

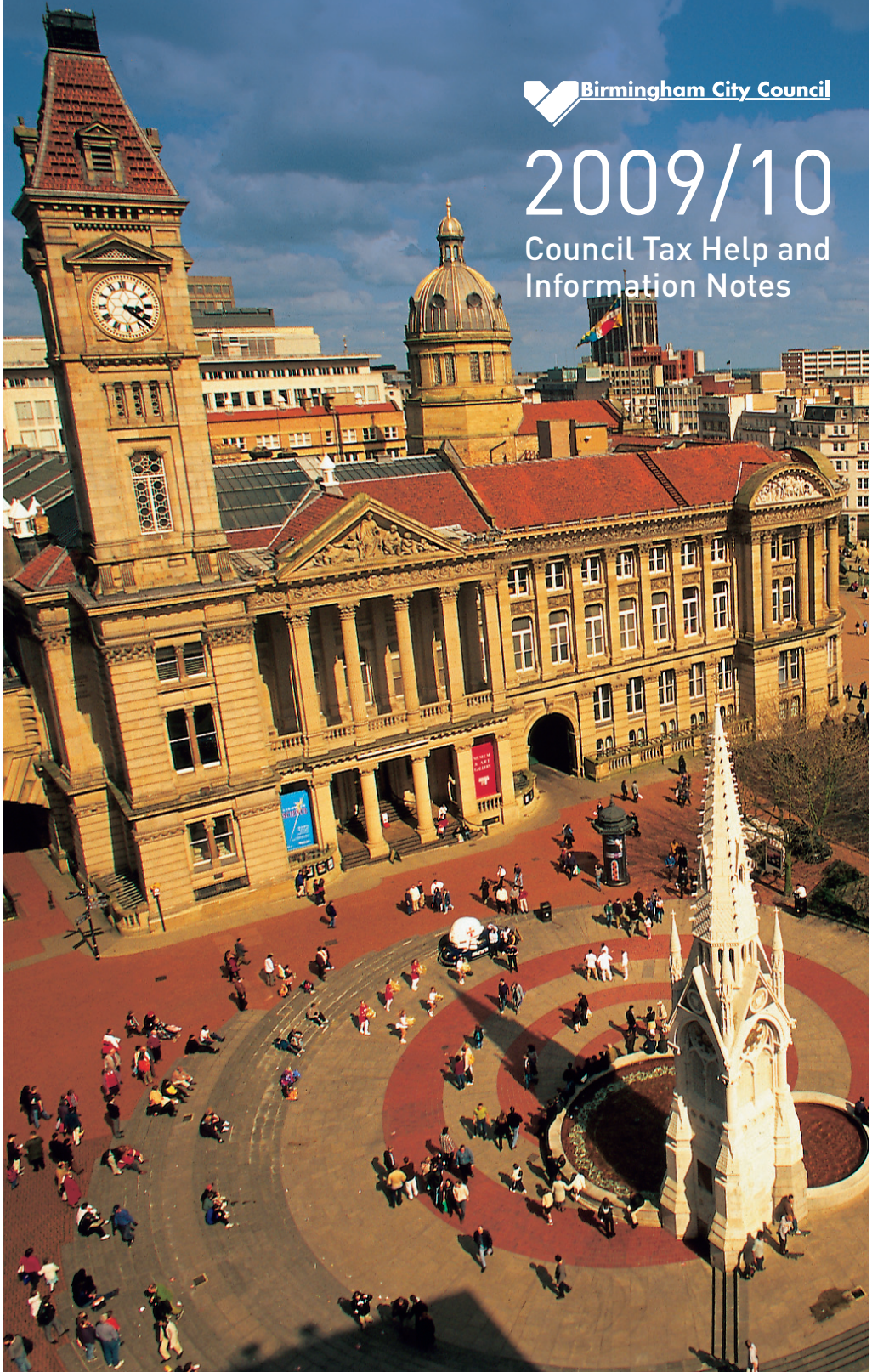


Birmingham City Council

# 2009/10

## Council Tax Help and Information Notes

BUDGET FOR BIRMINGHAM



## Introduction

Birmingham City Council is working to create a prosperous, globally-competitive city, that is safe, clean and welcoming, and where residents and businesses receive high quality and cost-effective services. Our five year Council Plan 2008-2013 sets out how we plan to achieve this vision for Birmingham and how we will measure our success.

We want all residents to:

- Succeed economically** – benefiting from education, training, jobs and investment
- Stay safe in a clean, green, city** – living in clean, green and safe communities
- Be healthy** – enjoy long and healthy lives
- Enjoy a high quality of life** – benefiting from good housing and renowned culture and leisure opportunities
- Make a contribution** – valuing one another and playing an active part in the community.

To achieve this, we are working hard to continually improve council services and performance. And last year saw some significant successes. The Audit Commission, (the Government’s watchdog for effectiveness and value for money) said:

“Birmingham City Council is improving well. The Council’s leadership is united in improving performance; this year has seen two thirds of key performance indicators improve which is above average. Performance in most priority areas has improved. Housing has continued to improve especially in preventing homelessness and strategic housing is now good with excellent prospects. Services for older people are good and improving.”

