

Trustee Recruitment Pack 2020



Welcome

Are you passionate about helping young men leaving prison and supporting them to make sure they never return? Do you believe we can all do more to help people get out of a criminal justice system that sometimes seems to have a revolving door? Do you share our ambition that *everyone* should have the opportunity to live a stable and rewarding personal and working life as an active member of society?

If so you may well be the person we're looking for to help Switchback on the next exciting stage of our journey as a charity. We're ambitious that we can do even more to support the young men we work with, our Trainees. To help achieve that ambition we're now looking for three new Trustees to join our Board in late 2020 or 2021.

We want our Board to look like the world we serve and to have different voices within it. We know that diverse groups of people make better decisions. We also recognise that currently we don't have an ethnically diverse board that represents the young men or communities we serve. However, we're committed to changing this and to making a deliberate effort to ensure our team and ways of working are fair. So we're *determined* in this round of Trustee recruitment to recruit people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and people with some lived experience of the criminal justice system to join us. We're also keen that our Trustees in future include people under, as well as over, 30.

We don't require candidates to have any previous experience of board or leadership roles. We only require that you genuinely care about the work we do and are able to contribute to the work of the Board. Please read on for more information and details about how to apply.

Duncan Shrubsole

Chair

Olivia Gillan Bower

Deputy Chair

'Seeing my Switchback Mentor in prison meant I already knew her once I got out. She understands me and understands the journey I'm taking. If I was doing it by myself things would have gone off track by now' - Daniel, Switchback Trainee

ABOUT SWITCHBACK

Switchback was established in 2008 on the basis that it's often not the lack of opportunity, but rather a lack of confidence, knowledge and continuity of support that prevents prison-leavers from overcoming challenges and realising their options.

Since 2008 we've helped hundreds of young men, our Trainees, leaving London prisons to build stable, rewarding lives they can be proud of. We provide them with intensive 1-2-1 support and real work training delivered with a team of full-time professional Switchback Mentors who help Trainees make choices that reinforce their initial commitment to change.

Real work training leading to a job after release is just one part of the Switchback process. We challenge and encourage Trainees to take control and make real, lasting change – a fundamental shift in mindset and lifestyle. This is new territory for most – a frank, non-judgemental relationship with someone there for them on a daily basis, helping to navigate the turbulent transition from prison to the wider community.

Last year, the proportion of Switchback Trainees who reached our benchmark of real, lasting change increased significantly to 75%. Over half our Trainees moved into lasting employment. While almost half of people released from prison are re-convicted within a year and many are back inside within weeks, Switchback Trainees are *five times* less likely to return to custody than other prison-leavers.

We're determined to expand our reach and – equally important – to use the evidence gathered from our work to secure wider change across the criminal justice system. To maximise our impact now and for the future we have to have the right funding, resources, staff team, partners and supporters and ensure that we use them all efficiently and effectively.

Switchback's work has been recognised in recent years with a number of accolades:

- Winner [Longford Prize](#) 2019
- Shortlisted [Charity of the Year](#) Charity Times Awards 2019
- Shortlisted [Outstanding Organisation](#) Criminal Justice Alliance Awards 2017
- Winner [Robin Corbett Award for Prisoner Re-integration](#) 2016

'Switchback provides real hope for change – it's not about targets, it's genuinely about helping people, and for the young men I look after that's really important' - Emily Thomas, Governor HMP Isis

OUR VALUES

We always aim to be:

Human – keeping Trainees at the heart of everything we do. We build trust, confidence and independence in all areas of a Trainee's life.

Authentic – rolling with the ups and downs of real life. We prize integrity and honesty. We don't sell a dream; we're realistic about what it means to genuinely start over and the huge courage needed to change. We provide a space to learn from mistakes.

Committed – Our commitment to Trainees is consistent and continuous, and for as long as it takes. We reject quick fixes. We do what we say we're going to do and coach our Trainees to do the same.

Ambitious – with high expectations. We assume strengths, resources and abilities in Trainees. We don't do things *for* people – we challenge and encourage our Trainees to take control.

Pioneering – we challenge Trainees and ourselves to move outside our comfort zones and we encourage adventure to learn and grow. As a charity we constantly seek to reflect and improve.



(1) What Trustees Do

Trustees, along with our Trainees and Staff, are one of the three key groups of people who make up Switchback. As a Trustee you'll use your knowledge, skills, and experience to ensure Switchback achieves its charitable objectives and represents the interests of all our stakeholders. Key responsibilities of our Trustee Board are to:

- Set the key aims, objectives, and direction of Switchback
- Serve as a means of communication with communities Switchback exists to serve
- Support, and sometimes challenge, staff to ensure the Charity and its resources are well-managed
- Promote, and act in, the best interests of Switchback at all times

(2) What We're Looking For

We always aim for our Trustee Board as a group to have a mix of skills and backgrounds. Particular things we're looking for this time are:

- Lived – real life – experience or knowledge of black, Asian and minority ethnic communities
- Lived experience of the criminal justice system (This might be your own experience, but could also be that of a partner or family member)
- Experience from your working life of the criminal justice system
- Experience of HR and employment law

We'd also welcome applications from Trustees who have connections with Tower Hamlets and Newham (two London boroughs many of our Trainees come from) but this is certainly not essential.

We're currently setting up a Fundraising Board too so if you have knowledge or expertise in that area (or in sales and marketing) please make contact.

*'People only do what they know, and that depends where you grow up.
To me, I knew how to sell drugs. In my community it's just normal to do crime.
Switchback taught me and pushed me so much. I've learned to forget about crime.
I've been shown a different route' - Ahmed, Switchback Trainee*

(3) Time commitment

Our Board meets five times a year, usually near the Switchback offices in Commercial Street (London E1) and for about two hours. Most Trustees sit on a sub-committee or sub-group such

as Finance or Fundraising or provide some further – as and when – support and advice on issues such as Trainee support, our mentoring programmes etc. While we're currently meeting remotely, we're always happy to pay travel and childcare expenses to enable Trustees to attend.

Trustees are normally appointed for three years. This term is sometimes then extended for a further three years to a maximum term of six years.

(4) Our other Trustees

Our other Trustees come from a range of backgrounds in the charity, public and private sectors. Some have lengthy experience of being charity Trustees, some are newer to Board membership.

We value both Trustee experience and the fresh view and perspective that comes with not having been a Trustee before. Many of our Trustees recognise that their engagement with Switchback has often helped them in their own personal and working lives.

From late 2020, our Board will be joined for the first time by one of Switchback's own Experts by Experience (EBE) Trustees, a current or former Switchback Trainee. He'll be nominated by our EBE Board set up in 2019 to make sure that the perspective and lived experience of our Trainees is reflected in all our work.



(5) Support for Trustees

We provide new Trustees with on-boarding support appropriate to them. This can include introductory coaching in governance (the administration of charities) as well as, of course, an introduction to the detail of the work that Switchback does and the Trainees we work with.

We will also provide continuing support for Trustees as they wish. Someone who hasn't been a Trustee before can be partnered with a 'Board Buddy', another Trustee who's happy to catch up with them by phone before and after meetings.

We want all our Trustees to contribute to the work we do, but we hope in return that their engagement with Switchback is a development opportunity for them too.

(6) Informal Chat

If you'd like an informal and private chat about being a Switchback Trustee, and what it might involve, you're very welcome indeed to contact Alice Dawnay, our Founder and Chief Executive, or Kenny Imafidon, a Trustee of Children in Need and Spark Inside, who's helping us with this recruitment exercise. Both will do their best to arrange to speak to you at a time that's convenient.

