

# Your council tax explained

County council services  
&  
how your money is spent

2023/24



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

## Dear resident,

We know that many households across our county are struggling because of the cost of living crisis. We are also facing our most challenging budget for many years. We estimate that the ongoing impact of inflation, the increase in the national living wage and higher energy prices, will raise our costs by **£38 million** in 2023/24.

We also face **£19m** of additional costs due to more demand for our services, in particular to support children and young people and to provide social care and care placements for children and adults. The national shortage of social care workers is leading to a reliance on agency staff and higher costs, and we also have a growing and ageing population.

While government grants and funding have increased in some areas, funding has not kept pace with growth in demand and costs so we have faced some difficult choices in setting our 2023/24 budget, which includes having to find **£30m** of savings. The additional government funding for adult social care is also based on the assumption that councils will raise some of the finance required through a **4.99 per cent** rise in council tax, **two per cent** of which must be spent on these services.

Our budget includes this council tax rise but we are also allocating money to ensure that the lowest income households are protected from this increase and receive further support.

Our budget also invests £7m in the things you think we should focus on. To do this, we listened carefully to what matters most to you and your communities through our residents' survey, Oxfordshire Conversation events and, most recently, our budget consultation.

This means we'll continue to protect those in need, while investing in roads, cycle paths and pavements, public and community transport and improving services for children and families.



Handwritten signature of Liz Leffman in black ink.

**Councillor Liz Leffman**  
Leader, Oxfordshire County Council

## ABOUT THE COUNCIL

Oxfordshire County Council provides 80 per cent of local government services by expenditure, including adult and children's social care, some education services, fire and rescue, libraries and museums, roads, trading standards, waste disposal and recycling.

## OUR VISION

To lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county.



### To achieve our vision, we will:

- Put action to address the climate emergency at the heart of our work.
- Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire.
- Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.
- Support carers and the social care system.
- Invest in an inclusive, integrated and sustainable transport network.
- Preserve and improve access to nature and green spaces.
- Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.
- Play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy.
- Work with local businesses and partners for environmental, economic and social benefit.

# WORKING FOR YOU

## Our services

We are proud to provide and support a huge range of services that enhance and improve the lives of people across our communities.

Here are just a few of the services we provided last year:

We cared for **864** children.



Supported on average **6,417** people daily with ongoing adult social care.



Managed **301,902** tonnes of household waste, of which 58.7 per cent was recycled, reused or composted.

(April 21 - March 22)



Loaned over **4 million** items and resources to our library customers.



Attended **6,340** fire and rescue service call outs.



Figures from January - December 2022

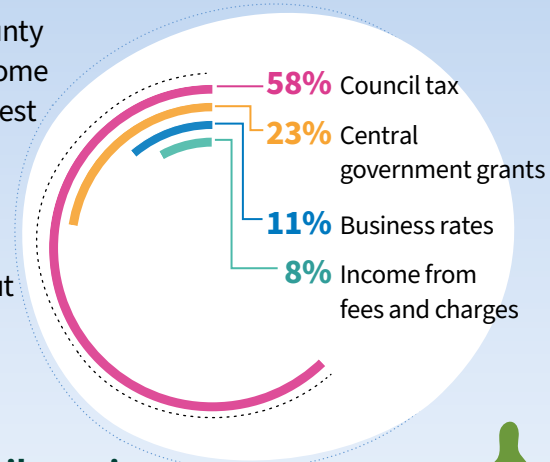
# MANAGING OUR BUDGET

## Where the money comes from

For 2023/24, **58 per cent** of the county council's funding for services will come directly from council tax, with the rest coming from charging for services and government grants.

This has increased over the last ten years as central government has cut grants to local government.

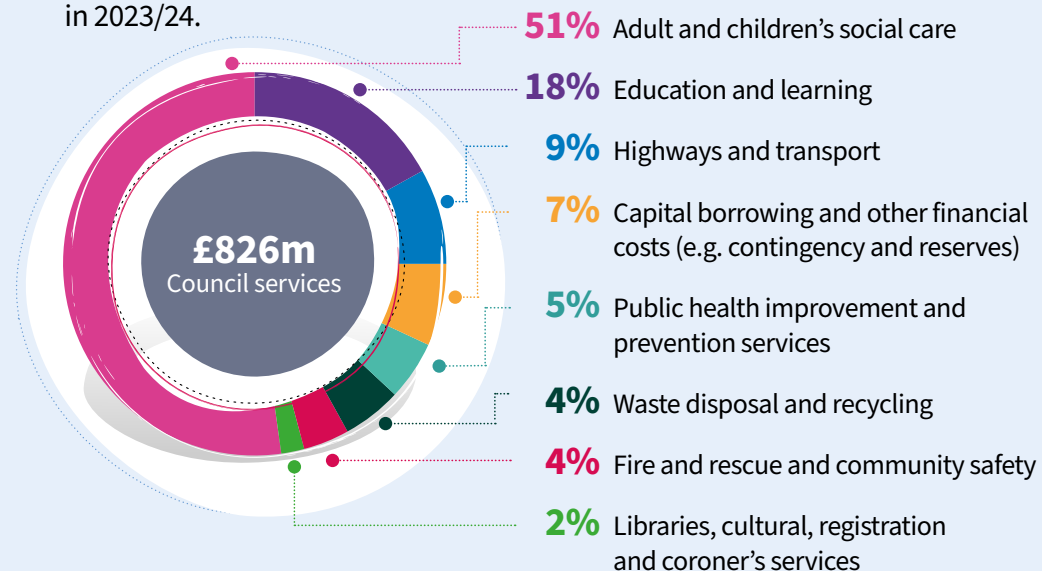
In 2010/11, **28 per cent** came from council tax.



