



Volunteer Handbook

**Keep this handbook to hand to refer to as and
when needed or if you are unsure about
something.**

**If you are ever in doubt, don't hesitate to
contact the Duty team during office hours or
the On Call worker at anytime outside of
office hours.**

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Welcome to Gloucestershire Nightstop

Welcome to hosting with Gloucestershire Nightstop. We are delighted that you have chosen to volunteer your time and open your home to the young people of Gloucestershire who would otherwise be homeless. Our volunteers' time and compassion are essential to delivering our services and working towards eliminating Youth Homelessness throughout Gloucestershire. We depend on volunteers Drivers and Hosts like you to ensure young people have transport to Host Households and when there, have access to welcoming safe spaces where they can enjoy a warm meal, can access washroom and laundry facilities, and have a good night's sleep.

This handbook is a useful reference tool, so please take the time to read it and refer to it when you need to. It provides background information, details of the roles and responsibilities of our volunteers, and a summary of our relevant policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are in place to ensure we deliver a safe service, protecting our clients and volunteers by limiting risks, and responding to incidents in a robust and consistent manner. The full policies are available through the volunteer portal on our website or you can request a copy through the Volunteer Manager.

Gloucestershire Nightstop



Gloucestershire Nightstop is a voluntary organisation working on behalf of homeless young people throughout Gloucestershire. We were established in 2003 and aim to eliminate Youth Homelessness by promoting and supporting the provision of emergency accommodation in the homes of volunteers (Safe Nights) and advancing the education amongst the public in matters concerning the experiences and needs of young homeless people.

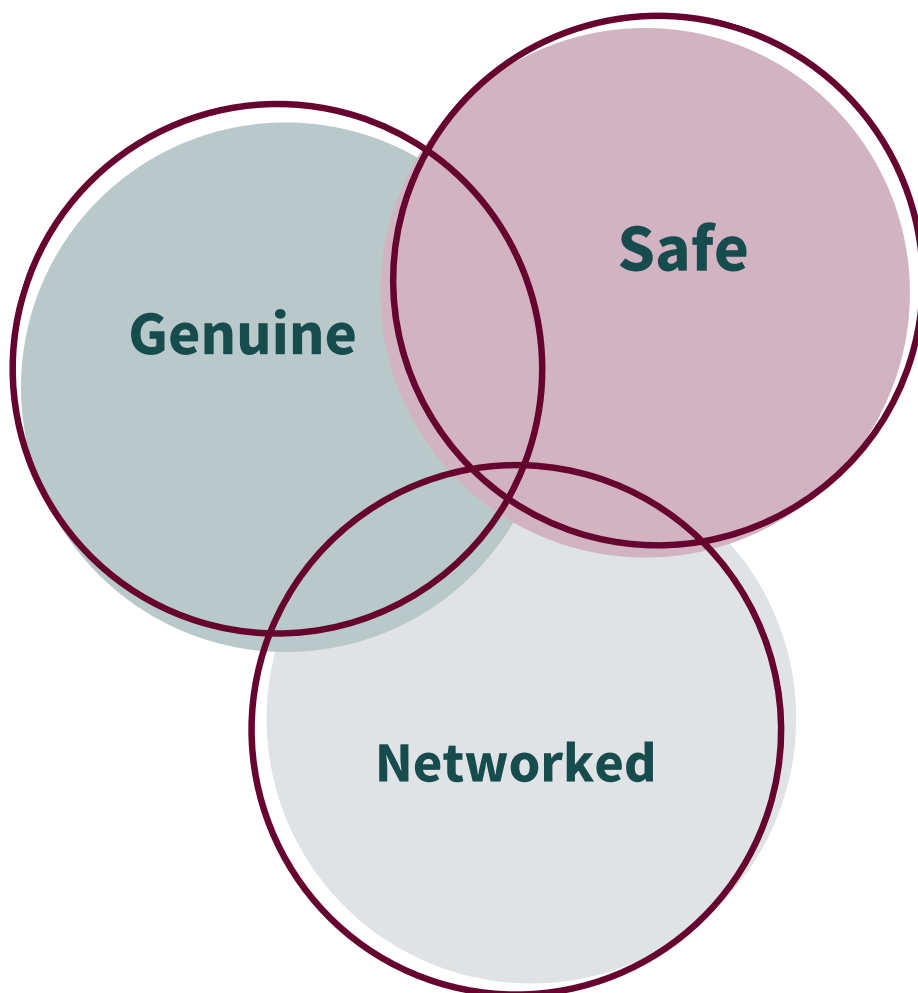
We work directly with individual young homeless people aged 16 – 25 across Gloucestershire, arranging temporary accommodation for young people in the homes of vetted and trained volunteers. In addition, we provide support with finding long-term accommodation during their time with Nightstop, and ongoing support following their move-on from Nightstop.

