



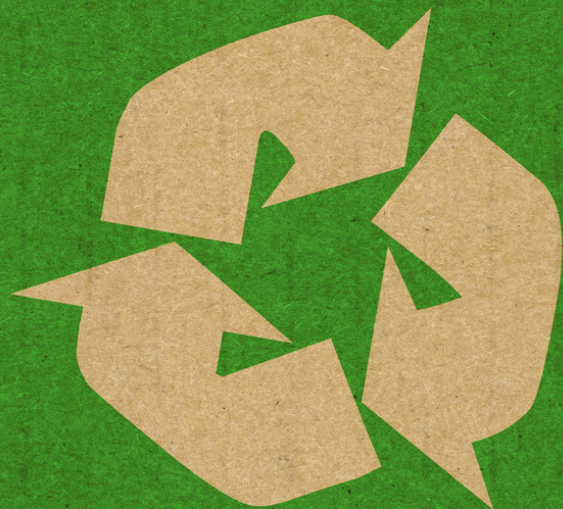
Judith Leary-Joyce

BOOKLET

When waste becomes treasure

Ideas for re-homing, recycling & reusing

REDUCE
REUSE
RECYCLE



CHAPTER 1

WHY BOTHER TO RE-HOME?

As we become more climate aware and concerned about the sheer volume and number of landfill sites, we're beginning to look for ways of re-homing, re-cycling and re-using.

Dumping and chucking stuff away has to be the final option only after every outlet has been explored. So this booklet is intended to give you a head start on possible options to explore in your area.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

You can use this booklet in two ways:

- To find places that will take the items you no longer want
- To find places that could provide you with the objects you need, either because you don't have the money to spend right now or you prefer to re-home for the environment.

WHEN WASTE BECOMES TREASURE

I have used many of these options for both reasons and I can tell you it works really well. So give it a go and join the community of re-homers.

DOES EVERYONE CLEAR OUT AS OFTEN AS WE DO?

I don't know whether it's my age or the fact that we keep working on our house, but we seem to have a regular pile of stuff that needs a new home.

We did another shift around recently, emptying our old garden office before it went to a new location, so I was back on the search for new homes.

Before too long I turned to Instagram, asking other people to share their good ideas to add to the list.

The response was brilliant— with plenty of ideas for places to take or post about unwanted items, as well as suggestions for the wine rack I focused on in the reel. What brilliant followers I have!

So this booklet is a summary of the ideas from myself and my followers.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING MY YEARS OF CLEARING OUT:

1. Binning it must be the last resort

You may have finished with something, but it will suit someone else perfectly. You just need to find them.

2. It might be a source of income

Someone may be willing to pay for your surplus so it's always

worth a try. If you can't find a buyer, then better to give it away to someone who needs it than send it to landfill.

3. Set your parameters – be clear from the outset

Be clear if you can deliver or not, about the size of the item and whether it needs a car or van, whether you can help carry stuff to their vehicle. Always be honest about the condition - it's a waste of time if people refuse at the door. And if you are consistently reliable, this will be noted on the websites.

4. Keep your options open until you see the whites of their eyes

Most people are very respectful in this re-purposing game, some are not. So never turn away other interested parties until you hand over the item. Instead, explain that someone is due to pick up the item and you'll let them know what happens. This way you won't miss out if your first choice of taker doesn't turn up.

People who use these websites are asked to give feedback on those they buy or take from. If you're rude, unreliable or disrespectful you can be barred. But as long as people can see you have a good rating, they'll feel more trusting and be fine about waiting.

5. Limit the number of offerings at one time. Once interest begins it can be pretty intense for a time. I've had up to ten people offering at once which means keeping track of emails and requests. So take your time. No more than three things at one time and you'll be fine.

6. Never second guess what will be of interest. We thought we knew what would be of interest but were proven wrong so many times. So try everything you have and see what happens. Like the lovely, twice used Samsonite suiter that

eventually went to the charity shop, while the old tv wall bracket we were sure no one would want could have sold five times.

