

Your council tax and business rates 2014-2015



Including Police and Crime Commissioner budget and priorities

Message from the leader of the council

The process of developing the council's budget for 2014/2015 and the two ensuing years has been an incredibly difficult task – set against a backdrop of finding £28 million of savings, and the effects this may have on the lives of Island residents.

This year, the council made the difficult decision to increase the Isle of Wight Council element of council tax for 2014/2015 by 1.99 per cent (excluding town and parish council and Hampshire Constabulary precepts). Importantly, this will raise an additional £521,000 to help us deliver vital council services (after the loss of the government's council tax freeze grant).

In developing the budget, wherever possible and achievable we have also sought to develop initiatives and to access funds to both protect and stimulate the Island's economy:

- **Pre-apprenticeships and business support for older people** - To allocate £150,000 next year to schemes supporting young people into pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships and supporting people over 50 to start up their own businesses.
- **Assisted Area Status** - To continue to promote the case for the inclusion of the whole Island in Assisted Area Status designation (currently status has been secured for 28 of the Island's 38 wards).
- **Children's services** - To provide an additional £2.25 million for children's services.
- **Business expansion fund** - To continue to promote the Isle of Wight Expansion Fund, launched in January 2014, making £2.46 million of grant funds available to Island-based businesses.
- **Tidal energy** - To match £1 million of private sector investment to create Perpetuus Tidal Energy Centre Ltd, a joint venture company to develop a tidal energy test facility off St Catherine's Point.
- **Superfast broadband** - The council has already committed £3 million to the installation of superfast broadband, ensuring the Island will be one of the best connected areas in the country.
- **Tourism** - Committed investment of £340,000 a year to Visit Isle of Wight.

Councillor Ian Stephens
Leader of the Isle of Wight Council

Contacting the Isle of Wight Council

Website: www.iwight.com

It is possible to **find out about, pay for, report on, comment on** or **complain about** a service through the A to Z of services on our website.

Phone: contact centre 01983 821000

For information on any council-related service, telephone our contact centre where an advisor will deal with your enquiry.

- Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm
- Saturday, 9am to 1pm

For enquiries regarding the following services, please dial:

Automated payments	0845 045 0076
Building control	01983 823580
Business rates	01983 823920
Education services	01983 823455
Council tax	01983 823901
Highways/Island Roads	01983 822440
Housing benefits	01983 823950
Housing services	01983 823040
Parking services	01983 823714
Planning	01983 823552
Registrars	01983 823233
Waste collection	01983 823777

Face to face

If you need to visit us for assistance with your enquiries it is possible that you will be directed to one of the self service computers available within the help centres to enable you to complete your enquiry or transaction. For those enquiries that are unable to be completed through the self service channels then assistance will be provided. For opening times and further information on where you can visit please call **01983 821000** or refer to our website.

Email: customer.services@iow.gov.uk

Your guide to the council's budget

The Isle of Wight Council believes it is important to provide you with information about your council tax bill.

The following pages give you details of the council's budget for 2014-2015 and explains how your council tax bill is calculated.

If you would like more information about the Isle of Wight Council and its services, please contact us in one of the following ways:

T: (01983) 821000 **E:** customer.services@iow.gov.uk **W:** www.iwight.com

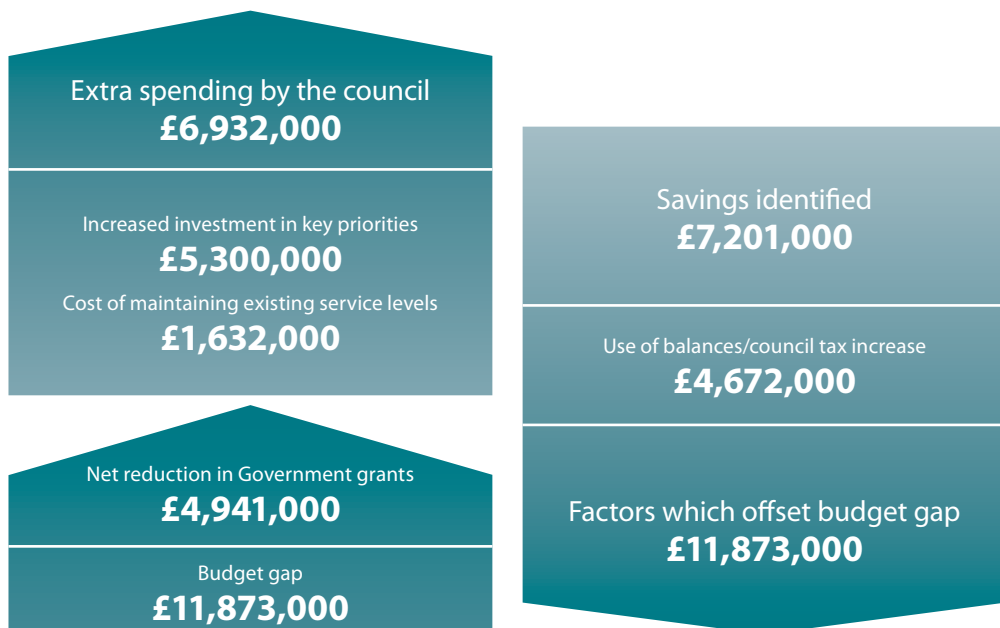
Spending changes

The Isle of Wight Council plans to spend £332.8 million in 2014-15 on providing services for Islanders.

