

Organisational Perspectives on Inclusion: Meaning, Barriers to and Facilitators of Inclusion

Organisation type	Everyday Community 22 interviews	Learning disability 17 interviews	Age-related 12 interviews	LGBT+ 16 interviews
Meanings of inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often framed as open access and treating everyone the same • Inclusion may be understood passively - “doors are open”, inclusion presumed • Mission statements stress safety, belonging, prevention, and community wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion depends on support that is adapted, understandable, and relational • Equal participation means more than presence - it needs communication access and agency • Accessibility and community visibility • Belonging grows when people with learning disabilities help shape decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion tied to reducing loneliness and making later life participation possible • Age-friendly community means routine, safety, dignity, and purpose • Intergenerational links can widen belonging and challenge ageism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion as active, relational, and community-shaped, not assumed, passive, or simple non-discrimination • Affirmation matters more than tolerance: identities should be visible and celebrated • Belonging includes specialist spaces, heritage, voice, and values-led practice
Barriers to inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical distrust of police, church, health, and care institutions • Physical and navigational access barriers, especially old buildings and confusing online systems • Lack of knowledge on active inclusion • Funding limits and weak digital visibility reduce reach and accessibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaccessible information, jargon, and limited easy-read or communication support • Paternalistic assumptions and being spoken for rather than listened to • Transport, staffing, and resource pressures reduce continuity and choice • Fear of discrimination/ staying silent • Safeguarding/ funding/ staff precarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolation, transport difficulties, and reduced confidence to join new spaces • Digital exclusion and over-reliance on online communication • Ageism and assumptions that older people are a single, uniform group • Seeing the age not the person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heteronormative mainstream spaces and the labour of constant self-explanation • Digital, rural, and transport barriers; information can be hard to access or unsafe to pursue • Funding precarity and rising anti-trans backlash make inclusion more effortful
Facilitators of inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizontal communication and trusted routes to raise concerns • External audits, charters, and accountability frameworks • Inclusive language, symbols, stakeholder voice, training, and partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy-read materials, making time, repetition, and communication tailored to different needs • Co-production, advocacy, and trusted support relationships • Staff training plus practical adjustments that build confidence and independence • Sustainable funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular daytime groups, outreach, reminders, and relationship-based contact • Hybrid communication: phone, print, word of mouth, and online options • Community partnerships and intergenerational work that sustain connection • Avoid siloing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queer-curated spaces and explicit signals of welcome • Advance access planning, small practical adjustments, and proactive outreach • Peer-led support, routine gatherings, and story-based dialogue • Listening, building confidence, trust

Shared pattern

Across all four organizational types, inclusion works best when it is active and rights-based rather than assumed: organisations anticipate needs, reduce participant burden, make welcome visible, and create reliable routes into voice, connection, and belonging.

Everyday Community Organisations: Hospitality, Arts and Culture, Police, Health and Clinical Services, Shopping, Recreation, Education and Wellbeing

Learning Disability Organisations: Advocacy, support and peer support, Food, Social Groups, Day Centres, Charity, Employability at local and national levels.

Age-related organisations: Intergenerational, Care providers, Advocacy and support at local and national levels.

LGBT+ organisations: Advocacy and support, Wellbeing, Sports, Archives, Housing, Welfare at local and national levels