

Your guide

to the budget
and Council Tax
2023-2024



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**Barnsley –
the place of
possibilities**



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Barnsley
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BARNSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council

This guide looks at...

- **your Council Tax and how it's calculated**
- **where the funding for the budget comes from**
- **how we'll spend and invest in Barnsley**
- **support for you and your family**
- **answers to your frequently asked questions.**



Our 2023-24 budget is full of opportunities and long-term possibilities for local people through more jobs, better housing, and improved access to education and skills, helping to grow ambition in our young people. We want to do this alongside striving to look after people and families who need help, recycle more of our waste, and repair our roads. We're working on how to do all this more sustainably as we work towards reducing our carbon emissions to net zero.

Council Tax is kept below the government's maximum increase

We recognise the financial pressures on you and your families, so we're not going to increase Council Tax by the maximum 5% amount allowed by the government.

Planning now for the future

These proposals balance our budget for 2023-24 while continuing to invest in Barnsley's communities. It's an enviable position for most councils, but the process feels very different this year, and the challenges are like nothing we have faced in a long time.

This budget has been prepared against the backdrop of recovering from the pandemic, the cost of living crisis, rising energy and fuel costs, inflation, increasing demand for services, and the impacts of the government's budgetary decisions.

Every year, we continue to serve our communities the best we can but we must make tough decisions to balance our financial challenges with the money we get to fund the cost pressures we face, investments we make and help drive Barnsley forward.

Our finances have always been well-managed, and we're preparing as well as possible for these uncertainties and the different scenarios we may face, which puts us in a good position. This is a testament to our fantastic employees, their long-term planning, and their drive to think outside the box to create different ways of working.

Significant challenges are ahead, but we're looking to the future to make Barnsley a place of possibilities for everyone.

The council's element of the Council Tax is proposed to increase by 3.9%*. This is broken down by 2% to support Adult Social Care and 1.9% to fund core services. This includes support for people that need it the most, schools and education services, maintaining open spaces, bin collections, roads, highways and street lighting maintenance.



*This does not include the amount you pay towards police and fire authorities.

We know money is tight and we have not taken this decision lightly. We've explored a number of options and done everything we can to minimise the impact of this increase on you and your family. Page 7 provides more information about support for you and your family.

Annual increase 3.9%

What will the increase mean to me?

The financial impact of this increase will depend on the house band you live in. The table below provides the weekly and annual increase based on your house band.

Band	Barnsley Council	South Yorkshire Fire	South Yorkshire Police	Total 2023-24 Council Tax	Weekly Cost	Monthly Cost over 12 months
A-	£947.54	£45.88	£132.24	£1,125.66	£21.65	£93.81
A	£1,137.05	£55.05	£158.69	£1,350.79	£25.98	£112.57
B	£1,326.56	£64.23	£185.14	£1,575.93	£30.31	£131.33
C	£1,516.06	£73.40	£211.59	£1,801.05	£34.64	£150.09
D	£1,705.57	£82.58	£238.04	£2,026.19	£38.97	£168.85
E	£2,084.59	£100.93	£290.94	£2,476.46	£47.62	£206.37
F	£2,463.60	£119.28	£343.84	£2,926.72	£56.28	£243.89
G	£2,842.62	£137.63	£396.73	£3,376.98	£64.94	£281.42
H	£3,411.14	£165.16	£476.08	£4,052.38	£77.93	£337.70

If you live in an area that has a Parish Council, you may also have to pay an additional amount set by the Parish Council which we also collect on behalf of the individual parish precepts. This amount can be found on our website:

barnsley.gov.uk/Council-Tax

Where does our budget come from?

The budget comes from a number of different sources.

