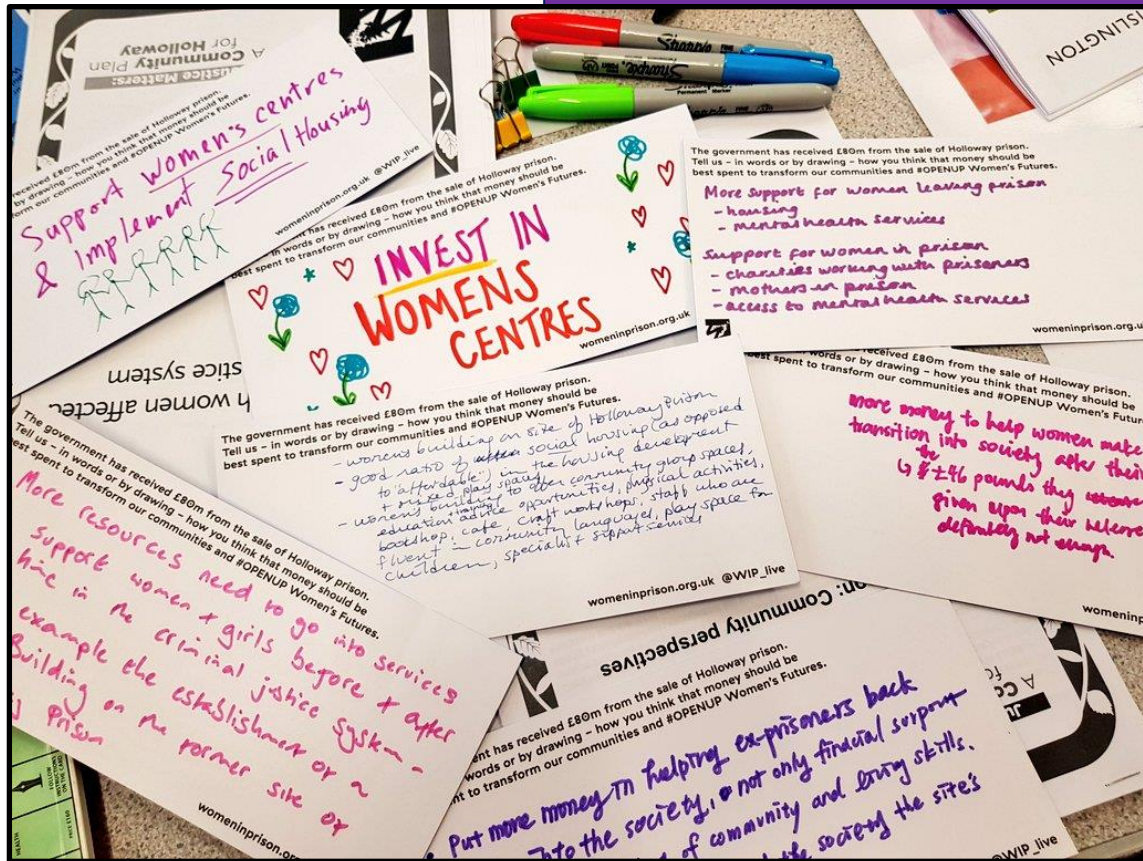


2024

# Link Worker (Prisons)

Charity no:  
1118727. Company  
no: 5581944.

Welcome



Dear Applicant,



Women in Prison is the only national charity focused on women in the criminal justice sector, we are women-led and know the importance of ensuring we have a clear gendered approach in all that we do. Our influencing potential and campaigning voice are substantial. We are currently in our 40<sup>th</sup> year of supporting women impacted by the criminal justice system. We work with women who are at risk of, or being, harmed by the systems that are meant to protect us.

At Women in Prison, we are passionate, ambitious and grounded in the reality of women's lives. We are proud of our roots as a feminist grassroots organisation, and we have grown from strength to strength since the 1980s, delivering services to women and campaigning for change. We exist to support women facing multiple marginalisation and exclusion, who have been let down, and their rights denied. We believe that prison doesn't work and we want to see an end to the harmful imprisonment of women in England and Wales.

