



Cherry Tree Nursery



Annual Newsletter 2015

As both our 25th year and 2015 draw to a close, we welcome our new customers and friends, and send our love and gratitude to everyone who has generously given us their support and helped Cherry Tree Nursery to continue offering a caring community environment to people in mental distress; over 750 volunteers have worked here since our first few days in 1990, and more are hoping to join us.

2015 has been a very special but momentous year for Cherry Tree Nursery as we look to secure our future, improve our services and find new supporters. We are very pleased to be starting 2016 with a strengthened and improved group of staff who bring new ideas but share the same commitment to our ethos and values. We know that our project is even more essential at a time when support services for those with mental illness continue to be cut, yet at the same time donations have become harder to find.

Preparations for the 25th anniversary celebrations started in January. Our knitting and sewing group made bunting and devised an ambitious project – for every volunteer to embroider, paint or write on a square. All the squares were then sewn together to make a fabulous tapestry as a permanent reminder.

We would like to thank Steve Fletcher for donating a football signed by the whole Bournemouth Premier Squad which we sold by silent auction in aid of our 25th Anniversary Appeal.

A History of Cherry Tree's first 25 years was written and promoted with our new video. The volunteers opted to celebrate our birthday with a week of

events including decorating the nursery, a coffee and cake session for sharing memories, a hot soup lunch, a demonstration of hawks and owls and a day to share with friends and family. A photo collage was also created.

Our five-year Sustainable Building Replacement Programme was completed in early spring and we moved into our new offices, named the Sylvia Bowditch Building after our late patron, in March. Our thanks go out to everyone who made the building programme possible and to the lovely people who built it.

With the successful completion of our new buildings the volunteers decided that volunteer Anita Payne would perform the opening ceremony. In front of 200 people, filmed by ITV television and accompanied by the Lord-Lieutenant of Dorset, Angus Campbell, and the High Sheriff, Jennifer Coombs, she cut the ribbon and formally opened the whole complex.

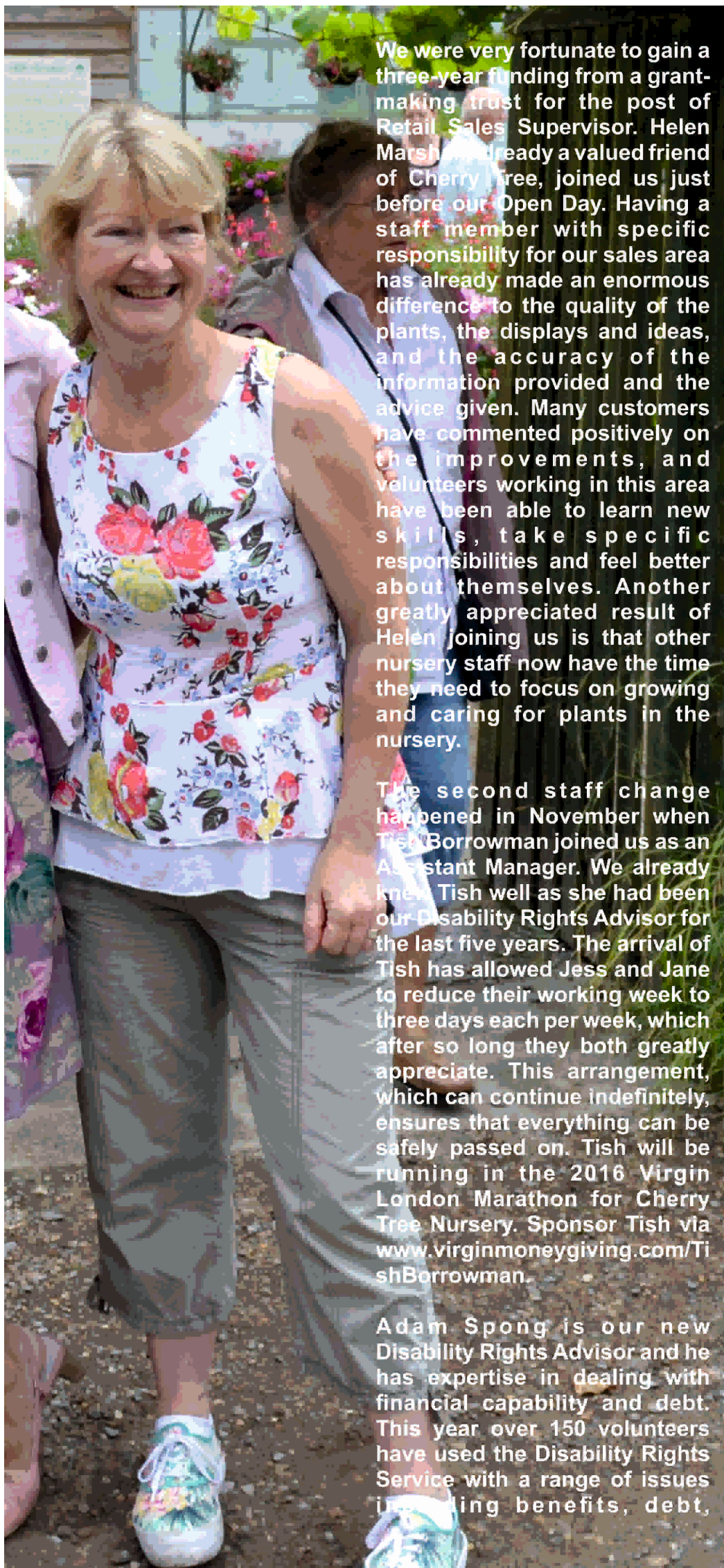
Anita's speech was the highlight of the year for many of our volunteers and the fact she was able to do this symbolises everything Cherry Tree stands for.

