

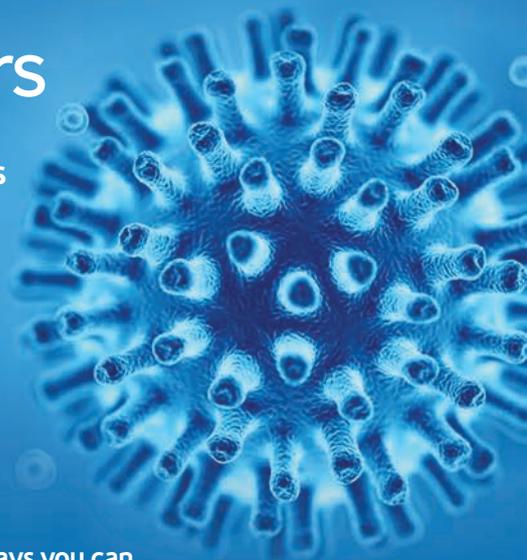
Advice for new community initiatives and good neighbours

A lot of new community initiatives have started to appear as residents in west Cheshire show true spirit and unite to tackle the virus.

Anyone can decide to set up a community initiative, but it's important everyone is kept safe. There isn't time to do the usual checks on people who want to volunteer, but all groups can do things to make sure vulnerable people are kept safe from the virus and aren't exploited by people who want to take advantage of them.

There are established charities and community organisations out there, with volunteers who have had background checks and experience helping other people. You might want to think about joining one of these and the coordinated community response can help direct you to them.

Being a good neighbour and micro volunteering are some of the most important ways you can be part of the community response, particularly as more people start to self isolate. There are some top tips you should keep in mind.



Don't take on too much

- **Focus on a local area** – perhaps support people on your street so you don't start something you can't sustain.
- **Support people you know well** – if you stick to an area where people will recognise you, they are more likely to think your offer is genuine.
- **Don't be offended** – some people will be cautious so, if they refuse your offer of help, try not to take it personally.
- **Stick to what you're comfortable with** – don't ever be afraid of saying no to something.

Follow guidance and stay safe

- **Stay in when you're supposed to** – if you need to self isolate, make sure you only volunteer from the comfort of your home and follow the self isolation guidance.
- **Social distance** – when you are working with other people, follow the social distancing guidance, staying at least two metres apart.
- **Wash your hands** – make sure you wash your hands for at least 20 seconds before and after coming into contact with other people.
- **Don't enter people's homes** – leave any deliveries outside of the house.
- **Keep an eye out for suspicious activity** – some people are using COVID-19 as a way to scam others so, if you spot anything suspicious, please report it.
- **Don't handle money** – if you don't know the person well, please don't either receive or give money for shopping or other things. Certainly don't give away your PIN number.



Join the community response

It is important that new community initiatives get on board with the coordinated community response to give west Cheshire the best chance of fighting COVID-19 together, while avoiding duplication, safeguarding vulnerable people, sharing high-quality, up-to-date information and making sure no community is left behind.

To register your support, visit: cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/communityresponders

To find out more about the community initiatives you can join, visit: livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk