

! Important Council Tax information inside



**Bromsgrove
District Council**

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



Recycling guide

Where your money goes

Regeneration in Bromsgrove

New photo ID rules for voting

Services for families and children

BROMSGROVE **Extra**



With the price of everything going up, we've worked hard to keep our council tax charge down once again.

Thanks to continuing improvements to the way the council works behind the scenes, we are providing all our services for just £242.74 this year. That's a well-below-inflation increase of 1.99% compared to last year.

In the face of this rising cost of living that we're all experiencing at the moment, we've also focused on attracting new money into the district. By bringing in more new outside funding, more investment, we boost our efforts to deliver the council's strategic priorities.

For example, work continues on the £14.5m Levelling Up the council secured from the government to regenerate two key brownfield sites in Bromsgrove. With that we can breathe new life into the land where our temporary 'BirdBox' is perched, and transform the former library and fire station to bring some much-needed new homes to the district. On top of that, the £2.8m we secured from the Shared Prosperity Fund is being put to work on a wide range of projects to boost our local economy for residents and businesses.

That all follows our redevelopment of the council's old Burcot Lane offices, where people will soon be living in new low-carbon homes including some precious new social rented properties. Again, our ability to bring in £1.6m from Homes England and the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership to do that is paying dividends.

We also had the honour of welcoming our multiple Olympic gold medallist Leanna Horne with the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay, a particular highlight made even more poignant by how soon afterwards the district joined in mourning for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. Now we look forward to another busy year working for you.

Cllr Karen May,
Leader of Bromsgrove District Council

Useful contacts:

Main Council Contact: 01527 881288
Emergency out of hours: 01527 871565

Benefit enquiries: 01527 881213
benefits@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Business Rates: 01527 881671
business.rates@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Council Tax: 01527 881671
council.tax@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Environmental Services:

Including - bin queries, domestic waste, business waste, assisted collections, garden waste, septic tank and cesspool emptying, litter, landscape and trees, street cleaning, MOT testing and more.
01527 881188

bsu@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Freedom of Information: 01527 64252
foi@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Parking: 01386 565009
bdcparking@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Planning Enquiries:
01527 881770
newplan@
bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Revenues: 01527 881671
revenues@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Room Bookings: 01527 881478
roombookings@
bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Starting Well Worcestershire:
01527 835775

Worcestershire Regulatory Services:

Including - Licensing, Food Hygiene, Taxis, Environmental Health, Dog Wardens, Pest Control etc.

More details available here:
www.worcsregservices.gov.uk
01905 822799
enquiries@worcsregservices.gov.uk

Where your money goes

Net expenditure budget	£ million
Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services	1.475
Environmental Services	3.824
Community and Housing Services	1.215
Regulatory Services	0.297
Legal and Democratic Services	1.767
Finance and Customer Services	1.717
Corporate Services	3.527
Total	13.822

Spending

Bromsgrove District Council provides local district-level services, including housing, leisure and recreation, waste collection, local strategic planning and planning applications, environmental health and licensing, and local management of the public purse. The budget for these services in 2023-24 is £13.822m.

Net corporate resources	£ million
Net Business Rates	3.282
Net Council Tax	9.068
Corporate Grants	1.222
General Balances	0.250
Total	13.822

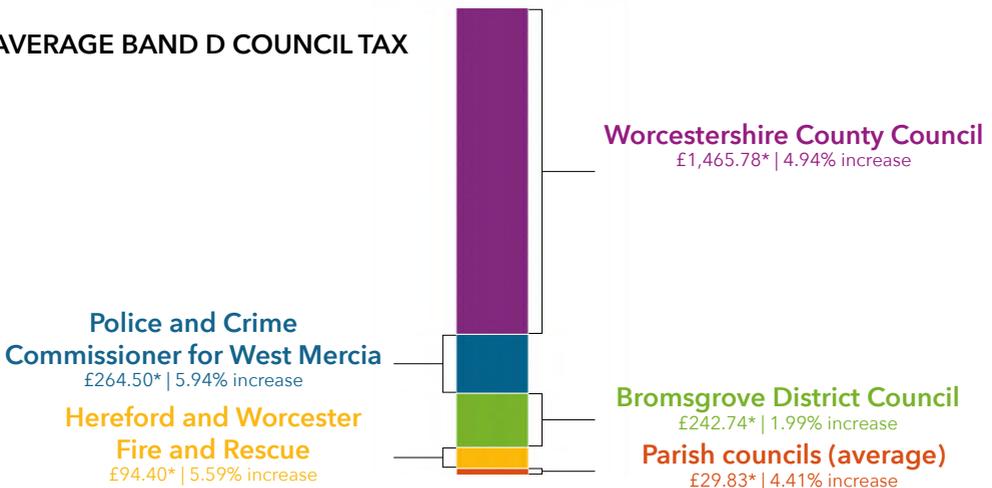
Financing

The money to pay for those services comes from: 11.6% of your Council Tax, business rates, investments, the council's cash balances, and funding from the government and other sources.

Collection of tax

The district council collects all the Council Tax and Business Rates, not just its part, but also on behalf of the police, fire and rescue, county and parish councils, and government.

*AVERAGE BAND D COUNCIL TAX



Payment of money

The district council also pays out a lot of money from the public purse, in the form of various benefits and tax reductions for residents and businesses. The money that's made available for these things is intended to benefit the people who need it, so if you think you could be eligible, particularly as the cost of living rises, **please apply**.

For lots more information on this support, as well as other help that is available from a range of agencies, visit bromsgrove.gov.uk/CostOfLiving

Residents

Council Tax Support can help reduce and pay for your Council Tax if your income is low. It's been expanded for this year: many working-age applicants on low-incomes are now eligible for more support than before, and childcare costs for some applicants in work can now be disregarded from the calculations. Certain benefits can also now be disregarded, which means that changes to those benefits won't always affect your Council Tax Support.

Council Tax Support £4.7m



£913k
allocated

Disabled Facilities Grant can help pay for essential adaptations to your home, if you or someone who lives with you has a disability - which can include being frail owing to age. It can help pay for things like accessible bathrooms, stair lifts, ramps, and suitable heating and lighting systems, following an assessment - and it won't affect any other benefits you may be getting.

£46k
paid

Discretionary Housing Payments can help you pay your rent if your Housing Benefit or Housing Element of Universal Credit does not cover your rent. It can be useful if you find yourself affected by the benefit cap, the removal of the 'spare rooms subsidy', Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates, or the costs of moving from one tenancy to another.

£138k
paid

Household Support Fund can help with the immediate costs of household essentials like food and energy bills. It's a government scheme that is not available directly from the council, and you would need to apply to either Citizens Advice (0808 278 7890) for household help, or to Act On Energy (0800 988 2881) for energy help. Visit bromsgrove.gov.uk/CostOfLiving for links.

£10.2m
paid

Housing Benefit can help you pay your rent if your income is low. You can only make a new application for Housing Benefit if you are living in supported, temporary, or emergency accommodation, or you (and your partner if you have one) are of Pension Credit age. Otherwise, you must now apply for Universal Credit which is replacing Housing Benefit.

Businesses

Reliefs can reduce your business rates. There are reliefs for small businesses, charities, non-profit organisations, community sports clubs and other categories. The government regularly changes the types and amounts of reliefs that are available.

Hardship reliefs can reduce your business rates in exceptional circumstances.

Exemptions from business rates apply to some properties, such as agricultural land, buildings used for training, empty buildings (3 months, or 6 months for industrial buildings) and others.



Local services for you

The council provides many more services for your money than just emptying your bins. Here are some recent examples of what our services have done in your community, over one year:

- Emptied 2.3m bins**
- Ran over 300 events** for families & children
- Supported 438 patients** referred to our Social Prescribers
- Updated 20,000 people's** financial circumstances for benefits
- Emptied 2,000 properties' cesspits & septic tanks**
- Provided lots of fun events** in the school holidays and more, plus celebrations for the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee** and **Commonwealth Games Baton Relay**
- Advised 9,000 people** online just on the government's '£150 Council Tax rebate'
- Awarded grants** to **12 local community groups**
- Made 800,000 garden waste collections**
- Supported 230 people** through local health programmes
- Ran 10 consultation surveys**, including with over **400 community panellists**
- Answered 62,000 queries** on bins & cleansing
- Determined over 700 planning applications**
- Given 3,000 people telephone advice** on benefits and **23,000 people** online advice on their Council Tax Taken away **437 businesses' waste**
- Welcomed 426 parents** to Starting Well programmes
- Spent £332k** on schemes to prevent, and support people facing homelessness



from Bromsgrove and Redditch Network

A safe, secure service if you're unable to use public transport

- | Shopping
- | Visiting
- | Leisure
- | Travel connections



Monday to Friday, district-wide

Easy registration by phone, email, or website

01527 585893 | burt@burtrides.org.uk | www.burtrides.org.uk



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Shopmobility

If you have difficulty walking you can register to use our FREE equipment to help you get around Bromsgrove town centre, six days a week.

- Battery powered wheelchairs and scooters
- Manual wheelchairs

We will help you to decide on the right equipment for you and show you how to use it and bring it out to you at our specially designated parking spaces.



In order to use the equipment you will need to register. To do this and find out more, go to:
bromsgrove.gov.uk/shopmobility

Voter ID

The UK Government has introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID when voting at a polling station at some elections. This new requirement will apply for the first time in England at the local elections on Thursday 4 May 2023.

WHICH FORMS OF ID CAN I USE TO VOTE?

You may already have a form of photo ID that is acceptable. You can use any of the following:

- Passport
- Driving licence (including provisional license)
- Blue badge
- Certain concessionary travel cards
- Identity card with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme)
- Biometric Immigration document
- Defence identity card
- Certain national identity cards

A full list of acceptable photo ID can be found at [gov.uk/how-to-vote](https://www.gov.uk/how-to-vote).



You now need photo ID to vote at a polling station

IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN ACCEPTED FORM OF PHOTO ID

If you don't already have an accepted form of photo ID, or you're not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, you can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate. You can apply for this at voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can apply on a paper form to Bromsgrove District Council's Electoral Services team.

FOR HELP OR MORE INFO

If you need any help with applying for a Voter Authority Certificate, or want to request an application form, contact Electoral Services at [bromsgrove.gov.uk/elections](https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/elections) or on **01527 881421**.

You can also find out more from the Electoral Commission by calling their helpline on **0800 328 0280**, or at [electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID)

BROMSGROVE DOES

YOU CAN RECYCLE



- 1. Plastic Bottles* †**
e.g. Shampoo bottles
- 2. Plastic Pots***
e.g. Yoghurt pots
- 3. Plastic Tubs***
e.g. Quality Street tub
- 4. Plastic Trays***
e.g. Meat trays
& fruit punnets
- 5. Aerosols†**
e.g. Deodorant cans
- 6. Food Tins**
e.g. Baked beans
- 7. Drinks Cans**
e.g. Fizzy drinks cans
- 8. Cartons †**
e.g. Tetra Pak®
- 9. Cardboard**
(Flatten boxes, no glitter)
- 10. Paper**
(No glittery or foil wrap)
- 11. Glass Bottles †**
All colours
- 12. Glass Jars †**
All colours

*All colours except black † You can leave tops/lids/caps on

**All items must be rinsed clean
& be loose in your green bin so it can be sorted.**

**If it isn't on the list above we can't accept it in the green bin.
For a full A-Z list see [bromsgrove.gov.uk/recycling](https://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/recycling)**

Worcestershire Starting Well Service 0 - 19



Starting Well Partnership
EVERY CONTACT SHAPES A LIFE

Groups for Parents & Carers

Being a parent can be tough! We all need a little support along the way. We have a range of behaviour and development support groups for parents and carers with children pre-birth to 19 years. Call our friendly Starting Well team to find out more on **01905 520 032**.

Childcare Choices Looking for help with your childcare cost?

Please go to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk or call us on **01905 520 032**.

Need support breastfeeding?

For further information and details on the peer support group, contact the Starting Well Breastfeeding Support Team via email: whcnhs.breastfeedingsupport@nhs.net or visit the Starting Well website www.startingwellworcs.nhs.uk

Healthy Start Vitamins



FREE Healthy Start vitamins if you're pregnant and until your child is 12 months old - or if they're receiving Healthy Start vouchers, until they're four. To apply and find out more, go to www.healthystart.nhs.uk

Volunteering opportunities

We are looking for volunteers and peer support workers to support the delivery and administration of our groups and services. Our invaluable volunteers are important team members and benefit from developing confidence and skills, with full training and ongoing support. For an informal chat contact Peer Support & Volunteer Co-ordinator Tracy Ames on **07768 307 628** or tracy.ames@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk.

Telephone Advisory Service (TAS)

To speak with a member of the Health Visiting team for advice on any worries or concerns you might have about your child's development up to age 5, including feeding, behaviour, toileting and sleeping, just call TAS on **0300 123 9551** (Monday-Friday, 9am-1pm)

Your local hubs are:

- Bromsgrove -**
Pear Tree Family Hub,
Broad St, Bromsgrove,
B61 8LW
 - Redditch -**
Holly Trees Family Hub,
St Stephen's First
School, Mabey Ave,
Riverside, Redditch,
B98 8HW
- We can help signpost you to local services.
Tel: **01905 520 032**



To find out more
Find us on social media:

@StartingWellIRB
 @BgroveandRditch

Scan the QR code to visit our website
startingwellworcs.nhs.uk



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- Enter code **PARENTSROCK**
- Begin learning

www.startingwellworcs.nhs.uk

EVERY CONTACT SHAPES A LIFE

Provided by:



In partnership with:



NWedR (North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration) provides services on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council, Redditch Borough Council and Wyre Forest District Council ~



Economic Development & Regeneration
Bromsgrove - Redditch - Wyre Forest
The natural environment for business

- We have recently secured £35.4 million of external funding for regeneration projects for Bromsgrove and Redditch from the Levelling Up Fund, Towns Fund, and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- We are preparing masterplans, feasibility studies and business cases for a pipeline of regeneration projects
- We support local businesses to access the grant funding and advice they need to develop and flourish. Since April 2022, we have helped businesses to access £480,891 worth of grants for business support in Bromsgrove and Redditch
- We promote North Worcestershire to businesses, stakeholders, prospective developers and investors and co-organise the annual North Worcestershire Business Awards www.nwbusawards.org

Register for our monthly newsletter at nwedr.org.uk/newsletter-sign-up

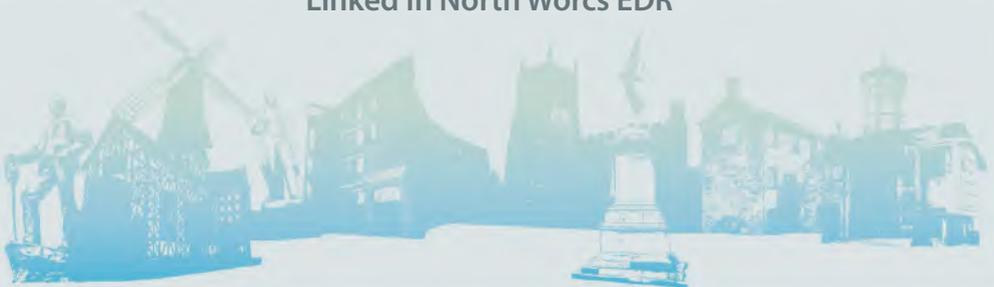
Connect with us by email info@nwedr.org.uk or call 0845 601 5953

www.nwedr.org.uk

Follow us on Twitter [@NorthWorcsEDR](https://twitter.com/NorthWorcsEDR)

Facebook [@NorthWorcsEDR](https://facebook.com/NorthWorcsEDR)

Linked In [North Worcs EDR](https://linkedin.com/company/NorthWorcsEDR)





Worcestershire County Council Budget 2023/24

2023/24 expenditure

- Adult Social Care, Public Health and Communities (£161m)
- Children's Services (£111m)
- Economy, Infrastructure and Environment (£69m)
- Support Services including Finance and Legal (£60m)

Total: **£401m Net budget**

We continue to invest in what you have told us is important:

A further **£19.4m** for highways in addition to the **£36m** agreed last year to improve roads and **£12m** to improve pavements.



£3m to renew highways drainage and flood mitigation works and **£500,000** for minor highways works.



150,000 trees to be planted to develop sustainable woodlands.



Additional **£3.5m** to maintain bus services.



£53m on a new secondary school and new school places across the county.

£6m to improve street lights.



Government is providing much-needed additional funding, and we have a programme of further efficiencies and reform, however the rising costs and demand on our key services have meant we need a rise in council tax to be able to continue to fund essential services.

Our council tax is one of the lowest of any County Council in the country and, with most councils increasing their council tax due to similar pressures, we will remain one of the lowest.

