PILGRIM HEARTS TRUST BRACKNELL NIGHT SHELTER

Volunteers' Handbook 2019 to 2020

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Thank you for volunteering with Pilgrim Hearts to work in one of the venues. Although several venues are involved in rotation, it is one-night shelter scheme at work. The night shelter provides opportunities to provide care and give time to a number of people who would otherwise be sleeping rough at a very cold time of the year.

Please take time to read these notes and take part in the training schemes we offer. We hope your experience of volunteering this winter will be rewarding and that our venues will be safe and welcoming for those who use them whether as guests, volunteers or visitors.

Background and context

It is good to recognise that some of the guests who use our venues have complex problems, which this scheme and its volunteers are not set up to deal with. We are here to provide basic facilities and to listen to people. Point them towards the Drop In at St Andrews, Priestwood which Pilgrim Hearts Trust runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays in association with Warfield Church. This engages with other provisions in the area and points guests to the right agencies, Council departments and charities who can help them sort out their problems on a longer-term basis. Please remember you are not a councillor and if you are getting into areas you cannot deal with report the conversation to the Co-ordinator or Manager who will pass the

information on to Pilgrim Hearts Trust (PH). Under no circumstances should you feel obligated to do anything asked of you by a guest or agree to keep secrets that you are not comfortable with. (See respect and confidentiality on page 6). There will be a doctor's surgery in attendance with open access during the evening sessions at Newbold Church General

The Night Shelter will be open from 1 December 2018 to 31 March 2019. Many churches are contributing to the scheme with venues, volunteers and food providing a place to sleep for up to 20 guests. Pilgrim Hearts will provide a Manager and will oversee and advise on the project. We are supported by donations from Church Urban Fund, Berkshire Community Fund, Bracknell Homes, with assistance from Bracknell Forest Borough Council and personnel from John Lewis Golden Jubilee Trust.

The Night Shelter is not a Drop In where anyone can turn up but is only available to those holding a Guest card issued by Bracknell Forest Council, the Bracknell Drop In, The Kerith social team, New Hope, the CAB and other assisting local agencies. This is for the safety of all our guests and volunteers.

The Pilgrim Hearts Trust is a charity (no 1085766) with a Board of Trustees, an unpaid Director, a Fund Raiser and many volunteers. It employs artists to run workshops to improve the wellbeing of those who visit the Drop In on Tuesdays. PH will oversee the smooth running of the shelter, liaise with the churches participating and work with the guests towards finding secure accommodation and a more stable life style. Please advise them of the PH Drop In where we can work with them on Tuesday and Thursdays 11am to 2pm. Hot meals drinks and a range of assistance are provided there by a separate team of volunteers and mentors.

There is a Steering Committee consisting of those representing the various participating churches and their appointed venue coordinators, and Pilgrim Hearts staff.

Each venue Coordinator will be responsible for:-

- Ensuring that there are at least two volunteers present at all times
 - Ensuring that volunteers have attended the training courses.
 - Making sure there are enough volunteers to cover the sessions by using the published communal rota. (Excel spreadsheet provided on Dropbox.)
 - Ensuring that provisions are available on site to prepare meals and clean up the venue.
 - Appointing a responsible and PH trained volunteer to act as deputy or Shift Leader when the coordinator is not present
 - Ensuring that volunteers are allocated specific roles. E.g. Checking that the venues own sign in sheet is filled in by all who enter, (including police names and identity numbers) during the evening shift.
 - Ensuring that the next shelter coordinator is informed of the nights guest list and of any potential problems.

Ensuring that a venue visitors' book is kept up to date. (name rank and numbers of visiting police needs recording)

The Manager will be responsible for ensuring the safe running of the shelter and for checking that the coordinator or shift leader has

- Allotted the various specific tasks to the volunteers. (see page 10.)
- Taken key decisions when other volunteers are unsure of the best course of action.
 - ≤ Supported volunteers where necessary in responding to guests.
 - Arranged a handover between shift leaders

The Manager has responsibility for the PH Log Book. This is however to be available to the coordinator and or shift leader to see what happened last night. The Logbook is important, as it is the main tool of communication between volunteers in the venue teams taking part in the shelter. It should be used to note any incidents that take place, to keep a record of attendance.

