

MONKEY WORKSHOPS CIC

Annual Review 2021/22



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Introduction

Monkey Workshops was set up in 2020 to improve the outcomes and prospects of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged young people requiring Alternative Provision in Suffolk.

It was set up because, having experienced Alternative Provision himself, Keith Colley felt that young people in a similar position were lacking confidence in their own abilities which locked them out of society and the opportunities they need to thrive.

The aim is to change the direction that these young people are heading in and lead them back into mainstream education, training, and/or employment. This will also lead to improved, mental health and ultimately, full inclusion in society.

We support young people aged 11-16 years old who are vulnerable and disadvantaged young people. They are largely those who have been excluded from mainstream school. They may have been violent and disruptive for many possible reasons including Autism, have ADHD, or being severely Dyslexic, Dyspraxic or Dyscalculic. Some are in care, others are already involved in County Lines. Some suffer from such extreme anxiety that are unable to access even the simplest elements of education.

We provide a choice of workshops, combined with mentoring on a one-to-one basis. Local people, some of whom have been through Alternative Provision themselves, staff the workshops and mentor the children. They make up our full-time staff. The environment is rural, non-threatening and non-institutional. The young people are treated with unconditional respect and positive regard in order to foster trust and connectedness. The workshops provide a spark of interest which then allows for vocational learning and mentoring to deliver improved self-esteem, resilience, and self-confidence.

We started by providing workshops in woodworking – Wood Monkey which demonstrated the progress we can make. It was also clear that a rural non-institutional environment was hugely beneficial to the young people we were mentoring. Grow Monkey was an obvious successor as was practical mechanics – Gear Monkey, music production – Music Monkey, technology – Tech Monkey. Together these vocational workshops make up Monkey Workshops as it stands today.

We mentor these young people to help their *autonomy* and *connectedness* and teach practical skills which gives them a demonstrable *competency*. These three elements form the bedrock of the widely upheld Theory of Self-Determination and Motivation which directly leads to improved wellness, mental health and resilience and therefore improves and sustains the lives of individuals, families, and communities.

Our Partners

Monkey Workshop has been working with a mixture of Alternative Providers, mainstream schools and the Local Authority. These partners include The Albany, Chalk Hill, King Edwards VI School, Sybil Andrews Academy and Lapwing Education. It is a source of pride to the team that our partners also believe we are making a difference.

The Albany – Bury St Edmunds

“Monkey Workshops has enriched the vocational curriculum offer for the students at The Albany and provided a consistent source of personal mentoring that has been instrumental in changes in behaviour as well as students well-being. We are delighted that Monkey workshops has expanded its offering and now have students attending three different Workshops”.

King Edward VI School – Bury St Edmunds

“We have had 8 students attend Monkey Workshops over the past 2 years, and each and every one of them has enjoyed and valued their time there. The difference the provision has made to their wellbeing is evident.

We have seen, in one student in particular, whose time has been increased due to the amount of progress he has made, a significant increase in confidence and self-worth. As a SEN student with specific needs and challenges, the mentors at Monkey Workshops have been so supportive and adaptable ensuring that he always feels valued and included. This student now sees hope for his future due to the opportunities that have been made possible for him”.

Lapwing Education

“I have nothing but praise for the team and the sessions that my student and I attended at the Wood Monkey workshop. A perfect campus where the team brings life to ideas and imagination. My student achieved so much in 7 sessions and is someone who struggles to keep going with a project – needing to see an end result immediately.

The team showed great patience and allowed him the opportunity to evolve and develop the initial project and supported him with encouragement, advice, modelling and empathy. The final product was amazing and the sense of achievement it provoked within my student was touching to see. The team was able to work with the many varying needs my student presented. Thank you Monkey Workshops”.

Our Young People

We have seen great progress from the young people we are mentoring over the last year. Here are some short stories to bring that to life.

James' Story – Wood and Grow Monkey

James has been attending Monkey Workshops for approximately a year. He started sessions at Wood Monkey and developed a variety of skills whilst growing in confidence and developing a positive relationship with his mentors. So much so that when James' school found it difficult to defuse difficult situations with him they would encourage him to call his mentors who then helped him through that situation to allow him to re-join the class. This was significant progress as the school has had a huge struggle keeping him engaged and on site. More importantly he has developed improved self-control and empathy with those he works with.

