

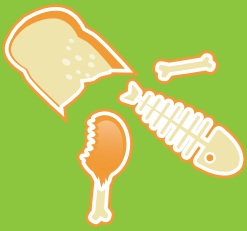
Your services

Wyre Forest
in Worcestershire

2011-12



HOW TO PAY • HELP & ADVICE • BENEFITS INFO • GET IN TOUCH
and much more from your County Council, District Council
and the Fire and Rescue Authority



Let's waste less in Herefordshire & Worcestershire

The possibilities are endless



This fantastic website is packed full of useful information about preventing waste, from how to save money by reducing food waste to just what to do with your old sofa.

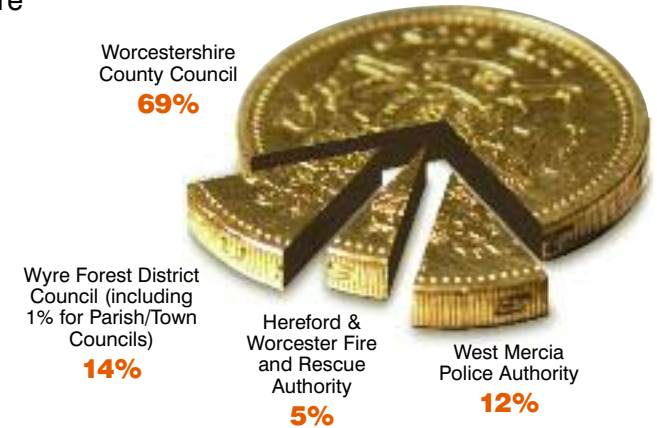
To find out more visit www.letswasteless.com
or call 01905 766883

welcome

Most of the money for providing services to you comes from central Government and other grants. In Wyre Forest, just under £7 million is collected through Council Tax.

Wyre Forest District Council collects the Council Tax on behalf of all of the authorities shown on the pie chart below. The total amount is then split to provide the services that are part of your everyday life.

This year a Band D household in Wyre Forest will pay £1,502.13 on average to their local authorities - that's just £28.89 a week.



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How we spend your money

Wyre Forest District Council provides a wide range of services to more than 98,000 residents in the district. The Worcestershire Hub team is your first point of contact for any district council enquiries. You can email worcestershirehub@wyreforestdc.gov.uk or call 01562 732928.

Wyre Forest District Council receives 13 per cent of your Council Tax bill – that is just 13p in every pound. Here are a few of the ways it is spent:

- Cleaner streets
- Waste and recycling collection
- Online services - from paying bills to reporting fly tipping
- Help and support for burglary victims
- Food, health and safety inspectors
- Parks, play areas and skate parks
- Leisure centres and sports and play activities
- Events - festivals and events in the parks
- Planning and building control
- Housing advice and benefits
- Energy efficiency advice and grants
- Countryside service and local nature reserves
- Car parking and civil enforcement officers
- Issue and enforce licences
- Action to combat environmental crime such as fly tipping
- Public toilets across the district
- Grants for community projects
- Innovative art projects in schools and the community
- Running elections
- Bewdley museum

All these services and more!



Moving forward

Over the next four years, we are going to focus on three main areas. We call these our priorities. They are:

- Securing the economic prosperity of the district
- Delivering together, with less
- Improving community wellbeing.

So how are we going to do this?

- Supporting regeneration and enterprise
- Creating a cleaner and greener local environment
- Promoting tourism
- Working together with partners to deliver value for money services
- Being proactive with local groups to help build a strong society.

These priorities are part of our new Corporate Plan which will be launched in April. It will tell you more about the work we are doing to achieve these aims.



WyredIn

Would you like to know more about what is happening at the council? Why not sign up for WyredIn - our new free online magazine for residents? There are two editions a year (July and December) which feature news and stories about life in the district. To find out more visit

www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/wyredin



A **year** in the life

Here are some of Wyre Forest District Council's other achievements over the past year:

- Our customer service advisors served more than 268,000 customers in 2010 - up 6,000 on the previous year
- 98.9 per cent of Hub customers surveyed said they were either satisfied or completely satisfied with the service they received
- We are working in partnership to develop a new district cemetery and crematorium scheduled for completion this year
- We progressed our plans for a new council headquarters and building is due to start this spring
- We introduced a new and improved recycling service with green wheelie bins
- We diverted 5,000 tonnes of waste away from landfill
- We signed up more than 1,200 residents to our new Garden Waste Scheme and recycled almost 350 tonnes of garden waste
- With partners we launched Kidderminster's first Canal Festival
- We secured more than £5 million external funding to develop district wide projects including regeneration, sports, arts, countryside and culture
- We held the inaugural meeting of the Kidderminster ReWyre Initiative Board which is working on the regeneration of the town
- We opened a new orchard and play project at the QE2 Gardens, Bewdley
- We welcomed record numbers of visitors to Bewdley Museum - more than 130,000



- We joined up with local schools and Three Little Pigs to pioneer a biodiversity grazing project
- We worked in partnership to bring play equipment for older people to Baxter Gardens in Kidderminster
- We organised 14 free outdoor summer bands concerts across the district
- We gained a Civil Wedding Licence for Kidderminster Town Hall which now hosts wedding ceremonies in the King Charles Room and Music Room
- We were once again awarded the Green Flag Award at QE2 Gardens and Brinton Park
- We launched a new Landlord Accreditation scheme to support tenants and landlords in the district
- We organised a World Food Event to promote the finest foods from the district and the rest of the world
- We opened a new MOT test centre
- We organised free energy advice surgeries for residents

- We organised the third annual No Barriers Awards set up in memory of Cllr Mike Oborski to celebrate local people who go the extra mile for people with disabilities
- We recognised the achievements of sports people across the district in the Wyre Forest Sports Awards in January
- We launched a campaign to save money and the environment by asking residents to go "paper free" and receive their Council Tax bills online
- We joined with four neighbouring councils to save money by jointly buying goods and services
- We launched a new free online magazine for residents - WyredIn.



