

SHERBURN HOUSE CHARITY FUNDING - AWARDED NOVEMBER 2025

Grants of £1,000 were awarded to the following organisations, of which the first five also received £1,000 from Sherburn House Charity in 2024.

1. Active Families NE: older people's fitness activities in Sunderland and Washington, as well as a dementia support group in Sunderland
2. Breathe Easy: a small charity in Darlington supporting older people with acquired breathing difficulties, mainly through fitness and social sessions
3. Chrysalis at Tynedale: a charity supporting older people with dementia in and around Hexham, Northumberland through provision of groups and activities
4. Churches Together Happy at Home: support of older people in South Tyneside through provision of hubs providing social activities (and encouraged older men to congregate by inventing "hub in a pub")
5. Mind Active: a charity in Northumberland supporting older people from communities and care homes to come together in joint social activities and events
6. Cancer Support Group at West View Advice and Resource Centre: founded by the centre and a group of local people with cancer in 2017, this Hartlepool constituted community group support their older people with a weekly get together in the centre and social activities and events out and about
7. Deaf Awareness NE: acquired deafness charity in North Tyneside, supporting older people, with a range of training support, but also social and fitness activities
8. Eden Hill People's Centre: this is a relatively new Co Durham charity set up in Peterlee Rugby Club clubhouse by local volunteers that includes older people's support in its range of services
9. Guisborough Bridge Association: this charity supports the rural town community of Guisborough in Redcar and Cleveland in different ways, and has a weekly luncheon club where it is reaching older people in the community
10. Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre: in the coastal and rurally isolated part of Northumberland, this village charity set up an older people's weekly social activity last year and have had great success

In terms of feedback, we requested organisations to provide a brief update on how funds were allocated and share feedback & photos participants where possible.

*Joanne Thomas
The Ballinger Charitable Trust
August 2026*



1. Active Families NE CIC – Kelly Brougham

The funding was used as planned. Following conversations with our older participants, many had told us they were worried about the rising cost of food and energy bills, and that cooking for one person often felt too expensive or too much effort. We therefore used the funding to deliver our Active Chef slow cooker workshops for older adults, helping people cook healthy, filling meals on a budget.

The grant enabled us to purchase slow cookers and provide weekly recipes and ingredients for participants to take home and use themselves. This meant people could continue cooking the meals at home and put what they had learned into practice straight away.

The sessions proved much more popular than we expected. Our original proposal aimed to support around 15 older adults, but over 60 people attended throughout the programme. The workshops gave people the opportunity to learn new recipes, improve their confidence in the kitchen, meet new people and discover ways to make their food budgets go further.

Quotes from beneficiaries and staff:

Participants -

- *I use my slow cooker all the time now. It's helped me save money and I don't rely on ready meals anymore.*
- *The recipes were easy to follow and I loved being able to take the ingredients home and make them again.*
- *I've picked up lots of ideas for meals that are healthy and don't cost a fortune.*
- *It was lovely learning something new and meeting other people at the same time.*

Quote by Kelly Brougham - Director Active Families NE -

- *The sessions were a real success. We saw people grow in confidence week after week, and many participants told us they were using the recipes and slow cookers regularly at home. The social side was just as important as the cooking, with new friendships forming throughout the programme.*

Thank you again for supporting this project. The funding has made a real difference and enabled us to reach far more older people than we originally anticipated.



2. Breathe Easy Darlington - Ann Boyd

Breathe Easy Darlington stated we would use the grant to pay towards room hire for our weekly BEActive pulmonary rehabilitation exercise class, which we did.

Our costs increased significantly for room hire this year from April 2022 and we did consider moving to alternative premises, but the Eastbourne Sports Complex provides the best opportunity for our members to meet and exercise, with a big enough room and equipment for all. Our membership has grown year-on-year and we would struggle to accommodate a class elsewhere.

Quote from beneficiary/ member -

"Lived experience and support from the group helps my mental health. I smile from the moment I walk in. I look forward to it every week. I'm not sure what I would do without the group and support. My nurse told me at my appointment with my breathing tests, I have no deterioration in the last 12 months. She is happy with me and she even said Fantastic! I couldn't be that well without attending BE Active. Thank you all."

Quote from Vixi , our Instructor -

"I love working with the Breathe Easy Darlington group as they are so motivated and willing. We have had to split the exercise group into two due to its large size of 28 - 30 members who come along every week to maintain their lung health. The room we use is a good size to accommodate us along with the equipment we need like a trampoline, large ball, exercise bike, as well as enough chairs for seated dancing."



