



Survivors'
Network

Volunteering

Information Pack

Information about Survivors' Network, our services and what is involved in volunteering with us.

Please find and complete the accompanying application form if you would like to volunteer with us.

“Thank you for having me volunteer at Survivors' Network. I have thoroughly enjoyed all aspects of it – the training, working with the team, and also, I have enjoyed volunteering with the women. I often come away from a drop-in (group) shift feeling inspired and moved by some of the women's stories and conversations. It is a truly wonderful charity.”

SN Volunteer

Volunteer Information Pack

Background to Survivors' Network as an Organisation

Survivors' Network was established in 1990 by women survivors of childhood sexual abuse to provide services that would support other women and girl survivors of childhood sexual abuse. In 2009 we became a Rape Crisis Centre. We now offer a range of specialist services to survivors of any gender who have experienced any form of sexual violence, at any point in their lives. We support survivors who live in Brighton and East Sussex. Survivors' Network adopts a feminist perspective that recognises that sexual violence is a crime of violence and abuse of power, and that it is the cause and consequence of gender inequality.

Survivors' Network Vision & Mission

Our Vision

Uniting to confront sexual violence, abuse and harassment so that no one has to face the impacts alone

Our Mission

- Delivering accessible, survivor-centered services across Sussex
- Empowering our communities to stand up against sexual violence, abuse and harassment through education, training and campaigning
- Demonstrating and advocating for intersectional feminist leadership

We are dedicated to raising awareness of and eliminating sexual violence. We work to empower survivors to make choices and achieve the life they want.

Survivors' Network aims to:

- Provide relevant and accessible services, for those who have experienced sexual violence or abuse
- Offer a high-quality service with a strong emphasis on empowerment and self-help
- Raise the awareness of individuals, professionals and the wider community to issues around sexual violence and abuse
- Work within an equal opportunities framework

Survivors' Network Organisational Structure

The Charity is governed by the Board of Trustees, which is made up of representatives from the local community. They bring their expertise from a variety of sectors. Survivors' Network employs 38 paid staff plus 12 therapists and around 25 volunteers.

Survivors' Network services

Our specialist services are:

- Confidential
- Free at the point of access
- Non-judgmental
- Provided from a women-centred perspective
- Provided in a self-identifying women-only space
- Survivor-led and focused

Volunteer-led Services

Groupwork (daytime & evening):

Online Groupwork: Our online groupwork is for self-identifying women survivors of sexual violence. Groups are run via Zoom and focus on subject such as self-care or goal setting. Most are run for 6-8 weeks and have 6 women on each course. The groups are run by our Groupwork facilitator and supported by volunteers. Volunteers help run the group by joining in or leading on certain sections or discussing topics in breakout rooms. Volunteers can come into the office in Brighton to run the group, or if they prefer, support the group from home.

'All the volunteers have been lovely and really added value and support to the group, please thank them from me. I feel so grateful for the opportunity to take part.' Survivor who attended one of our online groups.

'Thanks again for facilitating the groups really well and running good sessions. (And also, to the two volunteers). I have found them useful for reflection time...One of my favourite things about the group was speaking to people who I could relate to, without sharing any details of my life experiences.' Survivor who attended one of our online groups.

Face to Face Peer Support Groups (daytime & evening):

Our Peer Support groups are for self-identifying women survivors of sexual violence. We offer a safe, welcoming space for women to share their experiences and how they have impacted their life. These groups are currently run in a large inside space in Brighton. We will always work safely and within government guidelines. The groupwork facilitators will lead the session. Volunteers are there to support and help facilitate the space.

"The (Peer Support) shift I did was really beautiful and inspiring. Seeing the women empowering and supporting each other at their different stages was very special." (Volunteer)

Helpline & Email Support (daytime & evening): Our helpline & email service offers emotional and practical support to survivors of all genders of sexual violence (14+) and their supporters (including professionals, friends, partners of any gender). The helpline is open Mondays 7pm – 9pm and on Wednesdays 12pm-2pm and is facilitated by female volunteers. The helpline is run out of our office in central Brighton.

Please note that our Volunteer-led services volunteer opportunities are open to self-identifying women only (exempt under the Equality Act 2010, Schedule 9, Part 1), and that these volunteer roles are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and **subject to enhanced DBS checks.**

After 6-12 months experience on the above service, there may be opportunities to branch out into other areas, for example: helping in the office, promoting our services, supporting other teams.

Please be aware our Brighton office is not wheelchair accessible. Some of our in-person groups are run from accessible venues.

Recruitment process for volunteers:

Anyone wishing to apply to be a volunteer for SN must first complete and return an application form. They may then be invited to an interview with the services coordinator. If successful at interview, candidates will be invited to join the Volunteer Induction training programme.

Volunteer must attend all five days of the Induction Programme, provide two references and have an enhanced DBS check (SN will do this).

Volunteer hours:

We ask that volunteers do a minimum of 2-3 shifts per month. In addition to this, volunteers must attend group clinical supervision and the volunteer meeting. These are both held monthly in the evening (details on application form). These are currently via Zoom.

All volunteers have a probation review meeting after 6-month and then annual appraisals.

Volunteers are invited to join us for further training throughout the year and for social events.

Volunteer Role Description:

- Listen, offer emotional support and signpost survivors over the phone, email and in person
- Support survivors of all genders aged 14 and above, via phone and email
- Support adult survivors in face-to-face and online group work
- Adhere to our policies, including our confidentiality policy
- Be committed to the intersectional feminist and empowerment ethos of the organisation
- Create a safe, containing space for service users

- Work together with colleagues and check for their welfare as well as yours during shifts and afterwards during de-brief
- Provide support using SN's empowerment model
- Raise any issue with the service co-ordinator in a timely manner and in accordance to SN policies
- Maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries
- Attend service meetings, clinical supervision, reviews, appraisals, and additional training giving maximum notice to your supervisor or service co-ordinator if you cannot attend.
- Perform other duties which may from time to time require the input of the volunteer.

Person Specification

- A commitment to the aims of Survivors' Network and the direct service the volunteer will be working on
- Be able to maintain boundaries and confidentiality, and invest time to familiarise yourself and adhere to the organisation's policies and procedures
- Be reliable
- Good listening and communication skills
- High levels of empathy
- Be trans inclusive
- Have a commitment to self-care
- Ability to be an effective team member
- Understanding the needs of survivors of rape/sexual abuse
- Be able to respond sensitively and non-judgmentally to the practical and emotional content of working with survivors
- Ability to work under pressure and in crisis
- Have IT skills (particularly, be confident in using, email and filling out online forms)
- Has not been a user of the Survivors' Network services for two years
- Be over 21 years old
- Identify as a women

Knowledge and experience of working with client group is desirable, but not essential, as full training will be given.

Expenses

Please note that expenses, such as transport costs and a contribution towards childcare costs, will be paid to all volunteers once they have passed the training course, up to a maximum of £10 per shift. Receipts must be provided. We are unable to pay for expenses without attached receipts.

Support

You will receive monthly group supervision facilitated by a counsellor. You will also receive regular support, advice, and guidance, from your co-ordinator as well as on-going training opportunities.

Further questions

If you have any questions about volunteering for us, the recruitment process or training, please email the Volunteer Led Services Coordinator - dropin@survivorsnetwork.org.uk

Our organisation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff, volunteers and other post holders to share this commitment. For more details about your rights and responsibilities, please read our Volunteer Policy on our website.