After deducting grants and income of £202.1 million, the net budget is £130.7 million. This is £2.5 million lower than the 2013-14 budget.

Budget gap

The budget will be funded during 2014-15 in the ways shown below.



Where the money comes from

The money the council uses to provide services comes from sources including:

- business rates;
- revenue support grant (RSG);
- the council tax;
- government grants for specific services and projects;
- dedicated schools' grant;
- income from charging and contributions for certain services;

A Dedicated Schools' Grant*

21.9% (£72,952,000)

B Council Tax

19.7% (£65,587,000)

C Business Rate Retention Scheme

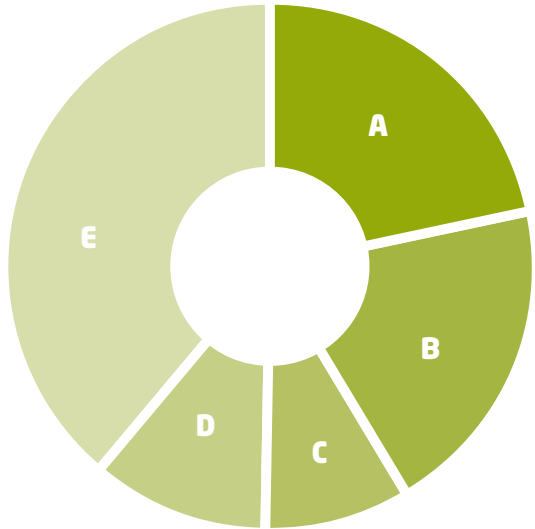
8.8% (£29,185,000)

D Revenue Support grant

10.8% (£35,956,000)

E Fees, charges, contributions and other grants

38.8% (£129,102,000)



*Provisional figure pending confirmation from the Department for Education.

Investing in the future

In addition to its day to day spending, the council also plans to invest nearly £14 million in projects which support its key priorities, the majority of which (£10.1 million) will be funded from government grant and external contributions.

£500,000 will be funded by the council to work with developers in providing affordable housing as well as £740,000 of government grant being available to deliver disabled facilities grant.

Government grant of £1.6 million will be used to fund improvement of island schools with the potential for further investment dependent on receipts from sales of schools declared surplus to requirements.

Rights of way and sustainable transport will be supported with £2.1 million of government grant.

The council will match the funding from the Government to make up the £4.2 million public sector commitment to roll out superfast broadband across remaining areas of the island.

Over £850,000 will be invested by partners in developing the tidal energy centre, matching the start up funding the council has already provided, and government grant of £269,000 will fund the rolling replacement of fire service vehicles and equipment.

Clearly the council has had difficult decisions to make in adopting a capital investment programme which is affordable and has had to focus its resources on issues which cannot be avoided, and keep the costs of borrowing to a minimum. Other small projects will therefore ensure that existing assets including ICT and Buildings can be put to maximum use and support the council in making savings in revenue budgets.

At 31 March 2013 our total net borrowings were £145.5 million.

Council workforce

At the end of December 2013 the council employed the equivalent of 3,252 full-time posts including 1,585 equivalent full-time posts based in schools.

Where the money will go in 2014-15

	This year £'000	Last year £'000		This year £'000	Last year £'000
Adult social services	64,758	63,496	Parks & open spaces	1,729	1,857
Housing services	61,203	61,752	Economic & tourism development	1,042	1,144
Schools budgets ¹	81,181	81,721	Cultural, leisure & libraries	3,736	3,934
LEA budget	13,820	12,952	Public health	6,147	5,922
Children's services	22,050	19,484	Other services	8,336	8,307
Fire service	7,781	7,628	Other financing	5,650	9,725
Environmental services	2,062	2,380	Gross Expenditure	332,782	331,691
Community safety	3,249	3,222	Less: Income	-202,054	-198,447
Waste management	9,785	9,543	Net budget requirement	130,728	133,244
Highways including PFI ²	25,217	23,655	RSG & Business Rate Retention Scheme	-65,141	-71,658
Car parking ³	1,687	1,702	Freeze grant & transitional grant	0	-996
Public transport support	5,782	5,935	Collection Fund (surplus)/deficit	-1,508	108
Planning and development control	3,351	3,218	Council Tax Requirement	64,079	60,698
Recreation & sport	4,216	4,114			

1. The reduction in the schools' budget reflects the funding arrangements for newly created academy schools which receive their funding direct from the Department for Education.

2. The Highways PFI scheme is included within the Highways line. The expenditure is shown gross of government grant received, which is included with income. In accordance with accounting regulations, a proportion of the PFI costs relating to capital financing are shown with Other Financing. The PFI contract includes street cleansing and street lighting operations.

