

Your guide to council tax 2010/11



Working together



Chiltern
District Council



Chiltern District Council

Phone lines are open 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Thursday and until 5pm on Friday. If the service you want to contact isn't listed, please visit us online at www.chiltern.gov.uk, phone our switchboard on **01494 729 000** or email info@chiltern.gov.uk.

Anti-social behaviour	01494 732 196	ASBO@chiltern.gov.uk
Benefits (council tax & housing benefit)		
- Chesham and The Chalfonts	01494 732 078	benefits@chiltern.gov.uk
- Amersham and all other areas	01494 732 077	benefits@chiltern.gov.uk
Building control	01494 732 249	buildingcontrol@chiltern.gov.uk
Business rates (NNDR)		
- Chesham and The Chalfonts	01494 732 078	revenue@chiltern.gov.uk
- Amersham and all other areas	01494 732 077	revenue@chiltern.gov.uk
Community safety	01494 732 265	communitysafety@chiltern.gov.uk
Council tax		
- Chesham and The Chalfonts	01494 732 078	finance@chiltern.gov.uk
- Amersham and all other areas	01494 732 077	finance@chiltern.gov.uk
Electoral services	01494 732 099	elections@chiltern.gov.uk
Environmental health	01494 732 058	envhealth@chiltern.gov.uk
Freedom of Information enquiries	01494 732 006	FOI@chiltern.gov.uk
Housing	01494 732 013	housingandcommunity@chiltern.gov.uk
Licensing	01494 732 063	licensing@chiltern.gov.uk
Parking	01494 732 252	parking@chiltern.gov.uk
Parking fines	01494 732 252	parking@chiltern.gov.uk
Planning	01494 732 950	planning@chiltern.gov.uk
Recycling and rubbish collections/ street cleansing	01494 732 053	wmanagement@chiltern.gov.uk

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@buckscc.gov.uk.

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

Out of hours emergency numbers

Roads and highways (Transport for Buckinghamshire)	01296 486 630
Social services	01494 675 802

Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service In an emergency dial 999

General enquiries	01296 744 400	enquiries@bucksfire.gov.uk
Fire safety in the home	01296 744 477	cs@bucksfire.gov.uk
Fire safety in the workplace	01296 744 482	aylesburyfiresafety@bucksfire.gov.uk
Fire safety training	01296 744 411	tctu@bucksfire.gov.uk
Recruitment	01296 744 670	recruitment@bucksfire.gov.uk

Police

In an emergency dial 999

Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
Thames Valley Police (non emergency)	0845 8 505 505

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 – Chiltern 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.

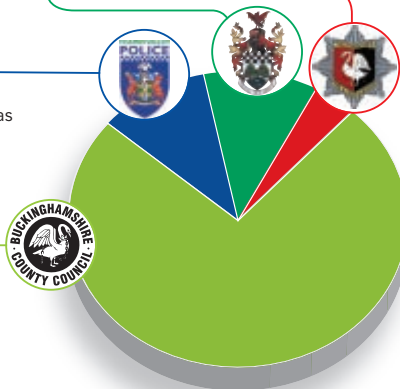
You pay your council tax to Chiltern District Council and this money is then shared with other local service providers.

Chiltern District Council £3.07
For services such as refuse collection, recycling and street cleaning, environmental health, planning, parks & open spaces and leisure centres.

Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority £1.14
For services such as enforcing fire safety law, responding to fires, road traffic collisions and other emergency incidents.

Thames Valley Police £2.97
For services such as crime prevention, law & order.

Buckinghamshire County Council £20.73
For services such as education, roads & transport, social care, waste management and libraries.



*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.

Budget details for the parish and town councils that are planning to spend more than £140,000 this year are shown on page 8.

How the tax is made up

Council tax base for 2010/11 = 44,259.87. Estimated resident mid year population = 90,900

Band D Equivalent 2009/10 (£)	How the tax is made up	Precept 2010/11 (£)	Band D Equivalent 2010/11 (£)	% Increase	Cost Per Resident (£)
1,056.61	Buckinghamshire County Council precept	47,700,632	1,077.74	2.00	524.76
155.61	Chiltern District Council precept	7,059,460	159.50	2.50	77.66
151.27	Thames Valley Police Authority precept	6,829,270	154.30	2.00	75.13
57.69	Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority precept	2,617,086	59.13	2.50	28.79
52.84	Parish and town council precepts	2,431,394	54.93	3.96	26.75
1,474.02	Average council tax for properties in band D	66,637,842	1,505.60	2.14	733.09

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2009/10 (£000s)	Where our money comes from	2010/11 (£000s)	As % of total
4,686	Fees and charges	4,475	11.98
17,640	Grants and contributions	20,865	55.86
216	Other income	861	2.30
55	Investment interest / balances	150	0.40
3,194	Business rates	3,449	9.23
737	Revenue support grant from government	501	1.34
6,860	Council tax	7,059	18.89
33,388	Total income	37,360	100.00

2009/10 (£000s)	How our money is spent	2010/11 (£000s)	As % of total
7,754	Employees	7,654	20.49
8,903	Supplies and services	9,573	25.62
16,731	Housing benefits	20,133	53.89
33,388	Total expenditure	37,360	100.00

Changes in our spending

Budgeted spending 2009/10 (£000s)	(£000s)
Changes	10,851
Pay inflation, pension contributions etc	95
Contract increases and price inflation	(10)
Loss of income from fees & charges	206
Savings achieved	(86)
Budgeted spending 2010/11	11,056

Staff numbers

2009/10	Directorates	2010/11
55	Chief Executives	53
144	Planning & the Environment	141
199	Full time equivalents	194

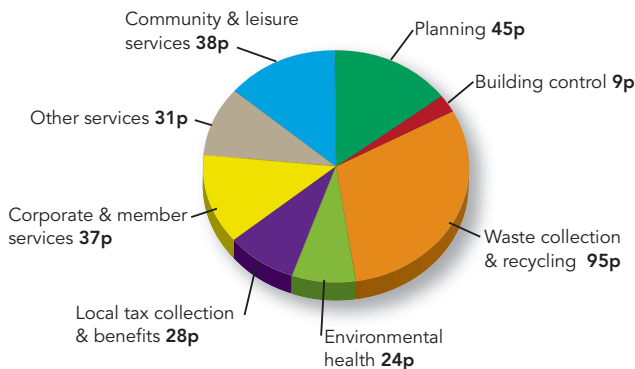
£3.07 per week
Chiltern council tax
buys you this
 (weekly cost per band D in pence)

Spending on capital projects

We have a rolling five year capital programme from 2009/10 through to 2013/14. The total planned spend during this period is just under £4.2 million.

Investments

As at 1 April 2009 we had £13.7 million invested with approved institutions.



Our budget for 2010/11

2009/10 Net expenditure (£000s)	Services	Gross expenditure (£000s)	Income (£000s)	2010/11 Net expenditure (£000s)
1,237	Recreation & leisure	1,380	212	1,168
2,109	Planning & building control	3,115	984	2,131
3,517	Waste collection, recycling & cleansing	4,761	1,076	3,685
990	Environmental health	1,229	295	934
-291	Parking & transport	2,047	2,121	-74
294	Community grants & projects	291	0	291
695	Housing & council tax benefits	21,294	20,587	707
394	Council tax & business rate collection	604	209	395
1,355	Corporate management & member services	1,458	0	1,458
1,330	Other services	1,947	670	1,277
11,630	Total service expenditure	38,126	26,154	11,972
90	(Savings) / contingency item			48
(55)	Interest income / use of balances			(150)
(814)	Asset management account			(814)
10,851	Chiltern net cost of services			11,056
	less :-			
(3,194)	Redistributed non domestic rate income			(3,449)
(737)	Revenue support grant			(501)
(60)	Collection fund adjustment item			(47)
6,860	Chiltern council tax requirement			7,059

