

*This directory of advocacy services for the Isle of Wight contains a range of information about organisations that provide independent advocacy services. These organisations are committed to key advocacy principles outlined below.*

## **THE ISLE OF WIGHT ADVOCACY CHARTER**

Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice by empowering people. It enables them to express their personal views and needs, thereby achieving their rights and entitlements. It also assists people in securing relevant information and knowledge, enabling them to make informed choices.

### **INDEPENDENCE**

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

### **EMPOWERMENT**

Advocacy supports self-advocacy and empowerment through its work. People who use advocacy should have a say in the level of involvement and style of advocacy support they want. Advocacy will ensure that people, who want to, can influence and be involved in the running and management of the services.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

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

### **SUPPORTING ADVOCATES**

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

### **COMPLAINTS**

Advocacy will have a written policy describing how to make complaints or give feedback about the service or about individual advocates. Where necessary, advocacy will enable people to access external independent support to make or pursue a complaint about their advocacy.

### **CLARITY OF PURPOSE**

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

### **PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST**

Advocacy 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 experience. Advocates will ensure that information concerning the people they advocate for is shared with these individuals.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

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

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

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

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Advocacy will have a 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.