7. Last resort options - skip hire, scrap metal person, recycling centre

Take the time to find out what will happen if you do have to dump. Some skip companies will recycle so check that out when you book a skip. The dump often has a recycling depot where they'll melt down the scrap metal, mulch wood etc. I have the scrap metal man on speed dial and he reliably turns up when he's says he will.

MINDSET CHANGE

This is all about a change in mindset. It's so tempting to see what we no longer want as 'rubbish', assuming it's only worthy of the dump. In fact it could be just what someone else is looking for - which is a much better solution than landfill on so many levels. Re-using reduces pollution but is also better use of all the emissions involved in the items processing and manufacture,

Increasingly these days - I'm pleased to say - we are encouraged to limit consumption, buy second hand, re-purpose and repair. It's time to think differently and look first for who might want what you have.

WE SOLD OR HANDED ON:

Just to demonstrate what is possible we have sold or handed on:

- our kitchen and all appliances – even the wok hob
- our engineered wood floor

WHY BOTHER TO RE-HOME?

- the old kitchen door
- a computer screen
- a sound system
- tap hoses
- white ornamental stones from the garden
- an unused loo seat
- a double skin radiator
- a leather sofa
- the old kettle
- off cuts of plasterboard
- Floorboards
- Large builders merchants bags
- spare tiles.....

The list goes on - these are just the ones I remember.

IT'S A FASCINATING OCCUPATION

I've had a great time and met some lovely people through re-homing. I'm still in touch with one or two who came to pick up stuff from me.

I remember the fabulous woman who took some of my business books ...

The delightful woman with her son who picked up the yards of red fabric brought back from India and never used.....

The student who took the ergonomic keyboard that didn't work with my new computer.

WHEN WASTE BECOMES TREASURE

It's been a delight. It has also been frustrating at time when people don't turn up, but I can count those events on one hand which is pretty good going.

So let me encourage you - look for options. Don't just throw - always think first and you never know what will happen.

CHAPTER 2

CHARITIES

The first place most of us think of when we have stuff to get rid of is the charity shop. But since Covid they have become more careful and they often turn donations away after a certain time of day.

It's quite useful - makes us think more widely about where our unwanted items might add more value.

The more you know about your home town, the more chance you know where to look. And if you don't know, this is a great incentive to go exploring. You never know, you might find something that really matters to you that you'd like to support!

HOMELESS CHARITIES

There are a number of organisations¹ in our hometown helping homeless people, in particular when someone is about to be given the key to their first home. At this point they have nothing, so it's a really positive way to hand on some of the stuff you no longer want or need. I've been particularly pleased when I've been able to hand on kitchen kit, bedding, rugs, lamps..... to help someone build their first home. So

find the best options near you and make contact. In my experience you will always be welcomed.

SAFE HOMES FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

It sadly happens that women and children have to get away from a violent situation, leaving everything behind. So this is a good place to donate quality home items that have plenty of wear left in them. It will be the same process as for the homeless charities – go online and look for your local organisation; make contact and find out what they need and where you can drop off your offerings. Expect to meet up in a car park or local shopping centre. You will never be given the address of the shelter for obvious reasons.

If you can't find a local website, then look on Facebook – they may well have their own page and someone else will certainly have asked the same question not so long ago.

EMMAUS

Emmaus² is a nationwide charity that offers 'a home, meaningful work and a sense of belonging.' They sell furniture that's been renovated by residents of their communities and they will collect.

They will only take furniture that just needs a bit of work to make it usable, so be prepared that they may turn you down if your offering is in too bad a state. But they are worth trying and they do great work.



UNUSUAL CHARITIES

Once you start looking you may well find some really interesting charities that have been set up to address a specific need. While looking for options I found the following:

THE COWSHED, READING

For anyone within reach of Reading UK go take a look.

