# **City and Farm Community volunteer**

**Location:** In our City community (north Edinburgh) or at our Farm community house (rural location near Wilkieston). You might move between both, if needed.

At the Farm community, you will live in a studio bedroom. In the City Community, you will share a room with another volunteer. You will live alongside the young residents who you are supporting.

You will not pay for rent or bills (including internet). We will also cover your food costs, and provide a weekly subsistence allowance.

**Time:** Full time living in the community for minimum 6-9 months. You have 2 days off per week to explore, rest and have fun.

You will also have holidays, which includes a small holiday allowance. You can take time off to explore Scotland, the rest of the UK and further abroad.

**Visa requirements:** If you are applying from outside the UK (and are not a British citizen or resident in the UK), we will help you get a Temporary Worker (Charity) visa.

## **What are our City and Farm communities?**

The purpose of our [**residential communities**](https://cyrenians.scot/how-we-help/1047-young-peoples-residential-communities) is to offer a space for young people to develop their confidence, skills and abilities to live independently. We want to empower them to eventually move to a more sustainable living environment on their own. Living with volunteers helps residents see alternative ways of coping with life, problems and issues.

We partner with social work organisations and the local council to make this happen. The two Communities have up to 15 residents (aged 18-30) in total, who come to live there because they were homeless. Up to 6 volunteers live with the residents between 6-9 months throughout the year. They are always supported by our team, who assess the residents, provide them guidance, uphold the rules and agreements, and have overall responsibility for everyone in the communities.

**What will you do as a volunteer?**

You will be living alongside young people who have experienced homelessness. You will support them and help look after your shared spaces, as this is your home together. Some might struggle to engage or have behaviours that are challenging. Residents may also have learning difficulties, mental health issues, disabilities, or are dealing with trauma.

This can affect how they interact with you or other residents, or struggle to follow rules. Your main part will be to creating a positive living environment and experiences, which will help move people towards a more positive future.

You will be part of a team including other volunteers, who contribute to the running of the community. Your tasks will be varied and can include:

* Being a peer mentor and staying in touch with the residents
* Accompanying a resident to appointments
* Helping a resident to cook a meal for the whole community
* Offering guidance on different topics and issues
* Organise activities, which can be walks, cycling, board games night, karaoke, tea and cake (whatever your interests) for the residents to come along.
* Help the residents develop the skills and confidence to move forward in life and become more independent.
* Leading or supporting residents to shop and cook food.
* Sharing information about the residents to Cyrenians employees, including concerns, feedback from activities or interactions that you have had with them.
* Help create a fun, secure and stimulating space for everyone
* Working together with your fellow volunteer(s) to agree who is volunteering when and arranging time off.

We will provide support and training needed for you to engage with the tasks and young people in a safe manner. Support, supervision and team meetings are regularly every month.

You will have a volunteer phone number and email address. Our small team are there to support you and the residents.

## **What can you gain from this volunteering opportunity?**

* Be a part of a positive and supportive community
* Support and help people affected by homelessness to participate in activities
* Learn and develop your knowledge about psychology, social policy, youth work, social work, community education and a range of other caring professions.
* Develop your understanding of different cultures
* Meet new people and create connections in Edinburgh
* Learn about the UK asylum system, the process for unaccompanied minor and trafficked young people
* Training in First Aid and food hygiene
* Opportunity to share your knowledge and shape activities and our service.
* A reference on completion of your volunteering

## **Does this sound like you?**

Everyone is welcome to join our community to live and volunteer with us. It will be a stimulating and hopefully rewarding opportunity, but it may also be challenging and tough at times.

If you…

* are between 18-30 years old
* would enjoy living and engaging with fellow young people
* can speak, write and understand English
* have the skills to live independently
* are friendly and easy to approach (within personal boundaries)
* are reliable and can work together with people
* are happy to share skills and knowledge with the residents
* can be flexible to needs and ability of individuals and groups
* are patient and understanding
* believe that people can create positive change for themselves and progress in their lives
* like to learn and are willing to listen to people
* can work with individuals who may have different support needs
* do not judge and are respectful of confidentiality.

Then let us know your interest and get in touch by filling in the online form. We can then arrange a chat to get to know each other better, and we will share more information about the place and volunteering opportunity.

## **Your accessibility**

Please let us know in the online form, if you need any support or adjustments to make our first chat together and volunteering a positive experience for you.

If you for any reason cannot fill in our online form, not to worry. Please reach out to us on (+44) 0131 333 1392 (ask for Lesley) or via email on: communitiesplacement@cyrenians.scot.

You are also welcome to submit a short video (MP4 format) via our online submission tool instead. Please include the information that we ask for in our application form.

If you are applying from outside the UK, you will require a Temporary Worker (Charity) visa. We will support with this but let us know if you have any questions.

We will cover (some) travel expenses to the community when you first arrive. These will be agreed before you start.

We will ask you for the contact details of a person, who you have known for more than 6 months (1 reference). If you need support identifying a reference, please let us know.

## **Keeping everyone safe**

We expect all volunteers to follow our community rules, which will be shared with you if you start volunteering with us. These are put in place to keep everyone safe.

Also, you will engage with people, who are either young people under 18 years old and / or considered particularly vulnerable in our society. It is therefore required that you are a member of the[**PVG scheme in Scotland**](https://www.mygov.scot/pvg-scheme).

If you are not already a member, then we will process your application with you. There are no costs to you in becoming a PVG scheme member for volunteering.

You can read [**our safeguarding policy here**](https://cyrenians.scot/assets/000/001/672/Safeguarding_Policy_original.pdf?1729240047) that details our commitment to keeping everyone safe. It is expected of everyone to adhere to these commitments. We expect all volunteers to do relevant training, so you can help keep yourself and others safe from harm.

We might also ask that you provide an official police check from your country of origin (except for UK applicants).