

Pam, 73, manages to get mortgage with new lender

A NEW mortgage lender's establishment in Guernsey has allowed the island's oldest known borrower to draw money and secure her home.

Pam Gidney, 73, has become Guernsey's oldest known person to take a mortgage after The Family Building Society was introduced to the island earlier this year.

Mrs Gidney was purchasing a property in stage payments, but was informed that she needed to complete much quicker than planned, so she required a lump sum.

'I tried all the high street banks and building societies, but was turned down because of my age,' she said. 'Then I saw an article in the Guernsey Press about a new lender in the island offering a product for those in their later years. I thought, "what can I lose by trying?"'

Paul Welch, CEO of largemortgageloans.com in the UK, introduced The Family Building Society to Guernsey earlier this year.

The locally-born entrepreneur returned

to live in the island with his family and upon arrival saw holes in the housing market he hoped to help fix. Mr Welch said Mrs Gidney was a prime example of the type of people he would like to help. 'My business's USP has always been about helping people borrow large sums of money, but what I want to do here in Guernsey is different. I want to help people like Mrs Gidney. With an ageing population, there's a huge need to facilitate later-life lending here, which is why I introduced The Family Building Society to the island.'

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According to a consultation carried out by the Population Policy group in 2011, by 2039 the largest age group in Guernsey is projected to be people aged between 65 and 74 and the number of over 60s is projected to approximately double between 2009 and 2039.

At the same time, the under-60s age group will decrease.

Mr Welch was confident that Mrs Gidney was the first of many later-in-life borrowers in Guernsey, but added that the changes must not stop. He is working with a number of bodies in pushing for fundamental reforms to the Guernsey mortgage market, including making bonds on home loans transferable. 'This would reduce cost, increase liquidity and enable people to benefit from lower interest rates offered by other banks. The island is facing a sluggish housing market and if interest rate rises go ahead next month, as projected, it could become even tougher to borrow. We need to help home buyers and investors any way we can now.'



Pam Gidney outside of her flat with Paul Welch, who introduced The Family Building Society to Guernsey earlier this year.