



**Damian Hinds**  
*MP for East Hampshire*

News release

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For immediate release

## **Damian Hinds Presses Minister on Debt Plans**

Damian Hinds joined forces with Labour MP Nic Dakin to put the case to Ed Davey, the Minister for Employment and Consumer Affairs, for better regulation of debt management plans.

Many people who find themselves in debt and unable to repay their loans find themselves pressured into taking on so-called debt management plans from private companies. Often the final costs of these plans will not be clear at the outset and customers are often unaware that free and objective advice can be had from the Citizens' Advice Bureau.

Damian Hinds and Nic Dakin, co-Vice Chairs of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Debt and Personal Finance, stressed to the Minister that in many cases people did not think they have any option but enter into a debt management plan offered by a private company.

Speaking after the meeting, Damian said

*"Here in East Hampshire, as elsewhere, it is far too often the case that people in the most vulnerable circumstances find themselves pressured into a spiral of unmanageable debt."*

*"We need to work harder to make sure that everyone knows that there is help available and there are ways of dealing with debt that really work. We need to make everyone aware of how the Citizen's Advice Bureau can help."*

*"If we don't make the effort to reach these people and tackle what is often a predatory business, we risk letting people be driven to unscrupulous lenders and unable to help themselves. I encourage people to look to their Credit Union, such as our own United Savings & Loan, for responsible credit and to the CAB or Consumer Credit Counselling Service for debit advice."*

Ed Davey, the Minister, was eager to meet with Damian and Nic and listen to the concerns they raised. He acknowledged that the sector was often marred by aggressive tactics but stressed that the Government looked upon increased regulation as a last resort.

Damian Hinds said

*"I fully accept the principle that business should be as free from regulation as possible, it helps entrepreneurs and small businesses and it is one of the keys to our economic growth. However, this sector in particular could benefit from better regulation and I am very comfortable restricting these businesses a little more to better protect the most vulnerable."*

*"Unmanageable debt should never be a way of life for anyone and it should absolutely never be a business opportunity."*

ENDS

Notes to editors:

The Local East Hampshire Citizens Advice Bureau operates in Bordon, Petersfield and Alton and can be contacted on **08444 111306** and at

The Hampshire credit union, United Savings & Loan, has an office in Bordon and a new presence in Alton and can be reached on 01420 488 977 and at <http://www.usal.org.uk/>

The Consumer Credit Counselling Service can be reached at <http://www.cccs.co.uk/> and on 0800 138 1111

For further information please contact:

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