



Habitat
for Humanity®
Great Britain

Global Village fundraising handbook

Contents

Setting a fundraising goal	6
Assessing your network: Who to ask	8
Fundraising strategies: How to ask	12
Crafting your message	13
Writing your appeal letter	15
Online giving	18
Asking in person	20
Event-based fundraising	23
Selling stuff	25
Other creative ideas for spreading the word and raising money	26
After returning from your build	28
Thanking your supporters	29
Appendices	
<i>Sample appeal letters</i>	32
<i>Gift Aid</i>	36
<i>Fundraising FAQ</i>	37
<i>About Habitat for Humanity</i>	40

Getting started

Congratulations on joining a Habitat for Humanity Global Village build! You play a vital role in our work to help people build strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter. We want to thank you again for dedicating your time, energy and resources toward eradicating inadequate housing conditions. Together, we are creating a world where families and communities have safe, affordable and decent places to live.

This handbook is a comprehensive guide to the many ways Habitat volunteers have successfully spread awareness about Habitat for Humanity's efforts and raised hundreds of thousands of pounds to support our shared mission.

“The fundraising, although daunting at the outset, was all part of the challenge.”

We think of fundraising as part of the Global Village challenge. Just as important as the work you do on the ground is the work that you do before you even depart on your build. While you are raising funds for your build, you will be talking to people who might not know much about Habitat. You are a spokesperson for our mission. As much as we wish otherwise, we alone cannot ensure housing for all simply by building or rehabbing more houses. That's why advocacy is a natural extension of the Habitat mission. Even if you are able to fund your entire program donation, travel expenses and more, we encourage you to invite your community to support your build.

Our ability to truly further our mission rests on our volunteers becoming vocal advocates around the world. Often, the countries where our volunteers travel are the ones that need these advocates the most. The more you share your story, the more impact you will have on this enormous global need.

Setting a fundraising goal

Many people are nervous about the idea of fundraising; some are downright intimidated by the thought of asking others for money. So how do you begin to set a goal?

When you sign on to a build, you will be given a fundraising target which covers the cost of your time in the country, including food, accommodation, and transportation to and from the build site. It also includes a donation to Habitat's work in Great Britain and the country in which you will be building.

However, we always encourage our volunteers to go above and beyond this fundraising target whenever possible. Every extra pound raised goes directly to our work building homes for people in need. The more funds you raise, the more Habitat can do. Remember: The more people you ask, the more people know about our mission – even if they say no.

Making a plan

There are some key questions that you need to ask before you start fundraising:

- How much have you been asked to raise?
- How long do you have to raise funds?

One of the first things you will need to do is to set up your online fundraising page. As a charity, we prefer you to use Everyday Heroes as it allows us to process your fundraising more efficiently. For more information on how to set up your Everyday Heroes page, see our Charity Portal FAQs. It may be helpful to make a timetable. Breaking your target down into monthly goals is a great way of keeping on track. Use this toolkit to organise a calendar of fundraising activity and you will soon see your sponsorship increase

Tips on becoming a successful fundraiser

Everyone can be a successful fundraiser, but here are some tips to help you along the way!

- Make sure you understand what exactly you will be doing and what Habitat for Humanity does. Your supporters will ask you and you don't want to appear like you don't know what you are doing.
- Use your networks. Your networks include all the different groups of people you may know, including your online social networks.
- Research local and national organisations that would be interested in what you are doing. This could include, for example, Rotary Clubs and local youth groups.
- Tell everyone about your events. The key to successful events is promotion, so make sure you put your event on Twitter, Facebook and other social media sites. Create posters and leaflets to give to your sponsors and to promote your events.
- Don't be afraid to ask! You will not reach your target if you don't ask people to sponsor you. Remember that you are asking for a good reason and their money will help you to reach your goal.

Getting support

Many people sponsor individuals who are raising funds for a target.

So why would people sponsor you?

- Because they know you
- Because you've asked
- Because they agree with the cause you're raising funds for
- If you are doing a sponsored event or challenge: Because you're prepared to make the effort – most people admire that!

Ask. You will only raise money when you ask for it. You will not raise money when you don't ask for it. The more people you approach, the more money you will raise. Remember, you are not requesting money for yourself, you are asking on behalf of Habitat for Humanity. The money you raise gives a hand up to real people around the world living in extreme poverty. It truly gives them hope and changes their lives, permanently.

Assessing your network:

Who to ask

You are much more than a fundraiser

Start by soliciting the people you know well. That inner circle will most likely be eager to support your efforts. Then move on to casual acquaintances, work or school associates, church members, local companies, and civic organizations. The truth is that many people you ask will support you. People will donate simply because you are asking!

Professional fundraisers put people into categories when they think about how to raise large amounts of money. Here are some you might come across:

High-level donors and family foundations

For build fundraising, a high-level donor is typically defined as someone who can give at least £1,000. These are people whom you want to ask in person whenever possible.

Donor bridges

Sometimes you know someone who knows someone. You might have a friend who, when you ask for help, says, “I know a donor who has a foundation and who would give a big gift to this cause.” The person who is willing to introduce you is called a bridge. You want to treat bridges as if they are donors.



Smaller-level donors

Most successful fundraising campaigns are built on a foundation of smaller-level donors who give in increments of £10, £25 or £100. If you ask enough people, you can quickly raise significant amounts of money £10 at a time.

