

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

### 2020

Welcome to the 5th Annual MoneyAge Awards

# WINNERS BROCHURE

Supported by:



Celebrating excellence within the personal finance space

 @MoneyAge\_UK #MoneyAgeAwards

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## Overview

The fifth annual MoneyAge Awards event was a virtual affair due to COVID-19 restrictions, but this didn't stop the personal finance industry donning their tuxedos and dresses to celebrate excellence, professionalism and innovation.

Banks, building societies, savings and investment providers, mortgage companies and personal finance specialists all tuned in, to see who would be rewarded for their efforts around product provision, innovation, focus on value and customer service.

Congratulations to all the prize winners and a very well done to all those shortlisted firms. Many thanks to all those who

helped make the event such a success. Firstly, our supporters, the Building Societies Association (BSA) and the Society of Later Life Advisers (SOLLA), secondly the judges who gave their time and expertise to help decide the winners; and finally to everyone who entered and watched the awards. Your ongoing support allows a fantastic night like this to happen.

We look forward to welcoming you all with open arms again in 2021 at our physical event, and rewarding all those that continue to excel in the personal finance arena.

Visit [www.moneyage.co.uk](http://www.moneyage.co.uk) for more details and to read all the latest news and commentary in the personal finance industry, as developments continue to be made to meet the needs of clients.

## Judges



**Chair of the judges: Adam Cadle**  
Editor  
**MoneyAge**



**David Butcher**  
Founder & Director  
**Communications and Content**



**Terri-Ann Humphreys**  
Development Director  
**Society of Later Life Advisers**



**Carol Knight**  
Chief Operations Officer  
**TISA**



**Laura Suter**  
Personal Finance Analyst  
**AJ Bell**



**Robert Sinclair**  
Chief Executive  
**Association of Mortgage Intermediaries (AMI)**  
**and Association of Finance Brokers (AFB)**



**Peter Timberlake**  
Head of Communications  
**Financial Reporting Council**

## The winners

### **Bank or High Street Bank of the Year**

Winner: Metro Bank

### **Building Society of the Year**

Winner: Saffron Building Society

### **Financial Adviser Award: Micro Firm of the Year**

Winner: Money Honey Financial Planning

### **Financial Adviser Award: Small to Medium Firm of the Year**

Winner: Face to Face Finance Anglia

### **Financial Adviser Award: Medium to Large Firm of the Year**

Winner: Age Partnership

### **Innovation in Consumer Finance Award**

Winner: Flagstone Investment Management

### **Mortgage Provider of the Year**

Winner: Nationwide for Intermediaries

### **Mortgage Adviser of the Year or Mortgage Broker of the Year**

Winner: Mortgage Advice Bureau

### **Equity Release Lender of the Year**

Winner: more2life

### **Micro Wealth Management Firm of the Year**

Winner: Hayden Kilkelly

### **Small to Medium Wealth Management Firm of the Year**

Winner: Bancroft Wealth

Highly Commended: Saunderson House

### **Medium to Large Wealth Management Firm of the Year**

Winner: JM Finn

### **Online Share Dealing Provider of the Year**

Winner: AJ Bell Youinvest

### **Savings Account Provider of the Year**

Winner: Masthaven Bank

### **ISA Provider of the Year**

Winner: Paragon Bank

### **Specialist Investment Fund or Provider of the Year**

Winner: Capital Rise

### **Cryptocurrency Platform Provider of the Year**

Winner: ADVFN

### **Loan Provider of the Year**

Winner: West One

### **Peer to Peer Loan Provider**

Winner: Ratesetter

### **Pension Provider of the Year**

Winner: Profile Pensions

### **SIPP Provider of the Year**

Winner: James Hay Partnership

### **Ethical Financial Services Provider of the Year**

Winner: Salary Finance

### **Best Charity Partnership of the Year**

Winner: Masthaven Bank

### **Diversity Award**

Winner: St. James's Place Wealth Management

### **Money Transfer Provider of the Year**

Winner: Currencies Direct

### **Insurance Provider of the Year**

Winner: 1st CENTRAL

### **Marketing Campaign of the Year**

Winner: Mortgage Advice Bureau

### **Consumer Champion of the Year – Individual**

Winner: Anthony Morrow, OpenMoney

### **Consumer Champion of the Year – Company**

Winner: Salary Finance

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### 2020

**WINNER**

# The Asset Management AWARDS 2021

**OPEN FOR ENTRIES**

Deadline for entries: 22 January 2021

**20 May 2021**

**The Waldorf Hilton, London**

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## Equity Release Lender of the Year: more2life

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## AWARDS

### 2020

# WINNER

### EQUITY RELEASE LENDER OF THE YEAR

The Equity Release Lender of the Year Award is awarded to the lender demonstrating a true understanding of this complex area of the market, a sensitivity to the needs of its clients and a keen interest in improving this sometimes opaque area of personal finance.

more2life has led from the front during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of continuing to lend throughout. Indeed, the judges praised the lender for its great speed, efficiency and overall response to the crisis. It was the first volume lender to adapt to a fully remote valuation process – meaning it has been able to continue lending on over 77% of plan options, and was the first lender to reintroduce physical valuations and to operationalise a ‘dual track’ process of valuations to meet the ongoing needs of vulnerable customers unable to have a physical valuation of their home.

The lender is also extremely familiar with success in the technology space. fastpath, its online KFI and application portal also continues to lead the industry in terms of how the firm’s products are delivered to the market and how applications are processed when they are submitted. The latest statistics from the portal – which can be timed to the second – demonstrate how more2life is transforming the way in which advisers deliver even better and faster levels of service to customers. The lender’s fastest KFI production has been recorded at six seconds, the fastest application submission at four minutes 47 seconds,

fastest application > offer (inc. valuation) at two hours, 26 minutes and 44 seconds, and the fastest application > completion one day nine hours 26 minutes and 24 seconds.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the fastpath portal really came into its own, as the company was already working with a fully paperless and signatureless process, meaning the business could operate as ‘business as usual’ when it comes to the processing of applications that perfectly suited the new ‘socially distant’ world. Investing in its portal has also allowed more2life to slash servicing times and manual

processes, which ultimately benefits both advisers and their clients. Advisers can spend less time fulfilling paperwork requirements, and spend more time safely helping their clients find the most suitable lifetime mortgage and exploring all available options.

2019 was a landmark year for more2life. It achieved the widest range of products, the lowest rates available on the market (and all-time lows for the equity release sector), brought its fifth funding partner to the equity release market (more than any other lender), moved up to become the second largest lender in the later life lending market with a significantly increased market share, continued to reduce overall application processing times and widened its distribution base with record numbers of registered and supporting advisers.

Performance at more2life is exemplary. The business has grown from being a champion of enhanced lifetime mortgages to offer one of the widest product ranges on the market and this has been reflected in the business volumes achieved in the past 12 months – this includes passing £3bn of loans under management and hitting almost 30% market share in Q1.

The product design ethos at more2life starts from a customer-centric foundation and is supported by a diverse and flexible funding model that allows it to create products offering the very best in modern lending features, customer flexibility, competitive





pricing and a range of lending options. Approaches to product design are collaborative as the firm works not only with funding partners but also important market stakeholders to ensure that products meet specific customer needs. This has helped the business offer a wide range of product options at different pricing points, giving more access points to the market for more clients regardless of their property value or lending needs. Added to all of this, more2life actively listens to its customers – advisers – who help inform its approach not only to product design but also pre-and post-completion service, helping us continually fine-tune processes and service proposition. The range of industry awards won by more2life are a testament to the excellent work in this area.

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, more2life has expanded its adviser support initiatives with new downloads and guides designed to help advisers transform their business from a face-to-face proposition to one which is entirely remote. This has included help with conducting telephone-based advice, transforming their websites with SEO tips, and improving customer relationship management with digital communication

strategies. The firm's ongoing programme of webinars on all areas of equity release have continued to prove extremely popular and it also ran a Later Life Lending Symposium event online.

more2life is a firm hitting the highest targets in the equity release space and continues to surpass the results achieved by its peers. A recent online 'school report' produced by an equity release specialist comparing the response by different lenders to the COVID-19 crisis revealed that the adviser scored more2life as an 'A+' and noted: "Still leading from the front. The most positive comments from other brokers."

Congratulations to more2life on a superb win.



## more2life – for advisers on a mission

At more2life we know how tough the last 6 months have been for advisers in this industry.

As ever, we have been listening and responding to the concerns and needs of advisers, creating a market-leading proposition in terms of our plans and service. Here are just a few of the ways in which we have had the backs of advisers in the later life lending sector, and helped keep their business moving forward:

### Technology to accelerate success

Our fastpath technology – the market's first, end-to-end, paperless portal - has been crucial in enabling advisers to keep delivering lending solutions to clients throughout this pandemic, as it takes advisers from KFI through to completion in one seamless digital journey, without the need for paperwork or physical signatures.

The automation and digital technology provided by fastpath meant that we never had to close our doors to new business, and were the only lender in the equity release market to remain open for new business throughout the national lockdown period.

To demonstrate our commitment to excellent service, more2life is still the only lender in the market to offer a 14-day Service Promise – if we fail to get your client from application to offer within 14 working days, we will pay them £500 on completion. You can view the T&Cs here: [www.more2life.co.uk/fastpath-promise-terms-conditions](http://www.more2life.co.uk/fastpath-promise-terms-conditions).

Fastpath wasn't the only technology that helped more2life advisers throughout lockdown – we were the first lender to introduce remote valuations to the equity release market – and once lockdown restrictions eased, we were the first lender to reintroduce physical valuations and at the same time, introduce a dual-track valuation process to the market, offering remote valuations to clients who still couldn't have physical valuations, and offering physical valuations to those who could.

### Adviser-focused support and expertise

When the national lockdown first came into effect, the team at more2life realised that this would affect the way advisers would operate for quite some time and revolutionise the equity release market. Not only would advisers have to adapt to delivering remote advice, but they would have to depend almost entirely

upon digital solutions to generate leads and market their businesses. We therefore enhanced our marketing support and created a range of new support to help advisers not only transition to a new digital way of working, but flourish in a market more dependent on technology than ever before.

