|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Council Tax Valuation Bands**  Most dwellings are charged for Council Tax. There is one bill for each dwelling,  whether it is a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette, mobile home or houseboat, and  whether it is owned or rented.  Each dwelling has been put into one of the eight bands according to its open  market capital value at **1 April 1991**:     |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Valuation Band  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H | Range of Values  Up to and including  £40,001  £52,001  £68,001  £88,001  £120,001  £160,001  More than | to  to  to  to  to  to | £40,000  £52,000  £68,000  £88,000  £120,000  £160,000  £320,000  £320,000 |   Your Council Tax bill tells you which band applies to your dwelling.  **2. Dwellings that are exempt**  Some dwellings are exempt, that is, no Council Tax is charged for them. This  includes: properties occupied by students, foreign diplomats, people under 18 or  people who are severely mentally impaired; annexes occupied by dependant  relatives; and empty properties which:  - are owned by a charity (exempt for up to six months)  - are left empty by someone who has gone into prison, or who has moved to  receive personal care in hospital or a home or elsewhere  - are left empty by someone who has moved so that they can provide  personal care to another person  - are left empty by students  - are owned by the deceased persons and probate or letters of administration  have not been granted (and for up to six months after)  - 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 empty annexes (which are part of another property and may not be let  separately without breaking planning regulations)  Forces' barracks and married quarters are also exempt. Their occupants will  contribute to the cost of local services through a special arrangement. If you think  your property may be exempt application can be made at [www.ashford.gov.uk](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/)  If there is an exemption showing on your bill the explanatory leaflet can be read at: [www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-and-exemptions/exemption-classes](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-and-exemptions/exemption-classes)  **3. Discounts**  The full Council Tax bill assumes that there are two adults living in each dwelling.  If only one adult lives in a dwelling (and it is their main home), the Council Tax bill  will be reduced by a quarter (25%).  People in the following groups do not count towards the number of adults living  in a dwelling:  - full-time students, student nurses, apprentices and Youth Training trainees  - patients staying in hospitals  - 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, or have just left, school  - careworkers working for low pay, usually for charities  - people caring for someone with a disability who is not a spouse, partner, or  child under 18  - 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) | If you think that you are entitled to a discount application can be made at  www.ashford.gov.uk – this Council will only backdate the granting of Council Tax  discount to the start of the financial year in which the application is made or  6 months whichever is the greater (if applicable). Unoccupied & Unfurnished dwellings that  have been so for 1 year or more will be charged a 100% premium, and for 5 years or more  200% premium and for 10 years or more 300% premium on the standard Council Tax. Unoccupied & Furnished dwellings will be charged a 100% premium. There are exceptions to the premiums, these can be found at [www.ashford.gov.uk/premium-exceptions](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/premium-exceptions). If your bill shows that you are getting a discount, **you must tell the Revenues Services of**  **any change of circumstances which affects your entitlement.**  If you do not, you may have to pay a penalty.  **4. People with Disabilities**  If you, or someone who lives with you, need a room, or 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 lower Council Tax bill. The bill may be reduced  to that of a property in the band immediately below the band shown on the  valuation list. This is to make sure that disabled people do not pay more tax  because of the extra space they need. If your home is in band A you will still be  entitled to a reduction. For further details, please contact the Revenues Services.  Your home may have special fixtures which have been added for a disabled  resident which reduce the home's value. If you think they were not taken into  account when your home was put into its valuation band you should contact the  Listing Officer (see section 6 below).  **5. Council Tax Reduction**  Council Tax Reduction means that people on low incomes can have their bills reduced.  You can apply and obtain more information at [www.ashford.gov.uk](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/)  **However, making an application does not allow you to withhold**  **payment of Council Tax owing in the meantime.**  **6. Appeals**  The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) maintains the Council Tax Valuation List. This includes placing new properties within a Council Tax band and changing bands for properties when necessary.  To understand why your property is in a certain band, please go to GOV.UK and search:  ‘**How domestic properties are assessed for Council Tax bands’.**  You can find out more about when you can challenge your band and what you need to do  at 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 gov.uk/contact-voa. If you are unable to use the online  service you can also contact the VOA on 03000 501 501. |

If you want more information about how your Council Tax helps to pay for the services we provide please visit [www.ashford.gov.uk](http://www.ashford.gov.uk)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | | |
| **If you pay monthly, your payments are due on the 1st of each month from April to January. If you pay as a single payment, you must pay by 1 April. You can also pay by 12 instalments, please contact us by emailing** [**customer.care@ashford.gov.uk**](mailto:customer.care@ashford.gov.uk) | | | | |
| **Via the internet or phone using your debit card**  You can pay by most debit cards by phoning 01233 330625 (24 Hours, 7 days a week), or on the internet by visiting www.ashford.gov.uk | | **At a PAYPOINT outlet**  You can pay at outlets that display the PAYPOINT symbol. To pay this way scan the barcode on the front of this bill. | **By Direct Debit**  If you would like to pay by Direct Debit please apply at www.ashford.gov.uk/pay | |
| **Data Protection – Ashford Borough Council is the data controller, your information will be used to administrate Council Tax collection, and processing is being conducted relying upon the public interest legal basis. Your data may be shared with other departments within the council for the purpose of improving services, keeping records up-to-date and for the protection of the public fund. We will not share your information with any third parties unless we are required or permitted to do so by law. Your information will be retained as long as you are required to pay Council Tax, plus six years. For more information about your data protection rights please see the Council’s data protection pages which can be found at** [**www.ashford.gov.uk**](http://www.ashford.gov.uk) **or contact the Data Protection Officer at, The Data Protection Officer, Ashford Borough Council, International House, Dover Place. Ashford, Kent, TN23 1HU. (If you think you know of a matter of Benefit fraud please call the Benefits Fraud Hotline on 0800 0213262 twenty-four hour confidential message recording service).** | | | | |
| All enquiries about this bill can be made at [www.ashford.gov.uk](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/) | | | | | | | |