

A budget that delivers for Hounslow

Supporting residents during
challenging times.



Dear resident

As a Council we ensure people have access to the local services they need. We look after some of the most vulnerable in our society, provide education and training, support businesses, and plan ahead for more housing and better job opportunities.

We maintain our roads, town centres, parks and green spaces, keep our streets clean and safe and help people to live healthy, independent lives.

I am immensely proud of what we have achieved this year, working alongside Hounslow's communities and our partner organisations. However, it is clear that the UK economy is in real difficulty, and as a council we are under financial pressure as we face the combined impact of soaring inflation and rising demand for vital services.

We estimate our costs will rise by up to £16million this year because of inflation alone. On top of that growing need for support for children with special needs and disabilities, as well as social care for both children and adults, is expected to cost us an additional £9million.

As Council Leader I have a duty to make sure that we set a budget that will enable us to continue to deliver for residents.

Although we have carefully managed our finances over many years, we do still need to take action to balance the books.

Despite more than a decade of government cuts, we've worked hard to find a further £3million savings and



we will continually look for ways to save money and offer the best possible value. This year we have also taken the decision to draw from our reserves to help cover running costs.

Unfortunately, these measures alone are not enough so we also need to raise council tax to ensure a balanced budget.

I fully appreciate this is an added cost at a time when household finances are already stretched.

We still offer one of the most generous Council Tax Support Schemes in London and our Council Tax remains well below the national average. We will also continue to do all we can to support people struggling financially – you can find out more on pages 4-5 of this booklet.

Despite the difficult circumstances, we remain absolutely committed to delivering on the things that really matter to residents.

Cllr Shantanu Rajawat
Leader of Hounslow Council

Delivering what matters

Last summer we approved **Ambitious for Hounslow, our Corporate Plan for 2022-26**. It focuses on six themes to improve our borough and the lives of its residents and businesses. Despite the financial challenges we face, we're delivering these priorities.

Thriving

We've provided early years support to ensure our youngest get the best start, helped hundreds of parents and carers through our children's centres, and intervened to support more families to stay together and reduce children going into care.

We've given more career support and improved employment prospects for those leaving education, and provided business initiatives like the Innovate and Grow programme to help small traders.

We've supported more than 150 community and voluntary groups to make a difference in their communities. In partnership with local organisations we've helped hundreds of people through our Cost of Living Marketplaces and created a network of Warm Spaces.

Safer

We're continuing to fund extra police officers and, through our new strategy to tackle violence against women and girls, are launching initiatives to reduce gender-based violence. We've worked with the police, voluntary groups and partners such as Brentford FC to divert children away from crime, violence and exploitation.

Greener

We planted 7,500 trees, improved recycling rates, and launched a Community Energy Fund for organisations to make their

buildings energy efficient. We've also launched Heston in the Loop, a pilot project to help people and businesses reuse, repair, share and recycle more.

Cleaner

Through taking enforcement action and fining offenders, we've reduced fly-tipping on our streets by 23%, and improved recycling facilities for flats above shops – making our high streets tidier.

Liveable

By delivering hundreds of high-quality, energy efficient new houses we're helping more local people find a home, and we're regenerating housing estates so they remain pleasant places to live.

Healthier

By working more closely with our NHS partners we're improving how we reduce diabetes, obesity, and falls among the elderly. We protected thousands of residents from Covid-19 and flu through a comprehensive vaccination programme.

Our new Two Bridges facility in Feltham provides 24/7 support to residents with learning disabilities, and we've improved the process for hundreds of vulnerable residents moving from hospital to care facilities, freeing up hospital beds.

Underpinning all we do is a commitment to put your voice at the centre of our decision-making. More than 1,500 people from across our diverse communities gave their views to our consultation on how we can reduce inequality, and 2,000 young people helped shape proposals for how we create spaces they enjoy and services to help them thrive.

Help for those who need it

Council Tax Support

The Council has a generous Council Tax Support Scheme to help those who are on low incomes, are in receipt of benefits or who have other circumstances which might make it hard for them to meet the costs.

The scheme is one of the most generous in London and those who are eligible can receive discounts of up to 100%.

£50 extra discount

This year everyone on Council Tax Support in Hounslow will have an extra £50 taken off their bill. Those owing less than £50 will have their bill reduced to zero.*

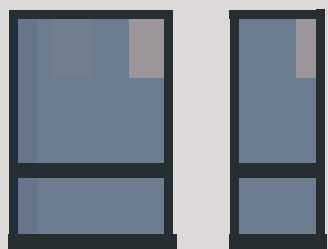
To check whether you might benefit from the Council Tax Support scheme please visit:

www.hounslow.gov.uk/counciltax or call **020 8583 4242**.

If you are having trouble paying your Council Tax

If you have genuine difficulties in paying Council Tax or Business Rates, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss your circumstances.

For Council Tax please call **020 8583 4242** or for Business Rates please call **020 8583 5708**.



* There is no cash alternative for those already in receipt of 100% discount.

With the cost of living rising, we know that many people will be struggling financially at the moment, including some households which have never had to worry about money before. If you are concerned about paying your bills there is plenty of support available.

Have you checked your benefits?

Many people do not claim all of the benefits to which they are entitled.

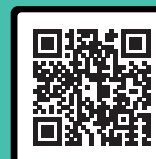
You can use our benefits calculator anonymously, any time, to find out whether you might be entitled to additional benefits.

Visit: www.hounslow.gov.uk/benefits-calculator and enter a few details about your circumstances to see what you are entitled to.

Other sources of support

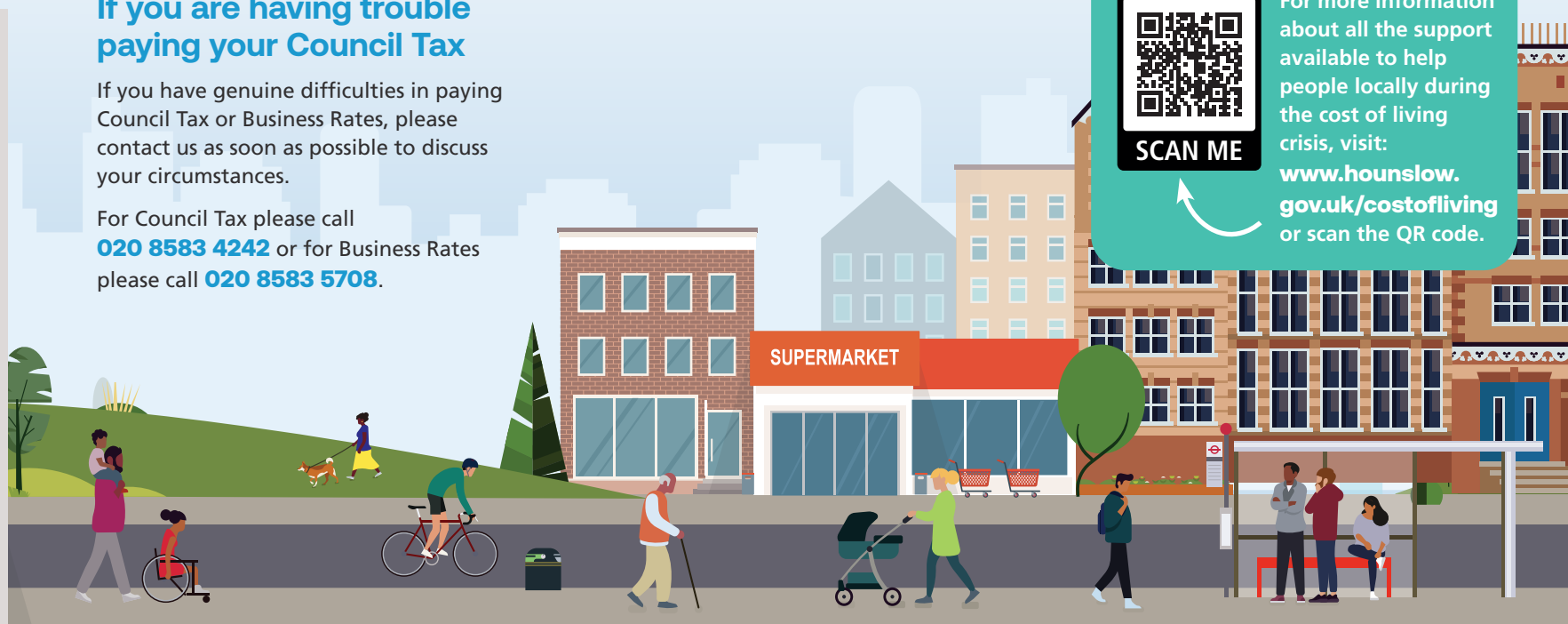
If you are finding things very hard and need extra help you might be able to benefit from a Household Support Grant.

There is also a range of help available to families on lower incomes, such as free school meals and school uniform grants.



SCAN ME

For more information about all the support available to help people locally during the cost of living crisis, visit: www.hounslow.gov.uk/costofliving or scan the QR code.



Hounslow's Council Tax

Each year Hounslow Council sets Council Tax to help pay for important local services including education, libraries, refuse and recycling, roads and social care.

The bill also includes a separate portion set by the Greater London Authority which includes funding for London's police and fire services.

Visit www.hounslow.gov.uk/GLAprecept for details.

Calculating Council Tax

This year Hounslow Council will be increasing Council Tax by **4.99%** in total. This includes a **2%** precept to help cover the cost of the borough's adult social care.

