neighbourly

Projects Starter Guide

August 2016

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Is finding volunteers a chore? Does meeting your fundraising goals feel like an uphill struggle?

As a charity or community project, getting funds and resources to support your valuable cause is vital for your future sustainability. The question is: is there a way to make this easier?

Volunteering at Seaton Deleval Hall, near Newcastle

Well, you've come to the right place – Neighbourly is a social network that helps charities and local causes connect with people and businesses that can help. Best of all, it's completely free!
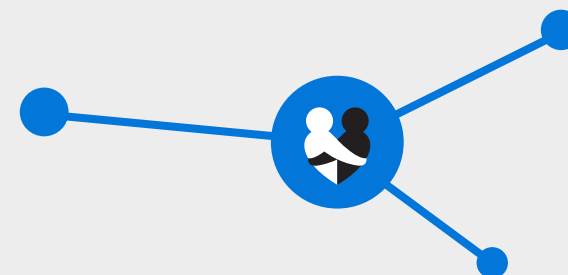
Many businesses want to support local projects with funds, volunteer time or food surplus, and individuals want to lend a hand to causes they care about. But finding those causes isn't always easy. Neighbourly is the online platform that brings this all together, making life better for everyone.

You can use Neighbourly to raise awareness, fundraise for your latest campaigns and rally volunteers together for specific tasks. You can also connect with food businesses to pick up their unsold food at the end of the working day.

This starter guide will kick start your Neighbourly journey, showing you how to create a project page and help you make your projects, fundraising and volunteer events a success.

It really is an exciting time to join Neighbourly, and having an active project on the site could prove an effective tool for supporting your charity's mission. Together we can spark a movement where we can share our stories, get inspired to help others and bring communities closer together.

Let's get stuck in!

The Neighbourly team

Your profile page

First, create an individual profile.

Head on over to **neighbourly.com** and click 'sign up' in the top right-hand corner. Select 'Charities, projects & volunteers' on the following page. If you have a social media profile, you can register for Neighbourly using Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Yammer.

Simply click on the relevant channel and select 'authorise app' – don't worry, Neighbourly won't post anything on your profile. It just makes sign-up and future log-ins even quicker!
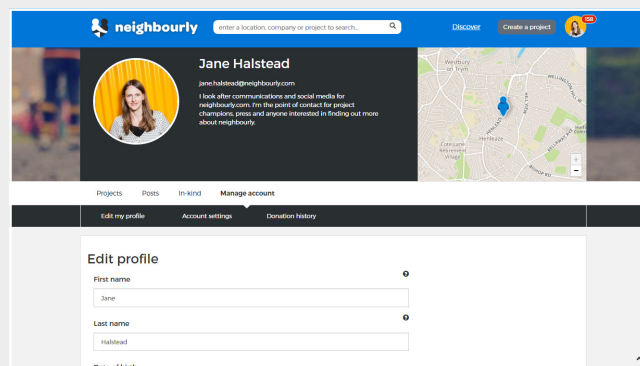
Next, fill in your details: name, address, email address and password. You can create a rough map location using your postcode, or by clicking on the map. You'll be sent an email to verify your account. Click the link in the email, and then you're all set! Check your spam folder if the email doesn't arrive in your inbox.

Now, upload a profile picture and short bio. Profile photos help other users see who is managing and supporting the projects. A bright, clear photo makes your profile much more personable, and a bio helps people understand what they might want to contact you about.
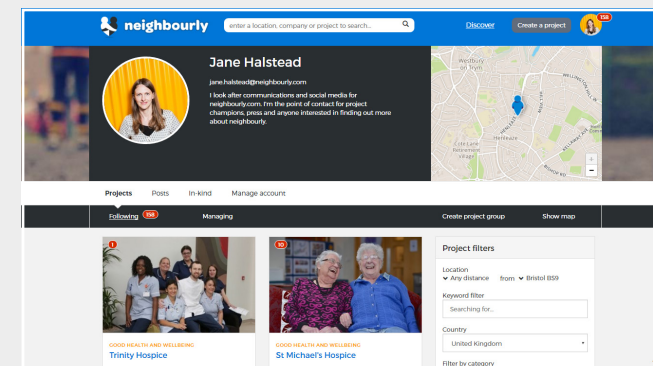
Navigating your dashboard

So far, you've got your profile picture, bio, and next to it an approximate map location. Below that, you've got three tabs: Projects, Posts and Manage account.

