



**GROUNDWORK UK**

**EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING IMPACT REPORT**

**2023 - 2025**

# INTRODUCTION

Groundwork is a charity taking practical action to create a fair and green future in which people, places and nature can thrive.

Our 2023 – 2028 strategy commits us to these goals:

- > To help more people overcome hardship and isolation.
- > To help build the green economy.
- > To help those who most need it connect with nature.
- > To help more people and places respond and adapt to climate change.

Our corporate partners have an important role to play in helping Groundwork deliver these goals. The financial and human resources provided help support community organisations and projects across the UK. The injection of skills and energy from employee volunteers help strengthen communities, improve wellbeing and enhance the natural environment.

That's why we are working with businesses big and small to turn corporate responsibility commitments into meaningful action, connecting employees with communities where their help is needed most.

This impact report highlights the activities and volunteering support from businesses since the start of the strategy period in 2023 to 2025.



## IMPACT TO DATE: 2023 - 2025



Since 2023, Groundwork has carried out **406 days** of volunteering with employee volunteers across our projects.



We have worked in partnership with **37 amazing businesses** on our employee volunteering.



Over **7,900 volunteers** have joined us at Groundwork projects.



Employee volunteers made a positive impact to local people and environments across **184 community spaces**.



Collectively, these volunteers donated over **42,400 hours** of their time to making an impact in the communities where they live and work.



**96.4%** of individuals reported improved wellbeing from volunteering with Groundwork.

# NEWHAM CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

The NHS Newham Centre for Mental Health provides a wide range of inpatient services for people experiencing mental health challenges across East London.

Groundwork has supported the Centre to create a high-quality outdoor space where service users can connect with nature and experience the wellbeing benefits of access to green space.

Employees from JLL and Deloitte have worked alongside Groundwork to transform the outdoor area into a safe, welcoming and therapeutic environment, now known as Cherry Tree Garden.

Employee volunteers helped to build raised beds for food growing and create new outdoor furniture, shaping a comfortable space designed to offer calm and sanctuary.

Thanks to the commitment and hard work of the volunteer teams, the Centre has been able to introduce regular gardening activities, occupational therapy sessions and social opportunities for both service users and staff. These activities have played an important role in supporting wellbeing, encouraging connection and enhancing the overall care environment.



**I feel emotional, I can't wait to see service users come and use the garden. You've made a masterpiece, thank you so much!** ”

*Service Lead  
NHS Newham Centre for Mental Health*



I enjoy learning new skills at the gardening workshop. It helps me focus. I don't like my wife to visit me on the ward, so we meet here at the Cherry Tree garden where we can relax.

”

*Service User  
NHS Newham Centre for Mental Health*

## ST KATHARINE'S COMMUNITY GARDEN

St Katharine's Community Garden is just one example of the many wonderful community projects supported by Groundwork across London. Since 1950, St Katharine's has been a place of refuge, building connections in the vibrant community of Limehouse in East London and supporting other charities, social enterprises and creative arts.

With the help of volunteers, Groundwork is developing the outdoor space to create more areas where the community can connect with nature, have places to relax and grow food.

Teams from real estate and accountancy firms, JLL, PWC and Deloitte have donated their time on site to build raised beds, install new seating and create a new garden space with a pergola. For local people, the garden has now become a sanctuary.

A member of the local community, John, has cancer and is currently undergoing treatment. He walks his dog through the garden every day and is now able to stop and rest on the benches.

**I love the new garden. It means I can sit for a few minutes each day and get some peace and quiet on these benches. I love this place.**

*John, Community Member  
St Katharine's*



## THE GREEN PATCH

The Green Patch is a thriving community garden in Kettering, Northamptonshire, making a positive difference to the lives of hundreds of people each week. Over the past ten years, Groundwork has transformed the site from an underused space into a vibrant green environment and welcoming community hub, bringing together people of all ages – from local primary school children to older residents experiencing social isolation.

Spanning more than 2.5 acres, The Green Patch includes orchards, food-growing areas and natural play spaces, and supports a wide range of wildlife alongside resident ducks, chickens, rabbits and cats. The ongoing success of the site relies heavily on volunteer support, helping to ensure local people can continue to access the wellbeing benefits of connecting with nature and with one another.

