



Community Toolkits

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# Repair Café

# What Is A Repair Café?


Repair cafés are free 'community-centered workshops' where people can meet to fix, and repair broken or damaged items that would otherwise end up in landfill!

There is a social focus to the model, with residents sitting to chat & watch as their item is repaired, helping to alleviate isolation.

Repair cafes can help significantly reduce waste in the local community, supporting a more circular and sustainable economy. They also encourage upskilling and retraining opportunities.



# Repair Cafe

Benefits	Considerations	Example: Farnham Repair Café	
Alleviating isolation and building community through social aspect	Insurance needs proper planning	1,822 items repaired to divert 5.1 tons of waste from landfill!	
Sustainable economy benefits and upskilling	Groups may need legal entity status for insurance purposes (CIC)	4,106 customers, with a 98% satisfaction rate	
Significant electronic waste reduction		£155,593 saved by Surrey residents vs. replacing broken items	
Cost of living support for low-income households		48.3 tons of CO2e saved	
<b>Members Contribution</b>		<b>£3000</b>	

# Benefits

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Community cohesion and reduced isolation

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Potential for large reductions in waste and CO2e emissions

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Sustainable economy benefits and upskilling

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Cost of living support for low-income households

# Case Study:



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So far:

- 81 events held
- 1,910 repairs completed
- 5.4 Tonnes of landfill diverted
- £155,593 saved by citizens
- 51 Tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e avoided
- 98% customer satisfaction



# What SCC Focus Areas Does It Meet

- **Tackling inequality:** Working with Surrey's residents to identify and address causes of inequality by reducing costs, waste and providing experience opportunities.
- **Supporting independence:** Helping residents help themselves and each other within their communities by serving their interests and meeting their needs.
- **Creating a greener future:** Tackling the causes of climate change to help Surrey become a carbon neutral county as soon as possible.
- **Partnership:** Working with residents, businesses, partners and communities to collectively meet challenges and grasp opportunities.

# Planning

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## Community Need

Is there another repair café nearby? Are you in a Priority Neighbourhood?  
Will the café be used?



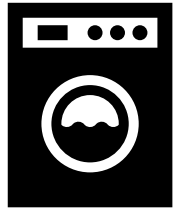
## What Will You Fix

Once you establish the needs of the community it will help you decide what you should prioritise in your repairs. Will you mend clothes, refurbish bikes, fix electronics, upholster furniture?

This will determine the skills set you require, and what tools you'll need to secure.

# Planning

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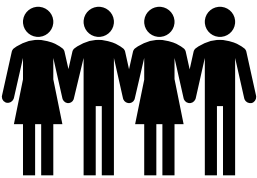


## Location

- Find a suitable location
- What community groups, local authority buildings, charities might you team up with?
- You need an accessible venue, or a venue with a lift for bigger repairs, along with plenty of tables to work off, floor space and sockets for electricals.

## Team

Set up a core team to help with organizing and recruiting repairers, people to greet and help with the day-to-day management of the project. Repairers obviously need the skills for the items they'll be handling. Whilst woodwork, bikes, clothes can be fixed by someone with basic skills, we recommend you have someone experienced fixed any electrical items, such as an electrical engineer.



# Requirements

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## Equipment

The equipment required will vary depending on the site and its requirements, this could include the following:

### Tools



Can you get tools donated? Could you start a Library of Things as a complimentary project? The tools you need will depend on the repairs you do, from sewing machines to soldering irons to puncture repair

### Electrical Testing



You'll need competent electrical safety testers. A multimeter will help you identify faults, and PAT testing equipment should be used to regularly check the safety of tools and electrical items

# Requirements

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## **Safety & Certification**

You're dealing with electronic and hazardous items, so it's important to have the following:

- Insurance (public / personal liability)
- Health and safety alignment between venue and operations
- PAT testing
- Legal entity for donations and operations (a Community Interest Company is the quickest and easiest legal entity to set up)
- DBS checks in relation to engagement with youth and / or vulnerable adults, as well as access to safeguarding information
- Read & understand your risk assessment

# Requirements

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## **Funding**

Funding requirements will vary depending on the scope of the project, you may want to start off housing the project in an existing space to reduce costs for premise hire.

Depending on your premises arrangements you'll need to consider the following costs:

- Premises hire – your local Surrey Library might offer you space?
- Electricity/water costs
- Maintenance
- Insurance

Other costs may include staff, utilities, materials and advertising.

# Operating a Repair Cafe

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1. To run a repair café, you will need a range of co-Ordinator's and volunteers to help manage the day-to-day responsibilities.
2. Most cafes run on a monthly basis which is sufficient for their area. Pop up cafes are also a good alternative when there is only the occasional need. This is to ensure that volunteer time commitment is not too onerous.
3. Complete a basic health & safety assessment before each session – check for visible damage to tools, trip hazards, loose cables, check your fire exits aren't obstructed etc
4. When people arrive at the café have them fill out a registration form to make them aware of the house rules, the form is returned at the end of the session to measure whether their item was successfully repaired.
5. Record what items are coming in, whether they are being successfully repaired and if they are returning items that need repairing again.
6. At the end of each session tally the data collected to report on.
7. Regularly email follow up questions to attendees of the café to measure behavior change

# Reporting

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Measuring the impact of your project is important. For a repair cafe you should report on:

**Repairs**– how many repairs are being done at the cafe per month

**Customers** – how many visits to the café are you recording per month

**CO2e** – how many tons of CO2 equivalent are you saving

**Waste**- how much waste are you diverting from landfill\*

\*This also assumes diversion from materials recycling.

# Maintenance

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**Regular trustee meetings to monitor and check progress, submit requests for extra funding needs etc**



**Use regular displays and campaigns to attract visitors and to recruit new repairers**



**Maintain and inspect tools to ensure they are still safe to use.  
PAT test any electrical tools.**



**Will you take donations? If so you'll need a bank account, someone to balance the books, and cash handling and donations policies which should be updated if and when things change**