



We transform the lives of people with a disability or mental health condition by providing the best quality housing, support and employment services to enable them to live the lives they choose, achieve their personal goals, feel valued and know their voices are heard.

Welcome to our end of year edition of our newsletter. We hope you have had a prosperous and successful year and look forward to a new way of working

NEWSLETTER 5 - 2019

LATEST NEWS



Transforming Lives Together



Strategic Plan Update 2019-20

May 2019

Strategic Plan 2019-20 launched

We are pleased to share with you our recently published [Strategic Plan Update 2019-20](#) which sets out Advance's plans and priorities for the last year of our current three year [Strategic Plan 2017-20](#).

We have made consistent progress against our ambitions over the last two years and believe we are well positioned to achieve the majority of the targets and objectives we set in this final year. [Read more](#)



New trustee at Learning Disability England

We are delighted that Debbie Neill, Director of Support Services at Advance, has been appointed a trustee at Learning Disability England. Debbie joined Advance in 2015 and offers a wealth of experience gained from more than twenty years working in health and social care. [Read more](#)



Our response to BBC Panorama

Our Chief Executive, Julie Layton responded to the distressing scenes in [BBC's Panorama programme](#). "Like everyone who watched the BBC Panorama programme we were shocked and angered by the examples of abuse highlighted. We welcome the CQC recommendation to carry out an independent review of the care and discharge plan for each person in a segregation ward for people with a learning disability and/or autism." [Read more](#)



Learning Disability & Autism awards

We were delighted to have been shortlisted for an award in the Learning Disability & Autism Awards for our housing and support scheme Albi Court, Cornwall. This is a block of 8 high specification, one-bed flats, a separate pod for sleep-in staff and communal space supporting customers with learning disabilities and mental health conditions. Although they live in their own flats 24/7 onsite support is available. [Read more](#)



Finalist for WOBA - best employer

We were delighted to be selected as one of three finalists for 'Employer of the Year' at the [West Oxfordshire Business Awards \(WOBA\)](#). We employ more than 50 people at our head office in Witney and around 600 people in total across England. It was a great chance for staff to tell the judges why they like working for Advance and how their careers have been developed and supported by the organisation.

HOUSING AND SUPPORT



How technology can support customers

We are pleased to be taking part in a cross health and social care platform of stakeholders for Cornwall looking at how to make use of technology to maximise health outcomes. The [EPIC Strategic Advisory Group 2019](#) is based at the University of Plymouth and is looking at all aspects of e-health across Cornwall. Any outcomes will feed into our 'personalised technology group' at Advance.



New business

We are pleased to have signed a three year lease with another housing and support provider in North Oxfordshire. This agreement helps Advance fill a decommissioned void property and helps the provider offer housing and support for 16-18 year old asylum seekers. Asset management is a key strategic focus for Advance and we have made great strides over the last year with reducing our void housing stock to either re-purpose, renovate and rent or dispose of stock. If you would like to discuss any housing needs please contact [Ronan Browne](#), Head of Tenancy & Leasehold Management.

HOUSING



A day in the life

Our Senior Housing Officer, Sasha Macaffer was featured in [24 Housing](#) magazine in their 'day in the life' profile. A housing officer's job is varied and complex and no two days are the same. [Read more](#)



Raising the Bar III

The shared ownership team attended the [Raising the Bar III](#) conference recently organised by PMLD link. We were able to share news and information about how HOLD can work for people with long-term disabilities..... more

SUPPORT



Growing PBS services

We are expanding our [PBS team](#) at Advance and find it invaluable when supporting customers with complex needs. One example is a customer in London (PJ) with autism, a learning disability and behaviours that challenge. He was admitted to hospital by his previous support provider due to a heart infection and psychogenic vomiting. Upon discharge to the care of Advance PJ was severely underweight (35kg). The PBS lead carried out a functional assessment and devised a Positive Behaviour Plan (PBP), with proactive and reactive strategies, to help staff understand what PJ needed. This included teaching new skills to promote independence and introducing Picture Exchange Communications System (PEC) to facilitate communications which PJ uses to communicate the activities he wants to do each morning.

