



REVENUES & BENEFITS CUSTOMER SERVICES CHARTER

THE SERVICE:

- Administer the collection of Council Tax on behalf of Ryedale District Council, North Yorkshire County, North Yorkshire Police Authority, North Yorkshire Fire Authority and all Town and Parish Councils.
- Administer the collection of Non Domestic Business Rates on behalf of Central Government.
- Administer and calculate the payment of Housing and Council Tax Benefit to residents of the District, as well as promoting and publicising the benefit schemes, preventing and detecting fraud and providing advice on welfare benefits.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US:

- To provide a cost effective high quality Revenues and Benefits Service that is continuously looking to develop and improve.
- Comply with legislation maintain high levels of conduct and professionalism and ensure staff are fully trained.
- To treat you as an individual by offering you a service that seeks to meet your needs.
- We aim to deal with you fairly and in a helpful, polite, friendly manner, and not discriminate against you because of your race, religion, age, sex, sexuality or disability.

ANSWERING TELEPHONE CALLS:

- Answer politely and clearly and give the name of the section or person you have contacted.
- We will answer telephone calls within 6 rings (you may be placed in a queue at busy times).
- Resolve your enquiry at first point of contact, or transfer your call to the right person.
- If we need more time to get the information you require, we will offer to ring you back at a time convenient to you, within normal office hours.
- If a message is left on an answer machine, we will contact you by the end of the next working day.

ANSWERING LETTERS, FAXES AND E-MAILS:

- Where required we will respond to all letters within 7 working days.
- We will respond to all e-mails within 3 working days.
- We will answer all your questions and tell you whom to contact if you require more information.
- If we are unable to respond within these time limits we will contact you and give you an alternative response time.
- We will supply clear information and avoid using jargon.

SEEING YOU IN PERSON:

- Our main offices at Ryedale House Malton have free parking, wheelchair access, and automatic doors and lifts to ensure easy access for all our customers.
- No appointment is required and if you visit Ryedale House a Customer Services advisor will speak to you within 5 minutes, and ensure your query is resolved or arrange for you to see a member of staff from the Revenues or Benefits department within 20 minutes of arriving. (At busy times there may be a delay).
- Where you need help in completing a Benefit claim form, we will help you and give you a receipt to acknowledge your claim has been received.
- A private interview room may be available should you wish to request this facility.
- If you are unable to visit the Offices due to special circumstances, arrangements can be made to visit you in your home.
- When we visit you our Officers will carry identification, and tell you whom to telephone if you require confirmation of their identity.

DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLIMENTS:

- Listen to what you have to say and welcome feedback from all customers. If things go wrong we need you to tell us about it, in order that we can improve things in the future.
- Record complaints, comments and compliments and use them to improve our services.
- Respond to informal complaints within 5 working days, and formal complaints within 10 working days.
- Inform you how you can take your complaint further if you are not satisfied with our response. A separate complaints procedure is available, which is independently reviewed by the Local Government Ombudsman.
- Treat complaints confidentially and fairly, apologise when we are at fault and do our best to put things right.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU:

- To be honest.
- Apply the same standards of behaviour towards our staff and other customers that you expect from us.
- Be polite and courteous (abusive language or behaviour to our staff will not be tolerated).
- When contacting our offices please ensure that you provide your name address and relevant account or reference number.
- Provide all the necessary proof and information required to calculate your benefit entitlement, or Council Tax or Business Rate discounts, as quickly as possible.
- Tell us promptly about any changes in your personal circumstances that may affect your Benefit entitlement, Council Tax or Business Rates liability.
- Pay back any overpayments that are deemed to be recoverable.
- Ensure that your payments reach us by the date they are due.
- Contact us immediately if you are having difficulty in making payment, or providing information.

HOW TO CONTACT US:

The main Revenues and Benefits office is located on the ground floor of Ryedale House, Malton. Access to our services can be obtained through our Customers Services Counter at reception.

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8.30am to 5.00pm

Tuesday 10.30am to 5.00pm.

Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

The address for correspondence is:

Revenues Services

PO Box 70

Ryedale House

Old Malton Road

Malton YO17 7ZN

Benefits Services

PO Box 69

Ryedale House

Old Malton Road

Malton YO17 7ZL

Telephone: **01653 600666**

Fax: **01653 699889**

E:mail benefits@ryedale.gov.uk

E-mail brates@ryedale.gov.uk

E-mail ctax@ryedale.gov.uk

For more details of the service and a list of downloadable forms please visit our website at www.ryedale.gov.uk and access the required area.