

Council Tax Guide

2014/2015

Haringey Council Tax frozen
for a **fifth consecutive year**





2014/15 sees the fifth consecutive year of council tax freeze in Haringey.

The contribution you make through your council tax is really

important in helping us deliver local services. But we are determined to balance that against the need to do what we can, when we can, to support local families who may be feeling the pressure of rising living costs.

The freeze will save the average Haringey family around £35 this year, with a saving of around £175 since the freeze began.

Haringey Council is responsible for the day-to-day services that we all enjoy – such as street cleaning, libraries, parks and recycling – as well as more specialised provision including safeguarding children and supporting vulnerable adults.

This guide outlines our budget over the coming year and shows where your money and the funding we receive from government grants and other income will be spent.

We'll be investing in regeneration programmes that will help Haringey to grow and thrive, and we'll continue to target funding at measures to make our neighbourhoods more inviting, such as better roads and pavements.

We've also unveiled plans for a flagship savings scheme for young people, which

will see every child in Haringey given a Credit Union savings account – with a £20 deposit from the council – when they start secondary school. We hope the scheme will help teach children about savings and finance from an earlier age.

The guide also shows you some of the highlights of our spending over the past 12 months so that you can see how your council tax is making a difference locally.

And it includes information about the Mayor of London's council tax precept and information on how to pay your bills and what to do if you have any concerns about your payments.

Cllr Claire Kober
Leader of Haringey Council

Haringey's progress in 2013/14

The Council's Corporate Plan identifies four important areas of work for 2013-15. These are:

Outstanding for all: Enabling all Haringey children to thrive

Safety and wellbeing for all: A place where everyone feels safe and has a good quality of life

Opportunities for all: A successful place for everyone

A better council: Delivering responsive, high quality services and encouraging residents who are able to help themselves to do so.

We have set a number of key priorities against each area of work. A brief summary of these priorities and progress made over the past 12 months is given below.

1. Outstanding for all: Enabling all Haringey children to thrive

Priority 1: Work with schools, early years and post 16 providers, to deliver high quality education for all Haringey children and young people

- Educational attainment across key stages improved and Haringey schools secured our best ever GCSE and A level results.
 - 63.6% of pupils gained five or more GCSE A*-C grades (including English and Maths)

which is above the national average.

- The majority of Haringey's primary and secondary schools are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted.
 - By the end of 2013 Ofsted ratings for schools inspected show that 49 out of 59 inspected schools (83%) were rated good or outstanding. Haringey compares favourably to the London and England averages of 82% and 78% respectively.
 - All eleven secondary schools (excluding Haringey 6th Form Centre) continue to be rated good or outstanding (100%). This figure includes academies. Haringey exceeds the London and England average.
- Our figure for young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) at the end of 2013 (3.6%) is lower than at this point last year (4%).

Priority 2: Enable every child and young person to thrive and achieve their potential

- We are supporting 576 families through the Families First programme, an initiative seeking to work with families who need extra support to help them thrive.
- There have been 55 successful adoptions and special guardianship orders in the year to January 2014, an improvement on the 45 legally permanent orders achieved in 2012/13.

2. Safety and wellbeing for all: A place where everyone feels safe and has a good quality of life

Priority 3: Make Haringey one of the safest boroughs in London

- Overall crime in 2013/14 shows a 7% reduction in the number of offences, similar to the fall across London but better than our most similar group of comparator boroughs (3% reduction).
- Haringey's success in integrating a range of partnership teams to reduce reoffending in the borough has been recognised as good practice by the Government and Mayor for London.

Priority 4: Safeguard adults and children from abuse and neglect wherever possible, and deal with it appropriately and effectively if it does occur

- 83.4% of people who use adult social care services said that these services made them feel safe and secure, an improvement from 76.7% in 2011-12. This result was better than England (78.1%) and London average (73.9%).
- There has been a continued downward trend in the number of children subject to a child protection plan.
- Good progress continues in placing looked after children closer to home and within the Borough boundaries.

Priority 5: Provide a cleaner, greener environment and safer streets

- A record number of green flags were awarded to Haringey parks (16), the fourth highest ranking borough in the country.
- Haringey is continuing to maintain high quality parks and open spaces, with 67% of parks inspected graded A or B standard.
- The number of flytips reported by residents and Members has reduced by more than the target for each of the past two years.
- 95% of Haringey's streets are free from litter.

Priority 6: Reduce health inequalities and improve wellbeing for all

- 3,379 social care clients are in receipt of a personal budget providing more choice and control to our vulnerable residents. This figure is above the London average.

