

2024-25

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Foreword

I am proud to present the council's 2024/25 budget, which focuses on the things that local people tell us are important to them, their families and our community.

Through the effective management of council finances, we are able to invest in our young people and older citizens, in new and improved public services, and continue to support those hit hardest by the cost of living crisis.

We know that waste services continue to be a huge concern so we're investing £5m to clean up the borough, with an extra 72 frontline workers, new vehicles and support to help increase our recycling rates.

Our ground-breaking investment in free school meals will continue for all pupils up to 16, providing a daily healthy nutritious meal, and a financial lifeline for hard pressed families.

We will be delivering further council and government funding into transforming youth services, and even more young people will benefit from £750,000 for the extension of the education maintenance allowance (EMA) and £1.2m university bursaries schemes.

As we have done with our housing services, we are bringing our leisure services back under full council control, with almost £250,000 investment to give free swimming and aquatic sessions for women and girls over 16, as well as men over 55. We are determined to ensure that our older citizens are supported to lead happy and

healthy lives, and are pleased that a variety of new funding measures will mean more residents will get extra help and support for their additional needs.

Working closely with a range of partners we have seen the completion of some fantastic new housing schemes, including much needed family sized and accessible homes. Our clear focus remains on exploring all options open to help more families in desperate housing need find a permanent home they can feel safe and secure in.

In the year 2023/24 the council froze its portion of council tax outside of the adult social care precept. This year the council has agreed a 2% adult social care precept to help directly fund our support for older residents. In addition a 2.99% rise in the council's element of council tax will be offset for many households by a new Council Tax Cost of Living Relief Fund. The new fund will mean that those with household incomes of less than £49,500 will not need to pay the increase, whilst our established council tax reduction scheme will also continue.

You can read in more detail within this booklet about how we are addressing your priorities, and allocating precious council resources to make the most of every penny we spend on your behalf

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Lutfur Rahman'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

Lutfur Rahman

Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets

Council tax for 2024-25

In the year 2023/24 the council froze its portion of council tax outside of the adult social care precept.

The council is increasing its portion of council tax this year by 2.99%. This represents a £34.29 increase in Band D Council Tax and generates £3.9m to support running the Council's services.

There will be an adult social care precept of 2%. This precept represents a £22.94 increase in Band D Council Tax and generates £2.6m towards funding adult social care costs.

The budget prioritises protection for vulnerable children and adults, as well as investment in community safety, waste services, housing, leisure and public health. We expect that Tower Hamlets will continue to have the sixth lowest council tax rates in London.

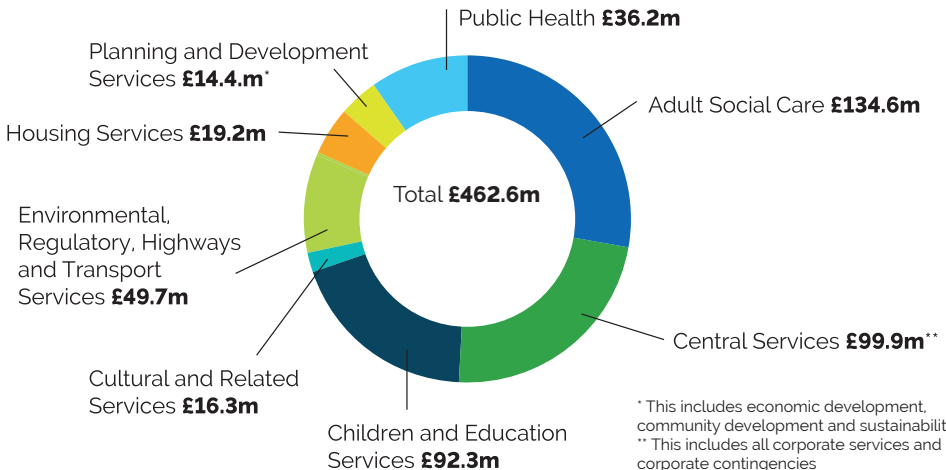
The Mayor of London has increased the Greater London Authority (GLA) element of Council Tax by 8.6%, a Band D increase of £37.26. The overall increase to Council Tax bills for a Band D property will be £94.49 in 2024-25.

