



# Lifeshare

Working to prevent and break the cycle of homelessness, reduce harm, and promote health.



**Christmas Drop-in Service**

## ABOUT THE SERVICE

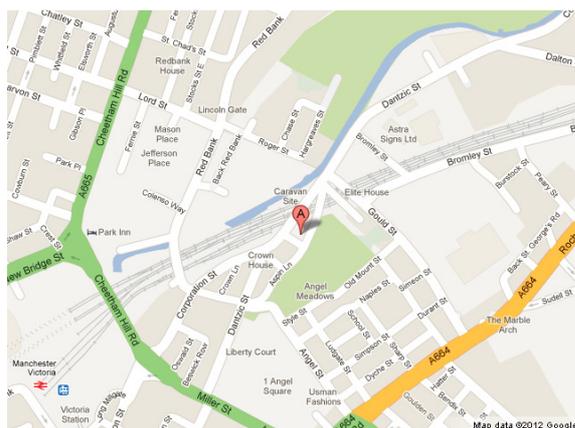
For most, Christmas is a happy and cheerful time spent with friends and family – exactly as it should be. For vulnerable people, however, Christmas can be a very difficult time when they are at the greatest risk; rough sleepers may have to contend with freezing cold temperatures (such as a record minus 17.6 degrees in January 2010), while those without friends or family nearby can feel especially lonely and isolated over the holiday period.

At Lifeshare, where we believe everyone is entitled to an enjoyable Christmas, we provide a daytime drop-in service over seven days where anyone in need of warmth, food or company can get it for free.

We are a non-religious and non-political charity, and we do not promote any system of beliefs.

### Where We Are

We are based at the Charter St Ragged School (142 Dantzic St, Manchester M4 4DN), behind the new Co-operative headquarters.



### Opening Times

The Christmas Drop-in is open over seven days of the Christmas Period:

23 December	2pm – 7.30pm (Dinner only)
24-28 December	7am – 7.30pm
29 December	7am – 2.30pm (Breakfast & Lunch only)

### Restrictions

Unfortunately, this service is only available to people aged 18 and over as we do not have the resources to implement the necessary safeguarding processes specific to younger people. We do not allow smoking, alcohol or drugs on our premises. Dogs are permitted but must be kept on a leash in specified parts of the building at all times.

## WHAT WE OFFER

### Good Company

The Christmas Drop-in Service is staffed at all times by up to 40 volunteers who are there to be a source of company and conversation over a cup of tea and a mince pie for anybody who may be feeling isolated or lonely.

### Good Food

Every full day we are open, we serve three hot meals prepared by qualified chefs: a breakfast from 7-8.30am, soup and sandwiches from 12.30-2pm, and a cooked dinner from 5-6.30pm. Tea, coffee and snacks are available throughout the day, and a full Christmas Dinner is served on Christmas Day.

### Fresh Clothing and Bedding

We distribute donations of clothing, both during the Christmas period and throughout the year at our Breakfast Service, to anyone whose clothing is no longer wearable. Wherever possible, we stock men's jeans, tracksuit bottoms, socks, shoes, underwear, hats, scarves, gloves, t-shirts, jumpers, hoodies, outdoor coats and jackets. For women, we keep a small stock of underwear, jackets, jeans and tops. We also have limited stocks of blankets, sleeping bags and duvets for those sleeping rough or who are simply in need of furnishings for their home.



### Toiletries

We also distribute donated toiletries throughout the year so that service users can freshen up. Specifically, we aim to provide soap, shower gel, facecloths, shampoo and conditioner, toothbrushes and toothpaste, disposable razors and shaving cream, skincare products, and sanitary towels and pads. Our building has a shower, and we often have a hairdresser at the Christmas drop-in to provide dry haircuts.

### Medical Services

Most days, we have a doctor on-site for a few hours to provide basic medical care and advice. They are usually assisted by nurses and often other qualified medical professionals such as dentists, podiatrists and massage therapists.

### Entertainment

At the Drop-in Service, we aim to make Christmas an enjoyable experience for everyone by stocking books, board games and playing cards. Service users can also play table tennis and table football, watch television or movies, and get involved in art projects or learn to play the guitar. Live entertainment from local bands and singers, dance troupes, pub quizzes and bingo are also regular fixtures at the drop-in.

## HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

### Donate

Running this service for six full days does not come cheap. Though many goods are donated by generous individuals and corporations, we must meet any shortfall through our own reserves. Heating the large building and almost continual cooking incur large gas bills that must be paid for, along with other operating expenses. Because most grant-awarding bodies will not fund services such as this, we rely on the generosity of the public to help us meet these costs through donations of cash.

If you would prefer to donate goods, we accept donations of food, clothing, books and toiletries all year round. For the drop-in we also accept donations of Christmas decorations, board games and musical instruments.

### Volunteer

The Christmas Drop-in is a very popular project for volunteers to get involved in, and we typically recruit 80 new volunteers every year to work with around 80 experienced volunteers who help out year after year. We are particularly keen to recruit medical professionals, chefs, artists, musicians, people who have experience working with vulnerable adults, and people who can speak a foreign language.

We accept online applications via our website or printed application forms from 1 October until 30 November at the latest (though popular days such as Christmas Day fill up well before then).

### Engage

We want as many people as possible to know about the work that our staff and volunteers do for vulnerable people over Christmas. By promoting the Drop-in Service, we will be able to raise more support and offer a better range of services. Please tell family, friends and colleagues about us at home and at work, and engage with Lifeshare through our social networking channels.

## CONTACT US

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