

# Volunteering at Branches Hostel

***Thank you for your interest in volunteering with Branches Hostel!***

By volunteering with Branches Hostel, you can help people turnaround their lives, re-gain lost skills or learn new ones.

Above all you would be helping people get back their confidence in their abilities and themselves.

## **Why are we looking for volunteers?**

We are developing a Monday to Friday programme of activities, interests, advice sessions, courses etc. for residents. We can't do this alone.

We are always looking for volunteers to complement and enhance the existing services we provide. Through volunteering at Branches Hostel you will bring additional (life) skills, experience and knowledge which will help the single homeless men and women we support.

In return, we offer a chance to volunteer with people who are striving to turn around their lives, some coming from very difficult backgrounds; and an opportunity to have new experiences (and some fun thrown in!) that come from volunteering with us.

## **Can anyone volunteer?**

We welcome volunteers who are aged 18 to 100!

The reason that we cannot accept volunteers under 18 is that you would be volunteering with 'vulnerable adults' who have been homeless, or have alcohol/substance use or mental health support needs. We must consider the safeguarding needs of service users and volunteers and that is why we have the age limit.

## **What is the time commitment?**

Each of the volunteering sessions run from one to two hours except for events volunteering or meal planning and preparation, where this would mean a two to four hour commitment.

***Although ideally we would want to have a minimum 6-month commitment from volunteers we would still love to hear from you even if you can only commit to a one-off session.***

## **How will I learn about the organisation?**

We will give you a full induction to Branches Hostel including the services we provide; the organisations we work with; an overview of the support needs of service users both current and former residents (depending on your volunteering role); health and safety; and volunteering within our confidentiality and data protection requirements.

### **How will I know what is expected of me in my volunteering role?**

Depending on the volunteering role you apply for we will provide a role description which lists your volunteering duties.

We also have a volunteering contract that sets out our commitment to you as a volunteer and our expectations of you while you are volunteering with us.

### **Will I be paid?**

Not for the volunteering work you do. We will pay reasonable travel expenses where these are supported by proof of the cost of travel.

### **I don't have an up-to-date DBS certificate – can I still apply as a volunteer?**

Yes. Not all volunteering roles require that you have a DBS certificate. Where you are working one-on-one with residents you will be required to have a DBS certificate.

### **I've never volunteered before – can I apply?**

Of course! If you have a skill that we are looking for then we would love to hear from you.

### **What will I get out of this?**

Volunteering is a two-way connection. We want volunteers to get something in return from their volunteering experience with us. It will help you decide if volunteering with Branches Hostel is the right volunteering role for you if you give some thought to the question – “What do you want to get from volunteering at Branches Hostel?” We will talk about this when we ask you to come for an interview.