The 2.99% rise in the council's element of council tax will be offset for many households by a new Council Tax Cost of Living Relief Fund so those with household incomes of less than £49,500 will not need to pay the increase. Details on how to apply for the new fund will be publicised in the coming weeks. Our established council tax reduction scheme will also continue.

আপনি এই পৃষ্ঠার বাংলা অনুবাদ পেতে চাইলে ইমেল করুন:
communications@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Hadaad Rabto aad hesho safxadan (page kan) oo af Somaliya fadlan lasoo Xidhiidh:
communications@towerhamlets.gov.uk

How the 2024/25 budget will be spent



Plans for the future

– our new budget includes

£5m

72 new frontline staff & waste vehicles to clean up the borough



£2.3m

ongoing funding for 40 more Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers (THEOs)



4,000

on target with partners to deliver 4,000 new homes by 2026



£20m

capital investment in a new adult care home



£1.95m

expanding the Mayor's Education Maintenance Allowances & university bursaries



Up to 100%

council tax reductions and a new cost of living council tax relief fund



£248k

free swimming for women and girls over 16 and men over 55



£1.5m

supporting our community with a new drug misuse treatment centre



£1.4m

new women's resource centre with health, education and employment support



£15m

capital investment for a world-class institute of academic excellence



Addressing your **priorities**

Tackling the cost of living crisis

The council has continued to support struggling households as the cost of living crisis shows few signs of easing. During the winter months we set up our warm hubs at some of our libraries and Idea Stores, providing hot drinks, snacks and staff on hand to provide advice if needed.

The Community Cupboard is a new project, based at our Children and Family Centres, and set up with the government's Household Support Fund. It provides free everyday essentials like nappies, wipes, toothpaste, bodywash and handwash to those who have been referred to the service.



We also produced an updated version of our popular Cost of Living booklet which contains a comprehensive directory of organisations to support residents with issues ranging from mental health, employment, debt management to tips on staying warm.

Our Cost of Living Help campaign is here to help and provides essential information and advice in one place at www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/costofliving. We encourage residents to use the online benefits calculator to see if they are missing out on any financial support.

Homes for the future

The council and partners are committed to delivering **4,000** homes by 2026.

We have just given the green light for the Harriott, Apsley & Pattison Houses Regeneration Scheme to build **400** new homes and a community centre in Stepney Green. The scheme aims to create more homes for social rent, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour through innovative design.

We have also delivered over **50** new properties with environmentally friendly features, community hall and a play area in Barnsley Street. The development comprises three blocks of flats, including five accessible homes.

The council has also been successful in adapting current council stock for larger families. Chris Braithwaite House in Limehouse ranges from five to eight storeys and comprises **17** one, two, three, and four-bedroom flats for social rent. Improvements to the wider Locksley Estate, includes a new children's play area, improved lighting and new trees and planting.



One of the biggest changes the council implemented in the last year was bringing Tower Hamlets Homes in-house to achieve more accountability, and joined-up services that support residents.

This means repairs, maintenance, improvements, caretaking, gardening, and rent and service charge collections will be handled by the council.

Accelerate education

This has been a key focus and our young people did an impressive job this summer securing excellent GCSE and A level results.

We continue to support all young people to achieve their full potential including extended funding for our EMA (education maintenance allowances) and university bursaries. There will also be a **£15m** investment to create a world class A level institution to send local children to Oxbridge, Russell Group and world class universities.

Our fully rolled out universal free school meals scheme means that **38,000** youngsters benefit from a hot, nutritious meal – shown to help with attention and attainment, and providing a financial lifeline for families.

Young people will also benefit from refurbished youth centres. The council has been awarded a grant of **£488k** to renovate youth centres across the borough.

The council has invested **£13.7m** to rebrand and expand its youth service, Young Tower Hamlets, to provide a diverse programme of free opportunities and support for young people aged 11-19 (25 with SEND).

