

Advocacy Into Action

Sponsor Us!



In these hard economic times, it is amazing what you will find yourself doing for a good cause.

We at Advocacy into Action have found ourselves planning a sponsored walk/crawl up the highest mountain in the British Isles-

Ben Nevis on the 19th of June 2010.

We will be raising funds for Advocacy into Action and the work we do with people with learning disabilities in Falkirk and Clackmannanshire.

If you have any spare pennies, we would be very grateful if you could have a look at our sponsor page.

www.sponsor-me.org/advocacyintoactionteam

If any one is keen to donate the old-fashioned way sponsor sheets are available from our office.



Advocacy Review

In January, Advocacy Into Action joined the other three advocacy providers (Forth Valley Advocacy, Quality Action Group and People First) and the commissioning officers from the Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire, as well as Forth Valley Health Board, to review the current advocacy services and funding arrangements. We have been meeting monthly since then to consider the future of advocacy in our communities.

This has been an interesting process, as we have learned from all the advocacy services exactly what they provide. We have also been learning about tendering, because this is an option the funders are considering. Tendering is different from what we have done in the past when our formal contract (usually known as our service level agreement) with the councils has been agreed every three years. Instead we may be asked to put in a tender which would be considered alongside any other tenders in a competitive way.

We believe that Advocacy Into Action provides the best advocacy to people who have a learning disability. We reach out to hundreds of people a year helping them to have their voices heard. We do this by building a relationship based on trust and we take however long we need to build that relationship.

We are also always thinking about how best to develop what we do and we now have some of the most innovative approaches to advocacy in the country. We pull down thousands of pounds for advocacy through funders like The Big Lottery and Henry Smith to enhance the provision of advocacy and this is a real strength of our organisation and to our independence . However there are major gaps in the provision across the Forth Valley area and a lack of equity within the current funding arrangements which we believe needs to be addressed through this review. We will keep you posted on any developments!

Welcome Debbie!

With Paul moving to the newly funded (thanks again Henry Smith!) Parent's Project, we advertised for an Advocacy/Volunteer Worker and Debbie Allison was the successful candidate (thanks to all those who applied). Debbie started with us on the 10th of May and is already settling in well — she is even keen to join us on our hike up Ben Nevis! Welcome to the team Debbie!



Thank you JD Kitchens!

Thank you JD Kitchens! We have just "made do" with our tatty kitchen



Before

for many years now. Then Nicola asked JD Kitchen if they could help us. They not only came and fitted a brand new kitchen—they did it all for free! Judge the difference for yourself with our before and after photographs! Here are their contact details:

www.jdkitchensltd.co.uk or 99 Mary St, Redding, Falkirk or Phone: 01324631313



After

Annual Review and Business Plan

Usually at this time of the year, we are putting the final touches to our internal review. However this year the Board of Directors took the view that because of the formal review of advocacy services, this would not be the best use of our time. So instead, Elizabeth has been updating our last report to reflect our achievements. This work has now been completed and you can get a copy by calling Nicola or Jenny. In the report you will see that we have managed to achieve the majority of our targets. With regard to those that we have not achieved, they are being discussed at the advocacy review with the commissioning officers. This includes our goals of increasing the advocacy post at Loch View to a full time post and receiving core funding from Forth Valley Health Board.



Working together

For the past year Advocacy Into Action has been working ever closer with Quality Action Group who are based in Stirling. Quality Action Group



is a well respected organisation run by and for people who have learning disabilities in the Stirling area. They promote inclusion and equality, provide training as well as running an advocacy project.

Quality Action Group asked if we would consider providing their advocacy workers with regular supervision and management and we were only too pleased to say yes! Elizabeth has been meeting monthly with Quality Action Group advocacy workers on an individual basis and in their team meetings to support them and the work they do.

Advocacy Into Action and Quality Action Group are currently working on a new contract between the two organisations that continues the arrangement until 2011, when the advocacy review work will be completed and we will have a better idea of what advocacy services will look like.

The Tuesday Group Continues!

Thanks to Cashback for Communities, we were able to fund a group for young people. The group meet every Tuesday evening and have been working hard to update our social networking sites.



Unfortunately, the funding comes to

an end at the end of May. However, thanks to Cheryl the group will continue—only bigger and better! Cheryl has volunteered to support the group until we find additional funding, and already the group are considering a different venue and an extended remit. However in the meantime, Advocacy Into Action would like to thank the members for all their fab work on Bebo, Facebook and MySpace, as well as helping us with our recent video. Thanks guys!