

Volunteer Forum 20th January 2026

Minutes



Attendees: Mags, Camilla, Helen (remotely) Gill, Peter, Melanie, Helena, Jill, Ali, Jane, Lisa

Apologies: Gemma, Teresa

1. Mags opened the forum with:
 - a. A comprehensive update on the charity's activities and impact over the Christmas Period. The Winter Campaign was a huge success and enabled THH to provide generously over Christmas, reducing anxiety, ill-health, risk of suicide and increasing self-worth and being loved. Services included:
 - i. Christmas meals, additional food parcels and Christmas hampers.
 - ii. Offers to house all rough sleepers although a couple declined, most were warm and dry at Travelodges for 12 days and nights with wifi and breakfast included. THH also provided extended food parcels including many basics and Christmas treats. SU behaviour was reported to be good so we are hopeful we can repeat this for another year.
 - iii. Christmas Grotto created, providing SUs with opportunity to choose their own warm clothes, puzzles and other distractions, gifts for their children and loved ones.
 - iv. Many gift tokens and individual gifts were also freely given to every SU we knew and some we didn't, and we too are grateful to the many SUs and volunteers who treated the staff with kind words, chocolates and other gifts.
 - b. April – Dec 2025 Impact/Stats
 - i. Approximately 200 SUs supported. 164 with mental health needs
 - ii. 70 with Substance misuse of varying degrees
 - iii. 80/95 Successfully rehoused
10,587 Services Accessed: 45 times each
 - iv. 470 Outreach support - Boroughwide – Vulnerable / Homeless
 - v. 2,366 Visits to THH Day Services
 - vi. 5,098. Meals & Refreshments (1 time count)
 - vii. 613 Food Parcels
 - viii. 162 Employment Support/CV support
 - ix. 86 Attended Training. Some attaining L1 or L2 qualifications
 - x. 866 Living Well Workshops / Activities.
 - xi. 285 Debt Management Support.
 - xii. And superb support from Peter re Non-English Speakers
2. Kitchen Update (Mags)
 - a. Excellent company who are very committed to supporting all your efforts and commitment. The more we share the more extras seem to be offered.
 - b. Final measurements and ideas to be agreed on Thursday visit to THH.
 - c. Meets the requirements for Food Safety by having two sinks, and much more besides.
 - d. **Action: Helen and Camilla** will share plans, dates and opportunities for further discussion as they firm up.
3. Safeguarding Award (Mags)
 - a. Thank you all for your contribution to and focus on safeguarding vulnerable adults at THH. We are delighted to announce that we are one of, if not the first, charity to achieve this award. The process was tough and thorough. We developed a healthy respect for the awarding body as they grilled us over the 10 safeguarding standards and 48 criteria assessed. THH aims to high

Volunteer Forum 20th January 2026

Minutes



professionally and this was reflected in receiving top marks (crudely put: 'outstanding') for 75% of the award criteria and Good for the remaining 25% leaving us a little room to tweak, develop and continue improvements, but nothing failing or requiring urgent improvement. 'Well-done' team.

- b. A detailed and helpful assessment report informs the areas we do and need to make more transparent, areas we can think more about and some wonderful tributes that we can share across THH and funding partners.
4. Safeguarding Certificate (Mags)
 - a. Mags was delighted to award certificates and a Hope Hub pen to volunteers who successfully completed their three-module training in Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults with Complex needs. You all have a crucial role in Team Hope Hub and safeguarding others.
 - b. Just for clarity, as we keep changing posters, the first port of call for any safeguarding concerns is Camilla, Gemma or Clare as they are often on site or Tristan as he holds different roles across Case working, EAS and Hospital discharges.
 5. Warm Hub/Living Well Update (Camilla)
 - a. Thank you for supporting the Caseworker on duty by encouraging SU engagement in Jigsaws, Quizzes, Puzzles, Art and Craft activities. Please use these resources as much as possible.
 - b. 5 Ways – Morya tends to run these workshops on a Friday, but they are gaining interest and proving encouraging. Helen will support and link in with some of the other dates and subjects Morya has identified for this term.
 - c. Energy Saving – Barbara and Fiona continue to lead these workshops.
 - d. Thank you to Wednesday team in particular for supporting and often leading so many cookery workshops in the Crisis Area over the summer and autumn. It has been great to see the impact on individuals and the wider impact as SUs gain more confidence to cook or be engaged indirectly.
 6. Next cookery workshops with free appliances. Helen would be grateful for help with any of the following cookery workshops this term. Dates can be confirmed when I know volunteer availability we are also working around the kitchen refit:
 - a. Thursday 29th January, St Martin's Church, Cookery Workshop/free Air fryers- changed to **19th February**
 - b. Wednesday ? February, THH Crisis Area, Cookery Workshop/free Slow Cookers
 - c. Thursday ? March, Camberley Baptist Church, Cookery Workshop/free Blenders

