

the centre of it all

Established in 1996, Beverley Cherry Tree Community Centre is a registered charity in East Yorkshire. Located on the Cherry Tree Estate, it works with those in the community struggling with varying degrees of poverty.

Within the centre is an OFSTED inspected pre-school. It also delivers an affordable out-of-school club (breakfast club and after school) and holiday club, to allow parents to work.

The centre has 21 staff and 55 volunteers. It supports 550 individuals living in poverty or financial exclusion each year, and 26,000 across the wider community.

In 2016, the centre faced a serious cash-flow problem which impacted the council's voucher payments and threatened it with closure.

Key Fund stepped in, allowing the charity to restructure, address the shortfall, and ensure its future and financial outlook were back on track.

Since then, services have expanded to meet growing demand, including a youth club, housing project, credit union, bingo group, and a community pantry.

The biggest challenge it now faces is the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, impacting both those on benefits and those working but struggling to survive.

When Jo Ramsay, Manager of Beverley Cherry Tree Community Centre, was a young, single parent, she had no guidance on benefits. Her family had moved away, and she was managing alone while working a night job.

"I had the bailiffs, I had debts," Jo says. "I was struggling to make ends meet. I couldn't afford to eat. There were no such things as community pantries."

She decided to study social work at university, but found it incompatible with being a single mother. So she left, and following a placement at a charity advising disabled people, she joined Cherry Tree Centre as a volunteer, eventually becoming manager in 2006.



KEY NATIONAL STATISTICS

2X

as many people need emergency housing today than 12 years ago.

>150,000

children were in emergency housing last year.

7.5M

children living in food poverty.

"I've said before, I think across the UK there should be something like a Cherry Tree Centre in every town. We wrap around the community and make such a difference."

Since Key Fund's first investment, Beverley Cherry Tree Community Centre's services have expanded to include a youth club that supports 90 young people weekly, a community pantry, housing support, credit union services, a community group and support for those seeking employment.

Jo sees the impact the centre delivers and the lives it touches. It's her hope that centres like Cherry Tree can exist across the UK.

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TOTAL FUNDING

£110,628

LOAN

£25,500

GRANT

£85,128

NUMBER OF AWARDS

5

IMD

20%