The Cowshed³ has a lovely ethos. Not only do they distribute donations, they work hard to ensure they are in good condition (cleaned up by the volunteers themselves if necessary) and displayed / handed on as if new. This is a real boost to the dignity of those on the receiving end, so to be applauded.

It's also a very good lesson for all us in the privileged position of being able to donate. Giving items that are in good, clean condition increases the value of the gift and helps boost the receiver .

HAPPY HANDBAGS

Happy Handbags⁴ is another interesting example: donations of handbags are filled with essential items for women in need who suddenly find themselves without the basics. What a brilliant idea!

And who doesn't have handbags tucked away that still have life in them? I can never bear to throw them out, since most are still in reasonable shape, just a bit battered after much love. A good polish makes them look so much better, then they can go off for a new life where they are needed most.


GREEN DOORS

I don't think this is a charity, but it is certainly about sustainability and would be a good place to look into if you are dismantling a home before renovation work. I've seen so many doors dumped onto skips when they are still in good condition.

Green doors⁵ takes used doors, clean them up and sell at much reduced prices.

CHAPTER 3

ONLINE OUTLETS

 online selling and donating is easy in terms of posting, but it does require you to stay on top of responses and to find a way to hand over the object in question.

BASICS

The trick is to give yourself as little work as possible so you're not tempted to give up and dump the item in question. So always give as much information at the outset as possible.

Most sites also have some sort of rating system which tells people how easy you are to deal with. You really don't want to be seen as exaggerating, being difficult or a poor communicator so get yourself in the right frame of mind before you begin.

Make your life easier by:

- Always including a photograph of your item - this is what catches attention
- If relevant, include measurements at the outset

- Be clear about the condition - if the item is well used, say so.
- Be clear that people need to collect and that you won't deliver. (Unless you're willing to do that of course)
- Keep track and respond quickly when people contact you.

FREEGLE

I love Freegle!¹ If you're happy to give something away then this is your place. You can't charge for anything – hence their strapline “like online dating for stuff”.

You can sign up with minimum fuss and make your first offering. Always include a picture so people can see if it's really what they want. Give as much detail as you can at the outset - it was measurements that got me, took me a while to remember to put them on. But the more detail you include at the outset, the fewer questions you need to answer before you find a taker.

We moved many things through Freegle. Sometimes, I tried to sell first, sometimes just gave away from the outset. We handed on everything from leftover pieces of tile from the new bathroom to an ice cream maker to a wonderful wool lined, silk curtain that had kept draughts at bay for us. The tiles became place settings for a kettle, cuppa, kitchen utensils, while the curtain was to be made into a bedspread. I met some lovely people, had interesting chats and enjoyed the feeling of just handing something over to a smiling face.

FACEBOOK MARKETPLACE

This works in a similar way to Freegle, but you can ask for payment. You do need to have a Facebook account, but once you have that you're on your way. You will find the link – Marketplace² - on the left hand side of the main page – just click on that and you can have a mooch through and see how it works. When you're ready, click on 'create new listing' in the left hand column and post your item. Include a picture - to do this, click on 'add photos' and upload from there.

In my experience, most people will try to haggle or just offer less. It's up to you if you want to accept that. Often we did. On the few occasions when the interchange felt unpleasant, I said no and gave it away to someone who really wanted it.

It is also worth being aware that some people will want your stuff so they can sell it on. Again, it's up to you whether you're OK with that. The main clue, we decided, was that they were able to pick something up very quickly in their own van. There were moments when we had a lot of stuff that we needed out of the way quickly so we were happy with that. Other times, when it was something that had been important to us, I preferred to see it go to someone who wanted it for themselves.

FACEBOOK PAGES

Most areas will have specific pages³ put together by local people for reuse, recycle, rehoming of items. Generally these are limited to giving away rather than charging. If our local pages are anything to go by, you have to be quick because some things will go within hours if not minutes!

