

Head of Services

Candidate Information Pack

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Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Head of Services at SIFA Fireside. I hope you find this pack useful in preparing your application.

SIFA Fireside assists adults who are at risk of, experiencing, or in recovery from the effects of homelessness. Formed of two charities, SIFA and The Fireside, we have almost 40 years’ experience of supporting the most vulnerable and marginalised individuals in Birmingham.

We are driven by our vision and values, which sit at the heart of our business and drive our decision making across the charity. SIFA Fireside is a vibrant and progressive organisation that puts people at its heart, growing and developing the individuals that are involved in its work.

Over the last 2 years, SIFA Fireside has grown its service delivery and has worked with its partners to develop a comprehensive city-wide response to homelessness. Our financial turnover has reached £2millon for the first time, and the workforce has grown to 52 staff alongside 35 regular volunteers.

The team at SIFA Fireside has transformed the profile of the organisation from one that simply supports people in crisis to an organisation that prevents homelessness at every opportunity. We have a fundamental belief that every individual who comes through our doors should have options and choices about their future. We want to ensure there is a pathway to a sustainable life that they want to lead.

Today, SIFA Fireside has become recognised as a leading charity in Birmingham and a go-to organisation assisting adults who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

SIFA Fireside is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring its senior leadership reflects the background, experience and identity of the community we support. This includes people with lived experience of homelessness.

We want SIFA Fireside to be in an excellent position to drive forward its strategic vision ensuring the senior leadership team is committed to helping the charity move forward and do the right thing by the people it exists to serve.

We will face policy challenges and uncertainties in the future, but we know that the work we do has real value and can transform people’s lives. If you would like to be part of our journey, we want to hear from you.

**What we are looking for**

* A person with exceptional leadership skills
* Significant experience in service delivery and contract management
* A team player and a great communicator
* Conversant with the homelessness and housing sector

This position is not for the faint-hearted! If you enjoy a challenge and have the drive and passion to advocate for some of the most vulnerable people in Birmingham, then why not make an application? You are also welcome to contact me for an informal conversation.

Your sincerely

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Natalie Allen

Chief Executive, SIFA Fireside

# About Us

We work with homeless and vulnerably housed individuals in Birmingham. Through our holistic and personalised approach, we want to ensure our clients have the best possible chance to build their lives and become active members of a community that exists beyond their traumatic experiences; an experience of homelessness should not permanently define an individual. We wish to give people the opportunity to take back control and lead healthier and more fulfilling lives.

**Vision**

Every adult in Birmingham can live a future without homelessness.

**Mission**

To challenge and address the systemic causes, and effects of homelessness in collaboration with our partners.

# Our Values INCLUSIVE

We respect diversity and equality and recognise people’s individual needs.

**COURAGEOUS**

We believe in doing the right thing to make a difference for our clients.

# DYNAMIC

We are a unique organisation and adapt our services to meet people’s needs.

**SUPPORTIVE**

We provide holistic support to encourage people to learn and grow from their experience.

# Legal Structure

SIFA Fireside is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. We were registered as a charity in 1983 and became incorporated in 1995. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which outlines the objects and powers of the charitable company. Our Articles of Association are SIFA Fireside’s governing document.

# Our Team

SIFA Fireside is governed by the Board of Trustees. The Chief Executive is responsible for the day-to-day operations and supporting the board to set the strategic direction of the charity. The management team work with the Chief Executive to implement SIFA Fireside’s vision alongside a team of specialist staff with a range of expertise. SIFA Fireside currently has a paid staff team of 42 individuals.

