

# Getting involved



Norwich City Council is teaming up with people who are driven to make the place where they live that bit better. Here we highlight just a few inspiring examples of things people are already doing to show the power local communities have when they come together and, if you are keen to do your bit, ways in which we can help.

## How can we help?

It is our goal to make people feel more connected to the city and to help those who want to be more active in it.

Our community enabling team can help with equipment you need to borrow, along with support and training and also signpost you to funding opportunities.

## What can I do and how much time will it take up?

It's not simply about volunteering – why not get involved by taking part in a class at your closest community centre, a local litter pick in your street or going to a party in your neighbouring park?

Being active in your community doesn't need to take up a lot of time and many of us do so much without even thinking about it. For example, making sure elderly or vulnerable neighbours are okay or telling new neighbours which days the waste and recycling are collected.

## Tell us about it

Sometimes one of the greatest challenges in getting a project off the ground, or keeping a successful one going, is spreading the word. Community gardens need a community of gardeners to grow, and even eat, the produce. Street parties need guests and craft workshops need willing participants.

Maybe we can help publicise your project or group to help get others on board?

## Opportunities to meet

It's important to keep connected. Finding others to join you, share experience or tools with, or just as a reminder there are other like-minded people can make all the difference.

The Sustainable Living Initiative hosted successful networking events over the past two summers for those involved in looking after their local open spaces, woods and parks – Friends of Eaton Park, Friends of Marlpit Wood and Lakenham and Town Close Green Spaces group, to mention a few.

Held at Marlpit Community Garden – a really special site which has allotments, bees, wildflowers, fruit trees, sheep and more – it provided a chance for people to meet over refreshments.

If you're interested in being involved in looking after somewhere that is local to you, or you are already doing so and would like to be invited to future network events, please get in touch.



## Street champions

A new project is currently being piloted in areas of Mile Cross, West Pottergate, Bowthorpe and Netherwood Green to support enthusiastic residents in creating their own local projects.

Street champions will choose what's important to them in their neighbourhood – be it bulb-planting, adopting local spaces, helping neighbours, street parties or anything else they think is needed – and we'll provide support so positive changes can be made.

These first champions will help us shape the programme before it is launched citywide. So, if you're not in one of the initial areas and think you'd be interested, please get in touch.

## Keeping it in the community

New life is being breathed into a former community centre in

Norwich thanks to an exciting new venture.

The building previously known as Russell Street Community Centre, off Heigham Street, was offered up to community, voluntary groups and organisations by way of Norwich's first Community Asset Transfer.

This means rather than standing empty, a lease has been granted to The Sports Factory.

Local residents will be consulted about the plans, which include weekly activities such as parent and toddler groups, a drop-in café, community meals, exercise classes, and a clothes bank. People will also be able to book the centre for community events and activities.

For those interested, there will also be opportunities to get involved in refurbishing and running the centre.

## Community grants

For smaller community groups, there's an easy-to-apply-for grant of up to £500 designed to help with local projects for local people.

Magdalen Street Celebration (pictured), having just celebrated its seventh year, is just one of our recent successful applicants.

[www.magdalenstreet.weebly.com](http://www.magdalenstreet.weebly.com)

Stuart McLaren, treasurer, said: "The Magdalen Street Celebration is the largest free festival in the northern city centre; an annual day to showcase the area's fascinating heritage, cultural diversity and overflowing creativity.

Finding funds to support our volunteers, stewards and performers is always a big part of what we do as an organising committee, which is why Norwich City Council's small grant award is so welcome and crucial for our sustainability."

To find out more about the grant, including details of how to apply, go to [www.norwich.gov.uk/grants](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/grants)



## Get in touch

For more information on any of the things contained in this article you may be interested in getting involved in, or advice on

getting your own idea off the ground, please contact our community enabling team by emailing [community@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:community@norwich.gov.uk) or calling 0344 9803333.

