

Council Tax

2025 - 2026

Your council tax explained.

Welcome

Now more than ever, people are turning to their local authorities for support. It is therefore vital that we continue to provide those services that are important to you.

With a continuing reduction in the funding we receive from central government, we are working hard to ensure that we retain high quality, value for money services for our residents.

This booklet outlines how we plan to spend the money raised from your council tax this year. Please take a few minutes to read through this information. You may find you are eligible to claim an exemption or discount, which could reduce how much council tax you need to pay. See pages 3 - 7 for more detail.

Contents

About your council tax

| | |
|---|----|
| How is council tax calculated? | 03 |
| Local council tax reduction scheme | 03 |
| Could you get a discount? | 03 |
| Empty and second homes | 04 |
| Council tax valuation bands | 05 |
| Reduction for people with disabilities | 06 |
| Could you be exempt? | 06 |
| Can you appeal? | 07 |
| What if you don't think you should pay council tax? | 07 |
| Changes in circumstance | 07 |
| How we use your information | 07 |

About your council tax bill

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Average bill for band D property | 08 |
| Charge for each property band | 08 |
| The Borough Council charge | 09 |
| Why the increased spend? | 10 |
| Other information | 10 |
| Parish spending | 11 |
| Colwich Parish Council | 12 |
| Stone Town Council | 13-14 |
| The Environment Agency | 15-16 |
| Contact information | 18 |

About your council tax

How is council tax calculated?

Your council tax is based on two adults living in a property.

- › If only one person lives there, they are entitled to a 25% discount.
- › Certain properties could be 100% exempt even if they are occupied. See page 6 for more details.

Please remember, if you are waiting for the outcome of an application for a reduction, you must continue to pay your current bill. If successful, you will be entitled to a refund of any overpaid council tax.

Local council tax reduction scheme

If you are unemployed or on a low wage, you may be able to get your bill reduced.

If you think that you may qualify for this reduction, please visit our website and use the online calculator www.staffordbc.gov.uk/benefits

Could you get a discount?

This depends on the number of adults in your house and their circumstances. If any of the adults are on the list below, they may not be counted for council tax purposes. If this takes the number of 'counted' adults below two, you are eligible for a discount.

- › Full time students, student nurses, apprentices, youth training trainees and foreign language assistants.
- › Young people for whom child benefit is payable and 18/19 year olds who have just left school or college.
- › Patients resident in hospital or being looked after in care homes.
- › Severely mentally impaired people.
- › People in hostels or night shelters.
- › People caring for a person with a disability who is NOT their partner or their child under the age of 18.
- › Low paid care workers (usually working for charities).
- › Members of religious communities such as monks or nuns.
- › People in detention (except for non-payment of council tax or a fine).
- › Spouses or dependants of students who are non-British subjects and are prevented by immigration regulations from working or claiming benefits.
- › Members of visiting forces, certain international and defence organisations and those with diplomatic privilege or immunity.

Council tax discounts and reductions

Furnished and second homes

Furnished and unoccupied 200% charge (100% up to 31 March 2025)

Empty homes

Unfurnished and unoccupied for less than 1 year.

- › Up to 28 days, 100% discount (100% charge after the 28 day discount period)

Long term empty homes

Unfurnished and unoccupied for:

- › More than 1 year but less than 5 years, 200% charge
- › More than 5 years but less than 10 years, 300% charge
- › More than 10 years, 400% charge
- › Unfurnished and unoccupied due to liable person living elsewhere in armed forces accommodation, 100% charge

Second homes (job related)

Furnished and unoccupied due to liable person living elsewhere in job-related or armed forces accommodation, 50% charge.

From 1 April 2025, the government have introduced a number of exceptions to the second home and long term empty premiums.

Examples are; second homes and long term empty properties being actively marketed for sale or to let (exception can apply for up to 12 months), dwellings left empty following the death of the owner (exception will apply for up to 12 months from the date of Grant of Probate/Letters of Administration), long term empty properties which require or are undergoing major repairs or structural alteration (exception will apply for up to 12 months).