Our Learning Lab is now full of guides, helpsheets, demos and downloads, including a guide to telephone-based advice, improving website and digital presence, with things like social media, search engine optimisation and how to use free Google tools to track marketing and lead generation output.

We are very proud that, for four years running, more2life has achieved the prestigious 'accredited CPD' status with the CII, meaning that many of our webinars provide structured CPD with certification provided automatically as soon as advisers finish watching each programme.

### Broadest range of plans and features

As one of the biggest lenders in the equity release market, more2life has a reputation for excellence, and our range of plans, from those offering some of the lowest rates in the market to those providing the highest LTVs, is second to none. Our fully-automatic '005' lending features come as standard – at no extra cost – and are included automatically where your client qualifies, which are: partial repayments to help reduce the overall size of the loan and therefore the effect of roll-up interest over time, fixed ERCs, downsizing protection, ERC exemption on death, and inheritance protection.

### For advisers on a mission...

Regardless of what happens next in the Covid-19 pandemic, advisers in this industry will remain focused on delivering better retirement outcomes for their clients and more2life is backing them up every step of the way, arming them with the technology, support and plans they need to achieve mission success.

If you want to find out more about how we can help you grow your business, get in touch today on 03454 500 151, by email [info@more2life.co.uk](mailto:info@more2life.co.uk) or via our website <https://www.more2life.co.uk/>



**more2life**  
the later life lender



For intermediary eyes only



FINANCIAL ADVISER  
SERVICE AWARDS



FIVE STARS, SAYS MONEYFACTS

# ***YOU'RE ON A MISSION***

**AND WE HAVE YOUR BACK**

You're no ordinary intermediary: you're on a mission to deliver to your clients a better retirement. That's why we're dedicated to providing you with the highest level of support, cutting edge technology and the widest range of lifetime mortgages. While you're working hard for your clients, we'll be working hard for you.

***FOR ADVISERS ON A MISSION***



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### 2020

## Bank or High Street Bank of the Year: Metro Bank

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## AWARDS

### 2020

**WINNER**

### BANK OR HIGH STREET BANK OF THE YEAR

The Bank or High Street Bank of the Year Award is awarded to the bank which has proved itself ahead of its peers when it comes to product provision, customer service and general excellence in everything it does.

This year the Bank or High Street Bank of the Year is Metro Bank. The judges said the bank has launched “game changing digital innovations, financial education programmes and has been very strong in the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) space”.

With 77 stores nationwide, providing banking services to over two million customer accounts, the bank is a leader. In October 2019, Metro Bank launched an in-app Business Insights tool to make managing business finances easier, helping customers to make more data-driven decisions and manage their cash flows better. This was followed in the same month by signing a trio of partnerships with Funding Options, Conance and DueDil, to enhance the bank’s offering for SMEs.

The bank’s ability to launch game-changing digital innovations was reiterated in December 2019 with the release of MCash. Managed through the bank’s mobile app, business customers can select a day for a cash pick-up/drop-off from as close as 24 hours away, and up to a week in advance. This was followed by a new partnership with ezbob to enhance the online loan application journey for SMEs. From initial application through to

ID and verification, customers will be able to get a loan approved in just a few minutes – all from the comfort of their own home.

Metro Bank’s excellence doesn’t stop there, and with the unique challenges posed to both personal and business customers by the coronavirus pandemic, it has reacted decisively and compassionately. Time has been spent on educating customers on the latest fraud techniques, to protect them from scammers who are using coronavirus to try and cheat people out of their money. The mortgages team has widened the use of both automated valuation

models and digital valuations for mortgages where a physical valuation would usually be required. Furthermore, the bank has provided thousands of CBILS loans to its business customers, in addition to offering capital payment holidays, interest roll-ups and covenant waivers to give customers vital peace of mind and more financial flexibility. Metro Bank is also an accredited lender with the Government-backed Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs). As of October 2020, Metro Bank has provided more than £1.3bn in loans to 33,000 customers via BBLs and CBILS

Brand and advertising is also at the forefront of the bank’s activities. It recently launched its first ever campaign ‘People-people banking’, based around the fact that whatever happens in the future of banking, people need people and value human relationships. This campaign had over 2,000 placements across 170 out-of-home locations close to Metro Bank stores.

It is clear that Metro Bank is a leader and continues to set the highest targets in the industry, helping to improve the overall performance of the banking sector. Well done on a richly deserved award.





# You're looking at the Bank of the Year

Our award-winning people have done it again. We scooped the top spot at the MoneyAge Awards 2020.

A huge thank you to all our colleagues and customers for your support. We couldn't have done it without you.

**METRO**  
**BANK**  
People-people banking



### Building Society of the Year: Saffron Building Society

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2020

**WINNER**

### BUILDING SOCIETY OF THE YEAR

The Building Society of the Year is awarded to the society which has proved itself ahead of its peers when it comes to product provision and customer service. The winner must also demonstrate a true understanding of the needs of the consumer.

This year's judges said this building society showed great product innovation, good communications with customers during the COVID-19 crisis, as well as strong levels of training for vulnerable customers. The winner of the building society of the year is Saffron Building Society.

