

Updated October 2022

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TOGETHER IN BARNET
NIGHT SHELTER VOLUNTEER
HANDBOOK



Together in Barnet
Shelter for homeless people

Updated October 2022

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TOGETHER IN BARNET – Who we are

Our Night Shelter has been providing cold weather overnight accommodation in Barnet since 2003. The Shelter was started by local Churches Together and is currently run by a partnership of churches, synagogues and a mosque throughout the London Borough of Barnet.

We provide shelter and hospitality to up to 17 men and women who are experiencing homelessness nightly. Our guests receive a warm welcome, a hot evening meal, a safe place to sleep and breakfast. There is space for recreation in the evenings, endless cups of tea and coffee and always someone to talk to.

Our guests are directly referred by Homeless Action in Barnet, a day centre which works to help homeless single people find accommodation and move on in life. At present we only take guests assessed and referred by HAB. Last winter our shelters quickly filled and there was often a waiting list.

THE FUTURE

Together in Barnet became a Charity in May 2014. This move will not affect the operation of the Night Shelter but will allow us to apply for funding to expand our work within the local community.

Our Registered charity no. is 1157192

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TOGETHER IN BARNET

AIMS

TiB aims to:

- Provide a night shelter for homeless people with low support needs who are not drink or drug dependent, nor who have complex mental health issues.
- We recognise this does not meet the needs of all street homeless in Barnet, but as we are run solely by volunteers these are the criteria within which we work.

Guidelines:

- All guests must be referred by HAB and will be named on the HAB daily list.
- All guests must be over 18 years of age.
- TiB provides for individual people and cannot provide any special arrangements for couples.
- Threats of verbal or physical violence will not be tolerated and will result in an immediate removal from the shelter and could result in indefinite exclusion. All exclusions for violence may be appealed through our appeals process. Appeals will be heard by a panel of two trustees and a HAB representative.
- Alcohol and drugs use are not permitted at the shelter. If used at the shelter, it will result in indefinite exclusion. Same procedure as for threat of verbal or physical violence will apply for appeals.
- If guests attend the shelter under the influence of drugs or alcohol they may be asked to leave.
- Guests are not allowed to add any personal items to their bedding bags.

TOGETHER IN BARNET CRITERIA FOR VENUES

A venue or community group offering a venue should provide:

- Two representatives where possible, who will attend Steering Group meetings, take on the roles of venue coordinator and liaison with Homeless Action in Barnet and TiB;
- Nominate a venue to be used for the full period allocated on the rota, which can be visited by a TiB trustee prior to the start of the shelter; Report any changes in or at the venue in good time.

The premises to be used should:

- Be secure with controllable entrances;
- Offer sleeping space for up to 17 male and female guests with some form of separate accommodation for females (this may take the form of a screened area);
- Offer sufficient separate toilet facilities for up to 17 male and female guests;
- Offer facilities for serving hot meals, with vegetarian option;
- Display Food Hygiene information;
- Have an outside smoking area with pots of sand or similar for disposal of cigarette ends;
- Have Public Liability Insurance, Building Insurance and any other insurances necessary for legal compliance;
- Offer some form of recreational space for the evening (television area, seating area etc). Ideally there should be some separation of recreational space from sleeping space so that those guests who wish to go to bed early may do so; and
- Have completed a TiB Buildings Health and Safety checklist for the safety of all volunteers and guests.

To this end we ask that all venues working or wishing to work with TiB review their facilities and undertake the following assessments:

- A Fire Risk Assessment
- A Gas Safety Certificate
- A Building Risk Assessment;
- A review of the venue's current Health and Safety policy and the inclusion of a specific section to cover overnight accommodation; and
- A review of how their premises would work as a night shelter including examples of how the space or spaces will be utilised.

Help is available with the review and assessments.

CRITERIA FOR VENUES continued

Also required:

Staffing of a venue for TiB

Most of the communities running venues for TiB provide their own volunteers or work in conjunction with other congregations or community groups in their area to make up a rota.

It is expected that the coordinators running the venue:

- Will recruit volunteers who are well known to their own communities or who have appropriate references, checked in advance;
- Will ensure that a minimum of two volunteers are present at any one time (three to five for the evening shift, two for overnight and three for breakfast shift). There should be no lone working;
- Will ensure that each team has a leader ready to take key decision;
- Will ensure that all volunteers are over the age of 18;
- Will ensure that their volunteers are trained either at TiB courses or at their own training courses meeting TiB criteria;
- Ensure that all volunteers have read this handbook and signed a volunteer agreement;
- Will organise a volunteer rota for the period that the venue is open;
- Will provide a full First Aid kit and guidance booklet;
- Will provide individual hand towels for all guests, which are laundered after each use.
- Will provide toiletries and earplugs if requested

GUIDELINES FOR VENUES

Recruitment of volunteers

Because we are extending a welcome to people placed by their homelessness in a certain degree of vulnerability, we should check out people who offer their services, especially if they are not well known to our fellowship, congregation or local community. If this is the case they should be asked to provide at least one referee (preferably two) who can vouch for their good character, and should not start volunteering until this source has been contacted and verified. The minimum age limit for volunteers is 18. No one under that age limit should be in the areas where guests are present.

Having been approved volunteers should attend a training session and be given their own copy of the Shelter handbook.

They should also familiarise themselves with any health and safety guidelines of the premises they are working in. Their initial shift should be alongside a seasoned volunteer.

Guidance for Volunteers

Your team depends on you to help make our guests welcome and meet their need for shelter, food, comfort and safety. If you cannot attend your shift assigned to you on the rota at the shelter, please try to find a replacement person within your own team. We expect you to:

- Come prepared to offer a warm welcome to our guests;
- Be familiar with the Shelter handbook and with the venue in which you are working, especially the fire exits;
- Be prepared to work as a team and to take instructions from your team leader;
- Be able to take responsibility for the period of your shift and to make your own judgements on when to seek help.

Behaviour with guests

Our guests can include people whose circumstances are problematic and can sometimes lead to unpredictable behaviour. Here are some pointers to help ensure the smooth running of the shelter:

- Be consistent in your treatment of our guests – do not give anybody any reason to think that others are getting preferential treatment.
- Do not share more personal information than you need to, especially private phone numbers, email or addresses and personal media contact points such as Facebook, family web pages or blog sites.
- Do not give or accept personal gifts; never lend or give money. Fares are provided via HAB, where appropriate.

