



RECYCLING FIRST

Furniture and White Goods Re - Use Charity

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2024—MARCH 2025

Unit 12A
Macmerry Ind Est
Macmerry
EH33 1RD

Email: recyclingfirstel@gmail.com

Website: www.recyclingfirstel.org

Contact Number: 01875 615797

Registered SCIO Number : SCO45286

Recycling First

Recycling First is a East Lothian-based non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting individuals in need, particularly those who are unemployed, on low incomes, or homeless. We work to reduce poverty, promote environmental sustainability, and provide pathways to employment and skills development.

Our Services

- ◆ To help meet the needs of low income households lacking basic furniture and effects.
- ◆ Accept and collect furniture donations from the general public in East Lothian.
- ◆ Store, repair as necessary, display, and sell surplus household furniture from our Warehouse.
- ◆ Offer volunteering opportunities, training, and practical work experience.

History & Status

- ◆ Founded in 1996 under the umbrella of East Lothian Voluntary Organisations Network (ELVON).
- ◆ Rebranded to Recycling First in 2005
- ◆ Registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) in 2014.

Our Objectives

- ◆ Prevention and relief of poverty.
- ◆ Provide essential furniture and household appliances to those in need, especially the homeless or low-income families.
- ◆ Protection and preservation of the environment, encourage reuse and recycling of donated furniture and household goods.
- ◆ Relief of employment, support the public through training employment, work experience, and volunteering opportunities.
- ◆ Environmental protection and stewardship, promoting recycling and reuse of furniture and household items to benefit the environment.

Community Payback

Recycling First has a strong partnership with the probation service, focusing on helping individuals through community payback programs. They emphasize seeing each participant's potential rather than their past mistakes. This year, 21 individuals completed a total of 1,880 community payback hours with the organisation, engaging in meaningful work that aligns with their skills.

Some photos of previous volunteers and old van from the early days of Recycling First.



CHAIRMANS REPORT - 2024-25

Recycling First has continued, as in previous years, to make a meaningful difference for many families throughout East Lothian. Through the project, households in need have received essential goods such as bedding, crockery, pots and pans, all made possible thanks to generous donations from the public who support our charity.

The organisation continues to receive strong support from partner agencies and organisations, who, through mutual agreement, refer families in need to Recycling First. We remain delighted and grateful for their ongoing willingness to collaborate.

Our work would not be possible without the dedication of our project manager, Tom Logan. Tom has devoted 30 years to Recycling First, starting as a part-time van assistant in 1996 and ultimately building the project into what it is today. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I extend our sincere thanks for his tireless commitment.

Special thanks also go to Tam, our Driver Supervisor, for his hard work in completing daily uplifts and deliveries throughout East Lothian and beyond, and to the Community Payback team for their steadfast support.

I wish to express deep appreciation for our dedicated volunteers: Bill Buckley, Bill Davidson, Barbra McDonald, Sharon Gardner, and George. The support and dedication of our staff and volunteers underpin every aspect of our work. We are fortunate that our core staff have remained stable and committed over the years,

Mr D Dickson
Chairman
Recycling First

PROJECT MANAGERS REPORT - 2024-25

As I mark my thirtieth year with Recycling First/ELVON and approach the conclusion of another year as Project Manager, I find it important to pause and reflect on what has truly been a remarkable journey. Though challenges and obstacles have come our way, the past year at Recycling First has been nothing short of outstanding.

The enduring spirit and determination within the Project team never fail to impress me. Despite ongoing economic pressures, evolving regulations, and the rising costs that touch every aspect of our work, the team's unwavering commitment continues to shine through. At the start of my previous report, I emphasised the profound experience and depth within our team—a sentiment I echo wholeheartedly today. Their contributions have ensured another successful year, marked by our continued ability to deliver vital services to our community, in line with the charity's mission.

This year, I am especially grateful to all who donate furniture. Our partnership with these generous donors has enabled Recycling First to thrive and excel, even when times are tough. To everyone involved in this collaboration, please know that your support is deeply appreciated and crucial to our ongoing success.

