

Vulnerable youngsters take recycling up a gear by refurbishing bicycles

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Young people in Brighton have been working on repairing and restoring donated bicycles as part of The Wheel Project, in partnership with Brighton based Generational Mentor.



Sanctuary Supported Living's Brighton and Hove Foyer provides supported housing and personalised support for young people, and has been working with Generational Mentor, which provides advice, grants, and networks to help people from disadvantages backgrounds realise their ideas – a perfect fit to support the 16–25-year-olds at the Foyer. The Wheel Project has provided valuable upskilling for the young people, who have been learning valuable skills, and focusing on their health and wellbeing – with the added benefit of creating sustainable transport in their local community.

Brighton MP Caroline Lucas donated three refurbished bikes which inspired the youngsters to work together to restore other bicycles provided by staff and members of the public. Once repaired, all Brighton and Hove Foyer residents can use them as they please.

Resident, Osric, said: “I like to cycle, so it's been really helpful to learn how to deal with a puncture, re-attach a slipped chain and keep my bike in a good state. We're really lucky to live in Brighton where we can explore the city, as well as the coastline. I'm excited to get out and about.”

As well as providing residents with basic bicycle repair and maintenance skills, The Wheel Project has helped with boost the young peoples' confidence and independence.

Project lead and fellow resident, Roy, added: “The Wheel Project gave me the confidence to put my skills into practise and I've finished my PROTECH Level 4, which was a personal goal of

mine. Now, I'm a qualified bike repair technician, and my certificate is proudly pinned up in the workshop. So many old bikes are abandoned in sheds, garages and backyards – I'm grateful for the opportunity to get involved in refurbishing them so we can use them. Cycling is good for our mental and physical health, as well as supporting the environment, and it's been really fun working together on this.”