

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018

**AWARDS GALA DINNER & CEREMONY**

**Winners Brochure**

18 OCTOBER 2018

De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms, London

**Celebrating excellence within the personal finance space**

[www.moneyage.co.uk/awards](http://www.moneyage.co.uk/awards)

[@MoneyAgeAwards](https://twitter.com/MoneyAgeAwards) [#MoneyAgeAwards](https://twitter.com/MoneyAgeAwards)

Sponsored by:



# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018





### Contents

04 | Overview of 2018 winners and judges

### Selected winners profiles:

- 06 | Equity Release Lender of the Year: more 2 life
- 10 | Bank of the Year: Bank of Ireland
- 12 | Peer to Peer Loan Provider of the Year: Octopus Choice
- 14 | Mortgage Provider of the Year: Vida Homeloans
- 15 | Savings Account Provider of the Year: Kent Reliance
- 16 | ISA Provider of the Year: AJ Bell Youinvest
- 17 | Spreadbetting Provider of the Year: Intertrader
- 18 | Travel Money Provider of the Year: eurochange
- 19 | Money Transfer Provider of the Year: Currencies Direct
- 20 | Insurance Provider of the Year: 1ST Central



## Winners' overview

**E**xcitement, enthusiasm and diligence are the three main words that one can use to describe these prestigious awards held at the De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms in London.

The MoneyAge Awards 2018 saw hundreds of consumer finance specialists gather to celebrate the highest achievements in the sector over a prestigious gala dinner.

Adding to the 'wow' factor permeating the evening, was comedian Lucy Porter, who delivered an entertaining stand-up comedy sketch before presenting the winners with their awards - a huge congratulations must go to all the prize winners, and a very well done to all those shortlisted firms.

The success of the event was amplified due to its partnerships with the Buildings Societies Association, Chartered Insurance Institute, the Society of Later Life Advisers, the Society of Mortgage Professionals and the Tax Incentivised Savings Association with the judges (see below) also giving up their time, providing us with their expertise to judge categories, allowing us to determine the worthy winners.

On the back of all of this, we are particularly looking forward to welcoming you all to the 2019 awards, as no doubt the industry will continue to shine through in so many fields, despite the market becoming increasingly complex and demanding.

You can visit [www.moneyage.co.uk](http://www.moneyage.co.uk) for more details and to read all the latest news and commentary in the sector.

## Judges



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



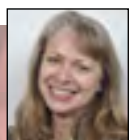
**Peter Pledger**  
CEO  
**NSAFS**



**Kirsty Cogan**  
Marketing Director  
**Weplan**



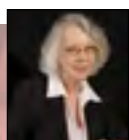
**Robert Sinclair**  
Chief Executive  
**Association of Mortgage Intermediaries (AMI)  
and Association of Finance Brokers (AFB)**



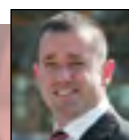
**Terri-Ann Humphreys**  
Development Director  
**Society of Later Life Advisers**



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



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



**Lee Travis**  
Partnerships & Member Engagement Director  
**Chartered Insurance Institute (CII)**



## The winners

### **Bank/Building Society of the Year**

WINNER: Bank of Ireland

### **Financial Adviser of the Year (small to medium-sized firm)**

WINNER: Strategic Solutions Chartered Financial Planners

### **Financial Adviser of the Year (medium to large firm)**

WINNER: Origen Financial Services

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

WINNER: Hatch

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

WINNER: Vida Homeloans

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

WINNER: Key Solutions Mortgages

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

WINNER: more 2 life

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

WINNER: Kent Reliance

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

WINNER: AJ Bell Youinvest

### **Spreadbetting Provider of the Year**

WINNER: InterTrader

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

WINNER: Salary Finance

### **Peer to Peer Loan Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Octopus Choice

### **Pensions/SIPP Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Scottish Widows

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

WINNER: Saunderson House

### **Online Share Dealing Provider**

WINNER: The Share Centre

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

WINNER: Plane Saver Credit Union

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

WINNER: Darlington Building Society

### **Travel Money Provider of the Year**

WINNER: eurochange

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

WINNER: Currencies Direct

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

WINNER: 1ST CENTRAL

### **Life Company of the Year**

WINNER: Zurich

### **Best IHT portfolio service**

WINNER: WAY Investment Services

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

WINNER: Lloyds Bank and Macmillan Cancer Support

### **Consumer Champion of the Year**

WINNER: Choose Wisely

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018

**WINNERS**

### Equity Release Lender of the Year: more 2 life

PLATINUM

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018

**WINNER**

**EQUITY RELEASE LENDER OF THE YEAR**



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

This year's winner is more 2 life. From its launch in 2008, more 2 life has gone on to become the third largest equity release lender in the UK, with a market share of 12.7% and last year surpassed a major milestone of £1bn of lending since launch. With another record year of lending ahead (more 2 life will complete almost as many mortgage loans in H1 of 2018 as the whole of 2017) more 2 life expects its market share to increase considerably this year.

