



# imagine

a new way of thinking and doing

Paradigm Newsletter - Issue 15 - May 2007

## Editor's Note

Welcome to the last ever paper edition of Imagine. Reading the articles that are in this edition I knew this could not be the last one ever! Where else could you read a passionate and frank article about abuse in hospitals by Peter Kinsella in the same place as an article about a conference celebrating people's success stories? This is why Imagine will continue. Its stories, celebrations, controversial opinions and information will go on in e-format only. So don't miss out – get your email address to

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

as soon as possible!

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# The last ever imagine?

**Is this the last ever Imagine you will receive in the post? I'm afraid it is! But don't worry, Imagine will continue to bring you passionate articles and up to date information - in electronic format only (phew!)**

The team at Paradigm really enjoy putting together this newsletter. It's an excellent way to talk about what's currently happening in our sector, how we feel about what's been happening and what we want to do in the future. We also get some great guest writers in Imagine who ignite

emotions and start some great debates. We cannot stop this!

Our decision to move to electronic copy only is in line with a change that's happening across Paradigm. Even our event

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bookings will be online-only in a matter of months at:

[www.offshootevents.net/paradigm](http://www.offshootevents.net/paradigm)

So if you don't want to miss out on this honest and informative newsletter make sure we have your email address by filling in the enclosed contact slip and sending it to our address at the bottom of the front page. Or email us and let us know you would like our e-information to:

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

## Online booking

You will have read on the front page of Imagine about Imagine going electronic. All of our event booking has now gone online. This enables us to keep costs down and pass on savings in the form of discounts to you, our customers. For every conference, workshop and No Frills event we do, you will be able to book online. This gives you real-time availability and the immediate emailing of your registration letter, map and all other details.

All of Paradigm's events will be listed at [www.paradigm-uk.org/conferences](http://www.paradigm-uk.org/conferences). From here you can book straight onto your event of choice. Alternatively, you will see a unique link on each flyer taking you direct to the booking page for that event. If you cannot access the internet (or have trouble doing so), you can still phone up and book a place – but you won't get the great online discounts.

# No Frills Conferences

**Paradigm's No Frills conferences are our attempt at offering a very high value but low cost conference enabling people who may not be able to afford the cost of traditional conferences to attend a great learning experience. Modelled on the experiences of the low cost airlines, we have tried to strip out many of the unnecessary costs to enable us to have a price from £50 a place.**

Later this year we are going to introduce something called elastic pricing. Again, similar to airlines, this will enable us to offer conference places from £5 a place (with none of the extra exorbitant taxes and charges the airlines add on). Basically, if you are quick off the mark, you will get one of

the ultra cheap places – these will be in limited supply, so you will have to be quick. Even if you miss out on one of those, you will still be able to have a *No Frills* Conference place from £50 a place.

What happens at a *No Frills* event? We have distilled a typical days programme into half a day without losing out on any of the content – cutting out breaks and changing the format around; we have fewer speakers, but covering topics in more depth; there is no lunch or refreshments, save for a cup of coffee at the beginning and water during the conference; delegates register themselves and collect and print their own handouts online. This has enabled us to really cut costs.

We have already held No Frills conferences on Reach, Individualised Budgets and Autism. Here is what some customers said:

'fantastic idea – all of my team were able to come today' – **Team Leader, Birmingham**

'first conference I have been to – we don't usually get a chance' – **Support worker, Leeds**

'I learnt loads today; nothing was lost with this format. Keep it up' – **Service Manager, Manchester**

This year, we have *No Frills* Conferences already planned on Reach and the Mental Capacity Act. More are in the offing. Check our website for details.

# Moving on by Walking the Line

**Now there's a tenuous headline – last year's Annual Conference title merged with this year's. If you have not been to one of Paradigm's annual conferences, you do not know what you have been missing. We think they are the best conferences ever – or rather, that's what our customers tell us. We have had people from all over the world at our conferences. This year's Annual Conference is called *Walk the Line* – as ever, it's a celebration of everything that people with learning difficulties, their families and support staff are managing to achieve.**

Every year, we have had an Annual Conference, now held in Manchester, with well in excess of 300 people attending. We work hard at making these events inclusive, and usually have over half of the delegates being people with learning difficulties and family carers. Don't take our word for it, though; this is what previous delegates have told us:

- Fantastic event
- Best conference I have ever been to
- Calling it a conference does not do it justice
- I wish you could bottle the experience and emotions this produces – if you could, I'd take an injection every week
- I came, I saw, I was bowled over, and I'll come again
- The most inclusive event I have ever been to
- This is something that everyone should come to – an amazing experience

We like to think of our Annual Conference as a showcase for the talent and achievements of people with learning difficulties.

