



King Street Artworks tutor Linda Tilyard, with artists Noella Godinet, Vanessa Maxwell, and Pathways senior addictions counsellor Rachael Kenny. PHOTO/EMILY NORMAN

Community bonds shared

A new art project showing off the bond shared between two community health organisations has come to fruition.

The project, which was led by Pathways, a mental health and addictions provider in the Wairarapa, involved four King Street Artworks artists who were asked to create works based on their interpretations of "community".

Pathways are now displaying the artworks in their reception area and addiction counselling rooms in the Departmental Building, as a way of supporting connections in the community and promoting the health and wellbeing of the people they support.

Pathways senior addictions counsellor Rachael Kenny said it was exciting to collaborate on projects with King Street Artworks,

"Pathways utilises King Street Artworks as part of our group programme for people with addiction issues," she said.

"The art groups provide the people we support with a tangible way to experience mindfulness and we have always had great success with it as a way of lowering their stress and anxiety and enhancing their mood."

"This is an excellent place for people in recovery, whether it's addictions, mental health, whatever, it's such a supportive,

safe, and non-judgemental environment."

She said one of the hardest things for recovering addicts was creating a new routine and returning to normality, "because you've got this huge gap now when you are not using drugs anymore".

"King Street is perfect for encouraging people to get into a different constructive routine.

"Art gives people something tangible they have created, and for hours they haven't thought about anything but creating."

King Street Artworks tutor Linda Tilyard said the art project aimed to bring awareness of the two services working together.

She said she hoped to continue working closely with Pathways, and would love to embark on a community mural project in the future.

"Masterton should be really proud of these services," she said.

"Mental health is an issue like any other health condition, and we all need to work on it.

"At King Street, we focus on the art, but it is art that encourages those very important dialogues.

"You have to be around other people for them to know that you're down.

"Be emotionally messy, we don't care."