Under Projects, you have a further two tabs: Following and Managing. Since you're not following any projects yet, you'll find a bright blue button under the Following tab inviting you to do so. Why not discover some great causes in your local community? Use keywords to search if you're looking for something particular, and click the 'Follow' button on the project pages you like. These will now appear under your Following tab.

Neighbourly dashboard

If you ever find yourself a little lost in the wealth of projects, you can always go back to your profile by clicking your picture in the top right hand corner, and selecting 'My dashboard' from the dropdown menu.

Neighbourly dashboard

The Managing tab is where you will look after your project page. We'll show you how to make one of these in the next section.
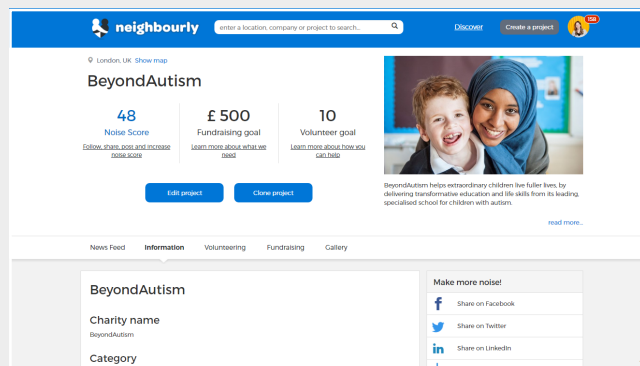
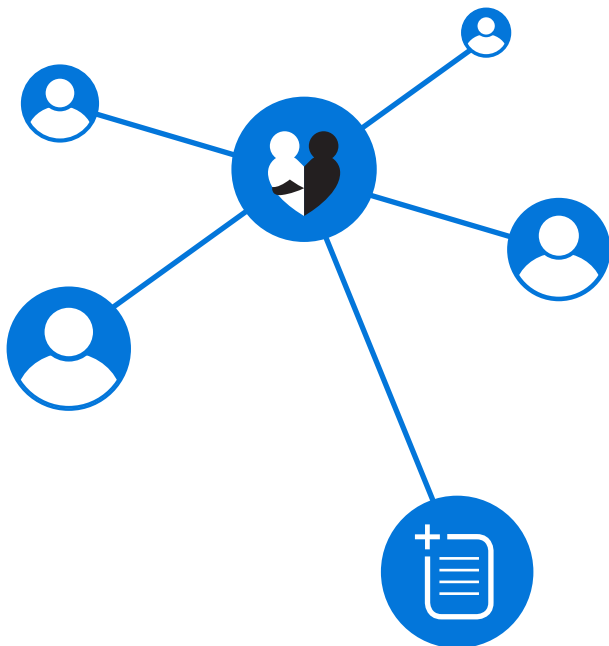Under the Posts tab, you can see your activity. If you've just followed a project, you'll find it here. Finally, under Manage account you can edit your profile details, link your other social media accounts, and keep track of your donation history for other projects.

> "Through the use of the Neighbourly website, we've been able to raise our profile in a different dimension."
>
> **Anya,**
> Re:store.

It's easy to add a project - just fill in a simple form to tell the story of your project and then start sharing! Neighbourly is designed to help you spread the word to people and businesses ready to help out.

A Neighbourly project page is like a social network page: you can post news, updates and pictures just like you might on Facebook. Best of all, it's the hub from which you can raise awareness of your project and update followers on your fundraising activity and volunteer events – more on these in the next chapters.

