

# What is a Citizen Advocate?



Citizen Advocacy is a unique role between two people. Taking Part's Citizen Advocates are volunteers who mostly support adults with learning disabilities and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder (referred to as partners) within Shropshire. A partner may support an individual with a mental health diagnosis.



Many Citizen Advocates chose to support one person. They build a relationship with their partner over time, supporting them to ensure their voice(s) are heard.



An advocate is:

- an ordinary person who is prepared to listen to another person who finds it difficult to express their opinions or have them listened to (the advocacy partner).



- someone who is independent of services (e.g. the local health authority, social services, support service providers, education services and day centres).



- someone who will help an advocacy partner to be heard by others and express their individual wishes, views.



Is training and support provided?

Training is provided for anyone who thinks they would like to become a Citizen Advocate for Taking Part. The training may be conducted in groups or on a one-to-one basis at a time and place to suit the volunteers.



All volunteers receive regular support through their assigned Citizen Advocacy Project Coordinator.



What does Taking Part expect from their volunteer Citizen Advocates?

Citizen Advocates achievements do not stop with the tangible outcomes, they also offer personal support and friendship which has real meaning.



Volunteers are asked to

- listen and observe their partner and value what they say.
- become familiar with their partner's routine and opportunities. If relevant, explore alternative opportunities and activities with their partner.
- keep in touch with their partner and coordinator.
- support their partner to find out about their choice and support them to solve their own problems.
- help their partner to make their own choices





## How to get in touch

If you would like to find out more.

Or think you would like an Citizen Advocate.

Please contact us on  
01743 36 33 99

Or email  
[takingpart@takingpart.co.uk](mailto:takingpart@takingpart.co.uk)

