



# imagine

a new way of thinking and doing

Paradigm Newsletter - Issue 10 - July 2005

## Where Does The Time Go?

### Editor's Note

Welcome to Edition 10 of Imagine. What a milestone! We're really pleased with how Imagine is received and hope you continue to read it. Write to us and let us know what you think of it.

We keep on trying to slim this down, but each edition we have so much great material that we struggle with what to keep out.

In this edition we have a special conference feature with lots in it about Paradigm's events, ideas for the future and some great opportunities for you.

Nicola Hilson, fresh from our Study Tour, has a cracking article about the absurdity of endless PCP training. We wish lots more people could be honest about making a difference in people's lives rather than obsessing about planning.

Our staff focus is Nigel Devine, Paradigm's resident Geordie, Study Tour leader and known to many from attending exhibitions as the flirtatious hip swinger!

We hope you like this edition and are both informed, stimulated and challenged by it.

Email us with your ideas to  
[admin@paradigm-uk.org](mailto:admin@paradigm-uk.org)

**Already we're in summer and starting the countdown for Christmas. We may not have the decorations up yet, but we are well advanced in our Christmas planning with the launch of our 7th Annual Conference. If you have not been to one yet, make this your first, you will not be disappointed. If you have been to previous conferences, get your booking in quickly as they always sell out.**

We have not been sitting on our laurels, during this first half of the year. We have launched a series of Action Learning Sets (on behalf of the Valuing People Support Team) aimed at managers in commissioning roles, focusing on housing and support. The first of these have just happened and we plan to report on these at

the start of 2006. We have had a busy time with a number of conferences, workshops and masterclasses, find out more on the back page.

Our latest venture is into mainstream publishing. This month sees the publication of Like a Fish Understands a Tree – a love story, a science fiction story

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### What's Inside . . .

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and a powerful tale involving a man with learning difficulties, written by none other than our Leeds based Consultant, Helen Collins. The next Curious Incident? We certainly hope so. Back to that Christmas theme, they make great Christmas presents – order yours now.

People continue to come and go. At the end of April, we said goodbye to Susan Dunn. Susan has been with us pretty much from the beginning and in latter times has managed our Supported Living Network and US Consultants programme. Susan will

continue to help us out at our London based conferences. At the end of June, we also saw the departure of Kathy Brown. Likewise, Kathy has been with us from the beginning and worked virtually full time for most of that time, leading our work around Person Centred Approaches. Kathy is taking up a new job with HFT in Oxfordshire. Kathy's informal role has been our social secretary, the organiser of many a quiet night and sedate game (not!). Kathy leaves a big hole (no double entendre intended) and will be missed by us all.

At the beginning of May, we welcomed back Gill Goodwin as a Consultant. Gill was one of our founding Consultants who took time out when she had children and for the next year will be working on our project to develop a meaningful and worthwhile training course as an alternative to NVOs. Our next edition will have much more about this. We are working in partnership with Owl Housing, Ling, Natural Breaks, Options for Supported Living, Dorset Scope and Michael Batt Foundation on this project.

*"A plan is a dream with objectives..."*

*Anon.*

# Ambition, Paradigm's 7th Annual Conference,

Manchester,  
28th & 29th  
November 2005

Please book early,  
places will sell out fast.





# Special Conference Feature

## Conference stars

Each year, Paradigm puts on over 30 different conferences, workshops and masterclasses. We always strive to include the most innovative practices and up to date ideas at our events. To this end, we are on the look out for people who have great things to share with others about what they are doing and learning.



Would you be interested in participating in one of our events? This may be in doing a keynote presentation, running a workshop, co-chairing a conference. If you have been to one of our

events before, this should have given you an idea of what we are looking for.

We want to start a register of people who are interested in doing this, and then when we are doing a relevant conference, we may ask you to do something at it. We are looking for people with learning difficulties and family members with great stories to tell, staff, managers and clinicians who are doing something different and innovative that is really making a positive difference in people's lives, consultants, trainers and researchers who want to disseminate the learning from their work to a wider audience.