## 2006 Moving On

Over 300 people packed out the Manchester Conference Centre for a sell out event. An important lesson for anyone thinking coming this year – book early, by the beginning of November, there were no places left!



*Jenny Blackwell*

Moveable Feast gave a stirring performance of the In Control themed production Moving On. As ever, it was a fantastic emotional start to the conference. More than ever before, performance was a strong theme at Moving On. Jenny Blackwell performed on the flute at the beginning of the day and showcased her dancing talent at the end. We had the usual mix of great keynote speeches and a mesmerising choice of workshops.

One of the new things we tried last year was a communication workshop just for men. Two workshops were held to encourage men to communicate. Encouraging people to create disability rights slogans to the tune or rhythm of football chants, it was a huge success. An impromptu performance at the end of the



*Moveable Feast*

day saw 30 men on stage leading the audience in renditions of their newly created work. The experience of 350 people singing along to 'you can stick your risk assessment up your arse' to the tune of 'She'll be Coming Round the Mountain' was a sight and sound to behold. Capturing the moment, we finished off with a rendition of 'You'll Never Walk Alone' which would have put Liverpool's Kop to shame – we did say that these conferences are like no other!

With a great overnight party, dancing away to a live band, day 2 saw a resumption to activity. A performance from the Brandon Trust, a rousing keynote from Caroline Tomlinson and a 'bring the house down' presentation from our very own Rachel Pattison were highlights of day 2. We ended the conference with everyone joining in to a group song and dance to the Locomotion. We had been on a two day rollercoaster. We really try and experiment at these conferences. We get a lot right, but inevitably, we make some mistakes – some sessions don't hit the mark. However, the whole point of our Annual Conference is to showcase people who have never spoken at a conference before. The vast majority worked superbly.



*Performance of the Football Chants*

If that's whet your appetite, read on about getting involved with our 2007 Annual Conference, *Walk the Line*.

### **Walk the Line – call for proposals**

Walk the Line is the name for this years Annual Conference. It will be held in Manchester on 11th and 12th December. As in previous years, we are looking for people who have done great things with their lives or services. The conference theme is broad; it's about doing whatever it takes to make something happen. We are particularly keen to see people working in partnership on their presentations or workshops or performances: people with learning difficulties, family members and support staff.

Do you have a talent you would like to showcase, a story to tell, an experience to share? It can be conventional or as unconventional as you like. We would love to hear from you if you would like to be a presenter at this year's conference. Presenters get a free place at the conference. Think creatively about:

- Different formats for small groups
- Different room layouts
- Creative and participative sessions
- Use of video and other media
- Theatre and performing arts
- Very participative sessions

If you would like our full information pack for presenting at this year's conference, visit our website for full details. If you do not have access to the website, call our office on 0870 010 4933. Hurry as we will take applications up to 28th May.

Make sure you put those dates in your diaries, you will get a flyer and be able to book from early July.

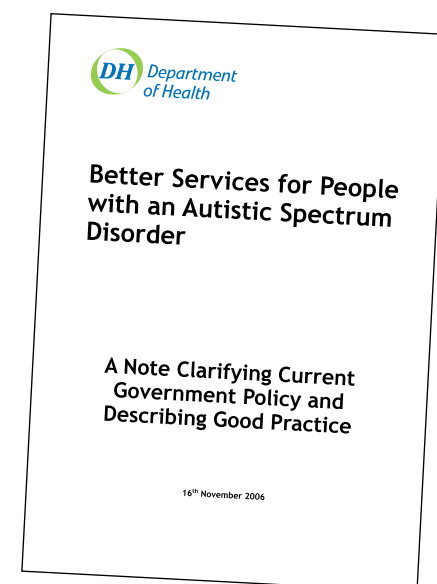
# Better Services for people with an ASD

## - how provider organisations are responding

Since the publication of **Better Services** for people with an ASD I have been invited by a flurry of statutory and provider organisations to help them think through how they measure up. In effect what we do when I visit is to test the robustness of local implementation of the national policy agenda by assessing the impact on the lives of people with an ASD. What I've discovered on my travels is no surprise; indeed much of it was anticipated and reflects why "Better Services" was written. Many statutory agencies are struggling to respond to the growing numbers of people with an ASD falling through the administrative gaps in traditionally organised services (e.g. between mental health and learning disability). This was one of the primary drivers for writing the document and the main issue it was supposed to address.

