

CREDIT U

AUTUMN/WINTER 2019

IT'S A BARGAIN!

**Don't be misled by
Black Friday**

HAPPY EMPLOYEES!

Banging savings accounts!

**GET YOUR
SKATES ON!**

**Have an affordable
Christmas**



CREDIT U

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CREDIT U

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Local Service. Global Reach.

INTERNATIONAL CREDIT UNION DAY

Credit union professionals from across the world will be celebrating International Credit Union Day this October with the theme of **'Local Service – Global Reach'**. The annual celebration held on the third Thursday of October and this year being held on **Thursday 17th October** has a different theme every year and this year after surveys were sent out to members across the globe from the **World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU)** and the **Credit Union National Association (CUNA)** respondents clearly favoured the theme of **'Local Service – Global Reach'**. Brian Branch, World Council President and CEO, said:

“Each credit union serves a local community. And it is because of that local service in communities across the world that we have a global credit union movement that’s now 260 million members strong. That’s why our theme—“Local Service. Global Reach.”—so perfectly captures the focus and scope of credit unions as we head into the next decade.

The day is recognised to reflect upon the credit union movements history, promote its achievements, recognise its work and share member experiences. It will be marked with ICU Day festivities worldwide with credit unions raising awareness of their services and the tremendous work that they do through outreach and volunteering in the community, competitions, charitable fundraisers and open houses.

ICU Day logos and posters have been created to unify the credit union brand worldwide and credit unions and members are encouraged to share photos, videos, events and experiences across all social media channels with the hashtag **#ICUDay**.



HALF TERM FUN!

It only seems like minutes since the school summer holidays. Keeping the kids occupied over the 6 weeks, days out, trips to the seaside or a foreign holiday and then you're faced with the added expense of kitting them out with new uniforms, shoes and stationery for their return back to school. Phew! You finally get everything sorted and then bang! It's half term and your little treasure is complaining their bored and there is nothing to do!

It can often be tempting to turn to a high street lender or pay day loan to keep your little one's entertained over the half term but with high annual percentage rates (APR) rates that memorable trip to a theme park, city break or attraction can cause a major dent in your finances with the amount of interest that you'll be paying back!

Credit unions offer short term low value loans typically between £50.00 and £3000.00 with a much lower (APR). They only let you borrow what you can afford to repay but you do need to become a member. Ethical, member and community led, there are no outside shareholders to pay unlike pay day loan lenders hence why they can keep (APR) rates lower ensuring peace of mind and letting you get on with enjoying those special family moments.

DON'T GET SPOOKED OUT BY SPIRALING DEBT



£1.578 trillion of debt is owed by individuals in the UK, which equates to an average debt of £30,537 per adult! Getting into debt is an easy thing to do and can very quickly spiral out of control due to a number of reasons such as life changes, redundancy, living beyond your means or just burying your head in the sand. Getting a grip on your debt is important not only to ensure financial stability but also for your own well-being and it's important to recognise that the quick fix of a pay day loan or a high street lender could land you further into debt due to the higher interest rates you'll be paying. Obviously in an ideal world none of us would be in debt but credit card bills and loans are part of our daily lives and if things do spiral out of control it's really important that you get the right help and advice to get your finances back on track.

Credit unions offer workshops, advice and can provide debt consolidation loans that can help you pay off your credit cards, loans or other outstanding debts. You may be able to pay off your debts faster and pay one monthly manageable payment giving you peace of mind that all of your financial commitments have been met.



Credit Unions

What are Credit Unions?

Credit unions are not-for-profit cooperatives, owned and controlled by their members rather than shareholders.

They are committed to helping their communities and members and offer different financial services that improve their quality of life.

Who can join?

To become a member of a credit union, you need to have a common bond with the other members.

For example, living in the same area, working for the same employer, or belonging to the same church or trade union.

Benefits

- Low fees
- Lower loan rates
- Higher interest rates on savings accounts
- FSCS protected
- Helping members to improve their credit score
- Workshops for improving members financial management Junior saving accounts
- Member owned
- Community involvement is priority
- There is a credit union for everyone

What Credit Unions do?

Loans

Saving Accounts

Junior Savings

ISA

Pre-paid Debit Cards

Employee Benefit Scheme

Christmas Savings

Current Accounts

Joint Accounts

Online Access

Members' Discounts

Mortgages



A vibrant display of fireworks exploding in a dark night sky. The fireworks are primarily red, orange, and white, with some blue and green streaks. The background is a deep, dark blue, making the bright colors of the fireworks stand out prominently.

