

# “Advonet”

Providing Independent Advocacy”



# Annual Report

## 2018-19

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# Foreword

## By Cllr Peter Gruen, Chair of Advonet



You can do a great deal in three years. You can get a degree, go from your first meeting with a potential life partner to your wedding (two years and 11 months, according to Metro), go to Mars and back and complete a distance learning degree.

In the past three years, Advonet has been very productive, turning four local advocacy providers into one following the merger in 2015, growing and remaining sustainable.

In that time, it has grown its unique model of advocacy for autistic people (Leeds Autism AIM) and established a new network of advocacy-providing organisations (Leeds Advocacy Network).

In February 2018, Advonet learned that it had been successful in the retendering of the contract to provide advocacy services in Leeds. This annual report tells the story of what Advonet did next. It's a story of consolidation and development.

Over the course of 2018/19, there were a few changes to the board of Trustees. Helen Bradley, Head of Resources at Keyring, stepped down as Chair, as did Treasurer Vicki Anderson and Sabine Dufeutrelle. I would like to thank them all for their significant contribution at a vital time.

I was appointed as Chair in the summer of 2018 following an extensive recruitment process. I was joined on the board by Emma Williams, Dr Mushtaq Ahmed and Phil Gleeson.

One of the activities that helped the board to come together as a team was an away day at which we used the NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) Governance Wheel to measure how well we were doing and how we wanted to develop further.

This year, the board created a Development sub-group to sit alongside its Resources and Quality sub-group to ensure that trustees were steeped in the detail in the key areas of risk.

In April 2018, Advonet was completely restructured, including new roles in the Senior Management Team. Clare De Arostegui joined as Finance Director; Lee-Simone Greenfield as Advocacy Director and Wendy Cork was appointed as Advocacy Development & Partnership Director.

Many valued colleagues left, while over 30 staff took on new or more senior roles as Advocates, Lead Advocates and Advocacy Managers. This long-planned change means that we are in a stronger position to both deliver quality advocacy in Leeds and develop new project in the city and elsewhere.

Between the summer and winter, we had internal discussions with external partners on what our new strategic business plan should look like. In order to be sustainable, the organisation

### Our Vision:

People having their voices heard and taking greater control over their lives, no longer marginalised.

### Our Mission:

Enabling people to better communicate their needs, understand their choices and obtain their rights.

**Continued on next page >>**





supporting other communities, individuals and organisations to do this; and find creative ways of working with people who have been marginalised to ensure that their voices and experiences are used to help society become more inclusive.

As you will see over the following pages, there have been a number of other accomplishments over the last 12 months. We worked with around 4,500 people. We established a new Advocacy Consortium with our partners Touchstone, Age UK Leeds and SignHealth. We also secured funding for one of only 12 LGBTQ+ projects nationwide from a grant via the Government Equalities Office.

We exported our unique partnership model of universal advocacy to Kirklees (as junior partners to Touchstone). We refreshed all of our internal systems. We are also reaccredited for the Investors In People scheme. All of this is just the tip of the iceberg, as the following pages make clear.

None of this would have been possible without the passion, determination and goodwill of everyone who works for Advonet – may I thank you all for everything that you do!

*Cllr. Peter Gruen*

**Cllr. Peter Gruen**

**Chair, Advonet Board of Trustees**

**“ADVONET is clearly a genuinely person-centred organisation that supports people to be actively involved in decisions about their lives. The advocates live and breathe the advocacy values and naturally involve people with lived experience to shape their services.”**

**QPM Report, 2019**

needs to grow. However, the board and colleagues were clear that we wanted to look for the ‘right kind of growth’.

We didn’t want to veer in to providing support or do anything that might compromise our independence. Neither did we just want to replicate services that are already being provided by other, bigger organisations. We want to be innovators, pioneers and as an organisation born of partnerships between advocacy organisations, we wanted to further foster our collaborative abilities.

Advonet’s future will involve providing advocacy,

## What is **Advocacy**?

### **Advocacy is working with you to:**

- Listen to what you want and act on your behalf at all times
  - Think about what choices you have
  - Put forward your views so they are heard
  - Stand up for your rights and interests
- Advocacy is **free, independent** and **confidential**



# New Strategic Plan: 2018-2023



In July 2018, we held our **launch event for the new consortium** together with our strategic partners. This introduced our plans for a more integrated advocacy service, reaching more people with the right amount of advocacy, empowering through self-advocacy and supporting others in using an advocacy approach.



We held our second **Strengthening the City Through Advocacy** event in **October 2018** with local groups and services to plan how we could move forward.

We held six workshops around the themes of:

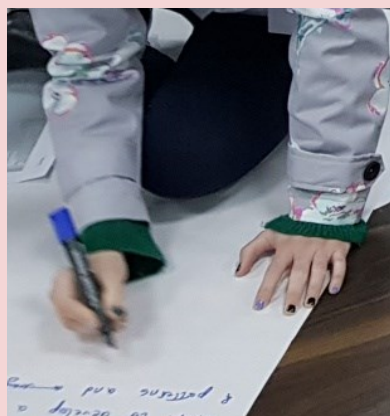
- Campaigning advocacy
- Self-advocacy training
- Advocacy in marginalised groups
- Using self-advocacy tools
- Practical advocacy-based solutions

Over 100 people attended this event from across Leeds and passed on their skills and knowledge to explore how we could work together for the future.



We held several **staff and volunteer events** in 2018/19, reinforcing our mission and values and co-producing our priorities.

These included consultations, celebrations for our volunteers and training half-day sessions for staff to help improve what we do.



In 2018, Advonet developed a new five-year **Strategic Plan** together with staff, volunteers, commissioners and connected services.

We responded to feedback from our partners, clients and commissioners to co-produce how we wanted this new advocacy contract to look for the future.

# Working towards our objectives

1

## **Independence:**

To protect Advonet's independence by widening the range of ways in which we obtain our income

We achieved several successful bids and tenders this year, working with others on advocacy-related projects, raising **£87,748** in additional funding for new or expanded work.

2

## **Pioneering:**

To be the most ground-breaking advocacy provider across Yorkshire and the Humber

We explored ways in which we could reach wider groups, developing innovative self and peer advocacy resources and partnership working.

3

## **Diversity:**

To be the most diverse advocacy organisation in our region in terms of volunteers, staff and clients

We increased the number of staff and volunteers with lived experience and developed more accessible volunteering resources.

4

## **Influence:**

To be a highly influential Advocacy organisation in the Yorkshire and the Humber region

We attended more strategic forums relevant to our goals and the people we support and supported the involvement and voice of people with lived experience in many of these.

5

## Partnership:

To design, deliver, review and improve all of our services together with the people who will get the most benefit from them and other expert partners

We introduced new client and staff/volunteer forums, increased user testing of resources and developed closer partnership work with priority groups.

6

## Excellence:

To be recognised by the people who use our services, and other key partners as a provider of outstanding services

We refreshed and updated our policies, forms and advocacy referral process.

We achieved Advocacy QPM (Quality Performance Mark) accreditation, Investors In People accredited status and the Leeds Volunteer Kitemark.

7

## Resourcefulness:

To continually strive to use our resources as efficiently as possible

We developed our First Contact Team as a single point of contact and supported 26 advocates to achieve the Independent Advocacy Qualification (IAQ).



In July 2019, Advonet were awarded the Advocacy Quality Performance Mark (QPM) until June 2022

"It is clear from talking with people that use the service and professionals that see advocates supporting people, that they live and breathe the principles of independence."  
QPM Report, July 2019



# Volunteering

Investing in using and developing the skills of our volunteers has been one of our key goals this year. We have a new Volunteer and Peer Advocacy Manager who works with the specific Volunteer Coordinators for Leeds Autism AIM, Citizen Advocacy and Leep1 to grow this provision.

We have a strong emphasis on developing our volunteers with lived experience, and many have moved to paid roles.

Our Volunteer manager is part of the volunteer managers steering group for Leeds and attends the volunteer managers network meetings together with volunteer coordinators.

We are in the process of renewing our Investors in Volunteers award this year with a site visit booked for October.

We recruited and trained a number of volunteers last year. Now, we have well over 100 volunteers across Advonet, nearly half of them with lived experience similar to the people they work with.



**"I get a challenge, a sense of community and a different experience to my day job. I feel like I am helping!"**

**Peter, Volunteer Citizen Advocate**

# 111

**Volunteers at Advonet**

## VOLUNTEER ROLES:

Trustee  
Community Advocate  
Citizen Advocate  
Leep1 Activities Supporter  
Café Leep Café Assistant

Autism Mentor  
Autism Hub Supporter  
AIM Steering Group Member  
Asking You! Volunteer

AREA	NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS	HOURS
Community	12	1,100
Leep1/Café Leep	13	892
Citizen Advocacy	21	294
Asking You!	13	700
Leeds Autism AIM	44	1,849
Trustees	12	576

# Training

Providing free advocacy training to outside services is a key part of our aim to support wider organisations in using their knowledge of the people they support to develop and embed advocacy approaches across the city.

We have developed a new suite of three free advocacy training courses to suit different needs and availability.

We have developed our team of advocacy trainers and delivered five courses this year, reaching people across Leeds.

## 1) Introduction to Advocacy

The Introduction to Advocacy course is designed to give professionals a comprehensive overview and knowledge on the principles of Advocacy, the role of an advocate and how advocacy benefits people who may need an advocate.

This course runs for half a day.

## 2) Effective Advocacy and Negotiation Skills

The Effective Advocacy and Negotiation Skills course is designed to give professionals the opportunity to learn about, and try out a range of key skills used by advocates when advocating on behalf of someone.

This course lasts a full day.

## 3) Introduction to Advocacy Specialisms

The Introduction to Advocacy Specialisms course is designed to give professionals an overview of statutory advocacy under specific legislation.

Understanding the different types of statutory advocacy and eligibility criteria will support professionals to know which advocacy type is appropriate to refer people to. This course lasts a full day.

16

**Completed Introduction to Advocacy**

43

**Completed Effective Advocacy and Negotiation Skills - old two-day course**

13

**Completed Effective Advocacy and Negotiation Skills - new one-day course**

9

**Completed Introduction to Advocacy Specialisms**



# Health Complaints Advocacy



The most common issue we helped with was **access to treatment and therapy**



We supported **123 new clients** and **52 existing clients** in 2018-19

“Advocate was very sympathetic with me and it’s nice to know she cares. When I contacted the NHS they didn’t listen but with the advocate’s help I had responses from them, just thank you very much your service has been brilliant.

“I can’t fault your service. [Advocate] was brilliant, top notch, don’t know what I would have done without her. She has guided me and signposted when I needed her to.”



Our Health Complaints Advocacy team can help you to make a complaint about any care you have received from a service run by the NHS, provided you live in the Leeds City Council area.

Our advocates will:

- Provide information about the NHS complaints procedure
- Help you to explore your options so you can decide what to do
- Help you to put forward your views and make sure they are heard
- Help you to understand what you can expect to achieve from making a complaint

## 203

Referrals made

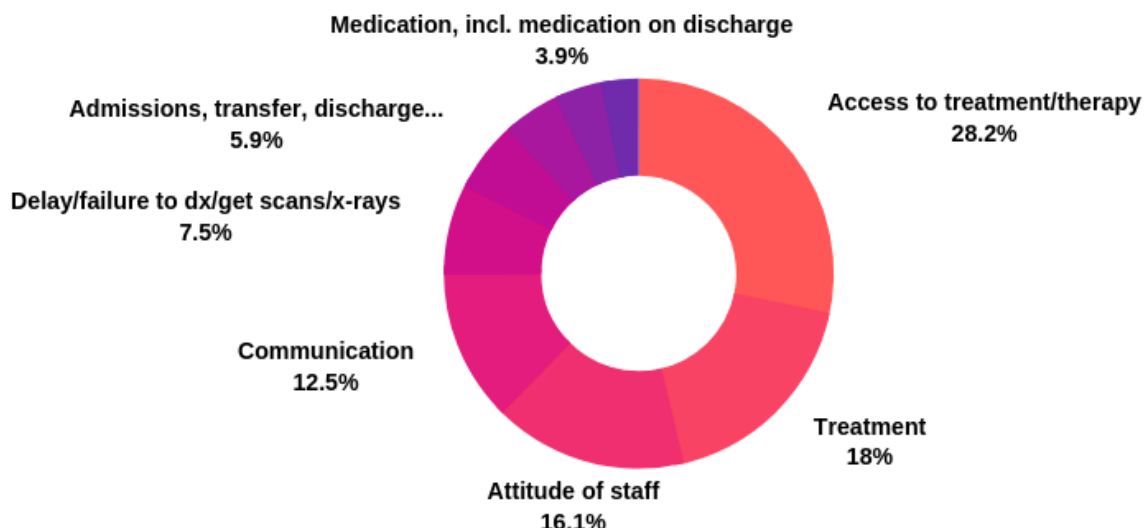
## 123

Client cases fully resolved

## 223

Enquiries made

## MOST COMMON ISSUES ADDRESSED BY OUR TEAM





# IMCA: Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy



We supported **394** new clients and **327** existing clients in 2018-19



**323** referrals were made for DoLS RPR (Relevant Persons Representative)



The majority of referrals for our IMCA service were made by carers

This past year, our IMCA team have been working on promoting advance decisions. These are known as “living wills”, which help you to have your rights and wishes respected later on in life when receiving end of life care.

## What is an advance decision?

Think ahead, plan ahead, share your wishes

What is your biggest concern?

Who would know your wishes?

Would you want to be an organ donor?

