



the Furniture
Scheme



Annual Report 2011/12

Registered Charity 1082068

Company 4041051

Statistics 1st September 2011—31st August 2012

Visits made to our shops	65,092
Qualifications awarded to trainees	115
Volunteers gaining work experience	108
Volunteers moving into employment	12
Tonnage of scrap recycled	57
Tonnage of furniture reused	192
People provided with a doorstep service	5,600
Household items donated and collected	5,757
Value of volunteer support	£78,630
Value of furniture received	£160,000
People supported at Rockspring centre	3,004
Attending Rockspring holiday scheme	123
Partners providing services from the Rockspring	38
Social enterprises supported through our SRC project	21

Board of Directors

Bill Jones (Chairman)
Bill Duley (Secretary)
Susan McCormack
Philip Reckless
Helen Corfield
Julian Price (Co-opted)
Clare Ratcliff
Robin Bennett (7 February 2012)
Steve Price (30 July 2012)

Jean Jarvis - Company Secretary



Rockspring's Great British Bake Off with judge, Will Holland



Chief Executive's Report

We've had another busy year at the furniture scheme, with more demand for our services than ever. Referrals from outside agencies for the £40 emergency delivery have seen a huge increase and the cost of this service to us has been more than £70,000 this year. This obviously has an impact on our cash flow and so finances have been tight for us too. There is a general movement in the sector of a requirement to do more for less. There are fewer small contracts around and a larger call on smaller funding pots, and so, despite the call on the sector to pick up the fall out from the public sector cuts, there is less money to support this work.

That said, we have undergone growth as an organisation. We continue to push forward on the management takeover of Craven Arms Community Centre, CASCA – Community, Art & Sports, Craven Arms and we've recently reopened the training suite and outbuildings at our Renaissance Centre in Tower Street, Ludlow as a flea market, proving very popular with new and old customer. In line with its business plan, Reviive Shrewsbury has shown a profit in year's one and two and we've opened Reviive London, to trial our upcycled furniture range. We plan to open Reviive Telford next year to complement the Chester Reviive. So fingers crossed that profitability continues – this supports our partner charity, Shropshire Housing Alliance and our own.

I'm pleased to report that Rockspring Community Centre continues to build its customer base, now has a willing team of brilliant volunteers, an array of agencies delivering services to local people and a full programme of a wide selection of events

throughout the year.

I was able to capitalise on the good fortune of becoming a finalist in the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year 2012. It was a great networking opportunity and some very beneficial partnerships are being nurtured for our community centres. Indeed partnerships seem to be the flavour of our times; we've a local example with Ludlow College joining forces with Herefordshire College of Technology and of course our SHA/Reviive partnership is proving to be a great success. I feel sure that collaboration is the way to save costs in the long run and that there will be opportunities for SSFS in this area next year

The demand for support from our Big Lottery funded, Sustaining Rural Communities project has stayed constant and since its inception we have worked with 77 organisations to boost their sustainable income and publicised the project to an audience of thousands!. We're working on ways to continue the momentum and to sustain the project beyond its funded period in a way that's manageable to our business. Our new website will help with this and we're making a DVD explaining and illustrating the whys and hows of what we do.

I know that we couldn't provide our extensive services without our volunteer workforce. My thanks, as always go to them and to the staff who work so hard for our cause. My management team have been brilliant this year, working with me to come up with the much needed solutions for doing a lot with a little and of course our board of directors who give generously of their expertise and time.

Jean Jarvis MBE

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General Manager's Report

When the UK entered recession early in 2009 we knew there would be tough times ahead for both our customers and ourselves as an organisation. The true impact of this economic downturn has perhaps only been fully realised in the last 12 months. The challenge of providing subsidised services, fulfilling our contracts and continuing our growth as a social enterprise is ongoing and will never be an easy task. We are always looking to improve our service provision, maximise the value of our resources and reach more people. In order to achieve our goals against a difficult backdrop we have focussed on becoming a robust and responsive organisation that will support our customers long into the future.

In 2011/12 we have upsized and professionalised our financial systems, health and safety and HR policies and procedures. This has strengthened us as an organisation, made us a better employer, positioned us to win more contracts and will enable us into the next stage of our development. Most importantly, we are now able to provide a better service to our customers.

As a result of our successful partnership with Shropshire Council and Veolia, WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) funded county wide publicity for the re-use services provided by SSFS, SHA and Reviive Shrewsbury. This led to an increase in both the volume and quality of furniture donations and has ensured that we always remain well stocked across our retail sites. The quality of furniture that goes out on referral is better than ever and we continue to get great feedback from our customers.

