My name is Dom Harvey, I’m 23 years old, and I was diagnosed with ASD at 17 while in 6th Form. I grew up and went to school in Hertford, and now work in Cambridge as an Engineer. I hope to go on to complete a master’s degree next year, and in my free time I work with charities and the NHS to design assistive devices for disabled and vulnerable people. I also like cooking!

I chose to be an expert by experience because I believe when it comes to providing support for any group, incorporated individuals with lived experience into policy creation is critical to improving their experience. As someone who has been fortunate enough to be supported yet still face issues, I believe it is my responsibility to advocate for others to the best of my ability.

Having had experience (both diagnosed and undiagnosed) with public and private sector support as a child and then into adulthood, as well as navigating a relatively late diagnosis during a critical period of change in my life, I hope to take my experiences of my diagnostic journey and use it to iterate and improve on current services, while challenging assumptions and educating others.

This year, I hope to improve the knowledge base for everyone – better equipping SEND individuals and those close to them with the means to communicate their needs, as well as give practitioners and service providers the insights they need to fill blind spots and improve the services already available. I would also love to see the expansion of the role – diversity of experience is critical to the improvement of a people-oriented service, and the more viewpoints are incorporated, the clearer an understanding everyone can get of themselves and each other.