



Business Plan

April 2010 - March 2013



Watford and Three Rivers Furniture Re-cycling
Scheme known as 9 Lives Furniture

Registered Charity No. 1096086
Company Limited by Guarantee in
England and Wales No. 4375649

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Section 1: Executive Summary

Watford and Three Rivers Furniture Re-cycling Scheme, trading as 9 Lives Furniture, is a registered charity (charity number 1096086) and company limited by guarantee (company number 4375649).

9 Lives Furniture was set up in 2003 to help disadvantaged people in need, suffering hardship or distress. It provides training and work placements for people with learning disabilities and mental ill health. It collects, refurbishes and distributes quality household goods, at subsidised prices to people identified as most in need by other local charities and agencies.

Our primary areas of operation are Watford and Three Rivers and we have a pilot scheme running for expansion into Hertsmere.

Furniture Recycling

The charity collects quality furniture and household items, donated by residents of South West Hertfordshire, and refurbishes them where required. These items are then sold at a greatly subsidised rate to local people on welfare benefits or other restricted income, or sold at market rate to provide income for the scheme.

Since opening to the public in 2004, 9 Lives Furniture has provided over 17,600 items / sets of furniture to over 4,600 families or young people.

The environmental benefit of the scheme is that to date 380 tonnes of bulky waste has been diverted from landfill sites and been re-claimed for use.

Training and Work Experience

9 Lives Furniture has identified local groups to work with on its training and support programme enabling local unemployed people recovering from mental ill health and people with a learning disability to improve their skills and self esteem.

Since opening over 350 students have attended courses and 33 either moved into paid employment or into further education.

Management

The current trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, are:

Irvin Cohen	(Treasurer/Secretary)
Lorna Cunningham	
Deborah Durkin	(Chair)
Rosemary Hadfield	
Albert Perahia	(Charity Secretary)
Dolly Torkilsden	
Pat Walton	

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1.00 in the event of a winding up.

Day to day running of the organisation is delegated to the following staff:

Manager	Marie Frost
Team Leaders	Donna Moriarty and Vanessa Troll
Drivers	Lyndon Griffiths and Daniel Leonard
Tutor (Refurbishment)	Robin Mursell

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The trustees and staff have a wide range of experience in business, finance, charity work, education, mental health, social housing and the relief of poverty that brings great benefit to the operation of the charity. Trustees meet six times a year, including an annual strategy meeting.

Market

9 Lives Furniture's business is focused on people in greatest need - older people, families and young people on low incomes, people leaving care or hospitals, refugees, people experiencing marriage breakdowns or house fires, people setting up home for the first time and ex-offenders restarting their lives. Those on means tested benefits receive a 50% discount on the ticket price. Many of our customers are referred to us by the local Councils, housing departments and Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB).

Our training and work experience placements are focused on adults with learning disabilities or recovering from mental ill health. They are referred to us by local day centres and mental health organisations and the local CVS.

9 Lives Furniture has a unique blend of services in the Watford and Three Rivers area. There are other charities in the area that include furniture within their shops and other training providers who provide courses for the same clients. We try to complement and work with other local services wherever possible. 9 Lives Furniture also works and shares best practice with similar organisations in other parts of the UK through the Furniture Re-Use Network and informal networking.

Financial Projections

9 Lives Furniture had a small positive balance in 2009/10 and is budgeting for a similar position for the next three years.

Our objective is to make the furniture recycling business self-sustaining in 2012 and on an ongoing basis whilst continuing to rely on statutory and grant income for the majority of the cost of the training courses and for capital / equipment purchases.

The outline plan for the next three years is given below along with the actuals for 2009/10 (these are taken from 9 Lives Furniture's own records – the formal year end accounts are being prepared).

	2009/10 actual	2010/11 budget	2011/12 budget	2012/13 budget
Furniture sales & other income	83,711	77,580	93,620	102,120
Grants / donations	35,602	45,540	40,400	35,500
Total income	119,313	123,120	134,020	137,620
Total expenditure	-117,331	-123,108	-133,960	-137,460
Balance	1,982	12	60	160

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Front Cover: Students refurbishing furniture in our workshop

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Section 2: Introduction and Vision

This business plan covers the period April 2010 to March 2013 and addresses 9 Lives Furniture's strategy to:

- Continue and improve the services provided to those in need in the local community:
 - Provide high quality second hand furniture and household goods
 - Provide training and work experience opportunities for people with learning disabilities or recovering from mental ill health or otherwise disadvantaged
- Ensure the long term sustainability of the scheme by:
 - Making the furniture recycling business self-financing
 - Continued fundraising for training and capital expenditure
 - Developing training income to reduce the dependence on grants for the training and work experience

Our Aims and Objectives

'Giving people and furniture a second chance'

Our aims and objectives are to help residents of Watford, Three Rivers and surrounding areas who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by the provision of furniture and accessories and to provide vocational training, support and work experience for those who volunteer at the scheme.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Collecting good quality, donated furniture and other household effects which are no longer required by the owners and would otherwise be destined for landfill.
- Displaying furniture and household effects so that people in need can choose from these and have them delivered to their homes if desired.
- Recruiting and supporting unemployed volunteers, specifically but not exclusively, people recovering from mental health problems or who have a learning disability. The volunteers are offered training to enable them to gain confidence and learn skills that will prepare them for work.

The trustees and staff reviewed 9 Lives Furniture's mission statement at our annual strategy session in March and made minor amendments to reflect better the focus of our activities over the next three years. The revised mission statement is given below.

Our Mission

9 Lives Furniture opens new doors for all people with disadvantages in our community. Our services and training opportunities help people build self-esteem and confidence, provide stability and facilitate social inclusion.

We maximise the reuse of good quality furniture and prevent it from reaching landfill by supplying it to people who are disadvantaged in our society.

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Section 3: Profile of the Charity

Why were we formed?

