



Poppy's palace speech

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Photos from the finish line: Pages 62 and 63

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TV team helps to build new Cherry Tree hub

CTYH

A place to call home

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FULL STORY AND MORE PHOTOS: Pages 38 & 39

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Report by James Richardson - Photos by Mike Hopps



DIY SOS team builds new





youth centre in eight days

Volunteers from across the East Riding were among the hundreds of volunteers who came together to build a youth club for a Beverley charity last month.

After eight days of round-the-clock hard work, the transformation of a field on Mudhills Park into the Cherry Tree Youth Club was completed on 22nd May.

The youth club provides a safe space for around 90 youngsters aged between 10 and 18 every week, as well as adults up to the age of 25 with special educational needs.

But in recent years, the youth club, which was established in 2016, has been meeting in a gazebo in the park after being left without a home following the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, thanks to the help of the DIY SOS team, led by presenter Nick Knowles, and the volunteers, the youth club now has a building it can call home.

The Cherry Tree Youth Club's new home features a communal area, kitchen, meeting room, storage area, outdoor gym and cycle path, as well as a whole host of other facilities for the youngsters to enjoy.

Jo Ramsay, manager at the Beverley Cherry Tree Community Centre, told Beverley Life that despite being forced to stay away from the build, so not to spoil the surprise of the big reveal, she was well aware of the spirit that had been created between the volunteers who worked day and night to ensure everything was finished on time.

"There are no words to describe what has been built for us," she said. "It's fantastic, a dream come true."

"Something like this doesn't

happen to people like us and a charity like ours. It's surreal.

"We were there at the start of the build when everyone involved came together, but after that we were not allowed back on site for eight days and were told to keep off social media as much as we could.

"But I was aware of the community that had been created. Some of my volunteers were reporting back that they were only going to help for a day but did the full eight.

"The community involvement was absolutely surreal. They have all become friends with people from all over the UK and everyone had their own story.

"It wasn't really about the build in the end; it was the community coming together, some of whom had been through their own hard time, to make a difference to others.

"And they all want to meet up again and work on the next DIY SOS build. It's fantastic and I know I would also like to give back now too."

The unveiling of the new building for the youth club came on 22nd May when the DIY SOS team, the volunteers, trustees and staff

from the Cherry Tree Centre and others involved with the project came together.

Jo said the final design surpassed all her expectations and she will never be able to thank everyone who contributed enough.

"I was really nervous before the reveal, as were the rest of my team," she said. "We were not sure what to expect.

"We were told to keep looking at the ground and it was a slow reveal, walking around the park before we could see the building.

"I looked up and one of the first things I saw was the abbreviation of the Cherry Tree Youth Club had been written in gold.

"All our logos are usually in red but seeing it in gold meant it was the best. My first thought was that DIY SOS thought our young people were the best and deserve these opportunities.

"I don't know what I was expecting but the building was more beautiful than I ever imagined.

"It's a lovely building, as is the land around it. We've now got outdoor equipment for the children, and we told the DIY SOS team that feeding the children was important, so we've got an outdoor pizza area.

"There are several outdoor sitting areas and then inside, there is a stage, giving an opportunity for the youngsters to perform, a beautiful kitchen, a coffee machine that will help them learn barista skills, an area to play consoles

on or have quiet time and a huge area for make-up and beauty treatments.

"There is DJ equipment, a washing machine, toilets and karaoke and bingo. It's just fantastic.

"It's going to change lives. We're tying up some loose ends before the building can be signed but we hope to be able to use it within the next month or so.

"The workmanship is beyond what we could have ever imagined. We can't thank the teams of people who worked on the build enough.

"No words are good enough and we just can't wait to get in and start using it."

One of those assisting with the build was Dawn Ball. Dawn is a regular volunteer at the Cherry Tree Centre's food pantry but donned her hard hat and steel toe capped boots to play several roles on the building site.

Her list of duties included working in the tea tent, painting wood panelling for the outside of the building, delivering the morning breakfast rolls to everyone, making sure that everyone had masks, goggles, ear defenders, moving fence panels, wall and floor insulation and plyboards to wherever they needed to be and barrowing topsoil, bark and plants around the site.

"The whole experience was fantastic," said Dawn. "So many friendships formed and so much laughter throughout the whole experience.

"The hope is for some of us to be able to join on another project not too far in the distant future.

"The atmosphere was absolutely buzzing and with all the chatter among us about how shocked Jo, Fiona, Chloe and Josh and the children would be when they saw what had become of that hole in the ground and what it had been turned into,

"It was a way to support their lives and help them with moving on. So much emotion was shown by all involved.

"The new building is so amazing and what they've been able to give them is unbelievable."

Also involved in the project was Chris Grubb, who had no previous links to the Cherry Tree Centre, but offered his handyman services free of charge to maintain the new facility.

"I've watched DIY SOS since it was first aired in 1999, and I always wanted to help on this show," said Chris. "So, when I heard they were doing a build in Beverley, the place of my birth, this was a must for me.

"Being a multi-tradesman, it gave me the opportunity to do lots of different jobs. I helped for the full eight days, working between 12 to 14 hours per day.

"I was lucky enough to help on the groundwork footings, flooring, fitting plasterboards onto the walls, the insulation, roof and wall cladding.

"The real treat was to paint and decorate inside the centre and work alongside all the stars of the show.

"They were all so down to earth. It was an unforgettable memory, the atmosphere was electric all the way through the build, and I never witnessed one argument.

"The community came together from adults with learning difficulties to senior citizens

"I'll always remember the 400 volunteers that helped to build the centre in eight days and be proud to be part of the DIY SOS Beverley team.

"We came there strangers, now I have 400 great friends for life. I've had the opportunity to travel all around the world in the military, but I can say this is one of the best things I've done to date."

