

CU Newsletter

Spring 2016

Top stories this issue:

- Meet our new CEO 1
- LifeSavers Schools Project.. 1
- Smartcash** for young savers 2
- CUCA service to be withdrawn .. 3
- AGM 25th Feb at Green Man..... 4
- Credit Union Services 4

Meet our new CEO



New CEO Ravi Ravindran shaking hands with Janet Greenwood.

After four years of dedicated service as Chief Executive of Lewisham Plus Credit Union, Janet Greenwood has decided to move to a different role. From April she will be working part-time as a loan underwriter and relief branch manager. The Credit Union is very grateful for all the work Janet has put into the organisation over the years, and is pleased to be retaining her expertise. Under her management Lewisham Plus has grown significantly to become one of the largest credit unions in London.

Ravi Ravindran started with us on 1st February and is working alongside Janet during their handover.

Ravi's background was originally in investment management before running a small business and Post Office. He is a local man, and was attracted by the community aspect of our work, in addition to being well qualified. He is also the volunteer Treasurer for a London charity.

Ravi is looking forward to working with our staff and for our members.

Please give him a big welcome!

Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Firm 213588.

LifeSavers Schools Project

We are pleased to announce a successful start for two new school savings schemes, at Keston Primary School, in Bromley and at St Bartholomew's Primary School in Lewisham.

Both schools are part of the 'LifeSavers' schools programme pilot being supported by the Church of England's financial taskforce. 'LifeSavers' is being piloted in six schools across Bradford, Nottinghamshire and South East London.

On average 1 in 3 pupils offered the savings club has taken up the chance to save. Credit unions are providing the savings facility and churches are supporting the delivery of LifeSavers, with volunteers to help run savings clubs and LifeSavers assemblies in schools.

This is a part of Archbishop Justin Welby's plan to support improved financial education and inclusion. He said *"I strongly support this initiative to encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards money and the habit of saving."*

For more about the Archbishop of Canterbury's wider financial initiative see www.toyourcredit.org.uk.

With help from Lifesavers Lewisham Plus hopes to bring credit union savings clubs to more local schools in Bromley and Lewisham in 2016.

Lewisham Plus Credit Union Ltd is a not-for-profit savings and low cost loans service for people living or working in the London Boroughs of Lewisham and Bromley and all of SE19



Smartcash

is an exciting new Engage card just for 8-16 year olds.

Save £10 with our special offer – see next page.



LifeSavers at Keston Primary School
Adults (Left to Right) Lisa Moralee, Sarah Neason, Katie Herbert and Christine Martin.

10,000 Member Milestone Passed

Lewisham Plus passed a milestone of **10,000 adult members** at 31st December 2015. This makes us officially "a Large v1 Credit Union", according to the PRA regulations.

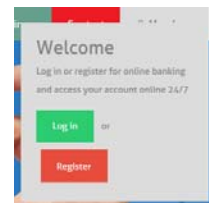
Recent highlights include:

- **10,019** adult members
- **1,414** young savers under 16
- **£4.7m** savings, **£5.6m** assets
- **£2.6m** loans to members
- **367** online loan and **268** online member applications Oct-Dec
- **0.5%** dividend (proposed to AGM)
- **1.5%** for young savers

(Figures at 31st Dec 2015)

Register a web PIN

Haven't registered for our new web site yet? This is quick and easy, and gives you secure access to your account balances, transaction details, and now also to online payments.

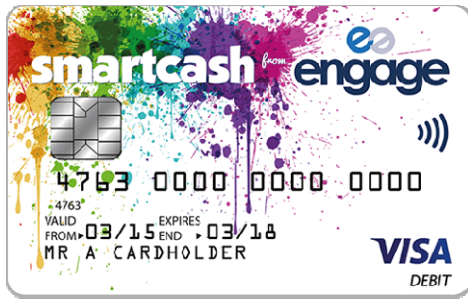


Click on Members to register your web PIN, for a next working day confirmation.

CUCA PINs and telephone banking PINs are not linked to web site PINs.

To get your overnight balance text 'Balance' to 07537 410334 or see your transactions online.

Tip: If you need to call, try to avoid busy times (e.g. 9:30 & 1pm), or send us an email asking for a call back. Thank you.



Smartcash pre-paid card for Young Savers

Available from March, **Smartcash** is an exciting new Engage card just for young savers aged 8-16, and is exclusive to credit unions.

Designed to help children and teens take control of their finances in the connected world – electronic pocket money to use and to learn the importance of money management. Parental access to the child's online account ensures safe, responsible spending, whilst the ability to send money direct to the credit union encourages young savers to add to their savings on a regular basis.



