



SWAN Advocacy Network
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Registered Charity Number 1100662

Volunteer Opportunities

Issue-Based Advocate
Citizen Advocate
Fundraising and Research
Administration
Trustee



SWAN Advocacy Network

South Wiltshire Advocacy Network (SWAN) was set up as a pilot project in 1999 to offer and promote an independent issue- based advocacy service for adults living within Salisbury District. Since this time the organisation has continued to grow in both stature and reputation, and in 2003 became an independent registered charity. (Registered Charity Number 1100662)

In 2004, having identified areas where more advocacy provision was needed, SWAN secured funding to extend and enhance the service for people who have a learning disability, and people recovering from or experiencing mental health illness. There is now a range of ways that independent advocacy is made accessible and available to these clients.

SWAN supports adults who, because of illness, disability or age, may experience difficulty speaking up or speaking out about issues affecting their everyday lives. Our aim is to ensure the voice of the client is heard as they struggle to make their needs known through a maze of law, regulation and policy. Our clients are people who are frequently excluded, and whose quality of life may be deeply affected by the decisions others make about them.

The organisation is run by a Board of Trustees. There are three full time and one part time employees and 15 volunteers.

Statement of Equal Opportunities

SWAN recognises that certain groups within society experience discrimination both directly and indirectly. We recognise that the society we serve is diverse, comprising people and communities with a variety of interests, needs and abilities.

SWAN is committed to actively opposing all forms of discrimination. We are committed to taking positive steps to implement policies and practices which counter direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sexuality, disability (including mental illness), age, ethnic origin, nationality, commitment to dependants, religion, marital status or political belief.

This policy applies to all matters relating to employment and **SWAN** services affecting individuals and groups.

The implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy will be regularly monitored and the policy reviewed and revised, in order to ensure that its aims are being met.



Registered Charity 1100662

Applying to Become a Volunteer

Anyone interested in learning more about SWAN is welcome to call in or phone to book an appointment for an informal chat. Please bear in mind that if you chose to call in you may not always find someone in the office.

If you wish to apply to become a volunteer, please complete a SWAN application form. If there is not one included with this information booklet, you can download one from our web site www.swanadvocacy.org.uk or ring and ask for one to be sent to you. To ensure equal opportunities, SWAN can only accept applications that are submitted on our own application form.

On receipt of an application form you will be invited to come in for an interview and discussion about the various opportunities, and your specific interest.

Successful applicants will be invited to join the SWAN induction training. On successful completion of the induction programme volunteer positions will be confirmed.

Please send your completed application to:

The Manager
SWAN Advocacy Network
26 Milford Street
Salisbury SP1 2AP

This application pack can be reproduced in large print or on cassette tape if requested.

Aims:

- To ensure that the voice of the client is heard
- To empower clients to make effective choices about their lives and to ensure they are accorded the same respect, dignity and consideration that all members of society expect
- To encourage self-advocacy

Objectives:

- To offer and promote an advocacy service for adults who are experiencing or recovering from mental illness, physical or sensory impairment, learning difficulty or disability or ageing or are carers and live in Salisbury District and request and agree to the service of an Advocate
- To offer a service where there is a specific need for advocacy which cannot be met, for whatever reason, by an existing service
- To provide a service, which is free, confidential, impartial, client-centred, issue-focused, enables client choice and is accessible regardless of disability, colour, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation

In line with the stated Aims and Objectives SWAN seeks to involve volunteer advocates to:

- Ensure that our services meet the needs of our clients
- Provide new skills and perspectives
- Increase our contact with the local community we serve
- Increase our contact with the local community we serve

South Wiltshire Advocacy Network changed its name to SWAN Advocacy Network in 2007 to reflect its new position as a county wide provider of advocacy.

Volunteer Advocate - Role Description

Role title: Volunteer Advocate
Responsible to: SWAN Manager or Project Co-ordinator
Area of work: Working with adults of all ages, who are experiencing or recovering from mental illness, physical or sensory impairment, a learning difficulty or who are carers.

Main purpose: To deliver an advocacy service within SWAN service Aims, Objectives and Policies.

