

Transcript – What is active citizenship?

KEY:

N: Narrator

N: Being a citizen means having legal membership of a country or state, in which to live and work. This also includes having the right to political participation and being subject to the laws of that country. Citizenship is closely tied to the concepts of Human Rights, responsibility, participation, and identity.

Active citizenship is the idea that everyone should try to make a positive contribution to their community, and society at large. Let's look at the ways in which people can contribute.

For example, in the United Kingdom, voting is not compulsory, but could be seen as a responsible thing to do. Being lawful is another in which citizens can benefit society. Laws are made by elected officials in government to ensure fair and equal treatment for all. Breaking these laws can result in legal consequences, such as fines or prison sentences. Law breaking has a negative impact on other people, and the community in which they live. Through being lawful and standing up for the rights of others, the community becomes a fair and more peaceful place.

Identity is about how individuals in groups view and identify themselves. People can have more than one identity. For example, an individual might identify themselves through their gender, sexual orientation, political belief, religion, or sport they follow. Recognising and respecting these differences in one another is a way in which people can become active citizens. This means treating each other equally and fairly, so that no one community is excluded or marginalised.

Bringing different communities together helps people to see what they have in common, rather than what divides them. These are only some of the ways in which people can become active citizens. But why does it matter?

Promoting and being involved in active citizenship is important to society, because it helps support democracy, support lawfulness, promote equality, diversity and inclusion, encourages citizens to build good relationships, and builds reconciliation and peace.