



*Delivering lasting personal change*

# 2025 Review



# Overview

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*Welcome to CatZero's 2025 Review*

On behalf of the whole team at CatZero Humber, welcome to our 2025 Review. Over the following pages, we'll take a closer look at our year through the numbers, our programmes, and the people behind the work.



**ADRIAN TALLON**  
CEO, CATZERO



## A Year to Remember

2025 was a record year for CatZero. Not just in terms of the number of people we engaged with, but in the depth of impact we achieved and the recognition that followed. This year, we were proud to receive two significant awards: the Hull BID Award for our impact on health and wellbeing, and Charity of the Year at the Hull & East Yorkshire Business Awards. The judges commended our long-term impact, strong governance, and innovative approach to delivery, all things we focus on every day.

Recognition like this matters. It reflects the consistency of our work over time. Real change doesn't happen overnight, it takes trust, consistency, and the right support in place at the right time.

## People, Partnerships and Governance

As ever, our impact is driven by people; our team, our volunteers, and the partners we work alongside. In 2025, we strengthened our Board with the appointment of Milly Rose as a Trustee. Milly first engaged with CatZero as a participant, before going on to build her own career. Her journey gives her a unique perspective on the difference our programmes make, and her voice adds real value to our governance. Just as importantly, her appointment reflects our commitment to ensuring lived experience informs how we develop and deliver our work.

We also introduced a refreshed partnership model this year, creating clearer and more structured ways for organisations to work with us. Strong partnerships remain central to our delivery, and this approach allows us to deepen relationships while opening up new opportunities for businesses across the Humber to play a role in changing lives.

A key moment in the year was opening our AGM to supporters and partners for the first time. This was a deliberate step, rooted in our value of transparency, bringing people together to share progress, reflect on the previous year, and strengthen the collective effort behind our work.

## Sailing and Opportunity

Sailing continues to sit at the heart of CatZero. In 2025, we delivered one of our busiest and most ambitious sailing seasons to date, supporting participants, corporate crews and partners to take part in challenging offshore experiences across the North Sea and beyond. These voyages are more than just time on the water; they create space for reflection, build resilience, and develop the teamwork and confidence that underpin long-term change. We'll share more on this later in the report, but it remains a defining part of what makes CatZero different.

This year also saw the introduction of the Thomas Boyd Sailing Bursary. The bursary recognises the important role Thomas Boyd played in connecting CatZero with The Fishmongers' Company - now a long-term supporter of the charity - who generously sponsor this opportunity, ensuring that life-changing experiences at sea remain accessible to those who might not otherwise have the opportunity.

## Volunteering

Our volunteers remain fundamental to everything we do. In 2025, 49 volunteers gave their time to support CatZero, contributing a total of 11,395 hours across our programmes, sailing activity, and operations. From maintaining the yacht, to crewing voyages, to supporting delivery on land, their contribution is significant. Quite simply, we could not do what we do without them - and we are incredibly grateful for their commitment and support.

## Understanding Our Impact

We place a strong emphasis on understanding - and evidencing - the difference our work makes. This year, our Social Value Engine analysis shows that for every £1 invested in CatZero, we generate £8.04 in social value. In total, our programmes created over £6.1 million in social value based on an input of just under £1 million.

This methodology goes beyond simple outputs. It uses nationally recognised financial proxies to quantify outcomes such as improved health and wellbeing, increased school attendance, and progression into employment, while accounting for factors such as deadweight and attribution to ensure a robust and credible assessment of impact.

Much of this value sits with children, families and participants, particularly in health, education and long-term life outcomes. These are the foundations that enable lasting change across communities.

## Looking Ahead

The need for CatZero's work remains clear, and in many areas, it is growing. At the time of writing, there are over 1m unemployed young people nationally, with the Humber region unfortunately significantly higher than other areas, with our data. At the same time, and uncoincidentally, pockets of deprivation in the region will continue to have an impact on the lives of children and young people.

Over the coming year our focus on young people and work will sharpen further as we respond to increasing challenges around youth unemployment and economic inactivity. Supporting young people to build confidence, develop skills, and move towards employment will be a key priority.

At the same time, we are pleased to have secured continued investment in our Full Families programme across Hull and East Yorkshire for the next three years. This will allow us to work with families earlier - often before crisis point - with a particular focus on school readiness for children aged 0-4.

## Thank You

None of this work happens in isolation. It is made possible by the commitment of our trustees, our team, the dedication of our volunteers, and the support of our partners and funders.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in CatZero. We hope you enjoy reading about our work in 2025 and we look forward to continuing the journey with you in the years ahead.

# Statistics

As CatZero enters its 18th year, we continue to deliver sustained, measurable impact across some of the most deprived communities in Hull, East Yorkshire, North and North East Lincolnshire. Almost 70% of our beneficiaries live within the 20% most deprived wards in England, demonstrating our commitment to reaching those facing the greatest barriers.

We empower individuals to overcome personal, educational and employment challenges through accredited training, structured teamwork, and intensive emotional and practical support. Our distinctive long-term approach sets us apart. Through our dedicated Progressions Team, we maintain contact with participants for months and often years beyond programme completion. Our ethos 'Once CatZero, Always CatZero' reflects our enduring commitment to every individual's journey.

Over the past 17 years, nearly 2,500 individuals have participated in our employability programmes, changing the trajectory of their lives. Of these, 80% report increased confidence and 70% demonstrated improved motivation; critical foundations for sustainable progression. More than 1,300 participants have moved into Education, Employment or Training, with hundreds more securing work experience placements or volunteering roles that strengthen their future prospects.

