# **Volunteer Cooking Assistant**

**Location:** Midlothian Community Hospital Gardens, 70 Eskbank Rd, Bonnyrigg, EH22 3ND. [**See on a map here.**](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Cyrenians+Midlothian+Community+Hospital+Garden/@55.8802548,-3.0949253,17z/data=!4m10!1m2!2m1!1sMidlothian+Community+Hospital+Gardens,!3m6!1s0x4887bf503b1975e5:0x95f257ab61392bd8!8m2!3d55.8802548!4d-3.0901617!15sCiZNaWRsb3RoaWFuIENvbW11bml0eSBIb3NwaXRhbCBHYXJkZW5zLJIBEGNvbW11bml0eV9nYXJkZW7gAQA!16s%2Fg%2F11ghr9z4bz?entry=ttu&g_ep=EgoyMDI1MDExNS4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D)

**Time commitment:** About 3-4 hours (10am to 2pm). Our meals take place on the 2nd Tuesday and last Thursday of every month.

We are flexible with how often you can help at our meals. Just let us know your availability on the days above.

## **What is the Midlothian Community Hospital Garden?**

At our community garden at the Midlothian Hospital, we want to make opportunities for good food and healthy lifestyles available to local communities. We invite people to come together to do gardening and eat together.

By bringing people together in a shared, green space, we help combat social isolation, build relations, and enjoy a home-made nutritional meal. By nurturing a sense of belonging and community, the garden helps mitigate factors contributing to homelessness. All while empowering people with life skills and resilience.

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

Do you love cooking? As a volunteer, you will support the Volunteer Cook to prepare and make community meals in the gardens. We use our outdoor kitchen to make meals with ingredients from the garden, pantry and local purchases.

You will be part of a team making meals for around 25 people, including fellow volunteers and wider community. Your tasks include:

* setting up the outdoor kitchen (cleaning it and bringing all the necessary equipment into the space)
* taking guidance from the lead cook to prepare and cook our meal
* washing dishes, clean the kitchen and clear away all equipment together.

Our meals take place twice a month on the 2nd Tuesday and last Thursday of the month.

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

* Be a part of a positive and supportive community
* Enjoy delicious food with other people
* Meet new people and have new experiences
* Develop your interpersonal skills
* Gain further understanding on food insecurity
* Opportunity for training in an elementary food hygiene course
* Be a part of the food education and garden community

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

Everyone is welcome to join us in our community garden and help prepare our shared meals.

If you…

* are over 18 years old
* have basic cooking skills and enjoy cooking
* like doing tasks outdoors in all kinds of weather
* enjoy being with people and listening to others’ stories
* work well as part of a team
* are friendly and easy to approach
* are reliable
* can be flexible to needs and ability of individuals and groups
* 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 can 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 for any reason, you cannot fill in our online form, not to worry. Please reach out to Michala, our Garden Coordinator, on 07772 886 746.

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 ‘interest form’.

Any expenses for helping with these activities, which have been agreed, will be paid back to you. We cover local travel costs at public transport rate, or mileage if you drive here. We provide a meal for all volunteers joining for over 4 hours at one time.

We have free parking by the hospital, and buses stop nearby (5-10 min walking distance).

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**

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.