



Brimscombe Mills Impact Report

2022/2023

"I LOVE COMING HERE! LOVE MANIFEST AS A REAL COMMUNITY
HAPPENING"

Brimscombe Mills customer





Executive Summary

It is great to introduce our second Brimscombe Mill impact report. It has been an amazing year of change, growth and challenge. We fully opened the new Mill site and all the work we had done returning the building back to use appears vindicated by the social outputs in this document.

All 83 staff who contributed to this work can reflect on the last year knowing that we have given it our best. After opening, we spent the first 6 months stabilising the companies and group as we opened and returned to trading. The second half of this year has started the process of trying to draft a Grace Network Blueprint to answer the question: what would we tell a new community who wanted to copy what we do in Brimscombe?

The need for this blueprint is, in part, driven because we get asked all the time "can you help us run one of these spaces in our community?" and we don't have an answer to how we actually do it. It is, in part, driven by investment we received to launch new sites in Gloucester and Cirencester. Equally, it is to help us reflect on the journey we have been on and understand who we are.

When planning out activities and businesses we train staff not to focus on what they do or how they do it but to start with why. Why reveals the core motivation and drives the longevity of a project. It seems sensible to share my why here to show why we have done all this work collectively:

The world doesn't seem right. It seems broken, unfinished, unfair and unhelpful, on a personal, community and global scale. Things are not working. Despite lots of doctors, people end up ill. Despite lots of police, people still feel scared. Despite millions of people in our country, people still end up lonely; and despite trillions of pounds, people end up poor. Every manifesto that has been written to solve these issues seems to be either self-serving to those who wrote it, or a nod to the problem that quickly returns to the safe ground of compromise. Yet those who feel lost, lonely, hopeless or poor don't want compromise, they want power, and agency to change. In my early 20s I rediscovered the proclamation of Luke 4, and found that it articulated the future I long for.

"To show the vulnerable that change is possible, to help free people who feel trapped and tell the world a new way of living, to help free people from the things, systems and choices that oppress them, to proclaim a new start, a second chance of life."



In response to this why, we didn't want to be part of the system, albeit a nice part of it, just helping people. Instead the fiery words in Luke 4's promise to call us to change the whole thing. That is why we can't settle on just being a nice place. We try to go beyond it. In the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer: "We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself."

I hope that when reading this impact report you will see the ways in which we are trying to break the wheel. To create a new economy and to evidence that we can do it using social enterprise as a replacement for the broken capitalism that stalks us all. The new blueprint is nearly finished and we are days away from signing our lease for Cirencester.

Next will be Gloucester and then, who knows? For now we are pleased to serve our community in Brimscombe and play our small part in proclaiming a new start for people, planet and community.

Will M

WHAT IS IN THIS IMPACT REPORT?

This report covers all the businesses that were based out of Brimscombe Mill in 22/23. As you read through you will see a section for each business but before then are some pages about how our site works and our process for change. If you want to know more details about anything just come and visit or drop us a line on will@thegracenetWORK.org.uk

"THIS WEEK I DISCOVERED BRIMSCOMBE MILL. AN AMAZING NETWORK OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES ALL HOUSED IN ONE PLACE ALONG THE STROUDWATER CANAL.

ALL WITH A COLLECTIVE AIM TO PROVIDE FOR ALL. A RETREAT FOR A QUIET SIT DOWN, A WARM NUTRITIOUS MEAL, LOW PRICED FURNITURE AND CHILDREN'S CLOTHES, TOYS AND EQUIPMENT. THE BIKE DROP OFFERS A SUSTAINABLE DELIVERY SERVICE IN STROUD ALONG WITH SERVICING AND ADVICE."

Brimscombe Mills customer



Our Home

At the core of the Grace Network's vision for a new economy is a focus on making our economy more place based. That is to say that we take things offline and build a real, physical community where people can meet, trade and work collectively. Last year we faced the biggest challenge to this focus- we were made homeless more hastily than we planned for as our warehouse was levelled for a new housing project.

It was ironic, having survived a global pandemic and produced 80,000+ meals for our community that we nearly collapsed due to a lease issue. We couldn't find a new site that we could move into. All we could muster was a derelict, Victorian Mill. The new "warehouse" wasn't fit for purpose. It was totally derelict- no electricity, no water, holes in the roof, no flooring, graffiti on the walls. We had to rebuild it and trust we could renovate it to a standard that would allow us to continue to trade safely. We also decided that we wouldn't make any staff redundant to save money whilst we renovated.

The entire 46-person team stopped working in their day jobs and became builders for 3 months (aided by another 50+ volunteers). We painted, cleaned, concreted, scraped and sawed. The space came together step by step.

The move became an embodied totem to our commitment to doing things differently. We took a broken, undervalued space and have turned it into a multi award winning enterprise hub. Since then we have grown our existing businesses, set up new enterprises and created new projects, and now have financial capital to invest into new sites in Cirencester and Gloucester. We have grown the staff from 46 to 83 in the space of 12 months.

