

Switchback Mentor

Switchback

JOIN OUR TEAM!

£32,755 - £36,264 depending on experience | Permanent | Full time (35 hours per week) | London/hybrid | Great benefits

Deadline: Wednesday 25th March 2026 at 12 o'clock

How to apply

To apply, please email the following to jobs@switchback.org.uk with the subject: Switchback Mentor:

1. Your **CV**
2. A Personal Statement Form
3. A completed **equalities form** [available here](#) (this is optional but will help support our equalities monitoring and will be treated anonymously and separate from your application).

Deadline

Midday on Wednesday, 25th March 2026

Interviews

First round – w/c 13th April 2026

Second round – w/c 20th April 2026

We are holding an optional **online Q&A from 6.30-7.30pm on Monday 16th March** with our Delivery Managers and a Switchback Mentor). If you'd like to join and hear more about us and the role, please register by emailing jobs@switchback.org.uk (and you will be sent the link to join).

Feedback

As a small team we regret, we are unable to provide feedback to candidates that are not selected for the interview stage.



WHY JOIN SWITCHBACK?

Switchback is an award-winning small charity supporting young Londoners to find their way out of the justice system and build stable, rewarding lives.

Switchback's pioneering model is centred on a meaningful relationship between a Switchback Mentor and Switchback Trainee, beginning in prison and lasting as long as it takes after release.

This unique level of support is new territory for most Trainees: a frank, non-judgemental relationship with someone who's there for them on a daily basis, helping to navigate the turbulent transition from prison to community.

Switchback's intensive approach works. **In stark contrast to the national average – which sees around half of those leaving prison every year back inside within 12 months – just 10% of Switchback Trainees reoffend.** In fact, over 50% go into long-term employment, while 65% reach Switchback's unique benchmark of Real, Lasting Change.

In 2025, 74 trainees joined our Real Lasting Change programme, and 449 men received pre-release support. In 2026 and beyond, we aim to reach even more individuals.

Building on 15 years of impact, Switchback works with others to inspire change across the justice system and beyond. In recent years we've made great strides shifting policy and perceptions, including through our groundbreaking podcast Time & Again, and the successes of Switchback's Reshape Release campaign, including the first rise in the prisoner discharge grant for 25 years.

You'd be joining Switchback's friendly team near to Spitalfields Market in the heart of East London. We offer flexible working, excellent benefits and training, and we have fun too.

Above all, we're a values-led organisation; make sure they resonate with you

This is an exciting time for Switchback as we're aiming to reach even more young Londoners while doing more to tackle social and racial injustice in the UK. Join us!



ABOUT THIS ROLE

Are you **passionate about working 1-to-1 with young prison-leavers** from a variety of backgrounds; many of whom are from marginalised communities, to help them lead more stable, rewarding lives?

As a Switchback Mentor, you will **play a vital role in transforming the lives** of young prison-leavers, helping them break free from the justice system and build stable, rewarding futures. You will be responsible for building your own caseload by **engaging directly with young men in prison** and providing intensive support after their release. In addition to working with those you meet in prison; you will also support Trainees referred to the programme after they have already been released.

Once on the programme, you will maintain regular contact with Trainees, meeting face-to-face at least once a week to help them navigate the challenges of being recently released from prison and work towards their goals. Most importantly, you will do this in a way that reflects Switchback's core values: **putting Trainees at the heart of everything we do**, setting high expectations, and building authentic, supportive relationships that enable lasting change.

Switchback works with prison-leavers aged 18-30 from a variety of backgrounds and circumstances. While we support individuals with a wide range of experiences, we currently do not work with those convicted of offences of a sexual nature or related to terrorism. It is essential that Mentors can **confidently and professionally engage with all Trainees** who meet the eligibility criteria for the Switchback programme, providing them with the support and guidance needed to move forward positively.

What you'll get when you work for us:

Switchback takes the development of Mentors very seriously. Switchback Mentors are the drivers of our impact, and we will help to build your expertise as a practitioner through our in-house training in our unique change model. This is complemented by a comprehensive training and supervision package including: regular psychologically informed 1:1 clinical supervision and group reflective practice sessions and an annual, individualised training budget. You will also join a structured progression pathway which can provide opportunities to further develop management skills and technical expertise, informed by your own learning goals.

