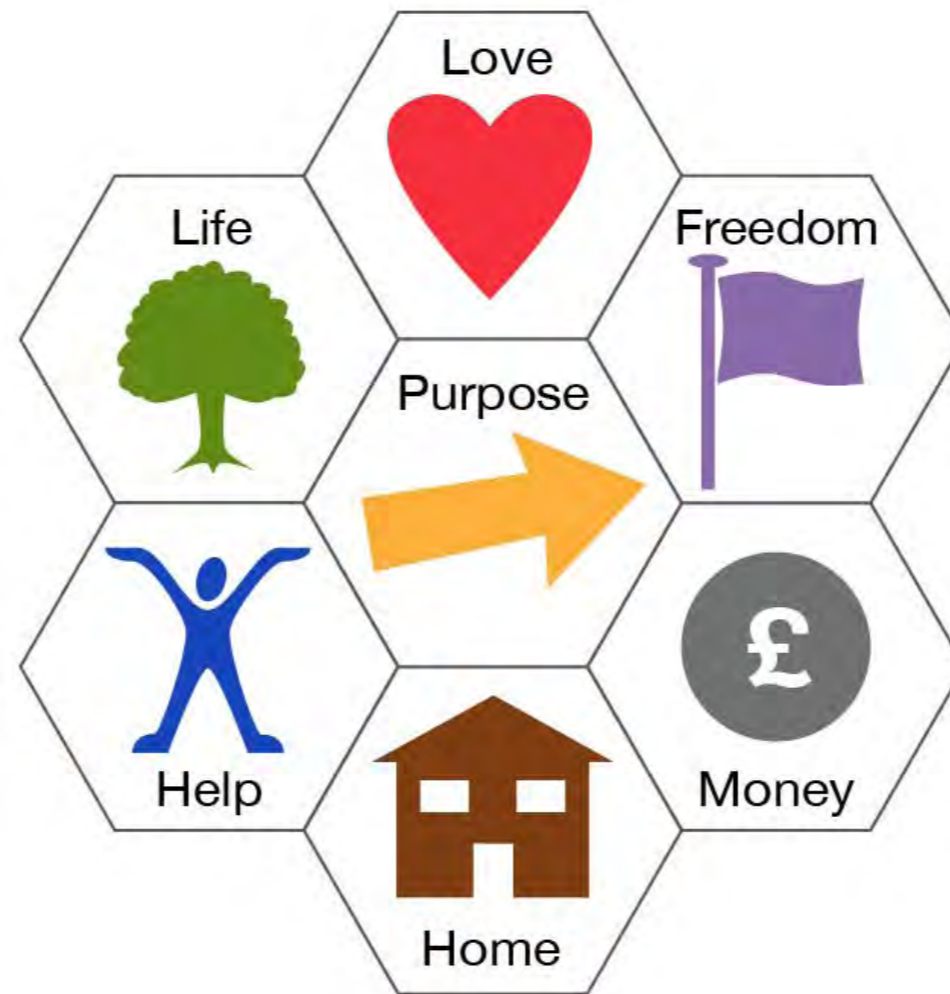


Citizenship for All



An Accessible Guide

by Simon Duffy & Wendy Perez

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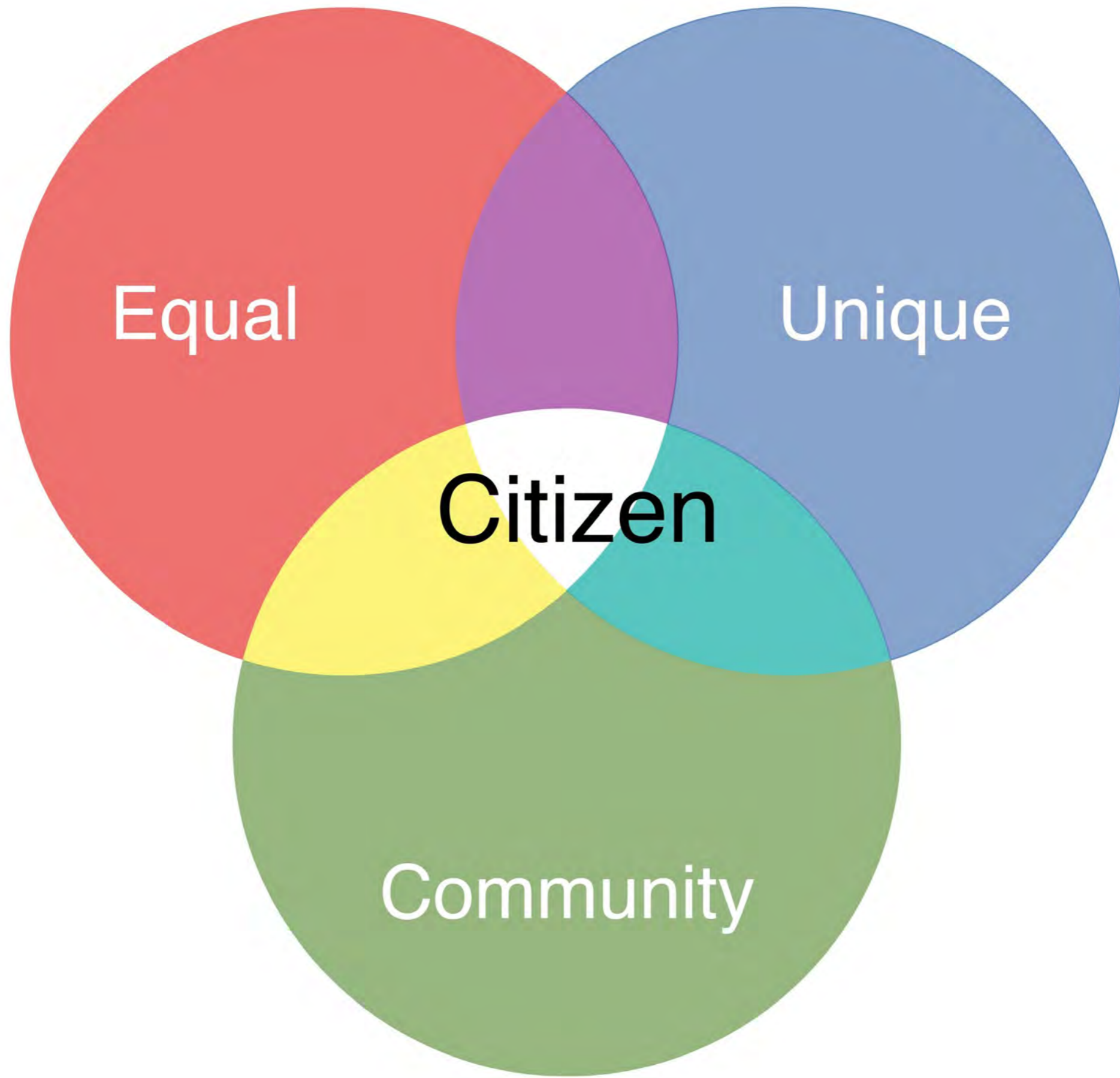
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Why citizenship is important