3. Opportunities for all: A successful place for everyone

Priority 7: Drive economic growth in which everyone can participate

- Good progress has been made in supporting Haringey residents into employment. Jobs for Haringey has supported 257 residents into work in the first half of the year. Of the people supported into work, 56 were young people aged 16-24 years old. 127 apprenticeship opportunities were created for Haringey residents aged under-25 in the period March-May 2013.

Priority 8: Deliver regeneration at priority locations across the Borough

- Sainsbury's supermarket, part of Tottenham Hotspurs' new stadium project, opened in November 2013 bringing 250 jobs to the area.
- The Heritage Lottery Fund has given £844,000 towards developing proposals for the regeneration of Alexandra Palace.
- The Council is investing £50,000 in working with traders to improve West Green Road in Seven Sisters.
- The Council is running a five month community consultation and engagement programme called "Tottenham's Future" which started in October 2013.

Priority 9: Ensure that everyone has a decent place to live

- The Council continues to be successful in licencing additional Houses in Multiple Occupation. 144 licences have now been issued in response to applications from landlords and following enforcement action. This is well above the annual target of 100.
- We are now in the sixth year of our Decent Homes programme to improve the quality of homes for families across Haringey, and so far more than 9,000 council homes in the borough have had work completed.
- Nearly 4000 more homes will have work completed in the next 3 years and during that same period we will

also deliver new affordable housing developments and new council-built housing.

4. A better council: Delivering responsive, high quality services and encouraging residents who are able to help themselves to do so.

Priority 10: Ensure the whole council works in a customer focussed way

- Performance has improved across all customer service indicators including:
 - call centre telephone answering (90% of calls resolved first time)
 - visitors to our Customer Services centres seen promptly
 - Complaints from residents are being dealt with in a shorter timescale than previous years

Priority 11: Get the basics right for everyone

Priority 12: Strive for excellent value for money

- The Council is performing on target for council tax collection with 82.1% of the tax due for the year collected in the year to December 2013.

This year's budget

This year, from April 2014 to March 2015, we have budgeted £528.6m (£281.7m excluding schools) for providing council services. The tables and charts in this section analyse this over services and set out the main sources of funding.

Precepts and Levies

As well as delivering services directly, we contribute to London wide services provided by other organisations through a number of levies. In addition the council collects a precept on behalf of the Greater London Authority (GLA).

This precept helps to pay for the Metropolitan Police, fire brigade and Transport for London.

Contributions to other organisations

Other Organisation	Amount Paid 2013/14 £'000	Amount Due 2014/15 £'000
Environment Agency	149	155
Lee Valley Regional Park Authority	208	211
London Boroughs Grants Scheme	280	280
Financial Reporting Council Preparers	2	2
London Pensions Fund Authority	255	263
North London Waste Authority (NLWA)	6,452	7,375
Total Paid/ Due	7,346	8,286

Our contributions to the GLA

	13/14 £m	% of bill	14/15 £m	% of bill
Council Tax	19.2	20.4%	20.1	20.2%
Business Rates	12.4	20.0%	13.0	20.0%
Total	31.6		33.1	

See pages 23 to 26 for information on services provided by the GLA.

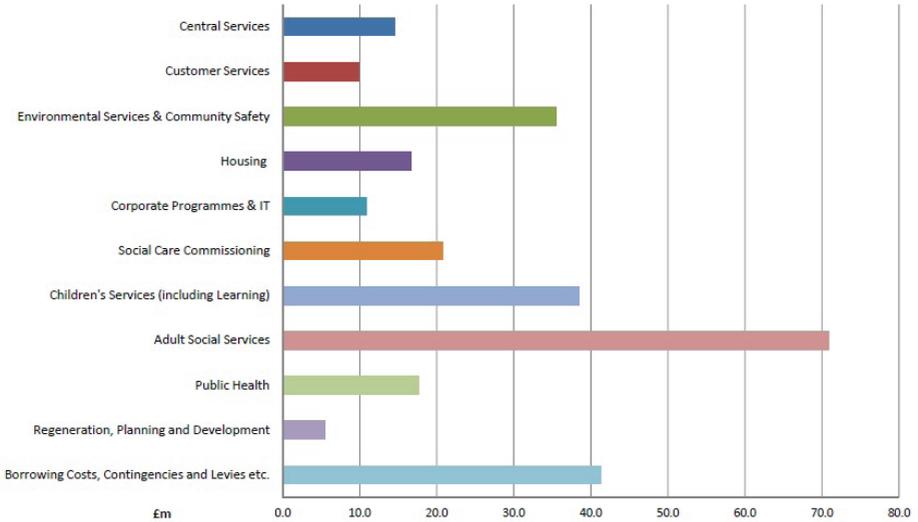
Total funding Requirement for Services 2014/15

