



Annual Report 2008

Published April 2009

The Furniture Station
Hazel Grove Baptist Church
Station Street, Hazel Grove
Stockport, SK7 4EX

Tel: Office 0161 456 0717
Fundraiser 0161 483 9010
Fax: 0161 483 9420
Email: alan@furniturestation.org.uk
mike@furniturestation.org.uk
Web site: www.furniturestation.org.uk

Registered Charity No.1097219
A Company Limited by Guarantee No. 4680660

In Partnership with



HAZEL GROVE
BAPTIST CHURCH



Aims and Objectives

Our main Aim is to:-

- Relieve poverty and distress by providing good quality re-used household goods to people in need living in Stockport, helping them to establish a more stable, healthy and independent lifestyle.

We also aim to:-

- Provide training opportunities and work placements to enable local unemployed or disadvantaged people to re-enter the labour market and regain self worth in the process.
- Make a contribution to national/local efforts to reduce environmental pollution by collecting and re-using many items that might otherwise have ended up in landfill.
- Encourage the general public to donate unwanted household items, ensuring they help both their neighbours and the environment.
- Treat everyone fairly and equally, without bias or preconceived ideas.

We will achieve this by:-

- Collecting furniture and white goods from donors.
- Providing the opportunity for clients to come and select items of furniture from the warehouse and

delivering selected items to their homes for a nominal delivery charge.

- Supplying properly cleaned, tested and recorded white goods items (electric cookers will be installed by our engineer).
- Cleaning and renovating white goods items as required and repairing furniture which is in need of repair, in our white goods and furniture workshops.
- Providing opportunities for work placements.
- Providing opportunities for volunteers to play a part in the community.
- Seeking funding for the provision of new beds, cots and cookers to supplement the supply of re-used items.

Vision

We are determined:-

1. That we shall continue to expand the operation to meet ever increasing demands
2. That we will endeavour to broaden the operation to cover other items as both supply and demand permit.



2nd Annual Dinner December 2008 - The Mayor of Stockport Cllr Pam King draws the raffle with MC Andy Gower and Ann Billington.



A selection of furniture waiting for delivery.



The Mayor and Mayoress visit the Furniture Workshop.



Delivering a cot and a fridge.

Chair's Report

This has been a year in which we were fortunate to be named as the Mayor of Stockport's Charity of the Year. Councillor Pam King chose The Furniture Station because "It is a local registered charity which aims to make a real difference to the lives of disadvantaged people in Stockport by providing them with good quality re-used furniture and white goods. Many people going into accommodation cannot afford to buy items they need to make a house a home. The project also ensures many items, which would otherwise end up in landfill, continue to have a useful life." As we review the year it is helpful to be reminded that the Furniture Station is about making a real difference in people's lives.

We have again secured funding towards salaries, and were able to replace the White Goods van thanks to support from the Co-operative Foundation, The Garfield Weston Foundation and The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation. The demands on our service have forced us to continue to develop which means that hours for the second driver have been increased to allow him to assist with White Goods collections and deliveries and to ensure we get optimum usage from both our vehicles. Once again we were able to keep our operating costs down because of the work carried out by our 19 volunteers and 18 work placements. They contributed in excess of 4000 hours during the year. This invaluable support, together with the time put in by the Trustees, Roddy Jones our Honorary Treasurer, who keeps excellent accounts and the small staff team is what makes The Furniture Station work so well to help people in need.

Our referrals were marginally up and totalled 1365. Delivery trips and collection trips were at similar levels to last year but the number of items delivered was up by 19%. Last year's record number of work placements was exceeded with TNG Workskills providing 18 individuals, who all gained positively from the time spent with us and made a significant contribution to the operation, which could not function without them. One of those who did a placement is now helping as a regular volunteer. Despite the introduction of additional appointments, the waiting list increased to 4 weeks towards the end of the year as referrals increased. We remain committed to getting waiting list times down to 2 weeks again. We continue to be unable to meet all the demand for beds and cookers and so will

continue to seek funding to purchase these items. Issues raised by new regulations have caused some problems with the disposal of fridges that cannot be re-used, despite considerable efforts by staff and Council Officers. This has still not been resolved and may result in additional costs in the future.

Stockport Council Main Grants Scheme, which has provided an element of core funding has moved towards 3 year funding agreements and we now know that we will be receiving a grant for the next three years. Stockport Homes, our main referral agency is now identified as a main partner of The Furniture Station. We received support from 33 different Charities, Trusts, Foundations, Companies or groups and from 18 individuals, in addition to the support provided by the 53 members of the Supporters Group who make regular monthly contributions. Simon Horsfield one of the Trustees was sponsored to do The Great North Swim and The Vernon Building Society promoted two Brass Band concerts and donated the proceeds to The Furniture Station and The Wellspring. We also held a comedy evening in partnership with the Hazel Grove High School PTA.

The reason The Furniture Station exists is to make a real difference in the lives of people who need support to establish a home. We have many stories of how people have benefited from our support, confirming the need for us to continue to offer this vital service to people in Stockport. Some of the individual stories are included in this report.

Billy Montgomery



The new White Goods van provided with support from The Co-operative Foundation, The Garfield Weston Foundation and The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation.

Our Achievements

We said the outcomes of our activities in 2008 would be as follows

1 Improved wellbeing of Stockport residents through the provision of services and equipment that help them to maintain independence.

- More people will be enabled to be healthy and choose to have a healthier lifestyle as individuals and families will be able to sleep better, particularly through the provision of beds and to eat better as provision of cookers and fridges allow improved storage and cooking of food and better choice of diet. **We delivered 353 beds (a 23% increase), 22 cots, 60 cookers, 132 fridges/freezers, 41 microwave ovens and 37 vacuum cleaners. Most clients would not have had these facilities, without The Furniture Station.**
- People will have more choice, independence and a better quality of life as the provision of furniture and household items will enable them to sit and sleep in comfort, store their possessions and to cook and store food. **We delivered a total of 4088 items of furniture, up 19% on 2007, these items went to 802 households.**
- Volunteering provides the opportunity for older people to continue to take an active part in the community. **21 Volunteers supported us in 2008 and 17 of these were over 50 years of age.**

2 Increase in the number of vulnerable people and their families supported to remain in their own homes.

- The provision of basic furniture and white goods gives an increased chance of people being able to accept and maintain their tenancies. **Information from Stockport Homes Resettlement Team indicates that in the 2 years 1/1/07 to 31/12/08 259 cases were referred to The Furniture Station of these 234 (90.3%) remain in settled accommodation.**

3 Reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill sites through the re-using and recycling of goods.

- The collection and re-use of household items of furniture and white goods that people no longer want means they will have their useful life extended and will be saved from going to landfill sites. **We collected 4698 items with a calculated weight of 128 Tonnes, providing an estimated saving to SMBC of £8,704 (based on average weights provided by FRN and costs provided by SMBC).**

4 Local unemployed people, particularly those from Stockport's priority wards gaining employment skills.

- The provision of training opportunities and approximately six work placements each year enables local unemployed or disadvantaged people the opportunity to re-enter the labour market and to regain self worth in the process. **There were 18 work placements with 8 of these coming from Stockport Priority Areas.**

5 We also said we would;

- Review the development of the partnership with Emerge as a means of sourcing more cookers and providing our donors with an outlet for white goods we are unable to process ourselves and seek to develop other relevant partnerships. **Due to issues raised by the WEEE Regulations Emerge decided to stop dealing with white goods, this has reduced the supply of cookers.**
- Review the use and cost effectiveness of the additional storage unit leased from December 2007. **The unit proved valuable, allowing the warehouse to be better organized so clients can view all available items and the agreement has been extended for a further 12 months.**
- Increase the hours of our second part-time driver to ensure optimum use of our vehicles and increase capacity to install white goods items. **The hours were increased from 18 to 30 and the driver received training in the disconnection of cookers. The increase in hours proved invaluable in sustaining the operation during some difficult times.**
- Seek funding to replace the white goods vehicle. **Funding to replace the vehicle was provided by The Co-operative Foundation, The Garfield Weston Foundation and The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation. The vehicle was delivered in December.**
- Plan and promote the second Furniture Station Dinner to be held in December 2008. **The Dinner took place on 6 December 2008 and a total of £2980 was raised.**

Looking Forward

In 2009 we will seek to achieve the same main outcomes

- 1 Improved wellbeing of Stockport residents through the provision of services and equipment that help them to maintain independence.
- 2 Increase in the number of vulnerable people and their families supported to remain in their own homes.
- 3 Reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill sites through the re-using and recycling of goods.
- 4 Local unemployed people, particularly those from Stockport's priority wards gaining employment skills.

We will also

- Continue to seek a solution to the need to dispose of fridges and freezers that are not suitable for re-use.
- Plan and promote an Open Day to keep our supporters, referral agencies, potential donors and other interested parties informed of the operation and to increase knowledge of our work.
- Design an IT based referral and appointment system and seek funding for its implementation.
- Undertake feasibility work on the re-development of the warehouse to allow an improved and more efficient service delivery.
- Examine the potential for the addition of a '12 month Trainee post' to provide an employment opportunity for people who have been on work placement.

case study

A story of two sisters

Two young women came to The Furniture Station, one of them had an appointment and the other was her older sister, who had a young baby. It turned out that the older sister, when she was 18 and with a one year old child was supported by the Furniture Station. At the time she had a flat but nothing to put in it, she heard about The Furniture Station on the 'grapevine' and was able to get a referral. The Furniture Station provided her with a settee, a dressing table and a fridge freezer. She said that the people had been very helpful and without this help she would have just had to manage without. The younger sister had to leave home at age 15 and had stayed with her older sister since she was 19 when they came to The Furniture Station and had now got her own flat. Knowing of her sister's positive experience with The Furniture Station she was referred for an appointment and chose a rug, curtains, a table and also got a fridge freezer, a microwave and a cooker. She said she would have been lost without The Furniture Station as there is no one else for people like her to rely on.

case study

provided by a Tenancy Support Officer from Stockport Homes

Fred suffered from Alcoholism and was being targeted by local youths in his property. He was supported in a move to a new property but before he could move into the new property, he was admitted to Stepping Hill Hospital with pneumonia

Once he was discharged from hospital The Furniture Station delivered a bed and 3 piece suite within 24 hours and offered another appointment for him to choose other items.

The Support Officer said: ' The speed with which the items were delivered, the friendliness of the service, the unflappable manner in which appointments were altered, emergencies met, and all-round consideration shown to a vulnerable man and his distraught mother cannot be adequately applauded. The Furniture Station items have made the difference between Fred being comfortably re-housed and settling into his flat and his tenancy failing for want of basic items.'

Treasurer's Report

The accounts show an increase in incoming resources of 8.26% and an increase in net incoming resources of 23.19%.

On restricted activities there was a transfer of £20,000 from unrestricted funds to provide for potential future redundancy costs and along with the surplus of £15,704 on restricted activities for the year helped move the restricted reserves up to £52,302.

On unrestricted activities there was a surplus of £17,465 but this was reduced to a deficit of £2,535 after the transfer of the £20,000 to restricted funds which moved the unrestricted reserves down to £78,282.

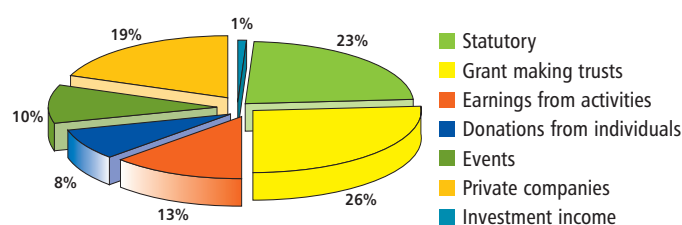
During the year we were successful in obtaining significant support towards our staff costs. The Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales, The Sobel Foundation, Comic Relief and Henry Smith Charity provided funding towards our drivers salaries. The Zochonis Charitable Trust, Healthsure Charitable Trust and Henry Smith Charity provided funding for the White Goods service engineer's salary. As staffing costs is our major area of expenditure, these grants were very welcome for 2008 and beyond.

Stockport Council provided a similar level of funding as that received in previous years. We have also been notified of their continued support for the next three years.

Other fundraising applications and activity provided both restricted and unrestricted funding including over £7,500 towards the purchase of beds, cots and cookers. Our second Annual Dinner in December was successful in raising £3,000 towards operating costs.

A new White Goods van was bought in December 2008 and has been fully funded by The Co-operative Foundation, Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation and Garfield Weston Foundation.

Looking forward we need to ensure the commitment to additional expenditure for the increase in hours for the drivers in 2009 to cover a wider area of furniture and white goods collections is covered in our fundraising activity.



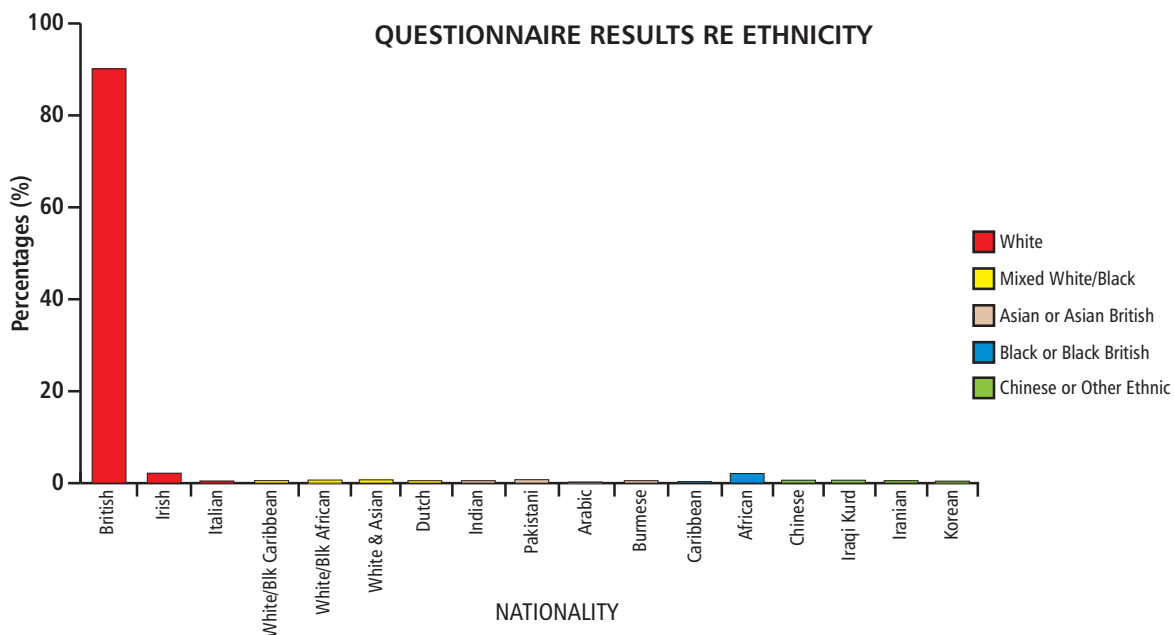
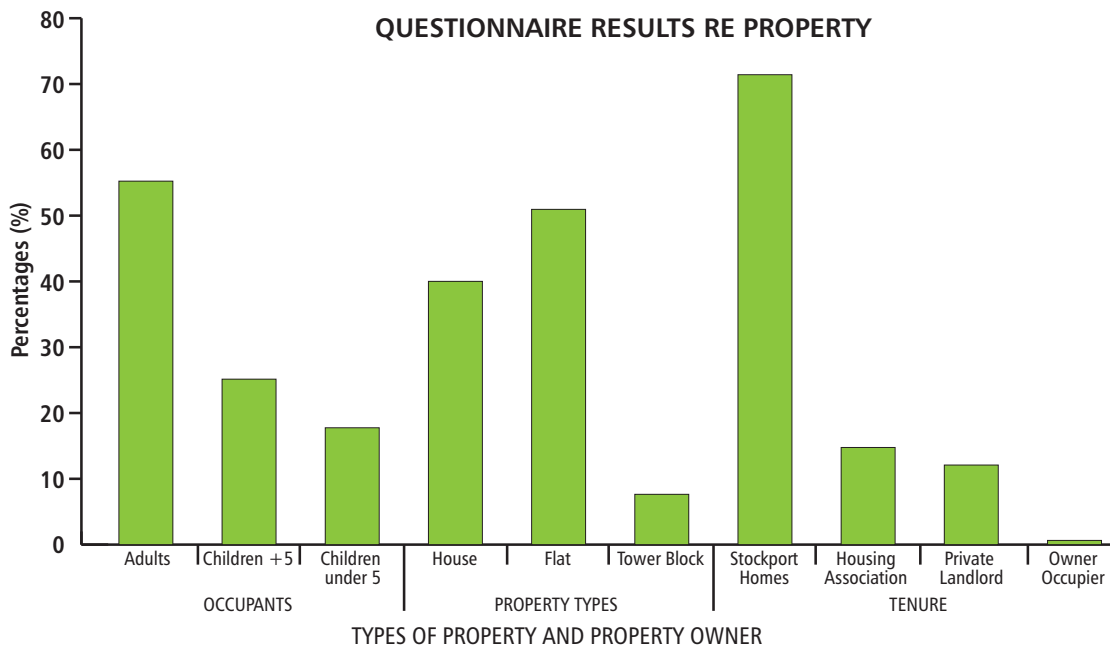
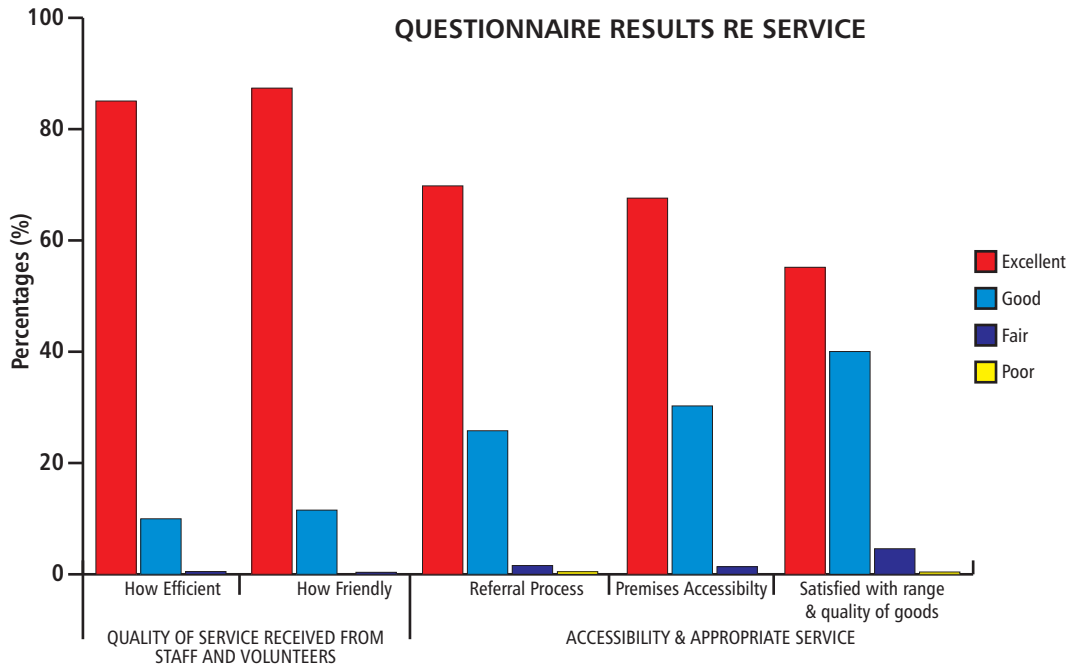
Statement of Financial Activities Year Ended December 2008

