THE STORY SO FAR

Our story of a Network weaving together a new neighbourhood-scale clothing and textile culture to nurture and restore the health of our community and the planet.



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All photos marked CN by Celie Nigoumi ↗

WHAT IS ‘EVERYONE NEEDS POCKETS’?

***Everyone Needs Pockets* is a network of people in our local community of Frome, Somerset. We collaborate and inspire each other, and our community, to make a change to the unsustainable way we consume and dispose of our clothing and textiles. We make the connection between health and climate, addressing the issues created by clothing and textiles for both people and planet.**

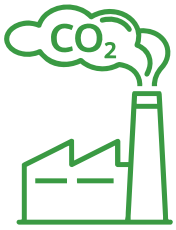
We gather together in person once a month and through online channels, to share skills, ideas and knowledge. By collaborating together we are able to take action that feels too difficult as an individual.



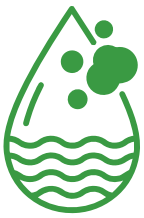
Fridays for Future climate strike in Frome – April 2025 CN.

WHY DID IT START?

Our clothing and textiles shouldn't harm our planet or our health but in today's world of fast fashion and overconsumption they do. The fashion and textiles industry needs to change due to its significant environmental and social impacts:



The fashion industry is responsible for an estimated 8–10% of the total global carbon emissions



Manufacturing processes and washing contribute heavily to water pollution



Textiles are one of the main drivers of microplastic pollution



Textile Waste hugely contributes to landfill



The fashion industry is built on exploitative labour practices



Our overconsumption of clothing negatively impacts both our mental and physical health



Toxic chemicals are used in every part of the textile industry process affecting our physical health



Lack of transparency in the supply chains leads to greenwashing and a system that's hard to change

We know now the benefits of making with your hands – and even more so when that is done in community. We want to highlight these benefits alongside the decline in people's engagement with their clothing and textiles directly corresponding to the exponential rise in global mass manufacturing and our consumption.

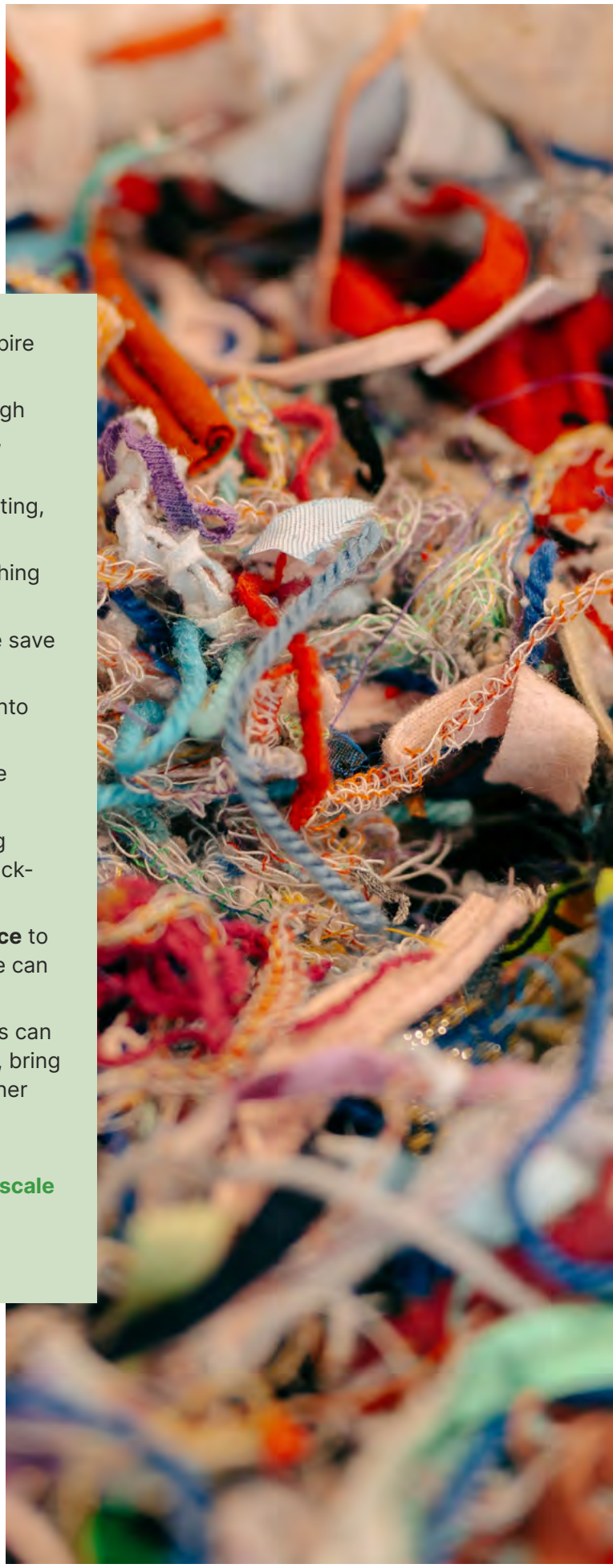
Through this lens, we wanted to create a network distinctive from other stitching groups – one that's actively exploring materials, searching for connections that wake us up to the horror of fast fashion's impact.

Network Aims

The network aims to create alternatives for our local community, building a local infrastructure for clothing and textiles which can shift our habits and culture away from the extractive take-use-waste model to one where the clothes we wear and the textiles we use aren't harming but healing our planet and our wellbeing.

- **Bring the community together** to educate and inspire each other to change these issues
- **Carbon emission reduction** – tackling waste through education and action and textile circularity – reuse, repair and recycling
- **Improve mental health and wellbeing** – by connecting, sharing, making and repurposing with textiles
- **Raise awareness** of the harmful impact of the clothing and textile industry
- **Address the cost of living crisis** by helping people save money on their clothing
- **Support individual and group ideas** and projects into fruition
- **Research** and offer regenerative alternatives to the take-use-waste model
- **Share** and keep alive skills for making and mending textiles and clothing with people of all ages and back-grounds within our community
- **Give Network members knowledge and confidence** to speak about the situation more, and share what we can do about it
- **Help tackle the overwhelm** which the climate crisis can trigger by taking action together to reduce anxiety, bring joy and increase our curiosity/confidence about other actions we can take together

We want the changes we create at a neighbourhood scale within our community to be shared and re-created in every community around the world.



Waste material being repurposed at our Make and Mend day for Sustainable Fashion Week © CN.

HOW DID IT START?

Everyone Needs Pockets was born out of a circular economy event hosted in Frome. At that event there were a large number of people in the room who all had an interest in textiles, with conversations leading to concerns around recycling and reusing different textile materials.

Monthly gatherings

From these conversations, *Everyone Needs Pockets*' first meeting was initiated by Edventure's *Future Shed* in March 2022. The call out at the time on *Future Shed*'s social media was for sewers, makers, retailers and citizens who are using, or want to use, recycled material for clothing, sculpture or knitting.

The first meeting was attended by two people and slowly those numbers increased. **We meet at the same time in the same place each month**.

By sharing the vision and bringing people together around how our clothing and textiles can address the link between health and climate, the network grew and strengthened. By 2025 monthly meetings are consistently 20 plus people, a WhatsApp group of 55 people and a mailing list of nearly 300 people.

Many people bring their mending and sewing projects along with them to the meet-ups. This acts as a great way to share skills and ideas.

We also created a monthly evening Stitching Social as a way to offer something to the people who wanted to join us but couldn't make it to our daytime meetups. The stitching social has also been used as a time to run film nights as well as a quilt club.

How we got our name

In those first meetings, a conversation arose around our frustration with womens clothes without pockets or with impractically small ones and the systemic issues behind this. The comment 'We should be called *everyone needs pockets*' invited a collective cheer and the name has stuck ever since!



A How To Mend session held at the Share Shop in Frome 🖂 CN.

What is Future Shed?

Everyone Needs Pockets was instigated by Edventure's *Future Shed*, an initiative set up to offer practical support to get green and healthy initiatives and enterprises off the ground through building networks, connecting people and ideas, signposting and start-up coaching.

Future Shed Frome is part of a wider programme called *Green and Healthy Frome* which is a partnership between *Edventure*, *Frome Medical Practice*, *Frome Town Council* and our local community. The programme was made possible by the *Climate Action Fund* through *The National Lottery Community Fund*.

Network Coordinators

For the first few meetups, *Future Shed* facilitated the meetings and all communications before putting a callout for volunteers to step forward to coordinate the network. A team of 4-5 people came forward to volunteer.

Coordination involves:

- ✓ planning and running the monthly meet-ups
- ✓ organising events and activities
- ✓ creating and managing the website, social media and additional marketing of events
- ✓ email communication
- ✓ monthly newsletter
- ✓ holding the long term vision of the network

Funding and Mentorship

By starting the network as part of a town wide climate initiative through *Future Shed*, the network was able to grow quickly drawing on the audience, community and infrastructure already built through the Green and Healthy Frome programme.

Guided by *Future Shed*, the coordinators put forward a proposal for the vision of the *Everyone Needs Pockets* Network and presented it to a panel at the Health and Climate Conference in July 2022. This led to the network being selected to be in residence with Future Shed, unlocking £5000 funding and mentorship to be used over one year.

***Everyone Needs Pockets* has been granted residency funding and support from *Future Shed* for three consecutive years – £5000 in the first year, £3500 in the second year and £5000 in the third year.**

The residency funding allowed the network's passionate ideas to become a reality. The mentorship meant both invaluable advice and practical support with, for example, ticketing and newsletter platforms, free training and coaching sessions, and hosting meetings in the Edventure Hub. It also enabled access to wider publicity channels and space for public events in the Town Hall.





Top: The four coordinators with Sue Palmer the Future Shed Lead 📷; Bottom: Fast Fashion Facts on display at a Stitch It Don't Ditch It event. 📷 CN

Creating the vision

Everyone Needs Pockets (ENP) invites people from outside Frome to inspire us and share projects that align with our aims. The first of these was Tze Ching Yeung from Refashion My Town in Chippenham in May 2022. Inspired by Tze Ching, the network brainstormed ideas of what our vision was for what ENP could be and do.

Amelia Twine came to share her brilliant initiative – Sustainable Fashion Week. This led to an ongoing relationship and the Network choosing to become a Sustainable Fashion Week Hub.

A talk from Flaxland inspired an offshoot project *Sewing the Seeds*, an initiative empowering residents to grow 1m^2 plots of flax in and around Frome and providing learning materials and sessions on how to grow, harvest, spin and weave flax into cloth.

Inviting Tamara Cincik from Fashion Roundtable brought politics smack bang into our local network! Judith Van Den Boom, with her experience as lead on the Regenerative Design MA at Central St Martins, opened our eyes to the possibilities of regenerative thinking and our part as a network to play.

> **“ Amazing work. It’s been amazing being included in your work and meeting your lovely people.**
>
> **Tze Ching Yeung**

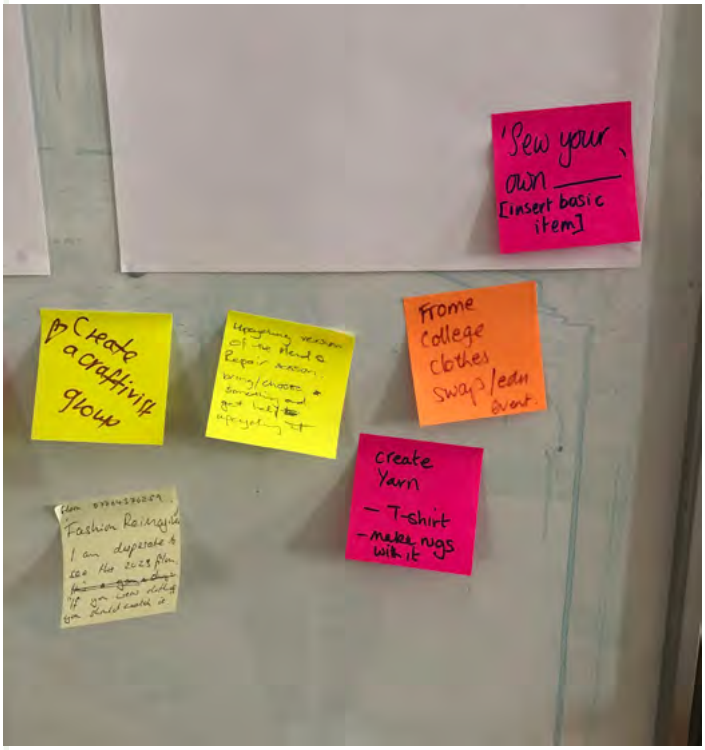




Left: Judith Van Den Boom, Course leader MA Regenerative Design at Central Saint Martins, speaking at our ‘Material Futures and Regenerative Design’ talk in September 2024 © CN; Right: Amelia Twine, founder of Sustainable Fashion Week inspiring the network.



