

# UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS - SESSION 1

## BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

### Short of time?

These are the core activities – topic introduction, Bible basics, real life application, time to reflect – taking action, and the prayer. If you have more time, then pick and mix additional activities from those below to add to these core ones.

### What are we trying to achieve?

By the end of this session, your young people should have an understanding of who their neighbours are, how they can be a good neighbour, and why this is important.

### Topic introduction

**Note to leaders:** Share this introduction about what it means to be a good neighbour with your group of young people.

**What you'll need:** You could look up some neighbour statistics to share – such as those in the Co-op Insurance and [Neighbourhood Watch Good Neighbour Guide](#) published in 2020.

**Length of activity:** 5 minutes.

Ask your group, when they think about neighbours, what comes to mind? Your group's answers might include the type of home they live in, who they live with, the people living near to them, and their street or neighbourhood.

Then ask them, what comes to mind when they think about good neighbours? Your group's answers might include people who are friendly, considerate, and approachable. They may also have some bad neighbour examples!

If you've prepared any, share some neighbour statistics.

In the Bible we're told that everyone is our neighbour, not just the people who live close to us. We should treat all our neighbours in the same way we'd like to be treated. It's not enough to see just the needs of those around us, we should act on them. Being a good neighbour can make the communities we live in stronger, safer, and happier.

The Queen is a great example of someone who is a good neighbour – she’s learnt the power of living for others and sees her public and voluntary service as one of the most important elements of her work.

## Quirky question

**Length of activity:** 5 minutes.

Ask your young people the following question and have a short discussion using their answers.

What’s the funniest thing you’ve seen out of your window?

Hopefully you’ll be able to draw out from their answers details about their neighbourhoods and their actual neighbours.

## Activity – help your neighbour

**What you’ll need:** The following actions printed/written on slips of paper.

**Length of activity:** 10 minutes.

Get one young person at a time to act/mime the following ways they could help their actual neighbours/ neighbourhood while the others have to guess what they’re doing.

Things you could do to help your neighbours/neighbourhood:

-  Take a parcel in for them when they’re out
-  Look out for their home/car when they’re on holiday
-  Be considerate about noise levels when you’re having a party
-  Invite them to a BBQ
-  Put their bins out
-  Help with decorating or gardening
-  Help an elderly neighbour who has fallen over
-  Pray for your neighbours
-  Pick up some litter on your street
-  Offer to help with shopping if they are unwell

## Activity – looking for some friends and neighbours

**What you'll need:** Chairs.

**Length of activity:** 10 minutes.

Get the young people to sit on chairs in a large circle. One of them should stand in the centre of the circle (and not have a chair).

The young person in the centre of the circle should say 'I'm looking for some friends and neighbours who...' and then select an attribute e.g. who like pizza/who are 14 years old/who are wearing the colour blue/who have a sister...

If what they say applies to any of the other young people, they all need to get up and switch seats and the young person in the middle has to try to sit on one of the vacant chairs, leaving a new person in the middle. The young people can't sit back in the chair they just vacated. The aim is not to be left standing in the middle.

Repeat the game until the time limit is up or everyone has had a go. Some of you may know this game as a variation of The Sun Shines On...

## Activity – a gift for your neighbours

**Note to leaders:** Decide in advance what your group is going to make.

**What you'll need:** Equipment and instructions for your chosen activity.

**Length of activity:** 20-30 minutes.

Spend some time making something for your young people to give to their actual neighbours, if they know them, or to your church's neighbours to show they care. This could be a baked item or a craft item, for example. Plan how the distribution of these items will happen e.g. delivered under adult supervision or posted through letterboxes. If you're posting something through a letterbox, then consider if the items need labels to explain who they're from and why.

## Bible basics – love your neighbour

**What you'll need:** A Bible.

**Length of activity:** 5-10 minutes.

Read Luke 10:25-27 from an easy-to-understand version of the Bible such as a Youth Bible or New International Reader's Version. Either read it to your group or ask one of them to read it.

Explain that this passage is followed by the well-known story of the Good Samaritan and paraphrase this, so everyone is aware of it.

This is how the Queen paraphrased the story in her 1989 Christmas broadcast:

*Many of you will have heard the story of the Good Samaritan, and of how Christ answered the question (from a clever lawyer who was trying to catch him out) 'who is my neighbour?'*

*Jesus told of the traveller who was mugged and left injured on the roadside where several important people saw him, and passed by without stopping to help.*

*His neighbour was the man who did stop, cared for him, and made sure he was being well looked after before he resumed his own journey.*

*It's not very difficult to apply that story to our own times and to work out that our neighbours are those of our friends, or complete strangers, who need a helping hand.*

Draw out the part that says we're asked to love God and love our neighbours as much as we love ourselves. Christians want to follow the example of Jesus in serving/loving our neighbours.

