LET'S FEED BRUM

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

**CHARITY NUMBER: 1178574**

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# THANK YOU

LET'S FEED BRUM

## Welcome to Let's Feed Brum

We're so glad you're here. Life can be hectic and we truly appreciate you taking the time to join us and make a difference for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Birmingham. Whether you volunteer every week or every now and then, we appreciate that you are all giving up your spare time to make a difference. Plus, we hope you'll make some fantastic friends along the way.

## Our Mission

Let's Feed Brum started in 2016 and we've grown a lot since then, **with over 100 volunteers** and amazing local restaurants now providing hot meals **seven days** a week.

We are a community-driven organisation that provides more than just food to Birmingham's homeless and vulnerable population. We build lasting connections, offer essential support, and empower individuals to access the services they need to rebuild their lives.

## Volunteering With Us

Let's Feed Brum is volunteer-run, so everyone you meet is also giving up their time to support Birmingham's homeless and vulnerable communities. This also means we could not do what we do without people like you. Volunteering opportunities are mostly with evening walkabouts and our breakfast clubs (see more detail about that below).

Although we always bring essential supplies to distribute, our main job is to offer friendship and support to the people we meet. By building trust, we can signpost people to the services that will help them change their circumstances.

## Everyone is Welcome!

Let's Feed Brum is an inclusive charity. We welcome people from all walks of life to join us. The diversity of our volunteers is what makes us strong and truly representative of our community.

If you have any accessibility needs, please discuss them with your Team Leader in confidence before you start. We're committed to making volunteering accessible and inclusive for everyone.

## Important Note

Although the majority of our walkabouts and breakfast clubs run without any incident, events can sometimes be unpredictable. While anyone over 18 can volunteer independently, for safety reasons, anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

# What volunteering looks like

Here's an outline of a typical volunteering session.

## Evening Walkabouts

**6:00 - 6:30 PM** Meet at the hub, prepare hot drinks and snacks, and load up the trollies. Often, a volunteer will collect hot food and other donations from a local restaurant.
**6:30 - 7:00 PM** We hit the streets! The Team Leader divides everyone into teams to cover different areas of the city centre. **Stick with your group at all times.**
**7:00 - 7:30 PM** We gather near the Cathedral to connect with people in need who have called our hotline.
**8:30 - 9:00 PM** Return to the hub, clean up, and put everything away.

Key Roles

- Serving: Handing out hot and cold food, drinks, and snacks. (two volunteers)
- Providing Essentials: Distributing essential items like sleeping bags, blankets, toiletries, and clothing. (two volunteers)
- Trolley Duty: Helping to transport supplies. (two volunteers)

## Tuesday & Thursday Breakfasts

**Tuesday 8:00 - 9:00 AM** Volunteers meet at the hub to load the food truck with hot water, snacks, drinks, and other supplies.
**Thursdays 7:30 - 9:00 AM** A team prepares sandwiches and other items before loading the truck.
**9:30 - 10:00 AM** We set up outside the Cathedral.
**10:00 - 11:45 AM** Breakfast service begins. Volunteers hand out food, drink and supplies. A walkabout team visits people around the city centre.
**11:45 AM - 12:00 PM** We clean up, pack away and return everything to the hub.

Key Roles

- Food Truck Crew: Loading the truck and ensuring it's clean.
- Hot Drink Station: Serving hot beverages (minimum of two volunteers).
- Clothing Station: Distributing clothing and managing queues (minimum of three volunteers).
- Snacks and Essentials: Providing snacks, toiletries, and books (maximum of six volunteers).
- Hot Food: Serving pre-prepared breakfast items (two to four volunteers).
- Walkabout Team: If we have extra volunteers and food, we might send a team to visit people who haven't made it to the Cathedral.

> “It is so heart-warming for us to watch our volunteers engage with the people we support. The friendships are so meaningful to all involved. Those who join our teams find the experience both uplifting and humbling, realising that giving even just a little time and care makes such a difference to those in need.”

Katherine Strang
Lets Feed Brum Trustee

# Things To Consider

## Signing Up

Email us at info@letsfeedbrum.com **and let us know the night or breakfast club you are interested in.** You'll then complete a quick registration form and join our mailing list. **The information you share remains confidential and it helps us keep our volunteers safe.** It also means that we can keep you updated but you can unsubscribe anytime. You can bring along a friend or family member but they will also have to complete a registration form before coming out.

