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A Decade of Vital Cancer Support Celebrated As Lady Elsie Unveils Fundraising Memento At Newcastle Building Society Headquarters

A lasting memento of the ten-year fundraising partnership between the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation and Newcastle Building Society has been unveiled by one of the charity's founders.

Lady Elsie Robson, who established the Foundation with her late husband in 2008, attended a reception at the Society's headquarters at the Cobalt Business Park in North Tyneside to dedicate a commemorative bench which now sits inside the building.

The Foundation formed its first and only financial partnership in 2012, with contributions made by the Society surpassing all early projections and now standing at well over £3m.

Lady Elsie was accompanied by two of her and Sir Bobby's three sons, Andrew and Mark, while the reception was also attended by Stuart Miller, Newcastle Building Society's chief customer officer, Dame Jackie Daniel, chief executive at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and Jon Goodwin, head of grant programmes at the Newcastle Hospitals Charity, of which the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation is part.

The two organisations also recently released a film to help mark the anniversary which highlights the practical benefits that the donations made by the Society and all the charity's other supporters bring to cancer patients across the region, especially in terms of the extra time that advances in treatment give them with their families.

The film features 16-year-old Rebecca Henderson from Billingham and Keith Farquharson (48) from Heaton, who have both received pioneering cancer treatments funded and developed with the support of the Foundation.

The Foundation was set up by Sir Bobby and Lady Elsie to support the search for more effective ways to detect and treat cancer.

Working within the NHS, and in collaboration with Newcastle University and other cancer charities, its main aim is to help fund world-class cancer treatments that directly benefit patients, as well as funding projects that enhance cancer patient care.

It funds projects within the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, which benefit cancer patients from across the Society's heartland area, and it also contributes significantly to the global fight against the disease.

Mark Robson, who is chair of trustees at the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation, says: "My dad would be so thrilled by the exceptional support we've received from Newcastle Building Society over the last decade. They've always understood the importance of the work the Foundation funds, and the difference that makes to people facing cancer both now and in the future.

"My mum, brother and I are extremely proud to be here today to see this new bench unveiled and extremely grateful to the Newcastle for their generous and ongoing support. It is very much appreciated."

Dame Jackie Daniel, chief executive at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, adds: "Over the last ten years, the support given by Newcastle Building Society for our Newcastle Hospitals Charity fund, the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation, has been nothing short of magnificent. Real progress has been made into cancer research through clinical trials during that time thanks to their generosity.

"Newcastle Building Society is a key partner in supporting the Foundation's work in finding more effective ways to detect and treat cancer and we're extremely grateful for their long-term commitment. If he was here today, I have no doubt theirs would be the first name on Sir Bobby's team sheet."

Andrew Haigh, chief executive at Newcastle Building Society, says: "Our colleagues have played a central role in the Society becoming the Foundation's largest corporate donor and we wanted to mark the tenth anniversary of our partnership with something practical that they would see and be able to use every day.

"We are honoured that Lady Elsie and her family have visited our headquarters and have helped us to recognise the immeasurable impact that everyone who has either supported the Foundation or benefitted from its support has had across our region and beyond."

The film marking the tenth anniversary of the partnership between the Sir Bobby Robson and Newcastle Building Society can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=6z9C0shl7uM

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About the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation:

Sir Bobby Robson launched his Foundation in 2008 and it has gone on to raise over £18 million to find more effective ways to detect and treat cancer.

Work funded by the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation directly benefits cancer patients in the North East and Cumbria and plays a significant role in the international fight against the disease - funding cutting-edge cancer treatment and innovative cancer support services and including the clinical trials of new drugs at the Sir Bobby Robson Cancer Trials Research Centre.

Sir Bobby described his charity as his “last and greatest team.” He had no idea how large his team would grow, or how much it would go on to achieve.

A fund within the Newcastle Hospitals Charity, the Foundation works within the NHS and in partnership with other leading charities and organisations. Teamwork was always very important to Sir Bobby.

For more information, please visit: www.sirbobbyrobsonfoundation.org.uk.

About Newcastle Hospitals Charity:

Newcastle Hospitals Charity is the official charity of Newcastle Hospitals and aims to make a positive difference for the patients, staff and communities of the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Supporters of Newcastle Hospitals help the charity to make an impact for the 19,000 staff and the 1.72million patient contacts that take place through the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust each year.

Newcastle Hospitals Charity supports initiatives that help to improve the health and wellbeing of patients, visitors and the wider communities of the North East and North Cumbria through compassionate and innovative healthcare, education and research.