

www.catzero.org  
2024 report



Delivering lasting personal change.



Edition kindly funded by the Haverby Trust

## Finances and high retention rates priority for new CEO



Adrian with David Talbot of Catch, Stallingborough.

*CatZero CEO Adrian Tallon takes a look back on 2024 when he took over the charity from founder Dave Bertholini, and a general election gave the chance to review strategies ...*

ON BEHALF of the whole team at CatZero Humber, welcome to our 2024 Review.

Over the following pages, we'll take a closer look at our year — through the numbers, programme activity, stories of individual change, and what's coming next.

'A Year of Change and Progress', 2024 was a pivotal year for CatZero. Following Dave Bertholini's departure in June, I was proud to step into the role of Chief Executive. I'd like to thank Dave for his work over many years, and for the support he gave during the handover.

Since joining, I've seen first-hand the values that underpin CatZero's work — transparency, dependability, and a clear focus on supporting people to make lasting changes in their lives.

This year saw us increase the number of people we supported, extend our delivery across more areas of the Humber, and continue to deliver positive outcomes for individuals and families. We remain focused on value for money, with high retention rates and strong progression into work, education or training.

Importantly, we continue to work with those who need the most support. Just under 70% of our beneficiaries come from the 20% most deprived wards in the country. This reflects the purpose of our programmes: to work with individuals and families facing the most significant challenges, and to offer the right support at the right time.

A key moment in 2024 was being awarded a two-year contract by The National Lottery Community Fund to support 112 people through our personal development programme, running into 2026. While each programme still requires 50% match funding, this gives us a firm foundation to plan ahead and deliver in the areas where need is highest.

We were also pleased to receive a generous £100k donation from People's Postcode Lottery, and we can't mention 2024 without acknowledging our Director of Sailing, Danny Watson, who raised £40,000 by completing a 150km running challenge in under 24 hours — a fantastic achievement that captured wide support and attention.

### **People, Partnerships and Delivery**

Our team continues to evolve, with new skills and experience being added throughout the year. I'm grateful for their support as I settled into the organisation, and I've enjoyed seeing their expertise in action. Their commitment to quality delivery and continuous improvement means we can offer support that is both practical and effective.

Our volunteers remain an essential part of CatZero. On the sailing side of our work, every trip requires up to four volunteer crew members. And before the yacht even leaves the marina, it takes hundreds of hours of volunteer time to maintain and prepare the vessel. Their contribution is significant, and we're grateful for their time, skills and dedication.

Director of Sailing Danny with Megan from Arco: Experts in Safety, during Danny's 150k fundraising run.



CatZero launches Norway sails for the public, another fundraising strand in 2024. More on page 18.



In light of internal changes and the outcome of the general election, we took the opportunity this year to review our strategic priorities for the 2025–2028 period. This was a positive process, allowing trustees and staff to reflect, challenge and confirm that our direction remains aligned with the needs of the region. You'll find more on these priorities later in the report.

### Funding and the Road Ahead

Fundraising remains our biggest challenge – and our top priority. Public funding for the programmes we deliver has reduced in recent years, and we now rely more than ever on grants, donations and the support of individuals and corporate partners. We're hugely grateful to those who support our work financially, and to the partners who provide generous in-kind support, enabling us to keep our focus on delivery.

Looking ahead, we'll be launching new ways for individuals and organisations to get involved and support CatZero, and we look forward to sharing these in the coming months.

The end of National Lottery funding for our full-family programmes is marked for 2026 – an

approach that has delivered significant outcomes for families across the Humber. Sustaining this provision will require a new funding model, and we're actively seeking the support of local authorities and regional partners to continue this vital work. We also welcomed funding from Sport England's Movement Fund in 2024, enabling us to help more families improve their physical activity and wellbeing – something that is often a key factor in long-term change.

The need for our programmes remains clear, and our commitment to the region is as strong as ever.

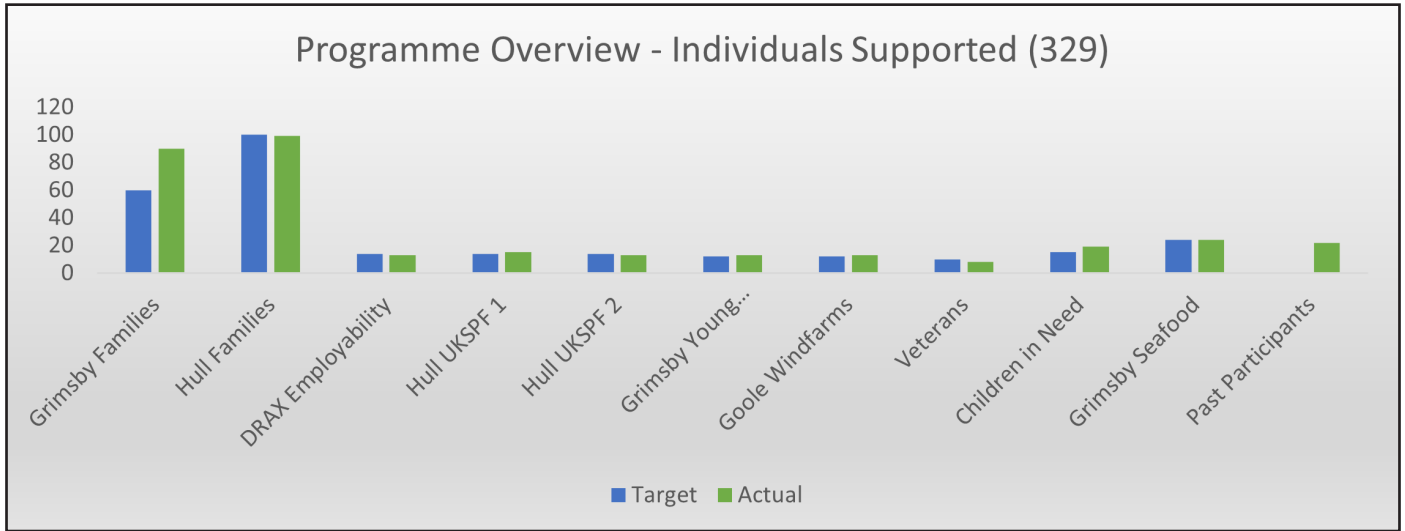
The introduction of two new Mayoral Combined Authorities presents new opportunities to work with regional decision-makers and ensure people across the Humber have access to the support they need to progress.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in CatZero. We hope you enjoy reading about our work in 2024 – and we look forward to working with you in 2025 and beyond.

*Adrian Tallon*

# Statistics

IN 2024, CatZero ran ten programmes supporting 329 individuals, including 118 new participants across eight individual programmes and 189 family members through two Full Families programmes in Grimsby and Hull. Additionally, we provided ongoing support to 22 individuals under our “Once CatZero, Always CatZero” promise, offering help with career progression and addressing challenges. Participants engaged in motivational activities, employability sessions, and therapeutic and community-building exercises. Families received one-to-one support, network meetings, and relationship-building activities.



