



HYNDBURN

The place to be
an excellent council

Council Tax 2021

A message from the Leader of the Council



COVID 19 has dominated all of our lives in the last 12 months and its impact looks like it will continue for a significant period of the new financial year starting in April 2021. The Council has faced extra financial pressures and the significant loss of income due to the pandemic during 2020/21 and will in all likelihood continue to experience these again as we continue to do all we can to fight the impact of the virus locally and assist with the national efforts around track, trace and enforcement.

The most important thing for the Council is to try and ensure that everyone is as safe and protected from the virus as they can be and to help individuals, households and businesses as

best we can. This remains our key objective for the year ahead.

In light of the financial demands upon us, we have increased council tax locally this year but only by 2% and our track record on increasing Council Tax still remains one of the best in the country, with the average below 1% over the last decade or so and many years in which our sound financial management has allowed us not to increase council tax at all.

Away from the pandemic, the Council continues to drive forward its agenda around improving Hyndburn whenever it can. We are continuing to work to bring a significant number of new homes to the area, particularly with the development of a Garden Village at Huncoat. Investment in the High Street will continue, building on the success of the heritage initiative along Blackburn Road, we will commit to spending more funds to improve both the Town Hall and the Market Hall and the land around these buildings.

COVID 19 has shown us the importance of the general health and wellbeing of individuals and that the virus will have more devastating effects in areas where people are not

active and do not have access to good physical activities and leisure facilities. It is therefore part of our ambition to upgrade our main Sport Centre at Church and to develop a much expanded facility at Wilson's Playing Fields to ensure we can provide the means by which everyone can easily access venues with good quality provision for everyone to enjoy themselves while keeping fit and active.

The work at Hyndburn Sport Centre and some of the other further capital investment we are due to make during 2021/22 at a variety of council buildings, will also help us to significantly reduce our carbon footprint, with the introduction of new energy technology. These positive steps underline our commitment to addressing the Climate Emergency we face and we will continue in future years to drive forward change wherever we can, so we can contribute locally to the global effort to save our planet.

Miles Parkinson - Leader of the Council

How Your Council Tax is Spent

Your Council Tax is split between four authorities below. Detailed financial information is available from each authority.

Lancashire County Council PO Box 78, County Hall, Fishergate, Preston, PR1 8XJ	72.4%	www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/finance/	0300 123 6701
Lancashire County Council's proportion of Council Tax includes a precept to fund adult social care.			
Hyndburn Borough Council Scatcliffe House, Ormerod Street, Accrington, BB5 0PF	12.7%	https://www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/counciltax/	01254 388 111
Lancashire Police & Crime Commissioner County Hall Preston, PR10 0LD	11.3%	https://www.lancashire-pcc.gov.uk/transparency/financial-information/	01772 533 587
Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Garstang Road, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 3LH	3.6%	www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk/about-us/how-we-are-funded	01772 862 545

In 2015, the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government made an offer to adult social care authorities to able to increase its relevant basic amount of council tax for the financial year beginning in 2016 by an percentage amount specified annually without holding a referendum[, to assist it in meeting expenditure on adult social care functions. Adult social care authorities are local authorities which have function under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014 ("adult social care functions"), namely county councils in England, district councils for an area in England for which there is no county council, London borough councils, the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly.

In relation to the financial year beginning 2021 the Secretary of State has determined (and the House of Commons has approved) a referendum threshold of 5% (comprising 3% for expenditure on adult social care and 2% for other expenditure) These authorities may therefore increase their Council Tax precepts in 2021-22 to these limits without holding a referendum.

For the financial year 2021-22, Police and Crime Commissioners will have the flexibility to increase their Council Tax precept by £15 for a Band D property without holding a referendum.

Can I appeal against my property's valuation band?

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) values domestic properties for council tax. This valuation is used to set your council tax band. You might need to contact the VOA if you think your council tax band is wrong.

You can find out more about when you can challenge your band and what you need to do at gov.uk/challenge-council-tax-band. If you challenge your band, you must continue to pay Council Tax at your current band until your appeal is decided.

