

Stitch in Time, 2009 - 2014



Stitch In Time, Transition Town Kingston's sociable sewing sessions, began with a bag-making workshop in 2009 and then ran monthly for from January 2010 to December 2014, first at Kingston Environment Centre in its previous premises, then at Kingston College for a few months in 2013, and finally at Kingston Welcare on Canbury Park Road for just over a year. We also occasionally took our workshops out on request – to Refugee Action Kingston's English class, community events, John Lewis...

Our workshops were an opportunity to share skills and repair or upcycle clothes in need of a little TLC. Anyone (young or old, expert or novice, male or female) who wanted free advice or help with a sewing problem, or could offer advice, or wanted to improve their sewing skills and learn new ways of doing things, was welcome. Assistance and conversation was provided, and refreshments were available, and everyone learnt

something! Spring and summer sessions usually included tips on “spring cleaning your wardrobe” – refreshing and repairing and altering old clothes to make them wearable again. Winter sessions tended to focus on keeping warm. In our 4+ years we made bags, curtains, draught excluders, toys... learnt to knit, crochet, do patchwork, make a skirt and how to get the best out of our donated sewing machines (cleaned, repaired and serviced, thanks to a small grant from Kingston Council in 2012), and we helped to patch, repair or alter clothes ranging from jeans and trousers to jackets and dresses. We didn't do repairs or alterations, just showed people how, including useful short-cuts we had picked up, and encouraged participants to have a go! We enjoyed sharing our know-how, encouraging re-use, repair, renovations and upcycling clothes and other textiles, keeping them out of the waste system and saving money at the same time.



We were very grateful to to [Kingston Environment Centre](#) for providing us with a good home for a couple of years. We couldn't have started without them, but in January 2013 when the Environment Centre closed for redevelopment, we moved out and eventually, towards the end of 2014, it became clear that demand had fallen. So we cancelled further workshops and gave away or lent out our remaining equipment. We concluded that, with several other local sewing groups starting up in the time since we began,

and many excellent “How to...” videos on YouTube, there might no longer be a need for our services. But if anyone reading this would like to try something similar, perhaps at a different time or place or with a different emphasis (ours was always on sharing skills and making do and mending), do please [contact Marilyn](#) to see if we can help in any way.