Saving **money** delivering **value**



Later this spring, building work is due to start on the council's new Civic Headquarters.

Saving the council more than **£500,000** a year in running costs

It is forecast that new offices on one site will save the council more than £500,000 a year in running costs - money which could be used to protect frontline services. The project is not diverting money from services either. It is a capital investment project.

Building new offices will reduce the council's impact on the environment. The offices will incorporate the latest in green technologies and it is predicted that it will reduce the council's carbon dioxide emissions from offices by 85 per cent. There will also be a big saving in time spent travelling between buildings.

Reducing carbon dioxide emissions from offices by **85%**

There are benefits for the district too. There will be an economic spin off, attracting investment into the area during the construction phase.

More from your Hub

From Spring, we are adding to the services you can access at the Worcestershire Hub in Kidderminster. We are working with the Community Housing Group to provide their customer services when the Oxford Street offices close later in the year. We are also introducing self-service payment kiosks. This will provide an additional way to pay for all sorts of services including Council Tax, parking fines and Community Housing rent.



Below are contact numbers for some of Worcestershire County Council's main services. Why not keep them somewhere handy? If the service you need is not listed, you can get advice or make a general enquiry by getting in touch with the Worcestershire Hub using the following contact details:

- **01905 765765** (Monday - Friday 8am - 8pm and Saturday 9am - 5pm)
- worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk
- www.whub.org.uk

An increasing range of County Council services are available anytime by going online - go to www.worcestershire.gov.uk to give it a try.

Adoption & Fostering - Freephone 0800 028 2158

We find homes for vulnerable children. If you think you can help, please get in touch for more information.

Bus Timetables 01905 765765

Up-to-date details of bus times and routes.

Concessionary Travel Scheme 01905 822766

Advice and information about the National concessionary travel scheme, including applications and entitlement.

Carers Unit - Freephone 0800 389 2896

Support and advice for anyone who looks after someone else's needs.

Consumer Relations 01905 766368

Responsible for managing all types of representations (comments, compliments and complaints) about County Council services.

Countryside Service 01905 766493

Information about our sites, guided tours, walks, activities and events.

County Museum 01299 250416

Find out what's on at the museum, based in the historic Hartlebury Castle, near Kidderminster.

Family Information Service 01905 790560

Free and impartial information and advice for families with children aged 0 to 19 years.

Highways & Transport 0845 607 2005

For enquiries about highways management and maintenance, including road works, potholes, dropped kerbs, yellow lines, abandoned vehicles, grass cutting and fly tipping.

Libraries & Learning 01905 822722

Discover where your local library is, events and activities taking place, and adult learning classes.

Useful County Council Contact Numbers

Public Rights of Way 01905 768214

For enquiries about public rights of way, including footpaths, bridleways and byways.

Record Office 01905 766351

For everything you could want to know about Worcestershire's history, contact the Record Office.

Registration Service 0845 603 2859

Make enquiries about civil weddings, births, deaths, baby naming and renewal of vows ceremonies.

School Admissions 01905 822700

Find out about allocation of school places at first, primary, middle and high schools in the county.

School Transport 01905 765765

Get details about transport to and from schools across Worcestershire.

Student Finance Direct 0845 607 7577

Support and advice on financial matters for higher education students.

Social Care 0845 607 2000

For social care enquiries, including support at home, residential care and home adaptations.

Street Lighting 'Lights Out Line' - Freephone 0800 137 352

Report faults and problems with street lighting in your local area.

Trading Standards: Consumer Direct 0845 404 0506

Specialist advice on all kinds of consumer issues - from buying cars to faulty household appliances.

Trading Standards: Business Advice 0845 330 3313

Business guidance on Trading Standards legislation - from keeping animals to labelling of foods and selling fireworks.

Waste Management 0845 607 2007

For information about household recycling centres, reducing, re-using and recycling your waste and home composting.

Youth Support 01905 765463

Free advice, information and support for young people aged 11-20 years, including youth centres, youth activities and our Worcestershire Youth Cabinet.



Your County Councillors

Log on to www.worcestershire.gov.uk/postcodesearch to find out who your County Councillor is and how to contact them to discuss your local concerns and issues.



Your County Council



worcestershire
county council



Quality and value for **everyone**

Worcestershire County Council remains committed to delivering services of real value to taxpayers, despite the financial challenges we face.

Read on for more information about the work your County Council has done in the last year and how we worked towards achieving our priorities.

The recent financial settlement received from the Government means the authority has to make savings of £60-70 million over the next four years.

See page 18 for more information on how we are responding to this challenge.

Council Tax collected in Worcestershire makes up 66.7 per cent of our budget, excluding funding for schools.

The rest of our budget is funded by central Government, including the money we receive to fund schools.

Our share of the Council Tax bill will not increase for 2011-12.



