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How to help others in your local area

Support your friends and neighbours

Faced with the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and people having to stay at home, numerous community-led initiatives are springing up around the country to lend a helping hand to those in need.

It can be lonely to be in your house for weeks on end, particularly older people who live on their own - so we need to do all we can to help vulnerable and isolated people stay in contact with friends and neighbours.

However, make sure you're adequately protected before helping others. If you deliver things like food shopping and medicines to friends and neighbours, arrange to deliver the items delivered to their doorstep or a place nearby instead. If they need to pay you, don't accept cash from them but make arrangements to be reimbursed online or at a later date.

Online groups

Covid-19 mutual aid groups have been formed across the UK to offer practical support for those in self-isolation, as well as phone calls. Volunteers are organising WhatsApp and Facebook groups and are holding meetings aimed at connecting people who need help with food shopping, picking up prescriptions or even dog-walking.

Postcards

You may also have heard of the **postcard idea** conceived by Becky Wass, a lecturer in Cornwall, who said she felt helpless by the pandemic and was compelled to do something to combat it.

The cards, **which are available to download online** so people can print them at home, include boxes for neighbours to write their name, address, phone number and state whether volunteers can help with picking up shopping, urgent supplies, posting mail or even just "a friendly phone call".

Community Action

Eden Project Communities have also launched the Community Action Response to encourage everyone to do what they can to support their communities during the Covid-19 crisis.

Peter Stewart, Executive Director of Eden Project Communities said:

“Neighbourly support can make a huge difference in a world fraught with challenge. Our relationships with people living nearby are the lifeblood of any healthy community and help us to stay happy and strong. Imminent difficulties may directly impact us and those living closest to us, but our neighbours, family and friends can help us overcome them. It is more important than ever that we unite and look out for each other. That’s why we’re joining forces with our friends and partners to call on everyone in our wider community to take positive and direct action to collaborate, support and care for each other in the coming weeks and months.”

Eden Project Communities are encouraging people to [download the free poster](#) and use it around your community or share via social media.

COMMUNITY ACTION RESPONSE: COVID-19

5 things you can do to make a positive difference in your community

 <p>Think of others, consider your actions & be kind</p> <p>People in every community will face the challenges of Covid-19 in some way – from needing basic provisions to help while they are unwell.</p>	 <p>Connect and reach out to your neighbours</p> <p>As self-isolation increases, we need to find new ways to stay connected and check in on one another for our physical and mental wellbeing. Share phone numbers and stay in touch.</p>	 <p>Make the most of local online groups</p> <p>Keep up to date, share information and be a positive part of your local community conversations.</p>	 <p>Support vulnerable or isolated people</p> <p>Different groups in our communities are at increased risk and social isolation and loneliness are key concerns for all ages. There are things you can do like volunteering for local support services or donating to food banks to help.</p>	 <p>Share accurate information and advice</p> <p>Support anyone who may be anxious about Covid-19. Sign post them to the correct advice from Public Health England and encourage people to follow the correct hygiene practices.</p>
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