

Refuge



**For women and children.
Against domestic violence.**



**Housing Independent Gender Violence Advocate
(IGVA)
Applicant Information Pack**

Introduction from the CEO

Thank you for your interest in working for Refuge.

We have a diverse team of incredible people who work together to provide an inclusive approach to ensure that every woman who needs support when facing domestic abuse, receives it.

We do this through a combination of frontline services offering immediate safety and support to women and their children. We also lead vital work to influence and change policies and practices that impact women and girls and use public engagement and campaigning to help change societal attitudes and norms.

We know that domestic abuse will never end until it is recognised by society as the crime that it is, and there is an understanding that it is underpinned by misogyny. We will not stop until we are able to challenge and shift harmful societal attitudes as well as drive policy and practice change that is needed to end Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). It is only then that women and children will be free to live their lives in safety, with control over their choices and without fear.

Whatever your role at Refuge, you will have the opportunity to grow and develop as part of an amazing diverse and inclusive team of inspirational and talented people who provide vital and specialist services to women and children when their lives are in crisis. This is not always easy work, but it is essential, it is lifesaving, and it is life changing. So, whether you work directly with clients, behind the scenes, or represent Refuge to the outside world, you will be an integral part of what we do.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Gemma Sherrington

CEO





We want kind and empathic people to work at Refuge, who believe in equality, diversity, and inclusion, are experts in their area of knowledge, want to make a positive difference and improve the lives of the women and children we support.

This is an opportunity to join Refuge as a Health IGVA supporting women and children who are impacted by different strands of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). You will work closely with victims of VAWG from the point of crisis, to provide high quality independent advocacy and support to survivors of VAWG at the highest risk and their children.

This post is restricted to women due to the nature of the role. The Occupational Requirement under Schedule 9 (part 1) of the Equality Act 2010 applies.

Salary

£29,701.36 per annum

(Inclusive of London Weighting, which may not be applicable depending on your home location and any agreed permanent homeworking arrangement)

Employment term

This post is full time, permanent

Location

The Gaia Centre, Lambeth

Closing Date

9:00am 1 June 2026

Interview Date

8th and 9th of June 2026

Employment Terms

Salary

The annual full-time salary for this role is 29,701.36. Please note that this includes a London Weighting allowance of £3,000 (pro rata for part-time employees), which may not be applicable depending on your location and homeworking arrangements.

Refuge is an accredited Living Wage Employer. This means that every member of staff working here will earn a real Living Wage. The real Living Wage is higher than the government's minimum, or National Living Wage, and is an independently calculated hourly rate of pay that is based on the actual cost of living. We voluntarily choose to pay the real Living Wage because we believe that a hard day's work deserves a fair day's pay.

Days and hours of work

The contracted hours of work are, from Monday to Friday. This is exclusive of an unpaid lunch hour for every full day worked. The working pattern is 9am – 5pm Monday – Friday. Occasional late early shifts: 8am-4pm or late shifts: 1pm – 8pm on a rota basis to cover duty (approximately 2-3 days a month). Flexibility on how the hours is spread across the week within these times.

Probation

All appointments are subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks, further details will be provided when an offer of employment is made. The probation period for this post is 6 months.

Annual Leave

Annual leave allowance is 28 days per annum plus public holidays, rising to 30 days following completion of five years' service at the start of the annual leave year. Annual leave for part-time roles is pro rata.

Pension

Refuge operates a qualifying salary sacrifice pension scheme with Aegon.

Employee Benefits

Refuge offers a variety of exciting opportunities to learn, develop and grow in your career. We recognise the value everyone brings to the organisation in achieving our aims, and we are dedicated to developing and rewarding our staff.

We offer all our employees a competitive benefits package including:

- Competitive salary
- Clinical supervision for all staff
- Confidential support and advice service via an employee assistance programme available 24 hours a day which provides support on a range of work and personal issues
- Enhanced sick pay leave which increases with length of service
- Excellent sector leading maternity, adoption, parental and paternity pay and leave
- Generous life cover scheme valued at three times individuals' salary and covers death in service subject to insurers approval
- Eye care e-Voucher scheme
- Cycle to Work scheme
- Discounted membership with PureGym
- Opportunity to join our wide range of Equality Network Groups
- Access to free Will writing service
- The ability to apply for flexible working from day one. There will be space to discuss flexible

working at interview

- Interest free loans to purchase season tickets for travel to work and/or to pay deposits to secure rented accommodation, and for professional qualifications

Training and Learning

We are committed to supporting a culture that enables all staff to achieve their full potential by providing a range of professional and personal development opportunities including access to a wide range of e-learning resources.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Housing Independent Gender Violence Advocate (IGVA)
Directorate	Service Delivery
Reports to	Deputy Service Manager
Location	The Gaia Centre, Lambeth and community
Working hours	37.5 hours per week
Working pattern	The working pattern is 9am – 5pm Monday – Friday. Occasional late early shifts: 8am-4pm or late shifts: 1pm – 6pm on a rota basis to cover duty (approximately 2-3 days a month). Flexibility on how the hours is spread across the week within these times.