9 Lives Furniture was set up for three reasons

1. To keep good quality used furniture out of landfill
2. To provide that furniture to people suffering disadvantage
3. To provide work experience and training to people recovering from mental ill health and learning disability

Our History

9 Lives Furniture was established in February 2003 and secured premises at 25 Wharf Lane, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 1HA in September 2003.

The building needed complete redecoration, adaptation to allow people with a disability to access, a new warehouse floor and some re-wiring. All this work was carried out before the grand opening on 14th January 2004.

9 Lives Furniture immediately started collecting donations of furniture and this was provided at low cost to anybody wishing to visit the shop and at a 50% subsidy to those claiming means tested benefits. In addition West Herts College became a partner of the scheme in January 2004 to provide training courses in subjects such as IT, Picture Framing, Upholstery, Curtain Making and French Polishing.

Throughout 2004 funding was obtained to purchase a wheelchair lift and adapt the first floor of the building to provide disabled access. This work was completed in June 2005. Funds were raised to purchase a new van with tail lift for collections and deliveries at the end of 2005.

9 Lives Furniture developed and has maintained the capability to test Portable Appliances (PAT) in line with current regulations. As such, we are one of the few local charities who can sell electrical items.

In 2006 we employed our own furniture restoration tutor / assessor who runs courses 3 days a week and also manages the restoration of donated furniture for 9 Lives Furniture by our 'graduated' students. West Herts withdrew their training courses in 2007 as they were consolidating centres and we have run our courses with our own staff, facilities and specialist tutors since then. We managed to obtain a grant to replace the equipment in our IT Suite.

2008/9 saw a great many changes in our staffing. Our Chair, Pam Handley, sadly died. Our Manager, Tania Metcalfe, left to establish her own business and one of our team leaders and a driver left. Our new team is now well established and very successful.

Legal Form of 9 Lives Furniture

In February 2003 9 Lives Furniture was registered as a company limited by guarantee (company registration number 4375649) and its governing document is its Memorandum and Articles of Association. 9 Lives Furniture is also registered with the Charity Commission (charity registration number 1096086).

Governance

9 Lives Furniture is governed by a board of directors/trustees who meets six times each year. At any time there may be up to 11 trustees. At the third and at every other Annual General Meeting the directors retire from office. Retiring directors are eligible for re-election. Decisions about day-to-day operational matters, including staffing, work planning and finance are delegated to paid staff through the Manager.

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Accommodation

9 Lives Furniture occupies accommodation at 25 Wharf Lane, Rickmansworth, WD3 1HA. This accommodation is rented from a trust, the beneficiary of which is Mrs L Burnell.

The lease is administered by Hancock Quins Solicitors and the lease was extended on 17th September 2007 to run until 16th September 2012. If we wish to terminate the lease 9 Lives Furniture needs to give 6 months notice of cancellation and will receive 2 month's rent free prior to termination.

The accommodation includes a ground floor showroom, kitchen, manager's office, staff / meeting room, IT suite, furniture refurbishment workshop and two other training rooms.

Funding

9 Lives Furniture derives 70% of its income from the public who are supplied with furniture. We also receive financial support from a number of sources. Historically this has included:

- The National Lottery Big Lottery Fund CRED Programme
- The European Social Fund
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Three Rivers District Council
- Watford Borough Council
- Hertsmere Borough Council
- A large number of companies and charitable trusts.

In 2009/10 Hertfordshire County Council's Innovation Fund provided funding for 9 Lives Furniture's training courses and this has been renewed for 2010/11 to cover the furniture refurbishment and retail skills courses. A number of other funds have provided grants towards the training courses and towards running costs to allow us to continue to subsidise the furniture provided to those in need.

Furniture Recycling

The charity collects quality furniture and household items, donated by residents of South West Hertfordshire, and refurbishes them where required. These items are then sold at a greatly subsidised rate to local people on welfare benefits or other restricted income, or sold at market rate to provide income for the scheme.

Every **£1,000** allows us to provide subsidised furniture for up to **30 more families** in need.

The 9 Lives Furniture shop opens four and half days a week and is situated in a warehouse just off a busy high street in Rickmansworth, with good public transport links.

Since opening to the public in 2004, 9 Lives Furniture has provided over 17,600 items / sets of furniture to over 4,600 families or young people.

The environmental benefit of the scheme is that to date 380 tonnes of bulky waste has been diverted from landfill sites and reused.

Training and Work Experience

9 Lives Furniture has identified local groups to work with on its training and support programme enabling local unemployed people recovering from mental ill health and for people with a learning disability to improve their skills and self esteem. The retail showroom and furniture refurbishing workrooms provide a safe and relaxed environment for people who would normally be excluded from the workplace.

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Every **£1,000** allows us to provide training courses for **two new students** with learning disabilities or mental ill health, helping to build their confidence and improve their employment opportunities.

The courses / work placements offered in 2009/10 were:

- Work experience placements
 - Working in the showroom (as retail sales and customer service staff)
 - On the delivery van as driver's mates
 - In the office doing clerical work
- EDI accredited training courses
 - Furniture restoration – in the workshop on the premises
 - Warehouse and retail skills – working in the showroom
- Other courses
 - Personal Development and Confidence Building course

Since opening over 350 students have attended courses and 33 either moved into paid employment or into further education. The training and support of volunteers by 9 Lives Furniture has also gained recognition winning a 'Valuing Volunteers' award in 2006. In July 2007 9 Lives Furniture became an accredited EDI Training centre.

2009/10 Achievements / Initiatives

Our new manager, Marie Frost, joined in January 2009. Marie very quickly settled into her role and implemented a number of improvements to 9 Lives Furniture's recycling and training / work experience programme.

These include:

- *New partnerships / sources of volunteers and students*
Thrive Homes, West London Community College, Northwick Day Centre, Stop Gap, Ascend, Turning Point, Work Solutions, Old Vicarage Residential Home, Guideposts Trust and Dimensions.
- *eBay / Manager's specials*
In order to provide additional income for the charity and allow 9 Lives Furniture to continue to provide the 50% subsidy for those in need, we now offer a small number of luxury items (often those refurbished in the workshop) as 'Manager's Specials', without a discount.

