

South West Probation – The Arches Bicycle Recycling Project

[keywords: *community payback*]

Overview

First set up in Torquay in 2021, but now in the Arches workshop in Exeter, the Exeter Bicycle Recycling Project is a Community Payback initiative, in partnership with the charity Exeter Ride On, repairing and recycling bikes for the benefit of the local community. The project is financially self-sustaining. Bikes left at local recycling centres, or abandoned on Network Rail and local council property, are donated to the project free of charge. Once repaired and refurbished, they are donated on either to Ride On, for them to sell on at an affordable price to people on low incomes, or to people on probation where they can demonstrate a clear employment or health-related need. Ride On donate back to the project 20% of the value of any recycled bikes, in parts and accessories. A similar partnership with Sue Ryder is also being explored at the time of writing (October 2024).

Its impact

The project provides an opportunity for those on Community Payback to complete their hours while learning new skills and benefiting the local community. It is hoped in future that those showing a particular aptitude and interest in the work will be able to secure a placement with Ride On, opening up new potential employment opportunities too.

What's special about it

It's a self-sustaining Community Payback activity with real benefits for those involved and the wider local community.

Wider applicability

While it requires strong partnerships with other agencies to source the bikes and pass them on, we believe this could be rolled out in other areas.

Further information

Contact: Sam Fox, Samantha.Fox@justice.gov.uk

See also: [KnowX.uk/SouthWest1-KBT24.pdf](https://www.knowx.uk/SouthWest1-KBT24.pdf) (presentation)