

Churches for Tunbridge Wells

Tunbridge Wells Churches' Winter Shelter



An Ecumenical Christian Charity
www.tunbridgewellschurcheswintershelter.co.uk

Health & Safety

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Purpose

This policy is to provide and maintain, as far as is reasonably practicable, safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems for work, for both volunteers taking part in and guests using the Winter Shelter Scheme.

Objectives

So far as is practicable, and as far as they are able, the Tunbridge Wells Churches Winter Shelter management committee undertakes:

- To provide a working environment that is healthy and safe with satisfactory amenities for all staff, volunteers, guests and visitors
- To ensure that health and safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice are observed
- To support and maintain through the participating Churches, safe premises and equipment including appropriate and 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 provide or locate appropriate training and advice for volunteers in these matters
- To promote effective communication between the Winter Shelter Management committee, the Project Manager and Support Worker, volunteers and guests on safety matters in each church

How the shelter will run safely (Safety policy)

TWCWS sees health and safety as being of vital importance. We aim to make sure that the Winter Shelter venues are as safe as we can make them for our guests, volunteers, church members, visitors and people from the local community. We take seriously our responsibility for health and safety; we expect that all people working in and visiting our premises will do likewise. Our simple rule is that nobody should put themselves or others at risk whilst involved in the Winter Shelter project

Specific safety arrangements relating to the shelter are:

- Team Leader to hold venue mobile phone for the duration of the shelter opening time. The Project Manager / Support Worker will hold the guest referral mobile phone
 - Check the identity of each guest arriving at the door by asking for their name first
 - Do not let any guest into the building whose name is not already on the list. The Project Manager / Support Worker will provide a guest list for each evening.
 - Do not let persons NOT on Volunteers List for that night into the venue, except Project Manager, Support Worker and Management Committee members, without prior approval from Project Leader / Team Leader.
 - At all times, no less than 2 people to answer the door
 - Door chain (where fitted) to be securely in place whenever answering a visitor
 - If a guest leaves the Winter Shelter during the session (7.30pm-8.00am) they will not be allowed to re-enter (i.e. once you are in, you are in!). This may seem harsh but the reasons for this include:
 - Guests may be going outside for drink or drugs
 - If a precedent is set, other guests may wish to do the same
 - The exception are smokers, but they must be accompanied by volunteers at all times whilst outside*
 - No worker to be on their own in the same space as a guest *
- (* We recognise that on some occasions a single volunteer will stand outside with guests who are smoking. That person must carry a personal alarm and be satisfied that they are safe in that situation.)
- All guests and volunteers are entered (booked in) in the log book with time of entry and, at the end of shift, time of leaving

- In line with the fire risk assessment, guests should be kept within areas of the building that have been agreed for use by the Winter Shelter. Any guests who trespass beyond these points may be asked to leave. On no account should a lone volunteer go looking for a guest from the shelter.
- Guests arriving at the shelter intoxicated must not be allowed entry (a copy of guest rules, signed by all guests, is at the back of this booklet – Appendix 1).
- No drugs or alcohol to be used at the Winter Shelter. Use may lead to a single night exclusion or more permanent ban.
- No drugs or alcohol to be taken into winter shelter venues.
- Do not attempt to handle a syringe if found – make the area safe and inform the Team Leader
- If syringes are found and owners are identifiable ask them to take care of them (i.e. reclaim or place in sharps bin)
- Take care when handling sharps bins
- NO SMOKING in venues – outside smoking areas have been designated
- Take care if stripping beds etc – may be other items present
- A first aid kit and body fluid disposal kit will ‘travel’ to each venue
- Water and electricity do not mix – for spillages near electrical items, isolate power and clear spillage
- Team Leaders and all volunteers need to be aware of fire evacuation procedure. Team Leader and/or Church Co-ordinator carries out a fire safety checklist at the venue every evening before opening
- Do not make casual visits to the shelters. If you have reason to ‘visit’ shelter phone the Team Leader to clear it first
- Volunteers must have attended our training to work at the shelter, or, in exceptional circumstances, read the volunteer handbook and confirmed understanding with the Team Leader

Emergency Procedures

What is an Emergency?

It is largely down to your common sense, but it might include:

Fire, violent incident, aggressive behaviour, self-harm, overdose, power failure.

What do we do in an emergency?

