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| A guide to donating surplus furniture and  equipment to the social enterprises, charities and community groups. | | |
|  | By donating assets you help to increase the impact of the charity and you maximise the value of the asset to the community |  |

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# Introduction

**Attempts to redistribute surplus assets internally can be stifled by planning, time and space pressures. Sadly, the result of failed redistribution is often a skip full of useful items**

There’s a positive flip side though. The charity sector is delighted when businesses and organisations consider them when they are trying to find new homes for their surplus assets. By donating items and assets to charity, you’re doing great environmental, social and financial work for your business.

It’s a **triple** win.

### Contents of this charity report

We are delighted to present this report to you, detailing several important facets of the relationship between large organisations and the charity sector.

#### Part One: Why you should donate your surplus to charity

* Warp It’s results
* Social gains
* Case study: Edinburgh City Council
* Case study: Sunderland’s Sharing Economy
* Case study: Henley Business School Decommission Project
* Interview with Ashley Scotland, Thriving Survivors
* Interview with Paul Dodd, CT Furniture

#### Part Two: Issues with donating to the charity sector

* Industry tips on ensuring charity donations work efficiently
* Warp It advice on donating to the charity sector
* Clear communication
* Access
* Resources
* Achievable targets for pickups
* Transfer of ownership documents
* Vetting charities
* Top anecdotes and heart-warming stories from our customers
* How to build networks

# Why you should donate your surplus to charity?

Let's explore the idea of this **triple** win.

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| **1** | **Financial  Impact.** |  | **2** | **Environmental Impact.** |  | **3** | **Social  Impact.** |
| **Instead of paying a waste contractor** to come and collect all your unwanted items and take them away, you work directly with the charity, who collect the items themselves, for free. This can also brings time savings- because you do not have to move the items in house. | |  | **By donating items, you save them from going to landfill**, where they will stay for eternity. On the other side, you also reduce the demand for production, cutting emissions in the supply chain. | |  | **Donating to charity improves your Corporate Social Responsibility,** **giving your organisation positive PR and social values** that customers and clients can see (if communicated well). Charities will use your unwanted or surplus assets to help the community, providing a further social benefit. | |

## Warp It results

Our platform has already facilitated the donation of more than £2 million worth of assets into the charity sector. This incredible feat is just the start, and so we’ve set the [**big goal of reaching £3 million**](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/furniture-reuse-charity-donation) by   
April 2018, giving us less than 100 days to get there!

**Since launching Warp It in 2011**, one of our main goals and activities has been using reuse to support charitable organisations, and it’s working. This year, we are tripling our efforts to support Warp It partners in making donations easier and smoother to process. We are working on safety and legal issues that have proved a hindrance in the past and providing a flow of resources (such as this report) to inform people on how and why donating to charity is beneficial to them.

## More on social gains...

Remember, Warp It is free to join for charitable organisations, so there’s no reason not to sign up. For businesses and organisations using Warp It, and looking to donate to charities, you will be comforted by the fact that all donations are tracked on weight of waste avoided, monetary value and carbon emissions avoided. You can report these as you wish, in order to show the social values of your business to website visitors and potential customers. [We have a press release template here.](https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/2694565/charity%20donation%20newsletter%20NOv%202018.docx)



If you’d like to see some real-life examples of organisations benefiting from making donations, take a look at these four case studies:

[Edinburgh University](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/it-reuse-edinburgh-university-alan-peddie)

[Horsham District Council](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/changing-culture-helen-peacock-horsham-council)

[Stirling Council](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/charity-donations-julie-mcphee-stirling-council)

[Edinburgh City Council](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/how-to-redistribute-surplus-assets-when-decommissioning-a-school-building)

## Edinburgh City Council



As the top donor on Warp It, with around £300,000 worth of donations, we feel it’s fair to highlight their incredible efforts in this report. The partnership between Warp It and Edinburgh City Council started in April 2016, and shortly after they used our service to aid with the [decommission of Portobello High School](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/2171/from_portobello_with_love).



Most of the assets were claimed by other schools, with a substantial portion also going to charity; these efforts rewarded the council with a cost avoidance of over £300,000 (they have now saved over £410,000 on our portal). The greatest news story that came out of this decommission was a shipping container filled with equipment that was sent for a new life in underprivileged schools in Ghana, where it’s common for children to sit on the floor or bring their own chairs to school.

## Sunderland’s Sharing Economy

One of the biggest donors on the Warp It system is the Sunderland Partnership, whose [case study you can read here](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/sunderland-kickstart-sharing-economy).

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To give a brief insight, dozens of private, public and third sector organisations in Sunderland came together to create a sharing economy using the Warp It tool. With Sunderland City Council facing a huge restructure, building closures and service changes, they found hope for the abundance of furniture and assets that sat obsolete by joining forces with Warp It.



The Sunderland Partnership now has more than 300 schools and 370 charities on the system, helping thousands of local people. The money saved through avoided disposal costs and sustainable procurement decisions has been redirected into a system that funds training, support and development for local communities.

