



## What is the London Brokerage Network (LBN)?

The LBN is a membership organisation for paid and unpaid support brokers and support planners in London and the South East. It is facilitated by Andrew Carpenter, the London representative of the National Brokerage Network. Those that join the LBN sign up to a code of practice and a set of principles, so that membership can be a badge of quality and ethical practice.

The LBN believes in collaboration between brokers, so that paid and unpaid, independent and employed brokers should be facilitated to work together to best support their communities.

The LBN believes that having genuine choice is integral to the Personalisation agenda and the changes happening within social care. To this end, the LBN supports there being a diverse and transparent set of options for support brokerage available to disabled people, including the option to broker for themselves.

The LBN seeks to demonstrate the significant numbers of quality independent support brokers and be a strong voice for ethical practice and giving choice and control to disabled people. The LBN believes that independent brokerage is an integral part of the Personalisation of social care services as it gives disabled people a right to choose support that is directly accountable to them.

Essential to the ethos of the LBN is the notion of collaboration. Any network is only as strong as its members and the network's success depends on the contributions of each member.

## Who can join?

Brokers can join in four ways, as Independent Brokers, Associate Brokers, Unpaid Brokers or as Friends of the LBN.

**Independent Brokers** are likely to be self-employed people.

**Associate Brokers** are likely to be employed within the social care/voluntary/user-led sectors.

**Unpaid brokers** are likely to be volunteers, peer-brokers, DIY-brokers, and family brokers.

**Friends of the LBN** are people who are not themselves brokers, but who wish to contribute to the network. Friends of the LBN may also be provider services who can show that they are able to offer services in a personalised and accountable way (e.g. by having a clear pricing structure and a contract with an individual client).

Organisations (including Local Authorities) can join the LBN, but only via specific, named brokers.



All paid-broker members must have successfully undertaken the NBN brokerage training programme or an approved equivalent and be able to show that they have access to ongoing support and supervision. Independent brokers can access supervision via the network.

### **What are the benefits of membership?**

- The LBN will itself be a member of the National Brokerage Network.
- Access to brokerage tools on the website, including a mutually-built searchable wiki database of anything and everything that might be useful for clients.
- An online talk-board to ask and answer direct questions or make announcements
- An umbrella of quality for independent brokers to work under and a chance to advertise their services on the website. However, the LBN is not an employer.
- Facilitation of a wider network
- Sharing information & best practice
- Discounted access to specialist seminars and ongoing training.
- Discounted access to direct services from Andrew
- Being part of an influential, stronger, demonstrable voice for change and good practice
- As membership grows, it is anticipated that the network may be able to attract discounts for services such as insurance
- Working across borough boundaries
- The ability to pool resources to bid for funding and tenders
- The ability to pool resources to be better brokers for our individual clients
- The flexibility for the network to grow and respond to new challenges and opportunities

### **What are the responsibilities of members?**

These are better defined elsewhere in the pack, but all paid-broker members must:

- 1) Be suitably trained
- 2) Be in receipt of appropriate supervision and support
- 3) Sign up to the code of practice and core beliefs of the LBN
- 4) Contribute to the online wiki database
- 5) Attend ongoing seminars, conferences and training
- 6) Be open to random quality checks from the Network or to demonstrate being part of (or even facilitating) a local quality network that performs a similar function.