Neighbourly project page

Setting up your page

Log in to Neighbourly then click the 'Create a project' button in the top right-hand corner. Fill in some basic details – your project title, such as 'Bristol surplus food collection and delivery' or 'Create a welcoming walkway at Bill Quay Community Farm'. Add the name of your charity, your charity registration number (if applicable) and choose a relevant category.

Neighbourly uses the **Sustainable Development Goals** (Global Goals) as project categories. These are a set of 17 commitments, created by the United Nations to provide a focus for addressing the most pressing issues affecting our communities and our planet.

We are using these goals to categorise the types of projects we have in the site, and the sort of outcomes they are focusing on. For example, is your project

working towards zero hunger, clean water and sanitation or gender equality? Choose the one that's most relevant for your project.

To make your project more discoverable, you can supplement your category with up to 12 tags. Select 'add tags' to view an A-Z of tags that you can apply.

Storytelling

Now is your chance to tell visitors just how important (and great!) your project is. Start by providing a project summary in one or two lines. Think of this as the 'what' section: what exactly is this project? For example, transforming the gym area for the local community. A clear need is important for people to understand how they can help.

Next fill in the description about the project. Here you have ample room to explain what the charity or group does and how this project will help support its mission. Consider this your 'why' box: why does your charity do what it does, and why does it need help? The 'who' is also really important, so flex your storytelling muscles – when it comes to charitable giving, emotion is a strong motivator.

Is this particular group unable to access spaces to get active because of lack of money or geography? How does a resource like this benefit their lives?

Personal donations

On Neighbourly, you can receive donations from both companies and individuals. If you would like to receive donations from both, make sure you tick the box: 'I'd like to receive donations via credit card payments from individuals.' You must be a registered charity to do this. See more about this in the next chapter on fundraising.
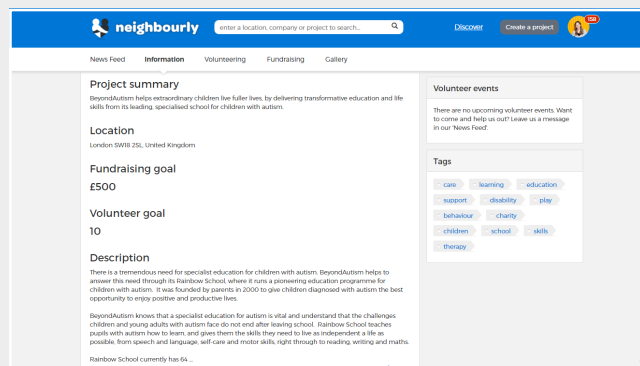

Food surplus donations

Food donations

Neighbourly can also connect you with businesses that have **surplus food** to donate. To collect and redistribute food, you need a food hygiene certificate.

To do this, simply check the box that says 'I'd like to receive food donations' and, if you have the additional food safety certificate, 'I'd like to receive donations of chilled food'. Neighbourly will usually come back to you within three working days – if you've been matched with a store, you'll be sent a separate set-up pack.

Neighbourly project page

Making a successful project page

Add your Twitter username and designate a hashtag that you'll include in tweets about this project. This can help people find all your posts on this topic in one stream, and can help you keep track of posts from supporters.

Next, fill in the 'What we need' section, including up to three things that you need to make your project a success. For example, 'Financial help to improve our outside areas.' Then fill in 'What we'll do', adding up to another three outcomes your project will achieve, e.g. "Make the gardens more accessible for wheelchair users."

Add links to specific pages on your website about this project. Perhaps you already have a blog about your plans, or information about the beneficiaries of your project.

A great project page will also have financial and/or volunteer goals so that people can see the tangible difference they're making. These are broken down into separate volunteering events and fundraising pots, e.g. 'Furniture for the cafe' or 'New computer equipment'. We'll help you set these up in the next chapters.

All done? Save your details at the bottom. Any errors will be highlighted in red – please correct these before saving. Now you'll see what your page looks like so far!