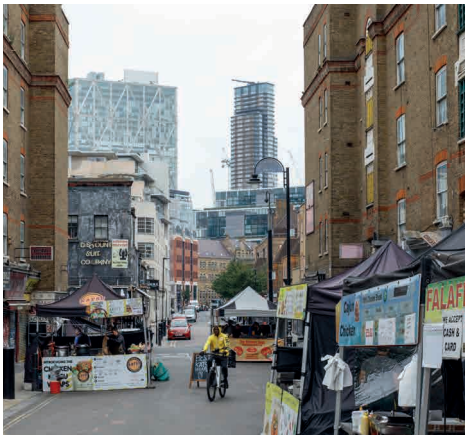


Supporting culture, business, jobs and leisure

The council is:

- Investing **£248,000** a year to provide free swimming and aquatic sessions for women and girls over 16 and men aged over 55.
- Promoting the borough as a place to visit, work and invest in including a civic pride campaign.
- Bringing local leisure services under council control.

The council is pleased to support the Petticoat Lane Food Court which recently won the Best Small Speciality Market Award at The Great British Market Awards 2024. The market was commended for its vibrant atmosphere, support for emerging talents, innovative approaches to community engagement – and of course its tasty food!



Investing in public services

The council now has five Residents' Hubs where you can pop in to get face to face advice and support on a range of issues – visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/residentshubs to find the locations.

So far more than **18,000** residents have visited the hubs and are benefiting from the council's new approach to customer service where you have the choice to access services how you want – digitally, in person or over the phone.

We are also investing:

- **£1.4m** to create a Women's Resource Centre to provide health, education and employment advice for local women.
- Investment in a Somali Resource Hub for the growing Somali population.
- **£1.5m** for a Drug Misuse Treatment Centre.
- **£20m** in an Adult Care Home designed to promote independent living.

Empower communities and fight crime

We are taking firm action against all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and improving safety and continue to campaign and raise awareness of gender-based violence.

We also launched our trailblazing #Dontcrosstheline campaign against harassment and misogyny on nights out in partnership with Hackney Council and the City of London Corporation.

We are working hard with our partners including Met Police and British Transport Police to crack down on crime throughout our borough. From April 2023 to December 2023, our partnership taskforce with the police carried out **560** stop and searches, seized **52** vehicles, carried out **60** nitrous oxide seizures, and gave out **155** anti-social behaviour warnings. They also arrested **126** people, including **46** for a variety of drugs supply and possession offences.



There is ongoing **£4.4m** investment in community safety, including **£1.6m** extra investment in policing and **£2.3m** to recruit more Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers (THEOs).



A cleaner and greener future

The council is investing **£5m** into our waste service to clean up the borough, including recruiting an additional **72** frontline workers. This investment will mean additional drivers, sweepers and loaders, alongside new vehicles to tackle the waste emergency declared by the council. There will also be extra support for residents including a campaign to help increase the borough's recycling rates.

We will be installing more than **2,200** new electric vehicle chargers over the next two years, with a mix of charging point types including **45** rapid chargers.

The decision is part of ensuring that Tower Hamlets is ready for the future and has the proper infrastructure to support cleaner, greener travelling as the number of electric cars on the roads continues to increase.

Tower Hamlets Council is required by law to collect money for other organisations through the council tax. We cannot influence how much they charge. More details on who is charging you and what services they provide is included below.

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Introduction

The Mayor of London's budget for the 2024-25 financial year sets out his priorities, including supporting Londoners through the current cost-of-living crisis. The budget also supports job creation and London's business community, our city's future growth and economic success and the Mayor's work to continue building a safer, fairer and greener London for everyone.

This year's budget will provide resources to improve the key public services Londoners need and help address the cost-of-living crisis. This includes extending the Mayor's universal free school meals programme for all state primary school children for a further academic year until at least July 2025, freezing TfL pay as you go and other

non-government regulated fares for the next twelve months and delivering more genuinely affordable homes. The budget also provides resources to support jobs and growth, fund skills and retraining programmes, help rough sleepers off the streets, invest in services for children and young people and make London a fairer and greener place to live. Moreover, it prioritises resources for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and London Fire Brigade (LFB) to keep Londoners safe, including violence reduction initiatives, support for victims of crime, funding to maintain frontline officer numbers, continued reform of the MPS and the delivery of projects to divert vulnerable young people away from gangs and violence.

