



### GREETINGS

So much has happened since our last newsletter I hardly know where to start! It has overwhelmingly been good news, including new supporters, new pledge adopters, and new research which has helped to make a difference. One thing that has really struck me is that Keep Me Posted appears to have finally broken through to the arenas where consumers and their attitudes to money management are regularly discussed. We have found ourselves receiving the same invitations to listen and contribute to debates and panel discussions on financial inclusion and capability. We've graduated to the point where as well as our core team championing the cause, others have taken up the baton and promoted the campaign in similar forums. I feel we really have turned a corner, and we couldn't have done it without your continuing support, both as organisations and as individuals. Now we need to keep up the pressure and continue putting our case about the unfairness of, to paraphrase the National Pensioners Convention's vice president, "being treated as second class citizens if we don't use the internet". I am delighted that many of our supporters have returned as MPs after the General Election, and look forward to continuing to work with them. With a new crop of MPs in Parliament the campaign also has a real opportunity to extend our base of political support. After all, there are as many and varied reasons why people don't use – or may choose not to use - the internet as there are constituents. This new Parliament could be the one that finally stands up for consumer choice and puts something into law that means we can all choose free paper bills and statements if that's what we want. That would be something to shout about.

Judith Donovan CBE, Chair

### MORE CUSTOMERS PROTECTED BY THE KEEP ME POSTED PLEDGE

More than 10 million customers across the UK are now protected by the Keep Me Posted pledge after Yorkshire Water and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water adopted our pledge.

Yorkshire Water added its support to the campaign – securing its 4.7 million customers the right to choose how they are communicated with – alongside Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water, who serve 3 million customers.

"We believe it is important that our customers have the right to choose in what format they would like to receive their bill, information or advice from

us," said Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water, while a spokesman for Yorkshire Water added "Listening to our customers and treating them in the way they expect is so important to us as a business".



See our new look pledge on Page 4

# 442%



the mark up some people are charged for bills on the approximate cost to their provider (35p – 65p)

# 163



the number of peers who voted for a House of Lords bill amendment to protect the right to keep paper – defeated by just 26 votes

# 64%



of people who don't bank online say security is a big concern

# 17%



of people earning less than £20,000 have never used the internet – just 2% of those earning £40,000 haven't

## WE'RE IN THE NEWS! What the media are saying...

Keep Me Posted has continued to enjoy the support of the media, with items appearing in national and regional press about our London Economics report (see page 3) new adopters, and our responses to everything from the abolishing of annual tax returns to a report on payday lenders. Here's just a small selection:

### MORTGAGE INTRODUCER

42pc of mortgagors ignorant of rate

Almost half of mortgage holders (42%) are unaware of their current mortgage rate, Keep Me Posted research has revealed.

### Daily Mail

Bid to deliver free paper bills

Energy, telecoms and water companies must not charge their customers extra to receive paper bills, an amendment to the Consumer Rights Bill will say today.

### theguardian

Paper bank statements make it easier to manage finances, study says

Research finds consumers twice as likely to correctly identify how much money in account if they didn't use online statements.

### IFA

Responding to the Chancellor's announcement that the annual paper tax return will be phased out, Judith Donovan CBE, Chair of the Keep Me Posted campaign, said:

"The Keep Me Posted campaign welcomes the fact that British tax-payers will still have the option to complete a paper self-assessment return. Many people like the protection offered by paper tax returns, particularly in light of revelations last year that five million British workers may have had their tax bills incorrectly calculated."

### BBC NEWS

Online banking fraud 'up by 48%'

Consumer Rights  
Losses from online banking fraud rose by 48% in 2014 compared with 2013 as consumers increasingly conducted their financial affairs on the internet.

### UtilityWeek

Welsh Water gives customers paper bill option.

Welsh Water has become the latest company to commit to giving customers a choice on how they are billed. Six million consumers are now involved in the "Keep Me Posted" campaign, which aims to give customers choice on how they receive their bills and statements without a penalty.

### financial Advice.co.uk

Following our story earlier this week about identity fraud being on the rise, **Financial Fraud Action (FFA)** has confirmed that losses from online banking fraud have risen by 48% in 2014.

### CITY.A.M.

Online statements could be bad for your bank balance

While people tend to think online statements help them make better financial decisions, you're more likely to have better money management skills if you receive paper statements in the post.

## KEEP ME POSTED IS ALWAYS READY WITH A COMMENT

We've been lucky to be invited to several industry-wide events dealing with financial inclusion, as well as being asked to comment on a whole host of issues and respond to consultations.

