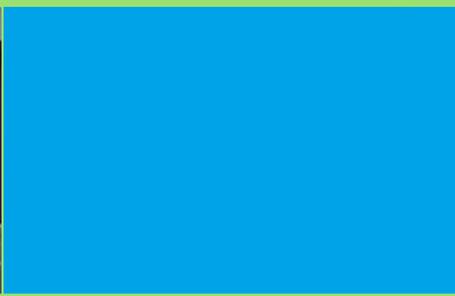
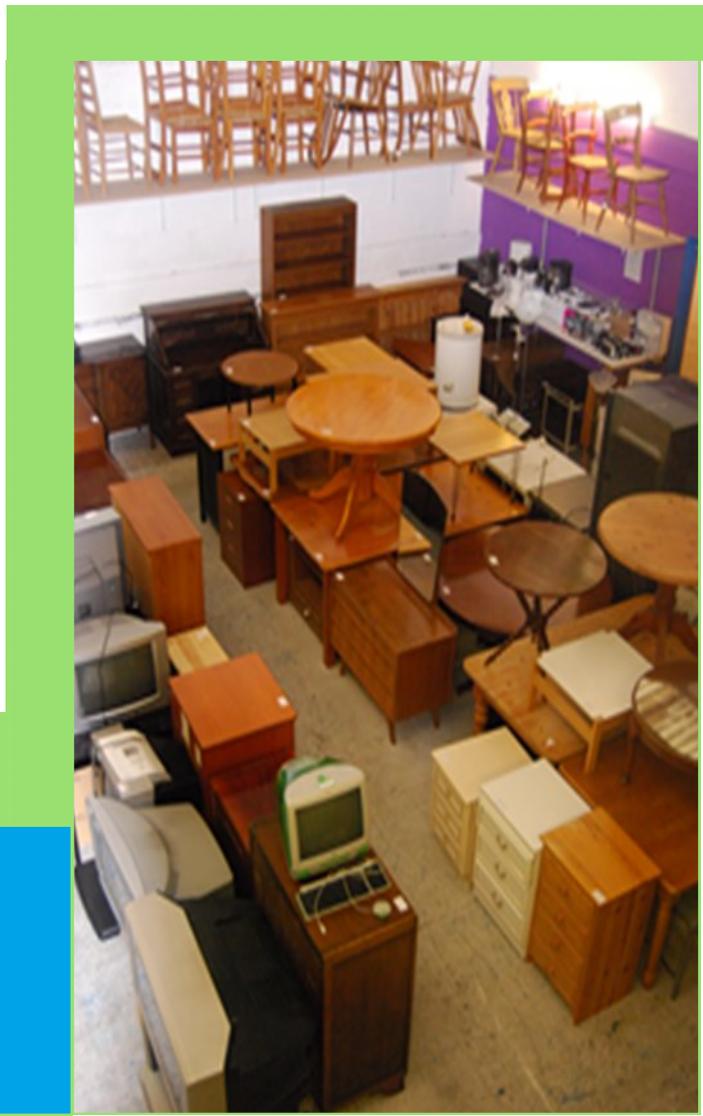




**Helping people
on low income
furnish their
homes**



History of Cambridge Re-Use

Cambridge Re-Use was formed in 1988 as Cambridge SOFA by Richard Darlington - who worked in Cambridge City Council's Housing Department - and Peter Wilson a colleague in Social Services. As a Housing Officer Richard had seen a lot of re-useable furniture from 'void' Council properties going to landfill while Peter knew of many families who would benefit from the unwanted furniture. So from the start it was decided to supply affordable second-hand furniture and other household goods exclusively to local people on benefits or low incomes, and this policy has continued unchanged to the present day.

In the early years the project was run by volunteers from St John's Church Hall in Blinco Grove. Items for sale were collected from generous donors and displayed in the Hall on just one day each week. However, in 1992 the City Council offered premises in Gwydir Street at a very low rent which allowed activities to expand. Cambridge SOFA acquired its own van to collect and deliver furniture, Beni Benstead became the full-time manager and the project became a registered charity.

Despite some temporary set-backs – including the theft of the charity's van – the charity went from strength to strength. By 2002 Cambridge SOFA was employing two full-time staff, and fifteen volunteers were helping the charity every week. In addition, the number of registered low income customers had increased to over 600. The charity was clearly in need of larger premises and in June that year the move to The Paddocks took place.

