**Solar Flowers with Nicola Clarke**

You will need:

Sharp pair of scissors.

Two plastic milk bottles washed with the labels removed. Keep the lids.

Garden Cane.

Solar lights

Hot glue gun and glue sticks.

Old rag or tea towel – to protect your fingers (and your work surface) from the glue gun.

If you don’t have a glue gun you will need some sticky tape. Please be aware a glue gun makes the process much easier.

Depending on your age and ability you might need an adult to help you. Please be very careful with the glue gun and make sure that an adult knows what you are doing.

**Preparation.**

Wash out your milk bottle with hot soapy water so that it does not smell.

Peel the stickers off.

Cut off the bottom of your milk bottle. (Keep this for later – Easier whilst the bottle is warm from the water)

**Petals**

Make several slits into the bottle. From the bottom that you have removed to the neck of the bottle.

Starting at the end you have just removed. Slide your scissors up towards the top. Do not cut through the neck of the bottle.

You can make as many petals as you want, they can be curved or wavy or have a point at the end. Each milk bottle can be different. If you want you can even make all of your petals differently. Be creative and have fun.

You can embellish your petals if you like using the scissors to cut into them. Be inspired by your imagination to create a flowers that have come from outer space or under the sea. You can use local flowers for inspiration too.

If you want can go through the same the process again and create another layer to add to your flower. (note: To make a 2nd layer to your flower it is much easier with a glue gun.)

You can use a different size bottle or you can cut more off the bottom to make your bottle smaller and the petals shorter – Again be creative.

On the 2nd bottle it’s nice if you can cut all the way to the neck of the bottle. This makes the petals more floppy and flowing for the centre.

**Sticking them together**

To join the flower petals. Take your scissors and put a small slit in the neck of the 2nd (Middle) bottle taking care not to go all the way through the neck.

Put hot glue around the neck of your 2nd bottle (hold your petals out of the way)

Take this and push it into the neck of your first flower. Using your rag you can push the bottles together this will protect your hands from the glue. Hold tight until the glue cools and the bottles are fixed together ( this can take a minute or two)

You can make stamens from the bottom of your milk bottle that we saved earlier. Cut along the width several times. When you’ve gone all the way along, roll the it to create the centre piece of your flower until it will fit into the neck of your bottle. Now you can use the glue gun to fasten. Hold it together (using your rag) until it the glue cools then use the glue gun (or tape) to attach your trumpets (or stamens) to the centre of your flower.

Screw the milk bottle lid onto the bottle – if you have a glue gun you can carefully glue the lid on to give it extra strength. Use the glue gun to melt a hole through the milk bottle lid large enough to fit your stick through.

If you don’t have a glue gun you will need a chopping board and a knife - place the knife into the middle of the milk bottle and twist until you create a hole in your lid.

Push the cane through the hole you can use glue to stick the cane to the milk bottle lid. (If you don’t have a glue gun use tape at the bottom and top of the milk bottle lid where the stick goes through.

**Without a glue gun**

If you don’t have a hot glue gun you could use wire, or string, or sticky tape to hold the two bottles together you will need to make some holes near the neck of each bottle to do this.

Or you could make lots of single layer flowers

To fix the on the stick without a glue gun you will need a chopping board and a knife and quite possibly and adult – if you are under 12 please check with an adult before you do this. - place the knife into the middle of the milk bottle and twist until you create a hole in your lid.

**Displaying your flower.**

Make as many flowers as you want to – the more the merrier.

Arrange the flowers in your front garden so that people driving and walking past can see them. They look nice in a cluster no more than 30cm apart. Once they are in the ground and you are happy with how they look trail your solar fairy lights around and through the flowers. Remember to face your solar charging panel towards direct sunlight and wait for dark when you will see your flowers all lit up looking magical.

Take some photos of you and your solar garden and submit them into to the competition as part of the Horsham Virtual Show and be in with the chance of winning a prize. You can enter your pictures by uploading on the art is webpage [www.artiswimmera.com/solar-garden](http://www.artiswimmera.com/solar-garden)