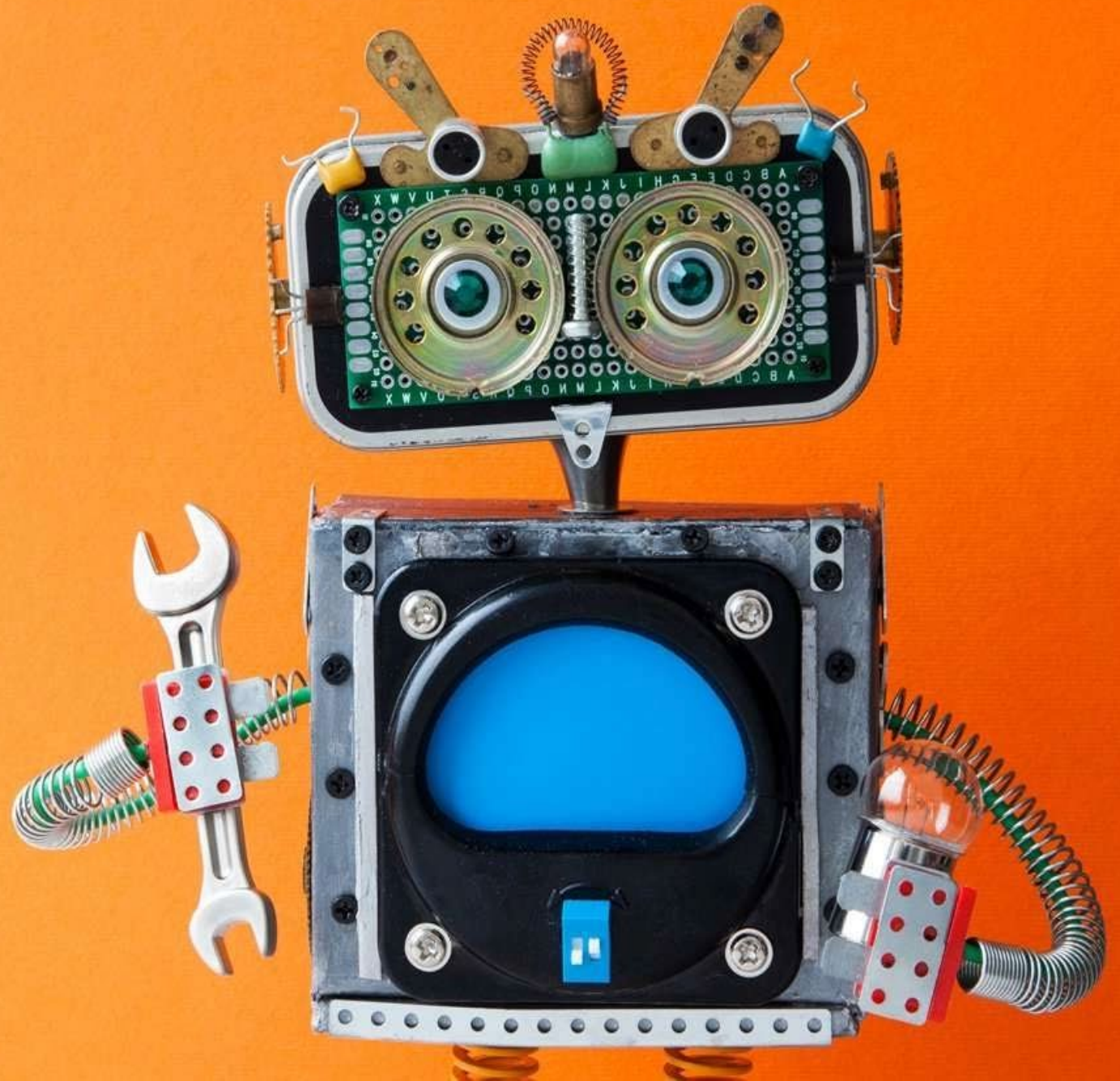


**Repair Cafés**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> UK Conference**  
**21<sup>st</sup> June 2024**  
**UCA**  
**Farnham**



# The Australian Repair Café movement

Professor Leanne Wiseman  
Australian Research Council (ARC)  
Future Fellow  
Griffith University  
Email [l.wiseman@griffith.edu.au](mailto:l.wiseman@griffith.edu.au)

Chair of Australian Repair Network  
[www.australianrepairnetwork.org](http://www.australianrepairnetwork.org)





# A little bit of Australian context

**Australia is about 32  
times *bigger* than the UK**

- United Kingdom has approx.  
~67.8 million people
- Australian has approx.  
26,681,175
- Presents challenges for  
upscaling Repair Cafés in  
Australia, particularly rural and  
remote regions



# Australia's First Repair Café

[Home](#)[Shop](#)[Workshops](#)[Tiny House Course](#)[Repairs](#)[Donate Goods](#)[What's On](#)[Support Us](#)[About Us](#)

The Bower...

- established in 2014
- two locations in Sydney
- Range of workshops, courses

[bower.org.au/](http://bower.org.au/)



## Marrickville Store

Our original Bower store at Addison Rd Community Centre – Building 34, is a treasure trove of building supplies, kitchenalia, bric-a-brac, paintings, games, clothes, books, records and more.

**OPEN Mon – Fri 10am – 5pm  
Sat & Sun 10am – 3pm**



## Summer Hill Boutique

Our new site at 7 Prospect Rd, is part of the Inner West Sustainability Hub. Specialty Boutique store to buy and donate vintage furniture, records, books

**OPEN Mon, Tues & Fri 10am – 5pm  
+ First Saturday of the month 11am-3pm**



## Redfern Workshops

Our workshop at the back of 107 Redfern St hosts many of our Home DIY, Woodwork and Furniture repair workshops. Every Thursday the Men's Shed meets here.

**Find out more and [BOOK A WORKSHOP](#)**



# Location of Repair Cafes in Australia



# Australian Repair Café Network

Our Repair Cafés take many different forms and play many different roles

Repair Cafés

Repair Events

Repair Labs

Repair Cafes in Universities

Community Repair awareness raising initiatives





# Our first Australian Repair Café Survey

In late 2023, we conducted the first survey of our Australian Repair Café convenors, committee members and repair volunteers and helpers

It was an attempt to gain some insights into the experiences of our repair volunteers and the benefits, opportunities and challenges that were being experienced by our Repair Café network in Australia

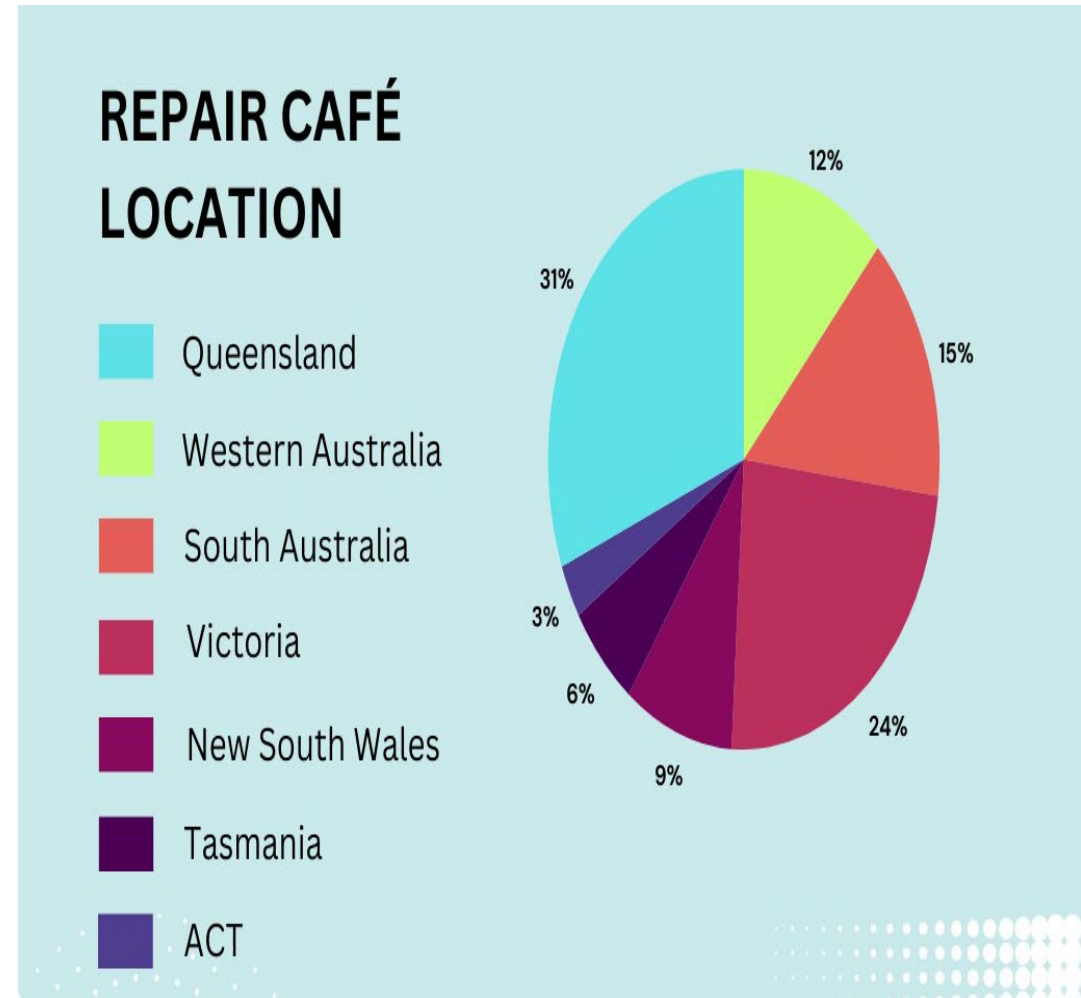


# Australian Repair Café survey

- The results of the 2023 survey demonstrated that the positive impacts of Repair Cafés extend further than merely promoting sustainability and reducing waste.

(challenge of limited responses due to a lack of formal network of repair cafes )

- Volunteers commonly responded that the repair cafés combat social isolation through encouraging social connection, provide the opportunity for innovation and learning new skills, and promote positive mental health and well-being.
- Overall, repair cafés are contributing to shaping a more sustainable, connected and empowered Australia.





# Repair Cafés – modes of operation

## Form/Structure of Repair Cafés

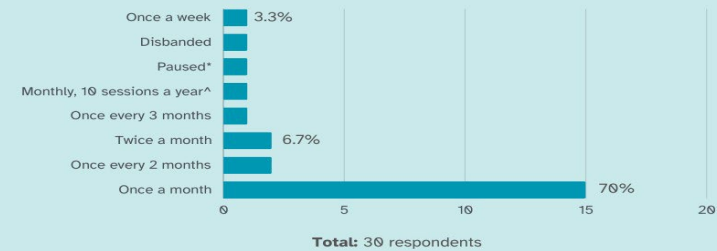
Question: What form/structure does your Repair Café take?

FORM/STRUCTURE	NUMBER	PERCENT
Volunteer student and staff group	1	3.3%
Repair Café Beenleigh is a program of Beenleigh District Community Development Association Incorporated (the operators of Beenleigh Neighbourhood Centre)	1	3.3%
Incorporated	5	16.7%
Unincorporated association	7	23.3%
Unincorporated association (but auspiced under another organisation)	7	23.3%
Community Initiatives such a program or service offered by a community centre/sustainability group/tool library	9	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: Totals exclude missing data.

