

Council Tax 2024/25

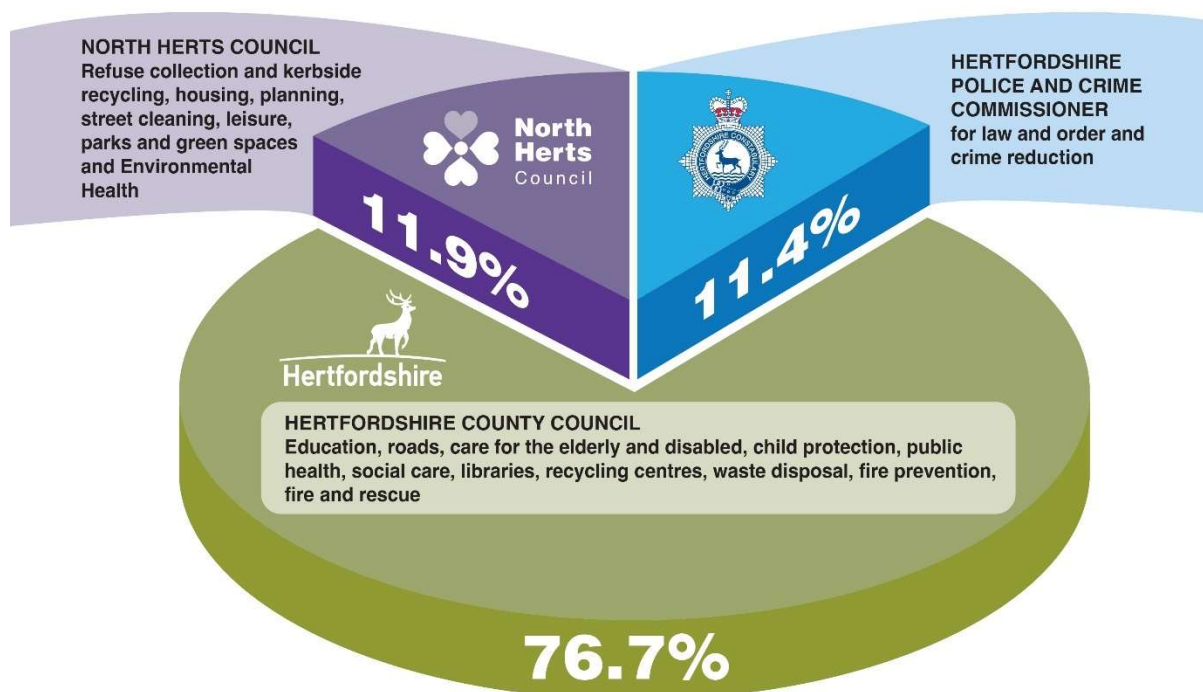
What your Council Tax funds

Your council tax bill is made up of four elements. Your council tax, which is collected by North Herts Council, pays for the services you receive from:

- North Herts Council
- Hertfordshire County Council (including Social Care precepts)
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Parish, Community or Town Council (where relevant)

North Herts Council (also referred to as North Hertfordshire District Council)

How your Council Tax is spent 2024 – 2025



The funding for North Herts Council makes up about 12% of your Council Tax bill. This element of your total Council Tax has gone up by 2.99% compared with 2023/24 (£7.51 for a Band D property).

The increase for the Hertfordshire County Council element is 4.99% (£80.12 for a Band D) and 5.46% (£13.00 for a Band D) for the Police and Crime Commissioner.



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Waste collection
& recycling



Street
cleaning



Parks &
greenspaces



Environmental
health



Planning



Council Tax &
Business rates



North Herts Museum
& Hitchin Town Hall



Parking



Housing advice &
homelessness support



Community safety &
environmental crime



Licensing



Community
grants



Benefits including
housing & council
tax reduction

The North Herts Council element of the Council Tax bill provides funding towards a range of services, including:

- Improving our environment and combating climate change
- Collecting refuse and recycling from all households in the district.
- Providing information and advice about housing to everyone, including people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- Providing three key leisure facilities, North Hertfordshire Leisure Centre, Hitchin Swim Centre and Royston Leisure Centre. In addition, we run the Letchworth outdoor pool and manage the sports hall at Fearnhill School, Letchworth.
- Providing parks and open spaces for all to enjoy.
- Managing elections not only for the District and County Council but also for the Police and Crime Commissioner and General Elections.
- Supporting voluntary groups through providing grant funding to organisations such as Citizens Advice North Hertfordshire.
- Dealing with Planning Applications.
- Ensuring public health is maintained by carrying out food safety inspections and investigating noise nuisance complaints.



