



TESTIMONIALS

"Branch & Lee have worked on Consultancy projects for North Herts. DC for the last 6 years. During this time we have effected a considerable saving that can be directly associated to their work.

Their objective has been to examine and analyse Benefit information extracted from our processing systems. They have specialised on Housing benefit and Council Tax subsidy.

We have found them to be highly skilled and effective in providing management information relating to Subsidy. Their work has been influential on providing accurate data and, as well as saving the authority a considerable amount of money, they have provided a number of important change processes before and during the Subsidy Audit process.

We consider them to be a cost effective and reliable asset in realising the maximum amount of subsidy available. They have provided an economical support service that has substantially reduced our external audit costs."

Mark Scanes

*Systems and Technical manager,
North Herts DC*

"They brought with them a professional and personable approach as well as valuable auditing experience, resulting in persuasive and effective working papers that were accepted by our own external auditor. They were also able to target their resource at those areas which had the highest impact to the authority.

Branch & Lee enabled Thanet DC to maximise its subsidy income in two key areas, resulting in a net increase in subsidy due of around £290K.

They represented an additional level of skilled resource to supplement our own team in further investigating areas which Branch & Lee identified themselves, following analysis of the interim final claim. In a financial climate where every penny counts, I would not hesitate to use their services again."

Mark Emery

*Performance & Budget Manager
Thanet DC*

Who we've worked for.

Since 2003 Branch & Lee has assisted the following Authorities with their subsidy claims and in doing so have saved them substantial amounts of money.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

External Audit Queries Project. Dec 2004.
External Audit Queries Project. March 2004.

BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

H.B Subsidy Maximisation. June 2003.

Savings of 50K.

Preparation of Subsidy Claim for external audit. May 2006.

COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL

External Audit Queries Project. April 2006.

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

H.B Subsidy Maximisation. Nov. 2007.

Savings of 30K.

KIRKLEES METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Subsidy Guidance Report. April 2003.

MEDWAY TOWNS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Subsidy Guidance Report June 2005.
H.B Subsidy Maximisation. July 2007.

Savings of 100K.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

H.B Subsidy Maximisation. May 2003.

Savings of 60K.

External Audit Queries Project. Feb 2005.
Preparation of Subsidy Claim for external audit. May 2005.

External Audit Queries Project. May 2006.
Preparation of Subsidy Claim for external audit. May 2007

External Audit Queries Project May 2008

RYEDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL

H.B Subsidy Maximisation. June 2003.

Savings of 60K.

Preparation of Subsidy Claim for external audit. June 2004.

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

External Audit Queries Project. April 2006.
H.B Subsidy Maximisation. April 2006.

Savings of 30K.

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

External Audit Queries Project. Aug 2006.
External Audit Queries Project. June 2007
External Audit Queries Project. June 2008.

STOCKPORT METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

H.B Subsidy Maximisation. April 2004.

Savings of 180K.

H.B Subsidy Maximisation. April 2005.

Savings of 250K.

THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL

H.B Subsidy Maximisation. June 2008.

Savings of £290K.

WIRRAL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

H.B Subsidy Maximisation. Sept 2003.

Savings of 250K.

H.B Subsidy Maximisation. June 2004.

Savings of 280K.

MAXIMISE SUBSIDY • REDUCE AUDIT COSTS • PRE-AUDIT HEALTH CHECK

Taking good care of your housing benefit subsidy





MEET THE TEAM

Philip Gary Branch

Before forming Branch and Lee Consulting Ltd in 2004 co-founder Philip Branch worked in and around Housing Benefit Administration for over 20 years.

Beginning his career as Benefit Assessor, Philip then went on to work as Team Leader, Appeals Officer, Benefits Manager and is currently a Branch and Lee Director and Housing Benefit Specialist.



Philip is conversant with almost every Housing Benefit commercial software package including: Northgate, OBIS, HBIS, Sanderson, Bull Logos, Saffron, IBS, Pericles and Academy.

Philip is also conversant with several 'In-House' software systems and has in-depth experience of most Document Image Systems. Since 1999 Philip has been contracted by the Audit Commission to audit Housing Benefit subsidy claims throughout Yorkshire.

These audits have totalled more than £1.5 billion. In total, Phillip has concluded more than 60 complete audits.

Joram David Lee

Joram has worked for the Audit Commission since 2003 and has assisted on thirty Housing Benefit Audits totalling more than £0.5 billion.

Together, Philip and Joram have worked with a range of different Benefit Services and have maximised their subsidy by well over three million pounds.