All this came from sticking to our core values of optimism, hard work, generosity, risk taking and fast paced work. It seemed an impossible task but we did it.

FROM THIS...

TO THIS...



"WONDERFUL, SO PLEASED TO SEE THESE BUILDINGS ARE BEING UTILISED AND PROVIDE A MEETING PLACE FOR THE COMMUNITY."

Brimscombe Mills customer



REUSE & RESTORATION.

BRINGING DERELICT BUILDINGS BACK IN COMMERCIAL USE.

UNITING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY TOGETHER THROUGH VOLUNTEERING AND WORKING TOGETHER.

1,300m²

Through significant renovation and repair works we have bought 1,300m² of derelict warehousing back into active and vibrant use. These buildings were not occupied for twenty years due to the complexities of the site. In navigating various challenges we have brought these buildings back into the local community and economy.

26 tonnes CO₂ embodied carbon a year

The potential alternative of commissioning a new build site of the same scale would use approximately 1050 CO₂e tonnes of embodied carbon (these are the emissions from construction).
26 tonnes CO₂e of embodied carbon is saved annually at Brimscombe Mills by reuse of our derelict building*

*Carbon figures based on assumption of 50 year building life span for industrial buildings. Data source - 0.8 tonnes Co₂e/m² Carbon footprint benchmarking data for buildings, David Collins Istructe 2020

Over 1,500 community volunteer hours, alongside our 46 staff and contractors, were put into Brimscombe Mill. Our local community came together in an incredible way to support us.

1,500 hours

"WHAT A BEAUTIFUL PLACE! SUCH A RELAXED AND POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE AND PHILOSOPHY- INSPIRATIONAL. WE ARE A GROUP OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS FROM BRISTOL ESCAPING THE CITY. COMING HERE HAS BEEN A GREAT START TO THE WEEKEND

THANK YOU"

Brimscombe Mills customer



Seven Spaces

MOVING FORWARD TO BUILD MORE COMMUNITY...

Beyond the businesses we run, we are trying to develop a community of change makers. People who can lead new businesses in new spaces in the future. To help us create a space for transformation we have been working to develop a framework of place based community development through a system that we call the Seven Sacred Spaces. There isn't enough space or time to explain the full theory behind this here but in simple terms they are 7 physical places in our site that each hold a different element of community life.

Most large workplaces (think Renishaw or Google) will pay for and run a number of additional extra bits that they build in order to help deliver the company's goals. This will often include a canteen, meeting spaces, recreation activities (John Lewis own a golf course) and even corporate vacation homes for staff (Timpsons). For us we focus on spaces that help people grow, communities gather and enterprises flourish.

Our approach to this -

RETREAT, CHAPEL, LIBRARY, CHAPTER HOUSE, REFECTORY, CLOISTERS, GARDEN.

We plan to build all 7 but so far we have the retreat, garden, refectory, and cloisters built, we anticipate the others being finished in 2023/2024. Some explanation of the spaces we have are below:

THE RETREAT

A small space to be by ourselves. This is a place to be alone with our own thoughts and to explore what else is there in the quiet. We encourage people to practise daily reflection in our retreat.



"WONDERFUL FRIENDLY PLACE, NEEDED WHEN FEELING LOW."

Brimscombe Mills customer

"LOVE THIS SPACE! I GET THE FEELING WE'RE PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL."

Brimscombe Mills customer



THE GARDEN

A place where commerce and business can take place. This is the heart beat of the site, made up of the group of social enterprises that make up a Grace Network hub. Working here helps us find unity and purpose, and all are welcome to come, have a job and explore their place in the world. At its best the garden provides a place of identity, belonging, fulfilment and satisfaction.



THE REFECTORY

A place of hospitality and eating together for staff, the Long Table helps facilitate this. Done well, the shared meal becomes a place for fun, supporting each other, sharing ideas and making friends. This is what is needed to give people the strength to change and contribute.

THE CLOISTERS

A place of welcome and acknowledgement. These are the public areas of the Grace Network hubs where we greet visitors to our site and the places where we bump into each other. We use this space so that when people come on site we can show them we're part of a bigger vision of which they can become active members.



"WHAT A FABULOUS PLACE! REALLY LIFTED MY MOOD & SPIRIT. LIFE CHANGING FIND."

Brimscombe Mills customer



The Mill Collective

Each social enterprise has their own social impact goals and ways of working, however we believe that the only way to change the global economy is to work together. Like a 5 cord rope, we are stronger if we work as one single rope as opposed to 5 threads. Our businesses are owned collectively, work collectively and have the collective goal of bringing social justice to our local area. Our broadest, foundational goal is captured in the Brimscombe Mills mission statement:

"TO SHOW THE VULNERABLE THAT CHANGE IS POSSIBLE, TO HELP FREE PEOPLE WHO FEEL TRAPPED AND TELL THE WORLD A NEW WAY OF LIVING, TO HELP FREE PEOPLE FROM THE THINGS, SYSTEMS AND CHOICES THAT OPPRESS THEM, TO PROCLAIM A NEW START, A SECOND CHANCE OF LIFE."

The genesis of our social impact journey came from these words. Between this mission statement and the social outputs of the collective companies lies another level of social impact:

"THE TRADING AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF AN ENTIRE HUB ADDED TOGETHER"

These impacts tie us together as a collective. They come to life when you see someone come to a Pay As You Can meal, spend 20 minutes in our retreat before meeting a friend in the Kids' Stuff play area and buying a handful of beautiful children's clothes for just a few pounds. It creates joy, beauty and impact that moves above just giving a meal or just sharing clothes.

Equally, this collective impact allows us to have firm conversations with those in charge of our local economy- Council leaders, titans of industry and influencers- that combine together the broad impacts as each company may recycle a little but put the outputs together and we reveal our collective impact and demonstrate how our social economy is more than the sum of our parts.

OUR IMPACTS COLLATED

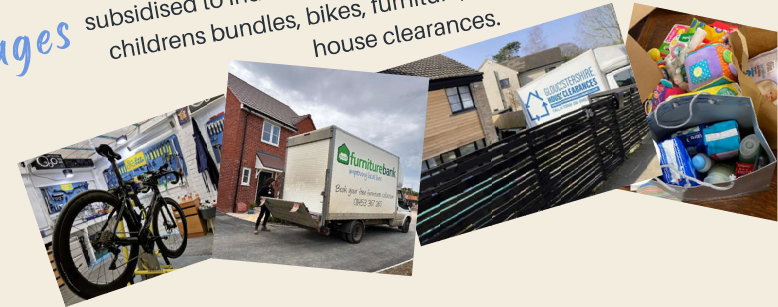
264 tonnes
264 tonnes of items reused through our enterprises during the year. This is 1.015 tonnes reused each working day.



63,084 hours
63,084 hours of employment created across our businesses. These jobs range from full time Monday to Friday to part time hours which fit around family life. As well as creating paid employment we also want to create a working environment which allows all of our staff to be whole at work. We use the 7 sacred spaces to create a space where we can grow an individuals whilst growing our enterprises.

941 referral packages

941 referral packages were given out for free or heavily subsidised to individuals and families in need. These include childrens bundles, bikes, furniture, sport club spaces and house clearances.



Our enterprises produced 83,649 meals across the year. These include school meals, meals eaten at our Mill and freezer of love meals. This is 322 meals every working day.

83,649 meals



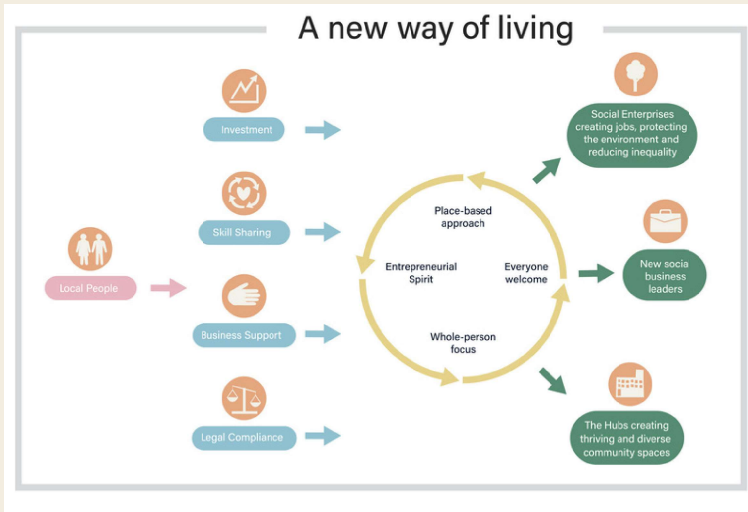
17,760 activities



17,760 activity sessions that our enterprises put on were attended by local children and families. This includes school PE sessions, after school clubs, holiday clubs, children and family activities down at the Mill and teenage cooking courses in our glade.



We have a clear sense of how we tie together the team and businesses that work in our collective. This is our process:



THE PRIMARY INGREDIENT IS LOCAL PEOPLE

Grace Network run compliance and central services for all the businesses in the Mill. This means that the business leaders can focus on growing their businesses and social outputs without having to spend time and brain power on essential business functions which can take energy away from achieving their aims. This ranges from book keeping to insurance to running the building. The Grace Network provide a fully serviced office for all the businesses on site. The energy of the subsidiary business staff then is fully focused on revenue, social outputs and community building.

Our community is built up through welcoming everyone, being place based whilst having an entrepreneurial spirit focussed on growth of the entire person, not just the business' growth.

This creates the collective outputs above and create new business leaders, thriving hubs of community and a big range of social outputs.

"THIS PLACE IS MAGIC. I HAVE A 1 YEAR OLD AND THREE OLD AND IT'S A SAFE, CARING, GROOVY, FABULOUS PLACE. THANK YOU."

