

BAYSIDE ROVING REPAIR PROGRAM



This project was delivered by Bayside City Council, with coordination support from Let Me Be Frank and supported by the Circular Economy Councils Fund. The Fund is delivered by Sustainability Victoria under the Victorian Government's circular economy policy, Recycling Victoria: a new economy.

This report was produced by [Let Me Be Frank](#)

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BE FRANK.**



This project was delivered on the Aboriginal lands of the Bunurong people. This report was developed on the lands of the Wurundjeri and Dja Dja Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, whose sovereignty was never ceded.

We recognise that First Nations people have deep knowledge and experience of resilience and sustainability that is critical to heal country, people, and communities. Despite the ongoing impacts of colonisation, First Nations people are still generously sharing knowledge and working towards reconciliation and treaty. For this, we pay our respects and deep thanks to First Nations elders past and present, and extend this to all First Nations people. We endeavour to learn from and lift up First Nations expertise in our work.

We all live, work and play on Aboriginal land. 1% of our income is paid to Traditional Owners. We encourage everyone to Pay the Rent.

Let Me Be Frank is a member of 1% for the Planet. We donate 1% of our annual income to environmental organisations. We are proud to be part of a global network that is accelerating smart environmental giving.



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A sock being darned at the Roving Repair Launch Event September 2023
Photo: Kiralee Ashworth

Introduction

In 2023, Bayside City Council launched their Roving Repair Program with support from Sustainability Victoria's Circular Economy Council's fund and Let Me Be Frank. The program delivered eight pop-up community repair events, over six months to February 2024.

The program had three major objectives:

1. To reduce waste to landfill
2. To up-skill the community to repair, reuse, and upcycle items
3. To foster a culture of repair in Bayside and build lasting community connections

This report not only outlines what was delivered by the project, and how well it was delivered, it also documents the key challenges faced during the planning and implementation stages and strategies the team employed to overcome them.

While there have been some challenges, the community response to, and support for, the program has been overwhelming. As has the internal support across Council - this has led to Bayside City Council exploring how they can support and strengthen this growing repair movement in the municipality going forward.



The staff and volunteers at Hampton's Recycled Sewing Studio
Photo: Darren Markey

Summary of events

1. Roving Repair Launch

Sandybeach Centre, 2nd Sep 2023

The purpose of the launch event was to introduce the community to the program and generate excitement about a repair movement. We had four repairers with skills in electronics, textiles - sewing, darning and crochet.

2. Recycled Sewing Workshop

The Recycled Sewing Studio, 8th Oct 2023

Utilising this fantastic studio in Hampton we had a sewing repair event, with six volunteer repairers.

3. Small electronics and appliances

Beaumaris Library, 14th Oct 2023

This event invited people to bring wired items that could be mended at a table with handheld tools.

We had only two expert repairers in attendance, one of whom Council had supported to get a tag and test certification.

4. Make, Do, and Mend, Together

Sandringham Library, 21st Oct 2023

As part of Seniors' Month, this event focused on intergenerational skill sharing of mending and crafts that fewer younger people are familiar with.

We had four community volunteers and three library staff, with skills including darning, felting, book and jewelery mending, crochet and other textile skills.

5. Woodwork, Toys and other non-wired items

Brighton Men's Shed, 12th Nov 2023

Four members of the Brighton Men's Shed gave up their Saturday morning to help people repair and restore wooden items at their workshop.

6. Bike Maintenance and Repair

Bayside Community Nursery, 25th Nov 2023

A bike maintenance workshop was run inside the nursery's training room by two volunteers, while a professional repairer from Rapid Wrench offered advice and an opportunity to book in repairs, from their van outside.

7. Upcycled Festive Sewing

Recycled Sewing Studio, 3rd Dec 2023

In the lead up to the holiday period six volunteers supported people to make gifts bags, crowns and festive decorations out of pre-loved blankets and other fabrics.

8. General Repair Event

Hampton Community Centre, 10th Feb 2024

The final event of the program was run more like a typical repair cafe, with six repairers offering various skills, including textile work and electronics and appliances.



