

# Your services

Malvern Hills

2008-09

**Find out**  
what your Council  
Tax pays for



Making  
life better  
- what we're  
doing to help

win  
**£100**

*find out more inside*

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

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# welcome

Most of the money for providing services to you comes from central Government and other grants but in Malvern Hills just under £3,739,000 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.



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Get in Touch  
contact us on the phone,  
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win **£100** in our easy-to-enter competition  
**See page 19 for more information**

This year a Band D household in Malvern Hills will pay £1,395 on average to their local authorities - that's just £26.83 a week.



## Setting the **scene**

**In May 2007, following local elections, the new Council undertook a thorough review of all of its activities and finances. The Council faced a number of existing challenges and the prospect of a difficult financial settlement from central government.**

In preparing to meet these challenges, we developed a sound financial and planning framework on which the Medium Term Financial Plan has been built. The full range of Council activities have been considered on the basis of not trying to do everything, but to do fewer things better, and to reshape services where necessary to achieve greater efficiencies.

In building a better future for the district, we will deliver better value to the tax payer. We shall also engage with, and provide leadership to communities, listen to residents and monitor parish and town council plans and maximize the benefits of partnership working with the police, primary care trust, the county council and other key agencies.

**Over the next three years 2008-2011 we will focus on the following priorities:**

- Economic prosperity.
- Planning for the future.
- Children and young people.
- Managing our waste for a better environment.





# Economic **prosperity**

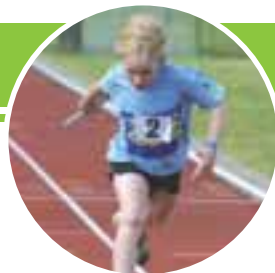
**We want the Malvern Hills District to be recognised as a place where businesses are prosperous and innovative. A place where the workforce is skilled, flexible and ambitious and the town centres are vibrant, sustainable and diverse. There will be a focus on increasing employment opportunities and improving visitor services.**

## **What we achieved in 2007:**

- Implemented the 'High street' Town Centre Regeneration concept with key partners in Great Malvern with support from the Civic Trust and New Economics Foundation.
- Published the Worcestershire Attractions Guide through Destination Worcestershire.
- Published and distributed the Malvern Hills Business Directory 2007.

## **What we seek to achieve by 2011:**

- Reduce the number of unoccupied sites allocated for Industrial and Commercial use in the Local Plan, thereby increasing employment opportunities in the Malvern Hills District.
- Increase the number of new business start ups by 10%.
- Ensure that the site infrastructure for Blackmore Business Park, Malvern is operational.
- Increase the average spend per tourist by 10%.
- Increase the amount of graded accommodation available in the District by 20%.
- Secure the 'Walkers are Welcome' status for Great Malvern.



## Children and **young** people

**We want to improve the access to and involvement of children and young people in activities which meet their development needs and encourage them to contribute to the wider community.**

### **What we achieved in 2007:**

- Secured £200,000 of external funding to improve the provision of play opportunities across the District.
- Invested almost £500,000 towards improving sports facilities at Sport Dyson Perrins.
- 20,000 children and young people have benefited from a sports coaching activity since 2004.
- Over 1,000 children and young people have subsequently joined a sports club.

### **What we seek to achieve by 2011:**

- Over 3,300 children and young people accessing and enjoying a range of free high quality structured play provision.
- 50% of junior sports clubs holding, or working towards quality accreditation.
- Increase the use of leisure facilities by children and young people to over 70,000 visits per year.
- Increase the number of hours young people volunteer to 1,000 hours a year.
- 50% of 5-16 year olds participating in at least 5 hours sporting opportunities per week, helping them to have a healthier future.





**25%**  
Recycling  
rate

# Managing our waste for a better **environment**

**We want to achieve sustainable waste management by reducing the amount of waste that people generate, increase recycling and make better use of waste that does arise by ensuring that it is dealt with efficiently and minimises harm to the environment.**

- What we achieved in 2007:**
- An average recycling rate of 25.7%.
  - Launched a recycling service for schools in the District.
  - Developed an award winning schools resource pack to support

the recycling service and educate local children about waste and environmental issues.