more 2 life now employs 80 staff at its head office in Preston, representing a head count of 70% since 2017. It has a reputation as a pioneering innovator within the equity release sector. From launch, more 2 life developed one of the first plans to offer high loan to values to clients with certain medical conditions or lifestyles such as

smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes and cancer. Today, its Tailored Choice enhanced lifetime mortgage plan remains a market-leader with the highest LTVs available anywhere in the market and more 2 life has built upon this expertise to help advisers recognise the power of medical underwriting and the importance of asking health questions with its multi award-winning 'Big Picture' campaign.

more 2 life was also the first lender to pioneer 'interest served' plans that allow clients to service the interest on their mortgage debt, and it has continued in this spirit of innovation ever since.

More recently, more 2 life has developed more flexibility across its product range, including modern, market-leading, customer-centric features such as guaranteed inheritance features, flexible, partial capital repayment options and downsizing protection and other early repayment charge exemptions.

Generous drawdown facilities that do not restrict clients in terms of when or how often they take cash from their facility are also on offer, with drawdown from just £500 that allows clients to use their facility on a highly flexible basis, and flexible inheritance protection, that does not restrict a client's access to further borrowing.

more 2 life is strategically focused on helping grow the equity release market as well as growing its own share of that market. In order to do this, more 2 life has striven to help bring greater insights to advisers and the wider market through thought-leadership, research and adviser education programmes.

It achieves this aim of bringing greater insight and clarity to the market through three key routes: public relations, bespoke research and adviser education.

The judges were particularly impressed with the firm's strong commitment to transparency in an often-opaque market.

Congratulations.

more2life



# 10 REASONS TO USE...

more2life

#1

No other lender gets your clients a quicker loan.

Our portal has taken an Application through to Offer in just **4 hours and 40 minutes**



#2

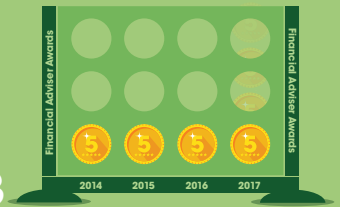
No other lender pays you faster.

We pay commission twice-weekly to ensure you get paid on completed business as soon as possible



#3

We are the only equity release lender to receive **FOUR back-to-back 5★ ratings** in the Financial Adviser Service Awards



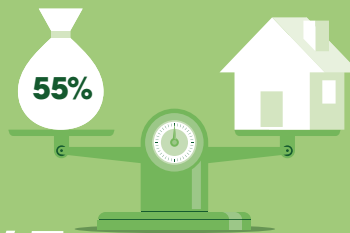
#4

We are the **UK's largest independent equity release lender** and we will be passing **£2bn** of lending in 2018



#5

We offer some of the **highest LTVs in the market, up to 55%**



#6

We offer some of the **most flexible product features on the market**, from drawdown to downsizing protection, inheritance protection and flexible capital repayments



#7

We are the only lender currently running a **comprehensive webinar programme** that has been accredited by the CII



#8

No other lender works harder to **improve the image of the industry.**

We are the only lender to have won awards for a campaign designed to focus attention on the importance of topics such as enhanced lifetime mortgages, downsizing issues and inheritance protection



#10

We believe that no other lender has the **ambition AND the ability to become Number One**. We are on a growth trajectory and strategic track to become the UK's largest equity release lender – with funding already secured and new funders being lined up for future product launches, we believe we will achieve this goal within the next three years

#9

We are constantly listening to our **advisers** to find out what we do well, and how we can improve where possible – this has recently led directly to improvements in our processes, portal and products



Contact our dedicated adviser support team today on **03454 500 151**  
**www.more2life.co.uk** or email **info@more2life.co.uk**

This is intended for intermediaries only and has not been approved for customer use

CML654.1 (11/18)

## Equity Release Lender of the Year



### Combating the problem

**more 2 life senior marketing executive Jennafer Small explains the issues around later life debt**

Our latest Later Life Lending Review has thrown some worrying facts into sharp relief; retirees are facing an unprecedented rise in the amount of debt

that they are carrying into later life, and, well... something truly has to give.