The additional funding will mean we can continue to deliver vital children's and adult social care to protect the most vulnerable in our communities.

I recognise this year will be a tough one for many people across the County. The Council is facing similar challenges too from the impact of inflation on costs and increasing demand for services adding significantly to the pressure on our budget.

With more vulnerable people needing our support than ever before, and with the cost of this care increasing significantly, our budget reflects this added pressure.

It will also enable us to maintain our capital commitments to invest in the priorities that are most important to our residents. These include better roads and pavements, tackling congestion and improving public transport alongside investments in the economy, environment and extra school places.

**Councillor Simon Geraghty,
Leader, Worcestershire County Council**

With a Gross Budget from Council Tax and Government Grants, we will be spending a record amount to help protect the most vulnerable people in our communities:

£268m for those who need Adult Social care in 23/24



£146m to improve the lives of Children and Young People



£91m to support people to live independently for longer through Public Health and Communities

-  www.worcestershire.gov.uk
-  /YourWorcestershire
-  @worccsc and @worcstravel
-  @YourWorcestershire
-  Search Worcestershire County Council



worcestershire
county council



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www.worcestershire.gov.uk/fostering

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- No phone line required
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Contact us on 01527 534060
or lifeline@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk



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Social Prescribing can link you to free and low-cost services to help you overcome issues you may be facing.

Contact us on 0300 303 5291 or rbccg.spbromsgrove@nhs.net to reach a friendly Social Prescribing link worker and find out more.

Social Prescribing: helping you to feel better



Bromsgrove District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



Council Tax Valuation

Most owned or rented dwellings are subject to Council Tax, the amount you pay depends on the value of your property. The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) has placed each dwelling in one of eight valuation bands. These bands are based on the price a property would have fetched if it had been sold on 1st April 1991. Any increase or fall in a dwelling's value since then will not affect your Council Tax band.

Please note that the VOA has assessed the value of the properties and not the council. Your Council Tax bill tells you which band your dwelling is in. You can appeal against your valuation if:

- There is a material increase or reduction in the value of the dwelling
- You start or stop using part of the dwelling for business
- You have just moved in, but you must appeal within 6 months of your move
- The listing officer alters the band

If you think your band is wrong, please visit **www.voa.gov.uk**

Discounts

The full Council Tax bill assumes that two adults live in a dwelling. If you are the only adult living in a property, your Council Tax bill will be reduced by 25%. You may also be eligible for a 25% discount if you or someone that lives with you falls into one of the following categories:

- A full time student, student nurse, apprentice, youth training trainee, or a non-British spouse/dependant of a student
- A permanent resident in a hospital or care home
- A person who is severely mentally impaired
- A person resident in a hostel or night shelter
- A person who is 18 or 19 years old and has just left school or college
- A resident care worker who is paid no more than £44.00 per week to provide care to the person they live with.
- A person caring for someone with a disability who is not their spouse, partner or child under 18 years of age.
- A member of visiting overseas forces, certain international institutions or certain religious communities.
- A person who is in prison (except those in prison for non-payment of Council Tax or a fine)
- A diplomat or member of an international organisation with UK headquarters

Empty Home Discounts

A discount of 100% is applicable for the first 30 days in which a property is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. After this 30 day period the charge will be 100%. Entitlement to the discount begins on the date the property first becomes unoccupied and unfurnished and in order for a new period of discount to be granted there must be a minimum period of occupation of 6 weeks.

Long Term Empty Property Premiums

Dwellings that have been unoccupied and unfurnished for at least two years, and are not subject to a statutory exemption, will have an additional premium of 100% council tax applied to them. Properties that have been empty for over five years will have an additional premium of 200% added to the council tax bill. Properties that have been empty for 10 years or more will have an additional premium of 300% added to the council tax bill

Exempt Dwellings

The list below is a summary of properties that are exempt from Council Tax:

- Left empty by students or school leavers
- Left empty by someone who has gone into prison or moved into a hospital, a residential care home or elsewhere to receive care
- Left empty by someone who has moved elsewhere to provide care for someone
- Empty and waiting for probate or letter of administration to be granted. Exempt for up to six months after the grant is made, then 100 percent charge applies
- Left empty by someone who is bankrupt or properties repossessed by a mortgage lender
- Occupied only by people under 18
- Occupied only by people who are severely mentally impaired
- Occupied only by students, or student halls of residence
- An unused caravan pitch or boat mooring
- Properties where occupation is prevented by law or by the actions of a local authority
- Waiting to be occupied by a minister of religion
- Part of a dwelling, such as an annexe or granny flat, which is empty and may not be let separately to the main home
- Occupied by members of visiting forces, certain international organisations, a foreign diplomat, or member of an international organisation with headquarters in the UK.
- Owned by the ministry of defence and held available for service personnel
- Any part of a property, such as an annexe or granny flat, which is occupied by a dependant relative of the family resident in the other part. The relative must be either; over 65 years of age, severely mentally impaired, or substantially and permanently disabled.

Disabled Person Reduction

If you or someone who lives with you is disabled and because of their disability needs extra space in your property, such as an extra kitchen or bathroom or extra space because they use a wheelchair indoors, then you may be entitled to a reduced Council Tax bill. Contact us for more information.

National Discount for Annexes

If your property includes a main home and an annexe then you would usually pay Council Tax for both the main home and the annexe. You can now receive a 50% Council Tax discount for the annexe provided that it is either used by the resident of the main home as part of their home or it is used as the sole or main residence of a relative of the person living in the main home.

Local Council Tax Support

Council Tax Support – can provide help with some or all of your Council Tax. Whether you get help depends on your personal circumstances and your income and savings. Generally the more income and savings you have the less likely you are to qualify for help.

To claim you will need to complete a claim form, available from our website.

Discretionary Reductions

The council has a discretionary power to reduce the amount payable. The Council Tax can be reduced by any amount and the power can be exercised on a case-by-case basis or by determining a local discount.

A decision to reduce Council Tax using this power would usually only be made in exceptional circumstances.

Claiming Discounts, Exemptions and Reductions

If you think that you are entitled to a discount, exemption or reduction and it is not shown on your bill then please contact us.

If your bill shows a discount, exemption or reduction to which you are not entitled then please let us know straight away. If you do not let us know then you may have a penalty of £70, if you continue to fail to provide us with the correct information then you may have to pay a further penalty of £280.

Instalment Scheme

Your Council Tax is normally payable in 10 instalments; you have the right to request payment in 12 instalments. If you would like to pay in 12 instalments then you must request this in writing and the request must be received by the 15th April, however we recommend that you contact us by telephone to discuss switching.

Appeals

You can appeal if you consider that you are not liable to pay Council Tax – for example because you are not the resident – or because you believe your property is exempt. You can also appeal if you believe that we have made a mistake by not giving you a discount, or reduction to which you believe you are entitled.

Making an appeal does not allow you to withhold payment of Council Tax and you should continue to pay as requested in your latest Council Tax demand. If your appeal is successful any overpayment will be refunded to you.

Any appeal must be made in writing, we will then respond to you within 2 months, if you disagree with our response, or if we do not reply within 2 months then you may appeal directly to the Valuation Tribunal. Details are available on request from us or the Tribunal Office, Hepworth House, Unit 2 Trafford Court, Doncaster, DN1 1PN.

Adult Social Care Information

The Secretary of State made an offer to adult social care authorities. (“Adult social care authorities” are local authorities which have functions under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014, namely county councils in England, district councils for an area in England for which there is no county council, London borough councils, the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly.)

The offer was the option of an adult social care authority being able to charge an additional “precept” on its council tax without holding a referendum, to assist the authority in meeting its expenditure on adult social care from the financial year 2016-17. It was originally made in respect of the financial years up to and including 2019-20. If the Secretary of State chooses to renew this offer in respect of a particular financial year, this is subject to the approval of the House of Commons.

Financial Information

Information relating to the relevant and previous financial years in regard to gross expenditure of the billing authority, precepting authorities and any body that has issued a levy on the billing authority or the precepting authority is available at

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/council-tax-info

A hard copy of the information is available where requested in writing.

Enquiries About Your Bill

If you have any questions about your Council Tax bill:

Write to: Revenue Services, Bromsgrove District Council, Parkside, Market Street, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 8DA.

Call: 01527 881671 between 9am and 5pm (10am and 5pm Tuesday)

Email: **revenues@bromsgrove.gov.uk**

Visit Website: **www.bromsgrove.gov.uk**

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