



The
**Bristol Soup
Run Trust**

Volunteer pack



**“HAIL, RAIN *or* SHINE,
WE SHALL BE OUT TONIGHT”**



Volunteer Information Pack

Welcome to the Bristol Soup Run Trust!

Thank you for your interest in supporting our work. We are thrilled to have you join us in making a positive impact in the community. This pack contains all the information you need to get started as a volunteer with us.

Our Mission

At the Bristol Soup Run Trust, our mission is to provide daily support every night to those experiencing homelessness in central Bristol. We offer hot soup, sandwiches, and hot drinks every day of the year, along with essential items such as sleeping bags, socks, gloves, and toiletries. We also provide warmth through friendly conversation and help guide our guests to additional services that can further assist them.

None of this would be possible without the commitment of volunteers like you and the generosity of our supporters.

What's Inside

This information pack contains everything you need to know about volunteering with us, including:

- About Us
- How We Operate
- Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities
- Health and Safety Best Practices and Safeguarding Guidelines
- How to Get Involved
- Contact Us

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at: admin@bristolsoupruntrust.org.uk

We're thrilled to have you consider joining us in making a positive impact!

About Us

Founded in 1986, The Bristol Soup Run Trust has been dedicated to supporting those in need every day, rain or shine, on the streets of Bristol.

As an outreach organization without a fixed location, we operate directly from the boots of our cars, serving at two designated locations each night outside Central Church and St. Mary Redcliffe Church in Bristol.

The Trust is governed by a dedicated group of trustees, all of whom are active soup runners. The only paid staff member is the volunteer coordinator. We have 22 teams, each led by a team leader, with an average of 6 to 12 volunteers per team. While teams typically go out once a month, some may go out weekly, depending on the need.

We are a non-judgmental, diverse, and inclusive organization. We welcome everyone, regardless of background or experience, and make efforts to accommodate your needs as a volunteer. Our work relies entirely on the generosity of donations and the commitment of volunteers, enabling us to provide essential support to individuals experiencing homelessness in our community.

How We Operate

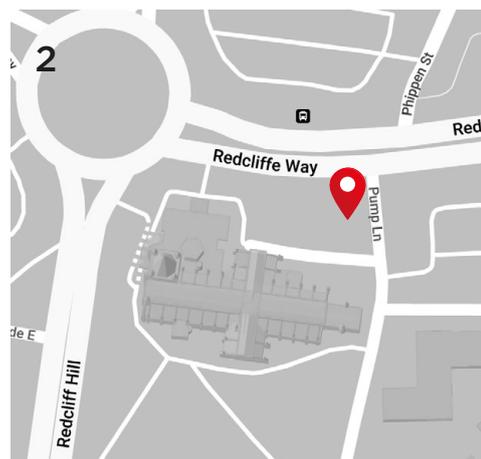
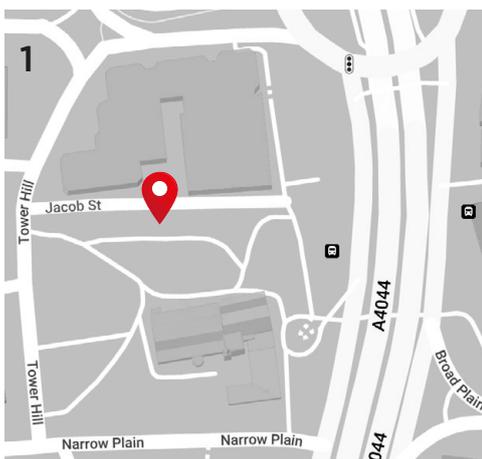
Our teams prepare for the soup run in various ways. Some teams are split into two groups: one prepares soup, hot drinks, and sandwiches, which are then collected by the team leader and distributed during the run. Other teams prepare everything together at a central location, while some handle preparation at home, with tasks shared among team members. Please coordinate with your team leader to confirm the tasks you are able to assist with. You will likely be involved in some aspect of the preparation process, whether it's making food, organizing items, or helping with distribution.