Corporate, church and civic organization donors or sponsors

Many local businesses like to sponsor people in their community who are doing exciting charitable work. Which businesses do you have relationships with, or where are you a frequent customer? Many large corporations have a program that matches donations given by their employees. Be sure to ask all of your donors if they have access to corporate matching programs that can double their gift.

Assessing your network: How much should you ask for?

Creating a list of who you want to ask and how much you think they could give you is a great place to start.

To raise money, it is important to break down your overall goal into smaller, more attainable steps. The first step is to see what you are comfortable asking for. For example, which of the ways to raise £5,000 seems most comfortable for you?

Five ways to slice it

Five people will give you £1000

Ten people will give you £500

Twenty people will give you £250

Fifty people will give you £100

Two hundred people will give you £25

Find the amount you feel most comfortable asking for. Is it £25, £100, £500 or £1,000? You might be comfortable asking for £25 but realize that you don't know 200 people to ask. In reality, you will be asking for some gifts at the £25 level and some at a higher level. You now understand where your comfort zone is for asking, but we also encourage you to stretch yourself to ask for higher amounts.

A network chart is a resource to break down your goal so that it feels achievable to you. The chart is made up of gifts in different ranges. Usually 1 in every 3 to 5 people you ask will give you a gift. When you ask for larger amounts, you often have to ask fewer people. Making your network list will help you to determine which ways are best for you to raise money.



Network chart

GOAL: £	£1,000 and above (ask in person)	£250 – £999 (try to ask in person)	£100-£249	£25 – £99	£25 or less
Number of gifts in this category needed to reach my goal					
Total amount I hope to raise from this category					
Number of people I need to ask to reach that goal About 20% to 40% of people will say yes when asked in person.					
Who to ask	1	1	1	1	1
	2	2	2	2	2
	3	3	3	3	3
	4	4	4	4	4
	5	5	5	5	5
	6	6	6	6	6

Fundraising strategies:

How to ask

There are many approaches to build-based fundraising. Here are a few common strategies:

Online giving

Giving through Social Media or via email is more popular than ever. Our fundraising platform allows you to set a fundraising goal and track your progress.

Snail mail appeal letter

Some of our most successful fundraisers do it the old-fashioned way – they write an appeal letter, print it, sign it, mail it to their friends and family, and include a self-addressed, stamped return envelope so people can easily respond.

In person/phone

Asking for a larger gift should be done in person whenever possible. You always have a better chance of getting a donation when you ask this way.

Company Sponsorship

It is helpful to think about asking companies to sponsor you, especially if they have a link with construction. You could get your employer to help you i.e. would they allow you to email all staff? It is best to send a summary of what you are doing with a leaflet on Habitat for Humanity for the best information.

Athletic event sponsorships

Some people run a marathon or participate in other athletic events to solicit friends, family and co-workers to sponsor them on behalf of Habitat.

Selling stuff for a profit

Cleaning out your attic and garage and having a benefit garage sale, or designing and selling T-shirts or other items, can generate a significant amount toward your fundraising goal.

Events

A popular way to raise money is to host events such as benefit dinner parties where the food is paid for or is subsidized, and participants donate money to attend. If you or a friend teaches a class, host a benefit class to raise funds for your goal.

Crafting your message

There are a lot of ways to develop your fundraising message. These methods have been successful, but these are just to get you started. We encourage you to create an even more compelling message and share it with us so that we can update this handbook with your success story. For sample text for some of these messages, see Appendix 1.

Sponsor me

Create an average donation-per-day sponsorship. If your goal is £3,000 and your build project is 5 days, look for people to sponsor you for a day at £600 per day, or a morning or afternoon for £300.

Alternative gifts

The alternative gift appeal letter asks for financial support in lieu of material gifts that traditionally would accompany a special occasion such as a birthday, Christmas, a wedding, an anniversary, a graduation, etc.

Birthday appeal

One veteran volunteer felt that turning 60 was a birthday that deserved extra attention, so she decided to go global by joining a Habitat build to Hungary. She asked friends and family – and anyone willing to listen – to donate rather than give her a birthday gift. Because it was her 60th, she asked for contributions of £6 to £600 or any amount, as long as it included a six. Many donors who might otherwise have written checks for £10 donated £16. Lots of people wrote checks for £60; a few made them out for £60.60, or £66. All told, nearly 50 donors – individuals, couples and families – participated in this very successful and satisfying alternative birthday celebration.

Writing your appeal letter

An inspiring, clear and compelling message is at the heart of a successful letter-writing campaign. Great appeal letters always tell a personal story and express the need that you are filling by raising funds and participating in a Habitat build. A sample letter can be found in appendix 1. Here are the elements of a great letter:

- Details about your team's project, including where and when and your overall fundraising goal.
- If possible, a personal note to the potential donor
- Why you are participating in a Habitat build.
- An inspiring story about the need for the project.
- If your audience is not familiar with Habitat, some background information
- A clear request for donations or financial support
- A date by which you want their support.
- Link/URL for your fundraising webpage.
- Instructions on how to donate via check.
- If via snail mail, include a self-addressed, return envelope
- How to reach you with any questions.

Additional tips

- Get to the point. Tell your story in one to two pages, maximum.
- Try to send at least two to three months before you leave
- Two months before your build, plan to send a reminder. A lot of people receive written appeals and mean to give, but then forget about it.
- Plan to give supporters and potential supporters another update on the project, your preparations for your journey, and how much you still are trying to raise.
- For those who haven't given yet, ask again.

