



Council Tax 2020-21

The Deal

Foreword by the Leader of Wigan Council

Welcome to this year's Council Tax booklet

For another year I am pleased to let you know that the general council element of your Council Tax will be frozen once again.

It will be the seventh year running we have been able to do this because of the continuing success of The Deal.

The Deal was created to help us cope with the impact of austerity but also to reshape our services and the way we work as a council to help deliver better outcomes for our residents.

You have played your part in The Deal, and continue to do so, by boosting our recycling rates, being involved in your local communities and shopping locally to help our economy.

This has all contributed in helping us to keep Council Tax as low as possible.

Once again this year central government has allowed councils the option to introduce a two per cent rise to help fund adult social care.

Our decision to do this has not been taken lightly and the funds it will generate will only go part of the way to covering our costs for the vital services in this sector.

The government says it recognises adult social care is under-funded and we wait in anticipation for the recommendations for more long-term plans.

In addition to this, you will also see increases to the tax bill for the Greater Manchester Mayor's precept.

It is worth emphasising though that Wigan Borough consistently delivers amongst the lowest tax rates in Greater Manchester.

This is all while we have had to cut £160m from our budget over the last decade.

As we continue to implement Deal 2030 and work alongside residents to deliver on the priorities that you helped identify, we are optimistic about the year ahead.

Through us all playing our part we will keep on with making our borough a better and fairer place for all.



Councillor David Molyneux
Leader of Wigan Council

About Council Tax

Council Tax is a property tax with a personal element.

Each year we send a Council Tax bill to every domestic property in the borough, whether it's a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette, mobile home or houseboat. Each dwelling is put into one of the eight bands below, based on what it would have cost to buy on the open market on 1 April 1991.

Every year we set the Council Tax for each band. The amounts for 2020/2021 are below. The band given to your property is on the front of your bill.

The Valuation Office Agency decides the band not us. You can appeal against your property's band if you have moved into the property in the last six months or there has been a change in the building or physical state of the local area.

You can contact them at Valuation Office Agency, Manchester Valuation Office, Portland Tower, Portland Street, Manchester, M1 3LD.
Phone 03000 501 501
www.voagov.uk

Band	Band Value	Council Tax for 2020/21
A	Up to £40,000	£1,076.71
B	£40,001 - £52,000	£1,256.16
C	£52,001 - £68,000	£1,435.61
D	£68,001 - £88,000	£1,615.08
E	£88,001 - £120,000	£1,973.97
F	£120,001 - £160,000	£2,332.88
G	£160,001 - £320,000	£2,691.79
H	£320,001 and above	£3,230.16

*Additional parish precepts will apply for properties in Haigh and Shevington

Thank you for doing your part of The Deal

Through your support of The Deal, we've been able to freeze our service element of Council Tax for the seventh year running.



Based on Band A	Council Services	GM Police precept	GM Fire precept	Adult Social Care	Mayoral precept	Total
2014	£794.76	£101.53	£38.42			£934.71
2015	£794.76	£101.53	£38.42			£934.71
2016	£794.76	£104.87	£39.18	£15.89		£954.70
2017	£794.76	£108.20	£39.96	£40.21		£983.13
2018	£794.76	£116.20	£39.96	£65.26	£5.33	£1021.51
2019	£794.76	£132.20	£39.96	£65.26	£11.33	£1043.51
2020	£794.76	£138.86	£44.13	£82.46	£16.50	£1076.71

Additional parish precepts will apply for properties in Haigh and Shevington

Council Services

This covers council services such as bins and recycling centres, schools and Start Well centres, street lights and road repairs.

GM Police

This is a charge levied on behalf of the Greater Manchester Police Service.

GM Fire Service

This is a charge levied on behalf of the Greater Manchester Fire Service.

Adult Social Care precept

This is a charge to cover the cost of Adult Social Care services within councils due to the budget cuts being imposed by central government. On your Council Tax bill the cumulative effect of the Adult Social Care precept will be shown.

Mayoral precept

This is a charge levied on behalf of the Mayor to pay for the running of the Mayor's office and to meet the Mayor's priorities in Greater Manchester.

The Deal - key statistics

Awarded
Council of the Year
at the 2019 Local Government Chronicle Awards



78%
of our residents supported by the outstanding reablement services require no further on-going support



£11million
invested through the Deal for Communities Investment Fund



95%
of people with a learning disability are supported to live at home or with their family – 6th best in the country



Over 1,200
new homes built in 2018-19, up 30% on last year



One of the best
in the North West at getting people home from hospital and better than the England average



Our Town
district centre improvement programme launching in 2020 - worth £600k



Launch of a
5 YEAR
Cultural Manifesto to increase cultural engagement across the borough



52%
of household waste recycled in 2018/19, **up 4%** on last year's figures



99%
of Day Nurseries and Pre-Schools are OFSTED rated outstanding



TOP PLASTIC RECYCLING TOWN
in the UK – Recycling almost double that of the next closest area



91%
of schools are OFSTED rated good / outstanding



Further information regarding the gross expenditure of the council, relevant precepting authorities and levying bodies (including their Council Tax requirements) can be found at www.wigan.gov.uk/IncomeAndSpending. A hard copy is available free of charge, upon request.

