



Media release
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INNOVATIVE ALICIA LANDS £250 TECH PRIZE FROM THE NOTTINGHAM

Artistic Alicia Perryman celebrated the arrival of 2021 with the news she had landed a £250 Nottingham Building Society Innovative Young People winner's prize.

The commendation came as part of a remarkable turnaround in life for Alicia, from Newark, who just five years ago turned to the services of a local homelessness charity aged just 17 following family mental health issues and subsequent anxiety and depression of her own.

In late 2020 her former Newark College tutor Karen Chesney saw the building society's award scheme - established to shine a light on examples of those aged 10-21 who have found inspiring ways of furthering their education or boosting career aspirations - advertised and decided to nominate Alicia in the 18 to 21-year-old category.

The Nottingham's judging panel were extremely impressed with Alicia's determination to succeed in college despite personal challenges no-one should have to face and her perseverance and creativity in positively moving forward towards her creative career goal.

The young artist, who now privately rents her own home with her partner, has already taken several steps down that road by stirring plenty of interest on Instagram as @aperrymanart and landing a place at the University of Lincoln where she studies illustration.

As well as touching on how far she has come in a relatively short period of time and encouraging other young people encountering difficult situations to seek relevant help as she did, Alicia, 21, confirmed that the £250 tech voucher she has won will be spent on equipment to help her achieve her career dreams.

She said: "I try not to dwell too much on what has happened in the past because I want to look forward with optimism but needless to say that no-one expects to become homeless, however certain things can happen in life and by the time I was 17 I was.

"Mental health issues were at the heart of what happened to me, and so often are the root cause of many domestic problems. I had to leave that environment, but I was very lucky to have had support from Karen and another tutor, Alison, and my peers at college who all went above and beyond to point me in the right direction.

"They helped reignite my love for all things creative and I wouldn't be where I am now without them. My message to anyone in a similar situation would be to not be too afraid or embarrassed to ask for help.

"My dream is to have a creative career - a job with Nintendo would be amazing, but we'll see what happens. It's lovely that Karen thought about me for these awards and took the time to nominate me - I'm very pleased and surprised in equal measures to have won."

An extract of Karen's nomination read: "Alicia has defied the challenges thrown at her. Life has never been easy for her, surviving and continuing her education has been far more demanding and required far more determination and inner strength than for most. She deserves every bit of help she can get."

The Nottingham's Head of People and Development, Anne Leivers, added: "Early on in 2020 we launched our [Career Academy](#) to help drive the aspirations of young people through hints and tips as to how careers can be kick-started.

"However with the Coronavirus pandemic causing serious challenges for all, not least young people who faced unprecedented hurdles in their education or career aspirations, we built on that by introducing the Innovative Young People awards.

"We received many inspirational nominations which made some very difficult decisions for the judging panel, but we are satisfied that the winners are thoroughly deserving of their awards and we hope the prizes can play a role in helping them fulfil their ambitions."

Innovative Young People of 2020 awards were also presented to winners, who live in other areas of The Nottingham's heartland, in the 10-13 and 14-17 age categories.

Photo caption: Innovative Young People of 2020 winner Alicia Perryman.

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Notes to editor

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About The Nottingham

Founded in 1849, The Nottingham is a mutual building society owned by its members with a long and proud history of doing the right thing and helping communities prosper. Today, The Nottingham is a top ten building society operating online and via a network of 40-plus branches across nine UK counties.

The society is well-known for providing a safe and secure place for people's savings and helping its members into their own homes. In addition to mortgage and saving products, it offers a variety of additional services through expert partners including whole-of-market mortgage advice provided by Nottingham Mortgage Services, estate agency and lettings provided by Belvoir Group and much more including funeral planning, financial advice and home insurance. Its range of services, alongside its commitment to providing expert advice, support the society's purpose to help its members save, plan for and protect their financial futures. www.thenottingham.com