



Making change count  
for homeless people

## 2018 Night Shelter FAQs

### **What is the Night Shelter?**

The Night Shelter is a 10 week programme repeated during the year. It is a holistic pathway that combines emergency accommodation with the wider support services offered by the 999 Club to empower people to change their lives. The Night Shelter provides respite from sleeping rough which gives homeless people the space and opportunity to engage with our services including:

- The Gateway day centre offering access to practical facilities, such as showers, laundry and internet access;
- Advice & Support to help with benefits and find and keep a home;
- Employability support to access training, gain qualifications, get work ready and find a job;
- Learning & Activities workshops to gain new skills and increase confidence and self-esteem;
- Personal Transition Service for highly personalised one-to-one support focused on each person's unique strengths, talents and abilities;
- Health & Wellbeing clinics hosted in our Gateway to improve physical and mental health.

### **How do people access the Night Shelter?**

People can self refer to the Night Shelter by attending the Gateway Monday to Friday 9am – Midday for an initial assessment. We also accept referrals from our partnership agencies (Bench Outreach, Deptford Reach, King's Church/Jericho Road Project or London Street Rescue.) We have 20 places each night which are allocated to people who meet the criteria.

### **How does the Night Shelter work?**

The Night Shelter runs seven days a week for 10 weeks at a time. We provide each Night Shelter guest with a locker, mattress, bedding, towels and a welcome pack including essential items such as deodorant, razors and sanitary products. Each guest has a case manager and works with them to secure ID, maximise income through benefits or employment, encourage engagement with health care partners and secure sustainable housing.

Guests arrive at 7.30pm each evening for a nutritious meal cooked by a team of volunteers co-ordinated by St Alfege Church and Great Beauty Tabernacle Church. During this time guests can also access laundry facilities, showers and computers before settling down for the night in our hall.

We provide breakfast in the morning and guests are encouraged to stay on to work with the team in our Gateway. Unfortunately we do not have the resources to operate a 24 hour/7 day a week service and so sign-post guests to services that operate outside of our hours as needed.

Our dedicated Night Shelter team, consisting of a project worker, two night shift leaders and around thirty-five committed volunteers oversee the smooth running of each season.

### **Why 10 weeks?**

By working in 10 week blocks we are able to provide a structured pathway supporting individuals to reach their goals within agreed timeframes. This also provides a two week window between seasons for the 999 Club team to review, evaluate and implement lessons learnt ahead of the next season. 10 weeks is usually enough time for us to replace essential ID documents, maximise income through benefits or employment and find a more sustainable housing outcome. We are committed to getting the best possible outcome for each individual and continue to support people after their 10 week stay as they continue their journey.

### **When does the Night Shelter run?**

The Night Shelter runs from our onsite hall at the 999 Club in 10 week blocks. Traditionally night shelters run just during the coldest months of the year but homelessness effects people all year round. We believe that people are equally entitled to a safe place to sleep during the warmer months of the year as they are in the winter.

We are currently delivering a three-year pilot to extend the Night Shelter to provide year round support. This includes running two 10 week night shelter seasons in year 1 (2017), 3 seasons in year 2 (2018), and 4 seasons in year 3 (2019).

We have funding to deliver two seasons this year and are crowdfunding in May to raise a further £20,000 to deliver our summer season.

This year's Night Shelter dates are:

- Winter – January 2<sup>nd</sup> to March 11<sup>th</sup> 2018
- Spring – April 3<sup>rd</sup> to June 11<sup>th</sup> 2018
- Summer – July 4<sup>th</sup> to September 9<sup>th</sup> 2018

### **Where do people move on to?**

Our experienced multidisciplinary team are committed to getting the best possible housing outcome for each individual. This will include a range of solutions including housing associations, supported accommodation providers, Lewisham Council's supported accommodated pathways and the private rental sector.

### **What happens to people when the Night Shelter finishes?**

We aim to have supported guests into sustainable accommodation by the close of the Night Shelter and continue to work with them long-term to sustain their tenancy. In some cases it may take longer than 10 weeks to find someone accommodation so we continue to work with these people to ensure this happens.