You can contact the VOA at gov.uk/contact-voa. If you are unable to use the online service you can also contact the VOA on 03000 501 501

Valuation Office Agency, Durham Customer Service Centre, Wycliffe House, Green Lane, Durham, DH1
The website address for the CTS application form needs to be updated to –

<https://www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ctaxandbenefits>

Council Tax Discounts

The full Council Tax Bill assumes that there are two or more adults living in a property. If only one adult lives in the property as their main home, we may reduce the bill by 25%.

Normally, we do not count the following people when calculating your bill:

- Full-time students, student nurses, apprentices or youth trainees;
- Patients who live in hospital;
- People who are severely mentally impaired;
- People staying in hostels for the homeless or night shelters;
- 8 to 19 year olds who are still at or have just left school;
- Care workers on low pay (who usually work for charities);
- Carers for someone with a disability who is not their spouse, partner or child under 18;
- Members of visiting forces;
- Members of religious communities, including monks and nuns;
- Prisoners (unless they are in prison for not paying Council Tax or a fine).

Contact us if you think you may be entitled to a discount. If your bill shows that you have a discount, you must inform us if your circumstances change. You may have to pay a penalty if you do not do this.

Empty and Exempt Properties

Charges for empty properties in Hyndburn are:

Property Type	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-24 months	24-60 months	60-120 months	120 months+
Properties undergoing or in need of major repair.	50%	50%	100%	200%	300%	400%
Empty and unfurnished properties.	50%	100%	100%	200%	300%	400%
Second Homes	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

We do not charge Council Tax on homes occupied only by students, people under 18 or people who are severely mentally impaired. We do not charge Council Tax for empty properties if:

- a charity owns it (exempt for six months);
- the resident is in prison, or lives in hospital or a home;
- the resident has gone to live with someone else to receive or provide care;
- a trustee is waiting for probate or letters of admission to be granted;
- a student owner was the last person to live in it;
- it is the responsibility of a trustee acting for a bankrupt person;
- nobody can live in it by law; or
- a minister of religion is waiting to move in.

People with Disabilities

You may be entitled to a reduction if you or someone who lives with you needs a room, an extra bathroom or kitchen or extra space because of a disability. Please contact us for further information.

Granny Flats and Annexes

If you rent a flat, building or annex within your property to a tenant who is not a family member, Council Tax is normally payable in full on that annex. A discount of 50% may apply if you have a family member living in the flat, annex or other home in the grounds of your property or if it becomes empty after they leave. A full exemption may be applied if the family member is over 65 or disabled.

Council Tax Support

Council Tax Support is a local scheme which replaced Council Tax Benefit in April 2013. Details of Hyndburn's full scheme can be found online at <https://www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ctaxandbenefits/>

Council Tax Support is available if you are out of work or working but on a low income. If you are working age (between 18 and 66) the maximum we can award is 70% of your Council Tax liability. This means all working age people must pay at least 30% of their bill.

If you are over 66 years old you can still claim up to 100% of your bill in Council Tax Support.

All claims are now made online at www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/whocanclaim . If you are applying for Housing Benefit, you can apply for Council Tax Support at the same time. If you cannot use a computer, please contact us to arrange an alternative.

If you are claiming or are in receipt of Universal Credit, please note that you must apply for Council Tax Support separately.

What happens if I cannot pay my Council Tax?

If you are struggling to pay your Council Tax please contact us. We can spread your payments over 12 months, or provide advice about Council Tax Support and payment methods.

If you do not pay your Council Tax, we may issue a summons to obtain a liability order which is authorisation from the Courts to take steps to recover your Council Tax using methods such as enforcement agents or deductions from your wages or benefits. Additional costs will be applied to your account if a summons and/or liability order is obtained.

Benefit and Council Tax Fraud

If you suspect that someone is committing Council Tax fraud please contact us. If you suspect Housing Benefit or any other benefit fraud , please contact the Single Fraud Investigation Service on 0800 854 440. www.gov.uk/report-benefit-fraud

Contact Us

Our Customer Contact Team is available Monday to Friday 9am-5pm (Wednesdays from 10am)

Web : <https://www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ctaxandbenefits/> **E:Mail :** enquiries@hyndburnbc.gov.uk

Telephone : 01254 388 111

Face to face appointments for vulnerable residents only and may be limited to virtual appointments only.

Write to us at Accrington Town Hall, Broadway, Accrington, BB5 1EZ