Our research found that in 2018, the total debt held by those aged 65+ will reach £86bn – **an increase of £30bn in just five years.**

At an individual level, total average debt held by those aged 65+ is now £15,700, up from £12,500 in 2017; so, in just one year, total debt held by retirees has ballooned by almost 26%. And this trend is set to continue – by 2027, our research conducted by Cebr predicts the Retirement Lending market will be worth £142bn.

The massive change needed is not going to be overnight, and it is not going to be straightforward, but one thing remains certain – older generations are facing a financial crisis due to a perfect storm of factors.

These factors include policy changes regarding pension freedoms and the state pension age, inadequate pension savings (and historically low income rates), and interest-only mortgages. Those aged 55+ are also having to care for several other generations of family members, both physically and financially.

The cost of renting is at an all-time high, as are student loans, so deposits for first-time buyers are hard to come by, meaning that many parents and even grandparents are stepping up to help. There

is also a national care crisis; the rising costs of later life care, along with cuts to health and social care services, means that many older people are struggling to get the care that they need without paying a large amount of money, which many don't have. Those aged 55+ often have to think about the younger and older generations before even thinking about funding their own retirement or possible future care needs.

We have already seen a huge increase in demand for equity release products, and it's not hard to see why. Equity release is a financial product designed specifically for those in or approaching retirement, which can enable consumers to service debt, help family and make the most out of their property wealth, whilst not having to make monthly repayments. There simply aren't many other products like it on the high street.

**The massive change needed is not going to be overnight, and it is not going to be straightforward, but one thing remains certain – older generations are facing a financial crisis due to a perfect storm of factors**

Not only this, but more recent market innovations have helped bring equity release to the attention of a much wider audience by offering more flexibility and a wider range of options to consumers, such as flexible capital repayment options, guaranteed inheritance features, downsizing protection and fixed ERCs and ERC exemptions to help meet changing circumstances in retirement

These features have been designed with the changing nature of retirement in mind. Retirement is no longer the single event it was for older generations, but a journey which takes an incredible





amount of consideration and planning, and one which can also change in an instant. These features give clients both flexibility and control; options such as downsizing are not closed off should they need to in future, they can reduce the size of the loan by making partial repayments and stopping at any time should they no longer afford to be able to do so, whilst still being able to leave an inheritance if they wish.

It is clear that property wealth should play a bigger part in retirement finances, and should become a more mainstream borrowing method, due to its suitability for older consumers. However, equity release cannot, and should not, be one of the few solutions available for those carrying so much debt into retirement. There is a need to develop a wider range of options for the retirement finance market, and there is a need to educate consumers about property wealth and equity release without constant recourse to negative rumours and widespread scaremongering.

With debt rising at such a rapid rate, more needs to be done to ensure that, after a lifetime of working hard, people can live a

comfortable retirement without the dark cloud of debt overshadowing them. Consumer demand for lending solutions designed specifically for older borrowers is out there and growing...the industry must do more to design the solutions required.

As Dr Louise Overton put it; 'There is a clear consensus across government, the financial services sector, that ensuring, and improving, the suitability and effectiveness of financial services for older people is a priority concern.'

If you want to read more about the latest research we have conducted into the Retirement Lending market, you can download a copy of our Later Life Lending Review by visiting the 'Learning Lab' section of our website. We also have an infographic and a video animation you can download or watch if you don't have time to read the full report.

# more2life

### Bank of the Year: Bank of Ireland

GOLD

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018

**WINNER**

**BANK OF THE YEAR**



The Bank of the Year Award is given to the bank which has proved itself ahead of its peers when it comes to product provision, customer service, general excellence in everything it does and demonstrates a true understanding of the needs of its customers and of the changing needs of the market.

With 2,000 staff, 2.9 million customers, £20bn customer loans and £19bn in customer deposits, Bank of Ireland UK is the clear leader.

