

QUILTS FOR CARE LEAVERS N.I.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

QUILTY HUG SIZES – Between 40” and 50” in width and between 66” and 72” in length (although longer is acceptable). If you are submitting a top for long arm quilting, then it should be 2” bigger all round to allow for shrinkage during the quilting process. Our hugs are made to be grabbed in each hand and literally hugged around the body, but so that you can still walk without falling over! For that reason, they should be designed in a ‘landscape’ orientation.

ACCEPTABLE FABRICS – Please do not use licensed fabrics as we have no wish to be sued by a large corporation. This includes Game of Thrones, Harry Potter, Disney, Marvel etc. Although we don’t charge for our quilts, we cannot guarantee what happens to them in the future, and they will carry our own Q4CL label. You should use 100% cotton where available, although hugs made from polycotton are acceptable, but please don’t mix the two. Heavyweight polycotton is fine for a backing.

DESIGNS – Please do not use designs that incorporate images or references to Houses / Homes. (Unfortunately, not all memories of foster homes or children’s homes are good ones). Unisex designs are great as these will appeal to both males and females. You are making for an age group between 16 and 25 years of age.

FACEBOOK – The Local Facebook group is Q4CL Northern Ireland, and details of local events and examples of previous quilt designs are a great source of info and inspiration, together with the monthly block drive pattern. All of this information is also available on our website. Please also consider joining our Facebook group QUILTS FOR CARE LEAVERS MAKERS (Q4CL). Make sure you answer 3 compulsory questions when applying to join this group.

WAYS TO HELP

Monthly Block Drive. If you like the pattern, make as many or as few blocks as you wish and send them in. These will later be collated into a quilt top.

Make your own Quilt – Either as an individual or as a group. Make use of current or previous block drive patterns which are available on the website and the Facebook group. Make one of your own design or utilize those scraps into a scrappy hug. This should then be sent to us, for measuring, photographing, labelling and numbering. It will be made available to care leavers through our online NI portal. All quilts made in NI will stay in NI to be offered to our own care leavers.

Gift tags

Please attach a (non-Christmas) paper gift tag with your own message to your quilt (safety pin is preferred) but use your first name only please (and no location/date information).

Make your own Quilt Top – We have a long-arm quilting service for those unable to quilt and finish their own hugs. It should be forwarded to us, together with a backing fabric. For a small fee (to cover supply of wadding) we will quilt and finish your hug for you. [See our website for details of the fee applicable at the time of submission.](#)

Before sending, please ensure that.

- Your top is a minimum of 42” x 68”. All tops shrink when they’re quilted so these dimensions allow for this. Remember our required sizes for the finished quilt are between 40” and 50” on the shorter side, and between 66” and 72” on the longer side, with a minimum of 20” difference between the two measurements. The ideal finished size is 44” x 70”.

- Check that there are no holes in your seams and no places where the stitching is coming undone. These are easier to sort out before the quilting is done. It's very fiddly to sew up holes when you can't get to the reverse side of the quilt, and it can mar the look of the quilt.
- Remove all loose threads, especially those that have come through from the reverse side of the top (where the fabric has frayed). These threads are very time consuming and fiddly to sort out after quilting.
- The backing you provide must be at least 8" longer and 8" wider than the top. This extra allows for the quilt to be loaded onto the frame. Backings can be joined/pieced but please:
 - Cut the selvedge off before joining. If you don't the join is "tighter" than the rest of the fabric and distorts the quilt. Use a ½" seam (wider than usual) and press it open. This means that the join is not as bulky at the back of the quilt.
 - If adding material as a strip to extend the width/length of your backing, please do not put it in the middle of the backing. If you do, it is very difficult and time consuming to get it exactly in the centre of your quilt. Placing the strip to one side so it is asymmetrical makes the longarmer's job a lot easier

Binding

The binding needs to be long enough to go round your quilt + 12". So, if your top is 68" x 42" the binding you provide should be at least 232" finished length (42 + 68 + 42 + 68 + 12).

The binding should be joined on the bias with the seams pressed open to reduce bulk.

Quilting - This can be as simple as you like but as close as is sufficient to support the seams of the top. Approximately 4" (approximately a clenched fist width) between lines of quilting is recommended. If using fleece as backing, wadding is not always required when good quality fleece is used, but quilting must support those seams on the top

Donations – We accept donations of orphan blocks, tops, quilts and fabrics. Donated fabrics are usually used to help offset the costs to the individual quilter and to run workshops. We also accept monetary donations towards the costs of purchasing backings and wadding for the block drive quilts to be finished, and to hire halls to hold workshops. We have many beginners in our ranks and sewcial workshops are a great way to share skills and build friendships. Please contact us information below.

Any questions, please contact us at theteam@q4clni.org.uk or telephone Lynne on 07543 119805.