

Membership Survey 2018

Sheffield Parent Carer Forum (SPCF) currently has 1,626 full members (families) and 226 associate members (professional and practitioners).

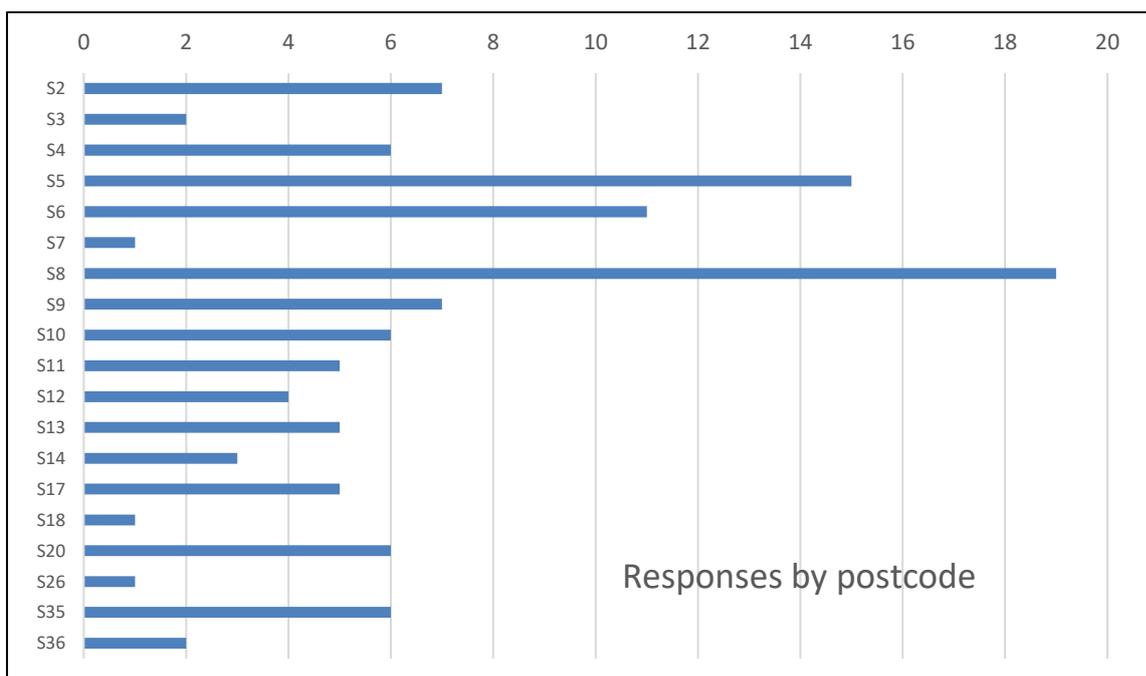
The membership survey was conducted online and was advertised to members via email and text. A £30 Meadowhall gift card was offered as an incentive. There were 112 responses.



Over half (57%) of respondents had been a member of SPCF for between one and five years and almost a third (29%) for over five years.

The ethnicity of respondents was 75% White British and 18.9% from other ethnic backgrounds with 3.6 % preferring not to say.

There was a good geographical spread of responses, with the largest numbers from S8, S5 and S6.



Child's disability, age and education

This year we asked parents to tell us about ALL of their child's disabilities not just the main one. Therefore, percentages do not sum to 100.

Disability	Percentage
Autism spectrum disorder	76
Speech, language and communication	28
ADHD/ADD	26
Social emotional and mental health difficulties	20
Severe learning disability	19
Moderate learning disability	17
Physical disability	12
Specific learning difficulty	10
Medical needs or long-term illness	10
Down syndrome	8
Hearing impairment	5
Visual impairment	5
Profound and multiple learning disability	3
Multi-sensory impairment	2
No diagnosis yet	3

