



## Hexham charity to stage 'Queen of all tea parties' for Platinum Jubilee thanks to Newcastle Building Society grant

23 May, 2022

### **A Hexham-based charity supporting people with learning disabilities is set to stage a Platinum Jubilee celebration thanks a grant from Newcastle Building Society.**

Gateway into the Community will host a traditional British afternoon tea party, bringing together over 100 of the charity's members and their families for a day of celebration. Taking place at Tynedale Cricket Club over the Jubilee weekend, the tea party will involve music, a royal bake-off, sporting activities and face painting to mark the Queen's 70 year anniversary on the throne.

Organisers hope to encourage people of all ages to join in the festivities, creating a sense of togetherness and engagement amongst community groups – sorely missed in recent times due to Covid-19.

Established in 1998, Gateway into the Community is a support group offering a dedicated day service, individual support and special interest groups for people with learning disabilities in the local area. The charity supports more than 200 members by enabling access to social, leisure and learning opportunities, providing a sense of belonging within their local community.

The £2,000 grant will cover the cost of the event and has been provided through the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund at the Community Foundation, which offers grants to charities and community groups located in or around the communities served by the Society's branch network. To help address some of the social isolation experienced in communities as a result of the pandemic, the Community Fund's latest round of grants supports Platinum Jubilee celebrations across the North East.

Julia Ferguson, chief executive at Gateway into the Community, said: "Following a pause to our social activities during the pandemic, our Platinum Jubilee tea party is an opportunity to unite generations of our community that may not ordinarily get the chance to come together for a celebration to mark the Queen's 70 years of service. Through staging our event we also hope to address the loneliness and social isolation felt throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

“In preparation for the event we are rallying support from businesses and residents in our local area, with our members and volunteers working hard to create decorations, deliver party invitations, and bake a selection of treats, all of which will help us to put on a memorable event for those who attend.”

Dale Barclay, area manager at Newcastle Building Society, covering the Hexham branch on Beaumont Street, said: “Having spent time with members and volunteers at Gateway into the Community, I know first-hand how excited they are to throw their Platinum Jubilee afternoon tea party.

“Events like this are what help our communities to thrive and, with the support of our Community Fund grant, the charity can continue to have a transformative impact on the lives of its members and their families.”

Since its launch in 2016, Newcastle Building Society’s Community Fund has 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, so far, are estimated to have had a positive impact on more than 151,000 people.

The Newcastle Building Society Community Fund is run in association with the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland. To find out more about the Community Fund or to nominate your charity or community group, visit: <https://www.newcastle.co.uk/powering-communities/community-grants/apply-for-a-grant>

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**Notes to Editors**

As part of its focus to address social isolation through the support of Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations throughout the North East and North Yorkshire, the Newcastle Building Society Community Fund has awarded grants to:

- Gateway into the Community (£2,000),
- Whitley Bay Tea Dance Club (£1,300),
- Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre (£3,000),
- Yarm Youth and Community Centre (£2,000),
- Kids Kabin, Middlesbrough (£1,000),
- Auckland Youth and Community Centre (£1,500)
- Age UK Darlington and North Yorkshire (£1,300).

### **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 were voted Number 2, Best Places to Work in the North East in 2019.

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](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. Call 0845 734 4345 or visit us online at [www.newcastle.co.uk](http://www.newcastle.co.uk)

\*\*Newcastle Building Society introduces to Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited for investments, pensions, inheritance tax planning, financial advice and life cover. Newcastle Financial Advisers Limited is an appointed representative of Openwork Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

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