Make sure to add an image: click on "picture coming soon!" on the right hand side, or contact Neighbourly to upload a video for you, if you'd prefer. This will help your project look its best on the site and in social shares.

What's next?

Your Neighbourly project page is a bit like a garden - it needs tending to every so often. That means updating it as you go and spreading the word using all of your social, digital and off-line channels.

> "It just opens so many doors. It's a validation of what we're doing.

Tony Wright
Forward Assist

The more people that follow, share and contribute to a project, the stronger it becomes.

Did you notice the 'Activity Score' at the top of your project page? This shows how much activity, content and followers your project has.

Your score will start off low - to ramp this up, post updates in your project's news feed, add photos to the gallery and share on social media.

Sharing on social

The key to getting projects supported is to spread the word, and there's no time like the present. After publishing, share the page on social media asking friends, family and colleagues to follow your project.

Neighbourly projects are designed for social sharing - on every project, event and fundraising page, you'll find Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn icons. Click these to spread the word about the cause you're championing. The site will pull the page link into the post for you, but you can add in your own personal message in the share box asking supporters to come and get involved.

To make your message as engaging as possible, you can add an image with your project link directly into Twitter and Facebook posts. Tagging other Twitter users on the image doesn't increase your character count, so try tagging local people or influencers that you'd like to come and follow you on Neighbourly, or that have a good social following and could help spread the word.

Don't be afraid to ask your followers, donors and volunteers to help as well – ask them to share the page to help raise your profile and reach new audiences.

The Cafe in the Hall, Loughborough

Promoting in other ways – digital and off-line

Send an email out to your supporter database with a link to your project page, telling people about the project and asking them to come and follow you on Neighbourly.

Consider sending different emails depending on how well you know the recipient – such as friends and family, colleagues and acquaintances. Either way, remember to 'BCC' everyone in a group message to protect their privacy.

Once you've sent the email, you can inform (or remind) future email recipients about your project by including a link to the page in your email signature, for example: 'Support our project on Neighbourly: https://www.neighbourly.com/project/xxx'

You can also write a blog post about the project telling readers what you're hoping to do and who will benefit. You might choose to give a little context to your project and point to further information, or you might link to previous successful projects, and note your aims for this one too. Feel free to get creative – and there's no need to stop at one blog!
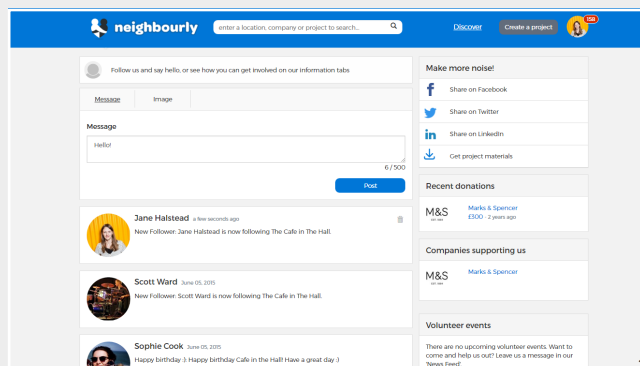
Include your project link and ask people to follow and share it. You can use your blog posts for content on social media to keep your followers engaged.

Word of mouth is also a powerful way to spread the word. Mention it to those you come into contact with in person, whether it's a business meeting or networking event. Follow up with an email with the project link – your recipient is more likely to be interested if you mentioned it first in person.

Bringing in followers
(and keeping them updated)

A follower is someone who is interested in hearing about the project's progress, including volunteer opportunities and campaigns. They receive a website notification when there is an update - the more frequent your updates, the more engaged your followers will be!

There are plenty of ways you can do this. There's a news feed, photo gallery and space to add links to files, videos or websites. If you have any volunteer opportunities, you can set them up as events within the 'Volunteering' tab, and you can create additional fundraising pots within the 'Fundraising' tab. Learn more about these in the next chapters.

Posting a new message

Adding content

The easiest way to add content to your news feed is updating followers on your activity. For example, if you've just set up a fundraising pot or event, make sure you shout about it!