We have also delivered bespoke support to 82 Armed Forces veterans, helping them rebuild confidence, address barriers and successfully reintegrate into civilian life.

Since launching our Full Families Programme in 2017, we have supported 273 families, over 1,000 individuals, through whole family interventions that create lasting change. Outcomes include improved school attendance and attainment, better behaviour at school and at home, increased peer friendships, reduced anxiety, healthier diets and shared family mealtimes, and an overall increase in families reporting that they feel more positive and in control of their lives.

In addition, 157 pupils have benefited from our targeted transition, GCSE and early intervention programmes, receiving structured support at critical educational milestones. This timely intervention strengthens resilience, raises aspirations and improves readiness for the next stage of education or training.

Together, these outcomes demonstrate CatZero's sustained impact: transforming lives, strengthening families and creating long-term social and economic change in the communities that need it most.

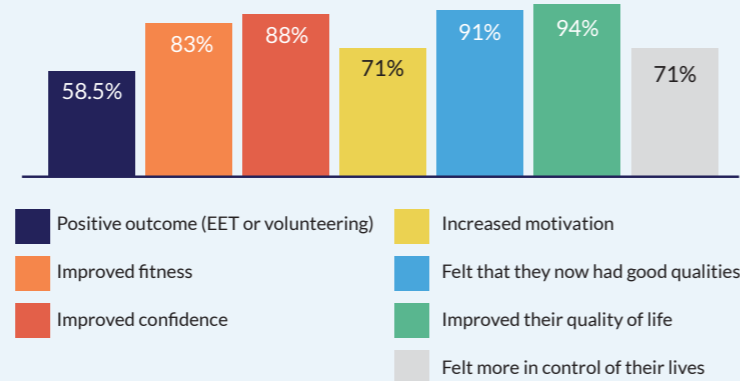
## A summary of 2025

Nine programmes were run over the year, supporting 259 individuals.

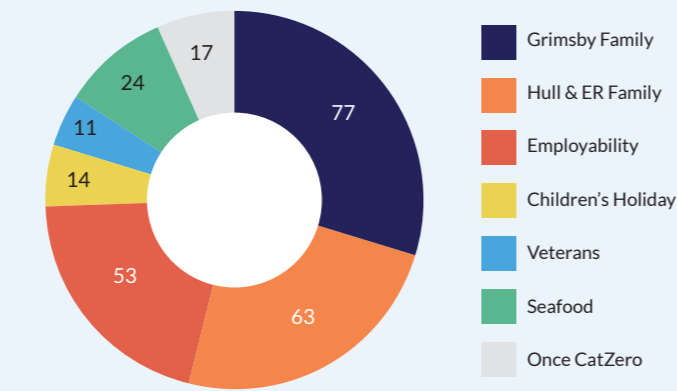
Thirty-four families (140 individuals) were supported through our two full families programmes in North East Lincolnshire, Hull and parts of the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Fifty-three adults from Goole, Grimsby and Hull took part in one of four employability programmes with an additional 35 people benefitting from our bespoke Seafood and Veterans programmes and 14 children benefitting from our School Holiday Programme. In addition, 17 people were given support through our Once CatZero, Always CatZero guarantee.

## Employability Programme Results



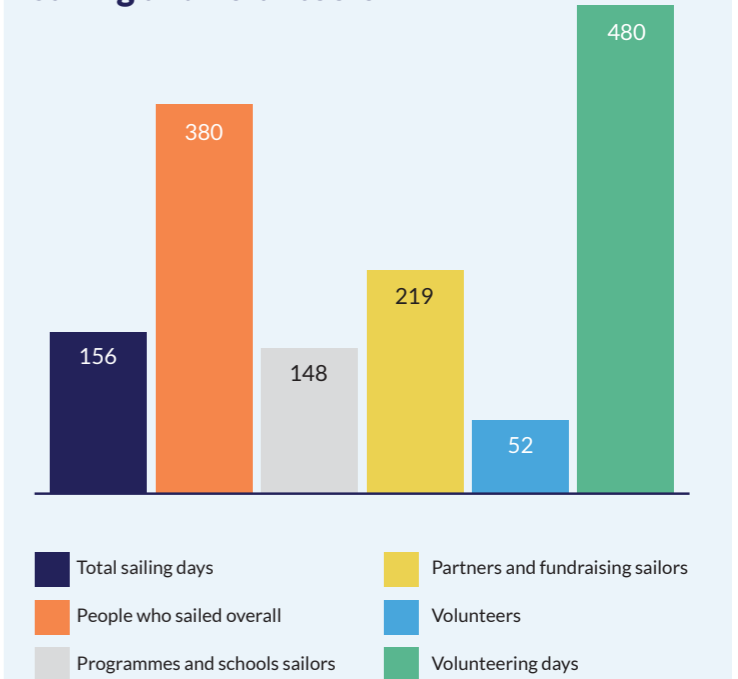
## Individuals Supported (259)



