

## **Brits Shown To Be Splashing Out On Home Help**

*Britons are willing to spend hundreds of pounds on domestic help, a recently-released report indicates.*

April 13, 2008 (FPRC) --As part of its Changing Face of British Homes research, Legal & General shows that 41 per cent of consumers are paying other people to carry out household chores instead of doing it themselves. The cost of hiring the likes of cleaners and gardeners was revealed to set the average person back by about 700 pounds a year. Assuming that such workers are on the national minimum wage, the total cost of hired help was shown to stand at seven billion pounds. However, "in reality" such costs are likely to be much more expensive. Citing research by SLM Recruitment, it was suggested that the typical wage for a live-in housekeeper in London stands at 21,000 pounds. Meanwhile, butlers and nannies are paid an average of 44,000 and 33,000 pounds respectively.

As such, the financial services provider stated that instead of having a DIY frame of mind, Britons are now more likely to say "You Do It" (YDI).

Research from Legal & General also showed that consumers living in London have the most home helpers and the likeliest of all Britons to have a cleaner. Furthermore, just under a third claim that they have such assistance so that their employee can do the jobs that they would prefer not to do themselves. A fifth states that they do not have enough spare time for domestic tasks due to their hectic lifestyle.

For those consumers looking for an effective way to pay for numerous home help services, taking out a cheap loan may be advisable.

Ruth Wilkins, head of communications for Legal & General's general insurance business commented: "Following a range of everyday price hikes such as petrol, heating, food and council tax, the cost of living is more expensive for UK households. Although household budgets may be stretched it seems that Brits are moving away from DIY and are now keen on YDI by getting in help for the more traditional jobs around the home.

"Having people in our home to help with the household chores may mean a higher security risk. For example, extra keys may need to be cut to allow a cleaner or gardener entry when nobody else is around."

Ms Wilkins added that it may be a "good idea" for those Britons who do have workers coming to their homes on a regular basis, particularly those who will be entrusted with a set of house keys, to carry out a few checks into their background. It was also suggested that consumers take the time to check the identification of those tradesmen who knock on their door unannounced.

Those consumers looking to hire a number of domestic staff such as butlers, gardeners, cleaners and nannies might find that taking out a homeowner loan may be useful. In doing so, borrowers may be able to pay for assistance quickly and effectively. Furthermore, home loans might be of benefit to consumers wanting to revamp their garden. Last month, research released by RIAS showed that Britons are spending larger amounts of money on their outdoor space. This increase was largely attributed to consumers attempting to copy something they have seen on a garden makeover

programme. Overall, some four billion pounds are being spent on flowers, tool, plants and other gardening apparatus each year.

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