1. There may be times in your life when you think about the consequences of becoming seriously ill or disabled



The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) is legislation about supporting and protecting vulnerable people who are unable to make their own decisions. The Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) will make sure that people are as involved as possible in important decisions and that these are in their best interests.

You can refer for an IMCA if the person is:

- Facing decisions about change of accommodation, serious medical treatment or are subject to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and:
- Assessed as lacking capacity to make these decisions, and;
- Has no appropriate family or friends to consult

# 843

Referrals made

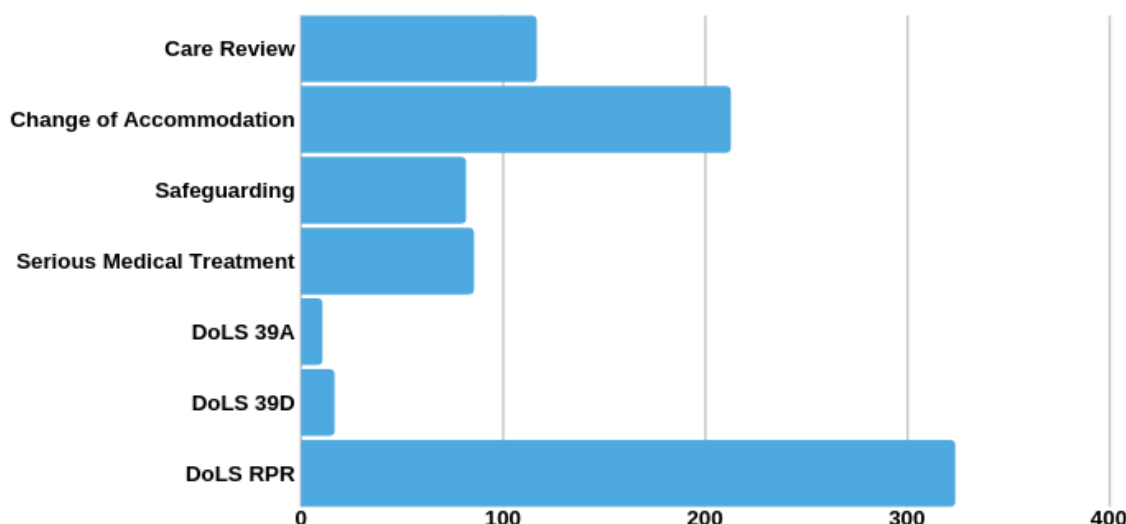
# 394

Client cases fully resolved

# 87

Enquiries made

## AREAS SUPPORTED BY OUR ADVOCATES



# IMHA: Independent Mental Health Advocacy



We had **274** referrals for Section 2 and **194** referrals for Section 3



We supported **448** new clients and **72** existing clients in 2018-19

“When you’re in hospital, you’re frightened of approaching people, I didn’t expect anyone to listen – I cannot describe it, it’s such a horrendous place – when there’s one single person you feel is giving you time, I can’t tell you it’s immeasurable...It’s done a lot for me”  
- “I just wanted her to know how much her work is appreciated”



Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) is for people who have been sectioned under the Mental Health Act and want their voice to be heard and their rights respected.

You have the right to an IMHA:

- You are sectioned under the Mental Health Act
- On a Community Treatment Order (CTO)
- Under Guardianship Order
- A conditionally discharged restricted patient

You also have a right to an IMHA if a ‘special treatment’ such as Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) (under-18) or neurosurgery is being discussed with you, even if you are not detained.

## 536

Referrals made

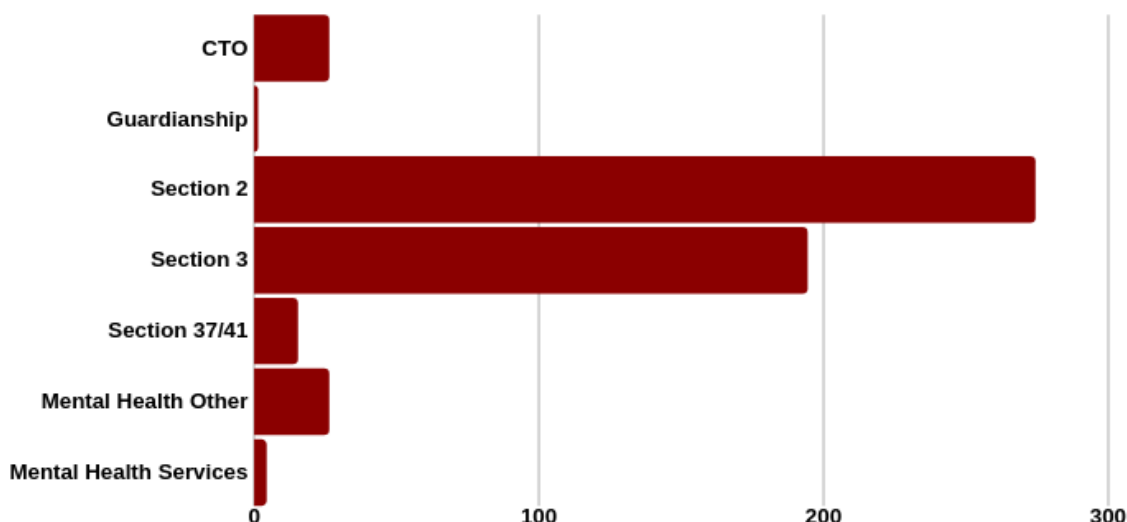
## 448

Client cases fully resolved

## 10

Enquiries made

### AREAS SUPPORTED BY OUR ADVOCATES



# Care Act Advocacy



We supported **63** new clients and **9** existing clients in 2018-19



**26** referrals were for Care Act Planning - **36%** of total referrals for our service

"Advocate requested a change of consultant at client's outpatient appointment as current consultant makes the client feel more anxious and upset. Client said "Thank you, I could never have said that to him (Dr) by myself. This was the first time he has even mentioned getting support with the issues that are upsetting me. He talked a lot more today, I'm sure it was just because you (the advocate) were there".



Care Act Advocates will work with individuals to help them make their own decisions. They will support people to understand the care and support process they will be involved in.

