

Council Tax

Explanatory notes

Includes information from Leicestershire
Police Authority and Leicester, Leicestershire
and Rutland Combined Fire Authority

**This leaflet is important and
forms part of your bill**



Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign.
Committed to clearer communication.

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CONTACT COUNCIL TAX AT:

**Wellington House, 22-32 Wellington Street,
Leicester LE1 6HL**

PHONE: 0116 299 3900 FAX: 0116 254 7322

E-MAIL: council.tax@leicester.gov.uk



**Leicester
City Council**

If you need help reading this publication or require it in a different format please contact: 0116 238 5126

إذا تحتاج للمساعدة حول هذا الإعلان أو تطلبها بأشكال مختلفة، رجاء الاتصال
بقسم المساكن (هاوزنك دبارتمنت) على الرقم التالي 0116 238 5126

এই প্রকাশনাটি পড়তে যদি আপনার কোন সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয় অথবা যদি এটি ভিন্ন কোন
ফরমেটে দরকার হয়, তবে দয়া করে হাউজিং ডিপার্টমেন্টের সাথে 0116 238 5126
নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

اگر شما احتیاج به همکاری دارید در مورد این اطلاعیه یا به شکل مختلف درخواست
میکنید ، لطفاً به قسمت خانه‌های مسکنی (هاوزنگ دپارتمنت) تماس بگیرید
به ژماره تلفن 0116 238 5126

આ પ્રકાશન વાંચવામાં જે તમને મદદ જેઈતી હોય અથવા એને તમારે જુદા રૂપમાં જેઈવું
હોય તો, મહેરબાની કરી ડાઉનિંગ ડિપાર્ટમેન્ટનો 0116 238 5126 ઉપર સંપર્ક કરો.

نمگەر پڻوڀستیت به یارمەتیدان ههیه دهربارهی ئەم ناگاداری یه ، یان به شیوهی جۆراوجۆر
داوای دهمکیت ، تکایه پههيووندی بکه به بهشی خانوووبهره (هاوزینگ دپارتمنت)
به ژماره تلهفونی 0116 238 5126 .

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਲਈ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਇਹ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ
ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹਾਊਜ਼ਿੰਗ ਡਿਪਾਰਟਮੈਂਟ ਨਾਲ
0116 238 5126 ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ।

Haddii aad u baahan tahay daabacaadan ama aad rabto iyadoo
iskale loo diyaariyay, fadlan la soo xiriir Qaybta Guryaha
taleefon 0116 238 5126 .

اگر آپ کو اس پبلیکیشنز (اشاعتی مواد) کے پڑھنے کے لئے مدد کی ضرورت ہو یا یہ کسی اور شکل میں چاہئے
تو ہاؤسنگ ڈیپارٹمنٹ سے رابطہ کرنے کے لئے براؤ کرم 0116 238 5126 پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔

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2 Paying by direct debit

Take control – pay your Council Tax bill the easy way

Did you know that direct debit is the easiest way of paying your Council Tax, especially in terms of time and convenience? You also have a choice of two dates in the month when you can pay and you can cancel at any time – so you stay in control.

- **You stay in control**

You will receive a schedule of payments for the rest of the year, at least 14 days before the first payment is due. You will have plenty of time to ask any questions.

- **We do all the work for you**

By filling in the simple direct debit form on the opposite page, your bank or building society will make payments for you automatically, saving the cost, time and effort in paying by cash or cheque.

There's no easier or safer way to pay your Council Tax than direct debit. Please fill in the form on the opposite page, and never worry about paying your bill again!

- **NEW FOR 2007 –
No need to fill in a form!**

To make it even easier you can telephone us on **0116 299 3900**

with your bank account name, number and sort code and we will set up the direct debit over the phone. Just ring **0116 299 3900**. No need to fill in the form!

- **Convenient monthly payments**

With direct debit, you can choose one of two dates a month to pay your bill. By paying every month, you spread the cost of the Council Tax over 10 months, so you can plan your monthly outgoings in advance.