An antique stool restored at the Brighton Men's Shed. Photo: Lucy Best



A selection of fixed children's clothing at a sewing repair event. Photo: Lucy Best

As we planned and delivered the repair workshops a few challenges arose, that meant we needed to adapt the model (and document our lessons!)

Challenge	Action taken and/or Solutions
Ensuring thorough risk assessment and management. There was particular concern about the safety (and potential liability) around electrical and bike repairs.	• Meetings with Council Risk Assessment team • Sought information and advice from other repair cafés, and expert repairers at the National Repair Summit August 2023 • Reviewing the legislation about repair of electrical items: confirmed that legally DIY electronic repairs can be carried out in Victoria • Organising and paying for Tag and Test Certification for one of the volunteer repairers and hired a tag and test kit to test electronic repairs • Clarifying and communicating that as per research presented by Mend It Australia (MIA) in the Australian Productivity Right To Repair Inquiry Report 2021, electrical repair did not result in Victoria hospital admissions between 2015 - 2020, injury, or death, from electrocution
Repairs being achievable but not having all the right parts or materials at events	• One repairer took items home to complete repairs • Men's Shed volunteers exchanged contact details with households to support repair post event • For the bike repair event - Rapid Wrench (private provider) booked people in for repairs following the event (which focused more on general maintenance) • Adjusting the registration process to ask attendees what they were bringing and contacting them to discuss and advise on any parts or materials to bring
Challenges sharing information on local Facebook groups (despite being a Council supported and free community program) as the Let Me Be Frank team are not local residents.	Let Me Be Frank identified page administrators and messaged them privately. Some responded and shared information to their pages.
Difficulty identifying an available woodwork shop, with suitable volunteers	Council's Volunteer Coordinator introduced Let Me Be Frank with Brighton Men's Shed - demonstrating how critical it was to have support across all parts of Council.

Challenge	Action taken and/or Solutions
Managing wait times	• All attendees were allocated a specific time for sewing and bike workshops • Contacting attendees to ask when they were planning to come and advising on best times to come to avoid a wait • Scheduling a changeover time between allocated times for sewing workshops, to reduce crowding • Allocating each attendee a number when they arrived so they had a sense of where they were in the queue • Providing tea, coffee and snacks etc while waiting • People did not seem to worry about waiting, since the repairs were done for free and they could observe other repairs while they waited, chat and socialise
People booked but didn't show up	Across the program, we found that there was almost an equal number of people arriving who had not booked, to the number of people who booked and didn't come. See recommendations for suggestions on how to manage this going forward.
Ensuring a safe space for all attendees.	There was an incidence of a community member turning up to a repair event wearing an anti-trans t-shirt. Earlier in the day there had been a gender non-conforming person in attendance. This person was the last to arrive and there were no other attendees there, so she was granted entry to the event and had her item repaired. However we would recommend being very clear about diversity and inclusion in the House Rules which could provide clear grounds for refusing access to community members who do not follow the guidelines.

BAYSIDE ROVING REPAIR PROGRAM

Bayside Roving Repair Launch Event
2 September

Sewing workshop with the Recycled Sewing Studio
8 October

Small Electronics and Appliances
14 October

Make, Do, Mend Together skill sharing
21 October

Furniture, Toys and other wireless items
11 November

Bike maintenance and repair
25 November

The Roving Repair program helps residents to repair their damaged items instead of disposing of the item and buying something new.

Scan the QR code, visit our website, or give us a call to learn more.

bayside.vic.gov.au/rovingrepair
(03) 9599 4444

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The Bayside Roving Repair Program printed collateral design by Council's Communications team

Program Outcomes and Impact

The evaluation of the program aimed to respond to the three key objectives:

1. To reduce waste to landfill
2. To up-skill the community to repair, reuse, and upcycle items
3. To foster a culture of repair in Bayside and build lasting community connections.