We also now offer a small number of items on eBay. This is managed by one of our associate tutors for a small commission. These items tend to be 'design classics' which can attract premium pricing online. The number and type of these items is carefully monitored to ensure that our core customer base is not deprived of essential items by this strategy.

- *Expansion into Hertsmere*
We have been planning to extend our collection / delivery area into Hertsmere for some time. Until recently (when the Peace Hospice opened a shop in Borehamwood) there was no furniture recycling service available and there was a high local demand. In 2009/10 we received a grant from Awards for All to pilot this expansion. Work is ongoing to raise awareness and to build relationships with local organisations, particularly the CAB who provide the referral form service.

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- *Increased number of deliveries / collections per day*

Furniture throughput is a key driver of sales income and increasing the number of collections / deliveries from 8 to 10 a day (5 morning and 5 afternoon) has had a significant effect on sales. 9 Lives Furniture remains closed on Mondays (a measure taken at the end of 2008 due to staff shortages) but plans to reopen on Mondays during 2010 as well as investigate extending opening hours on other days.

- *Fundraising*

The Hertfordshire County Council Innovations Fund has provided funding for our training courses for the last two years and has agreed funding for 2010/11. In addition, there is an extensive fundraising programme to cover the rest of the training budget, allowing 9 Lives Furniture to continue to provide the 50% furniture subsidy for those in need and operate the free furniture collection service. This work has produced good results so far in 2010 and will continue on a regular basis.

- *Recycling*

In 2009/10 9 Lives Furniture diverted over 2,800 items of furniture from landfill – equating to nearly 60 tonnes - to provide much needed support to households in need. Since opening in 2003 over 380 tonnes has been recycled and reused.

- *Showroom Improvements*

Improvements to the showroom include:

- New reception desk and till
- Display area for items that have been refurbished in the workshop
- Improved and fairer reserve system
- Badges to identify staff and volunteers
- Improved soft furnishing section
- Repainting

We also commissioned and paid for a road sign at the beginning of 2010 to help people to find the warehouse but are still waiting for it to be put up by Hertfordshire Highways.

- *Training Improvements*

Our first EDI accredited courses finished in 2009/10 with workbooks completed and certificates issued. We are now able to self certificate, with EDI providing external verification.

Student numbers in 2009/10 were:

- | | |
|--|----|
| • Furniture refurbishment | 20 |
| • Warehouse / retail skills | 12 |
| • Personal development and confidence building | 22 |

Numbers were lower than expected on the Personal Development course – mainly because there are a number of other similar courses in the area. We have therefore decided to discontinue this course and concentrate on courses where we have a unique proposition and / or there is a local gap in services.

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Section 4: Market place and competition

Market

9 Lives Furniture's business is focused on people in greatest need - older people, families and young people on low incomes, people leaving care or hospitals, refugees, people experiencing marriage breakdowns or house fires, people setting up home for the first time and ex-offenders restarting their lives. Many of our customers are referred to us by the local Councils, housing departments and Citizens Advice Bureaux.

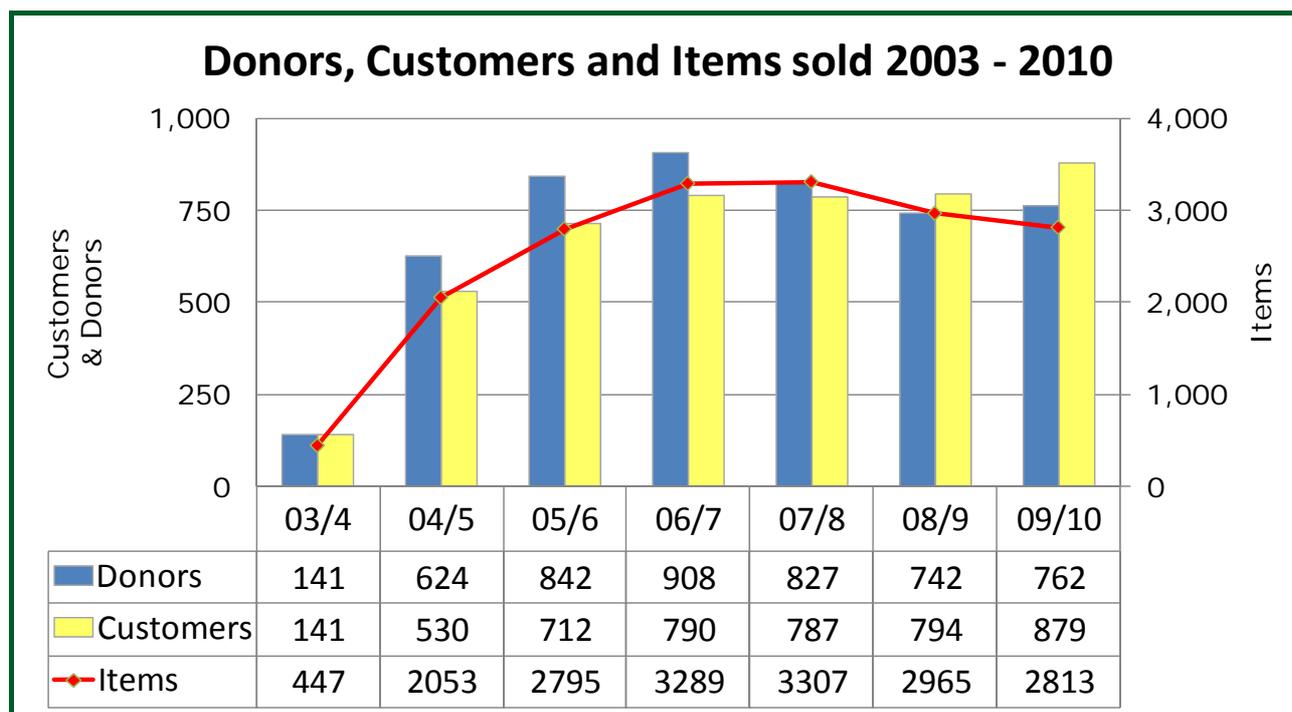
Our training and work experience placements are focused on adults with learning disabilities or recovering from mental ill health. They are referred to us by local day centres and mental health organisations and the local Centres for Voluntary Service (CVS).