Brimscombe Mills customer



PLACEMENTS

The Grace Network runs a placement scheme to create paid for on the job work placements for people who are some of the furthest away from employment.

These placements are housed in our own businesses which allow supportive placements in a community setting.

Once the placement is over we help guide them into new employment opportunities.



9

9 placements trialed or in place since the scheme started in Sept 22.

OUR TEAM

7,362

Hours of paid employment. We believe that everyone needs paid employment and so we do not have any volunteers working with us. Instead we pay all our staff, however we acknowledge that not everyone wants full time work and so we produce jobs that fit around our staff's family and personal situations.



"LOVE THIS SPACE! GET THE FEELING WE'RE PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL."

Brimscombe Mills customer



Gloucestershire House Clearances

Gloucestershire House Clearances' vision is of a new circular economy where the waste we all produce is better recycled, reused and recirculated. If we do this then we can create new jobs, reduce our impact on the planet and make our economy more vibrant. We believe that everything has a place on this earth and can be saved from becoming landfill. We are constantly on the look out to create new waste reduction solutions. Most recently we invested in a new bit of sophisticated kit to salvage rare earth metals out of electrical equipment.

One persons rubbish is another person's treasure.

"CLEARING THE HOUSE OF A FAMILY MEMBER, WHEN A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE HAS HAPPENED IN THEIR LIVES IS NEVER EASY. THE PROCESS WAS MADE EASIER, KNOWING THAT SO MUCH OF THE CONTENTS WOULD BE PUT TO SUCH GOOD USE. WHETHER THAT WAS THROUGH THEIR NETWORK OF CHARITY SHOP OUTLETS, FURNITURE DISTRIBUTION TO VULNERABLE PEOPLE NEEDING SUPPORT, OR ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND RECYCLING OF UNUSABLE OR BROKEN ITEMS."

Clearance customer

CREATING A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

114 tonnes
87%

114 tonnes of household items we have collected have been reused and recycled.

This is 87% of everything we have cleared.



"EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE FROM THIS WONDERFUL COMPANY. TIM WAS SO HELPFUL FROM THE GET-GO, OUR TEAM ON THE DAY WAS EXEMPLARY AND SO TOLERANT. AND I LOVE THE FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY. THANK YOU!!!!!!"

House clearance customer

13 tonnes of metal has been recycled.

Recycling and reusing one tonne of metal saves 1.67 tonnes of CO2, reduces air pollution by 86%, water use by 40% and water pollution by 76%. *

*Source: Stenna recycling

13 tonnes

10 tonnes

10 tonnes of bric a brac has been recycled through our pay-as-you-can pop up shops. This includes everything from kitchenware to clothes to garden utensils! We believe that a truly circular economy can be created whereby we no longer need to buy new, but can re purpose items that a person no longer needs.

OUR TEAM

6,825

Hours of paid employment. We believe that everyone needs paid employment and so we do not have any volunteers working with us. Instead we pay all our staff, however we acknowledge that not everyone wants full time work and so we produce jobs that fit around our staff's family and personal situations.



COMMUNITY CLEARANCES

3

3 subsidised clearances undertaken free of charge. We provide clearances to customers referred to us free of charge. Reasons for these clearances can range from low income to extreme hoarding.



Bike Drop

Helping our planet, improving our health and building our community one bike ride at a time.

Our aim is simple- Help people to get cycling!

We are serious about the benefits of cycling and aim to remove some of the barriers through the work of our community interest company.

We refurbish used bikes, service any bike or E-bike in-house or at our mobile workshop events, teach cycle mechanics, and operate an E-bike courier service.

If we are going to get more people on bikes we need to grow the servicing capacity of our communities. We set up our training workshop in January 2020 and launched public servicing in May 2020.

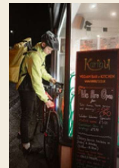
The Bike Drop started as a delivery network during COVID. We quickly realised we were on to something and started the first moves towards a local delivery network for Stroud District businesses.

DELIVERIES

5,416 KM 5,416 kilometers cycled in the year. This is the equivalent of our riders cycling to Sri Lanka.

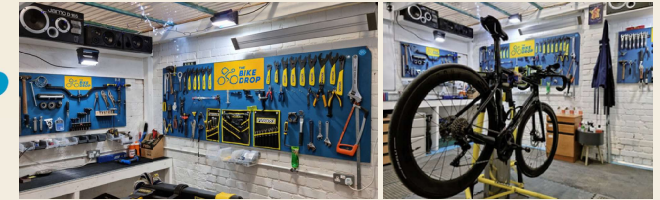
8,189 addresses delivered to in the year. This includes magazines and brochures to shops, bread and food items to houses and letter drops for Stroud District Council.

1,387 KG 1,387 kg carbon saved doing the journeys on ebike. If these deliveries were done by van they would have produced 1,468 kg of carbon. By doing these journeys by bikes they produced only 81kg of carbon.



