

IZWE Mobilisation Tools How to Get Involved in Your Community

ne_p National Empowerment Partnership

Managed by the Community Development Foundation

Funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government

London Civic Forum



HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY



take part



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Would you like to help change or improve your community?

Use this leaflet to help you think through how you want to get involved.





WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

- ▶ Get to know people locally
- ▶ Improve your local area
- ▶ Get involved with exciting projects
- ▶ Learn new skills
- ▶ Use your skills to help others
- ▶ Help influence decisions about local services


START BY MAKING A LIST OF THINGS
THAT MATTER TO YOU ABOUT YOUR
COMMUNITY.

ANYTHING FROM DUMPED MATTRESSES
TO CARE FOR THE ELDERLY.





WAYS OF JOINING IN

- ▶ Meet up with others socially
 - ▶ Volunteer for charities or community projects
 - ▶ Get involved with campaigning and influencing local services
 - ▶ Take up a formal community role
- 



WHERE TO FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON

- ▶ Your local council
- ▶ Your local library – find information about local groups, charities and new opportunities.
- ▶ Volunteer centre – will have a whole range of opportunities.
- ▶ Community centres – groups will often post flyers and information and have group meetings there.
- ▶ Local Newspapers – find vacancies, or community groups and campaigns in the news.

Find local online groups with

www.groupsnearyou.com

Type the name of your local area into an internet search engine and see what comes up!



TAKING ACTION

VOLUNTEERING

What skills can you bring to benefit your community?

For most activities, all you will need is enthusiasm and a little time to spare.

HOW MUCH TIME CAN YOU GIVE?

The occasional day, an hour or an afternoon a week – most groups are flexible. Even a small amount of time can go a long way!

There are opportunities for all skills, experience levels and backgrounds.

Find your local volunteer centre at <http://bit.ly/bTNHe5> , www.do-it.org or www.timebank.org.uk.


- ▶ Ask questions – don't be shy when applying for an opportunity.
- ▶ Talk to your friends and family for advice and guidance. Find out about their volunteering experiences. They might inspire you!
- ▶ With 'Timebanks' and local exchange trading systems (LETS), you do tasks for others and earn credits, which you can use to get help from others – see if there is one in your area – talk to your council.

TAKING ACTION

INFLUENCING AND CAMPAIGNING

Here are some common local groups who influence different service areas:

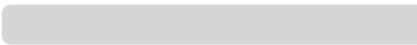
Issue	Group
HEALTH	Join your local LINK group (Local Involvement Network) (contact your local NHS Trust).
ELDERLY CARE	Find a local 'Age Concern' group
LOCAL PARK	Users Groups (look on noticeboards at the park!)
HOUSING	If you live in social housing, join your residents' panel
SAFETY & POLICING	Is there a Neighbourhood Watch near you?



If you care about the rights and representation of a particular group (e.g. a minority community) there will often be a group that meets with officers from the council and police to discuss related issues – ask your council.

A RESIDENTS' OR NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP IS A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO GET TOGETHER FROM AN AREA, ESTATE, BLOCK OR COMMUNITY TO INFLUENCE A RANGE OF LOCAL ISSUES.

Watch out for local campaigns who will frequently need more people to join in.



SOCIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Why not start by just meeting up with others? Being connected can increase your sense of well-being and your community spirit!

Keep an eye out for social events in your local paper and on local websites - these are good ways of meeting like-minded people, and can be easier than going to a meeting.

GET INVOLVED WITH:

- COMMUNITY ALLOTMENTS OR GARDENING GROUPS
- SPORTS GROUPS
- GO ON A COMMUNITY WALK OR JOIN AN EXERCISE CLASS – MAKE FRIENDS AND GET FIT!

BECOMING MORE FORMALLY INVOLVED

Did you know that you can become:

- ▶ a district or borough councillor
- ▶ a parish or town councillor
- ▶ a magistrate
- ▶ a school governor
- ▶ a special constable details.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THESE ROLES
TALK TO YOUR LOCAL VOLUNTEER CENTRE!

If you can't find the group you want to join,
why not set one up?

See our guide: 'How to... get others involved'.

WWW.IZWE.COM

Find other resources for active citizens at
www.izwe.com/resources/takepart

This booklet has been produced by
izwe on behalf of London Civic Forum
as part of the Take Part initiative