

7. Your organization & social inclusion - Help it perform



To support individuals to work inclusively, organisations need to be clear how they are going to help them put corporate social inclusion policy into practice. In *Open Hearts Open Minds*' introductory section 'Exercises and resources - how to use them', we explained that one of its key aims therefore, is to help managers and staff have useful discussions about social inclusion.

This section will help you to:

- find out where support and information is
- check out how you can access support and raise issues
- draw guidance from thinking and planning that has already been done in your organisation
- decide how you will act on the information and guidance available
- feed into discussion and forward thinking in the organisation, your ideas about how social inclusion can practically be addressed

Exercise 7.1: Charting where support exists around you in the organisation

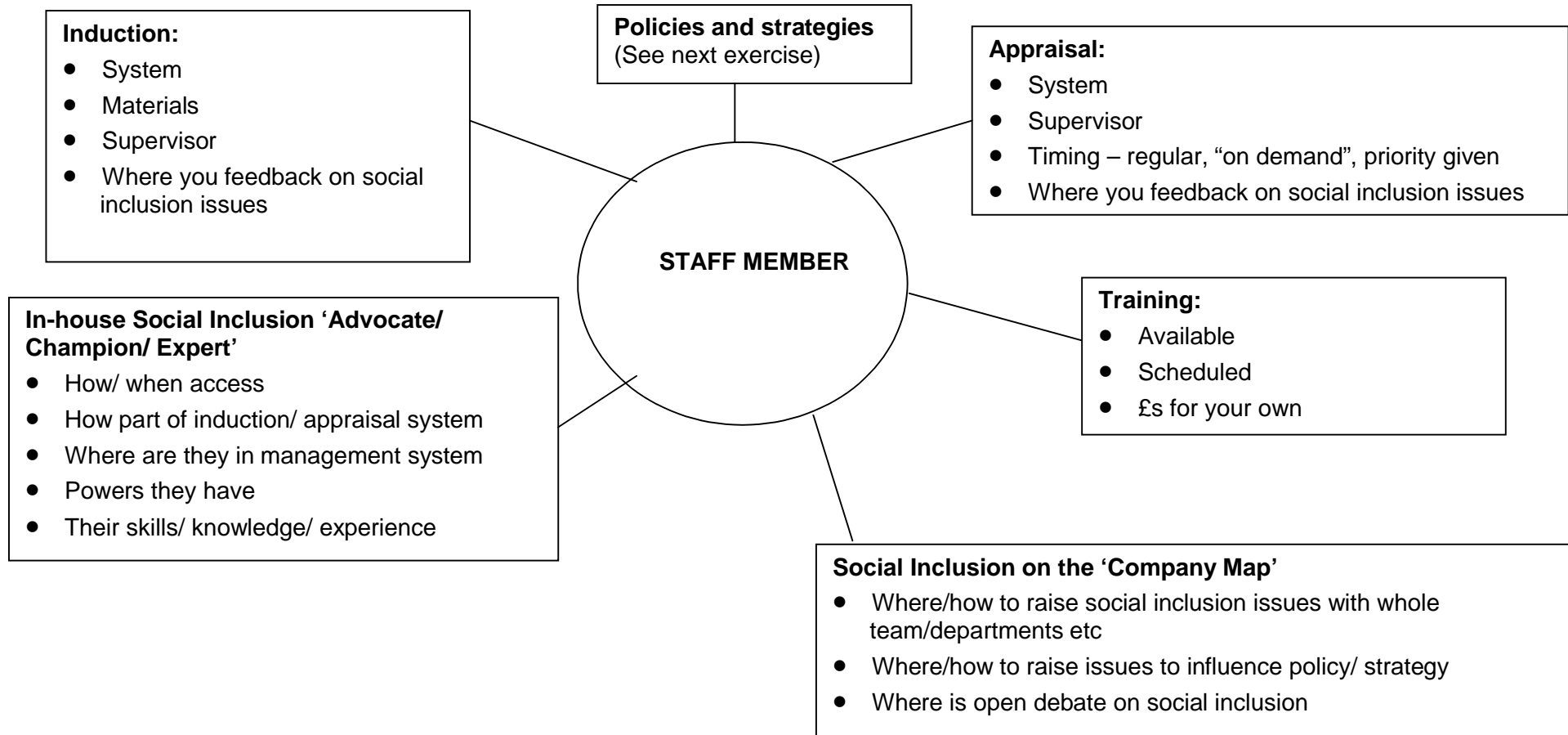
Use the model and the example charts below to find out where social inclusion is addressed in your organisation. Consider where you could access support and inform processes. A blank page is provided for you to create your own chart.