Demographics and customer base – furniture recycling

9 Lives Furniture was initially established to provide a furniture recycling scheme for Watford and Three Rivers.

During 2007 and 2008 we had an increasing number of enquiries from Hertsmere, who at the time had no furniture recycling service and in 2009 we received a Lottery grant from Awards for All to fund a pilot expansion into Hertsmere. This commenced in October 2009 with leaflet drops through Hertsmere during December, January and February and contact with the Citizens Advice Bureaux throughout Hertsmere so that they can refer customers in need.

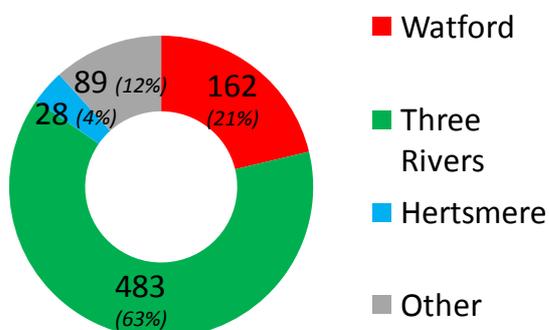
Since opening in 2004, 9 Lives Furniture has provided over 17,600 items of furniture to over 4,600 customers. The number of customers has grown steadily over the years, with 879 customers on 2010/11, of which 611 were new customers. The number of donors has grown since last year with, again, a large number of new donors in 2010-11. The number of items collected / delivered was lower in the last couple of years due to the reduction in the showroom hours and number of collections and deliveries (9 Lives Furniture shut on Mondays in November 2008 due to staff shortages).



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The charts below give the current donation and customer base by area and the split between subsidised sales of furniture to those in need and 'full price' sales.

**Number of donors by area
2009/10**

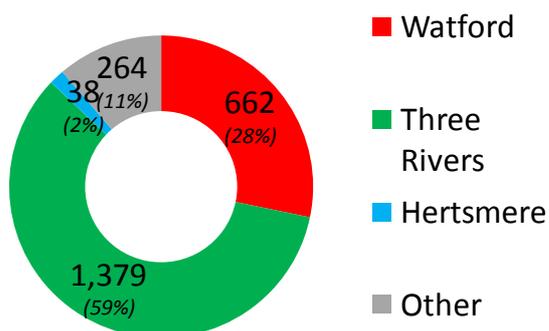


This chart shows the number of donors in 2009/10 by area.

Our key areas for donations are:

Rickmansworth	25%
Watford	17%
Croxley Green	12%
Chorleywood	8%
Maple Cross & Mill End	7%
Abbots Langley	4%
Moor Park & Northwood	3%
Bushey	3%
South Oxhey	3%

**Items sold by area
2009/10**

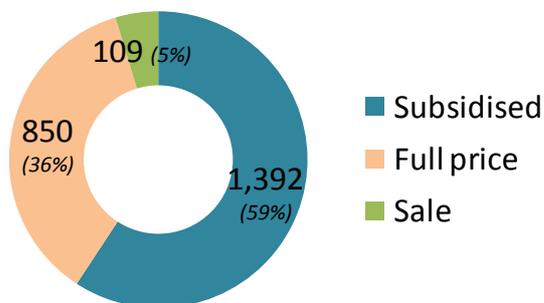


This chart shows the number of customers in 2009/10 by area.

Our key areas for customers are:

Watford	26%
Rickmansworth	25%
Maple Cross & Mill End	12%
South Oxhey	6%
Croxley Green	6%

**Items sold by price
2009/10**



This chart shows the number of items sold that were:

- Subsidised (50% discount)
- Sold at a reduced price in our January Sale (or where discounted as it was not selling)
- Sold at full price.

64% - nearly two-thirds - of items are sold at reduced prices.

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Three Rivers

- Three Rivers's population is 87,700.
- Three Rivers is ranked 293rd out of 354 local authorities in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2007
- Northwick, Hayling, Ashridge, Maple Cross and Langleybury wards feature comparatively highly on the IMD whilst wards such as Moor Park & Eastbury and Chorleywood West feature relatively low.
- South Oxhey (within Northwick ward with parts of Ashridge and Hayling) features as highly deprived against measures of income deprivation, employment deprivation, health deprivation and disability, education skills and training deprivation. South Oxhey is a key area for the provision of all 9 Lives Furniture services.
- Household recycling rates have risen from 49.26% to 54.01% in the District.
- In 2009/2010 people from Three Rivers accounted for 59% of the customer base at 9 Lives Furniture.

Watford

- Watford's population is 81,000.
- Watford is ranked 223rd out of 354 local authorities in the IMD 2007
- However, five of the most deprived smaller areas in Hertfordshire are in Watford, meaning the town has pockets of deprivation amongst areas of relative prosperity.
- Between April and June of 2009, almost 70 per cent of household waste was sent for reuse, recycling or composting.
- In 2009/2010 people from Watford accounted for 28% of the customer base at 9 Lives Furniture.