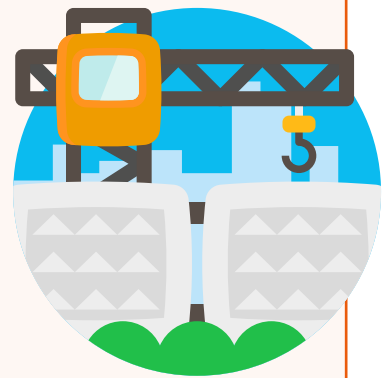
Revenue budget

The revenue budget is spent on our day-to-day running costs, and it comes from several places including government funding and grants. Council Tax also contributes towards funding the revenue budget.



Capital budget

We also have a separate capital budget which is used to pay for one-off investments and projects. Capital funding comes from several places, including selling off our assets, borrowing, and specific grants and contributions. Please note that Council Tax is NOT used to directly fund capital investments.



Council Tax will only contribute 20% towards the total amount we need in 2023-24 to deliver the services you and your family need - now and in the future.

49% Government Grants £285M

1% Rents (Excluding housing) £6M

18% Fees and Charges £108M

12% Business Rates £70M

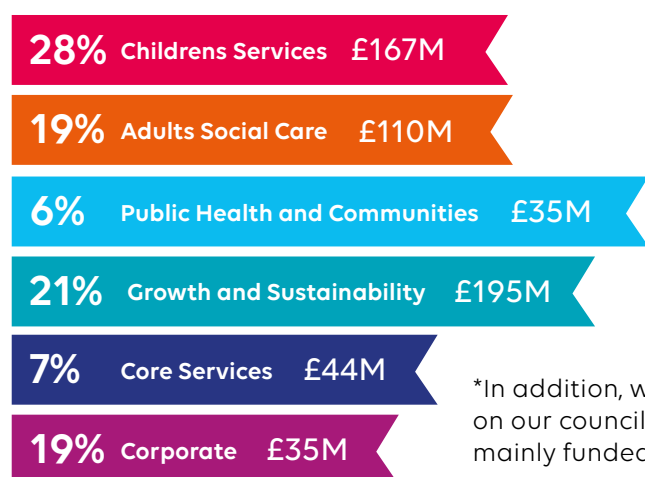
20% Council Tax £117M



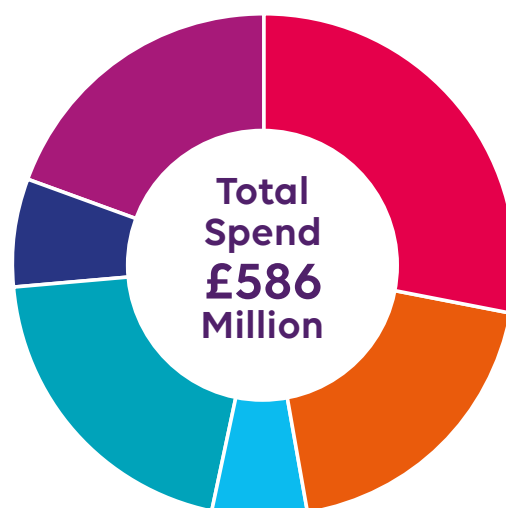
As you can see, the main source of funding comes from central government grants. This is why it impacts so much on our budget when the government make year-on-year cuts.

How is the budget spent?

