


Your services

Malvern Hills District
in Worcestershire

2011-12

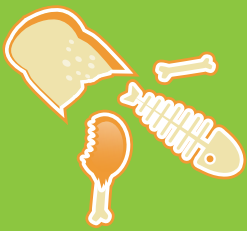


**Useful
numbers
for County
and District
Council
services**

Find out
what your Council
Tax pays for



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.

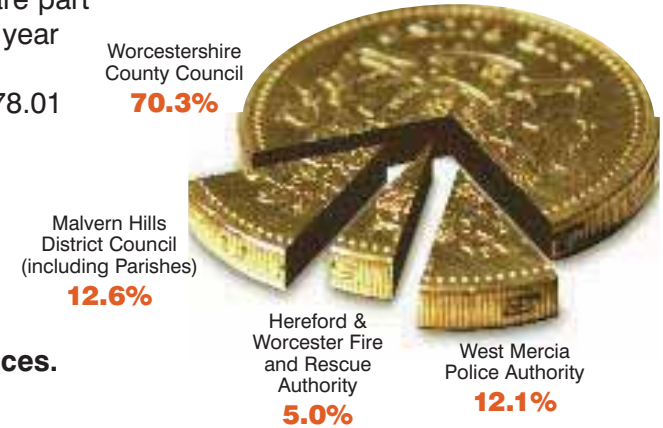
To find out more visit www.letswasteless.com
or call 01905 766883

welcome

Most of the money for providing services to you comes from central Government and other grants, but in Malvern Hills just under £4,040,000 is collected through Council Tax.

Malvern Hills District Council collects the Council Tax on behalf of all of the authorities shown on the chart. The total amount is then split to provide the services that are part of your everyday life. This year a Band D household in Malvern Hills will pay £1,478.01 on average to their local authorities - that's just £28.42 a week.

This year there is no increase in the amount you pay for county and district council services.



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Achieving a **better future** for the Malvern Hills District

With the 4th lowest spend per head of all district councils in the country, we are proud of our reputation for always providing excellent value for money. For just £2.54 a week, our communities receive high quality services, at low cost.

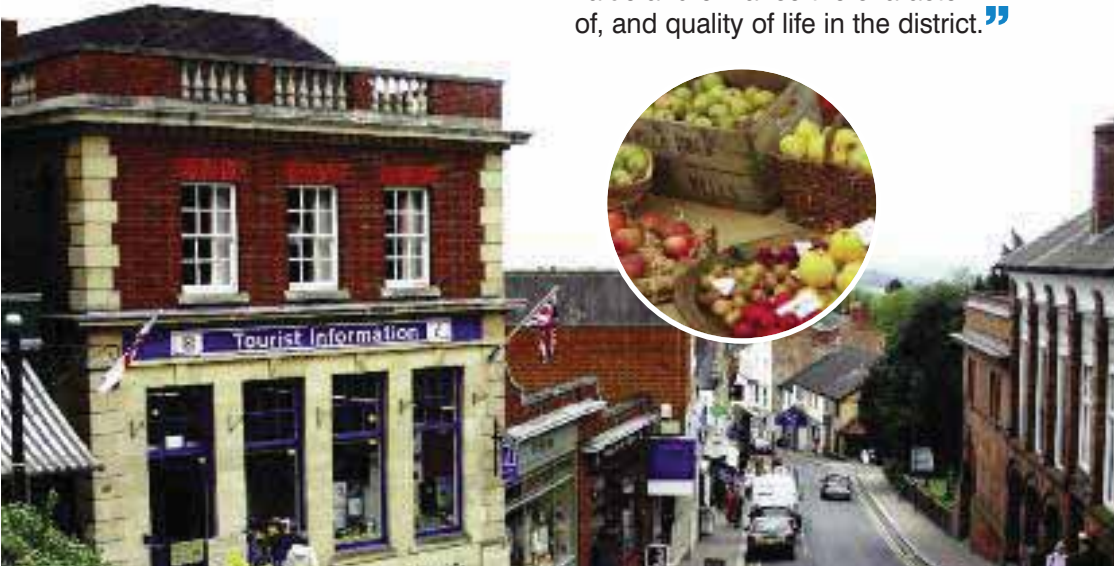
Our Vision for 2011-14

“Our ambition is for the Malvern Hills district to be recognised as a clean, safe, healthy and prosperous place to live, work and visit with vibrant and active communities and first class services and facilities.

Our communities can expect equal access to first class, co-ordinated public services which meet their diverse needs and address inequalities.

They can also expect their locally elected representatives to listen to their views, maintain the distinctive local identity of the Malvern Hills district, hold other public bodies to account for the services they deliver and to arrange for quality services to be delivered in the most appropriate, efficient and cost effective way by the public, private and voluntary sectors.

They can expect the council to add value and enhance the character of, and quality of life in the district.”



What we've **achieved**

The latest surveys tell us that more and more residents feel:

- We provide services that are good value for money
- Satisfied with the way we run our services
- They can influence decisions
- Well informed about performance.

In 2010-11 we:

- Helped 61 new businesses start up (despite the recession) and handed out 30 new business grants
- Opened new public toilets in Tenbury and Malvern Link
- Re-opened Upton Heritage Centre after a £25,000 upgrade
- Increased recycling rates through our new recycling arrangements - from 28 per cent to 33 per cent - and reduced landfill waste by 5 per cent
- Provided more affordable homes and prevented more people from becoming homeless.



Building a **better future** together

Over the past few years we have worked with our partners to tackle flooding issues, to improve access to health services and to ensure that any development within the district meets the current and future needs of our residents.

Over the last 12 months:

- Tenbury Wells received over £300,000 in flood protection funding to benefit 150 properties that are most 'at risk' from flooding
- Upton upon Severn, Uckinghall and other flood prone communities got the go ahead for flood defence schemes from the Environment Agency. Work on these schemes will take place in 2011

- Malvern Community Hospital opened to the public. This new facility will provide a range of health services for Malvern and surrounding areas
- Older people in the district were supported to keep their homes warm over the winter through the Warm and Well fund
- Work began on a new planning document (The South Worcestershire Development Plan) to set out the future development of this district, Worcester City and Wychavon
- A major project to tackle disadvantage and inequalities began in Pickersleigh.

Malvern Community Hospital



Looking **forward**

In 2011-12 we will do all we can to continue providing our first rate services and maintain the positive reputation of this district. Although a reduced Government grant will pose a number of challenges, our top priority is to ensure you receive excellent value for money.

Over the next 12 months we will:

- Continue to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill and increase the efficiency of our waste collection service
- Progress the "Route to the Hills" public open space strategy
- Implement flood protection measures in Tenbury Wells and elsewhere
- Work with our partners to improve rural access to services that matter
- Work with local residents to understand their needs and help them tackle local issues

- Actively seek further savings by working smarter and working closer with other public bodies
- Consult with residents on the preferred options for the South Worcestershire Development Plan.



A-Z of what MHDC is responsible for...

To find out more see: www.malvern hills.gov.uk
or contact the Worcestershire Hub on: **01684 862151**

Affordable housing
Arts and entertainment

Benefits
Housing/Council Tax -
01905 822744

Building regulations

Business Rates
01905 822755

Business support
Community grants
Community plans
Community safety
Compliments and complaints
Councillors and committees

Council Tax enquiries
& payments
01905 822733

Ditches, drains and flooding
Electoral services
Fly tipping
Grass cutting
Homelessness

Housing
Grants
Licences
Parking
Parks and
play areas
Planning
applications
Enforcement



Dog fouling & dog warden
Food safety
Noise nuisance
Pollution
Water quality
01905 822799

Recycling
Rubbish and waste
Sports & leisure facilities
Street cleaning
Toilets
Tourism and travel
Trade waste
Trees and hedges
Vehicles (abandoned)
Welfare and money advice

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.

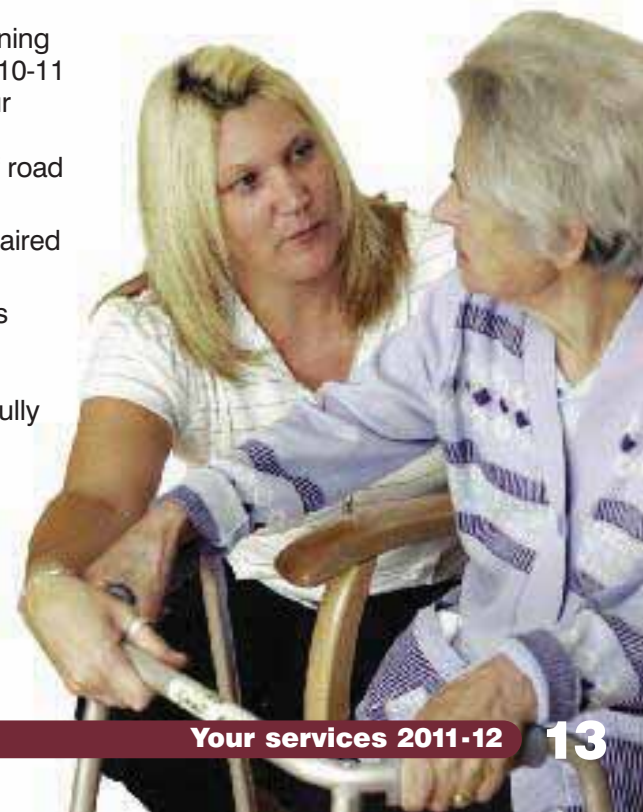
Roads, travel and transport

- 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:



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



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



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*





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.
- 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.
- focused on achieving priorities through redirecting resources which had improved our front-line services whilst achieving efficiency savings

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.

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.

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.



Facing up to the **challenges** ahead

A reduced Government grant for the next three years means we have less money to spend on providing services. However, we have a proven track record for high performance, high satisfaction and excellent financial management and our services are good value for money.

We have:

- The 4th lowest spend of all district councils in the country
- A strong reputation for providing high quality services
- Some of the most satisfied residents in the country.

Since 2006 we have made over £8.1 million savings and over the next three years we will continue to keep our costs low by:

- Focusing on services that residents want and need

- Continuing to work closely with neighbouring councils. Since 2007, closer working has reduced staffing numbers by over 100 and improved a range of services across the county
- Looking for opportunities to increase income from some of the external services we provide, for example in planning and recycling.

To keep up to date with the latest news from the council sign up to receive our free residents magazine, View from the Hills.

To subscribe simply email viewfromthehills@malvern hills.gov.uk with the word SUBSCRIBE in the subject line or contact the Hub on 01684 862151.



How we'll spend **Malvern Hills'** cash in 2011-12

We have agreed to spend £8.167 million for 2011-12. Given that the central Government grant has not kept pace with our cost pressures, we have had to make some difficult decisions in order to ensure that we can provide the best value for money services. After taking into account our reserves and balances, **there will be no increase for this year.**

How our budget compares to last year

	£'000
Budget requirement 2010-11	9,256
Pay & prices inflation	158
Investment in services	(428)
Service and efficiency savings (net)	(819)
Budget requirement 2011-12	8,167

The Council Tax levy for 2011-12 is an average of £132.33 for a Band D property.

Malvern Hills District Council's Budget

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

Services	2010-11 Net Expenditure £'000	2011-12		
		Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000
Community & economic development	1,596	1,404	197	1,207
Environmental & customer services	3,737	4,526	1,190	3,336
Planning & housing services	1,546	2,851	1,567	1,284
Corporate & democratic core	2,377	27,031	24,691	2,340
Total service expenditure & income	9,256	35,812	27,645	8,167
Total MHDC budget requirement	9,256			8,167
Use of balances and reserves	84			(113)
Financed by formula grant	5,157			4,240
Council Tax	4,015			4,040

Council Tax levy at Band D **132.33** **132.33**

Breaking the bill down

Make up of Council Tax 2011-12

Band	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Worcestershire County Council	692.71	808.16	923.61	1,039.06	1,269.97	1,500.87	1,731.77	2,078.13
West Mercia Police Authority	119.15	139.00	158.86	178.72	218.44	258.15	297.87	357.44
Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Authority	49.10	57.28	65.46	73.64	90.01	106.38	122.74	147.26
Malvern Hills District Council	88.22	102.92	117.63	132.33	161.74	191.14	220.55	264.66
Average levies and Parish precepts*	36.18	42.21	48.24	54.26	66.32	78.38	90.44	108.53
Total Council Tax bill (av)	985.36	1,149.57	1,313.80	1,478.01	1,806.48	2,134.92	2,463.37	2,956.04

*Parish precepts/special levies are based on average charges. Depending on where you live, you may be required to pay slightly more or less than the sums shown.

Levies Levies are included in the requirements of the District Council. For Malvern Hills, levies are included to support costs incurred by the Lower Severn Drainage Board and by the Malvern Hills Conservators. These levies are detailed below.