Priorities for 2010-2011

Given the unprecedented change in the global economy we are currently revisiting our vision and values with three themes; Open for Business, Children and Families, and Environment.

Here are just some of the achievements from last year:

Value for money and low Council Tax

- We have one of the lowest Council Taxes compared to other county councils without responsibility for the fire service.

The local economy

- We made the local economy a high priority during 2010 by working with partners to support businesses
- Among many other initiatives, we invested in a £1 million loan fund for local companies, held a series of events to help people start their own business and developed the Find It In Worcestershire business portal
- We also worked with partners to successfully agree the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, which will help the county's private sector industries
- Our Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) grants scheme awarded nearly £300,000 to VCS groups during 2010, which provide excellent value for

money and services that respond to community needs.

Keeping people safe

- We worked closely with others to keep children and young people safe. There were 3,140 referrals and 2,898 initial assessments to children's social care service in 2009-10.
- The improvements we have made to arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable adults have been



Work continued through 2010-11 on The Hive, which is due to open in 2012 and is set to be Europe's first joint public and academic library, creating jobs for local people.



recognised with a rating of 'performing well' by the Care Quality Commission. We are handling just under 100 new adult protection referrals a month

- Our road safety education programme in primary schools has delivered cycling training to 2,812 children and pedestrian training to 7,164 children (April 10 to Jan 11)
- The number of people killed or seriously injured on Worcestershire's roads fell by 19.4 per cent last year and the number of children killed or seriously injured fell by 16.7 per cent.

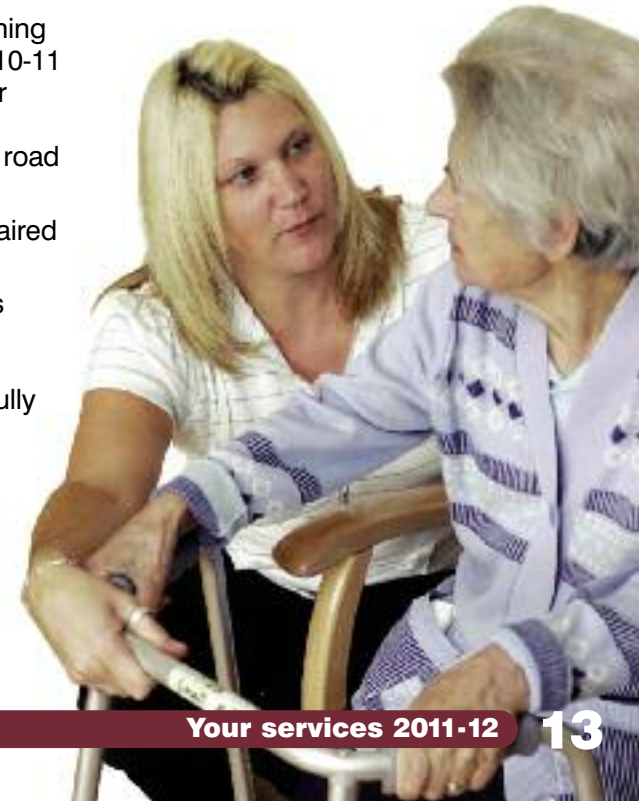
Roads, travel and transport

- We spent £16 million on maintaining Worcestershire's highways in 2010-11 and during the winter season our gritting teams went out 32 times covering around 26,000 miles of road
- During 2010-11 around 35,000 potholes were identified and repaired
- A major £15 million programme has just started to improve roads in rural areas of the county. A similar scheme for urban unclassified roads was successfully completed during 2010
- A £3 million capital project to improve footways around Worcestershire was recently completed and, following the success of that scheme,

another similar one is set to start in 2011-12. Flood alleviation and drainage improvement work has also taken place across the county.

Independent healthy living

- Our Choice and Control programme allows individuals to choose the type of social care they prefer. Around 2,000 people have chosen to receive a direct payment and make their own care arrangements.



Educational achievement and skills

- Worcestershire has just under 74,000 children being educated in 243 schools, which are supported by over 14,000 teaching specialists and support staff. The total budget for schools is £306 million
- There are currently 34 designated Children's Centres in Worcestershire providing services to families with children under five-years-old
- The council supports 305 private or voluntary early years settings, 541 childminders, one nursery school and 53 nursery units.

A green future

- Our work to improve the county's sustainability has resulted in us being short-listed for the best 'Low Council Carbon', due to be decided later this year

- We are piloting 'eco-communities', and we have supported the national 10:10 campaign to reduce carbon emissions
- The County Council manages 19 countryside sites across Worcestershire, which include three that achieved the prestigious Green Flag status in 2010. In addition to this the countryside team looks after more than 16,000 rights of way, totalling around 3,000 miles, along with 140 miles of waymarked trails and circular walks
- The EnviroSort recycling facility, which officially opened in March 2010, has helped divert 54,000 tonnes of Worcestershire household waste from landfill sites.



How the money is spent

Summary of gross expenditure, income and staffing

The planned costs of services are shown below:

2010-11 Net Exp £m	Services	2011-12			Council Tax for a Band D property £	Staffing numbers
		Gross Exp £m	Income £m	Net Exp £m		
0.0	Schools budget	369.0	369.0	0.0	0.0	8,479
84.9	Children's Services, excluding schools	104.9	28.9	76.0	240.57	1,431
157.2	Adult and Community Services, including libraries	195.0	37.6	157.4	498.43	1,792
34.5	Highways and public transport	39.2	2.2	37.0	117.07	444
24.1	Waste disposal	39.1	14.6	24.5	77.40	15
3.0	Planning and economic development	3.7	0.4	3.3	10.60	63
30.7	Net cost of council borrowing	29.7	0.1	29.6	93.89	-
-28.4	Other services	24.3	14.9	9.4	29.53	801
0.0	Council Tax Freeze Grant	0.0	5.5	-5.5	-17.30	-
306.0	Total cost of services	804.9	473.2	331.7	1,050.19	13,025
3.1	Addition to or use of general reserves	0.0	3.5	-3.5	-11.13	-
309.1	Net budget requirement	804.9	476.7	328.2	1,039.06	13,025

Where the money comes from to pay for the 2011-12 budget

The Government calculates our general grant according to relative circumstances and ability to raise money from Council Tax. Worcestershire's general grant is £109.163 million or £195 per person, compared to the shire county average of £211 per person for comparable county councils without responsibility for the fire service.

We also receive other grants from the Government for specific purposes. The most significant is the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) that provides the funding for schools and can only be used for this purpose. For 2011-12 the Government has made changes to the grant arrangements by discontinuing some specific grants, removing ring-fencing and transferring some grants into our general grant.



Your County Council's Budget

Overall, however, the level of grant support has been reduced.

In addition the Government has made available a Council Tax Freeze Grant to councils limiting their Council Tax to the level set for 2010-11. This is a new grant equal to an increase in Council Tax of 2.5 per cent and represents a benefit of £5.5 million to the County Council.

The cost of providing our services in 2011-12, net of specific grants, is £331.7 million which, after transferring £3.5 million from general reserves, leaves £328.2 million to be funded from general Government grant and local taxation, as follows:

Council Tax (66.7%)



Net Budget

£328.2 million

Council Tax (66.7%)



£/person

Total £/person

£586

Why spending has changed from 2010-11

	£m
Net budget requirement 2010-11	309.1
Less transfer to general reserves in 2010-11	-3.1
Personal Care at Home legislation not continued	-1.5
Area Based Grant discontinuing	39.7
Specific Grants transferring to Formula Grant	2.9
Revised starting position 2011-12	347.1
Inflation	7.3
Adult Social Care service pressures	4.5
Concessionary fares function transferred from district councils	5.1
Looked after children service pressures	2.0
Children's early intervention activities	0.4
Strengthening economy	0.3
Community based transport	0.1
Better Outcomes, Lean Delivery programme - budget savings	-16.5
Grant funding and services discontinued due to grants ceasing	-11.8
Reduction in borrowing costs for capital expenditure	-1.1
Other	-0.2
Council Tax Freeze Grant	-5.5
Transfer from general reserves in 2011-12	-3.5
Net budget requirement 2011-12	328.2

The council faces additional cost pressures in respect of inflation and increases in the demand for services such as the extra numbers of people needing social care. Some inflationary costs experienced by local authorities

are significantly higher than the general rate of inflation. In addition the responsibility for concessionary fares transferred from the district councils to the County Council with effect from 1st April 2011. The overall effect of these cost pressures together with the reduction in grant funding has resulted in the need to identify significant reductions in the council's budget. The net budget requirement for 2011-12 has reduced by £18.9 million over last year, as shown in the table opposite.

In addition the DSG funding for schools will be £4,601 per pupil, giving no increase over the 2010-11 adjusted figure. The estimated total DSG for 2011-12 is £342 million.

Council Tax

There will be no increase in the Council Tax contribution towards our 2011-12 budget and for a Band D property it remains at £1039.06. The illustration below shows how much you will pay for our services for each property band.

Staffing

During 2011-12 we expect to employ the equivalent of 13,025

full-time staff. This includes an increase in school-based staff, the movement of staff between authorities following the establishment of shared services, and the planned reduction in staff numbers as part of the council's efficiency measures.

Capital investment

We plan to invest £90.6 million during 2011-12 in capital projects such as building and refurbishing schools, improvements to roads, and information and communications technology.

Borrowing

We borrow money to pay for some of our capital investment. The total borrowing at 31 March 2011 is estimated to be £240 million.

General balances

We plan to keep a general reserve of around £14 million to pay for emergencies and other unforeseen expenditure.



Being **BOLD**

Public sector organisations are facing unprecedented reductions in funding over the next four years. Worcestershire County Council is not immune from these challenges and is tasked with making savings of £60-70 million over this period.

In response the County Council launched its **BOLD (Better Outcomes, Lean Delivery)** programme back in 2009. Such early engagement with these challenges has meant that significant progress has already been made, with *savings proposals totalling some £45 million already identified* at the time of going to print. Savings have been identified in three ways; through efficiencies, in other

£800,000

has been taken out of senior management costs

words delivering the same level of service for less money, through reforming some services and as a last resort, through cuts.

We believe that by planning ahead, we can do more to protect core and valued services. Where changes or reductions in service are necessary, the **BOLD** programme has given us the time to involve staff, partners and customers in designing and managing those changes to minimise disruption and upset.

Have your **say**

The **BOLD** programme is much more than just saving money, it is about delivering Better Outcomes for Worcestershire residents and ensuring that the money the council does have is spent delivering the services which really matter to people. This is why we have and will continue to ask you what you think.

Consultation began in earnest last year which ranked residents' priorities for services and was followed up by a further dialogue this year which went into more detail to inform the budget decisions. Methods included: questions in a residents' survey, a web-survey, face-to-face interviews and a simple survey in public buildings and local newspapers.