In light of the conditions imposed as a

Band D Council Tax	2023-24	Change	2024-25
	£	£	£
MOPAC (Metropolitan Police)	292.13	13.00	305.13
LFC (London Fire Brigade)	62.48	4.26	66.74
GLA	22.44	0	22.44
Transport Services	57.09	20.00	77.09
Total	434.14	37.26	471.40

result of government funding deals, it has been necessary to provide additional resources through local taxation income, including council tax, to maintain London's transport system and preserve and expand the bus network.

Council tax for GLA services

The Greater London Authority's (GLA) share of the council tax for a typical Band D property has been increased by £37.26 (or 72p per week) to £471.40. The additional income from this increase in council tax will fund the MPS and the LFB, and will also go towards ensuring existing public transport services in London can be maintained, meeting requirements set by the government in funding agreements. Council taxpayers in the City of London, which has its own police force, will pay £166.27.

Investing in frontline services

This budget will enable the Mayor to fulfil his key priorities for London. These include:

- > Freezing TfL fares (excluding central government regulated fares such as travelcards) in 2024 with off-peak fares being introduced on Fridays all day for an initial three month trial period between March and May 2024
- > Working with London boroughs to maintain existing concessionary travel and assisted door to door transport schemes. This includes, for example, maintaining free bus and tram travel for under 18s as well as free off-peak travel across the network for older Londoners (supplemented by free travel before 9am on Fridays for those aged 60+ for an initial three month trial period from March to May 2024), the disabled, armed forces personnel in uniform and eligible armed services veterans and protecting the Taxicard and Dial-a-Ride schemes.
- > Providing £140 million to continue to fund universal free school meals for London's estimated 287,000 state primary school children for a second academic year until at least July 2025. This will save families up to £1,000 over two years per child as the cost-of-living crisis continues to hit
- > Ensuring the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has the resources it needs to tackle violent crime by investing an additional £151 million in 2024-25 in policing and crime prevention. This includes investing an extra £6.5 million in London's Violence Reduction Unit to divert young people away from gangs and crime. More generally an additional £189 million is being invested to deliver reform of the MPS, including through the New Met for London programme to increase trust and confidence amongst Londoners in their police service
- > Funding 1,300 additional police officer posts and 500 extra Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) from locally raised council tax and business rates revenues. This budget will see MPS receiving a record £1.143 billion in funding from the GLA

- > Tackling the underlying causes of crime through the rollout of funding to support disadvantaged young Londoners to access positive opportunities and constructive activities that allow them to make the most of their potential, as well as resources for new violence reduction initiatives
- > Protecting vulnerable children and women at risk of abuse and domestic violence
- > Providing resources to rollout a transformation programme so that the London Fire Brigade (LFB) can implement the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and other key improvements. The London Fire Commissioner, with the full support of the Mayor, is also committed to continuing to implement the deep-rooted reform needed to the culture and systems within the LFB
- > Continuing the Hopper bus fare, which makes transport more affordable for millions of Londoners
- > Delivering the Elizabeth line on its full timetable and route. The Elizabeth line has increased central London's rail capacity by ten per cent and is forecast to see upwards of 200 million passenger journeys per annum making it the busiest rail line in the UK. This follows on from the opening of Northern line extension to Nine Elms and Battersea Power Station in September 2021
- > Continuing to tackle London's housing crisis, by investing £6.4 billion over the next five years to increase the number of Londoners who have a safe, decent and affordable home as well as allocating resources to tackle homelessness and reduce rough sleeping
- > Tackling the climate emergency following the expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) London-wide to tackle air pollution, which has been supported by a £210 million vehicle scrappage scheme for small businesses and Londoners to help them switch to cleaner vehicles or retrofit their existing ones
- > Investing in projects to enable more walking and cycling across London and
- > Funding projects to bring Londoners together, promote arts, sports and culture, help tackle inequality and improve the environment.

