

# Illegal Money Lending

How to protect yourself from illegal money lenders

Easy read booklet



Plymouth

**STOP LOAN SHARKS**  
Intervention . Support . Education

# What is a Loan Shark?



A 'loan shark' or illegal money lender is a person who lends you money without the legal permission to do so. They lend it to make themselves more money.



They usually make you pay back a lot, lot more than you borrowed. For example, you borrow £10 and will have to pay back £50.



They can be people that you may know, a friend or a friend of a friend. A loan shark can be anybody.



You might have seen them sometimes in places that you go to. Somewhere like the park, the pub or café.



They may seem very friendly and kind and want to help you at first.



Or they could contact you on social media, through Snapchat or Facebook.



You might even see an advert for a loan on a pop up.



A loan shark will not write down what you owe them, and they won't tell you how much you will have to pay back.



They will usually keep on collecting the loan week after week, month after month, year after year.



And if you cannot pay them, they may turn from being very friendly to being very angry.



Sometimes they will ask you to do things you do not want to do, such as stealing or dealing drugs.

# Have you borrowed money from the loan shark?



If you have borrowed money from the loan shark, you are **not** in trouble. They are the people that are breaking the law.



Speaking to someone about your situation is the best thing to do as they could give you help and support.



# How to report a loan shark

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Report them to the Illegal Money Lending Team on **0300 555 2222**

Speak to your local Citizens Advice

# What information can you give to them?



You can even report what has happened to you **without giving** them **your name** or **phone number**.



Their name or nickname



Where they live



How much you borrowed, how much you pay them and how you pay them



What car they drive





Where you meet them



When they come



Describe how they look

# Illegal Money Lending Team

The Illegal Money Lending team investigates and prosecutes those who lend money illegally (loan sharks). They also support people who have borrowed money from a loan shark.

Their teams have specialist investigators and officers who work together to arrest and prosecute loan sharks.

The Illegal Money Lending Team work closely with many different organisations to protect you from illegal money lenders. This includes the police, housing association and advice agencies.

You can contact the Illegal Money Lending Team at any time on **0300 555 2222**.



Citizens Advice is a charity that helps people with different problems they face for free. The Citizens Advice service has over 270 local Citizens Advice in England and Wales. Citizens Advice offers confidential advice online, over the phone and in person for free.

Their advisers do everything to help every client, whoever they are and whatever the problem. They treat all clients with the same respect and the same commitment.

The charity can help you with problems such as debt and money, benefits, work, housing, family, consumer, immigration and much more.

Citizens Advice will not share your information about your problems with anyone.

They also campaign on big problems such as Universal Credit, disability benefits, debt and financial difficulties, and other important problems.

# How to protect yourself from loan sharks

This booklet was funded by the Illegal Money Lending Team and aims to raise awareness of loan sharks. The money available for the funding has come from the proceeds of crime taken from convicted loan sharks.

Citizens Advice Plymouth received funding from the Illegal Money Lending Team to create an online easy-read material that will be suitable for people coming from different backgrounds or having difficulties reading a complex text in English.

Credits for design work go Ellie Spicer. The text of this booklet was created by Shirley Deeney and Jaroslava Hurtikova.

Thanks to Improving Lives Plymouth for their help developing this booklet.

Visit <https://www.stoploansharks.co.uk/> for more information about loan sharks and how to report them.

You can download this booklet from [www.citizensadviceplymouth.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.citizensadviceplymouth.org.uk/campaigns)



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