Citizenship means being equal and different.

Citizens are respected and valued for all their differences. Everybody doesn't need to be the same.

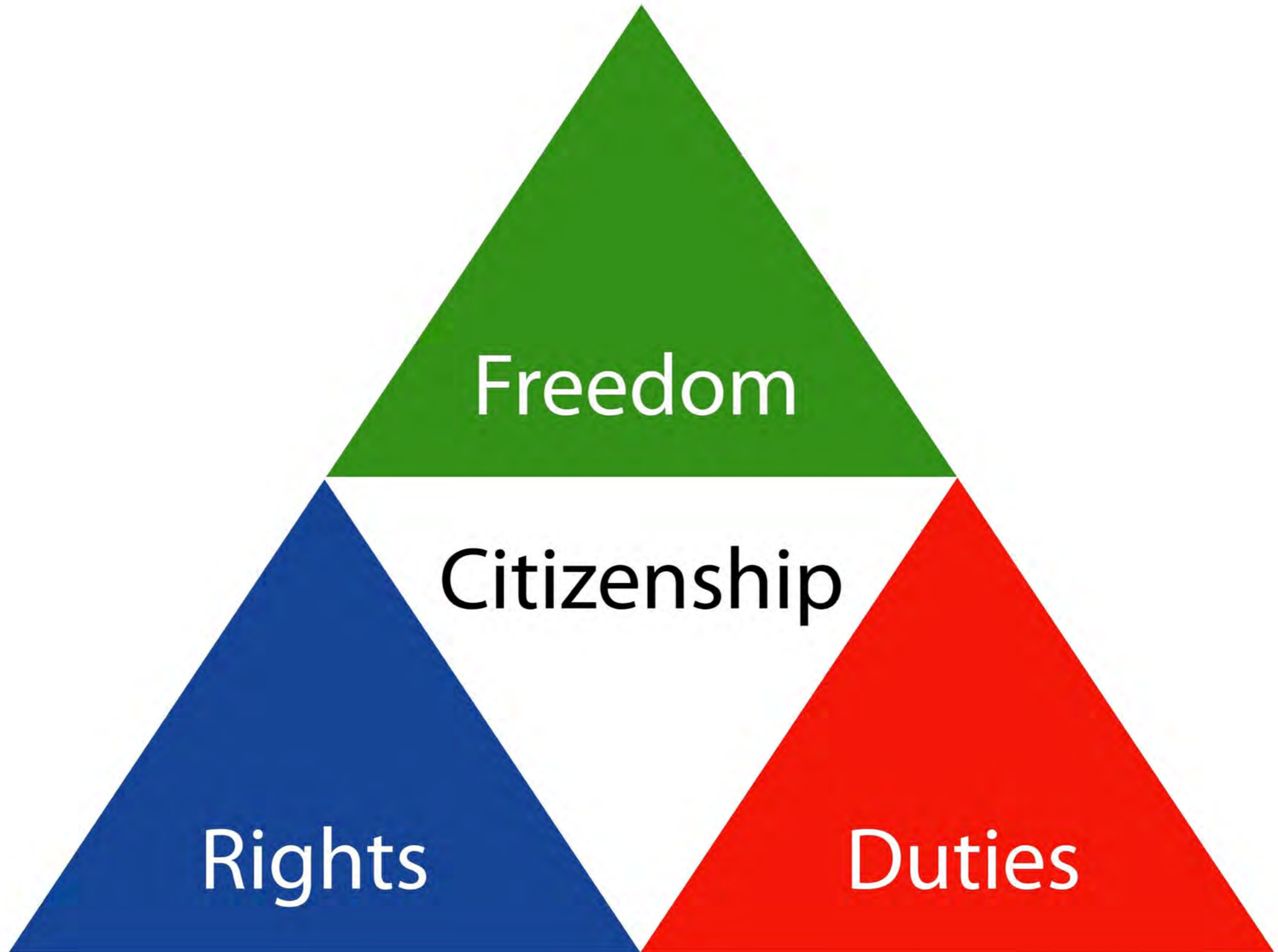
We each make our own unique contribution to community life. It is being members of our community that makes us equal.