Soup Run Schedule:

Start Time: 9:15 p.m.
at the wall of Central Church
on Tower Hill

Second Stop: 9:45 p.m.
at the wall of St. Mary
Redcliffe Church on
Pump Lane

End time:
10.15pm



Storage & Stock:

The Bristol Soup Run Trust has a storage room in St. Jude's, managed by the Volunteer Coordinator, which holds essential items such as:

- Brown paper bags, cups, sandwich wedges, and flasks
- Toiletries: roll-on deodorant, shower gel, toothpaste, toothbrushes
- Clothing: hats, gloves, male underwear, socks
- Other items: wet wipes, tissues, sleeping bags

Team leaders will be assigned fobs to allow access to this room.

Important Notes:

- This is not a traditional soup kitchen. Our focus is on delivering sandwiches, hot drinks, and essential items directly to those in need on the streets of central Bristol.
- We welcome anyone in need, and no questions are asked. While many people we serve may be experiencing street homelessness, others may face financial hardship, be seeking companionship, or require guidance.
- Our goal is to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where individuals can access food, essential supplies, or simply enjoy a listening ear. We don't provide direct advice, but we are committed to signposting individuals to services that can help them achieve a more stable life.
- Detailed information about available services in Bristol can be found in The Caring Handbook, which is stored in our storage room. Volunteers who need a copy of this handbook should contact their team leader or the volunteer coordinator.
- While we advocate for long-term solutions in areas like housing, cost of living, and social justice, our focus is on offering immediate support to individuals facing hunger and cold. We aim to alleviate their struggles through empathy, solidarity, and practical assistance.

Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

The team leader is in charge of managing the volunteer team, assigning tasks based on each volunteer's skills. If a team leader isn't a driver, they may need help collecting essential items like toiletries, sleeping bags, gloves, socks, and sandwich packs.

The team leader organizes tasks, such as picking up sandwiches and wraps from partner shops and ensures there's coverage when they're unavailable. They stay in regular contact with the volunteer coordinator via email or Slack to report on supplies, provide feedback, and request additional volunteers when needed.

After each run, team leaders update the "Numbers" Slack channel with how many people were served and any special requests (e.g., a guest needing a sleeping bag) to help future teams.

Team leaders also monitor stock levels in the "Storage Room" Slack channel and are notified of any updates, including when the volunteer coordinator is unavailable (e.g., on holiday).

The "General" Slack channel is open to everyone in the organization, including trustees and volunteers, for broader communication and updates. Lastly, the team leader is responsible for ensuring their team's safety during the run. They should assess any training needs and work with the volunteer coordinator to arrange necessary training, such as First Aid or other relevant courses.

Volunteer roles are based on what each individual can commit to, as agreed with the volunteer coordinator or team leader, and also on the needs of each team. Volunteers help with preparing and distributing coffee, tea, soup, and sandwiches, and assist with distribution on the day. Some volunteers may also help collect surplus items from local shops that collaborate with us. We aim to serve at least 60 people, but during busy times, this number can rise to 80 per night.

Volunteers are typically asked to participate once every four weeks. Currently, only one team goes out every week on a Tuesday. Unless specifically asked to join this weekly team, you will be part of the 1 day every four weeks rotation.

Communications

While volunteering with us, you will be invited to join a WhatsApp group by your team leader. If you've agreed to it on your volunteer form, the volunteer coordinator will also add you to our Slack workspace. Slack is where we share important information related to the organization, volunteers, or the community we support. We also have an emergency cover WhatsApp group for situations when a team is short on volunteers. We do our best to run the Soup Run every day of the year, so all your efforts are truly appreciated and make a big difference to those who need it.

We also have a Facebook and Instagram page – please give us a follow!

Expenses

We provide flasks for each team, which will be given to the designated person responsible for them, as well as brown paper bags, cups, and sandwich wedges for preparing food, hot drinks, and soup.

We do not store food in our storage room, so if you need to purchase items like bread, cheese, milk, soup ingredients, or soup powder, we will reimburse you (unless you are using a partner's business or collecting donations such as sandwiches or wraps at the end of the day). Reimbursements are usually processed within 7 days of the request, unless the trustee responsible for payments is away.

