



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.



I am pleased to share with you our newly published Strategic Plan Update 2018-19 which sits alongside our three-year Strategic Plan 2017-20. We are pleased with the progress we have made in the first year of our three year strategy. Customer satisfaction is exceeding our targets, our customers feel they have a meaningful say in our work and employee engagement is strong. We have also worked with commissioners and other partners to develop new services and maintained our financial stability, so that we can invest and grow. The full document can be accessed on our [website](#).

During Mental Health Awareness Week our staff and customers enthusiastically showed their support by organising walks, art projects, mindfulness training and a BBQ. Although lots of fun was had the underlying message about managing stress before it has a negative impact on your health and well-being was taken seriously. We also supported Mencap's Learning Disability Week 2018, the other campaign we actively get involved in. This year's theme around fair access to good healthcare is very relevant to our customers. Earlier in the year we set up a health and well-being project team to look at this issue and how we can support customers to enjoy better health.

Thank you for your continued interest.



Julie Layton, Chief Executive

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## NEWSLETTER 3 - 2018

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You receive this e-newsletter because we either work with you already or you have subscribed via our website. Either way, and mindful of new GDPR legislation, if you wish to stop receiving these updates simply click [unsubscribe](#) below. For information we have recently updated our [privacy policy](#) and we promise never to share your contact information with a third party. We hope you continue to find this newsletter of interest.

### LATEST NEWS



#### Advance head office a 'Safe Place'

Visitors to our head office in Witney may notice we have a new sticker on the reception door. That is because we are now part of a national scheme to provide '[Safe Places](#)' which helps vulnerable people if they feel scared or at risk while they are out and about in the community and need support right away.

Shops, businesses and cafes who display this sign are

part of a growing network of organisations which will offer help if a vulnerable adult is being harrassed, feels anxious or confused.

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### **Mental Health Awareness Week 14-20 May**

Advance supported the [Mental Health Foundation's](#) awareness campaign, themed around stress, with a range of activities for staff and customers. This included an introduction to mindfulness, wellness walks, BBQ and art projects. Research has shown that two thirds of us experience a mental health problem in our lifetimes, and stress is a key factor in this. [Read more](#)

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### **Introducing David Mell**

David joined the Board of Advance in September 2017. This follows a thirty year career at IBM and, over the last eight years, roles on the Boards of a number of NHS Providers, Commissioners and other organisations. Most recently David was Non-Executive Director and Vice Chair of Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust from 2013 to August 2017. [Read more](#)

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Transforming lives together



Gender Pay Gap Report 2018 -19

### Gender pay gap report

Our [Gender Pay Gap Report](#) was published in March. Chief Executive, Julie Layton, said: "At Advance our mission and values strongly reinforce the equality and opportunity for all employees, irrespective of gender. I am proud to form part of a strong workforce of women."

We employ three women within our Group Management Team of five staff. We have a balance of both male and female Board members and appointed a female Chair in January 2018.

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### Supported Loving webinar

If you missed the recent webinar with our Customer Engagement Manager, Rachel and Dr Claire Bates, the founder of Supported Loving you can listen in [here](#). In it they discuss the importance of good support in making and maintaining relationships, focusing on relationships for people with learning disabilities.

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## SUPPORT



### Worting Road rated 'Good' by CQC

We are delighted that our registered care home on Worting Road in Basingstoke was given a 'Good' rating overall in a recent unannounced inspection. We are particularly pleased that inspectors observed that our customers were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives. [Read more](#)

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### **What happens when you reduce support hours?**

Our Chief Executive, Julie Layton is also a trustee of the Association of Mental Health Providers (AMHP). She has written a blog for their website about the research Advance carried out into the impact of reduced support hours on our customers with mental health conditions.

[Read more](#)

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### **Hampton Mews marks its second anniversary**

Customers, their families and friends, staff gathered to celebrate the second anniversary of the opening of the Hampton Mews, a supported living scheme in Kidderminster where Advance provides support services. Team Lead, Victoria said, "It was great for everyone to get together as staff and customers really love being here. It was great to see so many friends, family and others join us to celebrate our second birthday. "

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## HOUSING

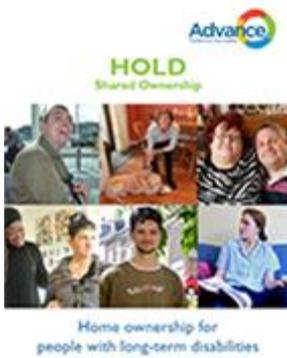


### **New Housing Developments**

We are currently in discussions with a number of county councils in the South East about possible sites for development for supported housing.

The number of applicants for the shared ownership programme delivered through the Home Ownership for People with long term disabilities ([HOLD](#)) continues to increase. 10 HOLD units have completed with a further 27 properties identified. Six flats in Camborne, Cornwall have completed, potential customers have seen the flats and are making applications. They will be assisted in their transition from a secure ward in the area.