As well as having something to say, you need to be eager and enthusiastic, be very committed to person centred principles – we

will not allow a contribution at our conferences that isn't -



and willing to get your message across in an easy to understand way. You do not need to have done something like this before. In fact, we often find the best contributions are from people who have never presented at a conference before.

If you would like to know more, visit our website at [www.paradigm-uk.org/conferencestars.html](http://www.paradigm-uk.org/conferencestars.html) and fill in the very short application form.

## Conference Help

Would you like to get a free place at one of our

conferences for your organisation? We often need help at the beginning and end of the day on our conference registration desk. If you are willing to help register delegates and then collect feedback forms and seal up boxes, you can have a free place at that conference. You will not miss anything of the programme itself.



We are starting to hold a register of people or organisations who are willing to help. We hold conferences all over the UK, so it does not matter where you are. If you would like to do this, please email Pam Wilkinson at [pamw@paradigm-uk.org](mailto:pamw@paradigm-uk.org) to register your interest. When we have an event near you, we will be in touch.

### Better Value

From our very first days, we have always offered a large number of free places at our

conferences to people with learning difficulties and family members. We are committed to always doing this.

We have been working at creating better value for all of our other customers. We have always offered team discounts, and are now improving this even further. For all of our conferences we now offer discounts for bookings of three or more places, typically offering a 15% reduction. In addition, for every three places booked, we will offer you an additional free place – offering you unrivalled value for money. This means that four people can attend at a saving of at least 35% off our main rates.

You can save even more by doing everything via email. We will offer a further £10 discount if you are willing to pay by BACS (direct from your bank account to ours) and receive all of your confirmations and maps by email.

New in 2005, we now offer student places at our conferences. To qualify for one of these, you need to be a full time student, receiving no

salary from an employer. If you fit this bill, we have places available at most of our conferences for £45. We have a limited number of these student places so early booking is always advised.

### Conference Reports

Risk: Manage, embrace avoid? was the title of our June conference in Manchester. We had a packed conference hall to hear a diverse range of ideas and views about managing risks. Paul Sillitoe started the conference off with a presentation of his exploits climbing Everest, Kilimanjaro, and most of the other major mountains in the world, it seemed. Paul has learning difficulties and had the audience open mouthed with tales of his exploits – showing how even the most grave risks can be tackled

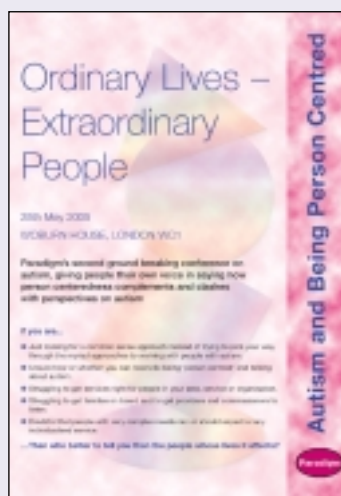
though out, and when you have the motivation for it.

Joe Steen, a parent of two men with learning difficulties and also chair of Natural Breaks, implored services to listen, work in partnership with parents and seek out emotional attachment with those people whom they are supporting. Joe gave a frank and honest account of what it takes to keep one of his son's alive and how services had all too frequently got it wrong by not listening to parents.

Jim Williams, Richard Williams, Helen Collins, Sam Smith and Karyn Kirkpatrick gave great insights into developing risk policies, making risky decisions, attending to people's sexuality, reducing staffing cover and organisations getting the right balance with risk. Reviews from the conference were fantastic, and to top it all, the conference saw the re-launch of Community Living, with free wine for anyone who popped over to the Community Living stall.

Autism: Ordinary Lives ... Extraordinary People was the name of our conference held on 25th

May. Whilst Liverpool were enthralling the world with their fantastic



victory at the Champions League Final in Istanbul, we were enthralling a smaller bunch of people with some profound accounts of people's lives and experiences with Autism and challenging some long held (and we would argue, mistakenly held) views of what Autism is. Tim Serpell, Lucy Skuce, Kevin Smith, Patrick Kenny and Ros Blackburn told the audience how it is for them. Their powerful and emotive accounts left people under no illusion of the importance of being person centred no matter what your label.