“Schools, standards are improving and GCSE results have again improved. Environmental and cultural services have also improved. However, children’s services are now only adequate with safeguarding being judged as inadequate; the Council is taking urgent action to address this. The Council has improved its partnership working. There have been significant reductions in crime and the focus of the Council and its partners is on the most deprived neighbourhoods, enabling faster progress to be made for those with greatest needs.”

“The business transformation programmes are progressing well, and are on track to deliver planned benefits. Value for money has improved and is now good; the new ten year financial plan provides a sound platform to deliver further improvements.”

We also want you to be involved – telling us what you think we should be doing and how you can contribute to making the city better. To find out more, visit our consultation portal on:

[www.birmingham.gov.uk/consultation.bcc](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/consultation.bcc)



**Councillor Mike Whitby**  
Leader of the Council



**Councillor Paul Tilsley**  
Deputy Leader of the Council

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## Progress in 2008

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- We were assessed as “good” by the Audit Commission for financial management and value for money. Improvements have been achieved while maintaining a low council tax and exceeding efficiency savings.
- We were also assessed as “good” in adult social care and our strategic housing function was judged by inspectors to be a “Good two star service with excellent prospects for improvement”.
- Our environment and culture services both increased their Audit Commission ratings from “adequate” to “good”.
- Our benefits service again was recognised as “Excellent” – for the sixth year running.
- Birmingham has one of the lowest rates of crime of all core cities. And the Audit Commission has praised the work with our partners to focus on the most deprived neighbourhoods.
- We have worked with our partners to reduce homelessness (by two thirds so far from 2005/06) and we have achieved a reduction of rough sleeping in the city – down to an all time low.
- The city has exceeded its national affordable homes target, providing 644 homes last year.
- We are reusing, recycling and composting more than ever before and have achieved a challenging government target for reduction in litter and detritus.
- We held Birmingham’s first-ever half marathon in 20 years, attracting 9,000 entries.
- In 2008, Birmingham’s Artsfest was one of the most successful ever with nearly 250,000 people taking part and the Frankfurt Market had an estimated 2.8 million visitors.



## Key Points

The City Council's 2009/10 budget is based on the priorities laid out in the Council Plan 2008 - 2013. These aim to create a city where everyone can: succeed economically; stay safe in a clean and green city; be healthy; enjoy a high quality of life; and make a contribution. We are providing ever-better services within a tight financial discipline, creating a global city with a local heart.

The key points of our 2009/10 budget are:

- Council tax for city council services will rise by 1.9%. When increases for the separate fire and police authorities are added, the overall level of council tax increase for Birmingham is 2.05%.
- Our council tax increase for next year has been kept below the current consumer price index for inflation\*. This is the fourth year of below inflation increases of 1.9%. The council continues to develop and improve services by making efficiencies and reducing waste.  
[\*Based on the Consumer Prices Index of 3.1% for December 2008]
- Investment to continue improving adult social care. The introduction of individual personal care budgets and rigorous financial control will enable people with learning and physical disabilities, older people and people who experience mental illness to exercise more choice and control over their care. Ultimately, this will help more people to live independently and enjoy a higher quality of life.
- We will respond to the current economic downturn by working with businesses and, wherever possible, attracting new investment whilst supporting residents to improve their skills and ability to access jobs. We are committed to delivering the Big City Plan and regenerating both the city centre and local neighbourhoods.

- Additional funding to attract international events, help the local economy, enhance Birmingham's reputation and inspire participation among local people. We will build on the success of our 2008/09 local events programme which included the half marathon by:
  - > allocating £1 million, growing to £4 million by 2011/12, to meet the capital financing costs for the new Library of Birmingham;
  - > re-opening Aston Hall and Park after a major refurbishment;
  - > developing plans to modernise our swimming pools, including building a new 50 metre pool as part of a major leisure complex;
  - > putting in place a new grounds maintenance contract to improve standards in parks and public open spaces.
  
- We have begun implementing the Brighter Futures programme to improve outcomes for Birmingham's children and young people, focusing on safeguarding children at risk of neglect or harm, and on improving standards in early years so that all children get the best possible start in life. All of Birmingham's secondary schools will be rebuilt or refurbished with the start of the £2.4 billion Building Schools for the Future programme.
  
- Over £400 million will be invested over the next three years in council and private sector housing, including £125 million on structural repairs and improvements to council housing in 2009/10. This will complete the Decent Homes Programme and continue a Decent Homes Plus Programme (kitchens and bathrooms - £16 million in 2009/10), together with developing new affordable housing.

