

# Your services

**Wychavon**  
in Worcestershire

## Find out

**what your Council  
Tax pays for**

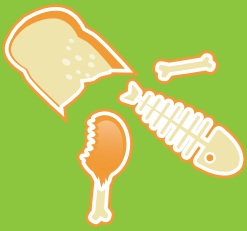
2011-12



**Useful  
numbers  
for County  
and District  
Council  
services**



**HOW TO PAY • HELP & ADVICE • BENEFITS INFO • GET IN TOUCH**  
and much more from your County Council, District Council  
and the Fire and Rescue Authority



# Let's waste less in Herefordshire & Worcestershire

The possibilities are endless



This fantastic website is packed full of useful information about preventing waste, from how to save money by reducing food waste to just what to do with your old sofa.

To find out more visit [www.letswasteless.com](http://www.letswasteless.com)  
or call 01905 766883

## welcome

Most of the money for providing services to you comes from central Government and other grants, but in Wychavon over £68 million is collected through Council Tax.

Wychavon District Council collects the Council Tax on behalf of all of the authorities shown on the chart. The total amount is then split to provide the services that are part of your everyday life.

This year, a Band D household in Wychavon will pay £1,440.44 on average to their local authorities - that's just £27.70 a week.



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# How we **spend** your money

Look what you get for just £2.09\* a week and around 8 per cent of your bill

- Cleaner streets
- Waste and recycling service
- Tough action on environmental crime such as fly tipping
- Community Neighbourhood Wardens on your streets
- Free security equipment for vulnerable burglary victims
- Food, health and safety inspectors
- Food hygiene ratings for local food businesses
- Parks, play areas and skate parks
- Leisure centres and sports activities
- Summer events - festivals and parties in the parks
- Planning and building control
- Housing advice and benefits
- Award winning toilets
- Online services - from paying bills to reporting fly tipping
- Rehoming lost and abandoned dogs.

\*based on a Band D property before special expenses



This year, on top of all that, we have also:

- Opened the Evesham Leisure Centre, visited by 688,471 in its first six months alone
- Become the first council in the West Midlands to earn the new standard for Customer Service Excellence
- Sent 10,000 tonnes of waste to be recycled at Worcestershire's state-of-the-art Envirosort plant in Norton
- With your help, become the 12th best council in England for dry recycling (bottles, cans, paper, etc)
- Awarded £65,000 to 18 community projects across Wychavon
- Given business development and start-up grants to over 20 local businesses
- Launched the refurbished Youth Bus
- Supported another year of fantastic festivals, including the Plum Festival, Asparagus Festival, Salt Day and many more
- Launched the Migration and Integration in Rural Areas (MIRA) project to promote training opportunities in the local migrant community

- Been named the second highest placed council in The Times Best Public Sector to Work For survey – and been made an Investors In People Champion.

Find out more at [www.wychavon.gov.uk](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk)

You can follow us on [twitter](#) and [facebook](#) search for Wychavon



## Our **promises** to you...

In 2011, we will continue to work to make Wychavon safer, greener, healthier, stronger and more successful. Here are some of the things we're planning:

### **Safer** - helping you to be safe and feel safe

- Create and promote a leaflet and web page giving the facts about crime and useful contacts
- Work with the Police to tackle anti-social behaviour and unauthorised occupation of land.

### **Greener** - a better environment - now and tomorrow

- Launch a recycling service for businesses
- Consult on the South Worcestershire Development Plan
- Recruit and support ten people to act as regular community litter pickers and continue our support for community litter picks.

### **Healthier** - improving your health and well-being

- Work with partners to run physical activities and smoking cessation projects in Badsey, Broadway, Harvington, Norton and parts of Evesham.

### **Stronger** - vibrant communities with a strong economy and affordable homes

- Use innovative ways to deliver more affordable homes
- Promote positive activities like sport, art and life skills for 14-25-year-olds
- Work with major employers to secure funding from the regional growth fund
- Support a programme of community games as part of the build up to the 2012 Olympics.

### **Successful** - an efficient, well run council delivering value for money services

- Maintain current levels of customer satisfaction for front line services, despite spending cuts
- Introduce payment kiosks at our Community Contact Centres
- Develop our team leaders to deliver quality services to you.

### **Difficult times** - are you struggling?

Housing and Council Tax Benefits are available to people on a low income or who receive Pension Credit, Income Support or Jobseekers' Allowance - very important in these difficult times. For more information go to [www.wychavon.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/benefits) or use our DigiTV services. For Sky, press the interactive button, choose DirectGov, select the welcome page and choose #1 - local services. For Virgin Media, press Interactive then Looking Local. For 3 Mobile, select Services, then Websites, then Look Up Stuff, then press Looking Local.



## A-Z of Wychavon District Council services

<b>Affordable Housing</b> 01386 565524	<b>Council Tax Enquiries</b> 01386 565130	<b>Parking</b> 01386 565009
<b>Arts and Entertainment</b> 01386 565396	<b>Council Tax Payments</b> 01386 565200	<b>Parks and Play Areas</b> 01386 565018
<b>Benefits – Housing/Council Tax</b> 01386 565130	<b>Ditches, Drains and Flooding</b> 01905 822799	<b>Pest control</b> 01905 822799
<b>Building Regulations</b> 01684 862223	<b>Dog Fouling/Warden</b> 01905 822799	<b>Planning Applications</b> 01386 565565
<b>Business Rates</b> 01905 822755	<b>Electoral Services</b> 01386 565162	<b>Planning Enforcement</b> 01386 565293
<b>CCTV</b> 01386 565422	<b>Fly Tipping</b> 01386 565018	<b>Pollution</b> 01905 822799
<b>Civic Centre Bookings</b> 01386 565507	<b>Food Safety</b> 01905 822799	<b>Recycling</b> 01386 565018
<b>Communications</b> 01386 565102	<b>Grass Cutting</b> 01386 505018	<b>Rubbish and Waste</b> 01386 565018
<b>Community Grants</b> 01386 565168	<b>Homelessness</b> 01386 505020	<b>Sports</b> 01386 565229
<b>Community Safety/Wardens</b> 01386 565301	<b>Housing General</b> 01386 505020	<b>Street Cleaning</b> 01386 565018
<b>Consultations</b> 01386 565333	<b>Housing Grants</b> 01386 565335	<b>Toilets</b> 01386 565018
<b>Councillors and Committees</b> 01386 565427	<b>Housing Waiting List</b> 01386 565020	<b>Tourism and Travel</b> 01386 565373
<b>Compliments and Complaints</b> 01386 565178	<b>Jobs</b> 01386 565563	<b>Trade Waste</b> 01386 565018
<b>Councillors' Standards (Code of Conduct)</b> 01386 565470	<b>Land Charges</b> 01386 565001	<b>Trees and Hedges</b> 01386 565565
	<b>Licences</b> 01386 565016	<b>Vehicles (abandoned)</b> 01386 565018
	<b>Noise Nuisance</b> 01905 822799	<b>Water Quality</b> 01905 822799

