

Renewed Hope Trust



A HANDBOOK FOR DROP-IN VOLUNTEERS

DROP-IN VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK 2018

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MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a safe and welcoming place for homeless and disadvantaged people in Reigate & Banstead Borough and Tandridge District Council areas. To provide a non-judgemental environment, food and signposting to specialist services, showing through actions the love of Christ and seeking to bring new hope and new opportunity to rebuild damaged lives.

We work in professional partnership with relevant voluntary and statutory agencies while giving the maximum opportunity for volunteers to serve in the varied activities of the charity.

We are inspired by Matthew Chapter 25:40 that 'whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me' and encouraged by Isaiah 58 to 'feed the hungry and shelter the homeless'.

*"If the hunger of others is not my own,
If the anguish of my neighbour in all its forms touches me not,
If the nakedness of my brother does not torment me,
Then I have no reason to go to church and to live.*

*Life is this: to love one's neighbour as oneself;
This is the commandment of God.
Love means deeds, not good wishes.
For this reason, I commit myself to working for the necessities of others."*

Javier Torres, Nicaragua

Drop-In RULES

1. Everyone is welcome. Drop-Inners, whether they perceive themselves as a Helper or Service User, are expected to treat the Drop-In, those who use it, and those who work there, in the manner in which they would like to be treated.
2. The Drop-In opens at 11.00 – 15.00 Monday – Friday.
3. Volunteer Drop-Inners on the first shift should plan to be on site by 10.50am.
4. No drinking of alcohol, taking drugs or aggressive behaviour is allowed on or around the premises. No person may bring unlawful drugs or weapons on to the premises, and no violence or abuse of any kind will be tolerated.
5. Anybody suspected of bringing unlawful drugs onto the premises will face exclusion and the matter may be reported to the police.
6. Any person found using illegal drugs or whom the staff have a reasonable suspicion is using illegal drugs, on or near the premises will be asked to leave. Any person found dealing in drugs will be reported to the police.
7. Any violence, harassment, sexual or racial abuse, at the discretion of the Drop-In Leader or after discussion with a Trustee/member of staff of RHT or of Three Central, may be reported to the police.
8. There is no smoking inside the building. Smoking is limited to the designated outside area.
9. IN SHORT: NO DRUGS, NO ALCOHOL, NO AGGRESSIVE, RACIST OR SEXIST BEHAVIOUR
10. We encourage an atmosphere of fun and respect at all times. Anything other than that is not acceptable behaviour for Drop-In

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Anyone over 18 and not obviously under the influence of drugs or alcohol is welcome. Anyone who manifests aggressive or violent behaviour that makes him or her disruptive or dangerous will be refused admission and may be banned from Drop-In for a period decided by the Drop-In Leader – normally a member of staff, Trustee or experience volunteer.

Please bear in mind that the purpose of our project is to provide a safe place for many who have difficult behaviour. Consider whether there are ways in which a disruptive person may be ‘talked down’, or given a cup of tea (not coffee as this has a contraindication for some substances). If there is no member of staff in the Drop-In, please feel free to phone one of us, or come up to the office and ask someone to come down and speak to the ‘difficult’ person.

To ensure the safety of all of those in the Drop-In we wish to make it possible for the Drop-In to be available for all of those who need this place of sanctuary.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL Drop-In Volunteers

While the very strict Winter Night Shelter rule *of never being alone with a single Guest* is not normally relevant for you and the other Drop-Inner's security, it is wise not to be in a one to one situation with Drop-Inners.

The issues are likely to be different. We have, and will continue to open our doors to people who may not have the capacity to fully understand what has been said to them and may misconstrue the words or actions.

NORMALLY there will be a member of staff, a trustee or a very experienced Drop-In person in the Drop-In whose role resembles that of the Evening Shift Supervisor (for those who have experience of Winter Night Shelter).

DROP-IN VOLUNTEER DUTIES

There are no specific duties assigned to Drop-In Volunteers other than the Leader and the Food Provider. Anyone can and should add to the Drop-In Day List the names of all the people who come into the Drop-In. If a new person comes to Drop-In please take their first and last name and encourage the person to tell you at least a little of their story.