By 2011 the charity had over 1000 customers. A brand new furniture van was acquired and the charity re-launched itself under its current name of 'Cambridge Re-Use' with a party attended by the Mayor of Cambridge Sheila Stuart. In 2013 the charity celebrates 25 years of continuous service to the people of Cambridge and the local area



“ The charity has been invaluable over the years, going way back to Gwydir Street”



Cambridge Re-Use is a registered charity carrying forward the good work of Cambridge Sofa which was established in 1988.

With a team of dedicated volunteers we serve people and families struggling financially on low incomes.

We offer

- A service that is dedicated solely to helping people on low incomes or benefits to buy furniture, electrical goods and household items that they may not otherwise be able to afford.
- Volunteering opportunities that enable people to come together and work as a team and be part of a community that spans all ages, lifestyles and life experiences.
- An opportunity for the general public to donate items of furniture and electrical goods that they no longer need, thereby avoiding the use of landfill and helping the environment.

Our aim is to continue to grow, enabling more low-income households to make their house a home.



"The amazing staff and helpful attitudes have helped me so much! Made my life worth living again; after such a terrible time. I cannot thank them enough"

Serving Our Customers

In our store we are able to offer our customers a wide range of good quality furniture and electrical goods, bric a brac, linen and other household items, the prices of goods are kept low and affordable and we pride ourselves on the warm welcoming atmosphere.



32% of our customers live on income support
22% on ESA
15% on JSA
13% on Pension Credit
79% on housing benefit
75% on council tax benefit



66% of our customers live in Cambridge City
24% live in South Cambridge



71% of our customers are single
61% are female
36% are male
23% are single parents

64% are in Council Housing
21% are in Housing Association housing
9% are in Private Tenancy
4% are House Owners
2% live in other accommodation

“ Without places like Cambridge Re-Use I could not have furnished our house. My water tank burst and destroyed so much I couldn't afford insurance.”

Serving Our Customers

In our customer survey we asked "how has shopping with us improved your life?"

94% said it made them feel relaxed,

92% said it made their life less stressful,

90% said they felt less anxious and worried through shopping at Cambridge Re-Use,

92% said it made them feel happier.



Over 1,000 people are registered with us as customers. We conduct over 2,500 sales each year and our van crew carry out over 600 deliveries. Our customers range from people working on a low income to students, pensioners and those on benefits.



"Saves us having to get stressed and worried about needing money for things for the children. Things that usually cost an extreme amount of money new."

Volunteering at Cambridge Re-Use

We would not be able to run the charity and offer our service without our hard working and dedicated volunteers. They give us over 270 hours per week which totals a staggering figure of 13,000 hours per year of time, dedication and energy.

With a 40% rise in volunteer numbers since 2008 we now have a team of between 35 and 40 volunteers through out the year.

An analysis of our volunteer reviews showed:

55% rate their experience as very good

41% rate their experience as good



We asked our volunteers what they had gained from volunteering with us. Responses included:

Confidence in my abilities continues to grow.

My self esteem, confidence, new friends.

Being able to do something productive, more socially confident also.

I feel I have gained new friends and a massive confidence boost, as well as a few nice bargains.



" It is brilliant for people on low income, it has helped me a great deal to improve mine and my children's lives."

Volunteering at Cambridge Re-Use

Our team spans ages and different reasons for volunteering – professionals, retired people, people with mental health issues, learning disabilities, single mums, and people looking to get back into employment. We offer the opportunity for individuals from a wide variety of lifestyles and with a range of life experiences to come together and work as a team to deliver our service to people struggling on a low income.

When asked what do you like about volunteering with us

34% Said the companionship

24% Helping people in need

24% Doing interesting work

20% Said being in a relaxed atmosphere



Volunteer quotes:

"It doesn't feel like a workplace, it's got a family closeness feel. It's calm and everyone is sociable and friendly."

"I like that everyone is friendly and it is like a big family (without the rows!)"

"They say life begins at 40! My life began when I came to volunteer at Re-Use."

" My mother who is 86 years finds this a really good shopping experience; she loves the staff and friendly helpful service as well as the patience that the staff have for her. "

Donors

Cambridge Re-Use provides a positive environmental friendly alternative for unwanted usable furniture. We cannot offer our customers the excellent range of good quality furniture without the generosity of the general public in donating their furniture, electrical goods and household items to us.



We have over 1,100 enquiries regarding donations each year and our volunteer van crew carry out over 800 collections, covering a 20 mile radius of Cambridge city center. Over 1,300 electrical goods are donated each year; most pass the necessary safety test and are resold.

