



Supporting advice in London: a review of infrastructure needs

Research by: Alison Lamb/ADP Consultancy
Edited by: Paul Treloar/Lasa



london advice services alliance
an expert resource for advisers



Funded by the Home Office

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Contents

Executive summary	<i>page iv</i>
1 Introduction	<i>page 1</i>
2 Current infrastructure support	<i>page 5</i>
3 Research findings on future infrastructure support needs	<i>page 8</i>
4 Strategy and action plan	<i>page 12</i>
Annex 1 Advice network infrastructure support	<i>page 15</i>
Annex 2 Research data	<i>page 22</i>



Executive summary

The independent advice sector is a key component of London's Voluntary and Community Sector. Over 700 organisations form a considerable and distinct constituency, providing vital advice and information about rights, entitlements and responsibilities on issues such as housing, employment and income maximisation for individuals and communities within inner and outer London. It is widely recognised that socially excluded people face a disproportionate number of these problems, and that if problems are not dealt with quickly, more can occur as a result.

The infrastructure support to the independent advice sector is well established and high profile, being primarily delivered by advice networks such as Age Concern London, *advice*^{UK} London, Citizens Advice London region, Law Centres Federation London unit and Youth Access. This research demonstrates that the infrastructure support provided by these networks is well used and highly valued.

In terms of future need, independent advice organisations identified priorities related specifically to their advice giving functions. These include:

- Ensuring the need for advice is taken into account in local plans, as well as local, regional and national policy development
- Securing funding for advice work
- Identifying and training sufficient advice staff
- Ensuring staff and board members work effectively together to plan advice services
- Demonstrating outcomes and the impact of advice work
- Resourcing organisations with ICT and being able to use ICT effectively in advice giving.

In commissioning this research, the advice networks are committed to exploring an increased strategic and collaborative approach to providing infrastructure support, whilst retaining their individual niche provision. Any strategy for future development of London's independent advice should prioritise:

Making the case for advice – the key challenge is ensuring that infrastructure providers work more effectively with London stakeholders, such as Association of London Government, Greater London Authority and Government Office for London, to raise the profile of advice, and its contribution and impact on key social objectives. The potential to enhance the structure and co-ordination for policy and promotion should be explored.

Responding to workforce development needs – the research has indicated ongoing issues with the recruitment and training of advice staff as well as a gap in the provision of support for management. A range of approaches have been identified to develop a more coherent approach to the provision of support.

Planning and developing services to adapt to change – the research was undertaken at a time of considerable change for independent advice providers, for example, the new Community Legal Service strategy and changes to the Association of London Government grants scheme. Much of this change is impending and organisations have highlighted that it is a high priority that they are supported and assisted in responding to such changes.

Increasing organisational infrastructure – the research confirmed a distinction between the support needs of larger and smaller organisations, particularly for smaller community-based organisations where advice may be just one of a range of services provided to meet the needs of their local community.

1

Introduction

There are over 40,000 voluntary and community groups in London. The voluntary and community sector (VCS) makes a huge contribution to the lives of Londoners, providing a range of services and support to the capital's diverse communities.

Infrastructure support¹ is provided to these organisations by a wide range of national, regional and local organisations eg Council for Voluntary Services (CVS). Research for the London Regional ChangeUp Consortium on mapping London VCS networks² found over 200 regional and sub-regional networks providing infrastructure support in London.

A key component of the London VCS is the independent advice sector that forms a considerable and distinct constituency. Over 700 organisations³ provide vital advice and information about rights, entitlements and responsibilities on issues such as housing, employment and income maximisation for individuals and communities within both inner and outer London. Advice organisations provide free legal advice to London's most socially excluded communities.

The London advice sector is uniquely diverse with a large percentage of organisations being staffed by and delivering services to specific communities eg BME, refugee, lesbian and gay, young people, older people and women's and disability groups.

Infrastructure support for these advice organisations is primarily provided by their advice network organisation eg *adviceUK* London or Citizens Advice London, or London wide infrastructure organisations such as London Advice Services Alliance.

The scope of this research

This research seeks to identify the infrastructure needs of the advice sector in London. It was undertaken by ADP Consultancy, an independent consultancy organisation on behalf of the Advice Sub-Group of the

London Change Up Consortium consisting of *adviceUK* London, Age Concerns in London, Citizens Advice London, DIAL UK, Law Centres Federation London Unit and Youth Access and convened and supported by London Advice Services Alliance (Lasa). These groups also meet up, with others, as the London Advice Forum⁴, which aims to work collaboratively and strategically around issues affecting advice provision within Greater London.

The aim of the research is to identify the infrastructure needs of frontline advice agencies and to establish recommendations that will allow the capacity of these organisations to be developed and sustained within an independent context.

In particular, the research identifies the specific support needs that relate to advice giving functions that cannot be met by generic infrastructure support.

The environmental context for the research

This research was undertaken at a time of change for organisations in relation to infrastructure support and the social and political environment they operate in. This section highlights some of the main issues facing the independent advice VCS by reviewing the approach of key stakeholders. It also summarises the funding environment that the sector works in.

ChangeUp

In devising the themes for the survey, the main strategy used was ChangeUp⁵. ChangeUp is intended to have a major impact on the infrastructure support available to organisations.

ChangeUp aims to ensure that *“by 2014 the needs of frontline voluntary and community organisations will be met by support which is available nationwide, structured for*

1 Functions and services such as support and development via training and consultancy, co-ordination, representation and promotion to front line organisations.

2 Janice Needham and Jean Barclay, Mapping Voluntary and Community Network May 2005, Government Office for London.

3 An estimate based on advice network membership data and additional local forums.

4 London Advice Forum includes *adviceUK* London region, Advice Services Alliance, Age Concern, Citizens Advice London region, DIAL UK, Homeless Link, Law Centres Federation London Unit, Legal Action Group, London Advice Services Alliance, and Youth Access.

5 *ChangeUp: Capacity Building and Infrastructure Framework for the Voluntary and Community Sector*, Home Office, 2004.

maximum efficiency, offering excellent provision accessible to all, truly reflecting and promoting diversity and sustainably funded”⁶. The ChangeUp Framework⁷ provides a guide to how support should develop over the next ten years. Key support needs for the sector are identified as:

- Performance improvement in frontline organisations
- Developing a highly effective workforce
- ICT support and advice
- Governance of frontline organisations
- Recruiting and developing volunteers more effectively
- Financing voluntary and community sector activity.

ChangeUp infrastructure support includes national hubs based on the themes above and the provision of funds to each English region (via Government Offices setting up Regional Consortium) to identify areas and activities that need developing in line with the aims of ChangeUp.

Production of the London wide Plan for ChangeUp is being co-ordinated by London Voluntary Sector Council (LVSC) working with the London ChangeUp Regional Consortium (LRC). The LRC is currently finalising this plan. The plan will identify gaps and duplication in infrastructure and suggest how infrastructure can be configured to deliver effective, sustainable services and best meet the needs of users. In addition, local Council for Voluntary Services (CVSs) are producing a plan for each of the London Boroughs. The LRC operate with ten sub groups that take forward existing regional projects and develop proposals for new activity in line with agreed and emerging priorities. Lasa convene the Advice sub group.

London stakeholders

Advice providers make key contributions to social and economic themes that concern a range of London stakeholders and address regeneration and social inclusion initiatives.

Association of London Government

The Association of London Government (ALG) invests over £27m a year in voluntary organisations on behalf of all the London councils. They fund more than 400 organisations, with individual grants ranging from £5,000 to £500,000. Grants are given in a wide range of areas including: regeneration, homelessness, health and social care, culture, legal advice, etc.

Some 79 advice-specific agencies are currently funded through the grants scheme, with many others funded through other areas of the scheme. All of the grants are made to organisations seeking to tackle disadvantage and promote social inclusion, as well as to improve the lives of people who live in, work in and visit London. The services delivered by London’s advice sector are at the forefront of this strategy.

However, the 2006 local authority elections have changed the political landscape of London with eight London Boroughs changing political control and the Conservative party gaining overall control of the ALG. There is uncertainty about which service areas will be agreed as priorities for future funding at this stage, and there have also been concerns over borough contributions and the spread of services in inner and outer London.

The ALG has also recently undertaken a review of their grants process to investigate their future role and scope in funding the voluntary sector. Recommendations from this review include a move towards commissioning specific priority services forming part of a pan-London pattern of provision, which poses a further challenge for the advice sector in joining up service delivery.

Local authorities

Many local authorities work closely with local advice providers to address issues such as regeneration through Neighbourhood Renewal initiatives. However, there are severe pressures on local authority spending from a variety of sources, some arising from statutory requirements for public services whereas others, including independent advice provision, are not a statutory duty.

A total of fifteen London local authorities are signed off for Local Area Agreements (LAAs)⁸ under Round Two of a national roll out. By April 2007, every local authority will need to have a LAA, demonstrating their vision for improving services to local people, based on local needs and priorities.

The primary objective of a LAA is to deliver sustainable communities through better outcomes for local people in 4 key areas of:

- Children and young people
- Safer and stronger communities
- Healthier communities and older people
- Economic development.

A key challenge for the independent advice sector is how to influence and inform these developments and

6 *ChangeUp: Capacity Building and Infrastructure Framework* p. 7, Home Office, 2004.

7 *ChangeUp: Capacity Building and Infrastructure Framework for the Voluntary and Community Sector*, Home Office, 2004.

8 A Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a three-year agreement setting out priorities agreed between the Government Office for a region (Government Office for London) and a local area represented by a lead local authority and other key players via the Local Strategic Partnerships.

ensure that the income maximisation achieved by advice work is included with agreed outcomes frameworks.

It is clear that the provision of advice services can help to meet many of the outcomes related to these 4 key themes, but without specific advice-related outcomes included, it may become increasingly difficult for advice services to secure local authority funding in future.

Government Office for London

The Government Office for London (GOL) represents central government across the capital, delivering policies and programmes in the London region on behalf of ten central government Departments. GOL's 5 key priority areas for 2006/07 reflect the 5 areas of the LAA process:

- Making London more healthy
- Making London safer
- Making London more sustainable (including greener and cleaner)
- Investing in London's children
- Developing London's economy.

The advice sector delivers a range of advice that address these priority areas including advice on employment, housing and welfare rights. Community organisations within the sector increasingly deliver advice alongside employment CV, computer and language skill classes.

Further, recent research by the Legal Services Research Centre⁹ (providing an in-depth and long term study into civil legal problems) identified that a third of justiciable problems experienced could affect people's health, with 18% of problems leading to stress-related ill health and 16% leading to physical ill health. The availability of advice can begin to address this issue.

Greater London Authority

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is a strategic citywide government for London whose main areas of responsibility include economic development, environment and health.

The GLA vision for London is based on three interlocking themes including:

Social inclusivity to allow all Londoners to share in London's future success

Legal Services Research Centre research¹⁰ highlights how addressing civil legal problems early can ensure adverse outcomes such as ill health, unemployment and homelessness can be deterred, so enabling improved

social inclusion. The advice sectors role in ensuring access to advice and information for London citizens should play a key role in achieving this aim.

Further, it is clear from many of the GLA strategies that the role of independent advice services is crucial to their success, or otherwise, in meeting stated aims and objectives. The latest Children and Young People strategy has an Action Point that:

The Mayor will work in partnership with the Association of London Government, the boroughs, the Regional Legal Services Committee and advocacy providers to support the development of improved access to advice and advocacy services for children and young people in London and explore the potential scope and funding for a Londonwide children and young person's advocacy unit.

There are also specific strategies relating to Housing Advice, problems with Refugee and Immigration Advice, as well as related aspects in the Domestic Violence and Tackling Poverty strategies.

It is felt that the GLA could have a valuable role in co-ordinating independent advice provision across the capital, bringing together key strategic agencies to ensure that all London citizens can access appropriate and accessible advice and information services.