Fire:

1. Raise the alarm by informing the Team Leader
2. Calmly raise the alarm with all guests and volunteers using a loud, clear but calm voice and fire horn if necessary
3. Team Leader will dial 999 and request the fire service
4. Evacuate the building via marked fire exits (specific instructions will be given at each venue)
5. Team Leader will check toilets and corridors as well as main areas. Team Leader to carry log book to outside assembly area
6. Assemble in agreed area (specific to each venue)
7. Check all volunteers and guests are present, against log book
8. If fire is minimal, extinguish with a fire blanket or appropriate extinguisher but DO NOT place yourself or anyone else at risk.
9. Wait for fire service

Violent incident/aggressive behaviour:

- Take as few risks as possible
- Isolate: if necessary evacuate people from the area concerned
- Use language that is easily understood, speak calmly and clearly and slowly. Do not shout! Use downward hand movements with open palms

- If you need to raise the alarm by calling the police or anyone else try to use language that will not further exacerbate or inflame the situation
- Do not hesitate in calling the police. Dial 999 and use clear and precise language. Venue locations are described in the log folder with post codes; ensure you describe the hall not church.
- Shop / Pub Safe Radio alert may also be used for non-critical issues.
- Do not 'have a go' – keep yourself safe, do not physically intervene to break up a fight
- People are more important than property

Self-harm / mental health crisis:

- Remain calm and speak slowly and clearly
- Allow the person concerned physical space – reduce number of people nearby, don't touch the person
- Allow the person space to talk – silence is OK. Don't bombard them with questions or suggestions
- If situation seems dangerous or acute, suggest to the guest that further help is needed
- If guest presents as very disturbed and in a mental health crisis, is self-harming, or there is an immediate danger to the person concerned or to others, contact the police who have powers under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act
- If a Mental Health assessment is needed contact the mental health team (phone number in the venue file)
- For less serious situations, advise the guest on the availability of Samaritans – they will be volunteers at the shelter on occasions and can be contacted as usual at other times.

Procedures and Guidelines for Daily Implementation

Food Safety

Food must be purchased, prepared, cooked and served in accordance with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency booklet 'Safer Food, Better Business'. A copy of the extracted relevant parts of this booklet forms the 'Tunbridge Wells Churches' Winter Shelter Food Safety Manual' which caterers should read if providing food for the shelters.

Some basic guidelines for all volunteers to follow are:

- Hang up all outside coats/jackets outside kitchen – keep valuables in a secure place.
- Tie hair back
- Wash hands thoroughly before handling food – wash hands when you re-enter the kitchen from other areas (unless ONLY serving to table)
- Wear a CLEAN apron
- Use anti-bacterial spray to wipe work surfaces prior to usage
- No guests in kitchen at any time
- Be careful of space in kitchen when moving hot items/liquids – be aware of who is around you
- Evenings: Serve main meal and drinks
- Mornings: Serve drinks and toast / cereal
- Be aware of risks of contamination from hands and coughing/sneezing
- Do not prepare food or work in the kitchen if you have sickness or diarrhoea; be clear of both for 48 hours before working again
- Cover food, monitor it!
- Use the disposable cloths that are provided
- Keep the kitchen and serving areas tidy
- Wash up using the anti-bacterial washing up liquid and have a 2nd sink (or bowl) with very hot water or warm water and Milton fluid for rinsing
- Where possible on hobs, use the rear rings only to reduce fire/burn risk
- Change wet/dirty hand towels on a regular basis
- Do not store and save food from previous sessions
- Use only the designated kitchen mop and bucket

- TOILET AND KITCHEN MOP/BUCKETS ARE NOT INTERCHANGEABLE

No cooking past 10.00pm due to:

- Increased fire risk whilst people are sleeping
- Raised noise levels in kitchen whilst people are sleeping

Basic Hygiene Precautions

- Do not attempt to clean any bodily fluids etc unless authorised by the Team Leader. Make area safe first. Must be cleared/disposed of using appropriate personal protective equipment and body fluid disposal kit
- If there are any first aid requirements please inform the Team Leader
- Toilets to be checked ½ hourly and cleaned if necessary
- Toilet hand towels replaced if needed
- Guests personal hand towels are available – change if requested
- For cleaning and laundry use gloves at all times
- GLOVES AND CLOTHS ETC USED IN THE TOILETS SHOULD NEVER BE USED IN THE KITCHEN AND VICE VERSA
- Do not leave something for somebody else to do; if you see that something needs doing – do it or report it

Guidelines on Personal Boundaries

- If you or someone else are in danger, inform the Team Leader immediately
- Do not give money or personal items to guests – if you are concerned about their situation, refer them to local agencies, details are in the venue file
- Do not provide lifts in your vehicle for the benefit of guests
- Never tell guests where you live or give out your own phone number
- You have the right to not have your own personal space invaded by other people – respect the same right for our guests
- Only share minimal information about your personal life and only insofar as you feel safe doing so
- Never allow yourself to be alone in a secluded space with a guest
- Don't touch guests to wake them up
- We are all human, but try to avoid having favourites
- If in doubt talk to a colleague/Team Leader
- It is advisable to report any contact you have with a guest outside of the Winter Shelter to the Project Manager / Support Worker
- It is your job at the Winter Shelter to be friendly, not to be friends
- Do not accept gifts from guests