Drop-In Leader(s)

Prior to the Drop-In Opening Drop-In Volunteers need to:

- Take a Fridge Reading and add the data to the Blue Book stored beside the microwave.
- Tables and work surfaces wiped down
- Dehumidifier emptied of water
- Hot Pot/s be filled with freshly boiled water
- Fill milk jug – check and note if we will need more milk during the session
- Biscuits and sweets to be topped up
- Check that the Setting Up has been completed

At 11.00 or when two Volunteer Drop-Inners are present unlock the door and place the Drop-In Flag in the base close to the fence.

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There are many regular Drop-Inners who although not 'leaders' are safe, and many of the regulars help when asked to. In the unlikely event of there not being two or more volunteers and you do not feel that it is safe to open the Drop-In, delay your opening time. You may choose to go outside to talk to the Drop-Inners who are waiting and explain what is happening.

As soon as is reasonable, sit yourself beside each of the Drop-Inners, ask them what we can do for them today and fill their answers into the book. If it is to use a phone, have help with forms or writing letters please flag this up to the staff as soon as possible to ensure that we meet their needs if at all possible. If we fail to meet a Drop-Inner's needs we should apologise at the end of the session and flag this up as a priority for the following day.

Drop-In Food Provider

Having signed up to provide food you are welcome to bring something prepared in your own home, in accordance with the Rules of Food Hygiene.

Other Food Providers shop and bring fresh ingredients to cook on site.

Some people come with some items to top up the tins and dry goods that we have in store.

Several Food Providers create what they can from what is in the Drop-In cupboards.

If all else fails eggs or and beans on toast is a very acceptable meal.

Sometimes we just make soup and sandwiches

Some Food Providers just drop off the food, returning later in the day/week to collect their pots and pans. Others stay for the whole session or until lunch has been cleared away. The Food Provider is not expected to clear up!

What does a Volunteer do during Drop-In?

Volunteers are encouraged initially to join those sitting at the table and when they feel comfortable join in, or engage others in conversation. For some Drop-In Volunteers this will be within minutes, other people choose to 'get to know' the regular Drop-In Volunteers and Drop-Inners, before engaging.

CONVERSATION GUIDELINES

- 1) ***Diffuse rather than fuel any contentious discussions!***
- 2) Remember that the personal experience and circumstances of those present will be more radically different than the people with who you normally converse.
- 3) Most of the Drop-Inners hold passionate opinions on many topics. As a Drop-In Volunteer you might prefer to encourage people to listen to the opinions of others rather than expressing your own opinions. We aim to be non-judgemental, the Drop-Inners are not!
- 4) It might be unwise and certainly we would not recommend that you share your last name/address or other personal information with anyone you meet in the Drop-In.

Decision Making re who is welcome or might be excluded

It is the responsibility of the Lead Drop-In Volunteer **and it is imperative that Drop-In Volunteers do not question decisions in front of the other Drop-Inners. Any complaints or concerns should be communicated to the appropriate person (a senior member of staff or the Chair of Trustees), in private.**

Potentially Threatening Situations

If at any time you feel that you are in a situation you cannot handle or someone is becoming aggressive or intrusive – back off. Although people ‘kicking off’ seldom happens, never under-estimate the threat and do not respond aggressively yourself. **If you are uncomfortable leave the room.**

How to handle a potentially threatening situation;

- Stay calm
- Position yourself about a metre from the person (don't crowd them)
- You may want to stand at a right angle so as not to come across as threatening
- Speak slowly and clearly with a gentle tone
- Avoid being drawn into an argument
- Remember your first duty is to yourself
- Never put a hand on anyone who is angry

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A person on the brink of physical aggression has three possible choices:

Attack

Retreat

Compromise.

You need to guide them towards retreating or compromising without 'losing face'.

If you feel the threat of violence is imminent

- keep your eye on potential escape routes
- keep yourself between the aggressor and the door
- if possible, stay behind a barrier such as a table.
- don't turn your back on the person
- be prepared to move very quickly if necessary.

If you manage to calm the situation down,

gradually try to re-establish contact

take special care with your words and actions

make a cautious approach to the person

WHEN the situation is diffused maybe offer a cup of tea or coffee for each of you, this will help to cushion the after-shock.