- Additional funding of £5million to include expanding the Council's recycling service to all properties, keeping roads and footpaths well maintained and to cover the increased energy costs of street lighting to ensure our city remains bright and safe. The capital budget includes measures to tackle traffic congestion and increase road safety, improve recycling facilities and crematoria, support the New Street Station Gateway project and increase resources for another year of street lighting schemes chosen by local people.
- We will continue to fund local priorities through our Community Chest programme of £4million. A further £1million will be invested in schemes to improve the quality of life in local neighbourhoods, working with partner agencies.
- Through the Safer Birmingham Partnership, the city council and other statutory and voluntary agencies will continue to work with local communities to make Birmingham a safe city in which to live, work and visit.
- We will continue to fund Marketing Birmingham, which is facilitating a number of events to attract business tourism to the city, including the 100th Rotary International in 2009 which will attract 25,000 delegates from all around the world.
- Our business transformation programme will enable us to provide better and more efficient services, saving £670 million over the next ten years. Overall, we will make savings of £17 million in 2009/10 including a range of actions in specific areas and improved productivity.

## Spending and Council Tax

	'08/'09 £m	'09/'10 £m
<b>Total spending</b>	<b>3,270.6</b>	<b>3,375.9</b>
Less: income	-2,310.3	-2,392.0
<b>City Council budget requirement</b>	<b>960.3</b>	<b>983.9</b>
Less: formula grant	-639.6	-660.1
transfer from Collection Fund	-6.5	-
<b>TO BE FINANCED BY COUNCIL TAX</b>	<b>314.2</b>	<b>323.8</b>

HOW SPENDING HAS CHANGED FROM 2008/09	£m
CITY COUNCIL BUDGET REQUIREMENT 2008/09 WAS:	960.3
Inflation (non schools)*	+24.5
Budget pressures and policy priorities	+21.8
Efficiency savings	-17.4
Other, including capital financing costs	-6.9
Net change in use of reserves & balances	+1.6
<b>CITY COUNCIL BUDGET REQUIREMENT 2009/10 IS:</b>	<b>983.9</b>
*schools are funded by a separate grant	

	'08/'09	'09/'10	% change
Charge to council taxpayers	£314.263m	£323.874m	+3.06
Divided by the taxbase (Band D property equivalents)	293,011	296,341	+1.14
<b>Council tax for City Council services (Band D)</b>	<b>£1,072.53</b>	<b>£1,092.91</b>	<b>+1.90</b>
Fire & Rescue Authority precept	£45.74	£46.90	+2.54
Police Authority precept	£94.67	£97.98	+3.50
<b>Gives a total council tax (Band D)</b>	<b>£1,212.94</b>	<b>£1,237.79</b>	<b>+2.05</b>

The New Frankley in Birmingham Parish Council precept will be charged only to council taxpayers in the parish and in 2009/10 amounts to £86,059, equivalent to £41.54 per property in Band D.

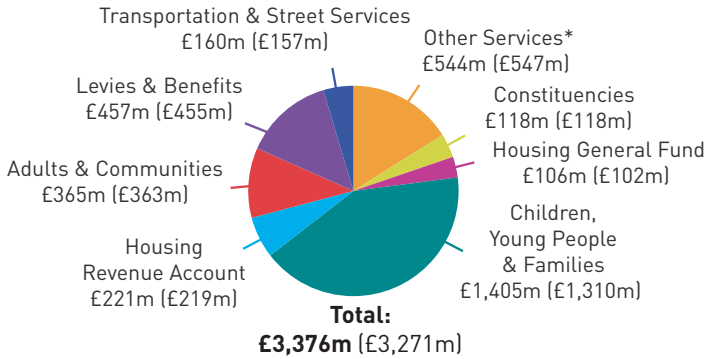


# Revenue Expenditure

Revenue expenditure involves spending on the day-to-day running costs of the council, e.g. employees, premises, supplies and services

## Where the money is spent – 2009/10

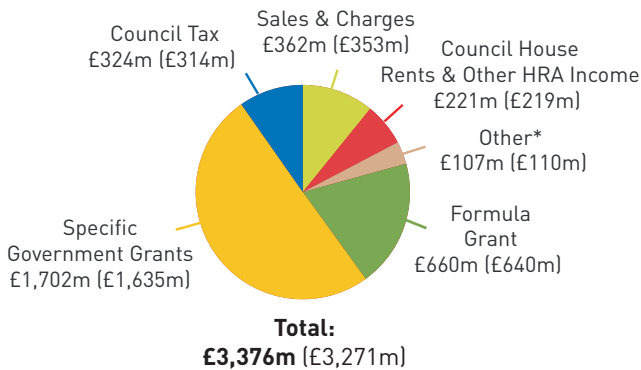
(2008/09 figures in brackets)



\*Other Services includes: central departments/budgets £258m (£271m); Local Services & Community Safety £113m (£111m); Regeneration £71m (£70m); Leisure, Sport & Culture £69m (£63m); Regulatory Committees £33m (£32m)

## Where the money comes from – 2009/10

(2008/09 figures in brackets)



\*Other Rents £60m (£59m); Other Grants & Contributions £28m (£28m); Corporate Resources & Use of Reserves £19m (£17m); Transfer from Collection Fund (2008/09 only: £6m)

