

Perspectives

WINTER EDITION

The newsletter of Anthropods & Co Ltd

Anthropods grows up



At the beginning of August, the Company moved to new 4000 sq ft premises at 6 Hambleton Grove Industrial Estate in Knaresborough

The site, conveniently located just off the town centre and within easy reach of the A1, enjoys excellent access for large lorries to pick up pods for customer deliveries. The factory unit contains a small office with two workstations and enough space to welcome visitors (at a safe distance). The light and airy factory allows for four pods to be built side by side with plenty of room to store parts and equipment.

'After spending the first two years of the Company's life sharing premises, firstly at Copgrove and then Killinghall, it was a relief to find a place we could call our own,' said Rik Currie, Anthropods CEO and inventor. 'Our productivity has doubled and our capacity quadrupled overnight. The factory layout and combined offices has helped engender a really close team working spirit and we are now firing on all cylinders.'



Rik Currie, Anthropods CEO and Douglas Adamson, Anthropods Executive Chairman

Lux Life magazine has awarded Anthropods **'Most Versatile Luxury Glamping Pod Solution: Anthropods LUX Eco-Excellence Award for Sustainable Design'** in the luxurious Resorts and Retreats accommodation sector.



A wedding venue where creativity and new ideas thrive



Jessica Barker, owner, and inspiration behind Thief Hall, one of the most successful wedding venues in the north of England, has been an early and active supporter of Anthropods.

'Jessica is a shining example of a true entrepreneur; her imaginative conversion of her farm into a beautifully appointed wedding venue is a triumph of style and professionalism,' said Anthropods Executive Chairman, Doug Adamson.

Located just outside Thornton-le-Moor, close to Northallerton, Jessica can accommodate up to 36 guests in the converted farm buildings surrounding the venue. The problem was remaining guests had to be accommodated in nearby hotels. She needed extra accommodation hotel style, but

with a twist of originality.

'With a wedding booked every Saturday for the next two years I was sending potential revenue away every weekend,' she said. 'Anthropods provided a creative solution and once I have got all six pods in place, I can house up to an extra twenty-four people. It's a no brainer!'



weddings

The GO! Garden Office hits the market

It was a natural decision to adapt the Bleriot 53 model to create a funky Garden Office to service the burgeoning home office market.

As this new way of working is set to stay (Covid-19 or otherwise), the GO! Garden Office offers home workers purpose designed accommodation that can move with them if they decide to change house.