2010/11 total council tax charges for all areas and all property bands

Parish/Town Council	Valuation band							
	Band A (£)	Band B (£)	Band C (£)	Band D (£)	Band E (£)	Band F (£)	Band G (£)	Band H (£)
Amersham	1,019.03	1,188.87	1,358.71	1,528.55	1,868.23	2,207.91	2,547.58	3,057.10
Ashley Green	988.84	1,153.65	1,318.45	1,483.26	1,812.87	2,142.49	2,472.10	2,966.52
Chalfont St Giles	1,005.09	1,172.61	1,340.12	1,507.64	1,842.67	2,177.70	2,512.73	3,015.28
Chalfont St Peter	997.69	1,163.97	1,330.25	1,496.53	1,829.09	2,161.65	2,494.22	2,993.06
Chartridge	974.69	1,137.14	1,299.59	1,462.04	1,786.94	2,111.84	2,436.73	2,924.08
Chenies	992.15	1,157.51	1,322.87	1,488.23	1,818.95	2,149.67	2,480.38	2,976.46
Chesham	1,031.13	1,202.38	1,374.84	1,546.69	1,890.40	2,234.11	2,577.82	3,093.38
Chesham Bois	986.08	1,150.43	1,314.77	1,479.12	1,807.81	2,136.51	2,465.20	2,958.24
Cholesbury	979.88	1,143.19	1,306.51	1,469.82	1,796.45	2,123.07	2,449.70	2,939.64
Coleshill	980.57	1,144.00	1,307.43	1,470.86	1,797.72	2,124.58	2,451.43	2,941.72
Great Missenden	986.90	1,151.38	1,315.87	1,480.35	1,809.32	2,138.28	2,467.25	2,960.70
Latimer	980.00	1,143.33	1,306.67	1,470.00	1,796.67	2,123.33	2,450.00	2,940.00
The Lee	977.36	1,140.25	1,303.15	1,466.04	1,791.83	2,117.61	2,443.40	2,932.08
Little Chalfont	1,012.95	1,181.78	1,350.60	1,519.43	1,857.08	2,194.73	2,532.38	3,038.86
Little Missenden	981.41	1,144.97	1,308.54	1,472.11	1,799.25	2,126.38	2,453.52	2,944.22
Penn	981.77	1,145.39	1,309.02	1,472.65	1,799.91	2,127.16	2,454.42	2,945.30
Seer Green	990.15	1,155.18	1,320.20	1,485.23	1,815.28	2,145.33	2,475.38	2,970.46

If a parish or town council needs to raise more than £140,000 from council tax charges it has to provide additional information; these parishes are shown below. Other parish council charges are shown on page 38.

2009/10	Amersham Town Council	2010/11
(£)		(£)
297,760	Community services	286,891
265,565	Finance & general purposes	255,730
563,325		542,621
(56,380)	Contribution to/(from) reserves	(23,000)
506,945	Precept	519,621

A more detailed breakdown of the Town Council's financial accounts is available by writing to Mr. D. Knowles, Town Clerk, The Court House, King George V Road, Amersham, Bucks, HP6 5ST

2009/10	Chalfont St Peter Parish Council	2010/11
(£)	Committee	(£)
71,710	Finance & admin	91,862
39,830	Amenities & planning (inc Lighting)	30,778
18,550	Open spaces	13,350
141,532	HR	147,957
5,000	Communications & PR	10,050
9,000	Capital	20,000
285,622		313,997
	Contribution to/(from)	
(27,572)	reserves	(15,668)
258,050	Precept	298,329

A more detailed breakdown of the Parish Council's financial accounts is available by writing to Penny Harris, Temporary Clerk to the Council, Council Office, adj. The Community Centre, Gravel Hill, Chalfont St Peter, Bucks, SL9 9QX

2009/10	Little Chalfont Parish Council	2010/11
(£)		(£)
10,625	Village hall	13,790
88,970	Westwood Park and pavilion	41,726
49,850	Administration	52,000
40,200	General maintenance	36,875
20,000	Street lighting	21,000
29,000	One-off projects	41,000
238,645	Gross expenditure	206,391
(29,300)	Income	(23,348)
209,345	Net expenditure	183,043
	(912) Contribution to/(from)	25,390
	reserves	
208,433	Precept	208,433

A more detailed breakdown of the Parish Council's financial accounts is available by writing to Mrs J Mason, Parish Clerk, Village Hall, Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont, Bucks, HP8 4UD

2009/00	Chesham Town Council	2010/11
(£)	Service	(£)
173,115	Administration & democratic services	204,525
12,385	Allotments	13,460
74,110	Cemetery & churchyard	70,815
95,480	Chesham Moor Gym & Swim	100,675
(6,290)	Housing	(6,720)
224,745	Parks & open spaces	233,720
22,555	Sports pavilions & pitches	12,135
166,010	The Elgiva	167,810
31,740	Town centre revitalisation	27,905
37,950	Town Hall & Temperance Hall	44,820
16,895	Lowndes Park toilets	16,270
848,695		885,415
(59,545)	Contribution to/(from) reserves	(79,025)
789,150	Precept	806,390

A more detailed breakdown of the Town Council's financial accounts is available by writing to Mr W Richards, Town Clerk, Chesham Town Council, Town Hall, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 1DS. Phone 01494 774842 or visit the website www.chesham.gov.uk