Legal Services Commission

Nearly 100 voluntary sector advice providers in London hold Legal Services Commission (LSC) contracts to deliver publicly funded legal aid advice across a variety of social welfare topics such as welfare benefits, debt, housing, employment, etc. It is estimated that there are a further 600 voluntary organisations in London who hold the Community Legal Service (CLS) Quality Mark for advice at Assisted Information or General Help level.

These organisations will all be affected by the new CLS strategy¹¹ that aims to create Community Legal Advice Centres (CLACs) in areas of high social deprivation¹² as well as inviting organisations with a legal services contract to apply for Preferred Supplier status. The intention of the Preferred Supplier strategy is to concentrate on fewer larger contracts with fewer larger agencies. There are proposals to introduce new contracts from April 2007 that will bring solicitors firms and Not for Profit contracts into line. All of these developments would appear to mitigate against smaller, community-based advice providers being able to access LSC funding in future.

More immediately, the CLS Strategy has introduced uncertainty about the future of the CLS Quality Mark. This issue, and others, has been raised by survey

9 *Causes of Action: Civil Law and Social Justice*, Second Edition, LSRC Research Paper No. 14, Norwich: The Stationary Office. Publication date: March 2006.

10 *Op. cit.*

11 *Making Legal Rights a Reality*, Legal Services Commission, March 2006.

12 Stated as being local authority areas with over 50,000 benefit claimants and a high population density.

respondents and is referred to in section 3. Similarly, the demise of the LSC's participation in Community Legal Service Partnerships (CLSPs)¹³ was underway during the research period. This research sought to explore the value of partnerships and other forums that have emerged to replace or enhance the CLSP role.

The funding environment

The advice sector operates within a particularly challenging funding environment:

- ALG funding has been subject to reprioritisation over the years
- Local authorities vary in their commitment to advice
- Time limited funding is a predominant feature eg neighbourhood renewal funds
- Number of charitable funders in London no longer fund advice work
- Impending revisions of Legal Services Commission funding
- Social enterprise is an emerging feature with a number of frontline advice organisations delivering training and support, while maintaining free access to advice services.

In addition, addressing full cost recovery and VAT have raised training and information needs for organisations. Commissioning of services and greater VCS involvement in the delivery of public services are increasingly common.

Methodology for the research

The research sought to identify what infrastructure support the independent advice sector need to work effectively in the environment identified above. The methodology for the research consisted of three phases.

Survey

ADP devised and undertook an online and postal questionnaire survey based on the ChangeUp themes identified above with a wide range of advice providers:

- Members of each of the advice networks eg Age Concerns in London, *adviceUK* London, Citizens Advice London, DIAL UK, Law Centres Federation London and Youth Access
- Organisations that tend not to have been specifically set up to provide legal advice but instead are called on to provide advice and information alongside existing service provision. Both Evelyn Oldfield Unit and Women's Resource Centre members were included in the survey
- Inner and Outer London borough organisations.

Stakeholder meetings

Issues arising from the survey were then explored with a range of stakeholders including a diverse spread of London forums. This included meetings and discussions with:

- Citizens Advice Directors
- An emerging debt partnership
- Ealing Advice Forum
- London Law Centres Forum
- Tower Hamlets Advice Forum
- London Youth Advice Forum.

Consultation

Issues arising from the research were discussed with the Advisory group as the research progressed and this final report incorporates the basis of a future strategy for developing infrastructure support agreed by that group.

¹³ CLSPs worked in local authority areas, with funders and providers of advice across voluntary, public and private sectors to plan local advice provision.

2

Current infrastructure support

As indicated in the previous section, the advice sector in London is wide-ranging and makes a significant contribution to strategic developments for London. Existing advice sector infrastructure support from the advice networks is well established and is the main source of support to these organisations. This section provides an overview of the organisations that participated in the survey and their current pattern of infrastructure support.

The London advice sector infrastructure

The infrastructure networks that exist to support these providers are primarily the advice networks: *advice*^{UK} London; Age Concern in London; Citizens Advice London; DIAL UK; Law Centres Federation London; Youth Access and London Advice Services Alliance (Lasa).

All but Lasa are membership bodies. Lasa provides a range of infrastructure support services to advice providers. Details of infrastructure services provided by these organisations are at Annex I.

These infrastructure organisations have a track record in collaborative working and have worked on joint projects eg the Quality Development Initiative (QDI)¹⁴.

The research sample

Membership data was collected from each of the advice networks together with advice giving organisations from Evelyn Oldfield Unit, Women's Resource Centre and the Refugee Council. This ensured that the sample was representative of the diversity of advice VCOs and the geographical coverage they provide including inner and outer London Boroughs.

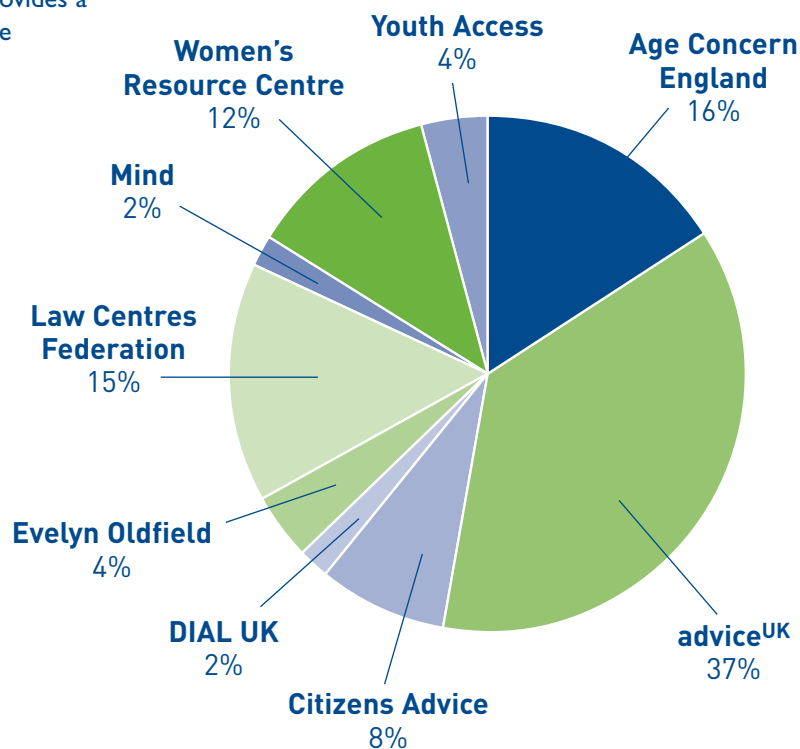
The survey was distributed to over 500 advice providers. 103 responses were received. The network breakdown is in the chart below.

The organisations that responded included:

- 24% BME organisations, 11% women's organisations, 10% disability organisations
- Organisations from twenty seven London Boroughs with nearly 50% of the sample being organisations from Outer London Boroughs.

A further eighty individuals were consulted at stakeholder events.

Primary network



¹⁴ QDI was a London advice services development project, hosted by Lasa and managed by a consortium of advice networks: Advice UK, Age Concern, Citizens Advice, DIAL UK, Law Centres Federation, Refugee Council and Youth Access. The Community Fund and the Association of London Government funded the project from 2001–2004.

Support accessed

Organisations were asked which areas of support they had accessed over the last 12 months. (See graph below.)

Organisation responses demonstrated that the main areas in which support was accessed were funding, developing staff and issues relating to quality. In addition a considerable number of the sample also accessed ICT and governance support.

Support for a number of organisations tended to be holistic ie across several areas:

We have had unparalleled support from our networks this year in all the areas above. Amazing. Very positive experience overall.

Organisations also identified the value of constant support as they face unpredictable and individual needs for support eg dealing with funding crises and personnel issues such as disciplinary matters as well as daily operational challenges:

Our network offered excellent support and advice tailored to our needs. We could not have continued to offer a service without their help during our recent funding crisis.

Eight organisations had not accessed any external support in the last 12 months. These organisations were smaller organisations and tended not to be aware of potential sources of support.

Where support was accessed

65% of the organisations had accessed support from their advice network organisation. Of those accessing support:

- 61% had accessed support in developing staff including advice training, management support, management consultancy
- 57% had accessed support in relation to funding

- 51% had accessed support in relation to quality.

Local authority officers were also identified as providers of support with 30 respondents accessing support from them. This support from local authority officers tended to be accessed in the London boroughs where officers work closely with the advice sector eg Tower Hamlets and Southwark.

A further 30% of organisations had used their own funds or secured bursaries to access one to one support from independent consultants, pro bono legal support or other training organisations eg Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG).

There was less use of CVSs (24% of the sample), or National ChangeUp hubs (8% of the sample).

Organisations with an LSC contract reported using the ASA CLS Support Project (14 organisations). Advice specific support was particularly valued:

“ASA CLS Support – their work with staff has been excellent”

“Having access to specific training on LSC contract matters has been invaluable”

Factors affecting access

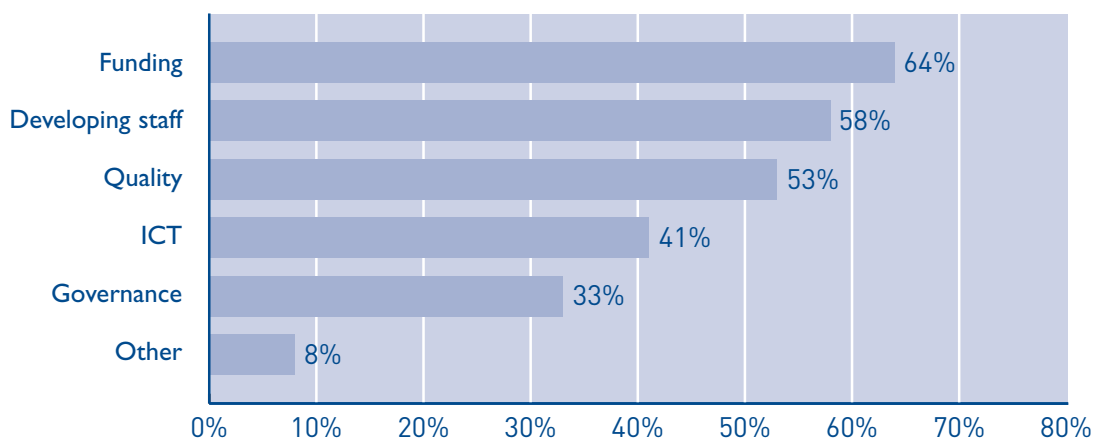
Respondents were asked what factors influenced whether they accessed support or not.

Organisations valued support that:

- Helped achieve what they wanted to do
- Was available when they wanted it
- Helped gain new skills or knowledge.

The survey responses tended to show a high awareness of the availability of support, ie, once in an advice network, attention is drawn to other sources of support such as free training or funding opportunities via information bulletins and network meetings.

Which areas of support have your organisation accessed over the last 12 months?



The organisations that responded to the survey tended to be in one of the main advice networks eg *advice^{UK}*, Citizens Advice, Law Centres Federation or Age Concern. Youth Access and DIAL membership were less likely to respond.

When support was not accessed it was due to:

- Lack of awareness that it was available
- It being too expensive
- It not being delivered in an appropriate form eg one to one.

Again, the organisations that had not accessed support tended to be the smaller organisations. These organisations raised other issues in relation to support:

- Infrastructure services tend not to meet urgent or crisis led support
- Clashing dates for free courses/workshops mean have to choose
- Courses tend not be targeted or focused on specific issues
- Their preferred model of deliver was one to one support rather than training events.

Forums and partnerships

Advice forums have emerged following the announced termination of LSC participation in Community Legal Services Partnerships, resulting in several CLSPs effectively being abandoned. In addition, a range of partnerships focusing on advice eg financial inclusions partnerships or welfare rights networks exist. These forums also play a role in providing support to organisations.

The London Youth Advice Forum has more recently provided a useful environment for advice providers working with young people to collaborate and share good practice. The links between this forum and the London Advice Forum ensure that strategic issues can be shared across advice networks and providers.

