BWC

BRIGHTON WOMEN'S CENTRE TRUSTEE CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK 2026

INCLUSIVE BOARDS



Welcome from our Director

Welcome to BWC and thank you for taking the time to show an interest in the work we do with women living with multiple disadvantages across Sussex and into Kent and Surrey.

Run for women by women, BWC places each woman at the heart of her support, recognising she is the expert of her own experience. Through our diverse services, we support women who are homeless or insecurely housed, involved in the criminal justice system, survivors of abuse and discrimination, women on low incomes, living in poverty and those with long-term mental and physical health conditions.

In 2024 we celebrated BWC's 50th Birthday, making us one of the oldest women's centres in the UK. We have navigated challenges with resilience and flexibility, meeting the rising need and demand for our services. Last year we helped 986 women and 14 children through one or more of our services – 14% more women than the previous year.

As we look ahead, we stand firm in our roots of centering women's voices, co-producing solutions and living our values. Our 2024–2027 Strategic Business Plan has allowed us to take stock of where we have come from and build with conviction our ambitions for a fairer and more equal society.

Equality, diversity and inclusion is important in all we do – after all, our mission is to reduce inequality for women. It is, as you would imagine, one of our Five Aims to embed Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) as a golden thread throughout everything we do in our 2024–2027 Strategic Business Plan.

Whilst these values already underpin much of our work, I want to see BWC going further, both as a service provider and as an employer, in acknowledgement of the societal and intersectional barriers rooted in discrimination and historical oppression. For this reason we welcome applications from underrepresented women, especially those from the global majority, to join our Board at this meaningful time. We welcome trans women and non-binary people comfortable in gender specific settings.

Even after over fifty years of support in the community, our services are needed now, more than ever. By joining the Board of Trustees, you will play a vital role in BWC's journey and help women from all backgrounds to live happier lives.

Will you join us to make a difference on this journey?



Lisa Dando FRSA
Director
Brighton Women's Centre

About Brighton Women's Centre

Brighton Women's Centre (BWC) delivers women centred services for women in Sussex. We recognise that the women we support have complex and interrelated needs, with high incidences of trauma and abuse. We recognise women are the experts of their experience and ensure our services are co-produced and are based on what women tell us they need. Our approach is relational, holistic, and practical and takes account of the complexity of women's circumstances, background, and experiences.

BWC has been delivering services to women for 50 years. We have extensive understanding of supporting women with multiple and complex needs to become empowered to turn their lives around. Leading the award winning Inspire project for women in the Criminal Justice System since 2009 and the Women's Accommodation Support Service since 2015.

BWC is part of a national network of women's centres and gender responsive providers committed to identifying best practice in ensuring women and girls with complex needs can access the right support in the right place at the right time.

BWC works in partnership with a variety of other organisations both statutory and voluntary.

Our Vision
An equal and fair society where every woman can live a full and rewarding life.

Our Purpose
To work holistically with women in trauma-informed, inclusive safe spaces to enable them to thrive.

Our Impact
Women recognise and use our individual and collective strengths so we can live full and rewarding lives.

Our Values

- Openness: We approach every woman with an open mind and an open heart. We build trusting relationships where every woman can be completely herself.
- Strength: Our team must be strong, to fight the inequality we see around us. And we need to help women build their own inner strength, so that they can go on to live independent, rewarding and happy lives. This also strengthens the people and the society around them.
- Equality: We care equally about every woman, and every team member. And we believe passionately in building a society where every individual is treated equally, regardless of their gender.



Trauma Informed Commitment

BWC is committed to being a Trauma-Informed organisation. This means that we train all our staff, volunteers, and trustees in trauma-informed working. The central principles of approach are:

- Takes into account the impact of trauma on people's thinking, feelings, and behaviours (both service users and staff).
- Avoids triggering a 'trauma reaction' and avoids the re-traumatising of individuals.
- Involves all your team (employees, volunteers and trustees) in working in a trauma informed way.
- Considers the six core values (Safety, Trustworthiness, Choice, Collaboration, Cultural Competency and Empowerment) across the organisation.
- Adjusts the behaviour of staff and the organisation's policies and procedures, to support an individual, therefore allowing trauma-survivors to manage their trauma symptoms successfully so that they can access and benefit from services.

Visit our website:

Home | Brighton Women's Centre (womenscentre.org.uk)

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

At BWC, equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging are integral to our ethos. Our holistic model is informed by intersectionality, understanding that different forms of discrimination can intersect to result in varied and distinct barriers and inequitable diverse experiences. Our work recognises the complexity and the individuality of each woman's story, while also acknowledging the societal and intersectional barriers, challenges and often trauma faced because of discriminatory and historically oppressive systems and structures.

