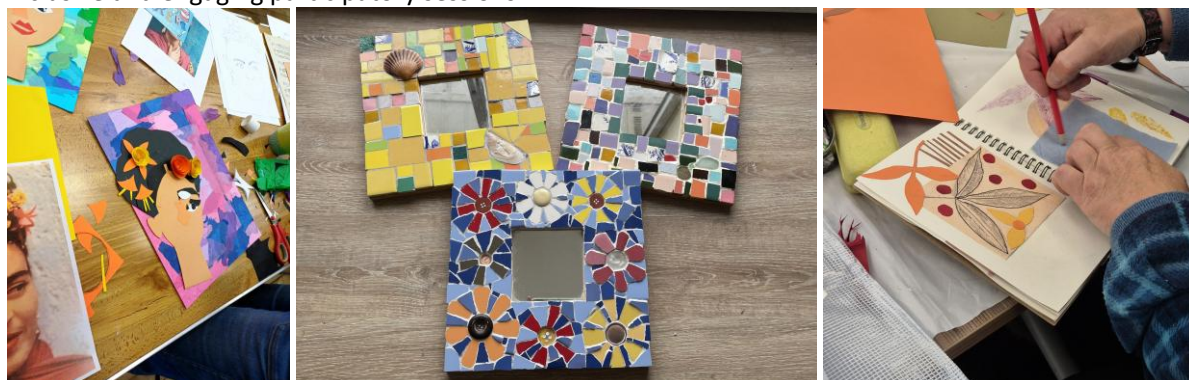


Additional information to support Gateshead Libraries Thrifty Makers

Gateshead Live Public Workshops

We will deliver a series of art workshops inspired by the principles of upcycling, re-using and re-imagining, with sustainability embedded throughout. Activities may include eco-printing, calligraphy, bookmaking, jewellery making, painting, sculpture, papermaking, paper cutting, origami, collage, creative writing, photography and textiles. Each workshop will encourage participants and artists to work with existing material supplies, natural resources and ethically sourced materials. The programme will be designed to offer age-appropriate, accessible activities, led by experienced artists skilled in delivering inclusive and engaging participatory sessions.



Examples of previous workshops: Frida Collage workshop with Bethan Laker, Mosaic Mirrors with Mark Todman, Jane Young sketch booking workshop for Art Diamonds.

Art Diamonds Creative Wellbeing Workshops for older adults

Art Diamonds is a programme of creative activities designed to improve wellbeing and strengthen social connections for people of retirement age. As a Celebrating Age initiative running successfully since 2018, the programme now has over 350 members who regularly take part in workshops across a wide range of art forms in Gateshead Library venues and community locations across the borough. We take a collaborative approach to programming, and *Thrifty Makers* will enable us to develop this model further by creating more opportunities for inspiration, co-creation and participant-led activity. The programme will include artist-led sessions, member-run 'Make and Share' workshops, and 'Go, See, Do' visits to green and eco-focused exhibitions and events.



Examples of previous workshops: Fun Palaces textile event 2023 with artist Donna Cheshire

Monthly Saturday Art Club for Young People

Weekend workshops for younger people will be delivered by professional artists and will combine creative skill-building with environmentally conscious making. Activities will include elbow-patch making, tin-can planters, handmade wrapping paper, recycled model-making, scrapbooking, printmaking, painting and drawing. Each session is designed to inspire creativity while encouraging participants to consider sustainable approaches to art and everyday materials.



Examples of previous workshops: Experimental painting with Kath Rodger, recycled sculpture making with Katie Watson, Photomontage with Tommy Anderson

Thrifty Schools

Thrifty Makers will include a school's programme in which artists design and lead eco-conscious creative activities for 10 schools, alongside the creation of activity resource packs that can be shared more widely with pupils and their families. Developed in collaboration with Gateshead Council's Communications Team, this strand will take thematic inspiration from the local authority's priorities around sustainability and environmental responsibility. Schools will be selected to ensure a good geographical spread across the borough, with priority given to those located in areas of multiple deprivation. This programme will also connect with Gateshead's Culture in Education Partnership, supporting creativity for young people, linking schools with inspiring cultural opportunities and empowering pupils to play an active role in shaping Gateshead's cultural life.

[Shape Gateshead Culture - Shape Gateshead Culture](#)



Examples of previous workshops: Images from school's sculpture day 2025

Art Gems Thrifty films

Artists will be invited to make a short film to inspire a public and school audience, sharing a creative process which encompasses recycling, re-purposing or re-imagining materials or existing items. These will be added to the collection of Artist Films on our Gateshead Libraries YouTube channel and Shape Gateshead Cultural Education Partnership (GCEP), website.

