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FOUR-FIGURE WELFARE FUND BOOST FOR NORTH EAST HOMELESSNESS CHARITY

A North East homelessness charity is extending the support it can provide to local people in crisis at a time of fast-growing need, with the help of a four-figure grant from the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation.

Oasis Community Housing runs a range of housing and support services to help address individuals' immediate needs and the wider root causes of homelessness.

A core part of its work revolves around its Basis drop-in resource centres in Gateshead and Sunderland, which ensure vulnerable people can have their urgent needs met and can also easily access a range of services and specialists through a single location that can help them regain control of their lives.

Oasis Community Housing, which helps around 1,000 people every year, is now using the £3,000 Society grant to boost its welfare fund, which it uses to cover the cost of whichever items its service users require to meet their immediate and longer-term needs.

Food, clothing and emergency accommodation costs can all be covered, while for people moving into new accommodation, starter packs containing all the essential items they need to live independently are made available.

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

As part of its homelessness services, Oasis Community Housing also operates 45 one-bedroom flats which give service users their own space in which to live while also retaining access to support workers who can help them get their lives in order.

Hazel Ditchburn, corporate relationship manager at Oasis Community Housing, says: “Our Basis drop in service allows us to give people whatever immediate help they need, such as hot drinks and food, dry clothing or a shower, while also giving us the chance to offer a friendly ear and find out about their situation, so we can look at what help we can provide in the longer term.

“We sometimes only see a particular person once and can give them the help they need straight away, but for many others, the relationship lasts much longer and there are multiple issues that need to be addressed.

“Getting a grant of this size from Newcastle Building Society, especially in the current financial climate, means we’re able to plan our services with a much greater degree of certainty ensuring the people walking through our doors get the right help and support they really need.”

Robert Boak, manager at Newcastle Building Society’s Waterloo Place branch in Sunderland, adds: “Organisations like Oasis Community Housing step up to help vulnerable people who often have nowhere else to turn and their impact on local communities is immense.

“With the need rising significantly for the help they provide, Oasis Community Housing’s role has never been more important and we’re very pleased to be contributing to its essential work.”

Since its launch in 2016, Newcastle Building Society’s Community Fund at the Community Foundation has also contributed over £2.1m 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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For further information on Newcastle Building Society, please contact:

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About Oasis Community Housing - www.oasiscommunityhousing.org

Oasis Community Housing has with almost 40 years' experience supporting people facing homelessness, especially young women and mothers and babies. Every year, the charity helps more than 1,000 people by providing housing, support and, more fundamentally, a place where people feel they can belong. They have projects across North East England and South London.

About Newcastle Building Society

Newcastle Building Society* is the biggest building society in the North East, with a network of 30 branches and assets of more than £4.9bn. We've been here for our members for over 150 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 £2.1m

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. Call 0845 734 4345 or visit us online at www.newcastle.co.uk

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