2009/10	Chalfont St Giles Parish Council	2010/11
(£)	Committee	(£)
139,935	Finance & general purposes	137,605
6,700	Footway lighting	9,900
25,240	Open spaces & amenities	23,690
10,510	Capital	11,190
182,385	Precept	182,385

A more detailed breakdown of the Parish Council's financial accounts is available by writing to Mr M Mac Mahon, Clerk to the Council, 12 Royle Close, Gerrards Cross, Bucks, SL9 0BB

2009/10	Great Missenden Parish Council	2010/11
(£)		(£)
51,237	Administration	55,358
10,750	Capital	14,547
7,130	Grants	13,000
45,318	Open spaces	57,746
10,670	Parking	11,204
2,780	Repairs and renewals	1,040
4,182	Street lighting	3,608
-	From reserves	-8,000
132,067	Precept	148,503

A more detailed breakdown of the Parish Council's financial accounts is available by writing to Mr K J Williams, Asst. Clerk to the Council, Parish Office, Memorial Centre, Link Road, Great Missenden, Bucks, HP16 9AE

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.



Safety tip

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



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

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 region



The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood defence for 5,200 kilometres of main river and along tidal and sea defences, in the area of the Thames Regional Flood Defence Committee. 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 central funding, the 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

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

Parish council charges for band D properties

Precept 2009/10 (£)	Parish	Precept 2010/11 (£)	Charges 2010/11 (£)
14,960	Ashley Green	14,960	32.59
9,500	Chartridge	9,500	11.37
5,000	Chenies	5,000	37.56
45,000	Chesham Bois	46,350	28.45
8,650	Cholesbury	9,523	19.15
6,500	Coleshill	6,500	20.19
6,000	Latimer	9,900	19.33
6,000	The Lee	6,000	15.37
63,500	Little Missenden	68,500	21.44
46,800	Penn	50,000	21.98
40,700	Seer Green	41,500	34.56

Becoming more efficient

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

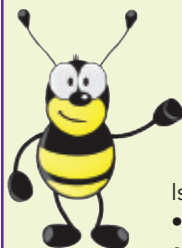
All councils measure and report the value of efficiency savings they have achieved since April 2008. An efficiency saving occurs when the cost of an activity falls, but its effectiveness is not reduced. The table below shows the cumulative value of efficiency savings achieved by the end of March 2009 and forecast to be achieved by the end of March 2010:

	By March 2009 (£)	By March 2010 (£)
Chiltern District Council	334,000	668,000
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 (£)
Chiltern District Council	15	41
Buckinghamshire County Council	95	98
Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority	5	4
Thames Valley Police Authority	33	54

Chiltern and South Bucks Welfare Partnership Bee Benefit Wise



You don't have to be unemployed to claim help with rent and council tax.

Is the credit crunch affecting you?

- reduced hours?
- loss of partner's income?
- having problems paying rent or council tax?

Phone us to find out if you may be entitled to help:

01494 732 077 / 732 078

Email benefits@chiltern.gov.uk



Chiltern District Council

Chiltern District Council

PO Box 406, Amersham,
Bucks, HP6 5TB

Phone 01494 729 000

Email revenue@chiltern.gov.uk

www.chiltern.gov.uk



Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service

Stocklake, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 1BD

Phone 01296 744 400

In an emergency dial 999

Email enquiries@bucksfire.gov.uk

www.bucksfire.gov.uk



Buckinghamshire County Council

County Hall, Walton Street,
Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 1UA

Phone 0845 3708090

Email customerservices@buckscc.gov.uk

www.buckscc.gov.uk

For council tax enquiries

Phone

01494 732 078 (Chalfonts and Chesham)

01494 732 077 (Amersham & elsewhere)

Email revenue@chiltern.gov.uk

For council tax and housing benefit enquiries

Phone

01494 732 078 (Chalfonts and Chesham)

01494 732 077 (Amersham & elsewhere)

Email benefits@chiltern.gov.uk

Contact details for some of our other services are listed on page 2.

Did you know you can find our more about council tax and benefits on our website? Visit www.chiltern.gov.uk.

The most frequently asked questions about our services are answered on our website; some of our services are also available online. Visit us online at www.chiltern.gov.uk to find out more.

If you don't have access to the internet, you can visit our council offices on King George V Road, Amersham, HP6 5AW.

This leaflet is available in different formats by phoning 01494 732 077.