

Employer Supported Volunteering Programme Toolkit

This guide is published by WAM Get Involved.



Forward from RBWM

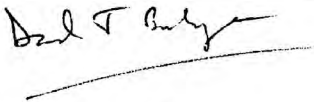
As a Vanguard Authority for the Big Society the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead has a commitment to promoting social action, civic participation and removing the barriers that allow more people to be involved in their communities and to take action on things that matter to them. The Employer Supported Volunteering Programme (ESVP) toolkit will help promote this commitment.

I believe that the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead should lead by example, demonstrating the value of volunteering. As a major local employer we have adopted policies and created opportunities for our staff to volunteer within the borough.

Employee Supported Volunteering will provide opportunities for employees to engage with local communities and by doing so, acquire new skills and local knowledge which will benefit them and their teams, In developing local relationships employees volunteering can also potentially increase the confidence of local residents to take control of how things are done in their areas with Employee volunteers effectively becoming ambassadors for their Company which may enhance their Employers reputation amongst local communities.

A recent study found that 87% of people who volunteered in the last year said that volunteering had developed teamwork and people skills, and 81% agreed that volunteering together strengthens relationships among colleagues. What's more, four out of five employed people who volunteered in the past year say that they feel better about their employer because of the employer's involvement in volunteer activities.

Councillor David Burbage MBE



November 2014



WAM Get Involved

Our mission is to help local people to get involved with local community projects. We want to remove the red tape and get you connected with the groups who need volunteers.

Resources for RBWM Businesses

On the home page of www.wamgetinvolved.org.uk there is a link for resources for businesses. On here we have the Employer Supported Volunteering Toolkit plus additional resources.

If you create any templates or resources within your business that you would like to share with others email WAM Get Involved at admin@rbwm.communitydatabase.co.uk and we will place them on this resource page.

Get Connected

On the Home page of WAM GET INVOLVED you and your staff can subscribe to a monthly newsletter. This will connect them on a regular basis with the community activities in Windsor and Maidenhead as well as highlight any volunteering opportunities.

Charities and Community Groups

You can search the groups section for local charities and community groups. Details of what they do and their contact information is available. This makes it easy for any employer or employee who wants to contact an individual organisation.

We also send out information to all local charities and community groups. If you have a request to the voluntary and community sector or need to inform the sector of your CSR email admin@rbwm.communitydatabase.co.uk.

Volunteer

After you have subscribed to the monthly newsletter, you will be invited to register as a volunteer. Just volunteering is easy, Employees can search the database of volunteering opportunities and make direct contact with the organisations.

Volunteering Toolkit

Wondering how to get started? This is essentially a toolkit that focuses on ESVP for companies that want to get involved in CSR. You are provided with the first steps to take, helpful resources and basic elements to consider as you build or strengthen an employer supported volunteer program in your work place.

What is an ESVP?

An Employer Supported Volunteer Program (ESVP) is the way a company engages its employees in service to the community. It provides the framework for workplace engagement so that the good work of employees and companies can be tracked, measured and reported. There is no one-size-fits-all ESVP – every workplace is different and every effective ESVP should be tailored to make sense for your company.

This toolkit contains information on:

- The business case for employee volunteering
- Getting started – the first steps
- How to develop a Employer Supported Volunteer Program
- Working with Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (VCSO)
- How to manage, monitor and evaluate an employee volunteering program
- Checklists and feedback forms
- Other local and national resources

This toolkit is a work in progress. We welcome input from local companies. Please send feedback comments, changes and improvements to Ramesh@sloughcvs.org.uk.

The next review for this document is July 2015.

1. Background

RBWM's overall aim is to create an environment where it is easy for communities to do things for themselves around issues that matter to them. The role of the council is to enable this to happen and facilitate the maximum community benefit.

In response, many businesses, amongst other things, are now developing frameworks for employee volunteering. In part, business believes it is the right thing to do, but more than ever, employees are seeking opportunities to volunteer.

Employers can help their staff participate in making a difference to needy communities and at the same time deliver true business benefits to their company.

An Employer Supported Volunteering Program (ESVP) is a planned, managed effort that seeks to motivate and enable employees to effectively volunteer under the sponsorship and leadership of the employer.

