

WBC Latitude Festival 2017: Volunteer Briefing

This Volunteer Briefing contains information about volunteering to raise funds for UNISON Northern Young Members Group at the Latitude Festival 2017 by working with the Workers Beer Company (WBC). Please read it and ensure you understand what is involved before you register an interest in going.



It covers the following topics:

- Who is eligible to volunteer?
- What does it involve?
- Are there any changes from previous years?
- Do I need previous bar experience?
- How do you decide who goes and what are the deadlines?
- What do you need from me?
- What are the travel and accommodation arrangements?
- What's working on the bar like?

If you would like to know more about the Latitude Festival itself, their website is here:

<http://www.latitudefestival.co.uk/> (if you're at work, please remember the Council's internet policy).

It has been written by Vikki Garratty, the Workplace Contact for UNISON Northern Young Members. In other words, the person responsible for liaising between the WBC and the union, recruiting the volunteers, applying for places, briefing the volunteers and sorting the transport... basically doing all the organising! If you have further questions, I'm happy to answer them. Please email me at v.garratty@unison.co.uk. (Please do not ring me unless you do not have ready access to email. I get a lot of enquiries about this, and whilst I'm happy to help, it's much easier to manage them if people email.)

Who is eligible to volunteer?

Anyone who is a member of UNISON Northern. This includes people from all branches which come under the North East Region of UNISON. If you are a member with another UNISON Region, please contact your regional Young members officer and ask if they are sending a team to the festivals. We cannot accept people's relatives, friends or partners as volunteers, unless they are also members of UNISON.

People who are in the process of applying for UNISON membership can apply for a place providing that you will be a full UNISON member by the time of the festival (July 2017).

You must be at least 18 years old to volunteer. There is no upper age limit, but you must be reliable, responsible, and physically able to work on your feet behind a busy bar for between 6-8 hours each day of the festival.

What does it involve?

You agree to volunteer to raise funds for UNISON at the festival by working a bar shift of between 6-8 hours every day whilst you are at the Latitude festival as part of a team of 6 volunteers from UNISON Northern Young Members. This includes at least one late shift i.e. 9pm-3am or later. In return for supplying volunteers, the union is paid £10.50 for each hour you work.

You will be working behind a bar run by the Workers' Beer Company (WBC), which runs the main bars on site. The WBC is a not-for-profit organisation that exists to give trade unions and campaigning organisations the chance to raise funds by volunteering in this way.

You will be away from home for seven days: travelling down on **Wednesday 12 July**, working at the festival between **Thursday 13 – Sunday 16**, travelling back on **Monday 17 July**.

In return, you get free entry and time off to enjoy the festival when you are not working your shifts. You also get free transport, secure camping with toilets and showers, a free meal each day and some free drinks.

Are there any changes from previous years?

Yes. The Workers Beer Company is heavily emphasising the importance of professional customer service, and knowledge of themselves and how the volunteering system works. All volunteers are asked to sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct. **Breaching the Code of Conduct can result in you being removed from the site, and the union having to pay a penalty fee of £225.**

The main point here is that you are going to the Festival to work every day that you're there, and you get free entry to the festival during your time off as a reward. It can be great fun, but it is not the same as buying a ticket and going to the festival as an ordinary festivalgoer. You are committed to working your shifts regardless of what time they are, whether they clash with your favourite band, how tired you are... It's not an ordeal, but please be aware that this is what you are signing up to, and only sign up if it's what you want to do.

Do I need previous bar experience?

It is not essential. Training is provided on-site and you won't be lugging barrels around, just serving drinks. There are price reckoners to help you calculate the cost of people's drinks. Each bar has a trained Bar Manager (who is a member of the WBC) to oversee things, and the team has a Team Leader who has volunteered at festivals with the WBC before and who can help you out if you have any problems. You will have to be prepared to learn about the laws regarding selling alcohol and abide by them, just as you would if you were working behind an ordinary bar.

How do you decide who goes and what are the deadlines?

