

SPRING FAMILY VOLUNTEERING



create family time that gives back



Volunteer Centre
North Tyneside



VODA

VOLUNTEER FROM HOME

Are you looking for fun ways to make a difference in your community this Spring?

This booklet includes a range of simple activities that support local people and the environment. They are designed to help you spend time together as a family while doing something positive for others.

Many of the activities involve craft materials, simple tools or spending time outdoors. Children must be supervised at all times, and it is the responsibility of a parent, carer or other responsible adult to make sure they take part safely. Please take care when using scissors, tools or any other equipment, and choose activities that are suitable for your child's age and abilities.

You can find more volunteering opportunities at:
voda.getvolunteering.co.uk

make a card

If you love being creative, then you could try making a card for someone you care about, such as a friend or neighbour. You can also choose to make a card for someone you don't know who may need cheering up. There are a few different charities that accept these. **Cards for Bravery** and **Post Pals** collect cards for children in hospital, whilst **Festive Friends** collects Christmas cards for the elderly. Find their websites here:

www.cardsforbravery.com | postpals.co.uk
philippagriffin3.wixsite.com/christmas

Friendship Bracelets

A good way to brighten someone's day is by bringing them something you have personally made! You could try making **friendship bracelets** to help cheer up friends and family or sell them to fundraise for a charity. To make them you can braid together some string or simply use beads and elastic. There is plenty of inspiration online!



VOLUNTEER FROM HOME

make a Bird Feeder



Bird feeders are so **easy to make** with materials you probably already have! You just need a plastic bottle, string, scissors, a pin and some sticks. Take care with scissors - an adult will need to do these steps.

1. Start with a clean bottle and remove the cap. Then pierce the bottom with a pin to make small drainage holes.
2. Use the pin again to make two small holes on opposite sides of the bottle near the base. You can use the scissors to make them wider.
3. Push a stick through the holes to make a perch. You should have around 5cm on either side.
4. Just above the perch, use your scissors to cut a small hole (around the size of a 5p coin) to make a feeding hole.
5. Pierce the bottle with the pin on the bottle neck on opposite sides. You can widen it with scissors.
6. Thread the string through these holes to hang it up. Then fill with bird feed and replace the cap.

Seed Balls



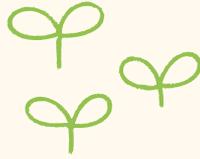
Seed Balls are a fun way to plant new **flowers**. All you need is flour, soil, water and some native wildflower seeds.

1. Mix 10 parts soil to 1 part flour in a bowl.
2. Add water to the mix in very small amounts until it becomes a sticky dough.
3. Roll the mix into balls that are roughly the size of a ping pong ball. Or make smaller ones, the size of a marble.
4. Roll the balls in the seed mix to cover the outsides.
5. Leave them to dry out for a day and then plant or throw them in your garden!



VOLUNTEER FROM HOME

Tetrapack Planters



Rather than throwing away tetrapack juice cartons, you could try transforming them into planters.

Make sure you thoroughly clean them out and then carefully cut off the top for an upright planter, or the side for a wider planter. Take care with scissors. An adult will need to do this step. Then decide how you want to decorate them. You could try papier-mâché (old strips of paper mixed with glue or flour and water), paint, ribbons, googly eyes or whatever takes your fancy.

Litter Picking

A really easy way to make a difference in your local area is to clean up litter! Make sure you have protective equipment like gloves, boots and litter picking sticks, and beware of hazards such as broken glass. You may also want to wear high-vis jackets if you are near a road. You could even take before and after photos to see your progress!

Little Library

If you have some old **books** you no longer need, why not take them to a little library and swap them? A Little Library is a book exchange point. If you take a book, then you leave one in return. There are a few in the local area, or you can set up your own.

You can find existing ones at The Rising Sun Country Park, Jesmond Vale and on Benton Road in Newcastle. To start your own, you just need a covered place that protects the books from different weather types. Find more inspiration at: littlefreelibraryproject.co.uk



COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Big Lunch

The Big Lunch is an annual event that celebrates **community** and **neighbours** coming together. All you have to do is take part in a lunch with people from your community. This could take the form of a garden gathering, street party, park picnic or whatever suits you best! This year, the 'Big Lunch' takes place from **Friday, the 5th of June to Monday, the 8th of June**. To find out more information, you can check out the link here:

www.edenprojectcommunities.com/the-big-lunch

The Great Big Green week

The Great Big Green Week is an annual event that was made to help us appreciate **nature** and help to fight climate change. This year it takes place from the **6th to the 14th of June**. Throughout the week, you are encouraged to try to take part in or organise local events that help to benefit our planet. For example, you organise a clothes swap, beach clean, litter pick-up, or nature walk. To look for events or find inspiration for your own events, you can find out more on the Climate Coalition website:

www.greatbiggreenweek.com/get_involved

Great British Beach clean

The Great British Beach Clean is an annual event that happens every September. In 2026, it will run from Friday the 18th to Sunday the 27th. It is run by the **Marine Conservation Society**. Closer to the date, the events will appear on their website. It's a good opportunity for family time and a way to show some love to our beautiful coast! Most beach cleans will open to all ages but require under-16s to have a parent or guardian with them. Visit their website: www.mcsuk.org



The Big Garden Bird watch

The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch is the world's largest garden wildlife survey. Every year, hundreds of thousands of nature lovers take part, helping to build a picture of how garden birds are doing. It takes place in January each year. Find out more here: www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch/info

CHARITIES TO SUPPORT



RSPCA

The RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) has a lot to offer for people of all ages. Over-18s can sign up to simply be a '**Fundraiser**' or under-18s can sign up as a '**Young Fundraiser**'. To raise money, you could have a bake sale, offer to do things like pet sitting/ wash a car or attend a car boot sale.

They also have some animal-friendly crafts and quizzes online suitable for kids. Slightly older family members could choose to volunteer. For example, they have spots open for the **Wildlife Friends** scheme, which could count towards a **Duke of Edinburgh** award. Check out their website here:

www.rspca.org.uk

wildlife watch

Wildwatch is a branch of the Wildlife Trust that focuses on opportunities for families and children. They offer many different events throughout the year as well as resources on their website for eco-friendly things you can do at home!

You can browse activities on the website below:

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/activities





The RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) offers a **Wild Challenge** which you can join as a family. In order to take part you just sign up on their website and pick 3 different activities to complete. These include things like birdwatching, rock pooling or nature walks. The RSPB site also offers instructions on many at-home activities which can help to protect wildlife. You can find out more on the site here: www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities

Surfers Against Sewage

Surfers Against Sewage is a charity that helps to keep our beautiful **oceans** clean. There are many ways to get involved, including joining the **Million Mile Clean**. This is an annual event in which volunteers rally together to clean up trash in beaches, rivers, parks, city streets or even mountains. They are family-friendly events; however, you need to be 16 or over in order to register to clean. Under-16s must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. This activity can also count towards a **Duke of Edinburgh Award!** To learn more, you can check out their site: www.sas.org.uk/plastic-pollution/million-mile-clean

British Red cross

The British Red Cross is a charity that helps people in emergencies both in the UK and abroad. To support them, you can try **Fundraising**. There are loads of ways to do this, including hosting a '**Pour of Cup of Kindness**' event. This could take the form of a tea party, coffee morning or afternoon tea. They have online packs on their website to help you get started. Learn more on their website: www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved



With thanks to VODA volunteer Ellie Avery for creating this resource.