Alongside inspirational speakers, in our monthly meetups we often do brainstorming activities working in groups with ideas shared. A network member has helped facilitate these by running Imaginarium workshops, pushing us as a network to creatively imagine what the ideal future of clothing and textiles in Frome could look like.



Some Imaginarium examples imagining the future of fashion we want to see:

“It’s cool to wear refashioned individual clothes”

“Legal labelling regulations re fabric content, recyclability and sustainability”

“Mending education is compulsory in schools”

“Fast Fashion Is Dead”

Top & bottom: Planning our vision as a network at one of our Friday monthly meet-ups.

Communication, Identity and Web Presence

Identity

Everyone Needs Pockets started as a network without a name, logo or website. The development of our identity was led by the network. Both our logo and website were designed and built by members who volunteered their time and expertise and both have been updated and amended along the way with feedback from the network.

Website

The website showcases who we are, what we do and how people can get involved both locally and further away. It allows people to sign up to the newsletter and has our contact details for getting in touch. It also holds a directory of local clothing and textiles services and businesses that align with our ethos.

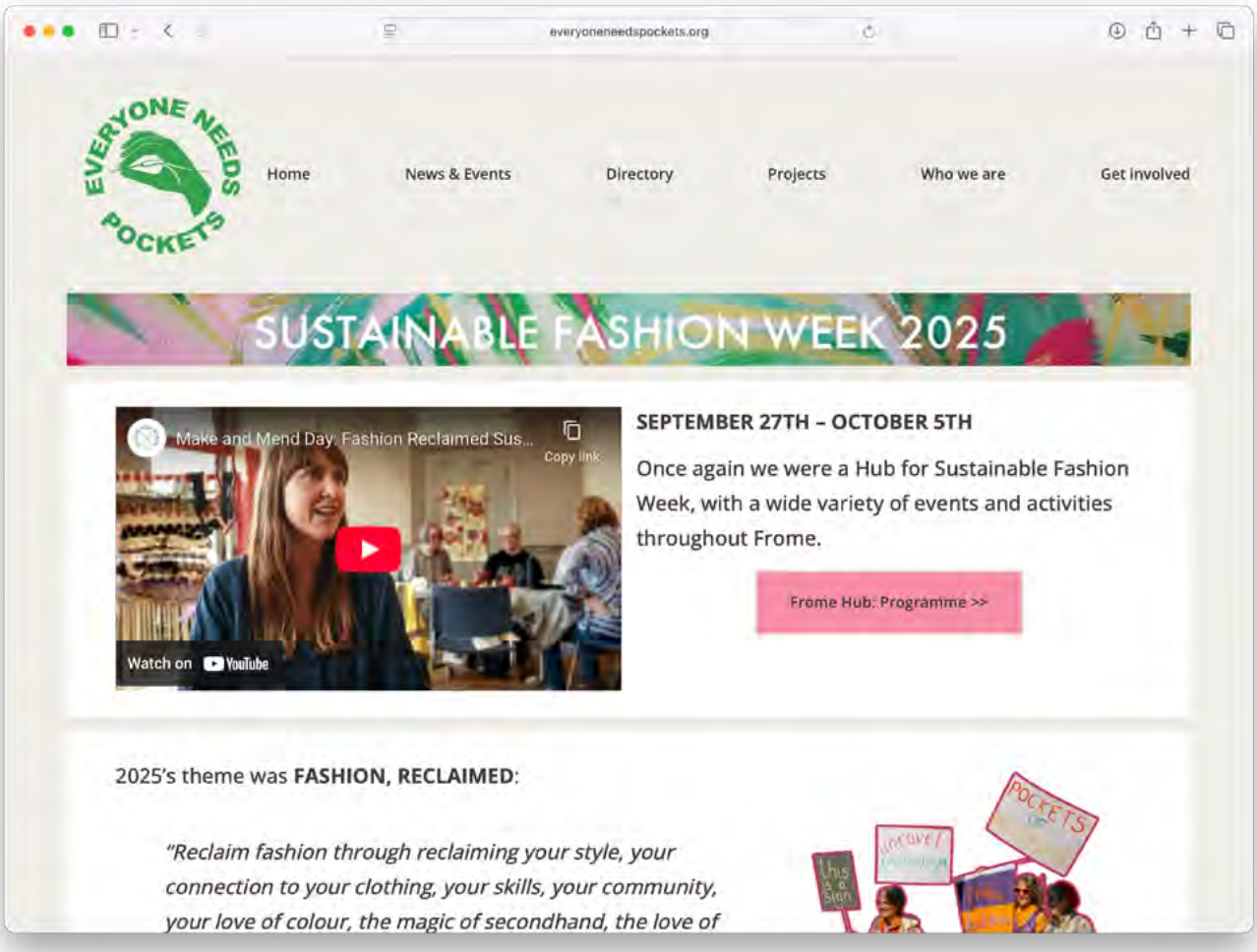
Social Media

Our social media (mainly Instagram) is updated regularly by one of the network coordinators, with some of the residency funding going towards their time to do this. This showcases everything we are doing as well as sharing information about issues and topics related to fashion and textiles in relation to climate and health.

Newsletter

Our monthly newsletter, written by two of the network coordinators with some of their time being funded, shares all the current *Everyone Needs Pockets* projects, events and activities with information on how people can get involved.

> **A great initiative. Seemingly a very gentle form of activism, but with their support, managed to push me out of my comfort zone! Thank you.**
>
> **Alison Eddy (instagram)**



Marketing

We use all avenues to share our messages and events: adverts and press releases in local newspapers and listings, flyers and posters with QR codes that take people straight to the best webpage. We also use a ticketing platform for events, especially when we need people to book in for activities such as How To Mend Your Clothes.