## Detailed Council Tax Figures

### New Frankley in Birmingham Parish

Band	City Council	Fire and Rescue Authority	Police Authority	Total	Parish Precept	Parish Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
A	728.60	31.27	65.32	825.19	27.70	852.89
B	850.05	36.48	76.20	962.73	32.30	995.03
C	971.48	41.69	87.09	1,100.26	36.92	1,137.18
D	1,092.91	46.90	97.98	1,237.79	41.54	1,279.33
E	1,335.78	57.32	119.75	1,512.85	50.78	1,563.63
F	1,578.66	67.74	141.52	1,787.92	60.00	1,847.92
G	1,821.51	78.17	163.30	2,062.98	69.24	2,132.22
H	2,185.82	93.80	195.96	2,475.58	83.08	2,558.66

## Efficiency Statement

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

Birmingham City Council has worked to deliver important cash-releasing efficiency projects. This includes its business transformation programme which is expected to make significant savings in 2008/09 through initiatives such as the better buying of goods and services and its restructuring of internal support services. The table below shows the City Council's forecast efficiency savings.

### Birmingham City Council

Value of efficiency savings since 1 April 2008 forecast to be achieved by 31 March 2009 (£ million)	£38.7m*
Efficiency savings above as a percentage of the council's 2007/08 spending	2.9%
Average saving per Band D dwelling (£)	£134
National average saving per Band D dwelling (£) for similar authorities	£112

\* The City Council has reinvested the money released by the efficiency savings to meet increased demand for services and new service priorities, and to keep down its level of council tax increase.

# Environment Agency Midlands Region

## The Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rating (Demand Notices) (England) Regulations 2003

The Environment Agency as a levying body for its Flood Defence functions, under the above regulations, provides the following information.

The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood defence along 4,682 km of main river along with tidal and sea defences, in the area of the Severn Trent 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 financial details are:

### Severn Trent Regional Flood Defence Committee

	2008/09	2009/10
	£'000	£'000
Gross expenditure	44,277	56,100
Levies raised	3,000	3,075
Total Council Tax Base	2,884,354	2,888,934

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 local councils 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.

Changes in the gross budgeted expenditure between the years is due mainly to an increase in the funding for the capital works programmes.

The total Local Levy raised has increased from £3,000,000 in 2008/09 to £3,075,000 for 2009/10.

## Council Tax - help and information

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If you have any difficulty understanding this part of the booklet or you want more help with your Council Tax, you can:

**Go** to any **Neighbourhood Office** (see page 14).

**Telephone: 0121 303 1113**

Lines are open from 8.00a.m. to 8.00p.m. (Monday to Friday)

Our telephones can be busy in the morning.

Why not try calling later in the day?

All calls may be monitored / recorded for training and quality purposes.

**Fax:** 0121 464 0551 or 464 0552

**Text phone:** 0121 503 1464 (Registered Users Only)

**Write to:** Birmingham City Council  
Resources Department, (Revenues and Benefits),  
P.O.Box 5, Birmingham B4 7AB

**E-mail** us using the address shown on the front of your bill.

### HELP ONLINE

You can now log on to the Council Tax website at:

**[www.birmingham.gov.uk/council-tax](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/council-tax)**

You will find information about Council Tax, along with forms you can use to contact us.

You can e-mail us to ask questions about your account, or to tell us about changes in your circumstances. If you contact us by e-mail, you will receive a reply by e-mail, normally within 14 days, unless you tell us to telephone or write to you. Please quote your account reference number, if you have one.

## FAIR PROCESSING STATEMENT – Customer First.

**Any personal data held by Birmingham City Council in relation to your Council Tax bill will be held in full compliance with the legal obligations as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 and in accordance with the Council’s new Privacy Policy. A copy is available at any Council Neighbourhood office, Council Library or on the Birmingham City Council web site:**

[www.birmingham.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/privacy)

**In line with the Privacy Policy, Birmingham City Council will incorporate the names and addresses held in the Council tax systems into the new Customer Services Systems.**

'Birmingham City Council processes and shares this Council Tax Data with other bodies for the purposes of preventing and detecting crime and /or fraud. For further information, see the Privacy Notice'.

## CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES

You are required by law to inform the Council if there is a change that affects your Council Tax. For example; you receive a discount or exemption and the discount / exemption conditions no longer apply. An example is where you receive a discount for being the only person over 18 years of age living at your property. You should also advise us if you change address; or if a different person should now be liable to pay the bills, etc.

You must inform the Resources Department (Revenues and Benefits) within 21 days. Failure to do so, without reasonable excuse, could result in a financial penalty.

## HELP AND INFORMATION FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

PLEASE TELEPHONE (0121) 303 1113 TO REGISTER FOR OUR LARGE PRINT SERVICES. WE CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH INFORMATION RELATING TO YOUR COUNCIL TAX BILL IN LARGE PRINT, AUDIOTAPE OR BRAILLE.