Food donations and new followers will also appear on your news feed automatically. Consider thanking those that have taken an interest in your project. People love to be appreciated, and it might attract further interest both from your followers and new visitors to your page.

Make sure you take lots of pictures at volunteer events and share these in your gallery. If your events look like fun, more people will be interested in participating in the future. Keep your followers engaged by providing pictures of the results of your project – for example, service users enjoying a new space. Your volunteers will feel proud of the difference they've made.

If this all sounds a little resource-hungry, project leads can invite administrators to help them share, update, create events and respond to comments. You can invite admins at the bottom of your project's information tab.

Editing a project

You can update the page at any time – find it via your dashboard by logging in, then click on 'Edit project'.

If you have a large project, it can sometimes help to break it down into a number of smaller pages. Start with one, and click the 'Clone project' button to create duplicates which can be edited separately. Once you have multiple projects you can create a project group – click 'Projects' on your profile page, then find the 'Create project group' option on the right hand side.

> "Neighbourly contacted me and said 'we've got a big retail company that want to come down and help you guys' and I said 'let's go!'"
> **Solomon Smith**
> Brixton Soup Kitchen

Setting up a fundraising pot on Neighbourly will give your followers and volunteers an easy way to make a donation to your project.

Let's talk money

Companies can 'pledge' to campaigns on Neighbourly but money transfer is arranged separately. Individuals are able to make debit or credit card donations to your project via the website. If you want to set this up, make sure you have ticked the box 'I'd like to receive donations via credit card payments from individuals' on your 'Edit project' page. This will send a request to us for approval, and we'll normally come back to you within 3 working days.

Then click on 'Connect to Stripe' which will direct you to set up an account with our payment provider. You can either connect an existing Stripe account or set up a new one.

Rules about being a registered charity

To fundraise and receive donations from members of the public you must set up a project for a registered charity. The charity should have the appropriate authorisation, permit or licence to operate as a charity.
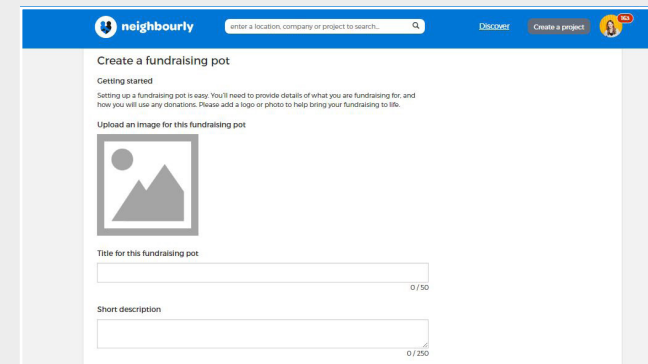
If you haven't already done so, include your registered charity number on the project page, and describe exactly what you are fundraising for and what the money will be spent on.

If you're registered with HMRC to claim Gift Aid, include your Gift Aid number. As part of the approval process for receiving donations from individuals, you'll be given the option to provide information about your participation in the HMRC Gift Aid scheme.

Donors will be offered the option to include a Gift Aid declaration as part of their donation. By doing this they confirm that they're a UK taxpayer and eligible for Gift Aid, and wish your charity to reclaim the tax paid under the Gift Aid scheme.

How to set up a fundraising pot

Now, for the exciting part - setting up your fundraising pot! Click on the 'Fundraising' tab on the project page and press the blue 'Create fundraising pot' button.