**What we seek to achieve by 2011:**

- Reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by 5%.
- Increase recycling rate to 27.5%.
- Maintain a downward trend in the incidence of fly-tipping and other improper waste disposal.
- Achieve a 2% reduction in the “carbon footprint” for waste collection activity per household in the Malvern Hills District.

## Planning for the **future**

**By 2011 we want to have in place a Joint Core Strategy which, through clear plans and actions, delivers the infrastructure to support long term sustainable growth and development.**

### **In the shorter term we will:**

- Ensure that a minimum of 5 parish housing needs assessments are completed each year.
- Process planning applications faster than the average for district councils.
- Monitor and strictly enforce conditions attached to all planning permissions.
- Establish the 'carbon footprint' of the Council's own activities in 2008/9 and thereafter set targets for its reduction.



## Some of our 2007 **achievements**

- We have one of the lowest Council Taxes in the country, debt free capital programme and a sustainable financial plan.
- Our performance in some service areas is better than many "Excellent" councils'.
- The time taken to deal with planning applications is now better than average.
- Satisfaction with our services is amongst the best council's in the country according to Government surveys.
- This powerful combination of low costs plus good performance and high satisfaction demonstrates real Value for Money for our residents.



It's been a busy year for your County Council, and the next few pages tell you what we've achieved for Worcestershire.

## High quality.

Low cost...



**worcestershire**  
county council

★★★ **FOUR STARS** ★★★

**TOP**  
marks  
for value  
for money

Our big news is that we're still a 'four star' council - the highest rating a council can get - and we got top marks for 'value for money' once again.

"For every pound you pay in Worcestershire, you get more services than you would in almost every other part of the country," said our Leader, Dr George Lord.

For 2008-09, the County Council's share of your Council Tax bill will increase by 4.34 per cent.

That's a £40.97 increase for a Band D property, rising from £943.80 to £984.77.

Council Tax makes up about 71 per cent of our budget, excluding school funding. The rest is decided by the Government, including the money we receive to fund schools.

Turn over to find out how we used our budget last year...



## Top **priorities**

We have six main priority areas where we're committed to making improvements between 2005 and 2009:

- Improving community safety
- Raising standards in schools
- Improving highways, footways and transport services
- Supporting older people to live independent lives
- Strengthening Worcestershire's economy
- Enhancing services to young people

We also try to keep Council Tax as low as we can while still delivering our whole range of services.

## **Last year's successes**

We've made more than  
**£25 million**  
of **efficiency**  
**improvements**  
in the last three years

## **Less** waste

Recycling and composting increased by five per cent. Nearly 38 per cent of the county's waste is now recycled or composted.

Commercial Vehicle and Trailer Permits reduced the amount of businesses breaking the rules by using household waste sites.\*

## **Better** buses

The number of bus journeys made in Worcestershire increased by seven per cent, thanks to improved services and effective marketing.

More than  
**15 million**  
**bus journeys** were  
made in the county

## **Fewer** cars

We worked hard to reduce traffic congestion in Worcester and achieved a 12 per cent reduction in car use.

## School run **success**

Forty-one schools worked with us to develop 'school travel plans'.

The plans teach pupils, parents and staff about the environmental, health and social impacts of their travel choices.

\* For permit enquiries please call 0845 607 2007



## Walking & cycling

As well as our day-to-day work to boost walking and cycling, our support helped Sustrans win the People's Millions contest - including £850,000 for a new foot and cycle bridge across the River Severn.

## Road repairs

We surveyed roads that aren't main highways (known as "urban unclassified" roads) and made a plan to improve 330km, or 205 miles, during the next 18 months.

**£15 million**  
will be spent **improving**  
urban roads

## Flood response & recovery

Our Emergency Planning Unit led our work, co-ordinating our efforts and running a special helpline.

Our social care staff helped people evacuated from care homes.

Tireless work by our highways engineers helped to keep roads open.

Worcestershire secured £725,000 of the £1 million available for economic recovery in the region.

In 2008-09, we'll still be working hard with our partners to make the county more resilient to flooding.





## Ofsted praise

We received the top rating - for the third year running - in our annual Ofsted assessment of services for children and young people.

The report said: "The overall effectiveness of the council remains outstanding. It consistently delivers services for children and young people which are well co-ordinated and managed... There is a focus on, and commitment to, improving the lives of children and young people across Worcestershire."