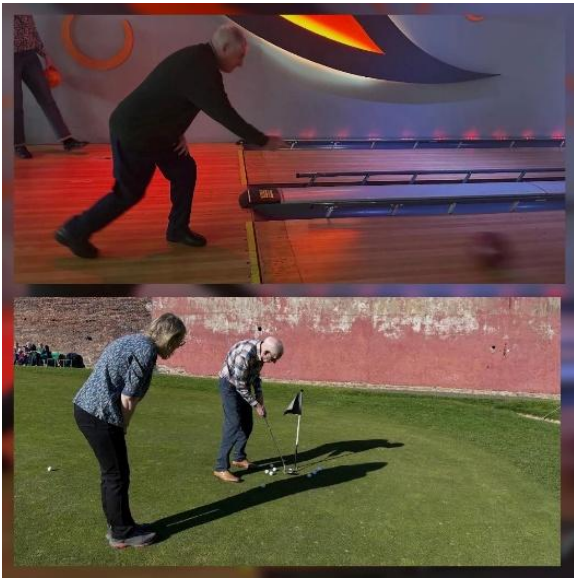
3. Chrysalis at Tynedale - Rosie Robson

The Sherburn House money has been very much appreciated by the members of Chrysalis Club. We were in desperate need of new chairs for our members as ours were getting quite tatty. Because of the age and mobility issues with our members, the chairs have to be of good quality and be chosen carefully. We managed to find some good quality second-hand ones and purchased 10 chairs for £630. They have worked well and we are very pleased with them.

With the balance of the money we subsidised some trips out over the year. The trips included The Pantomime, 2 trips to the Theatre, Hexham Races, a visit to the Alpacas, a steam railway trip, Cycling without Age, Bowling. The members and carers appreciate being able to take part in events in the

wider community with a little bit of subtle help and a coach - which is more sociable and people don't have to worry about parking.

Thank you Sherburn House for the funds, they are really appreciated.



4. Churches Together South Tyneside – Miriam Ritson

A proportion of the grant was used to take 32 older volunteers and beneficiaries to a local Christmas pantomime, providing a wonderful opportunity for many who would otherwise have spent the festive season feeling isolated. The event was such a success that it has now become a firm annual tradition for the charity, with beneficiaries looking forward to it for next Christmas!

We also used the grant to take 28 of our older volunteers and beneficiaries on a festive trip to a local garden centre, where they enjoyed Christmas shopping followed by lunch together. Many of those who attended have limited mobility, no access to transport or health conditions that make shopping independently difficult or impossible. This outing gave them the opportunity to choose Christmas gifts and festive treats for themselves and their loved ones, something many would otherwise have missed. As well as providing practical support, the trip helped reduce loneliness by bringing people together to enjoy the festive season, strengthening friendships within our charity.

The remaining balance of the fund was used to purchase vouchers for local pubs and restaurants, enabling our volunteers to take older beneficiaries on individual outings for a drive along the coast followed by lunch together. Many of our beneficiaries live alone and have limited mobility, meaning they rarely have the opportunity to go out or enjoy a meal in the company of others. These relaxed one-to-one trips provided valuable companionship, meaningful conversation and a change of scenery, helping to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation. The vouchers also gave volunteers the flexibility to arrange outings at a time and place that best suited each beneficiary, having a really positive impact on their wellbeing.

'Hi today we used the vouchers Happy @ Home gave us for a Joyride and lunch at the Harbour Lights. We have had a lovely day, good food, good conversation and good company. Today was a huge success as many in our party eat their meals on their own. All safely delivered home after a drive along the coast road.' – Volunteer Dawn, after taking a party of mixed volunteers and beneficiaries out using the 'joyride' vouchers

'It was a lovely day out thanks everyone!' – volunteer about the shopping trip

'Brilliant afternoon thanks to all concerned' -beneficiary about the Panto

'As you probably heard I laughed so much I cried ! Brilliant, brilliant, brilliant. Thank you it was amazing' - volunteer Carol about the Panto



5. Deaf Awareness NE - Derek Craigie

Thanks to the generous funding from Sherburn House we were able to organise cinema trips to subtitled movies for deaf and hard of hearing people.

Having access to subtitled movies is enormously important for deaf people as it aids inclusion and provides a sense of welcome. Too often deaf people are isolated from the content of movie showings or forced to accept attending the cinema at times unsuitable to them.

This funding enabled our group of deaf people to attend cinema showings at a venue of their choice and attend at appropriate times with other deaf people.

As an organisation deaf awareness NE has particularly strong links with our local Tyneside Cinema, providing deaf awareness training to cinema staff, so this funding was a positive tie-in to that collaboration.

