

Bennachie Horizon's Step-by-Step Appeal Guide

If your SDS budget doesn't cover your needs, you have the right to challenge it. Here's how to do it in plain English.

Step 1: Gather the evidence

- Collect your support plan, assessment notes, and any reports (school, health, therapy).
- Note down specific examples of where your current budget falls short (e.g. "can't attend community activities due to lack of hours").
- If you know of others with similar needs who receive more, record this anonymously in your Budget Comparison Sheet.

Step 2: Ask for the budget calculation

- Contact your social worker and request a breakdown of how your budget was worked out.
- You have the right to see the "resource allocation" or scoring system used.

Step 3: Write a review request

- Send a short letter/email asking for a budget review.
- Be polite but clear: explain why the current budget doesn't meet your assessed needs.
- Include your key evidence and attach supporting documents.

Step 4: Escalate if needed

- If your request is ignored or refused without a clear explanation, ask to escalate it to a senior manager.
- You can also request an internal review panel.

Step 5: Independent support

- ⦿ If progress stalls, you can seek advice from:
 - ⦿ **Independent Advocacy services** (free in most areas)
 - ⦿ **Citizen's Advice Bureau**
 - ⦿ **Specialist SDS advice organisations** (e.g. SDSS Scotland)

Step 6: Keep a paper trail

- ⦿ Save copies of all emails, letters, and responses.
- ⦿ Record dates and names of people you speak to.
- ⦿ A clear paper trail strengthens your case if things need to go further