Each night shelter may like to keep their own log book to record the night's happenings.

What is required of Volunteers?

- Experience in working face to face with people, and an ability to talk to people and put them at their ease.
- Some knowledge and sensitivity to issues relating to homelessness, including mental health issues, drug and alcohol abuse. (Volunteer training covers these issues.)
- Familiarity and ability to work within Pilgrim Hearts Trust policies and quidelines, especially regarding Health & Safety procedures.
- Ability to respond calmly but quickly in an emergency.
- Judgement when to call for help., or to deal with any situation.
- Basic knowledge of the building, especially the location of fire exits.
- Willingness to follow instructions from the shift leader, and work as part of a team.

- Knowledge of basic first aid would be useful.
- A heart for the vulnerable, poor, needy and a willingness to be challenged and changed.

General Guidelines

- Try to be on time.
- Make sure you know the church layout, especially the emergency exits, and any areas that are out of bounds to guests.
- Treat guests with respect.
- Be friendly and make guests feel welcome.
- Work as a team and support your leaders Do not challenge their decisions in front of other volunteers or guests.
- Guests and volunteers should be known by first names only.
- Please do not give or lend money to guests.
- Do not give out your own or others personal information especially addresses, telephone numbers or email addresses. You may think there will be no problems, but people have been pestered long after the shelter closes with requests which are hard to refuse.
- Arrangements should not be made to meet with guests outside the Shelter unless it is an activity arranged by PH.
- Make sure you are not left alone with a guest or leave a colleague alone with a guest. This is not only for your own safety but so that if anyone alleges an impropriety against you, there is a witness.
- When speaking to guests it is best not to make promises; people can feel very let down by a promise not kept. Our organisation needs to build trust to be effective in finding appropriate help for guests. Broken promises can undermine this work.
- Do not take guests to your home.
- For your own safety do not wear or bring expensive items, valuables or handbags to the Shelter. Often there is nowhere to store valuables

safely.

- There should always be at least two volunteers in the Shelter .
 - Wear appropriate clothing and a minimum of jewellery.
 - Pass on information gathered to your coordinator and the manager.

Confidentiality

When talking to guests it is important not to push for information. Please acknowledge that some guests may feel hurt or let down by some experiences and may not wish to talk about them. Others will like nothing better than to tell you their story. Please respect guest's confidentiality and don't allow your conversation to become common gossip especially with other guests or volunteers.

Confidentiality is important for building trust however, it is not about keeping secrets, and this should be made clear to guests. You may keep any conversation in confidence so long as you do not feel burdened or uncomfortable about what has been shared. If things feel as though they are getting too demanding tell the guest that you may have to tell your coordinator and the manager what is being said to get appropriate help. It is then up to the guest as to whether they want to continue.

If you feel there is a threat to another person or to the safety of the Shelter you should tell your coordinator and the manager immediately.

Gifts

From time to time guests may wish to give gifts to staff or volunteers. Small gifts may be accepted particularly if they can be shared. The general rule is that all gifts should be shared with the team and the guest should be told that this is the policy. In any case all gifts should be reported to the Coordinator and recorded in the log book. Any gift deemed to be too expensive or in some way inappropriate should be gently returned to the guest. You should not encourage guests to give gifts.

RULES FOR GUESTS

We keep the rules to a minimum, but for everyone's comfort and safety please note the following:

■ No alcohol or drugs to be brought onto or consumed in or around the premises. It must be handed in for safe keeping.

- No violent, threatening, racist or other anti-social behaviour/language
- No offensive weapons
- In accordance with the law, there is no smoking inside the building.
 Provision
 - will be made outside under the control by volunteers, for one or two but not for large groups. Large groups are not to loiter outside as this intimidate the venues neighbours and generates a bad feeling towards the shelter's presence.
 - Pets are discouraged but can be accommodated in some churches if necessary. Remember most churches operate a no pets rule because of past experience and the danger of zoonoses for children who may use the premises at other times.
 - ■ Your place is forfeited if not personally reserved each night.
 - ■ The Shelter is for those aged 18 years and above.