These objectives were measured by:

- Registration data that captured attendance numbers, demographic and geographic spread
- Volunteer numbers, repairers and other volunteers
- Self report evaluation data from attendees via a short online survey: 84 responses were collected
- Estimated weight and volume of repaired items

ATTENDANCE AND ITEMS REPAIRED

The high level data on attendance and items fixed at each event is shown in the table below. This does not reflect items that were fixed post-event by eager volunteers.

Event	Attendees	Volunteers	Number of items repaired	Weight in grams (estimate)
1. Launch	36	6 (4 repairers)	13	5000
2. Recycled Sewing	19	7 (6 repairers)	50	13240
3. Small electronics and appliances	21	2 repairers	5	8000
4. Make, Do, and Mend, Together	18	5 (4 repairers)	25	7400
5. Woodwork and non-wired items	14	4 repairers	6	35332
6. Bike Maintenance	20	3 repairers	7	5600
7. Upcycled Christmas	13	7 repairers	40	3020
8. Hampton Community Centre	19	7 (6 repairers)	8	6400
Total	160		154	134392 (134.92kg)

REPAIRS COMPLETED BEYOND THE EVENTS

At some of the events - particularly the event focused on electronics and appliances, and the woodwork and non-wired items event at the Men's Shed, items were not able to be repaired on the day. However the volunteer repairers supported attendees with advice.

One volunteer, David, was willing to take items home to repair and then contact attendees directly to arrange pick up.

The president of Brighton Men's Shed, Paul, also arranged to visit someone's house to help them fix their windows, which they had brought a photo of to the event.



A kettle being fixed. Photo: Lucy Best

SUCCESSFUL REPAIRS

75% of survey respondents who brought in an item to be repaired had a successful repair at the event. 14% of the respondents had their item(s) partially fixed with a further 11% stating their item(s) couldn't be repaired.

This aligns with global averages according to the [Repair Café International Foundation](#).

Was your item repaired?

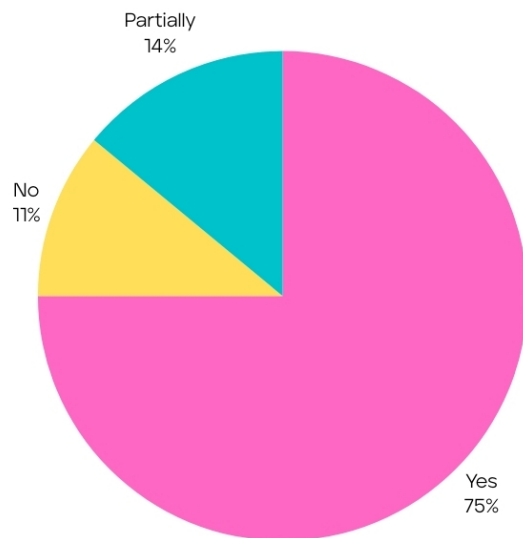


FIG 1. COMPLETED REPAIRS

WASTE AVOIDANCE

Around 40% of the items that were brought to the Repair Events would have been thrown away in general waste or taken directly to the tip. Lots of people (37%) didn't know what they would have done with the item - unsure of whether it could be repaired, or recycled or it had sentimental value and would never be thrown away, despite not working.

The program has avoided a significant number of items ending up in the bin, at the tip or gathering dust!

Prior to attending the event, what did you plan to do with the item if it couldn't be fixed?

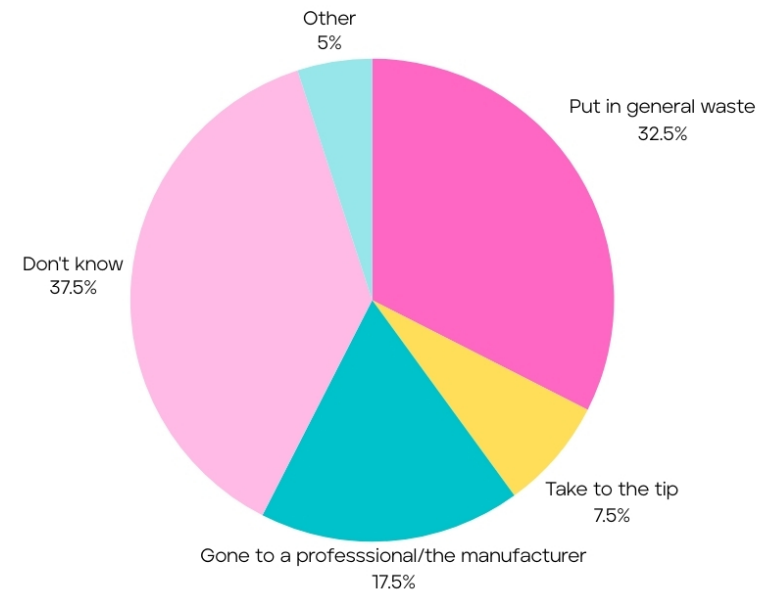


FIG 2. WASTE AVOIDANCE

INSPIRING REPAIR

Several people explained that they had been holding on to things, with a plan to fixing them or getting them fixed, but hadn't got around to it or didn't know where to go. The events motivated and inspired them to take action.

Anecdotally people told staff and volunteers at the events that they were now thinking more about other items they had at home, in need of repair.



A mended jumper at
The Recycled Sewing Studio
Photo: Lucy Best

EMISSIONS REDUCTION IMPACT OF REPAIRING ITEMS

Without knowing how items would have been disposed of it's hard to calculate emissions reductions associated with repair.

Even knowing the quantity of avoided waste to landfill, it's hard to accurately quantify Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reductions, because conversion factors can change from year to year and are impacted by the materials of the item, along with other materials in the waste mix. Meaning that without knowing the full make up of materials we can only speculate.

In addition to the potential emissions reductions from avoiding waste to landfill, avoiding purchasing new items also reduces the impact of consumption dramatically.

There's a levy of \$129 per tonne of waste to landfill, with gate fees on top. There are also costs incurred dealing with dumping. So avoiding waste in the first place is a financial as well as an environmental win!

LEARNING NEW SKILLS

Another intended outcome of the Roving Repair Program was to support members of the Bayside community to learn new skills. 77% of survey respondents said that they learnt new skills.

At each event we found many attendees would share that they had observed and/or learnt new skills. Some reported observing skills they had never even heard of.

The Make, Do, And Mend Together event had a particular focus of sharing skills that younger generations don't typically learn. Felting was very popular at this event as a way to create invisible mending on woven fabrics.

Teenagers at the sewing events were excited about their new found skills and planned to use them at home.



An attendee at the launch helping our volunteer fix a toaster.
Photo: Kiralee Ashworth

Did you learn any new skills?

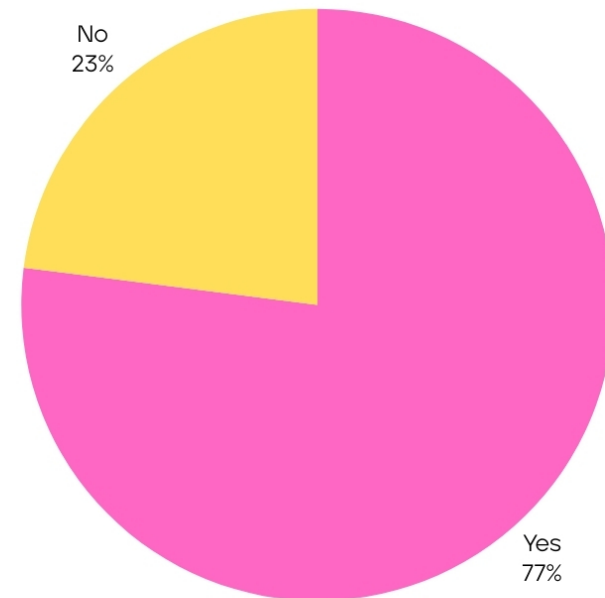


FIG 3. NEW SKILLS

AGE OF ATTENDEES

Across the program we observed a broad range of ages. The Launch and the Make, Do, and Mend, Together event (which was promoted as an intergenerational skill-sharing event) had the largest number of children in attendance.

