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Citizens Advice is here to help millennials grappling with debt

For many of us affording to live is a struggle as we pick our way through our post-pandemic economy. But the situation is tougher for young adults trying to scrabble a foothold in an age of scarce jobs and expensive housing. Many live at home with parents, others cope with high college fees, and more apply for jobs in an incredibly competitive employment market. Without parental support or employment, some get into serious debt, succumbing to glittering offers of ready credit ("buy online now, pay later"), loan sharks and borrowing much more than they can ever pay back.

If you are in this position, start putting things right today. There is every reason to feel hopeful. Make a firm resolution to be careful. Confine your spending to essentials and try to stop buying things you don't need. Take stock of your overall situation by making a complete list of your debts and exactly how much you owe. An indispensable resource here is the debt and money section of the Citizens Advice website www.citizensadvice.org.uk, which also includes a useful budgeting tool. Other helpful websites are www.youngmoneyblog.co.uk and www.moneyexpert.com

Contact your creditors on their Helplines starting with priority debts like Council Tax, utility bills, mortgage or rent, and explain your situation. They want to help so you have everything to gain. Think about ways to earn extra income and cut your living costs. And there's an inspiring alternative possibility: consider retraining, doing courses and developing new skills, especially if you can't find a job and have time on your hands. You'll feel so much better if you talk to somebody about your problems. [Webchat](#) is available ("Talk to a debt adviser") on the [Citizens Advice website](#), or you can call us free at Citizens Advice across Oxfordshire (Mon to Fri 9.00 am to 5.00 pm). For a list of local offices visit www.caox.org.uk.

Teresa Archer Chief Officer at Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire, said:

"The coronavirus pandemic has had a huge impact on lots of young people's finances, with many falling behind on essential bills and getting into debt. We have seen more young people with debt problems than ever before. In 2020, Citizens Advice across Oxfordshire helped almost 4000 people age 15 to 29 with one-to-one with debt problems. If you are

struggling with managing your finances, please get in touch as soon as you can and we'll help you find a way forward.

We give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.