Maybe I've been working with the "good ones" however working with them has lead me to reflect that contrary to the bad press some statutory agencies are acknowledging that there are problems and are trying to address them. It's a humbling business spending a day with champions from a wide range of organisations as they seek to alter how things are historically organised to create services and administrative arrangements that make more sense to the people with an ASD. There's a long road to travel and a lot of acknowledgement that they are only beginning to take steps in the right direction.

Contrast that with the response from some, but by no means all, ASD specialist provider organisations. Firstly, let me inform anyone reading this, that doesn't



already know, that prior to working for Paradigm I led an organisation that "specialises" in supporting people with an ASD. I am reminding you of that because I want to make it clear that I have no axe to grind with specialist organisations per se, it's the specialist organisations that are wearing their "specialism" as a form of armour that I am having difficulty understanding.

Should you ever have the dubious fortune to hear me present Better Services to an audience, glance around the room as I am speaking. You'll spot them a mile off. As the session starts they look irritable. They don't really want to be there. As it progresses their body language deteriorates from crossed arms & legs to stern faces, withdrawing eye contact, fidgeting, huffing and puffing, loudly mumbled asides and occasionally to heckling.

“What’s to heckle”, I wonder? “I am only presenting national policy direction – No need to shoot the messenger.”

Shooting the messenger usually starts with a strong assertion “excuse me, can I just point out.... we are a person centred organisation, thank you very much”. I wonder.... as I don’t know them or their organisation, and as I am presenting national policy direction what it was that I said that made them think I was disputing that?

I have lots of ideas. Here’s a few.

Maybe it’s because I say that some organisations are condition centred and other organisations are person centred and that national policy implies it’s important to know the difference? Did I imply their organisation was condition centred or did they just do that?

Perhaps it’s because I ask how come, when we know many people with an ASD experience difficulties with social relationships, there are so many people with an ASD living in groups with other people they didn’t choose to live with? I’d be happy to hear a response to this that actually sounded like a reason. It’s not a rhetorical question. One explanation proffered was “because some of ‘them’

like to watch other people” (sic). The difficulty is that they are the same organisation that just told me they were person centred.

It could be because I say that national policy is clear about expectations in relation to person centred planning and that we should all be doing it. Excuses like “person centred planning and ASD don’t go together” or “we can’t get started on person centred planning until we have adapted and remarketed all the tools so that they are ASD friendly” or “the tools are for people with a learning disability and don’t work for people with an ASD” don’t cut much ice. I’ve successfully planned for myself, my family and with people with an ASD for years. It seems to me most people need the tools tweaking in one way or another, but most of that is easily accommodated by smart planners who know a person well. Really smart ones can jettison the tools all together and still come up with a smart plan. Is there really a need for a whole new industry?

Perhaps it’s because I know of and, can name and talk about an increasing number of families whose sons or daughters who, to put it mildly, haven’t fared very well at the hands of existing services and who despite protestations about

complexity, severe challenging behaviour and risk management, have taken the funding instead of a support package and seem to be doing pretty well now?

I don’t know. Maybe it’s just because it’s hard to change? Maybe if you’ve worked for years to develop a unique selling point based on specialist knowledge it’s hard to stand back and genuinely critique what you do? Maybe some ASD “group think” has evolved and accommodating differing points of view about how services can be delivered is too threatening?

The challenge seems to me to understand how someone’s ASD impacts on their life and use this knowledge about their condition to be thoughtful and brave in designing person centred supports that recognise the uniqueness of each person. Although it’s not necessarily easy I don’t think that’s too much to ask.