Full details of all of the exceptions and online application forms can be found on our website www.staffordbc.gov.uk/empty-and-second-homes

The council tax team can give you more information about how the above charges may affect you and may be able to refer you to someone who can give you advice about bringing your property back into use.

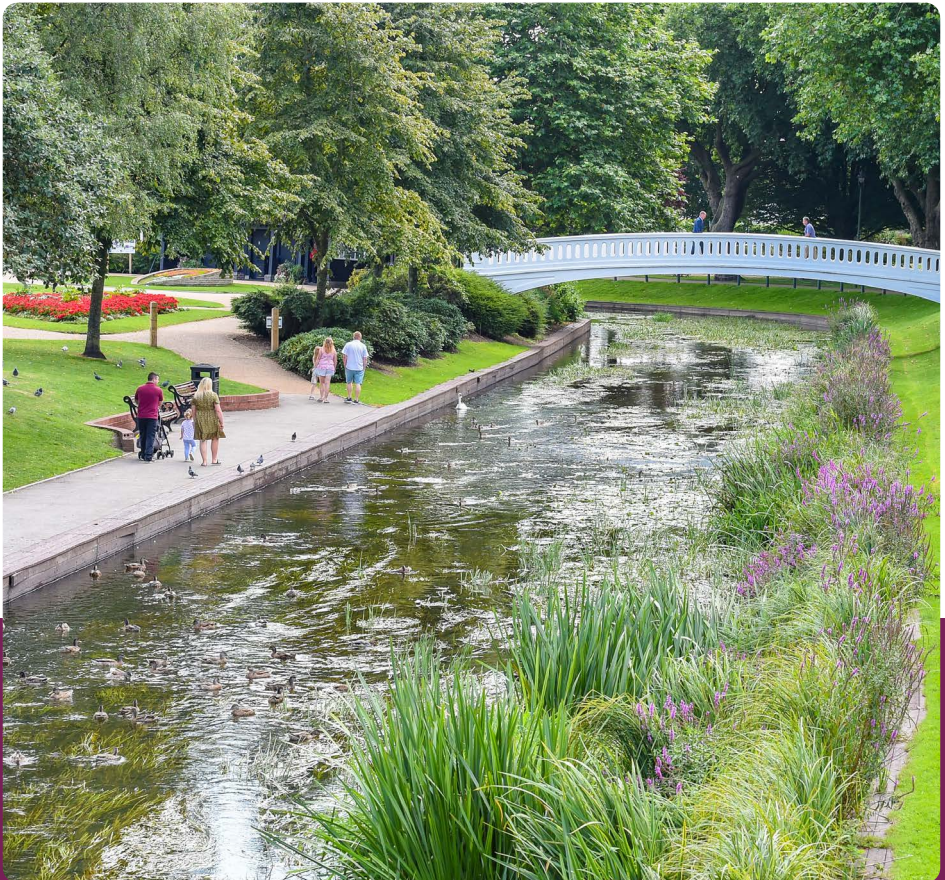
Reduction for people with disabilities

Your bill may be reduced if you (or someone who lives with you) need a room, an extra bathroom or kitchen, or extra space in your property to meet the required needs arising from a disability.

The bill may be reduced to that of a property in the band immediately below the band of your property. If your property is in Band A, a reduction (equivalent to a band) will be given. This reduction is not based on your income or savings.

Annexe discount

A discount of 50% may be applicable to a separately assessed annexe (or similar self contained part of a property) which is occupied as part of the main property or is the main home of a relative of the council taxpayer of the main property.



Council tax valuation bands

The Valuation Office Agency, part of HM Revenue and Customs (not your local council) has put every property into one of eight valuation bands. Your council tax bill states which band applies to your home and your home's valuation is based on an estimate of how much it was worth on 1 April 1991. Price changes since that time won't affect the valuation.