Over 80% of the sample were members of local forums or partnerships and the majority identified considerable benefits from membership of advice forums. Organisations responding to the survey identified the following benefits:

Up to date information on issues affecting advice work. Help with problems that arise. A national voice. Ability to join with similar projects on social policy issues.

Chance for staff to meet other staff from other group; peer support; training; information; up date on events/changes in policy etc

Sharing good ideas and best practice, empathy, support and fellowship; practical advice and value for money service and resources.

Digests of information, especially affecting funding or funding opportunities

Being with likeminded people.

Organisations that didn't take part in forums stated lack of time, limited relevance or number of forums as reasons for their not taking part.

"Lack of Time – Lack of capacity – Too much information!"

Other reasons identified for non-attendance included location. A number of organisations based in outer London boroughs commented that most forums were centrally located.

Key findings arising from analysis of current access

The following themes emerge from analysis of the data collected from organisations on current access:

- Each of the advice network infrastructure bodies provides a level of discrete and specific support to their network members. This is utilised and highly valued by sample organisations
- Support tends to be accessed in all areas with funding, staff development and quality being prioritised
- Support is accessed from a range of providers including links with local authority officers, provision such as CLS support for legal services contract, Lasa circuit rider is highly valued
- Forums are emerging as a potential source of support – however, there are challenges in linking the activities of local advice forums with the overarching strategic forums such as London Advice Forum and London Youth Advice Forum
- Smaller organisations tend to access free support and are less likely to be aware of sources of support
- Very small organisations tend not to be members of network organisations.

3

Research findings on future infrastructure support needs

Organisations taking part in the survey were asked to identify their future support needs. This section summarises the findings and identifies key themes.

Support needed

The support that organisations anticipate accessing or wanting in the future reflects current patterns of access with funding, quality and developing staff remaining the main priorities. However, ICT and governance also signify a higher need for support than currently accessed. (See graph below.)

In each area eg funding, quality, etc, respondents were asked to indicate if they anticipated needing support with a range of issues related to that area. There were no limits on how many issues one organisation could list. A breakdown of responses is at Annex 2. The priorities for support are outlined in this section.

Significantly, the areas of support that respondents prioritised related specifically to their advice giving functions eg

- Ensuring the need for advice is taken into account in local plans, as well as in local, regional and national policy developments

- Securing funding for advice work
- Identifying and training sufficient advice staff
- Ensuring staff and board members work effectively together to plan advice services
- Demonstrating outcomes and the impact of advice work
- Resourcing the organisation with ICT and being able to use ICT effectively in advice giving.

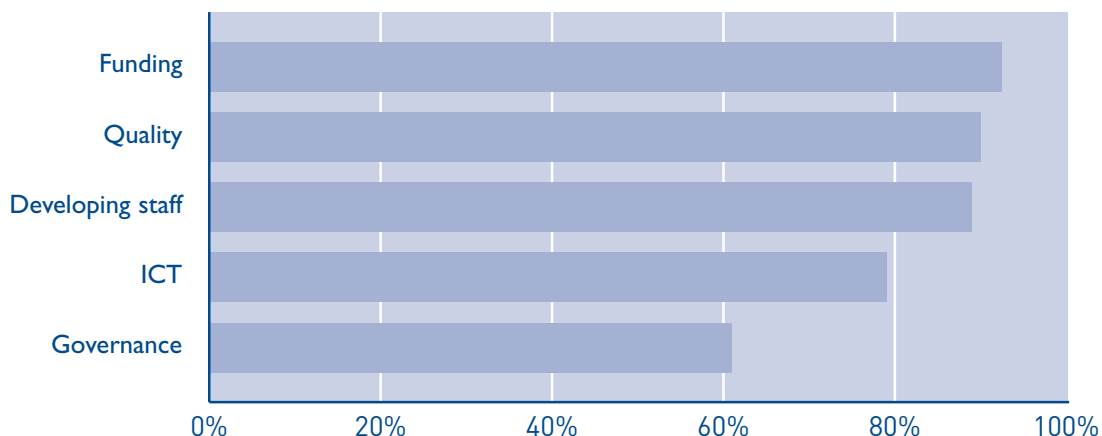
Priorities for support

The priorities identified from responses to the survey can be broken down into a number of distinct categories:

- Making the case for advice
- Workforce development needs
- Planning and developing services to adapt to change
- Increasing organisational infrastructure eg ICT.

The preferred suppliers for these areas of support were predominantly advice networks or distinct advice infrastructure organisations such as Lasa or the ASA CLS Support Project.

Which areas of support does your organisation anticipate accessing in the future?



Making the case for advice

“The case for advice has not been made which makes finding funding more difficult”.

This issue emerged across funding, quality and governance:

- Organisations anticipate needing support with identifying funding sources for advice services and in particular, identifying continuation funding
- Increasing the profile of advice by linking advice with national policies and local plans and identifying policies that impact on service users is viewed as key
- Ensuring that advice was linked into emerging initiatives such as work with offenders
- Building in outcome measures in order to demonstrate the impact of advice
- Working with Board members on social policy and the planning of advice services.

Over 90% of respondents wanted support in identifying potential funding sources for advice and 82% wanted help identifying continuation funding:

“There is a lack of stability regarding long-term planning and development of services and funding of at least one post during the year is about to expire”.

Increasing the profile of advice and making the case for advice being included in major initiatives was identified as a priority – 84% of respondents indicated that they required support from the advice networks in identifying local, regional and national policies that affect the funding for advice. 74% reported that ensuring the need for advice is taken into account in local plans was important.

This also included, for smaller groups especially, providing a clear and consistent definition of advice that organisations could use with funders. A number of smaller groups reported issues in distinguishing advice from other service delivery such as advocacy and ensuring funders are aware of the contribution these organisations make to advice provision.

Advice forums are emerging as a potential vehicle for increasing the profile of advice and respondents view forums and partnership as favourable and a mechanism for raising the profile of advice:

Our local forum facilitates practitioner information exchange, contributes to local and national policy and research and provides information on policy, legislation updates etc.

Increases publicity and exposure of the service within the borough. Also helps to network with the relevant people.

As well as advice forums, there is an extensive range of partnerships that advice providers can potentially get involved in eg Local Strategic Partnerships and Children’s Trusts. Attending such partnerships can ensure advice sector issues are drawn to the attention of policy makers and local planners. This can, however, be a resource intensive issue for advice sector organisations:

“No ‘core’ funding to pay for my time at meetings and number of potential networks is huge – need to be focused on those that will lead to improvements for our clients.”

“Insecurity of funding for particular strands can mean that you develop expertise in one client area, but have to stop being engaged in networks when funding ends despite the value of the service.”

Workforce development needs

Organisations reported considerable issues in relation to workforce development:

- Difficulties in recruiting appropriately skilled staff that means organisations have to invest their own time and resources in training individuals to a level where they are competent at advice giving
- Inconsistent access to advice training programmes
- Gaps in access to qualifications
- Lack of support for managers in dealing with change.

The survey responses indicate a gap in the advice workforce that is causing practical difficulties for organisations:

“I am having difficulty in recruiting skilled workers for the advice line. There seems to be shortage of skilled generalist advice workers. Ideally our workers as well as having experience in benefits, employment, housing etc should have knowledge of family law and legal issues on separation and divorce. In practice, they usually need training, which is often internal.”

“I am recruiting for the post for the third time and hope that flexible hours may encourage more experienced applicants. If not, I will need to recruit a trainee, which I was forced to do in a previous post. However I will need support to provide a training package, as I don’t have the physical space. I will also struggle to provide enough human resource to support/train and supervise the trainee and keep the service open.”

Lack of access to advice training programmes means organisations are in many cases having to skill up staff themselves. There is support for more coherent provision of advice training from respondents.

Access to qualifications was identified as an issue for 56% of the respondents and was linked to the need to attract new entrants to the sector, both volunteers and paid staff.

Managers report a degree of isolation in dealing with a range of managerial and organisational issues:

“Very fast-changing culture – new developments can be unexpected and make it hard to plan ahead – some work is wasted.”

Managers in the advice sector tend to have a wide range of responsibilities from promoting the organisation and securing funding to dealing with ICT problems.

Managers highlight a lack of support and peer support packages as an option for resolving this gap. A number of the forums consulted during the research also identified the need for coaching or mentoring for managers of advice services.

Planning and developing services to adapt to environmental change

A number of organisations, primarily Law Centres, Citizens Advice Bureaux’s and larger independent advice agencies highlighted the need for support in responding to specific changes. These tended to be around legal services contracting and specifically around the larger delivery models envisaged by CLACs, CLANs and preferred supplier. Such changes highlighted a number of specific priorities:

- Support in relation to mergers – identifying options and assessing implications to the practicalities of merging. A number of organisations specifically referred to wanting support with developing strategic plans and business plans that took into account the emerging climate for CLACs etc
- Addressing issues such as Full Cost Recovery in existing and new contract arrangements:

“Real issue that all of our major funding streams have been cash limited year on year for many years, with no allowance for inflation. Have had tapered funding, and there is no-one at the moment who is able to pick up highly successful projects and meet mainstream funding costs – funders need to acknowledge the environment, and actually deliver full cost recovery”

- Addressing the practicalities of partnership. The research was undertaken whilst London organisations were planning a project based on the DTI financial inclusion initiative. This raised a number of issues for respondents including relationships between better and less well-resourced groups, level of influence of membership networks and how partnership work can be resourced.

Increasing organisational infrastructure

Organisational infrastructure development needs eg ICT and capacity building services addressing quality assurance, are highlighted in organisation’s responses. Whilst the research found that the majority of organisations had already addressed the achievement of quality assurance standards (mainly the CLS Quality Mark) as well as addressing key policies such as case management and supervision, a significant number of other issues relating to quality assurance and ICT remain.

ICT

ICT is viewed as a priority continuing support need with organisations referring to the need to increase ICT resources, access trouble shooting and implement electronic case management systems. A wide range of organisations reported support needs in operating electronic statistical recording and case management systems (64.2% of the sample).

Access to sufficient levels of ICT remains an issue for the advice sector, with larger better resourced organisations reporting needs alongside smaller organisations. 53% of the sample require support with accessing a sufficient number of computers to carry out advice work. Smaller organisations tend not to have web access to advice resources.

Lasa are viewed as the potential known supplier for this support, along with the advice networks.

Quality assurance

A considerable number of smaller organisations expressed the need for capacity building packages based around the following

- Developing strategic plans
- Devising core advice procedures eg confidentiality
- Obtaining information resources for advice eg handbooks
- Providing supervision for advice work
- Delivering annual appraisals.

This support need particularly arose where the organisation provided a range of services eg a BME organisation providing employment and training as well as advice.

Concerns regarding the phasing out of the CLS Quality Mark were raised in survey responses and at forum consultation. A number of smaller organisations, particularly those targeting specific client groups, have not yet achieved the Quality Mark. As a result, funding applications have not been accepted due to the lack of a Quality Mark. Consequently, these groups have raised serious concerns about how they will be able to demonstrate the quality of their advice to potential funders without the external assessment provided by the Quality Mark.

Governance

Organisations identify the need for governance training that is advice sector specific rather than generic.

A significant percentage of the sample (65.1%) identify the need to work more effectively with board members, both on social policy influence as well as effective planning of advice services.

60% also want support in ensuring board members are aware of key advice policies and have sufficient information about the advice service to perform their board duties.

Key themes

The following major themes emerge from analysis of future infrastructure support needs:

- The advice sector faces major issues in relation to future funding, addressing workforce gaps and monitoring and evaluating advice services and there are expectations that advice networks will respond to this need
- Drawing attention to advice and its impact is expressed as the primary priority for organisations, particularly where it can be related to potential funding streams
- Network members indicate a strong loyalty to their advice network and wish to extend their access to infrastructure support from the network. Support needs are common across a number of networks and whilst collaboration is not identified as a option, there may be value in exploring joint responses
- Advice forums provide a potential mechanism to provide support to organisations and further thought needs to be given on how to maximise the links into strategic policy initiatives
- There are benefits to being in an advice network. Those organisations outside of network membership report the greater support needs
- There is minimum engagement with the ChangeUp agenda (96.6% report being not at all or not very engaged) and CVS services as generic support is not seen as a priority for advice organisations. Organisations have highlighted advice specific support needs.

4

Strategy and action plan

The Advice subgroup that commissioned this research intends to identify a strategy to respond to the infrastructure gaps and needs identified by this report that could include:

- Potential collaboration including joint working
- Sharing of existing and future resources
- Increased cross network strategies
- Increased engagement with national advice infrastructure organisations
- Developing a bursary scheme for access to training or consultancy.

Potential areas for inclusion in an action plan

Making the case for advice

Identified needs

- To ensure links with key strategies and policies are drawn to the attention of priority stakeholders and key funders of advice services eg GLA, GOL, ALG, Legal Services Commission, Big Lottery Fund, etc
- To promote contribution of advice to cross cutting policies including specific clients groups such as young people and refugees
- To maximise potential for emerging advice forums to contribute views and practice
- To co-ordinate distribution of policy material to ensure organisations can prioritise policy issues that need to respond to
- To create a system to collect views on policy
- To provide support that helps organisations distinguish advice from other activities.

Potential response

- ✓ Create case for central network neutral resource to co-ordinate policy work in relation to advice across London government stakeholders
- ✓ Develop an Advice for Londoners strategy that includes collaborative work on case for advice vision to share with GLA, ALG and London Funders Group
- ✓ Prioritise a strategy to maximise impact of advice forums – regional co-ordination through London Advice Forum; link in to central policy resource; website to facilitate sharing of materials; dissemination of good practice
- ✓ Work with ASA and national networks on manifesto for advice to create clear and commonly understood definition of advice
- ✓ Explore the feasibility of collecting common core monitoring data to demonstrate impact of advice
- ✓ Produce promotional materials and marketing toolkit for London advice providers for use at local and regional levels.

Workforce development

Identified needs

- To respond to workforce gaps and recruitment issues
- To meet development and support needs of managers
- To increase access to training in advice skills ranging from introductory, refresher and specific areas of advice
- To increase ICT skills of advice sector workers, in terms of, for example, electronic case recording, monitoring statistics, etc.

Potential response

- ✓ Utilise Advice Sector Workforce Development Plan¹⁵ (due August 2006) to develop a 5–10 year strategy to encourage new entrants and provide an induction support programme
- ✓ Mapping of existing advice skills development training and resources
- ✓ Co-ordinate the promotion of range of training programmes via creation of central database/website booking
- ✓ Explore managerial support mechanisms eg action learning sets, peer support arrangements, access to coaching and mentoring for managers of advice services.
- ✓ Investigate potential linkages with Learning and Skills Councils programmes for skills development of trainee advice workers
- ✓ Expansion of Circuit riders scheme to work with advice agencies in planning effective ICT strategies to enable advisers to work more effectively and efficiently by way of establishing basic competencies.

Planning and developing services to adapt to change

Identified needs

- To respond to changing funding environment eg commissioning, social enterprise culture
- To meet specific training needs eg Full Cost Recovery
- To provide guidance with analysing options for organisational structure eg mergers, partnerships
- To develop support for organisations to respond to legal advice changes eg changes to NfP LSC contracts, preferred suppliers, CLACs and CLANs.

Potential response

- ✓ Develop a strategy for London advice provision that takes into account response to changing environment, for example, CLS strategy and Preferred Suppliers model, new ALG commissioning scheme, etc
- ✓ Share training resources to develop support programme addressing issues such as Full Cost Recovery, partnerships working, contract issues, etc that are shared across networks
- ✓ Source training/support on issues such as change management, Human Resources functions and governance, and ensure access to all network members and advice providers.

¹⁵ The NOS4 Advice Project is due to publish a major survey of the advice workforce in England and Wales.

Increasing organisational infrastructure eg ICT

Identified needs

- To identify common strategy in relation to organisational quality standard/auditing to replace CLS Quality Mark
- To meet development and support needs of smaller, emerging advice providers
- To increase access to ICT support.

Potential response

- ✓ Engage, or initiate, strategy re: future auditing etc of organisational quality standards with ASA and national networks
- ✓ Work with London infrastructure organisations eg Women's Resource Centre, Evelyn Oldfield Unit and other specialist agencies to identify potential advice specific training courses
- ✓ Work with ICT hub to identify ICT support for London advice agencies and advisers
- ✓ Produce good practice materials for London advice providers.

Advice network infrastructure support

Age Concern services for Age Concerns in London

What is Age Concern London?

Age Concern London is a regional organisation within the national network of Age Concern Charities. All Age Concern charities are members of the Age Concern Federation that is based on agreed objectives and quality standards.

Age Concern London acts as the collective voice of Age Concerns in London by representing all of its London Age Concern members at regional level. Age Concern London and the London region fieldwork team, who are part of the National Age Concern Charity – Age Concern England, are working together to increase the regional capacity of Age Concerns in London.

Services for Age Concerns in London

<p>Information & Advice Practitioner Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Age Concern Federation supports regular meetings in London supported by a Regional Fieldwork Officer. ● Hold four meetings each year attended by around 25 practitioners covering a range of subjects including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Tracking local service issues — Encouragement of peer support — Links to social policy and campaigns within Age Concern. ● Guest speakers attend to discuss practitioner identified issues from mental Capacity to Quality of Advice. 	<p>Information & Advice Strategy Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The I&A Strategy Group consists of practitioners, Chief Officers, trustees and Age Concern London and regional fieldwork representatives coming together to discuss issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Funding — Quality — Training. ● Strategy group representatives meet regularly with regional bodies such as the Pension Service and Legal Services Commission and consult across the region in order to inform these meetings.
<p>Information and advice 3-year plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 3-year plan is linked to a national information and advice plan covering issues of particular relevance to Age Concerns in London. 	<p>Campaigning on older people's issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Age Concern London campaigns on older people's issues. In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Raising the profile and demonstrating the value of advice for older people in London — Influencing regional bodies such as the GLA — Producing an older people's strategy.

advice^{UK} London Region Infrastructure Services

What is advice^{UK} London Region?

advice^{UK} is a national network of independent advice centres. The aims of advice^{UK} London region are to promote the quality and sustainability of members' independent advice services; to maximise the learning and professional development opportunities available to members; and to promote awareness of members services and represent members' interests at a strategic level.

advice^{UK} London Region services for members

<p>Free telephone and email consultancy</p> <p>Free newsletter – quarterly updates and features on a wide-range of advice related issues.</p> <p>Free Advice Surgeries – one-to-one meetings with a development team member on specific organisational issues.</p>	<p>Free information materials – a range of good practice briefings and an advice services library. Copies of briefings, a directory of second tier support services available to London advice providers and other information are available to members on the advice^{UK} website.</p>	
<p>Development</p> <p>The Development Team offers a wide range of services including advice and information, capacity building support, training and policy and research. These are some of the main areas that the services cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Managing your organisation and staff ● Planning your service ● Quality standards for advice agencies ● Fundraising for your advice work ● Sustainable funding for your advice work. <p>The Development Team facilitates a training programme to develop the advice-specific skills and knowledge of Development Officers working in 2nd tier and network organisations.</p>	<p>Training & NVQ Assessment</p> <p>advice^{UK} London region is the only advice sector based Advice & Guidance NVQ assessment centre approved by City & Guilds. It has considerable expertise in designing and running training and programmes that meet Advice & Guidance NVQ standards. They have the advice specific expertise and knowledge to ensure that training reflects how advice centres work and to meet the highest quality control standards for advice work training. Courses are Law Society accredited and carry Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Hours. Current training offered includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learning to Advise ● NVQ Accredited Train the Trainer ● AI NVQ Assessor ● Effective Supervision for Managers ● Support Service & Reception Skills NVQ. 	
<p>Policy Work</p> <p>advice^{UK} London undertakes policy work in support of its members' and the cause of independent advice. This includes lobbying policy makers and funders to promote funding policies that recognise members' needs and circumstances. advice^{UK} London also lobbies and works with the LSC to ensure the priorities of the CLS coincide with those of advice^{UK} members.</p>	<p>Advice Forums</p> <p>advice^{UK} London set up and facilitate a number of advice forums to assist the local advice sector to work together more effectively including working on relevant policy issues. A range of resources, training and presentations are provided.</p>	<p>Franchise Forum</p> <p>advice^{UK} London run a forum open to any organisation that has a contract with the Legal Services Commission. The forum provides participants with updates on contract issues, undertakes policy work and provides other resources and support.</p>

Citizens Advice London Region infrastructure services

What is Citizens Advice London?

The London Regional Team provides support and guidance to 30 Citizens Advice Bureaux which serve local communities from 81 main outlets and over 250 other locations across the capital including county courts, prisons, hospitals, GP surgeries, community centres and libraries.

The overall aim of working and supporting the bureaux services is to help them be viable, successful and sustainable organisations.

Citizens Advice London services for CAB

<p>Consultancy support</p> <p>To provide direct assistance and guidance to senior management and trustee boards of bureaux including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Business planning● Meeting audit requirements● Recruiting and inducting senior managers and trustees● Reorganising and restructuring bureau services● Funding and fundraising issues● Equalities initiatives● Developing social policy.	<p>Events & forums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Facilitates bureau networking, joint working and knowledge sharing by running a number of events and forums.● Forums are organised around key development areas including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Access to services— Equality and diversity— Governance— Health— Legal services.
<p>Initiatives & partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The team establishes relationships and partnerships with key London organisations and agencies to ensure that the Citizens Advice service is represented as a major stakeholder and is actively engaged in local, sub-regional and pan-London initiatives and partnerships.	<p>Identifying strategic priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The team identifies key strategic priorities for the London Citizens Advice service these include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">— Developing sustainable communities— Challenging discrimination— Supporting London's economic development.

DIAL UK services for members in London

What is DIAL UK?

DIAL UK is the national organisation for a network of 135 independent autonomous advice and information centres run by and for disabled people. DIAL UK's primary aim is to support and empower disabled people to overcome the social and economic disadvantages they face.

DIAL UK services

The following services are available to all DIAL UK members regardless of their location. DIAL UK members in London are able to access these services.

<p>Staff development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Management support – provide support on all issues related to running an advice services. Covers all sorts of information including governance, HR, policies and procedures. ● Database of training resources – used to deliver training but now only have a database of other services that deliver it. 	<p>Performance improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have own quality standards that are based on quality mark but have been adapted to be more specific to disabled information and advice services.
<p>Information & advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a signposting service to local centres for public who contact DIAL centrally. ● Rights helpline – 2nd tier service for member organisations. Advisers with issues or queries on cases they have can contact the helpline. 	<p>ICT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Website – have a website that provides information for members.
<p>Social policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respond to changes and consultation from government mainly around issues that impact on disabled people and rights for disabled people but also on policy affecting advice provision. 	<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publications and information – produce newsletter and some information on issue important to members. ● Database of resources – hold information on services available to disabled people. Members can buy this and it is regularly updated. ● Have funding to carry out 1–2–1 support with member organisations on infrastructure development and identifying funding but require match funding to implement the project.

Law Centres Federation (LCF) London Region infrastructure services

What is LCF?

LCF is the national federation for Law Centres in England & Wales. LCF's London region works with 22 member Law Centres across 29 outlets to provide second tier support. Services are provided in order to: improve organisational strength within Law Centres; increase the number of Law Centres or Law Centre services; improve networking between London Law Centres and achieve change at public/policy level.