They will also be to tell people about their wishes and feelings to inform discussions about their future care and support needs. To make a referral for an independent Care Act Advocate, the person being supported must:

- Be going through one of the processes listed in the Care Act
- Have substantial difficulty engaging in the process
- Have no-one else to support them through this process

# 72

Referrals made

# 63

Client cases fully resolved

# 9

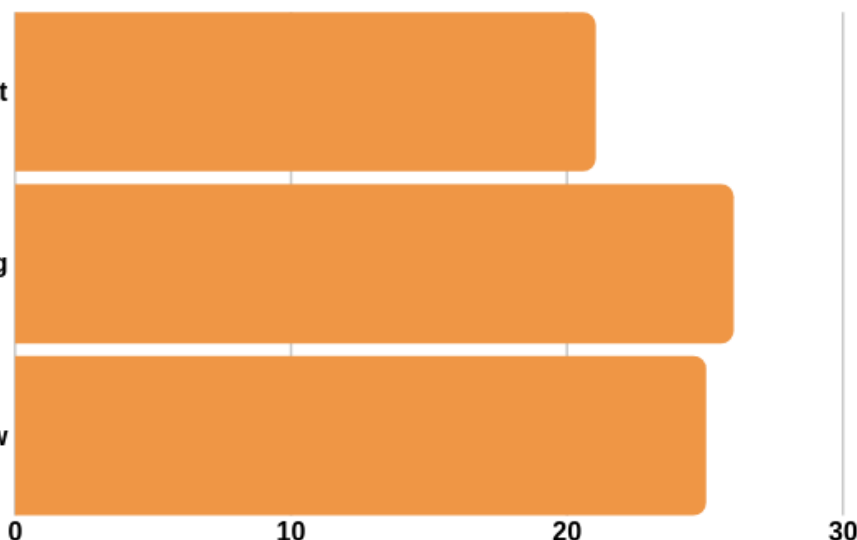
Enquiries made

## AREAS SUPPORTED BY OUR ADVOCATES

Care Act Assessment

Care Act Planning

Care Act Review





# Community Advocacy



We supported **540** new clients and **392** existing clients in 2018-19



**579** referrals for this service were for financial issues e.g. benefits



**Access to Info/Services, Medical and Housing** were other areas supported

**"I felt very uneasy and restless at first and didn't know where to go and what to do, I felt trapped. As I spoke to the Advocate, I felt calmer and at ease. After working with them, I felt grateful as it had been a very long time since someone has listened to and helped me."**



Community Advocacy can help you to understand and put forward your choices, be involved and have a say in what you need.

Our service is available for any adult who needs advocacy support to have their voice heard dealing with organisations like:

- Adult Social Care
- Healthcare professionals
- Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Utility companies and housing services

We are here to support you to uphold your rights.

**1,141**

Referrals made

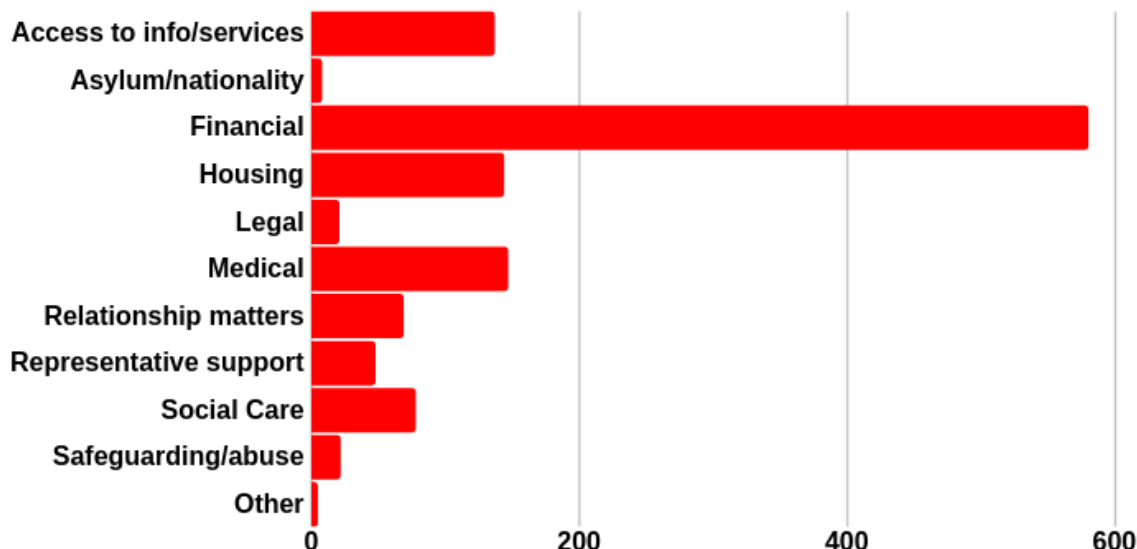
**540**

Client cases fully resolved

**273**

Enquiries made

## AREAS SUPPORTED BY OUR ADVOCATES



# Advocacy Kirklees

**“We are really excited about bringing the respective expertise of Advonet and Touchstone together to provide a new service for Kirklees that helps people's voices be heard and their rights be respected.”**

***Alison Lowe, Chief Executive - Touchstone***



In July 2018, Advonet were excited to be asked by Touchstone to help them adapt the Leeds model of universal advocacy for Kirklees.

Touchstone were successful in winning the contract and Advonet provided a Deputy Manager and two Advocates to the Kirklees team. The contract covers the following services:

- Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)
- Care Act Advocacy
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Advocacy
- Independent NHS Health Complaints Advocacy
- General Advocacy – for people who are looking for other, non-statutory advocacy
- Peer, self and group advocacy
- Relevant Person's Representatives

It provides advocacy that is free, independent and confidential, just like the service Advonet runs in Leeds.

## PLACES SERVED:

**Huddersfield  
Dewsbury  
Batley  
Mirfield**

**Cleckheaton  
Heckmondwike  
Birstall  
Ravensthorpe**

**Holmfirth  
Slaithwaite  
Marsden  
Meltham**



# Asking You!



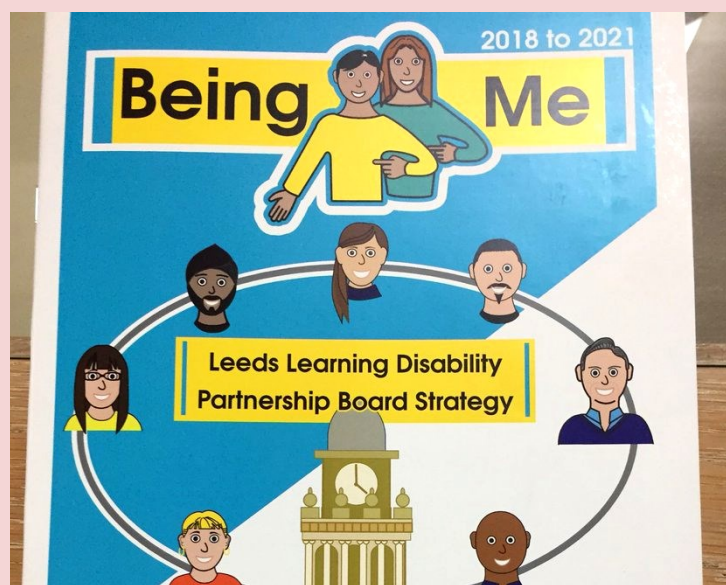
For the Being Me project, we continued to work closely with and challenge colleagues at Adult Social Care, who are changing the way they work to being more strength-based. We love this project, as it's focusing on what people can do and listening to what they want for their lives.

