MINSTEAD TRUST

OUR YEAR 2024-25

Annual Report and Consolidated Accounts

Registered company number 03149116. Registered charity number: 1053319.

‘Coming here is brilliant. I’ve learned pottery, gardening and I’ve worked in the café. I’ve made best friends.’
David

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OUR NEW BRAND

We hope you like our new look annual report which reflects our rebrand this year across the Trust and our social enterprises.

The rebrand goes much deeper than just looking different. Our new brand is a reflection of how the Trust has been developing and the bolder role we believe we can play in achieving greater change for people with learning disabilities and autism.

MINSTEAD TRUST
BREAKING BARRIERS
ENRICHING LIVES

WHO WE ARE

WE APPRECIATE EACH PERSON.

Everyone is different – we respect and celebrate this.

Rhianne embodies what it means to appreciate every person. She cared for her mum during her final weeks, now she supports her sister every day, and helps those she lives with.

WE'RE ALWAYS LEARNING.

We all have something to offer and more to learn.

'I've learned to do weaving. I can use the pedals and the big machine. Now I can make things on my own. I'm making a cushion cover. It makes me happy - I've achieved something I've never done before.'
Pete

WE'RE ALWAYS IMPROVING.

Striving to give our best and to have more impact.

Royce works with the Trust's maintenance crew and has really built his confidence as he has learnt how to work in a team.

WE FIND THE JOY IN EVERYDAY LIFE.

We have the freedom to be ourselves and enjoy what we do.

Jordan reminds us how powerful joy can be. His enthusiasm lights up Whitemoor House - whether he's leaping like a frog, playing pranks, or laughing with his friend Rory. Though non-speaking, Jordan connects deeply with others.

WE PUSH FOR CHANGE.

We will challenge society to be fully inclusive.

David campaigned for a reversal of council cuts to free bus passes for people with disabilities. He was instrumental in gaining publicity for a petition through an interview on TV.

OUR VISION:

A society where people with learning disabilities enjoy fulfilling lives of their own choosing.

OUR MISSION:

We support people with learning disabilities to fully develop their individual potential by providing opportunities, enhancing life skills, ensuring informed choice, and influencing society.

THE TRUST AT A GLANCE

Per week

386
hours of support in our residential home

182
people learning and developing skills in day opportunities (169 in 23-24)

129
people supported to live their lives in their own homes (101 in 23-24)

330
people supported (320 in 23-24)

TIM'S STORY

Tim takes part in our animal care sessions and has become a natural at looking after the animals.

He spends time caring for our goats, brushing them, feeding them, and keeping their hut clean.

Tim also helps with Jack and Alfie, our donkeys.

Right now, Tim is learning 'clicker training' with the donkeys. Using a clicker and a few tasty carrot treats, he encourages them to do little tricks.

When asked how he feels about animal care, Tim said, 'It makes me feel happy and calm.'

Over the year

2
day opportunities

1
residential care home

160
volunteers
(139 in 23-24)

283
staff
(268 in 23-24)

15,859
volunteer hours
(14,757 in 23-24)

62
people training for work with Empowering Employment

Over
40,000
Furzey Gardens visitors
(35,000 in 23-24)

50,500
online supporters
(45,200 in 23-24)

5
social enterprises across 6 venues

ENRICHING OUR LIVES...

THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Iesha

Iesha's volunteering role at Lymington Library is helping her build vital skills on her path to greater independence. 'I just love working here,' she says.

The experience has also improved her reading. 'I found it difficult,' she admits, 'but with my Read Easy coach Sally, I can read more.'

Her confidence has grown too. 'People ask me where the children's books are, and I show them,' she explains proudly. In the beginning, her mentor Diana was there to support her every step of the way, but as Iesha's skills and self-assurance increased, Diana was able to gradually step back, allowing Iesha to thrive independently.

