

PAT testing



Firstly, I'd like to point out that I'm aware that the T in PAT stands for Testing but PA Testing just doesn't sound right.

I run Cuppa in Felixstowe and have always tried to do so with minimum waste and environmental impact; recycling, upcycling, compostable packaging, no single use consumables etc. However, the ideal is to be a net benefit rather than just reduce impact.

For that reason I am in the process of setting up a group of volunteers to repair items which would otherwise be thrown away. Not only will this help the environment it will also bring people together and have positive knock on effects eg reduce loneliness, improve self esteem, community cohesion

I am expecting many of the items needing repair to be electrical or electronic so I wanted to be able to ensure the safety of both the person conducting the repair and the owner of the item when it is in use. To this end, I made a bid for funding, and was awarded a sum of £445 to purchase a PAT machine, accessories and online training for 5 people.

The PAT process (avoiding the redundant acronym) is fairly straightforward and is similar to a car's MOT in that it validates the electrical safety of the item, not whether or not it works. The test consists of a visual inspection of the item, including the cable and plug, for any issues such as exposed wiring or incorrect fuse ratings, concluding with an analysis using a PAT machine.

Testing does not need to be carried out by an electrician; it is sufficient to be "a competent person". Hence the funding for 5 certificates, following an online course, so that we can have a bank of people to call on for testing. To date four people have taken and passed the course.

The last thing I want to do is to take business from local companies who make a living from repairing items. For that reason, I am expecting the focus of the repairs to be on low value items which would normally otherwise be thrown away.

I am aware that there are currently a couple of other similar schemes locally, the repair hub in Martlesham but nothing in Felixstowe.

I am currently in the process of seeking quotes for insurance which will probably be the deciding factor as to whether the Repair Café can go ahead in the manner that I have in mind. Prices for insurance are high!

Many thanks to all at the town council for your support for positive schemes like these. It only takes a few positive improvements, however small, to make a big difference to someone.