

Your council tax and business rates 2016 to 2017



Including Police and Crime Commissioner budget and priorities

Message from the leader of the council

This is the most difficult budget this council has had to address and deal with for many years. For 2016/17 the council had to find savings of almost £17.5m, due to increasing pressures on our finances from government funding cuts.

Extensive representations and lobbying has taken place, and an extremely strong case has been put forward to government for additional resources. It is bitterly disappointing that the final funding settlement offered us not a penny more. We are continuing to lobby the government to provide a fairer funding deal for the Island.

The 2016/17 budget was, therefore, constructed to do the best possible within the current circumstances; to save what we must, in order to make the books balance, and to provide us with time and sufficient security to enter into a process which, in a nutshell, may decide whether this council stands or falls. We have considered the options very carefully to maintain what services we can and minimise the pain to Island residents, while considering the impact on the future of where we live.

Regrettably, council tax will rise by 3.99 per cent this year. On top of the maximum 1.99 per cent rise allowed, this year the government announced an additional 2 per cent increase was possible, to fund adult social care. This extra income support some of our most vulnerable residents, but it falls short of covering the ever increasing costs that the Island has to deliver these essential services.

We have also had to agree a number of changes to the local council tax support benefit, in order to find further savings. Those who receive help through this benefit may now have to pay more than in previous years towards their council tax. Again, this is unfortunate, as it further impacts low income households; for which I am sorry.

Our ambitions and priorities for the Island remain the same, but, as has been made clear, we will have to look at new ways to deliver services over the coming year:

- Supporting growth in the economy and tourism, making the Island a better place and keeping it safe.
- Keeping children safe and improving their education.
- Protecting the most vulnerable with health and social care, investing in support, prevention and continuing care.
- Ensuring the most effective use of resources in achieving the Island's priorities.

In accordance with our priorities, and the pressures that we face this year, I am confident that our resources are being put to the best possible use for the benefit of the Island, in these difficult times.

Councillor Jonathan Bacon, 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/Local council tax support	01983 823950
Housing services	01983 823040
Parking services	01983 823714
Planning	01983 823552
Registrars	01983 823233
Waste collection	01983 823777

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 2016-17 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 £315.3 million in 2016-17 on providing services for Islanders. After deducting grants and income of £196.8 million, the net budget is £118.5 million. This is £4.1 million lower than the 2015-16 budget.

Budget gap to be bridged:

Extra spending by the council
£8,165,000

Adult social care

Extra spending by the council
(increased need; additional costs of care packages; impact of living wage)
£4,772,000

Cost of maintaining existing service levels
£3,393,000

Reduction in government grants
£7,313,000

Budget gap carried forward from 2015-16
£6,769,000

Budget gap
£22,247,000

Budget gap met by:

Additional business rate income and
1.99% council tax increase
£4,127,000

2% adult social care precept
£1,367,000

Agreed savings
£12,753,000

Use of balances
£4,000,000

Factors which offset budget gap
£22,247,000

Where the money comes from

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

- Retained 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

21.3% (£67,187,000)

B Council tax

22.6% (£71,090,000)

C Business rate retention scheme

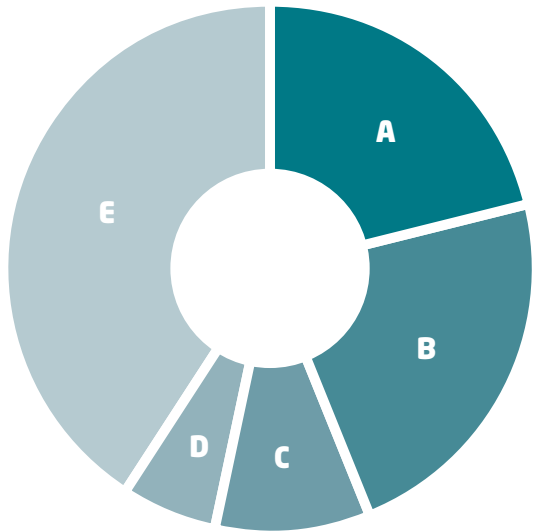
9.6% (£30,369,000)

D Revenue support grant

5.7% (£18,082,000)

E Fees, charges, contributions, other grants and collection fund surplus/deficit

40.8% (£128,592,000)



Investing in the future

In addition to its day to day revenue funding, the council also plans to invest £37 million in capital projects in 2016/17 which support our key priorities. Of this some £17 million will be funded from government grants and contributions with the remaining £20 million coming from council borrowing.

