Team Challenges

Team Challenges is a programme run by York Cares that brings groups of business volunteers from York together with community organisations to undertake and complete community projects.

The focus of these volunteering opportunities is to help a local voluntary, community or social enterprise organisation to achieve something it doesn't have the resource (time, materials, labour) to undertake, resulting in positive and beneficial impacts to the organisation and the people who benefit from it. Team challenges are organised for York Cares Full Members.

Portakabin Volunteers planting wildflowers and managing himalayan balsam with York Greenways

Community Challenges are a fantastic way of giving something back to your local community, whilst providing motivational, team-building opportunities for your employees. It is a great way to work as a team to achieve a common goal.

> *"Do it. Just do it… it's a win-win situation for all – you get to do something as a company, people get to feel good about actually helping and putting back into the community"*
> **Lou Dean, Aviva Volunteer**

Turn up-and-do Challenges
Minimal preparation is required and all materials for the challenge are provided– it's all about your efforts on the day! We have a variety of half and full day volunteering activities organised in partnership with our community partners for teams of 2-25 people.

Example turn up and do activities include: Redecorating and refurbishing community facilities, schools and older peoples' homes, practical gardening, woodland, wildflower meadow and greenspaces maintenance and management and improving habitats for wildlife and biodiversity with our community partners across the city.

Benenden Volunteers repainting the equipment at Broadstone Way Play Area

> *"There were so many things I didn't think I would be able to do at the start of the challenge but it's a great feeling now that I have!"*
> **Nicola Taylor, Benenden Volunteer**

Connecting businesses and the community through sharing skills

Social Connections
Social connections is our new programme of volunteer support, activities and socialising with older, vulnerable or isolated people at older peoples' homes and sheltered housing schemes in York. Opportunities are for 1-2 hour sessions and may require, depending on the activity, 1-3 hours of preparation in advance. Opportunities available for small groups of 2-10 people.

Social Connections opportunities include:
Life Stories:
Volunteers will pair up with a resident to listen and document their fascinating and vibrant life stories.
Crafternoons:
Organise a craft session for a
group of residents such as card making or biscuit decorating.
Games and activity sessions:
Organise games, dominoes or bingo.
Tea Parties:
Socialise with residents over a cup of tea and a piece of cake.

Aviva volunteers organisaed a Christmas Card making crafternoon for the residents of Windsor House older peoples' home.

"I really enjoyed the afternoon and it was inspiring to see so much energy. I was speaking to a lady who works there and she said the residents are normally really quiet and they were much more animated and clearly enjoyed it. Hearing that made me even more certain that little things can really help someone."
Lindsay Brown, Aviva Volunteer

Planned Challenges
Undertaking a planned challenge usually requires 3-6 weeks lead in time for planning, sourcing materials and fundraising (if necessary) culminating in a practical challenge day for the team. The amount of planning depends on the size and nature of the project.

Planned Challenge Example:
Memory Trail Corridor Makeover
Memory trails have been proven to help people experiencing dementia to stimulate the mind prompting fond memories of family, friendships and experiences which may have been forgotten. Teams use their creative skills to design a 'memory trail' to reflect the residents' lives and stimulate fond memories.

Aviva volunteers with the pictures they created for the Windsor House residents memory trail.

"It's has been the best example of what Team Building should be about!"
Nicole Carr, Nestle Volunteer