

Your Council Tax



How the money is spent



Clackmannanshire Council

www.clacksweb.org.uk

Introduction

Your Council Tax assists the Council to meet the costs for the wide range of services we provide including schools, social work, libraries, refuse collection and recycling, environmental health, police, fire and rescue. Your contribution makes up over £20.5 million of the money this Council receives each year.

This booklet shows how Clackmannanshire Council spent its budget last year and how we are planning to spend the budget in the coming year. It also gives the council tax rates, which we have frozen again this year, for 2013-14.

In the coming year the council intends to spend over £115 million on the services we provide to you. I recognise the need to broaden our horizons and consider alternative ways of providing quality services for our area. We are developing a Business Improvement programme, Making Clackmannanshire Better. This will be a key platform for helping to reduce the Council's cost base to a sustainable level in the future whilst improving services.

I am keen to continue to face future challenges by this Council seeking to ensure that the services provided are the right services you want and targeted at those who need them. It is vital therefore, that the Council continues to engage and work with communities, to make service delivery as best and effective as possible.

I thank you for your input and valued contribution. I very much look forward to working together in taking Clackmannanshire Forward.

Councillor Gary Womersley
Leader of Clackmannanshire Council



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Welfare Reforms

You may have heard the term “Welfare Reforms” being discussed in the media, but what in reality does this mean for residents of Clackmannanshire ?

The Council’s analysis is that many working age residents will see a reduction in the support provided to them. The major areas of the reforms are summarised below along with any actions the Council is taking to try to mitigate the effects on our residents. Changes to Welfare Benefits will include:

◆ **Benefit Cap**

From April 2013, there will be a maximum amount of benefit that a household can be entitled to.

◆ **Under Occupation in Social Rented Sector**

With effect from April 2013 the amount of Housing Benefit you get to pay your rent will be based on the number of bedrooms your household needs.

The size criteria used will be the same as used in Local Housing Allowance (LHA)

◆ **Universal Credit**

Universal Credit will replace the current benefit system with effect from 2013.

The 1st applications will be made in October 2013.

◆ **Localised Council Tax Support**

Additional data after Council Tax Benefit ceases from 31st March 2013 to be replaced by a new Council Tax reduction Scheme. The level of support should remain the same for 2013. You will not receive a separate notification of this reduction. Should you require a detailed breakdown of how the reduction was calculated, please contact Revenues on 01259 450000 or e-mail benefits@clacks.gov.uk

◆ **Localised Social Fund**

Comes into force 1st April 2013. Community Care Grants & Crisis Loans will be replaced for the majority of customers with a localised Scottish scheme.

The administration of the scheme will pass from the Department of Work & Pensions to local authorities.

◆ **Disability Living Allowance to be replaced with Personal Independence Payments (PIP)**

Effective for new claims from 1st April 2013. Existing customers will be migrated onto this new benefit on a phased basis.

Further information regarding the above is available on the Housing & Benefit web page or contact Benefits team on 01259 226239/450000 or e-mail : benefits@clacks.gov.uk

How did we do last year



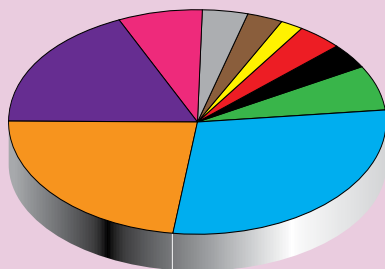
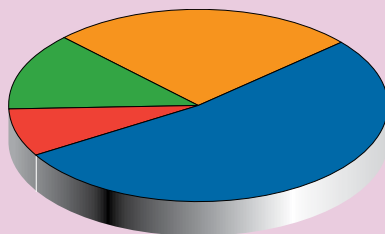
Last year we spent over £150 million. Some of the things we did with the money:

- ◆ We kept 287km of roads and 430km of pavements / footpaths clean
- ◆ We emptied over 2 million bins and recycling boxes for 23,973 households
- ◆ We looked after 19 council-owned car parks
- ◆ We maintained over 8602 street lights and paid £305k to power them
- ◆ We supplied 653,498 meals to all our schools
- ◆ We educated 6,614 school children
- ◆ We provided home care to 1,027 elderly or disabled people

A full copy of the Councils 2011/12 audited accounts are available on Clacksweb and in the main Council offices.

Where our money comes from

Central Government Grant	£83.0m	53%
Business Rates	£12.3m	8%
Council Tax	£20.7m	13%
Other Income	£41.7m	26%
Total Income	£157.7m	100%



* (£0.6m) of statutory adjustments are recovered from expenditure (being predominantly depreciation), which leaves a surplus of £3.9 million.