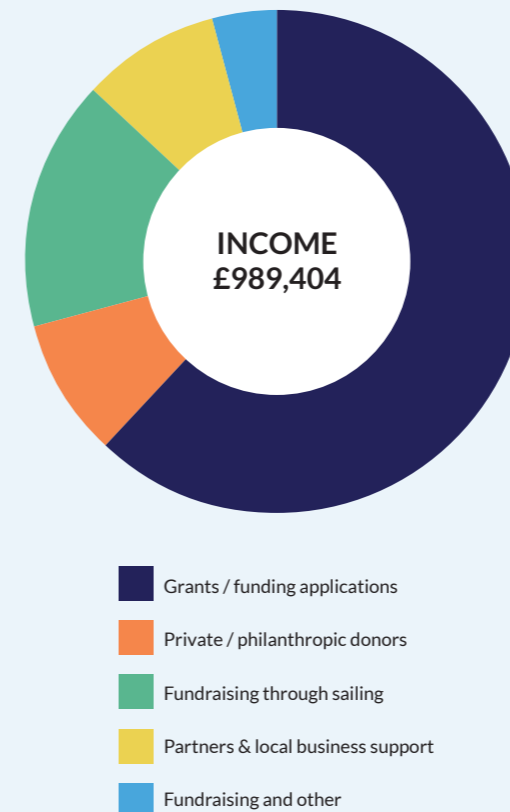
## Sailing

2025 proved to be our busiest sailing season since starting back in 2009. Commencing on 18th March, 156 days were spent sailing with CatZero being berthed for the year in Grimsby Fish Docks. Special thanks to Martyn Boyers and the staff at Grimsby Fish Dock Enterprises. Fourteen residential sails took place, including voyages to Norway and Holland. Thirty-three people took part in one of our three school residential, with 115 participants taking part in one of five programme residential & day sails. When not sailing as part of our programmes the boat is used to raise funds, all of which go back into funding the sailing element of our programmes. Five such fundraising sails took place in 2025, including the Fastnet race, with 57 people taking part, raising just short of £100,000. Day sails are also offered to our partners, with just over £75,000 being raised across 12 local business partnerships. Twenty-three day and taster sails took place, which included opening up the sailing experience to our families and those participants unable to commit to a residential experience. In total 380 people took part in a sail, with 49 volunteers providing 11,395 hours of their time to support our work.

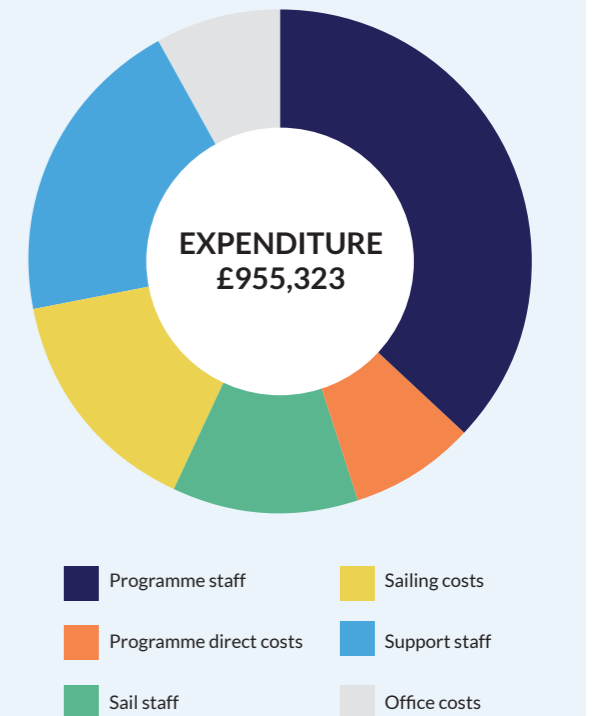
## Sailing and volunteers



## Funding Breakdown



## Expenditure Breakdown



# Social Impact

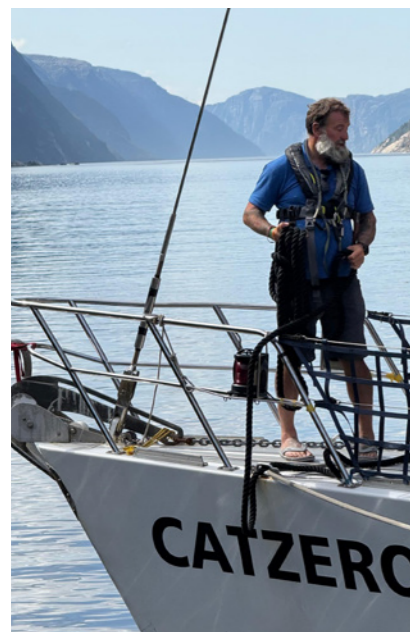
The impact figure represents the broader difference CatZero makes in people's lives, measured through changes in wellbeing, stability and life chances as well as entry to employment. Using the nationally recognised Social Value Engine, our Social Return on Investment (SROI) shows how that impact relates to the resources invested, providing a transparent and credible way to understand the value created for every £1 spent.



*"It felt like for the first time someone listened to me. When I first met S (CatZero Delivery Officer), I was a mess. She supported me with going to big meetings, and helped me with my parenting through Triple P. She made me realize more about being a mum and what it's all about."*

Parent

# Volunteering



**Total volunteering hours in 2025:**

**11,395**

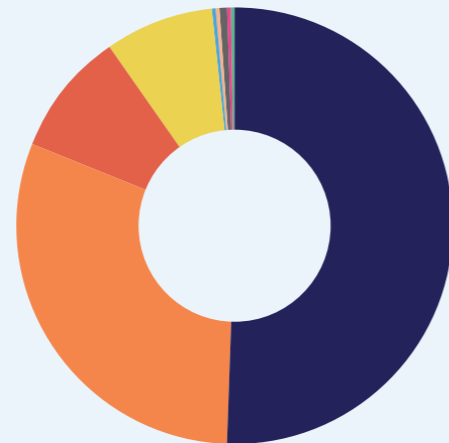
Volunteering includes: Sailing days, training, group activities, Childrens' Holiday programme activities, Sports England activities, Watch Leader, Hull UKSPF activities, mock interviews, Goole Windfarm programme, Fastnet race, veterans residential programme.



