

Our ref:

Your ref:

KN/VJR/ShepherdsFriendly

When telephoning
please ask for:

15th January 2019

SENT BY EMAIL ONLY

To: UNISON NW BRANCH SECRETARIES

Dear Branch Secretary

SHEPHERDS FRIENDLY

I am sending this letter to introduce you to Shepherds Friendly, who is the newest provider to join the UNISON Living programme.

Shepherds Friendly is now UNISON Living's endorsed provider of savings plans. They offer a variety of tax-efficient savings plans for the whole family and have been in business since 1826. As a UNISON member, you are also entitled to an exclusive special offer of a Love2shop voucher worth up to £35 when you open a savings plan with them too, so it's worth keeping this in mind.

After speaking to representatives from Shepherds Friendly, I feel that they are a reputable company, who are in alignment with UNISON's values. I appreciated the fact that they're a mutual society, rather than a bank, meaning that they're owned by and run by their members instead of shareholders. Because of this, all profits are either paid out as bonuses to savings plan members, or are reinvested back into the society for the members' benefit.

In terms of the savings plans that they offer, I think there is pretty much something for everybody:

- **ISA:** A tax-exempt government backed savings plan, which is invested in a range of assets. It is rated as a medium-low risk product, and they have paid a bonus rate of 3% every year for the last 10 years. You can save from £30 a month, but there is not commitment to keeping up these payments and you can withdraw money whenever you want with no exit fees.
- **Bonus Plan:** A slightly more accessible, long-term savings plan, which can be opened from £10 a month. It also comes with added life insurance, so you have a guaranteed cash lump sum, even if you die during the term of the plan. It's important to note that a monthly commitment is required for this plan, the minimum term is 10 years and you can only withdraw money once the plan has matured.
- **Junior ISA:** This is like the ISA, except it is available to children. The plan can only be opened by the child's parents, but family and friends can contribute to the



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plan whenever they want. Additionally, savings start from just £10 a month, and the money will be accessible to your child when they turn 18 years old.

- **Young Saver Plan:** Another tax-exempt child savings plan, which can be opened from £7.50 a month. Additionally, the plan can be opened by anyone, including grandparents, aunts and uncles. It also comes with added features such as sickness benefits, to help support you financially if the child is ever off school sick for more than four weeks. You can also withdraw 25% of the money on their 11th birthday to help with things like school uniform and books.

I think it's important to mention that regardless of the plan you open, when you choose to save with Shepherds Friendly you can also be safe in the knowledge that your money is protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). Their savings plans are investment based, so you should remember that as with all investments your capital is at risk. However, they have actually paid a bonus every year for the last 10 years on all the products that have been endorsed by UNISON.

In order to take advantage of the exclusive offer of a Love2shop voucher worth up to £35, it is important that you visit their website via the following link: www.shepherdsfriendly.co.uk/UNISON, so that they know that you're a UNISON member.

I hope you find this useful.

Yours sincerely



Kevan Nelson
Regional Secretary

P.S. My contact at Shepherds Friendly has asked that when sending out any emails about them, I include the below information:

- *HM Revenues and Customs may have the ability to change tax rules in the future*
- *Past performance of their savings plans cannot be taken as a guarantee of future returns*
- *Bonus rates may vary from year to year, depending on the performance of the investments. - In some cases, no bonus may be paid out at all. If investments are particularly poor, then they may apply a Market Value Reduction (MVR).*