

14 August 2023

## Newcastle Building Society celebrates 1<sup>st</sup> birthday in Knaresborough with support for local arts and crafts charity

**Colleagues at Newcastle Building Society's Knaresborough branch have marked their first year in the market town by supporting Henshaws Arts and Crafts centre with grant funding to enhance its work supporting people living with disabilities and visual impairments.**

Henshaws offers life-changing support to people with a range of disabilities, including those living with profound and multiple learning disabilities, sensory impairments and other physical disabilities.

At the centre they create much more than art. Their aim is to bring people together in an atmosphere that never fails to inspire. Through the workshops, people living with a range of disabilities discover their talents, put them into practice and realise their full potential. On weekdays the workshops are filled with Art Makers creating beautiful and unique pieces of art.

The charity, which celebrated its 185<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2022, is using a £3,000 grant from the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland to purchase eight iPads for Art Makers. The iPads will be equipped with immersive readers, making a huge difference to Art Makers with visual impairments to communicate more effectively, and enabling the workshop team to record activities, document progress and share content digitally.

Newcastle Building Society officially opened its branch within Knaresborough's popular library last summer, restoring financial services to the town after the last bank left in 2021. Since opening, its Knaresborough branch has added a OneBanx multi-bank kiosk, as part of a pilot project that aims to restore access to cash to UK towns and high streets.

The Newcastle Building Society Community Fund provides grants to charities and community groups located in or around the communities served by the Society's branch network. Since 2016 the Society has awarded over £2.3million in grants and donations to local causes via its Community Fund.

As one of the oldest charities in the UK, Henshaws employs around 360 members of staff and 232 volunteers who support individuals, families and their carers who are living with sight loss as well as a range of other disabilities.

Shaeron Caton-Rose, Workshop leader at Henshaws, said: "For our Art Makers, having access to equipment such as the iPads has really helped them to develop their skills and grow their confidence. A great example of this is our Art Maker Jenna, in the workshop her eye for detail and her ability to trace and copy designs was extraordinary, but she struggled with the confidence to put pen to paper to make her own creations come to life. With an iPad in hand, Jenna's self-confidence grew day by day and her skills soared. She practiced drawing from her imagination first on to a screen and then translated this skill into drawing and illustrating on to paper and other materials.

"Everything we do at Henshaws has this focus, looking at what you can do, what you're capable of and making it happen. The support we've received from Newcastle Building Society that has enabled us to purchase the iPads will offer life changing opportunities for our Art Makers in terms of creativity, independence, and confidence building."

Heather Pearman, manager of Newcastle Building Society's Knaresborough branch, and who recently visited the charity added: "Since opening our Knaresborough branch we've developed a strong relationship with Henshaws. Colleagues have lent their time to volunteer with the charity at some of its largest annual fundraising events, including Henshaws Bed Fest, with further plans to support the charity later into the year.

"Henshaws have a long history of supporting those with learning disabilities to realise their full potential and live creative and fulfilling lives. We're incredibly proud to be able to support the charity as it continues to have such a positive impact on the lives of these young people in the local community."

To mark the milestone of its first year in Knaresborough Newcastle Building Society is inviting locals to visit its stall on Market Day, Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August. Having partnered with several local businesses, the stall will offer a host of freebies and prize-giveaways, including a locally sourced hamper, branded flasks and free coffee.

**-ENDS-**

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### **About Newcastle Building Society**

Newcastle Building Society\* is the biggest building society in the North East, with a network of 31 branches and assets of more than £5.3bn. We've been here for our members for over 160 years.

As a leading local employer, we're committed to growing our region's talent and being a great place to work where people can realise their potential. We hold Platinum IIP and won the Excellence and Positive Impact Award at the 2022 CIPD North East of England HR&D Awards. We were named Company of the Year in the Northumberland and Tyneside category of the North East Business Awards 2022.

We help people to own their home, to save and to plan their finances through our range of products and services. We believe in the role of the high street at the heart of our communities and are proactive in making financial information and financial advice accessible across our region. Our Financial Advice is provided through our Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited division\*\*. We're dedicated to helping our North East communities make positive changes; since 2016 the financial support through grants and donations from the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation to benefit local causes has surpassed £2.3m

\*Newcastle Building Society Principal Office: 1 Cobalt Park Way, Cobalt Business Park, NE28 9EJ. Newcastle Building Society is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Newcastle Building Society is entered in the Financial Services Register under number 156058. You can check this on the Financial Services Register or by contacting the Financial Conduct Authority on 0800 111 6768. Call 0845 734 4345 or visit us online at <https://www.newcastle.co.uk/>

\*\* Newcastle Building Society introduces to Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited for advice on Investments, Pensions, Life and Protection Insurance and Inheritance Tax Planning. Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited is an appointed representative of The Openwork Partnership which is a trading style of Openwork Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