Saffron is a mutual society which has been serving its local community since 1849. Since opening its first branch in Saffron Walden, the organisation has undergone expansion, opening branches in Hertfordshire, Suffolk and Essex.

The society offers a variety of mortgage products to meet a range of individual needs, as well as assisting with remortgages and further advances. Saffron also offers a range of savings products including cash ISAs, notice accounts, immediate access and children's savings.

Due to its manual underwriting process, Saffron can make decisions on mortgage applications on an individual, case-by-case basis, and can therefore offer more flexibility than many other lenders. It is often able to lend to people who might not get a mortgage elsewhere, including those who are self-

employed or who work on non-typical contracts.

Saffron's swift recognition of the personal and financial challenges facing its customers as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak impressed our judges, particularly in identifying potential financial problems amid an uncertain property market.

A range of new products and initiatives have been introduced over the past 12 months, designed to cater to a diverse range of customer needs. This includes products to help first-time buyers get onto the property ladder, and products to help retirees, as well as green

products, self-build support and the aforementioned COVID-19 support. On a practical level, the Saffron team took measures to ensure that customer communications were not disrupted, providing telephone appointments to ensure that customers saw no change in the service quality they received before lockdown.

Saffron is committed to putting the needs of its customers first and has kept introducing measures over the last 12 months to support areas of vulnerability, improve accessibility and augment its level of service for customers. This commitment to its customers, through the introduction of innovative new products and exceptional service, has seen the company's customer satisfaction remain consistently high, with its branch network regularly achieving 100%.

Saffron is continuously evolving its service offering to aid both intermediaries and consumers amid the uncertainty arising from COVID-19, reinforcing its aim to provide an accessible, adaptable service that caters to a varied range of requirements.

Congratulations to all at Saffron for a deserved win.



# Saffron Building Society

## Building Society of the year 2020

We're at the heart of your community and perfectly placed to be central to your money goals. Savings, mortgages, financial planning...whatever you need, we'll help you get there. Because your money happiness matters.



Saffron Building Society is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority (Financial Services Register no. 100015) except for Commercial and Investment Buy to Let Mortgages and Will Writing. Registered office: Saffron House, 1a Market Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1HX.

In branch  
0800 072 1100  
[saffronbs.co.uk](http://saffronbs.co.uk)



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## AWARDS

### 2020

## Financial Adviser Award: Micro Firm of the Year: Money Honey Financial Planning

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## AWARDS

### 2020

**WINNER**

### FINANCIAL ADVISER AWARD: MICRO FIRM OF THE YEAR

This category, open to firms with 10 employees or less, rewards the financial adviser that has demonstrated a successful service offering, shown a true understanding of the advice market and put the client at the heart of everything it does.

The judges praised this adviser for maximising its use of technology for financial education and different types of advice to reach a wide audience, and stated that the experience of its customers has not been impacted by COVID-19. The winner is Money Honey Financial Planning.

Money Honey offers a completely digital experience utilising the internet, video conferencing and secure communications that allows the firm to keep fees permanently low and offer substantial savings. This enables the adviser to provide the most efficient service it possibly can without having to pass on the usual fixed costs of plush offices or printed brochures.

The firm was set up by longstanding members of the industry – chartered financial planner, Jane Hodges, and her IT and marketing partner, Rod Reed. Their aim was to build a financial planning business that put the customer at the heart of every decision and reflected the changing use of technology and digital demands.

Money Honey uses an array of sophisticated adviser tools, with a market-leading CRM system and Microsoft 365 the two core

systems that allow the whole team to understand every client seamlessly – whether they are an administrator, paraplanner or carrying out quality assurance.

These systems are supported with cashflow modelling tools, risk assessment tools, research tools and comparison tools, and everything can be shared digitally or with screen-sharing. Since the outbreak of coronavirus earlier this year, the firm has indicated that little impact has been felt in terms of its day-to-day capability, other than having to home school kids at the same time.

The adviser's approach is designed to educate and support clients, rather than just advise them, and it will hold multiple videoconference meetings or numerous secure message conversations before it is ready to give any advice.

Money Honey offers advice across all stages of life, from young families needing protection, to how to fund long-term care and passing on legacies. It works with attorneys, executors and families. As an independent financial adviser unaffiliated with any network or provider, it always places the interests of its clients at the heart of its advice.

Also at the heart of everything Money Honey does is a belief that people need access to advice in a way that has to be within their budget. The adviser has clearly demonstrated that it truly cares about the futures of its clients.

Congratulations to this financial adviser on a truly amazing year, and for winning the prestigious Financial Adviser Award: Micro Firm of the Year.





## It is Life Jim- but not as we know it

**Money Honey has navigated the market exceptionally well over the past year and customers have not been impacted by COVID-19 in their financial planning as a result. Are you confident this will remain the same for the next year?**

Certainly, we have been working like this 100% for the last 3 years and started the journey when we set up a previous company. Our struggle has never been customers- only providers and trustees- who up until now have been largely paperbound. This year has transformed them as they were forced to move more digital or go out of business. Lockdown has often meant the only way to communicate with family has been by video-conferencing apps like Skype, Whatsapp and FB Messenger. Banking and shopping were often online anyway- so now it is normal to use video-conferencing, and this has expanded our range of clients if anything. We always tell people upfront and on the advisor profiling websites that we work effectively virtually, and people love it. I think people can also tell when advisors have their best interests at heart, and that shines through just as clearly on video-conference.

