



The multiple dangers of borrowing from illegal moneylenders.

A 2023 data suggests that more than 7% of adults in Great Britain, a total of 3m people, may have borrowed from an illegal lender in the last three years, according to research by IPSOS for Fair4All Finance.

Most illegal lenders are 'fairly prominent' in their community, and may present themselves as friends to their customers or operate out of seemingly legitimate businesses like cafes, beauty salons and pubs.

In response to the report, your credit union and other experts have issued three tips for hard-pressed households to help determine whether a lender is operating illegally, including;

- ◆ **did they offer you a cash loan,**
- ◆ **did they not give you paperwork, and**
- ◆ **are you scared of people finding out?**

Always check the Financial Conduct Authority register of regulated firms, which lets you search by the lender's name. It provides warnings when an unauthorised lender is known to them.

Remember that if you need credit, you should consider the UK's community finance sector, made up of credit unions, like Grampian Credit Union and other responsible lenders. By saving and borrowing from a credit union you have the protections you'd expect from a regulated provider, plus you'll be helping to extend financial support to other people in your community.

Credit Unions play an important role and Grampian Credit Union is proud to have been supporting our community for over 32 years, and have partnerships with about 30 local employers [Grampian Credit Union | Employer Partnership](#) and if you'd like to talk to us about how we can help you with cost-of-living pressures, we'd love to speak to you.'

Fair4All Finance's report also highlights that:

- ◆ While users of illegal money lenders generally borrow hundreds rather than thousands of pounds at a time, the total amount of debt per borrower is significant at around £3,000 on average. Repayment rates were different but

invariably involved paying double. However, a lack of transparency or awareness of the total cost of credit was commonly reported.

- ◆ With increasing numbers of people struggling through the cost of living crisis, illegal moneylenders appear to have moved upmarket targeting low income workers with a median customer income of £20,000 - £24,999. This group is better off than the poorest fifth of the population and may not have considered this option until recently.
- ◆ Many borrowers believe their bank would never give them a loan, and one said that they turned to illegal lending because their bank wouldn't give them an overdraft, despite being a longstanding customer with an income of nearly £1,500 a month
- ◆ Another reported that she was forced to clean the office of the lender that she owed money to, after telling them she wasn't able to pay them back
- ◆ Other borrowers had been used as 'money mules' in money laundering operations – with some then losing their bank account as a result.
- ◆ There were reports of 'parallel lenders', who previously worked for a legitimate doorstep loan firm that has gone out of business yet continue to lend and collect repayments from the same clients.
- ◆ Many borrowers reported harassment, such as repeated phone calls or visits at home or work, and some were threatened with violence or violence against their family
- ◆ Just 1% of borrowers have reported an illegal lender to the UK's illegal money lending teams
- ◆ While regulated lenders are required to perform affordability checks on applicants, one illicit provider said that they actively looked out for those unable to pay as they would be more profitable in the long term, saying: 'The longer they couldn't pay you back, the better.'

Follow us on social media and let's form a community



Meet our Finance Team

Meet Adefolabi:

Adefolabi or Ade joined the Finance team as Finance Manager less than a year ago and has become a very valuable member of the team.

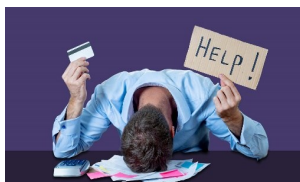
He is building strong relations with members and colleagues. Also, his vast experience previously working in finance at a senior level has been very valuable for the Credit Union in loan assessment and has been instrumental in our loan process and helping our members.

Meet Shirley:

Shirley is our Finance Assistant and has been with us for nine years. She joined the Credit Union initially on a fixed term basis before securing her current permanent role as part of the Finance team.

Shirley has experience working in finance. She works very hard to ensure that our members accounts are looked after.

Both Ade and Shirley, with help from colleagues, ensure that our members are well supported and their accounts maintained properly.



Are You Worried About Paying Your Credit Union Loan?

Don't ignore the problem - **Talk to Us!**

It is very important to remember that you're not alone, and we are here to help you. **Open communication is key.** We genuinely care about your financial well-being and are committed to supporting you through tough times. Please don't hesitate to contact us.

Being silent is not a solution and can have long term impact on your ability to access credit in the future. So, **Talk to Us!**

Follow us on social media and let's form a community



Borrowing from Your Credit Union Is Easy & Affordable!

At **Grampian Credit Union**, we make borrowing simple, transparent, and tailored to your needs. We only approve loans that are affordable for you—because your financial wellbeing is our priority.

Why Choose a Member Loan from Us?

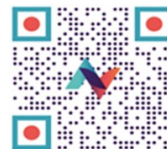
- ◆ **Affordable interest rates**
- ◆ **Flexible repayment terms** that suit your budget
- ◆ **Friendly, personalised service** from our local team
- ◆ **Quick and easy application**

Whether you're planning a **summer getaway**, buying **school uniforms**, paying **school fees**, or tackling a **home improvement project**, we're here to help.

With loans available from **£200 to £15,000**, your plans are well within reach!

Apply or learn more by scanning QR code or go to www.grampiancreditunion.co.uk

Ensure you borrow responsibly!