Main tasks:

After training and with support

- To ensure that the voice of the client is heard
- To empower clients to make effective choices about their life and to ensure that they are accorded the same respect, dignity and consideration that all members of society can expect
- To encourage self-advocacy
- To explore client's issue, identify options, listen supportively, and offer the opportunity to decide how any actions should be carried out
- Make clear and factual records of each meeting or contact with the client
- Participate in the supervision and support programme offered by SWAN

Availability:

Advocates should be flexible but able to commit fully to the client they take on at any given time. The decision as to whether to take a client is entirely that of the volunteer.

Time for training, team meetings, support and supervision will be required, and will average approximately 2 hours every three months.

Charity Trustee

Availability:

Trustees should be able to offer a minimum of four hours per month to attend Trustees' meetings, and dialogue on organisational matters. Additional time may be required to fulfil organisational policy changes, or attend training deemed necessary by the Board of Trustees.

Anyone unsure about becoming a Trustee can be invited to join the Board as a co-opted member; they can then join the Board after election at the AGM or remain as a co-opted member if this is their preference.

Person Profile

We welcome applicants with any range of these experiences

- Experience of or willingness to learn about charitable aims and objectives and charity law
- Experience or understanding of organisational or business structures
- An understanding of budgets and accounting
- Experience or understanding of using statutory services
- Experience or understanding of fundraising
- Experience or understanding of the voluntary sector
- A positive attitude towards disability, recognising own feelings, attitudes and prejudices
- Life skills and experiences that you feel you can bring to enhance strength and development of this charity
- Tenacity and commitment.

Charity Trustee

Roles & Responsibilities

Role title: Trustee

Responsible to: SWAN Chair of Trustees

Area of work: Working with the Board of Trustees to control the management and administration of the charity

Main purpose: To deliver an advocacy service within SWAN service Aims, Objectives and Policies.

Main tasks:

With the support of the Board of Trustees

- To take an active part in the running of the charity.
- To give time to the efficient administration of the charity and the fulfilment of its trusts
- To bring relevant skills and experience to the Board of Trustees
- To meet with the Board on a monthly basis, with further meetings as may be required from time to time
- To participate in ongoing dialogue between trustees and the manager on the charity's affairs
- To exercise a duty of care, acting lawfully, reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to the charity
- To ensure that any fund-raising activity carried out is properly undertaken and that all funds collected are properly accounted for
- To fulfil legal requirements in regard to the charity's accounts and objectives

Volunteer Advocate – Person Profile

- Commitment to user empowerment by accepting the client's right to choose a course of action
- Ability to remain open-minded and flexible in approach to clients
- A positive attitude towards disability, recognising own feelings, attitudes and prejudices
- Ability to communicate diversely and effectively by:
 - ⇒ Listening with empathy
 - ⇒ Explaining information in plain language
 - ⇒ Writing clearly and concisely
 - ⇒ Learning new communication methods and skills
- Ability to recognise own strengths and weaknesses
- Ability to demonstrate willingness to learn and develop new skills
- Willingness to accept the confidentiality of the SWAN service
- Willingness to work as part of a team and to accept guidance and supervision
- Active commitment to SWAN's Aims and Objectives
- Active commitment to SWAN's Equal Opportunities Policy
- Active commitment to ongoing training, including team meetings
- Tenacity and commitment to see something through with a client, to their satisfaction or acceptable/workable outcome.

Volunteer Citizen Advocate - Role Description

- Role title:** Volunteer Citizen Advocate
- Responsible to:** SWAN Manager or Learning Disabilities Co-ordinator
- Area of work:** Working with adults of all ages and abilities, who have a learning difficulty.
- Main purpose:** To deliver a citizen advocacy service within SWAN service Aims, Objectives and Policies.

Main tasks:

After training and with support

- To spend time with a person with a learning disability to get to know him/her and build trust on which to base a supportive partnership, particularly where there is no network of friends or relatives
- Where there are problems with verbal communication, to find out and learn other methods used by the client
- To agree together, as far as is possible, on the frequency and length of meetings to bring security and stability to the partnership
- To discover and assist the partner with any issues he/she may have which disadvantage him/her in the community
- To link the partner to all services and support that he/she needs and to ensure that he/she is accorded the same respect, dignity and consideration that all members of society can expect
- To participate in the supervision and support programme offered by SWAN.

