

CHERRY TREE PROJECT



The Cherry Tree Project in Stockport formed in January 2019 with St Chad's Church, as a way to connect with the community of Cherry Tree. Since then, funded by Our Time and StreetGames, a small team of youth workers have been engaging with residents around Romiley and spending time with young people in particular. The aim of the project is to work collaboratively within the community and create new opportunities, avenues of support and sustainable provision for the young people.

The Cherry Tree project usually run Fit & Fed sessions on Cherry Tree during school holidays, but with the social distancing restrictions in place in relation to COVID 19, they are unable to run sessions as they usually would in 2020. The coronavirus pandemic has hit the country and people's lifestyles hard, but Racheal, Nigel and Andy have been working tirelessly to mitigate the impact on their local community. Still adhering to lockdown rules, they deliver support to the doorsteps of families in the form of goodie bags, games, sports equipment and food hampers. Their Facebook and Instagram pages are constantly updated with resources, giveaways, activities and challenges, which currently (in May) is followed by 860 people.

The project originally targeted families that are known to usually receive free school meals, but are open to all families living on the estate. By establishing connections with Morrison's, Avanti West Coast and a local bakery, residents who call for it through their Facebook page can get fresh bread and food hampers delivered to their door courtesy of Cherry Tree, sometimes by a member of staff dressed in a Spiderman costume to the delight of younger residents. Bags of ingredients for their online 'cookalong' videos are also delivered, meaning families can bond whilst cooking a free homemade meal for their household, whilst gaining the skills to cook the recipe again in future for next to nothing. 'Nigel's chicken curry' amazingly had over 100 households tune in on Facebook Live.

With the help of signposting from StreetGames, Cherry Tree have raised over £1000 via GoFundMe and were successful in gaining funding from Greggs to help sustain their wide range of delivery. Cherry Tree staff have also upskilled via StreetGames training academy, Racheal says 'the mental health first aid especially had a huge impact and was one of the inspirations behind our fundraising efforts for POPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide) during lockdown, we've raised over £300 and our young people spoke about mental health and coping mechanisms on the news'. Their Facebook page is also a hub of support, with posts relating to mental health awareness and heart-warming 'shout outs' and calls to action within the community.

During a difficult time for families, the commitment and positivity from Cherry Tree's staff has clearly resonated with the community who comment their appreciation in droves on their posts and videos. Cherry Tree are also showcasing how much is possible through the power of social media and proving that healthy eating and physical activity can still be provided to those in need, despite participants not being able to leave their homes.



“ Everyone! Kiki needs your help!! Her next door neighbour, Arthur, turns 80 tomorrow and she wants to help him celebrate. Please answer her pleas by adding messages and photos in the comments that I can print for him. If you live on Cherry Tree and you have a card or gift for Arthur, please let me know and I'll collect it tomorrow and items can also be dropped at my house and left in the porch. ”

To find out more about the great work Cherry Tree are doing, find them and support them on social media:

