

Leeds Building Society pledges £240,000 to support people into safe and secure housing in Yorkshire

Five Yorkshire community projects will receive a share of £240,000 funding thanks to nominations from colleagues at Leeds Building Society, who teamed up with local organisations to secure support for causes close to their hearts.

The five projects all support diverse groups of people who experience barriers to home ownership, delivering practical support for marginalised groups to help them into safe and secure housing, and reducing their energy bills during this cost-of-living crisis.

Vanessa Roberts, Head of Strategy and Responsible Business at Leeds Building Society, said:

“We believe that everyone deserves a place to call home. As a purpose-led business we are laser-focused on putting homeownership within reach of more people and each of the colleague-nominated projects we are supporting aligns with that purpose.

“We know that for certain groups of people, home ownership can feel way out of reach but through some of these projects we’re supporting them on the next step of this journey. This might be providing a safe place to live, support into a tenancy or help with running and maintaining a home.”

Organisations receiving a share of the £240,000 funding:

Pride of Place Living awarded £41,500

LGBTQ+ people in the UK earn, on average, £6,703 less per year compared to heterosexual people, making it even harder to save for a home¹.

Leeds Building Society has pledged £41,500 to support Pride of Place Living to establish the first ever LGBTQ+ affordable housing project in Leeds.

Jane Stageman from Pride of Place Living, said:

“The funding which has been generously pledged by Leeds Building Society will help us make a huge difference to the LGBTQ+ community in Leeds.

“With the financial help we have been offered, we can pay for a project manager to locate and establish a site for the project, which will eventually provide 35 new homes and cater for the safety and wellbeing of the community living there.”

Leeds Asylum Seekers Network (LASSN) awarded £27,500

One in four people seeking shelter from homelessness agencies are refugees². LASSN provides asylum-seeking men with temporary accommodation to recover from rough sleeping including medical attention and legal support to resolve immigration difficulties. Leeds Building Society is providing funding to help retrofit one of their properties to reduce their carbon emissions and energy bills.

Jo Carter from LASSN, said:

“We are delighted to be able to step up the work we’ve been doing to support refugees in Leeds, thanks to the new funding we will receive.

“The money pledged will provide new windows and insulation as we embark on a project to retrofit a new house we are purchasing in Leeds to make it as energy efficient as possible. The changes we are making will reduce energy bills and carbon emissions, making our organisation more sustainable for the future.”

Rush House awarded £76,500.

One third of young people leaving the care system experience homelessness within the first two years of leaving care, and 25% of all homeless people are estimated to have been in the care system during childhood³.

Leeds Building Society is supporting Rush House’s *A Place of Your Own pre-tenancy training* programme to help vulnerable people, including young care leavers prepare to live independently.

RUSH is a charitable organisation based in Rotherham that provides accommodation and support services to young people aged 16-25.

Lisa Rachieru, Head of Services at Rush House, said:

“We are grateful to colleagues at Leeds Building Society who have worked hard to pitch for funding to support us in expanding our service not just to young people in South Yorkshire but to all those who might benefit from this support.

“This money will allow us to improve our pre-tenancy training and practical support for vulnerable young people including those leaving the care system as well as those vulnerable adults who might otherwise struggle to sustain a tenancy. They have also pledged to share their expertise to help us create a new module on home ownership. We believe financial education focused on home ownership is important to help break the cycle and empower our people to be happy, healthy and safe as part of their community.”

Leeds Action to Create Homes (LATCH) awarded £54,500.

LATCH is a unique charitable organisation that refurbishes derelict and run-down houses in the Chapeltown, Harehills and Burley areas of Leeds into energy-efficient supported housing.

Funding from Leeds Building Society will provide essential furniture for single women and their children as they move from supported housing to independent living.

Ruth Frost from LATCH, said:

“The generous funding from Leeds Building Society will allow us to make a huge difference to women and children who have experienced homelessness in Leeds.

“This project will provide practical support and basic ‘day one’ items for 25 women and their children who have lived in LATCH’s supported accommodation and are now ready to live independently.”

Keighley Association for Women and Childrens Centre (KAWACC) awarded £40,000.

KAWACC provides a range of services including advice, education, health activities, and youth clubs to bring opportunities and empowerment to the women and children of Keighley.

Leeds Building Society has pledged funding for KAWACC’s Energy Know How project, supporting Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim women living in the most deprived neighbourhoods of Keighley to reduce their energy and household bills.

Black and Minority Ethnic household income has fallen by 6% (compared to 1% in White households) between 2020 and 2022, with 66% facing fuel poverty⁴.

Naz Kazmi, CEO at KAWACC, said:

“Thanks to the nomination from Leeds Building Society colleagues, and the generous funding that has been pledged, we hope to address the growing number of families in Keighley who are struggling with unaffordable fuel bills.

“As part of the project, we’ll be offering advice and support to help households become more sustainable.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. [YouGov and Linked In survey 2019](#)
2. [No Accommodation Network report 2019](#)
3. [British Association of Social Workers 2023](#)
4. [Gov.uk 2023: Ethnicity facts and figures](#)

About Leeds Building Society

Leeds Building Society operates throughout the UK and had assets of £26.9bn at 30 June 2023 (£24.1bn at 30 June 2022). The UK’s fifth-largest Building Society has its head office in the centre of Leeds, where it was founded in 1875.

The Society won the title of Best Shared Ownership Mortgage Lender in the 2023 What Mortgage Awards, its eighth consecutive year of success in this category. It also received a Gold Ribbon from Fairer Finance for savings accounts for the fifth year running, based on customer happiness and trust, along with the ability to explain things clearly.