Below are contact numbers for some of Worcestershire County Council's main services. Why not keep them somewhere handy? If the service you need is not listed, you can get advice or make a general enquiry by getting in touch with the Worcestershire Hub using the following contact details:

- **01905 765765** (Monday - Friday 8am - 8pm and Saturday 9am - 5pm)
- [worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk)
- [www.whub.org.uk](http://www.whub.org.uk)

An increasing range of County Council services are available anytime by going online - go to [www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk) to give it a try.

**Adoption & Fostering - Freephone 0800 028 2158**

We find homes for vulnerable children. If you think you can help, please get in touch for more information.

**Bus Timetables 01905 765765**

Up-to-date details of bus times and routes.

**Concessionary Travel Scheme 01905 822766**

Advice and information about the National concessionary travel scheme, including applications and entitlement.

**Carers Unit - Freephone 0800 389 2896**

Support and advice for anyone who looks after someone else's needs.

**Consumer Relations 01905 766368**

Responsible for managing all types of representations (comments, compliments and complaints) about County Council services.

**Countryside Service 01905 766493**

Information about our sites, guided tours, walks, activities and events.

**County Museum 01299 250416**

Find out what's on at the museum, based in the historic Hartlebury Castle, near Kidderminster.

**Family Information Service 01905 790560**

Free and impartial information and advice for families with children aged 0 to 19 years.

**Highways & Transport 0845 607 2005**

For enquiries about highways management and maintenance, including road works, potholes, dropped kerbs, yellow lines, abandoned vehicles, grass cutting and fly tipping.

**Libraries & Learning 01905 822722**

Discover where your local library is, events and activities taking place, and adult learning classes.

# Useful County Council Contact Numbers

## Public Rights of Way 01905 768214

For enquiries about public rights of way, including footpaths, bridleways and byways.

## Record Office 01905 766351

For everything you could want to know about Worcestershire's history, contact the Record Office.

## Registration Service 0845 603 2859

Make enquiries about civil weddings, births, deaths, baby naming and renewal of vows ceremonies.

## School Admissions 01905 822700

Find out about allocation of school places at first, primary, middle and high schools in the county.

## School Transport 01905 765765

Get details about transport to and from schools across Worcestershire.

## Student Finance Direct 0845 607 7577

Support and advice on financial matters for higher education students.

## Social Care 0845 607 2000

For social care enquiries, including support at home, residential care and home adaptations.

## Street Lighting 'Lights Out Line' - Freephone 0800 137 352

Report faults and problems with street lighting in your local area.

## Trading Standards: Consumer Direct 0845 404 0506

Specialist advice on all kinds of consumer issues - from buying cars to faulty household appliances.

## Trading Standards: Business Advice 0845 330 3313

Business guidance on Trading Standards legislation - from keeping animals to labelling of foods and selling fireworks.

## Waste Management 0845 607 2007

For information about household recycling centres, reducing, re-using and recycling your waste and home composting.

## Youth Support 01905 765463

Free advice, information and support for young people aged 11-20 years, including youth centres, youth activities and our Worcestershire Youth Cabinet.



## Your County Councillors

Log on to [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/postcodesearch](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/postcodesearch) to find out who your County Councillor is and how to contact them to discuss your local concerns and issues.



# Your County Council



**worcestershire**  
county council



## Quality and value for **everyone**

**Worcestershire County Council remains committed to delivering services of real value to taxpayers, despite the financial challenges we face.**

**Read on for more information about the work your County Council has done in the last year and how we worked towards achieving our priorities.**

The recent financial settlement received from the Government means the authority has to make savings of £60-70 million over the next four years.

**See page 18 for more information on how we are responding to this challenge.**

Council Tax collected in Worcestershire makes up 66.7 per cent of our budget, excluding funding for schools.

The rest of our budget is funded by central Government, including the money we receive to fund schools.

**Our share of the Council Tax bill will not increase for 2011-12.**



## Priorities for 2010-2011

Given the unprecedented change in the global economy we are currently revisiting our vision and values with three themes; Open for Business, Children and Families, and Environment.

**Here are just some of the achievements from last year:**

### Value for money and low Council Tax

- We have one of the lowest Council Taxes compared to other county councils without responsibility for the fire service.

### The local economy

- We made the local economy a high priority during 2010 by working with partners to support businesses
- Among many other initiatives, we invested in a £1 million loan fund for local companies, held a series of events to help people start their own business and developed the Find It In Worcestershire business portal
- We also worked with partners to successfully agree the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, which will help the county's private sector industries
- Our Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) grants scheme awarded nearly £300,000 to VCS groups during 2010, which provide excellent value for

money and services that respond to community needs.