Reaching Out

We connect to other like-minded groups and businesses through reaching out via email or instagram as well as often being contacted directly by them.

Aligning with and participating in national and global initiatives such as Great Big Green Week, Fashion Revolution's *Mend In Public Day*, *Stitch It Don't Ditch It*, *Mend it May*, *Sustainable Fashion Week (SFW)* and *SFW's Future Citizens* project has boosted our profile, making our work known to their wider audiences.

Becoming a *Sustainable Fashion Week Hub* means our website and all the activities we put on as part of *SFW* were promoted to their global audience through their website as well as printed programmes distributed in all their Hub locations.

> **"Wonderful and Inspiring work, thank you.**
>
> **Judith Rawlings**





Top & bottom:
Marketing, 'Stitch It Don't Ditch It' event © CN.

How to start a network checklist

- **Meet in person monthly**, at the same time, in the same place
- **Have someone or a few people** to coordinate the network
- **Create an identity** and web presence to communicate who you are and what you do
- **Build communication channels** such as an email address, WhatsApp groups, social media accounts, a mailing list and a monthly newsletter
- **Get training** in what you need – marketing, using socials, design, canva, ticketing, using Mailchimp. Do skills swaps with friends or look for local free training for volunteer led organisations
- **Join in** with local, national and global initiatives that align with your values
- **Use a ticket sales platform** such as Eventbrite or Ticket Tailor
- **Some funding and mentorship** really helps
- **Invite speakers** and connections from a wider context to inspire the network and learn about how the local is connected to the global. This gives greater opportunity to intervene or find the break points where you can take action.
- **Reach out** to existing individuals and businesses with the same ethos and create a directory to share and amplify the whole movement that's already happening rather than starting from scratch or competing.
- **Put on events** and activities for the wider community to spread the message and cultivate connection and agency.
- **Follow the enthusiasm** that people are showing! This will keep people coming back to the meet ups. Our success usually comes from a mix of practical skill sharing and conversation.
- **Have boundless enthusiasm for positive change!**



An everyone needs pockets volunteer helping someone with their mending at a How to Mend session held at the local climbing centre © CN.

A BRIEF TIMELINE

2021

Winter: *Edventure* launched *Future Shed*, which provided the initial framework for the network.

2022

January: An 'ideas event' highlighted the desire for a Frome 'clothing & textiles' network.

May: The network was officially named *Everyone Needs Pockets* and a co-ordinating team was established.

December: Awarded residency mentorship and £5000 funding through *Future Shed*, providing crucial support for the first year.

2023

January: Launched the first of the monthly *How To Mend Your Clothes* sessions, establishing a core community offering.

September: Became the first market town to be a *Sustainable Fashion Week Hub*.

August: Network website, built by a member, goes live, establishing an online presence.

2024

January: Started *Quilt Club* (monthly sessions making a community quilt) and the *Sewing the Seeds* project was born.

June: Hosted sold-out talks by industry figures (Tamara Cincik and Katherine Symonds-Moore).

December: Awarded a third year of residency mentorship and £5000 funding, demonstrating sustained success.

2025

January: The Community loom was built and the *Let's Make Together* community weaving project was born out of the network.

April: Took part in Fashion Revolution's Mend in Public Day with a street stitching event, increasing public visibility.

September: Acted as a *Sustainable Fashion Week Hub* for the third time and was featured in a talk by World Circular Textile Day, gaining national/international recognition.

WHAT WE DID

As a network we put on events and activities for the network members as well as the wider community of Frome to educate about the issues and offer solutions for more sustainable and regenerative clothing and textiles. As a network, we also generate projects which are led by network members, some of which have gone on to become independent initiatives.

Events and Activities

Sustainable Fashion Week Hub

Sustainable Fashion Week is a global initiative, taking place in the last week of September, uniting the community in taking creative action, to change the fashion system from the bottom up.

As *Everyone Needs Pockets*, we pay to be one of the *SFW* hubs which means that the events we do are listed in their programme, on their website and in printed programmes distributed in all their hub locations.

This is our busiest time of the year and uses a large part of our funding in coordination fees, space hire and marketing. It offers a great opportunity for network members to put forward ideas and to get involved in events. It is also a great opportunity for us to engage and promote our message to the wider community, encouraging other sustainable fashion businesses and groups in Frome to get involved.

We put on some events ourselves as a network as well as encouraging and coordinating other local groups and businesses to take part. SFW Frome has included:

- the local fabric shop hosting clothes **making and mending workshops** and pattern swaps
- charity shops offering **repaired clothing rails**
- vintage clothing shops putting on **talks and a fashion show**
- pre-loved **sales and swaps**

The programme of events has grown each year, building more and more engagement with the whole town community and all the groups and businesses working with the same aims.



A handmade banner on display at our 'Stitch It Don't Ditch It' event CN.

Stitch It Don't Ditch It

We wanted to find a way to make ourselves more visible and *Stitch It Don't Ditch It* has been a brilliant way of doing that. It takes something usually done at home on your own out into the public space.

We first ran *Stitch It Don't Ditch It* as part of our Sustainable Fashion Week (SFW) programme and have repeated it each year as part of SFW as well as for 'Mend in Public Day' organised by Fashion Revolution. We followed the movement started by artist Suzie Warren, gathering a group of people to mend their clothes out in public wearing home-made banners saying 'Stitch It Don't Ditch It'. Suzie describes the activity as a 'gentle encouragement of what we'd like to see more of rather than a protest'.

We ran a banner making workshop ahead of our first street stitching demonstration where ENP members made their individual banners as well as collaborating together to make a large 'Stitch It Don't Ditch It' banner for the event.

Network members volunteer to bring a chair and some mending and form a line along the street, stitching for an hour while wearing their banners. We used it as an opportunity to hand out printed information on clothes mending and the work we do as *Everyone Needs Pockets*, as well as handing out sewing kits we made out of network member donated pegs, needles, threads and buttons.

