



Case study

Lighthouse referred Sarah (not her real name) to AVoice.

Sarah had a learning disability which made it hard for her to understand information; make decisions and engage with services.

She lived alone in a flat in Bristol and became a victim of crime. The incident left her feeling vulnerable and intimidated.

Sarah's case was assigned to an AVoice advocate who visited her at home.

After meeting Sarah, it became clear to the advocate that the incident was not isolated. In fact, it was one of many committed against Sarah over many years. She had been targeted because of her disability.

She had made complaints to the police in the past but felt they had been dismissed (without sufficient investigation) as she had not been able to communicate effectively with them (due to her disability).

The advocate became a single point of contact between herself, Lighthouse and the Police. They directly liaised with both agencies on her behalf and relayed information from her to them and vice versa. They used communication tools and documents in 'easy read' formats to enable Sarah to better understand information about her case.

In addition, the advocate also referred Sarah to a local organisation with expertise in supporting adults with learning disabilities. The agency provided support and advice appropriate to her needs such as helping her with housing matters and developing a personal safety plan.

The advocate kept in regular contact with Sarah and the case eventually progressed to trial.

The advocate understood that due to her learning disability, Sarah would need support to communicate effectively whilst giving evidence therefore, they arranged for the appointment of a registered intermediary to help her through the process. The advocate went along with Sarah and with support from them and her registered intermediary, she was able to give her best evidence in court.