Creating a fundraising pot

Fill in the form with an engaging image, description and fundraising goal. This is your opportunity to tell people why they should donate. What work does your charity do, and why is it so important? How does this particular programme meet your goals? Why is it urgent now, rather than next month or next year?
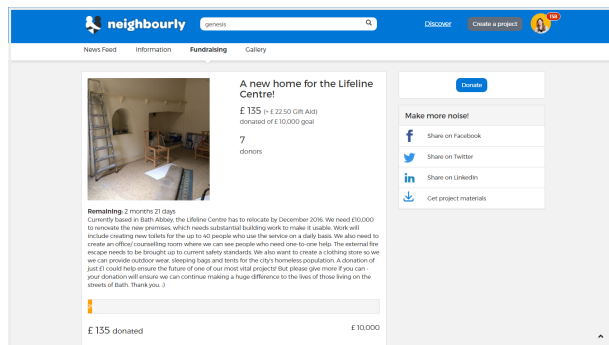
You also have the opportunity to designate a start and end date. Click on 'Show advanced options' on this page and input your dates. You can also have a deadline countdown on the page by ticking the box next to this option. This will bring a sense of urgency to your activity, and hopefully drive donations.

Press save and your fundraising pot will be live on your fundraising tab, unless you've chosen to hide it until your future start date.

How to promote and get people to donate

Share your fundraising page often to spread the word to potential donors. You can share the page on social media, digital platforms and offline in the same way you promoted your project page in the last chapter.

Any number of companies and individuals can pledge to support a fundraising pot, which means you could potentially receive contributions from a number of sources. Hurray!

A Genesis Trust fundraising page

How the fees and payments work

We use Stripe – a third party payment provider, to process donation payments. You'll set up and manage your Stripe account directly with them. Payments will generally be made on a 7-day rolling basis. No cash or cheques, we're afraid.

We charge a small transaction fee on every donation made to cover the costs incurred. The fee is currently 5% of the gross donation, exclusive of any Gift Aid

amount. Fees are deducted automatically through Stripe before donations are credited to your account. There are no additional subscription fees.

Donors will only be able to cancel a donation if they contact us within 48 hours after it is authorised on the site. After this time, donors will need to contact you directly to request a refund, which will be at your discretion. Where a refund is provided, any fees charged by Stripe will also be returned to you.

Keeping supporters up to date via the project page

Your project page is your 'hub' for updating on all your fundraising activity. Have you reached the half way mark? Shout about it! Have you got some great stories that might drive up those valuable donations? Share them!

> "A lot of projects like this, they do get forgotten about by 'Big Business' and it's really comforting to know that we're not on our own and people care and a company like Heineken want to do something to help us."
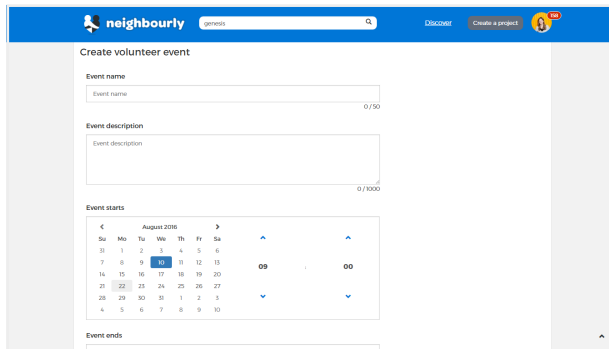>
> **Julie McCurdie**
> Community One Stop Shop

The Cafe in the Hall, Loughborough

Creating a fundraising pot   9

Along with your fundraising pots, you have an opportunity to recruit volunteers on Neighbourly by creating a Volunteer event page. Potential volunteers can donate their time with the click of a button and see other volunteers that are also attending.
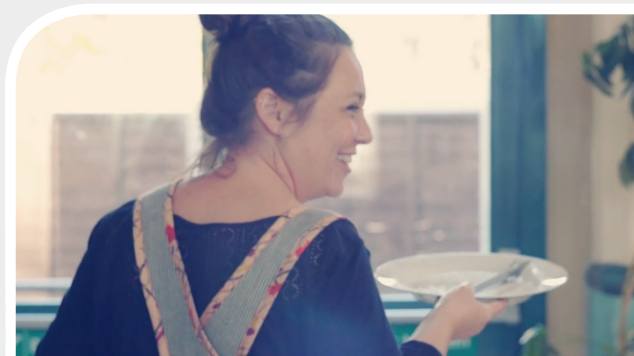
How to set up an event

Click on the 'Volunteering' tab on the project page and press the 'Create volunteer event' button. Fill in the form with a description, location, date, time and how many volunteers you need.

