

# The Advocacy Charter

The basis for Age UK Notts' Advocacy Service



## Advocacy

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# Age UK Notts is committed to working with and for people in Nottinghamshire, enabling them to maintain their independence and quality of life.

*People are entitled to be in control of their own lives but sometimes they may be unable to speak up, make informed choices or represent themselves. Advocates can help to support individuals to ensure that they have a voice.*

**Age UK Notts' Advocacy Service adheres to the definition and principles of the Advocacy Charter.**

## Definition of 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 schemes work in partnership with the people they support and take their side.*

*Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice.'*

- Action for Advocacy

## Principles of the Advocacy Charter

### Clarity of purpose

The advocacy service will have clearly stated aims and objectives and be able to demonstrate how it meets the principles contained in this Charter. Advocacy services will ensure that people they advocate for, service providers and funding agencies have information on the scope and limitations of the services' role.

### Independence

The advocacy service will be structurally independent from statutory organisations and preferably from all service provider agencies. The advocacy service will be as free from conflict of interest as possible both in design and operation, and actively seek to reduce conflicting interests.

### Putting people first

The advocacy service will ensure that the wishes and interests of the people they advocate for direct advocates' work. Advocates should be non-judgemental and respectful of peoples' needs, views and experiences. Advocates will ensure that information concerning the people they advocate for is shared with these individuals.

### Empowerment

The advocacy service will support self-advocacy and empowerment through its work. People who use the service should have a say in the level of involvement

and style of advocacy support they want.

Services will ensure that people who want to can influence and be involved in the running and management of the service.

### **Equal opportunity**

The advocacy service will utilise Age UK Notts' written equal opportunities policy that recognises the need to be proactive in tackling all forms of inequality, discrimination and social exclusion. The service will have in place systems for the fair and equitable allocation of advocates' time.

### **Accountability**

The advocacy service will have in place systems for the effective monitoring and evaluation of its work. All those who use the service will have a named advocate and a means of contacting them.

### **Accessibility**

Advocacy will be provided free of charge to eligible people. The advocacy service will aim to ensure that its premises, policies, procedures and publicity materials promote access for the whole community.

### **Supporting advocates**

The advocacy service will ensure that advocates are prepared, trained and supported in their role and provided with opportunities to develop their skills and experience.

### **Confidentiality**

The advocacy service will use Age UK Notts' written policy on confidentiality, stating that information known about a person using the service is confidential to the service and any circumstances under which confidentiality might be breached.

### **Complaints**

The advocacy service will use Age UK Notts' written policy describing how to make complaints or give feedback about the service or about individual advocates. Where necessary, the service will enable people who use its services to access external independent support to make or pursue a complaint.

Developed as a set of core principles for advocacy, the Charter is designed:

- To inform advocacy practice and training.
- To raise awareness of the value of advocacy.
- As a tool for negotiating with funding and commissioning bodies.
- As a quality assurance mechanism.

Information for this leaflet has been obtained from Action for Advocacy.

**Our vision is for a world in which older people flourish**  
**Every year we help over 45,000 people**  
**We're local & independent - we're here to help people in**  
**Nottingham & Nottinghamshire**



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Volunteering, donating, leaving a legacy or telling your friends and neighbours about our services are just some of the ways that you can make a difference.

Visit [www.ageuknotts.org.uk](http://www.ageuknotts.org.uk) for more information and to sign up to our monthly email newsletter.



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