Online giving

People who use online fundraising tools raise 40% to 50% more than people who don't use online fundraising strategies. Online donations also typically bring in double the amount of money given versus donations made via check. Think about your social networks, your email address book and even the various email lists you are on. Who would be interested in the opportunity to support your Habitat project? If possible, send an email with a personal note at the beginning before the content of the appeal letter.

We are also pleased to offer access to Enthuse, Habitat for Humanity Great Britain's fundraising platform, which streamlines and simplifies your efforts to fundraise via email, Facebook, LinkedIn and other social networking sites. Your fundraising page is a great resource for sharing photos and stories and measuring your fundraising progress. All donation will instantly be counted toward your fundraising goal. Details on setting up your fundraising page will be provided with your build registration if applicable.

Snail mail

Not everyone is a fan of email, and some of our volunteers have had great success the old-fashioned way: printing their appeal letter, signing it and enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the donor to return a check to them.

Compelling evidence shows when the return envelope is already stamped, people are more likely to give than if they have to find their own stamp. Make sure your letter includes your fundraising webpage's URL and your donors to include your name and build details on any checks they are sending.

Email with restraint

In this age of do-not-call lists and internet spam, it is important that volunteers exhibit a degree of restraint. In compliance with Habitat for Humanity International's policy when fundraising via the internet, avoid sending cold call and blanket email solicitations to strangers and e-lists of people you do not know. It is acceptable, however, to participate in chaperoning, in which someone you know prefates your solicitation with an endorsement and sends it to people they know.



Asking in person

In-person fundraising is the single most effective approach – 10 times more effective than mail and five times more than a phone call. It works best when presenting to a group, seeking business sponsorship, or requesting larger gifts. Most people feel uncomfortable asking for money in person, but preparation and practice make all the difference. Role-play your pitch with a friend or family member – if you're inspired, they will be too. Once you've practised, you'll be ready to understand how an in-person fundraising meeting works.

Before your meeting, prepare thoroughly:

- Know Habitat's mission and the region you're visiting – and be ready to speak personally about why eradicating inadequate housing matters to you. Include photos in any presentation.
- Make a clear, specific ask – a pound amount, event sponsorship, or a company presentation – something that can be answered yes or no.
- Research your potential donor – their interests, giving history, and resources – so you can tailor your ask accordingly.

Before the meeting

Before scheduling the meeting, let the donor know you'll be making an ask – nobody likes an unexpected solicitation. A simple phone call works: "Hi Bill, I think you'd be interested in the Habitat project I'm involved in – I'd love to meet and tell you more."

Outline

Structure your meeting as follows:

- Open by thanking them for their time, then ease in with brief small talk – but be mindful of their schedule.
- Establish the connection. If they have a Habitat tie, acknowledge it. If not, explain why you thought of them – whether that's an interest in poverty housing, the region you're visiting, or support for your personal development.
- Build your case. Share the need for Habitat's work where you're going, stories of impact, and what personally drives you to be involved.
- Explain how they can help and the difference their support will make.
- Make a specific ask – a dollar amount, range, or other concrete support.
- Then stop talking. Give them space to absorb and respond.

After the meeting

Always thank the donor for their time, whatever the outcome.

- If they said yes, collect a check before you leave if possible, or provide online giving instructions. If they need time, agree on a clear follow-up date.
- Follow through on any materials you promised.
- Reflect on what worked and what didn't.
- Within 48 hours, send a personal thank-you note for their time, consideration, or gift.

Other tips for asking in person

- Try to be attentive, thoughtful, responsive and respectful of the needs of the donor. Do not interrupt or disagree or argue with the donor, even if they express objections.
- Be prepared for questions and objections. Imagine the issues the donor might raise, and be prepared to answer them.
- When asking, make sure you ask a specific question. Saying, “I hope you will consider giving to Habitat” is not an effective ask. Saying, “Would you be willing to give £500?” is an effective ask.
- If the donor is not receptive to the request, gently find out why. Is it the timing? Is the project not a match for them? Is the amount of the request too high?
- Bring a card with instructions on how they can donate online or by sending a check. If possible, collect a check during the meeting.



Telephone

Telephone asks have similar elements to meetings and require the same preparation. They are typically shorter and more to the point. Telephone asks are less effective than in-person requests, but they are a very valuable strategy for asking people you know.

- Tell them why you are calling. What is their connection to you, Habitat's mission, the country? Why would they be interested? What is the need in the country? How will their donation directly support a family who could not otherwise afford decent shelter?
- Make a specific ask and then be quiet and let the donor respond.
- If the person is interested in contributing, ask how they would prefer to donate and then provide instructions on how to do that.
- Thank them for their time and consideration.
- If they make a gift, be sure to follow up with a personal thank-you note.

Event-based fundraising

Planning is the key. The planning takes longer than you might think so plan several months in advance.

5 steps to setting up an event

1. Research: Shop around for an appropriate venue that is easily accessible to your guests. Once you find somewhere give them a call and book a date. Don't forget to ask them if they can give you a charity discount.
- 2 Entertainment: Consider allowing singers, dancers and other performers to sell their own merchandise at the event in exchange for a free performance or two. This will help you to cut costs.
- 3 Advertising: With your venue and entertainment sorted it's time to sell the show. Create an open invitation event on social media along with some posters and flyers that you can give to local restaurants and shops to hand out.
- 4 Tickets: Create some tickets and sell them for a set price before the event. You can also sell tickets on the door for a slightly higher price to encourage ticket sales earlier on.
- 5 Additional Funds: If there is a bar at your venue, ask them if they would donate a percentage of the income from the event to your fundraising. Alternatively, sell cakes or crafts at the event to boost your fundraising.