"THESE ARE PROVEN SERVICES, OFTEN DELIVERING QUICKER THAN ANY NATIONAL CHAIN CAN."

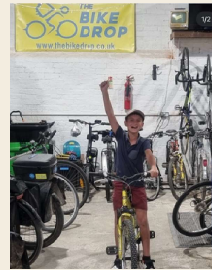
Tony Davey, MBCS CBA Chairman of Stroud and District Chamber of Trade and Commerce



SERVICING

Every bike we service and repair helps us to achieve our mission of putting more and more bikes on the road, supporting a low carbon future our community longs for and drive a future towards active travel.

319 319 bikes serviced this year. That is 319 bikes back on the road instead of in the shed!



"I HAVEN'T RIDDEN MY BIKE FOR OVER 18 MONTHS AND GOT THE GUYS AT THE BIKE DROP TO SERVICE MY WHIP. AFTER MY FIRST RIDE INTO WORK THIS MORNING I CAN HONESTLY SAY IT'S NEVER RIDDEN BETTER."

Bike Drop customer

RECYCLING

Our workshop recycles and services donated bikes. These bikes are then sold at an affordable price or given away.

11 11 refurbished bikes have been given away for free to people needing transport.

120 bikes refurbished

OUR TEAM Hours of paid employment. We believe that everyone needs paid employment and so we do not have any volunteers working with us. Instead we pay all our staff, however we acknowledge that not everyone wants full time work and so we produce jobs that fit around our staff's family and personal situations.

4,120

Hours of paid bike mechanics training. We believe a new green economy needs highly trained, skilled technicians and we want to provide this training whilst paying the trainees for their time.

40



Furniture Bank

Furniture Bank collects unwanted furniture and recycles it back into the community through our shop and our community referral program. We aim to build a truly circular economy by showing that no one need buy new furniture again.

Our referral program allows families to be referred to us to receive heavily subsidised furniture delivered to their door.

We offer employment through paid placements and flexible employment opportunities.

CREATING A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

142 tonnes of furniture was collected and reused by our team. This is the equivalent weight of 142 orca whales.

142 tonnes

It's estimated that re-using 1 tonne of sofas saves 1.5 tonnes of CO2 emissions.

6,673 items throughout the year. This is 6,673 new items of furniture that were not produced from the earth's raw materials.

6,673 items

"YOUR SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ARE INSPIRATIONAL, A LIVING EXAMPLE OF HOW A DOUGHNUT ECONOMY CAN NOT JUST WORK BUT THRIVE."

Brimscombe Mills customer



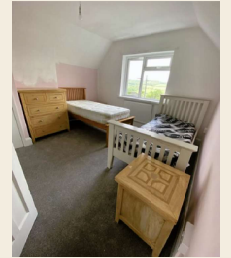
"THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR STRONG, STURDY BED, EASY TO PUT TOGETHER & FANTASTIC MATTRESS. ABSOLUTE BARGAIN, TRULY APPRECIATED."

Brimscombe Mills customer

Furniture Bank

REFERRAL FURNITURE

576 items
363 Families



Furnishing empty homes for the homeless

576 items of referral furniture delivered into 363 families. We provide low cost subsidised or free furniture to those referred to us. This ranges from families on low incomes to displaced families to families who have had a house fire.

"I WAS JUST GETTING IN TOUCH TO SAY WHAT AN AMAZING SERVICE FOR OUR FAMILIES."

Social worker- Stroud

OUR TEAM

8,928

Hours of paid employment. We believe that everyone needs paid employment and so we do not have any volunteers working with us. Instead we pay all our staff, however we acknowledge that not everyone wants full time work and so we produce jobs that fit around our staff's family and personal situations.



2

2 work placements created. Our work placement scheme creates paid for on the job work placements for people who are some of the furthest away from employment. We provide supported work and training and once the placement is over we help guide them into new employment opportunities.

6 people have worked or trialed in our placements.

6

"THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR KINDNESS ON A DAY I REALLY NEEDED IT. YOU ARE AMAZING PEOPLE."

Brimscombe Mills customer



The Great Plate

Changing school food one yummy bite at a time.

The Great Plate is a social enterprise that wants to improve the quality and impact of school meals across our communities. This means healthier, more nutritious food at lunch times as well as fun and engaging lessons about the importance of nourishing our bodies.

The Great Plate provide school meals and training for local primary schools. We grew out of the COVID pandemic when the world awoke to the reality of food inequality in our county and the work of people like Marcus Rashford and more locally Bishop Rachel has even more so focussed this question on the unequal distribution of food for children of school age.

OUR MEALS

At first glance our menu may not look too different to other schools, but we are providing access to more nutritious and delicious foods across the Stroud district by cramming in lots of extra veg, fibre and nutrients. Our chefs cook from scratch using locally sourced ingredients where possible, promoting sustainability and supporting our local community of growers and farmers.

