

The Mortgage AWARDS 2022

Winners Brochure

5 May 2022

The Waldorf Hilton, London

Celebrating excellence within the UK mortgage industry

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The Mortgage AWARDS 2022



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Contents & selected winners

Contents

- 05** Overview of 2022 awards gala dinner and judges
- 06** The winners

Selected winners profiles:

- 07** Building Society of the Year: Saffron Building Society
- 11** Large Loans Mortgage Lender of the Year: West One Loans
- 13** Specialist Lender of the Year: Pepper Money
- 15** Shared Ownership Mortgage Lender of the Year: Leeds Building Society
- 17** Later Life Lender of the Year: Pure Retirement

The Mortgage AWARDS 2022

Overview & judging panel

Overview

The Mortgage Awards 2022, held at The Waldorf Hilton, London, played host to hundreds of mortgage professionals celebrating excellence within the UK mortgage industry.

British quizzier, comedian, doctor and broadcaster, Paul Sinha, conducted the evening, helping to present trophies to the deserving winners. Congratulations to all the prize winners and a very well done to all those shortlisted firms. Many thanks also to all those who helped make the event such a success, including the sponsors, supporters, judges and everyone who entered and attended the awards.

We look forward to welcoming you all with open arms again in 2023.

2022 Judging panel



Adam Cadle
Editor
MoneyAge



Karen Rodrigues,
Director of Sales
ULS Technology



Richard Beardshaw
Head of Sales
HSBC UK for Intermediaries



Louisa Sedgwick
Managing Director of Specialist
Mortgages
Hampshire Trust Bank



David Burrowes
Chair
Equity Release Council



Robert Sinclair
Chief Executive
AMI and AFB



Greg Cunnington
Chief Operating Officer
LDNfinance



Adam Tyler
Executive Chairman
FIBA

The Mortgage AWARDS 2022

Winners 2022

The winners

First-time Buyer Mortgage Lender of the Year

Winner: HSBC UK

Specialist Lender of the Year

Winner: Pepper Money

Remortgage Lender of the Year

Winner: HSBC UK

Large Loans Mortgage Lender of the Year

Winner: West One Loans

Second Charge Mortgage Lender of the Year

Winner: Evolution Money

Shared Ownership Mortgage Lender of the Year

Winner: Leeds Building Society

Later Life Lender of the Year

Winner: Pure Retirement

Bank Mortgage Provider of the Year

Winner: Metro Bank

Overall Mortgage Lender of the Year

Winner: HSBC UK

Small Broker of the Year

Winner: Prolific Mortgage Finance

Specialist Broker of the Year

Winner: Connect IFA

Best Buy-to-Let Broker of the Year

Winner: Dynamo

Equity Release Broker of the Year

Winner: Fluent Money

Best Broker for Short-Term Lending

Winner: Pilot Fish

Best New Homes Broker of the Year

Winner: Visionary Finance

Best Secured Loans Broker

Winner: Loan.co.uk

Overall Broker of the Year - sponsored by eConveyancer

Winner: Fluent Money

Building Society of the Year

Winner: Saffron Building Society

Best Newcomer in the Mortgage Space

Winner: MPowered Mortgages

Best Innovation in the Mortgage Space

Winner: Mortgage Advice Bureau

Mortgage Surveyor of the Year

Winner: Countrywide Surveying Services

Mortgage Conveyancer of the Year

Winner: LMS (Legal Marketing Services)

Mortgage Technology Provider

Winner: Knowledge Bank

Mortgage Lender Customer Service of the Year

Winner: HSBC UK

Best Mortgage Club of the Year

- sponsored by Loan.co.uk

Winner: SimplyBiz Mortgages

Diversity Initiative of the Year - sponsored by HSBC UK

Winner: Sesame Bankhall Group

ESG Initiative

Winner: Landbay

The Mortgage AWARDS 2022

Winner 2022

Building Society of the Year: Saffron Building Society



This category recognises a building society that has proved itself ahead of its peers when it comes to product provision and customer service, and one that has demonstrated a true understanding of the needs of the consumer.

With new products released across the limited company buy-to-let, first-time buyer, self-build and self-employed markets, the judges said this building society is at “the top of its game”. This year’s winner is Saffron Building Society.