We have really pleased about the way they are working and felt included. It has also been good to learn more about how they work and with the project team, work closely with partners including Through the Maze, Carers Leeds and Tenfold.

The project team have come to see us at the People's Parliament and asked for people's ideas and feedback which we have then seen them put in to practice.

**"I love everything I do and I hope I am an inspiration to others when they see that everything and anything is possible!"**

***Susan, Asking You! Volunteer***



## People's Parliament

The Leeds Learning Disability People's Parliament goes from strength to strength. We increased the number of meetings from 4 to 6 last year and are getting new members at each one.

We launched the new Leeds Learning Disability Strategy at our Council Chambers Takeover meeting in June 2018.

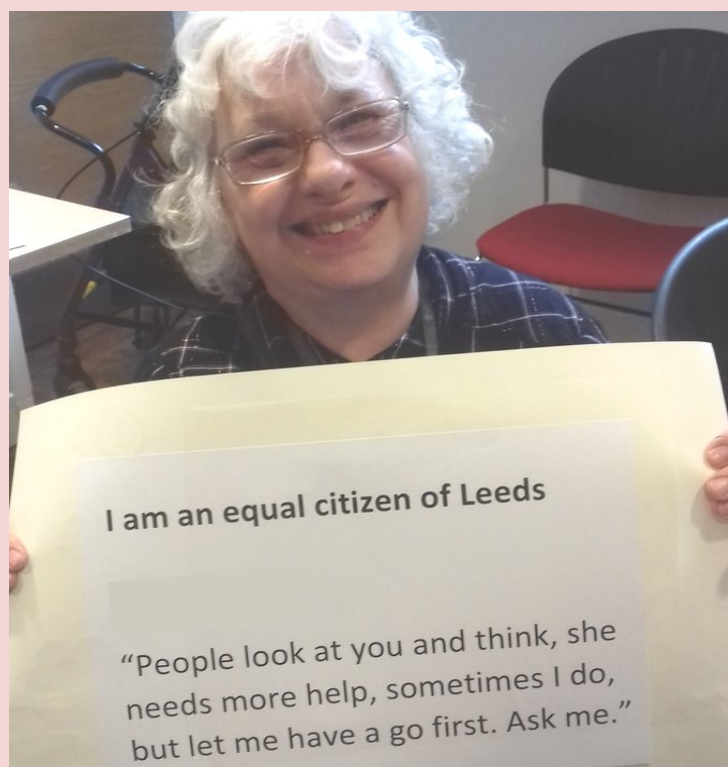
The People's Parliament has had new people coming to each meeting, which is great as we get to hear new voices and ideas.

We have helped lots of different organisations, giving feedback on their services and help make their services better for people with learning disabilities.

## Good Lives Leaders

The Good Lives Leaders continue to visit people in supported living and residential care and report what they have been told is good and what could be better.

They have made so many positive changes to many people and the Good Lives Leaders who are all volunteers say they love the work they do as they like to help other people.





# Leeds Autism AIM



Our Leeds Autism AIM service provides a range of services to autistic adults locally that have little other funded support. The service has achieved three pots of funding this year: continuation funding from Leeds CCG, three-year funding from The National Lottery Community Fund and funding to deliver autism mental health training to the new Community Based Mental Health service Live Well Leeds. This has enabled us to give additional roles to autistic staff to lead on several areas of the service, expand our volunteering provision and develop much needed areas.

We expanded our popular peer support sessions, increased partnership working with other services and developed new groups as well as running a new autistic led employment course and developing our self advocacy resources. We have worked with other services to improve access and supported several outside consultations. We continue to facilitate the Autism Reference Group and LTHT's autism group.

We have 25 autistic people in mentoring matches. Issues supported include employment and education, issues, accessing the community, benefits, housing, accessing health and mental health services. We have 44 volunteers - 17 of them are autistic.

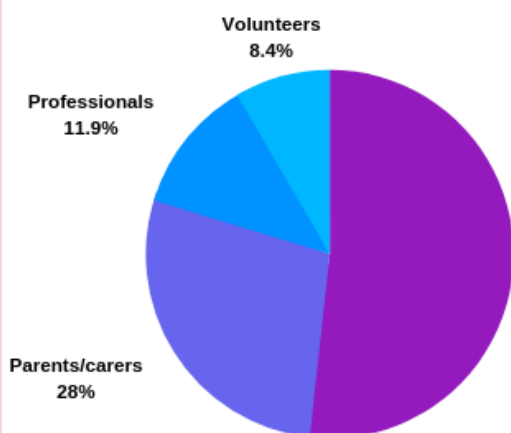
We expanded our provision of personalised resources to help access services and produced 36 of these, including individualised autism alert cards, GP profiles and employment profiles. Finally, we are developing a pilot this year of autistic-led post-diagnostic provision.



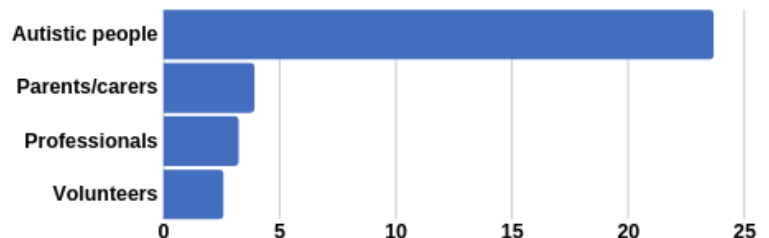
**530** People were supported by the Leeds Autism AIM service in 2018-19

## AUTISM HUBS IN NUMBERS:

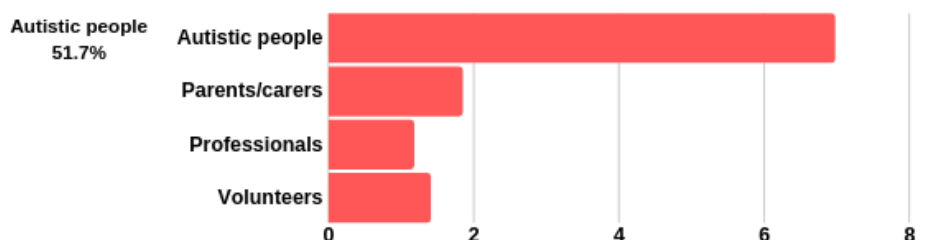
**404** Unique visitors to our Hub sessions on Tue/Fri



**31.98** attendees per Tuesday Hub



**10.88** attendees per Friday Hub



**192** Signposted by AIM in 2018-19



**44** Volunteers with AIM in 2018-19



**25** People in mentoring matches in 2018-19



**36** Self-advocacy tools made in 2018-19

# Leep1 and Café Leep



One of our members was a victim of mate crime. Because of this, we now go round Year 6 primary schools in Leeds to do **two performances around hate and mate crime**.

It's an interactive performance where the pupils offer solutions to the issues. We won The Creative Award for the work we have done.

**Leep1's Friendship Group** runs every Wednesday night from 6pm-8.30pm; the group plan their own activities.

Through this group, there have been many friendships made, including a blossoming love story between two of the members.

**Café Leep** have **30 people** who have now passed their NVQ in Food Safety and have **12 trainees** in employment or training.

**"I really enjoy seeing the members interact and socialise and the way they always include me"**  
*Holly, Leep1 Club Nights Volunteer*



## Leep1 members' successes



Some members who attended the Cooking Group are now able to cook for themselves at home, using the skills they learned in Café Leep



People who have attended Leep1's club nights have gained more confidence to go out and do things, whether on their own or with support



Some of Leep1's members became Travel Ambassadors, teaching adults with learning disabilities skills to travel independently



Members who attended our Literacy Group weren't able to read or write before they came. Now, they are now able to do both!



12 of Café Leep's trainees are now either in a job or have gone on to do further training to help them get into work.

# LGBTQ+ Health Inclusion Project

This is a new self-advocacy service for LGBTQ+ people who are either autistic, have a learning disability or mental health difficulties. The grant was awarded by the Government Equalities Office for a 12-month period for Advonet to work with CHANGE and Yorkshire MESMAC.

As part of that, the Project will run self-advocacy workshops, one-to-one peer support and training for health and social care professionals around the needs of the groups supported by it.

Work on the project started in March 2019. New staff were hired to work on it, with some on secondment from CHANGE and Yorkshire MESMAC.

The project will run two sets of self-advocacy workshops, each in six weekly sessions. One is for LGBTQ+ people with learning disabilities; the other is for LGBTQ+ people who are autistic or have mental health difficulties.



## Winter Wellbeing Project

The Winter Wellbeing Project was delivered from January 2019 to March 2019 and provided BAME communities in Leeds support on Winter Wellbeing issues. We developed a holistic plan to tackle issues of fuel poverty, access to food, financial knowledge, debt advice as well as the wider wellbeing issues for individuals such as long-term health conditions.

The barriers BAME communities face are mostly language, no knowledge of services, trust and preconceptions. Our strength in understanding and relating to communities helped in overcoming these barriers. We looked at engaging with communities using a range of suitable techniques and strategies.

We delivered 39 Winter Wellbeing outreach information sessions, cafes and presentations, facilitated in a range of languages. We offered individual consultations, provided refreshments and collected free useful items of energy-efficient light bulbs, notepads, pens and shopping list booklets. We involved volunteers to increase knowledge of cultures and languages and invited speakers from services such as the Green Doctor for additional value.

We engaged with a total of 362 people throughout the project. In total, we worked with 24 partners directly in delivering the sessions, including four GP practices.

**362**   
**People engaged with  
throughout the project**

**39**   
**Sessions held  
between January  
2019-March 2019**

**24**   
**Organisations  
worked with to  
deliver the project**

**4**   
**GP Surgeries we  
worked with during  
the project**



# New and Developing Projects

## Outreach Surgeries

We are developing five outreach surgeries from a number of venues in Leeds. The services we support work with individuals and groups who are struggling with a range of barriers and problems such as the homeless, Asylum Seekers and Refugees, BAME and drug and alcohol abuse.

The enquiries and issues are diverse and include housing, finances, immigration, Brexit, health and wellbeing and hate crime. We work in 15 languages and deliver the sessions using a drop-in and appointment system. At each session, we meet with individuals through one-to-one support, but also do so via signposting and referrals.

## Restraint, Seclusion and Segregation (RSS) Project

Funding was awarded by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to Advonet and CHANGE to run this project. Its aim is to help people with lived experience of restraint, seclusion and segregation (RSS) in health and care settings to feed back on their experience to the CQC.

Ultimately, the project aims to help stop the use of RSS and for people in health and care to be treated better.

## Advocacy in Care Homes

Throughout the year, we provided in-house advocacy for residents at three care homes run by the Exemplar Health Care group - one in East Leeds and two in Castleford.

We looked at offering this service to more care home providers. To help with this, we started planning for an information and learning event aimed at care home providers and people who work with care home residents. This was scheduled to take place in June 2019.

## Supported Decision Making

Advonet were among a number of organisations who started a new training course for support workers who work with adults with learning disabilities about supported decision making. The project is overseen by a steering group made up of people with learning disabilities.

The groups involved in setting up the training were Advonet, CHANGE, Connect in the North, Forum Central and Leeds City Council Adults and Health, alongside adults with learning disabilities. An initial planning meeting was held in February 2019, with free courses planned for later on that year.

## Leeds Autism AIM: Post-Diagnostic Support Sessions

Leeds Autism AIM was given extra funding by Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to run a trial post-diagnostic support service. The funding is for development of new fortnightly post-diagnostic support sessions for newly-diagnosed autistic people. It is led by members of the AIM staff team and offers up to four appointments for people wanting to know what their diagnosis means. The sessions started in July 2019.

## Safeguarding Feedback Project

With backing from the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB), Advonet have been asked to take a lead on getting people's feedback on their experience of safeguarding. It will use all feedback given to inform the SAB of how the safeguarding process can be made better.

This project will be steered by a 'Citizens' Panel' of people with lived experience of safeguarding to talk directly to the SAB. It will be set up in the summer of 2019.