**Could you explain in more detail how your market-leading CRM and Microsoft 0365 systems work?**

We use Office 365 for our infrastructure and Microsoft Teams as our central workspace with separate teams and channels set up for different clients, internal teams and introducers when we are working jointly on a case. It is like being at a giant desk with everyone working and understanding a client fully and leaning over each other's shoulder as we all make changes to a single document. Suitability letters are the best example- I may be writing parts, my paraplanner other parts, and we may be QA'd at the same time. We love for video-conferencing and recording client meetings. Then we use Intelliflo's Intelligent Office as our system of record and client portal. Once an important document



is completed we upload it from Teams to IO. If necessary, we can share it with clients on their secure Document Vault and discuss it on their secure messaging- jumping into video-conference if we need to discuss anything. The process is very iterative, as educational as we can make it and ultimately helps the client decide on the best approach to meet their needs and objectives.

**What is your outlook for the business over the coming years?**

We want to stabilise our client numbers as we built from nothing three years ago and are now inundated with new enquiries. As a single advisor, all be it backed by an experienced support team and CRM's who are Chartered in their own right, all advice sits with me, and we want to make sure everyone gets the ongoing support they need even in our relatively low-cost model. We think the need for good quality, honest relationships, and proper financial planning are vital and will become more so- but we have to do better as a profession at using technology because more of our clients will demand it.

**Written by Jane Hodges, managing director, Money Honey Financial Planning**



### Micro Wealth Management Firm of the Year: Hayden Kilkelly

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**WINNER**

#### MICRO WEALTH MANAGEMENT FIRM OF THE YEAR

The Micro Wealth Management Firm of the Year Award is given to the wealth manager with 10 employees or less, and one which has proved itself a cut above the rest when it comes to meeting the ever complex needs of its clients.

Hayden Kilkelly (HK) does exactly that. The judges were particularly impressed with the firm's imaginative use of language and visuals in its entry and across its business, giving clients something genuinely different in a homogenous world.

The 'HK Way' proposition is built around a bucket-list approach to aspirational lifetime financial planning and the creation and ongoing maintenance of lifetime financial plans. It does however appreciate that all clients are different and it looks to adapt its service accordingly. The firm spends considerable time exploring client aspirations and wants clients to dream big. Therefore, it places a lot of emphasis around its presentation of advice and the way it engages with clients' aspirations. Turning numbers into pictures helps, and visual aids are used for the creation of lifetime financial plans of the 'HK Way' pop-up, road-map brochure. The choice of language is also especially important and the firm's 'tardis analogy' transports mindsets forwards in time, stepping out in the future and visualising life in retirement.

Business statistics are also outstanding. Funds under advice are up 30%, turnover up 53%, net profit up 55%, recurring income as a percentage of turnover is at 90% and referrals as a percentage

of new clients is at 100%. Recurring income alone results in HK being a profitable business, and there is no adviser requirement to 'push' 'promote' 'sell' in order for the business to be successful. Only best advice is offered, with the client's needs firmly positioned before the firm's.

Hayden Kilkelly was awarded (2019) and retained (2020) Corporate Chartered Status by the Chartered Insurance Institute, positioning it among the elite financial planning firms in terms of status, qualifications, technical competence, ethics, client service and ongoing client support. It was also awarded

the Pensions Transfer Gold Standard by the Personal Finance Society (PFS), testament to the firm's skills, knowledge and advice process.

The work doesn't stop there either. HK recently launched its 'In the Event of My Death' service; and additional service to HK clients whereby a 'working' secure online document records all client financial information, funeral wishes and provides an opportunity to pre-record "a proper goodbye" in advance to loved ones. This has been warmly received by clients.