If you have decided to run your own event, these How to Guides will help you to think about the process from start to finish.

Some overall tips for organising an event

- Make sure that your event doesn't clash with any other major events in your area or nationally
- Write a checklist of all the things that need to happen before the day and make sure you prioritise
- Try to get as much as possible donated for free by local businesses in return for a bit of publicity (e.g. mention them in a press release to the local paper, put their business cards on tables).
- Whatever your event, always make sure that you have a display somewhere accessible about Habitat for Humanity and why you are raising money.

Event-based fundraising

Before

The venue

- Always approach your venue as early as possible to avoid disappointment.
- Make sure the venue management is aware that you would like to use their space for a charity event. They will often donate their venue to you for free or give you discounts/gifts to make sure your event is a success.

When booking a venue for your event, always consider the following:

- Is the venue easy to access? Think about its location for your guests.
- Does it have parking?
- How many people can the venue accommodate?
- Does the venue have the correct licenses needed for the event?
- Can you take a percentage of the bar takings/ organise deals on drinks and food for your guests?

Selling tickets

- Start selling tickets in advance rather than on the door. That way you know how many people are attending. You could always keep a certain amount aside for tickets on the night.
- If you want to sell tickets on the door, make sure you know how many tickets have already been sold and how many you have left to sell. Your venue will have a strict policy on how many people it can accommodate for insurance and safety reasons.

During the event

- Always try to arrive as early as possible at your venue, so that you have enough time to set up your event. Leave enough time to decorate, test technical equipment and check the venue staff are happy with the arrangements
- You could place collection boxes around the venue – email our Supporter Services team if you need collection boxes: hello@habitatforhumanity.org.uk
- Please do take lots of photos and send them into our Supporter Services team!

After the event

Thank all the attendees and let them know how much you raised. It's a great feeling for them to know that they were part of a successful event.

- Don't forget to thank the venue for having you for the evening! It's great news for them if the event was a success and by maintaining a good relationship, you know you could call on them again to host future events.
- Once you have counted up the money you collect at the event, upload it onto your fundraising page as an offline donation.
- Don't forget to give us a call and let us know how it went!

What to do with your money?

- Whenever possible, direct your sponsors to your own online fundraising page.
- Ask your sponsors to give you their sponsor money at the time that they sponsor you. It will save you having to catch up with them again after your sponsored activity.
- Wherever possible, ask for a cheque (made payable to Habitat for Humanity). It's too easy to get coins and notes muddled and it's also easier to keep tabs on who has or hasn't paid up.
- If people give you cash, write down who has given you what. Write a cheque payable to Habitat for Humanity for the amount of cash or arrange a bank transfer. On the back of the cheque, or on a note with the postal order, write the names of the sponsors and the amount they gave.

Event-based fundraising

Direct solicitation via email, snail mail, in person and phone are good ways to ask family and friends for financial support. However, fundraising events allow you to go far beyond that inner circle and expose your build and Habitat for Humanity to a larger, more diverse audience. And they can be fun!

General tips for events

- Events can be as simple or elaborate as you want them to be. The first couple of times you do fundraising events, try to err on the side of simplicity. People will be happy to support you and don't need a complicated plan with a lot of details to be able to offer their support.
- Always create a goal. How much do you want to raise at the event? Make sure people know what the goal is.
- Have a sign-in sheet and collect as much contact information as you can. Use this information to follow up and thank people for coming and for their support. You might also use this list to send updates from the field and to do fundraising after the build if you are inspired.
- If appropriate, offer a short presentation about the project. Show a Habitat video, create a slideshow, and speak from the heart about why you have chosen to invest your own time and money into this effort.
- Ask for support. You could do a formal pitch or ask people to support your build through a silent auction or other means.
- Manage the logistics of collecting the donations. It is important to be prepared to collect the donations you are requesting. Have envelopes available for people to put checks into. Have enough pens for everyone. Be sure to have one or two people on hand to collect donations at the door or during the event.
- Always have your fundraising webpage info available on a card that you can hand out with clear instructions on how to donate online or via check.
- Be creative with the theme. If possible, tie it to your project by having food, decorations or entertainment from the region you will visit or create a home-building theme in which the goal of the party is to raise enough to build a house.

Some successful event ideas

So that you can control numbers and plan for the evening it's best to sell tickets for the evening in advance – you could always have one price if people buy their ticket beforehand and another, slightly higher price on the door if there is still capacity.

Dinners

Host a dinner party at your house and ask for a minimum contribution from the guests. Do a short presentation between courses. You could serve food from the region you will visit and see if local shops that carry that type of food can donate items, such as desserts or drinks. Get a restaurant to sponsor or partially sponsor you and charge a donation at the door for a buffet or fixed menu. Some people like to host these events at restaurants that serve the cuisine from the country you will visit.

Drinks

A popular and successful way to raise money is to gather people at a restaurant or café, where you charge a donation at the door. Ask if the venue will offer you free drink tickets or a discount at the bar. We've seen people include silent auctions as part of these events to raise even more money.