Citizens have rights, including the right to get the help they need to be a citizen.

Citizens have duties, including the duty to help others be a citizen.

Citizens are free. We live our own life, our own way, but as part of a community.



Citizenship is important because it means being treated with respect and dignity.

Citizens are equal **AND** different.

Simon

Citizenship means being part of everyday life -
not being stuck in a box.

Wendy

Why is there still a question when people with learning disabilities just want to do ordinary things for themselves?

Wendy

Not only can people with learning disabilities be full citizens - they are often the very best citizens there are.

Simon

Everyone can be a citizen.

We don't need spoken language. We don't need to be clever. We don't need to be the same as everyone else.

A fair society is where every one of us can be a full citizen. In a fair society everyone works together.

Everyone is included. Everyone is free.
Everyone has rights. Everyone has duties.

There are 7 keys to citizenship

Sometimes people face barriers to citizenship.

Prejudice, silly rules, thoughtlessness or carelessness can make it hard for us to achieve citizenship.

Sometimes it takes work to help somebody be a citizen.

But everyone can be a citizen.

Citizenship is for everyone. Everyone can be a citizen.

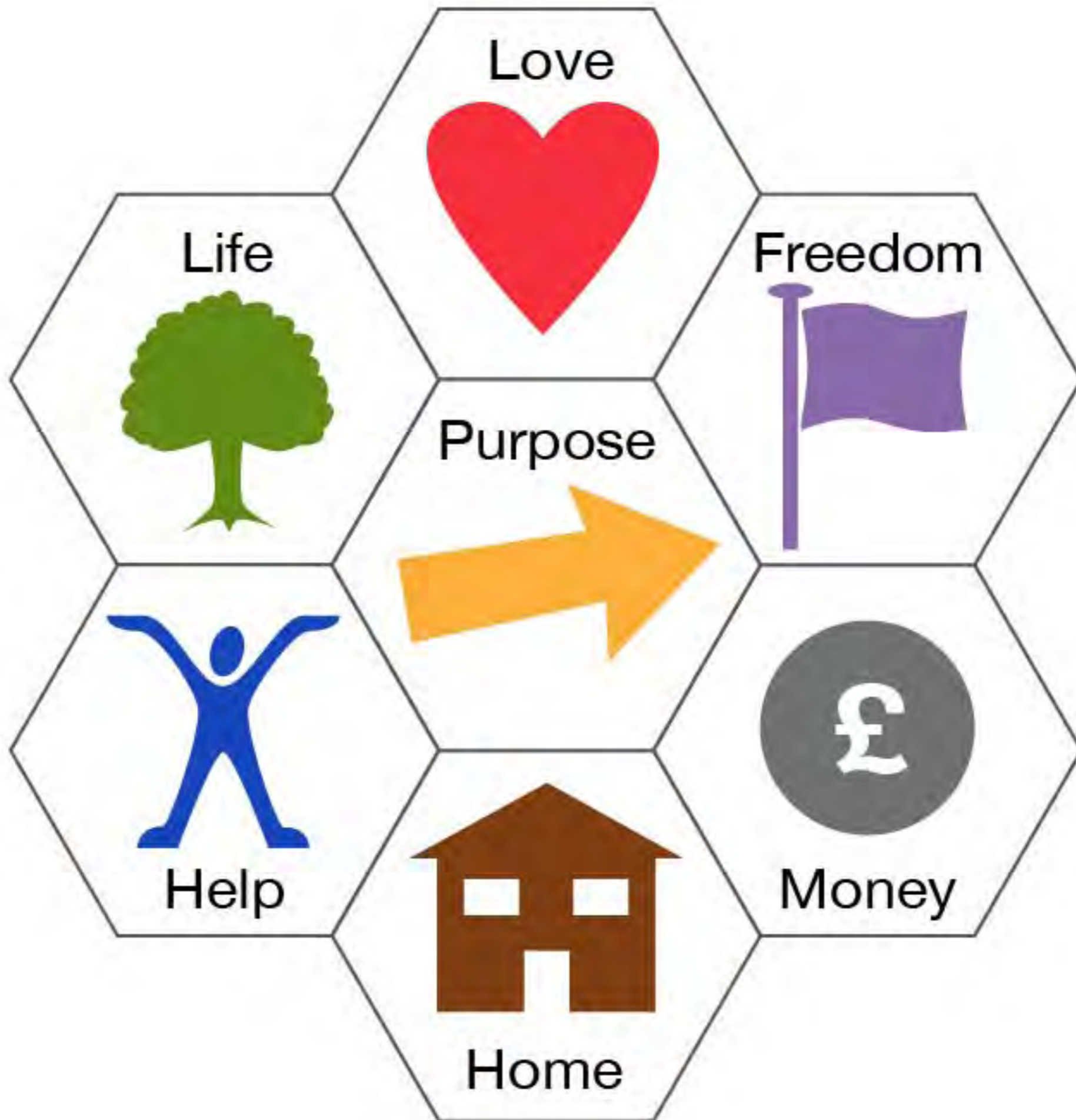
This guide describes the different things we must do to make citizenship real for all of us.

