

## Your Council Tax Explained 2017/18

About your council tax  
How to pay  
Applying for reductions and discounts

## About your council tax

### What you are paying for

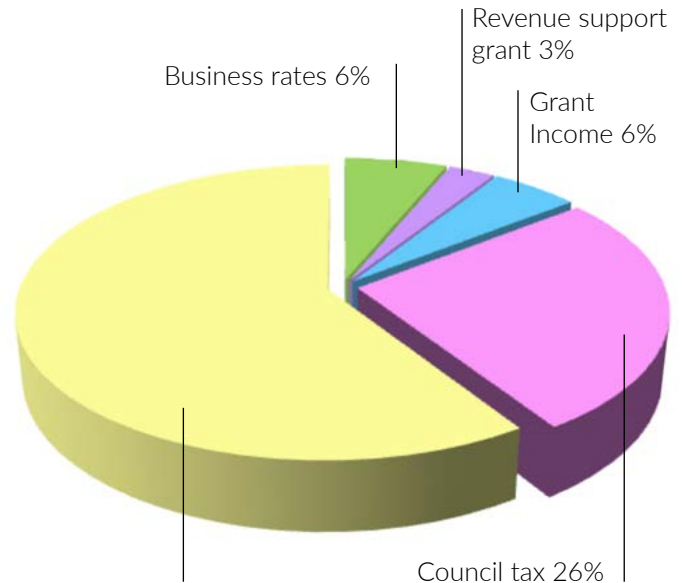
This year we will spend about £354 million providing services to residents and businesses in Herefordshire. Services we provide include:

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

Council tax payments contribute £93 million to the money we have to spend. As well as supporting the provision of services, council tax also helps to fund Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority, West Mercia Police and Parish and Town Councils.

The remainder of our spending is funded by business rates, government grants and charging for some services.

### Where our money comes from - gross budget £354m



More information on funding streams can be found on our website [here](#)

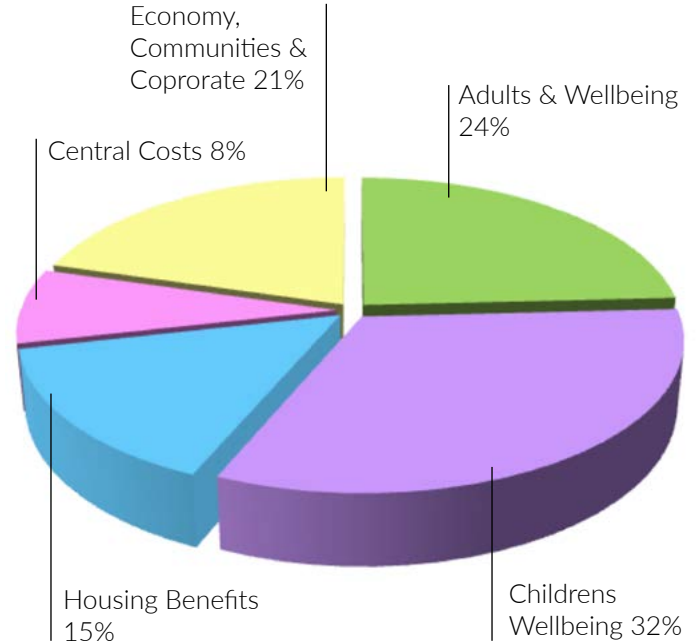
## Where we will spend the money

Our spending plans need to maintain financial stability, deliver efficiencies and support investment in priority services. Our plans must demonstrate value for money and maintain service quality.

Each year we consult with you on how you think we should be spending our money. More information on this year's budget consultation can be found on our website [here](#).

Our [medium term financial strategy](#) details our priorities and can be viewed on the website by clicking the link.

## How we spend our money



## How council tax is calculated

Council tax is set based on the difference between the amount of budget we need for the year and the grant and non-grant income that we will receive.

Government grants and non domestic rates currently fund part of the spending by Herefordshire Council, West Mercia Police and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority. The remainder of spending, together with all the spending by town and parish councils, is funded by council tax.

Budget requirement	2016/17 Total £000s	2016/17 Amount per band D equivalent properties £000s	% Change	2017/18 Total £000s	2017/18 Amount per band D equivalent properties £000s
<b>Herefordshire Council*</b>	<b>88,595</b>	<b>1,324.83</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>93,049</b>	<b>1,376.50</b>
Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	5,216	78.00	2.0	5,376	79.53
West Mercia Police	12,679	189.60	0.0	12,817	189.60
Parish and town council precepts**	3,502	52.36	8.1	3,827	56.61
<b>Average council tax charge</b>	<b>109,992</b>	<b>1,644.79</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>115,069</b>	<b>1,702.24</b>

\*The increase to the Herefordshire Council budget requirement includes a 2% increase specifically to fund adult social care

\* funding collected on behalf of parish and town councils is referred to as a precept

## The Social Care Precept Explained

The percentage increase in the Herefordshire Council element of your council tax bill includes a 2% increase specifically to help support the rising costs of adult social care.