Gloucestershire Nightstop is part of Depaul UK's nationwide network of 30 Nightstops covering approximately 40% of the UK from Edinburgh to Guernsey. In 2019, the network provided 9,103 Safe Nights in the homes of 937 Volunteer Hosts. This affiliation means we have the freedom of a local charity to tailor the support to meet the needs of local young people and volunteers, whilst meeting the high standards required of Nightstop UK and accessing support from them.

Volunteering Values

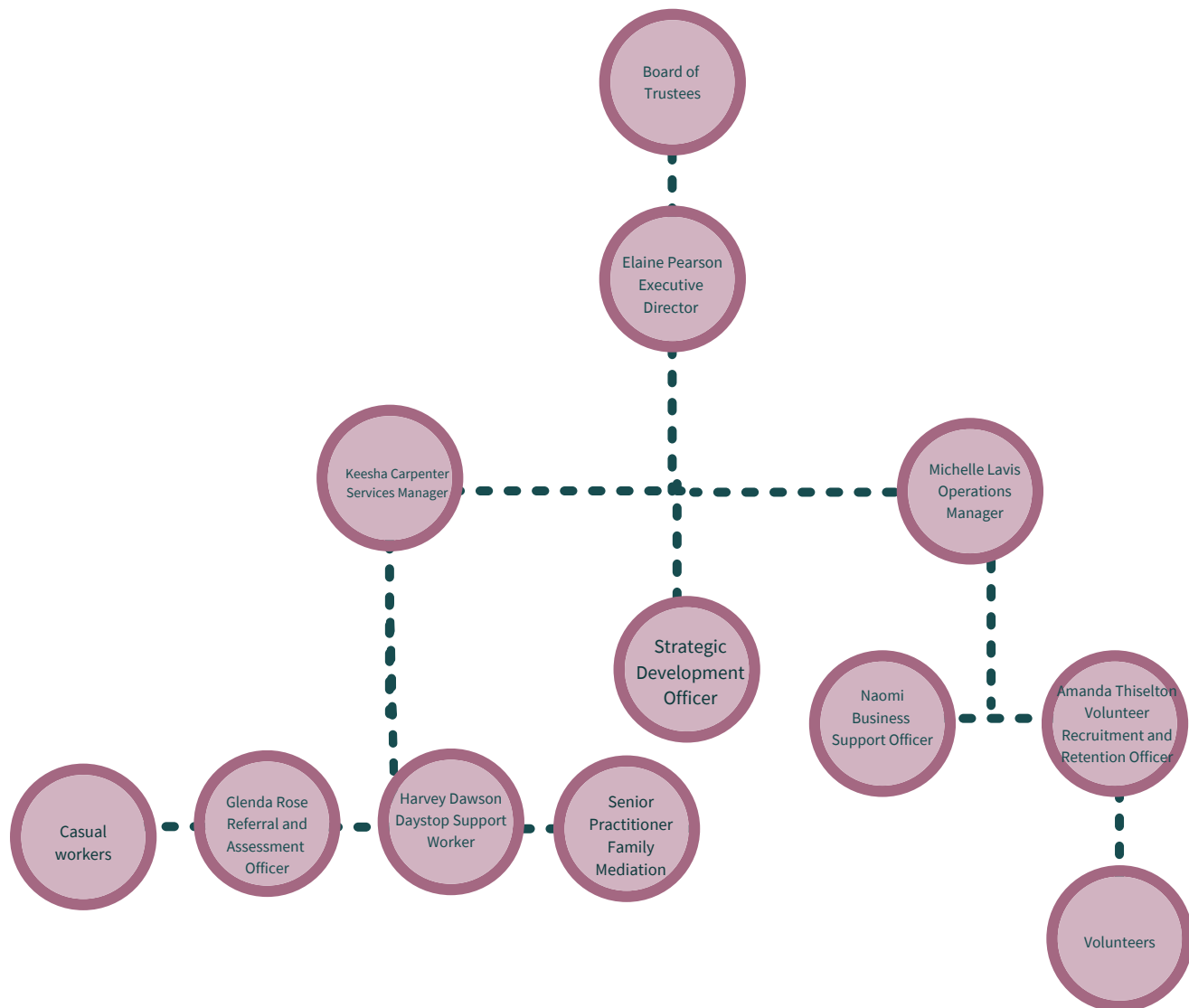
Genuine – We provide a genuine, transparent service operating with integrity, honesty, and understanding.