TIME TABLE OF SHIFTS

- 7.15-10.00pm Evening Shift (short overlap time for briefing between shifts)
 - Prepare and cook a hot meal.
 - ≤ Set up tables & chairs and make beds.

 - 7 .15pm The whole team should get together for briefing. A good time to introduce new volunteers. Check that they have read the volunteers handbook and check that everyone knows the fire drill. Coordinator to pass on any concerns from the previous night. Jobs to be allotted to volunteers. Where appropriate finish with prayer.
 - 7.30pm Doors open book guests in for the night in the signing in sheet or visitors book.
 - Man the doors. Bag search for entrant guests (check entry passes)
 - Show new guests around;

- ≤ Serve tea & coffee over the course of the evening.
- Serve a meal to the guests
- Wash and tidy up after the meal.
- Organise social activities for the guests e.g. games of draughts, jigsaws, dominoes, table tennis, TV, guizes etc
- Report any incidents so they may be recorded in the log book.

9.45pm- 7.00am Night Shift (overlap times)

- Secure the building
- Make sure everyone is comfortable and settled in for the night;
- ≤ 10.30 pm Lights out. All guests should adhere to lights out and quiet.
- There should always be one volunteers awake, in case of need.
- Record any incidents in the log book.

6.50-8.30am Morning Shift

- Put on kettles or urn & Cook breakfast
- Wake up guests.
- Serve breakfast
- Clear sleeping bags etc.; Guests should be encouraged to pack up their own bedding. (It is advised that you wear thick gloves when handling bedding and shake bedding carefully)
- Ensure guests leave premises by 8.30 a.m. (or your venues agreed time of closing.)
- Wash up and tidy up.
- Ensure log book has been completed and a record made of any incidents.
- Clean Church premises and toilets.

- Wash and dry sleeping bags periodically. Please wash at 40 degrees (most larger domestic machines can wash one sleeping bag satisfactorily.)
- Secure the building.

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers have the responsibility for managing the human and physical resources of the shelter in conjunction with the co-ordinator and manager. You will be called upon to make decisions as to the most appropriate course of action, and you may wish to make these in consultation with those in charge who will be more familiar with the guests. However, no list of policies and procedures can possibly cover every situation, and sometimes you will have to think on your feet.

Buildings

You must be familiar with the building. Importantly you must:

- Know where the fire exits and fire extinguishers are situated
- ≤ Know where the First Aid box, defibrillator,(if provided), telephone and list of emergency numbers are.
- Make sure that fire exits are unlocked and not blocked
- Know the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire
- Make sure that any areas where you do not want residents to go are secure.
- Tell volunteers where guests can and cannot go.
- Identify a safe area where volunteers can leave their belongings.

The Log Book

The Log Book is extremely important as it is:

■ The way we collect statistics, used to write a report at the end of the shelter.

The log book is our evidence of the Shelter being properly run, please look after it.

See the front of the log book for a sample page on how to lay it out. Entries must be

signed legibly so that any queries regarding incidents can be followed up.

Before you open

- You should have a working mobile phone and the churches signing in book ready.
- Go through the information from last night with the senior volunteers if possible, and inform the volunteers of any incidents, problems or concerns.
- If you anticipate a problem, discuss it and agree what you will do; everybody should know how you will deal with it before you open.

Opening Up

- DO NOT let any of the guests into the shelter unless the Guardian or at least one other senior volunteer is present, unless given specific authorisation to do so.
- Welcome each guest as they arrive and check new ones have entry passes.
- The age limit is 18 and above. This will be declared by guests by signing the entry sheet that refers to the guest's rules.
- If it's their first night in the Night Shelter you will need to sit down with them and go through the Shelter Rules. Remember that some guests may not be able to read.
- Offer new guests a copy of the map of the night shelter venues.
- When you answer the door, always ask guests to give you their names (i.e. don't ask "Are you Dave?")
- ≤ Sometimes people turn up at the door who are not booked in. The

senior people will make the decision to allow entry if the person is acceptable and well behaved. Do not take in drunken people or those under the influence of drugs, as you will not know their background and will be putting other guests and volunteers at risk. Tell them to get an NS entry pass from issuing organisations, the Council housing officers, Drug and alcohol team, Citizens Advice Bureaux, The Kerith Social Team or the Pilgrim Hearts Drop In at St Andrew's in Priestwood on Tuesday's and Thursday's to register.

