

Eden Frequently Asked Questions

Who can join Eden?

Anyone can join Eden! If you're a Christian, feel like you're called to some sort of mission work and most importantly if you feel God might be calling you into this (and are probably a bit terrified about that!) then get in touch!

Am I too old to join Eden?

No one is ever too old to join Eden. We have stories of volunteers on Eden who have become like adopted Grandparents and an invaluable part of the team and community. The part you play may be different to the 20-year-old team member, but it will be no less important.

Can I join a new team or an existing team?

Either! We are always starting new teams, and for each new team we need at least six team members to make it viable to launch, with it growing ideally to around 12 members. Equally, we are always looking to strengthen and grow the teams that we have.

Can I visit a team?

Yes. Part of the process of discerning whether Eden is right for you is to visit one or two teams. This should give you an idea of what it's like to be part of Eden, as well as a chance to speak to people who are part of it.

If I'm relocating, can I get to know the team or the team leader before I move?

If the team is already in existence, you will be able to visit to meet the team, team leader, and other key people before you make your decision. In the case of a new team, we'd still encourage you to visit the area, meet the local church leader and any others who are also considering joining that team.

Do I get to choose my church when I join Eden?

Eden always partners with a local church who own the vision and who are committed to the team and to the people they serve. When you join Eden, you are also becoming part of that church family. As part of your visit to a team you will be able to meet the church leader and potentially visit the church as part of your discerning process.

How long do I need to commit for?

One of the important things about something like Eden is that we embed ourselves in the community and stay for the long haul, consistently and reliably. We don't set a minimum commitment, but we ask that when you're considering Eden, that you think about it as somewhere you will stay long term.

How do I fund my time on Eden?

Team members on Eden are volunteers, and so you will need to find paid work or some other means of supporting yourself. We usually ask you to allow about 6 hours per week or around three different things to get stuck into each week for Eden (youth clubs, team time, prayer, detached work, etc depending on the team), so you should be able to have a job and do Eden at the same time.

Why are not all team members paid?

One of the key things about Eden is that we want it to be sustainable long term. Having committed volunteers alongside a paid team leader helps to achieve this goal. We take inspiration from Paul in the New Testament who was a tentmaker. We look for people who have a trade or career which enables them to be financially stable while offering their free time to local ministry. There are many other advantages to building on the tentmaking principle, including setting a great example to local young people who often have few role models who work for a living.

Is it all to do with youth work?

In the early years of Eden there was definitely an emphasis primarily on youth work. It is an easy way to establish yourself in the community, and getting to know young people is a great door-opener to the rest of the community. This means often Eden does start with youth work, but not always. Often how a team outworks mission is to do with the makeup of that specific team or area – i.e. if the team is made up of young families, then they may start a baby and toddler group. If the area has lots of food poverty, the team may start a foodbank or similar project. There really are no limits to how each team pursues mission. At the heart of it is a desire to be present in the neighbourhood – to get to know people, pursue hospitality and be intentional with the gospel in every area of life.

Is there any support or training?

Each month the whole team is encouraged to come to Formation, our regional team night where we will provide training and a chance to support and pray for each other. Once a year we also have Teams Day where we get all the teams together for a day

of input and support. We also give free tickets for team members to our annual Proximity Conference, which is a two-day conference all about urban mission.

Can I join an Eden team without moving house?

Each Eden team defines the area which they will cover, and we ask every core team member to move into this defined area. We follow Jesus' example of incarnational living, living amongst people, being close and being available.

Do you provide housing?

Most teams do not provide housing and it would be up to you to find your own housing on the estate, whether rented or bought. Sometimes there may be house shares available with other team members, or the possibility of lodging with a family, but it is up to you to work out what housing option would work best for you.

How does the joining process work?

We usually start with an informal chat to get to know you and your situation. Once a region has been identified we put you in touch with our Hub leader for that region who then will organise a visit to a specific team or a couple of teams. We also provide you with a recruitment pack which includes a prayer journal to help you process and discern what God is saying. Then comes the application. You will need to complete an application form, and then there will be an interview with the church leader, hub leader and team leader (if it is an existing team). All being well, you then have the go ahead to pursue moving in and getting going!