Understanding the changing needs of the market is where the bank excels, as a niche mortgage provider (with a 1.5% market share), it focuses on developing products that meet specific needs of specific groups to really support property purchase. In the FTB higher earner space, it developed a product for the 35% of young people who have a good salary but no deposit. Family Link enables FTBs to borrow up to 90% loan to value (LTV) and they take out a mortgage for the

remaining 10% secured against a parent's home. Bank of Ireland UK has completed 100 FTB mortgages with a total value of £19.2m in the last 12 months.

In the low earner space, 'First Start' helps those that can raise a deposit, but have low income. It allows buyers to include the income of a sponsor in the assessment, boosting borrowing power to £500k.

For older buyers, Bank of Ireland UK has developed a mortgage for retired people, where they can use their pension income. They need a minimum pension income (combining private and state) of £15k, and can borrow up to 50% of property value. Strict criteria ensures people are protected, including having sufficient equity (£250k) to buy a property in another location if needed. In the first month of its launch, this had 52 enquiries at a mortgage value in excess of £5m.

Bank of Ireland UK also has a strong commitment to improving the overall mortgage marketplace. It has invested £7m to develop a bespoke online mortgage-application process and enables 75% of all new business application referrals to be dealt with within three hours and 89% within six hours. Application-to-offer averages 11 days.

A Customer Hub has also been built to take service to the next level, beyond mortgage completion. All customers have their own hub, with over 3,000 customers registered since launch in April. A total 22% of all applications are already via the Hub which has excellent added-value capability and customers can switch products.

The judges said Bank of Ireland UK's entry exuded excellence, demonstrating commitment to its customers, its staff and the industry, as well as a clear understanding of the changing needs of the market with genuinely innovative products.

A fantastic win for a great firm.

**Bank of Ireland**  **UK**



# We succeed together

**At Bank of Ireland for Intermediaries we work closely with our brokers to make things as easy as possible.**

**We offer:**

- service you can rely on with our award winning application system
- streamlined processes including day 1 valuations
- direct access to our underwriters using case messaging, to provide fast, consistent decisions
- case tracking to follow the application's progress
- support from our experienced account managers.



We're here to help, call us on **0345 266 8928\***  
Or visit us at **boi4i.com**

\*Lines are open 8.30am – 6pm Mon to Fri. Call may be recorded for training and monitoring purposes.

Calls cost no more than calls to geographic numbers (01 or 02). Calls from landlines and mobiles are included in free call packages.

Bank of Ireland UK is a trading name of Bank of Ireland (UK) plc which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Registered in England & Wales. Registered Number: 7022885. Registered Office: Bow Bells House, 1 Bread Street, London, EC4M 9BE.

F0528 11/18 12752181107

### Peer to Peer Loan Provider of the Year: Octopus Choice

GOLD

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018

### WINNER

#### PEER TO PEER LOAN PROVIDER OF THE YEAR AWARD



The Peer to Peer Loan Provider of the Year is awarded to the provider proving itself as a leader in this field with advanced product offerings, its competitiveness and its transparency. The firm standing head and shoulders above the rest in this category is Octopus Choice.

Octopus Choice is the peer-to-peer lending product distributed by Octopus Investments, and is designed to provide investors with an easy way to target an attractive return, without the volatility of the stock market. Since launching in April 2016, the firm has become one of the fastest-growing P2P platforms in the UK, lending over £264m, helping investors earn a collective £8.3m of interest in the process. In the last year alone, Octopus Choice has well over doubled its assets under management to more than £204m, and increased its investor base by 150%.

Furthermore, the firm has managed to do this by carving a niche as one of the only IFA-friendly P2P platforms around and has over 1,000

advisers registered looking for a way to help their clients target attractive returns without investing in the stock market. Instead, by investing people's money in a portfolio of loans backed by bricks and mortar, Octopus Choice has helped open up a whole new asset class to advisers and their clients that was previously accessible only to family offices and financial institutions with the substantial cash balances required to make lending a viable proposition.

Every loan on the Octopus Choice platform is made at a conservative loan-to-value ratio of 76% (although the average is just 61%). It means the value of the property would have to fall significantly before the investor is at risk of losing any capital.

Octopus Choice's focus has been on providing an unbeatable customer experience and this has been split into three main areas – product features, customer service and transparency. The firm launched its new ISA last summer and also launched an ISA transfer facility, making it simple for advisers and investors to transfer existing ISAs across to Octopus Choice. In excess of £35m of ISA money is now managed.

