



Churches for Tunbridge Wells

An Ecumenical Christian Charity

www.tunbridgewellswintershelter.co.uk

Tunbridge Wells Churches' Winter Shelter Referral Policy & Procedure

Date Created: 22/01/15

Date Approved by Project Team: September 2016

Date Approved by Management Committee: September 2016

Date of Review: May 2017

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to clarify who the shelter is for and the process of referring into the TWCWS.

Who is the Shelter For?

TWCWS is a 12 bed shelter. The service is aimed primarily at single rough sleepers over the age of 18 who are currently sleeping out in Tunbridge Wells or immediate locality, but TWCWS will accept referrals from rough sleepers across West Kent and further afield although a Local Connection to Tunbridge Wells BC will be required as and when the shelter is overfull.

Referral route:

All potential guests to go through referral form and risk assessment interview prior to being offered a bed. Applicants must have been made aware of the rules of the shelter and have signed a Guest Agreement.

Access to the shelter is via referral by TWCWS staff or agencies: and risk assessment interview by TWCWS staff only.

TWCWS: Tel. Wendy Hogg 07513 377951 or Jayne Hoose 07443 532904

Agencies: The following are acting as referral agencies: TW CAB; Porchlight; The Gateway; TWBC Housing Options or Out of Hours Service; Crisis Recovery Day Centre; TW Street Teams; The Bridge Trust; Chapter One; YMCA; TW Churches, TW Library. People can also self-refer.

- The shelter has no banding for prioritising referrals into the service. Referrals are accepted on a first come, first served basis up to the point that the shelter is full.
- When full, we will prioritise guests with a local connection to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Guest with a Local Connection, who decline to engage with move-on opportunities offered may lose

their “priority status” in favour of others, including non-local connection guests.

- Referral forms and risk assessment may be carried out before the shelter opens, but provisional acceptance is no guarantee of a place.
- Applicants/agencies to call project staff to arrange interviews which are held weekday mornings between 9.30am and 1.00pm to enable risk assessment vetting for potential entry that evening. Interviews generally to be held in TW Gateway.
- The shelter may carry a small waiting list. In the event that someone does not arrive to claim their bed by the 8.30pm deadline, shelter staff will contact individuals on that list. Priority on the waiting list will be given to rough sleepers from the Tunbridge Wells area who have already cleared the interview process.

Needs and Risk Assessment Interview

Before an applicant can access the shelter, they must be interviewed. The purpose is to ascertain needs and risk assess the applicant to determine their suitability for a shelter vacancy.

At the start of the interview or application form completion, the TWCWS/agency staff member should give the following information:

- **We open on Monday 2nd January (a Bank Holiday). For information, please call the Project Manager: Wendy Hogg on 07513 377951 or Support Worker: Jayne Hoose on 07443 532904.**
- **Referral forms may be filled in before then (we will be interviewing in The Gateway on 29 / 30 December between 9.30am-1.00pm) and applicants may be provisionally approved. Beds will then be allocated on a first come, first served basis from 2nd January.**
- Point out that a place is only offered after we complete a referral form, are happy with the information given, have carried out a risk assessment and gathered information from other agencies including Kent Police and have a vacancy available.
- Background information on the shelter and the fact that it is run by TW Churches, is a temporary shelter with communal sleeping area and not a permanent fixture.
- Shelter Rules and the limits of the service (we have no daytime provision). Be clear that we will enforce rules around alcohol, substances and behaviour.
- Confidentiality/Sharing of Information (see Referral Form & Confidentiality Policy & Statement).
- Go through the TWCWS Referral Form and Risk Assessment with the applicant. The most important question on the Referral Form is who knows the applicant locally, or where they have come from – it's a priceless behaviour reference.
- The purpose of these forms is to get basic information about a person's circumstances; to give them the opportunity to find out more about the shelter and to determine whether the service is right for them; and to carry out an accurate risk assessment. Are they an alcoholic or drug user? We are not a 'wet' hostel. How do they behave when drunk? Completing all the questions will give you a good picture of who you are dealing with.

Type of Risk	For Example, is there a history of.....
Violence and Aggression	Physical assault, criminal damage, verbal aggression
Mental Health	Attempted suicide, self-harm, aggression, not taking medication, self-neglect, unusual behaviour, abuse from others
Substance Misuse	Harm to self, overdose, risks from social networks, hospital admissions, lack of engagement with treatment
Physical Health	Self-neglect, long term illness not taking medication, hospital admissions
Financial	Gambling, debt
Offending	Criminal record, risk taking behaviour
Other	Arson, abuse from others, local conflict

If an applicant is accepted, they should read and sign the Guest Agreement.

Note this agreement confirms authority for Shelter staff to request and be given relevant information from a variety of agencies specifically including Kent Police.

If an applicant is refused then they may be told this verbally but this must be followed up by a letter from the Project Manager. A refusal is likely if the applicant has recently been convicted of arson, violence or offences of a sexual nature or if they are deemed a great risk or significant disrupting influence to other guests, staff or volunteers.

Returning Forms to Support Worker / Project Manager

Any agency referring applicants to the Winter Shelter should complete as much of the Referral Form as possible and send to the Support Worker / Project Manager, or call and arrange to hand it over. They will then arrange an interview time for the guest and complete the referral process.

Scanned/typed into and emailed to support.twcws@hotmail.co.uk or office.twcws@gmail.com

Phone Jayne Hoose 07443 532904 or Wendy Hogg 07513 377951

The Support Worker / Project Manager will let the referring agency know the outcome of the referral interview and whether a bed has been offered or not.