You may need to make a few phone calls or emails to people in your organisation to get information. You may want to split the work up between you and colleagues, and then meet to discuss and develop the chart.

You may find that there are gaps in support and information, or that what's there isn't as good as it could be. Discuss these things with your line manager at your next supervision meeting. S/he may be able to provide you with information you were unaware of and needs to be made aware of gaps, where they exist. Your line manager also needs to be made aware of how easy it was to find out what is available. Inaccessible information lays the foundation for barriers to inclusion in your organisation.

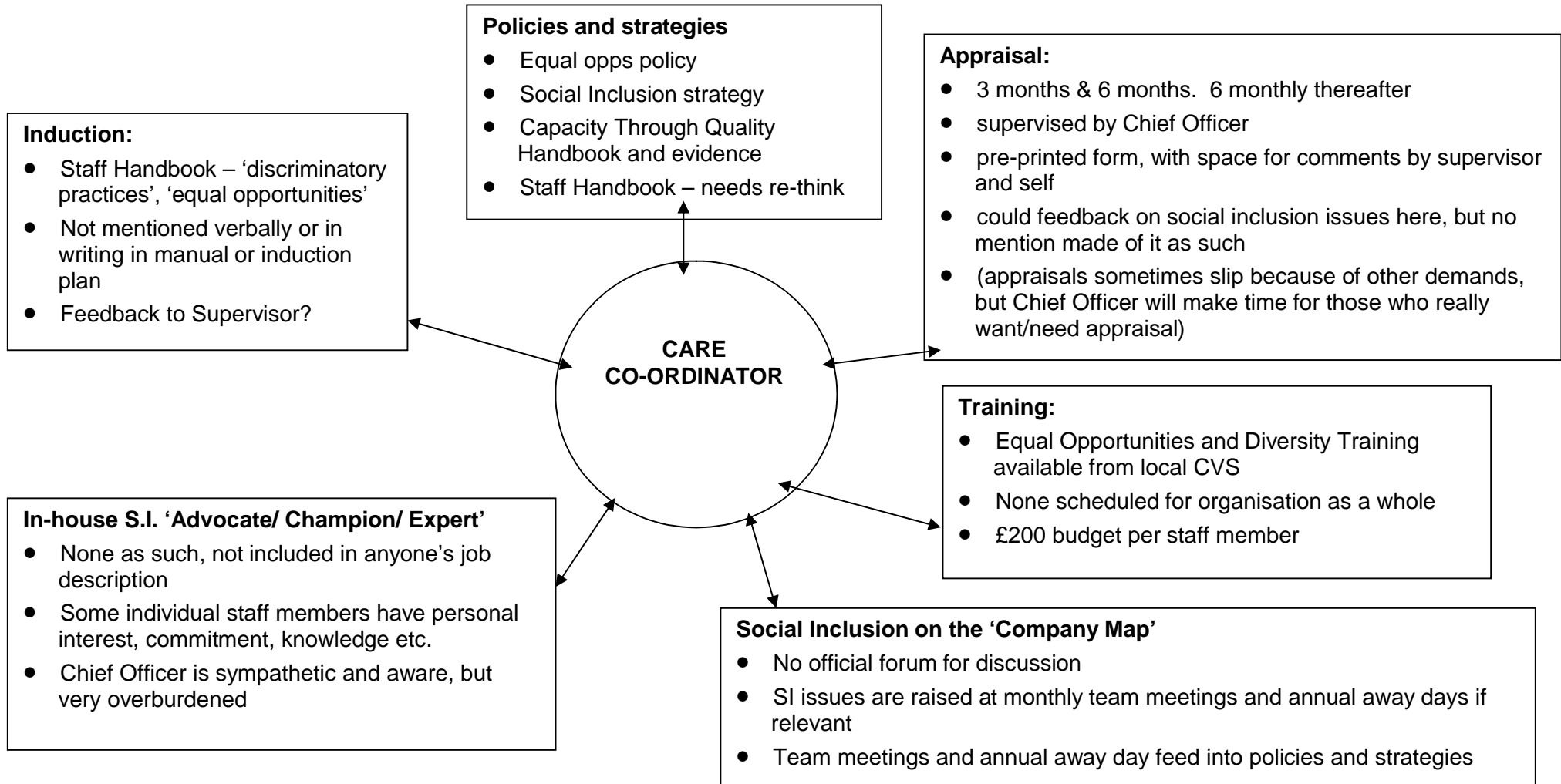
MODEL

Where Social Exclusion is addressed in the Organisation



EXAMPLE

Organisational Chart for Exeter Care Share



Organisational Chart for My Organisation

Refer to the worked example, and using the model create a chart of how social inclusion is addressed in your organisation. Add any additional headings relevant to you.

Map created by (your name)..... on (date)..... revisited with line manager on (date)

NB. Managers - collating the charts created by your staff should provide a clear picture of Social Inclusion strengths and gaps in your organisation

Your policy and strategy documents – how do they help you turn policy into practice?

Strengthening joint working between staff who work with the public, and their policy makers, is key in addressing social exclusion.

Someone within your organisation may already have been thinking about social inclusion to some degree. The tasks in the exercise that follows are designed to get staff and managers spending time together to identify key documents describing your organisation's strategy and approach to social inclusion. The idea is to use these documents to help you work out your role in fulfilling their objectives. Having done this, you can feed this understanding into your personal best-practice vision (Exercise 4.1).

Your organisation may have produced its own policy papers on social inclusion, or have policies that address social inclusion in part. In addition your organisation may have signed up to strategies developed by partnerships locally or nationally. You will find some routes to these through the Devon Strategic Partnership Website <http://www.devonsp.org.uk/otherdocs.html> and through their monthly e-bulletin *Input* <http://www.devonsp.org.uk/newsletters.html>. You may need to email senior managers to find out which policies with a bearing on social inclusion have been adopted by the organisation.

Some of these documents will be pitched at a strategic level and aimed more at telling organisations what they should be thinking about. They are usually less focused on helping staff in their individual work. Some documents however include useful background information, and things to look out for include:

- How deprivation and exclusion are measured with government indicators. You can use and 'translate' some of these for your own purposes. These will help you look out for the sorts of things that flag up that someone may be experiencing exclusion.
- How much is known in locally about the extent of deprivation and exclusion. This information can help you pick out where your main areas of concern might be.
- Things that can be done that are known to have the effect of reducing and preventing exclusion. This information can help you identify how your work is contributing to reducing exclusion. It will also help you decide where you need to link up with activities you hadn't thought of before.
- Questions that should routinely be asked to challenge whether excluded people in society have had enough influence over the way we provide services. Staff themselves can ask some of these questions and some need to be asked by managers. Staff and line managers should devise 'challenge questions' together, to take a team look at your organisation's performance. (E.g. *'How do we know that our service reaches those in need and not only those who can shout the loudest?'*)

Exercise 7.2: Turning policy into practice

The following exercise should be done by a team of colleagues and their line managers. This is important for the discussion that will take place, and will help to share out the work involved.

It will take a little time to bring together the people and the information you need, to do it.

The exercise consists of a series of tasks (a, b, and c). These are done at the various times a) you are able to accumulate information, b) read and digest it, and c) discuss it with your team members, including managers. You will not be able to complete tasks b) and c)

Information in the documents that are useful to our work in flagging up client's potential vulnerability to exclusion:

Aspects of exclusion that the documents show are known to be a key issue in our geographical and professional area of work:

Things that the documents suggest we can do to reduce exclusion, as a *natural part of our work*:

Additional things we reckon, having read these documents, we can do, to help our organisation reduce social exclusion:

People we need to contact to improve our networks in addressing exclusion:

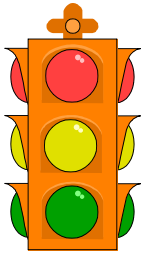
'Challenge questions' we need to start asking ourselves. These will help us keep a check on the 'inclusiveness' of our service and the way we deliver it:

Task c) Discussing and deciding

How helpful and accessible was each document? Give each document a 'traffic light' score using the system below.

