

# eauc case study

**CLASSIFICATION:**  
**Waste**  
**SUB CLASSIFICATION:**  
**Operational**

*TITLE:*

## **University of Aberdeen Partnership with the Creative Waste Exchange**

*DATE:*

October 2007

*INSTITUTION PROFILE*

HE

13,900 FTE students

3000 staff

City

60+ buildings on 2 main sites

### SUMMARY

The University of Aberdeen is working with the Creative Waste Exchange to divert material from landfill to community groups and other organisations such as schools that are able to re-use the goods. Consequently, instead of being land-filled the items are put to a good cause, saving valuable resources and money. The University diverted six tonnes of waste in their first year

### EAUC COMMENT

This case study demonstrates the positive social, environmental and financial benefits of creating partnerships with local organisations.



### PROJECT PARTNERS

University of Aberdeen

The Creative Waste Exchange (Scrapstore)

### THE PROBLEM

The University of Aberdeen identified that many goods such as furniture, wooden pallets and stationary, were being disposed of to landfill that were still in good condition and could, ultimately, be used by someone else. This was costing the University money and wasting resources.

### THE APPROACH

Following meetings with the Creative Waste Exchange the University developed internal procedures for collecting and storing furniture and other materials from departments. University Staff were informed of procedures for collecting material through the University's Environment website and meetings of their college council. When staff are clearing out their offices or refurbishment work is being undertaken they inform the University's Waste and Environment Officer who subsequently contacts the Exchange. At this point the Exchange will inform their members of the material that is due to come available. Arrangements will then be made to collect and deliver the goods directly rather than store them.

### GOALS

The main aim was to ensure that goods that were no longer used by the University, and were by legal definition a waste, were re-used within community groups and other organisations. This re-use leading to a reduction in the amount of waste the University was sending to landfill.

The main goals are to:

- Reduce the amount of waste being disposed of to landfill;
- Make available good quality and affordable furniture and other materials to those who can re-use it (e.g. community groups); and
- Reduce costs of waste disposal.

## OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

- Storage of furniture when the requirement is to dispose of it as soon as possible.
- Ensuring the Creative Waste Exchange could collect furniture prior to it becoming a storage problem by finding out when clearance projects are likely to take place and scheduling uplifts.
- Lack of internal awareness of the Creative Waste Exchange membership at the University.
- Raising the profile of the Creative Waste Exchange through events, posters, email alerts, perspex holder flyers and through discussions with college councils.

## PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

The University of Aberdeen is a corporate member of the Creative Waste Exchange and is on the organisation's Steering Group. For an annual membership cost of £100/annum the University has diverted six tonnes of waste from landfill by working in partnership with the Creative Waste Exchange in their first year. This represented 13% of the total amount of waste diverted by the Creative Waste Exchange in the same year.

## LESSONS LEARNT

However simple a scheme appears time is always required for project management and general organisation. Time needs to be invested into communication and encouraging project managers and staff to contact the Waste and Environment Manager in plenty of time to arrange uplifts of furniture. Interim storage is sometimes a problem.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

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University of Aberdeen  
[www.abdn.ac.uk/estates/environment](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/estates/environment)

The Creative Waste Exchange is one of a number of Scrapstore projects around Scotland  
[www.home-education.org.uk/scrap.htm](http://www.home-education.org.uk/scrap.htm)

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