

Summer 2018 The official quarterly newsletter for Advonet

- **Planning event run in partnership with other groups**
- **Workshops to discuss areas where advocacy can help**

Strengthening the City 2018: Book your free place!



This autumn, Advonet gets together with a number of advocacy partners to hold a follow-up event to last year's Strengthening the City Through Advocacy. **Strengthening the City Through Advocacy 2018** has two main aims.

The first is to formally launch the Leeds Advocacy Network, a new network of charities and community groups in Leeds who offer formal or informal advocacy.

The second is to hold six workshops on a range of topics run in partnership with other groups where advocacy can help the people we support. The

workshops are on:

- Campaigning advocacy: How can we influence change? - co-led by Alzheimer's Society
- Advocacy and capacity building - co-led by Leeds Citizens Advice
- Using self-advocacy tools - co-led by CHANGE
- Advocacy in marginalised groups - co-led by Leeds GATE
- Self advocacy training and groups - co-led by Age UK Leeds and LBEA
- Practical advocacy-based solutions - co-led by Leeds City Council Migrant Access and Exemplar Healthcare

It will be on **Thursday 4th October** from **10am to 2pm** in the Banqueting Suite of **Leeds Civic Hall**.

The Civic Hall has a wheelchair accessible entrance and lifts to the Banqueting Suite. Parking is available at the nearby Rose Bowl. Both lunch and refreshments will be provided on the day.

If you would like to attend our free event, all you need to do is go to **strengtheningthecity2.eventbrite.co.uk** and register on there. For further info, email **office@advonet.org.uk**.

There is a link to the programme on our home page and Eventbrite page.

What is Advocacy?

“Advocacy is taking action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain services they need. Advocates and advocacy providers work in partnership with the people they support and take their side. Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice”

The Advocacy Charter, 2016

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Over 80 people attend successful advocacy consortium launch event



Making a point: Wendy Cork, our Advocacy Development and Partnerships Director, at the consortium launch event

Over 80 people came to our consortium launch event on **Wednesday 18th July** to learn about our future plans and what advocacy can do for the people of Leeds.

At the event, we held discussions about four topics and listened to fascinating talks from our partners in the new consortium. We welcomed visitors from different third sector organisations and community groups across the city.

Together with members of our staff team and interested members of the public, they heard about what each partner in the consortium did and plan to do going forward.

On the day, we had an introduction from Chief Executive Philip Bramson, on the exciting times ahead for the new consortium. Then, Touchstone's Jessica Parker spoke on developing co-production and working with the

people we support to provide better advocacy services.

Next, Age UK Leeds' Hilary Brockway discussed advocacy support for older people and what they had done already. She mentioned the Arch Café and support given to their clients.

Mark Healy, our Lead Advocate on secondment from SignHealth, spoke about advocacy for deaf people. He then introduced a drama performance from SignHealth's Adam done entirely in British Sign Language.

Afterwards, we showed examples of innovative advocacy from our bilingual advocacy surgeries, and our Asking You! and Leeds Autism AIM projects. We then held discussion groups on the following topics:

- Peer involvement
- What is advocacy?
- Training and consultation
- Addressing gaps and partnership

working

Here is a selection of things that were said at the groups from visitors:

- "Peer advocacy is needed if you're isolated, have a small social circle; limiting amount of advice to be sought" – Peer involvement
- "Using lived experience" – What is advocacy?
- "Difference between statutory and non-statutory advocacy" – Training and consultation
- "PIP; shared training support at assessment" – Addressing gaps and partnership working

The feedback from those groups will help to shape discussion at our next big event, Strengthening the City Through Advocacy II, in October.

We would like to thank everyone who spoke at the event and took time out to come along. It wouldn't have been a success without your support.

Asking You! and Citizen Advocacy – Looking at what works

As part of our ongoing learning and reflection, we held a workshop with **Asking You!** volunteers, who are all adults with learning disabilities, to explore how we use communication in the annual review process for Citizen Advocacy.

We were interested in exploring the different ways people communicate, what works well and what things can act as a barrier when communicating. The day involved a range of role play activities and working with non-verbal forms of communication.

Communication was seen as really challenging, but highlighted some things that worked well – like using pictures and mime.

One of the key things that we learned was how important context is when communicating with people. We are going to look at how we are able to use the context of volunteer advocacy relationships and storytelling to capture the impact that volunteer Citizen Advocacy matches have. Thank you to all of the volunteers who came to the workshop.

Community advocacy surgeries

Our Community Advocacy team run four weekly surgeries for people who don't speak English as their first language, offering advocacy support and information in 15 different languages.

We have published a list of them on the Advonet website. It says where they are, when they take place and which languages are on offer.

To find out more, please go to advonet.org.uk/how-we-can-help-you/our-advocacy-services/community-advocacy/surgeries/.

