



**LEEDS
WOOD
RECYCLING**

IMPACT

REPORT

2022

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INTRODUCTION

2022 Has been a year of growth for Leeds Wood Recycling. With the purchase of a second van we have boosted our collections capacity and focused on increasing our retail offer and products for sale. None of this would have been possible without the vision, support and dedication of our amazing volunteers and staff.

At the beginning of the year, we did a large amount of research and development into scaling up the business with a view to expand into a larger premises. This research was then fed back to the whole team; staff, volunteers and the board of directors. After much deliberation and number crunching we decided that the economy held too much uncertainty, so decided to focus on upscaling and utilising our current warehouse to increase efficiency.

This led to growth in every department!

We encouraged the team to think 'outside the box' and drive our social mission further. We focused on streamlining many of our procedures and processes which has had a fantastic impact on the business making us more efficient and more sustainable.

We moved to using project management systems as a part of our daily communication in the growing team. This has increased our confidence with technology and we have invested a lot of time ensuring all members of staff are part of that upskilling, giving extra training to all staff and volunteers. We have also been able to strengthen our training and health and safety practices, putting a number of staff and volunteers on external training.

We have worked to retain our status as a responsible employer, channelling those successes back to our staff and volunteers, ensuring we remain a real living wage employer.

2022 at a glance:

Staff, Volunteers and Training

- Our first cohort of 'Kickstarters' (a government funded scheme) left and our second two placements started their 6 month placements
- We developed the foundations of a work experience programme for SEND adults, securing funding for a support worker from Leeds Community foundation
- Four women were supported to complete their ILM Management training, gaining Management qualifications through #Wecan
- We offered an additional work experience placement in partnership with 'Progressions'

Collections

- We have upscaled our collections. We bought a new van and created a new van driver position. Welcome Jamie!
- We moved to an electronic waste transfer system and customer database, and created new in-house training for the team

Retail

- Retail Manager: Our fantastic manager Finch relocated to the south, and we have now employed a fabulous new manager. Welcome Mitch! They have been working to grow our retail department
- We launched our online shop, selling finishes and ironmongery alongside in-house made products
- Extension of opening hours: The Timber Shop now opens 7 days a week

Workshop

- We have developed a progressive training programme of weekend and evening courses, available to the public
- Developed products made solely by volunteers which work in partnership with the online shop
- We ran 'The Skill Tree' for a second year, offering 4 free woodwork courses to over 24 participants

STAFF & VOLUNTEER TRAINING



Leeds Wood Recycling works hard to invest in our staff and volunteers, by offering training and opportunities to all members of the team. People volunteer at Leeds Wood Recycling for a range of different reasons.

For some people it's to boost employability and learn new skills, for others it is a chance to get out the house and give some time while having a bit of a workout!

2 PEOPLE GAINED THEIR CSCS CONSTRUCTION SKILLS CERTIFICATION LABOURERS QUALIFICATION

1 KICKSTARTER AND 1 STAFF MEMBER

“ I really enjoy volunteering at LWR. I think it is so worthwhile to so many people and the wider environment. I enjoy the people, work, using tools, learning about so many things such as how to use tools. I enjoy being able to contribute and enrich my own knowledge and the pallet breaking workouts! ”

Rory - Volunteer

6 NEW VOLUNTEERS
Given training opportunities on collections

37

CPD training courses completed by staff & volunteers

“ I really enjoy being in the workshop environment as it is so different to what I do during the rest of my working week. I also find it a good way to de-stress by doing manual work that requires mindful concentration. ”

Jane - Volunteer

THIS YEAR WE'VE HAD...