## High quality education

We offered 97 per cent of children a place at their first choice school.

Key Stage 1 results were well above the national average in English and maths.

Last year saw our highest ever results of five or more GCSE A\* - C grades, including English and maths.

Healthy Schools status was achieved by 63 per cent of schools. A total of 97 per cent are taking part in the programme.

**£15 million**  
has been spent improving  
school buildings





## Youth matters

The number of young people older than 16 in full-time education, training or employment is above the national average.

Teenage pregnancy and youth offending rates have fallen.

We opened a brand new, specially-built children's home last year.

Our support services worked with thousands of children and young people and ran major projects such as the Youth Cabinet elections and the Big Questionnaire.

## Older people's independence

Our work to promote direct payments has increased the number of older people managing their own care.

New technology, such as the Telecare scheme, is helping more older people to live at home.

Our joint Third Age team has helped older people claim more than £3 million of extra benefits.

## Better support

Our range of 'low level' support services for older people continued to expand.

More people received intensive support at home in 2007-08 than 2006-07.

The number of people waiting for hospital discharges fell again last year.

**87%** of children are satisfied with our libraries - up by **14%**





## **Safer** communities

Worcestershire's British Crime Survey figures continued to fall last year.

Access to drug treatment services improved again.

We expanded and improved our services to help people experiencing, or who have experienced, domestic abuse.

The Trader Register, run by Trading Standards, helped local people to use reputable plumbers, roofers and electricians - not 'rogue traders'.

## **Customer** service

During the floods, the Worcestershire Hub worked with other key partners to set up 'Hublets' that offered vital advice and information for residents in the worst-hit areas of the county.

## **Local** democracy

Your County Councillors took part in numerous surgeries, forums, area committees, school visits and special democracy events, as well as helping countless local people with council queries and issues.

More than 40 separate consultations have been listed on our Ask Me! Consultation Planner & Finder since April 2007, helping local people to get involved.

## **Partnerships** work

The Worcestershire Partnership - which includes all of the county's public services, as well as the voluntary and community sector, businesses and other organisations - ran a successful assembly about climate change.

It also launched a new online service to help local organisations find sources of vital grant funding.

## **More** info

These pages have given a brief snapshot of some of our achievements last year. For a full guide to all of our work, look out for our Annual Report for 2007-08 which will be published in the summer.

And don't forget that you can get in touch with us about any of our services by contacting your local County Councillor - visit [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/councillors)



## Your **Fire & Rescue** authority

This year, just £68.21 from a tax Band D Council Tax will go to fund the services provided by Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA). The FRA is made up of 25 county councillors who manage our budget and coordinate and plan how we deliver our services to you.

**This contribution amounts to £1.31 per household each week.**

For this, you receive round the clock reassurance that in the event of an emergency, the Fire and Rescue Authority will be on hand to help you. We also spend time in your local communities, educating people about how the risk of fires, road traffic

collisions and other emergencies can be reduced.

We provide our services from a total of 27 fire stations and a headquarters building. There are five Wholetime Stations based in Hereford, Worcester, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Redditch. These are crewed 24 hours a day. We also operate three Day-Crewed Stations in Malvern, Droitwich and Evesham, where crews are present during the day and are on call at night.

There are a further 19 retained duty stations that are crewed by firefighters who provide round the clock cover to their communities, often in addition to their regular employment.





## How do we spend your money?

Your contributions help fund a total of 340 full-time operational staff, 381 retained firefighters and officers, 29 control room staff who take emergency calls and mobilise our crews, and 130 support staff who ensure our service runs effectively and efficiently. We also host one of 20 national Urban Search and Rescue specialist units.

We attend approximately 9,500 incidents each year. The majority of calls are to fires, road traffic collisions and alerts from automatic alarm systems. In our area in particular, there are also calls for rope rescues, for grass and heath fires in open areas, and to assist when floods strike. We have highly trained specialist teams to deal with these

specific types of emergencies.

Last year we rescued 21 people from fires, 71 people from road traffic collisions and 82 people from stalled lifts. During a two-day period in July when the flooding across the two counties was at its peak, we took 854 emergency calls and rescued 1,124 people.

