

Big Church Festival

Frequently Asked Questions



When and where is Big Church Festival taking place?

Big Church Festival runs from 28-31 August at Wiston House, Steyning, BN44 3DZ. Volunteers are needed from 27-31 August, to help with arrival and departure. Volunteers can arrive from the afternoon of 26 August and need to be on site by 11am on Thursday 27 August at the latest. We'll prioritise those available for the full event as it's easier to coordinate, but we welcome all applications—so get in touch!

How many hours will I volunteer each day?

Volunteering roles and shifts will vary, but you'll volunteer for up to 6 hours each day (Friday-Sunday). You'll also need to join the daily meetings for all volunteers and your individual team.

Each day of volunteering will vary, but expect a combination of morning, afternoon and evening shifts.



What training will I receive before the festival?

Each volunteer will receive:

- Role-Specific Training: This is for the area you'll be helping with at the festival e.g. welcome, café, storyteller.
- Compassion Training: Resources and tips on how to talk about Compassion so you feel confident in telling others about our work and how they can get involved through sponsoring a child, supporting Mums and Babies or our Critical Interventions.

We want all our volunteers to feel fully equipped and confident in their roles.

Here's what you can expect:

Access to the Compassion Connect Hub

You'll have access to our Advocates Portal, where you can manage your advocate profile and access training materials. We recommend completing your profile and training between May and July, at your own pace.

Monthly online zoom sessions

These sessions will be offered at various times, giving you important event information and the opportunity to meet other team members ahead of the festival.

Mandatory onsite training (Thursday 27 August)

All advocates must attend in-person sessions to ensure you're fully prepared and briefed before the festival starts.

We'll give you plenty of opportunity to complete the training, so you are well equipped for your role. Unfortunately, if you don't complete the training you won't be able to attend the festival as a volunteer.

Do I need to sponsor a child through Compassion to volunteer?

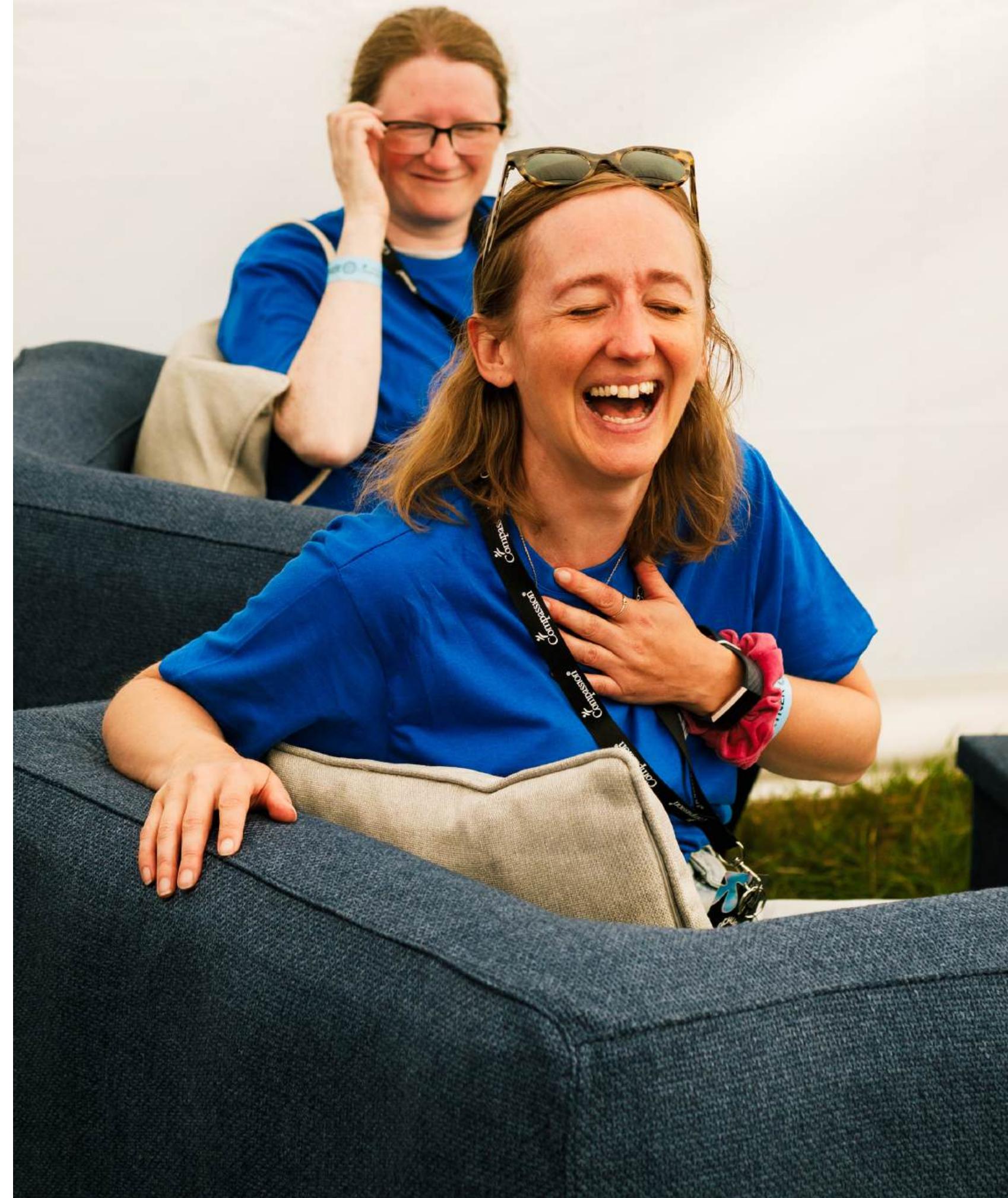
No, you don't have to be a current supporter to volunteer.