This is shown in your bill (using a property in Band D as an example) as:

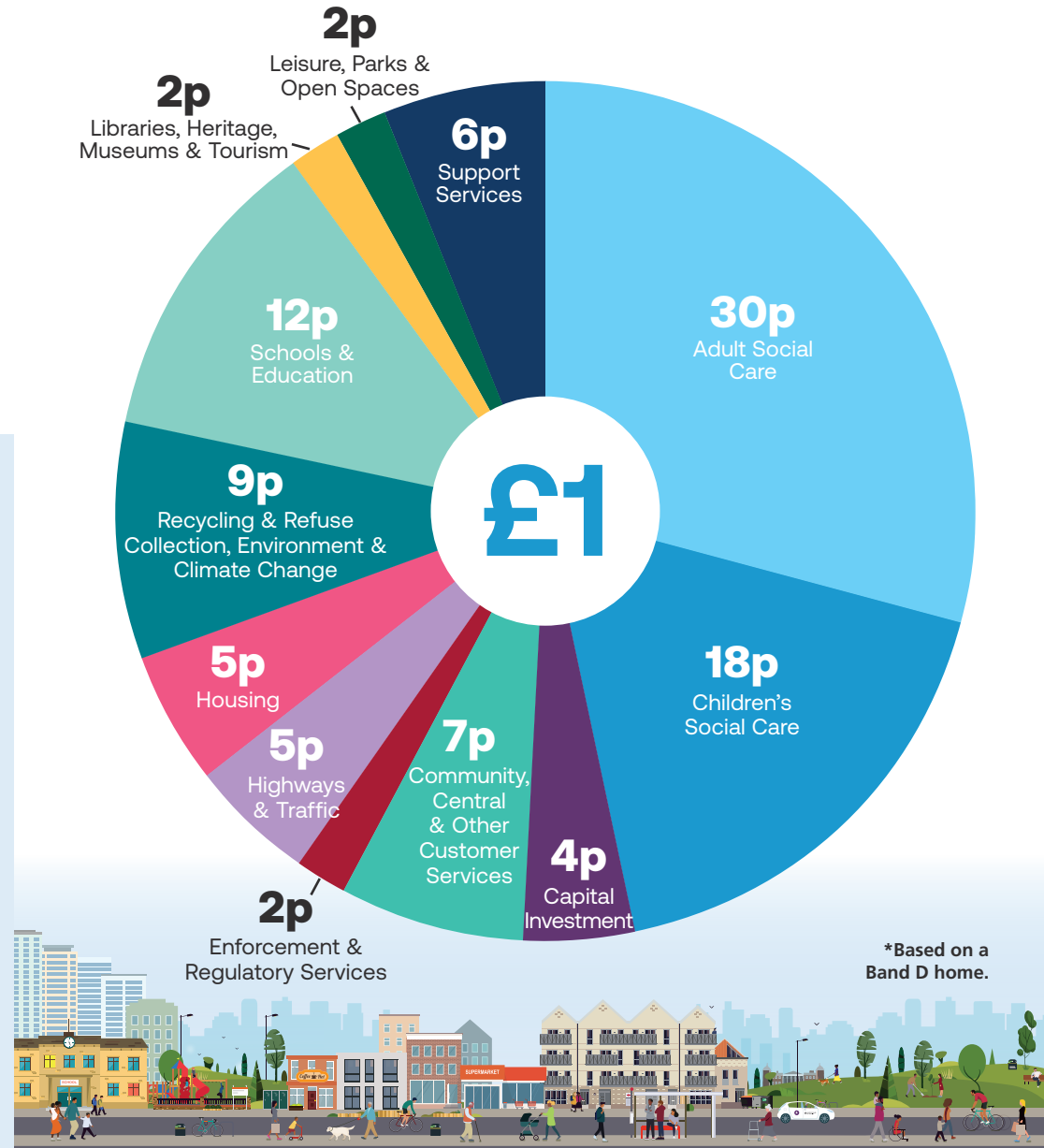
LB Hounslow	£1,276.23
LB Hounslow Adult Social Care	£171.15
Greater London Authority	£434.14
Total Amount	£1,881.52

How much Council Tax will you pay?

Band	Hounslow Council Tax	GLA Council Tax	Total Council Tax
A	£964.92	£289.43	£1,254.35
B	£1,125.74	£337.66	£1,463.40
C	£1,286.56	£385.90	£1,672.46
D	£1,447.38	£434.14	£1,881.52
E	£1,769.02	£530.62	£2,299.64
F	£2,090.66	£627.09	£2,717.75
G	£2,412.30	£723.57	£3,135.87
H	£2,894.76	£868.28	£3,763.04

Hounslow's Council Tax for 2023/24 is £27.83 per week*

This is how each £1 will be spent to deliver essential services.



How to pay your Council Tax

There are three easy ways to pay your Council Tax bill.

Option 1:

Direct Debit – Go online to www.hounslow.gov.uk/counciltax where you can set up a direct debit straight away using your account number and online key which you will find on the front of your bill.

Option 2:

Online – Visit www.hounslow.gov.uk and select the 'pay it' option

Option 3:

Call **0300 7906 871** and quote the account/invoice number at the front of your bill, following the prompts you will hear.

Payments can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Calls cost no more than national rate calls to 01 or 02 numbers, from a landline or mobile.

Other ways to pay: You can pay in person at any PayPoint Outlet or any Post Office. Please check at www.paypoint.co.uk/paypointlocator for your nearest one and its opening times.

Remember to take your Council Tax bill with you as they will need to scan the barcode on the front of this bill. You can also download the Allpay App from the Apple store or Google play anytime, anywhere.

Please note the Council no longer accepts cheques as a method of payment. The following cards will not be accepted: Diners Club, Electron and American Express.



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of Hounslow**

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