

Struggling borrowers offered reprieve

BY **DAN RAYWOOD**

All Types of Mortgages (AToM) has launched an Individual Voluntary Agreement (IVA) facility.

Backed by accounting and auditing firm Grant Thornton, AToM's service is aimed at enabling borrowers to protect their home and repay an amount they can afford over a set period.

Providing that customers can meet criteria, including owing their creditors in excess of £15,000 in total and are able to control their finances in a structured IVA, borrowers will be able to make use of the agreement.

Mortgage intermediaries are able to speak to the dedicated AToM IVA team at Grant Thornton about their clients' circumstances and because a remortgage or secured second charge may be part of the solution, there is no loss of business.

Richard Hearn, managing director at AToM, admitted that market conditions had led to the decision.

He said: "4,000 IVAs are currently being taken out per month in the UK. With more and more people suffering from the burden of debt they need structured solutions and we wanted to provide this support to brokers. We wanted to align ourselves with a highly reputable business that would not charge clients or intermediaries for the advice, and who would manage the IVA and keep the broker involved."

Gareth Neill, Partner at Grant Thornton, said: "We are delighted to assist with the service AToM can now offer its brokers. It means that AToM will have a solution for any



*Richard Hearn,
managing director,
AToM*

situation referred to it and more importantly for its intermediaries to retain their clients for the future."

Tamsin Hemsley, press officer at UCB Home Loans, suggested that borrowers should make the lender their first port of call if they are

having difficulties in making their mortgage payments, in order that the organisation could put procedures in place to get the borrower back on track, in the shortest possible time period.

She said: "If a customer was experiencing problems in paying we would ask them to tell us so it can be resolved quickly. We would rather come out with a payment plan and as long as they can stick to it, we're happy."