

# Community Impact 2023



# Community Impact 2023

## Introduction

### Strengthening relationships in our communities

At Newcastle Building Society, we're committed to the people and places that make up our heartland. We help members from all walks of life own their own homes, save for the future, and receive trusted financial advice. We've provided essential services to generations of members for 160 years.

Guided by our Purpose of connecting communities with a better financial future, in 2023, we focused on continuing to make positive changes, building and strengthening the relationship we have in our communities, and delivering value for our members. We aim to deliver member value and impact across three key areas:

- Our products, pricing, services and accessibility, including our commitment to branches and providing accessible financial services;
- Our membership and communities, which includes our engagement with members, our community giving, colleague volunteering and inclusive approach;
- Our employment opportunities, operations, and partnerships – such as our strategic employability partnerships with the Prince's Trust, Walking With the Wounded, and Newcastle United Foundation.



Siobhan Younger, our Wooler Branch Manager

# Community Impact 2023

## Community contributions

In 2023, the total value of our community impact was equal to £893,810.

£357,296 of support through donations, partnerships and colleague fundraising, including a contribution of £216,733 to the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland.

Through our Helping Hand service – delivered by Citizens Advice Gateshead – a further £536,514 in estimated financial benefit for Members and colleagues was achieved, through a combination of grants and benefits from the advice and support received.

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value of our  
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# Community Impact 2023

## Helping Hand


Delivered in partnership with Citizens Advice Gateshead, Helping Hand is our free-to-use, quick access support service that is available to all our members and colleagues.

Users can get practical advice and guidance on a range of issues, including welfare and benefits, housing, relationships, and scams, and can even receive emergency financial assistance.



2023 marked the first full year of operation for Helping Hand, and it continued to provide our members with quick and timely support when they need it most.

In 2023 a total of

**133** people used  
Helping Hand 

The advice, guidance and additional support they accessed is estimated to have financially benefited them by more than

 **£500,000**  
as well as almost  
**£25,000** in emergency  
financial support

One of our members recently benefited from a £250 food shopping voucher and advice on which benefits he might be eligible for. He'd told his local branch team that he was starting to struggle financially, especially with increasing food costs, after being involved in an accident that left him unable to work. He has since received further support from Citizens Advice Gateshead.



Citizens Advice Gateshead colleagues.

# Community Impact 2023

## Colleague volunteering

A core part of our Purpose is helping our communities to make positive changes and our colleagues play an important role in bringing this to life. They regularly get involved with their local communities and are the driving force behind impactful volunteering – generously donating their time, energy, and skills.

In 2023

**673** 

colleagues  
volunteered

a total of

**10,518** 

hours across  
the year

which is equivalent to

**1,502** 

working days

### Some of our volunteering highs from 2023 included:

- A Society-wide effort to transform an old boys club into a brand new performing arts school for True Colours Theatre - who were later awarded a grant from our Community Fund;
- IT colleagues inspiring local schoolchildren to explore digital and technology careers after they supported Newcastle United Foundation to deliver a series of science and engineering workshops;
- Our Head of Enterprise Risk, Paul Edwards, giving schoolchildren the opportunity to try rugby, after their middle school struggled to access a qualified coach to teach the sport.



Paul Edwards, our Head of Enterprise Risk, was approached by a governor at Gosforth Central Middle School to coach an after-school rugby club, after they struggled to access a qualified coach.

# Community Impact 2023

## Community grants

Every year the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland awards a series of small grants worth up to £5,000 to local charities across our branch locations in the North East, Cumbria, and North Yorkshire.

Since 2016, we've awarded more than £1.7m to benefit local causes and make a real difference in the areas we're based.

In 2023, we continued to prioritise projects that worked to tackle issues linked to employability, food poverty, debt management, homelessness, and the environment. £170,253 was awarded to 45 charities, which positively impacted 36,413 people.



West End Women and Girls Centre used a £3,000 grant to help their members reconnect with their farming heritage.

# Community Impact 2023

## Partnerships

### Unlocking the potential of our region

We've teamed up with likeminded partners – the Prince's Trust, Newcastle United Foundation, and Walking With The Wounded – to help unlock the potential of our region. Together, we're working to grow local, regional talent, reduce barriers to employment, and increase skills within our communities.

Through these partnerships, our colleagues actively help deliver an extensive range of support activities, such as CV writing, mock interviews, mentoring, as well as employability, career development, and money management workshops.