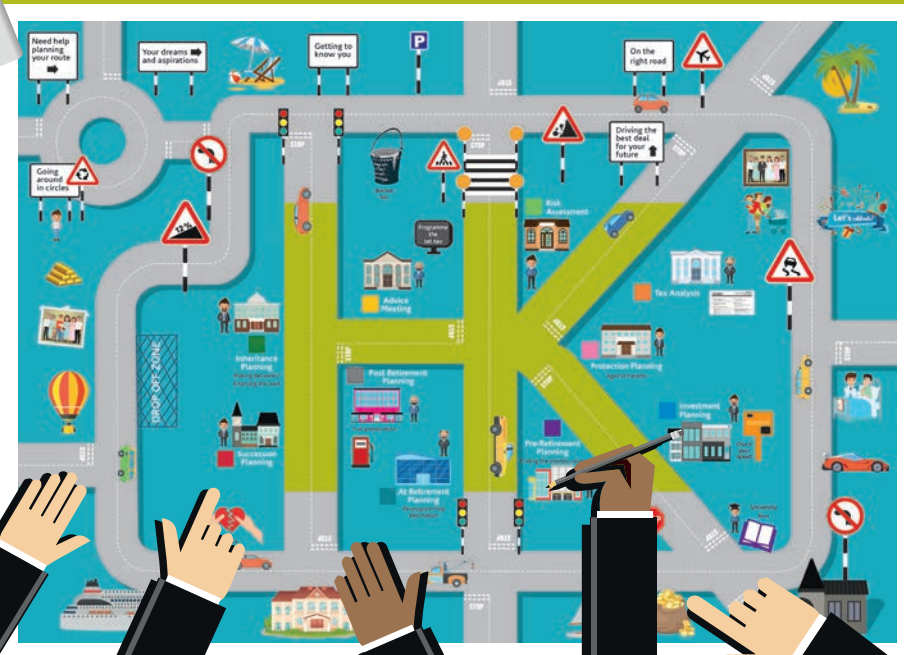
HK knows from its client feedback and referral numbers, that clients love what it is doing and the way that it is doing it. The work it does can encourage other financial advisory firms to adopt its approach, morals and practices which would be to the benefit of the profession and all UK financial planning clients, serving to reduce the 'understanding gap'.

Congratulations to all at HK for all the hard work over the year, something which has delivered top results.



# Financial directions for life's journey

## THAT'S THE HK WAY



**Hayden Kilkelly**  
Independent Financial Advisors



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### Medium to Large Wealth Management Firm of the Year: JM Finn

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2020

**WINNER**

### MEDIUM TO LARGE WEALTH MANAGEMENT FIRM OF THE YEAR

The Medium to Large Wealth Management Firm of the Year Award is given to the firm with 250 employees or more that has proved itself a cut above the rest when it comes to meeting the ever complex needs of its clients.

Leading the way in this field for 2020 is JM Finn, a wealth management firm that prides itself on being able to treat each investor as an individual. It believes that to provide a superior service, its relationship with clients is like a partnership. JM Finn, received a 98% trust rating from its clients in its most recent client survey. However, whilst delighted with these responses, JM Finn is not a firm that rests on its laurels and, thanks to the highly personalised service that it offers, are always looking for ways to add value to its client relationships.

With cyber crime on the increase and email the primary communication tool of its clients, JM Finn wanted to protect them from the huge risk that is now prevalent in digital communication. The business adopted a two-pronged approach to helping its clients - providing an appropriate tool and education. JM Finn pioneered a secure client portal in 1999, and over time, the portal has evolved, now offering a personal library function, which allows clients to choose a paperless reporting option. This means, the firm does not have to send important documents with sensitive information to clients. Furthermore, a secure messaging function has been created allowing clients to

send important documents via the portal allowing them to avoid using email. JM Finn has also hired a dedicated support person for the portal.

One innovation introduced this year, is software that allows the firm to access a clients' computer remotely to guide them through the portal, a new feature that has been warmly received by clients, particularly those less computer literate.

On the issue of combatting fraud, the judges applauded JM Finn for its work around this. A Fraud Alert button was added to the portal, so that if a client suspects their email account has been compromised, they

can click a button, which sends an alert to their investment manager and temporarily freezes their account.

In terms of education, JM Finn regularly writes in its client magazine about cyber fraud but it has also curated a comprehensive Guide to Cyber Crime Awareness designed to help clients mitigate the risks, understand some of the tactics the fraudsters might employ and provide some insight as to what to do in the eventuality that you have been tricked.

JM Finn is a firm that doesn't just say it puts its clients first, it really does. This is thanks to the model it operates which allows it to offer a highly personal service. The firm excels according to its clients and versus its peers whilst offering pertinent wealth planning advice.

Well done to an outstanding wealth manager, and one which allows clients to put their finances to the back of their mind whilst enjoying nurturing their passions.

**JM FINN**  
Investment | Wealth

# JM FINN

Investment | Wealth



# An individual approach

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## ISA Provider of the Year: Paragon Bank

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

### 2020

# WINNER

### ISA PROVIDER OF THE YEAR

The ISA Provider of the Year Award is given to the firm that has proved itself time and time again throughout the year with its product offering and deep understanding of the needs of its customers.

The provider excelling in this space is Paragon Bank. At the start of the year, it launched Wallet and Flexible features across its range of Cash ISAs, allowing more flexibility in order to help people maximise their tax-free savings. The judges described the ISA Wallet feature as "exemplary" as it allows savers to spread their £20,000 annual ISA allowance across multiple Cash ISAs including fixed rate, easy access and notice products. This means that people can split their allowance across multiple products within the same tax year. Most other saving providers limit savers to opening a single Cash ISA per tax year, and require an ISA transfer to be completed should savers want to move their money to a new product.

The Flexible ISA feature has also been designed with ease and convenience in mind, allowing savers to replace funds withdrawn from their ISAs without it impacting their tax-free entitlement. Most other providers do not offer this option and require any money withdrawn from an ISA to still be counted towards the yearly allowance; this means the funds cannot be replaced if savers have already reached their maximum allowance before making a withdrawal.

