

The Berkshire model village

Art and crafts

Flexible duration

(For a full village: a series of 45-minute sessions)

You will need:

Paper, in a range of colours, A4 or A5 sized works well

Scissors

Glue

Coloured pencils

Paintbrushes

Paints, in a range of colours

Paint pots or palettes

Coloured pens and pencils

Instructions for a range of origami houses and buildings

(there are plenty available online)

Some completed buildings and elements for the group to look at

Printed pictures of doors, windows, etc

A baseboard for your final village

Large groups



Calming
Collaborative
Reflective

Credit:

The Berkshire Nursing and Care Home, Four Seasons Health Care Group.

This simple activity is a great way to connect people and bring back memories. It works well taking place around a big table in a communal space, but equally people could make elements in their own space to be added to the finished artwork. For example, in a bedroom in a care home.

To prepare:

Lay out the materials and origami instructions so that the participants can see them and pick them up if they would like to look at them.

To begin:

Start by explaining that you are going to create a model village over a number of sessions. Then ask what they would like to include in their very own model village and create a list of ideas for content. This in itself can bring back some great memories of items, buildings or objects that they have or had in their local village/town/area, so don't rush this stage. Allow time for people to talk and share memories and stories.

It can help to show examples of finished buildings and objects and pictures of possible designs or instructions. This will encourage conversation and help people come up with a plan together.

Next:

When the list is ready, you can start using the paper as you would with origami to make simple houses and buildings – you can use the instructions that you have printed off to help with this.

Let the participants choose their building design and the colours they would like for their particular model home.

To add a bit of personality to the homes and buildings, encourage them to customise windows and doors. You could draw windows and doors on or print some from the internet and use the glue to stick them on. It is fun to make each house as different as possible. You could encourage participants to put a number on the door or to give their building a name.

Finally:

After you have some buildings ready, you can start to build the village on a baseboard. Work with the participants to plan where to put each little house, tree, building etc. Working together to move objects around and choose the best place for them is a lovely, fun activity in itself. Then, you can get started naming the streets and the village itself!





A full village can take several sessions to create – there's no rush though! So enjoy the conversation and stories that are generated as a result of the process.

You could also:

Add as many features as the group come up with: what about a hairdressing salon, a bakery, a butcher, a river, trees, a church, a school, a bowls club, a community hall, or a pub? The possibilities are endless! As you make the village, remember that there is no right or wrong way of doing it.

When you have completed your village, you can use it as inspiration to talk about the people who might live there, or the events that might happen there. It can also be a lovely thing to display that becomes a talking point for people to explore together.