Any size business can participate. Employees can volunteer individually, as a group or as an entire company. Volunteer projects can be one time or on-going throughout the year. The key is to tailor workplace volunteering to your business needs and to integrate it into what you do on an on-going basis.

2. Types of Employee Volunteering

Employee volunteering describes volunteering undertaken by employees, either within or outside of working hours, that is supported in some way by the employer and if appropriate by the involved non-profit organisation.

There are many ways in which companies can support employee volunteering. A company should weigh up which fits best with both the business and the staff makeup.

Payroll Giving

Payroll Giving (also known as Give As You Earn or workplace giving) is a flexible scheme which allows anyone who pays UK income tax to give regularly and on a tax free basis to the charities and good causes of their choice.

Payroll Giving donations are deducted before tax so each £1.00 you give will only cost you 80p, and if you're a higher rate tax payer it will only cost you 60p.

Payroll Giving is a valuable, long term source of revenue, providing regular income to help charities budget and plan ahead more effectively. Employees can choose to support any charity of their choice with a regular donation direct from their pay.

It's cheaper because it's tax free - for example, a donation of £5 per month costs the basic rate tax payer £4.00 (the taxman pays the rest!).

Higher rate taxpayers- the only way to pass on your 40% or 45% tax to charities. Only 28% can be recouped via other ways of giving.

Benefits:

- It allows staff to give a small, affordable contribution each month
- It enables staff with either very demanding jobs or heavy family commitments to play their part without having to put in "volunteering time"
- A payroll programme is easy to install and implement
- Tax incentives for giving are available

Payroll giving builds a sense of collective responsibility and is likely to create a sense of involvement so that, in time, many payroll givers will go on to become volunteers if additional opportunities are presented to them.

Individual Volunteering – Out of Office Hours

Staff members may volunteer as individuals during out of office time, for example, as school governors, board members of local charities and community groups, or teaching sport to children. These activities are making a difference to the community and can be easily acknowledged and supported.

Benefits:

- Employees really feel good about who they work for as the company shows it takes their cause seriously.
- Employees make excellent ambassadors of the company in the community.

2. Types of Employee Volunteering (continued)

Volunteering from your desk

Employees are also able to volunteer from their desk, to provide professional services and engage in skills transfer. An example of this could include managing the books of an VCSO, conducting research, assessing community expectations, checking donor responses, and making recommendations for improved performance.

Benefits:

- Skills transfer from the company to the VCSO
- The volunteer can offer specialised areas of expertise
- Volunteer safety (not having to travel etc.)
- Volunteers don't need to "volunteer down" or handle issues outside their expertise
- Very little workplace disruption
- Personal development and a sense of making a contribution

Team volunteering and team challenges

Team challenges can form part of a Volunteer Day or an on-going paid release programme.

Staff are challenged to find a volunteering opportunity or fundraising activity. Often a particular cause is suggested. A committee is formed to select the beneficiary organisations, plan the event, and then mobilise support from other staff. A small pot of money could be set aside which committees can apply for assistance with their chosen activity.

Benefits:

- As teams are usually mobilised around divisions or units, a spirit of healthy competition can be created
- Committees are often driven by enthusiastic staff who are not necessarily the most senior, thereby building their organisational skills and leadership
- Can involve families of employees
- Excellent for team building and motivation
- Provides a good "taster" for those who are new to volunteering. The initial activity may not be long-term or sustainable, but can lead to a more developed programme

Secondments to a Charity

Increasingly, corporates are making staff available for prolonged secondments to the Charity sector. There are many reasons for this: the personal development of the employee, providing the Charity with expertise it cannot afford, reputation building, branding and staff retention.

2. Types of Employee Volunteering (continued)

Awards Programme

Awards programmes are well suited to companies with smaller budgets that cannot match every employee activity. Each year, employees are asked to submit details of their volunteer activities or nominate colleagues for an award. Applications are judged against a variety of different categories, which may include: impact on communities, best individual effort, best team effort, and so on.

Grants can then be awarded to the organisations where the staff members are volunteering. Often the staff member will receive some kind of recognition, such as a mention in the company newsletter or a weekend away. It is important to ensure that the entire process is transparent, from the selection process through to the resultant publicity. For example, outside judges could be appointed to adjudicate winning projects.

Awards programmes can be run for both team and individual events.