## Repair Café Operating Times

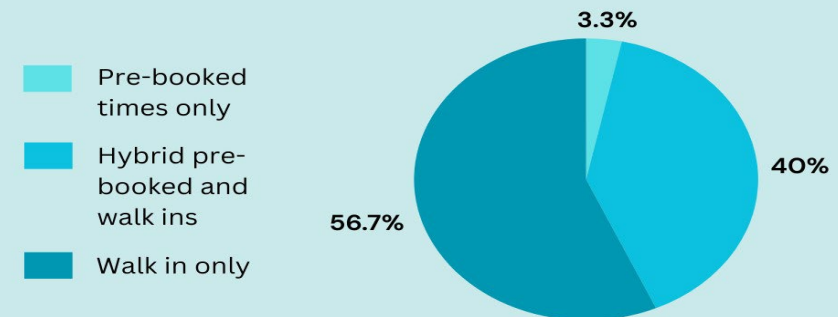
In response to the question, 'How often is your Repair Café running?'



\*Operated for 18 months where we hosted 6 events, now currently paused, however will operate again soon.

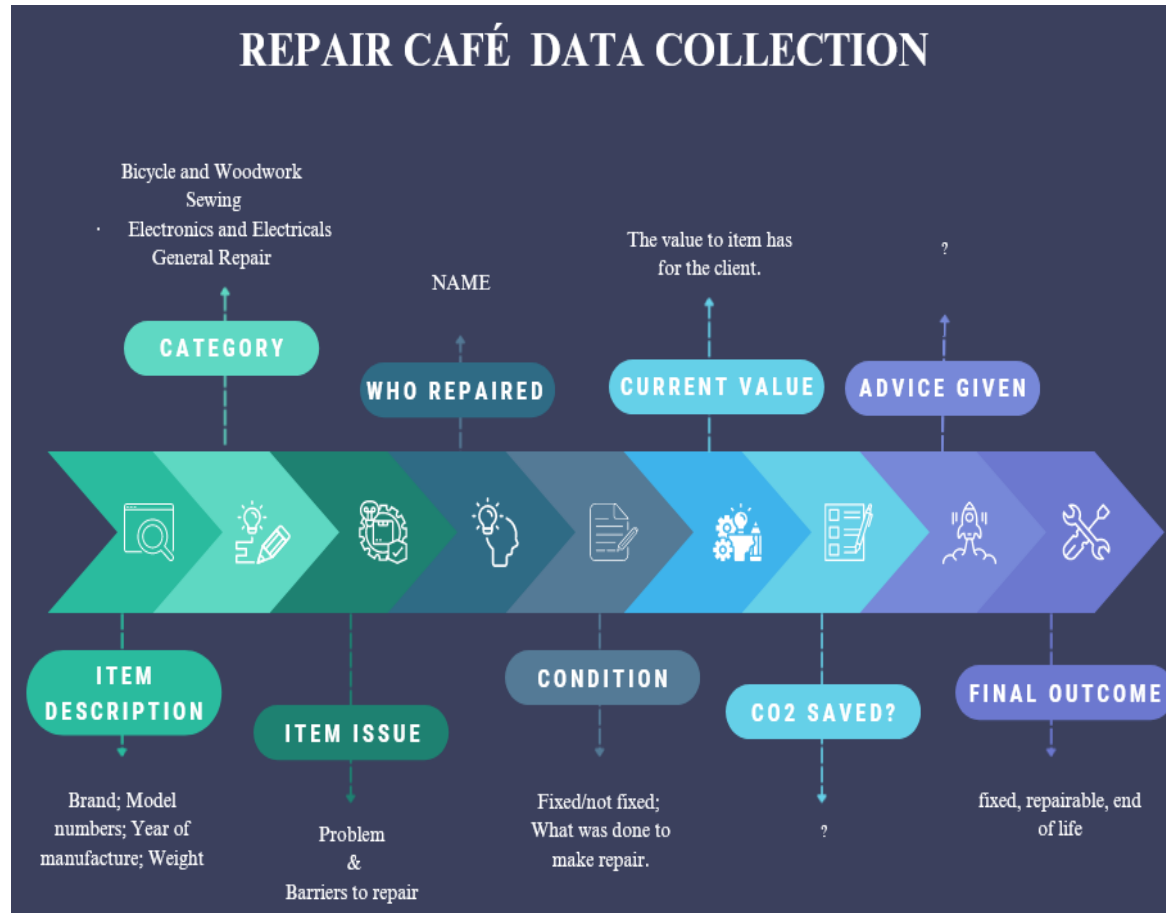
^Monthly, 10 sessions per year, breaking in January and July for holidays

## WHICH SYSTEM DO YOU USE TO BOOK IN REPAIRS?



Total respondents: 30

# Repair Café Data Collection...



## Webinar: Talking About Repair Data

The collection of repair data and information can be used to help inform the advocacy and policy work being done around the Right to Repair movement. To assist Repair Convenors and repairers, we organised a webinar about repair data to discuss and learn about the various tools and ways that repair data can be collected.

Talking About Repair Data was presented on Tuesday 22 November 2022 by James Pickering and Ugo Vallauri from the [Restart Project](#) in conjunction with Professor Leanne Wiseman of the Australian Repair Network.

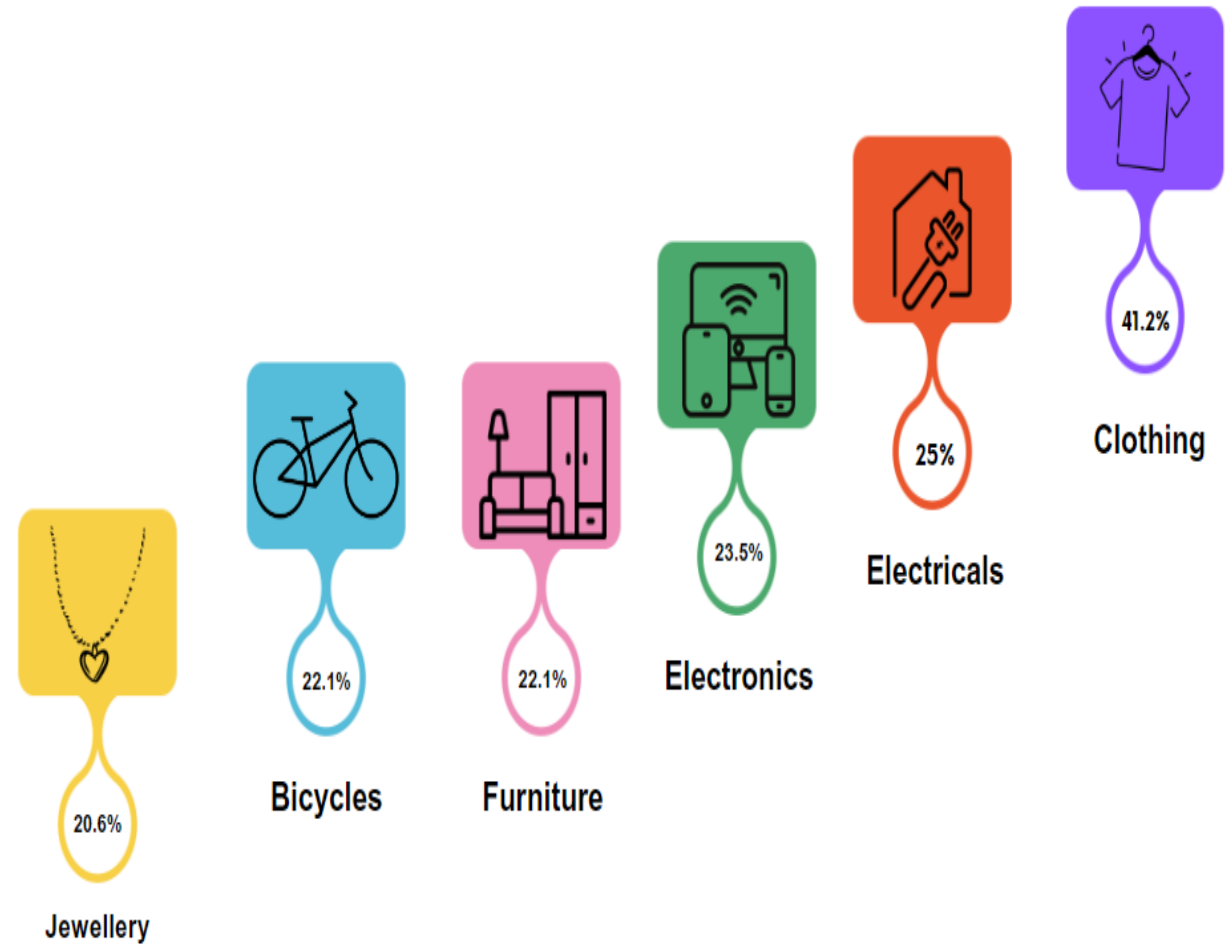
[Download The Restart project presentation slides \(3.9MB\) >](#)

Image credit: Mark A Phillips (Instagram: [@markaphill](#), Twitter: [@unbrokensoluti](#))

