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connecting you to LGBTQ+ support

SENIOR LGBTQIA+ INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVISOR (IDVA)

APPLICANT INFORMATION PACK

October 2026

WELCOME

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Senior LGBTQIA+ Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA). On the following pages you will find more information about Switchboard, the role and how to apply.

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PROUD SINCE '75

Who Are We?
In 2025 we celebrate our 50th birthday, and this landmark makes Switchboard Brighton's longest-running LGBTQ+ organisation.

This is an important and exciting time to be joining our growing charity, and our vital work has never been more needed.

Switchboard amplify, connect and support LGBTQ+ people across Sussex. We serve over 5000 people every year through our 'by and for' services.

Our Vision
is an inclusive and diverse society in which all LGBTQ+ people can realise their own unique potential.

Our Mission
as a charity run by and for LGBTQ+ people, is to work to understand and respond to the needs of all LGBTQ+ communities in Sussex. We do this by listening, informing, and developing.

THE ROLE

Reports to: Domestic Abuse Service Manager
Location: Brighton & Hove
Salary: £33,000-£35,000, depending on experience
Contract: Full-time / 1 Year Fixed Term Contract

The Senior LGBTQIA+ IDVA will lead the day-to-day delivery of Switchboard's specialist domestic abuse advocacy service. The postholder will support and line manage the IDVA team, maintain high standards of risk assessment and safety planning, and ensure that support remains survivor-led, trauma-informed and affirming of each person's identity.
The role is the first point of advice and escalation for complex risk, safeguarding and information-sharing decisions. The postholder will hold a reduced caseload of high-risk or complex cases and provide cover where needed, while protecting sufficient time for supervision, case oversight and service quality.
Working with the Domestic Abuse Service Manager, the Senior IDVA will strengthen partnerships across Sussex, represent Switchboard in multi-agency settings and use service data and survivor feedback to improve access and outcomes.

Applications will be accepted up to Friday 23rd October 2026
Provisional interviews to take place in the week commencing 26th October 2026 at Switchboard’s office in Brighton & Hove.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Service Leadership and Delivery

- Coordinate the day-to-day delivery of the IDVA service and allocate work fairly, taking account of risk, urgency, complexity, staff capacity and continuity for survivors.
- Ensure consistent completion of risk assessments, safety plans, safeguarding actions, referrals, MARAC submissions and advocacy with partner agencies.
- Review caseloads and case records regularly, with particular attention to high-risk cases, changes in risk, professional disagreement, disengagement and cases involving counter-allegations.
- Hold a reduced caseload of high-risk or complex cases and provide skilled short- to medium-term advocacy based on individual risk, safety, choice and recovery goals.
- Support inclusive outreach and early engagement across LGBTQIA+ communities, with attention to people who experience additional barriers to recognition or support.

Safeguarding Risk and Crisis Response

- Act as the operational lead for advice on adult and child safeguarding, information sharing and immediate risk management, escalating to the Service Manager or statutory partners where required.
- Ensure staff understand and follow organisational safeguarding procedures, local pathways and lawful information-sharing practice.
- Lead coordinated responses to crisis situations, serious incidents and significant changes in risk, ensuring decisions, rationales and actions are recorded clearly.
- Support learning after serious incidents, complaints and near misses, and ensure agreed changes are embedded in practice.

Staff Leadership and Supervision

- Provide regular line management, practice supervision, case review and workload oversight for staff reporting to the post.
- Create a reflective and accountable team culture in which staff can discuss uncertainty, bias, wellbeing and the emotional impact of high-risk work.
- Support recruitment, induction, probation, appraisal, performance management and staff retention in line with Switchboard policies.
- Identify learning needs and arrange coaching, shadowing, training or other development activity. Share current practice guidance and legal updates with the team.
- Plan cover and business continuity so that survivors receive clear information and urgent risks are responded to during staff absence.

Quality Monitoring and Service Development

- Maintain accurate and timely case recording and ensure files meet organisational, funder, data protection and professional standards.
- Use case audits, supervision, performance information, survivor feedback and outcome data to identify strengths, gaps and improvement priorities.
- Ensure practice complies with relevant legislation and guidance, including the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, safeguarding duties, data protection requirements and local information-sharing arrangements.
- Work with the Service Manager to develop an accessible service that recognises intersectional needs and responds to changing patterns of demand across Sussex.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

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Essential Qualifications and Experience

- A recognised IDVA qualification, relevant professional or vocational qualification, or substantial equivalent experience of specialist domestic abuse advocacy.
- Significant experience of supporting victim-survivors of domestic abuse, including people at high risk and people facing multiple or intersecting barriers.
- Experience of supervising, line managing, coaching or providing structured case oversight to staff or volunteers.
- Experience of completing domestic abuse risk assessments, safety planning, MARAC referrals and multi-agency advocacy.
- Experience of making and overseeing adult and child safeguarding decisions, including proportionate information sharing and escalation.
- Experience of managing complex or crisis situations and making defensible decisions under pressure.
- Experience of quality assuring casework, maintaining accurate records and using monitoring information to improve service delivery.
- Experience of partnership working with statutory and voluntary organisations and of constructively challenging practice where needed.

