

Press release

What: Cambridge Carbon Footprint attempting to hold the world's biggest repair café

Where: Wesley Methodist Church, Christ's Pieces, Cambridge, CB1 1LG

When: Sat 11 Nov, 10am – 6pm

Contact: Nicole Barton nicole@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org t: 07979 523584

circularcambridge.org/festival/

Date: 03/11/2017 For immediate release

Cambridge Carbon Footprint to celebrate burgeoning repair café movement with world record attempt in Cambridge

Environmental organisations, Cambridge Carbon Footprint and Transition Cambridge are hosting an attempt to run the World's Biggest Repair Café on Sat 11th Nov, with hundreds of people and repairers gathering to celebrate the incredible growth of the repair café movement. The event is hoping to beat the 150 repairs that took place at the biggest repair cafe held to date, which took place in Vauréal, France in 2013.

Repair cafes are community events that match experienced repairers with people who need stuff fixing. The movement started in Holland 8 years ago, there are now a network of over 1,300 cafes globally. By 2021 there will be an estimated 5,000 repair cafes engaging 50,000 volunteers and 145,000 visitors every monthⁱ.

Cambridge is at the heart of the movement in the UK and repairers will be coming from all over the country to take part in the world record attempt. There will be talks from Patagonia, the outdoor clothing company that has its own network of repairers, and from Tara Button, founder of BuyMeOnce, the campaign for product lifetime labelling in the UK. FoodCycleⁱⁱ will be serving up hundreds of meals made from surplus food.

Nicole Barton, one of the organisers of the record attempt, said:

“The repair café movement has really taken off in this part of the country, as it has in other parts of the world. I think their immense popularity is an indication of how sick we are getting of our wasteful consumerist society.

People are delighted and sometimes even moved when an object they thought would never work again is brought back to life. Hopefully this world record attempt will inspire others to set up new cafes in their area.”

Repair cafes are one of the most tangible elements of the wider fixer movement, where activists are more likely to be wielding screwdrivers and drills rather than placards. It is a practical,

positive response to the excessive waste created by our consumer culture. The average European goes through an incredible 16 tonnes of materials in a lifetime, of which 6 tonnes ends up as waste mostly going to landfill. The Fixer Movement is dedicated to teaching people the skills and confidence to repair their stuff, and to help foster a new repair culture that has the potential to create millions of jobs and increase practical skills. It is estimated that repairing electronics creates 13x more jobs than recycling them.

Cambridgeshire is a UK Repair Café hub. A domino effect has occurred here, with villages supporting one another to run the events. They're now a regular feature in the City, and surrounding villages to the north, south, east and west. They're run from schools by PTA's, from churches by vicars, by retired engineers from community centres. Some repairers work in couples, some are asylum seekers not allowed to work, some are managers in tech firms that miss being hands on and one of our Cambridge repairers even travelled to Sub-Saharan Africa to set up its first Repair Café.

Draper Tools and Mackays of Cambridge will be giving the Cambridgeshire Repair Café movement an enormous boost when they hand over a huge new toolbox filled with tools at around 11am on the day of the record attempt.

ⁱ From The Second Global Survey of Repair Cafes: A Summary of Findings. May 2016, Prof Martin Charter and Scott Keiller at The Centre for Sustainable Design

ⁱⁱ FoodCycle is a charity that aims to unite and nourish communities using surplus food. They provide free community meals across the UK and Cambridge

Per capita, Britain is one of the top five nations creating electronic waste and the average Briton dumps 23.5kg of electronic waste each year (United Nations)

Repairing a single 13" MacBook will save 710 kg CO₂e so repair is crucial to tackle climate change.