

A GUIDE TO YOUR COUNCIL TAX BILL

Receipt: Your Rotherham Council services for 2024/25

- 139,000 bins collected every week and 2,200 public litter bins provided right across the Borough
- 2,500 adults cared for in their own homes
- Over 1,300 families supported by Early Help services
- Improvement projects across every ward in Rotherham including 23 Towns and Villages Fund schemes
- Over 154 road and footpath resurfacing schemes are planned in the next 12 months
- Nearly 4,700 roads swept so that they are clean and tidy
- 36,399 street lights kept in good repair
- 11 urban parks, 3 country parks and 60 playgrounds maintained for local residents to enjoy
- 15 libraries stocked with books and public access computers
- And much more...

All for around
£3.32 per day*



Rotherham Council delivers a wide range of services across the Borough. This leaflet tells you how we spend the money raised and other important information.

*Based on a Council Tax Band A property for services provided by Rotherham Council.

www.rotherham.gov.uk/counciltax

FOREWORD

The last decade has been a very challenging time for councils across the country, and sadly Rotherham has been no exception to that rule, having to make cuts and savings of over £200m to our Annual Budget since 2010. As prices have risen for households, the Council has faced the same pressures.

This year's increase of 1.5% in general council tax plus 2% through the government's Adult Social Care Levy is expected to be the lowest increase of any council in Yorkshire. This will be the fifth successive year when our increase has been below the government's referendum cap threshold, saving a Band D household nearly £200 over that time.

Even more in these tough times, we want to support Rotherham residents. So including use of the levy we can support an additional £7.5 million of additional funding to support Adult Social Care services for our residents who rely on them.

And because of the choices we have made we are able to do more this year to support families. We will put more money into Children's Centres and youth work, creating hundreds more sessions for children and families right across the borough. We will invest in new children's play areas, and in renovating the water splash at Clifton Park. By also rolling out baby packs to every new family we'll make sure no Rotherham child starts life without the essentials.

Moreover, we are prioritising the services that everyone benefits from. That means an additional £16 million over the next four years for road and pavement resurfacing, more staff and kit to help keep our streets clean, cracking down on litter and fly-tipping with tougher fines and slashing the cost of household bulky waste collections.

By making those choices now, we can do our bit to make our community the best place it can be for the future.



Councillor Chris Read
Leader of Rotherham Council

Your Council Tax in action

Our aim: **Every neighbourhood thriving**

We want every part of the borough to be a thriving neighbourhood, where people work together and achieve a good quality of life.

Over the last few years, our Towns and Villages Fund has seen improvements made or planned to local centres right across the borough. And over the coming years we have committed an additional £2 million to the Our Places fund, so we can continue to improve our local environment.

We have invested in the borough's fifteen libraries, with the new library at Thurcroft recently opening, the new Swinton Library under construction, and plans for new facilities in Wath and in the town centre in place.

The Council continues to invest in road and pavement resurfacing. Over the last few years, we have reduced the number of potholes in our roads by 50%, and over the next four years we will spend an additional £16 million to resurface an additional 40 miles of local roads. And to ensure the safety of all road users we will invest an additional £400,000 in small scale local interventions such as measures to make it easier to cross the road.

Council staff are pictured at Wickersley, helping to deliver a Towns and Villages Fund project.





Young people who successfully completed Independent Travel Training are pictured, alongside their family and Council staff.

Our aim: **Every child able to fulfil their potential**

We want every Rotherham child to make the best possible start in life, and this year the Council will spend £65 million on protecting and supporting our most vulnerable children and families. More than 1,300 families benefit from the Council's Early Help Services, including using the borough's nine children's centres, giving parents support and advice when they need it the most.

More than 500 children are currently living in the Council's care, including those in foster care and in the Council's own residential homes. The Council's latest Ofsted inspection rated the services we provide to our most vulnerable children as "Good".

We have continued to invest in creating new and improved school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities. This year we will go further, and working with Rotherham Parent Carer's Forum, we will open a new SEND Hub in the town centre, to give parents and children extra support in an accessible location.

In the coming year we will spend an additional £370,000 on additional universal services through our children's centres and more youth work, to ensure that more families are able to access the help they need. We will begin to invest more than £900,000 in a major upgrade of the children's play facilities at Thrybergh and Rother Valley Country Parks and in eight other locations around the borough. And we will support every new family with a baby pack, to make sure they have the essential items all children need, and parents know how to access help and advice.

Our aim: **People are safe, healthy and live well**

The single biggest area of expenditure for the Council is Adult Social Care. That means providing support and services for anyone aged over the 18 who needs assistance to live independently, often older people or those with a physical or mental disability. We expect to spend £122 million in the coming year supporting over 3,670 adults at any one time, including 2,500 in their own homes. This is an increase of over £7.5 million on last year with the extra money helping to ensure we can continue to meet the increased costs of care, as well as helping to recruit and retain excellent social care staff.

Our aim is to maximise a person's independence through information, advice, guidance, aids and adaptations, reablement and assistive technology. In addition, services such as home care and residential care continue to provide support for those people who need it.

We will continue to work closely with our NHS partners to support people to leave hospital and return home as quickly and as safely as possible, ensuring they are supported to regain independence. This will reduce pressure on our hospitals. The Council will support partners to ensure that excellent care is delivered for local residents.

We are committed to building a new day centre to assist residents with Learning Disabilities, Castle View at Canklow, alongside specialist housing in the adjacent area.

At the same time, nearly 20,000 Rotherham households live in Council homes, and we are building and buying hundreds more to meet the needs to residents who remain on our waiting list. As well as building new homes, we are investing £57.4 million in 2024/25 in our existing housing stock, ensuring it is always of a decent standard and that our residents have a safe and affordable place to live.

Plans for Castle View Day Centre in Canklow.



Our aim: **A cleaner, greener local environment**

Every week the Council collects 139,000 bins and provide 2,200 public litter bins right across the Borough. We operate four Household Waste Recycling Centres seven days a week. And in this year's budget we are committing an additional £366,000 to support additional street cleaning in our busiest areas, including dedicated staff to make sure we're getting the best use out of our street sweepers.

At the same time we are cracking down on litter and fly-tipping. The fines for those who are caught will be increased to the maximum allowed by law, and to help everyone to do the right thing we are halving the cost of household bulky waste collections.

We are proud of our three country parks at Thrybergh, Rother Valley and Ulley, as well as the award-winning Clifton Park, which are visited by almost 1.7million people each year, alongside numerous smaller community parks and green spaces across the borough.

We are committed to reducing the Council's carbon emissions and continue to roll out further tree planting as part of our commitment to reduce our impact on the environment.

A Council operative is pictured removing litter in Swinton.





An artist's impression showing what the completed Rotherham markets and library development could look like.

Our aim: **Expanding economic opportunity**

The Council's Employment Solutions team work to support local residents who need help to access work or training, assisting with debt or other challenges. Over the last three years 1,300 local people have moved back into work or education as a result.

The Council has secured more than £100 million of grant funding to improve our local economy, including £20 million to support the regeneration of Dinnington High Street and Wath town centre, and £8.9 million towards the redevelopment of the historic Centenary Market in Rotherham Town Centre.

Further work, due to start later this year, will see a new business district created at Templeborough, whilst the new Skills Academy at Maltby High School is nearing completion and innovation Skills Street project is under construction at Gulliver's Valley.

At the heart of town centre regeneration, the Forge Island scheme in the heart of the town centre is nearing completion this summer and will be home to a state-of-the-art cinema, a 69-room hotel, a mix of restaurants providing food from around the world and a coffee shop.

Importantly, we want to ensure that local people and local businesses get the full benefit of this activity, so social value is integrated into everything that the Council does. In the last three years we've increased the Council's spend with local businesses by more than £30 million a year.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

About your bill

The amount you pay in Council Tax is based on the band in which your property is classified.

Paying your bill

You can pay your Council Tax a number of ways, including:

- **One lump sum** (in April)
- **In two payments** (the first in April and the second in September)
- **Or, in weekly/fortnightly/monthly instalments.** If you are paying monthly, you have the choice of spreading your payments over 10 or 12 months for instalment plans that start in April. You can pay on the 6th, 13th, 20th or 27th of the month. However, if you wish to pay by 12 monthly instalments you must request this no later than the 9th April

If you have any outstanding balance from the previous year, the law does not allow us to include this within the instalments due for your new bill from April. Any outstanding balance should be paid straight away, or a payment arrangement made by contacting us.

You still need to pay your Council Tax bill even if there are council-provided services that you don't use. If you do not pay your bill, the Council can take action to recover the money that is owed.

Moving house and empty properties

If you move house at any point during the year, then you should inform the Council as soon as possible. You may be able to get a refund on the Council Tax that you have already paid or have it transferred to the bill for your new property if you are moving within the borough.

Council Tax is still payable on an empty property:

If a property has been empty and unfurnished for two years, an additional 100 per cent premium is payable. If a property has been empty and unfurnished for five years, an additional 200 per cent premium is payable. If a property has been empty and unfurnished for ten years, an additional 300 per cent premium is payable.

Legislation to allow Councils further discretion regarding the premiums is contained within The Levelling up and Regeneration bill. The act received Royal Assent in October 2023 and the Council is awaiting the regulations and guidance regarding any exclusions to premiums which are still being drafted.

The changes would mean that:

- The 100% premium could become effective for properties that have been unoccupied and unfurnished for over 1 year

- Second homes would become eligible for premiums. This does not include those second homes which currently receive a 50% job related discount

Consultation was undertaken by the Government and included several proposed circumstances for which the empty homes and second homes premiums would not be applied.

As full details of the changes are not yet available for 2024/25, Rotherham will continue to apply the empty homes premium as now when a property has

been unoccupied and unfurnished for two years. Rotherham will implement the second homes premium from 2025/26 although a further decision may be made once full details of the legislation and guidance are known.

In accordance with S11B(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, Rotherham Council will not apply the long-term empty premium to any class of dwelling prescribed by the Secretary of State as not subject to it.

We are required by law to send a bill, even if the amount owed is zero.

Contacting the Council

If you have questions about your bill or need to update your details, visit the Council website at: www.rotherham.gov.uk/counciltax

You can access the Council website for free at your local library or neighbourhood hub.

COUNCIL TAX DEMAND NOTICE EXPLANATORY NOTES

“**HOW THE TAX IS ARRIVED AT FOR BAND...**” shown on your bill, gives a percentage. The percentage (calculated to one decimal place) relates to the change in annual charge, for each element of the charge, compared to that of last year.

Council Tax Valuation Bands

Most dwellings are subject to Council Tax. There is one bill per dwelling, whether it is a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette, mobile home or houseboat, and whether it is owned or rented.

Each dwelling has been allocated to one of eight bands according to its open market capital value at 1st April 1991.

Under the legislation, the billing authority, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, has to set a Council Tax for the financial year commencing 1st April 2024, for a Band D property (a Parish Precept may also be relevant along with the precepts for the Police & Crime Commission and Fire & Rescue Authority). Each other band charge is calculated as a ratio of a Band D Charge, as shown in the table below.

Valuation Band	Range of Values	Ratio of Payment to Band D Property
A	Up to and including £40,000	6:9
B	£40,001 to £52,000	7:9
C	£52,001 to £68,000	8:9
D	£68,001 to £88,000	9:9
E	£88,001 to £120,000	11:9
F	£120,001 to £160,000	13:9
G	£160,001 to £320,000	15:9
H	More than £320,000	18:9

Your Council Tax bill states which band applies to your dwelling.

Can I appeal against my property's valuation band?

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) values domestic properties for council tax. This valuation is used to set your council tax band. You might need to contact the VOA if you think your council tax band is wrong.

You can find out more about when you can challenge your band and what you need to do at www.gov.uk/challenge-council-tax-band. If you challenge your band, you must continue to pay council tax at your current band until your appeal is decided.

You can contact the VOA at www.gov.uk/contact-voa. If you are unable to use the online service, you can also contact the VOA on 03000 501 501.

The grounds for appeal about banding are restricted to the following cases:

- where you believe that the banding should be changed because there has been a material increase or material reduction (this is explained below) in the dwelling's value
- where you start or stop using part of your dwelling to carry out a business, or the balance between domestic and business use changes
- where the Valuation Office Agency has altered a list without a proposal having been made by a taxpayer
- where you become the taxpayer in respect of a dwelling for the first time. (Your appeal must be made within six months, but if the same appeal has already been considered and determined by a Valuation Tribunal, it cannot be made again)

A material increase in value may result from building, engineering, or other work carried out on the dwelling. In these cases revaluation does not take place until after a sale – so the person appealing would usually be the new owner or resident.

A material reduction in value may result from the demolition of any part of the dwelling, any change in the physical state of the local area or an adaptation to make the dwelling suitable for use by someone with a physical disability. In these cases revaluation should take place as soon as possible.

Exempt dwellings – for which no Council Tax is payable for the period of exemption.

Dwellings owned by foreign diplomats, the Secretary of State for Defence and those working for certain international organisations.

OR

Occupied dwellings which are solely occupied:

- by students
- by a member of a visiting force and their family
- by a person or persons aged under 18
- by a person or persons who is or are severely mentally impaired
- by an elderly or disabled dependent relative in an annex.

OR

Vacant properties which:

- are left empty by someone who has moved in order to provide personal care to another person
- are waiting for probate or letters of administration to be granted (and for up to six months after, unless there is a change of ownership)
- have been repossessed
- are the responsibility of a bankrupt's trustee
- are empty because their occupation is forbidden by law
- are waiting to be occupied by a minister of religion
- are left empty by a student
- are annexed within the curtilage of an occupied dwelling
- are left empty by someone who has gone into prison, or who has moved to receive personal care in a hospital or a home or elsewhere
- are owned by a charity and immediately prior to becoming unoccupied have been utilised for charitable purposes (exempt up to six months)

If a dwelling consists of a pitch or a mooring which is not occupied by a caravan or, as the case may be, a boat, an exemption will apply.

If you think your property may be exempt, you should contact the Council Tax department on 01709 336007.

Section 13A – Local Government Finance Act 1992

In certain exceptional circumstances the Local Authority may reduce the amount payable.

Appeals

You may appeal if you consider that you are not liable to pay Council Tax, for example, because you are not the resident or owner, or because your property is exempt; or that your billing authority has made a mistake in calculating your bill or your Council Tax Support. If you wish to appeal on these grounds you must do so in writing.

Making an appeal does not allow you to withhold payment of Council Tax owing in the meantime. If your appeal is successful you will be entitled to a refund of any overpaid Council Tax.

Discounts

Discounts are available to Council Tax payers if they meet certain criteria. A Council Tax reduction of 25 per cent is available for adults who live alone in a dwelling (as their main home). Certain people will not be counted as adults resident in a dwelling if they are under the age of 18 or are:

- full-time students, student nurses, apprentices and Youth Training trainees
- a non British spouse, civil partner or dependent of a student
- patients resident in hospital
- people who are being looked after in care homes
- people who are severely mentally impaired
- people staying in certain hostels or night shelters
- 18 and 19 year olds who are at school/college
- 18 and 19 year olds for whom child benefit is in payment
- 18 and 19 year olds who leave school/college between 1st May and 31st October may be disregarded for this period
- care workers working for low pay, usually for charities
- people caring for someone with a disability who is not their spouse, partner or child under 18 years of age
- members of visiting forces and certain international institutions
- members of religious communities (monks and nuns)
- people in prison (except those in prison for non-payment of Council Tax or a fine)
- people who have immunity under either:
 - 1) The Diplomatic Privileges Act 1964 or
 - 2) International Organisations Act 1968 or
 - 3) Commonwealth Secretariat Act 1996.