REMEMBER THAT A HOT DRINK IS A POTENTIAL WEAPON AND SHOULD NEVER BE OFFERED TO SOMEONE WHO IS ANGRY OR SHOWING ANY SIGNS OF THREATENING BEHAVIOUR.

Regardless as to whether you are the Drop-In Leader, Food Provider or a Drop-In Volunteer please speak to the Drop-In Leader, a senior member of staff or the Chair of Trustees to 'debrief'. Ideally we would like you to write an Incident Form to enable us to learn how the situation was managed.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE BUILDING

You must be familiar with the building.

The Fire Exits are obvious

From Our Place in the Kitchen

White door to the yard

Glass door in the corridor to the pathway beside the building

From The Den

Glazed door to the yard

Internal door to the Warehouse then the Fire Door to the Car Park

FIRE MEETING POINT

Outside of Poundland

Volunteers

Drop-In Volunteers are able to select their shifts, training dates, etc. using Dutyman. Reminders of the duty will be sent by email to your phone.

Accident Book

Please ensure all incidents and accidents are reported. The Accident Book is in the lowest drawer by the sink. Should there be an incident, you may prefer to write or type a report. You can come up to the office and use one of our laptops or send an emailed report from your home. I would ask you to write the report as soon as you can.

Pets

Pets are not allowed in the Kitchen or Den. They may be left in yard but remain the responsibility of the owner and are welcome so long as they are well behaved.

The Kitchen

If you are working in the kitchen, you must wash your hands **BEFORE** and **AFTER** you touch food. Raw meat should always be chopped on a separate board, using separate utensils. Please don't serve food containing uncooked eggs. If you reheat food, make sure it's piping hot.

Food should be kept secure from infestation.

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First Aid/Disposal Kit

There is normally a qualified First Aider in the Three Central building. There is a First Aid kit on the window sill to the left of the door to the yard. There is a defibrillator beside the glass doors to the building.

ALWAYS WEAR GLOVES WHEN DEALING WITH ANY INJURIES WHERE THERE IS BLOOD OR OTHER BODILY FLUIDS - EVEN IF YOU THINK IT IS UNNECESSARY.

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Some of our Drop-Inners are substances misusers.

Marijuana, or Pot, Weed, Grass or Puff is a mixture of dried, shredded leaves, stems, seeds and flowers of the hemp plant *Cannabis sativa*. It is usually smoked, but some users cook it into foods. The main active chemical in marijuana is called THC, which is delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol. Marijuana remains the most commonly used illicit drug. Most users report feeling 'less stressed' 'somewhat distanced from problems'. When stoned unusual things can seem to be very funny. Frequently there is a desire for lots and lots of sweets. It is believed to cause many effects if used long-term, including paranoia, respiratory problems, heart defects, cancer and psycho-social disorders.

Alcohol

Alcohol is a depressant drug. It slows down the heart, breathing and reactions. Too much in one go can slow the body down so much that it stops working altogether.

Alcohol also affects judgement and causes most people to become uninhibited. This makes them more likely to behave in a way that they wouldn't normally. This can lead to people being overly friendly or, at the other extreme, aggressive.

Alcohol is physically addictive. A person's tolerance to alcohol increases and so more is required to achieve the same effect. It is life threatening for a heavy drinker completely to stop drinking alcohol without medical supervision.

Heroin

Heroin is a depressant drug. It is the same as diamorphine, the very strong painkiller given in hospitals. It reduces reactions to pain and slows down breathing and heart rate. It gives people a feeling of warmth and a sense of wellbeing. It relieves feelings of anxiety and fear. Heroin bought on the street is often mixed with other things. That is why it is difficult to tell how big a dose has been taken. Overdose is a real risk, which can result in coma and death. Heroin can be smoked on tin foil or injected.

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Tolerance to heroin does develop so more is required to have the same effect. Although coming off heroin is unpleasant, it is not usually life threatening. It is difficult to stay off. Medical supervision and detox usually involves the use of methadone. Methadone is a similar drug to heroin but the doctor prescribes it. It is green syrup that is swallowed. Selling and even sharing methadone is illegal.