Volunteer (Fundraising and Research)

Person Profile

- Sound administration and organisational skills
- An ability to work alone and as part of a team, and to accept guidance and supervision
- Computer literate, with willingness to learn grant research
- An understanding of project budgets would be helpful, but not essential
- Some experience of event management or organisation would be helpful, but not essential
- Ability to demonstrate willingness to learn and develop new skills, and learn and apply fundraising law
- Willingness to accept the confidentiality of the SWAN service
- Active commitment to SWAN's Aims and Objectives
- Actively commit to the fundraising strategy and to SWAN's Equal Opportunities Policy
- Active commitment to ongoing training, including team meetings
- Flexibility, pragmatism, sense of humour and tenacity are all useful traits!

Volunteer (Fundraising and Research)

Role Description

Role title: Volunteer (Fundraising and Research)
Responsible to: SWAN Manager
Area of work: To work with the Manager and/or Consultant Fundraiser to research potential grant opportunities and to raise funds generally to support the ongoing work of this local charity.

Main purpose: To support fundraising activity within the SWAN service Aims, Objectives, Policies, and in line with the charity's fundraising strategy.

Main tasks:

After training and with support

- To research and explore fundraising opportunities
- To assist with the organisation of fundraising events
- To assist in the writing of grant applications
- Maintain accurate administration records of activity

Availability:

Volunteers should be able to

- Offer at least 6 hours per month to the tasks as outlined above.
- Attend team meetings when able
- Attend induction and basic training sessions and ongoing training as applicable

Availability:

This could vary from once a week to once every 6 months, depending on the need, and would last as long as it was deemed necessary by both sides. This could be months or years. Ongoing training, team meetings, support and supervision are integral to the organisation and will average approximately 2 hours every three months.

Volunteer Citizen Advocate – Person Profile

- Ability to empathise with the partner's situation and difficulties
- Ability to see partners as who they are and not with the label they have been given by society
- A positive attitude towards disability, recognising own feelings, attitudes and prejudices
- Ability to communicate diversely and effectively by:
 - ⇒ Finding out how the person communicates if verbal skills are lacking
 - ⇒ Having the patience to listen and find a way of understanding accurately what the person is saying
 - ⇒ Learning new methods of communication when necessary
- Ability to stand by the person without judging him/her
- Willingness to accept the confidentiality of the SWAN service
- Active commitment to SWAN's Aims and Objectives
- Active commitment to SWAN's Equal Opportunities Policy
- Active commitment to ongoing training, including team meetings

Volunteer (Administration)

Role Description

- Role title:** Volunteer (Administration)
- Responsible to:** SWAN Manager
- Area of work:** To work with the Manager and/or Senior Officer to carry out administrative tasks generally to support the ongoing work of SWAN.
- Main purpose:** To support administrative activity within the SWAN service Aims, Objectives, Policies, and in line with the charity's fundraising strategy.
- Main tasks:**
After training (where necessary) and with support, to assist with specific administrative tasks as and when required, such as, but not exclusively, mail-shots, printing, binding, answering the telephone, reception duties, checking information held on the contacts database, delivering mail and other items within the city centre.
- Availability:**
- The need for this administrative support is variable, so volunteers are asked to be flexible. Commitment could be approximately 6 hours per month.
 - Attend induction and basic training sessions and ongoing training as applicable

Volunteer (Administration)

Person Profile

- Willingness to be flexible in terms of time and activity
- Administrative and organisational skills are desirable
- An ability to work alone and as part of a team, and to accept guidance and supervision
- Computer literacy is desirable, but not essential for all areas of work
- Willingness to learn and develop new skills
- Good telephone manner and ability to communicate effectively with people at all levels
- Active commitment to SWAN's Aims and Objectives
- Ability to work within SWAN's Equal Opportunities and Confidentiality Policy
- Active commitment to ongoing training, including team meetings
- Self motivation, flexibility, pragmatism, sense of humour and tenacity are all useful traits!