A full list of valuation bands is available on its website at www.voa.gov.uk.

| Band | Range of values as at 1 April 1991 | Proportion of Band D tax payable |
|------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A | Up to and including £40,000 | 6/9 |
| B | £40,001 to £52,000 | 7/9 |
| C | £52,001 to £68,000 | 8/9 |
| D | £68,001 to £88,000 | 1 |
| E | £88,001 to £120,000 | 11/9 |
| F | £120,001 to £160,000 | 13/9 |
| G | £160,001 to £320,000 | 15/9 |
| H | More than £320,000 | 2 |



Could you be exempt from council tax?

Some properties may be exempt from council tax.

Unoccupied properties which are

Owned by a charity (allowed for up to six months)

Left empty by someone who has gone to prison

Previously occupied by a person in permanent residential care

Owned by the estate of a deceased person and waiting for probate or letters of administration to be granted (continuous for up to six months after being granted)

Empty because occupation is forbidden by law

Waiting to be occupied by a minister of religion

Left empty by someone who has moved to receive personal care by reason of old age, disablement or illness

Left empty by someone who has moved to provide personal care to another person

Owned by a student and last occupied by a student

Subject to a Repossession Order

The responsibility of a bankrupt person's trustee

A site for a caravan, mobile home or mooring

Unable to be let separately because it is linked to, or in the grounds of, another property and planning conditions do not allow separate letting

Occupied properties where

All the residents are students

Used for UK armed forces accommodation, whether occupied or not

At least one liable person is a member of a visiting force

All residents are less than 18 years old

All liable residents are severely mentally impaired

At least one liable person is a foreign diplomat

It is annexed to a family home and occupied by that family's elderly or disabled relatives

Can you appeal against your council tax band?

There are several situations where you can appeal against the band in which your house has been placed:

- › Within six months of becoming the new tax payer for the property.
- › Within six months of the Valuation Office Agency making a change to the band.
- › If there have been specific material changes in the property value.

Any queries about appeals and bandings should be made direct to the Valuation Office Agency. See contacts on page 17.

What if you don't think you should be paying council tax?

You can appeal to the council if you think you are not liable to pay council tax e.g. because you are not the resident or owner, or because your property is exempt or you are entitled to a discount. You should not withhold payment if you are making an appeal. You should pay as normal and a refund will be made if you are successful.

Changes in circumstances

If you have been granted a reduction you must tell the council of any change in circumstances which will affect your entitlement within 21 days. If you fail to do so you may be faced with a penalty of £70. For more details about council tax discounts see page 3, for details of Council Tax exemptions see page 6.

How we collect and use information

Stafford Borough Council, as the data controller, will use the information that you provide to update your Council Tax account. We want to be able to provide appropriate, timely and effective services so it is important to us that we coordinate what we do for you properly. To do this, we will share basic information such as name and address between services within the Council. This allows us to keep our information on you as up-to-date as possible in order to improve our services to you.

Even though our systems are joined-up, we ensure that staff within the Council can only access the information they need to do their job. Please be advised, we won't sell or give your information to any third party for marketing purposes unless we have asked for your permission. We will only share your information, when necessary, with agencies involved in the administration of your Council Tax account, or where the law requires or allows us to, for example, to prevent or detect fraud and error within the Council Tax and/or Benefit System.

For more information, please see www.staffordbc.gov.uk/PrivacyNotice or www.staffordbc.gov.uk/nfi.

About your council tax

Your council tax bill comprises charges from four principal authorities in the area, Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Commissioner (Police and Crime), Staffordshire Commissioner (Fire and Rescue) and Stafford Borough Council.

The Borough Council is solely responsible for collection of council tax.

