

Green Case Studies

CVS Bedfordshire are developing case studies with organisations that highlight the brilliant environmental and sustainability focused work of organisations in the nonprofit sector. These 'Spotlight on' features are showcased on our website to encourage others to begin on their ecofriendly journey. Please complete the below template to share the wonderful work you have done:

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| Organisation name: <i>Bedford Repair Cafe</i> |
| Organisation registration number (if applicable): |
| Location: <i>Bedford & Kempston</i> |
| Brief general overview of organisation (<i>this is a chance to promote the wonderful work you do to the wider sector</i>): <i>Bedford Repair Café started in 2016. Our aim is to empower people not just to get their belongings repaired, but learn how to repair things themselves. We want to save products from being thrown away and give them a new lease of life. Through the group, we hope to help lessen the impact of our 'stuff' on the environment by keeping it in use, as well as saving people money and time by not having to replace their broken items.</i> <i>The repair café holds several events a year, where anyone can turn up with their broken item and the team will do their best to fix it. If we can't, we can often give advice on how it may be able to be fixed with replacement parts so we can fix it at a future event, or where else they may be able to find help. We can repair all sorts of items, from clothes to toys to electricals such as radios and garden strimmers.</i> |
| What has your organisation done to be more eco-friendly? <i>We think that 'eco-friendly' is baked into our ethos! But to expand our work, we try to move the repair café around the borough so we can reach as many communities as possible without people having to get in their car, or drive as far. We also use upcycled materials in the general running of events, share tools and pass items on to each other for reuse.</i> |
| What challenges has your organisation faced in your journey to become eco-friendly? <i>The biggest challenge our fixers face is that there are far too many products that are not designed to be repairable! One common problem is that products can be made in such a way that they're impossible to open up to even diagnose the problem in the first place. Another is that spare parts are not always readily available from manufacturers.</i> |
| What has been your organisations greatest success in the journey to become eco-friendly? <i>As of October 2024, we estimate that repair café volunteers have prevented 576kg of waste so far this year, averaging 115kg of waste per session.</i> |

What are your top 3 tips for other organisations to be more eco-friendly?

1. When you're thinking about buying an item, consider how 'repairable' your potential options are. Choose the one with the best aftercare service and where replacement parts are readily available.

2. Do a waste audit to see what your biggest waste culprits are! Once you know what the problem really is, then you can start to fix it.

3. Try sharing resources across the organisation or see if you can borrow items before buying.