A number of **BOLD** "Have your Say" public road shows also took place across the county to ask communities what they thought about our plans which provided qualitative feedback to sit alongside the quantitative results.

We will be asking you for your views throughout this year, with more roadshows planned for the spring, look out for further details visit **www.worcestershire.gov.uk**

We have had over 16,000 respondents to consultation since BOLD was launched - a big thank you to all who took part.

“ the services important to me are...”





Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Last year the County Council combined with the six district councils in Worcestershire, to create the first all encompassing Regulatory Service in the UK.

Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing functions all across the county have been combined into a single service:

Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

The innovative and ground-breaking move is part of a range of ideas for sharing services across councils, which use less resources and are also more effective.

All the local services that Worcestershire's local authorities used to deliver to residents remain in place, and are now run as a single shared service hosted by Bromsgrove District Council.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services is the first service of its kind in the country, and will be more efficient and effective while still addressing local needs.

So for all your Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing needs, call the Worcestershire Hub on:

01905 822799 or e-mail

worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk



 <p>COMING SOON TO YOUR COUNCIL District Elections Parish Elections & National Referendum</p> <p>WHEN? Thursday 5 May</p>	<p>POLLING DAY - THURSDAY 5 MAY</p> <p>Going to be away? - Plan early. Don't Lose YOUR Vote!</p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mon 3 April, all hours</p> <p>Close of Nominations to stand as a candidate</p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurs 14 April</p> <p>Deadline to register as an elector for these elections</p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurs 14 April, 5pm</p> <p>Deadline to apply for a postal vote or change an existing one</p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Week of 18 April</p> <p>Issue of Postal packs. Are YOU to home to receive YOURS?</p>
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thurs 21 April, 5pm</p> <p>Deadline to apply for a proxy vote or vote by electronic means</p>	
<p>?</p> <p>Need more info? Contact YOUR Electoral Services Office, or For application forms and advice visit: www.elect.gov.uk</p>	



YOUR Fire & Rescue Authority

We have not increased our Council Tax charge this year so just **£73.64** from a Band D Council Tax will again go to fund the services provided by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA). The FRA is made up of 25 Worcestershire County Councillors and Herefordshire Councillors who oversee our budget and give strategic direction to how we deliver our services to you.

This contribution amounts to just 20p each day per Band D household.

For this, you receive round the clock reassurance that in the event of an emergency, the Fire and Rescue Service will be on hand to help you. We also spend thousands of hours in your local communities, educating people about the risk of fires and other emergencies including road traffic collisions. We also work extensively with other local partners to protect the young and vulnerable including the fitting of free smoke alarms.

We provide our services from a total of 27 fire stations and a headquarters building. There are five Wholtime Stations; Hereford, Worcester, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Redditch which are crewed 24 hours a day. We also operate stations in Malvern, Droitwich and Evesham, which are staffed during the day with crews on call from home at night.

There are a further 19 retained duty (on-call) stations that are crewed by firefighters who are on-call to provide 24 hour cover to their communities, often in addition to their regular employment and respond in a few minutes from their place of main employment or home.

Your contributions help fund a total of 328* full-time operational staff, 369* retained (on-call) firefighters, 25* control room staff who take emergency calls and mobilise our crews, and over 100* support staff who ensure our service runs effectively and efficiently.

**These statistics are the current budgeted staffing establishment figures*



This document can be made available in other languages and alternative formats (large print, audio tape, computer disc and Braille) on request from the Worcestershire Hub on telephone number 01905 765765 or by emailing worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk



As part of the nation's resilience against large scale incidents we also host specialist equipment including one of 20 national Urban Search and Rescue specialist units.

In 2010 we received 12,919 emergency calls and attended 8,751 incidents. Throughout the year, we rescued 17 people unharmed from fires, 49 people unharmed from road traffic collisions and rescued 212 unharmed people from other situations.

In our area in particular there are also calls for rope and water rescues and to assist when chemicals are spilled. We have highly trained specialist teams to deal with these specific types of emergencies.

In 2010 we completed 3,196 Home Fire Safety Checks and fitted 6,871 smoke alarms in areas where we have identified people who are at greater risk. We also carried out 473 education visits in local schools.

How are we performing?

We are committed to delivering an excellent service and we will continue to strive to ensure that our communities are made safer from the dramatic and sometimes tragic consequences of fire and other hazards.

We are a consistently high-performing authority with a good record of improvement and financial prudence.

In 2011-12 the Fire and Rescue Authority will spend £31.2 million providing a comprehensive emergency service to the communities of Herefordshire & Worcestershire. £10.4 million will come from the government in the form of grants and the (£20.8 million) balance from council tax-payers.

	2010-11 £m	2011-12 £m
Gross expenditure		
Employees (including pension costs)	23.324	23.326
Running costs	6.950	7.105
Capital financing	2.205	2.400
Income	(0.170)	(0.169)
Core budget	32.309	32.662
Special Grant - Urban Search and Rescue	(0.868)	(0.868)
Special Grant - New Dimensions Training	(0.080)	(0.080)
Special Grant - Fire Control Project	(0.238)	0.000
Special Grant - Council Tax Freeze	0.000	(0.519)
Gross expenditure	31.123	31.195



Performance & priorities

In a report published in December 2010, the Audit Commission confirmed that Hereford & Worcester FRA had:

- its best ever annual performance in terms of the lowest total number of incidents, in addition to delivering a number of five year performance records in key areas
- a track record of performing within budget whilst achieving good service performance.
- focused on achieving priorities through redirecting resources which had improved our front-line services whilst achieving efficiency savings

We remain one of the highest performing Combined Authorities yet in 2010-11 received a lower government grant per head than any other Combined Authority in England.

