

Nene Park Trust

Received £2,000 towards developing and sustaining the 'Orton Makers' community group into a self-led, wellbeing focused, crafting group for 75 local residents in Orton.

Through this project we have worked with Orton Makers to co-deliver 17 weekly craft sessions with 146 attendances. Workshops have been led by artist Rose Croft and have covered a range of different crafting skills, selected by the group. They ran on Tuesdays from 12.45 – 2.45 at Orton Goldhay Centre.

We worked towards a showcase of work at Peterborough Celebrates Festival. Orton Makers wanted to design an accessible project that brought people together to create and promote a sense of pride. It needed to involve, as many groups, schools, and individuals as possible. Together we created 'Spread Your Wings', a citywide project. The premise for the project was the design and making of large-scale birds made from marine plywood. Using birds of paradise as a theme, each bird represented an area of the city, including people's ideas of paradise or messages of hope. They wanted three birds to be created in Orton.

Following a schools competition, the group decided on the final design for the Orton Young person's bird. This project engaged over 150 young people from Orton, 6-10 elders from Lapwing residential care home in Orton. The makers created their own bird too. In addition, another 80-90 people from Peterborough took part including; residents from HMP Peterborough, Eye Youth Club, Millfield, the Lithuanian community and young people from Hampton.

There were ten birds in all designed by groups from across the city. The 'flock' was installed at Peterborough Celebrates festival, Ferry Meadows, Orton. Over 20,000 people saw the display. Orton Makers volunteered and supported workshops over the festival weekend, working with two artists to deliver art workshops with 292 people. Two of the birds are now sited at Lapwing and Orton Wistow Primary School, both venues in Orton.

Link to overview of project: <https://peterboroughpresents.org/spread-your-wings>.

Link to an event the Makers helped host: <https://peterboroughpresents.org/sneak-beak-spread-your-wings>.

We delivered other sessions in sheltered accommodation and other locations to help promote the group and increase attendance. Spread Your Wings, helped Orton Makers create a bigger profile, and that of a successful, exciting, and welcoming group. Workshops in the community attracted more participants, from

both inside and out of Orton, to attend weekly sessions which increased from a regular 8 members a week to around 20-22.

After Spread Your Wings in May, we asked the group what types of art they wanted to learn. We showed them work by local artists and they picked five that would lead special sessions with them. They chose Tony Nero (oil painting), Fiona Cifaldi (ink marbling), Deanne Echarri (pendant making), Emily Bowers (screen-printing) and Kaine Kulczak – Korp (doodling). The artists led monthly workshops from June to November, helping to inspire and improve people skills. This led to more people attending the group and a profile being created around the group.

We supported the group to become self-sufficient and self-led and have created a plan with organisers from within Orton Makers regarding the group's future. During Spread Your Wings & the Star Makers sessions. Orton Makers were encouraged to take more of a lead, taking over the weekly running of the sessions, whether that was the refreshments, marketing or helping the artists lead the activity. The group have been meeting without a regular Peterborough Presents presence since early July. When an artist does not lead the session, the group lead it, using skills they have learned. Orton Makers are



passing on their creations. They helped spread some Xmas cheer by making decorations, crackers, wreaths that were included in fifty Christmas hampers or 'Cheer Packs', which are gifted to families who are struggling with cost of living and will help them at this time of year. Family Voice helped in handing these out.

Peterborough Presents have been working with five of the Orton Makers who take on different roles to create a plan for the group going into 2024. We created a plan to support the confidence of each maker, achieving this through group and 1:1 mentoring sessions. Members were given signposting, training, and support to plan for their future. We also continued to extend the relationship with Family Voice who manage the venue, which they use each week. Orton Makers have designed their own branding for the group, created posters and social media accounts. They are now in charge of bookings, have their own outlook account. They are connecting

with local charities to get further funding for other star makers, room hire or for refreshments. Keely from Peterborough Presents will at least once a month, check in with the group to support them if needed.

Wellbeing: We have used this project to support the five steps to wellbeing for each beneficiary, (5-steps to wellbeing is a recognised wellbeing programme adapted by the NHS). In our evaluation surveys, we asked participants whether they felt the activity had helped them achieve any of these six steps. The responses are below:

1. Connect (97% of participants felt that attending the activities helped them to spend time with other people (friends, family, new people)
2. Give (83% of participants felt that participating allowed them to do something for them self, others, a friend, my community)
3. Be active (17% felt that taking part helped them to be physically active)
4. Keep Learning (76% felt they had learned something new and 76% felt they were inspired)
5. Take notice / reflect (62% felt they had time to reflect and be curious due to taking part)

The project has made significant improvements in physical health, mental health and wellbeing to its participants. Participants have gained a better understanding of how creative activities affects their wellbeing too, many of the



members of the group, express higher esteem, less need for mental health services and they are taking part in other creative activities, led by themselves or other organisations.