3. Car parking is expenditure on the service; income is included in the income line.

Four factors that affect what you pay

1 The level of tax set by the Isle of Wight Council

The level of tax set by the council to cover the cost of services it will provide in 2014-15 is 1.99 per cent higher than in 2013-14, equivalent to 44p per week for a band C taxpayer. **This is expressed on the council tax bill to one decimal place in accordance with council tax regulations. Consequently, the per cent has been rounded up and shows as 2.0 per cent. This does not require a referendum.**

2 The property band you are in

The value of your property, on 1 April 1991, will have been assessed by the independent listing officer, a central government agent. Your property will then have been placed in one of eight bands - your bill will show which one.

Want to appeal against your property banding?

Further information about this is provided on page 14 & 15 of this booklet.

3 The level of spending set independently by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire

The element of council tax that relates to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire will increase by 1.99 per cent in 2014-15, equivalent to 5p per week more for a band C taxpayer.

4 Charges for local services

Your bill includes an amount towards the cost of the parish or town council for the area in which you live.

Band	Value of property 1 April 1991	Proportion of band D	Council tax (IW Council element)
A	Up to £40,000	6/9	876.98 730.82*
B	£40,001 to £52,000	7/9	1,023.14
C	£52,001 to £68,000	8/9	1,169.31
D	£68,001 to £88,000	9/9	1,315.47
E	£88,001 to £120,000	11/9	1,607.80
F	£120,001 to £160,000	13/9	1,900.12
G	£160,001 to £320,000	15/9	2,192.45
H	Over £320,000	18/9	2,630.94

* Disabled reduction

Council, police, parishes and towns

This table shows the combined costs for a band D council tax payer. The figures include the Isle of Wight Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Island's town and parish councils.

	£ per band D	£ Total 2014-2015	£ Total 2013-2014		£ per band D	£ Total 2014-2015	£ Total 2013-2014
Isle of Wight Council	1,315.47	64,079,175	60,697,988	Lake	19.58	29,955	29,476
Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire	154.26	7,514,313	7,117,825	Nettlestone & Seaview	22.34	38,217	29,020
Parish/town councils				Newchurch	16.46	16,361	12,951
Arreton	19.97	7,384	6,797	Newport	36.36	253,715	108,367
Bembridge	59.04	115,639	112,020	Niton & Whitwell	20.56	18,527	12,863
Brading	81.71	58,091	56,777	Northwood	17.01	14,321	13,503
Brighstone	34.26	26,907	18,551	Rookley	23.78	5,567	5,566
Calbourne	34.13	12,662	12,404	Ryde	49.43	362,617	266,898
Chale	32.24	7,302	6,535	Sandown	61.79	131,909	128,500
Chillerton & Gatcombe	37.43	6,764	6,769	Shalfleet	37.55	26,017	25,316
Cowes	42.91	169,545	81,821	Shanklin	38.95	123,705	120,792
East Cowes	48.84	107,494	75,784	Shorwell	17.55	5,388	5,289
Fishbourne	44.01	18,052	13,741	St Helens	44.27	23,881	19,190
Freshwater	54.45	124,092	109,959	Totland	37.67	46,339	44,778
Godshill	27.55	14,785	12,639	Ventnor	77.77	182,299	125,437
Gurnard	43.92	34,119	30,552	Whippingham	38.57	12,231	12,000
Havenstreet & Ashley	22.11	6,973	6,816	Wootton Bridge	46.75	61,898	59,101
				Wroxall	18.18	9,894	9,315
				Yarmouth	53.87	27,154	21,982

The precept amounts for the Isle of Wight Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Parish and Town Councils are shown net of Government Grant received relating to the Localised Council Tax Support scheme.

The council is required to show costs in this table as they affect band D council taxpayers. In accordance with government guidelines we are required to detail parish or town council precepts exceeding £140,000. This is shown in the table below:

	Gross spend	Income	Reserve movement	Budget requirement 2014-2015	Budget requirement 2013-2014
Cowes Town Council	£177,300	-£7,755	0	£169,545	£81,821
Newport Town Council	£294,605	-£28,758	-£12,132	£253,715	£108,367
Ryde Town Council	£417,150	-£91,483	£36,950	£362,617	£266,898
Ventnor Town Council	£210,242	-£27,943	0	£182,299	£125,437

Commentary by individual parish or town councils in respect of their budget for 2014-15 is provided in appropriate parish communications such as newsletters or websites.



Paying for your policing

Police and Crime Commissioner sets budget for 2014/15

Further to a 2 per cent cap being imposed on the policing part of the council tax precept by Government, Hampshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Hayes, will be increasing the precept for 2014/15 by 1.99 per cent.

Despite receiving overwhelming support from the public in support of a 3 per cent rise and receiving a majority vote by the Police and Crime Panel in favour of the precept rise, the Commissioner has been left with little choice but to make up the £973,000 shortfall from reserves.

The precept cap follows unprecedented cuts to policing in Hampshire, with £80 million cuts being pushed through in the seven years from 2010 to 2017 as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. These significant cuts have led to the Force planning an Operational Change Programme to enable it to deliver the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan despite the cuts and make it sustainable into the future.

Voicing his disagreement with the cap imposed by Government, Commissioner Hayes said: "The cap equates to a funding loss of nearly £1 million and puts additional pressure on our already squeezed budget for the coming year. With the public purse in mind I have decided against a costly referendum. Instead, I will increase the policing element of the council tax by 1.99 per cent and make up the shortfall from our reserves to ensure we can sustain the current level of neighbourhood policing and keep our communities safe.