Octopus also prides itself on its straightforward, no-nonsense and above all, human approach. The dedicated customer success team responds to 75% of queries within three hours – and 49% within 60 minutes.

Finally, none of the business's investors have lost any capital or interest. It is up front about the fact that late-paying loans are simply a feature of the lending process – so there are no unusual surprises if and when 5-10% of a portfolio isn't available for withdrawal.

The judges were very impressed with the speed in which the provider is growing in the space.

Well done.

**CHOICE**  
by octopusinvestments





# Fed up with the stock market?

**Sick of the ups and downs of the stock market?  
But still want to get a good return on your money?  
Octopus Choice might be able to help.**

We think tough questions deserve smart answers. It's why we designed **Octopus Choice**.

Invest in loans backed by property, and you could **target an interest rate of 4% a year**, without the fluctuations that come with the stock market.

We'll put your money to work by lending it out to lots of borrowers – and secure each loan against a property, just in case.

You can open a general account, or include it within your ISA. What's more, you can request a withdrawal at any time, with no fee for doing so.

**Less volatility or uncertainty – just bricks and mortar.**

Remember, the value of an investment, and any income from it, can fall as well as rise.

Money invested through Octopus Choice is concentrated in property and could be affected by market conditions. For the same reason, instant access can't be guaranteed.

Also, peer-to-peer investments aren't covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS).

Bear in mind, too, that tax treatment depends on individual circumstances and may be subject to change.

**Start investing in loans backed by property.  
Visit us at [octopuschoice.com](https://octopuschoice.com).**

### Mortgage Provider of the Year: Vida Homeloans

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018

### WINNER

#### MORTGAGE PROVIDER OF THE YEAR



New intermediary mortgage lender Vida Homeloans is on a mission to make a difference to the UK mortgage market by focusing on customers who should be able to get an affordable mortgage from a responsible lender but who have been locked out of the market until now. The Mortgage Provider of the Year award is given to the firm which has proved itself in its field with strong product offerings, a deep understanding of the changing needs of the mortgage market, sensitivity to the pressures placed on property buyers and a commitment to improving the overall mortgage marketplace.

Over five thousand completed mortgages, representing £1bn in lending, show just how far Vida has come from a standing start. Vida is delivering on its promise to become the specialist mortgage lender of choice in the UK. The lender's further expansion is further evidenced by the fact that 10,000 intermediaries have registered to do business and three securitisations worth more than £1bn have been completed. Product innovation within the firm to match the changing

needs of the mortgage market is exemplary. Its innovative product design and marketing approach is based on customer segments and products designed specifically for them, presented in a way that will assist intermediaries in clearly identifying the typical profiles amongst their own customer base. The criteria-driven products cater for the self-employed, contractors, those with complex income, first-time buyers and those who need to buy together as a maximum of four friends or family members to get onto the housing ladder. Vida also lends to expats living overseas who want to purchase a buy to let property in the UK and portfolio landlords who wish to use a limited company or SPV to purchase Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and Multi-Unit Blocks (MUBs) which are particularly attractive types of property for student housing.

Technology innovation is also at the heart of everything Vida does. One of the biggest problems for established lenders is a legacy system but Vida does not have that issue. Vida chose Exela Technologies as its mortgage origination platform provider and bought an off the shelf package. It then worked with the software house to enhance the systems to meet specific requirements that were bespoke to Vida. The technology has been built with the intermediary in mind, adding in tools they will need, like maximum loan calculators for all product types, which are very quick and easy to use, as is the online decision in principle and full mortgage application process. Online DIPs with instant decisions are available in 10 minutes with a full mortgage application in only 15 minutes.

The judges said Vida offers a fresh, new and exciting approach to lending with an innovative product range. Well done on a deserved award win.



## Savings Account Provider of the Year: Kent Reliance

# MONEYAge AWARDS 2018

### WINNER

#### SAVINGS ACCOUNT PROVIDER OF THE YEAR



The Savings Account Provider of the Year is awarded to the firm that has proved itself ahead of the game with its savings accounts/savings products, is competitive, relevant and has a customer service standard that is second to none.

Displaying all these elements and more, this year's winner is Kent Reliance, part of the OneSavings Bank group. Whilst the Kent Reliance brand has been around for over 150 years, it is the period since 2011, when it became a bank, leading the way for many who have subsequently sought to copy its business model that merits this award. From a balance sheet of less than £1bn in 2011, it has since grown to around £7bn and now has more than 200,000 customers.

