

Blog on Greenbelt festival
Written by Sarah Corbett
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So you might have seen on our [blog](#) and via [Twitter](#) and Instagram that I've been at [Greenbelt Festival](#) for the August Bank Holiday weekend delivering workshops, a filmed talk (eek!) and being a #PopUpCraftivist (they sold some of [our products](#) in their shop too).

So for those that don't know what Greenbelt Festival is, it's an annual summer festival that focuses on arts and social justice. Puuuurfect for us obv's! So I got really excited when the Greenbelt Youth Participation Coordinator (Becky) got in touch and asked if I would come and deliver some Craftivism workshops throughout the weekend. I checked that she was happy I did planned sessions (drop in sessions just don't work for craftivism/slow activism- it's just too smash and grab and transactional) and we opened up some of the workshops to all ages not just young people. Plus I told her of an idea I had that I thought would work well at that family friendly festival site = being a "Pop Up Craftivist". I have had the idea for a few months now and really wanted to test it out somewhere. Becky was so supportive and encouraging and agreed I could test that out too. Woop woop! So from Friday night to Monday evening I delivered 4 workshops and in between them was a #popupcraftivist.

Wellies and World Changin'

So what's a pop up craftivist? Sounds a bit odd ... Pop up shops are soooo last year!;p Instead of a pop up event Greenbelt festival agreed to have its very own pop up craftivist instead. Me! I popped up around site with my little suitcase of craftivism hanging out at different spots of the festival throughout the weekend and tweeted and Instagrammed (is that a word?!) where I was (@craftivists #PopUpCraftivist #GB12) so people could find me. Greenbelt is small enough as a festival for it to be a good tester ground and their smartphone app and robust Twitter presence really helped get the message out there where I was. It went pretty well and we had some great chats with new craftivism converts- many of them coming to my workshops during the festival after getting the craftivism bug :)

If you were there, I want to say a huge thanks to you for coming to our workshops, meeting me & my little suitcase around the site to do some impromptu craftivism and/or for coming to watch me do a 10 minute talk in one of the few dry venues they had. It was the first time I have delivered craftivism activities at a festival but the feedback was really encouraging and kind. All who got involved were super lovely people, keen to learn, discuss craftivism and talk honestly and openly about injustice and what they are going to do as a global citizen to try and help the world fulfil its potential to be a beautiful place throughout. I got pretty teary during one workshop specifically programmed in for young people to go to. I arrived to see over 40 young people (aged approx 7-16) queuing up to attend.

I had enough [Mini Protest Banner kits](#) for 30 people but luckily had my #popupcraftivist footprints activity others could do too. 15 minutes into the workshop it was so quiet, they were all quietly reflecting and stitching. All of the volunteer staff were shocked and pretty moved too. Some of the young people had come up with their own content to stitch onto their banners about social justice. One girl even wrote her own poem. All wanted to stay until the end and about half stayed after the session to continue to stitch in the venue or come to our Late Night Craft Session for all ages to come and finish off their banners. At our Late Night Craft workshop making [Don't Blow It handkerchiefs](#) we had a mother and son combo. The mum was stitching a hanky for their local MP and the son was stitching a hanky for his teacher. I got a bit emotional at that one too seeing them absorbed in the

stitching whilst there were so many other activities and acts they could have chosen from the enormous programmes list.

Spreadin' the news

I think I was extra sensitive that weekend because as well as getting such a great response from people saying how inspiring and important a service it was we were providing I was also bloody knackered! Not just from doing the workshops in the mud but also because I was delivering a talk on the last evening and it was causing me to not sleep very well, get very nervous and stressed. It was a 10 minute talk for [GTV](#) which would then go out on Greenbelt website sometime in 2012/2013 to engage festival goers and others throughout the year with mini talks. I was lucky enough to be picked to do one (apparently they picked from 100s of people and whittled it down to 40). It was a great opportunity to talk about the benefits of craftivism to a wider audience at the festival but also spread the message wider through the film. Therefore I put a lot of pressure on myself to do a really good talk so we could use it in the future if it was good.

The Salon London talk the week before was a good practice for this- [JP Flintoff](#), craftivist Nikki and craft friend [Deadly Knitshade](#) gave me great constructive feedback to help with the GTV talk and the wonderful [Ben Hammersely](#) helped me structure and practice the talk beforehand. I'm naturally a bit of a rambler and want to say 100 reasons why craftivism is so brilliant but in 10 minutes I needed to be strict on what to say and what not to. I knew it was going to be tough. And on top of that Greenbelt had hired 6 cameras and camerapeople from the BBC (!) to produce the films. I had to wear a Britney Spears style microphone and had a clock in front of me (behind the audience) counting down from 10minutes to a big red "TIME" if I went over. I managed to do the talk in 10minutes 15seconds (with a really dry mouth throughout about 70% of the talk but hopefully no one noticed!) which GTV were happy with *phew* and when we get a copy of the film we will share it with you. GTV & Salon London talks in the space of two weeks was very nervewracking but I got through it and hopefully got across how valuable I think craftivism is to have in this world.

I learnt a lot from doing craftivism at Greenbelt festival and feel very blessed that I got a chance to be there and do some crafty activism with their lovely punters :)