We are also visiting more people in their homes to provide advice and install smoke alarms as part of a Home Fire Safety Check. In 2007, we carried out 2,882 checks and fitted 3,483 smoke alarms. We also completed 478 educational visits in local schools and 57 summer water safety school visits.

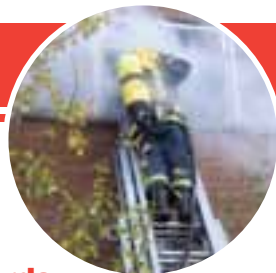
Gross expenditure	2007-2008 £m	2008-2009 £m
Employees (including Pension Costs)	22.110	22.773
Running Costs	6.259	6.230
Capital Financing	2.342	1.686
Income	(0.211)	(0.166)
<b>Core Budget</b>	<b>30.500</b>	<b>30.523</b>
Special Grant - Urban Search and Rescue	(0.737)	(0.859)
Special Grant - New Dimensions Training	(0.080)	(0.080)
Special Grant - Fire Prevention	(0.037)	0.000
Special Grant - Fire Control Implementation	(0.145)	(0.056)
Special Grant - Home Fire Safety Initiative	(0.064)	0.000
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>29.437</b>	<b>29.528</b>

# Fire and Rescue Authority

Our 2008-09 budget is £29 million, £10 million comes from Government grants, £19 million from Council Tax.

Budget requirement and Council Tax precept	2007-2008 £m	2008-2009 £m
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>29.437</b>	<b>29.528</b>
Release of Transitional Grant Reserve	(0.164)	0.000
Release of Pension Reserve	(0.047)	(0.070)
Release of Fire Control Implementation Reserve	(0.095)	0.000
Release of New Dimensions Training Reserve	(0.070)	0.000
Release of USAR reimbursed costs Reserve	(0.930)	0.000
Release of Rank to Role Reserve	0.000	(0.147)
Strengthening Balances	0.155	0.000
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>28.286</b>	<b>29.311</b>
Less: Business Rates	(8.867)	(9.180)
Less: Revenue Support Grant	(1.488)	(1.278)
<b>Gross Precept Requirement</b>	<b>17.931</b>	<b>18.853</b>
Less: Surpluses on Collection Funds	(0.063)	(0.013)
<b>Net Precept Requirement</b>	<b>17.868</b>	<b>18.840</b>
Tax-base	274,850	276,204
<b>Band D Equivalent</b>	<b>£65.01</b>	<b>£68.21</b>

Why spending has changed	£m
<b>Gross Expenditure 2007-2008</b>	<b>29.437</b>
National Pay Awards & Cost Pressures	0.741
Training Improvements	0.225
Cash Releasing Efficiencies	(0.225)
USAR Capital Expenditure funded from prior year revenue grant	(0.735)
Impact of Asset Management Plan and Vehicle Strategy	0.079
Net Other Smaller Changes	0.006
<b>Gross Expenditure 2008-2009</b>	<b>29.528</b>
Release of Reserves - see above	(0.217)
<b>Net Budget Requirement 2008-2009</b>	<b>29.311</b>



## Performance & priorities

### How are we performing?

We are a consistently high-performing authority, and have been highly rated by the Audit Commission through a number of independent assessments to look at how we deliver our services, how we use our resources, and our plans for the future.

We are committed to delivering an excellent service and we will continue to strive to enhance the safety and welfare of the residents and visitors to Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

### What will your money go towards this year?

This year, your money will help us continue the development and delivery of our Community Safety Strategy. We will work with other emergency services, agencies and schools to make our communities safer and help improve community well-being.

We will continue to develop our Home Fire Safety Check programme to ensure that the most vulnerable people in society are included in our visits. The Service is enhancing the fire safety message by the use of tailored information via DVDs displayed on an interactive computer display. The development of our road safety strategy will continue and will focus on how we work with local partners to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

Your Council Tax will also go towards ensuring our firefighting and rescue response to emergency calls remains effective, and that we continue to perform well against the standards set by the Government.

For more information please call **0845 12 24454**.

# Competition & translations



You can win £100 to spend on anything you like - all you have to do is read this leaflet and then answer these three simple questions:

- 1 What percentage of children are satisfied with Worcestershire's libraries?
- 2 Which council is responsible for emptying your bins?
- 3 How many smoke alarms did Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority fit last year?