Everyone can be excluded from citizenship. Everyone can fail to be a citizen. It is not just disabled people who can lose their place as citizens.

It can happen to any of us.

There are 7 keys to citizenship

1. **Purpose** - set our own direction
2. **Freedom** - take charge of our own life
3. **Money** - have enough to live on
4. **Home** - have a place where we belong
5. **Help** - get real help from other people
6. **Life** - get stuck in and make a difference
7. **Love** - find friendship, love and family



Key 1: Purpose

Citizens have lives that are meaningful. They have a sense of purpose.

But sometimes we find ourselves living a life without meaning.

This often happens when other people take control, exploit us or boss us around.

We can lose our sense of purpose

1. **Don't believe in ourselves** - we forget that we have talents, skills and gifts.
2. **Waste** - we waste our time, our talents and our money.
3. **Alone** - we may think that no one cares about us.
4. **Cut off** - we become isolated, unable to join in with things.
5. **Lose hope** - we stop believing that things can get better.

To find our sense of purpose

1. **Gifts** - have faith in our unique gifts and find ways to share them.
2. **Resources** - make the best of everything we've got.
3. **People** - find the people who believe in us and who help us find our way.
4. **Community** - find meaning by joining in with things that matter to us.
5. **Hope** - follow our dreams and don't play safe - life is for living.

Purpose

Gifts



Resources



People



Community



Hope



Key 2: Freedom

Citizens are free; but sometimes that freedom is lost.

People with disabilities, especially people who don't communicate with words, often find that other people take control of their lives.

We can lose our freedom

1. **No control** - other people make our decisions for us.
2. **No confidence** - we don't feel we can say what we want.
3. **No ideas** - we don't know our options, we just accept what we're given.
4. **No communication** - people don't know how to communicate with us.
5. **No decisions** - nothing gets done, things just keep going round in circles.

To gain our freedom

1. **Control** - remember we have the right to be in control of our own life.
2. **Voice** - learn to speak our minds and get help to speak out.
3. **Options** - get good advice, get information and find out all our options.
4. **Listen** - we need people to listen, to really understand what we are saying.
5. **Decisions** - we may need a good representative or support with decisions.

Freedom



Voice



Control



Options



Listen



Decisions

Key 3: Money

Citizens need money, at least enough to allow us to live with dignity and security.

Too many people, especially disabled people, find themselves living in poverty.