The balance in the General Fund at the year end is £13.1 million.

Where our money goes *

Education	49.5m	32%
General Fund Housing	25.0m	16%
Social Work	35.9m	23%
Cultural and Leisure Services	8.0m	5%
Environmental Services	6.7m	5%
Roads and Transport	3.6m	2%
Police and Fire Joint Boards	7.2m	5%
Planning & Development Services	3.1m	2%
Services and Corporate Support	6.6m	4%
Interest	8.8m	6%
Total Expenditure	£154.4m	

Performance Summary

Performance is a key priority for Clackmannanshire Council & we constantly seek to improve the way we work. In 2011-12, we met two thirds of our targets and performed 3rd best out of the 32 Scottish Councils in the Statutory Performance Indicators.

A selection of the indicators are shown below, further details can be found on Clacksweb or by contacting us on 01259 450000

The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses.

- ◆ For a 2nd year, 89% of residents are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live, the same as the Scottish Average & near our target of 91%
- ◆ The Council were in the top 3 councils at processing planning applications with 89% within target time.

Our Communities are safer

- ◆ We improved further in response times for Domestic noise complaints and were the best in Scotland for those dealt with through Antisocial Behaviour
- ◆ Our Road networks target improved and the conditions of our roads were better than the target and the Scottish average
- ◆ We were close to target for both indicators on Community Payback orders with the council & community groups benefiting from the work completed. Substance misuse and its effects are reduced
- ◆ 99% of smoking ban inspections were met on time, in accordance with current government guidance
- ◆ We made a slight improvement in perceptions of both drug and alcohol abuse in the community.

Vulnerable people & families are supported

- ◆ We improved the amount and type of homecare provided for older people
- ◆ We improved in several homelessness performance indicators, including housing more people into permanent homes and reducing those assessed as homeless within a year
- ◆ We met our targets to process benefit applications and cost per case. A substantial improvement brought us up to 5th in Scotland.

Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive

- ◆ 89% of our Council houses meet all the criteria in the Scottish Housing Quality Standard which was above our target of 83%, significantly above the Scottish average of 66%
- ◆ We performed above the Scottish average and very close to our target of 75% for Council buildings that have disabled access
- ◆ 53% of the highest earning Council employees are women, very close to the percentage of women in the population and above the Scottish average.

Performance Summary (continued)

The environment is protected and enhanced for all

- ◆ We were among the top performing Councils in Scotland, increasing to 53% of our waste being recycled or composted
- ◆ The cost of refuse collection and disposal increased, however we were better than the Scottish average
- ◆ We met our targets in gas and electricity consumption, however we had a slight increase in Council water consumption.

People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment

- ◆ Standard grade attainment levels increased to 81%, the Scottish average is 78%
- ◆ Strong performance continued in the number of Library visits and Learning Access Point use
- ◆ 97% of residents are satisfied with primary schools and 90% were satisfied with secondaries. Positive inspection reports were received for all schools and pre-schools inspected.

Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing

- ◆ We are among the top performing Councils for visits to indoor sports facilities. However visits to swimming pools have declined
- ◆ We met the national target for physical education in primary schools and are slightly under for secondary pupils
- ◆ Timescales were met for initial appointments to mental health services. This was an improvement on last year.

The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence

- ◆ We performed better than target and the Scottish average for tenant arrears
- ◆ 93% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied with the contact centre and 100% of those surveyed were satisfied with our local offices



- ◆ Improvements were made and targets met for Council Tax received within the year and the cost of Council Tax collection, improving to 3rd place in Scotland
- ◆ We continue to improve in working days lost through absence management for local government employees. We improved from 2nd to 1st place in Scotland
- ◆ Budget variance improved above target, with a £4.2 million surplus achieved through efficiency savings
- ◆ Improvements have been made in asset management and the cost of maintaining buildings
- ◆ Satisfaction with public services, public agencies working well together and opportunities for participating in local decision making, have all improved.

Budget Engagement Process

During Autumn 2010 a range of stakeholder engagement activity was undertaken. A number of face to face events collected the views of young people, partners, community councils, staff, businesses and the general public on the financial challenges the council faces.

Not all savings proposals were taken forward but were recorded in a database for future consideration. This provided a valuable source of potential savings initiatives for the Council to consider in the current budget discussions.



In December 2012, the Council launched a specific consultation based on the range of officer savings options being considered by elected members. The consultation ran until the 18th January 2013 and was open to the general public as well as partners, service users and staff. The consultation ran online via Clacksweb and letters were issued to Council partners encouraging them to participate. Copies of the consultation were also made available in hard copy in Community Access Points and Libraries. The consultation was also promoted via media releases, Facebook and Twitter.