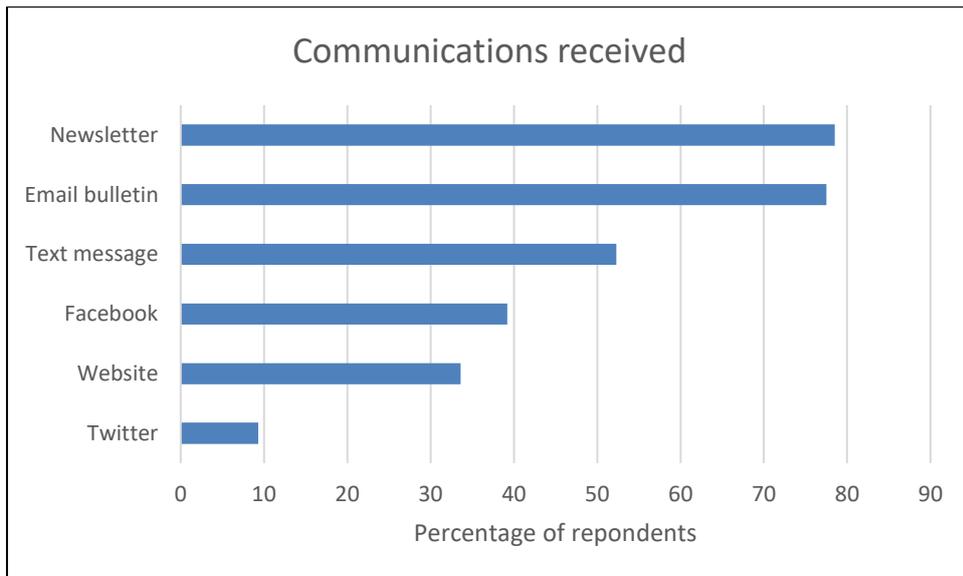
Most respondents (45%) had children aged 5-10 years or 11-15 years (30%).

50% of the children were educated in mainstream settings, 32% in specialist settings and 11% in Integrated Resources.

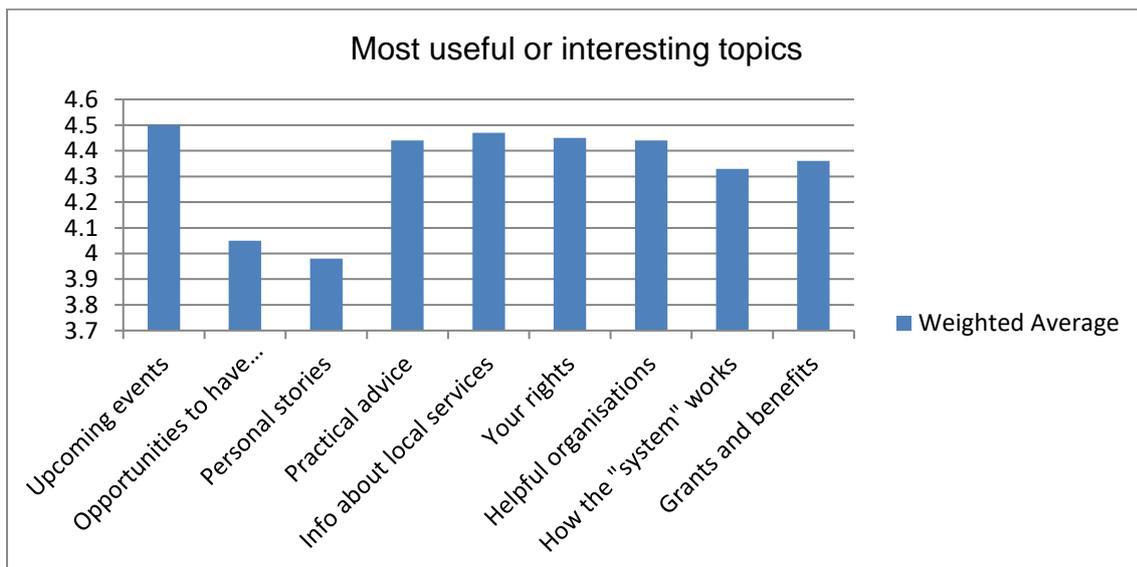
Communication

Most parents/carers had heard about SPCF from the Children's Hospital/Ryegate (23%) or from a parent support group (20%). Word of mouth and school/nursery/college accounted for 16% each.

The newsletter was received by 78% of respondents and 77% got the monthly email bulletin. Facebook has become a successful way to gather feedback from parents.



Our members continue to find information about upcoming events and local services to be the most useful.