We maintained our positive sales figures of 2010/11 but given the rising cost of essential resources including utilities, fuel and rent we must look to boost our retail income in the coming year. The opening of our new Renaissance Flea Market is indicative of our determination to maximise our sustainable income and uphold our core aims of alleviating poverty and eliminating discrimination.

James Cooper



HR, Training & Development Manager's Report

The length and breadth of the skills in the staff and volunteer team never cease to amaze me – particularly at this time of year when the annual report is due and I actually look at what has been achieved over the past year! To do that I look back even further at the previous year's achievements and then when I think about what the year ahead may bring ...well you will have to wait till this time next year for that!

108 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

55 volunteers have gained 115 OCN Qualifications in Personal Learning Programme, Work Experience, Customer Service and Health and Safety Awareness. All our units can now be accredited at OCN's Level 1 Award in Progression and are targeted to be most appropriate for the majority of our volunteers who are seeking employment and therefore the focus is on skills that will be useful in the workplace as well as building confidence. Skills covered include communication in the work place, personal presentation, and working safely

17 staff and volunteers have completed the two day course in Mental Health First Aid or the half day mental health awareness course MHFA Lite and are better informed and equipped to support others

1 of the staff team is receiving training in Level 5 Leadership and Management

3 members of staff have achieved CIEH Level 2 Food Safety in Catering certificate

2 members of staff trained to deliver MHFA Lite a half day mental health awareness course

1 member of staff achieved Level 4 Advanced Diploma in Counselling Theory

1 member of staff achieved their Diploma in Bench Joinery

5 staff achieved Level 2 Emergency First Aid at Work

4 of the staff team have attended Volunteer Management workshops

1 staff member trained in City and Guilds 2377 in Inspection & Testing of Electrical Equipment

And as if that wasn't enough reason to celebrate...

Many of our volunteers have received job seeking and employment related support, attended the work club project at Rockspring, accessed the IT drop in there for online job search or been referred to other further education provision such as English and Maths

And what it's all about...

12 volunteers have moved into employment

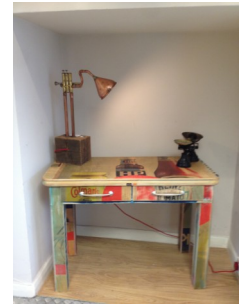
6 young people from Ludlow School have been able to stay in mainstream education and have their aspirations and horizons widened through the NEETS Prevention project. It was commented by the LEA's Educational Psychologist that the Furniture Scheme had "a significant impact" on the confidence and self esteem of those involved

A FANTASTIC ACHIEVEMENT – WELL DESESRVED PRAISE - THANK YOU TO YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Gill Pitt

Reviive

In line with Reviive's business plan a profit was posted in its first year of operation and the targeted dividend was paid to the two co-owners, Shropshire Housing Alliance and ourselves. At the end of year two the profit level increased and an enhanced contribution was made to both charities. As part of the business plan we intend to expand next year to Chester and Telford. In September this year we opened Reviive London to trial our fabulous range of upcycled furniture.



I have been a strong supporter of South Shropshire Furniture Scheme since I first came across it 10 years ago. It is now well established as one of the largest social enterprise entities in Shropshire doing invaluable work in training young people and helping those in need.

Philip Dunne MP

We'd like to highlight the work of the Furniture Scheme - rooted in furniture reuse but much wider impact on social welfare.

St Laurence's Ludlow

It still surprises and excites me to think that two small Shropshire Charities own and run one of the most exciting Social Enterprises in the Country.

James Wood

**Chair Shropshire Housing Alliance
Director Reviive**

FUNKY FURNITURE - INTO 2012. In December 2011 the students started work on the latest "Funky" project turning some tired old pieces of bedroom furniture into something new.

A showcase for the power of community links, the project brings clients South Shropshire Furniture Scheme together with Ludlow College Department of Art and Design through catalyst Ludlow 21, with technical help on furniture making provided by Skillbuilders CIC.

The brief is about up-cycling - turning waste into higher value products than the original - and has been enthusiastically taken on by the student practitioners. Designs range from the stunning art piece "Nightmare" inspired by the dark film work of Tim Burton through the African flavour of technically challenging "Intersections" to "Unwanted" which turns a very sad, cheap set of drawers into a homely 3D textile sampler - potentially a great community or small business opportunity.