The challenges the fledgling bank faced in providing a world class savings franchise at the outset of 2011 were considerable. Kent Reliance was a small, local brand with both limited nationwide

awareness and customer service policies. Its existing suite of products was designed without a long-term strategy and supported by ageing technology. Furthermore, the network of nine branches had seen partial, if any, investment for over 20 years. When set against the fallout from the financial crisis, trust in banks was at a record low and new savings providers in the UK were unheard of.

The first step in surmounting these challenges was to define the Kent Reliance mission – to simply crystallise what the bank wanted to achieve and create positive outcomes for its customers. The group unanimously decided that Kent Reliance should remain true to its building society roots by retaining its small branch network and to focus heavily on providing excellent customer service and savings value, but with the ambitious challenge of competing nationwide.

Kent Reliance's product range is simple, competitive and accommodates a range of needs. Its products offer no complicated terms and conditions, confusing withdrawal restrictions or charges. Where possible, the firm will always try to offer customers a fair and competitive interest rate on their savings, and offer existing customers the opportunity to switch to any currently available product without barriers.

The Kent Reliance product range is suitable for those who need access to their savings or those who want to put it away for a longer period of time. On the back of these elements, the firm has witnessed a number of outcomes including savings balances increasing by £4.5bn in the last five years, an average fixed rate bond retention of 90 per cent or more, and a year-to-date customer satisfaction score of +60.2.

This year's judges were particularly impressed with the product on offer and how it places a high emphasis on customer service, backed up by strong testimonials.

Congratulations to an outstanding firm.

## KentReliance



### ISA Provider of the Year: AJ Bell Youinvest

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018

### WINNER

#### ISA PROVIDER OF THE YEAR

The ISA Provider of the Year Award is given to the firm that has proved itself with its product offering and understanding of the needs of its members.

Rising out from amongst the rest for 2018 is AJ Bell Youinvest with its Stocks and shares ISA, which provides a combination of excellent value for money and market leading investment range, and is one of the most competitively priced accounts available in the market.

Customers are at the heart of the business through its aim to make investing as easy as possible. There are no charges to set up the ISA, custody charges are very competitive and the online application process is fully mobile responsive, letting customers invest quickly and easily with their debit card. AJ Bell Youinvest offers a wide range of investments, including shares and overseas dealing in 24 markets, thousands of funds, investment trusts and ETFs and provides an ability to deal online with equity deals processed immediately, as well as applying for IPOs and new issues online.

The firm also allows customers to manage multiple accounts with a single login, while family linking lets customers manage multiple family members' accounts in one place. A range of risk-targeted funds are also available – the AJ Bell Passive funds. There's no dealing charge for customers to buy them, and the custody charge is waived until January 2019. A Favourite funds list is also provided. The list of 72 funds, selected by the Head of Fund Selection, is the pick of the best funds for medium to long term growth or to provide income.

To make investing easier AJ Bell Youinvest has, extended its dealing hours for US stocks until 9pm, enhanced log in security on its website via two factor authentication, improved the mobile app with the introduction of debit card payments and introduced a transfer tracking feature so customers can monitor the progress of their transfer to AJ Bell Youinvest online.

Existing customers also have the chance also to attend exclusive events such as Investors' Evenings, in which speakers from leading financial institutions comment on current market issues - with a Q&A session at the end. This year, the firm has continued its programme of highly popular webinars, on topics including exploring investment trusts and funds.

The judges said this firm is consumer-focused, responsive to customers' needs, competitively priced and offers a market-leading investment range.

A wonderful showing from a hugely successful firm.



## Spreadbetting Provider of the Year: InterTrader

# MONEYAge AWARDS 2018

### WINNER

#### SPREADBETTING PROVIDER OF THE YEAR AWARD



The MoneyAge Spreadbetting Provider of the Year award is given to the provider that has shined through in this extremely competitive field. For the second year running, the trophy went to InterTrader, a firm which has built on past successes to create a service tailored to the needs of professional traders, and provided tools to help existing retail clients who want to pursue professional status.

In a dramatically evolving regulatory environment for spread betting and CFD trading, InterTrader has introduced a new advanced trading platform, custom-built in response to clients' needs and designed specifically for professional-level traders. The platform has been developed in partnership with leading trading software firm NetDania and offers support for multi-monitor set-ups, extensive charting and analytic capabilities, with over 100 in-built technical indicators and patterns, and integrated trading signals, with target levels, plus the trader's own trade and order levels, overlaid on the price chart for each market.

