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# Employee Volunteering Policy

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POL-081

## 1. Scope

GRAHAM is committed to making a meaningful contribution to the communities where we work and live.

This policy outlines how GRAHAM staff can volunteer their time and skills during 'Volunteer Days' which are paid time off from their normal day-to-day roles. In addition to the benefit to the community, volunteering is a valuable opportunity for employees to apply and develop their skills and broaden their perspectives.

- When volunteering, employees are required to comply with the rules and processes detailed in this policy.
- Employees are bound by all the Group policies whilst on volunteering leave.
- This policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment.

GRAHAM are committed to being an inclusive workplace where all employees, customers and stakeholders can fully participate and contribute. We strive to ensure accessibility across all facets of our operations, including physical spaces, digital platforms, communication channels and services.

Our People policies are regularly audited against rigorous accessibility standards to ensure compliance and to support every employee.

Anyone who requires additional support or has any questions regarding accessibility can contact the [HR team at HR-JGC@graham.co.uk](mailto:HR-JGC@graham.co.uk)

## 2. Paid Time Off Entitlement

All employees are entitled to TWO 'Volunteer Days' each year subject to operational requirements. These days will be paid and will not affect holiday allowance. Volunteer Days must be used during normal working hours except where a GRAHAM opportunity requires out of hours attendance. In this case time off in lieu can be authorised by the Line Manager.

Employees can split their Volunteer Days allowance into half-days if applicable.

The volunteering year runs 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December. It is not possible to accrue Volunteer Days and use them in a subsequent year.

Part time workers are entitled to pro-rata days. Contractors are not entitled to Volunteer Days.

## 3. Volunteering Opportunities and Authorised causes

Employees will be expected to use one of their volunteering days to participate in a GRAHAM-led activity.

GRAHAM-led activities will be advertised through either the Hub, regionally or at project level and this should be the default for the first volunteering day, where available.

Where a GRAHAM-led opportunity is not available an employee may be permitted to volunteer for a non-GRAHAM activity. This decision process should then be repeated for any subsequent request for volunteering days.

For non-GRAHAM activities employees are permitted to volunteer for any organisation that is registered as a charity in the United Kingdom or Ireland and which demonstrates positive social or environmental benefit. Employees are not able to use Volunteer Days to support political groups, religious charities or undertake any activity that would conflict with the GRAHAM ethos. If an employee is unsure, they should discuss the opportunity with Human Resources.

There are no restrictions placed on employees using their personal time to volunteer.

#### 4. Approval and Recording

It is important that GRAHAM has a record of who is volunteering so we can record and report on the benefit to society. To ensure effective management of the volunteering process employees must comply with the following steps:

##### Step 1:

The employee should investigate any GRAHAM-led volunteering opportunities as advertised through the various media, regionally or at project level.

If no suitable GRAHAM-led activity is available they should source an appropriate non-GRAHAM activity, ensuring it meets the guidelines.

The employee should request volunteering days in writing to their Line Manager setting out the details of their request (this can be via email). This should include:

- Name
- No of Days and dates requested
- If it is a GRAHAM-led or external activity
- The reasons for requesting a non-GRAHAM activity (e.g. non-availability of a GRAHAM activity or 2<sup>nd</sup> volunteering day)
- Details of the volunteering activity
- Supporting info – how it will benefit GRAHAM/Employee and the Charity

In addition employees should also ensure that appropriate risk assessments (Section 8) are in place and approved by the Regional SHE Advisor.

##### Step 2:

The Line Manager will review the application, ensuring that the request adheres to the rules of the volunteering policy, in particular with regard to the appropriateness of GRAHAM-led activities and risk assessments.

##### Step 3:

The Line Manager will approve any volunteering leave taking into consideration

- the impact on the core business activity
- if the activity is external that it is with an authorised Charity
- whether the activity is appropriate for the employee
- that appropriate approved risk assessments are in place for external activities
- other factors which may be relevant

Approving such requests is at the Line Manager's discretion. The Line Manager will confirm in writing to the employee their decision.

When this has been approved, the employee/volunteer should request the leave on the

holiday system (selecting *Volunteering Full Day* or *Volunteering Half Day*), and this is accepted by the Line Manager.

#### Step 4:

HR will issue the volunteer with a post event online feedback survey which must be completed. Information will be shared with the Line Manager, to collate summative engagement data and to drive improvements.

## 5. Expenses

Expenses incurred when volunteering can be reclaimed and are subject to the same policy and process for expenses incurred as part of normal employment.

## 6. Line Managers' responsibilities

All employees of GRAHAM should feel supported and enabled to take time off to participate in volunteering activities.

Line Managers should see volunteering as an opportunity to develop their staff and work with employees to agree the most suitable opportunity based on existing skills and personal development goals.

Line Managers shall approve all volunteering opportunities and ensure employees adhere to the policy, ensuring any security checks/risk assessments are in place.

## 7. Security Checks

- For most volunteering opportunities, Security checks will not be required.
- GRAHAM will organise any required checks for GRAHAM activities.
- If an employee is undertaking any external volunteering opportunity that requires a Security check, they must organise this directly with the Charity. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure they have the correct checks in place before volunteering.

## 8. Risk Assessments

For all external volunteering opportunities, GRAHAM employees should seek a Risk Assessment and copy of the Insurances in place by the receiving organisation. A legal duty remains on the receiving organisation to ensure the safety of those they do not employ, but for whom they have control, supervision, management, and direction of the works being completed.

GRAHAM retain a Duty of Care for their employees and fulfil this duty by ensuring a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is in place and communicated prior to the volunteering activity occurring.

Any risk assessment should be proportionate to the works being completed including the duration of the works and the foreseeable hazards involved.

Please note all volunteers have an ongoing responsibility to ensure the safety of themselves and others around them.

***NB: Volunteering cannot commence until the risk assessment has been completed and approved by the SHE team.***

## 9. Conduct

When volunteering employees are an ambassador of GRAHAM and should give volunteering the same priority as any other client or customer engagement.

Employees must adhere to the GRAHAM values and code of conduct when carrying out any volunteering.

