**Section 9: I want to help out but I’m not sure….**

* Do I really have the skills you need?
* What if I don’t have much time?
* What will I get out of volunteering?

Michelle Obama once said, "Success isn't about how much money you make; it's about the [difference you make in people's lives](https://www.inc.com/mooser-wagner/how-entrepreneurs-are-disrupting-philanthropy.html?cid=search)." Most of us know that charity is its own reward. The true wealth of charity is measured by good deeds, not ego and material gain. Countless studies validate the benefits of giving, not only for the ones on the receiving end but for the ones who [support those in need](https://www.inc.com/molly-reynolds/why-giving-to-charity-is-good-for-business.html?cid=search). Benefits of giving back include feelings of [happiness and wellbeing](http://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier), as well as inspiring a greater [sense of purpose](http://www.unitedhealthgroup.com/~/media/UHG/PDF/2013/UNH-Health-Volunteering-Study.ashx) in life. [Volunteering](https://www.inc.com/jeffrey-phillips/5-reasons-volunteers-are-the-best-innovators.html?cid=search) is also a great way to boost self-esteem and may help you discover talents you never knew existed within you.

Everyone has something to offer their community, it’s just a matter of finding where you can get involved that suits you and your needs. Ask your neighbour, at the village hall, at your place of worship, at the school, at your community shop, at your parish council.

If you want to start something new but are not sure how to go about it, get in touch with us:

hilary.lombard@communityfirstoxon.org**.**

These websites might be of interest:

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/support-us/volunteer/help-at-an-event>

<https://www.signupgenius.com/nonprofit/community-service-project-ideas.cfm>

<https://issuesiface.com/magazine/10-ways-to-help-your-community>

**Ways to help out**

Little Things Count:

* Still not sure where to start? Helping your community doesn’t have to entail a grand gesture. There are plenty of small steps you can take to make a difference in the lives of those around you.
* Commit to keeping your local streets clean – keep that used sweet wrapper in your pocket if you can’t find a rubbish bin.
* Be that person who lets a frazzled parent holding a child or an older person ahead of you at the supermarket.
* Remember, if you’re committed to helping the community you live in, the most important thing to do is to take action. Decide that you’re tired of sitting around wondering how to help your community and instead choose an action item, even if just one, and move on it immediately. Whether you invest money, energy, or time in the place you call home, the sooner you get involved, the better you’ll feel about your community and the brighter its prospects will look.

What other ideas do you have? Share them with us so we can let other people learn from your great ideas.

* <https://thegirlwhoknows.com/soul-to-soul-100-ways-to-make-a-difference/>
* <https://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2000/jan/08/weekend7.weekend5>
* <https://www.curbed.com/2016/9/22/13019420/urban-design-community-building-placemaking>

**And** i**ts official – helping out in your community is good for you!**