Once things have settled down you will be keeping an eye on things but you should have plenty of opportunity to chat to guests and volunteers.

Handover

If you are working in shifts with different leaders, make sure you talk to the person taking over about any incidents or problems.

Jobs that volunteers should undertake are:-

Registration and door control:

- If you do not have enough volunteers and do not feel it is safe to open, delay your opening time - it is a good idea to go outside and talk to the people who are waiting and explain what is happening.
- Register every guest attending the night shelter for that night on the sign in sheet.
- Secure guests personal belongings in a dedicated area. (All guest's bags will be given up into the care of the Night Shelter or searched each night for banned substances. Let them put what they need into a bag under supervision.)
- Refuse admittance to any person who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. (Please be aware, behaviour of a person who has drunk alcohol prior to presenting at the Night Shelter may deteriorate over the course of the night)
- Refer any refusal of admission to the coordinator or Guardian.
- Remain on the door throughout the duration of the admittance time or until relieved by another volunteer.

Catering:

- Provide meals within the time set for all guests and volunteers.
- To stay within the guidelines of good food hygiene and practice.
- To ensure safety of equipment. I.e. control and safety of catering knives -kept under lock and key and not accessible to guests. Communal area:
- Ensure guests are compliant with the Night Shelter rules.

- Ensure guest's behaviour remains appropriate towards each other and towards volunteers.
- Accompany guests or be aware of guests when they use the facilities such as bathrooms etc. I.e. Guests taking personal belongings into toilets, please check for drug equipment/alcohol. If bags are searched and only what they need is allowed on, then there should be no problem.
- Monitor time spent in bathrooms and if excessive time taken or use of during the evening report it at once to the coordinator or manager.
- Set out equipment such as beds, self inflating sleeping mats and sleeping bags.
- Tidy away games, crockery, or general equipment used throughout the evening. Door Monitors:
- Accompany any guest who wants to going outside to smoke.
- Ensure each guest is staying within the designated smoking area.
- Report and refuse admittance to any non working guest who has turned up later than 10pm.(Do not let them come in after staying in the pub all evening they should be in by 8.30pm at the latest. Note:- special arrangements are needed for those who have jobs and work night shift. Consult the Guardians so you know who is a worker)
- Ensure guests do not go to hidden stashes of alcohol or drugs to take during the evening.
- Ensure guests are smoking legal substances only. I.e. tobacco.
- Remain on the door until someone else comes to cover or doors are locked for the evening.
- Ensure guests are accompanied in the morning shifts. The morning is a time when dealers arrive to hand over drugs for the day. Night shift:
- Ensure all guests have adequate sleeping equipment. Do not allow such equipment to be removed from the shelter.
- Be responsible for ensuring all guests go to bed and stay in bed between the hours of 11pm and 7.00am. Some may be working and need to sleep.
- Monitor any activity i.e. bathroom trips throughout the night.
- Ensure guests are respectful to others wishing to sleep.
- After lights out the only drink served is water. No tea or coffee.
- Ensure guests do not leave the building. If a guest goes out re-admittance is refused including for breakfast.

HEALTH & SAFETY STATEMENT

Our policy is to provide and maintain, as far as is reasonably practical, safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for both volunteers taking part in and guests using the Winter Night Shelter, and to provide such information, training and supervision as is needed for this purpose.

OBJECTIVES

Each church aims:

- To provide a working environment that is warm, dry, healthy and safe with satisfactory toilets and washing facilities.
- To ensure that health & safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice are observed.
- To provide and maintain safe premises and equipment including appropriate protective clothing.
- To ensure that the use, handling, storage and transportation of food, articles and substances are safe.
- To ensure that the systems of work are safe and to provide or locate appropriate training and advice for volunteers in these matters.
- To ensure that all volunteers and guests using the premises are safe and without risk to their health
- To review and revise the safety policy and risk assessments annually.
- To insure the premises and occupants.

