



4 March, 2024

## Building Society's Tech Powers Up Next Generation

**Colleagues from the North East's largest building society are helping to upskill and inspire the next generation by donating IT equipment to one of the region's best-known charities.**

Young people from Newcastle United Foundation are already getting to grips with the laptops thanks to a donation of 50 devices from Newcastle Building Society.

Led by Newcastle Building Society's community development specialist, Ken Hines and colleague device technical lead, Andy McAlpine, colleagues from the Society's Digital and Technology team delivered and set up the laptops which will be used by young people on the charity's employability and skills programmes to help search for jobs, write CVs and upskill in digital literacy.

The programmes take place at the Foundation's community hub, NUCASTLE powered by Newcastle Building Society, and the equipment will benefit around 50 young people by supporting with their employability skills and enabling them to create and share digital content.

Michael Conville, chief customer officer at Newcastle Building Society said: "Our partnership with Newcastle United Foundation is all about creating meaningful opportunities that engage and inspire communities across the North East.

"Digital skills have never been more important for young people entering the world of work, however we know some young people lack basic IT skills, such as the understanding of emails and the ability to search the web.

"That's why it's so important to our Society that we support young people with the tools they need to break down the barriers to digital literacy and develop the employability skills they'll need on entering the workplace."

In July 2020, the Society entered a six-year partnership with Newcastle United Foundation worth £1.1 million, including support for their flagship employability programme, NU Futures. The partnership also helped to deliver the Foundation's state-of-the-art community facility, NUCASTLE powered by Newcastle Building Society, which opened in Newcastle in March 2022.

The facility provides access to extensive sports and fitness activities for the community, as well as delivering wellbeing and education programmes for the wider region, supporting people become fitter, healthier, more active, and develop their employability skills.

Andrew Foster, Director of Programmes and Impact at Newcastle United Foundation, said: "It is critical for young people today to have access to digital devices as they navigate their education, job opportunities and the workplace in a technology-driven world.

"The generous donation of 50 laptops from Newcastle Building Society will help enable teenagers and young adults we engage through our NU Futures programme to build their digital literacy and improve their confidence using systems and programmes crucial to moving closer to the world of work.

"Our key partnership with the Society continues to deliver life-changing impact for communities across the North East through NU Futures and together we are empowering hundreds of young people to achieve their full potential."

Newcastle United Foundation's NU Futures programme provides life-changing opportunities through education and employment support for schoolchildren, teenagers, and young adults. Through one-to-one mentorship, interpersonal skill-building, inspirational apprenticeships, and work placements, 92 percent of the next generation have improved self-confidence and 98 percent improved their teamworking skills. Since September 2023, more than 150 NU Futures participants have been engaged, earning 66 qualifications, and facilitating 83 job starts and 25 apprenticeships in career paths based right here in the North East.

Find out more about Newcastle Building Society, including details of your nearest branch at [www.newcastle.co.uk](http://www.newcastle.co.uk)

**ENDS**

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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 have been named Regional Building Society of the Year for seven consecutive years from 2017 – 2023 by What Mortgage? and also won Best Overall Personal Finance Brand at the Personal Finance Awards 2023/24. 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 its members and communities.

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, as our branch network grows, we are increasingly proactive in making financial information and financial advice accessible across our regions.

Our Financial Advice is provided through our Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited subsidiary. Face-to-face financial advice is available at each of the Society's 31 branches plus a financial advice-only location in Pickering, North Yorkshire. For the third year running, Newcastle Financial Advisers has been awarded Top Rated Firm status by VouchedFor - the UK's leading review site for Financial Advisers.

We're dedicated to helping our 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. Our total community contributions in 2022, made up of grants, match funding, and our ongoing partnership donations, was more than £544,000.

Newcastle Building Society is committed to creating a culture of belonging, where people can bring their whole self to work and be respected and valued for who they are. Our colleague-run networks include the Race Network, LGBTQ+ Network the Disability and Awareness Network, Women in Leadership Network, Menopause Network and Parent and Carers Network, all of which help steer Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy within the organisation.

[www.newcastle.co.uk](http://www.newcastle.co.uk)

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.