Hertsmere

- Hertsmere's population is 98,700.
- Hertsmere is ranked 250th out of 354 local authorities in the IMD 2007
- Hertsmere is a relatively affluent area however there are significant variations between wards.
- Borehamwood Cowley Hill has the 4th highest unemployment rate in the county. The 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that part of Borehamwood Cowley Hill ward is in the top 15% of the most deprived areas in the country.
- Cowley Hill features as highly deprived against measures of income deprivation, employment deprivation, health deprivation and disability, education skills and training deprivation. Every measure of deprivation shows increased levels of deprivation over the period 2004-2007.
- Other areas of deprivation also exist in parts of Bushey North, Potters Bar Oakmere and Borehamwood Brookmeadow and Borehamwood Kenilworth wards.
- The main areas of deprivation in Bushey are the barriers to affordable housing.
- The Household recycling rate in 2007/8 was 16.8%.
- In 2009/2010 people from Hertsmere accounted for 2% of the customer base at 9 Lives Furniture.

As can be seen from the analysis above, the area that 9 Lives Furniture services includes a mixture of areas of deprivation and areas of affluence. This mixture is an ideal combination for the furniture recycling business as donations from the more affluent areas provide good quality furniture for those in need from the more deprived areas.

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Customer base – Training and Volunteering

9 Lives Furniture's training courses and work experience are targeted at adults with learning disabilities or recovering from mental ill health.

9 Lives Furniture students are referred to us by a number of local partners including Northwick Day Centre, Stop Gap, Ascend, Turning Point, Work Solutions, Guideposts Trust and Dimensions. Volunteers are referred by the local CVS in Rickmansworth and Watford.

The need for services and support for people with learning disabilities is greater in Hertfordshire where 0.7% are affected, compared to the national average of 0.3%.

Competition

9 Lives Furniture has a unique blend of services in the Watford and Three Rivers area. Other organisations providing similar services to 9 Lives Furniture within Watford, Three Rivers and Hertsmere and surrounding areas are detailed below. Wherever possible we seek to work in partnership with other local organisations.

9 Lives Furniture also works and shares best practice with similar organisations in other parts of the UK through the Furniture Re-Use Network and informal networking.

	Area	Services / Notes
Within Watford, Three Rivers and Hertsmere		
Ascend	Oxhey	Ascend is based in South Oxhey. As a community based charity, Ascend's work is all about moving people forward, challenging their perceived barriers to education and training; providing people with more choice and control over their lives.
Betel	Watford	Betel of Britain is a caring, not-for-profit Christian community dedicated to restoring homeless and substance-dependent people to productive, independent lifestyles. They operate a number of furniture stores across the country.
Good Samaritans, All Saints Church	South Oxhey	Provide furniture for reuse. Donated furniture is welcome.
New Hope Trust	Watford	A business enterprise scheme that restores self-esteem to homeless or recently resettled people through woodwork and furniture recycling.
Oxfam	Watford	Donations of good quality furniture including sofas and suites, beds of all sizes, tables and chairs, wardrobes and many other types of homeware in good condition.
Peace Hospice Shops	South Oxhey Chorleywood Borehamwood	The Peace Hospice, based in Watford, cares for people living with a life limiting or terminal illness and supports their families. They have shops in Watford, South Oxhey, Bushey, Tudor, Garston, Radlett, Chorleywood and Borehamwood selling a wide range of new and good quality used products including furniture, clothes and bric-a-brac.

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	Area	Services / Notes
Surrounding Areas		
Emmaus	St Albans	<p>Emmaus St Albans shops accept donations of household furniture, some electrical goods, toys and books, bric-a-brac, bicycles, collectables and antiques.</p> <p>Many of the furniture donations pass through the in-house workshop where they will be sympathetically restored. The workshop will also design and build a variety of items from scratch with a particular focus on using recycled materials.</p> <p>Emmaus also runs an eBay shop and has a wood recycling business.</p>
Paradise Furniture & Training (Dacorum)	Hemel Hempstead	<p>Whilst redistributing unwanted furniture the project provides training and volunteering opportunities to ex-offenders and people recovering from mental illness.</p> <p>Every year they redistribute 4,000 items of low-cost second-hand furniture and white goods. People on benefits get a 50% discount. They also re-upholster items, including dining chairs and ottomans.</p>
The Sharing Project	Chalfont St Peter	<p>Provide practical assistance to families and individuals with needs for furniture and household items, who are on low income or benefits.</p>
Trinity Activities	Uxbridge	<p>Shops recycle unwanted domestic furniture, provide paid employment and training for disadvantaged people and offer good quality, affordable furniture to the local community.</p> <p>All income from the business goes directly to the employment and training of their service users.</p>

Our volunteers also volunteer at a number of other local charities and businesses including Mencap, the Ovaltine Development, Springwell Animal Rescue and Sue Ryder shops.

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Section 5: Influencing factors, opportunities and risks/threats

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed staff with blend of new ideas and experience Manager with adult learning background Successful furniture recycling business model Strong relationships with local voluntary and mental health organisations Good reputation and some good local support Long term, loyal volunteers Increase in customers of 10% over 2008/9 New donors in 2009/10 Committed funding for 2010/11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not well known - lack of organised PR and marketing Warehouse difficult to find Dependence on grant income for both furniture subsidy and training courses Lack of showroom space limits furniture throughput Subsidy system not well understood Previous low volunteer turnover limited placements available
External	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in people wishing to recycle furniture Strengthening relationships with local housing organisations Potential to increase throughput with extended opening hours and increased storage facilities Continued expansion into Hertsmere Potential income from Gift Aid Demand for other training courses – opportunity to add soft furnishings course Develop proper marketing plan Improve signage and awareness 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other furniture recycling businesses in area Significant competition for ongoing funding

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Section 6: Strategies

Short-term (next 12 months)