Communication

- Guests with Passes will have agreed to respect the basic shelter rules
- Volunteers should be informed of the policy at briefing meetings and details of the policy should be included in information given to volunteers.
- If anyone is excluded from the shelter as a result of unsuitable behaviour Pilgrim Hearts and the following night's coordinator must be notified.
- Venue Coordinators should keep the list of volunteers and shifts up to date on the Dropbox spreadsheet.

FOOD HYGIENE & KITCHEN SAFETY

Detailed guideline procedures are contained in a separate document for catering staff. This is available to all volunteers on request.

FOOD PREPARATION AND REHEATING GUIDELINES

These are general points for all volunteers to be aware of. Cooks and those storing, preparing and handling (including serving) any food should refer to the comprehensive Food Hygiene and Kitchen Safety Guide which is available on request.

Preparation

Food should be thoroughly cooked to a core temperature of at least 70'C and kept at that temperature for at least 2mins. (if you are cooking a casserole the core temperature should be taken from the centre of a piece of meat)

Cooling

Cool food rapidly before putting in the refrigerator. Food should not stand around for more than a few minutes at which time deterioration will begin. Food can be cooled quickly by standing in cold or iced water.

Reheating

The practice of reheating should be avoided. However, if this is unavoidable, the food should be heated until it has reached a core temperature of at least 70'C and held at that temperature for at least two minutes.

Microwaves

If food is being cooked or heated in a microwave oven be especially careful to ensure that every part of the food is thoroughly heated. Microwaves often heat food unevenly, so you may need to stir and move the food around to ensure temperature consistency.

Serving

Hot food must be served at a temperature of at least 63'C

(Information from 'The Food Safety Handbook')

FIRE INSTRUCTIONS

Volunteers need to be aware of the fire instructions for the venue/s they will be at. They must familiarise themselves with the procedure in case of fire.

All venues must have fire instructions clearly displayed on the wall.

PROCEDURES FOR PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE

Over the years that the Night Shelters have operated the shelter environment has generally been calm and welcoming and there have been few violent incidents. With that in mind however, it is important to recognise that actual or potential violence may be a problem in working with this vulnerable guest group.

The following guidelines are intended to offer direction on the most effective ways of preventing violent behaviour and protection from its consequences.

The Health and Safety Statement included in this document acknowledges

the churches role to provide direction and support to volunteers; in addition, all volunteers have an individual responsibility never to put themselves, their colleagues, guests or members of the public at unnecessary risk. These procedures should be viewed within the context of that shared responsibility.

Defining violence and aggression

Although these guidelines focus on the extreme end of violent behaviour, this does not mean to imply that only physical assault is of concern. Threats and verbal abuse, for example, are also recognised for their intimidating and undermining impact and, where appropriate, these guidelines should apply to all forms of aggressive behaviour.

General guidelines for managing violence and aggression

It is natural to be frightened of violence, and this needs to be taken into account in the expectations of oneself or others when dealing with actual or potential violence or threatening behaviour.

In responding to violence or potential violence, one's own safety and that of colleagues and the guests must be seen as the first consideration.

Guidelines can never cover every eventuality. Volunteers must also draw on their experience, skills and common sense when faced with aggressive situations.

All volunteers should co-operate in taking a consistent approach to confronting guests about unacceptable behaviour and in banning or excluding guests from the building. As far as possible, one volunteer should not be identified as the instigator of a ban - these should be presented as team decisions, and all volunteers must actively support the decision even if they have a different opinion

Managing a violent incident

It is the responsibility of all volunteers to alert colleagues at the first sign of aggression and to act co-operatively to diffuse the situation.

One or two volunteers should talk to the individual/s concerned, remaining calm, but firm, and trying to create opportunities for the guests to back down without feeling humiliated. Where possible, the guests should be taken aside.

Other volunteers should remain at a reasonable distance but pay attention in case the situation escalates. Volunteers who are not directly involved with

the main protagonists should attempt to keep other guests calm, and prevent them from becoming involved unless they are friends who can assist positively.

