



Arts For All Outreach Project Summer Activities Report 2025

Introduction

Start Up Stirling, in partnership with The Arts Society Stirling & Forth Valley, developed an “Arts For All Outreach Project,” for the duration of the school Summer holidays. A trained artist, Lesley Anne Derks, provided 5 afternoon sessions of different arts activities for everyone, of all ages, who wished to participate at the Callander Community Hub. Arts activities were also purchased for the Killin and Bannockburn Hubs.

Arts bags that were age specific were also created for children who lived on the rural margins of Stirling Council, who were eligible for support from the Crisis Food Service, but lived too far away to access the Community Hubs, or their parents didn't access the Community Hubs when they went to collect their food parcels. These bags were delivered along with the families crisis food parcels around halfway through the Summer holidays when children were more likely to have exhausted most of their activities at home, and were looking for something else to do

Callander Community Hub

Callander Community Hub was chosen as the ideal venue to host the arts project over the Summer holidays, as they had already expressed an interest in having more arts activities as part of a previous Community Hub evaluation.

We were truly fortunate to engage the services of Lesley Anne Derks, a highly skilled artist, with a BA (Hons) in Fine Art Drawing and Painting from Glasgow School of Art, and a 1998 Facultat de Belles Artes, University of Barcelona. She has exhibited worldwide and has established a reputation for her depiction of cities at night. Lesley also works with Forth Valley College, is currently exhibiting at the newly refurbished Rosebank Distillery in Falkirk and has a studio in Larbert.
<https://www.laderks.co.uk/>

During the holidays, Lesley Anne provided a variety of different arts outreach activities for the group to participate in – everyone was welcome to join in. Here is some feedback from her about her art projects over the five weeks of the Summer holiday.

“During the first week, I introduced the group to leaf printing, which we enhanced by adding colour with pastels. The response was so positive that I decided to continue with similar materials in the following session. For weeks three and four, we explored oil pastel transfer combined with brusho. Using landscape photographs, we coloured the backs with black oil pastel, then placed the photographs face-up on watercolour paper, drew on top with pencil to create transfer drawings. We then brought these images to life with vibrant brusho paints.

In the final week, I prepared silk painting activities by ironing the silk onto freezer paper to keep it flat, then used a gutta outline pen to create assorted designs that held the silk paint in place during painting.

The groups were great—welcoming, receptive, and enthusiastic. While not everyone participated directly, many engaged by asking questions about the techniques and materials being used/or chatted about materials they had worked with. Some stopped by simply to discuss what was happening or to watch others in action. Notably, one participant with limited hand mobility tried the oil pastel and brusho technique and was delighted with the results.

It was heartwarming to hear that several members took their artwork home to share with friends and family. I received thoughtful feedback expressed that the sessions were life-changing and greatly benefited their mental well-being. Many talked about framing their creations, and some discussed how they might use the ideas for other community projects they were involved in. One participant, inspired by our sessions, purchased their own pastels and oil pastels to continue practicing.

The wide age range—from toddlers as young as two to older adults—created a really nice vibe of all ages working together too.”

Some photographs of the art activities undertaken at the Hub are in the index.”

Arts resources for all of the Community Hubs and Food Banks

Because of the drop in nature of the Community Hubs, we wanted to provide a variety of activities that could be undertaken by attendees of different ages and abilities, as well as a different offering for those at the Callander who wanted to do something different than undertaking group work with the artist.

As the Food Banks operate in a different way, and they are much faster paced, the Crisis Food Support Worker identified some of the arts items that would be useful for the children and young people who attended during the school Summer holidays to take away with them. Where there were cases of extreme poverty, and options to purchase activities for artistic expression were limited, this provided an original activity for them to do.

Details of the items purchased are within the index.

Art Bags

The initial plan was to budget for 50 bags for distribution, based upon the available information at the time of the grant application. In reality, we ended up producing 65 bags, due to the increasing need for our Crisis Food Service.

The value of the bags could have been reduced, but we decided in order to provide a good selection of different activities for each child and young person, we would keep to the figure quoted, of around £12 per bag, with the additional cost of the cotton bags for distribution.

In order to keep postage costs low, all of the arts goods were purchased from The Works, and the cotton bags came from Amazon. We purchased 100 bags, as they could also be used to transport artwork undertaken at the Hubs home.

Because of small parts for young children, the art bags were produced for children in the following age ranges: 5-7 years, 8-10 years, 11-12 years, and 13-14 years. We asked some of the parents who attended the Food Banks and Community Hubs about the type of things that they thought their children would like to do, as a basis as to what to purchase.

There is a breakdown of what was in each art bag, age composition, and geographical area of distribution at the end of this report.

Feedback From Some Service Users

"Thanks very much for the crafts my grandson, he loves making stuff and he will make something for his little sister from the cupcake crafts" Grandma who attended the Food Bank

One lady at the Callander Hub wanted to know what art materials to buy, so that she could continue her artwork at home.

Someone else at the Callander Hub wants Gail to find out from Lesley Anne about purchasing the correct arts materials, so that they can continue the project in her absence.

