

# REUSE & REPAIR: COMMUNITY SEWING WORKSHOPS



## CASE STUDY

### PARTNERS:

London boroughs, waste authorities and six expert crafters

### APPLICABLE TO:

Local councils and waste authorities, government organisations, community organisations, retailers, events organisers, shopping centres

## OVERVIEW

Our objective was to raise awareness of textiles waste and its environmental impact. Using this backdrop, we wanted to impart effective life-long skills to Londoners, which would help them value their clothes and keep them in use for longer, thus diverting textiles from landfill. To achieve this, we ran a series of sewing workshops in local community centres, focused on repair and upcycling skills.

## THE ISSUE

Particularly in large cities like London, consumers have a 'throw-away' culture and this attitude extends to their clothes. When clothes suffer from normal wear and tear, rather than repairing or altering them, many people simply

throw them in the bin. Part of the problem is that previously ubiquitous skills have been lost, and people simply don't know that easy sewing hacks can give their clothes a new lease of life.

## WHAT WE DID

We ran 20 sewing workshops across as many London boroughs, working in collaboration with local councils and waste authorities. These were a mixture of repair and alterations and re-styling and customisation workshops, held in local community centres and targeted at residents who could attend for free. Offering free workshops removed a barrier which might prevent people from attending and generated positivity towards the campaign and the local council. Most workshops ran as three-hour sessions with attendees expected to participate for the full time, although a number were run as more flexible drop-in workshops.

We contracted six expert crafters to run the workshops, assigning each crafter to one, or a group of boroughs. The crafters and local councils were responsible for running the workshops and for planning, promotion and logistics of the workshops in the run up to the event. We provided financial support, promotional materials, PR and communications support, as well as overall project management. Through these workshops, our aim was to address the lack of sewing skills in today's society, a contributing factor to a culture which consumes rather than re-using and repairing.

## IMPACT

Around 200 residents attended the workshops, averaging at ten people per workshop. Where drop-in events were held, an additional 60 people were engaged and learned about the Love Your Clothes campaign. We achieved more than 20 media stories, ten online, seven London-wide and broadcast, five at borough level and one national - the events catalysed popular broadcast conversations around favorite old items that could be rescued and worn again. Excluding broadcast media, these reached over 2,251,900 people.

*"We all found the campaign thought-provoking and interesting - it definitely opened people's eyes to the endless re-use possibilities, and made them think twice about putting old clothes in the bin."*

Violetta,  
Resource London

## SEE ACTION PLAN

[www.loveyourclothes.org.uk](http://www.loveyourclothes.org.uk)



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 YOUR CLOTHES