	£'000	
Central Services	14,511	5.2%
Customer Services	9,889	3.5%
Environmental Services & Community Safety	35,399	12.6%
Housing	16,610	5.9%
Corporate Programmes & IT	10,769	3.8%
Social Care Commissioning	20,823	7.4%
Children's Services (including Learning)	38,532	13.7%
Adult Social Services	70,880	25.2%
Public Health	17,592	6.2%
Regeneration, Planning and Development	5,455	1.9%
Borrowing Costs, Contingencies and Levies etc.	41,239	14.6%
	281,699	100.0%

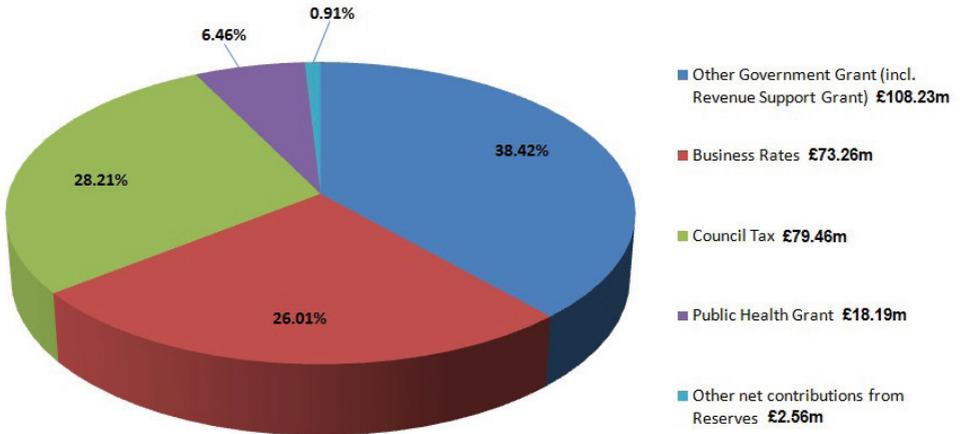
Total Funding for Council Services 2014/15

Other Government Grant (incl. Revenue Support Grant)	108,230	38.4%
Business Rates	73,261	26.0%
Council Tax	79,457	28.2%
Public Health Grant	18,189	6.5%
Other net contributions from Reserves	2,562	0.9%
	281,699	100.0%

Service Budgets (excluding schools) 2014/15



Funding for Council Services (excluding schools) 2014/15



Cost of Services

2013/14 Net £'m	Services	2014/15 Net £'m
954.9	Gross expenditure	929.1
(666.8)	Income	(647.4)
288.1	Total Funding Requirement	281.7
71.3	Business Rates	73.3
108.5	Revenue Support Grant	87.9
17.6	Public Health Grant	18.2
15.5	Other funding sources	22.8
75.2	Council Tax Requirement	79.5
63,530	Number of Households (Band D equivalents)	67,091
£1,184.32	Band 'D' Council Tax for Haringey	£1,184.32
£303.00	Band 'D' Council Tax for Greater London Authority	£299.00
£1,487.32	Total Band 'D' Council Tax	£1,483.32

Key budget differences between 2013/14 and 2014/15

The 2014/15 budget reflects the second year of reforms to the system of local government finance. Councils now retain a share of local business rates, although central government will still retain 50% of the revenue generated.

When the system was set in 2013/14, Haringey was calculated as receiving less in Business Rates than the national average, and is therefore subject to a top-up payment from central government.

Because of the way that these changes have been implemented, there is no direct impact on the level of Band 'D' council tax.

The 2014/15 budget continues to reflect the need for the council to respond to reductions in the overall level of funding for Local Government; in particular savings in excess of £20m are included as part of the budget package. Despite the funding reductions, the council has frozen its element of the council tax again.

Council Tax

What is council tax?

Council tax is a locally set tax that is payable on all domestic properties whether owned or rented. The tax pays for about a third of the cost of the services to the borough such as education, libraries and refuse collection. The rest comes from government grants and business rates.

Who pays council tax?

Council tax is paid by home owners or tenants aged 18 or over. Where there is more than one person aged 18 or over resident in the property, the one nearest the top of the following list will be responsible for paying council tax:

- resident freeholder
- resident leaseholder
- resident tenant
- resident licensee any other resident
- the owner, where there are no occupants.

A resident is someone aged 18 years or over who has their only or main home at the property. If two residents meet the same description i.e. joint tenants, they will be jointly and severally liable for payment of the bill. This means that the council can require all or any one of them to pay.

Married couples and those living together as husband and wife or civil partners are jointly liable for payment, whether or not they have an equal interest in the property. You should inform us if your bill does not include your partner's name. For more details visit www.haringey.gov.uk/counciltax-faqs.

How much do I pay?

The council tax you pay depends on the value of your home as at 1 April 1991, as set by the Government's Valuation Office Agency which is part of HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs).

