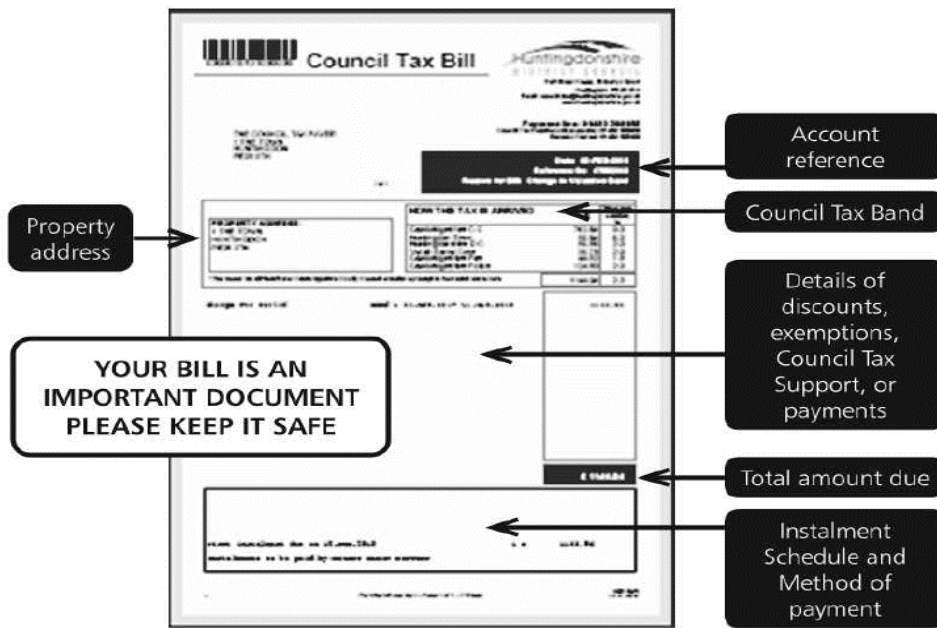


# Understanding Your Council Tax Bill



## Is your bill correct?

If you are no longer entitled to claim a reduction, discount or exemption, **you must let us know within 21 days, otherwise you may incur a penalty of £70.**

## Financial information - What does Council Tax pay for?

Council Tax pays towards services provided by us, the organisations listed below, and your local town or parish council.

To find out more about how the money you pay is spent, please visit:

- **Cambridgeshire County Council** [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/finance-and-budget/council-tax](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/finance-and-budget/council-tax)
- **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority** <https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/council-tax>
- **The Police and Crime Commissioner** [www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/money/budget](http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/money/budget)
- **Cambridgeshire Combined Fire Authority** [www.cambsfire.gov.uk/about-us](http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/about-us)
- **Huntingdonshire District Council** [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk)
- Find details for your **town or parish council** on our website [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) If you do not have access to the internet and would like a copy of this information, please contact the relevant body.

**About your Council Tax** - Council Tax is payable on each domestic property, whether it is owned or rented, and the people that live in the property are usually liable to pay. The amount charged is dependent on the Council Tax Band of the property, which is decided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) according to the open market value **at 1st April 1991**. For more information, visit [www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands](http://www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands)

**If you think your Council Tax Band is wrong** - you may be able to appeal to the Valuation Office Agency, within 6 months of you becoming liable for the Council Tax. Please see their website for more information – [www.voa.gov.uk](http://www.voa.gov.uk) - or contact them on telephone number: 03000 501 501. **You must keep paying your Council Tax instalments in the meantime.**

**Below, you will find broad descriptions of the available discounts and exemptions regarding Council Tax. Please see our website - [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount) for more detailed information, and to make an application.**

**Discounts for occupied properties** - For more details visit: [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount)

- If you live alone, or if you live with people who do not count as adults for Council Tax purposes, you may receive a 25% discount. People who do not count for Council Tax purposes include:-
- Full-time students, student nurses, apprentices and Youth Training trainees.
- 18/19 year-olds who have just left school and where Child Benefit is still paid.
- Members of visiting forces (foreign military personnel or civilians working for the foreign military)
- Caring for someone with a disability who is not their spouse, partner or child under 18.
- People being looked after in care homes.
- Patients permanently resident in hospital.
- People who are severely mentally impaired.
- Certain Care workers.
- People staying in certain hostels or night shelters.
- Members of religious communities.
- People in prison.

**Discounts for unfurnished Properties** - For more details visit: [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount)

- Properties that are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished do not qualify for a financial discount in Huntingdonshire so the full Council Tax amount is payable.
- Unoccupied properties requiring major repair or undergoing structural alteration do not qualify for a financial discount in Huntingdonshire, so the full Council Tax amount is payable.

