



# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



# AMBASSADORS' REPORT

We start with our Ambassadors, as they are key to guiding our work. We work in partnership with them on all our major decisions. They've had another busy year! Here is a summary of what they've been doing between April 2022 and March 2023:



We went to the Birmingham City Football Ground to give a talk to Learning Disability Nurses about CASBA and shared our experiences.



Martyn and Janet did some learning disability awareness training for members of staff at Lloyds Bank while other Ambassadors spoke to customers.



We wrote a chapter for the Citizenship Book being written by Building Bridges. This book is being made so that people from health and social services can understand the challenges that people with learning disabilities face every day.



We made videos asking people to donate to CASBA's Big Give. We talked about how CASBA has helped us become more independent.



# 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023



We went on walks to help raise money for CASBA's 500 miles challenge, which raised over £2,000. The walk from Kings Norton along the canal was 6 miles long!

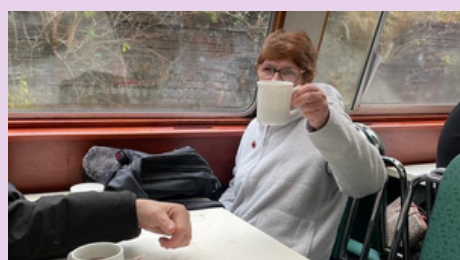


We went to the Kings Norton Beach special day for families with children who have special needs.

We made some playdough before the day. We took it with us and played with the people who came. It meant we could also talk to parents about our experiences.



We made videos and leaflets to help people with learning disabilities understand what to do about domestic violence. These are on the CASBA website and YouTube.



It wasn't all hard work! We got funding from Mencap for activities, and we visited the Botanical Gardens, went on a canal boat and went bowling.

# The year in numbers



**£303,430**

raised in grant funding



**514%**

increase in people engaging with our Facebook posts.



**230**

people donated to CASBA's community fundraising campaigns.



**85%**

of the parents we worked with have needed support from food banks due to the cost of living crisis.



**35**

years since CASBA started supporting people leaving Monyhull Hospital

# CASBA stories

The names have been changed to protect our citizens' identity.

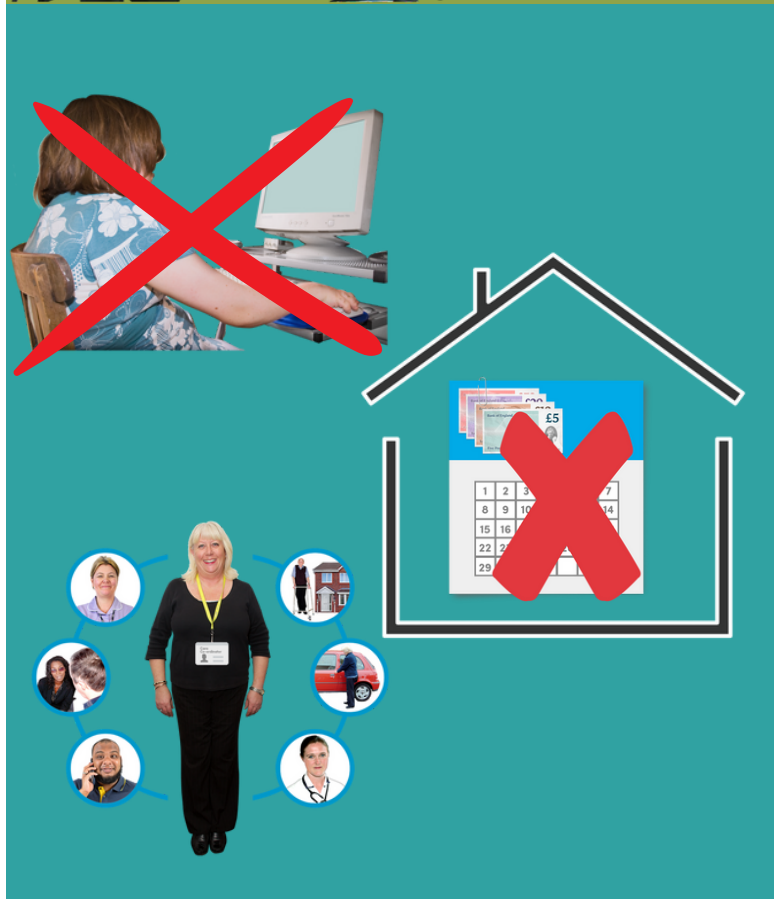


## Eva - crisis advocacy

Eva asked us for help so that she could take care of her health and feel better. Without family help, she finds it hard to go to her health appointments and understand what the doctors and nurses tell her. She feels like they don't listen to her.

With the help of her advocate, Eva can now say how she wants to be helped and is listened to. She gets reminders to make her health appointments and stay on top of her health.

Eva says that having an advocate has made her feel happier and more confident. She feels like she's in charge of her health now.



## Mandy & Mary - Forward Carers

Mandy needed help with housing problems because she doesn't know how to use a computer. She couldn't get help with money for housing, because the forms are online.

Mary cares for her, but had trouble getting answers from the agencies, and it made her really stressed. Our advocate arranged a care review for Mandy and Mary, so they could share their thoughts and feelings.

The advocate also made sure Mary knows about the Carers Hub and the help they can give.



# LINK Self Advocacy Group



The LINK group started meeting in November 2022. We meet every two weeks on a Friday at Touchbase Pears. We were the first CASBA group to meet there and it has been a good place for meeting with lots of different people.

The aims of the group were agreed:

- To be a voice
- To engage
- To create
- To shape



We have done this. We've been meeting with people from different community groups, we've worked with artists and gone to events, but we've only just started. There will be much more to tell next year.

**"I was scared when we were teaching the social workers with Belvinder, Michaela and Jen, but I enjoyed it." John**



"I have learnt a lot, and I am more confident in myself. I feel safe in the group and don't feel judged. It feels equal in the group" Jo



The group is co-chaired by Jen and Rita, who are supported by Sally.



# West Midlands Self Advocacy Network



My name is Rita Lee. I am a link worker for CASBA working with West Midlands Self Advocacy Network (WMSAN). As well as CASBA, our group includes:

- Hereford Mencap
- Dudley Voices for Choices
- Our Way - Kidderminster
- SATA - Solihull
- Speakeasy Now - Worcestershire

We worked on three main projects over this year:

## **1) Housing project**

We want to make housing more accessible to people with learning disabilities. This will allow them to stay in their homes. We are hoping to make councils make the application process easier for people who need housing.

For people who live in care homes, we challenge enforced bedtimes that mean people are going to bed at 9pm.

## **2) Hate and Mate Crime**

We did research showing this is a big issue for people with learning disabilities. It turned out this was affecting a lot more people than we thought. We also showed that there aren't enough 3rd party reporting centres. These are places that aren't police stations, so people feel safer to report hate and mate crime there.

## **3) Health Project**

We aim to make sure everybody can access medical treatment and have a health passport. We also got a safe quiet space added to local hospital where people could wait.



# Pregnancy to



CASBA has a long history of supporting parents. Our new project aims to reach pregnant women as early as possible. Some examples of the things we do are:

Go with moms to appointments about them and their baby's health.

Help parents to understand information and fill in forms.

Put parents in touch with other local services that will help.

Produce materials for women to learn about keeping themselves and others safe.

Support parents to prepare for the arrival of their baby.

Organise groups for parents with a learning disability and children to make friends.

90% of our parents are now on the learning disability register for the GP. This means extra support.

92% of our parents need support with the cost of living. Household support grants, clothes and baby equipment secured.

"I have really enjoyed to coming to CASBA for the baby group with the other moms and their babies because I feel lonely in my flat once my other children are in school" – new mom





# Parenthood

"I don't have to wake up to me thinking, what mood is he in? Is he going to start now? I don't have to live in fear, I can be my own person" - Freedom Programme participant

"It was a privilege to watch their journey and see them emerge more informed and empowered at the other end of the training." Staff reflection

The Freedom Programme



The majority of people who experience domestic violence are women. Our version of The Freedom Programme is a course designed to help women with learning disabilities understand what has happened to them and their children as a result of domestic violence.

We run this course in small groups and one-to-one to build trust and maximise learning opportunities.



