

ACS Clothing – Helping Lanarkshire extend the life of their clothes

ACS Clothing spoke to us about why they loved being a part of Lanarkshire's Climate Action Festival in 2024.

Who are you and what do you do?

We are ACS Clothing. We inspire to transform the fashion industry from the traditional, linear take > make > dispose model, towards a circular fashion model that extends the life of existing textiles and diverts clothing from landfill.

Can you tell us about the workshop you hosted as part of Lanarkshire's Climate Action Festival?

We were delighted to be invited along to Coatdyke and Cliftonville Community Centre to bring our skills to a Mend and Repair workshop. The aim of the day was to promote mending, repairing and repurposing garments of clothing to extend their life, teach new skills and promote circular fashion. It was a great chance for us to share our expertise and knowledge in our local communities.

We took along a domestic sewing machine and our very talented seamstress, Alisha. Armed with needles, threads, scissors and fabric, we were raring to go.

What sorts of items did people bring along?

Firstly we were presented with a pair of gym leggings with a tear in them. Our seamstress demonstrated how this could be repaired on a household sewing machine and, if this wasn't available, how to sew them by hand. This resulted in a very

happy customer with good as new gym leggings!

We also had a jacket from a young girl who was so attached to it, she found it hard to part with, even to get the repair done. The lining of the jacket was torn and the pocket had a hole in it. Alisha demonstrated how this could be repaired with a needle and thread. Our customer was so happy, she was in tears. This meant so much to us to have made this possible.

What were some of the barriers or challenges you faced?

The challenges we faced were around confidence; with attendees not believing that they could repair their clothes. Attendees also didn't necessarily have a sewing machine at home to make repairs to their clothes, and some expressed that they can find it hard to find the time to mend their items. It's all too easy to pop something in the bin and go buy another one, due to not having the time or resources to fix it. Fast fashion has taken over our high streets, causing a significant problem with waste, which is having a detrimental impact on our environment.

What were the benefits of your workshop to the attendees?

For many of the attendees sewing was something that they had practiced in the past. Our workshop inspired them to bring out sewing machines from their attic and get their wardrobe back in action.

Andy MacFarlane, Circular Operations Manager at ACS Clothing added:

ACS is committed to sustainable textiles. We are based locally in Lanarkshire. Being able to help this local community to mend and repair garments that they had was fantastic. The community have gained new skills and rescued much loved clothing.

Lynne, Operations Manager at Coatdyke and Cliftonville Community Centre commented:

Having the Mend and Repair workshop has been a great opportunity to bring the community together, learn something new and understand the impact clothing has on the climate.

We had a brilliant day, saved clothing going to landfill and inspired the group to go home and look out their sewing machines!

