

This Thursday, October 15, is [International Credit Union Day](#).

This year's theme is "Inspiring hope for a global community."

We are delighted to have partnered with over 110 Credit Unions in England to promote responsible saving and lending.

Credit unions encourage members to save regularly, provide loans at low rates, and help members in need of financial advice and assistance.

It's important that we help people to save and build up their financial resilience, protecting them against future unexpected events and falling into the trap of unscrupulous loan sharks.

We regularly deliver incentive schemes with credit unions to raise awareness of the dangers of borrowing from illegal money lenders and encourage the development of a regular savings habit.

Members must open a credit union account and save for three months to qualify for the £25 bonus, funded from the proceeds of crime taken from loan sharks.

Since 2016, more than **9000** new member accounts have been opened and **£470,000** saved through our incentive scheme. Over **£167,000** has been awarded to members for their determination to save and many have utilised other financial products and services through credit unions.

The scheme is a clear demonstration that extortion and crime doesn't benefit the criminals. Communities win in the campaign against loan sharks and credit unions gain new savers who are then able to access affordable loans.

If you would like to work with our team, or have questions about the incentive scheme, please [get in touch](#) and we'd be more than happy to help.

### **Social Media**

This year protecting people against loan sharks is more important than ever. The coronavirus crisis means more people are facing issues - from employment and debt, to housing and health - resulting in more people being in vulnerable situations.

Continued economic uncertainty during the coronavirus pandemic, with many people facing redundancy, means loan sharks may look to take advantage of people in a vulnerable position who feel they have nowhere to turn for help.

These unscrupulous individuals target the vulnerable and make money persecuting those who can least afford it. As a society we need to protect those at risk and ensure illegal money lending is a thing of the past. Credit Unions are a huge part of the solution by offering affordable, responsible loans, they give people who need a little extra help from time to time, a safe and reliable option.

Help us spread the message that loan sharks are not the answer to financial difficulties. We must help people avoid loan sharks and provide information on where to access support from safe and ethical alternatives. There are actions we can all take to report them, share stories and raise awareness of illegal money lending to safeguard ourselves and others.

## Tweets

- Tips on how to spot and avoid #loansharks
  - 👉 Check your lender is @theFCA authorised
  - 👉 Report illegal money lenders to @LoanSharkNews
  - 👉 Contact your local credit union about safe savings & affordable loans. Find a credit union near you: [www.creditu.co.uk](http://www.creditu.co.uk) #ICUDay
- We are proud to support #ICUDay! Please join us on October 15 in celebrating how #CreditUnions make a difference for families and communities nationwide. Find a Credit Union near you: [www.creditu.co.uk](http://www.creditu.co.uk)
- Do you know how to spot a loan shark? Check out @LoanSharkNews animation for the warning signs: <https://bit.ly/33INihl>
- Beware of loan sharks who offer to lend you money. Protect yourself and avoid them - consider other options if you need to borrow money, such as a credit union. Find a credit union near you: [www.creditu.co.uk](http://www.creditu.co.uk)
- Looking for a safe way to save & borrow money? Look no further than the XXXX Credit Union - find out more here: [LINK TO CREDIT UNION WEBSITE](#) #ICUDay
- Do you need a safe, reliable way to borrow money? The XXXX Credit Union may be just the place for you. Find out more: [LINK TO CREDIT UNION WEBSITE](#). #ICUDay
- If you're facing financial challenges because of #COVID19, your local credit union is here to help. Find out more: [LINK TO CREDIT UNION WEBSITE](#). #ICUDay
- We work closely with @LoanSharkNews to stamp out loan sharks and ensure people have access to flexible, affordable and fair lending during this time of uncertainty. Watch the animation below to find out more about the benefits of using a credit union: <https://bit.ly/2ZPTZMH>

- People suffering financial difficulties due to #COVID19 may be at risk of using loan sharks. We will continue to help members access ethical financial products and services. Find out more: [LINK TO CREDIT UNION WEBSITE](#)
- Have your finances been affected by the #COVID19 pandemic? Speak to your local Credit Union about ethical, affordable loans [www.creditu.co.uk](http://www.creditu.co.uk) #ICUDay
- Credit unions are not-for-profit financial cooperatives that provide a safe, convenient place for members to save money and access loans and other financial services at reasonable rates. Find a credit union near you: [www.creditu.co.uk](http://www.creditu.co.uk) #ICUDay
- More people in the UK are joining their local Credit Union. Credit Unions offer a local, ethical & not-for-profit alternative to high-cost lenders and loan sharks. If you are looking for a safe place to save and access affordable loans, visit [LINK TO CREDIT UNION WEBSITE](#) #ICUDay

### **Partner Resources**

We have launched a [payroll deduction pack](#) to encourage employers and businesses to sign up to a payroll deduction savings and loans scheme through a credit union.

Check out our YouTube [animation](#) that will help raise awareness of credit unions, build membership and promote the financial services they offer.

Please [contact us](#) if you would like to include your logo on the animation.

### **To report a loan shark**

Call the 24-hour confidential helpline on 0300 555 2222

Email [reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk](mailto:reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk)

Complete a report form online at [www.stoploansharks.co.uk](http://www.stoploansharks.co.uk).

Talk to our trained staff and get information and support via Live Chat on our website 9am-5pm, Mon-Fri.

Download the Stop Loan Sharks App for free from the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#).