Saffron offers a variety of mortgage products to meet a range of individual needs, including specialist circumstances and remortgages. It also offers a range of savings products including cash ISAs, notice accounts, immediate access, and children’s savings.

For lenders and brokers alike, 2021 became a year of unexpected buoyancy and surprises, and for many became one of the busiest years of the last decade. For Saffron, however, with results pending,

it is likely to be the best year in the mutual’s history.

In 2021, the society shifted to a new strategy focused wholly on service. While the pandemic left the mutual busier than ever, this didn’t deter the team. The society went from a team of two full-time and one part-time BDMs, to nine, adding two field-based BDMs – one for the north and one for southern regions.

Saffron also added a live chat function to its website during working hours, and bolstered the underwriting team with a new, highly experienced underwriting manager. Investment in the risk team with experience and internal promotions, improvements to the website to make the application process smoother, and the addition of a raft of effective affordability calculators to the website for brokers, have also significantly enhanced the Saffron offering.

The market saw many shifts in 2021. A massive increase in buy-to-let, a rise in self-employed issues, homeowners’ requirements for their home changing, the great shift from city to urban living, a revolution in self-building, a boom in the small developer market, and first-time buyers finding themselves increasingly priced out of the market for affordability.

For Saffron, these were not issues, but challenges, and led to what would become a year of new products, adjusted criteria, and a brand-new momentum for the mutual.

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Winner 2022

One move saw Saffron return to the limited company buy-to-let market in 2021. Saffron saw an impressive 603 applications and increased its mortgage lending for the year by £47m from limited company completions alone.

Saffron also continued to develop its first-time buyer range last year. Having already re-entered the 95% LTV market, the society went further by providing a wider range of solutions to appeal to those with less upfront finances, or those interested in the lower fixed rate. Two new 95% LTV products were introduced – a two-year and five-year fixed rate with no arrangement fee, saving £999 on the upfront cost of the mortgage and free valuation.

In the self-build space, the building society introduced a new large loan product which takes the lending ceiling from £1m on the typical product, to £2m – with the opportunity to increase this to £3m on a case-by-case basis.

Saffron is also proud of its history of accepting more self-employed applicants than most lenders in the UK, a quality that has provided it with knowledge of how the market is shifting. As such, to help the self-employed with limited upfront funds, 2021 saw the society release three 90% LTV products on its specialist range.

The issues of the pandemic were unpredictable and for some had a negative impact on their ability to get a mortgage. Saffron's clear communication and collaboration with mortgage clubs and brokers alike allowed its senior team to observe and adapt with a customer centric approach. This customer strategy has seen the value of Saffron's mortgage

book grow by 10% and its published results have seen the mutual very close to breaking the £1bn mark in lending. This comprises a 40% increase in first-time buyer completions, and a 194% uplift in self-employed completions.

Education is also key. The Saffron for Intermediaries team already produce a live webinar series, with an episode every month, that is interactive and allows brokers to ask questions directly. Over the year the team have been joined by underwriters, specialists in development finance and external guests. The series is going from strength to strength, with between 150-200 brokers live on the webinar and a large amount more watching on demand. In 2021, SFI (not so) LIVE was distributed for the first time - a pre-recorded monthly podcast targeted at mortgage brokers, financial advisers, and their peers. As opposed to the webinar series, the podcast looks at recent news in the sector and the panel debates what it means for the industry. This is distributed internationally on all major podcast channels. Brokers who work with Saffron benefit from regular communications - from email communications, alongside the webinar and podcast, it includes helpful video series on social media, speaking events, and direct-to-broker communications.

Congratulations to the whole team at Saffron for an outstanding year, and a fantastic win. The firm is a shining light in the industry, and continues to set unbelievably high standards which is only a positive for the mortgage market overall and its clients.

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Winner 2022

CAN THERE BE 'INTERMEDIAR-EASE'?



Tony Hall, head of mortgage sales at Saffron for Intermediaries

One of the drivers for change in the mortgage market is open and honest communication - combined with great service of course. When I joined Saffron Building Society, I was embraced by a senior team that was already focused on delivering the highest service standards. But there will always be room for improvement.