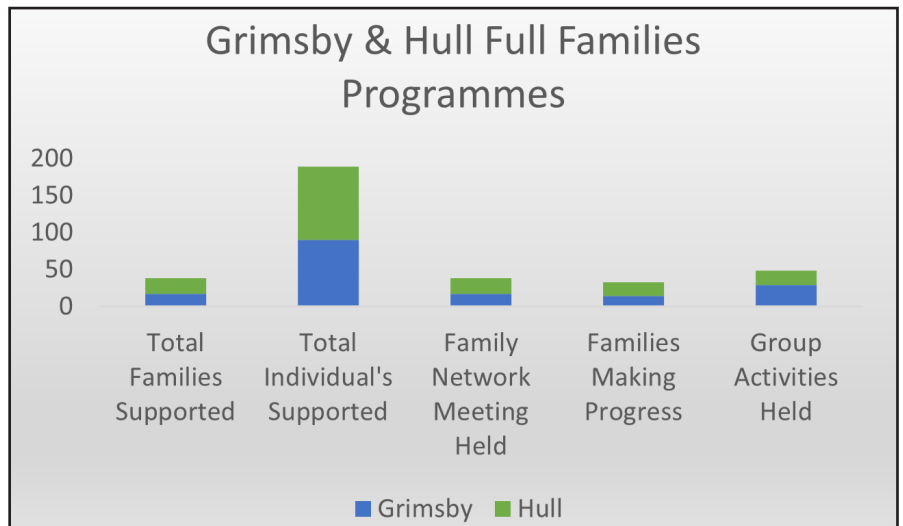
## GRIMSBY FULL FAMILIES PROGRAMME

Entering its seventh year in 2024, this programme, funded by the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, supported 17 families (90 individuals) in Grimsby. Fourteen of these are already seeing demonstrable progress, including increased school attendance and improved health and wellbeing, among other things. Staff are already working with 11 new families in 2025, with a number of families on the waiting list and further referrals being received daily, demonstrating the demand for early

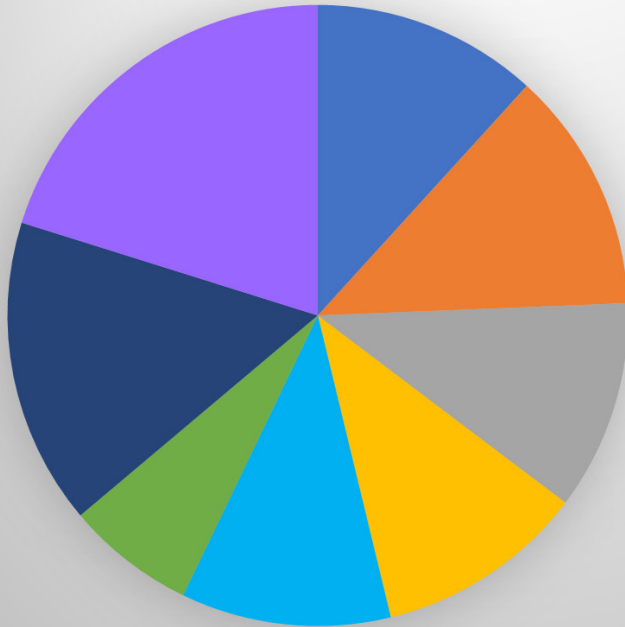
help in the deprived areas of this region.

## HULL FULL FAMILIES PROGRAMME

The Big Lottery continued their 50% funding for a full families programme focussing on the West Hull area, targeting early intervention to deliver meaningful change to prevent them drifting to the point of crisis. During 2024, staff worked with 21 families, 99 individuals with 19 families seeing demonstrable progress. Work continues with many of these families while also engaging with five new families.



# Individuals Supported (118)



- DRAX Goole
- UKSPF 1 Hull
- UKSPF 2 Hull
- Grimsby YP
- Windfarms Goole
- Veterans
- CIN Hull & Grimsby
- Seafood Grimsby

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## INDIVIDUALS' PROGRAMMES

### DRAX

In January 2024, we launched a programme funded by DRAX to support unemployed young people in Goole, an area of socio-economic decline. Thirteen economically inactive participants joined the programme and spent 12 weeks working alongside staff. Five of these were living in the Goole YMCA and many of the others had not really left the house for a number of years. The programme included an eight day sail on board the CatZero yacht which was a massive challenge for many and a unique experience for all. The progressions team continued to work with the participants after the 12 weeks which proved very successful. Eight successfully achieved a sustainable positive outcome, three of which were in employment.



### Veterans

We continued our very successful bespoke Veterans residential programme throughout 2024. This included an eight day sail on board the CatZero yacht. Working alongside other support agencies, CatZero staff helped ex-service personnel to adapt to civilian life as well as supporting them with whatever



challenges they face which were preventing them from moving forward.

### Children in Need

Throughout 2024 CatZero continued to run the holiday programme, funded through Children in Need. This programme was designed for young people aged 10-15 selected from the families we are working with in Hull and Grimsby. A decision was taken at the start of the year to reduce the age gap to 10-12-year-olds instead of 10-15-year-olds as the wider age range had split the group too much the previous year. This allowed us to focus on the issues faced by the children as they transition between primary and secondary school. Nineteen children took part and benefited from a range of team building activities which saw them develop friendships, decrease their anxieties and build their confidence, with most increasing their school attendance as a result. Private counselling was also offered as part of this programme.



### UKSPF 1 and 2 Volunteering and Employability

Two programmes were run in Hull funded through the UK Shared Prosperity fund. Twenty-eight participants took part in the two programmes the first of which commenced in April, (continued p6)

(continued from p5) the second in October which ran to the end of the year. Four of the 28 have now entered employment, nine are undertaking further training opportunities and 12 are undertaking volunteering in the local community. Progression work continues.



### Grimsby Employability

At the start of July our first programme in Grimsby for 2024 took place, working alongside Beyond Food, who use cooking as a tool to help anyone who feels their life has unravelled and is looking to implement change.

Thirteen unemployed people took part in this programme which included hosting an evening of fine dining to raise the profile of both organisations. This gave each participant an insight into the catering industry and what it is like to work in a busy restaurant, some acting as front of house, others

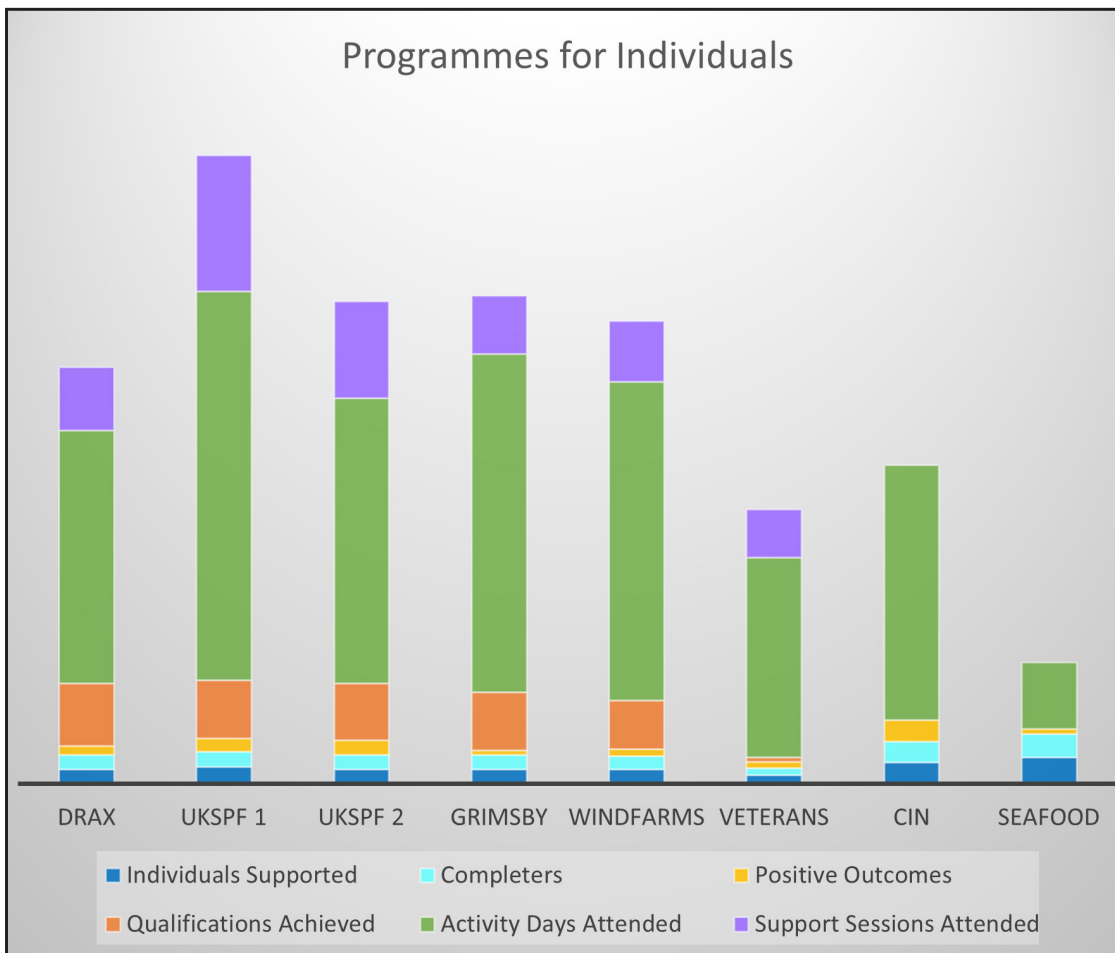
pot washing and waiting tables. All learned how to prepare and cook food from scratch, seeing how you can turn basic ingredients into something special. Four of these participants now have jobs with work continuing with the remainder.

### Goole Employability

July also saw us return to Goole with 13 young people from the area joining us for the summer programme which included an eight-day residential sail. Four participants have moved into employment, one is undertaking further training with another volunteering in order to gain work experience and enhance his CV. Like with all CatZero participants, the progression team offers ongoing support post programme.

### Seafood Programmes

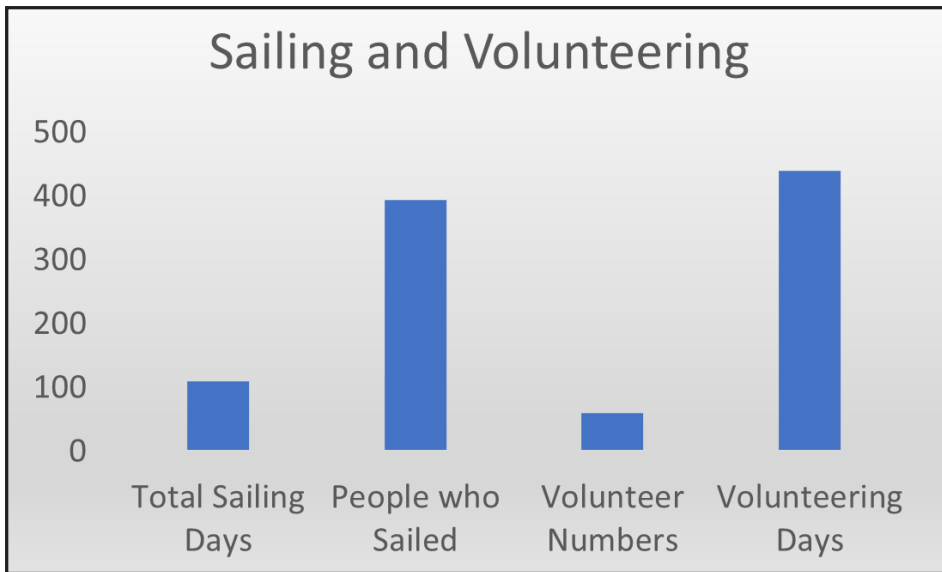
As in 2023, three short bespoke Seafood Employment Programmes were run throughout the year. These week-long programmes supported 24 people to increase confidence and improve their job search and interview skills. Four people so far have entered employment.



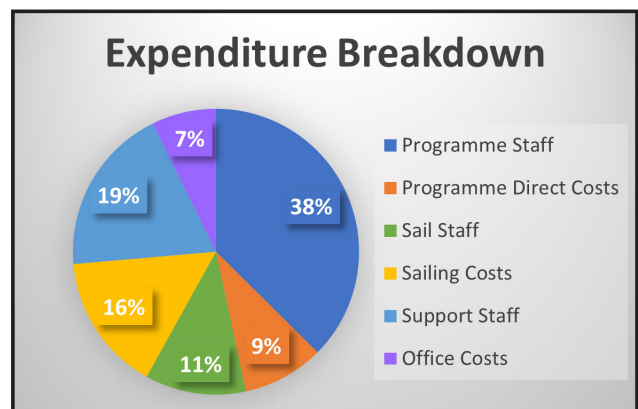
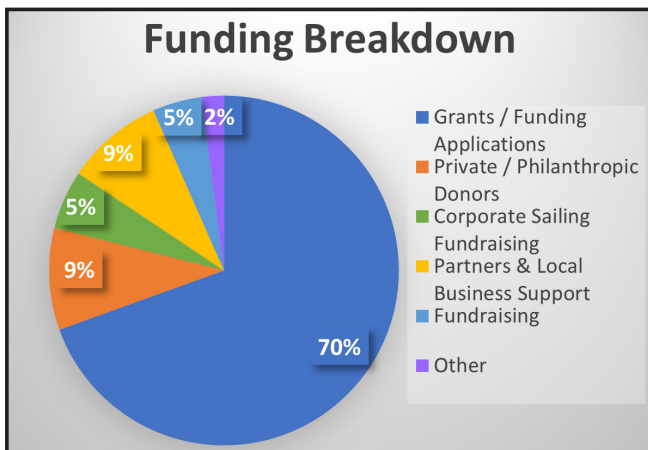
## Sailing

2024 saw a very successful season with 110 sailing days for the yacht. A wide range of voyages from a four hour taster sail to 10 day residential voyages took place with 394 people sailing. One hundred and twenty seven of our programme participants took advantage of this amazing opportunity, including families. When not being used by our programmes we utilise the yacht as a fundraising tool. This includes team building days for local

businesses and residential trips for schools. A total of 267 school children and local business people experienced team building activities on the Humber or a residential experience which saw the boat going across the Holland and Norway. We also have to thank our 61 volunteer crew members and sea staff who enable this to happen. In addition, we were fortunate to receive funding from Sofina and Highways England for a new main sail and yankee sail.



## Funding



# Full Families



## Hull Full Families

FOR almost five years, the CatZero team has run a Full Families programme across West Hull and East Riding, working closely with families to identify their worries and concerns, supporting them to make meaningful changes to their lives.

During 2024, we worked with 21 families, each facing a variety of complex challenges each day. Despite their differences, we work with each one in the same way, by bringing the entire family together for a “family network meeting”, where we identify what is going well and what are the families worries. We then explore the changes they wish to make.

As in Grimsby, we hold meetings in surroundings familiar to each family, whether that is a school, or community centre. From the time we meet them, we all go on a journey together, with the CatZero team empowering each person within that family, from the youngest to the adults, empowering them and supporting them to make positive changes in their lives.

Having supported families across West Hull and East Riding for the past five years, CatZero has built strong relationships with local organisations and schools. As a result, we have received a high volume of referrals from a wide range of agencies, and developed an excellent rapport with teachers.

We also maintain strong professional partnerships with social services, the Early Help Team (EHT), the

Police and Crime Commissioner, and Humberside Police, most of which regularly refer families on the brink of crisis to us.

Tim Cahill, CatZero Personal Development Officer, said: “Since the programme began we have worked with families who have a range of needs, and have helped them through issues including homelessness, debt, housing problems, and repairs to their homes!

“Several of the issues presented to us through our families include life-altering illnesses, anger and behavioural problems, and more. As a team, we support the families as they take each step through their tailored family action plan.”

Every family CatZero works with brings new challenges, and the team is constantly learning and adapting to ensure good support is provided for each family member. Running the Children in Need programme alongside the family programme enabled the team to add new and varied activities, along with counselling (if needed), giving families a solid programme that has made, and continues to make, a real difference to their lives.

Programme & Implementation Manager Sarah Coulson said: “As we adapt and change to support the families we serve, we also stay up to date with training and applying that learning to everyday practice.

“Historically, CatZero focused on time-limited programmes for individuals, but we found that many reverted to their previous way of life once

Full Families taster sail in the Humber Estuary.



the programme ended, often influenced by family dynamics. By engaging the wider family, we encourage all members to embrace change and support each other, fostering long-term transformation.”

### Grimsby Full Families

Across the estuary in North East Lincolnshire, the Full Families team has been busy supporting the 17 families referred to them during the course of 2024, with participants on the programme coming from the Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Immingham areas.

This region is where the first ‘Solihull Approach’ sessions for families were held before rolling them out across Hull and East Riding. Several of the Grimsby staff were trained in the approach during 2023, after which the course was offered to families on the south bank, while north bank families had the choice to join the course with the CatZero team in 2024.

The Solihull Approach is applied across many disciplines and professions, helping practitioners and people working with families to have a better understanding of child development, relationships, and family connections. They describe on their website: “The three concepts of containment, reciprocity, and behaviour management facilitate the understanding of relationships and how to apply this in different contexts.”

Solihull delivered by the CatZero team has proven

popular with families, who are reaping the benefits of time spent on this back-to-basics-style programme.

Full Families across North East Lincolnshire also welcomed a Grimsby Town FC ticket exchange opportunity, where eight families were able to attend the town’s matches. Everyone had a fantastic time, and enjoyed the chance to visit the ground.

Along with opportunities to take part in craft events and seasonal sessions during the course of the year, Full Families Grimsby and Hull participants enjoyed a short trip on the CatZero yacht. Families have been able to visit the boat previously but this was the first time they could sail in the estuary.

A total of 17 families took part from across the region.

Before Christmas 2024, a new staff member joined the team, Natalie Acton, following the departure of Steve Quinn, as he retired to spend more time with his family. Mild-mannered Steve, who had been with CatZero for a number of years, is very much missed but reports say that he has since moved to be nearer his children and grandchildren and is loving life as a retired grandparent.

Natalie, from Hull, is working from the Grimsby office and has been frequenting the area’s schools as she supports young people with their tailored CatZero plans going forward.

For more about Full Families, visit <https://catzero.org/catzero-programmes/#families>

# Case Study

## First job is a great success for young IT employee

INITIALLY known to CatZero's Full Families programme in 2017, Cleethorpes' Michael George has come a long way since spending time with the team.

At 16 he was already 36-stone and suffered from crippling anxiety, which could see him housebound for weeks at a time. Eventually, going to college and simply living life became hard, and Michael was referred to CatZero with his family by social services.

Now retired staff member Sean devised an action plan that would see regular visits to Michael's home, initially to walk the dog with the then teen but with hopes for developing activities as time went on.

Michael said: "They were only short trips, and we would only walk around the block, but they came regularly to see me, just to get me out of the house!

"These short walks became longer and eventually I was enticed into the other activities available to me. I always want to do them but Neil and Tim strongly encouraged me and I ended up doing badminton, going to the gym, visiting Welton Waters to do water sports, going on a bunch of different walks, and even camping at Melton Scout camp!



Michael's photo for his new work ID badge.

"Anxiety and obesity were the two main issues. I still deal them but it is easier than it was. I am still battling with weight but I have support and it is on a downward trend!"



Michael working hard at the gym, in 2018.

In 2017, Michael had aspirations to work in IT and in January 2025 his dreams were realised. Now working for Drugs4Delivery, Michael showed willing by completing a work experience period prior to Christmas 2024, which bagged him his first ever full time job.

Michael commented: "I completed a computing and games development course in 2016, followed by a media course, and always wanted to work with computers and I am really happy that I have found something I enjoy, particularly as my first job.

"The team I work with are really lovely, too. We all get on well together and it is a great environment to be in. This is helping me to feel better about myself, and I am looking forward to what the future holds."

Michael was delighted to contact Sarah at CatZero recently, to let her know about his new job. He credits the team and their support for helping him get to this point, being "great motivators", he said, and for encouraging him to take little steps to achieve his goals.

"I would definitely recommend CatZero," he finished. "If I met someone who was considering it, I would tell them to do it.

"I would also tell them to never give up on what they are trying to get you to do. There were probably hundred times I wanted to give up myself, but Neil and Tim, and the other members of CatZero, kept nudging me to move forward, and here I am now, working in a job I really enjoy. Getting out every day.

"It really has been a life-changer and I am looking forward to sharing positive life stories with the CatZero team in the future."

## Every day is a rewarding experience



CATZERO'S work could not be done without the many volunteers supporting its programmes, some of whom have been with the charity since it began in 2009.

Sailing is where the majority of our volunteers are currently placed, not only due to the massive amount of work needed to keep our 72-foot Challenge yacht in peak condition, but also to support the crew as they take people on taster sails, fundraising sails, and, of course, the many people participating on our programmes.

In 2024, more than 60 volunteers offered their time to CatZero. Post sailing season, we undertook the mammoth task of removing the boat from the water for maintenance, which saw a total of 28 volunteers taking part, giving a massive 737 hours of their time before the boat was ready for its March '25 inspection.

On land, several volunteers have been supporting CatZero participants with land-based activities, including their involvement with mock interviews on employability programmes, teambuilding, and visits to Welton Waters.

**Volunteer Mark Christopher Adams tells his story:**

*Come join us they said, come and join the sailing vessel CatZero, they said. So I did, filled with visions of azure seas, fair winds and adventure, with maybe the odd drink as the sun disappears over the yard arm. The reality was much better.*

*The vessel itself stands out in the marina and at sea, even attracting looks when alongside and tied up. But what is most outstanding is not readily seen, but shines like a beacon to those involved. That is the organisation, the team, including all the volunteers.*

*Stepping into the office, everyone is welcoming and friendly, while remaining professional, then stepping*

*on board, you are instantly a crew member. Obviously, tasks are assigned in line with safety while you are given the opportunity to expand your knowledge and confidence.*

*Sailing days are both exciting and addictive, and the enjoyment seen in the faces of guests as they learn alongside you is fantastic, and even better as you slip into being a mentor.*

*The winter maintenance period, with the vessel out of the water was equally rewarding. Small teams working together to ensure that vessel was ready for the 2025 sailing season. It was not glamorous, working through rain, wind and snow, but it was gratifying and educational. I learned a great deal about myself.*

**Volunteer Liz Wrigglesworth commented:**

*Last year was my first full year of volunteering with CatZero, and it's safe to say that it was action packed!*

*I have supported staff and participants with a wide range of activities, from sailing the CatZero yacht across the North Sea, team building activities and water sports at Welton Waters, to cooking and serving a full, three-course meal at a café day!*

*My highlight of the year came during an 8-day sail with a group up to the Orkney Islands, with a participant who had been very nervous about taking the helm for the first few days of the trip. Later in the week, I popped up on deck to see her with the biggest grin on her face as she confidently helmed the boat and proudly told me she had got up to 12 knots, smashing our speed record for the week! Helping participants to build their confidence and do things they never thought possible is one of the biggest rewards of working with CatZero.*

*The shared sense of achievement at reaching a goal with the participants, along with the friendship and camaraderie amongst the team, make every day at CatZero a rewarding experience.*

# Children in Need



THE CatZero Children in Need programme in 2024 was funded by the charity of the same name to work with children and young people affected by deprivation in coastal areas.

Children were fed into CIN through the Grimsby Full Families programme, with the team delivering a range of activities across the Humber region throughout the summer holiday period.

This unique programme culminated in a residential on the CatZero yacht, which saw young people participate in a two-night, one-day sail that took them around the Humber Estuary.

To encourage confidence building along with the opportunity to visit new areas, the young people swapped from the north bank to the south bank of the Humber for activities, with those from Hull heading over to Grimsby on occasion, and vice versa.

Programme & Implementation Manager at CatZero, Sarah Coulson, said: "We tried to encourage participants to try the sort of activities in their areas that they could continue doing with their families, along with some that were unique to the programme, such as the CatZero Challenge yacht.

"Group sessions delivered fun, enjoyable team-building activities which also addressed physical and mental health, wellbeing, and confidence-building. The programme is in part designed to challenge negative attitudes and support positive attitudes and behaviours.

"For young people struggling with mental health

issues, we also arranged for counselling with a freelance professional, which was optional and arranged on an individual basis."

During the programme, each young person worked with a member of delivery team, looking in detail at their specific needs, and paying attention to mental, physical health and wellbeing. The team also continued to address social issues that arose from the 2020/21 Covid-19 pandemic, which continues to be reduced school attendance, behavioural issues and difficulty socialising with peers.

Sarah continued: "Many of the young people have been told that they won't aspire to anything, so we look at their future aspirations and create an action plan to set out what we can do together to help them reach their goals."

While the sessions are fun, at their core they address not only aspirations and behaviour, they also look at healthier living and physical wellbeing. Each participant can choose activities such as climbing, walking, canoeing, dinghy-sailing, visits to local gyms, sports clubs, and more! Sessions can include healthy eating and other health-related issues, and we also introduced new skills, such as creative experiences, and practical life skills.

The Children in Need programme saw 22 young people participating during 2024, with several remaining with CatZero as part of the Full Families programme.

**“...she was visibly nervous and was very quiet ...”**



Case studies from CatZero's Children in Need programmes, during 2024 ...

Child A: Having identified a young person from Full Families as suitable for the Children in Need programme, we discussed the opportunity with his family, who were very enthusiastic. Unfortunately, the young person we will call "Child A" was a little reluctant and quite nervous to start.

We agreed that prior to him attending any sessions, CatZero staff would see him at school for one-to-ones so that he felt familiar with the staff who were running the activities during the programme. He decided he would attend some of the activities to see what he thought.

Child A attended his first session, where he met another participant and formed a good friendship. After the first couple of sessions, he began to mix with the whole group and was well liked, which massively improved his self-confidence.

At the end of the school summer holidays, the young person overcame his biggest fear and spent two nights on the CatZero yacht, where he sailed across the Humber, steering the yacht, raising the sails and participating in all activities asked of him.

Following the programme, Child A took part in an arranged transition days to his new secondary school, which proved to be very successful.

Child B: Struggling with anxiety, Child B found it difficult to meet and make new friends. It took some convincing to get her to come onto the programme but CatZero staff took the time to talk it through with her and put coping mechanisms in place.

We agreed that she would attend one session to see what she thought, with no pressure to continue attending if she found it too overwhelming. At the

first session she was visibly nervous and was very quiet, but with encouragement and staff alongside her, she took part in the activity and thoroughly enjoyed it. She agreed to continue attending, despite some of the activities not appealing to her.

As her confidence grew, she took part in all activities available, overcoming her shyness and conquering her fear of heights by taking part in Go Ape and rock climbing, all of which increased her self-confidence. As part of each session we run restorative circles at the beginning and end of each day, giving each child the opportunity of a voice. This encouraged her to talk at the beginning of each day, which she continued throughout the day, enabling her to make friends while on the programme.

Following the programme in September, Child B found it much easier to make friends when she started school.

Case C: A mother struggled with anxiety and letting her daughter out of her sight, which if left unresolved could create bigger problems in the future.

Mum said: "I just wanted to message to thank you and your team for everything you have done for my daughter.

She has loved every single minute and we have noticed such a massive change in her. She has gained more confidence in herself and today showed that. She was frightened about today and told me she wasn't going to do it and would stay on the ground taking photos, so to hear that she had a go was so lovely to hear.

You have been so supportive with my anxiety of letting my daughter go on days out without me, sending photos and texts updating me on times she would be back etc. So just a big thank you from us to you."

# Veterans



ANOTHER busy year supporting veterans coming from as far across the country as Lancashire, CatZero's year-long programme for those who have served in the Forces is designed to increase self-belief, confidence and motivation.

Broken down into four sections, the programme offered the opportunity to gain new friends who then become their own support network, helping one another through team building and group activities whilst addressing social anxiety and social isolation. Our 'Once CatZero, Always CatZero' ethos always ensures continued support for participants at the end of each programme.

The first section saw CatZero take veterans on a three-day residential in the Yorkshire Wolds, which included team-building activities, night hikes, communal cooking, games and water sports. This was a great intro for the group, allowing them to get to know one another, increasing confidence by discovering people who have been through similar situations.

The next three-day residential took place in the beautiful Peak District, where veterans could take part in arts and crafts before trying their hand at more physical activities, such as caving.

For many, a highlight of the programme is the eight-day voyage on our 72-foot Challenge yacht, and opportunity to work as a team, enjoy being part of a sailing crew, and to learn new skills.

Finally, the programme ended with a three-day follow-up residential, to celebrate personal and group achievements, with activities and planning for the future.

Veteran Kevin said: "All these residential with CatZero, brilliant! Yes, there is a serious side to it but

it's so much fun! The new experiences are something you'd probably never get to do again in your life. We've sailed around the North Sea - how many people can say they've done that? It's life-changing. It's given me so much hope for the future, for what I can achieve."

Fellow participant Howard commented: "I can honestly say, this experience has been life-changing. Through CatZero, and other supporting charities, I have learnt to not stop myself falling over but prevent myself falling over.

"The programme has been over four parts, so it has been good to look forward to it, rather than being just one event.

"The structure, the sailing crew, the encouraging people to try - you see people being nurtured and grow, especially when you see them push through on a 72-foot yacht in the middle of nowhere!"

For more about CatZero's veterans' programme, visit [https://catzero.org/catzero-programmes/#veterans\\_programmes](https://catzero.org/catzero-programmes/#veterans_programmes)

Our veterans' programmes are delivered with support from Healthier Heroes, Veterans' Launchpad with funding from ABF the Soldiers' Charity, and the Royal Marines Charity.



## Forces' family work launches in Yorkshire

HAVING heard great things about CatZero's Full Families' programme, Partnership & Development Manager Pete Tighe arranged for the team to work with five serving Forces' families at the Defence School of Transport in Leconfield.

Within the Reservists network of Hull, the programme was match-funded through the National Lottery and the Veterans' Foundation.

Pete said: "The core programme is the same as Full Families but, as with all CatZero programmes, the overall content is personalised to suit each individual.

"Working with serving personnel and their families, we can appreciate how different their needs are compared to others we work with across the Humber.

"We are mainly working alongside the welfare team at Leconfield and those involved from CatZero have found working here very rewarding. It is great to be



embedded within the facility and offer a service to serving families across the region.

"We have continued to work at Leconfield into 2025 and look forward to reporting on our increased family numbers and their progress in the coming months.."

## A window into the seafood industry

NOW in its third year, the CatZero Seafood Programme continues to offer people across the North East Lincolnshire area the opportunity to learn about the seafood industry in the region.

As Pete Tighe, Partnership & Development Manager, commented: "We are trying to show the diverse range of opportunities available, from jobs in engineering and maintenance to work in administration and distribution.

There are so many facets to the industry, including the more traditional roles of fileting and packing. Our aim is to showcase the careers on offer and support participants as they prepare to move back into the workplace or training."

The three-day course includes visits to local suppliers, hauliers, fish processing companies, and places of local interest, including Grimsby Town Football Club's Blundell Park and the Fishing Heritage Centre.

Participants have had the opportunity to create and refresh CV's, and undertake training in moving and handling, first aid, and food hygiene, each of which serve to better their prospects for the future.



# Huge success rates for north bank with high group retention

TWO hugely successful programmes ran in the north bank town of Goole during 2024, both designed for unemployed 18-40-year-olds across the area.

The year began with a 12-week programme funded by the Drax Foundation, with participants taking part in a number of activities to improve employability, increase skills attainment, improve physical and mental health and wellbeing, and overcome barriers to personal development.

This was the first time CatZero had worked with the Drax Foundation, who were proud to support the charity's vital work for unemployed people in Goole. Staff at Drax were attentive to the programme's outcomes and welcomed the participants to Drax Power Station as part of their development work, and were keen to take part in the programmes' Café Day, held at Saltmarshe Hall.

Sergei, who was evacuated from Ukraine in late 2022, has almost two decades of experience in the construction industry but his qualifications were not accepted in the UK. He said: "I am doing the programme to help me to improve my English and grow in confidence, so that I am better able to find work. I feel that it has helped me towards this goal."

Sergei has since gone on to regular employment with an engineering firm in the area.

In addition to mock interviews, CV work, and qualifications – of which the group gained a combined number of 60 during the 12 weeks, including first aid, and health and safety – the group were offered the chance to sail on the yacht, first on a taster sail and later for an eight-day voyage to Holy Island.

A further programme was run following Drax, funded this time by Goole Windfarms, with a total of 27 participants joining the CatZero team to address what was preventing them from being economically active, or securing employment.

Co-designing the programme with CatZero's personal development workers, to ensure it met individual needs and the needs of others within the group, participants looked at barriers to employment,



Participants on the Drax programme.

workplace skills, job searches, CV planning, and mock interviews.

Industry-relevant qualifications were also offered to help participants enter the labour market. These included Health and Safety in the Workplace, Manual Handling, First Aid, Food Hygiene, and Fire Safety,

Sarah Coulson, Programme & Implementation Manager, said: "In addition to these practical skills, staff worked with participants to enhance their personal skills, focusing on problem-solving and using restorative practices and outcome-based accountability to boost resilience and motivation.

"This approach ensures participants are well-prepared to overcome any challenges they may face.

