



# Brighton & Hove Speak Out

## Giving people with learning disabilities a voice



Last year Speak Out supported over **400** people with learning disabilities to have their voices heard. Since April 2020 we have continued to provide support during the Covid-19 pandemic.



### KEY AREAS OF SUPPORT

Top 5 issues addressed in 1-1 advocacy:

1. Accessing Social Care



2. Housing problems



3. Health & Mental Health



4. Transitions for young people



5. Rights of parents with learning disabilities



### OUR SERVICES IN 2019-2020

**244** **ADVOCACY CASES** were delivered, supporting people with learning disabilities to deal with a specific problem



**63** people attended **DROP-IN SESSIONS**, 3 weekly drop-ins were held in venues across the city



**58** members took part in **7 SELF-ADVOCACY GROUPS** and gained peer support, skills and confidence



**82** people took part in **CONSULTATION EVENTS** and had their say about health, social care and other services they use



**100** people took part in **ACTIVITIES** run by the Learning Disability Voices Network



We are the only organisation in Brighton and Hove that offers this specialised support exclusively to people with learning disabilities

### VOLUNTEERS

Over **25** volunteers helped deliver our services

**25**  
VOLUNTEERS

**2,000**  
HOURS

Volunteers gave over **2,000** hours of their time In 2019-20

### WHY IS OUR WORK NEEDED?

People with learning disabilities continue to face discrimination and inequality in many areas of their lives



People with learning disabilities were up to six times more likely to die from Covid-19 during the first wave of the pandemic



Mental health problems amongst adults with a learning disability are more than double the rate in the general population



On average, the life expectancy of people with learning disabilities is between 14-18 years shorter than the general population



People with learning disabilities often lack information they can understand about services, options and their rights

**36%**


of people with learning disabilities say they have experienced hostility, aggression or violence because of their learning disability

**50%**


of people with learning disabilities say they experience extreme isolation and many face barriers to participating in leisure activities

# HOW DOES OUR WORK MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

We support people with learning disabilities in Brighton, Hove and beyond to:



Have their voices heard and bring about positive change in their life



Challenge discrimination and uphold their rights



Access the support and services they need and participate in the community

**80%** of young people attending advocacy groups reported improved self-esteem and confidence

**75%** of people regularly attending drop-ins felt their isolation had reduced and that they had increased support networks

**78%** of those receiving 1-1 advocacy (who gave feedback) said that they were able to make their own decisions and have more control in their life

## WHAT OUR SERVICE USERS SAY...

**"I'd have found lockdown much harder to cope with, the news doesn't explain things very well and we can come here (to a drop-in) and you explain things so that we can understand them"**

**"Coming to the group you make new friends and it gives people something to do in the week and stops people feeling alone. You have someone to talk to about problems"**



**QUALITY SERVICES**

We are accredited under the **National Advocacy Quality Performance Mark**



Recognising quality in independent advocacy



## DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Between April and November 2020 we continued to provide vital support to people over the phone, online and face to face:

**154**  
ADVOCACY CASES delivered over the phone, via video calls and face to face

OVER **1000**  
CALLS made to and from our HELPLINE

**73**  
SERVICE USERS received regular welfare check calls in lockdown

**63**  
people took part in 8 regular online ADVOCACY GROUPS and DROP-IN SESSIONS

**93**  
people and organisations joined our 'HUB AND CHAT' Facebook group

### JAKE'S STORY

"My brother Jake has a learning disability and needed an advocate because he was very unhappy where he was living. His advocate from Speak Out was brilliant, she recognised his communication needs and the best way to work with him. She went out of her way to visit him once lockdown restrictions eased so that he could fully engage in decisions about his move into supported living.



**I feel that without an advocate he would have never moved during this difficult time."**



Speak Out's **'Being Heard in Government'** group won UK Parliamentary Campaign Award for Best Community Campaign 2020



For more info please see our website [www.bhspeakout.org.uk](http://www.bhspeakout.org.uk) or call **01273 421921**  
Charity number: 1076995