Prince's Trust



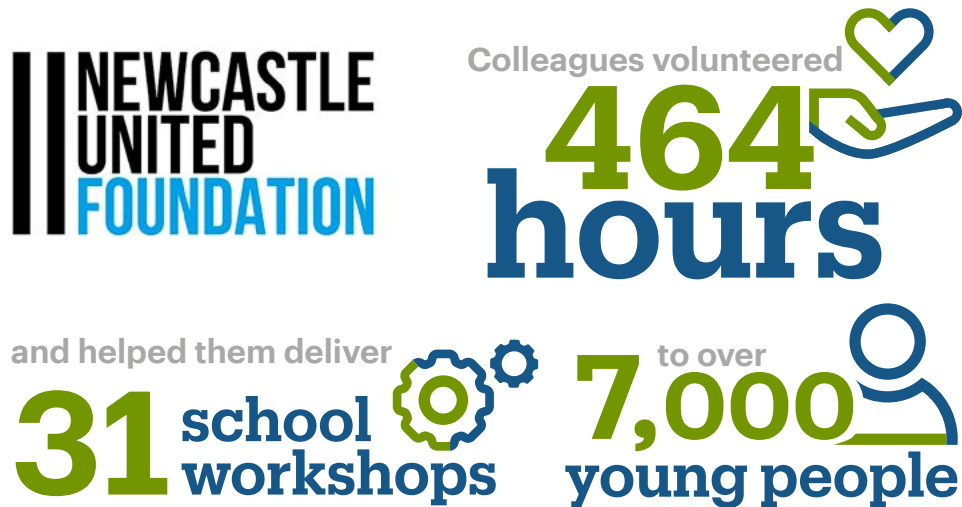
Newcastle United Foundation's community facility, NUCASTLE powered by Newcastle Building Society.

# Community Impact 2023

## Partnerships

### Newcastle United Foundation

Our colleagues play a very important role in our partnership with Newcastle United Foundation. They regularly volunteer their time, energy, and skills to help the Foundation deliver financial education workshops or digital and technology workshops to young people.



Colleagues from our Digital and Technology teams spent their summer delivering a series of computer science and engineering workshops to local schoolchildren to encourage them to pursue a career in digital and technology. Activities included teaching the children how to program Sphero coding robots to move and do basic actions, to help develop their creative thinking

Our branch colleagues also regularly visit local schools to support financial education and enterprise sessions, helping to inspire the next generation of talent.



Fiona Shaw supporting Newcastle United Foundation deliver a STEM workshop to schoolchildren at NUCASTLE powered by Newcastle Building Society.



# Community Impact 2023

## Partnerships

As part of our work with the Prince's Trust and Newcastle United Foundation, we also offer work experience to young people to help them build their confidence and give them insight into an industry that they wouldn't otherwise get.

Before taking part in Newcastle United Foundation's employability programme, Jonny Wilson struggled with his confidence and wasn't sure how to make the final step into employment.

After completing two weeks of work experience with us, Jonny built a strong foundation of skills and confidence to take his first role. He is now enjoying a career with Sky.