**Most volunteering hours from a single person:**

**Kenny Keegan**  
**2,835.75**

This impact can be seen using the UN's sustainable Development Goals:



Good Health and Wellbeing: £3,147,749.14 (50.81%)
Quality Education: £1,877,493.65 (30.31%)
Decent Work and Economic Growth: £584,111.31 (9.43%)
Sustainable Cities and Communities: £484,759.29 (7.83%)
Zero Hunger: £25,300.00 (0.41%)
Reduced Inequalities: £23,271.78 (0.38%)
Responsible Consumption and Production: £22,405.07 (0.36%)
No Poverty: £19,913.19 (0.32%)
Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure: £9,699.68 (0.16%)

# School Holiday Programme 2025

CatZero recruited 14 young people from deprived Humber region communities (Grimsby and Hull). This year we targeted those who were in year 6 who needed additional support to transition to year 7 at secondary school. We delivered a programme of structured activity, creating new experiences, making positive memories and facilitating new friendships. This helped each child to overcome social anxiety, improve their physical and mental wellbeing while learning new skills to help them navigate the challenges life throws at them.

Each young person joining the project worked closely with staff, looking at their specific needs, paying attention to mental & physical health and wellbeing. The team build strong relationships with young people who've seen their life chances limited by economic circumstance.

The group sessions comprised of fun, enjoyable team-building activities which built confidence and resilience, challenged negative attitudes and supported positivity.

The young people were introduced to a great number of new, exciting experiences such as archery and beach trips. Staff also supported the children to look at their relationship with learning and issues around personal presentation.

Each child had the opportunity to take part in a residential day sail on the CatZero yacht, staying on board overnight before a taster sail on the Humber. This built self-motivation, communication and perseverance as well as providing each with the opportunity to participate in a life-changing experience.



## Case Study

The family has been known to Social Care for some time due to concerns around neglect and unmet health needs. They have engaged positively with services and made significant improvements. While it is hoped Social Care may step down soon, the family still require support with consistent parenting, employment, and providing structured activities for the children.

Following referral, staff completed an initial home visit to discuss potential support. A full family network meeting was then held, structured around three questions: What is going well? What are your worries? What would you like to change?

Key priorities identified included supporting Child T with behaviour and emotional regulation, maintaining a tidy home through age-appropriate cleaning routines, building Mum's confidence to act independently, and creating more positive family memories.

After the meeting, staff introduced the Children's Holiday Programme. T's parents were enthusiastic but unsure whether he would attend as he struggles with friendships and confidence. When staff spoke with T, he felt nervous but became excited about the activities. He agreed to join if he could bring his teddy bear for reassurance.

On his first day, T was quiet and withdrawn, participating briefly before becoming overwhelmed. With gentle encouragement, he re-joined and completed the session. During a Rock Up climbing session, T shared that he feared heights. Staff reassured him that small steps would be an achievement. To his own surprise, he climbed halfway up the wall. He beamed with pride and asked staff to tell his dad. His father's praise further boosted his confidence.

As weeks progressed, T grew more comfortable, engaging more independently with peers and activities. The programme culminated in an overnight sailing challenge - his first night away from home. Though determined, T froze when approaching the yacht. Staff supported him with breathing techniques and small steps forward. Encouraged by cheering peers, he finally stepped aboard to applause. The pride on his face was unmistakable.

T completed the sailing experience successfully. His parents were amazed by his resilience and courage, particularly in overcoming his fears. His journey demonstrates how targeted, supportive interventions can build confidence, strengthen family relationships, and create lasting positive change.

# Full Families

## Full Families Programme – Hull & Grimsby

CatZero's Full Families programme provides practical, relationship-based support to families across Hull, East Riding and North East Lincolnshire, helping to build resilience, strengthen relationships and create long-term stability. In 2025, we worked with 36 families across all areas, delivering tailored interventions to address challenges including school attendance, behaviour, wellbeing and financial pressures. Through a combination of school-based support, in-home guidance, physical activity and shared experiences, we work alongside families to create sustainable, positive change.



## Grimsby

For eight years, CatZero has supported families across North East Lincolnshire, and in 2025 worked intensively with 18 families, with a strong focus on improving school attendance. Persistent absence remained a key challenge, with significant time spent working directly with schools to create clear, achievable reintegration plans. This included close collaboration with teaching staff and pastoral teams, alongside one-to-one support for children to rebuild confidence, address barriers and sustain engagement in education.

Parents and carers were also supported, particularly in navigating complex processes such as Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), ensuring children with additional needs could access the right support.

Beyond education, families accessed wider support to improve overall wellbeing. Six families completed a six-week cooking programme, funded through the Household Support Fund, building skills in budgeting, nutrition and meal preparation while addressing food insecurity. In addition, 16 families engaged in physical activities through Sport England funding, including leisure centre access and structured sports.

Taster sailing sessions also provided new challenges and opportunities for families to build confidence, strengthen relationships and create positive shared experiences.



## Hull & East Riding

For six years, CatZero has worked alongside families in Hull and East Riding, supporting 18 families in 2025, including seven serving personnel families based at Normandy Barracks. The primary area of focus this year was behaviour in schools, with some children experiencing repeated incidents and disruption to their learning. CatZero worked closely with schools through behaviour reviews, reintroduction meetings and multi-agency support, ensuring consistent approaches were in place.

Children were supported through one-to-one sessions to develop emotional awareness, understand triggers and build practical coping strategies. Alongside this, work within the home helped families establish routines, boundaries and more positive communication, improving relationships and stability.

Through Sport England funding, 14 families accessed a range of physical and wellbeing activities, supporting both mental health and family connection. Opportunities included gymnastics, football and SEN-specific sessions, providing structured, inclusive environments for children to thrive.

