

Press Release

Community volunteering to hit record levels at Bournemouth Water

COMMUNITY volunteering by staff at Bournemouth Water is expected to hit record levels this year.

The company allows each member of staff three days per year to take part in charitable or community activity.

The volunteering can include:

- 'Work party' events organised with local charities or conservation groups
- Skills-sharing such as offering technical expertise or design and communications support
- Supporting a cause close to an individual's heart, for example taking part in a sponsored marathon or spending the day baking for charity.



Staff spent the equivalent of 130 man-days in the community in the 12 months to March 31, almost doubling the previous recorded activity.

But this figure has already been exceeded with 131 man-days clocked up in the six months since April 1. Bournemouth Water aims to spend a minimum of 175 man-days in the community per year by 2020.

Bob Taylor, Managing Director, said the community volunteering target was in direct response to feedback from customers.

He added: "Our customers said they wanted to see more of us out and about and actively engaged with our local community.

"While we have always supported our local community since the company was established in 1863, we didn't formalise our community volunteering initiative until 2014.

"Rather than giving modest cash donations to numerous charities, we feel that donating our time and sharing skills has a longer lasting impact and is, therefore, of greater value to the organisations we support."

Employees from across all areas of the business, including Bournemouth Water's senior management team, take part in the initiative.

Recent activities include freshening up Langside School in Poole for Diverse Abilities, Dorset's disability charity. Six volunteers spent a day painting and decorating at the special school in Langside Avenue.



Meanwhile other work parties saw staff working alongside a handful of Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT) volunteers to clear the Gussage Stream near Wimborne of weeds and vegetation by hand. The work is important for the protection of the rare white-clawed crayfish, Britain's only native freshwater crayfish.

Other community events supported by Bournemouth Water have included food festivals, fairs and sporting events where drinking water has been provided free of charge via standpipes, bowsers or manned stalls.



Employees have also chosen to use their three days to participate in fundraising events for the charity of their choice resulting in them climbing mountains, running races or baking cakes - all on company time.

Mr Taylor said: "Our local community benefits from the tasks our teams of volunteers perform, which would otherwise have to be paid for by the local organisations, costing them considerable time and expense.

"We've built upon our long-term relationships with a number of charities and community organisations and have formed new relationships as part of this re-invigorated initiative. In short, everyone benefits."