At Saffron we understand that to improve service we need to understand the issue brokers are facing across the sector. The only way to know that, is to ask them. To that end we surveyed 101 brokers to ask them how they have found service in the sector in the last 12 months.

Service has slipped since pandemic restrictions were lifted

Whilst expectations may have been lowered during the pandemic, with many brokers expecting the service standards to slip, it isn't a big surprise that 96.4% of those surveyed stated the service received was **good to excellent** during covid restrictions. Better than anyone could have predicted.

What was concerning for us was the significant drop since covid-19 measures were lifted, with 74% of brokers having received only **good service** in the last 12 months. I was also disappointed to see

that 68% of the respondents had to resort to complaining about the poor service they had received by their lender, with 50% reporting poor service times, in the same period.

How much do lenders listen to brokers?

I think this is the fundamental issue here. How much do lenders understand the frustrations of brokers and their clients? How many offer an open door to have the "difficult" conversations? As a lender we know we could do better. I would assume many lenders will feel the same.

A lesson for lenders

The results of our broker survey covered much more than the topline service issues raised above and delved deeper into the broker/lender relationship. On the back of some significant findings, Saffron has launched a new broker initiative 'Intermediar-ease' which will address the issues and continually improve our broker relationships in the future.

To find out more about Intermediar-ease and what it means for you, as a broker, Google "Saffron intermediar-ease" for links to the information you need.



Building Society of the Year

**Proud winners of Building Society of the Year
at the Mortgage Awards 2022!**

Life's easier for you with Saffron for Intermediaries. We're committed to shaping our services around our brokers, building lasting relationships of real value, which will make it easier for your clients. Our personal approach will find the right solutions whatever their needs. It all adds up to an award winning broker experience.

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Saffron
For Intermediaries

The **Mortgage**

AWARDS 2022 **WINNER**

Building Society of the Year

The Mortgage AWARDS 2022

Winner 2022

Large Loans Mortgage Lender of the Year:

West One Loans



The Large Loans Mortgage Lender of the Year category aims to reward the firm looking to facilitate the residential and commercial borrowing requirements of high-net-worth individuals, particularly those looking to borrow more than £500,000.

This year's winner is West One Loans. The judges were impressed with its strong in-house expertise with the ability to build bespoke solutions for more complex cases. During 2021, West One Loans completed a number of very large loans of between £10m and £20m. Recent cases have included a £8.7m refinance of a development site that was originally with another lender and a £5.25m loan for the purchase of a development site.

The firm builds its own technology systems in-house and has launched a new origination, underwriting and case management system for

its bridging products. This has enhanced the processing journey with improved data capture, automated document production and underwriting control. Significantly, all products across the firm's four divisions are now originated on a single common platform. This means its multi-product offerings are processed more efficiently and it can be more flexible with funding solutions. Clients can be offered a combination of high value bridging and development finance to acquire sites and then finance new build, conversion, or refurbishment activity. The loan can also be moved onto a buy-to-let deal if the client intends the exit strategy to be rental of the properties.

The challenges of last year were dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic leading to a shortage of materials and labour resulting in delayed projects and rising costs in some cases. West One Loans was able to support its large loan clients where these types of issue occurred, being in a position to restructure loans so projects could complete, and/or allowing breathing space for sales to go through.

West One Loans is one of the biggest and fastest growing non-bank lenders in the UK and its expansion is being boosted by larger and more complex loans. Its highly skilled BDMs and underwriters work closely together with the broker and client to get the best outcome for all involved, not just at the application stage but throughout the project. Congratulations on a fantastic win.

Your trusted large loan lender.



Bridging
Loans



Buy-to-Let
Mortgages



Development
Finance



Second Charge
Mortgages

We are one of the UK's largest non-bank lenders, trusted by intermediaries, borrowers and property professionals since 2005 as their go to specialist finance partner.

As experts in complex cases, large loan requirements and unique circumstances, our experience speaks for itself. Every case is treated individually, manually underwritten and we tailor and create unique solutions for even the most complex cases.

One solution, one partner, all you need is one. West One.