Lily can find a time in Alice's diary – lily@switchback.org.uk
Kenny's Assistant is – celine@clearviewresearch.co.uk (Please put Switchback Trustee as subject title)

'When I first came into Switchback I'd feel so uncomfortable I could hardly speak. Switchback totally changed how I thought about myself. I've learned that it's not about taking the fast route, taking the long route is more beneficial in the end. I've done so much more than I thought I could' -

Elton, Fashion Student and former Switchback Trainee

(7) Applying to become a Switchback Trustee

If you'd like to apply to be a Switchback Trustee, we ask you to provide in one email or document:

- a. A brief summary of your personal background (up to 200 words)
- b. A brief summary of why you're interested in Switchback (up to 200 words)
- c. A summary of what you hope you'd be able to add to our Board of Trustees in terms of your knowledge and experience and how you'd bring what we're looking for (as in Section 2 above) (up to 300 words)

and also please attach

- d. A completed Diversity monitoring form available [here](#). This is separated from your application immediately upon receipt but does help us monitor the range of people we're engaging so that we can keep our work connected with all the communities we serve.

Please send these – marked Confidential – to lily@switchback.org.uk by **6pm** on **Friday 25 September 2020**.

(8) Previous convictions

There's a small range of offences – mainly fraud, sexual offences and terrorism-related offences – which can currently disqualify some people with unspent convictions from serving as a charity Trustee. Even in these cases, individuals can apply for a 'waiver' and this is often granted. If this is a matter of concern for you, please raise it – completely privately – with Alice during an informal chat and we'll offer advice.

(9) Recruitment Timetable

We're aiming to keep to the timetable outlined below so that we can have new Trustees on board either in December 2020 or spring 2021.

Launch of Recruitment Process – Friday 14th August

Alice Dawnay and Kenny Imafidon available for **background phone calls** – throughout August and September

Applications – due by 6pm Friday 25th September

Alice Dawnay **informal conversations** with candidates – Monday 28th September to Friday 2nd October

Shortlisting meeting – Monday 5th October

Interviews – Monday 12th October

Candidates will meet a panel of four people: Olivia Gillan-Bower (Deputy Chair, Switchback), Kenny Imafidon (Trustee, Children in Need and Spark Inside), Ben Summerskill (Trustee, Switchback), Monique Williams (Head of Delivery, Switchback)

Informal chat for final candidates with Duncan Shrubsole (Chair, Switchback) – 19th October to 23rd October

At present, we expect both the Interviews and Informal chats to take place remotely. (If this changes, then travel expenses will be paid for anyone asked to attend.)

Announcement of appointments – late November 2020

'I don't know where I'd be without Switchback. They restored a lot of things. My faith, my trust, my mentality. You're allowed to open up at a rate that works for you. You're a person, not a plan. There's so much to look forward to now. I used to see the world in a totally different light. I used to see it in black and grey, now I see it in colours' - Michael, Chef and former Switchback Trainee

Thank you

If you've read this far, thank you for your interest. Switchback is an organisation that transforms lives. It's a remarkable charity, doing remarkable work, with a remarkable team of all sorts of different people involved. We hope you might want to become one of them and we look forward very much to hearing from you.



Switchback Trustee

Full Role Description

Key responsibilities

- Ensure that Switchback pursues its objectives
- Ensure that Switchback applies its resources carefully and responsibly
- Contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in direction to Switchback – setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and measuring performance
- Keep the beneficiaries at the heart of decision making
- Ensure that Switchback complies with the various legislation relating to charities
- Safeguard the good name and values of Switchback
- Ensure the effective administration of Switchback
- Ensure the financial stability of Switchback
- Protect and manage the property of the charity and ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds

In addition, all Trustees should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions and provide honest and constructive criticism, advice and comments.

Further duties

- Support our staff to improve operations by bringing specialist knowledge and skills, contacts and networks and experience on different aspects of the operations as required
- Read Board papers carefully in advance of meetings
- Keep informed of the services provided by Switchback
- Network where possible on behalf of Switchback to support income generation from organisations and individuals

Further duties of Trustees as a group

- Be accountable to funders for the services provided and money spent
- Approve major actions of Switchback, such as capital spending and major programme changes
- Annually review the performance of the Board and take steps to improve its performance
- Seek new Trustees when appropriate
- Appoint independent auditors

'I was totally closed off before. But speaking with my Switchback Mentor created that trust, that bond. I can talk to her about anything, I know she's not going to judge me. If I didn't take that step to come to Switchback I'd probably be back inside'
 - Raihan, Hotel Receptionist & former Switchback Trainee