



THE ARCHBISHOP
OF CANTERBURY



The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has welcomed a new training resource designed to help local churches “play a vital role” in signposting people to free and professional debt advice services.

Guiding people to free debt advice: a debt awareness and signposting workshop is a two-hour video-based workshop developed by the Money Advice Trust, the charity that runs National Debtline, in partnership with the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Task Group on Responsible Credit and Savings. It is available as a free online download or to order with a DVD.

The workshop is designed to help staff and volunteers in churches and church-linked community groups, identify and respond appropriately to someone who may be struggling financially. It also looks at the types of debt advice available, how these can be accessed, and how to help prepare someone for debt advice.

The workshop is not designed to train people as debt advisors or counsellors, but to enable them to act a link between people who are in debt and the free services that can help them. Of the nearly 9 million people in the UK who are struggling with debt, only 17 per cent are currently receiving advice to help deal with their situation.

Archbishop Justin Welby said: “Helping people to get out of debt, and freeing them from the anxiety and exploitation that often goes with being in debt, is part of the Church's commitment to human flourishing.

“I welcome this new training resource to help local churches play a vital role in encouraging people to seek assistance earlier and to make use of the many free debt advice services that are available.”

Joanna Elson OBE, chief executive of the Money Advice Trust, said: “Nine million people in the UK are over-indebted, and yet only 17 per cent seek debt advice. We know that many others turn to other organisations, including churches, for help and support – and so ensuring proper signposting to free debt advice services from these points of contact is vital.

“That’s why we are proud to have developed this resource with the support of the Archbishop’s Task Group. Through this initiative, we can harness the terrific work that local churches provide to their community to help people who are struggling to cope access the free debt advice that can turn their lives around.”

The training resource was welcomed by the John Kirby, Founder and International Director of Christians Against Poverty, of which Archbishop Justin is Patron.

John Kirby said: “UK poverty can seem a giant of a problem but actually each of us has the ability to transform lives, without needing specialised qualifications. All that is needed is compassion and the information to signpost to the services out there which will do the complex financial work.

"This new resource provides some easy-to-follow information to help Christians feel confident in being that vital link in the chain."

For more information, visit toyourcredit.org.uk/debt-aware.

3 min read

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