This is a very exciting time in Women in Prison. As a deeply value-led organisation, we know that our recently agreed set of values represents the unique nature of our organisation, and also need to hold us to account for how we work in an unpredictable future. Our new vision and purpose will guide us as we build a strategy during 2024 to be implemented from 2025.

We know we want to build more coproduction; deeper support to women who are disproportionately affected by the system through an intersectional lens; greater connection between the women we support and the influencing we do; an increased focus on alternatives to the system and a stronger focus on preventing women being caught up in the system.

If you are excited by our purpose, and the breadth of what this role could offer to you, we would love to hear from you.

I look forward to meeting you.



**Sonya Ruparel, Chief Executive**

## **Our Story**





Our **Vision** is of a society which no longer accepts the structural inequalities that lead women and girls into contact with the criminal justice system.

Women in Prison was born out of the anger our founder – Chris Tchaikovsky – felt about what she experienced and saw when imprisoned in HMP Holloway in the 1980s.

During Chris' time in prison, a woman died after setting fire to her own cell. Chris saw that the specific needs of women in prison and the damaging effect prison sentences were having on women scarcely figured in public or political discourse. So, in 1983, alongside international criminologist Pat Carlen, Chris founded Women in Prison, pushed hard to expose this scandal and campaigned for change. Our founders wanted to increase awareness of the lives behind the women in our prisons, and the impact of poverty and abuse on women's lives. Chris believed the idea of sending a woman to prison as punishment was shameful and absurd.

In her words:

*“Taking the most hurt people out of society and punishing them in order to teach them how to live within society is, at best, futile. Whatever else a prisoner knows, she knows everything there is to know about punishment because that is exactly what she has grown*



*up with. Whether it is childhood sexual abuse, indifference, neglect; punishment is most familiar to her.”*

In the early 1990s, the organisation was able to expand its remit beyond campaigning to deliver direct support to women affected by the criminal justice system. WIP's initial focus on prison in-reach services was then expanded to support women in the community following their release. Chris, sadly, passed away in 2002. Despite the loss of our visionary founder, Women in Prison works to carry on Chris' legacy.

Today, WIP is a national charity dedicated to making a difference to the lives of women affected by the criminal justice system. We campaign for a new system of justice - one that addresses the root causes of offending (including homelessness, substance use, mental ill health and experiences of poverty, trauma and abuse). Our women's centres in Manchester and London and the services we provide in communities and prisons deliver holistic, women-centred support to enable those whom we work with to address the complex challenges they face.

We want to persuade decision-makers to radically reduce the women's prison population, by demonstrating how a focus on human rights, social justice, health and investment in specialist community support services, including women's centres, enables women to move forward with their lives. We do this by:

1. Leading inspiring, passionate campaigns to replace the current system, and to radically reduce the number of women in prison, thereby freeing resources for investment in community support services, including women's centres.
2. Delivering high quality, trauma-informed, independent advocacy services for women, in communities and prisons, which focuses on early intervention, health and holistic provision as part of a 'whole system' multi-agency response.
3. Offering a platform for women's voices which builds women's confidence and self-belief, strengthening an understanding of their rights and responsibilities, and provides opportunities to speak 'truth to power' to bring about real change

Here is a link to our most recent annual report:

[2023 Annual report and accounts Women In Prison.pdf \(womeninprison.org.uk\)](https://www.womeninprison.org.uk/2023-Annual-report-and-accounts-Women-In-Prison.pdf)

## Link Worker (Prisons)



**Reports to:** Service Manager (Prisons)

**Direct reports:** n/a

**Location:** Across South London Women's Hubs, HMP Bronzefield, HMP Downview

### **About Women in Prison**

Women in Prison is a national, women-led, feminist organisation. We deliver front line support to women harmed by the criminal justice system, through our work in prisons, in the community and 'through the prison gate' as they resettle back into their communities. We also campaign for systems change that addresses the root causes of offending, reduces the harmful impact of prison, and creates workable, community-based alternatives to imprisonment.

## **Job Description:**

### **Job Purpose:**

The primary purpose of this role is to work with women in custody, including on remand, preparing them for, and connecting them with vital community support services on, release.

