

Merton CIL Craftivism & Chat Pack

April 2020



Why we wish you to be involved with 'Craftivism and Chat' whilst staying home due to coronavirus

1. Help make change happen

Combining activism and arts & crafts is a great way to attract attention and help your voice be heard more. Craftivism provokes thinking and creatively encourages others to be part of improving our communities.

2. Stay connected and look after your wellbeing

One of the aims of our group is to reduce isolation and loneliness and we hope this work will continue whilst we are unable to meet up in person. Therefore, sharing our creations and speaking vulnerably about our worries allows us to create something special to connect and converse with others respectfully. Arts & Crafts is also a great way to slow down, reflect and recharge.

3. Using time for Changemaking

A lot of us have been considered high risk and have been in isolation for a number of weeks. If you are bored of Netflix and have run out of books to read why not join us in some Craftivism and Chatter using your hands, head and heart together?

4. Disability Arts are important

Disability art can help to highlight the issues faced by Deaf and Disabled people, be a catalyst for thought and action and is therefore an important part of the Disability Rights movement.

Made with courage and care with Sarah Corbett of Craftivist Collective

What is included in your pack:

1. This Craftivism Pack document
2. A little book of Craftivism by Sarah Corbett
2. A canvas or two
3. Some plain paper
4. A lined notebook
5. Acrylic or Watercolour Paints
6. Paint brushes
7. A pen and a pencil

TOP TIPS for making CHANGE happen



Let's get started!

Topics that could inspire your Craftivism

What it is like to be Disabled in Merton

Are there issues that affect Disabled people in Merton that you want to speak up about?

What does independence mean to you?

Our members told us that the areas mentioned in the image on the right hand side were important in helping them to live an independent life.

Access

Are you fed up of having to plan ahead when you want to use public transport? Fed up of not being able to get around card shops?



Issues affecting Deaf & Disabled people in the current coronavirus pandemic

What do you think about the Coronavirus Act suspending the Care Act? Have you had issues with food deliveries, PPE for your PA, issues around mental health support or your care, feeling isolated

Benefits

How do you feel about the process that Disabled people have to go through to claim PIP or ESA? What do you think of PIP and ESA health assessments? Any thoughts on Universal Credit?

Also: hate crime, a lack of representation of Deaf and Disabled people in the media - Let us know if you think there is anything that we have missed

Other topics that could inspire Arts & Crafts

Nature

Whilst outside, take a picture something that you find beautiful or inspirational. When you get home recreate it in a painting or let it inspire a poem.

Family & Friends

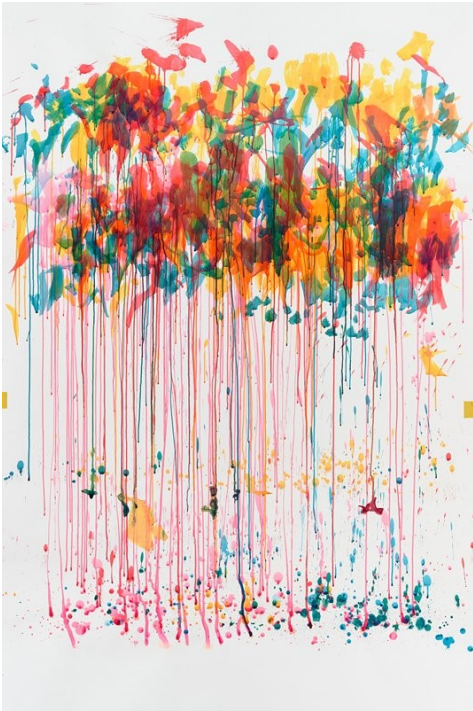
We are all missing our loved ones at the moment. Why not let's thoughts of them inspire something creative.

Other peoples art

See page xx for a list of resources and places you can look at what others are creating and get inspired.