- **Guaranteed peace of mind**

Direct debit is an efficient and secure way to pay. Under the conditions of the direct debit scheme, you are guaranteed an immediate refund if there is a mistake, and you can cancel your direct debit at any time.

You will never have to queue again!



3 How to pay your Council Tax

You need to pay your Council Tax at the start of the financial year (1 April), or in 10 monthly instalments as shown on your bill, unless you take over the property during the year.

If you pay in any way other than direct debit, you should pay three to five days before the due date to allow for postal delivery and bank processing.

If you do not pay in line with your instalments, we will take action to collect the money you owe. This could result in us cancelling your right to pay by instalments, and the outstanding balance would then be due immediately. Further action may also result in costs being added to your balance. You can pay your Council Tax bill in any of the following ways.

Direct debit

This is the simplest way to pay. You stay in control because you have a money-back guarantee. You pay every month but you only sign one form, and your bank or building society does the rest. You have a choice of two payment dates – 1st or 20th of the month – so you can plan your payments to suit yourself. You can forget queues, cheques and stamps.

To pay by direct debit, fill in the direct debit form on page 4 of this leaflet, sign it and send it to:

Leicester City Council
Freepost RRBZ-TECL-GLRZ
Wellington House
22-32 Wellington Street
Leicester
LE1 6HL

You do not need a stamp.

Or Call us on **0116 299 3900** with your bank account name, number and sort code and we can set it up over the phone.

If you already pay by direct debit, you do not have to do anything. The monthly payments shown on your bill will automatically be made by your bank or building society.

Standing order

If you are not sure about paying by direct debit, you could set up a standing order. It is so much easier than paying by cash or cheque.

To pay by standing order, fill in the standing order form on page 16 of this leaflet and send it to your bank or building society. Remember to set your standing order date 5 days before your instalment due date so that you pay on time.

Internet

Pay on-line through our website at **www.leicester.gov.uk/payments**, and follow the simple guidance on the screen. Just have your card details and Council Tax reference number ready when you go on-line.

Debit card -

Call us on 0116 252 7012

You can pay your Council Tax over the phone. We accept Maestro (Switch), Solo, Delta and Electron debit cards. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week – you can leave your payment details on our secure digital phone service. Just have your card details and Council Tax reference number ready when you call.

By post

Please make your cheque payable to 'Leicester City Council', write your Council Tax reference number on the back of the cheque, and send it to Leicester City Council, Cash Office, Welford House, Welford Place, Leicester LE1 6ZH. Please do not send cash in the post. We do not accept cheques made for a future date.

In person

Use your payment card and visit our cash office at Welford Place at the above address. There is also a deposit box at the cash office, which is open 8am until 7pm every day except Christmas Day. You can also make payments at your local housing office. Their addresses are shown on the back of your Council Tax Bill.

Difficulties in Paying

If you have problems paying the amount due you may be entitled to Council Tax benefit. Please refer to the details on page13 of this leaflet. Depending on what action has been taken already to collect the amount you owe, we may be able to make a payment arrangement. Please note however that no arrangement will be considered without you giving full employment details, and the arrangement must be paid by direct debit. Our contact details are on page 14 of this leaflet.

4 Council Tax valuation bands

Each home, whether it is a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette, mobile home or houseboat, and whether it is owned or rented, is placed in one of eight bands depending on its open-market value as at 1 April 1991. The bands are as follows.

Band	Ranges of value
A	Less than £40,000
B	£40,001 to £52,000
C	£52,001 to £68,000
D	£68,001 to £88,000
E	£88,001 to £120,000
F	£120,001 to £160,000
G	£160,001 to £320,000
H	Over £320,000

5 Appeals

You can appeal to have your home put in a lower valuation band only if:

- part of the property has been demolished;
- it has been converted to flats; or
- there have been physical changes in the local area, for example a major road is built nearby, which would affect the value.

Or, you can appeal within six months of:

- a band change to your property made by the listing officer; or
- becoming the new taxpayer for the property.

You still have to pay Council Tax while you are waiting for a decision on your appeal. If it is successful, we will refund any overpayments.