Paragon Bank also became one of only a few financial providers in the UK to offer a cash Lifetime ISA (LISA), allowing people to save for their first home or retirement whilst receiving a 25% government subsidiary. Savers are able to deposit up to £4,000 of their yearly ISA allowance into the LISA and thanks to the ISA Wallet feature, they are also free to split their allowance between the LISA and the other products in the firm's portfolio.

Postal access across all of the firm's fixed-term accounts has also been launched, meaning that customers who prefer to manage their

accounts through the post can now do so with full flexibility. Customer satisfaction surveys show that nearly 87% of Paragon Bank's customers would describe the account opening process as easy. Based on their experience with Paragon Bank, 89% would consider opening another account in the future.

Paragon Bank's outstanding work does not stop there however. A 60% increase in ISA applications was seen compared to the same period last year (March to May), and as a result of this, the business increased the value of its total ISA deposits by more than 40%. This is particularly remarkable considering market data showed a downturn in applications across the industry. Achieving such substantial growth in the face of challenging market conditions, exacerbated further by a tumbling Bank of England base rate and the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, is a testament to the business in delivering outstanding products that meet the needs of its customers.

Paragon Bank stands head and shoulders above the rest, and is the shining light in the ISA Provider of the Year category. Well done to all at the business for an outstanding year.





# Help your clients make the most of their tax-free savings allowance by opening a cash ISA with Paragon Bank

Opening a cash ISA with Paragon Bank can support your clients' saving goals thanks to our diverse range of products and flexible account features. By opening a cash ISA with Paragon Bank, savers don't have to choose to invest their entire ISA allowance in one product. Our ISA Wallet feature allows them to spread their £20,000 annual ISA allowance across multiple Cash ISAs with Paragon, enabling full flexibility to split their allowance between fixed rate, notice, limited withdrawal and easy access products.

This means the allowance can be split across a diverse range of cash ISA products, ensuring you help them build a varied portfolio that meets their needs.

We have also introduced the Flexible ISA feature, which allows any funds withdrawn from an ISA to be replaced without it impacting your clients' tax-free entitlement. If they need to withdraw some of their balance to cover an unexpected expense, the funds can be replaced in the same tax year without the allowance being impacted.

Tax-free interest remains a crucial resource when it comes to maximising the return on savings.

**Your clients can get in touch with Paragon today to open a Cash ISA.**



[savings@online.paragonbank.co.uk](mailto:savings@online.paragonbank.co.uk)



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paragon



### Diversity Award: St. James's Place Wealth Management

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2020

**WINNER**

#### DIVERSITY AWARD

This award goes to the personal finance firm that has recognised the importance of diversity in its workforce, or been instrumental in driving forward diversity in other ways, such as through marketing and events, or through products designed to be more inclusive.

The judges said that in a relatively short space of time, this organisation has encompassed a broad diversity policy that has had a very positive impact throughout the firm. This is working to build a more diverse and inclusive culture where all employees feel valued, supported and engaged. The winner is St. James's Place Wealth Management.

Just two years ago, the firm had no head of diversity, no diversity budget and no diversity accountability. Driving a transformation and ensuring the sustainable growth of its business took an Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) strategy that was not just ambitious, but supported at every level of the organisation, with every one of its people accountable.

SJP now has a head of diversity, and has also created an I&D Steering Group, chaired by its CEO, created an I&D Advisory Panel to track evidence of its I&D work, and created an I&D Network Champions committee. The firm has also appointed senior executive sponsors to each strand of diversity, with objectives for each.

With just one woman on its own board – and none on the Executive Board – at the time, SJP spearheaded an ambitious programme to champion gender equality. Moves included the formation of a Women's Network, Unity, which at March 2020 had grown to over 120 members and is still growing. The firm also signed up to the Women in Finance Charter and implemented gender-balanced recruitment shortlists.

SJP also raised the Pride flag above its Head Office, marking a defining moment for the business – a sign of how far it had come. The firm's work to champion the LGBT+ agenda has

continued through workshops, inclusive recruitment literature and important workplace and transgender policies.

The firm's I&D focus has also seen it prioritise race equality. By recognising the underrepresentation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees in and out of SJP, it has signed up to the BiTC Race at Work charter, run Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic roundtables to drive progress, and established a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Network of over 65 members.

With 12.5% of employees, including 10% of leaders, identifying as disabled, SJP has also worked to reduce and remove common workplace barriers and provide bespoke support. The firm was highlighted as a best practice example in 2019 in a Parliamentary report, and awarded Disability Confident Leader status.

Through its commitment to championing Inclusion & Diversity in SJP, and the industry, the firm is working to create a vibrant place to work where difference is recognised as a strength, and where talented people can flourish and achieve their highest potential. Congratulations on an outstanding diversity drive and thoroughly deserving win.



ST. JAMES'S PLACE  
WEALTH MANAGEMENT





ST. JAMES'S PLACE  
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

# It goes beyond pride...

It's our business. It's crucial that we foster an inclusive environment in which people can not only be themselves at work but where they can thrive and achieve their potential.

We understand that diverse teams and inclusive environments make for better decisions and provide the foundations for creativity, innovation and growth. We are reliant upon our ability to attract diverse talent, **but we must do more than that.**

We aim to not only attract, but support, retain and develop individuals from all backgrounds, so everyone can succeed, and know that they belong.