Here is a short extract from that very special speech:

"Before I cut the ribbon, I am going to say a little bit about how important Cherry Tree is, not only in my life but also to everyone who comes here. I needed somewhere to go where not only was I safe but where I would receive the help I so desperately needed. Cherry Tree gave me structure and support. Coming in to the nursery, being greeted by smiling faces and warm hugs, lifts me even on a bumpy day. Cherry Tree has something very special; compassion, love and acceptance. We are not judged nor do we judge...."

"...Cherry Tree has something special: compassion, love and acceptance..."





We were very fortunate to gain a three-year funding from a grant-making trust for the post of Retail Sales Supervisor. Helen Marsh, already a valued friend of Cherry Tree, joined us just before our Open Day. Having a staff member with specific responsibility for our sales area has already made an enormous difference to the quality of the plants, the displays and ideas, and the accuracy of the information provided and the advice given. Many customers have commented positively on the improvements, and volunteers working in this area have been able to learn new skills, take specific responsibilities and feel better about themselves. Another greatly appreciated result of Helen joining us is that other nursery staff now have the time they need to focus on growing and caring for plants in the nursery.

The second staff change happened in November when Tish Borrowman joined us as an Assistant Manager. We already knew Tish well as she had been our Disability Rights Advisor for the last five years. The arrival of Tish has allowed Jess and Jane to reduce their working week to three days each per week, which after so long they both greatly appreciate. This arrangement, which can continue indefinitely, ensures that everything can be safely passed on. Tish will be running in the 2016 Virgin London Marathon for Cherry Tree Nursery. Sponsor Tish via www.virginmoneygiving.com/TishBorrowman.

Adam Spong is our new Disability Rights Advisor and he has expertise in dealing with financial capability and debt. This year over 150 volunteers have used the Disability Rights Service with a range of issues including benefits, debt,

housing, and health and consumer problems.

Volunteers have enjoyed many outings this year, including a coach trip to Sherborne Castle on Harry Roffey Day, walks in the New Forest, Corfe Castle, Upton Country Park and Abbotsbury. A new experience has been two recent visits to see the horses at Newman's Farm, and a popular event, now taking place every two months, is a working party at the Hengistbury Head Wildlife Garden.



Our most generous long-term supporters, the Rotary Club of Bournemouth North, very kindly provided delicious sandwiches and a cream tea in September, and Olive Boswell, mother of our late volunteer Tim, celebrated her 90th birthday here in May, with the food provided by her sons. A happy group attended volunteer Anna's wedding to John Sweeney in June.

Thanks to the Landmark Trust's 50 for Free scheme, a group of 5 volunteers who have not had a holiday for a long time, if ever, went to stay in the old railway station at Alton in Staffordshire. Another group went on the annual caravan holiday, choosing Chichester again this year.



Seasonal events include the annual Santa Fun Run, organised by the kind members of the Rotary Club of Wimborne, the quiz between staff and volunteer teams at Cherry Tree and the annual Christmas Party for volunteers.

Many volunteers enjoy and benefit from the wide range of classes and courses available including 'Money Talk' workshops run by Quaker Social Action, focusing on how to manage your money and make it go further. Literacy, numeracy and computer classes run by Sue Cheeseman continue to be popular, as do the cookery sessions on 'Healthy Eating' and 'Cooking on a Budget' run by Annie Newbury. Diana Guy's preserve-making classes and the successful 'Making the Most of Containers' were enjoyed by the public as well as the volunteers

A special visitor was Joan from Quaker Bolivia Link who brought news from our volunteers' water projects in Bolivia. Volunteers have now raised funds to provide safe clean piped water supplies to 12 indigenous Aymara communities in Bolivia.

