

South Shropshire Furniture Scheme

Annual Report 2010/11

Registered charity 1082068

Company 4041051

Forword Jean Jarvis MBE, CEO



This year I start on a sad note, our Chairman, Monica Green, passed away last February. She has been sadly missed, but not just by SSFS. Monica worked tirelessly for many other charities and local causes. Her loss has had a big impact on us all.

We are thrilled to have been rated at 43 in the RBS SE 100 index of fastest growing enterprises. A massive achievement for South Shropshire Furniture Scheme amongst national social enterprises with

multi million pound turnovers, such as the Eden Project in Cornwall.

Last year I predicted that public services would be delivered by social enterprises. This is now happening, in Shropshire and throughout the UK. In June we took over the running of Rockspring Community Centre on the Sandpits Estate in Ludlow. With assistance from Sam Hine at Communities Can we've carried out a wide range of activities in our mission to re engage the local community and bring the centre back to life. You'll read more about this further on in the report. We're currently in talks as to whether we can embark on a similar initiative with Craven Arms Community Centre.

With great optimism and in partnership with Shropshire Housing Alliance we opened Reviive CIC in October 10. One year on we've out-performed our business plan, and reached a turnover of £16,000 per month. Starting with one part-time member of staff, we now employ 7 and have 20 regular volunteers. We'll continue to develop this concept and hope to open more Reviives throughout the UK over the coming years.

Our workforce continues to grow in size and develop its skills and we buy in additional expertise where necessary. We've maintained a volunteer team of over 90 people of all ages and competencies.

Sales of reuse furniture has increased again this year as people choose more carefully how to spend their limited funds. A sign of these straightened times is the increase this year in the numbers of people requesting our emergency delivery of furniture for £40. We continue to work in partnership with South Shropshire Housing Association to provide this service as swiftly and painlessly as is possible.

2010/11 has been a good year for SSFS and for me personally. I was awarded an MBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours list for Services to Social Enterprise, which I couldn't have achieved without the great team of staff, volunteers and directors that give their all to SSFS.

Bill Jones—Chairman

The 2010/11 annual report reflects the highs and lows of the organisation over the last twelve months. From the great sadness at the loss of Monica, to the sense of achievement and fulfilment as the Furniture Scheme continues to grow and develop taking on new challenges on the way.



The excellence of the Furniture Scheme has been recognised nationally, firstly our chief executive Jean for her pioneering work in the area of social enterprise and secondly to the organisation as a whole, number 43 in the RBS SE 100 index of fastest growing enterprises is no mean achievement. The national recognition is complimented locally by all those who willingly support us and especially by those who need our support.

The organisations success depends on its staff and volunteers, without them we would not achieve such a high level of performance.

As chairman I would personally like to thank them all. I would also like to thank the Board Members who with the Chief Executive ensure that the Furniture Scheme continues to move forward.

I commend the 2010/11 annual report to you.

Board of Directors

Monica Green

Bill Jones (Chairman)

Bill Duley

Susan McCormack

Philip Reckless

Julian Price

Helen Corfield

Sue Perry

Clare Ratcliff

Jean Jarvis—Company secretary

Staff

Rockspring Community Centre

Jean Jarvis MBE—Chief Executive

Rosemary Collie—Social Enterprise Advisor

James Cooper—Development Manager

Elaine Duggan—Community Directory/Marketing

Maria Darcy—Rockspring Events Co-ordinator

Paul Francis—Statistics Officer

Lynda Hoad—Finance Officer

Sam Hine—Communities Can

Rob Gardner—Caretaker

Richard Rix—Ducks in a Row, Health & Safety

Renaissance Centre

Gill Green—Training & Development Manager

Serena Penn-Harvey—Volunteer Co-ordinator

Mike Jones—Training Co-ordinator

John Jones—Customer Service Assistant

Richard Carpenter—Renaissance Centre Co-ordinator

Josh Curtis—Administration Assistant

Carpentry Workshop

Bob Russell—Workshop Manager

Stefan Laird—Workshop Supervisor

Graham Lambourn—Workshop Support Worker for Volunteers and Trainees

Re-use Centre

Simon Magill—Re-use Centre Manager

Chris Breakwell—Logistics Manager & Driver

Mike Cornhill—Warehouse Link Officer

John Jones—Customer Service Assistant

Tim Stevens—Van Driver

Julie Magill—Administration Assistant

Richard Handley—Van Driver

Reviive

Sophie Black—Manager

Jane Price—PR & Marketing

Alex Hughes—Customer Service Assistant

Marie Teleki—Administration Assistant

Bevis Tromans—Warehouse Co-ordinator

Liz Porter—Team Leader

Andy Holland—Van Driver

Gill Green, Training and Development

This year:

- 111 volunteers have gained valuable work experience with us that will help them on their road to employment, further education, increase their confidence or equip them with new skills
- 95 volunteers have gained 223 OCN Qualifications in Personal Learning Programme, Work Experience, Customer Service, Health and Safety Awareness
- 18 staff and volunteers have completed the two day course in Mental Health First Aid and are better informed and equipped to support others bringing the total to 32
- 2 members of staff and 1 volunteer have gained a Level 2 NVQ in Waste Management
- 2 staff have achieved Level 5 Leadership and Management
- 1 member of staff has completed Certificate to Teach in Life Long Learning Sector
- Two of the staff team have completed Level 3 in Management
- 1 member of staff has achieved Level 2 in both Literacy and Numeracy
- 7 staff achieved Level 2 Emergency First Aid at Work
- 10 staff and volunteers succeeded in gaining certificates in the Principles of Manual Handling L2
- 6 staff gained Health and Safety in the Workplace certificates at Level 2
- 1 staff improved his IT skills with an Intermediate Excel workshop
- 1 member of staff trained in Charities Evaluation Service Outcomes Champion
- 1 member of staff trained in Measuring Social Impact and Social Return on Investment
- 1 staff member attended Volunteer Management and Recruiting and Retaining Volunteer workshops
- 1 member of staff trained to deliver VOICE a training tool used to engage community groups
- 1 member of the staff team gained their CIEH Risk Assessment Level 2
- 1 volunteer achieved their introductory certificate in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector
- 1 staff member trained in City and Guilds 2377 in Inspection & Testing of Electrical Equipment
- 5 staff attended a briefing workshop on Child and Adult Safeguarding
- 18 staff undertook Practical Use of Fire Equipment training
- 10 staff and volunteers reached standards of safe practice in fork lift truck



Tea Room

Another year gone and instead of my usual boasting about the popularity of my fish pie, bakewell tart and cream sponge I have to say GOODBYE and THANK YOU.

Thank you for all the fun and friendship I have been given over the past years, thank you for the support and encouragement of Jean and the staff and best wishes for all your new and exciting endeavours.

Kath Bills—Tea Room Volunteer



Bookshop

It is nearly 3 years since I took charge of the book department and I am happy to report that sales have risen steadily year on year and latterly month on month.

We have established a reputation as a bookshop which treasures the old and unusual – a place where book lovers may hope to find some lost favourite as well as the latest paperback fiction.

At a time when the hardback book is in danger of disappearing, somewhere the real book needs to be valued and appreciated. Our out-of-print section has become one of the most popular with our regular customers and increasingly discovered by visitors to Ludlow.

I am deeply grateful to those who continue to bring us their surplus books and would particularly like to mention the local bookseller who, on reducing his stock, has supplied us with thousands of excellent books of all kinds.

There is also now a book section at our Weeping Cross Lane Reuse Centre as well as a book bank so when books finally reach the end of their lives they can be recycled, not dumped.

As one who was born and brought up in the antiquarian book trade I have great personal satisfaction in being able to continue using my skill and knowledge for the benefit of the Furniture Scheme and the cause of social justice.

Helen Muir, Volunteer

Reuse Centre

What a busy twelve months we have had at Weeping Cross Lane. This has meant that we were able to take on more staff and increase our volunteer team to cope with the rise of collections.



For the past six months we have built up a good relationship with a company in Manchester who produce furniture for major hotel and food chains. This has meant that we have been able to collect their used stock on a monthly basis. The leather sofas and chairs are very popular with customers. We now have a range of bed seconds which is proving to be a great success with our customers.

Tonnage of scrap wood, metal and computers recycled.

- Wood, 12,240.00kg
- Metals, 17,620.00 kg
- Computer and electrical components, 2,532.30 kg

Good News Stories

Richard started with the scheme in February 2011 on a six months future job funded placement. During the six months, Richard had proven himself to be a reliable, responsible and trustworthy team member. At the end of the six month placement we were able to employ him as a van driver.