Concerts

If you know musicians or other performers (or if you are one), you could create and produce a benefit performance, or attach yourself to a music event or other performance that is already scheduled. Ask if a band you know would be willing to collect donations at the door or by passing a hat and if they would allow you to speak on stage in between sets.

Parties

Host a party at your house or at a venue that you can use for free. Charge a donation at the door. If you are ambitious, have a silent or live auction as part of the activities.

Benefit classes

Ask a local restaurant to sponsor a cooking class and charge a donation at the door.

Ask a yoga teacher, dance teacher, boot camp fitness instructor, etc., to create a benefit class that is at a special time, in a special location and perhaps longer than their normal class. Sometimes people gather a group of teachers to teach an exciting class together.

A-thons

Big athletic events are a great way to piggyback fundraising with your athletic interests. If you're a runner, cyclist, swimmer, hiker or any type of athlete, you can solicit sponsorship for an upcoming event. Ask friends; family members; and people you know through work, church and civic groups to donate based on your accomplishments, such as running a marathon, cycling or swimming a certain distance, or hiking a mountain.

Karaoke Evening

Ask a local pub or other venue to donate a private room for you to hold your karaoke night. Some pubs and even some restaurants have their own karaoke equipment in a special function room, or you could hire a room at a karaoke bar. Don't forget to tell them it is a fundraising event for charity and to ask for the best charity discount they can do for you.

Pub Quiz

Most pubs have a quiz night once a week so it is better not to clash with these! It's always worth asking your local pub if they will hold their regular quiz night in aid of Habitat for Humanity (so that the entry money all goes to HFH) and offer to do lots of publicity of the event so that there are lots of attendees and increased bar takings for the pub.

Tip-a-thon

Food service workers have held tip-a-thons to collect donations for their Habitat build. The restaurant and your co-workers might be willing to donate all or a portion of one night's tips to support your build. Placing a donation jar with a compelling photo and donation information near the cashier's station or on the bar gives patrons an opportunity to help. Be sure to make cards with information on how people can donate online, and have those available too.

Work-a-thon

Design a work-a-thon! Work-a-thons provide a service, especially to the elderly and those with limited free time. Brainstorm tasks that others would appreciate having done: raking leaves, washing cars, babysitting, taking care of pets, running errands, tailoring clothes, doing laundry, cleaning, trimming, shoveling snow, etc. Ask friends to take on a task or two on your behalf. Ask recipients of the services for a donation and ask others to sponsor you for a day or per task.

Bowl-a-thon

A bowl-a-thon is a popular way to raise money. Get a local bowling alley to sponsor or partially sponsor the admission price for your guests, charge a higher donation at the door, and create a bowling competition with prizes at the end of the night.

Tournaments

Golf tournaments and fishing tournaments are also successful ways to ask for a donation to register and then provide prizes at the end of the event.



12 tips for running a fundraising event (from a volunteer!)

1. Advertise your event as widely as you can using posters, Facebook, social media, and letters. I persuaded the Communications department in the hospital where I work to send out an email to the 3000 staff that work there to advertise my cake sale. Talking about your event well in advance is one of the best ways to get people interested.
2. Thinking about running a quiz, raffle, or Tombola? It's worth dropping into high street shops, businesses, football clubs, and restaurants to ask for prizes – chain businesses have a corporate social responsibility budget. One of my best raffle prizes was a voucher from Le Bistrot Pierre for dinner for 2 worth £35. I also managed to secure a full body massage!
3. It's handy to have an Authorisation Letter and some information about Habitat for Humanity ready to give the Manager to explain what you are doing, when and where the funds are going. [You can download information about our work on our Resources page!]
4. The venue is key. Choose a venue for your event that is accessible and has good car parking.
5. Remember to have a large cash float to be able to give change to your customers, e.g. for entrance tickets, raffle tickets.
6. Remember to minus your costs to work out your profit.
7. Give people alternative options. If they cannot attend your event, ask them if they would like to buy a cake / a raffle ticket instead.
8. Have a paper sponsorship form as well as your online giving page – don't let on the spot offers of sponsorship go by – ask Habitat for Humanity to send you an electronic form to print off.
9. Try to get the payment of a ticket for your event from the donors beforehand as there will always be people who will not be able to attend at short notice for various reasons. You don't want to risk losing the money.
10. Don't be shy about asking for favours from friends/ colleagues / acquaintances. People are really keen to support you and get involved when you tell them what you are doing. I asked the landlord of my local pub if I could host a pie and pea supper. He kindly gave me the function room for free and sold me the pies and peas at cost price (£3 each). I made a profit of £5 on each ticket sold. The £8 ticket price also got my donors a go on the quiz. The landlord also donated a mini keg of beer as a quiz prize. I also ran a raffle on the night and charged £1 a sbuild. This event raised £550 and a good time was had by all 65 people that turned up!
11. Do your homework. Make sure you know exactly where the money is going – your donors will want to know. Not many people have heard of Habitat for Humanity so have some facts and figures about the charity at your fingertips. Ask your Team Leader or Habitat for Humanity staff who will be able to give you a breakdown of the costs.
12. Remember to contact your local newspaper a couple of weeks before you leave for your Global Village build or before your fundraising event. They might even come along to the event!

“If running an event is not for you, there are lots of other ways to get fundraising!”

Selling stuff (at events and online)

There is a huge list of creative ways to sell products. Some that are successful are included here, but use your creativity and share your successes with us.