170 tones of unwanted furniture and domestic appliances are re-used every year. These goods would otherwise be sent to landfill, so we are reducing waste and helping the environment while addressing the need for these items within our community.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our donors who continue to support us, those in need, the local community and the environment by enabling us to re-use their furniture.



“ Kind friendly staff always helpful, always have time for us. They are great.”

Working in Partnership

We have strong working partnerships with many varied agencies and charities who refer clients to us. These range from mental health teams, housing associations, agencies working with addiction and others working with people in crisis and struggling financially. The agencies include;

Circle Support, Metropolitan, English Churches Housing, South Cambridgeshire District Council, John Huntingdon Charity, Central Aid, Young Parent Project, YMCA, Women's Aid, Children's Centres in various localities, Women's Resource Centre .



“Cambridge Re-Use really helped to stretch the budget for one of our young Mums recently when she moved into a new property with her young daughter. She was able to find a bed with a mattress in good condition and paint to redecorate her new home. We have always found staff at Cambridge Re-Use really helpful especially when organizing delivery of big items. Thanks Cambridge Re-Use, from the Parents at Young Parent Project!”

“South Cambridgeshire District Council have been working with Cambridge Re-Use since 2009, to date 60 of our tenants have been helped by this successful partnership. By providing a small repayable grant to our tenants we have been able to help our tenants move into their new homes with the basic essentials they need. Tenants have really appreciated this help and are amazed at the quality and variety that Cambridge Re-Use supply.”



“We love Cambridge Reuse. Many of our families have lost their belongings as they had to flee their homes following domestic abuse. Having a source of affordable, quality furniture is vital in helping them to set up their new home and start again. We are grateful to this charity for the support and kindness they show our families. Thank you”. (Women's Aid)

“All the staff at John Huntingdon Charity would like to take the opportunity to thank Cambridge Re-Use for their support to our client groups”

Operational Manager's Report

We continue to see the generosity of the general public in donating their furniture and household goods. Through this we are able to carry on serving people struggling financially and offer them a relaxing place to shop where there is choice, and affordable goods.

The service we provide would not be possible without our dedicated team of volunteers giving their time each week we greatly appreciate and thank each and every one of them. I would like to thank Jake our store supervisor and Mark our van supervisor for all their hard work and commitment they have shown to the charity. This year we became Hastings Insurance Company charity partner and their support has been invaluable to us.

In the present economic climate the need for our service will continue to grow and we hope to continue and help people struggling financially for many years to come.



Chairman's Report

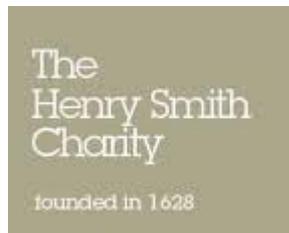
Throughout the life of our charity from 1988 to the present, the aims have remained the same; to help households on low incomes to furnish their homes at affordable prices; to avoid serviceable goods being consigned to landfill; and to provide volunteering opportunities to many, including those with learning difficulties and mental or physical health problems.

Reaching our anniversary in 2013, we all feel a sense of pride in what we do, but we also recognize the contributions of all the people who have helped to establish and grow the organization over the years. Particularly, we realize that we have been fortunate to have had hundreds of volunteers supporting the work of the trustees and paid staff. In addition, we owe a great debt to those who have helped us with funding – councils, grant-making trusts, and generous individuals.

May Cambridge Re-Use continue to flourish for many years to come!

Acknowledgements

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We would also like to thank the following for their support:

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Malcolm Mitchell, Bookkeeper

Andrew Noyes, Surveyor

Irena Spence, Solicitor

Special thanks go to Jake Mathewson, our Store Supervisor and Mark Good our Van Supervisor.

Our dedicated team of volunteers: Alan, Alan, Albert, Catherine, Charles, Christopher, Colin, Cyril, Daniel, Dave, Dominika, Elly, Emilio, Gemma, Gerald, Graham, Janet, Judy, Lee, Lesley, Liza, Louise, Luis, Malcombe, Micheal, Natalie, Neeraja, Nicholas, Nya, Richard, Roger, Rupert, Salewa, Samm, Sinead, Vjaceslavs, Wendy.

Trustees: Valerie Cutting, Paul Ewans, Desmond Fitzgerald, Deborah Neal, Alan Oswald, Janet Stein, James Williams and Sue Myring.



Unit H, The Paddocks

347 Cherry Hinton Rd, Cambridge

CB1 8DH

01223 576535

www.cambridgereuse.org.uk

info@cambridgereuse.org.uk

