

Independent Advocacy North East



Annual Report 2020



Thank you to our funders and supporters

**Giving a voice to vulnerable and disabled people
since 1995**

About Independent Advocacy North East

Independent Advocacy North East (IANE) is a charitable company, registered with the Charity Commission on 6 October 1995 (Charity No: 1049624) and registered with Companies House (14 February 2012). IANE is an established charity whose business is the provision of independent advocacy services. Independent Advocacy is known as an organisation which has remained true to the values and principles of advocacy and service user involvement and will continue to do so.

IANE's aim is to empower vulnerable people to have their voices heard, to be properly involved in their own care, to have information about their rights and to access the services they need. Our charity aims to continuously deliver high quality advocacy services that are accessible, responsive and appropriate to the diverse needs of different client groups.

Mission Statement 2019

“To enable the voices of vulnerable people to be heard through the provision of a range of independent advocacy services, tailored to the needs of individuals.”

Advocacy provides the support someone needs to express their views, to communicate their choices and to participate in decision making. It can enable people to take more responsibility, have choices and control over decisions that affect their lives. It promotes individuals' overall health and wellbeing by increasing self-determination and on a larger scale helps to promote social inclusion, equality and social justice.

At Independent Advocacy we assist the person to look at options and to be part of the decision making process. We help with: care plan assessments, support plans, reviews of care and safeguarding enquiries or assessments and reviews. We can also help with various issues and concern such as housing, complaints, family, etc.

“If it wasn't for Susan I wouldn't have attended as many appointments. I felt the trust I had in Susan made sure that my voice was shared with others.” *Client comment*

A word from IANE...



Once again like many organisations in the voluntary sector it has been a challenging year. We have undergone a whole organisational restructure, where we have bid farewell to some of our board members as well as a few staff members. We hope they are doing well in their new endeavours. We are now a more streamlined service, and this



has enabled us to come together as a team, to successfully win for the second time our Statutory Service Contract with North Tyneside Council. Covid19 and subsequent lockdown raised even more challenges for keeping IANE operational and although the service has been limited due to hospital ward and care home closures. We want to thank our team for their dedication, professionalism and amazing problem-solving skills in keeping our service going through this crisis. The board and I would also like to thank our funders for not only your financial support but also your support of our charity during lockdown 2020. We would also like to take this opportunity to announce our exciting news. We are officially moving premises. From the 1st October 2020 we will be joining numerous other community groups and moving into Linskill Centre, North Shields. Come along and pay us a visit, we hear they have a wonderful community café.

Dennis Errington - Chair of the Executive Committee

Debbie Shelton – CEO

The Audited Accounts for the financial year 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 are available at the Annual General Meeting and from the IANE offices at 62 Howard Street, North Shields NE30 1AF.

Extracts from the published accounts are included below:

Statement of Financial Activities	2020	2019
Total Incoming Resources	248,527.00	248,652.00
Total Resources Expended	280,872.00	258,463.00
Net Movement in Funds	(42,156.00)	(9,811.00)
Funds Brought Forward	106,514.00	116,325.00
Funds Carried Forward	<u>74,169.00</u>	<u>£106,514.00</u>
Balance Sheet		
Fixed Assets		
Current Assets	81,483.00	113,544.00
Less Current Liabilities	(7,314.00)	(7,030.00)
Net Assets	74,169.00	106,514.00
Represented by Fund above	<u>74,169.00</u>	<u>£106,514.00</u>

Financial Position

Incoming resources in the year were £248,527 of this £93,677 related to restricted activities. Despite sound financial management and the support of staff and volunteers, the Charity has a deficit on unrestricted funds of £38,770 and a surplus of £6,425 on restricted funds.

At 31 March 2020 total reserves were £74,169 of which £67,093 represented unrestricted funds.

Thanks, Farewell and Welcome

Thanks & Farewells

This year the organisation has been through a rationalisation and restructure which, sadly, resulted in us losing members of both the staff team and the Board of Trustees.

We extend our thanks for their service and wish them the best in their future endeavours:

Elayne Alexander; Tony Blair; Natasha Fothergill; David Grieveson; Nathan Johnstone; Elisabeth Robertson; Leah Sowerby.

Congratulations

To Susan Dryland, Advocacy Manager, Angela Goodwin, Project Administrator and Joe Auchterlonie, Finance Administrator in respect of their new roles within the organisation.

Welcomes

This year, we have been delighted to welcome two new members to the Board of Directors—Mark Barrow and Felicity Howgate. They bring high-level skills and experiences to the Board, and you can read more about Mark below.