In addition, it allows direct trading from charts, and the ability to click-and-drag order levels and issue complex alerts for individual markets based on price targets, trendlines or chart studies.

Unlike other spreadbetting providers, InterTrader doesn't believe in simply marketing existing retail services to professional clients. It recognises that professional-level traders require more complex, adaptable trading tools, and has invested heavily in powerful new software to meet this need.

InterTrader's 'market-neutral execution' also provides a protection against some of the conflict-of-interest concerns raised by regulators. It hedges every trade a client places in full by trading in the underlying market and means the firm never has a vested interest in whether the client's trade makes a profit or a loss.

On the back of the rise of cryptocurrencies, InterTrader now offers round-the-clock CFD trading on Bitcoin, Ethereum, Bitcoin Cash, Litecoin and Ripple. Traders can go long or short of cryptocurrency prices without having to make a physical purchase and cryptocurrency trading is leveraged, so traders can increase the risk/return of their investment capital. Furthermore, all client funds are held in a segregated account for security and protected by a parental guarantee.

The firm's offerings do not stop there however. A key part of its service has always been the trader education programme which equips traders with the essential tools and knowledge that can provide a platform for successful trading. This includes free software such as the advanced charting package by IT-Finance, and free trading signals from leading provider Trading Central, along with automated pattern analysis from Autochartist.

Overall, the judges were particularly impressed with InterTrader's investment in new technology and the provision of educational material to enhance the customer experience.

Congratulations on an outstanding entry.



### Travel Money Provider of the Year: eurochange

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018

**WINNER**

**TRAVEL MONEY PROVIDER OF THE YEAR**



Established in 1975, eurochange is known as 'the foreign exchange expert' and over the past 43 years has grown into one of the largest foreign exchange providers in the UK. It provides travel money on over 70 currencies in cash, travellers cheques or pre-paid cards, as well as international payments and remittance services to both retail and business customers. Over 170 eurochange branches across the UK at present will be joined by further openings in the New Year.

eurochange's USPs include their market-leading Click and Collect service (where you can order online and collect in branch from as little as 60 seconds) and a home delivery service with ordering right up to 4pm for next working day delivery.

One of the firm's key components is the 'Boost your Rate' feature and additional rate tiers for improved rates on Euros and US Dollars. Very few of its competitors offer tiered rates at all and eurochange previously offered 'standard' and 'improved' rates on 24 currencies,

online and in branch. This was increased to four tiers on their two most popular currencies, Euros and US Dollars to reward customers who purchase more by giving them even better rates. The rates would apply at various foreign currency amounts e.g. purchase €1,200 or more to secure the 'Best Rate'. This means consumers are rewarded with an even better rate, especially when they purchase larger amounts. The 'Boost your Rate' link has been engaged with over 50,000 times in four months, and the average transaction value has increased by 5%.

eurochange does not operate in airports as high rents would limit the ability to offer great rates on travel money. In fact their 'Take off with 20% More' survey, conducted in February 2018 at airport bureau de change in the UK, showed that on average you would be 20% better off when buying £100 of euros and 17% better off when selling back €100 at the Hounslow branch rather than at the airport.

Planned up-and-coming activity signals a strong outlook for the business also. It is also trialling the sale and purchase of gold products such as coins and bars in selected branches as the offering is a close fit with travel money.

Now three times winners of the MoneyAge Award, according to the judges, this firm's passion for what it does shines through in its customer satisfaction ratings and is a player in this competitive space that continues to deliver service, convenience and value to their customers.

A superb all round performance.





## Money Transfer Provider of the Year: Currencies Direct

# MONEYAge AWARDS 2018

### WINNER

#### MONEY TRANSFER PROVIDER OF THE YEAR



Currencies Direct was established in 1996, and its knowledge of the market has helped the firm enjoy significant growth in the last 20 years. The business has looked after the currency requirements of more than 270,000 customers and manages international payments worth over £6.5bn a year, with this figure looking set to climb over the next 12 months.

Awarded to the money transfer firm which has shown a true understanding of the money transfer market and has kept competitiveness, transparency and customer service at the heart of its business, this award was handed to Currencies Direct, whose core aims are to help customers save money on their currency transfers through their app, online, telephone and branch services.