Safe – We seek to continually assess and mitigate risk to both our clients and volunteers to deliver ‘Safe Nights’ and eliminate rough sleeping for young people across Gloucestershire.



Networked – GNS forges and cultivates strategic partnerships to ensure we maximise our reach by raising awareness with key referral partners. In addition, we work closely with organisations with overlapping priorities to collaborate and develop innovative solutions to homelessness.

Staff Structure



Role	Staff member	Phone	Email
Executive Director	Elaine Pearson	07392992056	manager@glosns.uk
Operations Manager	Michelle Lavis	07972323940	admin@glosns.uk
Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Officer	Amanda Thiselton	07989320368	volunteering@glosns.uk
Services Manager	Keesha Carpenter	07975843896	advice@glosns.uk
Referral and Assessment Officer	Glenda Rose	07570873729	dutyandsupport@glosns.uk
Daystop Support Worker	Harvey Dawson	07340254381	daystop@glosns.uk

On Call- Emergencies

The thorough vetting and assessment process is in place before any discussions and arrangements for placements are made, Whilst we do everything we can to avoid any risk there maybe occasions when you need to access support outside of office hours for an emergency. This support is available 24 hours a day either through the Duty Worker in the day or the On Call worker on evenings/nights/weekends/bank holidays.

On Call Number

01452 541957

5pm-9am and all weekends and
bank holidays

If in doubt- please CALL

Things you should definitely call On Call about;

- No shows/late arrival
- Young person under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Abusive behaviour/threats/violence- Only after calling 999 if needed.
- Bringing guests
- Mental Health needs
- Physical Illness
- If you feel uncomfortable with a request
- Questions or being unsure about something

Nightstop Rules

No drugs or alcohol are to be taken or consumed whilst on Nightstop (including the daytime).

No illegal goods, substances or weapons are to be taken into hosts' homes.

You are not allowed to have your friends visit you at the hosts' homes.

The location of each house you stay at must not be given out to anyone to keep these homes 'safe' houses.

You may not return to a host's home at any time after a Nightstop unless you have been placed there officially by a Nightstop worker.

You must follow each individual host's house rules, for example, on smoking and times to be in at night.

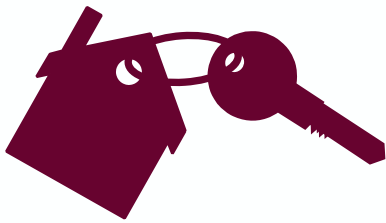
You must do your best to be a good house guest and treat the hosts and their homes with respect.

You agree to work with the staff at Gloucestershire Nightstop toward moving on into settled accommodation.

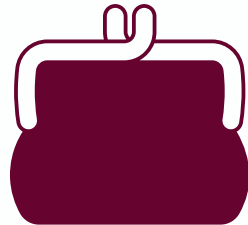
Don't forget to include your own house rules- Speak to the Volunteer Engagement Officer who can get a template printed for the young person's room if you would like.

Staying Safe

We expect all of our young people to respect your home and incidents are extremely rare within all Nightstop services across the country, but there are things you can do as hosts to reduce the risk and not put temptation in front of young people in a stressful, vulnerable time where they may be more likely to make a bad decision if faced with an opportunity.