LCF London services for Law Centres

<p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a funding advice and consultation service for London Law Centres. ● Assist Law Centres in funding crisis. ● Explore funding opportunities for Law Centres. ● Negotiate with funders on a range of funding opportunities. 	<p>Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keeping abreast of relevant quality issues and disseminating knowledge and information on Quality Matters. ● Raise awareness of good practice in relation to quality assurance issues particularly around service delivery. ● Provide advice and templates for office manuals in line with the Specialist Quality Mark.
<p>Staff development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing and organising appropriate training to increase knowledge and skill base. ● Represents LCF on the National Occupational Standards for Legal Advice. 	<p>Service development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assist with the development of new Law Centres. ● Assist existing Law Centres develop new services.
<p>Policy development</p> <p>Contribute to policy development by representing LCF through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Big Lottery Fund negotiation ● LSC Cost of Contracting exercise ● LSC external reference group – audits and peer review ● Mayor's Round Table discussions on Children & Young People, Immigration Advice in London, Housing Strategy etc ● Carrying out consultations, eg 'Working Under Contract' ● Responding to consultation papers from a London perspective particularly ALG. 	<p>Forums & Law Centre representation</p> <p>LCF London arranges forums for London Law Centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Directors/Coordinators ● ICT Circuit Riders ● Funding/Development Group ● Contracting Group. <p>LCF London represents London Law Centres at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● London Advice Forum ● London Youth Advice Forum ● Regional LSC meetings ● ALG meetings and events.
<p>LCF support – Law Centres in London also benefit from services delivered from LCF including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● information resources, eg newsletter and briefings ● recruitment advertising service ● LawWorks project providing pro bono legal advice clinics. 	

London Advice Services Alliance (Lasa) infrastructure services

What is Lasa?

Lasa provides strategic and innovative services to support the provision of expert independent advice for all. Lasa works with voluntary sector organisations across the whole of Greater London, as well as covering some of the UK. Lasa co-ordinates the London Advice Forum, which brings together the major advice networks working in London to influence and respond to relevant policy initiatives. Lasa is not a membership organisation.

Lasa support services

Policy

Lasa undertakes policy work on issues that affect the provision of advice and legal services:

- Advises on policy changes
- Publishes reports, discussion papers and briefings
- Responds to central, regional and local government consultations
- Promotes the value of advice work to government and funders
- Liaises with advice organisations, the wider voluntary sector, researchers and policy makers
- Generates debate between organisations via seminars, publications etc.

ICT support

- **Aims** – a client contract database for advice and information providers
- **Circuit riders** – mobile technology development and support workers
- **Computanews** – information on the use of technology for information and advice providers
- **ICT Health checks, consultancy and training**
- **Knowledgebase** – comprehensive database of ICT information and advice on line
- **Multikulti project** – information and advice in community languages.

Welfare benefits

- **Appeals team** provides free representation to claimants referred by London advice organisations. The team provide representation at social security benefits, tax credit and housing benefit tribunals and representation at appeals to the social security commissioners.
- **Rightsnet** is an expert website resource for advisers that provides access to the most up-to-date welfare benefits and tax credit information on the web and promotes latest job vacancies and training and support availability. The team also produce review, a publication that provides information on the latest welfare benefit and tax credit news.
- **Training** – rights net training courses cover all aspects of welfare benefits advice from overview courses through to courses that develop the skills of advisers who prepare cases and represent at tribunals. Training is CPD accredited.
- **Specialist support service** – Lasa provide expert legal advice, mentoring and support to organisations with the CLS quality mark or contract at General Help with casework and above. This is funded via the Legal Service Commission specialist support contract and includes subsidised training.

Youth Access services for members in London

What is Youth Access?

Youth Access is the national membership organisation for young people’s information, advice, counselling and support services (YIACS). The following services are available to Youth Access London members.

Youth Access services

<p>Performance improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quality Standards and Self Assessment – developed to help organisations recognise their strengths and identify areas for improvement in service delivery. 	<p>Staff development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Training – set up to improve the local positioning and development of services for young people. Members receive 50% discount on training fees. ● Events – usually 3 a year on relevant issues that provide networking opportunities for members.
<p>Social policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interpret the government agenda on children and young people and identify implications for members. ● Represent the youth sector in discussions with DCA and LSC. ● Run co-ordinators groups on a social policy theme usually twice a year. ● Facilitate London Youth Advice Forum. 	<p>Information & advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pilot project on developing the Youth Access Law Centre model. Evaluation to be used to influence policy-makers, funders and other decision-makers. ● Monthly email bulletin provides updates on relevant issues, web links and other information. ● Website – members only area with discussion forums, downloads etc.
<p>Other services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promotion of a holistic approach to information, advice and counselling services. ● Quarterly mailings covering relevant policy, practice and funding information. ● Publications – members receive reduced price publications. Publications cover research, policy and practical guidance on service delivery. ● Enquiry service – information, advice and support for members via phone, email or letter. ● Consultancy service – members get 25% off consultancy fees for more in-depth support and consultancy services. ● Reduced rates from partner organisations, eg Shelter Training, insurance through adviceuk, advisernet from Citizens Advice and National Youth Agency publications. 	

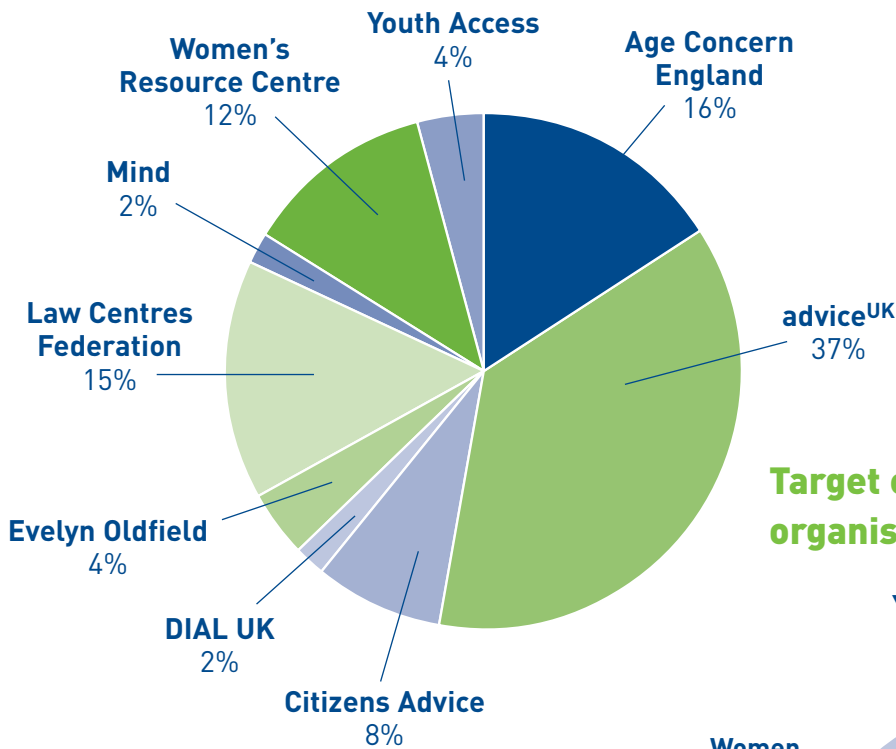
annex 2

Research data

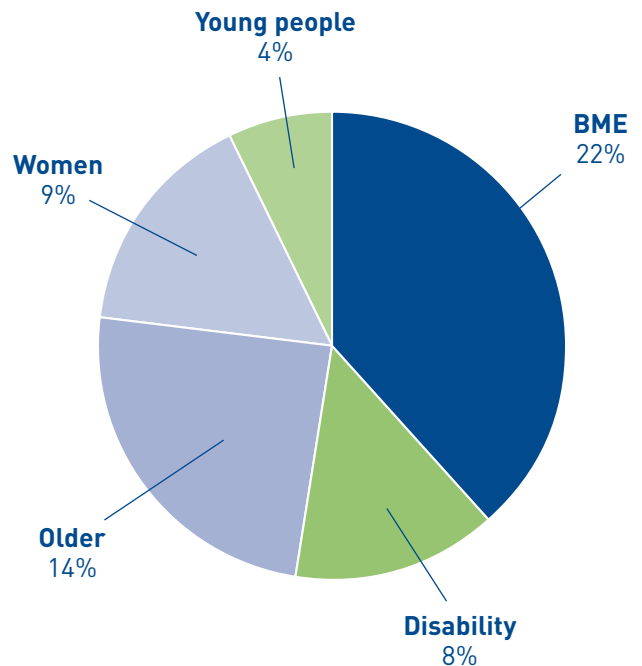
Respondants were asked to tick all responses that applied to them in relation to each question, so percentages pictured reflect responses to individual questions rather than overall percentage of respondents.