### **What happens if the Night Shelter is full or if someone doesn't meet the entry criteria?**

We are committed to continually reviewing and improving our Night Shelter and as a result have recently increased our capacity to 20 people per night. We work with guests to find housing solutions as quickly as possible and as a result many guests move on from the Night Shelter early and do not need to stay for the full 10 weeks. Their places then open up for new referrals or people on the waiting list. If the Night Shelter is full or we are not able to meet the persons needs we will refer the individual on to an appropriate service.

### **What will my money be spent on?**

It costs us £17.15 per place per night to run the Night Shelter or £24,010 per season. We need to raise a further £20,000 to fund the Summer Night Shelter and the money you donate will go towards:

- Fees to obtain vital identity documents (e.g., birth certificates or Citizen's Cards);
- Travel expenses to attend important appointments and viewings;
- Nutritious breakfasts and dinners;
- Fresh bedding and towels for each guest;
- One-to-one case management support;
- Tenancy sustainment workshops;
- Night Shelter project workers and volunteer expenses.

### **How do I volunteer for the Night Shelter?**

We simply could not deliver our Night Shelter without the wonderful support of our volunteers. Volunteers do evening or breakfast shifts and do not need to stay overnight. Evening volunteers are here from 19.30 until 22.00 and breakfast volunteers are with us from 7.00 – 8.00. If you are interested in volunteering contact [leon@999club.org](mailto:leon@999club.org).

### **Who are the 999 Club?**

Based in Lewisham, one of the top 20% most deprived local authorities in England, the 999 Club has a 25 year history of working with people who have experienced homelessness, most of whom also experience high levels of poor health, poverty and disadvantage.

We provide a warm welcome for people who are often ignored, isolated or stigmatised and empower them to gain the confidence, skills and support needed to transform their lives. Our experienced multidisciplinary team deliver life-changing services which include:

- The Gateway day centre offering access to practical facilities, such as showers, laundry and internet access;
- Advice & Support to help with benefits and find and keep a home;
- Employability support to access training, gain qualifications, get work ready and find a job;
- Learning & Activities workshops to gain new skills and increase confidence and self-esteem;
- Personal Transition Service for highly personalised one-to-one support focused on each person's unique strengths, talents and abilities;

- Health & Wellbeing clinics hosted in our Gateway to improve physical and mental health.

The 999 Club is a registered charity no 1091077 and company 4238295.

### **What is the homelessness situation in Lewisham?**

The number of homeless people rough sleeping on England's streets has reached highest levels since records began, having increased year-on-year since 2010. Rough sleeping in Lewisham increased by 40% in each quarter of 2017 and in the last quarter of 2017, Lewisham ranked as second highest of all outer London boroughs for rough sleeping ([https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports.](https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports))

Lewisham is among the worst four London boroughs for educational outcomes and has high levels of premature mortality (Trust for London, 2017). It also has high levels of inequality and high housing costs, which contribute to poverty levels. Indeed, Lewisham is in the top 20% most deprived local authorities in England, with 1:4 working people earning less than the Living Wage.

High housing costs, coupled with a shortage of social housing means more residents living in the private rented sector where rents are rising fast and many residents are subject to rogue landlords and insecurity (Lewisham Poverty Commission, 2017).

Therefore, the context in which we work is one of high levels of homelessness and poverty, inaccessibility to affordable, safe and secure housing, poor educational attainment and poor health.

### **Why are you crowdfunding?**

Having successfully funded our first two seasons through Trusts & Foundations, we need to raise a further £20,000 to fund our Summer Night Shelter. Funding pilots can be challenging at first and a successfully crowdfunded project will demonstrate there is demand for what we're doing in the local community and give funders confidence to fund the project in future. It will also enable us to unlock match funding specifically available for crowdfunded projects.

### **What is the Night Shelter criteria?**

In order to secure a place at the 999 Club's Night Shelter, guests need to:

1. Register at/with the 999 Club's Gateway Centre or with the referring team of one of our partner organisations (Bench Outreach, Deptford Reach, King's Church/Jericho Road Project or London Street Rescue);
2. Be a known/verified rough sleeper;
3. Be in receipt of state benefits or be eligible to claim benefits;
4. Provide valid, up-to-date proof of identity;
5. Demonstrate a local connection to the London Borough of Lewisham, Greenwich, Southwark and Bromley (i.e., for six of the last twelve months or three of the last five years).

This criteria has been set so that we can focus our resources on those who will benefit most from our support.