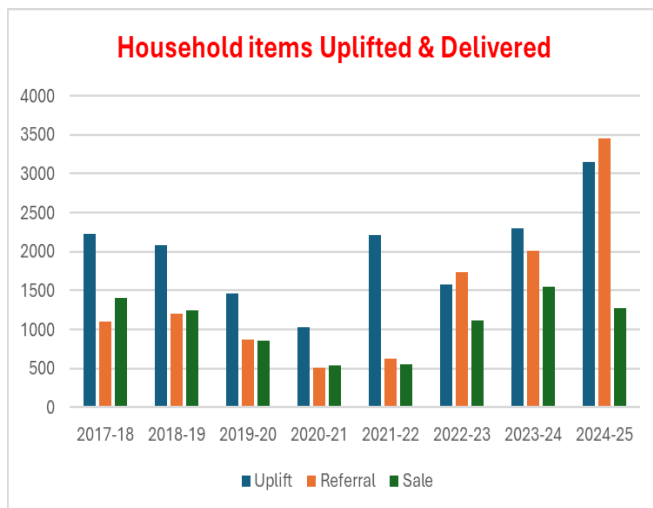
No annual reflection would be complete without recognising our incredible volunteers. Year after year, their dedication to the charity's aims remains steadfast. Volunteers are truly the lifeline of the organisation, consistently rising to every challenge and ensuring we remain resilient. My heartfelt thanks go to each volunteer for their unwavering commitment, with the hope that this spirit continues well into the future.

The Board of Trustees has also played an essential role, making important decisions to benefit the Project. With half the board composed of volunteers from Recycling First, their shared efforts and leadership deserve special thanks. Equally, I wish to recognise our outstanding employee whose daily dedication is making a tangible impact for those we serve.

As we close out a challenging yet rewarding year, it is my sincere hope that the Project will continue to thrive, regardless of the hurdles ahead. May the flow of innovative ideas for improving the Project never cease. To all involved, best wishes for the year to come.

TWK Logan
Project Manager
Recycling First

2024 - 2025 Key numbers and activity



We Supported

474

households who needed help

6 Volunteers contributed an estimated

2.031 hours to support Recycling First

Tonnage Donations

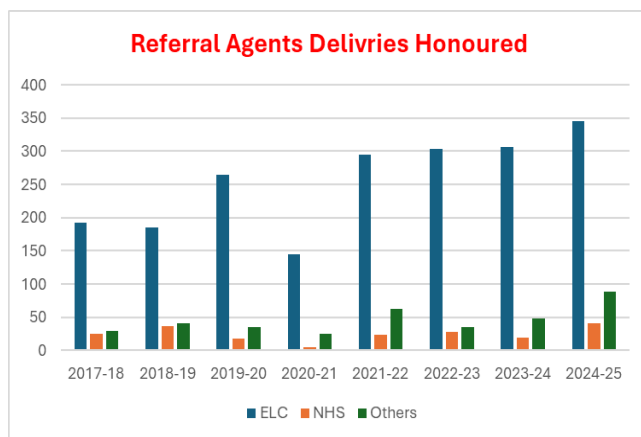
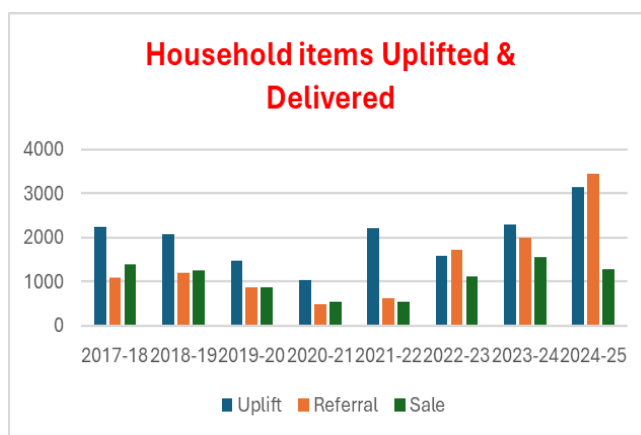
78 tonnes of furniture donated. This makes a total of **670 tonnes** donated in the last **9** years

Tonnage Sales

34 tonnes of furniture sold, Just under **312 tonnes** of furniture sold in the last **9** years.