Each **Smartcash** account comes with a contactless Visa debit card, free mobile app, online account and a range of rewards and discounts to save on everyday spending and purchases like games or fashion.

There will normally be a one-off £10 fee for a **Smartcash** card, but no monthly fee and no fee to load from a credit union account. **As a special introductory offer, Lewisham Plus will pay the £10 fee on the first 500 cards, so they will be free for kids.**

Note: A parent must also be a credit union member and hold an Engage card to validate the child's identity.

For full details see our web site and Terms and Conditions (coming soon)

Payments Online

Our website can already accept new member entrance fees on-line.

Members are now able to add to their credit union savings or make loan repayments using a debit card, by signing into the Members area.

Corporate Accounts Service Launched

An AGM commitment was made last year to allow corporate members to join the credit union. This facility is now available for local charities, trusts, clubs and societies. Our first account has just been opened for a local residents' association.

Conditions apply, so please see our website for further details.

www.pluscu.co.uk/accounts-for-societies-and-charities.

Meet Your Board

Getting everyone on our Board of Directors together for a photo is always difficult and we almost managed it. *From Left to right: Tim Pagan, Keith Howick, Liz Ballaster, Frank Whittle, Mark Plummer, John McCarthy (President), Paul Treece, Arun Prasad and Peter Dulley.*



Missing from the photo are James Gardner, who was away celebrating a birthday (21 again!), and member engagement director Geoff Cave.



We have three new directors, *left to right Keith Howick, Arun Prasad, and Tim Pagan (awaiting approval)* We were sorry to see Nene Addo step down as a director due to family and work commitments. However we have welcomed David Blane and Barney Wanstall to join David Smith on the Supervisory Committee.

FSCS change

On 1st January 2016 the FSCS deposit protection limit changed from £85,000 to £75,000.

For further details see our website: www.pluscu.co.uk/is-your-money-safe



New staff member at The Albany, Deptford

The credit union's Deptford outreach service, previously at 1a Eddystone Tower, moved with Lewisham Homes to Unit 13 A-B, The Albany, Douglas Way, Deptford, SE8 4AG.

Find us at the far end of The Albany as viewed from Deptford market.

Our Deptford desk is open to serve credit union members from Mon to Wed, 10am to 3pm. **Note: This service does not handle any cash.**



Janet Palmer is our new member of staff at The Albany. If you live in the north of Lewisham, why not pop in to ask her about our services?

Engage Classic Cards going contactless

The Engage Classic Prepaid card is an ethical low-cost Visa debit card. Engage is easy to use, very flexible, and has exciting high street **cashback rewards** too.



Members with Engage Classic Cards, which were not contactless when they were issued, will shortly be receiving a new card with the facility for contactless payments. Please ensure your old card is destroyed. Benefits are:

- UK sort code & account number**
- Contactless Visa debit card**
- ATM, cash back & money transfers**
- Cashback rewards at many stores**
- Online portal and mobile app**
- Envelope™ Money Management**
- No issue cost – no credit checks**
- Ethical £2/month, no load fees***

See our web site for full details

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL CREDIT UNION CURRENT ACCOUNT (CUCA) CUSTOMERS

CUCA Service to be withdrawn

We are sorry to announce that due to changes at the Co-operative Bank the national CUCA system is being withdrawn for all credit unions. All our CUCA accounts will need to be closed by 31st August 2016.

We will be working hard to support members with CUCA in making their choices, and in helping to migrate to new services where we can.

Lewisham Plus will not open new CUCAs after 29th February 2016.

In summary:

- Banking support for CUCA is being withdrawn nationally
- All CUCA accounts must be closed by 31st August 2016
- **Don't panic! Alternatives are available and we will help**
- We will be writing to members with a CUCA over the next few months to set out your choices and then to give notice of closure
- Assistance will be provided to support you in moving to new payment arrangements

The services that underpin CUCA are provided by the Co-operative Bank and ABCUL, through a national agreement with credit unions. All credit unions have agreed to an orderly exit, which must now be completed. Lewisham Plus has about 1,800 CUCAs.

How does this affect my CUCA?

We appreciate this is unwelcome news, but we are here to help you.

Your CUCA account will continue to work normally until the date we set out in your personal "Notice of Closure" letter when we write.

In February we will send you a "Your CUCA Choices" letter. This is to set out your choices and, as a first step, to ask you to transfer your benefit or other credits to the Credit Union Main Account. *This is shown in the diagram below.* Doing this first will ensure your saving and loan payments continue and will make it easier to move to a new account.