In particular, one volunteer should ensure that any vulnerable people are removed from the area and if possible, potential weapons such as plates, cutlery, etc should be removed from the area.

Space should be created to ensure that people are not crowded into a confined area. All those present should be mindful of their own and others "escape route" should it be necessary to get out of the way fast.

Volunteers should be in a position to 'phone for police assistance should this become necessary or is requested by those dealing with the situation. It may be useful to identify in advance which volunteer on your shift would have this responsibility should a situation arise.

If an incident escalates and the guests cannot be calmed, then volunteers should be prepared to vacate the area. Personal safety must be put before the protection of property. The police should be summoned immediately.

In exceptional circumstances, if retreat is not possible, volunteers should take appropriate measures to defend themselves. In the unlikely event of an attack, only force sufficient to stop the attacker and prevent injury to self, colleagues or other guests should be used, reasonable restraint is acceptable.

After an incident has occurred

If an incident does occur, it is likely to be very unsettling for everyone involved in the project, whether volunteer or guest. Some things that can be done include:

- Promote first aid where necessary
- Providing reassurance and helping everyone to calm down
- Recording details of the incident as quickly as possible in the log book
- Arranging for any volunteer that has been scared or hurt to leave the shift
- Arranging longer term support where necessary
- Discuss the incident and try and draw out constructive lessons for

avoiding a similar incident in the future

Consider providing other guests with brief details of what happened and how it was dealt with; this is to prevent rumours and provide reassurance that incidents are dealt with effectively.

PERSONAL SAFETY

In order to promote safety in the Night Shelter sessions, always observe these rules:

- Check the identity of each guest arriving at the door by asking for their pass and name
- Do not let any guest into the building whose name is not already in the log book
- Never give your home 'phone number or home address to a guest, or invite a guest into your home.
- Avoid being alone with a guest, especially one of the opposite sex.
- Leave your valuables at home or locked in a car.
- Do not give money to guests if you are concerned about their situation, refer them to the Manager.
- Do not touch any guest, even to wake them up.
- Wear heavy rubber gloves when handling used bedding or let guests put their own bedding in marked black bags, until next week. Use a mechanical claw.
- When dealing with lost property, never put your hand into a bag or pocket. Tip contents onto a flat surface so you can see what you are handling.

Volunteers should act safely and not put themselves or other volunteers or guests in any danger. If you feel intimidated at any time during the shift, inform the Manager.

Please take directions at all times from them, especially with regard to matters of personal safety.

DRUG & ALCOHOL INFORMATION and PROCEDURES

- Drugs or Alcohol must not be consumed/used on the premises by any guest or volunteer.
- Drinking alcohol whilst on shift is not allowed.
- Volunteers should not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs when coming onto their shift.
 - Guests may try to conceal drink and /or drugs outside the premises

Action to be taken if policy is breached

- If guests are found drinking on the premises they will be asked to leave the shelter. This can be done that evening by the manager or coordinator.
 - It may be more disruptive to remove the person from the premises that night, depending on what kind of state they are in at that time.
 - If guests are found taking drugs on the premises they will be asked to leave the shelter.
 - Anyone found dealing drugs will be asked to leave the shelter.
 - Volunteers who suspect that someone is violating these policies must discreetly alert the manager or coordinator. This way volunteers the following night can be alerted to the problem.

NIGHT SHELTER VENUES

Sundays – St Joseph's Church, Bracknell 7.30pm to 8.30am

Mondays - Holy Trinity, Bracknell 7.30pm to 8.30am

Tuesdays – St Mark's, Binfield 7.30pm to 8.30am

A bus will pick up from Bracknell Station 7.15pm

Wednesdays -- Easthampstead Baptist Church 7.30pm to 8.30am

Thursdays -- Newbold Church, Binfield 7.30pm to 8.30am

A bus will pick up from Bracknell Station 7.15pm

Fridays -- St Michael's, Easthampstead 7.30pm to 8.30am

Saturdays -- Methodist Church, Priestwood 7.30pm to 8.30am

CONTACT US

Please get in touch if you have any questions your colleagues cannot answer. 01344 307030 Website www.pilgrimhearts.org.uk
Email pilgrim.hearts@gmail.com