

Open Church Project Overview

In conjunction with

The Society of St James

SHELTER DATES FOR 2018

Portsmouth: Monday 29th January 2018 to Sunday 25th February 2018

OUR AIM:

We desire to give people who are homeless the tools and help they need to move from being on the margins of society to a valued community member.

OUR VALUES:

- **Respect** for all people at all times at all places.
- **Equality** for guests and volunteers about who they are or want to be, ensuring there is no discrimination from or towards them.
- **Empowerment** we aim to empower our guests and volunteers to achieve their dreams and aspirations.
- **Generous hospitality** towards our guests and each other.
- **Accountability** making sure we are accountable to our guests, broader charities and each other.

SHELTER DESCRIPTION AND ETHOS:

The Open Church project is a 28 day pilot scheme to serve people affected by homelessness and crisis. We provide overnight accommodation and hot nutritious meals, friendship and support for people who are experiencing homelessness.

There will be a named venue for each night of the week where up to 10 guests will travel to each evening. There will be a warm welcome into the venue, a hot meal, comfortable and warm clean bedding (provided by the each church) and we hope a peaceful night's sleep. In the morning there will be a simple breakfast (tea and toast) and guests depart by 8am.

The scheme is a rolling shelter – one that is located at a different venue each night of the week. All of our venues are churches but we must ensure we do not 'Proselytize' or insist on taking prayers with guests. Our guests can be of any faith or none and their wishes and beliefs must be respected even if they do not match yours.

Volunteer teams may consist of congregations and/or community members of any faith or none and whilst you may of course pray with your volunteers e.g. before the shelter opens, you must respect all volunteers wishes to withdraw from this.

We take referrals into the project from The Society of St James (SSJ). We offer hospitality and love for our guests. Providing a warm welcome to our guests at the night shelter is our starting point.

Churches, Coordinators, Shifts and Team Leaders

Each host church has a **Venue Coordinator** who is responsible for ensuring the shelter runs smoothly and safely at their venue. Venue Coordinators will Nominate Shift Leaders for each shift and teams of volunteers who are responsible for ensuring all tasks within each shift are carried out. There are three shifts per night/morning:

(1) Evening Shift 6.30pm to 9.30/10pm

To prepare the shelter i.e. making beds, preparation of a cooked meal, welcoming guests with a hot drink, eating together with volunteers, conversation, games, tv if available.

(2) Overnight Shift 9.30/10pm (start) to 6:45am (finish)

Usually 4 people. Each person to take turns in staying awake for around 2 hours, during the night.

(3) Morning Shift 6/6.30am to 8.30am

To prepare breakfast, clear away bedding and arrange it to be cleaned/replaced, and clean the site.

Venue Coordinator

- To ensure there are enough volunteers to cover the sessions by drawing up a rota.
- To ensure that the necessary meals will be provided for each evening and breakfast shift
- To ensure that the venue is cleared after the session

Shift Leaders

- Are responsible persons on site for each shift
- This may be the Venue Coordinator, but is usually another volunteer appointed by the Venue Coordinator

Shift Leaders are responsible for

- Allotting tasks to volunteers
- Taking key decisions when other volunteers are unsure of the best course of action
- Supporting volunteers where necessary in responding to Open Church Handbook 2018
- Briefing the new Shift Leader at handover
- Filling in the online Daybook

Kitchen Coordinator

- To ensure there are enough members of the team present to effectively prepare a meal for the guests and volunteers.
- To ensure food handling skills and all duties in the kitchen are done in accordance with good practice for the health and safety of volunteers and guests.

Referral Process

The Night Shelter is **not** an open access shelter and potential guests must be referred from SSJ. We operate a referral process working closely with the Local Authorities in or nearby the shelter areas. In turn, we refer guests to a range of agencies who can provide support for them such as benefits, housing, health, employment.

Risk assessments are carried out for each guest for the health and safety of all our guests and volunteers. We take clients with lower support needs. Once a decision is made, Venue Coordinators are informed by email of the identity of guests for each session before the start of the shelter, each day. We aim to do this by 4pm each day,

though sometimes last minute referrals will be added to the list after this if beds are free.