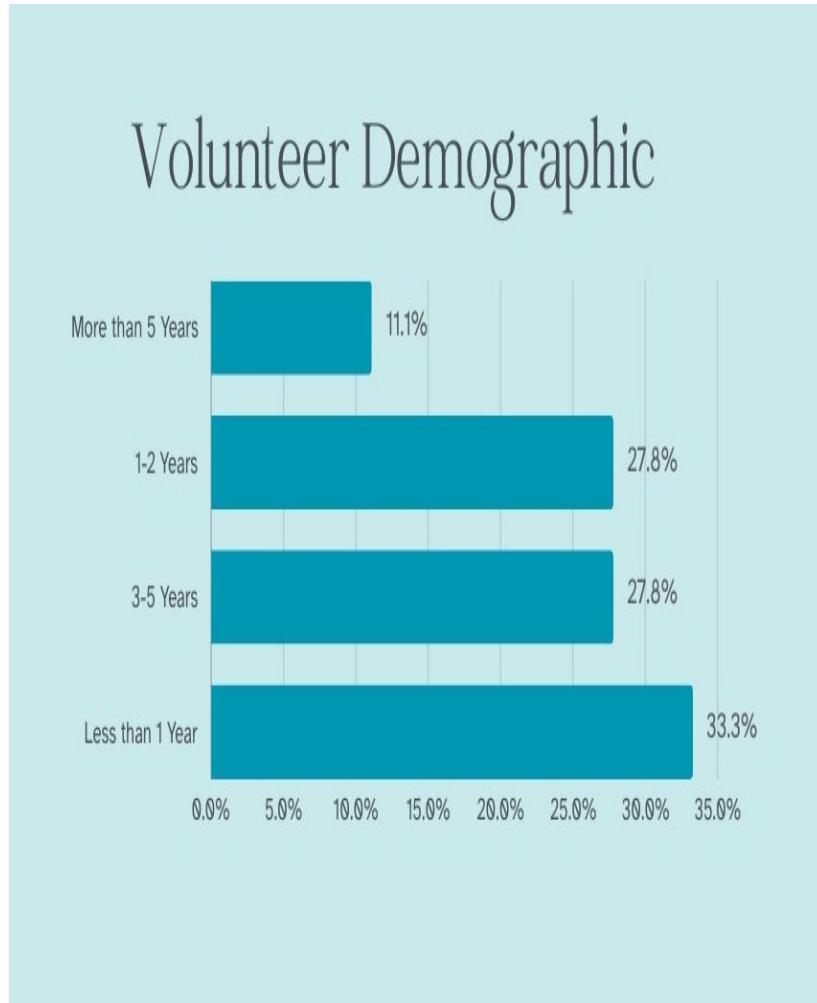




# Types of Repair and Skill Sets

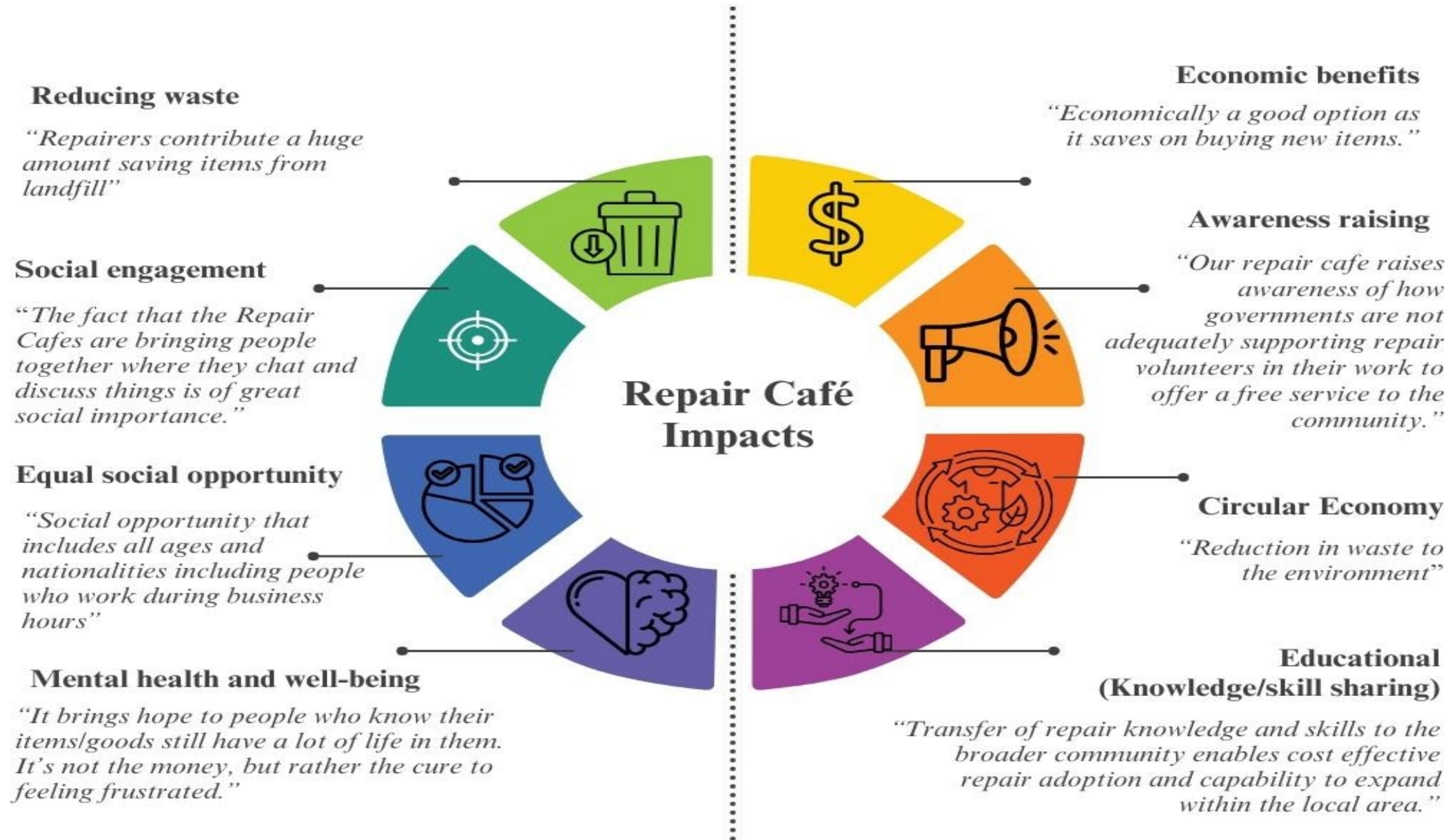


# Volunteers and Methods of recruitment





# The positive impacts of Australian Repair Cafés



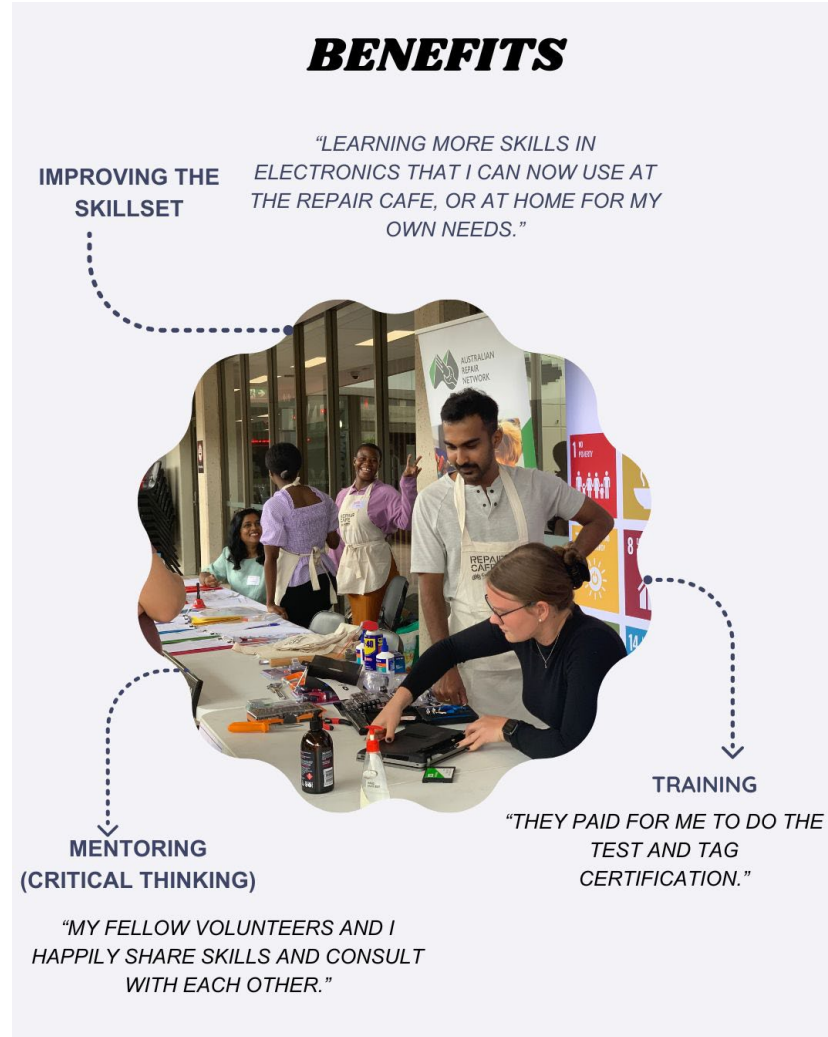
# Themes of the value of being a Repair Café Volunteer

Community Engagement  
and Social interaction

Sharing Skills, Promoting  
Sustainability and  
Circular Economy in the  
community

Helping to reduce waste  
and save money  
in our community and  
raising awareness

Feeling good and happy (a  
sense of well being)



# Visitors to Repair Cafés

## Satisfaction Levels

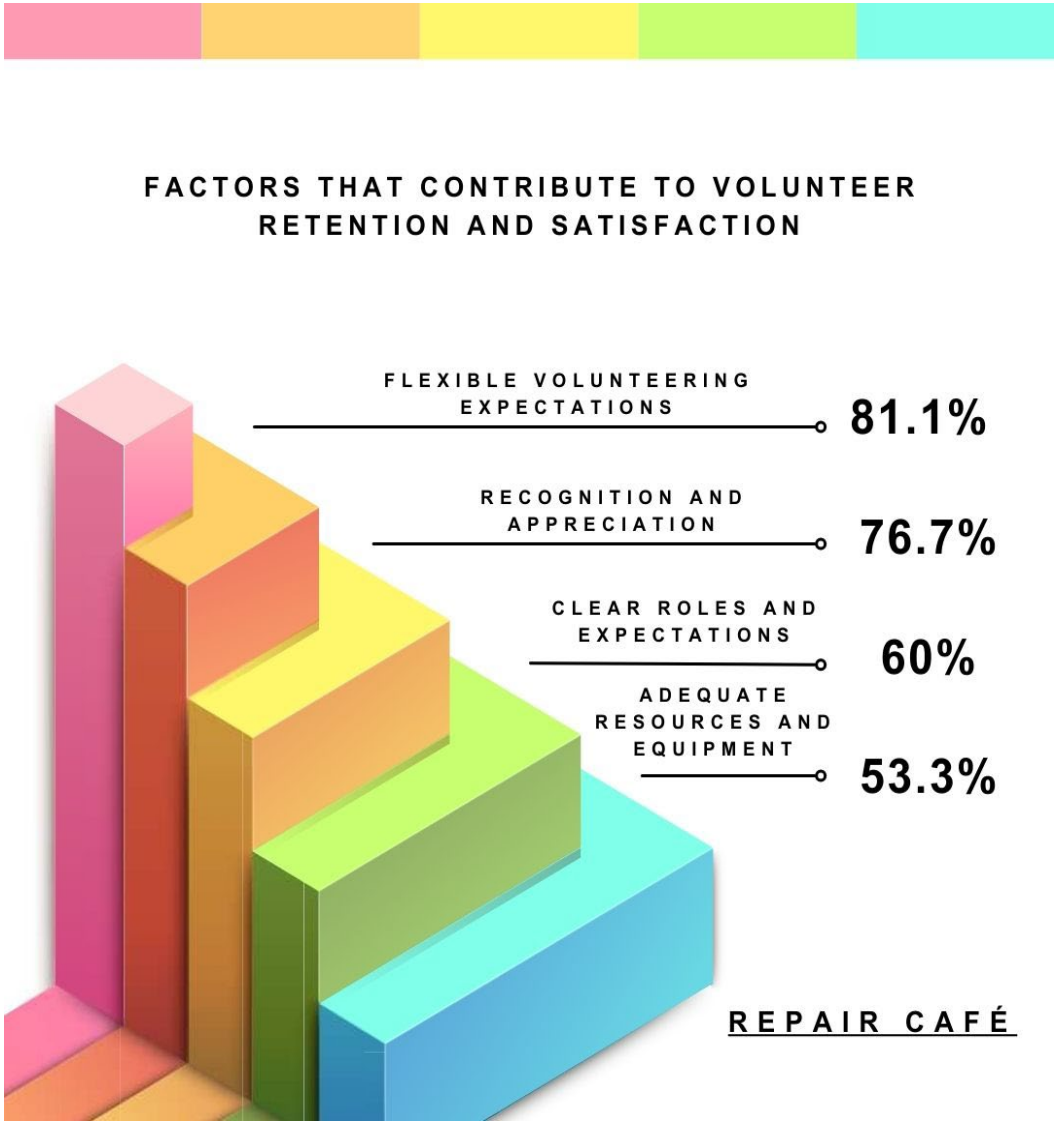
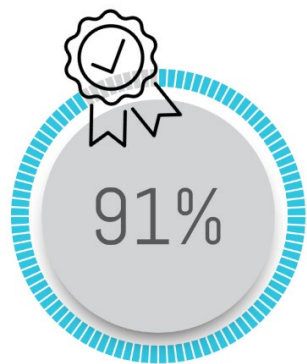
People in the community have a really good experience when they visit Repair Cafés, with the survey reporting that the overall satisfaction rate is 86%

Most people want more Repair cafes and more often





# Recognition and appreciation of Repair Café Volunteers



# Challenges facing Repair Cafés

- Recruiting appropriately licensed electricians and encouraging the public to attend
- Balancing scheduling with demand for specific repairers.
- Frustration at poor manufacturing standards and built-in obsolescence.
- Ensuring compliancy with government legislation.
- Insurance being required to get access to the premises.
- The time and energy commitment to delivering the repair café each month.
- Availability of spare parts.
- Having a reliable and regular group of skilled repairers at each campus.
- Not knowing each month how many volunteers will be attending each month.