Our Town

Last year we launched Our Town to help build on our residents' sense of community pride and recognise the many areas that make up our wonderful borough.

Feedback from the Big Listening Project consultation highlighted how attached residents feel to their local community and the individual characteristics of our districts.

Improvements to public realm and the environment are therefore a major part of Our Town, as a result of residents telling us what is important to them.

Throughout 2020, council teams will work in each of the 12 district centres delivering the following:

- Deep clean and public realm improvements; jet washing, weeding, pruning and removal of fly posting. Replacement or additional bins, replacement street furniture, new planters or new trees, improved street lighting, signage and bollards, if required.

- Vacant shop improvement fund; a pro-active approach to engage with owners and encourage them to apply for grants to improve the condition of the shop fronts.
- Locally identified priorities; key projects highlighted in the Big Listening Project. For example, it could be additional car parking or street lighting, having engaged with ward members.
- Event budget; an opportunity to celebrate local heritage through providing a funding stream for one-off community-led events.

In addition, the Our Town awards has been launched, encouraging residents to nominate their local hero or neighbour. It may be someone who goes above and beyond for their community, from taking out their neighbours' bins, nipping to the shops for a friend or caring for others when they need it most.

Winners will be picked from across the districts and will be unveiled at the Our Town awards later in 2020.

Wigan Borough

many brilliant towns
making up
one great place.



For more information about Our Town visit www.wigan.gov.uk/ourtown

When you may not have to pay Council Tax

You may not have to pay if only the following people occupy your property:

- Full time students,
- Care Leavers up to the age of 25,
- People under the age of 18, or
- People who have a severe mental impairment and would otherwise be liable to pay Council Tax.

You may not have to pay for a limited time if your property is not occupied because it is:

- Newly built and not yet occupied (no charge for 1 month); or
- Substantially unfurnished (no charge for 1 month); or
- Owned by a charity (exempt for 6 months).

You may not have to pay for any of the following types of properties even if they are occupied:

- Armed Forces' accommodation.
- Visiting Forces' accommodation.
- A self-contained annexe.
- Occupied by someone who has diplomatic, commonwealth or consular privilege or immunity.

You may not have to pay for your property whilst it is:

- Left empty by the owner or tenant, who was the last occupier, and who has moved to receive or provide personal care in either a hospital or home elsewhere.
- Repossessed by a mortgage company.
- Empty because occupation is forbidden by law.
- Waiting to be occupied by a minister of religion.
- The responsibility of a bankrupt's trustee.
- Left empty by a student owner who lived in it immediately before leaving to study elsewhere.
- An empty caravan pitch or houseboat mooring.
- Unoccupied because the last occupier, who was also the owner, had died and probate or letters of administration have not yet been granted (and for 6 months after).

For further information, and to make an application for discount, exemption or reduction please visit www.wigan.gov.uk/CouncilTaxDiscounts



Ways to pay less Council Tax

The full Council Tax bill assumes that there are 2 or more adults living in a property.

If you are the only adult living in your property your bill can be reduced by 25%. We can also consider local discounts for other reasons as well.

When we work out if you are entitled to a discount we don't count these people:

- Children under 18.
- People over 18 that still qualify for Child Benefit.
- 18 or 19 year olds who leave school after 30 April are not counted until 1 November of the same year.
- People with a severe mental impairment.
- Apprentices.
- Youth Training Trainees.
- Care Workers.
- Carers.
- People in residential care homes, nursing homes and hostels that provide a high level of care.
- Resident hospital patients.
- Student nurses.
- Prisoners in detention (unless for non payment of fines or Council Tax).

- Students in full time education.
- Diplomats and members of international organisations with headquarters in the UK (and their non British spouses).
- Members of religious communities such as monks or nuns.

Certain qualifying conditions apply.

People with disabilities

If you, or a person that lives with you, has a disability you may qualify for a reduction.

Your home will need to have an extra bathroom, kitchen or other room that is used mainly to help with the person's disability. You can also qualify if the disabled person uses a wheelchair in the home.

If you qualify we will work out your Council Tax charge again using the valuation band below the one your property is in.

The Council have additional discretionary powers to reduce the Council Tax liability where national discounts and exemptions cannot be applied.

