

**Volunteer Link Up** has been operating as a Good Neighbour Scheme in the West Oxfordshire district since 1983. We provide a range of services to help older, isolated and vulnerable people stay independent and feel supported in their local community.

We provide the Good Neighbour Scheme Support Service across Oxfordshire as part of the Community Information Network, offering advice and guidance to existing schemes and to communities wishing to set up a new scheme in their area.

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**Community  
Information  
Network**

Stay involved, informed, in touch

## Setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme in your local community

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“Volunteering as a driver and befriender has truly improved my life. Helping other people has given me a sense of purpose, and a positive reason to get out of bed in the morning. It really does boost my confidence and the fact that people are so appreciative of what I do gives me a nice feeling.” **Fred\***

\*Name has been changed.

Volunteer Link up is part of the  
Community Information Network in  
partnership with



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The Community Information Network is a free local information service for older people in Oxfordshire, run by Age UK Oxfordshire (Charity No. 1091529) in partnership with Volunteer Link-Up (Charity No. 1133530) and supported by Oxfordshire County Council. All images via Shutterstock.com.



## What is a Good Neighbour Scheme?

Across Oxfordshire there are more than 50 Good Neighbour Schemes offering help in the local community.

Most of these groups offer assistance with essential transport, for example, taking people to and from hospital, doctors' surgeries and other medical appointments.

Some groups offer other services, such as befriending, shopping, help with gardening and small DIY jobs.

All Good Neighbour Schemes are different and it's up to the residents of the area to decide what services they would like to be available.



## How to set up a Good Neighbour Scheme

Anyone can become involved in setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme. Here are some steps to give you an idea of what's involved:

1. Establish whether there is a need for a scheme in your community. You could do this by sending out a questionnaire.
2. Hold a public meeting to identify members of the community who might be interested in getting involved.
3. Form a steering group to oversee the running of the scheme. A good size for a group is between five and ten people.
4. Decide how your scheme will be coordinated - will it have a single coordinator or several?
5. Decide what services/activities your scheme will offer.
6. Assign members of the steering group to particular roles e.g. funding, publicity, insurance and DBS checks.
7. Hold an information evening to encourage people to sign-up and volunteer.
8. When the scheme has a few volunteers in place, publicise locally through the use of cards/flyers delivered to homes or by advertising in local publications.
9. Begin taking requests from clients.
10. When the scheme has been operating for a month or so hold a launch party to generate as much publicity as possible.

## The Good Neighbour Scheme Support Service

Volunteer Link-Up provides a support service for Good Neighbour Schemes across Oxfordshire. We offer advice and support to existing schemes, as well as to communities wishing to set up new scheme in any part of the county.

### How we can support you:

- We can help you to source start up grants.
- We offer free insurance for Good Neighbour Scheme Volunteers and Trustee Indemnity Insurance to Good Neighbour Scheme Network Members.
- We give advice on constitutions, policies and procedures.
- We provide free Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for volunteers.
- We can help with publicity materials.

### Contact us

If you would like more information about setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme in your community:

Call: 01993 776277

Email: [oxfordshiregns@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:oxfordshiregns@hotmail.co.uk)

Visit: [www.vlu.org.uk](http://www.vlu.org.uk)