THROUGH WORK

Helen

Coming out of college, Helen felt unsure about her next steps. Battling anxiety and lacking clear direction, she was worried about her future. That's when she joined Empowering Employment's supported apprenticeship programme and began working at Lily & Lime café in Portsmouth. Helen has now successfully completed her apprenticeship and works as a café assistant.

Through her role, she's learned vital skills like customer service and food preparation and has grown much more comfortable in a busy work environment. Helen shared, 'It's going really well, I've really progressed with my confidence and skills...it's really good because I'm finally paid to work and I've found new freedom with earning money and keeping myself occupied and not just sitting at the house.'

THROUGH COMMUNITY

Aimee

Moving on from college can be a daunting time for anyone, and for Aimee it was especially difficult. Throughout her college years, Aimee struggled with her mental health and felt unsupported, making the transition into adult life feel even more overwhelming.

That changed when she began attending our New Forest Day Opportunities. Here, she has finally found the understanding and sense of community she had been searching for.

'My time at Minstead Trust has improved my mental state and I've got more friends... I don't get as nervous coming here. I think my confidence has grown. A few of my friends have noticed,' she says.

Aimee enjoys getting involved in different creative activities. 'I do arts and crafts here and make things to sell at Furzey Gardens. I think art calms me down a lot, since being here.'

BY IMPROVING OUR HOME

Darren and Josh

Darren and Josh took on the challenge of improving their back garden in Portsmouth.

With support, they cleared an overgrown patch that had become full of weeds. They carried heavy bags of soil, dug over the ground and planted flowers in beds and pots. The work gave them the chance to learn new skills, take responsibility for watering and caring for the plants, and enjoy working as a team.

The garden is now full of colour and is a place they can go to relax and feel proud of. What began as a small idea has become a space that makes a real difference to them and their housemates.

THROUGH ACTING

Silas

Our Community Theatre at Hanger Farm is a welcoming space where budding performers with learning disabilities can come together to act, express themselves, and delight audiences. But it's more than just theatre, it's a place of belonging, creativity, and personal growth.

As Silas puts it, 'I feel proud of myself when I'm up on stage in front of the crowd. Acting makes me feel quite happy. It feels like a little family.'

THROUGH GARDENING

Dan

Dan is a supported gardener at Furzey Gardens, where his work helps bring the garden to life while enriching his own day-to-day experience.

Gardening offers Dan not just a chance to connect with nature, but also meaningful opportunities to work alongside others and engage with visitors.

'It makes me happy working with the other guys really. I just like talking to the customers about what I do here... I tell them what we do at the Lodge as well. I'm quite proud really,' Dan shares.

WHERE CHANGE HAPPENS

Residential

LYNDHURST

Florence took part in travel training to help her get to Southampton and Bournemouth by bus. She grew more confident, even supporting her friends. She now feels closer to travelling independently to social events, giving her a more connected social life.

MINSTEAD

Day Opportunities

MINSTEAD

'I do enjoy doing the newspaper, I get a great thrill out of doing it with everyone. I feel really happy and excited when each issue is published.'

Robert, is a supported journalist with the Minstead Enquirer – a newspaper produced entirely by journalists with learning disabilities each month in New Forest Day Opportunities.

POOLE

Supported Living

POOLE

Lily is impacted by autism and anxiety and had a difficult year, frustrated with where she was living and looking to leave her job.

Staff worked tirelessly to find her a new home, wellbeing support and a new day opportunities – making her so much happier and feeling able to continue with her cleaning role at a day nursey.

This is just one example of the life improvements for people we support to live in their own homes across Poole.

Empowering Employment

SOUTH COAST

Greg was referred into us after a period of challenging experiences with unsuitable employers after the misuse of zero hours contracts. Working with Greg, we found him a supported apprenticeship with Marsham Court Hotel in Bournemouth.

'I've learnt to work efficiently and use my initiative, [the apprenticeship] has given me something to strive for.'

Supported Living
NEW FOREST

We are running a supportive and welcoming new home for four young people transitioning from a local residential college. Each of them has embraced this new chapter with energy and determination - securing apprenticeships, enrolling in further education, and learning to live together as a community of friends.