Car boot sale

Being part of a Habitat build is a good excuse to clean out your closets. Ask friends and neighbors to donate items, and be sure to advertise that all proceeds will support Habitat for Humanity. If you have kids who want to help out, add a bake sale or lemonade stand. You could even let the buyer decide how much to “donate” for each item. You will be surprised by people’s generosity.

Virtual craft show

If you are an artist or make crafts, you could sell handmade items. Host an Etsy.com event and tell your friends to go to your Etsy store and purchase things for which all proceeds will be donated to Habitat.

T-shirt sales

Design a T-shirt. You could create an iron-on design that you put on secondhand T-shirts in good condition (or low-cost new shirts) and sell at your events or online (or give to your donors).

Bake sales

Even if you aren’t a great baker, ask your family, friends, or colleagues to bake and donate some items for your bake sale. Some shops or cafes might even donate baked goods.

Sell old clothes

Sell your old clothes online through Vinted or Depop. Ask friends and family to do a closet cleanout and give you their unwanted items to sell online.

Host an auction

Create an auction and ask for contributions of unique items, a stay at a timeshare, handmade crafts, gift cards to local stores, or services such as massages and facials. There are several ways to auction your items:

- Live auctions: You can hold a live auction at your workplace over lunch or during a big fundraising event, party or concert that you are hosting.
- Silent auctions: A silent auction can be held open for as long as you want. For example, you could create a silent auction at your church that is open for bids for a month, or a silent auction that is open only during a party or a concert.
- Online auctions: eBay is a good place to create an online silent auction. Spread the word to your social network, promoting the start and end dates for the auction, the link to the auction page, and some of the premium items you will be selling. Send an email about one week before to excite people, an email on the day it starts, and then another one a day before the auction ends. After the auction, thank all of your purchasers (and people who donated auction items) and tell them how much you were able to raise through their support.



Other creative ideas for spreading the word and raising money



Even though this handbook is full of ideas for raising money, our ultimate goal is to gain supporters for the work and mission of Habitat for Humanity. That means we welcome the opportunity to spread awareness of the issue of global inadequate housing, create advocates for our work, and inspire new volunteers of Habitat builds and in other aspects of Habitat's efforts, from bringing new volunteers into local affiliates or new shoppers into our Habitat ReStores. As you are fundraising for your build and your goal, keep in mind the big picture of all the ways people can be engaged in our mission. These ideas are ways to spread awareness and open the door for people to step into the world of Habitat. Of course, you can use these ideas to raise money, too!

Speaking presentations

Ask anyone and everyone you know if you can make a presentation to their group: churches, civic organizations, clubs, classes, etc. Build your presentation around the Habitat video or your own slideshow or video about your build. Sometimes this works well after your build, too! Share your pitch with the group — the reason you are giving your own time and money to this project, and what inspires you about the mission. Collect as many donations on the spot as you can and have cards available with your fundraising webpage address and information on how to give via check. As with events, have a sign-in sheet and follow up to thank people.

Community newsletters

Use your company, organization, church or campus newsletter to publicize your Habitat build. Offer to write a series of articles about Habitat for Humanity, and your particular build, possibly one before, during and after. Ask for financial support for your build in the articles you write, and publicize your fundraising web address to encourage people to donate online. Remember: You'll always get more when you ask.



Local companies, civic organizations and churches

Don't forget to ask local businesses that you patronize, civic clubs such as Rotary, and local churches. Find ways they can support you, from allowing you to leave a change jar near the cash register at the coffee shop to making an extra offering on a Sunday at church.



Media

Use whatever forms of local media are available while fundraising: newspapers, television and radio stations, and community bulletin boards. If you are hosting a particularly creative event, media might jump at the chance to cover a captivating story about someone reaching out to make a positive difference in the world. When providing information to the media, always mention the local Habitat affiliate, whose mission it is to eliminate inadequate housing locally.



Employer matching gifts

More than 1,300 companies match employee gifts to Habitat, and this money could be designated for your Habitat build. If applying for matching gifts, notify your team leader or Habitat Volunteer Coordinator so that we can make sure your matching gifts are properly allocated to your fundraising goal and to your team.

After returning from your build

Fundraising and awareness-raising is most helpful before you leave for your build, but it is also a good idea to consider fundraising efforts after you return. For people who have never been on a Habitat build and are not comfortable fundraising without having experienced this transformational program, fundraising after you get home is a great way to carry your inspiration into action. For generations to come, your efforts to fundraise and share your story with others will significantly affect the community you visited. Many of the suggestions listed in this handbook work just as well after the build as before. Instead of saying in your appeal letter or in your pitch, “I’m raising funds for a community in Nepal, where I will be building a home in two months,” you would say, “I just returned from building a home in Nepal and got so inspired that I have committed to raising the money needed to build another home.” While you are traveling, be sure to document your experience and be thinking about how you can best share it with others once you get back. Remember that people will be inspired by your inspiration, so give them ways to get involved. They can donate money to your fundraising effort, learn more about the program and about Habitat, join a future Habitat team, or volunteer with Habitat in your community.

Thanking your supporters

Regardless of how people give, we encourage you to follow up personally with your donors.

Some great ways to acknowledge and thank your supporters include:

- Sending a handwritten thank-you card after you receive the gift.
- Including the donor on any build updates you do before, during or after the build, if they would like to be included.
- Sending a personal email after the build with a photo from the build and thanking supporters again for their help.
- Throwing a thank-you party once you get home and sharing stories, photos and videos from your build.
- Bringing a small gift of appreciation from the build, such as something personal and handmade or special from the community you visited.