As a consequence of this activity, the Council received a significant number of responses from Clackmannanshire residents. These predominantly related to:

- ◆ Sports Development and Sports clubs 20%
- ◆ Free swimming and P5 swimming 16%
- ◆ Learning support and Classroom Assistants 12%
- ◆ Music tuition 18%
- ◆ Home School Liaison Officers 15%
- ◆ Breakfast clubs 6%

Other areas included: School crossing patrols; ABC nursery and Kidzone; Winter gritting.

The budget for 2013/14 also incorporates the following commitments:

- ◆ no increase in the price of school meals
- ◆ free parking across Clackmannanshire to remain
- ◆ corporate staff training budget maintained
- ◆ provision of £720K to offset the impact of welfare reform
- ◆ continued provision of £400k to offset decreases in the level of Department of Works and Pensions support provided in respect of homelessness
- ◆ investment to provide high speed broadband across 85% of Clackmannanshire
- ◆ a pay award of 1% for council staff after a 2 year pay freeze
- ◆ budget of £273,000 maintained and embedded in respect of Kinship Care.

Council Housing

Spending on our assets (2011/12)

The Council's Housing Services has a responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate supply of quality, affordable housing in Clackmannanshire. We do this by offering council housing for rent and by supporting and encouraging other organisations to provide housing for renting, leasing or buying. The Council also has a responsibility for those with special needs such as homeless people and travellers.

The housing revenue account deals with expenditure on council houses, for example, repairs and estate management. This is mainly met from rents received.

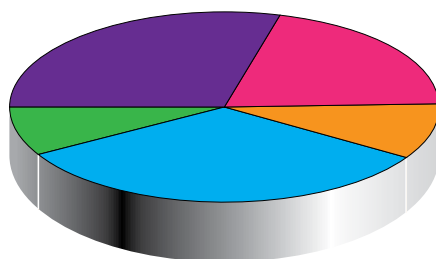
The following table shows the position for 2011/12.

Income *	2011/12 £000s
Council house rents	(14,675)
Other income	(97)
	(14,772)
Expenditure †	
Repair and maintenance	4,698
Supervision and Management	3,310
Interest payable	1,473
Depreciation & Impairment	5,312
Other costs	1,252
	16,045
Deficit for the year	1,273

* Data from 2011/12 financial year



We own a total of 4,957 houses and flats. We have earmarked a further £1,750,000 to spend on completing the building of 49 new dwellings.



What we spent on our assets and improving the area in 2011/12

	£'000s
Education & Community	
Primary and Nursery Schools	943
Centralised Kitchens & Catering Equipment	70
Demolition of old Secondary Schools	33
Lornhill Academy Sports Facilities	21
	1,067
Social Services	
Adult Day Care Facilities	17
Telecare	59
	76
Roads & Transportation	
Roads & Footpath Improvements	883
Traffic Management & Accident Prevention	838
Street Lighting	233
Other Roads & Transport Projects	21
	1,975
Environmental, Community & Protection	
Vehicles	402
Recycling Strategy & Wheeled Bins	270
Public Convenience Replacement	176
Flood Prevention	62
Parks and Open Spaces	58
Black Devon Landfill Gas Station	16
Contaminated Land Works	44
Asbestos Removal	29
Other Environmental & Community Projects	44
	1,101
Economic Development	
Alloa Town Centre Development	353
Kilncraigs Mill Development	140
	493
Community Facilities	
Refurbishment of Alloa Town Hall	354
Cochrane Hall Refurbishment	366
Other Community Facilities Projects	47
	767

	£'000s
Corporate & Support Services	
Finance & IT Hardware & Software	305
Customer First Developments	3
	308
General Services Capital Total	
	5,787
Housing	
Structural Work, Roofs and Doors	394
Central Heating and Insulation	771
Kitchens and Bathrooms	617
Safe Electrical Systems and Environmental Improvements	318
Conversions, Adaptations and Water Supply Replacement	324
New Build Housing	350
Other Housing Projects	78
Housing Services Capital Total	2,852
Grand Total	
	8,639

What we own, what we owe, and what we are owed

Buildings, Land and Houses	£313.2m
Investments	£16.2m
Stock	£0.5m
Cash in the Bank	£20.9m
Money owed to the Council	£9.8m
Money owed by the Council	-£150.0m
Provisions and future liabilities	-£124.9m
Net worth	£85.7m

Summary

Education & Community	12%
Social Services	1%
Roads & Transportation	23%
Environmental, Community & Protection	13%
Economic Development	6%
Community Facilities	9%
Housing	33%
Corporate & Support Services	3%

How we plan to spend the budget in 2013/14

Your Council has set its budget for the coming year. The Council Tax for a house valued at Band D will be £1,148 in financial year 2013/2014. Details of the Council Tax applicable to the other valuation bands are shown on page 9 of this booklet. The expenditure figure used by Government in calculating its support to the Council is £6,071 per house. The Council's proposed spending amounts to £6,368 per house.

