

About this letter

This letter gives you information about your entitlement to housing benefit. You should check the details carefully and keep this letter for reference. We may be able to offer this document to you in a more accessible format such as in large print, by email, in Braille, on audiotape/CD, as a BSL DVD, if you have a specific impairment that requires this. We can also provide it in Easy English with pictures and or in community languages if English is not your first language. Please contact 0117 922 2300 should you require this.

Check the details overleaf carefully and tell us immediately if something is wrong.

If you have any questions about anything in this letter you can contact us at:
www.bristol.gov.uk/contactbenefits.

If you think our decision is wrong

You should get in touch with us **within one month** of the date of this letter or we may not be able to consider any dispute. You can:

- ask for a full explanation - called a 'statement of reasons'
- ask us to look at our decision again
- appeal to an independent tribunal

You can download a Benefits Appeal form from our website at: www.bristol.gov.uk/benefitsappeal.

If you would like independent advice from someone who does not work for us, you can contact either the Citizens Advice Bureau or one of the advice centres in Bristol.

If you have had a change in circumstances

We want to make sure that you're getting the right amount of benefit. It's important that you tell us about changes that might affect the amount of benefit you get. You can find out the kinds of changes to tell us about or report a change online at: www.bristol.gov.uk/benefitschanges.

Information in your benefit decision notice

Its really important that you check this decision notice as you might have to pay back any benefit we overpay.

Weekly gross rent	This is the total amount of rent / council tax that your benefit is based on.
Weekly eligible rent	This is the amount of rent that we use to calculate your benefit and it may be less than the rent that you actually pay. This can be because your rent includes an amount for 'services', or because the rent officer has restricted the amount that we can pay.
Ineligible service charges	This amount is for services included in your rent, which housing benefit cannot pay for. This may include fuel charges, water rates etc. This amount can be changed if you provide evidence of the actual charges.
Your earned income	You / your partner's earnings shown as a weekly figure after other deductions for tax, National Insurance and half of any pension contribution.
Any other income	All other types of income, including tax credits, child benefit, state benefits, private pensions are added together and shown here.
Assumed income from capital	We must assume you have income from money in bank accounts, savings or investments. The amounts we assume are fixed and based on your total savings and capital.
Other disregarded income	We ignore some income when we work out your benefit, like child care costs.
Non-dependent deduction	This is money taken off your benefit because you have other adults, apart from your partner, living in your home.
Applicable amount	This is the figure that we must use as the amount needed for day to day living expenses. It is dependent upon your household circumstances.
(I) Interim payment or payment on account	This is a payment of housing benefit where we do not have enough information to make a final decision on your claim. When we are able to make a final decision your weekly entitlement may change

For a more detailed explanation of your decision see our website: www.bristol.gov.uk/benefitsletters.

You can view and manage your housing benefits account online. See our website at www.bristol.gov.uk/myaccount