

Reusing Resources

WHETHER YOU'RE HAVING A SPRING-CLEAN CLEAR OUT OR SEARCHING FOR A PIECE OF FURNITURE OR A HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCE, LOOK NO FURTHER THAN THESE FANTASTIC LOCAL RECYCLING RESOURCES, SAYS STEVE ALLEN.



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Waste Watch tells us that in less than 2 hours the UK produces enough waste to fill the Royal Albert Hall. That's 31 million tonnes every year – over a tonne of rubbish from each household. It's hard to picture that shocking amount, and you might well be wondering how on earth we manage to find space for it all!

Alongside being an unnatural blight on any landscape, landfill kicks out a massive 40% of the methane emissions (3% of all greenhouse gas emissions) of the UK (source: DEFRA). Encouragingly, thanks to the efforts of many, these figures have fallen significantly over the past 20 years. But there is still plenty of room for improvement. The 'three R's' – reduce, reuse, recycle – put it perfectly. By reducing our consumption, reusing items and recycling wherever possible, we can reduce our waste and tread more lightly on the earth.

Over the next two months we are going to talk about some local resources that can help you reduce your contribution to landfill. This month we're focusing on initiatives that support both reuse and our local communities. Next month, in part two, we'll be discussing green boxes and recycling.

THE FURNITURE PROJECT

The Genesis Furniture Project was founded 16 years ago to supply furniture and household goods to anyone on a low-income or benefit. This amounts to a staggering 5,000 families in this prosperous city of Bath. The Project takes donations of good-quality goods and, through its small warehouse in Oldfield Park, sells them on at low-cost. With a full-time staff of four, the Project collects over 1,600 items of furniture a year and makes some 1,200 deliveries.

Peter George, the Project Manager, says: "During the past two years we have logged 2,000 customers – that's 2,000 families or single folks that have benefited from our generous donors. In other words, we have saved over 100 tons of household goods from going to landfill".

The Project collects from within a 10 mile radius of the city centre, and both



Green columnists Steve Allen (left) and Duncan Glendinning

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collection and delivery services are free. There are a small number of conditions for collections. Soft goods such as sofas and chairs must comply with the 1988 Fire Regulations, and white goods must be clean and in a good condition. If you wish to donate anything please give plenty of notice – 10 days or two weeks ideally – as they only have a limited collection capability. The Genesis Furniture Project is open 10am – 4.30pm Monday-Friday and can be found at their Oldfield Park Warehouse at 31A West Avenue, near Moorland Road.

So remember, don't skip it, donate it.

THE WOOD WORKS

The Wood Works sells donated antique and high-quality furniture that is available to everyone. They offer training placements to long-term unemployed men and women, who learn to repair and revive furniture donated by the general public. The shop has a fantastic selection of stock, which during my recent visit included beautiful dining tables, chairs, dressers, shelving and more. All sales support the continuation of the training programmes. Trainees can gain a wide range of on-the-job skills, and also have the opportunity to take more formal training in health and safety, the City and Guilds Basic Wood Working Course with the City of Bath College, and upholstery.

Over the last two years the Wood Works' success has included the support of six people back into professional work and two into further education. Laure Gray, the Shop Manager, says: "We now need donations of all these lovely objects you keep in your attic, basement or cupboard and which you never use. This is an excellent opportunity to clear your storage space and contribute to a good cause."

The Wood Works can be found at 1–3 James Street West, and is open Tuesday to Saturday, from 10am – 5pm. They currently restore only furniture that is for sale in the shop, but do accept orders for small upholstery projects and chair caning. They also take orders for tailor-made wooden furniture.

OTHER RESOURCES

There are a number of other ways that you can avoid landfilling unwanted items. Charity shops will welcome any good quality goods such as books and clothes, or you can make some cash by selling items at a car boot sale, which will be starting up again in the Spring – check your local paper for details. Finally, there are internet-based resources such as your local Freecycle group (www.freecycle.org) and www.ebay.co.uk – both provide easy ways to dispose of unwanted items to people who can reuse them. ■

INFORMATION

■ Contact the Genesis Furniture Project on tel: 01225 421111. To find out more about the Genesis Trust, these projects and others, visit www.genesisistrust.org.uk

■ Your unwanted furniture can be collected for free by the Wood Works within the Bath area. If you would like to donate, contact Laure on tel: 01225 429617 or email her a photo and description of the item at: laure@genesisistrust.org.uk.

■ For information about training at the Wood Works, contact Stephen Budd on tel: 01225 429617; email: thewoodworks@genesisistrust.org.uk If you would like to volunteer they are also looking for help with the running of the shop.

■ The Green Companion is a really useful booklet available from many places around town including health food shops. There is an online resource too at: www.greenbath.org

■ Recycle Now is the national recycling campaign for England, and it has plenty of useful information and advice. Contact tel: 0845 331 3131 or visit: www.recyclenow.com

■ B&NES Council can also give local advice on recycling, and you can contact Council Connect on tel: 01225 394041, or via email at: CouncilConnect@bathnes.gov.uk

Next Month: Recycling and Reusing – part two. Send your questions and comments on green issues to Steve and Duncan at: green@thebathmagazine.co.uk