Lower Severn Drainage Board	2010-11 (£)	2011-12 (£)
Levies requirement from MHDC	864.23	891.16

Malvern Hills Conservators The levy for 2011-12 has been **frozen at 2010-11 rates**. This has been made possible by increases to parking charges, thus helping to alter the balance of the costs of managing the hills between residents and visitors.

	Estimate 2010-11 £'000	Estimate 2011-12 £'000
MHDC levy	340	340
Herefordshire levy	35	35
Other income	266	248
Total income	641	623
Salaries and land management	469	468
Visitor management	22	25
Administration	96	92
Reserve transfers and depreciation	37	33
Total expenditure	624	618
Increase/(decrease) to reserves	17	5

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).

Council Tax valuation and banding

Most dwellings are subject to Council Tax. There will be one bill per dwelling, whether it is a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette, mobile home or houseboat, and whether it is owned or rented.

HM Revenue and Customs Valuation Office has placed each dwelling in one of eight bands according to its open market capital value at 1 April 1991.

Your Council Tax bill states which band your dwelling is in. You can appeal if:

- There is a material increase or reduction in the value of the dwelling
- You start or stop using part of the dwelling for business
- You have just moved, but you must appeal within six months of your move
- The Listing Officer alters the band.

If you disagree with the banding of your property, contact the Listing Officer at

Government Buildings, Whittington Road, Worcester WR5 2LB or telephone (01905) 687600.

Exempt dwellings

The classes of dwellings that are exempt from Council Tax are:

- Uninhabitable and unfurnished property undergoing structural alteration or repairs. This exemption will apply for a maximum period of 12 months (as long as the property remains unoccupied and unfurnished). After 12 months, a charge applies
- Unoccupied property owned by a charity, for a period of up to six months since last occupied
- Unoccupied and unfurnished property for a period of up to six months since the last occupation date or the date that the construction of the property was substantially

completed (as long as it remains unoccupied and unfurnished)

- Unoccupied property because the person who would otherwise occupy the property is in prison, is permanently resident in hospital or a nursing home
- Unoccupied property previously occupied by someone who is now deceased or where probate or letters of administration have not yet been granted, and for a period of up to six months after the date such grant is made, provided there is no change of ownership
- Unoccupied property where occupation is prohibited by law
- Unoccupied property held available for use by ministers of religion from which to carry out their duties

- Unoccupied property where the person subject to the tax has their sole or main residence elsewhere in order to receive care
- Unoccupied property where the person subject to the tax has their sole or main residence elsewhere in order to provide care
- Unoccupied property where the person subject to the tax is a student and has been since he/she last occupied the property
- Property that has been repossessed under a mortgage
- Student halls of residence and premises where ALL of the residents are students
- Property owned by the Ministry of Defence and held available for occupation by serving personnel
- Property occupied by members of visiting forces or certain international organisations
- Property left empty by a bankrupt
- Unused caravan pitch or boat mooring
- Property occupied only by people under 18 years of age
- Unoccupied ancillary accommodation (eg. annexes) which may not be let separately without

being in breach of planning regulations

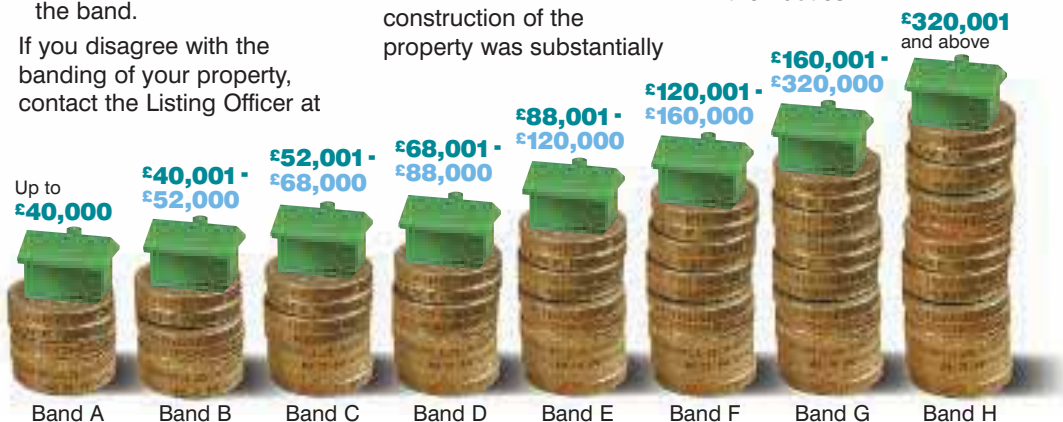
- Property occupied only by people who are severely mentally impaired
- Property occupied by a foreign diplomat or a member of an international organisation headquartered in the UK
- Any part of a property, eg. an annexe, which is occupied by a dependent relative of the family in the other part of the building where the relative is either over 65, severely mentally impaired, or substantially and permanently disabled.