Budget requirement and Council Tax precept	2010-11 £m	2011-12 £m
Gross expenditure	31.123	31.195
Transfer to General Balances	0.271	0.000
Net budget requirement	31.394	31.195
Less: Business Rates	(9.315)	(7.950)
Less: Revenue Support Grant	(1.353)	(2.457)
Gross precept requirement	20.726	20.788
Less: Surpluses on Collection Funds	(0.083)	(0.031)
Net precept requirement	20.643	20.757
Tax-base	280,317	281,861
Band D equivalent	£73.64	£73.64

Why spending has changed	£m
Net budget requirement 2010-11	31.394
Less one-off Strengthening of Balances 2010-11	(0.271)
Deletion of Assistant Chief Fire Officer post	(0.140)
Savings from 2010-11 Pay Freeze	(0.150)
Non-Pay Inflation	0.328
Impact of Asset Management Plan and Vehicle Strategy	0.201
Additional on-call Firefighter Training & Property Maintenance Costs	0.150
Council Tax Freeze Grant	(0.519)
Net other changes	0.202
Net budget requirement 2011-12	31.195

What will your money go towards this year?



This year, your money will help us to procure and replace the necessary equipment and vehicles to ensure the safety of our communities and our firefighters.

Ultimately, your Council Tax will go towards ensuring our firefighting and rescue response to emergency calls remains effective, and that we continue to perform well.

We will continue to deliver safety advice, particularly to vulnerable people within our communities. We will continue to work with other emergency services, agencies and schools to make our communities safer and help improve community well-being.

The development of our environmental strategy will help us to reduce our impact on the environment, improve sustainability and focus on carbon reduction.



Who spends the Council Tax collected by Wyre Forest District Council?

	2010-11	2011-12		2011-12	
	Council Tax £	Council Tax £	% of Bill	Weekly Equivalent £	% Change Since Last Year
Worcestershire County Council	1,039.06	1,039.06	69%	19.98	0.0
Wyre Forest District Council	197.62	197.62	13%	3.80	0.0
West Mercia Police Authority	178.72	178.72	12%	3.44	0.0
Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority	73.64	73.64	5%	1.42	0.0
Average Parish/Town Council	13.12	13.09	1%	0.25	-0.2
Total Amount Payable (Band D)	1,502.16	1,502.13	100%	28.89	0.0

Wyre Forest District Council services only cost £3.80p per week out of a total average bill of £28.89 per week (Band D).

How much is your Council Tax?

The amount of Council Tax payable depends on where you live and your valuation band, this table will help you to check yours. The figures do not include any discount or benefit entitlement that you may have.

Parts of the Council's Area	Valuation Bands							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
The Charter Trustees Town of Kidderminster	995.51	1,161.41	1,327.32	1,493.24	1,825.09	2,156.92	2,488.75	2,986.49
The Parish/Town Council of:								
Upper Arley	1,021.70	1,191.96	1,362.24	1,532.52	1,873.10	2,213.65	2,554.22	3,065.05
Bewdley	1,007.06	1,174.88	1,342.72	1,510.56	1,846.26	2,181.93	2,517.62	3,021.13
Broome	999.81	1,166.42	1,333.06	1,499.69	1,832.98	2,166.23	2,499.50	2,999.39
Chaddesley Corbett	1,012.39	1,181.10	1,349.83	1,518.56	1,856.04	2,193.49	2,530.95	3,037.13
Churchill and Blakedown	1,011.76	1,180.36	1,348.99	1,517.61	1,854.88	2,192.12	2,529.37	3,035.23
Kidderminster Foreign	1,004.96	1,172.44	1,339.93	1,507.42	1,842.42	2,177.40	2,512.38	3,014.85
Ribbesford	992.71	1,158.14	1,323.59	1,489.04	1,819.96	2,150.85	2,481.75	2,978.09
Rock	1,004.14	1,171.48	1,338.83	1,506.19	1,840.92	2,175.62	2,510.33	3,012.39
Rushock	1,008.92	1,177.06	1,345.21	1,513.36	1,849.68	2,185.98	2,522.28	3,026.73
Stone	1,009.64	1,177.89	1,346.16	1,514.43	1,850.99	2,187.52	2,524.07	3,028.87
Stourport-on-Severn	1,008.12	1,176.12	1,344.14	1,512.16	1,848.22	2,184.25	2,520.28	3,024.33
Wolverley and Cookley	1,006.96	1,174.77	1,342.59	1,510.42	1,846.09	2,181.73	2,517.38	3,020.85

The Parish/Town Council Tax for each area

Parish Tax Area	2010-11		2011-12	
	Parish Precept £	Band D Council Tax £	Parish Precept £	Band D Council Tax £
Upper Arley	15,000	44.25	15,000	43.48
Bewdley	80,399	21.52	80,184	21.52
Broome	1,800	10.29	1,800	10.65
Chaddesley Corbett	21,783	29.76	21,783	29.52
Churchill and Blakedown	21,740	28.76	21,740	28.57
Kidderminster Foreign	6,863	17.42	7,170	18.38
Kidderminster (Charter Trustees)	75,990	4.20	76,390	4.20
Ribbesford	0	0.00	0	0.00
Rock	22,000	18.15	20,670	17.15
Rushock	1,700	23.94	1,800	24.32
Stone	6,500	25.29	6,500	25.39
Stourport-on-Severn	166,240	23.12	167,800	23.12
Wolverley and Cookley	38,535	21.54	38,535	21.38
Total	£458,550		£459,372	
Average Parish/Town Council Charge		£13.12		£13.09

Stourport-on-Severn Town Council Spending Budget information for Stourport-on-Severn Town Council must be included with this leaflet because its precept exceeds £140,000.

