

# Your Council Tax explained 2021/22



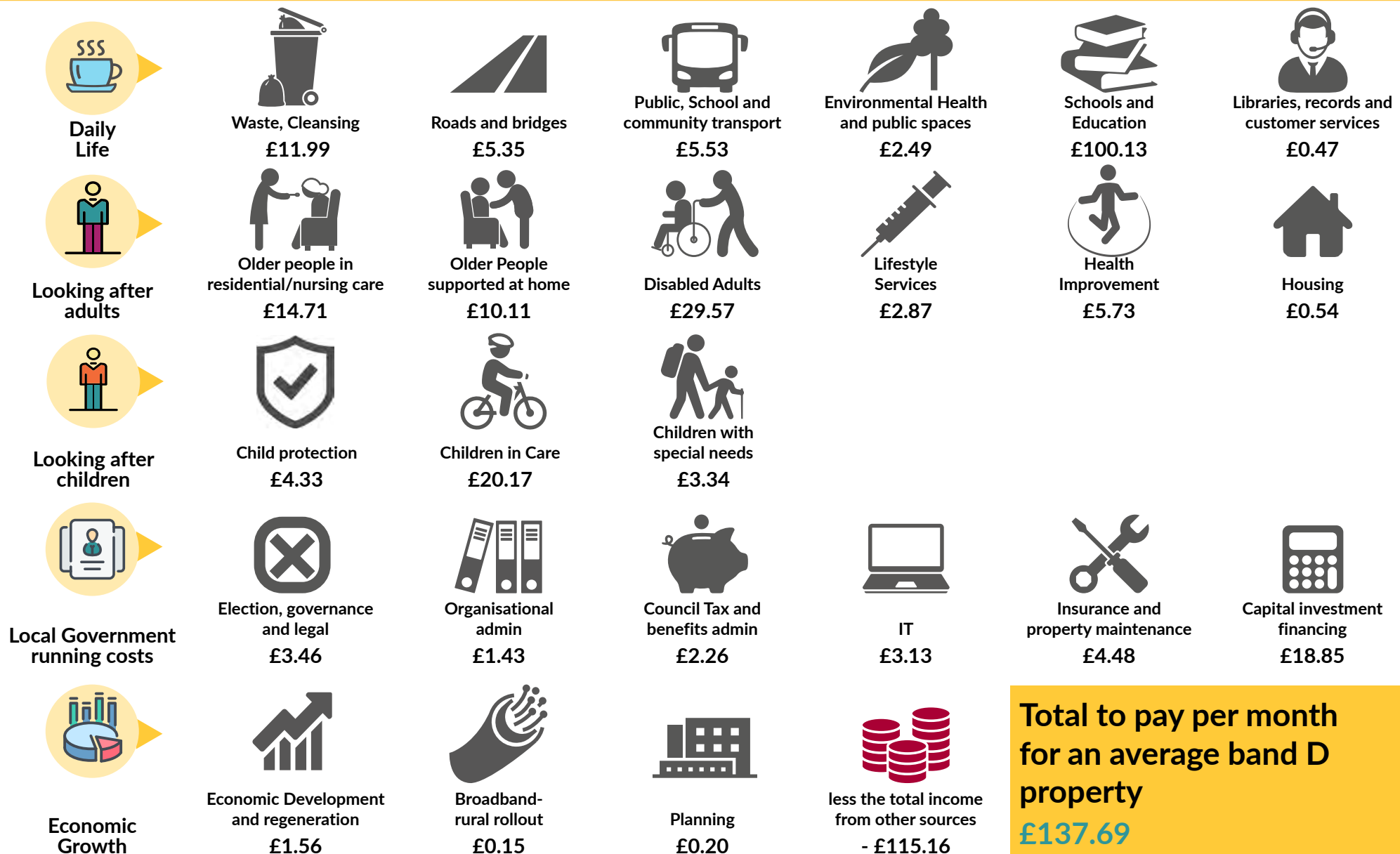


# Contents



Contents	2
How your council tax is spent	3
About the Council's budget	4
How we are funded	4
How the budget is spent	5
Capital investment	5
Revenue investment	6
How Council Tax is calculated	7
The Social Care Precept explained	8
The amount of Council Tax you pay	8
Parish council precept explained	8
Save time – go online	9
Pay your Council Tax by direct debit	10
By BACS or faster payment	10
Other ways to pay your Council Tax	11
Council Tax Reduction	12
Council Tax discounts and exemptions	13
Council Tax – exempt properties	14
Who to contact for help	15

# How your council tax is spent



## About the Council's budget

Herefordshire Council's budget is funded by a combination of Council Tax, local Business Rates, central government grants and charging for some council services.

