

Crisis support in the Scottish Borders



Information on the services and support available in the Scottish Borders produced by the Scottish Borders Welfare Reform Liaison Group

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This booklet provides information, advice and guidance for those advising individuals and families facing crisis. This might include homelessness, lack of food or the prospect of no money. Issues dealt with include dealing with delays to benefit payments; challenging and avoiding benefit sanctions; addressing budgeting, or other problems at home that can lead to no access to money. The help available to individuals varies, depending on their personal situation, so it is important to consider each person's case on an individual basis.

Many organisations in the Scottish Borders provide support for individuals and families in crisis. This booklet has been compiled to help all of us provide the best advice possible to clients. It has been jointly produced by the following organisations.

Central Borders CAB

Peebles and District CAB

Roxburgh and Berwickshire CAB

Eildon Housing Association

Waverley Housing Association

Scottish Borders Housing Association

Berwickshire Housing Association

Scottish Borders Council

NB The benefits system is very complex and is subject to change. 'Universal Credit' will eventually replace most existing benefits and tax credits. It is expected that Universal Credit will cover all benefit claims by 2017. At the time of publishing this guide, Universal Credit has not been introduced in the Scottish Borders Council area, however advisers should take care to check. This document is a guide for advisers; current legislation and information on all benefits is available from www.gov.uk. Up to date advice on benefits is available from Citizens Advice Bureaux, the Welfare Benefits Service at Scottish Borders Council and (for advisers and support workers only) from CPAG (advice@cpagscotland.org.uk).

Scottish Borders Citizens Advice Bureaux

Please note that outreach services are available, in addition to the times and places below. Information about outreach services is available from any of the CAB offices.

DUNS

Address: Southfield Community Centre, Station Road, TD11 3EL
Telephone: 01361 883340
Fax: 01361 883340
Email: enquiries@roxburghcab.casonline.org.uk

Opening hours

Tuesday 12:00 – 15:00
Wednesday 10:00 – 13:00
Thursday 10:00 – 13:00

EYEMOUTH

Address: Community Centre, Albert Road, TD14 5DE
Telephone: 01890 750500
Fax: 01890 750500
Email: enquiries@roxburghcab.casonline.org.uk

Opening hours

Monday 12:00 – 15:00
Wednesday 10:00 – 13:00
Friday 09:30 – 12:30

GALASHIELS

Address: 111 High Street, Galashiels, TD1 1RZ
Telephone: 01896 753889
Fax: 01896 756966
Email: bureau@centralborderscab.casonline.org.uk

Opening hours

Monday 10:00 – 16:00
Tuesday 10:00 – 16:00
Wednesday 10:00 – 16:00
Thursday 10:00 – 18:00
Friday 10:00 – 13:00

HAWICK

Address: 1 Towerdykeside, Hawick, TD9 9EA
Telephone: 01450 374266
Fax: 01450 370119
Email: enquiries@roxburghcab.casonline.org.uk

Opening hours

Monday 10:00 – 16:00
Tuesday 10:00 – 16:00
Wednesday 10:00 – 13:00
Thursday 10:00 – 16:00
Friday 10:00 – 15:00

KELSO

Address: 20 Sheddon Park Road, Kelso, TD5 7AL
Telephone: 01573 223516
Fax: 01573 223516
Email: enquiries@roxburghcab.casonline.org.uk

Opening hours

Tuesday 10:00 – 13:00
Thursday 12:00 – 15:00

PEEBLES

Address: Chambers Institution, High Street, Peebles, EH45 8AJ
Telephone: 01721 721722
Fax: 01721 723844
Email: manager@peeblescab.casonline.org.uk

Opening hours

Monday 10:00 – 16:00
Tuesday 10:00 – 13:00
Wednesday 10:00 – 13:00
Thursday 10:00 – 13:00
Friday 10:00 – 13:00

Scottish Borders Council Welfare Benefits Service

Address; Paton Street, Galashiels, TD1 3AS

Telephone: 01896 661394

Email: wbs@scotborders.gcsx.gov.uk

Duty times

Monday 09:30 – 12:30

Tuesday 09:30 – 12:30

Wednesday 13:30 – 16:30

Thursday 09:30 – 12:30

Friday 09:30 – 12:30

The Welfare Benefits Service can offer home visits.