# Coproduction and Involvement

<b>Governance</b>	<b>Advonet's Board of Trustees</b>	
<b>Client involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Client Forum</b> - for users of any Advonet service to feed into the Board meetings</li> <li>• <b>Leep1 members</b></li> <li>• <b>Asking You! Volunteers and Citizen</b></li> </ul>	<b>Advocates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Leeds Autism AIM steering group</b></li> <li>• <b>LGBTQ+ Health Inclusion Project steering group</b> - for a project we run with CHANGE &amp; Yorkshire MESMAC</li> </ul>
<b>Staff involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Staff Rep</b> - Representative for staff members at board and senior management level</li> <li>• <b>Staff Council</b> - A regular meeting for nominated colleagues to assist the Board of Trustees in reviewing T&amp;Cs,</li> </ul>	<p>policies and strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Events Reps</b> - Representatives of each staff team responsible for coordinating social activities for their respective teams</li> </ul>
<b>Volunteer involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Volunteer Reps</b> - 4 x representatives for volunteers to meet regularly with the Volunteer Coordinators</li> <li>• <b>Volunteer Forum</b> - A regular meeting for volunteers to share their views and feed to the Board and SMT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Volunteer get-togethers</b> - regular events to thank volunteers for their all of their efforts</li> <li>• <b>End-of-year review</b> - a chance for vols to share their thoughts on what works and what can be improved</li> </ul>
<b>Staff teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Central Services team</b> - Admin, Data, Finance, HR, Communications</li> <li>• <b>SPA/First Contact team</b> - first point of contact for clients/referrals</li> <li>• <b>Community Advocacy team</b></li> <li>• <b>Health Complaints Advocacy team</b></li> <li>• <b>IMCA team</b></li> <li>• <b>IMHA team</b></li> <li>• <b>Volunteer Coordinators</b> - Volunteer &amp;</li> </ul>	<p>Peer Advocacy Manager plus coordinators for Citizen Advocacy, Leep1 and Leeds Autism AIM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Asking You! team</b></li> <li>• <b>Citizen Advocacy team</b></li> <li>• <b>Leep1 team</b></li> <li>• <b>Café Leep team</b></li> <li>• <b>Leeds Autism AIM team</b></li> <li>• <b>LGBT Health Inclusion Project team</b></li> </ul>
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Commissioners</b> - Leeds City Council, NHS CCG</li> <li>• <b>Funders</b> e.g. The National Lottery Community Fund, Leeds CCG, Health and Social Care Volunteering Fund</li> <li>• <b>Members of the Advonet consortium</b> - Touchstone, Age UK Leeds, SignHealth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Organisations we work in partnership with</b> e.g. CHANGE, MESMAC, Carers Leeds, Exemplar Health Care, Citizens Advice, LYPFT</li> <li>• <b>Community organisations</b> e.g. TransLeeds, Leeds GATE</li> <li>• <b>Leeds Advocacy Network members</b></li> </ul>
<b>Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Philip Bramson:</b> Chief Executive</li> <li>• <b>Lee-Simone Greenfield:</b> Advocacy Director</li> <li>• <b>Wendy Cork:</b> Advocacy Development &amp; Partnerships Director</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Clare de Arostegui:</b> Finance Director</li> <li>• <b>Team managers</b> - HCA, Community, IMCA, IMHA, SPA, Vols, Asking You!, Leep1, Leeds Autism AIM</li> </ul>

# Case Examples

## Example 1: Care Act Advocacy

An independent Care Act Advocate (CAA) was requested to advocate for a client during their care review, as there was disagreement between the client's social worker and their family on the best way to meet the client's needs. The CAA met with the client to understand their views and preferences around their long-term care needs.

The client's biggest barrier was their health as they had a diagnosis of dementia, which meant they found it difficult to orientate themselves to time and place. The client talked about wanting to go home. The advocate adopted a rights-based approach to ensure the Mental Capacity Act's principles were followed.

They highlighted the Care Act's wellbeing principles when looking at all of the client's options including their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and how each may be impacted depending on the options being considered. The outcome of the review was for the client to remain at the residential home, where they were receiving respite care long-term.

## Example 2: Community Advocacy

A Community Advocate was requested to support a client around making a will. The client wanted to leave their money to their care workers and had received conflicting information as to whether this was possible. The client felt frustrated by the lack of information and felt they should be able to leave their money to whomever they wanted to. The client did not want their money to be left to the 'state'.

The company that provided care to the client were concerned that the client had capacity to make this decision and did not want to be at risk of concerns around financial abuse. The advocate gave the client information about Age UK's free wills service and got clarity from the care company manager about accepting a gift left in a will. The outcome was that the client had information on how to access advice on this matter and write a will so they could leave their money to their care workers.

## Example 3: Leeds Autism AIM

We have helped a number of clients who came in with several issues at once after lack of support. Examples of difficulties: PIP and ESA, debt, lack of access to mental health support and increasing depression, isolation, housing issues, lack of employment/education and unresolved health issues.

Spent time looking at priorities: CAB Hub worker helped with PIP/ESA forms and advocate helped prepare for assessments. Hub housing worker helped with housing applications and advice, supported them to find mental health support, refer and put forward needs, supported to create self-advocacy resources including a personalised autism alert card and GP profile to help them access health services.

Ongoing: Introduced to two hub groups to help combat isolation, made Friday peer support appointment to discuss strategies to manage in work and social life. Put on waiting list for autism mentor to work on accessing volunteer opportunities and volunteer profile, referred to hub disability employment adviser and referred to hub employment course.



# Feedback

Advocate requested a change of consultant at client's outpatient appointment as current consultant makes the client feel more anxious and upset. Client said "Thank you, I could never have said that to him (Dr) by myself. This was the first time he has even mentioned getting support with the issues that are upsetting me. He talked a lot more today, I'm sure it was just because you (the advocate) were there."

**"Thank you very much for months of your hard work to support me. I would have not received what I was entitled to if you were not there to help me."**

**"The advocates are highly skilled and professional; without their help, I would have completely floundered."**

***"I am having a hard time putting my gratitude into words, I hope you know how much I have appreciated your help and support. Thank you for taking the time to share your knowledge and expertise with me. Your encouragement and input were extremely helpful. It gave me the confidence I needed to pursue the complaint. It made it easier for me to make the ultimate sound and informed decision.***

***"Also I appreciated the fact that choice on how to proceed with complaint was always mine. You helped me to identify the options open to me and respected my wishes at all times.***

***"Your thoughtful and considerate input re the redress payment option, something I had not thought of. I want you to know just how much your being there for me at a time when I was feeling very vulnerable and needed support, it meant a lot, Bless you.***

***"You are simply the best, I applaud your professionalism."***

# Accreditations this year



## Quality Performance Mark (QPM)

Advonet started work on retaining the Advocacy Quality Performance Mark (QPM) in the spring of 2019.

After putting together a report, followed by a site visit where the assessor spoke to staff, service users, trustees, volunteers and other agencies, we were awarded the QPM, which lasts until June 2022.



**compact for leeds**  
public and third sector  
working together for the people of leeds

## Leeds Volunteering Kitemark

In December 2018, Advonet gained the Leeds Volunteering Kitemark in recognition of our work to make volunteering with us accessible and inclusive. This came after much hard work from our Volunteer and Peer Advocacy Manager, and Volunteer Coordinators for Leep1, Citizen Advocacy and Leeds Autism AIM.



## Investors In People Accredited

Following a visit from Investors In People, we were given Accredited status until 2022, continuing from our previous accreditation lasting until February 2019. This is in recognition of Advonet putting its faith in the people who run the organisation - staff, volunteers, trustees, partner organisations, other services and service users.

**“It is evident that staff, volunteers, and managers have a shared vision and committed to supporting people to be in control of their lives.”**

**“Advocates and people that had been supported by an advocate provided numerous examples of how advocates support people to lead the process, develop self-advocacy skills and empower them to stay in control of their lives.”**

**“People that had used the service described advocates as confidential, professional, knowledgeable, independent and easy to talk to. It was clear that they felt the advocate was on their side, listening to what was important to them.”**

**“This is an organisation that has an excellent understanding of the other agencies and they effectively signpost people where appropriate. They are committed to ensuring a person receives the support they need whether from ADVONET or via another organisation.”**

**QPM Report, July 2019**

# Communications

Our communications work has made great strides in the past year. After appointing a member of staff to look after communication, we did a lot of new things. We made some updates to our website, published more posts on it, used social media far more frequently and created new resources, including new-look leaflets.

We also held and attended a number of events to promote what we do. In July 2018, we held an event to launch the new consortium. In October 2018, we held Strengthening the City Through Advocacy alongside a number of community partners to help inform work in different areas.

Events our staff attended included the Leeds Big Chat in the summer of 2018, held with Healthwatch Leeds and Forum Central, among others. We were more present at forums too in areas such as disability, refugees and asylum seekers, and LGBTQ+.

We delivered internal Twitter training for 20 staff members and created new accounts for Volunteering at Advonet and our Health Complaints Advocacy service.

Overall, visits to the website went up by more than 30%. Views of our Tweets went up by 85%.



## New leaflets coproduced

In 2018-19, we looked at producing a suite of new leaflets, with one for each service within Advonet. Before finalising them, we produced drafts and asked a range of people for their input into how they should look and what they should say.

We met with clients with lived experience, volunteers, professionals from other organisations and different staff teams to create the new leaflets. Then, in the autumn of 2018, we finalised them based on their feedback.

In the next year, we are going to produce some Easy Read versions of each leaflet.



**New regular e-newsletters** were developed



**We sent out more press releases** to local media



**We published more regular news posts** on our website



**We posted a lot more and shared more on our Facebook page**



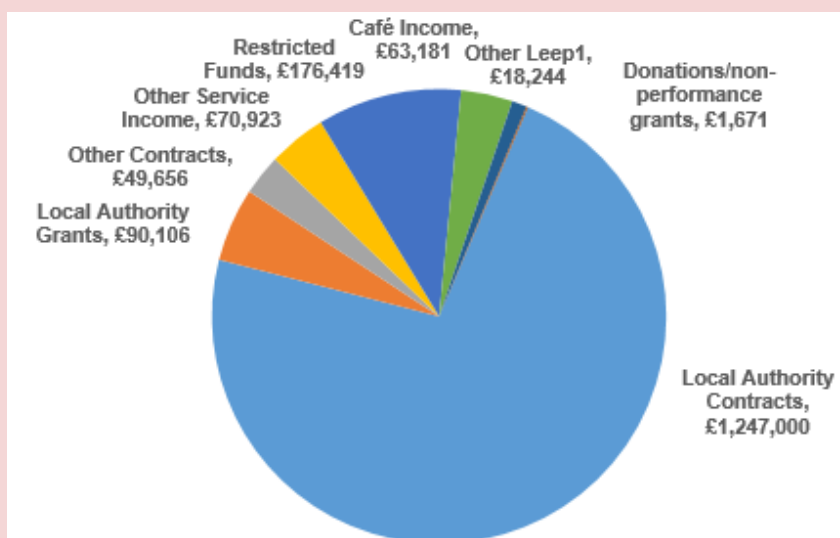
**We used Twitter a lot more regularly and set up accounts for different projects**



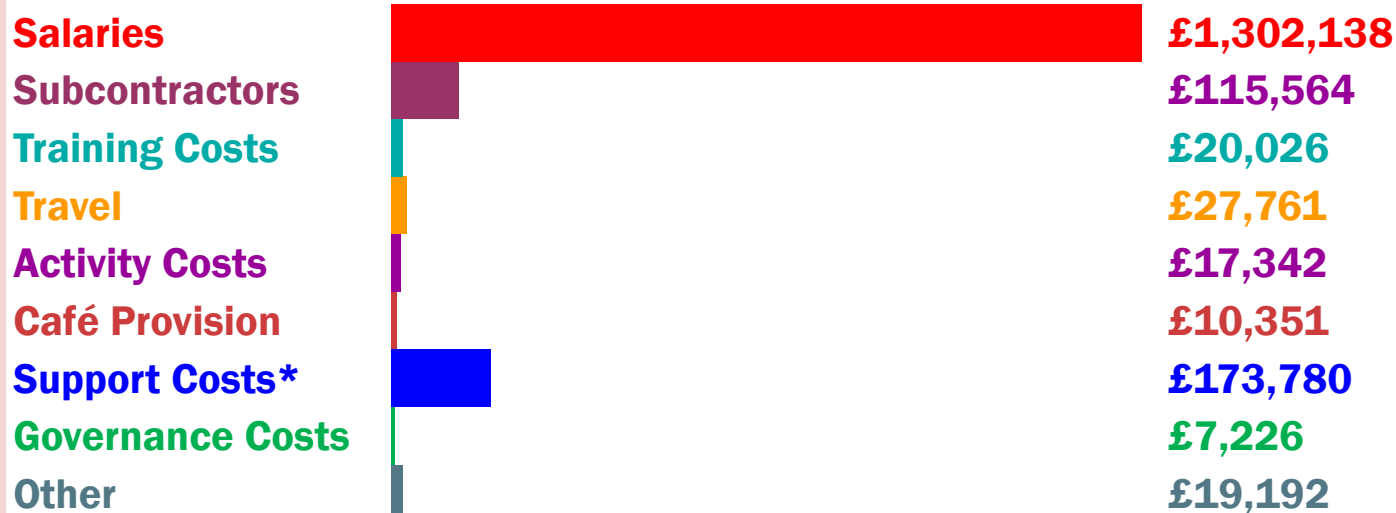
# Finances and funding

**Income for 2018/19:**  
**£1,717,200**

**Spending for 2018/19:**  
**£1,693,380**



## HOW WE SPEND OUR FUNDING



\*Excluding salaries

## NEW FUNDING SOURCES FOR 2018/19:



**£44,335**

Of a £296,434 grant Funding for delivering the Advocacy Kirklees contract, delivered in partnership with Touchstone



Government Equalities Office

**£6,033**

Of a £106,941 grant Grant from the Govt. Equalities Office for the LGBTQ+ Health Inclusion Project, run with CHANGE and Yorkshire MESMAC



COMMUNITY FUND

**£37,380**

Of a £199,950 grant Funding from the National Lottery Community Fund for the Leeds Autism AIM service

# Thank you to...

## Our consortium partners

We set up a consortium with Touchstone, Age UK Leeds and SignHealth



## Our funders

Thank you to all the funders of our main contract and linked services, including Advocacy Kirklees, Leeds Autism AIM, Leep1, Café Leep, the Winter Wellbeing project, the LGBTQ+ Health Inclusion Project and the Supported Decision Making course.



## Our community partners

Thank you to all of the organisations we have worked with on specific projects, where we used our respective experience and expertise to deliver services for different communities across Leeds.



## And finally...

...thanks to commissioners who have had faith in us, everyone who has used our services, our volunteers and to you, the people of Leeds.

We hope that we can continue to provide free, independent and confidential advocacy to help make your voice heard and rights respected in 2019-20 and beyond!

# Contact us



Call our First Contact number on **0113 244 0606**



Visit our website at **[advonet.org.uk](https://advonet.org.uk)**



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