Having a good grasp of what Compassion does will certainly help when talking about our ministry, but don't worry—we'll provide plenty of information and training in advance. If you've sponsored a child before (even through another organisation), feel free to share that experience—every story helps bring our mission to life!

What costs are covered for volunteers?

- Your ticket to the festival is covered.
- All meals will be provided each day.
- Refreshments: Tea, coffee, and refreshments will be available throughout the day in designated areas.
- Mileage/public transport costs to and from the festival from within the UK will be reimbursed when you submit your receipts or mileage claim.

Please note: If you'd like additional snacks, you can buy them at the festival or bring your own.



What kind of teams can I expect to serve on at the festival?

There are so many ways you can put your skills and gifts to good use. Here are just a few roles you might take on.

When you sign up, you can indicate the role where you feel your skills will be put to best use in your application. We'll do our best to allocate you to a team that matches your interests, but we can't guarantee it.

Welcome

Be the friendly face greeting attendees as they arrive. You'll spread the joy, provide directions, answer basic questions, and guide people to where they need to go.

Café Team

Serve hot drinks, snacks, and other refreshments to guests. You'll help keep the café area clean, tidy and welcoming, and may chat with visitors to ensure they have a truly wonderful experience.



Main Stage Appeal

Your role is to support people during the key appeal moments from the main stage. When the invitation is given to begin the life-changing journey of child sponsorship, you'll be ready to hand out child profiles to those responding. These moments are crucial, your presence helps make it easy for people to take that first step.

Expo

Help oversee the exhibition space and chat with visitors to our stand.

Storytellers

Get out and about around the festival site speaking with people about the work of Compassion and telling stories about the impact on individual lives and communities.



Can I bring my family?

If they're also volunteering with Compassion

You're welcome to bring your spouse and children over the age of 18 to volunteer as well. They'll receive the same benefits (ticket, meals, camping accommodation and travel).

Just make sure each individual fills in their own application form.

