

Sort out your debts! – take control of your finances!

Have a look at www.citizensadvice.org.uk – see the section on debt and money.

If you do not have internet access, contact Citizens Advice for self-help information.

- 1. Maximise income – check your benefits.** Can you work overtime? (may affect benefits). Make sure grown up children are contributing!
- 2. Minimise expenditure** - essential spending only, look for the cheapest deals.
Check contracts before you cancel or change!

Try www.uswitch.com www.moneysupermarket.com,
www.moneysavingexpert.com for money saving ideas.

Know what you're spending – write down your income and expenditure.
What can you cut out or cut down?

- 3. Deal with priority debts first!** – including current rent arrears, Council Tax arrears, current gas & electric, court fines, CSA arrears.

Agree payments & start paying these before dealing with non-priority debts.
You could set up payments by Direct Debit on your Universal Credit or work pay day.

Action priority creditors can take – includes bailiffs, repossession of home, charging order, imprisonment, loss of driving licence.

- 4. Non priority debts next!** – includes water, loans, credit and store cards, catalogues, mobiles, Sky/Virgin, Hire Purchase agreements.

Make small, token payments if you can whilst you sort out priority bills and debts & get further advice. Communicate in writing, keep copies of letters & log phone calls. Ask them if they will stop interest charges.

Benefit overpayments – try negotiating lower repayments/deductions.

Action non-priority creditors can take – includes letters, default notices (affecting credit rating), court action - County Court Judgments (CCJ) which can lead to other action, loss of goods (HP agreements).

Legal action threatened? Being harassed? Get free advice!

See Citizens Advice website or call our financial inclusion co-ordinators on 01903 703110 for more information.