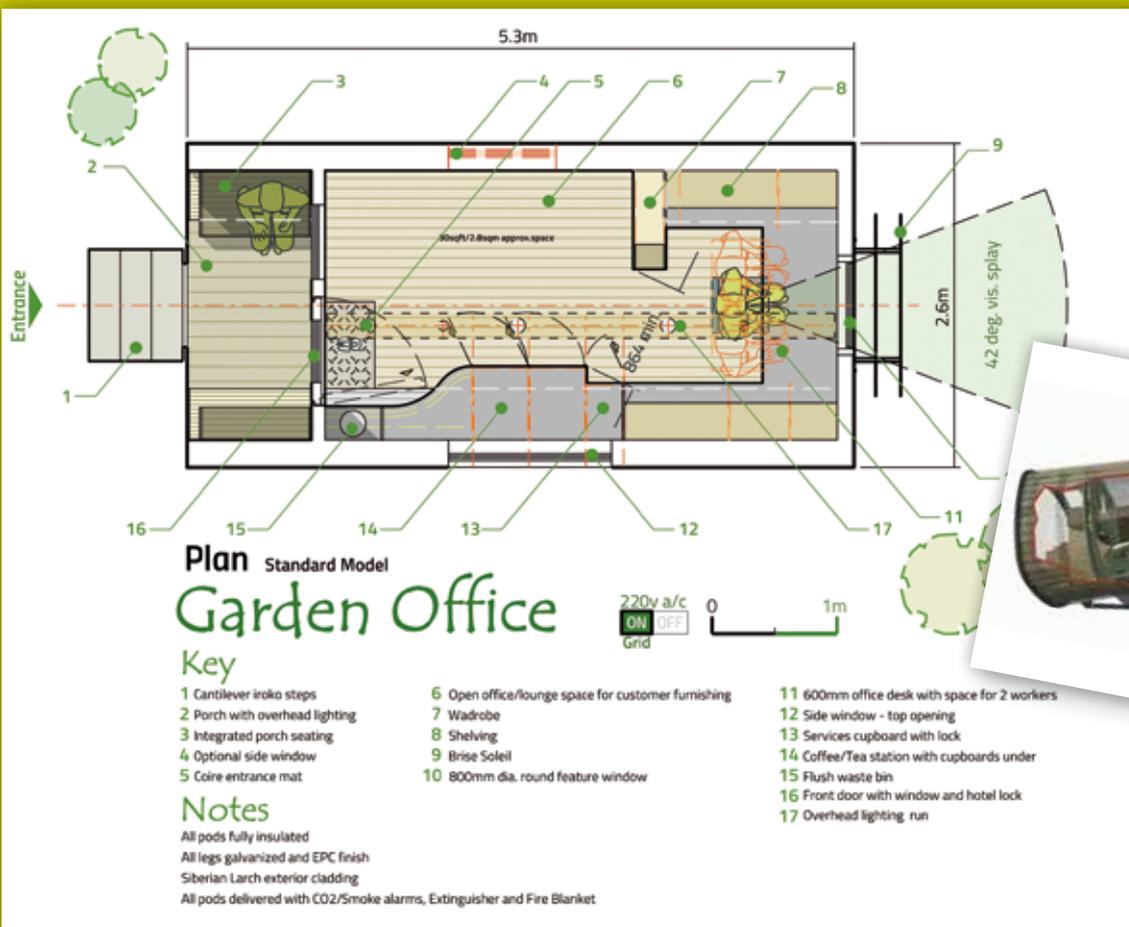
The GO! is no revved-up garden shed, but an ergonomically designed space that can be used all year around and is an interruption-

free retreat from the normal distractions of home working – children, animals, domestic duties and general noise.

This practical, stylish addition to any home can be located in a back or side garden without any need for planning permission and can double up as an extra bedroom by installing a pull-out sofa bed. The GO! has a tea/coffee prep area and

comes with Bluetooth speakers installed. The office layout includes computer desk, chair, handy work tops, storage and filing facilities.

The GO! can be customized to suit individual tastes and equipped with the customer's own furnishings if required. The GO! costs **£27,500 + VAT** and can be purchased on finance over 5 years with just 10% deposit.



The first Bleriot Plus Air models go overseas

A week before the world closed in and the UK went into full lock down on 23 March, our first Bleriot Plus Air model was shipped to new Netherlands customer, Jarno Keizer of Si-Es-An in Balkbrug.

The Air model has the added attraction of 600mm higher legs that stands the pod at 3.6 metres high. Rik designed a new handrail to accompany the six-step entrance into the pod. Customer reaction so far has been

very positive and Jarno reports that bookings have been strong since Dutch camp sites reopened in July. As we go to print the second Bleriot Plus Air is being shipped to Rheezerwold Holiday Park in Hardenberg, Netherlands.

Dutch camping holidays, like the UK home staycation market, have seen a terrific boom in trade as Netherlanders have been reluctant to travel far beyond their borders because of the pandemic.



Stargazer development to get underway

Although still only in concept form, detailed design engineering work has been taking place over the last few months to finalise working drawings; the first build is planned to commence in early 2021.

The Stargazer, a pod specifically designed to be in dark sky designated areas, continues to generate enquiries, most recently from Scotland, the Lake District, and the Netherlands. 'We are convinced once launched the Stargazer Orion (4 berth) and Cygnus (2 berth) models will become popular additions to our Bleriot ranges,' said, Stargazer creator, Rik Currie.



Expansion and recognition

Awards, awards, awards

The Company is still awaiting the outcome of both the Institute of Directors (IOD) and the Yorkshire Post Business Excellence awards. Rik has been shortlisted for Director of the Year (Innovation) for Yorkshire and the North East, and finalists in the Yorkshire Post award which covers the business. In addition, Lux Life magazine has awarded the company 'Most Versatile Luxury Glamping Pod Solution: Anthropods LUX Eco-Excellence Award for Sustainable Design' in the luxurious Resorts and Retreats accommodation sector. 'These awards are testament to the hard work undertaken over the last two years in bringing our innovative glamping and micro-dwelling products to the market. It is a team effort and great to be recognized in this way,' said Rik.