### Keeping people safe

- We worked closely with others to keep children and young people safe. There were 3,140 referrals and 2,898 initial assessments to children's social care service in 2009-10.
- The improvements we have made to arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable adults have been



Work continued through 2010-11 on The Hive, which is due to open in 2012 and is set to be Europe's first joint public and academic library, creating jobs for local people.



recognised with a rating of 'performing well' by the Care Quality Commission. We are handling just under 100 new adult protection referrals a month

- Our road safety education programme in primary schools has delivered cycling training to 2,812 children and pedestrian training to 7,164 children (April 10 to Jan 11)
- The number of people killed or seriously injured on Worcestershire's roads fell by 19.4 per cent last year and the number of children killed or seriously injured fell by 16.7 per cent.

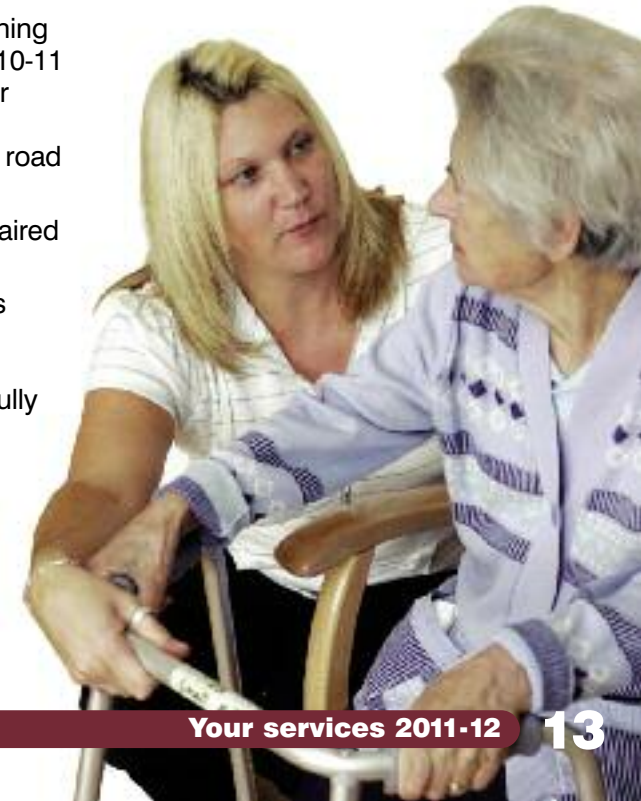
### Roads, travel and transport

- We spent £16 million on maintaining Worcestershire's highways in 2010-11 and during the winter season our gritting teams went out 32 times covering around 26,000 miles of road
- During 2010-11 around 35,000 potholes were identified and repaired
- A major £15 million programme has just started to improve roads in rural areas of the county. A similar scheme for urban unclassified roads was successfully completed during 2010
- A £3 million capital project to improve footways around Worcestershire was recently completed and, following the success of that scheme,

another similar one is set to start in 2011-12. Flood alleviation and drainage improvement work has also taken place across the county.

### Independent healthy living

- Our Choice and Control programme allows individuals to choose the type of social care they prefer. Around 2,000 people have chosen to receive a direct payment and make their own care arrangements.



## Educational achievement and skills

- Worcestershire has just under 74,000 children being educated in 243 schools, which are supported by over 14,000 teaching specialists and support staff. The total budget for schools is £306 million
- There are currently 34 designated Children's Centres in Worcestershire providing services to families with children under five-years-old
- The council supports 305 private or voluntary early years settings, 541 childminders, one nursery school and 53 nursery units.

## A green future

- Our work to improve the county's sustainability has resulted in us being short-listed for the best 'Low Council Carbon', due to be decided later this year

- We are piloting 'eco-communities', and we have supported the national 10:10 campaign to reduce carbon emissions
- The County Council manages 19 countryside sites across Worcestershire, which include three that achieved the prestigious Green Flag status in 2010. In addition to this the countryside team looks after more than 16,000 rights of way, totalling around 3,000 miles, along with 140 miles of waymarked trails and circular walks
- The EnviroSort recycling facility, which officially opened in March 2010, has helped divert 54,000 tonnes of Worcestershire household waste from landfill sites.



## How the money is spent

### Summary of gross expenditure, income and staffing

The planned costs of services are shown below:

2010-11 Net Exp £m	Services	2011-12			Council Tax for a Band D property £	Staffing numbers
		Gross Exp £m	Income £m	Net Exp £m		
0.0	Schools budget	369.0	369.0	0.0	0.0	8,479
84.9	Children's Services, excluding schools	104.9	28.9	76.0	240.57	1,431
157.2	Adult and Community Services, including libraries	195.0	37.6	157.4	498.43	1,792
34.5	Highways and public transport	39.2	2.2	37.0	117.07	444
24.1	Waste disposal	39.1	14.6	24.5	77.40	15
3.0	Planning and economic development	3.7	0.4	3.3	10.60	63
30.7	Net cost of council borrowing	29.7	0.1	29.6	93.89	-
-28.4	Other services	24.3	14.9	9.4	29.53	801
0.0	Council Tax Freeze Grant	0.0	5.5	-5.5	-17.30	-
<b>306.0</b>	<b>Total cost of services</b>	<b>804.9</b>	<b>473.2</b>	<b>331.7</b>	<b>1,050.19</b>	<b>13,025</b>
3.1	Addition to or use of general reserves	0.0	3.5	-3.5	-11.13	-
<b>309.1</b>	<b>Net budget requirement</b>	<b>804.9</b>	<b>476.7</b>	<b>328.2</b>	<b>1,039.06</b>	<b>13,025</b>

### Where the money comes from to pay for the 2011-12 budget

The Government calculates our general grant according to relative circumstances and ability to raise money from Council Tax. Worcestershire's general grant is £109.163 million or £195 per person, compared to the shire county average of £211 per person for comparable county councils without responsibility for the fire service.

We also receive other grants from the Government for specific purposes. The most significant is the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) that provides the funding for schools and can only be used for this purpose. For 2011-12 the Government has made changes to the grant arrangements by discontinuing some specific grants, removing ring-fencing and transferring some grants into our general grant.

