

**Roots & Branches**

Seeds for Action Case Study 2022-23

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# Eco-Sewing Circle

Bury Art Museum & Sculpture Centre

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Bury Art Museum & Sculpture Centre opened in 1901 as a purpose-built gallery to house and display a collection of Victorian oil paintings, watercolours, etchings, drawings, sculpture, and Wedgwood plaques formed by local paper manufacturer, Thomas Wrigley. In 1907 a social history museum was added to complement the Art Gallery and in 2014 the site expanded, and the Sculpture Centre was added. Over the last century, Bury's art collection has developed, but its outstanding strength remains the collection of 19th century British art.



# The project: Eco-Sewing Circle

I wanted to replace the amount of bubble wrap the gallery use so we could lower our carbon footprint, so I established an 'Eco-Sewing Circle', made up of community volunteers.

We use a lot of bubble wrap to protect our Perspex and glass plinth lids, so I designed an eco-friendly alternative quilted cover to replace it.

I encourage the volunteers to bring with them their unwanted clothing, bedding, curtains that we reused/repurposed for the plinth covers.





# Impacts and Outcomes



## Volunteer benefits

The sewing circle gave **volunteers** the opportunity to:

- learn new skills,
- meet new people and chat,
- tackle loneliness
- and contribute to their overall health and wellbeing.



## Packaging awareness: Exhibitions

Curatorial & the Technical team are more aware of the packaging materials we use and try to reuse any bubble wrap for temporary exhibition loans.



## Packaging awareness: Retail

The manager of Bury Art Shop has begun to source eco-friendly packaging as well as reusing eco-friendly packaging materials.

# Challenges



I initially set out to make Eco-Pads to replace bubble wrap in our museum collection storage boxes. Conservators at the Whitworth highlighted to me that the use of textiles would be detrimental to the museum objects in the box, due to chemical dyes etc. I then had to shift focus and explore the other ways we use bubble wrap that could be improved upon.

One of the handmade covers is now on display at the Manchester Museum to showcase environmental actions being taken by museums participating in the Roots & Branches project.





I've enjoyed  
making in this space and  
purposeful sewing  
in a group.



Liz

I enjoyed  
everything and  
meeting new people.

Robin,  
aged 6 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>



# Next steps and future climate actions

- I want to eventually start to make **eco-friendly pads** that can be used in our museum object storage boxes, to replace bubble wrap. I am currently researching eco-friendly materials that I can use to achieve this.
- One of the volunteers is a member with **Bury Climate Action Group** – we have made a connection and are open to future collaborative projects.
- On a wider note we are creating a **Green Tour of our permanent collection gallery**. Our interpretation labels will highlight climate change issues. We have also started to run reuse/repurpose workshops as part of our gallery offer.



# Find out more



Bury Art Museum & Sculpture Centre [Website](#)



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# Roots & Branches

## Seeds for Action – case studies



The **Seeds for Action Programme** is part of the Roots & Branches project. It aims to connect Carbon Literate Certified museum people across England to develop and build on their carbon reduction strategies and approaches to taking climate action.



By pooling our **collective expertise and resources**, we can save ourselves time and money, and tackle the climate emergency more effectively together. Feel free to **share this case** study with others.

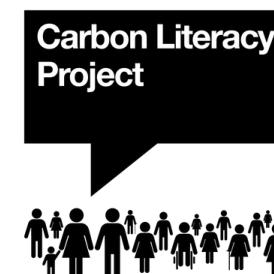


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- Case study submitted by Susan Lord
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