Meet one of our new Executive Members.....Mark Barrow

I qualified as a Chartered Accountant with KPMG after receiving a first class degree in Mathematics and Statistics from Newcastle University. Since then I have provided corporate finance advice to UK mid-market growth businesses across a range of sectors. I am also a non-executive director of Agatha Christie Limited which manages the literary and media rights to Agatha Christie's works around the world.

Before becoming a trustee, I spent a year getting to know IANE as a result of them winning a grant from The Garfield Weston Foundation to attend the Pilotlight Programme. I am really impressed with their passion, commitment, expertise and strategy and I am keen to support them as a trustee by providing financial and strategic advice. I believe their work is hugely important and gives people in Tyneside a voice when they really need it the most.

Directors

Dennis Errington – Chair

Nigel Dorner – Vice Chair

Felicity Howgate – Exec Member

Mark Barrow – Exec Member

Staff

Debbie Shelton – Chief Executive Officer

Joe Auchterlonie – Finance Administrator

Marc Wilson – Advocacy Case Worker

Louise Coltman – Statutory Case Worker

Susan Dryland – Advocacy Manager

Gillian Goodbrand – Statutory Case Worker

Angela Goodwin – Project Administrator

Shami Hamidi – Advocacy Case Worker

Elsbeth Kirkwood – Advocacy Case Worker

Alison Pringle – Development Officer

Gem O'Connor – Advocacy Case Worker

STATUTORY-BASED ADVOCACY

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)

IMHA cases concern people who are qualifying patients within the Mental Health Act, either formally detained in hospital, under a Community Treatment Order, Conditional discharge or under guardianship. In some circumstances informal patients can also have representation and support from an IMHA case advocate when specific types of treatment requiring additional safeguards are being discussed, for example, Electro Convulsive Therapy or Neurosurgery.

IMHA cases, due to the statutory criteria, are often lengthy and can require a high degree of involvement from a number of professionals. Such cases might even include court proceedings, particularly if the case involves forensic issues. IMHA advocates are extremely valuable in helping inform patients of their rights and of the powers of those involved in their care. Our IMHA service works on a one-to-one basis to help empower people, wherever possible, to take control of their lives by helping them to explore options and make informed choices, encourage people to speak for themselves or to speak on behalf of the individual and support them to be aware of their rights under the Mental Health Act.

The advocates' role is to ascertain the individuals' wishes and agree with them a course of action, support the individuals so that their views are heard, and empower those individuals to put their views and feelings across when decisions are being made about their lives. Advocates support individuals to explore options and make informed choices, encourage them to speak for themselves or speak on behalf of the individuals and support them to be aware of their rights under the Mental Health Act, as well as to exercise those rights.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)

The IMCA service is a safeguard under the Mental Capacity Act for people deemed to lack the capacity to make specific important decisions. The IMCA role supports and represents the person during the decision-making process, making sure that the Mental Capacity Act is correctly used. An IMCA's role and functions can be quite specific under the Act, but IMCAs are always required to produce a report for the person who instructed them. This report is provided to the decision maker and those who instruct IMCAs must pay attention to any issues raised by the IMCA in making their decision and IMCAs may formally challenge their decision-making.

Care Act (2014) Advocacy

Local authorities must abide by the Care Act (2014) and involve people in any decisions made about them, their care and/or their support. No matter how complex a person's needs, local authorities are required to help people express their wishes and feelings, support them in weighing up their options and assist them in making their own decisions. The Care Act (2014) places a duty on local authorities to arrange independent advocacy for any person with care and support needs who has substantial difficulty in being involved and if there is no appropriate individual to support them.

At IANE we assist the person to look at options and to be part of the decision making process. We help with: care plan assessments, preparation of care and support or support plans, review of care and support or support plans, safeguarding enquiries or assessments and safeguarding adult reviews.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (Relevant Persons Representative) (DoLS-RPR)

A manager of a hospital or a care home may decide it is necessary to deprive someone of their liberty if that person lacks capacity, provided it is justified. Justification is established by assessing the person's capacity and the legal criteria concerned, before this decision is made. The assessments must agree that any deprivation of liberty is appropriate and in the persons best interests.

The role of a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Relevant Person's Representative (DoLS-RPR) is to consider whether the justification outlined in each of the assessment reports still applies. The RPR is a further safeguard appointed after the assessments have taken place to review each assessment, meet regularly with the person concerned and review whether it remains appropriate for the deprivation of liberty to continue.