[Art Gems - YouTube](#)

Climate Cafes and Mend It Cafes

We will connect and partner with Gateshead community organisations to programme new '**Mend It Cafes**' in our MakerPlace. The sessions will offer creative, practical opportunities for individuals of all ages to upcycle, repair and reinvigorate items, giving them a new lease of life. Libraries are a trusted space in the community and have a role to combat the spread of misinformation. One of the pledges of the Green Libraries manifesto is to empower our local communities to take positive environmental action. We will establish a **Climate Cafe**, which we can use to co-produce activities with local residents and discuss issues of concern. Some of the ideas may form the Thrifty Makers later programme.

Author Visits

Gateshead Libraries have an excellent track record in supporting authors and delivering workshops in schools to inspire young people’s love of books and reading. For example, as part of Northern Children’s Book Festival each November we host visits from authors, illustrators and poets in 30 Gateshead schools. We will invite authors who write about sustainability, recycling, or mending to be involved in our Thrifty Makers programme, supporting the Information and Reading universal offers. Authors will enthuse young people in the sessions, inspiring them to take action and make eco conscious changes.

Youth Festival

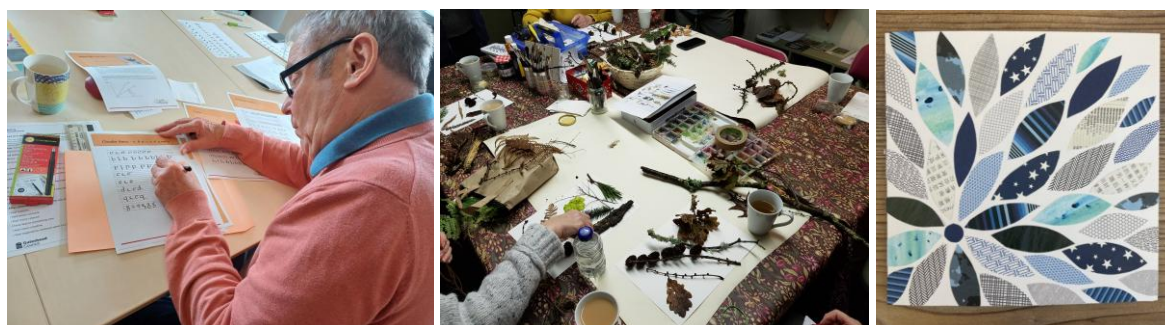
As part of the 2027 Youth Festival, artists will work with Gateshead youth groups to devise and deliver creative events for other young people, using themes of recycling, re-imagining, re-purposing and with eco materials and processes. This will build on the pilot Shape Youth Festival in February 2026, inspiring the next generation of young producers to develop skills in event planning and delivery, aligning with our Cultural Education Partnership ambitions.



Examples of previous workshops: Photos from our Youth theatre Christmas production 2025

Community Outreach Workshops

A series of community outreach workshops inspired by the idea of *make do and mend*, incorporating artistic skills from the past, and given a contemporary twist. These could include - bookbinding, recycling maps, journalling, calligraphy and woodcarving. Sessions will be for targeted groups and communities at different locations within Gateshead partnering with Green Heart Collective, Em Bells, Christ Church, ‘Place of Welcome’ group and more.



Examples of previous workshops: Contemporary calligraphy with Angela Reed, creative well-being walks, creating cards from recycled envelopes.

MakerPlace Digital Workshops

Workshops led by the Library Digital team, will focus on repurposing and upcycling, using natural products where possible, while learning digital skills and processes with the MakerPlace equipment. Workshops will include fabric design processes to upcycle and refresh clothing; adding embellishments, printing on existing garments or items and learning how to engrave on denim. Other workshops could include laser cutting wooden planters, cork engraving notebooks, plant markers, repurposing old CDs

adding laser patterns to make suncatchers, engraving old glasses or candle holders to personalize them and using old books with MakeyMakey in coding workshops.



Examples of previous workshops: Physical Coding with an upcycled model from MakerPlace, decorating upcycled bags and tops with vinyl prints from MakerPlace.