The project has increased of volunteering opportunities taken on by its beneficiaries. Six members are now volunteering regularly for the group each week, and eight members have volunteered at other events and projects across the city. These have included, litter picking drives in Orton, the warm hub based at Family Voice and invigilating an exhibition in the city centre.

Members of Orton Makers have hosted sessions with other groups too, such as a coffee morning in Millfield where they made Christmas Baubles with fifteen adults.

Halloween half term activities with families in Orton, where they decorated pumpkins with around twenty children. This shows progression and confidence on their parts achieving a goal for a few of the makers too.

86% of people saying that they learned a new creative skill and 76% learning something new. Improvements in skills: two members using the confidence gained from Orton Makers to go back into part time employment.

Improvements in sense of pride in the place people live: 97% of participants stated that such workshops make a difference to where they live.

100% of participants said that they would recommend the activities to a friend. The sessions have encouraged participants to do more for their community and others within it, for example the 'Cheer Packs' that the group made for local families. The project has also turned opinions around about the Orton area and the residents within it. People from outside of Orton are now travelling there for workshops when it is considered by some to be an area that you should avoid.

The investment of this grant and the Peterborough Presents team has changed perceptions of many of the Orton group members, where they have been let down or ignored in the past.

Case Study

Kaci volunteers at the Goldhay Centre, helping in the café. She had an interest in arts and crafts prior to joining the group. The group has enabled her to expand her repertoire, trying new things, enjoying learning to whittle, making increasingly intricate work. The group activity has inspired Kaci to buy the equipment to carry it on in her own time at home. She has become so good that she has been taking orders for wands from people!

Alongside the crafting, the chatting is also a crucial part of the Orton Makers experience. Topics are varied but will generally revolve around families and mental health and wellbeing. Kaci explained how participating in the group has helped her wellbeing. Kaci discussed living with depression, linking her high levels of stress and anxiety to regular seizures where she will 'blank out'. As part of her treatment plan she would meditate every day, but since participating in the group she recognises that she doesn't need to do it as regularly as problems tend not to escalate when chatted through at the group.

She just had a desire to keep the group going after having such a great time. The group was instrumental in boosting Kaci's confidence to enable her to increase her role in the group. Built up her confidence to take the next step, supporting

others as well as participating. Been able to take ownership, overcoming anxieties to meet more artists, making connections, and taking the group forward. Artists work very closely with the group, building strong bonds through a relaxed approach to relationship building whilst upskilling and enthusing people to engage and maintain the activity outside of the group.

Moving forwards, she would like to not only secure the future of the group but also help to transfer the model of support and her learning to help other people elsewhere in Peterborough. Also recognises the role of Keely and Peterborough Presents in helping to establish and sustain the group. This not only includes building confidence and know-how to enable the group to become more self-sustaining, but also ongoing reassurance as part of a diminishing level of support as and when required.

'It helped me get out more. I was quite a crafty person but not on this scale. Orton Makers is about learning new crafts and making new friends. Once we know what we are doing we just chat away. A lot of people have improved their mental health, it's good to get things off your chest. When COVID-19 happened, I became so isolated. Orton Makers is a bit of a retreat. It makes people less vulnerable. I don't get seizures now on Tuesdays. I'm a lot happier. It's quite simple. I wouldn't know what to do without the group, I don't think there's anything else like it around here. Before the group I would never have imagined I'd be running something like this in a 100 years! I was being selfish, and I just didn't want it to end it so people like me could keep enjoying it. Roxie says I'm rather talented, but I didn't believe it. It's not just about building trust with the artist, they become part of the family. She is an Orton Maker, and she always will be. It would be nice for other areas to have what we have.'

Feedback

'It was held locally to me - so easy to get to. Tony was a good tutor, engaging well, easy to understand. I was surprised at my painting outcome, had doubted my ability. Refreshments were welcome.'

'Learned how to use wire and beads. New skills, very much enjoyed. Very mindful and calming.'

'I enjoyed the opportunity to get out and meet other people. I enjoyed getting messy and creative and learning a new skill. I learnt about different craft materials and techniques.'