



Community RePaint is a national network of 63 community-based paint reuse projects. Stretching from Cornwall to Belfast to the Shetland Isles, this network provides a practical and innovative approach to one of the more common types of household waste - paint.

About 400 million litres of paint are sold in the UK each year. It is estimated that 56 million litres are left unused, stored in homes or garages or simply thrown away. That's enough to fill over 22 Olympic-sized swimming pools! Leftover paint donated to Community RePaint not only helps to protect the environment by keeping paint out of landfill but also benefits those in need.

Individual projects collect "half-tins" of leftover, domestic paint, deposited by householders, from donation points at the local council's household waste recycling site or civic amenity site. Unsold paint and damaged tins are also collected from local DIY outlets such as B&Q and Homebase, trade centres such as Dulux Decorator Centres and local shops. Painters and decorators may also donate leftover paint from decorating jobs.

The paint is stored at the local project's premises and then redistributed to local charities, community and voluntary groups and individuals in social need. Paint is usually offered free of charge although projects encourage small financial donations to help cover their costs. Some projects operate annual subscription programmes.

Community RePaint has been sponsored by Dulux since its inception in 1993 and is co-ordinated by Resource Futures, an employee owned, non-profit distributing environmental consultancy. The network also forms part of Dulux's ongoing sustainability programme.

The running of Community RePaint projects also provides employment and volunteer and work experience placements to, for example, the long-term unemployed and people with learning difficulties. Many schemes also run training courses in tandem with paint redistribution in subjects such as health and safety, manual handling, waste management and computing. Several of these are accredited to NVQ and City and Guilds level.

In 2007 the Community RePaint network:

- collected 450,000 litres of paint from householders, businesses, manufacturers and retailers (which otherwise would have ended up in landfill).
- with a market value of over £1.75 million.
- redistributed over 250,000 litres of paint to a total of 16,500 community groups, charities, voluntary organisations and individuals in need.

Milestones

2000 - Biffaward Award for Best Waste Minimisation Project and Overall Project Winner.

2002 – Community RePaint is cited as an example of best practice in a European Commission report¹ with a recommendation that other member states set up similar networks.

2004 – ICI Chief Executive Award (Europe) for Community Involvement.

Community RePaint continues to make closer links with the paint industry and its trade bodies and with local authorities in order to redistribute paint to an ever-increasing number of charitable organisations and individuals in need.

¹ European Commission – Directorate-General Environment: Study on Hazardous Household Waste with a main emphasis on Hazardous Household Chemicals: July 2002.

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