GUIDANCE FOR VENUES continued

Behaviour with guests continued

- Limit physical contact and watch your body language.
- Don't offer to look after people's possessions including medication.
- If you are talking privately with a guest please do not go into a private place but keep in contact with the main group. Your role is that of host and listener rather than counsellor or adviser.

Respecting our guests privacy

Our guests are dependent on us for shelter. Do not take advantage of this by attempting to evangelise them. If they initiate discussion on matters of faith you may respond but do not embarrass them by forcing your religious beliefs on them.

Photography or filming of any guest is prohibited.

Confidentiality

You will receive information about our guests from various sources, perhaps through Homeless Action in Barnet, perhaps from a conversation with the guest. Please treat all personal information about any guest in the strictest confidence. There are certain types of information that can put a guest at risk if divulged to a third party. Please ensure that you have read and understood the TiB confidentiality policy.

Accidents

Before treating minor wounds, abrasions or blisters, put on the rubber gloves from the First Aid kit. If you have a cut or small wound make sure it is covered by a sterile dressing.

Any medical condition that needs treatment should be referred to a hospital. Do not offer guests medicines such as Aspirin. All new medical conditions must be reported to HAB in the morning report.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT THE NOTICE ON THE NEXT PAGE IS DISPLAYED AT THE VENUE DURING SHELTER OPENING TIMES.

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NIGHT SHELTER GUEST RULES AND INFORMATION

Timetable

7pm	Doors open. Sign the guest register and give in your HAB ticket.
8pm	Meal. We cannot guarantee you a hot meal if you arrive after 8pm.
10pm	Outer doors closed
11pm	Lights out
7am	Outer doors open. Wake-up, breakfast and pack bags
8.30am	Sign out and leave the building taking all your belongings with you.

We hope you enjoy your stay with us.

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

- No drugs
- No alcohol
- No pets
- No photography or filming
- No offensive weapons
- No violent, threatening or racist behaviour or language
- No smoking inside the building (including e-cigarettes)
- Guests may go outside the building to smoke but are not expected to leave the premises
- Guests are to sleep on their own and mattresses are not to be moved together
- All electrical appliances/chargers etc. must be unplugged overnight.

Your belongings remain your responsibility at all times.

All prescription drugs must be kept on your person and be clearly marked with your name.

Pack only your bedding in the bag provided.

We are really glad to have you with us and will do our best to ensure your comfort and safety.

TIMETABLES FOR VENUES

Timetable, routines and guidance for volunteers Every shift should have a team leader who is prepared to:

- Ensure that all volunteers and guests sign in;
- Display rules and regulations prominently;
- Be prepared to undertake a briefing before each shift;
- Ensure that all volunteers are familiar with the building including spaces where guests are not allowed, fire exits and evacuation procedures;
- All guests and volunteers should have the fire procedure explained to them
- Ensure that all volunteers know each other by name;
- Ensure that any first time volunteer is paired with a more experienced volunteer;
- Allocate tasks;
- Complete a handover;
- Communicate with your venue coordinators;
- Take key decisions where other volunteers are unsure of the best course of action.

Evening Shift – 6.30 pm preparation 7 pm -10pm open

Arrive in good time for opening and sign in. Prepare a table for signing in and display the shelter rules (there is a copy in this pack). Follow the checklist for the venue including a briefing on current guests and health and safety. Prepare tables and chairs and put out fresh towels. See that enough milk, bread, butter, sugar, etc, is provided for both the evening meal and breakfast. See that bedding bags are to hand and labelled according to the day's referral list (report immediately to team leader or coordinator if bags are not labelled or missing).

Reception - Doors open from 7pm and close at 10pm

Welcome guests, check names to list (your team leader will have supplied a current list received from the Homeless Action in Barnet day centre) and ask for their ticket of entry. Ask them to sign in.

You must refuse entry to anyone not referred to us by HAB.

Stop anybody entering whose behaviour appears to be detrimental to other guests or volunteers (e.g. drunk - alcohol is not allowed on the premises). The police may be called if the person refuses to leave.

If meals are not cooked on the premises, receive the cooked meal when it arrives and keep it hot in an oven or reheat when required in a microwave. When the meals are served and where you feel invited, sit with our guests to engage in conversation. It helps for at least one or two volunteers to eat with the guests.

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TIMETABLE FOR VENUES continued

Reception and evening shift continued

Explain the self-inflate bed to new guests before or after the meal but in time for those who wish to retire early. See that there is something to occupy them until they wish to retire. Make sure you are covered by a licence if you have a TV. Keep the noise and lighting level down when you see that some are trying to sleep.

Normally women don't object to sleeping in the general hall, but if there are those who would prefer to sleep separately, suitable accommodation should be found.

Guests cannot expect a hot meal if they arrive after 9pm.

Record any incident for the following team leaders so it can be included in the daily email. A report by email should be sent by 10am the next morning to the Day Centre manager at HAB and the TiB Operations Manager on the night's attendance and any disruptive incidents (including initials or number of guest on guest list). This is important, as guest tickets cannot be given out until the report is received.

Ensure guests and volunteers know where the fire exits are before they retire for the night.

Night Shift – 9.30pm-7.30am

The overnight pair of volunteers should arrive by 9.30pm and sign in.

Make yourself familiar with the fire exits and assembly area.

See the evening volunteers off the premises by 10.00pm and secure the building.

Stop anybody entering the shelter after this time.

Turn the lighting down as guests start to settle and off when they have retired. Lights should be turned off by 11pm. Guests are to sleep on their own and mattresses not to be moved together (to protect vulnerable guests).

Make sure that the shelter rules on quiet are kept. It's handy to have a few sets of ear plugs to help with excessive snoring.

Once the guests are asleep, you may sleep either among the guests or in an area that allows you to monitor what goes on in the guest sleeping areas.

Make sure a phone line (landline or mobile) that you know how to use is available in the hall in case of emergencies (sickness, incidents).

Wake the guests around 7.00am.

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Lay out breakfast table. Remember that breakfast is available for rough sleepers at HAB from 9am most mornings so a cooked meal is not necessary except at weekends.