In support of this, over 100 volunteers from global law firm Kennedy's swapped their suits for gardening gear to work alongside Groundwork and members of the local community. Employee volunteers helped to clear, replant and revitalise key areas of the garden, including rejuvenating the bee garden, rebuilding the duck pond, and carrying out essential weeding, planting and potting.

Their contribution has helped to maintain and enhance The Green Patch as a safe, inclusive and biodiverse space – ensuring it can continue to support community wellbeing, environmental learning and nature recovery for years to come.





”  
The woman who named The Green Patch has been coming here for 22 years. At 86 years old, she walks a mile and a half from her house with her walking trolley and has a plot down here.

What I like about the Green Patch is it doesn't matter what age you are - we all look out for each other.

*Community Volunteer  
The Green Patch*

## THE PEOPLE'S PATCH

The People's Patch is a community garden project located in Willenhall, the most deprived ward in Coventry and one of the most deprived areas in England. Recognised as a 'left behind' community, almost a third of children in the area live in poverty.

The garden is situated behind a local sports centre and aims to increase physical activity while improving health and wellbeing across Coventry's communities. Its vision is to create a high-quality green space where residents feel connected to their neighbourhood and encouraged to participate in community life.

Zotefoams' Executive Team volunteered at the project to support its development. The team played a key role in remodelling the pond, which will form part of the garden's future 'wild area'.

Work began with flattening the ground to improve safety, followed by the installation of a sandpit and the enlargement of the pond. By reshaping the area, the team helped create a habitat capable of supporting increased biodiversity.

Once complete, the People's Patch community garden will offer volunteering opportunities that build skills, enhance local nature and support food-growing initiatives to increase the capacity of local foodbanks.

Zotefoams' contribution has helped move the project closer to this vision, creating a welcoming space where the community can come together, develop new skills and build lasting relationships.



## ANNIE LENNARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Annie Lennard Primary School is a small school in Sandwell, one of the most deprived districts in England with high levels of poverty. The core of Annie Lennard's ethos is to be a nurturing and caring school with a passion for bringing learning to life for their children.

The school has very little outdoor space and part of the limited space that they do have was completely unsafe and unusable for the children. That's why Education Recruitment Agency, TeacherActive, teamed up with Groundwork and donated funding and volunteering time to transform this unused space into a sensory and outdoor learning area where teachers could enhance learning for the children and provide them with new opportunities.

Over 20 volunteers from TeacherActive volunteered with Groundwork at the school over two days to carry out the ground preparation work and then bring the space to life by building planting beds and installing benches and sensory elements including a new storytelling chair.

This new multi-functional space benefits the school children and their teachers, providing them with a calm space to learn and connect. Special Educational Needs teachers use the space for one to one sessions and the children are enjoying bringing their science and geography lessons to life with outdoor experiments.





We feel very lucky to have this new space. ”  
The garden contributes massively to our passion to bring learning alive for our children and making the curriculum relevant, exciting and stimulating, being able to cater for all or our children’s needs. As well as the massive contribution to the children’s development in terms of providing sensory stimulation, it significantly enhances our science curriculum and gives a mental health boost to our children and staff who are also be able to utilise the space.

*Kim, School Business Manager  
Annie Lennard Primary School*

## WATERWORKS ESTATE

The Waterworks Estate in Birmingham is one of the most disadvantaged communities in the UK. The Estate faces high levels of social isolation, limited access to private outdoor space, and a high crime rate. Many residents, particularly younger people, have very few opportunities for positive community activity and the lack of accessible green space has contributed to a reduced sense of wellbeing across the estate.

Groundwork has been working to secure funding, resources and volunteer support to help revitalise the community garden with a long-term aim to create an inclusive, welcoming and safe green space that encourages social interaction and offers opportunities for residents to grow food, learn new skills and reconnect with their community.

A team of volunteers from Pfizer joined Groundwork on the Estate to begin essential work to improve the garden space. They worked alongside residents to clear overgrown vegetation, restore and maintain raised beds and prepare planting areas for new fruit trees and pollinator-friendly species.