41 VOLUNTEERS

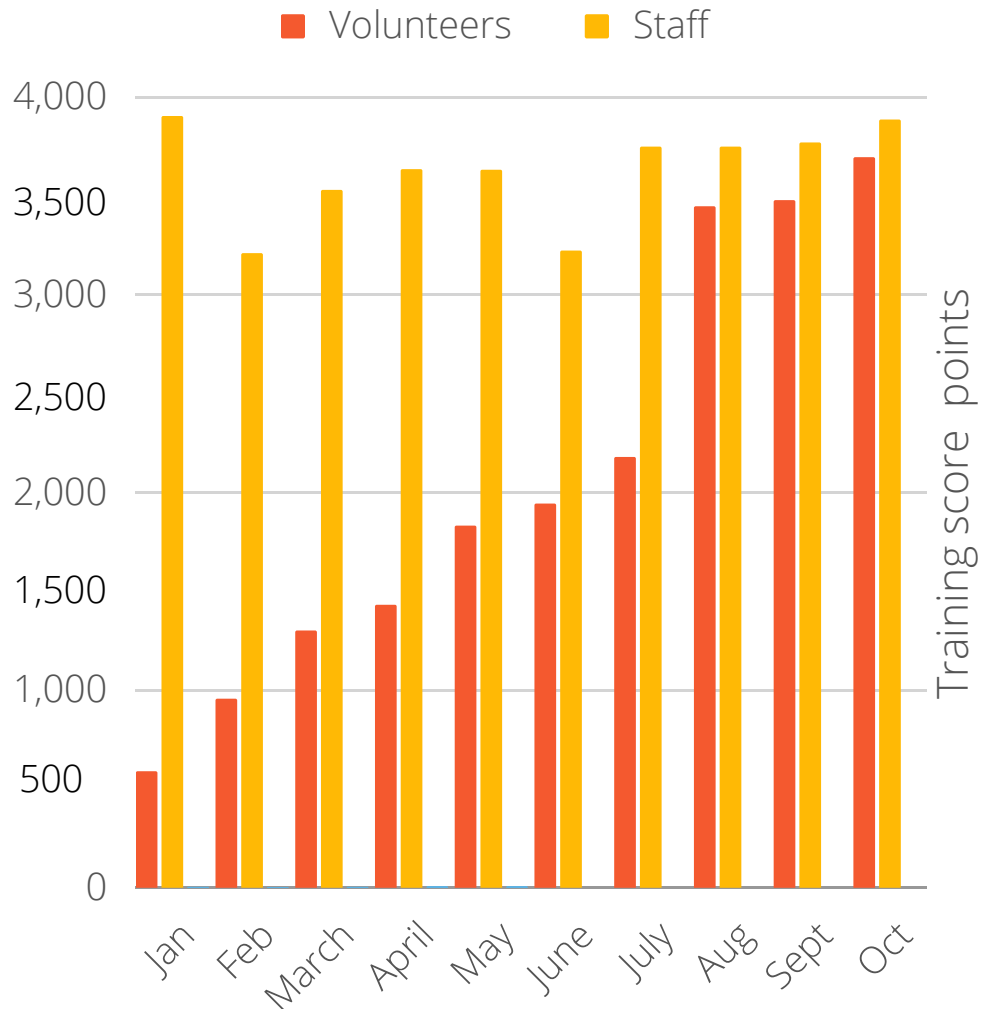
WHO HAVE GIVEN A MASSIVE...

2579 HOURS OF VOLUNTEERING!



TRAINING SKILL MATRIX

The Skill Matrix was developed with the Ideas that Change Lives fund to chart the growth in people's skills and confidence. This detailed spreadsheet documents all staff and volunteers' training and experience. This information is shared with individuals, so they can see their personal progress and growth. The matrix is a tangible way that people will be able to see their own learning and skills develop over time; this feeds into their improved confidence, better mental health and greater chances of employability.



“ When I started as a volunteer at LWR I was lacking confidence and experience. I'm now employed by LWR and act as a mentor to Kickstarters and volunteers. I feel very proud of that... ”

Collections team member

Skills are categorised by:



Modules from National Community Wood Recycling

We offer a range of training modules teaching staff and volunteers about the wood recycling industry



Citation approved micro qualifications

Working alongside Citation we offer a range of additional Health and Safety and HR micro qualifications. Ideal for people to add to their CV and for personal development



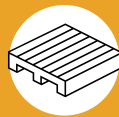
Hand and power tool training

We document people's training on all our hand and power tools



Retail experience

All retail tasks are broken down into bitesize tasks, enabling people to skill up and learn tasks such as pricing up timber, through to using the card machine!



Collections experience

Training includes working safely, understanding risk assessments. Through to the logistics and administration of using our digital WTN system



Product manufacture

Documenting the skills people have learned to fulfil inshop and online orders



Employability skills and additional training

This documents additional learning including making a CV, interview practice, and passing external training such as First Aid and CSCS qualifications

KICKSTARTERS & WORK EXPERIENCE

Boosting Employability

“

LWR has helped because I've gained experience to put on my CV to stand out from other people trying for the same apprenticeship. They helped with the interview by practising what it would be like, they also helped to improve my confidence with talking to people I don't know. ”

Jacob

KICKSTART
SCHEME

LifeSkills
Creating Brighter Futures

Jacob joined us as part of the 'Progressions work experience' program when he left school unsure on which direction to take. LWR supported him to learn all the aspects of our business working in the workshop, retail, and collections departments. After seven weeks he decided he enjoyed the woodwork and started applying for apprenticeships. We are proud to say that he successfully reached his goal and now has a full time apprenticeship in furniture making!

LWR have been working to develop our work experience program this year. Continuing partnerships with Progressions and the Kickstarter scheme. We have also expanded our offer to support more adults with SEND. We offer support with their CV's and extra training to help give them a step into employment.

“The whole experience of being in a work environment (and such a supportive one), and the discipline and socialisation this involves is tremendously beneficial. Ben seemed to fit right in. I was particularly impressed with how quickly he improved and listened attentively to your advice and instructions. ”

A testimonial from a caseworker at Mencap about a young persons development while on Work Experience with LWR



6

Work
placements
given



COLLECTIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

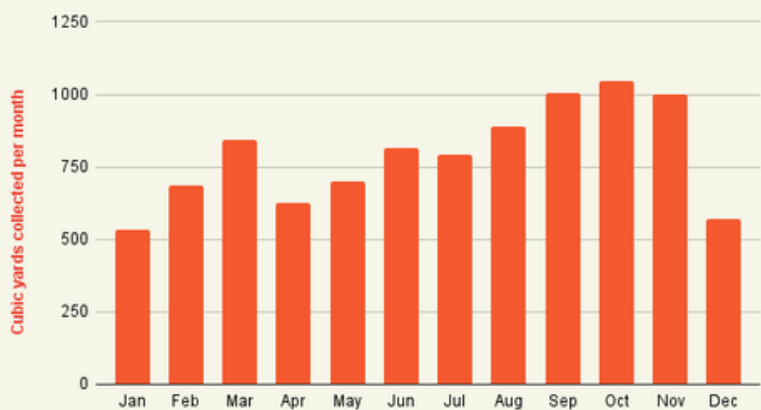
In 2022 we doubled our collection capacity and bought our second van. This has allowed us to divert even more wood waste from landfill, allowed us to create new jobs and provided new opportunities for work experience placements and volunteers!

2532
Tonnes of waste wood collected since the project began in 2018

1 NEW PERMANENT JOB CREATED

2 KICKSTARTER JOBS CREATED

Amount of waste wood collected in 2022



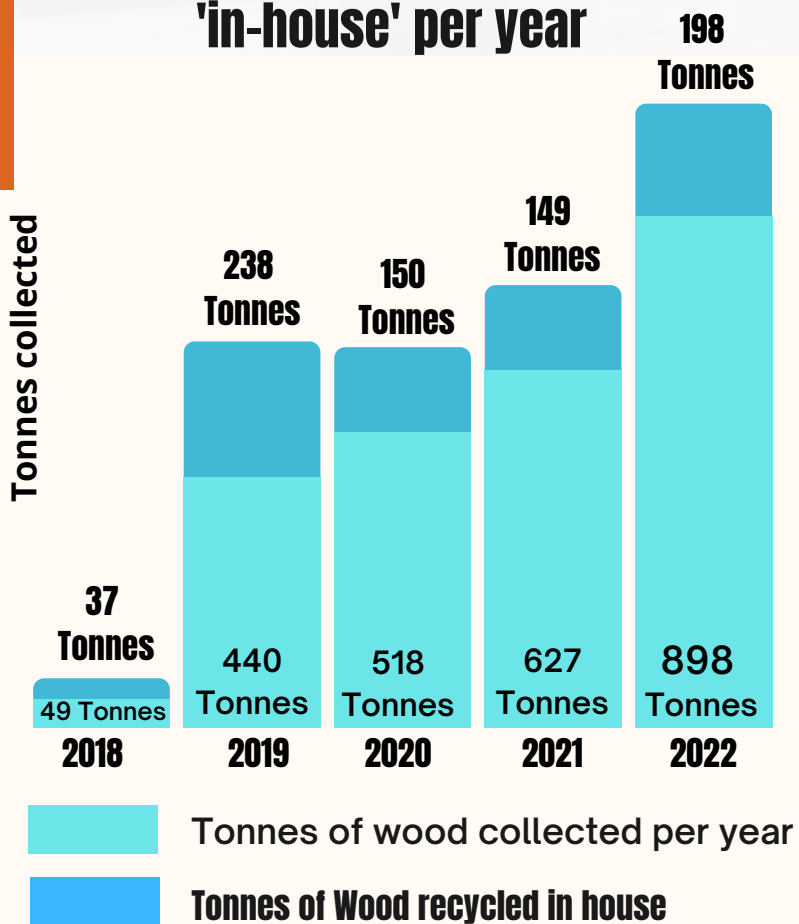
898 Tonnes Collected in 2022

That's a... **430%** increase in waste wood collections from 2021

198 TONNES wood recycled in-house

320% INCREASE IN WOOD RECYCLED IN-HOUSE COMPARED TO LAST YEAR

Total Wood Collected & Recycled 'in-house' per year



449 TONNES CARBON DIOXIDE SAVED IN 2022



RETAIL

LAUNCH OF THE ONLINE SHOP



Pallet wood walls range



These planters developed by volunteers, to be made completely by volunteers with recycled pallets. They are now on sale in our online shop.

