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North Hertfordshire Council Privacy Statement

Revenues and Benefit Service

2024

This Privacy Statement should be read in conjunction with the [Corporate Privacy Policy](#).

Purpose

Revenues and Benefits uses your personal data to:

- administer and enforce your council tax account.
- administer and enforce your business rate account.
- administer housing benefit.
- help us collect debts owed to the council.
- assist in the recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments.
- applications and payments for Housing Benefit, Discretionary Housing Payment and Local Welfare Provision
- personalise your use of the council's website and communicate information advice and guidance.
- communicate with council tax and business rate payers. information about their entitlement to grants, exceptions and discounts
- protect public funds we administer, we may use information held about you for all lawful purposes, including and not limited to:
 - the prevention and detection of fraud
 - matching council tax data with electoral registration records
 - protecting public funds in investigating misuse of public money
- research and statistics
 - sometimes we may use the information you have provided us for research and statistics to help us better deliver services and share this with our partners. This may also involve sharing information we hold about you with government departments who lawfully request it.

- in most cases we remove any personal information that may identify you as an individual or household and only use and share anonymous statistics.

Legal Basis

The Revenues & Benefits Service's data processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject - as provided for in the GDPR's Article 6 (1)(C). The council has a legal obligation to process the information in accordance with the following legislation:

- The Local Government Finance Act 1988
- The Local Government Finance Act 1992
- The Local Government Finance Act 2012
- Local Government Act 2003
- The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992, as amended.
- The Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) Regulations 1989, as amended.
- The Business Improvements Districts (England) Regulations 2004
- Social Security Administration Act 1992 and associated regulations
- Social Security Contribution and Benefits Act 1992 and associated regulations
- Housing Benefit Regulations 2006
- The Welfare Reform Acts 2011 and 2012 and associated regulations
- The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 and associated regulations

We collect and use this information under powers given to local authorities (councils). Under the General Data Protection Regulations, the following categories of lawfulness apply.

Personal data

- 6(1)(b) Contract: processing is necessary for a contract you have with the individual, or because they have asked you to take specific steps before entering into a contract.
 - Sundry Debts
- 6(1)(c) Legal Obligation: processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation.
 - Sharing with government departments and the police
- 6(1)(e) Public Task: processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller.

- Council Tax, Council Tax Reduction, Business Rates, Business Improvement Districts, Housing Benefits, Discretionary Housing Benefits

Special Category data

- 9(2)(b) Social Security: processing is necessary for carrying out obligations under employment, social security or social protection law, or a collective agreement.
 - Housing Benefits

1 How do we collect your personal data?

- When you apply for our products and services
- When you talk to us on the phone or in our reception
- When you use our website
- In emails and letters
- Application forms either online or paper forms
- We may receive information from landlords.
- We will collect your personal data from information that we receive from or through other organisations such as credit reference agencies.

2 How do we process your personal data?

Common to all services

- Name, address, contact details
- Correspondence (emails, letters, supporting documents)
- Conversations (recorded and typed notes of telephone conversations)
- Case notes
- Bank account details if applicable

Council Tax and Business Rates

- Dates of occupancy
- Tenancy agreement and landlord details
- Agent details if applicable
- Business accounts and trading information (Business Rates only)
- Medical information only when required to support specific Council Tax exemptions and reductions

If you choose to pay by direct debit, we will also collect some financial information from you.

Sundry debts

- Services provided
- Payments made and outstanding

Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Discretionary Housing Payment and Council Tax disregards, discounts and reductions

- Date of birth, gender
- National Insurance number
- Financial information (income, savings, assets and where necessary, expenditure)
- Benefits you're in receipt of
- Details of others living in your household
 - Sometimes we need information about people other than the person who has applied for a benefit or service to work out what that person is entitled to. For example, where a person makes a claim for Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction, we need information about other people who live in the same household to work out how much the person will be paid
- Landlord name, address and contact
- Medical information only when required to support your claim in specific circumstances

3 Automated Profiling

Your personal data will be subject to the following automatic profiling (as defined in Article 4, paragraph 4 UK GDPR):

Council Tax billing

When you submit an online form to update your Council Tax information, our system may process this automatically and determine a new bill. If you disagree with the outcome you can appeal as standard.

Housing Benefit

Some claim assessments are automated based on the information the claimant has provided to us directly or from other Central Government departments. All applicants are offered a right of appeal as standard.

Income collection

If you have not kept up with payments or have not made an acceptable arrangement to pay, our system will automatically escalate your account and you will be issued with a reminder notice.

If payment

or an acceptable arrangement has still not been made for Council Tax and Business Rates, the system will automatically escalate to court proceedings. The enforcement process will occur once a court liability order has been obtained.

If you disagree with the outcome, you can appeal to have it reviewed by a person in the normal way by responding to the notices. If the case has progressed to court proceedings, you may only be able to address this in court.

4 Sharing your personal data.

Your information may be shared:

- to detect or prevention crime
- for enforcement action
- for credit reference checks
- tracing debtors
- to enable delivery of your services and/or to meet our legal obligations.
- National Fraud Initiative Data matching for the prevention of Fraud
- Data and Data Matches will be shared with the Council's Shared Anti-Fraud Service who carry out investigations on our behalf.

5 How will we store your personal data and for how long will we keep it?

Most personal data are stored within computer application systems, (including a corporate document imaging system), which are accessible only by those authorised to process the data.

A very limited amount of personal data is stored in paper files, which are securely locked when not in use.

The Council will retain data in accordance with its Retention Policies. These are available at:

[Retention Schedule | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

6 Exercising your Rights

You have the right to ask us to amend or delete your data as well transfer or limit its use. You also have the right to request a review of an automated decision where you think this is wrong.

Each request will be considered individually. Where we are required to keep your data by law, we may be unable to action your request. In all circumstances we will explain our decision making in writing to you.