Summary of the GLA Group budget

The following tables compare the GLA Group's planned spending for 2024-25 with last year and sets out why it has changed.

The GLA's planned gross expenditure is higher this year. This reflects the additional resources the Mayor is investing in policing, the fire brigade and transport services. Overall, the council tax requirement has increased because of the extra resources for the MPS and the LFB and to secure funding to maintain existing transport services including buses and the tube network. There has been a 1.4 per cent increase in London's residential property taxbase. Find out more about our budget at: www.london.gov.uk/budget

How the GLA budget is funded (£m)	2024-25
Gross expenditure	17,480.4
Government grants and retained business rates	-7,433.2
Fares, charges and other income	-8,130.3
Change in reserves	-426.6
Amount met by council taxpayers	1,490.3

Changes in spending (£m)	2024-25
2023-24 council tax requirement	1,353.1
Net change in service expenditure and income	485.3
Change in use of reserves	43.7
Government grants and retained business rates	-272.3
Other changes	-119.5
Amount met by council taxpayers	1,490.3

The Environment Agency

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 5,200 kilometres

of main river and along tidal and sea defences in the area of the Thames 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:

Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee	2023-24 000s	2024-25 000s
Gross expenditure	£140,213	£157,319
Levies raised	£12,526	£12,776
Total Council Tax Base	5,297	5,365

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 1.99%. The total Local Levy raised has increased from £12,526,341 in 2023-24 to £12,775,615 for 2024-25.

London Pension Fund Authority

The London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA) raises a levy each year to meet expenditure on premature retirement compensation and outstanding personnel matters for which LPFA is responsible and cannot charge to the pension fund. These payments relate to former employees of the Greater London Council (GLC), the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) and the London Residuary Body (LRB).

For 2024-25, the income to be raised by levies is set out below. The Greater London levy is payable in all boroughs, the Inner London levy only in Inner London Boroughs (including the City of London). The figures show the total to be raised.

From 2022 onwards, a portion of the amount previously raised as levies is being paid into the LPFA Pension Fund to address a funding deficit in respect of former GLC, ILEA, and LRB employees.

Inner London	£7,000,000
Greater London	£1,000,000
Total	£8,000,000

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

Lee Valley Regional Park is a unique leisure, sports and environmental destination for all residents of London, Essex and Hertfordshire. The 26 mile long, 10,000 acre Park, much of it formerly derelict land, is partly funded by a levy on the council tax. This year there has been a 3% increase in this levy. Find out more about hundreds of great days out, world class sports venues and award winning parklands at www.visitlee valley.org.uk

Budget/Levy 2024-2025	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m
Authority Operating Expenditure	15.5	15.3
Authority Operating Income	(7.3)	(7.8)
Net Service Operating Costs	8.2	7.5
Financing Costs - Debt servicing/repayments	2.0	2.2
Financing Costs - Capital investment	0.9	1.3
Total Net Expenditure	11.1	11.0
Net Use of Reserve	(0.5)	(0.0)
Total Levy	(10.6)	(11.0)

Further details on how this budget is spent and the amount each council contributes can be found at www.leevalleypark.org.uk

How to contact us

We want you to be able to access services quickly and easily online, whilst on the go or in the comfort of your home.

The easiest way to access council services is to go online. This includes parking, council tax, housing applications, housing benefits and more. Visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/contactus

You can also

- Call **020 7364 5000**
- Download the **Find it, Fix it app** via App Store or Google Play

Find out more

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- www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/signup

Follow us on social media

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-  towerhamletscouncil

If you do not have the facilities to go online from home or you would like support, please visit one of our Idea Stores. Staff are on hand to help you with using our online services.

Residents who cannot access services online or need additional help with complex issues can make an appointment to visit the Residents' Hub based at the new Town Hall, 160 Whitechapel Road, E1 1BJ or call **020 7364 5055**. Further details on each of the five hubs in the borough at www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/residentshub

If you require the information in this booklet in an alternative format or language or for help or advice on claiming council tax support call **020 7364 5000**.

**Tower Hamlets town hall is now located at:
160 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ**