**SIFA Fireside Structure 2024**

Board of Trustees

Homeless

Intervention

Chief Operating Officer

Facilities

HR

Finance

Operations

Head of Services

Recovery

Prevention

Head of

Fundraising, Volunteering and Communications

Chief Executive

Communications

Volunteering

Fundraising

**The Board and Senior Leadership Team**

## **Board of Trustees**

**Carole Wildman, Chair**

Carole has 38 years’ experience of work in the Social Housing Sector and retired in April 2016. Her last 20 years at work were spent as an Executive Director for Regeneration. She is passionate about assisting people and communities to become empowered through education, training, work and active citizenship. An experienced chair, she is a Board member of the Pioneer Group, a community-led social housing provider in north Birmingham, which she chaired from 2017-2023.

**Glen Bate, Trustee**

Glen is a marketing and communications specialist with more than 15 years’ experience of working for the commercial sector in a range of management positions. Glen has been on the board at SIFA Fireside since 2016 and brings extensive knowledge around effective marketing and profiling of the charity including online and digital techniques.

**Martin Chidgey, Trustee**

A former Head teacher and voluntary sector Chief Executive, Martin has been closely involved with SIFA Fireside since 2015. Martin has nearly 20 years’ experience in the voluntary sector working with organisations that support vulnerable people and their families. Martin was previously Company Secretary for SIFA Fireside and prior to that had worked in partnership with SIFA Fireside in the delivery of Criminal Justice services. He was also heavily involved in staff training.

**Catherine Groom, Trustee**

Locally grown, Catherine is the General Manager at Fierce, an international performing arts festival in Birmingham where she does everything and anything that needs doing from HR and policy development to finance and producing events. Alongside her work at Fierce and in the arts, she freelances as a consultant and trainer for small charities.

**Dave Ollier, Trustee**

Dave has a background in teaching and has been with SIFA Fireside since the two charities merged more than ten years ago. In addition to his extensive professional experience, Dave also runs SIFA Fireside’s AA group every Friday and is a strong advocate for ensuring that the voice of our clients is present around the board table.

**Steve Partridge, Trustee**

Steve is a Consultancy Director with Savills Affordable Housing Team and is a national expert in housing finance. He has 30 years’ experience in the public and private sectors in business planning, financing and development, specialising in social and affordable housing.

**Holly Pyke, Trustee**

Holly has 20 years of experience working with vulnerable adults and young people with complex support needs. Holly provided both strategic and operational management support across a range of third sector and NHS services to develop services that reduce health and social inequalities. Holly has spent her career ensuring that the rights of vulnerable people are respected, their voices are heard and they are empowered to live independent, socially included lives.

**Stuart Young, Trustee**

Stuart is a commercial lawyer working at one of Birmingham’s largest firms of solicitors. He started out as a volunteer at SIFA Fireside’s breakfast sessions and joined the SIFA Fireside board in 2023.

**Martin Molloy, Company Secretary**

Martin joined SIFA Fireside in a voluntary capacity as Company Secretary in 2019. A former Assistant Director in the Civil Service, his main responsibilities included corporate governance and finance. Prior to that he worked in urban regeneration, both as West Midlands Policy Lead on a range of Government initiatives and as Head of Corporate Services and Communications at regeneration programmes in Castle Vale and Kings Norton. Martin was also a Trustee of the Birmingham Irish Association for several years.

## **Senior Leadership Team**

**Natalie Allen, Chief Executive**

Natalie has worked in the homeless sector since 2014 and joined SIFA in October 2022 as CEO. She is an experienced Senior Leader with a demonstrated history of working in the charity sector within Birmingham and nationally, and is committed to ending homelessness and rough sleeping,

Natalie joined SIFA Fireside from Homeless Link, where she worked as the Head of National Partnerships, working to improve local responses to homelessness and strengthen partnership working.

Prior to Homeless Link, Natalie led Birmingham Changing Futures Together, a strategic partnership led by BVSC focused on achieving local systems change in the design, delivery and commissioning of services for people experiencing multiple disadvantage. As part of this work, Natalie led her team to develop a set of quality standards for Exempt Accommodation in partnership with Birmingham City Council and co-authored the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Commitment to Collaborate Toolkit to design out Homelessness.