Phil Sams of Ludlow 21 said, "I love it. The department and students rise to the challenge of a professional brief in an unusual medium. Great for the client of course, and it really shows the willingness of the College to provide students with excellent learning opportunities - while having fun as well."

The spark for working with Ludlow College came 3 years ago out of up-cycling/ sustainability themes at London College of Fashion, where Phil is a Visiting Professor. "I thought - let's try these things in Ludlow too. The College grasped the chance, and when Jean came along with her Funky Furniture ideas, the whole thing took off".



Rockspring Community Centre

Activities 2011/12



Bake off with celebrity judge Will Holland **F**irework display on gallows bank **F**estive art and crafts **C**ooking for Christmas **B**asic flower arranging classes **D**ay trip to RAF Cosford **W**alking for health/ Stiperstones & High Vinnalls **H**oliday schemes for 8-14 year olds including day out to Ludlow castle, Medieval living and archery, bike rides, music sessions, art and craft activities, sporting events, circus skills, badge and keyring making, face painting and body art, drama. **C**omputer skills and IT assistance, help with word processing, emails, file management **F**ree Zumba classes to encourage health and fitness **B**udgeting on a shoestring **A**rt classes **C**ommunity Choir n Delve into local history days **P**oetry reading **B**ig lunch and **J**ubilee street party **C**ertificates in Manual handling, health and safety, food safety in catering, mental health first aid. **C**ookery classes **L**earn to make fly fishing ties **J**unior discos 5-10 year olds **E**nergy advice day **W**ork club **A**romatherapy **W**eekly drop in day with multi agency team on hand for advice on housing, benefits, getting back into work, debt advice, credit union. **Y**outh club with SSYF **H**omework club with SSYF

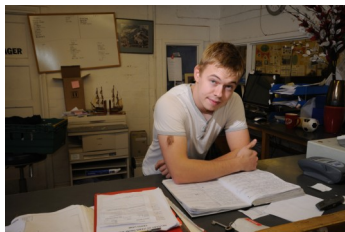
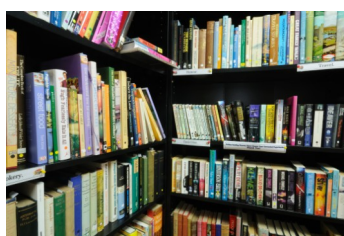
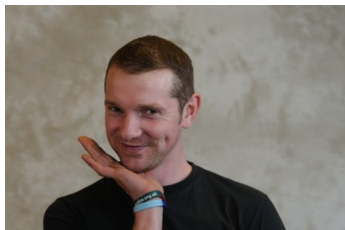
The Furniture Scheme CEO Jean Jarvis, and dedicated team, through a lot of hard work have transformed Rockspring centre into a lively, brilliant Community hub of activity.

Councillor Tracey Huffer

The Rockspring Community Centre is like a second home to me.

Sarah Lello
Volunteer





This is what we do...

We offer a breadth of activities and experiences to a wide range of beneficiaries, each of which has their own needs and challenges.

Our activities fall into 5 broad areas:

Training and Work experience

Reuse and recycling of furniture and other waste streams

Retail

Development of Social Enterprise – both within and externally to SSFS

Community Engagement and support

Training and work experience

We are able to offer formal accredited training, work placements and support, and more informal volunteering opportunities for our client group. All the units we offer are from the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) Progression Award allowing trainees and volunteers to build up credits that are 'portable'. By way of example, training opportunities include accredited qualifications in Personal Learning Programme, Work Experience, Customer Service, Health and Safety Awareness, Emergency First Aid at Work and certificates in Manual Handling; Mental Health First Aid; IT skills; CIEH Risk Assessment; Practical Use of Fire Equipment. Where appropriate we will facilitate access to external training such as Waste Management; Literacy and Numeracy; Leadership and Management.

These training opportunities take place across all our sites and within all of our activities.

We continue to develop our training provision and are currently adding

more vocational training; establishing more progression routes for beneficiaries by developing community services/social enterprises such as an outside catering company, handyman scheme and working with employers to ensure that we train people in the appropriate skills to match employment opportunities.

