

Council tax benefit

List of reports published between 1 April 1997 and 31 March 2007.

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Key to findings

- MI** = Maladministration and injustice
M = Maladministration, but no injustice
NM = No maladministration found
LS = Local settlement report (until 31 March 2003)

2006/2007

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
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|---|----------|-------------------|
| 1. Brent LB | 05A18870 | 27 February 07 MI |
| Housing benefit: woman claimed HB and CTB – changes in circumstances – failure assess underlying entitlement to benefit – account showed council tax arrears – recovery action taken – bailiffs – anti-poverty strategy (also relevant to report ref 05a17099 on local taxation) | | |

2005/2006

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
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none

2004/2005

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
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| 1. Sandwell MBC | 03B12862 | 29 September 04 MI |
| Local taxation: council tax overcharged by £400 and man taken to court for money he did not owe - council tax benefit claim had been assessed for payment - incorrect revised demand issued charging a further £200 he did not owe | | |
| 2. Westminster City C | 04A00861 | 4 January 05 MI |
| Housing benefit: Chinese man, unable to work because of illness - council tenant - delay in assessing renewal claim for HB & CTB - requested information unnecessarily - LGO recommends council to improve performance re increase in HB complaints | | |
| 3. Allerdale BC | 03C07422 | 12 January 05 MI |
| Housing benefit: housing association tenants - ran private internet business - complicated claims for HB & CTB - delays, failure to respond to appeal letter, cancelled claim without notice or explanation | | |
| 4. Waltham Forest LB | 04A10401 | 22 March 05 MI |
| seriously ill man, wife is his full-time carer - claims for HB & CTB following change of circumstances not processed for six months - council tax recovery action taken, liability order, bailiff's letter - complaint made by DIAL on complainants' behalf, treated as normal correspondence and not replied to: also Housing benefit | | |

2003/2004

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
|---|----------|------------------|
| 1. Manchester City C | 02C10575 | 31 July 03 MI |
| recovery of overpayments of council tax benefit – promise not to pursue recovery while appeal pending – computer record amended twice by officer who did not check situation, and a liability order sought | | |
| 2. Southwark LB | 02B06799 | 26 August 03 MI |
| Housing benefit: man with mental health problems - failure to determine claims for HB & CTB since April 2000 – arrears accrued – council took legal action for possession and recovery | | |
| 3. Waltham Forest LB | 03A01900 | 28 October 03 MI |
| Housing benefit: tenant of social landlord – failure to process new claim – cancelled HB – no reply to request for explanation – recovery action started despite arrangements to prevent this when claim outstanding – bailiffs served two notices | | |

2002/2003

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
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| 1. Southwark LB | 01B01669 | 17 April 02 MI |
| Housing benefit: delay in dealing with claims for HB & CTB - council tenant - threat of eviction - inadequate notification - failure to deal with review requests - failure to respond to complaints | | |
| 2. Southwark LB | 01B07616 | 9 May 02 MI |
| Housing benefit: failure to process application from mature student - change of circumstances, additional information - pursued council tax recovery in spite of outstanding benefit claim - many failures | | |
| 3. Luton BC | 00B10421 | 29 August 02 MI |
| Housing benefit: delay, inconsistency, other errors - woman's HB & CTB accounts - did not know how much rent and council tax she should be paying - court proceedings | | |
| 4. Southwark LB | 01B17404 | 5 September 02 MI |
| Housing benefit: law centre obo complainant - recovery of overpayments of HB & CTB - unlawful recovery - right of appeal | | |
| 5. Liverpool City C | 01C15191 | 30 September 02 LS |
| Housing benefit: Local settlement report - delay in appeal against recovery of overpayment - pursuit of recovery while appeal pending - 28-day time limit for submitting appeals to Appeals Service | | |
| 6. Liverpool City C | 01C07860 | 30 September 02 LS |
| Housing benefit: Local settlement report - delay in notifying of decision not to allow late appeal - delay in arranging review board and passing appeal to Appeals Service - 28-day time limit for submitting appeals to Appeals Service | | |
| 7. Islington LB | 01A12752 & 15958 | 31 October 02 MI |
| advice agency obo clients - technical problems on crediting council tax benefit to accounts because of software & interface problems, affecting 320 claimants - recovery action taken for arrears - summonses received - one complainant with mental health problems | | |