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The **Mortgage**

AWARDS
2022

WINNER

Large Loans Mortgage Lender of the Year

The Mortgage AWARDS 2022

Winner 2022

Specialist Lender of the Year:

Pepper Money



This category rewards a lender that has displayed healthy loan books with strong financial results, whether this be in the buy-to-let, self-employed or help to buy equity loan space. The Specialist Lender of the Year also goes to a firm that has revolutionised its offerings to meet customer needs.

The judges said the winning lender has made great strides in its overall proposition, with strong offer times and implementation of new technology – specifically automated valuation models (AVMs). The winner is Pepper Money.

Pepper Money is a specialist mortgage lender that supports intermediaries and their customers with diverse needs. It offers a range of products across the residential and buy-to-let spaces to address key challenges experienced by customers across England and Wales.

Over the last year, the lender has broadened

its range to better address changing customer demographics, launching an affordable home ownership proposition that includes help to buy and shared ownership, to ensure it can provide greater options to first-time buyers.

Pepper Money has also placed a significant focus on service to support its intermediary partners. The firm provides a dedicated case owner from application to offer on every case submitted, which means that a truly personal service is received. This has led to excellent reviews on its approach to underwriting and the quality of support provided to brokers.

Elsewhere, Pepper Money has continued to implement technology that has given its team everything they need to support brokers without losing the human touch. This includes the launch of AVMs, passing on cost savings to customers and reducing the carbon footprint within the application process. In doing so, Pepper Money has continued to operate without depending on computer decisions, ensuring it finds fairer lending solutions for more customers. Offer times in 2021 were Pepper Money's fastest ever, including just 24 hours with the help of an AVM, and frequently within seven days for customers without AVMs.

Pepper Money has achieved all of this while continuing to invest heavily in its team, which has seen a steady rise in headcount in the areas that will significantly impact the broker experience.

The **Mortgage**

AWARDS **WINNER**

2022
Specialist Lender of the Year



We understand your customers

Life is different for everyone, including your customers. And as a broad specialist lender, we're here for you to help them succeed. By taking a deeper, more rounded and empathetic view, we're able to connect the right people to the right products.

- **Almost Primers** – taking the last step towards Prime borrowing
- **Recent Recoverers** – hard workers on their way to financial recovery
- **Affluent Borrowers** – financially settled, looking to fulfil ambitions
- **Comfortable Consolidators** – families getting back to financial comfort

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The Mortgage AWARDS 2022

Winner 2022

Shared Ownership Mortgage Lender of the Year: Leeds Building Society



Shared Ownership offers the individual the chance to buy a share of their home and pay rent on the remaining share. The Shared Ownership Mortgage Lender of the Year award rewards the firm with the highest level of expertise in this area, helping clients to get on the housing ladder.

The judges said Leeds Building Society's high loan to value lending is key for many clients in this space. As a mutual lender, Leeds Building Society really believes in helping more people own the home they want. Its offering includes loans available to 95% LTV (based on the share being purchased), fulfilling a key need of the target market (lower deposit requirement). It was the largest lender to remain at 95% throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that these customers remained supported.

Focus is key at the lender as well. Knowing how important affordable housing, specifically shared

ownership, is to the housing market, Leeds Building Society has built an internal structure that means it is able to give the scheme the focus it deserves. It has a dedicated team whose sole responsibility is the end-to-end management of its shared ownership offering. That team considers not only the pricing of the products for new and existing customers, but also the criteria that supports them, and is responsible for making sure that the lender's offering meets the needs of customers.

This approach means that Leeds Building Society is able to really understand the market, and as a result when intermediaries and customers have questions, it is able to support them. It realises how privileged it is to be considered a market leader in shared ownership, and it sees it as its responsibility to support the market as best it can.

Leeds Building Society knows that competitive pricing is important to customers, and has worked to ensure that its range remains competitive whilst also ensuring that the margins it makes can be used to support investments in technology to support service. As a mutual, it doesn't have shareholders. That means every bit of profit it makes goes back into the business and to its members and it can continue to reinvest in its offering and its community.

Congratulations to all at Leeds Building Society for an outstanding win and for having a fantastic year.

