

There are many ways you can get in touch with the Housing Benefit Section. You can visit, call, write or email us.

In Person

You can visit the Town Hall from Monday to Friday to make a claim, advise us of a change in your circumstances or just to make a general enquiry. Our opening times are as follows:

Opening Times

Monday 8.45 - 16.45

Tuesday 8.45 - 16.45

Wednesday 8.45 - 16.45

Thursday 8.45 - 16.45

Friday 8.45 - 16.15

The Housing Benefit interview rooms are in the Customer Contact Centre and you will need to visit the reception desk on arrival. We can be very busy on Mondays and after Bank Holidays but we will try to see you as soon as we can. If you are unable to wait we do offer an appointment system where you can arrange a time to come back to the centre and see a Benefit Assessor. Please ask at reception in the Customer Contact Centre for more details.

By Telephone

If you are unable to come to our office you can call us. We are now able to accept some changes of circumstances over the phone, as well as send out application forms and offer general advice. The telephone number to call is

Customer Services (01325) 388514

(Please note this phone line can get busy, please be patient and we will answer your call as soon as possible)

In addition to our Customer Services line we also have a number to call if you suspect anybody of committing benefit fraud. All calls are confidential and you do not have to give your name. You can call either number below

Fraud (01325) 388517

Fraud Hotline 0800 854 440

In Writing

You can write or send information to us at the following address:

**Housing Benefit Section
Darlington Borough Council
Town Hall, Darlington, DL1 5QT**

By Email

To contact the section by email, the address is:

HBenquiries@darlington.gov.uk

You can visit our web site **www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/housing+benefits** to download an application form and get details of how to claim.

There is also a useful calculator online to give you a rough idea of how much benefit you may be able to get.

Welfare visits

If you are having difficulty completing your claim for Housing or Council Tax Benefit or you wish to provide information for an existing claim but find it difficult to come to our offices, you can ask us to visit you in your home.

We can arrange a time and date that suits you.

This service is also available if you have any queries about a claim or require general advice about Housing and Council Tax Benefit.

The Customer Support Officer can also advise of other welfare benefits that you may be entitled to. If you would like a visit arranged please call:

Customer Services (01325) 388514



We work closely with other organisations that may be able to help you. Below are some telephone numbers you may find useful

Council Tax

If you have any queries regarding your bill or payments please call Customer Services on **01325 388373**

Housing

For all queries on council housing including waiting lists and homelessness you can call on **01325 388542**

Supporting People

Supporting People is for people who need support to live independently in their home. Assistance is available for many vulnerable people. For more details please call **01325 388602**

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

If you wish to apply for Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance or Incapacity Benefit you need to claim with the DWP. You can also enquire about other state benefits that are available for you to claim. You can call them on **0845 600 4262**

The Pension Service

If you are 60 or over you may be able to get Pension Credit. Pension Credit is not only available for people on low incomes but you may be able to get it if you have savings. You can call them on **0800 991234**

Tax Credits

If you have a young person or child living with you, you may be able to claim Child Tax Credit. You can claim this if you are working or claiming benefits.

You may be able to claim Working Tax Credit if you are working and on a low income. For more information on Working and Child Tax Credit please call **0845 300 3900**

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

CAB offer free and independent advice and support to the public. They can offer advice on anything to do with your benefit claim, such as help with an appeal or an overpayment of benefit. You can call them on **(01325) 380755** or drop in at Bennet House, 14. Horsemarket, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL1 5PT

Landlord Accreditation

This scheme is to help tenants find private landlords and properties that are of a suitable standard. For more information please call **(01325) 734105**

Community Legal Service Direct

The Community Legal Service offers free, quality advice. It has been set up to help you find the right legal information and guidance to solve your problems. If you would like more information please visit their website.

www.clsdirect.org.uk

or you can call them on **0845 345 4 345**



Getting in touch with us

Housing and Council Tax Benefit

(Please keep this leaflet)