## Henley Business School Decommission Project



In 2015, Henley Business School in Berkshire were looking to [clear out a large furniture storage unit](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/henley-business-school-finance-building-redistribution-project), filled with desks, cabinets, pedestals, chairs and more. By combining with various local businesses, charities and individuals, they were connected with a charity called [CleanConscience](http://cleanconscience.org.uk/).

This partnership lead them to be able to support the [Kori Women’s Development Project](http://kwdp.org/what-we-do/), by contributing towards the cost of a shipping container, and donating a large amount of high quality furniture towards the [Sandy Raffan Memorial Library](http://kwdp.org/the-sandy-raffan-memorial-library/). As well as this, they were able to donate all the broken chairs to a local resident, originally from Cameroon, who personally fixed the chairs and sent them back to his home country to support a charity close to his heart.

As you can see, acting charitably can have incredible benefits on multiple continents!

## Interview with Ashley Scotland, Thriving Survivors

C:\Users\kyrad\Dropbox\Warp-it\Feb-18\Thriving surv.pngAshley managed to kit out her entire building using furniture claimed on our online portal.

[Thriving Survivors](http://www.thrivingsurvivors.co.uk/) ‘are dedicated to improving the lives of survivors of trauma by increasing their confidence, self-awareness, self-esteem and helping them to discover who they really are and what they want to achieve in life.’

Few causes need free office furniture more than charities, which is why we make it possible!

[Read Ashley’s Warp It journey here.](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/furnish-office-free-ashley-scotland-thriving-survivors)

## Interview with Paul Dodd, Community Transport





We interviewed Paul Dodd from **Community Transport** Furniture division, who are one of our largest charity claimants. If you want to see the full scope for potential of this service, look no further.

* How they reached 100 tonnes of reused office furniture
* How reselling claimed furniture supports their local community in a huge way
* How ‘too good to be true’ isn’t true, but it is very good!
* How bulk collections are better for everyone than small collections
* How Community Transport solved a huge waste issue for the University of Sunderland

[Read Paul’s amazing journey with Warp It right here.](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/donating-furniture-and-equipment-to-charity)

# Issues with donating to the charity sector

Charitable donations are wonderful for all parties involved, but sometimes a few hiccups and hurdles block what could be, a really positive activity.

In this next section, we will be exploring the most common problems that organisations and charities face in handing over assets. We’ve asked some of our customers for their insights, which they were happy to provide, before we explore all the issues that we know can prove tricky to overcome.



These following issues most commonly stop charitable donations:

1. ‘Legal issues’
2. ‘Perceived legal liabilities’
3. ‘Concerns about the 3rd party re-selling the asset’
4. ‘Dealing with bad eggs in the past’
5. ‘Too much to donate’
6. ‘Not enough to donate’

We asked our customers

*‘What are your top tips for ensuring donations to 3rd parties happen in the most effective way possible?’*

[John Bailey](http://blog.warp-it.co.uk/using-bees-to-engage-on-sustainability-and-other-tips-to-make-your-projects-buzz), Head of Sustainability, owner of a delightful moustache and manager of beehives at the **University of London** told us

"Generally, we get them to liaise with the building contact most suitable, often the Building Manager or Porters. They have the onus on them to get their collection vehicle to us to make the collection. Communication is key to a successful Warp It experience, and generally it works well. It's always nice to see the stuff go to a new home rather than a skip, and every time we successfully 'donate' an item to a charity it helps both parties, so it's normally a very happy experience!’."

Alan Peddie, Projects Coordinator at the **University of Edinburgh**   
(and their Warp It lead), told us:

"Having a good, agreed system that makes everyone happy is great. For instance, we donate to a social enterprise and have a good agreement written up that means everyone knows what to expect. Making sure we then articulate the positives of the agreement to people so that all the good parts of the project are highlighted (waste diversion, cost savings, jobs in charity sector, circular economy integration, helping people who are worse off, etc, etc)"

# Warp It’s top tips for donating to the charitable sector

1. **Ensuring a clear line of communication**

It's very common for charities to be staffed by volunteers, in order to maximise their budget and help as many people as possible. To help these volunteers, and the charitable organisation through donation, you first need to find whomever is in charge of accepting donations and begin liaising with them. When donating to a charity registered with Warp It, all of the contact details will be provided to you, to make communication even simpler.

1. **Access arrangements**

As well as having a clear line of communication, you need to have a transparent dialogue in which both parties express their expectations. You need to make strong agreements about the time that they will turn up, where they can park, and who will do the lifting and shifting. It is very important that each arty has a main contact and swap mobile numbers!!

1. **Resources**

Every site has different health and safety policies and visitor guidelines. It's your duty to inform charities who may be coming to pick up items about what is expected them on site, and it can be very helpful to say how heavy items might be in terms of manpower and lifting requirements. To save yourself time in the long run, it may be worth creating one document that outlines everything the visiting charities need to know.

1. **Setting achievable targets for pickups**

Give plenty of time for a pickup to be arranged, it's unlikely that a charity will be able to come within the first day, as they have to find a volunteer and a van to do the collection. It's a good idea to tell the claimant how long before the item needs to be gone, and then working together to agree the perfect time and date.