Make your appeal in writing to:

The Listing Officer
Valuation Office Agency
Enkalon House
92 Regent Road
Leicester
LE1 7DD.

Phone: **0116 280 0200**

Fax: **0116 280 0299**

The listing officer is independent of the Council.

You can appeal to us by writing to the Revenues and Benefits Service if you think you are not responsible for

paying the bill – for example, because you are not the resident or owner, or because Council Tax does not have to be paid on that property.

6 Who has to pay the Council Tax?

Look down the list below. When you reach a description that applies to a person in your home, they will be the person who has to pay.

The following people could be responsible for paying Council Tax.

- 1 A resident freeholder – this is the owner-occupier**
- 2 A resident leaseholder – this includes assured tenants under the Housing Act 1988**
- 3 A resident statutory or secure tenant**
- 4 A resident licensee**
- 5 A resident – this includes squatters**
- 6 The owner – this is usually when the property is unoccupied**

There are a few exceptions to these rules. These include where a property is split into bedsits with shared facilities, or where the occupiers have separate rent arrangements and pay

an individual rent to their landlord. These properties are called houses in multiple occupation, and the owner has to pay the Council Tax.

7 Changes in Circumstance

There may be changes in your household that affect the amount of Council Tax to be paid; for example, people may move in or out, become 18 years of age, or stop being a full time student. Please let us know about these

changes within twenty one days of when they happen. This will help us change your bill quickly and ensure you pay the right amount. Details of how to let us know about any changes are shown on page 14 of this leaflet.

8 Uninhabitable Properties

Some unoccupied and unfurnished properties need structural changes or major repair work before they are lived in. These properties may be entitled to an exemption from Council Tax for up to one year before the full charge is applied, even if the work is not finished. Before the exemption can be given we will need to know the type and amount of work to be done, and

we will need to visit the property. Details of how to contact us for an application form are shown on page 14 of this leaflet. Please note that if you only apply after the work is finished, we will not grant an exemption without sufficient proof of the work done and the amount of time it took.

9 Ways to reduce your bill

If you read the following and think you are entitled to a discount or disabled person's relief, or you believe your home may be exempt, please contact us for more information. You will have to give proof to support your claim. If your bill shows you receive a discount or exemption, you must tell us about any changes that may affect your entitlement within 21 days of the change.

[1] Discounts

The full Council Tax bill assumes that two adults live in the property. If only one adult lives there (as their main home), the bill is reduced by 25%.

The following people do not count towards the number of adults living in a property.

- Full-time students, student nurses, husbands and wives of overseas students, foreign language assistants
- Apprentices and youth training trainees
- Adults with severe mental-health problems
- People in prison (except people in prison for not paying fines or Council Tax)
- 18 and 19-year-olds who are at, or have just left, school
- Patients living in hospital

- Patients who are living in residential care homes, nursing homes and hospices
- Care workers on low pay and volunteer care workers
- People who care for someone with a disability who is not their husband, wife or partner, or child under 18
- People staying in certain hostels or night shelters
- Members of visiting forces and certain international institutions
- Members of religious communities, such as monks or nuns

[2] Changes from 1 April 2004

From 1 April 2004, the Government allowed local authorities to reduce the level of discount and exemption granted to the Council Tax payers of certain types of property. The Government also gave local authorities the power to create and change new types of local discounts. The changes in Leicester are as follows.

- If you have a property that is unoccupied and unfurnished, the property has no charge for the first six months. After this, the charge to pay goes up to the full 100% amount.

However if the property has been unoccupied and unfurnished for six months or more by the time you become responsible for it, no further exemption will be given and the

100% charge will be payable with immediate effect.

- From 1 April 2004 until 31 March 2007, for the first six months that you own a second home in Leicester, or where you are responsible for paying Council Tax on a furnished property that is unoccupied, you will have to pay 50% of the full charge. After six months, the amount to pay will go up to 90% of the full charge.

