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Tens of thousands across the UK to receive help managing their money

Money Advice Service announces first projects to receive funding from the new What Works Fund initiative

Projects across the UK will receive new funding from the Money Advice Service, helping tens of thousands of people manage their money better.

Today, the Money Advice Service announced funding for 26 projects, with more to follow in the coming months. The projects, which cover every region of the UK, are being funded from the Money Advice Service's new £7m What Works Fund. Funded projects will reach thousands of people – from younger people in school, to students and from working age adults to those in retirement.

We know that levels of financial capability remain stubbornly low - four out of ten adults are not in control of their finances and around 16.8 million working age people have less than £100 in savings.

However, very little evidence currently exists on the best way to address this issue. That is why the What Works Fund aims to build evidence and to establish the interventions which best help people to manage their money. Ultimately, the aim is to scale up the most effective projects in order to improve the levels of financial capability of millions of people across the UK.

David Haigh, Director of Financial Capability at the Money Advice Service comments:

"This is the first time that we have funded projects to gain evidence about how best to help people with their money. These projects will reach tens of thousands of people, while helping organisations ensure their interventions are truly effective. By increasing the effectiveness of what we do, we can better target our collective efforts, thereby improving the financial capability of millions across the country."

"Evidence will be gained from a range of approaches, from large-scale digital projects that engage with people online, through to one-on-one interventions which guide people through a step-by-step process to help them keep on top of their finances. The projects will help individuals to budget, saving regularly, handle their finances online, manage their credit and build their numeracy skills."

The projects also target segments of society who could be vulnerable to falling into financial difficulty, including those with mental health issues, those at risk of being homeless and people with long term illnesses.

“We know that millions of people across the country are one unexpected bill away from seeing their finances spiral out of control – and for those who are already vulnerable, that risk is exacerbated. We want to build evidence on how we can get these people to engage with their financial situation and avoid them ending up in problem debt or with other financial difficulties,” explained Haigh.

Caroline Rookes, Chief Executive for the Money Advice Service said: *“There is an urgent need to help people gain the skills and confidence they need to make good decisions about their money day to day. The insights from these projects will be vital, helping organisations to channel their efforts in the right places and to fund and deliver interventions that we know make a real difference. This will also underpin the money guidance commissioning work to be carried out by the new money guidance body which will replace the Money Advice Service.”*

“We look forward to collaborating not only with projects funded through the What Works Fund, but with all organisations that are working to improve levels of financial capability. A collective approach is needed to really tackle the issues that underpin low financial capability in the UK.”

-ENDS-

For more information, please contact:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

More information can be found at the following link from 00:01 Tuesday 31st Jan

https://www.fincap.org.uk/understanding_what_works

***What Works Fund Projects**

Organisation	Project description	Organisation	Project description
1625 Independent People	Training young people aged 16-25 to be peer educators; helping vulnerable young people learn how to manage their money and avoid getting into financial difficulty	National Learning and Work Institute (Centre for Responsible Credit)	Working with social landlords to test the impact of flexible rent payments, savings and use of credit
Age Cymru: Swansea Bay	Working with people aged over 65 in Swansea manage to encourage them to plan ahead to manage their finances through life events.	National Numeracy	Working with young people and working age adults to improve their numeracy skills through Job Centres and Money Saving Expert digital channels.