Average bill for a band D property for 2025 / 2026

| 2024/25 (£) | Authority | 2025/26 (£) | Increase (£) % | |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| 173.56 | Stafford Borough Council | 178.75 | 5.19 | 2.99% |
| 1,544.64 | Staffordshire County Council | 1,621.71 | 77.07 | 4.99% |
| 86.77 | Staffordshire Commissioner (Fire and Rescue) | 91.77 | 5.00 | 5.76% |
| 273.57 | Staffordshire Commissioner (Police and Crime) | 287.57 | 14.00 | 5.12% |
| 2,078.54 | Total | 2,179.80 | 101.26 | 4.87% |

Charge for each property band

| Property Band | COUNCIL TAX | | | | Total (£) |
|---------------|-------------|------------|----------|------------|-----------|
| | Borough (£) | County (£) | Fire (£) | Police (£) | |
| A | 119.17 | 1,081.14 | 61.18 | 191.71 | 1,453.20 |
| B | 139.03 | 1,261.33 | 71.38 | 223.67 | 1,695.41 |
| C | 158.89 | 1,441.52 | 81.57 | 255.62 | 1,937.60 |
| D | 178.75 | 1,621.71 | 91.77 | 287.57 | 2,179.80 |
| E | 218.47 | 1,982.09 | 112.16 | 351.47 | 2,664.19 |
| F | 258.19 | 2,342.47 | 132.56 | 415.38 | 3,148.60 |
| G | 297.92 | 2,702.85 | 152.95 | 479.28 | 3,633.00 |
| H | 357.50 | 3,243.42 | 183.54 | 575.14 | 4,359.60 |

In addition a further charge is included for the spending of parish councils where appropriate (see page 11).

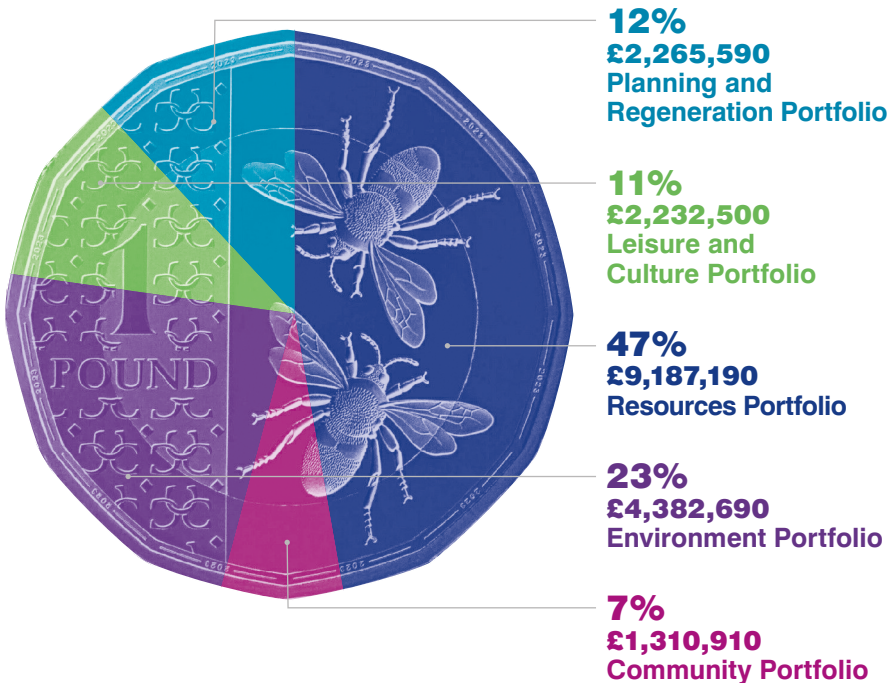
How the Borough Council charge of £178.75 is derived

The amount of money required by the Council for 2025/26 to carry out its functions and provide services (its Budget Requirement) is £16.294 million (£15.371 million in 2024/25).

A proportion of this is met by Business Rates Retention with the balance being met from council taxpayers.