Whatever you do, make sure it is personal and heartfelt and acknowledges your supporters for the profound impact of their gift on a family and on a community.

Strategies for making your one-time supporters into longtime supporters

Almost half of the people who go on a Habitat build are repeat team members. They have the opportunity not only to travel and build homes every year with a Habitat team, but also to challenge themselves and their networks to support a Habitat host program in another part of the world. This section is for people who are planning to participate multiple times with Habitat teams.

What if you had 50 people who supported you and donated money to Habitat every time you asked them? What if your donor team actually looked forward to your annual letter asking them for money? Sound impossible? It's not!

To create a donor base that is excited about your work and that feels good about supporting you and Habitat year after year, these are some of the best practices from our top team leaders:

- Relationships. Go to people whom you know very well or with whom you want to build stronger relationships. Take the time to know what they care about, and share why you care about the mission of Habitat for Humanity. The more they know about your passion, the more they will be inspired by it.
- Personalize. Don't send blanket "Dear friend" emails to the people you want to cultivate for the long term. You could segment your list so that after you've sent one "Dear friend" email, you can follow up personally with the people who give and make sure all future communications to them are personal.
- Share. People who give toward your fundraising goal likely want to know about your journey before, during and after. Keep them in the loop by sending updates about your preparations, things you learn beforehand about the build project, a couple of poignant emails or videos from the field, and certainly a report when you get back.
- Account. What did Habitat spend your money on? Once the money is counted and sent to the host program, make sure you find out how that money was spent and report back to your donors so that they can see the home, the family and the community where their investment made a difference. They want to know their money was spent well.
- Update. Send an update email sometime during the year in between your fundraising asks if you learn something new about Habitat, the build project you just did, or a build project you will be doing. If your donors feel the investment they made in Habitat was spent well and the experience was rewarding for them, the likelihood is much higher that they will want to give again. Habitat for Humanity International will make sure that the money donated is spent well. But we cannot possibly know all of your donors or deliver communications that speak to them personally. Therefore, it is your personal communication with your donors before, during and after your projects that will make the experience inspiring and rewarding for them over the short term and long term.



appendix

Sample appeal letters

Dear _____,

How are you? I saw on Facebook that you recently welcomed a baby girl into your family. Congratulations! I'm writing today because I am seeking support for a cause I care deeply about. As you may know, I've been volunteering on and off with Habitat for Humanity's local programme here in the UK for the past couple of years. I have experienced firsthand how building a safe, affordable and decent home for a family changes not only that family's living conditions but also their lives. When children grow up with the security of having a roof over their heads, miraculous things can happen. Kids who might never have finished school suddenly have the solid foundation that allows them to go on to further education. Communities that were unsafe for decades are rebuilt by families living in clean, decent homes, and entire neighbourhoods start to transform.

Recently, I had the honour of being chosen for a Habitat for Humanity Global Village build, where I will travel in September with 12 others to Malawi. One of the smallest and most densely populated countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Malawi is frequently ranked among the world's least developed nations, with the vast majority of its population living in rural areas and relying on subsistence farming to get by. One of the families we will work with lives in a small dwelling made with unstable mud-brick walls and a thatched roof that offers little protection from the heavy rains of Malawi's wet season or the intense heat of its dry months. Overcrowding is common, and without a secure home, families face constant exposure to waterborne illness, malaria, and the instability that comes from living in a structure that may not last the year. Habitat for Humanity Malawi works to help families like this one build safe, durable homes – and it does so through a community-centred model that puts families at the heart of the process. Prospective homeowners contribute sweat equity, dedicating hundreds of hours building their own homes and those of their neighbours. Habitat Malawi also partners with local communities to use locally sourced, affordable materials and techniques suited to the environment, keeping costs low and skills rooted in the community. It is truly an honour to be able to play a small part in helping this family and their future. Today I'm asking that you consider supporting me and my team as we embark on this journey. It costs the equivalent of just £1,600 to complete a new Habitat house in Malawi. Each house includes two rooms, plus a sitting room, kitchen and bathroom. Our team hopes to raise £8,000 to build five new homes in Malawi.

Please consider giving as generously as you can. You can donate online at my personal fundraising page, or send a cheque made payable to Habitat for Humanity Great Britain to the address below. I will send all cheques I receive together on 1st August.

Thank you in advance for your support. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Kindest regards,

Post cheques to: [Name] · [Address] · Phone: [Phone number] · Email: [Email address] ·

Donate online: [Click here to visit my fundraising page.](#)

Fundraising FAQ

Doubling our impact

Habitat for Humanity International is challenging our volunteers to make an even greater impact on the global issue of inadequate housing. With the help of our dedicated participants and leaders, we are hoping to build twice as many homes by encouraging our volunteers to raise above and beyond the minimum program donation.

Why is Habitat encouraging above and beyond fundraising?

The world is experiencing a global housing crisis. About 1.6 billion people live in substandard housing, and 100 million people are homeless, according to the United Nations. These people are increasingly urban residents, and every week more than a million people are born in or move to cities in the developing world. Today, 1 billion people – 32% of the global urban population – live in urban slums. If no serious action is taken, the number of slum dwellers worldwide will increase over the next 30 years to nearly 2 billion, according to the U.N.

