

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**May 2019**

***Businesses and Philanthropists pledge support for those furthest from the job market.***

**Balfour Beatty** and **Squire Patton Boggs**, along with philanthropists **Gary Shuckford** and **Chris Miller** from **Leeds Commercial** have teamed up with former Chair of **Leeds Community Foundation**, Rachel Hannan to raise a minimum of £100,000 in support of The Leeds Fund.

Seeded by a personal donation of £25,000 from Rachel Hannan, the Foundation had called for fellow business leaders and philanthropists to join her and invest in enterprising community led projects that enhance the employability skills of those further from the job market.

From 2019, The Leeds Fund's strategic priority is Loneliness and Inclusion. With over 37,000 people in Leeds affected by loneliness and around 160,000 people living in neighbourhoods that are amongst the 10% most deprived in England, the Foundation is committed to supporting community-based projects that build a happier, healthier and more connected city.

Leeds Community Foundation has also pledged to support the city's Inclusive Growth Strategy to ensure everyone benefits from the city's success.

Stephen Semple, Regional Delivery Unit Commercial Director at **Balfour Beatty** said: *"We are excited to work alongside the Leeds Community Foundation to deliver positive change within the local community."*

*“Having worked in the area for some time, we are keen to reduce the skills gap through the 5% Club apprenticeship scheme; a commitment to ensuring that 5% of industry workers are apprentices, which will help local people learn new skills and build a strong career.”*

John Alderton, Office Managing Partner at **Squire Patton Boggs Leeds** said: *“The Trustees of the firm’s Charitable Trust are delighted to continue their support of Leeds Community Foundation who is helping to make a real difference to the loneliness and inclusion issues we face in Leeds.”*

Rachel Hannan, Former Chair of **Leeds Community Foundation**, said: *“I’m so proud that fellow businesses and philanthropists in the city have signed up to make a difference in Leeds and hope that this will encourage further support to reach our target of £100,000 helping to empower people to fully utilise their skills to build strong, well connected communities that continue to fuel our economy.”*

For more details about **The Leeds Fund**, please visit [www.leedscf.org.uk/leedsfund](http://www.leedscf.org.uk/leedsfund) or email the team at [info@leedscf.org.uk](mailto:info@leedscf.org.uk) for details on how to get involved.

**ENDS**

### **Notes to Editor**

Picture from L-R – Gary Shuckford, Chris Miller (Leeds Commercial), Rob Lockwood (Balfour Beatty), Rachel Hannan, John Alderton (Squire, Patton, Boggs) and Cherie Paterson (Balfour Beatty)

### **Leeds Community Foundation**

Leeds Community Foundation supports thousands of charities and voluntary groups across the city, addressing inequalities and working together to help create opportunities for those that most need help. As part of a national network, UK Community Foundations, Leeds Community Foundation invest in these groups by distributing grants and sharing advice – acting as a catalyst for positive change. Leeds Community Foundation relies on the generosity of individuals, businesses and public sector organisations to help local people to gain the support they need now, while investing in a brighter future for all. [www.leedscf.org.uk](http://www.leedscf.org.uk)

### **The Leeds Fund**

The Leeds Fund welcomes financial contributions from individuals and businesses who want to support the city in which they live and work. The Leeds Fund bridges the gap between those in need and those with the ability to help. The fund has three levels of grants: micro, small and strategic. Strategic grants are themed and focus on current priority needs of the city. These are identified by working in partnership with the third sector and key public and civic organisations in Leeds, in our role as a conveyor and catalyst for change in the city. The priority for the first series of strategic grants was Mental Health and, in 2018, the strategic priority for the city is Loneliness and Inclusion. [www.theleedsfund.org.uk](http://www.theleedsfund.org.uk)