Mellow parenting is an early intervention programme for Moms and Dads with a learning disability. It aims to create positive, successful relationships between parents and children.

"For some of our parents this is the first opportunity to embrace their pregnancy, as many around them have only expressed their negativity towards them." Staff reflection

# My Money Matters

My Money Matters provides advocacy for adults (18 years and over) who need support with knowing about and claiming benefits, budgeting, and avoiding or dealing with debts.



We have run regular workshops and peer learning sessions on topics such as claiming the Household Support Fund, financial awareness, cooking on a budget, food pantries, fuel poverty and support for keeping citizens' homes warm.



We have supported citizens with 1:1 person-centred holistic support. There have been lots of complex and challenging cases, including:

Supporting citizens with welfare claims and applications, including new PIP and Local Welfare Provision applications.

Supporting citizens to speak up and challenge unfair decisions and information that is not accessible to them.

Giving support and guidance regarding debt, understanding entitlements, rights and housing issues.

Support to access vital healthcare and wellbeing services.

Supporting citizens to access food bank vouchers and fuel vouchers.

# Crisis Advocacy

Crisis Advocacy project work supports citizens who have a learning disability to get support with a wide range of issues. We help with anything which is impacting or could impact negatively on their lives.

## What is Crisis Advocacy?

Here are a few examples of the work our advocates do:

Liaising with the council housing department regarding repairs or to move to more suitable housing accommodation

Liaising with a GP surgery due to safeguarding health issues, as well as liaising with health services around appointments.

Supporting citizens to send a typed letter to the benefit agency to give an update of circumstances.



Resolving issues with a voluntary work placement with another charity to ensure the citizen can continue volunteering

Contacting the Department for Work and Pensions to resolve payments issues using their online messaging system as citizens aren't able to use it.

Making calls or sending text messages to citizens, informing them of current services and resources available to them.



# Fundraising



**This year our community fundraising took off!**

**We will walk 500 miles!**



We held our first ever 500 miles challenge and had a fantastic result, raising over £2,000. As well as raising money, lots more people heard about us because the people taking part shared messages on social media. Also, everyone enjoyed getting some fresh air and exercise with friendly, encouraging people. Thanks to everyone who took part and donated.

**Our first Big Give**

We raised even more money in our first-ever Big Give Christmas Challenge. Thanks to generous support from Lloyds Bank and the Reed Foundation, every donation made by our supporters was doubled and we managed to raise more than our target of £4,000.



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# and Communications



## Grant fundraising

This year, we've seen a big increase in restricted funds for projects like Crisis and our new project My Money Matters. We also saw a 220% increase in unrestricted grant funding this year. These grants are vital to CASBA's sustainability.

## Business partnerships

We continue to have an extremely productive and much-valued relationship with the local branches of Lloyds Bank. As well as helping us with the Big Give, they raised thousands of pounds for us in their branches.

We began a relationship with global IT company SCC in March. More on this next year!



## Our new website

Our much-anticipated new website was launched this year, along with fresh brand guidelines and a new logo. We now have a site we can be proud of, which is accessible, easy to use, and can help us to raise more money. In the coming year, we will provide online courses through the website to generate more money for CASBA and a private area for those taking Freedom and Mellow parenting courses.



# CEO'S OVERVIEW

CASBA is 35 this year. As we celebrate this milestone it's good to reflect on how things have improved for people with learning disabilities and changed for CASBA.

At the beginning of the year, we launched a new project called My Money Matters which in this cost-of-living crisis has been much needed. At capacity within weeks, it has remained so ever since. We provided crisis advocacy with zero criteria so we could be there to help no matter the issue. And Pregnancy to Parenthood continues to provide support to parents with learning disabilities keeping families together. There is no other project like it in Birmingham. Our staff, volunteers, trustees, and citizens all working together and speaking up is at the heart of all this. We raised more money this year, and we worked on our five-year strategy, published at our AGM. We now have our plan for success and will help CASBA become ever stronger. CASBA is unique in Birmingham. We will continue to speak up alongside our citizens on the platforms that matter improving lives and making long-lasting change. Citizens are heard and their voices are included in the decisions that are made. It's been a busy and productive year.