Judith North, Liz Pinner, Sue Ashton, Sarah Havard, Maggie Sykes, Mina Malpas and Luke Beardon through workshops and

presentations gave the audience a rich menu of sessions to attend, giving people an insight into how to successfully support people within a person centred framework and how to better understand autism from a theoretical perspective.

This was our second Autism conference. The reviews were superb, confirming to us that it is nonsense to hold the view that person centredness does not go with autism. Don't be hoodwinked by those who pedal this message. They are talking out of their proverbial.

Paradigm offers in-house training on autism, picking up on the central messages of this conference. Have a look at our flyer or email Judith North for more information at [judithn@paradigm-uk.org](mailto:judithn@paradigm-uk.org)

*"Don't be afraid to take a big step. You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps"*  
David Lloyd George

# Inside Paradigm

We have always prided ourselves on being open and accessible in the information we have. Internally, this means that virtually no document or information is withheld from any of our staff or Consultants (save for personal file information). Yet despite having this as a driving ambition, we still found ourselves with not everyone in the organisation knowing everything we thought they should. People had unanswered questions, assumptions about where we stood or what we were doing.

To combat this, we decided to start a process where anyone could ask a question about anything or anyone in the organisation. This was all done via email (as our opportunities to meet are few and far between), and we amassed a huge number of questions to which everyone in the organisation was expected to answer. At the end, we had a 65 page document.

Here is just a sample of some of the questions:

- Will there ever be a discussion on how the profits are distributed?
- This is the first time since I joined Paradigm that I can remember any decision making process, and my part in it, being made so clear and explicit. Have you been so clear and explicit before?
- Paradigm is influential and well-positioned to influence the national picture. Could this position be strengthened by it being a registered charity?
- Is there any way of reducing the cost of our conferences?
- Once a decision is made in relation to the future of Paradigm, will we accept the decision as part of a democratic process (even if it is not what we have voted for?)
- What are the dynamics like at the management team? What works and what doesn't work? What are the management team doing about that?
- I believe that we are well paid, appreciated, supported and clear on

our roles and responsibilities. I think the excessive traveling and not seeing colleagues regularly is difficult but accept that this is part of job. What do you think?

- Do you think you are worth what you are paid and why/why not?
- How do you espouse the values of inclusion in your personal life?
- If I leave Paradigm, who inside or outside of the organization would you like to see lead it?
- Has such explicit no-holds-barred questions left you feeling OK or is it unsettling? And would you like to see it done again?
- Given our original aspirations what have we done well, and what have we struggled with?
- What measures can we take to ensure that people feel comfortable tabling and discussing any matters relating to Paradigm business in our meeting forums?
- How do we know the people who have supervisory roles are any good at it?
- What changes in the

operation of the company do you see, for us to become a not for profit organization?

We wanted to create a moment in time where we had complete openness and honesty amongst us all. No hidden agendas, no assumptions – just upfront information and discussions. It felt exhilarating and panicky at the same time. What had we started, where would it lead us? Could we cope with being so open and honest with each other?

We think it worked a treat, we have used it as a platform for how we always want to be with each other. This has helped shape how we meet, how we communicate with each other, how we commit to action and hold each other accountable. Additionally, it is helping us create an organization that we feel proud about working for and one where we really enjoy each others' company, time and work.

At the same time, we embarked upon a process to decide the future of the organisation. Three years ago, we said that we would take a look at the organisation's company

status and earlier this year, we opened this up to a vote to everyone in the organisation. We started off as a for-profit company, and decided to review things in the future. Despite being for-profit, we have strong social aims, and seek to reflect these in everything that we do. It was thus a very big and important decision for us.

We used the exercise described above to also explore our own views about Paradigm's company status and to help collect everyone's thoughts to help them choose about the future of the organisation. In the middle of April, we came together to weigh up the pros and cons of changing and have a vote. Everyone in the organisation had an equal vote, with a commitment that whatever the majority chose, we would abide by. We chose overwhelmingly to maintain our status as it is. Why? We felt that we were doing some great things; we had attracted the most talented bunch of individuals that any organisation had in the UK (and beyond). Our present status helps us to stay lean and focused, making quick decisions. We are kept fresh by the

fact that if people do not want our services and are unwilling to pay for them, we will die off very quickly. This keeps us focused on being innovate, giving great value for money and excelling at what we do.