We hold the events in the local shopping precinct on a Saturday morning when it's busiest and in sight of some of the fast fashion shops. This has meant we've been visible to and connected with people that wouldn't otherwise see us or think about the connection between their clothing and climate and health and sparked some of the most interesting conversations. Network members love being part of this and engaging in conversations about mending and sustainable fashion with Frome residents. For *SFW 2024* we had:

- **816 members of the public** viewed/engaged (including our local MP Anna Sabine)
- **15 items** of clothing repaired
- **40 mending kits** handed out
- **100 'how to mend' zines** distributed





Left: Sewing kits made up by the network using second hand haberdashery and handed out to the public for free 📷 CN; Right: Our 'Stitch It Don't Ditch It' event taking our mending out onto the street 📷 CN.









Clockwise from top left: Home made banners made by the network; One of our members chatting to the local MP Anna Sabine ⓒ CN; Handing out 'How to Mend' flyers ⓒ CN; Taking our mending out onto the streets at a 'Stitch It Don't Ditch It' event.

Workshops and Exhibitions

As part of *SFW* we have put on the following workshops and exhibitions:

'Feeling Dressed' Museum clothing history workshop

A network member, Dr Lucy Gundry, invited people to explore the archives of Frome Museum to peek inside boxes and become dress detectives! They explored how items have been worn, mended and repaired as part of the rich history of textiles in Frome

Frome Wardrobe Collective: Clothes Swap

ENP collaborated with the Frome Wardrobe Collective with network members volunteering at their Clothes Swap.

Upcycling Workshop

As part of *SFW '24*, network coordinator Anna Fraenkel, ran an upcycling workshop in the town hall with a team of network volunteers. She showcased her examples of upcycled clothing as well as putting together a pack of inspiration for each participant.

Sustainable Fashion Window Trail

A group of network members coordinated a window trail to promote the sustainable fashion and Charity shops throughout the town. They encouraged them to create window displays and a set of patchwork numbers was created with a network led workshop with the students at Selwood school to place in each window. A local illustrator was employed to create a map for people to follow which was handed out around the town ahead of *SFW*.

Film screenings

As part of *SFW* we have hosted film screenings and Q&A's of both *The Nettle Dress* and *Fashion Re-Imagined*.

> **"It was really inspiring to learn about the work you're doing in Frome to catalyse conversations about what healthier, happier and more sustainable futures for everyone could look like! I had a great day – thanks so much for inviting me.**
>
> **Gemma Metheringham**





Top & bottom: A clothes swap put on by Frome Wardrobe Collective as part of Sustainabale Fashion week 📷 CN.

Talks

We regularly invite speakers to give talks at both our monthly meetups and in larger venues for the general public. The larger talks, organised as part of *SFW* and Great Big Green Week, have focused on *Material Futures and Regenerative Design* and whether *Upcycling And Buying Second Hand Is The Future Of Fashion*. These events were sold out with audiences of 60–70 people from around Frome and as far as Bristol and London. We offer these ticketed talks for free, supported through our funding.

Speakers have included:

Amelia Twine from Sustainable Fashion Week
Tze Ching Yeung from Refashion my Town in Chippenham
Tamara Cincik from Fashion Round Table
Katherine Symonds-Moore a sustainability consultant
Liz Parker from the Clean Clothes Campaign
Nick Stilwell from Protomax Plastics
Caroline Till from Franklin Till, a design futures agency
Sanne Visser from Studio Sanne Visser talking about working with human hair as a material resource
Judith Van Den Boom, the Regenerative design MA course leader at Central St Martins
Flaxland fibre flax growers from seed to cloth
Gemma Metheringham from The elephant in my wardrobe
Chloe Haywood from Chloe Haywood London / Rewardrobe

We have ongoing relationships with many of the speakers, an integral part of strengthening the network. Connecting with Amelia Twine led to our involvement in *SFW*. We visited London to see Sanne Visser's project *Haircycle* after her talk and she joined us again to teach a rope making workshop. The Flaxland talk inspired the local project *Sewing the Seeds*.

> **"I've been involved in this topic since the late 90s and met lots of people and lots of groups and I can genuinely say this is one of the most inspiring groups I've seen in terms of action. For me this is a big part of the answer of what we need to do. It needs to happen locally, as well as globally and at the policy level. I would say just keep doing what you're already doing and do more of it.**
>
> **Liz Parker**, The Clean Clothes Campaign





Top: Speaker Caroline Till from FranklinTill, a design futures agency, at our 'Material Futures and Regenerative Design' talk 📷 CN; Bottom: Speakers Gemma Metheringham and Chloe Haywood at our 'Is Upcycling and Buying Second Hand the Future of Fashion' talk.

Community Outreach

Working with schools

We initially struggled to involve young people in our network activities. In an effort to change this, we made contact with local schools and have now run textile skills and sustainable fashion education workshops in four local schools.

Sustainable Fashion Week launched an initiative called Future Citizens. We reached out to Frome College to offer support to engage in Future Citizens and two of the network volunteers went in to give a talk and run a weaving and upcycling workshop with the school's climate action group. This has developed into an ongoing relationship. Network volunteers went into Selwood school to work with the students to make patchwork numbers out of waste fabric for the SFW window trail. The following year we were invited back and taught weaving with waste fabric.

The Community Loom project, which was born out of the network, has been into two first schools to teach weaving and upcycling with waste fabric.

Stalls

In 2022 and 2024 we had a stall at The Frome Independent Market. We used it as an opportunity to advertise what we do and find new network members, to raise awareness around problems with the fashion Industry and to showcase inspiring repair and upcycling techniques.

Each year we have had a stall at the Eco Festive Craft Fair in Frome, with network volunteers running waste fabric festive activities for families.



Collaborating with other climate action groups

There are many other community climate action groups in Frome that we have connected with. As part of this relationship, we have:

- **Created banners** for Frome Kindness Festival out of waste fabric
- **Supplied waste fabric** and helped create the banners for Canteen, an initiative to help local people access responsibly-sourced, wholesome food in a communal setting
- **Organised a Network roadtrip** to DeFashion Dorset
- **Been invited to speak** at Farrington Gurney's Pollinator Party
- **Cultivated close relationships** with other groups, initiatives and businesses in the town such as *Frome Wardrobe Collective* and the local fabric shop *Millie Moon*



Top: Upcycling waste fabrics in our kids scrap studio workshop as part of Sustainable Fashion Week 📷 CN; Bottom: The giant community loom at the 'Arts Adventures at the Library' event.

Projects

These projects have grown out of the network, taken forward by members inspired by the collective energy to take action.

