DETAILS OF THE MOBILE STAFF TEAM

The following members of staff are employed by Pear Tree Projects and predominantly cover holidays and sickness throughout all our residential children's homes.

By having this team in place, Pear Tree can provide consistent care for our children, as we aim to utilise staff members from the mobile team on a more regular basis to specific homes where possible, however, other members of this team can / will be used when needed.

All information which is added to the individual homes Statement of Purpose, specifically points 20 & 21, is also relevant to the Pear Tree Mobile Team, this includes training, supervision and records of these.

Contact details for members of the mobile staff team can be found within the Pear Tree Staff Structure document accessible for all Pear Tree staff members, with generic "Pear Tree" email addresses for all.

Bernadette Price

Position: Senior RSCW

Date of employment: 21.08.06

I have been married for thirty years, and I have three beautiful boys who are all doing well in life. I left school at 16 with no qualifications and started work the following Monday I worked for a small coil winding company (BBH Ltd). Where I worked for twelve years. I progressed from line leader to supervisor then Facilitator in charge of forty-three people. As a Facilitator I had to break down engineering jobs to enable people to understand them and able to read drawing, giving them the ability to learn the process and able to develop a high standard of work. My objective was to work with the group event to meet goals through, training, good communication and presentation skills.

I took redundancy to start a family, with my eldest son born in 1997 I then started work at Redworth Hall Hotel. I worked part-time until my second son was born in 2000. I then split my time between working and looking after my family. I was offered a job at a local restaurant firm with room to develop my skill set. As my boys got older, I wanted to broaden my horizons and started working at Brewers Fayre. I worked hard and was offered an extra shift behind the bar serving drinks and taking food orders. This developed over time, and I then became responsible for large sums of cash, stock and above all else customer service within the restaurant working my way up to Duty Manager being supportive towards my staff team's problem-solving, routers, banking and general building duties i.e., opening and securing the building on a night shift. I developed my skill set to enjoy all aspects of the restaurant. I then started to work in the children's play area. Finding this aspect of work very rewarding nurturing children and developing their thought processes in play and seeing the progress they were making. I enjoyed this part of my job so much that I started to volunteer at the local youth centre helping children from the ages of 8 yrs. to 15 yrs., I found this very interesting and great fun in fact I enjoyed it so much, so I started to do voluntary work at my sons Primary School (Cockton Hill Juniors) as a support worker classroom assistant. I found a great deal of pleasure and a sense of accomplishment in being able to help and support children to develop and make progress I wanted to pursue a career looking after children in the care sector.

I later applied for a position at Pear Tree Projects as a support worker working with vulnerable young children with individual and complex needs. I quickly realised that this was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. Nurturing these children to have a better outcome and experience a wonderful childhood is key to their development. After six months I was given the opportunity within the company to become a Residential Social Care Worker, I still to this day remember my conversation with Head of Service David Bartlett who bestowed this opportunity and I thank him greatly for giving me this wonderful opportunity. Over time I became a Senior Member of staff and eventually Duty Manager looking after six houses two farms and school sites with twenty-two children and eighty staff members. I have helped develop and support a good working team across the board in different homes and settings. My main role is to safeguard children which is my top priority and staff alike to ensure all are safe and documentation is correct. I have been a Duty Manager for several years and loved the role dearly and I thank my head of service for believing in my abilities and helping me develop into the person I am today. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing all the children and being a part of their lives helping them make progress and learn to trust again which is a big part of my job. I came off the active role as Duty Manager to concentrate on

my personal development of report writing moving to Holly house working under my House Manager Steven Bradwell. Throughout this time Steven has been a huge support and continues to encourage me, I have become a keyworker and I can complete all my keyworker duties, LAC Reports, Care Plans, Daily files, Children's meetings, Meetings with Social Workers, and I have been involved in MAPPA meetings which was a huge experience and adding files onto the main computer. I feel that moving to Holly house has been the right move for me and I look forward to my personal development working alongside RHM Steven. I'm currently in my eighteenth Year working at Pear Tree and I look forward to many more years to come.

Janice Tomlin

Position: RSCW

Date of Employment: 16.06.08

My journey with Pear Tree Projects commenced 15 years ago. Having worked with children previously for a number of years running play groups for various ages my understanding was I had gained lots of experience during this time. These children were from mostly secure and stable backgrounds. It soon became apparent that Pear Tree would be very different and that I had lots to learn. I was eager to learn in order to be able to support and help our young children moving forward in their lives. The aim was to teach them the skills required to progress over a period of time and eventually to go to be functioning, competent individuals in their lives ahead. My enthusiasm and interest for the job increased as I learnt new skills and became more confident in my role. Having learnt by others more experienced and spending time with the children, watching behavioural patterns and dealing with challenging issues that may arise. This gave me the knowledge and understanding to help support our children. Whilst enjoying different experiences outside of the homes with our young people for many years my thoughts of how important it was for our young people to have the experience of having a warm nurturing home which many had never experienced. To have their own bedroom (a space to feel safe) and have caring staff available for support this could be a time to heal. I take great pride within this role ensuring that our homes are well maintained to a high standard and a warm and welcoming to our children, staff and visitors. I'm always willing to give other staff support and positive advice when required.

Pear Tree is a very special place and one like no other. I would like to think I have made a positive contribution to the lives of these children who have not had the best start in life. My hope is that we have given them a warm secure place with lots of exciting new experiences and the tools to repair, rebuild and to move forward in order to become positive individuals' productive meaningful lives.

Ashleigh Walton

Position: SRSCW

Date of employment: 9.1.18

I left school in 2008 after completing my GCSE's. I was working in a part time job as a waitress at a local pub and also attending college completing a uniformed services course. I did not complete the whole course as I applied for the army and began the selection process and training. I completed the process and training and was selected to start. I was very glad I had completed the process but found that the timing to leave for the army was not right and I left. After not joining the army, I had a few part time jobs for a couple of years including working as a waitress/cleaner at The Carlbury Arms, volunteering work at a local racing stable yard, also working in Morrison's for four years on the kiosk department. Once I left Morrison's I started working at a local primary school as a lunchtime supervisor, while in this employment I also covered caretaker roles and supervision of a child with autism on a one-to-one basis in breakfast club and cleaning duties. While working at Montalbo primary school I started working a second job at Staindrop academy as a cleaner, working afternoons after school finished and also worked some mornings before school to cover shifts. Over the Christmas periods of 2013 and 2014 I worked a seasonal employment on The Polar Express at Weardale Railway as a dancing chef. I really enjoyed working on the train with the children, reading stories, dancing, serving hot chocolate and cookies and singing before they met Santa. Working with the children I helped them with their daily learning including using cutlery correctly and supporting children on the playground with bullying issues or injuries. I made sure that all children's needs and safety were met with high standards. I really enjoyed working with the children, which led me to look for full time employment with children. My sister works at Pear Tree as a Groom and told me about the company. I applied for Pear Tree and was successful with my application. I am excited about progressing my experience throughout my career.

Sharon Edwards

Position RSCW

Date of employment: 6.2.23

From leaving school in 1984, I have always mainly been employed in the equine industry including working at Pear Tree previously where I often had daily interactions with the children. In between having my own children, I have worked as a self-employed cleaner, I was able to work my hours around the children. From 2016 to 2020 I was an assistant yard manger and due to covid, I was made redundant. I was then employed as a yard manager at a yard close to home. I was responsible for ensuring the day-to-day management of the yard horses. This involved prioritising each horses' individual needs, organizing other equine professionals to attend when needed and providing general care to make sure they were fit and healthy. My hobbies include walking, within the countryside, visiting the beach and cooking. I also really enjoy the equine point to point days out. My favourite job ever is being a mum, spending time at home and walking my 5 dogs.

Andrea Shotton

Position: RSCW
Start Date - 6.11.23

I re-joined Pear Tree in November 2023 after working for training providers and local collages delivering apprenticeships for Health and Social care and Children and Young People along with functional skills level 2 & 3 and B-tech qualifications for the last 15 years. I was made redundant in August 2023 and decided to re-apply for Pear Tree.
Since leaving school I have worked in various industries and settings which have included fruit shops, factory work, warehouses, elderly care, Mental health care, Learning disabilities and childcare. I have two children; we are a close family who are always there to help and support on another when needed.
I have gained valuable experience within the jobs I have worked especially childcare and education environment, these are skills I can transfer into my new role at Pear Tree and these will provide solid foundations which I can build upon and progress my career here at Pear Tree, as well as helping the young people to strive and achieve their own dreams, having them believe in themselves and also grow as individuals, working as a team with basic family values of encouragement positive reinforcement and having support, having boundaries and also structures in place whilst promoting their own physical and mental well-being, health and educational needs, through a consistent approach to the care of the young people will acquire self-esteem, resilience, self-awareness and also basic life skills.
I was delighted to be offered a role back at Pear Tree and being welcomes back into the Pear Tree family. In my spare time I enjoy Archery to which I am a club member of Durham City Archers, swimming, museums, fishing, being outdoors, baking and cooking, I also have my own allotment where I grow veg and fruit, I enjoy reading, spending time with my own family and enjoying holidays together, I enjoy learning and enhancing my own personal skills by continuing my own professional development.

Mae Bostock

Position: RSCW

Date of Employment: 10.7.2024

From the age of 8 years old I competed in judo and from the ages of 15 to 17 I competed at the highest level for Great Britain all over the world including places such as Japan, taking part in major events such as the Youth Olympics in Baku and the European championships. I was also national champion three years in a row. Judo has shaped me as a person and made me who I am as well as providing me with brilliant life skills that I have now transferred over into the workplace and everyday life such as determination, resilience, discipline, planning, sportsmanship etc. which are qualities I hope to teach the children at Pear Tree. Since leaving school I attended sixth form and also achieved two A-levels in psychology and sociology which I loved studying and found it very interesting. I feel as though these qualifications have given me the skills to be able to analyse and understand the reasoning for someone's behaviour and actions. I feel as though this will support me in my role as a residential support worker as I am able to recognise and understand behavioural patterns. After my A-levels I joined NEAS

(Northeast Ambulance Service) where I worked as patient transport. This job came with a-lot of responsibility and pressure but also provided me with a wide range of skills and knowledge that I will be able to transfer and use while working with Pear Tree such as empathy, person centred care, attention to detail, patience, the ability to follow strict guidelines and procedures whilst working in stressful situations. While working with NEAS, as much as it was a great opportunity I knew my passion was to work with children and young people as the few jobs we had where children were involved and needed my help and support I felt more engaged and passionate which encouraged me to make a move to work for Pear Tree where I knew my passion would not be wasted.

Lauren Patterson

Position: RSCW

Date of employment: 27.8.2024

Since leaving Secondary school I have always been excited and determined to have a job where I could meet new people, be independent and help people where I can. I have worked in several customer assistant roles, since I was 16 years old, such as working on the perfume counter at Boots, waitressing at my local pub and working as a customer assistant at Lidl. Alongside working, I have also completed a professional policing degree at Teesside University with the intention of going on to join the police, which I successfully did back in 2022. I wanted to join the police as I wanted to help people and be a support network for someone who needs it. During my time as a police officer, I had to deal with many challenges, often involving children and other types of incidents that have happened, so it was important that I have good time management skills and the ability to quickly build trust with people in the community. Whilst in the police, I fell pregnant with my daughter who is now 15 months old and quickly realised that the shift patterns and demand of the job was not suitable for me and my family, so I decided to leave. Some of the activities I love doing in my spare time include going for walks with my daughter and partner to discover new places and spending weekends up at our family caravan by the sea to relax and unwind.

I've always wanted to care for others and make a difference in people's lives, and I knew that providing help to children who have experienced disadvantaged starts to their childhoods, was the sort of job I wanted to do after the police, and this is when Pear Tree was recommended to me. When looking into the values and work that Pear Tree does with the children in their care, I knew that I wanted to be a part of it, so I applied to be a residential social care worker. Thankfully I got the job, and I am extremely excited to start my journey here at Pear Tree.

Laura Hendsbee

Position: RSCW

Date of Employment: 23.09.2024

I grew up as a child of the British Army, moving all over the country to whatever base my dad's job positioned us in- I attended 4 primary schools and 2 secondary schools! At college, I did Psychology, Criminology and English Literature. My choice of A-levels and subsequent

University degree was inspired by my grandma. She was an incredible woman who lived with ill mental health and the stigma it brought, yet she remained caring, selfless and determined in spite of it. I began University, doing BSc Psychology with Criminology, at the height of Covid in 2020; my freshers were spent cooped up in student halls playing Scrabble and reading books which I did not mind one bit. I also experimented with some new hobbies at this time and some I have kept up with include ice skating, playing the guitar, weightlifting and baking. I really enjoyed my time at university and particularly enjoyed the modules pertaining to individual differences and development, I ended up graduating with honours after doing my dissertation on the topic of victim blaming attitudes toward women where participants were grouped by individual differences. Interested in development, I decided to enter a role as a teaching assistant at a SEN school in Morpeth for my first job as a post-grad. I enjoyed working with the children at this school very much and I gathered some valuable experience working with children across year groups with a variety of learning differences and behaviours.

My favourite thing about that job and working with the kids was the moments of connection when an area of shared interest was discovered, and then I'd go on to spend whole lunchtimes discussing the most interesting shipwrecks or extinct animals. I left that position recently after a year due to a change of address, yet I knew I wanted to remain working with children due to the confidence and knowledge I built up over that time. I was drawn to Pear Tree because of its trauma-informed approach; this is an approach I feel passionately about as a result of my studies and past experience.

During my time here, I hope to bring a blend of sportiness and craftiness to the homes I look after. I think that group activities are an excellent way to build connection, and I hope that I can introduce the children to some activities that are new and interesting to them to build as varied an experience as possible. Ultimately, I aim for the kids to see me as a trusted, reliable and consistent caregiver. I live with my two cats, Pixie and Duke, alongside my partner. My favourite colour is orange, and my favourite animal is a pigeon! Someday, I'd like to travel to Nova Scotia to meet the other half of my family.

Jennifer Lavelle

Position: RSCW

Date of employment: 19.11.2024

After leaving school, I pursued my passion for working with horses by starting an equine course at college, before moving on to an apprenticeship at a racehorse stud. This experience taught me a great deal, including the privilege of bringing new lives into the world and watching them grow into exceptional athletes. I assisted with the day-to-day care of the horses and supported veterinary work. Once I completed my apprenticeship, I moved to Middleham, where I had the opportunity to care for some of the horses I had helped raise, traveling the country to racecourses and experiencing the success of the sport. I became an assistant manager, but after six years, I realised that the early mornings and long days were not what I wanted for my future. Realising my passion was in the care sector, where I could make a real difference to others, I began working as a reablement support worker. I assisted individuals recovering from injury or hospital stays, helping them regain independence. However, the long travel required for

this role became unfeasible due to car and fuel costs. As a result, I returned to racing, this time on a smaller yard, where I worked with some fantastic horses. During this time, I bought my first house and recognised that I needed a long-term career. This led me to residential care, where I found my true calling. I absolutely love this field, but my first role did not fully align with my values. When I heard about Pear Tree through a friend, I immediately knew it was the perfect place for me. The opportunity to combine my passion for care with my love for the outdoors and working with animals drew me in. I see it as a unique and amazing chance to make a positive impact on the lives of children and young people in care, something I feel deeply committed to. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my animals (two cats, a dog, and a horse), exploring the countryside, baking, and preparing good food.

Marie Levitt

Position: RSCW

Date of Employment: 2.6.25

After leaving school in 1999, I studied Health and Social Care at college. While studying, I worked part-time in a supermarket, and after completing my course, I continued working there. I was later offered additional training and took on a role as a pharmacy dispenser in the newly opened pharmacy department. I enjoyed the healthcare aspect of this role, which led me to explore full-time employment in the care sector. In 2015, I secured a full-time position in the pharmacy department of a hospital. This role involved checking medications on the wards, which gave me the opportunity to observe clinical staff delivering direct, face-to-face care to patients. It was during this time that I realised I wanted to work in a more hands-on care role. In 2018, I took the next step and became a Mental Health Care Assistant, completing a Level 3 NVQ in Mental Health Care while working on the wards. My passion for supporting others continued to grow, and in 2021 I was offered the opportunity to complete further training and became a Nursing Associate. In this role, I worked within a Community Mental Health Team, delivering one-to-one mental health interventions to adults experiencing complex mental health difficulties. This position helped me develop a deeper understanding of how to build therapeutic relationships, offer consistent support, and promote strategies to aid recovery and provide high quality care at the same time.

Outside of work, I have a wide range of hobbies and interests including CrossFit, bouldering, metal detecting, cross-stitch, and gardening. I've also completed a personal training and fitness qualification, which I pursued for my own knowledge and wellbeing. Recently, I began looking for a new challenge and an opportunity to make a meaningful difference in a different setting. I believe the skills I've developed throughout my career are highly transferable. My experience in mental health care, building relationships with individuals in distress, and delivering consistent, compassionate support has prepared me well to contribute positively to the lives of young people at Pear Tree. I am drawn to Pear Tree's commitment to helping children and young people in care feel safe, supported, and empowered to make progress in their lives and I am looking forward to bringing my experience, empathy, and enthusiasm to the team and supporting the children during their time at Pear Tree.

Anne-Julie Heslop

Position: RSCW

Date of employment: 4.8.2025

I first developed a strong work ethic and sense of responsibility while helping my dad in his butcher's shop as a child during school holidays. After completing my exams in 1986, I left school to work full-time in the family business, where I gained valuable experience interacting with customers and working as part of a team. Over the years, I've worked in a variety of roles, including being chalet maid at Butlins and a customer service agent for a loan company. But it was when I began supporting people with complex physical and learning disabilities that I truly found my passion. I took great pride in making a positive difference in their day to day lives. Whether it was accompanying individuals on holiday, supporting them during hospital stays, or simply being a consistent and caring presence, I found the work deeply rewarding and meaningful. Earlier this year, I took a short break from the care sector and worked in a factory as a laundry assistant. However, I quickly realised that I missed the personal, human aspect of my previous roles. I thrive in environments where I can connect with people, offer support, and feel like I'm making a real difference. When a friend told me about Pear Tree Projects and the high standard of care offered to children, I was immediately interested. I know several staff members who speak very positively about their work here, and I felt it could be the perfect setting for me to return to doing what I love. I believe I have many transferable skills that can benefit the young people, and I'm excited to bring my experience, empathy, and enthusiasm to this role.

Outside of work, I enjoy a wide range of hobbies including gardening, baking, cooking, knitting, crocheting, and walking my little dog. I also keep my own horses, and I find animals can have a very calming and therapeutic effect, something I hope to share with the young people here at Pear Tree. In the past I often took homemade cakes or soups into work as I really enjoy cooking and baking, and I look forward to using my skills to involve the children in activities that promote creativity, life skills, and general wellbeing. I'm really excited about this opportunity and committed to being a positive, consistent and nurturing presence for the children in our care. My goal is to support each young person to achieve their true potential in life.

Kayleigh Cunningham

Residential Social Care Worker

Start Date: 31/03/2026

Due to Covid-19 I left school early in the March of 2020 this meant I did not complete my final year in school and never experienced sitting my GCSEs like most other 16-year-olds. I feel this time in my life was crucial to becoming who I am today as it was during the countless lockdowns I learned of my ambition to help people and to give back in any way I could. I had been a cadet previously and had my sights set on being a fire fighter so when I began college in the September of 2020 I went to study a Level 3 diploma in entry to the uniformed public services. Here I learnt so much about rule of law and how our country operates in emergencies

and conflict as well as how we can spot signs of things going wrong early whilst learning about the prevent agenda and British values.
After completing my Diploma I decided I wanted to be independent and travel to a new country however I knew this was something I could not plan myself and would likely get flustered being unstructured for so long, so I signed myself up for Camp America and then was placed in an additional needs camp caring for young people with a wide range of needs and behaviours. Here I learned so much and developed a lot as an individual. Once my time at camp was over, I decided I wanted to keep volunteering and given back so in joined two Girl Guiding (brownie groups) as a unit helper and am currently undertaking my leadership Qualification.

Throughout this transition time between school and college I joined the work force and worked as a bar staff at JD Wetherspoons where I made a lot of friends and got an understanding of how to interact professional with the public, during this employment I also began an apprenticeship and worked towards my level 3 Business administration qualification. I continued to work at Learning Curve Group as a recruitment admin then became a senior administrator for the bids and contracts team where I got a taste of the legal world and government and authority funding works. After 3 years of admin work and office life I realised I needed a change of environment and career I wanted something I could progress in and really see a future in so I joined Pear Tree and look forward to growing my knowledge of social care and how I can help a young person overcome their background and become who they want to be.

In my spare time I enjoy volunteering, trying out any new classes/activities that come my way (currently netball, Dance and running) I like to keep fit and am an avid gym goer as well as loving a hike and mountain climbing. I love to cook and enjoy participating in weekly quizzes.

Amber-Paige Thorpe

RSCW

Start Date: 08/06/2026

Since leaving school in 2017, I have always been passionate about learning. Although I did not achieve the grades I had hoped for, I did not let this hold me back. I knew I needed to work harder to achieve my goals.

I studied childcare at college, as it was something I had always wanted to do from a young age. I worked in a nursery with children aged from 6 months to 5 years. I gained a wide range of experience, including working with SEN children, and developed strong professional relationships with the children in my care. It was incredibly rewarding to see the children grow and develop through the care, attention and planned learning opportunities I provided.

After working with children for a couple of years, I wanted to explore something completely different, so I began an apprenticeship in dental nursing. I worked with some lovely people, and the patients were great, especially when children came in for their appointments. This is when I realised that I missed working with children.

I considered returning to work with children; however, I wanted to further challenge myself and develop my skills. I took some time to consider my next steps, during which I came across a Pear Tree advertisement. A residential children's home role had been something I had considered previously but had not pursued at the time due to limited experience with children.

When I saw the advert, I felt it was the right opportunity to apply my knowledge and skills within this setting, and support children to reach their full potential. I look forward to supporting the children at Pear Tree to grow and develop holistically within a safe and secure environment.

Donna Hall

RSCW

Start Date: 22/06/2026

After leaving school, I found employment in several secretarial and receptionist roles, which I enjoyed as I like to be organised. This led to an opportunity to become a medical secretary, a position I was successful in obtaining. From there, I progressed to becoming a Nursing Associate in 2025 and began working at the GP surgery where I had completed my placement. I loved this role because of the contact I had with people and the care and compassion I was able to provide. I found it particularly rewarding to support people during times when they were feeling anxious or worried.

During a consultation with a patient, they spoke about their place of work at Pear Tree Projects and described it as a lovely place to work. A few weeks later, I saw an advert for a position and decided to apply.

I applied for the role because I have always wanted a career that gives me the opportunity to help others. As a mother raising two daughters of my own, I understand the importance of providing children with care, guidance, and stability. I wanted the opportunity to support children who have experienced childhood trauma to build positive futures for themselves. I am committed to helping create a nurturing, family-like environment where children feel safe, valued, and supported to reach their full potential.

My hobbies and interests include running, which I took up because I believe outdoor exercise has a positive impact on mental health and is a great way to meet new people. I also enjoy walking and spending time outdoors in nature. This is an area of interest that I hope to build on at Pear Tree, encouraging children and young people to get involved, as I believe spending time outdoors can bring significant physical, emotional, and mental health benefits.

Chloe Williams

RSCW

Start Date: 17/08/2026

From a young age, I have had an interest in mental health, behaviour and supporting others, influenced in part by my experiences within my family. This encouraged me to pursue further education in areas that would develop my understanding of people, their emotional wellbeing and the factors that can affect their behaviour.

My studies in Psychology and Health and Social Care during my A Levels provided me with valuable knowledge of human behaviour, emotional wellbeing, safeguarding and the importance of person-centred support. I continued to develop this knowledge through my

studies at Northumbria University, where I further explored areas relating to development, attachments, relationships and human behaviour

I have chosen to work as a Residential Support Care Worker because I want to use my knowledge and skills to make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people. I understand the importance of building positive, trusting relationships with children, providing consistency and appropriate boundaries, and creating an environment where children feel safe, valued and listened to.

I look forward to supporting children with their individual lives, encouraging their independence, developing hobbies and interests and celebrating their achievements. I believe that even small steps can represent significant progress for a child and are important to recognise.

I consider myself to be caring, approachable, open-minded and patient. I understand that every child is an individual and that their experiences, needs and ways of communicating may be different. I am committed to learning from experienced colleagues and working as part of a team.

Outside of work, I enjoy reading, baking and walking to explore new areas. In the future, I hope to continue developing my knowledge and experience within mental health and psychology, with the long-term aspiration of completing a PhD in Clinical Psychology and becoming a Clinical Psychologist.

Macy Campbell

RSCW

Start Date: 10/08/26

After finishing my first year at college, I decided I wanted to jump straight into work rather than continue studying. I became an on-call carer for a company called CareMark, where I really enjoyed working with the service users.

Unfortunately, COVID hit and, due to having a new baby brother in the family home, I had to leave. I then started a job in 2021 with an outsourcing company on a NatWest/RBS banking contract. I worked my way up from an agent to support administrator, then to trainer, before becoming a manager with my own team.

In 2024, I joined a social housing charity called Beyond Housing, helping people apply for homes and answering calls regarding repairs and queries.

Due to relocating to Bishop Auckland, I wanted to step outside my comfort zone of working in offices and looked into returning to the care sector. My little brother was diagnosed with ADHD and autism, and I wanted to assist people with similar needs to reach their full potential. I applied for and was successful in securing a role at a SEN college as a Learning Support Assistant for the North East Autism Society (NEAS). In this role, I helped adults aged 16–25 with additional needs attend college, create routines, further their education and look towards the future.

I love learning new things, which has led me to have lots of hobbies. I mostly enjoy creative activities such as painting, knitting, drawing and gaming. I also love to read and have even read eight books in a month.

Due to only working term time, I began looking for a more full-time role, which is how I came across a role at Pear Tree Projects. After researching the company and looking at the website, I knew this was an amazing and dedicated organisation and one I would be proud to work for. I am looking forward to bringing my experience and caring nature to ensure the best possible support for the children and young people.

Charlotte Frost

RSCW

Start Date - 07/09/2026

I grew up as a very outdoorsy child. I would go fishing every Saturday with my Dad and help my Mum in the yard with the horses after school; this is where my passion for horses began.

After leaving school, having earned the GCSEs I needed for the sixth form I was desperate to attend, I realised my predicted grades wouldn't allow me to go to university to qualify as a teacher—which is what I believed I wanted to do as a career at the time. I completed six months of sixth form and then decided to move on.

I secured an apprenticeship as a Teaching Assistant (TA) through a work experience scheme provided by my school. This was when I decided I wanted a job working with young people, though I wasn't yet sure if an educational setting was the right fit.

Once I finished my qualification, I used my savings to plan a six-month trip to Japan, as I love Japanese cars and shows. Everything was ready and my visas were approved, but then COVID-19 reached the UK. When the lockdown began, Japan shut its borders.

I made the brave decision to cancel my travelling plans and relocate. While my paperwork was being processed, I started a transferable job at a hotel and worked in the stables for my Mum. At 19, I moved to Durham independently.

Once I settled in Durham, I wanted to continue my own educational journey by applying for university. However, because my apprenticeship qualification wasn't high enough for direct entry, I began a degree online with the Open University. I decided to continue my career in education and started a new job as a TA in a SEND provision within a mainstream school. I felt I provided a reliable foundation for the children by being able to understand their personal struggles and creating a fun environment that incorporated their chosen interests into the classroom.

Eventually, I realised that specific setting wasn't for me. However, it clarified that I am particularly interested in supporting children who have had a difficult experience growing up. I want to provide stability for those who haven't always had it, so I decided to seek a fresh start and applied for a position with Pear Tree.

Chanelle West

RSCW

Start Date – 14.09.2026

After leaving school in 2009, I completed my BTEC National Diploma in Health and Social Care and planned to attend university, as I wanted to become a sonographer. However, life had other plans for me, and I went on to have my own children. I chose to focus on raising my children while they were young before returning to education to complete an FDA in Counselling.

I have always had an interest in substance misuse and the impact it can have on an individual's mental health, and this became the career path I chose to pursue.

During my university placement, I completed placement hours within an addiction service, providing person-centred counselling to individuals recovering from substance misuse. Many of the clients I worked with had experienced adverse childhood experiences. This led me to consider how the right guidance, care and support during childhood may have helped their lives follow a different path as adults.

It was through this experience that I decided I wanted to work with children within a mental health setting. For the past five years, I have worked as a child counsellor, supporting a wide range of children experiencing difficulties ranging from lower-level concerns to more complex risk-taking behaviours, trauma and other mental health difficulties.

This role taught me how unique every child is and how their individual lived experiences can shape the way they view and understand the world around them. I loved my previous role and particularly valued the opportunity to build therapeutic relationships with the children I supported. However, one of the limitations was that some children would have benefited from longer-term therapeutic support than school or agency funding allowed.

I applied to Pear Tree as a Residential Social Care Worker because I hope this role will give me the opportunity to develop new skills while supporting and building positive relationships with children over a longer period of time. I am looking forward to using my previous experience while continuing to develop my knowledge and skills within residential childcare.

- Amendment – 25/11/25 by SB – LB & AB removed & BB added.
- Amendment – 9/12/25 by SB – EMc added.
- Amendment – 5/1/26 by SB – CB removed.
- Amendment – 20/1/26 by SB – BS & CH removed.
- Amendment – 18/3/26 by SB – JGB removed.
- Amendment – 7/4/26 by SB – KC added.
- Amendment – 29/4/26 by SB – GDG removed & KC added.
- Amendment – 12/5/26 by SB – LLA removed.
- Amendment – 16/6/26 by SB – EM & SK removed & AT added.
- Amendment – 25/6/26 by SB – AR, KB, KS, BB, KC removed and added to various fixed staff teams. BP & DH added.
- Amendment – 28/8/26 by SB – CW & MC added.
- Amendment – 17/9/26 by SB – AS, CF & CW added.