

DEBT CHARITY DELIGHTED AT OFT CRACKDOWN

DEBT-COUNSELLING charity Christians Against Poverty today welcomed a report exposing 129 debt management firms who dupe vulnerable people. The Office of Fair Trading has ordered the companies, who pose as charities, to clean up their act within three months or face losing their licences. The clampdown follows changes by the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice which changed the rules at the beginning of September making it harder for fee-charging debt management companies to describe their services as “free” when many charge monthly tariffs.

In contrast, Christians Against Poverty is a UK-wide charity offering a completely free service to some of the poorest people in the country helping them to work their way out of their debts.

Just this month CAP highlighted this issue before parliamentarians asking for the companies to be looked into.

CAP’s CEO Matt Barlow said: “When you are at rock bottom with your finances, creditors are at your door and you risk losing your family home, what you cry out for is someone you can trust.

“How awful then, that desperate people can get sucked in by firms that pile on the charges and actually add to their debts.”

He added: “We would advise that there is no miracle cure – and firms that offer one need to be very carefully examined.”

CAP is happy to be counted alongside the genuine charities offering good quality help for free such as CCCS, National Debtline and CAB.

- To find out more about CAP visit www.capuk.org or ring 0800 328 0006

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

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 131 centres across the country – and more to come in the next month. 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.