Some new friends are the monks and their supporters from the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery UK Trust. Kachen La and Thokmed La gave a moving blessing to the Nursery in June, and a larger group of monks built a sand mandala for us on a very special day in September.

We were amazed to be successful in a competition organised by the new Tesco store in Kinson, where customers voted for a local charity to support. We would like to thank their customers who voted for us.

Remembering Andrew

There are currently 170 people on our books. This year 80 volunteers participated in a questionnaire designed to find out how volunteers feel about the activities and services we have on offer, what we can improve, what else they need, and how they feel they have changed, or their lives have changed, as a result of attending the nursery.

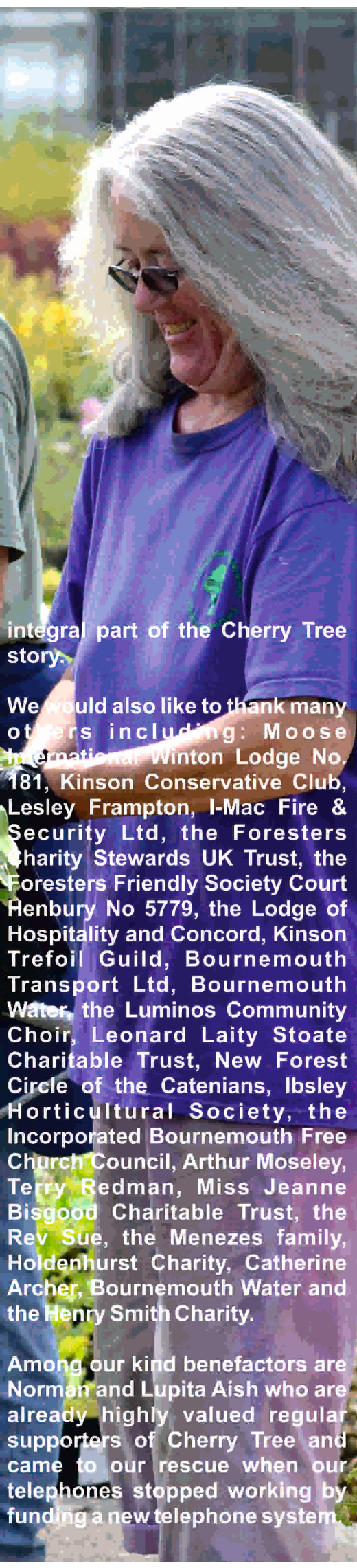
The findings of this survey show substantial improvements in aspects such as motivation, self-esteem, confidence, feeling part of a community and learning new skills, along with comparable decreases in feelings of loneliness and isolation and admissions to psychiatric hospital. Interestingly, improvements for those engaged in horticultural work seem to be greater than for those who are not.

We held our annual Day of Celebration and Remembrance on 30th October and remembered with love and affection our special Andrew Menezes who we lost earlier this year and all those we have loved and lost along the way.

Andrew is missed daily at Cherry Tree Nursery, his death was sudden and unexpected and his funeral had an unprecedented large attendance from Cherry Tree Nursery. An event in his memory was organised at the nursery where we welcomed his large family and many friends, neighbours and members of his church. Andrew was in charge of our photocopying and we have renamed our library in his memory. Jess spoke on behalf of all the volunteers, friends and staff at his funeral and here are some quotes from her speech that day which moved so many of us to tears.

'Andy was very special to all of us. His beautiful smile lit up the nursery and our days rang with his laughter. He made our lives brighter just by being with us, with his kindness, his sweet nature and his cheeky sense of humour. He was also a real gentleman, always polite and caring about others.'

'We knew him as 'Menz', a name given to him by his good friend Trevor Guest, who gave nicknames to the people who were special to him. He was also known for a very special wiggle only he could do, known as 'waving his tail feather'. 'Cherry Tree will not be the same without him.....'



From March to October we are open seven days per week and our Plant Sales next year are on 2 April, 2 July and 17 September. The festival-like atmosphere of these events has been enhanced by well-known local band The Darwins who have joined our own Propagators in providing the music. Our thanks go to the Rotary Clubs of Bournemouth North and Westbourne for the mouth-watering barbecues at these events.