Every home is placed in one of eight valuation bands (A to H). Your bill shows which band your property is in. Your council tax charges are worked out as a percentage of the band D rate, as shown in the table on page 12. The total band D rate is worked out by dividing the money to be raised by council tax (£79.5m) by the number of band D equivalent homes in the borough 67,091. Details can also be viewed at www.haringey.gov.uk/bands_and_charges

2014/15 Council Tax charges by valuation band

Valuation Band

	Value of Home	GLA	Haringey	Full Council Tax Charge
		£	£	£
A	£40,000 or less	199.33	789.56	988.89
B	£40,001 to £52,000	232.56	921.14	1,153.70
C	£52,001 to £68,000	265.78	1,052.73	1,318.51
D	£68,001 to £88,000	299.00	1,184.32	1,483.32
E	£88,001 to £120,000	365.44	1,447.39	1,812.83
F	£120,001 to £160,000	431.89	1,710.70	2,142.59
G	£160,001 to £320,000	498.33	1,973.87	2,472.20
H	Over £320,000	598.00	2,368.65	2,966.65

Appealing against your banding

Existing occupiers may need to show that there have been major structural changes, or there are physical changes in the local area that change the sale value.

New occupiers have six months to appeal from the date they receive their first council tax bill - there are some restrictions - if you need more information contact The Listing Officer at The Valuation Office Agency on 03000 501 501 or the address shown below.

The council cannot deal with banding appeals. If you appeal, the law says you must continue to pay your current bill until the appeal is settled. You may be contacted by companies offering to appeal the banding of your property on a 'no win, no fee' basis. However, if they are successful in reducing your council tax band they receive around 30% of any refund you may be due. We are aware of a company canvassing taxpayers in the area and would advise taxpayers to contact the Listing Officer at The Valuation Office Agency directly at:

**Council Tax South
Valuation Office Agency
Second Floor
1 Francis Grove
Wimbledon
London
SW19 4DT**

Please be aware that if a valid appeal is made and the Valuation Office Agency investigates the band of your property, there are 3 possible outcomes:

- the band of your property is deemed too high and is reduced retrospectively to the date you became liable for council tax
- the band of your property is deemed correct and remains the same
- the band of your property is deemed too low and will be increased.

Scams

Some households have received telephone calls claiming to be from the Valuation Office Agency or council officials asking for credit card or bank details so that they can refund money to you or take a one off administration fee. The Valuation Office Agency will never ask for your financial details. If you have any doubt about a call from the council tax office please call us directly on 020 8489 1000.

How to pay council tax

Paying by direct debit



If you chose to pay by direct debit we will give you a choice of two payment dates, either the 1st or 15th of each month. Just telephone 020 8489 1000 and have your bank account details ready. Alternatively, download a direct debit instruction via www.haringey.gov.uk/dd. Once set up, payments are taken automatically and you will be given at least 14 days notice of the first payment date. Your direct debit will continue from year to year so there is no need for you to contact your bank at the beginning and end of your instalment plan.

If you sign up to pay by direct debit before 27 June 2014 you will automatically be entered into our prize draw and could win £25,000. Existing direct debit payers will be included in the draw.

Other ways to pay

Council tax is usually paid in ten instalments from April to January if you pay by debit or credit card, over the internet, via the automated telephone service or by cash or cheque. If you wish to extend your instalment plan for 2014-

15 until March 2015 please contact us as soon as possible.

Please complete the online form via www.haringey.gov.uk/dd before 17 March 2014. Alternatively, telephone 020 8489 1000 before 14 March 2014. If you contact us after 14 March, we will only be able to offer instalments that end in March 2015.

If you do not wish to pay by direct debit we can offer the following payment options:

Paying by debit or credit card

You can use your debit or credit card to pay your council tax:

- over the internet at www.haringey.gov.uk/payments
- by telephone using the 24 hour automated telephone payment service on 0845 070 1414. You will be asked to quote your council tax account number which is shown on the front of your bill.

Telephone and PC banking

Most banks and building societies offer telephone and online banking. To make a payment contact your bank or building society and quote Haringey's bank account number 43399710, sort code 20-98-21 and your full council tax account number which is shown on the front of your bill.

Post office and PayPoint



You can also pay by cash, debit or credit card or by cheque at any post office or by cash at any outlet displaying the PayPoint logo using the barcode on the reverse of your bill. To find your nearest PayPoint outlet visit www.paypoint.co.uk/locator. If you have a swipe payment card you can continue to pay by this method however replacement cards will no longer be issued.