Our group was welcomed to the cinema, given a sectioned space in the cinema café to have a bite to eat, a chat, and a catch up prior to the cinema showing, then guided to our seats by helpful cinema staff.

The seats we had were appropriate to our group, being near enough to the screen that the subtitles were easy to read, and one member commented that this was a crucial part of the experience for him.

With subtitles provided the group were able to relax and enjoy the movie, and this type of easy access meant that the group could properly discuss the movie content after the showing and be sure that what they were experiencing was as accurate as that of their hearing peers.

Thank you for providing funding to have this experience.



6. Eden Hill People's Centre - Lynzie Robinson

As part of our work to reduce social isolation and exclusion among people aged 55 and over, a Christmas shopping and social trip to Skipton was organised on Friday 5 December 2025.

The trip provided an opportunity for 50 participants to get out into the community, enjoy the Christmas atmosphere, undertake Christmas shopping and spend time socialising with others in a safe and welcoming environment.

A coach was organised to transport participants to and from Skipton, making the trip accessible for people who may otherwise have found it difficult to travel independently.

Once in Skipton, participants had free time to explore the town, look around the shops and enjoy the Christmas atmosphere. The trip gave people the opportunity to do some Christmas shopping, browse the local shops and market areas, and spend time with friends and other members of the group.

As an additional benefit, every participant received a Greggs voucher for a drink and snack. This provided a small refreshment during the day and helped create a welcoming and inclusive experience for everyone attending.

The trip was particularly valuable in supporting social inclusion. Christmas can be a difficult and lonely period for some older people, particularly those who live alone or have limited opportunities to socialise.

The coach journey itself provided an opportunity for participants to meet and talk with others. Once in Skipton, people were able to socialise, explore together and share the experience of visiting the town during the Christmas period.

The activity encouraged participants to leave their homes, engage with their local community and take part in a positive group activity. It also helped provide a sense of belonging and connection at a time of year when social contact can be particularly important.

The trip successfully provided:

- *An opportunity for 50 people aged 55+ to participate in a social activity.*
- *Increased opportunities for social interaction and meeting other people.*
- *Support for people who may otherwise experience social isolation.*
- *Accessible transport through the organised coach trip.*
- *An opportunity to undertake Christmas shopping and enjoy the festive atmosphere.*

- A chance for participants to spend enjoyable time away from home and their usual routines.
- A welcoming refreshment opportunity through the Greggs drink and snack voucher.
- Positive community engagement through visiting and supporting the local town of Skipton.

The Skipton Christmas trip was a successful social inclusion activity, bringing together 50 people aged over 55 for a day of shopping, exploring and socialising.

The activity provided more than simply a shopping trip. It created an opportunity for people to connect with others, enjoy a shared experience and participate in a festive community activity. Providing accessible transport and a refreshment voucher helped make the day more inclusive and enjoyable for participants.

The trip contributed positively towards reducing social isolation and encouraging older people to remain socially active and connected within their community.

Overall, the activity met its social inclusion aims and provided a positive and enjoyable experience for the 50 participants who attended.

Participants Comments:

- ❖ *"It was a lovely day with lovely people, so great to see everyone enjoying themselves"*
- ❖ *"Brilliant day thank you, was very much appreciated by all"*
- ❖ *"Was a brilliant day, thank you"*
- ❖ *"brilliant day out, Thank you"*



7. Guisborough Bridge Association – Marianne East

Thank you once again for the £1,000 one-off grant from the Sherburn House Charity. As you are aware we have or currently are using the funds to impact social-inclusion activities for beneficiaries aged 55+.

The full £520 (£480 for meals/gifts + £40 for entertainment) was scheduled for expenditure during the week beginning 14th December 2025.

We delivered two super Christmas celebrations for our regular customers (over 60) and extended invitations to some of our over 60s volunteers, who volunteer in projects such as the Foodbank and

Community Shop and who don't work in big teams, so this way they could see a different project and interact / chat to clients and be celebrated too.

Every guest received a small gift sourced from Boots - in their place setting when they arrived for the meal to make them feel special. Anything slightly under the spend on gifts (as there was an offer on the Boots toiletry gifts, was spent on extras to finesse the Christmas meals - e.g. fruit juices, wider choice of menu.

Retaining a specific, talented musician provides continuity, which is vital for dementia-friendly environments. Until December 2025, the group was very small and fluctuating between 4 & 6 regular, sometimes up to ten attenders. Trish held the December session and then we went with her and an open invite to Sainsburys to perform Christmas carols and popular songs and promote awareness that the group exists and is offered for free.