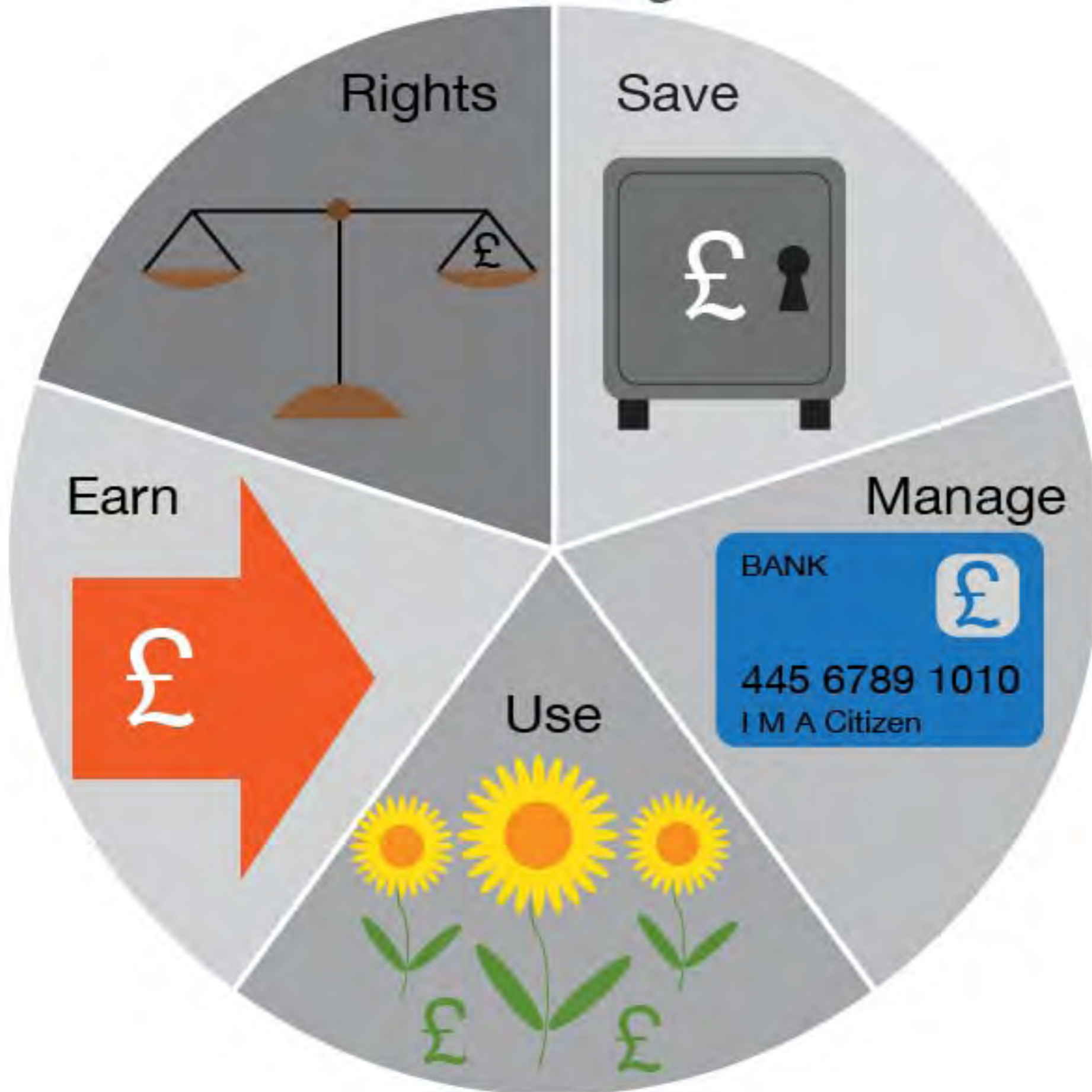
We can lack the money we need

1. **Poor** - we might not even have enough to live on.
2. **Trapped** - it can feel risky to try and earn money or save it.
3. **Dependent** - we may have to put up with the things other people choose for us.
4. **Abused** - other people can take advantage of us using our money as if it were theirs.
5. **Fearful** - we can feel we've got nothing to fall back on.

To get the money we need

1. **Rights** - we should all have an entitlement to enough money to live on.
2. **Earn** - we may be able to find work to earn more money.
3. **Use** - we should be able to use our money flexibly, to get the best out of it.
4. **Manage** - we may need help to manage our money well.
5. **Save** - we all need savings, something to fall back on.

Money



Key 4: Home

Citizens belong. They have their own place, a home where they are safe and secure, in a community that's right for them.

Many disabled people, find themselves living with their families too long, or stuck in care homes.

Not every home is a real home

1. **No privacy** - we might not be free to do our own thing, get grumpy or let off steam.
2. **Wrong place** - we can end up in the wrong community, not where we want to live.
3. **Shut off** - we can be locked in, not able to invite people in or share our home.
4. **Wrong people** - we can end up living with people we don't like or who abuse us.
5. **No rights** - we can find ourselves with no real housing rights, at other's mercy.

Real homes are our homes

1. **Private** - home is where we can unwind - do our own thing - with no worries.
2. **Belong** - it is best to live somewhere where we belong, that works for our whole life.
3. **Invite** - we should be able to invite our neighbours, friends and family round.
4. **Safe** - we should be able to live with people we like and never have to live in fear.
5. **Secure** - we should have strong rights and not fear that we will easily lose our home.

Home

Private



Safe



Belong



Invite

Secure



Key 5: Help

Citizens need help. Everyone needs help. Help is good.

But many disabled people are too dependent on those who help them. They get help at the price of freedom. This is bad help.

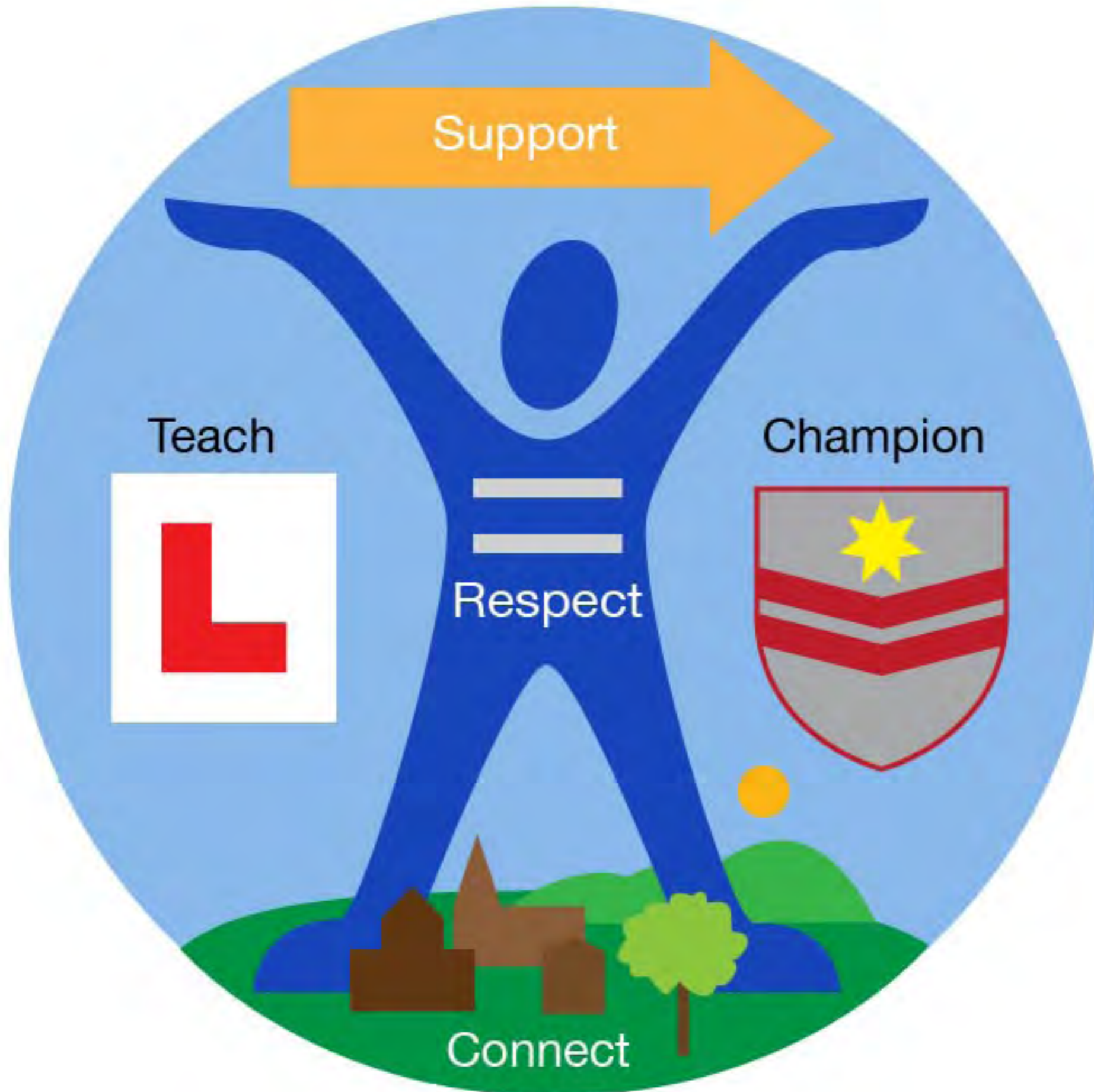
Bad help harms us

1. **Controlling** - sometimes people don't really help us to do what is important to us.
2. **Dependent** - sometimes we are left weaker and more reliant on others.
3. **Segregated** - sometimes we get cut out of ordinary life.
4. **Wrong** - sometimes there's no fit and the person offering help is just wrong for us.
5. **Abuse** - some people can even abuse their power over us.

Good help leaves us stronger

1. **Support** - good help gives us what we need to achieve our own plans.
2. **Teach** - good help keeps us learning and making the best of our abilities.
3. **Connect** - good help links us to other people and builds bridges into community life.
4. **Respect** - good help is respectful, it is given in a spirit of equality and mutual benefit.
5. **Champion** - good help means having someone to look out for us.

Help



Key 6: Life

Citizenship is about making a difference. We do this by getting involved and helping make our community be a better place.

But many disabled people are excluded from community life.