What to do if a client has been sanctioned

Jobcentre Plus can sanction individuals for some kinds of misconduct, for example if they are receiving Jobseeker's Allowance and fail to take part in the Work Programme. A sanction normally means Jobcentre Plus stops or reduces benefit for a certain period.

Jobcentre Plus cannot impose a sanction if there was a good reason for an individual's behaviour. If Jobcentre Plus has been unreasonable and the sanction has been unfairly applied, then it should be challenged.

A client may be able to cope financially with a sanction of four weeks, but a second or third sanction could mean they are without benefit for up to 13 weeks or even 3 years in some circumstances.

What are sanctions?

Any of the following benefits can be sanctioned:

- Income Support as a carer
- Income Support as a lone parent (where child is between 1-4 years)
- Income Support on the grounds of ill health
- JSA income based
- Universal Credit
- JSA – contributions based
- ESA – income related
- ESA – contributions based
- Incapacity benefit
- Carer's allowance
- Severe disablement allowance

Sanctions normally last for a fixed period of 4, 13, or 26 weeks, or 3 years, depending on the benefit and the individual's misconduct. It also depends on whether it is the first, second or third such incident.

There are three different types of sanctions. All can be applied to JSA, and some are applied to other benefits:

- Lower level sanctions - normally last 4 or 13 weeks.
- Intermediate level sanctions - also normally last 4 or 13 weeks.
- Higher level sanctions - normally last 13 or 26 weeks or 3 years.

For individuals aged 16 or 17, there are special rules about when Jobcentre Plus can impose a sanction.

Challenging a sanction

If a sanction decision is unfair, clients should be encouraged to challenge it.

Jobcentre Plus can't impose a sanction if there was a good reason for your client's behaviour. For example, if they didn't apply for a job that was pointed out to them, but this was because it was too far away. This would usually have to be further than an hour and a half each way.

A sanction cannot be imposed if an individual did not meet the conditions for a sanction. For example, if a client did not act in the way the Jobcentre Plus maintains.

A client should ask for a written statement of the reason for the sanction and any reply should give all of the reasons (with supporting evidence if applicable) when asking Jobcentre Plus to review the decision. It is important to challenge this quickly as there is a time limit of one month from the decision in which to challenge a sanction.

This process is called a 'mandatory reconsideration' and means a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) decision maker will look at the decision again to see if it is correct.

Help when someone has been sanctioned

If an individual wants help to find out why a benefit has stopped, to challenge a sanction, or find out about sources of emergency support they may be entitled to, they should be directed to their local Citizens Advice Bureau or the Welfare Benefits Service at Scottish Borders Council.

Contact information about these offices is at the start of this guide.

Remember that there are time limits involved with challenging sanctions, so it is important that clients are encouraged to take action immediately.

The following pages of this guide are designed to give information about the benefits and support available to individuals in a 'crisis' situation. They may be struggling to cope financially due to an emergency or problems with benefits.

Short-term Advances of Benefit

Short-term advances of benefit are available to anyone claiming Jobcentre Plus administered benefits. They are intended for use when someone has claimed a benefit and is in a period of financial need whilst waiting to receive it. Some of the circumstances where an individual may be entitled to an advance payment are:

- If a claim for benefit has been made, a decision has not yet been made but the DWP thinks it likely it will be awarded
- If a benefit has been awarded but the first payment has not yet been received
- If a first payment has been received but it covered a shorter period than usual and there is a wait for the next payment
- If a client's circumstances have changed, so benefit entitlement has increased but not yet been received

To receive the advance payment, an individual must prove financial need, for example where there is serious risk of damage to the health or safety of the benefit recipient or a family member.

Short-term advances must be repaid from future benefit payments, usually within three months.

Help with applying for a Short-term Advance of Benefit is available from Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Hardship payments

Hardship payments are a reduced rate of payment for claimants of income-based JSA or ESA, who are experiencing hardship, for example being unable to meet essential living costs. Hardship can be as a result of a sanction.

They are available in specific circumstances, for example if benefit has been suspended or sanctioned, or if the Jobcentre is making a decision about meeting job seeking conditions. Hardship payments must be applied for.

How much are the payments?

Usually for JSA or ESA a hardship payment is 60% of the usual amount. If the claimant or member of the family (including partner) or member of the joint claim is pregnant or seriously ill then it is 80% of JSA payment.

