

September 2011

Lothian Valuation Joint Board is responsible for the compilation and maintenance of:-

- **The Electoral Register**
- **The Council Tax List**
- **The Valuation Roll**

Our aim is to provide high quality, effective and responsive services to all of our stakeholders. We are committed to listening and responding to customer needs. We therefore welcome your complaints as a valuable form of feedback about our services. By telling us what you think, and letting us know if things go wrong, you can help us improve our services to you.

MAKING CONTACT WITH US

If you wish to make a comment on any of our services, or are unhappy with the service you receive from us, you can:-

- **Speak to staff in person**
- **Telephone (0131 344 2500)**
- **Write a letter**
- **E-mail (assessor@lothian-vjb.gov.uk)**
- **Complete a Comments & Complaints Form**

Written complaints should be addressed to:-

The Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer
17A South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 9FL

COMPLAINTS

We take complaints about Lothian Valuation Joint Board services seriously and deal with them in confidence.

We use information from complaints to try to improve our services and prevent the same problem happening again so to ensure senior management are aware of complaints and outcomes these will be reported at management meetings and action/s required undertaken, as appropriate.

THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Stage 1 – Frontline Resolution

If you are unhappy with the service you receive from us, you should raise the issue with the officer you are dealing with at the time. Officers' should provide a full explanation and aim to rectify any problematic issues when they arise. Frontline resolutions should be completed within five working days and can be dealt with either face-to-face or by telephone. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to extend the investigation period but any extension will be agreed with you beforehand and in any case shall not be longer than 10 working days. It may not always be possible to resolve complaints at Stage 1 of the procedure that are complex or require an amount of investigation to establish the facts.

Stage 2 - Investigation

If you are not satisfied with the member of staff's response at Stage 1 then you should formally contact us in writing (by letter, form or email) with full details of your complaint. Your complaint will be referred to a **Client Care Officer**; a senior officer appointed by the Assessor whose duty it will be to investigate the matter fully and examine all options to remedy the situation. An acknowledgement will be sent within **3 working days** and a full written response to your complaint will be sent to you **within 20 working days**.

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Stage 3 – Independent External Review

If, after completing all of the above, you feel you still believe that you have been treated unfairly, you can refer your complaint to the Ombudsman by writing to:-

**Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
4 Melville Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7NS**

Please note you require take your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) within 12 months from the date on which the issue was raised. The SPSO will normally only handle complaints after you have exhausted Lothian Valuation Joint Board's Complaints Procedure and where you claim to have suffered injustice or hardship as a result of maladministration or service failure. The role and remit of the SPSO are set out in the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002.

APPEALS FOR RATING VALUATION, COUNCIL TAX & ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

The Assessor and ERO is an independent statutory official who carries out his/her duties in relation to Rating Valuation, Council Tax and Electoral Registration in line with the appropriate statutory legislation and guidelines. Separate and distinct appeal systems exist for disagreements regarding entries in the Valuation Roll, Council Tax List or Electoral Register. Appeals against entries in the Roll, List or Register **will not therefore be dealt with as complaints** as these must follow the legislative framework set out in the Acts.

Valuation for Rating

- Application to the Assessor, followed by
- Appeal to the local Valuation Appeal Committee or the Lands Tribunal with
- Further appeal to the Lands Valuation Appeal Court

Compilation of the Council Tax Valuation List

- Proposal to the Assessor followed by
- Appeal to the local Valuation Appeal Committee with
- Further appeal to the Court of Session

Electoral Registration

- Formal hearing by the Electoral Registration Officer with
- Appeal to the Sheriff Court

For further guidance please contact our office.

OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

Scottish Assessors' Association website: www.saa.gov.uk

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
4 Melville Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7NS
Telephone Number : 0800 377 7330
SPSO website : www.spsso.org.uk

CONTACT INFORMATION

THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT, BRAILLE,
VARIOUS COMMUNITY LANGUAGES AND CDROM

Contact details are noted below:-

JOAN M HEWTON, ASSESSOR & ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER
17A SOUTH GYLE CRESCENT, EDINBURGH, EH12 9FL
HELPLINE ~ 0131 344 2500 FAX ~ 0131 344 2600 MINICOM ~ 0131 344 2611
EMAIL ~ enquiries@lothian-vjb.gov.uk WEBSITE ~ www.lothian@vjb.gov.uk

