

## Wow! Major donation marks new beginning

**A** donation of £100,000 is about to transform the lives of around 100 disadvantaged youngsters across the North East.

The Coalition recently secured new funding from the Northern Rock Foundation. The money will be ploughed into our youth mentoring programme, which helps young people in danger of turning to crime and unacceptable behaviour find a new sense of direction.

Under the programme, volunteer adults guide youngsters away from trouble and help them develop skills so they can find work and contribute more to their local communities.

One major success story is Naomi Evans. You can read more about her achievements on page 2.

Heather Armstrong, our youth

programme manager, said the £100,000 donation would help support around 100 more youngsters over the next three years.

“This is a major boost for us and the young people in the region who need our help. We’re hugely grateful to the Northern Rock Foundation for their contribution,” said Heather.

“However, there is a lot more work for us to do, and many more young people who need our support. Further donations will be crucial to us during these difficult times.”

Rob Williamson, director of policy and communications at the Northern Rock Foundation, added: “We are delighted to support this excellent project. This kind of individual help really works to improve young people’s lives.”



### On the up after difficult 2008

*Elaine Carey, Chair of the Coalition, says tough times have brought a new sense of purpose...*

**2008 saw the start of hard times for many - and the Coalition was no exception. We’ve had to make some difficult decisions, but because of the strength and commitment of those who are still with us, we’ve got lots of positive new developments to share with you.**

A fantastic donation from the Northern Rock Foundation (see left) was just the start to the year our youth programmes needed.

Meanwhile, the North East Retail Crime Partnership has some exciting new developments coming up - more on page 3.

We want to reassure our members that 18 years since the Coalition started, we’re still here, and we’re set to achieve a great deal in 2009.

*What can you do? Find out on the back-page!*



Northern Rock Foundation’s Richard Walton with the Coalition’s Heather Armstrong



## Is knife crime a problem here?

*Youth programme manager Heather Armstrong outlines an important new project...*

**Knife crime has grabbed** the attention of the national media recently. But figures show that the North East doesn't have anything like the knife-carrying rates of other parts of the country.

What concerns us is that this media coverage could increase levels of fear among young people in our region and actually lead to more knives being carried.

As a result, we've launched our 'It's a Sharp Life' project. Over the next few months we're running sessions in schools and youth clubs across Tyne & Wear and Northumberland to dispel some of the myths surrounding knife crime.

Those taking part will contribute towards a booklet on the issue which we'll be publishing later in the year. Watch this space!

## Did you know?

**Since the Coalition was** first launched in 1990 we've worked with around 10,000 young people on our various youth projects.

# How mentoring turns young lives around

**N**aomi Evans was referred to us at the age of 15. At the time she found it almost impossible to relate well to adults or other young people and could not cope at all with being challenged.

This led to her being excluded from school and then from college, and she left both with no qualifications. She was also becoming known to the police and was often getting into scrapes with them.

After several preparatory meetings with one of the Coalition's project workers, Naomi was matched with her first mentor. Although things were difficult for both at first, Naomi and her mentor built up a good relationship lasting 12 months. The benefits were huge, and during this time Naomi completed a City & Guilds Profile of Achievement Award. She was thrilled to gain the award as it was the first thing she had ever really achieved and completed.

Our support for Naomi continued as she was still experiencing difficulties in her reactions to other young people, and found it hard to

communicate with them.

She went on a painting and decorating training course, but still faced issues when trying to find a placement for her new found skills. By working closely with another mentor for six months Naomi was accepted as an apprentice and recently won a 'Most Improved Apprentice of the Year' award.

Her new found confidence is inspirational. She has appeared on BBC Radio Newcastle talking about her experiences. She also recently spoke to an audience of over 100 people at a regional mentoring and befriending conference, where she was brilliant. Fantastic for someone who struggled to maintain eye contact when talking to just one person a little more than 12 months ago.

We're all very proud of Naomi and everything she has achieved.

*Thank you! It's your membership fees and donations that help us turn young lives like Naomi's around. Please keep up your support and encourage others to do the same.*



Naomi Evans doing a bit of painting and decorating. Great job! (Photo: Gary Pringle)



Asda's regional security manager Mike Cannon, pictured at their Gateshead store

## Asda reckon we're 'value for money'

**T**ime and money! That's why retailers should join the North East Retail Crime Partnership (NERCP), according to Asda's regional security manager Mike Cannon.

Mike has been involved with the NERCP for seven years now, while Asda's membership stretches back even further. He is a champion of the basic idea behind the Partnership - sharing information. But he also admits it is good old business benefits that drive Asda to keep up its membership year upon year.