## Neighbourhood Offices

You can get help and advice at any of the following Neighbourhood Offices:

Acocks Green	3 Botteville Road, Acocks Green B27 7YE	303 0596
Bartley Green	Monmouth Road, Bartley Green B32 3LX	303 5250
<b>Birchfield*</b>	<b>3 Trinity Road, Aston B6 6AH</b>	<b>303 6500</b>
Bromford	Cameronian Croft, Bromford B36 8UB	303 7300
Castle Vale	Spitfire House Community Campus, High Street Castle Vale B35 7PR	675 4829
Cotteridge	9 Pershore Road South, Cotteridge B30 3EE	303 4950
Druids Heath	Druids Heath Library, Druids Heath B14 5NJ	303 7111
<b>Edgbaston*</b>	<b>21 Tylney Close, Edgbaston B5 7ND</b>	<b>303 4988</b>
Erdington	Civic House, 101 Sutton New Road, Erdington B23 6RE	303 0820
<b>Frankley*</b>	<b>Frankley Community Library, New Street, Frankley B45 0EU</b>	<b>464 7319</b>
Handsworth	12 Dawson Road, Handsworth B21 9HS	675 5317
Handsworth Wood	13 College Road, Handsworth Wood B20 2HU	464 4237
Hawkesley	50 Hawkesley Square, Kings Norton B38 9TU	303 2173
Kings Heath	38 Silver Street, Kings Heath B14 7QU	303 5009
Kingstanding	20 Rough Road, Kingstanding B44 0UY	303 7733
Ladywood	Botany Walk, St Vincent Street West, Ladywood B16 8ED	464 0567
Newtown	New Aston House, Newtown Shopping Centre B19 2SW	303 5649
Northfield	1a Vineyard Road, Northfield B31 1PG	464 7850
Perry Beeches	174 Beeches Road, Perry Barr B42 2HN	303 0390
Perry Common	599 College Road, Kingstanding B44 0AY	303 1880
Quinton	Four Dwellings Centre, Quinton Road West, Quinton B32 2RJ	303 5500
Saltley	54 Highfield Road, Washwood Heath B8 3QU	303 1859
<b>Selly Oak*</b>	<b>Selly Oak Library, 669 Bristol Road B29 6AE</b>	<b>303 4950</b>
Shard End	Shustoke Road, Shard End B34 7BB	303 5859
Small Heath	349 Coventry Road, Small Heath B10 0SN	303 8929
Sparkbrook	Greencoat House, 261 Stratford Road, Sparkbrook B11 1QS	303 9110
<b>Sparkhill*</b>	<b>641 Stratford Road, Sparkhill B11 4DY</b>	<b>303 0722</b>
Stechford	189 Meadway, Kents Moat B33 8NB	303 1487
Sutton Coldfield	Council House, King Edwards Square, Sutton Coldfield B73 6AN	303 1439
Yardley Wood	201 School Road, Yardley Wood B14 4ER	303 7534

\* Please note that offices shown in red are appointment only and you should ring 0121 303 1113 to arrange to attend.



## The Council Tax Bands

Council Tax is the way in which the City Council gets some of the money it needs to provide local services. The amount you pay is based on the value of your property. There are 8 bands set by the Government.

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

Your band is shown on your Council Tax bill.

### APPEALS AGAINST BANDING

You can appeal against the banding of newly occupied properties, or properties, which have had a major change in structure, or use of facilities. It is not possible to appeal on the grounds of general changes in the property market, or if an appeal has been made before.

**The property value is based on 1991 prices.**

If you have any questions concerning the banding of your property, contact:

**THE LISTING OFFICER**, Valuation Office Agency, Regent Court,  
14-17 George Road, Birmingham, B15 1NU. Telephone: 0121 410 3700

### COUNCIL TAX LIABILITY

The person liable to pay Council Tax is the person who first fits one of the descriptions listed below, starting with 1, and working through to 6. More than one person can be held liable if they are on the same level. Husbands and wives, or partners may also be jointly and severally liable.

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Resident owner                      | 4. Resident with a licence to occupy |
| 2. Resident leaseholder                | 5. Resident aged 18 or over          |
| 3. Resident statutory or secure tenant | 6. Owner                             |

In some cases, the owner of a property will always be held liable, rather than the residents (e.g. houses in multiple occupation, care homes or nursing homes, etc.).

### APPEALS AGAINST LIABILITY

If you think that you are not the person who should have to pay Council Tax, See HELP AND INFORMATION on pages 12/13/14.

# Reductions

## PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

If your home has special facilities for someone in your household who is disabled, it may be possible to get your bill reduced. You may be able to get a reduction if, for example:

- > You have a room needed by the disabled person for a special purpose (e.g. dialysis equipment).
- > You have an extra bathroom or kitchen for the disabled person.
- > There is enough floor space for someone who uses a wheelchair within the home.

**You will need to complete an application form to receive this reduction.**

## PERSONAL DISCOUNTS

The full bill is only payable if there are at least two adults living in the property.