## How Often Can I Volunteer?

To help us plan and ensure everyone has a role, simply let your Team Leader know in advance (ideally a day or two before) if you can join a session. There's no pressure to commit to a frequent schedule (we know life can be busy!) but we'd love to see you become a regular member of our team. Consistent volunteers help maintain a smooth operation and it helps the people we meet to see familiar faces.

## Your First Shift - We're Here For You!

On your first outing, you'll be paired with an experienced volunteer or Team Leader. They'll guide you through everything and answer any questions you have. We encourage you to participate as much (or as little) as you feel comfortable. Need advice? Check with your Team Leader first but we're all here to help with questions, from experienced volunteers through to the Board of Trustees. We are here for you! Don't hesitate to ask questions on the night or afterwards – we're a team after all.

## Staying Connected with WhatsApp

Once you become a regular volunteer, you can join our dedicated WhatsApp group for your chosen night. Each week, a Team Leader will " Shout Out" to find out who's available. Knowing numbers means they can create a plan for the evening and assign roles for a successful outing.

## What to Wear

Comfort and practicality are key! There's no uniform, but we recommend warm clothes in winter (coats, hoodies) and comfortable walking shoes - we go out in every weather. We'll provide a Let's Feed Brum lanyard to identify you for you to wear during your shift.

**We're a friendly bunch, passionate about making a real impact.**
**Ask questions, get involved in conversations, and be yourself!**

## Contact the Team Leader for any night you'd like to volunteer

**MONDAY EVENING**
**JOE**
**07835 759 378**

**TUESDAY EVENING**
**BRANDON**
**07975 729 014**

**WEDNESDAY EVENING**
**KATIE**
**07703 803 702**

**THURSDAY EVENING**
**ANNIE - 07852 587 436**
**KEN - 07484 118 689**

**FRIDAY EVENING**
**KENDRA - 07475 176 543**

**SATURDAY EVENING**
**AIDEN - 07933 890 600**
**SURURA - 07732 210 072**

**SUNDAY EVENING**
**BRANDON**
**07975 729 014**

**TUESDAY & THURSDAY BREAKFAST**
**KATHERINE**
**07736 145 845**

# Your role in making a difference

## Building Strong Connections

One of the most important things we do is simply be there for people. Chatting, listening to stories, and offering a friendly face are all crucial parts of our work. Don't worry if you're new! Every volunteer plays a valuable role in building trust and connections. If you're unsure how to approach someone, follow the lead of more experienced members of the team.

## Teamwork Makes the Dreamwork

Collaborate with your fellow volunteers to make each service a success. We expect all of our volunteers to treat each other and those we serve with kindness and respect. If you're unsure about anything or need assistance, don't hesitate to ask a Team Leader.

## Taking Photos

Also, be mindful of privacy when taking photos or video while volunteering. Do not take any photographs of the people we serve, they are going through complex situations and even asking them for permission can put them in a difficult position. Ask permission before taking photographs with fellow volunteers also. Remember, not everyone wants their picture shared on social media, so check before posting - and if you do, don't forget to tag Let's Feed Brum! Team Leaders can provide guidance on appropriate photo-taking during media events.

## Respecting Privacy

Let's Feed Brum is a source of trust for the people we support. They sometimes share personal information that cannot be posted or shared publicly. Respect the privacy of those you encounter.
We take data protection seriously. If you ever want to unsubscribe from our mailing list, remove your data, or see our Data Protection Policy, just email info@letsfeedbrum.com.

## Your Safety Matters

Our priority is your safety. We have a zero-tolerance policy for volunteers receiving abuse from anyone. If you ever feel uncomfortable, please report any concerns to a Team Leader. They'll help you step away or move to another role.
We have a Health and Safety Policy in place to keep you safe. While some risks are unavoidable with street-based work, we have processes in place to minimise them. We also have various insurance policies to cover our activities.