Send your entries to Worcestershire Council Tax Leaflet Competition, Basepoint Business Centre, Bromsgrove Technology Park, Isidore Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 3ET or email [competition@thinckcreative.com](mailto:competition@thinckcreative.com)

All entries must be received by Friday, May 16, 2008. Please include your full name, address and telephone number. Good luck!

Terms & conditions: 1. No purchase necessary. 2. The winners will be drawn at random on Friday, May 23, 2008 and winners will be notified directly by Friday, May 30, 2008, unless exceptional circumstances prevent it. 3. Arrangements for receipt of the prize will be made with the winner only and proof of identity will be required. 4. Contestants' details will not be passed to a third party or used for any other purpose. 5. The winner's name and home town will be published on [www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk) by or after Friday, May 30, 2008. 6. No employees of Thinck Creative Ltd can enter.

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'If you need help understanding this document in your own language, please contact Ethnic Access Link. Tel: 01905 25121' (*English*)

'যদি এই দলিলটি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় বুঝতে আপনার সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয়, অনুগ্রহ করে Ethnic Access Link (এথনিক অ্যাক্সেস)-কে 01905 25121 টেলিফোন নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন' (*Bengali*)

如果你需要這個文件的中文信息，請聯絡 Ethnic Access Link，電話是01905 25121 (*Cantonese*)

'Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tego dokumentu we własnym języku, zadzwoń do Ethnic Access Link. Tel: 01905 25121' (*Polish*)

'Se necessitar de ajuda para perceber o conteúdo deste documento na sua língua, contacte a associação Ethnic Access Link pelo telefone: 01905 25121' (*Portuguese*)

'Si necesita ayuda para entender este documento en su idioma, puede ponerse en contacto con Ethnic Access Link en el teléfono 01905 25121' (*Spanish*)

Bu dokümanõ kendi dilinizde anlamak için yardım isterseniz Ethnic Access Link ile temasa geçiniz Tel: 01905 25121' (*Turkish*)

'اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کو آپ کی اپنی زبان میں سمجھنے میں مدد کی ضرورت ہے، تو براہ کرم Ethnic Access Link (ایٹھنک ایکسس لنک) سے رابطہ کریں۔ ٹیلی فون: 01905 25121' (*Urdu*)



# Working **together** for you

## All of Worcestershire's local authorities are working towards the same goals for the county.

The Worcestershire Partnership brings all these organisations together to tackle the big issues that really matter but we can't address separately.

To make the best use of resources, we all work towards the same goals for the county. The goals are spelt out in Worcestershire's Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

You can find more information about the Worcestershire Partnership at [www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk](http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk)

These documents set out the vision for the future of Worcestershire and focus on what we need to do in the short term to make life better in the county.

By signing up to the priorities shown on these pages, we all made a commitment to achieving the same things for you, your friends and your families.

## Meeting **the needs** of children and young people





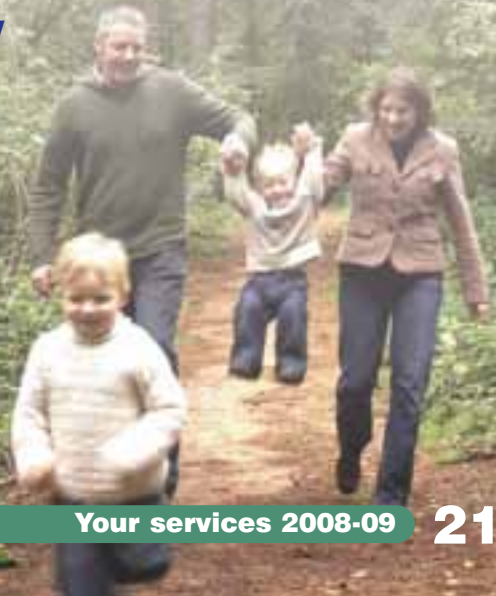
**Stronger**  
communities

Economic  
**success**  
that is shared by all

**Improving** health  
and well being

Communities  
that are **safe**  
and feel safe

A **better** environment  
for today and tomorrow



## How the money is spent

### Summary of gross expenditure, income and staffing

The planned costs of services are shown below:

2007-08 Net Exp £m	Services	2008-09			Council Tax for a Band D property £	Staffing
		Gross Exp £m	Income £m	Net Exp £m		
0.0	Schools budget	345.9	345.9	0.0	0.00	8,141
79.8	Children's Services, excluding schools	108.4	24.2	84.2	288.83	1,232
126.9	Adult and Community Services, including libraries	182.3	44.9	137.4	471.65	1,877
31.0	Highways and public transport	35.1	4.8	30.3	104.16	408
19.7	Waste disposal	35.3	13.4	21.9	75.34	16
2.6	Planning and economic development	3.3	0.5	2.8	9.57	63
21.3	Net cost of council borrowing	27.4	4.3	23.1	79.33	-
-9.9	Other services	23.7	34.4	-10.7	-36.87	771
<b>271.4</b>	<b>Total cost of services</b>	<b>761.4</b>	<b>472.4</b>	<b>289.0</b>	<b>992.01</b>	<b>12,508</b>
-5.0	Use of general reserves	0.0	2.1	-2.1	-7.24	-
<b>266.4</b>	<b>Net budget requirement</b>	<b>761.4</b>	<b>474.5</b>	<b>286.9</b>	<b>984.77</b>	<b>12,508</b>

### Where the money comes from to pay for the 2008-09 budget

The Government calculates our general grant according to relative circumstances and ability to raise money from Council Tax. Worcestershire's general grant is £83.052 million or £150 per person, compared to the shire county average of £176 per person.

We also receive a number of 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.

The cost of providing our services in 2008-09, net of specific grants, is £289 million which, after using £2.1 million of general reserves, leaves £286.9 million to be funded from general Government grant and local taxation, as follows:

Council Tax (71.1%)

**£203.9 million**

General Government Grant (28.9%)

**£83 million**

Net Budget

**£286.9 million**

Council Tax (71.1%)

**£367**

General Government Grant (28.9%)

**£150**

**£/person**

Total £/person

**£517**

### Why spending has changed from 2007-08

We face additional cost pressures in respect of inflation and increases in the demand for services, such as waste disposal and the extra numbers of people needing social care.

Some inflationary costs experienced by local authorities are significantly higher than the general rate of inflation.

Efficiency measures and other reductions offset these cost pressures and result in our net budget requirement rising by £7.6 million over last year, after allowing for changes in funding arrangements for specific grants and the use of general reserves, as shown in the table below.

	£m
<b>Net budget requirement 2007-08</b>	<b>266.4</b>
Changes in funding of specific grants	7.9
Add back use of general reserves in 2007-08	5.0
<b>Starting position 2008-09</b>	<b>279.3</b>
Pay (£4.6m) and price (£4.7m) increases	9.3
Adult social care service pressures	3.3
Waste disposal	3.3
Financing borrowing costs for capital expenditure	1.8
Looked after children service pressures	1.5
Other	1.0
Efficiency measures	-4.9
Savings from spending less and doing less	-5.6
Use of general reserves in 2008-09	-2.1
<b>Net budget requirement 2008-09</b>	<b>286.9</b>

In addition the DSG funding for schools will be £3,729 per pupil, an increase of five per cent.

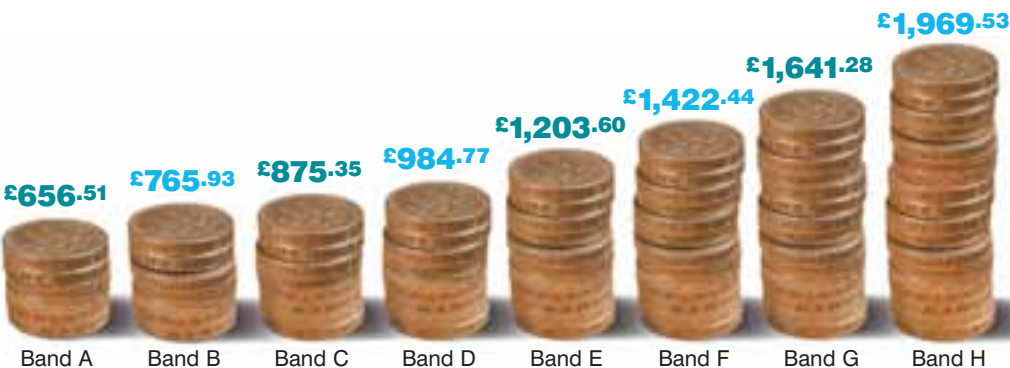
# Your County Council's **Budget**

## Staffing

During 2008-09, we expect to employ the equivalent of 12,508 full-time staff, compared with 12,525 during 2007-08. The decrease of 17 arises from an increase in school-based staff of 126 and a reduction in other staff of 143 across the whole council.