Profile of the sample organisations

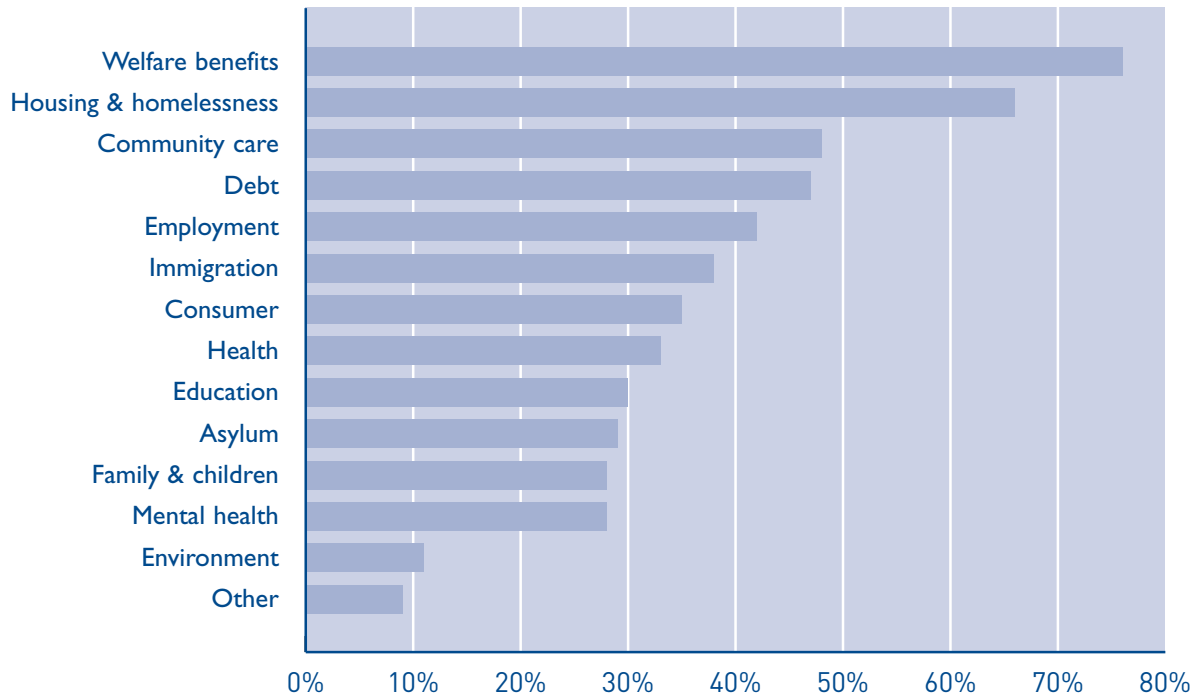
Primary network membership



Target client group for organisations

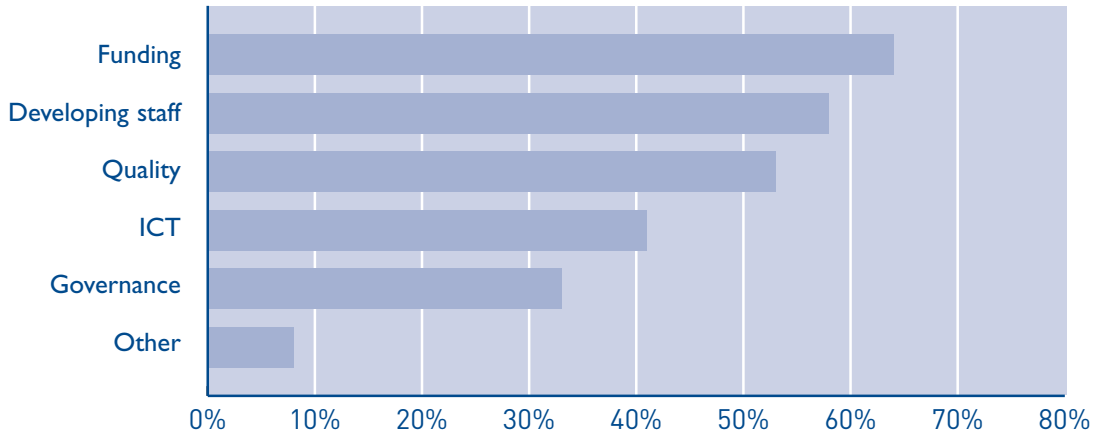


Advice delivered by sample organisations

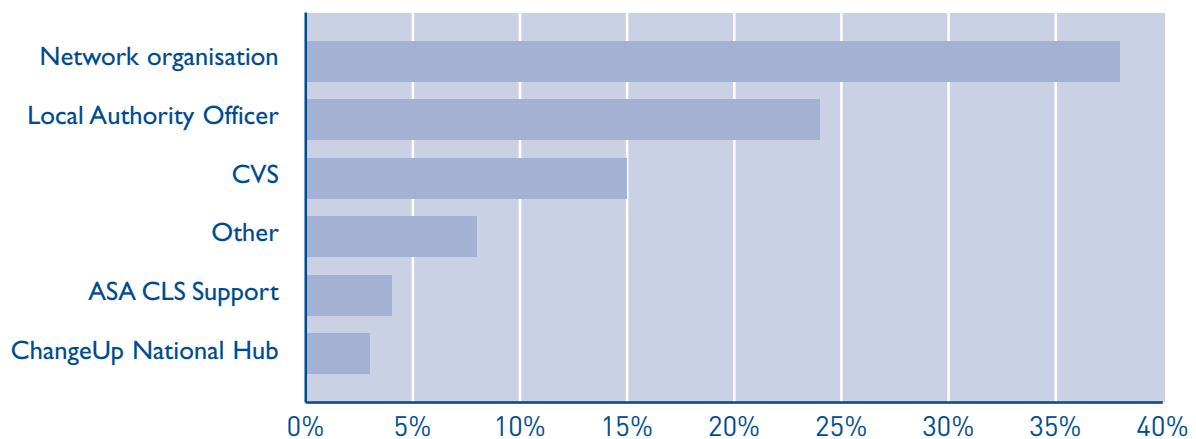


Current access to support

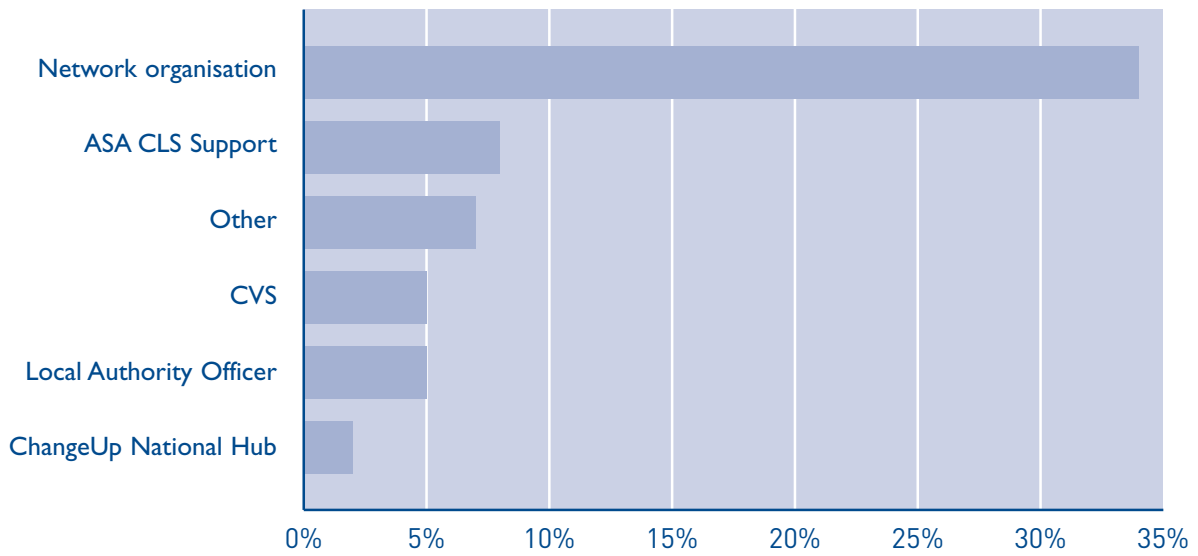
Organisations were asked to identify what advice VCOs had accessed in the last 12 months. 95 organisations responded to the questions.