Later we will send you a "Notice of Closure" letter, to give 30 days notice of CUCA account closure.

"Notice of Closure" letters will be sent out in stages between March and July. You can ask us to close your CUCA earlier if you want to, or wait until we write to give you notice.

If you are an active CUCA user and let us know in response to the "Your CUCA Choices" letter that you may be interested in the Engage Current Account, we will delay your "Notice of Closure" until June or July 2016.

If your CUCA is used to pay direct debits, you will need to arrange for these to be re-directed to a new current account when you have one.



What are "Your CUCA choices"?

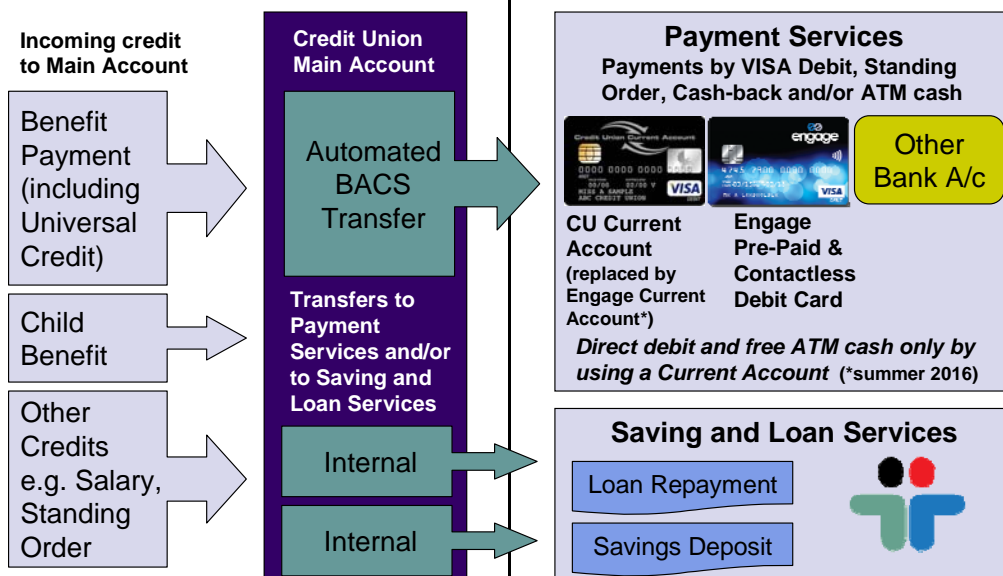
These will include:

- Open a new ethical **Engage Current Account**. We expect these to become available from June. This option is likely to be suitable for people with active CUCA accounts who want to stay with a service designed for credit union members.
- Use an **Engage Classic Card**. Applications are available in branches and online. These may be suitable if you don't use direct debits and don't use ATMs often.
- Transfer to an **existing bank or building society account** you already hold. Unfortunately CUCA does not support '7 day' account switching, but we can help with information you need.
- Open a **Basic Bank Account**. A number of banks launched these in January. Find out more about Basic Bank Accounts on the Money Advice Service Website: www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/basic-bank-accounts

For now keep using your CUCA as normal. But please do respond promptly when we write or call you to ask for your decision or action.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NOW
Your benefit or other credit used for savings and/or loan repayments needs to be moved to the Credit Union Main Account by 30th June.

We will contact you to arrange an appointment to transfer your benefits to the Credit Union Main Account by visiting one of our branches, or to create a standing order from your existing bank account if you have one.





AGM 26th February

We invite and encourage all our members to participate in the credit union by attending our Annual General Meeting, to be held at:

7pm on Friday 26th Feb 2016 at The Barn, The Green Man, 355 Bromley Road, SE6 2RP.

Members are invited to register an interest in serving as directors or on the supervisory committee by email to volunteer@pluscu.co.uk, or by letter, by Friday 19th February

The AGM is free for credit union members. Stay to celebrate the year with us over a light buffet.

The Barn is the community hall to the left of The Green Man building. It is on the Lewisham-Bromley bus routes, 5 minutes from Bellingham and Downham, with free parking on nearby streets behind the building.

Annual Report 2015

Our Annual Report and Accounts for the year to 30th Sept 2015 are now available on our web site (under the "About Us" section). These will be presented at our AGM, and are available on request.

Membership: Grew to 9,596 adults (up by 722) and 1,453 juniors.

Savings: Up by over £640,000 to £4.4m for adults and £0.26m for juniors, a 17% increase.