EBAY

Ebay⁴ is a very popular way of selling things. I never tried it myself, but I know a lot of people who have used it successfully. It does offer the opportunity to sell items of value and also to set up a bidding process that can increase the amount you get paid.

You have to have an account and be an approved ebay seller. It's important to remember that ebay covers the whole country. Unless you stipulate 'collection only' you will be responsible for transport/delivery of the item so make sure you include that cost in your asking price.

CHAPTER 4

APPS

We can't have a booklet about re-homing without including Apps. It's a convenient and easy way to link up with people in your area and share ideas, needs and offers.

OLIO APP

Olio¹ covers a range of options. You can find surplus food from supermarkets as well as items that people no longer want. 'Share more, waste less' is their byline.

This is definitely worth a look when you have a lot of items to find a home for.

LOCAL WHATSAPP GROUPS

Loads of neighbourhood WhatsApp groups were set up during Covid and many are still going strong. So if you are part of such a group, try putting up a post and offering an item that might be perfect for different age groups or people at different life stages. If anyone likes what you have to offer, it's

WHEN WASTE BECOMES TREASURE

the easiest option – it can be picked up from your doorstep or handed over alongside a cup of coffee.

This is a resource that is very active in my own street. It's amazing how much can be found within such a close neighbourhood. So that's very often a first port of call.

CHAPTER 5

LOCAL OPTIONS

In your local area there will be a number of organisations that need support, so ask around and have an explore to see what you can find.

SCHOOLS

Books, craft items, toys are often of real value to schools. If you have your own kids or know someone with kids, you can easily find out what's needed.

I've also been able to provide some interesting raffle prizes – that rather nice wine carafe that's never been used for example.

THE SCRAP METAL MAN

If you have items made from metal then look for your local scrap metal person. They may do a regular round – although that's no longer as common as it used to be.

I have the number in my phone and I've always found them very responsive. Usually within a few hours, he is on the


doorstep. He's always very clear about what he can and cannot take, but will have ideas for what to do with the stuff that isn't of use to him. So get that number in your phone!

SHOP AT THE TIP (RECYCLE CENTRE)

Increasingly, Local Authorities are establishing a shop at the Tip¹. This means that if you have something you no longer need, but it's in good condition it can often be sold on through the shop and some much needed money goes into your local council. Frequent items near me are bicycles, toys, tools – the list goes on.

CHAPTER 6

REPAIR, RE-USE, ADOPT

ver the years we've become used to throwing out something that's broken and going out to buy a new one. We've been talking about 'built in obsolescence' for a long time and it really does seem to have come to fruition.

Just think about the replacements you've bought over the years without first considering repair. So many items that could have been made good again have gone to landfill.

TIME TO REPAIR

Finally we are waking up to the fact that we can repair goods that no longer work, saving money and landfill.

I attended our local repair fair a while ago with my hairdryer, which would only work on the slow, cool speed. I'd grown used to it and short hair meant it wasn't a problem. When my daughter borrowed it to dry her long hair she reckoned it would be quicker if I just blew on her!

So off I went to our local Repair Fair. The machine was opened up, a mountain of dust and fluff removed and it worked perfectly well on both fast and slow settings.

The same is true of so many items. You can attempt the repair yourself, take it to a repair shop if you have one nearby or look out for a local Repair Fair where volunteers who have the knack of making good can take a look for you.

HOW TO FIND WHAT YOU NEED

There are numerous ways of reusing or adopting other people hand on's. All you need to find them are the right search words, so I'm going to make suggestions here that I hope will get you started.

SUSTAINABILITY GROUPS

These are your first port of call. Put 'sustainable' into the search engine followed by the name of your home town or nearest big town and see what comes up.

Another option is 'Eco Hub' 'Eco Group' 'Eco House'

These are all groups of local enthusiasts and volunteers who are committed to saving our planet, so they are thinking of every way possible to reduce carbon footprint.

