

Friday 26 October
RECYCLING ENTERPRISE 'REFURNISH' NAMED YORKSHIRE'S TOP
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE



Doncaster Refurnish has been awarded first prize winning £10k in the Key Fund's Top Ten Social Enterprise Awards.

The awards mark the Key Fund's tenth anniversary since its first loan and were hosted at a celebratory event at the Magna Science Museum on Thursday 25 October. The Key Fund, a social enterprise itself, is now Britain's largest regional Community Development Finance Institution specialising in the social economy market.

The Top Ten enterprises were chosen from across ten different sectors including childcare, leisure, health, arts and renewable energy.

Bradford's Action for Business Limited took the second prize of £3k. Leeds Create were in third and awarded £2k. All three received sculptors handmade by artist Steve Blaylock out of Sheffield steel. Doncaster Refurnish formed in response to two factors: the lack of affordable furniture for disadvantaged people and the vast amounts of reusable furniture being buried in landfill.

To date for this financial year Refurnish made 13,309 collections of bulky household waste, received 125 shipments of retailer waste, diverted 504 tonnes from landfill and supported 10,500 individuals and families with the proceeds.

In addition this work has provided 11 ex-offender work placements and 79 training work placements for the long-term unemployed, engaged 149 students and pupils in educational activities, and supported 150 children through the annual 'Spirit of Christmas' event.

Matt Smith, Fund Manager at the Key Fund, said: "Refurnish is a truly entrepreneurial social enterprise which combines the delivery of social, environmental, and economic targets. It's not just about helping its employees, it makes a significant impact on local people who are in dire financial straits, developing new services so they don't fall into the murky world of loan sharks and other illegal activities."

Refurnish work closely with the local community, sharing its resources with schools, colleges, social education centres, theatres and community groups. New projects include a community scrapstore, a handyman service, and offering credit facilities at their shops through a partnership with Moneyline. People with learning difficulties and disabilities and the long-term unemployed are actively engaged. Andy Simpson, CEO of Refurnish, said: "We are just overjoyed at winning this award and I can't praise the Key Fund enough for helping us achieve the success we have to date."

"The Key Fund delivers. It always has done. There are lots of funding institutions out there that make promises, that talk a good story and shine in the eyes of the powers that be, but none deliver like the Key Fund. The Key Fund truly understands our sector, it lives and breathes it, it believes in what we strive to achieve."

In ten years the Key Fund has supported 2,000 organisations, aiding 6,500 training opportunities, 175 new business start-ups, and the creation or safeguarding of 1,822 jobs.

Ann Oldroyd, CEO of the Key Fund, said: "All the social enterprises we have worked with deserve recognition and it's been tough to judge. They are all winners because they judge success as something that goes beyond profit. We're proud of all the social enterprises we have helped to nurture over the last decade, here's to another ten years."

**About ABL: Second Place
Community Support & Information Finalist: Action for Business Limited**

Action for Business Limited was established in 1992 to support economic development and social cohesion in the severely disadvantaged area of Manningham in inner city Bradford.

ABL bought Carlisle Business Centre from Bradford Metropolitan District Council in 2003. It's a building that has become a catalyst for economic growth, social cohesion and a recognised community anchor.

The centre is home to 50 small and medium sized businesses, charities, social enterprises and statutory agencies, employing over 300 people; 25,000 visitors a year attend business and social events helping change perceptions of Manningham.

**About Create: Third Place
Hospitality & Catering Finalist: The Create Foundation CIC**

The Create Foundation, a Community Interest Company launched in 2007, provide innovative training and employment opportunities. It helps people who are homeless, marginalised, or vulnerable to rebuild their lives. Working in West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester and the North East, today Create operates premium corporate food services in three locations, a café, and a Good Food Guide listed restaurant.

In just over a year its Create Academy has welcomed around 300 people into its programme.

Picture caption: Front row left to right: Matt Smith, Fund Manager at Key Fund, Alistair Grimes Chair of Key Fund, Andy Simpson CEO of Refurnish, Ann Oldroyd, CEO of Key Fund with staff from Refurnish.

For all media enquiries, photos or interview requests, please contact Ann at Cause UK on 07534892715 or Ann@cause.uk.com

Notes to Editors

About the Key Fund

South Yorkshire was facing a grim future with the downturn in the steel and coal industries and the scourge of long-term unemployment was a black cloud over its future. In 1999 the Key Fund was born by a group of entrepreneurs from Locality (formerly the DTA), South Yorkshire Community Foundation and the Sheffield Community Enterprise Development Unit.

They pooled their experience and skills from working in the Third Sector with a philanthropic impulse to meet the glaring needs of budding social enterprises and community organisations. In 2002, the Key Fund escaped a culture dependant on grants and made its first loan.

Their objective remains the same as it did when it began: to remove the barriers within society and the financial markets that help propagate poverty and disadvantage.

Today, the Key Fund is a market leader in innovation recognising the nature and environment within which social businesses operate, namely; disadvantage and market failure. www.thekeyfund.co.uk

The Top Ten Key Fund Shortlist in full:

- **Arts & Creative Finalist: Higher Rhythm Ltd**
- **Community Support & Information Finalist: Action for Business Limited**
- **Training & Education Finalist: Barnsley Community Build**
- **Health & Social Care Finalist: CASA**
- **Community Assets/building Finalist: Darnall Forum Post Office**
- **Childcare Finalist: Cawthorne Children's Centre**
- **Leisure & Sports Finalist: Chapeltown Baths & Community Business**
- **Hospitality & Catering Finalist: The Create Foundation CIC**
- **Recycling Sector Finalist: Doncaster Refurnish**
- **Renewable Energy Sector Finalist: Settle Hydro**