

Help with meeting Your Council Tax bill



If you are on a low income and liable to pay Council Tax, you could be eligible to receive help towards paying Your Council Tax by claiming Council Tax Benefit.

- You could be working but receiving a low wage and you do not have to get any other benefits to be entitled.
- It does not matter if you already get a discount on Your Council Tax, for example, if you live alone.
- However, if you have capital in excess of £16,000 you will not qualify for Council Tax Benefit unless you get the guarantee credit within pension credits. To work out Your Council Tax Benefit, the Council will look at:-
- Money you and your partner have coming in, including earnings, some benefits, tax/pension credits and things like occupational pensions

- Your savings and your partners savings
- Your circumstances, such as your age, the ages and size of your family, whether you or any of your family is disabled and whether anyone who lives with you could help with the rent.

The most Council Tax Benefit you can get is the full Council Tax you have to pay. There are special rules for students. In most circumstances the Council will also make a deduction for any non-dependants (persons aged 18+) living with you.

Second Adult Rebate - You may be entitled to Second Adult Rebate even if you are not entitled to Council Tax Benefit. Second Adult Rebate is based on the income and capital of other people in your household. It is not affected by your income or savings.

If you would like to find out more about Second Adult Rebate, contact the benefits hotline on **01789 260991**. It is important that we can be sure of your identity when you make a claim. We may need to ask you about your background and look at any official documents that you have to support the information you give.

If you are not currently claiming Council Tax Benefit or Second Adult Rebate you can obtain an application form from any of the Council's offices in Stratford, Alcester, Southam or Shipston. Alternatively you can telephone **01789 260991** or email revenues@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Here to help

If you find the text in this leaflet difficult to read we can supply it in a format better suited to your needs.

We try to write everything in Plain English and want to make sure that everyone has access to the information they need.

01789 260105 www.stratford.gov.uk

6

Message from Councillor Les Topham

- Leader of Stratford-on-Avon District Council



“ This is a difficult time for everyone and we are going to have to look at different ways of delivering our services and look in depth at what the Council has to do, what it should do, and what it wants to do. ”

It is clear 2008 was a year of tremendous activity for Your District Council, building on previous years' improvements and it is pleasing to note the recognition Your District Council has received in various quarters for its efforts, but more recently having achieved regional recognition by being awarded the 'Investors in Excellence' Standard by Midlands Excellence.

It is a tremendous achievement that a small District Council has achieved this accolade with validation that we continue to deliver high quality, value for money services and that we have in place a programme of continuous improvement to ensure that we maintain excellence across all our services for the benefit of the District. This award confirms how much Your District Council has improved, but this is not the end of the journey and there is always more we can do to improve our services. 2009 is likely to be a challenging year for Your District Council but we will meet these challenges head on and achieve what we set out to do.

Like most of the national and local economy, Your District Council faced some tough decisions as it prepared this year's budget. In order to balance the books, savings of over £2million needed to be found and are not what we would be suggesting in normal circumstances, but these are not normal times.

The current economic landscape has radically changed and the public sector is not immune to the current economic problems – with investment income down, rental income down, parking and planning income has reduced and the level of Government grant less than inflation. All of these reductions place extra financial burden on Your District Council.

We have achieved a lower percentage tax increase year on year for the last four years, making Your District Council Tax bill the lowest in the country. An increase of 3.5%, the lowest in Warwickshire, equals 8.3p a week increase and will mean all the services provided by Your District Council are only costing £2.45 a week for a Band D household.

Staff

It is estimated that the Council will employ an average of 327 (full time equivalent) staff in 2009/10, compared to an average of 338 (full time equivalents) in the previous year.

7

Future Capital Projects

Stratford-on-Avon District Council intends to spend a net £2m in 2009/10 on projects that will benefit buildings and major equipment that the Council is responsible for. The Council's 2009/10 projects programme includes: E-Government Action Plan £744,000; Parking Equipment £150,000; Area Committee Grants £80,000; and Housing £791,000.

