

FOI number: **HBC_FOI_20190219**
Date FOI Received: **19/03/2019**
Department: **Council Tax**
Title: **Council tax properties by band**
Description: **Details of Council tax properties per band and funding of Housing Benefit and Council tax support.**

Request: *(As Redacted sent by requestor)*

Dear Sirs.

Your leaflet 'Your council tax 2019/20' is exciting a good deal of interest locally in Potters Bar. There are some misconceptions that are being aired that I would like to try to clear up! Much of this concerns the £44.3m for Housing benefit and Council Tax support. If I am reading it correctly this amount is received from Central Government and not through Council Tax.

Is it possible to have a breakdown of the number of properties by band for Hertsmere and for Potters Bar? I'd like to try and shed some light on the numbers so anything else that may be useful would be welcome.

Regards.

Response: *(Response as Redacted sent by service)*

The figure of £44.3m is split between Housing Benefit (£38.5m) and Council Tax Support (£5.8m), these are indicative budget figures that net off to zero to show the gross expenditure and income.

The Housing Benefit element (£38.5m) is in the main funded by the Government's Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) through the Housing Benefit Subsidy grant system but also through the recovery of overpayments from claimants by Hertsmere. Housing Benefit is cost neutral in the budget and is not funded through Council Tax.

The Council Tax support element (£5.8m) represents the amount of Council Tax Support (or Council Tax discount) that has been awarded by Hertsmere Borough Council, as the Collection Authority, on behalf of all precepting bodies including Hertfordshire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire, Parish Councils and Hertsmere Borough Council.

The Council Tax Support system came into being from April 2013 replacing the old Council Tax Benefit system that had been fully funded through a specific government grant. However, under the new system this funding was rolled in as part of the general government grant awarded through the annual financial settlement. At the time the level of funding was however reduced by 10% and local authorities were required to devise their own local scheme, thereby passing the risk of Council Tax Support on to the Local Authority and hence the local taxpayer.

The breakdown of properties by band is shown in the table below:

Council Tax	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
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Band									
Potters Bar	68	375	1,302	2,764	3,211	1,131	662	47	9,560
Hertsmere	667	3,956	6,953	14,360	8,797	4,378	4,504	1,074	43,689

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Cheshire SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545700
Website: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Please include the above reference number on all correspondence related to this request.

Thank you for your request.