Records are broken as items are repaired

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Anne Lewis and, inset, a family heirloom clock mechanism in the hands of John Miller

THERE have been record breakers at a Denbighshire scheme.

A record number of 50 items were fixed in one day at the most recent Ruthin Repair Café.

The first Repair Café in Ruthin was the idea of Jozsef Vass and organised by Ruthin Friends of the Earth in February 2020, with just a few volunteers and a handful of items coming through the door.

Since then, it has grown beyond all expectation in its monthly home in the Naylor Leyland building.

This month, a team of 24 volunteers tackled a record 50 items with fix rate of 83 per cent.

In 2021, Anne Lewis took on the role of organising the repair cafes.

Anne co-ordinates the 26 regular volunteers, liaises with venue providers, chats with customers, solves problems, networks with other local groups and is the king pin – or perhaps more appropriately, queen pin – of the smooth running of the café.

She said: "I have cared deeply about nature and the wider natural environment since I was a child.

"I've been involved in several nature conservation and environmental groups since the 1980s and now that I am retired I wanted to use my free time to become more active again in these groups."

Anne is proud of her meet and greet team, which she calls the unsung heroes of the project.

Anne added: "Our meet and greeters are the face of the repair café.

"They welcome and guide visitors through the fixing process, which includes completing a repair form at the beginning, recording items on a progress chart, and ensuring that the repair is digitally recorded at the end.

"In addition, they do a really good job of tracking and moving customers items through the process, to minimise waiting times and keep our 'fixperts' busy at all times!"

This month in Ruthin, fixed items included a family heirloom clock, jewellery, a ukelele, two cuddly toy dogs, an antique plate and a wooden bureau that was otherwise bound for the tip.

Two customers reported that they had enjoyed learning how to repair their items, and looked forward to doing their own repairs with more confidence in the future at home.

The Ruthin Repair Café is on the first Saturday of the month at the Naylor Leyland Centre.

The next session is on Saturday, April 1 from 10.45am to 1.30pm.