***If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.***

Mother Teresa

# An audience's perspective of a Paradigm conference

by **Chris Mitchell**

**Charlie Daniels once sung, 'all we need is a little less talk and a little more action'. This and other positive messages were broadcast at the Paradigm conference on including people with autism.**

As a person diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome myself, I share the views expressed by Paradigm's speakers, in



Genevieve Edmonds

particular Genevieve Edmonds, that people on the autistic spectrum need to be included more by failing services. Personally, what I feel is of particular importance so that people on the autistic spectrum, from the very severe to the more able, is that services are not only person-centred, but also offer flexibility in terms of choice of lifestyle. It is a grim reality that many adults with autism in the UK still have little choice over where they can study, work

and indeed live. It is a credit to Genevieve, through her work, that she is determined not to let this continue.

There were some eye-opening examples of good practice on display, which will have shown conference attendees the positive capabilities that many people on the autistic spectrum have, including being able to find a job, become valuable employees, manage a flat, cook, and generally lead independent and dignified lives without interference. Lucy Skuce's wonderfully heart-warming presentation in particular showed what can be achieved with a little support.

However, the conference also highlighted that autism, in particular Asperger's Syndrome, is still poorly understood within many front-line services. In many cases, local authorities are still unable to provide support to people with Asperger's Syndrome as the condition remains unheard of where it matters. Though there are some examples of good practice in existence in some parts of the country, it shouldn't be dependent on postcode lotteries or the limitations of tick-box procedures in terms of who has access to it.

What many people on the autistic spectrum generally want, including myself, is not a nanny state, but a little informal support to help us move forward. Hopefully, the work of Paradigm and other awareness raising of autism elsewhere can enable this.

*The ASC Guide would like to thank Genevieve Edmonds and Judith North for inviting us to attend Paradigm. And Genevieve, if I had any influence, I would nominate you for a Nobel Prize!*

**Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall.**

Stephen Covey

# Are we really making progress?

**A version of this article first appeared in Community Connecting in their March 2007 issue ([www.communityconnecting.co.uk](http://www.communityconnecting.co.uk))**

How many times must we witness people with learning difficulties being abused? Each year, another service (often hospital based ones, but let's not be complacent thinking it does not happen in community services) is in the news. How on earth can we be optimistic when such abuse is still going on? We should all hang our head in shame, as every one of us is tainted by such practice as we all collectively work in the same sector.

Do we all do enough to stop and report poor practice – before it ever gets to abuse? Are we clear enough about what abuse is? We may be clearer about sexual and physical abuse than we were many years ago, but what about these?

- A social worker not telling a person about their right to a Direct Payment – **an abuse of power**
- A support worker telling a person they need to go to bed (as their sleep in is about to start) – **an abuse of power**
- A Chief Executive making their staff fill in mountains of their own self produced paperwork rather than spend time with people they are supporting making connections in the community - **an abuse of power**

- A Finance Director insisting that the people their organisation supports collect receipts for when they spend their own money – **an abuse of power**
- A parent telling their daughter, who lives in her own home, that she cannot go to Spain on holiday with her friend but must go away with them – **an abuse of power**

If we allow this sort of practice and behaviour to continue, we should not be surprised when we discover more noticeable sexual and physical abuse. Yet what do we do about it? Many of us are complicit in all of this. It's time to stand up and be counted – it is not enough to do nothing. The horrors of the Second World War are ample evidence of when too many people do nothing in the face of emerging evil.

In particular, managers and Chief Executives have to start earning their money. We need to stop describing our empires in terms of numbers: how big our turnover is, how many people we support, how many staff we employ, how fast all of these are changing. We're losing the plot if we think these things impress people or are an indication of quality – measures of our own vanity, perhaps? Let's hear about real people's stories who are starting to live the lives they want, told by Chief Executives from positions of personal friendship or

connection with the people their organisation supports. Let's hear about declining numbers of people supported because organisations are doing such a great job that people are either opting to organise the support themselves or need so little or different support that they don't need that organisation to do it any more.

It's not enough to claim ignorance in the face of abuse – not enough to say 'we support too many people to know about everyone'. We need to keep the systems and processes human in our organisation so we have a fighting chance of preventing abuse in its earliest stages and promoting the best possible practice. We need to see organisations sacking many more people than they do at the moment. I see too many people with appalling practice who couldn't care less about people leading the best lives possible; too many managers who wouldn't know best practice if it slapped them in their face; too many Chief Executives who are more concerned with the size of their package rather than what's happening for people on the ground; and too many board members thinking that their job is just strategy, and not about people's lives, or getting obsessed about irrelevant detail.