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North
Herts
Council

How every £1 of council tax is spent in North Herts



The budgeted spend for 2024/25 is shown below, alongside a comparison with 2023/24:

	2024/25 £m	2023/24 £m	% Change
Gross Service Expenditure	61.8	61.3	0.8%
<u>Less</u> Service Income	(14.9)	(15.3)	
<u>Less</u> Housing Benefit Subsidy	(24.0)	(24.1)	
<u>Less</u> income from commercial rents	(1.8)	(1.7)	
<u>Less</u> investment interest income	(1.2)	(1.6)	
Net Expenditure	19.9	18.6	7.0%
Retained Business Rates	3.4	2.8	
New Homes Bonus	0.3	0.9	
Council Tax	13.1	12.8	
Other general funding	1.4	0.9	
Contribution from / (to) Reserves	1.7	1.2	
Total Funding	19.9	18.6	7.0%

North Herts Council's budgeted net expenditure is £1.3m higher than 2023/24. This includes:

- Net inflationary pressures of £0.9m,
- the expected delivery of new savings and cost reductions of -£0.5m
- budget pressures and investments of £1.5m, and
- a -£0.5m reduction in budget provision relating to the financial impacts of Covid-19 (reducing from £0.5m to zero).
- Other budget changes of £0.1m



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North Herts Council's vision is that: We put people first and deliver sustainable services, to enable a brighter future together. This includes the following detailed priorities:

- **People First** People make North Herts work. We value all our residents, businesses, staff, contractors, councillors, and other partners, and place them at the heart of everything we do.
- **Sustainability** We recognise the challenges our towns and district as a whole face and are committed to delivering services which are relevant and sustainable. In doing so we will place our environmental responsibilities, as well as sound financial planning, at the centre of our policymaking.
- **A brighter future together** We are far-sighted and plan for the long term to secure the best outcomes for our people, towns and villages, and the local economy, ensuring North Herts continues to thrive.

Councillors have also agreed a Medium-Term Financial Strategy for the next five years. The strategy identified that the Council's reserves would be used to avoid having to make drastic service changes in response to cost-of-living pressures.

In addition, in future years North Herts Council is expecting to see an increase in waste collection costs and a continuing reduction in real terms funding from Central Government. The delivery of future savings will initially focus on delivering services at lower cost by using technology and income generation. But ultimately it is likely we will need to reduce the levels of service that we provide. We will consult with you in advance of any decisions, see below for more details of how you can get involved.

In setting the Council's budget in February 2024, Councillors felt that, taking into account inflationary pressures and future funding uncertainty, made it necessary to increase Council Tax by 2.99% (£7.51 per year on a band D property).

Investing in our district

North Herts Council will also use capital funds to provide investment in the district. For 2024/25 onwards this includes the following:

- £1million for a gym extension at Royston Leisure Centre – we will also be investigating the feasibility of building a learner pool at Royston.
- A £2.9million contribution towards a total investment of almost £11million in the decarbonisation of our leisure centres. The remainder is funded from a successful Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme bid.
- Continued investment in our play areas and green space.

North Herts Council also pays a special levy to the Bedfordshire and River Ivel Drainage Board. In 2024/25 this will be £9.0k (£5.6k in 2023/24).



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Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)

The funding for HCC makes up about 77% of your Council Tax bill. This share of your Council Tax has gone up by 4.99% compared with 2023/24 (2.99% for core spending and a further 2% for social care). The HCC charge also includes a levy for the Environment Agency Thames and Anglian Central Regions and a levy for the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.



Highways and transport (including public transport, street lights, traffic lights, potholes, gritting, road repairs & verge maintenance)



Adult social services, including blue badge applications, adult social care, day services and support for unpaid carers



Schools and education, including SEND, schools admissions & free school meals and transport



Fire & rescue



Recycling, Re-use Centres & waste management



Trading standards



Public Health



Children's social care, including fostering and adoption



Libraries & archives



Registration Services

The HCC element of the Council Tax bill provides funding towards a range of services, including:

- Caring and supporting children, young people and families
- Caring for the elderly, and people with disabilities and mental health issues
- Public Health and supporting people with drug or alcohol problems
- Fire and rescue services
- Road maintenance and safety
- Co-ordinating bus services and providing home to school transport for children
- Recycling and waste disposal
- Responding to major planning applications – for example, housing and mineral extraction
- Economic development
- Providing libraries, archives and local studies materials
- Protecting consumers against poor quality goods and services and upholding fair trading laws
- Community safety (crime / reducing anti-social behaviour) and emergency planning

The budgeted spend for 2024/25 is shown below, alongside a comparison with 2023/24:

	2023/24 £m	2023/24 £m	% Change
Gross Service Expenditure	2,688	2,395	12%
<u>Less</u> Ring-fenced grants	(1,407)	(1,178)	
<u>Less</u> Sales, fees and charges	(141)	(130)	
<u>Less</u> Partner contributions	(31)	(30)	
Net Expenditure	1,109	1,057	5%
Business Rate Retention	167	156	
Ring-fenced funding	54	52	
Non ring-fenced grants	89	78	
Use of reserves	13	19	
Council Tax	786	746	
Total Funding	1,109	1,057	5%

HCC's budgeted net expenditure has increased by £52m. The main reasons for this increase are additional service demand and inflationary pressures.

