



Making A Difference

Spare a thought...

Welcome to your Winter Making A Difference newsletter.

It is easy to forget others around the world who do not enjoy the privileges and comforts we share. In this edition, our main feature focuses on the work of John Ebe, who works hard in the Republic Of Togo, West Africa, to provide the basic necessities of life for his family.

John is a used textile trader and has been a BTR customer since 2003. The surplus textiles you pass us are processed by our team in Bristol, before being exported to Africa, where traders like John seek to earn a living by selling them on to the African public.

Sadly, John's brother Onuoha died in 2005, leaving John as head of his family. His new role brought with it great personal responsibility to provide for the family and maintain their wellbeing.

Your surplus textiles keep John and many others like him, in employment. Earning money to feed and cloth his family and send his brothers and sisters to school. I hope you find his story as inspiring as I do.

I hope you continue to enjoy the newsletters in 2007. Please keep letting us have your ideas for stories or features and any feedback you have.

Many thanks for your continuing hard work and custom. With all good wishes for 2007.

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The Family Business

An insight into what life is like for African Trader, John Ebe, and how your textiles help him to feed and provide for his family.

Meet John Ebe. John is 25 years old. He lives in the Republic of Togo, West Africa. John runs Fashion Fair Trading Co. Limited, which trades in used clothing, shoes and handbags. His company purchases around textiles from BTR every year.



John sets about sorting the bales and sells the items to other local traders. In this way, the surplus textiles from the UK help many African families to survive.



These textiles are initially met at the African port of Lome, by John's customs agent, who formally accepts the shipments and ensures they clear customs.

The textiles are then sold to the African public at vibrant, colourful street markets.



They are then stored in a warehouse, still in the bales we prepare.



The cultural and geographical differences between the UK and Togo are huge, but the process of recycling surplus textiles forms a connection between the two countries. A connection which sustains life, provides shelter and education and improves self-esteem.

Our Mission: "To supply consistently graded high quality used clothing that enhances peoples lives & improves their self-esteem"

Sharing Success in 2006

During 2006, we passed back a percentage of our profits to you, to thank you for your custom and contribute to your charitable goals.

In total, we gave back just short of £30,000—what a great start to our 'Sharing Success' scheme!



Thank you for using our services and for all your hard work in setting aside your waste textiles for collection in 2006. We look forward to working with you and passing back more funds during 2007.

Remember— 'Sharing Success' payments are based on the overall collections made from each charity group. *Keep the textile supplies coming in and maximise the amount given back to your charity!*

Helping us to help you

The more textiles we can process, the more funds we can pass back as 'Sharing Success' donations.

It is very important that garments such as suits, pyjamas, gloves, bikinis and especially shoes, are received in pairs.

Overall, we process in the region of 80 tonnes of materials per week (8000 bags) and it is virtually impossible for us to find matching pairs of shoes and clothing once the grading process is underway. We currently pay to dispose of around 3500 kilos of waste in landfill sites per week. Thousands of unpaired items will go to landfill. In the case of suits, we receive much less money for a separate pair of trousers and separate jacket than we do for a complete suit.

We would be most grateful if you could find time in your busy schedule to tie or pack together 2-piece items whenever possible. Thank you.

New Customer Corner

The BTR team is delighted to welcome Cornish Hospices (combining Mount Edgcombe & St Julia's Hospice) and the YMCA as customers.

Cornish Hospices provides palliative care to the terminally ill, as well as providing advice and support to their families. We are collecting textiles from 22 Cornish Hospice shops across Devon and Cornwall.

The YMCA has been providing invaluable services for decades and is recognised by most people. BTR is providing collection services to 16 YMCA shops from Plymouth up to Cheltenham.



Meet The Team!



Fernley Piper founded BTR way back in 1970, originally as Avon Rag Merchants. He built the company, passing over overall control to his son, Haydn in 1994.

He remains a Director of the company and continues to contribute to the BTR strategy.

On a day to day basis, he oversees the production supervisors at the BTR factory. When he is not working hard, he enjoys photography and gardening.

They're growing...

Congratulations to St Michael's Hospice, St Peter's Hospice and The Salvation Army, who have all opened new shops over the last couple of months. BTR were delighted to present our £500 new shop donation to each of these charities.



- Comment or suggestion?
- Got a story to tell us?
- Want your shop/charity to feature in the 'Making A Difference' newsletter?