**Dan Wakely, Chief Operating Officer**

Dan joined SIFA Fireside in 2018 as Finance Manager before progressing to Head of Finance and then his current role of Chief Operating Officer. He completed his ACCA qualification in 2023. Dan is on the board of Compass Support, a local charity based in Castle Vale and sits on the Audit and Assurance Committee for Pioneer Group Housing Association.

Dan studied Politics at University of East Anglia and has previously spent time football coaching with Arsenal in the community in London and Singapore. Dan has his level 2 AAT qualification and developed his own business between 2012 and 2018, carrying out a wide range of accounting processes for a number of SME’s in Birmingham.

**Melissa Roche, Head of Fundraising, Volunteering and Communications**

Melissa has been working at SIFA Fireside since 2016. She started as Fundraising and Corporate Partnerships Manager but has since taken on the role of Head of Fundraising, Communications and Volunteering.

Since joining SIFA, Melissa has developed the scope of corporate partnerships from 9 to over 320 supporters and has grown the fundraising team to continue driving the increased profile of the organisation.

Melissa held a variety of previous roles within the voluntary sector, including as a Support Manager for Cara Irish Housing, Cultural Development Officer/Events organiser for Birmingham Irish Association, Development Worker for Counselling and Psychotherapy charity ICAP, as well as roles in recruitment and business development.

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**Job Description**

**Job title: Head of Service**

**Reporting to: Chief Executive**

**Contract: Permanent**

**Location: 48-52 Allcock Street, Birmingham B9 4DY**

**Hours: 37.5 per week**

**Salary: £43,321- £50,680 per annum**

**Date last updated: September 2024**

**Who are we?**

We are SIFA Fireside, the support service for any adult in Birmingham that faces homelessness. For 40 years we have supported Birmingham’s most vulnerable people through Homelessness Intervention, Prevention and Recovery services.

**Overall purpose of job:**

The Head of Services forms part of SIFA Fireside’s Senior Leadership Team, playing a key role in developing an effective service delivery pathway and contributing to the strategic development of the organisation. An integral part of this role is to ensure that SIFA Fireside’s values of courageous, dynamic, inclusive and supportive are visible in all that we do.

The post holder will oversee quality service delivery across the homelessness pathway from prevention through to recovery and take responsibility for the successful delivery of all of SIFA Fireside’s service delivery, including self-funded provision and our range of externally funded services.

**KEY TASKS**

**Strategic and Operational:**

1. Provide strategic and operational leadership across all areas of service delivery to ensure all adults in Birmingham can live a future without homelessness.
2. Contribute to the development and delivery of the organisational strategy, reporting back to the board of Trustees on key achievements.
3. Overall responsibility for the effective day to day delivery of all of SIFA Fireside’s frontline service delivery including mobilisation of new services.
4. Lead by example in building the confidence, motivation and commitment of staff and volunteers.
5. Develop and maintain productive and trusting relationships with external partners and key stakeholders, ensuring that appropriate agreements are in place and effectively managed.
6. Coordinate the production of key performance data ensuring that outcomes and outputs are achieved. Use this data to effectively report to funders and lead on contract review meetings as required.
7. Analyse and interpret performance data and trends and report key learning to funders, key partners and stakeholders.
8. Continuously improve reporting systems including maintaining and developing the In-Form database to maximise impact measurement.
9. Set, monitor and report on project spends against associated budget(s).
10. Achieve service outcomes in line with project spend and available resources.
11. Take overall responsibility for the risk management of service delivery, ensuring that key policies such as lone working, safeguarding and client risk assessments are adhered to.
12. Work with key stakeholders to create opportunities and develop projects in line with our strategic objectives.
13. Share and embed best practice in service delivery e.g. Psychologically Informed Environments and Trauma-Informed care, ensuring that all services are person-centred.
14. Responsible for the sustainable delivery of our core Homeless Intervention team.
15. Supporting income generation through contract negotiations, identifying future income streams and tendering for externally-funded services. Be responsive to changes in the external environment.
16. Represent SIFA Fireside at internal and external meetings, upholding the values of the organisation at all times and enhancing our reputation.
17. Maintain up to date knowledge of policy, strategy, legislation and best practice surrounding the delivery of SIFA Fireside services and contribute to activities as appropriate.
18. Work the frontline staff and Service Managers to embed a coproduction approach, ensuring that clients are involved in service and organisational design and development.
19. Work with Service Managers to provide leadership in areas of conflict management, de-escalation and dealing with challenging situations.
20. Act as Designated Safeguarding Lead embedding a robust and preventative approach to safeguarding vulnerable adults in line with our policies and procedures.