Of course, there are many people in all of these roles who are doing fantastic jobs, but let's not

kid ourselves that the above examples are tiny and rare examples – we close our ideas to it if we do. Too many people operate as described above – it's a big minority. There is no place for them in the lives of people with learning difficulties and people with learning difficulties should not be used as a means to provide a salary or training to learn how to do things better and differently if it means that people with learning difficulties are the unwitting guinea pigs who rarely benefit from the support they get.

We also need to recognise that this malaise goes much further than our sector. It's ironic that on the day the news broke of the Orchard Hill scandal that the furore erupted over Celebrity Big Brother. Only the Guardian had front page (and very significant) coverage of Orchard Hill. Let's recognise and commend the Guardian for that and let's remember the real scandal – every other national newspaper saw fit to publicise a spat and racist name calling between over paid and over-inflated egos in a TV show whose sole purpose is to produce arguments and fights which some of the public find entertaining.

What does this say about us as a society and the lowly position that people with learning difficulties occupy in the general psyche? Our Chancellor of the Exchequer saw fit to comment on and condemn Big Brother but not mention Orchard Hill; our Prime Minister has said nothing. Yet the abuses that occurred were carried out by Government employees. This is the real scandal.

So what can we do about all of this?

- We can all show courage and leadership and not tolerate any of our colleagues' poor practice – well before it gets to a stage of abuse – report them
- Managers and Chief Executives can show real leadership by routing out poor practice, promoting the highest standards, leading in a way which is an exemplar to everyone else and running their organisations so that they give out the message that people, not balance sheets, are the most important thing
- If you are a government official, commissioner or politician you can stop commissioning the large, congregate services (in and out of the NHS) that abuse has all too often been discovered in. This is not just hospitals or campuses, but the services that put small numbers of people (3-4) together based on their label or a false perception about economies of scale
- Whatever paper we read (with the exception of the Guardian), we should write in to the editors and complain about the disproportionate coverage that Big Brother and Orchard Hill got
- Lastly, let's all get very angry about this. Talk about it with our families, friends outside of work and anyone we meet. The message should be '**no fucking way**'. Let's get radical and elevate the status of people with learning difficulties in everyone's minds

### Postscript

It's now four months since I wrote this original article, and the more I read and reflect on what

happened at Orchard Hill and other institutions, the more disturbed and upset I get. The more press attention that Big Brother got over Orchard Hill, the more disturbed and upset I got. My tears are real and rare. It takes a lot to move me to tears. I don't know what my tears are about, but they are always there when I think about this – maybe for the many people who lived in Orchard Hill and other hospitals who have been so horrendously abused; maybe for the complete lack of interest or concern from society at large and the press. What does this say about us? I know it is only a matter of time before something else is uncovered in another hospital or institutional setting. I also know that it will barely register on the nation's conscience again. Where's the anger, the vitriol and the headlines about what happens to people with learning difficulties – what does that say about us? Not just our society, but those who work in this field who seem to have lost the capacity to be angry and upset and to turn this into public protest. Our silence is shameful. Are you crying? Are you angry? We all must stand up and be counted.

<sup>1</sup>This not a typo; it has got through the editorial process and is used to convey the strength of feeling that we should be showing about this poor state of affairs – did it make you sit up and notice? Used with acknowledgement of Dave Hingsburger's *Fuck the Attitude* campaign.

# An interview with the Offshoot Events team

**In 2006 the Paradigm events team, was set up as a separate company called Offshoot Events. With 9 years experience of organising over 500 events, Offshoot was able to run not just Paradigm's conferences but many other organisation's ones too. Approaching Offshoot's first anniversary, we caught up with two of the Offshoot team to find out how things are going and what the future holds**



*Jennifer Maninin*

**for them. Dan Kirkham and Jen Maninin give us an insight into Offshoot.**

## Questions

### 1. What does Offshoot Events do?

Offshoot Events are an event management company who strive to produce the most

amazing, professional and successful events for our customers. We look after all aspects of our events to ensure that our customers are completely stress free. Offshoot run all of Paradigm's conferences and many conferences for outside organisations from The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) to In Control to private organisations such as The Edward de Bono Foundation.

