

10th April, 2025



Newcastle Financial Advisers Expands Customer Base with Acquisition of Financial Planning Business

Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited has announced the acquisition of Orchard Financial Management as part of the latest milestone in its ongoing strategy for growth – ensuring that as many people as possible in the region have continued access to trustworthy financial advice.

Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited, the Financial Advice subsidiary of Newcastle Building Society, has completed the acquisition of the County Durham-based financial planning firm, welcoming around 200 customers to the business who will benefit from access to face-to-face financial advice services throughout the mutual's network of 32 locations.

Newcastle Building Society introduces customers to Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited, who provide accessible advice on investment, retirement, inheritance tax planning and protection advice through the Society's network of branches across the North East, Cumbria and North Yorkshire.

Graeme Leigh founded Orchard Financial Management in 1998 in Chester-le-Street, County Durham, providing advice on investments and pensions as well as protection. Alongside his wife Michele, Graeme has grown the business through word-of-mouth recommendations. Having now decided to retire, Graeme and Michele want to ensure a seamless transition of business, and were drawn to Newcastle Financial Advisers due to its commitment to building long-term relationships with customers, and expertise in the market.

Graeme Leigh, founder of Orchard Financial Management said: "The top priority for Orchard Financial Management was to find the right and trusted home for our clients. Newcastle Financial Advisers has a fantastic reputation and we're impressed by its strong high street presence both in County Durham and throughout the North East, North Yorkshire and Cumbria, which will help to ensure a smooth transition and integration of our local client base."

Iain Lightfoot, Managing Director of Newcastle Financial Advisers, said: "We're pleased to be able to welcome Orchard Financial Management's customers to Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited. Graeme's focus on fostering long-term relationships based on a foundation of trust is

one that very much aligns with our own purpose, and the acquisition of his business therefore feels like an organic fit for Newcastle Financial Advisers.

“Graeme’s customers will continue to benefit from our commitment to providing personalised, trustworthy financial advice that is accessible to all via our experienced local advisers who are available face-to-face on high streets across Newcastle Building Society’s branch network, and also remotely via video call. Customers will also now benefit from our in-house support team who help our advisers in delivering great advice and providing all important ongoing customer service.”

Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited is a subsidiary of Newcastle Building Society, and provides financial advice across its 32 Newcastle Building Society branch locations.

For more information on Newcastle Financial Advisers visit: <https://www.newcastle.co.uk/>

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Newcastle Financial Advisers is a trade name of Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited which is an appointed representative of The Openwork Partnership a trading style of Openwork Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Approved by The Openwork Partnership on 08/04/2025

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About Newcastle Building Society

Newcastle Building Society is the UK’s 7th largest building society with 32 branches across the North East, Cumbria and North Yorkshire. A branch in Manchester city centre will open later this year under the Manchester Building Society brand. The Society has assets of more than £6.2bn. It has been there for its members for over 160 years. Financial Advice is provided through its Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited subsidiary. Newcastle Financial Advisers has consistently

been awarded Top Rated Firm status by VouchedFor - the UK's leading review site for Financial Advisers.

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 we're proactive in making financial information and financial advice accessible across our regions.

We're dedicated to helping our communities make positive changes; since 1995 the financial support through grants and donations from the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation to benefit local causes has surpassed £1.7m.

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. We are a Real Living Wage employer and were the first building society in the UK to become an accredited Living Pension employer in 2024. We have been named Regional Building Society of the Year for eight consecutive years (2017–2024) by What Mortgage? and Best Overall Personal Finance Brand at the Personal Finance Awards 2023/24 and 2024/25.

In 2024 Newcastle Building Society became the first UK business to receive international accreditation for mutual value measurement, recognising our ongoing commitment to creating value for our members and communities.

In 2025 we signed up to the UN Principles for Responsible Banking, committing to take action for a more sustainable future in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement.