

Day Opportunities at Camphill St Albans

APT CREATIONS

Art Studio – Textile Studio – Glass and Ceramics – Gallery – Boutique – Café – Gardening

APT (Artists Producing Together) has grown into a thriving social enterprise based on a fusion of individual creativity and group projects. This service is all about artists and craft people, some of whom have mental health problems or learning disabilities, working together to produce beautiful items that can be sold in the APT Galleries. The work of APT is focused in the art and design studio, craft workshops, the APT Creations Gallery and APT Boutique, with a range of activities which people can experience as part of a varied weekly timetable or by concentrating on one activity for a longer period. On a different note we also have an active community garden team maintaining the gardens around our various buildings.



APT is all about learning, developing, gaining confidence and acquiring skills and training. It offers a unique path of learning and growing beyond limitations. The studio and workshops are peaceful spaces where people can explore their own creativity in partnership with others. At Camphill St. Albans our unique mix of holistic lifestyles including day opportunities enables people to find the will and strength to embark on this path and the benefits can definitely be experienced also by those who come only for a few sessions a week.

The art studio produces original paintings and many different styles of striking and unique hand-made greetings cards for every occasion which have proved to be especially popular with customers. The textile studio or 'weavery' has a number of looms which are used to produce different woven articles including tapestries, cushion covers, rugs and table runners. This workshop is a beautiful environment and peaceful setting for developing skill and creativity.



The work in ceramics ranges from simple shapes and plaques for use in jewellery design to casting with liquid clay, sculpted figures for seasonal decorations and the challenge of creating a form on the potter's wheel. Glasswork at present involves composing segments of beautifully coloured glass into striking abstract designs and natural forms, such as dragonflies, birds and butterflies, and soldering them into place to form beautiful one-off decorations. One of the workers in the studio, says, *"I love the work I do. I do a lot of practical work such as glass making and bead work. It's harder than it looks. It's a challenge but I enjoy it. I'm also making mirrors with glass shapes around them and that's fun to do. I work with different people at different times of day."* Another regular, says, *"I work in the studio workshop in APT. My main job is collages and articles and making bags. The people I work with are a group, helping each other as a team. Each one is doing something and asks 'what job can I do next?'"*

APT Creations Gallery and Boutique sell a wide range of high quality art and craft gifts, jewellery and clothing from many sources and provide regular work opportunities for people to meet and interact with the general public, learning valuable retail and social skills and with opportunities to train for NVQ qualifications.



As a further innovation, Café APT opened in the Gallery in June 2009, providing additional work and training opportunities for people to learn all the skills involved in serving customers from a fully organic menu including carefully selected coffees, teas and juices and a range of homemade lunches, sandwiches and cakes. One of the workers, says, *“The café is the centre of attraction in the shop. It creates a special atmosphere for everyone in the shop. The food is very healthy and delicious. It attracts the customers and*

puts the people in a good mood and helps them to look at the shop in a relaxed way.” Also another regular worker, says, *“I arrive there in time at 9.30 to start work. I like working there. I meet people and serve them and smile and check that all is well. I help with the dishwasher. I have lunch with friends. The café brings people together.”*The gardening team works under the guidance of its experienced leader, maintaining lawns, flowerbeds and shrubs, doing general maintenance and also propagating, planting and cultivating vegetables and greenhouse plants. As one member of the team, says, *“The garden team is a good group who get on well and work well together and also enjoy outings together. We have a laugh together. I work in the gardens of the community and really enjoy it very, very much. I really love gardening and everything I do in my work. I love being outside in the open air and nature and being at one with nature and the earth.”*



If you would like to find out more about us we can arrange for you to visit the studio, craft workshops, galleries, weavery and garden team. If you like what you see, the next stage would be to have some taster sessions to experience the different creative situations. A session is from 9.30 – 1.00 or 2.30 – 5.00.

We are interested in finding out about people’s personalities, their interests and what they would like to do that is creative and stimulating. After this we will need to discuss with you and your Care and Support Manager how many sessions you might want to attend and how much it will cost. You will need to arrange your own transport and your Care and support Manager can help you to decide the best way of getting to APT. For your benefit there is a minimum of 2 sessions per week. Price per session per week is 2@ £40 each, 3 @ £35 each, 4 @ £30 each and 5 or more @ £25 each.

We will then agree a start date and time for your first day. We will also give you information about how we think you are getting on and discuss with you any suggested changes, including your own ideas.

Are you ready to take a step forward in your life, to find a new way of self-development through learning, building your confidence and gaining new skills which can lead to NVQ qualifications? Would you enjoy working with others as a team in a friendly social environment? If so, then you will be able to find what you are looking for at Camphill St. Albans. Get in touch with us and discover what new path of learning and growing can open up for you.

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