

Blackfriars

Advice Centre

Received a Letter from Bailiffs for Council Tax arrears?

If you have received a letter from bailiffs for the recovery of Council Tax arrears, the first thing to remember is **THEY CANNOT BREAK INTO YOUR PROPERTY!**

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO LET THE BAILIFFS IN when they call to seize your goods. Even if you open the door to them they are not allowed to push their way into your home. By law they have to make “peaceable entry” in order to seize your goods. Therefore, it is important that you **DO NOT INVITE THE BAILIFFS INTO YOUR HOME.**

Even if the Police come with the bailiffs you still do not have to let the bailiffs in. The Police are only there to keep peace and should not encourage you to open the door and let the bailiffs in.

The best thing to do when you receive a letter from the bailiffs is to **ALWAYS CHECK WHO IS AT THE DOOR BEFORE YOU OPEN IT. SEEK ADVICE** as soon as possible to try and make an arrangement to pay off the arrears your advisor will be able to check and make sure you have received all the benefit and discounts you are entitled to see if the level of arrears is correct.

ONCE YOU HAVE LET THE BAILIFF INTO YOUR HOME, THEY CAN TAKE WALKING POSSESSION OF YOUR GOODS AND COME BACK AT ANY TIME (EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT THERE) AND SEIZE YOUR GOODS.

The bailiffs can walk in through an open door or climb through an open window. They can also sometimes break into interior doors. Therefore, it is important that you **KEEP ALL EXTERNAL AND WINDOWS IN YOUR HOME LOCKED.**

Please seek advice about your Council Tax arrears as soon as possible. Your adviser can then try to help you make an affordable arrangement to pay off your arrears. **COUNCIL TAX ARREARS ARE A PRIORITY DEBT AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO PAY THEM OFF.**