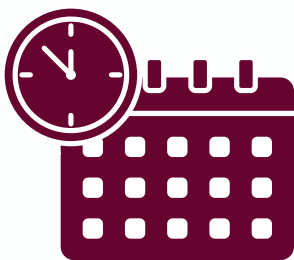
Don't leave house and car keys out on the side where they can be picked up easily



Put money and valuables away out of sight



Keep alcohol stored away safely



Keep family calendars out of sight so it's not visible when you plan to be away from home



Put away phones and devices securely

Lock medication away



Dos and Don'ts for Emergency Hosts

Be welcoming and Friendly



Maintain boundaries

Call the On Call worker or office if you are unsure or have a question

Be open minded

Treat everyone respectfully and equally

If you can, offer a lift/drop off to the bus stop and pick up from bus stop as arranged with Duty team

Allow Young People to be dropped off at your home by their friends or family members



Promise to keep secrets

Let someone stay if you suspect they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Exchange contact details

Judge

Agree to follow up nights/placements without speaking with the duty team first

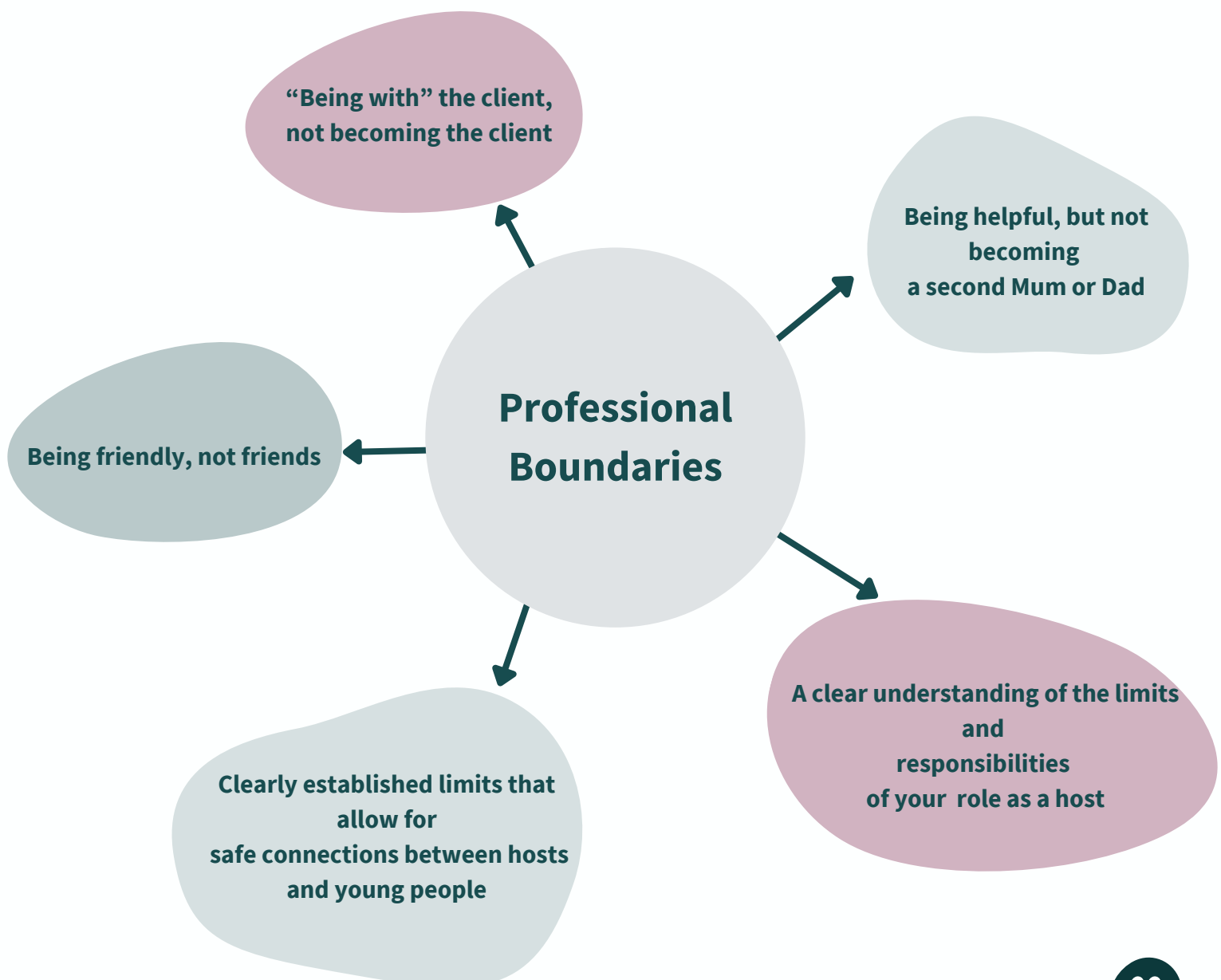
Give anyone medication including paracetamol

Allow anyone to bring guests to your home

Boundaries with Young People

Why is it important to have boundaries?

