

# Magpie cop-operative



Project author or developer:  
**Magpie cop-operative**

Where:  
**GB / Regno Unito / Brighton**

Website:  
**[www.magpie.coop](http://www.magpie.coop)**

## Magpie Recycling began life in 1990 at Hanover Community Centre

**History** Three volunteers collected drink cans and glass, plus office paper from a small number of local residents and businesses, including the Universities. Magpie became a Co-operative Limited Company in 1992 and by 1994 had expanded its range of commercial services to necessitate the move to its current premises, provided by the Local Authority at Saunders Park. In May 1996 the company began its GreenBox kerbside collection scheme, collecting a wide range of recyclable materials from domestic households. Starting out with a modest 17 subscribers, the company now has around 2000 customers throughout Brighton & Hove.

### Services

**Consultation Service** We have provided a kerbside advice consultation service for several local authorities in the south-east, including Horsham District Council. In partnership with the University of Brighton and Magpie Recycling, they were conducting trials of recycling systems with the aim of increasing the recycling rate. The trials were designed to make people think about recycling. The containers were being delivered by Magpie Recycling who have 20 years experience in the field. We have also worked with Croydon District Council to help increase the number of households using their kerbside scheme by visiting 16000 households with leaflets and questionnaires.

**Manufacturing Workshop** We aim to be environmentally aware in all our operations. Consequently our kerbside collection vehicles are electric powered converted milk floats. We have designed and converted these ourselves in our manufacturing workshop.

**Commercial Services** Our commercial collection service is now done by our partners Brighton Paper Round. This service includes confidential shredding, collection of a variety of grades of office paper, cans, plastics, tetra pak, foil, cardboard, toners and much more.

**Furniture Project** Employing one manager and one full time and several part time employees, we collect donated furniture free of charge and sell it on at cost to those on low incomes at Shabitat. We also work in conjunction with Social Services to offer a low cost removals service, which is now available to all residents of Brighton and Hove.

**Development Team** This is shared amongst all employees. Their initial remit is to look at the medium and long term shape of the business, investigate the various avenues for development within the waste industry, and apply for funding and sponsorship.

**Summary** The day to day management of the business is distributed amongst the departmental managers, who in turn are accountable to the elected Executive Council. All affairs of the business, including this Executive, are ultimately accountable to the General Council, which comprises of all company members. This company structure and the lack of shareholders affords every employee the opportunity to influence the performance and direction of the business. We intend to maintain this scenario as we pursue new and innovative routes through the waste management industry. There is at present an option to become a member of the co-op after two years employment with the company.