## What we spend on council services

In 2023/24, the council plans to spend **£826** million on services – our gross expenditure budget. In addition to the education funding shown below, we will also spend **£207** million on maintained schools, which covers teachers and running costs, and comes directly from the government.

The figures below show broadly how we will spend our budget on services in 2023/24.

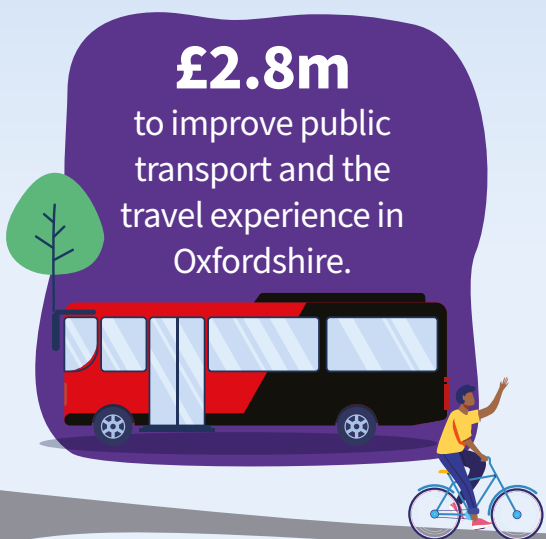


# OUR BUDGET DECISIONS

## Where we will invest

Our budget invests in the things you think we should focus on to deliver our nine strategic priorities. We listened carefully to what matters most to you and your communities through our residents' survey, Oxfordshire Conversation events and, most recently, our budget consultation.

### Examples include:



**£2.8m**  
to improve public transport and the travel experience in Oxfordshire.

- **£2.3m** to provide council tax and cost of living support to low income households.
- **£1m** for people with special educational needs and disabilities and for community hubs to support families and young people.
- **£1m** to improve local highways, cycle paths and pavements in Oxfordshire.

### Capital programme

**Four per cent** of your council tax is used to support the cost of borrowing towards our **£1.5 billion** capital programme, which includes investing in highway improvements (**£282m**) and major infrastructure (**£740m**), energy efficient street lighting (over 10 years), new school buildings and pupil places (**£259m**) and other service needs reflecting the council's priorities.

Most of the funding comes from government grants and can only be used for capital schemes – it can't be used for day to day council spending.

## Additional costs and savings

All local authorities are facing significant increases in inflation that are driving up costs and prices in energy, fuel and materials. We estimate an increase to our costs, including the rise in the national living wage, of **£38 million** in 2023/24.

We also face **£19m** of demand-led pressures, including the rising cost of children's and adults' social care.

This year, while government grants and funding have increased in some areas, funding has not kept pace with inflation so we have faced some difficult choices. Our 2023/24 budget includes **£30m** of savings, which can be viewed at [oxfordshire.gov.uk/councilspending](https://oxfordshire.gov.uk/councilspending).

## Council tax

**For 2023/24, Oxfordshire County Council is increasing council tax by 4.99 per cent.** This is made up of a 2.99 per cent increase to your 'core' council tax and an additional 2 per cent increase to help pay for adult social care (known as a precept), which the government expects local authorities to use to meet social care responsibilities.

The county council's share of council tax for a Band D property (the average council tax band) in 2022/23 was £1,651.61 (£31.76 per week).

For 2023/24, this will increase to £1,734.03, which is equal to an additional **£82.42 per year or £1.59 per week in council tax on a Band D property.** We're working with all Oxfordshire councils to ensure that the lowest income households are protected from this increase, and are working in partnership on wider support during this cost of living crisis. For help and support, visit [oxfordshire.gov.uk/living](https://oxfordshire.gov.uk/living).

The overall council tax bill for your property also includes separate payments to your city or district council, the police and crime commissioner for Thames Valley and possibly a parish or town council.

# YOUR COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Oxfordshire County Council has **63 county councillors** who you vote for every four years. Your county councillor can help if you have a query or concern about the council's services by offering advice or directing you to someone who can help. [oxfordshire.gov.uk/councillors](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/councillors)

## WASTE AND RECYCLING

Household waste recycling centres  
[oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste)

### Bin collections:

- [westoxon.gov.uk/bins](https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/bins)
- [cherwell.gov.uk/bins](https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/bins)
- [southoxon.gov.uk/bins](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/bins)
- [whitehorsedc.gov.uk/bins](https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/bins)
- [oxford.gov.uk/recycling](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/recycling)

Recycling advice

[oxfordshirerecycles.org.uk](https://www.oxfordshirerecycles.org.uk)  
[oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard)

Your waste, your responsibility.  
Let's S.C.R.A.P flytipping  
[oxfordshire.gov.uk/flytipping](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/flytipping)

## REPORT

Potholes, faulty street or traffic lights  
[fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk](https://www.fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## LIBRARIES

[oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries)

## SCHOOLS





Admissions and term dates  
[oxfordshire.gov.uk/schools](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schools)

## SUPPORT SERVICES

Live Well Oxfordshire  
[oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell)

Making better climate choices  
[climateactionoxfordshire.org.uk](https://www.climateactionoxfordshire.org.uk)

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## CONTACT US

[oxfordshire.gov.uk/contact-us](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/contact-us)

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