- **Maintaining one's physical and emotional safety**
- **Maintaining a healthy, open, communicating and functioning team (volunteers + paid staff)**



Safeguarding Concerns



Report ANY concerns to Nightstop staff

Be supportive but not inquisitive

No concern is too small- if in doubt contact staff



Ensure not to ask questions, or share your own experience, or give advice

Do not promise to keep secrets

Do not try to fix any problems



Types of Concerns to look out for

Neglect

Physical

Emotional/Psychological

Sexual

County Lines

Domestic abuse

Financial

Modern slavery

Organisational/ Institutional Abuse

Volunteer Portal

The Volunteer Portal is found on
www.gloucestershirenightstop.org.uk

This button will show as Login/Register

We will send you a log in details and a temporary password that
you will be prompted to change.



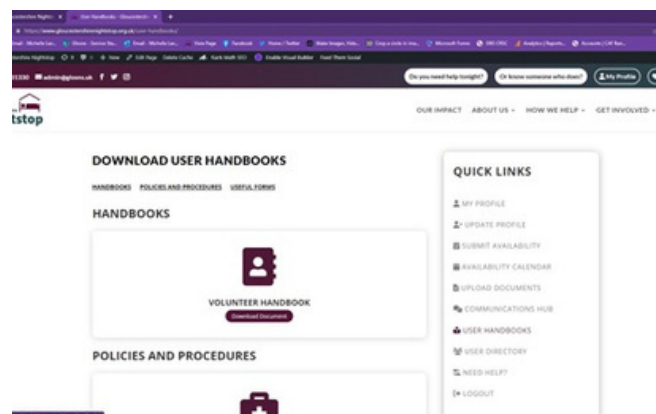
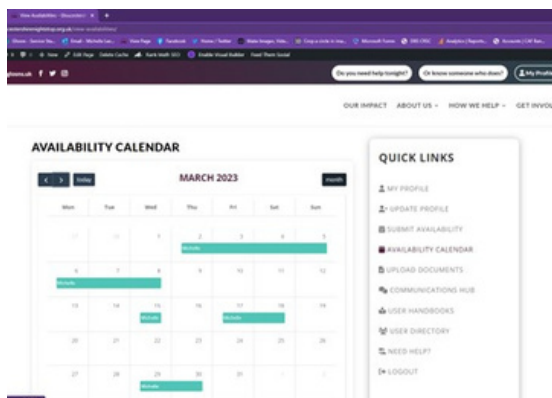
Availability Calendar

**This is the view you will have to view your
availability**

To change or delete a date hover over the date and
select "View/Edit Entry"

A new screen will open and you can select "delete"

You can edit, delete and add to your availability
throughout the month without informing staff
We will only contact you to host/volunteer on days
you have opted in to volunteer, on the portal



Quick Links

Your Profile- To View your Profile

Update Profile- Customise with pics and a bio

Submit Availability- Tell us when you can volunteer

Availability Calendar- View the dates you have given us

Upload Docs- If asked to provide us pics/copies of documents

Communication Hub- A forum to chat with other volunteers

User Handbooks- Policies and procedures, volunteer handbooks and
forms you may need

Need Help- Video How to guides

Log Out- To leave the portal

Support for Hosts

There are various aspects of support provided to hosts from the Gloucestershire Nightstop Team.

The duty team will;

- Check in with you at the start and end of placements
- Double check your availability
- Make sure you aren't over committing and give you breaks following long periods of placements, if needed
- Offer advice and guidance
- Challenge or address behaviour of young people if needed

When you first start hosting the Volunteer Engagement Officer will check in with you more regularly, review how things are going and have a supervision session with you shortly after your first few nights hosting.