Sailing remained a key part of the programme, with families taking part in taster sessions that encouraged teamwork, confidence and resilience, often for the first time on the water.

*"I think CatZero are amazing. Always there for a chat, ready to listen, and I know I can rely on them whenever I need support. Their presence alone brings comfort, and their kindness makes difficult moments easier to manage."*

Parent

## Grimsby Full Families Case Study

In October 2025, RL approached CatZero in crisis, deeply concerned about her family's mental health and overall wellbeing. The family, Mum, her long-term partner, Child A (15) and Child B (12), were facing multiple, complex challenges that were impacting daily life.

### Challenges

The family were experiencing significant difficulties across several areas. Within the home, there were frequent arguments, aggressive outbursts and challenges around emotional regulation, all set against RL's own history of trauma, ongoing mental health struggles and limited external support.

Both children were struggling in education, with low attendance, repeated suspensions and a breakdown in relationships with school staff. RL felt unable to confidently advocate for her children and believed their needs were not being fully understood or supported. Child A, who had ADHD and an EHCP, was not receiving appropriate provision, while Child B's additional needs had not yet been identified.

The family was also socially isolated, with strained relationships and limited positive interactions outside the home. Alongside this, they were living in overcrowded housing, adding further pressure to an already challenging situation.

### The Journey

CatZero provided coordinated, intensive support across home, school and community settings.

Weekly school-based sessions were delivered over eight weeks, focusing on emotional awareness, relationships and boundaries. "House Rules" were co-created with the family to support consistency and positive behaviour at home, while RL was supported to access counselling to begin addressing her own trauma.

We worked closely with schools, attending meetings to advocate for the family and ensure clearer communication and shared understanding. Child A was supported to access weekly CBT sessions, while both children received ongoing guidance to improve engagement and behaviour in school.

Support extended into education and SEN processes, with CatZero attending SEN and Team Around the Family meetings. Child A received a full review, leading to a revised medication plan, an additional diagnosis of Raynaud's Disease and a transition into a specialist school setting. At the same time, an EHCP request and ADHD assessment pathway were initiated for Child B.

To reduce isolation and improve wellbeing, the family engaged in CatZero's Sport England programme, taking part in activities including swimming, sailing, cricket and badminton, alongside accessing local leisure facilities. RL also completed a conflict resolution course, while both adults engaged in the Solihull parenting programme.

Practical support was also provided to address housing, helping the family secure a more suitable three-bedroom home.

### Outcomes

At home, relationships strengthened, with reduced conflict and improved communication. RL began her own journey of recovery, building resilience and confidence in her parenting.

In education, attendance improved, suspensions reduced, and relationships with school staff became more positive and collaborative. Both children developed a better understanding of behaviour, consequences and emotional regulation.

Child A successfully transitioned into a specialist setting better suited to his needs, while Child B's additional needs are now formally recognised and being assessed, ensuring appropriate support moving forward.

Through increased participation in activities, the family built confidence, developed new skills and formed positive community connections, reducing isolation. The move to a more suitable home further improved stability and overall wellbeing, creating a more supportive environment for long-term progress.

## Hull Full Families Case Study

In October 2024, CatZero began supporting a single mother of five following an Early Help referral. The family was in crisis, with Mum overwhelmed, exhausted and facing significant financial pressure, limited support and ongoing conflict at home.

### Challenges

Several children were experiencing challenges in school. One child had been excluded and was at risk of permanent exclusion, while others faced bullying, behavioural difficulties and unmet additional needs. Daily routines were strained, relationships within the home were deteriorating, and the family lacked stability across multiple areas.

### The Journey

CatZero provided intensive, coordinated support across the home, education and financial systems.

Mum received regular one-to-one support alongside weekly counselling, helping her develop emotional regulation, confidence and practical strategies to manage family life. We completed a detailed DLA application for Child 4 across two extended sessions. The award was backdated, resulting in a huge £1,300 boost. Additional guidance was given on reduced water tariffs and ways to save money on energy. Mum was also supported to resolve a problematic phone contract in her ex-partner's name, enabling her to regain financial control.

We worked closely with schools, attending meetings and advocating for each child to ensure appropriate support was in place. This included reintegration planning following exclusion, access to mental health provision, and support with SEN processes, including EHCP applications and specialist assessments as well as attending multiple meetings with senior leaders, SENCO and safeguarding teams.

Through Sport England funding, the family accessed beach trips, swimming, and gymnastics for three daughters. These shared experiences strengthened bonds and built confidence.

### Outcomes

The family has moved from crisis toward stability: reduced debt, improved school engagement, clearer routines, and stronger relationships. Holistic, persistent support has empowered Mum and created safer, more hopeful futures for her children.

Restorative work between Mum and Child 1 improved communication. Whole-family discussions focused on respectful responses and reducing conflict.

**Child 1:** Following exclusion, CatZero advocated in reintegration meetings. She returned to school in isolation provision and was added to the ELSA list. A Thrive referral was made for in-school mental health support, stabilising her placement.

**Child 2:** Awaiting autism assessment, she struggled with anger and perceived bullying. She joined the Children's Holiday Programme, where behaviour and compliance improved. Clear boundaries were reinforced at home. Although transition to secondary school brought further challenges, strategies are now in place to manage risk.

**Child 3:** Conflict with a teacher was resolved through a restorative meeting facilitated by school. Adjustments including a fidget tool and soft classroom transitions significantly improved behaviour and peer relationships.

**Child 4:** Significant learning and sensory needs were identified. An educational psychologist assessment informed classroom strategies. Mum was supported to request an EHCP and SEN registration. A neurodiversity referral was submitted.