### 2. How would you describe Offshoots Events?

Offshoot Events is a fast paced company with an absolute passion for superb customer service. Our team is small which allows us to give each of our customers 100% of our attention. Our team has the knowledge and understanding to tackle any event. We are a small event management company with big ideas!

### 3. Tell us how Offshoot Events came about?

Offshoot's was originally Paradigm's event team; however since the demand grew high for Paradigm's events team to run other

company's events it was the natural move to create our own company. Phillipa, one of Paradigm's Personal assistants came up with the name Offshoot Events as the company literally began as an offshoot of Paradigm – although we operate as two separate and independent companies.

### 4. Is the team different to what it was with Paradigm? If so how?

The team has as many similarities as it does differences. Obviously with Jen and I working side by side as we did in Paradigm we have a history of working well together, but the work in itself is different and as a team we have adapted to the changes really well. As the team is now focused on events only, I suppose the team was bound to change. We said goodbye to old colleagues and welcomed new ones. I must say there is still a great vibe about the Offshoot office. Everyone helps each other out, we're there for each other and we work together like a family.

### 5. What's been Offshoot Events greatest achievement to date?

Wow what a question! We've come really far! A big office move, a whole change of company which continues to

grow and attract new customers. Our biggest event so far was organising Paradigm's 2006 Annual Conference "Moving On". It was such a large conference and it ran so smoothly! I think this was down to fantastic communication and excellent teamwork. Some of



Dan Kirkham

our other great achievements have been the high profile contracts we have been awarded in addition to our Paradigm work, such as the Office for Disability Issues, the launch of in Control Scotland and the Edward de Bono Foundation.

### 6. What plans does Offshoot Events have for this year?

We already have a really exciting list of events in our calendar for this year. We have a very busy programme of Paradigm events; we also have more work for the ODI and Edward de Bono Foundation, plus a good number of new contracts which we can't tell you about

yet. We have a new General Manager, Pam Dennett who will really focus our marketing and business development. Fairly soon, we expect to have a few more event Coordinators to cope with the growing demand for our services.

### 7. What would you like Offshoot Events to be doing in 5 years time?

I'd love to see Offshoot organising more exhibitions and week-long events, including social and creative sub-events for our customers and their delegates. Most importantly, I would like us to be recognised as a fantastic company that exceeds expectations and beats other event companies on price and quality. We will never lose our public castor roots, but I think we will be doing more sales conferences, product launches and the like.

### 8. What sets Offshoot Events apart from other event management companies?

Offshoot really is unique as we benefit from being a new company but with many years of experience. We have loads of excitement for fresh new ideas, yet we also have the experience and knowledge of collectively, over 20 years experience!

We have time to listen to our customers and ensure we completely understand what they want. We strive to make sure our customers are more than 100% happy with our service and the final production of their events as we care so much about our customers.

### 9. Anything else you want to say?

It is a great pleasure to work for such a wonderful company. The customers, events, my colleagues and the way we work together are all amazing! I'm really proud to work for Offshoot Events, I am looking forward to the continuous challenges and fantastic events in the future.

If you would like Offshoot to organise your conference or other event, please contact Pam on:

[pamd@offshootevents.com](mailto:pamd@offshootevents.com)

or 0870 066 3627

***My grandmother started walking five miles a day when she was sixty. She's ninety-seven now, and we don't know where the hell she is.***

Ellen DeGeneres

# “In Control” or “in control”.... spot the difference?

**It wasn't going to take long was it? For two words that used to mean something in the English language to lose their meaning and become another social care profession euphemism. If we were playing that word association game, where someone says a word and the next person has to come up with a related one (I know 'in control' is two words...don't get hung up on the rules...we stuck to eye spy when I was a kid), 'in control' would now be followed by 'RAS', 'indicative amount' or 'support plan'.**

I imagine some of you are wondering what the big deal is. Well, on my recent travels around the country working with individuals/organisations/authorities embarking on changing their lives/agencies/systems, I heard the following remarks;

“We're doing in control with the transition group”

“We asked for them to be put on in control”

“They told us he's not on in control anymore cos he's not in adult services”

Apart from sounding a bit bizarre and not grammatically correct, there is another

reason why these statements worry me. I have nothing in essence against picking a name for something so we all know what we're talking about. But it's when what starts happening doesn't reflect what the words really mean that I start to fear the worst. Are you on In Control or are you in control?

