

# Room for Art:

Keeping participants creative and well in their homes during Covid 19

When our workshops were suspended in mid-March, we adapted to make sure we could offer continued support to our participants as often we are the only service they engage with.

Room for Art workshops are not just art classes, they are supportive creative communities, and our role is to help keep people well through connection and creativity. How could we try and replicate this during such a challenging time?



70+ participants and 7 partners

450+ art material packs delivered

200+ attendances at 30 Zoom workshops

50+ digital resources

*"Since lockdown the staff have worked hard to keep us connected...This has had a big impact on my mental health, increasing my self-esteem and enabling me to reconnect to things I find valuable."*



We developed a new project; 'Room for Art at Home'. It includes:

- Regular posted packages with high quality art materials (sponsored by Greatart and Edinburgh Art Shop), cards and art activity sheets.
- A strong digital presence including a Facebook Group and regular interactive workshops
- Resources including video demos, artist inspirations and activity cards with a focus on using surroundings and materials found at home.
- Opportunities to take part in including participant instigated, online exhibition 'Living in 2020', and a colour and doodle book designed by participants and delivered to Streetwork to support those affected by homelessness.

*"I received the latest pack of supplies recently, and, to be honest, I am floored. Truly a gift from the heavens! Room for Art makes room for the soul."*



86% of participants questioned say taking part in Room for Art at Home during lockdown has helped their health and wellbeing, including:

- Time to relax, bringing focus and calm.
- Improved mood.
- Using creativity as a coping mechanism, expressing feelings through art.
- Connecting to people in a meaningful way, feeling valued and part of a community.
- Learning skills from our artists and each other.

*"I'd had a bad morning... the Zoom class really helped. It was good to focus on simple creative activities and feel connected to and able to interact with people. And I went on to have a much better second half of the day."*



- Through increased connection we have become a more supportive project.
- We have learnt more about the lives of the people we work with.
- We will continue to work this way alongside our physical workshops as it enables more people to engage that find it difficult to leave the house.
- Online facilitation is a new skill for us and we continue to learn.
- Our online workshops are short and simple - to limit anxiety and fatigue.
- Zoom workshops have been a barrier for some (especially those really struggling or lacking in IT confidence) a multi layered approach to communication is needed.
- We have to be mindful of the language a platform designed for business (Zoom) uses as it can be inappropriate and harsh for more vulnerable participants.
- We are developing other ways (including an art therapy pilot) so we can provide extra support as the situation continues.

All images by our participants for our 'Living in 2020' online exhibition:

<https://roomforart.squarespace.com>