As part of our mentoring we learnt that James has a real passion for farming. A copy of Farmers Weekly bought on the drive back to the workshop revealed passion and knowledge as he, without prompting or hesitation, proceeded to explain what crop rotation was and why it was important. The launch of Grow Monkey has allowed him to have his own raised bed in which he is planning to replicate a variety of farming crops appropriately rotated. Our rural location gives us easy access to agricultural knowledge which will be part of his Grow Monkey curriculum.

Most encouraging is that the school have reported a considerable increase in his general engagement and he has said that he can see a future for himself.



Chris' story – Gear, Grow and now Music Monkeys

Chris was one of Monkey Workshop's first students. During this time we have seen significant ups and downs in his personal life including changes in his living arrangements, the sad loss of parental figures and dangerous situations involving County Lines. He has often spoken in detail about his mental health when he feels things may be getting too much for him. This is a big step as he hadn't

been prepared to do this, which would often result in an aggressive front. During one session it became evident that CG needed additional support. He explained that he had a number he could call for counselling. He asked for help to make the call which he then did. This small step represents a huge change in attitude and a real step forward that had a positive impact on him. He has particularly enjoyed Gear Monkey sessions, and then Grow Monkey but Music Monkey is where he has really found a spark. Our principal approach of finding that spark could not be made clearer than when during a break in Grow Monkey he volunteered that he has always enjoyed rap music. It was clear he was keen to explore music production, often taking his mentor aside to ask their opinion on his latest lyrics. Our recent launch of Music Monkey gave him the opportunity. In just under a week we have seen a very different side to Chris. Previously his ability to explore Rap music was to simply walk into a booth and sing his lyrics over someone else's track. In just a few sessions he has now produced an entirely original piece of Rap music. This includes everything from selecting a beat to adding instrumentals, effects and autotune, but most importantly he has started to use the software himself rather than have a "desk driver". This achievement is wonderful to see. Chris has ADHD and finds it incredibly difficult to concentrate and would often wander and seek out distraction. However, in Music Monkey he does not leave the studio. His ability to explain what he has been doing in technical detail is fantastic. The picture below is a striking visual representation of the impact that spark, achievement and mentoring is having on this young man.



Euan's Story – Gear Monkey and a lot else

Our one-on-one child centric approach has given us some great opportunities to really work specifically on an individual child's needs. Euan now attends two different workshops. At Gear

Monkey he enjoys calm time to work at a steady pace and enjoy the outdoor environment which is proving to be of huge mental health benefit, especially as he suffers with anxiety to such a degree that he has been held back from a lot of opportunities. As a result he has become isolated. Gear Monkey gave us a very practical way to introduce Euan in a safe way to new people and environments. He decided he didn't want to work on the projects Gear Monkey had to offer but instead was keen to work on building a unicycle. Our mentor was able to track down an old unicycle in need of repair. Whilst it was a fairly straightforward repair (one wheel, no gears) there was one area we were unable to complete ourselves: the seat. The seat needed upholstering, and this was not something we were able to do in-house. We contacted a local firm of specialists that worked on bespoke vehicles but also did their own upholstery. They were more than happy to do the work for us but more importantly we were able to take Euan to their workshop to watch the process himself. It was not long before he was interacting with new people in the same way he does back at Monkey Workshops HQ. This was a great experience for Euan. He had the control and the confidence and succeeded in meeting and interacting with new people. A challenging and huge step for Euan.



Adam's Story – Monkey Works in action

Keith met Adam in the first days of Wood Monkey. Adam insisted he would not come to the workshop, not even just to take a look. We had to meet him at his school. He was at The Albany - a Pupil Referral Unit in Bury St Edmunds. As our first real customer he was incredibly nervous. Adam was hunched over in the corner, and we could only sit at the other end of the room so as not to make him anxious. That was 18 months ago. Since then, Adam has worked on several projects and embraced his naturally creative side. We are delighted to say that Adam will be attending West Suffolk College next year to study Carpentry. Adam is quick to tell you that he firmly believes his time at Wood Monkey has helped him take an opportunity he simply would not have been confident enough to take before. Everything Adam needed to get to college was already in him: we simply allowed him to see that for himself and gave him the tools he needed.