With the funding secured, we have the "breathing room" to focus on promotion. We are now filling half the long lounge with people, and our posters have been shared to the Memory clinic and Teesside Dementia Action. As we undertook dementia ambassador training, we are seeing the membership grow. 2026 will be defined by increasing the average attendance has moved from 10 to 15+ participants. I rarely take photos of actual clients, because they are vulnerable, I tend to photograph Trisa. I have some recordings of the group singing/ playing percussion and would share if asked.

2 Ukelele performances were given. Utilising the local Ukulele group for a nominal donation £20 was good for everyone (us and them). There was a double booking for Hinton Court - a school choir wanted to sing; therefore, we had time to move the second Uke session to our Christmas Soup & Roll Fund raiser, which did two things: Allowed them to showcase to a wider audience, and entertained at our charity's main regular fundraiser for the Foodstop. We hope by supporting them as a local community asset, they will have received more bookings of more members who will join their practice sessions.

The Sherburn House Charity grant is 100% committed. It successfully covers costs of entertainment, gifts and more expensive food without us having to charge any additional costs, providing the highest emotional return for elderly beneficiaries.

If we were to repeat this, we might look to support a local business with the gift side of things, rather than a chain such as Boots - although buying from Boots on our Highstreet assured a good quality of gift items.



8. Longhoughton Community & Sports Centre – Adrian William Hinchcliffe

The plan was to use £100 as a contribution towards a fund for a Christmas present for residents who fall into the following categories:

- Vulnerable and frail adults caused by illness or age resulting in them finding it difficult to care for themselves.
- People who have recently lost a partner or close relative through bereavement.
- People who have recently had a bad time through serious mental or physical illness.
- Young people who have gone through trauma or bad health.

The balance of £900 was to be used to fund the Thursday Together Programme. Overall, the contributions to the fund came to £800. £768 was spent on 62 gifts that were distributed to residents who met the above criteria. The balance of £32 was carried forward to 2026.

Weekly talks and demonstrations were put on at the Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre from 11.30 am to 1.00 pm each Thursday between November 2025 and the end of March 2026. The topics of the talks are given below. All attendees received refreshments and a soup lunch (homemade) provided by volunteers. This was a great success. The average attendance was between 25 to 30.

The two programmes catered primarily for older people who are mostly retired, many of whom have lost a partner. The Thursday Together programme has become an important part of what is on offer in Longhoughton. The Trustees of the Centre really do appreciate the financial support that we received from Sherburn House.



9. Mind Active – Stephen Ward

The grant has been used for the intended purpose, ensuring some of our most frail clients continued to be socially connected and engaged in their communities as frailty increased, and/or they decided it was time to give up their cars, which might have also impacted on those car sharing, potentially making even more beneficiaries vulnerable to social exclusion when they need to be connected most.

The Sherburn grant proved crucial to avoid ageing health related exclusion, ensuring our guests maintained high-quality social inclusion connections, an escape from the depressing same four walls of their homes replaced with experiences that invigorated, rejuvenated and built resilience

whilst avoiding isolation, loneliness and potential depression, resulting from being with like-minded others with whom they have built solid friendships and informal support.

Without doubt this grant has been extremely successful evidenced by the photos and beneficiary testimonies below.

"I would like the founders to know how much everyone has enjoyed Mind Active's summer events. The provision of taxis and the Watbus has enabled me to attend every event and the service has been exemplary. It is heartwarming being part of such a caring, thoughtful, heart-lifting group. Being able to have trips out, picnics in the park and a visit to the beach with wonderful company and being well looked after, a tonic for all."

"The days out are great. Having transport provided takes away the stress of driving and everyone arrives together having enjoyed the chatter on the bus with sweeties thrown in. The destinations have been well thought out and organized well."

"There has been a terrific choice of varied venues for the summer programme. The driver of the WATBUS has been exceptionally helpful. It has been particularly good that two of our members who are now in a residential home have been able to participate, accompanied by a family member. Thanks so much for making it happen."



10. WVARC Cancer Support Group – Robert Booth

Everyone at the WVARC Cancer Support Group wish to thank the Ballinger Trust and Sherburn House Trust for your kind and generous donations in 2025.

The first of which paid for our members to enjoy a 4 course Christmas Lunch at The Hartlepool Golf Club. Events like this can only take place with the generosity and support of people like Ballinger & Sherburn House Trusts. We thank you for being able to help people living with Cancer to thoroughly enjoy our Christmas Festivities. Everyone had a wonderful time being with people who fully understand the impact Cancer has on the individual, and being able to make the most of the situation.