**Child 5:** Now registered for nursery from January 2026; speech and development will be monitored.

# Employability

## 4 Linear programmes, 12-weeks each

CatZero's 12-week programmes support adults and young people who are facing barriers to moving forward, whether that's low confidence, challenges around employment or education, or reaching crisis point at home. Through a combination of skills development, qualifications, one-to-one support and a unique sailing experience, the programme builds confidence, improves wellbeing and helps participants gain a clearer understanding of their next steps. With a strong focus on long-term outcomes, over 66% of participants progress into employment, education or training within six months of completing the programme.

### Programme One – Goole

Programme One was delivered in Goole with 14 participants completing the 12-week programme and achieving a total of 65 qualifications.

Recruitment proved challenging due to the small Jobcentre and limited opportunity for on-site engagement. In response, staff adapted their approach, working directly with community and training organisations and offering one-to-one information sessions to support individuals who were anxious about group settings.

Outcomes were strong, with six participants progressing into employment, two into further training, and one into education. The group demonstrated high levels of commitment throughout.

### Programme Two – Grimsby

Programme Two supported 12 participants in Grimsby, many of whom presented complex needs. Early challenges included poor attendance and timekeeping, requiring a more intensive, relationship-based approach to engagement.

Additional one-to-one support was introduced, enabling the team to better respond to individual circumstances, including participants in recovery, those experiencing mental health challenges, and care leavers with disrupted backgrounds.

Despite these barriers, 37 qualifications were achieved, with one participant progressing into employment. The programme successfully built trust and re-engaged participants with learning and routine.

### Programme Three – Hull

Programme Three supported 14 participants from across Hull, many of whom faced significant barriers, including previous offending, care experience, homelessness and recovery from substance misuse.

Participants achieved 56 qualifications, with positive outcomes including four progressing into employment, two into education and two into volunteering. The programme supported individuals to rebuild confidence and take meaningful steps forward.

### Programme Four – Hull

Programme Four began with 16 participants, with 10 completing work placements in partnership with Sewell Group.

A total of 68 qualifications were achieved. Outcomes to date include five participants progressing into employment and two into education, demonstrating strong progression into sustained opportunities.



### Case Study – Programme One

O is originally from Bradford. She is 22. She lived with her mum and dad until 11. At 11 her parents split up and her dad moved out. She lived with mum until she was 16 and mum passed away, she was then placed in various foster care settings and separated from her brother. She stopped attending school at 14 and didn't get any qualifications. She had sporadic contact with her Dad until the age of 19 when she moved in with him for 6 months but left due to his drinking. She then moved in with her Grandma to support her. While here, she enrolled at Keighley College and commuted from Selby every day. She passed Health and Social and Child Care level 1 and Functional Skills Maths.

O has now settled at the YMCA in Goole and has lived there for 2 years. She suffers from anxiety and is in receipt of Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment (PIP). She doesn't like going to places she isn't familiar with. She has been financially coerced by some of the residents within the YMCA. She has worked as a support worker and production operative. In the future she would like to become a Social Worker.

O's attendance on the programme was very good. She completed 3 qualifications and joined the boat for the taster sail. She was unable to attend the celebration event as she had her first shift working as a supporter worker at Devonshire Care Home – Goole Hall.

### Case Study – Programme Two

Sadly, just two days before the presentation, L's grandmother passed away. Four generations of the family all lived together under one roof and the death was quite traumatic for L and her mum who were there at the time. Despite the immense emotional challenges and grief that she and her mother were experiencing, she remained determined to complete the programme to honour her grandmother. With her mother's support in caring for her 2 year old son, L passed all 5 qualifications and took part in the taster sail. The celebration event was deeply emotional for everyone involved and she went on to find employment at Beechwood Farm Restaurant.

### Case Study – Programme Three

Before CatZero, K was extremely isolated and rarely left the house, spending most of his time online playing Eurotruck Simulator 2, reflecting his passion for HGVs. Attending the CatZero recruitment presentation was a huge step, but he quickly made progress, starting with the Intro Day and embracing new challenges.

During the introductory sessions, K excelled. He discovered he could work successfully alongside others, completing group tasks with strangers. Grateful to secure a place on the programme, he threw himself into activities he had never tried before. In his first two weeks, he attended Rock Up and Welton Waters, conquering the "Stairway to Heaven" climb and jumping from a jetty into the water. As his confidence grew, so did his personality. His dry humour made him popular within the group, and his inquisitive nature kept trainers engaged throughout his qualifications.

A key milestone came when K arrived one day with a fresh haircut and clean shave. He explained that thriving at CatZero had given him pride in his appearance and the confidence to present himself differently.

There were challenges. Before a Go Karting session, K felt anxious due to past experiences. With encouragement from staff and peers, he faced his fears and completed the race, proud of his achievement. Later, learning that strangers would conduct his mock interview unsettled him. Determined to succeed, he prepared carefully, bought a suit and tie, and arrived "looking like a CEO." He performed exceptionally well, with feedback praising his enthusiasm, professionalism, and positive presence.

K's transformation was most evident during the ten-day sailing voyage. It was his first extended time away from home and his first experience of structured work, completing four-hour shifts aboard the yacht. He showed no fear, only curiosity and excitement, asking thoughtful questions about sailing and the engine. When the voyage ended, K was emotional and grateful, thanking staff and participants and looking forward to hugging his mum.

By the programme's end, K had grown immensely. At the Celebration Event, he chose to speak without notes in front of family and strangers, confidently sharing his journey. His speech was so impactful that CatZero invited him back to help recruit new participants. Wearing his orange backpack with pride, K supported Presentation Days and encouraged others. He is a powerful example of how confidence, opportunity, and support can transform a young person's future.