If you pay by cash or by cheque through a bank or post office you must allow five working days for the payment to reach your council tax account. Postal payments should be sent to Haringey Council, PO Box 55235, Wood Green, N22 9DF. Please make your cheque payable to Haringey Council and write your council tax account number and the address the payment is for on the reverse of the cheque. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope if you require a receipt.

Recovery action may be taken against you if payments are not received in accordance with the instalment plan set.

Help with paying your council tax

There are several ways you may be able to reduce your council tax bill. These include:

- exemptions
- discounts
- disabled relief
- council tax reduction.

Full council tax is charged if there are two or more adults aged 18 years or over living in a property. If you are the only adult aged 18 or over in the property we will usually reduce your bill by 25%. This is called the single occupier's discount.

Some other groups of people such as full time students, people who have severe mental health needs and 18 and 19 year olds still at school or who have recently left school are not counted when we work out how many adults there are in a property. So even if there are two or more adults resident you may still be able to get a discount.

For a full list of the discounts available and evidence required visit www.haringey.gov.uk/housing-ctaxdiscounts. Alternatively, telephone 020 8489 1000 for further information and an application form. You may need to provide evidence to support your application. Without this your application may be refused.

You must continue to pay your council tax as demanded until your request has been dealt with. An outstanding request for a discount, exemption, relief or reduction is not grounds for not paying your council tax.

Haringey Council is under a duty to protect the public funds which it administers and from time to time we will check claims for reductions with third party records to make sure that claims are accurate. We may share personal information you have supplied for council tax with other departments, the police and other public bodies if this relates to the prevention of crime, fraud or the collection of taxes.

If your circumstances change during the year this may affect your entitlement to a discount, exemption, relief or reduction. You must notify us of any changes within 21 days of the change to allow the council to independently verify the position. If this does not happen any claim may not be dealt with retrospectively. If we know that your discount, exemption, relief or reduction is due to end we will send you a revised council tax bill nearer the time telling you the revised amount to pay. Failure to notify us without reasonable excuse of any matter that affects your entitlement to a discount, exemption, relief or reduction may result in a financial penalty being imposed.

Empty properties

The Government has replaced council tax exemptions given to certain types of empty property with a new range of discounts. The level and duration of discount has been determined by Haringey Council.

There is no right of appeal against this relief either within the Council or to any external independent body as this is a matter of council policy which is allowed under council tax regulations.

Properties that are unfurnished may receive a 100% discount for one calendar month from the date the property first became empty. Thereafter the full charge will be payable. The discount does not restart if there is a change of ownership. Properties that have been empty and unfurnished for two or more years will attract an empty homes premium of an additional 50%. Some properties will be exempt from the empty homes premium. For further details visit www.haringey.gov.uk/housing-ctaxdiscounts

- Furnished lets that are unoccupied and those properties used as second homes will be charged the full amount of council tax.
- Properties undergoing major structural changes or repair may be entitled to a discount of 50% for up to one year.
- You are required to provide a schedule of works being undertaken to support your application.

- Properties owned by charities will receive a 100% discount for up to six months.

Discounts are also available for other types of empty property such as those left empty following the death of the resident or where the resident is receiving long term hospital care or has moved into a care home. For a full list and further information visit www.haringey.gov.uk/ctaxreductions.

People with disabilities

People with disabilities whose homes have been adapted for their use may be entitled to a disabled band reduction. This means that their council tax will be calculated as if their property is one band lower than it would normally be. If you think that you should be receiving this reduction visit www.haringey.gov.uk/ctaxreductions for further details and to download an application form. Alternatively, telephone 020 8489 1000. An officer from the council will visit the property to ensure that the relevant adaptations have been made prior to the reduction being awarded.

Appeals

You can appeal against certain decisions made by the council, for example if we have refused to grant a discount, exemption or relief and you believe you meet the requirements. In such circumstances you should write to us, heading your

letter 'Council Tax Appeal' and send any supporting documents you believe will support your case. You must also state why you disagree with our decision.

An officer of the council will review your case and provide you with a response within two months. If you remain unhappy with the decision you can appeal to the Valuation Tribunal Service within two months of the council's notification of the decision. Their address is

Valuation Tribunal Service Second Floor

**Black Lion House
45 Whitechapel Road
London E1 1DU**

Tel: 020 7426 3939

Fax: 020 7247 6598

Email: vtwhitechapel@vto.gsx.gov.uk

You must continue to pay your council tax as billed whilst your appeal is being considered.

Empty homes

The council is committed to getting empty homes back into use and uses compulsory purchase and enforced sale if necessary to achieve this. Grants are sometimes available to help with renovation costs on long term empties. For more information email empty.properties@haringey.gov.uk

Council Tax Reduction

If you are on a low income, or getting income support, employment and support allowance, pension credit or jobseeker's allowance, you may be entitled to council tax reduction. There are two types of reduction: council tax reduction and alternative maximum council tax reduction.

