



Press release

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Debt charity helps struggling UK consumers calculate debts online

As the latest statistics reveal record-breaking personal insolvency in the UK¹ a debt charity has launched a groundbreaking online tool to help people get a grasp of their spiralling debt problems.

Debt Advice Foundation, which launched a debt advice helpline earlier this year, is now giving people the ability to calculate the true extent of their debt problems with a new downloadable *Debt Analyser*. By entering information about credit commitments and living costs, this unique tool makes automatic calculations to help people understand how much money they owe and what they can reasonably afford to pay back, it also generates individual letters which users can then send to their creditors.

David Rodger, Managing Director of Debt Advice Foundation explains: "The number of Britons becoming insolvent this year looks certain to be at its highest level since records began, as more and more people find themselves caught in the downward spiral of debt. With around 300 people becoming insolvent every day², demand for debt advice is increasing dramatically³.

"For many people seeking debt advice, the toughest challenge is simply to calculate the extent of their debt. This downloadable resource is a new way for people, who may have never needed to work out the extent of their mortgage payments, credit card borrowings, hire purchase deals and other loans, to take stock of their situation for the first time."

David continues: “Seventeen million people - almost half of the adults in the UK have difficulty with numbers⁴ so it’s no surprise that people struggle to keep track of their debts. We are not looking to replace the vital telephone support that charities like ours provide, but to assist as many people as possible to understand the full extent of their financial problems and recognise which payments are a priority.”

If an individual has a surplus income, the tool will tell them how long their debts will take to pay back and at the touch of a button they can create individual letters to inform creditors of their situation. Importantly everyone who uses the Tool, regardless of the extent of their debt problem has the option to call a member of the Debt Advice Foundation for free support and guidance.

Debt Advice Foundation’s *Debt Analyser* tool is available to download free of charge at www.debtadvicefoundation.org

Ends

<http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/otherinformation/statistics/historicdata/HDmenu.htm>

Photo Caption: ‘Recession-hit Brits struggle with debt and money worries.’

Note: Image of David Rodger, Managing Director of Debt Advice Foundation is available on request.

Further information:

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Editors Notes

¹ There were 35,242 individual insolvencies in England and Wales in the third quarter of 2009. source: The Insolvency Service, 6 November 2009.

<http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/otherinformation/statistics/200911/index.htm>

Insolvency Service statistics show that there were 107,288 personal insolvency filings in the whole of 2006 – the highest annual figure since records began.

<http://www.insolvency.gov.uk/otherinformation/statistics/historicdata/HDmenu.htm>

² 98,568 became personally insolvent in the first three quarters of 2009 – an average of 361 every day.

³ Citizens Advice Bureau report that debt enquiries are 21% higher (Jan-Mar 2009 versus Jan-Mar 2008) - source CAB press releases issued by the Citizens Advice Bureau, June 09
http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/pressoffice/press_index/press_20090610

⁴ Leitch Review of Skills Final Report, December 2006, HM Treasury, p1.
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/furthereducation/uploads/documents/2006-12%20LeitchReview1.pdf>

About Debt Advice Foundation

- Debt Advice Foundation's telephone helpline service is available six days a week on 0800 2922077, lines are open from 8am-8pm Mon-Fri and 9am – 5pm on Saturdays.
- Debt Advice Foundation is a registered charity, with the following objectives:
 - Provide free, impartial and appropriate advice to people with unaffordable debt.
 - Help people with debt problems to gain free access to solutions that will help them.
 - Promote the education of young people in money management so as to reduce the likelihood they will mis-use debt later in their lives.
 - Undertake or fund research to understand why problem debt happens and its effect on individuals, families and the wider UK economy.
 - To use this evidence to become a force for beneficial change within the credit and debt solutions industry and to work with government to bring about legislative change to benefit UK consumers.
- Dennis Benson was appointed Chair of Debt Advice Foundation in August 2007. Dennis was previously Chairman of the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust from 2005 to 2007. He is also Chair of the Rosemere Cancer Foundation.