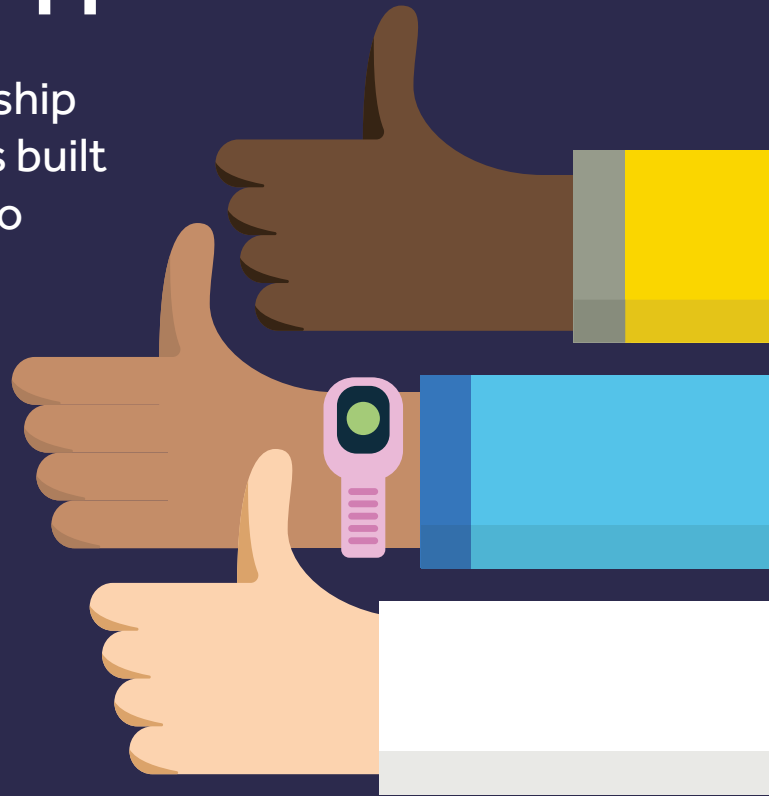


Leeds Building Society

Three in a row!

Thanks for your support

Our success as Shared Ownership
Mortgage Lender of the Year is built
on our ongoing commitment to
this market



LBS Intermediary



@LBSIntermediary



leedsbuildingsociety.co.uk/intermediaries

FOR INTERMEDIARIES ONLY

The Mortgage AWARDS 2022

Winner 2022

Later Life Lender of the Year:

Pure Retirement



The Later Life Lender of the Year is open to mainstream and equity release lenders and rewards a firm that has displayed strong business performance over the last year, strong degrees of innovation as well as client satisfaction.

This winning lender was praised by the judges for its continued education of the intermediary sector to improve the image of later life lending and commitment to product innovation. The winner is Pure Retirement.

Founded on the belief that everyone deserves to enjoy their later years, Pure Retirement offers customers market-leading lifetime mortgage solutions with flexibility at the core, ERC-free repayment options on all ranges, and the ability to repay up to 40% annually.

Throughout what's been another challenging year for the sector, Pure Retirement has continued to develop its product and service offering. A

strong highlight has been the firm's introduction of flexible pricing, meaning applicants can benefit from a customer-centric initiative with a unique and personalised interest rate that's contingent on factors including age, loan amount, property type and postcode and in turn allows for more competitive pricing and a lower cost of borrowing.

Pure Retirement has also hosted weekly virtual updates, keeping advisers informed about its latest products, digital marketing training and process updates. This has culminated in the firm's 'Unplaceables' series, providing a forum for advisers to raise their difficult cases to find a workable solution.

The firm has also developed a 'Marketing Toolkit' for advisers with more digital resources such as social media templates, and white label presentations aimed at both introducers and customers. A monthly insight blog and quarterly market report also ensure that advisers are being kept up to date with the latest market trends. These resources have been designed to support advisers with a greater understanding of their later life customers and the ways to best engage them, thereby growing both their business and the market.

Across products, service, technological innovation and quality resources for adviser support, Pure Retirement is a leader. Congratulations on a fantastic win.

Innovative Lifetime Mortgage Solutions



The **Mortgage**

AWARDS
2022

WINNER

Later Life Lender of the Year

Here to support you
and your customers,
never leaving you
in the dark.

- Flexible pricing offering up to 1000 price points
- Flexible repayment options ERC-free across all our products
- Extensive marketing support templates to our registered advisers

www.pureretirement.co.uk

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