	2008	2007
Incoming Resources		
Grants receivable	137,760	127,290
Trading activities	21,318	19,867
Interest receivable	1,922	1,651
Other income	252	134
Total Incoming Resources	161,252	148,942
Resources Expended		
Fundraising & publicity	9,340	11,138
Employment costs	71,953	62,380
Office & other charitable activities	45,525	45,529
Governance costs	2,965	2,969
Total Resources Expended	129,783	122,016
Surplus on sale of assets	1,700	0
Net Income (Expenditure)		
Net Movement in Funds	33,169	26,926
Total Funds brought forward	97,415	70,489
Total Funds carried forward	130,584	97,415

Balance Sheet 31st December 2008

Fixed Assets		
Tangible Assets	29,382	13,771
Current Assets		
Debtors & Prepayments	7,813	13,132
Cash at bank & in hand	115,352	92,510
Creditors due within 1 year	(21,963)	(21,998)
Net Current Assets	101,202	83,644
Net Assets	130,584	97,415
Accumulated Funds		
Restricted	52,302	16,598
Unrestricted	78,282	80,817
TOTAL FUNDS	130,584	97,415

Providing good quality re-used household goods to people in need living in Stockport



Supporters in 2008

Main Partners

Stockport MBC Hazel Grove Baptist Church Stockport Homes

Other Financial and in-kind Supporters

The Alchemy Foundation
The Noel Buxton Trust
CadAssist
The Co-operative Foundation
The Cotton Trust
Granada Material Handling
HealthSure Simply Health
The Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund
Leeds Building Society Charitable Foundation
The Odin Charitable Trust
Parfett's Cash and Carry
The Peter Kershaw Trust
Rhode Island Coffee (Stockport)
The Sobell Foundation
The Stoller Charitable Trust
Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation
Thrift Shop, Bramhall Methodist Church
The Garfield Weston Foundation
The Members of the Supporters Groups and many other individual donors

The Sydney Black Charitable Trust
The Woodroffe Benton Foundation
Courtts Charitable Trust
Croftons Solicitors
Fedelta Leisure
Hazel Grove Rotary Club
HGBC Calligraphy Class
John Lewis Community Committee
29 May 1961 Charitable Trust
N Smith Charitable Settlement
The Pennycress Trust
Poynton Round Table
The Henry Smith Charity
Stockport Sports Trust
Sovereign Creative Marketing
Stockport Homes Staff (sponsored run)
The Vernon Building Society
The Zochonis Charitable Trust

Management Committee

Billy Montgomery – Chair, Trustee and Director, Minister H.G.B.C.
Amanda Jennings - Trustee and Director, Company Secretary,
Kath Jones - Trustee and Director, Resettlement Services Team Leader, Stockport Homes
Mendie de Vos – Trustee and Director,
Simon Horsfield – Trustee and Director
Jeff Palmer – Trustee and Director
Alan Gunnion – Manager
Mike Atkinson - Fundraiser / Administrator
Phil Edge – White Goods Engineer
Roddy Jones - Treasurer

Staff

Alan Gunnion - Manager
Phil Edge - Service Engineer White Goods Project (part-time 28 hours)
David Newman - Driver Furniture Project (part-time 30 hours)
Gary Brown - Driver (part-time 30 hours)
Mike Atkinson - Fundraiser (part-time 10 hours)

Volunteers

Andy Blackham	Dave Harrop	Marjorie Stevenson
Jo Blackham	Amanda Jennings	Suzanne Townley
Mike Bowen	Roddy Jones	Mark Tucker
Dave Christey	Irene Leather	Glynis Winton
Penny Dean	Alec Needham	Alan Wood
Brian Dixon	Dorothy Sandham	
Marjorie Harrison	Paul Stevenson	

Produced with support from Sovereign Creative Marketing Ltd.
Printed on paper from renewable sources.