BANGING SAVINGS ACCOUNTS FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES

Supporting the financial wellbeing of your employees is good for them and for your business. Poor financial wellbeing can affect physical, mental and social health which can result in poorer job performance, reduced ability to concentrate, lower productivity and absenteeism. Financial stress has a major impact on the productivity of your workforce, and with reports suggesting that it costs the UK economy £121 billion and 18 million working hours in time off work each year, it has never been a more important time to consider your employees financial wellbeing.

A report from the FCA “Financial Well being in the workplace– A way forward” suggests that one in four workers are reporting loss of sleep over money worries and it is affecting their concentration and performance at work. In addition 70% of the workforce spend a fifth of their working hours worrying about money. Higher levels of financial stress can also result in higher absenteeism with a study conducted in Europe reporting that 6.2 days per year were lost to absenteeism in a group with high financial stress compared with 3.8 work days a year in a low financial stress group.



Credit unions are member owned, not for profit, financial cooperatives that provide savings accounts, affordable loans and other financial services to their members. They are a fantastic source to help your employees enjoy financial freedom and provide them with savings schemes and ethical low rate loans paid conveniently through payroll.

Payroll savings and loans schemes allow employees to save and/ or make loan repayments via a payroll deduction made by their employer and transferred to the credit union. These schemes are easy to set up, offer competitive rates and provide an opportunity for the employee to build up savings at the same time as repaying a loan. For the employer there are no fees, it's straightforward to set up, it's a fantastic employee perk and corporate and social responsibility attribute for your company to support the local economy and the community projects that the credit union is involved in. Furthermore, it will help to alleviate your staff's financial stress, reduce sickness absence and increase productivity.



Black Friday, originally imported from the USA, is now one of the biggest shopping days in the UK. This year Black Friday falls on the 29th November and big brands are already ramping up their marketing encouraging their audiences to be part of the biggest shopping experience of the year. However, Black Friday may seem like a great way of doing your Christmas shopping, but it's not without its pitfalls. Here are five reasons why you should avoid Black Friday:

You are not always getting a good deal

Big discounts on products can be tempting; however, that “70% off” ticket might be misleading. It seems that some retailers offering “massive discounts” have been raising their prices before Black Friday to make the discounts bigger than they really are. Whilst not everyone is trying to trick you, it is worth bearing in mind that not every deal is as good as it looks.

Overspending is highly encouraged

Clever marketing adverts are encouraging audiences to buy expensive things in order to make their loved ones happy. Their message is quite simple; if you love someone you should spend your money on them! However, would the people that love you really want you to suffer any financial stress from overspending? It's the little things that are important and finding a special present really doesn't have to break the bank!





You can easily get scammed

Black Friday is a prime day for scammers to strike, so if you are shopping online be vigilant of fake websites and emails, and any offers that seem too good to be true!

It is easy to panic

Black Friday deals are often with limited stock, which creates a sense of “panic-buying” with goods being bought up quickly. Once people start feeling the pressure, they tend to rush into buying something without really thinking it through; therefore they end up with undesirable overspending. However, the truth is that many retailers will continue their sales and many popular Christmas gift prices are actually dropped after Black Friday. If you feel yourself slipping into “panic-buy” mode, take stock and instead of blowing your budget, remember you can wait and often find the item even more affordable at a later date.

There are many nicer opportunities

As Black Friday hype creates a frenzy amongst shoppers there are many alternatives that you can focus on instead. One of the most popular is **#BuyNothingDay**, which encourages people to celebrate by taking control as a consumer and not spending on Black Friday. It also offers alternative hints, tips and ideas regarding ethical spending and making your own gifts.

CREDIT UNION NEWS



1 A MATTER OF LIFE & DEBT RETURNS FOR SEASON THREE!

Over the last couple of weeks, the hugely successful television series, ‘**A Matter of Life & Debt**’ returned for its third season, airing on prime time BBC One. **A Matter of Life and Debt** explores the important and life changing work carried out by credit unions up and down the country.

2 HIGH DEMAND FOR CHILD BENEFIT LOANS, SAY CREDIT UNIONS

There's been a rapid rise in demand for a type of loan for families who repay using their Child Benefit.

3 CENTRAL LIVERPOOL CREDIT UNION PREPARES FOR A SPECIAL 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Chief Executive, Eileen Halligan said: “Over 30 years, we’ve become a valuable asset to the community and something to be extremely proud of.”



GET YOUR SKATES ON IT'S NEARLY CHRISTMAS!