Benefits:

- Allow a company with a small budget to give out a few grants
- Highly motivating and raises awareness of volunteering within the company.
- The awards ceremony is often a gala dinner and a real accolade for the winning staff members.
- Effective way of finding out what employees are doing in the community without appearing intrusive. This can be helpful especially when divisions or branches are undertaking activities on their own initiative.

Paid Release Time

This type of volunteer activity is extremely popular in the US, and becoming popular among international UK companies. The rationale is that staff members are given a certain number of hours off per month to carry out volunteer activities during office hours.

Research would seem to indicate that the norm is a maximum of four hours per month. Many employers are afraid that these types of programmes will be open to abuse. They can however work very well if the company plays a significant role in the scheme, for example, once per month a bus is available to take employees out to a disadvantaged school where they will run extra classes or act as tutors or mentors for pupils.

For instance, the Habitat for Humanity home building programme – where a group of employees have been given up to a week off to participate in a programme to build homes for disadvantaged communities – has proved extremely successful. Habitat for Humanity is an international development charity that aims to break the cycle of poverty by eliminating poverty housing and homelessness.

The benefits are that the company does not have to commit large financial resources, although successful programmes usually receive some input from the company (a staff committee) to identify good opportunities and to keep up the momentum.

Volunteer Day

A company-wide volunteering activity, concentrated over a day (or at most a week) is a good way to bring social issues to the attention of all staff, instil a sense of responsibility towards corporate social investment and generate publicity for your company in return.

Usually, employees are mobilised into teams to carry out activities that bring them into close contact with needy communities. While there may be little developmental impact, volunteering days are an excellent way to encourage staff participation in the community and to foster a spirit of volunteering.

3. The Business Case

Any successful Employee Volunteering Program should have a significant and positive impact on the Charity and local communities where the program(s) take place, the volunteers and the business itself.

Benefits of Employer-Supported Volunteering (ESVP)

ESVP is a three way partnership between employee, employer and the organisation receiving the volunteer.

Benefits to employer include:

- Improved reputation and credibility underlining the Volunteer Workout project
- Improved staff morale and enhanced work performance
- Different and exciting training and development opportunities
- Improved services via new insights gained into another aspect of the voluntary sector

Benefits to the employee include:

- Developing professional and personal skills
- Working in a completely new environment
- Meeting and working with new people from other parts of voluntary sector
- Contributing to an issue that they care about and support
- Leading projects
- Different and exciting training and development opportunities
- Gaining recognition from their employers and enhancing career prospects

Benefits to the organisation receiving the volunteering:

- Access to high quality volunteers with varied skills
- Better services for vulnerable and deprived groups
- New talent and energy.

4. Creating an Employer Supported Volunteering Program

While there is no one size or shape of ESVP that will fit all workplaces, there are some basic steps to take when starting to develop policies and procedures to manage an employee volunteer program.

Getting started...

- Get leadership approval to explore feasibility of and interest in ESVP
- Assess interest among your co-workers. Engage employees who are already volunteering
- Create a work team to assist with research and collecting data
- Create a proposal, complete with timeline and estimated resource allocation
- Get leadership buy-in and support
- Create a system to collect employee input
- Develop policies to cover issues such as eligibility, tracking, incentives etc.
- Reach out to community partners
- Do a “pilot” project. See how it goes. Capture lessons learned. Go from there

Elements to consider:

- Identify one person to lead the EVSP
- Explore ways to align EVSP direction with corporate-wide social responsibility focus
- Create an employee volunteer activity review group/board
- Consider value of incentives – release time for volunteering, volunteer awards etc
- Establish tracking and reporting systems
- Develop appropriate recognition – share success stories internally and externally
- Research skills-based opportunities for professional development
- Consider ongoing opportunities for collective community impact
- Set up systems for periodic review and revision of ESVP

5. Other Considerations

Key parameters

- Up to 1 day (7 hours) paid time off per year to enable ESV (pro-rata for part-time staff) will be allowed. The implementation of this will be at the discretion of the line manager based on workload, staff coverage, etc. This can be flexible, e.g. 1 whole day or one to two hours per week up to a total of seven hours a year
- Where time off with pay is approved, the amount payable per day will be the amount normally payable when an employee is taking annual leave
- It is the responsibility of the receiving volunteer-involving organisation to meet the requirements of the independent Safeguarding Authority, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, where this is required for employees volunteering under this scheme
- Managers must ensure that, where appropriate, health and safety risk assessments have been carried out, and any relevant health and safety training has been put in place before the project is commenced
- To protect volunteers, the volunteer-involving organisation must have an acceptable Volunteering Policy to ensure a positive volunteering experience.