The Money Advice Service approached us to give feedback on their draft Financial Capability Strategy for the UK, which has so far led to the MAS setting up an evidence hub. There everyone can go to read about good practice in action when it comes to financial education and helping people manage their money. We are planning to contribute our own Managing Money Online research to the hub. Keep Me Posted was also mentioned in a new report from the Financial Inclusion Commission, an independent body of experts and parliamentarians who came together to put financial inclusion on the political

agenda for the new Parliamentary term.

[www.financialinclusioncommission.org.uk/report](http://www.financialinclusioncommission.org.uk/report)

Once again the previous Government's digital by default programme raised our hackles with proposals we think are frankly unfair, such as an option for a two-tier payment system for a driving licence proposed by the DVLA. Under DVLA changes paper applications for a driving licence now cost £43, whereas applications made digitally cost £34. We argued that this "introduces a financial distinction between those who can and cannot (or do not want to) apply for their licence digitally". The campaign believes such a financial distinction is wrong at a time when so many citizens have difficulty accessing the internet.

Keep Me Posted also contributed to the review of the Lending Standards Code.

The Code provides valuable protection for customers and explains how firms are expected to deal with them day-to-day and in times of financial difficulties. We believe a new consumer friendly, easy to read, guide should be developed which explicitly sets out how financial organisations should communicate with customers about their loans, credit cards, charge cards, current account overdrafts or other financial products (e.g. personally in writing, or by some other means).

We also responded to proposed amendments to the Income Tax (PAYE) Regulations 2003, which we felt would isolate customers who did not have access to broadband or did not wish to receive notifications from HMRC electronically.

## MEETING WITH THE NEW PARLIAMENT

The Keep Me Posted campaign is delighted to welcome a new crop of MPs to Parliament and we look forward to meeting with many of them in the coming months to build support for the campaign. We need your support

to keep these issues on the political agenda, so do consider writing to your local MP to urge them to support the aims of the Keep Me Posted campaign. You can find the name of your local MP by entering your postcode at

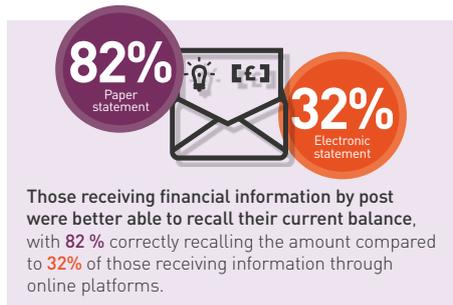
[www.theyworkforyou.com](http://www.theyworkforyou.com), and you can write to them at House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. If you do not have easy access to the internet please do contact the campaign and we can find the name of your MP for you.

# MANAGING MONEY ONLINE: NEW RESEARCH REVEALS THIS MAY NOT BE AS EFFECTIVE AS WE THINK

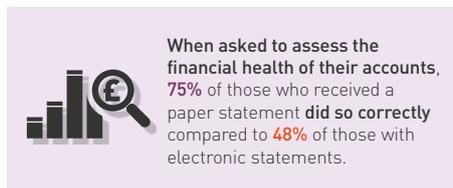
A behavioural economics survey to look at the differences in how people manage their money online and on paper provided some surprising results earlier this year, not just for us, but for experienced financial educators The Money Charity, with whom we partnered to launch the survey.

The research, the biggest study of its kind, investigated how the method by which people receive financial information influenced their understanding of the information, the choices they made and the actions they took. And the overwhelming response was that people understood information better, made better choices and were more likely to take action when they received mail by post.

London Economics, who conducted the experiment, asked 2,400 people to assess the health of a mock bank statement. Half of participants received the statement by post, and half received it online. More than twice as many of those who received the information by post could recall their current balance compared to the online-only group (82% v 32%).



When asked to assess the financial health of their account, 75% of those who received a paper statement could do so, compared to under half (48%) of those who saw it online. Even those who claimed that



electronically-received statements were better than paper in terms of helping them manage their finances found the opposite was true in practice.

The findings caused a stir when we officially launched them at a debate earlier in the year, with Michelle Highman, CEO of The Money Charity, John Thurso MP, a member of the Treasury Select Committee, and Mick McAteer, founder and director of the Financial Inclusion Centre, as panelists.

Also in the audience were representatives from a host of service providers, consumer groups and financial companies including Money Advice Trust, Money Advice Service, British Gas, Santander, Nationwide, Uswitch, Which?, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Building Societies Association, Financial Conduct Authority and Advice UK. They asked some demanding questions of our panel, and we hope took the results away to contemplate the impact on their businesses.

You can read the executive summary and the whole report on our website, or write to us at our usual address for a copy of the executive summary.

“Policy-makers and legislators should look closely at how to protect people’s right to choose.”

