Royal London Community Strategy

Introduction

Since its inception, over 150 years ago, Royal London has played an important part in the local community, helping people to help themselves. Over time our role in the Community has evolved with our business model but we still firmly believe that we can be active citizens and share our skills and resources to make a positive impact on the wider community. Our Community Investment Strategy and the associated Community policy cover four core themes and have been developed to guide the ways in which we can maximize this impact on the community whilst simultaneously engaging our employees and members. The core themes are:

1. Charitable giving
2. Community investment
3. Employer supported volunteering
4. Commercial initiatives

Charitable giving

The Royal London Foundation

We want to support the communities that Royal London’s members live and work in and so in April 2011, we launched The Royal London Foundation in honour of our founders Henry Ridge and Joseph Degge and the principles with which they set up Royal London.

The Foundation focuses on three core areas, which we believe encompass issues relevant to our members and UK communities:

Education
Causes which support the education of people of all ages, including skills to help those seeking employment

Elderly
Causes which help older generations who require assistance in their daily lives

Health
Causes that provide health and fitness activities to those who might not otherwise have access to such facilities
Each year we will also grant a £25,000 award, the ‘Degge and Ridge Award’, to one deserving cause.
We have partnered with the Community Foundations Network (CFN) to manage the applications and grant making process. CFN is a registered charity that leads a movement of community foundations committed to positive social change in the UK through the development of ‘community philanthropy’. It acts as a national membership association for community foundations nationwide, negotiating and managing grant-making and fundraising opportunities.
Working with CFN means The Royal London Foundation will run efficiently, cost effectively and enable it to reach communities at a local level.

**National Charity partner**

As a diverse Group with eight different businesses, fundraising helps to engage people at Royal London in activities with a shared purpose, creating a sense of a community working together. Each year, our employees elect a national charity partner, which we then support through a programme of fundraising activities. In the last two years we have also involved members in our fundraising by offering a donation to our charity partner for every proxy vote cast at the AGM.

Each year we aim to raise at least £40,000 for our charity partner.

**Matched donations**

Our matched donations scheme is designed to support employees who raise money for UK registered charities. Royal London matches pound for pound the amount raised up to a maximum of £250 per individual and a maximum of £1000 per team, per year.

**Payroll giving**

We support our employees to give money to their own charitable causes by promoting payroll giving. Royal London pays the administration fee on every donation, meaning more of each donation goes direct to the charity.

**Gifts in kind**

Wherever possible Royal London supports giving in kind through the provision of resources and facilities to charities and community organizations which are based in the locality of our offices.
Community investment

**Fun to Save**

Royal London is a member of the Association of Financial Mutuals (AFM). AFM conducted research which concluded that there was very limited resource in schools to aid financial understanding. We are one of eight mutuals which have funded an agency with an educational specialism to build a website, Funtosave.org. The primary objective of the Fun To Save programme is to fund and provide a no-cost resource for schools, parents and children that will help children to understand the concept of money and financial management.

We will work in partnership with the Association of Financial Mutuals to further develop Fun to Save for primary school aged children.

**Employer supported volunteering**

**Stepforward**

We believe that it’s important to share resources and the skills of our people to support local communities. We also recognise that volunteering can be an excellent way to get personal and professional development. Our Stepforward volunteering programme lets employees take up to two days each year of company time to volunteer in the community. In 2011, over 400 people in Edinburgh and Wilmslow took part in volunteering projects.

In London, employees at Royal London Asset Management (RLAM) volunteer on a few key projects which are designed to support people in the boroughs surrounding the City of London which are some of the most deprived in the country:

- Toynbee Hall to promote financial inclusion amongst residents in Hackney by working with them as advisors to offer financial capability support to debt clients
- Reach Out which supports young people through a weekly programme of tutoring and then a ‘soccer school’ with FA coaches at a school in Hackney.

In Edinburgh and Wilmslow Royal London volunteers work directly with local schools on the Number and Reading Partner and Pupil Mentoring programmes. Through these programmes Royal London aims to support schools in raising achievements in literacy and numeracy, while enhancing children’s confidence, motivation to learn and give a positive insight in to the world of employment.

In Wilmslow, Edinburgh and Glasgow employees volunteer on a range of projects from clearing up local parks or other green spaces to primary schools and hospital gardens.
Royal London Volunteering Awards

The Royal London Volunteering Awards were launched in 2011 and are designed to recognise the commitment, time and energy that our people give to the community in their own time. Since their launch, 42 of our people have been recognised through the awards and we donated £10,500 to the organisations they support.

Commercial initiatives

Royal London has identified that there are an estimated 33 million UK adults who do not currently use any form of professional advisory service, to develop a clearer understanding of their financial position and make informed choices.

The Moneyvista website is a new commercial initiative for Royal London.

The site provides a holistic, personal financial planning tool along with around 200 guides which can be accessed by any member of the public searching for information on the internet. Customers are also be able to pose questions to our panel of experts or make use of our Forum to discuss issues amongst themselves.

In launching the proposition, Royal London Group is taking a strong lead in addressing the advice gap that exists for UK consumers and is responding to the FSAs call for senior management of financial firms to run their firms for the benefit of society as a whole.

The website was formally launched in January 2012, and functionality and content of MoneyVista was enhanced during 2012, taking into account feedback and suggestions from our growing customer base.
Further information

If you would like more information on Royal London's CR programme, please email corporate.responsibility@royallondongroup.co.uk