Their progress has been impressive. From the structure of college life and close parental support, they are now building the skills and confidence needed for greater independence.

Supported Living
PORTSMOUTH

The transformative power of person-centred support was shown by Richard, who lived a disengaged life spent at home.

With encouragement and tailored support, he now attends a local day opportunities twice a week, where he actively engages with others and has become a valued part of the community. His confidence has grown so much that he's started washing cars to earn extra money.

Day Opportunities
PORTSMOUTH

With gentle encouragement and consistent support, Michelle has embraced a new diet and lifestyle focused on wellbeing. She also now goes swimming every week, a huge step toward improving her physical health.

The transformation hasn't stopped there. Her growing confidence and positivity have become contagious, she's even inspired members of our staff to take steps toward healthier living themselves.

OUR KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 24-25

1. We supported more people, with every department in every region seeing growth in the use of our services.

Did you know? Minstead Trust now supports over 330 people along the south coast from Poole to Portsmouth

2. Our financial plan of running businesses that provide opportunities as well as working with the government to support people paid off, enabling us to do everything we wanted to do with a little money left over to take into next year.

Did you know? Hanger Farm sold 3x more tickets this year than in the 19-20 financial year, its first full year as part of the Trust.

3. We improved our quality, with customers in all areas giving us exceptional scores for their satisfaction with our services and our businesses.

Did you know? No major New Forest attraction is rated more highly on Google than Furzey Gardens.

4. We created a new type of service to help people leaving college experience new things and decide what they would like to do in their lives.

Did you know? Just 25% of young people with learning disabilities are in education or training a year after leaving school (Mencap)

5. We have been funded by Innovate UK for a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with the University of Essex to carry out essential research into how support providers like us can work best with family carers to improve outcomes for the people we support.

Did you know? Just 10% of family carers feel adequately supported by social services. (Mencap Family Carer Survey)

6. We were recognised by many other people and bodies as being excellent at what we do, including commissioners, national organisations, and charity leaders – and we won awards for our contribution to the local economy, and for diversity, equity, and inclusion in our employment programmes.

Did you know? Our employability service was renamed as Empowering Employment this year and claimed a News and Observer Series Apprenticeship Award for Diversity and Inclusion.

OUR CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

(AND HOW WE OVERCAME THEM)

THE CHALLENGE:
Massively increased costs.
Another huge increase in National Living Wage without enough increase in local authority fees meant we had to generate nearly £1m more income just to cover our costs.

Our solution: We grew our social enterprises and supported more people in all our services, as well as working more efficiently and being very disciplined in our spending.

THE CHALLENGE:
A race against time in Poole.
We were asked to take over a supported living home in Poole - with just two weeks' notice.

Six people live there. They'd had a tough time and weren't keen to get involved at first.

Our solution: We saw their potential, not their past. So we acted quickly, listening closely and building flexible support that fits each person.

It wasn't simple. We had to meet the expectations of commissioners while putting people's choices first. But we made it work.

Now, things are changing. Families are telling us they've seen a real difference. Commissioners are praising our team. Most importantly, people in the house are starting to thrive.

THE CHALLENGE:
Major theft at Minstead Lodge
More than £50,000 of equipment was stolen overnight, including mowers and tools used regularly by the people we support in their work.

The theft left us facing a huge bill and unsettled many of the people who are supported at Minstead Lodge, who were unable to go about their usual roles.

Our solution: When we told our community about the theft we were overwhelmed by their generosity and support.

More than £40,000 was donated as well as many tools, allowing us to bounce back even stronger and showing the people we support just how much their local community values them.

THE CHALLENGE:
Restrictive procurement rules prevented us from participating in two tender competitions because our annual income wasn't high enough.

This meant we missed out on more people benefiting from our holistic approach to the care we provide.

Our solution: We registered our complaint with the local authorities involved, and in one case, this restriction has been successfully overturned and we are now able to bid for future tender opportunities.

