

Kendra & Nicky - Storytellers for Scarborough Stories

Kendra & Nicky's story explores joining the Gallows Close Centre family.

KENDRA: 2016 - The year that finally took a hold on me, realising the house is going to get emptier, being a mum was what my life revolves around and now the children are getting older and beginning to leave for university & starting their new lives. I was beginning to feel alone, trapped, scared, overwhelmed.

The more time goes on I realise I have not left the house in months, agoraphobia and the anxiety that goes with it had taken its grip on me.

I AM ALIVE BUT NO LONGER LIVING.

February 2017 - I decided this is not the life I want to live anymore. It was time to get help. My doctor was amazing and helped me find the best route to feeling myself again.

April 3rd 2017 – Matthew came home from his club today at Gallows Close Centre, he's volunteered my services to make a cake for their Easter gala raffle (kids you gotta love em). I don't mind really.

April 5th 2017 – The centre manager from Gallows has just emailed me asking if I would like to volunteer and help in their café at the Easter Gala. I can't. I'm not ready, people will stare & judge me, the thought of it fills me with anxiety so I have to say no.

July 10th 2017 - I'm slowly leaving the house with less anxiety. I just picked Matthew up from his club for the first time on my own, was introduced to Kimmie the centre manager of Gallows who asked me again if I'd like to volunteer, this time for their summer fair. She put me at ease and I've decided yes I can do this, I'm gonna go for it. Little did I know this was to be the start of my new life of volunteering.

NICKY: 19th July 2019 – it was a normal day/night at work, in the takeaway. I had 3 deliveries to do, and it caused an argument! I can't believe he disrespected and shouted at me like that! I walked from that job!

20th July 2019 – maybe I should go back? Everyone tells me I'm better off out of the place, they tell me I'm better than that!

KENDRA: 20th July 2019 – My 2nd Anniversary of being a volunteer, Kimmie is amazing and pushed me to try things I never thought I could do. I've been given the job as admin assistant & kimmies right hand woman.

NICKY: 1st August 2019 – what's the point? I've nothing to get up for! I have no purpose and no-one to talk to!

20th August 2019 – Kev suggests I come to gallows with him, I say no, I don't know anyone.

26th August 2019 – Kev asks again for me to go to gallows, I really don't feel comfortable, but he says it will do me good.

1st Sept 2019 – Kev asks again for me to go to gallows! I think I may just go to get him to stop asking!!

2nd Sept 2019 – I go to gallows and have a coffee in the café. I met Kimmie & Kendra today. They seem nice. They asked me if I wanted to sign up for the employability course run from the centre by Askham Bryan College.

4th Sept 2019 – I go to the centre again; Kendra's breakfasts are amazing!! Kimmie asked me if I would like to volunteer at the centre in the youth club, I said ok I will give it a go.

4th Oct 2019 – I'm 4 weeks into the employability course, it was hard at first with all the new people but it's getting better!! Feeling better about working in the Youth club the kids seem to be getting used to me!!

4th Nov 2019 – 8 weeks into the course and I'm feeling more confident!! Youth Club has been good lately. I feel better being there and feel like I'm part of the team.

4th Dec 2019 – I've completed the course!! We're doing more on Christmas at the youth club. The kids are loving it!!

4th Jan 2020 – We're back after Christmas there seems to be a virus going round!! I'm not too troubled by it, it's at the other side of the world at the moment. I started another 8 week course with Askham Bryan!!

4th Feb 2020 – There's more case's of the virus that now has a name Covid-19 its now in Europe I'm starting to feel a bit nervous about it. I'm 4 weeks into the course it's really good.

10th March 2020 – I've completed the level 2 course with Askham. The cases of covid are rising there's talk of locking down the country, I hope not as I don't know how I will cope.

BOTH: 23rd March 2020 – Boris has been on the news, he's put the country in Lockdown, the cases of Covid-19 have gone sky high, we've had to close the centre!! What are we going to do, not being able to leave the house?

7th April 2020 – it's been two weeks of lockdown and I'm not sure how We've coped but Kimmie has messaged the group chat and asked for volunteers to help make craft bags for the children that take part in our clubs normally.

7th May 2020 – it's been a month since we made the craft packs and now, we're providing food parcels and birthday cakes for families on our estate.

31st August 2020 – we've survived the summer. The centre isn't open properly yet we're still in a sort of lockdown.

NICKY: I have been offered a paid job as an Engagement Support Worker for Askham Bryan College on the employability course that I took at Gallows.

30th September 2020 – we're trying to run the course as a blended course with Andy at home due to shielding and me in the centre with the students.

BOTH: 30th October 2020 – we're trialling social distancing clubs at Gallows, but people are not wanting to be indoors with others yet.

NICKY: 30th November 2020 – it looks like we're going back into lockdown cases are rising again, the centre has closed its doors again and we're back to working in the centre without the public.

KENDRA: We're preparing for Christmas and receiving donations for Christmas eve parcels for those who will be spending Christmas alone.

NICKY: 23rd – 24th December 2020 – myself and Kimmie have been to pick up the Christmas Dinner parcels for those who would not have one otherwise and the rest of the things for the Christmas Eve parcels, there's still lots to do but the parcels are being delivered on Christmas Eve all 200 of them!!

KENDRA: 24th December 2020 - It's been a long week, I've just finished making turkey sandwiches to pop in the 200 Xmas Eve parcels I've put together. There's gonna be some smiles from lots of people today.

NICKY: 12th January 2021 – the centre is back after the Christmas break. We're hoping we can open the clubs back up shortly.

12th February 2021 – the clubs are back open and youth club is back I feel back to where I should be.

23rd March 2021 – a year of Covid and lockdowns has gone by we're starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel, everything is starting to open up and the centre is starting to feel more normal again.

KENDRA: I'm in shock, I've just been promoted to assistant manager. How did that happen? I'm proud but stunned.

NICKY: 14th April 2021 – we haven't been able to do another employability course at Gallows yet so I'm going to York twice a week to support students in Animal Care. I'm loving it!!

30th May 2021 – I'm back working at Gallows as a volunteer and for Askham Bryan it's good to be back to normal more.

30th June 2021- I'm still at Gallows youth club and love it!! My Askham Job has changed slightly as I changed to The Prince's Trust side of outreach. It's more hours but it's great!

31st July 2021 – the summer holidays are underway, Team Gallows are busy with summer activities, unfortunately I'm still working with the Prince's Trust so I can't take part in all the daytime activities with Gallows.

31st August 2021 – Team Gallows have arranged a family fun day and certificate day for the kids who took part during the summer and the locals can come and have fun and see what we do at the centre.

KENDRA: 2022 – Wow it's been a whirlwind 5 years since my new life began. Gallows close centre has been my life saver, I heard it once described as a hidden gem & this couldn't be more true, if you're ever lucky enough to meet Kimmie she is the sparkling diamond that brings us all together. I get to help people with struggles like my own, the struggles are still real, with a new feeling of imposter syndrome (how did I get here). I still struggle to leave the house most days. I'm now known as Mama Kendra, I have a team, a whole new bonus family, my life has purpose again.

I AM ALIVE AND I AM LIVING.

NICKY: 2022 – It's been 3 years since my first trip to Gallows and I'm still there . I love my Gallows Family who are there for me. Youth club is going from strength to strength and with my job at Askham, which we have won an award for!! and my volunteering for Gallows I feel like I have a life again.