

Building societies 'uniquely placed' to help young people manage money

- 59% of societies providing financial education for young people – 95% track impact.
- Greater focus needed on pensions and credit.
- Localism 'trumps' one-size fits all national approach.
- Building Society Association (BSA) commission report by youth money charity MyBnk.
- Annual Conference to discuss report 18th-19th May.

Britain's building societies are well placed to help stem the nation's personal debt crisis at a grassroots level with better financial education for young people, according to a new report by the charity MyBnk.

The nationwide study found that while 59% of societies are already helping youths learn how to bank and budget, a breakthrough could be made in developing long-term positive money habits with a central BSA vision, effective 'white label' resources and youth sector collaboration.

Tens of thousands of 5-25 year olds are benefiting from dozens of innovative building society projects using intergenerational money advice sessions, school banks and trained volunteers. However, greater efforts on content, methodology and impact measurement are needed to help youths make informed decisions on areas such as pensions and credit, says MyBnk.

Embedded in their communities and with a strong focus on benefitting their members, building societies have a mandate and a sense of social responsibility to deliver financial education, the report concludes.

The BSA has already established a working group to advance key recommendations of the study, while individual societies are continuing to develop their activity alongside experts from the youth financial education sector. Leaders will discuss the report at this year's BSA Annual Conference in Newcastle on 18-19th May.

UK personal debt is at a record £1.45 trillion, 17-24 year olds owe on average £12,215 each (over half of which is not student debt) and despite curriculum requirements, less than half of young people receive any form of money lessons at school.

Quotes

"Many societies are punching above their weight. They know their communities and have an advantage over some national organisations by avoiding a one size fits all approach. If they can address issues of resource, training and expertise, the sector can fulfil its massive potential to improve the financial wellbeing of wider society." **Guy Rigden, CEO MyBnk.**

"MyBnk's research shows that the building society sector is providing some excellent financial education ranging from the delivery of workshops, online resources and running school banks. Given their links to local communities and emphasis on building long-term relationships with members, financial education is a natural fit with their businesses. There is a considerable appetite

to do more. We look forward to building on the report's recommendations to develop the sector's financial education provision through the new working group." **Robin Fieth, Chief Executive, BSA.**

Report

MyBnk examined the effectiveness and scale of the youth financial education efforts of 44 building societies and two credit unions. We also produced a road map to improve provision.

[Full report with Executive Summary.](#)

About MyBnk

MyBnk is the UK's leading trainer, designer and deliverer of financial and enterprise education programmes for young people.

Their experts bring a range of award winning workshops covering topics such as saving, tax, debt, budgeting and university finance, to over one hundred thousand 11-25 year olds in 750 schools and youth organisations.

In 2015, The Money Advice Service's Evidence Hub gave their flagship schools programme, Money Twist, the [highest effectiveness rating](#) of any UK youth money skills project.

About BSA

BSA is the voice for building societies and for some other mutual financial service providers. Together these organisations serve over 20 million customers up and down the length of the UK and have total assets of over £340 billion.

Including their subsidiaries, they hold residential mortgage balances of over £265 billion - this equates to 21% of all outstanding mortgages in the UK. They also hold over £245 billion of retail deposits - 18% of all such deposits in the UK. BSA members employ around 40,000 full and part-time staff and operate through 1,550 branches.

For more information or to attend a MyBnk session, please contact declan@mybnk.org or call 0207 377 8770.

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