The investment includes £17 million of capital contributions to the waste contract, £5 million for the replacement Cowes ferry vessel, £3.5 million for road works as part of the Asda development, £1.6 million on disabled facilities grants and £4 million on schools. The remaining spend will be spread across smaller projects like rights of way, fire appliances, ICT, refurbishments for care facilities, and works to leisure centres and harbours.

The council has limited capital resources and therefore has prioritised projects that support the improvement and delivery of statutory services, essential works and initiatives that protect current income or generate additional income. In addition to this approved capital programme, the council has also agreed in principle to invest the capital receipt it received from the disposal of land to Asda on projects that either reduce the council's revenue costs and/or generate ongoing income to help bridge the revenue budget gap.

At 31 March 2015 our total net borrowings were £136.4 million.

Council workforce

At the end of December 2015 the council employed the equivalent of 3,211 full-time posts including 1,645 equivalent full-time posts based in schools.

Where the money will go in 2016-17

	This year £'000	Last year £'000		This year £'000	Last year £'000
Adult social services	64,725	59,953	Economic and tourism development	788	1,190
Housing services	58,311	60,239	Cultural, leisure and libraries	3,576	3,663
Schools budgets ¹	76,174	77,653	Public health	8,009	6,177
LEA budget	12,965	13,091	Other services	7,676	7,732
Children's services	21,314	21,505	Other financing	1,968	6,628
Fire service	7,367	7,500	Gross expenditure	315,320	320,153
Environmental services	1,280	1,560	Less: income	-196,835	-197,538
Community safety	3,100	3,229	Net budget requirement	118,485	122,615
Waste management	9,044	9,459	RSG and business rate retention scheme	-48,451	-55,622
Highways including PFI ²	25,116	25,540	Collection fund (surplus)/deficit - council tax	-977	-755
Car parking ³	1,180	1,463	Collection fund (surplus)/deficit - business rates	2,033	220
Public transport support	5,226	5,577	Council tax requirement	71,090	66,458
Planning and development control	2,445	2,793			
Recreation and sport	3,542	3,634			
Parks and open spaces	1,514	1,567			

- 1 The schools' budget is funded by the dedicated schools' grant, other grants received from the Department for Education and income received by schools.
- 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 your council tax bill is

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 2016-17 is 3.99% higher than in 2015-16, equivalent to 92p per week for a band C taxpayer. **The council is able to have a general increase in council tax of under 2%. Any increase above this level requires a public referendum.** In addition for 2016/17 the Government have introduced regulations that enable councils with adult social care responsibilities to increase council tax by a further 2% without triggering a public referendum. This adult social care precept is to be used to meet additional costs of adult social care that will arise from the introduction of the national living wage, increased need and inflation. The council has therefore agreed an overall increase of 3.99% including a 2% increase for adult social care. More information about the social care precept can be found at www.iwight.com/ctinfo

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.

The table shows the amount of the Isle of Wight Council element of the council tax payable for each band.

Band	Value of property 1 April 1991	Proportion of band D	Council tax (IW Council element)
A	Up to £40,000	6/9	£930.11 *£775.09
B	£40,001 to £52,000	7/9	£1,085.13
C	£52,001 to £68,000	8/9	£1,240.15
D	£68,001 to £88,000	9/9	£1,395.17
E	£88,001 to £120,000	11/9	£1,705.21
F	£120,001 to £160,000	13/9	£2,015.25
G	£160,001 to £320,000	15/9	£2,325.28
H	Over £320,000	18/9	£2,790.34

* Disabled reduction

Want to appeal against your property banding?