The process is as follows:

Registering:

1. You decide if you want to go, check that you are available on the dates, fill in the registration form, sign the Code of Conduct and send them back to the Workplace Contact, who will register you as potential volunteer.
2. **Dead line: MONDAY 17 APRIL 2017**

Draw – April 2017 (TBC)

3. Names of registered volunteers are drawn out of a hat in the UNISON regional office to decide who goes.

Allocation – April 2017 (TBC)

4. The Workplace Contact will confirm with the lucky volunteers that they are still able to go.
5. If so, they will be allocated to the team!
6. We will hold a briefing for team members in June.

Please note:

- If you have applied for a place at a festival before and not got one, you are most welcome to apply again. Please note that everyone's names go into the same hat for the draw for places, regardless of whether you have applied before or not.
- If you have volunteered at a festival with UNISON before, you should already have been contacted by the Workplace Contact. Preference for places will be given to people who have not volunteered at a festival before, as in the interests of fairness we want to give everyone a chance to volunteer at a festival at least once.

What do you need from me?

What details do you need from me?

You will be sent a form to fill in. Basically, we need your personal contact details, your UNISON membership number, and also the following:

- a) confirmation that you are available to travel and work on the dates in question, **Wednesday 12 – Monday 17 July***,
- b) a passport photo, either as a JPEG or a printed copy with your name written on the back in biro,
- c) a signed character reference from your line manager or a trade union official who knows you well,
- d) your signature on the WBC Code of Conduct.



* Please confirm that this is okay with your line manager / partner / dog / elderly relative you take shopping on a Sunday / etc. before you put your name down. We need you to confirm that you are definitely free to go on those dates in advance, due to the demand for places and the fact that the deadline for registering people to go is several weeks prior to the festival. People who drop out after this point cannot be replaced, so the union will lose the money from your earnings, and someone who could have gone does not get to go.

Please don't say you are interested in going unless you are certain you will be free on those dates.

You must send these to the Young Members Contact, Vikki Garratty Send by email to: v.garratty@unison.co.uk, or to: Vikki Garratty, UNISON Northern Region, 140 -150 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6TH

Do you store my personal details securely?

Yes. They are kept in a secure folder that only the WBC Workplace Contact for UNISON Northern Young Members can access.

I don't know what my UNISON membership number is.

It will be on your UNISON membership card. If you can't find this, please contact your UNISON branch and they can help.

How many places are there?

We have received an allocation of four places. One place is reserved for the Team Leader, who is someone who has volunteered at a festival with the WBC before. It's possible we may be asked at short notice to supply more volunteers, which would be in the weeks leading up to the festival, in which case an email is sent out to ask people if they are still interested in going.

Can I volunteer with my friend?

Names are pulled out of the hat at random. This means that we can't guarantee that even if both you and your friend will get a place on the team. If you want to take the chance and put your names in, this is fine, on the understanding that if you get a place and your friend doesn't, you will need to decide within a couple of days of finding out that you've got a place if you want to go without them.

Travel and Accommodation

What are the travel arrangements?

The team will travel down to the Latitude festival on **Wednesday 12 July**, work on **Thursday 13 – Sunday 16** and return on **Monday 17 July**.



Travel arrangements are still to be confirmed, but will probably involve getting a direct train to London Kings Cross from Newcastle Central Station, travelling across London by tube, then getting the free WBC coach from London to the festival in Suffolk (yes, it's quite a long day's travelling)! The WBC coach pick-up point is usually in Clapham, and the exact location will be confirmed nearer the time. To get back, it's the same journey in reverse!

You need to arrange your own transport to and from Newcastle Central station. Please note that should you miss the coach back you are responsible for arranging your own transport back from the Festival.

What is the accommodation like?

You will be camping in the WBC Staff Village. This is a secure camping area with showers and toilets, also a canteen and bar. Only people with a WBC pass are allowed in. This means that unfortunately no friends / boyfriends / girlfriends / family who are also at the festival can camp with us, unless they are also registered WBC volunteers. You get your pass at the event and you must not lose it! It is a condition of going that all UNISON Newcastle volunteers travel, camp and work together.

