

High Wycombe Central Aid Society

Registered Charity No. 201445

Furniture Project News

Volume 1, Issue 1

July 2008

Changes at Furniture Project

Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter. Please read on to find out about some of the key changes that will be happening shortly at the Furniture Project.

New Opening Times

From Tues 19 August we will be **closed** Mondays and Fridays, but **open for longer** on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Saturday mornings remain the same (see panel opposite for details of our new times).

Discount Cards

As part of a computerization of our systems, we will be producing **discount cards** for all registered customers. As from 19 August you will need to produce a discount card to produce items at the discounted price, or to buy any restricted items such as beds and wardrobes. Next time

you are at the warehouse, please ask for your new card at the welcome desk. If any of your personal details have changed, please bring in proof of benefit entitlement and address.

Registration Expiry

In future, your discount card will be valid for 1 year, after which time you will need to re-register with proof that you are still in receipt of benefits. Unless you have registered within the past year, your new card will be valid until **31 December 2008**.

Fair Use

Please remember that any items purchased as a registered customer must be *for your own use at your registered address*.

The Furniture Project is a charitable undertaking, set up to provide furniture at

affordable prices to those on low incomes. At times we have shortages of our 'restricted' items (e.g. beds and wardrobes), and consequently need to ensure that as many registered customers as possible are able to obtain them.

Therefore, as from 19 August we shall be introducing a formal '**Fair-use**' policy for all registered customers. This means that we will be placing an explicit limit on how many restricted items you may buy. Initially, this will be 2 double beds, 4 single beds and 2 wardrobes. Extensions to this limit will need to be agreed with the Furniture Project Co-ordinator.

In future we will suspend the registration of those we consider to be abusing the benefits of their registered status to buy well beyond their own personal needs.

New Opening Times

Please make a note of our new Warehouse opening times as from **Tues 19 August 2008**:

| | |
|--------|-------------------|
| Mon: | CLOSED |
| Tues: | 10 AM - 3.30 PM |
| Weds: | CLOSED |
| Thurs: | 10 AM - 3.30 PM |
| Fri: | CLOSED |
| Sat: | 10 AM - 12 Midday |
| Sun: | CLOSED |

Want to donate items?

We collect various kinds of furniture for sale / grant at our warehouse in West Richardson Street. If you have anything to donate, please contact us on (01494) 443459. Items must be in good condition, and comply with current safety legislation such as fire safety labels for upholstered furniture. We try to focus on smaller, basic items of furniture. We do ask for a voluntary financial donation towards our collection costs.

What do we Sell?

Typical discounted prices for many of the items we sell:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Single Beds | £30 - £35 |
| Double Beds | £50 - £60 |
| Chests of Drawers | £15 - £25 |
| Bedside Cabinets | £10 - £15 |
| Armchairs | £15 - £25 |
| Sofas | £25 - £50 |
| 3 Piece Suites | £60 - £80 |
| Table + 4 chairs | £30 - £45 |
| Wardrobes | £30 - £50 |

Summer Holiday 2008 Closure Dates

The Furniture Project will be closed for two weeks between Sat 2 August and Sun 17 August. We will re-open on Tues 19 August at our new opening times of 10.00 - 15.30 (see panel above right for details).

Collection Team Changes

March saw the retirement of our long-standing volunteer driver, Roy Healey. We wish Roy all the best for the future and are enormously grateful for all his hard work over the past 15 years. In April we recruited

a new face, George Stonhill, as our new driver and collection team supervisor. George says he is enjoying his new role very much. Joined by helpers from Scout Enterprises, George is out and about around Bucks collecting furniture as normal on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.



High Wycombe Central Aid Society

Registered Charity No. 201445

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Andrew's Column

We were extremely disappointed at the end of last year to learn that our charity's total annual grant of £10,000 from Wycombe District Council would not be renewed. Despite staff from both Wycombe District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council referring large numbers of people to us for help, we now receive no financial assistance from either authority. Going forward, this leaves the charity with a substantial ongoing funding shortfall which we will have to finance from sales, donations and other fundraising activities whilst remaining true to our charitable objectives.

I am very grateful to the Project's remaining funders, Chiltern District Council and Bucks Housing, for their continued financial assistance. Despite a challenging financial year ahead, at the Furniture Project we are committed to providing what has proved to be an essential service for many people over the past 15-20 years. At a time when recycling and re-use is increasingly topical it sometimes seems like we're fighting an uphill battle to save things from going to landfill!

We were very pleased, therefore, to be adopted by John Lewis, High Wycombe as their local 'charity of the year'. Staff from John Lewis joined our own volunteers to redecorate our furniture warehouse in May, and their 'Meet the Neighbours' fete in June was successful in raising nearly £1,800 for the charity. We are very much looking forward to working with John Lewis over the coming year. Also, thanks to some nifty application-writing from Clyde Perkins, our Secretary, we were lucky enough to get a grant towards a new van from the parent company of the Bucks Free Press (see picture below).

I'd like to say a big thank you to all our customers, staff and volunteers for their support.

Andrew Lyon (Furniture Project Co-ordinator)

What is Central Aid?

The High Wycombe Central Aid Society is a registered charity set up in 1906 by Dame Frances Dove, a key figure in Wycombe's history.

The Objects of the High Wycombe Central Aid Society as covered by its Trust Deed of 1906 are as follows:

** The alleviation of distress amongst persons resident in High Wycombe area.*

** To promote the welfare of persons who are aged or physically disabled.*

** To establish and maintain a system of organized personal service in the area, to encourage co-operation amongst voluntary and official agencies and to promote and support new effort.*

For over 100 years the Society has acted in support of these objectives, helping the people of High Wycombe.

Through staff and volunteers in our office in the town centre, we provide information on a wide range of topics, small grants, plus clothing and food on a limited basis, to those in need of help.

We run a pop-in for the over-50s twice weekly at the Reggie Goves Centre in High Wycombe. We also provide support for SSAFA, a charity that helps those who have been in the Armed Forces.

For more information about any of the above services, please call our office on 01494 535890.

Fridges, Freezers and Cookers.

We are currently not selling any of the above direct from the warehouse due to shortages. Instead, our office in Cornmarket is maintaining a waiting list to ensure that those in most need get priority when items are available. Unfortunately, this may mean a wait of many weeks.

Why the shortage? Well, every appliance has to pass a strict set of electrical safety and functionality tests. Additional items that fail these tests cannot be dumped for free - each additional fridge costs us £25 to dispose of, for example. Given the huge demand, we are currently looking at how we might be able to increase our capacity for dealing with used appliances in future.



New Project Van

A grant of £10,000 from the Gannett Foundation (The Bucks Free Press parent group) at the start of the year helped us to buy a replacement van (above), a Mercedes Sprinter. Our previous van, which we'd had for a good ten to twelve years, had become increasingly unreliable and consequently very costly to run.

With the current steep increase in fuel prices, the better fuel efficiency of the Sprinter has also helped us to avoid increasing our delivery charges. We hope to get many years service out of our new van.