Further information on the HCC element (including Social Care precept) can be found here: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/whatwedo

The HCC element of the Council Tax also provides funding for the levies in relation to the Environment Agency and the Lee Valley Regional Park.

The Environment Agency is a levying body for its Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Functions. The majority of funding for flood defence comes directly from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). However, under the Partnership Funding rule not all schemes will attract full central funding. To provide 'matching' funding the Agency may seek funding from County 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 area.

Lee Valley Regional Park is a unique leisure, sports and environmental destination for all residents of London, Essex and Hertfordshire. The 26 mile long, 10,000-acre park, much of it former derelict land, is partly funded by a levy on the council tax.

	2024/25 £m	2023/24 £m	% Change
Environment Agency Thames			
Gross Expenditure	157.319	140.213	+12.2%
Less: Other Funding	(144.543)	(127.687)	
		12.526	+2.0%
Environment Agency Anglian Central			
Gross Expenditure	27.837	20.378	+36.6%
Less: Other Funding	(26.512)	(19.091)	
Council Tax Levy	1.325	1.287	+3.0%
Lee Valley Regional Park			
Gross Expenditure	15.3	15.5	-0.1%
Financing Costs	3.5	2.9	
Less: Income	(7.8)	(7.3)	
Contribution to / (from) reserves	0.0	(0.5)	
Council Tax Levy	11.0	10.6	+3.8%

Further information on the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority element can be found here: www.leevalleypark.org.uk

Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)

The funding for the PCC makes up about 11% of your Council Tax bill. This share of your Council Tax has gone up by 5.46% compared with 2023/24.

The budgeted spend for 2024/25 is shown below, alongside a comparison with 2023/24:

	2024/25 £m	2023/24 £m	% Change
Net Expenditure	267.0	253.5	+5.3%
Central Government Funding	150.1	142.2	
Collection Fund	(0.3)	0.7	
Council Tax	117.2	110.6	
Total Funding	267.0	253.5	+5.3%

The PCC's budgeted net expenditure has increased by £13.5m. The main reasons for this increase are cost pressures of £9.4m and investments of £6.1m. This has been partly offset by savings of £7.2m.

Further information on this element can be found here: [Finances \(hertscommissioner.org\)](https://www.hertscommissioner.org/finances)

Parish, Community and Town Councils

Across the District there are 36 parish areas. Not all of these have a local Council and therefore do not have a precept (do not make a charge for Council Tax). If you live in an area with a Parish, Town or Community Council, the following amounts will be added to your Council Tax bill for an equivalent Band D property:

Area	Band D Precept (£)	Area	Band D Precept (£)
Ashwell	121.43	Knebworth	95.28
Baldock	n/a	Langley	0
Barkway	98.28	Letchworth	n/a
Barley	96.88	Lilley	95.40
Bygrave	60.87	Nuthampstead	0
Caldecote & Newnham	45.54	Offley	66.51
Clothall	22.85	Pirton	88.89
Codicote	65.50	Preston	68.71
Graveley	58.34	Radwell	24.18
Great Ashby	22.80	Reed	49.87
Hexton	0	Royston	59.22
Hinxworth	67.05	Rushden & Wallington	23.00
Hitchin	n/a	St. Ippolyts	36.08
Holwell	74.95	St. Pauls Walden	82.56
Ickleford	63.49	Sandon	37.05
Kelshall	36.25	Therfield	25.19
Kimpton	81.71	Weston	50.21
Kings Walden	84.42	Wymondley	101.38

Royston Town Council raises more than £140,000 from Council Tax and as a result there is a requirement to disclose further information about their budget. This is shown below:

	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000	% Change
Royston Town Council			
Gross Expenditure	570	553	3%
<u>Less</u> Income	(154)	(135)	
<u>Less</u> Other Funding	(12)	(11)	
<u>Less</u> Funding from Reserves	0	(20)	
Council Tax Levy	404	387	4%

Council Tax by band

Your council tax band is based on how much your property was worth when council tax was introduced. Your council tax band is shown on your bill. Your council tax band is decided by the Valuation Office Agency <https://www.gov.uk/topic/local-government/council-tax>

Your Council Tax for 2024/25 (excluding any Parish, Community or Town Council element) will be as follows:

	North Herts Council	HCC	Social Care Precept	PCC	Total
Band A	173.34	961.58	162.25	167.33	1,464.50
Band B	202.23	1,121.84	189.30	195.22	1,708.59
Band C	231.12	1,282.11	216.34	223.11	1,952.68
Band D	260.01	1,442.37	243.38	251.00	2,196.76
Band E	317.79	1,762.90	297.46	306.78	2,684.93
Band F	375.57	2,083.42	351.55	362.56	3,173.10
Band G	433.35	2,403.95	405.63	418.33	3,661.26
Band H	520.02	2,884.74	486.76	502.00	4,393.52

The overall increase (excluding any Parish, Community or Town council element) compared with 2023/24 is 4.80%.