An important part of his story is that Adam told us that when he arrived at West Suffolk College to look around, he initially refused to go in as his anxiety got the better of him. But only for a few minutes. Adam remembered the conversations we have had about always having to take one more step, the scary step. He pushed himself into the building, met the carpentry tutor and quickly discovered the carpentry team were in a much smaller, less formal building out at the back. Adam is looking forward to getting started.



Our Community

One key aspect in developing the Monkey Workshop curriculum has always been to produce quality work in a way that means young people can believe in their abilities. This has been hugely evident in the relationship we have with our local community. We have been able to purchase better quality equipment this year which has led to more students producing higher quality products including owl boxes, picnic tables, swift boxes, and bicycles. It's a very real and positive lift for our young people to see real customers purchasing items for themselves. We have been fortunate to receive photos and thank you messages from customers that have further developed a sense of self-worth and self-belief amongst our students.

Rougham Sunflowers

Wood Monkey students assisted in the build of picnic tables for the Rougham Estate Sunflowers Event this summer. Students that participated were able to attend the event with friends and family so they could see what they had achieved. This was a great example of how we are working with our community and provided a huge boost for students and their sense of social inclusion. Students particularly enjoyed seeing positive social media posts.



We were delighted to help the Bumblebees group at **Riverwalk School** by making two sensory and activity frames. These were designed for wheel chair users to be positioned under the frame and benefit from the sensory items that hang from it. We also restored the old Rougham Village notice Board and created a new one for the local nursery school. We were also delighted to receive an “outstanding work for the community during Covid” award from the High Sheriff and we had a very successful couple of days at the South Suffolk Show where Gear Monkey’s restored bikes did brisk business.

Progress Report

It has been a busy year of growth for Monkey Workshops as we progressed from our Founder's garage in December with the ability to support only a handful of young people, to five Monkeys, five well equipped Workshops and five full time staff. We have appointed a Board of three and an advisory Board of four hugely supportive and knowledgeable advisers.

And perhaps most importantly can now deliver over 125 sessions a week. In April we were running at less than 40 sessions By the end of the summer term that had increased to 60 and we are now building to reach 125 at the start of January 2023 with all the workshops and equipment largely in place.

We are planning, and fund raising now, to add a further campus of five workshops which will double that number by September 2023.

Our attendance rate has remained high at 80%, although that would be higher if it weren't for the challenge of transport. We are exploring ways to improve this element in a cost-efficient manner.

As we grow, we are determined to maintain the high standards we set ourselves at the very beginning and so positive comments from our partners and evidence of progress in our young people are vitally important.

We instigated a comprehensive assessment of each session in the summer using the Leuven scale. This is already providing us with useful evidence to identify both positive and negative changes in our young people. We will also be using the Warwick and Edinburgh scale to provide a longer term and more balanced view over each term. This will help us work even closer with our partners as we endeavour to really make a difference.

Our Team

Keith Colley, our founder and CEO, is the driving force behind the team. He is supported by **Rory Mckenzie** who joined in January and **Piers Symons** who joined in April. Piers was a mental health worker for 11 years whilst also working in drug and alcohol mentoring. Rory was a senior coach at Realise Futures working with young adults with mental and physical disabilities for five years. **Claire Lovegrove** is providing us some much-needed support to ensure we fully document the progress our young people make. She has been working with the NHS as a physiotherapist, working closely with patients in the rehabilitation sector.

Daniela Symons joined in September. She was a long-standing customer of Monkey Workshops in her role as Intervention Centre Manager at King Edward VI. Daniela believed strongly in the Monkey Workshops method and shares our passion to help SEND and hard to reach young people as well as our ambition to become a real part of the solution. Her experience spans 24 years of educational settings making her role as Outcomes and Engagement Manager at Monkey Workshops vital to the success of our young people and to our continued growth. We are delighted to have someone of her talent and experience on board.

Nick May also joined in September. Nick has a deep-rooted passion for Music Technology, achieving a 1st Class Honours degree in Creative Music Technology. Nick has been working with young people from the first day of his professional career and has been educated right on our doorstep in Bury St Edmunds. Nick is keen to take Music Monkey into the wider community to explore opportunities for our young people and is a strong believer in social inclusion. We are excited to add Nick to the team.