If there has been a change in circumstances since the assessments were written, or the RPR disagrees with the justification outlined, a request can be made to review the decision. This can sometimes involve applying to the Court of Protection to look at the decision. It is therefore an important safeguard for the person concerned. The RPR will represent the views of the person throughout the authorisation at any care reviews.

CASE WORK

Mental Health Case Work

IANE frequently supports people who are socially excluded and without ordinary support networks. Whilst mental health professionals may act in their best interests, the advocate can often be the only person to help them get their own voice heard. Comments from service users have included “Nobody was listening to me until you got involved” and “My mental health is better now I’m getting the support I need”.

Issues have ranged from the need for formal support (e.g. at mental health reviews) to help with community-based problems such as family disputes and housing difficulties.

Our service has seen an increase in use from people who suffer from anxiety and depression. The effect can be very debilitating leaving the person unable to speak up for themselves effectively or make informed choices. Issues such as poor housing, debt or family difficulties can be overwhelming. Our advocates support each person to express their views, make choices and effect positive life changes. Comments from users of this service have included “I don’t feel like I’m on my own now” and “I can see an end to my problems now that you are helping me”.

Physical Disability Case Work

We offer advocacy services to people with a wide range of physical disabilities. More often than not, the person is able to speak up for themselves, but just needs that extra bit of support to enable them to achieve their desired outcome. This year we have helped people appeal against their health assessments, find new activities for them to do as well as communicate to staff.

CARE ACT

Young People in Transition Project

The transition project is now well established in Beacon Hill, Woodlawn and Tyne Met, where we are currently working with 30 young people. Work within these establishments has been invaluable ensuring that the voice and opinions of young people are heard and acted upon. We are still looking for funding to expand and pay towards this project, however we will continue to work with these young people under provisions in the Care Act (2014). Advocacy has continued to ensure that young people’s views are taken seriously and listened to by everyone who is involved in their care, education and future.

Another positive for the young people we work with and ourselves is that we get to know individuals who may become future services users for other reasons. We hope that if they need some assistance in the future they will call on IANE. Or from perviously working with IANE they will have the confidence to advocate for themselves.

Refugee & Asylum Seekers Project

This project is now in its ninth consecutive year. As demand for the project has grown significantly over the years so have the dynamics of the project. The word of mouth amongst service users was and remains our primary method for raising the awareness around Refugee and Asylum Seekers advocacy and how it can support individuals. Many of the people we support are socially isolated, marginalised and left with little or no support to deal with overwhelming and debilitating issues. As well as providing one-to-one case advocacy we continue to facilitate two Refugee and Asylum Seeker Advocacy clinics.

Refugee & Asylum Seekers

Our 360-degree support for this demographic is unique, and thus vital, within North Tyneside.

Mondays 11am–1pm at St Luke’s Church, Frank Street, Wallsend

Wednesdays 11am–1pm at the Baptist Church, Howard Street, North Shields

We have developed mutually-beneficial collaborations with St Luke’s Church which also offers English language lessons and lunches to those in need. These Refugee and Asylum Advocacy clinics provide advocacy drop-in sessions for refugees and asylum seekers.

The clinics allow people to access the service—without an appointment—providing information, signposting and the support to make a referral for an advocate. Much of this work focuses on developing people’s skills and confidence to enable them to self-advocate where possible.

Case Studies

Our Advocates provide an excellent service – read about some of the clients we have helped.

Our work helps many people in a variety of ways. One recent example is of a service user with learning difficulties, autism and mental health; who found it impossible to speak with the council without becoming annoyed and aggressive; resulting in him being asked to leave the building. He simply wanted to know why he had to pay the bedroom tax in his two bedroomed house, which he shared with his wife. He was allocated a case advocate who listened to him, and found out what outcome he wanted. An advocate contacted the council for more information, (after sending written authorisation to the local authority for the advocate to speak on his behalf). After speaking to the housing benefits department, it became clear that if written evidence could be produced stating why a second bedroom was needed – the bedroom tax would be stopped. After speaking with the service user permission was given for the advocate to contact his GP, resulting in evidence which was submitted to the council and the cessation of the extra bedroom tax. This simple communication, made a massive difference to some-one's life, was greatly appreciated.