We find we are becoming more like a garden centre and less like a plant nursery as the years go by. This year we needed to extend the areas for the sales of both trees and roses again, the volunteers are now planting up many more containers and hanging baskets for sale, and the demand for fruit bushes and trees, vegetable plants and herbs has increased. Requests for hedging have turned our *Griselinia* potting day into an annual event, and we are very happy to see an ever-growing numbers of schools, hospital units, care homes etc. wanting to set up their own projects that are popping up, and by the ever-growing recognition of the link between the natural world and our mental and physical wellbeing, which is fundamental to all we do.

We cannot thank you enough for your donations, large or small, each one matters and we could not continue without your support. There is not enough room in this newsletter to thank all of the brilliant individuals, organisations, businesses and trusts that have helped, supported and encouraged us both this year and for the last 25. Out of the many we can only mention a few, starting with our biggest supporters over the last 25 years, the Talbot Village Trust and the Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Foundation, whose generous contributions are such an

integral part of the Cherry Tree story.

We would also like to thank many others including: Moose International Winton Lodge No. 181, Kinson Conservative Club, Lesley Frampton, I-Mac Fire & Security Ltd, the Foresters Charity Stewards UK Trust, the Foresters Friendly Society Court Henbury No 5779, the Lodge of Hospitality and Concord, Kinson Trefoil Guild, Bournemouth Transport Ltd, Bournemouth Water, the Luminos Community Choir, Leonard Laity Stoate Charitable Trust, New Forest Circle of the Catenians, Ibsley Horticultural Society, the Incorporated Bournemouth Free Church Council, Arthur Moseley, Terry Redman, Miss Jeanne Bisgood Charitable Trust, the Rev Sue, the Menezes family, Holdenhurst Charity, Catherine Archer, Bournemouth Water and the Henry Smith Charity.

Among our kind benefactors are Norman and Lupita Aish who are already highly valued regular supporters of Cherry Tree and came to our rescue when our telephones stopped working by funding a new telephone system.

Our thanks go to Malcolm Rattue who rewired our laundry room so we could install a donated industrial dishwasher and to Mark and Rachel from Baskets in Bloom who donated several hundred New Guinea Busy Lizzie plants.

A big thank you to White Stuff in Bournemouth Arcade who have chosen Cherry Tree Nursery to be their charity partner. Our partnership was launched with a cake and information day at their shop on 13 November.

During the course of the year, we have had three trainee Community Police Officers placed with us. This is very beneficial for our volunteers, who can share their experiences of the police with the trainees, and for the trainees to gain valuable insights into mental health.

Students4Community joined us in the spring for a while and set up a new blog for us www.cherrytreenursery.wordpress.com which is now run by a volunteer who posts a weekly poem chosen or written by someone at Cherry Tree.

Our thanks go to Nationwide for sharing their expertise of social media, promotion and fundraising with us.

We wish to extend our thanks to our dedicated friends who make and donate items such as cards to sell in our shop. Thanks to Helga Aldersey and Sue Lynch for opening their gardens in aid of our projects. Thanks also to JP Morgan, LV= and Nationwide who have sold our plants at their premises. This is an extremely good idea and we would encourage other businesses, companies and organisations to try it.

From March to October we are open seven days per week and our Plant Sales next year are on 2 April, 2 July and 17 September. The festival-like atmosphere of these events has been enhanced by well-known local band The Darwins who have joined our own Propagators in providing the music. Our thanks go to the Rotary Clubs of Bournemouth North and Westbourne for the mouth-watering barbecues at these events.

We find we are becoming more like a garden centre and less like a plant nursery as the years go by. This year we needed to extend the areas for the sales of both trees and roses again, the volunteers are now planting up many more containers and hanging baskets for sale, and the demand for fruit bushes and



popping up, and by the ever-growing recognition of the link between the natural world and our mental and physical wellbeing, which is fundamental to all we do.

We cannot thank you enough for your donations, large or small, each one matters and we could not continue without your support. There is not enough room in this newsletter to thank all of the brilliant individuals, organisations, businesses and trusts that have helped, supported and encouraged us both this year and for the last 25. Out of the many we can only mention a few, starting with our biggest supporters over the last 25 years, the Talbot Village Trust and the Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Foundation, whose generous

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental illness has been in the news a lot recently, following cuts to services, and as part of an ongoing effort to tackle the unjust discrimination commonly experienced by people with mental health problems. A review of mental health services by the King's Fund, released in November 2015, found that "cuts to adult mental health services in England have started damaging the quality of care given to patients," and there is now "widespread evidence of poor quality care". The review also pointed to growing evidence that there is inadequate support for those with severe problems. It found that only 14% of patients had reported receiving appropriate care in a crisis. Marjorie Wallace, of the charity Sane, commented "a lot of mental health services are disappearing and we really believe that people's lives are being put at risk unnecessarily."