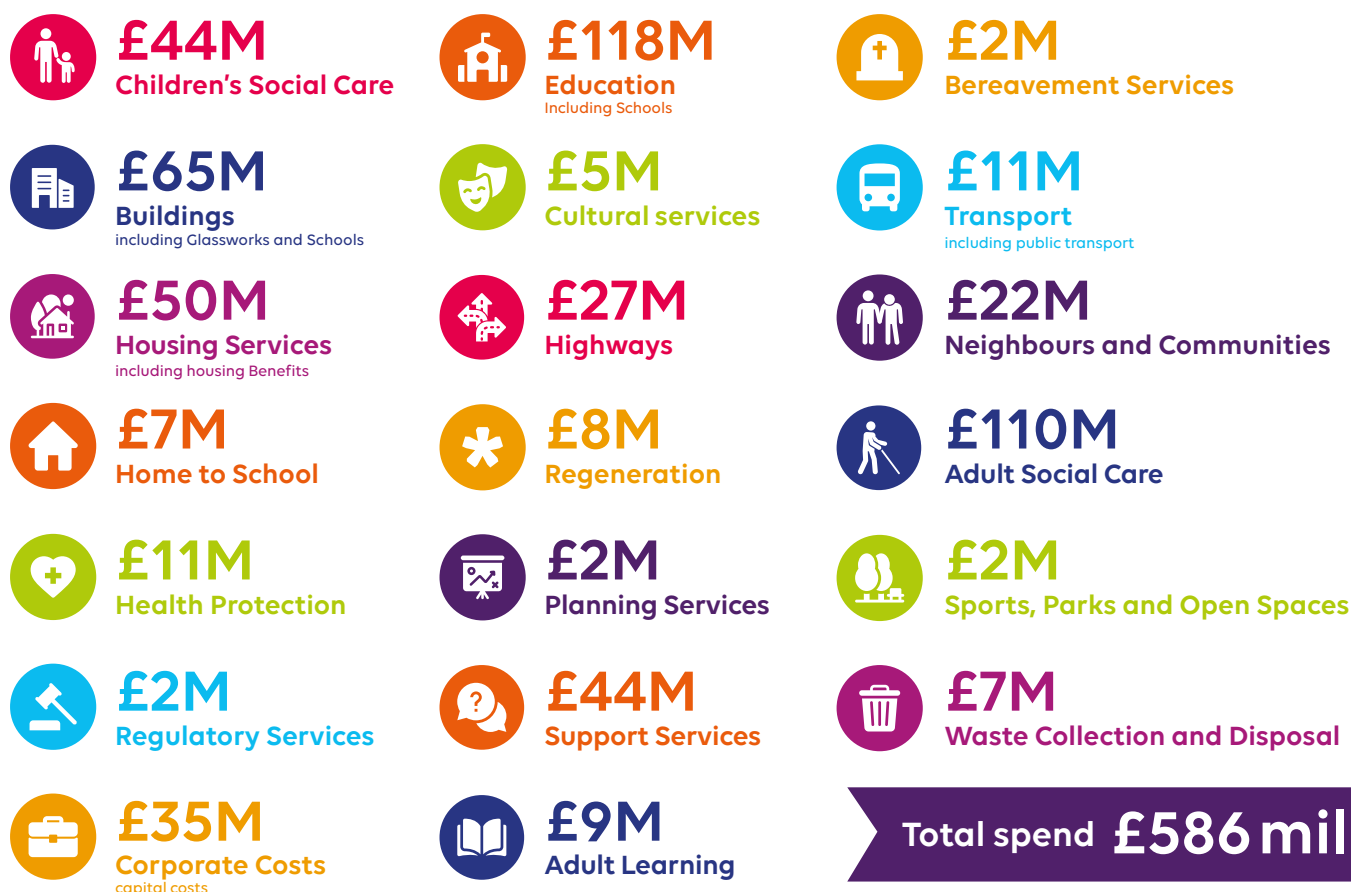
In 2023-24, we will spend approximately **£586 million** providing you and your family with a range of services. This includes an additional **£35 million** we are investing in our day-to-day services. The budget is split between our key service areas which are vital to you and your family and invested in those areas where it is most needed or will have the biggest impact. You can find out more about how we will be investing on page 6.



*In addition, we spend £79 million on our council houses which is mainly funded from housing rents.



Here is a more detailed breakdown of how the budget is allocated between service areas.



Investing in our services and Barnsley's future

Barnsley – the place of possibilities			
Healthy Barnsley	Learning Barnsley	Growing Barnsley	Sustainable Barnsley
Enabling Barnsley We are a modern inclusive efficient, productive and high-performing council.			

Despite increasing demand and pressures on our services and finances, we continue to work towards our [Council Plan](#) for 2021-2024 which sets out what we will achieve against a range of priority areas and where we know we must commit resource, people and time to ensure success.