Switchback understands the challenges and complexities faced by the young people we work with. To ensure Mentors can provide the highest level of support, we intentionally keep caseloads low. This allows Mentors to dedicate the time and resources needed to build strong, meaningful relationships and offer Trainees the intensive, tailored support they need to make lasting change.

KEY DETAILS

Job title	Switchback Mentor
Salary	£32,755 - £36,264 per annum, depending on experience
Hours	Full time (35 hours per week)
Contract	Permanent
Location	London (Spitalfields E1) / Mentors work on-site—whether in the office, community, or prison—four days a week and have the flexibility to work from home one day a week.
Reporting to	Delivery Manager
Start date	As soon as available
Benefits include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 35-hour working week with flexible working possible.• 25 days' holiday rising to 30 days with service, plus bank holidays, plus 3 extra days holiday in the last week of December.• Holiday buy-back scheme after 2 years' service (10 extra days).• Strong commitment to staff development and training.• Generous pension scheme (5% employer contribution).• Cycle to Work scheme• Team away days and social events.• A free-to-access Employee Assistance Programme supporting mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Caseload Development and Mentoring

- Build and manage a caseload of Trainees, supporting them to achieve stable and rewarding outcomes.
- Develop your caseload through regular prison visits and/or engagement with community referrals.
- Gather and assess information about potential Trainees from multiple sources, including the Trainee, Prison Service, Probation Service, and partner organisations.
- Proactively manage selection lists, prepare potential Trainees for engagement, and monitor caseload numbers to ensure consistent engagement.
- Deliver high-quality, face-to-face mentoring, including:
 - Setting and reviewing meaningful goals.
 - Reflecting on challenges, progress, and behavioural change.
 - Providing practical advice and structured support across Switchback's 10 Pathways.
 - Using motivational interviewing techniques to encourage sustained engagement and commitment to change.
- Build safe, professional, and appropriately bounded relationships with Trainees.
- Constructively challenge attitudes and behaviours to support positive change.
- Facilitate access to relevant partnership opportunities that support Trainee progression.
- Work with colleagues to plan and facilitate monthly developmental experiences for Trainees.

Partnership and Advocacy

- Build and maintain effective working relationships with prison, probation, and statutory staff to ensure strong awareness and understanding of Switchback's work.
- Advocate on behalf of Trainees, supporting them to navigate complex welfare, health, housing, and employment systems.
- Support Trainees into and through work placements, apprenticeships, and permanent employment.
- Ensure each Trainee is supported across Switchback's 10 Pathways, making referrals to specialist services where appropriate.

Data, Recording and Impact

- Accurate and consistent data capture is integral to Switchback's effectiveness, accountability, and development. High-quality data enables us to understand Trainee needs, track progress and outcomes, identify trends, strengthen programme delivery, and meet funder and reporting requirements. You will:
 - Record all Trainee interactions, outcomes, and relevant updates on Switchback's database within 72 hours of engagement.
- Ensure information is accurate, complete, and consistently entered in line with organisational standards.
- Use data to inform your mentoring practice, identify emerging needs, and adjust support plans accordingly.
- Contribute to the organisation's understanding of trends, impact, and areas for programme development through accurate reporting.
- Support internal and external reporting requirements by maintaining robust, audit-ready records.
- Failure to maintain accurate and timely records may impact service delivery, safeguarding oversight, and organisational accountability.

Culture, Learning and Organisational Contribution

- Actively embody and promote Switchback's culture, values, and methodology internally and externally.
- Engage fully with Switchback's supervision and training programme to support professional development.
- Contribute to building organisational knowledge of the justice system by sharing insights and learning from practice.
- Share learning from Trainee work to inform programme development, training, and influencing activity.