Daily engagement means staff can support PJ in creating a structure to his day, which helps to reduce his challenging behaviour. Staff use stress balls and rain tubes to distract PJ from wanting to vomit after eating and they have involved him with the preparation of his food. Activities have also slowly been introduced as his health has improved so that six months on he weighs 50kg. and continues to thrive. For more information contact michelle.o'neill@advanceuk.org



Support on form in Dorset

Advance provides care and support to people with learning disabilities living in six 'supported living' settings in Ferndown, Dorset to live as independently as possible. The services have again been given an overall 'Good' rating from their recent CQC inspection. Inspectors noted that there was a clear referral and admissions process in place which ensured that people received pre-admission assessments and

effective person-centred support during transition between services. People's needs and choices were assessed and care, treatment and support was provided to achieve effective outcomes.

CUSTOMER FOCUS



Annual customer survey

The top line results from our annual customer survey are listed below and we are pleased that that our overall response rate has increased from 23% to 26%. More results will be available when we publish our full customer report in September.

- 14 people filled the survey in online this year compared to 3 last year
- 87% of customers would recommend us to others

The biggest, positive increases are:

- Support customers feeling listened to (86.2% to 92.8%, an increase of 6.6%)
 - Housing customers feeling listened to by their Housing Officer (88.81% to 94.55%, an increase of 5.74%)
 - Support customers understanding information from Advance (74.4% to 80%, an increase of 5.6%)
 - Housing customers knowing who to speak to for advice or information (74.57% to 79.82%, an increase of 5.25%)
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Customer conference 2019

Customers, their families and staff came together at the Winchester Science Centre for our annual customer conference. Andy and Steve (Advance customers who are also trustees of [My Life My Choice](#)) spoke about self advocacy. Workshops included Well-being and Mindfulness, Being a Friend to the Environment, and Getting Your Voice Heard with a member of the Parliamentary Outreach Team. [Read more](#)



Learning Disability Week 2019

We were proud to support LD Week again this year. Mencap's research showed that, of the people they surveyed, 1 in 3 spend less than 1 hour outside their homes on a typical Saturday and that 49% would like to spend more time outside their house. Customers and staff marked Learning Disability Awareness Week at our customer conference with a workshop on physical movement and keeping active. Although the theme for the week was sport and inclusion, we looked at how to keep active, how to engage with activities in the community and how that makes people feel.

STAFF AT ADVANCE



Long Service in Luton

Chief Executive Julie Layton visited Luton Services in May for lunch with customers and staff where she also presented Long Service Awards to four members of staff.

Julie was delighted to present the awards and praised

staff for their hard work and dedication to their work over the years.

*Justine Griffiths, Service Manager for 25 years service

*Mary Smith, Rachel Redmond and Sonia James for 15 years service each



Staff conference

Advance employs around 600 staff across England and once a year there is a conference arranged for them to meet up. It's led and organised by staff and a great opportunity to put faces to names and hear about the important issues facing the organisation. This year staff heard from their colleagues describing their roles and how they support customers.



Mental Health Awareness Week

Advance engages with staff and customers for three national awareness campaigns each year. In May it was Mental Health Awareness Week and the theme was body image. This can mean different things to different people so we decided to focus on why we think our bodies are amazing despite the challenges many of us face. Nicola from our head office Finance Team tells us why her body is so wonderful. [Read more](#)

USEFUL LINKS

Useful links ►

We are proud to be involved with or members of the following organisations and support the good work they do to improve the lives of customers with long-term disabilities and mental health conditions.

- [Voluntary Organisations Disability Group \(VODG\)](#)
- [Association of Mental Health Providers \(AMHP\)](#)

- [Charity Works](#)
- [Learning Disability England](#) (LDE)
- [National Housing Federation](#) (NHF)

DIARY DATES



Looking ahead



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marketing@advanceuk.org

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