The table below shows how the 2013/14 Council Tax has been calculated and how the Council intends to finance its expenditure. The estimated net expenditure for each service is also shown.

	2013/14	Change from previous year		
	£'000	£'000	%	
Total Gross Expenditure	130,236	(8,724)	(6.3)	
Less: Fees and Charges	14,930	364	2.5	
Total Net Expenditure	115,306	(9,088)	(7.3)	
	2013/14 Total Net Expend	Change from previous year		Effect on Band D Council Tax
	£'000	£'000	%	£
Net Expenditure Allocated by Service				
Support Services	5,862	(227)	(3.7)	58
Strategy and Customer Services	5,628	1,037	22.6	56
Facilities Management	24,246	441	1.9	241
Social Policy	26,192	441	1.7	261
Education	33,683	(600)	(1.8)	336
Housing	3,011	(231)	(7.1)	30
Community and Regulatory	5,472	113	2.1	54
Corporate	1,547	1,076	228.5	15
JOINT BOARDS				0
Police Services	0	(7,704)	(100.0)	0
Fire Services	0	(2,486)	(100.0)	0
Valuation Services	394	0	0.0	4
Miscellaneous Services	1,157	24	2.1	12
Significant Trading Operations	(1,338)	(441)	49.2	-13
Interest on Revenue Balances	(378)	(218)	136.3	-4
Contribution to Balances	367	(333)	(47.6)	4
Loan Charges	9,463	20	0.2	94
TOTAL	115,306	(9,088)	(7.3)	1,148
FINANCED BY:				
Government Grants	78,596			
Non-Domestic Rates	11,872			
Contribution from reserves	3,229			
Amount to be met by Council Tax	21,609			
TOTAL	115,306			
Yield of £1 Band D Council Tax	£18,823			
Band D Council Tax	£1,148			
Scottish average Band D Council Tax 2011/12	£1,149			
(Notional Scottish Office figure exc. Water Charges)				
Local Authority Employees	2013/14	Increase		
(Budgeted full-time equivalent)	2,251	4		

Your council tax

For 2013/14 your council tax has stayed the same.

We set council tax to help pay for the services we provide. The level of your charges depend on the valuation band of your property.

If you think your bill is wrong, please contact us and we will check it.

Did you know...

If 1,000 households changed to paying their council tax by Direct Debit this would save the Council over £20,000 per year. (this money could be used to provide free school meals to 63 pupils for one year!)

Valuation Band	Council Tax	Water	Waste	Total
A up to £27,000	£765.33	£124.80	£144.84	£1,034.97
B £27,001 to £35,000	£892.89	£145.60	£168.98	£1,207.47
C £35,001 to £45,000	£1,020.44	£166.40	£193.12	£1,379.96
D £45,001 to £58,000	£1,148.00	£187.20	£217.26	£1,552.46
E £58,001 to £80,000	£1,403.11	£228.80	£265.54	£1,897.45
F £80,001 to £106,000	£1,658.22	£270.40	£313.82	£2,242.44
G £106,001 to £212,000	£1,913.33	£312.00	£362.10	£2,587.43
H over £212,000	£2,296.00	£374.40	£434.52	£3,104.92

Valuation band

The Assessor decides the valuation band for your home.

If you have an enquiry about your band, you can contact the Assessor. (details on the back of this booklet)

Changes in circumstances

If you have details of any change of address or circumstances which might affect the amount you pay, for example the number of people living in your home, you should tell the Council. If you fail to tell us of any changes which might affect discounts or exemptions you may have to pay a £50 penalty.

Water charges

Scottish Water's charges for water and sewerage have increased by 2.8% since last year. The Council does not set these charges. Please contact Scottish Water on 0845 601 8855 with any queries.



How to pay your council tax

We prefer you to pay council tax by direct debit. Call us and we will set up your direct debit over the phone and tell you what you will pay each month.

It only takes five minutes to set up over the phone. Advantages to paying by direct debit are:

- ♦ only set it up once
- ♦ we can now do it over the phone in under five minutes
- ♦ saves a journey to the office and money on stamps
- ♦ you'll never worry about missing a payment
- ♦ you can pay over 12 months rather than just 10 months

Did you know...

