

OPPORTUNITIES FROM BUILDING MATERIAL RE-USE CENTRES (BMRCs)

Does your Organisation want to be involved in creating several new BMRC (also known as *ReStore*) projects across Britain?

Email back this week if you answer is YES to at least two questions below:

- 1 Is your organisation interested in business opportunities from increased reclamation and reuse of building materials from construction or regeneration projects, and the wider building sector?
- 2 Do you want know more about Building Materials Reuse Centres in the USA and their potential for replication in the UK, initially proposed for 3 to 5 UK trial locations?
- 3 Does your organisation want to be part of a national e-network to share and review our **ReStore** Business Plan Toolkit, and wider resources, to be published in Feb/March 2008, and in any nearby network to create a local **ReStore** in your area?
- 4 Are you interested in supporting a **ReStore** partnership event in your area? (regional events held so far in North East, East & South East England – others depend on regional support/funding).

QUICK PROJECT SUMMARY – for fuller introduction see below/attached

In the USA and Canada there are Building Material Reuse Centres, or **ReStores** as they get called, in most large communities.

USA **ReStores** are financially sustainable retail outlets that sell reusable building materials to trade and general public.

The stores increase sales income from commercial, public and community customers with charged services such as:

- clearing site materials,
- undertaking commercial salvage jobs and/or deconstruction,
- partnering with regional or national builders, training people for mainstream construction jobs,
- delivering external awareness and training.

Meanwhile, the UK currently only has two

ReStores. Though we do have effective wood reuse projects, successful architectural salvage businesses, a growing social enterprise sector and many organisations interested in **ReStores**. There is a lot of potential for growth.



Seattle's (USA) RE-STORE © lifebegreen

BioRegional Reclaimed¹ are working with WasteWISE² and MASCo³ to publish a **ReStores** business plan toolkit in March 2008 and develop an e-network of enthusiastic **ReStores** partner enterprises. This will be linked in to wider networks. Our aim is to support the establishment of 3 to 5 major new **ReStores** across different UK regions. This initial work is funded by the Centre for Remanufacturing and Reuse⁴.

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO OTHERS YOU THINK MAY BE INTERESTED.

To find out more, ring or email:

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SOURCES OF MORE INFORMATION

¹ www.bioregional-reclaimed.com, sustainable building material specialists including related analysis on megayards/weblinks

² WasteWISE Consultants Ltd - Lewis Herbert - lewis@wastewise.org.uk For full details on the April 2007 **ReStore** event organised by WasteWISE, see also www.renewteesvalley.co.uk

³ Minchinhampton Architectural Salvage Company, a successful UK salvage business – MASCo www.catbrain.com/profile.asp

⁴ www.remanufacturing.org.uk

Sharing our ReStore Business Plan Toolkit

BioRegional Reclaimed¹ are working with WasteWISE² and MASCO³ to develop a Business Plan Toolkit and e-network for UK **ReStores**. Our aim is to support the establishment of 3 to 5 different centres across the UK. This initial work is kindly funded by the Centre for Remanufacturing & Reuse⁴.

The core business model for **ReStores** will be based on vibrant retail outlets, run as social enterprises. Outlets will source “as new” products from the excess materials of new build and regeneration projects and reclaimable materials from the wider building sector.

These new businesses will complement existing salvage and recycling companies.

Materials received are carefully processed before being re-sold to the general public and small-scale builders. Prices will be cheaper than for new equivalents. Outlets will aim to grow sales, develop a range of services and generate accessible employment and training opportunities. In doing so, this will also reduce the volume of usable building materials being downgraded into aggregate, incinerated or landfilled. This is preferable from an economic and environmental perspective.

ReStore retail outlets will therefore generate important economic, social and environmental benefits whilst providing the building trade and general public with access to affordable building materials that would otherwise be landfilled. Many successful **ReStores** already operate across North America.



Habitat ReStore, Dane County, Wisconsin, USA

Why a ReStore e-network, working with projects and existing networks?

We will circulate a draft business plan toolkit for review by February 2008 and a final version for use during March 2008. Our plan is to develop an e-network of potential **ReStores** and support organisations across the UK. This will:

- create linkages between outlets for the transfer of information and materials,
- offer key support services, representation and capture learning,
- develop a high visibility brand identity with trusted values,
- engage existing sector networks and building sector companies, and
- engage with key strategic partners on a national scale.

Who Will Benefit From Joining the E-Network?