How to Mend Your Clothes

This is a scheme to encourage the wider Frome community, particularly those unable to pay for mending services or skills tuition, to learn mending skills they can use to keep their clothes in wearable condition for longer, rather than discarding them when they become damaged or broken.

- Monthly 2 hour sessions are held on the last Saturday of most months
- Free and bookable through Eventbrite
- *Everyone Needs Pockets* members with varying levels of mending skills volunteer their time to help guide people in mending their own garments
- Held in affordable and accessible and varied spaces around Frome including the local climbing centre, the library and the Medical Practice
- Equipped with mainly donated equipment, reference books and examples of mending

How to Mend is coordinated by a network member with some of the funding being used to pay for her time, to hire the spaces and buy any equipment needed.

The session gives people confidence to mend their own clothes and provides a social space for learning and idea exchange. It's a joyful process for both volunteers and participants. People go away empowered to mend their clothes, often returning to learn more.

The main repairs brought to the sessions are rips and tears that need patches and darning, broken fastenings, fixing hems and occasional requests for alterations. Participants are advised on booking their place that if their repair requires anything specific, such as colour for darns or fabric for patching, to bring it with them.

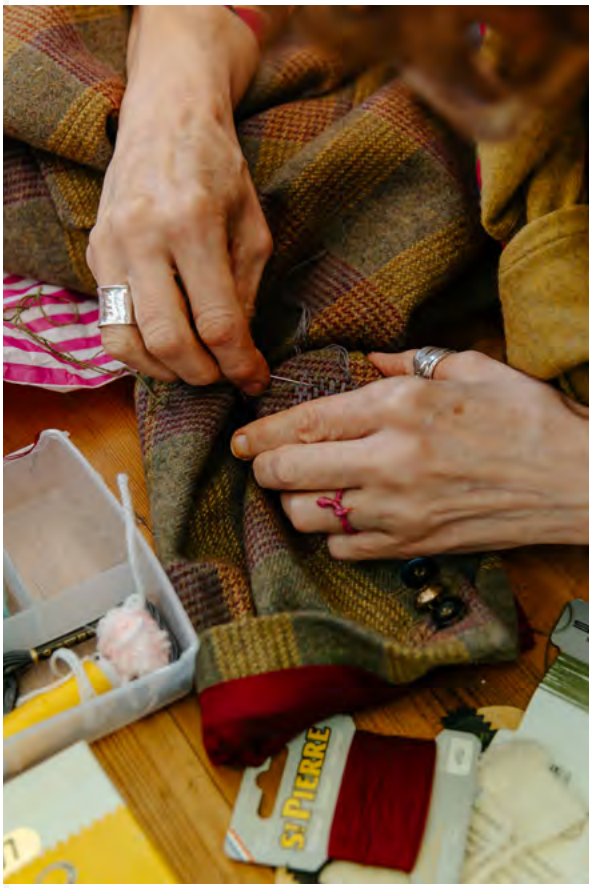
Over 3 years:

- **200 attendees** learnt to mend
- **368 items** of clothing repaired
- **20 volunteers** gave 250 hours of their time to helping people learn skills to mend and repair

> **"Such an amazing atmosphere to be part of everyone mending. I'm so pleased. I've never done anything like this before."**



A 'How to mend your clothes' session held at the local climbing centre Frome Boulder Rooms 🖻 CN.



> **“Thank you all for a great mending session. My husband has bought a darning needle and has mended two additional jumpers which were his favourites. He’s worn his repaired jumpers all week and is extremely proud of himself. It’s very heartwarming (and body warming).”**
>
> Lisa M.

> **“I absolutely loved saturday! Thank you so much for organising this! I had these items in my mending basket for sooo long! it inspired me to get my machine out again yesterday, I don’t think I’ve ever finished so many projects in one day!”**
>
> Jenny L





Network members helping people with their mending at a ‘How To Mend’ session CN.

Community Loom

Two of the *Everyone Needs Pockets* coordinators built a giant loom out of scrap wood. This was built in response to the abundance of requests the network receives to be part of events and to work with children. We found that as a network, although we had a wealth of skills, we didn't have an easily planned activity to offer or a way of using all the scrap fabric we were being donated.

The Loom allows people of any age or skill to have a go at weaving as a community and to create something in collaboration with each other. A 'Waste Fabric Mountain' flagpole was also made to collect the donated scrap fabric around as a gentle way to highlight the volume of waste fabric in the world.

The Loom has been at a number of community events such as the River Festival, Frome Children's Festival and Art's Adventures at Frome Library. It has also been used to teach weaving skills in four local schools.

> **"This is why we – humans – are here on the planet. To be together. To use our hands. To be making and mending. To be talking. It was a profound moment where I felt connected to people who came before me. Like I could see - in my minds eye - women, in circles, using their hands and weaving or sewing or handling willow."**
>
> **Sara B**





Weaving with scrap fabric on the Giant Community Loom at our 'Make and Mend Day' as part of Sustainable Fashion Week CN.

Sewing the Seeds

Sewing the Seeds is a collaborative community project, based in Frome, run by a group of six local textile practitioners and enthusiasts who came together through the Network. They shared an interest in regenerative and locally produced fibres, and had all been inspired by a network workshop led by Flaxland UK in 2023, where they gained an insight into the beguiling craft of flax processing.

The group wanted to cascade that learning to the wider community and test the viability of growing small plots of backyard flax for fibre and fashion. The project's aims were to educate and nurture conversations around the connections between fibre, food and soil through sowing, harvesting, processing – and finally to weave a union cloth from a blend of locally grown linen and nettle fibres.

Access their story via the ENPs website in the Projects section ↗



Quilt Club

This was a project to collaboratively make a giant quilt together using donated scrap fabrics. The project was born out of a request from a local venue for a wall hanging to provide better acoustics to allow them to put on more live music events in the community. The quilt has been used for this purpose as well as for a number of other community events held in the venue such as clothes swaps and poetry and storytelling evenings. Quilt Club:

- **Welcomed 57 attendees** over 6 sessions
- **Made a 7×3m** tumbling block quilt
- **Used 42m² of scrap** fabric

Quilt Club Attracted a range of people from absolute sewing and quilting beginners to experts – it was beautiful to see the skill sharing amongst the group.