Investing in areas that mean real differences for people and communities:	£77 million in new capital schemes to improve housing, schools, and roads.
£17.5 million in our frontline services, particularly Children's and Adult Social Care.	This includes £2 million to address potholes and general maintenance to improve our roads and highways.
Ongoing investment in the Principal Towns programme	£10 million to create an activity park for young people and to establish a new home for the renowned Barnsley Youth Choir.

Support for you and your family

We're providing additional Council Tax Support to around 24,000 households across the borough, which includes additional funding provided by the Government Council Tax Support Fund.

People on the Local Council Tax Support Scheme will see no increase in the council's element of their Council Tax bills. Some people on the lowest incomes will see a decrease in their bills as we're providing a one-off grant to them.

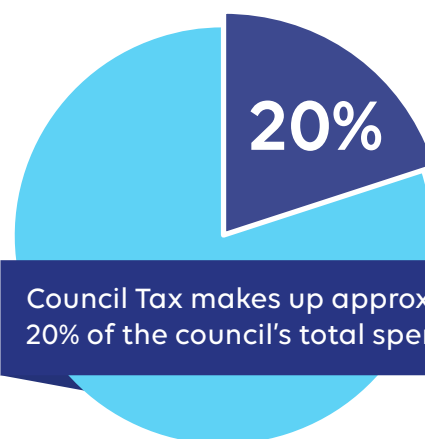
If you're struggling to pay your Council Tax and can't access Local Council Tax Support, we have a Council Tax Hardship Support Scheme which might help people who are in financial crisis.

If you need help managing your money, utility bills, food and housing, employment and skills, and household support grants, please look at the range of help on offer on our [More Money in Your Pocket](#) webpage.



This week, you were served by Barnsley Council

It's important to remember that Council Tax is only a contribution towards the day-to-day running costs of delivering our services – it's not a charge for individual services. Council Tax only contributes towards around 20% of the total amount we'll spend delivering our services and does not contribute towards any capital investment schemes we deliver.



Here's a snap shot of what your Council Tax contributes towards in one week

 **684 tonnes**

of waste was recycled



49,217
square metres
of grass was cut



We've gritted and cleaned roads within the borough's **729 mile** network



179,012
bins were emptied



84 incidents



of fly tipping were removed

 **89 incidents**

of anti-social behaviour were dealt with



94 children
per year were found loving foster homes

2,878
people were cared for including those receiving home support



It costs around

£11M
a week

To provide the services you need. Council Tax only contributes £2M towards these costs.

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 a funding gap or short fall that we need to fund through Council Tax contributions.

Why has my Council Tax increased?

Despite our efforts to make financial savings, we're faced with ongoing cuts from the government and a growing demand on our services which increases the gap in funding we need to fill. If we didn't increase Council Tax to fill this gap, 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.

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 contributes towards lots of services you use daily that benefit everyone - such as, your bin collections, road maintenance and public health. 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 and you can even choose out of four dates when the payment leaves your account each month.

Even better, register for a My Bentax account so you can access information about your bill, change payments details and even register for paperless e-billing. To do this, visit:

barnsley.gov.uk/MyBentax

Council Tax – everything you need to know

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.

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. For more information, visit: barnsley.gov.uk/CTrecovery

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, you're a fulltime student, or your property is unoccupied whilst undergoing major repairs. In some cases, you may be eligible for council tax support or exempt from paying Council Tax at all. For more information about discounts and exemptions or to make an application, visit: barnsley.gov.uk/Council-Tax.

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, and managing your account online can be found all in one place on our website: barnsley.gov.uk/Council-Tax.

To make things even more convenient, we've introduced a live webchat service to the Council Tax section of the website so someone will be on hand to deal with any queries you may have at the click of a button - freeing up phone lines and saving you time.

You will also find a full list of FAQs about the 2023-24 budget and Council Tax on the website at barnsley.gov.uk/Budget.