**GINNY CULLEN** Chief Executive Officer

**"We will  
continue to  
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that matter"**





**"Our  
Ambassadors  
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new strategy  
to appointing  
staff."**



# VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

This has been a time of growth and development for CASBA in which we continued to put citizens at the heart of the charity. Our Ambassadors have been involved in every decision, from writing the new strategy to appointing staff. They have spoken at conferences and training events, been involved in training nurses and social workers, and taken part in consultations. Last year, we welcomed one of the Ambassadors, Martyn, to the Board of Trustees. Our new website demonstrates our commitment to use Easy Read and Easy Speak. We are working hard to make sure we do this all the time.

CASBA's staff have worked hard to make a difference to the lives of the citizens they support. Each project has become more important because of the cost-of-living crisis. This affects us all, but can affect our citizens more than others.

Through taking part in fundraising events such as the Big Give, and 500 miles our staff and volunteers helped us to exceed our fundraising target.

I would like to thank Ginny, the staff, Ambassadors and volunteers for their dedication and hard work this year. I hope you enjoy reading about their work in this Annual Review.

**JACKIE POUNTNEY** Chair of Trustees

# CASBA stories



## Julie's story

Julie found it hard to go to health appointments. She couldn't understand what people said to her. She felt nobody was listening to her when she went to appointments.



Our advocate helped Julie to make appointments and go to them. Now she feels in control and understands what is happening. Her mood is better and she feels more confident.



## Elizabeth's Story

The midwife referred Elizabeth to us. She was 22 weeks pregnant and felt unsafe where she was living. We met with Elizabeth, who was highly anxious and tearful in case she lost her baby because social services were involved.

The advocate worked with her to understand all her options and issues. The advocate then supported Elizabeth to move somewhere where she will be safer and better supported.



# Financial statement



## Annual accounts for the period

Period start date

01-Apr-22

To

Period end date

31-Mar-23

## Section A Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Endowment funds £	Total funds £	Prior year funds £
<b>Income</b>					
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	13,960	-	-	13,960	9,905
Grant income	29,326	274,104	-	303,430	166,803
Interest income	321	-	-	321	14
Other income	200	3,691	-	3,891	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>43,807</b>	<b>277,795</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>321,602</b>	<b>176,722</b>
<b>Expenditure (Note 3)</b>					
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	4,201	7,402	-	11,603	-
Charitable activities	21,265	234,507	-	255,772	201,474
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,466</b>	<b>241,909</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>267,375</b>	<b>201,474</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>	<b>18,341</b>	<b>35,886</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>54,227</b>	<b>- 24,752</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	<b>2,918</b>	<b>- 2,918</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses):</b>					
Gains and losses on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use	-	-	-	-	-
Other gains/(losses)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>21,259</b>	<b>32,968</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>54,227</b>	<b>- 24,752</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward	76,364	18,569	-	94,933	119,685
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>97,623</b>	<b>51,537</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>149,160</b>	<b>94,933</b>

The accounts show that our hard work in raising money from different sources (income diversification) is paying off. We have managed to keep our costs extremely low - only 4% of our expenditure, to achieve a 224% increase in unrestricted income - money that we decide how to spend. We look forward to seeing this grow even more over the next few years. This will give the charity a much stronger financial base from which to fund the activities our citizens want us to provide.



# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Without the generous support of everyone who has donated to CASBA in 2022-2023, we wouldn't be here today.

We have been fortunate to be supported by some very large grant funders, such as National Lottery Community Fund, Henry Smith Charity, CAF Resilience Fund, and Wesleyan Foundation.



Their support is invaluable, but last year we were also lucky enough to be supported by 230 individuals who donated to our fundraising campaigns and believed that their money would make a difference. It has made a massive difference. Thank you.



As a charity led by citizens with learning disabilities, we make sure that everything we do is improving the lives of people with learning disabilities. From one-to-one advocacy with people in crisis to delivering training sessions to groups and recording videos that will be seen by thousands of people, our work has an impact.

By giving a monthly donation, you could help us do even more, giving the gift of independence to more citizens who want to live fuller lives.