	<i>Status / Timescale</i>
<i>Partnerships and volunteering</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build Partnerships – furniture referrals, student/volunteer referrals and shared training (e.g. Guideposts Trust) 	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalise Service Users Group (from volunteers group) 	July
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to expand number of volunteers / students 	Ongoing
<i>Training courses</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue furniture refurbishment course (15 students) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Funding secured from Herts CC Innovation Fund 	April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue warehouse / retails skills course (12 students) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Funding secured from Herts CC Innovation Fund 	April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce new IT Skills courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ To include people with learning disabilities and recovering from mental ill health and the long term unemployed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Entry level (10 week course) ▪ Level 1 (30 week course) ▪ Six students per course ◦ Funding to be secured 	October
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate opportunities for soft furnishing course 	Ongoing
<i>Income development</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Gift Aid – get agreement from donors to claim Gift Aid on sales proceeds of items they donate, advise them once sold and complete quarterly returns to HMRC 	Donor agreements started March 2010. First return end of June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop income for furniture refurbishment commissions (and separately track higher prices for refurbished furniture) - positioned carefully as students' work 	April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden furniture refurbishment service to include painting and re-upholstering of furniture etc 	Trial underway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reopen showroom and reinstate collections/deliveries on Mondays (would need 1 more driver day, driver's mates and possibly additional showroom staff/volunteers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Grant financing received to (partially) cover first year – will be self-financing in long term 	July
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase storage at warehouse (and thus allow for increased throughput) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Purchase a storage container for car park ◦ Introduce racking for sofas in warehouse 	June August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review other extension of hours e.g. late opening, weekend 	October

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	<i>Status / Timescale</i>
<i>IT upgrade</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revamp website to bring up to date and allow us to maintain. Consider displaying some current items for sale, allow donors to request collections etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Joan of Arc School are interested in doing this for us • Review if training room IT needs updating in line with IT skills course • Improve donor / buyer database – to record gift aid, allow for updating / correction of details and further reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Requirements document being prepared to get estimates • Ensure office IT network is stable / fit for purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Currently stable but to be monitored 	<p>August</p> <p>August</p> <p>September</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<i>Develop marketing plan</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure local council websites properly reflect 9 Lives Furniture's services • Telephone number / delivery time cards – successfully piloted printing them ourselves, now get bulk order printed professionally • Cards for local publicity (to replace current leaflets) • Secure professional assistance with plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Seeking volunteer through CVS • Improved signage (van and showroom) to include website • Regular press release / stories • Improved website (see IT upgrade) • Use removals companies / estate agents to promote service (including website links?) 	<p>May</p> <p>May</p> <p>May</p> <p>June</p> <p>June</p> <p>Ongoing, starting July</p> <p>July</p> <p>October</p>
<i>General Operations/Premises</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral cards for customers on benefits (improvement to current system) • Explore options for use of upholstery workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Possible additional showroom managed by volunteers 	<p>June</p> <p>July</p>
<i>Medium term</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furniture business to pay for itself in 2012 and beyond • Continued fundraising to provide grants to cover cost of training courses • Develop further training revenue – room hire and paid courses - to reduce grants required • New training courses – upholstery (including public course to raise funds), communication, customer service, NVQ customer service for more advanced students, more courses for general unemployed (expand to include all who are disadvantaged) • Consider expansion of collection / delivery area from Rickmansworth base into neighbouring areas outside Hertfordshire (e.g. Denham, Northwood, Chalfonts, Amersham) – review competitors etc • Consider more formal expansion including additional premises / warehouse space • Explore potential of using local vacant shops for storage / display of items 	

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Section 7: Management Committee and Staff

Management Committee

The trustees have a wide range of experience in business, finance, charity work, education, mental health, social housing and the relief of poverty that brings great benefit to the operation of the charity. Trustees meet six times a year, including an annual planning / strategy meeting.

Name	Role at 9 Lives	Experience
Irvin Cohen	Treasurer, Company Secretary and trustee	Chartered Accountant
Lorna Cunningham	Trustee	Manager of Guideposts Trust
Deborah Durkin	Chair	Management consultant
Rosemary Hadfield	Trustee	Retired school teacher Chair of governors of St Clement Danes school Trustee of the Anchor Fund Trustee of the Holborn Estate Charity
Albert Perahia	Charity Secretary and trustee	Founding trustee Trustee of Mencap
Dolly Torkilsden	Trustee	Manager of Stadium - local housing association hostel
Pat Walton	Trustee	Founding trustee Previously manager of Emergency Furniture Unit Administrative Secretary of an International Church organisation

Constitutional arrangements

Trustees / Directors serve for three years before standing for re-election. 9 Lives Furniture's Memorandum and Articles was amended in March 2009 to remove the requirement for trustees/directors to serve only six years before standing down and not being able to stand again for two years. This provides continuity for the charity. There are regular changes in trustees and new trustees are recruited as appropriate to provide the expertise needed and represent our user group.

Staff

9 Lives Furniture is managed by a full-time Manager. Other staff are:

- Two part time Team Leaders
- Two part time Drivers
- One part time Trainer (Furniture Refurbishment)

Volunteers

In addition to paid staff 9 Lives Furniture relies on the contribution made by a significant number of volunteers including:

- Drivers
- Driver's Mates collecting and delivering furniture
- Showroom volunteers, assisting customers and keeping the premises clean and tidy
- Furniture refurbishment – ex students who refurbish donated items for sale in the showroom and work on independent commissions.
- A team of volunteers who assist with the administration, web site and IT