Extra recruits boost the team

Senior joiner, Ashley Vaughan, joins us from Ilke Homes to head up our factory operations. In addition, we have added two new Apprentice Joiners, Tom Ward-Lewis and Brandon Bain. Both apprentices are studying joinery and carpentry at Harrogate College for one day a week.

New investor joins the board

The Anthropod board has been strengthened by the appointment of Dan Richmond-Watson who joins as a non-executive director and new investor. 'Dan's experience of running his family's country estate in Northamptonshire will be invaluable in giving us an insight into the needs of country landowners who are looking to maximize their land usage,' said Doug Adamson (Executive Chair). Dan joins Rik Currie (CEO) and Raymond Wolfson (Finance and Corporate Strategy).



Left to right : Brandon Bain (apprentice), Ashley Vaughan, (Head of Factory Ops), Tom Ward-Lewis (Apprentice), Adam Odle, (Joiner)



Future proofing

Since the Company's formation many enquiries have arrived from overseas. During the early part of the year, we received an enquiry from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Government for a substantial order for luxury glamping accommodation for a new global city project, called NEOM.com. We quickly realised to undertake this task, we needed a partner in the Kingdom to facilitate and supervise the project. Shipping pre-built pods from the UK to the Gulf would be prohibitively expensive. The only way to service this order would be to licence the building of our pods in Saudi. The Department for International Trade was instrumental in putting us in touch with prospective partners via the UK Consulate in Riyadh. Because of Covid this process has slowed but we are currently discussing heads of terms with a partner company. In addition, we are beginning a search for a similar arrangement to tap into US and Canadian markets.

Perspectives

Douglas Adamson, Anthropods Executive Chairman, comments:

"May we live in interesting times," is an old Chinese curse and is particularly apposite in the current circumstances. Perhaps, it would be more accurate to say, "we live in dangerous and turbulent times." But out of crises, opportunities can spill out.

I have been struck on my recent journeys around the country, and the many phone and email enquiries received, that tectonic plates are shifting in the staycation market. Even while the dreaded Covid-19 was still lurking in a Chinese bat cave, and before the predictable spike in UK holidays, it was clear there was a resurgence of interest in holidaying closer to home. This has been driven by a growing interest in outdoor exercise (cycling, walking, canoeing etc) and a recognition that the countryside can bring not just physical fitness, but mental wellbeing too.

In addition, a growing interest in the natural environment fostered by TV programmes like Countryfile, Spring/Autumn Watch and the plethora of vet, farming and wildlife documentaries has encouraged people to get out and explore the world around them. Add in an increasing awareness of the negative effects of air travel, and its contribution to climate change, and you have recipe for behavioural change.

It is fact that glamping has introduced many people to the countryside, who in the past,

wouldn't have been seen dead near a wild camping tent. But today's 'me generation' wants to experience the great outdoors on their own terms - an exclusive, bug-free, warm environment, complete with a flushing loo! And they are prepared to pay for it.

While some parts of the hospitality sector is barely surviving, the opportunities for landowners and farmers looking to diversify, loom large. As the glamping market matures and expands beyond millennials to an older, more affluent, demographic, so will the demand for new experiences and accommodation offering greater luxury and comfort. Differentiation will be the key decider.

Thankfully, we can now see a vaccine on the horizon, but it will take time before UK holidaymakers are persuaded to be herded back onto Ryanair flights or cruise to the overcrowded cities of Europe and beyond.



Douglas Adamson, Anthropods Executive Chairman

Promotional activity continues to raise our brand profile

The lockdown has meant that the Company has been unable to showcase our products at any exhibitions since March, so we have stepped up our social media and paid for advertising activities. Our budgets remain modest but through constant online media activity and web site comment, effectively managed by



Made by Bridge in Leeds, and supplemented by small, stylish ads from Threefold Creative, we have kept a presence in key landowning and farming publications. Combined with social media feeds and PR coverage we continue to receive a steady flow of telephone and email enquiries.



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Glamping, Hospitality, Park & Office Accommodation