



All-Party Parliamentary Loan Charge Group

www.loanchargeappg.co.uk

Rt Hon Philip Hammond, MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road, London
SW1A 2HQ

13th March 2019

By email

Dear Chancellor,

Loan Charge delay and halt to settlements – Open Letter

Further to my letter of 8th March, we are writing to request a halt on settlements to allow a genuine independent review of the Loan Charge.

Such a measure is absolutely vital given recent evidence received of suicides by individuals facing the Loan Charge, the administrative chaos that is rife at HMRC in dealing with the backlog, and the lack of communication with taxpayers that continues despite the looming deadline of April 5th.

1. Known suicides and suicide risk.

With regard to suicides, we have factual evidence of two such cases and have been informed over the last twenty-four hours that HMRC are aware of a total of six individuals facing the Loan Charge who have taken their lives, directly as a consequence of harassment by HMRC.

2. HMRC failing to deal with caseload and delayed response times.

The administrative chaos in dealing with the backlog of people impacted by the Loan Charge is also increasingly evident: numerous submissions to the APPG have provided evidence of incorrect settlement amounts being proposed, taxpayer details being submitted to the wrong people, conflicting advice being given (by phone and by mail), deadlines being missed, etc.

3. Poor communications and undignified treatments of taxpayers.

Communications with taxpayers continue to be extremely poor due to lack of HMRC resources. We have had reports of people being put on hold for indeterminate amounts of time, phone lines being cut off, HMRC employees being unable to answer questions (despite being the 'dedicated' name to speak with), and many instances of threatening letters to taxpayers who are already extremely vulnerable or even on the 'at risk' list (and therefore whom should not be contacted in the first instance).

With some seventy public submissions having been recently sent to Ruth Stanier and HMRC to review and comment on, and a further five hundred submitted to the APPG, there is a very clear message that the Loan Charge must be halted until a genuine independent review has been conducted.

The catalogue of errors that is underway as HMRC seek to steamroller through an enormous backlog of settlement requests is untenable. This pernicious legislation requires an immediate halt to all settlements until it has been properly scrutinised, assessed and debated. Anything less would be a failing on behalf of a government intent on ruining the livelihoods and bankrupting a vast number of hard-working contributors to the UK's services economy.

Yours sincerely,



Sir Ed Davey
Chair



Ruth Cadbury
Vice Chair



Ross Thomson
Vice Chair

On behalf of the Loan Charge APPG