

Tools workshop blog June 2022



Left: One of our service users working away removing the last of the rust from a fork he's been working on (ready for paint and varnish).

May was a week shorter than usual, as I finished up my holiday in sunny Cornwall. After returning, fresh faced and ready for action, we got straight to business with quite a bit of interest from members of the public, who donated loads of their unwanted tools and who also placed orders to have their favourite old tools refurbished ready for summer. We finished an especially nice refurbishment job this month, where a gentleman had brought in his father's tools, so he could give them to his kids to remember their now late grandad. It was a real honour to work on this project and to

help him to remember a cherished loved one for generations to come - not to mention that there were some very cool classic tools that we've loved working on.

We've also had great feedback from our friends at Coton Manor Gardens and The Horti-Hub at Northgate School that our tools are flying off the shelves (with their very kind support and promotion). One of which we've already resupplied ready for the next influx of keen, green fingered patrons, and the other we're currently working on. We also had a large order placed by Ruskin Mill College, who are doing great work in supporting young people with learning difficulties, behavioural issues and disabilities, to learn farming, traditional skills and animal husbandry down near Gloucester. We're really happy to link up with this great cause and to support them with their tool needs.

As our supported workshop assistant Kyle comes to the end of his placement here, we've been further ramping up his employability support and associated life skills courses to give him the best chance of success as he looks to leave the nest. As well as being a great help in the workshop, he's been working hard on building his confidence (through a personalised, structured course with exercises), we've been getting into the nitty gritty of our advanced budgeting course so he can really look after the pennies and also helping him to build his phone skills and confidence in speaking to new people. We've also continued the drive to help him to find further employment after his placement here.

We've had a corporate volunteer start, from Crane Fluid Systems who have been so generous as to help us out with one of their members of staff as part of their CSR programme. It's been a pleasure having him here and he's already producing great work and engaging well with our service users. In addition to our regular "grind" or should I say "sand", we also took a bit of time out of our busy schedule to fit a new keypad lock, to better secure our offices and also removed a breakfast bar in our learning for living area (to allow for a more usable space for our classes and courses). It's a seemingly small change, but it's done wonders for increasing the utility and feel of the area, we have a little bit of remedial carpeting to do, but then she'll be good to go.

Just a very small taster of some of the great work our guys have been doing, the customer was very happy with her newly rehandled edging fork and we had loads of fun working on this beautiful classic axe, which looked to be at the end of it's life when it first came in, but is now ready for many happy years of wood cutting.



James – workshop manager