- > If you are the only adult living in your property, you can apply for a 25% discount.
- > If there are no adults living in the property (e.g. second home or an unoccupied furnished accommodation), you can apply for a 10% discount.

Some people are not counted when looking at the number of adults in a property. The main categories are:

- > Full-time students, student nurses, apprentices and youth training trainees.
- > People who are severely mentally impaired.
- > People caring for someone living in the property who has a disability, and who is not their spouse, partner or child aged under 18 years.
- > 18 and 19 year olds who are at, or who have just left, school or college.
- > Patients resident in hospital.
- > People who are being looked after in care homes.
- > People in prison (except those in prison for non-payment of Council Tax or a fine).

# Exemptions

## EXEMPT PROPERTIES

Some properties are exempt from Council Tax. The main categories are:

- an unoccupied, unfurnished property having major alterations or repairs, for a maximum of 12 months;
- an unoccupied, unfurnished property, for a maximum of 6 months;
- a property left unoccupied by a person detained in custody;
- a property left unoccupied by patients now resident in a hospital or care home;
- a property left unoccupied because the owner or tenant has died, for a maximum of 6 months after probate has been granted;
- a property left empty by people receiving care;
- a property left empty by people providing care;
- a property left empty by someone who is now a full-time student living elsewhere;
- a property occupied solely by full-time students, or by some non-British dependants of students;
- a property left empty by a bankrupt;
- a vacant caravan pitch or boat mooring;
- a property occupied only by people aged under 18 years;
- an unoccupied annexe which cannot be let separately without a breach of planning control;
- a property occupied only by people who are severely mentally impaired (including the liable person);
- certain properties occupied by diplomats;
- an annexe occupied by an elderly or disabled relative.

**You will need to complete an application form to receive any reduction or exemption.**

There are additional categories to those shown above. If you want more information or have any questions about reductions or exemptions, please contact us using one of the options shown in the Section – “help and information”.

## Council Tax Benefit

Council Tax Benefit is money off your Council Tax bill. It means that you do not have as much to pay.

Council Tax Benefit can be paid in addition to any other reductions in your bill, for example because you live alone.

You may still qualify for Council Tax Benefit even if:

- You are working
- You have other income such as a works pension or a private pension
- You have savings, unless these are more than £16,000

### HOW MUCH CAN I GET?

The amount of Council Tax Benefit you get depends on your individual circumstances and takes account of any income you (and that of a partner, if you have one) get from working, pensions, benefits and tax credits, any savings over £6,000 and your household circumstances including any other people who live with you.

Single people, couples and families can get Council Tax Benefit. There is no minimum amount of Council Tax Benefit. Even if you are only entitled to £1 per week that still means over £50 coming off your bill

For example:

- A pensioner living alone with a Council Tax bill for £1000 might still get some help where their weekly income is as much as £245 per week;
- A pensioner couple in the same circumstances could be getting as much as £320 per week and still qualify;
- A couple with 3 children who are working could also get help if their income (including child benefit and tax credits) is £380 per week

**REMEMBER:** These are only examples. You could get more if your Council Tax bill is more than £1,000 or someone in your household is sick or disabled, so check it out now, even if you think you will not be entitled.

If your income is too high to qualify but you are a single person living with another adult who is not your partner and who is on a low income, you might still get some help. This is called a 2nd Adult Rebate and is worked out based on the income of the person who is living with you.

## £ MILLIONS OF COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT GOES UNCLAIMED EACH YEAR

Every year thousands of people in Birmingham who are entitled to Council Tax Benefit do not claim. This means that all of these people are having to pay more Council Tax than they should.

### GETTING HELP AND ADVICE

Some people might not know how to claim, others might think it is too complicated.

If you have not claimed Council Tax Benefit but would like to know if you are entitled or would like us to send you an application form, ring us today on 464 7000.

You can also visit any Neighbourhood Office (see page 14) where staff will be happy to help you make your claim. Please note that you may have to make an appointment at some Neighbourhood Offices. To find your nearest Neighbourhood Office you can call 303 1111 or see the list on page 14 of this leaflet.

If you already get Council Tax Benefit you do not need to make a new claim, your benefit has already been taken off your bill. But you **MUST** tell us straightaway if your circumstances change.

**BENEFIT FRAUD** – Help us stamp it out

**‘Do you know anyone committing Benefit Fraud (or any other type of fraud against the Council)?’** – Anyone wishing to report a suspected benefit fraud should call, in confidence, the **Local Authority Fraud Hotline** on **0800 328 6340 (0800 328 6341 Textphone)**, or write to P.O. Box 9990 Birmingham B1 2YS, or e-mail **fraudhotline@birmingham.gov.uk**

## Performance

Every year we set ourselves standards that we try to achieve. We are committed to letting you know how we measure up to these standards. A comparison of our performance between this year and last year is shown below:

	2007/08	2008/09
Responses to letters within 14 days	70%	77%
Personal visits dealt with in 30 minutes	88%	96%
Payments at Waterloo St. Cashiers office within 10 minutes	98%	98%
Telephone calls answered within 120 seconds	53%	55%

### SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

Enhancements to the Direct Debit process introduced in 2007/08 have resulted in a further increase of more than 7,000 payers using this facility during 2008 / 09. Now 43% of Council Tax customers pay by Direct Debit. It really is the most convenient way of paying and all payments are covered by the Direct Debit Guarantee Scheme. To pay by this method please ring 0121 303 1113.