The recent lockdown meant that we had to adapt our ways of working with care home residents. I first met Ms X as her Care Act advocate at a pre-discharge meeting in hospital. She had suffered an episode of acute delirium adding to a pre-existing condition. It was agreed she would have a temporary placement in the hope she would recover enough to return to her family. Soon afterwards all visits to care homes were stopped. I managed to speak to Ms X on the phone and also using a video link on Whats App and persuaded the care home to enable a similar call to her family, which she found helpful. Unfortunately she was not well enough to go home, where her circumstances had also changed while she was away. As her advocate I was able to listen to how she felt about staying in care. This contributed to the decision to make her placement long-term. Our service will be ready to work with her again in future if needed.

N was referred to our service during lockdown by a previous client. She is an asylum seeker who came to this country a month ago and has recently moved to North Shields where she lives with her husband. She asked for support because she hadn't received her Aspen card which meant they did not have any money to buy food. Our Advocate contacted THE BAY FOODBANK requesting a food parcel for them which they delivered the same day. Our Advocate also emailed the Red Cross to ask them for more support.

When they received their Aspen card our Advocate helped them to active this by calling Sodexo and getting a pin code. Our Advocate is still continuing to help them with regards to applying for Hc2 or registration with a GP.

“Awesome, thank you for your input.” Client comment

What's happening at IANE;

IANE selected to deliver advocacy on behalf of North Tyneside Council

We are pleased to announce that through a competitive tendering process Independent Advocacy North East were asked by North Tyneside Council to, once again, deliver statutory advocacy to vulnerable people within the borough. We are honoured to be asked to take on this important role and will continue to do so with professionalism, dedication and passion.

Through speaking up for someone who cannot represent their own wishes or needs at a critical point in their lives, advocates will often be one of several professionals representing the interests of a vulnerable person. As such our advocates will work closely with North Tyneside Council, GPs, hospital-based medical teams, nursing homes and care homes, as well as with other charitable organisations, in order to get the best possible outcome for each of our service-users. Our team of advocates now comprises seven qualified staff.



North Tyneside Council

- Susan Dryland (Advocacy Manager)
- Louise Coltman
- Gillian Goodbrand
- Shami Hamidi (Asylum Seekers & Refugees)
- Gem O'Connor
- Elspeth Kirkwood
- Marc Wilson.

Thanks to our Pilotlight consultants

In 2018 IANE was awarded a place on the London-based Pilotlight programme (funded by the Weston Charity). This innovative programme matches up a charity that wants to develop certain aspects of their organisation, with a small team of high-level professionals who are willing to share their expertise in those areas. After the initial meeting in London, we welcomed the team of four Pilotlight consultants to our offices for the day. After an informal lunch where staff, Pilotlighters, service-users and advocacy volunteers got to know each other, we spent the afternoon identifying areas of the business in which IANE and the consultants would focus their development programme.

IANE's CEO, Development Officer and Chair of the Board of Trustees, went on to meet our Pilotlight team on a monthly basis over the next year, during which they advised us on the pre-identified areas and projects (often giving us homework at the end of each session!), which supported us in moving the organisation forward in positive ways.

It was a hugely beneficial experience for IANE and as we prepared to say our sad goodbyes at the final monthly meeting two of the consultants asked if they could continue to work with us through joining our Board of Trustees. Needless to say, we were—and are—delighted to have their on-going support, positivity and expertise.

We extend our grateful thanks to the Weston Charity, the Pilotlight programme and their wonderful coordinator, Belinda Johnson, and to our four Pilotlight consultants—Mark Barrow, Felicity Howgate, Alison Pickering and Sarah Williamson—who shared their expertise with great insight, generosity, understanding and humour. We thank you all.



Become a Volunteer with IANE . . .

“ . . . To enable the voices of vulnerable people to be heard through the provision of a range of independent advocacy services, tailored to the needs of individuals”

[IANE Mission Statement]

We offer volunteering opportunities for **Citizen Advocates** to work in partnership with vulnerable people who live in North Tyneside. Advocates listen to and speak up for individuals, ensuring their voice is heard, thus helping them feel that they are a valued part of society.

Volunteering as a Citizen Advocate can also help you! e.g. by gaining experience in the charity sector which could lead to new opportunities, building self-confidence as you learn new skills (including ways of dealing with people), as well as something valuable to add to your CV. Additionally, you will become much valued by the people you work with.

Our volunteers come from all walks of life —from students to retirees. If you are interested in learning more about helping others, or if you have a couple of hours a month to spare please do get in touch with us.

We also have volunteering opportunities for **Trustees** to join our Executive Committee. It is important that a **Trustee/Director** has an understanding of advocacy, the skills and enthusiasm to become an active part of the team and is able to attend board meetings, which are held early evening, every other month.

We would love to hear from you!