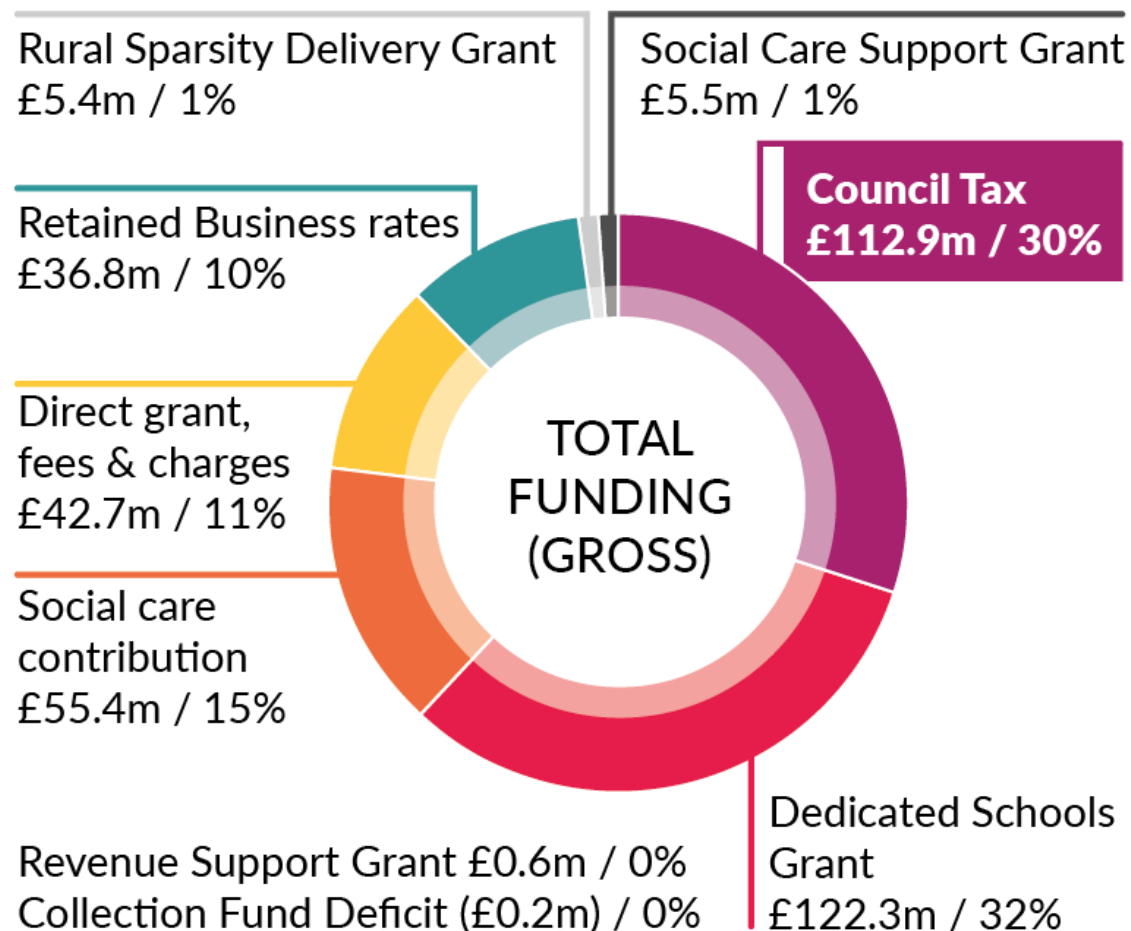
The budget is used to deliver services to more than 192,000 residents. Services we provide include:

- Adult social care
- Planning
- Waste collection and disposal
- Children and young people's services
- Highways maintenance and transportation
- Cultural and community services

### How we are funded

Did you know 30% of our funding comes from council tax?

