



the  
advocacy  
people

# Considering volunteering?

This pack will tell you everything you need to know when it comes to donating your time to **The Advocacy People**

# We're excited for you to become a volunteer

We are called **The Advocacy People** because we want our organisation to be just that:

*The advocacy people, a group of people working together to deliver what we see as really important services.*

If we are to do this properly, we need to be able to draw on as diverse and experienced a team as possible to reflect and work effectively with our many clients.

We are certain that you will find the experience rewarding and satisfying.

Together, we can help change lives.

This pack contains information which will help you to decide if volunteering is right for you, the types of opportunities available and what to do next to become a volunteer with **The Advocacy People**.



**Matthew Hilton**  
Chief Executive Officer

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# Our commitment to you

We value the contribution volunteers make, not just to our organisation but to the people we provide support and services to, and the local communities in which we work.

It's important to us that a volunteer's experience working with **The Advocacy People** is a positive, effective and enjoyable one.

To ensure we provide a positive and worthwhile experience for our incredibly valuable volunteers, we make sure there is an effective framework in place, to give you the information, training and support you need and that it's appropriate to your role.

## Why our volunteers are so important to us

- The variety of unique life skills, experiences and enthusiasm
- The diversity
- The contribution to local communities
- The time and skills that volunteers donate
- Their contribution to support **The Advocacy People** as an organisation, to provide sustainable, good quality services
- Their ability and willingness to support someone as they may have been helped in the past
- The desire to make the world a better place, to change lives for the better, in whatever way they can



# What is advocacy and why is it important?

We all know how hard it can be when we don't feel listened to, when what's important to us isn't taken seriously by others, or when we don't feel we are able to say what we really feel or want.

This can be even more difficult when decisions are being made about our health and social welfare, care and treatment.

**“My advocate helped me to clarify everything in my own mind and supported me to understand my rights. It made me feel more confident in dealing with a most upsetting and stressful time in my life”**



Advocacy is supporting someone to communicate when they are struggling or communicating on their behalf to; help them say what they want, ensure their rights are being respected, represent their interests and help them access the services they need.

Advocacy promotes inclusion, equality and social justice.



**“Thank you for being with me yesterday. It made me feel stronger. I think I would be powerless on my own, even to be in the meeting”**



# An introduction to **The Advocacy People**

People are at the heart of what we do.

We believe in a society where:

**people** feel in control of their lives and are confident to speak up

**people** who can't speak up for themselves have someone in their corner to speak for them

We've been providing advocacy services since 1994.

Since then we've been through many changes as an organisation, growing and evolving to meet the changing world of advocacy provision.

We provide a range of services to a wide range of society, from working face to face with clients in prisons, acute psychiatric wards and hospitals to helping write letters to GPs and social workers.

An advocate's role is diverse and rewarding.

Our aim is to provide high quality, confidential, independent advocacy.

Our staff and volunteers support clients to have a voice in the way they are cared for, in the services they receive, and in decisions that are made about their lives, assisting them in safeguarding their rights and ensuring that those who are particularly vulnerable and/or excluded have an opportunity to take forward issues which are of importance to them.



# What to expect as a volunteer

Your individual skillset and experiences help us to match you with the right role within **The Advocacy People**.

## Volunteering opportunities

- Volunteer advocates
- Supporting advocates at local drop-ins and networking events to raise awareness of our services
- Supporting administrative work in locality teams
- Supporting trainers at training events
- Participating in recruitment panels
- Being part of our student placement programme (affiliated to local colleges/universities)
- Becoming a member of **The Advocacy People's** Board of Trustees

We are committed to our volunteers, we will ensure that you are armed with the skills and knowledge needed to give you the confidence to carry out your role with us.

We will provide a blend of shadow training, online courses and other resources, relevant to your role.

You will be provided with a detailed induction checklist, a handbook that will equip you with an overview of **The Advocacy People**, our services and our policies and procedures.

Volunteers can expect support from us in terms of a named employee for contact, access to our Mindful Employer Plus scheme, reasonable expenses for travel and the provision of equipment as relevant.

**The Advocacy People** are committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity whilst working hard to ensure we respect people's cultures.

# What to do next

If you would like to apply to become a volunteer with us, please fill in the Expression of Interest form which you can find on the volunteering pages of our website.

If you would like more information or to have a chat about volunteering opportunities, you can get in touch via:

<b>Phone</b>	0330 440 9000
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:volunteering@theadvocacypeople.org.uk">volunteering@theadvocacypeople.org.uk</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk">www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk</a>



Thank you for taking the time to learn about volunteering with **The Advocacy People**.

We hope that you found this information pack helpful and look forward to hearing from you soon!