### Case Study – Programme Four

T was recruited through the Job Centre after being unemployed since leaving Wilberforce College in 2021. Despite strong academic achievements - nine GCSEs at Grades 5-8 including Maths, English and Science, and a Triple Distinction in an ICT Level 3 Extended Diploma - he had struggled to secure work. Academically one of the brightest participants CatZero had seen in some time, it quickly became clear that social factors, rather than ability, were holding him back.

From the first Intro Day, T's intelligence and analytical skills stood out. During team tasks and the group Taster Sail, he confidently interpreted the yacht's navigation system and even identified when it had drifted off course. However, staff also noticed concerns around hygiene, which later conversations revealed were linked to complex home circumstances.

T lives with his mum and older brother, both of whom rarely leave the house. Severe hoarding meant his bedroom was unusable, and he and his mum alternated sleeping in the same bed. Without structure, T often stayed awake gaming through the night and slept during the day. There was no washing machine in the house, and he owned only two sets of clothes. Bathing and dental care were extremely infrequent, largely due to limited awareness and routine. In a sensitive one-to-one, staff discussed how sleep patterns and hygiene were affecting his employability. T was surprised but receptive. CatZero provided toiletries and helped him establish a daily routine.

For work experience, T chose Sewell On The Go in Dunswell but felt overwhelmed by travel and full-time hours. The placement was adjusted to two days, and staff supported his first journey. On his second day, when his bus was delayed, T proactively sought an alternative route and arrived on time - a significant milestone. He particularly enjoyed shelf-stacking and took pride in presentation, aligning with his ambition to work in stock replenishment.

Following this, T began making independent, positive choices. He arranged for clothes to be washed, visited a barber for his first haircut in seven years, and expressed pride in his appearance. At CatZero's Café Day, he arrived clean, well-presented, and confident, volunteering for the hot drinks station where he served guests independently.

T's journey remains ongoing, but his progress demonstrates how CatZero's person-centred, holistic approach can address deep-rooted barriers and unlock potential that academic success alone cannot realise.

# Sailing

## Sailing through 2025: Year in Review

2025 has been one of our busiest and most rewarding years on the water. It hasn't always been smooth sailing, but that's exactly what made it memorable. Time and again, we saw people step up, take on new challenges and achieve more than they thought possible, with every voyage showing what people can do when they step outside their comfort zone.



**DANNY WATSON**  
DIRECTOR OF SAILING

### A Challenging Start

We started the season on the back foot. Heavy silt in our home marina meant we had to find alternative berthing, and what we thought would be a short-term fix ended up lasting all year. Even so, the team got on with it. Plans changed, logistics got more complicated, but the sailing didn't stop.

### Voyages to Norway

Our 13-day trips to Norway and back were a real highlight. We welcomed students from Tonbridge School for the first time, with one group sailing out to Stavanger and another bringing the boat home. We also enjoyed another trip with Hymers College students who sailed to Stavanger and back. These voyages ask a lot of young people, but they give even more back. The confidence and independence they build is clear to see.

*"The best personal development trip I have ever been on. Watching a 15 year old take in the stay sail in heavy rain and bouncing waves, and the thrill on his face, was unforgettable."*

### Family and Young People Sails

Alongside the longer voyages, we ran taster sails for families and young people. These trips might be shorter, but they still make a difference, giving people time together, new experiences and a chance to build confidence on the water.

### September Residential Voyage

Our final long sail from 12th – 21st September brought together ten young people for a full-on experience of life at sea. For many, it pushed them well outside of their comfort zone, but that's where the biggest changes happened, as they faced their fears, tried something new and realised they're capable of more than they thought.

*"The long sail was an experience of a lifetime. It made me realise I am exactly where I want to be."*

Beth, 17

*"Seeing dolphins next to the boat was amazing. I was scared of deep water, but I did something I never thought I could."*

Maks, 18

*"It made me feel like I can push myself and try new things."*

Luke, 19

### Working with Partners

We continued working closely with partners like the Sailors' Children's Society and ABF Veterans, supporting young people and ex-service personnel through meaningful time on the water.

### Paid Expeditions

We also saw more demand for paid voyages this year, which play an important role in supporting our charitable work. Highlights included voyages to and from Norway, two Dutch Dashes, a lively Netherlands crossing with OutdoorLads, and a strong result in the Rolex Fastnet Race, where CatZero came out ahead of all Challenge 72s and Clipper 68s – an amazing result.

### Looking Ahead

With the season wrapped up we're already looking ahead. 2026 is shaping up to be even bigger, with more sails, more challenges and more opportunities to make a lasting difference. 2025 has demonstrated the strength and adaptability of the CatZero programme. Through a combination of challenge, structured support and experiential learning, the organisation continues to deliver meaningful outcomes for participants.

More sails.

More challenge.

More adventure.

More lasting personal change.

Thanks to everyone who helped make 2025 what it was.

## Case Study: Thomas Boyd Sailing Bursary

In 2025, the Thomas Boyd Sailing Bursary, funded by The Fishmongers' Company, enabled two young people from the Humber region to take part in a transformative offshore voyage from Stavanger, Norway to Grimsby.

Eli (26) and Lili (19), both from Grimsby, were selected for the bursary in recognition of their commitment and progress during CatZero's 12-week personal development programme. Prior to joining, neither was in employment. Since completing the programme, both have made significant progress. Eli has secured work in hospitality and achieved six qualifications, including RYA Competent Crew. Lili has gained four qualifications, completed a Level 3 Engineering course and is now pursuing a career in the offshore wind sector.