If you are liable for an Annex you may qualify for a 50 per cent discount if you are:

- using the annex as part of the main residence
- aged under 65 and a relative of the person who pays the Council Tax in the main house.

If you think you may be entitled to a discount you should contact the Council Tax department on 01709 336007.

If your bill indicates that a discount has been allowed, you must tell us within 21 days of any change of circumstances which affects your entitlement.

If you fail to do so you may be required to pay a penalty.

People with disabilities

If you, or someone who lives with you, need a room, an extra bathroom or kitchen, or extra space in your property to meet special needs arising from a disability, you may be entitled to a reduced Council Tax bill. The bill may be reduced to that of a property in the band immediately below yours. If your home is in Band A your bill will be reduced by 1/9 of the Band D liability. These reductions ensure that disabled people do not pay more tax on account of space needed because of a disability.

Apply for disabled person's relief at:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/council-tax/apply-council-tax-discount/4

People on low incomes

You could be entitled to Council Tax Support if you are on a low income or in receipt of Income Support/Jobseekers Allowance/Pension Credit Guarantee Credit/ Employment and Support Allowance/Universal Credit or other state benefits.

Get help to pay your Council Tax:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/council-tax/get-help-pay-council-tax/1

This Authority is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information you provide for Council Tax purposes 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.

Adult Social Care Precept 2024/25

The Secretary of State made an offer to adult social care authorities. ("Adult social care authorities" are local authorities which have functions under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014, namely county councils in England, district councils for an area in England for which there is no county council, London borough councils, the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly).

The offer was the option of an adult social care authority being able to charge an additional "precept" on its Council Tax without holding a referendum, to assist the authority in meeting its expenditure on adult social care from the financial year 2016/17. It was originally made in respect of the financial years up to and including 2019/20. If the Secretary of State chooses to renew this offer in respect of a particular financial year, this is subject to the approval of the House of Commons.

The House of Commons has approved the Secretary of State's renewal of the offer to social care authorities which are able to increase the Adult Social Care Precept by up to 2%, for the financial year 2024/25.

In 2024/25 there is a 3.5% increase in Council Tax, comprising a 1.5% increase in the basic rate of Council Tax and a 2% increase in the Adult Social Care Precept.

PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION

The Council Tax Guide is published on the Council's website:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/counciltax

This provides details of how we work out your Council Tax and what your Council Tax pays for.

It also provides details of parish council precepts in the Borough. To request a paper copy free of charge contact Council Tax on 01709 336007.

For information about the statement of accounts and budget setting for the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority please visit: www.rotherham.gov.uk/counciltax

If you or someone you know needs help to understand or read this document, please ring 01709 336007.



FOSTERING
ROTHERHAM

Join our fostering family and help make a difference to a local child

CALL US 01709 357370

Help us change the lives of local children



www.fosteringrotherham.com

There are currently over 500 Rotherham children in care of all ages, who urgently need local people with the love in their heart and the room in their home to provide a safe, loving environment that they can thrive in.

Could that be you?

You will receive extensive support from the Council's Fostering team and fostering community in Rotherham.

Find out more at www.fosteringrotherham.com or call 01709 357370.

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A family friendly leisure destination
in the heart of Rotherham

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Caffé Noor • Casa Peri Peri • Cow & Cream
Estabulo Rodizio • Sakku Samba • The Rustic Pizza Co.

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