

## WHAT IS A BASIC BANK ACCOUNT?

'Basic bank accounts' are no-frills accounts that allow customers to receive cash, pay bills, and use a cash card to make withdrawals from cash machines and Post Office branches.

Most people can now have a Basic bank account without the risk of going overdrawn.

## IS IT EASY TO GET A BANK ACCOUNT?

Getting a bank account is easy and can help you manage your money better. Opening a bank account has sometimes been difficult in the past for people with previous or existing debt problems.

Since October 2000, the government has said that banks should make a 'basic bank account' available to everyone, including those with poor credit records.

## WHY OPEN A BASIC BANK ACCOUNT?

- **We will pay your Housing Benefit direct to your bank account, making it easier for you to reach and manage your money.**
- **You can pay your landlord by standing order or direct debit.**
- **You can make automated payments such as paying bills by direct debit. Sometimes there are discounts available if you pay this way.**
- **Your Housing Benefit will usually be available to you sooner, as you will not need to wait for a cheque to clear.**

## HOW CAN I GET MY MONEY?

You can take money out at cash machines. Also with some accounts you can withdraw money from branches of your bank or building society. Most basic bank accounts offered by high street banks and building societies can also be accessed at the Post Office.

However, you will not get a cheque book with a basic bank account.

## HOW CAN I OPEN AN ACCOUNT?

The table in this leaflet shows details of some of the local banks and building societies that offer a basic bank account. When you have chosen a bank contact them direct to open an account.

It is important that you discuss your own needs with the bank before deciding to open an account with them.

## WHAT IDENTIFICATION WILL I NEED?

**To open a bank account you will need TWO separate documents of identification;**

- **Something that confirms who you are**
- **Something that confirms your address**

The best documents are ones that are sent to you by an official authority (such as the government), as they cannot be easily altered, and some of these include a photograph. The same document cannot be used to prove both your identity and your address.

Each bank has their own rules about which documents are needed. You should discuss with your chosen bank what they need.

## WHAT TYPES OF IDENTIFICATION?

The types of document you will be asked for are:

- Current passport or national ID card
- Driving licence
- Pension or benefit book
- Council Tax bill
- Utility bill (e.g. gas, electric, phone)

## HELP AND ADVICE

You can get independent advice from **Citizens Advice Bureau, 40 Park Road, Peterborough (01733) 558383. or Age Concern (01733) 564185.**

## CONTACTING US

**Telephone us on (01733) 452241**

Or send us an email to:

[benefits@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@peterborough.gov.uk)

Or visit our web site at:

[www.peterborough.gov.uk/housingbenefits](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/housingbenefits)

The web site also includes answers to a number of questions often asked about benefits.

Look out for other leaflets in this series

- BF1 "Claiming help with your rent"**
- BF2 "Claiming help with your Council Tax"**
- BF3 "The Verification Framework"**
- BF4 "Non-Dependants"**
- BF5 "The role of the Rent Service"**
- BF6 "How to Appeal"**
- BF7 "Second Adult Rebate"**
- BF8 "Backdated Claims"**
- BF9 "Benefits Performance Standards"**
- BF10 "Overpayments of Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit"**

# BENEFITS SERVICE

## OPENING A BASIC BANK ACCOUNT



### HOUSING BENEFIT

A guide for Housing Benefit claimants, who need to open a basic bank account to receive Housing Benefit payments.



Leaflet – BF11

Name of Bank	Name of Account	Charge for unpaid Direct Debit	Direct Debit	Cheque Book	Cash machine Card	Debit Card	Overdraft	Post Office Access	If any of the following apply, your application may be declined
<b>Abbey</b> 1-4 Long Causeway	Basic Account	£32.00	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Undischarged bankrupt, Record of fraud
<b>Alliance &amp; Leicester</b> 4 Church Street	Basic Banking Account	£29.50	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Undischarged bankrupt, Some bad debts depending on individual circumstances
<b>Barclays Bank</b> 1 Church Street	Cash Card Account	£30.00	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Record of fraud
<b>Co-operative Bank</b> 33 Westgate	Cashminder	None	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Record of fraud
<b>Halifax</b> 28 Queensgate	Easycash	£30.00	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Undischarged bankrupt, Record of fraud
<b>HSBC</b> Cathedral Square	Basic Bank Account	From £20.00	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Undischarged bankrupt, Some bad debts
<b>Lloyds TSB</b> 30-31 Long Causeway	Basic Bank Account	£32.00	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Undischarged bankrupt
<b>Nationwide Building Society</b> 28 Long Causeway	FlexAccount Cash Card	£30.00	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	History of fraud
<b>NatWest</b> Cathedral Square	Step Account	£30.00	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Undischarged bankrupt
<b>The Royal Bank of Scotland</b> 14-15 Hereward Cross	Key Account	£35.00	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	
<b>Yorkshire Bank</b> 10 Church Street	Ready Cash	£35.00	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	