No hardship payment is made for the first two weeks unless the claimant or someone within their household falls within a vulnerable group and it can be proved that suffering or hardship will result without the payment.

The claimant is 'vulnerable' if they are any of the following:

- A pregnant woman
- responsible for child under 16
- qualify for a disability premium
- have a long-term medical conditions (must provide evidence)
- a carer (for person in receipt of qualifying benefits)
- certain 16/17 year-olds
- under 21 years of age and being looked after by LA within previous three years.

Hardship payments will end if a client is no longer entitled to JSA or ESA. Payments made because of a sanction will stop on the date the sanction is due to end (even if there are consecutive sanctions).

To apply for JSA payments clients should ask for and complete a "JSA Hardship Application" available from their local Job Centre Plus office.

Individuals who would like help with applying for Hardship Payments can ask for support at their local CAB or from the Welfare Benefits Service.

Severe Hardship Payments (16 to 17 year-olds)

If you are 16 or 17 you may be able to claim JSA in exceptional circumstances such as estrangement from your family or when leaving local authority care. In order to receive Severe Hardship Payments you must be:

- Available for and actively seeking work and training
- Registered with the Local Authority Youth Services/ Careers Service
- Capable of work
- Able to prove to a certificated officer that he/she would suffer severe hardship if a Severe Hardship Direction was not awarded.

To receive payments you will be interviewed by an under 18 advisor at the local Job Centre at which you should mention any health problems, difficulties at home, or whether you will become homeless without them.

It is important that when claiming the JSA that you state you are claiming under the Severe Hardship rules.

Severe Hardship Payments are paid for short periods of up to 16 weeks at a time and at the same rate as ordinary JSA for an 18 year old.

What counts as living away from home for a “good reason?”

One of the following would be a good reason for being away from home:

- You have no living parent(s) or anyone acting as your parent(s)
- You have been in care
- You are living away from home because you were in danger there.

You may be asked for permission to contact your family to confirm why you can't live at home. You cannot be forced to give your permission, but if you don't you may be refused benefit. If you don't want your family to be contacted, a person in a responsible position (advice worker, social worker, etc.) who knows your circumstances can give evidence for you.

If you would like help with applying for Severe Hardship Payments, you should ask for support at your local CAB or Scottish Borders Council Welfare Benefits Service.

People who are aged 16 or over, on a low income and do not have access to any other financial support to pay for what they need may be able to receive a payment under this fund.

- Crisis Grants are available to people who are experiencing a disaster or emergency situation and need money urgently for living expenses to help them through that period.
- Community Care Grants are available to enable people to live independently in their community without them having to go into institutional care.

Both of these grants are awarded at the discretion of the local authority and are intended to meet one-off needs rather than be for ongoing expenses, and do not have to be paid back.

Crisis Grants

If an individual has experienced an emergency or disaster, they may receive money to help them recover. It is important that an individual can show that if they do not have this money quickly, it will be a risk to them or their family.

There must be no other way of paying for this. For example, if an individual has enough of their own, they will not get this grant. A Crisis grant may be awarded if it can be proved that it is very important for an individual or their family. Some examples may include:

- escaping domestic violence;
- delays with a benefit claim;
- you may have had money stolen from you;
- you may have nowhere to live;
- fire, floods or other natural disasters.

Grants will not always be money. They may include food, heating costs, nappies or toiletries, travel costs, or hostel accommodation costs. Only three grants a year are allowed for the same reason (e.g. if a purse was stolen three times). Normally, a Crisis Grant will not be awarded within 28 days of a previous similar award.

Community Care Grants

This money enables an individual to retain or establish a settled way of life in the community, for example, setting up home after a stay in homeless accommodation. Examples for which the award might be granted are:

- Household equipment (e.g. cooker, fridge, bed, or bedding, or installation costs)
- Furniture
- Removal costs
- Travel costs
- Gas and electricity connection charges

It does not matter how long an individual has been receiving a low income for, but they will have to prove that if they didn't have this extra help they would not be able to live independently in the community. In general, an individual must have under £700 savings if they are of working age and under £1,200 if they are of pension age.

