

News release:

Debt Counselling Charity Urges Church to Respond to Economic Slowdown

Christians Against Poverty recommends greater provision for those in need

A Christian charity today called on churches across the country to help those suffering as the UK slides further into economic difficulty. Christians Against Poverty (CAP), the national debt counselling charity, responded to the latest news about the continued rise in inflation and the falling housing market by urging the church to make increased provision for those in need.

The charity, which operates through a national network of debt counselling centres, made its statement following the Governor of the Bank of England's announcement that inflation would continue to rise next year, increasing the risk of 'stagflation' in the British economy, amidst a fall in house prices.

Among the charity's recommendations was greater provision for those slipping into financial difficulty through debt counselling and financial advice. CAP has recently launched a money management course, CAP Money, aimed at helping those in the local community regain control over their finances, providing a long term solution to financial difficulties through proper budgeting.

Matt Barlow, UK CEO, CAP, said: "The downturn in the economy is severely affecting all sectors. We have seen an increase in those previously financially secure seeking help, as the credit crunch continues to hit and inflation rises unabated.

“Our recently launched switchboard is busy with calls from across the UK as more and more people find their financial situation unsustainable. The good news is, though, we’re here to help.

“It has never been easier for a church to reach out to its local community through both CAP Money and our award-winning debt counselling services. The solutions are available, but the church needs to respond now.

“Proper planning and making the right decisions will mean that the church in the UK can respond efficiently and sympathetically to people’s needs as this crisis unfolds. Currently there is over £1.4 trillion of personal debt in the UK and this figure continues to rise. It is time for the church to practically demonstrate Jesus’ love.

“As we are now beginning to see families with no money to feed their children, we would also recommend all churches to set up a hardship fund to meet immediate needs.”

For more information about CAP, visit www.capuk.org

For more information about CAP Money please watch the promotional DVD on www.capuk.org/capmoney or ring Tim Brown on 01274 760758

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Notes to editors:

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Further information
About Christians Against Poverty

CAP aims to show God's love in action by providing sustainable poverty relief through debt counselling, advice and practical help. CAP's unique 'hands on' approach empowers people to help themselves out of poverty and be released from the fear, oppression and worry generated by overwhelming debts. Vital financial and budgeting life skills are developed through our services, thus ensuring poverty relief is sustainable.

The charity operates through a growing network of centres based around the UK, all opened in partnership with a local church. Over the last ten years, the charity has grown from one man working from his home with a donation of £10, to a national charity with 72 centres across the country and an annual turnover of £5 million.

CAP's vision is to answer the national problem of debt in the UK by having at least one CAP centre operating in every major town and city by the year 2021.