

Celebrating our 25th anniversary Unity in the Community

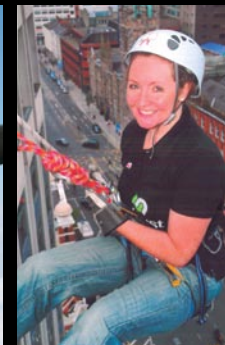


2009 was a busy year for the staff at Unity Trust Bank. To help celebrate our silver anniversary, we were involved in an initiative called **Unity in the Community**, which encouraged us to provide our time, energy and expertise to support local and national charities and good causes.

We kicked off the year by grouping into teams and choosing our selected team charities. Those who were already involved in voluntary activities led the way in introducing the rest of us to the difference that we could make by giving some of our spare time and raising money for the good of society. **Here are some of the highlights...**



We raised over **£7,500***



Our first major sponsored event took place in March – a **120ft abseil** at the Fort Dunlop building in Birmingham in aid of The Stroke Association.

In April, we spent two days volunteering at Acorns Children's Hospice, near our head office in Birmingham, where we **cleaned, hung pictures and painted walls**.

We were making communities safer by **sitting as a magistrate** in Stratford, East London, and **running a Neighbourhood Watch** group.

On an overcast day in May, staff descended on the SIFA Fireside allotment in Birmingham. Armed with gardening gloves and tools, we **cleared, weeded, turned soil over and planted seeds**.

We also went to Take That concerts, held at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry, and **shook collection buckets** to raise funds for Teenage Cancer Trust.



We spent over **1,600 hours** volunteering*



We **ran across all parts of the Midlands**, taking part in the Great Malvern, Knowle and Dorridge Fun Runs.

In June, over 30 of us visited Warley Woods Community Trust in Birmingham to help **paint benches, clear paths and flower beds, plant a tree and collect over eight tons of rubbish**.

July saw us supporting Cancer Research UK's Race for Life by **running and walking the 5km Race for Life** around Don Valley Stadium in Sheffield and Sutton Park in Birmingham.

We **helped teachers** from Priestley Smith School in Birmingham, for blind and partially sighted pupils, with their annual Sports Day.

We visited Edward's Trust, in Birmingham, to **spruce up the garden area and car park**. We also helped to **build an amphitheatre** at Cotteridge Park in Birmingham.

* Figures as at 1 December 2009

Two of our teams took to the streets of Birmingham to raise money for Acorns Children's Hospice and Teenage Cancer Trust. Walking down New Street, we attracted plenty of attention and collected an impressive amount of spare change.

We jumped out of a plane – really! – for a sponsored sky dive in aid of Midlands Air Ambulance.

Over the year, we were involved with a mentoring scheme aimed at keeping young people out of trouble with the police, in Cheltenham.

September saw us jump off a building for an abseil to raise funds for The Simon Community, Northern Ireland, and take part in a sponsored swim for the Midlands Air Ambulance, in Leamington Spa.

We got up at 4:30am to guarantee a good pitch at Merry Hill Shopping Centre's monthly car boot sale, in Dudley. Everything we sold raised money for Well Cat. And we spent three days helping out at their rescue centre in Birmingham.

In December, we were taking part in numerous Christmas concerts and carol singing events around the country, to raise awareness and funds for The Salvation Army and Acorns Children's Hospice.



But it's not just one-off events that have been keeping us busy. Throughout the year, around the UK, we were involved in a number of sporting projects, such as coaching a local youth rugby team and training young players from the Young Lions Cricket Club in Harrow.

We were referring football matches and coaching an U16 team in Birmingham. We volunteered our time to teach young people about fishing, on an ongoing basis, as part of the Coarse Angling Skills Training Staffordshire (CASTS) programme.

We were volunteering with the Whitley Bay Baptist Church girls football team, and accompanying the U16 team when they visited Sweden for an international tournament.

We used our business skills to benefit a variety of organisations. We

volunteered as a board member of a private caravan site in Bracklesham Bay, West Sussex, and organised sports days and fetes for the holiday-makers.

We spent a day in the offices of Acorns Children's Hospice, researching potential supporters to

donate to a Christmas appeal. We also produced the annual accounts for a school in Leamington Spa.

And we volunteered to provide assistance with legislative and compliance paperwork for a Scottish credit union.

The main charities we supported in 2009 were:

Acorns Children's Hospice Trust, Alzheimer's Society, Midlands Air Ambulance, St Basil's Homeless Shelter, Teenage Cancer Trust and Well Cat.

Other charities and organisations supported throughout the year include:

Breakthrough Breast Cancer, Bromley Community Engagement Forum, Children in Need, National Blood Service, Credit Union Development Association, Lesbian and Gay Switchboard – West Midlands,

Birmingham Visually Impaired Service, Sacred Heart School Association, Bentley Heath School Solihull, 7th Bushey and Oxhey Scouts, Young Enterprise South West, Social Mobility Organisation, NSPCC, Oasis Church Trust Birmingham and St John's Primary School Birmingham.

Not all banks are the same

At a time when banks are under scrutiny by the public, for good reason, we wanted to highlight how our commitment to enabling social development and supporting community involvement – by offering all staff five volunteering days each

year – makes a sustainable contribution to society. Not only does this benefit local communities and society in general, it also provides valuable practical experience for our staff, which enhances their understanding and knowledge of the social economy sector.

Unity in the Community was introduced to celebrate our 25th anniversary. Based on its success in 2009 we are looking forward to carrying it on into 2010. Keep up to date with our ongoing activities by visiting www.unity.co.uk/unityinthecommunity



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