Beyond the immediate physical improvements, the work has encouraged positive interaction among residents, reducing isolation, and fostering a sense of shared ownership and pride in the estate. The improvements support the community's aspiration to transform the garden into a thriving green hub where people of all ages can come together.

It was a fantastic day working outdoors in the sunshine to achieve something truly positive for the community. The emotional and heartfelt feedback from the community lead made the experience even more meaningful, and it was such a positive day overall.

*Volunteer  
Pfizer*



## WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY SPACES

In 2023, as part of Grosvenor's Greener Futures programme, Groundwork delivered a series of transformative community volunteering projects across Westminster. This companywide volunteering day saw 230 Grosvenor volunteers help transform the green spaces on the Lisson Green Estate. Building on the success of this 'Big Help Out', 180 Grosvenor volunteers returned in 2024 to improve outdoor learning environments for local children.

The programme focused on five Westminster schools and each project was designed to meet the specific needs of the school, with Groundwork providing expert guidance in environmental improvement and community engagement.

Volunteers transformed outdoor areas into vibrant green spaces for learning, conservation and recreation. Activities included planting fruit trees and vegetables which are now used in the school kitchens, giving pupils a meaningful seed-to-plate learning experience.

Use of these new spaces for learning and play had a positive impact on the school children - 90% learned something new about the natural world, 84% felt more confident trying new things, and 79% felt that the experience could support their schoolwork.

The Big Help Out demonstrated the power of collaboration between charity and corporate partners. Through hands-on volunteering, Grosvenor employees strengthened local communities while helping to create greener, healthier and more inspiring spaces for Westminster's young people.



## GROZONE

Grozone is a cosy community garden and wildlife project in Cheshire. A place where local people are welcomed to meet new friends, learn new skills and connect with nature in a welcoming and friendly outdoor environment.

Grozone prides itself on being an inclusive space, providing opportunities to people of all walks of life. From connecting families and introducing toddlers to outdoor learning through their weekly forest school sessions to supporting individuals with learning difficulties through craft, music and cooking workshops, this space is such an important asset to the community.

Grozone relies heavily on the generous support of volunteers to maintain and improve the space so that they can continue to be a place that local people can depend on. That's why Centrica employees have donated multiple days of volunteering time to this project, allowing them to really get to know Grozone and build a strong and valuable local partnership.

Centrica volunteers have made an impact across the site, edging and resurfacing pathways to improve accessibility, pruning trees and maintaining shrub beds, and installing a new donated shelter. This new shelter means that Grozone can provide the local people and groups that they support with a space to enjoy a cup of tea and lunch without being rained on and a place to carry out activities even through bad weather.



**I have been coming to Grozone since 2010 and it has enabled me to go from being house-bound with agoraphobia to having the confidence to work for a local charity and coach a youth football team.**

**I still pop in regularly to see everyone. Thanks to the volunteers from Centrica we have a yurt and shelter, so that I can keep coming over winter, which is really important for my mental health.**

*Simon, Community Member  
Grozone*

# THANK YOU FROM ALL OF US AT GROUNDWORK

Thank you to the organisations who have supported Groundwork's work through employee volunteering. Your involvement has helped bring our strategy to life by supporting communities, improving access to nature and strengthening climate-resilient places.

With sincere thanks to the following organisations:

Amazon	Dalcour Maclaren	Morgan Sindall Group plc
AXA UK	Deloitte LLP	NHS Property Systems
Balfour Beatty plc	EIP	Northwood
Barnett Waddingham LLP	Grosvenor Group Limited	Palletline
BNP Paribas	Grosvenor Systems	Pfizer Ltd
Bupa	Hermes	PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)
Capgemini UK plc	HS2 Ltd	Shawbrook Bank Limited
CBRE Group, Inc.	HSBC	SIG plc
Centrica plc	IBM UK Limited	Sopra Steria Group
CEVA Logistics	Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL)	Story Contracting Limited
CGI UK Limited	Kennedys Law LLP	TeacherActive
Cushman & Wakefield	KPMG LLP	Veolia
		Zotefoams plc

Find out more

[www.groundwork.org.uk/employee-volunteering](http://www.groundwork.org.uk/employee-volunteering)

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# GROUNDWORK

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Company Registration Number: 1900511. Charity Registration No: 291558