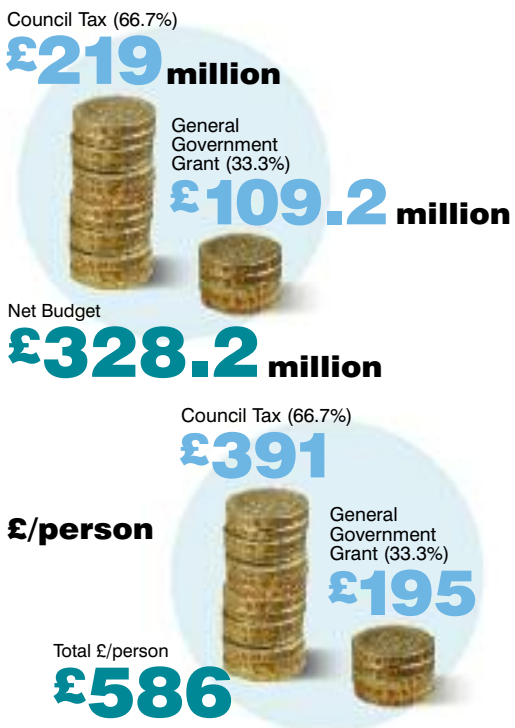


# Your County Council's Budget

Overall, however, the level of grant support has been reduced.

In addition the Government has made available a Council Tax Freeze Grant to councils limiting their Council Tax to the level set for 2010-11. This is a new grant equal to an increase in Council Tax of 2.5 per cent and represents a benefit of £5.5 million to the County Council.

The cost of providing our services in 2011-12, net of specific grants, is £331.7 million which, after transferring £3.5 million from general reserves, leaves £328.2 million to be funded from general Government grant and local taxation, as follows:



## Why spending has changed from 2010-11

	£m
<b>Net budget requirement 2010-11</b>	<b>309.1</b>
Less transfer to general reserves in 2010-11	-3.1
Personal Care at Home legislation not continued	-1.5
Area Based Grant discontinuing	39.7
Specific Grants transferring to Formula Grant	2.9
<b>Revised starting position 2011-12</b>	<b>347.1</b>
Inflation	7.3
Adult Social Care service pressures	4.5
Concessionary fares function transferred from district councils	5.1
Looked after children service pressures	2.0
Children's early intervention activities	0.4
Strengthening economy	0.3
Community based transport	0.1
Better Outcomes, Lean Delivery programme - budget savings	-16.5
Grant funding and services discontinued due to grants ceasing	-11.8
Reduction in borrowing costs for capital expenditure	-1.1
Other	-0.2
Council Tax Freeze Grant	-5.5
Transfer from general reserves in 2011-12	-3.5
<b>Net budget requirement 2011-12</b>	<b>328.2</b>

The council faces additional cost pressures in respect of inflation and increases in the demand for services such as the extra numbers of people needing social care. Some inflationary costs experienced by local authorities

are significantly higher than the general rate of inflation. In addition the responsibility for concessionary fares transferred from the district councils to the County Council with effect from 1st April 2011. The overall effect of these cost pressures together with the reduction in grant funding has resulted in the need to identify significant reductions in the council's budget. The net budget requirement for 2011-12 has reduced by £18.9 million over last year, as shown in the table opposite.

In addition the DSG funding for schools will be £4,601 per pupil, giving no increase over the 2010-11 adjusted figure. The estimated total DSG for 2011-12 is £342 million.

## Council Tax

There will be no increase in the Council Tax contribution towards our 2011-12 budget and for a Band D property it remains at £1039.06. The illustration below shows how much you will pay for our services for each property band.

## Staffing

During 2011-12 we expect to employ the equivalent of 13,025

full-time staff. This includes an increase in school-based staff, the movement of staff between authorities following the establishment of shared services, and the planned reduction in staff numbers as part of the council's efficiency measures.

## Capital investment

We plan to invest £90.6 million during 2011-12 in capital projects such as building and refurbishing schools, improvements to roads, and information and communications technology.

## Borrowing

We borrow money to pay for some of our capital investment. The total borrowing at 31 March 2011 is estimated to be £240 million.

## General balances

We plan to keep a general reserve of around £14 million to pay for emergencies and other unforeseen expenditure.



# Being **BOLD**

**Public sector organisations are facing unprecedented reductions in funding over the next four years. Worcestershire County Council is not immune from these challenges and is tasked with making savings of £60-70 million over this period.**

In response the County Council launched its **BOLD (Better Outcomes, Lean Delivery)** programme back in 2009. Such early engagement with these challenges has meant that significant progress has already been made, with *savings proposals totalling some £45 million already identified* at the time of going to print. Savings have been identified in three ways; through efficiencies, in other

**£800,000**

has been taken out of senior management costs

words delivering the same level of service for less money, through reforming some services and as a last resort, through cuts.

We believe that by planning ahead, we can do more to protect core and valued services. Where changes or reductions in service are necessary, the **BOLD** programme has given us the time to involve staff, partners and customers in designing and managing those changes to minimise disruption and upset.

# Have your **say**

The **BOLD** programme is much more than just saving money, it is about delivering Better Outcomes for Worcestershire residents and ensuring that the money the council does have is spent delivering the services which really matter to people. This is why we have and will continue to ask you what you think.

Consultation began in earnest last year which ranked residents' priorities for services and was followed up by a further dialogue this year which went into more detail to inform the budget decisions. Methods included: questions in a residents' survey, a web-survey, face-to-face interviews and a simple survey in public buildings and local newspapers.

A number of **BOLD** "Have your Say" public road shows also took place across the county to ask communities what they thought about our plans which provided qualitative feedback to sit alongside the quantitative results.

We will be asking you for your views throughout this year, with more roadshows planned for the spring, look out for further details visit **[www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk)**

*We have had over 16,000 respondents to consultation since BOLD was launched - a big thank you to all who took part.*

**“ the services important to me are...”**





# Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Last year the County Council combined with the six district councils in Worcestershire, to create the first all encompassing Regulatory Service in the UK.

Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing functions all across the county have been combined into a single service:

### Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

The innovative and ground-breaking move is part of a range of ideas for sharing services across councils, which use less resources and are also more effective.