CAB Basingstoke	New interactive financial capability training course with digital support in Basingstoke	National Skills Academy for Financial Services	Evaluation of an existing online pensions tool
CAB North Liverpool	Project to provide support and workshops to help people who are post retirement age in Liverpool to improve day-to-day money management	National Youth Agency	Peer- led Money Skills project designed to target 500 apprentices aged 16-21 across 25% of England's most deprived local authorities
CAB Southwark	Evaluating the Money Savvy Southwark community based money champion project	Royal Society for Blind Children	Pilot of a face-to-face financial capability service for blind and partially sighted children aged 11-25
Campaign for Learning	Family Fortunes workshops in Birmingham to equip parents with skills to improve their children's financial capability	Shelter Scotland	Providing advice within a series of health contexts across Dundee and Glasgow
Centrepont Soho	Evaluating the impact of structured learning and one-to-one support for young homeless people in London	The Money Charity	Money workshops for schools and colleges designed to reach 28,000 young people aged 11-19 across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
Church Urban Fund (Just Finance Foundation)	Offering short 4-hour introductory courses for budgeting skills and financial capability as an early intervention for working age adults in the Black Country, Liverpool, Newcastle, Nottingham.	The Royal Leicestershire, Rutland, Wycliffe Society for the Blind	Workshops for retired older people in Leicester to test whether targeting emotional, psychological and behavioural drivers is more impactful than other financial capability interventions.
Community Links	Embedding financial capability across existing community services for NEETs and Working Age adults in Newham	The Wales Co-operative Centre	Extending the Your Money, Your Home scheme which provides financial capability training and support for working age tenants in the private rented sector
Cornwall Rural Community Charity	Course to help retired people in Cornwall to improve their financial capability skills by giving them access to information, tools and deals online	Tinder Foundation (Good Things Foundation)	Piloting a new approach to improving the financial capability of vulnerable people using face to face community based support and digital learning
Groundwork West Midlands	Financial Champions project in Birmingham to create a resource pack which can be used in workshops to support people to get online, make the most of their bank, manage money online and stay safe online	West Kent Housing association	Pilot targeting 16-24 year olds in Kent who are considering apprenticeships or training with the housing association
Move On	Training homeless people and those who have been in care to provide peer to peer training in schools in Glasgow and Edinburgh	Young Scot	Project to investigate young people's financial capability needs in Scotland
MyBnk	Financial education workshops	Youth Cymru	Peer-led project for 16-24 year



Financial Capability
Strategy for the UK

for 11-18 year olds - Money
Twist and Uni Dosh

olds from vulnerable
backgrounds across South Wales



Comments from fund recipients

Dawn Taylor, Operations Director, 1625 Independent People:

“1625 Independent People’s Cash Pointers Upfront project is all about offering young people the right skills and tools, shared in a way they can relate to, to help them manage their money better before they get into financial difficulty. It builds on our previous learning and experience delivering peer education and helping young people manage their money. The new project will offer a great opportunity to evaluate what works for young people. We’re delighted to work in partnership with MAS to deliver and evaluate this project.”

Nicola Russell-Brooks, CEO of Age Cymru Swansea Bay, added:

“We are delighted to have been given the opportunity to deliver a Money Advice Service project aimed at helping people over the age of 65 in Swansea. We are looking forward to finding out what barriers people face when they want to take action to develop their financial capability, and to directly supporting people to create a lasting power of attorney; to limit their risk of being scammed; and, to help them learn how to safely use online financial services. If anyone would like to benefit from this project, please get in touch. You can contact us on 01792 64 88 66 or by email at enquiries@agecymruswanseabay.org.uk.”

Juliette Collier, National Director, Campaign for Learning:

“Families provide the most important opportunity for most children to see, talk and learn about money; what parents do really matters in helping children make positive financial choices as they grow up. We are excited to be working with the Money Advisory Service and the What Works Fund to deliver the Family Fortunes project, because it will enable us to really understand what works in helping parents build brighter financial futures for themselves and their children.”

Paul Hackwood, Executive Director of Church Urban Fund, said

“We are delighted to be trialing our new Cash Smart Credit Savvy course with support from Money Advice Service. Our innovative short course format is designed to help more people to access financial education, through community delivery partners who they already know and trust. People will have the skills to make good choices about credit and understand the importance of savings.”

Gemma Finnegan, Project Manager, for Cornwall Rural Community Charity Comments:

“Cornwall Rural Community Charity is excited to have been successful with securing funding for our Get £F+IT project. Cornwall has a higher than average population over the age of 65 and many live in a rural community. With many financial services migrating to digital channels many retired people are losing out on the advantages of advice and money management tools – our project will support retired people to increase their digital skills and their financial capability skills with our locally delivered training.”

John Hinton, Executive Director of Move On said:

“We look forward to an exciting partnership with the Money Advice Service working alongside vulnerable people, in order to improve their money management skills, opening up new opportunities and improving their life outcomes.”

Damon Gibbons, Director at The Centre for Responsible Credit comments:

“The Centre for Responsible Credit is delighted that the Money Advice Service has elected to fund a trial of ‘supported rent flexibility’ for social housing tenants in London and the South East. Prior research indicates that low income families face reasonably predictable pressures on their budgets at various points in the year, such as at Christmas and during the school holidays. These pressures often lead to rent arrears or to people taking out expensive forms of credit.

