



**Thriving at Work  
Mental Health at Work Intervention Summary**

<b>Name of intervention</b>	<i>Enabling Volunteering</i>
<b>What does it aim to achieve?</b>	<i>Implement a workplace volunteer scheme and provide opportunities for employees to support local charities and social enterprises.</i>
<b>What evidence supports it?</b>	<i>Participation in social and community life has attracted a lot of attention in the field of wellbeing research. Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy. Studies have also shown that volunteering helps people who donate their time feel more socially connected, thus warding off loneliness and depression. Volunteering also has positive implications that go beyond mental health. A growing body of evidence suggests that people who give their time to others might also be rewarded with better physical health—including lower blood pressure and a longer lifespan.</i>
<b>Costs</b>	<i>As much as your organisation wants to invest in the partnerships. Engaging a consultancy to set up partnerships could cost around £6K but this could be done internally via employees with the right skills and connections. Other funds could be raised via employee donations to support volunteering activities or other forms of donation.</i>
<b>Effort levels</b>	<i>High</i>
<b>Links to resources</b>	
<b>Local sponsor</b>	<i>Organisation: Triodos Bank Email: <a href="mailto:thrive.bristol@bristol.gov.uk">thrive.bristol@bristol.gov.uk</a></i>
<p><b>Local case study</b>  <i>Triodos Bank UK Ltd has run a Changemaker volunteer programme since 2016. There have been two different programmes supporting two charities each time.</i>  <i>2016/17 – Young Bristol and Bristol Drugs Project (BDP)</i>  <i>2018-20 – 1625 Independent People and Avon Wildlife Trust (AWT)</i>  <i>Each co-worker gets one day per year to have from work to volunteer at one of these charities. The activities are a mixture of physical tactile improvements to youth hostels, gardens and wildlife reserves and skill sharing such as marketing workshops, money management classes, support with strategy planning and CV review/interview skills.</i>  <i>The project aims and objectives are:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Create mutually beneficial activities where co-workers and charity partners can learn from one another and build skills of both organisations</i></li> <li><i>2. Establish volunteering activities that are inclusive of all co-workers</i></li> <li><i>3. Provide an opportunity to increase co-worker morale, wellbeing, employee engagement and pride in Triodos and promote cross departmental working.</i></li> <li><i>4. Have a positive impact in Bristol communities improving social and environmental experiences for all.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Both programmes have been successful and have had over 60% of co-workers taking part and all of them feeding back that it improved their moral and reengaged them with Triodos. All co-workers surveyed strongly agreed their sense of wellbeing and happiness had improved following their</i></p>	

*volunteering day.*

*Our current partners AWT also run wellbeing exercises at the beginning and end of each activity which has been really popular – finding improved mindfulness through nature. Something that we will be planning to continue in other volunteering planning.*

*We endeavour to continue our relationships with all charities we partner with and co-workers have gone on to build independent connections with them, e.g. one co-worker is now a trustee of BDP and another is a mentor at 1625ip.*

*We chose to work with two charities so that there is a mixture of these two types of activity, the more physical and skill sharing. The skill sharing, we use to develop co-worker skills where they might not get the opportunity in their role at Triodos, for example a junior member of staff being coached to lead a workshop or project manage a garden renovation. The Learning and Development Manager at Triodos is involved in every step of the Changemaker programme to maximise on these opportunities.*

*The Changemaker team that plan the activities and are responsible for the main relationships with each charity are more junior co-workers that have volunteered to give extra time and in turn get additional mentor and coaching support to develop into these roles, after the two year partnerships they then become mentors to the new team and learn new skills in passing on what they have learnt.*

*We evaluate each programme to fully understand, from a co-worker perspective what has gone well and what could be improved – with wellbeing in mind. A big part of this evaluation process is trying to map impact, that of our co-workers and the communities in Bristol. A big part of this evaluation process is trying to map impact, that of our co-workers wellbeing, the charity, the service users of the charity and communities in Bristol.*

<b>Links to Thriving at Work Core Standards?</b>	
Produce, implement and communicate a mental health at work plan	N
Develop mental health awareness among employees	N
Encourage open conversations about mental health and the support available when employees are struggling	N
Provide employees with good working conditions and ensure they have a healthy work life balance and opportunities for development	Y
Promote effective people management through line managers and supervisors	N
Routinely monitor employee mental health and wellbeing	N