Social impact report 2018
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Join the conversation

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Registered Charity No. 1090824
I am delighted to once again release our annual social impact report, highlighting the challenges faced by the poorest in today’s society and illustrating how charities and social enterprises working within the reuse sector aim to support people in their local communities.

As the Reuse Network, we support our members with supply of products, advice and guidance to ensure that our members are armed with the right tools to face tomorrow’s challenges and continue to provide their vital services. 2018 has been a difficult year for many furniture reuse organisations, as we received reports of charities closing their doors due to financial constraints.

In spite of these closures more household items are making their way to reuse charities and social enterprises allowing more people to access affordable items every year. With more demand for reusable goods due to austerity, benefit changes and the increase in poverty we are seeing an increase in demand for certain product types.

The services that Reuse Network offer are based on the agenda of the membership and opportunities that are on offer for the sector to grow. The future is going to mean a network that works together, members building capacity by partnering with other members through consortia working and trust.

Craig Anderson
CEO, Reuse Network
What is reuse?

To reuse an item is simply to use it again or more than once either in its original form or after washing or minor repairs, for the same or an alternative purpose.

At Reuse Network, we believe no one should be without a bed to sleep on, a cooker to cook on or a sofa to sit on. We are working across sectors to make this vision a reality, giving our member charities the support they need to reach vulnerable people in need through reuse.

Reuse and recycling are often interchangeably used, but for us and our members, reuse has an environmental, social and socio-economic value.

There are many reasons to reuse, especially in today’s climate where resources are limited and demand for household and electrical items has increased. Reducing waste through reuse not only prevents essential items from going to landfill, but also provides low income households with household and electrical items at affordable prices.

Reuse is near the top of the waste hierarchy, second only to prevention of waste.

Stages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevention</th>
<th>Include:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using less material in design and manufacture. Keeping products for longer (reuse). Using fewer hazardous materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing for reuse</td>
<td>Checking, cleaning, repairing, refurbishing whole items or spare parts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycling</td>
<td>Turning waste into a new substance or product. Includes composting if it meets quality protocols.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other recovery</td>
<td>Includes anaerobic digestion, incineration with energy recovery, gasification and pyrolysis which produce energy (fuels, heat and power) and materials from waste; some backfilling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposal</td>
<td>Landfill and incineration without energy recovery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is reuse?

But it doesn’t stop there — the activity of reuse creates employment, training and volunteering opportunities for those most marginalised in our society, whether because someone is experiencing long-term unemployment, an ex-offender, or experiencing mental health problems.

Working with reuse provides people with the skills and confidence they need to progress in life, whilst helping others access items they may not have otherwise had access to.

Reuse Network supports reuse charities and social enterprises across the UK to help them alleviate poverty, reduce waste and tackle climate change.

We are driving the message of reuse across the UK, creating a sustainable, supportive network that strives to help the poorest in our society build a brighter and better future for themselves.
How we support our members

We provide relevant information, advice and guidance on standards, best practice and regulatory compliance, and we represent our members at local and national levels to various stakeholders.

In addition we support them by:

• holding the only conference in the UK dedicated to not-for-profit reuse organisations
• running a series of regional networking events across the UK
• featuring a national service finder of reuse charities and social enterprises on our website to facilitate public donation and queries
• providing members with an exclusive space to find resources and start discussions

• offering quality management audits and approval
• managing opportunities to buy from selected service providers and product suppliers
• providing a licenced average weight list of over 200 furniture and electrical items
• managing national partnerships between major retailers, reuse charities and social enterprises
What our members say about us

“Reuse Network membership is a huge benefit to Reviive. We get to know what is happening nationally with developments in reuse and recycling and we get access to really good opportunities to buy new and end-of-line furniture. We regularly purchase mattresses, beds and flat-pack furniture through the Reuse Network. These opportunities help support our sales and make our stores look great. The single best decision you can make as the manager or board member of a furniture project is to join the Reuse Network.”

Julian Price, CEO, Reviive

“Working in partnership with the Reuse Network has helped us build the capacity of the organisation, through their ability to secure commercial opportunities which match the charitable objectives of our organisation. We have seen a great uplift in the number of items received and in revenues received through these initiatives. Working in partnership with well-connected and respected organisations means that being able to get in contact with the correct person at the right time is imperative as the Reuse Network offer excellent networking opportunities. One of the overarching and important parts to the membership is the excellent audit process which gives a professional edge to the work that we do to know that we are fully compliant and following best practice.”

Shaun England, CEO, toogoodtowaste
2018 highlights

- 12 networking events including business workshops and management training
- Successful annual conference with 184 attendees, 10 exhibitors and 20 speakers
- New branding for the network
- New website with improved functionality to connect members of the public with our members
- Increased access to new, graded and donated products from commercial partners
- New funding stream for future activities
In 2017/18, commercial partnerships managed by the Reuse Network, supplied 76,100 items furniture and electrical appliances to the voluntary reuse sector. This, in turn:

- **60,885** Helped 60,885 households in the UK
- **£9.1 million** Saved low-income households over £9.1 million
- **2,500** Prevented 2,500 tonnes of products from being wasted
- **2,200** Saved 2,200 tonnes of CO₂ emissions
Network
Who our members are

Our members are located throughout England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands. They support people in their local communities through a whole host of activities. In addition to reusing household and electrical items, many of our members run food banks, community cafes, Men’s Sheds, support groups as well as providing volunteering and employment opportunities.

The people our members support:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People supported</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People facing homeless</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with learning disabilities</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People suffering from substance misuse</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offenders and ex-offenders</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled people</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People facing long-term unemployment</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People facing mental health problems</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our members’ reuse activities

- 97% reuse household furniture
- 82% reuse electrical items
- 56% reuse office furniture
- 44% reuse textiles
- 30% reuse IT equipment
- 19% run food banks
- 23% provide starter packs
- 18% reuse paint
The challenges faced today

We are working across sectors giving our member charities the support, information, connections and goods they need to reach vulnerable people in need in their local communities.

14.2 million people in the UK are living in poverty. That’s 8.4 million adults; 4.5 million children and 1.4 million pension age adults.

12.1% of the total UK population live in persistent poverty which equates to more than one in ten of the population.

68% of people living in workless families are in poverty compared to 9% of families where all adults work full-time.

8.8 million people in the UK are turning to credit to pay for their everyday essentials.
How our members support communities

In 2017/18, the reuse sector reused 3.5 million furniture and electrical appliances. This, in turn:

- **1.55 million**
  Helped 1.55 million households in the UK.

- **£448 million**
  Saved low-income households over £448.46 million.

- **52,700**
  Supported 52,700 people through volunteering, training and work placements.

- **5,500**
  Employed 5,500 people through full-time and part-time work.
Environment
The challenges faced today

We are building meaningful connections to divert millions of usable household items from landfill and into low-income households.

- **19%** of bulky waste are electrical appliances or electronic equipment.
- **32%** of bulky waste is reusable in its state, that increases to 51% if items required slight repair are taken into account.
- **1.6 million** tonnes of bulky waste items are thrown out every year in the UK. More than half of these items could be reused.
- **42%** of bulky waste is furniture.
How our members support the environment

In 2017/18, the reuse sector reused 3.5 million furniture and electrical appliances. This, in turn:

- **120,270** Diverted 120,270 tonnes of households items from landfill
- **129,250** Saved 129,250 tonnes of CO₂ emissions
Thank you

To Reuse Network members across the UK, our commercial partners, the general public and Reuse Network staff for making the great work we do possible each year. We wouldn’t be able to do it without you and are grateful for your continued support.

For any queries, please contact:
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