



SUFFOLK



GOOD

NEIGHBOUR



NETWORK

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE  
TO SETTING UP YOUR  
GOOD NEIGHBOUR  
SCHEME

A Project funded by



Toolkit produced by



Good Neighbour Schemes are usually entirely volunteer led community groups, that aim to enhance life in their community by providing Good Neighbour Volunteers to local people that need a little help or friendship.

Community Action Suffolk co-ordinates the network of Good Neighbour Schemes across the county and supports each scheme to set up. However, as Good Neighbour Schemes are usually independent of any other organisation, it is essential that those leading them have the confidence and information to run their scheme. Community Action Suffolk's involvement will be to work 'alongside' the group encouraging and empowering them to develop and resolve challenges themselves, and supporting them to make a positive difference in their own communities.

This toolkit is to help guide a community group in setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme. The process can be broken down into 3 different stages - Understanding your community and growing support, Setting up the Scheme, Keeping it going and valuing yourselves and volunteers.

Please contact the Good Neighbour Network Development Officer if you have any further questions or queries.



## **So you are interested in setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme!**

Congratulations and thank you for making the first step to making a difference in your community! We think that Good Neighbour Schemes are rather special and it's great that you would like to know more.

Good Neighbour Schemes bring many benefits to communities and individuals, helping people to connect with neighbours and an opportunity to improve their wellbeing.

The five ways to wellbeing was developed in 2008 as an evidence-based, simple framework for looking after your day-to-day mental health and general wellbeing. Think of them a bit like the five-a-day fruit and veg message, which is great for physical health, but in this case good for your wider wellbeing.

# 5 Ways to Wellbeing for Good Neighbours

**CONNECT**

with your neighbours, develop these relationships through a Good Neighbour Scheme

**LEARN**

new skills and from other volunteers through the Good Neighbour Schemes

**TAKE  
NOTICE**

of how you are feeling ask the Good Neighbour Scheme if they can give a little help

**GIVE**

a little of your time and skills to a Good Neighbour Scheme

**BE ACTIVE**

by volunteering with a Good Neighbour Scheme - dog walking, baking, gardening etc

# Contents

## Stage 1

### **Understanding your Community and Growing Support.**

This section will focus on making sure that there is a need and local support for a Good Neighbour Scheme. Its a great way for those involved to get to know each other and understand what is already going on in the community.

## Stage 2

### **Setting up your Scheme**

Once you have agreed that there is a need for a Good Neighbour Scheme you move into the stage of forming your committee and putting into place the procedures that will ensure your scheme operates efficiently and safely. There are lots of templates and guidance available from Community Action Suffolk to help you with this stage.

## Stage 3 Keeping momentum and Volunteer Recognition

This stage is about keeping your scheme going and ensuring that you and your volunteers enjoy being part of it and that those that need to access a Good Neighbour Scheme do.

## Stage One

### Step One - GENERATE INTEREST AND FIND YOUR GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Find a few people in your local area who are also interested in starting a group. Talk to your neighbours and friends in your community. Visit local groups and talk to your local parish/community/town council. Use social media such as your local Facebook community page or NextDoor the social networking service for neighbourhoods. Post that you are looking for people to support you in setting up a scheme.

When you have a few interested people, arrange a meeting, it doesn't have to be too formal, perhaps in a local café or pub and invite the Good Neighbour Network Development Officer to explain more.



## Step Two - FORM A STEERING GROUP

From the neighbours that you have recruited, organise and commit yourselves to form a steering group. There is no need to appoint roles at this point as you will just be working together to ensure that there is a **need** and **support** for a Good Neighbour Scheme in your community.

## Step Three - LOGO

Ask your Good Neighbour Network Development Officer for a logo to use. We encourage you to use the design of the Suffolk Good Neighbour Network as it will help you to be recognised and feel part of our larger network of schemes, but we will personalise the text on it for your scheme/group.



## **Step Four - MARKET RESEARCH**

A simple questionnaire can help you see if there is a local need and volunteers for a potential scheme. There is little point in putting your efforts into setting up a scheme if you don't have the support of your wider community! The form can include questions for people who may want to use the scheme as well as volunteering or both!

The Good Neighbour Network Development Officer can provide you with a template questionnaire to use and adapt. We advise circulating it to key groups in your area with a secure place for the forms to be returned to. You can also produce and share an electronic version through SurveyMonkey. Your council or a local business may help with the printing costs for the questionnaires.

You may also want to get comments from key people in your community who can comment on behalf of others or from their own experience – such as GP Practice Manager, Post Office worker, Vicar, Library staff, head teacher at local schools. For example the GP surgery may tell you that they see a number of patients who are lonely or isolated.