At the time of booking age was an optional question. Make, Do, and Mend, Together event was booked through Bayside Libraries, so age data was not captured. Therefore we don't have complete data on the age range of all attendees.

Although no attendees for The Recycled Sewing Studio event shared their age when booking, staff and volunteers observed the highest number of teenagers in attendance at that event.

Age bracket of attendees across the program

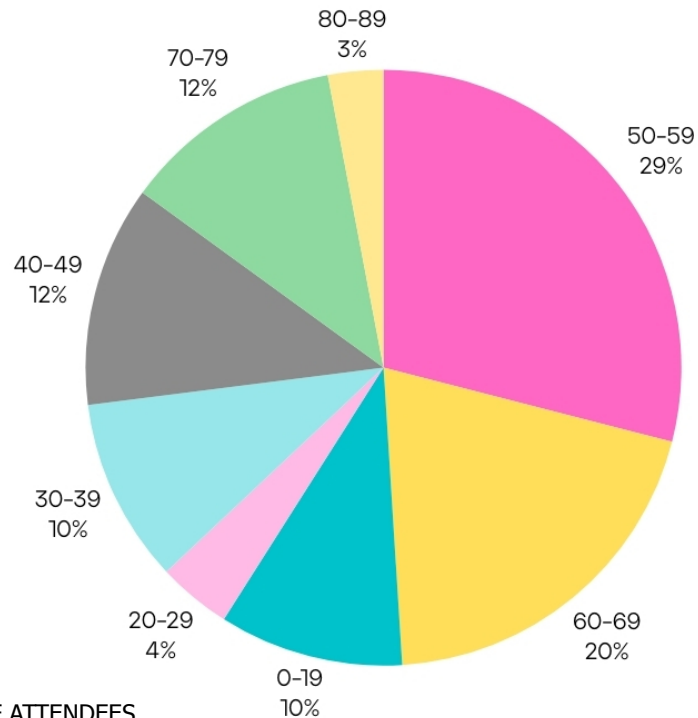


FIG 4. AGE OF ATTENDEES

GENDER

Gender was not asked at the time of booking. We observed a cross section of gender representation amongst attendees at each event. However, the sewing events had a majority female attendance.

We also observed that the repairers focused on electronics and appliances were all men and the repairers with skills in textile repair were all women or non-binary people. All the volunteers at the Recycled Sewing Studio were women.

Several women brought furniture items to be repaired at the Brighton Men's Shed and asked whether or not there is a women's shed, or other opportunities to develop skills with tools.

GEOGRAPHIC SPREAD

79% attendees were from the Bayside municipality. However the program attracted a participants from a broader spread across Melbourne. With 8% from Kingston, 4% from the City of Melbourne, 3% from Glen Eira and a further 1% each from Stonnington, Boroondara, Port Phillip, Merri-bek, and Darebin.

