



Compare Cost

Before you agree to take out a loan, always compare lenders interest rates. The interest rate is quoted as an “APR” this means an “Annual Percentage Rate”. Typically, the lower the amount of the APR, the cheaper the loan. However, be careful, some lenders

promote loans at 6.9% APR, but when you read the small print, this interest rate is only available on loans of more than £7,000.

Here is an example of the interest rates charged by different lenders on a £1,000 loan repaid over a 12 month period.

| Source of Credit | Typical interest rate | Monthly repayment | Total interest | What you save on interest |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Credit Union | 12.7% APR | £88.85 | £66.13 | – |
| Lloyds TSB Bank | 14.9% APR | £89.79 | £77.48 | £11.35 |
| Capital One Classic Credit Card | 29.9% APR | £97.44 | £169.28 | £103.15 |
| Home Credit Company / Doorstep lender | 177.0% APR | £136.61 | £639.13 | £573.00 |

Source: Internet rates quoted on 10th November 2005

Cashing Cheques

If you need to cash a cheque, the Post Office will charge 55p for every £100. There are a lot of High Street shops offering to cash cheques, but you should always shop around and compare their cost with that of the Post Office.

Opening hours

79 Denmark Hill
Camberwell, London SE5 8RS
Mon-Thurs: 9.30am – 4.30pm
Fri: 11am – 4.30pm

18 Pilgrimage Street
Borough, London SE1 4LL
Mon-Thurs: 9.30am – 4.30pm
Fri: 11am – 4.30pm

221 Rye Lane
Peckham, London SE15 4TP
Mon-Thurs: 9.30am – 4.30pm
Fri: 11am – 4.30pm
Sat: 10am – 1pm

If you are interested in finding out more about anything in this newsletter, just get in touch. Southwark Credit Union can be contacted on:
Email: Info@creditunion.co.uk
Phone: 020 7787 0770
Fax: 020 7207 1444
Web: www.creditunion.co.uk

Investing in your community

Do you realise that when you save money in SCU you are investing in your community? The money that you save with us is used to make loans to other members. SCU members currently have £3.7million in savings, of which £3.7million is out on loans to members – so we are making good use of every penny you save. Why not make a new year resolution to try to save a little more money in 2006, and help us to help people in Southwark even more than we have done in 2005.



Southwark Credit Union

winter newsletter **2005**

Back to our roots

Those of you who have been members for a few years will remember that we originally started out in 1982 as 'Southwark Council Employees' Credit Union Limited'. As the name suggests, we only provided services to staff of Southwark Council. This was until our original members, who mainly consisted of employees of Southwark Council and Kings College Hospital, took the decision to expand the Credit Union's services to everyone living or working in the borough in 1999.

Since we expanded, Southwark Credit Union has grown beyond our original dreams, we are really making a difference to the lives of over 5,000 people and we are now the 13th largest credit union in Britain.

However, we realised that our success in the wider community meant that we became less connected to the Council and over time, our links lessened. To re-establish our links SCU provided a deputation to a Southwark Council meeting on 19th December. We are delighted to report that following our deputation, Cllr Nick Stanton, Leader of the Council, tabled a motion, seconded by Cllr Lorraine Zuleta and passed unanimously by Council Members, to provide information on Southwark Credit Union to Council staff and at public access points across the Council.

We look forward to working in partnership with Southwark Council to raise awareness of our services as a financial option for many more people living in Southwark.

Recognising Good Practice

In recognition of the contribution the Credit Union makes to helping people open accounts, receive their benefits, access affordable credit and insurance, as well as begin to build savings, we have been invited to provide presentations on our work at two major conferences organised by the Council. The first conference was the Revenues & Benefits Stakeholder Conference 2005 in October. The second conference takes place in December and is entitled "Routes to Prosperity: Paths out of Poverty". This conference brings together central and local government, academics and the voluntary sector to debate the strategic policy changes required to enable local government to tackle poverty more effectively at a local level.

And Government Recognition too!