As a worldwide leader in eradicating inadequate housing, Habitat responds to this need as a matter of conscience and action. Our volunteers and build leaders are some of the highest-caliber, most inspiring ambassadors for this mission. We believe that, because of the growing need in the world, Habitat's volunteer travel programs can easily double their efforts and serve twice as many families and communities than in the past. We have 1.6 billion people counting on us to do this!

I am uncomfortable asking people for money. Do I have to do it?

No one is required to fundraise, but we appreciate your support in helping us do more to eradicate inadequate housing around the world.

For people who are uncomfortable asking for money, we recommend two strategies:

- Use our online fundraising platform, which allows you to write a simple appeal letter and send it to your social network.
- Consider a benefit event, such as a yard sale, where you can sell things you are trying to get rid of anyway, and let people know that the proceeds will go toward your Habitat fundraising goal.
- You will be surprised how many people will be happy to know their purchase is going to a good cause, and many might ask you about your build. See “Event-based fundraising,” for details on this strategy. Amaze yourself!

Don't Habitat build volunteers already make a donation to the host program of the location they visit?

Program donations include a donation of £800 to £1200 per person to the national organization, plus a donation to cover some of the costs of managing your participation in the build. These are considered donations, but they are the actual costs of the staff members who support you, your team leader and your build project, along with the costs of the materials for construction. The additional money raised will expand the national organization's ability to build more homes and take on more community improvement projects. It will also allow Habitat to engage more volunteers and improve our services.

How can Habitat help me raise money?

Habitat helps you in these ways:

- **Habitat fundraising platform:** Our fundraising platform allows you to set up your own fundraising page with the ability to add photos, videos, stories and a personal appeal letter. With the click of a button, you can share your appeal letter with your email list and with all of your social networks, such as LinkedIn, Facebook and more.
- **Your team leader:** Many of our team leaders have experience and skill in fundraising and are happy to support their teams in their fundraising efforts. Ask your team leader what additional support your team is using, such as calls before the build to hear about the host program, virtual teams and more.

Can I use the funds I raise to pay for my airfare?

Transportation from your point of departure to your build country is not included in the published program donation and is your responsibility to schedule and pay for. Funds raised that exceed the program donation of your build cannot be used to cover any part of a volunteer's airfare.

How will the extra money raised be spent?

Half of the funds will go to the country program, where they will be used to build more homes and strengthen Habitat's in-country efforts. The other half will go toward enhancing the overall builds program, such as additional training of leaders, improved customer service, and better web tools and resources.



Eliminating inadequate housing and homelessness

Who we are

Driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat for Humanity found its earliest inspirations as a grassroots movement on an interracial community farm in south Georgia. Since its founding in 1976, the Christian housing organization has grown to become a leading global nonprofit working in local communities across all 50 states in the U.S. and in multiple countries around the world. Families and individuals in need of a hand up partner with Habitat for Humanity to build or improve a place they can call home. Habitat homeowners help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage. Through financial support, volunteering or adding a voice to support affordable housing, everyone can help families achieve the strength, stability and self-reliance they need to build better lives for themselves. Through shelter, we empower. To learn more, visit [habitat.org](https://www.habitat.org).

Why our work matters

The world is experiencing a global housing crisis. About 1.6 billion people live in substandard housing, and 100 million are homeless, according to the United Nations. These people are increasingly urban residents, and every week more than 1 million people are born in or move to cities in the developing world.

Today, 1 billion people live in urban slums. If no serious action is taken, the number of slum dwellers worldwide will increase over the next 30 years to nearly 2 billion, according to the U.N.

People live in inadequate housing throughout the world, and Habitat for Humanity is dedicated to helping people in need of decent, affordable housing build strength, stability and self-reliance through adequate shelter. In the United States alone, millions of people have housing problems. These problems include payments that require too much of their income, overcrowding, poor quality, and homelessness.

Building homes does more than put a roof over someone's head. In clean, decent, stable housing:

- Families can provide stability for their children.
- A family's sense of dignity and pride grow.
- Health, physical safety and security improve.
- Education and job prospects increase.

Millions of people are sleeping in safer, healthier and more secure homes thanks to the efforts of Habitat for Humanity and its partners and supporters. Each year, Habitat for Humanity helps families build strength, stability and self-reliance by constructing and improving homes, by advocating for fair and just housing policies, and by providing training and access to resources to help families improve their shelter conditions.

How do we work?

Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds and rehabilitates decent houses alongside our homeowner families. Every year, Habitat mobilizes more than 500,000 volunteers to build, advocate and raise awareness about the global need for shelter.

Habitat for Humanity works in a number of different ways to create decent, affordable housing

In addition to new construction, Habitat also renovates existing homes in many communities, particularly in urban areas.

- Habitat for Humanity helps people repair and improve their own homes and neighborhoods. Habitat's Disaster Response works with local communities to address a variety of housing needs after natural disasters.
- Habitat's advocacy work raises awareness and support for decent and affordable housing around the world.

Habitat's home-building and finance model in developing world economies

New and innovative housing finance programs are designed through Habitat's partnerships with microfinance institutions. These programs are:

- Effective and suitable for families with very low incomes.
- Applied where appropriate.

Some examples:

- MicroBuild Fund – Lends to microfinance institutions, which in turn provide small loans to families to build safe, decent and durable homes as their finances allow.
- Building in Stages – Houses are built progressively with small loans that must be paid before the next stage of the house is built.



every
hand
makes a difference