

Cheshire Furniture Reuse Forum (CFRF) is made up of local projects and organizations that collect quality reusable furniture, household appliances and other items and donate or sell it at low cost to people in need. They employ staff, create work placements and train volunteers. The Forum is supported by Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester Local Authorities and works in partnership with many different organisations.

A number of the members run, or are involved in, bike refurbishment and reuse projects and will collect both working and broken bikes; using them as a means of increasing skills, employability, independence, health and well-being.

Examples differ, but as these case studies show, the individual Furniture Projects work with their local community and partners to find an approach that benefits individuals and families in their area.



### Wesley Community Furniture

Wesley Community Furniture provides household items to people in need. Established in 1993, the Wesley collects donations from people throughout Manchester and North Cheshire, repairs and renovates where necessary then provides (for a small fee or on an agency referral basis) to members in the local community and those in need.

Wesley Community Furniture has been running a volunteer led bike refurbishment project since 2012. Wesley Community Furniture collect for free anything bike related that the public has in their shed/garage/back yard or hall. In the past they have received bikes from the University and the police. They also work in partnership with the local 'Edinburgh Cycles' shop who supply them with discarded bikes and parts.

Volunteers are trained and in return they provide their time in the workshop.



Currently two volunteer-mechanics run a workshop that provides the shops with bicycles for both adults and children.

They spruce-up donated bicycles and also put together machines from donated parts.

The training and experience has frequently led to long term employment in other organisations.

Supplying over 100 bikes a year to young and old, Wesley aims to get people on two wheels as cheaply as they can, increasing the freedom of the local community.

## Christian Concern Crewe - CC Cycles

Christian Concern began in the 1980's when three local couples started collecting furniture to give it to those they knew were in need of it. Now diverting up to 200 tonnes of furniture from landfill a year, Christian Concern gives items away four days a week on referrals and offers to public sale on a Friday.

CC-Cycles began in 2013. In less than 12 months the project has been able to refurbish more than 250 cycles. But it is more than a cycle reuse shop. Most of the bikes sold are used by local people to get to work.

The workshop is a skills development hub for young and old alike, and has recently been expanded. It is fully equipped and you will often see retired Bentley engineers teaching young adults traditional mechanical skills. More importantly these young people gain positive attitudes towards work by working alongside experienced engineers.

With the average price of a cycle from CC-Cycles less than a weekly bus pass and the working hours of many low waged not aligning with public transport timetables, these bikes are an essential part of improving the employability of the community.



## Blacon Furniture Project, Changing Lives in Cheshire, Reviive and Chester Giants

Blacon Furniture Project is furniture reuse project anchored in the Blacon community. Changing Lives in Cheshire (CLIC) collects items from the southern part of Cheshire West, Reviive Chester collects items from the northern part of Cheshire West. The projects all operate pricing structures that enable those in need to purchase at reduced rates and their work allows them to employ staff, create work placements and train volunteers. CLIC provides furniture packages via the Council's emergency welfare scheme.

Chester Giants offers training and work experience to vulnerable adults or anyone that needs a helping hand. This is coupled with tailored advice for every volunteer, benefiting their network and community.

Chester Giant's 'On Yer Bike' project involves as many different people as possible in refurbishing and building bikes, developing skills and confidence, and to provide safe FREE transport to local communities.



Bikes in various states of repair are provided by various organisations including the local council, the police & local furniture reuse projects.

Volunteers and trainees refurbish the bikes or dismantle ones beyond economic repair and use the parts to rebuild a brand new one.

Once trainees have completed the course they build their own bike to take away and receive a certificate stating their achievement helping in their search for employment.

Bikes are also sold through Big Bills Bikes in Ellesmere Port or via the furniture reuse projects with plans to provide to housing associations and other community projects.