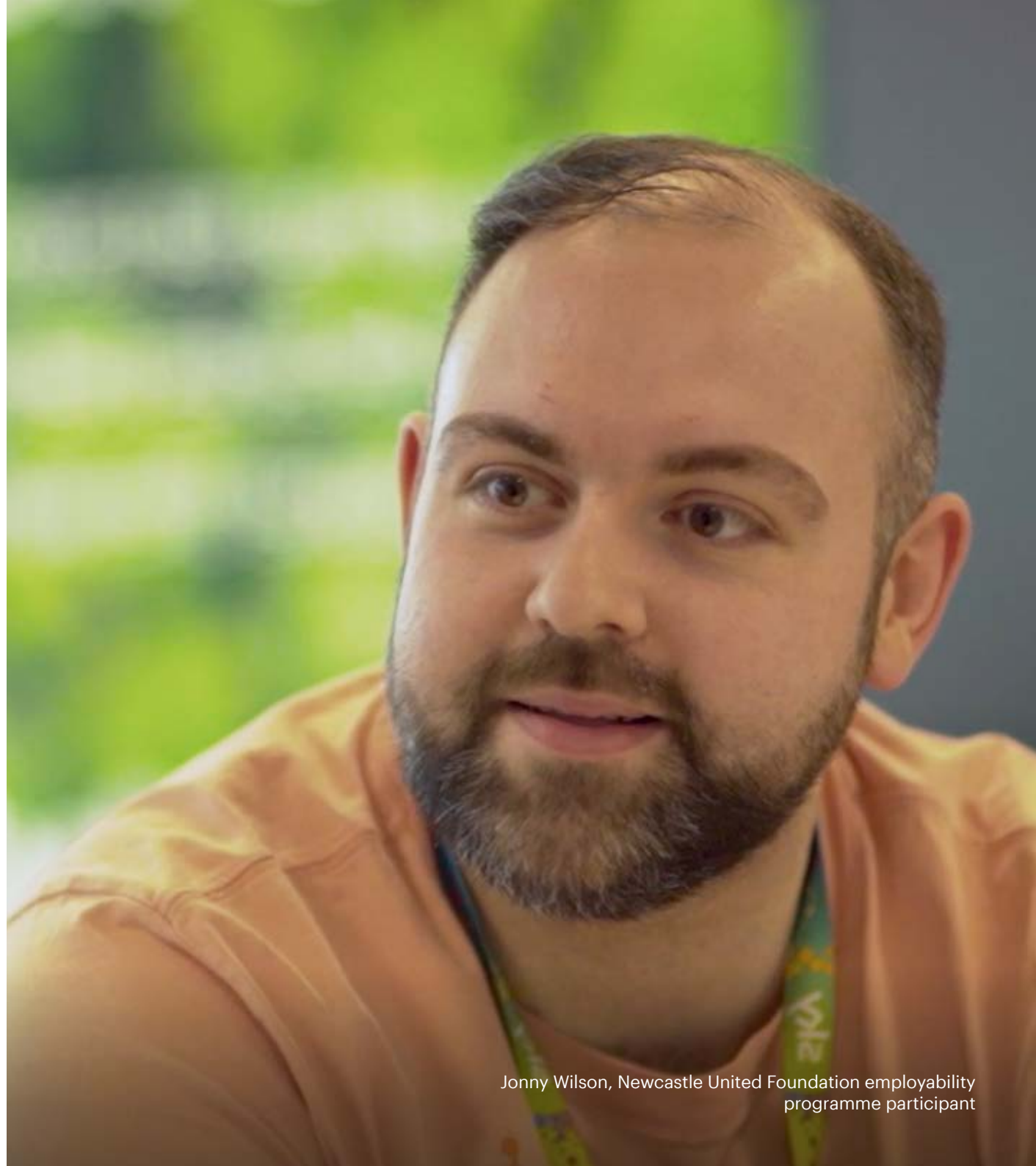
To view Jonny's story, scan the QR code or visit:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-g6ZgSgRIM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-g6ZgSgRIM)



Scan the QR code to view Johnny's story.



Prince's Trust



Jonny Wilson, Newcastle United Foundation employability programme participant

# Community Impact 2023

## Partnerships

### Sir Bobby Robson Foundation

For more than a decade, we've proudly partnered with the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and invested in the next generation of cancer research.

We've contributed more than £3m to date to support the Foundation fund the early detection and treatment of cancer and clinical trials of anti-cancer drugs; and from 2019, we've funded the role of a Trainee Specialist Cancer Research Nurse at the Sir Bobby Robson Cancer Trials Research Centre.

In 2023, we welcomed Ashleigh Barrow as the new 'Sir Bobby' nurse. She has the important role of welcoming new patients to the Research Centre and discussing trials of experimental cancer treatments with them – often 'first in human' trials. She is also responsible for coordinating trials of drugs that are in later stages of development.



L-R Ashleigh Barrow, Trainee Specialist Cancer Research Nurse, and Helen Chambers, Senior Oncology Research Sister at the Sir Bobby Robson Cancer Trials Research Centre.

# Community Impact 2023

## Partnerships

### Walking With The Wounded

In support of our partnership with military charity, Walking With The Wounded, fundraising reached brave new heights in 2023.

Taking on the charity's flagship fundraising event of the year, the Cumbrian Challenge, 12 colleagues hiked one of three different routes through some of the Lake District's most demanding scenery.

Eight members of our team trekked 10km to the west of Grasmere, before making their way up to the 766m peak of Great Rigg. Another four challenged themselves to a longer route of 26km and climbed more than 1,700m to reach the peak of five different fells in 10 hours.

Together, both teams raised vital funds for Walking With The Wounded, which will go towards helping more veterans using employment and mental health programmes.



Our IT colleagues, Gary, Jade, Glenn, and Richard, who braved the longer 26km trek.

# Community Impact 2023

## Reimagining Branches

Despite a national trend of bank branch closures, we're continuing to invest in and grow our branch network. This involves rethinking the branch of the future, and how to breathe new life into their place in our towns and high streets. We know how important branches are to our communities, providing access to convenient face-to-face services and trusted financial advice.