Further information about this is provided on page 15 and 16 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% in 2016-17, 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.

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 2016-2017	£ Total 2015-2016		£ per band D	£ Total 2016-2017	£ Total 2015-2016
Isle of Wight Council	1,395.17	71,090,050	66,458,137	Lake	28.17	45,322	41,364
Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire	160.46	8,176,143	7,793,342	Nettlestone & Seaview	22.28	38,333	38,264
Parish/town councils				Newchurch	16.55	17,030	16,605
Arreton	20.38	7,817	7,468	Newport	38.40	284,395	156,035
Bembridge	67.48	135,542	119,755	Niton & Whitwell	36.87	34,167	18,839
Brading	81.29	59,895	58,145	Northwood	22.70	19,355	19,089
Brighstone	39.37	31,222	28,586	Rookley	25.35	6,067	5,579
Calbourne	33.68	12,956	12,764	Ryde	83.17	643,642	475,159
Chale	33.28	7,994	7,480	Sandown	101.18	229,828	202,362
Chillerton & Gatcombe	45.11	8,268	6,859	Shalfleet	47.03	33,178	30,895
Cowes	56.85	233,594	170,781	Shanklin	54.84	185,557	126,448
East Cowes	73.18	174,554	128,903	Shorwell	25.95	8,172	5,504
Fishbourne	44.07	18,291	18,239	St Helens	52.24	29,150	28,500
Freshwater	92.58	224,023	191,612	Totland	70.98	90,630	59,664
Godshill	38.53	20,936	15,490	Ventnor	111.45	271,809	232,326
Gurnard	65.68	53,775	48,895	Whippingham	40.87	12,867	12,267
Havenstreet & Ashey	29.67	9,532	7,131	Wootton Bridge	47.80	64,693	62,950
				Wroxall	21.03	11,742	10,148
				Yarmouth	91.21	46,780	35,117

The precept amounts for the parish and town councils are shown net of grant received relating to the localised council tax support scheme.

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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 the table below:

	Gross spend	Income	Reserve movement	Precept requirement 2016-2017	Precept requirement 2015-2016
Cowes Town Council	238,010	-4,416	0	233,594	170,781
East Cowes Town Council	182,000	-7,446	0	174,554	128,903
Freshwater Parish Council	231,373	-7,350	0	224,023	191,612
Newport Town Council	296,298	-11,903	0	284,395	156,035
Ryde Town Council	751,200	-42,558	-65,000	643,642	475,159
Sandown Town Council	242,299	-12,471	0	229,828	202,362
Shanklin Town Council	306,509	-13,387	-107,565	185,557	126,448
Ventnor Town Council	412,446	-140,637	0	271,809	232,326

Commentary by individual parish or town councils in respect of their budget for 2016-17 is provided in appropriate parish communications such as newsletters or websites.



Paying for your policing

Police and crime commissioner sets budget for 2016/17

Following the chancellor's Autumn statement in November 2015 and the policing minister's funding settlement in December made it clear that the government expected police and crime commissioners to increase the precept by at least 1.99 per cent in order to maintain the protection in real terms of police spending.

The announcements from the government came after years of cuts to police budgets have seen officer numbers reduced despite savings of £80 million and efficiencies across the two counties. In order to protect frontline policing, Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Simon Hayes is increasing the amount residents of Hampshire and Isle of Wight pay for policing by 1.99%, which for an average Band D council tax payer is an extra £3.13 a year.

Simon Hayes, Police and Crime Commissioner, said: "Following the historic cuts and despite significant savings made, the budget is still greatly reduced. I must ensure that the budget for policing in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight reflects what our residents expect from their constabulary.

"Feedback from members of the public across the two counties shows that the majority are in favour of a 1.99 per cent rise in the precept. We will continue to provide this essential and efficient service which has been shown as good value for money to residents."