We have also successfully been accepted to join the national 'Ready to Burn' scheme. Gaining accreditation and formalising standards of our firewood. This ensures that consumers are safe in the knowledge that the wood we produce is legal to burn at home in compliance with the new Air Quality Regulations. Helping people to make safer and cleaner choices when it comes to domestic burning.

This year has seen many changes for our Timber Shop. Our fantastic founding retail manager left us for pastures new, but we are happy to welcome the fantastic Mitch to the team. With the support of funds from the SSE our online shop was launched this year.

We now make in-house bespoke scaffold shelves and pallet wood walls, alongside selling products such as planters and a range of finishes and ironmongery. This has given the business added resilience and given our volunteers new projects to get involved in and develop. We have developed products which can be manufactured from our upskilled volunteers from the start to the end of the process.



Scaffold shelves, cut, sanded and finished to order



Moisture testing our firewood and kindling



This year we developed our showroom to be more attractive and showcase our products. More developments are planned for next year!

READY TO BURN



school for
social
entrepreneurs



power to
change

business in
community
hands

COURSES DELIVERING WOODWORK CLASSES TO THE PUBLIC

Throughout 2022 we have worked hard to develop the courses we offer to the public. We run a range of 'one off' courses such as; build a lap steel guitar, make a wood store, and fix your own wobbly chair, alongside Christmas craft classes.

This period of research and development has been amazing, supported by the LCF Resilience Fund. The research has streamlined our course offer, launching our new level system for our evening and weekend courses. Our beginners woodwork classes proved very popular, but people kept asking us "what's next?" so we have decided to focus on a set programme of levels for people to progress through to improve the skills that they learn with us.



92

Course participants in 2022

14

Courses run

28

Volunteers and Staff Gained free Woodwork and facilitation experience

LEEDS WOOD RECYCLING WOOD WORK COURSES

We want people to grow and progress their skills! So we are developing a new Level system for our courses! To take part on the Level 3 and 4 courses, we now suggest you to have completed a Level 2 to access them. This ensures that you'll be comfortable with the more complex techniques and power tools.

01

BEGINNERS

Learning the basics: Hand tools, measuring and understanding materials. These are also short craft based courses.

02

SKILLING UP

Gaining confidence with marking, measuring and how to keep safe.

03

INTERMEDIATE

Learning how to design and manufacture a project with a greater level of skill and precision

04

EXPERT

Confident with hand and some powertools, guided courses gaining experience



eventbrite

GIFT UP!

THE SKILL TREE

We successfully gained a grant from Leeds Community Foundation's 'Ideas that Change Lives fund'. The grant enabled us to run a project called 'The Skill Tree' running four 12 week courses teaching the basics of wood skills making products for our shop. We supported 24 adults from a range of backgrounds and abilities, assisting people with additional needs, poor mental health, brain injuries, refugees and people with autism to learn new skills for free!

Although this was our last year of running The Skill Tree, the project has sparked our passion for working with people who need additional support. We are excited that next year, again with the support of LCF, we are looking to employ a part time support worker who can ensure we continue to reach and support people to fulfil their potential.

Many of the Skill Tree participants have now joined our volunteer programme, so will be making more in the new year!



“The course really helped me to get back into socialising and I met people who I wouldn't have otherwise met, from all walks of life. I loved the chats and sitting outside and having dinner, the long conversations and sharing stories. Learning and sharing about where everyone else is in their lives.



I'm still friends with people now, and it's why I still volunteer as I enjoy having new networks and contacts. My best moment was finishing a dog bed that I made for my dog. It felt like a spark moment, a turning point where I thought, I can do anything.

Ellie

81%

of the Skill Tree participants identified as having mental health issues. All reported an increase in wellbeing as a result of the course.

Leeds
Community
Foundation

SPECIAL THANKS



We would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who helps Leeds Wood Recycling; the businesses and building sites that we work alongside, the loyal customers who support our shop, the amazing volunteers and staff, the social prescribing and volunteer networks, our funders and finally those of you who support us from afar on social media and beyond. This support is what makes our community, and we are grateful for the support that has helped us still be here.

We would like to give a special thanks to Egger, Northern Monk, Hillside and Clade who help so much with the daily running of our enterprise. We would also like to wish a warm thank you to Finch, our founding retail manager who left this year. Also a big thank you again to the Leeds Bread Co-op whose support helped us pilot additional collections, resulting in us getting our second van in 2021.



CLADE



Supported by
The Community Business Trade Up Programme



business in
community
hands



LOTTERY FUNDED