A Neighbourly volunteer event

In the description, list any particular skills that you'd like your volunteers to have and what you'll be doing on the day, e.g. trimming, weeding and painting. It's also an opportunity to explain why you're doing it, such as encouraging more people to use a community space. People want to feel like they're making a difference.
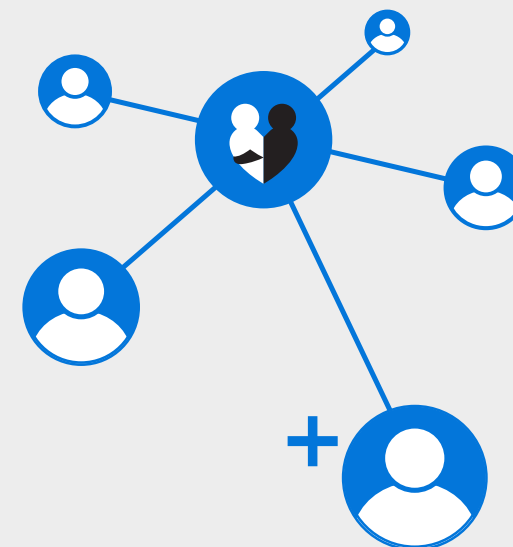

A volunteer helping at a community lunch

Also, you might want to suggest extra benefits for volunteers who give up their time – perhaps to meet a friendly bunch of like-minded people, and there's no shame in advertising the free tea and coffee! With an all-day event, it might be worth mentioning if lunch is provided or if volunteers should pack one themselves. For larger events, you might want to specify a meeting point.

To help volunteers to discover your event, add up to 12 tags that describe the type of activities they will be doing, for example 'painting' or 'gardening'. It'll also feature on Neighbourly's volunteer board, so make sure your event has a catchy title!

Approving (or not approving) volunteer requests

You can choose if you want to approve volunteer requests and whether to keep a waiting list if the event gets full. You can now save your event, or if you're all done, press 'Publish'.

The system will manage volunteer sign-ups and create an attendee list. If you've selected to approve volunteers, you'll receive an email when someone signs up and you'll need to pop back to the website to accept them. Once a volunteer place is approved, your volunteer will automatically get an email confirmation.

Creating volunteer events

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How to promote the event and get people to sign up

After publishing, get sharing! Cast that net as widely as possible on social media (and beyond) to give yourself the best chance of recruiting volunteers. Click the social icons or copy the page link into an email or other social channel.

Share your events on social to spread the word

It's a good idea to tag local networks and influencers within your posts and images to encourage them to spread the word for you.

Perhaps you've also got your own list of contacts who've expressed an interest in volunteering for your charity, or have done in the past. Why not send them a quick email about your event to see if they're free? Also, you can pop in a line or two about it in your usual newsletter.

Share the opportunities regularly on social media and keep followers and volunteers up to date through posts on the news feed.
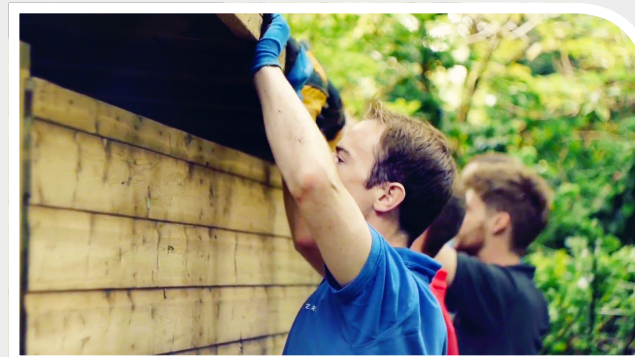
How companies can offer employee volunteers

If a company would like to support your events with staff volunteers, they'll add your project to their volunteering list. You'll get an email when this happens and be able to offer a number of spaces to this company at each event.