Top: Learning to process flax with 'Sewing the Seeds'; Bottom: Assembling the giant collectively made quilt as part of our 'Quilt club' project.

WHAT WE LEARNT

In terms of audience engagement

- ✓ The activities that strengthen the network and the connections amongst its members are the in-person meetings and activities.
- ✓ Keeping regular times each month for daytime and evening meet-ups allows people to attend regularly.
- ✓ Our activities that have worked best in terms of engaging with wider audiences have been building an instagram following, hosting talks with notable speakers from outside Frome and taking events into unusual public spaces such as mending in the street and offering mending workshops in the local climbing centre.

ENP in In Numbers

How to Mend Your Clothes

200
Total attendees

368
Total items mended and back in circulation

Frome Wardrobe Collective Clothes Swap at SFW

1738
Items donated with only **322** items left at the end

1416
Items swapped by **159** people

In terms of health, climate and textiles (research and action)

- ✓ **Quantitative**: A few of our events have allowed us to gather statistics in terms of items saved from landfill that can be translated into measuring one of our aims – carbon emission reduction. These events have been teaching and encouraging clothes mending, clothes swapping events, dying workshops and both Quilt club and the Community Loom using up scrap fabric.
- ✓ **Qualitative**: Some of our other aims and outcomes are harder to measure but we can get a guide through attendee numbers and feedback. In terms of improving mental health and wellbeing by connecting, sharing, making and repurposing with textiles, a number, if not all of our activities have addressed this and we have received heart warming feedback to back it up.
- ✓ We have achieved our aim of **raising awareness** of the harmful impact of the clothing and textile industry through our events such as hosting talks and film screenings, building an instagram following and working with schools. These events also highlight the action that our community can take to address the negative environmental and social impacts of much of the textile industry.
- ✓ Our aim to **address the cost of living crisis** by helping people save money on their clothing and textiles has been achieved by skill sharing as a network, teaching the community to mend their clothes and facilitating, encouraging and promoting local groups to put on clothes swaps and second hand sales.



A mother and son mending on the street as part of our 'Stitch It Don't Ditch It' event ⓒ CN.

Outcomes and Insights

- ✓ People enjoy meeting to talk, grow ideas, share skills and take action
- ✓ Focusing on people's interest and relationship to textiles creates something we can gather around to tackle wider climate and health issues
- ✓ Being locally focused allows place based solutions to global issues
- ✓ Clothing and textiles brings together people of all ages with a wide range of skills across different industries.
- ✓ By collaborating together we are able to make change that feels too difficult as an individual
- ✓ Gathering as a network helps tackle the overwhelm which the climate crisis can trigger
- ✓ Taking action together can reduce anxiety, bring joy and increase our curiosity about other actions we can take together

> **Looking on, it feels like ENP is gaining traction and strength and has become the heart of a wonderful, connected textile community and network who care and repair in all the ways textiles can through stitching together. So important to change and challenge the capitalist system which has and continues to drive the fashion system. Gaining confidence in textile / dress making skills is imperative at all levels and for all communities, keep doing what you are doing!**
>
> **Lucy**





Top: scrap fabric woven on the giant community loom CN;
Bottom: A mother and son mending on the street CN.

> **ENP has done so much incredible work! But I just wanted to say how, for me, it's created a rich community that has tied me to Frome in a wonderful way that I wasn't expecting. All its tendrils have reached out to so many people and encouraged them to shout about their skills and knowledge. (How amazing!). I can't imagine a Frome without it. Thank you to all the kind and generous people who keep it going and connect us all to one another. We need ENP!!!**
>
> Cathy













Friday for futures climate strike in Frome – April 2025 CN.

What we found challenging

As coordinators of the Network, the last three years has been a steep learning curve of mostly highly rewarding learning but there have been a few challenges and obstacles.

Volunteered Time

Challenge: A lot of time and energy is needed, both in an organising capacity from the coordinators as well as from a network of willing volunteers to help with events and activities.

Learning: While this is sometimes a challenge to keep momentum up, it is also one of the most valued opportunities the network creates, giving people agency and purpose. A little funding can go a long way in incentivising people.

A Diverse Audience

Challenge: Both clothing/textiles and climate action seem to attract a majority female audience. We've found this to be true of both our network membership and in participation at our events. It is also a struggle to reach audiences who aren't already engaged with taking action.

Learning: Choosing a variety of venues for our events has diversified our audience: How to Mend in the local climbing centre encouraged a lot more men to sign up, taking to the streets for *Stitch It Don't Ditch It* introduced our work to new people and working with schools meant we engaged with younger people from a totally diverse background.



An everyone needs pockets member helping someone with their mending at our Make and Mend day as part of Sustainable Fashion Week 📷 CN.

Funding

Challenge: We are currently not registered formally in any way as a group/network. This means we are unable to get a bank account or apply for the majority of grants.

Learning: Being in residency with Green and Healthy Frome has been invaluable as it has allowed us to access funding without having to formally incorporate the network. Going forward we will look for either another 'umbrella' organisation or look into incorporating as a Charity or Community Interest Company.

Accessible Spaces

Challenge: Our monthly meeting is currently in an upstairs space that is not accessible to everyone. This is because the space is given to us for free but it is not ideal.

Learning: We look for accessible spaces for as many as possible of the other events and activities we do so that there are no barriers to anyone being able to attend. When we look for a new space to meet we'll look for somewhere accessible and try to factor that into the funding.





Left: Sanne Visser making rope with people as park of 'Make and Mend Day' 📷 CN;
Right: Children playing in the 'Waste Fabrics Mountain' at 'Make and Mend Day' 📷 CN.

