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NEW TYNE RIVERS TRUST PROJECT HELPING LOCAL VOLUNTEERS JUMP INTO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT WORK

One of the North East's leading environmental charities has launched a new project in two Tyneside communities to encourage more local residents to get involved with looking after their local rivers.

The Tyne Rivers Trust is dedicated to improving the River Tyne and its catchment area, and works to improve the well-being of the Tyne rivers and people from Alston and Kielder through to Tynemouth through education, tackling pollution and practical conservation.

It has set up new schemes in Woolsington, in conjunction with the local Parish Council, and at the Schoolhouse Allotments in Ouseburn to help look after and improve the different parts of the Ouse Burn which run through each location.

River walks are being held to show residents and allotment holders what their respective stretches of river have to offer and what they can do to help look after them, while water quality testing and invertebrate sampling activities are being carried out to help assess the health of the local environment.

Hidden wildlife cameras are also being put in place to get a fuller idea of the animals, birds and insects that live in each location.

A £2,500 grant from the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland is helping to fund the new projects.

The Tyne Rivers Trust, which celebrates its 20th anniversary next year, acts as the 'voice of the river' and currently has a wide range of different projects ongoing which support, protect and enhance river environments across its catchment area.

Dozens of volunteers support the Trust's 15-strong team with activities ranging from building willow fences, bank repairs and tree planting through to litter picking, water quality management and e-fishing, which helps to quantify, assess and monitor fish populations.

Chloe Hall, communications manager at the Tyne Rivers Trust, says: "The rivers that we work to protect and enhance belong to all of us, and we're working to encourage more people across the region to get actively involved with looking after these priceless natural assets.

"The more information we can gather from locations like Woolsington and the Schoolhouse Allotments, the more idea we have about what's happening there and what the best things we can do to support the local environment would be.

"Getting local people involved is the key to making a positive impact in local communities, and we've had a really positive reaction to this project in both locations, with volunteers of all ages signing up to be part of it.

"With such a wide area to cover and so much work to be done, there's never any shortage of activities to which we can allocate budgets, so getting Newcastle Building Society's support for this work means we'll be able to get on with reaping the benefits of it far sooner than we otherwise could have."

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

Donna Stubbs, community manager at Newcastle Building Society, adds: "The work of the Tyne Rivers Trust makes a massive difference to the health and well-being of our local water courses, as well as to the enjoyment that we can all get out of them, and we're proud to be supporting a project that will have such a tangible positive community impact."

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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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 £5.3bn. We've been here for our members for over 160 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 £2.3m

*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/>

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