

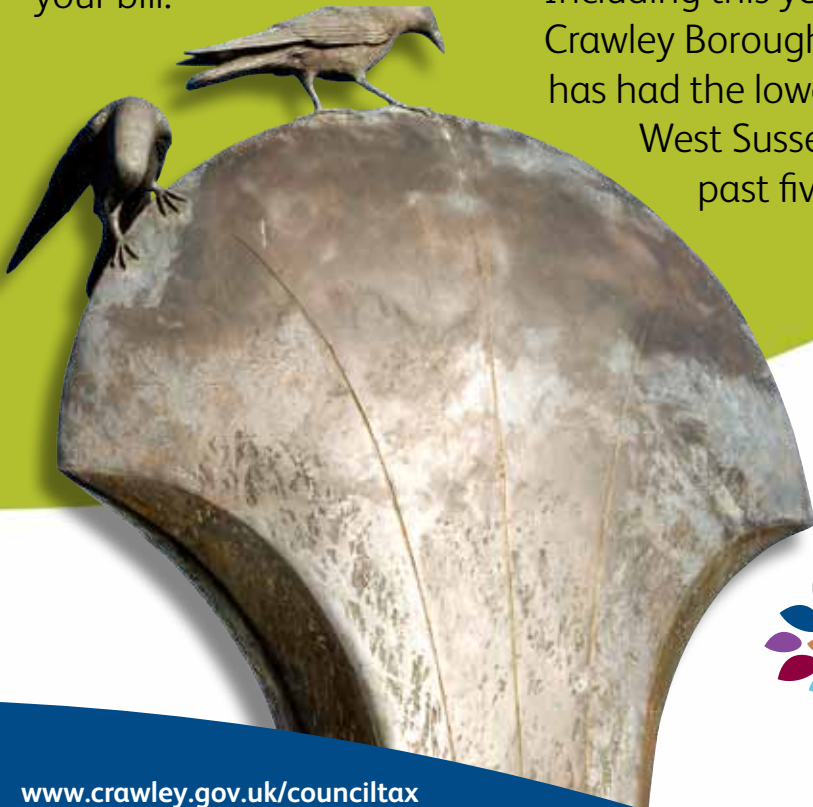
Council Tax 2011/12

Your Council Tax has been frozen this year. Crawley Borough Council, West Sussex County Council and Sussex Police have all decided not to increase your bill.

For every £1 we collect in Council Tax we keep just 13p.

The rest goes to West Sussex County Council (78p) and Sussex Police Authority (9p).

Including this year's freeze, Crawley Borough Council has had the lowest rise in West Sussex for the past five years.



Dear Resident

Crawley Borough Council, like every other local authority, faces new financial pressures each year. Our grant from central government, which makes up a large part of our income, is 14.3 per cent lower than the grant we received in 2010/11.

As well as being £1.252 million less than we received last year, the Government's grant alone has never been sufficient to cover our expenses.

The pressure on public finances has made it necessary to make increasingly tough decisions to manage our budget and ensure we protect frontline services to those most in need.

Despite this, your Council Tax will not increase a penny this year because Crawley Borough Council, West Sussex County Council and Sussex Police are freezing people's bills.

This is because the Government agreed to help fund a Council Tax freeze by giving local authorities the equivalent of a 2.5 per cent rise.

Historically we have seen low rises in Crawley, with the town's residents having the lowest increases in West Sussex for the past five years.

We are also continuing with our £18 million programme of neighbourhood regeneration schemes, which saw the major improvements to the centres of Bewbush and Langley Green completed at the end of last year.

Every year we work hard to find savings to make our services more efficient and to minimise the impact on Council Tax payers. In the financial year ahead we will save £1.3 million.