	2010-11 Net Expenditure (Comparison) £	2011-12 Expenditure £	2011-12 Income £	2011-12 Net Expenditure (Net Income) £
Administration	56,320	59,870	(50)	59,820
Parks, Gardens, Cemetery & Allotments	102,220	132,830	(29,010)	103,820
Grants	(8,930)	3,050	(11,600)	(8,550)
Christmas Lights & Twinning	7,680	8,000		8,000
Mayoralty & Elections	8,450	9,920		9,920
Transfer to/(from) Balances	500	(5,210)		(5,210)
Total	£166,240	£208,460	(£40,660)	£167,800

Note: 2010-11 figures have been restated following a change in accounting practice

Key to abbreviation Exp. = Expenditure Inc. = Income brackets = negative figures

How we'll spend Wyre Forest's cash in 2011-12

We have agreed a net expenditure for 2011-12 of £13.341 million. After taking the use of our reserves, balances and central Government support into account, your council tax is frozen this year. The Council Tax for 2011-12 remains at £197.62 for a Band D property.

How our budget compares to last year	£'000
Inflation	96
Increase in contribution from reserves	(934)
Net reduction in fees and charges	562
Net reduction in cost of services	(1,701)
NET BUDGET REDUCTION	(1,977)

The table below shows how we spent the money last year and how we will spend it in 2011-12.

How we spend the money	2010-11			2011-12		
	Exp. £'000	Inc. £'000	Net. £'000	Exp. £'000	Inc. £'000	Net. £'000
Waste Collection	2,654	(739)	1,915	2,668	(816)	1,852
Recreation	3,986	(633)	3,353	3,470	(155)	3,315
Highways Cleansing & Parking Facilities	1,000	(73)	927	965	(70)	895
General Cultural & Commercial Services	2,320	(1,821)	499	2,192	(1,776)	416
Environmental Health & Community Safety	1,908	(636)	1,272	1,108	(296)	812
Housing & Welfare	2,253	(496)	1,757	1,289	(92)	1,197
Council Tax, Housing Benefits & Financial Services	42,939	(41,725)	1,214	44,850	(43,550)	1,300
Planning & Building Control	1,734	(657)	1,077	1,693	(847)	846
Property, Economic Development & Tourism	851	(815)	36	750	(657)	93
Corporate Activities	5,094	(559)	4,535	5,643	(625)	5,018
Total Service Expenditure/(Income)	64,739	(48,154)	16,585	64,628	(48,884)	15,744
LESS Capital Account/Interest received	(1,175)	(102)	(1,277)	(1,294)	(225)	(1,519)
Use of reserves	10	0	10	0	(884)	(884)
Total Net Expenditure	63,574	(48,256)	15,318	63,334	(49,993)	13,341
Financed by Formula Grant			8,067			6,244
Financed by Area Based Grant			328			109
Balance funded by Council Tax			6,923			6,988

Council Tax at Band D **£197.62** **£197.62**

Note: 2010-11 figures have been restated following changes in the accounting rules which apply to the council.

Details of borrowing The council's borrowing as at 31st March 2011 is estimated to be £34,000.

How many people do we employ? The average number of employees in 2011-12 is estimated to be 378 in comparison with 422 in 2010-11.

Your Bill Explained

Most dwellings are subject to Council Tax. 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 placed in one of eight bands according to its open market capital value at 1st April 1991.

It is also based on certain assumptions; for example, vacant possession, a freehold interest (or if a flat, a 99 year leasehold at a nominal rental) and the property being in a reasonable state of repair.

Your Council Tax bill states which band applies to your dwelling

This value has been assessed by the Valuation Office Agency - NOT the District Council. You can inspect the Valuation List at Valuation Office Agency, Crown House, Bull Ring, Kidderminster,

Worcestershire DY10 2AA. You may be able to appeal against this valuation - see Appeals, page 29.

Reducing Your Bill

Single person discount

If you live on your own you may be entitled to a 25 per cent reduction on your bill.

People with disabilities

If either you or someone who lives with you has a disability, and your home has been adapted to meet their needs, you may qualify for a reduction in your Council Tax bill.

Empty properties or second homes

Where a property has been empty for longer than six months or is classed as a second home, a discount may apply.

Exempt dwellings

There are a number of properties on which

you do not have to pay Council Tax. A list of exempt classes is on the reverse of your bill.

