

Traffic calming Saving buildings

Neighbourhood Improvement Schemes

Recycling and composting

Exciting and innovative projects to help communities become 'greener' and more conscious of the need to care for our environment are being developed around the county, ranging from encouraging people to recycle and conserve to looking at ways to reduce traffic on our roads.

To help you develop your own projects, you may find it useful to read how other people have developed their ideas.

In addition to information in this leaflet of how the **Furniture Recycling Project** now plays a major role in the county, you can also find out more about other initiatives including the ongoing challenge of **bringing life back into Coleford** – in the Beelines Bulletin in this folder and on either of the following websites: Forum – www.town2town.org.uk BBC – www.bbc.co.uk/gloucestershire/communitytoolkit

One key environmental issue which affects each and every one of us is that of transport – the County's **Rural Transport Partnership initiatives** are also highlighted in Beelines.

Turn to the back page of this leaflet for a list of useful organisations and contacts you can use to take your idea further.



 Land reclamation 

FURNITURE RECYCLING PROJECT, GLOUCESTER

Creative Use of Waste

The Challenge

The Recycling Project was launched about 10 years ago by a Gloucester Neighbourhood Project when someone was faced with turning down an unfurnished flat because he had no furniture and could not afford any.

Developing the idea

Two garages were leased by the Neighbourhood Project for storage but the Project soon had to expand to meet a need, not just in the local area but also throughout Gloucester City.

The Project became independent in 1996. Since then, the pioneering award-winning Project has gone from strength to strength; supplying safe, clean, affordable recycled furniture and household items to disadvantaged communities. The recycling of furniture also helps the environment by reducing demand for landfill sites and supports/develops staff and volunteers.

Making it happen

The Project is currently housed in two warehouses at Gloucester Docks and has a shop in Stroud, serving the whole of the county. From three paid staff and nine volunteers in 1996, the Project now has a staff of 12 and supports up to 50 volunteers/trainers. It has recently acquired three LPG dual fuel vans funded through the **Landfill Tax Credit** scheme. The small amounts charged for the recycled furniture help offset the running costs of staff wages, rent, insurance etc.

Gloucester City Council recognises the Recycling Project has saved the council about £250,000 over four years, resulting in a reduced need for landfill. During 1999/2000 it supplied 850 wardrobes, the equivalent of about 65 cricket pitches. Currently, it recycles about 13,000 items a year. It also removes an increasing burden from social services – people go to the Project to furnish their homes who would otherwise have to go to social services for help – or to 'loan sharks'.

The Project also offers work experience placements and opportunities for volunteers, including asylum seekers and people with learning disabilities, to develop their skills and confidence and assist them into employment.

Key tips

- Tap into the **expertise** of people involved – people with retail, business and training experience can help set up systems of management, personnel and marketing
- **Premises** – consider storage, insurance, health and safety (manual handling, Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), sales of goods act, legislation) issues
- **Transport** for collection and delivery

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