Examples of situations where the grant may be applicable are:

- Moving out of care (care home, long term hospital care, prison etc.) and want to start to live independently
- Disabled and need specialist equipment that may be expensive
- Setting up home as part of a resettlement programme following a period of unsettled living. E.g. homelessness.
- Not disabled, but under a lot of pressure to keep children in a safe and secure environment.

The grant can also help to care for prisoners on release on a temporary license. Recipients have to be receiving a qualifying benefit or receive support or care from their local authority.

Eligibility for a grant may depend on whether the applicant is considered to be a vulnerable adult (unable to care for themselves because of a disability or a mental health issue or any other reason). The fund can also help children and young adults leaving local authority care. The Council will consider applications using the criteria outlined previously.

How to apply for the Scottish Welfare Fund

Applications to the Scottish Welfare Fund are made through Scottish Borders Council.

Applications can be made online, by downloading a form from the website, or by phoning or calling in for an application form from any of the Contact Centres.

Telephone: 0300 100 1800

Website: www.scottishborders.gov.uk

Contact Centres can be found at the following locations:

- **Coldstream:** Gateway Centre, High Street, TD12 4AE
- **Duns:** 49 Newtown Street, TD11 3AU
- **Eyemouth:** Old High School Building, Coldingham Road, TD14 5AN
- **Galashiels:** Paton Street, TD1 3AS
- **Hawick:** High Street, TD9 9EF
- **Innerleithen:** Buccleuch Street, EH44 6LA
- **Jedburgh:** Castlegate, TD8 6AS
- **Kelso:** Bowmont Street, TD5 7JH
- **Newtown St Boswells:** Bowden Road, TD6 0SA
- **Peebles:** High Street, EH45 8AG
- **Selkirk:** High Street, TD7 4JX

The Revenues and Benefits section can provide help and advice on applications and can be contacted on the number above.

Help is also available from any of the citizens advice bureaux in the Scottish Borders.

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to support vulnerable individuals and “children in need” if there is an emergency and can make discretionary payments to do this.

A vulnerable person is defined by the Social Work Scotland Act 1968 regulations as a “person in need”, who is 18 or over. It includes people who:

- Are elderly or
- Have a mental illness or physical disability or
- Are vulnerable in other ways (e.g. drug/alcohol dependency) or victim of domestic abuse, or
- Have applied for asylum and are awaiting the outcome of an appeal

Section 12 Payments

One type of payments, called Section 12 Payments, can cover emergencies, debts and preventative help to avoid a person’s needs becoming greater. Some examples may be:

- Cash payments - pay a fuel bill to stop disconnection of supply
- Payments to third parties - a rent guarantee to a landlord
- Payments in kind - vouchers to purchase food, fuel, clothing, furniture
- Loans - to cover a stolen or delayed benefit payment

Local authorities can also provide accommodation through Section 12 payments to prevent homelessness in exceptional circumstances.

Section 22 Payments - children in need

Local authorities also have a duty of care for ‘children in need’ (Children Scotland Act 1995). By this they mean someone 18 or under and deemed as being at risk.

Examples would include children who:

- Are unlikely to achieve or maintain reasonable health and development unless services are provided or

- Whose health or development would be impaired unless services are provided or
- Are disabled (chronically ill or with mental or physical disability) or
- Are adversely affected by the disability of another family member.

In exceptional emergency situations the local authority can provide discretionary cash payments to help promote the needs of the child if help is unable to be provided in some other way. The payments may also take the form of those listed above for Section 12 Payments.

If a child is at risk of serious harm the local authority may also provide short term (usually 7-14 days) refuge accommodation. Examples where this provision could be made available include:

- Family conflict or abuse or neglect at home
- Problems with drugs or alcohol
- Pregnancy
- Children who have run away from foster-care or local authority accommodation.

The aim of the short refuge is to provide somewhere safe for the child to stay whilst the immediate problem is resolved or to assess provision of longer term accommodation.

For either of the above payments the onus is on the person claiming to prove that they fall into one of the categories and have no other way of paying for the service they require.

Application for these payments can be made:

Scottish Borders Council

Address: Council Headquarters Newtown St. Boswells Melrose TD6 0SA

Telephone: 0300 100 1800

Email: enquiries@scotborders.gov.uk

Budgeting loans can help with essential lump sum expenses which are difficult to budget for when living on means-tested benefits. Budgeting loans have to be paid back to the social fund, but they are interest-free. This means that all that needs to be paid back is the amount awarded. A budgeting loan won't be awarded simply on the grounds of eligibility. The decision will be made following a review of an individual's circumstances.