With improved efficiencies Council Tax have also been able to reduce the time lapse between non-payment and the issue of recovery action. This has resulted in reducing the level of arrears outstanding whilst at the same time increasing the 'in-year' cash collection for the City

The City has recently acquired some tracing software which will enable us to identify and recover outstanding Council Tax from people who leave their property without paying their council tax.

### COMMENTS / COMPLIMENTS / COMPLAINTS

We are committed to providing our Customers with a good level of service and support the City Council's 3C's policy. If you would like to raise anything about the service you have received whether it is a Comment, Compliment or Complaint, please let us know.

The address to write to, our telephone number and a list of our offices can be found on pages 12 & 14 of this leaflet. Alternatively, you can complete one of the 'Customer Views' Feedback forms, which can be found at any of the City's Customer Enquiry Service Points, and return it to the freepost address stated on the form.



## How to Pay

**Please note that from April 2009 the payment date is the 1st of the month, commencing in April. If you pay by direct debit you still have a choice of payment dates.**

**DIRECT DEBIT** is the easiest and cheapest way to pay, and you are protected by the Direct Debit guarantee. This method is available for monthly instalments only, Direct Debit payers have the choice of paying on the 8th, 15th, 21st or 28th of the month.

If you would like to pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit, it could not be simpler. Just call us on 0121 303 1113, advise us of your chosen payment date and provide us with your relevant details. We will do the rest.

**By Internet** – Visit [www.birmingham.gov.uk/council-tax](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/council-tax) where you can make payment by Debit or Credit card.

**By Telephone using Debit / Credit Card** – Call (0121) 464 2001 to make payment on the 24 hour Automated Payment System. OR (0121) 303 1113  
Monday – Friday 8.00 a.m. – 8.00 pm, except Bank Holidays, where the Customer Services Team can take your payment.

**IF YOU PAY BY ANY OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS, YOU MUST ALLOW 5 DAYS FOR YOUR PAYMENT TO REACH US.**

**By Post** – to Birmingham City Council, Resources Department (Revenues & Benefits), P.O. Box 5, Birmingham B4 7AB. Cheques / Postal Orders should be made payable to Birmingham City Council – writing your Payment Reference number on the reverse. Please do NOT send your Payment Card, if you have been issued with one. Cash must not be sent in the post and DO NOT STAPLE, PIN OR FOLD CHEQUES. Receipts will only be issued if a stamped self-addressed envelope is provided.

**Payment Card** – If you are in receipt of a Payment Card, you can take this to any Post Office. If you pay by cheque at the Post Office you must make it payable to 'Post Office Ltd'. You can also pay at any shop displaying the PayPoint or PayZone logo – but ONLY CASH is accepted at these outlets.

**If the front of this bill shows that you will be paying by Payment Card and you have not received it within 7 days of this bill, please ring the Customer Service Team on 0121 303 1113.**

Whether you choose the Post Office, Paypoint or Payzone please take your Payment Card with you.

If you want to change your frequency of payment please complete and return the form on page 23, or alternatively telephone 0121 303 1113 and advise us of your preferred frequency.

## Don't fall into the debt trap

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All payments must be received by the due dates shown on your bill, or you will receive a Reminder Notice. If payments are not made on time, you may be subject to enforcement action. This can involve bailiff action, deductions from your income, bankruptcy proceedings, Charging Order or an application to commit you to prison. Substantial costs are involved – and will be payable by you.

If you have difficulties paying your council tax, please contact Council Tax Customer Services on (0121) 303 1113. To pay by Direct Debit and so avoid missing your payments, you can also ring (0121) 303 1113.

Paying by Direct Debit ensures you do not miss payments

## Useful Numbers

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Council Tax Customer Services	0121 303 1113
Benefit Services	0121 464 7000
Valuation Office Agency	0121 410 3700
Refuse Collection	0121 303 1112
Adult and Communities	
Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team	0121 675 4806
Out of Hours Home Care Services	0121 464 5001
Homelessness	0121 303 7410
Trading Standards	0121 303 6031
Benefit Fraud	0800 328 6340

For information on all Council Services visit our website at [www.birmingham.gov.uk](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk)

## Changing your payments

- (a) If you want to change the frequency of your payments (as shown on your bill), please tick the appropriate box, fill in the personal details, and return this form to the address shown at the bottom of the page.

MONTHLY

HALF-YEARLY

- First payment due by 1st April 2009
- Balance due by 1st October 2009

ONE ANNUAL PAYMENT

- Due by 1st April 2009

- (b) Complete these details in block capitals, please.