We are proud to receive the MoneyAge 2020 Diversity Award.



[www.sjp.co.uk](http://www.sjp.co.uk)



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### Money Transfer Provider of the Year: Currencies Direct

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2020

**WINNER**

### MONEY TRANSFER PROVIDER OF THE YEAR

This category rewards the money transfer firm which has shown a true understanding of this market and has kept competitiveness, transparency and customer service at the heart of its business. This provider was praised by the judges for its strong customer proposition and the use of technology to boost its service offerings. This year's winner of the Money Transfer Provider of the Year is Currencies Direct.

As one of the first currency providers in Europe, Currencies Direct has never underestimated the importance of staying ahead of the curve. The provider has been offering its customers highly competitive exchange rates and no transfer fees since 1996. Over that time, the firm has invested heavily in staff and technology to ensure customers have a seamless, hassle-free and tailored experience.

Key to the firm's industry-leading satisfaction figures is its unique account management approach. This defining customer-led approach is fulfilled through more than 20 global branches and a team of over 500 currency experts. So far, more than 325,000 customers have benefited from the support and insight that Currencies Direct teams provide, and it now transfers more than £7.5bn in international payments a year.

In a challenging year for the provider and its customers, as well as for competitors and the sector as a whole, Currencies Direct has shown a commitment to supporting customers and providing

a competitive, transparent and reliable service.

While some competitors had to adjust their offerings in response to the hurdles created by the COVID-19 crisis, Currencies Direct had a business continuity plan that ensured it was able to continue operating with no disruption to customers. The provider has also committed to spending an additional £5m this year on the continued development of its service, so that it is ready to face any challenges the future might bring.

Over the last 12 months, Currencies Direct has delivered on several

projects to improve its customers' experiences. These include payment tracking, which gives customers complete transparency over the status of their payment from start to finish, as well as in-app registration, which has given customers the ability to register through the firm's app – meaning they can create an account in a couple of taps.

Currencies Direct has utilised machine learning to ensure its customers are engaging with the most relevant content possible. Consistent data analysis and regularly checking in with customers also enabled the firm to identify any changes in customer behaviours early on, and adjust offerings accordingly.

Amid the impact of coronavirus across the market, Currencies Direct has maintained a commitment to offering its customers a competitive, transparent, exceptional service that can always be relied on. Well done to all involved.



It's the service that counts

# Sending money abroad?

With over 20 global branches and 500+ currency experts we're always here when you need us.

Discover how to make fast, secure currency transfers at great exchange rates.



Let's talk currency

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### Insurance Provider of the Year: 1st CENTRAL

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2020

**WINNER**

### INSURANCE PROVIDER OF THE YEAR

The Insurance Provider of the Year Award is awarded to the firm that has shown a true understanding of the insurance space with its product offering, has displayed a deep commitment to meeting the needs of its clients and has displayed general excellence in every part of its business.

1st CENTRAL is an insurance provider that has met all of these elements, and the judges were particularly impressed with its strong growth in profit, strong employee support and low customer complaints. The firm has grown to become an innovative and agile insurance company, helping over half a million customers save money on 5-star Defaqto rated car insurance, and generating £108m turnover. Recent profits were up 26% to £7.8m.

The business's focus is to provide customers with experiences and products they want. By investing in proprietary software and embarking on a journey of digital transformation, 1st CENTRAL is continually developing new ways to save customers time and money. 90% of policies are now purchased online (up from 85% year-on-year). The firm's Trustpilot rating grew from good to excellent over the past year, and its NPS score is now up to 46 and continues to improve against an industry average of 7. Customer complaints have reduced by 8.51% in the past 12 months, and over 98% of claims have been paid out. Satisfaction is also evidenced in customer retention rate, which has grown by 4.8% in the last year.

Not resting on its laurels, 1st CENTRAL has partnered with RAC to provide customers with breakdown cover from such a well-known and trusted brand, and has launched a customer repair partnership with WNS Assistance, one of the UK's leading providers of claims management. The first quarter of 2020 also saw the launch of a new premium finance product allowing customers to spread the cost of their policy over more instalments to provide more flexibility.

1st CENTRAL's people are at the heart of everything it does and the firm has enhanced its wellbeing programme, which included

recruiting and training mental health first aiders across the business. More than 25% of its employees are currently studying for professional qualifications and 22% of colleagues have received a promotion or development in their job in the last 12 months. A total of 80% of employees recommend working for the company.

The firm also works closely with the local community and supports the Sussex Cricket Foundation, which aims to change the lives of young people in the local community through cricket by delivering accessible and enjoyable opportunities that tackle inequalities, improve health and wellbeing and enable people to fulfil their potential.

Furthermore, it also sponsors Foundation 92, a charity set up by Salford City FC, which helps vulnerable people in the local community. 1st CENTRAL's fundraising target of £70,000 was reached in November 2019, for its charities.

An outstanding entry and a fantastic firm. Well done.





# MONEYAge

AWARDS


2021

**Save The Date**

**7th October 2021**

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## AWARDS

### 2020

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