Confirm who attended

After the event, go through the volunteer list and click to confirm which people attended. Attendees will automatically receive a quick email to thank them for volunteering, and those that didn't will receive one encouraging them to keep an eye out for other opportunities.

You can set up as many volunteer events as you wish! Budding volunteers can keep an eye on your upcoming events via your news feed and on the volunteer notice board at **www.neighbourly.com/volunteering**

A company volunteer day

"I love the idea of showcasing volunteering locally and encouraging people to volunteer within their own community.
I immediately knew that my project would be a perfect fit and was hugely excited and proud that they had asked me to be involved"

Julie Taylor
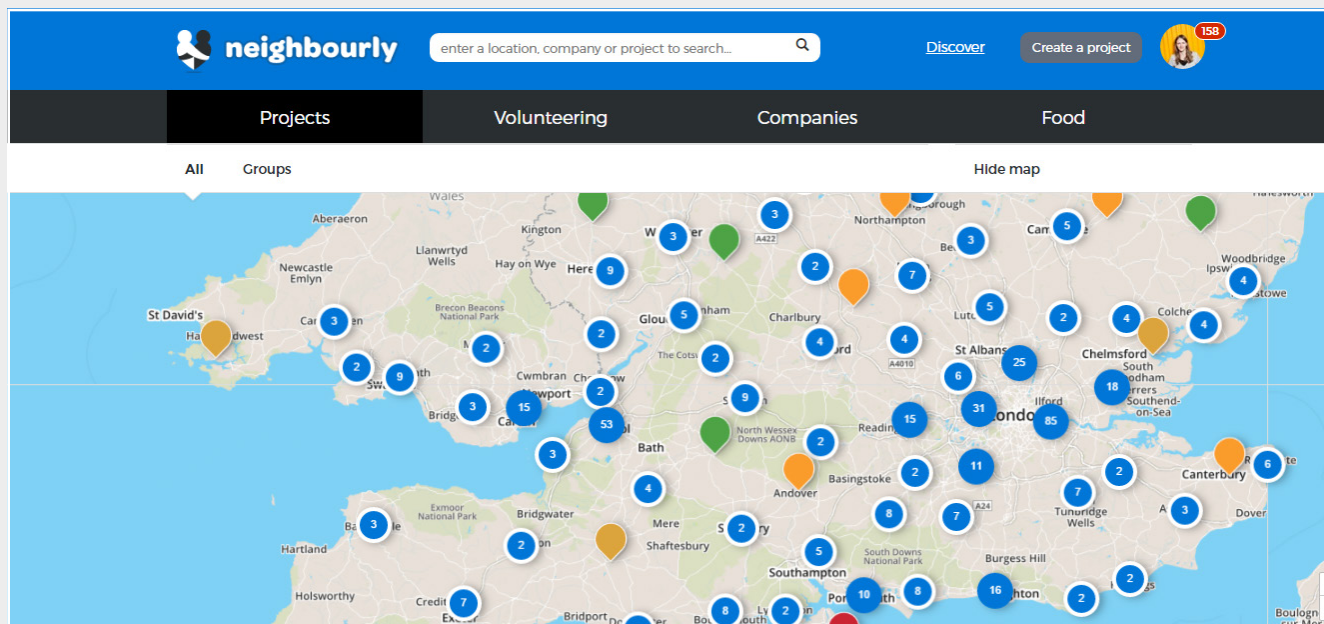Making for Charity

Creating volunteer events 11

Best of luck with your projects!

You can set up as many projects, events and fundraising pots as you wish, and remember, Neighbourly is here to help.

Support is always on hand – drop us a message at **support@Neighbourly.com**

Why not help other charities you know by telling them about Neighbourly?

Neighbourly dashboard – map of events

"When our service users walk in, they're going to feel 'wow'. That's the spark that's been created today. And I don't think that's something good. I think it is something outstanding!"

Mahamed Hashi
Brixton Soup Kitchen