How much you get will depend on:

- the amount of your council tax bill
- your weekly income and any savings that you have
- the number of people living with you and their incomes and
- the number of children living with you.

If you are of qualifying pension credit age, and applying for the first time for an award of council tax reduction, you will be protected from the reduction and awarded the maximum level of help depending on your income and savings.

If you are in receipt of specified disability benefits you will be protected from the reduction.

If you or your partner are of working age and have savings of £10,000 or more, you cannot get council tax reduction even if you are in receipt of specified disability benefits.

If your income or savings are too high for council tax reduction, you may be able to get a reduction based on the second adult in the property. This is called alternative maximum council tax reduction. You can claim up to 25% if you are the only person responsible for paying the council tax but share your home with one or more adults who:

- don't pay rent; and
- are not your husband, wife or partner, and
- have a combined weekly income before tax of less than £239.00 if of working age or £241.00 for pensioners.
- If you live in a student house but cannot get a student exemption because one or more people who are not students live in the property, and the people who are not students receive income support, job seeker's allowance (income based), employment support allowance (income related) or pension credit and nobody pays rent to the taxpayer, you may be entitled to apply for a reduction of up to 100% of the council tax charge.

For more information on council tax reduction

Visit: www.haringey.gov.uk/benefits or call Customer Services on 020 8489 1000.

You must continue paying your council tax while your application for council tax reduction is being considered.

Reporting changes in your circumstances

If you qualify for council tax reduction or alternative maximum council tax reduction, it is your responsibility to inform us of any changes that may affect the amount of money credited to your council tax account. Unreported changes can lead to a reduction being overpaid, which we can ask you to repay.

Things you must tell us about:

- if you or your partner's income or benefits go up or down
- if you, your partner or other household member stop or start working
- if your savings or your family's savings change
- if people whom you live with move in or out
- if you change your address.
- if you are in receipt of pension credit you do not need to tell us about changes in your income as the Department for Work and Pensions should do this for you.

Help us root out fraud

If for any reason you have information about someone you think is claiming a council tax discount, exemption, relief or reduction in Haringey that they are not entitled to please contact us immediately by emailing fraudcall@haringey.gov.uk or by telephone on 020 8489 1000. You do not have to give your own details.

What happens if I don't pay?

We take late and non-payment very seriously. If you do not pay your instalments on or before the due date you run the risk of falling into arrears and losing the right to pay by instalments. We will take action to recover the amount you owe.

If an instalment is overdue, a reminder notice is issued for the amount of the arrears. If payment of this amount is made within seven days, your instalments can continue. If you can't pay the amount of the arrears within seven days and fail to contact us to make a payment arrangement you will lose the right to pay by instalments and the whole balance on your council tax will be due in full. Please be aware that a reminder notice is not sent every month.

A maximum of two reminders will be sent to you in any one year. If you do not pay the reminder notice within a further seven days you will lose the right to pay by instalments and we will send you a summons. If it is necessary to issue a summons for late or non payment, you will incur costs of £125.00.

It is important that you contact us as soon as possible on 020 8489 1000 or via council.tax@haringey.gov.uk if you are having difficulties in meeting your monthly instalments. We will review your circumstances and advise you how to repay the amount owed. We will also look at ways to reduce the amount payable by way of reductions. If you fail to do so it is likely that recovery action will be taken against you and this will include additional costs.

If it is necessary for us to issue a summons against you for late or non payment, we will apply for a liability order against you. This hearing takes place in a Magistrates' Court. If this happens you must pay the full amount due, plus costs. You will no longer be entitled to pay by instalments.

Once a liability order is granted we can take further recovery action against you such as:

- declare you bankrupt in court (this will mean you won't be able to get a loan, a mortgage or a bank account)
- put a charge on your property and consider forcing sale
- send enforcement agents to take

away goods to the value of the money you owe (plus additional fees)

- get your employer to take the money from your earnings
- deduct amount directly from benefit paid to you by the Department for Work and Pensions
- ask the Magistrates' to consider sending you to prison.

Please remember that we will take action against those who wilfully withhold or avoid payment of council tax, the results of which can include the loss of your home.

To avoid unnecessary action being taken against you, you must pay your council tax on time. If you get a letter from us but can't pay, contact us as soon as you can and we'll do our best to help you.

The Ministry of Justice have developed changes in the way debts are administered by enforcement agents. In the main these relate to the management and collection of debt by enforcement agents (previously known as bailiffs). These changes will become effective from 6 April 2014. The regulations apply to most types of debt referred by the Council to an enforcement agent for collection. This includes council tax, business rate and penalty charge notices.