Who can apply for a budgeting loan?

An individual can apply for a budgeting loan if they are getting Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Pension Credit on the day that they apply. In addition, they must have been on one of these benefits for at least 26 weeks. Breaks of 28 days or less in a claim will be ignored.

Individuals cannot receive a full budgeting loan if they or their partner has more than £1,000 in capital (£2,000 if either is 61 or over). If capital above this amount is available, any budgeting loan award will be reduced by the amount of excess capital.

What can a budgeting loan be used for?

A budgeting loan can only be awarded for essential items or services in certain categories. This could include:

- furniture and household equipment
- clothing and footwear
- rent in advance and/or removal expenses to new accommodation
- improvement, maintenance and security of a home
- travelling expenses
- expenses associated with getting or starting a job
- maternity or funeral expenses
- hire purchase payments and other debts, if the money was borrowed for expenses in any of the other categories.

Before applying for a budgeting loan, an applicant should check whether they are entitled to a maternity grant or funeral payment, as these grants do not have to be repaid.

An individual may also be eligible to apply to the Scottish Welfare Fund for a crisis grant or a community care grant as described on pages 13 to 15. These do not have to be repaid.

How to apply for a budgeting loan

A budgeting loan can be applied for using form SF500, which is available from Jobcentre Plus.

Contact

Telephone: 0345 603 6967

Opening hours: 8:00 to 18.00, Monday – Friday

A copy of the form can be downloaded from the GOV.UK website.

Website: www.gov.uk/budgeting-loans/how-to-claim

Because budgeting loans depend on circumstances, all the questions on the form which apply must be answered. The applicant does not have to specify exactly what is needed or why, but the categories of the expenses for which the loan is required, and the amount of money, must be detailed.

Help with applying for a budgeting loan is available from citizens advice bureaux.

Dealing with benefits delays or poor processing

Users have the right to expect a good standard of service from a public sector agency. Action can be taken to complain about and resolve issues surrounding poor service and/or maladministration.

Examples of poor service would be:

- An unreasonable delay in receipt of a payment or processing of that payment
- The DWP aims to process claims within:
 - o Income Support - 9 days
 - o Job Seekers Allowance - 11 days
 - o Employment Support Allowance - 14 days
- Neglecting to inform the client of their rights
- Rudeness or failure to answer reasonable questions
- Giving misleading advice
- Discrimination on gender, race or colour grounds
- Offering no redress where it is warranted
- Omitting to mention the client's appeal rights on a decision
- Loss of case papers connected to a claim
- Not replying to letters or telephone calls
- No provision of interpretation facilities if the claimant has a first language that is not English

What can be achieved by making a complaint?

A client can expect to achieve the following by making a complaint:

- An apology and explanation for what happened
- An assurance that the situation will be rectified if possible
- A change in procedure
- In certain circumstances financial compensation

Who should complaints be directed to?

Initially, a complaint should be made to the office administering the benefit. Agencies have their own internal complaints procedure which should be available on request.

Housing benefit and council tax benefits complaints should be addressed to:

Scottish Borders Council

Address: Council Headquarters Newtown St. Boswells Melrose TD6 0SA

Telephone: 0300 100 1800

Email: enquiries@scotborders.gov.uk

JobCentre Plus is responsible for payment of Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance and Income Support and in the first instance a complaint should be made to the local office administering the benefit who should reply within 15 working days of receiving the complaint.

If a client is unhappy with the response or the complaint remains unresolved then the complaint should be referred for a decision to:

Jobcentre Plus Operating Officer

Address: Room 607, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA

Telephone: 020 7273 6006

If the problem or complaint is still not resolved the case may then be referred for a final decision or appeal to an independent agency that examines all services provided by the DWP, namely:

The Independent Case Examiner

Address: Jupiter Drive, Chester, CH70 8DR

Telephone: 0845 606 0777

What to include in a complaint

In dealing with any of the above agencies it is essential that for written complaints the following is included:

- Client name, address, date of birth, national insurance number and contact details
- Photocopies of correspondence with the relevant office(s)
- A summary of the complaint with details of dates and events, and names of officials
- Any other relevant information to the complaint
- An explanation of why the treatment of the case was unacceptable

DWP Special Payments

The DWP may make special payments in cases where an individual has suffered hardship or injustice through proven maladministration. These payments are discretionary but may be available if:

- The client has lost entitlement to benefit payments
- The client has suffered actual financial loss pursuing the claim e.g. travel expenses, postage costs
- The client has suffered injustice or hardship (for which there are payments available between £25 and £500)

There is no statutory right to these payments – and a final decision by The Independent Case Examiner will be binding.

