

Lowest increase for 20 years

Hampshire County Council's council tax remains among the lowest of all county councils and this year's rise of 4.7% is the smallest for 20 years.

We have continued to set tight controls on the budget, and efficiency improvements of £5 million will be achieved this year. In addition, for the first time for many years, the Government's expectations of increased spending (particularly on schools) has been matched by the rise in Government funding which makes up 62% of our budget. This shows that, when fairly funded, the County Council can deliver a lower council tax increase.

Future grant losses

Changes in 2003/04 to the way Government allocate grant to local authorities resulted in large council tax increases for many in the South East. Despite one-off additional grant in 2004/05, to keep council tax rises to low single figures, we are still expecting further grant losses in future years. With your help we will continue to press the Government to reverse these changes through our Hands Off Hampshire campaign.

For further information

County Council's budget:

Budget Questions,
County Treasurer's Department,
Hampshire County Council,
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UB

E-mail: budget@hants.gov.uk
www.hants.gov.uk/finance/budget

County Council's services:

Freephone information line 0800 028 0888
Textphone: 0808 100 2484
E-mail: info.centres@hants.gov.uk
www.hants.gov.uk

For large-print versions of the information in this leaflet, call freephone 0800 028 0888.

Braille and other language versions are also available.

Claim the Benefit

Currently an estimated £860 million of council tax benefits go unclaimed throughout the UK. Make sure you claim your share.

It's your money. For information on council tax benefits contact your district council directly. Alternatively, ring 0800 028 0888 for more information on where to go for a variety of benefits.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Council Tax 2004/2005

it's your money
see how it's spent



Hampshire
County Council

Hampshire County Council provides over 1.2 million people with vital services every day. The council tax you pay is essential to deliver these services.

It's your money
Read on to find out how it's spent.

Services for everyone

Every day, you are likely to come into contact with many services provided by Hampshire County Council. A trip out might take you on a road, past a day centre for the elderly, a school, a country park or a recycling centre - all managed and maintained by the County Council.

Listening to your needs

Our job is to deliver cost-effective services that reflect the needs of the community. In consultation with you, we have set spending priorities and aims including:

maximising life opportunities	£m	600	Education
managing the environment we live in		227	Social care
achieving economic prosperity		53	Recreation, heritage and other services
building strong and safe communities		52	Highways transport and planning
improving services		36	Waste management
		36	Capital paid for from revenue
		33	Borrowing costs
		15	Future inflation, contingencies and reserves

These help to meet our overall aim of developing the quality of life for everyone.

How well are we doing?

For the second year running, the way we manage and deliver public services has been classed as 'Excellent' by the Government's independent watchdog, the Audit Commission. You can read more about this in our residents magazine 'Hampshire Now', or on our website at:

www.hants.gov.uk/cpa

www.hants.gov.uk/bestvalueinhampshire

About your council tax

In 2003, we asked members of the public their views on options for this year's spending and council tax. The majority said they would like a low council tax rise but with extra investment in Education and Social Care and no cuts in other services.

Previously the council tax for Hampshire County Council services included an amount for the Fire Authority. From 2004/05 this appears separately on your bill and will no longer be part of the council tax paid to the County Council. This is why your bill shows a decrease of 0.5% when in fact the council tax for County Council services has risen by 4.7%.

The County Council budget for 2004/05 will be spent in the following areas:

Investment for the future

We also invest to improve services in the future. In 2004/05 we expect to spend over £201 million on new and improved roads and buildings such as schools and nursing homes.

Down to detail

In 2004/05 the County Council expects to spend £1,334 million on essential services compared with £1,264 million in 2003/04. After deducting specific grants and income from fees and charges, the County Council has set its budget at £1,052 million.

The main increases from last year's budget are:

£24m going direct to schools

£15m on social care to meet increased demand

£19m to maintain other services and make targeted improvements

Budget breakdown

	£m
Budget for 2003/04	1,032
Change in funding for fire services etc	-38
Adjusted budget for 2003/04	994
Efficiency improvements	-5
Increased spending on services	36
Inflation	27
Budget for 2004/05	1,052
which is financed by:	
National business rates	314
Government general grant	334
Surplus on district councils' collection funds	2
Balance to be met by council tax payers	402

These figures show the part of your 2004/05 bill which is for County Council supplied services only. Your bill states which band your property is in.

Band A	£560.10	Band E	£1,026.85
Band B	£653.45	Band F	£1,213.55
Band C	£746.80	Band G	£1,400.25
Band D	£840.15	Band H	£1,680.30