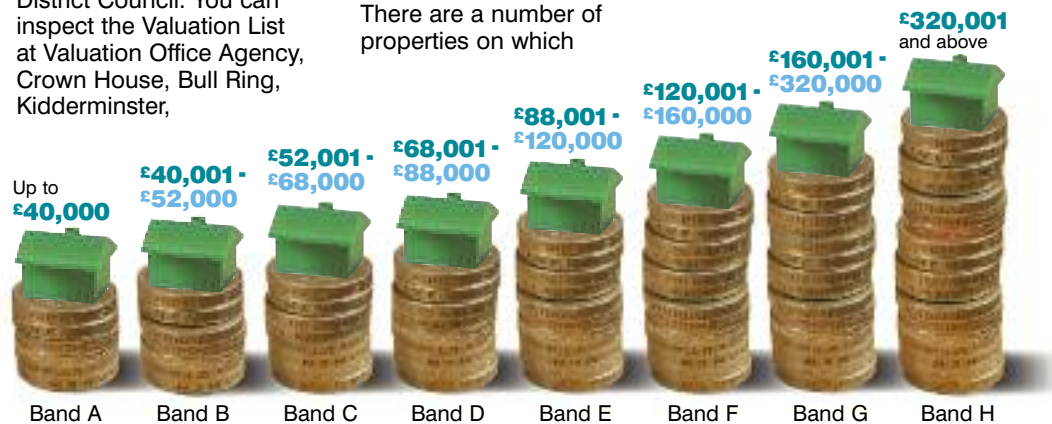
For further details of discounts see the reverse of your bill.

Council Tax Rebate/Housing Benefit

Do you need help to pay your Council Tax bill or rent?

If you are liable to pay Council Tax or pay rent you may apply for benefit. Your benefit will be calculated on:

- your capital, including any savings
- your income
- the amount of Council Tax or rent you pay
- your family circumstances.



Valuations based on houses prices from 1 April 1991.

Even if your income is high, if you share a house with other adults (except for a partner) who have low incomes you may be able to claim Council Tax Second Adult rebate.

We have customer service advisors who can give you advice on the benefits you may be able to claim. Call 01562 732928 or visit www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/benefits

Appeals

All Council Tax valuations are based on the price of a property on 1st April 1991.

Any increase or fall in a dwelling's value which results from general changes in the housing market since then will not affect your Council Tax band. If you think your property should be in a higher or lower band, you should contact: The Listing Officer, Valuation Office Agency, Crown House, Bull Ring, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY10 2AA, Tel: 01562 620100.

Making an appeal does not allow you to withhold payment of Council Tax in the meantime. If your appeal is successful, you will be

entitled to a refund of any overpayment. If you appeal and you are still not satisfied that a proper decision has been reached (or you are not notified of a decision within two months of making your appeal) you can appeal to a Valuation Tribunal. Details are available on request from Customer Services on 01562 732928 or write to the Listing Officer.

Business Rates

Information about Business Rates is shown on the separate explanatory leaflet enclosed with the Business Rates bill.

How to pay your Council Tax - Preferred methods



Direct Debit

Download a form from our website or contact 01562 732928



Council's Website
www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk



Internet Banking

The Council's bank details should be available from your bank's website



Telephone
24 hour automatic payment line
01562 67533

Alternative methods



By Post

Cheques are payable to 'Wyre Forest District Council', please enclose your bill with the payment and send to the address on the front of the bill. Please do not send cash.



In Person

At the Worcestershire Hub Customer Service Centres (see back page for details)

Please note, the Council is considering phasing out accepting cheques from Summer 2011. We would suggest you use one of the other methods of payments.

If in the future you would like your bill by email please register by visiting the Council Tax section of our website www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/paperfree

Environment Levy

Environment Agency Midlands Region

The Environment Agency, as a levying body for its Flood Defence functions, provides the following information:

Severn Trent Regional Flood Defence Committee

	2010-11	2011-12
Gross expenditure	£63,822,000	£51,066,000
Levies raised	£3,000,000	£3,000,000
Total Council Tax base	2,908,000	2,926,000

Flood defence money is spent on flood defence schemes, maintenance of the river system and a flood warning system.

Changes in the gross budgeted expenditure between the years are mainly due to an enhanced capital programme based on national prioritisation.

The local flood defence levy included in the County Council's budget for 2011-12 is £0.2 million (2010-11 £0.2 million).

Did you know that...



Wyre Forest District Council now provide an MOT Testing Service?

You can now have your vehicle MOT carried out at the Council's Vehicle Workshop at Green Street, Kidderminster. The workshop can undertake tests for cars, light vans and larger vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes. The team does not make subsequent repairs after the test, so you can be confident it will be an unbiased test. Costs start from £36 and should your vehicle fail we offer a free re-test.



To book please call us on: 01562 732941 or 01562 732927 or visit www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/mot for more information.

Waste collection updates



How do you find out what to do with your bins when bad weather affects normal collections? One way is to check our website www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/waste



This page is regularly updated with any changes to our refuse and recycling service. There are many more council services which you can access online.

From finding out about benefits and planning applications to reporting fly tipping.

Quick, easy and safe

It'll save time, money and is better for the environment. Also, you'll be helping us to help the district...

Find out more at www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/paperfree

Need more information about your **Council Tax**?



The Hub'll help

For information or advice about your Council Tax, or any other council service, contact the Worcestershire Hub



www.whub.org.uk

email: worcestershirehub@wyreforestdc.gov.uk



01562 732928



**Kidderminster Customer Service Centre
Town Hall, Vicar Street, Kidderminster DY10 1DB**

**Stourport-on-Severn Customer Service Centre
Civic Centre, Stourport-on-Severn DY13 8UJ**

**Bewdley Customer Service Centre
6 Load Street, Bewdley DY12 2AF**