Kevin started with the scheme in January on a four week placement after being unemployed for two years. During his four weeks with us he proved to be a very enthusiastic and hard working team member. When he finished his four week placement, Kevin continued as a reliable and trustworthy volunteer. In June 2011 we employed him.

Simon Magill—Reuse Centre Manager

Reviive CIC



It has been a very exciting year for Reviive which started trading in October 2010. Reviive is a joint venture between South Shropshire Furniture Scheme and Shropshire Housing Alliance and it aims to raise funds for both charities through the sale of re-usable furniture and electrical goods. Reviive is located on Battlefield Enterprise park close to the Household Recycling Centre. The idea behind Reviive is that it reaches a wider section of the general public so we can re-use even more furniture. Reviive has developed a more showroom feel through its layout and it has a mixture of shop seconds and donated furniture.

Everyone in SSFS, SHA and Reviive have worked very hard to make it a success and some of the highlights of this year include:

- Winner of Reuse Organisation of the year award
- Over 200 tons of unwanted furniture re-used
- Generated a surplus of over £10,000 to give back to SSFS and SHA
- Open 7 Days a week
- Employing 8 staff members
- A growing awareness of recycling and re-use with new stores planned in Chester and Telford

Reviive has proved that there is still a lot of re-useable furniture out there and that these resources can be harnessed to develop social enterprises that can have a hugely positive impact on the environment and peoples lives. Reviive aims to grow over the coming years into a national brand for re-use.

Julian Price—Chief Officer at SHA / Director at Reviive

SRC Social Enterprise Support

Our Big Lottery funded Sustaining Rural Communities project is now into its 3rd and final year. In the last 12 months we have continued to support and advise a large number of individuals and enterprises that are looking to develop their services. As a flagship social enterprise we have welcomed a number of visitors for a tour and consultation. It has been very rewarding to see the difference the project has made to social enterprise support in Shropshire. There has been a county wide push to enhance the quality and accessibility of infrastructure support and SSFS is a big part of this. **James Cooper, Development Manager**



HG Enabling Fund

The Enabling Fund is one of the rewarding aspects of SSFS's work. In 2010/11 we have distributed grants to several families and individuals. The recipients needed help to overcome certain barriers to improve their prospects for the future. This has included funding for driving lessons, training and work equipment.

James Cooper, Development Manager

Shropshire Community Recycling Ltd



During the last 12 months to August 2011 SCRL has become very active representing community waste and recycling organisations on the Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly. The SCRL representative has had a particular role in working with Shropshire Council, helping to shape how performance of the sector will be measured in the future.

We completed the awarding of grants to a wide range of organisations to support such activities as creation of giant recycling games, production of a booklet containing simple recycling ideas; an exciting project involving primary school children in recycling; and a series of outreach recycling workshops in the rural communities of Shropshire.

We are currently working with Shropshire Environment Alliance and the Low Carbon Communities Network to form the Green Shropshire Exchange and to co-ordinate activity aimed at limiting energy consumption and climate change.

SCRL produces a monthly informative newsletter and maintains a useful website

www.scrl.org.uk.

Rosemary Collie, SCRL Coordinator



Volunteers & Trainee Placements

Yet another fantastic year for SSFS, there have been so many developments, which you can read all about in the reports from my colleagues. I find it hard to believe that my 3 year post which has been funded by Lloyds TSB is nearly at an end.

The Volunteer Coordination role has developed again this year, with more of an emphasis on work based learning and mandatory work placements.

We have a huge unpaid workforce kindly donating time and effort to us on a regular basis. I want to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to every one of you, as without this dedicated team of volunteers who drive, collect, deliver, clean, serve customers, recycle, refurbish, bake, support others, tidy, sort, label, and assist generally SSFS would not be what it is today.

Volunteers and trainees come and go during the course of a year, this year there are 111 people on my database (24 more than last year!) who have donated hours to SSFS.

That's 111 people who have been part of or who still are members of the volunteer team, 111 people who have had the opportunity to work towards changing their lives, and the lives of other people.

Those people who work so hard have given 17,917 hours, which in kind is worth £143,340.00, staggering, incredible and so appreciated.

This year sadly we have said goodbye to some very long standing, dedicated volunteers who have worked tirelessly for SSFS over the years.

