

## **MIND ACTIVE SUPPORTING OLDER PEOPLE ACROSS SOUTH EAST NORTHUMBERLAND WITH NEWCASTLE BUILDING SOCIETY BACKING**

An award-winning south east Northumberland charity which works to enhance the lives of older people across the area has received a four-figure funding boost from the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation.

Mind Active seeks to complement and build on activities available within residential homes, and to enable people living in their own homes with debilitating conditions such as dementia to continue as part of the community.

The Bedlington-based organisation, which celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, operates across the Castle Morpeth, Wansbeck and Blyth Valley, and delivers a wide variety of events and activities which promote inclusion through mental stimulation.

These range from exercise sessions, fellowship groups, concerts, picnics and school and animal visits through to trips out to local attractions such as Alwick Garden and Plessey Woods.

Mind Active is now using the £3,000 Newcastle Building Society grant to help meet the growing costs of providing its services in light of the continuing cost of living crisis and to pay for a series of lunch clubs with different kinds of entertainment.

The funding is being provided through the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland, which offers grants to charities and community groups located in or around the communities served by the Society's branch network.

As well as working directly with local older people, Mind Active also works with bereaved carers and families for as long as they feel they need its support.

An advisory panel which includes beneficiaries and their families, helps to shape the charity's services to ensure that they are meeting the needs of those that receive them.

The charity's work is delivered with the help of around a dozen volunteers, including Vanessa Hudson of Newcastle Building Society, who spent an initial two days working with the charity under the Society's policy of enabling staff to spend time supporting local good causes and has stayed involved with it ever since.

Mind Active's founder Stephen Ward says: "Many of the inclusive practices that are commonplace in residential homes today had never been heard of when we began introducing them 20 years ago, but the benefits to our beneficiaries, their families and care staff became very clear very quickly.

"Keeping active, both mentally and physically, is the key to our beneficiaries feeling they are still valuable members of society and all the activities we organise are designed to help to achieve this goal.

"We try to make use of outdoor spaces and places whenever the weather allows, with the fresh air and change in their surrounding environment being stimulating for everyone, and it really increases the connection that our guests and beneficiaries feel with their local communities.

"The transformations that we often see from sleepy inactive residents to vibrant, lively and socially interactive people shows how much of a difference our approach can make, and as we celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> year, we're looking to keep doing as much as we can to make a difference to the lives of our older local residents and their families.

"The funding we've received from Newcastle Building Society has come along just at the right time, especially with the cost of delivering our work continuing to rise, and it'll make a big difference to what we can do."

Vanessa Hudson, secretarial administrator at Newcastle Building Society, adds: "Mind Active's proactive approach and the longstanding commitment of its team are clearly having a hugely positive impact across local communities and we're very pleased to be able to be supporting such an effective and impressive charity."

Since its launch in 2016, Newcastle Building Society's Community Fund at the Community Foundation has also contributed over £2.3m 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 are so far estimated to have had a positive impact on more than 151,000 people.

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**For further information on Newcastle Building Society, please contact:**

Julian Christopher  
Footprint Public Relations  
07891 005034

### **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 £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 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 £2.1m

\*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 investments, pensions, inheritance tax planning, financial advice and life cover.

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