Councillor Bob Lanzer
Leader of the Council



What we do

Caring for your environment



We:

- Collect 546kg of rubbish per household from 42,328 properties
- Collect, recycle and compost 29.1 per cent of household waste
- Collect glass, paper, cardboard, cartons, plastic bottles, cans, foil and aerosols from REDtop bins
- Clean 11,670km of roads and 3,102km of paths
- Collect and dispose of 136 tonnes of dog waste
- Collect 8,979 tonnes of recyclable material through the REDtop scheme and neighbourhood recycling sites
- Co-ordinated more than 170 environmental volunteering projects through our Let's FACE it! scheme
- Reduced the council's carbon emissions from its main buildings by 10 per cent, saving a total of £15,000 in energy bills
- Have retained the prestigious EMAS (Eco Management and Audit Scheme) accreditation for the seventh consecutive year.

Regeneration and development



We:

- Invest about £30 million in our council housing stock to bring it all up to the decent homes standard
- Improve the physical environment and economic potential of our town centre
- Invest £18 million to regenerate all our neighbourhood parades
- Ensure developers contribute to infrastructure and community benefits for new housing developments
- Improve Manor Royal Business District with new signage, better public areas and long-term masterplanning
- Ensure developments don't breach planning regulations and take enforcement action when they do
- Ensure new developments abide by noise and health and safety laws and take enforcement action when they don't
- Ensure houses in multiple occupation meet national guidelines.



Improving leisure and cultural facilities



We:

- Maintain 971 hectares of public open space and parks
- Provide state-of-the-art leisure facilities at K2 Crawley
- Provide an 800-seat theatre and arts complex at The Hawth
- Run the Venture Service, which manages four adventure playgrounds for children and young people
- Run three parks with the prestigious Green Flag status – Goffs Park, Memorial Gardens and Tilgate Park
- Provide £663,500 in grants and support for voluntary and community groups
- Employ Leisure Rangers who check on the safety and cleanliness of parks and open spaces.

Help make Crawley a safer place to live



We:

- Provide CCTV cameras at key spots throughout the borough
- Check restaurants and other food outlets maintain hygiene standards
- License all taxis and premises serving alcohol
- Provide a Community Wardens service that works closely with the police
- Monitor air and noise pollution and take action against offenders
- Remove offensive graffiti within one working day (five working days for other graffiti)
- Remove 100 per cent of abandoned vehicles within 24 hours of police notification.

Providing value for money



We:

- Collect Council Tax from 42,577 properties on behalf of West Sussex County Council and Sussex Police Authority
- Assess and pay some 10,657 benefit claims
- Provide one-stop customer services through our Contact Centre
- Run local, county and general elections within the borough
- Saved £967,000 in 2010/11.

This year we will find £1.3 million in savings and efficiencies.



Your questions answered

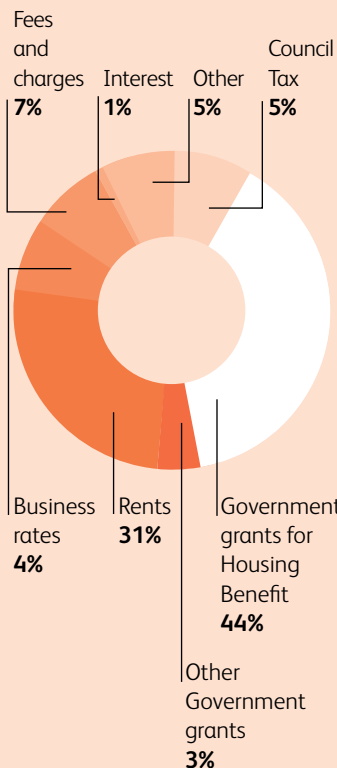
Why pay Council Tax?

We spend £128 million providing services to residents. Of that £128 million, just £6.9 million (five per cent) is raised through Council Tax. The remainder comes from government grants (47 per cent), rents (31 per cent), external support like business rates (four per cent), fees and charges (seven per cent), investment interest (one per cent) and other sources (five per cent).

Who decides how much Council Tax I pay?

Your overall Council Tax bill is decided by us, West Sussex County Council and Sussex Police Authority, with the level of Council Tax that the county sets having the greatest impact.

