Kathryn's Story: Flower Arranging

The Beginning:

Kathryn first met Victoria, the Community Builder at New Wortley Community Centre, through a Sewing Social group. During conversations, Kathryn shared her love of flower arranging and her desire to bring people together through creative activities.

Giving back to her community is important to Kathryn. Drawing on her own experiences of mental health challenges, she wanted to create a welcoming space where people could connect, make friends and enjoy the wellbeing benefits of being creative.

With support from a Small Sparks grant, Kathryn bought flowers and materials for her first community flower arranging workshop, with the aim of growing a regular group for local residents.

> ***"I absolutely loved the flower arranging sessions, so easy to do for all ages...I'm not creative but the flowers were so good I would 100% come to a regular session. A great big thank you for the experience I loved it!"***
>
> **(Sarah, attendee)**



The Journey:

Kathryn's first workshop focused on creating a summer bouquet using purchased flowers and locally sourced foliage and gave participants the chance to learn flower arranging techniques while creating their own display to take home.

The session was run on a pay-what-you-can basis, helping to keep it accessible while raising enough money to cover room hire and contribute towards future workshops.

The workshop was full and had a warm, welcoming atmosphere from the start. Participants learned practical flower arranging skills, including how to choose flowers for an arrangement, how to correctly trim stems to make flowers last longer, and how local foliage can be used to create beautiful displays. By the end of the session, everyone had created a professional-looking arrangement to take home.

The Impact:

The first workshop got people talking, sharing ideas and excited about doing more together. Participants enjoyed both the creative activity and the chance to connect with others. As one attendee, Becki, shared: *"It was relaxing doing the flowers and it was lovely to meet other community ladies. I can't wait for the next one."*

While a session planned for September had to be postponed, Kathryn has since run a pumpkin-themed workshop and is already planning a Christmas wreath-making session.

The project has been rewarding for Kathryn too. It's given her the chance to share something she enjoys while supporting her own wellbeing and helping others connect and learn. The experience has also encouraged her to develop her skills further, and she's recently signed up for a flower arranging course to build her knowledge and confidence.

Looking ahead, Kathryn hopes these workshops will help people grow in confidence and spark enough interest to develop a regular monthly flower arranging group. Her aim is to create an ongoing space where local people can come together, learn new skills, support one another and build lasting friendships around a shared interest.





