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| *Content type* | **Publication** |
| *Date* | 4 June 2013 |
| *Title* | **Tales of the Tallyman: Debt and problem debt among older people** |
| *Excerpt* | Debt has often been seen as an issue affecting younger people, with limited attention paid to older people in debt or who are over indebted. |
| *Body copy* | In new analyses of British and English data, ILC-UK explore debt and problem debt affecting older people, and its impact on their lives. This report was kindly supported by Age UK as part of the Age UK fellowship.The research examines three key areas. Firstly, the attitudes of older people compared to younger people on debt and borrowing, and the reasons behind these attitude differences. Secondly, the research explores the patterns of debt in older people (here classified as aged over 50). Next, the report turns to the characteristics of older people that place them at greater vulnerability of falling into problem debt. Finally, the effects of living in problem debt on older peoples’ outcomes and experiences are examined.ILC-UK analyses used data from three sources: the British Social Attitudes survey, the Family and Resources Survey, and the English Longitudinal Survey of Ageing. This mix of resources looks at both longitudinal and cross-sectional data.Some of the headline findings of the research include:* As they age, people tend to have more negative attitudes towards credit and borrowing.
* In the over-55s, women and people who are married or cohabiting have more negative attitudes to credit and borrowing.
* Just three per cent of people aged over 65 would turn to credit in the event of an unexpected £200 expense – four times as many just couldn’t pay.
* Among debtors the proportion in problem debt has increased; while there was an overall decrease in the numbers of people in debt between 2002 and 2010, but problem debt fell by less.
* Debt is becoming concentrated to a greater degree among fewer people, with median debts increasing above inflation from £1,500 in 2002 to £2,500 in 2010.

Based on the findings of the research ILC-UK make a number of recommendations:1. Protecting funding for money advice
2. Better information on older debtors
3. Protect debtors from falling so rapidly into problem debt
4. Better advice for older people who are self-employed
5. Improved industry-led support for debtors with mental health issues
6. Further exploration of when manageable debt becomes problem debt
7. Appropriate access to suitable credit
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