Now this is not meant as a knock to the tremendous amounts of effort, imagination and courageous leadership that has brought the development of self directed support to where it is today in the UK. I have had the pleasure of meeting several individuals and families whose lives have been transformed by the actions of professionals who have truly tried to change the power balance. You know who you are and I'm not talking about you.

But I am also aware of a growing number of people who feel anything but in control of a process which is supposed to feel like self determination. Months, sometimes years delays in getting indicative budgets, being on then off pilot groups, never quite knowing how the figures are worked out, waiting for support plans to be signed off because a care manager is off sick, are just some examples of how in control

has sometimes not lived up to its meaning.

To put this another way, I met Jo Dickie last year in British Columbia, Canada. Jo was one of the 'Woodlands Parents Group' who brought about the closure of an institution and first conceptualised the idea of brokerage in the 1970's. She is unsurprisingly an absolutely inspirational woman. When I asked Jo, now in her 70's, how she felt about things today, she replied, 'We've lost the battle'. Now apart from wanting to cry, I also wanted to know what she meant.

As an area of the world often cited as 'class swot' when it comes to individualised budgets, brokerage and the rest I was confused that a pioneering family member felt so depressed about it all. But it turns out, that in trying to get themselves so far ahead of the game, British Columbia may have ended up taking the ball away from the very people that really matter.

Yes, they have given the money to people, they have set up impressive support structures to help people spend it, but it seems they may have done it to people, not with them. Not that Jo or any of the other individuals and families I met would not

want the new way of doing things. But, when I asked Jo what would be her advice for authorities in the UK that were starting to work in this way and she said, 'always ensure, without fail, that individuals with disabilities and their families have an equal place at the table as professionals.'

And I think this is my point. When we talk about in control, we must never forget that it is more than a project, a new system or something to put people on. It is fundamentally

about a shift in the way you view individuals and their families and your actions and behaviour should reflect this shift. I really feel that many of the individuals and families I have met who have been part of the experience of individualised budgets would forgive the mistakes, the waiting, the let downs – if they felt truly included, involved and equally in control of creating a new way of doing things.

However hard it is, however much it challenges, when we

talk about In Control we must really remember that we mean in control. For over 4 years, Paradigm has been at the vanguard in promoting Self Directed Support through our general work but through specific programmes such as New Partnerships, Dynamite, Brokerage for Change and the In Control Provider Network. It all has such tremendous potential to make a difference, but only if we truly understand what people being in control is really about.



**Finally, we have been able to produce the Reach DVD. Nearly 6 months late, we had terrible problems with the software design. Since October, we have been pulling our hair out and falling out in a very big way with our Software Engineers. Thankfully, that is now all behind us, and we are now able to despatch the DVD to all of our customers who have been waiting, and of course, it is available for all new orders.**

The DVD enables customers to view a series of videos (made in conjunction with the North East Self Advocacy group, Skills for People) which show a short cameo for each Reach standard of what good support and what

bad support looks like. We hope it will really aid communication and people's understanding. Additionally, the DVD enables all of the Reach process to be completed electronically and distributed both throughout an organisation and beyond via email.

This second edition of Reach was produced in partnership with Skills for People, Valuing People Support Team and the Association for Supported Living. It builds on the first edition of Reach in a number of ways:

- It's more comprehensive – additional standards to ensure it meets today's expectations of what a good quality of life is
- Much improved accessibility – the design, layout and functionality have all changed to allow as many people with learning difficulties as possible to use it directly themselves
- As far as is possible, the Reach standards have been mapped across to CSCI Domiciliary Care Standards and the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework

We are really pleased with it. Reach was launched in the autumn at the House of Lords. There have been a number of conferences around the country to promote the new Reach. It has been selling like hot cakes. Every provider or commissioner that is serious about Supported Living should make sure they use it as part of their quality process. For more information, check out the flyer that accompanied this edition of Imagine or visit our website at:

[www.paradigm-uk.org](http://www.paradigm-uk.org)

Lauren Rowe, from Skills for People, worked very closely with us on the development of Reach, and played an integral part in ensuring that people with learning difficulties were involved throughout. Sadly, Lauren died last month. She will be very sadly missed by all of her friends and colleagues at Skills for People, Paradigm and everyone else who worked with her. We hope that Reach is one of the lasting legacies that Lauren has left behind. Our condolences go to Lauren's family, friends and colleagues.