Life changing stories are frequently heard at SSFS whether we deliver furniture to a domestic violence survivor to enable them to build a new life and a future, or offer employment to long term unemployed people who come to us on placement, we know that the work the staff and volunteer team does, really contributes to making a huge difference in our community.

Serena Penn-Harvey—Volunteer Coordinator



Reuse Centre Team



The Reuse Centre



Carpentry Workshop
Volunteers



Roger McWilliam—Volunteer



Peter Humphries –
Volunteer



James Campbell—
Volunteer

Trainee Trends, New Projects & Malawi!



Changes such as the Welfare to Work Programmes, the Big Society approach and other external factors has meant adapting to meet the different needs of the referring partners and the diverse needs of the people we train whilst building our own capacity to do what we do so well. One impact of the changes has been we are now taking mandatory work placements as government policy has shifted towards working for benefit to break the welfare culture. This presents more challenges for the staff and volunteer team but already we are learning how to best tackle the issues, whilst making a difference to the lives of the most disadvantaged.

To stay abreast of this trend we now have to consolidate our training and resources to play our part in the multi agency approach to supporting those people around us within our own community. As a result we have successfully accessed funding to employ two new members of staff with a view to establishing an Employment Support Project in the year ahead.

I would also just like to take this opportunity to thank those of you that supported my recent trip to Malawi. During August I travelled by myself to work for two weeks as a volunteer with a Christian project in rural Malawi. One of the main aims of this project is to build up a dairy goat herd in order to supply fresh milk to otherwise malnourished HIV orphans. In Chiringa, where the project is based, it is estimated that 45% of the 10,000 population are HIV positive and many women die in childbirth, this means there are plenty of hungry infants to feed as even those mothers living with HIV are unable to breast feed. I was helping to prepare accommodation for some new pure bred milking goats and help to develop a water project that involves boreholes and piping water from a local mountain river. Although it was hot and the work sometimes very hard it was extremely rewarding and I wouldn't hesitate to return and volunteer there again. The money that you gave to support the work was spent on much needed tools which I bought for the project while I was there so, thank you to those that helped.

Mike Jones, Training and Development Officer

Renaissance Centre

It's been a year for big changes at the Renaissance Centre which have provoked both positive and negative emotions throughout the entire Scheme. The sad death of one of our volunteers and board members, Monica Green, left us all shocked after working so closely with her at Renaissance Centre. Her kindness and ability to reason always seemed to shine through every Thursday when she volunteered and her cheery nature and goodwill showed the best of what the Scheme had to offer.

Also Jane Price, our operations manager, moved on. With Jean, James, Elaine, Rosemary, Paul and Maria leaving us to go to Rockspring Community Centre this left the Renaissance Centre in a slight state of limbo. However, strong efforts from all staff, particularly the carpentry team and Serena Penn-Harvey our volunteer coordinator, made it possible for the Renaissance Centre to get back on its feet. As always we continue to receive high quality products including those that are lovingly refurbished by carpentry. The levels of customers have stayed steady, but there is a marked increase in the number of tourists who are arranging for vans to collect furniture for places out of our delivery zones.

Every week we look for new and exciting ways to improve what is already a fantastic shop and a lovely place to work. Many thanks to all of our current volunteers as well as those who have been with us for a long time, we couldn't do it without you!

Richard Carpenter, Renaissance Centre Coordinator



Mike Jones in Malawi





Marketing & Community Directory

In the latter part of last year I was out on the Bridgnorth library van promoting the Community Directory, SRC project and Reviive, talking to people and putting posters on village notice boards, which has now completed

most areas of Southern Shropshire.

I continue to keep the Furniture Scheme website up to date with news of what's going on as well as keeping the Community Directory website updated. In the last year I have added 127 new organisations onto the Community Directory and now have 766 records to maintain. Nine Care

Information leaflets are updated regularly plus the Furniture Scheme and Rockspring leaflets which are on display at Rockspring and Renaissance Centre, and taken out to events. 14 press releases were sent out to various papers and newsletters for the Furniture Scheme, SCRL and Reviive. The Volunteer News is produced quarterly with 150 printed. In June I produced and printed 70 copies of a Recycling Booklet for Rea Valley Environmental Network. I attended the Social Enterprise Road Show in the Darwin Shopping Centre in November, Shrewsbury Town Square to promote Reviive in April and the Housing Association Open Day in Shrewsbury in August.