Reuse and recycling

We either collect donations of furniture and other recyclables (electrical, computers, metal, wood, fabric) directly from households or they are brought to our sites. We reuse and recycle in a number of ways:

- Direct sales through our Reuse Centre in Ludlow
- Refurbish in our carpentry workshop and sell from our High Street Renaissance Centre retail outlet in Ludlow
- Dismantle and recycle as components or scrap. Computers are stripped into their component parts; sofas without fire labels are stripped and the textiles recycled; electrical items which fail PAT test are dismantled and the components recycled
- Upcycle through our 'Funky Furniture' project developed in conjunction with Ludlow college, Skill Builders CIC and Ludlow 21. We provide the furniture and the students provide the creativity to upcycle the items into very stylish and original works of art. This project is now in its third year. We have built on this idea and sell a range of upcycled furniture through Reviives Shrewsbury and London.

As an organisation we are continually seeking new and better ways of doing things. As a result of our pioneering spirit, in partnership with SHA...

we subcontract to Veolia ES Shropshire , a private sector waste contractor for Shropshire, to collect the Shropshire Bulky Waste from households. This gives us the opportunity to re-use and recycle as many of the materials and items of furniture as possible. We also operate a common database with the other furniture schemes which has allowed for a more streamlined process for the customer. In addition we have established a relationship with a company which produces furniture for major hotel and café chains. We now collect their used stock and recycle this through our shops.

Retail

The Renaissance centre and all it now offers has an established reputation in Ludlow. Our reputation for second hand and rare books continues to grow steadily. The shop provides 'reborn' items for the household in a gallery and domestic setting and offers employment and volunteering opportunities combined with training.

In 2011 we developed new initiatives including a new Community Interest Company, Reviive CIC, our fabulous eco-chic shop in Shrewsbury. This is a joint venture company and has been set up in partnership with SHA and as a result of an innovative and interesting collaboration with Veolia.

We continue to grow our reuse centre, which gives the public access to purchase a wide range of reused furniture at low cost.

Development of Social Enterprise

Using our flagship social enterprise to illustrate, inform and inspire others we are at the forefront of social enterprise development in Shropshire. We offer a specialist consultancy service alongside training provision and showcasing the furniture scheme as a successful model of social

enterprise.

Community Engagement and support

Over a year ago we took over the management of the Rockspring Community Centre in Ludlow. We are shortly due to do the same with Craven Arms Community Centre. During our first year at Rockspring it has once again become a vibrant and active hub which provides activities and services for the community. We aim to repeat this success at Craven Arms. We will continue to develop our community engagement work across both centres, working with partners to deliver services and training in response to the needs of the local communities.

Our aim is to turn Craven Arms Community Centre into:

“a lively centre with a range of activities which will ‘hook’ people in and be a place which appeals to all the people of Craven Arms. It will deliver a range of training courses; outreach activity; support the development of social enterprise and link to other local food initiatives to become identified with all things ‘food’ and health. Computers will be available for all to use”.

The centre has excellent facilities including a sports hall, access to the playing fields, children’s nursery, training kitchen, large conference hall and smaller meeting rooms, IT suite.

Grants

Over the year we have given out a range of small grants to enable local people to take steps to improve their future prospects but are lacking the funds to do so. Also, supported by Big Lottery, we give out seed corn grants to new and emerging social enterprises.

As a social enterprise not only do we provide social benefits, but we work in a social way. We couldn't provide the wide range of services and activities without the assistance of our funders and partners. **These are...**

Big Lottery Mind

The Millichope Foundation

Lloyds TSB Shropshire Council

South Shropshire Housing Association

Ludlow Relief in Need **LJC**

PB Dumbell P & B Barritt

HG Charitable Trust

Veolia ES Shropshire Mrs Neate

...and the public who generously donate their furniture

some of our partners...

Grow Cook Share CAB

Just Credit Union

County Training

South Shropshire Youth Forum

The Baptist Church

The Gallows Bank Trust

Ludlow College Skill Builders

Ludlow 21 Sure Start

West Mercia Police



We don't only recycle furniture, but also...

- Books
- Shoes
- Clothes/textiles
- CDs
- Records
- Metal
- Wood
- Ink cartridges
- Computer equipment
- Hinges, handles, screws and fittings
- We also carry out battery disposal

All items can be dropped at any of our sites.



Bob Russell...

