



# Crafting Creativity in our Communities



# What do we do?

Heritage Community Crafts designs and facilitates creative Crafts Workshops to under represented groups such as Seniors and those excluded from wider society. For example: teenagers attending Pupil Referral Units and those in prison. These particular groups have limited access to these diverse and creative crafts due to constraints of their situation.

Our Workshops benefit the participants in the following ways:

- Learning new craft skills - upskilling
- Gathering together in neutral spaces to engage in group activities
- Creative education and vocational training in prison are widely recognised as a large factor in supporting crime-free living
- Sharing experiences and keeping modern and traditional craft skills alive.
- Encouraging people to re-use and upcycle jewellery and fabrics rather than throwing them away
- Learning how to price their items to sell online / at craft fairs and markets to provide extra income
- Raising self esteem and having fun
- Increasing cognitive function in Seniors and teenagers



We are passionate about creativity, and specialise in using recycled materials such as fabric and wood offcuts, broken/scrap costume jewellery, broken crockery and shells. Including paper crafts: Origami, flower making, greetings card making. Mending / upcycling clothes, Knitting and crochet, Miniatures making (1:12 scale room boxes and furniture), drawing and sketching, weaving, découpage, mosaic making.

We teach these Crafts in a modern environment with references to fashion, music and fabrics from different cultures.



Our Workshops will take place at Community Centres, Libraries, Churches, Galleries, and Pupil referral units across London.

As reported in a study at the Centre on Ageing, Health & Humanities (The Creativity and Ageing Study: The Impact of Professionally Conducted Cultural Programs on Older Adults):  
The programs drew upon a range of art and cultural disciplines, such as painting, pottery, dance, music, and poetry.

## Findings:

### Seniors: (Aged 75 and over):

#### Crafting Boosts A Senior's Brain.

Whether it's improving the skills they already have or trying something new, crafting is a brain-boosting activity for Seniors. Different crafts stimulate different parts of the brain and provide an enjoyable mental workout.

- Being creative helps with focus and concentration.
- Crafting promotes problem-solving and critical thinking.
- Memory formation and retrieval are facilitated when seniors get creative.
- Enjoying arts and crafts can slow the progress of and even improve dementia or Alzheimer's disease.
- Some experts believe that crafting and other creative or leisure activities can lower the chances of developing 'a cognitive impairment' by up to 50%.
- **Overall Health:** After a year, those participating in the program reported an increase in overall health, while those in the control group reported a decline.
- **Depression:** Over a two-year period, those in the cultural programs improved on the depression assessment, while those in the control group did less well.
- **Morale:** Trend data suggest that participation in the cultural programs had a slightly more positive impact on morale than being in the the control group.





**Trainings Elizabeth Joseph has completed:**

- **Safeguarding Adults (SGA) Level 1 and Level 2.**
- **Safeguarding Children PWP Level 1 and Level 2**

**Duty of Care Training:**

- **Safeguarding Young People**
- **A Practical Guide to GDPR in Education**
- **Mental Wellbeing in Children and Young People.**

## **Young People: (Aged 16 and over):**

Educational institutions are the main source of arts access for young people. For less privileged young people this is often the only avenue to access relevant information and opportunities. However, many schools are not offering adequate arts activity.

A Report by Art31 discovered that young people have an awareness of the personal, social and therapeutic benefits of arts engagement.

Young people need regular arts opportunities in a safe environment, supported by passionate staff, volunteers and peer mentors in order to build trust and develop skills, knowledge and confidence.

“Lack of opportunities in my area” was one the top responses to the online survey question around barriers to taking part in the arts. Anxiety and cost appear to be the most significant barriers to young people engaging with the arts.

Schools offer limited forms of arts in the curriculum with students often only able to pick one arts subject per term rather than a variety.

## **Benefits of young people taking part in creative activities:**

- Feeling relaxed and in control
- Socialising with others
- Encouraging risk-taking and fun
- Improving cognition and memory
- Strengthening a sense of identity
- Increasing self-esteem
- Nurturing spirituality
- Eliminating boredom

## Why us?

Heritage Community Crafts was founded by Elizabeth Joseph who has over 10 years experience in designing and facilitating creative Crafts Workshops for groups of adults and teenagers. Including for Private Members Clubs, bespoke creative Workshops for businesses, teenagers in PRUs, members of the public and Seniors in Community Centres.

Her mix of British and Caribbean / Ghanaian backgrounds helps her to develop creative services to address specific and diverse perspectives.

She has appeared on Channel 4: *'The Great Big Tiny Design Challenge'* and the Christmas Special, where she designed and made miniatures (1:12 scale) furniture and interiors.



### **Recommendations:**

**From Hyacinth Slowley: Special Educational Needs Teacher Lead and Art Teacher  
Footsteps Academy:**

*"Elizabeth supplied interesting art materials for the students to explore and use. She supported the students to explore their creativity and enhance their skills by teaching new methods on how to manipulate materials."*

*Elizabeth encouraged the students to participate and work well with their peers.*

*Elizabeth has a calm aura, she is patient and nurturing to the students, which supported them to remain focused and complete work to the best of their ability.*

*I believe that Elizabeth could work in a similar role in Barnet, the students will enjoy the creative Sessions."*

**From Jeni Osbourne: Head of Community Services at CommUNITY Barnet:**

*"Elizabeth's Craft Workshops has made a real difference to our members at The Barnet African Caribbean Association. She brings fresh ideas to the crafting table and the members react well to her and her ideas."*

*She is one of the best facilitators we have worked with and the outcomes have been excellent. She is currently creating a large artwork to be displayed during Black History Month using the craft items made by BACA members and we are looking forward to her facilitating more Crafts Workshops in future."*

**Elizabeth Joseph is a member of these Community groups in the Borough of Barnet:**

1. The Environment Network
2. The Barnet Arts and Culture Group
3. Inclusion Barnet's Community Organisation Support membership
4. CommUNITY Barnet
5. The Finchley Central Town Team

# How we do what we do...

The Directors of HCC, Elizabeth Joseph and Kathleen O’Keeffe design and facilitate regular Workshops in London:

All of our Workshops are ‘Anti-waste’: I.e: Making artworks, jewellery, Christmas Decorations, miniatures, wall hangings, crochet for beginners. We specialise in using donated broken and unsold or unwanted jewellery and wood offcuts saved from landfill.

We provide all materials and teach a variety of Crafts skills from beginner level and allowing those with experience in crafts to work to their own skill level, using mainly upcycled materials.

Each Workshop lasts between one and three hours.

A survey of over 45,000 people has revealed London to be the craft capital of the UK. In the study, which was carried out by the expert team at Liberty London, 76 different data points were examined, including Google search data, local crafting resources, and social media interest.

**The most popular crafts in the UK are:**

- Crochet
- Knitting
- Sewing
- Pottery
- Art

**Being creative is good for our emotional and cognitive health.**

Crafting has been shown to have an overall positive effect on people of all ages. Spending time pursuing arts and crafts lifts the mood, fosters a sense of purpose and personal identity, and contributes to a healthy and active mind. All in all, crafting adds to our quality of life.





## Our North Star:

We want to change attitudes towards unused jewellery and fabrics. To overcome our hesitation towards making items to give as gifts, or creating our own small businesses from items we have made ourselves.

We will be asking charity shops in Barnet to donate jewellery items that have been unsold. We can then start to determine how much jewellery waste we have prevented from possibly ending up in landfill/the sea.

We will be asking for feedback from participants as to how their attitude has changed towards fashion waste and what they have learned from attending our Workshops.





**Heritage Community Crafts CIC**

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