"Outdoor team-building activities were incorporated to further develop confidence and improve interaction and social skills. These activities, such as conservation work, also provided a wider community benefit."

Each participant was also offered the opportunity to take part in a four-hour taster sailing experience on board the CatZero yacht, followed by the chance to undertake an eight-day residential experience. This life-changing opportunity tests social disciplines and pushes individuals beyond their comfort zones, proving that they can rise to any challenge and achieve anything they set their mind to.

A massive 89 per cent completed the two wind farm programmes, with further outcomes still being determined as we power through 2025.

## Range of opportunities for employability programmes

FROM mock interviews to confidence building activities at Welton Waters and pop-up restaurants with gourmet cuisine, the options on the table for participants in 2024 have seen exponential growth.

CatZero's programmes create lasting personal change in the lives of people living in often deprived communities across the Humber region. Through trust and commitment, the team helps people move beyond personal barriers, working together to create a bespoke programme of activities that instil confidence and resilience in the participant.

By taking part in outdoor activities and team-building exercises, learning new skills, and gaining work-relevant qualifications, the participants feel more prepared for work, with a majority moving directly into employment, education, volunteering, or training.

In recent years, CatZero has worked alongside a London-based food charity, Beyond Food Foundation, and in 2024 partnered once again to host an event at Creative Start Grimsby's 'The Great Escape' building on the town's dock. Participants



and staff from all three charities worked together to create a five-course menu for dignitaries, local businesses, and former participants.

Beyond Food and CatZero share a similar ethos in their respective programmes - while CatZero uses its 72ft Challenge yacht as a tool for change, teamwork and confidence building, Beyond Food uses food and hospitality skills, under the careful eye of chef and charity founder Simon Boyle. The two charities were supported with this one-off event by Creative Start CIC, The Fishmongers Company, New England Seafoods, Alfred Enderby, and Made Great in Grimsby.

In mid-2024, the team were delighted to have been awarded almost £200,000 of National Lottery funding towards eight, 12-week employability programmes across the Humber region for three years, allowing the team to work with at least 112 participants in Hull, Grimsby, and Goole.

New CEO Adrian Tallon commented: "For the National Lottery to show such a commitment to CatZero is a testament to the impact we have, delivering lasting personal change through our unique personal development programmes."

Employability participants also have the unique opportunity to sail on the charity's 72-foot Challenge yacht, a life-changing experience. The sail also offers the chance for adventure and out-of-area travel, something many of the participants have not had previously.



## Yacht kept in tip-top shape by a fantastic team!



A SOLID 2024 programme of sailing for the CatZero yacht saw the team venturing out with participants, corporate clients, and adventurers.

Public fundraising sails included the ever-popular Dutch Dash, two of which were filled in 2024, prompting an additional sail to be added to the schedule in 2025.

Three taster sails took place during the year and nine corporate day sails, the latter being fantastic fundraisers paid for by supportive businesses and each offering their own unique chance for publicity.

Throughout the year, the usual taster sails for participants on our programmes took place, along with five participant long sails averaging around seven days each. These trips offer people the chance to experience something entirely new while, first and foremost, building confidence and improving team-working skills.

A Norway adventure is no stranger to the CatZero sailing team, being a long-time trip for Hymers College. With several voyages already under their belts, the crew is well versed with the North Sea route to this part of Scandinavia, and the fjords around the Stavanger area.

The Norway fundraising sail was offered to the public in 2024, a 12-day adventure starting and ending in Hull. This proved to be so popular, there are two public Norway sails heading out in 2025.

Forces' veteran and former CatZero veterans' programme participant, Aaron Tough, who took part in the 2024 sail, commented: "I was in the Army for 10 years and have since been diagnosed with adjustment disorder, so this sail was a really big thing for me.

"It was a bit rough, but the weather made it fun and exciting, and when we arrived in Stavanger I was blown away by the incredible views. It was one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen.

"The trip is definitely for anyone, not just people with sailing experience. There were people on there who had barely set foot on a sail boat before, but there is no pressure for anyone to do anything they can't or don't want to do. Everyone was amazing and I felt very safe and supported the entire trip!"

While the planned taster sails and programme residencies continued throughout a busy sailing



Image by Örjan Borgström. A 'watch' on the Norway sail.

# Mammoth run raises staggering £40K

To celebrate 15 years of programme delivery, Humber-wide charity CatZero's co-founder and Director of Sailing, Danny Watson, ran 150km in a day – the equivalent of 93-miles, or three and half marathons – finishing in just under 24 hours!

Starting at Grimsby Dock at 4am on Thursday, May 2, 2024, Danny ran half the distance on the North Wall between Grimsby and Cleethorpes before taking a pilot boat across the Humber and completing the run around Hull Marina at approximately 3.30am, on May 3.

Through the '150km in a Day' event, Danny hoped to raise at least £24,000 (worth £60,000 when match-funded), which would enable CatZero to use its 'Full Families' programme to work with an additional 12 families, or approximately 60 children, young people, or adults. Danny's total was a staggering £40k!

Danny explained: "The need for CatZero is clear when you appreciate that in Hull and Grimsby alone there are 35,100 children living in poverty,

27,400 workless households, and 1,501 looked after children, at a total cost of £100 million.

"I am passionate about the work we do at CatZero and once again, I am willing to put myself on the line to raise further funds to help families improve their lives."



season, the team worked hard behind the scenes to ready the crew and volunteers for a schedule of works in the winter.

The 72-foot CatZero Challenge yacht underwent a number of maintenance works, starting in mid-October 2024. Having stripped the boat of all internal equipment, such as life jackets, life rafts, and anchors and chains, the yacht was lifted out of the water, and with the help of many CatZero volunteers, the staff and crew, was transferred to the Hull Marina yard to undergo the work.

CatZero skipper and director of sailing, Danny Watson, said: "Hull scaffolding business Elevation Yorkshire Ltd, along with all the volunteers and the ever-supportive Kildale Marine, were pivotal in making this happen, giving time and hard work to the operation.

"With volunteers also kitted out in PPE donated by Arco, everyone was in the right gear for the job!

"Our new first mate, Johnny Mercer, did a fantastic job preparing the boat for removal, and has been instrumental in rallying our amazing volunteer team.

"The coding of the yacht works on a five-year cycle, ensuring that we retain our certification of Category Zero – CatZero. This refers to the highest level of

safety and structural standards for commercially operated sailing and motor vessels under the MCA (Maritime and Coastguard Agency).

"It means our vessel is permitted to operate unrestricted worldwide – there are no limits!

By Christmas 2024, the boat was back in the water and ready for the recommissioning process, which included the return of life rafts and sails, galley equipment, and fuel and water. The internal painting of the yacht proved difficult due to the low temperatures at the start of the year. The process was made easier with the new, on-board Eberspacher heater, which was very generously donated by a long-standing volunteer and supporter of CatZero, Nigel Rose.

