What is ReSpace Projects?

Using wasted space for social good

ReSpace Projects is a not-for-profit company set up to help make better use of our wasted resources, in order to positively impact both society and the environment.

We believe that by focusing our efforts on freeing up space for community use - and by sharing skills, resources and information - we can help create stronger societies, better equipped to deal with the challenges we face, on both a local and global scale. Many excellent organisations exist who share these goals, but if we are to succeed we need to collaborate in the building of an infrastructure which will support these efforts.

Our model, ‘holistic urban regeneration’, is a fairly simple system of sharing resources - from white goods and furniture, to wooden pallets and people. Such wasted resources are largely ignored in modern society, yet the value they can provide tends to positively impact across the wider community – hence we call it ‘holistic’.

This infrastructure will manifest as physical buildings in which to store resources, provide training and organise community actions. It also includes the technical support and data systems needed to create and maintain records of resources and to help connect the dots, such as the need to transport various resources between projects.
The Hive Dalston

We set up a showcase building, Hive Dalston, to demonstrate the feasibility of providing social and environmental value, using mainly wasted resources. Hive Dalston pays its own bills but no rent – working on a system of collaboration between the landlord, council and community. The Hive Dalston was just one example of how such empty buildings could be used, although in the future such use will be determined by local communities.

The building itself was empty for nearly eight years, before ReSpace Projects was given permission for its use by the landlord, a local developer: He gave us a 6 month rent-free lease with the remit that we should facilitate the building for use by the local community. Within two weeks of getting permission – on a budget of about £250 – The Hive Dalston had opened its doors to the community.

In the first six months we hosted everything from art exhibitions and fundraisers, to conferences, skateparks and wellness days. Our landlord was so impressed that he extended our lease - twice and we’ve since been going for over a year. Since this time we’ve engaged with about 8000 members of the community, helped about 70 charities and engaged with nearly 250 local businesses.

The next step is to put in place the necessary infrastructure required to support this system.
THE FAMILY’S PROJECT

This would be a space for local families to share childcare duties by offering creche facilities and after school activities, with an event space for fundraisers for local causes. There would also be a focus on growing food and providing regular healthy meals.

HOMELESS NOT HELPLESS PROJECT

This building will enable homeless people to shower, use clothes washing facilities and internet, get a healthy free meal and also access a range of advice services. Our dream is that some of these service users are able to go on and join the team running this Hive Hub.