Information from the Mental Health Foundation shows that, in the UK, one in four people will experience some kind of mental health problem in the course of any year, with anxiety and depression the most common; one in 10 children has a mental health problem at any one time; and nine out of every 10 prisoners has a mental health disorder. The UK has one of the highest self-harm rates in Europe, at 400 cases per 100,000 population. Information from the Guardian shows that 75% of people suffering from mental illness do not receive any treatment at all. More than 2,000 hospital beds have been cut in England alone since 2011, with the result that in September 2015 there were no mental health beds available in the whole of England in the public or private sector. Just 5.5% of the UK's health research budget is spent on mental health, i.e. around £9.75 is invested for every person affected by mental illness; the figure per cancer patient is £1,571.

Also in November 2015, more than 200-high profile people signed an open letter calling for more investment in mental health services to secure equality with physical health

treatment. They say that the economy is weakened to the tune of £100bn per annum because of a lack of sufficient mental health services. "People with mental health problems do not enjoy the same access to services and to treatment as those with physical health problems. 75% of children and young people experiencing a mental health problem are thought to not access any treatment. And only 15 per cent of people who might benefit from talking therapies are actually getting such treatment."

Local authorities in England are spending on average just 1% of their public health budgets on tackling mental health problems, the charity Mind has calculated. Paul Farmer, Mind's chief executive, said, "Prevention is always better than cure and ignoring the problem simply doesn't make sense." Another recent Mind report, on the programme of welfare reforms introduced by Iain Duncan Smith, unsurprisingly showed that 83 per cent of people on the Government's Work Programme because of their mental health problems believed the scheme had made those problems worse. 76 per cent of the same group also said the scheme, which is enforced by sanctions, had made them actually less able to work than before they were allocated to it. On November 13th 2015, The Independent reported that "The number of benefit sanctions imposed on people with mental health problems has increased by over 600 per cent over the last four years. 19,259 people with such conditions had their benefits stopped under sanction in 2014-15 compared to just 2,507 in 2011-12 – a 668 per cent rise."

The above information makes clear the desperation in the lives of the forgotten of our society. Cherry Tree reminds us all of the basic human need for love and companionship, and shows the strength of the bonds forged through shared experience. It reinforces the constant need for projects like the Sheltered Work Opportunities Project, and

HEALTH IN CRISIS

demonstrates why we ask you for donations towards restoring dignity and self-belief to people who represent an often neglected and forgotten group in society, one representing an illness which affects one family in three, and has touched the lives of almost everyone.



Our front gate is causing us anxieties as the size of the lorries making deliveries has increased substantially. As a result, when cars are parked on the access road, these lorries cannot enter the nursery or turn around, causing queues, traffic blockages and holdups, affecting the public, the water purification works and access to the SSSI. Bournemouth Council are aware and looking into solutions.



We encourage and welcome visitors wanting to learn more about our work, and the therapeutic value of horticulture. This varies from students, researchers and people wanting to share experiences of working with volunteers or of community gardens, to people wanting to set up projects locally and further afield. Among others we were visited by a group from the University of Maryland, USA, in the summer.

Volunteers, friends and staff give talks and presentations to many different groups and we also host them with tea and a tour of the nursery. We hope local groups may then be interested in holding coffee mornings, bake sales or other events to raise funds for us.

In order to continue our work, we need your support. Please sign up to our mailing list, or follow us on Facebook, 'like' and share our posts, and come in to see us whenever you can. As we always do at this time of year, we ask you to consider making a donation to Cherry Tree, taking out a standing order, or remembering us in your will. Even the smallest donation makes a difference and is greatly appreciated. Donations can be made via the Cherry Tree Nursery website.

Are you on our mailing list? If not, please contact us.

We provide a good home for unwanted Christmas presents and we also offer an alternative gift for those you cannot find the right present for. Why not buy an item of protective clothing for an anonymous Cherry Tree volunteer? A gift of £15 buys a warm fleece, £15 a pair of safety boots, or £20 a waterproof jacket.

The story of Cherry Tree's first 25 years begins and ends with our lovely volunteers who amidst all their troubles and darkness bring us love, laughter and inspiration, and care for each other on a daily basis.

'Words don't come easily to me, but I would not be alive today without the staff and volunteers who have kept me going'. (Cherry Tree Volunteer)

"...we should be careful of each other, we should be kind while there is still time." (Philip Larkin)



Cherry Tree Nursery
Off New Road Roundabout, Northbourne, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH10 7DA.
www.cherrytreenursery.org.uk
email: contactus@cherrytreenursery.org.uk
Registered Charity Number 900325