How to...Host a Coffee Morning / Builder’s Tea Break

Coffee mornings are a great tradition. Large or small, they are the perfect activity for raising money and awareness for Habitat. You could make your event that little bit different by hosting a builder’s tea break to link it directly with Habitat!

1. Finding a venue

Fundraising coffee mornings can be held in your home, in your workplace, or out in the local community. Choose somewhere comfortable, along with easy accessibility for those attending. You also need to consider if the venue has appropriate kitchen facilities and enough seating for your guests. Community halls and businesses may let you use their space for free or for a reduced rate.

1. Planning your fundraising coffee morning

Choose a date that is far enough in the future to allow yourself plenty of time to plan and prepare; this will also give your guests plenty of notice to be able to attend.

Coffee mornings can be simple. You need somewhere to make and serve coffee, support from baking friends and a collection box for donations. Decide whether you're going to sell coffee for a fixed price or accept a donation as a goodwill gesture. Accepting donations will allow Habitat to claim gift aid and make donations go even further!

Contact the Habitat NI office for a supply of donation envelopes, buckets, and pull up boards. If there is a suitable place to display a banner you will want one of those too!

Try to keep costs to a minimum by getting your venue for free and recruiting a team of friends to bake a selection of tasty treats!

1. Publicising your coffee morning

How you do this depends on the size of your coffee morning, but make sure you give yourself plenty of time and your guests plenty of notice.

For a smaller gathering, like in a home or small office, you can simply invite people by word of mouth or by sending invitations. Remember to make use of social media.

For a community coffee morning, you'll need a bit more publicity. You will have a greater chance of success if you spread the word wider beyond close friends and family. Make use of the Habitat resources (including a Builder’s Tea Break poster) or contact the Habitat NI office if you require any help.

1. Maximise your fundraising

You may choose to create opportunities for additional fundraising. In addition to donations for tea/coffee/ cakes etc, you can hold a raffle or auction, have a cake sale or craft stalls or even organize a car wash in the car park while your guests enjoy a cuppa! The longer people linger at your coffee morning, the more money you'll raise for Habitat!

1. Collecting donations

Make sure you collect donations in a prominent place. You could ask for a donation as people arrive and also have your collection tins prominent as people leave. Don't be ashamed to ask for donations or talk about Habitat; that's why people are there!

1. On the day

Have a team of helpers in place to help you prepare and serve! This will also free you up to chat to your guests. Be sure to arrive at the venue early to set up and start making coffee. Put up your outside banner if possible.

Decide how best to serve your coffee, this will depend on the size of your venue and the number of guests. If you are hosting a small coffee party, you can serve from one central point and ask people to help themselves. However, for larger events, you may like to seat people first and then serve guests at their table.

All that's left to do is mingle, keep the coffee pot brewing and remind people about Habitat! It is a good idea to say a few words about the work of Habitat, your involvement on a team and how the money raised will really help. If you can show a Habitat film, and make sure you have information about You may like to show a video or distribute flyers. Make use of the communication points or contact the Habitat NI office if you require any further help or advice.

1. Keep It Safe and Legal

Contact the Habitat NI office if you require insurance, take care with handling hot drinks and remember food safety laws apply when food is available so ensure you follow food hygiene procedures.

Make sure you have a safe and secure area to store any donations received and following your event bank the funds as quickly as possible.

Thank you!