

What has the Advice Services Transition Fund done for us?

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Advice Services Alliance

- 'Meta' umbrella body for the independent advice sector in the UK
- Set up in 1980 by the Consumers Association and the advice networks
- Members are Citizens Advice, Law Centres Network, AdviceUK, AgeUK, Shelter, Shelter Cymru, Scope and Youth Access
- In excess of 2000 local advice giving outlets
- Range from small un-resourced community based outlets to large national charities

The Advice Quality Standard



Advice Services Alliance: Objectives

- champion the development of high quality information, advice and legal services
- ensure that people are not denied access to such services on account of lack of means, discrimination or other disadvantage
- encourage co-operation between organisations providing such services
- provide a forum for the discussion of issues of common interest or concern to advice organisations.

Current work streams 2015

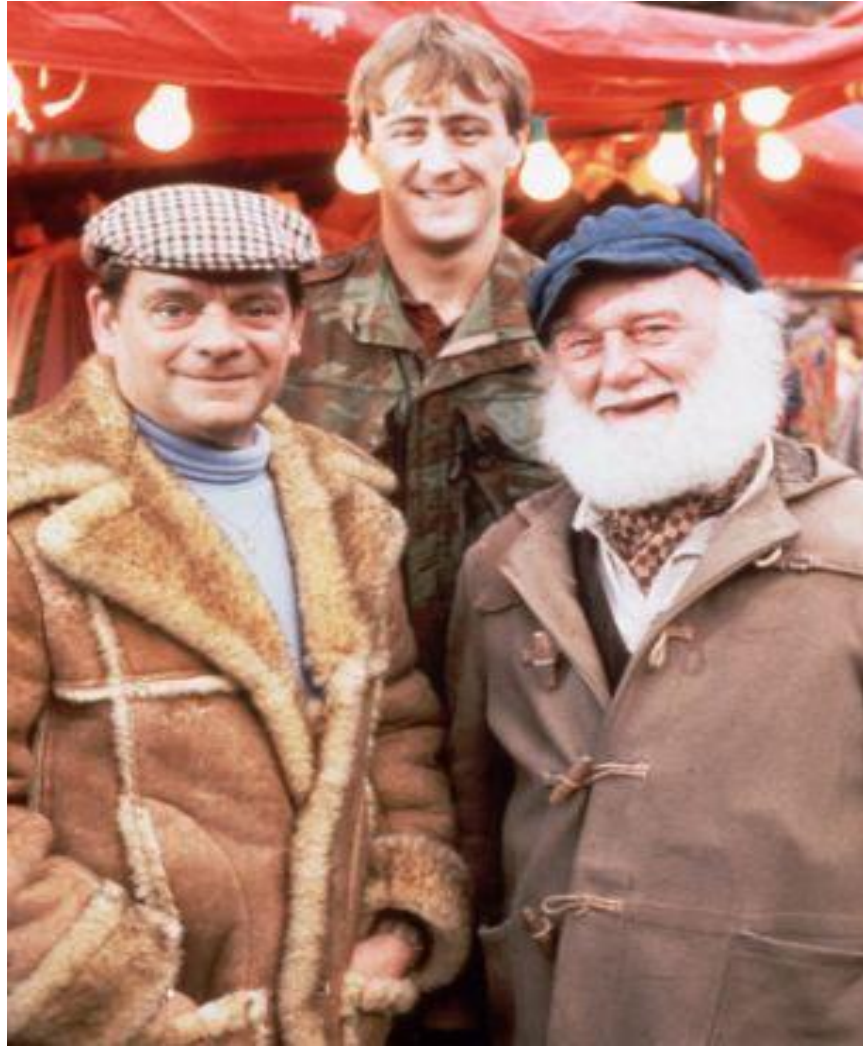
- Manage and develop the AQS and quality
- Learning and Support for ASTF Partnerships
- Research in Health Outcomes and Advice
- Voice for the advice sector
- Liaise with key stakeholders

If our partnership was a garden.....

Take 5 minutes to think about what your partnership might look like if it were a garden.

- What are the key features of the design?
- How has the weather, nature and the gardeners changed what the finished garden looks like?

Theory 1: Diversify Income Sources



Theory 2: Develop more efficient practices



Theory 3: New ways of advice giving



Theory 4: Catch people early



Sustainability verses Resilience

Sustainability

- Synonymous with organisational survival
- Key measure that we keep going
- Key ability to maintain line and continue in time tested practices

Resilience

- Synonymous with continued service delivery
- Key measure that we provide a service to those in need
- Key ability is to bounce back and to adapt

Partnership = Trust

Three dimensions to trust:

- Trust of Judgement
- Trust of Motive
- Trust of Competence

Building trust takes time and hard work, it is often hard won and easily lost

What's happening Nationally

- Engagement with BIG and others over what next
- 'No More Money'- austerity continues and very limited BIG/LA funds
- Political scene- Elections and new Ministers (unknown quantity)
- Low Commission- LowCom2 due to be published in March 2015
- Ministry of Justice Survey on access to advice- field work January 2015
- Health Outcomes Work- promising but confusing picture due March 2015
- Care Act 2014- Commissioning advice and information strand from HWBB
- New partners in advice giving including Pro Bono Community
- Litigants in Person strategy (family courts particularly)

What can you do locally

- Make sure you use the ASTF money to work for you in the long term
- Engage your local authority in writing a local advice strategy
- Open up sensible conversations with commissioners
- Stay visible to all parts of the democratic process and to the public
- Keep collecting your local evidence and use it
- Build a multi faceted funding strategy
- Collaborate as much as possible with as many partners as possible
- Focus on quality and depth of advice as well as quantity

But if you only do one thing....

- Stay very close to the communities you serve
 - Involves your clients in all aspects of the work
 - Engage with local groups
 - Find out what matters to them

It costs nothing but time and will return in many ways

And finally....

“We believe the evidence shows that not only is there a need for advice services now but if anything a strengthening of provision to tackle the increasing problems that people are likely to bring in the next few years”

- Advice Services Crisis Working Party 1979