

When things go wrong

If you disagree with a decision in relation to your Housing Benefit award (rent allowance or rent rebate) you can ask us to look at it again by writing to us within a month of your benefit decision saying why you think it is wrong - we will review the decision to see if we can change it for you. If we cannot change the decision we will tell you why. If you wish to appeal this decision there is a further independent appeal process administered by the Appeals Tribunal which we will tell you about.

If you disagree with a decision in relation to your Council Tax Support (reduction in council tax) you can ask us to look at it again saying why you think it is wrong. We will look at your claim again and write to you with our decision. If we do not respond to you within 2 months, or if you are still aggrieved by the decision you may appeal direct to the Valuation Tribunal. You can appeal online at www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk or by post to the Valuation Tribunal, Council Tax Reduction Team, First Floor, Hepworth House, 2 Trafford Court, Doncaster, Yorks, DN1 1PN.

If you disagree with a decision in relation to your Business Rates assessment you can contact your local Valuation Office direct:

Stevenage businesses

Valuation Office Agency, St Peters House,
45 Victoria Street, St Albans, AL1 3WZ
Telephone: 03000 501501

East Herts businesses

Valuation Office Agency, Eastbrook,
Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8DU
Telephone: 03000 501501

If you disagree with the level of your Council Tax and think you should be entitled to a discount or reduction/exemption please write to us within 28 days of receipt of your bill. For appeals about the banding of your property you can contact your local Valuation Office direct:

Stevenage & East Herts residents

Valuation Office Agency, Ground Floor, Ferrers House,
Castle Meadow Road, Nottingham, Notts, NG2 1AB
Telephone: 03000 501501

If you wish to complain about how we delivered the service, you can lodge a complaint as follows:

Stevenage residents

If you are not satisfied with the response from the service provider you can contact the Customer Service Centre to make a formal complaint:
Telephone: 01438 242242
Textphone: 01438 242555
email: csc@stevenage.gov.uk

East Herts residents

If you are not satisfied with a response that you receive from an enquiry made to a service, you may feel that you wish to make a complaint.
Please e-mail complaints@eastherts.gov.uk or use the on-line form www.eastherts.gov.uk



Customer Charter

The Revenues & Benefits Service,
Council Offices, Wallfields,
Hertford SG13 8EQ

SBC Tel: 01438 242875 EHC Tel: 01279 655261

The Revenues & Benefits Shared service for East Herts and Stevenage is hosted by East Herts Council. We are committed to providing a high standard of service to all of our customers.

Who we are and what we do

The Revenues & Benefits shared service is responsible for administering the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support schemes, the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme and for the billing and collection of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates).

The service is also responsible for investigating and prosecuting fraud.

Further information about the services are also available on the Council Websites by clicking on the links to Benefits:

Stevenage Borough Council website: www.stevenage.gov.uk

East Herts District Council website: www.eastherts.gov.uk

Customers can also contact the shared service as follows:

In writing: Revenues & Benefits, East Herts Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8EQ

By email: benefits@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk or revenues@hertspartnership-ala.gov.uk

By telephone (Stevenage residents): 01438 242440 (Benefits)

By telephone (Stevenage residents): 01438 242875 (Council Tax)

By telephone (Stevenage businesses): 01438 242876 (Business Rates)

By telephone (East Herts residents): 01279 655261

Telephone lines are open 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday - Friday

In person: Each Council provides a face to face service for its residents to receive correspondence and to provide information and advice.

For Stevenage residents this is through the Customer Service Centre at Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 1HN open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm.

For East Herts residents this is at Bishop's Stortford Council Offices, Charringtons House, The Causeway, Bishops Stortford, CM23 2EN which is open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm, and Hertford Council Offices, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8EQ which is a drop in service on Tuesdays 8.30am to 4pm and Wednesday mornings 8.30am to 12.30pm.

We aim to

- Be professional, helpful and courteous
- Take responsibility for your enquiry
- Deal with your enquiry as quickly as we can
- Provide equal access to our services
- Say sorry when we get things wrong
- Be cost efficient in all our processes, to keep costs to residents to a minimum

We ask that you treat our staff with respect

Operationally we aim to

- Process correspondence within 14 working days from the supply of all necessary information
- Ensure that the take up of Housing benefit, Council tax support, exemptions and discounts is maximised throughout the whole community
- Prevent fraud, investigate and prosecute where appropriate those who claim benefits, exemptions and discounts to which they are not entitled.
- Take steps, where necessary, to minimise overpayments of benefits, but where these do occur, seek to recover with due regard to individual circumstances.

Working together

You can help us to provide a good service in a number of ways:

- Tell us as soon as possible about any changes to your circumstances
- Make sure that the information you give us is accurate and provided in a timely fashion
- If you are unsure or have any questions regarding benefit entitlement, council tax or business rates, contact us as soon as possible.