**Managerial:**

1. Line manage Service Managers to deliver against the requirements of their service portfolio in accordance with SIFA Fireside’s policies and procedures.
2. To ensure the implementation of SIFA Fireside’s policies and procedures are applied across all service delivery including health and safety and equal opportunities.
3. Work with the leadership team to investigate and respond to complaints and serious incidents and ensure the identification, sharing and implementation of any lessons learned as appropriate.
4. Be visible, accessible and demonstrate leadership to all staff and volunteers offering advice, guidance and support as necessary to help them fulfil their roles.
5. Deputise for other senior staff when required and carry out other tasks as delegated by the Chief Executive.
6. Contribute to the ethos of continuous improvement at SIFA Fireside.
7. Lead on the development of policies and procedures relevant to service delivery.

**Working conditions:**

1. The working week consists of 37.5 hours with the option of flexible working.
2. Further employment information is contained within the Staff Handbook.
3. The Head of Service will be based at 48-52 Allcock Street, Digbeth, Birmingham B9 4DY.
4. There may at times be a requirement to travel to other sites locally and nationally to fulfil the requirements of the role. Travel expenses will be paid for any journeys undertaken.
5. All staff members receive time of in lieu for any Bank Holidays worked.

**Our Values:**

Supportive, Inclusive, Dynamic and Courageous: these are our values and our staff and volunteer team live them each and every day.

SIFA Fireside is committed to ensuring its staff team is reflective of the community we support. We strive to address diversification through initiatives such as our Employee Voice working group and we have committed to provide Unconscious Bias and Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity training to all staff.

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**Person Specification**

**Head of Services**

SIFA Fireside is committed to inclusive employment practices and we are particularly interested in applications from individuals who have lived experience of the issues our clients face. We encourage applicants to think creatively about how they can meet the requirements of the person specification. We are looking for talented individuals who align with our values and support our vision and mission – there are no barriers to how you demonstrate this.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Assessment** | | |
| Application | Interview | Task |
| **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE** |  |  |  |
| 1. Complex programme/service management experience including managing multiple contracts/services simultaneously. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. An understanding of the challenges faced and support required to assist people experiencing multiple disadvantage including homelessness. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Demonstrable experience of implementing new services and mobilising new contracts. | 🗸 |  | 🗸 |
| 1. Ensuring the needs of vulnerable people are met through project development and service delivery. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Experience of contract negotiation and income generation. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Ability to think strategically and make decisions on the basis of a range of internal and external factors and long-term impacts. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Substantial experience of managing staff including performance management. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Understanding of coproduction and embedding client involvement in all aspects of service and organisational development and delivery. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Clear understanding of current adult safeguarding practice and its implementation in a complex setting. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Proven track record in building and maintaining partnerships across the private, statutory and voluntary sectors. Including working in consortia/ multi partner funding frameworks. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Experience of managing financial resources which includes setting budgets, monitoring expenditure, and reporting on financial performance. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Excellent knowledge of IT systems including Microsoft office packages and CRM systems to handle client data. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Understanding of GDPR and associated data protection legislation. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Excellent communication and presentation skills with the ability to facilitate and provide information to a wide range of audiences. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| **BEHAVIOURS AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES** |  |  |  |
| 1. Committed to making a difference to the lives of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness as outlined in the strategic plan. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Proven ability to manage challenging and competing demands, respond to change and act under pressure. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Excellent inter-personal skills and the ability to inspire and empower staff to achieve challenging outcomes. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Committed to being visible, accessible and accountable to clients, staff, volunteers, board and other SIFA Fireside stakeholders. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Conflict resolution and de-escalation, dealing sensitively with challenging situations. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Demonstrates resilience when dealing with the emotional challenges of working with an extremely vulnerable client group within a complex setting. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Proactive in seeking out opportunities to improve practice. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Able to be resourceful and find creative solutions to problems. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Autonomous and able to make decisions quickly and independently. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Strong influencing skills with the ability to challenge the status quo across a range of audiences to achieve positive outcomes. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Creativity and enthusiasm with a positive, solution-focused attitude. | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |
| 1. Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and ability to incorporate this into practice. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Adherence to SIFA Fireside’s vision and values. | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| 1. Ability to work flexibly | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |
| **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS** |  |  |  |
| Enhanced DBS | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |

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**Strategic Plan 2024-26**

Introduction

SIFA Fireside is Birmingham’s main support centre for adults experiencing or at risk of homelessness. SIFA Fireside has been central to homeless provision in the city for nearly 40 years and is well-versed in delivering services that meet the immediate needs of the individuals we support.

In a challenging post-pandemic environment, and with an increase in the cost of living and rising homelessness, we must be realistic about the challenges we face and cannot lose focus on the importance of our immediate response to those who present as homeless at SIFA Fireside’s Support Centre every day. We must strive to deliver more effective services, remove barriers to accessing support, establish routes into good quality accommodation and enable people to recover from homelessness and build their resilience, to prevent it from reoccurring in the future.

However, in order for there to be a future without homelessness, we must look further than the delivery of our services. We must take on new roles in preventing homelessness at every opportunity and being a voice for change where we see this approach not being taken elsewhere. This will require us to share our learning and enable our clients to have their voices heard in shaping the support they need.

Our strategic priorities are a shift towards prevention and influencing change, whilst retaining a focus on delivery. This will require us to work with new partners and be more courageous in order to be a voice for change.

We are on a journey; work with us to create a future without homelessness.

Vision

Every adult in Birmingham can live a future without homelessness.

Mission

To challenge and address the systemic causes, and effects of homelessness in collaboration with our partners.

Values

At SIFA Fireside, our values define us and are embedded in everything that we do.

**INCLUSIVE** We respect diversity and equality and recognise people’s individual needs

**COURAGEOUS** We believe in doing the right thing to make a difference for our clients

**DYNAMIC** We are a unique organisation and adapt our services to meet people’s needs

**SUPPORTIVE** We provide holistic support to encourage people to learn and grow from their experience

Strategic Priorities 2024-26

1. **The occurrence of homelessness is reduced by addressing the systemic causes**

To reduce the occurrence of homelessness, we have to address the systems that create it. This complex network of systems includes healthcare, criminal justice, welfare, housing and immigration.

Many people who present at SIFA Fireside are homeless as a result of being let down by the services and systems set up to support them. This can include homelessness as a result of discharge from hospital or prison, people not in receipt of the benefits they are entitled to, lack of good quality and affordable housing, and a complex immigration system that traps people and makes it difficult for them to move out of homelessness.

In order for us to reduce homelessness, people must be able to access and benefit from the services and systems set up to support them. This includes effective immigration pathways, a welfare system that provides sufficient resources to support the cost of living, and a route into employment for those seeking it to enable them to move on from homelessness.