## Step Five - ANALYSE YOUR SURVEY RESULTS

You do not need to receive hundreds of responses but you'll want to see a healthy response showing that people in your community will use a Good Neighbour Scheme as well as an encouraging number of people wanting to volunteer. You might be surprised by the type of help and activities that people might like from your scheme, such as befriending, form filling, simple everyday tasks, or lifts to medical appointments.

By asking for people to leave their details on your survey, you will be half way there to recruiting your Good Neighbour Volunteers! To set up you don't need lots of volunteers, and it can be more manageable to start smaller and build on what you offer to residents over time and as your Scheme gains confidence and more volunteers.



## Stage 2

### Step One - FORM YOUR COMMITTEE

You may find that people have different skills and strengths that lend themselves to various roles on the committee. Agree who will make up your committee and take on specific roles.

Suggested are:

Chairperson, Treasurer (for most GNS there don't tend to be many financial transactions through the year), Secretary, Safe Guarding Lead (this is essential but could be taken on alongside another role in the committee), Committee members.

However, this is your scheme, you may want to do something a bit different!

The Good Neighbour Network Development Officer has a sample Constitution for you to use and adapt, to help you outline your group aims, activities, and the rules you will abide by.



## Step Two - APPLY FOR FUNDING

You will need to raise around £800 to set up your scheme and will probably need £200-300 annually going forward (see estimate costs below). Now that you have your data from your market research you can write a funding letter explaining why there is a need for a scheme in your community. The Good Neighbour Network Development Officer can help you with this. You could ask your local parish/community/town council and district council initially for funding. For other ideas please search for Funding4Suffolk on the internet or Suffolk Community Foundation, and have a chat with the Good Neighbour Network Development Officer.

## Step Three - SET UP A BANK ACCOUNT

While you are applying for funding you can start setting up your bank account. This can take a little while so worth doing this as early as possible. Be aware that Building Society accounts can be restrictive, and offer limited services, particularly online.

### Typical Setup Costs

Insurance	£160
DBS checks	£240
ID badges	£80
Mobile Phone	£125
Printing and Misc.	£170
Safe and Sound	£75
<b>Total</b>	<b>£850</b>

## Step Four - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

To join the Network you will need to have a few robust policies to help your scheme operate in a safe and transparent manner. A Constitution and Safeguarding Policy are a must. You are moving your community neighbourliness towards a more formal structure; potentially helping vulnerable or 'at risk' people in your community so some guiding and supportive policies will help you, your scheme, volunteers and those using the service to be safeguarded.

We have sample policies and procedures for you to use which your Good Neighbour Network Development Officer will provide you with. The policies strike a balance between encouraging common sense and guidelines to help safeguard and avoid exploitation of volunteers/clients. The Safeguarding policy will ask for you to appoint a Safeguarding Lead, this may be best suited to somebody on your committee who already has an understanding of Safeguarding, but not to worry as training is available to help provide this knowledge and build confidence on the topic.

There is also a Privacy Notice to help you comply with GDPR.

## **Step Five - INSURANCE COVER**

Start getting your quotes for Public Liability insurance, Employers Liability insurance (remembering that volunteers will be considered as employees whilst engaged in authorised work) and where needed, insurance cover for property, money, management liability etc.

Community Action Suffolk have an insurance team that can offer policies for Good Neighbour Schemes. If you would like to explore this, you can contact them by e mail at [insurance@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk](mailto:insurance@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk) or by phone on 01473 345303. Alternatively, you can find companies who can quote by way of an internet search. Do read the small print as it will set out what the policy will ensure your scheme for, and always get a few quotes to compare coverage and value. For example some policies may not insure volunteers to use a lawnmower if they are over the age of 65!

Volunteer drivers should be covered under their own motor insurance, but will need to inform their insurer that they intent to become a volunteer driver. There is not usually an additional charge for this, but drivers will need to check with their individual insurers. Our Toolkit has a bit more info on this.

## **Step Six - GET SHOPPING!**

Once your funding has been secured and is in your bank account you can purchase your mobile phone, PAYG is fine. You may only need to purchase a SIM card and top-up if you've had a second hand phone in good working order donated to your Scheme for this use (ensure any saved files, data and texts are cleared of the phone before receiving it). You should consider the best network for signal in your area.

You will probably want a petty cash box for the float, a lockable A4 filing box for confidential papers, A4 hardback book or diary for recording the tasks.

Using some simple IT solutions such as a basic task spreadsheet and keeping copies of your policies as files may be the best solution for schemes with volunteers that are comfortable using a computer or tablet, as it can cut down on paper use and storage. In these cases having a password protected backup hard drive or memory stick is a good idea. You could even see if anyone is willing to donate a good second hand laptop or tablet to your scheme to use for this (always ensure this is appropriately cleared of past user info and data and make sure you setup some internet security and password protection).

