



HOSPITALITY AND HOPE COOKING UP HEALTHY EATING EXCITEMENT IN SOUTH TYNESIDE WITH NEWCASTLE BUILDING SOCIETY SUPPORT

A South Tyneside charity is cooking up local enthusiasm for healthy eating with the help of new funding from Newcastle Building Society.

Hospitality & Hope supports vulnerable individuals and families across its community to address a range of social, personal and financial difficulties that are impacting on their lives and works to find sustainable ways to improve their situations.

The South Shields-headquartered organisation has used a £3,000 Society grant to set up an innovative new project which sees local families given the skills and experience to feed their family a healthy meal on a budget.

A recipe book packed with healthy meal ideas and a slow cooker is included as part of the project - and the charity is already seeing people who've never cooked before in their lives getting excited about the food they're now able to prepare.

The project funding is being 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.

Founded in 2002, Hospitality & Hope has its main operations centre on Hampden Street in South Shields, from which it runs the South Tyneside Food Bank, and is supported by a 30-strong team of local volunteers.

Its Chai Community supported housing scheme provides education, training, employment and volunteering opportunities for its residents which help them build good and purposeful lives for themselves, supporting them to live well in independent living.

It is hoping to see at least two dozen local families take part in its healthy eating project this year and has also just opened its first community food shop, which allows users to select up to £15 of food for a fee of just four pounds.

Brian Thomas, chief executive officer at Hospitality & Hope, says: “We try to have a positive impact on the lives and confidence of the families that we support, and promoting healthy eating is very much part of this.

“While we all like a takeaway meal sometimes, cooking using healthy ingredients isn’t just better for you, but also tends to be much less expensive, which is an especially important consideration for everyone at the moment.

“This project has been designed to give people both the knowledge and the equipment they need to make healthy meals for themselves and their family and we’re already seeing some great results.

“It’s been fantastic to get so much enthusiasm from the people that have taken part in the course so far, especially from those who hadn’t cooked like this before who now can’t wait to tell us what they’ve made and even send us photos of what’s on the family menu today.

“This project simply wouldn’t exist without the funding that Newcastle Building Society has provided, and we hope that it will have a positive lifelong impact on dozens of local families’ approach to planning, cooking and eating their meals.”

David Pearson, manager at Newcastle Building Society’s Denmark Centre branch in South Shields, adds: “Hospitality & Hope is a real beacon in our community and makes a tangible impact on the lives of so many local families.

“This is a simple idea that will have both short and long-term positive impacts on our community and we’re very pleased to be able to help make it happen.”

Since its launch in 2016, Newcastle Building Society’s Community Fund has also 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 are so far 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.

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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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