Programme costs

Cost of providing arts activities & art materials for 65 arts bags, the Community Hubs, and the Food Banks = £1083.50

Cost of 100 canvas bags = £110

Arts activities at Callander Hub with Lesley Anne Derks

5 Art workshops, travel expenses, and programme materials = £487.17

Total = £1680.67

The cost of the additional arts bags was offset by Lesley Anne's very reasonable arts expenses and workshop fees.

Issues arising

There were a number of issues arising which needed to be overcome before "The Art For All Outreach Programme" could be undertaken.

We had real difficulty in engaging an artist to do anything for us. Either they did not work over the holidays, they were already booked in advance for the holidays, or more often than not, they either said that they would get back to us and did not or did not respond at all. At one point, we were so concerned about this that we thought we would have to consult with The Arts Society Stirling & Forth Valley to see if a member were willing to take on the role. However, thanks to the support and suggestions from The Young Arts Coordinator at The Arts Society Stirling and Forth Valley, who knew the artist, and had previously worked with the artist on other Arts Society Projects, the project was able to secure the skills of Lesley-Anne.

The grant funding allocated by The Arts Society needs to reach the recipient within at least 2 months, preferably 3 months in advance, so that the funding is in place prior to the artist being engaged to undertake the project. When less time is available than that, it compounds the difficulties of finding someone suitable in a short space of time. However, all of the anxiety was worth it, to provide such a special experience for our service users.

Conclusion

The Arts For All Outreach Programme at the Callander Hub, plus the arts materials distributed to the children and young people across the Stirling Council area proved to be extremely popular. Working with Lesley - Anne, either directly or within the Hub

community had a positive impact, encouraging people to try new things, or talk about past art activities.

The art bags were well received, and it allowed children and young people to try new arts activities that financially their parents would have struggled to fund.

Overall, around 120 people participated directly in the project, and if further funding became available, it is a project that Start-Up Stirling would look to provide again in the future.

The project was funded using a grant of £1500 from The Arts Society and the remainder was raised by Start-Up Stirling through fund raising.

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Art bag composition for rural recipients

GIRLS

5-7 years - 10 bags

Disney coloring book

Felt tip markers

Blooming flowers kit

Bracelet kit (not for under 6's)

Paint your own wooden rainbow for under 6 years (1child)

Pompom cupcakes

A4 art pad

Clay dinosaur

8-10 years - 10 bags

Felt tip markers

Colouring stamps

Blooming flowers kit

Pompom cupcakes kit

A4 Art pad

Big bag of crafts

11-12 years - 4 bags

Scentos fine line markers

Jotz Coloring in stamps

A4 bumper drawing pad

Air drying clay elephant

Mug painting set

13-14 years - 5 bags

Twin tip felt tip markers

Gel pens

A4 drawing pad

Mug painting set

Blocks in bloom blue clover

TOTAL - 29 bags

BOYS

5-7 years - 5 bags

Disney colouring book

Felt tip markers

MYO fidget toy

Awesome stickers

A4 Drawing pad

Air drying clay dinosaur

8-10 years - 11 bags

Felt tip markers

Awesome stickers

A4 drawing pad

Giant bag of crafts

Mug painting set

MYO mosaic art sticks - space

11-12 years - 8 bags

Scentos magic markers

A4 drawing pad

Mug painting set

Mini pottery kit

13-14 years - 2 bags

Twin tip felt pens

A4 drawing pad

Mug painting kit

Mini pottery kit

TOTAL - 26 bags

Arts packs for Killin and Callander areas

These are for children whose parents attended the Hubs for Crisis Food collection but did not stay for the groups.

Girls 5-7 years - 4 packs

Disney coloring books
Felt tip markers
Blooming flowers kit
Bracelet kit (not for under 6's)
Paint your own wooden rainbow (for under 6's)
Pompom cupcakes
A4 art pad
Clay dinosaur

Girls 13-14 years - 1 pack

Twin tip felt tip markers
Gel pens
A4 drawing pad
Mug painting set
Blocks in bloom blue clover

Boys 5-7 years - 5 packs

Disney colouring book
Felt tip markers
MYO fidget toy
Awesome stickers
A4 Drawing pad
Air drying clay dinosaur

TOTAL - 10

Total number of arts bags distributed - 65

Community Hub resources for Killin, Bannockburn and Callander

Paper wreath sets
Felt tip markers

Scentos Fine Line Markers
Jotz Colour stamps
Gel pens
MYO Blooming Flowers Kit
MYO Bracelet Kits
MYO Pom Pom Cupcakes
Awesome Sticker Set
MYO Air drying clay dinosaur
Mug painting sets
MYO Mosaic Art Sticks: Space
Blocks in bloom building blocks
MYO Diamond Snap Bands
MYO Scented Bracelets

Food bank resources

MYO Paper wreaths
Polymer clay jewellery kit
Diamond painting Bee and Flower
PYO Bee Trinket pot
Unicorn Craft Packs
PYO Plaster Dinosaurs

Pictures of the contents of some of the arts bags

Girls Art Pack: 5-7 years of age



Girls Art Pack: 8-10 years of age



Boys Art Pack: 11-12 years of age



Girls' Art Pack: 13 - 14 years of age



Arts For All Outreach Project Gallery

Presentation of £1500 to Start Up Stirling + A Young Participant busy painting