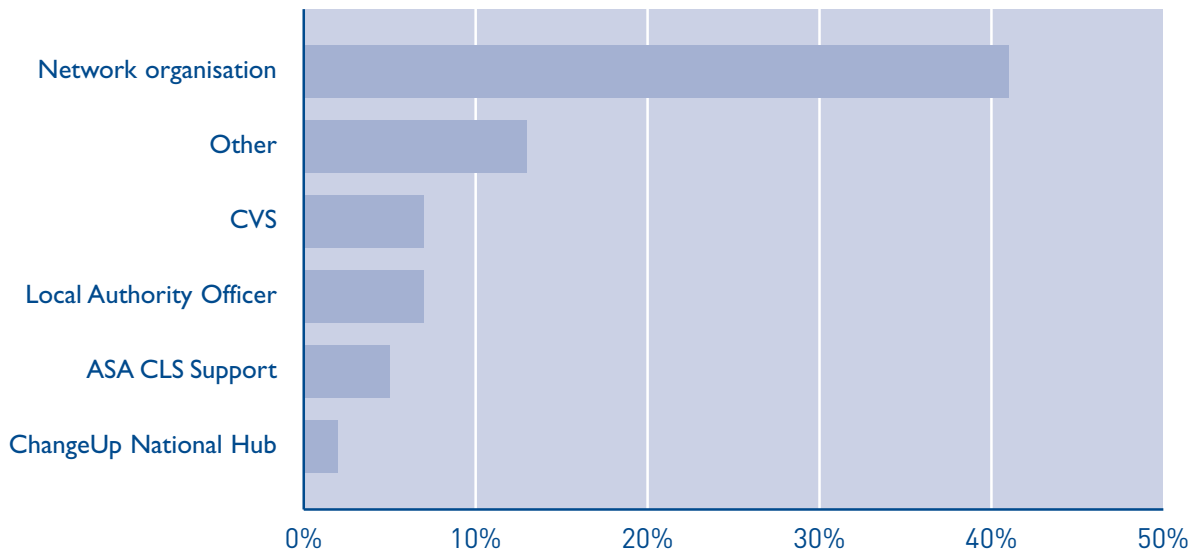
Funding



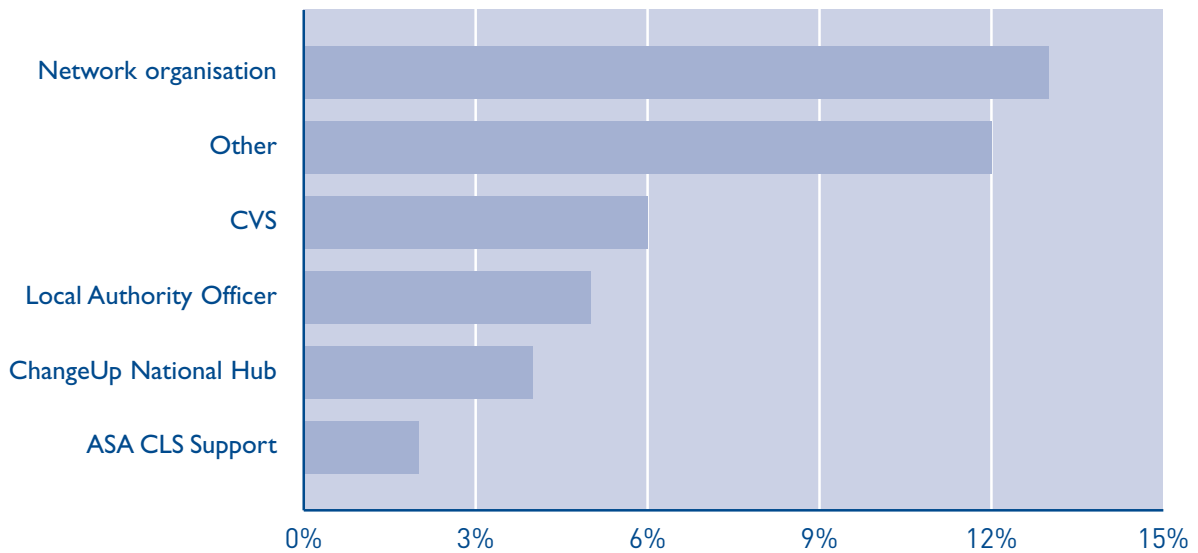
Quality



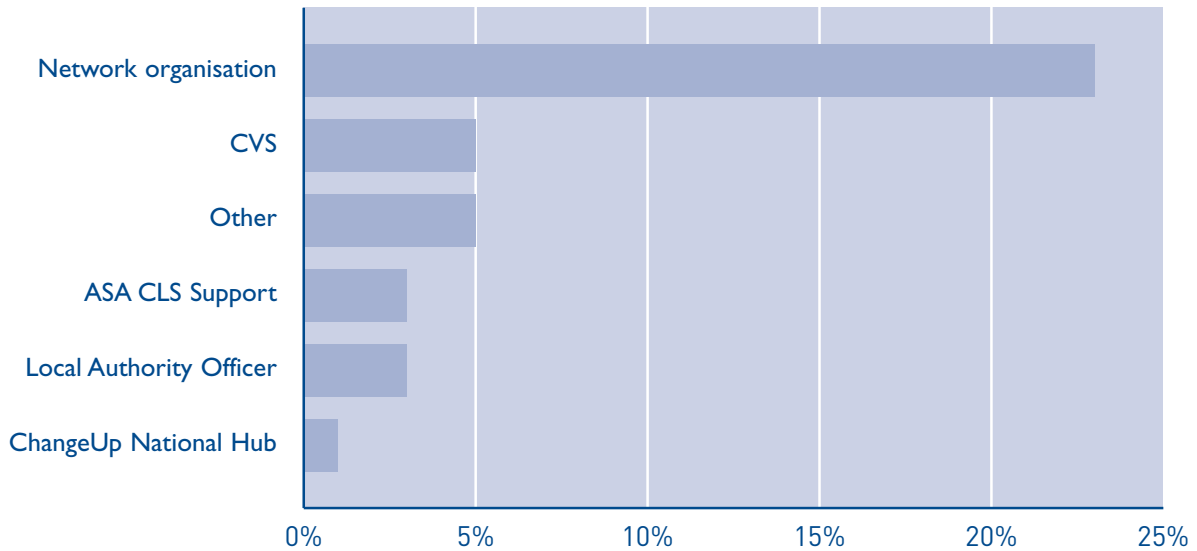
Staff development



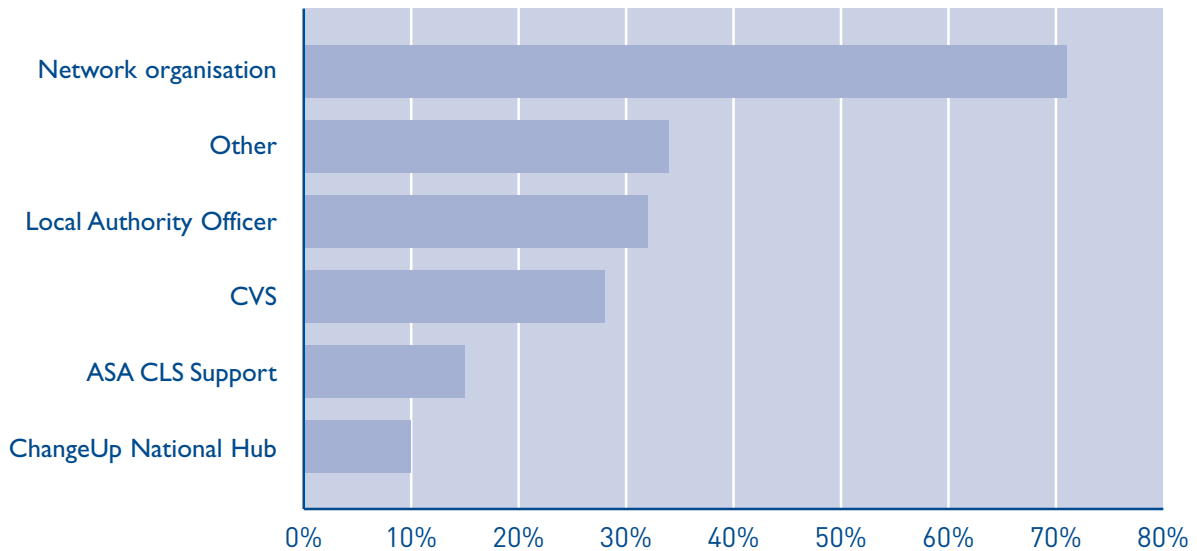
ICT



Governance



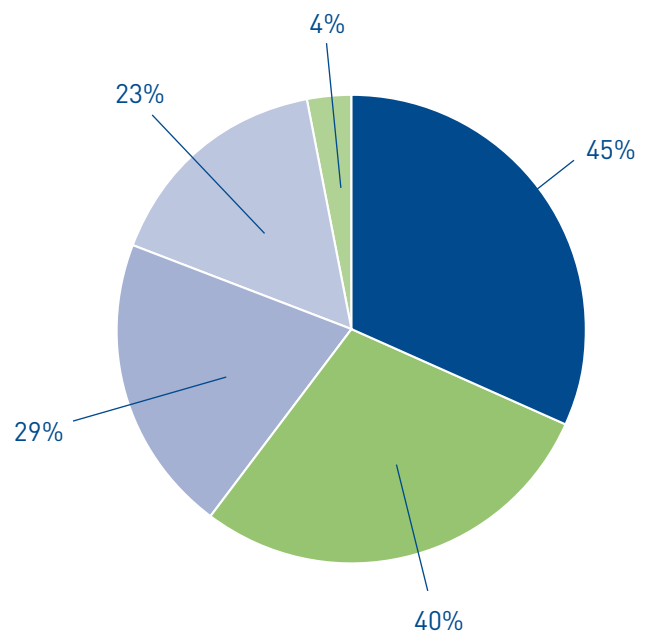
Funding, quality, staff development, ICT and governance



How useful was the support?

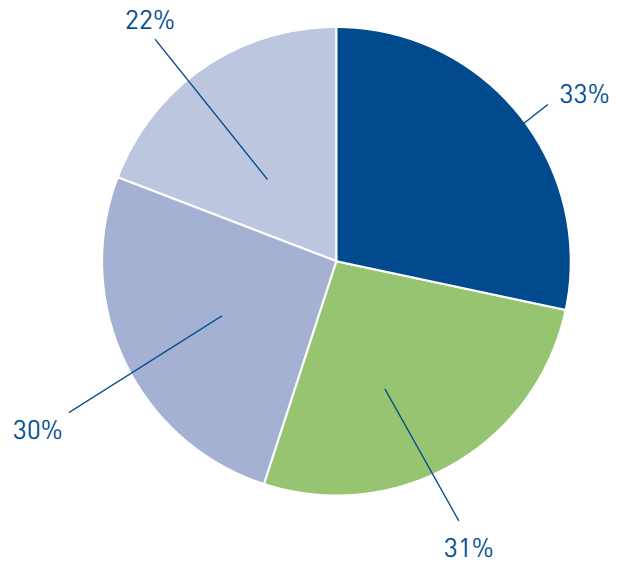
Funding

Available when you wanted it
Helped you achieve what you wanted
You gained new skills or knowledge to use in the future
At a price your organisation could afford
It wasn't useful



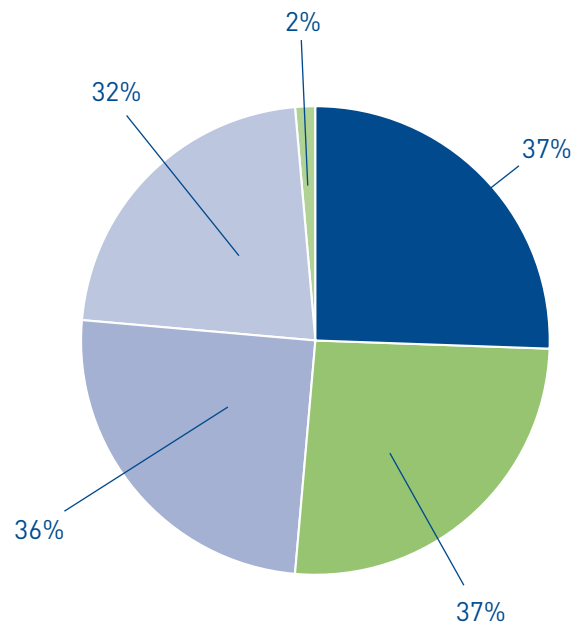
Quality

	Helped you achieve what you wanted
	You gained new skills or knowledge to use in the future
	Available when you wanted it
	At a price your organisation could afford



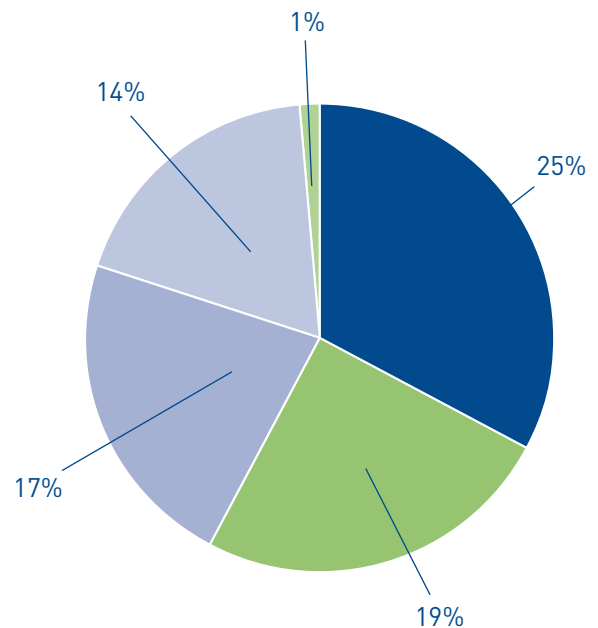
Staff development

	Available when you wanted it
	You gained new skills or knowledge to use in the future
	Helped you achieve what you wanted
	At a price your organisation could afford
	It wasn't useful

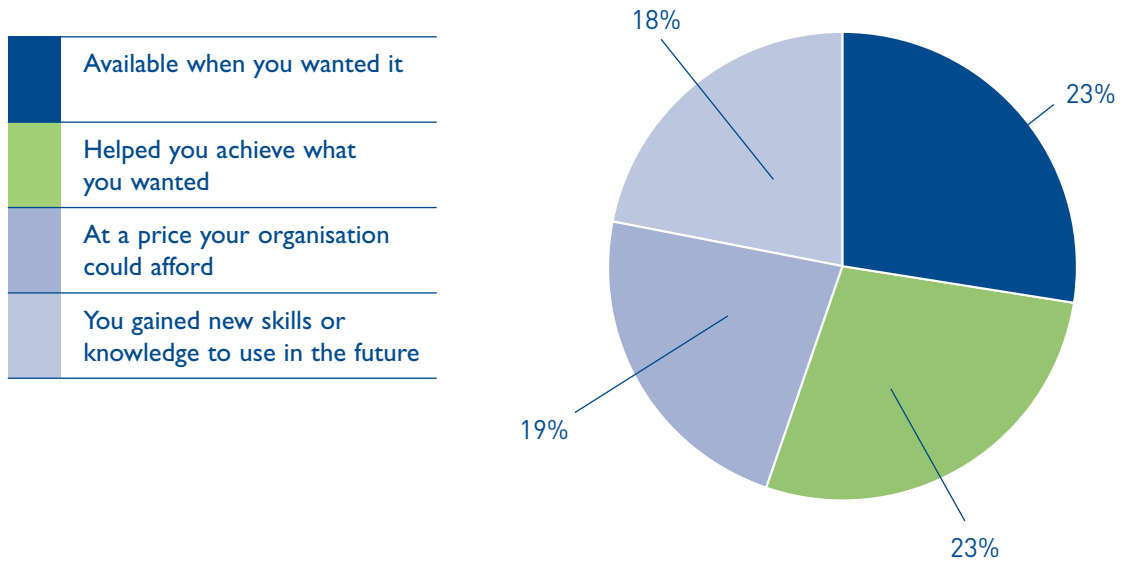


ICT

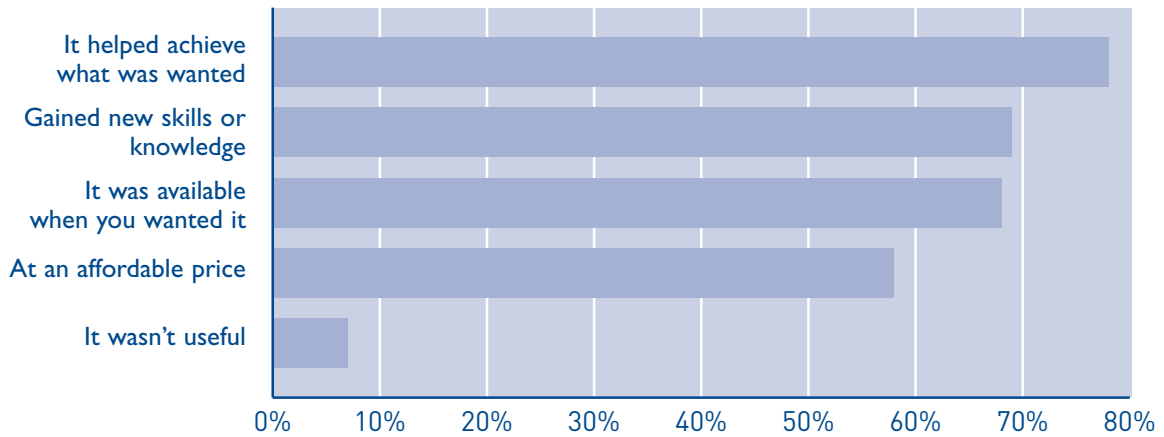
	Helped you achieve what you wanted
	At a price your organisation could afford
	Available when you wanted it
	You gained new skills or knowledge to use in the future
	It wasn't useful



Governance

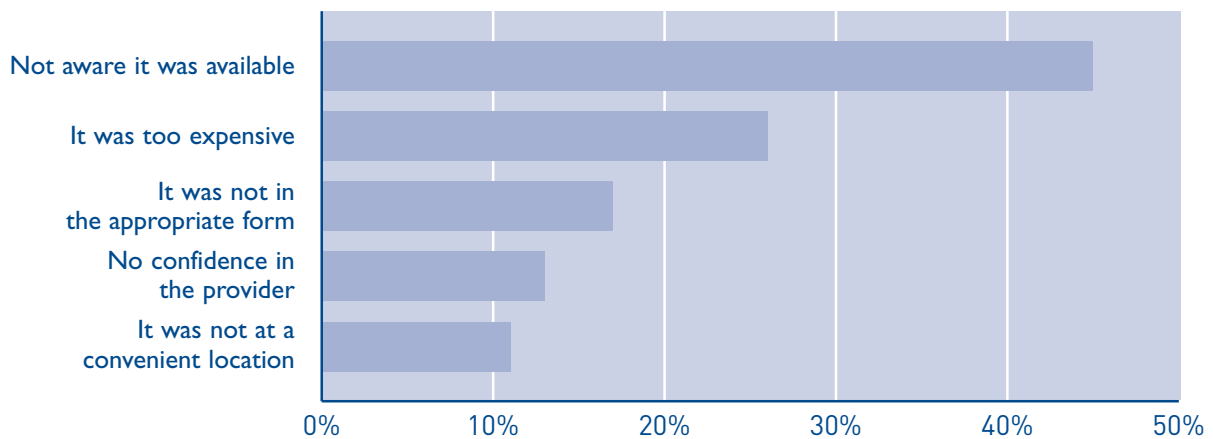


Funding, quality, staff development, ICT and governance



Why organisations didn't access support

For those areas of support on funding, quality, developing staff, ICT and governance that you didn't access, why was this?



