

Setting Up A Little Community Library

One of our #HuntsWasteBusters created a little community library, helping to share books, reduce waste and build a stronger community. Here is her journey, and some ideas on how you could start one in your community.



Whilst reading what has become one of my most treasured books, *The Little Book Of Lykke (The Danish Search For The World's Happiest People)*, I came across a section entitled 'Five Ways To Plant A Community' with a suggestion for 'Establishing A Book Lending Cupboard', amongst other things. I loved the idea of this as I am an avid reader and thought what a great way it would be to give new life to books that I have already read and are gathering dust on the shelf as well as blessing my community and hopefully getting a few new books to read myself too.

As I was driving home thinking about how I could go about this, I spotted that a neighbour in the next street had left an old bookcase with a sign saying 'Please take me' at the end of their driveway so I thought that I may as well just give it a go, picked up the bookcase, put it on an empty bit of land at the end of my street, just down from my house and headed indoors in search of some books that I would be happy to give away. Because this first bookcase was open to the elements, I had to bag the books up in plastic envelopes so that they wouldn't get damaged. This wasn't ideal but it was the start of our Little Community Library. After tea, I then got to work creating a Facebook page which I invited some local friends to join, who I thought might be interested and the Little Community library (on our street, at least) was born.



That was over 3 years ago now and since then the Little Community Library has grown as friends have invited their friends to join, people have stopped with curiosity, asking what it is and if they can use it and school children and families have taken to stopping off and taking an excited look in the box on the way home from school. The old bookcase



started to rot after the first year so we replaced it with a plastic storage box, which I bought in a local garden centre and thankfully means that we now don't need the plastic envelopes anymore either. Some people just anonymously leave and take books, which they are very welcome to do and others like to post photos, comments and reviews on the Facebook page. When I can, I usually post updates of new donations so that people can see what's in there and if there is anything that they fancy reading and I think that this probably also works as a bit of a reminder that the Community Library is there and encourages them to take a stroll over and have a look.



I've also become a bit of a Community Library geek and love watching out for telephone libraries and other book boxes whilst out and about and always try to keep a handful of books in the car so that I can leave a couple whenever I come across one and help myself to a couple that I fancy reading myself.