The table below provides an analysis of the funding of the budget requirement and illustrates how the charge of £178.75 is calculated.

| 2024 / 2025 | | | 2025 / 2026 | |
|--------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| £000's | Band D Equivalent £ | | £000's | Band D Equivalent £ |
| 15,371 | 311.76 | Budget Requirement | 16,236 | 327.11 |
| 6,814 | 138.20 | Less Business Rates Retention | 7,364 | 148.36 |
| 8,557 | 173.56 | Council Tax Requirement | 8,872 | 178.75 |



Why the increased spend?

The Council's budget requirement for 2025/26 of £16.326 million is £0.865m more than in 2024/25. The following table identifies the major reasons for this:

| | £'000 |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Inflation and cost increases | 496 |
| Changes in income | (503) |
| Waste changes | 215 |
| Local plan | 169 |
| Other changes | 488 |
| Increase in budget requirement | 865 |

Other information

Staffing

Budgeted staffing for 2025/26 is 241.02 compared to 243.5 staff in 2024/25 (part time staff are included as full time equivalents).

Capital expenditure

In 2025/26 the Borough Council will be spending approximately £11.786 million on capital investment.

Areas of investment include Future High Streets spend to redevelop the Town Centre (£7.930 million), Food Waste (£1.458 million) and Disabled Facilities Grant (£1.522 million).

Borrowing

The Borough Council has no outstanding debt.

What is your parish spending?

| 2024/2025 (£) | Parish | 2025/2026 (£) | Band D Equivalent (£) |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 3,293.97 | Adbaston | 3,291.24 | 14.50 |
| 108,923.08 | Barlaston | 107,632.83 | 103.49 |
| 41,274.08 | Berkswich | 42,849.70 | 54.03 |
| 14,713.02 | Bradley | 14,667.31 | 63.76 |
| 15,061.66 | Brocton | 15,374.79 | 28.35 |
| 7,009.33 | Chebsey | 7,375.31 | 29.56 |
| 6,983.14 | Church Eaton | 7,031.35 | 23.93 |
| 214,849.87 | Colwich | 241,166.25 | 127.56 |
| Nil | Creswell | 11,112.57 | 12.66 |
| 20,895.98 | Doxey | 20,558.47 | 22.74 |
| 79,718.94 | Eccleshall | 80,377.47 | 37.26 |
| 345.63 | Ellenhall | 345.63 | 5.27 |
| 1,264.00 | Forton | 1,180.00 | 8.26 |
| 1,678.32 | Fradswell | 1,921.79 | 22.81 |
| 105,714.97 | Fulford | 105,208.09 | 46.03 |
| 3,978.23 | Gayton | 4,386.13 | 50.87 |
| 102,673.11 | Gnosall | 117,046.81 | 58.18 |
| 23,999.44 | Haughton | 25,262.21 | 55.24 |
| 5,017.99 | High Offley | 4,997.74 | 12.86 |
| 12,358.09 | Hilderstone | 12,448.98 | 44.87 |
| 38,862.36 | Hixon | 42,000.00 | 56.09 |
| 27,003.07 | Hopton and Coton | 40,638.84 | 48.10 |
| 7,183.00 | Hyde Lea | 7,296.13 | 38.88 |
| 3,133.27 | Ingestre | 3,433.74 | 40.83 |
| Nil | Marston | - | Nil |
| 7,413.55 | Milwich | 8,864.69 | 44.41 |
| 3,917.97 | Norbury | 3,906.37 | 19.53 |
| 5,017.52 | Ranton | 5,250.00 | 27.74 |
| 7,857.15 | Salt and Enson | 8,333.48 | 45.22 |
| 10,107.94 | Sandon and Burston | 14,839.96 | 86.69 |
| 18,959.09 | Seighford | 18,951.37 | 24.63 |
| 10,785.44 | Standon | 11,331.57 | 34.33 |
| 393,644.59 | Stone Town | 409,788.12 | 63.99 |
| 16,736.20 | Stone Rural | 17,628.47 | 23.47 |
| 18,895.16 | Stowe by Chartley | 20,105.38 | 103.56 |
| 33,019.83 | Swynnerton | 32,884.84 | 24.15 |
| 3,144.42 | Tixall | 3,420.04 | 26.29 |
| 34,194.52 | Weston | 34,062.33 | 71.26 |
| 1,558.67 | Whitgreave | 1,610.40 | 18.19 |
| 27,526.41 | Yarnfield and Cold Meece | 28,903.42 | 35.49 |
| 1,438,713.01 | TOTAL | 1,537,483.82 | |

