

## Access to Volunteering

For the refugees you support, volunteering can present an opportunity to get involved in their new community outside of your Community Sponsorship Group. Volunteering can provide invaluable work experience and enable people to build confidence and improve language skills.

### Where to volunteer

You may be able to find volunteering opportunities through local connections, but there are also larger agencies that help people to find voluntary work. The [gov.uk page](#) on volunteering provides guidance, a list of organisations that can provide local volunteering opportunities and a link to [Do-it.org](#) which is an online database of UK volunteering opportunities. You can guide the refugees you support to different volunteering opportunities once you learn more about their career aspirations and interests.

### Explaining Volunteering

The concept of volunteering may be new to some refugees, and you may have to work with them to help them understand the benefits it can bring such as gaining UK based experience, securing someone to act as a referee as well as gaining and using skills. Once they understand the UK's employment system, which relies on reference checks and experience, they may see that volunteering is more than working for free but a way to build valuable connections with the local community.

If you are in contact with other refugees or migrants who have benefited from volunteering, and are willing to share their experience, this may be much more powerful than trying to explain yourself. And remember, as with other aspects of your support, as a Community Sponsorship Group, you can only suggest and advise but ultimately whether or not they get involved in volunteering is up to the refugees you support.