

Project Name	Leeds Money Buddies
Amount applied for	£16,313 (Armley £10,875.50, B&S £5,437.50)
Lead Organisation	Burmantofts Community Projects
Ward/Neighbourhood	Armley, B&S

Community Plan Objective	Best City For Business – Provides opportunities for people to get jobs or learn new skills for example - through volunteering
	Best City for Communities – Communities are empowered and engaged. People get on well together, by sharing their learning with others in the local community; adds knowledge to the community base and supports cohesion. Education by stealth.
	Best City for Health and Wellbeing- Older residents are enabled to participate in local community activities; by encouraging volunteering as a Money Buddy from older residents.

Project Summary
<p>Money Buddies provide a handholding, empowerment, emergency debt advice and financial capability service to the public. This stabilises their finances, maximises their income, improves their money skills and develops confidence with money and improves their well-being.</p> <p>Support given, includes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Switch utility suppliers on-line • Face to face Legal Emergency Debt advice at centres • Applying for grants including; Discretionary Housing Payments (under occupancy issues), Water/Energy Trusts • Check benefit entitlements • Negotiate with creditors (emergency debts) • Access to and prepare clients for full debt advice • Develop budgets for personal use • Help in reporting illegal loan sharks in a confidential environment • Apply for budgeting accounts with Credit Unions • Explore ways of saving money; i.e: search online for free furniture/ white goods • Helping with the steps clients need to take after debt advice • Facilitate the relationship with the client and the debt adviser as needed • Help clients write letters to creditors after debt advice • Ongoing advice and support – clients can see Money Buddies as often as they need • *NEW: Benefits support, including - assistance with completing Benefit forms, attendance at assessments and work coach meetings • Unemployed clients sign posted for Employment Skills and Kick start initiatives • NEW: Energy advice -including energy assessments and home visits for vulnerable clients <p>Please note Benefits Support is a new and in -depth service which is a separate area of Social Welfare Law compared to Money and Debt. Benefits Support also requires stringent regulatory supervision and administration.</p> <p>Funding is for 3 Money Buddy as follows (venues can be changed if members prefer)</p>

- One Money Buddy at Armley Community Hub
- One Money Buddy at Bramley Community Hub
- One Money Buddy at New Wortley Community Centre (please note room hire may be chargeable, not included in the bid)

Money Buddies require access to a private, confidential room, with Internet, telephone and lockable draw.

Money Buddies has a Covid -19 Risk assessment for outreach working, which is available on our website www.moneybuddies.org.uk/ Covid Health and Safety.

Money Buddies Services During Covid-19 Pandemic

We provided a telephone, video, webchat, social media messenger and e-mail service – which was funded by the charity in full during the crisis.

Overall because creditors action was on hold throughout much of this period, numbers for emergency debt advice issues dropped compared to pre-Covid

- Of all clients who called Money Buddies for help during the pandemic to 01 May 2021 20% were from Inner West postcodes, this demonstrates there is a high need for help and support with Debt, Benefits, Budgeting, letter writing, applications and form filling
- The average number of issues clients called us about increased from 2 pre -Covid to 5 during Covid, for example no money for food and heat, domestic abuse, benefits issues including form completion, housing and unemployment
- We distributed £5,000 of food and fuel vouchers in February and March 2021.

Creditor action has now started again and over the last three months we have seen a rise in the number of calls. We expect this to intensify in both numbers and complexity of issues as lockdown eases, furlough ends, redundancies announced and restrictions on collecting rent arrears and evictions are lifted.

When will the project run?

19th July 2021 – 31st March 2022 (29 sessions per venue) Each session is for half a day 9-12pm or 1-4pm. Should we start at a later date, the costs would be pro rata down again.

Targets for the project and how success will be measured

We would aim for and expect to support 2 clients per centre per session, which is currently 58 clients per centre. (Please note benefits support sessions can take time for example; filling in application forms and appeal forms, therefore the 2 clients helped per session is not a hard target)

Increase in wellbeing of clients; this is recorded on our case management and recording system (AdvicePro) as a rating of how clients feel about their well- being and financial future before and after seeing a Money Buddy.

Financial capability skills enhanced; clients rate how they feel their budgeting knowledge has improved after seeing a Money Buddy. Recorded on our case management and recording system.

The overall outcome for the project will be measured in terms of the improved financial situation of Money Buddy clients. The measurable outcomes include:

- Amount of unclaimed benefit gained
- Number of people helped with Benefits support
- Amount of money saved through utility switching
- Amount of grants secured (DHP etc)
- Number of people supported to develop a manageable household budget
- Number of clients supported to negotiate with creditors
- Number of referrals made to Illegal loan shark team
- Number of people supported to open Credit Union accounts and Budgeting Accounts
- Number of clients where emergency debt advice has been provided
- Number of clients made aware of warm homes discount and how to claim it
- Number of clients who received Energy advice
- Number of clients made aware of Priority Services Register and how to be placed on it
- Value of free goods secured.

How the project will be promoted and/or participation encouraged

Money Buddies will be promoted through the Leeds Debt Forum and Leeds Debt Advice Network - where applicable

Partners on the West Leeds Debt Forum will promote the service within their networks and to their clients

Committee team will promote the services, news and content, throughout their network, channels and social media outlets

Printed publicity will be displayed in key local venues including all the community hubs and venues with Advice provision.

There is also a Money Buddies website and Facebook page where clients can find additional information on services, as well as confidentially sending a message.

Clients mention the service and help they receive to friends, family and their locale, which has helped build trust in local communities.