TIMETABLE FOR VENUES continued

Morning Shift 7 am to 8.30 am – perhaps later at weekends

Arrive from 7am onwards according to the day's schedule (weekend guests usually lie in a little longer) and sign in. Make breakfast, wash up, etc. Please be aware that guests are not allowed to come into the kitchen.

Get guests to pack their bedding away in the bags provided and collect in the used towels for washing.

Make sure all guests sign out and leave at the normal time for your venue. Completed forms should be kept in your own files.

Pack away all shelter equipment and clean all areas (please wear protective gloves for all cleaning duties).

Leave all the guests' bags ready for transfer to the next venue.

TOGETHER IN BARNET Health and Safety Checklist

Name of Venue-

Date of Check

SHIFT LEADER PLEASE REVIEW BEFORE EVERY NEW EVENING SHIFT STARTS

This checklist is to increase awareness of collective and personal responsibility for the Health and Safety of everyone at the Shelter, to ensure that the venue is a safe place to hold the night shelter, and so that all volunteers are aware of procedures regarding the reporting of hazards, accidents and injuries.

Volunteers

- Are there enough volunteers on site to run the shelter (minimum in terms of welcoming, overnight and morning on rota- 5,2 and 3 for example)?
- Have volunteers signed in? Have they attended a briefing/staff training? Have they signed a volunteer agreement?
- Are all volunteers over 18 (extra measures need to be put in place if not- i.e. risk assessment)?
- Are volunteers aware that there is a strict no lone working policy?

Guests

- Have guests been signed in (identification/safety and fire roll call considerations)?
- Have new guests been made aware of the Community Code and signed a guest agreement?
- Have new guests been shown around the premises/facilities and been made aware of fire exits?

First Aid

- Where is the first Aid box?
- Is it stocked according to the list contained in the box?
- Who is/are the trained first aiders on site (if any)? Where is the accident/near miss log?

Fire Safety

- What is the Fire evacuation procedure? (Voice/bell/alarm- where is the assembly point and who brings volunteer and guest sign-in sheets?) Where are the extinguishers?
- Are the exits clearly marked and free from obstruction? Please check they open and that beds are not put in front of exits.
- Are routes from the fire doors clear?
- Is there a No Smoking sign displayed clearly?
- Have any smoke alarms been checked and found to be working?

TOGETHER IN BARNET Health and Safety Checklist continued

Fire Safety Continued

- Close and lock any small spaces/ rooms so that Guests and Volunteers are in larger communal areas.
- Do the overnight volunteers have torches?

Washing/Toilet Facilities /Heating

- Are the toilets /bathroom clean?
- Is there hot and cold water running from taps?
- If applicable do the showers work?
- Is the heating on? (Please make sure you know how to change the temperature of the heaters or how to override any time clocks).

Food Hygiene

- Is the kitchen clean (Including cooker/fridges)?
- Are Food Hygiene Standards and directions displayed in the kitchen? Has equipment been PAT Tested and recently checked?

Guest Problems/ Emergencies

- Where is your list of emergency contacts? Are you familiar with Incident procedures?
- Do you have access to a mobile phone that you can use in the event of a problem?
- Has the team leader had a handover of any new guests referred - with risk information (e.g. mental health/ physical health/ substance misuse)?

In The Morning Feedback

- Are there any overnight concerns you need to feed back to HAB and Night Shelter Coordinator?
- Any concerns about the venue that need to be addressed before next week?

If YES to either of these two questions please report ASAP.

TOGETHER IN BARNET HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY
STATEMENT

General Statement

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

TOGETHER IN BARNET

Undertakes to:

- Provide a working environment that is healthy and safe with satisfactory amenity facilities;
- Ensure that health and safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice are observed;
- Provide and maintain safe premises and equipment including appropriate protective clothing;
- Ensure that the uses, handling, storage and transportation of food, articles and substances are safe;
- Ensure that the systems of work are safe and to provide or locate appropriate training and advice for volunteers in these matters.
- Promote a safe effective communication between Together in Barnet Trustees, Steering Group, Venue co-ordinators, volunteers and guests on safety matters in each venue;
- Ensure that all volunteers and guests using the premises are safe and without risk to their health;
- Review and revise this policy annually or as new legislation requires.

Personal Safety

DO'S AND DON'T'S FOR VOLUNTEERS AT TOGETHER IN BARNET NIGHT SHELTER

In order to promote the safety of all the guests, volunteers and visitors at all the Night Shelter sessions, please always observe the following rules.

- Check the identity of every guest arriving at the door by asking for their name;
- Do not let any 'want to be guest' into the building whose name is not already on the list from Homeless Action in Barnet without consulting with the team Leader;
- Never give your home or mobile phone number, your home or email address or personal media contact points to a guest.; Never invite a guest to your home.
- Never give or lend money to a guest.

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TOGETHER IN BARNET HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY
STATEMENT continued

- Never be alone with a guest.
- Do not bring valuables to the venue.
- Do not touch guests even to wake them up.
- When dealing with lost property never put your hand in a bag or pocket. Tip the contents on to a flat surface so you can see what you are handling. This will help prevent any potential injury.
- Be aware and cautious of any movement in the building and ready to act when necessary, while on the shift.
- Responsible for safeguarding of guests, staff.
- Volunteers should act safely and not put themselves or other guests in danger. If you feel intimidated at any time during the shift, inform your team leader. Please take directions at all times from them, especially with regard to matters of personal safety.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- 1 Confidentiality Policy
 - 1.1 Together in Barnet believes that all volunteers, trustees and staff need to respect confidentiality in all that they learn and hear about guests and that appropriate boundaries should be maintained in relationships with guests.
 - 1.2 Guests using the night shelter must feel free to discuss their history, personal problems or situation with volunteers and know that what they disclose will remain confidential.
 - 1.3 Information about guests will usually only be passed on if the individual concerned has given his/her consent. Information can only be passed on without consent if there is a clear risk to the guest or to another person.
 - 1.4 Gossiping among clients, staff, committee members or volunteers in the venue or outside of it is strongly discouraged, even if it does not strictly break confidentiality.
- 2 Confidentiality Procedure
 - 2.1 Volunteers who have concerns about risk should raise this discreetly with their venue coordinator who in turn will raise it with the Night Shelter Cooordinator.
 - 2.2 The Night Shelter Coordinator will relay the concern to the Day Centre Manager of Homeless Action in Barnet (HAB) who will act according to HAB's policies and procedures around confidentiality, risk and safeguarding.
 - 2.3 Any breaches of confidentiality should be raised with trustees by the Night Shelter Coordinator and assertive action taken at the venue where the breach occurred.

