



Keeping Well: Virtual and local volunteering

Volunteering is incredibly rewarding, particularly at this time of uncertainty and when you may have found yourself with some extra time on your hands. We've collated some volunteering opportunities which can be done either remotely from home or safely whilst following social distancing measures. Some opportunities can be started straight away, whilst others may require you to be vetted or trained before you begin.

Local support for vulnerable people

In many local areas, a network of voluntary supporters has been established to help ensure elderly and vulnerable people still receive necessary food and supplies:

- [4000 mutual aid groups](#) have been set up to help coordinate community support
- [A match-making service between those offering assistance and those needing help](#)
- You can also check your local authority website to see if your area has a network

Food bank donations

Food banks have been reporting food shortages during Covid-19, so they need donations more than ever. Find your local food bank:

- [A network of 1300 food banks around the UK](#)
- [A network of 800 independent food banks](#)

NHS and community health

- Become a [Community Reserve Volunteer with the Red Cross](#)
- Volunteer for the [NHS Voluntary Responders programme](#) (recruitment for this is currently paused, but may resume soon)
- Help contribute to vital Covid-19 research by [tracing your symptoms on this tracker app](#)

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Virtual support

- [Support people via text](#) - Shout is a 24/7 UK crisis text service available for times when people feel they need immediate support
- [Provide virtual support for young people under 25](#)
- [Provide telephone-based befriending for the elderly](#)
- [Provide 'Telephone Buddy' services for older people](#)

Skills-based volunteering

It's a great time to put your skills and expertise to good use:

- [Use your skills to help peace and development projects around the world](#)
- [Use your skills to help cancer charities](#)

Online research

If you're looking to do something that engages your brain and makes use of your research skills, then there are a range of opportunities:

- [Complete online research projects for The Smithsonian Institute](#)
- [Help map unmapped areas to help humanitarian aid](#)
- [Put your birdwatching skills to good use and contribute to biodiversity projects](#)

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Wilson James supports Duke of Edinburgh Award in their amazing work. The charity is continuing to enable people to complete their Duke of Edinburgh Awards during the COVID situation, through their DofE with a Difference programme. This includes [lots of great ideas for alternative ways to complete volunteer and skills and physical challenges](#) during Covid-19.