## **Step Seven - MEET ANOTHER GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME!**

Now might be the time to meet up with a scheme that has been up and running for a while – to learn from them and how they operate. The Good Neighbour Scheme Development Officer can put you in contact with a local scheme.

## **Step Eight - RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS**

You will already have a stock of contacts for potential volunteers from your survey. If you need a few more you could use Social Media, have a think about all the ways that you can reach potential volunteers, community leaflet drops can prove affective. How about arranging a Volunteer Information Drop in Session? You can then explain more about the scheme and sign up the volunteers officially – you can do the DBS checks at this point or arrange another date for the DBS checking.

**We have a template Volunteer Information Pack that you can adapt to help induct your volunteers. Ask your Good Neighbour Scheme Development Officer for a copy.**

## **Step Nine- DBS AND ID BADGES**

DBS is needed where volunteers are carrying out a regulated activity (driving to medical appointments and handling clients' money e.g. by shopping for them). Community Action Suffolk can help administrate the DBS checks for you at £12 per volunteer check, and the process is largely online. The Good Neighbour Network Development Officer can put you in contact with CAS's DBS team who will arrange your scheme with access to the CAS DBS Check portal and provide you with guidance and support with the process.

The CAS DBS teams will be able to add a couple of committee members to the portal and explain how to do the applications and ID verification so in the future you can do the DBS administration online, before submitting the online DBS application to CAS for checking (fee still applies).

Community Action Suffolk can also provide you with a photo ID badge for each volunteers at a charge of £3 + vat a badge including lanyard.



## Step Ten - TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS

We do not want you or your Good Neighbour volunteers to feel over-professionalised.

However, you will want everyone involved to feel confident and informed about what to do if something does go wrong or there is a concern. If your Safeguarding Lead has not already attended accredited Safeguarding training we advise they do so. This can be done through Community Action Suffolk or through Suffolk County Council's Suffolk CPD website.

Community Action Suffolk have developed a 'GNS keeping people safe' session that is about 90 minutes long as an introduction to Safeguarding and covers health and safety, lone working and professional boundaries for your volunteers. This is a nice way for volunteers to meet each other too, even if held online, rather than in person.

Please speak to the Good Neighbour Network Development Officer about Safe and Sound, for sessions run in person there will be a small cost.



## Step Eleven - ADMINISTRATION

You will have gained a lot of information by meeting a neighbouring Good Neighbour Scheme, so now you need to formalise how you will keep your records. You may want to use a diary, formulate your own sheets, or use a digital spreadsheet. It is important that whatever you choose to do complies with your GDPR and your privacy notice.

Good Neighbour Schemes should only collate as much basic personal information as you need to carry out requested tasks effectively, and any information needs to be kept safe and dealt with, and disposed of suitably and inline with GDPR.

We can provide you with a template sheet to record your tasks. Community Action Suffolk will want to collate some basic statistics from you so that the true impact of Good Neighbour Schemes across Suffolk can be celebrated, understood and replicated. We will share a basic spreadsheet and surveys with you yearly to help gather this information.



## Step Twelve - PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Promotional material will help you get your scheme known locally. Flyers, pop-up banners and even fridge magnets are great ways of doing this.

Maybe a local business will sponsor you?

Your Good Neighbour Network Development Officer has a template for ordering pop up banners.



**SNape  
GOOD  
NEIGHBOUR  
SCHEME**



Making a difference to the  
quality of life in our  
community

**Tel: 07541 754426**

Our volunteers will help you with:

- Lifts + support to doctors / hospital appointment
- Friendship
- Dog walking or checking on a pet if owner unwell
- Help with computer / tablet / TV
- Other activities as requested / agreed

Part of The Suffolk Good Neighbour Network which is National Lottery funded and run by Community Action Suffolk



## **Congratulations! You are ready to Launch!**

You may decide to open your scheme with a big BANG! By inviting the community and other local organisations and supporters to a party or community event.

You may like to pop a story in the local newspaper to announce your launch.

Or you may decide to do a soft launch by sharing your scheme's telephone number with your community and see how things go!

Whatever you decide to do, make sure you congratulate yourselves for the hard work you have put in and the difference you are making in your community.



## **Stage 3 Keeping Momentum and Volunteer Recognition**

### **Step One - KEEPING MOMENTUM**

Quite often we think that recruiting the volunteers is the hard part, actually it can be encouraging local people to pick up the phone and use your scheme for all kinds of reasons. Such as pride, independence, trust and confidence.