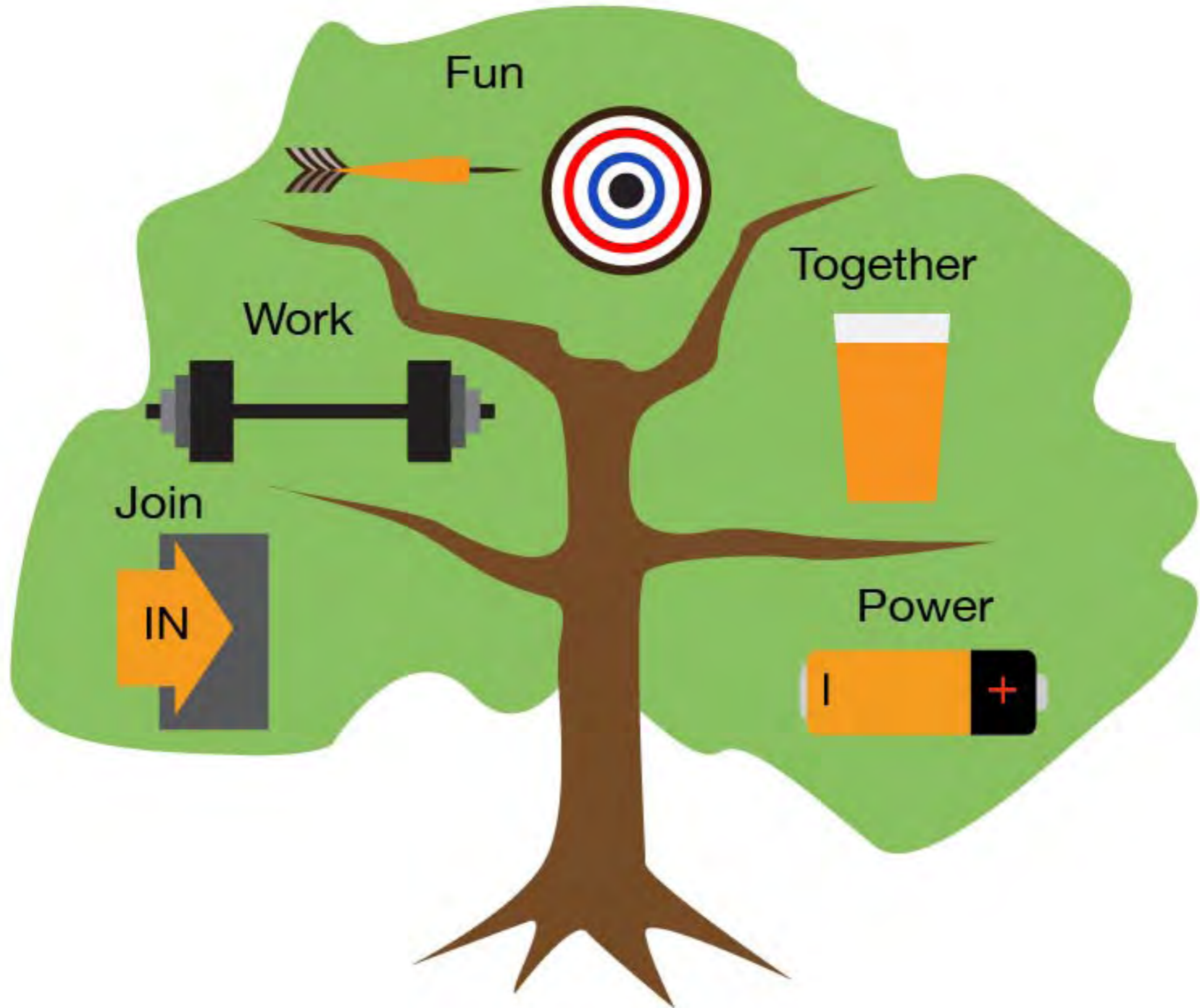
No community means no life

1. **Bored** - we end up bored, living without purpose.
2. **Not valued** - nobody finds out what we have to offer because we're not part of it.
3. **False** - some of us end up in services that are just strange copies of ordinary life.
4. **Lonely** - without community we make no friends and we can lose the friends we have.
5. **Disconnected** - without connections we are weaker and our options are limited.

Community is where life is

1. **Join** - we will find lots more going on in our community if we look.
2. **Work** - our community needs us, there are always plenty of things we can do to help.
3. **Fun** - find the places where we are happy, we can laugh and relax, have fun.
4. **Together** - being part of the community is how we meet other people and make friends.
5. **Power** - together we can achieve so much more than on our own.

Life



Key 7: Love

The most important thing in the world is love.

Love exists even when citizenship is missing, but true citizenship strengthens the force of love in the world.

Disabled people can love and be loved just like everyone else. But sometimes the world makes it harder.

It's hard to live a life without love

1. **Abused** - we can be abused, made to have sex or be hurt in other ways.
2. **Broken** - we can lose our families and miss out on the chance to have children.
3. **Lonely** - we can have no real friends, even when we are surrounded by other people.
4. **Missing out** - we can miss out on sex and the chance to be someone's lover.
5. **Closed in** - we can be closed in, unwilling to love, frightened of giving to the world.

Love is always possible

1. **Self-respect** - we mustn't let other people hurt, use or abuse us.
2. **Family** - we can be part of a family, we have the right to have our own family.
3. **Friends** - we can find real friends, people who value us for who we really are.
4. **Lovers** - we are a full human being who should be allowed to have affection and sex.
5. **Giving** - we can give love to the world and to other people.