**Exemptions for unoccupied properties** - For more details visit: [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount)

- Owned by a charity. Maximum exemption period is 6 months.

- Left unoccupied by someone who has been detained in custody.
- Previously occupied by a person now in permanent residential care.
- Left unoccupied from the death of the liable person and there is no other owner of the property. Maximum exemption period is 6 months after grant of Probate. Subject to certain conditions – please contact us for more information.
- Empty because occupation is prohibited by law (e.g. Prohibition Notice served).
- Reserved for occupation by a minister of religion.
- Previously the home of someone who has moved to another residence (not residential home or hospital) to receive personal care.
- Left empty by someone, whilst providing personal care to somebody elsewhere.
- Owned by a student and was last occupied by a student.
- A mortgagee is in possession (e.g. repossessed property).
- The responsibility of a bankrupt's trustee.
- A vacant caravan pitch or boat mooring.

**Exemptions for occupied properties - For more details visit: [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount)**

- Which are student halls of residence.
- Where all the residents are students.
- Which are armed forces accommodation.
- Where at least one person liable to pay council tax is a member of a visiting force (i.e. foreign military personnel, or civilian component).
- Where all residents are below 18 years old.
- Where all the residents are severely mentally impaired.
- Where at least one liable person is a foreign diplomat.

**Annexes - For more details visit: [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount)**

- Exempt if occupied by elderly or disabled relatives of the council tax payer who is responsible for the main property.
- 50% discount where the occupants are related to the council tax payer of the main property, other than elderly or disabled.
- Exempt if unoccupied, and cannot be rented out due to planning restrictions.
- 50% discount when an Annexe is left unoccupied, provided the Annexe is used as part of the main property.
- If none of the above applies, then the Annexe will be treated in the same way as any other property.

**Council Tax Liability Appeals** - If you disagree with our decision regarding a discount, exemption or reduction, please contact us within 2 months. If we still consider that our decision is correct, you can then appeal to the Valuation Tribunal Service – [www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk](http://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk) - You must keep paying your Council Tax instalments in the meantime.

**Disabled Band Reduction** - If you are disabled, or have a disabled person living with you, and special adaptations have been made to your home, you may be entitled to pay on a reduced Council Tax Band equivalent. For additional guidance, and to apply online, go to: [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/disablement](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/disablement) - If you do not have access to the internet, we can send you a form by post.

**Long Term unoccupied and unfurnished properties (updated from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021) –**

- For properties left unoccupied and unfurnished for more than 2 years but less than 5 years the Premium charge will be 100% e.g. if the standard Council Tax charge is £1,000, then the amount payable is £2,000.
- For properties left unoccupied and unfurnished for more than 5 years but less than 10 years the Premium charge will be 200% e.g. if the standard Council Tax charge is £1,000, then the amount payable is £3,000.
- For properties left unoccupied and unfurnished for more than 10 years the Premium charge will be 300% - e.g. if the standard Council Tax charge is £1,000, then the amount payable is £4,000.

**Council Tax Support** - The council operates a Local Council Tax Support scheme, where residents on low incomes can access financial support towards their Council Tax bill. Full details of the scheme, along with an electronic application form, can be found on our website at [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/claimonline](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/claimonline) - You can also apply if you receive Universal Credit.

In exceptional circumstances, the Council has discretion to reduce the amount of Council Tax for situations not covered by national discounts and exemptions. This can be used for individual cases, or locally determined classes of property.

**How to contact us**

- **Sign up to the Customer Portal** – [my.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://my.huntingdonshire.gov.uk)
- **Online** – via our online form at <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/council-tax/contact-us-council-tax/>
- **By phone** – Council Tax Enquiries - **01480 388030** (account queries only), for payments call **01480 388165**
- **By phone** – Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support – **01480 388308**
- **In person** – Pathfinder House, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN

**Council Tax and Housing Benefit:**

- **Make a payment or set up a Direct Debit:** [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/payments](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/payments) or 24 hour payment line: 01480 388165
- **Apply to pay over 12 monthly instalments:** [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/12months](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/12months)
- **Tell us you are moving:** [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/changeofaddress](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/changeofaddress)
- **Apply for a discount or exemption:** [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/ctdiscount)
- **Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support:** - For new claims [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/claimonline](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/claimonline)
- **Tell us about a change of circumstances:** - For existing claims [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/changesonline](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/changesonline)

**Other services:**

- **Business Rates:** [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/business/business-rates](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/business/business-rates)
- **Fraud hotline:** Tel: 01480 388188
- **Refuse & Recycling:** [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/bins)
- **Electoral Roll:** [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/elections/register-to-vote](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/elections/register-to-vote)