For 2011/12 the average Crawley Borough Council element of Council Tax for a Band D property is £187.83. This is broken down as follows:



	2010/11	2011/12	Increase since 2010/11
Crawley Borough Council	£187.83	£187.83	0%
West Sussex County Council	£1161.99	£1161.99	0%
Sussex Police Authority	£138.42	£138.42	0%

How much does it cost to provide Crawley Borough Council services?

Services	Expenditure £million	Income £million	Net £million
Council housing	38.35	38.35	0.00
Other housing services	59.69	57.42	2.27
Leisure and cultural	11.21	3.78	7.43
Community engagement	1.30	-0.32	1.62
Planning and economic development	1.67	0.23	1.44
Other services	12.14	12.36	-0.22
Refuse collection, recycling and street cleansing	3.32	-0.12	3.44
Other environmental services	4.14	0.28	3.86
Cost of services	131.82	111.98	19.84
Less capital charges	-2.19		-2.19
Less investment income			-1.26
Less grant and external funding			-0.05
Less use of reserves			-1.70
Net borough requirement			14.64

Crawley Council's Council Tax

The council receives income of £113.29m and we spend £127.93m which means our net budget to pay for our services in 2011/12 is £14.64m.

The government gives us £7.7m so the amount we need to raise from Council Tax in 2011/12 is £6.9m.

Do you borrow money?

Our borrowing and investments at April 1 2010 were:

	£millions
Invested	102
Borrowed	0

How many staff do you employ?

At February 1 2011 we employed 832 people.

How spending has changed

	£millions
2010/11 Budget requirement	17.318
Savings identified	-1.359
Improvements in services	0.113
Other efficiencies	-0.099
Additional contributions to Pension Fund	0.212
Additional contributions to redundancy reserve/renewals fund	0.400
Additional National Insurance contributions	0.090
Reduced investment interest	0.697
Relocation of the depot	0.247
Bewbush Healthy Living Centre running costs	0.125
Transfer of concessionary fares function to West Sussex County Council	-1.524
Inflation	-0.279
Loss of income in planning and car parking, commercial properties and land charges	0.435
Other	-0.038
Use of reserves	-1.699
2011/12 Budget requirement	14.639

So how much Council Tax does each band pay?

The Council Tax payments for Crawley residents for 2011/12 for all bands (based on a two adult household) are:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Proportion of Band D charge	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9
Crawley BC	125.22	146.09	166.96	187.83	229.57	271.31	313.05	375.66
WSCC	774.66	903.77	1032.88	1161.99	1420.21	1678.43	1936.65	2323.98
Sussex Police	92.28	107.66	123.04	138.42	169.18	199.94	230.70	276.84
Council Tax for 2+ adults	992.16	1157.52	1322.88	1488.24	1818.96	2149.68	2480.40	2976.48
Changes over last year	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax 2011/12 for 1 adult	744.12	868.14	992.16	1116.18	1364.22	1612.26	1860.30	2232.36

Council Tax demand notice explanatory notes

Council Tax Valuation Bands

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 by the Valuation Office Agency according to its open market capital value at April 1 1991:

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

Valuation Band	Range of Values (at April 1991)
A	Up to and including £40,000
B	£40,001 – £52,000
C	£52,001 – £68,000
D	£68,001 – £88,000
E	£88,001 – £120,000
F	£120,001 – £160,000
G	£160,001 – £320,000
H	More than £320,000

Exempt Dwellings

Council Tax is not payable on some properties including vacant properties which:

- Are substantially unfurnished and require or are undergoing structural alteration or major repair (exempt for up to 12 months or for six months after the works are complete, whichever is earlier)
- Are substantially unfurnished (exempt for up to six months).

A full charge applies following the expiry of the above 12 and six month periods.