Help with making a complaint or applying for DWP Special Payments, is available from citizens advice bureaux.

Borders Food Bank Network

There are 8 food banks currently operating in the Scottish Borders. Food banks require a referral from a recognised agency and the contact numbers are subject to change. Contact details for food banks are held by referring agencies.

Within the Scottish Borders there are food banks serving the following areas:

Hawick - includes Denholm, Robertson, Teviothead (please note, Hawick requires the individual to collect from the Salvation Army in the centre of town)

Jedburgh - includes Ancrum, Crailing, A68 to St Boswells

Galashiels - includes Tweedbank, Melrose, Gattonside, Stow

Selkirk - includes Bowden, Lilliesleaf

Kelso - includes Ednam, Stichil, Morebattle, Yetholm

Peebles - includes Innerleithen, Walkerburn and the whole of Peebleshire

Duns - includes Greenlaw, Chirnside, Gordon, Eyemouth (please note, Duns requires an online referral form to be completed)

Earlston

Food bank services may either provide a 'delivery' or 'collection' service.

All food banks in the Scottish Borders require clients to be referred from a referring agency. These include, but are not restricted to:

- Scottish Borders Council (Social Work/Criminal Justice/Homelessness team/Scottish Welfare Fund team/Welfare Benefits)
- Mental Health Teams (Penumbra, SAMH)
- Borders Care and Addiction teams (Add Action, BCAT etc)
- 16+ Transition team
- Heriot Watt University
- GPs / Nurses / Health Professionals
- CAB offices

Borders Women's Aid

Borders Women's Aid Ltd. is an independent charity dedicated to helping women and their children escaping domestic abuse.

It provides safe accommodation in a refuge, along with a range of help and support from a team of trained and dedicated support workers. Any contact with Borders Women's Aid is strictly confidential.

All women (16+) are welcome although if space is limited, priority is given to women with children who have no access to alternative accommodation.

Contact details

Telephone: 01835 863514

Website: www.borderwomensaid.co.uk/

Penumbra

Penumbra Borders Youth Project is a community based mental health project for young people aged 16-21 who live in the Scottish Borders. It offers emotional support and advice to young people experiencing any difficulties relating to their mental health and wellbeing.

One-to-one and drop-in support is available.

Penumbra also provide local supported living services so use contact details for more information.

Contact details

Telephone: 01896 751177

Website: www.galashiels.bordernet.co.uk/penumbra/

SAMH

SAMH Borders Support team offers one-to-one support to people experiencing mental ill-health, encouraging and assisting them to step out of isolation, unemployment and discrimination into equality and independence.

Referrals can be made to SAMH by Social Workers, Community Psychiatric teams, Occupational Therapists and General Practitioners.

Contact details

Address: SAMH, Borders Support Service, 50/52 Island Street,
Galashiels, TD1 1NU

Telephone: 01896 664838

Email: Lesley.mania@samh.org.uk

Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre

Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Centre provides emotional and practical support and information to women and girls aged 13 and over who have experienced rape or sexual violence in their lives. This includes sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse and other forms of sexual violence. The centre is run by women for women.

Contact details

Telephone: 01896 661070

National Helpline: 0800 054 2445

Email: support@sbrcc.org.uk

Opening hours:	Tuesday	10:00 – 14:00
	Wednesday	12:00 – 14:00
	Saturday	10:00 – 14:00

Domestic Abuse Advocacy Support (DAAS) Service

Individuals can ask for help from the DAAS service if they feel unsafe in their home or wish to leave an abusive situation. The service is free, confidential and will assess an individual's situation and help find a way forward. The DAAS service will support men, women and children/young people.