Future support needs

Respondents identified what support they currently need or may want in the future across the following areas. Total number of respondents who answered the sections on what support they would like with the following issues:

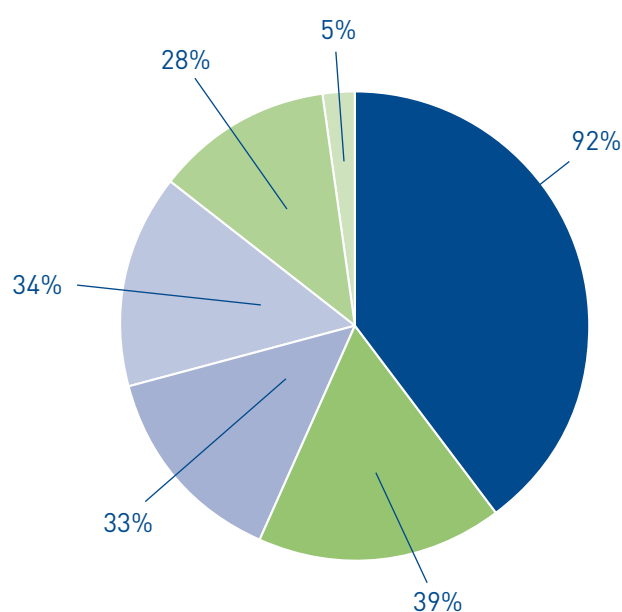
Issues	No of responses
Funding	96
Quality	93
Developing staff	92
ICT	81
Governance	63

Funding

	No of responses	% of response
Identifying potential funding sources for advice services	88	92%
Identifying local, regional & national policies that affect funding for advice	82	85%
Identifying funding to continue the project beyond the life of the funding	79	82%
Ensuring need for advice is taken into account in local plans	75	78%
Building in appropriate advice outputs and outcomes into your application	70	73%
Writing effective applications for funding advice	60	63%
Once you have achieved the funding, managing the budget and financial reporting	33	34%

Preferred suppliers of support on funding

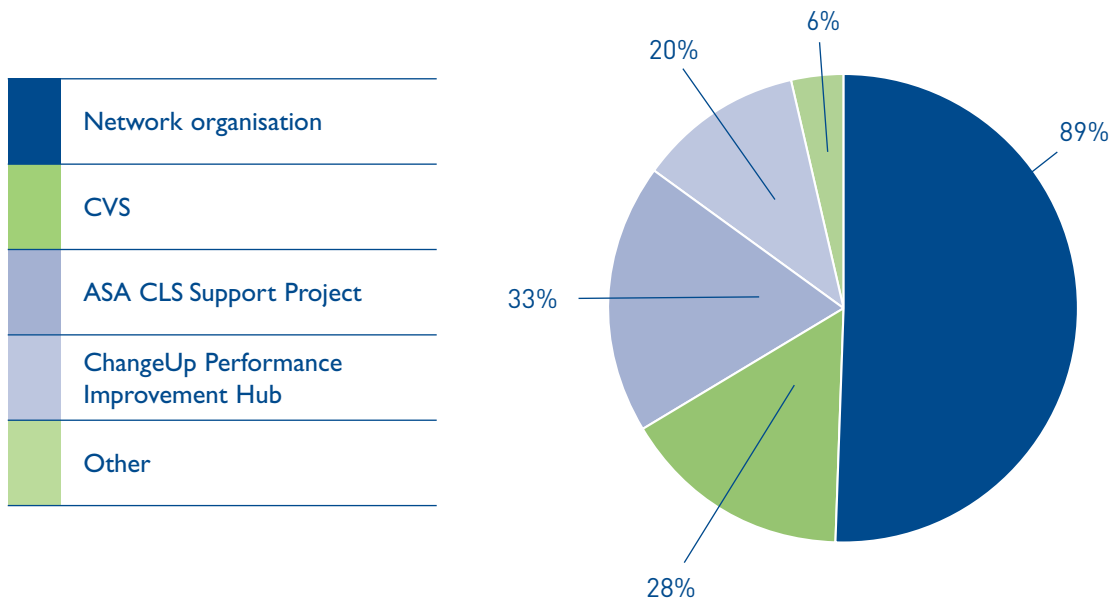
Network organisation
CVS
Funderfinder
Local authority officer
ChangeUp Funding Hub
Other



Quality

	No of responses	% of response
Identifying relevant local and national policies that impact on service users	58	62%
Developing a strategic or business plan for the advice service	49	53%
Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of advice services	49	53%
Setting up and maintaining monitoring systems, eg statistics or time recording	41	44%
Undertaking social policy work	41	44%
Being able to access an audit against an external quality standard	35	38%
Devising and undertaking user feedback including a complaints procedure	32	34%
Developing effective referral arrangements	28	30%
Developing key procedures such as confidentiality and independence	23	24%

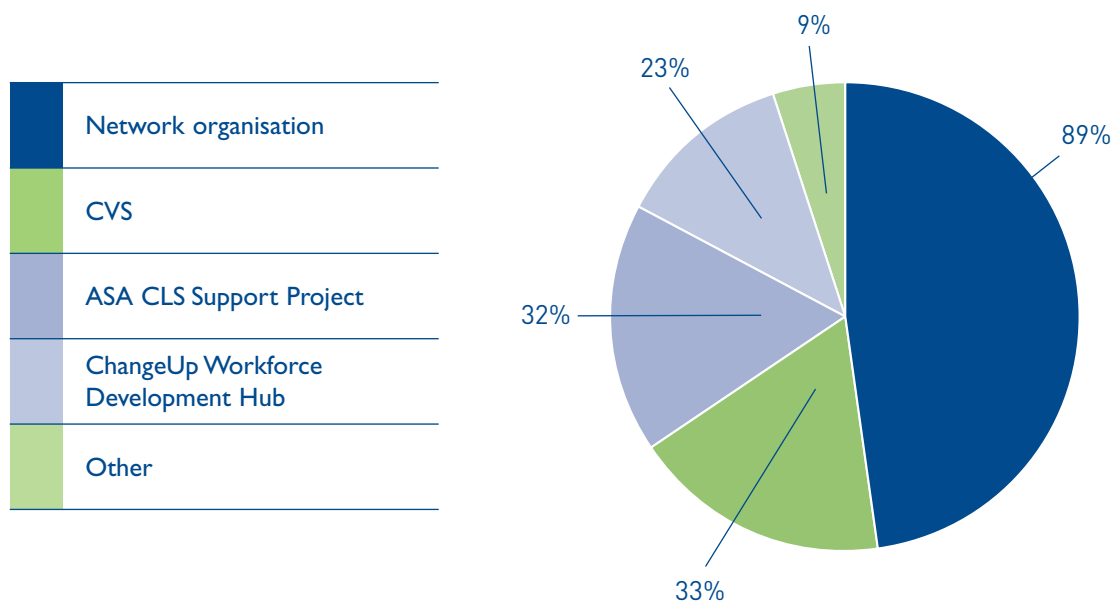
Preferred suppliers of support on quality



Staff development

	No of responses	% of response
Being able to identify and access advice training	59	64%
Meeting management development needs	56	61%
Being able to access appropriate qualifications for staff	52	57%
Providing staff with information resources for advice	50	54%
Identifying potential volunteer advice workers	46	50%
Being able to recruit appropriately skilled paid workers	45	49%
Providing supervision for advice work	39	42%
Delivering annual appraisals	35	38%
Delivering an induction process for advice workers	31	34%
Implementing a recruitment process for paid workers	21	22%

Preferred suppliers of support on staff development

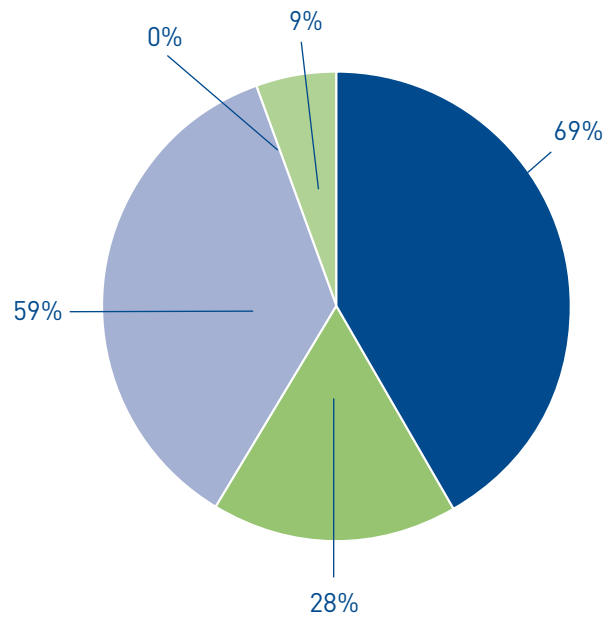


ICT

	No of responses	% of response
Identifying and operating an appropriate electronic case management system	52	64.2%
Implementing and operating an electronic statistics system	46	56.8%
Accessing a sufficient number of computers to carry out advice work	43	53.1%
Identifying if the Data Protection Act applies	34	42%
Providing access to the web for advice workers	30	37%

Preferred suppliers for support on ICT

Network organisation
CVS
Lasa
ChangeUp ICT Hub
Other

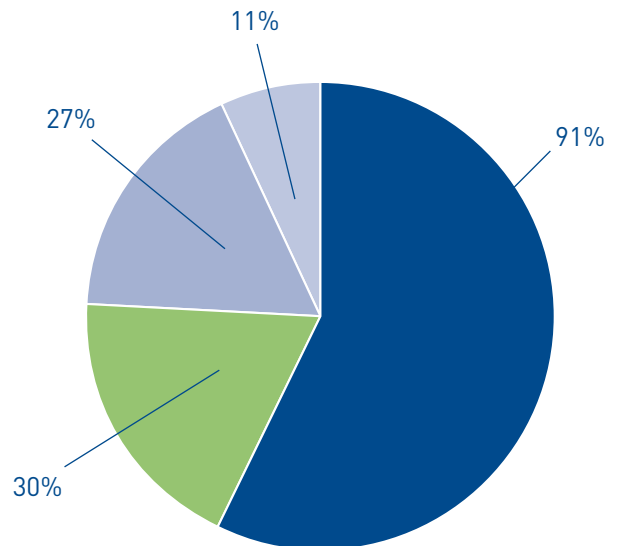


Governance

No of	% of responses	response
Working effectively with board members to plan advice services	41	65.1%
Working effectively with board members on social policy	41	65.1%
Ensuring board members are aware of key advice policies	38	60.3%
Ensuring board members have sufficient information about the advice service	38	60.3%
Ensuring board members induction includes the advice service	37	58.7%

Preferred suppliers of support on governance

Network organisation
CVS
ChangeUp Governance Hub
Other





london advice services alliance
an expert resource for advisers



Funded by the Home Office