"This is not my preferred option, as using reserves put aside through careful budgeting only offers short-term relief for one year, whereas funds generated through a precept increase are generated for years to come. However, having listened to the feedback during my consultation with the public over this, I am absolutely clear that people

want a strong local policing presence in their neighbourhoods, and that it's therefore vital to pull out all stops to ensure the necessary funding is found. The extent of the cuts and the imposed cap this year will also mean that we may need to look at further precept adjustments in the coming years."

Police funding

The majority of police funding (67 per cent) comes through Government grants, with the remaining 33 per cent coming from the council tax precept (including approx. £1m coming from budget reserves). The 2014-15 budget for the Police and Crime Commissioner and Hampshire Constabulary is £307.685m. It is broken down as follows:

Local policing	43%
Crime, custody and criminal justice	18%
Corporate support	14%
Public services	7%
Operations	7%
General	4%
Tasking and co-ordination	4%
Risk management	1%
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	1%
Chief Constable and ACPO	1%

Further Information

Please contact your local council if you have any queries about your council tax bill or council tax support.

For more details about the budget set by the Police and Crime Commissioner, please visit www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk. For queries:

Email: opcc@hampshire.pnn.police.uk

Phone: 01962 871595

Post: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Westgate Chambers, Staple Gardens, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8AW.

Who pays council tax?

Almost every household has to pay council tax, whether your home is a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette, mobile home or houseboat, and whether you own or rent it. At least one person in each household is responsible for paying council tax. In most cases the person (or people) aged 18 or over and who are in the highest category of residence will be responsible for paying council tax:

- owner-occupiers;
- the resident freeholder;
- leaseholder;
- licensee or tenant;
- people such as squatters, who live in the property but have no legal interest.

Married couples, those who live together as a couple or those in civil partnerships are also jointly responsible for paying the bill.

In the following cases the owner of the property must pay the bill rather than the occupants:

- if the property is no-one's main home;
- residential care homes – nursing homes and hostels;
- properties occupied by religious communities and religious ministers;
- if more than one household occupies the property;
- properties occupied by resident staff;
- houses for asylum seekers.

How the bill is calculated

The amount you pay depends on the banding of your property, the area you live in and whether you qualify for any discounts, including Local Council Tax Support.

Each dwelling has been placed in one of eight bands according to its market value on 1 April 1991. The market value range is important, as this decides which Council Tax band applies. These ranges are fixed by the Government and have not changed since the start of council tax in 1993. The amount you have to pay depends on how the property has been valued by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), part of HM Revenue and Customs, not by the council.

The charge for each band is calculated as a multiple of the band D amount.

Valuation band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Fraction	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9

The valuation band and values are as follows:

- A** Up to £40,000
- B** £40,001 - £52,000
- C** £52,001 - £68,000
- D** £68,001 - £88,000
- E** £88,001 - £120,000
- F** £120,001 - £160,000
- G** £160,001 - £320,000
- H** Over £320,000

Querying your council tax band

If you are responsible for paying the council tax, or an agent acting on behalf of someone who is, you may make a formal proposal against your Council Tax Band. The circumstances in which you can make a formal proposal are very limited but if you have a genuine concern that your home may be in the wrong band, you should contact your local Valuation Office and ask to have your band reviewed. The occasions when a challenge by "proposal" is permitted include the following:

- property demolished (unless the demolition is the first stage of building work);
- adaptations have been made to make it suitable for someone with a disability;
- if part of the property has been separately banded but should now be banded as one;
- physical changes in the locality affecting values;
- within six months of a band change to your property by the Listing Officer.

If you think you meet one of the above by which a valid proposal can be made – for example, if you have moved into a property within the last 6 months and you think the band is wrong you can complete a proposal form online, at www.voa.gov.uk or in writing to:

Listing Officer,
Valuation Office Agency,
Council Tax West,
Overline House,
Blechynden Terrace,
Southampton
SO15 1GW

Tel: 03000 501501 Fax: 0300 504370 Email: ctwest@voa.gsi.gov.uk

Making a proposal does not allow you to withhold payment of your Council Tax. If your proposal is successful you will be refunded any money you have overpaid.

You can only appeal a VOA decision if your case has been accepted as a valid proposal. An appeal must be lodged with the valuation tribunal within three months of the decision, at www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk

Other appeals

If you think your Council Tax bill is wrong, tell us immediately for example if:

- you have been billed for council tax but do not believe you are responsible for paying the tax as you do not fall into one of the owner/occupier categories;
- you have claimed a discount or exemption and this has been refused;
- you think any item on your bill has been calculated incorrectly.

To appeal about these matters, you must notify the Council Tax office in writing, please mark your letter or email "APPEAL" and send it to:

Isle of Wight Council Offices,
Broadway,
Sandown,
Isle of Wight
PO36 9EA

Email: **council.tax@iow.gov.uk**

We will then review your case. If you disagree with the response, you may apply to a tribunal to hear your appeal. The Valuation Tribunal is an independent legal body. Certain time limits apply and more details can be found at www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk

If you appeal, you must continue to pay your council tax until your appeal is decided. If your appeal succeeds any overpaid council tax will be repaid.

Council tax reductions

Single person discount

A full council tax bill assumes that there are two adults living in the property. An adult for council tax purposes is a person aged 18 years or over. If only one adult lives in the property as their main home, the council tax bill may be reduced by 25 per cent.

To apply for a single resident discount go to www.iwight.com/revsandbens Council Tax Reductions "**Do it online**"

You can get 50 per cent off your bill if the property is a caravan pitch or boat mooring. You must send us: the full address of your main home and a copy of the latest council tax bill for your main home.

If you are applying for the 50 per cent discount because you live elsewhere for work, you must also send us full details of where and for whom you work together with a copy of your contract which states that you must live at that address to conduct your employment effectively. If the property is a caravan pitch or boat mooring, we will need to visit for confirmation. Please provide a contact number so we can make an appointment to visit.

A discount of up to 50 per cent may be awarded depending on the number of disregarded people who live in the property. In some cases, even if two adults live in the property you may still qualify for a discount, examples are, if one adult is:

- a full time carer;
- a student, student nurse or foreign language assistant;
- an apprentice;
- suffering from severe mental impairment;
- 18 or 19 years old and still in education;
- over 18 who have child benefit paid for them;
- a school or college leaver aged under 20;
- student;
- on a youth training scheme;
- long-term resident of hospitals, residential care home or nursing home;
- volunteer care worker;
- providing care for someone they live with;

- a member of religious communities;
- a member of international headquarters, defence organisations and visiting forces;
- in prison or detention (except for non-payment of fines or local taxes);
- staying in hostels or night shelters.

New national discount from 1st April 2014 of 50% for annexes occupied by a relative

- a. Dwellings which form part of a single property which includes at least one other property; and
- b. is being used by a resident of that other dwelling, or one of those other dwellings as part of their sole or main residence
- c. or is the sole or main resident of a relative/relatives of the person who is liable to pay council tax in respect of that other dwelling.

Discounts for empty properties

Properties that are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished will be eligible for 100 per cent discount for the **first three months** a property becomes empty and unfurnished. From the start of the fourth month the full 100 per cent charge will be payable.

Properties in need of major repair or work/structural alteration to make them habitable

Properties that are classified by the council in need of, or undergoing major structural repair will be eligible for a 75 per cent discount for a period **not exceeding twelve months** from the date the criteria was first met. (The property must be empty) Therefore council tax charges at 25 per cent will apply. From the start of the thirteenth month the full 100 per cent charge will be payable.

Long term empty properties (Premium)

Where a property has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished in excess of two years a 50 per cent levy resulting in a charge of 150 per cent will be applied.

There is no reduction available for second homes.

Relief for people with disabilities

If your household includes a person with a disability and they use a wheelchair at home or need an extra bathroom or room adapted to meet their special needs they may be entitled to an adjustment to the Council Tax valuation band. The room or the wheelchair must also be essential or of major importance to the disabled person's well-being, due to the nature and extent of their disability.

The relief is granted by charging Council Tax based on the next lowest band. Even if your household is in Band A, you will still get a reduction.

Discounts have been granted based on existing council tax records and will be shown on the front of your bill. If you have not been allowed a discount but think you are entitled to one, you should contact us. If you believe you have been allowed a discount you are not entitled to you must tell us within a period of 21 days of this belief or you may have to pay a £70 penalty. For more information visit www.iwight.com or contact the council tax office on 01983 823901.

Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, inserted by section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003. This gave councils new powers to create their own discounts and exemptions, including powers to grant relief on a case by case basis of between one and 100 per cent. Any discount given has to be met by the council.

The council has the power to agree discounts but is not obliged to do so as council tax is a tax related to property and not directly to the provision of any specific services. It is not appropriate therefore, to relate the cessation, reduction or non provision of any specific services or facilities to the payment of council tax.

Any specific application for discount is referred to the Cabinet Member for resources, under their delegated authority, and a decision is made on the merits of the case.

Exempt properties

Council tax is not charged on some properties (known as exempt properties), including empty properties which are:

- owned by charities (this lasts for up to six months);
- annexes (granny flats) which cannot be let separately without breaching planning conditions;
- not allowed to be lived in by law;
- repossessed;
- waiting to be lived in by a minister of religion;
- deceased person's former dwelling (may be exempt for up to six months after probate granted);
- empty caravan pitch or boat mooring;
- left empty by a bankrupt;
- left empty by students, prisoners, patients in hospitals or care homes, people receiving or providing care elsewhere.

Other exempt properties are:

- homes lived in only by people with severe mental impairment;
- halls of residence;
- homes lived in only by students;
- homes lived in only by persons under 18;
- dwellings which form part of a single property and which are occupied by a dependant relative/relatives of the family living in the rest of the building (eg, properties with an annexe or similar self-contained unit);
- armed forces accommodation, owned by the Ministry of Defence;
- visiting forces accommodation.

For further information and applications www.iwight.com – council tax reductions.

Contact us - www.iwight.com/counciltax "Do it online"

Email: council.tax@iow.gov.uk

Telephone: 01983 823901

(Lines are open between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday, 9am – 1pm Saturday).

Fax: 01983 823900

Privacy notice

The Isle of Wight Council as data controller will process your personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The personal details provided by you may be shared and verified with other departments within the Council for the recovery of any debts, for providing assistance in relation to tenancies, Local Assistance Scheme applications, Blue Badge applications, maximising claimants' income, bringing empty properties back into use and to identify persons responsible for Business Rates and/or Council Tax. The departments include Council Tax, Benefits, Parking Services, Business Rates, Electoral Registration, Housing Services, Supporting People, Blue Badge, Strengthening Families, Adult Social Services, Community Services Financial Assessment, and Sundry Debts (including Housing Benefit overpayments).

The Council may also be required to disclose personal information to third parties (such as the police or Department for Work and Pensions) for the purposes of preventing or detecting crime or apprehending or prosecuting offenders. The council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use council tax, housing benefit, Blue Badge and Local Assistance Scheme information for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes. The Council is required under section 6 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 to participate in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching exercise. Council Tax data will be provided to the Audit Commission for NFI and will be used for cross-system and cross-authority comparison with other relevant organisations' data for the prevention and detection of fraud.

For more information visit: www.iwight.com/nfi

Local council tax support

If you are in receipt of income support, jobseekers allowance, employment support allowance, pension credits, other state benefit or low income, you may qualify for local council tax support. If your joint capital e.g. savings or investments, exceeds £16,000 you are unlikely to qualify for support from the main scheme, unless you receive pension credit (guarantee element). Any application form for local council tax support should be returned without delay to avoid loss of support as entitlement is normally considered from the Monday following the date a claim is received. **An online application can be found at www.iwight.com/revsandbens**

Anyone making a claim via the Department for Work and Pensions will also need to complete a claim for local council tax support through the council.

Second adult rebate

This is a form of local council tax support that is only available to those claimants who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit. This may be available to council tax payers who share their home with someone on a low income but who do not have a partner or a paying lodger. It may be payable even if the council tax payer has a high income themselves and would not normally qualify for any benefits or local council tax support.

Application forms and further advice on local council tax support are available from **www.iwight.com/revsandbens** or contact the benefit office, **Tel 01983 823950**.

Please note:

If you are eligible for Housing Benefit but are not entitled to Local Council Tax Support, you are responsible for making a further claim for Local Council Tax Support if your income reduces and you may become entitled to some assistance. As Local Council Tax Support is normally considered from the Monday following the date a claim is received you must log your intention to claim and complete a new application for Local Council Tax Support immediately.

Fraud Hotline: 01983 823969 – If you know someone who is fraudulently claiming local council tax support or housing benefit please call our hotline, your call will be dealt with confidentially. Email: benefit.fraud@iow.gov.uk

Non-domestic rates explained

Non-domestic rates, or business rates, collected by local authorities are the way that those who occupy non-domestic property contribute towards the cost of local services. Under the business rates retention arrangements introduced from 1 April 2013, authorities keep a proportion of the business rates paid locally. This provides a direct financial incentive for authorities to work with local businesses to create a favourable local environment for growth since authorities will benefit from growth in business rates revenues. The money, together with revenue from council tax payers, revenue support grant provided by the Government and certain other sums, is used to pay for the services provided by your local authority and other local authorities in your area. Further information about the business rates system, including transitional and other reliefs, may be obtained at www.gov.uk

Rateable value

Apart from properties that are exempt from business rates, each non-domestic property has a rateable value which is set by the valuation officers of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), an agency of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. They draw up and maintain a full list of all rateable values, available on their website at www.voa.gov.uk

The rateable value of your property is shown on the front of the bill. This broadly represents the yearly rent the property could have been let for on the open market on a particular date. For the revaluation that came into effect on 1 April 2010, this date was set as 1 April 2008.

The valuation officer may alter the value if circumstances change. The ratepayer (and certain others who have an interest in the property) can appeal against the value shown in the list if they believe it is wrong. Further information about the grounds on which appeals may be made and the process for doing so can be found on the VOA website or from your local valuation office.

National non-domestic rating multiplier

The local authority works out the business rates bill by multiplying the rateable value of the property by the appropriate multiplier. There are two multipliers: the standard non-domestic rating multiplier and the small business non-domestic rating multiplier. The former is higher to pay for small business rate relief. Except in the City of London where special arrangements apply, the Government sets the multipliers for each financial year for the whole of England according to formulae set by legislation. Generally, the multipliers increase in line with inflation according to the Retail Price Index in September of the preceding year. The Government announced in the Autumn Statement 2013 that it will cap the RPI increase in business rates to 2 per cent in 2014-15. Between revaluations, the multipliers change each year in line with inflation and to take account of the cost of small business rate relief. In the year of revaluation the multipliers are rebased to account for overall changes to total rateable value and to ensure that the revaluation does not raise extra money for Government. Similarly, the change in the revaluation date to 2017 has no effect on the total amount of revenue raised from business rates. The current multipliers are shown on the front of this bill.

Business rates Instalments

Payment of business rate bills is automatically set on a 10-monthly cycle. However, the Government has announced that it will legislate to allow businesses to ask for their business rate bills to be spread over 12 months to help with cash flow. The Government is putting in place regulations that will, with effect for the 2014-15 financial year, allow businesses to require their local authority to enable payments to be made through 12 monthly instalments. If you wish to take up this offer, you should visit www.iwight.com/businessrates and select “How to Pay” or “Do it online”.

Revaluation 2010 and transitional arrangements

All rateable values are generally reassessed every five years at a general revaluation to ensure bills paid by any one ratepayer reflect changes over time in the value of their property relative to others. The current rating list is based on the 2010 revaluation. The Government has confirmed that the next revaluation has been postponed until 2017. This will provide greater stability for businesses to encourage economic growth. Five yearly revaluations will continue from 2017. Revaluation does not raise extra money for Government. The Government's Written Ministerial Statement on the postponement can be found at the following link:

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm121112/wmstext/121112m0001.htm

For those ratepayers who would otherwise have seen significant increases in their rates liability, the Government has put in place a £2 billion transitional relief scheme to limit and phase in changes in rate bills as a result of the 2010 revaluation. To help pay for the limits on increases in bills, there were also limits on reductions in bills. Under the transition scheme, limits continue to apply to yearly increases and decreases until the full amount is due (rateable value times the appropriate multiplier). The scheme applies only to the bill based on a property at the time of the revaluation. If there are any changes to the property after 1 April 2010, transitional arrangements will not normally apply to the part of a bill that relates to any increase in rateable value due to those changes. Changes to your bill as a result of other reasons (such as because of changes to the amount of small business rate relief) are not covered by the transitional arrangements.

The transitional arrangements are applied automatically and are shown on the front of this bill.

More information on revaluation 2010 can be found at www.voa.gov.uk

Unoccupied property rating

Business rates will not be payable in the first three months that a property is empty. This is extended to six months in the case of certain industrial properties. After this period rates are payable in full unless the unoccupied property rate has been reduced by the Government by order. In most cases the unoccupied property rate is zero for properties owned by charities and community amateur sports clubs. In addition, there are a number of exemptions from the unoccupied property rate. Full details on exemptions can be obtained from the local authority. If the unoccupied property rate for the financial year has been reduced by order, it will be shown on the front of the bill.

The Government is introducing a new temporary measure for unoccupied new builds from October 2013. Unoccupied new builds will be exempt from unoccupied property rates for up to 18 months (up to state aid limits) where the property comes on to the list between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016. The 18 month period includes the initial three or six month exemption and so properties may, if unoccupied, be exempt from nondomestic rates for up to an extra 15 or 12 months.

Partly occupied property relief

A ratepayer is liable for the full non-domestic rate whether a property is wholly occupied or only partly occupied. Where a property is partly occupied for a short time, the local authority has discretion in certain cases to award relief in respect of the unoccupied part.

Small business rate relief

Ratepayers who are not entitled to another mandatory relief or are liable for unoccupied property rates and occupy a property with a rateable value which does not exceed £17,999 outside London or £25,499 in London will have their bill calculated using the lower small business non-domestic rating multiplier, rather than the national non domestic rating multiplier.

In addition, generally, if the sole or main property is shown on the rating list with a rateable value which does not exceed £12,000, the ratepayer will receive a percentage reduction in their rates bill for this property of up to a maximum of 50 per cent for a property with a rateable value of not more than £6,000. However, until 31 March 2015 the Government has doubled the usual level of relief.

Business rate reductions

Generally, this percentage reduction (relief) is only available to ratepayers who occupy either:

- a) one property; or
- b) one main property and other additional properties providing those additional properties each have a rateable value which does not exceed £2,599.

The rateable value of the property mentioned in (a), or the aggregate rateable value of all the properties mentioned in (b), must not exceed £17,999 outside London or £25,499 in London on each day for which relief is being sought. If the rateable value, or aggregate rateable value, increases above those levels, relief will cease from the day of the increase.

However, the Government has introduced additional support to small businesses. For those businesses that take on an additional property which would normally have meant the loss of small business rate relief, the Government has confirmed that they will be allowed to keep that relief for a period of 12 months.

An application for Small Business Rate Relief is not required. Where a ratepayer meets the eligibility criteria and has not received the relief they should contact their local authority. Provided the ratepayer continues to satisfy the conditions for relief which apply at the relevant time as regards the property and the ratepayer, they will automatically continue to receive relief in each new valuation period.

Certain changes in circumstances will need to be notified to the local authority by a ratepayer who is in receipt of relief (other changes will be picked up by the local authority). The changes which should be notified are-

- a) the ratepayer taking up occupation of an additional property, and**
- b) an increase in the rateable value of a property occupied by the ratepayer in an area other than the area of the local authority which granted the relief.**

Charity and community amateur sports club (CASC) relief

Charities and registered community amateur sports clubs are entitled to 80 per cent relief where the property is occupied by the charity or the club, and is wholly or mainly used for the charitable purposes of the charity (or of that and other charities), or for the purposes of the club (or of that and other clubs).

The local authority has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill.