Further details of the changes and the full table of fees will be available on our website during April 2014 via www.haringey.gov.uk

We can also offer the option to pay by direct debit to people with arrears. Please contact us straight away to arrange this.

- Email: council.tax@haringey.gov.uk
- just ring us on 020 8489 1000
- or write to:
Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services
P.O. Box 10505
Wood Green London N22 7WJ

If you can't pay your council tax?

Lots of people are in debt for all sorts of reasons and it is important that we are kept informed of changes that impact your ability to pay. 2014/15 is going to be difficult for many households. If your circumstances change, for example if you lose your job, please contact us straight away if you cannot pay or are falling behind with your payments. We will do all we can to help you. The sooner you get in touch, the more help and advice we will be able to offer.

Priority debts

Some debts are more important than others. Council tax and rent arrears are examples of priority debts. The law gives different creditors (the people you owe money to) different ways of getting their money back. With priority debts, some creditors could take your home away (repossession or eviction) or send out

enforcement agents to take items from your home to sell, it is therefore important to sort out your priority debts first.

Don't ignore the problem, it won't go away and the longer you leave it the worse it will get. Contact us straight away.

Confidential debt counselling is available from a Citizens Advice Bureau. There are two in Haringey.

Tottenham Citizens Advice Bureau
551B High Road
London N17 6FB
Turnpike Lane Citizens Advice Bureau
14A Willoughby Road
Hornsey
London N8 0JJ

For opening times please go to:
www.adviceguide.org.uk
or phone 0844 826 9715

How to contact us

We are continually making improvements to our website to make it easier for you to access our services at a time that suits you.

The council website is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is the quickest way to find out how to pay your council tax and download information and application forms about discounts, exemptions, reliefs and reductions.

We have introduced a 24 hour automated telephone service to answer your most frequently asked council tax questions. This service will provide you with general information relevant to the option(s) you select. You may be asked for specific information such as your council tax account number or could be referred to an advisor or our website at www.haringey.gov.uk

For council tax enquiries telephone 020 8489 1000 select option 2 and then one of the following:

Press 1 – for information about payments.

Press 2 – to notify us of a change of address or any other change to your circumstances.

Press 3 – for information on discounts and exemptions.

Press 4 – for valuation band information.

Press 5 – for general council tax information.

Press 6 – if you have overpaid your council tax and would like to request a refund.

Press 7 – if you have received a council tax recovery notice.

We aim to do our best to deal with all queries as quickly as possible however, our telephone call centre and customer service centres are very busy and, on occasions you may have to wait for your query to be dealt with.

So before telephoning or writing to us why not use the website to:

- pay your council tax
www.haringey.gov.uk/payments
- check your account balance
www.haringey.gov.uk/citizensaccount
- sign up for direct debit
www.haringey.gov.uk/dd
- find out about an exemption, discount, exemption, relief or reduction
www.haringey.gov.uk/housing-ctaxdiscounts
- notify us of a change of address
www.haringey.gov.uk/counciltaxhowtoregister

If you would like a copy of this information sent to you by post please contact counciltax@haringey.gov.uk or telephone 020 8489 1000.

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Introduction

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, is committed to leading a transparent administration. This guide explains how your council tax pays for GLA services. His sixth budget continues to deliver on his promise to reduce council tax and invest in London's infrastructure. For the third year running the Mayor is cutting his part of the council tax. This means it has fallen 24 per cent in real terms since 2008. He is also on course to meet his commitment to reduce it by ten per cent in cash terms during his second term.

The current financial climate means that the public sector must deliver improved public services with fewer resources. This year's budget has required some tough but necessary choices to be made while at the same time protecting the key services Londoners expect from the Mayor - safer streets, investment in transport infrastructure and affordable housing.

Council tax and budget information

The Greater London Authority's (GLA) share of the council tax for a typical band D property has been reduced by £4 to £299.00. The table below shows how this is allocated. A band D council taxpayer in the City of London, which has its own police force, will pay £84.48.

Council Tax (£)	2013-14	Change	2014-15
MOPAC (Met Police)	216.92	-2.40	214.52
LFEPA (Fire Brigade)	49.87	+2.55	52.42
GLA and Olympics	33.88	-4.09	29.79
TfL (Transport)	2.33	-0.06	2.27
Total (£)	303.00	-4.00	299.00

Controlling costs at City Hall (Core GLA)

The Mayor has put value for money at the very heart of his administration and has controlled costs tightly and cut out waste. This is reflected in the savings and efficiencies of just under £350 million which will be delivered across the GLA Group in 2014-15.

These savings have allowed the Mayor to reduce his precept for residents of the 32 London boroughs as well as releasing money to deliver his key priorities over his current Mayoral term. This includes maintaining police officer numbers at or around 32,000; reducing tube delays by 30 per cent; the delivery of Crossrail and the Northern Line Extension; the regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park; the creation of over 200,000 jobs; and the delivery of 42,000 homes a year.

Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (Met Police)

The Mayor has set the Met Police a challenge to drive down crimes in key categories; boost public confidence by at least 20 per cent; reduce delays in the criminal justice system by 20 per cent; increase compliance with community sentences by 20 per cent; and reduce reoffending by young people by 20 per cent while delivering 20 per cent savings in its budget.

The MetChange programme is redesigning the way that police services are delivered in London through the One Met Model. This includes: under Neighbourhood Policing, a planned increase of more than 2,600 officers over the next two years and a reconfiguration of specialist policing services and support functions.

In order to meet the financial challenges faced by the Metropolitan Police and protect resources for front line policing it will be necessary to sell many of the under-used and outmoded buildings in MOPAC's estate and continue reforming back office functions. However, the Mayor has promised that an equivalent or better public access will be provided following this rationalisation

Every London borough continues to have at least one front counter open 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The Mayor is also seeking to make it easier

and more convenient for Londoners to access the police in new ways while ensuring that more officers are out on the beat where Londoners want to see them.

Transport for London (TfL)

With London's population forecast to grow by one million in the next decade, the Mayor is investing in making the transport network more reliable. TfL's ten year investment plans will deliver major upgrades and improvements in day to day service reliability to support jobs, economic growth and prosperity. This investment includes:

- delivering a 30 per cent improvement in the Tube's reliability by the end of 2015 and upgrading key stations across the network;
- completing Crossrail which will increase London's rail capacity by ten per cent and delivering the Northern Line extension to Battersea;
- increasing capacity on overground and underground trains;
- introducing a new 24-hour Tube service at weekends from 2015;
- contactless payment being expanded to TfL's rail services;
- delivering 600 New Bus for London vehicles by 2016; and
- making cycling safer and improving the safety and quality of London's roads for all users.

London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

LFEPA approved the Fifth London Safety Plan (LSP5) in 2013. This plan supports improvements to operational efficiency and effectiveness which will not only balance the authority's budget but also seeks to protect, and where possible, improve the London Fire Brigade's response times. LSP5 will promote community safety and fire prevention and prioritises ensuring that buildings in London conform to fire safety standards in order to protect Londoners and visitors to London.

London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)

The LLDC was set up by the Mayor to ensure that London benefits from a lasting legacy from the 2012 Olympics. In Spring 2014 the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park's southern section - including the Aquatics centre - will re-open. The Olympic Stadium is due to re-open permanently in 2016. In addition plans will be developed to boost job creation and economic growth through creating a higher education and cultural quarter.

Summary of GLA group budget

The tables below set out the GLA's funding sources and the reasons for the year on year change in the budget.

How the GLA budget is funded (£m)	2013-14
Gross Expenditure	11,243
Fares, charges and other income	-5,303
Government grants and busines rates	-5,108
Net transfer to/from reserves	-53
Amount met by Council Tax payers	779

Changes in Spending (£m)	2014-15
2013-14 council tax requirement	779
Inflation	123
Efficiencies and other savings	-349
New investment to improve services	473
Other changes	-239
2014-15 council tax requirement	787

Detailed budget by service area

The table below compares the GLA group's expenditure on policing, fire and other services (including transport) in 2014-15 with 2013-14. The increase in the council tax requirement is supporting investment in policing, the Fire Brigade, regeneration and

apprenticeships. The reduction in gross expenditure reflects the impact of savings and efficiencies made within the GLA group.

Find out more about the budget on our website: www.london.gov.uk (tel: 020 7983 4000).

Summary of Spending	Police (MOPAC)		Fire (LFEPA)		Other Services (including GLA, LLDC and TfL)		GLA Group Total	
	2013-14	2014-15	2013-14	2014-15	2013-14	2014-15	2013-14	2014-15
(Figures may not sum exactly due to rounding)								
Gross expenditure	3,269.9	3,253.0	445.1	431.6	7,527.9	7,352.3	11,242.9	11,036.9
Government grants and business rates	-2,443.0	-2,359.1	-283.3	-264.9	-2,382.2	-1,837.1	-5,108.4	-4,461.1
Other income (incl. fares and charges)	-297.1	-272.6	-30.1	-30.7	-4,975.4	-5,553.2	-5,302.6	-5,856.5
Net expenditure	529.8	621.3	131.7	136.0	170.3	-38.0	831.8	719.3
Change to Level of Reserves	27.3	-57.1	-3.3	2.2	-77.1	122.5	-53.1	67.6
Council tax requirement (income)	557.1	564.2	128.4	138.2	93.2	84.5	778.7	786.9