Danny finished: "A huge thank you to all that helped with this massive process. While we undertake a number of regular maintenance processes to keep the boat safe for participants on our programmes, this was a significant mid-term inspection, so we are very grateful to the CatZero staff, crew, volunteers, and our supporters for helping to keep everything in tip-top shape.

For more about our programmes, public sails and fundraising sails, visit [www.catzero.org](http://www.catzero.org) or telephone 01482 333303.

## A unique view of Civvy St and the Forces from the TA

JOINING the Territorial Army (today's Reserves) as a teenager, Hull-based Paul H offers a glimpse into a life between two worlds.

A trained mechanic, Paul had been an Army Cadet since he was 13, moving into the TA in 1980, at the age of 17. His war, he says, was the Cold War, spending a lot of time on exercise in Germany. His role was within the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) Corps, perfect for his mechanical skills and background.

Coming from a family of Forces' veterans, he did attempt to join the REME 'regulars' at 18, but he was told he would have to go into the infantry due to academic restrictions. Given that he was already working with REME, he felt this was a step backwards so he stayed with the TA.

An industrial accident saw Paul lose a finger and although mobilised for the second Gulf War in 2002, he remained in the UK.

"The accident was a bit of a shock, especially given my job, and I was sent to a defence rehab hospital," he said. "It was here I realised that compared to others' injuries, it was merely a scratch!

"Until then, I had been juggling three worlds - one as a Civvy Street mechanic, evenings with the family at home, and the other at weekends with the TA. I didn't realise how busy I was until I look back now!"

Paul retrained to repair weapons before spending time in Kenya as a Full Time Special Reserve (FTSR). He eventually completed an undoubtedly respectable 25 years in the Territorial Army before being medically discharged in 2005.

"I went back to work as normal, taking a job with Hull College as a motor vehicle NVQ Assessor," he commented. "Following redundancy in 2018, I found work as a Financial Contracts Coordinator with Humber Learning Consortium (HLC), until 2023."

Paul first heard about CatZero through a Life Works residential, following redundancy from Hull College. He had plenty of experience with job interviews and CV's in-house at the college, but was seeking

support for external interviews when he saw a leaflet detailing CatZero veterans' programmes.

He said: "The programme is ideal, as it gives you the tools you need to move forward. CatZero is superb for showing veterans' their transferable skill set, helping them use what they have learned in the Forces to adapt to a life outside.

"Retiring in 2023, I called Pete at CatZero to ask if he needed a volunteer. As someone that has experienced life in the Forces and in Civvy Street at the same time, I felt I had plenty to offer participants on the programmes.

"I realised that veterans from the 'regulars' have a very different perception of what is happening on the 'outside', and having had so much done for them in the Forces, like paying for bills, house hunting, and other practical elements, I felt I could support them with these tasks.

"I am also a REME responder for the region, helping people when they leave the Forces. Due to GDPR and other legislation, many of these people are falling through the cracks, particularly if they have drug and alcohol problems. Things can spiral out of control, and unless they ask for help - which many are too proud to do - they don't find organisations such as CatZero for support.

"CatZero offers hope and a sense that veterans' aren't written off, and they can turn their lives around with support. They have someone to talk to, people with shared experiences, and learn that they are valuable.

"A good programme delivered well can turn somebody's life around, and that's truly what CatZero does."



Paul during a veterans' visit to Cleethorpes.



## Charting a bold course

AT CATZERO, we deliver lasting personal change for individuals and families across the Humber. As we strengthen our team and expand our reach, we are guided by a refreshed strategy built on impact, resilience and growth.

One of our key strategic drivers is our financial sustainability, and finding new ways for individuals and corporate partners to support the work we do. Funding from the National Lottery and other grant funders has provided us with the platform to deliver our work, but looking to the future we must grow our reserves and unrestricted funding streams in order to continue to deliver our work in the future.

In 2025 we will see the launch of our brand-new corporate membership scheme, The Spinnaker Club, to support our growth, alongside our partnership offering.

We're now working to bring our programmes to more people in more places. Our ambition is to deliver our transformative Full Families programme in all four Humber region local authority areas.

We currently work in two and are actively developing partnerships and funding to extend this whole-family approach across the region. Alongside this, we aim to double the number of 12-week personal development programmes we run - in the short-

term, from four annually to eight - so they operate on a rolling basis on both sides of the Humber, providing consistent, life-changing support to those furthest from the job market.

The yacht remains a defining part of our work and identity and 2025 is set to be our busiest sailing year ever. We're determined to sustain that momentum.

While fundraising and corporate sailing play an essential role, our priority is always that the majority of our sailing days benefit the people we support. These experiences at sea are more than adventurous, they are powerful catalysts for growth, confidence, and lasting change.

We're also focusing on how we tell our story. By strengthening our brand and communications, we will build recognition, trust, and demand for our programmes, positioning CatZero as a key player in regional regeneration and social mobility.

Having now delivered our programmes for 17 years, supporting thousands of individuals in the Humber region, we are looking to the future by strengthening our delivery team, investing in our impact and evaluation, and engaging more with businesses in the region. To do this, we need your support, so please do get in touch...

# Supporters

## How you can play your part in CatZero



Smart Technology enjoy a corporate day sail.

- Meet your CSR commitments
- Team building events on land and water
- Volunteering opportunities for your staff
- Supporting our programmes
- Corporate hospitality
- Make a difference

“We had a fantastic time on the corporate day sail, which also gave us the chance to network with other organisations. Ultimately, it is great to be involved with such a dynamic local charity.” K-COM

In addition to grants from major funders, we also rely on support from corporate partners and match funding to enable our critical work to take place.

It costs **£3,500** per person to deliver each life-changing programme. CatZero is very cost effective in comparison to any other service and has consistent, excellent results.

### Become a partner

Our programme partners are top level professional and corporate supporters who provide funding for programmes. They are offered fantastic opportunities in return, including yacht and media branding, programme involvement, corporate sail and land team building and/or hospitality packages tailored to different requests.

### Sponsor a young person

At £3,500 per participant, you could provide a truly life-

changing opportunity for a young person. Could you be a sponsor and a mentor?

### Be a friend

Grants, fundraising, discounted services, individual fundraisers. Our friends are recognised on our website and are welcome to support participants on our programmes.

To discuss the above opportunities further, please email: [pete@catzero.org](mailto:pete@catzero.org)

### Donate

For direct donations, visit [www.catzero.org/support-us](http://www.catzero.org/support-us) and click the DONATE NOW link.

### Contact us

Call 01482 333303 to speak to someone about how you can support CatZero and its programmes.

# Funders, supporters, and partners 2024

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Hesslewood Children's Trust  
Highways England  
HLAS Chartered Accountants  
HBOT  
Horncastle Family Foundation  
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And many more individual supporters and fundraisers. Thank you.



# CAT ZERO

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