All information relating to guests and the shelter including daily emails, sign in sheets and daily procedures checklists should be kept in a secure place to maintain confidentiality.
After six years, paperwork may be shredded or disposed of confidentially.

TOGETHER IN BARNET EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Overview

Together in Barnet recognise that in our society groups and individuals have been and continue to be discriminated against on the basis of race, sex, marital status, disability, sexuality, age and religious belief. We believe that discrimination on any ground whatsoever is unacceptable. The aim of Together in Barnet Night Shelter is, therefore, to provide genuine equality of opportunity for our employees, volunteers and for the guests who use our services.

Guests

Guest access to Together in Barnet night shelter is open to all, except that homelessness is a condition for admission. This means that we do not discriminate against any guest on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or cultural origins, religion, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or age.

Treatment of guests

Together in Barnet will seek to ensure that there is no discrimination in service provision and delivery. All guests will be treated with equal dignity. Moreover, we do not accept our guests encountering any such discrimination while in our care, whether from our volunteers, from other guests, from visitors, or from the staff of any of the external services we use. We therefore commit ourselves to investigating any allegations made, using our established grievance procedures. Wherever possible we will work for reconciliation between the people involved, but our first concern will be for the welfare of our guests. We will not tolerate the humiliation of discrimination or the injustice of false allegations.

We will endeavour to ensure that our service responds to the needs of all our guests. We recognise that this will involve careful monitoring of the use made of our charity and may result in the development of positive action programmes to target the needs of specific groups among those who access Together in Barnet Night Shelter.

Volunteers

Treatment of volunteers

All volunteers will be treated with dignity and respect by the venue coordinators and other members of Together in Barnet. However, Together in Barnet recognises that not all guests will treat volunteers and employees in a similar fashion. In a situation where a guest behaves badly or inappropriately, volunteers are asked to be very patient, compassionate and continually forgiving. However, any incident will be recorded, and Together in Barnet will deal with verbal or physical abuse with appropriate measures.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY continued

Employees

Treatment of employees

All Together in Barnet employees will be treated with dignity and respect by the venue coordinators and volunteers. However, Together in Barnet realises that not all guests will treat volunteers and employees in a similar fashion. In a situation where a Together in Barnet guest behaves badly or inappropriately, employees are asked to be very patient, compassionate and continually forgiving. However every incident will be recorded and Together in Barnet will deal with verbal or physical abuse with appropriate measures.

Recruitment of Employees

Together in Barnet will seek to ensure that in recruitment and employment practices there is no discrimination.

ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED DRUGS POLICY

1. Use of Alcohol and Drugs.

State of guests and volunteers on arrival

- Guests deemed unmanageable due to being drunk or under the influence of controlled drugs (Examples include Dilaudid, methadone, Demerol, OxyContin, Percocet, morphine, opium, codeine, amphetamine (Dexedrine, Adderall), and methamphetamine) are not to enter the premises.
- Volunteers are not to be under the influence of alcohol or controlled drugs when arriving for their shift.
- Alcohol or controlled drugs must not be carried onto the premises by any guest or volunteer.

Inside the Venue

- Alcohol or controlled drugs must not be consumed on the premises by any guest or volunteer.
- Together in Barnet night shelter is a 'dry' shelter so consumption of alcohol to avoid withdrawal is not allowed.

2. Possible Examples of this policy being broken.

- A guest may take a controlled drug in the toilets at a TiBNS venue. A guest may drink alcohol in bed at night
- A guest may smoke cigarettes at night in the building or actually in their bed.

3. Action to be taken if the policy is breached.

State of the guests and volunteers on arrival

- On arrival, if a guest is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled drug and deemed unmanageable they cannot enter the shelter until stabilised.
- They may be asked to wait outside with a cup of tea or coffee but if they are extremely drunk or high on arrival they may not be admitted.
- If guests are found drinking on the premises they may be asked to leave. The situation must be reported to Homeless Action in Barnet in the morning report.
- If guests are found taking controlled drugs on the premises they will be indefinitely excluded from TiB night shelter and asked to leave that night.
- Anyone found dealing drugs will be indefinitely excluded from TiB night shelter and asked to leave immediately.

ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED DRUGS POLICY continued

Timings of the implementation of a ban

A venue co-ordinator may decide to ban a guest from the shelter in the evening. Depending on how settled into the premises the guest in question is that night and what stage of the evening it is, the venue co-ordinator may decide to ban the guest on the following morning. This is up to the venue co-ordinator's discretion but he or she is advised to call the Night Shelter Co-ordinator for advice if he or she is not present. It may be more disruptive and potentially irresponsible to remove the person from the venue that night, depending on the state they are in and other factors.

Suspicion of guest using alcohol or controlled drugs at a TiBNS venue

- Volunteers who suspect that someone is violating the alcohol and controlled drugs policy must make a note of this on a separate sheet of paper and inform the Venue Co-Coordinator and the Night Shelter Co-Coordinator as soon as possible. Any such suspicion must be included in the daily report to all venues.
- Volunteers should police their shelter. All volunteers involved in TiB must be gracious, loving and compassionate towards our guests. However, it would be a disservice to our guests, fellow volunteers and the venues if we are negligent. Negligence always leads to problems and shows a lack of organisation and real care for the guests.

Communication of TiB Alcohol and Controlled Drugs Guidelines to Guests and Volunteers

- Guests will be clearly advised of the Alcohol and Controlled Drugs Policy by Homeless Action in Barnet prior to their inclusion on the daily list. The policy will be contained in the wording of the Guest Agreement and a copy of this policy will be included in the welcome pack
- All volunteers should be informed of the Alcohol and Controlled Drugs Policy at training sessions or at briefing meetings prior to the opening of the shelter.
- All venues must be informed of any bans in the daily referral email.