## Council Tax

The Council Tax contribution towards our 2008-09 budget for a Band D property is £984.77, a rise of 4.34 per cent or £0.79 per week from last year. The illustration below shows how much you will pay for our services for each property band.



## Capital investment

We plan to invest £98.9 million during 2008-09 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 March 31, 2008 is estimated to be £300 million.

## General balances

We plan to keep a general reserve of around £12 million to pay for emergencies and other unforeseen expenditure.

# Malvern Hills District Council's Budget

## How we'll spend Malvern Hills' cash in 2008-09

We have agreed to spend £8.9 million for 2008-2009.

Given that the Central Government grant has been much lower this year, we have had to make some difficult decisions in order to ensure we can provide the best value for money services. After taking into account our reserves and balances, your tax increase for this year will be 4.5%.

### How our budget compares to last year

	£'000
Budget requirement 2007-08	8,527
Pay & prices inflation	207
Investment in Services	769
Service and efficiency savings (net)	(542)
Budget requirement 2008-09	8,960

The Council Tax levy for 2008-2009 is £125.40 for a Band D property. In addition some parts of the District will pay a special expenses levy which is £51.33 on average for a Band D property.

We have set our budget based on our four priorities. The table below shows how we spent the money last year and how we'll spend it in 2008-2009.

Services	2007-08 Net Expenditure £000's	2008-09		
		Expenditure £000's	Income £000's	Net £000's
Community & Economic Development	1,615	2,116	(345)	1,771
Environmental & Customer Services	3,630	5,055	(1,155)	3,900
Planning & Housing Services	1,576	2,690	(1,167)	1,523
Corporate & Democratic Core	1,706	22,203	(20,437)	1,766
<b>Total MHDC budget requirement</b>	<b>8,527</b>	<b>32,064</b>	<b>(23,104)</b>	<b>8,960</b>
Funded by:				
Use of balances and reserves	0	-	-	166
Formula grant	4,965	-	-	5,055
Council Tax	3,562	-	-	3,739

**Council Tax levy at Band D**

**£120.00**

**£125.40**

brackets = negative figures

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## Breaking the bill down

### Make up of Council Tax 2008-09

	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Worcestershire County Council	656.51	765.93	875.35	984.77	1,203.60	1,422.44	1,641.28	1,969.53
West Mercia Police Authority	110.30	128.69	147.07	165.45	202.22	238.99	275.75	330.90
Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Authority	45.47	53.05	60.63	68.21	83.37	98.53	113.68	136.42
Malvern Hills District Council	83.60	97.53	111.47	125.40	153.27	181.13	209.00	250.80
Average Levies and Parish Precepts*	34.22	39.92	45.63	51.33	62.74	74.14	85.55	102.66
<b>Total Council Tax bill (av)</b>	<b>930.10</b>	<b>1,085.12</b>	<b>1,240.15</b>	<b>1,395.16</b>	<b>1,705.20</b>	<b>2,015.23</b>	<b>2,325.26</b>	<b>2,790.31</b>

\*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	2007-08 (£)	2008-09 (£)
Gross Expenditure	1,048	1,354
Net Expenditure	808	770
Levies	679	680
Levies requirement from MHDC	744.30	744.30

Malvern Hills Conservators (for the Parishes of Great Malvern, Malvern Wells, West Malvern and Guarlford)	Estimate 2007-08 £'000	Estimate 2008-09 £'000
Gross Expenditure	590	611
Less: Gross Income (excluding levy)	-210	-220
Malvern Hills	316	326
Herefordshire	33	34
Net Expenditure (to be met from balances)	40	31
Balances/Reserves start of year	233	239
Less met from balances	-40	-31
Balances/Reserves end of year	193	208

# The **small** print

## 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.



# The **small** print

- 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 (e.g. 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 e.g. an annex, which is occupied by a dependant 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.