# My day out at the BBC studios!

by **Tom Dowsett**

**On 15 August 2006 I visited BBC Television Centre, London as part of a project known as Dynamite.**

Dynamite is the code word for a new government pilot study, which is supporting a small number of young disabled people and their families to make informed choices about taking up self-directed support.

I am six months in to a degree course in Television and Video Production at Southampton Solent University and have been invited to participate in the Dynamite study.

Like most of my fellow students, I am grappling with the bureaucracy of UCAS points, applications, student loans, not to mention exams! On top of this my family and I have the considerable challenge of reorganising my care.



I was fortunate enough to be introduced to Andy Walker, who is employed at the BBC on the News team and who, like me, is a wheel-chair user.

Andy was kind enough to organise a look at the BBC's working environment for me.

This was a wonderful opportunity to experience what I hope to do in the future, whilst at the same time organise what was needed to make it happen.



First stop was the editing suite where I observed the team editing obituaries, which came as quite a surprise to me and my helper Debbie, as the subjects were, to the best of our knowledge, still alive when we entered the building.

Andy described how the process of editing has progressed, and I saw for myself how easy it is to edit out irrelevant images with the use of digital video.



Then it was off to the BBC Club for lunch and my chance to judge the much discussed

BBC catering, which seemed fine to me.

After lunch it was back to Andy's office for some guidance in putting together web pages.



Then Andy took us off to the central part of Television Centre, affectionately known as the 'Doughnut,' where I discovered some interesting information about the BBC's broadcasting history.

I finished the day with a tour of some of the famous studios; I even found myself on the set for the National Lottery.

However, my illusions were shattered, when I found that I could only just about fit inside the Tardis!



***There are no right answers to wrong questions.***

Ursula K. Le Guin



This edition we focus on Tony Shingler, Paradigm's Finance Manager

## Staff Profile

Here we are highlighting Tony Shingler who is our Finance Manager at Paradigm - so let's find out what counts for him...

### Your idea of happiness is...

Playing sport all day in lovely sunny weather (and winning of course!)

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

Impatience and intolerance whilst on the road, behind the wheel.

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

Getting in my way when I'm on the road, behind the wheel.

### Your favourite books...

Sadly Excel & similar computer manuals, although I really enjoyed Rod Laver's Autobiography (for the uninitiated he was a top Australian Tennis player in the 70/80's).

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

Chariots of Fire by Vangelis

### Top three films...

- Death Wish
- The Sixth Sense
- The Godfather

### Lesson life has taught you...

Not everyone can be trusted, let the buyer beware!

### Your hero/heroine...

My wife, if she can put up with me for 31 years she must be close to sainthood.

### Your life motto...

Smile and be nice to people and hopefully people will return the compliment.

### Your greatest fear...

Losing my zest for life

### Stuck in a lift with...

The orthopedic consultant who replaced my hip to thank him for all of the years he has given me that seemed impossible 30 years ago and Bill Kenwright so I could tap him for a season ticket at Goodison.

### Your worst habit...

Not listening to my wife when she's talking to me.

### Most overused words...

No Problem

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

The simple pleasure of feeling alive and ready for whatever life throws at you.

### Makes you laugh out loud...

Rude jokes, people making fools out of themselves and silly pranks like Candid Camera.

***A computer once beat me at chess, but it was no match for me at kick boxing.***

Emo Philips

# What's on

Here is our  
Conference and  
Workshop listing  
for the next few  
months.

## Paradigm Workshops & Masterclasses

Building Brilliant Teams **York** – 16th May 2007

Supported Living Train the Trainer **York** – 14th June 2007

## Paradigm Conferences

Reach No Frills **London** – 6th June 2007

**Manchester** – 12th July 2007

Person Centred.... **Liverpool** – 24th May 2007

Community Engagement **Leicester** – 17th May 2007

Supported Living **London** – July 2007

*Imagination and  
fiction make up  
more than three  
quarters of our  
real life.*

Simone Weil

There are great discounts for everyone that books online at

[www.offshootevents.net/paradigm](http://www.offshootevents.net/paradigm)

for any of our conferences or for further information  
please call our events team on 0870 066 3627.

