



**YORKSHIRE
BUILDING
SOCIETY**

Tracey Newton

Colleague wellbeing during Covid-19 pandemic



About Yorkshire Building Society

Yorkshire Building Society exists to make real difference to customers' lives

The YBS difference is delivered by our colleagues; the experience they create for our three million customers

To support this, we work to create an environment where colleagues can be their best self

Social context and media attention

Our core purpose as a building society

Commitment to our colleagues, members and regulators



YBS Reward Principles developed with our colleagues

YBS Reward Principles

Attract and retain talent, aligned to our **mutual values** and forward thinking to ensure **relevance in a changing world**.

Focused on total reward; recognising that **reward is more than just pay**, enabling colleagues to make the choices that work for them at different stages in their life.

Flexible within a framework to ensure a consistent approach whilst **responding** to different challenges, supported by education to help managers balance **doing the right thing** for both the Society and their people.

Reward decisions and choices are clear and transparent for colleagues; delivered through **effective and open communication**.

Our reward arrangements are reflective of both team and individual achievements, with the ability to recognise the contribution **all colleagues** have made to our success.



Solid foundations to build on when Covid-19 hit

Wellbeing programme ongoing since 2017 and embedded into organisational culture

Over 600 line managers completed mental health awareness training in 2018

Wellbeing is part of our core benefits offering; partnerships with Unmind, Salary Finance and Bupa

Whole person approach to wellbeing - mental, physical, financial and social

Wellbeing champions and Mental Health First Aiders operational

Enhanced sick pay policy in November 2019 to six months full pay



Our response to Covid-19 - *Colleague Security*

The YBS response to the crisis anchored around two simple outcomes - providing essential services to our customers, whilst safeguarding the health and wellbeing of our colleagues...

Ensuring our colleagues sense of security

Fast and frequent communications

- Daily CEO communications (email and blogs).
- Coronavirus area on intranet with FAQ documents and copies of all key communications.

Equipped People Leaders

- People Leader emails with updates on key policy developments.
- People Leader call - chaired by CEO and attended via wider Executive team and key Directors managing the crisis.

Financial reassurance

- All colleagues who are required to self-isolate or are unwell due to Covid-19 receive full pay.
- Colleagues who need to access emergency dependants leave receive full pay.
- Confirmed no plans to furlough colleagues.

Safe working environment

- c1400 colleagues now working from home.
- Head Office sites - reduced occupancy and social distancing measures introduced.
- Branches - Hand sanitiser and sneeze screens at all counters.

Tools to survive the new normal

- Wellbeing check ins - open & honest conversations and signposting to support.
- Support for colleagues working from home - guidance to stay well and maintain good posture.
- Employee Assistance Programme including crisis and bereavement counselling.
- Mental Health First Aiders available when colleague need them on-site on offices, on the phone and via video chat for those in branches or working from home.

Our response to Covid-19 - *Benefits of being part of the YBS family*

We created a Coronavirus section on our Wellbeing Hub, providing support to both our leaders and colleagues. Helping colleagues to access the support that was already there quickly...

Making the most of our partnerships

Body

BUPA

- Babylon - On-line 'virtual' GP Service.
- Webinars providing hints and tips to manage health, covered topics such as 'managing stress' and 'preventing and reducing muscle, bone and joint problems'.

NUFFIELD

- Webinars on the subjects of mental resilience and posture

Mind

UNMIND

- 'Firesides' - Podcasts with wellbeing experts on a range of topics including 'building a healthy brain', 'coping with anxiety' and 'protecting relationships'.
- Spotlights on mindfulness - techniques to help colleagues to navigate the 'new normal' e.g. 'meeting focus', 'managing distractions' and 'team synergy'

Finances

SALARY FINANCE

- Tools to support colleagues to manage their finances through Covid-19 .

Community

OUR COLLEAGUES

- A series of videos to share personal stories from across YBS, sharing how colleagues are supporting one another and the sense of pride from collectively support our customers at a time of real need.
- Colleagues have run virtual yoga classes to help each other to keep well.



Our response to Covid-19 - *Adapting Together*

From day one we have faced into the fact that the impact of Covid-19 will be felt for some time, our focus has been on accepting and adapting to a 'new normal' rather than anchoring back to the past...

Maintaining a sense of optimism and togetherness

Creating a base-line

- Blogs and messages from senior leaders and colleagues that acknowledge the concept of a 'new normal'.
- Colleague curated videos - sharing what life is like at YBS right now.
- 10 ways to wellbeing animated video to help colleagues see how they can use the Mental Health Foundation's 10 ways to wellbeing to look after ourselves and each other in our new 'normal'.

Building our coping mechanisms

- Building mental resilience - online training and webinars to help colleagues build their own resilience.
- Virtual 121's - where colleagues can speak to someone confidentially about what is bothering them and they are signposted to resources.

Practical stuff

- Guides on how to work from home
- Home-schooling guides
- People leader policy hub to house all key Covid-19 related policies

Creating a new sense of community

- Videos and written blogs from leaders sharing personal reflections and the tips that they have to build their own resilience such as creating new routines, exercise, healthy eating.
- Making connections via our internal social platforms.
- Team WhatsApp groups and challenges to keep all engaged and supported.
- Fundraising activity converted to 'socially distanced' means.



Yorkshire Building Society's approach to wellbeing

Our wellbeing vision: YBS is a place where colleagues can thrive and, in turn, deliver business success together.

The principles underpinning our approach to wellbeing

A whole person approach
(physical, emotional, financial, social)

Open and honest two-way dialogue

Wellbeing is part of our core benefits package

Encourage colleagues to collaborate and help each other

Proactive rather than solely reactive

The outcomes we are seeking to achieve

Increased resilience

Colleagues are able to build and maintain their own mental resilience to deal with normal stresses and strains, and take the opportunities change brings.

Confident and caring leaders

YBS has confident and capable leaders at all levels, who can identify issues and offer proactive support to their team members.

A healthy and happy workforce

An inclusive environment where colleagues look after their own wellbeing, so they can be physical well, emotionally balanced, financially secure and socially connected.

How will we know when we've got there? Increased engagement and productivity, lower absence and quicker return to work.



Colleagues are telling us it's making a difference

Colleague engagement
Increase by c10%
between Oct 2019
and April 2020.

“Colleagues in general now have greater awareness of the wellbeing support offered by YBS and how it is part of our DNA...there is benefit to this even where they are in a good positive mind state”.

“In the current environment YBS have demonstrated just how awesome they really are, supportive and reactive to the situation.”

“I couldn't be prouder of how the teams are pulling together in these difficult times. I'm proud to work for YBS.”

“The degree of flexibility and understanding for people with families and with health problems means a lot to me as well as our focus on mental health and wellbeing.”

“Aside from great flexibility, and a real human focus on my wellbeing, recent events in the world have made me feel extremely grateful that I work for YBS. Where so many companies are making rushed and in some cases counter intuitive decisions, YBS seem to be calm, measured, and keeping the wellbeing of not only its customer, but also its colleagues in mind!”