Share some love with **Aberdeenshire Loves local Gift cards.**

You can pick up a gift card from our office on 250 Union Street Aberdeen. Support Local! Buy Local

For more information please visit Aberdeenshire Gift Card City Gift Cards UK (townandcitygiftcards.com).

Get Involved Today! If you're interested in volunteering with us or have ideas for community events that we can participate in, please reach out! We are looking for volunteers in Aberdeenshire and Moray who can represent the Credit Union in their communities. Please speak to us to see how we can work with you to serve your local community better.

Let's work together to create a stronger, more vibrant community!!!

Together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of those around us.

Free Financial Literacy Workshops for Aberdeenshire Communities

We are offering **free financial literacy workshops** to local communities across Aberdeenshire.



These interactive sessions cover essential financial topics such as budgeting, saving, and responsible borrowing, designed to boost your financial confidence and help you make informed everyday money decisions.

Workshops are available **in person**, and we'll soon be launching **online sessions** to reach even more people throughout Aberdeenshire.

At the end of each workshop, participants can book a **one-to-one financial review** for tailored advice and support.

So far, we've visited Huntly, Alford, Fraserburgh, and Stonehaven—and we're excited to return this August to Peterhead, Banchory, and Macduff.

Ready to join us? Simply **scan the QR code below** to register. Remember to follow our social media channels for the latest updates on upcoming events.



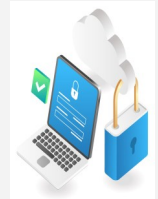
Visit: www.grampiancreditunion.co.uk

Your Banking On-the-Go

We have Online Banking available to Members. You can now check your account balances all from the comfort of your home or on your phone. However, in order to avail of this service you need to have PIN to login. Instructions on how you can login or register can be found on our website. We will send your PIN via SMS directly to your mobile phone.

Feature

- Secure Member Login - Have peace of mind knowing that your data is secure
- The ability to check your account balances On the Go
- Transfer funds between your own accounts
- Transfer funds to external non-credit union accounts
- Pay your bills once set up



Through a secure platform, members can check balance, make payments, and track transactions and more, without needing to visit a branch.

For more information please visit our website—[Grampian Credit Union | Online Banking](http://www.grampiancreditunion.co.uk)

Member Feedback from our recent survey

97% of members are satisfied with their overall credit union experience

'You guys are always super-pleasant over the phone, ready to give any advice I need. I always recommend opening an account to anyone who mentions wanting to save up. I work at Social Work and recommend your services to clients'

98% of members will recommend the credit union to family and friends

'I've always found it really easy to save and borrow and it had come in very handy at difficult financial points in my life. Staff are always very helpful'

'Excellent service when I've needed to speak to someone, they are always able to help me and resolve any queries'

97% of members are satisfied with our customer service quality

Excellent service when I've needed to speak to someone, they are always able to help me and resolve any queries

Health is Wealth. So, it is important that we try and stay healthy

Fun Facts About Credit Unions

- ◆ Credit Unions operate in 97 Countries worldwide.
- ◆ People who use credit unions are called members. This is because they have to have something in common to join. For example they work in a certain place or live in the same community.
- ◆ Credit Unions are non-profit making. Any money they make is passed back to members in the form of better services or by paying a dividend on savings.

Introducing CashPerks

Grampian Credit Union is pleased to let you know that we have partnered with CashPerks to provide a New service to you, our members.

CashPerks is a new initiative to improve access to financial services for members who face barriers with traditional banking.

With CashPerks to withdraw cash from your credit union account at an ATM. It's secure and convenient. Members will need a mobile phone for this service.



eligible members will be able to withdraw cash directly from their credit union account at an ATM without using a debit card. It's secure and convenient. Members will need a mobile phone for this service.

For more information, contact the office by sending an email to admin@grampiancreditunion.co.uk.

Frequently Asked Questions.....(FAQs)

We have put together some questions that we are asked regularly and hope this will help you.

How can I get access to my Pin for online banking?

This can be done by submitting a form on our website [Grampian Credit Union | Online Banking](#). Once we receive this form, someone from the office will contact you to go through security and then issue the pin. You must be a member and have a minimum of £5 in your membership account for the pin to be issued.

What is the interest rate on loans?

All our rates can be found on the loans page of our website at [Apply for Loan](#). There is also a loans calculator that can guide you and give you indicative rates and payments.

What do I need to do in order to apply for a loan?

You must be actively saving with the credit union before you can apply for any of our loans. Check out [Apply for Loan](#)

What is the minimum and maximum amount to contribute when joining?

Money paid into the Credit Unions are called savings and not contributions. You can start saving with as little as £10. However, we usually say 'save as little as you can afford.'

Does the credit union help with mortgages?

NO, Grampian credit union does not currently offer mortgages.

How does the free life insurance work?

Grampian Credit Union provides free loans and savings protection insurance for members as part of your membership. In the event of death of a member, this insurance will clear any loan balance and provide up to 100% of the savings amount to the beneficiary. This is subject to terms and conditions of the insurer (information available on request).

Why did I not get the loan I applied for?

Our loans are based on Affordability. We assess your household finances and based on all the information you submit and the information from the Credit report, we make an informed decision on your loan application.