Ongoing support includes;

- Annual supervision- More regular if you host very regularly
- Open door policy, if you would like to talk about anything we are hear to listen.
- Refresher Core and Safeguarding Training required every 2 years
- Additional training arranged on an adhoc basis or as required, in specialist areas relating to the needs of young people made available to all volunteers
- Our Advice and Support team provide "Info Sessions" on various topics
- E-learning system with training available in various areas.
- Expenses paid for each night hosting- £15/week nights and £20/weekend nights. Claims can be made monthly or more regular if needed.
- Volunteer Portal to update your availability, make expense claims and update your information easily and quickly
- Regular feedback is gathered about how our service works and we use this information to feed into our strategy and day to day operations.
- Social events throughout the year to come together informally with staff and other volunteers
- 24 On-Call service- You are never on your own, If in doubt, Please CALL.

Duty and Advice & Support

Once you have submitted your availability for the month, the duty worker will be aware of what days you are available to host.

We will always give you a ring or a message on the day you are available to see if that is still the case. This will always be in the AM so we know what availability we have for placements.

If there is a particular time or method you would like us to contact you to confirm if you can host, please let the duty worker know when they speak with you or send us an email.

We will accept referrals after 3pm, but depending on the information we need to gather we may not always be able to place that same day.

We will always try to confirm if you are needed to host and there is a young person to be placed with you by 3.30pm, but sometimes referrals come in later or there are last minute changes.

If it is a young person's first night with you, we will always ensure the young person is dropped off by a member of staff or one of our volunteer drivers.

We don't expect hosts to be able to drop or pick up, but if you are in a position to feel you may on occasion be able to pick or drop a young person off (especially in areas with limited public transport options) please let us know and we can let you know about our driver training.

How does Nightstop emergency hosting work?

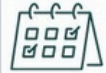
so you are interested in becoming a host, but not sure what it entails.

this step by step will explain how emergency hosting works.

01 AVAILABILITY

You add what days you are available for the month on to our online portal. If you need to change any days you can do this via the portal.

Our duty worker will contact you the days you have said you are available to see if that is still the case.



02



THE REFERRAL

The Nightstop duty worker receives a referral for a young person who is homeless and meets our criteria.

- Aged 16-25
- In Gloucestershire
- A low risk to themselves and others

03 THE ASSESSMENT

The duty worker that day will undertake a risk assessment with the young person to ensure they are not too high risk to stay with a host.

We also speak with 2 references for the young person and do a probation check.



04



ARRANGING THE PLACEMENT

The duty worker will call to see if you are available to host this evening and will give you a bit of information about the young person we need to place and their circumstances.

We will confirm a time that is suitable with you for the young person to arrive.

One of our volunteer drivers or a member of staff will bring the young person to you for their first night on Nightstop, do introductions and ensure they have settled okay.

05 NIGHTSTOP

The young person will have dinner with you (if they want to) and then stay with you for the evening. Staff will check in with you and the young person during the evening to make sure everything is okay.

You are not alone and will be able to contact Staff 24/7 should you have any questions or concerns.



06



POST SAFE NIGHT

Staff will check in with you in the morning to see how the placement went.

If you have said you were available to host the following night, we will check if this is still the case and if you are happy to host the same young person if they need Nightstop again.

Referral Process

We receive referrals from many other organisations across the county, including;

- Local Authority housing option teams (all districts)
- P3
- Young Gloucestershire
- Youth Support Team
- Social Services
- Schools and Colleges
- and many more.

We are now accepting self referrals but only as a last resort for young people who may not have anyone else to refer them in or do not have duty from the local authority. We still ask for all the same information during the referral and will not place without references or a probation check.

We will undertake a risk assessment to see if the young person is suitable to be placed in a hosts home.

Firstly, we will read the information provided on the referral, if this is limited we will ask the referrer to provide more information in order to help complete the risk assessment.

We will then do a probation check in Gloucestershire (or somewhere else if the young person has not been in the area for a significant amount of time.)

Speak with the referees provided to clarify or get further information relating to the referral form and to see if the reference has any concerns about a young person staying with a host.

Risk assessments

Based on the information provided on the referral and from the references, we will start the risk assessment. When completing the risk assessment we look at;

- Aggressive or violent behaviour
- Criminal activity
- Committed sexual offences
- Sexual offences committed against the potential guest
- History of allegations against or made by the potential guest
- Risk of exploitation or abuse
- Susceptibility to mental health/behavioural disorders
- History of self harm or suicidal attempts
- History of long term illnesses or current illnesses
- Allergies and medication
- Use of drugs and or alcohol
- History of drug or alcohol use, including overdoses
- History of arson
- Special requirements in relation to language, religion, culture, race, gender or sexuality

If we deem a young person too high risk or feel a placement will exacerbate any of the above, we will not accept them for a placement.

