

Your guide to council tax 2010/11



Working together



Aylesbury Vale District Council

Phone lines are open Monday to Friday; from 8.45am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday and until 4.45pm on Friday.

If the service you want to contact isn't listed, please phone our switchboard on **01296 585858** or email customerservices@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk.

Benefits	01296 585618	benefits@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Business rates (NNDR)	01296 585096	businessrates@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Electoral registration	01296 585807	electoralreg@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Environmental health (including noise, pollution and food safety)	01296 585605	envhealth@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Housing advice	01296 585168	housingneedsandadvice@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Licensing – taxi/alcohol/food/entertainment	01296 585560	licensing@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Litter, graffiti, abandoned vehicles, fly-posting	01296 585235	contractservices@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Parking	01296 585381	parkingservices@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Planning applications	01296 585426	devcon@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Recycling and rubbish collections	01296 585510	contractservices@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Out of hours emergency numbers

Car parks, flooding, council buildings	07785 705766
Environmental health issues	01296 585093
Homelessness advice	01494 675802

Buckinghamshire County Council

Phone lines are open Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm.

If the service you want to contact isn't listed, please phone our switchboard on **0845 370 8090** (Typetalk facility available on request) or email customerservices@bucksc.gov.uk.

Adult learning	0845 045 4040	studentenquiries@bucksc.gov.uk
Customer services	0845 370 8090	customerservices@bucksc.gov.uk
Education/schools	0845 370 8090	customerservices@bucksc.gov.uk
Fly-tipping	0845 330 1856	illegaldumpingcosts@bucksc.gov.uk
Libraries	0845 230 3232	library@bucksc.gov.uk
Public transport (Transport for Buckinghamshire)	0845 230 2882	passtrans@bucksc.gov.uk
Roads and highways (Transport for Buckinghamshire)	0845 230 2882	TfB@bucksc.gov.uk
Household waste recycling centres	0845 370 8090	waste_strategy@bucksc.gov.uk
Social services	0845 370 8090	customerservices@bucksc.gov.uk
Trading standards	0845 370 8090	tsd@bucksc.gov.uk

Out of hours emergency numbers

Roads and highways (Transport for Buckinghamshire)	01296 486630
Social services	01494 675802

Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service In an emergency dial 999

General enquiries	01296 744400	enquiries@bucksfire.gov.uk
Fire safety in the home	01296 744477	cs@bucksfire.gov.uk
Fire safety in the workplace	01296 744482	aylesburyfiresafety@bucksfire.gov.uk
Fire safety training	01296 744411	ictu@bucksfire.gov.uk
Recruitment	01296 744670	recruitment@bucksfire.gov.uk

Police

In an emergency dial 999

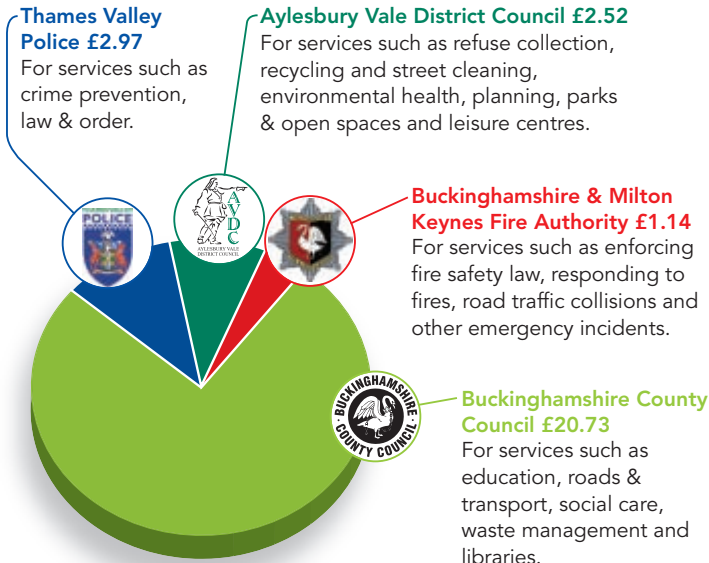
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
Thames Valley Police (non emergency)	08458 505 505

We all use local public services. Some services are funded by government grants, while others are paid for by collecting council tax. This leaflet contains information from three of the authorities which provide local public services and are funded by your council tax - Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council and Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority. We hope that this combined leaflet will give you a clearer idea of how your council tax is spent.

How much do I pay?

This is how much council tax you pay* each week for local services in your area. We hope that you will agree that it represents good value for money.

You pay your council tax to Aylesbury Vale District Council and this money is then shared with other local service providers.



*Based on an average band D property

In addition to the authorities above, some of your council tax is shared with your local parish or town council to pay for the services that they provide. These charges vary according to local needs and are listed on page eight.

Budget details for the parish and town councils that are planning to spend more than £140,000 this year are shown on page eight.

आपके नगर क्षेत्र के अलग-अलग सेवाओं के लिए, जो नगर, जिले, आग्नि-सुरक्षा, पुलिस और अन्य स्थानीय निकायों द्वारा प्रदान की जाती हैं, आपको अपने कौंसिल टैक्स का हिस्सा देना पड़ेगा।
 01296 425334
 01296 425334

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Income and spending

This year, an average band-D household will pay AVDC £131.07 a year, an increase of 5p a week, resulting in a weekly charge of £2.52 for the whole range of AVDC services, as shown below.



This comes despite reductions in income from investments, a low government funding settlement, increasing fuel costs and lower income from fees and charges.

The council has looked at a range of options to balance the books. More than £700,000 of savings to meet the council's initial budget gap of £1.1 million have been found through efficiency reviews of services. Other measures include:

- Introducing charges for pre-planning advice
- Making a small reduction in the amount of funding to voluntary and community groups
- Removing council funding from events such as Parklife and Buckingham Festival Fortnight
- Removing funding from the Reflex Gym in Winslow and the Buckingham Tourist Information Centre



Staff salaries have been frozen for the coming financial year and there will be no increase in councillors' allowances to help keep council tax down and protect key front-line services.

We have worked very hard to find savings with the least impact on residents. We understand the impact of the recession on families across the district and we've kept our council tax rise as low as we can. We will continue to look for efficiencies, including working with other district councils to deliver further cost savings in the future

As part of the overall budget package, Buckingham is to get a new long-stay car park at Stratford Fields and more short-stay parking spaces at Cornwall's Meadow. These improvements will be funded in part by the introduction of modest parking charges in Buckingham.

We provide many local services, but others are provided by the county council, your local town or parish council. Services we provide include:



- Business grants
- Collecting rubbish and recycling waste
- Cleaning streets, removing abandoned cars, graffiti & litter
- Community grants
- Community safety
- Leisure, sports and arts services
- Parks and play open spaces
- Developing and supporting the economy
- Licensing alcohol, food or entertainment premises, taxis & street traders
- Food safety
- Air quality and noise pollution control
- Local planning and building control
- Electoral registration and running elections
- Collecting council tax and business rates
- Shopmobility and car parks
- Housing advice and homelessness
- Providing council tax benefit and housing benefit service



2009/10 Net (£000s)	Aylesbury Vale District Council	2010/11 Gross expenditure (£000s)	2010/11 Gross income (£000s)	2010/11 Net (£000s)
1,647	Civic amenities	4,909	-3,495	1,414
2,192	Community matters	4,906	-2,326	2,580
49	Corporate issues	1,092	-1,099	-7
-246	Economic development	6,109	-6,598	-489
6,243	Environment & health	13,000	-6,125	6,875
2,891	Leader	5,015	-1,787	3,228
4,651	Leisure	6,434	-1,871	4,563
3,478	Planned development	5,907	-2,413	3,494
913	Resources	4,876	-3,681	1,195
-142	Housing & council tax benefit	38,808	-38,867	-59
769	Cost of collecting council tax	1,297	-1,031	266
1,882	Democratic representation and management	1,785	0	1,785
-4,057	Financing, interest & other	564	-4,704	-4,140
20,270		94,702	-2,665	20,705
	Funded by:			
-8,523	Council tax			-8,778
-2,203	Revenue support grant			-2,203
-9,544	NNDR contribution from pool			-9,724
-20,270				-20,705
	Capital spending			
27,854	Major projects			24,317
3,000	Housing grants			3,000
839	Other grants			839
705	Vehicle replacements			1,400
2,945	Other capital schemes			700
35,343				30,256

We charge one of the lowest rates of council tax set by a district council in the whole country. Last year, we were in the bottom fifth, charging £33 lower than the average district council across the country.

If you would like to know more about our budget and spending, phone us on 01296 585273 or email tskeggs@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Net cost per week of some key services

Refuse collection	91p
Planning	68p
Parks, sports pitches & leisure centres	56p
Environmental health	48p
Street cleansing	44p
Recycling	29p
Concessionary travel	23p

Budget details of the larger parish and town councils that are planning to spend more than £140,000 are shown below:

2009/10 Spend after income (£)	Aylesbury Town Council Service	2010/11 Spend after income (£)
379,062	Town amenities, environment & projects investment	388,884
77,524	Cemetery	71,280
69,976	Mayor's office and civic events	74,910
227,980	Town events	221,340
91,000	Partnership projects and community grants	96,000
96,014	Planning and information	115,081
941,556	Town charge	967,495

2009/10 Spend after income (£)	Buckingham Town Council Service	2010/11 Spend after income (£)
54,062	Leisure, events and weekly markets	50,065
94,300	Special projects	0
225,340	Parks, cemetery and town amenities	175,755
274,747	Administration	333,187
	Buckingham Festival Fortnight and Buckingham Tourist Information Centre, previously funded by AVDC	21,000
-90,105	Transferred to/from reserves	12,950
-31,400	Income	-69,957
526,944	Town charge	523,000

2009/10 Spend after income (£)	Wendover Parish Council Service	2010/11 Spend after income (£)
86,950	Amenities, inc recreation, property, highways and lighting	78,420
168,270	General, inc utilities, staff and churchyard care	162,238
-28,685	Income	0
226,535	Parish charge	240,658

2009/10 Spend after income (£)	Winslow Town Council Service	2010/11 Spend after income (£)
26,218	Leisure, town amenities and environment	32,700
44,000	Street lighting	59,000
71,232	Community grants, administration and salaries	71,249
141,450	Parish charge	162,949

The table below shows the spending on services we provide to people who live in Aylesbury, which are paid for by a separate charge.

2009/10 Spend after income (£)	Separate charge in Aylesbury Service	2010/11 Spend after income (£)
684,400	Parks and grounds	685,300
236,500	Community centres	233,900
-8,500	Open-air market	-38,900
10,000	Special projects	10,000
-3,700	Interest from investments	-1,000
-16,500	Money transferred to/from reserves	-11,700
902,200	Council tax charge	877,600

Your choices in an emergency

At some point, you will need to get help because of an accident or a medical emergency. This is more likely if you have children or elderly relatives living with you. Planning ahead and understanding what your options are in an emergency will help you get the best care as quickly as possible.

In Buckinghamshire the NHS provides more than just A&E services for urgent medical care. This means that if you need urgent medical treatment, you might not need to travel to Stoke Mandeville Hospital to get it. Likewise if you live near the borders of Buckinghamshire, the nearest place to go in an emergency might be in Slough, Milton Keynes or Oxford. Here's an introduction to your emergency choices:

Minor Injuries Unit (MIU)

In Buckinghamshire we have two Minor Injuries Units which can help adults or children with minor injuries, for example suspected fractures, scalds or minor burns. Waiting times at a MIU are often shorter than at A&E, where you may have to wait a long time with the same symptoms while other

more critical patients are treated first. At Milton Keynes Hospital a similar service is offered called an Urgent Care Centre.

Emergency Medical Centre

Wycombe Hospital's Emergency Medical Centre can treat a wide range of adult medical problems, including chest pain, breathing difficulties and overdoses. This means you might not need to go to Stoke Mandeville if you are taken seriously ill and if Wycombe is closer to your home

Accident & Emergency

Accident and Emergency departments should only be used in limb or life-threatening situations. A&E departments provide immediate emergency care for people who show the symptoms of serious illness or are badly injured.

For more information about the NHS in Buckinghamshire request a Choose Well leaflet and pocket card from our Patient Experience Team on **0800 328 5640** or visit www.buckinghamshire.nhs.uk/choosewell

Stoke Mandeville Hospital
Mandeville Road,
Aylesbury, HP21 8AL
Phone **01296 315 664**

Wycombe Hospital
Queen Alexandra Road,
High Wycombe, HP11 2TT
Phone **01494 425 438**

ONLY ONE OF THESE PEOPLE NEEDS A&E.

For less severe symptoms
Know your choices

Choose well.



For more information visit:
www.buckinghamshire.nhs.uk



Our income and spending

Our main aims are to provide efficient and effective services and keep council tax levels down by driving out waste and inefficiency.



In finding around £20 million of efficiency savings through improving the way we deliver services, we have been able to keep our council tax increase to 2 per cent. The need for efficiencies is vital in balancing our books, as we only receive a government grant increase of 1.5 per cent.

The Audit Commission states that "The Council manages its finances well to deliver value for money" and as a result it can provide a range of high quality services to Buckinghamshire residents.



This year the average band D household will pay £1077.74 a year, an increase of only 21 pence per week.



We provide a range of services for both you and your community including:

- Schools and education
- Social care
- Highways
- Public transport
- Youth services
- Libraries and museums
- Recycling
- Trading standards
- Country parks
- Archaeology

A breakdown of our spending can be viewed on the opposite page.

Recommended revenue budgets 2010/11

2009/10 adjusted* Net (£000s)	Portfolio	2010/11 Net (£000s)	Cost of services per £100 of council tax
112,158	Adults and families	115,613	36.86
55,117	Children and young people	54,656	17.43
8,864	Deputy leader	8,171	2.61
3,251	Leader	3,218	1.03
19,869	Planning and environment	21,248	6.78
24,966	Resources	26,820	8.55
47,640	Transportation	47,670	15.20
30,998	Capital financing and other below the line	36,225	11.55
302,863	Total net operating budget	313,621	100
-1,805	Use of reserves	-1,270	
-18,651	Area based grant (ABG)	-24,029	
282,407	Net budget requirement	288,322	
	Financed by:		
-58,732	Formula grant (RSG & NNDR)	-59,552	
-847	Net surplus on council tax collection	-41	
-222,828	Council tax	-228,729	
-282,407	Total financing	-288,322	

*Budgets and financing adjusted to enable like for like comparison

2009/10 Gross (£000s)	Capital spending	2010/11 Gross (£000s)
726	Adults and families	430
11,283	Children and young people	29,645
1,630	Planning and environment	739
8,856	Resources	10,629
14,042	Transportation	9,547
-	Additional pump priming budget	300
36,537	Total gross capital programme	51,290

Safety tip

Remember to turn off and unplug hair-straighteners and irons after use and to keep them out of reach of children.



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority comprises 14 councillors from Buckinghamshire and seven from Milton Keynes. It serves a population of around 730,000.

You can count on us to respond to your 999 call for help in an emergency – and we are working harder than ever to prevent fires and other emergencies from happening in the first place.

Our vision is to make Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes safer by working with the other emergency services and national and local government partners to reduce death, injury and damage to property, the environment and our heritage from fire and other emergencies.

This year we will continue to focus on five key community safety objectives and on improving the performance of our emergency response. The objectives are to make you safer:

- In your home
- At work and in public places
- On the roads
- In your community
- In an emergency

Where the money comes from

This year we will spend £28,835,152 (£39.88 per head of population) on providing services to you. Government grant accounts for £2.01 per head of population, business rates £13.83 and council tax £24.04.

	2009/10 (£)	2010/11 (£)
Government grant	2,136,807	1,452,021
Business rates	9,257,746	9,999,505
Council tax	16,825,230	17,383,626
Total	28,219,783	28,835,152

Safety tip

Keep internal doors shut - if you have a fire, this will slow down the rate at which it spreads through your home.

Our budget for this year is 2.18 per cent higher than last year's. This allows for committed expenditure such as the costs of specialist equipment and contracts for utilities such as electricity and gas, and the decline in interest received.

To fund essential improvements and priorities, and to compensate for an increase in government funding of 0.5 per cent – £56,973 – we have had to increase the rate at which our share of your council tax is charged by 2.5 per cent. This amounts to an additional £1.44 a year to a band D council tax payer, making a total of £59.13 for the year for a band D property.

Where the money goes

	2009/10 (£)	2010/11 (£)
Employees	23,860,517	24,209,263
Premises	1,256,514	1,312,529
Transport	1,890,392	1,539,059
Supplies and services	2,742,097	3,266,940
Agency payments	61,080	224,774
Capital charges	773,983	929,514
Income	-2,364,800	-2,646,927
Total	28,219,783	28,835,152

We currently employ a total of 733 staff, comprising 361 wholetime firefighters, 211 retained firefighters, 24 control room staff and 118 people who work in a variety of support services including community safety, fire safety, workshops, finance, human resources, planning, information technology and procurement, and 19 staff based at fire stations such as cooks, cleaners and administrative support.

We repaid a loan of £335,000 in 2009/10, reducing our total borrowing to £6,117,000 at 31 March 2010.

The employee costs take account of a reduced establishment in our wholetime firefighters. This is part of our plan to continue to have a more efficient workforce with no reduction in our response capability.

Safety tip

Make an escape plan - talk to your family now about how you would all get out of your home if there was a fire.



Safety tip

More than half of all house fires start in the kitchen. Take extra care when cooking and never use the cooker or oven if you have been drinking.

Safety tip

Smoke alarms save lives - but only if they work. Test your smoke alarms once a week. Push the button, not your luck.



Safety tip

If in doubt, get out, stay out and call us out by ringing 999. Things and buildings can be replaced - people can't.

The costs also take account of the phased enhancement of the numbers of retained firefighters and community safety staff. Included within employee costs are the National Insurance contributions required by employers, and the pension contributions set nationally for firefighters and locally for non-firefighting staff.

A significant proportion of our employee costs is used for training our staff to ensure that they are well prepared for any event that they may be required to attend, and are skilled to the appropriate level to help you at a variety of different types of incident.

We have reviewed our capital programme and will fund the essential repairs and maintenance of our fire stations and maintain the replacement programme for some fire appliances and associated specialist equipment. We will also continue our programme to install smoke alarms in the homes of the most vulnerable people within our community. In addition, we are investing in environmental measures to help reduce our carbon footprint.

Making you safer

- Are you aged 65 or over?
- Do you live on your own?
- Are you sharing with non-family members?
- Do you receive a benefit?

If you have answered "yes" to one or more of these four questions, we can help make you safer. Let us carry out a **free** home safety check to help you minimise the risk of a fire. It takes about 20 to 30 minutes, depending on the size of your home. We will need you to be present to answer a few questions for us. We will fit free 10-year smoke alarms where necessary.

To book one, phone us on 01296 744 477 or email us at cs@bucksfire.gov.uk

Fire safety leaflets in other languages

Fire safety leaflets in English and 30 other languages are available to download from our website at www.bucksfire.gov.uk/bucksfire/languages

These notes form part of your council tax bill

Council tax and housing benefit

These notes form part of your council tax bill

If you and your partner are unemployed or on a low income, you may be able to get help to pay your council tax bill and/or housing rent.

Any entitlement to benefit will normally start on the Monday following the date you first contact the council. So don't delay, it could cost you money.

The actual amount of benefit you receive will depend on your financial situation and the housing benefit may not meet all of the rent due on the property. The Rent Service - part of the Valuation Office Agency - decides how much rent your home is worth. The amount of housing benefit will be linked to the number of rooms you and your family need.

Under no circumstances should you take on a tenancy in the hope that housing benefit will take care of the rent. We recommend that you contact the council before you commit yourself to a tenancy agreement.

Second adult rebate

This type of rebate is for council tax payers only and is a different way of getting help to pay your council tax. People who are solely liable to pay council tax, who share their home on a non-commercial basis with one or more adults on a low income may claim it, for example if you have adult children or elderly relatives. Please note that this does not include your spouse or partner.

- Even if your income and/or savings are too high to qualify for council tax benefit, you may still be entitled to some help, as benefit is based on the other adult's income, not your own.
- You cannot get both council tax benefit and second adult rebate, but we will work out which one you will be better off receiving.
- The amount of second adult rebate may be 25 per cent, 15 per cent or 7.5 per cent, depending on the second adult's income.

Discounts and exemptions

If you are already receiving a discount or your property is exempt from council tax payments, this will be shown on your bill. If you are not entitled to the discount you must notify the council within 21 days of any change. Failure to do so may lead to penalties being imposed.

Are you entitled to a discount?

The full council tax bill assumes there are at least two adults living in a property. If there is only one adult living there and it is not a second home (rented or owned), you should be receiving a 25 per cent discount. When counting the number of adults (people aged 18 and over) in your home, you can exclude:

- 18- and 19-year-olds who are still at school or have recently left school
- full-time students and student nurses, foreign language assistants
- long-term residential patients in a hospital or care home
- people under the age of 25 receiving approved training that is funded by the Learning Skills Council
- residents of some night hostels or shelters
- apprentices earning less than £195 a week before deductions and working over 35 hours

- people who provide full-time care for a disabled relative who is not a child aged under 18 or their husband, wife or partner
- resident care workers earning less than £44 a week
- people with severe mental-health problems
- people in prison or detained by a court order
- members of religious communities with no income
- diplomats and visiting forces staff

If a property is unfurnished and isn't used at all throughout the year, then council tax is payable. If the property is your second, furnished home or holiday home, then there is a discount of 10 per cent, unless it is a condition of your employment that you live and pay council tax in a specific property.

Disabled band reduction scheme

If someone in your home is disabled and either uses a wheelchair indoors or has the total or main use of a room because of this disability, you may be entitled to a reduction in your bill. This does not apply if the room is your only kitchen, bathroom or toilet.

Should you be paying council tax at all?

We will not charge council tax for an empty home if:

- it is unfurnished apart from fixtures (up to six months) after which council tax is payable
- it cannot be lived in or is undergoing major structural work (up to 12 months) after which council tax is payable
- it is owned by a charity and was last used for charitable purposes (up to six months) after which council tax is payable
- you are in prison, or detained by a court order
- you are a long-term residential patient of a hospital or care home
- the person living there before has died and the will has not yet been settled or was settled less than six months ago
- planning restrictions do not allow anyone to live there
- it is waiting to be lived in by a serving cleric
- you are living elsewhere to receive or provide care
- it is an unused caravan pitch or boat mooring

- you are bankrupt or the property has been repossessed
- it is an annexe (or granny flat) which cannot be let separately

We will also not charge council tax if the property is only lived in by:

- full-time students
- people under 18 years old
- dependent relatives who are either disabled or aged 65 years or over, and the home is annexed to the main property (a granny flat)
- people with severe mental-health problems
- visiting forces staff and their dependants
- armed forces staff and their dependants and the home is owned by the Ministry of Defence
- diplomats and their dependants

If we have not given you a discount and think you should get one, please contact us with the details, or visit our website for an application form. Our contact details are on the back page of this leaflet and on the front of your bill.

Valuation bands and appeals

There is one council tax bill for every property, whether it be a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette, mobile home or houseboat. Each property is in one of eight valuation bands and your council tax bill shows which band your home is in. The value of your home on 1 April 1991 is used to work this out.

Appealing against your valuation band

You can appeal against the valuation band your property is in if one of the following applies:

- Your home has reduced in value because of demolition or adaptation work or because of a change in the area, such as a new major road next to your home.
- The property has been re-valued because of past building (or other) work. The person appealing would normally be the new owner or occupier.
- You have to pay council tax for the property for the first time, in which case you must appeal within six months of first becoming liable.
- You start using part of your home for business, or the balance between domestic and business use changes.

You cannot appeal directly to the council about your council tax band. You must appeal to the listing officer, who is a government official, at:

Property band	Property value on 1 April 1991	Fraction band-D charge
A	Up to £40,000	6/9
B	£40,001 to £52,000	7/9
C	£52,001 to £68,000	8/9
D	£68,001 to £88,000	9/9
E	£88,001 to £120,000	11/9
F	£120,001 to £160,000	13/9
G	£160,001 to £320,000	15/9
H	More than £320,000	18/9

The Valuation Office Agency,
Heron House,
49 Buckingham Street,
Aylesbury,
HP20 2NQ
Phone 01296 550 300

If you want information about valuation bands for similar properties, you can visit The Valuation Office Agency website at www.voa.gov.uk.

Please note that this is a free service and there is no need, unless you want to, to employ a company to appeal. If you have access to the internet then please take some time to research the matter.

Appealing against paying council tax

You can appeal if you think that you are not the person who should be paying council tax. In this case, you should appeal directly to your district council. Our contact details are on the back page of this leaflet and on the front of your bill.

Have your circumstances changed?

If you are receiving help with your rent or your council tax through the benefits system, it is very important that you tell us about any changes in your circumstances. If you do not tell us about these changes, you could lose out on benefit that you should be getting, or you could be receiving more benefit than you are entitled to, resulting in us sending you a bill later on to recover the overpaid amount.

The types of change you must tell us about are:

- changes in your income or your partner's income, capital or savings including any new benefit you get
- changes in any tax credits you receive
- changes to the income of any adults living with you
- if you stop receiving Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance or Employment Support Allowance
- a change of job or changes to your working hours
- changes in the number of people in your household
- if any of your children leave school or college
- changes to your tenancy or rent
- if you move to different accommodation
- if you are likely to be away from your home for 13 weeks or more

The information you provide us with must be accurate and we may ask for documentary evidence before we make any change to your entitlement. If you need any advice or are unsure of the effect of any change, please contact our benefits team - their contact details are listed on page two of this leaflet.



Please note that the council has a duty to protect the public funds we manage. The council tax information you provide us with could be used for the prevention and detection of fraud. We may also share this information with other organisations responsible for auditing or administering public funds, so that checks can be made.

Thames & Anglian regions



The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood defence for 5,200 kilometres and 1,314 kilometres of main rivers in the area of the Thames and Anglian Central Regional Flood Defence Committees respectively. Flood defence money is spent on the construction of new flood defence schemes, the maintenance of the river system and existing flood defences, together with the operation of a flood warning system.

The majority of funding for flood defence comes directly from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). However, where there are schemes which do not attract funding, the Environment Agency may seek funding from county and metropolitan councils, unitary authorities and London boroughs in the form of a local levy. The local levy is shared on the basis of band D equivalents between all contributing bodies within the committee area.

The levy is being kept at the same level as balances are being used to fund the increased expenditure on flood defence projects.

2009/10 (000s)	Thames Regional Flood Defence Committee	2010/11 (000s)
£96,798	Gross expenditure	£113,089
£10,000	Levies raised	£10,000
4,988	Total council tax base	5,027

2009/10 (000s)	Anglian Central Flood Defence Committee	2010/11 (000s)
£21,518	Gross expenditure	£26,751
£972	Levies raised	£1,021
626	Total council tax base	633

To report an incident such as pollution, phone the incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60. For further information about flood warnings in a particular area, phone 0845 988 1188 or visit www.environment-agency.gov.uk.