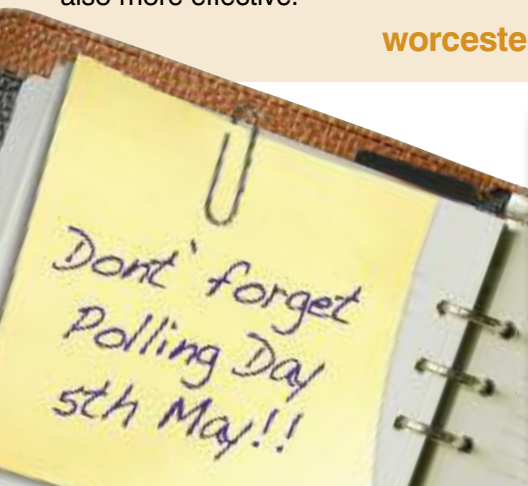
All the local services that Worcestershire's local authorities used to deliver to residents remain in place, and are now run as a single shared service hosted by Bromsgrove District Council.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services is the first service of its kind in the country, and will be more efficient and effective while still addressing local needs.

So for all your Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing needs, call the Worcestershire Hub on:

**01905 822799** or e-mail

[worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk)



 <p><b>COMING SOON TO YOUR COUNCIL</b> District Elections Parish Elections &amp; National Referendum</p> <p><b>WHEN?</b> Thursday 5 May</p>	<p><b>POLLING DAY - THURSDAY 5 MAY</b></p> <p>Going to be away? - Plan early. Don't Lose YOUR Vote!</p>	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Mon 3 April at Home</p> <p>Decide if you wish to stand as a candidate</p>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Thurs 14 April</p> <p>Decide to register as an elector for these elections</p>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Thurs 14 April, 8am</p> <p>Decide to apply for a postal vote or change an existing one</p>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Week of 18 April</p> <p>Drop off Postal packs. Are YOU fit to go to receive YOURS?</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Thurs 21 April, 8am</p> <p>Decide to apply for a proxy vote or use a mobile ballot box</p>	
<p>?</p>	<p>Need more info? Contact YOUR Electoral Services Office, or For application forms and advice visit: <a href="http://www.elect.gov.uk">www.elect.gov.uk</a></p>	



# YOUR Fire & Rescue Authority

We have not increased our Council Tax charge this year so just **£73.64** from a Band D Council Tax will again go to fund the services provided by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA). The FRA is made up of 25 Worcestershire County Councillors and Herefordshire Councillors who oversee our budget and give strategic direction to how we deliver our services to you.

**This contribution amounts to just 20p each day per Band D household.**

For this, you receive round the clock reassurance that in the event of an emergency, the Fire and Rescue Service will be on hand to help you. We also spend thousands of hours in your local communities, educating people about the risk of fires and other emergencies including road traffic collisions. We also work extensively with other local partners to protect the young and vulnerable including the fitting of free smoke alarms.

We provide our services from a total of 27 fire stations and a headquarters building. There are five Wholtime Stations; Hereford, Worcester, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Redditch which are crewed 24 hours a day. We also operate stations in Malvern, Droitwich and Evesham, which are staffed during the day with crews on call from home at night.

There are a further 19 retained duty (on-call) stations that are crewed by firefighters who are on-call to provide 24 hour cover to their communities, often in addition to their regular employment and respond in a few minutes from their place of main employment or home.

Your contributions help fund a total of 328\* full-time operational staff, 369\* retained (on-call) firefighters, 25\* control room staff who take emergency calls and mobilise our crews, and over 100\* support staff who ensure our service runs effectively and efficiently.

*\*These statistics are the current budgeted staffing establishment figures*



This document can be made available in other languages and alternative formats (large print, audio tape, computer disc and Braille) on request from the Worcestershire Hub on telephone number 01905 765765 or by emailing [worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk)



As part of the nation's resilience against large scale incidents we also host specialist equipment including one of 20 national Urban Search and Rescue specialist units.

In 2010 we received 12,919 emergency calls and attended 8,751 incidents. Throughout the year, we rescued 17 people unharmed from fires, 49 people unharmed from road traffic collisions and rescued 212 unharmed people from other situations.

In our area in particular there are also calls for rope and water rescues and to assist when chemicals are spilled. We have highly trained specialist teams to deal with these specific types of emergencies.

In 2010 we completed 3,196 Home Fire Safety Checks and fitted 6,871 smoke alarms in areas where we have identified people who are at greater risk. We also carried out 473 education visits in local schools.

## How are we performing?

We are committed to delivering an excellent service and we will continue to strive to ensure that our communities are made safer from the dramatic and sometimes tragic consequences of fire and other hazards.

We are a consistently high-performing authority with a good record of improvement and financial prudence.

In 2011-12 the Fire and Rescue Authority will spend £31.2 million providing a comprehensive emergency service to the communities of Herefordshire & Worcestershire. £10.4 million will come from the government in the form of grants and the (£20.8 million) balance from council tax-payers.

	2010-11 £m	2011-12 £m
<b>Gross expenditure</b>		
Employees (including pension costs)	23.324	23.326
Running costs	6.950	7.105
Capital financing	2.205	2.400
Income	(0.170)	(0.169)
<b>Core budget</b>	<b>32.309</b>	<b>32.662</b>
Special Grant - Urban Search and Rescue	(0.868)	(0.868)
Special Grant - New Dimensions Training	(0.080)	(0.080)
Special Grant - Fire Control Project	(0.238)	0.000
Special Grant - Council Tax Freeze	0.000	(0.519)
<b>Gross expenditure</b>	<b>31.123</b>	<b>31.195</b>



## Performance & priorities

In a report published in December 2010, the Audit Commission confirmed that Hereford & Worcester FRA had:

- its best ever annual performance in terms of the lowest total number of incidents, in addition to delivering a number of five year performance records in key areas
- a track record of performing within budget whilst achieving good service performance.
- focused on achieving priorities through redirecting resources which had improved our front-line services whilst achieving efficiency savings

We remain one of the highest performing Combined Authorities yet in 2010-11 received a lower government grant per head than any other Combined Authority in England.

Budget requirement and Council Tax precept	2010-11 £m	2011-12 £m
Gross expenditure	31.123	31.195
Transfer to General Balances	0.271	0.000
<b>Net budget requirement</b>	<b>31.394</b>	<b>31.195</b>
Less: Business Rates	(9.315)	(7.950)
Less: Revenue Support Grant	(1.353)	(2.457)
Gross precept requirement	20.726	20.788
Less: Surpluses on Collection Funds	(0.083)	(0.031)
Net precept requirement	20.643	20.757
Tax-base	280,317	281,861
Band D equivalent	£73.64	£73.64

Why spending has changed	£m
<b>Net budget requirement 2010-11</b>	<b>31.394</b>
Less one-off Strengthening of Balances 2010-11	(0.271)
Deletion of Assistant Chief Fire Officer post	(0.140)
Savings from 2010-11 Pay Freeze	(0.150)
Non-Pay Inflation	0.328
Impact of Asset Management Plan and Vehicle Strategy	0.201
Additional on-call Firefighter Training & Property Maintenance Costs	0.150
Council Tax Freeze Grant	(0.519)
Net other changes	0.202
<b>Net budget requirement 2011-12</b>	<b>31.195</b>

# What will your money go towards this year?

This year, your money will help us to procure and replace the necessary equipment and vehicles to ensure the safety of our communities and our firefighters.

We will continue to deliver safety advice, particularly to vulnerable people within our communities. We will continue to work with other emergency services, agencies and schools to make our communities safer and help improve community well-being.

The development of our environmental strategy will help us to reduce our impact on the environment, improve sustainability and focus on carbon reduction.

Ultimately, your Council Tax will go towards ensuring our firefighting and rescue response to emergency calls remains effective, and that we continue to perform well.



## How we'll spend Wychavon's cash in 2011-12

We have agreed a net expenditure budget for 2011-12 of £11.415 million. We have frozen your Council Tax bill this year. The Government will make a Council Tax Freeze

Grant of £131,000 - equivalent to the income we would have received if we had raised Council Tax by 2.5 per cent. Our grant funding from the Government is down 14 per cent in 2011-12. You can read about how we are responding to this budget cut on page 27. The district Council Tax levy for 2011-12 is £108.44 for a Band D property, unchanged from last year. In addition there will be a special expenses levy in some parts of the district to cover work like grass cutting. On average this equates to £1.33 for a Band D property. We have set our budget based on our five priorities. The table below shows how we spent the money last year and how we'll spend it in 2011-12.

### How our budget compares to last year

	£'000
Budget Requirement 2010-11	12,968
Concessionary Fares Transfer	(554)
Budget Savings	(893)
Budget Growth Items	105
Reversal of Previous Estimated investment loss	(180)
Other Variations (net)	(31)
Budget Requirement 2011-12	11,415

*brackets = negative figures*

How we spend the money	2010-11			2011-12		
	Exp. £'000	Inc. £'000	Net. £'000	Exp. £'000	Inc. £'000	Net. £'000
<b>Our five priorities:</b>						
<b>Safer</b>	982	543	439	877	653	224
<b>Greener</b>	9,145	1,708	7,437	9,067	2,073	6,994
<b>Healthier</b>	2,980	1,040	1,940	2,712	1,007	1,705
<b>Stronger</b>	38,363	36,058	2,305	37,153	35,061	2,092
<b>Successful</b>	6,623	3,744	2,879	7,097	3,774	3,323
<b>Total service expenditure and income</b>	<b>58,093</b>	<b>43,093</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>56,906</b>	<b>42,568</b>	<b>14,338</b>
LESS Capital charges	(1,500)	-	(1,500)	(2,207)	-	(2,207)
Interest and investment income	-	305	(305)	-	359	(359)
Estimated investment loss	180	-	180	-	-	0
Earmarked reserves	-	45	(45)	-	36	(36)
Use of balances and reserves	-	362	(362)	-	321	(321)
<b>Total net expenditure</b>	<b>56,773</b>	<b>43,805</b>	<b>12,968</b>	<b>54,699</b>	<b>43,284</b>	<b>11,415</b>
Financed by Government	-	-	(7,772)	-	-	(6,117)
Council Tax Freeze Grant	-	-	0	-	-	(131)
Collection fund surplus	-	-	(50)	-	-	0
Balance funded by Council Tax	-	-	5,146	-	-	5,167

**Council Tax levy at Band D**

**£108.44**

**£108.44**

**Your services 2011-12**

## Breaking the bill down

### Average charge for each Council Tax band for 2010-11

	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Worcestershire County Council	692.71	808.16	923.61	1,039.06	1,269.97	1,500.87	1,731.77	2,078.13
West Mercia Police Authority	119.15	139.00	158.86	178.72	218.44	258.15	297.87	357.44
Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Authority	49.10	57.28	65.46	73.64	90.01	106.38	122.74	147.28
Wychavon District Council	72.29	84.34	96.39	108.44	132.54	156.64	180.73	216.88
*Average special levy	0.89	1.03	1.18	1.33	1.63	1.92	2.22	2.66
*Average parish precept	26.15	30.53	34.89	39.25	47.95	56.68	65.40	78.49
<b>Total Council Tax bill (av)</b>	<b>960.29</b>	<b>1,120.34</b>	<b>1,280.39</b>	<b>1,440.44</b>	<b>1,760.54</b>	<b>2,080.64</b>	<b>2,400.73</b>	<b>2,880.88</b>

\*Parish Precepts/Special Levies are based on average charges. Depending on where you live, you may be required to pay slightly more or less than the sums shown.

**Town Council Precepts** Town and Parish Councils' spending plans are carried out without any income from Government grants. The town council precepts and Band D Council Tax are shown below. This is before the District Council's special levy is applied.

