

“ In 2006 Gordon Brown, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, issued a challenge to all employers – to have a volunteering scheme for their employees.

This challenge has been met by a growing number of employers, as according to the 2006-07 Helping Out study 36% of current employees had an employer-supported volunteering (ESV) scheme available to them. (Up from 16% in 1997).\* ”

### How does the Network work?

Any company or voluntary organisation in the Basingstoke area is eligible to join the Network, although companies will need to have an Employee Volunteering policy in place. Companies starting from scratch can find a vast array of useful information on how to get started on the Volunteering England website at: [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)



Voluntary organisations might like to think about how the Network could help them eg do they have the need for a group of volunteers to carry out a Team Challenge, or are they

in need of business expertise in one particular area eg Finance or Marketing?

Organisations can join the Network by contacting the Employee Volunteering Project Coordinator, who acts as a Broker between the companies and the voluntary organisations, matching up the requests from the voluntary groups with companies that can help them.

The Network is actively looking for more business and voluntary organisations to get involved in the scheme, which has already enabled many Employee Volunteers to work in the local community. As the Network grows it will enable members to learn from each other, share ideas and maximise the effectiveness of Employee Volunteering. The overall aim is to create stronger and better resourced communities for Basingstoke.

If you require further information on any aspect of the *Basingstoke Employees in the Community Network* please contact:

Vivien Harrison  
Employee Volunteering Project Coordinator  
Basingstoke Voluntary Services  
The Orchard, White Hart Lane  
Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 4AF

Tel: 01256 423833 Fax: 01256 423825  
Email: [vivien.harrison@voluntaryservices.com](mailto:vivien.harrison@voluntaryservices.com)  
[www.voluntaryservices.com](http://www.voluntaryservices.com)

\* Source: Helping Out: a national survey of volunteering and charitable giving (2007), Institute for Volunteering Research, an initiative of Volunteering England

# Employee Volunteering in Basingstoke



Employee Volunteering is when company employees offer their time and expertise for the benefit of local voluntary and community groups during work time with the support of their employer. Volunteering is promoted, encouraged and recognised by the company.

The *Basingstoke Employees in the Community Network* was launched in May 2007 to promote Employee Volunteering. Numerous local companies and voluntary groups have signed up to the initiative, which matches Employee Volunteers with organisations that need their help. The Network enables local voluntary and community groups to benefit from the skills, expertise and practical assistance available to them on a voluntary basis from local companies.



A Project of Basingstoke Voluntary Services



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*Basingstoke Employees in the Community Network*

# Employee Volunteering in Basingstoke



“ Research suggests that Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) schemes can motivate employees to join companies and encourage commitment. The 2007 Volunteer IMPACT survey by Deloitte found that 62% of respondents would prefer to work for a company where they can volunteer.

Other research has found that involvement in ESV schemes and support for volunteering from employers helps employees feel more positive about their employer and more committed to their job. \* ”

## What can Employee Volunteers do?

There is a wide variety of voluntary and community organisations in Basingstoke from very small local groups to large national charities which need volunteers. The *Basingstoke Employees in the Community Network* encourages staff, within the member companies, to volunteer for one or more of the following activities:

- Team Challenges
- Sharing Professional Skills
- Regular Volunteering



## Team Challenges

A Team Challenge is when a group of employees from one (or more) companies volunteer to carry out a task for a voluntary or community organisation. This gives them the opportunity to learn different skills, build cross-functional teams and have some fun! Team Challenges can make a real difference to voluntary groups with limited funds and resources. Examples could be:

- Painting/Decorating:** This could be a scout hut, community hall, classroom or public space.
- Gardening/Landscaping:** This could be at a community garden, school or charity which uses

gardening as therapy. Or it could be clearing a local black spot of weeds and litter.

- Conservation:** Helping a local conservation group with tree planting or hedge laying.
- Day trip or Christmas or Summer Party:** For children, disabled or frail elderly people.

Groups of employees from Barclays, Unum, AWE, Global Crossing, IBM, Shoosmiths and Alberto-Culver have taken part in a variety of Team Challenges in and around Basingstoke which have made a real difference to the community.

## Sharing Professional Skills

One of the Network's aims is to set up a 'Skills Bank' of Employee Volunteers from local companies who are willing to share their business skills and expertise freely with local voluntary groups. Ideal projects are 'one-off' tasks which would require between 2 – 16 hours to complete, with no further commitment. Examples of the kinds of business skills which are greatly sought after by the voluntary sector include:

- IT:** Database development, website construction
- Finance:** Annual accounts, budget plans
- HR:** CV writing, interview techniques, mentoring
- Marketing and Business Development:** Marketing/Business plans, publicity materials, PR
- Legal:** Property, employment

The 'Skills Bank' offers businesses the opportunity to enhance the development of their employees by facilitating experience in communication and interpersonal skills, diversity, mentoring, creative/alternative thinking and

presentation. Completed 'Skills Bank' projects include a solicitor from Shoosmiths who has carried out conveyancing work for Victim Support and an IT specialist from Barclays who has helped Basingstoke Advocacy Scheme develop their contact database.

## Regular Volunteering



Taking part in Employee Volunteering often has the by-product of encouraging employees to undertake regular voluntary work in their own time. The kinds of tasks they can

undertake include administration, befriending, advice giving, helping at a youth club or hospital, or becoming a school Governor. The Basingstoke Volunteer Bureau can help match employees with local groups looking for their help.

## Benefits

Employee Volunteering creates a partnership between the private, statutory and voluntary sectors which provides mutual benefits.



## Businesses:

Employee Volunteering demonstrates a company's commitment to playing an active part in the local community and to building a more prosperous, healthy and safer community for all who live and work there. Benefits include:

- Development of new skills eg leadership, project management, teamwork
- Increased staff morale and motivation
- Improved staff recruitment and retention
- Enhanced local reputation (positive media coverage)
- Improved customer loyalty
- Creation of new business opportunities

## Voluntary Organisations:

Employee Volunteers can make a real difference to voluntary organisations by helping them to accomplish tasks which they do not have the resources to achieve. In addition access to a range of business skills and potential sponsorship can create the additional capacity and infrastructure support to make a real difference to the work that they do, often with the most vulnerable in society. Benefits include:

- Cost savings
- Improved facilities or services
- Acquiring new business skills
- Raising local awareness of the work done by voluntary groups
- Recruitment of regular volunteers and Trustees
- Building long-term relationships with local companies