The Council Tax you pay makes a vital contribution towards funding the services we all use and investment in our communities.



## How the budget is spent

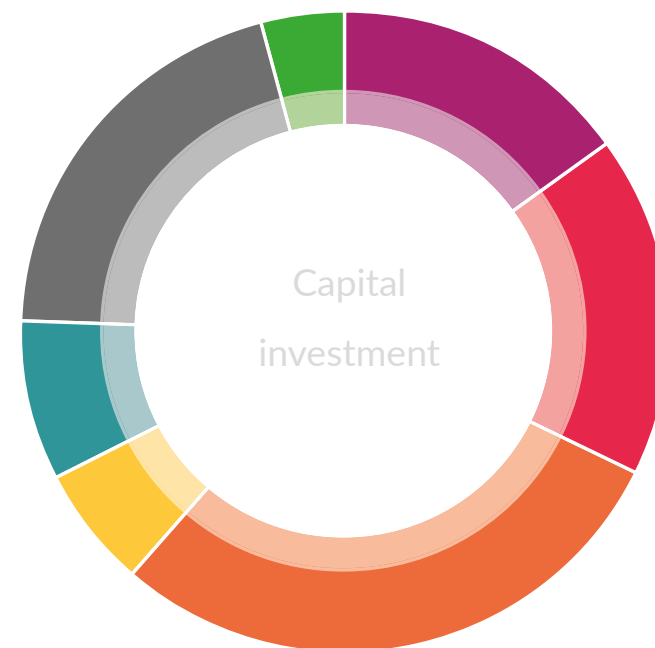
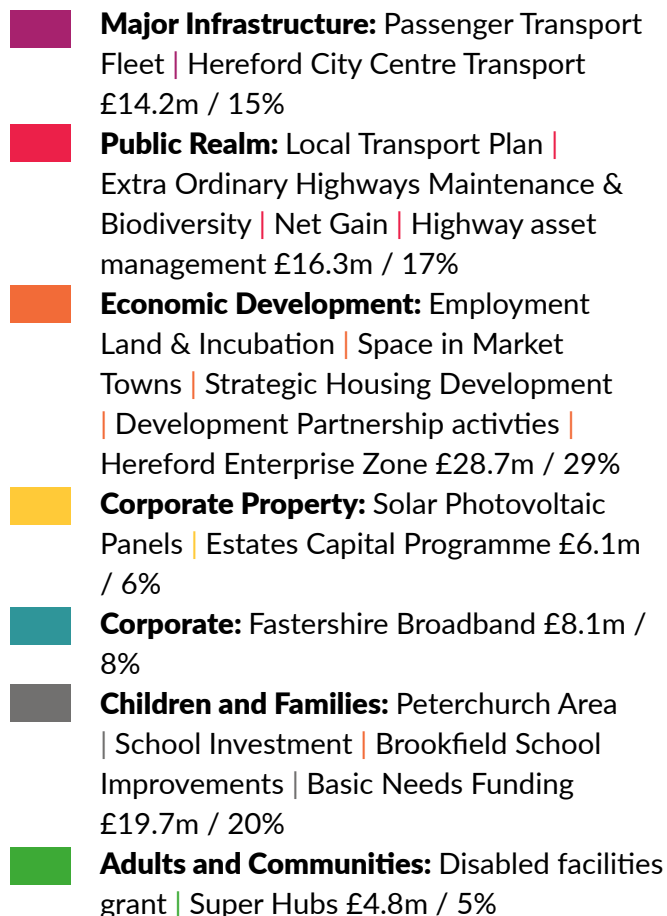
We always look to use our resources wisely and ensure we deliver value for money, maintain service quality and support investment in priority services, to benefit Herefordshire residents and businesses.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact locally - there are huge challenges to the vulnerable members of our communities and to our local economy, business and employment. This in turn impacts on the council budget with 1,400 more households now receiving a Council Tax discount compared to last year and more people are needing to use our services, especially our social care services.

We will need to make around £11m savings to balance our budget this year. We will work hard to make sure our vital services continue to be delivered in the most cost effective way.

### Capital investment

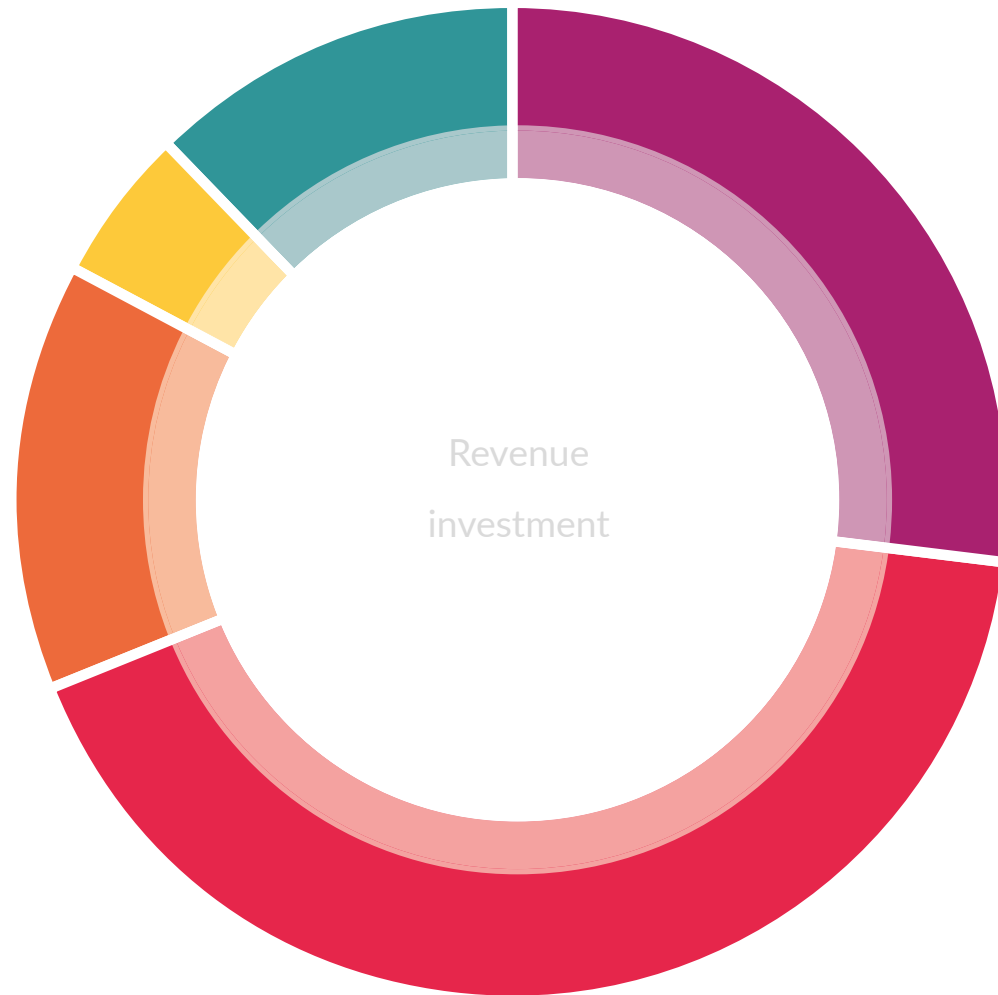
In 2021/22 the council has a capital budget of £97.9 million to invest in the community. This is the money we use on big investments such as roads, buildings, schools, carbon reduction schemes and broadband.



## Revenue investment

- Adults & Communities £101.6m / 27%** Wide range of services supporting communities including many of the most vulnerable individuals in the county
- Childrens & Families £159.2m / 42%** Responsible for education services, safeguarding and family support
- Economy & Place £53.7m / 14%** Highways, regulatory services, waste and economic development
- Corporate £18.2m / 5%** Finance, human resources, legal, communications and strategic transformation and delivery
- Central, treasury management, capital financing & reserves £48.7m / 12%** Pension and financing costs

In 2021/22 the council has a gross revenue budget of £381.4 million to invest in the community. This is the money we use to pay for your day to day services - such as educating children, caring for vulnerable people and recycling and waste.



