

Women lead table of bankruptcies among under-35s

YOUNG women are going bankrupt at a faster rate than their male counterparts, accounting for more than half of personal insolvencies among the under-35s last year.

Official figures show that far more young women than men are also taking out Debt Relief Orders (DROs) over mounting loans and bills.

Almost 7,300 resorted to an order – often dubbed ‘bankruptcy light’ because it costs four times less than normal bankruptcy – compared with 3,807 men.

Applicants for a DRO must owe less than £15,000, and have assets of less than £300, excluding a car worth less than £1,000.

The figures for both sexes have shot up since previous years, with experts saying that women are increasingly using credit to pay household bills. In 2012, 16,698 women under 35 were declared insolvent, compared with 12,697 men in the same age group.

The figures from the Insolvency Service show that women across all age groups plunging into insolvency caught up with men for the first time.

By **Emine Sinmaz**

Last year 54,177 women were declared insolvent and 54,812 men.

In 2011 the difference was greater, with 60,764 insolvencies among men and 57,937 among women.

Insolvencies include bankruptcies, individual voluntary arrangements and DROs.

Women accounted for just 30 per cent of personal insolvencies in 2000, but this has now risen to almost 50 per cent.

The official figures show that across all age groups the total number of women plunging into insolvency caught up with men for the first time.

Andy Davie, a consultant with **Vincent Bond** debt management, said: ‘Many young women end up insolvent due to a change in circumstances such as a relationship breakdown or job loss.

‘They then find themselves trying to pay the rent and credit agreements on just one salary or no salary.’