400 school meals a day

Fed to primary school children

55,575 school meals a year

We worked in 4 local primary schools in the Stroud District;

Amberley Parochial School, Brimscombe CofE Primary School,
Minchinhampton CofE Primary Academy & Nailsworth CofE Primary School.

4

"THANKS SO MUCH TO YOU AND ALL THE TEAM FOR SUCH A GREAT START TO OUR LUNCHTIME CHANGES SINCE SEPTEMBER. THE FEEDBACK HAS BEEN GREAT AND THE NUMBERS CONTINUE TO RISE FOR THOSE TAKING A MEAL."

"... IS ALSO FEELING HAPPY AS PART OF YOUR SMALLER TEAM, I KNOW SHE FEELS FAR MORE VALUED WORKING FOR GREAT PLATE AND OUR SCHOOL. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!"

Great Plate School



EDUCATION

To complement our lunch time offerings, we also offer empowering and hands on classes, designed to support the design and technology curriculum for years 5 and 6. Working with our in-house nutritionist the children learn about a variety of foods and cooking techniques, culminating in a feast shared with family members.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

We want to ensure that all children in our schools can have access to healthy nutritious food in the school holidays as well as during the term, regardless of background or finances.

2 Freezers

2 freezers have been put in our schools for parents and teachers to take free of charge frozen meals from.

We collaborated with Kick Off Stroud to provide a free Easter holiday club for free school meal children with lunch and games.

Easter holiday club

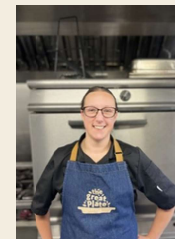
200

200 HAF meals cooked for local school holiday projects

OUR TEAM

Hours of paid employment. We believe that everyone needs paid employment and so we do not have any volunteers working with us.

Instead we pay all our staff, however we acknowledge that not everyone wants full time work and so we produce jobs that fit around our staff's family and personal situations. Our jobs are all term time only and school hours so are ideal for primary carers of children.





Kick Off Stroud

Using sport as a catalyst for change

We grew out of a simple vision: sport can change lives. Since 2012 we have been pioneering new ideas to get more children playing sport. Not only that but we have been able to create employment and training for those who need it most.

We work in schools to help grow their sports provision to ensure that every child has access to good quality physical education and the chance to be active. In the holidays we run sports holiday clubs.

OUR CHILDREN

We believe every child should have access to good quality sports coaching and physical education. We want to help every child, whether that is to help them achieve their dream of being an Olympic athlete or to get more active in school. Every child has different abilities, goals and likes and we want to work with them all. Whether that is at school during the term to help them engage in a PE lesson or play at lunch or whether that is at a holiday club in the school holidays. We believe good physical activity and team sports helps children in all aspects of their lives.

380 school children a week

380 children a week come to one of our school clubs or attend our school PE lessons.

1,631 spaces booked
1,631 spaces booked at our school holiday clubs

99 spaces at our holiday clubs given out for free to families who are struggling financially or refugee children.



"**** LOVED THE GROUP AGAIN THIS MORNING. THANK YOU! HE MADE FRIENDS WITH *** AND SPENT THE MORNING WITH HIM. WE GAVE ** A MESSAGE WITH MY PHONE NUMBER AS *** WOULD LOVE TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH HIM. HE IS GOING TO SPEND HIS AFTERNON LEARNING UKRAINIAN!"

Kick Off holiday club customer



"MY CHILDREN LITERALLY LOVED TODAY. THEY'RE ALWAYS SLIGHTLY BLUGH ABOUT CAMPS BUT THEY WERE SO HAPPY AND EXCITED ABOUT TOMORROW."

Kick Off holiday club customer

OUR COACHES

We want to train a whole generation of new sports coaches across our District. We invest in good quality training to ensure our coaches are the best they can be and provide top quality coaching to our children. We run an apprenticeship scheme to train youngsters to become sport coaches and teaching assistants, they come out of the apprenticeship with a full qualification and a years worth of on the job training.

4,507

Hours of paid employment. We believe that everyone needs paid employment and so we do not have any volunteers working with us. Instead we pay all our staff, however we acknowledge that not everyone wants full time work and so we produce jobs that fit around our staff's family and personal situations.

1 apprentice trained up. This involves on the job training in schools, formal apprenticeship training and external training through certified sports bodies.



"**** IS SO PLEASED HE IS ALLOWED TO ATTEND THIS FINAL HOLIDAY OF SESSIONS BEFORE HE STARTS YR 7. HE HAS LOVED KICK OFF OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS AND CONSISTENTLY SAYS THAT MR T IS IN HIS TOP 3 FAVOURITE ADULTS."

Kick Off holiday club customer





Eat & Greet

A new meals on wheels service for the Stroud District.

Eat & Greet is a 4 month pilot project aiming to create a better way of receiving a hot lunch at home. We are replacing the Apetito contract that has covered the Stroud District in recent years. We are here to serve the community and bring positive change. We want to make a real difference to the lived experience of many who eat alone and create meaningful human connection through food, this is at the heart of what we do.

