



## Craig Whittaker MP

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### **Response to Child Maintenance Collection (EDM 575) – January 2017**

Thank you for contacting me about child maintenance and Gingerbread's 'Missing Maintenance' report.

I completely understand your concern about this issue, and I can assure you that the Government is doing all it can to ensure the system is fair and parents make an appropriate contribution to their children's upbringing. The Government is committed to pursuing those parents who do not willingly meet their financial responsibilities to their children.

The Child Maintenance Service (CMS) has a range of effective enforcement powers intended to help ensure all parents fulfil their financial responsibilities towards their children, including taking deductions directly from earnings and bank accounts. When a paying parent defaults on a payment without reasonable justification, the CMS will take appropriate action to recover the missed payment and re-establish compliance.

I can assure you that the Government is currently considering the recommendations contained in Gingerbread's 'Missing Maintenance' report. For example, in relation to the suggestions the report makes about deductions from joint bank accounts, the Department for Work and Pensions has already started taking steps to implement this power, and ran a consultation this summer on the proposed process.

I am confident that Ministers are committed to doing everything they can to ensure children receive the support they deserve from their parents.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Whittaker'.

Craig Whittaker MP