
About Action 21



Who we are

In a nutshell: Action 21 aims to raise awareness of the climate crisis, to promote sustainable living and to reduce the environmental impact of the local community. We do this by running a second-hand shop which sells donated items to save them from landfill. The income raised is used to support the business and promote other local sustainability themed projects.

Our History

Action 21 was set up by members of the Leamington and Warwick community to put sustainable development into practice at a local level. Launched as a social enterprise in 1996, in response to Agenda 21 of the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit, in 2010 Action 21 acquired charitable status. Over the years we have organised many projects to promote sustainability in the areas of food, energy, education, transport and recycling. Originally income came from statutory funds, charitable trusts and membership fees as well as self-generated income. Nowadays Action 21 is governed by a board of volunteer trustees and since 2012 Action 21 has not relied on external funding and now raises its entire revenue from the sale of goods at The Re-Useful Centre. The income generated by The Re-Useful Centre funds the organisation and various local projects

Our Aims

Our charitable aims

“To promote the protection and preservation of the environment for the public benefit by the promotion of waste reduction, re-use, reclamation, recycling, the use of recycled products and the use of surplus for the benefit of the inhabitants of the District of Warwick, and its environs. To also advance the education of the public in subjects related to sustainability in areas related to Energy, Food, and Transport through practical projects.”

What we're aiming to achieve:

Action 21 aims to reduce waste, promote reuse, increase knowledge, and support our community in living more sustainably.

For the environment, we aim to:

- Reduce the amount of reusable goods going to landfill
- Reduce the consumption of fossil fuels in the local area
- Encourage the consumption of locally produced food, thus saving on food miles

For the local community, we aim to:

- Raise awareness around how to live more sustainably
- Provide a source of quality re-usable items at low cost
- Provide education and training opportunities related to living sustainably
- Offer group activities and volunteering opportunities designed to strengthen the local community

For individuals, we aim to:

- Enable upskilling, thus increasing employment opportunities
- Offer a variety of volunteering opportunities to meet a wide range of personal, social and work-based motivations
- Provide a safe, friendly and rewarding volunteering platform experience

What we do

- The charity runs the Re-Useful Centre which has operated from 3 adjacent, leased units in Court Street, Leamington Spa since January 2015. Action 21 also leases a local railway arch, which accommodates a bike workshop.
- The Re-Useful Centre receives donations of goods from the public that would otherwise go to waste (principally landfill) and enables the items to be purchased and re-used. During the last year, we estimate that our activities saved some 70 tonnes of donated items from landfill.
- In order to increase re-use, the charity undertakes the refurbishment of bicycles and some items of furniture to ensure items are of an adequate standard for sale. Hundreds of donated bikes are refurbished and sold each year, thereby providing a means of affordable sustainable transport for the local community.
- Action 21 also tests electrical equipment for resale, allowing re-use of items that would otherwise be scrapped. Donated items which cannot be sold are broken down and sold for scrap, re-used, recycled or sold on to other companies for upcycling.

In addition:

- Action 21 runs a regular fortnightly group called 'Craft Club' at The Sydni Centre which is a "skill share" activity.
 - Action 21 promotes and takes part in Warwick District Council's Eco Fest each September. This annual event highlights the work of local environmental groups and sustainability charities.
 - Action 21 supports a number of organisations by donating items from the Re-Useful Centre including; Operation Christmas Child (helping to fill shoe boxes for needy children in Romania and Ukraine, OWNBOOKS (a book recycling project to help young children without books at home), Vision Aid Overseas (an organisation recycling unwanted spectacles).
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Volunteers

Volunteers are an essential resource for Action 21. Around 50 regular volunteers support the operation of the Re-Useful Centre as well as Action 21's administrative, communications and marketing activities. Some volunteers are drawn from vulnerable and disadvantaged groups who benefit from the vocational experience, training and social interaction.

Marketing and communication

- Action 21 aims to maintain and expand public awareness of Action 21's projects and activities; to promote the Re-Useful Centre in order to increase donations and purchases; to promote volunteering opportunities in order to recruit new volunteers; and to publicise events in order to increase event attendance.
 - Action 21's website <https://www.action21.co.uk> features information about our activities as well as the guidance on how to make a donation and how to volunteer. It also contains our founding documents, our policies, and our annual reports and financial statements.
 - We make increasing use of social media and our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages promote the day-to-day activities at the Re-Useful Centre and forthcoming events.
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Our future focus

In the coming years, our key areas of focus will be:

- Greater community awareness and engagement in our objectives
- More training and skills development in the areas of re-use, energy, transport and food that contribute to the upskilling of the local population.
- Greater financial and site security