- Social enterprises and community/training projects looking for expansion
- Building sector companies looking to diversify, and reduce overheads
- Support organisations wanting to advise/assist projects and/or businesses
- Other sector networks
- Local authorities and other public sector organisations.

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Creating successful local enterprises through material re-use

ReStore viability is already proven by the network of over 500 “**ReStores**” in the US and Canada (HfH, 2006). Their stores sell used or excess building materials sourced entirely from construction waste streams. Profits generated are both reinvested and fed into organisations like the international house building charity “Habitat for Humanity”.

The economic and social benefits generated are significant. The Madison ReStore in Dane County, Wisconsin provides training for approximately 100 volunteers and employs several full time staff, with the profits from the first five years used to build 15 new affordable homes.

In contrast, the volume of building materials sold in the UK by the architectural salvage industry appears to have been declining over the last ten years, with salvage companies tending instead toward specialist and high value reclaimed products or new and reproduction alternatives (Salvo, 2007).

ReStore retail outlets could be created the following ways:

- an expansion opportunity for an existing social enterprise (such as the wood recycling projects or NVQ training schemes),
- a not-for-profit venture for business or reclaimed industry,
- co-located with a major development project site, or
- as a partnership with a council-led initiative such as an expansion of a civic amenity site, new waste/recycling facility or resource recovery park.

This is a major opportunity for cross sector partnership between the building sector, reclamation industry, local government and social enterprise.

The time is now for UK **ReStores**

There is already a wealth of social enterprises across the UK successfully retailing reusable materials such as wood, furniture and commercial off-cuts⁵. Up until now, none have focussed on the huge opportunity presented by the reuse of building materials.

There is, therefore, a clear gap in the UK market to recover far more substantial volumes of useful building materials and sell them at affordable prices to the general public and small-scale builders. This includes both “as new” construction site surplus and lower-value reclaimed materials not currently handled by the existing salvage industry. In doing so, we can contribute to a more sustainable construction industry that provides genuine community benefits.

UK Case Study – Community Campus New Project, Tees Valley

Following a regional event in April 2007, a **ReStore** Centre is being planned, led by local building and training social enterprise, Community Campus based in Stockton.

A feasibility study is now underway with the appointment of a Project Development Officer, supported by both a cross sector Steering Group and Renew Tees Valley, the local resource efficiency and regeneration agency

⁵ Examples include: National Community Wood Recycling Project - <http://www.communitywoodrecycling.org.uk/> , Children’s Scrap and Materials Centres- <http://www.childrengreenstore.co.uk/> , and Green Works furniture reuse - <http://www.green-works.co.uk/>.

The Environmental Imperative – The Need to Change Current Practices

The UK construction and building sector currently accounts for around:

- 19% of the total national ecological footprint (BioRegional, 2003).
- 23% of the of the national carbon footprint (WWF, 2003).
- 420 million tonnes of material consumption or 7 tonnes per person (BioRegional, 2002).
- 30% of all road freight on UK roads (Department for Transport, 2006).

Waste from demolition and construction is also the single largest contributor to the UK's national waste stream at 32%. Nearly a third of this currently ends up in landfill.

“Crushing to aggregate” and timber for compost and chip board are not the solutions. These approaches may reduce materials going to landfill, but valuable resources are being “downcycled” towards lower grade products such as crushed bricks and low value fuel. This wastes significant embodied energy⁶ and wastes employment and skills opportunities. It also produces a lower value product and causes further environmental impacts.

This analysis is backed up by figures from WWF's Living Planet Report (WWF, 2004). These show that if everyone on the planet consumed as much as the average person in the UK, we would need three planets to support us.



Instead, the UK Construction Industry needs to reduce its consumption of fossil fuels and virgin materials by at least two-thirds to be environmentally sustainable. To achieve this reduction, we need to develop practices that are consistent with *one planet living*[®].

We need to reverse the fact that the volume of materials sold by the salvage industry has been declining over the last 10 years. Negligible quantities of construction materials are currently being reused in their existing form; worse still, an estimated 15% of materials go to waste without ever being used; bought in excess to ensure that construction and re-build projects are delivered on time⁷.

With successful UK **ReStores**, all building products sold for reuse replace the need to manufacture them as new. This saves the impacts associated with both manufacture and disposal, whilst creating employment, training and second-use affordable building materials.

Contacts for more information

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⁶ The embodied energy of a building product is the amount of energy used in order to quarry/extract, manufacture and transport it to site.

⁷ Commonly cited wastage figure, quoted by stakeholders in workshops including our Cambridge event, September, 2007.

An initiative from:



MASCO

www.catbrain.com



Funded by:



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