THE CHALLENGE:
Real Jam & Chutney Company's kitchen wasn't big enough to meet the demand for our products.

We were struggling to keep up with orders and the opportunities for more cooks with learning disabilities to be involved were limited.

Our solution: With the help of a grant funder, we created a brand-new professional kitchen and moved into it, enabling us to grow the team, increase production and supply some new customers in the process.

BUSINESSES THAT ENRICH LIVES

The dedication of our social enterprises team meant that our businesses contributed important money to support the Trust in this year.

It was a good year for **Hanger Farm**, the arts centre we run in Totton. We sold over 25,000 tickets and introduced the Restoration Fund to fund new lighting and staging.

We have also seen a shift to younger artists performing at Hanger Farm, bringing in fresh energy and new audiences.

Furzey Gardens in Minstead continues to be a peaceful and welcoming place. Over 40,000 people visited last year, and many of them pop into the tea rooms, which saw an increase in takings from the previous year.

Across our enterprises, we support four apprentices working towards their Level Two qualifications in hospitality and catering. They are learning new skills every day and building a great future for themselves.

We also developed a new partnership with Sparsholt College who arranged four internship SEN students to gain work experience for Furzey.

This year saw a great increase in volunteers at Furzey – this is fantastic and shows the community really cares.

Real Jam & Chutney Company is going from strength to strength and made over 30,000 jars. We continue to make our products at speed to meet demand. This year, we welcomed a new chef to support production. This means even more people with learning disabilities can play a key role in making our delicious products.

'I enjoy doing the labels and meeting our customers to see our products on the shelves. I also enjoy working with our team.'
Iesha, Supported Cook.

OUR NEW BRANDS

Our businesses unveiled fresh new brands this year after a long period of consultation and engagement.

The brands position our businesses more independently from Minstead Trust, allowing them to better match their sectors and appeal to their key customers.

The response has been overwhelmingly positive and we hope the brands will help the businesses thrive in a challenging wider economic environment.

Furzey Gardens

Explore. Discover. Relax.

HANGER FARM

LILY & LIME

Good Food. Good Company. Good Cause.

REAL JAM & CHUTNEY CO.

MINSTEAD LODGE

VOLUNTEERS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

This year, 160 volunteers have generously given their time, energy, and enthusiasm to support every area of Minstead Trust. In total, they contributed 15,859 hours across 25 different roles – including 5,653 hours spent directly with the people we support.

We were delighted to welcome 33 new volunteers, with many existing ones taking on additional roles as the Trust grows.

Volunteer involvement continues to evolve, with new opportunities both in person and remotely. A great example is our IT and Digital Team, where skilled volunteers have delivered staff training and supported digital projects flexibly and remotely.

While national volunteering trends show a continued decline post-pandemic, Minstead Trust continues to thrive, thanks to the diversity of roles we offer across multiple sites. We've also expanded supported volunteering, particularly in our cafés and gardens, working closely with local education providers and specialist schools.

Our volunteers regularly report highly positive experiences, often saying they gain more than they give.

For the people we support, the difference is significant. Volunteers provide valuable one-to-one time, patience, and encouragement, helping individuals to flourish in meaningful ways. They are extra hands to help and extra ears to listen – enhancing every experience.

Thanks to our volunteers, the people we support have also enjoyed trips to the theatre, cinema, and pub, as well as discos and dog walks and much more.

'I've volunteered at Hanger Farm since 2023, combining my love of musical theatre with supporting people with learning disabilities. I help at Community Theatre sessions and volunteer Front of House helping audience members. It's fun, rewarding, and has helped me build strong friendships after retiring from full-time work.'

Helen, Hanger Farm volunteer

ENRICHING THE LIVES OF OUR STAFF AND THOSE THEY SUPPORT

In 2024–25, the promise to enrich lives resonated through every part of our People & Culture work, whether empowering our dedicated team members or creating opportunities for the people we support.

