

Welcome to ReSkilled's Newsletter



February 2024

ReSkilled Workshop, St Peter's Shared Church, 37 Hazel Avenue, Guildford GU1 1NP

Tel: 07821 198 641 email: piers@reskilled.org

Operating times: Monday - Thursday 9.15am - 2.45pm

You are very welcome to come and visit us – please ring or email beforehand, thank you!

What's new at ReSkilled?

It's now been over 6 months since our last newsletter (I apologise) and much has happened!

We've seen new faces join us; old ones rejoin us; exciting new projects made, in progress or commissioned (on our waiting list) and... a new dust extraction system making the workshop look even more "proper".

We're also having fun *making an electric guitar out of an old coffee table*, with encouraging results - more details later! You can find regular updates on this project on our [Facebook](#) page - we're calling it "Table to Telecaster". If you enjoy following its progress, please forward the link.



Progress

Whilst this can be hard to measure, Participants come back week-on-week so we must be doing something right! With each project there are varying degrees of problem-solving and perseverance, always resulting in satisfaction and a desire to continue. Everyone is happy to work to a high standard, keeping products saleable online (where appropriate) - frequently going beyond our/their expectations.



We maintain our focus of helping people move towards work, recording the many transferable work skills observed in each person's *Developing Skills for the Workplace* folder (in-house production). This can be a useful tool in itself as individuals see how they've done, show it to a future workplace and also as it gives a basis for our providing a current work/character reference.

We have recently written CVs for two individuals and have been researching job vacancies in areas of interest. As this takes extra time, we are aiming to work in collaboration with CAP Job Club and are also awaiting funding news that might provide an additional avenue.

In the meantime, one Participant has been volunteering for several months - a very positive step. Whilst this took a little time to get started, it now requires no input from us at all.

Wooden Products

We continue to ask Participants to alternate between making something for themselves and something for ReSkilled to sell - either from our range (see [Etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com)) or a commission. This is a selection of work that different people have made:



**Wine rack
in progress**
**(Left)
File holders**



(Above) Clock
**(Left) Small indoor
plant holders**



(Above) Spice rack



**(Right) Bangle made
in yew**
**(Left) Set of 3
tea light holders**



As always, everything made at ReSkilled uses wood that has either been reclaimed or donated, e.g. the file holders and indoor plant holders are from donated offcuts, whereas the tea light holders and bangle come from a table leg and a coffee table respectively.



Before and After:
5m long, solid oak pews that no-one would collect. It's a shame to cut them into lengths but we can make a wide variety of new pieces from the old wood.



Commissions

We've had a steady flow of commissions coming in. A popular one recently being flower presses:



They've taken a lot of patience and attention to detail and have been made by someone who hadn't done any woodworking at all before attending ReSkilled.

Getting the word out

From January - March 2024, we have been nominated as one of three projects supported by **Tesco's Stronger Starts** funding, i.e. the ones in store that you can use the **blue tokens to vote for**.

We've asked for funding for a router, router table and miscellaneous hand tools - the amount we actually receive will depend on whether we come 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the number of tokens put in our section.

Please **ask for a blue token** each time you shop at a Guildford Tesco store, **put it in our section** and **ask friends to help us too** - thank you!!



The original table



First shaping cuts



"It's coming together"

"Table to Telecaster" - We had been given the table above and after removing the legs, wondered what we could do with this beautiful piece of yew?! Different suggestions were offered, from a dining table centrepiece to serve from, or a series of clocks (New York, London, Tokyo) to an electric guitar... and we chose the guitar - something we had only had experience of playing, never making!

With the help of several YouTube videos, advice from a local classic guitar buff and a dose of "why not", we got started. We have used templates to create a Fender Telecaster copy, bought a second-hand neck and refurbished it, and are now in the later stages of making what should be a very good instrument!



To see our progress in photos, please check out our [Facebook](#) page (and share it!).

Once finished, an experienced guitarist from a local band will put the guitar through its paces and we then plan to auction it, giving another opportunity to raise awareness of ReSkilled - **details will be on the [Facebook](#) page.**

Supporting ReSkilled

There are several ways that you can support our work:

- Donating financially - if our aims ring true with you, giving a regular amount is really helpful (we can claim Gift Aid too)
- Prayer (see below)
- Buying our handmade products or placing commissions

As we become more established, we are trying to raise our profile and engage as many people as possible to sign up to giving a **regular amount** - could you give £5 per month? Or even £10 per month?

Our target is to be supported by enough **individuals** to cover 50% of our annual costs - this means achieving a monthly total of £1,000. We know that this will take time but it will also give us a secure, stable base from which to continue to develop our provision without being so reliant on grants.

If you are interested in supporting us financially, please either use the QR code which will take you to our website's *Donate* page, or go there directly using the link: [Donate - ReSkilled](#)



Prayer requests –

Firstly, we want to **give thanks** for all of the progress that has been made and answered prayers in our previous newsletter:

- The number of Participants attending has steadily risen
- The message of what ReSkilled does is being circulated more widely and we are receiving enquiries from places that we hadn't realised even knew about us!
- We've had more commissions than we can almost handle
- We have a new Volunteer who can cover sessions when our regular Volunteers are away
- Our new dust extraction system was more affordable than expected and part of the cost was covered by a specific grant



We would **really value your prayers** for the following please:

- For those who have expressed an interest in attending but haven't actually managed to start due to various personal circumstances
- For Participants who have been with us for a while and are trying to make the next step into paid work or volunteering, to find the right connections and opportunities for them to move on

Events

If you would like someone from ReSkilled to come and talk to a group or church that you attend, please get in touch so that we can make arrangements appropriate to the event.

We'd love to come and share our experiences and hopes!

Coming in May....



Piers, our Programme Manager, will be taking part in his first Triathlon to raise money for ReSkilled.

If you would like to support him, please visit our CAF Donate page ([click here](#))

Thank you for your interest and support in every way.

May we all be “working to restore hope” together!

Registered address: 37 Hazel Avenue, Guildford GU1 1NP

reskilled.org e-mail: info@reskilled.org Tel. 07821 198641

 **reskilledwood**

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