

Under 18 and looking into volunteering? Let's get you started!

Why consider volunteering?

- Benefit your community and the environment or help individuals needing support
- Gain experience in a working environment
- Develop your knowledge and skills
- Learn about yourself, your interests and strengths
- Be part of a team and connect with new people
- Expand your horizons, develop compassion and build confidence



Volunteering is for everyone. At the same time, due to the needs of the role, safeguarding requirements, insurance and other considerations, there will be a minimum age for many roles.

There are many volunteering options for young people:

- Family volunteering, eg.:
 - [Home | Family Volunteering](#) - sometimes has opportunities on GoVolHerts
 - Local community initiatives are often family-friendly, for example helping with a local event, tree-planting or litter-picking.
- Find opportunities on our **GoVolHerts** website, which lists roles available for under 18's [here](#). See [here](#) for help narrowing your search. If aged 16+ contact the organisations via our site to find out more about the opportunities and apply for the roles.
- Youth leadership and volunteering - does your school/college, place of worship or another institution you're part of run a programme you could join? Eg.:
 - [The Duke of Edinburgh's Award](#) (14+)
 - [UK Youth Parliament - National Youth Agency](#) (11-18 years)
 - [Roots & Shoots](#)
- Clubs and organisations for young people often have youth leader/volunteer roles eg.: sports groups, youth groups, [Scouts](#), [Girl Guiding UK](#), or groups like [Young Minds](#)
- Some large organisations may have opportunities open to youth from a certain age, eg.:
 - [Opportunities for young people | British Red Cross](#) (age 15+)
 - Hertfordshire libraries eg. [My Voice youth volunteers | Hertfordshire County Council](#)
- #IWillMovement: [Youth Action: UK Youth Charity Empowering 10-25 Year Olds](#)
- Some non-volunteering youth activities have a community-focused element, eg [Fire Cadets](#)

Talk to your parents/legal guardian about volunteering choices. They, or you if you are aged 14+, can contact us if you need help finding out more about volunteering. To create your own GoVolHerts account and contact organisations directly via GoVolHerts, you need to be aged 16+.



16-17 year-olds - Additional options to explore for young people aged 16+:

- [National Trust](#): Has a youth discovery programme for 16–18-year-olds, mostly at weekends.
- [The Conservation Volunteers](#): Conservation projects for 16–25-year-olds.
- NHS: youth volunteering is growing across health and care services with some volunteering roles for 16+ [Volunteers – East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust](#), [Volunteer with us :: West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust](#), [NHS Volunteering - Homepage](#), [For info: youth volunteering across health and care services](#), [NHS Cadets](#)
- Consider events that interest you – local festivals, sports/games/music/arts/cultural events and community gatherings may require volunteers to assist with tasks such as set-up, registration, etc and be open to under 18s.
- Fundraise for a charity whose purpose you support or ask them if you can help them in a tailored way, for example with a campaign or their social media.
- Some charitable companies may have opportunities for trustees to be on their Boards from age 16¹. Trustees are volunteers who make decisions together about the strategy and running of the charity.

Other useful links:

[Volunteer it Yourself \(aged 14-24\)](#) might have a project running you'd be eligible for. The projects tend to be practical construction activities.

[DoIt](#) – national volunteering site.

[Free courses, programmes and support | The King's Trust](#) - Support for young people to develop essential life skills, get ready for work, and access job opportunities.

¹ [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do - GOV.UK](#)

Tips:

- Before contacting organisations, try to be clear about the type of experience you are looking for and what activities you can do to help them.
- Tell organisations your age at the start and check that you will be insured.
- Ask questions about the things that matter to you.
- If it will be useful to you to show your experience and contribution in a volunteer role, ask if the organisation will provide a reference or proof of volunteering.
- Speak up if you experience any doubts or problems.
- Ensure your parents/responsible adult are aware about your volunteering. They may help you think of questions to ask and with deciding between options.
- Some organisations may accept under 16's if accompanied by a parent or guardian, so keep this option in mind when speaking with volunteer managers.

Disclaimer:

GoVolHerts provides general information to assist in finding appropriate volunteering roles (see website [terms](#)). Efforts are made to ensure accuracy at time of publication but information may not remain current. GoVolHerts does not endorse specific organisations/opportunities mentioned or recommend them. We always encourage individuals to check volunteering opportunities will fit personal circumstances.