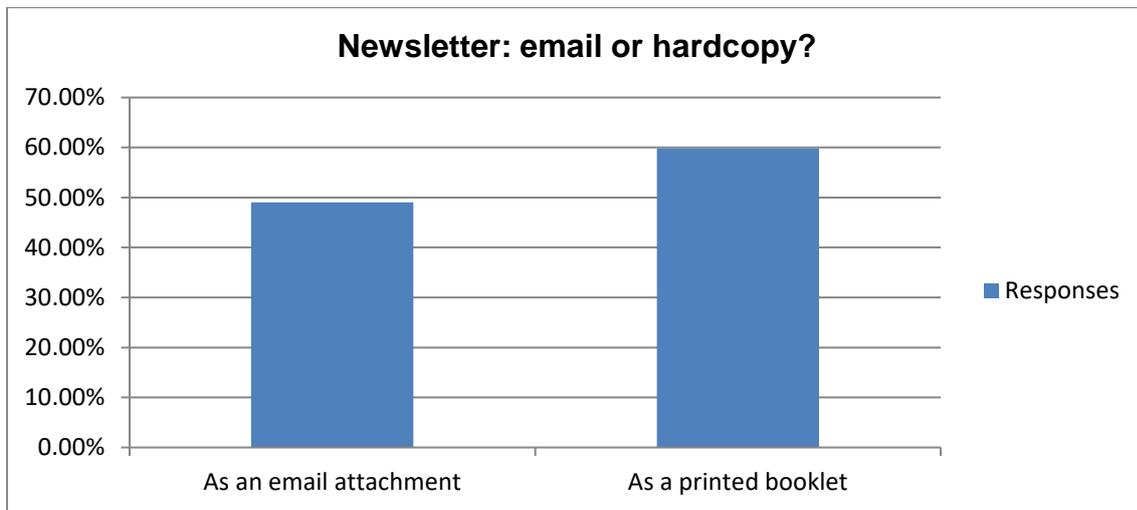


We asked parents what else they would like to read about and got 33 responses. The topic that was mentioned most (8 respondents) was transition to adulthood. Parents wanted information about:

- What happens after school and the transition to college at post 16 or 19
- Transition to adult services
- Activities and events for young adults
- Employment opportunities for young people

Other suggestions included condition specific stories/information (3 responses), parental health and courses/activities for parents (2 responses) and information about research and therapies (2 responses).

This year we asked an extra question about whether our members prefer to receive the newsletter via email or hardcopy. 60% said that they preferred a printed booklet, and some wanted both versions.



We also asked parents for reasons for their choice. Parents like the printed booklet because they can read it over a period of time, refer back to it, tear out or mark pages and pass it on to others. Those who preferred an electronic version did so mainly because it would save paper, printing costs and postage.

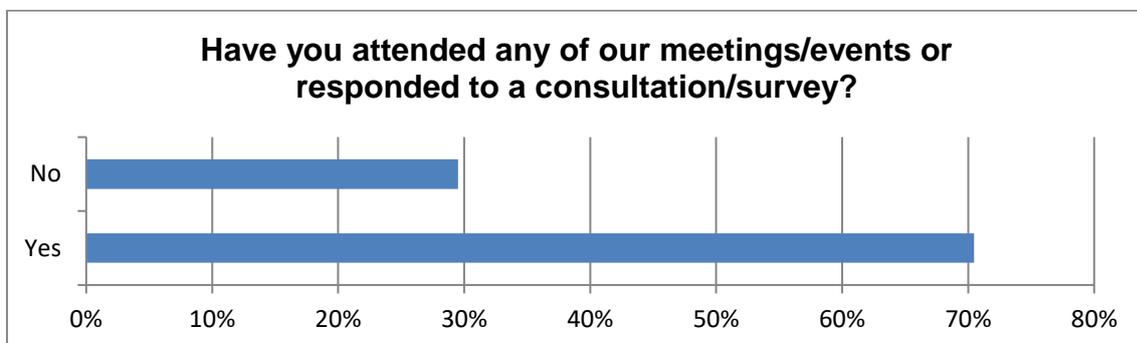
“With a printed copy I pick it up and read bits when I get 5 mins! Nice for others (friends/family) to read too”

“Less paper. Have lots of paperwork to deal with for my child, prefer to have less.”