Tonnage Referrals

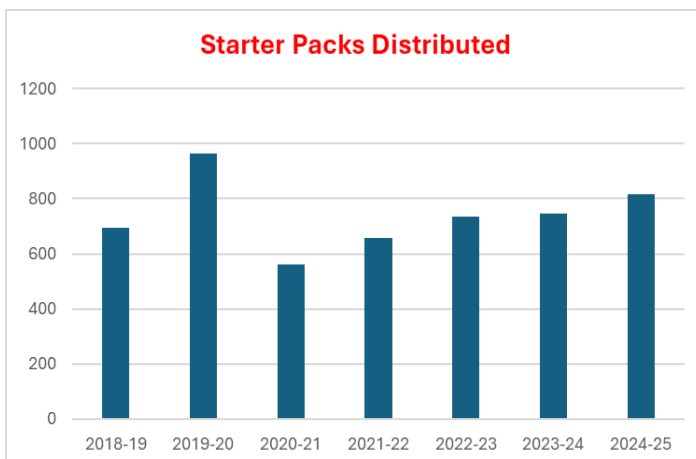
83 tonnes of furniture handed out on referrals, making a total of over **361 tonnes** reused over **9** years.



2024- 2025 Key numbers and activity

	2023 - 2024	2024 - 2025	%
Households Participated	1.120 Households participated	1.185 Households participated	Up 5%
Items Donated	2.299 items donated	2.851 items donated	Up 29.9%
Tonnage Donated	75 tons items donated	78 tons items donated	Up 4%
Referrals Honoured	420 Referrals honoured	435 Referrals honoured	Up 3.5%
Items Re - Used	3.300 items re-used	3.460 items re-used	Up 4.8%
Tonnage Re - Used	82 tons were re-used	83.25 tons were re-used	Up 3%

Starter Packs



815 Starter Packs were distributed to **185** families. This makes a total of **5.179** packs supporting **1.148** families over the last **7** years .



Recycling First : A year of Volunteering-Driven Success

Recycling First has had another successful year, thanks to the dedication of our amazing volunteers. The vast majority of our work is carried out by volunteers, and without their commitment we simply could not operate. We run structured training placements for volunteers in the office, warehouse, workshop and on the vans. For many, volunteering has become a crucial stepping stone toward paid employment.



Volunteers come to us from a variety of sources, including training programmes, agencies and local community members who want to make a difference. We are proud to share that the majority of our work placements have transitioned into paid employment after leaving the project, as participants gain valuable skills and confidence. We are also delighted to have retained some placements in paid roles.



In Memory: Tommy Keenan

We were saddened to share that Tommy, our electrician for 4 years, passed away after a long illness. Tommy always had a ready smile and a helpful word for colleagues

What People say about Recycling First

Thank you for the collection today it was all carried out efficiently and professionally it is a certainly a service that I will recommend

**Lovely
Lot
You lot**

I chose to volunteer at Recycling First for its stand on helping the local disadvantaged group"

**Great Quality, Great
Service!!!
Thoroughly
Recommended**

"Very well appreciated, it helps us buy things that we can't afford in the high street stores. Thank you to Recycling First

We cannot thank you enough for the cooker and washing machine, please accept this small token as a big Thank You!

**Wide verity of choices
always enjoy a nose!
Thank You**

Great wee place always enjoy having a look around, we usually come across something that we are looking for our house, the guys are always happy to help.

Super great service, Driver and team very friendly and polite, will use the charity again.