Painting, drawing and collaging

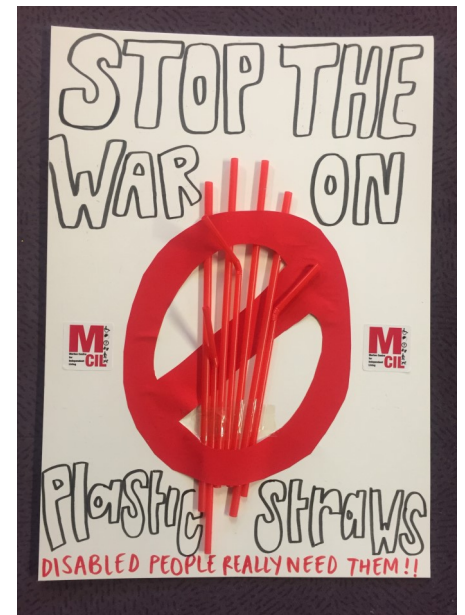
Painting, drawing or collaging is a great way to unwind if you are feeling overwhelmed. It allows you to slow down and recharge. It is also great to create as part of a community. So, please see below for a few ways you could be a craftivist with paints, pens or paper.



Create an abstract piece that highlights how you are feeling inside.



Paint the background of your canvas and then put words that are important to you



Use paper and pens to create a poster that speaks up about an issue that affects Deaf and Disabled people.



Above: paint or draw a self portrait

To the right: Cut up paper, newspapers, magazine and make a collage



Take a picture and recreate it in your own way.



Image below: paint a picture, cut it up and then stick it back together.



Write some poetry

Poetry is a great way to speak up. It is honest and full of emotion.

If you need some inspiration, you can see some Top tips on the right and a poem that was written by attendees at Craftivism & Chat - February 2020 below.

I have control and I have no control

I have control when I feel secure
I do not have control when I appear demure
I have control when I am in the kitchen cooking
I do not have control when my electric wheelchair needs pushing
I have control when I am making dresses and lost in design
I do not have control most of the time
I have less control when I am with other people
I have more control when I am by myself
I do not have control when I am in hospital due to my health
I have control when I feed my cats meals
I do not have control after I pay my bills
I lose control when my day does not align with my to do list
I gain control over my chair through my joy stick that I twist
I have no control, what the hell am I doing here?
I have control when I am driving my car
I have no control over my noisy neighbour
I have control when my deliveries come on time
I have no control when people call me
I have control over who I let come through my front door
I have no control over my money
I have control and I have no control
But, having control is important to me. All having control is important for us all to see



Top tips when writing poetry by Richard Downes - Poet & Disability Arts Online Associate Artist

1. Don't sweat it
2. Don't worry about rhyme or meter
3. Don't worry about creating verses
4. Write whats in your head as your head wants to write it
5. Don't edit your poetry until you have finished
6. Remember poetry is about feelings
7. Remember poetry uses imagery
8. Remember we live in a culture that is less worried about poetry rules
9. Enjoy yourself
10. Do it again
11. Explore poetry forms when ready to do so
12. Read other people's poetry
13. Don't worry about what people think
14. Go to open mics
15. Speak up for your right to speak as you want to
16. Trust in free verse develop, grow, be the poet you want to be
17. Have a go



Photography

Whilst you are in the garden, looking out the window or having a walk why not photograph anything that you find beautiful or inspiring and share it with us. To the left is a photo that a Merton CIL staff member took on their lunch time walk.

Create content online

Visit www.canva.com and create a free account. You will then be able to create a wide range of graphics using their templates and designs. Please see one that was created by Merton CIL below. These images are perfect to tweet or post on Instagram. Combined with a few relevant hashtags you will be sure to get people's attention.



Write a song

You can write a song using your pen and paper. You can use Richards Poetry top tips to help with song writing too. Also John Kelly (Rockinpaddy) performs on Facebook on Friday afternoons if you need some inspiration.

How to share what you create

We would love to see all that you create, so that we can share it with our members and inspire them to get involved in Craftivism and Chat too.

You can share pictures of your arts & crafts with us by posting to social media and tagging us on the following platforms :

Instagram: @MertonCIL

Facebook: @MertonCIL

Or join our closed FB group: Merton CIL Members and Supporters

Twitter: @MertonCIL

If you want what you create to be shared anonymously or you create a video you can email us at info@mertoncil.org.uk

Or use the hashtag #mertoncil

Tips for taking photos of your art to upload

1. Place your canvas or piece of paper on the floor or a plain background, ideally in natural light
2. Position yourself above it, trying not to cast a shadow. If you are unable to do this you can hold it out in front of you and photograph it.
3. Take your photo ensuring all the edges of the paper are in frame.
4. You can take a shot with the flash and one without and see which you prefer.
5. You can download a free app called VSCO which allows you to edit your photographs

Disability Arts Online - <https://disabilityarts.online/>

This is a great website to look at Disability Art.