Eat & Greet is more than a meal.

It is about connection, community and nourishment

Our model is simple. We take food to eaters and cook it in their home. Time is given to chat, make friends, laugh and help with odd jobs.

We hope that our eaters and greeters become friends and soon look forward to their daily interactions. In time, the greeters will be able to notice little problems- broken light bulbs, messy gardens or people getting bored- and work out how to help solve them with their eater. It might be making a call to family, another support group or just fixing it together.

This approach is more than just about food, it is about a meal and a friendship

WHY CALL IT EAT AND GREET?

The Eater

The eater is someone who needs a meal dropped off regularly. It needs to be a nice meal, well prepared with proper ingredients and provenance. They also need to have someone drop in to check they are well - to connect with them and ensure they are feeling safe and can have a connection through conversation with a friend.



The Greeter

The Greeter is a person who wants to show love and care to someone unable to easily access good food and have someone to eat it with. It requires patience, empathy and interest from the greeters for their eaters wellbeing. We believe the connection will promote positive emotions and foster a relationship built on mutual respect and care.



"FOR OVER A MONTH YOUR EAT & GREET SERVICE HAS BEEN DELIVERING HOT MEALS TO MY FATHER, WHO IS 90 YEARS OLD, LIVES ON HIS OWN AND IS UNABLE TO COOK HOT MEALS FOR HIMSELF.

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO HIGHLIGHT HOW CRUCIAL THIS SUPPORT HAS BEEN, NOT ONLY THE NUTRITIOUS MEALS, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE CARE TAKEN WITH THIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE.

WHEN I ASKED MY FATHER HOW HE WAS GETTING ON WITH THE MEALS, HE WAS VERY COMPLIMENTARY AND SAID HE ENJOYED THEM EVERY DAY. THE MOST IMPORTANT COMMENT HOWEVER WAS, HOW KIND AND CARING YOU AND YOUR TEAM ARE, TAKING TIME TO HAVE A CHAT WITH HIM EACH DAY, REALLY MAKES SUCH A DIFFERENCE AND HAS IMPROVED HIS WELL-BEING NO END.

FROM THE FAMILIES PERSPECTIVE AND HAVING MET YOU AND SOME OF YOUR TEAM, PLEASE ACCEPT OUR THANKS AND GRATITUDE FOR PROVIDING AN OUTSTANDING AND CARING SERVICE IN SUPPORTING THE ELDERLY, NOT ONLY IN PROVIDING HOT MEALS, BUT REALLY TAKING THE TIME TO CHAT AND SHOWN GENUINE CARE TO THESE ELDERLY PEOPLE, WHO SOMETIMES WOULD NOT SEE ANYONE ALL DAY, THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR FATHER FOLLOWING THESE VISITS IS AMAZING!"

Eat and Greet family member



Supporting local families, building community, walking side by side through life's journey.

Kids Stuff

The Kids Stuff mission is to build a truly circular economy. By fulfilling our vision to encourage families to recycle their gently used children's items, we can provide access to everyday essentials to enable all children to thrive.

We offer a community space that is used for a wide range of activities focused on children, parents, grandparents and carers, to build a sense of belonging, sharing and community so people on the margins, especially those who are just about managing can get the support they need without stigma. All whilst highlighting that raising a family doesn't need to cost the earth.

Our work empowers our staff to improve their current situation by offering flexible, supported working opportunities.

"YOU MAKE IT FEEL POSSIBLE TO GIVE MY CHILDREN NICE THINGS IN A TIME WHERE MONEY IS TIGHT. SO THANK YOU."

Brimscombe Mills customer

REFERRALS

62

62 red referrals given out. The items in these bundles provide support to the families who come through our referral process by responding to their immediate needs. This is open to carers, health visitors, local authorities, schools, midwives and more.

30 amber referrals given out. A gift card for our shop is given to families so they can come and choose the items they need for themselves. These gift cards are identical to those that can be purchased in our shop, so can be used without any stigma. Having the ability to choose the items promotes and encourages independency.

30

141

141 children received Christmas bundles. This year with the rise in the cost of living as our focus for Christmas bundles, we provided each child with a warm onesie in the bundle. The most universal clothing item that can be worn as an extra layer at home, at the park or out shopping.

20

20 newborn Baby Bundles were given out to local maternity units. Aimed at providing the essentials needed in those first few weeks, these bundles are for families who have been displaced or are vulnerable.



CREATING A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

3.7 tonnes 3.7 tonnes of items were donated to us to repurpose.

82.5% of all donations given to us were recycled through our shop, referrals, CTR collections and scrap metal.

82.5%



"IT IS AN AMAZING RESOURCE. THE DAY I VISITED WITH A FAMILY WAS VERY EMPOWERING FOR THEM TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN ITEMS USING THE GIFT CARD. WE ALSO HAD A COFFEE AND CAKE, WHICH NORMALIZES THEIR SHOPPING EXPERIENCE. THANK YOU."