Do I have to bring a tent?

Yes, you need to provide your own camping gear including a tent and sleeping roll & bag. I will supply you with a list of what you are likely to need. It includes wellies!

Do I need to bring food?

Some snacks and a bottle or two of water are an excellent idea, but you do not need to bring food or cooking equipment with you to the Festival. You get a free meal each day and there are a huge number of food stalls to buy food from whilst you're there, which are (mostly) reasonably priced! You can get vegetarian / healthy food there too.

What if I'm ill?

If you're ill on the day we're meant to be travelling down, contact me (the Workplace Contact) on my mobile phone number and we'll sort something out. If you're ill during the festival, tell your Team Leader immediately and they will get you medical attention.

What's working on the bar like?

More details about the bar work

You will be working on a team of around six volunteer servers behind one of the Workers' Beer Company bars at the festivals. Teams work a shift of between 6-8 hours a day (with one 20-minute break during the quiet periods for six-hour shifts, 30 minutes for longer shifts) every day of the festival. Each team has a Team Leader who is responsible for making sure everyone turns up, communicating anything you need to know about working on the bars to you, sorting out breaks, mediating if there are any disputes, getting the invoice for hours worked signed by the bar manager, and collecting the tips and drinks vouchers. The Team Leader is always someone who has volunteered with the WBC at a festival before.



Is it the same shift every day?

No. You will work a different shift every day, including at least one, probably two, late shifts (i.e. 9pm – 3am), so you will get the chance to see at least some of the headline acts.

Are we working on the main bars?

Yes. The WBC runs many of the biggest bars on site, including the ones near the stages.

Will there be other teams working with us?

It depends on the size of the bar. The large main bars at the festivals near the big stages will have several teams from different organisations working on them.

What hours are the bars open?

Latitude does not have 24-hour bars. The earliest shifts start at 11am, and the latest shifts finish around 3am. Most late shifts start at 9am and finish either at 2am or 3am. Shift start times vary depending on the demand for staff at the bars. The bars are closed between 3am-11am so that they can be cleaned and restocked, and the management staff can get some rest! There is usually a high demand for staff on the later shifts, so you may well work more than one late shift whilst you are there.



When do we find out which shifts you are working?

On the first day of the festival, when the shift rota is published. You should be aware that you work as part of your team, and your team works wherever it has been placed on the shift rota for each day of the festival. If that means missing your favourite band because your shift clashes with it – sorry, but that's how it goes. It is not possible to swap shifts. This means that we cannot guarantee that you will definitely see a particular band, although you should get to see at least some of the headline acts.

What this means in practice...

If your shift starts at 11 in the morning, you need to be at the bar at 11 in the morning, dressed, showered (hopefully!), fed, watered, not totally hung-over, and ready to work until 5 in the afternoon. If your shift starts at 9 in the evening, you show up at the bar sober and ready to work until 3 in the morning. If your shift coincides with your favourite band's headline set... you'll still have to work. You must be in a fit state to work your shifts, and allow yourself enough time when moving around the festival to get to your bar on time. It is a big festival and it can take over an hour to get from one side to the other! You must be aware that you are agreeing to work whilst you're there and this is our priority.

What happens to the money?

After the event, we submit an invoice for the hours our volunteers have worked, and the union is paid for them at the rate of £10.50 an hour. The money will then go to UNISON Northern Young Members to be used for union activities and / or causes we support.

If you would like to know more about the legal requirements for working behind the bar, please contact the Workplace Contact, and I'll send you some information.

Any more questions?

About the WBC and the Latitude festival volunteering: please contact Vikki Garratty on 01642 201080 or v.garratty@unison.co.uk.

About UNISON: please contact the UNISON Northern Office on: 0191 245 0800 or email: n.region@unison.co.uk