

# A Guide to Professional Advocacy

*Serving the people of Ashford, Tenterden, Hythe, Folkestone, Lyminge and New Romney*



# Independent Advocacy

How Independent Advocacy Can Support You





## **Advocacy is about working together to have your views heard...**

- Advocacy involvement is short term, independent  
Advocates work with people on their specific issues.
- Advocates listen to what you want
- Advocates remain independent – to support you to express your views and wishes.
- Your Advocate will support you to understand and exercise your rights.
- Your Advocate will support you to research information
- Your Advocate will treat you with respect and dignity
- Your Advocate will enable you to be kept informed of progress
- Age UK Advocacy is free of charge

# The Principles of Professional Advocacy

- Your Advocate works for you. Our job is to help you to express the issues that are most important to you.
- Advocacy promotes your independence
- Advocacy helps you to make informed choices based on factual, quality information
- Advocates are totally independent. They do not work for a Local Authority, or the providers of care services.
- Advocacy is a confidential service.
- Your Advocate should offer you a choice about the type of advocacy that suits you best. Some people like one person to act on their behalf, others the support of a group. Some prefer a minimum of support and will advocate for themselves.

## **A Professional Advocate Can ...**

- Help you to speak up and get heard
- Help you to explore choices and options
- Help you to challenge decisions that you do not feel are in your best interests
- Help you to challenge discrimination and abuse
- Help you to understand and exercise your rights
- Help you to make a complaint where you feel badly treated

## **A Professional Advocate Cannot...**

- Give you advice or personal opinions
- Make choices for you.
- Work with you long term
- Complete forms or support work tasks
- Transport you to appointments
- Support or condone discrimination



## Confidentiality

- Unless you request otherwise, all information shared with the Advocate will be kept confidential
- Advocates must disclose information if they believe that the person disclosing the information is at risk or putting others at risk.
- Confidentiality cannot be maintained if a Court or the Police tells the Advocate to disclose the information

## Complaints

- If you are not happy with the quality of the advocacy you have the right to complain
- We have a complaints procedure. In the first instance however please address your concerns to the Chief Executive of Age Uk Ashford who will investigate your concern
- If you are still unhappy you can complain to a member of the Board of Trustees.



## How to make a referral

Anybody over the age of 55 is eligible for our advocacy scheme. We can send you a referral form through the post please write to:

David Chadwick  
Age Uk Ashford  
The Eldercare Centre  
Stanhope Road  
Ashford, Kent

By email – [davidageukashford@gmail.com](mailto:davidageukashford@gmail.com)

By phone – 07912 179 951

Via our website [www.ashfordageuk.org](http://www.ashfordageuk.org)

We also run Advocacy Clinics at The Eldercare Centre, The Joe Fagg Pop In Centre, Tenderden Day Opportunities Service please call for dates

**Thank you for reading this leaflet we**

**look forward to hearing from you**

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