## How Council Tax is calculated

In 2021/22 Council Tax payments will contribute £112.9million to the money we have to spend. As well as supporting council services, the Council Tax you pay also helps to fund Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority, West Mercia Police and Parish and Town Councils.

Each year the council has to set a balanced budget to continue to deliver core public services. Council Tax is set based on the difference between the amount of budget we need for the year and the income that we will receive from Business Rates, government grants and charging for some services.

To balance our budget in 2021/22 we need to increase Council Tax by 4.99% from April 2021.

The increase is made from 1.99% increase to 'core Council Tax' and 3% increase to the 'adult social care precept'.

This will provide £3.2million towards the cost of council services.

Budget requirement	2021/22 Amount per band D equivalent properties £000s	% Change	2021/22 Total £000s
Herefordshire Council	£1,652.30	4.99	112,943
Average parish council precept	£71.44	2.30	4,884
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	£240.19	6.66	16,418
Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority	£87.68	1.97	5,993
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,051.61</b>		

## The Social Care precept explained

The government has given councils that provide adult social care the option to charge an additional precept on their Council Tax to assist in meeting expenditure on adult social care. It is a requirement that this precept is shown as a separate line on your Council Tax bill.

The Herefordshire Council element of your Council Tax bill includes a 3% increase specifically to help support the rising costs of adult social care.

## The amount of Council Tax you pay

The amount of Council Tax you pay will depend on the valuation of your property. Every home is allocated a Band based on its value, from Band A (lowest) to Band I (highest).

The amount will also depend on which parish council area you live in.

Full details are available at: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax)

## Parish council precept explained

Parish and town councils are funded by a part of the Council Tax known as the parish precept.

Each year parish and town councils forecast how much money they are going to need the following year and this is collected on their behalf via Council Tax.

The actual amount you need to pay will be dependent on the spending by your town or parish council, the properties within your parish and the valuation band your home is in.

You can find details on the Herefordshire Council website [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax)



## Save time - go online



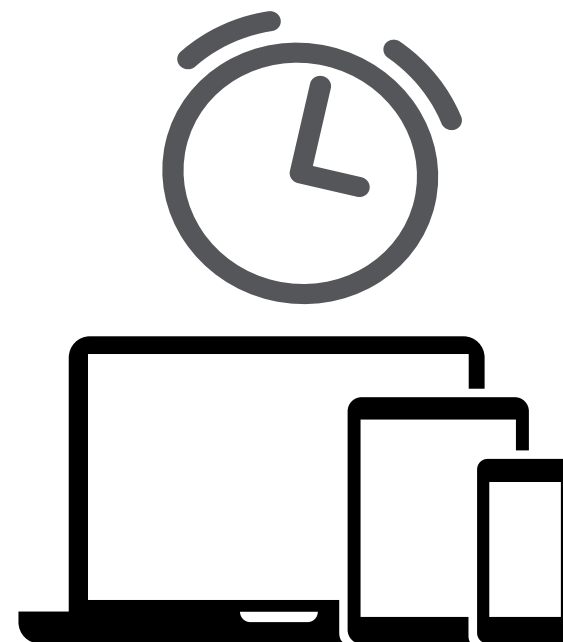
You can now have 24/7 access to online accounts for Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Landlord and Business Rates

**Register online at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/myaccount)**

Use your online account to:

- Go paperless and sign up to electronic bills for Council Tax or Business Rates
- Set up and make payments to your account by direct debit
- View your account and payment history
- Apply or cancel Single Person Discount
- Apply for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Reduction
- View payments due
- View correspondence that we have issued to you

You'll need your Council Tax account number to get started, which can be found on your most recent bill.



## Pay your Council Tax by direct debit

If you haven't signed up to pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit, now is the time! Set up your Direct Debit quickly and securely online and you'll never have to worry about missing a payment again.

To set up your direct debit, you will first need to register your email address on our website. After registering your email address you can then login and get access to your Council Tax account to set up a direct debit.

If you prefer you can download and print off a direct debit mandate which can be emailed or posted to us.

Click on the links below to go to the website.