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### Shared ownership

Do you know someone who would benefit from shared ownership? HOLD (home ownership for people with long-term disabilities) is a government supported scheme for those wanting to purchase a property through shared ownership. It is a great opportunity to buy a property on the open market for those who fit the criteria (they must be over 18 and in receipt of certain benefits). Advance is one of the foremost providers of shared ownership to customers with learning disabilities and/or mental health conditions. [Read more](#)

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## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



### Employment win in Chelmsley Wood

A scheme to help dozens of disadvantaged and long-term job seekers in north Solihull get into work has been given the go-ahead. The Employment Support Pilot will give people in Chelmsley Wood tailored job advice and specialist support in the heart of their own community.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has awarded Advance Housing the contract to set up and deliver the three year scheme starting this summer.

[Read more](#)

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### Meet the team

Our Employment Team held an event in Wolverhampton giving customers the opportunity to meet local employers, and for employers to consider the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. Job seekers who are supported by our Employment team also attended to find out more about available opportunities, training, and available aids and adaptations to help people with

disabilities in the workplace. [Read more](#)

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### **Success for James**

James joined the Advance Work Choice programme in November 2017 as a customer. From their first meeting staff could see that James was extremely motivated and professional, with a burning desire to get into paid employment as quickly as possible.

With this great attitude as a foundation we employed James under Advance's Supported Business Placement scheme. James worked in our Northfield Outreach Centre for three months and spent his time helping the staff to give support to others. [Read more](#)

## AWARDS & ACCOLADES



### **Shortlisted for National LD & Autism Awards**

We are delighted that two Advance employees have been shortlisted for the Learning Disabilities & Autism Awards. Michelle has had positive results using Positive Behavioural Support with a customer with very complex needs and behaviours that challenge.

Martin has worked at Advance for 15 years in a variety of roles and brings that experience into the training courses he designs and delivers for staff, customers and contractors. [Read more](#)

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### **Advance Pride awards for staff**

Every quarter, we hold PRIDE awards to recognise members of staff who have gone above and beyond what is expected of them while demonstrating our PRIDE values. There is an award for each value; Partnership, Respect, Innovation, Drive and Efficiency,



as well as a Team Award.

There were excellent examples from; a Support Worker who stayed out of hours to help customers deal with a friend's death, one of our administrators who took an innovative approach to developing a new monitoring system and, an employee in our IT team who was previously an employment customer, has shown that no job is too small in endeavouring to resolve technical issues.

## CUSTOMER FOCUS



### **Staff and customers had a ball at customer conference**

Advance customers and staff from around the country had a ball at our annual customer conference in mid-June at the Kassam Stadium, Oxford. More than 100 customers attended from across the country, as well as staff from all services. What a busy and fun day we all had.

Workshops were held on a range of topics including:

- keeping safe in the community with Thames Valley Police
- how to maintain good health and well-being
- planned maintenance
- DIY -common fixes
- health & safety in the home
- equality & diversity
- STOMP (stop over medicating people with a learning disability or autism)
- getting your voice heard

[Read more](#)

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**Questions (Please tick ONE circle for each question)**

1. Overall how happy are you with the service you get from Advance?
- Very happy   
  Quite happy   
  Quite unhappy   
  Very unhappy
2. Do you feel Advance staff do a good job?
- Always   
  Nearly always   
  Sometimes   
  Never
3. Do you know how to tell Advance what you think of their service? (Good or bad!)
- Yes   
  No
4. Do you know how to make a complaint if you are unhappy with Advance?
- Yes   
  No
5. Do you feel comfortable making a complaint?
- Always   
  Nearly always   
  Sometimes   
  Never



## Customer satisfaction survey

Early results from our annual customer survey are proving very positive. Each year we use it as an opportunity to find out which of our customers want to get more involved in the design and delivery of our services such as having meaningful input on interview panels for new staff and a range of other activities. It also helps us find out where we are getting things right or not quite right in our housing, support and employment services. The full results will be combined into our Customer Report 2018 and will be available on our website in September.

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### Advance collective meets in Bournemouth

The Advance Collective is the new name for the National Forum, which brings together customers from across the country to give feedback and have their say on how Advance's services are run. [Read more](#)

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### Getting together in Dorset

"Let's Get Together " is a customer-led social & activity group set up by Advance customers in Dorset. Customers decide on what activities they want to do together and what they want to talk about. Our Support Workers then help customers create an itinerary that gets sent out to everyone in the group. [Read more](#)

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### Royal celebrations

Our customers got into the spirit of the Royal Wedding celebrations, congratulating Meghan and Harry by holding parties in Dorset and Windsor. In Dorset customers made their own scones, wore crowns and waved their union jack flags while watching the events live on TV.

Customers in Windsor decided not to venture into town, but dressed up and threw their own party at home. Everyone was

particularly excited to see Meghan and her mum driving past on their way to Windsor Castle.

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## LOOKING AHEAD



### Dates for the diary

- Early July: Results of the annual customer satisfaction survey available
- 31st August: Starts at Home Day, National Housing Federation
- 4th September: Advance Collective meeting in Luton



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[Website](#)

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