



Richard Mehmed

Community Wood Recycling is a fast-growing UK network of social enterprises. Our aims are to:

- Save resources by *reusing* waste wood that might otherwise be landfilled;
- Provide life-changing job and training opportunities to disadvantaged people.

Although the enterprises are committed to delivering great social and environmental outcomes, they are completely financially sustainable; generating 100% of their income through trading.

Enterprises work mainly with the building industry and provide a highly competitive and efficient wood waste collection service, so well as helping to relieve poverty and reduce carbon, customers can save money on their waste disposal (an even more powerful motivator to use the service).

The concept is spreading quickly because the business model is simple; it is:

- *Low-capital intensive*; very little start-up capital is required. Enterprises have been set up for as little as £12,000.
- *Low-tech*; No highly trained staff or expensive, high-tech machinery is needed.

The big environmental benefit is that the wood is *reused locally*; it is sold back to the community for DIY/building work or made into wood products, so has the smallest possible carbon footprint.

The activity is creates lots of lower-skilled but highly worthwhile work for those marginalized from the labour market – such as ex-offenders, drug or alcohol abusers, or those with mental health or learning difficulties. They are able to develop their confidence and self-esteem and learn a lot of transferable skills in a supportive but disciplined and financially sustainable social enterprise.

For so many of our people it's the crucial step towards getting back into the job market and pulling themselves out of poverty.

We are a great example of how social enterprises in the UK are helping to relieve poverty by proving a place for people to take control of their lives and find a path to an improved standard of living.

Could Community Wood Recycling work in Switzerland?

For more information please call 0044 1273 20 30 40 or email info@communitywoodrecycling.org.uk

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Community Wood Recycling