## CHALLENGES



Limited funding & resources



Difficulty in securing a suitable venue

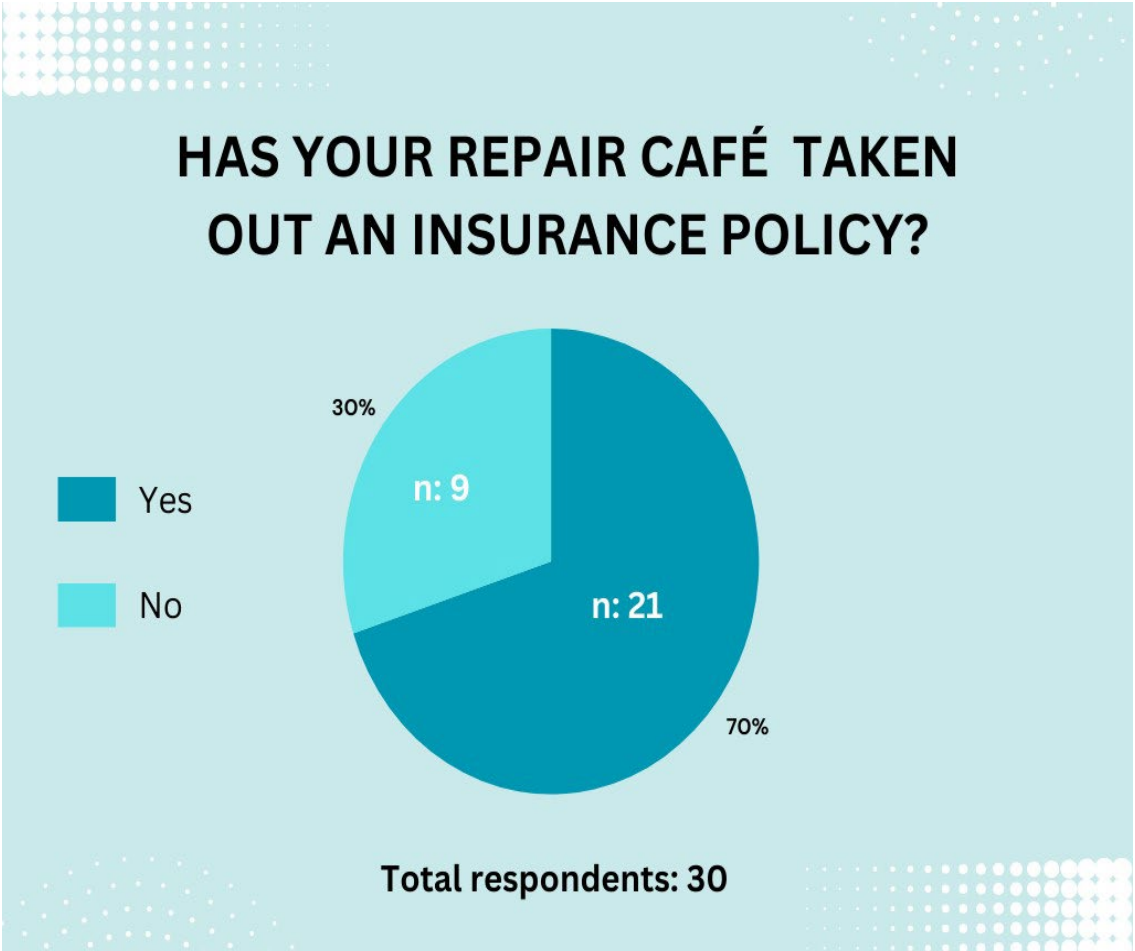
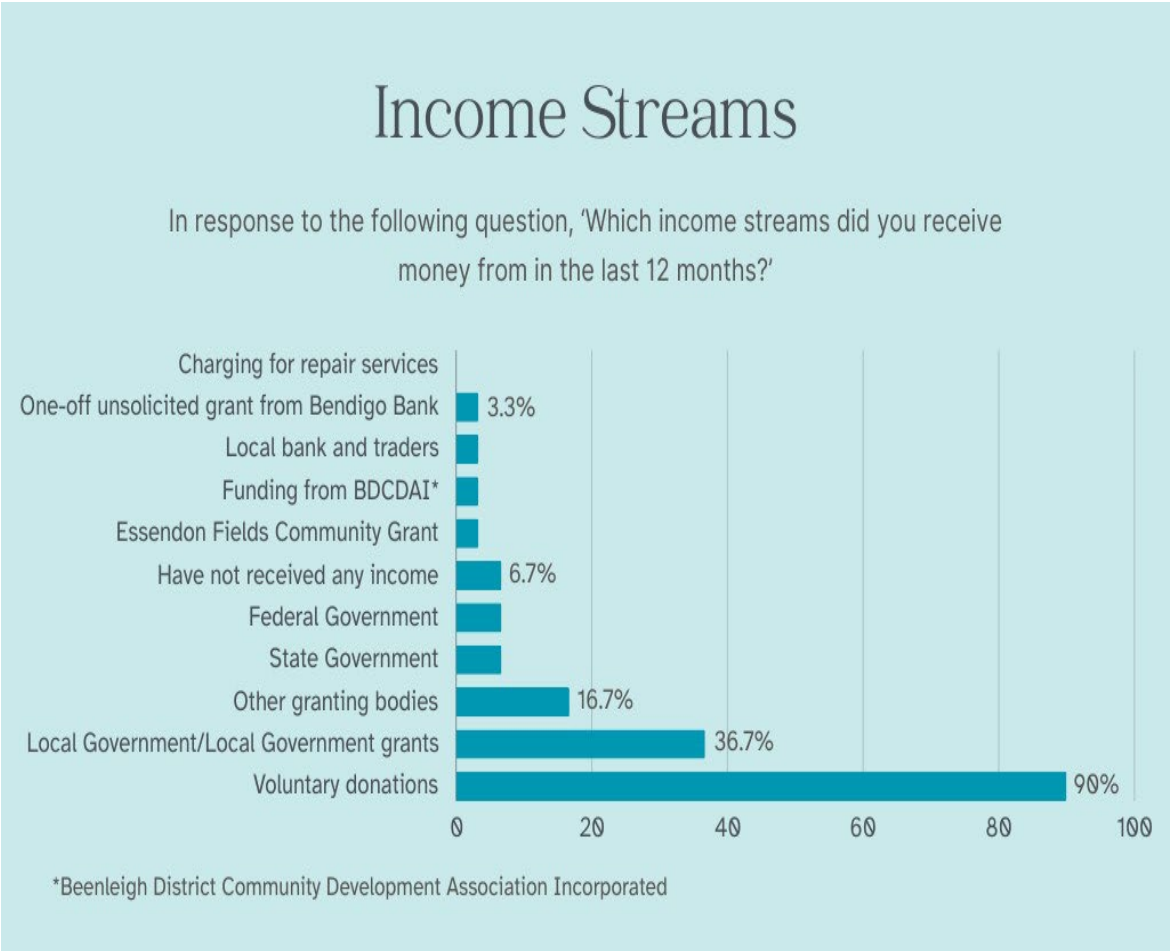


Finding skilled volunteers for specific repairs



Limited community awareness and participation

# Challenges around Income and Insurance





# Building a Repair Culture in our Educational Institutions



**Toss it away? No way!**

The Griffith University Repair Café is a student led initiative aimed at giving a new life to broken items that would otherwise be thrown away. The café aims to educate people to see their possessions in a new light. This reduces the volume of raw materials and energy to make new products and ultimately reducing the amount of waste to the environment. Repair Cafés are bringing back sustainable and environmental repair skills, building stronger communities, helping people save money in times of economic uncertainty. The Griffith University Repair Café brings together a society of students whose purpose is to engage with sustainability and contribute to SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production.

[View all upcoming Repair Café events.](#)



# **What Australian Repair Cafés want...**

**Creation of a central organization that manages, supports and elevates Repair Cafes across Australia**

**Support for State/Territory and National Convenor to help support and expand Repair Café Network**

**Advocate for Local, State and Federal Government funding to support and grow the network of Repair Cafés**







## AUSTRALIAN REPAIR NETWORK

About us

Events

News and Media

Law Futures Centre

### Creating a sustainable future for Australia

Australian Repair Network brings together a wide range of stakeholders interested in or working in the repair sector, who genuinely want to engage in open and respectful dialogue, with industry, other sectors and the community at large about the legislative and policy changes that are being developed to respond to the international right to repair movement.

### WHAT WE DO

We engage with all levels of government, policy makers, industries, engineers and the community to facilitate the need for a right to repair in Australia. We recognise the complexity of the wide range of interests involved in ensuring the longevity of a range of goods, machinery and equipment. We work closely with universities and research institutions on priority themes related to repair, durability and product life extension.

### WHY WE DO IT

We believe that education, dialogue, and exchange is fundamentally important to ensuring our society recognises the social, environmental and economic benefits of reparability and the role it can play in creating a sustainable future for Australia. We encourage you to become involved, make contact, follow our research and initiatives, and remain connected for the latest Australian Repair Network updates and news.

# Australian Repair Summit





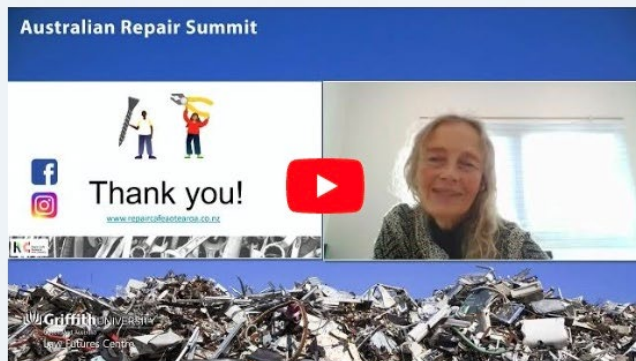
# Helping to Support Australian Repair Cafés

## Pre-Summit Community Repair Conference - August 2022

This year, we also hosted a Pre-Summit Community Repair Conference. This event was run Thursday 4 August from 1-4pm at the National Library in Canberra, providing a focussed forum for discussion of Community Repair initiatives. This event brought volunteer repairers and community repair stakeholders together to discuss community repair cafes and community repair initiatives' role in improving Australia's environmental sustainability.

[Download the program >](#)

**View videos from this event**



### *International Perspectives on Community Repair*

**Brigitte Sistig**, Repair Café Aotearoa New Zealand (RCANZ)

**Repair Café Europe & Martine Postna**, International Repair Café Foundation, Amsterdam, (Online Presentation)

Discussion of International repair initiatives and supports



### *Australian Perspectives on Community Repair*

**Brendan Norris**, Fixable.co

**Guido Verbist**, General Manager, Revolve Recycling

**Julie Boulton**, Project Manager, Monash Sustainable Development Institute

**Griffith UNIVERSITY**  
Queensland, Australia  
Law Futures Centre

## Building Back Better: ReUse, Repair and Recycle Stakeholder Workshop

### Webinar: Talking About Repair Data

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[Download The Restart project presentation slides \(3.9MB\) >](#)

Image credit: Mark A Phillips (Instagram: @markaphill, Twitter: @unbrokensoluti)



# Repair: Climate

## Why Repair Matters Now

**Repair plays a critical role in waste reduction** by promoting sustainability through responsible production and consumption

**The ability to repair** extends the lifespan of products, saves money, opens service and repair markets, reduces waste and the need for new resources



Media statement: Release of Environment Ministers' Meeting Communique

21 October 2022

3. “To work with the private sector to design out waste and pollution, **keep materials in use** and foster markets to achieve a circular economy by 2030”



# “Business as usual can’t continue...”

\*Global e-waste is growing 5 times faster than recycling...

\*immediate call for greater investment in infrastructure development, more promotion of repair and reuse...

We cannot just recycle our way out of our waste crisis





# Building a Repair Economy





# Building a Repair Economy

Supporting policy change for Australia's Right to Repair movement, including a flourishing repair ecosystem with strong industry support for repair: open and fair competition in our aftermarkets, consumer empowerment, IP reform, support and expansion of our grassroots repair, equity and social inclusion, skills, training, addressing the digital divide

**Thank you !**



# Woking Repair Cafe



**WEAct**  
Woking Environment Action





# What is Woking Environment Action?

- Formed in 1994, a group of volunteers tackling global environmental concerns on a local scale.
- Addressing climate change, improving environment and encouraging sustainable living in Woking through spreading awareness and carrying out projects.
- This made us the logical choice for our council to approach in January 2023, to set up a repair cafe for Woking residents
- In December 2023 WEAct (& therefore the repair cafe) became a Registered Charity!



