



## THE WESTMEATH INDEPENDENT

# Give broken items a new lease of life

## New Repair Cafe in Athlone aims to teach lost skills

Deirdre  
Verney



[deirdre.verney@westmeathindependent.ie](mailto:deirdre.verney@westmeathindependent.ie)

**H**ave you got a broken piece of furniture, household item or piece of clothing that you'd love to know how to fix? Rather than tossing it in the rubbish bin, get yourself along to the Athlone's first Repair Cafe later this month where you can learn how to bring it back to life for free!

The innovative event, kickstarted by Westmeath County Council and other local groups, brings expert volunteers

together to help people with small repair projects on Saturday, November 22, from 2pm to 5pm in St Kieran's Community Centre, Tormey Villas.

"We're looking for people to bring along small items, it could be a broken chair or mobile phone, or a non-working part of an electrical device, and they will be shown how to repair it if it's possible," Shay Hamilton from Athlone Tidy Towns explained this week, saying that he hopes the repair cafe idea becomes a regular thing locally as it has many benefits.

"You repair (the item) rather than toss it away which very much feeds into our concept of sustainable waste and resource management in Athlone Tidy Towns. It also teaches basic skills that have been lost over the years in a community setting," Mr Hamilton added.

"I don't know how many people can repair a puncture on a bike now, things that older

people learned all the time. Well, there will be a guy at the repair cafe teaching you how to do that. It's all about fixing and teaching old skills that have been lost," he concluded, adding that it will be a free, fun afternoon for those who come along. All ages and backgrounds are most welcome.

Athlone's first Repair Cafe is a collaboration between the **Local Authority Prevention Network**, Eastern-Midlands Waste Region, Athlone Tidy Towns, Midland Makerspace and Westmeath County Council. The concept, relatively new in Ireland, has been operating in the Netherlands for many years where the idea first originated.

**For more information about the Athlone repair cafe event on November 22 next in St Kieran's Community Centre, Tormey Villas, call the Environment Department of Westmeath County Council 044 9332125.**