Organisational Responsibilities

- Share reports, data, and case studies with the Influencing and Fundraising teams to support communications and income generation.
- Understand and contribute to the delivery of Switchback's strategic plan.
- Undertake additional duties as reasonably required to support organisational objectives.
- Attend both internal and external meetings and represent Switchback where necessary



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Are you full of potential but not sure you fit all the criteria? Apply anyway and we could help you get there! As a small, dynamic charity we're used to training and supporting brilliant people to learn and grow in their role. If you think you could fly in this position, get in touch.

Experience

- At least 1 year's continuous experience of working 1:1 with 18–30-year-olds with experience of the Criminal Justice System

OR

- At least 1 year's continuous experience of working 1:1 with 18–30-year-olds with complex needs to make positive change (e.g. substance use, mental health challenges)

Skills

- Ability to work confidentially with 18–30-year-olds
- Ability to work effectively with professionals.
- Ability to use risk assessment tools
- Ability to prioritise and demonstrate effective time management
- Great communication skills including excellent active listening skills
- Ability to receive and act on feedback, and be willing to give feedback in a constructive way
- Good IT skills and willingness to learn and use Switchback's databases

Professional attributes

- Passionate about our ambition and purpose
- A strong commitment to upholding Switchback's values.
- Understand and respect the need for the best interests of our Trainees to always come first
- Resilience with the ability to deal with setbacks, frustrations and unpredictability
- Intuitive, resourceful and able to problem solve
- Willingness to step outside of your comfort zone
- Self-starter with a proactive mindset



DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Diversity

Switchback is committed to diversity in all that it does and aims to build a team representative of modern London, celebrating the differences that people bring with them as a vital resource. We welcome applications from the widest possible talent pool. We particularly welcome applications from candidates with lived experience of the justice system (personal or by association). We are an equal opportunities employer and are committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workforce. Women are currently underrepresented in our Delivery team and we therefore encourage applications from women in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Selection for appointment will be based solely on merit. Our diversity and inclusion policy is available [here](#).

Accessibility

Please let us know if you have any special requirements which we might need to consider in relation to the selection process (e.g. attending interviews.) Any requests will not affect your application.

“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.”

Jordan, Market Manager and former Switchback Trainee

A NOTE ON CRIMINAL RECORDS

Switchback welcomes applications from individuals both with and without criminal convictions. Please note that the Switchback Mentor role requires independent access to prisons, including the ability to draw keys. As such, the role is subject to security clearance by HMPPS, a process which is managed externally and is outside of Switchback’s control.

Switchback will support any applicant with a criminal conviction through the HMPPS vetting process. Following a successful interview, any offer of employment will be made subject to satisfactory HMPPS security clearance.

Candidates should be aware that the HMPPS vetting process can be lengthy and timelines are determined solely by HMPPS. Where clearance is not granted, this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis before any decision regarding employment is finalised.

Helpful information on this subject is provided by the charity Unlock – [you can read it here](#) – and you might like to consider this before making an application.

OUR VALUES

Switchback's values cut through everything we do, from our work with Trainees to our fundraising and partnerships.

1. Human

Keeping Trainees at the heart of everything we do.

We build trust, confidence, independence and stability in all areas of a Trainee's life. In all decisions we use the lens: "does this help us improve the prospects of young men leaving prison?"

2. Authentic

Rolling with the ups and downs of real life.

We prize integrity and honesty. We don't sell a dream: we are realistic about what it means to genuinely start over and the huge courage needed to change. We recognise that change is not linear and we provide a space to learn from mistakes.

3. Committed

Taking the long way around.

Our commitment to Trainees is consistent and continuous, lasting for as long as it takes. We reject quick fixes, shortcuts and tick boxes. We do what we say we are going to do and coach our Trainees to do the same.

4. Ambitious

Having 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. We are distinctive in our high expectations of Trainees, our own conduct, the quality of our partnerships and the impact of our work.

5. Pioneering

Pushing into our stretch zone.

We challenge Trainees to move outside their comfort zone and we encourage adventure to learn and grow. As a charity we strive to do the same, constantly seeking to reflect and improve. We pioneer an alternative approach and share our evidence with others to inspire wider change.