The impact of the social care precept on an average Band D property is shown below.

	Average Band D Council Tax £	Percentage increase
Herefordshire Council 2016/17	1,324.83	
General Council Tax Increase 2017/18	25.17	1.9%
Social Care Precept	26.50	2.0%
<b>Herefordshire Council 2017/18</b>	<b>1,376.50</b>	<b>3.9%</b>

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has given adult social care authorities the option to charge an additional precept on their council tax since the financial year beginning in 2016 without holding a referendum, to assist authorities in meeting expenditure on adult social care. Subject to the approval of the House of Commons, the Secretary of State intends to offer the option of charging the precept at an appropriate level in each financial year up to and including the 2019/20 financial year.

Adult social care authorities are those which have functions under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014, namely county councils in England, district councils for an area in which there is no county council, London borough councils, the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly. As a county council Herefordshire Council is and adult social care authority and therefore able to charge a social care precept.

## Spending by parish and town councils

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. You can see how much money your parish council requested [here](#).

The actual amount of your council tax bill will be dependent on the spending by your town or parish council and the valuation band your home is in. You can find the council tax payable by band for your parish [here](#).

## Flood defence and land drainage

The council's budget includes a provision to meet the special levies of the Environment Agency and Internal Drainage Boards (IDB).

The Environment Agency is the leading public body for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales. They make sure that air, land and water are looked after by everyone to create a cleaner and healthier environment.

Levy Body	Net Requirements (special levy) 2016/17 £000s	Net Requirements (special levy) 2017/18 £000s
Environment Agency - West Midlands	79	80
River Lugg IDB	114	118
Lower Severn IDB	10	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>208</b>
Total per Band D equivalent	£3.04	£3.08

Internal Drainage Boards manage water levels and land drainage and undertake flood risk management on ordinary watercourses (other than main rivers). This involves the maintenance of rivers, drainage channels and pumping stations, facilitating drainage of new developments and advising on planning applications. IDBs also look after sites of special scientific interest and other designated environmental areas.

The easiest way to pay your council tax is by direct debit.

You can pay over 10 or 12 months and can also choose from four payment dates: 1st, 10th, 15th or 26th of the month.



You can set up a direct debit online or if you prefer you can download and print off a direct debit mandate which can be emailed or posted to us.

Click on the boxes 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

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.



You can pay your bill using the Allpay payment app on your , or smartphone. The app securely stores payment reference numbers, bank details and payment amounts.



### 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 by calling Allpay on 08445 578321. You will need your bill to hand as you will need the 19 digit number found under the barcode on the front of your bill. Calls are charged at 7p per minute plus your phone provider's charges if applicable.

## 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. Instalments are due on the 10th of each month unless you are paying by direct debit and have chosen a different date. If you would like to pay over 12 months, from April to March, please [email us](#) quoting your 8-digit council tax reference number. applicable.

## Who to contact for help and advice

Our [website](#) contains lots of useful information but if you cannot find what you are looking for you can contact us by telephone or email.

- Email: [counciltax@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@herefordshire.gov.uk)
- Telephone: 01432 260000 and select option 2

## 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, because it 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 [Who can claim Council Tax Reduction](#) page on our website or to apply for a reduction click below.

[Council Tax Reduction](#)



## Council Tax discounts and exemptions

You can get money off your council tax bill, or even pay nothing, in certain circumstances.

A discount or exemption depends on your current situation or circumstances, but does not take account of income or savings. Click on the opposite boxes to find out if you might be eligible.

[Single person discount](#)

[Person aged 18 and eligible for child benefit discount](#)

[Disabled person discount](#)

[Patient in care home or hospital discount or exemption](#)

[Carer or care worker discount](#)

[Severe mental impairment discount](#)

[Student discount or exemption](#)

[Person in detention or prison discount](#)

[Apprentice discount](#)

[Religious community discount](#)

## Council Tax exemptions

Some properties are exempt from council tax. Exempt properties can be occupied and unoccupied.

If you think a property you are responsible for paying for council tax fits any of the below criteria, visit the [website](#) for more details of how to apply for an exemption.

- 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 and 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 as a diplomat
- Annexes or similar accommodation occupied by an elderly or disabled relative

If you are unable to find the information that you are looking for on our website please contact us by email at [counciltax@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@herefordshire.gov.uk) or call us on 01432 260000 option 2.



# WISH

Wellbeing Information and  
Signposting for Herefordshire

[www.WISHerefordshire.org](http://www.WISHerefordshire.org)

Email: [info@WISHerefordshire.org](mailto:info@WISHerefordshire.org)

Telephone: 01432 383880

Or visit us in the Hereford Library, Museum and Art  
Gallery, Broad Street, Hereford

Office opening:

Mon, Tues, Wed and Thurs: 9.30am - 5.00pm

Fridays 9.30am - 6.30pm

Saturdays 10.00am - 4.00pm

[@wishHereford](#)

[WISH Herefordshire](#)