Role Outline

The Housing Independent Gender Violence Advocate (IGVA) will be embedded within borough housing teams to facilitate the dual working that will ensure that survivors' safety and housing needs are met. This includes:

- Close working relationships with Housing colleagues
- Provision of specialist knowledge relating to DA for Housing Officers and Homelessness Teams to draw on
- Specialist support for survivors at the moment of crisis
- Provision of advocacy; supporting survivors to access safe accommodation
- Ongoing support from the IGVA from wider DA service, including access to group clinical supervision, casework management meetings, reflective practice sessions, one-to-one supervision from service manager

This recognises that many survivors will approach Housing at moments of crisis, when they are either considering fleeing, or have already fled.

The Housing IGVA will work closely with victims of gender-based violence from the point of crisis, to provide high quality independent advocacy and support to survivors of gender-based violence at the highest risk and their children. The role will be part of increasing the ability of partner agencies to recognise, reject and respond appropriately and safely to all forms of gender-based violence (including domestic violence, sexual, financial and emotional abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour-based violence).

The job involves working within a multi-agency framework consisting of the MARAC and local partnership protocols and procedures that prioritise the safety of survivors. The job involves informing survivors of the full range of civil, criminal, housing and practical options that might increase their safety. The post holder will empower survivors by providing them with emotional, practical and personal welfare support especially around complex housing needs.

The job involves ensuring that women are provided with a safe, supportive and welcoming environment, enabling them to access their rights, make decisions and increase their life options.

Key Accountabilities

- Providing practical and emotional support to people experiencing forms of domestic abuse and different strands of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) including sexual violence, stalking, trafficking, modern slavery, harmful practices (So called 'honour' based violence) including forced marriage, female genital mutilation and sexual exploitation including involvement in prostitution and child sexual exploitation, applying the principles of effective casework when supporting survivors of VAWG at the highest risk and their children and to advocate for survivors to ensure their needs are met.
- Carrying out individual risk and needs assessments re the individual household and the survivor (and their children if applicable)
- Establishing the risks and the needs of survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of VAWG
- Developing individual support and safety plans to address the risk of harm to survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of VAWG and their children.
- Providing practical, emotional support and advocacy to survivors of domestic abuse and VAWG to ensure their needs are met especially around complex housing needs and others including civil remedies, wellbeing etc.
- Ongoing support to enable the survivor to cope with and recover from their experiences of DA and VAWG.
- Ensuring a multi-agency response to households at risk of domestic abuse and VAWG ensuring survivors wider needs are assessed and provided with all the necessary support/ referred to the relevant support provider
- Ensuring that survivors are referred to relevant support agencies when appropriate.
- Working in partnership with other agencies primarily housing provider in the borough to strengthen the partnership and to contribute to the design of interventions and the design of plans which protect survivors and their children whilst maintaining an independent role on behalf of the survivors, keeping their safety central to the plans.
- Regularly seek out and obtain updated, relevant, information on housing options and government policy relating to housing and homelessness.
- To prevent future homelessness amongst survivors experiencing domestic abuse and their children
- Participating in community events to promote the services in the borough, strengthened partnership relationships, explore new referral pathways and opportunities for colocations.
- Ensuring that any matters in relation to safeguarding children or vulnerable adults are brought to the immediate attention of a manager
- Supporting the empowerment of survivors, assisting them to recognise the dynamics of domestic abuse present in their own situation, and to help them regain control of their lives.
- To recognise, respect and address the needs of service-users who face particular barriers when seeking help to access the advocacy service, including those from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, LGBT communities, and disabled people.
- Providing statistical monitoring, reports and case studies as required.
- Ensuring that the views and experiences of service-users and agencies are sought actively, recorded carefully, and inform the development of the service.
- To maintain confidentiality and to ensure that professional boundaries are observed when working with clients, staff and external bodies and to work within Refuge's Code of Conduct.
- Providing advice and information on housing to the wider team when and if needed
- To be collocated amongst housing providers in the borough
- To participate on the duty rota system, within a large team.