Local discounts

Local authorities have a general power to grant discretionary local discounts. Full details can be found at www.iwight.com/revsandbens

Retail discounts

The Government is giving funding to local authorities so that they can provide a discount worth up to £1,000 a year - in both 2014-15 and 2015-16 - to retail premises with a rateable value of up to £50,000. This will provide support to premises including pubs, cafes, restaurants and shops. The Government is also giving funding to local authorities so that they can provide a 50 per cent discount for 18 months for those businesses that move into retail premises that have been empty for a year or more. This is available for businesses which move into empty premises between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2016. The award of such discounts is considered likely to amount to state aid. However it will be state aid compliant where it is provided in accordance with the De Minimis Regulations (1407/2013). The De Minimis Regulations allow an undertaking to receive up to €200,000 'de minimis' aid over a rolling three year period. **If you are receiving, or have received, any 'de minimis' aid granted during the current or two previous financial years (from any source), you should inform the local authority immediately with details of the aid received.**

Hardship relief

The local authority has discretion to give hardship relief in specific circumstances.

Rate relief for businesses in rural areas

Certain types of properties in a rural settlement with a population below £3,000 - the only general store, post office or food shop may be entitled to relief and with a rateable value of less than £8,500, or the only public house or petrol station and with a rateable value of less than £12,500. The property has to be occupied and an eligible ratepayer is entitled to relief at 50 per cent of the full charge whilst the local authority also has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill, if it is satisfied that the business is to the benefit of the community and having regard to the interests of its council taxpayers. In addition, the local authority can give relief on certain other occupied property in a rural settlement where the rateable value is less than £16,500.

Full details of all reliefs and applications can be found at www.iwight.com/revsandbens selecting Business Rates Reductions.

Non-domestic rates explained

Cancellation of backdated rates liability

The Government has put in place regulations to allow for the cancellation of certain backdated business rates liabilities. The relevant regulations, the non-domestic rating (Cancellation of Backdated Liabilities) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/537), can be found at www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/537/made

Information on the type of backdated rates liability that can be cancelled is available with business rates information letter titled Cancellation of Backdated Rates:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/8187/Business_Rates_Information_Letter_4-2012.pdf

Rating advisers

Ratepayers do not have to be represented in discussions about their rateable value or their rates bill. Appeals against rateable values can be made free of charge. However, ratepayers who do wish to be represented should be aware that members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS – website www.rics.org.uk) and the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV – website www.irrv.org.uk) are qualified and are regulated by rules of professional conduct designed to protect the public from misconduct. Before you employ a rating adviser, you should check they have the necessary knowledge and expertise, as well as appropriate indemnity insurance. Take great care and, if necessary, seek further advice before entering into any contract.

Information supplied with demand notices

Information relating to the relevant and previous financial years in regard to the gross expenditure of the local authority is available at www.iwight.com/brinfo

A hard copy is available on request by writing to the council or at **01983 823920**.

How to pay your council tax/business rates

Paying by direct debit

Collecting local taxation by direct debit is much cheaper for the council as it saves substantial administrative time and expense, such savings free more council funds for providing local services.

We offer a choice of payment dates – **1st, 10th or 20th** of the month and **half yearly (2 instalments 1 April and 1 October)**. www.iwight.com/online and select “apply online” to download a Direct Debit instruction for completion or contact the council tax office on 01983 823901, and the business rates office on **01983 823920**.

You can now pay Council Tax and Business Rates over twelve monthly instalments. To request this now go to www.iwight.com/revsandbens and select “How to Pay”

Act now and you will also help us to save the cost of sending you more paperwork. Any delay means your request may not allow sufficient time to start the new instalment plan in time for 2014/15.

Internet payments

You can pay via the internet with your Debit Card at www.iwight.com “Pay Online” to utilise the 24-hour payment facility.

Telephone payments

You can pay by Debit Card when using the 24 hour automated telephone payment system.

Please call **0845 045 0076** to access the 24 hour automated telephone payment system.

You will need to quote your account reference and the amount you wish to pay. Your account reference number can be found on your council tax bill.

Online banking

You can pay your council tax over the Internet, you will need the council's bank details: **Sort code 54-10-34, account number 47672552** and to quote your account reference number. Your account reference number can be found on your council tax bill.

By AllPay

Download the App from *App Store /Google play* using an Apple or Android Smartphone wherever there is a mobile signal. Use the 19 digit payment reference number from the bar code on the front of your council tax bill to pay your instalments.

You can pay in cash only at any PayPoint retailer. You must take your bill or payment card with you when you go to pay. To request a payment card click visit **www.iwight.com/revsandbens "How To Pay"**

If you have been issued with an Allpay payment card you can now make your payment to the council direct from your mobile telephone. All you need is a registered mobile phone and a debit card, then please log on to **www.allpayments.net/textpay/login.aspx**

Post Office

You can use your payment card at any Post Office free of charge by cash or debit card.

Your rights

The council wishes to give the best possible service and hopes to resolve your concerns quickly, if you have a complaint about council services please make it to the council department concerned. If we cannot deal with your concerns ourselves, or if you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your complaint, you can talk to the local government ombudsman advice team on 0300 061 0614 or go to their website at www.lgo.org.uk

Alternatively you can write to:

The Local Government Ombudsman,
PO Box 4771,
Coventry
CV4 0EH





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If you have difficulty understanding this document, please contact us on 01983 821000 and we will do our best to help you.