
Summary of the Winter Shelter Operations

Introduction

Our night shelter provides much needed rest and respite for those who would otherwise be living on the streets during the coldest months of the year. Between January and March, we host up to 15 people every Wednesday evening/Thursday morning from the CARIS Islington circuit for dinner, overnight accommodation and breakfast.

We endeavour to build relationships with our guests to facilitate their recovery. For those who do not have a key worker, we offer specialist support at our drop-ins on Mondays (women only) and Wednesdays (mixed) around housing, benefits and legal, money and health issues.

We provide a welcoming place of warmth and comfort where guests can relax and get respite from the hardships of street life. For some access to books is important, while others prefer the camaraderie of conversation, a game of scrabble or to watch TV.

What the volunteering involves

There is a co-ordinator and/or shift leader on every week at every shift. The winter shelter works on the following shift patterns:

Cooking Shift 4.00 – 8.30 p.m (2-3 people)

A volunteer cooking team prepares a hot meat and vegetarian option for approx. 22 people.

Evening shift 6.00pm -9.00/9.30 pm (5 people) to help set up and make beds and give guests a warm welcome.

Details:

Set up tables and chairs, put up and make beds.

Check toilets for cleanliness, soap and towels.

7.15pm - The whole team usually get together for a briefing. This is a good time to introduce new volunteers, to check they have read the volunteers' guideline and that everyone knows the fire drill. Co-ordinator will pass on any concerns from the previous week and any necessary information about new guests. Jobs to be allotted to volunteers.

7.30pm - Doors open. Co-ordinator and/or shift leader will book guests in for the night.

Show new guests round and on entry, serve tea and coffee and over the course of the evening

8.00pm - Serve the meal. Volunteers eat with the guests providing a friendly environment.

Wash and tidy up after the meal.

9.00pm - Handover to overnight volunteers.

Night Shift 9.00/10pm to 7.00a.m. (2 people)

Volunteers take it in turns to stay awake for the night.

Details:

Secure the building.

Make sure everyone is comfortable and settled in for the night.

11 pm - Lights out. We urge all volunteers to ensure quiet. It is perfectly fine to chat amongst yourselves but remember guests are probably exhausted and need to sleep and many may find it difficult to do so.

The Margins Project

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All guests should adhere to lights out and quiet.

Morning Shift 6-9.00am (4 people) to make and serve breakfast, clear away beds, clean kitchen & showers and do washing.

Details:

Prepare drinks such as tea and coffee and make breakfast.

Wake up guests.

Serve breakfast.

Clear beds and bedding away. Need to wear gloves

Guests can be encouraged to clear up their own bedding.

Ensure guests leave premises by 8.30am

Wash and tidy up.

Clean Margins premises (inc kitchen and showers).

Bag bedding and towels up ready to be taken to the laundrette.