

## London Advice Strategy Support project

The project is funded by City Parochial Foundation under the priority area 'strengthening the voluntary sector'.

The aim of the project is to sustain the not for profit agencies that are offering advice to the most disadvantaged and isolated people in London. By promoting a bottom-up, integrated network approach to advice services, we hope to ensure that migrant and refugee community organisations, CABx, law centres and independent advice agencies move towards sustainable integration that offers Londoners enhanced access to legal advice on issues such as homelessness, debt, benefits, immigration, employment and education.

The project will offer 1-2-1 support to 6 borough advice forums and local authorities per year to help them develop advice funding strategies. The advice strategies will promote more joined up work and improved referral capabilities locally, allowing better access to a wide array of advice services encompassing legal aid providers, local authority services, community groups and equalities organisations. The project will use templates to help guide local agencies to participate in the process, with focus groups and meetings to encourage local agencies of all sizes to feed into the strategy when appropriate for them.

In addition, the project will offer campaigning and influencing skills training to advice agencies and, drawing on good practice case studies, will develop a briefing and training on the alternatives to commissioning advice services.

AdviceUK London has expertise in: organisational development, training and quality assurance development work with independent advice providers; advice services consultancy; policy and networking with local authorities, funders and regulatory bodies (OISC, LSC); partnership development; and the development of inclusive borough-based forums of advice providers. Our consultation work with Hackney and Tower Hamlets has also demonstrated our ability to have a positive impact on advice strategy design and partnership development.

### The project will have the following outcomes:

- improved quality of advice strategies and advice commissioning strategies;
- improved access to joined up advice services for people seeking advice, including up to date information on current advice services available and how to access them;
- improved advice integration and partnership working within boroughs;
- more sustainable advice services;
- improved campaigning/influencing skills for advice agencies;
- improved social justice through improved, sustainable and integrated advice services.

The findings of the work will be incorporated within the advice strategies, and go into AdviceUK's *State of Advice in London* annual publication. Learning and materials developed during the project will be shared with advice forums across the country. All local authority bodies and advice agencies will be able to access templates, case studies and samples of strategies through AdviceUK's website.

If you are interested in accessing the London Advice Strategy Support Project, please contact **Katy Bobin, Development Consultant** on [katy.bobin@adviceuk.org.uk](mailto:katy.bobin@adviceuk.org.uk) or phone 020 74695700 or **Artie Singh, Development Assistant** on [artie.singh@adviceuk.org.uk](mailto:artie.singh@adviceuk.org.uk).