Becoming More Efficient

All councils are required to measure and report the value of efficiency savings they have achieved since April 2008. An efficiency saving occurs when the cost of an activity falls, but its effectiveness is not reduced.

The table below shows the value of efficiency savings submitted to the Government to be achieved by the end of March 2009 :-

	Saving per Band D dwelling	National average for similar authorities
Stratford-on-Avon District Council	£8	£22
Warwickshire County Council	£49	£53
Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Authority	£1	£2

Since these figures were submitted, Stratford-on-Avon DC has revised its figure from £407,000 to £1,528,000 which equates to a £30 saving per band D dwelling.

Useful Contacts

Name	Contact details
Stratford-on-Avon District Council	01789 267575 (Out-of-Office 01789 414066)
Minicom	01789 260747
Council Tax	01789 260990
Benefits	01789 260991

The Council participates in the bi-annual National Fraud Initiative and the current exercise has been extended to include information from both the electoral register and council tax records to identify incidents of potential fraud. For this purpose, the Council works with the Audit Commission, an independent public body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council transmits information to the Audit Commission through a secure upload to the Audit Commission's IT system.



Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6HX
Email: info@stratford-dc.gov.uk
Web: www.stratford.gov.uk

8

your council tax explained 2009/10



WELCOME TO THE DISTRICT OF
STRATFORD ON AVON



www.stratford.gov.uk

This leaflet is designed to tell you about Your Council Tax. How it is funded and how it is spent.

Introduction to Your Council Tax

Stratford-on-Avon District Council provides a wide range of services including:

- Housing
- Refuse Collection
- Leisure Facilities
- Public Car Parks
- Planning permissions for new buildings or alterations to existing buildings.

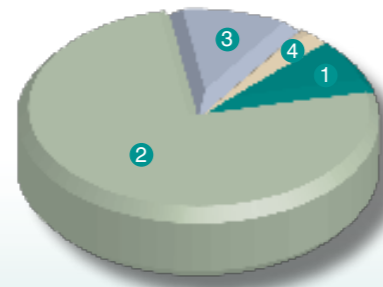
Services provided by Warwickshire County Council include:

- Education
- Social Care & Health
- Waste Disposal
- Road Maintenance
- Libraries
- Fire Service

(Please note: The Police Authority is a separate organisation and the Town and Parish Councils undertake further services).

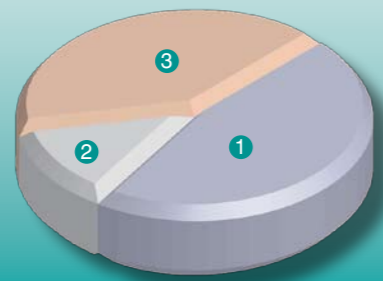
Your District Council collects the Council Tax on behalf of the County Council, Police Authority and the Town and Parish Councils. The income collected is split in the following way:

	2008/09	2009/10
	£000's	£000's
1 Stratford-on-Avon District Council	6,318	6,541
2 Warwickshire County Council	1,185	1,781
3 Warwickshire Police	6,060	6,060
4 Parish/Town Councils	6,060	6,060
TOTAL	13,563	13,563



Where Your District Council gets its money

	2008/09	2009/10
	£000's	£000's
1 Council Tax	6,318	6,541
2 Revenue Support Grant	1,185	1,781
3 Redistributed Non-Domestic Rates	6,060	5,637
TOTAL	13,563	13,959



Where Your District Council spends its money

	2008/09	2009/10
	£000's	£000's
EXPENDITURE		
Housing and Housing Benefit	19,699	19,938
Recreation and Tourism	2,414	2,507
Parking – on and off street	3,117	3,384
Planning	5,468	4,891
Environmental Health	3,809	3,675
Refuse Collection	3,518	3,774
Council Tax / National Non-Domestic Rates	1,171	1,339
Council Tax Benefits	6,378	6,933
Other Services less charges for the use of Land, Buildings and Equipment	1,883	646
TOTAL GROSS EXPENDITURE	47,457	47,087