Marijuana and Alcohol are the two substances that Drop-Inners are most likely to be using. Both have a distinctive smell. Many of the Drop-Inners will 'top up' before coming in or/and pop out for a top up during the Drop-In Session.

IF YOU SUSPECT THAT A GUEST IS USING ANY ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES WHILST ON THE PREMISES YOU SHOULD INFORM THE PERSON IN CHARGE, OR GO UP TO THE OFFICES AND INFORM A MEMBER OF RHTES STAFF.

First Aid

Both alcohol and heroin can cause a person to become drowsy and/or lose consciousness. They can also both cause people to vomit.

If someone becomes drowsy or unconscious during Drop-In:

1. Work with the Drop-In Leader who will assess if medical assistance is required.
2. If you are the Leader get another person to call 999
3. Put the person in the recovery position.
4. Loosen tight clothing.
5. Keep warm with a blanket.

Never give black coffee to try to "sober up" a person. It makes the drugs work faster!

WHAT IS MENTAL ILLNESS?

Mental health problems can affect us all at some point in our lives. We all have times when we feel stress, depression and emotional distress. Usually these periods are short and we recover without outside help. But sometimes these reactions can become prolonged and unusually intense, which may affect our ability to cope with the demands of everyday life. Our thinking, our perceptions and mood may be affected and we may temporarily lose touch with reality.

Mental illness is not well understood and it may frighten people. All too often it carries a stigma. People who suffer from mental illness are vulnerable and most present no threat to anyone but themselves.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please respect a Drop-Inner's wishes regarding his/her care; it may be helpful to provide immediate practical support – a drink or food, for example. It is important to resist the temptation constantly to step in and try to solve people's problems. **Listening** is the most important skill; don't feel as if you have to say much. It can be useful to the person you are supporting if you empathise with their emotions and encourage them to feel they are in a safe place. For example: - Converse informally with those in Drop-In, keeping your conversation simple and positive. Avoid being too direct. Stay well clear of controversial issues and be very careful if you talk about religion or politics. Remember that Drop-Inners are likely to take a suggestion that there might be some help as a serious promise. Listen carefully and use your discretion. If at all possible, do not argue with others in Drop-In. Being uncritical can make the difference between a person feeling safe or threatened.

DROP-INNERS PARTICIPATION POLICY

All Drop-Inners are welcome regardless of background or personal history, as long as they behave appropriately and adhere to the rules. Everyone attending the Drop-In can expect to be treated with courtesy and respect and with practical help insofar as it is possible to provide it.

Participation

We seek to encourage and involve Drop-Inner's in the following ways:

- Making practical suggestions as to how the Drop-In is run
- Assisting in the practical work – washing up, wiping tables etc.

BOUNDARIES GUIDELINES

The aim of this policy is to make explicit to staff and volunteers what is expected of them in respect of their relationship to guests and to highlight that which is specifically not allowed.

BOUNDARIES

To ensure the smooth running of the Drop-In and Winter Night Shelter and the safety of volunteers, Drop-Inners and guests, we need to establish a framework of boundaries. Service Users need to know where they stand and volunteers must not do something that jeopardises their own or a colleague's ability to deal appropriately with a person in any circumstances. For example, **if we are too friendly, we may have trouble when an unpleasant action has to be taken such as giving a warning.** Conversely, if we are angry or authoritarian, we will not gain the trust of our service users and will not have the goodwill needed to calm down a challenging situation.

RESPECT

Everyone in the Drop-In should be treated with respect; to show disrespect can have far reaching consequences. If we don't treat the Drop-Inners with respect, there is no reason for him/her to show any respect for us or to pay any attention to what we have to say.

In all our dealings with the Drop-Inners, it is important that we are aware of our own attitude, the use of language and endeavour not to be abusive, contemptuous, flippant, authoritarian, judgemental or critical.

MONEY, GOODS AND SERVICES

It is imperative that you stick to the basic principle of not loaning or giving money to anyone in the Drop-In. There are NO exceptions to this. Neither should you become involved in any monetary dealings, if the person needs help with budgeting or finance suggest that they book an appointment with Community Debt Advice, with whom we share an office on the 2nd Floor.