Love



Friends



Lovers



Family



Giving

Self-respect



Taking action

Here are some important questions

Personal change - We all need to think about what citizenship means for us. What can you do to change things for yourself?

Local change - Change begins in our local communities. How can you be a good local citizen?

Political change - There are many things that are not fair in our society. How can you help change this and help build a better world?

Citizenship for All is a project that aims to help change the world and make sure everybody can be a full citizen. It is just beginning and you can find out more at www.keystocitizenship.com

The Centre for Welfare Reform published this guide and it produces lots of free information and advice you can use to help make citizenship real. You can find out more at www.centreforwelfarereform.org

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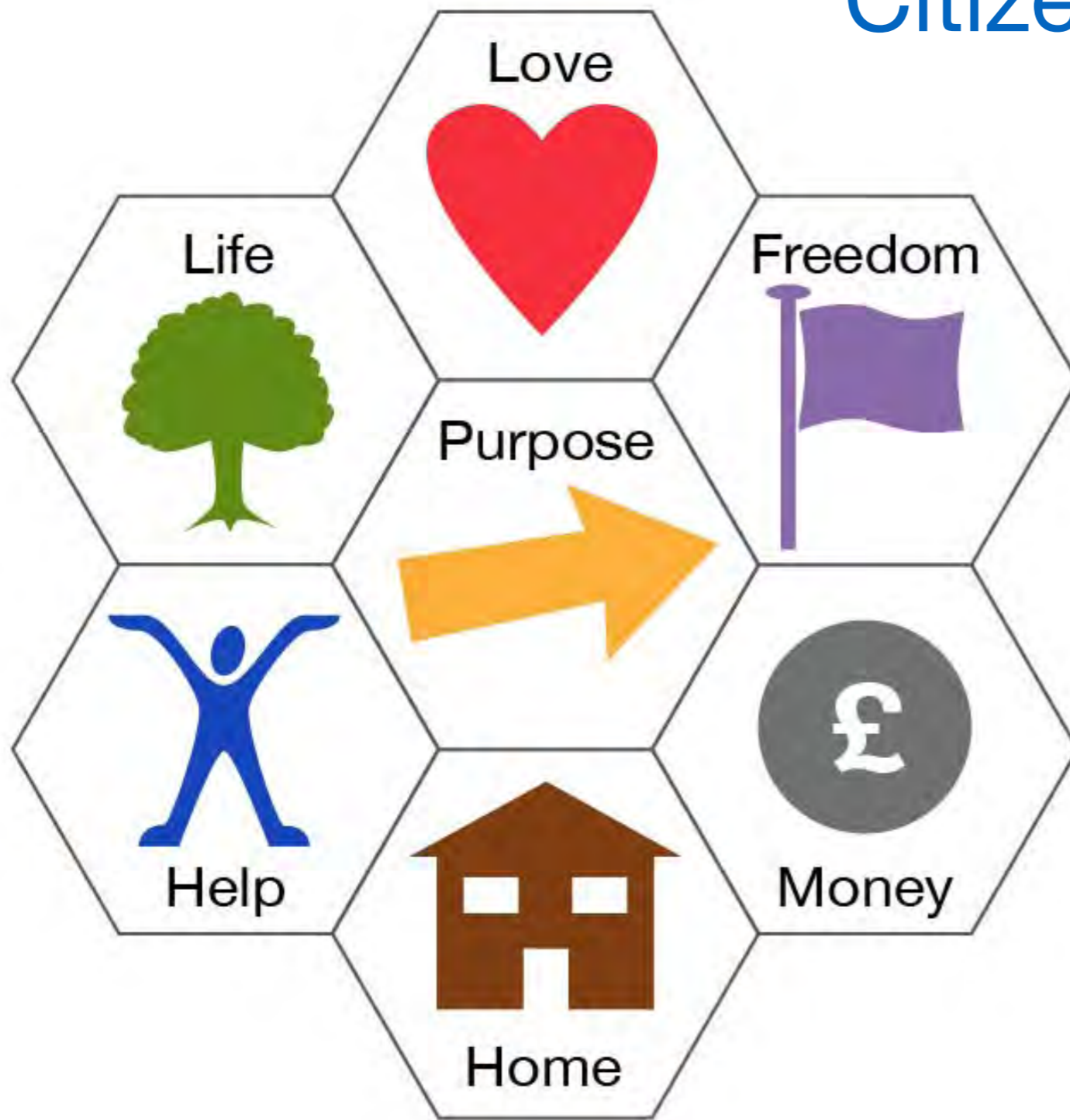
With thanks to Sam Sly, everyone at Cornwall People First and New Key, and to John O'Brien and Pippa Murray for their wisdom.

For more information about citizenship join our Citizenship for All project. Just go to:

<http://www.keystocitizenship.com>



Citizenship is for everyone.



We're all equal.

We're all different.

We're all citizens.

Let's make it happen.