Supported decision making: What we learned from event

Written by **CLAIRE NIXSON** / Asking You! Coordinator



Scenes from CHANGE's event on supported decision making on Thursday 5th July.

Advonet were pleased to work together with Tenfold to support CHANGE's event exploring supported decision making and embracing the idea of "nothing about us without us". CHANGE have been working internationally looking at how different countries are working towards the aims of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and want to share their knowledge with us. The event took place on the **4th and 5th of July** at the University of Leeds.

Following the idea of "nothing about us without us", the first day was for people with learning disabilities, to ensure they had time and opportunity to look at their lives, and making

decisions without jargon, or professionals, or "people with more power" leading the discussions.

Advonet were pleased to be involved; supported decision making is at the heart of what we do.

We try to ensure that people can access any information and resources they need to be informed, empowered and heard to make their own choices. Professionals from Leeds and across the country joined the event on the second day and were challenged to work in new ways to ensure everyone was included.

We found it hard on the 2nd day to use the methods, like drama and games, that had been so popular on the first day. It was a good way of

moving some of the power to the people with learning disabilities, as they felt more comfortable than the people without.

At the end of the two-day event, it was the forum theatre that everyone had learnt the most from.

Asking You! volunteers are excited about learning more about Forum Theatre, so we can use it at the People's Parliament and other events. We are looking forward to sharing the report from CHANGE in a future newsletter, and keeping working together across Leeds and the country to make things better for people with a learning disability, making sure they are included and hopefully lead the process.

DoLS set to change after parliamentary debates

This July, debates have been held in the Houses of Parliament about existing laws around people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. Proposed changes that have been discussed include the replacement of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) with a new set of laws.

DoLS will be replaced with Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS), which will see a few changes to what happened under the old system. They include:

- Involving families more in the decision-making process
- Allowing the NHS to make decisions about patients instead of

local authorities

- Removing repeat assessments when someone under DoLS/LPS moves between a care home, hospital or ambulance as part of their treatment

LPS is part of the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Bill, which was sent to the House of Lords in early July.

Romanian advocacy NHS meet advocates #AutisticLifeHacks

We now have a regular advocacy surgery for Romanian-speaking patients at a local GP's practice. It will take place every Tuesday afternoon at the **Bellbrooke Medical Practice** in Harehills, from **2pm to 4pm**.

The surgery will be run by one of our Community Advocates who speaks Romanian, and is for patients at the Bellbrooke. To book an appointment, please contact us by email at office@advonet.org.uk or call us on **0113 244 0606**.

On **Thursday 19th July**, two of our NHS Health Complaints Advocates met with Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHT) staff as part of their Working Lunch strand of meetings.

Lead Advocate Nahida Hussain and Advocate Gabby Voinea spoke to a group of 10 staff about the topic of "Patient Advocacy" and how it works.

Many of the staff who attended felt as though they had learned a lot about what advocacy can do to support hospital patients.

Our Leeds Autism AIM team has started a new string of posts on their website and social media accounts, asking autistic adults to share their life hacks. Called **#AutisticLifeHacks**, the idea came from Gill Loomes, their new Peer Development Worker. She did the first hack on meal planning.

To find all of the posts, just search for the **#AutisticLifeHacks** hashtag on Facebook and Twitter. Each hack will also be posted on the AIM website at leedsautismaim.org.uk.

Leep1 and NCS fix up Unity garden area



Leep1, along with volunteers from the National Citizens Service (NCS) did some work on the garden area next to Advonet's office at the Unity Business Centre.

The work saw them make big improvements to the picnic table, put up some banners to hang on the fences, tie old CDs to branches of nearby trees as decorations and tidy up the mess left there.

We would like to thank everyone involved from Leep1 and NCS for doing such a great job. Since it was done up, our staff cannot get enough of spending time there!

What's on at Advonet?

Thursday 4th October
10am-2pm

Strengthening the City 2018

Our free advocacy planning event features workshops and the launch of the Leeds Advocacy Network

Banqueting Suite, Leeds Civic Hall, Calverley St, LS1 1UR

Tuesday 4th September
5pm-6:30pm

Leeds Autism AIM: Autism Ref Group

Leeds Autism AIM host the quarterly autism reference group for the Leeds Autism Partnership Board

Lovell Park Hub, Wintoun Street, Leeds, LS7 1DA

Every Tuesday afternoon
2pm-4pm

Romanian advocacy surgery

Our Community Advocates offer advocacy support via one-to-one appointments for Romanian speakers in Leeds

Bellbrooke Medical Practice, Bellbrooke Ave, Leeds LS9 6AU

Contact us

“Advonet”
Providing Independent Advocacy



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Single Point of Access (SPA) number: 0113 244 0606

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