

Art and the VIC Creative Community Hub



One of the first art groups held in Bacup

Veterans in Communities (VIC) is an ex-services charity based in East Lancashire. Established in September 2012, VIC supports ex-service personnel, their families and members of the uniformed services who have experienced difficulties re-integrating with the community on returning to civilian life.

The art group was one of the first activities developed by VIC. Through the experience of a member of using art for its therapeutic benefits, it was decided to set up a weekly group in Bacup. The group has developed into one of our successful projects and the membership has grown.

The ages of those who have accessed the group over the last two years have ranged from 6 – 92 years of age.



The new room ready for use by the weekly art group



Creative Hub group using the new art room at the VIC centre

The VIC art group is now well established. A form of relaxation therapy, members now enjoy the full benefit in BANNER the permanent arts and crafts room in the VIC Centre in Haslingden.



The VIC exhibition at the Millgate Shopping Centre in Bury, over 3000 came in to view the members art over seven days it was open to the public

VIC members have exhibited their art in a number of venues; our own VIC exhibition at Alder Grange, Bury Millgate Shopping Centre, The Army Arts Society annual exhibition at Salisbury, Bideford Veterans Art Exhibition, Castle Park Association of Wildlife Artists, The Tate Gallery in London and numerous community arts and crafts events.

In 2014 VIC were successful in our application for funding from the MOD. The funding was granted for the **'VIC Creative Community Hub'**; the arts and crafts group will now be able to take this project into the community and help both ex-service personnel and members of the wider community to benefit from the therapeutic involvement it brings to the individual.

The VIC Creative Hub now has the facilities to frame and mount pictures, painting in all mediums, model making, rock paintings, ceramic and porcelain painting, costume jewellery and candle craft.



Art work framed and mounted for a customer



Arts and crafts exhibited in Bury

The Creative Community Hub continues to meet every Friday at the VIC Centre in Haslingden. The group has evolved due to the needs of the group, and continues to grow in strength and numbers.

Many of those who have taken part over the last 2 years have had very basic arts and crafts skills. The group develops with those using the group, and the tuition they receive by the tutors has increased their confidence, self-esteem and their creative skills.

This has led to them exhibiting their work during the exhibitions we have attended. In some cases their work has been sold to the public.