A strong transparency element is at the heart of the firm. The firm's mission is to make currency transfers simple – and that means stripping away the jargon, ditching complex processes and presenting

customers with a service that's easy to understand, straightforward to use and completely clear from start to finish.

Whether customers are new to the world of foreign exchange or old hands at moving money abroad, the firm gives them as much support as they need throughout their journey and provide an unrivalled level of customer care at every touchpoint. If they want to make a transfer over the phone, their personal currency expert is on hand to explain the process from start to finish, offer transparent pricing and keep them updated on both the latest market movements and the status of their transfers.

Currencies Direct's online service and app also give customers the opportunity to check the exchange rate as and when they want to, so they can compare rates, know how much they are going to achieve for their transfer from the outset and make an informed decision.

The firm's 'rate alert' system is also another service open to customers. Customers choose the rate they want to achieve and Currencies Direct lets them know as soon as the market moves to that level. The company's website was relaunched in 2017 and the UI and UX of their app was revamped to support the goal of making currency transfers simple – by streamlining navigation and presenting customers with the most relevant information for them based on past behaviour, Currencies Direct ensures customers have easy access to all the information they need.

The judges recognised that the firm's submission demonstrated a strong commitment to its customers, while its significant investment in people and technology and has helped the firm stay one step ahead in a competitive marketplace.

Congratulations on a well-deserved win.



### Insurance Provider of the Year: 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL

# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018

### WINNER

#### INSURANCE PROVIDER OF THE YEAR



1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL is a trusted, market-leading insurance business, delivering future solutions based on what customers want and need. With almost 500,000 customers and £108m turnover, the firm's customer-focused approach has resulted in satisfied customers and a positive environment which employees can thrive.

The Insurance Provider of the Year recognises 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 surpassing its peers in this competitive market. 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL meets all this criteria without a shadow of a doubt, and its simple, jargon-free experience is underpinned by strong technological capabilities, agility and the capacity to drive change which have enabled 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL to grow quickly. Since launching in 2008, it has helped nearly four million UK policyholders to save money on their car insurance and is instantly recognisable as a top 10 supplier in the UK price comparison motor market.

A key challenge faced by the motor insurance industry is the changing way in which consumers choose to buy and service their policies. Customers are increasingly opting to use digital devices to shop for policies and make changes when necessary. In fact, 85% of 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL's policies are now bought online.

In today's rapidly changing insurance market, the company prides itself on being an agile business able to adapt to changes in the industry more quickly than bigger players. Its market-leading software is designed to flex with the market, allowing us to meet the changing needs of customers and people. As increasing numbers of customers opt to shop for and modify policies online, the firm's website must create an effortless journey both visually and functionally, with continuous innovation through self-service capabilities. It invests heavily in technology to improve the user experience for customers. With mobile traffic overtaking desktop for the first time, 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL saw an opportunity to improve the mobile journey with user-friendly, technologically savvy solutions.

1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL has also launched webchat. It is now helping up to 1000 customers per day across sales and service and that number continues to grow. As well as producing efficiency savings and increasing the range of options customers have to contact us, webchat lets the firm gather insight which helps to improve the customer journey. A total of 88% of customers rate 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL Good or Excellent on Feefo, the independent online review system and the business has achieved an average NPS score of 30 and improving (against the industry average of 7).

The ability to constantly evolve to meet the needs of customers is the special element that the judges picked out for this award win.

Well done to all involved.



# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018





# MONEYAge

## AWARDS

2018



# MONEYAge


## AWARDS

2019

4th annual MoneyAge Awards

**SAVE THE DATE**

10 October 2019, The Waldorf Hilton, London

For the latest news and updates follow  @MoneyAge2018 #MoneyAgeAwards

[www.moneyage.co.uk/awards](http://www.moneyage.co.uk/awards)



The background is a dynamic, abstract composition. The upper half is dominated by a vibrant red color, composed of numerous overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes (polygons) that create a sense of depth and movement. Scattered throughout this red area are several bright, multi-pointed starburst or spark-like effects. A thick, white diagonal band cuts across the middle of the image, separating the red upper section from the blue lower section. The lower half features a similar pattern of overlapping geometric shapes, but in shades of blue and teal, set against a dark navy blue background. More starburst effects are also present in this lower section.

**[www.moneyage.co.uk](http://www.moneyage.co.uk)**

**#MoneyAge**