Action Any willing Volunteers to email Helen (address below). Thank you. We couldn't give any of this kit away without you.
 7. Fundraising News (Gemma's slides)
 - a. Morgan Lovel is a big contractor we have been working with through a challenging competitive bid. We are delighted to have won their support for improvements to hub and EAS over 2026. Mags is to present an outline of the work we undertake at THH and out plans for improvement to contractors in February.
 - b. The partnership between THH and Lloyds Bank Charity/Foundation? has led to a range of grants being funded over the last 7 years (This is an exceptional achievement in itself and has taken considerable effort from Mags and Trustees). Now the local branch of Lloyds bank has offered to fundraise for

Volunteer Forum 20th January 2026



Minutes

THH and possibly offer workshops on scam awareness and other safety/banking tips for SUs.

- c. Silent Disco fundraiser – offered by a local who follows our social media –
Action: Gemma. – Volunteers asked to have these dates shared asap so they can support them.
- d. **Action Volunteers** – Are you using our social media and on the circulation list for THH News updates. – If not contact Gemma.

8. Questions at the Forum:

- a. Christmas lunch:
 - i. Many thanks to Gill, Ali, Jill and the team for making this another huge success this year.
 - ii. Ali is compiling notes to inform future delivery.
- b. Gill raised a wider question from the team about the ethos of the day being at odds with our usual warm, welcoming inclusive services. 'It was hard to tell people that they could not come in or be fed on that day, could we be more inclusive another year? Could we do another one?'
 - i. Mags' response – There are physical challenges of fitting everyone in on one day therefore we hold multiple events across the week that target specific groups such as housed SUs (buffet and hampers), non-housed (Christmas lunch, Travelodge stays and extensive food parcels. Access via Case workers to the grotto and to individual gifts.
 - ii. Camilla explained rationale for delivery of different services and together we reflected on ways this can be made clearer to all Volunteers in the future:
 - 1. Challenge of breakfast/warm hub opening – Ensure there are posters up in advance and on the door on the day. Make the sign-up sheets for different activities and services more widely known.
 - 2. Complications of non-attenders as in every workshop/activity we offer. Not everyone who signs up will attend and we do then welcome in extras withing Health and Safety Risk Assessments.
 - 3. Helen noted that every year we have made capacity or support arrangements for SUs that arrive unexpectedly so that cohort has usually been covered.

Actions – Mags/ Camilla/ Helen/ Clare - better communication across the team to share the initial plan and rationale, followed by posters, lists of SUs as they develop, needs for individual presents etc

- c. Lisa – How are other Volunteers supporting refugees/Non-English Speakers as plates of food are being returned untouched. Discussion across the forum noted:
 - i. This is happening on other days and at the EAS.
 - ii. Most SUs like eggs, some are asking for Hallal, they tend to want meat not vegetarian meals – increases expenses – then there is the pressure to offer the same adjustments to all SUs. This puts heavy demands on the SUs without successful solutions.

Actions:

- iii. **Volunteers:** Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Offer one egg, beans, toast etc to meet immediate need to address hunger and cold. If SUs have a good breakfast then lunch can be simple eg soup.

Volunteer Forum 20th January 2026

Minutes



- iv. **Helen:** Will prepare guidance for SUs re new Breakfast plan with visual support when back at work next week.
 - v. **Peter** has kindly offered to use discussions around food in some of his supporting English as an additional language sessions.
 - vi. **Morya and Helen** have plans to run a 5 Ways workshop to explore flavourings and cultural favourites.
 - vii. **Volunteers:** Soup can be nourishing and bulked up with lentils, pasta, chopped spaghetti, tinned vegetables or our surplus of potatoes. If the planned lunch or a microwave meal does not meet the needs then offer a range of tinned soup.
 - viii. **Volunteers:** Keep meals simple e.g. if we need two pasta bakes, change the flavour with herbs and spices and veg. rather than adding substitute meat we cannot afford.
 - ix. **Volunteers/Helen:** I'm happy to make more visual aids but need time and your guidance to do so. We can build up a bank of lunch menus with stock photos or better still your own photos for meal that we offer on a rotation or regular basis. Please let me know lunch menus, key phrases or guidance that would benefit from visual prompts.
- d. Camilla: Due a clean-up of open packets and further tubs to store dried food such as flour and sugar. **Action Camilla/Helen/ Volunteer** purchase tubs and sort.
- e. Gill: Safeguarding and new kitchen. Communication between the kitchen and empowerment area is impeded. Could we install a panic button in the kitchen or something to connect with the rest of the hub. **Action Camilla** will follow through with a doorbell connection as part of the kitchen refit.
9. Volunteer Forums – Future dates. Please email Helen Helen.Robinshaw@thehopehub.org.uk with any requests for questions, content or discussion at the next forum.
- a. Wednesday 4th March 2026 Online
 - b. Thursday 4th June 2026 at THH Volunteer Week – How would you like to celebrate this?