**Motion in support of We Are Debt Advisers**

**This branch notes:**

We Are Debt Advisers (WADA) is a campaigning group formed in November 2020, made up of debt advisers in the voluntary and public sectors.

WADA is an independent voice for the grassroots of debt advice. Too many decisions about debt advice are made by government talking to the public affairs departments of major national charities, ignoring the advisers who do the job every day, many with decades of frontline experience.

In three months, WADA has:

* Worked with the Centre for Responsible Credit to build and maintain a [website](https://wearedebtadvisers.uk/home) and assist with campaign strategy
* Passed [a resolution](https://wearedebtadvisers.uk/news/campaign-gains-ground) at the Institute of Money Advisers (IMA) AGM committing the Institute to support the aims of WADA
* Produced a [detailed policy briefing](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fc91d958b9551093cfd009d/t/5ff47d6abe4d2f0e79cb8ebc/1609858410984/Breathing+Space+-+debt+adviser+briefing+5th+January+2021.pdf) on the government’s forthcoming Breathing Space scheme. This scheme offers little help to the most vulnerable of debt advice clients, and creates significant extra work for debt advisers, worsening working conditions.
* Sent an open letter with [180 debt adviser signatories](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fc91d958b9551093cfd009d/t/5ffda584e78bfb21b592b76d/1610458500782/list+of+signatories+as+at+12th+January+2021.pdf) to the Economic Secretary John Glen MP on urgent changes needed to the Breathing Space scheme, and received a [reply](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fc91d958b9551093cfd009d/t/601022c15c129e5b3cc150be/1611670210231/Letter+from+the+Economic+Secretary+-+21+January.pdf).
* Arranged a [letter-writing campaign to MPs](https://wearedebtadvisers.uk/news/urgent-call-to-our-supporters-please-write-to-your-mp) on the Breathing Space scheme, resulting in support from Labour MPs, a number of whom raised WADA’s concerns in the third reading of the Financial Services Bill
* Arranged an online meeting of more than 140 debt advisers to agree a grassroots response to the government’s [current review of debt relief order (DRO) criteria](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/debt-relief-orders/debt-relief-orders-consultation-on-changes-to-the-monetary-eligibility-criteria). These changes do not go far enough to help debt advice clients, and will increase debt advisers’ workloads and worsen working conditions.

This has all been achieved by debt advisers working together in their spare time with no budget.

Those involved in WADA are trade union members and activists, and the values of the campaign align with those of this branch.

**This branch agrees to:**

* Make a public statement of support through social media channels for WADA
* Have the branch’s name added to the WADA website and publicity materials as supporters.
* Provide practical and financial support to the WADA campaign, for example by assisting with modest administrative costs if requested
* Publicise WADA campaigns and activities to branch members