In order to make this a reality we will:

* Influence local and national policy and commissioning, share our learning through campaigning and amplify the voice of lived experience with a particular focus on housing, welfare, benefits and immigration.
* Build relationships and pathways with key partners to ensure people have access to legal advice and any financial help they are eligible for.
* Increase staff knowledge on existing pathways and statutory duties including healthcare, criminal justice, welfare, housing and immigration, ensuring that people benefit from the services and support that they are entitled to.
* Create Peer Mentor routes into employment.
* Provide digital/IT and pre-employment skills.
* Develop pathways into work for non-UK Citizens.

1. **People experiencing homelessness can benefit from routes that relieve their current situation and prevent reoccurrence**

In the event that homelessness does occur, we must respond quickly and effectively to relieve the circumstances, whilst simultaneously taking action to stop it from happening again in the future. Our mechanism to achieve this is through the services we and our partners provide from our support centre. We will provide advice and support on routes out of homelessness, ensuring that people understand the options available to them, giving them both information and choice. We will work with partners from other parts of the system such as health, substance misuse and adult social care to provide wrap-around support that meets the often-complex needs of the people we work with, and prevent them falling through the net.

If we want to both relieve and prevent homelessness, people must be accommodated in safe, good quality housing that they can afford. Birmingham is the epicentre of Exempt Supported Accommodation, with vulnerable individuals often housed in poor quality accommodation and receiving none of the support they are entitled to. The number of people living in Exemptaccommodation has more than doubled in the last 3 years and abandonments makes up the largest proportion of rough sleepers. We will look to build on our work supporting people living in exempt accommodation, ensuring they receive support during their transition into accommodation. We will do this whilst also driving up standards of exempt accommodation working in partnership with Birmingham City Council and BVSC to encourage providers to sign up the quality standards.

In order to make this a reality we will:

* Deliver housing advice, including for those not owed a statutory duty.
* Provide support and navigation including safe handover to other services.
* Escalate individual cases that fall through the gaps and identify trends to influence commissioning.
* Report exempt accommodation providers who do not meet the standards.
* Improve standards of exempt accommodation by working with providers to achieve the quality standard.

1. **People at risk receive the support they need as early as possible to prevent homelessness from occurring in the first place**

Homelessness can affect anyone, but it is important to recognise that some people are more at risk than others. Homelessness is rarely the outcome of a single event or a circumstance. It comes about as a result of the interplay between structural issues and personal circumstances.

We need to ensure that people are able to access support that meets their needs, enables them to find and sustain accommodation and build their resilience. This support must be available when people need it, at a time and place that is suitable to them, where staff have the knowledge and skills to provide effective support.

A combination of funding, policy choices and local circumstances determine the ability of the system to provide the necessary support to prevent homelessness and decrease pressure on crisis services.

There are some key areas of prevention that we are well placed to focus on based on the experiences of our clients. Homelessness as an outcome from interactions with statutory services must be reduced: this can include discharge from hospital or prison for example, or as a result of eviction or abandonment from exempt accommodation. In order for this to be achieved, people need to be accessing support that meets their needs, as early as possible.

In order to make this a reality we will:

* Train staff to deliver services that are person-centred and trauma-informed.
* Upskill staff from other parts of the system including hospital discharge and exempt accommodation support workers.
* Take our services to where people need them and increase our offer outside the Support Centre.
* Provide support and navigation including safe handover to other services.
* Provide support for people to engage in activities and build resilience in their local communities.

Our commitment

In order for there to be a future without homelessness, organisations like SIFA Fireside must commit to making it happen. This strategy cements our ambition to grow in the key areas required for us to affect change and to ensure that our infrastructure is sufficient in supporting our delivery. This will allow us to improve our delivery of essential services as well as influence future policy, commissioning and service delivery by being a voice for change in collaboration with our partners and clients.

**How to apply**

To apply please download and complete the application form. Deadline: **5pm Wednesday 25th September**

Completed applications forms should be emailed to [recruitment@sifafireside.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@sifafireside.co.uk) along with the Equality and Diversity monitoring form.

Interviews are scheduled to take place for shortlisted candidates on **Thursday 3rd October 2024.**