

# New mobile repair and reuse project

## **Summary**

- **Launching later this year, the project aims to move repair and reuse from 'niche to norm'.**
- **Based around a mobile repair and reuse vehicle, it will work with existing groups and engage new audiences.**
- **The first year will be dedicated to electrical items and electronics – anything with a plug or battery.**
- **This is a grant-funded project that SWP is running in partnership with Resource Futures and Donate-IT.**
- **We are currently advertising for a Community Repair Coordinator and asking the public to suggest names for the new service/vehicle.**

## **Background**

SWP commissioned Resource Futures (RF) to look at how we can increase reuse and repair, taking into account the work of existing groups across Somerset. One of three potential solutions was for a mobile repair vehicle (working title Somerset Repair Bus) to travel the county bringing repair and reuse to new audiences, tackling barriers around travel and access to repair facilities/groups, and helping groups to collaborate and share skills.

RF and SWP have secured grant funding from [Ecosurety Exploration Fund](#) for the [project](#) which in its first year will be dedicated to electricals and electronics - from toasters to tablets, record players to remote controls – anything that has a plug or takes batteries.

We have also partnered with local company Donate-IT CIC which collects, refurbishes and distributes tech like laptops and smart phones to people, schools and groups who need them. We are now working hard to get the [project](#) up and running as soon as possible.

## **Project overview**

Its aim is to support existing groups, engage new audiences and take repair and reuse from 'niche to norm' through four key areas of activity:

- Educate and raise awareness of repair, reuse and sustainable consumption, targeting schools, community groups, individuals, businesses.
- Amplify existing repair activities – supporting all local repair groups, helping them to extend their reach into wider audiences and promoting their current activities.
- Support group expansion – facilitating skills and knowledge sharing, increasing resource sharing and accessibility, and providing advice and practical input.
- Address digital poverty – collecting used smart tech from businesses and residents, refurbishing, and diverting it back into the community, reducing waste and keeping items in use.

If it proves a success, SWP will consider continuing the project and expanding it to cover the repair and reuse of any item. This will, of course, be subject to a business case and the availability of budget or new sources of grant-funding.

## **More detail**

The vehicle will be second-hand and probably a 'transit-style' van with eye-catching branding and livery. We have explored electric options, but cost and logistics make an electric vehicle impractical for this project at this time.

We are now working with the local repair café groups to establish how it can best support existing activities. We expect this will include providing tools and equipment that support their work and make 'pop-up' repair events possible.

The vehicle will operate in all districts seeking to:

- Increase consumer confidence in repair and reuse.
- Encourage people to view sustainable electronics consumption and repair as 'the norm'.
- Collecting donated electronics for repurposing/recycling, and enhancing knowledge of existing local activities around repair, reuse and recycling.

The vehicle's itinerary will be a balance between visiting existing groups, attending events, hosting 'pop-up' sessions and visiting schools and workplaces.

We are asking the public to [suggest a name for the new service/vehicle](#).

Suggestions can be made through this online [form](#) and the deadline for ideas is 9am on Monday 21 February. SWP will shortlist suggestions and put them to an online public vote.

The vehicle will be driven by a Community Repair Coordinator and this role is being [advertised now](#). The successful candidate will travel the county promoting repair and sustainable consumption and working with SWP, Resource Futures and a wide range of Somerset-based audiences.

Closing date for applications is 9am Tuesday 22 February. Please share this advert widely.

We anticipate that the Repair Bus will be attending events between May and December this year, depending on recruitment and fitting out the vehicle going smoothly.

We understand that data security is a concern and can stop people offering devices for repair, reuse or recycling. Through our partnership with Donate-IT we can offer a collection point for unwanted tech items and ensure that these are securely data wiped before being refurbished and donated to those in need.

## **Further information**

For questions about the project, or if you would like to suggest an event that might be suitable (subject to availability), please contact: Julie Searle

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- [Resource Futures](#) is an environmental consultancy specialising in the waste sector
- [Donate-IT](#) is a Community Interest Company
- For details about Ecosurety and the Ecosurety Exploration Fund visit [www.ecosurety.com](http://www.ecosurety.com)