



**Embargoed until 00:01 hrs, Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November**

## 100 Fair Loans Made In East London

East London based Fair Finance, an ethical and socially responsible lending organisation, has today approved its 100<sup>th</sup> loan totalling £180,000 to people who were previously using expensive and unethical lenders.

From its offices at 47 Ben Jonson Rd Fair Finance offers credit to residents of Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham for personal or business use.

“Since we opened our doors in April the demand for our services have been phenomenal, people have chosen to come us over the expensive home credit and unethical lenders out there,” says Faisal Rahman Managing Director of Fair Finance. “The first loan we approved was for someone to consolidate debts that were charging 500%, and the two loans we approved today were to help a single mother buy her children presents for Christmas and a for someone to expand their vegetable wholesale business.”

Fair Finance was launched in April 2005 to help people with problems accessing finance from mainstream sources, or who simply want a fair deal for the money they borrow. It has helped and supported over 200 people to open bank accounts, with money and debt management, business support as well as offering finance when appropriate.

In addition Fair Finance provides targeted money and debt advice to residents of BGVP HA, Newlon and Spitalfields Housing through its Money Matters project.

Nassar Miah, Enterprise Manager at the Ocean NDC a supporter of Fair Finance said, “Although Fair Finance has only been in business for 6 months it’s really making an impact on people’s lives, we hope that people will realise that there is an alternative to expensive and usurious lenders out there and that alternative is Fair Finance.”

“Fair Finance’s growth in the last six months shows how important a service they provide locally. Barclays is committed to supporting community finance organisations like Fair Finance who can reach out to local communities in a

way that often mainstream banks cannot, providing an important alternative to the illegal loan sharks and high-interest door-step lenders” said Jenna Eastlake, Senior Financial Inclusion Manager at Barclays Bank “We believe Fair Finance is making a real difference at a local community level by providing affordable loans to people in need.”

Fair Finance offers the following services to residents of Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets:

- Personal loans of up to £2,000 at 21%
- Business loans of up to £7,000 at 19%
- Help in opening Bank Accounts

All decisions are based on your individual circumstances and your ability to afford a loan, so bad credit history is no problem.

Fair Finance is based at 47 Ben Jonson Rd and can be contacted on 0207 780 1777

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Notes to editors

- 1 Fair Finance is an ethical and socially responsible lending organisation, tackling financial exclusion and exploitation amongst poor communities in East London. It was launched on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005 by the FSA and Treasury as a fair alternative to the unfair lenders who profit from other peoples poverty. It is based in Stepney in the Ocean Estate.
- 2 Fair Finance builds and expands on the pioneering work done by Tower Hamlets based community organisation - The Environment Trust, Streetcred (<http://www.quakersocialaction.com/streetcred.htm>) and Account 3 (<http://www.account3.org.uk/html/index.php>) on Debt and Microfinance. These projects have been recognised as excellence and best practice in their field by the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, the Bank of England, Royal Town Planning Institute, and the Development Trust’s Association
- 3 In partnership with Fair Finance Streetcred and Account3 offer ‘microcredit’ loans of up to £2,000 for excluded women entrepreneurs. Since 1999/2000 they have helped over 350 east London residents access over £250,000 to either start or grow their business.
- 4 Main funders of Fair Finance are Banks (Natwest and Barclays), Government (Ocean New Deal for Communities, Phoenix Fund) Europe (ERDF), a number of charitable trusts (Esmee Fairbarin and the Tudor Trust), and housing associations (BGVP HA, and Newlon HA).
- 5 Barclays and NatWest/RBS Banks are providing funding as part of their work to promote financial inclusion. For more information please see [www.barclays.co.uk/financialinclusion](http://www.barclays.co.uk/financialinclusion) and <http://www.rbs.co.uk/community>

- 6 Fair Finance is an Industrial & Provident Society set up as a CDFI (Community Development Finance Institution) - a new financial tool for social, economic and physical renewal in under-invested communities. They lend and invest in deprived areas and underserved markets that cannot access mainstream finance. They are sustainable, independent organisations that provide financial services with two aims: to generate social and financial returns more details on the [www.cdfa.org.uk](http://www.cdfa.org.uk) website
- 7 Fair Finance rates have been assessed to ensure customers have a real alternative to expensive sub prime lenders and doorstep lenders. Typical lending rates.

Lender	Average APR
London & Scottish Provident	158%
Provident Financial	164%
Morses Ltd	365%
CLC	1564%
Fair Finance	20%

- 8 Fair Finance is based at 47 Ben Jonson Rd, Stepney, London E1 4SA and can be contacted on 0207 780 1777
- 9 For more details contact: Faisal Rahman – 0207 780 1777