We will not accept any young people with a history of arson or sexual offences.

We will always speak with or meet the young person before confirming they have been accepted. All young people will meet with us in person at the office to undertake their induction.

What happens after a young person has been placed.

Once a young person has been placed on Nightstop, we will support them until something less temporary or permanent accommodation becomes available.

This could be:

- 🏠 Supported accommodation
- 🏠 Intensive Housing management projects
 - 🏠 Private rented
 - 🏠 House shares
- 🏠 Supported Lodgings

We want to be person centred and ensure we are working with the young person on what they think would be suitable for them and work towards that. This doesn't mean waiting for the perfect end goal, but making sure the young person is happy and comfortable with the move on option. By doing this, we are hoping to prevent repeated homelessness and the young person needing nightstop again in the future.

There are many barriers and factors that can prevent a young person moving on quickly, meaning it may be that you host the same young person again, if you are happy to.

We hold an information session twice a year on housing, support and move on for young people, which will cover this in more detail. If you are interested in the session or want some more information, please contact our advice worker at advice@glosns.uk

Comments, Compliments and Complaints

We encourage feedback about all aspects of our service to help us do more of what we do well, improve where we need to and prevent mistakes repeating

Comments and compliments can be provided verbally to any member of staff, in writing by email or post at the details below.

Please do let us know if we can use compliments or comments for marketing purposes either anonymously or with permission to use your name as your experiences really help us to recruit more volunteers so we can support more young people.

Complaints- Where possible we will always try to resolve any issue informally. Please contact the Volunteer Engagement Officer to discuss any concerns you have. If you are not happy with the outcome at this point you are welcome to make a formal complaint, in writing addressed to the Executive Director either by email or by post at the details below.

The complaint will be investigated and a formal outcome notified in writing, If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, there is a 28 day period to escalate to formal stage 2 where the board of Trustees will investigate and provide a formal outcome which is considered final.

At that point an escalation to the Charities Commission as our Ombudsman would be required in order to escalate any further complaint.

Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Officer:

07989 320368/ volunteering@glosns.uk

Executive Officer:

manager@glosns.uk

Chair of Trustees:

Pat Le Rolland
chair@glosns.uk



13 Ladybellegate Street,
Gloucester,
GL1 2HN
01452 331330

Other Ways to Get Involved

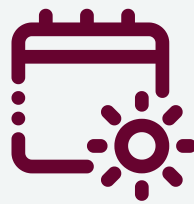


Longstop-Long-term hosting with a young person on tenancy providing life skills and experiences

Driving- Providing safe transport to and from host's homes and supporting young people to stay connected with work and education



Daystop- Providing a safe space during the day for young people on Nightstop at home

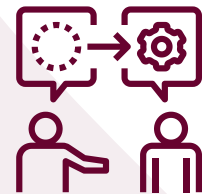


Daystop Skills- Providing training or sharing your skills with young people in a group or 1:1 setting at our Daystop Service

Attending training as an experienced host



Skill Sharing- Do you have any skills or experiences that could help the office? IT, HR for example,



Fundraising- Sponsored events, organising events, linking us up with businesses/schools/groups who could fund raise/collect donations etc

Give us feedback, The Good, The Bad and The Ugly so we can do more of the good stuff and work on anything we need to.



Tell friends and share our posts on social media!

Current Volunteer Feedback



How do you find your experience being a host with Nightstop?

“*'My experience as a host is good. I am well supported by the team and I know the checks are thorough and risks are made minimal due to ensure mine and my daughter's safety. I like that you try to match hosts to guests that would best suit their life styles. Also that I'm under no pressure to host and can have breaks when needed, plus no guilt for when I'm not available to host.'*”

What has made you stay, and continue to give your time and support?

“*'We have the space, we are able to do it and help out. It doesn't tie us in anyway, we can always so no. That is something which is important to us, so we feel that we are in control of things.'*”

'I've stayed due to the flexibility the scheme provides, allowing me to host as much or as little as I like. Also it means my spare room isn't sat empty.'”

Data Protection & Privacy



Data Protection & Privacy





Gloucestershire Nightstop
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Volunteering@glosns.uk