1. Millions on the edge use credit to keep up with living costs

- 8 million UK adults (17%) struggling to keep up with bills and credit repayments have recently borrowed to pay for essentials.

2. Becoming dependent on credit to cope often makes the situation worse

- Among those borrowing for essentials:
  - 45% say debt negatively affects their health.
  - 29% report affecting their relationships with their partner, family or friends.
  - 27% say debt negatively affects their ability to get enough sleep.
  - 24% say debt negatively affects their work performance.

3. A vicious cycle prevents people in difficulty from accessing support

- 53% of people using credit to pay for essentials have access to safe alternatives to desperation borrowing.

4. Unaffordable consumer debt causes real life harm

- 82% say borrowing to pay for essentials makes their financial situation more difficult.
- 55% of parents with children under 18 had their child’s education affected.
- 52% of people using credit to pay for essentials find it difficult to cut back on essentials.
- 45% of people who find it difficult to keep up with credit repayments recently have been offered more credit.
- 45% say debt negatively affects their ability to get enough sleep.
- 45% say debt negatively affects their work performance.
- 45% say debt negatively affects their health.
- 45% say debt negatively affects their ability to cut back on essentials.
- 45% say debt negatively affects their ability to cut back on non-essentials.

5. Top five priorities:

- The FCA should make preventing unaffordable consumer debt a priority.
- A focus of the Consumer Duty should address harmful debt communications.
- Credit information reforms should reduce barriers to seeking help.
- Urgently regulate Interest-free Buy Now Pay Later.
- Ensure people struggling with debt have access to safe alternatives to desperation borrowing.