- Are owned and last used by a charity (exempt for up to six months)
- Are left unoccupied by someone who has gone into prison, or has moved into a hospital or residential home
- Are left unoccupied by someone who has moved to provide or receive personal care to or from another person

- Are left unoccupied and were last occupied as the home of a student
- Are waiting for probate or letters of administration to be granted (and for up to six months thereafter)
- 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
- An unoccupied annex (but not necessarily unfurnished) which may not be separately let.

Some occupied properties are also exempt, including property occupied only by students, armed or visiting forces' accommodation, dwellings occupied only by persons aged under 18, properties occupied by the mentally impaired or shared by the mentally impaired and students (does not apply where liability falls on a non-resident owner), a foreign diplomat's residence or an annex occupied by a dependent relative (aged 65 or over, severely mentally impaired or disabled).

Discounts and Reductions

Your Council Tax is based on two adults living in the property as their main home.

A reduction of 25 per cent applies when only one adult (aged 18 or over) lives in the property as their main home.

For Council Tax purposes, some adults are not counted in working out the number of adults resident in a property, and a property with two or more adults can still be entitled to a status discount.

The following groups do not count in calculating the number of adults residing in a property:

- Full-time students (and certain non UK spouses/dependants), student nurses, apprentices, Youth Training trainees and foreign language assistants
- People who are permanently cared for in nursing homes, care homes or hospitals
- People who are severely mentally impaired
- 18 or 19 year olds who are at or have just left school
- Care workers working for low pay, usually for charities
- People caring for someone with a disability who is not a spouse, partner or child under 18 (more than one adult can be disregarded as carer if all required conditions are met)
- 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).

A reduction of 10 per cent applies to furnished property not occupied by anyone as their main home. If this applies to you, your bill will show the per cent discount as '2nd Home Class B'. A charge of 50 per cent applies to any dwelling consisting of a pitch occupied by a caravan or mooring occupied by a boat. A 50 per cent reduction applies to dwellings where the liable person is also liable for Council Tax for another job-related dwelling provided to him or his spouse by reason of their employment (ie tied accommodation).

Change of circumstances

Please ensure you notify the council on 01293 438616 or email taxation@crowley.gov.uk if your circumstances change, such as you move house, or someone else moves into or out of your property.

If your Council Tax demand shows that a discount has been applied, by law you must tell the council of any change of circumstances affecting your entitlement within 21 days of the change. For example, if a second adult becomes resident, a child reaches their 18th birthday or a student ceases to attend college.

You can be fined up to £70 if you don't.

People with disabilities

If anyone living in your home has a disability and needs a room, or an extra bathroom or an extra kitchen to meet their special needs or there is sufficient floor space to permit the use of a wheelchair, we may be able to reduce your Council Tax bill. You will be charged at the rate for the band immediately below the band shown for your property. You can still qualify for a reduction if your property is in Band A.

This relief does not apply to stair-lifts or if the only adaptation to your home is your only kitchen or bathroom.

How to pay

Please see your Council Tax demand for details of when your payment is due and how you can pay.

How to appeal

Property Bands

You have the right to appeal to the Listing Officer if you believe your property is in an incorrect band. The rules specify that you may appeal within six months of becoming the taxpayer at an address. You may also appeal if there has been a material reduction in the value of your property due to building or other work carried out on the building or a change in the physical state of the local area. For further information contact:

Listing Officer

Valuation Office Agency
Westmoreland House
Strand Parade
Worthing
BN12 6EA
Tel: 01903 707933
www.voa.gov.uk

Liability to pay

You may appeal to the council if you believe you are not liable to pay, perhaps because you are not the resident or the owner, or you believe the property is exempt or because a 25 per cent discount should apply. Please contact:

Taxation

Crawley Borough Council
Town Hall, The Boulevard
Crawley
RH10 1UZ
Tel: 01293 438616
Email: taxation@crawley.gov.uk

Please note that even if you appeal you must still continue to pay your Council Tax instalments. If your appeal is successful, then any amount overpaid will be refunded.

Can I get help with my Council Tax bill?