1. Provide high-quality, trauma-responsive advocacy support both in prison and the community, to women on remand in HMP Bronzefield, HMP Downview and HMP Send
2. Development and maintenance of professional relations in prison and the community
3. Ensure clear, timely and effective communication and record keeping
4. Proactively seek to develop your personal and professional practice, and contribute to wider organisational development
5. Contribute to building a feminist leadership culture and positive working environment for Women in Prison

**1. Provide high-quality, trauma-responsive advocacy support both in prison and the community, to women on remand in HMP Bronzefield, HMP Downview and HMP Send**

- Take a co-produced approach to the design and delivery of interventions, involving women in the decision making over interventions, so that they are assisted to achieve their goals



- Provide Through the Gate support to women leaving custody and returning to London and Southeast England, and telephone support to women returning to other areas of the country.
- Liaise with other services working with women across the country, to signpost women returning to areas outside of London and Surrey to relevant support services and interventions
- Undertake risk and needs assessments and develop and record individual support plans with women across the nine pathways to reoffending
- Complete safeguarding referrals where appropriate and support women's safety through involving them in the safeguarding process

## **2. Development and maintenance of professional relations in prison and the community**

- Build excellent relationships with prison officers and resettlement and reducing reoffending teams,
- Develop and utilise a variety of strategies to communicate effectively with women using our services, colleagues, external organisations, stakeholders and the general public
- Be responsible for establishing and maintaining professional relationships internally and with other relevant statutory and voluntary sector agencies
- Participate in the delivery of training for front-line professionals from community and statutory sector groups, in order to improve responses to women affected by the criminal justice system

## **3. Ensure clear, timely and effective communication and record keeping**

- Accurately document all client interaction on Women in Prison's case management database relevant external systems
- Work in line with Women in Prison and prison policies and procedures
- Work in line with GDPR, maintaining confidential service-user records of interventions and contact details in line with Women in Prison's case management policy
- Support in the collation and production of reports as requested, including ensuring that appropriate recording, monitoring and evaluation of work is completed to set deadlines

## **4. Proactively seek to develop your personal and professional practice, and contribute to wider organisational development**

- Contribute to a culture of innovation within the women's sector, ensuring that Women in Prison remains at the forefront of best practice within the sector
- Support Women in Prison's campaigns work through actively contributing to ongoing campaigns and ensuring that Women in Prison provides a platform for women's voices
- Attend and prepare for regular line management meetings, including annual appraisals
- Attend regular clinical supervision
- Take responsibility for self-care and managing vicarious trauma, promoting the importance of self-care both internally and externally



- Maintain and improve competencies through continuous professional development
- 5. Contribute to building a feminist leadership culture and positive working environment for Women in Prison**
- Foster good working relationships within staff teams and build a fair and open culture.
- Adhere to Women in Prison policies, values and approaches
- Treat with confidentiality any personal, private or sensitive information about individual organisations, clients, staff and project data.
- Be flexible and carry out other associated duties as may arise or develop in line with the broad remit of the position.
- Abide by all organisational policies, codes of conduct and practices.
- Support and promote inclusion, diversity and equality of opportunity in the workplace.

*The job description does not form part of your contract of employment and can be amended from time to time as the needs of the organisation require.*

## Person Specification:

### Skills and Experience

- Experience working with vulnerable individuals who have a range of intersecting needs, including designing and delivering 1:1 and group interventions in a trauma-informed manner
- Skilled in engaging and motivating clients and working with a strengths-based approach
- Ability to problem-solve difficult situations and deal with them calmly and effectively
- Self-motivated with confidence to work alone but can also work co-operatively and flexibly as part of a team.
- Effective communication skills both verbally and in writing with people of many different backgrounds and within a range of settings
- Ability to summarise information to identify key themes.
- IT skills at a level that supports report writing, email, internet and use of a database

### Personal Attributes and other requirements

- Commitment to the core values and ethos of Women in Prison, including social justice and feminism
- Commitment to anti-discriminatory practice and equal opportunities and an ability to apply awareness of diversity issues to all areas of work
- Understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and a commitment to working in a way that promotes social justice and feminism
- Up to date understanding of safeguarding practice, policy and procedures
- Understanding of the impact that contact with the criminal justice system may have on women



- Understanding of the root causes of women's offending and the importance of women-specific provision
- Understanding of the impact of trauma and of how to work in a trauma-informed way
- Travel across South London and Surrey
- Interested and motivated to further own skills and knowledge

## Terms and Conditions:

<b>Start date:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024
<b>Salary:</b>	£29,864 per annum (inclusive of £3,990 London/South East Weighting)
<b>Working hours:</b>	35 hours, full time
<b>Contract:</b>	Permanent
<b>Annual leave:</b>	30 days plus statutory bank holidays (if full time). All WIP staff also receive an additional 3 days leave between Christmas and New Year.
<b>Pension scheme:</b>	WIP provides an auto enrolment pension scheme with 5% contributions from the employer and 3% from the employee.