WHAT'S NEXT

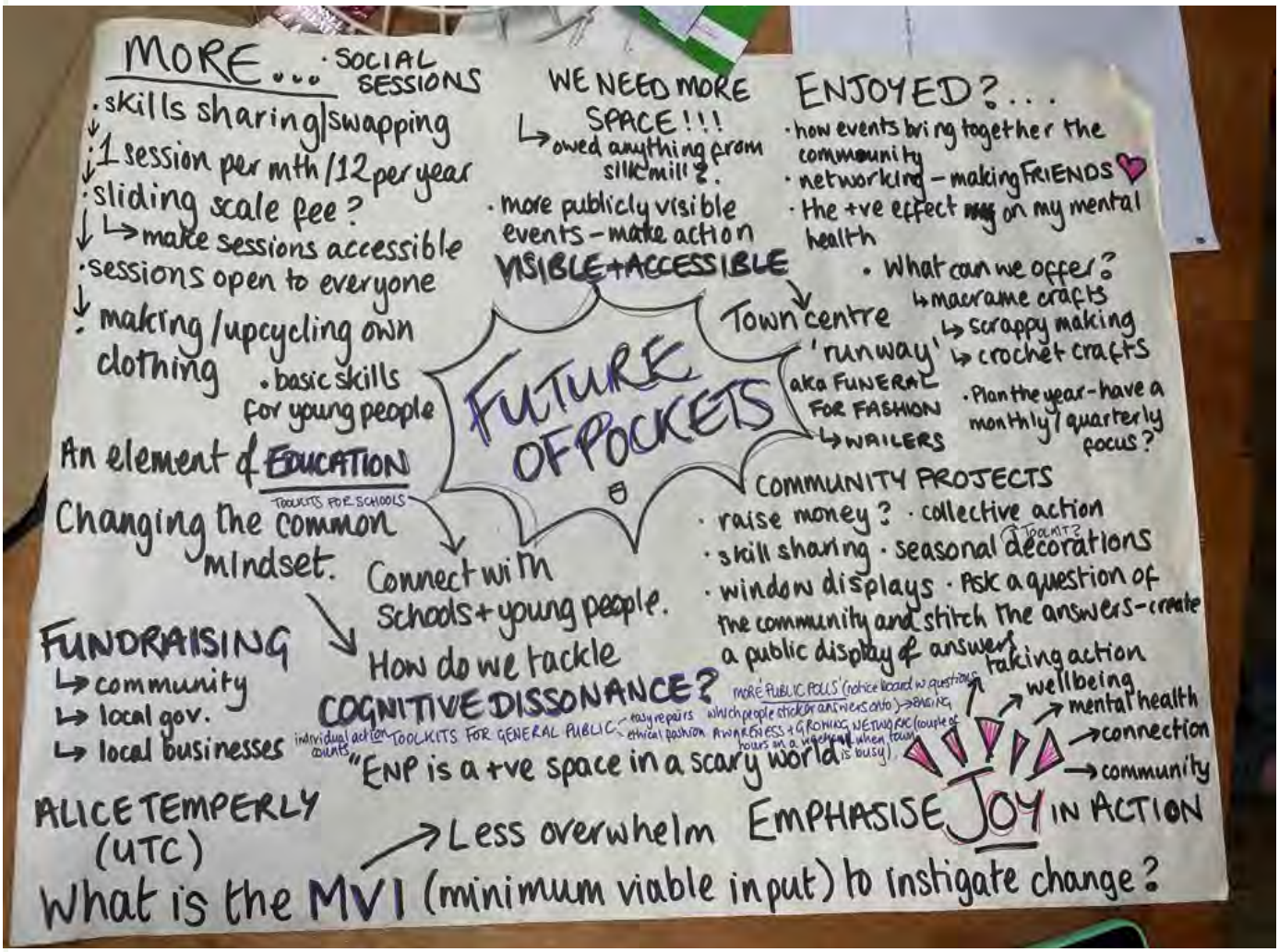
As we move out of the residency we are re-evaluating what a network can look like and achieve. We are reflecting on our initial objective to 'stop textile waste leaving Frome' – likely an impossibility – but it focuses our vision and lifts up our aim. **Aim high!**

The overwhelming feedback as we evaluate how to move forward is how much members love and value the network, from the social connections made, to the sense of purpose generated by sharing both passion and skills, to the impact clearly being made. Everything we have achieved together continues to prove the crucial role of local place-based action to bring about change

As we look to the future we are asking questions like – Does Frome need it's own textile shredding machine? What would running this look like?

Could the Network have a permanent physical space – A place to house a second hand clothing shop, run workshops, a permanent clothes swap, rent out sewing machines and equipment?

We have challenges to face in this transition period, looking at which structure will allow us to keep going most effectively and in the right way for where we find ourselves as a network now, but the momentum of people coming together around a shared cause, continues to drive the Network forward.



INFORMATION

Who we are

Network Coordinators

Tamara Jones – Clothing and textile designer, artist and clothing repair specialist
Claire Orpin – Designer and maker at Green Sea Threads – consciously crafted slow fashion for children
Jill Phillips – Textile upcycler specialising in polyester
Anna Fraenkel – Maker and designer at Anna Design – Interiors textile commissions and upcycled clothing

A Network of a core group of 35 people and a wider mailing list of 300 people made up of people with a range of skills including weavers, quilters, natural dyers, textile curators, fibre growers, lecturers and researchers.

Who this document is for

This document is intended for use by people who want to take action on the impact clothing and textiles have on our health and our planet by galvanising and offering alternatives within their local community. It aims to share learning for anyone looking to adapt the *Everyone Needs Pockets* model in their own communities.

We love to connect with like minded initiatives and to share everything we have learned so please get in touch.

This toolkit was completed in March 2026 and is part of a series of toolkits and learing insights developed for the *Green and Healthy Frome* project. Others can found:

Green and Healthy Frome Toolkit Suite ↗

WITH THANKS

Edventure Frome

This community led network was instigated by *Edventure's Future Shed*, an initiative set up to offer practical support to get green and healthy initiatives and enterprises off the ground through building networks, connecting people and ideas, signposting and start-up coaching. *Everyone Needs Pockets* was initiated as one of the networks.

Edventure's Future Shed webpage ↗

Green and Healthy Frome

Future Shed is part of a wider programme called *Green and Healthy Frome*, a partnership between Edventure Frome, Frome Medical Practice, Frome Town Council and our local community. The programme was made possible by the Climate Action Fund through The National Lottery Community Fund.

Green and Healthy Frome project website ↗

This Toolkit was written by Tamara Jones, one of the network co-ordinators with help from the other coordinators, Claire Orpin, Jill Phillips and Anna Fraenkel.

Thank you to the members and volunteers of *Everyone Needs Pockets*, Sue Palmer's guidance and support as *Future Shed* Lead and the wider team at *Green and Healthy Frome*.




EVERYONE NEEDS
POCKETS