Case study: Team volunteering – Hansel

Context

Team volunteering is a common form of employer-supported volunteering (ESV), where groups of employees take part in activities together for a day or short period. At **Hansel**, employee volunteer groups contribute to estate maintenance, gardening and grounds projects, helping improve the environment for the people the charity supports.

Volunteering activity

During spring and summer, small groups of 5 to 20 employees from various organisations visit the Hansel estate in Ayrshire as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitments. Volunteers undertake gardening and grounds maintenance projects, providing practical support.

Hansel ensures volunteers are well-supported by providing breakfast rolls, personal protective equipment and all necessary tools. Each group has a designated point of contact and at least one staff member to guide tasks. Volunteers receive a safety briefing, and Hansel requests advance information on mobility or dietary requirements. General risk assessments are conducted for all planned activities.

Impact

For employees

Volunteers benefitted from spending time outdoors, doing tasks that differ from their usual roles and engaging in team-building experiences. One volunteer said: “Thank you for hosting and looking after us so well. It was great to meet some of your customers during the day, and we all loved Lindy's soup! We look forward to seeing you again next year!”

Several employers return year on year, demonstrating the value and enjoyment of the experience.

For Hansel

Employee volunteers help maintain and improve the estate, enhancing the environment for staff and the people the organisation supports. The days also provide insight into Hansel's work, helping demystify social care and strengthen community engagement.

Key learning

Key insights from Hansel's experience hosting employee volunteers include:

- **Plan for accessibility and safety:** gathering information about mobility and dietary requirements and conducting risk assessments ensures the day is inclusive and safe.
- **Encourage repeat participation:** positive experiences encourage employers to return year on year, strengthening long-term partnerships.
- **Look after volunteers well:** providing refreshments and checking in with volunteers throughout the day helps to make them feel like they're being looked after.



Mileway staff volunteering at Hansel's estate. Credit: Hansel.



An employee volunteer helping out at Hansel’s estate. Credit: Hansel.



An GSK employee volunteering at Hansel’s estate. Credit: Hansel.

Knowledge Gateway

The Knowledge Gateway is created and led by **Volunteer Scotland**

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This is a regularly reviewed resource. If you have any suggested updates, please email Volunteer Scotland at **hello@volunteerscotland.org.uk**