Digital Textile Workshops

Working with textile artists, activities will include ‘make do and mend’ skills in a series of hands-on practical workshops. Creative sessions will be devised to inspire participants artistic endeavours alongside learning basic skills such as sewing, replacing fastenings, (zips, buttons), taking up hems, adjusting sleeves, repurposing fabric to make cushion covers from curtains or altering or embellishing a garment to fit.



Artist led school holiday activities

Working with artists, we will deliver a programme of cultural activities for children and young people in libraries during school holidays. These will be free or low cost to ensure that access is available to all. The programme will support the culture and creativity universal offer and will allow families to access activities close to home, so they can meet others and explore ideas about how to be more sustainable in everyday activities.



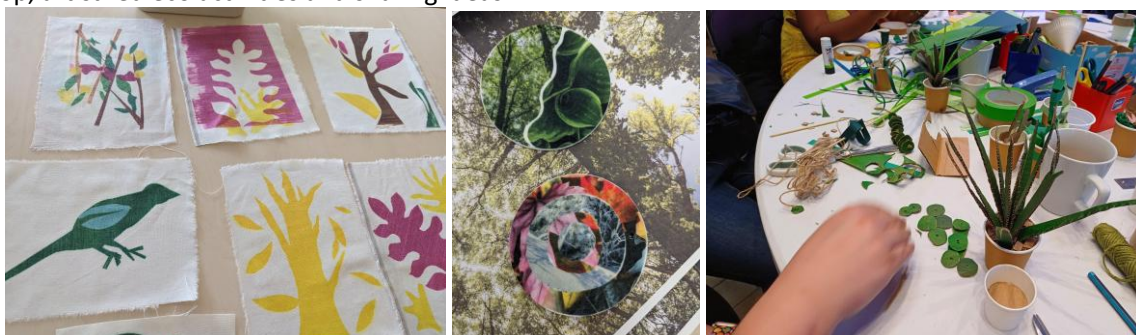
Examples of previous workshops: Examples from Crafternoon Scrap Wool Birds, Sock rock caterpillars and Wizarding Wands workshops

Thrifty Makers Creative Prompts and Training

Our library teams deliver a programme of creative activities in school holidays, encouraging families to use their local library and to ensure there is a cultural offer available close to home. We will collaborate with artists to co-create ideas for activities on the theme of sustainability. Staff will then support local families to engage with these creative prompts, exploring the green themed inspirational ideas. This concept has worked previously as part of the Emerald Explorers programme and will help staff to gain confidence and learn new sustainable skills and eco-friendly approaches that are deliverable during and beyond the Thrifty Makers programme.

Thrifty Makers Festivals

As part of the Newcastle Gateshead Late Shows event which offers free evening access to museums, galleries, heritage sites and creative spaces, Gateshead Central Library will host a Thrifty Makers mini festival in May 2027 at Gateshead Central Library. A highlight of the programme will be a Thrifty Makers Festival Day of eco-friendly workshops and activities to coincide with Green Libraries week in Autumn 2027. All previous participants, artists, partners, community groups and schools will be invited to take part or attend in this celebratory event with a range of inspiring upcycling workshops, a creative swap shop, artist-led eco activities and sharing ideas.



Examples of workshops led by professional artists at from previous Late Shows events at Gateshead Central Library

Outreach Activities for Young People

Our Children and Young People's team deliver targeted sessions that support the Culture and Creativity, Digital and Information, and Reading Universal Offers. These sessions take place in community venues such as family hubs, schools and Edberts House, a voluntary sector organisation that manages community houses in areas of need. We will use this established outreach approach to deliver creative, eco-focused activities including clothing revamping, gift making, printing and skateboard design. All activities will be free to ensure they are fully inclusive and that cost is never a barrier to participation.

Cultural Freelancers Training and Networking

In addition to public, community and school sessions, we will arrange training and networking events focussed on implementing sustainability in practice for Cultural Freelancers, artists and creatives who live or work in Gateshead. These will be an opportunity for artists to connect, collaborate, share and explore their own creativity in facilitated sessions. These workshops will be advertised through our own artists networks and by promoted through Northeast Cultural Freelancers and our other networks.

Legacy Training for Staff

The Green Libraries Network supports the national Green Libraries campaign by giving staff opportunities to share ideas and best practice. Through this network, we will seek out practical advice, inspiration and sector learning, and offer relevant training to our staff. This will build on the knowledge we gain from the artists we work with, helping us to ensure that our programming remains environmentally sustainable during and beyond the Thrifty Makers project. This training will also support our ongoing environmental responsibilities by strengthening our response to our Environmental Action Plan and the Green Libraries self-assessment.