It's very possible that they'll run events that have a repair element that you can attend for a small charge or donation.

They may also run market stalls with information about different ways of greening your life, plus list of local providers to help you.

If they don't have exactly what you're looking for, they may well know where you can find it, so asking a question or going along to a meeting would be a good next step.

REPAIR FAIRS

Repair fairs are becoming more popular. They will cover electrical goods but maybe also clothes repairs - darning, sewing on buttons, changing hems etc

There may also be the opportunity to learn how to do some of these repairs for yourselves.

Sustainable group websites may also have video input on repairs. Of course you can always go to Youtube - you'll find instructions for most things there.

CYCLE REPAIR

There are a number of cycle repair options to look for. Community centres may have times when cycling experts are available to help with your problems.

Sometimes the local train station has provision for a small repair business to do the work while you're away for the day.

Cycle groups will also have plenty of information about what is available locally.

FASHION

Looking out for second hand and repairing/repurposing clothes are both ways of reducing our contribution to landfill.

Charity shops are interesting places to look for your next fashion fix. Get to know the different shops in your area. It's interesting how shops start to get known for different offerings. I guess we see what's in the shop and think of that when we have something to do donate.

If you don't have many charity shops in your area, then look

at the surrounding towns. You can get some real bargains if a town is prosperous.

Nearly New outlets are growing in popularity. One of my favourites is Nearly New Cashmere¹. As ever you need to pop in periodically (shop or online) to see what's available. Following your favourite outlet on social media can be a good idea - they may well do live sessions of new items newly in.

A WORD FOR SLOW FASHION

This is not strictly to do with recycling, but it is very relevant to the use of landfill. So much of fashion is about cheap clothes that are only good for a few wears. The fact that the items are so cheap is also a good indicator of how much workers have been paid to make them.

So looking up slow fashion/ethical fashion is a way of reducing your carbon footprint. It may not be cheap but it is more likely to be items that will last so cost you less in the long run.

This includes the challenges often seen on social media that invite us to cut down on fashion purchases. Agreeing to only buy four items in the year is one I decided to have a go at. It didn't include second hand purchases - at least that's how I decided to do it - so it got me into the habit of dropping into charity shops as I walked by to see what was around. I made a few good purchases and a few duds, but I could easily take those back.

Start by putting the phrase 'slow fashion' into the search engine and see what you can find.

You can often find summaries of ethical sites, like this example². The merchandise isn't cheap but it will give you some pointers towards more ethical businesses

NB: whenever a site or brand claims to be ethical, it's always worth a bit of digging yourself to see what you can find. Being Green is increasingly a sales opportunity so be watchful for greenwashing as you explore.

CHAPTER 7

LET ME KNOW WHAT I'VE MISSED

This is an living document.

If you have any ideas that I've missed, please let me know and I'll add them in.

You can contact with me on:

Email: judithlj43@gmail.com

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ecorenovationhome/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Ecorenovationhome/>

NOTES

2. CHARITIES

1. <https://www.actionforhomeless.co.uk>
2. <https://emmaus.org.uk/about-us/>
3. <http://www.thecowshed.org/how-and-what-to-donate/>
4. <https://www.thegentletouch.co.uk/happy-handbag-scheme/>
5. <https://greendoors.co.uk/shop/back-doors/page/4/>

3. ONLINE OUTLETS

1. <https://www.ilovefreegle.org/browse>
2. <https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/?ref=bookmark>
3. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stalbansreuseproject>
4. <https://bit.ly/3wXsQuX>

4. APPS

1. <https://olioapp.com/en/>

5. LOCAL OPTIONS

1. <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/recycling-and-waste/where-can-i-recycle/reuse.aspx#whatis>

6. REPAIR, RE-USE, ADOPT

1. <https://www.nearlynewcashmere.co.uk/>
2. <https://goodonyou.eco/most-ethical-and-sustainable-clothing-brands-from-uk/>