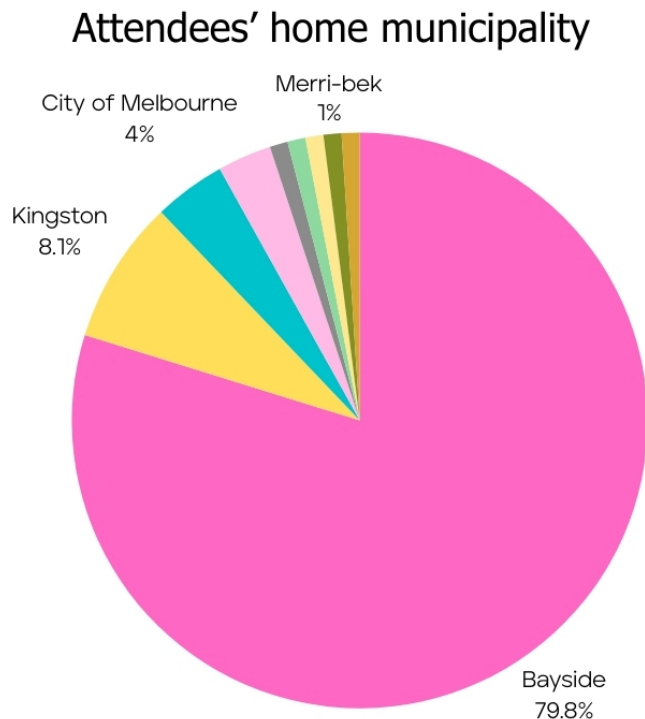


FIG 5. HOME MUNICIPALITY



Mayor Stitfold and Lachlan Johansen at the Roving Repair Launch Event
Photography: Kiralee Ashworth

Participant feedback

Quotes from happy participants

"A wonderful event. So glad to be able to give my clothing another life and learn how to repair clothing so that I can tackle myself"

"Thanks so much for organising this event. I really appreciate that my local council organises community events. Well done and thank you"

"Everyone was very friendly and I left absolutely delighted with a lamp that had been waiting 20+ years to be rewired!"

"It was fantastic to see the skills & speed with which repairs were completed"

" Well organised"

"Delighted the program is on offer and look forward to supporting & participating regularly"

" The two events I attended were extremely helpful. Had I known about the wood repair event a lot sooner I wouldn't have thrown out a lounge that I now realise could have been repaired. I'm really thrilled with these events within my community. I will definitely attend more."

"Great experience"

"Thank you for the warm welcome and cuppa!"

"Loved the event - glass wine would be good"



Two young sewers at the Upcycled Festive Sewing workshop
Photo: Lucy Best

"This was incredible, I have had my pants, sitting on my shelf, collecting dust, looming over me for close to 2 yrs now just waiting to be sewed. I have a 2 & 4 yr old. I have no time. Im so happy to wear my pants (which still fit!) From 2005 repaired. Thank you."

"Really wonderful idea"

"More Facebook advertising"

"Thanks for bringing together council with knowledgeable and passionate community members"

"How to use old clothes to turn into doll clothes"

"Staff very friendly and helpful"

"It's amazing, thank you for doing this!"

"Great program, have then monthly, promote through the library, great diversity in items that can be mended and eye opening to new skills"

"Do it more often!"

"Would be good to have more sewing /repair events in future"

"Hold more events!"

"Brilliant program, would be amazing to have this kind of programs more frequently"

"Keen to do again!"

"Great initiative, keep it up please"

"Include a broader range of repairers at each session if possible (rather than have a specific focus for each session)"

"Have regular 'permanent' events"

"Have more of these events regularly eg at least twice a year. Great community event and resource. Other councils do these sorts of workshops and at last Bayside has also begun to do them."

"More frequent events of multiple different times or day"

"More events"

"Have these as a regular service for the community"

"The program is absolutely brilliant idea, it gives opportunities for people who would like to upcycle but have no idea how. Suggest to create more this kind of program frequently so people can develop upcycle skills - minimise waste"

"Great event do more!"

"Please would like to attend another bike repair workshop in the future"

"Look forward to more similar programs"

"Run more"



Fixed clothes at The Recycled Sewing Studio
Photo: Lucy Best

"Awesome idea, keep program running"

"Pls pls repeat these events Fabulous and productive morning Mended things Ive had sitting around for years Well done So enjoyable"

"Make these events regular ie Monthly"

Recommendations

Let Me Be Frank has a series of broad recommendations for Bayside City Council to consider in order to support a continuing repair movement in Bayside.

While these Recommendations have been developed specifically for Bayside City Council any other organisation or community group may like to consider and apply them to their own repair events.

REGULAR EVENTS

The feedback was overwhelmingly that the community want regular events.

The advantages of regular events include:

- Continue momentum created through Roving Repair Program
- Opportunity for people to attend and get advice then come back to a subsequent events, having purchased necessary materials or parts
- A pool of volunteer repairers to cover events, without all of them having to attend every one
- Opportunities for other volunteers to support events through welcome desk, housekeeping and data/feedback capture
- Positive social impact of a regular opportunity to attend, socialise and skill share



Tag and test equipment was hired for relevant events.
Photo: Lucy Best

KEY COMPONENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY RUN EVENTS

The Climate, Waste and Integrated Transport team in Council should be the main point of contact to support the success of community run repair events. Their role will be to liaise with Council Communications and Library teams, along with the Managers of any other venues being utilised.

Additionally, they could support the community by notifying them of available grants for one off larger scale events, training opportunities, or the purchase of materials and equipment.

The community organisers may occasionally need support moderating between members and Council maybe required to step in.

Placing the onus on the community to deliver regular events would require willing volunteers to:

- Engage with Council to promote events and share news. Suggest a monthly informal 'check-in' meeting
- Communicate with venues - libraries, community centres or otherwise to confirm bookings and access
- Attend the welcome/triage desk
- Conduct repairs
- Ensure all spaces are left clean and tidy
- Handle any donations made, to reimburse repairers for materials, travel expenses, and/or venues for tea-coffee, snacks etc



A treasured lamp fixed at Beaumaris Library
Photo: Lucy Best

COST IMPLICATIONS TO COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY-RUN EVENTS

Thanks to the Roving Repair Program Council already has:

- Engaged community members
- A list of willing and skilled volunteers
- Low cost existing communication channels that have been demonstrated to work
- Relationships with
 - Sandybeach Centre
 - Hampton Community Centre
 - Recycled Sewing Studio
 - Brighton Men's Shed

At a very low cost to Council regular events can be supported through:

- Providing locations. For example libraries, or offering financial support for other locations as listed above
- Grants or other support to purchase tools and materials. For example, tag and test equipment
- Connecting individuals already engaged or encouraging a Facebook or WhatsApp group for communication - moderation may be required
- Promoting events through existing communication channels

As is common with repair events around the world, the delivery of the above model for repair events would primarily be done by the community.

FURTHER COUNCIL SUPPORT FOR THE REPAIR MOVEMENT IN BAYSIDE

Council can further support regular events with:

- Educational information on its website about the right to repair
- Supporting repairers to connect with The Australian Repair Network and list events
- Sharing of success stories from repair events
- Establishing a database of places to get things repaired within Bayside
- Attending events, when appropriate, to demonstrate - and identify ways to strengthen - Council support
- Connecting the repair volunteers with relevant community groups e.g. Village Zero
- Offering community training programs for repair e.g. working with professional bike repairers, The Recycled Sewing Studio, a women's shed etc

Let Me Be Frank also recommends that Council develop a policy around inclusive behaviour, that can be shared with the House Rules and at the time of booking.



Local MP Zoe Daniel attended the launch event and is very supportive of the repair movement/

Photo:Kiralee Ashworth



Local volunteers have been very keen to share their skills all the way through the project.

Photo:Kiralee Ashworth

PARTNER WITH THE BAYSIDE RESOURCE RECOVERY CENTRE

Bayside Waste and Recycling Centre was historically run as a traditional tip, with the majority of waste going to landfill. Future Recycling is now operating the site and expanding it to a Resource Recovery Centre with a tip shop.

At this stage the Tip Shop won't be able to support ongoing repair events due to storage and safety issues, and a lack of a commercial model to underpin the events. Instead, Future Recycling may be interested in working with local repairers to fix items to sell, rather than offer an opportunity for people to bring or buy items to get fixed.

There may be opportunities to partners with Future Recycling to:

- Provide materials for repair, through waste recovery
- Educate people about how to dispose of items that can't be repaired
- Run repair workshops in their training rooms
- Run a bike repair workshop, with materials salvaged from bikes disposed of
- Provide storage for bike parts, and equipment

Let Me Be Frank therefore recommends that Council support community-run events to leverage the momentum built during this program.



The team at Hampton Community Centre
Photo: Kate Knight

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