



Acorn Chaplaincy

Introduction to Volunteering

Revision: September 2022

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Acorn Chaplaincy Introduction to Volunteering

1. Welcome

Please accept our heart-felt thanks for your commitment and support. We hope that you find your time volunteering with us rewarding and enjoyable. This document provides information to help volunteers understand their role at Acorn Chaplaincy and the guidelines for working with each other and adults with addiction who seek our help (Guests). If you have any questions that you would like to speak to someone about, please ask a trustee.

2. Background

The founder and Chair of Trustees, Revd Dr Mary Nicholson, was a former General Practitioner with Special Interest in Substance Misuse. She treated patients with addiction clinically for five years whilst working with Bournemouth NHS drug services. This experience gave her the understanding of the profound scale individuals' sufferings, such as poor physical and mental ill-health, loss of confidence and self-esteem. Dependency encompasses addiction to substances and obsessive behavioural problems. It captures and imprisons people from all walks of life and from every culture. It does not discriminate whether they are rich or poor or all faiths or none. It is a growing problem. No one organisation or individual can tackle it alone.

3. Our Mission

Acorn Chaplaincy is a non-profit Christian charity. Our mission is to relieve persons in need and hardship by reason of addiction, through the provision of pastoral care, support services and information according to Christian ethos and spirituality. Our aim is that those affected by addiction and related forms of ill health, poverty and disadvantage can find God's love and so have hope for a transformed and purposeful life.

We adopt a holistic approach, working in collaboration with other churches and agencies already in the field, to welcome individuals with addiction who seek our help. We aim to help them regain self-esteem and confidence by providing emotional and spiritual support so that they are empowered to take charge of their own lives and become more resilient. It is then that they can stand up for themselves and have hope to make a realistic life plan.

4. Our Services

Acorn Chaplaincy seeks to provide comprehensive support for adults with addiction. We understand that people's needs will vary depending on where they are on their recovery journey, so we offer a range of services, from having a chat with one of our volunteers to community support groups. We also run courses that aim to equip individuals to manage and overcome their addiction. If guests require further support, we will sign post them to other organisations. Our volunteers will help individuals with phone calls, filling in forms or provide them with any other aid so that they can get connected to the services that can best help them.

Drop-in Centre

The Drop-in Centre is a safe environment, hosted by compassionate volunteers who can offer a listening ear, refreshments, and advice on ways that Acorn Chaplaincy can help. The Drop-in Centre is open Wednesdays from 10:00-13:00 and Thursdays from 14:00-17:00. All are welcome and no invitation is required. It is located in the basement of Southampton City Centre Parish Office.

Recovery Community

The Recovery Community is a group support meeting where individuals can discuss their recovery and support others in the community. Individuals join the group by invitation and are expected to be committed to attend the meetings. Currently the group meets in cycles of fifteen weeks on Mondays from 13:00 to 15:00 in the Freemantle Baptist Church.

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Recovery Course

The Recovery Course is a free, fifteen-week, Christ centred twelve-step program. Each week includes a testimony, an educational video and group sessions, split into male and female that allow participants to share and learn how to manage and overcome their addiction. This course is suitable for anyone who is battling any form of addiction or compulsive behaviour.

5. Volunteering

The volunteer roles available are:

Volunteer

To be: Committed, caring and reliable volunteers.

To do: Assist Acorn Chaplains at the Drop-in Centre and other Acorn meetings for guests.

- Welcome guests on arrival and make them feel comfortable.
- Make and serve light refreshments such as tea and coffee, cake, and biscuits.
- Help set up and clear away at the start and end of each session.
- Acorn Chaplaincy will provide Basic Safeguarding Awareness training for all volunteers.
- Maintain guest and Acorn volunteer confidentiality at all times.

Responsible to: Session Leader

Chaplain

To be: Committed, caring and reliable volunteers.

To do: As an Acorn Chaplain, provide Christian care and support to all our guests at the Drop-in Centre, Recovery Community, and Recovery Course.

- Welcome guests on arrival and make them feel comfortable.
- Provide a listening ear and signpost guests to other organisations where appropriate. A booklet of organisations is provided for the use of Chaplains at the Drop-in.
- Offer individual one to one discussion with guests where appropriate and if requested by the guest.
- Pray with guests if appropriate and requested.
- With the assistance of Volunteers, make and serve light refreshments such as tea and coffee, cake, and biscuits, and help set up and clear away.
- Be a Team Worker, to ensure the smooth working of guest sessions.
- Attend Acorn Chaplaincy Training and Reflective Sessions and Group Meetings.
- Maintain guest and Acorn volunteer confidentiality at all times.
- Acorn Chaplaincy will provide Safeguarding and other training required for the role.

General

In most volunteering roles it is useful to have a trial period, so that you can assess whether the role suits you. For the Acorn Chaplaincy this is a period of three months followed by a review with a trustee. During this time, we encourage you to be open with the trustees of any concerns or difficulties you encounter.

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6. Training

Training will be provided either directly by Acorn Chaplaincy through induction and team meetings or by outside agencies. Depending on need, training can include the following:

- Acorn Chaplaincy policies and procedures
- Boundaries
- Listening Skills
- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Working with addictive behaviour/substance misuse awareness.
- Data Protection
- Equality and Diversity

S. Curson

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