For further information, and to make an application for discount, exemption or reduction please visit www.wigan.gov.uk/CouncilTaxDiscounts



Council Tax for empty dwellings and second homes

When a dwelling first becomes empty

A dwelling that becomes newly empty will be given a maximum 1 month full exemption followed by a 25% discount for a maximum of 5 months.

Long term empty dwellings

Dwellings left empty and unfurnished for longer than 6 months, or have already been empty for between 6 months and 2 years, will be charged 100% Council Tax.

Empty homes premium

Long term empty dwellings that remain empty and unfurnished for longer than 2 years will attract an Empty Homes Premium. The premium will be an extra 50% charge in addition to the 100% charge for a long term empty dwelling.

Second homes

Dwellings that are unoccupied but furnished are classed as second homes. There is no discount for these dwellings. The charge for a second home is 100%.

If your property becomes empty, contact us straight away and we can tell you if you qualify for any reduction.

A property in need of, or undergoing, major repairs

If you own a property that is either in need of, or undergoing, major repairs you may be entitled to a reduction of 75% from your bill for a maximum of 12 months, or until the work is completed if that is sooner. You will be asked to provide evidence of the extent of the works required to render the property habitable. Only one major repairs reduction can be given for any period during which a property is continuously empty. Certain qualifying conditions apply for all reductions.

Family annex

If your property has an annex which has a separate Council Tax band and is occupied by a relative, they may be entitled to a reduction from their Council Tax.

For further information, and to make an application for discount, exemption or reduction please visit www.wigan.gov.uk/CouncilTaxDiscounts



Council Tax Reduction

Our Council Tax Reduction scheme helps households on low incomes to pay their Council Tax bill.

1. The National Council Tax Reduction Scheme – pensioner households and households with children under 5

These households:

- Can apply for support.
- Can apply for Second Adult Rebate if the only other adult living in the property is on a low income.
- Can apply for backdated support. This will only be awarded if there is good cause why the claim wasn't made from the earlier date.

2. The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme – working age households with no children under 5

These households:

- Can apply for support under our local Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- Will have their entitlement calculated using the national scheme but support will be reduced by 20%.
- Cannot apply for Second Adult Rebate.
- Can only get support from the date a claim for reduction is made.

Who can apply for Council Tax Reduction?

To apply for Council Tax Reduction you must be the person whose name is on the Council Tax bill.

You may qualify if you are:

- On Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit;
- On Pension Credit, Guaranteed Credit and in some cases Saving Credit;
- Working and on low pay (including people who are self employed);
- On a low income. For example you might only get a retirement pension or be getting social security benefits;
- A working age household with capital / savings under £12,000; or
- A pensioner household, or household with a child under 5, with capital/savings under £16,000.



In April 2018 the government made changes to all Local Council Tax Reduction schemes that may affect how much Council Tax Reduction we can award you.

These include changes to:

- Limit the child premium to two children for new claims or where you become responsible for a third child;
- The amount of the Non Dependant Deductions for some customers who have another adult (not their partner) living with them;

- The Applicable Amounts we use to work out how much Council Tax Reduction you are entitled to;
- Limit the length of time you are allowed to leave the country and keep your claim active to 4 weeks.

For a full list of these changes and for more information on this please visit: www.wigan.gov.uk/CouncilTaxReduction

How to apply

You can find out more information and apply online at www.wigan.gov.uk/CouncilTaxReduction

You cannot make a claim for Council Tax Reduction through Job Centre Plus or the Pensions Service.

For more information about Council Tax Reduction visit www.wigan.gov.uk/CouncilTaxReduction

If you rent your home you might also be entitled to Housing Benefit. For more information about Housing Benefit visit www.wigan.gov.uk/HousingBenefit

Need help to make an application?

- You can get help and use our online facilities at our Life Centres in Wigan, Marsh Green, Atherton, Leigh Town Hall, Ince and Platt Bridge.
- If you are a tenant of Your Housing, Adactus Housing, or Riverside Housing, your landlord can help you fill in and check your benefit claim online.
- If you do not have access to a computer or are unable to visit us at any of the above places, contact us 01942 489002.



The following agencies can give advice about your application:

- Citizens Advice
Tel: **0808 2787 801**
Email: advice@cawb.org.uk
www.cawb.org.uk
- Age UK (for those over 50) Wigan
Tel: 01942 241972
Email: enquiries@ageukwiganborough.org.uk
www.ageukwiganborough.org.uk
- Wigan & Leigh Carers Centre (For registered Carers)
Tel: 01942 705959
Email: info@wlcccarers.com
www.wlcccarers.com

Changes you need to tell us about

Tell us straight away if you are getting Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction or have a discount or exemption applied and have a change in circumstances.

