



Groupwork & Helpline Volunteer Information

Please complete the accompanied application form if you are interested

“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 shift feeling inspired and moved by some of the women’s stories and conversations at the drop-in. 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 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-centred 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 over 50 paid staff plus 12 therapists and around 15-20 volunteers.

Survivors' Network services

Our specialist services are:

- Confidential
- Free at the point of access
- Non-judgmental
- Survivor-led and focused

Volunteer Services

Peer Support Groups In-person:

Tues Create and Connect 13:30 – 16:00 creative group for adult women including trans women and gender diverse people

Wed Cedar 18.00-21.00 for adult women including trans women

Thurs Aspen 10.30-13.30 for adult women including trans women and gender diverse people

Thurs Birch, in Eastbourne, 10:30-13:30 for adult women including trans women and gender diverse people

Fri Oak 10.30-13.30 50 Plus Group, women including trans women aged 50 and over

In our peer groups, we aim to offer a safe, compassionate and welcoming space for survivors to share how their experiences have impacted their life, and to support one another. These groups run in two locations in central Brighton, and one in Eastbourne. The groupwork facilitators will lead the session. Volunteers are there to support. Please note, the C&C and Aspen groups are run from a building that is not accessible. The Birch group is not wheelchair accessible but is on the ground floor.

“The (peer support) shift I did was really beautiful and inspiring. Seeing the survivors empowering and supporting each other at their different stages was very special.” (Volunteer)

Helpline & Email service:

Mon 18.30-21.30

Wed 11.30-14.00

Our helpline offers emotional and practical support to survivors of all genders of sexual violence (14+) and their supporters (including professionals, friends and partners, of any gender). The helpline is run out of our office in central Brighton. Please note, this building has a lot of stairs and is not wheelchair accessible.

Online Groupwork (various daytime & evenings): Our online groupwork is for all women & gender diverse survivors of sexual violence. Groups are run via Zoom and focus on subjects such as self-care. They run for 6-8 weeks and have 6 people on each course. The groups are run by our Groupwork Facilitator. Volunteers help run the group by joining on or leading on certain sections or discussing topics in breakout rooms. Volunteers can support the groups from home. They can also come into the office in Brighton to run the group where they will be provided with a laptop and private space. The groupwork facilitator may run the group from home but there will usually be another member of the team in the office whilst the group is running.

In addition to the helpline there are likely to be opportunities to support the Welcome Team and help with fundraising and events.

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 informal group interview with the Volunteer Services Manager and the volunteer coordinator. If successful at interview, candidates will be invited to join the 5-day Volunteer Induction training programme.

Volunteer must attend all 5 days of the Induction Programme, provide two references and have an enhanced DBS check (SN will do this) and provide proof of Right to Work/ Volunteer in the UK.

Volunteer hours:

We ask that volunteers complete a minimum of 3-4 shifts per month. Each shift is 3 hours. 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 run via Zoom.

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

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

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 person and online group work
- Adhere to our policies, including our confidentiality policy
- Be committed to the intersectional feminist and empowerment ethos of the organisation
- Help create a welcoming, 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 issues with the service manager in a timely manner and in accordance with SN policies
- Maintain confidentiality and professional boundaries
- Attend service meetings, clinical supervision, reviews, appraisals, and additional training giving maximum notice 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, ethos and values of Survivors' Network and the direct service the volunteer will be working on
- Have knowledge of and/or experience of supporting women and/ or gender diverse people, particularly around sexual violence
- Be able to maintain boundaries and confidentiality, and invest time to familiarise yourself and adhere to the organisation's policies and procedures
- Reliable and committed to being a volunteer
- Good listening and communication skills
- High levels of empathy and compassion
- Able to work as part of a trans inclusive service
- Have a commitment to self-care
- Ability to be an effective team member
- Understanding the needs of survivors
- 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

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 clinical supervision. You will also receive regular support and guidance, from the Volunteer Service Manager as well as on-going training opportunities.

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.