This leaflet gives general guidance only and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of Council Tax law as laid down by Parliament or interpreted by the courts.

Discounts

The full Council Tax bill assumes that there are at least two adults living in a dwelling. If only one adult lives in a dwelling (as their main home), the Council Tax bill can be reduced by 25 per cent. Some people are not included when counting the number of adult residents in a dwelling provided they meet the following conditions:

- Full-time students/student nurses
- Apprentices and Youth Training Trainees
- Patients permanently resident in hospital
- People who are being looked after in care homes
- People who are severely mentally impaired
- People staying in certain hostels or night shelters
- 18 and 19 year olds who are at or have just left school
- Careworkers working for low pay, usually for charities
- People caring for someone with a disability who is not a spouse, partner or child under 18
- Members of visiting overseas forces and certain international institutions
- Members of religious communities (monks and nuns)
- People in prison (except those in prison for non-payment of Council Tax or a fine)
- Diplomats and members of international organisations headquartered in the UK.



Valuations based on houses prices from 1 April 1991.

Unoccupied properties

The following levels of discount will apply for the 2011-12 financial year:

- Furnished properties which are no-one's main residence - 10 per cent discount
- Unoccupied/unfurnished properties (following the relevant period of exemption) - No discount.

People with disabilities

If your home has any special features which have been added for a disabled resident and which increase its value, these features should be ignored when your property is valued for Council Tax purposes. If you think your property has been valued incorrectly you should contact the Valuation Office.

Council Tax and Housing Benefit

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

- Your capital, including any savings (if you and/or your partner have over £16,000 you will not qualify unless you receive pension credit guarantee)
- Your income including tax credits, earnings, other state benefits
- The amount of Council Tax or rent you pay
- Your family circumstances, eg. age of the claimant and/or partner, how many dependent children, whether anyone is disabled.

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.

MANY PEOPLE LOSE BENEFIT because they delay making a claim. Benefit can not normally be backdated, **SO DO NOT DELAY** - complete an application form **NOW**. If you would like an application form or further information please contact us straight away. Telephone 01905 822744 or visit www.whub.org.uk

Appeals

You can appeal if you consider that you are not liable to pay Council Tax. For example, because you are not the resident or owner, or because you think that your property should be exempt, or you believe that your bill has not been calculated correctly. If you wish to appeal on these grounds you must notify the council in writing, and we will readily review the situation.

If you make an 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 then appeal to a valuation tribunal. Details are available on request or contact the Tribunal Office, Hepworth House, Unit 2, Trafford Court, Doncaster DN1 1PN. Telephone 01302 342324



and win
£500 Sign up to receive your Council Tax bill online before 1st October 2011 and you could win a cash prize.

No more waiting for your bill to arrive in the mail - now you can see it online and if you're one of the first to sign up you could be our lucky winner!

Council Tax payers can:

- view your account details including payments made and amounts due
- set up a Direct Debit
- make a payment
- report a change of address
- apply for discounts and exemptions.

Benefit claimants can:

- make a new claim for Council Tax or Housing Benefit
- notify us of a change in your circumstances
- view notifications and details of how your benefit has been calculated.

Just a click away!

To find out more visit www.malvern hills.gov.uk or pick up a form from the Hub.

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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



Council Tax 01905 822733
Benefits 01905 822744
Business Rates 01905 822755



Malvern Hills Customer Service Centre
Graham Road, Malvern WR14 2HU
Tenbury Wells Customer Service Centre
Tenbury Library, Teme Street, Tenbury Wells WR15 8AA
Upton-upon-Severn Customer Service Centre,
Upton Library, School Lane, Upton-upon-Severn WR8 0LE

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how the Hub can help
you, call 01684 862151**

