

Brighton and Hove Advice Services Transition Fund partnership project



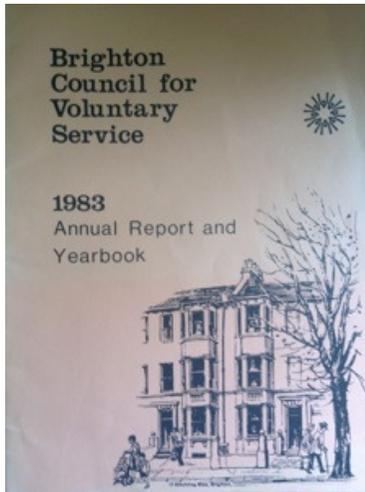
Vicky Watson, Chair Brighton and Hove
Advice Partnership

Paul Sweeting, Brighton and Hove Advice
Strategy Project

Brighton and Hove Strategic Partnership 1st October 2013

Brighton and Hove Advice Partnership

“tackling inequality through the provision of accessible, quality advice and information”



1983: Brighton CVS sets up Advice Services Network to address

“a need to establish closer links between local advice giving agencies in order that common issues might be tackled in unison.”

(Brighton Council for Voluntary Service Annual Report and Yearbook 1983)

Today's presentation

- 'Social Welfare' / 'rights based' advice – what it is and why it matters in Brighton and Hove
- Effective Partnership working – a case study
- The Advice Services Transition Partnership Project - Facing the challenges

‘Social Welfare’ / ‘rights based’ advice

independent advice and assistance with problems around the core areas of

- Debt
- Welfare Benefits and tax credits
- Housing
- Employment rights

And related areas of Family Law, Immigration, Community Care, Consumer Rights

What does Advice Achieve?



Improved Mental Health & Wellbeing:

“the anxiety and depression...it can magnify things that wouldn't seem all that to other people. But I don't worry like I did before...dealing with those problems helped to ease off on the mental health side of things and the anxiety and that. It's really helped me get on with everything else, focus on day to day life”

(former local advice client)

What does Advice Achieve?

Improved Confidence and resilience:

“...wouldn't be intimidated by them again...I have definitely really learnt”

(former local advice client with a consumer / debt issue)



What does Advice Achieve?



Improved:

- Financial Circumstances
- Housing Situation

Local provision and access

- 2011 survey of 11 local agencies estimated that 20,000 residents per year were accessing social welfare advice.
- Initial access through range of telephone or drop in
- Face to face provision largely provided in city centre offices

Getting Advice in Brighton and Hove

Understanding your rights and responsibilities is difficult enough at the best of times. Thankfully there is a range of services and resources that can help answer the questions: 'where do I stand?', 'what can I do?', 'what is the best way forward?' and 'what happens to my benefits if I start work?'

All the services listed on this page offer **free, independent and confidential** advice. Download the [full directory](#) or browse by subject below. To access self help support...

Benefits and Tax Credits

'am I getting the right benefits?'

'Help! my benefit has been stopped...'

'what happens to my benefits if I start work?'

online help
find an adviser

Housing and Homelessness

'I'm in arrears and I can't afford to pay them off...'

'I'm worried I might lose my home...'

'my landlord won't return my deposit'

online help
find an adviser

Dealing with Debt

'I've had letters from the bailiffs and I don't know what to do...'

'I've got less money coming in than I have going out...'

'Should I apply for bankruptcy?'

online help
find an adviser

Advice

All the local advice services are featured on our Google Map.

Key

- 📍 Services open to all residents
- 📍 Services that assist people with disabilities
- 📍 Solicitors offering Legal Advice
- 📍 Organisations hosting advice services



[Click here to access the map](#)

Working together: a Case study

Warm Homes Healthy People programme Winter 2013:

- Short mobilisation period
- 6 agencies participated (CAB, The Fed, MACS, Age UK, BHT & BUCFP)
- Single gateway, standard service offer, common monitoring



Working together: who did we help?

Secured referrals from over 30 frontline services. Of the 232 people we visited:



- 63% had no savings
- 68% were without home contents insurance
- 54% were using key meters to pay for fuel
- 25% had priority debts (e.g. rent, council tax)
- 39% were PRS tenants (34% council tenants)

Working together: Case study – what did we achieve?

£500,261 in positive financial outcomes recorded



- *Project cost: £50,000*
- *Ratio of investment to impact 1:10*

Advice Services Transition Fund

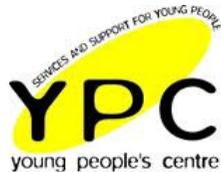
"At a time of great change, it is important that people can continue to access high quality local advice. This partnership fund is designed to help local providers come together and deliver a more coordinated and sustainable service."

Nick Hurd, Minister for Civil Society



Advice Transition Partnership Project

- Collaborative bid by 15 local not for profit providers, led by Brighton and Hove Citizens Advice Bureau
- Bid endorsed by wider Advice Partnership



Advice Transition Partnership Project



•Business Development

- More effective use of existing, collective resources
- New resources and funding for provision

•Service Development

- Improved navigation of services for residents
- Pilot online delivery
- Promote Digital Inclusion

•Social Policy

- Identifying and highlighting trends in demand

Advice Services Transition Fund: Resources

Project commences 1st December 2013. Funding of £326,750 over two years for:

- Business Development Coordinator
- Policy and Impact Officer
- Digital Inclusion and Advice Officer
- Online Advice Officer
- Training programme
- Quality audit for smaller partner agencies
- Website development

Our questions...

- If you needed advice, how would you want to access help?
- How can frontline advisers shape public services?
- Are there opportunities to build better links between the advice sector and the business community in the city?
How might we take that forward?