Police funding

The majority of police funding (66 per cent) comes through Government grants, with the remaining 34 per cent coming from the council tax precept. The 2016/17 budget for the Police and Crime Commissioner and Hampshire Constabulary is £303.352m. It is broken down as follows:

Prevention and Neighbourhoods	£45.2m
Response and Patrol	£42.6m
Investigation	£73.4m
Operations	£20.6m
Intelligence and Tasking	£21.0m
Contact Management	£22.8m
Professional Standards & Management of Risk	£4.3m
Corporate Support	£49.9m
General	£18.3m
Chief Constable and Support	£3.8m
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	£1.5m

A detailed report and information about the budget and council tax precept for 2016/17 can be found here:

www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk/Accountability/Council-Tax.aspx

Further Information

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

For queries in relation to police funding:

Email: opcc@hampshire.pnn.police.uk

Phone: 01962 871595

Post: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, St George's Chambers, St George's Street, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8AJ.

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 six 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,
Council Tax West,
Valuation Office Agency,
Overline House,
Central Station,
Blechynden Terrace,
Southampton
SO15 1GW

Tel: 03000 501501

Email: ctwest@voa.gsi.gov.uk

If you think your band is wrong and the valuation office agrees your challenge, they will put it right and a revised council tax bill will be issued. This service is free.

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.

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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.

Further information on how to appeal your bill can be found at:
www.gov.uk/council-tax-appeals

To appeal about these matters, you must first notify the council tax office in writing and provide detailed reasons for your appeal to allow the matter to be reconsidered. 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

The council 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/selfserve using your online key.**

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;
- a 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.

Discounts for annexes

From 1 April 2014 annexes that are not exempt from council tax, that form part of a main dwelling, being used by the person(s) liable to pay council tax for that dwelling (as part of the main property or is the sole or main residence of a relative of those person(s)), may be eligible to a further 50 per cent reduction in council tax liability on top of any existing discount.

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.

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 per cent 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.

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/revsandbens or email: council.tax@iow.gov.uk

Exempt properties

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

- owned by charities (exemption allowed for up to six months only);
- 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.

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Other exempt properties are occupied property:

- 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.
- A property which is annexed to a family home and occupied by that family's elderly or disabled relative.
- Armed forces accommodation, owned by the Ministry of Defence.
- Visiting forces accommodation.

For further information and applications visit www.iwight.com and search for 'council tax reductions'.

Citizens access online at www.iwight.com/selfserve

- **Register for council tax moving into the area or moving within the area.**
- **Report a change – use the unique online key shown on your most recent bill, to view your payments and account balance.**
- **Set up or amend a direct debit to pay your council tax/business rates.**
- **Check the council tax property band or rateable value of a business.**
- **View details of your current benefit claim.**

You will not be able to view your council tax account without correctly inputting:

- Your name as it appears on your council tax bill.
- Your online key shown on the top of your most recent bill.
- Contact details – the last 3 digits of your bank account if you pay by direct debit, or last three digits of any phone number you may have supplied.
- Postcode – details should be entered in the format e.g. PO36 9EA

Contact us

www.iwight.com/revsandbens 'Do it online'

Email: council.tax@iow.gov.uk

Local council tax support

Do you struggle to pay your rent or council tax? If you are on a low income, your council may be able to help with housing benefit or council tax support.

If you are in receipt of income support, jobseekers allowance, universal credit, employment support allowance, pension credits, other state benefit or low income, you may qualify for local council tax support.

If your joint capital (eg, savings or investments) exceeds £6,000 you are unlikely to qualify for support from the main scheme, unless you are of pension credit age where the limit is normally £16,000.

Any application form for local council tax support should be completed 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 'Do it online'

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,

Council tax support

you must log your intention to claim and complete a new application for local council tax support immediately.