It also means that we will keep on doing many of the things which fulfil our social aims: a large programme of pro-bono work, free places at conferences and workshops for people with learning difficulties and parents, our website, Imagine and a large programme of development work.

It was a high risk strategy we adopted – we had no idea where it was going to take us. But it feels great that everyone was involved and feels really healthy for the organisation to have done things in this way. We're really pleased with the result and look forward to working with you all for many years to come.

*"Know the true value of time; snatch, seize, and enjoy every moment of it. No idleness; no laziness; no procrastination; never put off till tomorrow what you can do today."*

Lord Chesterfield

# Europe in Action 2005

## Toward Living in the Community Prague, 19-21 May 2005

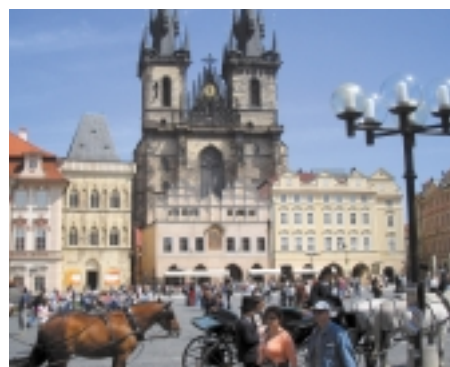
by Wendy Perez,  
Paradigm Project Worker & Consultant

I was invited to give a presentation on In Control, the new project which is about people getting more control of their lives and their support. The congress was organised by Inclusion Europe (The European Association of Societies of Persons with Intellectual Disability and their Families) and Inclusion Czech Republic. People from 38 countries attended the congress – not just from Europe but from around the world.

My travels are always an adventure – some people I know didn't think I could travel on my own but I wanted to prove them wrong. So, I bit the bullet and went for it – and I'm back in one piece to tell my story. At Heathrow airport, on my way to Prague, they wanted me to put my chair in the hold – but I refused. They told me it was policy – I said NO and put my brakes on. At the end of the long debate I WON! As I boarded the plane I asked the guy "if it was policy" and he said "it's up to the customer". I'd told them that I didn't want my wheels buckled and scraped

as this had happened to a friend's chair in the past. I knew I would have been in a pickle with NO chair! My chair easily went into the cupboard on the plane. Why is it such a fight to be heard British Airways?

On the plane I sat back and relaxed. The stewards were wondering why I was travelling on my own and asking who was going to meet me at the other end? On arrival in Prague while getting off the plane, I had to crack the language barrier to get my luggage and tell them that I was to meet Peter at arrivals. As you can imagine I succeeded. Having met Peter, we headed off in a taxi to the hotel. Finally at the hotel – after going round the houses – we found cobbled streets and steps. After booking in, we ordered another taxi to visit the



sights. As a city, there was a lot to see with nice buildings and it felt a good place to be. It was clear more is being done for inclusion in the UK than Prague. I only saw two parking spaces for people with a disability.

I welcomed the opportunity to take part in the congress, to change people's views and lives. It was an experience that I hope other people get the chance to do. Those who presented were researchers and service providers – so I was a bit out of my comfort zone. Why are so few others with a disability not included in giving presentations?

I also attended a Person Centred Planning workshop where it was still people from services talking. It was not real people, real lives. We must do more to change this. I tried by asking questions on sexuality and by stating that "why are there questions when people with learning disabilities want to do something, and yet there are no questions when people without learning disabilities make a decision about their life?" This led to opening up

a debate, it's always a start. The translators had a field day! I could see them in their boxes.

Peter and I delivered our presentation on In Control – which raised a lot of questions and discussion. We took the time to explain it fully to all present so that they understood what we said.

The after-congress-dinner was not accessible, a stair-lift from Ancient Times! Access audit here we come! We headed off to dinner, to view the city and the night life. Food and city fine, liquid even better. I only wish more people could have the opportunity to go out into the community and enjoy themselves. If they don't try

it, they won't know what it is like.