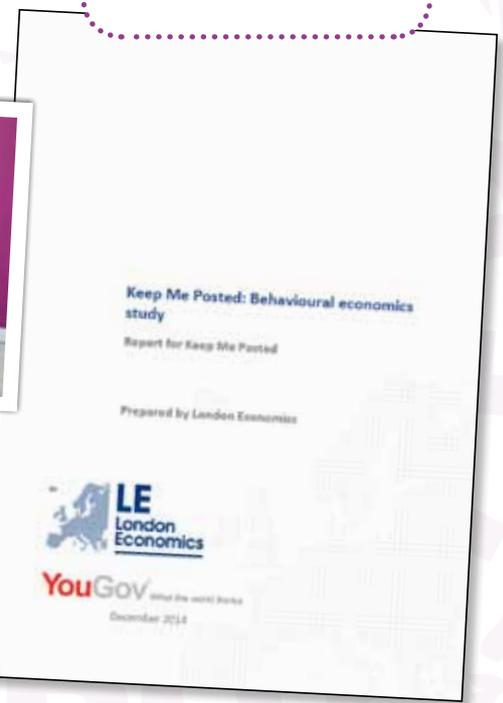
– John Thurso MP

“It is easier and cheaper to change the behaviour of one bank rather than its 7 million customers”

– Mick McAteer

“The fact that the research reveals 42% of people couldn’t identify the largest payment from a bank account is petrifying”

– Michelle Highman



# WHY DIGITAL SHOULDN'T BE THE DEFAULT MODE

“Digital by default” was the outgoing Government’s mantra for its plans to move as many of its services as possible online. The idea was that the system would be so simple to use it would become the preferred way of operating to fill in a census form, file VAT returns and many more things.

However, having lost a court case over VAT returns, when a couple of small businesses without broadband won the right to keep paper forms, another U-turn occurred recently when the Rural Payments Agency was forced to allow

farmers to continue to submit paper forms to apply for EU subsidies. The Rural Payments Agency had found that after moving their system wholly online in January, the number of registrations had fallen dramatically. In one region, Cumbria, fewer than half – 43 per cent - of likely claimants had registered in the first six weeks of the system. In 2014 more than 800 paper applications were made by farmers in Cumbria – in 2015 just seven per cent of those eligible had registered for the new Basic Payment Scheme.

Figures like these, and complaints from farmers who had to travel to special offices to have their data inputted by someone else if they were unable to do it themselves, prompted a climb down. Farmers are now allowed to submit paper forms again – though as yet we don’t know if that option will be retained. We call upon the new Government to offer a paper alternative to all those who choose it, rather than being forced into a system they cannot work with, or even worse, simply doesn’t work.

## ‘PLAIN ENGLISH’ recognition for the Keep Me Posted pledge

When we launched Keep Me Posted we had a six-point Right To Choose pledge that we called for service providers to adopt. However, we wondered if it could be simplified, and with the help of the Plain English Campaign we have come up with a clearer version – less wordy but still adhering to the principles. We think you’ll agree it’s a change for the better. It’s even been awarded the Plain English Campaign’s Crystal Mark for clarity!

The new pledge now calls for organisations to:

- Offer all customers the right to choose paper bills and statements
- Ensure there is no charge for choosing to have paper bills and statements
- Only take away paper bills and statements after the customer agrees to the change
- Only change the frequency of paper bills and statements after a customer agrees to the change
- Ensure customers are not denied online access if they choose paper bills and statements
- Allow customers who have moved to online billing to move back to paper without charge



## European progress

Keep Me Posted EU, a consumer campaign directed at the European institutions, continues to make progress. Set up following the success of the UK’s Keep Me Posted campaign, KMP EU has garnered the support of consumer groups, charities and Members of the European Parliament. These include

ANEC – the European consumer voice in standardisation, Age Platform Europe, European Development Fund, European consumer organisation BEUC, Lucy Anderson MEP, Jude Kirton-Darling MEP (S&D Group) and Heinz K. Becker MEP (EPP Group).

Another EU member, Finland, has also been flying the flag for consumer choice. In a test case against mobile phone firm

ELISA, the Finnish Market Court decided that the €1.90 charge for a paper invoice was unlawful, disputing the company’s claim that the practice was widespread, saved the environment and supported the move towards a “knowledge society”. The Court even threatened the firm with a €100,000 fine if they did not comply!



## A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR NEW SUPPORTERS

Since our last newsletter we have added some more big names to our support organisations, including the Federation of Small Businesses, who called for Keep Me Posted principles to be adopted in its Manifesto for the new Government, poverty campaigners the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and The Salvation Army. We will continue to work with all our supporters to champion the right to choose paper bills and statements.



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