Contractors

9 Lives Furniture also uses self employed tutors to provide specialist training and outsources its accounts function.

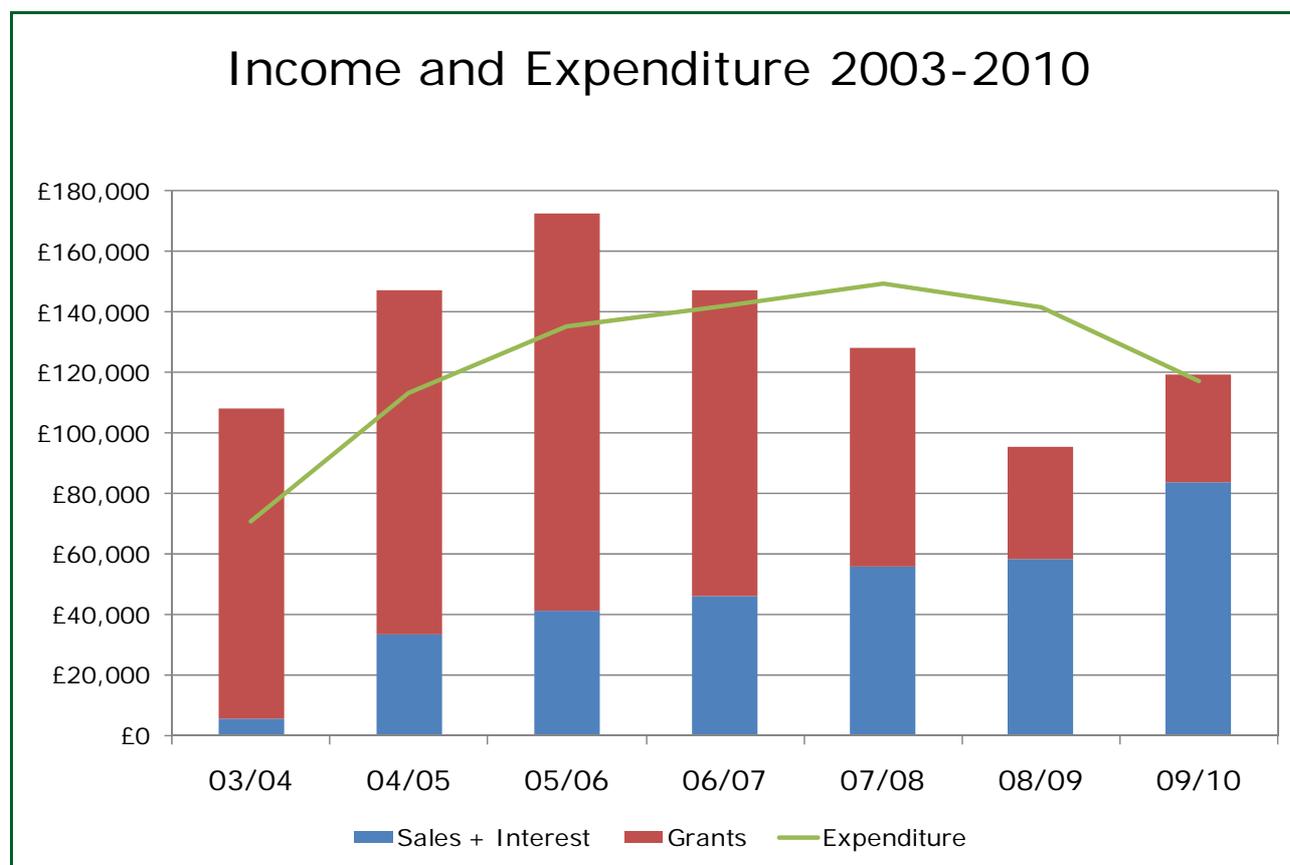
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Section 8: Financial Information and Requirements

Financial Summary

In the early years of 9 Lives Furniture we received significant grants from CRED and ESF funds and many charitable trusts. Over time we have built the charity's sales income so that it now covers 70% of expenditure and have reduced the charity's reliance on grant income. We have also reduced costs over time (there were one-off staff and legal costs of £25,000 in '08/09 relating to an employment issue).

As a result of these actions 9 Lives Furniture had a small positive balance in 2009/10 and is budgeting / planning for a similar position for the next three years.



Financial Year	Sales + Interest	Grants	Total Income	Expenditure	Surplus	Unrestricted reserves
03/04	£5,772	£102,172	£107,944	£71,021	£36,923	£26,078
04/05	£33,444	£113,593	£147,037	£113,486	£33,551	£52,690
05/06	£41,285	£131,448	£172,733	£135,469	£37,264	£92,583
06/07	£46,178	£100,975	£147,153	£142,122	£5,031	£87,644
07/08	£55,904	£72,131	£128,035	£149,312	-£21,277	£77,343
08/09	£58,393	£37,165	£95,558	£141,803	-£46,245	£29,214
09/10	£83,767	£35,546	£119,313	£117,331	£1,982	TBA

9 Lives Furniture – Business Plan 2010-13

Three year plan

The outline financial plan for the next three years is given below along with the actuals for 2009/10 (these are taken from 9 Lives Furniture's own records – the formal year end accounts are being prepared).

Our objective is to make the furniture recycling business self-sustaining in 2012 and on an ongoing basis whilst continuing to rely on statutory and grant income for the training courses and for capital / equipment purchases.

		'09/10 actual	'10/11 budget	'11/12 budget	'12/13 budget
Furniture recycling	Showroom running costs	-66,684	-72,567	-72,471	-74,121
	Furniture sales	78,531	70,600	78,000	82,500
	Gift Aid	0	2,100	4,000	5,000
		11,847	133	9,529	13,379
Collection / delivery	Costs	-16,465	-17,371	-20,133	-20,673
	Income	3,465	3,000	8,120	10,120
		-13,000	-14,371	-12,013	-10,553
TOTAL FURNITURE BUSINESS		-1,153	-14,239	-2,484	2,826
Training Furniture refurb + retail only	Training costs	-34,182	-33,169	-41,356	-42,666
	Furniture refurb income	1,000	1,400	2,000	2,500
	Room hire/training income	715	480	1,500	2,000
		-33,467	-31,289	-37,856	-38,166
Income	Grants / donations already secured	35,546	43,609	2,000	2,000
	Further grants / donations required		1,891	38,300	33,400
	Other income	56	40	100	100
Totals	Expenditure	-117,331	-123,108	-133,960	-137,460
	Income	119,313	123,120	134,020	137,620
Balance		1,982	12	60	160
Total reserves		42,962	42,974	43,034	43,194