In 1985 the Queen said:

*The story of the Good Samaritan reminds us of our duty to our neighbour. We should try to follow Christ's clear instruction at the end of that story: 'Go and do ... likewise'.*

## **Real life application – Marcus Rashford**

**Note to leaders:** More information about Marcus Rashford can be found online.

**What you'll need:** A picture of Marcus Rashford.

**Length of activity:** 5-10 minutes.

Ask the young people if they know who is pictured. Explain that it's Marcus Rashford. Have they heard of him, and do they know why he's famous?

He's an English professional footballer who plays for Manchester United and the England national team. But, although he's famous for his football skills, Marcus is also well-known for his campaigning against racism, homelessness, and child hunger. He received an MBE in October 2020 for his efforts.

In 2020 he urged the government to provide food vouchers to England's poorest families to support them through the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. In response to his efforts, the government announced a £120m COVID-19 summer holidays food fund for 1.3 million pupils across England.

[Watch the video](#) about Marcus talking about his MBE.

Ask the young people if they think Marcus is living out the Bible passage you just read. How is he loving his neighbours? He's using his platform as a footballer to drive positive change and improve the lives of thousands of people.

## Time to reflect – thinking it through

**Note to leaders:** Read the information below to help your young people think through why it's important to be a good neighbour.

**Length of activity:** 5 minutes.

As we saw in the Bible passage from Luke, Christians believe we're called to do two important things...

- 1) Love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind
- 2) Love your neighbour as yourself.

Loving God is the first and greatest commandment we're given, and we're asked to do it with all that we are. Then our next greatest responsibility is to love our neighbours as much as we love ourselves. In the Bible, we learn that everyone is our neighbour, not just the people who live close to us. This means treating everyone with care, mercy, and generosity – just as the Good Samaritan treated the injured man.

We can love our neighbours in three main ways:

**Prayer** – we can be good neighbours by praying for people. We can ask God to be with them in the situations they find themselves – comforting them, guiding them, and blessing them.

**Listening** – the better we know our neighbours, or a situation they're in, the more detailed our prayers can be. We need to pay attention to what's going on around us to understand what we can do to help or how we can best pray.

**Responding** – the Good Samaritan didn't just give the injured man pity, he also responded to his physical needs. It's not enough just to see the needs of those around us, we should act on them. Sometimes we can't fix all our neighbour's needs, but we can all do something – even a small response can make a big difference. It could be as simple as offering an encouraging word to someone or picking up litter in the street.

## Time to reflect – taking action

**Note to leaders:** Pose these questions to your group and then listen to their answers.

**Length of activity:** 5-10 minutes.

Marcus Rashford was brought up as a Christian and in May 2021 told The Guardian newspaper 'Sometimes the faith we have in God is shown by the people we are. For me and my family, that's definitely the case.' Ask your young people what motivates Marcus Rashford to make a difference in the community?

Are there areas in your life where you can put your faith into action and make a difference to others? What are you passionate about changing in your world? Where can you be a good neighbour? Could you aim to do a good deed every day? What would stop you? What would help you?

## Challenge – time to party

**Note to leaders:** This activity is more in-depth and will have to be planned over several weeks.

**What you'll need:** Equipment and instructions for your street party.

One way in which your group could show they're good neighbours, as well as celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, is by holding a street party.

You might choose to do this within your group or with your church on a suitable date, or you might decide to host a Big Jubilee Lunch in your local community on 5 June.

The Big Lunch will bring the Jubilee celebrations into the heart of every community as people are invited to share friendship, food, and fun with neighbours.

A Big Jubilee Lunch can be big or small - street party or picnic, tea and cake or a garden barbeque. The Big Lunch provides tips and ideas for hosting an event and you can [find these here](#).

HOPE Together and the Methodist Church have also put together a Party Planner and a list of ideas for Platinum Jubilee event games. You can [find them here](#).

As the Platinum Jubilee bank holiday includes Pentecost Sunday, you may want to add a Christian worship element to your event.

Ensure your young people are involved in the decision making, planning and carrying out of your event.

Once you have decided on an event or street party, make sure you add it to the Government's [Platinum Jubilee website](#).

You can also apply for funding for larger events. [Find out more here](#).

## Let us pray – being a good neighbour

**Note to leaders:** Share this prayer with your group.

**Length of activity:** 1 minute.

Dear Lord,

We thank you for Marcus Rashford and his example to us as a good neighbour. Help us Lord to follow in his, and your, footsteps to be good neighbours to everyone and not just the people we like or who are like us. Give us enthusiasm when we lack it, energy for when we're tired, and generosity to love and serve others with what we have. We pray that we can all take steps towards making the world a better and more caring place for all.

Amen.

## The Wellbeing Journey

Join the Youth Wellbeing Journey – [find out more at here](#) and [watch the youth promo video](#)

## 70 Acts of Service

The Queen has served the UK and the Commonwealth for 70 years. To honour her, let's join together in [70 Acts of Service](#) during 2022.