Essential Knowledge

- An excellent understanding of domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, economic abuse, stalking, harassment and the effects of trauma on adults and children.
- A strong understanding of LGBTQIA+ experiences of domestic abuse, including identity-based abuse, threats to out someone, abuse within family or community settings, and the way discrimination can affect help-seeking and professional responses.
- Knowledge of relevant legal and practical remedies, housing and homelessness options, safeguarding duties, confidentiality, data protection and lawful information sharing.
- A thorough understanding of IDVA practice, including risk-led support, survivor choice, professional judgement, safety planning, multi-agency working and the purpose of MARAC.
- Understanding of trauma-informed, anti-discriminatory and intersectional practice, including explicitly trans-inclusive support.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

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Essential Skills and Abilities

- Lead and motivate a team while maintaining clear expectations, compassionate accountability and appropriate professional boundaries.
- Provide effective supervision and case consultation, helping staff analyse risk, plan action and reflect on the impact of the work.
- Communicate complex and sensitive information clearly with survivors, colleagues, partner agencies, senior leaders and commissioners.
- Prioritise competing demands, organise work across a team and respond calmly to urgent or rapidly changing situations.
- Write concise, accurate case notes, referrals, reports and professional correspondence.
- Use case-management systems, Microsoft Office applications and monitoring tools confidently and securely.
- Work independently, use initiative and recognise when to seek advice or escalate a concern.
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Personal Approach and Values

- A survivor-led, non-judgmental and strengths-based approach that supports informed choice and autonomy.
- A clear commitment to LGBTQIA+ equality, trans inclusion, anti-racist practice and accessible services.
- Integrity, discretion and respect when working with survivors, colleagues and partner organisations.
- Emotional resilience, self-awareness and willingness to use supervision and reflective practice.
- Flexibility to work occasional evenings or weekends and to travel within Sussex when the service requires it.

Desirable Criteria

- A management, supervision, safeguarding, domestic abuse or training qualification.
- Experience of working in an LGBTQIA+ by-and-for organisation or service.
- Experience of service development, policy writing, funding reports or commissioning activity.
- Knowledge of Sussex safeguarding, MARAC, housing and domestic abuse partnership arrangements.
- Experience of delivering training, presentations or practice development sessions.

OUR PROJECTS & SERVICES

Originally set up as a helpline in 1975, we've grown to deliver much more in response to needs we've identified.

This exciting new role will be supporting Switchboard to continue innovating, developing and delivering and developing services, by and for LGBTQ people in Sussex.

- Bereavement, Older People and Dementia
- Training & Consultancy
- Domestic Abuse
- Engagement & Research
- Social Prescribing
- Gambling Harms

HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in this role, we would love to hear from you!
Please email ciara.murphy@switchboard.org.uk with a CV and cover letter of no more than 2 pages demonstrating how you meet the person specification.

Applications will be accepted up to Monday 12th October 2026

Provisional interviews will take place week commencing 19th October 2026

PLEASE NOTE:

We recognise that Black and non-Black people of colour are under-represented in our team and we actively encourage applications from people from these under-represented groups. We value lived experience and unpaid work and labour in our recruitment processes.

All of our services operate from an explicitly trans inclusive standpoint. We believe trans people are who they say they are, non-binary identities are valid, and our services are focused on intersectional inclusion. Our service is for all genders and all LGBTQ sexual orientations. All employees and ambassadors of Switchboard are expected to represent these values in their work.

GDPR AND OUR APPLICATION PROCESS

DATA YOU SHARE WITH US
Any data that you share with us in your CV and supporting letter will be used for recruitment purposes only. We have a legitimate interest to some of this data in order to shortlist your suitability to the post.

WHO WILL SEE THE DATA
The only people viewing the data will be those receiving the application, those shortlisting for the post and those on the interview panel. Should you be offered the post, then the Administration Officer will then have access to your data to set up the HR systems that are required for the role.

WILL WE SHARE YOUR DATA?
Your data will not be shared outside of Switchboard. It maybe that an external stakeholder is invited to be on the interview panel and in this instance systems will be put in place to ensure that data does not leave Switchboard.

WHERE WE FIND CANDIDATE DATA
The only data that we would have about you is anything that you chose to share with us through your application form.

HOW WILL WE PROCESS YOUR DATA
Your data will be sent to us via email and will be kept on our shared drive for the purposes of shortlisting and, if shortlisted interview. Those shortlisting will have access to the shared drive and in the instance of an interview a copy of your CV and covering letter maybe printed in a hard copy for interviewers to look at. Any data that identifies you would be omitted from any hard copies printed and all copies would be destroyed after the interview process.

HOW LONG WILL WE KEEP YOUR DATA
All data will kept for one month after the shortlisting and interview process, after this time it will be destroyed. Should you be offered employment then this data may be transferred to your HR file.

YOUR RIGHTS
You have the right to be forgotten, to rectify or access the data we have about you, to restrict processing, to withdraw consent and to be kept informed about the processing of your data.

HOW WE PROTECT YOUR DATA
Our general privacy policy can be found https://www.switchboard.org.uk/privacy-and-cookies/