- WEAct projects include
- Climate Action Group
  - Biodiversity Group
  - Hedgehog Group
  - Incredible Edible
  - WEAct on Plastic



# Building a Cafe

- A handful of WEAct volunteers formed a steering group and started to plan.
- We drew upon materials from lots of existing cafes & created the documentation that we now use
- We recruited fixers through appeals on social media, council newsletters and word of mouth. Our “Welcome Team” came mainly from former vaccination centre volunteers.
- By early April we had all the volunteers we needed & even ran introductory zoom orientation & training sessions.
- We aimed to launch in June as part of Great Big Green Week.

REPAIR CAFE



## Volunteers Needed

Are you someone who enjoys fixing broken things? Are you sad when mendable items go to landfill?

We are looking for local residents with different skills to be repair enthusiasts during our **Woking Repair Café** events.

If you have the time and skills to support your local community by repairing these kinds of items we'd be delighted to hear from you:

- Small electrical items
- Small household/garden items
- Clothing/textiles
- Simple bike repairs

WEAct are planning the **Woking Repair Café launch event in June 2023**.



## Environment group seeks handy volunteers for new local Repair Café

Woking News  
Thursday 20th March 2023 1:07 pm

SHARE



### MOST POPULAR

- The act who lived on a bus
- National programme to help people find services for their Wokingham
- How to get to the High Street Wokingham in 2023



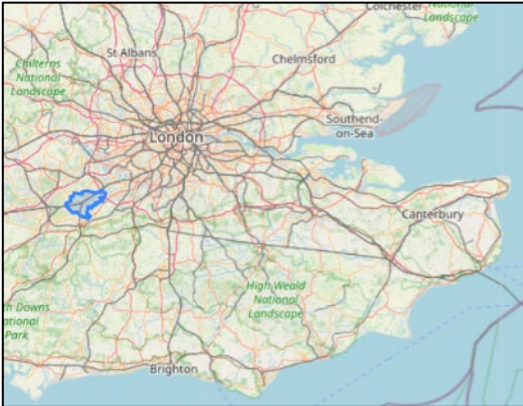
# Insurance

- Our single biggest issue / headache.
- We already had insurance because we were an existing group, but they seemed to struggle with the idea of adding the Repair Cafe on as another activity.
- After a **lot** of pushing, they finally agreed – and didn't charge us any extra for the rest of that year because they had been so slow!
- When we renewed in Feb 2024 we went to a new company (Ansvar) to cover all of the WEAct activities and saved £100 a year!

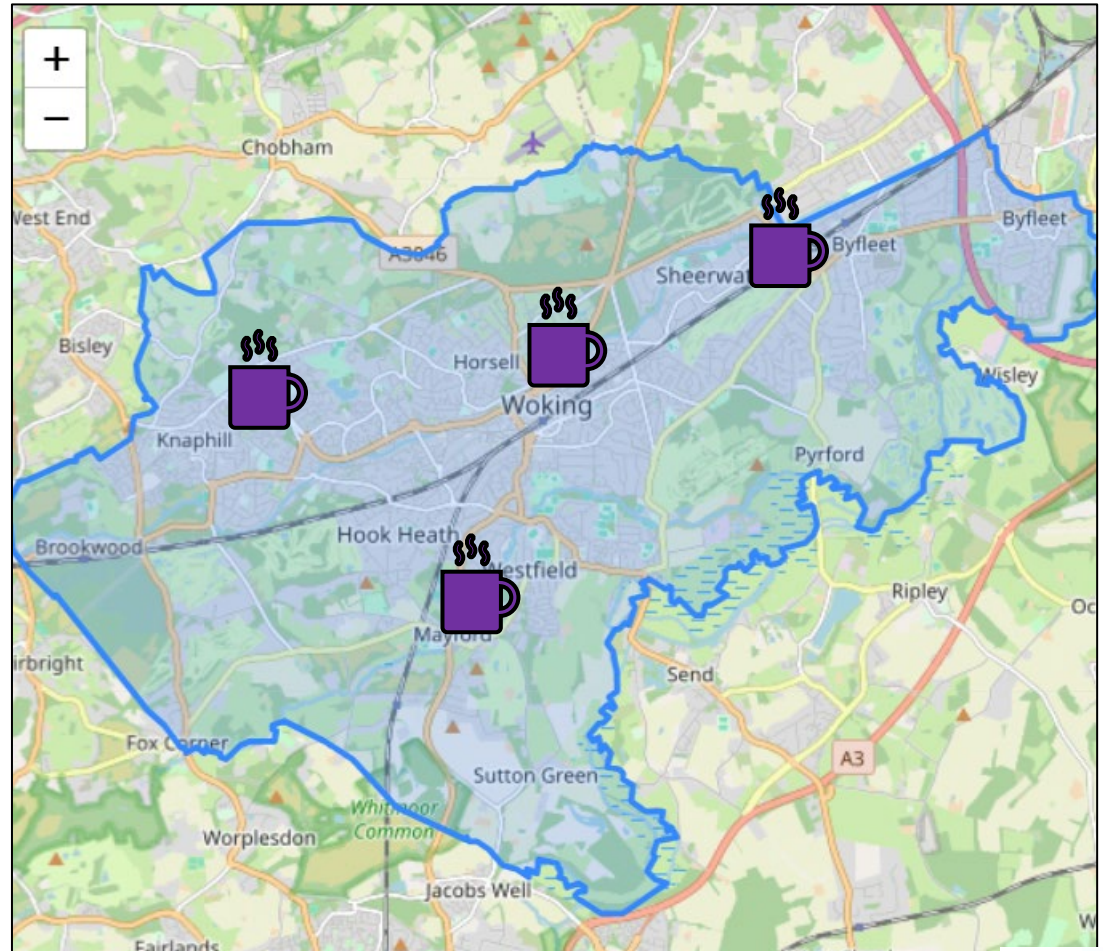




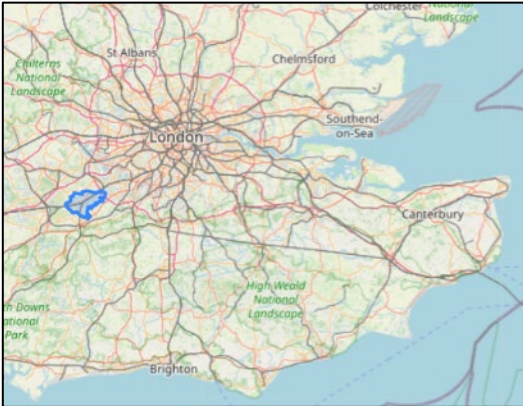
# Where is Woking and where were our cafes?



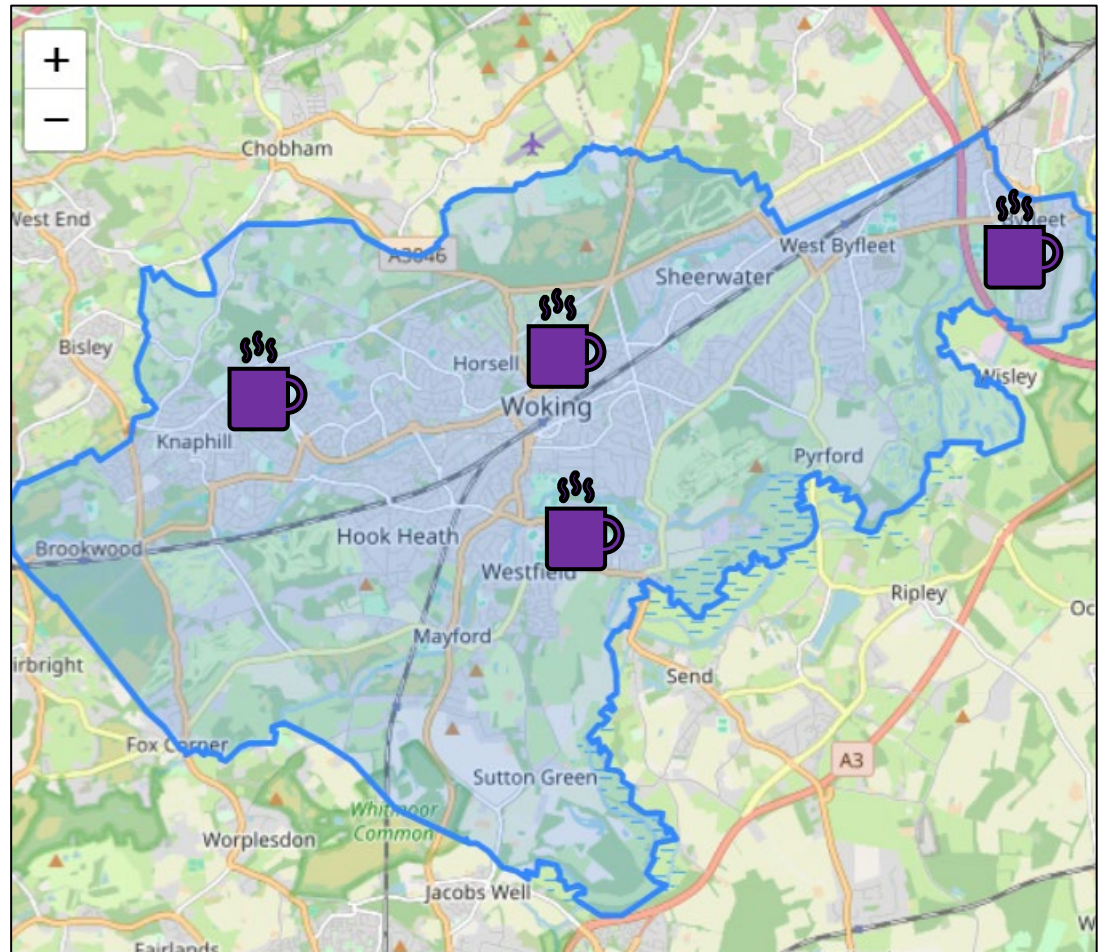
Woking is in SE England  
23 miles (37 km) SW of London  
Population 103,900  
25 sq miles (64km<sup>2</sup>)



# Where is Woking and where are our cafes?



Woking is in SE England  
23 miles (37 km) SW of London  
Population 103,900  
25 sq miles (64km<sup>2</sup>)



# Woking Repair Cafe

- We did think about choosing a town centre venue, but a number of people told us they rarely went into town; our in-borough public transport networks aren't great; and coincidentally we were approached by an out-of-town church who invited us to set up there.
- As you can see, we ended up with 4 venues
- We visit each of them 3 times a year, with a schedule of up & coming venues on our website
  - St Andrew's, Goldsworth Park
  - St Mark's Church, Westfield
  - St Michael's Church, Sheerwater
  - Trinity Methodist, Town Centre
- We got a grant from the Surrey Climate Commission to pay for our PAT tester and our banner.
- We get typically 60 items in per 10 til 12:30 event – so it's very busy!






# Learning as we go – A few things we do

1. We ask that product owners email in. These are collated & shared with our fixers so they've some idea what is coming
2. Queuing System – cafe-style numbers on sticks
  - **Red Numbers** waiting for a PAT test
  - **Green Numbers** PAT test done, need an electrical fixer
  - **White Numbers** need a textile fixer
  - **Blue Numbers** are everything else
3. Product receipts for items taken home by fixers. These are also recorded on a tracker sheet.