INCLUSION AT ALL LEVELS

One of our proudest steps forward this year was increasing the involvement of the people we support in staff recruitment. By inviting their voices into key hiring decisions, we ensured our workforce not only brings strong skills, but the empathy and values that resonate most with those at the heart of our mission. Their insights have shaped a more person-led culture that will help the Trust protect its ethos as it grows.

GROWING OUR SKILLS

We continued to invest in our people with a renewed focus on personal and professional development. Our enriched learning and development offer now includes more accessible, flexible, and specialist training pathways, giving staff the tools to thrive in roles that make a genuine difference.

REDESIGNING SERVICES TO UNLOCK POTENTIAL

To ensure specialist knowledge stays exactly where it matters - at the frontline - we redesigned elements of our care service delivery. We are introducing improved digital systems and enhanced central admin support, giving frontline staff more time to connect with individuals in ways that matter. This shift allowed our expert teams to do what they do best: provide thoughtful, compassionate, personalised support.

A CULTURE OF BELONGING

Across our services, we've nurtured a culture where everyone feels seen, heard, and valued. Our people told us they felt more engaged than ever before. Through every training session, recruitment panel and care plan, we see their engagement with the Trust and its ethos building.

LOOKING AHEAD: GOING EVEN FURTHER

As we look to 2025–26, our focus will be on deepening this momentum - embedding even more co-production into our culture, expanding the reach of our training to embrace emerging digital care technologies, and further refining our service model so that our frontline teams are continually supported to deliver life-enriching care.

We're excited to continue building a workplace where purpose and professional growth go hand in hand, and where every individual – supported, volunteer or staff - feels empowered to thrive.

YOUR SUPPORT ENRICHES LIVES

This was a year when, once again, we were humbled by the generous outpouring of support for people with learning disabilities at Minstead Trust. This was never more obvious than after the theft of equipment and vehicles from our New Forest day opportunities.

The feelings of shock and hurt were quickly replaced by the most generous response of core supporters, as well as those who had never supported before, to right a wrong.

As a result, we were still able to meet our original fundraising targets, as well as replace everything that was lost.

We were also particularly grateful to receive a legacy during the year which allowed us to invest confidently in providing support that is not contract funded, using voluntary income to reach more people.

PARTICULAR THANKS TO OUR BIG GIVE CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE PLEDGERS, HAMPSHIRE CRICKET FOUNDATION, PLUS MANY GRANT FUNDERS, COMPANIES AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS:

• Mr Shripal Shah • Pimco Prime Real Estate • M Group • BDW Homes
• Century IT • Northwood • Littlewick Wealth Management
• The Christos Lazari Foundation • Mark Benevolent Fund
• Freemasonry Lodges in Hampshire and Isle of Wight • Surbiton Golf Club
• Rotary Clubs of Bransgore, Romsey, New Forest, Hythe & Waterside
• Netley Marsh Steam and Craft Show • Lions Club of New Milton
• Romsey, Chandlers Ford & District Roundtable • Totton South U3A
• Calshot Camping and Caravan Club • Sway WI • Friends of Lepe Country Park
• Thanks also to Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Fund for their continued support.

MORE PEOPLE SUPPORTED US LAST YEAR THAN EVER BEFORE.

MORE PEOPLE UNDERTOOK SPONSORED CHALLENGES.

MORE PEOPLE HAVE PLEDGED A GIFT IN THEIR WILL.

We are excited about meeting the very real challenges of the future head on – knowing that you are backing the people we support.

OUR MONEY

Minstead Trust consolidated accounts show a **13% increase** in net income to **£8.7m** (2024: £7.7m) with a **surplus of £52k** (2024: surplus £40k). Charitable costs **increased by 13%**.

In Care Services the increase in income was the result of opening of new supported living services in the New Forest and Poole. There was also excellent growth in all our social enterprises from increased Jam & Chutney production to **organic growth across our other social enterprises**.

