

# Near Neighbours



## Overview

**Reference:** 22

**Location:** National

**Target Group:** Multi-faith

**Initiative type:**

Information and  
community outreach

## Contact

**Email:**

[hello@nearneighbours.org.uk](mailto:hello@nearneighbours.org.uk)

**Website:**

<https://www.nearneighbours.org.uk/>

**Twitter:**

@nearneighbours

## Top Tip

*Listen to people first, and then respond to their needs in their language.*

### Why is this important to us?

Near Neighbours is a programme run by the Church Urban Fund to bring multi-faith communities together to improve community cohesion. During the COVID crisis, we received national funding as part of the community champions scheme to promote vaccination and public health messaging around the vaccine, within multi-faith areas. Our work involves listening and responding to the needs of local populations and faith organisations through our local hubs, which are spread across ten areas of the country. Through this, we respond to needs we see locally using our coordinators and the network of wider organisations they work with.

### What are we doing?

We are working on two different levels: addressing the immediate crisis and promoting vaccination, and laying the foundations for long-term recovery. Our main activities concerning vaccine promotion involve our network of local hubs. Each has one local coordinator and one volunteer coordinator, who recruit and coordinate volunteers locally, feeding information back to the central team. Our volunteers support the activities of vaccination initiatives locally, ranging from delivering communications and information resources to driving someone to get their vaccine. Coordinators have a network of organisations they work with including emergency services, GPs and local authorities and communities, they can understand both sides, create a dialogue between them and tailor to local needs. From this, we have produced six different messages and videos in 14 community languages, ranging from what to do when you receive your vaccine letter to combatting myths around vaccination. These materials were informed by what we heard from our local hubs. Similarly, we have produced six broadcasts in different community languages to be broadcasted regularly across community radio stations.

### Who is involved?

We have a communications manager and the central team coordinates the activity of local hubs. At a local level, these hubs include one local coordinator, one volunteer coordinator and local volunteers. Our coordinators have a network of Public Sector organisations they work with to understand local needs.

### What works for us?

We were well networked with community and faith organisations before the crisis- this was pivotal and was one of the reason we were approached by national government. Because we are a national organisation with grassroots, we have spent a lot of time building trusted relationships in these communities, so we did not have to reinvent the wheel to engage with them constructively. This has worked because what we developed and delivered was based on what we were seeing and hearing locally.