Colwich Parish Council

| | Revenue Expenditure 2024/25 (£) | Revenue Expenditure 2025/26 (£) |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Administration | 40,490 | 41,633 |
| Staffing | 209,769 | 225,567 |
| Community Engagement | 2,900 | 2,900 |
| Events | 17,500 | 16,500 |
| Parish Maintenance | 2,175 | 3,775 |
| Footpaths | 0 | 0 |
| Green Infrastructure | 0 | 0 |
| Parish Centre | 0 | 0 |
| Jubilee Playing Field | 0 | 0 |
| Allotments | 0 | 0 |
| Grants/Donations | 0 | 0 |
| Reserves | -50,000 | -38,798 |
| Precept (including Local Council Tax Support Grant) | 222,834 | 251,577 |





Stone Town Council

Stone Town Council provides services for the people and town of Stone.

These services include the provision of community facilities, such as the Frank Jordan and Stone Station community centres, Stone Heritage Centre, allotment sites at Newcastle Road and Mount Road and the Crown Meadow Nature Reserve and amphitheatre.

The 2025-26 budget includes additional funding to provide support for the introduction of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) in Stone High Street, further improvements at Crown Meadow, support for VE Day and VJ Day commemoration events, improvements to wreath laying arrangements on Remembrance Sunday, and improvements to the Council's office accommodation.

Investing in and working to promote a vibrant town and encourage visitors is a key Town Council priority. In order to support this, the Council organises regular events such as the Town Market and monthly Craft Market together with town centre events such as the Summer Street Party, Puppet Festival, the Classic Car event and the St Georges Day celebration. Christmas lights are provided in the High Street and at Walton, with the Council's annual switch-on event being one of highlights of the town year. The High Street environment is enhanced by the Council's provision of hanging baskets and bunting along the High Street, and recently refurbished noticeboards and fingerposts throughout the town.

The Council provides bus shelters, benches and dog bins throughout the area and takes responsibility for the upkeep of many local amenities and planted areas. It also provides grants and other support to help charitable and community organisations such as the Stone Community Hub, organises remembrance events, and the Council staff supply regular support and advice to local residents.

By considering the impact of every planning application, the Council seeks to develop and conserve the town, and its approved Neighbourhood Plan helps the Council to shape and protect the future of Stone for years to come.

At its monthly meetings the Council welcomes questions from the public and sets aside time to listen and respond. Assistance with public questions will gladly be given by the Council's staff.

Stone Town Council

| | Revenue Budget 2024/25 (£) | Revenue Budget 2025/26 (£) |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Community and Heritage Centres | 54,300 | 49,700 |
| Town Market | -6,100 | -2,020 |
| Town Maintenance | 17,500 | 37,700 |
| Grounds Maintenance | 22,000 | 23,050 |
| Crown Meadow Improvements | 8,150 | 2,560 |
| Allotments | 0 | -2,050 |
| Environmental Initiatives | 0 | 810 |
| Christmas Lights | 23,000 | 21,000 |
| Tourism and Town Promotion | 24,500 | 30,000 |
| Grants | 4,000 | 4,000 |
| Salaries and Employment Costs | 226,800 | 237,200 |
| Insurances | 6,700 | 10,760 |
| Administration & Civic Costs | 46,220 | 62,530 |
| Town Centre Elections | 0 | 0 |
| Contingency | 19,870 | 10,657 |
| Grants Received | -11,460 | -11,460 |
| Contributons from Reserves | -18,096 | -38,439 |
| Precept (incl. Local Council Tax Support Grant) | 417,384 | 435,998 |



Environment Agency

The Council Tax (Demand Notices) (England) Regulations 2011.