“Supported rent flexibility’ seeks to offer families an alternative. We will be working with tenants of Amicus Horizon who have a recent history of rent payment problems in order to identify their financial pressure points, and offering individualised schedules of rent payments (allowing over and under-payments in various months to be agreed with the tenant) to help smooth these out.

“In line with principles of the What Works Fund, we will be undertaking a robust evaluation of the impacts of the trial on rent arrears and levels of financial well-being for tenants. An interim report will be available in June this year, and a final report in February 2018.”

Peter Pledger, Chief Executive of the National Skills Academy for Financial Services, said:

“We are delighted to have secured funding from the What Works fund to deliver a project evaluating our free Get Ready online pensions education tool. Financial planning for retirement is an important topic, although pensions are often viewed as complicated and confusing and the subject can get ignored. This evaluation project will help to measure the Get Ready tool’s true impact in empowering people to take control of their long-term finances, while also aiding the future development of the tool and other similar financial capability initiatives.”

Jamie Morgan, community Services Manager from the Royal Society for Blind Children comments:

“The Royal Society for Blind Children (RSBC) often meet vision impaired young people who do not feel confident about managing their own money. This could be because their family take on that task due to the visual nature of finances and financial transactions. We are delighted that the Money Advice Service is supporting RSBC to help the young people we work with learn these skills and put them into practice. It will go a long way to helping them live an independent life.”

Alison Watson, Deputy Director of Shelter Scotland, said:

“People are much more likely to visit their doctor when they’re ill than they are to seek help when struggling financially. But the stress and pressure felt by people facing financial difficulties – especially if their home is under threat - is known to cause ill health.

“By basing this new advice service in health centres and having medical professionals refer people directly to it, we hope to reach more of those people who are less likely to ask for help and offer them the money and debt advice they may not otherwise get.

“Through this service, we expect to help some of the most vulnerable and hardest to reach people in some of the most deprived areas in our society. We hope that following the first two pilot projects in Glasgow and Dundee we can expand the service to other areas across Scotland.

“We very much welcome this funding from the Money Advice Service via the What Works fund.”

Jocelle Lovell Financial Inclusion Manager at The Wales Co-operative Centre said:

“We are delighted to have been selected by the Money Advice Service to deliver our project as part of the What Works funding. It will enable us to expand our work and learn more about the financial capability of tenants in the private rented sector, whilst gathering robust evidence of the most effective support interventions.”

Adam Micklethwaite, Director of Business and Innovation for Good Things Foundation comments:

“We’re delighted to be taking part in the MAS What Works programme, carrying out a landmark study testing how assisted digital transactions can build financial capability and confidence. Our findings could have a significant impact on supporting some of the most excluded people in the UK to overcome the complex barriers to financial inclusion they face, helping them to move out of poverty and realise a range of wider benefits.”

Claire Griffiths, Head of Communities for West Kent Housing Association comments:

“West Kent Housing Association (West Kent) is delighted to have been chosen as a partner for the Money Advice Service’s What Works programme. Our project supports young people aged 16 – 24 living in Sevenoaks, Maidstone or the Medway towns, who have left school and are transitioning into independent living, to help them prepare for making better financial decisions over the next 12 months. We anticipate the project will increase young people’s ability to balance current and future financial needs and hope that the learning from the project will inform future support provided by West Kent as part of our wider training and employment activities.”

About the Financial Capability Strategy for the UK

The Financial Capability Strategy was established as a ten-year strategy to address the stubbornly low levels of financial capability across the UK. The Strategy aims to bring together individuals and organisations to deliver a collaborative approach to improving levels of financial capability, as well as establishing the interventions that are proven to work and seeing that as many people as possible benefit from them. The strategy can be found at www.fincap.org.uk/uk_strategy

About the What Works Fund

During the first half of the year we launched a £7 million fund to gain a better understanding of which projects and interventions work best to help people make the most of their money. We received over 400 expressions of interest for funding. Projects will be funded until March 2018.

About the Money Advice Service

The Money Advice Service is an independent organisation. It gives free, unbiased money guidance online at moneyadviceservice.org.uk or via free phone on 0800 138 7777. Debt advice is also provided through a variety of partners across the UK. The Service was set up by Government and is paid for by a statutory levy on the financial services industry, raised through the Financial Conduct Authority. Its statutory objectives are to enhance the understanding and knowledge of members of the public about financial matters (including the UK financial system); and to enhance the ability of members of the public to manage their own financial affairs.