The Board is made up of **Phil Shelley** who has had a distinguished career in Investment Banking for the last 25 years and who is Chairman of several public and private companies. **Nigel Gambier** brings huge experience as a successful entrepreneur, whilst **Michael Walton** brings strong financial discipline as a chartered accountant with experience in establishing and overseeing charitable organisations.

The Board is superbly supported by several advisers who bring a wide range of very relevant skills and understanding. **Janey Auchincloss** is a successful and local Garden Designer with huge horticultural experience. **Chris Wheeler** has had a long career in Education and is currently Head Teacher at Monkton Coombe School. **Dr Rachel Jones** is a vastly experienced Forensic Psychiatrist with an in-depth knowledge and expertise in mental Health disorders including Anxiety, neurodevelopmental disorders, and ADHD. We are also delighted to welcome **Teresa Selvey** to our Advisory Board. She brings huge educational experience having worked as a teacher and Headteacher for over 24 years, most recently as Founder and CEO of Our Lady of Walsingham Multi Academy Trust.

Financials

Financial background

The original business was incorporated on 22 September 2020 and established as a limited company.

The company traded as Wood Monkey Workshop Ltd and generated revenues of £13,139 in the thirteen months ending 29th October 2021 generating a small surplus of £2,700.

The initial trading period demonstrated Wood Monkey's potential and it was resolved to replace the trading structure with the incorporation of a Community Interest Company, a private company limited by guarantee without share capital. The CIC was incorporated on 28th May 2021 and the trading activities of the original business were transferred to Wood Monkey Works CIC.

The initial accounting year end of Wood Monkey Workshop was the twelve-month anniversary of incorporation, being 31st May 2022. The directors have now determined to extend this trading period by 3 months to 31st August 2022.

The rationale for this extension is to synchronise the financial reporting period with the business cycle. The business trades during the school year, with training sessions following the school schedules of Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. The business does not currently offer sessions during the school holidays and there is no trading during August.

Customers pay in advance, so the business carries modest cash surpluses throughout the year, however these surpluses are extinguished by the end of the accounting year.

Any major growth projects require additional funding which so far has come from private individuals, foundations, and Local Government.

The company is currently transferring to Charitable Status. This is expected to be complete by November.

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Unaudited accounts for the period ending 31st August 2022

Balance sheet	£	£	Trading account	£	£
Assets					
Fixtures & fittings	41,680.63		Teaching revenue		79,198.58
less: depreciation	(8,336.13)		Product sales		3,150.00
Fixed assets		33,344.50	Total trading income		82,348.58
Cash at bank		40,380.00	Expenses		
			Salaries & benefits	(57,514.66)	
Totals assets		73,724.50	Marketing	(2,502.16)	
Liabilities			Prof services	(3,652.98)	
Loan	(20,000.00)		Consumables	(1,814.82)	
Accruals	(3,650.00)		Capex		
Deferred income	(12,320.00)		Travel	(1,666.13)	
			Admin	(1,047.79)	
Total liabilities		(35,970.00)	Course materials	(8,740.12)	
			Rent/rates	(5,950.00)	
Net assets		37,754.50	Utilities	(644.18)	
			Sundry	(571.63)	
			Insurance	(186.76)	
			Depreciation	(8,336.13)	
			Communications	(450.21)	
			Total expenses		(93,077.57)
			Trading profit / loss		(10,728.99)
			Donations		48,483.49
			Surplus generated		37,754.50

Looking Ahead

The business has reached a break-even position in its first year of full year of trading despite very considerable growth. This gives us considerable confidence in the sustainability of the Company and underpins our decision to become a Charity.

We will continue to grow our capacity with the build out of Music Monkey, Tech Monkey and Grow Monkey. This is well advanced, and we see considerable demand. The initial priority is to have a broad range of vocational opportunities to find that spark that then creates the opportunity to mentor and evidence individual achievement. As we continue to see the progress, we plan to expand the number of monkeys over the next twelve months to at least seven and possibly more.

This will require an additional campus and further funding, something that we are already well advanced on.

Each Monkey requires a workshop, equipment and a mentor to drive its development and as we grow, we will need further support. This is all included in our budget for 2022/2023 which is expected to double revenue from last year's levels.

We are enormously privileged to have the support of many people and to be able to make the difference we are making. We look forward to delivering more progress in the coming year with some excitement and great determination as we continue to make a difference to many more young people.