

THE LIFE CENTRE

Transforming a Community Centre

The Life Centre is a thriving community centre that serves the people of Bierley housing estate in Bradford. Together we are growing toward their vision of 'working in partnership to bring the community together – creating hope, realising potential and changing lives.'



What was needed

Historically a council-run community centre, The Life Centre had become a run down, under-used facility and eventually, due to funding cuts, the council decided to close the centre.

Bierley Community Association Ltd, a charity founded by residents of Bierley and local church members interested in keeping their centre open, were granted use of the building. But the initial two years of trying to keep the centre open, find funding and resource and staff activities proved exhausting.

In 2012 the board of trustees approached Futurekraft for help in;

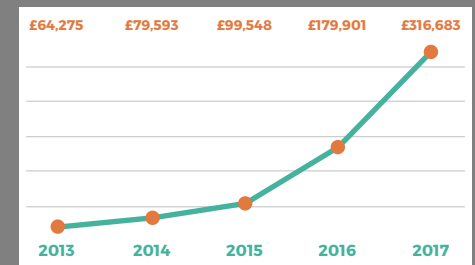
- developing a **funding** strategy,
- achieving **sustainability**,
- supporting stronger **governance**,
- and developing a dynamic and relevant programme of **services** and **activities**.

Over the past five years, the picture in Bierley has changed dramatically. The Life Centre is now a vibrant hub of activity.

What we achieved

The Board of Trustees has been strengthened by recruiting people with additional skills. **Policies and procedures** have been overhauled and implemented alongside robust **monitoring and evaluation** systems giving a clear picture of delivery for planning and decision making.

£740,000 has been raised – with an upward trend year on year.



A new Centre Manager has been appointed and a six-day **activity programme** with sessions for older people, families, children and young people has evolved.

Sustainability has been supported with the rental of space and ongoing contracts with services wanting to deliver in the area. This now forms approximately 25% of revenue.

The Life Centre can now dream big: a much-needed community nursery is being built on-site and plans for new sheltered housing are in development.