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Whitley Bay Tea Dance Club put best foot forward to celebrate Queen's Platinum Jubilee thanks to Newcastle Building Society grant

A North Tyneside-based dance club is set to stage its Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration, using grant funding from Newcastle Building Society to reunite its members and help tackle social isolation in the community following a Covid-19 enforced pause.

Having brought the Waltz, the Tango and the Cha Cha to North Tyneside for the past six years, the Whitley Bay Tea Dance Club is returning to the dance floor for its Queen's Platinum Jubilee event after 18-months of lockdown measures. To celebrate its return the club will welcome a network of tea dancers from across North Tyneside to come together for an afternoon of dance and live music.

Taking place in June at North Shields' Linskill Centre, the event, funded by Newcastle Building Society, will encourage new and existing members to join in the festivities. Organisers hope the celebration will give dancers the confidence to return to socialising with like-minded people in their local community. To mark the Queen's 70 years on the throne, a new modern dance sequence – the Platinum Jubilee Waltz – has been choreographed for the celebration and will be performed at the event.

The £1,300 grant has been provided through the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation, which offers grants to charities and community groups located in or around the communities served by the Society's branch network. To help address some of the social isolation experienced in communities as a result of the pandemic, the Community Fund's latest round of grants supports Platinum Jubilee celebrations across the North East.

Joyce Hall, treasurer at Whitley Bay Tea Dance Club, said: "Tea dancing provides meaningful social activity for our members, many of whom will have witnessed the impacts of social isolation over the past couple of years, while social distancing measures have been in place.

"Gaining grant funding is a huge relief as it means that we can stage a fantastic celebration that we don't have to charge dancers costly entry fees to attend – an expense that would make the event inaccessible for some. The Queen's Jubilee celebration will also help to spread the word about the Whitley Bay Tea Dance Club, and we hope to encourage more dancers to join us."

Abbe Hurn, manager at Newcastle Building Society's Whitley Bay branch, said: "Volunteering with the Whitley Bay Tea Dance Club is something colleagues at our branch have enjoyed for some time now, and in 2016 our Community Fund helped to purchase a new sound system for the group.

"Since then, and following the Covid-19 pandemic, helping to tackle loneliness and isolation in the communities Newcastle Building Society operate within has become even more of a priority. We are thrilled to support a community group that has, and continues to have, such a positive impact on the lives of people living in North Tyneside."

Since its launch in 2016, Newcastle Building Society's Community Fund has contributed over £2.1m in grants and partnerships to a wide variety of charities and projects across the region, including the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and the Prince's Trust.

The grants, so far, are estimated to have had a positive impact on more than 151,000 people.

The Newcastle Building Society Community Fund is run in association with the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland. To find out more about the Community Fund or to nominate your charity or community group, visit: <https://www.newcastle.co.uk/powering-communities/community-grants/apply-for-a-grant>

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Notes to Editors

As part of its focus to address social isolation through the support of Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations throughout the North East and North Yorkshire, the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund has awarded grants to:

- Hexham's Gateway into the Community (£2,000),
- Whitley Bay Tea Dance Club (£1,300),
- Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre (£3,000),
- Yarm Youth and Community Centre (£2,000),
- Kids Kabin, Middlesbrough (£1,000),
- Auckland Youth and Community Centre (£1,500),
- Age UK Darlington and North Yorkshire (£1,300).

About Newcastle Building Society

Newcastle Building Society* is the biggest building society in the North East, with a network of 30 branches and assets of more than £4.9bn. We've been here for our members for over 150 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 were voted Number 2, Best Places to Work in the North East in 2019.

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 £2.1m

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