**EGGER supports local charity, Natural Ability**

**Hexham’s largest employer, EGGER, has announced local charity, Natural Ability, as its headline charity.**

**Based on Anick Grange Road, across the road from EGGER, Natural Ability offers services for people with learning disabilities who enjoy being outdoors and active.**

Last spring, EGGER’s Charity Committee was inundated with responses after putting out a call for employees to nominate charities close to their hearts. Noel and Judith Urwin, whose nephew attends the day farming service that the charity provides, nominated Natural Ability.

As EGGER’s headline charity, Natural Ability will receive a donation of £10,000 per year for a two-year term. The money donated comes from a variety of fundraising activities at the Hexham site, including a Christmas raffle, EGGER Runs sponsorship and a significant donation from EGGER (UK) Limited.

Other charities nominated by employees are now part of the company’s new Community Fund scheme, which sees three charities receive a share of £3,000 every quarter through a voting system. The last donation saw the Great North Air Ambulance receive £1,500, the Freeman Heart and Lung Transplant Association receive £1,000, and the Hexham Youth Initiative receive £500.

Natural Ability offers people with learning and other disabilities a chance to learn through meaningful work whilst having fun. It was founded by two friends, Annie Sanders and Janice Walker, who had a vision of creating services for people with learning disabilities centred on choice, respect, and equality. Today they offer multiple services including Independent Supported Living, Day Farming and Handyperson.

Their Day Farming service takes their members to local farms where they get involved and enjoy a variety of day-to-day farm tasks like stonewalling, lambing and baling. The other day service they offer is Handyperson, which gives its members the opportunity to earn their own money through tasks such as gardening and maintenance.

Andrew Sanderson, Chairman of the Charity Committee and Plant Director at EGGER Hexham, said, “We are delighted to have Natural Ability as our headline charity for the next two years. The work they do in the local area is invaluable and we will support them in developing the services they offer.”

Nicola Crawford, CEO of Natural Ability said, "It's fantastic that EGGER have chosen to support Natural Ability in this way. As a charity, this type of support is vital to ensure that we can continue to offer and enhance our services for people with learning disabilities. The support from the team at EGGER is very much welcome, and will enable us to continue to deliver much needed services to some incredible people within our local community.

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