POLICY AND GUIDELINES ON THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE

Over the years the Together in Barnet night shelter environment has generally been calm and welcoming and thankfully there have been no violent incidents. This is due in part to the fact that our guests are assessed and approved by Homeless Action in Barnet.

With that in mind, however, it is important to recognise that actual or potential violence may be a problem in working with this client group. The following guidelines were issued by the London Rough Sleepers Unit and are used by Shelter and Crisis and 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 pack acknowledges the responsibility of the trustees and various churches and synagogues to provide direction and support to volunteers; in addition, all volunteers have an individual responsibility never to put themselves, their colleagues, clients 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 client group 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 clients about unacceptable behaviour and in banning or excluding clients from the building.

TOGETHER IN BARNET COMPLAINTS POLICY AND
COMPLIMENTS PROCEDURE

- 1 Complaints and Compliments Policy
 - 1.1 Together in Barnet believes that guests should feel able to provide feed back in the form of complaints or compliments about the hospitality provided.
 - 1.2 Complaints and compliments are a valuable way of learning how we can best support people during this very challenging period in their lives.
- 2 Complaints Procedure.
 - 2.1 Together in Barnet has a two- stage procedure.
 - 2.2 Stage 1
 - Complaints or compliments can be made verbally or in writing and should be passed in the first instance to the Night Shelter Coordinator. These could be made to a volunteer at a venue, to the venue Coordinator, to trustees or to Homeless Action in Barnet. Whatever route they come in through they should be referred to the Night Shelter Coordinator.
 - The Night Shelter Coordinator will collate these and report them to trustees at their regular meetings.
 - The Night Shelter Coordinator will note compliments but no response is required. All complaints must be responded to in writing. The Night Shelter Coordinator will acknowledge the complaint and aim to respond fully within one month.
 - 2.3 Stage 2
 - If the guest is not happy with the response from the Night Shelter Coordinator they can appeal to the Board of Trustees who will look at their complaint afresh at their next meeting.
 - The Chair of the Board of Trustees will respond in writing within two weeks of the meeting where the complaint is discussed.
 - Stage 2 complaints will be reported to Homeless Action in Barnet.

TOGETHER IN BARNET VOLUNTEER POLICIES

In line with the TiB agreed venue criteria assessment, venues will only recruit volunteers who:

- 1 Are known to their communities or have appropriate references;
- 2 Are over the age of 18;
- 3 Are trained in TiB courses or their own training courses meeting TiB criteria;
- 4 Abide by the rules of the TiB including relating to evangelism and discrimination.

All volunteers will be emailed or given a copy of the TiB handbook and will be expected to confirm that they have read and agreed with it.

TiB requires donations to run the shelter. Venues are asked to absorb expenses related to the running of the shelter if at all possible. In exceptional circumstances venues can request reimbursement by prior arrangement with the shelter coordinator.

All expense claims should be submitted on the TiB expense claim form and sent to the treasurer.

Expenses will be checked by the treasurer and the volunteer reimbursed after agreement by at least one other trustee. This agreement will take the form of a counter-signature on the cheque and/or the expense being approved in the monthly trustees meetings.

TOGETHER IN BARNET
VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1 Introduction

1.1 Together in Barnet takes its responsibility to nurture, protect and safeguard the welfare of the vulnerable people who use its services very seriously. All volunteers will be aware of opportunities to ensure the protection of the vulnerable people we work with and of the current procedures to follow. The aim of Together in Barnet Night Shelter is to provide a safe place to stay for those who would otherwise be on the streets.

1.2 A vulnerable adult is defined as:

‘... a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation’.

TOGETHER IN BARNET VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE
continued

2.0 Guidelines for volunteers

2.1 Preventing Abuse

While it is not possible to prevent all abuse, there are a number of steps those volunteering with Together in Barnet can take to reduce the risk of abuse occurring. They should:

- Know what abuse is;
- Understand how it can happen;
- Be alert to indicators of potential abuse situations;
- Know the procedures for reporting concerns and poor practice; and

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. It may also occur through deliberate targeting or grooming of vulnerable people and may be carried out by individuals or groups of individuals. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. See Appendix 1 for more information.

TOGETHER IN BARNET VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE
continued

3.0 Procedure if abuse suspected by volunteers continued

3.1 Respect for the Individual

When abuse has been disclosed, reported or observed, it is important that the alleged victim be treated with dignity, is involved as an equal in the investigation, and kept fully informed on a regular basis.

They have the right:

- To be believed when they report abuse of themselves and/or others, unless there is direct and unequivocal evidence to the contrary.
- To appropriate education/information in order to identify behaviour which constitutes abuse.

3.2 All volunteers need to be aware that abuse can be carried out by another volunteer or member of Together in Barnet. If a volunteer has any suspicions they must report them immediately to their venue co-ordinator. Under no circumstances should a person who is suspected of abuse, or where abused has been alleged by a guest, carry out an investigation or in any way to seek to determine the validity of the suspicion/ allegation.

3.3 In any instance where abuse is suspected the volunteer should alert their venue coordinator, who should in turn alert the Together in Barnet Co-ordinator, the Day Centre Manager at Homeless Action in Barnet, and a Board member who has DBS clearance themselves if going to Board.

Board Contact:

Chair of Together in Barnet

Email – Chair@togetherinbarnet.org

3.4 The Day Centre Manager for Homeless Action in Barnet will investigate the safeguarding concern, alerting the Local Authority as necessary.

TOGETHER IN BARNET VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE
 (appendix 1)

4.1 Recognising Abuse

Social and emotional indicators

The following are indicators for assessing the risks involved where abuse is suspected:

- The vulnerable adult appears to be withdrawn or agitated and anxious.
- They may be isolated in one room of the house or confined to living in a small space.

- Their mobility is restricted due to absence of suitable mobility aids.
- They may be excluded from outside social contacts.
- They are overly subservient or anxious to please.
- Lack of eye contact – looking at the floor during discussions or looking to others to answer questions even when directed to the individual.
- Dramatic changes in behaviour or personality; depression or confusion, for which no medical explanation can be offered.
- Lack of clothing, lack of access to own money.

5.0 Indicators of Abuse

5.1 Indicators of physical abuse

The following are indicators for assessing the risks involved where physical abuse is suspected.

