



Role description: Volunteer guest buddy

About Sanctuary Hosting

Now part of Asylum Welcome, Sanctuary Hosting is a hosting service that provides temporary accommodation for refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants at risk of homelessness in Oxfordshire and Reading by matching them with volunteer hosts who offer a free bed and a warm welcome. This gives guests a chance to tackle the causes of their homelessness. All of our hosts and guests are in turn supported by a team of dedicated volunteers.

About the Guest Buddy role

Volunteer guest support buddies provide practical support to individuals - 'guests' - who are accommodated within the hosting scheme, serving as the main contact.

During the placement, the buddy makes regular contact with the guest, reviews with them how things are going and provides feedback to Sanctuary Hosting.

Guest buddies often get involved in very practical ways - for example, helping the guest register with a GP, join the library, or find English lessons.

What we are looking for

You need to be:

- an excellent communicator with good listening skills and a high level of spoken and written English;
- personally resilient and able to work appropriately with vulnerable people in difficult or challenging situations, both face-to-face, over the telephone and online via email, WhatsApp or Zoom;
- able to use emotional support skills in a calm and responsible manner;
- aware of conflict and migration issues, and empathetic about the situation and needs of refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants;
- sensitive to cultural issues, including those relating to gender;
- able to involve the guest in decision-making, acting in their best interests at all times;
- willing to adhere to Sanctuary Hosting's policies and procedures;
- able to uphold confidentiality.

Role	Volunteer Guest Buddy
Hours/ frequency	Average 1-2 hours a week. Due to the nature of the role, the hours can be irregular and require responding to situations that may arise. Routine contact with the guest may be during the day, evening or weekend and can be agreed on an individual basis.
Reporting to	Sanctuary Hosting Service Coordinator
Tasks may include	● Picking guest up (from e.g., train/bus station or from previous host's house) and delivering to new host ● Providing one-to-one orientation support to guests who are new to an area e.g., finding local bus routes and amenities ● Supporting guests to access other support services e.g., local refugee support group, GP, English classes, food bank, counselling and accompanying them to appointments, helping them find information, providing signposting support ● Reminding guests about appointments ● Contacting referral agencies to ensure continued support and progression for guests ● Working with interpreters, other volunteers, and staff at Sanctuary Hosting ● Identifying and responding appropriately to any safeguarding and protection issues ● conducting regular guest review meetings and providing feedback to Sanctuary Hosting
What we offer	● Induction training ● Boundaries & giving safely training ● Refresher training ● Peer support training ● Ongoing support and supervision ● Reimbursement of reasonable travel and other expenses ● Membership of mutually supportive Sanctuary Hosting community
Additional information	To volunteer for this role: ● You must be aged 18+ ● You must have a basic DBS check