

Co-Owner Volunteering Policy

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Contents

Purpose	3
Scope	3
Eligibility	3
Approved Volunteering Activities	3
Finding Volunteering Opportunities	4
Requesting Volunteering Leave	4
Cancellation of Volunteering Leave	5
Guidance for Managers	5
Matched Funding for Fundraising	5
Volunteering whilst representing BrisDoc	5
Liabilities	6
Monitoring and Reporting	6
Policy Review	6
Version Control	6

Co-Owner Volunteering V1.1

Purpose

BrisDoc is committed to supporting the health, wellbeing, and environmental charitable causes that align with our core values and that are important to you. This policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for participating in the volunteering programme.

Scope

This policy applies to all BrisDoc co-owners, regardless of their role or level within the organisation.

Volunteering that provides direct religious or political support, advocacy, or seeks to influence beliefs are not covered by this policy. This exclusion is to ensure that BrisDoc maintains a neutral stance and inclusivity in its support for charitable causes.

Eligibility

All co-owners are eligible for up to two paid volunteering days (15 hours) per calendar year, regardless of average working hours. This can be taken in full days or by the hour, and can be claimed within or outside of regular working hours.

Co-owners on the **Flex GP Package or on Bank contracts** are not eligible for volunteering leave.

This time is paid at the standard daytime / training admin rate, and does not include additional backfill rates – co-owners are only eligible to claim for the time spent volunteering. The volunteering activity must not involve pay by the charitable organisation – you must be giving your time for free.

Approved Volunteering Activities

A volunteering activity tends to be a one-off activity, but your volunteering leave hours could go towards a regular commitment. You must be an active participant in the volunteering activity, instead of attending as an observer.

Volunteering activities must be organised with charitable organisations local to Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire (organisations local to the South West region would be acceptable), as the purpose of this offer is to 'give back' our local community. Charitable organisations can be a registered charity or grassroots organisation.

Volunteering activities should support one or more of the following causes, however you may have a charity that is important to you that does not fit one of these categories:

Health

Activities aimed at improving physical health, medical support, and access to healthcare services.

Co-Owner Volunteering V1.1

Wellbeing

Activities focused on enhancing mental health, emotional support, and overall quality of life.

Environment

Activities dedicated to environmental conservation, sustainability, and ecological protection.

Equality

Activities that support inclusion, equality of access or opportunity.

Volunteering that provides direct religious or political support, advocacy, or seeks to influence beliefs are not covered by this policy.

Example of volunteering activities:

✔ Example approved activities:	✗ Example non-approved activities:
Participating in a fundraising event like a sponsored sky dive	Attending a fundraising event to watch
Supporting a vulnerable person as an 'activity buddy' (e.g. going to a music gig or the theatre) through a charitable organisation	Going to an activity with a friend or family member, even if they would be classed as vulnerable
Marching in the Bristol Pride Parade with BrisDoc	Attending the Bristol Pride Parade or event as an attendee / observer rather than active participant
Civic duties like staffing a polling station on election day	Campaigning for a political party
Providing mock interview, mentoring, or giving CV advice for a charity that supports vulnerable people to develop professional skills	Facilitating professional skills workshops as an individual, outside of a charitable organisation
Regular commitments like administering a local football club or working in a retail charity shop	Attending a local football match as a supporter or shopping in a retail charity shop

Finding Volunteering Opportunities

You can find local volunteering opportunities on the Radar Volunteering page <https://www.radar-brisdoc.co.uk/volunteering/> or on <https://candobristol.co.uk/>

Requesting Volunteering Leave

Co-owners must follow these steps to request paid volunteering leave:

1. **Identify an Opportunity:** Choose a volunteering or fundraising opportunity that aligns with the above causes.
2. **Speak to your manager:** Before making a formal request and before confirming with the charity discuss your request with your line manager.

Co-Owner Volunteering V1.1

3. **Confirm with your chosen charity:** You should not confirm your volunteering with your host organisation/charity until your request has been approved by your manager.
4. **Submit a Request:** Request “volunteering leave” via RotaMaster at least four weeks in advance. A description of the type of volunteering activity must be provided in the ‘notes’ box to be considered.
5. **Approval:** Your Line Manager will review the request and will approve or deny the request within five business days.
6. **Share your story!** Post about the exciting volunteering activities you have taken part in on Shine, through the newsletter, and share with your team at team meetings.
7. **Cancellation:** Cancellation of approved volunteer leave should be requested as soon as is possible.

Cancellation of Volunteering Leave

If a co-owner needs to cancel their approved volunteering leave, they must follow the same procedure as for cancelling annual leave.

Guidance for Managers

Please support your team members to take their volunteering leave by reviewing their requests swiftly and thoroughly and arranging shift cover where necessary.

This policy provides guidance on the types of volunteering activity that are approved or non-approved, but does not account for every example. Use the definitions in this policy to guide your decisions, and contact the People team for any further queries.

Sometimes a team may like to organise an activity as a team – see the ‘Volunteering whilst representing BrisDoc’ section for more clarification on this.

Matched Funding for Fundraising

Co-owners engaging in fundraising activities can request matched funding from BrisDoc. For more information on the process, plus information on the maximum amount of match funding, please refer to the BrisDoc Community Fund TOR document on Radar.

1. **Submitting a Request:** Send an email to BrisDoc's Community Fund at community.fund@nhs.net. This email should include details of the fundraising activity, the beneficiary organisation, and the amount raised.
2. **Approval:** The Community Fund Steering Group will review the request to ensure it meets the policy criteria and will approve or deny the request within five business days.
3. **Disbursement:** Once approved, BrisDoc will match the amount raised by the co-owner (the maximum amount is decided by the Community Fund Steering Group on a case-by-case basis) and disburse the funds directly to the beneficiary organisation.

Volunteering whilst representing BrisDoc

Volunteering activities may be designed into a team building process. In this situation the volunteering will not count as use of the two days volunteering leave days.

Co-Owner Volunteering V1.1

If a Team, Service, or Board organises volunteering opportunities to support a BrisDoc initiative and you freely give your time, then these would count as part of the two days volunteering leave. For example, marching with BrisDoc in the annual Bristol Pride Parade.

Liabilities

BrisDoc does not accept liability for the actions, activities, or health and safety of their co-owners when they are volunteering for other organisations. BrisDoc's insurance does not extend to Co-owners while they are volunteering outside of BrisDoc.

The exception to liability and insurance is when the volunteering is directly organised by BrisDoc and the Co-owner is explicitly representing BrisDoc in an agreed capacity during the volunteering activity.

Monitoring and Reporting

The People Team will track the use of volunteering days, participation in fundraising activities, and the use of matched funding. Reports on participation rates and feedback will be compiled annually to ensure the effectiveness and continuous improvement of the programme.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed six months after its initial launch, and then reviewed every three years and updated as necessary to reflect any changes in organisational priorities or feedback from co-owners.

Version Control

Date	Version	Author	Change Details
23/05/2025	1.0	MoK	New policy published.
20/08/2025	1.1	MoK	Minor update to clarify eligibility for certain contracts