Managing security

- To ensure Refuge's risk assessment and lone working procedures are adhered to at all times.
- To report any risks that could impact on own or others safety are immediately reported to a manager.
- To ensure that security of sensitive information is maintained and complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR.

Managing health and safety

- To promote and ensure safe working for self and others by strict adherence to Refuge Security procedures and Health and Safety policy.
- To ensure that all equipment provided by Refuge is in safe working order and that periodic testing and maintenance is carried out.
- To ensure, when co-locating with other agencies, the relevant H&S and security policies are followed.

General Responsibilities

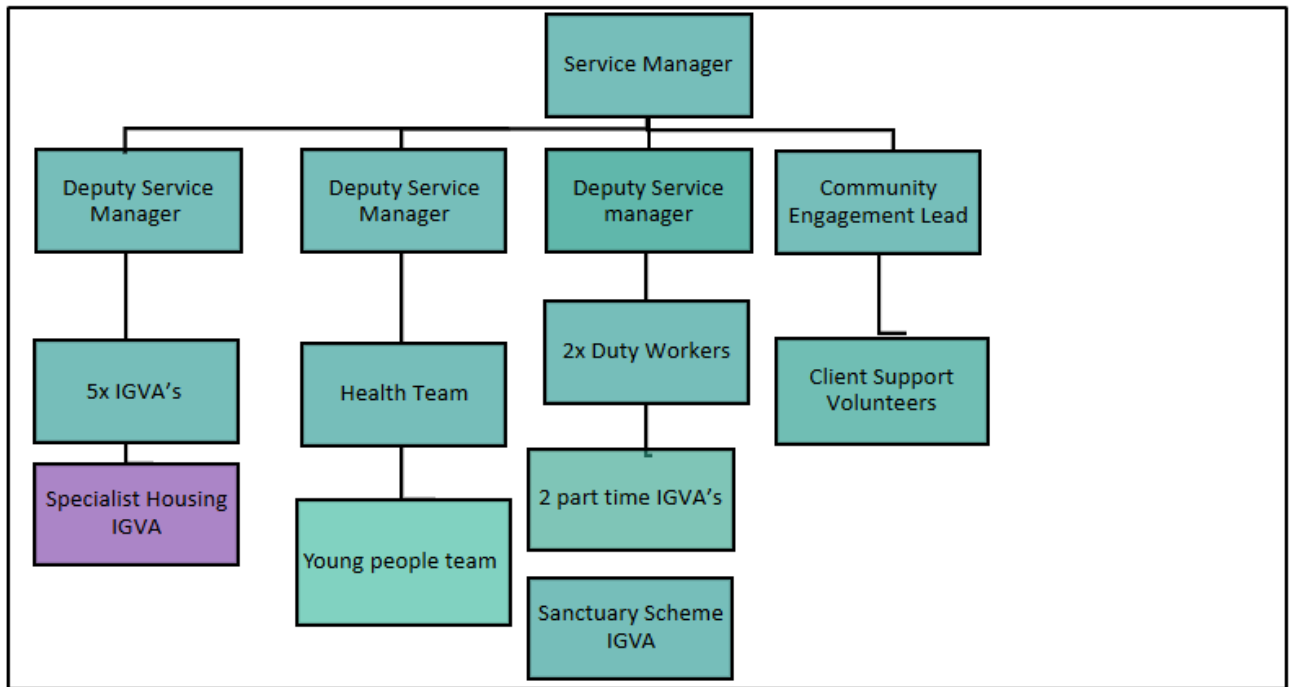
- Demonstrating an understanding of and commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of the role.
- Promoting and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of self and others in line with our Safeguarding Adult and Children Policies, Health & Safety Policy, together with any other requirements aimed at keeping people safe from harm in their interaction with Refuge.
- Ensuring that the confidentiality and security of information is maintained in accordance with our Confidentiality, Data Protection, IT and Security policies.
- Promoting sustainable working practices and reducing the environmental impact of Refuge's work.
- Adhere to Refuge's Policies and Procedures at all times.
- Cover for other members of the team and division as necessary.
- Developing and maintaining positive, collaborative working relationships with other Refuge staff
- An interest in and commitment to the long-term success and development of Refuge.
- Acts as a role model for the organisation.
- Acts with integrity and shows a commitment to upholding professional standards.
- Enhancing personal capability by undertaking continuous personal development activity and maintaining up to date knowledge

This post is restricted to women due to the nature of the role. The Occupational Requirement under Schedule 9 (part 1) of the Equality Act 2010 applies.

