

Press release: April 2011

CHURCH OUT TO PROVE THERE IS LIFE AFTER DEBT

16 towns to get a new debt counselling centre, four other centres to expand

SIXTEEN more areas of the UK are set to get free help for the poorest and most desperate people in their communities.

Growing debt counselling charity Christians Against Poverty (CAP) has partnered with the new churches in destinations from Brighton to Kircaldy as it aims to bring its in-depth service to every town and city in the UK.

It is some rare good news for people who are seeing the biggest squeeze to their income since the two world wars according to a new report by the Centre for Economic and Business Research.

Representatives from each of the congregations have been rigorously trained to bring both hope and a solution to people with problem debts – most often caused by job loss, pay cuts or illness.

Their care and on-going support for each client will be backed up by the financial expertise of the head office in Bradford which has specialist departments in every area of debt counselling, including insolvency.

CAP's CEO Matt Barlow said: "Our experience shows that there will be an unfathomable amount of people in each of these areas who believe they are trapped by their debts. Creditors will be ringing all day, the letters will be piling up and their sleep, health and relationships will all be suffering.

"The fantastic news is that due to the commitment of their local church, we will be able to support each client by seeing them in their own home, contacting their creditors on their behalf, setting them a budget and staying with them until they are debt free."

As well as the 16 new centres which brings the total up to 160 across the UK, four existing centres have taken on extra debt coaches to cope with the demand for the service.

2011 marks the 15th birthday for the award-winning charity whose free debt counselling is described as "unsurpassed" by Money Saving Expert Martin Lewis.

- CAP's help is available to all regardless of age, gender, faith or background. Find out more about CAP at www.capuk.org or by calling 0800 328 0006

Ends

About Christians Against Poverty:

Christians Against Poverty is a home-grown debt counselling charity which is determined to reduce poverty in the UK caused by debt. It partners its financial expertise with the care of the local church to offer free debt help and a solution to people through 160 centres. The fast-growing charity intends to have a debt-counselling CAP centre in 500 towns and cities across the UK by 2015. For more about CAP see www.capuk.org

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CBER report as reported by BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-13029870>

The 16 new CAP centres are opening in:

Bexhill on Sea, Brighton, Birmingham Central, Derby, Doncaster, Kircaldy & Burntisland, Leeds & Wharfedale, Leeds East & South, London Greenwich, London Merton, Penicuik, Pontefract, Saffron Walden, Southampton East, Sunderland and Yeovil

Extra debt coaches have been taken on Belfast East, Chichester, Causeway Coast and Woking.