For the return journey, the taxi was late, so we cut it fine for the airport with 25 minutes to go for boarding and no assistance present, but we made it. In life we have to deal with what comes our way. If I had not gone I would not have faced these challenges. Another first for me – but I say "why not give it a go, seeing is believing." Paradigm have

given me the opportunity. They are trail blazers who look out of the box. I only wish more organisations would do this.

Thankfully, I got home in time for the football. Just like in Prague, my team got the message across. My team (Arsenal) got the cup. I hope that others in Europe and the rest of the world get the opportunity to lead fuller lives in the community with fewer services and in control of their own life – just like everyone else.

*"The most important thing in life is to learn how to give out love, and to let it come in."*  
Morrie Schwartz

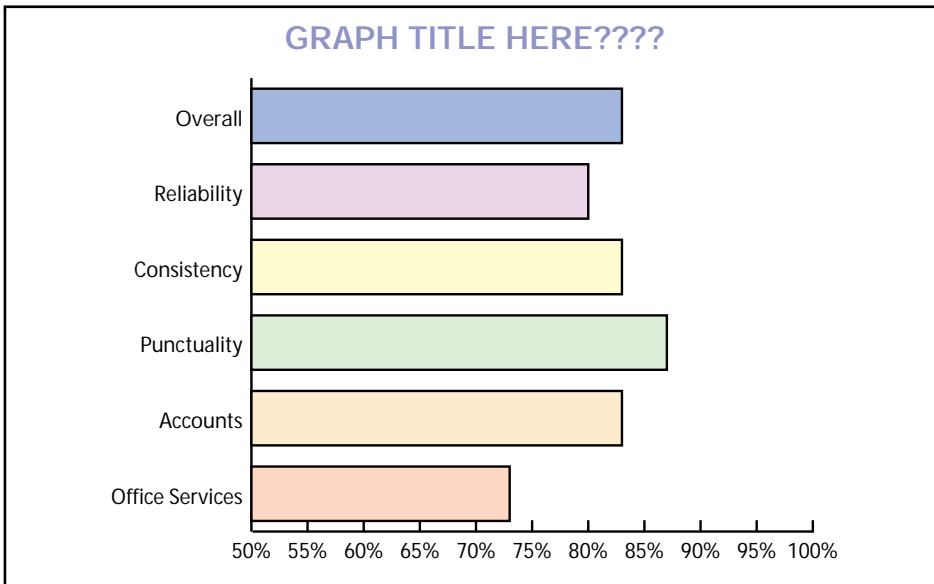
**We are about to start a fantastic project to support Local Authorities combining transition with self-directed support.**

**To receive information, email:**

**[nicrc@paradigm-uk.org](mailto:nicrc@paradigm-uk.org)**

# Quality Matters

In our last edition we started to report on our own quality feedback. Everything we do, whether it is consultancy, training, conferences or workshops we ask our customers for feedback.



This gives you a chance to see what people say about our work. We have high and exacting standards. Maintaining our performance is always a challenge. This last quarter has seen us working hard on speedier booking processes for conference delegates. We aim for a 24 hour turnaround of booking forms and have achieved this 98% of the time. We are really pleased with this.

## Like a Fish Understands a Tree

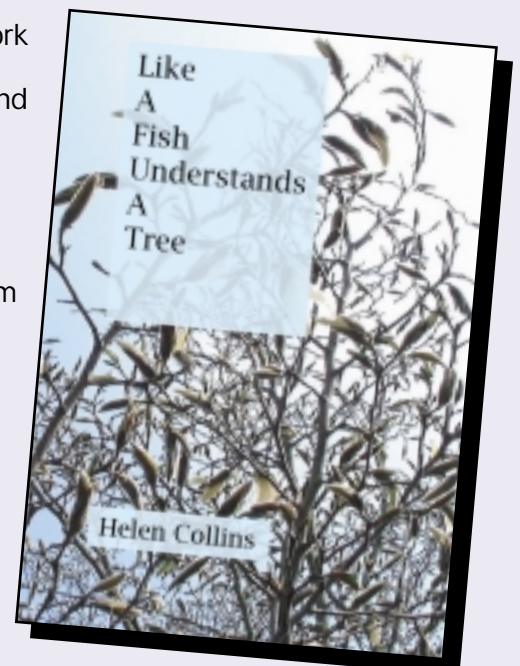
will be Paradigm's next publication.