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Kids Stuff Referrer

We hosted a wide range of community events at The Mill with the aim to support parents, carers and their children by providing an all year round safe space to meet, socialise, make friends and have fun.

1,295

1,295 adults and children have come along to our drop in sessions.

85

85 local community groups ran free or pay-as-you-can sessions in our indoor play area. These included breastfeeding support, hair dressing, parent fitness, craft tables, nappy sales and baby yoga.

We ran 66 sessions of our weekly family drop in. Here families can receive debt advice from Clean Slate, a listening ear over a cup of tea or coffee whilst their children have access to snacks and supervised play activities.

66

OUR SHOP



Our shop is open to everyone! Our prices make it accessible to every family and reflects our mission to support all families, whether with a limited budget or a desire to reduce their impact on the environment, our shop allows them access to the things that help children thrive, whilst showing them that recycling second hand items is the way forward.

16,557

16,557 people visited our shop last year.

OUR TEAM

7,424

Hours of paid employment. We believe that everyone needs paid employment and so we do not have any volunteers working with us. Instead we pay all our staff, however we acknowledge that not everyone wants full time work and so we produce jobs that fit around our staff's family and personal situations. We shut each week day at 14:30 to allow our staff to pick children up from school.



"IT'S SUCH A PRECIOUS AND NEEDED SPACE FOR OUR COMMUNITY TO COME TOGETHER AND SPEND TIME WITH EACH OTHER, WHILST SAVING MANY ITEMS FROM LANDFILL AND ALSO DECLUTTERING OUR HOME SPACES, READY FOR THE NEXT YOUNG PERSON TO ENJOY."

Brimscombe Mills customer

THE LONG TABLE The Long Table

The Long Table is a restaurant that strives to answer the question of

'What if everyone in our community has access to great food and people to eat it with?'

We make sure that amazing chefs get to create delicious meals using the best local ingredients and make these all Pay As You Can. Our home creates a space for all by showing radical hospitality and allowing community to have space to grow.

Amazing things happen when we eat together.

This year we fully reopened our community canteen in our new home at Brimscombe Mills – and what a year its been eating together again.

MEALS AT OUR TABLE

26,034 26,034 people ate a pay-as-you-can meal at our table
42% of these meals were paid below what it cost us to make the meals **42%**

1,249 1,249 paid forward meals bought by customers for someone else to redeem.
1,694 1,694 people claimed a meal paid forward by someone else

LOCAL COMMUNITY CAFES WE SUPPORT

Eating with us and paying what you can means we fund chefs and all the food they cook within communities around Stroud.

4 4 community cafes funded.

2,127 people ate together at one of the community cafes we support. **2,127**

2,040 2,040 freezer of love meals were fully funded in five communities.



YOUNG MINDS COOKING WILD

14 14 inner city school children joined us for an outdoor culinary adventure. With fire pit cooking, delicious food and a focus on fun and well-being.



THE LONG TABLE

"SO WELCOMING AND GENUINE! SO HAPPY WE FOUND THIS WONDERFUL GEM"
Brimscombe Mills customer

FOOD WASTE **3.32 tonnes**

3.32 tonnes of food repurposed back into meals that would have entered the food waste system. This is the equivalent weight of almost 3 and a half orca whales. In addition our Ridan bio digester turns our own green waste back into compost that we use for growing on site.



OUR TEAM 17,704 Hours of paid employment. We are proud that we pay every member of our team living wage and above. Most importantly we acknowledge that not everyone wants full time work and so we produce jobs that fit around our staff's family and personal situations.



"CAN'T HONESTLY THANK YOU ALL ENOUGH. BEING ON MAT LEAVE CAN BE SO LONELY AND HARD, AND I CAME TODAY REALLY FOR A DRIVE TO TRY AND GET LITTLE ONE TO SLEEP AND SEE IF YOU HAD ANY BABY TEETHING TOYS WHICH MIGHT HELP.

WHEN GOT THERE I WAS JUST SO OVERWHELMED WITH THE KINDNESS FROM EVERYONE, IT DID SO MUCH GOOD FOR MY MENTAL HEALTH. IT IS SUCH A HIDDEN LITTLE PARADISE, THE LIGHTS, MUSIC AND LONG TABLE JUST MAKE IT FEEL SO HOMELY.

ALL THE LITTLE NOTES OF LOVE AND SUPPORT AROUND. JUST WISH MORE PLACES LIKE YOURS EXIST. HADN'T EATEN OR SLEPT PROPERLY FOR WHAT FEELS LIKE MONTHS AND JUST A CHANCE TO SIT DOWN SOMEWHERE NON JUDGMENTAL WITH SOME HOT FOOD WAS JUST SO NICE. FINANCIALLY, MAT LEAVE PUTS YOU IN A REALLY TRICKY SPOT BECAUSE EVERYWHERE YOU GO IS ALWAYS SO EXPENSIVE AND STATUTORY MAY PAY GOES NOWHERE"

Brimscombe Mills customer