

EMPLOYER SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERING



**Over the past 10 YEARS... 2,891 employees
contributed 18,837 volunteer hours**

"Fleming Fulton School have come to depend on the work of volunteers through VSB. They carry out a number of tasks around the school particularly outside in our grounds which helps keep the school environment welcoming and in good order. This directly benefits the pupils who spend quite a lot of time outside using the nature trail, interactive garden, working in the green house, in our memorial garden, playing in the playground and going for walks. Our thanks to all of those who have visited in the past for their time and commitment, it is much appreciated."

Eddie McGlinchey – Deputy Head

"VSB was responsible for opening up a whole network of contacts through Employer Supported Volunteering and Action Days. They make volunteering an attractive and exciting venture, make it fun but above all developmental for the community and for the wide range of charities who are dependent on the good will and efforts of the volunteers."

Ivor Robinson N.I. Housing Executive

BACKGROUND

VSB has been promoting ESV for the past 10 years during which time interest has grown and more employers are taking steps towards encouraging their employees to get involved.

Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) occurs when companies actively support and encourage their employees in voluntary activity within the local community. It has been shown to provide significant community impact, employee development opportunities and corporate profile among many other benefits.

Research has shown that employers are supportive of employees' voluntary activities but would appreciate assistance in establishing a programme to maximise the benefits to employees, the community and the business.

VSB has established a programme to support, encourage and develop ESV (Employer Supported Volunteering) to interested parties across Northern Ireland. We provide employers and employees with opportunities to help the communities, in which they live and work. Participation can be team-orientated or individual; time limited or ongoing but above all the experience should be rewarding and meaningful and will improve the quality of life for all concerned. ESV benefits include:

- development competencies
- creative thinking & problem solving
- project management skills
- networking
- relationship building and team working skills development

"I am delighted that many staff from the Big Lottery Fund's Belfast office are taking up this opportunity to carry out valuable volunteering work. Grants from the Big Lottery Fund provide vital support for a wide range of activities that involve volunteers, indeed groups supported through the small grants programme Awards For All will often be entirely comprised of volunteers. Such support helps to recognise, promote and develop active citizen involvement in community life."

Walter Rader, the Big Lottery Fund's NI Director



A 'Saintly' army of ESV Volunteers prepared for Action at 'Be A Saint ... Volunteer' Event



Staff from DSD Voluntary & Community Unit get to work at Re-Connect

ACTION DAYS

As part of this initiative VSB organise "Action Days" These events are geared to encouraging as many employees as possible to leave the constraints of their work environments and to do something positive within the community. Generally they will all meet at VSB for breakfast, T.Shirts, goody bags etc. and will then depart in their teams to a pre-chosen activity. Action Days are excellent "taster" events for ESV with a strong emphasis on volunteering, team building, and fun!

Last year VSB partnered with Business in the Community to organise a joint Action Day. Held

close to St Patricks Day it was themed "Be a Saint – Volunteer!" Such was the success of the day with over 300 employees deployed around the Province undertaking activities such as painting & decorating, environmental and conservation work as well as DIY and maintenance activities that plans are underway to hold another similar event on 19th March 2010.

In the past three years VSB has helped facilitate 1491 employee volunteers to undertake 10,437 hours of volunteering within local communities.

"The volunteering projects have had a positive affect on the children within the unit. It's good for the children to see that people have volunteered to do something nice for them"

Paul McKee - William Street Childrens Home Newtownards

"The sensory garden is a great addition to the environment at Newcroft Lodge and our residents are sure to enjoy it for years to come"

Sam McMahon, Newcroft Lodge – Hollywood

"Volunteering allows us to give something back to the community in which we operate, and also has a positive impact on staff team building"

Vivien Walsh - Musgrave, Centra, Supervalu

"The volunteers who came to us at Lorne were extremely helpful and hardworking. They really enjoyed the outdoor work and were willing to help with anything that we threw at them. It was great to see team spirit and volunteers who genuinely wanted to make a difference."

Claire Flowers, Executive Manager, Girlguiding Ulster

CURRENT PROJECTS

The Great Outdoors! ... National Trust NI have a range of volunteer opportunities in environmental and conservation activities

A Walk in the Park! Laganvally Regional Park have various opportunities around the lagan tow path for eager conservationists!

Assisi Animal Sanctuary... Excercise a four legged friend an make their day!

Painting Facelift! The Indian Community Centre require a team to help out with some decorating at their centre in Carlisle Circus

A Date with Nature! RSPB would welcome a team to collect data on their various sites which will provide baseline information on the richness and diversity around Belfast Lough



PARTICIPATING COMPANIES SINCE 2001

- Musgrave / Centra
- Lombard
- Accenture
- Queens University Belfast
- Ulster Bank
- Belfast Royal Academy
- Prudential
- Progressive
- Botanic Inns
- Northern Bank
- Northgate
- J & J Hazlett
- N I Fire Service
- Avalanche Technology
- Alcoa
- Halifax
- Bass Ireland
- Bombardier
- Grafton Recruitment
- Challenge Cookie
- Laganside Corporation
- Tourism Ireland
- Price, Waterhouse, Cooper
- Inland Revenue (various teams)
- Department of Education (various teams)
- NISRA (NI Statistical Research Agency)
- N I Water Service
- Big Lottery
- NI-CO
- Department for Social Development (incl. Voluntary & Community Unit)
- Department for Regional Development (various teams)
- Department of Agriculture & Rural Development
- DHSSPSNI (various teams)
- Department for Finance & Personnel
- N I Housing Executive (Belfast & Ards)
- Northern Ireland Office
- N I Customs & Excise
- Volunteer Development Agency
- Voluntary Service Bureau

VSB has an open door policy - during office hours there will always be a member of staff available to talk to you about volunteering opportunities. Office hours are 9am-5pm Monday-Thursday and 9am-4pm Friday.

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VSB North Down & Ards Volunteer Centre

91 High Street, Bangor BT20 5BD

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VSB staff 'Making a Difference' at 6th Belfast Scout Group, Cavehill Road



Northgate Technology staff at Assisi Animal Sanctuary



DSD staff at Childcare NI



Department of Education guys 'taking five' at Gannaway Activity Centre, Millisle