If they are NOT volunteering with Compassion

If your family are attending Big Church Festival but aren't volunteering with Compassion, you'll be able to stay with them in your tent. Just be aware that they won't receive the same benefits as you - so they'll have to fend for themselves when it comes to meals!

Can I serve if I'm under 18?

Volunteers aged 16 and 17 are welcome to serve as long as a legal guardian is on site at the Festival. This year, we are not accepting applications from volunteers under the age of 16.



Where will I stay during the festival?

Volunteer camping

We'll provide you with a decent-sized tent you can stand up in, complete with a camping bed and air mattress, in our volunteer campsite. This area has its own toilet and shower facilities, giving you a more comfortable and convenient experience during the Festival.

You won't share a tent with anyone else, unless you wish to share with someone you know, and you can specify this on your application form.

Other options:

- You can camp in your own tent with your church/group/family if desired. Just be aware that this could be in a different section of the campsite.
- If you prefer glamping, you can upgrade for a fee.
- If you'd like to bring your caravan/motorhome, that's fine too. You'll just need to pay the additional pitch cost.

Once your application has been processed and confirmed, we will share instructions on how to book glamping or motorhome options. For an indication of the costs, please visit the [Big Church Festival website](#).



What will a typical day look like?

Morning Briefing (approx. 20 minutes)

- Each day begins with a wider team gathering where we'll have a short time of worship, prayer, and devotion.
- This also includes a quick team leader check-in, where we'll share what's going on that day. Connectivity isn't great on site, so this is the main way to share important information.

Meals & Refreshments

- All meals for volunteers are served in the Compassion Team catering tent.
- You'll be fuelled with a constant supply of hot drinks and refreshments throughout the day.

Volunteer Shifts

- Most shifts are scheduled in 3 or 4 hour blocks. You will be required to serve a maximum of 6 hours per day according to your role and rota.
- During your shift, you'll work in your assigned area (e.g. welcome, café, etc.).
- If you're under 18, we'll ensure you have appropriate breaks.

Free Time

- Outside of your shift and the morning briefing, you're free to enjoy the festival. You can attend events, explore the grounds, and make the most of all the festival offers.



Do I need a DBS check?

Yes, all team members aged 16 or over must have a basic DBS check and provide a reference as part of our safeguarding process. If you already have one, you can send us the original certificate as part of your application. If you don't have a DBS certificate, we'll help you get one and we'll even cover the cost.

What if I have specific dietary requirements or allergies?

Just let us know and we'll make sure you have some alternative options.

Are there showers, toilets and other facilities on-site?

Yes, The Festival provides shower and toilet facilities across all areas. While these can get busy during peak times, the event organisers make every effort to keep them clean and well-stocked. In addition, our dedicated volunteer campsite has its own separate toilet and shower facilities for extra convenience.



What should I expect from the Festival site and the physical demands of volunteering?

It's a large outdoor space, so expect plenty of walking and standing on uneven ground in all kinds of weather. Some roles include shifts that can be busy and physically demanding, so please keep this in mind when applying.

Can I arrive later or leave earlier than the stated times?

Volunteers are vital to the smooth running of the festival, so we really need you there for the whole time. If you have any special circumstances, please let us know in advance.

I've already bought a ticket but now I'd like to volunteer. Will I receive a refund for my original ticket?

If you've already purchased a ticket, unfortunately we can't offer you a monetary refund and neither can Big Church Festival. However, if you'd still like to volunteer, you're welcome to transfer your existing ticket to someone else. You would then receive your volunteer ticket from us at no extra cost. This way, you're not out of pocket, and a friend or family member can enjoy the experience too!



What if I can no longer attend Big Church Festival?

We understand that circumstances change and life happens so if for any reason you are no longer able to join the team please let us know by emailing or withdrawing via the Compassion Connect Hub.

What if I have more questions?

If you have any other questions please email bcfadvoates@compassionuk.org and we will do our best to answer.