Pershore Town Council	Net expenditure	
	2010-11 (£)	2011-12 (£)
Administration	47,276	48,499
Maintenance of grounds, parklands and buildings	68,503	66,050
Community initiatives	35,156	36,386
Precept	150,935	150,935
<b>Band D Council Tax</b>	<b>53.95</b>	<b>53.97</b>

Evesham Town Council	Net expenditure	
	2010-11 (£)	2011-12 (£)
Recreation and amenities	89,995	84,765
Tourism	102,100	100,050
Finance and administration	177,810	185,090
Precept	369,905	369,905
<b>Band D Council Tax</b>	<b>45.10</b>	<b>44.73</b>

Droitwich Town Council	Net expenditure	
	2010-11 (£)	2011-12 (£)
Community and amenities	67,081	53,238
Resources	266,301	281,891
General contingency	6,000	5,000
Building maintenance reserve	8,000	5,000
Use of reserve	(43,297)	(41,044)
Precept	304,085	304,085
<b>Band D Council Tax</b>	<b>34.80</b>	<b>34.78</b>

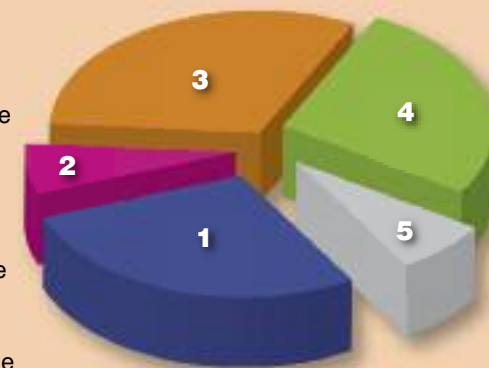
# Funding cuts

## - our five-point plan

Last year we received a £7million Government grant to support our services to you. Over the next two years that will be reduced by £1.8million - that's a 14 per cent cut this year and a total of 25 per cent by 2012/13.

We've put together a five-point plan to maintain the quality of your services.

- 1 Efficiencies and joint working** - work better with partners and other councils to share services and reduce back office costs (£537,000).
- 2 Increase income from our assets** - make the best of the assets we own (£130,000).
- 3 Management and staff savings** - reduce management and staff costs, but keep redundancies to a minimum (£600,000).
- 4 Increase income from our services** - charge residents fair, yet realistic prices for our services (£510,000).
- 5 Service reductions** - reduce the level of some of the services we provide (£134,000).



## Environment Agency Midlands Region

The Environment Agency, as a levying body for its Flood Defence functions, provides the following information:

### Severn Trent Regional Flood Defence Committee

	2010-11	2011-12
Gross expenditure	£63,822,000	£51,066,000
Levies raised	£3,000,000	£3,000,000
<b>Total Council Tax base</b>	<b>2,908,000</b>	<b>2,926,000</b>

Flood defence money is spent on flood defence schemes, maintenance of the river system and a flood warning system.

Changes in the gross budgeted expenditure between the years are mainly due to an enhanced capital programme based on national prioritisation.

The local flood defence levy included in the County Council's budget for 2011-12 is £0.2 million (2010-11 £0.2 million).

## Council Tax valuation

Most owned or rented dwellings are subject to Council Tax. How much you pay depends on the value of your property. The Inland Revenue placed each dwelling in one of the eight valuation bands shown below. These are based on the price a property would have fetched if it had been sold on 1 April 1991. Any increase or fall in a dwelling's value since then will not affect your Council Tax band. Please note that the Inland Revenue assessed the value of properties, **not** the district council.

Your Council Tax bill tells you which band your dwelling is in. You can appeal against your valuation if:

- There is a material increase or reduction in the value of the dwelling
- You start or stop using part of the dwelling for business

- You have just moved (in this case, you must appeal within six months of your move)
- The Listing Officer alters the band.

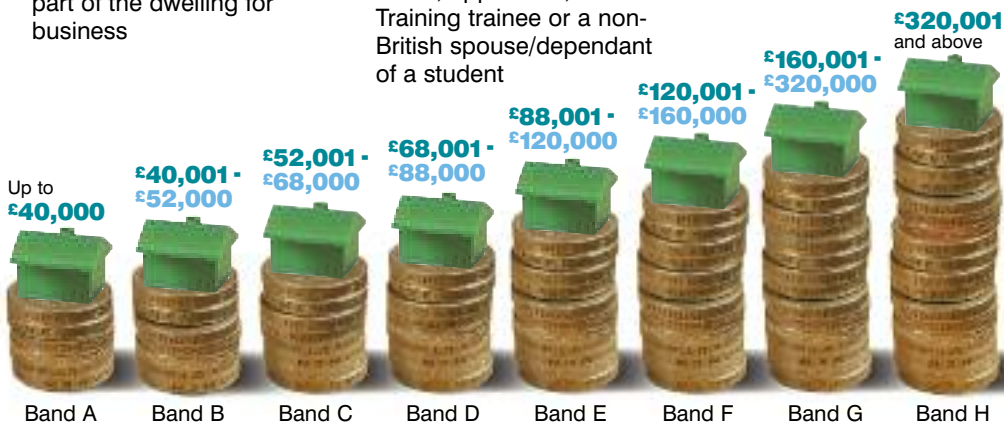
If you think your band is too high contact the Listing Officer at Government Buildings, Whittington Road, Worcester WR5 2LB or ring 01905 687600. You can inspect the Valuation List at the same address or at one of the Wychavon Community Contact Centres.

## Discounts

The full Council Tax bill assumes that two adults live in a dwelling. If you are the only adult living in a property, your Council Tax bill will be reduced by 25 per cent. You may also be eligible for a discount if you or someone who lives with you is:

- A full time student, student nurse, apprentice, Youth Training trainee or a non-British spouse/dependant of a student

- Permanently resident in hospital or a care home
- Severely mentally impaired
- Staying in certain hostels or night shelters
- 18 or 19 years old and is at, or has just left, school
- A charity careworker on low pay
- Caring for someone with a disability who is not a spouse, partner or child under 18
- A member of visiting overseas forces, certain international institutions or certain religious communities
- In prison (unless they are in prison for not paying Council Tax or a related fine)
- A diplomat or member of an international organisation with UK headquarters.



