



Business in the Community

Business in the Community (BITC) is a membership organisation that enables responsible business through a range of services, practical guidance and creative solutions that help businesses review, improve, measure and report. They run a number of schemes for their 800 business members including many that rely on local community groups to provide employee volunteering opportunities.

Team Volunteering

One of their most popular offers to businesses is team building volunteering opportunities. They receive many enquiries at their regional offices to source community projects that require a short term input of labour (normally unskilled).

They have regional offices across the UK – [view contact details online](#) – with similar remits although programmes may differ slightly between regions.

What is on Offer to Community Growing Groups?

BITC have a large and varied membership and receive enquiries from businesses wanting to get involved in the community through team volunteering. This saves community groups from having to do the initial leg work to develop links with business.

Teams normally consist of up to 15 volunteers although numbers will vary. Most requests from businesses for outdoor activities are made between March and October due to the weather.

If your community project wants to host a corporate volunteer team, you will first need to complete the BITC Request for Support Form. On receipt and if appropriate, BITC will come out to **register your project** and checks its suitability. BITC will then coordinate a **site visit** between the team leader from the business and the community group to assess the resources required. The business will then do a **risk assessment** of the activity and site and draw up a **project proposal**. Businesses may choose to add an additional element to the team building event and fundraise to **cover the costs of materials**.

BITC encourage ongoing contact between the business and the community group which could lead to future volunteering or support opportunities. There is no fee to be paid by the community group.

What is Required of Community Growing Groups?

- Be available to answer questions and liaise with BITC and business representative before the activity day.
- Source materials and equipment required by volunteers.
- Coordinate the group on the day including the provision of first aid support if required.
- Have adequate Public Liability Insurance.

Is this a Good Option for your Project?

As with all new activity it is important to assess the risk of using corporate teams to support your community project. Here are some questions to ask before seeking a team of corporate volunteers.

- Do you have any existing links with business? BITC (and other brokers) do the leg work for community organisations and may charge businesses for sourcing a good opportunity for their staff. If you already have good corporate contacts then there may not be any need for you to go through a broker (leaving you the free to charge a business a facilitation fee).
- Is your project suitable for a team of corporate volunteers? Do you have Public Liability Insurance (essential), toilets, shelter, car parking and tea making facilities? Some projects are more appealing to corporate teams due to factors including location, facilities and tasks.
- Do you have capacity to support a team of volunteers? Coordinating a team of 15 volunteers takes skill and preparation, you will need to set aside a full day of at least one volunteer/staff member to support and instruct the team as well as preparation and tidy up time.
It is unusual for business teams sourced through BITC to pay for staff/volunteer time so if this is something you need to cover then you need to justify and be clear when putting together your proposal and consider sourcing volunteers elsewhere. Other brokers may be able to offer “on the day coordination”.
- Is there a clear task where the team can work together to make a visible difference in one day?
- Do you need a team? This will require more equipment than smaller numbers of regular volunteers. The work may suit regular maintenance rather than a large one-off team.
- Is your project time limited? Companies will sometimes expect a quick turnaround following an initial enquiry or may postpone due to business priorities – if you can be flexible, this helps.
- Are there any businesses you are unwilling to work with? Businesses will often use employee volunteering to develop good PR in which case your name will be linked to theirs.

If well-managed, employee volunteer teams tend to be well motivated and can achieve a large amount in a short space of time. Poorly managed, however, and tasks may be left unfinished or of poor quality, which will leave a bad impression on your organisation and on the volunteer team who want to know they have made a difference to the community.

Next Steps

If you are looking for a broker to source a team of corporate volunteers for a specific project, you can contact your [regional Business in the Community office](#) for an initial scoping visit.

What’s next? An initial corporate volunteer team can be your opportunity to develop an ongoing partnership that could yield future benefits. Make sure you get the contact details of the key decision maker and have a conversation with them on the day. Make it clear what other opportunities there are such as upcoming events, regular volunteering slots, any resources or services you require.

www.growingtogether.community

Find us on Facebook: [growingtogether.community](https://www.facebook.com/growingtogether.community)

Follow us on Twitter: [@gtcommunities](https://twitter.com/gtcommunities)



ARIENNIR GAN Y LOTERI
LOTTERY FUNDED