People on low incomes can get Council Tax Benefit to help towards their Council Tax bill

You could:

- Be single or have a partner
- Have children or live alone
- Be working, unemployed or retired
- Rent or own your home
- Be receiving Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Disability Benefits, Child Tax Credits or Pension Credit.
- Be on low wages

If you have savings:

- Over £16,000 you will not qualify for help unless you also get Guarantee Pension Credit
- Over £6,000 but less than £16,000, the amount of help you can get will be reduced
- Less than £6,000 they will not affect your claim.

How much benefit will I get?

The amount of benefit you may get depends on your individual circumstances. To find out how much you could get, visit the council's online Benefit Calculator at www.crawley.gov.uk/calculator to get a personal estimate.

What is Second Adult Rebate?

Second Adult Rebate is a Council Tax rebate for single Council Tax payers who share their home with another adult who has a low income.

The amount of the rebate depends on the gross income of the other adult (aged 18 or over) sharing your home who is:

- Not your partner
- Not paying you rent
- Not liable for Council Tax themselves at your address.

The amount of Second Adult Rebate is based on the other person's low income and not on your income or savings.

How do I apply for Council Tax Benefit?

If you think you might be entitled to Council Tax Benefit or Second Adult Rebate, fill in the form at the back of this leaflet and we will send you a claim form. You can also email benefits@crawley.gov.uk

Help us prevent fraud

Crawley Council's successful anti-fraud team has a 24 hour freephone number so that residents can report any suspicions they may have that fraud is being committed. This service is totally confidential.

**Please call free on
0800 634 0180**

How can I get advice?

If you have a query on your Council Tax bill or would like help and advice about making a claim, call us on the numbers below and we'll be happy to help.

You can speak to a benefit adviser at the Town Hall between 9am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

Home visits can be arranged for those unable to get to the office due to disability or infirmity. We also have staff that can help if English is not your first language or provide support if you are hearing impaired.

Visitors	Monday-Friday, 8am-6pm until July 8 2011 Monday-Friday, 8.30am-5pm from July 11 2011	Contact Centre Town Hall The Boulevard Crawley RH10 1UZ
Telephone	Monday-Friday, 8am-6pm until July 8 2011 Monday-Friday, 8.30am-5pm from July 11 2011	
	Benefits	01293 438611
	Discounts and reductions	01293 438616
	Disability reductions	01293 438677
Email	Council Tax	taxation@crawley.gov.uk
	Benefits	benefits@crawley.gov.uk
Website	Council Tax information	www.crawley.gov.uk/counciltax
	Online payment facility	www.crawley.gov.uk/payments
	Benefits calculator	www.crawley.gov.uk/calculator

If you are:

Hearing impaired	We can provide communication support in different formats – please write to us at the Benefits Service.
Disabled or housebound	Home visits can be arranged
Non English	Speaking interpretation or translations can be arranged

Data held for Council Tax

Crawley Borough Council has a duty to protect the public funds it administers and may use information held for Council Tax purposes for the prevention and detection of fraud. The council may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes. The information will be matched to other council-held data.

If you or someone you know would like this leaflet in a different format (such as Braille, large print, CD or a translation) please call 01293 438616 or email taxation@crawley.gov.uk

Request for Benefit Claim Form

Please cut along line,
complete and
return to Crawley
Borough Council

I am responsible for paying the Council Tax and
would like to claim (please tick ✓ as appropriate)

Council Tax Benefit	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Second Adult Rebate	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Name

Address

Postcode

Signed

Date

Please return to:
Revenue Services
Crawley Borough Council
Town Hall
The Boulevard
Crawley
West Sussex
RH10 1UZ

Pay your council bills the easy way



Direct Debits

- No queues
- No writing cheques
- No postage
- Set up once, unlike standing orders
- **Choose when to pay on 1st, 15th or 25th of the month**

It's quick, safe and easy to set up:

- Phone** 01293 438616
Online www.crawley.gov.uk/payments
Town Hall Pick up a form