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Public Performance Report 2014/15

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Background

The Assessor for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute is an independent statutory official who is responsible for the preparation and the maintenance of the Valuation Rolls and Council Tax Valuation Lists for East and West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute. The Assessor has also been appointed as the Electoral Registration Officer for these three areas and he is therefore required to prepare and maintain their Registers of Electors. The Assessor's service is conducted from two main offices located at the addresses above.

You can contact us by e-mail at 'assessor@dab-vjb.gov.uk'.

General Information

During the year to 31st March 2015, the Assessor had a full-time equivalent staff of 56.4 and a staffing budget of £2.19m. A total of 560 days (4.5%) were lost through illness, an increase to the 445 days lost in 2014/15.

Council Tax List

The Council Tax List contains all domestic properties showing an allocated Council Tax band which is based on the market value of the property as at 1991. The bands shown are used by the local authorities within the Joint Board's boundaries for the production of domestic Council Tax bills. As at 31st March, 2015, the Council Tax Lists for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute contained 143,184 subjects. Of the 1,269 houses added to the List between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015, the time between the date of occupation/completion and the issue of the banding notice is shown in the following table. Both the 3 month target and the 6-month target were achieved.

The targets which we have set for 2015/16 are 95% within 3 months and 98% within 6 months.

Year	Number	Within 3 Months		Within 6 Months	
		Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved
2014/15	1269	95%	97%	98%	99%
2013/14	1074	95%	95%	98%	98%
2012/13	1110	93%	96%	98%	99%
2011/12	988	92%	96%	98%	98.6%
2010/11	989	93%	90%	97%	98%
2009/10	940	90%	87%	96%	98%
2008/09	1084	92%	87%	97%	98%
2007/08	1128	92%	93%	97%	99%
2006/07	953	90%	93%	97%	98%

Valuation Roll

The Valuation Roll contains the rateable values of all non-domestic properties within the area. The rateable values shown are used by the Joint Board's constituent local authorities for the production of non-domestic rates bills.

As at 31st March 2015 the Valuation Rolls for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute contained 13,564 subjects with a total rateable value of £328.7 million. Of the 950 amendments made to the Valuation Roll between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015, the time between the effective date of the alteration and the issue of the Valuation Notice is shown in the following table, along with previous years' data. The performance at three months was ahead of target and at six months fell just short of target but improved from 2013/14.

The targets we have set for 2015/16 are 80% within 3 months and 94% within 6 months.

Year	Number	Within 3 Months		Within 6 Months	
		Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved
2014/15	950	80%	82%	94%	91%
2013/14	892	80%	78.4%	94%	90.5%
2012/13	1369	80%	78%	92%	91%
2011/12	930	80%	77.8%	92%	90.4%
2010/11	964	80%	79%	90%	91%
2009/10	952	75%	77%	90%	93%
2008/09	1057	80%	80%	90%	93%
2007/08	1072	80%	82%	95%	94%
2006/07	1051	75%	76%	90%	96%

Electoral Registration

The Electoral Register lists the name and addresses of everyone who is registered to vote. The Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) holds a copy.

2014/15 saw significant challenges within Electoral Registration. Amongst others there was the European Parliament Election, the Scottish Independence Referendum, including the extension of the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds, and also the transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER).

The Scottish Independence Referendum saw unprecedented registration activity and the total electorate for the referendum was 229,986, including eligible 16 and 17 year olds.

The transition IER meant that the traditional annual canvass took on a different form and was held later in the year. A data matching exercise was carried out to compare electors' details with details held by the Department of Work and Pensions, there was also a further matching against records held locally. This resulted in 87.2% of Electors being transferred over to the new IER registers, the remaining 12.8% of electors that were then subject to the 2014/15 canvass.

Year	Electorate at Publication
2014/15	223,594
2013/14	221,453
2012	219,117
2011	217,065

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 (EAA) gave the EC powers to set standards of performance for EROs, Returning Officers (ROs) and Referendum Counting Officers (RCOs) in Great Britain.

As part of the preparations for IER, the Electoral Commission introduced two new performance standards related to the transition.

Performance Standard 1 required EROs to illustrate that they understood the challenges in their registration area and that they had developed a plan for engaging with residents which responded to these challenges. The Commission responded that they were happy that we had met this standard. Standard 2 required EROs to deliver an implantation plan and monitor progress. The Commission has yet to report on this standard.

Other Items of Note

During the year we also:

- Wrote to all households informing them of who was on the Electoral Register at that address.
- Maintained a Young Persons Register as required for the Scottish Independence Referendum which took place on 18th September 2014
- Conducted a further Customer Satisfaction Survey, with 99% of the returns indicating that our staff were found to be professional, courteous and helpful, and 97% of the users of the Valuation Joint Board's services expressing their satisfaction with the information and/or advice given. Satisfaction levels amongst those with protected characteristics as detailed in the Equality Act 2010 were generally similar to the overall figures.
- Worked with the Equalities and Human Rights Commission to produce more measurable Equalities Outcomes.
- Began preparations for the 2017 Non Domestic Revaluation
- Continued to provide information to the Assessors Portal (www.saa.gov.uk). This website provides an on-line search facility for Valuation Roll and Council Tax entries throughout Scotland and provides for the on-line submission of Valuation Roll appeals and Council Tax banding proposals. It also provides a mapping tool for identifying the location of entries. For the 2010 Revaluation entries for most shops, offices and industrial subjects have summarised valuations available online. The Automated Appeals Logging System which allows for the receipt and acknowledgement of Revaluation continues to operate successfully.

A copy of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer's Annual Report is available on request from either office and also online at <http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/best-value/annual-report-and-financial-statement/>



*Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute
Valuation Joint Board*