**Great Place, Great
Service.
Thank you for all
you do**

What a great place amazing customer service and Quality products at very reasonable prices

Amazing place loads of great furniture to choose from and lovely professional help. Fast delivery, affordable prices, and reliable service overall. To be honest I can't fault the place or people working there from the moment we walked into the place to delivery. Definitely recommend to everyone and definitely will be back.

And finally... get involved!

There are many ways to support recycling First:



Spread the word: Follow us, share our work and tell your friends. The more people who know about us, the more impact we can have.



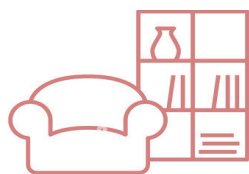
Volunteer with us: Join our growing team and make a difference in your community. Whether it's helping in store, office or joining our van teams, there's a role for you.



Donate your pre-loved furniture: Your unwanted items can help someone furnish their home affordably. We offer free local collection across the East Lothian.



Partner with us: We believe in doing more together. If you're a local organisation, school, or business, we'd love to explore how we can collaborate to support our communities.



Shop with us: Everyone is welcome in our Warehouse! Pop into our Sales Room and browse quality and affordable furniture - and say hello while you're there.

Outlook for 2025-26:

- ◆ Recycling First's primary objective is to improve customer service within their warehouse operations, focusing on supplying essential furniture to local authorities and providers of furnished tenancies.
- ◆ Recycling First intends to broaden its customer base by identifying and pursuing opportunities in the social housing sector, aiming to support a wider range of individuals and families in need.
- ◆ A further goal is to increase sales within Recycling First's warehouse outlet, thereby making more pre-loved surplus goods available to the general public.
- ◆ Ongoing efforts will be made to deepen partnerships with referral agencies, and to raise the volume of donations distributed to those facing challenges.
- ◆ Together, these initiatives demonstrate Recycling First's dedication to sustainability, community welfare, and ensuring access to essential resources for vulnerable groups.

Our Achievements 2024 - 2025

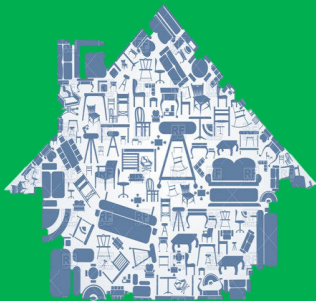
We collected
3.148
Items from local residents



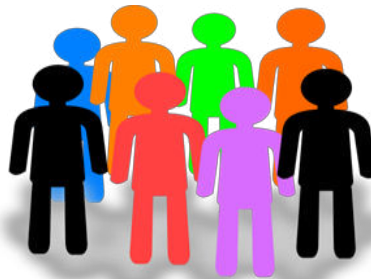
3.460
Items were selected for
Re - Use



First Choice for Second Hand



Over
83 Tons
of electrical & Household
items Diverted from
Landfill



7.741 People used our
Charity Warehouse to
access affordable
Household Items



The Value of
Furniture provided to
those Referred to us for
help was
£65.846

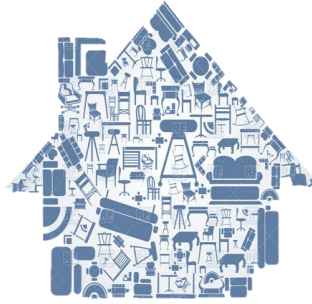


We received
730 requests for help
Benefitting **474** families

1.185 Uplifts were
carried out.



We supplied **815**
Starter Packs
to **185** families



RECYCLING FIRST

Recycling First is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation - SC045286

Registered Address:

Unit 12a Macmerry Ind Est, Macmerry EH33 1RD

Phone: 01875 615797. Email: recyclingfirstel@gmail.com Website: www.recyclingfirstel.org

Chairman

Mr David Dickson

Trustees serving in 2024 - 25

William Buckley

William Davidson

Paula Edmond

Candace Higgins

Barbara McDonald

Pamela McKinlay

Independent Examiner of Accounts:

Stuart Glass of Glass Accountancy Ltd

Recycling First gratefully acknowledges the support of:

