

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING CASE STUDY

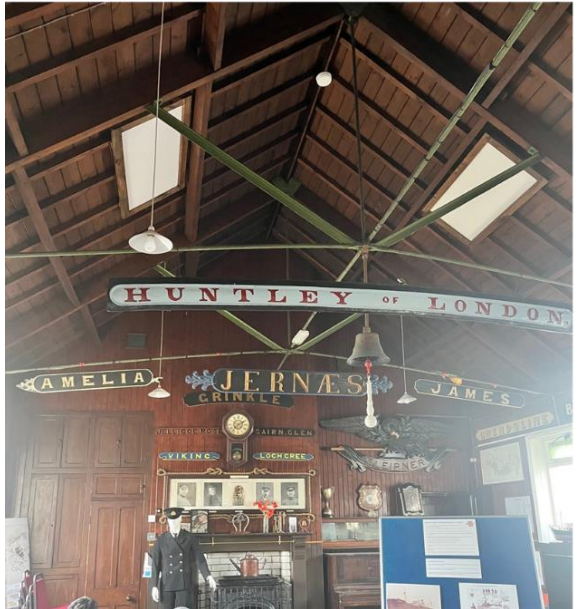
F&I Group give the best Christmas present, making a long-awaited wish come true.

Less well known than the RNLI but no less important are local volunteer life brigades, established in the late 19th century to provide shore-based rescue facilities around the British coast. Sunderland Volunteer Life Brigade (SVLB) was established in 1877 saving over 800 lives around our coastline. One of just three of the original forty remaining VLBs in the UK, it's an important part of the maritime history of the northeast. On call to the Coastguard 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, SVLB provides shore-based volunteers trained and ready to assist in a range of coastal emergency situations.

They are reliant on fundraising and donations to provide vital equipment and the upkeep of the Watch House, and had long wondered how they were going to repaint their roof sign because of the tricky location on a hill on a busy road. Probably not

painted for 147 years, the sign heralding their existence and their little museum had virtually disappeared. The squeaking batteries in the smoke alarms – unreachable without scaffolding in the apex of the roof - were also irritating for volunteers and visitors alike!

Help came via Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance (SVSA), introducing SVLB to Ingleford Scaffolding who used their specialist expertise to reach and repaint the roof in December 2024.



"One aspect we particularly liked about this corporate volunteering opportunity was the chance to use our industry expertise to give back to the community in a meaningful way. From erecting scaffolding and painting the iconic Roker Watch House sign to completing electrical work by replacing smoke alarms inside the building, it was incredibly rewarding to apply our skills to a project that benefits the community directly."

This alignment of our professional capabilities with a community-focused initiative made the experience even more fulfilling. It allowed our team to take pride in their work, knowing their contributions were both practical and impactful." Rebecca Browne, Marketing & Bid Manager, F&I Group

The works were completed by a team of Sunderland-based operatives. Around 25% of F&I staff are local to Sunderland and it gave employees the opportunity to learn more about their local history and deliver meaningful, positive impact on their doorstep.



“Ultimately, experiences like this reinforce our commitment to being more than just a company working in the area; we’re part of the community, and we’re proud to contribute where we can.” Rebecca Browne

The name on the Watch House helps raise awareness of and promote the charity – hopefully sparking more interest and enquiries.

Staff from Ingleford Scaffolding used their expertise to erect the scaffolding both internally and externally. *“The volunteers worked hard to get the work done on time ... [they] did a brilliant job, were very enthusiastic and worked hard for the tasks to be completed. Please thank the volunteers for a job well done. We really appreciate their work.”* Rosemary Roberts, Treasurer and Director, SVLB

NO OF HRS	NO OF CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS	TOTAL NO OF HRS	SOCIAL VALUE (SKILLED VOLUNTEERING) £	SOCIAL VALUE (MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT) £	TOTAL VALUE £
14	4	14	1,414.00	1,150.00	2,564.00

Additionally, Jenny in the SVSA team secured **£3,000** so far to provide new, clear glazing for the museum’s front windows and a mural on the side of the building. It is hoped that both of these initiatives will increase footfall to the museum.

“Everything was great! We received all the support and guidance we needed from SVSA, and the process was smooth. Thank you for making it such a positive experience! The engagement with the Volunteer Life Brigade made the project even more enjoyable and insightful for our team.

Partnering with organisations like SVSA ensures the experience is well-coordinated and rewarding for everyone involved. We would absolutely consider corporate volunteering again through SVSA.” Rebecca Browne

“I would like to go on record that the job Marie [from SVSA] did was outstanding and she’s great to work with.” Keith Johnson, SVLB volunteer Watchman

Sunderland Voluntary Life Brigade welcome new volunteers. For more information email admin@sunvlb.com.

For enquiries regarding corporate volunteering email volunteer@sunderlandvsa.co.uk

