



Just Group launches new awards to celebrate advisory team excellence in supporting vulnerable customers

- UK's first and only awards scheme to recognise and honour the achievements of financial intermediary firms and staff supporting vulnerable customers
- Four prestigious award categories: three for firms and one for individuals
- Entries will be assessed by a panel of expert judges
- Awards offer winners an opportunity to showcase excellence and enhance reputations among clients, peers and the wider community

Just Group has launched a new award scheme dedicated to recognising and showcasing business leadership, financial advice, paraplanner and support staff for excellence in supporting vulnerable customers.

The **Just Group 2021 Vulnerable Customer Awards** will honour the achievements of firms, and individuals working within them, who have been seeking to ensure that customers experiencing vulnerability are recognised and supported with outcomes as good as those of other customers.

Consumer vulnerability is a theme that has come under increasing scrutiny from the Financial Conduct Authority. Its Financial Lives survey revealed that 46% of UK adults – about 24 million people – showed one or more characteristics of vulnerability in 2020¹.

Just Group has been at the forefront of helping financial advice firms design and implement their own vulnerable customer policies. Almost 7,500 intermediaries and support staff have used its Consumer Vulnerability in Later Life online training module, identified by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) as an example of good practice.

Following the FCA publication in February of 'Finalised guidance, FG21/1 Guidance for firms on the fair treatment of vulnerable customers', and with the significant progress that has been made in this area, Just Group wants to recognise and showcase financial intermediary excellence in supporting vulnerable customers.

Entries will be assessed by a panel of judges with highly regarded expertise in the fields of consumer vulnerability, financial advice, compliance and customer service. This panel includes: **Jenny Cadman**, Head of Customer Experience at Just Group; **Tish Hanifan**, Founder and Joint Chair of SOLLA; **Sally Plant**, Head of Financial Planning at CISI; **Keith Richards**, out-going CEO of the PFS and Chair of the Financial Vulnerability Taskforce; **John Somerville**, Head of Financial Services at The London Institute of Banking & Finance; and **Johnny Timpson**, Prime Minister's Champion Group Member for Dementia Communities.

"We have launched these awards to encourage firms to share and celebrate the significant efforts and progress made addressing the consumer vulnerability agenda, and to recognise the firms and individuals who have been the most successful in supporting customers experiencing vulnerability" said **Stephen Lowe**, group communications director at Just Group.

"You are already delivering excellence in supporting vulnerable customers – you just need to tell us about it!"

He said that receiving an award represents the opportunity for winners to demonstrate their commitment to developing their firms' capabilities to support vulnerable customers, and mark the achievements of colleagues, while enhancing their reputation among potential clients and the wider community.

There are four prestigious categories each offering a winner and two highly recommended awards:

1. **Up close and personal** recognises excellent support for clients who have been or are vulnerable.
2. **Data and technology** highlights innovative and/or effective use of data and technology to advance the customer vulnerability agenda.
3. **Company of the year** marks outstanding progress within individual firms.
4. **Vulnerable customer champion** for individuals who have gone the extra mile to mobilise the consumer vulnerability agenda in their firm.

The awards are easy to enter. Each category has its own entry form available on the link below:
<https://www.justadviser.com/business-services/just-group-2021-vulnerable-customer-awards>

The closing date for entries will be 5pm on Friday 30th July 2021 and winners will be announced in September.

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References

1 - FCA, Financial Lives Survey: <https://www.fca.org.uk/publications/research/financial-lives>

About Just

Just (Just Group plc) is a FTSE-listed specialist UK financial services company.

A leader in the individual retirement income, care and defined benefit de-risking markets, Just has been trusted to manage £23 billion of customers' retirement savings and has helped customers release over £5.5 billion from their properties.

Just provides the following wide range of products, advice and professional services to individual customers, financial intermediaries, corporate clients and pension scheme trustees:

Marketed Products

- De-risking solutions for pension scheme trustees who want to remove the financial uncertainty of operating defined benefit pension schemes;
- Individually underwritten retirement income products delivering a guaranteed income for life;

- Long term care plans that provide those people moving into residential care with peace of mind by knowing a regular payment will be made to the care provider for the rest of their life;
- Lifetime mortgages for people who want to safely release some of the value from their home.

Professional services

- Regulated financial advice and guidance services for individuals wanting help in using their pension savings and/or releasing some of the value from their home; and
- A range of business services tailored for our corporate clients, ranging from consultancy and software development to fully outsourced customer service delivery and marketing services.

The companies within Just Group are authorised and regulated in the United Kingdom by the Financial Conduct Authority and / or the Prudential Regulation Authority.

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