Dividends to be credited on 26th March 2016 are:

- **1.5% for young savers.**
- **0.5% for adults** (subject to AGM)

Loans: Over £2.6m granted, up by 9% from £2.4m in the prior year.

Financial: Income from members met 85% of expenses. Bad debt write offs higher but overall at 5.0% of lending. Capital ratio at 9.3% of assets, helped by a £100,000 capital grant from Lloyds Banking Group.

Balance Sheet 30th Sept 15

	2015	2014
Assets		
Tangible fixed assets	148,969	192,060
Loans to members	2,248,277	1,876,942
Other debtors	46,844	44,220
Current investments	1,612,864	1,591,174
Cash at bank/in hand	<u>1,574,556</u>	<u>1,104,707</u>
Total Assets	5,631,510	4,809,103
Liabilities		
Other creditors	89,709	35,035
Juvenile deposits	262,293	264,628
Members' shares	4,412,821	3,745,690
Accruals/deferred inc.	<u>344,735</u>	<u>412,419</u>
Total Liabilities	5,109,558	4,457,772
Net Assets	<u>521,952</u>	<u>351,331</u>
Reserves		
General reserves	186,656	142,063
Other reserves	<u>335,296</u>	<u>209,268</u>
	<u>521,952</u>	<u>351,331</u>

Income and Expenditure for year ended 30th Sept 15

	2015	2014
Income		
Loan interest	569,536	366,428
Investment/bank interest	23,262	22,190
Other income/grants	279,742	287,431
Lloyds Banking Group	100,000	0
Growth Fund release	<u>72,000</u>	<u>90,000</u>
	1,044,540	766,049
Expenditure		
Operating staff costs	303,214	283,119
Other admin costs	316,114	284,035
Occupancy costs	62,373	56,928
Regulatory charges	10,654	6,409
Bad and doubtful debts	<u>140,498</u>	<u>96,101</u>
	832,853	726,592
Operating surplus/(loss)	<u>211,687</u>	<u>39,457</u>
Taxation	(22,571)	(55)
Distribution paid in year	(18,495)	(27,898)
Prior year adjustment	18,770	0
Total recognised gains	<u>189,391</u>	<u>11,504</u>

Paul Treece, Treasurer -extract from audited accts

Credit Union Services

Anyone living or working in Lewisham, Bromley or SE19 can join Lewisham Plus Credit Union.

Saving and Borrowing

Save up to £30,000, £3 joining fee for adults, £2 for young savers.

Personal Loans up to £10,000 from 0.75% to 2% pm (9.4% to 26.8% APR)

SAYB 3% pm/42.6% APR, save as you borrow – our most popular loan.

Corporate Accounts

Deposit account available for local associations, clubs and charities.

Engage Ethical Card Services

Low cost prepaid Visa debit card, £2 per month, no load fees.*

Smartcash electronic pocket money for 8-16s. £10 one off, no monthly fee.*

Engage Current Account Card service* (planned launch June 2016)

*See full Terms and Conditions for details.

To protect your funds we require proof of ID for all withdrawals.

Branch Contacts & Hours

Sydenham 262 Kirkdale, SE26 4RS

Tel: **0208 778 4738**

Email: admin@pluscu.co.uk

The Green Man at 355 Bromley Road, Catford, SE6 2RP

Tel: **0208 461 4721**

Bromley Plus at 54 Cotmandene Cres. St.Paul's Cray, BR5 2RG

Tel: **0208 617 9416**

All open 9.30-1pm Mon-Fri.

Sydenham only 7.30-9pm Friday and 10am-noon Saturday.

Deptford at Unit 13 A-B, The Albany, SE8 4AG (Mon-Wed 10am-3pm)

Closed Bank Holidays and as per notices.

Dormant adult accounts under £10 balance - annual £2.50 fee.

Online Joining & Loans

Apply to join the credit union and for loans from us using online forms.

Online Account & Transactions

View recent transactions online in our Members' area and approve money transfers (Web PIN required)

24/7 Telephone Balances

Automated balances and transfers 24/7 on 0208 778 4738 (PIN required)

SMS Balance Enquiries

Text Balance to 07537 410334

The text will cost your standard network rate for an SMS. If you don't get a response email admin@pluscu.co.uk with your name, member number and mobile phone number.

PayPoint Cards

Make cash payments at PayPoint outlets. 50p charge for each PayPoint use.

Life Insurance

Members up to age 70 receive life insurance at no charge. Loans are also covered up to age 75.**

**All insurances subject to policy limits

Our individual and friendly service is volunteer led but professionally managed. We work for a fair and inclusive local community.