



The All Party Parliamentary Group  
on  
**POVERTY**

**Joint meeting of the APPGs on Poverty and Debt & Personal Finance**  
Monday, 13 November 2017, 14.15, Jubilee Room, Houses of Parliament

**Officers present:**

Baroness Ruth Lister  
Baroness Clare Tyler  
Ed Miliband MP  
Kevin Hollinrake MP  
Susan Elan Jones MP  
Neil Gray MP  
David Drew MP  
Yvonne Fovargue MP

**Others present:**

Olu	Alake	
Will	Barnes	Money Saving Expert
Jane	Clack	
Mark	Donaldson	Financial Ombudsman
Rob	Downey	GLA
Katie	Evans	Money and Mental Health Policy Institute
Gareth	Evans	Financial Inclusion Centre
Liam	Evans	Turn2Us
Cathryn	Evans	
Nicole	Fassihi	The Children's Society
Lizzie	Flew	Child Poverty Action Group
Rory	Geoghegan	Amnesty
Kirsty	Good	Money Saving Expert
Joe	Greaney	Christians Against Poverty
Mark	Haslam	StepChange Debt Charity
Megan	Jarvie	Family and Childcare Trust
Hannah	Kitcher	Young Foundation
Caron	Leo	
Trina	Lynskey	
Barney	McCay	
Andy	McNair	Financial Conduct Authority
Rev Paul	Nicolson	
Carl	Packman	Toynbee Hall
Issy	Petrie	New Policy Institute
Tom	Sefton	Church of England

Gary	Simpson	South Yorkshire Credit Union
Joseph	Surtees	Money Advice Service
Luke	Tyrrell	Financial Conduct Authority
Sorana	Vieru	StepChange Debt Charity
Sian	Williams	Toynbee Hall
Chris	Woolard	Financial Conduct Authority
Emma	Yorke	Gingerbread
Jordan	Singh	

## Introduction

Yvonne Fovargue MP welcomed everyone to the joint meeting and welcomed the findings of the End Child Poverty (ECP) report on the Poverty Premium.

**'Feeling the Pinch' report** Laura Rodrigues of StepChange, a member of ECP, outlined the key findings of the report. The underlying reason why people turn to rent-to-own is the lack of an alternative. Second hand goods are often too costly, saving is not possible and the localisation of the social fund has reduced the availability of low cost credit for those on low incomes.

**Financial exclusion:** Baroness Tyler, who chaired the Lords select committee on Financial Exclusion, said her committee identified 22 recommendations. She was especially concerned to hear that those on low incomes could end up paying for a basic fridge three times what an expensive fridge from Harrods would cost. She was pleased with the FCA feedback statement but the government's response has been lacklustre.

**End Child Poverty:** Judith Cavanagh, ECP co-ordinator, said it was very difficult to be upbeat, with new research from Child Poverty Action Group showing the impact of cuts on families. The government needs to strengthen protections for vulnerable families, especially through the increased provision of interest free credit.

**APPG on Poverty:** Kevin Hollinrake MP spoke about his own direct experience of poverty and how the lack of hope leaves many in a desperate situation. The APPG on Poverty is developing two strands of activity: [1] cost of living, for example on 'rent-to-own' [2] 'cost of work', for example childcare and low pay. He noted that business has – and sees itself as having – a key role in to play in fighting poverty. He also suggested residential property could be placed in a pension, if it was rented out at a social rent.

**Ed Miliband MP** congratulated both APPGs for the meeting and ECP for its report. He said: [1] Campaigning is starting to have effect. The FCA should take credit for its recent fine of Brighthouse [2] Brighthouse not better than nothing. It plunges people in to deeper poverty and contributes to a downward spiral. He suggested the payday lending cap be extended to rent-to-own. [3] All of us have responsibilities to develop alternatives. The FCA need to be positive enablers.

**Financial Conduct Authority** The FCA's Chris Woolard outlined its current work. It's taken action against Brighthouse and is looking at affordability, adverts, lending standards and vulnerable consumers. The FCA recognises there is a social utility underlying credit so it has to balance how it acts. He noted the difficulty of regulating in the 'rent-to-own' sector where attention has to be paid to the goods, the price and the interest rate. The FCA also needs to think laterally, for example, unfurnished properties are likely to increase demand for 'rent-to-own'. Could credit unions step in to help people in need of credit but who cannot access it at the moment?

The meeting closed.

**Secretariat:** Dr Wanda Wyporska (Equality Trust) and Imran Hussain (CPAG)  
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