If you do not tell us about a change as soon as it happens, you could pay the wrong amount of Council Tax, lose benefits or we could pay you too much. If this happens you may have to pay any overpaid amount back and pay any underpaid Council Tax amount.

It is an offence not to tell us about any change in circumstances that affects your entitlement. We may take court action against you.

- You can also get Welfare Rights Advice from us by emailing welfarightsadvice@wigan.gov.uk

These facilities are available to all customers:

- Access for wheelchair users at our Life Centres in Wigan, Marsh Green, Atherton, Leigh Town Hall, Ince and Platt Bridge.
- ReciteMe is available on our website so that you can have the information on our web pages read aloud to you.

You can tell us online at www.wigan.gov.uk/BenefitsReportAChange

You can get face-to-face help with any enquiry about a council service at our Life Centres in Wigan, Marsh Green, Atherton, Leigh Town Hall, Ince and Platt Bridge.

Complaints or compliments

Fill in an online form at www.wigan.gov.uk/ContactUs



Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a payment paid by the Department for Work and Pensions to help with your living costs if you are on a low income or out of work.

It replaces existing benefits and credits into a single monthly payment.

From 18 April 2018 most people making a claim for working age benefits and help with housing costs in Wigan Borough will be placed in Universal Credit Full Service.

You will be automatically transferred to Universal Credit in Wigan Borough if you have a change of circumstances that affects your current benefits.

You will have to pay your Council Tax from your monthly Universal Credit

payment yourself. If you are on a low income you may qualify for Council Tax Reduction.

Apply at www.wigan.gov.uk/CouncilTaxReduction

Find out more about Universal Credit on the government website www.gov.uk/universal-credit

If you don't have a computer at home you can use one for free at your local library or Life Centre. There are also drop-in sessions for residents that need extra help to get online. For more information about help and support for Universal Credit claimants visit www.wigan.gov.uk/universal-credit

Don't be excluded

If you are struggling to pay your bills or need help and advice, get in touch with those you owe money to as soon as you can.

You can nominate a friend or representative to help you if you find it hard to manage it yourself.

In a crisis?

If you find yourself in a crisis our Local Welfare Support Advisors can help support customers to:

- access financial help and advice,
- gain appropriate referrals e.g. food parcels, white goods, and
- build self-reliance.

For further information go to www.wigan.gov.uk/MoneyAdvice or visit our Life Centres in Wigan or Leigh

Avoid doorstep loan companies. Their interest rates can be extremely high.



Information about the Adult Social Care Precept

Wigan Council has responsibility for Adult Social Care functions under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has given Wigan Council the option to charge an annual 'precept' of 2% on its Council Tax for the financial year 2020/21 without holding a referendum, to assist the authority in meeting its expenditure on Adult Social Care for the financial year 2020/21. For Adult Social Care authorities, Council Tax bills show two percentage changes: one for the part of the overall change attributable to the Adult Social Care Precept, and one for the part attributable to general expenditure.

Information about the Mayoral Precepts

The Mayor of Greater Manchester has taken on the responsibilities of the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Commissioner and the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue services. From 2018/2019 the precept on Council Tax bills for Police services was replaced with the Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner Precept Component and this precept funds Police services. The precept for the Fire and Rescue Services was replaced with the Mayoral General Precept Component (including Fire Services). This precept includes an amount for Fire and Rescue Services and an amount to fund the Greater Manchester Mayor and the work he wants to do in Greater Manchester. The information provided by the Mayor indicates that the precept will pay for the running of the Mayor's office and to meet the Mayor's priorities in Greater Manchester which are:

- Recruiting more police officers
- Provide increased resources for fire service and support for recruiting over 100 firefighters
- Do more for young people in care and Our Pass pilot for 16-18 year olds

The table below shows the cost of the Mayoral Precepts per household for 2020/21.

Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner Precept

Council Tax Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Precept Charge (£)	138.86	162.01	185.15	208.30	254.58	300.87	347.16	416.60

Mayoral General Precept (including Fire)

Council Tax Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Precept Charge (£)	60.63	70.73	80.84	90.95	111.16	131.37	151.58	181.90



Thank you for doing your part of The Deal

- Recycle more, recycle right
- Get involved in your community
- Get online
- Be healthy and be active
- Help protect children and the vulnerable
- Support your local businesses
- Have your say and tell us if we get it wrong
- Believe in our borough



We've been able to freeze our service element
of Council Tax for the seventh year running.



We can make the information in this booklet available in other formats and languages on request.

Contact us at:

Wigan Council, PO Box 100, Wigan, WN1 3DS. 01942 489001

Email: revenues@wigan.gov.uk

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