

West Sussex Mind is an independent local charity. We support people with their mental health, provide specialist training and campaign to improve services and promote understanding.

WS Mind is affiliated to the national charity Mind. This affiliation requires WS Mind to work within the terms of a Mind Federation Agreement and also be subject to their external quality assurance process, the Mind Quality Mark.

The advice and support we offer aims to improve people's physical and mental well-being, strengthen self-esteem and confidence and promote strong relationships with family, friends and communities. We also help people get into education, training or work and achieve their personal and social goals.

Increasing understanding about mental health is a priority for us so we run a comprehensive training programme for parents, carers and professionals. Our experts provide specialist training to professionals, as well as bespoke training to staff and managers in other organisations and companies.

We also work in communities to raise awareness and to tackle the stigma which continues to affect the lives of people with mental health problems.

How do trustees help to support our work?

Trustees work collaboratively with other members of the Board to give leadership, direction and support to our managers.

Why become a trustee?

Being a trustee is a great way to be involved in the community and with a cause which really matters to you.

Being a trustee can help you meet new people, change your community for the better, learn new skills or use your existing skills in a new context.

At its heart, being a trustee puts you at the centre of the action for the organisation.

This is a particularly exciting time to join West Sussex Mind. We have experienced significant growth in recent years, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, growing from 65 staff in March 2020 to 118 staff in November 2021.

We are supporting more people than ever before with their mental health: we supported 6,230 people from March 2022 to April 2023; trained 12,449 people in mental health; and made 24,959 individual and group interventions over the same period.

At West Sussex Mind we aim to further develop our Board of trustees, by seeking representation that truly reflects the communities that we support. We believe the greater diversity we have on the board, the greater difference we can make.

Who can be a trustee?

At its simplest, most people over 18 years of age can become trustees, but a few are not eligible. Those who have already been disqualified as company directors and those who have been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty or deception cannot usually become trustees.

What skills do trustees need?

- Self-motivation to learn and develop
- The willingness to make a commitment to us
- The desire to continually improve
- The commitment to achieving positive outcomes for people with mental health problems
- IT skills to be able to access emails, look at papers and join meetings online

How much time does it take?

Trustees attend six Board meeting per year.

Meetings are held online via Zoom or in our offices in Durrington or other venues. Board meetings currently run between 17.00pm and 19.00pm. For each Board meeting there are papers which are circulated in advance which trustees need to read before the meeting.

In addition to this **trustees are also asked to contribute to at least one sub-committee.**

Sub-committees undertake more detailed work for the Board, which there isn't time to do at full Board meetings. Sub-committees meet bi-monthly.

Trustees also attend two development days per year.

Trustees are not expected to attend everything, but trustees need to be able to make a contribution depending on their interests and strengths.

Working with West Sussex Mind

At West Sussex Mind we place a very high value on the work of our staff and volunteers as we depend heavily on their skills and dedication in order to provide excellent services. Working with us requires a real understanding and appreciation of our beliefs and values.

We encourage a culture that is friendly and welcoming to all and we continually aim to create an environment that supports learning, growth and personal development.

We are proud of our Investors in People status and offer the widest opportunities possible for training and professional development, recognising this is an essential ingredient in providing quality services and in the overall success of the organisation.

As a new trustee you will be able to take part in a range of activities to help you settle in to your new role. You will be assigned a buddy who will be a current trustee; they will work with you during your induction period and continue to support you after this.

We have a trustee handbook which will be available to you, this will provide you with all the relevant governance information and policies that you will need in your new role.

You will be added to our new online learning library where relevant courses will be automatically allocated to you. You will also be added to our supporters network where you will be sent news and updates.

You will have regular reviews including a three-month, six-month and an annual review to see how things are going and to ensure you have all the support you need.

Applying for to be a trustee

The Role Description sets out the key work that is involved in being a trustee. Think about why you are interested in becoming a trustee, the attributes we are seeking and how your own skills and experience tie in with what the role involves.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is an area that we as an organisation are hugely committed to. We have developed a working group which brings together a range of people from across the organisation to focus on creating positive change.

Principles and practice

We will promote the principles of equality and the benefits of diversity throughout West Sussex Mind and in our relationships with the community as a whole.

We will aim to eliminate unfair discrimination by maintaining an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our service users, staff and volunteers and are recognised and valued.

Within the organisation and in our relationships with other organisations, we will seek to maintain a climate and culture opposed to all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination.

We aspire to greater diversity within West Sussex Mind in order to reflect the community we serve and to ensure our services truly reflect their needs.

We aim to have a workforce that is truly representative of all sections of the community and will regularly review our recruitment policy and procedures to ensure that we recruit staff and volunteers fairly, legally and in accordance with best practice.

We will provide education and support to ensure that all our staff and volunteers fully understand the importance and relevance of equality and diversity at West Sussex Mind.

We aim to help and encourage all staff and volunteers to develop their full potential by ensuring that their individual skills and attributes are fully recognised, utilised and developed to provide the best possible delivery of services.

We will ensure that no form of harassment, bullying or intimidation is tolerated within the organisation.

We will monitor the effectiveness of what we do in these areas and continually seek to improve our performance.