Have your say

This is the second year we've worked together to produce our council tax information leaflet in this format, part funded by local advertising to reduce costs, and we hope that you find it a more interesting read.

Most of the pages have information that we must provide, but we'd like to hear your views on the content and style of the leaflet, the number and format of the advertisements and if there is anything else you would like us to consider including in next year's leaflet.

Please email consultation@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk or write to: Communications Aylesbury Vale District Council FREEPOST (11939) 66 High Street Aylesbury Bucks HP20 1SD.

Becoming more efficient

During 2010/11, Aylesbury Vale District Council will continue to work with other local authorities, including Buckinghamshire County Council, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority and Thames Valley Police Authority, to achieve important efficiency savings, which we hope will also result in significant improvements in service delivery.

All councils now 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 cumulative value of efficiency savings achieved by the end of March 2009 and forecast to be achieved by the end of March 2010:

	By March 2009 (£)	By March 2010 (£)
Aylesbury Vale District Council	1,033,000	2,327,000
Buckinghamshire County Council	9,792,000	20,101,000
Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority	717,000	1,404,000
Thames Valley Police Authority	12,088,000	28,043,000

The table below shows the average savings we expect to have achieved by March 2010 for the average band D household and compares that with the average figure for similar authorities across England:

	Saving per band D household (£)	National average for similar authorities (£)
Aylesbury Vale District Council	35	41
Buckinghamshire County Council	95	98
Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority	5	4
Thames Valley Police Authority	33	54

How good is our council tax and business rate collection?

We are regularly one of the most successful councils in England for collecting council tax and in the top ten councils for collecting business rates.

Our high collection rates of both council tax and business rates are a major factor in allowing us to keep our council tax increase to 5p a week for the average Band-D property.

2008-2009 Council tax collected: Aylesbury Vale – 98.7%

2008-2009 Business rates collected: Aylesbury Vale – 99.4%

Making a teleclaim – it's as easy as A B C!

Teleclaim is an easier way to claim housing and council tax benefit. It's quick, easy to use and helps us to process your claim more quickly. You don't have to fill in any forms or visit our offices.

- A. Simply call us on 01296 585618 and we will call you back at an arranged time, usually later the same day or the next working day. We'll tell you exactly what information we need from you before we return your call.
- B. When we call you back, you'll need to have this information ready for us. We'll take it down over the phone and fill in the application form for you. We'll tell you what documents we may need to see and make an appointment to visit you at home.
- C. When we visit (usually on the next working day), we'll ask you to sign the application form and show us any documents we need to see as proof for your claim.

It's that simple - phone us on 01296 585618 or email benefits@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Make sure that you make a claim if you think you are entitled to.



Aylesbury Vale District Council

Department of Corporate Resources
66 High Street, Aylesbury,
Buckinghamshire, HP20 1SD

Phone 01296 585299 Fax 01296 585285

Minicom 01296 585055

Email counciltax@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Website www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk



Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service

Stocklake, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP20 1BD

Tel 01296 744400

In an emergency dial 999

Email enquiries@bucksfire.gov.uk

Website www.bucksfire.gov.uk



Buckinghamshire County Council

County Hall, Walton Street,
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP20 1UA

Tel 0845 370 8090

Email customerservices@buckscc.gov.uk

Website www.buckscc.gov.uk

Help the environment, view your bill online

Reduce paper waste by viewing future council tax bills online instead of through the post. To find out more, phone us on **01296 585299**, or go online at:

<https://ebilling.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk>.

Please have your council tax account number to hand.

Sign it and forget it with Direct Debit

There are no cheques to write or paperwork and postage each month as payments are taken directly from your bank account. To find out more, phone us on **01296 585299**, or visit our website:

[www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/council tax](http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/council-tax) and click on **How do I pay my council tax?**

Easier to pay

Our 24-hour automated payment line makes it easier to pay your council tax by credit or debit card. To use this, phone us on **01296 585820**, or you can pay online by visiting our website

<https://epayments.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/avdcwebpayhome.htm>