For further information about volunteering experiences, please contact:

Susan Dryland – susan@iane.org.uk (for Citizen Advocate information)

Alison Pringle – alison.pringle@iane.org.uk (for Trustee/Director information)

Contact tel. (0191) 259-6662

NB Applicants must be over 18 years of age.

Volunteer Opportunities – Citizen Advocate

Susan Dryland is responsible for the recruitment and training of our volunteer **Citizen Advocates**. She is actively recruiting more volunteers for training. If you would like to talk about the role of a Citizen Advocate, please do not hesitate to get in touch with her. Susan will be more than willing to talk about the role of a volunteer and to answer any of your questions.

Volunteer Opportunities – Trustee of the Executive Committee

We are also looking to recruit more dedicated **Trustees** from all walks of life and work experiences to become a member of the executive committee to help steer IANE forward.

IANE values diversity and welcomes any members of the public who are interested in furthering the aims of IANE, to join our board. It is important that a Trustee is able to devote the necessary time, have strategic vision, an understanding of advocacy, an ability to think creatively and a willingness to speak their mind. Board meetings are held early evening, every two months at the IANE offices, 62 Howard Street, North Shields.

The Work of our Volunteers

Over the last year our volunteers have improved the lives of many people in a variety of ways. Our volunteers have attended professional meetings, including safeguarding meetings, made phone calls on their client's behalf or gone out for a cuppa and a chat. The work of our volunteers ensures that the quality of life of the individuals they are working with improves, because someone is there to listen to them and value what they have to say.



Thank You

Volunteers are the bedrock of our organisation and we would not be such an integral part of the community without them. Our volunteers give up their own time to help others. IANE would like to say a Very Big Thank You to all of our wonderful volunteers – Citizen Advocates and Trustees.

Case Study

One of our new volunteers has been doing brilliant work with his citizen advocacy partner, going above and beyond to improve their quality of life.

He has listened to what his citizen advocacy partner wants, so when he visits him, the meetings are very productive. He reads his partners mail to him and explains any actions that he may wish to take. He has found out information about getting a disabled car badge, and has taken action to help make this happen. He has attended medical appointments, able to assist his partner in explaining what he wanted (because he had spent the time listening to his issues and desired outcomes). He has also managed to help him sell an old boat, which was in the back garden!

He has also shared very positive feedback from a local restaurant, where his citizen advocacy partner visits daily. They are aware of his needs, and ensure they are met e.g. a quiet table and the same meal daily.

There are many more stories from our invaluable volunteers, who we are very proud of.

Telephone: 0191 259-6662

“Thank you for all your help, you have been incredibly supportive and I wouldn't have been able to get it sorted without you.”

Client comment

How to donate to IANE

We are always grateful for any donations, regardless of size, which help us continue with our work in supporting vulnerable people in our community who cannot speak for themselves. If you would like to help support us, there are several ways in which you can do this."

If you would like to donate to our charity please make your cheque out to

'Independent Advocacy North East'

and please post to

**Independent Advocacy North East, Room B14 Linskill Centre, Linskill Terrace,
North Shields NE30 2AY**

Gift Aid

You can increase the amount of any donation you make to us free of charge by completing a Gift Aid form. We will send the form to HM Revenue and Customs who will refund to us the appropriate amount of tax for the amount you donate. Note you must be a tax payer for us to benefit from this.

Forms for Gift Aid declarations can be found on our ['Downloads' section of our webpage.](#)

Give more with Virgin Money Giving

Fundraising for IANE? Raise more with virginmoneygiving.com

You can set up your fundraising page in minutes, and get loads of tips and tools to support you.

Through the page, your donors can easily add Gift Aid, increasing their donation by 20%, and the donation plus 20% is passed onto IANE in full – instantly boosting the amount you raise.



Visit virginmoneygiving.com to create your fund-raising page today and support Independent Advocacy North East.

Donate with Amazon Smile

With little effort you can enable Amazon to donate to IANE! Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net price of all of your Amazon purchases to the charitable organisation of your choice. You simply need to choose your charity by going to: <https://org.amazon.co.uk/>. If you don't already have an Amazon account you'll be asked to give your email and create a password at this point. Then, each time you access Amazon ensure it is via their Smile site: <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/> and they'll donate to your charity each time you purchase. Couldn't be simpler and you will be supporting us to help some of the most vulnerable people in North Tyneside. Thank you!



**Independent Advocacy North East
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Independent Advocacy
North East

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“Just to say a big thank you for all your help over the last year – it’s been invaluable.”

Client comment