This should include:

1. Knowledge of what is expected of them, planned activities and clear instructions
2. Provide adequate support in their volunteering, advise of all appropriate health and safety policies, be aware of the organisation's facilities and where they are e.g. rest rooms, toilets, refreshments etc
3. Receive appreciation for their efforts e.g. being welcomed at the start and thanked when finishing
4. Have safe working conditions, including being insured for the activities that they carry out
5. Be briefed and informed of their rights and responsibilities if something goes wrong
6. Receive relevant out of pocket expenses
7. Receive appropriate briefing and training
8. Be offered the opportunity for personal development
9. Be free from discrimination

6. Evaluations

Evaluation of the programme is essential and should consider the outcomes for all involved. The questions below may help in evaluating the outcomes:

Outcomes for the employer

- Did it improve community relations?
- Did it improve team work and leadership?
- Did it enhance or embed employee skills?
- Were there other unexpected matters resulting from the volunteering?

Outcomes for the volunteers/employees

- Will they continue to volunteer in some capacity?
- Did the volunteering provide them with new challenges and skills or enhance existing skills?
- Did they find it worthwhile?
- Did they enjoy it?

Outcomes for the recipients of the services provided

- Did the end result match the aim of the volunteering activity?
- Was it a positive experience for the voluntary organisation and its clients/service users?
- Have there been any measurable impacts on the organisation, the wider community or service user?

Lessons learned

Every project should be an opportunity to learn more about your activities and the charity's needs and how to make future projects more successful.

In light of your evaluation you should think about what you could do next time to get even more value from employer supported volunteering activities.

HR ESVP Tracking

An integral part of ESVP is to keep track of the employer supported volunteering hours undertaken by staff. In the same way that working hours, holiday and sick leave are tracked, it is also possible to track volunteering. The form included is one of the suggested methods of tracking; it is also possible with some Human Resource Management (HRM) systems.

7. Record Keeping

Records will be kept by the employer as a means of tracking uptake, monitoring impact. These will include an assessment of the monetary value of volunteers' involvement as well as individual volunteering records and feedback forms.

Guidance on assessing monetary value and relevant forms are in the appendices.

Appendix 1: Guidelines on monetary value of volunteering

Appendix 2: Monetary value of volunteering tracking form

Appendix 3: Monetary value of in kind support record

Appendix 4: Individual employee volunteering record

Appendix 5: Employee volunteering feedback form

Appendix 6: Receiving organisation feedback form

8. References and Useful Resources

WAM Get Involved	http://www.wamgetinvolved.org.uk
Business in the Community (UK)	http://www.bitc.org.uk
Payroll Giving	http://www.payrollgiving.co.uk
Volunteering England	http://www.volunteering.org.uk
Volunteer Opportunities	http://www.do-it.org.uk
Civic Society Resources	http://knowhownonprofit.org
UK Volunteering and Social Action	http://www.csv.org.uk
Volunteer with Young People	http://www.princes-trust.org.uk
Institute for Volunteering Research	http://www.ivr.org.uk
An International Project	http://www.habitatforhumanity.org.uk

APPENDIX 1

Monetary value of volunteering record and guidelines

1. Benefits to the organisation

A tracking form can be used to calculate the monetary value of the volunteer's effort in terms of what it would have cost to buy that work in, using the following table:

Volunteer or volunteer role	Equivalent paid job	Hourly wage rate	Total hours of this role	Value of this role
e.g. painting and decorating	Decorator	As agreed	7	£75.04
e.g. marketing advice	Marketing professional	As agreed	10	£188.64
e.g. gardening	Agricultural worker	As agreed	21	£168.00
Total				

Hourly wage rates are available from the Office for National Statistics' annual New Earnings Survey (or possibly from local jobcentres).

In addition, you should list the less quantifiable benefits received, including:

- New ideas generated
- Access to new skills
- Enhanced relationships
- Potential for volunteers to continue to be involved with the charity
- Enhanced enthusiasm and morale within your own organisation as a result of successful completion of a project

2. Benefits to the community

You should also list the benefits delivered to the community or to your client group. This might include the value of services that would not otherwise have been made available, or of new facilities created.