Product Receipt		REPAIR CAFE	
Your fixer has kindly agreed to try and fix your item at their home. Please come to our next repair café event to collect your item. Your fixer will be in touch via your mobile number to update you. If you need to contact <a href="mailto:wokingrepaircafe@gmail.com">us</a> please email <a href="mailto:wokingrepaircafe@gmail.com">wokingrepaircafe@gmail.com</a>			
Fixer Name: _____			
Item Description: _____			
		Item Number: _____	
Tick if Donation Already Received: _____			

Next Events		REPAIR CAFE	
St Mary's Community Centre, Byfleet, KT14 7LZ		13 <sup>th</sup> July	
Old Woking Community Centre, GU22 9AT		13 <sup>th</sup> August	
Trinity Methodist Church, GU21 4LH		14 <sup>th</sup> September	

 **WEAct**  
Woking Environment Action



# Woking Repair Cafe

We have an incredible team of fixers – determined not to be beaten!

100% of 428 feedback forms filled in say they would recommend us to others!

Events Held	13
Visitors to Cafe	782
Fixed	449
Fixed off site	105
Total fixed	554
Total Fixed %	70.8%
Fixable	133
Total Fixed / Fixable	687
Fixed / Fixable %	87.9%
KG of Land Fill diversion	1302.4
KG of CO2e reduction	13743.9



# Woking Repair Cafe

- Oh & we splurged on these rather smart shirts & aprons









# Tunbridge Wells Repair Café

Chris Murphy

# In the beginning

- 100 people attended a meeting
- 75 initial volunteers
- March 2020 - 1<sup>st</sup> Tunbridge Wells Repair Café
- And then...



# Where are we now?

- 77 volunteers
- 31 dates so far
- 28 repair stations
- 2693 items seen
- Repair rate – 58%
- Average repair time - 26 mins
- £3650 raised for charity

# Repair stations and repair times

Station	% of repairs	Average Repair Time
Computers / IT	6%	27 mins
Electrical	32%	30 mins
Jewellery	10%	14 mins
Knife Sharpening	7%	14 mins
Mechanical	14%	28 mins
Miscellaneous	19%	24 mins
Textiles	12%	30 mins

# Aha moments

- Outsource refreshments
- Online repair management system – Repair Manager (Matt Barber)



https://www.repairmanager.co.uk/StaffLiveDisplay/?cate=1

Restore pages  
Microsoft Edge closed unexpectedly.  
Restore Open startup pages







**CURRENT QUEUES**  
TO FIND OUT YOUR EXACT POSITION IN THE QUEUE, PLEASE ASK A MEMBER OF STAFF.

Station	Number In Queue	Number of Repairers	Estimated Wait Time (Mins)
Electrical	3	6	30
Computers/IT	0	2	0
Mechanical	2	4	30
Knives	2	2	15
Textiles	0	3	30
Jewellery	0	2	0
Miscellaneous	0	5	0

11:32 AM

LG

matt@repairmanager.co.uk

ID	Name	Allocation	Queue	Repair	Exit
1	VOLUNTEER Clare [REDACTED]	Electrical			
7	John [REDACTED]	Electrical			

[matt@repairmanager.co.uk](mailto:matt@repairmanager.co.uk)

Name: Caroline

Item: Toaster

Manufacturer: Silver Crest

Model: STS 850 C1

Problem: The sliding part won't stay down and there's no heating.

[matt@repairmanager.co.uk](mailto:matt@repairmanager.co.uk)



# Our customer demographic

- 64% female
- 86% > 41 yrs old
- 86% of our customers are from the local area.
- Heard about us:
  - Word of Mouth - 22%
  - Previous customer - 16%
  - Poster - 11%
  - Facebook – 6%
- 86% of our customers are from the local area.

# Aha moments

- Outsource refreshments
- Online repair management system – Repair Manager
- Multiple café managers
- Electrical assistants
- Exit strategy
- Legal assistance
- Storage at our venue

# 3 Take Aways

- Keep it simple (dismiss the should's)
- Get a team
- Get rid of paper!