It will be available from us in September for just £6.99.

This marks a turning point in our publications, as this our first work of fiction, and it's a love story too! It's the story of George and Tracy, who have been going out with each other for some time and would like nothing more than to get married and settle down together. Nothing is as easy as it sounds and this ambition is hampered by their disability, as both George and Tracy have Downs Syndrome.

This is a new love story for a new century, of how the two of them manage to work out their own way in the world. They are helped along by a computer character who is also learning to love in a very different way.

Originally the result of a competition and written in only a month by Paradigm Consultant Helen Collins, this is a story which everyone loves. A unique blend of computer science fiction, disability awareness, myth, love and everyday life. It is a groundbreaking, moving, funny and acutely observed novel which can be read and re-read on many levels. Helen Collins has a gift for creating emotionally compelling, complex characters and ideas.



# SUMMER SALE!!

Late July and August are generally quiet times for us. We are going to try something different this year.

If you request any training and consultancy from now that occurs between 18th July and 2nd September, we will reduce the price for them to £499 per day plus VAT & expenses.

This is a considerable saving on our usual rates. We know that this is not the most popular time of year to have any training or consultancy, but not everyone goes away in the summer.

If you would like some work over this period, call us now as we only have a small number of days available at that price.



## Consultant Profile

It's time to meet **NIGEL DEVINE** - Paradigm's resident Geordie and Director of Consultancy

### Your idea of happiness is...

Seeing my kids grow up happy and healthy and seeing Newcastle United win any trophy.

### The trait you most deplore in yourself...

My Catholic guilt complex.

### The trait you most deplore in others...

- Those people who talk the talk but don't walk the walk
- Snobbery
- Racism

### Your favourite books...

- Fever Pitch – Nick Hornby
- Wilt – Tom Sharpe
- Viz Profanasaurus

### Music for the soundtrack of your life...

- Blaydon Races - Geordie Ridley
- Reason To Believe - The Faces
- All My Loving - The Beatles

### Top 3 films...

- Schindlers List
- Angel Heart
- Young Frankenstein

### Lesson life has taught you...

Never say never

### Your hero/heroine...

Sarah Hoburn. My god daughter who died aged 16 but taught me the real meaning of dignity and bravery.

### Your life motto...

Don't do to others what you wouldn't want done to yourself.

### Your greatest fear...

Anything bad happening to my kids and dying before Newcastle United wins a trophy.

### Stuck in a lift with...

My Paradigm colleagues. I'm sure we would use the time effectively.

### Your worst habit...

Smoking.

### Most overused words

Brilliant  
Lush

### You get out of bed in the morning ...

For life in general, most of the time I love it and I hate lying in!

### Makes you laugh out loud...

Adam Collerton one of my best friends and more recently Julian Yates from the Michael Batt foundation, the funniest bloke I have ever met.

## What's on

Here is our  
Conference and  
Workshop listing  
for the next few  
months. Call our  
office or visit the  
website for more  
details.

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### Paradigm Workshops & Masterclasses

Masterclass in Becoming a Reviewer with Reach  
**Birmingham** – 12th July

Supported Living Train the Trainers  
**Bristol** – 13th September

Making Connections  
**London** – 20th September  
**Leeds** – 24th November

Building Brilliant Teams  
**Birmingham** – 11th October

### Paradigm Conferences

No ifs...no buts  
**London** – 12th October

Every Young Person Matters  
**London** – 20th October

Ambition (Paradigm's Annual Conference)  
**Manchester** – 28th & 29th November

*"I was getting into  
my car, and this  
bloke says to me  
"Can you give me a  
lift?" I said "Sure,  
you look great, the  
world's your oyster,  
go for it." "*  
*Tommy Cooper*

