

# Council tax in Ashford 2024/25

How your council tax helps pay for the services we provide



It costs us around 50p every time we send out a printed council tax bill.

So save time, save money and make resources go further.

Sign up to e-billing at: [www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/council-tax-e-billing](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/council-tax-e-billing)

Visit [www.ashford.gov.uk](http://www.ashford.gov.uk) for more information.

Query with your council tax? Phone **01233 331111**.

## About your council tax

Council tax is a local tax that you pay to fund the services that are provided by:

- Ashford Borough Council
- Kent County Council
- Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service

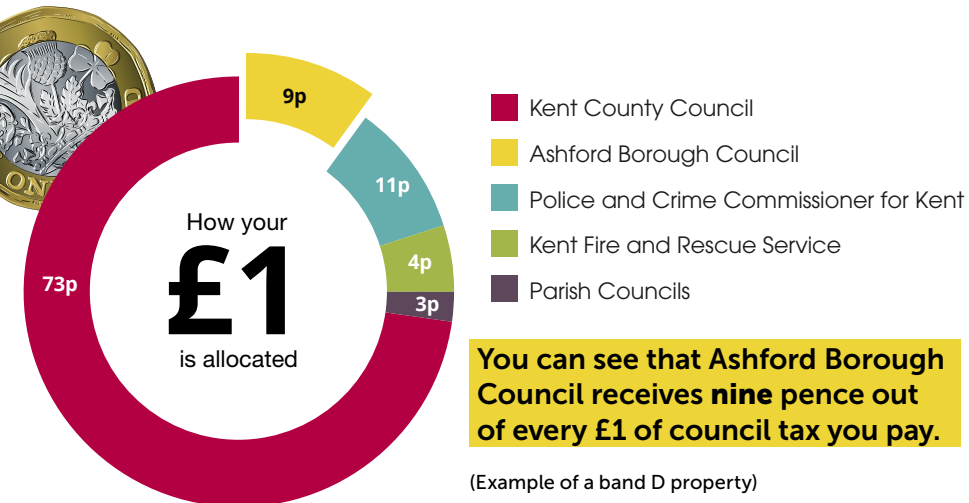
If you live in an area with a parish or town council, an element of what you pay will also go to them.

The amount you pay is determined by the value of your property (please note, valuations are based on your property's value in 1991). The amount that is quoted is always that of a band D property, which is the average.

Council tax bills are sent out in mid-March. Please check yours carefully when it arrives. On the bill you can find out which council tax band you are in.

### Who receives my council tax?

Ashford Borough Council collects your council tax and then distributes it as shown in the chart below.



## How every £1 of your council tax is allocated

	2024/25	%
Ashford Borough Council	£9,366,420	9
Kent County Council	£80,270,382	73
Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent	£12,764,467	11
Kent Fire and Rescue Service	£4,480,395	4
Parish Councils	£2,857,275	3
<b>Total Council Tax Collected</b>	<b>£109,738,939</b>	

## Your council tax is one of the lowest in Kent

The allocation set by Ashford Borough Council is one of the lowest in Kent. The council is raising council tax on a band D property by £5.46, this is to ensure the council can continue to provide our residents with their statutory services without imposing cuts that would reduce service delivery. Ashford's council tax is significantly lower at £187.96 than the average council tax in Kent which is currently £232.92 per annum, based on the provisional figures supplied by all authorities.

Local councils now have a choice of increasing the level at which their council tax is set – the maximum being either 2.99% or £5, whichever is greater. Ashford Borough Council members have agreed to raise it by £5.46 (2.99%) (for a band D property) for 2024-25 – working out at just over 10p per week extra (for a band D property).

Authority	Average charge for a band D property (2023-24 financial year)	Average charge for a band D property (2024-25 financial year)
Ashford	182.50	187.96
Average for Kent districts	226.59	232.92

# Your council tax goes towards lots of things

Here's a snapshot of just some of the things your council tax contributes to, on average, in just one week...



**213**

tonnes of waste recycled



**139**

tonnes of garden waste collected and recycled



**11**

incidents of fly tipping removed



**189**

miles of streets cleaned  
(or 305 kilometres)



**34**

licences issued  
(examples include; alcohol sales, taxis and scrap metal)



**25**

environmental investigations  
(examples include; noise nuisance, air quality and contaminated land)



**12**

food hygiene inspections carried out



**47**

planning application decisions made



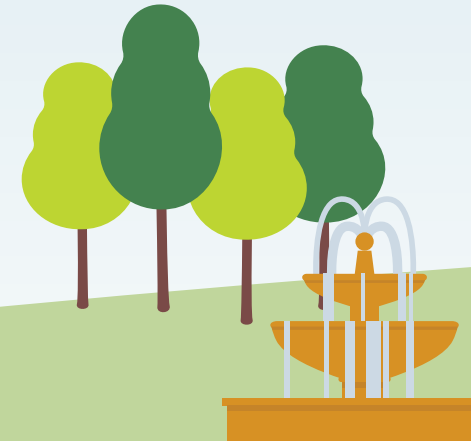
**200**

households supported in temporary accommodation



**2,300**

customer calls and emails dealt with



## These are just some of our services

Ashford Borough Council provides a range of services for just over **£3.62** a week (based on the amount paid on a band D property).

### Examples include:

- Weekly food waste and refuse or recycling collection
- Keeping streets clean and emptying public bins, deter and prosecute environmental crimes, such as fly tipping
- Provide and maintain playgrounds and support wider leisure facilities
- Support those homeless or at risk of becoming homeless through advice and support
- Promote the delivery of projects for the future economic growth of the borough: Newtown Works, enhancements to Victoria Park and regeneration of the town centre
- Grants, funding for community projects, support for the voluntary and community sector
- Maintain a local development plan to ensure development is made in a strategic manner within designated sites
- Electoral services, including voter registration
- Youth and arts services (including cultural and town centre events)
- Public health duties, including food hygiene inspections of commercial properties
- Our communications channels (our websites, social media, telephone and face-to-face customer services)

### Pay by direct debit

The easiest way to pay your council tax is by direct debit.

You can pay on the 1st of each month and spread the cost over 10 or 12 months from April.



To set up a direct debit:

- Visit [www.ashford.gov.uk/pay](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/pay)

## Your contributions to each organisation

House Band	Ashford Borough Council	CC Adult Social Care	Kent County Council	Kent Fire and Rescue	Police and CC for Kent	Total Council Tax (excluding parish precepts)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
A	125.31	155.34	918.54	59.94	170.77	<b>1,429.90</b>
B	146.19	181.23	1,071.63	69.93	199.23	<b>1,668.21</b>
C	167.08	207.12	1,224.72	79.92	227.69	<b>1,906.53</b>
D	187.96	233.01	1,377.81	89.91	256.15	<b>2,144.84</b>
E	229.73	284.79	1,683.99	109.89	313.07	<b>2,621.47</b>
F	271.50	336.57	1,990.17	129.87	369.99	<b>3,098.10</b>
G	313.27	388.35	2,296.35	149.85	426.92	<b>3,574.74</b>
H	375.92	466.02	2,755.62	179.82	512.30	<b>4,289.68</b>

The table above shows how much money you will pay to each organisation in the 2024-25 financial year. This is the total you will pay in one year, so for a band D property, your total amount will be **£2,144.84**. The monthly amount will be itemised in your bill.

Other organisations listed above are also increasing their element of council tax. Therefore, you will see an increase in your overall council tax bill compared with last year. If you live in an area where there is a parish, town or community council, the amount you contribute towards this is detailed on your bill.

## Council tax reduction

Council tax reduction is a local system designed to help you pay your council tax if you are on a low income.

Visit [www.ashford.gov.uk/benefits/claiming-benefits/claiming-council-tax-reduction/](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/benefits/claiming-benefits/claiming-council-tax-reduction/)

## Ashford Borough Council's budget

This table shows you how much money:

- We allocate to each service area within the council
- We are allocating compared with last year
- We spend on each service per head of population
- We have to spend overall compared with last year
- We have in our reserves, should we need to use it.

Service	2023/24	2024/25	*Per Head
	£	£	£
Finance and IT	29,480	28,891	213
HR, Customer Services, Comms and Digitalisation	737	687	5
Housing	41,117	43,758	323
Health & Wellbeing (incl. Port Health)	8,348	4,485	33
Environment, Property and Recreation	15,856	19,695	145
Planning and Development	4,762	4,549	34
Corporate Management Costs	834	631	5
Economic Development	780	848	6
Performance and Policy	1,699	1,548	11
Legal	616	693	5
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>104,229</b>	<b>105,785</b>	<b>780</b>
Less grants and other income	-84,875	-84,189	-621
<b>Net expenditure</b>	<b>19,354</b>	<b>21,596</b>	<b>159</b>
Contribution to/(from) reserves	-650	164	1
<b>Budget requirement</b>	<b>18,704</b>	<b>21,760</b>	<b>160</b>
Financed by:			
New Homes Bonus	-1,662	-1,447	-11
Government grants	-615	-1,358	-10
Business rates	-7,502	-9,589	-71
<b>Council Tax requirement</b>	<b>8,925</b>	<b>9,366</b>	<b>69</b>

Ashford population of 135,600 (based on the Statistical Bulletin published by Kent County Council, summer 2021).

## The future

The council has reacted quickly to the changing economic environment over the last year and there is still uncertainty as we move into the next financial year. The council is committed to delivering the priorities set out in our Corporate Plan and delivering essential services to our residents.

We want to increase biodiversity, to continue to improve our recycling rates, to encourage greener modes of transport and for our homes and buildings to be as energy efficient as possible.

Every community needs a range of homes, affordable to local people and offering suitable accommodation for all. This, together with well-planned local services, from shops and schools to health and leisure facilities, community spaces, parks and green areas that are easy and safe to access are vital to everyone's health and wellbeing. We will work with other partners to make sure that local people are equipped with the skills and knowledge to

take up new opportunities as existing businesses adapt and new businesses establish in the borough.

Increasing productivity by attracting creative and innovative industries to establish themselves in the borough alongside growing and strengthening the visitor economy are key drivers to good employment and increasing the skills and knowledge base of local people. Ashford has grown its business base by attracting inward investment to the borough. Building on this success we will support existing and new business to thrive with a focus on green, sustainable businesses.

Working to the Corporate Plan will ensure the borough recovers to be greener, more sustainable and resilient for the future benefit of our residents.



## FAQs

### How do you work out how much council tax you need to charge?

To work out how much council tax our residents need to pay, we work out how much money we need to deliver our services and then take away the money we receive from the government and other sources. This leaves us with the funding gap we need to fill through council tax contributions.

### Why has my council tax increased?

The economic landscape over the past year has resulted in high inflation, increasing interest rates and a cost of living crisis. This is a time of increased costs for residents, businesses within the borough, and Ashford Borough Council is not protected from these external factors. If we didn't increase council tax we'd have to cut vital services as the funding is simply not there.

### Why is my council tax bill more than my friends?

The amount of council tax you pay depends on the property band you live in. All properties are banded into one of eight valuation bands (A to H) set by the government. If you live in an area with a Parish Council, you may also have to pay an additional precept set by them which is added to your bill. You can find out more about valuation bands and what to do if you wish to appeal your banding on our website: [www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/valuation-and-band-charges/](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/valuation-and-band-charges/)

### Why do I have to pay for services I don't use?

Council tax is like income tax – it's not a charge for individual services, it contributes towards the overall running costs of delivering our services. It goes toward a range of services you use daily that benefit everyone, for example; your bin collections, supporting those homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and electoral services. Some services are used by fewer residents depending on personal circumstances but remember, we never know what services we may need in the future.

### How do I pay my council tax?

You'll receive your bill in March which outlines payment options. You can pay the annual bill in one go or in monthly instalments. The easiest way to pay is to set up a Direct Debit – you can choose whether to pay over 10 or 12 months. [www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/)

### What do I do if I can't pay my council tax?

If you're struggling to pay your bill, please let us know as soon as possible so we can make reasonable alternative payment arrangements. You can contact us at [revenues@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:revenues@ashford.gov.uk)

### What will happen if I miss a payment?

If you don't pay your council tax bill on time, we'll send you a reminder telling you how much is overdue which you'll be required to pay within seven days. If you fail to do so, you could lose the right to pay in instalments. If payment is still not made as required, recovery proceedings may be taken against you. [www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/if-you-don-t-pay-on-time/](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/if-you-don-t-pay-on-time/)

### Could I be eligible for a discount or exemption?

Depending on your personal circumstances, you may be eligible for a discount on your council tax, for example, if you're the only person over 18 living in your home or you're a full-time student. In some cases, you may be eligible for a council tax reduction or exempt from paying council tax at all. For more information about discounts and exemptions or to make an application, visit: [www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-exemptions-and-disregards/](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-exemptions-and-disregards/)

### How can I find out more information?

Information about all aspects of council tax - including how to pay, telling us about changes to your circumstances, discounts and exemptions visit: [www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/)

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# How else is my council tax spent?

Please use the links below to access information on how the other named authorities are spending their share of your council tax.



## Kent County Council

[www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budget/council-tax](http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budget/council-tax)



## Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

[www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/what-we-do/setting-the-kent-police-budget](http://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/what-we-do/setting-the-kent-police-budget)



## Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority

[www.kent.fire-uk.org/financial-information](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org/financial-information)

**Parish councils –** [www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax-information](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax-information)

## Tenterden Town Council

As Tenterden has a town council, its information is included separately here. Details of Tenterden Town Council's activities and services can be obtained from their website [www.tenterdentowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.tenterdentowncouncil.gov.uk)

Copies of its latest newsletter and annual report can be downloaded from there or requested by calling **01580 762271**.

	2023/24	2024/25
Estimated expenditure	<b>683,900</b>	<b>724,250</b>
Less income	<b>(30,320)</b>	<b>(30,470)</b>
<b>Precept charged</b>	<b>653,580</b>	<b>693,780</b>
Earmarked additional reserves for Town Projects		<b>74,000</b>