We are committed to safeguarding therefore we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. As part of this commitment, we undertake basic disclosure checks (DBS) in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice for all roles. We undertake an enhanced DBS check for our roles working directly with survivors.

It is essential to the development of Refuge's service delivery that the post holder can respond flexibly to changes in the requirements of this post. This job description is therefore a guide and not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities the post holder may have over time.

Service Structure Chart





Who Are We Looking For?

For us it is important that you are passionate, committed and care about the work Refuge undertakes. Not all roles require previous experience in the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) sector. You may be able to bring relevant experience from another industry or transferable skills from a different type of role or volunteering/community experience.

For us, a role description is a useful guide. But please don't discount yourself if you feel you don't meet all the criteria and believe you have the potential. Above all we value individuals who are committed to working hard but looking after yourself, flourish in an inclusive environment and want to make a positive difference to the communities we support.

Person Specification

Experience, Knowledge & Qualifications

- Good general standard of education
- Knowledge of the dynamics and impact of domestic abuse and other forms of VAWG and how best to support survivors.
- Working knowledge of the legal system as it relates to survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of VAWG.
- Experience of identifying and responding to the risks to and needs of survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Experience of providing emotional and practical support to survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) including sexual violence, stalking, trafficking, modern slavery, harmful practices (So called 'honour' based violence) including forced marriage, female genital mutilation and sexual exploitation including involvement in prostitution and child sexual exploitation.
- Experience of providing, non-judgmental, non-directive and confidential. support to individuals and of encouraging them to take control of their lives and set realistic objectives and goals.
- Understanding of multi-agency partnership structures, including the MARAC, in responding to domestic violence and other forms of violence and abuse.

Skills

- Up to date knowledge of legislation relating to survivors of domestic abuse and gender based violence.
- Excellent negotiation and advisory skills and can apply these with a range of individuals and agencies.
- Demonstrable strong written and verbal communication skills; to be able to write reports and to communicate with stakeholders in a clear and effective way.
- Evidence of the ability to work effectively on own initiative, with minimal direct supervision and as part of a team.
- Evidence of the ability to manage in a crisis and to work under pressure within a stressful working environment.
- Evidence of the ability to be an ambassador for Refuge and to communicate and work in accordance with Refuge's philosophical principle.
- Flexible and proactive approach to working, with excellent organisational and administrative skills.
- Demonstrable ability to use Microsoft Office (word, excel, outlook, access), and to collect and analyse statistics.

Personal Qualities

- An interest in and commitment to the long-term success and development of Refuge.
- Acts as a role model for the organisation with integrity and a demonstrable commitment to upholding professional standards.
- Demonstrates passion and approaches all work in an enthusiastic way.
- Commitment to follow the policies, procedures and philosophical principles of Refuge and a strong commitment to feminism, empowerment, support and equality which underpin all of the work undertaken by Refuge.

An Inclusive Workplace for All

- Our vision is to have a workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve; therefore, we actively encourage and welcome applications from candidates of diverse cultures, perspectives and lived experiences.
- We are committed to challenging the inequalities of society and will continue to learn and grow as an organization to ensure that we provide an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.
- We understand that people have personal lives, and these can sometimes impact on their time and availability. We will be as flexible as we possibly can be in terms of supporting staff to balance their work and their personal lives. If you need flexibility within your working hours, working pattern or location then do let us know and if the role and team can support that request, we will do what we can to support you.
- We are proud to have been awarded Disability Confident Employer. Refuge is aware that individuals with disabilities, or long-term health conditions or are D/deaf or neurodivergent are underrepresented in the sector. Refuge is committed to doing what we can to support our employees.
- We committed to paying a competitive salary for the sector because we want to help break the poverty cycle and reduce social economic barriers to those working within the sector. This is reflected in our commitment to the Show the Salary pledge and #Nongraduateswelcome and being an Accredited Living Wage employer.
- We understand that individuals who are Black, Asian and ethnically diverse are often underrepresented within the sector therefore we have signed up to the VAWG Anti-Racism charter, we have an EDI Steering Group and equality, diversity and inclusion training.
- We have created a [Respect Charter](#) to complement our values to support our EEDI journey in creating an inclusive and respectful environment both within Refuge and beyond.
- Furthermore, we have seven Employee Network Groups providing a safe space for staff to share their lived experiences and to challenge us as an organization to do better.