# Thank you

Chris Murphy  
twellsrepaircafe@ gmail.com

# Twickenham Repair Cafe

## RC Conference 2024

21st June 2024



# Our Numbers

2.5

Years old

26

Repair Parties

1,500

Repairs

28

Repairers

25

Support team

7

Repair Cafes  
we helped get  
started

3,000

Hours of  
volunteer time

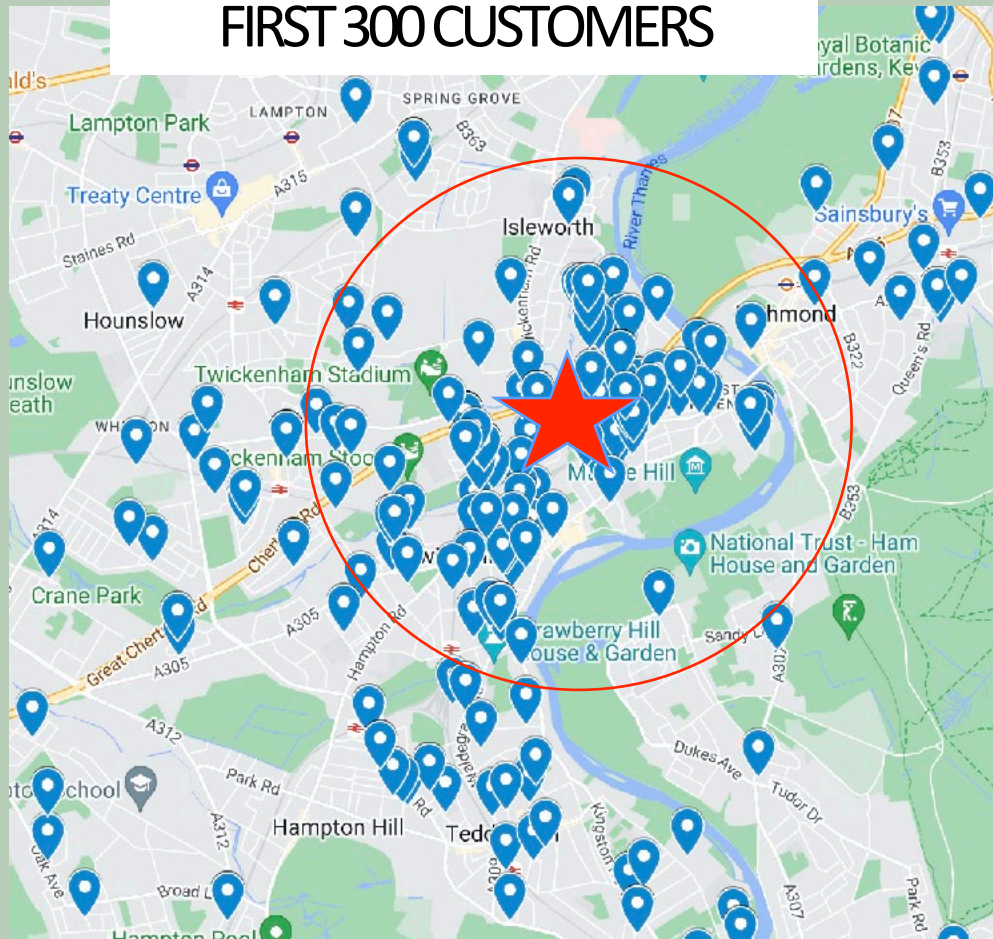
£3,000

Raised for  
charities

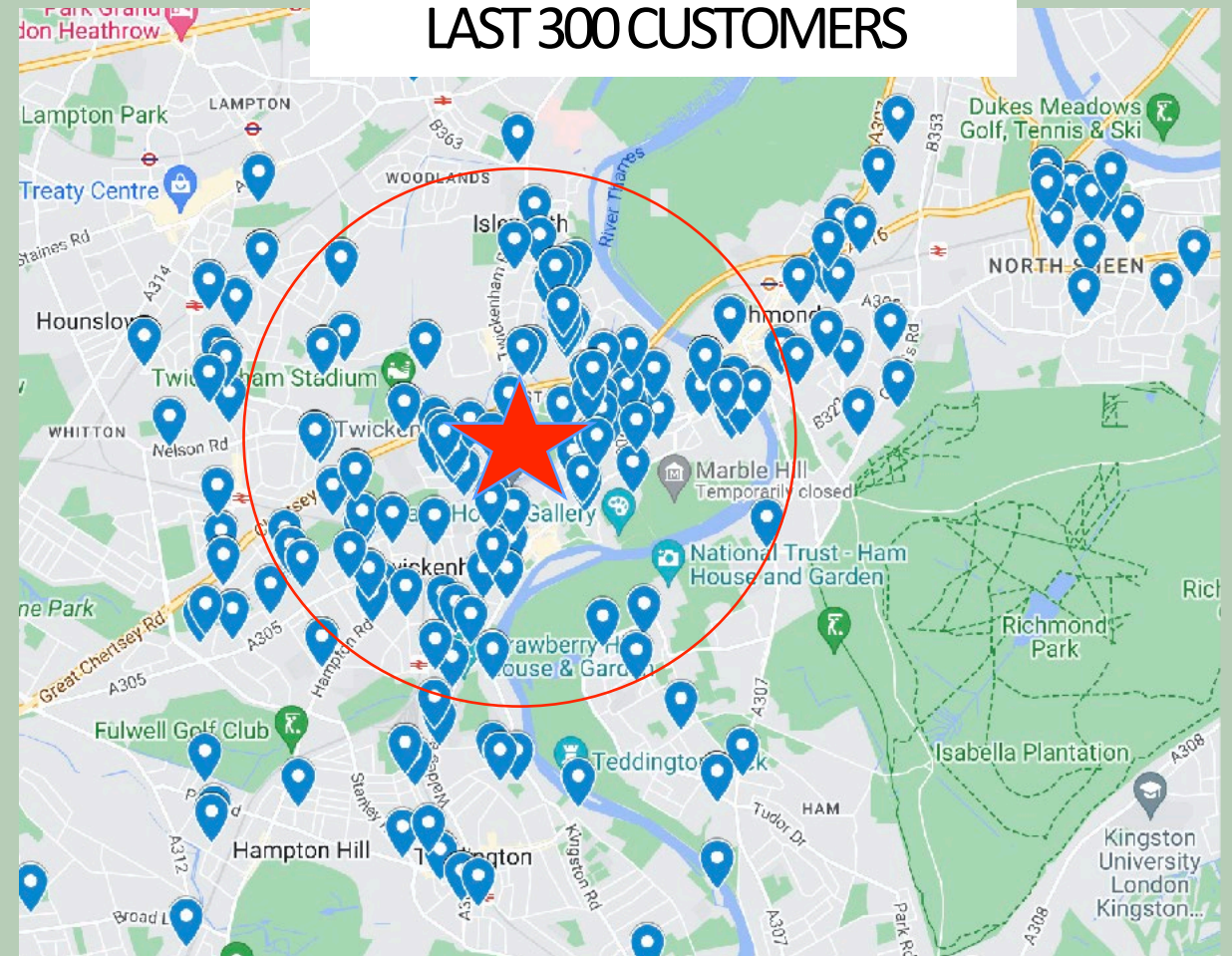


# 85% come within 2 miles

FIRST 300 CUSTOMERS



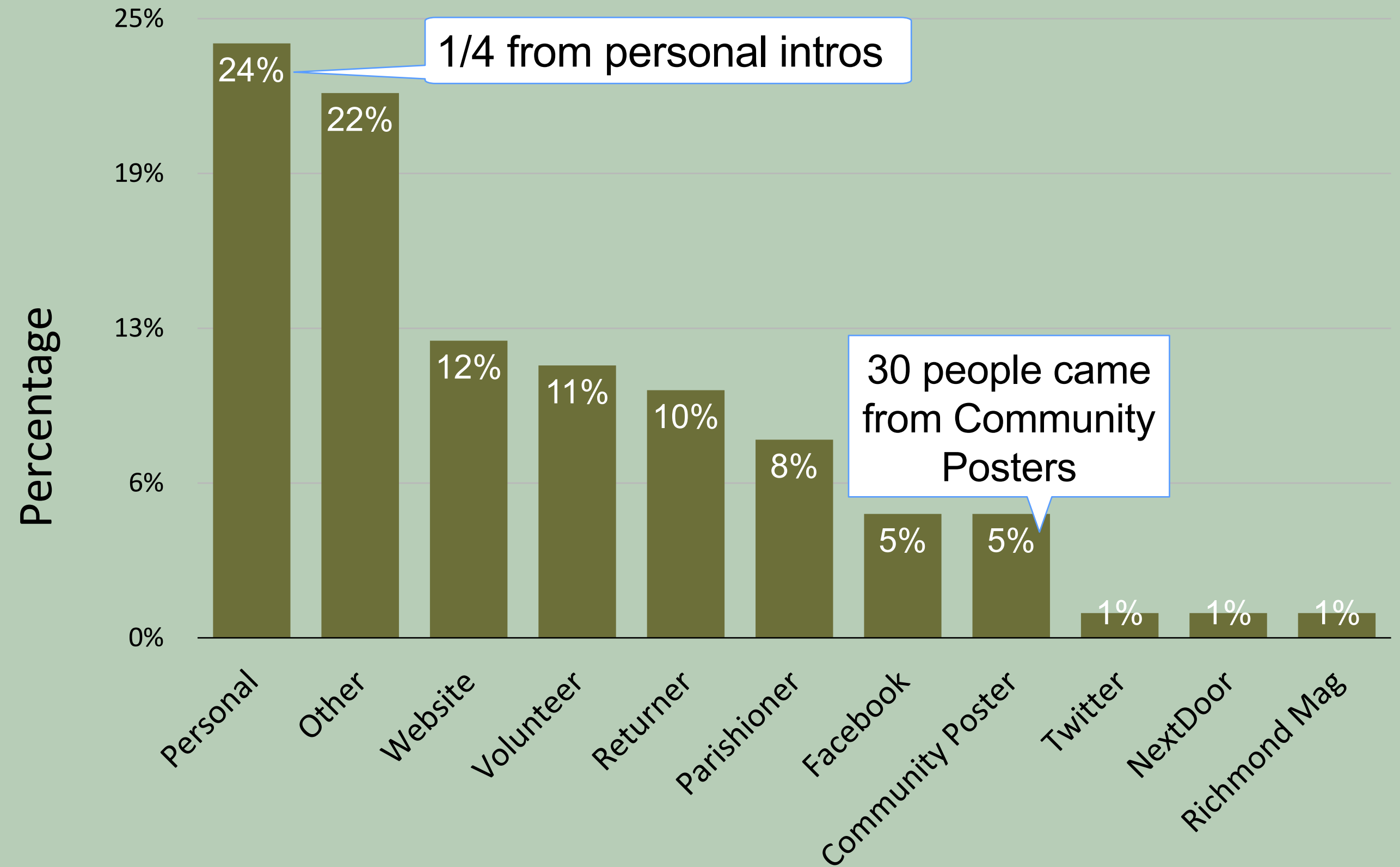
LAST 300 CUSTOMERS



## So no worry of overlap with other Cafes



# Wide range of promotions





# Pop-up Cafe in local council estate

- 3,000 households
- 30 different languages
- Only 3/4 mile from our RC, but
- No one had ever visited

We run a mini Repair Cafe in their Community Centre every 2 months





# Lots of 'spin-off' activities



Celebrating our  
1,000th repair



Funded Wellbeing  
workshops



Bike repair  
station



Pop-up RCs in a  
local school



Tools for  
Africa



# 3 Overall lessons for other repair cafes

1. Ask your repairers / volunteers what could be better?
2. Do 5 minute “Espresso Master Class” sessions before start of RC
3. Spoil your repairers and volunteers





# Thank you

RC Conference 2024

21st June 2024

# Glues

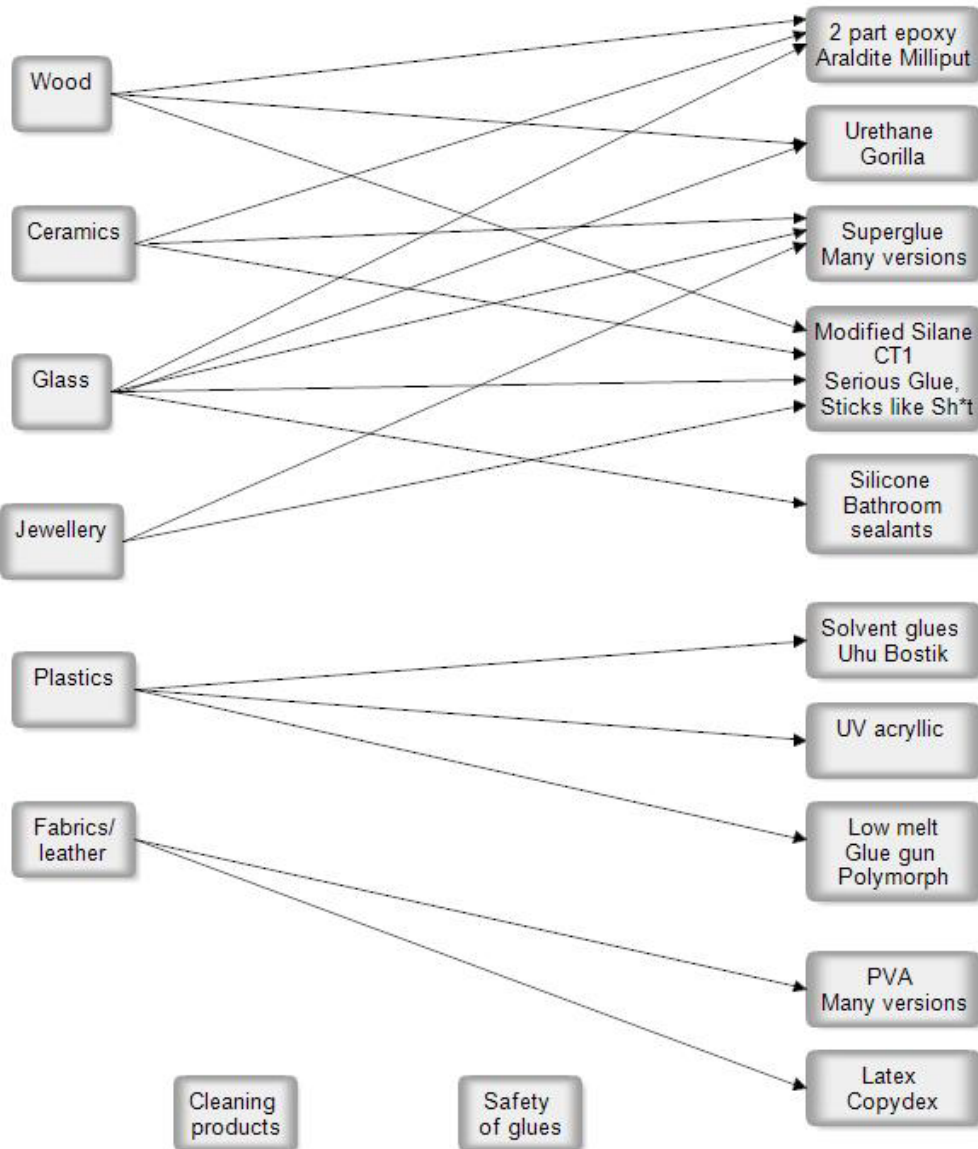
Ian Adam



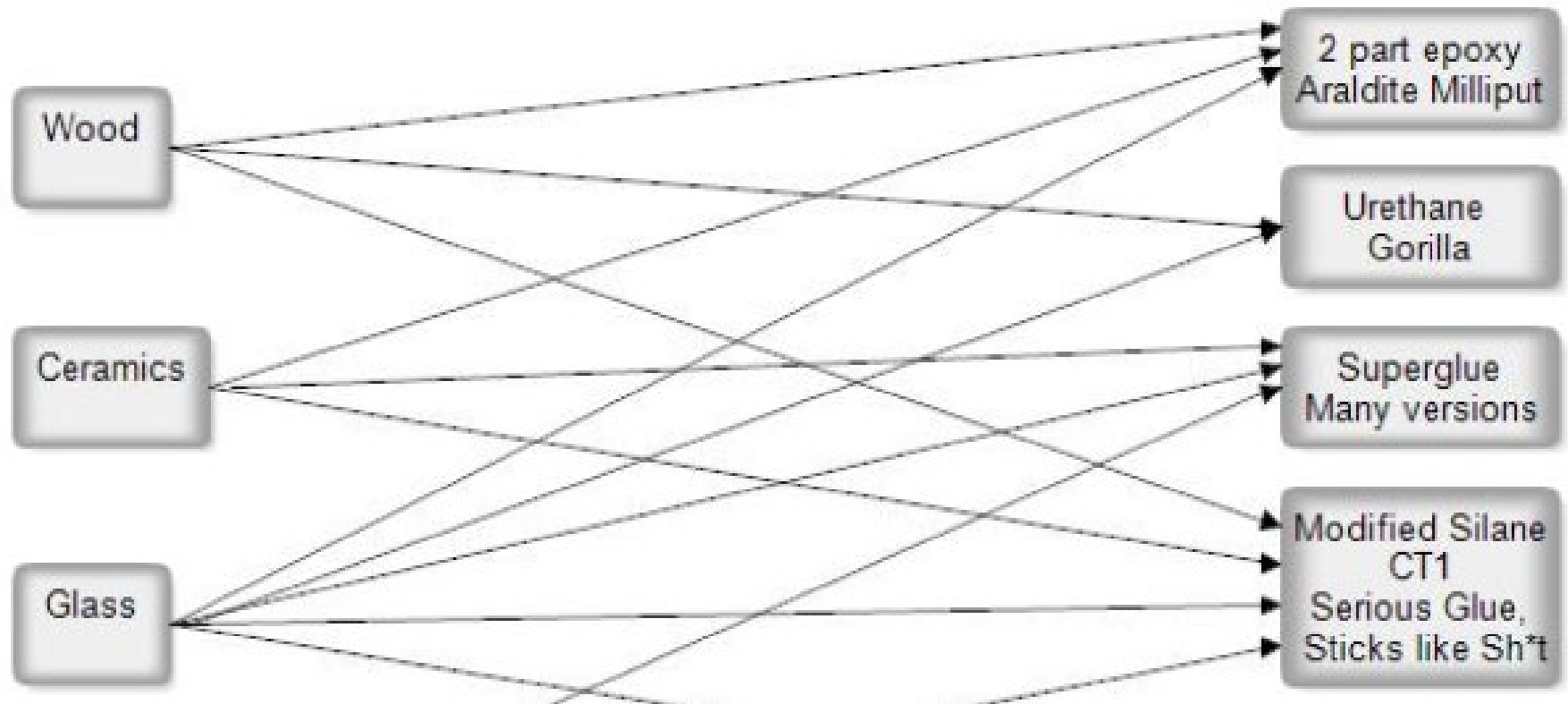
## Fixing with glues

Repairs to:

Repair with:







# Milliput

- Short for, I believe, 'Military Putty' this is a stiff 2-part paste that sticks but is not as unpleasant to use as Araldite.
- The two parts are kneaded with fingers and wash off easily. It can also be smoothed with wet fingers or tools – very similar to decorating a cake with icing or marzipan.
- It has a huge following on YouTube with people who repair ceramics including 'difficult' jobs like replacing a ceramic horse's leg.
- Sets overnight but, like Araldite, can be accelerated or retarded with a hairdryer or freezer

# Polymorph (Fixits)

- Very cheap, endlessly reusable by immersing in hot water ( $62^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Used in orthopaedics to make custom shaped splints and in schools for clean modelling.
- Fixits were on Dragon's Den and they have lots of YouTube videos. 30g for £12 on Amazon, Polymorph 500g for £11.50 from Aliexpress.