[Set up online](#)

[Download a direct debit instruction](#)



### By BACS or faster payment

If you prefer to pay by BACS or faster payment you can do so using these bank details. Please ensure you quote your 8-digit council tax reference number on all payments so they can be correctly allocated against your account.

- Sort Code: 53-50-41 • Account No: 55059805

## Other ways to pay your Council Tax

You can pay at any Post Office free of charge. Please take your bill with you so that the barcode can be scanned.

You can pay free of charge anywhere that you see the PayPoint sign. Please take your bill with you so that the barcode can be scanned.



### Pay by cheque

You can pay your bill by sending a cheque to: Council Tax Section, Revenues and Benefits, Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane, Hereford HR4 0LE. Please write your 8-digit Council Tax reference number on the back of the cheque.

### Pay by phone

You can pay securely by calling our payment line on 01432 260200. You will need to quote your 8 digit Council Tax account reference.

### Paying by instalments

Council Tax bills are issued every March and are payable over 10 monthly instalments unless you request to pay over 12 months.



## Council Tax discounts and exemptions

You can get money off your Council Tax bill, or even pay nothing, in certain circumstances. Please see the information below for further details on the types of discount available, and whether you may be eligible, including:

- Single person discount
- Disabled person reduction
- Carer or care worker discount
- Student discount or exemption
- Apprentice discount
- Person aged 18 and eligible for child benefit discount
- Patient in care home or hospital discount or exemption
- Severe mental impairment discount
- Person in detention or prison discount
- Religious community discount
- Foster Carers discount

You may be able to have other reductions on your Council Tax bill:

- Care leaver discount
- Ministry of Defence's Council Tax Relief
- Job related second home discount

If you are having difficulty paying your Council Tax, regardless of whether or not you receive Council Tax Reduction, the council may be able to reduce the amount you have to pay. Visit our Council Tax Discretionary Assistance Payment page for more details.

## Council Tax Reduction

In certain circumstances you can get help to pay your Council Tax bill.

You can get help if you are responsible for paying the Council Tax bill and:

- You are on a low income whether from benefits, low paid work or self-employed work
- You (and your partner) don't have more than £6,000 in savings and capital, unless you are getting Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit)
- You get Universal Credit that only includes help with your rent, not Council Tax

If you have a partner we will include their income and savings as well when we work out how much you can get.

To find out more about eligibility for a council tax reduction please visit the Herefordshire Council website

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/council-tax-1/council-tax-reduction](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/council-tax-1/council-tax-reduction)

If you are having difficulty paying your Council Tax, regardless of whether or not you receive Council Tax Reduction, the council may be able to reduce the amount you have to pay. Visit our Council Tax Discretionary Assistance Payment page for more details.

## Council Tax – exempt properties

Some properties are exempt from Council Tax. Exempt properties can be occupied and unoccupied.

If you think a property you are responsible for paying council tax for fits any of the below criteria, visit the website for more details of how to apply for an exemption [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax)

- Unoccupied property owned by a charity (exempt up to six months)
- Property left empty by a prisoner
- Property left empty by a person receiving personal care in hospital or care home (no time limit)
- Left empty following death of taxpayer
- Occupation prohibited by law
- Empty and awaiting occupation by minister of religion
- Left empty by someone who has moved to receive personal care from another person
- Left empty by someone who has moved to provide personal care to another person
- Property left empty by a student
- Property repossessed by the mortgagee
- Halls of residence
- Properties occupied by students or school leavers
- Armed forces accommodation such as barracks
- Properties occupied by members of visiting forces
- Property left empty by bankrupts
- Unoccupied caravan pitches and houseboat moorings
- Properties occupied by persons under 18
- Unoccupied annexes which form part of a single property & may not be let separately without breaching planning consent
- Properties occupied by persons who are severely mentally impaired
- Property where at least one person who would otherwise be liable is as a diplomat
- Annexes or similar accommodation occupied by an elderly or disabled relative



## Who to contact for help and advice regarding your Council Tax



The Herefordshire Council website contains lots of useful information  
[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax)



If you cannot find what you are looking for you can contact us by email:  
[counciltax@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@herefordshire.gov.uk)



Or by telephone: 01432 260360



