



**COMMUNITY MANAGED LIBRARIES
NATIONAL PEER NETWORK**

Harbury Village Library as a Community
Recycling Hub



Harbury Energy initiative

Harbury Energy initiative is a local low carbon group serving the village of Harbury in rural Warwickshire. Since they began working in our community in 2010 they have achieved significant beneficial changes for our community buildings, installing PV panels and LED lighting, insulation, energy storage and other carbon reduction. Their main aim is to identify challenges and find grants that enable us to help the residents and community building committees to cut carbon and reduce costs. They have now expanded their reach to stimulate new activity in the county through the Low Carbon Warwickshire Network.

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network

Low Carbon Warwickshire Network aims to connect low carbon groups across the county of Warwickshire, sharing ideas and stimulating and supporting new activity. Although primarily rural in focus, they exclude no one. In 2021 Bob Sherman, FRSA BEM, founder of both Harbury Energy Initiative and Low Carbon Warwickshire gave a presentation on “The Low Carbon Library” at one of the CMLNPN online network meetings.

Harbury eWheels

Harbury eWheels provides transport to those in need using 2 electric cars supplied by Electric Zoo, working within a 15-mile radius of Harbury. We do this at no cost to the beneficiary or the agency that refers them. Their aim is to reduce rural isolation and enable local agencies to deliver their services effectively. This combines social and environmental benefit. The electricity to charge the electric cars

comes from **Harbury Village Library** on whose car park the EV charge point is located.

Repair Cafe Harbury

Repair Cafe Harbury is helping to change attitudes by presenting an innovative approach to waste reduction, social cohesion and the transference of craft skills, through the act of repairing, upgrading and maintaining a broad range of products. The intention is to persuade people to think twice before sending broken items to landfill. The group holds repair events on the 4th Saturday of the month in **Harbury Village Library**.

Harbury Environmental Group

Harbury Environmental Group was established to share environmental ideas, bring more 'green' things to the village, and pass on environmental ideals to the next generation. Some of the recycling boxes organised by the group are hosted in **Harbury Village Library**.

Harbury Village Library

Harbury Village Library is one of 13 volunteer run, community managed libraries, in Warwickshire, and earns its place in this list of environmental groups because libraries have been part of the **Circular Economy**, and exemplars of **Collaborative Consumption**, for over 2,000 years.

The library is in the centre of the village and operates a cafe, making it a natural place for people to congregate. The building is regularly used for meetings and events, has displays of leaflets and flyers in the

entrance foyer, and during the pandemic became the collecting point for the local Food Bank. It was inevitable that when they were looking for a place to locate a recycling box the Harbury Environmental Group asked the library. By default, we say “yes” to almost all requests, so started our role as a village recycling hub.

Recycling Methods

Electric Toothbrush heads and Covers

The first two recycling boxes were provided by **Terracycle**, who are an innovative recycling company that has become a global leader in recycling hard-to-recycle materials. They offer a range of free programs, usually funded by brands. Our first box was for plastic dental care products.



Items accepted are:

- Electric toothbrush heads & covers
- Electric flosser nozzles
- Flossing sticks
- Interdental brushes
- Dental floss containers

Items not accepted include:

- Battery operated toothbrushes
- Electric toothbrush handles
- Manual toothbrushes
- Toothpaste tubes and caps

The initiative is funded by Philips Dental Care, but other companies' products are accepted for recycling.

Marigold Gloves

Box two was for Marigold Gloves.

Items accepted are:

- Marigold durable gloves
- Marigold disposable gloves
- Marigold gloves plastic packaging



Other brands of durable and disposable gloves are not accepted which likely explains why this has been the least successful of the recycling boxes. The box is likely to be removed in the near future.

Bra Bank

The next arrival was a Bra Bank from the **Against Breast Cancer** charity. A village resident had been hosting the box in their porch, but this had quickly become impractical. As before, when we were asked to host the recycling box, we said “yes”.



The bra recycling scheme takes unwanted or unloved bras and through a network of bra banks raises vital funds for pioneering breast cancer research.

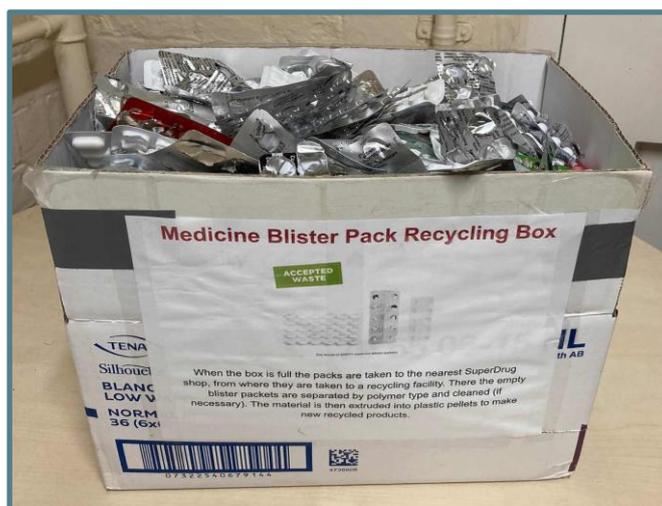
The same bras also help to support small businesses in developing countries in Africa and around the world. Together with recycling partners, their textile recovery project prevents these bras going into landfill before giving them a new lease of life in countries such as Togo, Ghana and Kenya, where bras remain expensive to produce locally.

Successful ventures like this provide an income for families in developing countries whilst providing employment for people living in the UK. Any bras that are genuinely beyond redemption are dismantled and disposed of properly.

For every tonne of bras collected, Against Breast Cancer receives £700 to fund their research.

Medicine Blister Packs

Following the early success of our recycling programme, Harbury Environmental Group (HEG) came back to us to see if we'd be prepared to host a recycling box for plastic medicine blister packs. In this case the model is a little different. **Superdrug** have teamed up with brands Anadin, Panadol, Nexium, Piriteze, Rennie, Nicorette, Imodium, Sudafed & Benadryl to include collection boxes in every Superdrug Pharmacy. Once the recycling box in the library is full an HEG volunteer collects the contents and takes them to the nearest Superdrug shop, in Leamington Spa. We've been surprised at how well used this box is. It frequently needs emptying three times a week.



From Superdrug the blister packs are taken to a recycling facility. There the empty packs are separated by polymer type and cleaned. The material is then extruded into plastic pellets to make new, recycled, products.

We make sure to remind people leaving packs that they must be empty. Unused tablets should be taken to the nearest pharmacy.

Inkjet Printer Cartridges



In the last few weeks, we have taken the initiative in installing a fifth recycling box. We can now collect inkjet printer cartridges for recycling.

Recycle4Charity is a free to use ink recycling programme, that helps its thousands of members raise funds for charity and non-for-profit organisations.

Since launching in 2002, they have developed strong relationships globally with buyers of used ink cartridges, allowing them to compile and maintain one of the broadest and stable ink cartridge wanted lists in the market.

Because of this it's possible for us to receive a payment for the recycled cartridges we send. We have just posted our first box and are waiting to see what payment we receive.

Laser and toner cartridges are not included in the programme.

Some thoughts...

While recognising our environmental responsibilities, we didn't intend to become a recycling hub for the village. It's something that has just happened because over the years we've become the place to go to if something needs doing. We're proud of the fact that we're now seen as a Community Hub and aren't ashamed to admit that it's something that happened accidentally, rather than as part of a deliberate strategic initiative.

What do other community managed libraries need to do to become recycling hubs:

- Find a space
- Forget how to say "no"
- Be selective about what you're prepared to recycle. We turn down anything to do with food, such as empty crisp packets. We've also been asked about battery recycling, but there are health and safety implications, in particular the wrong sort of battery can cause a fire.

One side effect of this initiative is that we have increased our footfall, with villagers visiting our building for the first time.

