

A Volunteer's Thoughts on the New Buildings

We are so happy with our new buildings, and excited about the new offices. The light flooding through the spacious area is wonderful. The newness and smell of the wood as soon as you step inside is so uplifting, and the amount of space makes you feel relaxed and able to breathe with ease. The energy is positive and at the same time peaceful.

A nice long, wide corridor leads from the office through to the staff room, meeting room and first aid room. Then you can go through to phase 2 and the library/work room, the quiet room where volunteers go when they are not feeling well, the book-keeping room, the disability rights advice room and the computer/training room where volunteers have their lessons. Then, returning to the seating area outside, past the storeroom and toilets, lastly you reach the volunteers' tearoom, which again has plenty of space and light.

We are so lucky to have all this, and know that it is the contributions of all our supporters that have made it possible. The volunteers remember what the old crumbling portacabins were like: cold, dark and damp with leaking roofs. Eventually they were beyond repair. The water eventually got in to the electrics and became quite dangerous. Thankfully those days are now past.

The new offices are named after our late patron Miss Sylvia Bowditch. She was the senior trustee of the Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Foundation, which has supported Cherry Tree since the very beginning.

Having these lovely new buildings is great for the volunteers' self-esteem, confidence and whole outlook on life. They are warmer, lighter and more cheerful. Strange as it may seem, the new buildings make us feel safe and protected, like being wrapped in a warm blanket. Coming to Cherry Tree is a pleasure. I look forward to my journey knowing I am going somewhere special, which helps me feel better.

Reaching its 25th anniversary is a great testament to the work done at Cherry Tree Nursery, but it could not have happened without all our wonderful supporters. The volunteers are so proud to have the new buildings and to know that we are part of this very special and worthwhile project that has changed so many people's lives during its 25 year history. What a fantastic achievement. Thank you all for making this possible.

On behalf of all the volunteers

Eileen Foley

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