## Unoccupied properties

The following levels of discount will apply for the 2008-09 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 you, or someone who lives with you, need a room, or an extra bathroom or kitchen, or extra space in your property because of a disability, you may be entitled to a reduced Council Tax bill. For more information please contact us. If your home has any special fixtures which have been added for a disabled resident which reduce the home's value and you do not think they have been taken into account in the valuation band to which your home has been assigned 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 e.g. age of the claimant and/or partner, how many dependant 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 01684 862151 or visit [www.whub.org.uk](http://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, The Hollies, Newport Road, Stafford ST16 1BY 01785 254321 [vtstafford@vto.gsx.gov.uk](mailto:vtstafford@vto.gsx.gov.uk)





# Waste Prevention Initiatives

The Waste Prevention Team at Worcestershire County Council has been working with residents to reduce the amount of waste that they produce.

In 2007/08 each person in Worcestershire produced approximately 505kg of household waste. In 2008/09 we need to try and reduce this to 485kg per person. If we don't work to reduce our waste, costs will escalate in the future. We are making good progress but we need your help!

In order to help you we offer the following waste prevention initiatives.

## Compost at home

Composting at home is an excellent way to keep bio-degradable waste out of landfill. It is a natural process that transforms kitchen and garden waste into a fertiliser for your garden.

Worcestershire County Council and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) offer residents subsidised compost bins.

Compost bins can be purchased from [www.recyclenow.com/compost](http://www.recyclenow.com/compost) or alternatively you can call **0845 077 0757** to order a bin.



## Sink Your Waste

Food waste disposers are a very convenient way of getting rid of unwanted food scraps that should not be added to your compost bin e.g. bread and chicken bones.

If you fit a food waste disposer in your kitchen you can claim up to £80 cashback from Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council\*.

For more information or to download a cashback claim form log on to [www.sinkyourwaste.com](http://www.sinkyourwaste.com) or call **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**.

\*Terms and conditions apply

For more ideas and information about what you can do, visit the **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE** website or call **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**

[www.wastemissionimpossible.org.uk](http://www.wastemissionimpossible.org.uk) 01905 766 883

## Choose to Reuse

We have become so used to throwing things away without a second thought. However, many household items can be used over and over again.

Worcestershire County Council help to promote and support a number of local community-based non-profit-making organisations and projects where you can donate

clothes, furniture, electrical goods, computers, bicycles and paint. We encourage residents to not only donate unwanted items to these organisations, but also to consider buying second-hand items as well.

For your free 'Guide to Re-use Organisations in Worcestershire' contact **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**.



## Real Nappy Incentive Scheme

Real nappies are an easy-to-use, practical alternative to disposables. They reduce rubbish going to landfill and can be significantly cheaper to use, which is why more and more families are choosing to use them.

The "Real Nappy Incentive Scheme" gives parents/ guardians the opportunity to either receive £30 cashback when they purchase

£50 worth or more of real nappies (excluding accessories) or they can claim a free pack of 'pre-fold' nappies worth approximately £15 from Green Nappies, a social enterprise working with adults from disadvantaged groups.

For more information about the scheme contact **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**.



## Jilt the Junk Mail

Unwanted mail can be a real problem. The Waste Prevention Team have put together a useful pack to help you to do something about the amount of unwanted mail that comes through your door.

To get your free "Jilt the Junk Mail" pack contact **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**.



## Recycling

Every resident in Herefordshire and Worcestershire has access to recycling facilities. If you don't already have a kerbside collection of recyclables there are a large number of recycling centres across each district.

For more information visit [www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com) or contact your local council.



worcestershire  
county council

# 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 your local Hub centre**



**01684 862151**

Malvern Hills Customer Service Centre  
Graham Road, Malvern WR14 2HU

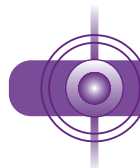
Tenbury Wells Customer Service Centre  
Tenbury Library, Teme Street, Tenbury Wells WR15 8AA



**[www.whub.org.uk](http://www.whub.org.uk)**



**To find out more about how the Hub can help you, call 01905 765765**



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