# Modified Silane

- Widely used in industry and construction.
- Many, many versions with incomprehensible chemical modifications.
- Best features of both Urethane and Silicone. Paintable, 100°C, odourless.
- Mostly available in mastic tubes.



Walton-on-Thames

*Beyond the toolbox*



# **What handy extras have you added to your tools?**

**We have added various odds and ends to our toolkit, usually as a result of a bit of lateral thinking when a job gets awkward.**

**We thought it might be useful to share some of our tricks and hear about everyone else's**



# *Tin of Requirement*



## **Tin of requirements:**

- Clear nail varnish
- Playdough
- Skewer
- Dusting brushes
- Cord
- Vaseline
- Suede/metal brush
- Staple remover
- Glasses repair kit
- Fine sandpaper
- Gaffer tape

# Keeping things in place

- Dycem



- Play dough



- Boxes for screws and small parts



- Clamps and grips

# Mixing and gluing

(If you don't provide these, repairers will use storage containers, pens, whatever comes to hand)

- Lolly sticks, coffee stirrers
- Thick squares of cardboard





# Cleaning

- Every station has a clean cloth
- Dust-buster/ vacuum cleaner
- Grease remover
- Superglue remover
- Suede brush
- Artist paintbrush



# Do you have spare tool kits?



- For new repairers/ people without their own tools/ don't want to bring own tools
- To be used by visitors *"In the place where a Repair Café is located, you'll find tools and materials to help you make any repairs you need" (Repair Café International)*
- For people to borrow eg for jobs that can't be brought in

Annette Helliwell

REPAIR  
CAFE Ruskin  
Road





# Marketing & Social Media

Ian Grange

Social Media Lead

Wokingham Repair Cafe

# Startup Three Main Strategies

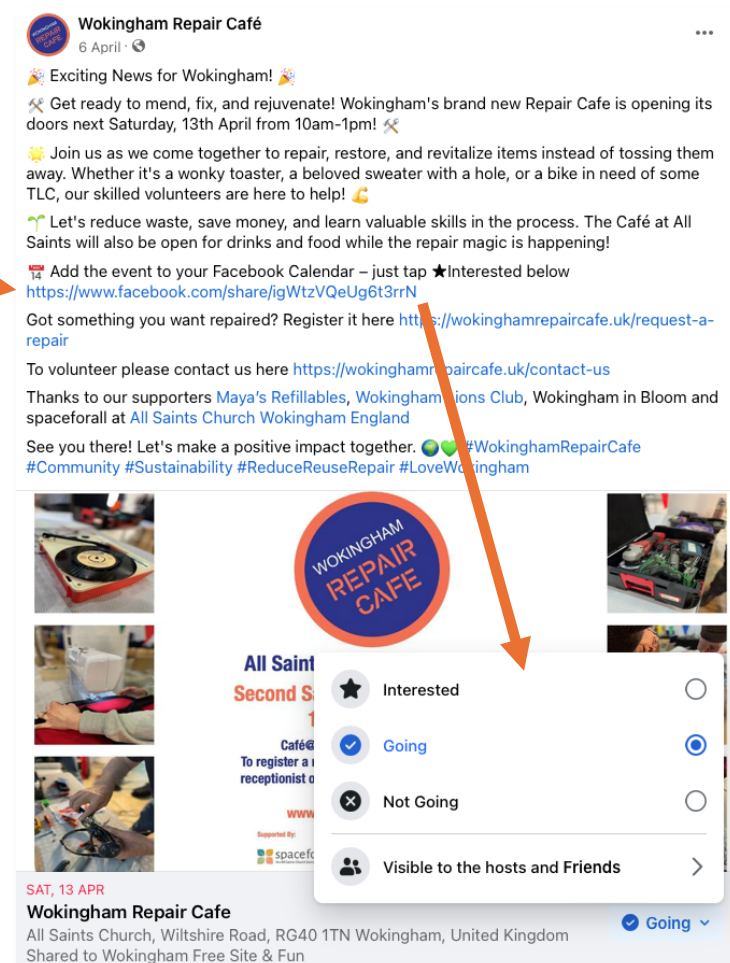
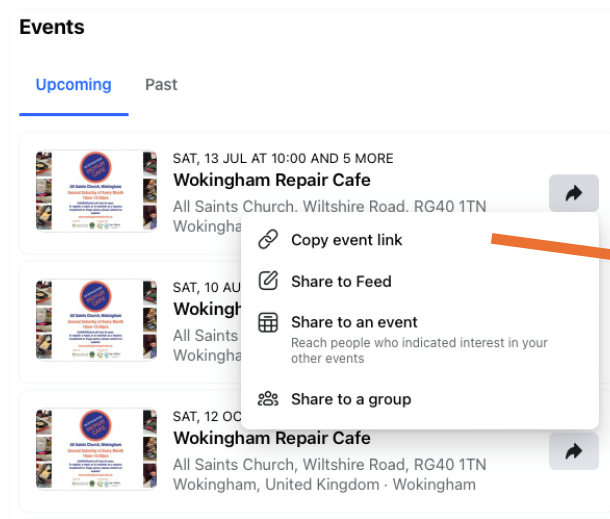
- Facebook Events
- Target Facebook Local Community Groups
- Local Press



# Facebook Events are Key!

- Push event link into local Facebook groups

- Community, Buy & Sell, Gossip, What's On, etc.



WOKINGHAM  
REPAIR  
CAFE



# Facebook Events are Key!

- Push event link into local Facebook groups
  - Community, Buy & Sell, Gossip, What's On, etc.
- Opportunity to press **“Interested”** or **“Going”**
  - Easiest **action** for them
  - Gets them “on the hook”
  - Their friends/family see their interest
  - Puts it in their Facebook diary
  - You have a communication link



# Other Places!



- Press – Get emails of local...
  - Press
  - Local Government “What’s On”
  - BBC/Local Radio
  - Local “Free” Papers
  - Local Parish Magazines
  - ....include a QR code and/or shortlink (eg: [tinyurl.com](https://tinyurl.com)) to Facebook event with Press Release
- Other Social Media
  - LinkedIn (For new volunteers and for existing volunteers to add to their CVs)
  - Instagram (Can do at the same time as Facebook using Meta Business Suite)



# Time Savers!

- Website
  - Use plugin (eg: Juicer) to repeat Facebook Posts



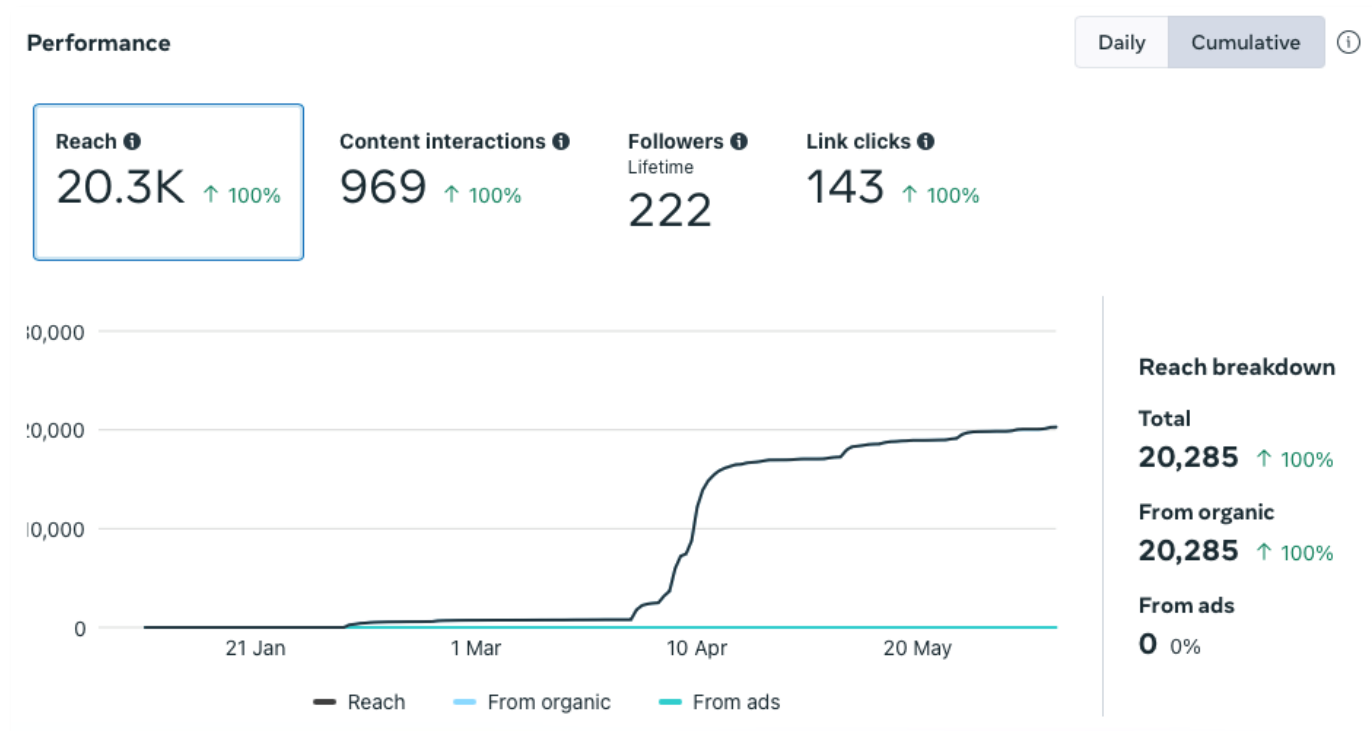
- Meta Business Suite
  - Can post to three Groups & Instagram at the same time



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# Results!



# The Power of Pictures....

# Don't Forget!

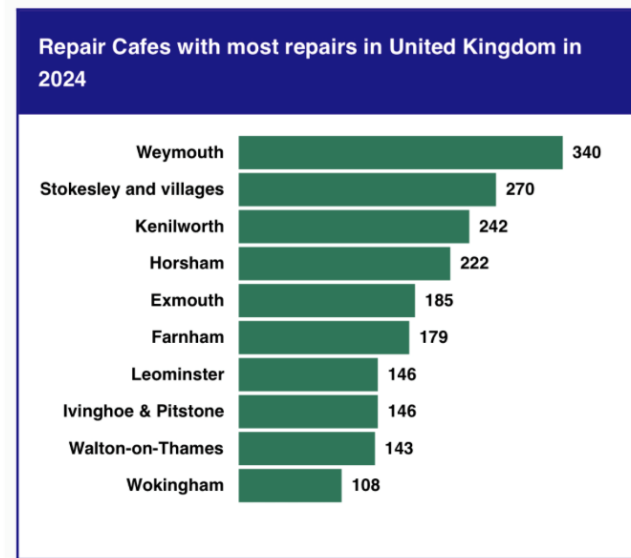


Wokingham Repair Café is at All Saints Church Wokingham England.  
28 May at 13:55 · Wokingham ·

After just two sessions the [Wokingham Repair Cafe](#) has become one of the top 10 Repair Cafes in the UK for 2024 - take a look at the results here <https://dashboard.repairmonitor.org/?language=en&cafe=all...> Cool! 🥰

🔧 Our next session will be on Saturday 8th June from 10am-12:30pm at All Saints Church Wokingham England - add it to your diary here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/416233384228029/416233400894694>

🔧 Got something you'd like repaired? You don't h... See more



Wokingham Repair Café is at All Saints Church Wokingham England.  
a day ago · Wokingham ·

At last Saturday's Wokingham Repair Cafe we made a Carbon Saving of 1147 KgCO<sub>2</sub>e with the 57 items we processed - 67% were successfully repaired!

That includes poor teddy below, who you'll be glad to hear has been reunited with his arm 🧸

The next repair cafe will be at [All Saints Church Wokingham England](#) on Saturday 13th July from 10:00-12:30 - add it to your Facebook calendar here <https://www.facebook.com/share/EzJDFMxYbhTFqmEF...> See more



# ...and Stories.

