Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit

Liz Emmons



Who are we?

- WIMLU officially launched on 25th February 2008.
- Funded by levy on high cost credit providers
- 22 Local Authorities: all Wales
- Investigators and Client Liaison Officers



Definition

A 'loan shark' is anyone who is lending money without having the authorisation required by the Financial Services and Market Act 2000.

These authorities are issued by the Financial Conduct Authority to individuals or companies whom they believe are 'fit and proper'



Characteristics of loan sharks:



- No credit agreements
- No receipts
- Violence/intimidation

- Target vulnerable individuals
- Illegal securities
- Interest/default charges



Some 'business models'...

- 'Friends'/family/neighbours
- Unlicensed debt collector
- Unlicensed doorstep lender
- Pub Bouncer
- Drug Dealer
- Church Group
- Taxi drivers
- School gate



Who is affected?

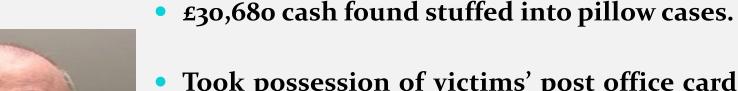
- Anyone can be affected.
- In Wales we find that the majority of victims are vulnerable in some way.
- In a 12 month period, 85% of loan shark victims had a recognized mental or physical disability



Stop Loan Sharks

Gareth Jenkins

• Caerphilly "Money Man".





- Over 10 year period, retained £92,000 from one vulnerable elderly couple's benefits, leaving them with scraps to live off.
- Pleaded guilty to illegal lending and sentenced to 15 months imprisonment

Stop Loan Sharks



Gareth Jenkins (2) POCA

- Gareth Jenkins : £91,073 POCA recovered
- Compensation to victims including awards of £16,460 £25,650 £23,650
- Repayment to Government departments
- WIMLU can apply limited amount of POCA money to awareness raising activities



Within the SRS area....

- Cardiff male cautioned
- Female in Vale under investigation for lending £3000 and requiring over £6000 in repayments
- Thai female under investigation for illegal loans
- Debt collector in Cardiff under investigation for offering loans when enforcing debts



Who refers cases to us?

- Support workers e.g. tenancy support
- Advice providers e.g. Citizens' Advice
- Enforcement agencies e.g. police
- Concerned members of the public



Engage with WIMLU

Report suspected loan shark activity to 24 hour confidential helpline

0300 123 33 11



Engage with WIMLU

FREE training

- To increase awareness of effects of illegal money lending on vulnerable people
- To know how to seek expert help and advice
- To be able to identify the signs of loan shark activity



Diolch yn fawr!

If you've been a loan shark victim or know a victim, call our 24 hour hotline for help and advice in the strictest confidence. Os ydych chi wedi dioddef oherwydd usuriwr neu'n

gwybod am rywun arall sydd

wedi dioddef, ffoniwch ein llinell 24 awr am gymorth a

chyngor yn gyfrinachol.

Are you a loan shark victim?

A ydych chi'n dioddef

oherwydd siarcod

benthyg arian?

BEAT THE LOAN SHARKS... **BITE BACK!**

YN ÔL!

CURWCH Y SIARCOD. ILADDWCH 0300 123 331 (Standard rate/Cyfradd arferol)

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Stop Loan Sharks