



Angela Rook, Associate Director, (Fundraising, Marketing and Media) at the RNLB with students at Northumbria University Business Clinic

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## Students help Cullercoats RNLB honour heroes at sea

**Cullercoats RNLB (The Royal National Lifeboat Institution) has enlisted the support of talented business students as it embarks on a marketing drive to celebrate its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary.**

Students from Northumbria University Business Clinic came up with a range of suggestions to help the lifeboat station promote events around the charity's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary and other activities that would help it safeguard its

future in Cullercoats.

The RNLI is a highly respected charity that was established to save lives at sea. Its mission is to provide lifesaving services, including a 24/7 lifeboat search and rescue service. With a presence in Cullercoats Bay since 1848, it has cultivated a robust community of volunteers and relies on donations to carry out its services.

The organisation approached the Business Clinic for marketing support and a group of students led by team leader Laura Smith – including Lucy Pennock, Eve Remington and Ella Ridley – conducted extensive research into the organisation, its goals and ambitions.

On the back of the research, gaps were identified in the social media presence of the lifeboat station and in areas that would help it extend its engagement activities across the community.

The students then developed a series of recommendations that would enable Cullercoats RNLI to drive forward a more effective marketing strategy. The recommendations featured a 200-minute mega raffle and special RNLI Legacy Film Night event (to be promoted heavily via social media), as well as a monthly social club that would bring together members of the Cullercoats community. The premium recommendation was to enhance the traditional features of Harbour Day – a spectacular fun-filled day of family-friendly activities – by adding more interactive components to attract a larger audience to its successor, Harbour Day 2.0.

Dr Kay Heslop, lifeboat operations manager at RNLI Cullercoats, said: “The Business Clinic students excelled in providing fresh ideas for the RNLI to engage with the community in our 200<sup>th</sup> year. Their ideas were tailored to honour and foster a sense of community, commemoration and inspiration in the community of Cullercoats.

“As a charity they were mindful of our tight budgets and all of their recommendations were fully costed. Thanks to the students, we were able to embrace new ways to market ourselves more effectively to the local community. They’ve given us food for thought and we’ll look to implement some of their ideas going forward.”

Team leader Laura Smith said: “This project was a fantastic opportunity to develop my teamwork and project management skills on a live project. Working with the RNLI gave me a chance to get some real-world experience to make my CV stand out, hands-on experience that writing a dissertation wouldn’t have given me.

“RNLI were great to work with, offering support throughout the challenges that came our way during the project, and we were determined to meet their timescales and deadlines. The project really improved my work ethic and motivation, and I honed essential skills including teamwork, communication and project management.”

“My time with the Business Clinic shows how powerful practical, real-world learning can be in higher education.”

Nigel Coates, founder of the Business Clinic, added: “The RNLI is one of our most respected third-sector organisations and we realise they don’t have the necessary resources to carry out all the activities they’d like. We were only too happy to help them in their 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary year as it’s vital that more people know about the great work they do in the Cullercoats community.

“This project exemplifies the value of the experiential learning that we offer students. Our programme has benefited hundreds of private, public and third-sector organisations since we established the Business Clinic more than ten years ago.”

The Business Clinic has delivered 780 consultancy projects involving more than 3,100 students across all business subjects since it was founded by Nigel Coates in 2014. It offers pro-bono consultancy support to SMEs, multi-national organisations, charitable organisations, educational trusts and social enterprises that operate across a wide range of sectors, both in the North East of England as well as further afield in the UK and overseas.

Students work at the Business Clinic within their final year of study, offering clients a full consultancy experience that takes in activities as diverse as feasibility studies including finance, investment and growth; HR including recruitment, retention and diversity; marketing including branding and digital; business analytics; logistics and supply chain management. The aim of each project is to undertake research and make recommendations that will benefit organisations in the short and long term.

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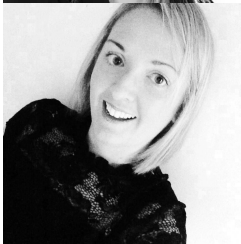


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