Write each document name, its traffic light score and your comments in the next box.

Send these scores to the producers of the document. It will help them to improve the impact and usefulness of their policy and strategy making. Without your feedback, they are working blind. They would never know therefore if social inclusion policy is being translated into practice as they intended. Good managers will value constructive feedback



Red: Alert! This document was difficult to get hold of and make use of. The producers of this document should review how well they are communicating and delivering their intended messages to service delivery level.

Amber: This document was easy to get hold of, but still needs to address social exclusion more clearly and practically for translation into front-line action.

Green: This document is accessible and helpful.

Document name	Traffic light score	Comments

Go back to the notes you made under Task b).

- Explore the implications for your role and your team.
- Add any points arising out of discussion, or from your own local experience and knowledge, to the notes you made.
- Decide which of the learning and action points you will make a commitment to address in your work. Use a highlighter to pick them out.

Then, go back to Exercise 4.1 (section 4) on your personal best-practice vision.

- Make any additions or cross-references, as appropriate.

Make notes in the box below about:

- what you decide to do
- when you have done it
- the feedback you receive from the producers of the document

Action notes

Feedback notes

Social Inclusion as part of Induction, Supervision & Appraisal

Staff who work with the public and who helped create these *Open Hearts Open Minds* exercises identified that it's essential to encourage organisations to make space for staff development on social inclusion. This can be achieved through induction, supervision and appraisal. These processes are obvious opportunities for making sure that social inclusion is being thought about, and for making sure that as many people as possible are doing so.

We found through consultation that induction, supervision and appraisal vary greatly within and among organisations. The exercises here can be tailored to fit your workplace.

Exercise 7.3: How useful are our development processes for staff and volunteers?

Staff and line managers should use this exercise to consider how existing staff development processes support staff to address social inclusion. It will clarify the areas that line managers and personnel managers need to address. Staff should ideally complete this exercise after 6 months in post. Managers should use it to review the working practices within their organisation, on a regular basis.

Look at each process in the left hand column of the table on the next page. Consider how it helps you or your staff to develop a socially inclusive approach to your service.

The bullet points below and worked examples may remind you of some of the problems that sometimes exist.

- Insufficient management time/ space / priority allocated
- Introduction in person to local workers, networks and community groups limited
- Importance for part-time staff not recognized

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities for development
Induction		EXAMPLE: Written communication not available in Braille or large print	Present consultation on communications policy review a good time to raise these issues
Supervision		EXAMPLE: confusion about purpose of supervision	
Appraisal	EXAMPLE: Managers have good awareness of own strengths and weakness	EXAMPLE: No framework for checking staff's inclusive work practice	
Training			EXAMPLE: Raise need for training managers on supporting staff to work inclusively, in training needs survey

Checklist of information for Line managers to give to staff

The exercise below is for Line Managers, and helps to check how they support staff to deliver more inclusive services.

Exercise 7.4: Developing support for staff and volunteers

Think about the **policies and strategies** that shape how services and their delivery should promote social inclusion. How can you make them more effective, as a manager?

To help with this, have a look back at *Exercise 7.2: Turning policy into practice*. Make sure that you have conducted this exercise with your staff. It will have needed your input. It will have helped to identify what can be learnt from your organisation's policies, and what needs to be clarified. It is also important that as a manager, you can convey relevant learning from policies to new staff when you induct them.

Reflect on what you have learnt from your discussion with staff about your organisation's policies and respond to the questions in the boxes below.

<p>How comprehensively do these policy documents cover the breadth of exclusion issues? (See 'Groups frequently at risk of social exclusion' in <i>Open Hearts Open Minds</i> Section 1)</p>	
<p>What extra guidance do I need to find for staff, to fill any information gaps?</p>	
<p>What should I do next to improve communication of ideas and good practice between policy makers and staff?</p>	
<p>How can I make sure that practical, digestible information gets to as many of my staff as possible?</p>	

Next, consider what **training** is routinely available to staff that covers social inclusion? Select and tick boxes from the list below to build up a picture of the type of training available.

- None!**
- Generalist equality and diversity training** (up to a day long)
 - For some staff
 - For all staff
- DIY training resources for staff** (books, videos, leaflets, web-links, and the permission to take time to use them!)
- Equality and diversity training** that specifically covers some or all of the following:
 - Sexual orientation
 - Class
 - Gender
 - Disability
 - Ethnicity
 - Travelling communities
 - Places where exclusion is experienced by specific groups/communities in your locality
 - Other issues and groups linked with those vulnerable to the effects of social exclusion
 - The difference between personal and institutional discrimination, and how to address both.
- Training that gives staff work-focused support** including:
 - Information about law (at a pitch relevant to the level at which the staff are working)
 - Support for staff to build confidence in talking about aspects of equality and inclusion with each other and with clients.
 - Time to work out how individual staff can be more inclusive in their behaviour and practice in their role
 - Action planning time for staff and line managers together so that real changes to work culture can be made.

In the light of the boxes you have ticked above, consider the questions in the following table and make notes:

<p>Which of your staff are missing out on training addressing social inclusion?</p> <p>What arrangements can you make to address that? (Check feedback from staff who have completed Exercise 4.1).</p>	
<p>What do staff tell you about the value of the training they get at present?</p> <p>How can you measure its effects in changed behaviour and practice?</p>	
<p>What support do you give to staff to help them implement what they have learnt from training?</p> <p>How can you improve the quality of the follow-up support you offer?</p>	

<p>Training should lead to changes in service delivery. What allowance of time / funds is made for staff to work more inclusively (e.g. for client expenses like childcare and travel, for outreach equipment and hire of space, for costs of voluntary groups' input to consultation etc.) ?</p>	
<p>Think about the practical benefits training currently brings for staff and clients.</p> <p>What could your organisation do to improve the quality and scope of training?</p> <p>(Send a copy of these notes to the person responsible for commissioning training.)</p>	

There is a collective responsibility on organisations that want to promote social inclusion/ They need to promote access to their own service and to others too. Inclusion involves making your own 'front door' attractive, and opening doors to other services also.

Consider the **resources** you provide and encourage staff to use for inclusive working. Respond to the questions in the table below:

<p>Which of the following types of materials do you help staff to access and use? (Select and tick)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Visual materials which help people to feel they are welcomed by your service</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Information about other services and organisations supporting specific groups of people experiencing exclusion, discrimination and disadvantage</p>
<p>Which groups at risk of social exclusion still need to be covered in the materials?</p>	
<p>How do you make information available to people who have difficulty with reading?</p>	
<p>What more can you do to enable your staff to 'open doors' for clients?</p>	

Finally, consider the **feedback** you give to staff. How does it help to promote inclusive working?

- Select and tick boxes from the list below to review the feedback opportunities you use.
- Then, respond to the questions in the table that follows the list below.

In which of the following settings do you give time to discussing inclusive performance thoroughly with your staff?

- Induction
- Appraisal
- Line management/ supervision meetings
- Staff/Team meetings

What is your feedback discussion based upon?

- Staff’s own views of their performance
- Staff’s own reflection on their performance having used self-assessment tools
- Complaints procedures
- Positive feedback procedures (do you have any?)
- Service performance monitoring systems
- Equality Steering Group feedback

<p>What more can you do to set aside quality time for discussion and action-planning with staff on inclusive performance?</p> <p>(Get feedback from staff who have completed Exercise 7.3: How useful are our development processes for staff and volunteers?).</p>	
<p>How can you (and your staff) bring more information about their performance and its impact on socially excluded clients, to the discussion?</p>	

Thank you for taking the time to work on this section; We know from staff working with the public who helped design it, that your effort and action will be appreciated.