## Volunteer Welfare

We're here to support you! We understand feeling a bit nervous when starting something new. But don't worry, we'll be there every step of the way to offer support and answer any questions you might have. Each session has an experienced and passionate Team Leader who will greet you warmly. They'll introduce you to other volunteers and explain how everything works, including the key roles involved. Don't hesitate to ask questions – we're always happy to help.

**Although volunteering is rewarding and often a lot of fun, some of the challenging circumstances of the people we support** can be a lot to deal with week after week, so if you are finding it tough, take a week off and speak to your Team Leader**, they'll understand and are there to support you.**

## Mind Your Items

You are responsible for your own belongings, so take care of anything you have with you while volunteering. Bags can be left at the hub when volunteering but they are left entirely at your own risk.

## Keeping Our Hub Clean and Stocked

Our hub is where we prepare for each service. We all share the responsibility of keeping it clean and tidy. Since it's kindly loaned to us by another organisation, we need to be respectful and follow their rules. The kitchen facilities are shared, so please keep areas clean and put away LFB items after use.

We restock the hub every week with donations from our amazing supporters. We also purchase additional supplies to ensure we have everything we need. Check expiration dates and use supplies due to expire most recently first. Inform a Team Leader if anything needs to be thrown away or runs low. Tea and coffee are available for volunteers before and after service, but please avoid using the hub for personal food or drinks.

## Expense Claim Proceedure

Our amazing volunteers donate their time generously. We don't offer payment for volunteering services. However, we do reimburse pre-approved out-of-pocket expenses you might incur while volunteering. Need to grab some extra milk for hot drinks? No problem! Here's how to get reimbursed for small expenses you may incur while volunteering:

**Before you buy**

- Get the green light. Check with your Team Leader first to make sure the purchase is needed. Think practical – buy only what we need.
- Always grab a receipt. We can't reimburse you without it.

**Claiming your expenses**

- Time-sensitive: Submit your claim before the end of the month.
- Send an email with "Volunteer Expenses" in the subject line to info@letsfeedbrum.com. Confirm the Team Leader who approved the expense. Include your bank details and attach a digital copy of your receipt.
- We typically pay reimbursements directly into your bank account. Let us know if this isn't possible for you and we can make other arrangements.

**Travel expenses**

- Let’s Feed Brum can’t reimburse expenses for travel to and from volunteering.
- LFB can't reimburse any related costs or damages to your vehicle if you use it to travel to volunteer.
- Special cases: If travel is essential for specific LFB activities, reimbursement needs to be discussed beforehand and have Trustee approval.

> “Volunteering with Let’s Feed Brum has been an honour and a privilege. I have learnt new skills, expanded networks, and most importantly the act of giving is great for mental and physical wellbeing. Volunteering enriches the community. We provide a lifeline of support through food and other supplies, and most importantly humanity, being there as a friend and a listening ear; by lifting others we elevate ourselves.”

Brandon Doherty
Lets Feed Brum Ambassador &
Team Leader

## Medical Emergencies

- Call emergency services in medical emergencies.
- Provide space and check breathing for those needing medical attention.
- If you are first-aid trained, alert your Team Leader and provide assistance, if you feel comfortable.
- If a volunteer needs medical aid, alert your Team Leader immediately.
- Explain the situation clearly when calling for an ambulance. Be clear about your location. **Someone will have to remain with the person needing attention. Discuss this with your Team Leader and agree on a plan.**

## Emergency Contacts

Volunteer emergency contact details are collected during registration. Team Leaders will contact a Trustee if needed. Each Let's Feed Brum WhatsApp group has a Trustee included.

## Managing Challenging Situations

We have experienced Team Leaders on every outing and breakfast session to ensure things run smoothly. If you encounter any difficulties, please reach out to your Team Leader. They are trained to handle most situations.

## Know When to Seek Help

If someone is in distress, let your Team Leader know. We rely on Street Link, a service that sends alerts to outreach teams, to assist people in need. In emergencies, we always call 999.

## Team Leader Roles

Team Leaders play a vital role in managing our operations. **Alongside running the night, they coordinate with other Team Leaders, the Board of Trustees, food donors and volunteers for their night.** Interested in taking on more responsibility? If you'd like to become a Team Leader, let us know by emailing info@letsfeedbrum.com.

