

Building 'homes from home'. Don't miss Health



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Don't dump that kettle!

IF A JOB'S WORTH DOING, Neale has a ready centre with the tool kit donated by Draper Tools



IKK the idea of making do and mending? Have having to replace broken things rather than repair them? It appears you're not alone.

Cambridge is embracing the growing phenomenon of 'repair cafes', social gatherings where people bring their broken goods – be it a clunky bike or a temperamental roller-blind – to be fixed for free.

People meet and share their expertise, with knowledgeable volunteers imparting the most of their chances of fixing up old things.

There are about five groups now operating in Cambridge, meeting in community centres and school halls, with other groups popping up nearby in places like Royston and Cottonham.

Nicole Barton works for Cambridge Carbon Footprint, co-ordinating the repair cafes, along

with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Transition Cambridge.

"We put on a cafe and sell 'We get people bringing in all sorts of things, from mobile phones of jeans, chainsaws, or even a friend of mine's car."

"I think people are tired of paying a lot of money for something that breaks, that should be easily fixed. People hate to throw things away."

Nicole said a recent repair cafe in Histon attracted more than 80 people.

She said people brought all kinds of things to be fixed and, while enjoying a cup of coffee, could watch and learn from a skilled repairer as they worked on the item.

"The younger generation are in awe," said Nicole. "They watch the engineers and can see their work and learn from shop Mackays, in fact Road is hoping to encourage this burgeoning interest in DIY repairs by advertising upcoming repair cafe events in town on a digital display board in the store."

"We have so many skilled people coming in and out of the shop," explained Neil Mackay, director of Mackays. "We thought this could be a place where people could find out what's happening and maybe volunteer if they have the time."

The repair cafe also has the benefit of becoming a social hub of a community and bringing people,

often near neighbours, together.

"I liked the concept," said Mr Mackay. "You don't need to throw things away if they only need minor repairs. It's more sustainable and gives things a longer life-span. I know I'm forever throwing away microwaves because the doors break or whatever. This could help."

After hearing about the growing interest in repair cafes, Draper Tools were keen to get involved and volunteered to provide tool kits for the emerging groups to help them get going.

News of upcoming repair cafes can be found at www.cambridgecarbonfootprint.org, or in Mackays in Cambridge.

OBDS AND ENDS

MICROWAVE doors aren't the only things that break easily and jeopardise good products. Here are a few simple repairs to make things as good as new again.

Hair dryers often break down if the vent gets covered because they have a thermal fuse inside. Replacing this cheap component could save having to buy a whole new appliance.

Record players that have seen better days can often be brought back up to speed with a new motor, a fresh needle or a new valve. These can be very rewarding to repair.

Bikes benefit a lot from simple maintenance, be it turning up the brakes every now and then or just keeping the chain and gears oiled.

Many old ovens can get a fresh lease of life with new pairs of levers when splash-dipped their cast soon be looking as good as new?

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