From 1 April 2007 however this changes so that any property that is a second home or furnished but unoccupied will be charged 90% with immediate effect. Any property that is part of the way through a six month 50% charge when 1 April 2007 is reached will be moved immediately to the 90% change. This change is in support of the Council's Empty Homes Strategy to help encourage the quick letting or reoccupation of properties in Leicester.

[3] Exemptions

Some properties are exempt from Council Tax (you do not have to pay it). The types of property can be unoccupied or occupied, and are as follows.

Unoccupied properties

Class A – Unoccupied properties that need or are undergoing structural alteration or major repair (exempt for up to 12 months), and properties where the alteration or repair work has been completed (exempt for up to six months) – exempt for up to 12 months in total.

Class B – Unoccupied properties owned and last used by a registered charity (exempt for up to six months).

Class C – Unoccupied and mainly unfurnished properties (exempt for up to six months, depending when the last people moved out). The exemption starts from the date the property became empty and not from when you became liable to pay Council Tax for it.

Class D – Properties left unoccupied by someone in prison, unless they are in prison for not paying fines or Council Tax.

Class E – Properties left unoccupied by people who are in hospital for a long time.

Class F – Properties left unoccupied by people who have died where probate or letters of administration are to be granted, and properties where such a grant has been made for up to six months after.

Class G – Properties left unoccupied because the law does not allow anyone to live in them, including properties where a planning condition prevents occupancy.

Class H – Unoccupied properties kept empty for a minister of religion.

Class I – Properties left unoccupied by people receiving care elsewhere.

Class J – Properties left unoccupied by people providing care elsewhere.

Class K – Properties left unoccupied because the owner is a student somewhere else.

Class L – Properties left unoccupied

because they have been repossessed.

Class Q – Properties left unoccupied which are the responsibility of a bankrupt's trustee.

Class R – Empty caravan pitches or houseboat moorings.

Class T – Unoccupied property that forms part of another property, which cannot be let separately.

Occupied properties

Class M – Student halls of residence

Class N – Properties used only by full-time students

Class O – Accommodation for armed forces

Class P – Accommodation for visiting forces

Class S – Properties lived in only by people under 18

Class U – Properties occupied only by people who have severe mental-health problems

Class V – Properties lived in by diplomats

Class W – ‘Granny flats’ lived in by dependent relatives

[4] Reductions for disabled people

If you, or anyone who lives with you, need a room or an extra bathroom or kitchen or space to use a wheelchair in your home, you may be able to have your Council Tax bill reduced. We will need to visit the property. See page 14 for details of how to contact us for an application form.

[5] Council Tax Benefit

You may get Council Tax Benefit if you and your partner (if you have one) have to pay Council Tax and are on a low income. The amount of help depends on your income,

who lives in your household and the amount of Council Tax you have to pay.

You cannot normally get Council Tax Benefit if you (together with your partner, if you have one) have savings of more than £16,000 – but you may be able to get Second Adult Rebate.

You may get Second Adult Rebate no matter how much income or savings you have. However, you cannot normally get a Second Adult Rebate if you have a partner living with you.

If you claim Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or the guaranteed part of Pension Credit, you must claim Council Tax Benefit. Council Tax Benefit will not be paid automatically to you if you get one of these benefits.

Second Adult Rebate

You can claim if:

- you are liable for the Council Tax and there is at least one other adult living in your household (not your partner);
- the other adults are not tenants or joint owners with you;
- the other adults are not paying rent or board; and the other adults are on a low income.

If you could get both kinds of help with your Council Tax, the benefits section will work out which kind reduces your bill by the most and will pay you that.

Making a claim

If you want to claim Council Tax Benefit or Second Adult Rebate, you can pick up a form from:

your local housing office (the address is on the back of your Council Tax bill);

Wellington House, 22-32 Wellington Street, Leicester LE1 6HL or
the Customer Service Centre (New Walk Centre, King Street, Leicester).

You can also phone or write to these offices and they will send you a form.

See page14 for the contact details.

You must make a claim for benefit in writing. The benefit section will ask you to fill in a claim form. They will also need to see proof of your, and your partner's (if you have one), identification, income received and any savings you have. If you are entitled to any Council Tax Benefit, your claim will generally be paid from the date you make a claim in writing. You must not delay making a claim to us.

