

Your guide to Council Tax 2019/20

Building a borough
for everyone



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Message from Cllr MJ Saunders, cabinet member for finance

Dear resident,

Welcome to this year's Council Tax booklet which explains how we plan to spend your Council Tax to support our local community and protect key services that matter most to you.

We have agreed a 2.99% increase to our Council Tax and this ensures it remains the lowest Band D Council Tax outside London. The cost to you, if you live in a Band D property, will be £961.33.

We have listened to your views and feedback from the residents' survey and we will be investing:

- Over £14.8 million for resident facilities including £350,000 for refurbishing Clewer Memorial Pavillion, £250,000 for a community café in Dedworth and £500,000 into park and open spaces improvements including work at Ockwells Park and Battlemead Common.
- £12.7 million into road improvements including road resurfacing, fixing potholes, traffic and road safety schemes, maintenance, transport improvement and bridge improvements. The investment also includes £850,000 for refurbishment works at Elizabeth Bridge in Windsor as well as £100,000 for Cookham Bridge refurbishment works.

- Over £2.9 million for community facilities including continued investment in all 14 of our libraries for stock and buildings, £83,000 on Christmas lights with new lights in Old Windsor and continued investment in Maidenhead as well as £150,000 improving the Guildhall, Windsor.

We will also be continuing to invest in our waste and recycling services, ensuring weekly collections continue across the Royal Borough as well as investing in our waste and recycling facilities at Vicus Way and Tinkers Lane.

Our investments also protect the community wardens and a range of services delivered in our children's and adult's services.

Alongside this we will continue to invest £300,000 into local community groups and charities via our community grants fund.

We hope this investment continues to provide the services that are important to you and while working on this budget we have ensured front line services are protected.

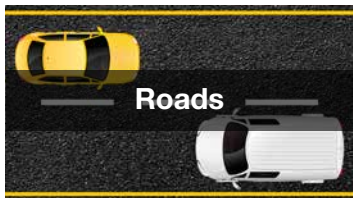
Best wishes,
Cllr M J Saunders.



How your Council Tax helps fund your services

The budget for 2019/20 was approved on 26 February 2019. This budget outlines how we use your Council Tax and grants we receive from central government to support services that matter most to you.

We spend nearly £267 million delivering a wide range of services for our residents. Just over a quarter of this is made up by the local element of your Council Tax, totalling £66 million, with an additional £5.1 million raised through the government's adult social care charge. We also generate additional income through fees and charges to supplement the money received from the government and Council Tax.



We invest in roads across the borough including pothole repairs, resurfacing and safety schemes.



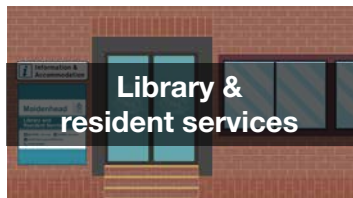
We maintain over 60 parks and open spaces.



Our 25 community wardens support our communities.



We maintain six leisure centres across the borough.



We have kept all 14 libraries (including two mobile) open with extended hours and are continuing to invest in stock and buildings.



We invest in adult and children's social care ensuring some of our most vulnerable residents have the support they need.



We invest in our schools and over 90% of our schools are good or outstanding.



We are maintaining our weekly waste and recycling collections.

Royal Borough revenue budget

Service / Expenses	2018/19	2019/20			
	Net expenditure £'000	Gross expenditure £'000	Specific Govt. grants £'000	Other income £'000	Net expenditure £'000
Adult social care	40,280	59,080	-4,665	-16,941	37,474
Central (other services/ expenses)	6,987	12,630	-682	-5,632	6,316
Children's and education	25,574	97,377	-69,466	-2,357	25,554
Culture and community	5,869	9,515		-3,764	5,751
Environmental and regulatory	14,153	17,089	-28	-2,431	14,630
Highways and transport	5,395	18,238	-76	-11,242	6,920
Housing	3,584	44,599	-38,608	-2,498	3,493
Planning	855	5,614	-6	-5,288	320
Public health	295	3,124	-2,104	-40	980
Total service expenditure	102,992	267,266	-115,635	-50,193	101,438
Non service costs	8,612				12,711
Notional pension & capital accounting	-25,213				-20,282
Total borough expenditure	86,391				93,867
less unparished area costs	-1,047				-1,094
less adult social care precept	-5,054				-5,109
Budget requirement	80,290				87,664



Royal Borough budget 2019/20 and changes

The Royal Borough has set a Band D equivalent Council Tax of £961.33 for the year ending 31 March 2020.

	2018/19		2019/20	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD				
The Royal Borough budget requirement		80,290		87,664
Revenue support grant & business rate support	-14,095		-16,312	
Other grants	-4,375		-2,551	
Collection fund (surplus) / deficit	1,296	-17,174	-3,091	-21,954
Net Council Tax requirement		63,116		65,710
BAND D EQUIVALENT CHARGE		£933.42		£961.33
Adult social care precept 2019/20 £5.109m - BAND D EQUIVALENT CHARGE		£74.74		£74.74
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR THAMES VALLEY				
Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley total budget requirement	405,994		419,914	
The Royal Borough Thames Valley Police precept	12,325		14,100	
BAND D EQUIVALENT CHARGE		£182.28		£206.28
ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY				
Royal Borough Fire Authority total budget requirement	33,479		34,081	
The Royal Borough Fire Authority precept	4,352		4,530	
BAND D EQUIVALENT CHARGE		£64.36		£66.28
GRAND TOTAL BAND D EQUIVALENT (excluding parish)		£1,254.80		£1,308.63

Royal Borough budget changes 2018/19 to 2019/20

	£'000
Budget requirement 2018/19*	85,344
Inflation	2,362
Net growth	3,222
Capital financing	-745
Grant adjustments	-1,290
Other adjustments	3,880
Budget requirement 2019/20*	92,773

* RBWM Budget Requirement £87.664m + Adult Social Care Precept £5.109m = £92.773m

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency charges local authorities, including the Royal Borough, a levy for providing flood defence. In the Thames region, this includes maintenance of the river system and the operation of a flood warning system.

In 2018/19 the Royal Borough's levy was £153,646, for 2019/20 the levy is £155,581.

Parish council costs

Each parish council tells the borough council how much to collect to enable them to provide their services (such as allotments, footpath lighting, local planning issues, parish halls), and the borough collects this and passes it on plus extra grants funded from core Council Tax.

Parish	2018/19 Precept £	2019/20 Precept £	2019/20 Band D Charge £
Bisham	24,362	25,702	34.59
Bray	151,130	156,796	37.20
Cookham	91,143	91,975	31.18
Cox Green	139,792	146,909	47.52
Datchet	157,818	142,818	63.93
Eton	66,889	78,168	43.05
Horton	24,617	25,430	54.59
Hurley	37,482	35,124	34.74
Old Windsor	150,445	153,500	63.61
Shottesbrooke	Nil	Nil	Nil
Sunningdale	136,118	184,214	53.38
Sunninghill & Ascot	169,593	171,507	26.27
Waltham St. Lawrence	22,500	24,500	36.66
White Waltham	121,180	128,605	101.69
Wraysbury	76,400	81,700	38.05
Unparished*	1,046,993	1,094,294	31.02

* If you live in Ascot, Maidenhead or Windsor, you pay a contribution towards the services provided in the Royal Borough in the same way that a parish charge is made in a precepting parish.

Adult social care precept

The Government requires all local authorities introducing the adult social care precept to provide the following information to residents:

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has made an offer to adult social care authorities (“Adult social care authorities” are local authorities which have functions under Part 1 of the Care act 2014, namely County Councils in England, District Councils for an area in England for 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).

The offer is the option of an adult social care authority being able to charge an additional “precept” on its council tax for financial years from the financial year beginning in 2016 without holding a referendum, to assist the authority in meeting expenditure on adult social care. Subject to the annual approval of the House of Commons, the Secretary of State intends to offer the option of charging this “precept” at an appropriate level in each financial year up to and including the financial year 2019-20.

Adult social care

What is the adult social care precept?

Since 2016/17 the government gave councils the power to apply an additional charge on top of Council Tax to provide more funding for adult social care services. In 2016/17, the adult social care precept was two percent. In 2017/18 to 2019/20 councils could add a further precept up to three percent in any given year, but no more than six percent in total over those years. The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead took the decision to increase the adult social care precept element of Council Tax by three percent in 2017/18 and 2018/19. Therefore, in 2019/20 the adult social care precept will not be increased.

However, the government has said that this precept must be shown as a separate charge on all council tax bills.

This is a careful and caring measure to ensure council services can support vulnerable residents and meet the increase in demand as our population ages.

Over the four years from 2016/17 to 2019/20, the funding from the adult social care precept is added to £6.6 million of increased government funding and £0.7 million of additional council investment and pays for:

- More residential beds for older residents and those with learning disabilities.
- More nursing beds for residents with dementia and or other complex needs.
- Increasing the wage of domiciliary workforce, raising hourly rates to the living wage.
- Meeting the increased cost of care in nursing and residential homes.



How much is your total bill?

The amount you will pay depends on which of the eight valuation bands your home is in. The bands are based on your home's capital value at 1 April 1991 and are set by the government's Valuation Office. The table below sets out how much your bill will be depending on your parish and valuation band.

Valuation band & range

- A** - Up to £40,000
- B** - £40,001 - £52,000
- C** - £52,001 - £68,000
- D** - £68,001 - £88,000
- E** - £88,001 - £120,000
- F** - £120,001 - £160,000
- G** - £160,001 - £320,000
- H** - More than £320,000

BAND	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Parish	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bisham	895.49	1044.72	1193.99	1343.22	1641.72	1940.21	2238.71	2686.44
Bray	897.23	1046.75	1196.30	1345.83	1644.90	1943.98	2243.05	2691.65
Cookham	893.22	1042.07	1190.96	1339.81	1637.55	1935.29	2233.03	2679.62
Cox Green	904.11	1054.78	1205.48	1356.15	1657.53	1958.90	2260.27	2712.31
Datchet	915.05	1067.54	1220.07	1372.56	1677.58	1982.59	2287.61	2745.12
Eton	901.13	1051.30	1201.51	1351.68	1652.05	1952.43	2252.81	2703.36
Horton	908.82	1060.28	1211.76	1363.22	1666.16	1969.10	2272.04	2726.43
Hurley	895.59	1044.84	1194.12	1343.37	1641.90	1940.43	2238.96	2686.74
Old Windsor	914.84	1067.30	1219.79	1372.24	1677.19	1982.14	2287.08	2744.49
Shottesbrooke	872.43	1017.82	1163.24	1308.63	1599.44	1890.25	2181.06	2617.26
Sunningdale	908.02	1059.34	1210.69	1362.01	1664.68	1967.35	2270.02	2724.02
Sunninghill & Ascot	889.94	1038.25	1186.59	1334.90	1631.55	1928.20	2224.84	2669.80
Waltham St. Lawrence	896.87	1046.33	1195.83	1345.29	1644.25	1943.20	2242.16	2690.58
White Waltham	940.23	1096.91	1253.63	1410.32	1723.73	2037.14	2350.55	2820.65
Wraysbury	897.80	1047.42	1197.06	1346.68	1645.95	1945.21	2244.48	2693.36
Unparished	893.11	1041.95	1190.81	1339.65	1637.35	1935.06	2232.76	2679.30

Keeping in touch

If you want to keep up-to-date with council news, then sign up to our residents' newsletter.

We issue the newsletter monthly and it provides you with an update of council news and events to supplement *Around the Royal Borough*.

To sign up please visit <http://ow.ly/TnyDI> or scan the QR code to sign up today.



Access council services online

By registering on our website through the My Account you can report issues, track their progress and send messages to council officers about any ongoing queries.

Services available through My Account include:

- Bus pass renewals
- Blue badges
- Complaints, comments and compliments
- Education appeals
- Environmental Services
- Highways
- School transport
- Waste and recycling

Visit <https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/myaccount> and sign up today.

Council Tax support and second adult rebate

Council Tax Support

Since 1 April 2013 Council Tax Benefit has been replaced by Council Tax Support. If you are not receiving Council Tax Support you could be missing out on support of up to a 100 percent reduction in your Council Tax bill if you are a pensioner.

Second Adult Rebate

If you have someone aged over 18 living with you and they have a low income and are not a spouse or partner you could qualify for a 25 percent second adult rebate.

Had a change in your circumstances?

