

Set up in the mid-1980s in the cellar of a Victorian house, and originally called The Cellar Project, we are a registered charity which aims to provide mental health support in Bradford, Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven. Starting out with just a couple of people over 30 years ago, we now we have over 40 members of staff, not including volunteers. Kim Shutler-Jones (our CEO) joined the organisation just over four years ago, and brought in a lot of fantastic changes and additions to The Cellar Trust, including launching our crisis service in 2016.

Why was the organisation founded (what was the initial aim/need) –

The aim of the organisation was and is to provide a non-clinical answer to people living with mental health problems, making it an alternative to hospital or A&E.

What are you most proud of about your organisation –

The amount of people that we help in the local area, for example we may speak to somebody who has been out of work for a while due to mental health issues, we provide them with the help and support they need to re-enter the workplace. They remind us that what we do really does work and can make such a big difference to people's lives, and we are proud that we can be accessible to so many people with such a diverse set of needs.

We are also really proud of people who fundraise for us, and proud that they support our mission enough to want to do so. One man did a New Zealand triathlon and raised £5000 for us, which has helped us tremendously. Over #OperationPhoenix hundreds of people have helped to fundraise and we're immensely grateful.

What is your greatest challenge and how could others help you overcome it –

One of the biggest challenges is fundraising -a lot of our funding comes from individuals, businesses and organisations. Our head of fundraising, Andrew, works closely with many amazing local organisations, without whom we would not be here. We're a small charity but the support we've received over the years has been absolutely fantastic.

Another challenge is continuing to try and bring mental health to the fore. We need to make people feel comfortable talking about it so that they feel comfortable in seeking help. Celebrities and public figures speaking up has changed things massively – for example Princes William and Harry championing the cause, especially for men, and this is a great step in bringing mental health into the public eye and sparking a conversation. They have talked openly about their mental health and paved the way for others to come forward and discuss their own issues, and access support services such as ours.