



Brighton and Hove Speak Out

Volunteer Role Description

Self-Advocacy group supporter

About us

Speak Out is an independent advocacy charity for people with learning disabilities living in Brighton and Hove. We support people to:

- Speak up and get their voices heard,
- Have control over their lives and find solutions to their problems
- Participate in and positively contribute to their community

What we need

Self-Advocacy Group Supporter: to support people who come to the Link Group.

The Link Group is a group of approx. 6 – 8 people with learning disabilities and one Speak Out staff facilitator who meet every two weeks on a Tuesday morning. We work with the Learning Disability Partnership Board, a group of LD providers and BHCC decision makers, to represent the views of the learning disability community in Brighton and Hove. We run surveys and consultations with the LD community to get their views on local issues and policy, as well as working directly with Council teams to design good policy and deliver accessible events.

Recent examples of this are the survey we did about the state of activities and services in Brighton and Hove post-Covid; and working with the Council's Healthy Lifestyles team to make their annual sports and physical activities festival. TakePart, more accessible for people with learning disabilities.

What the role involves

- Being available for 2 hours every other week to provide self-advocacy group support at Speak Out offices or an alternative venue in the community
- You will be present to support people in a group setting
- You may be required to attend the Learning Disability Partnership board quarterly
- You will adhere to Speak Out's Code of Practice
- You may be required to help clear up at the end of sessions.

Support

- You will be supporting the group alongside a member of staff
- Initial induction training will cover the Principles of Advocacy, Speak Out's Code of Practice and how to advocate within this framework, and training to use Speak Out's database

- General support will be provided by Link Group coordinator. Group supervision, advocacy forums, social activities throughout the year will be arranged by volunteer coordinator
- Ongoing training opportunities will be available

Commitment

- 2 hours group time fortnightly
- 1-2 hours planning and computer work fortnightly (ad hoc)

Benefits

- Engage directly with local and national policies and campaigns to make Brighton and Hove a better place to be a person with a learning disability
- See positive outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged people as a direct result of your support
- Use and expand upon your existing experience and skills
- Access a range of free courses and training
- Be part of a team committed to a better, more equal and inclusive society
- Open up career opportunities, develop your CV and gain work references

Essential qualities

- Commitment to equal opportunities
- Good listening and observational skills to allow people with learning disabilities to speak up
- To be non-judgmental and respectful towards people
- A sense of fun and humour, and the willingness to try new things
- Understand the need for confidentiality of independent advocacy
- Ability to work independently, use initiative and remain calm in stressful situations
- A willingness to develop skills, engage in supervision and undertake training as required
- Basic IT skills that include Word, Outlook or similar

Desirable knowledge

- Knowledge and understanding of disability issues and the role of independent advocacy

When appointed, please sign and return this role description and a duplicate will be forwarded to you

Volunteer Name:

Signature:

Date:

Staff name:

Signature:

Date:

All Staff & volunteer appointments are subject to satisfactory DBS Clearance.