The amount you are entitled to is affected by many things including the income of your household, the number and ages of the people living there, any disability, your Council Tax and savings.

If your claim is not based on current information there is a chance you could be getting too much support – or not enough.

If your circumstances have changed you must notify us immediately.



Council Tax discounts

Single person discount

A 25 percent discount is given where a property is the sole or main residence of only one adult aged 18 or over.

Disregard discount

Some people will get a discount because they or the people they live with are not 'counted' for Council Tax purposes.

The people who are not 'counted' include:

- Full-time students, youth training trainees, apprentices and some student nurses.
- People who are severely mentally impaired.
- 18 and 19-year-olds who have just left school.
- People caring for someone with a disability (other than their partner or a child under 18).

Job related discount

If you pay Council Tax on two properties because you are required to live in one of them as a condition of your employment, you may be entitled to a 50 percent discount on one property.

Empty properties

If a property is unoccupied and unfurnished for a period longer than two years, a 100 percent Council Tax premium is payable on top of the full Council Tax for your property. This effects all properties that have been unoccupied and unfurnished for more than two years on the 1 April 2019. Prior to this date, the Council Tax premium was 50 percent.

People with disabilities

You may be entitled to a Council Tax reduction if your property has:

- An additional bathroom or kitchen required for meeting the needs of a disabled resident.
- Sufficient floor space for a wheelchair which is used for meeting the needs of a disabled resident.
- A room predominantly used by and required for meeting the needs of a disabled person.



Appealing against your banding

If you think your property should be in a different valuation band, you should contact the Valuation Office Agency to ask them to check it or to find out what your rights are and how to appeal. Their website is www.voa.gov.uk.

Appeals against liability or amount payable

If you feel you should not be liable for Council Tax you can appeal to the council. You can also appeal if you have asked for a discount or exemption that has not been awarded. For a full list please visit the council's website.

Council Tax exemptions

The following unoccupied properties may be exempt from Council Tax:

- Owned by a charity (up to six months).
- Was the home of someone who is in detention (i.e. in prison or detained under Mental Health Act or Immigration Act).
- Was the home of someone who has gone to live elsewhere to receive care (including a residential care home, hospital or with relatives), or was the home of someone who has moved away to provide care for another person.
- Self-contained property which forms part of another dwelling (e.g. an annexe) and it would be a breach of planning law to let it separately.
- Where executors are responsible for the property and are waiting for probate or letters of administration to be granted.

The following occupied properties may be exempt from Council Tax:

- Occupied only by students or people who are severely mentally impaired.
- Annexe occupied by elderly or disabled relatives.

Unoccupied and unfurnished properties

Please note there has been a change to the reduction available to unoccupied and unfurnished properties.

A 100 percent discount was previously given for the first month of the property being unoccupied and unfurnished.

No reduction has been given since 1 April 2017. This means that full Council Tax is payable on empty and unfurnished properties.

If the property remains empty and unfurnished for two years, then a 100 percent premium is payable on top of the full Council Tax for your property. There is no reduction for properties undergoing or requiring structural alterations. For further details please visit the council's website.



To report Housing Benefit fraud:



! **Visit** the Department for Work and Pensions Benefit theft website:

www.gov.uk/report-benefit-fraud

! **Call** 0800 854 440 (text phone 0800 3280 512).

! **Write** to NBFH, PO Box 224, Preston, PR1 1GP.

All other fraud

To report a fraud affecting the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, such as Council Tax Support, social care, blue badges, housing applications or any other council area, please email in confidence fraud@wokingham.gov.uk giving as much information about the fraud as you can.

Cheques no longer accepted

Following careful consideration it has been decided that cheques will no longer be accepted at the Royal Borough as a form of payment from 1 April 2019.

You will still be able to make payments to us for Council Tax, business rates or anything else using a credit or debit card or via bank transfer.

Further information about Council Tax can be found at:

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead - www3.rbwm.gov.uk/counciltax

The Environment Agency - www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley - www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service - www.rbfrs.co.uk

Mandatory parish precept information available at:

Sunninghill and Ascot Parish Council - <https://sunninghillandascotparishcouncil.co.uk/>

Datchet Parish Council - www.datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk

Bray Parish Council - www.brayparishcouncil.gov.uk



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