In October, we hosted a visit from a HM Treasury Financial Inclusion Task Force. The Task Force were provided with a presentation and an opportunity to ask questions on our role in helping people become financially included. The Government established the Financial Inclusion Task Force to monitor progress against the Government's objectives to promote financial inclusion through increasing access to banking, affordable credit and face-to-face money advice.

Welcoming our new members

Since our Summer Newsletter, we launched access to our services for staff of the Greater London Authority. The date chosen was 21st July 2005, the date of the second round of bombs in London. We were with Ken Livingstone when he received the news and are very grateful to him for the time he spent with us, prior to leaving to take up his official duties as Mayor of London during such a difficult time.

Ken Livingstone was not the only famous face signing up for membership of Southwark Credit Union, a few weeks later, Simon Hughes, MP, became a member of the Credit Union at a Residents' Fun Day held in Tabard Gardens, Borough on 13th August. Simon urged local residents to join Southwark Credit Union, he said:

"I am keen to see local co-operatives such as credit unions thriving and am happy to sign up as a member today."



Simon Hughes signing at desk



Ken Livingstone hands his application for credit union membership to Laksham Chandereska

He urged the residents to talk to Southwark Credit Union about how the Credit Union could help them escape from the clutches of extortionate lenders:

"If you are on benefits and tied into expensive loans with door-to-door lenders, why not talk to Southwark Credit Union? Why pay £650 in interest on a £1,000 loan when the same loan will cost just £66 with the Credit Union?"

Southwark Credit Union is delighted to welcome Simon, Ken and 1,272 adults and 935 children who became members in the past year from October 2004 to September 2005.

Investors in People

Southwark Credit Union's Investor In People award was renewed in June 2005. SCU first achieved Investor In People status in 2002 and have maintained this ever since.

Members' Meeting

This year's Annual General Meeting of members will take place on 2nd February 2006. The meeting will take place from 12pm to 2pm in Room A2 at Southwark Town Hall, Peckham Road, Southwark. As always refreshments will be available.

We have been running an Inter-School Poster Competition in schools offering Young Saver Accounts. Pupils have produced posters on either diversity or money or both. We are awarding two prizes, one for primary schools and one for secondary schools. The prize is a mini Ipod. At the AGM members will be able to view the competition entries and select the winners of our Inter School Poster Competition.

Proposed dividend

Following a successful year, the Board of Directors intends to propose a dividend of 1.5% to be paid on members' savings. This is a proposal due to be voted upon at the members' meeting. We are continuing to pay 3% interest on our Young Saver Accounts for under 16s.

Service Changes

The 24 hour telephone service has been withdrawn.

Due to ever increasing costs, we regret that we have decided not to produce a diary this year.

Change to Family Protection Plan

Members will be aware that the Family Protection Plan coverage has been changed to remove the element of worldwide cover. The Board recognises that this was a very valuable and important part of the cover for members with parents and family members living overseas. Please be assured that the Board protested very strongly about this change. Unfortunately, the decision to withdraw the worldwide cover remains. The Board is convinced that the policy still represents good value for money, allowing up to 6 members of one family to be provided with £2,000 of insurance cover for funeral costs for as little as £9.60 per month.

Respecting each other

We aim to help our members by delivering a friendly, helpful service. We respect our members, and expect members to respect our staff. We reserve the right to close a member's account if our staff are subjected to abuse. Thank you for your co-operation.

Coming soon: Argos Acard

Do you shop at Argos? If you do you may be interested to hear about the Argos Acard. The Acard is a payment card which you can top-up with either your Credit Union savings, or you can apply for a Credit Union loan to be added to the card. If you are planning a purchase in Argos, the Acard is safer than carrying cash. It also gives you the convenience of a plastic card without running up expensive credit card debt.

In addition – every time you add £100 to the card, Argos will add £5. If you decide to place a £300 loan on your card, Argos will add £15 to the card. As the interest on a £300 loan repaid over a 12 month period is £19.83, you will in effect only pay a total of £4.83 in interest – which is cheaper than many credit cards and mail order catalogues!

More information on this exciting new service will be available in 2006.