APPENDIX 2

Monetary value of volunteering tracking form

Examples of typical roles for ESV are listed below.

Hourly wage rates are from Office for National Statistics' annual New Earnings Survey 20?? (update with latest rates).

Volunteer or volunteer role	Equivalent paid job	Hourly wage rate	Total hours of this role	Value of this role	No of persons	Value of this role
e.g. painting and decorating	Decorator	[£6.67]	7	£46.69	15	£700.35
e.g. marketing advice	Marketing professional	[£18.86]	10	£188.60	2	£377.20
e.g. gardening	Agricultural worker	[£8.00]	22	£176.00	5	£880.00
Total value of project				£411.29		£1,957.55

APPENDIX 3

Monetary value of in-kind support

Cost category	Details	Value
Staff time	Pro-rata salary	
Advertising	Printing leaflets, briefings, proposals etc	
Recruitment	Materials, refreshments, fees for external training	
Induction and Training	Travel and subsistence expenses (if applicable), refreshments provided on the day	
Expenses	Any materials, resources, equipment used solely for project	
Supplies and equipment	Rent and utility costs where buildings are maintained solely for volunteers, volunteer insurance etc	
Overheads		
Total for the year or project		£1,200.00

APPENDIX 4

Volunteering record - individual employees

Name: _____ Financial year: 20____ - 20____

All staff have 1 day (7 hours) entitlement for employer supported volunteering per financial year (April – March), pro rata. This cannot be carried forward to the next year. All activity must have prior approval by your line manager.

Date	Hours	Organisation (if applicable)	Activity	Approved (by line mgr)

APPENDIX 5

Employee volunteering feedback form

(With grateful thanks to the Midcounties Co-operative for the use of this form).

In order to gain important information from your recent volunteering activity, please complete this feedback form. There are sections for employees and employers to complete.

Contact name			
Organisation name			
Telephone number		Mobile	
Email address			
Name of main contact			

Did we make a difference to the organisation that was helped?

How many people benefited from the volunteers' help? Give approximate numbers e.g. 1 – 10, 10 – 25, 25 – 100	
Did it improve community relationships and has it made a difference?	
How did you tell people about it?	
Were you consulted about the activity beforehand?	
Is there an opportunity for us to advertise our support or speak to the organisation you helped?	
Did local press turn up? If so, for which publication?	

<p>How did you hear about community/ employer supported volunteering?</p>	
<p>How satisfied were you with the Team Leader?</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>How satisfied were you with the group of volunteers on the day?</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>How satisfied were you with the final outcome?</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>Are you likely to continue volunteering in some capacity and how will you do this?</p>	
<p>Did you complete the work agreed?</p>	
<p>If not, has another time been arranged to complete the work? When?</p>	
<p>Are there any other opportunities that others could be involved in?</p>	
<p>Any additional comments you would like to make?</p>	

APPENDIX 6

Volunteering feedback form for organisation receiving the support

(With grateful thanks to the Midcounties Co-operative for the use of this form).

In order to gain important information from your recent volunteering activity, please complete this feedback form. There are sections for employees and employers to complete.

Contact name			
Organisation name			
Telephone number		Mobile	
Email address			
Name of main contact			

Did the employer supported volunteers make a difference to your organisation?

	1 - 5	5 - 10	10 - 15	15+
How many people helped with the activity?				
Did the end result match the aim of the volunteering activity?				
Did it improve community relationships and has it made a difference?				
Were the volunteers involved in the decision as to the activity that they were going to take part in?				
How did you hear about community/ employer supported volunteering?				
How satisfied were you with the Team Leader?	1	2	3	4 5
How satisfied were you with the group of volunteers on the day?	1	2	3	4 5
How satisfied were you with the final outcome?	1	2	3	4 5

<p>Did the volunteers complete the work agreed?</p>	
<p>If not, has another time been arranged to complete the work? When?</p>	
<p>Are there any other opportunities that others could be involved in?</p>	
<p>Any additional comments you would like to make?</p>	

Thanks to BTIC, BIG Lottery, NAVCA and Community Impact Bucks for developing and sharing some of the information included here.