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Groundbreaking repair and reuse shop coming to Newport!

Repair Cafe Wales and Benthg Cymru are teaming up to open a combined repair shop and library of things in the city centre this summer.

Newport's high street and its environmentally-friendly credentials are set to get a massive boost with today's announcement of a trailblazing project coming to the Olympia House regeneration on Skinner Street.

Repair Cafe Wales and Benthg Cymru will be setting up a permanent repair space and library of things, giving residents from around the city access to free repairs, skill-sharing workshops and volunteering roles as well as the opportunity to borrow a range of household items such as a drill, sewing machine or board game at low cost, with the opportunity to pay in volunteering time or Tempo time credits as well as cash.

'RE:Make Newport' will be based at 26 Skinner Street, with the additional benefit of an online borrowing platform allowing people to go online to browse, reserve and pay for items they wish to borrow. An electric cargo bike will also enable deliveries and collections around the city and provide active travel opportunities for volunteers.

Phoebe Brown, Director of Repair Cafe Wales said:

"Repair cafés are a brilliant way to reduce waste, promote skill sharing and increase community cohesion. This project will enable us to combine these benefits with those of a library of things into one innovative high street space serving the community of Newport. We are hugely excited to launch RE:Make Newport and hope it will pave the way for many similar initiatives across Wales."

Becky Harford, Co-founder of Benthg Cymru said:

"Libraries of things are for everyone – providing opportunities to share precious resources that are already in communities and create the connections with people in Newport and beyond that to empower people to take part in the sharing revolution. We're thrilled to be setting up this new permanent space in Newport City Centre and look forward to working with the community to get everyone borrowing"

Matthew Davies, Executive Director for Development of Newport City Homes said:

"We're delighted to be a part of this innovative project to make repair and reuse a reality for NCH residents and the wider community of Newport. The development of Olympia House is part of the wider regeneration of the city which is giving us a unique opportunity to reimagine how we can live and work in ways that are more environmentally friendly and will help us become more resilient to the challenges of modern life."

David Wilton, Chief Executive TPAS Cymru said:

"Repair cafés and libraries of things are an exciting and much needed resource for all our communities in Wales. TPAS Cymru sees repair cafés and libraries of things as vital in creating sustainable communities focused on reducing waste and reducing poverty. This project will play a

crucial role in creating a blueprint for housing associations around Wales to create similar repair and reuse spaces for tenants and communities.”

Ruth Marks, Chief Executive WCVA said:

“WCVA are very pleased to be supporting Repair Cafe Wales with their grant of national significance via Welsh Government’s Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme (LDTCS). The success of their smaller LDTCS funded project and the precedent set for other similar initiatives is fantastic. We look forward to seeing the achievements that this larger project funding enables. Re use and repair is such an important part of Wales' circular economy ambitions and community activity like this is great to see.”

Further information:

The project is being run by Repair Cafe Wales and Benthg Cymru, with funding from WCVA’s Landfill Disposal Tax Communities Scheme with additional support from Newport City Homes.

Libraries of things and repair cafés were cited in the recent Welsh government ‘Beyond Recycling’ strategy as facilities that will help to grow the circular economy in Wales and achieve zero waste targets by 2050.

Repair Cafe Wales and Benthg Cymru are both Community Interest Companies. Benthg is a Welsh word meaning borrow or lend.

The Olympia House Development was part funded by Welsh Government through its Rent to Own Wales and Shared Ownership Wales scheme, Newport City Council Property Enhancement Fund and NCH capital investment.

Interviews available on request, contact Ella Smillie 07734 444882 / ella@benthg-cymru.org or Phoebe Brown 07895 845270 / phoebe@repaircafewales.org.