These groups are:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- LGBTQI+ Shine
- Anti-Racism
- Allies
- Families
- Women's

Disability and Neurodiversity Matters **An Inclusive Workplace for All**

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- LGBTQI+ Shine
- Anti-Racism
- Allies
- Women's
- Disability and Neurodiversity Matters

How To Apply

Key Information and Deadlines

To apply please access our online application form via our website:

<https://refugecareers.ciphr-irecruit.com/Applicants/vacancy>

Applications must be completed and submitted by 9.00am on 1 June 2026

- If you have any questions or want to discuss the post before applying, please contact us via email to recruitment@refuge.org.uk
- You can also find out more information about Refuge at www.refuge.org.uk

Interviews will take place vis MS Teams on 8 and 9 June 2026

Completing your application form

What matters most to us when recruiting new members to join the Refuge team, is the inclusive attitude and relevant experience you will bring to the organisation and the role, and how you will support our values of, A feminist force for good:

- **NEVER SHY AWAY**
- **BUILD IT TOGETHER**
- **SHOW WE CARE**
- **LEARN EVERY DAY**

The full values can be downloaded from our [website](#)

Please note that we do not accept CVs for this job vacancy and all applications must be submitted via our online application form. The application process will require you to complete various sections of the application form. It is important that you complete all sections. Please do indicate N/A (not applicable) should some areas of the form not apply to you.

Your Supporting Statement section of the application form describing your skills and experience against the job description and person specification, will also be used to determine who to invite for an interview. Therefore, please do give clear examples of how your skills and experience are relevant to the job you are applying for, and how and where you have used them. Your Supporting Statement should not exceed a maximum of 800 words.

For example, this can be:

- Relevant experience from your present or previous jobs.
- Skills and experience gained from community or voluntary work, work experience, leisure interests and activities in the home.
- Education and the training you have received.

We would like to thank you in advance for expressing an interest in working for Refuge. We look forward to receiving your application.

Applications from Refuge Service Users and Survivors

Former Refuge service users and other survivors supporting Refuge in its external work including for fundraising, policy, media and press can apply for all externally advertised job vacancies.

Survivors that are currently using our services cannot apply for Refuge job vacancies. This restriction is for the survivor's safety and to ensure there is no conflict of interest.

A confirmation of a conditional job offer to a former service user will be subject to a risk assessment. Where significant risks to Refuge and other service users cannot be mitigated, we may not be able to make a conditional offer of employment. If successful in securing the role, their data on Impact will be protected.

Our commitment to inclusive recruitment

Our People and Culture team will remove your name, address and date of birth before forwarding your information for shortlisting. Your education is only considered if it is a requirement of the role.

We want Refuge to be an organisation that is reflective of the society we are based in, therefore, we are committed to growing our diverse workforce. The information you provide on the diversity monitoring form is confidential and helps the People and Culture team to understand where you would have seen the role and how we may need to do better in ensuring everyone who wants to work for Refuge is aware of the opportunities as they arise.

Other information

Safeguarding is vital to our work, and we strive to prevent harm and promote and protect the welfare and safety of all adults and children that come in contact with the organization. We have a collective responsibility to take a do no harm approach by prioritizing the safety and wellbeing of the women and children accessing our services, as well as ensuring a duty of care to our staff and volunteers.

As part of this responsibility, we undertake basic disclosure checks (DBS) for all roles in accordance with the Codes of Practice and in line with our Recruitment of Ex-Offender and Disclosure Barring Services Checks Policy, and for our roles working directly with survivors, at an enhanced level check. Applicants are encouraged to apply for job vacancies, having a spent or unspent conviction will not automatically exclude you from being offered the role. If you are successful in securing the role, we will hold an open and measured discussion about any convictions that might be relevant to the role. Our Recruitment of Ex-Offender and Disclosure Barring Services Checks Policy is available to applicants on request.

Data Protection Act

Refuge is committed to protecting your privacy. Information provided by you in your application form will be kept for the purposes of monitoring. It will be copied for use during the recruitment process. Once the recruitment process is completed, the data will be stored for a maximum of 6 months and then destroyed. If you are the successful candidate, relevant information will be taken from this form and used as part of your human resources record. All personal information that you supply to us as part of your application will be processed in accordance with prevailing UK Data Protection legislation.

By submitting your completed application form you are consenting to your personal data being used and held as described above.

Please ensure that the information you give to us is correct and that you let us know of any changes immediately.

