



Introducing SOVA & Nottingham Independent Visitor Service

SOVA have over 40 years' hands-on experience delivering services to people with complex needs throughout England. SOVA were delighted to be awarded the Independent Visitor service on behalf of Nottingham City & Nottingham County Council in November 2017, and are pleased to report that under their careful watch the service thrives.

Staffing Structure November 2017

In November 2017 one member of staff underwent the TUPE process and joined SOVA as Volunteer coordinator; however, at that time the member of staff was on maternity leave and therefore the new structure included a temporary volunteer coordinator and service lead. Some volunteers transferred but inevitably others chose to retire from volunteering.

Volunteers

SOVA were and remain grateful to the volunteers transferring from the outgoing provider, indicative of their commitment to their role. SOVA were entirely reliant upon their good will as it was necessary to repeat paperwork already in existence with the outgoing provider. Due to data protection, details could not be transferred. This was an important time of careful volunteer management to reassure volunteers that they were in safe hands. Therefore early meetings were arranged to meet with existing volunteers and gather the relevant information.

Young People

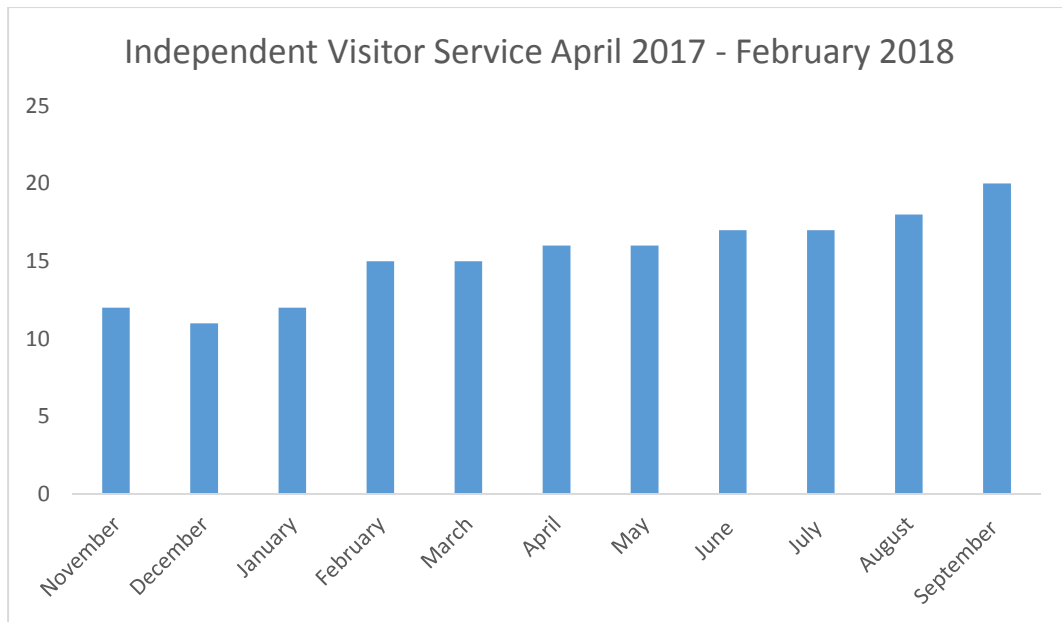
In the same way, the outgoing provider were not able to share anything more than the name of any young person referred into the service. Staff were engaged in a lengthy process of chasing names, details and outstanding paperwork for all young people requiring a service. Risk assessments and referral details were needed for all which for safety reasons needed to be completed by social workers. SOVA has a responsibility to deliver a safe service and could not rely upon hearsay or historical knowledge, paperwork trails need to be water tight.

Independent visitors Nottingham City

- November 2017 - 12 matches were transferred to SOVA
- Current Matches 20
- 29 new referrals received since start of contract.
- 13 new matches
- Current waiting list 10 young people

NB: Independent visitors Nottingham County

- November 2017 zero matches transferred
- 7 matches made; 10 young people awaiting a match



Scrutiny & Transparency

- SOVA meet quarterly with commissioners to share information and review progress. By means of discussion and a detailed report commissioners are able to monitor the service at regular intervals.
- SOVA gather data and develop and assist projects by sharing best practice. SOVA have robust internal reporting in place to ensure feedback from young people and volunteers is captured and utilised.
- SOVA have 10 independent visitor services across England and draw upon the resources of sister services to assist in volunteer recruitment.

Looking after our Young people and our volunteers

- Five separate training sessions across both independent visitor service + rolling training program accessible to all IV volunteers across Sova
- Sova HUB support for targeted volunteer recruitment across Sova nationally so OOA's can be matched more easily
- Partnership working has developed with Derby University & Nottingham providing training facilities and access to social worker students to recruit volunteers.
- Existing volunteers have regular supervision with staff.
- Quarterly peer support meetings are held where volunteers can share ideas and experiences
- Staff meetings are held fortnightly.

Promotion of the Service

- Sova have attended IRO meetings in the City and County to update and generate referrals
- Sova continue to advertise through do-it.org, indeed and through local CVS's, Universities

- Sova have developed publicity materials flyers, postcards and posters and this was done through the Children in Care Council.

Moving Forward

In conclusion, we are pleased with the progress made during the first year. Recruitment of volunteers is established with regular training scheduled. The volume of referrals received demonstrates a continued demand for the service; waiting time on the IV service has been dramatically reduced in some cases young people have been matched within weeks of a referral being received. We intend to continue with this same momentum into the second year of service and anticipate exceeding the targets set by commissioners.