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Newcastle Building Society reveals Darlington branch investment

The North East's biggest building society has shared plans for a big investment into its Darlington branch including support for local charities and community groups.

Newcastle Building Society plans to create a community room for local people to be able to meet and use for small events within its branch on Horse Market, converting unused space on the first floor into a state-of-the-art meeting space.

Despite a national trend of bank branch closures, Newcastle Building Society has continued to invest in its branch network, and over recent years has upgraded its branch facilities across the region, opened in several new locations by sharing space with community organisations, and helped restore access to financial services in places where banks have left town.

Since 2015, more than 5,000 bank branches have closed across the UK, including several in Darlington, County Durham and Teesside, forcing customers online and making it harder for some people to manage their money.

Newcastle Building Society has been present in Darlington for more than three decades; its first branch in Darlington opened on Skinnergate in the early 1990s, before it moved to its current premises in 2017. The investment into its Darlington branch cements the Society's place in the town and will help create a meeting room for local community groups, including access to virtual meeting technology and locally-sourced tea and coffee.

It will be the Society's 15th community room across its network of 31 branches. Each community room is free to use, provides a welcoming space for good causes, and tend to be popular with groups including 'knit and natter', friendship groups and for informal meetings with local charities.

Michael Conville, chief customer officer at Newcastle Building Society, said: "We know people are concerned about the number of bank branch closures, and the growing sense that they are being excluded from the provision of local financial services.

“At Newcastle Building Society we’re committed to enhancing our branch network, making better branches and providing a welcoming service in the heart of the community.

“By investing in Darlington and opening a brand new community room, we’re making a commitment to the town and showing how our innovative branches meet the needs of our communities by working collaboratively and combining the best of friendly customer service and technology.”

Amy Walker, Newcastle Building Society’s Darlington branch manager, said: “We’re really looking forward to adding a community room to our branch and hosting some of our fantastic local groups and charities. There’s so much going on in Darlington at the moment, so I’m sure it’ll be popular with customers and will be another great reason to pop into town.”

Work on Newcastle Building Society’s community room at its Darlington branch is underway and is expected to be complete in October. To book the community room, pop into the branch on Horse Market or visit www.newcastle.co.uk/our-branches for more information.

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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, as our

branch network grows, are increasingly 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. Our total community contributions in 2022, made up of grants, match funding, and our ongoing partnership donations, was more than £544,000.

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.