Valuations based on houses prices from 1 April 1991.

Where a dwelling is no-one's main home, the bill will be reduced by 10 per cent. This can apply to unoccupied furnished dwellings and second homes.

If you think you're entitled to a discount that is not shown on your bill please contact us. If your bill shows that an exemption or discount has been applied and your circumstances have changed, please let us know straight away. If you don't, you may have to pay a penalty of £70. If you continue to fail to provide the correct information, you may have to pay a further penalty of £280.

## Exempt dwellings

The list below is a summary of properties that are exempt from Council Tax. These include properties that are:

- Unoccupied and unfurnished, including new dwellings – these are exempt for a period of up to six months, after which a 100 per cent charge applies
- Uninhabitable, unoccupied, unfurnished and in need of, or undergoing, structural alteration or repairs - these are exempt for up to one year, then a 100 per cent charge applies
- Empty and owned by a charity - these are exempt for up to six months then 100 per cent charge applies
- Left empty by students or school leavers
- Left empty by someone who has gone into prison; or moved into hospital, a residential care home or elsewhere to receive care
- Left empty by someone who has moved elsewhere in order to provide care for someone
- Empty and waiting for probate or letters of administration to be granted - exempt for up to six months after the grant is made then 100 per cent charge applies
- Left empty by someone who is bankrupt; or repossessed by a mortgage lender
- Occupied only by people under 18 or by people who are severely mentally impaired
- Student halls of residence or where **all** the residents are full time students
- An unused caravan pitch or boat mooring
- Not allowed to be occupied by law
- Waiting to be occupied by a minister of religion
- Part of a dwelling, such as an annex or granny flat, which is empty and may not be let separately

- Occupied by members of visiting forces, certain international organisations, a foreign diplomat or member of an international organisation with UK headquarters
- Owned by the Ministry of Defence and held available for occupation by serving personnel
- A self-contained part of a property, which is the sole or main residence of a dependant relative of a person who lives in the other part. The relative must be over 65, severely mentally impaired or substantially and permanently disabled.

Contact us if you think your property may qualify for an exemption.

## People with disabilities

If you, or someone who lives with you, need extra space in your property because of a disability, such as an extra bathroom or kitchen, you may be entitled to a reduced Council Tax bill. Contact us for more information.

If your home has any special features which have been added for a disabled resident and which increase its value, these features should be ignored when your property is valued for Council Tax purposes. If you think your property has been valued incorrectly you should contact the Valuation Office.

## **Council Tax and Housing Benefits**

If you are liable to pay Council Tax or pay rent you can apply for benefit. The amount of benefit you receive will be based on:

- Your capital, including savings (if you and/or your partner have over £16,000 you will not qualify unless you receive Pension Credit Guarantee)
- Your income, including tax credits, earnings and any other state benefits
- The amount of Council Tax or rent you pay
- Your family circumstances, e.g. the age of you and/or your partner, the number of dependant children, whether anyone is disabled.

Even if your income is high, if you share a house with other adults (except for a partner) who have low incomes you may be able to claim Council Tax Second Adult Rebate.

**You should start claiming as soon as possible - if you delay you may lose benefit. You can apply even if you do not have all the supporting information, as this can be sent to us later. Benefit cannot normally be backdated, so do not delay. Get in touch and complete an application form now.**

## **Appeals**

You can appeal if you consider that you are not liable to pay Council Tax - for example, because you are not the resident or owner, or because your property is exempt, or we've made a mistake calculating your bill. If you wish to appeal on these grounds you must

notify us in writing, and we will review the situation. Making an appeal does not allow you to withhold payment of tax owing in the meantime. If your appeal is successful you will be entitled to a refund of any overpaid tax.

If you make an appeal and you are still not satisfied, you can then appeal to a Valuation Tribunal. Details are available on request from us or the Listing Officer (valuation appeals only), or The Tribunal Office, Hepworth House, Unit 2 Trafford Court, Doncaster, DN1 1PN, 01302 342324.

## **Business Rates**

Information about Business Rates is shown on the separate explanatory leaflet enclosed with the Business Rates bill. If you have not received this leaflet and would like a copy please contact us.

## **Enquiries about your bill**

If you have any questions about your Council Tax or non-domestic rates bill, Council Tax Benefit or Housing Benefit contact us:

Write to: South Worcestershire Shared Services (Revenues and Benefits), PO Box 11, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 1PU

Ring: 01905 822733

Email: [revenues@swrbss.org](mailto:revenues@swrbss.org)

Website: [www.wychavon.gov.uk](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk)

This leaflet forms part of the Council Tax demand notice and national non-domestic rate bill for 2011-12.

**GO PAPER PLANE**

**and win**

**£500**

**Sign up to receive your Council Tax bill online before 1st October 2011 and you could win a cash prize.**

No more waiting for your bill to arrive in the mail - now you can see it online and if you're one of the first to sign up you could be our lucky winner!

### **Council Tax payers can:**

- view your account details including payments made and amounts due
- set up a Direct Debit
- make a payment
- report a change of address
- apply for discounts and exemptions.

### **Benefit claimants can:**

- make a new claim for Council Tax or Housing Benefit
- notify us of a change in your circumstances
- view notifications and details of how your benefit has been calculated.

*Just a click away!*

**To find out more visit [www.wychavon.gov.uk](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk)**

*Prize sponsored by Capita Software Services*

# Need more information about your **Council Tax?**



## The Hub'll help

**For information or advice about your Council Tax, or any other council service, contact the Worcestershire Hub**



**[www.whub.org.uk](http://www.whub.org.uk)**



**Council Tax 01905 822733**

**Benefits 01905 822744**

**Business Rates 01905 822755**



**Droitwich Community Contact Centre  
44 High Street, Droitwich Spa WR9 8ES**

**Evesham Community Contact Centre  
Abbey Road, Evesham WR11 4SB**

**Pershore One Stop Shop  
Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore WR10 1PT**

**To find out more about  
how the Hub can help  
you, call 01386 565000**



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