### A new blueprint for branches

With 31 branches and a dedicated financial advice location, we serve a diverse range of communities across the North East, Cumbria, and North Yorkshire. This includes four innovative community branches in Hawes, Knaresborough, Wooler, and Yarm, which sees us share spaces with local services – such as libraries and community centres – to offer new ways of serving customers in ways that suit them.

In 2023, we announced our plans to move our Newcastle city centre branch. We'll be putting our brand of accessible, face-to-face financial services at the heart of our home city, as we move from our current location on Northumberland Street to a new flagship branch next to the iconic Monument.

Elsewhere in our branch network, we added a brand-new community space to our Darlington branch. Our community spaces offer members of the local community a safe, warm and welcoming place to gather in and connect with each other – regardless of whether they're a customer of ours or not. The Darlington branch community space brings the number of community rooms across our network up to fifteen.



Our new Monument branch.

## Community Impact 2023

### Reimagining Branches

To continue offering new and innovative ways of serving the communities we're located in, we were the first financial services provider to pilot a multi-bank kiosk in our branches. The kiosks are free to use for anyone who needs to deposit or withdraw cash using their current account. They also help to restore access to cash in communities where several banks have shut their doors and left people with no other option but to spend time and money to carry out their banking.

In Knaresborough, Kele Warrender of Kele Beans no longer has to travel out of her way to Harrogate or a Post Office to carry out her business banking. Thanks to the kiosk in our Knaresborough Branch, Kele routinely carries out all of her banking every fortnight when she's in town for market day.

Similarly, in Gosforth, the multi-bank kiosk has become a timesaver for the General Manager of Adriano's Deli, Rita Gray. She no longer needs to take time out of her busy workday to travel into Newcastle City Centre to carry out her personal and business banking. Instead, she simply crosses the road to our Gosforth Branch, where she can manage everything from one convenient location.

To view Rita's story, scan the QR code or visit:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=HlvIKiO-fKY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HlvIKiO-fKY)



Scan the QR code to  
view Rita's story



Kele Warrender of Kele Beans.

# Community Impact 2023

## Looking ahead

Looking ahead to 2024, our Purpose of connecting our communities with a better financial future will continue to guide everything we do.

We will continue to focus on delivering value for our members, strengthening the relationships we have with our communities, but also working on connecting, collaborating, and making a difference within our regions.

### **Our member value commitments for the next 12 months include:**

- Growing our Community Fund by at least £1m so that we can continue to support more worthwhile charities and projects;
- Continuing to make financial services accessible to people of all ages across our communities, by increasing the number of branches we have in the North East;
- Transforming our colleague volunteering programme so we can deliver an even greater impact across our communities;
- Continuing to expand our work and employment opportunities so that a career in financial services is more accessible to more people in our region;
- Measuring the positive impact and value created through each of our branches, helping to understand the unique role each branch plays in its communities and the impact of our branch network across our regions.



Two members of North Tyneside Disability Forum enjoying a fit and fun exercise session.

# Community Impact 2023

How you can get involved

## Community grants

Our Community Fund will continue to support projects linked to food poverty, sustainability and the environment, work and opportunity, homelessness, and debt management.

If you would like to nominate a charity for funding, simply visit our website and fill out the nomination form. To stay up to date on when nominations are open, follow us on Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn, or keep an eye on our website:

[www.newcastle.co.uk/powering-communities/community-grants](http://www.newcastle.co.uk/powering-communities/community-grants)

If you'd also like to donate to our Community Fund, scan the QR code or visit our donation page:

<https://communityfoundation.enthuse.com/cf/newcastle-building-society-community-fund>



Scan the QR code to donate to our Community Fund

## Connected Communities

Our online discussion forum, Connected Communities, is a place for our members to have their say on a range of topics.

From our grant-giving, product development, to what's going on in their local community, it's a place for our members to connect with us and each other, share their views, provide feedback, and help shape the future of our Society.

If you'd like to join Connected Communities, scan the QR code or visit:

[www.newcastle.co.uk/powering-communities/connected-communities](http://www.newcastle.co.uk/powering-communities/connected-communities)



Scan the QR code to join Connected Communities



Arsalan, a service user at Walking With in North Tyneside, who received a grant from our Community Fund to support the health and wellbeing of asylum seekers in the region.

## Community Impact 2023



To stay up to date with our latest community activity, follow us on:  
**@newcastlebuildingsociety** on LinkedIn and Instagram, and  
**@NewcastleBSoc** on Facebook.

For more information about our community work, visit:  
[www.newcastle.co.uk/powering-communities](http://www.newcastle.co.uk/powering-communities)

**Connecting our communities  
with a better financial future.**