

Practical ways for volunteers to support care homes during COVID-19

Organise events

- Ask a local singer or musician to put on a concert in the care home garden or other appropriate space, for example the car park. Or arrange an online concert!
- Create a video with supportive messages and email it to the care home.
- Encourage young people to get involved in our resources for remote intergenerational linking, from Care Home FaNs Intergenerational Linking Project – create gifts for residents to enjoy, such as a painted stones, bird feeders for the garden and word searches (carehomefans.org/remote-intergenerational-linking). Big kids welcome to get involved too!
- Donate flowers and/or seeds for the care home garden or an activity book or puzzle.

Volunteers must agree a date and time with the care home first, and ensure everyone adheres to social distancing requirements.



Research

- Link with a local shop or nearby supermarket chain and explore opportunities for donations e.g. donating a cake to celebrate a birthday or other event.
- Create a database of local voluntary sector organisations, community networks, faith groups and other organisations. Contact these for ideas on how they could link with the care home.
- Explore technology - does the care home have sufficient access to tablets/iPads? Are there local community members who could donate digital devices? Do staff need IT support that can be given at a distance?



Strengthen local links

- Are there residents without relatives who might appreciate a pen pal relationship with someone of a shared interest? Could that connection be made?
- Put out a call for donations and create well-being packs for staff and/or residents. For example, with cosmetics, sweet treats, little gifts and cards.
- Contact local businesses to encourage donations of items that the care home may need.
- Put the Care Home FaNs 'Help spread kindness!' posters in shops windows or other visible places, to help discover what other skills and ideas local people have.