Elaine Duggan, Community Directory and Marketing Officer



Out on the Library van



Social Enterprise day at Darwin Centre



Promoting reviive in Shrewsbury



reviiive

South Shropshire Furniture Scheme premises



Rocksring Community Centre



Carpentry Workshop



Renaissance Centre



Re-use Centre

Rockspring Community Centre

Open Day

The Rockspring Community Centre, now run by SSFS, held its official open day to the public on June 2nd. The idea

was to let the neighbourhood and other organisations know that we had taken over at the centre and would be giving it a new lease of life. Many events were laid on for the day including nail art, X box games, raffle and a lunch time BBQ. This event was opened by the mayor of Ludlow who said a few welcoming words and the day was a great success.

Summer Scheme

Rockspring ran a summer scheme through the holidays for local children aged 8-16, up to 80 children registered with an average of 25-30 kids attending each day. Many activities

were provided for the children such as **Leisure development**: sports, dodge ball, and street dance. **Grow, cook, share**: learning to cook with healthy food, then feeding all the kids. **Auntie Mabel's Kitchen**. **Table arts and crafts** **Appletree**: drama, put on a play last day of scheme.

Treasure hunts on gallows bank, famous Dj Josh Arrowsmith and much more. The scheme was so popular that we are running another one in the October half term which will be Halloween themed.

The general feedback since our takeover at Rockspring has been very positive; the centre is being used much more regularly and has become a hub of the community.

Maria Darcy, Centre Coordinator





Jim Hawkins Shropshire
Radio—on a bench at



Community Gardens



Rockspring Open Day



Rockspring Summer Scheme



Carpentry Workshop Volunteer

I came to the UK in early August this year to join my fiancé in Shropshire. My background has to do with architecture, archaeology, farm administration and some other activities. I was touring through Mexico, Belize and Guatemala before coming here which kept me quite busy for six years.

The visa I currently hold doesn't allow me to work but I needed something productive to do with my time and energy, something that could help me learn more about the local culture, improve my English, learn about British working standards and basically something to get me into everyday life here. So I thought volunteering was a very good option in addition to attending English lessons.

I went to the local Council Volunteering Office and did some research online. I found the Furniture Scheme webpage offering an interesting list of activities to volunteer in, including the opportunity to learn about a trade, about working standards and regulations, and a chance to volunteer in a different town. This really called my attention and seemed to suit my interests very well so I contacted them and made an appointment.

I have now been volunteering with the Furniture Scheme in the woodwork shop for nearly two months and since the first meeting, every day with them has been a very pleasant and enriching experience and a great opportunity for me to increase my work and life skills.

Armando Rodriguez-Ortega

Statistics



- 520 tonnes household items diverted from landfill
- 800 families receive low cost furniture delivered to their door
- 3,000 household provided with doorstep bulky waste collection
- 3,200 bulky waste items collected
- 5,200 items donated and collected (average 450 per month)
- 90 people accessed training opportunities H&S, customer service, mental health first aid
- 40 per year training in computer recycling, carpentry & recycling
- 80+ volunteers
- 8 people completing supervised unpaid work orders
- 5,000 accessing tea room
- 15,000 visiting Renaissance Centre
- 12,000 visiting Reuse Centre
- 2,500 using Rockspring Community Centre
- 40,000 visiting Reviive



Paul Francis, Statistics Officer

The Renaissance Centre

Open 9.30—5.00 Monday to Saturday

7/8 Tower Street, Ludlow

Shropshire SY8 1RL

01584 877751

Email: richard@furniturescheme.co.uk

Rockspring Community Centre

Open 9.00—5.00 Monday—Friday

Sandford Road, Ludlow

Shropshire SY8 1SX

01584 874922

Email: rockspring@furniturescheme.co.uk

SSFS Re-use Centre

Open 10.00—4.00 Tuesday—Friday, 9.00—1.00 Saturday

Weeping Cross Lane, Ludlow

Shropshire SY8 1JH

Email: simon@furniturescheme.co.uk

reviive

Open 10.00—5.00 Monday—Friday, 10.00—4.00 Saturday & Sunday

Unit 4, Knight's Park, Battlefield Enterprise Park,

Shrewsbury SY1 3AB

01743 588458

Email: sophie.black@reviive.co.uk

Website: www.reviive.co.uk

South Shropshire Furniture Scheme website: www.furniturescheme.co.uk

