

HACKNEY WINTER NIGHT SHELTER

Volunteering at St Paul's & Stoke Newington Baptist Church on Thursday nights

WAYS OF VOLUNTEERING

On **Thursday nights** we operate a night shelter in St Paul's Church Hall where we offer a welcome, a cooked meal and bread and breakfast for 18 overnight guests. Stoke Newington Baptist Church acts as an additional dormitory for a further 7 guests.

If you would like to come and help, you might consider joining one of the following teams :-

THE COOKING TEAM 5 – 9pm

Every Thursday, a Cooking Team prepares and serves a meal, consisting of a main course and dessert, for about 35 people. We offer a professional standard catering kitchen and a budget of £100 per night. Perhaps you might like to set up a Cooking Team from amongst your friends?

THE SETTING-UP TEAM 6:30 – 8pm

The Setting-Up Team arrives from 6.30 pm or as soon as possible after that. It's job is to set the hall up in readiness for the arrival of our guests at 8pm. Tasks include :-

- *Inflating mattresses*
- *putting duvets and pillows into covers*
- *putting up tables and chairs*
- *setting the tables for the meal*

Depending on how many volunteers we have, this takes from an hour to an hour and a half. But there is always time for a 'breather' before we open the doors to our guests at 8pm. 'Setting-up' volunteers are free to go at this point, but the majority stay on and become.....

THE WELCOME TEAM 8 – 9:30pm

This group has a variety of tasks, including :-

- *welcoming our guests as they arrive*
- *getting them a cup of tea, coffee or a mug of soup*
- *chatting and listening with any who want someone to talk to*
- *helping to serve meals*
- *dining with our guests*
- *clearing away after the meal*
- *other general tasks*

Members of the Welcome Team are encouraged to mingle with our guest. Most of our volunteers tend to find that a little bit intimidating! - but don't worry - we do have a help sheet giving tips on listening to folk who really want someone to talk to - and it is mostly listening rather than talking.

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During this time, volunteers are joined by support workers seconded from Thames Reach, a London-based charity that works with homeless people. They are there to offer guests advice and support.

The Welcome Team will usually stay on until about 9.30-10pm until everything is cleared up, the beds are out and the guests are beginning to bed down. At that point, most of the Welcome Team will leave, although some decide to stay on and become part of.....

THE OVERNIGHT TEAM.....9:30 pm – 8 am

At this point in the evening, our guests bed down for the night. 18 remain in St Paul's Hall, whilst a further 7 go over the road to Stoke Newington Baptist Church and sleep there, returning to St Paul's for breakfast the following morning.

Volunteers for The Overnight Team arrive between 9:30 and 10pm – earlier if they like! Their task is to oversee the safety and well-being of our guests during the night. Their presence is a great reassurance to guests, who are often anxious about the security of their personal belongings whilst they sleep.

We aim to have four overnight volunteers in St Paul's and two at the Baptist Church and we work a two hour 'shift' system. At St Paul's two of the team stay awake between 10 pm and 2am, whilst the other two grab four hours sleep. They change roles at 2 am. At The Baptist Church, it's one on and one off.

The Overnight Team welcomes the Breakfast Team at 6 am and helps to set up for breakfast at 7 am. They guests usually waken of their own accord. The Overnight Team is welcome to help with breakfast and with clearing up afterwards, though we recognise that some of them may need to leave for work.

THE BREAKFAST TEAM.....6 – 8am

Volunteers for the Breakfast Team arrive at 6am and their task is to :-

- *prepare and serve a cooked breakfast to be served at 7 am*
- *clear the kitchen afterwards*
- *help with clearing up afterwards*
- *putting away tables and chairs*
- *taking covers off duvets and pillows ready for the laundrette*

Much of the clearing up is done by the guests themselves.

The Shelter closes officially at 8am.

- *So there you are! Do give some thought as to which of the teams would be right for you and vice-versa. Don't hesitate to contact us for further information.*
- *We ask all new volunteers to fill in a Volunteer Application Form, attached to this email*
- *When you've made your mind up, open the attached spreadsheet and indicate your availability by putting your name against the appropriate team on the dates when you are available.*
- *As a guide, most volunteers commit to one Thursday a month, but feel free to offer more or fewer dates, according to your availability and circumstances*
- *We do ask that, if you find that you are suddenly unavailable for one of your committed dates, you let us know as soon as you are able!*