10 Where to get more advice

You can also get your bill and the information in this leaflet in braille, in large print or on audio tape if you ask us. The leaflet is also available in certain community languages – please ask us for more details.

You can contact us about your Council Tax

You can phone us on 0116 299 3900:

- between 8.30am and 5pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays;
- between 9.30am and 5pm on Wednesdays; and
- between 8.30am and 4.30pm on Fridays.

We may record your call for training purposes.

By e-mail at: council.tax@leicester.gov.uk

By fax on 0116 254 7322

You can visit us in person at Wellington House:

- between 8.45am and 4.30pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays;
- between 9.30am and 4.30pm on Wednesdays; and
- between 8.45am and 4pm on Fridays.

You can write to us at **Wellington House, FREEPOST RRB2-TECL-GLRZ 222-32 Wellington Street, Leicester LE1 6HL.**

You can contact us by minicom on 0116 252 7584 (for deaf people and people with hearing difficulties).

You can contact the Housing Benefit Section which deals with Council Tax Benefit claims at:

Leicester City Council, FREEPOST RRBZ-TECL-GLRZ 22-32 Wellington Street, Leicester LE1 6HL.

You can visit the Benefits Section in person:

- between 8.45am and 4.30pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays;
- between 9.30am and 4.30pm on Wednesdays; and
- between 8.45am and 4pm on Fridays.

Or, you can phone

0116 252 6944 if your last name begins with A to K, or **0116 252 6948** if your last name begins with L to Z. Or, you can e-mail housi207@leicester.gov.uk

If you have any questions about Council Tax and benefit, you can also visit the

Customer Service Centre, New Walk Centre, King Street, Leicester LE1 6ZG between 8.30am and 5pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, and between 8.30am and 4.30pm on Wednesdays and Fridays.

For more information about Council Tax, please visit our website at www.leicester.gov.uk/housing



Note: Remember to write your payment reference number or benefit reference number on any letters you send us. Please include a daytime phone number.

11 Change of address form

If you move house or sell a property you own, please tell us about the changes.

Please give your Council Tax account number.

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Owner

Name of the person moving	Exact date of the move	New address

If you were the owner of the property, has it now been sold?

Yes No

If 'No', is the property now furnished or unfurnished?

If 'Yes', what is the exact date of sale?

What is the name and previous address of the new owner?

.....

Who were the estate agents and solicitors who helped you with the sale?

.....

Tenant

If you rented the property, what was the name and address of your landlord or managing agent?

.....

Was the property rented furnished or unfurnished?



I confirm that, as far as I know, the information given on this form is correct.

Full name: Signature:

Date: Daytime phone number:

Please return this form to **Revenues and Benefits Service, Leicester City Council, FREEPOST RRBZ-TECL-GLRZ Wellington House, 22-32 Wellington Street, Leicester LE1 6HL.**

Data protection: We keep the personal information we collect about your Council Tax on computer records. We may also have to share it, by law, with other councils and with law enforcement agencies to prevent or detect crime, or to prosecute offenders.

12 Council Tax standing order form

Please fill in this form to instruct your bank or building society to make payments from your account by standing order. We advise that you quote payments dates that are 5 days before the instalment date to ensure payments reach your Council Tax account on time.

Then return this form to **your bank or building society**.

Instructions to your bank or building society

Please pay: The Co-operative Bank Plc, 77-79 Market Place, Leicester

Sort code: 08-90-77

For the credit of: Leicester City Council

Account number: 61079818

Council Tax reference number.

2	0																
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(Please enter the reference number on the front of your bill.)

Name and full address of your bank or building society

Name of your bank or building society account to be debited

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Bank or building society account number

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Sort code

--	--	--

--	--	--

--	--	--

Date of first payment:

--

Amount of first payment:

--

Further payments of:

--

On the:

--

 day of each month

until

--

 or you receive further notice from me in writing.

Your signature:

--

Date:

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