



Volunteer form home/ COVID-19

## Volunteering and coronavirus – how can you help?

Here's how you can volunteer to help and support others during the coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic.

Before volunteering, it is crucial that you follow current government advice to stay at home wherever possible and strictly limit face-to-face contact. Only services which are essential should be provided in communities.

It is critically important that you consider your safety and that of others at this time. NHS inform provides guidance on when to self-isolate and on how best to avoid COVID-19, at home and in other places.

Please note that opportunities to volunteer for voluntary organisations and public services are very limited at this time. More volunteers will be required over the coming weeks and as these opportunities become available they will be added here.

Meantime thank you and please Think Local, Act Local.

## Act locally!

### Look out for your neighbours

The simplest thing everyone can do right now is look out for their neighbours and offer help with shopping and other errands. If you must stay at home but feel well enough to help, you can volunteer remotely, for example to befriend people who are isolated people or share official information, such as from the NHS Inform or Scottish Government, by telephone or online.

It's not just about neighbours who are shielding, self-isolating or physically distancing from others. Other people in the community who might also appreciate help are:

- stretched medical staff and volunteers
- staff and volunteers in key worker roles
- supermarket workers
- delivery drivers.



## Other ways to help charities

All charities are going to be stretched. Lots of fundraising events that would've taken place have been cancelled. At the same time, many people who volunteer may not be able to - especially if they're being advised to stay at home.

The best thing to do is keep supporting the causes you care about. The Scottish public are incredibly generous and we really need their help to keep our work going. Any support you can give them, including as a volunteer or trustee would be incredibly valuable.

Volunteer Centre Western Isles can provide you with advice on becoming a trustee with a local charity.

You can also volunteer from home!

## Home Volunteering

Please contact us on [info@volunteercentrewi.org](mailto:info@volunteercentrewi.org) if you would like further information on the home volunteering opportunities below.

**Lewis and Harris Befriending** – telephone befriender

**Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland** – telephone befriender role

**Caraidean Uibhist** – telephone befriender role in Uist

**Silver Line** – national telephone befriending

**Friends of Raigmore Hospital** – Knit, crochet or sew to make baby cardigans, teddies, etc.

The gift shop in the hospital is temporary closed, when it reopens raising funds for our hospital will be more important than ever, if you knit, crochet or sew and have wool, material etc at home would you think about making baby cardigans, teddies etc for us and saving them at home until it opens? You can then pass garments etc on to VCWI offices in Barra, Uist, Harris and Lewis for sending off, if you wish, or send them off personally.

**Reach Volunteering** – professionals skills-based volunteering

<https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/i-want-volunteer>

Do you have three or more years' professional experience?

Our skills-based volunteers support charities as trustees, on short term projects or with an ongoing commitment. In the current Covid-19 (coronavirus) crisis is presenting new challenges for many charities in areas like remote working, moving services online, financial planning and HR. We can help you find volunteers with expertise in all these areas and more.



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### **Be My Eyes**

<https://www.bemyeyes.com>

Volunteer by downloading an app which connects you to a blind or partially sighted person who needs visual assistance via a live video call around the world.

### **Free Rice**

<http://freerice.com>

Freerice is a 100% non-profit website that is owned by and supports the United Nations World Food Programme. It has two goals:

- Provide education to everyone for free.
- Help end world hunger by providing rice to hungry people for free.

Each time you answer a question right, the banner ad that you see generates enough money for the World Food Programme to buy 10 grains of rice to help reach Zero Hunger.

### **Nature's Calendar**

<https://naturescalendar.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

What effect has recent weather had on wildlife? Does climate change affect timings in nature? Join Nature's Calendar and help scientists discover answers to these questions.

### **Post Pals**

<http://www.postpals.co.uk/>

The charity helps you to 'Post a Smile on a Sick Child's Face' by the sending of cards, letters, emails and little gifts to seriously ill children and their siblings in the UK. Letters are not sent directly to children.

### **Zooniverse**

<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects>

The Zooniverse is the world's largest and most popular platform for people-powered research. This research is made possible by volunteers — more than a million people around the world who come together to assist professional researchers. At the Zooniverse, anyone can be a volunteer! Help with research etc. for projects across science, humanities and more.