

**Discretionary  
Housing Payments**  
help you can get to top up  
your **Housing Benefit** and  
**Council Tax Benefit**

CARLISLE  
CITY COUNCIL



[www.carlisle.gov.uk](http://www.carlisle.gov.uk)

## Useful contacts

Get in touch with us by writing to:

Revenues & Benefits Services  
Carlisle City Council  
Civic Centre  
Carlisle  
CA3 8QG.

Fax: **01228 817266**

E-mail: **hben@carlisle.gov.uk**

Or you can phone us on one of the following numbers.

- Benefit queries: **01228 817201**
- Council Tax queries: **01228 817200**

If you prefer you can call into the Civic Centre to speak to someone.

Our Customer Contact Centre on the ground floor of the Civic Centre is open from:

- 9am to 5pm, Monday to Thursday;
- 9am to 4pm on Fridays.

## **You can get independent advice on Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit from the following:**

Citizens Advice  
Old Post Office Court  
Devonshire Street  
Carlisle  
CA3 8LE  
Phone: **01228 633900**

Benefits Advice Centre  
Civic Centre  
Carlisle  
CA3 8QG  
E-mail: **bac@carlisle.gov.uk**

Please phone **01228 625250** between 1pm and 3pm on Mondays to arrange an appointment.

Please ring **01228 817400** between 2pm and 4pm on Thursdays for advice over the phone.

## **What if I still have to pay rent or Council Tax not covered by my Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit?**

There is a scheme called Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to help people who need further help with their rent and/or Council Tax.

Unfortunately we cannot give a DHP to cover the cost of things included in your rent, such as fuel, water or food charges.

These payments are not part of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit and they are cash limited.

## **Who is entitled to Discretionary Housing Payments?**

DHPs are available to people who get Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit and who appear to the Local Authority to require further financial assistance in order to meet their housing costs.

- If you get Housing Benefit you can claim a DHP to help pay your rent.
- If you get Council Tax Benefit you can claim a DHP to help pay your Council Tax.

But we must be satisfied that you need more help with your housing costs.

## **How do I apply for a DHP?**

Please contact us and we'll tell you what you need to do. (Our contact details are on page 2 of this leaflet.)

Your request for a DHP must be made in writing and you will need to provide additional information regarding household income and expenses.

## **How do you decide if I can have a DHP?**

We look at things like:

- your total income;
- whether you have any savings;
- whether anyone else in the house is able to help financially;
- whether you have any loans or debts still to pay;
- whether you could rearrange your finances to ease the situation; and
- whether you or your family have any special circumstances, such as ill health or disability.

We ask you to give us a lot of information and if we need more we'll write to ask you for it.

We might also ask you to call in to see us if we need to discuss your claim in more detail.

## **How much can I get and for how long?**

How much you get depends on your circumstances and we look at each case individually. We can pay DHPs for different periods of time.

However, there is no guarantee that you will actually get a payment.

## **What does a DHP not cover?**

- Ineligible service or support charges.
- Any rent liability if entitled to Council Tax Benefit only.
- Any Council Tax liability if entitled to Housing Benefit or Second Adult Rebate only.

DHP and the award of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit cannot exceed the eligible rent for Housing Benefit or the liability for Council Tax.

## **How will you pay the DHP if my application is successful?**

If your application is successful, we usually pay your DHP with any Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit that you get, although DHPs are not payments of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.

## **What happens if I disagree with the amount or period of the DHP?**

If you don't agree with our decision, you should write to us within one month of the date of the letter informing you about the DHP award.

We will look at your application again and write to you with our decision.

## **What if my circumstances change?**

If your circumstances change, you must tell us, in writing, within one month.

We will then look at the DHP we awarded and see whether it needs to be changed.

We may be able to pay you more DHP, but, if you think you should get less, you might have to pay back some or all of the DHP we have paid.

## **Where can I get help?**

You can always phone us for help and advice. (See page 2 of this leaflet for our contact details.)

Or, you can contact Citizens Advice or the Benefits Advice Centre. (See page 2 of this leaflet for details.)

## **What if I want to comment on your service?**

We would like to know what you think about this leaflet or about the service we provide to you. If you have any comments, please contact us. (Our contact details are on page 2 of this leaflet.)

## **The following leaflets are available to give you information about Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.**

- Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit – can your claim be backdated?
- A guide to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit for students
- A guide to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit for landlords
- Changes you need to tell us about if you are claiming Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit
- What happens when you have been paid too much Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit
- How to claim Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Council Tax Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- A guide to Housing Benefit
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit for people who work
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit for people who are away from home
- How other people in your home affect your Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit

All the material printed in this leaflet is the copyright of Carlisle City Council and cannot be reproduced in any form without written permission.

This leaflet has been compiled by Carlisle City Council. If you would like a copy of it in an alternative format, such as large print or on audio tape, please call us on **01228 817201** or email us at **[hben@carlisle.gov.uk](mailto:hben@carlisle.gov.uk)**.

**CARLISLE**  
**CITY COUNCIL**



[www.carlisle.gov.uk](http://www.carlisle.gov.uk)

**Carlisle City Council**  
**Civic Centre**  
**Carlisle**  
**CA3 8QG**

**Opening hours**

**9am to 5pm, Monday to Thursday**  
**9am to 4pm on Fridays**