Fundraised income **grew by 2% to £513k**. This year we raised £167k in grant income to support the continued expansion of the Real Jam and Chutney Co. and our Empowering Employment team. An otherwise quiet year for grant applications, was offset by a very strong performance across other fundraised income streams. This was particularly pleasing given the challenging UK fundraising environment. We also secured the support of Innovate UK's Knowledge Transfer Partnership, and we will be working with the University of Essex in an exciting co-creation project, involving family carers.

The majority of our increased expenditure relates to increased staffing to support our growth with a full-time equivalent increase of 15 people (staff costs increased by 12%).

This year our **cash balances increased by 15% to £1.6m** due to the surplus made and the **reduction in our trade debtors to £491.7k** (2024 £632k). During this year we have focused on improving our credit control processes with most debts are now collected within 30 days of the due date.

OUR PRIORITIES IN 24-25

OBJECTIVE

We understand what everyone we support wants from their lives, and we are supporting everyone to achieve the life they want

PROGRESS

We identified that we are excellent at understanding a person's wants and needs in the majority of cases. However, that understanding was reduced in cases where a person is non-speaking.

We are therefore implementing Total Communication to ensure that no one will ever be left behind because of a communication barrier.

We will change societal views about people with learning disabilities through employment, work experience, exposure, and awareness building

62 participants engaged across our programmes and work experience 25 people currently in sustained paid employment 10 businesses supported to become disability confident employers £675,000 of social value generated in partnership with employers

OBJECTIVE

We will ensure that the views and experiences of people with learning disabilities are heard by those who have the power to change the world for the better, and make recommendations

PROGRESS

100% of marketing campaigns led with the voice of people with neuro-disabilities

We are involving the people we support in the improvement of our services and embedding this approach

We engage the people we support to enhance services, ensuring their voices shape improvements. Using our resources, we prioritise inclusivity, innovation and growth through feedback sessions, co-designed workshops, pilot programmes and community events

We will co-produce our services with the people we support

We involve people we support in recruitment, particularly where the support given is largely of a one-to-one nature.

We listen to the people we seek to work with to understand what they want from their services

OUR 2025 GOALS

OUR KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 25-26 FINANCIAL YEAR:

1. **Complete a charity merger** in accordance with our strategic shift to connect and work with more people who do not receive funded support.

2. **Achieve outstanding features** in our regulated services.

3. **Support the development** of practice within the sector by conducting research with the University of Essex into how best to work with family carers in support of their loved ones.

4. **Full implement the rebrand** of the Trust, its social enterprises, and its employability division to better equip them for sustainable success.

5. **Grow our annualised income** by £1.5m.

6. **Improve the annualised value** we generate from our costs by £375,000, to overcome the effect of the increase in National Insurance tax on our operating model.

7. **Implement and embed our holistic Personal Outcomes Scale*** to support and drive the achievements of lifestyle aspirations amongst the people we support.

*A Personal Outcomes Scale is a person-centered tool used in social care to measure how well support services help individuals achieve meaningful outcomes and improve their quality of life.

OUR HOPES FOR NEXT YEAR

PEOPLE WE SUPPORT SHARE THEIR OWN PERSONAL HOPES AND GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR.

ED

'I want to help make another trail at Furzey in woodwork'

SILAS

'I'd like to do lessons about history'

EMMA

'I would like to do more pottery'

JONNY

'I would like to do more gardening at Furzey Gardens'

RICHARD

'Want to live in my own flat with a flatmate'

AGATHA

'I'd like to get more exercise by doing trampolining'

OUR CEO AND CHAIR

Rhianne and DJ attend our New Forest Day Opportunities and sat down with Adam Dodd, Minstead Trust CEO and Jo Grunwell, the Trust's Chair, to find out about the successes and challenges of the year, as well as plans for the future.

Rhianne: What do you like about your jobs?
Jo: I like the fact that I help make sure the Trust is supporting everybody. The really good bit is when I have chats with people like you because it's so much fun and I also get to see how the Trust really makes a difference.

Adam: What we are all here for is to try to help people with learning disabilities and autism to live the lives that they really want to live. It's my job to make sure that we've got all the things that we need in order to do that, so people, money, other connections.