- Multiple bruising that is not consistent with the explanation e.g. a fall.
- Cowering and flinching.
- Bruised eyes, marks resulting from a slap and/or kick, other unexplained bruises.

5.2 Indicators of sexual abuse

The following are indicators for assessing the risks involved where sexual abuse is suspected.

- Changes i.e. the person starts to seek attention where previously they did not, by expressing over-sexualised behaviour, or becoming fixated on sexual matters.
- Complaints of soreness in genital/anal area, no medical cause known.
- Recurring conditions such as thrush or cystitis.
- Diagnosis of a sexually transmitted disease when the person is not known to be sexually active.
- Bruising on the inner thighs or shoulders.

5.3 Indicators of financial or material abuse

The following are indicators for assessing the risks involved where financial or material abuse is suspected.

- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills.
- Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts.
- Personal possessions of value go missing without satisfactory explanation.
- Unusual interest taken by relative or friend in finances assets especially if little real concern is shown in other matters.

TIB DATA PROTECTION POLICY

POLICY INFORMATION

Data Controller: The Data Controller is Together in Barnet

Scope of the Policy: This policy applies to

- the Trustees
- paid staff
- all temporary staff working on behalf of TIB

Policy Operational date: This policy comes into force on April 1st 2017

Policy Prepared by: Holly Kal-Weiss, Secretary and Trustee of TIB
Updated by Marcin Nocek

Policy review date: October 1st 2023

Definitions: Unless stated to the contrary 'Data Subjects' in this policy includes

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Trustees
- Members
- Contractors
- Clients
- Donors
- Supporters

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to enable TIB to:

- comply with the law in respect of the data it holds about individuals;
- follow good practice;
- protect TIB's volunteers, supporters, staff, clients and other individuals
- protect the organisation from the consequences of a breach of its responsibilities

Data Protection Principles

1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless –
 - (a) at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 1998 is met, and
 - (b) in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 of the Act is also met.
2. Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
4. Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.
7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

Personal Data

This policy applies to information relating to identifiable individuals, even where it is technically outside the scope of the Data Protection Act, by virtue of not meeting the strict definition of ‘data’ in the Act.

Policy Statement

TIB will:

- comply with both the law and good practice
- respect individuals’ rights
- be open and honest with individuals whose data is held

- provide training and support for staff and volunteers who handle personal data, so that they can act confidently and consistently

TIB recognises that its first priority under the Data Protection Act is to avoid causing harm to individuals. In the main this means: keeping information securely in the right hands, and

- holding good quality information.

Secondly, the Act aims to ensure that the legitimate concerns of individuals about the ways in which their data may be used are taken into account. In addition to being open and transparent, TIB will seek to give individuals as much choice as is possible and reasonable over what data is held and how it is used.

Key Risks

TIB has identified the following potential key risks, which this policy is designed to address:

- Breach of confidentiality (information being given out inappropriately)
- Insufficient clarity about the range of uses to which data will be put — leading to Data Subjects being insufficiently informed
- Failure to offer choice about data use when appropriate
- Breach of security by allowing unauthorised access
- Failure to establish efficient systems of managing changes to staff and volunteers, leading to personal data being not up to date.
- Harm to individuals if personal data is not up to date
- Insufficient clarity about the way Data Subjects personal data is being used e.g. given out to general public.
- Failure to offer choices about use of contact details for Data Subjects, Data Processor contracts

RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees

The Board of Trustees recognises its overall responsibility for ensuring that TIB complies with its legal obligations.

Data Protection Officer

The Data Protection Officers are currently the Coordinator and Trustee responsible for supervision of the Coordinator

- Briefing the Board on Data Protection responsibilities
- Reviewing Data Protection and related policies
- Advising staff and volunteers on Data Protection issues
- Ensuring that Data Protection induction and training takes place
- Notification
- Handling subject access requests
- Approving how data is held and processed
- Approving unusual or controversial disclosures of personal data Approving contracts with Data Processors

Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers are required to read, understand and accept any policies and procedures that relate to the personal data they may handle in the course of their work.

Enforcement

Significant breaches of this policy will be handled under TIB's staff disciplinary procedures or the volunteers' grievance procedure as appropriate. Members of staff breaching this policy may face dismissal.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Scope

Because confidentiality applies to a much wider range of information than Data Protection, TIB also has a separate Confidentiality Policy.

Communication with Data Subjects

TIB will have a privacy statement for Data Subjects, setting out how their information will be used. This will be available on request, and a version of this statement will also be used on the TIB web site. (See Appendix A.)

Communication with Staff

Staff, volunteers and sessional workers will be required to sign a short statement indicating that they have been made aware of their confidentiality responsibilities. (See Appendix B.)

Authorisation for disclosures not directly related to the reason why data is held

The Coordinator must check with the trustee supervisor before sending data to anyone or to any organization.

SECURITY

Scope

This section of the policy only addresses security issues relating to personal data. It does not cover security of the building, business continuity or any other aspect of security.

Specific Risks

TIB has identified the following risks:

- Information could go astray or be misdirected.
- Staff or volunteers with access to personal information could misuse it.
- Staff and Volunteers could continue to be sent information after they have stopped working for TIB, if their records are not updated promptly.
- Poor web site security might give a means of access to information about individuals once individual details are made accessible on line.
- Staff may be tricked into giving away information, either about supporters or colleagues, especially over the phone, through “social engineering”.

Setting Security Levels

Access to information will be controlled by function.

DATA RECORDING AND STORAGE

Accuracy

TIB will regularly review its procedures for ensuring that its records remain accurate and consistent and, in particular:

- ICT systems will be designed, where possible, to encourage and facilitate the entry of accurate data.
- Data on any individual will be held in as few places as necessary, and all staff and volunteers will be discouraged from establishing unnecessary additional data sets.
- Effective procedures will be in place so that all relevant systems are updated when information about any individual changes.

- Staff or volunteers who keep more detailed information about individuals will be given additional guidance on accuracy in record keeping.
- Processing of data must be authorised by a Data Protection Officer unless it is an established procedure previously agreed

Retention Periods

TIB will establish retention periods for at least the following categories of data:

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Clients
- Donors

SUBJECT ACCESS

Responsibility

Any subject access requests will be handled by the Coordinator but must check with supervisor before sending data.