	£000's	£000's
INCOME		
Government Grants	-24,568	-24,935
Fees and Charges	-5,924	-5,461
Interest	-1,053	-40
Other (grants, rent, sales)	-2,401	-2,314
TOTAL GROSS INCOME	-33,946	-32,750

	£000's	£000's
Contribution to reserves	0	-419
Collection Fund deficit	52	41

NET EXPENDITURE	13,563	13,959
------------------------	---------------	---------------

Your Council Tax explained - 2009/10

Your Council Tax is a local property tax that is charged in order to supplement Central Government funding of the local services provided by *Your District Council*.

It applies to properties used by people as their homes. Each home has been assessed and placed into one of eight bands (see table here). The amount of Council Tax you pay is dependent into which band your property falls (throughout this leaflet all illustrated examples use the costs that are associated with band D properties).

In addition to the standard rate of Council Tax for the District (see table on right), Parish Councils throughout the District have additional expenses for specific Parish requirements. These are called precepts. Each Parish may request additional funding which is added in proportion to Your Council Tax dependent on where you live (see precepts table on page 5).

Town and Parish Councils which raise a precept of over £140,000 from Council Tax are required to supply additional information to accompany the Council Tax bills. The information that has been provided is set out below.

Town/Parish	Year	Gross Expenditure	Contingency & Reserves	Income	Net Expenditure	Precept
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£'s
Alcester	2008/09	194	19	-4	209	209,000
	2009/10	215	6	-5	216	216,000
Bidford-on-Avon	2008/09	174	13	-41	146	145,900
	2009/10	202	-27	-21	154	154,400
Shipston-on-Stour	2008/09	255	0	-30	225	225,000
	2009/10	264	-18	-21	225	225,000
Southam	2008/09	190	-15	-6	169	168,734
	2009/10	211	-38	-4	169	168,848
Stratford-upon-Avon	2008/09	514	29	-76	467	466,947
	2009/10	579	56	-156	479	479,246
Wellesbourne	2008/09	288	-26	-4	258	257,857
	2009/10	241	-40	-1	200	200,000

Band values for the District

Band	Council Tax
A	£84.95
B	£99.11
C	£113.27
D	£127.43
E	£155.75
F	£184.07
G	£212.38
H	£254.86

Parish Council Precepts

Parish	Parish Precept 2008/09	Parish Precept 2009/10	Band D Parish Amount	Parish	Parish Precept 2007/08	Parish Precept 2008/09	Band D Parish Amount
Admington	£800	£800	£15.98	Long Itchington	£47,000	£47,000	£54.70
Alcester	£209,000	£216,000	£92.78	Loxley	£6,000	£7,300	£36.68
Alderminster	£5,000	£5,000	£19.60	Luddington	£4,000	£4,000	£20.44
Arrow (& Weethley)	£5,000	£5,000	£46.70	Mappleborough Green	£11,000	£11,000	£34.12
Aston Cantlow	£7,000	£7,600	£29.22	Marston Sicca	£8,000	£8,000	£37.41
Avon Dassett	£7,500	£7,000	£66.43	Moreton Morrell	£19,000	£19,000	£58.33
Barton-on-the-Heath	£657	£875	£16.86	Napton-on-the-Hill	£22,000	£26,400	£57.24
Bearley	£21,000	£21,000	£70.00	Newbold Pacey & Ashorne	£4,725	£4,725	£41.65
Beaudesert & Henley-in-Arden	£61,770	£82,487	£58.93	Old Stratford & Drayton	£4,660	£4,730	£14.92
Bidford-on-Avon	£145,900	£154,400	£78.36	Oxhill	£3,000	£2,500	£14.39
Binton	£4,000	£4,000	£27.97	Pillerton Hersey	£600	£400	£4.47
Bishops Itchington	£60,000	£62,500	£79.86	Pillerton Priors	£1,633	£2,027	£13.47
Brailes	£14,000	£14,000	£27.56	Preston-on-Stour	£3,500	£3,500	£47.04
Burmington	£250	£350	£5.76	Priors Hardwick	£1,500	£1,500	£17.91
Burton Dassett	£16,876	£16,523	£34.91	Priors Marston	£14,863	£14,500	£56.38
Butlers Marston	£500	£500	£4.87	Quinton	£20,000	£20,000	£27.61
Charlecote	£3,500	£3,500	£41.44	Radway	£5,980	£8,547	£67.09
Cherington & Stourton	£4,000	£3,850	£16.73	Ratley & Upton	£10,000	£10,000	£61.94
Chesterton & Kingston	£40	£40	£0.65	Salford Priors	£42,500	£41,000	£74.90
Claverdon	£15,500	£17,000	£27.53	Sambourne	£8,190	£8,436	£22.42
Clifford Chambers & Milcote	£6,750	£6,750	£28.83	Shipston-on-Stour	£225,000	£225,000	£108.37
Combrook	£2,900	£3,900	£47.69	Shotteswell	£5,500	£5,500	£45.45
Coughton	£2,500	£3,000	£38.32	Snitterfield	£21,200	£22,000	£39.26
Dorsington	£800	£800	£11.23	Southam	£168,734	£168,848	£73.72
Ettington	£30,000	£17,000	£33.13	Stockton	£20,185	£20,185	£42.58
Exhall	£3,670	£3,600	£32.50	Stratford-upon-Avon	£466,947	£479,246	£39.91
Farnborough	£7,000	£2,500	£19.62	Stretton-on-Fosse	£4,000	£4,200	£20.65
Fenny Compton	£22,000	£20,170	£63.07	Studley	£107,448	£122,528	£59.23
Gaydon	£7,584	£7,812	£44.19	Sutton-under-Brailes	£1,300	£1,500	£28.91
Great Aine	£23,500	£20,500	£73.75	Tanworth-in-Arden	£45,250	£45,500	£28.86
Great Wolford	£800	£850	£8.05	Temple Grafton	£4,200	£3,500	£15.22
Halford	£5,380	£9,000	£57.52	Tredington	£17,000	£17,000	£24.06
Hampton Lucy	£5,700	£6,000	£29.91	Tysoe	£10,000	£16,000	£31.72
Harbury	£58,667	£63,137	£58.24	Ufton	£5,400	£5,750	£51.18
Haselor	£3,500	£3,500	£33.03	Ullenhall	£5,000	£5,500	£14.75
Ilmington	£12,000	£15,000	£40.13	Warmington	£7,200	£7,410	£43.29
Kineton	£43,000	£43,000	£46.32	Welford-on-Avon	£19,760	£19,760	£28.46
Kinwarton	£16,000	£16,000	£38.10	Wellesbourne	£257,857	£200,000	£81.34
Ladbroke	£4,600	£4,700	£34.07	Whichford	£4,800	£4,800	£28.74
Langley	£1,000	£1,200	£13.11	Wilmcote	£11,300	£12,800	£26.60
Lighthorne	£9,500	£9,500	£42.07	Wixford	£5,000	£5,000	£64.28
Lighthorne Heath	£6,550	£8,500	£34.40	Wolverton	£1,800	£1,800	£14.45
Little Compton	£4,984	£5,487	£36.41	Wootton Wawen	£17,600	£18,750	£31.86
Long Compton	£7,000	£8,000	£21.57	TOTAL	£2,538,310	£2,559,473	
				AVERAGE			£49.86

Parishes not included within the schedule have not issued a precept in either 2008/09 or 2009/10.