The voyage presented a demanding and immersive experience, including challenging North Sea conditions. As full members of the crew, both participants demonstrated resilience, teamwork and determination, returning with increased confidence and a stronger sense of direction.

The bursary honours the legacy of Thomas Boyd OBE, a lifelong advocate for the Humber's maritime community and for creating opportunities for young people. His belief in the power of sailing as a tool for personal development is reflected in the outcomes of this initiative.

Participant feedback highlights the impact clearly. Both Eli and Lili reported significant growth in confidence, independence and outlook, describing the experience as life-changing.

This case study demonstrates the value of targeted bursary support in removing financial barriers and enabling access to high-impact development opportunities. Through initiatives such as the Thomas Boyd Sailing Bursary, CatZero continues to support individuals in building skills, confidence and positive futures.



Left to right: Eli, Dr Henrietta Boyd, Lili

# Veterans

## Building Belonging: A Year of Challenge, Courage and Connection

Throughout 2025, CatZero delivered a series of four residential programmes for veterans, designed to build confidence, resilience and connection through shared challenge and experience. From outdoor activities to a ten-day sailing voyage, participants were supported to step outside their comfort zones, reconnect with others and develop a renewed sense of purpose.



### Case Study: S's Journey with CatZero

S joined the programme after being introduced to CatZero through his local veterans' hub. At the time, he was facing significant personal challenges and was seeking an opportunity to make positive changes following a period of instability.

From the outset, engagement was not without challenge. However, with support from staff, S was able to remain on the programme and went on to achieve full attendance.

Throughout the residentials, S actively engaged in activities, particularly those in the Peak District, where climbing and outdoor challenges supported his confidence and sense of achievement. A key milestone came when he shared his poetry publicly at a local event, demonstrating increased confidence and willingness to engage with others. Being able to share his work publicly was a proud and meaningful moment in his journey, marking a significant boost in confidence.

Alongside the programme, S was undertaking university study. He reported a noticeable shift in his ability to manage environments and interactions, moving from avoiding engagement to participating more fully in both academic and social settings. S has developed stronger coping strategies, increased confidence and a more positive outlook. Today, he has built a positive circle of friends and support around him. Looking ahead, he is keen to give back and hopes to volunteer with CatZero in the future, supporting others who may be starting a similar journey of change.

*"It's a great way to be around like-minded people, people that have my back. I am not judged."*

*"CatZero has helped me so much. I used to sit at the back of my lectures in case it was all too much and I had to get out. Now I sit at the front. I can cope with people around me after being on the yacht."*

The programme began with a residential at a local scout camp, bringing together veterans from across the region, including those supported by Veterans Launchpad. Activities such as hiking, kayaking and team challenges were combined with shared living responsibilities, creating opportunities to build trust, communication and teamwork.

Participants co-created group expectations, establishing a safe and supportive environment. They also contributed to shaping future residentials, ensuring the programme reflected their needs. An increased focus on sailing preparation was introduced, with participants working towards the RYA Competent Crew syllabus, building both practical skills and confidence ahead of the voyage phase.

The second residential, based in the Peak District, responded directly to participant feedback by introducing greater physical and mental challenge. Activities included ridge walking, climbing, caving and navigation exercises. These experiences supported individuals to overcome personal barriers, build resilience and develop a sense of achievement, while continuing to strengthen group cohesion.

In October, seven participants undertook a ten-day sailing voyage from Grimsby to the Isle of Wight and back, alongside two returning veterans. Despite adverse weather conditions shortening the journey, the experience remained highly impactful.

Six participants achieved their RYA Competent Crew qualification. Throughout the voyage, individuals demonstrated increased confidence, teamwork and problem-solving, working together to navigate both the physical and mental demands of life at sea.

The final residential provided an opportunity for reflection and consolidation. Activities were designed to encourage participants to recognise their progress, strengthen peer support networks and consider next steps.

By the end of the programme, participants reported increased confidence, improved wellbeing and a stronger sense of belonging. Many highlighted the importance of being part of a supportive, non-judgemental group, with shared experiences playing a key role in rebuilding trust and connection.

# Thank you

## Funders, Supporters, Partners 2025

ABF Soldiers Charity  
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 The Tribune Trust  
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And many more individual supporters and fundraisers. Thank you.



# Partnership Opportunities

Join our mission.  
Support change.  
Be part of the journey.

We offer three partnership tiers, each playing a vital role in transforming lives across the Humber. Whether you're helping us raise the sails or steering real change, every level makes a lasting difference.

## Why Partner with CatZero?



Align your organisation with a respected, Humber-based charity with proven long-term impact



Gain visibility across our programmes, digital platforms and high-profile events



Be part of a growing movement focused on employment, wellbeing and opportunity



Support real people to achieve lasting personal change

*"CatZero for me was more than finding work it was about my confidence and the ability to truly believe in myself".*

Participant



## Other ways to support

Not ready for a partnership tier? There are still vital ways to be part of our journey, individuals and groups can help us move forward in practical, powerful ways.

- ✓ Fundraise for us through personal or corporate challenges
- ✓ Volunteer your time or skills to support our programmes
- ✓ Advocate for CatZero in your workplace, school or community
- ✓ Set up payroll giving to support us regularly, tax-free
- ✓ Make a one-off or monthly donation via our website
- ✓ Nominate CatZero as your Charity of the Year and make a lasting impact

## Partner with us

Ready to come on board? Get in touch to discuss how your organisation can play a leading role in creating brighter futures.

✉ [Info@catzero.org](mailto:Info@catzero.org)

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