## Stay Connected

Respond promptly to your Team Leader's weekly "Shout Out" if you're able to join us. And if something comes up that means you have to drop out last minute, just let us know. That will ensure we have enough volunteers for each service.

# Let’s Talk

## Unsure or Uncomfortable?

No worries! We’re here to listen. If you have a question or feel unsure about anything you’ve experienced, reach out to your Team Leader. We're a supportive team, and we're here to help! If you’d prefer to speak to someone else at LFB, email info@letsfeedbrum.com. These emails are read by the Board of Trustees, and we'll address your concern promptly.

## Respectful Assistance

We're here for anyone who needs or wants a helping hand. We don't pry into personal details, but we do ensure everyone gets a fair share of food and supplies.

## Share the Warmth

Volunteers, feel free to grab a hot drink or some food during your shift. We understand everyone has different situations, so don't hesitate to ask. Just be mindful that we want everyone to benefit.

## Handing Out Cash

Let's Feed Brum provides food and supplies, not cash. If you'd like to give your own money directly, that's your personal choice **but we ask that you not do so while in your role as a volunteer.**

## Cash Donations

For donations on the night, encourage people to use our website or pass on cash to a Team Leader for supplies.

## Wrapping Up Your Time With Let's Feed Brum

We understand volunteering commitments vary. Whether it's a day or years, we appreciate your time! No need for a formal goodbye, but a quick heads-up to a volunteer or Team Leader is helpful. You're always welcome back!

## Your Feedback Matters

We're dedicated to making your volunteer experience positive and valuable. We encourage everyone to provide feedback on our policies and procedures and to share questions, concerns, or ideas, anytime!

Confidentiality: If you have a sensitive concern, discuss it with your Team Leader or email the Trustees at info@letsfeedbrum.com - let them know you'd like the matter to remain confidential.

## Let’s Feed Brum Together!

If you are interested in getting more involved, we'd love to hear from you! Email us at info@letsfeedbrum.com with your ideas. While we can't always guarantee immediate roles (we're volunteer-run!), we're always open to fresh perspectives.

# Signposting Services

We'll provide a Let's Feed Brum lanyard with helpful contact information for you to wear during your shift. However, if you do see someone in need of assistance, alert your Team Leader. Here are some of the services we regularly point people to.

## Let’s Feed Brum Friendship Chatline: 0800 0016 847

Open every day, our chatline provides a lifeline to those who are feeling lonely and need support.
**We answer as many calls as we can but we also respond to any voicemails that are left.**

## Street Link

Our first port of call to provide help for anyone with nowhere to sleep is to contact Street Link. This will send an automated alert to the rough sleeper outreach team, who respond to all alerts.

## Trident Reach

Accommodation throughout Birmingham and through the rough sleeper outreach team.

## St Basils

Accommodation and rough sleeper outreach for young people aged 16 to 25 years old, as well as engagement and employment services.

## Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid

Services to help women who are rough sleeping because of domestic abuse.

## Cranstoun

Holistic housing support services for men and women who are rough sleeping. This includes:

- Domestic abuse support
- Harm reduction and staying safe support
- Help with budgets and debt
- Help with benefits
- Support with independent living
- Housing settlement planning

## SIFA Fireside

Holistic support services for rough sleepers. Services include practical support, such as access to:

- Breakfast
- Showers
- Laundry and emergency accommodation
- Tenancy support
- Legal advice
- Debt and welfare benefits help
- Employment support
- Referrals to specialist support agencies for those who cannot access public funds.
- Specialist pathway for victims of modern-day slavery.

# THANK YOU

LET'S FEED BRUM

## Our City, Our People

Whether you are just about to start volunteering or have been with us for a while, we want to express our sincere gratitude for your incredible dedication and hard work. Your commitment to helping those in need makes a real difference in our community.

Every meal served, every blanket shared, and every friendly smile offered has warmed hearts. Your compassion and kindness have uplifted spirits and brought hope to those who need it most**. We can't change everything for the people we support in an instant, but we can be there for them during difficult times.**

We couldn't do what we do without your generous spirit and willing hands. Thank you for being a part of our team and making a positive impact on the lives of others.

Together, we're making a difference.

With heartfelt thanks,

The Let's Feed Brum Team
info@letsfeedbrum.com