

Patchwork queens' Christmas kindness

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Ladies of the workshops at OliVen patchwork shop show off their twiddle quilts to be given to dementia patients for Christmas. ANL-161130-132729001

A patchwork shop's monthly meet-up group is donating 80 twiddle quilts, made by using unwanted scraps, to dementia patients for Christmas.

Vendulka Battais from Great Finborough runs OliVen based at Bridge Farm Barns in Monks Eleigh.



Ladies busy at OliVen patchwork shop making the quilts. ANL-161130-132742001

In March she arranged a new group to meet up, chat and get creative.

The 35-year-old said: “When making quilts you are usually left with lots of leftovers and so we were wondering how we could use them for a good cause.

“We came across an article on the internet speaking about twiddle quilts made for dementia patients.”

These are lap sized quilts which are embellished with zips, buttons, pom-poms, lace, velvet and felt to keep the hands of patients with dementia busy. We fell in love with the idea and at the beginning of the year we set up a group in our shop which meets once a month.”

The idea has taken off with the members thoroughly enjoying their new hobby and the many benefits it brings, honing their skills, using up old leftovers and producing something worthwhile for those in need.

So successful was the idea that what was originally a one-year thing is to be continued by the group to help even more local care homes and hospitals, while new charity initiatives are being started.

Individuals and members of other groups have even visited the OliVen sessions to learn about the quilts and to start making their own.

“It’s a lovely project as it uses left overs and scraps which is great as we all have them. Plus we also use them for a good cause.”

It is also a good starter project for beginners as there is less importance on precision, which even experienced crafters like Miss Battais describe as ‘very liberating’.

The next idea for the group is to produce heart shape cushions to give to cancer patients. They will also make sanitary pads and dresses for girls in Africa.

In total more than 20 people have attended the free meetings, with a core around eight members.

“Our shop provides the comfortable space of our workroom, fabrics and some technical help to the less experienced sewers and our volunteer ladies provided all the twiddling bits, great ideas, enthusiasm and the hard work,” said Mrs Battais.

“That’s if you can call doing your hobby, having good chat and laugh hard work.

“Originally we thought about it as a year long project but we created a lovely group of ladies and they all wanted to continue.”