

Case Study: From Old to Gold – Repair, Share and Care

Delivered during Reuse and Repair Week, the From Old to Gold project demonstrated how circular economy initiatives can create environmental, educational and social benefits for local communities.

The four-day programme, delivered in partnership by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Life Change Changes Lives (LCCL) and the Northern Ireland Resources Network (NIRN), supported participants in restoring and upcycling unwanted furniture rescued from the Council recycling centre.

Participants learned practical repair and restoration techniques, including sanding, painting, waxing, upholstery and patchwork, using reclaimed materials. The project encouraged waste prevention and reuse by extending the lifespan of furniture that would otherwise have been discarded.

Alongside the environmental impact, the project delivered significant well-being and community outcomes. Participants reported increased confidence, improved social connection and a strong sense of achievement. The relaxed and supportive workshop environment helped create new friendships and encouraged ongoing engagement with sustainability activities.

Project outcomes included:

- 100% participant satisfaction
- 100% reporting increased confidence in repair and upcycling skills
- 100% reporting a sense of achievement
- Strong evidence of improved social connection and wellbeing

The project successfully demonstrated that sustainability initiatives can support both climate action and community development, while promoting practical lifelong learning and circular economy principles.