DJ: What were the hard things last year?
Adam: One thing that's always really difficult is that each year it costs more and more money to do what we do, and the council is supposed to pay for many of those services, but they don't have enough money either. So what's been happening is that our costs go up, but the money that the council gives us doesn't go up by the same amount. It goes up by less, or (with some councils) not at all. So it gets harder and harder to pay for all of the things that we need to do. So that's a difficult thing most years, and it was a really difficult thing last year, but we managed to do it.

Rhianne: What were the best things from last year?
Adam: There's loads of great things that happened. One of the best things is that in all the places where we support people, we were able to work with even more people last year. In the New Forest, in Poole, in Portsmouth we work with more people now than we did then. We also won awards for the work that we do – from our inclusive employment work to the successes of our social enterprises.

DJ: Do we need to raise more money?
Jo: Yes, we do. As Adam said, we need to do more things for more people, and we get less money to do it. Our businesses like Real Jam & Chutney Company, Hanger Farm and Furzey Gardens help us bring in some extra money. We also help the people we support tell their inspiring stories so that people who donate money to us can see the difference this makes.

Adam: Donations are so important but we know money is tight for people more than ever. So our businesses are key because people are giving us money but getting something in return, like entry to Furzey or a jar of jam.

Rhianne: What plans have you got for next year?
Jo: We are just finishing our merger with Blue Apple Theatre, who run dance, singing and theatre groups and performances by performers with learning disabilities. I'm excited about what is next for this – hopefully more groups and performances, plus creative videos that push for change in society.

Adam: We're also working out what we want to do for the next 10 years. One of the things that's not great about living in the UK at the moment is that only a small number of people with learning disabilities get any funding. So the people that come to Minstead Trust at the moment are extremely lucky, because most people don't get the funding to be able to do things like that. We're going to work out what things we can do for the people that don't get funding.

Rhianne: Minstead Trust is special to me because I make friends and like doing weaving.

DJ: I like gardening and have lots of friends.

DJ: Why is Minstead Trust special to you?
Jo: Minstead Trust is special to me because everybody who comes here really wants to make a difference. It's special because there are so many different things that the people we support can do. So if there's something that you try and you don't like it, you can go and try something else until you find what you enjoy and then you can really learn and develop your skills.

Adam: I used to have a brother with learning disabilities, and he was looked after by an organisation a bit like Minstead Trust. He had a lot of physical disabilities as well, so he was quite limited in what he could do, but I saw how happy he was in the environment that he was in. So when the opportunity to come and work for Minstead came along, I just really, really wanted to be a part of that, and I have never regretted that decision.

My best days are the days where I get to spend time with people like you, or go down to the day opportunities and join a session. It's just really wonderful to see all the amazing things people are able to do – our craftspeople, our jam and chutney chefs, our gardeners...I'm really grateful to be able to play a role in creating the environment in which everyone can show what they are able to do.

TIM'S STORY

Tim takes part in our animal care sessions and has become a natural at looking after the animals.

He spends time caring for our goats, brushing them, feeding them, and keeping their hut clean.

Tim also helps with Jack and Alfie, our donkeys.

Right now, Tim is learning 'clicker training' with the donkeys. Using a clicker and a few tasty carrot treats, he encourages them to do little tricks.

When asked how he feels about animal care, Tim said,

'It makes me feel happy and calm.'

JOIN OUR MOVEMENT...

Step by step, person by person, we are empowering people to enrich their lives – join us!

DONATE

Give independence.

Your donation helps people with learning disabilities thrive.

FOLLOW US

Be part of the movement.

Follow us on social media and help share the change.

VOLUNTEER

Your time changes lives.

Join us and support someone to grow in confidence.

SIGN UP

Stay connected.

Get inspiring stories and updates straight to your inbox.

VISIT US

See the difference.

Support our social enterprises and the people supported to work at them.

Get involved now

minsteadtrust.org.uk

MINSTEAD TRUST

www.minsteadtrust.org.uk

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