Withdrawing cash

Unless you receive your benefit or your salary into your Credit Union account, the maximum amount of cash that you can withdraw each day is £50. When you need to withdraw cash, we will ask you to produce a photo ID to prove your identity. We are in the process of installing a webcam system to store photos of members in our computer system. We hope that members will co-operate with our aim to ensure that your account is protected.

Support for your debts

People in Britain now owe over £1.1 trillion. The easy availability of credit has meant that many people have become over-indebted and are struggling to repay their loans.

Southwark Credit Union is a responsible lender, and we do not want to contribute to our members becoming over indebted. Instead, we would like to help you to find a way to deal with your financial difficulties.

Thanks to funding from Barclays Bank, we are able to employ a Debt Support Worker who will be working very closely with Blackfriars Advice Centre and Twinpier Debt Counselling Service. You can speak to our Debt Support Worker in confidence about your financial situation and find out how we can help you.

Contact

Moji on 020 7358 5703 or email moji.oludario@creditunion.co.uk

Seasons Greetings

Please note: the Credit Union will be closed from 23rd December to 2nd January. We re-open on Tuesday 3rd January at 9.30am.

SCU board and staff would like to wish all our members a very happy festive season!

West Bermondsey

Sponsored by Neighbourhood Renewal funding in West Bermondsey, Southwark Credit Union's Outreach Team spent the summer visiting the Tabard, Rockingham and Leathermarket estates, knocking on 4,000 doors and speaking to over 1,000 residents. Door-knocking and community outreach sessions at Charterhouse, West Bermondsey Village Hall and the Rockingham Community Centre have enabled 112 new people from West Bermondsey to open a Credit Union account.

East Dulwich

Residents on the Dog Kennel Hill and Champion Hill estates in East Dulwich are the latest Southwark residents to hear

about Southwark Credit Union. A new Neighbourhood Renewal funded project has enabled us to knock on the doors of local residents, leaflet the estate and establish a regular outreach session every Monday from 11am to 2pm at the Albrighton Centre.

18 Pilgrimage Street

Between Long Lane and Great Dover Street is our Pilgrimage Street branch. The number of new members joining us as a result of the West Bermondsey NRF project means that we have increased the number of staff and IT provision at this office. The branch is now open from 9.30am to 4.30pm on Monday to Thursday and opens from 11am to 4.30pm on Friday.



Ela Topyla at Pilgrimage Street serving a member

A Sure Start for families

Sure Starts in Central Bermondsey and Rotherhithe have provided funding to establish weekly community cash collection points. The aim is to provide Sure Start families with an easy, local and convenient way to save money. Elizabeth Adade, herself a young mum, has joined Southwark Credit Union's Outreach Team to help parents in Central Bermondsey and Rotherhithe benefit from being able to save regularly.

In Partnership with Reed

Since November, SCU has been working very closely with Reed-in-Partnership. Thanks to funding from Southwark Council, we have been able to employ Laura Haigh as a new member of SCU's Outreach Team who works on our new 'Worklessness' project aimed at supporting people returning to employment. Laura holds regular weekly outreach sessions at Reed-in-Partnerships branches in Amelia Street, Walworth and Peckham High Street. A large number of people using the Reed-in-Partnership services have previously struggled to open a bank account. SCU has been able to open Benefit Direct Accounts for people in receipt of benefit, and arrange for people entering into employment to receive their salary into their Credit Union account. A high percentage of people opening Benefit Direct Accounts are switching from their existing Post Office Card Accounts as they prefer the extra functionality offered by a Credit Union

account – particularly the ability to save some money, rather than withdraw their full benefit.

Young Saver Update

St Saviour's and St Olave's Church of England School in New City Road has become the latest school to offer Young Saver Accounts to their pupils. There are now ten schools offering Young Saver Accounts and the convenience of a weekly cash collection point to encourage pupils to save money. Please get in touch if you are the parent of a child at one of these schools and would like to get involved in helping at the collection point in your child's school:

- Charles Dickens
- Crampton
- Geoffrey Chaucer
- Joseph Lancaster
- Notre Dame
- St George's RC
- St John's, Walworth
- St Joseph's, Borough & Bankside
- St Saviour's and St Olave's
- Victory

Contact

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