

Helping you build the Big Society

Our commitment to you:

Building the Big Society is about involving the people, neighbourhoods, villages, towns and cities of Britain in the great task of improving our country – and giving young people the power and opportunity to play a real part in their community. We will:

- ***guarantee your child a place on National Citizen Service, so they can learn new skills and meet young people from different walks of life***
- ***promote equal treatment and equal opportunity for all in a society proud of its tolerance and diversity***
- ***give those who work for a big company and the public sector a new workplace entitlement to Volunteering Leave for three days a year, on full pay.***

The Big Society is a vision of a more engaged nation, one in which we take more responsibility for ourselves and our neighbours; communities working together, not depending on remote and impersonal bureaucracies. Of course, there are many tasks which require the resources and grip of government. But there are also many areas of national life in which we need more people to step forward, take responsibility and play their part. This is about a national culture change, saying to everyone in Britain: ask what you can do for your community and your country.

Volunteering is at a 10-year high, with 3 million more adults giving their time last year than in 2010

In the past five years, there has been real progress. Volunteering is now at a ten-year high, with over three million more adults giving their time last year than in the year to March 2010. Charitable donations are on the up, with one million more people giving to good causes than at the end of the last Parliament. There are now parents' groups and charities running their own free schools. There are social enterprises helping people into jobs through the Work Programme. We have launched the world's first social investment bank, introduced more social impact bonds than the rest of the world combined

and highlighted the great work done in communities with the Big Society Awards and the Prime Minister's Points of Light award.

A generation of teenagers has undertaken National Citizen Service (NCS), developing their skills, broadening their horizons and growing in confidence; over the next five years, we will expand NCS – so it becomes a rite of passage for young people in our country. We will give more people the power and support to run a school, start their own social enterprise, and take over their own local parks, landmarks and pubs. We will encourage the 1,400 communities engaged in neighbourhood planning to complete the process and assist others to draw up their own plans. And we will take new steps to encourage volunteering, enabling more people to join the unsung heroes who are the backbone of communities across Britain.

Our plan of action:

We will expand National Citizen Service

Over 130,000 young people have graduated from NCS and we have now guaranteed a place on NCS for every 16 and 17-year-old who wants one. In addition to this, we will increase the number of cadet units in schools, so that more students have the chance to learn skills such as leadership and self-reliance.