The Environment Agency is a levying body for its Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Functions under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Environment Agency (Levies) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011.

The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood and coastal erosion risk management for 2369 kilometres of main river and along tidal and sea defences in the area of the Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Money is spent on the construction of new flood defence schemes, the maintenance of the river system and existing flood defences together with the operation of a flood warning system and management of the risk of coastal erosion. The financial details are:

| Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| | 2024/2025 000's | 2025/2026 000's |
| Gross Expenditure | £82,164 | £99,241 |
| Levies Raised | £2,313 | £2,360 |
| Total Council Tax Base | 1,930 | 1,959 |

The majority of funding for flood defence comes directly from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). However, under the new Partnership Funding rule not all schemes will attract full central funding. To provide local funding for local priorities and contributions for partnership funding the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees recommend through the Environment Agency a local levy.

A change in the gross budgeted expenditure between years reflects the programme of works for both capital and revenue needed by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to which you contribute. The total Local Levy raised by this committee has increased by 2.0%

The total Local Levy raised has increased from £2,313,472 in 2024/2025 to £2,359,742 for 2025/2026.

The Environment Agency is a levying body for its Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Functions under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and the Environment Agency (Levies) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011.

The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood and coastal erosion risk management for 2486 kilometres of main river and along tidal and sea defences in the area of the Severn & Wye Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Money is spent on the construction of new flood defence schemes, the maintenance of the river system and existing flood defences:

| Severn and Wye Regional Flood and Coastal Committee | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| | 2024/2025 000's | 2025/2026 000's |
| Gross Expenditure | £34,573 | £32,588 |
| Levies Raised | £1,270 | £1,296 |
| Total Council Tax Base | 1,029 | 1,049 |

The majority of funding for flood defence comes directly from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). However, under the new Partnership Funding rule not all schemes will attract full central funding. To provide local funding for local priorities and contributions for partnership funding the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees recommend through the Environment Agency a local levy.

A change in the gross budgeted expenditure between years reflects the programme of works for both capital and revenue needed by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to which you contribute. The total Local Levy raised by this committee has increased by 2.0%

The total Local Levy raised has increased from £1,270,332 in 2024/2025 to £1,295,738 for 2025/2026.



Contact Information

Stafford Borough Council

www.staffordbc.gov.uk

Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, Staffordshire ST16 3AQ

24 hour telephone payment line 0161 621 4111 or 01785 619 271
To pay online www.staffordbc.gov.uk

Business rates helpline 01785 619 282
Business rates information www.staffordbc.gov.uk/businessrates

Council tax helpline 01785 619 279
Council tax information www.staffordbc.gov.uk/counciltax

Benefit helpline 01785 619 478
Benefit overpayment e-mail debtrecovery@staffordbc.gov.uk

Contact centre 01785 619 000

Valuation Office Agency

www.gov.uk/voa/contact

Listing officer, Valuation Office Agency 03000 501 501

Fire

www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue, Pirehill, Stone, Staffordshire ST15 0BS

Fire Headquarters 08451 221 155

Emergency number dial 999

Police

www.staffordshire.police.uk

Staffordshire Police Headquarters, Weston Road, Stafford, ST18 0YY

Police non-emergency number 101

Emergency number dial 999

Staffordshire County Council

www.staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire Place, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST16 2DH

Main reception 0300 111 8000

CONTACT

01785 619 000

www.staffordbc.gov.uk/counciltax

www.staffordbc.gov.uk/businessrates

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford ST16 3AQ

www.staffordbc.gov.uk    [nextdoor](#)

If you need this information in
large print, Braille, other language
or in **audio format** please contact:

info@staffordbc.gov.uk

01785 619 000