"We wouldn't continue if it wasn't beneficial to us," he explained. "When you weigh up the cost of membership and divide it between all 22 of our stores across the region, it's very good value for money."

Membership of the NERCP gives all of the stores access to vital information on prolific shop thieves - what they look like, where they're operating, who and what they're targeting and much more.

The information arrives regularly in the form of a handy bulletin known as the "target file". Experienced and highly efficient NERCP staff are also on hand to answer questions

and to receive, and pass-on, crucial intelligence.

As a result, many thieves are stopped before they even get near to an Asda store. Mike explained that as well as preventing loss of valuable stock, fewer hours of management time were wasted handling shoplifting incidents.

"The average arrest with police response takes between half an hour and an hour - and you might have three or four of those a day - that's up to three to four more hours that managers could spend on what might be described as their day job."

Mike said he was keen to encourage other North East retailers to sign up as members.

"I think they're missing out on a very easy fix for their business. The NERCP has its finger on the pulse of retail crime in the region. I think for any retailer, it's a great benefit to them to lay their hands on this sort of shared information."

*For more information on the NERCP, or to become a member, contact either Dawn or Sarah on 01661 868 419.*



## Real-time service coming soon!

*NERCP manager Dawn Robinson is looking forward to unveiling a great new service for members...*

**Information sharing among NERCP members is about to get a massive efficiency boost, thanks to a new system we're revealing at our conference in April.**

I can't say much more than that for now other than get along to the event on Wednesday 8 April at the Lancastrian Suite, Gateshead.

The conference will feature vital information on national intelligence sharing, tricks of the trade used by criminals, internal fraud and card crime.

*Even better, it's free to attend! Call 01661 868 419 now for a booking form.*

## Did you know?

**Some of the biggest shops in the North East are members of the NERCP. Among them are B&Q, Boots, Collectables, Co-Op, Debenhams, Fenwick, HMV, House of Fraser, Ikea, J D Sports, John Lewis, M&S, New Look, Next, Principles, Sainsburys, Somerfield, Superdrug, Tesco, Top Shop and TK Maxx.**

## What can you do?

**U**nless you're one of those sports-mad people who habitually turns to the back-page of everything first, you ought to have got here via pages 1, 2 and 3.

If you did, then you already know more about what we do. But what about you - is there anything you can do? Well if you don't mind, here's a few suggestions:

### 1. Join us! Become a member...

Joining is really simple. Just call us on 01661 868 424 or email to [join@ncac.org.uk](mailto:join@ncac.org.uk) and we'll send you more information on what membership is all about, along with an application form.

### 2. Already a member? Renew...

Please keep up your membership. Your backing is vital to our continued support of youth crime projects across the region.

### 3. Make a donation...

We're sure you've heard this from other charities, but it's true - even the smallest of donations can make a big difference. Remember, our work is about reducing crime and the fear of crime throughout the North East, so everyone in our region should benefit from your contribution.

### 4. Volunteer...

All of our youth programme mentors are volunteers. Perhaps you could give up some of your time and help a

young person who is in trouble turn their life around? If you're interested contact Heather on 01661 868 424 or email [heather@ncac.org.uk](mailto:heather@ncac.org.uk). Maybe you have another skill that could help? Do let us know.

### 5. Provide facilities...

We're always on the look out for places to run forums, workshops, conferences and to hold meetings. Could you offer us space to do this - even it's just for a one-off event? Contact us and let us know.

### 6. Sponsor an event...

Sponsoring an event can be a great way of publicising your support for our work. There's often space for exhibition stands at our conferences and these offer a great opportunity for networking. Get in touch if you're interested.

### 7. Do a sponsored whatever!

Run a marathon, get on your bike, sit in a bath full of beans or shave of all your hair. Do whatever! All we're asking is that the next time you're doing a sponsored something, please think of us.

### 8. Promote our work...

We'd like it if more people across our region knew about the Coalition and the work we do. Please let others know about us. Tell them you're a member and why. Pass them a copy of this newsletter. It all helps.

## CRB checks at a great price

**As we are a registered body of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) we are able to offer a very competitive price for CRB checks.**

Our administration costs are held at only £15 per check (excluding VAT) plus the CRB cost. Become a member of the Coalition and receive a reduced administration fee.

## Get The Shoplifter

**Northumbria Police have recently produced a DVD designed to encourage staff in shops be more vigilant about retail crime.**

Called 'The Shoplifter', the DVD is only now available through the NERCP - thanks to the support of Apex Radios.

If you'd like a copy, call the NERCP on 01661 868 419.



## Join us, support us...

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