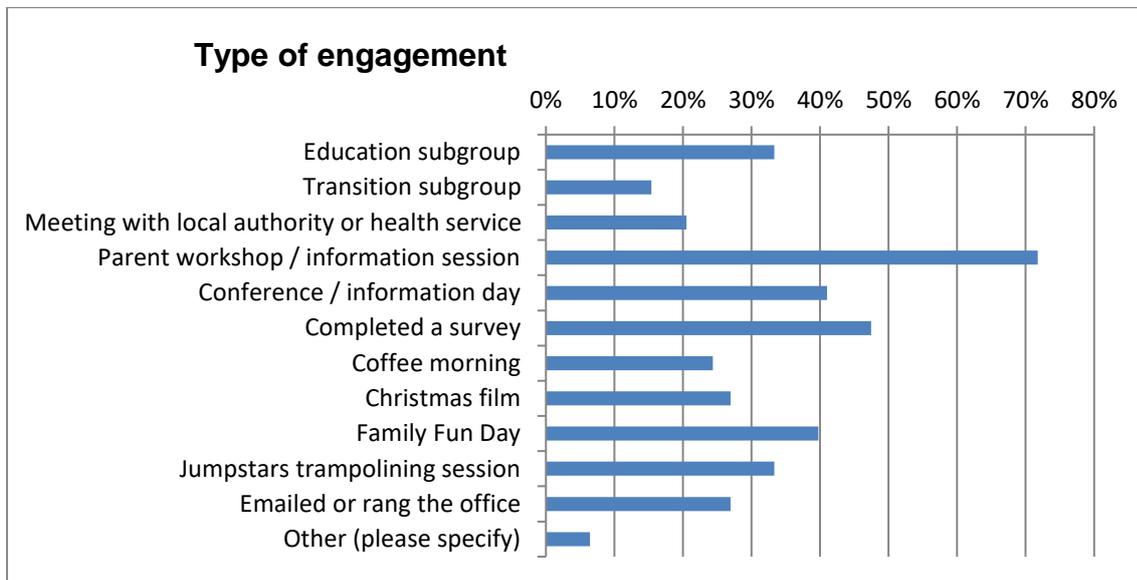
“Both, because the email is quick but the booklet I feel I can read through thoroughly and highlight things.”

Engagement

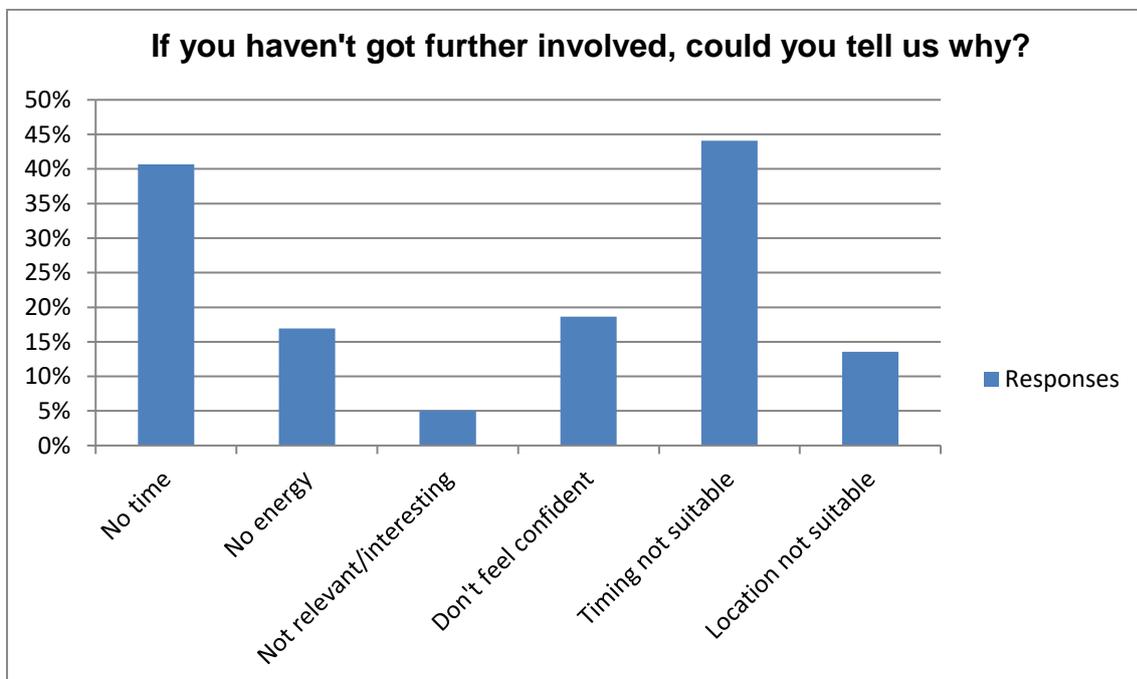
We asked our members if they had attended any of our meetings/events or responded to a consultation/survey.



Of the 70% who had engaged with SPCF, most had attended a parent workshop/information session, completed a survey, attended the annual conference/information day or came to the Family Fun Day.



We asked members who hadn't got more involved with SPCF to tell us why. Just over half responded (59 people). The main reasons given were that the timing of the meetings/events was not suitable or that the parents did not have the time due to their caring and/or work commitments.



Confidence in SPCF

We asked our members how confident they were that SPCF could accurately represent parents' views. 95% of respondents answered that they were confident or very confident.

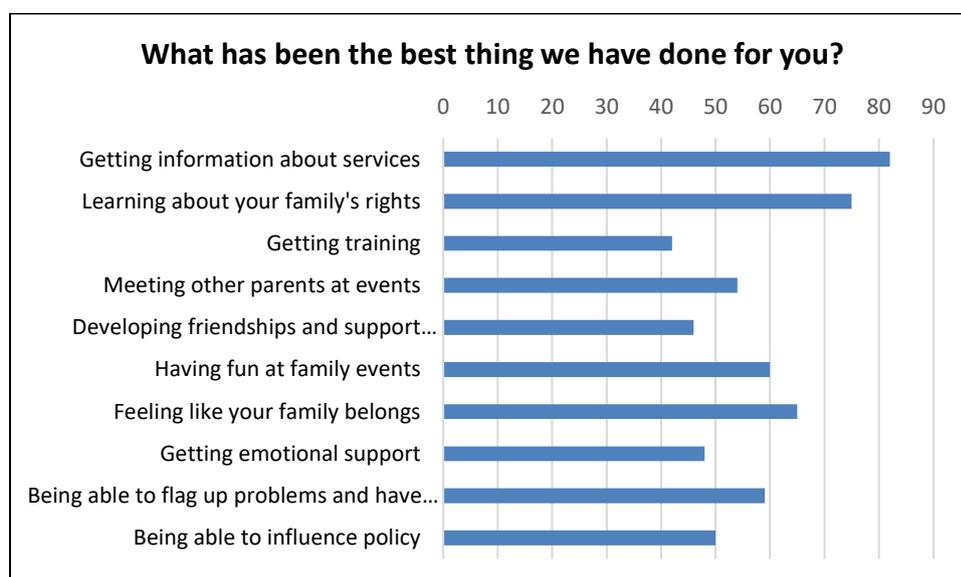
	Number of responses	Percentage	
Very confident	60	57%	95%
Confident	40	38%	
Not confident	0		5%
Not at all confident	5	5%	

Five respondents said that they were not at all confident and three answered the follow-up question asking about the reason for their lack of confidence. The only relevant response related to information and support for young adults and their parents/carers:

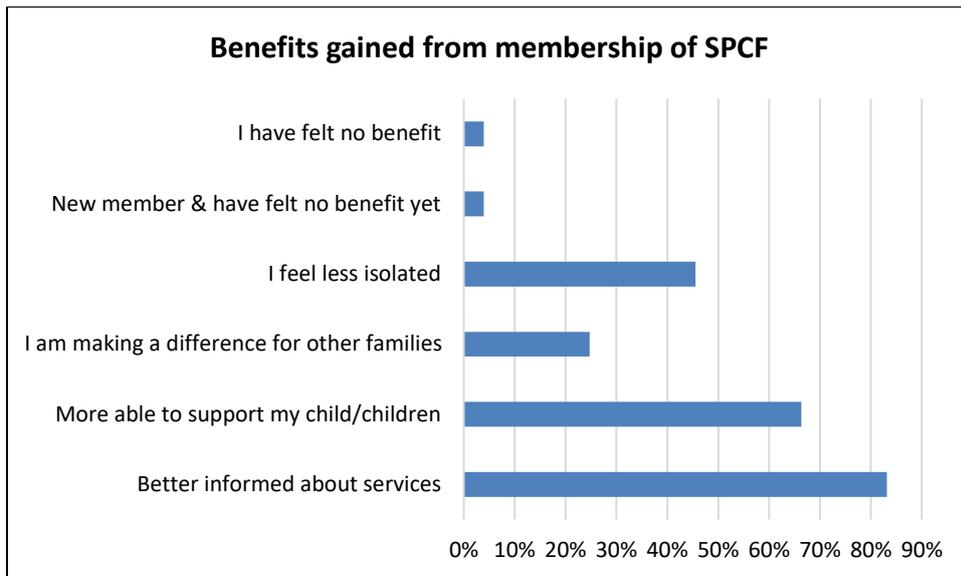
“Help the older individuals past 20 we don't get grants, help or anything the system just brushes you under the carpet.”