Contact details

Telephone:	01835 825024
National helpline:	0800 027 1234
Website:	www.scotborders.gov.uk/domesticabuse
Opening hours:	Monday to Thursday 08:45 – 17:00
	Friday 08:45 – 15:45

Homelessness service

The Scottish Borders Council Homelessness Service is available to anyone at risk of becoming unintentionally homeless. The Service will try to prevent homelessness wherever possible, and can also look for suitable housing for individuals and families.

Contact details

Address:	Scottish Borders Council, Paton Street, Galashiels, TD1 3AS
Telephone:	01896 661385;
Freephone:	0800 376 1138
Out of office hours:	01896 752111
Website:	www.scotborders.gov.uk/homelessness
Opening hours:	Monday to Thursday 08:45 – 17:00
	Friday 08:45 – 15:45

Shelter

Edinburgh Housing Aid Centre is for people living in Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian and Scottish Borders. It offers free, confidential and independent advice on homelessness, rent and mortgage arrears, eviction, housing benefit, dampness and disrepair, overcrowding, representation in court and landlord/tenant disputes.

Contact details

Address:	Edinburgh Housing Aid Centre, Ground Floor, Unit 2, Kittle Yards, Causewayside, Edinburgh EH9 1PJ
Telephone:	0844 515 2400
National helpline:	0808 800 4444 (Shelter's free housing advice helpline)
Email:	edinburgh_shac@shelter.org.uk
Opening hours:	Monday and Thursday 13:00 – 16:00 Tuesday 10:00 – 13:00

Please note that an appointment is not required during opening hours. Outside opening hours an answerphone will operate, or you can phone Shelter's free housing advice helpline number as above.

Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS)

PASS is an independent service which provides free, accessible and confidential information, advice and support to patients, their carers and families about NHS healthcare.



It also advises and supports people who wish to give feedback, make comments, raise concerns or make a complaint about treatment and care provided by the NHS in Scotland. The service is normally accessed by individuals via their local CAB.

Contact details

Address: Peebles and District Citizens Advice Bureau

Telephone: 01721 721722

Website: www.patientadvicescotland.org.uk

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

Most of the RSLs in the Scottish Borders area also offer some assistance to their tenants in need of money/benefit advice. This could be helping complete benefit claim forms or making a grant application. Tenants should contact the relevant RSL to find out what services are offered.

Contact details

Waverley Housing Association

Address: 51 North Bridge Street, Hawick, TD9 9PX

Telephone: 01450 364 200

Email: info@waverley-housing.co.uk

Scottish Borders Housing Association

Address: South Bridge House, Whinfield Road, Selkirk, TD7 5DT

Telephone: 01750 724444

Eildon Housing Association

Address: The Weaving Shed, Ettrick Mill, Dunsdale Road, Selkirk, TD7 5EB

Telephone: 01750 725 900

Scottish Borders Council Headquarters

Address: Newtown St. Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA

Telephone: 0300 100 1800

Email: enquiries@scotborders.gov.uk

Berwickshire Housing Association

Address: 55 Newtown Street, Duns, TD11 3AU

Telephone: 01361 884 000

ASAP (Armed Services Advice Project)

ASAP is provided by the Scottish Citizens Advice Bureau Service and provides information and advice for the armed forces community. In addition to the usual range of information and advice offered by CAB services, ASAP has links to many Service and ex-Service organisations that can give help, advice and financial support.

Contact details

Telephone: 0845 231 0300

Website: www.adviceasap.org.uk/

CAS Kinship Care Service

The Kinship Care Service is funded by the Scottish Government and is run by Citizens Advice Scotland via Citizens Advice Bureaux. It provides help and support for individual Kinship Carers as well as offering support and training services to Local Authorities. Individuals are advised to access the Kinship Care Service via their local CAB, but there is also a helpline open to anyone wishing to make use of the service.

Contact details

Telephone: 0808 800 0006

There is a local regional officer for the Kinship Care Service in the Scottish Borders.

Name: Gill Westwood

Address: Citizens Advice Scotland, Spectrum House, 2 Powderhall Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4GB

Telephone: 0131 550 1054

Email: gill.westwood@cas.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureaux are local, independent charities that provide free and confidential advice and information whoever you are and whatever your problem.

Find your nearest CAB here: www.cas.org.uk

Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux (SC016637)