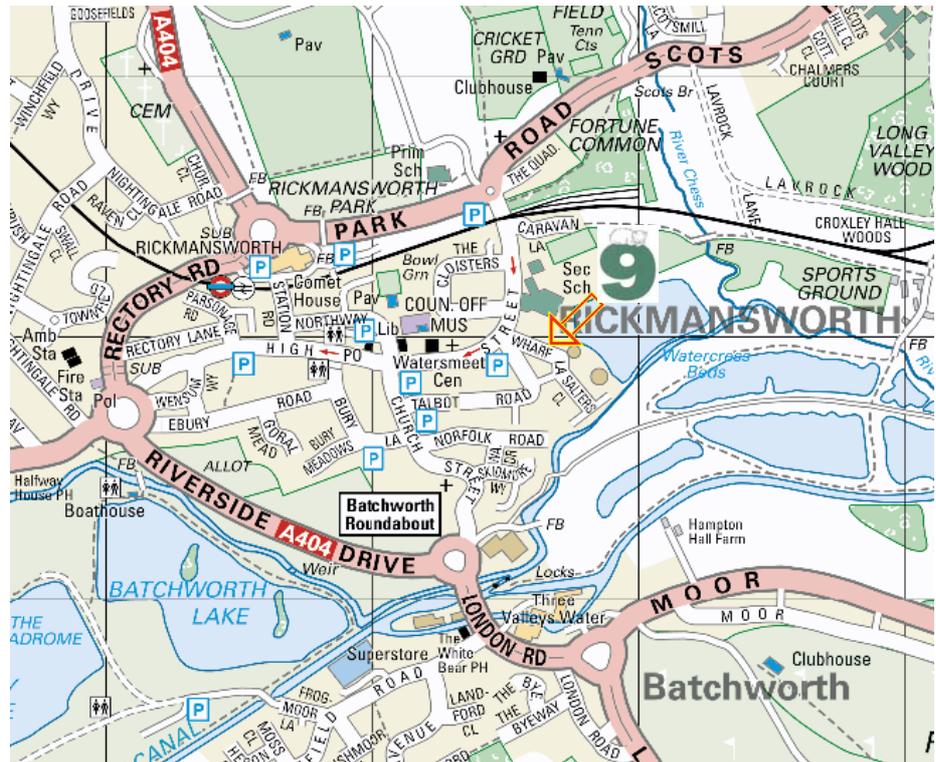
Reserves Policy

The trustees set a policy that reflects the need to maintain current operations whilst providing for future commitments. It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained sufficient to pay off staff, settle the rent to the end of the break clause and cover basic operational costs. This figure is currently £20,000.

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Contact Details

Address: 25 Wharf Lane
Rickmansworth
WD3 1HA



Telephone: 01923 718666

Opening Hours: 9am to 4pm Tuesday to Friday
9am to 12pm Saturday

Email: marie@9livesfurniture.org.uk

Website: www.9livesfurniture.org.uk

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Appendix – 2009/10 Financials

Nine Lives Furniture

Actuals for the year to 31st March 2010

(£)

	Apr-09 actual	May-09 actual	Jun-09 actual	Jul-09 actual	Aug-09 actual	Sep-09 actual	Oct-09 actual	Nov-09 actual	Dec-09 actual	Jan-10 actual	Feb-10 actual	Mar-10 actual	TOTAL
Donations (UnRest, Unsolicited)	32		3,000			1,062				36		2,000	6,130
Fundraising (Rest, Solicited)		13,460				106	11,600				500	3,750	29,416
Furniture Sales	6,795	5,751	8,100	5,036	5,770	8,364	7,061	8,770	5,157	4,029	6,490	8,208	79,531
Delivery income	280	175	265	195	360	410	260	420	240	180	300	380	3,465
Collection income													0
Bank Interest			15			16			13			12	56
Classroom hire			180	225						135		175	715
Total income	7,107	19,386	11,560	5,456	6,130	9,958	18,921	9,190	5,410	4,380	7,290	14,525	119,313
Bank Charges	2	2	29	12	2	2	2	2	2	5	2	2	64
Building maintenance	191	638	115	495	103		302	135	14	234		0	2,227
Expenses, staff								5	77				82
Expenses, volunteers	109	65	122	82	77	111	108	110	185	36	50	113	1,168
Expenses, trainees		15	18					3					36
Electricity		420			237		259	-250		574			1,240
Equipment repairs and pat testing			70				172			63			305
Insurance	372					1,300	1,716						3,388
Membership fees		67											67
Postage	2		15	2		5	6	15	23	5	5	4	82
Printing and stationery	2	44	136	6	2	63	270	44	104	2	133	15	821
Professional costs		55	25	25	10		1,285		15	15		25	1,455
Rent			6,250			6,250			6,250			6,250	25,000
Water rates				161						110	70		341
Salaries	4,477	4,303	4,390	4,390	4,390	4,466	4,443	4,442	4,715	4,714	4,714	4,583	54,027
PAYE and NIC			4,428				4,377			3,917		4,034	16,756
Staff travel													0
Sundries	3												3
Telephone and fax	85	82	81	86	91	82	95	98	83	64	63	63	973
Training expenses	450	754	87	0	309	92	81	450	306	60	123	473	3,185
Van running costs	130	120	150	150	90	195	146	140	100	1,354	360	190	3,125
Advertising and marketing	600						1,726			642	15		2,983
Roundings		1	1	-1	-1	-1	2	2	1	-1			3
Total outgoings	6,423	6,566	15,917	5,408	5,310	12,565	14,990	5,196	11,875	11,794	5,535	15,752	117,331
Net cash flow	684	12,820	-4,357	48	820	-2,607	3,931	3,994	-6,465	-7,414	1,755	-1,227	1,982
Balance b/f	40,968	41,652	54,472	50,115	50,163	50,983	48,376	52,307	56,301	49,836	42,422	44,177	42,950
Balance c/f	41,652	54,472	50,115	50,163	50,983	48,376	52,307	56,301	49,836	42,422	44,177	42,950	44,931