

Date: October 19, 2010
Press release: For immediate use

**Charity more than doubles its
help for poor Londoners**

Five new debt-counselling centres opening this week

FREE help is at hand for Londoners whose spiralling debts force them to live in fear and on the bread line amid rising bills and Government cutbacks.

National charity Christians Against Poverty has grown its cover of Greater London from seven to 18 debt counselling centres in just a year.

The award-winning charity, whose head office is in Yorkshire, partners its financial expertise with trained members of local churches to offer a caring but professional free service to people whose lives are being wrecked by debt.

Five new centres open this week in Camden, Cricklewood, Lewisham, Penge and Welling bringing the total in the UK up to 150.

Peckham's CAP centre was applauded by Prince Charles last month on BBC's Song's of Praise where he described the work of helping some of the London's most vulnerable people "fantastic".

The charity's Chief Executive Matt Barlow said: "Our clients' average salary is far below the accepted level that people need to live well in this country. "Rising utility bills, added VAT and redundancies put the pressure on us all but they are real body blows for those who have little to begin with.

"The good news is the church in London is not deaf to the needs of their communities and we are really delighted that so many congregations have been keen to work with us to provide a high quality service in their local area.

He added: "Our research shows more than a third of people with spiralling debts seriously consider suicide so we are literally bringing a life-saving service to London."

Centres in the London area are: Acton, Battersea, Camden, Cricklewood, Croydon, Ealing, Dagenham, Harrow, Lewisham, Penge, Streatham, Tulse Hill, Southwark, Sutton, Reigate, Walthamstow, Wandsworth and Welling.

Hear more about the work of the charity on a special documentary hosted by Dragon's Den favourite Duncan Bannatyne on BBC Radio 2 on Tuesday, October 26 at 10pm

ends

Notes to editors:For more information about Christians Against Poverty, please contact Marianne Clough at the press office on 01274 761924 or marianneclough@capuk.org We always have plenty of true-life stories and photos available on request!

Further information

We have more national stats if you would like about what it is like to live with debt in 2010.

This is the BBC's press release about the Radio 2 content:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2010/10_october/18/r2_faith.shtml

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. It is a free service available to people of all faiths and none.

The charity operates through a growing network of centres based around the UK, all opened in partnership with a local church. Over the last fourteen years, the charity has grown from one man working from his home with a donation of £10, to a national charity with 150 centres across the country. At any one time CAP is now dealing with £64m of clients' debt.

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 end of 2014.