**Winter Night Shelter (WNS) Volunteer**

**Location:** A Church in Kingston-upon-Thames Town Centre (details upon successful application)

**Period:** Mid-January – End of March 2024

**Training:** The applicant will attend one training session and, on completion of the training, they will then join the Winter Night Shelter team.

**Support and supervision will be provided by:** Ritu Marwaha, Winter Night Shelter Co-ordinator

**KCAH’s Winter Night Shelter**

The Winter Night Shelter plays a key role in helping to end the need for people to sleep rough in Kingston by ensuring that, when someone is sleeping rough or at imminent risk of sleeping rough, they can immediately be offered a place to stay that is safe, warm and dry while they engage with local services to address their needs. For many people, the Winter Night Shelter will provide an invaluable ‘stop gap’ that meets their immediate needs while they are helped with their housing issues by KCAH. The Winter Night Shelter can accommodate up to 15 homeless people at a time.

**Winter Night Shelter Shift System**

Open for guests every day between 9.30pm and 7.00am, the Winter Night Shelter operates a shift system involving 3 overlapping shifts:

• Evening shift (from 9.00pm until 1.00am)

• Night shift (from 12.30am until 4.30am)

• Morning shift (from 4.00am until 7.30am)

During the evening shift, the volunteers will prepare the reception for guests, the seating arrangements for food and prepare food, welcome and register the guests, serve refreshments and food. Afterwards, the volunteers will dismantle the dining area to transform the area into a comfortable sleeping environment while providing guests with companionship and encouragement.

During the night shift, the volunteers will ensure that all guests are in bed by 12.00am and that they are comfortable, safe and secure, and do not do anything that threatens or upsets anyone else (guests, volunteers or staff) in the building.

During the morning shift, the volunteers will awaken the guests, serve refreshments and a take away breakfast, manage the guests’ departure and ensure that the building is left in a clean and tidy condition.

**Importance of the Volunteers at the WNS**

Volunteers are at the heart of the Winter Night Shelter’s life-changing work. The Winter Night Shelter could not operate without the commitment and dedication of the dozens of volunteers who work there – on the frontline and behind the scenes – to ensure that it is able to provide emergency shelter during the winter months. Although some of the volunteers have previously worked with people who are homeless and/or vulnerable, most have not. Everyone who works at the Winter Night Shelter, however, has been selected because of their compassion, kindness and humility, and because they want to be part of a team that makes a real and lasting difference.

**Role of the Volunteers**

Volunteers play a vital role in ensuring that the Winter Night Shelter provides a safe, comfortable and positive environment for guests, volunteers and staff. With appropriate training and support, the volunteers will:

• Ensure the security of the building (through regular checks and monitoring) and contribute to discussions about admissions and exclusions.

• Participate in handovers (at the beginning and end of each shift) and ensure that all relevant information is properly recorded and that, where appropriate, this information is passed on in a timely manner.

• Provide guests with a warm and friendly welcome, explain the rules of the shelter and chat informally with guests.

• Be aware of guests’ wellbeing and state of health, reporting any wellbeing or safeguarding concerns to the Shift Leader.

• Ensure that the Winter Night Shelter Logbook and all Accident & Incident Forms are completed in an accurate and timely manner, and that all follow-up action is taken.

• Perform necessary first aid (if qualified) within the limits of policy and procedure.

**Qualities expected of the Volunteers:**

All Winter Night Shelter volunteers must be aged 18 or over and be:

• Committed, punctual and reliable

• Kind, patient, and respectful

• Friendly, approachable and non-judgemental

• Confident, calm under pressure, and resilient

• Encouraging, motivating and supportive

• A good listener, honest and trustworthy communicator l

• Discrete and able to maintain confidentiality

• Able to work well as part of a team

• Able and willing to follow policies and procedures.

**Recruitment of Volunteers**

Anyone wishing to become a Winter Night Shelter Volunteer should register on [http://tinyurl.com/yzda29cv](http://tinyurl.com/yzda29cv?fbclid=IwAR2uVEUda7Oewu-SGQu5xvY0j8m0gUT0DdOaXmSsgu3clRE7coESQDCzmdo) or if you need any further information, please call Ritu on 07877 0377731

The applicant will attend one training session and, on completion of the training, they will then join the Winter Night Shelter team.

**Benefits of being a Volunteer**

Volunteering at KCAH’s Winter Night Shelter provides a fantastic opportunity for people to use their skills and experience, make new friends and learn new skills whilst doing something worthwhile that makes a real and lasting difference. We do not expect volunteers to be out of pocket. All reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed if the volunteers choose to make a claim.