1. **Making the charity sign a transfer of ownership document**

With the Warp It system, your transfer of ownership document is produced automatically. As a show of good faith, we recommend that the charity brings their claim confirmation with them to identify themselves.

1. **Vetting the charity to make sure they are who they say**

Of course, you can use Google to learn about the charity themselves. If you're satisfied with that, simply ask them to bring ID along, or maybe have a chat about their plans for the assets, if you're concerned about what might happen to them.

1. **Set up your own Charity portal on   
   Warp It to increase leadership**

Your organisation will probably already have links with local charity and community groups.

Warp It is the perfect way to strengthen bonds and collaborate.

It is possible to set your own local charity portal up. This has worked very well with other customers.

The benefits of setting up a local portal for charities is:

* Great demonstration of Civic Leadership
* Brand the charity portal up with your logos
* Brand the charity portal up with your organisation name
* Better, more meaningful relationships with local charity & community groups
* Better communications with local charity for one off announcements etc
* You control who joins the portal
* You control the portal settings
* Charities apply to you directly

If you want to set up your own charity portal - please contact us with the details of the person who will lead on it and we will action this for you

1. **Link with local Voluntary Community group organisation**

A great strategy is to approach the local umbrella organisation for charities and voluntary groups in the area. These organisations are like a member group and represent local 3rd sector. When the umbrella groups join up to Warp It they get their own portal. All their members can join. This is a very efficient way of building your network as you only have to deal with one friend request.

Examples of very popular community umbrella groups include Glasgow Social Enterprise Network (GSEN) ([warp-it.co.uk/GSEN](https://www.warp-it.co.uk/GSEN)) and Sunderland Voluntary Community Action ([warp-it.co.uk/VCAS](https://www.warp-it.co.uk/VCAS)) who combined have facilitated £100K of surplus assets into their membership - saving £50,000!

To find your local 3rd sector umbrella organisation use google and the search term “location voluntary community group” see [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk](https://www.warp-it.co.uk/www.ncvo-vol.org.uk) or speak to your outreach department of your organisation. If you want your local umbrella organisation to join we can get them set up. Just let us know.

1. **The organisation’s staff have the most meaningful links with local 3rd sector.**

To encourage 3rd sector ties via staff, send your staff an email. These relationships prove to be very strong and as such transfers are more efficient than other 3rd sector groups. Please see Appendix 1 for an email template to send to staff.

## Here are some of our favourite charity donation anecdotes

**John Bailey** told us

“One of my favourites was donating chairs to the London Fire Brigade. It's great to know their money is being spent on protecting Londoners rather than on furniture, especially at a time when there's been a lot of news around funding cuts. Hopefully they've been able to furnish using Warp It and fight fires with their budgets!”

**Alan Peddie** added

“We have donated almost 500 PCs to Remade in Edinburgh which has helped them employ more staff, allowed us to have a positive impact on the environment and for our senior management saving some cash. Everyone wins!!!”

**Trudy Cunningham** shared an experience of hers, saying

“Very small charities often have very little. Through word of mouth I received a phone call from a new Meningitis charity in Dundee, saying they had got an office but no furniture. I asked how many desks they needed, and it was only two, we get gave them those, as well as 2 pedestals and 2 chairs. They were absolutely delighted that they could furnish their office without using their limited charity funds. This is just one of many stories like this...”

# How to build networks

**Do you like what you’ve read in this report**, and you are either an organisation who would like to make donations, or you are a charity in much need of assets, visit our [Build Networks page](https://warp-it.co.uk/buildnetworks) to learn how easy it is to connect.

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|  | **We want to facilitate** as much reuse and asset donations as possible, with a target of hitting £3m in donations by April.  **With your support**,  we can all be a part of achieving this! |  |

# Appendix 1

**Email to staff seeking 3rd sector connection – please copy and send to staff**

|  |
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| Dear [staff]  Are you involved with a local charity, community group, faith group or club?  **Are you looking for office furniture or other resources for your charitable social purpose activities? Look no further!**  XXX have signed up to a resource reuse network called Warp It. The system allows staff to give away and claim surplus resources for their work activities - saving procurement spend. More info here (XX link to your internal Warp It pages XX)  However sometimes we cannot find homes inside the organisation in the timeframe and these resources become surplus to requirements- so we pass these to local charitable groups.  The online portal allows charitable and community groups to claim surplus or underused resources from larger organisations, like a corporate Freecycle.  Resources include furniture, fixtures and fittings, stationery, files curtains even office plants!..anything really.  To sign your local community or charity group up for free visit www.warp-it.co.uk/charities. You must be a charity, social enterprise, community or faith group delivering a social objective to join. So, sports clubs, scouts and brownies and any groups serving a social or charitable purpose can join.  We are encouraging all third sector organisations to join the scheme. It is free, so why not? Save money on your purchasing spend.  XXXX and others are uploading spare resources now - in fact we have some resources on the system now which if not claimed internally will become available on XXX- so keep an eye out! |