What SPCF does for its members

We asked members “What was the best thing that we have done for you?” and asked them to rate their answers on a scale of 1 (least useful) to 5 (most useful). The things that SPCF does that members appreciate most are providing information about services, telling them about their rights, helping families feel that they belong and organising family events.



We asked members about the benefits they had gained from being members of SPCF. 83% of respondents said that they felt better informed about services for their family and 66% felt more able to support their child/children with disabilities.



We asked if members had used any of the information we had given them to change things for their child/children. 61% said yes and 39% said no. We asked those who said “Yes” to provide more information. Many parents had used our information to help with their child’s EHCP and getting support in school:

“Helping to get the process started in school to get my child’s EHC plan.”

“Pushing for more support at school and to secure a good transition to secondary school.”

Several parents mentioned using information from the Emotional Regulation workshop run by the Speech and Language Therapy Service:

“The way we deal with outbursts and meltdowns at home and in public areas”

“After attending a course on behaviour, it made me realise that I needed to think differently and communicate differently to achieve more positive results. It has made a more peaceful home.”

Other parents said that the information and support provided by SPCF had given them more confidence:

“Access more support and able to fight the system with more confidence.”

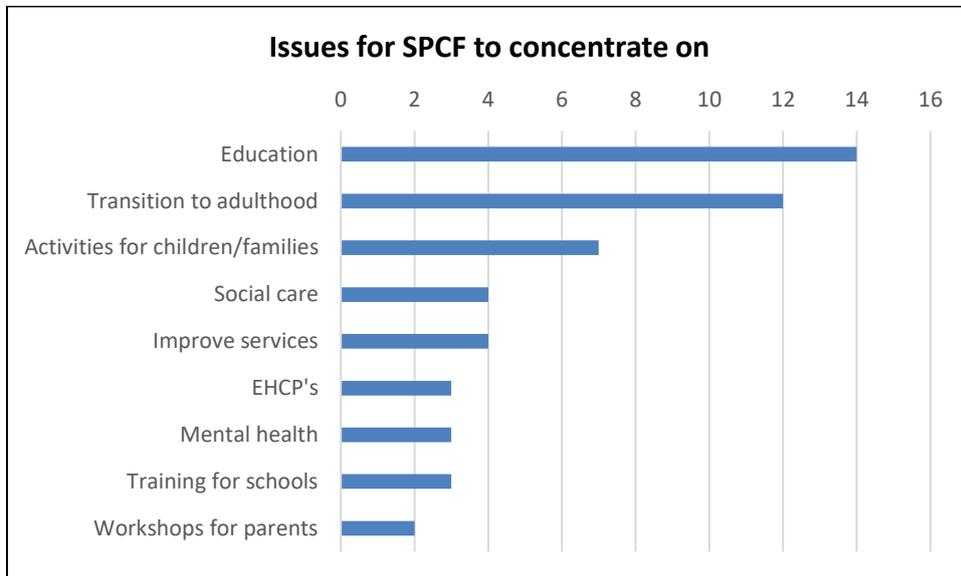
“Gave me more confidence to deal with chasing the right opportunities for my child without being afraid of paperwork.”

Others mentioned using the information to access grants, benefits and activities.

71% of respondents had passed information on to family, friends, other parents at school and work colleagues.

Issues that parents want SPCF to address

We asked parents to choose one issue that SPCF should concentrate on. This was a free text question (parents could write what they wanted). Education topped the list, closely followed by transition to adulthood. This is a big issue encompassing college, employment opportunities, activities, and adult social care.



Do you have any comments/complaints/suggestions about how we can work with you?

Only 17 people answered this question. There were no complaints and some really positive comments:

"Keep up the fantastic work."

"I have had incredible support from you and have been given the confidence to carry on fighting for my little girl."

"Keep up the great work because you are doing a great job!"