

PROJECT WORKERS

3 Part-time roles available

2 x 22.5 hours per week

1x 16 hours per week

Fixed term contracts from 13 December 2021 until 1st April 2022

Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter is a coalition of churches and volunteers from across the Maidstone community, working alongside Maidstone Borough Council and local agencies to offer afternoon and evening hospitality and overnight shelter to homeless people in the coldest months. The Shelter has operated since December 2013.

This winter, the Shelter will open from 3rd January 2022 until the morning of 1st April 2022, offering at least 4 bed spaces in rented accommodation. Five hosting churches will cover every afternoon and evening of the week through this period.

The Shelter's aims are:

- To provide hospitality and overnight shelter for homeless people in the winter months.
- To engage members of churches in Maidstone and other volunteers in building supportive relationships with homeless people in Maidstone, without discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- To support homeless people to find long-term accommodation.
- Undertaking such other purposes in relation to the needs of homeless people as the trustees may from time to time determine.

The Shelter achieves positive outcomes for its homeless guests by placing a small Project Team at the heart of a large body of compassionate, committed volunteers.

As part of the Project Team, the Project Workers ensure there is a staff presence every morning, afternoon and evening the Shelter is open. The Project Workers report to the Project Manager.

The charity also employs an Administrator, who works alongside the Project Manager to provide administrative support and to co-ordinate the volunteers for the project.

These are challenging and fulfilling opportunities, bringing relief, hope and transformation to some of the most vulnerable people in Maidstone.

Salary

The salary for these posts is £20,300 per annum pro rata. A full-time equivalent week is 37.5 hours.

Contract length

Fixed term contract from 13th December 2021 to 1st April 2022.

10 hours per week 13th December – 2nd January

22 hours per week 3rd January – 1st April

(From 3rd January – 3 shifts 15.00hrs – 21.30/22.00hrs, 1 shift 07.30hrs- 10.00hrs)

10 hours per week 13th December – 2nd January

16 hours per week 3rd January – 1st April

(From 3rd January – 1st April - 2 shifts 15.00hrs – 21.30/22.00hrs, 1 shift 07.30hrs- 10.00hrs)

Annual Leave Entitlement

Annual leave entitlement is four weeks per annum pro rata. Public holidays will also be calculated pro rata for the period of the contract. The leave year commences on the start date of the contract. Because the Project Workers' availability before and during the Shelter's opening is essential to the project's success, leave may not be taken during the contract period and will be paid in lieu.

Pension

Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter uses NEST, the Governments workplace pension scheme for all salaried roles requiring automatic enrolment.

Probationary Period

It is the policy of Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter to offer the successful candidate a trial period of four week's employment in the first instance, during which one week's notice in writing may be given on each side. Upon successful completion of the trial period, confirmation of employment will be given.

Disclosure Checks

The successful applicants for the posts will be offered employment subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check. The information contained in the disclosure will only be used to assess the applicant's suitability for employment, in so far as it is relevant.

Location

The post is based at several church buildings in and around central Maidstone.

PLEASE NOTE

We are unable to accept applicants who are not UK residents or do not currently have a permit to work in the UK

Job Description

Each Project Worker is responsible for:

1. Advancing and achieving, alongside churches, volunteers and partner organisations, the shelter's four aims.
2. Co-working flexibly and supportively with the Project Manager and other Project staff to ensure staff presence every morning, afternoon and evening.
3. Co-working with volunteer teams to set-up and clear-up Shelter venues.
4. Booking-in guests before the Shelter opens.
5. Checking in guests in the evening.
6. Checking out guests in the morning from rented accommodation.
7. Overseeing the moving of equipment between Shelter venues.
8. Overseeing the serving of refreshments.
9. Nurturing the safe, warm, happy environment of the Shelter.
10. Monitoring all aspects of the Shelter's operations in line with policies and procedures.
11. Supporting guests and responding to their needs, including supporting access to accommodation and service providers. This will include signposting and making referrals.
12. Maintaining excellent relationships with our public and third sector partner organisations and their representatives, with the aim that homeless people experience a united circle of support.
13. Thorough and accurate recording of information, including data collection for statistical reporting.
14. Reporting all incidents and accidents to the Project Manager.
15. Undertaking other duties aimed at the highest standards in operating the project, as required by the Project Manager or Trustees.
16. Enforcing all boundaries set out for our guests

Person Specification

Essential

1. The ability to work independently, with initiative to make responsible and well-judged decisions.
2. Reliable and have good time keeping.
3. Be an effective, flexible and supportive team member who is honest, non-judgmental and sensitive to the views and needs of others.
4. A basic understanding of the background and circumstances of homeless and vulnerable people.
5. A basic knowledge of the services available to homeless people.
6. Prior experience, paid or voluntary, of working to support vulnerable adults.
7. An empathetic and compassionate approach to vulnerable people in need. This includes strong interpersonal and listening skills.
8. A basic knowledge of the support needs typically associated with homeless people: substance misuse; mental illness; criminal behaviour; asylum and immigration.
9. Literacy and numeracy skills suitable for completing forms and maintaining internal communications.
10. The flexibility to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances.
11. Calmness in pressured and stressful situations.
12. The ability to maintain operational policies including Health and Safety, Risk Assessment and Data Protection.
13. An understanding of and commitment to Equal Opportunities.
14. Must be able to drive and have use of a car.
15. Sense of humour

Desirable

1. Previous experience of working, or volunteering, in a winter shelter.
2. Knowledge of the welfare issues affecting homeless people, including statutory obligations towards them.
3. Experience of working with – and awareness of the complex needs of – homeless people or similar disadvantaged client groups.
4. A track record of supporting positive change in people with a lifestyle of street homelessness.
5. Previous experience of assessing and interviewing vulnerable adults.
6. Previous experience of addressing challenging behaviour and de-escalation techniques.
7. Training, study or qualifications in adult social care, social studies, health care or housing.
8. Knowledge of the services available to homeless people in Maidstone.
9. Familiarity with Eastern European languages, especially Polish.

Employment is subject to provision of adequate references and the appropriate level of Disclosure and Barring Service Check.

Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter promotes equality in the workplace and encourages applicants from all sections of the community.