Branch and Lee provide a truly unique and bespoke service tailored to maximising your Housing Benefit Subsidy

SUBSIDY MAXIMISATION

Branch and Lee Consulting Ltd offer a Subsidy Maximisation service to all Local Authorities; our aim is to make sure that you are claiming every pound that is available.

In the current economic climate, ensuring that every Housing Benefit Service obtains the maximum amount of subsidy has never been so important. Yet each year, Local Government is losing out on substantial amounts of income that it could lawfully claim from Central Government. We provide a specialist and confidential service to ensure your Authority is claiming its full Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit subsidy entitlement.

To date we have maximised subsidy for various Local Authorities to the tune of well over £3 million.

Branch and Lee Consulting Ltd offer a completely free consultation in which we will examine your most recent MPF720A subsidy claim form in order to identify potential savings. After the consultation we will, if agreed, spend around two weeks at your authority identifying these lost savings.

At the end of the project we produce a full paper and electronic report which identifies exactly how and where these savings are to be obtained.

We also offer a follow up free of charge service in which the Authority can call or e-mail us with any queries should they arise.

To date, this has not happened as we work to the Audit Commission's strict standards and keep abreast of changes to legislation.

If required, we will return to the Authority, again free of charge, to sort out any outstanding issues.

SO WHAT DOES THIS COST?

We usually work on a fixed percentage of the actual increase in subsidy our work has achieved for you.

Alternatively, we offer a competitive daily rate for our services.

Branch and Lee Consulting Ltd is only interested in the money that it can ACTUALLY save you and this is why we only expect payment AFTER the claim has been signed off by the external auditor.

IN SHORT, IF WE DON'T SAVE, YOU DON'T PAY.

GET THE HEADS UP WITH OUR PRE-AUDIT SERVICE

Branch and Lee Consulting understands that external audits can be an expensive and time consuming exercise. It is of course a legal requirement, so it is essential to keep audit costs to a minimum.

External audit queries can be a time consuming and extremely disruptive part of the certification process, but resources need to be put in place to ensure that this part of the external audit process is dealt with effectively.

Experience tells us that many Local Authorities lack the staff with the necessary expertise and knowledge to come to an informed decision as to whether the auditor is correct in his or her assumptions. In other words, where detailed understanding of the administrative processes, together with the short comings of many benefit

processing systems and the legislative framework of the benefits system, are lacking, extra testing is often undertaken unnecessarily.

Individuals with experience and sound knowledge of these areas are difficult to come by, particularly external auditors.

A comprehensive counter argument against the external auditors findings are very often enough to make him or her change his mind which in turn can avoid further costs. In other words, not all auditors have the expertise required in the very field that they audit.

It is the objective of every authority to avoid extra testing wherever possible. The additional work requires significant resources by external audit and authority staff, increases the cost of the audit and so decreases value for money. This is simply due to the costs and the disruption that are associated with this testing.

Branch and Lee's pre-audit service is specifically designed to undertake testing in areas which have been problematic for the authority in the past. This eliminates any costly errors that the external audit may find.

Many authorities already employ us on an annual basis to do just this.

Ultimately this reduces all audit costs and also ensures that the authority is claiming its full subsidy entitlement.

Housing Benefit Subsidy Entitlement. You're entitled, it's exactly as it says on the tin. So why miss out?

"NOT ONLY DO SUBSIDY PAYMENTS FORM A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF MOST AUTHORITIES' TOTAL INCOME; THEY ARE ALSO A VITAL FACTOR IN DETERMINING THE QUALITY, EFFECTIVENESS AND STYLE OF HB AND CTB."

Zebedee, Ward, Lister
2006:445

Branch & Lee realise that in order to offer value for money when administrating HB and CTB, it is essential to maximise housing benefit subsidy.

We tailor our service to your specific subsidy entitlement and help you implement new and efficient audit procedures.

This will give you confidence that, as the DWP and Audit commission are requesting, you are improving the way you administrate your HB and CTB.

Every penny counts, especially in today's economic climate.

Appointing Branch & Lee is a sure-fire way to maximise your subsidy and provide those all-important assurances to government, taxpayers and benefit customers.

Our results are unquestionable, take a look at our testimonials.



**LET US HELP MAXIMISE YOUR SUBSIDY
CALL 0844 870 9869 NOW FOR A FREE,
NO OBLIGATION CONSULTATION.**



Due to the growing demand for Subsidy Maximisation, Philip and Joram are concentrating their abilities in this area and as such will not be auditing HB subsidy claims this year.

In the current economic downturn subsidy maximisation is more crucial than ever.