A robust marketing and development plan will be created specifically for the venues with active marketing objectives set to ensure that the community are fully aware of the Money Buddy services at the centres. A copy is available upon request.

Exit strategy/How the project will continue after the funding

At the end of funding, subject to a formal evaluation of the project, we will seek further funding to continue the project.

Other organisations involved

Leeds City Council Community Hubs, Housing Offices, Community Centres and NHS – provide venues for Money Buddies and clients and also referrals in and out of the service.

West Leeds Debt Forum and partners – providing local coordination for the project, liaising with BCP and publicising the service.

The Leeds Debt Advice Network (a renowned pressure group) which consists of all debt advisers in Leeds and their organisations, Leeds CAB, Better Leeds Communities, St Vincent's, Step Change, Safer Leeds, Housing Leeds, TV Licensing, Leeds County Court Bailiffs, Leeds

Magistrate Court Bailiffs, Leeds Council Tax Collections, Leeds Housing Benefit Overpayments, DWP Leeds all make referrals to the Money Buddy services.

Financial Information			
Revenue funding requested	£16,313		
Total cost of project	£24,680		
Match funding/Other funding sources	£8,367		
Available Funds in Group Bank Account			
Funding received since 2010			
Full Breakdown of Costs			
Item	Wellbeing	Other (with funding body)	Date of Decision
<p>Overheads</p> <p>Human Resources £1022 The HR costs are apportioned for the contract with Ellis Whittam for all Money Buddy: Legal, HR and health and safety services; Employee Assistance Programme, DBS checks, related to the service at each of the centres.</p> <p>Premises Costs £874 The premises costs are for the cost of Money Buddy using our centre for admin time, training and development; which; include utilities; insurance and maintenance. Please note as previously mentioned the Money Buddy has to return to the office, use the office and facilities for their element of administration of cases, accounts also for office cost of other colleagues, for example administrators use of facilities towards the cost of managing the originating centre's clients. Hence these are directly related costs</p> <p>Publications £117 Relevant industry documents that Money Buddies require to remain competent and up to date with regulatory and legal updates</p> <p>Insurance £213 Towards the cost of insuring our services</p> <p>IT Support £1229</p>	£5,781		

<p>This includes on -going IT support plus in built cost for laptops and maintenance/renewal. All the costs have been pooled and apportioned to money buddy sessions across the Area Committees</p> <p>Telecoms £774 This cost is towards making phone calls when money buddies are at centres/clients homes for technical consultancy and when speaking with creditors, for example British Gas to put action on hold,</p> <p>Software Licenses £629 Which covers in part the cost of using our recording system, which is essential otherwise we cannot operate a Financial Conduct Authority and Advice Quality Standards compliant and legal service. We pay licences in full annually whether it is used or partially used, we have however reduced the cost we pay by 27.5%for Area Committee bids and therefore take the remainder of the cost ourselves. The software is also used to collect data for monitoring purposes and reports.</p> <p>Stationery £844 This cover cost, mainly of postage for letters and documents to clients as part of the end to end case management of their cases</p> <p>PPE +£78</p>			
<p>Money Buddy Support (per money buddy) @ 4 hours per week @ £12.62 per hour for 37 weeks</p> <p>There are 37 weeks between 19th July and 31st March. We have said we can do 29 sessions in this time. Money Buddies will also have holidays and training sessions. In a full year we would have done 40 sessions, as per previous bids.</p> <p>The hourly rate calculation needs to include National insurance and pension costs which average 14.2% currently.</p> <p>So if we calculate out at $4 \times 12.62 \times 3 = £151.44 \times 37 \text{ weeks} = £5,603.28 \times 1.142 = £6,398.95$</p>	<p>£6,397</p>		

<p>Money Buddy Supervision and consultancy</p> <p>Regulatory requirements of the Financial Conduct Authority, Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) and Advice Quality Standards, without this supervision we would not be able to provide a service as we would be acting illegally. Costs are high and we are also carrying a cost of that too.</p> <p>Cases have to be reviewed to ensure we are compliant, this requires a supervisor to undertake this activity and therefore has a cost. In addition Supervisors will attend sessions with Money Buddies as part of our Supervisory requirements. Also consultancy- Money Buddies will need technical support available- especially for complex cases, clients typically present in chaos or under stress. In order to best support the client at point of contact a technical supervisor has to be available, usually by phone to provide that support, there is a cost attributable to that.</p>	£2,806		
<p>Training</p> <p>This is part cost, ongoing training is extensive and a necessary part of the role for example: Regulations and law can change - which also needs training out, otherwise we are not running a compliant service, and also towards training a new Money Buddy.</p>	£361		
<p>Admin Time</p> <p>Towards an element of the overall cost of our admin team supporting the Money Buddies, for example dealing with clients, taking calls, supporting general admin of Money Buddies</p>	£707		
<p>Expenses</p> <p>Travel to and from the centres; mileage / public transport</p>	£261		
Total:	£16,313		

Communities Team Comments

I have spoken with the venues mentioned above, Armley & Bramley HUB are not currently open to the public for these surgeries but are waiting for Silver Command and TU direction which they hope will be this week (w/c 12th July)

NWCC have confirmed they would be happy to book in these surgeries.

Cost per ward worked out as follows;

$\text{£}16,313 / 29 \text{ weeks} / 3 \text{ venues} = \text{£}187.50 \text{ per venue per week}$

Armley - $\text{£}187.50 \times 2 \text{ venues} \times 29 \text{ weeks} = \text{£}10,875$

B&S - $\text{£}187.50 \times 29 \text{ weeks} = \text{£}5,437.50$