Procedure for making request

Subject access requests must be in writing. All staff and volunteers are required to pass on anything, which might be a subject access request to the Coordinator/Supervising Trustee without delay.

Provision for verifying identity

Where the individual making a subject access request is not personally known to the Data Protection Officer their identity will be verified before handing over any information

Procedure for granting access

The required information will be provided in permanent form unless the applicant makes a specific request to be given supervised access in person

TRANSPARENCY

Commitment

TIB is committed to ensuring that in principle Data Subjects are aware that their data is being processed and

- for what purpose it is being processed; what types of disclosure are likely; and
- how to exercise their rights in relation to the data.

Procedure

Data Subjects will generally be informed in the following ways:

- Staff: in the staff handbook and policies
- Volunteers: in the volunteer handbook and policies
- Sessional workers: in the staff handbook
- Supporters: when they sign up
- Clients: when they access services

Standard statements will be provided for use on forms where data is collected.

Whenever data is collected, the number of mandatory fields will be kept to a minimum and Data Subjects will be informed which fields are mandatory and why.

CONSENT

Underlying Principles

Consent will normally not be sought for most processing of information about Data Subjects with the following exceptions:

- Staff details will only be disclosed for purposes unrelated to their work for TIB (e.g. financial references) with their consent.
- Client details will only be disclosed when permission has been obtained unless we are required to do so by law.

Information about supporters will only be made public with their consent. (This includes photographs.)

‘Sensitive’ data about supporters (including health information) will be held only with the knowledge and consent of the individual.

STAFF TRAINING AND ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Documentation

Information for staff is contained in the staff handbook.

Induction

All staff who have access to any kind of personal data will have their responsibilities outlined during their induction procedures.

Continuing training

TIB will provide opportunities for staff to explore Data Protection issues through training, team meetings, and supervisions.

NOTES

Data Controller

The Data Controller is the legal 'person' responsible for complying with the Data Protection Act. It will almost always be the organisation, not an individual staff member or volunteer. Separate organisations (for example a charity and its trading company) are separate Data Controllers. Where organisations work in close partnership it may not be easy to identify the Data Controller. If in doubt, seek guidance from the Information Commissioner.

Data Processor

When work is outsourced, which involves the contracting organisation in having access to personal data, there must be a suitable written contract in place, paying particular attention to security. The Data Controller remains responsible for any breach of Data Protection brought about by the Data Processor.

Fair processing conditions

Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act lays down six conditions, at least one of which must be met, in order for any use of personal data to be fair. These are (in brief):

- With consent of the Data Subject
- If it is necessary for a contract involving the Data Subject
- To meet a legal obligation
- To protect the Data Subject's 'vital interests'
- In connection with government or other public functions
- In the Data Controller's 'legitimate interests' provided the Data Subject's interests are not infringed

Notification

All Data Controllers have to consider whether they are exempt from Notification. TIB is not exempt and we have to Notify. This means completing a form for the Information Commissioner, and paying a fee. The Notification form covers:

- The purposes for which personal data is held (from a standard list) and for each purpose (again from standard lists):
- The types of Data Subject about whom data is held
- The types of information that are held
- The types of disclosure that are made
- Any transfers abroad

Subject access

Individuals have a right to know what information is being held about them. The basic provision is that, in response to a valid request (including the fee, if required), the Data Controller must provide a permanent, intelligible copy of all the personal data about that Data Subject held at the time the application was made.

The Data Controller may negotiate with the Data Subject to provide a more limited range of data (or may choose to provide more), and certain data may be withheld. This includes some third party material, especially if any duty of confidentiality is owed to the third party, and limited amounts of other material. (“Third Party” means either that the data is about someone else, or someone else is the source.)

Appendix A: Privacy statement

When you join as a member of staff or volunteer or when you become a supporter of TIB, we obtain information about you. This statement explains how we look after that information and what we do with it.

We have a legal duty under the Data Protection Act to prevent your information falling into the wrong hands. We must also ensure that the data we hold is accurate, adequate, relevant and not excessive.

Normally the only information we hold comes directly from you. Whenever we collect information from you, we will make it clear which information is required. You do not have to provide us with any additional information unless you choose to. We store your information securely on our computer system and in our databases, we restrict access to those who have a need to know, and we train our staff in handling the information securely.

TIB may also process your data for statistical purposes but in doing this no data that will enable you to be identified will be used.

You have the right to a copy of all the information we hold about you (apart from a very few things which we may be obliged to withhold because they concern other people as well as you).

To obtain a copy, either ask for an application form to be sent to you, or write to the Data Protection Officer at TIB. We aim to reply as promptly as we can and, in any case, within the legal maximum of 40 days.

Appendix B: Confidentiality statement for staff and volunteers

When working or volunteering for TIB you will often need to have access to confidential information, which may include, for example:

- Personal information about individuals who are members of staff, volunteers, clients, supporters or otherwise involved in the activities organised by TIB.
- Information about the internal business of TIB.
- Personal information about colleagues working for TIB.

TIB is committed to keeping this information confidential, in order to protect people and TIB itself. 'Confidential' means that all access to information must be on a need to know and properly authorised basis. You must use only the information you have been authorised to use, and for purposes that have been authorised. You should also be aware that under the Data Protection Act, unauthorised access to data about individuals is a criminal offence.

You must assume that information is confidential unless you know that it is intended by TIB to be made public.

You must also be particularly careful not to disclose confidential information to unauthorised people or cause a breach of security. In particular you must:

- not compromise or seek to evade security measures (including computer passwords);
- not gossip about confidential information, either with colleagues or people outside TIB;
- not disclose information — especially over the telephone — unless you are sure that you know who you are disclosing it to, and that they are authorised to have it. If you are in doubt about whether to disclose information or not, do not guess. Withhold the information while you check with an appropriate person whether the disclosure is appropriate.

Your confidentiality obligations continue to apply indefinitely after you have stopped volunteering or working for TIB.

I have read and understand the above statement. I accept my responsibilities regarding confidentiality contained in the Data Protection Policy and the Confidentiality Policy of TIB.