Changes to local council tax support from 1 April 2016 for working age claimants (www.iwight.com/lcts)

- **Savings in excess of £6000 will mean a person will no longer qualify.**
- **A self-employed claimant will be assessed to have a minimum living wage after a start-up period of one year.**
- **Backdated requests will be limited to one month.**
- **Removal of the family premium from the claim assessment for new claims.**
- **Removal of blanket protection for claimants receiving certain benefits and introduction of a targeted exceptional hardship scheme.**

For housing benefit, if your savings/investments exceed £16,000, it is unlikely you will qualify unless you receive pension credit (guarantee element), income based job seekers allowance or income-related employment and support allowance.

National Benefit Fraud Hotline – 0800 854440

If you know someone who is fraudulently claiming housing benefit please call the Department of Works and Pensions hotline (Your call will be dealt with confidentially), or by post to:

NBFH,
PO Box 224
PR1 1GP

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 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 at **www.gov.uk/government/organisations/valuation-office-agency**. The rateable value of your property is shown on the front of your 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. Full details on your rights of appeal are available from the Valuation Office Agency. Your billing authority can only backdate any business rates rebate to the date from which any change to the list is to have effect.

The Valuation Office Agency will continue to fulfil their legal obligations to alter rating assessments if new information comes to light indicating the valuation is inaccurate. Any alterations they make on or after 1 April 2016 can only be backdated to 1 April 2015.

Further information about the grounds on which appeals may be made and the process for doing so can be found on the **www.gov.uk** website or obtained 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.

The current multipliers are shown on the front of your bill.

Business rates instalments

Payment of business rate bills is automatically set on a ten-monthly cycle. However, the Government has put in place regulations that 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 2017

All rateable values are reassessed 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. This helps maintain fairness in the rating system by updating valuations in line with changes in the market. The current rating list is based on the 2010 revaluation. The Government has confirmed that the next revaluation will take place in 2017 based on rental values at 1 April 2015. More information on revaluation 2017 can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/valuation-office-agency.

Your draft rateable value is coming. You need to register your email address now. Register at www.gov.uk/voa/revaluation. From October 2016 you can check your draft rateable value and let the VOA know if the information held about your property is incorrect.

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.

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 your 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 has introduced a 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 non-domestic 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. Full details can be obtained from the local authority.

Small business rate relief

Ratepayers who are not entitled to other 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 – subject to a small number of exemptions – have their bills 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. The Government has announced, in the 2015 autumn statement, that the doubling of the usual level of relief – to a maximum of 100 per cent – will continue for a further year, until 31 March 2017.

Your non-domestic rates 2016 to 2017

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.

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 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. Full details can be obtained from the local authority.

Local discounts

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

State aid

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 EC 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. Full details can be obtained from the local authority.

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 while 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'.

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,

Your non-domestic rates 2016 to 2017

ratepayers who do wish to be represented should be aware that members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS – website: www.rics.org) 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 that 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

Financial management of Isle of Wight Council where information is published in the Council Tax Leaflet 2016/17.

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 (two instalments – 1 April and 1 October)**. Visit www.iwight.com/revsandbens and select 'apply online' to download a direct debit instruction for completion, or go online to www.iwight.com/selfserve and select **council tax notification** or **business rates notification**.

You can pay council tax and business rates over 12 monthly instalments. To request this 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.

Internet and telephone payments

To pay by debit card visit www.iwight.com and select 'pay online' to use the 24-hour payment facility, or 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

To pay your council tax/business rates using your online bank, you will need the council's bank details:

Sort Code: 54-10-34

Account Number: 47672552

You will need to quote your account reference number. Your account reference number can be found on your bill.

By AllPay

Search for and download the Allpay app from Apple's app store or Google Play using a smartphone. 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 only pay in cash at any PayPoint retailer. You must take your bill or payment card with you when you go to pay. To request a payment card visit www.iwight.com/revsandbens and click '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 www.lgo.org.uk

Alternatively you can write to;

The Local Government Ombudsman,
PO Box 4771,
Coventry
CV4 OEH

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



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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.