



Arbeit im Dorf Kreuzstetten

Location Hauptstrasse 11,
2124 Niederkreuzstetten, AT

Building Type Former single-family residential house

Reuse Shared workspaces for self-employed professionals

Usable Area ~ 85 m², of which 60 m² are workspace

Investment Costs ~ 5,000€

Ownership Model Association Arbeit im Dorf

Duration until Opening 3-4 months - Opening in July 2021



Initial Situation

- Desire to create **local employment opportunities for women** & self-employed professionals
- Demand for** flexible & affordable **workspaces** in rural areas - Search for suitable premises within the village centre
- Identification of a **vacant single-family house** with good location, accessibility & visibility
- Only **minor structural adaptations** required

Objectives

- Creation of local workplaces** (*reduction of commuting*)
- Promotion of local self-employment** in rural areas
- Strengthening local service infrastructure** (e.g. hairdresser, wellness services)
- Reinforcement of social networks within the community** (*especially for women & families*)

Reuse Strategy

Strategy: Minimal & cost-efficient building adaptation with community-based organisation

Spatial Programme:

- 2 large long-term rented rooms (cover *operating costs*)
- 1 smaller flexible room (*bookable hourly or daily*)
- Shared facilities (*entrance area, kitchen, sanitary facilities*)

Key Decisions:

- Maximum use of existing building structure
- Flexible usage options
- Low-threshold access for users

Financing & Costs

- Total renovation** ~ 5,000 € (*minimal structural adaptation*)
- No rental costs** due to a socially motivated agreement with the property owner
- Monthly **operating costs** ~ 800 €

Financial Components:

- No external financing
- Private pre-financing by association members
- Membership fees
- Municipal grant (~ 3,000 €)

Funding: only played a minor role (*municipal subsidy*)

Income Sources: Subletting of workspaces + additional income through events

Operating Concept

- **Operator:** Association Arbeit im Dorf
- **Use Concept:** Combination of long-term room rentals & flexible bookable workspaces
- **Community-oriented workspace** for self-employed professionals
- **Goal:** Support regional self-employment through low-threshold access
- **Usage Mix:** Cosmetics, therapeutic massage, psychosocial counselling, midwifery, spiritual counselling (*previously also: hairdresser*)
- **Marketing:** Local media (*municipal newspaper, district newspaper*), flyers, website, social media (Facebook)

Challenges & Solutions

- **Challenge: Finding suitable premises**
 - Solution: Use of personal networks & patience
- **Challenge: Association organisation**
 - Solution: Clear role allocation & transparent communication
- **Challenge: Technical building issues**
 - Solution: Small maintenance reserves & self-help
- **Challenge: User turnover**
 - Solution: Conscious acceptance as part of the "stepping-stone model"

Key Actors

- **Main Operator:** Association Arbeit im Dorf (*voluntary board responsible for organisation, coordination & accounting*)
- **Property Owner:** Private landlord (*supporting non-profit use instead of vacancy*)
- **Supporting Actors:** Municipality (*one-time grant ~ 3,000 €*)
- **Users:** Self-employed service providers (*high personal responsibility & co-design*)

Transferability

What makes this example particularly instructive?

- Demonstrates a **demand-driven reuse model** (*social need leading to building reuse*)
- Shows an **extremely low-threshold & low-cost implementation model**
- Highlights the advantages of **flexible spatial concepts**
- Demonstrates the "**stepping-stone principle**" (*use turnover as success rather than failure*)

For whom is this model suitable?

- Small municipalities with vacant residential buildings in village centres
- Non-profit or community-based initiatives
- Projects with limited investment resources

Tips

- ✓ Clarify concrete **user demand before** starting the project
- ✓ **Plan maintenance reserves** for repairs & vacancies
- ✓ **Actively involve committed users**
- ✓ Use **existing competences** within the project team
- ✓ **Explore funding opportunities at an early stage**
- ✓ **Use experience** from existing association structures

- ✗ **Rent** premises **without** secured **demand**
- ✗ **Leave responsibilities & expectations** within the association **unclear**
- ✗ Generate **excessive fixed costs**
- ✗ Treat vacancy as a goal in itself - always start with **identifying demand**



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