It costs the Council £2 to process a payment made at a CAP / Rent office, but just 4p if you pay by direct debit.



The payment can be set around a time to suit you - we also offer weekly direct debits each Friday.

Please just call a member of the revenues team to set it up!

The Council offers variable payment dates and the option to pay council tax over 12 months if you choose this method. Unless you pay by direct debit, council tax is normally paid in 10 monthly instalments.

You can also pay:

- ♦ using a debit or credit card by phoning 01259 450000 and giving your account reference
- ♦ online at www.clacksweb.org.uk using a debit or credit card
- ♦ at any Council Collection Office



How to pay your council tax (continued)

Council Tax Reductions

You may be able to get help with your council tax if you are on a low income (a separate leaflet is available from Council offices).

You will not receive a separate notification of this reduction. Should you require a detailed breakdown of how the reduction was calculated, please contact Revenues on 01259 450000 or e-mail benefits@clacks.gov.uk

Arrears Action

You need to pay the instalments by the due dates stated on your bill. If you miss one full instalment you will have to bring the account up to date within a week of us asking. If you don't bring your payments up to date you will lose the right to pay by instalments and we could ask you to pay the rest of the bill in full. If you do not make efforts to pay we will apply to a court to insist you pay your bill and will add a 10% penalty. Court action could lead to your earnings being arrested; your bank account being frozen and you may incur additional charges.

If you have a problem paying your bill, contact us at once so that we can help you. The Council's Money Advice Service offers free, confidential advice if you are in debt. Call 01259 452512 for more information.

Appeal rights

You can appeal to the Director of Finance if you disagree with our decision to ask you to pay council tax or the calculation of your bill. If you remain dissatisfied you have a right of appeal to the Valuation Appeal Committee.

If you make an appeal you must continue to pay your council tax. If your appeal is successful then any overpaid council tax will be refunded or transferred to reduce any other outstanding debt to the Council.



Useful Contacts

Clackmannanshire Council:

Benefits - 01259 450000

benefits@clacks.gov.uk

Council Tax - 01259 450000

counciltax@clacks.gov.uk

Finance - 01259 450000

Money Advice - 01259 450000

Appeals: Director of Finance,
Greenfield, Alloa.
FK10 2AD.

[web: www.clacksweb.org.uk](http://www.clacksweb.org.uk)

Other organisations:

Assessors: - 01786 892200

The Assessor,
Hillside House,
Laurelhill,
Stirling.
FK8 2NA

[web: www.saa.gov.uk/central](http://www.saa.gov.uk/central)

Citizens' Advice Bureau:

47 Drysdale Street,
Alloa.
FK10 1JA

Tel. 01259 723880

[web: www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Information Commissioner - 0303 123 1113

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire. SK9 5AF

[web: www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

Scottish Water - 0845 601 8855

[web: www.scottishwater.co.uk](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk)
[email: services@scottishwater.co.uk](mailto:services@scottishwater.co.uk) or
customer.services@scottishwater.co.uk

National Debtline - 0808 808 400

[web: www.nationaldebtline.co.uk/scotland](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk/scotland)

Ombudsman - 08003777330

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman,
4 Melville Street,
Edinburgh, EH3 0BR

[web: www.spsec.org.uk](http://www.spsec.org.uk)

Department of Work and Pensions

[web: www.dwp.gov.uk/contact-us](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/contact-us)
or www.directgov.gov.uk

DATA PROTECTION

In line with the Data Protection Act 1988, we will process your information for the purposes of collecting any council tax you owe us. The Council has a duty to manage public funds properly. As a result, we will use the information you provide to make sure all amounts we are owed are paid on time (for example by identifying people who have not yet paid their Council Tax and to help people who are entitled to claim benefits).

From the 1st April 2013, the Council will also be administering the new Scottish Welfare Fund in Clackmannanshire, following the abolition of the Social Fund by the Department for Works and Pensions.

Due to this change, the Revenues and Payments Service will now use personal data held for Council Tax Reduction purposes to assist in the processing of all claims made for Welfare Benefits to ensure that customers receive the correct amount should they apply to the Welfare Fund.

We may also use this information to prevent and detect fraud. We may share your details with other public organisations such as other Councils or the Department of Work & Pensions who handle public funds. We may also share your details with other organisations including credit reference agencies for the purposes of confirming who is living at a particular address.

We may use your information to create management information, including statistical analysis to help combat fraudulent claims and improve customer service and satisfaction.

Should you have a query regarding the above information, please contact the Revenues and Payments Service on 01259 450000 or for further details please see www.Clacksweb.org.uk.