8. Bromley LB 01B09315 5 December 02 LS
Housing benefit: Local settlement report - unreasonable delay in assessing HB & CTB claims – failure to submit to IAS
9. Lambeth LB 01B17580 14 February 03 LS
Housing benefit: Local settlement report – unreasonable delay in assessing HB and CTB claim – delay in response to request for review of decision – council began legal proceedings while claims outstanding and obtained liability order for unpaid council tax

2001/2002

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none

2000/2001

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
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1. Epping Forest DC 98B03614 18 July 00 MI
Housing benefit: woman & family in large house with 20 acres & swimming pool – £2,000 rent per month – alleged delay in determining HB & CTB claims – failure in communications between benefit & finance sections led to bailiffs visit re council tax debt: also **Local taxation**
2. Nottingham City C 99C03307 11 December 00 LS
Housing benefit: Local settlement report – delay in making home visit to verify residence – failure to link claims for HB and CTB – repeated requests for information already provided – wrongly told no right of appeal – wrongful recovery of overpayment: also **Local taxation**
3. Southwark LB 99A04690 & 05089 16 January 01 MI
Housing benefit: delay in determining HB & CTB claim – backlog – NOSP received – rent arrears – delay in replying to complaint from law centre: also **Local taxation & Managing tenancies**

1999/2000

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
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1. Broxbourne BC 98B02004 & 02071 7 July 99 MI
Housing benefit: delay in processing claims for HB & CTB – complainant suffered stroke – demand for council tax arrears sent
2. Ealing LB 98A04300 31 January 00 MI
Local taxation & Housing benefit: with claim for hb & ctb – issue of summons for non-payment of council tax – after claim decided nothing owed – council then obtained liability order

1998/1999

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1. Lambeth LB 97A03765-6 28 May 98 MI
Housing benefit: HB & CTB - change of circumstances - delay - failure to review or hold review board - failure to reply to letters - recouping overpayment from ongoing payments while appeal outstanding
2. Ealing LB 96A03916 30 September 98 MI
Housing benefit: private tenants - HB & CTB - delays

3. Ealing LB 97A02321 25 February 99 MI
Housing benefit: delay in paying HB & CTB - Council sought to repossess home

1997/1998

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
|---|----------|-------------------|
| 1. Hackney LB | 96A03291 | 1 September 97 MI |
| council tax benefit - delay in determining claims - non-determination - deductions from income support | | |
| 2. Ealing LB | 96A03413 | 16 October 97 MI |
| Housing benefit: claim for hb & council tax benefit - council tenant - bailiffs used even though benefit claim outstanding - refusal of backdating | | |
| 3. Ealing LB | 96A03310 | 22 December 97 MI |
| Housing benefit: full-time student with wife on income support - change in circumstances - rent account - hb and council tax benefits - incorrect recovery action - delays & errors | | |
| 4. Ealing LB | 95A04841 | 9 March 98 MI |
| Housing benefit: delays & errors - incorrect recovery action - rent account - council tax benefit | | |

1996/1997

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
|--|----------|-------------------|
| 1. Wirral MBC | 95C03318 | 11 December 96 MI |
| Housing benefit: issue of council tax bills – housing & council tax benefit – interim payments – delay – notification – provision of information | | |

1995/1996

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| none | | |

1994/1995

| Authority | Ref no | Date/Finding |
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| 1. Newham LB | 92A01971 | 12 May 94 MI |
| Housing benefit: HB & CTB – delay in determining claims – private tenants receiving income support | | |

1993/1994

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| none | | |