SELF-DISCLOSURE

A good rule of thumb is *“do not tell anyone in Drop-In anything that you would not be prepared to announce to the church hall or staff room”*. If someone persists in asking for your personal information, leave the situation and decide whether you want to inform whoever is ‘in charge’ that day. It is inappropriate to give any person in Drop-In your address or phone number.

COLLUSION WITH OTHERS

We should not collude with a colleague in doing something that is unethical or unprofessional. Such instances are difficult to deal with and you may feel you have to be loyal to your colleague; however, turning a blind eye will not help the situation and will put the rest of the team in a difficult situation.

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

If you have any concerns about relationships or boundaries within the Drop-In, please speak in the first instance to the ‘Leader’. If you are still unsure, don’t hesitate to contact the John Bartlett – Chair of Trustees or staff member on 07943 685660.

GUESTS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Before sharing any information given to you by anyone in the Drop-In you should consider whether you would want other people sharing your private information. If you learn anything from a Drop-Inner that concerns you, please immediately share it with whoever is in charge in Drop-In or one of the staff.

All entries made in the incident book or on the guest list should be factual and not based on personal opinion.

The **EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE** is:

- 1) On occasions when you have a concern for the safety for another Drop-Inner, or they are suggesting that they might hurt themselves or another person.
- 2) Where you feel that the integrity of Renewed Hope Trust is at risk. For example, this may be where you discover that someone is dealing drugs or that a guest is or has stolen from other Drop-Inners.

In each of these cases, which are not exhaustive, always inform the Drop-In leader.

POLICY ON VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

The Drop-In and Winter Night Shelter aims to ensure a non-threatening environment for the safety and security of drop-inners/guests, volunteers and staff.

On entry all guests, volunteers and staff are reminded that no violence or aggression will be tolerated in the Winter Night Shelter or/and Drop-In, and will be a cause for exclusion with the right reserved to call the police. All guests are reminded that no objects that could be considered of use as weapons may be brought into the Drop-In, this includes fireworks.

VIOLENCE TOWARDS PERSONS

Two strict **rules** apply with regard to the response to violence.

- 1) Automatic dismissal follows any incident of physical violence. This applies to the person who intimidates and the person who retaliates.
- 2) Anyone who sees any violence is required to report it to the Drop-In Leader or member of RHTES staff preventing secrecy and collusion.

The police may be called by staff if there is a risk of subsequent violence in the neighbourhood or to any person at a later time, or if immediate assistance is required.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

In the event of aggressive behaviour from a person then suggest that they modify their behaviour; the decision as to whether the person is asked to leave the Drop-In shall be taken by the Drop-In Leader. All incidents shall be recorded.

VIOLENCE AGAINST PROPERTY

Respect for property is a prerequisite all incidents shall be recorded.

POLICY ON HARASSMENT

Renewed Hope Trust opposes harassment and will take action against any person, whether volunteer or guest, who harasses another (on the basis of race, gender, disability, colour, ethnic and national origin, sexuality or religion). Harassment offends human dignity and constitutes a violation of the basic human rights of respect and privacy.

WHAT CONSTITUTES HARASSMENT?

Talking and/or acting in a bullying, intimidating, invasive, tormenting, taunting manner to someone relating to the above categories.

PROCEDURE HARASSMENT

- Tell the harasser to stop
- Walk away
- Report the incident immediately to the Drop-In Leader.

VOLUNTEERS are reminded of their right to use the complaints procedure, and that any incident of harassment is to be reported in the incidents book along with the action taken.

IN SUMMARY: THE SEVEN COMMON SENSE RULES

The following rules are a useful summary of the advice for volunteers covered in this handbook:

- 1) Treat everyone with respect
- 2) Don't give out personal details
- 3) Don't give away money
- 4) Don't contradict what your Drop-In Leader says in the Drop-In
- 5) Don't be alone with a Drop-Inner
- 6) We don't search bags or clothing and if you see alcohol in a bag ignore it
- 7) Don't give advice unless you **really** know what you're talking about or make promises you can't keep

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