**Applications close:** 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2024

**Interviews with Women in Prison:** tbc

**To apply:** Send a completed application form to [recruitment@wipuk.org](mailto:recruitment@wipuk.org)

If you require reasonable adjustments to support you during the application process, please contact the HR team on [hr@wipuk.org](mailto:hr@wipuk.org).

We are happy to invest in developing the right person, so you are welcome to apply even if your professional experience does not fully meet the job description or person specification.

We particularly encourage applications from Black, Asian and minoritised women, and women who have personal experience of the criminal justice system.

**In line with legal requirements and the nature of our work, this role:**

- Is restricted to women only as a genuine occupational requirement





- Requires the right to work in the UK
- Is subject to an Enhanced + Adult Barred List DBS check.
- Is subject to HM Prison and Probation Service vetting ('Enhanced Level 1' or 'Standard Plus')
- Requires that the post holder is not [automatically disqualified](#) by (or can obtain a waiver from) the Charity Commission

---

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### Our Principle Commitments

WIP is committed to building and valuing diverse teams and taking positive action to promote equality and challenge unfair and unlawful discrimination. We recognise that women may experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination based on their sex and additional, real or perceived, characteristics including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion, sexual orientation, social-economic background, immigration status, caring responsibilities, spent convictions or trade union membership.

WIP works to tackle discrimination and the structural inequalities women experience. We are committed to embedding diversity and inclusion in all areas of our work, including recruitment, and aim to reflect the diversity and excellence of the women that we work with. We actively encourage applications from women from a variety of backgrounds, and with a range of skills and experiences. We are particularly interested to hear from Black, Asian and minoritised women and women who have lived experience of the criminal justice system.

## Policy on the Recruitment of Women with Lived Experience of the Criminal Justice System

Women in Prison actively encourages and supports the employment of women with lived experience of the criminal justice system. We believe that women's own experiences drive the Charity forward through understanding, solidarity and passion for change.

### Job Advertisements and the Application Process

We do not ask for disclosure of criminal records during the application process, to ensure that women with lived experience of the criminal justice system are assessed on their merit, without risk of discrimination and are not asked to disclose sensitive personal information unnecessarily.



If a [Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) check](#) is required for a role, this will be stated clearly in the job advert, including the level of DBS.

### **Levels of DBS Checks**

Basic DBS checks contain details of unspent convictions. Standard and Enhanced DBS checks contain details of unspent and spent (unless filtered) convictions and cautions (including reprimands and warnings). Enhanced DBS checks may also include other information held by police forces deemed relevant to the role or check for inclusion on the Children's or Adults' Barring List.

### **Job Offers and the Induction Process**

We will only ask for a DBS check at the point of job offer.

Disclosures will be treated confidentially and only stored where necessary, in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines. Access will be restricted to limited Senior Management or HR representatives as needed to assess suitability for the role.

A criminal record will not arbitrarily bar women from employment with us. We discuss disclosures with applicants (in person, or via phone or video call), to allow them to explain the background in their own words. We consider the relevance to the role, including the type and seriousness of an offence, how much time has passed and whether the individual's circumstances have changed. If they have restrictions on the work they are able to do, we consider whether we are able to make reasonable adjustments to facilitate their employment.

The Charity Commission does however have its own [automatic disqualification](#) rules on who can hold senior positions within a charity, which apply to our Trustee, CEO and Director of Finance and Resources positions. Although it is possible to apply for a waiver.

Women in Prison does not have a blanket ban on any criminal records and will always approach disclosures fairly and on an individual basis. We seek to balance supporting women with lived experience into employment, alongside safeguarding our current employees, service users and the organisation.

