

REUSE Foundation secures National Lottery funding to bring refill to East London communities

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Media:

Building on the success of Bottles for Good, the charity will pilot a Community Hub Refill scheme across Newham — helping households save money and cut plastic waste



London – REUSE Foundation, the UK-registered charity behind the Bottles for Good campaign, has secured funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to launch a new pilot bringing refill and reuse directly into local communities.

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The Community Hub Reuse and Refill Pilot will run across four established community hubs in Newham, East London, helping local households reduce single-use plastic while lowering the cost of everyday essentials.

Related Keywords:

Refill Stores :: Refill :: Stop Plastic Waste :: Bottles For Good :: Refill Shop :: Community Impact ::

"This is about making refill part of everyday life, in the places people already trust." Roger Sharp, Trustee, REUSE Foundation

From Bottles for Good to Community Hubs

Bottles for Good invited refill shops across the UK to stock free, high-quality reusable bottles to help seed reuse habits. Nearly 40 stores from Norwich to Newham took part and was a great success. Participants choose how to price the bottles with a suggested 50% returned to REUSE Foundation to support its reuse work in India.

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REUSE Foundation saw the benefit of working with local community stores to help promote reuse behaviours and wondered how it could extend this work.

The answer was to take refill somewhere it hadn't been before: straight into the food hubs and community spaces that many people rely on every week. With backing from the National Lottery, that idea is now becoming a reality.

A National Lottery-backed pilot

Awarded through the National Lottery Community Fund's Awards For All programme, the grant will fund a 12-month pilot, including a two-month set-up phase, designed to test whether refill can work sustainably in some of London's highest-need areas. The charity and its work are supported locally by MP and government minister Sir Stephen Timms.

This pilot is just the beginning. The learning, evidence, and outcomes generated in Newham will help build the case for a much larger programme, with REUSE Foundation hoping to secure further National Lottery support to scale the model across a wider geographic area.

How it will work

- Food hubs will welcome people in, hand out reusable containers, and introduce the scheme, helping normalise refill from the first visit.
- Food clubs and mixed-use community venues, starting with sites run by partner organisation Ascension Community Trust, will host refill stations where households can top up everyday essentials at close to cost price.
- Products will be priced to cover what it costs REUSE Foundation to supply — nothing more — so the scheme can keep running and keep saving people money.
- The pilot will focus on a small number of high-use, long-life products, making it simple for hubs to run and easy for households to build into their routine.

REUSE Foundation is working with Newham Food Alliance, which supports 41 food banks and clubs across East London, along with bulk refill suppliers LESS& and Fill Refill, who are providing product and expertise to help the pilot get off the ground.

Why it matters

UK households are grappling with rising costs at the same time as growing awareness of plastic waste. By putting refill into places people already visit for support, REUSE Foundation hopes to show that reuse can be affordable, practical and genuinely community-led — not an added burden, but a welcome one.

"We started Bottles for Good to support refill stores seed reuse in their communities," said Roger Sharp. "This pilot takes that same spirit somewhere new — into the community hubs already doing brilliant work across Newham. If we can show that refill works here, in the places where it matters most, we can build something that scales across the country."

What's next

Over the coming months, REUSE Foundation will work with Ascension Community Trust and other local community partners to confirm sites, launch the refill stations, and begin tracking impact — from money saved by households to plastic kept out of the waste stream. The results will directly inform a future bid to the National Lottery Community Fund's Reaching Communities programme, with the ambition of taking the model far beyond East London.

About REUSE Foundation

REUSE Foundation is a UK-registered charity dedicated to developing and supporting practical solutions that reduce reliance on single-use plastic and deliver change at scale. Alongside its UK refill work, it backs a reuse-model pilot in rural India and has conducted a global survey of reuse practitioners.

Media contacts

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