Schedule 2:

Conditions relevant for purposes of the first principle: processing of any personal data

1The data subject has given his consent to the processing.

2The processing is necessary—

(a)for the performance of a contract to which the data subject is a party, or (b)for the taking of steps at the request of the data subject with a view to entering into a contract.

3The processing is necessary for compliance with any legal obligation to which the data controller is subject, other than an obligation imposed by contract. 4The processing is necessary in order to protect the vital interests of the data subject.

5The processing is necessary— (a)for the administration of justice,

[F1(aa)for the exercise of any functions of either House of Parliament,] (b)for the exercise of any functions conferred on any person by or under any enactment,

(c)for the exercise of any functions of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department, or

(d)for the exercise of any other functions of a public nature exercised in the public interest by any person.

SCHEDULE 3 Conditions relevant for purposes of the first principle: processing of sensitive personal data

1The data subject has given his explicit consent to the processing of the personal data.

2(1)The processing is necessary for the purposes of exercising or performing any right or obligation which is conferred or imposed by law on the data controller in connection with employment.

(2)The [F1 Secretary of State] may by order—

(a)exclude the application of sub-paragraph (1) in such cases as may be specified, or

(b)provide that, in such cases as may be specified, the condition in subparagraph (1) is not to be regarded as satisfied unless such further conditions as may be specified in the order are also satisfied.

Guidance from Gov.uk for Nigh Shelter

This guidance has been drafted with advice and input from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). This guidance is not specific to COVID-19 but sets out advice on how night shelters can operate more safely, based on public health principles which can be applied to many public health risks, including respiratory infections. [Comprehensive advice for people with respiratory infections](#) has been published by UKHSA.

This guidance is delivered in 2 sections, the first covering public health principles for Night Shelter providers and the second covering wider good practice.

2a Organisationally

Due to shared facilities and airspaces, night shelters can be high risk for the transmission of infections. As Government and sector, we have learnt a great deal from the pandemic that can be applied when managing public health risks in homelessness settings. Many organisations will have incorporated these practices into our daily lives since the beginning of the pandemic, they are simple, applicable principles that help organisations to stay in control of infection.

Let fresh air in

Make sure you let plenty of fresh air into any shelters. You or the venue manager can do this by uncovering vents, and opening doors and windows.

Good air circulation is important because when a person infected with respiratory infections, including COVID-19, talks or breathes, they release droplets and aerosols which can be breathed in by another person. The more fresh air circulated into and the more stale air circulated out of an indoor space, the less likely a person is to inhale infectious particles. See [further advice on what importance of improved ventilation is](#).

Limit close contact

Although social distancing for COVID-19 is no longer required, staff, volunteers, and service users may choose to limit the close contact they have with people they do not usually live with, if they are displaying symptoms of respiratory infection or because they are not fully vaccinated. This is a personal choice which can help reduce the risk of catching or spreading COVID-19.

Face coverings can also be a useful tool in reducing the risk of close contact. Staff, volunteers and service users may want to wear a face covering in the following situations:

- when you are coming into close contact with someone at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19 or other respiratory infections
- when COVID-19 rates are high and you will be in close contact with other people, such as in crowded and enclosed spaces
- when there are a lot of respiratory viruses circulating, such as in winter, and you will be in close contact with other people in crowded and enclosed spaces

Night shelter providers should be prepared to support those who wish to maintain social distancing, especially around those who may be more vulnerable. Providers of night shelter accommodation may also want to consider the proximity and density of service users, as well as the duration and regularity of any interactions.

Wash your hands

Service users, staff, and volunteers should wash their hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day. Regular hand washing is an effective way to reduce the risk of catching illnesses.

Service users, staff, and volunteers should wash their hands:

- after coughing, sneezing and blowing their nose
 - before they eat or handle food.
- after coming into contact with surfaces touched by many others, such as handles, handrails and light switches
- after coming into contact with shared areas such as kitchens and bathrooms
 - as soon as you return home
- along with hand washing, providers should regularly clean their surroundings and encourage service users to cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.

Vaccination

People who experience homelessness and rough sleeping are more likely to have underlying health conditions, which can make them vulnerable to many illnesses including COVID-19. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation has therefore prioritised them for being offered COVID-19 vaccines. Providers should make every effort to support people to become fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Find [further information and guidance about supporting people to take up the vaccine](#)

We know that airborne viruses like COVID-19 and flu are more prevalent in winter, you should look to plan your vaccinations ahead of time to make sure you keep people safe. [The Green Book](#) has the latest information on vaccines and vaccination procedures, for vaccine preventable infectious diseases in the UK.

COVID-19 testing

Those working with people who experience homelessness and rough sleeping are included in the list of those prioritised for COVID-19 testing. See [further details](#).

If anyone on site receives a positive test result for COVID-19, they should follow guidance for those with respiratory symptoms. We recommend that providers support staff and service users to self-isolate.

Find [further guidance on what to do if you have symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19 and have not taken a COVID-19 test](#)

2b Individually

Self-isolation

Where applicable, service users, staff and volunteers should be enabled to self-isolate when they present symptoms of respiratory infection, this is a key factor in limiting transmission.

GP registration

It is important that service users in your care are encouraged and supported to register with a local GP. It is free to register with a GP in England and you do not need identification or proof of address to do so. GP practices are not required to ask for proof of identity, address or immigration status from patients wishing to register. [NHS guidance on how to register with a GP surgery](#) clearly outlines that a practice cannot refuse a patient because they do not have proof of address or immigration status.

Community and faith groups can support individuals to register with a GP by helping them to provide a form of identification, this is not essential, but it is helpful to do so. [Guidance on registering with a GP as a homeless person is available](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Together in Barnet Charity Operations Manager:

Marcin Nocek

Phone: 07983387863

Email:

marcin@togetherinbarnet.org

TiB Website: togetherinbarnet.org

Homeless Action in Barnet:

36B Woodhouse Rd, London N12 0RG

020 8446 8400

habcentre.org

TOGETHER IN BARNET
VOLUNTEER CONFIRMATION

Name of volunteer.....

Address.....

Post Code..... Contact

number.....

Email address.....

I confirm that I have read Together in Barnet Handbook and that I will follow the guidelines, policies and procedures given whilst I volunteer at the night shelter.

Signature

Date.....