



Donating IT equipment to PCrefurb

Frequently Asked Questions

PCrefurb is a digital inclusion charity that helps people to access the online world. We do this by refurbishing IT equipment, giving it away to people in need, and, if needed, helping them learn to use it.

By donating unwanted IT devices to PCrefurb you will be both saving them from land fill and helping someone to get online that would otherwise struggle to do so.

What can we reuse?

Our number one request is for laptops. The more recent the better, but we can still use much older laptops – see '[What about device security?](#)'. The most up-to-date list of what we can reuse can be found on [our website](#).

What about data security?

We have the facility to erase data from hard drives and other storage devices using professional industry standard methods, producing an individualised certificate of erasure when required.

[Redkey USB](#) supports PCrefurb through charitable giving – we have access to their highest level of software and support. Their data erasure platform is [ADISA Certified](#), meeting strict global standards.

We do not look at any data on donated devices. Sometimes, if a device has a hardware failure, we must remove a drive to erase it in our 'erasing station', a dedicated PC running RedKey USB.

If for any reason a drive cannot be erased, we will physically destroy it, or it will go to a registered third-party company for physical destruction.

You may choose to donate devices such as laptops that have already been erased or reset. We can also accept laptops with drives removed.

Where is donated equipment stored?

We have two storage locations – our office and a commercial storage venue. Both have centrally linked security systems and CCTV.

Who does the refurbishing?

Refurbishment is overseen by our Technical Lead. They supervise a team of highly experienced volunteers who assist at weekly workshop sessions. Many of our volunteers face complex life issues who benefit greatly from the meaningful work they undertake to help people get online.





All our staff are DBS checked. Any volunteers working on refurbishment are always fully supervised by our staff.

How are donations tracked?

Each donated device is given a unique Asset ID.

This means it has its own record on our admin system. We know where every item has come from, what we have done to refurbish it and who is the new recipient.

Once a device has been gifted, we do not monitor its use in any way, and it becomes the private property of the beneficiary.

What about device security?

We only give out devices that can receive security updates. This means we will not redistribute phones, tablets or computers that only run out of date operating systems such as Windows 10 (or older!), or old version of Android or iOS.

We only install Windows 11 on devices that are officially capable of supporting it.

PCrefurb is a registered Microsoft Third Party Installer. This means we can install Windows and deploy digital licences if necessary. Licences are available to us as a registered charity specifically for the benefit of eligible individuals and organisations.

As Windows licences digitally embedded in hardware these days, unless we are instructed otherwise, we reuse the licences that come with donated devices. Please note – this just refers to the Windows operating system itself, and is nothing to do with Microsoft Office, Microsoft 365 or any other software licences.

On computers not capable of running Windows 11, when possible, we install [ChromeOS Flex](#) – a lightweight version of ChromeOS (Google's operating system) which is ideal for anyone who just needs to get online, and is a great use of older yet still perfectly useable devices.

Do you ensure that devices are safe?

Device safety has the highest priority. Along with physical checks, all devices are PAT tested before being redistributed. Stress testing is carried out as far as possible, and all batteries are checked for their state of health and will be replaced as necessary.

Who gets the refurbished devices?

Devices are gifted to individuals that are referred to us by third parties such as other charities, social prescribers, NHS support services and very many others – we have over two hundred organisations in our network of referrers. We support people that live in Tameside and Derbyshire.





Recipients must have limited access to technology, be of limited means and/or have a disability.

We also provide devices to other charities and community groups that find themselves unable to afford IT devices, or that are directly supporting people in need through digital inclusion services.

What if devices can't be reused?

If donated devices cannot be reused, we will either dismantle them to harvest useful parts, send circuitry and certain components to be refined for their precious metals, or they will be recycled 'whole' by a registered third-party recycling company.

Nothing is sent to landfill, and everything that can be separated is recycled.

PCrefurb is registered with the Environment Agency, Registration number CBDL410472 and has a [T11 exemption](#) for repairing or refurbishing waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE).

Is it all worth it?

Yes! We are improving the life chances of disadvantaged people every day.

PCrefurb can be contacted via our website: <https://pcrefurb.org.uk/contact-us/>