...retires at the end of this year. Bob has been with us for 12 years, helping us set up our very first carpentry workshop and prototyping many products—he's the original 101 items from a

pallet man! He came up with the 'Renaissance' name and worked with me on the concept of a charity shop that doesn't look like a charity shop—radical six years ago, they're all doing it now! He even roped his wife, Jan, in to help with displaying the furniture, which she did with great style and originality. We shared concerns about keeping stock levels up, this in actual fact has never been a problem and the quality of donations stepped up a notch, when the public saw what we were selling. His restoration expertise has been invaluable to us over the years and he has taught our carpentry workshop supervisor, Stefan Laird, pretty much everything he knows. Literally hundreds of trainees and volunteers have passed through the workshop over the years, many have kept in touch. When he first started working with us I know that he wanted to 'give something back' and to leave a legacy by passing on his hard earned skills. I'm sure I can speak for everyone when I say that he has certainly achieved what he set out to do and we'd like to wish Bob all the very best in the future and hope that he enjoys his well-earned rest.

Jean Jarvis

Furniture Scheme Staff

Jean Jarvis MBE – CEO

Rosemary Collie—Social Enterprise Advisor

James Cooper—General Manager

Elaine Duggan—Community Directory & Marketing

Maria Darcy—Rockspring Co-ordinator & PA to CEO

Paul Francis—Statistics Officer

Christine Perkins—Community Engagement Worker

Lynda Hoad—Finance Officer

Sam Hine—**Communities Can**

Richard Rix—Health & Safety (**Ducks in a Row**)

Rob Gardner—Caretaker

Gill Pitt—HR Training & Development Manager

Mike Jones—Organisational Development Manager

Chris Christie—Work Placement Officer

Richard Carpenter—Renaissance Centre Co-ordinator

Matt Duley—Renaissance Centre Co-ordinator

Bob Russell—Workshop Manager

Stefan Laird—Workshop Supervisor

Graham Lambourn—Workshop Support and Development Worker

Tracy Magill—Woodwork Tutor

Simon Magill—Re-use Centre Manager

Chris Breakwell—Re-use Officer

Mike Cornhill—Warehouse Link

John Jones—Customer Team Leader

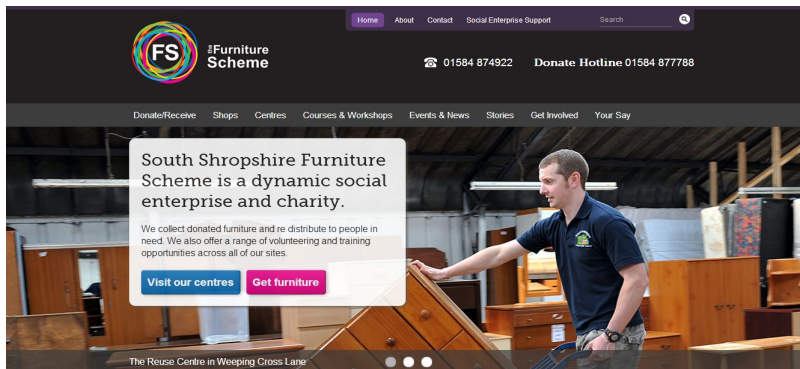
Julie Magill—Administration Assistant

Tim Stevens—Transport Team Leader

Richard Handley—Van Driver

Kevin Jones—Van Driver

Antony Tyrrell—Warehouse Assistant



Our new website funded by Big Lottery

www.furniturescheme.co.uk

Donate/Receive

Donate Furniture

Get Furniture

How does it work?

Donate Furniture

Use the form below to tell us about the unwanted furniture you'd like to donate. If you can bring it to us that would be great, as you'll help us out and save us money, but we are able to offer a pick-up service.

There are 3 things to remember before you get started:

<p>1 We pick-up Mon-Thurs 9am-4pm</p> <p>MON TO THURS</p> <p><small>* We will contact you to confirm your donation</small></p>	<p>2 Your item must be in good condition</p>  	<p>3 This must be on your sofa*</p>  <p><small>* If you're donating a sofa</small></p>
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Next Steps

- Contact us
- Find out about courses
- Send us your feedback

Donate furniture

Receive furniture

Share this page



The Renaissance Centre
Open 9.30—5.00 Monday to Saturday
7/8 Tower Street, Ludlow
Shropshire SY8 1RL
01584 877751

Reuse Centre
Open 10.00—4.00 Monday to Saturday
Weeping Cross Lane, Ludlow
Shropshire SY8 1JH
01584 877788

Rockspring Community Centre
open 9-5 Monday to Friday,
by arrangement evenings and weekends
Sandford Road , Ludlow,
Shropshire, SY8 1SX
01584 874922

Reviive Shrewsbury
Open 7 days a week
Unit 4, Knight's Park, Battlefield Enterprise Park,
Shrewsbury SY1 3AB
01743 588458

www.furniturescheme.co.uk
www.reviive.co.uk