NAME

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ADDRESS

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- (c) BILLING REFERENCE NUMBER (from your bill)

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**I understand that if I fail to pay by the due date the total amount will become immediately payable.**

- (d) SIGNED

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DATE

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**RETURN THIS FORM NOW TO:**

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL,  
 Resources Department (Revenues and Benefits),  
 P.O. Box 5,  
 Birmingham, B4 7AB

This booklet explains Council Tax and the council's budget. If you cannot understand it, please go to your Neighbourhood Office and you will be given assistance.

توضیح هذه الوثيقة ضريبة المجلس البلدي وميزانية البلدية. إذا لم تستطع فهمها، الرجاء الذهاب إلى مكتب الخدمات الاجتماعية "نيبرهود أفس" القريب منك، أو زيارة قسم خدمات الزبائن المختص بضرية البلدية، وعنوانه مدرج بالأسفل، أو اتصل هاتفياً بالرقم المذكور أسفله حيث ستحصل على المساعدة بهذا الشأن.

এই প্রচারপত্রটিতে কাউন্সিল ট্যাক্স এবং কাউন্সিলের বিভিন্ন খাতে বরাদ্দের বিষয়ে ব্যাখ্যা করা হয়েছে। আপনি যদি এটা বুঝতে না পারেন, তবে অনুগ্রহপূর্বক আপনার নেবারহুড অফিসে যান, নিম্নোক্ত ঠিকানায় কাউন্সিল ট্যাক্স কাউন্সিল সার্ভিসেস অফিসে আছেন, অথবা নিম্নোক্ত নম্বরে ফোন করুন তখন আপনাকে সহায়তা করা করা হবে।

這份資料單張解釋了地方稅和市政府的預算案。如果你看不懂，可前往當地的鄰舍辦事處、下面列出地址的市政地方稅顧客服務處或者打下列電話號碼，我們會協助你。

این برگه مالیات کاتسل (شهرداری) و بودجه کاتسل را توضیح میدهد. اگر شما این را نه می فهمید، لطفاً به دفتر نیبرهود آفس خود (Neighbourhood Office) بروید یا به سرویس مراجعین کاتسل تکزس به آدرس ذیل مراجعه کنید و یا هم به شماره ذیل تلفن کنید به شما کمک فراهم خواهد شد

આ પત્રિકામાં કાઉન્સિલ ટેક્સ અને કાઉન્સિલના અંદાજપત્રની સમજણ આપવામાં આવી છે. જો તમને તે ન સમજાય તો કૃપા કરી તમારી સ્થાનિક નેબરહુડ ઓફિસ, કાઉન્સિલ ટેક્સ કસ્ટમર સર્વિસીસ, સરનામું નીચે આપેલું છે, અથવા નીચે આપેલ ટેલિફોન નંબર પર ફોન કરી અને તમને સહાયતા આપવામાં આવશે.

دغه ڪتابچه تاسو ته د ڄارو والي د مالياتو (ڪاتسل تڪس) او د ڪاتسل د بوديجي په باره ڪيبي معلومات دركوي. كه چيرته تاسو په دې نه پوهېرئ، لطفاً خپل نيبرهود آفس (Neighbourhood Office) ته ولاړ شئ يا د ڪاتسل تڪس د مراجعينو له سره سره څخه به لاند، آدرس، ڪنهنه و كره يا هره لاندن شمېر ته تلفون وكړه، كه تاسو سره به مرسته وشي.

ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਾਉਂਸਿਲ ਟੈਕਸ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਉਂਸਿਲ ਦੇ ਬੱਜਟ ਬਾਰੇ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਸਮਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਨੇਬਰਹੁਡ ਔਫਿਸ ਜਾਓ, ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਪਤੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਾਉਂਸਿਲ ਟੈਕਸ ਕਸਟਮਰਜ਼ ਸਰਵਿਸਿਜ਼ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਕੇ ਮਿਲੋ, ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਿੱਥੋਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮੱਦਦ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ।

یہ لیفٹ کونسل ٹیکس اور کونسل بجٹ کے بارے میں وضاحت کرتا ہے۔ اگر آپ اسے سمجھ نہیں سکتے تو براؤزر کم اپنے نمبر ہوڈ آفس میں، یا نیچے دیئے گئے پتے پر کونسل ٹیکس کسٹمر سروسز کے دفتر تشریف لے جائیے، یا درج ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے، یہاں سے آپ کو مدد حاصل ہو سکتی ہے۔

Thông tin này giải thích về Thuế Hộì Đồng và dự thảo ngân sách của hội đồng. Nếu quý vị không hiểu, xin vui lòng đến Văn Phòng Ban Láng Giêng của quý vị, tới nơi Phục Vụ Khách Hàng về Thuế Hộì Đồng, theo địa chỉ bên dưới, hoặc gọi cho số điện thoại dưới đây quý vị sẽ nhận được giúp đỡ.