Teams can claim back food and drink expenses incurred during their run. To claim, please email a copy of the receipt to:

receipts@bristolsoupruntrust.org.uk and contact our Trustee, Richard Price.

Please note, we do not reimburse volunteers for petrol costs. However, you can claim back your Clean Air Zone (CAZ) payment by forwarding the proof of payment email to the address above.

Health and Safety

At The Bristol Soup Run Trust, we are committed to providing support to a diverse group of individuals in our community. While we strive to create a safe and welcoming environment, we recognize that situations involving conflict or aggressive behaviour may arise, often due to mental health issues, intoxication, or past trauma. Our primary concern is the safety of our volunteers, and we have procedures in place to help mitigate risks.

Volunteer Safety:

To ensure the safety of all volunteers, we only accept volunteers aged 18 and over, in line with our liability insurance requirements. If at any point you feel unsafe, please inform your team leader immediately. If there are serious safety concerns, we may stop serving to protect our volunteers.

Always be mindful of your personal boundaries and act accordingly. In the event of an incident, please email the Volunteer Coordinator at **admin@bristolsoupruntrust.org.uk**. You will be sent an incident form to complete, which will be reviewed by our Safeguarding Lead, Sheeylah Price. Sometimes service users may express anger or frustration, which can be directed at us. Remember, this is not personal—many individuals are dealing with trauma, mental health, or addiction issues. If conflict arises, stay calm, step back, and consult your team leader, who is likely to have established rapport and experience in handling such situations. If you feel unsafe, the advice from trustees is to leave immediately.

Safeguarding

If you have concerns about someone's safety, whether it's someone you believe may be a threat to themselves or others, it is important to report it. Discuss your concerns with your team leader, as we have a duty of care to all individuals involved—both directly and indirectly. We all share the responsibility to care for and report concerning situations within our community.

We also offer Safeguarding training, typically online or in person once per year. If you are interested in taking part, please reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Health and Safety Best Practices and Safeguarding Guidelines for Volunteers:

- **Hand Hygiene:** Wash your hands thoroughly before preparing any food or drink. If you're involved in food preparation, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator to complete online Level One Food Safety training, if you haven't already done so.
- **Food Storage:** Ensure all food and drink are stored at the correct temperature. For example, sandwiches should be refrigerated and not left in the boot of a car.
- **Health:** Do not attend if you are unwell. It's crucial that we protect our service users from germs and illness.
- **Food Distribution:** Be mindful of saving food for the second stop and follow your team leader's instructions regarding food distribution.
- **Hazardous Objects:** If you encounter needles, drug paraphernalia, or sharp glass, do not touch them. Immediately report any hazardous items to your team leader.
- **Personal Belongings:** Leave valuables at home. Keep your phone in your pocket unless it's an emergency.
- **Guest Behaviour:** Encourage guests to sit on the wall to be served, avoiding crowding around the car or volunteers.
- **Safety Awareness:** Stay aware of passing traffic, including e-scooters, and any other potential hazards in the area.
- **Hi-Viz Jacket:** It is recommended that you wear a Hi-Viz jacket (always provided by your team leader) for visibility. Please return it after use.
- **What to wear:** Dress appropriately for the environment, in warm, sturdy clothing and footwear, as the pavements can be uneven. Avoid drawing unwanted attention by dressing scruffily and covering your body.
- **In Case of Danger:** If you feel unsafe, threatened, or witness any talk of a weapon, leave immediately and call 999. Your safety is the most important priority.

Getting Involved

We are always looking for passionate individuals to join our teams and make a difference. You can get involved by:

- Becoming a regular volunteer
- Donating food or items
- Joining our fundraising efforts
- Sharing your experience or skills with us
- Volunteering as a team leader

Please fill out the volunteer form to sign up, and a member of our team will be in touch to get you started.

Thank you for considering becoming part of our community at The Bristol Soup Run Trust. Your time, efforts, and compassion make a world of difference. We look forward to welcoming you!

Thank you

The Bristol Soup Run Team

@bristolsoupruntrust