It's important that as a scheme you talk to the people in your community about what you are about in order to help build up trust and understanding about what your offer is, and why you do what you do.

Encourage everyone to play a part. It maybe that an older person has knowledge, a skill, or a story to share and could do some befriending themselves.

Or somebody else might be able to do some baking for an event or cook an extra meal for a neighbour who is unwell.

People like to be needed and their skills used and acknowledged. A Good Neighbour Scheme is a wonderful way to bring out and share these gifts, skills and interests with your local community and your neighbours.

## Step Two - VALUING YOUR VOLUNTEERS (AND YOURSELVES!)

Think about how you will ensure your volunteers feel valued and enjoy being part of your scheme - it's always a good idea to make sure volunteers feel communicated with clearly, listened to, and supported as necessary. Setting clear expectations of tasks, checking-in to make sure things are going OK and that they are happy with what's being asked of them, and offering thanks for their time and commitment all helps towards making your volunteers feeling appreciated and valued.

Planning volunteer get-togethers, be it online or in person, is a great way to celebrate and bond your volunteers.

You could ask your volunteers once a year "would you recommend being a Good Neighbour volunteer to others?"

This is a great way to understand if being part of the scheme is something they enjoy and value and why.

There are various awards in Suffolk that you could consider nominating volunteers for. The Suffolk Community Awards (there is even a Suffolk Good Neighbour Award!), The High Sheriff of Suffolk Awards, etc.



**SUFFOLK COMMUNITY  
AWARDS**

RECOGNISING AND CELEBRATING THOSE WHO HAVE IMPROVED THE QUALITY  
OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS OF SUFFOLK

## Step Three - PART OF A NETWORK

Now you are up and running you will be promoted by Community Action Suffolk as being part of the Suffolk Good Neighbour Network.

You will receive regular Good Neighbour Network bulletins and CAS newsletters as well as having access to support from Community Action Suffolk.

There will be opportunities to take part in learning and support sessions, and to meet up with other Good Neighbour Network members to share ideas, successes and challenges.

You can access your network members area and resources on [www.SuffolkGoodNeighbours.co.uk](http://www.SuffolkGoodNeighbours.co.uk) and share your Good Neighbour posts and stories via our Facebook page @SuffolkGNS. Ask your Good Neighbour Network Development Officer for more details.



## Checklist

- Form a small working/steering group
- Carry out a Good Neighbour Scheme survey
- Form your committee and sign your constitution
- Secure funding and open a bank account
- Put in place your policies and Privacy Notice
- Purchase your insurance
- Purchase phone & other items you might need
- Recruit your volunteers
- DBS and ID badges for volunteers
- Volunteer Information Pack
- Meet a local Good Neighbour Scheme
- Put into place your admin systems
- Plan how you will recognise your volunteers
- Agree your promotional materials
- Safe and Sound workshop for volunteers
- Advertise your scheme
- Launch!



## **Useful Contacts**

### **Training**

Community Action Suffolk Learning Zone  
[www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/training/](http://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/training/)

### **Funding**

Suffolk Community Foundation  
Funding4Suffolk

### **Volunteer Recruitment**

[www.volunteersuffolk.org.uk](http://www.volunteersuffolk.org.uk)

### **Transport**

Connecting Communities [www.communities.suffolkonboard.com/](http://www.communities.suffolkonboard.com/)

### **Older People**

Age UK [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)  
Dementia Together [www.dementia-together.com/](http://www.dementia-together.com/)

### **Rural Loneliness and Isolation**

Rural Coffee Caravan [www.ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk](http://www.ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk)

### **Carers**

Suffolk Family Carers [www.suffolkfamilycarers.org/](http://www.suffolkfamilycarers.org/)

### **Fuel Poverty**

[www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/warm-homes-healthy-people/](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/warm-homes-healthy-people/)

### **Families in Need**

HomeStart Suffolk [www.homestartinsuffolk.org/](http://www.homestartinsuffolk.org/)

### **Safeguarding - Customer First**

0808 800 4005

I enjoy telling people that they must always ask for help and we will where we can and it helps them feel reassured

It gives me a sense of community spirit, enabling people to live fuller lives, helping local shops and services improve footfall. Friendship is the best medicine!

It makes me feel useful and it's satisfying to see people helped with their independence

Good Neighbours have been a great help to me, especially trips to the hospital and lovely jolly afternoon teas at the hall,  
Thank you

A wonderful feeling of community and friendship. If I need help I know I just have to pick up the phone.

The Good Neighbour Scheme brings the village together for friendship and a very happy time together.

**COMMUNITY  
ACTION  
SUFFOLK**



Strengthening the voluntary and community sector