We may not want to think of it yet, (after all the kids have just gone back to school after the long summer holiday) but Christmas is just around the corner and now is a good time to start planning your festive funds.

We all know the best way to fund Christmas is to plan ahead and save for it, however, sometimes it's not always possible as you may have paid out a lot of money for your summer holiday or faced increasing costs of sending the kids back to school. Credit unions offer affordable Christmas loans and taking out a Christmas loan from a credit union will allow you to enjoy stress free celebrations, ensuring that you can afford your festive spending and that you won't be faced with unexpected bills in January. Even if you have managed to save a little for Christmas, the demands, especially if you have children can often be difficult to meet. It is really difficult to explain to young children that you cannot afford the presents they have set their hearts on, especially when they believe that Father Christmas will be delivering them on demand! When shopping for Christmas presents you might be tempted to purchase a credit agreement from a high street lender, retailer or catalogue however, by doing this by the time you have finished all repayments, you will end up paying much more than the real price of the item. However, if you take out a Christmas loan from a credit union you will be free to look for the best possible deal on the market taking advantage of seasonal offers which many retailers provide for customers who can pay up front.



Even if you don't have children to provide for, Christmas can still stretch the purse strings, not least because, when you have worked hard all year the least you can expect is a little bit of fun and indulgence around the festivities. You might be tempted to borrow from a payday loan company, a doorstep lender or a credit card, however, the ethical alternative is to take out an affordable Christmas loan from a credit union to cover your Christmas expenses. In return you'll receive affordable repayments spread across the year which will help you to manage your finances more effectively. So if it's presents, Christmas food and drink or simply decorating your home to be ready for the festive season, credit unions can provide affordable Christmas loans up to £15,000 with a host of great benefits including:

- Rates between 1% and 3% interest on decreasing balance
- No set-up fees
- No early settlement penalties
- Fast approval decision
- FREE life insurance (subject to rules)
- A personalised tailored and affordable repayments plan

And if you have to consider a loan this Christmas why not plan ahead for next year and join a Credit Union Christmas Club? Christmas Clubs allow you to start saving early and many can lock your money in until nearer the time ensuring you're not tempted to spend your money during the year!



HAVE A HAPPIER NEW YEAR!



Whether you are planning a lazy week in the sun relaxing by the pool or something more adventurous like skiing down the slopes in the Alps, backpacking off-the-beaten track or just recharging the batteries with a weekend break, why not chat to your local credit union about a flexible holiday loan or ethical holiday savings account?

Credit unions are not for profit organisations, owned and controlled by their members rather than shareholders. They are committed to helping their members and local community through offering limitless financial services that improve their quality of life. Credit unions and banks serve members differently. Credit unions can offer some of the best rates on the market and dividends for their members whilst delivering a highly personalised service.

Many people may think it is difficult to join a credit union due to specific rules and regulations, however, there are many credit unions who have different requirements for joining members, therefore essentially there is a credit union for everyone! Find your local credit union at www.creditu.co.uk and choose the right service for you.

HOLIDAY LOANS

- Competitive interest rates 8.5% (variable 8.86% APR)
- The amount of interest you pay decreases as you pay back the loan
- No charges or penalties if you want to pay the loan off earlier
- Free loan protection insurance to qualifying members
- Flexible repayments
- No transaction fees or administration costs
- Speedy decisions - usually within just 2 days
- No processing charges or documentation fees, so there are no hidden surprises

HOLIDAY SAVINGS

- Simple, straightforward accounts
- Save from £5 to £1,000 each month (must maintain balance of £10 to retain membership)
- Annual dividend return paid in December each year
- Quick and easy access to make withdrawals by BACS transfer
- Free Life Savings protection (restrictions apply)
- Easy to make regular contributions by Direct Debit or from your salary for members of any employee schemes.
- Savings accounts are protected by the FSCS up to £85,000.



We're all about



To find out how you can build your financial future, please enter your postcode and find your nearest Credit Union:

Find Your Local Credit U



Who are we?

Credit U is a online platform that helps to promote credit unions, their benefits and services and sign posts visitors to their local credit union.

The platform has been developed after conducting extensive academic research into consumer finance and the need to help people find ethical savings and affordable loans to move people away from high cost credit.

The portal is supported by seasonal online/offline marketing campaigns to create awareness of credit unions and their services, drive traffic to our portal, connect applicants to their nearest credit union and provide credit unions with more quality leads for your business.

For further information please visit www.creditu.co.uk

Our Mission:

- ✓ We can help you build your financial future
- ✓ We help you find affordable loans and ethical savings
- ✓ We serve everyone at any life stage