We strive to ensure that women also see a diversity of experience and identity in our services and teams, to ensure we are a safe, culturally inclusive and welcoming space for all women, trans women and non-binary people comfortable in gender specific settings. Working with a strengths-based, person-centred and culturally responsive approach, we empower each woman and consider her the expert of her own experience. For this reason, we know we always have more to learn, to walk alongside any woman who walks through our door.

Our Board Now:

- 60% have a disability or long-term health condition.
- 40% are LGBTQIA+.

Where we want to be:

- 1/5th of our board is from the global majority.
- We want to improve our representation of the 26% of residents in Brighton & Hove from black and racially minoritised communities.

We welcome applications from anyone regardless of disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality, social economic background or other difference. BWC is deeply committed to inclusive working practices, so during the application process we commit to:

- Paying for childcare whilst you are at interviews where these take place in person.
- Paying for your travel costs for interviews held in person.
- Making any reasonable adjustments – for example ensuring we have a sign language interpreter organised in advance if you'd like them.
- Providing this document in a Word document format readily available to download.
- Offering a guaranteed first stage interview with Inclusive Boards for disabled candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the role.



Become a BWC Trustee!

Join our Board of Trustees and play your part in supporting the vision and direction of a local charity with 50 years' experience supporting women in Sussex!

Meet our Board

Why Join the Board?

- Contribute to the direction and vision of a vital charity
- Support women and girls in your community
- Use your lived experience to ensure our governance reflects the community we support

Trustees play a vital role in setting BWC's strategic direction, safeguarding our values, and championing trauma-informed, women-centred services. While our current Board reflects diversity in disability and LGBTQIA+ identities, we are keen to broaden representation further, and particularly welcome applications from women from racially minoritised backgrounds and the global majority, and women with diverse lived experiences, to ensure our governance better reflects our community.

Statutory Obligations of all Trustees are to:

- Ensure that Brighton Women's Centre complies with its governing document, organisation law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensure that Brighton Women's Centre pursues its objectives as defined in the governing document and is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.
- Ensure Brighton Women's Centre applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives.
- Contribute actively to the board of trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to Brighton Women's Centre, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Safeguard the good name and values of Brighton Women's Centre and act in our charity's best interests.
- Represent Brighton Women's Centre at functions and meetings as appropriate.
- Declare any conflict of interest while carrying out the duties of a trustee.
- Be collectively responsible for the actions of Brighton Women's Centre and other trustees.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organization.
- Abide by BWC's equalities and diversity policy.
- Ensure the financial stability of Brighton Women's Centre.
- Protect and manage the property of Brighton Women's Centre and to ensure the proper investment of the Brighton Women's Centre's funds.
- Make sure Brighton Women's Centre is properly insured against all reasonable liabilities.
- Appoint and support the employees and monitor their performance.
- Use any specific knowledge or experience you may have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions. Including scrutinising Board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, and providing advice and guidance requested by the board on new initiatives, or other issues relevant to the area of, the Brighton Women's Centre's work in which you have special expertise.
- Participate in and support the fundraising activities of Brighton Women's Centre.
- Attend meetings, and read papers in advance of meetings.
- Attend sub-committee meetings as appropriate to participate in other tasks as arise from time to time.
- Keep informed about the activities of the organisation and wider issues which affect its work.

Person Specification

We are seeking two new Trustees to join our Board of Trustees and supporting the vision and direction of Brighton Women's Centre.

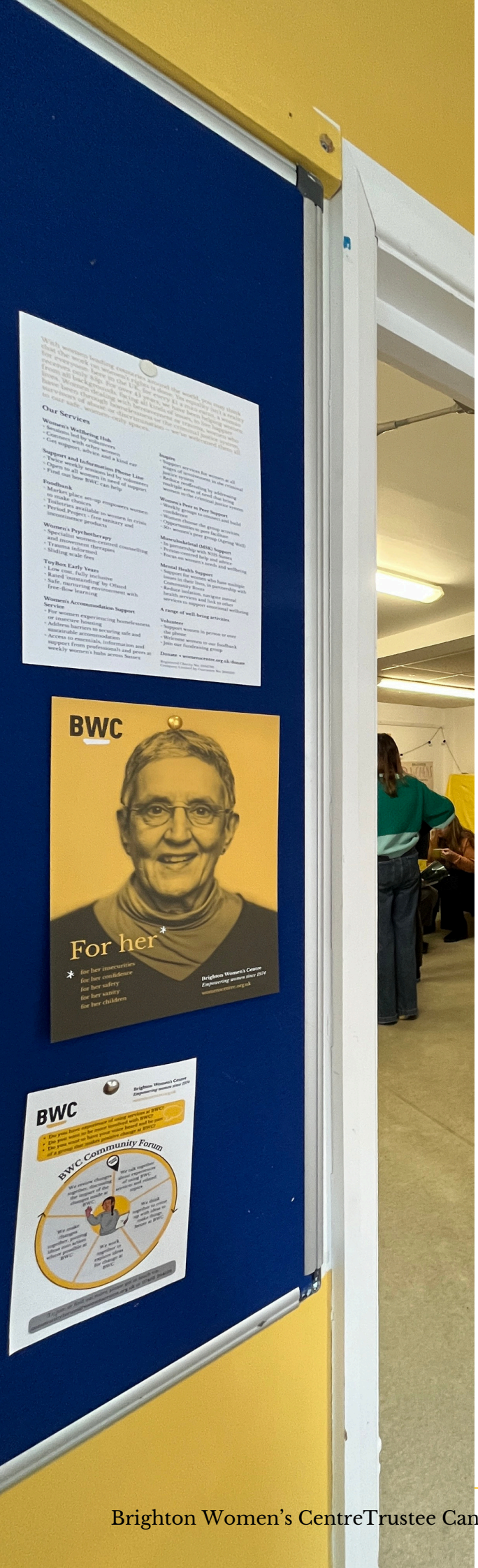
Essential Criteria

- A woman, trans woman or non-binary person comfortable in gender specific settings, who lives and/or works in Sussex or Kent the South East of England.
- A commitment to the values, aims and mission of BWC, including a strong personal commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Brighton Women's Centre is fully trans-inclusive and welcomes all women, trans women and non-binary people comfortable in gender specific settings.
- Eligible as per the Declaration of Eligibility (see Application Form)
- Willingness and ability to understand and accept their responsibilities and liabilities as trustees and to act in the best interests of the organisation.
- Willing to devote time and effort to the work of the Board and the capacity to (prepare for and) attend regular meetings and contribute to the work in between meetings, e.g. via email.
- Ability to think strategically, exercising good, independent judgement as well as working and communicating effectively with other Board members.

In addition to the above essential criteria, we also interested in hearing from candidates who can bring ONE of the following expertise to add value to our Board:

- Good local knowledge and networks
- Legal expertise





Additional Information

Time Commitment:

- Attend quarterly Board Meetings in person in Brighton. These are usually Thursdays 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Preparation will be required.
- Attend at least one subcommittee online, usually on Thursday evenings. One of these runs every other month, the other runs quarterly. Preparation will be required.
- Attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM), usually in November.
- Make efforts to attend as able: one organisational Away Day a year and two Trustee Away Days a year.
- Be available over email for ad hoc consultation via email or phone.

Terms of Office:

Voluntary Position, with reasonable expenses reimbursed. Trustees are appointed initially for a one-year term, followed by 3-year terms, for a maximum of 9 years

Remuneration:

This is a voluntary role. Reasonable expenses, such as travel, can be claimed in line with our expenses policy.

Conflicts of interest:

All candidates will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest. These will be examined to see if any actual conflicts exist and appropriate steps taken as needed.

How to apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Inclusive Boards on behalf of Brighton Women's Centre. If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following by **11:59 on 08/11/2026:**

- A detailed CV setting out your career history including responsibilities and achievements.
- A cover letter (maximum two sides of A4) highlighting your suitability for the role and responding to the following questions:
  - Why do you want to join Brighton Women's Centre as an organisation?
  - What experience would you bring to the Board of Trustees at Brighton Women's Centre (please use person specification as reference)
  - Which area of Brighton Women's Centre's work particularly interests you?
  - Do you know of any reason which would prevent you from becoming a charity trustee?
- Details of two professional referees together with a brief statement of their relationship to you and over what period of time they have known you. Referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.

Please consider filling out our diversity monitoring form. The information provided to us is confidential, stored securely and separately from your application, and is only used to ensure we are meeting our obligations for equal opportunities under the Equality Act 2010.

If you have further questions after reading this pack, please email BWC@inclusiveboards.co.uk or call 0203 963 8802.

Please visit www.inclusiveboards.co.uk/opportunities to apply online or send your CV and cover letter to BWC@inclusiveboards.co.uk.

INCLUSIVE BOARDS

About Us

Inclusive Boards is the UK's leading board diversity practice. We have worked alongside over 300 organisations to provide support with Board recruitment, development and governance reviews. We strive to be at the forefront of equity and diversity, and believe that everyone should be represented at Board level. Additionally, we also provide bespoke training sessions on a variety of subjects including personal branding, inclusive recruitment practices and board structures and governance as well as delivering leadership development programmes for underrepresented leaders across a range of sectors.

Contact us today

To improve diversity on your Board please don't hesitate to contact us via hello@inclusiveboards.co.uk.

To join a Board, sign up to become a candidate via our website and be notified of the latest opportunities as and when they become available.

www.inclusiveboards.co.uk

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https://linkedin.com/company/inclusive-boards

