

Highlights

Community Reuse Shop (CRS) provides collection, preparation, retail and delivery of reusable goods to members of the community.

CRS has seen a 50% increase in income since March 2021.

Supplied a full range of services and activities throughout pandemic.

Clothing sales from its 'Wee' Re:loved clothing shop, including supplying free school uniforms and interview clothing.

The Active Travel hub, Rhins Active, has diverted nearly 250 bicycles from landfill, to be sold affordably.

Doubled the number of staff in the shop



Furniture Project (Stranraer) Limited

The Furniture Project is a well-established and successful sustainable social enterprise that delivers a series of projects across the rural communities of Wigtownshire, supporting the alleviation of poverty locally and providing employment and skill development for members of the community with barriers to employment, while assisting with health and wellbeing via placements provided to people suffering from health issues or social isolation.

The **Community Reuse Shop (CRS)**, for members of the community, is provided under a contract to Dumfries & Galloway Council over a 20-year period; opening in 2017, it is the first of its kind in Scotland and delivered from the shop constructed on the site of Dumfries & Galloway Councils Zero Waste Park in Stranraer. Its USP is affordable and accessible homeware.

Other projects the Furniture Project operate, as a result of the impact of this shop, including:

- **Re:Loved Local**, selling quality reused clothing & homeware at Revolve certified standard for second hand shops in Scotland, tackling fast fashion, and working towards environmental sustainability and reducing the effects of climate change
- **Fed-Up Community Café**, to help reduce poverty, social isolation and loneliness, by offering a place for people to visit, socialise and access free hot meals, whilst learning how to cook nutritional meals on a budget
- **Rhins Active**, supporting the people of Wigtownshire travelling actively by:
 - Refurbishing unwanted bicycles
 - Providing parts and repairs to bicycle
 - Providing instruction and training for bicycling
 - Providing led rides and walks with qualified instructors
 - Providing hire/free loan and tester bicycles
 - Offering bike-ability training to schools
 - Providing bike maintenance courses to local primary schools
- **Stranraer Community Events Group** (formerly Stranraer Scottish Week) providing a series of community events in the summer, Christmas and Easter

Between April 2021 and December 2021 services were restricted, but even so, the team managed to carry out significant positive action:

- 1,420 collections of reusable goods
- 940 deliveries of goods
- 103,609 items sold to customers
- diverted 231 tons of waste from landfill, for reuse
- diverted 19 tons of waste from landfill for recycling
- Carbon Savings: 175,839 kg CO₂e (equivalent in volume to 31 double decker buses)
- 40 volunteers have provided 8,950 hours of volunteering time in 2021 (equivalent to 5 full time staff)
- Over Christmas 2021 the team provided 103 Christmas hampers, consisting of food and new toys, to assist local families who were identified by Social Services

The **Fed-Up Community Café** has supplied over 42,000 hot meals, with just over 80% of those being delivered by the Community Reuse Shop volunteers (employees) on a voluntary basis. In addition, the team have produced and delivered 443 food parcels and 45 Christmas hampers.

The Re:Loved clothing and homeware shop is focused on making affordable clothing available locally. Prices are often £1 per item for adults and 50p for kids. It also provides free school uniforms in partnership with Tesco and the Council's Anti-Poverty team, and free interview clothing in partnership with Loreburn Housing Association - to ensure pupils and interviewees are fully prepared and on an equal footing with their peers.

Active Travel Hub **Rhins Active** was set up during the first lockdown and has demonstrated so much success that Furniture Project have developed it as an integrated project. So far in this year of operation, it has:

- 246 bikes diverted from landfill and sold affordably. This equates to 2.8 metric tons of waste diverted from landfill or recycling
- ten bikes gifted to key workers and good causes
- carried out 27 free repairs for key workers or good causes and loaned six bikes for free to key workers
- two e-bikes available to trial, free of charge, by members of the community to establish if users would like to buy one themselves

Stranraer Community Events Group provided Christmas events, such as a Big Christmas party for children and their families, where they were able to meet Santa, face painted, cake making, a disco and mascots. In the summer the group provide 20+ activities over an one week period, including car treasure hunt, football tournament, alternative lowland games, day in the park and many many more.

The projects that have been developed since the Furniture Project took off have now provided services across the community in Wigtownshire. They have worked in a number of areas:

- Children and young people – toys, hot meals, free school uniforms, field trips
- Communities – all welcome, for example through donations or receiving services
- Economy – increase from four to eight employees, plus 19 others funded through other projects, and are now a sustainable green social enterprise
- Education – team committed to learning through vocational courses
- Environment – 231 tonnes of waste diverted from landfill each year
- Fair work – committed to being a living wage employer
- Health – benefits to physical and mental health through employment and volunteering
- Poverty - providing supported employment currently to ten people through the community Jobs Scotland Scheme, five through Kickstart and no one left behind programmes. We supply homeware at affordable prices, along with low cost & free clothing and free food to people living in poverty to assist to alleviate the effects of poverty.