



# Join our Board

● Information pack ●

# A message from our Chair



Thank you for taking the time to read this pack and considering taking on the role of Trustee at Greater Manchester Women's Support Alliance. The role of a Trustee is vital to ensuring that GMWSA and therefore, the women attending our nine member Women's Centres, receive the support they need. You will discover as you read through, that GMWSA is an impactful organisation, where all women are valued and can flourish, and you can bring your skills, time, and experience to have maximum impact.

We are a truly diverse and inclusive organisation that welcomes all women. All who come, are supported through their own personal journey, and each person's background culture and identity is valued. We set high standards for everyone associated with GMWSA and recognise that everyone is unique and has potential.

We would very much welcome your knowledge, skills and wisdom to support and enhance the lives of others (and your own!) through work with the Trustee Board.

## **The benefits of becoming a Trustee include:**

### **Giving something back**

Becoming a Trustee is a fantastic way to give something back to the community and use your skills, time, and experience to support our women. You will be playing an integral part in the way the charity is run, ensuring it remains sustainable and financially viable. The help you provide will be invaluable to the lives of thousands of women.

### **Learning new things**

It's not all about giving. Getting involved as a charity Trustee is a great way to put your professional skills to use but can also be a fantastic opportunity to learn new things. You will get great insight into what is involved in the management of GMWSA and gain skills on working in a unique charity board role. From learning how our organisations are run, to planning finances and attending meetings and events, acting as an advocate for the organisation across the town/city/ region, this experience can also be the perfect way to give you personal satisfaction or even boost your CV.

I hope that you will take the opportunity to take up this role, develop new skills and increase your knowledge on the issue affecting women, governance matters and most importantly, gain a great sense of satisfaction that your experience, skills, and community-standing would be making a real difference to the lives of our women, their families and to the team at GMWSA.

Best wishes and thank you,

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GMWSA Chair

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# An introduction to GMWSA

**Our Mission** is to provide world-class services to support, safeguard and empower vulnerable and marginalised women, to help them take control of, and rebuild their lives.

**Our Vision** is to see an approach to vulnerable and marginalised women, which emphasises early intervention and prevention, diverting women away from statutory intervention.

**Our Values** shape the way we think and work:

- A strong sense of justice
- A belief in our service users' ability to change and develop, have a voice in and contribute towards our service delivery
- A belief in a common purpose and a strong partnership approach, both with GMWSA members and partners
- Transparency and accountability
- The promotion of Equality and Diversity
- An evidence-led approach to service delivery, and trauma-responsive services.

## What is GMWSA?

We are an Alliance of nine organisations, who all provide high-quality services to women facing multiple disadvantages across Greater Manchester, ensuring that there is a service in each borough of the county. The women we support find their way to our services through a variety of routes: some are referred via criminal justice agencies such as Police and Probation; others from local authorities or health providers; others self-refer.

We provide them with support in women-only safe spaces and help them to address a wide range of issues such as domestic abuse, emotional wellbeing / mental health, debt, accommodation. We also provide positive group activities such as Arts and Crafts, empowerment and building self-esteem to name a few.

The Alliance became a Charity Limited by Guarantee in late 2019. We already have 9 Trustees and are looking to appoint an additional independent Trustee to join the Board and act as Treasurer.

You can find out more about GMWSA on our website [www.gmwsa.co.uk](http://www.gmwsa.co.uk)

# An introduction to GMWSA

## Supporting ALL women

Any woman in need in Greater Manchester, can access our services. We also support women involved in the Criminal Justice System. Greater Manchester Probation Service staff are co-located in each of our centres, meaning women can see their GMPS worker in a safe, women only environment, while being able to access the specialist support our members offer.

Our services are gender-specific, holistic, and flexible; addressing all relevant aspects of a woman's life, addressing the impact of a wide range of underlying issues that cause distress, including offending behaviour. The service will ensure that women feel physically safe and emotionally supported. Services promote empowerment and self-determination, improving women's economic/social conditions by developing their resilience and capacity to be self-sufficient.

We are trauma responsive, we don't ask 'What's wrong with you?', we ask 'What's happened to you?' It has become clear that many of the "symptoms" and problems that bring women into touch with support services, have their roots in prior experiences of trauma, abuse or neglect. The provision of safe, supportive, nurturing, non-judgemental and respectful spaces are central to effectively empowering vulnerable women. A Trauma Informed Service is responsive to the impact of trauma, focusses on safety and creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control.

We deliver all services in line with the five core values of trauma informed services

**Safety** - Women who have suffered some physical or emotional trauma are often hyper-aware of possible danger. Safety is the opposite of danger and fear

**Empowerment** - encouraging women to do what they can for themselves, rather than maintaining a culture of dependence. Empowerment is the opposite of helplessness

**Trustworthiness** - Those who have been betrayed, taken advantage of, harmed, or had their boundaries violated in some other way, may find it difficult to trust others. Trustworthiness is the opposite of lying and betrayal

**Choice** - When her choices are taken away, a woman then believe that her ideas and wishes are of no importance. Choice is the opposite of chaos and coercion

**Collaboration** - sharing information and power, making decisions and plans mutually. This is a particularly sensitive issue for women who have been dominated or abused in relationships. Collaboration indicates that a woman is an important partner in achieving her goals

The Women's Centre has given me my self-esteem back and shown me that there is life beyond the four walls at home..."

# What are we looking for

Are you passionate about the provision of high-quality services for women who have complex needs across Greater Manchester? If so, then why not consider joining the Board of the Greater Manchester Women's Support Alliance and acting as honorary Treasurer?

## What will you be doing?

This is an opportunity to contribute to the stewardship of a charity which seeks to secure funding to improve the lives of disadvantaged women across Greater Manchester. GMWSA seeks to work in collaboration with other stakeholders from the Statutory, Voluntary and Private sectors, to ensure that high quality services are developed for our service users, and where possible to co-design and co-commission services. As a Trustee, you will be able to apply your significant skills and abilities, and will be working alongside other devoted, skilled and enthusiastic Trustees who have a vision to see services for women expand and improve.

There is no remuneration for this post, but reasonable travel expenses would be paid.

## We are seeking at this time:

- Corporate leaders and Community influencers
- People with business acumen, knowledge, and connections
- Women with lived experience.

Previous Board/Trustee experience is not necessary and we welcome applications from all ages and backgrounds.

## Time commitment required

- 6 Board meetings per year (and preparation) 4 online, 2 in-person
- Offer support and perspective on specific areas and issues by joining Board sub-committees or task & finish groups, as required
- Represent GMWSA within the community including at events

## What is a Trustee?

The [Charity Commission](#), which regulates charities in England and Wales, says: "Charity Trustees are the people who serve on the governing body of a charity. They may be known as Trustees, directors, Board members, governors or committee members. Charity Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of a charity."

## How to apply

We would welcome applications from women, and those who have previous lived experience of the type of issues facing our female service users. We would also welcome applications from people who have protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Interested? Please complete our application form, and send it with a copy of your CV. Please send this to Tracy Sparkes, CEO, at GMWSA, 3 Jo Street, Salford, M5 4BD, or send by email to [tracy.sparkes@gmwsa.org.uk](mailto:tracy.sparkes@gmwsa.org.uk), by .....