

Councillor Grace Williams
Leader of Waltham Forest Council



March 2023

Dear resident,

The rise in inflation and the wider cost of living crisis has affected us all and increased demand on Council services that support residents struggling financially. We are making sure we put the right support in place including extending free school meals, supporting food banks and increasing financial support.

Since 2010, real terms central government funding has gone down by almost half, forcing us to make £120 million in savings during a time when the needs of the borough have continued to rise.

As with most councils, we have the stark reality of either raising Council Tax or slashing services and support at a time of desperate need for many. To protect vital services, Council Tax will increase by a total of 5.96 per cent from April 2023. For the average family in Waltham Forest in a Band C property, that means an extra £1.98 per week. This is a 2.99 per cent rise in basic Council Tax, alongside a 2 per cent increase to fund Adult Social Care that can only be used to support vulnerable people with complex health or care needs. The Mayor of London has also increased his part of Council Tax by 9.74 per cent, which will mean an increase of £34.26 for a Band C property.

We want a brighter future for Waltham Forest, which is why we are working hard to bring extra funding in to create jobs, opportunities and improve infrastructure.

In the past few weeks alone, we have received £14 million in Levelling Up Funding, to add to the £9 million provided by our Community Infrastructure Levy.

In total, investment from the proceeds of growth will be £553 million over the next five years, bringing improvements to resident's local neighbourhoods.

We are delivering on our promises, building 1,000 new council homes for residents. We're also opening new youth, family and hubs, whilst also investing in the first new lido in the borough since 1936.

We have also been listening to residents' concerns around our roads, community safety and the climate emergency, which is why we have put an extra £5 million into 2,000 new energy-efficient streetlights, with 300 of them fitted with EV charging points, and filling potholes across the borough.

From September, all primary school children will receive free school meals, through funding from the Mayor of London.

Our approach has been to do all we can to help our residents weather the cost of living crisis whilst never forgetting that we will need to work in partnership with you to build a better future for us all.

Our new focus on 15-minute neighbourhoods means we will shape each area across the borough in partnership with residents, so that each place has everything needed for people to thrive, to get around easy, and to feel safe, building on its unique character and history.

We know this rise is not welcome news, but it is the only choice in current circumstances to prevent cuts to the services you care about. We must continue to invest at the same time as taking action to ensure people struggling have someone to turn to in their moment of need.

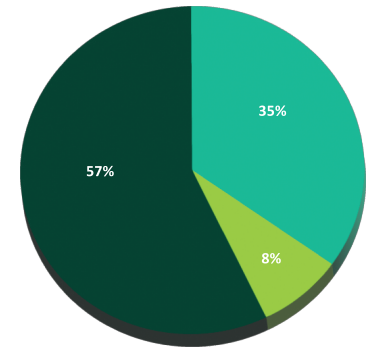
Thank you for your understanding and continuing to make Waltham Forest a great place to live.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Grace Williams
Leader of Waltham Forest Council

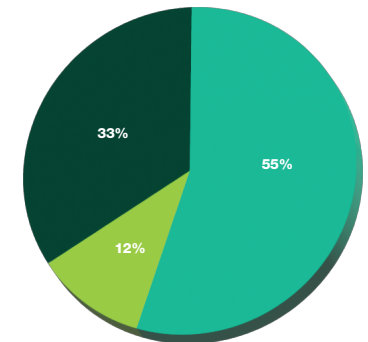
Email: Leader@walthamforest.gov.uk

Waltham Forest Funding 2013/14



Local Council Tax	35%
Local Business Rates	8%
Government Grants	57%

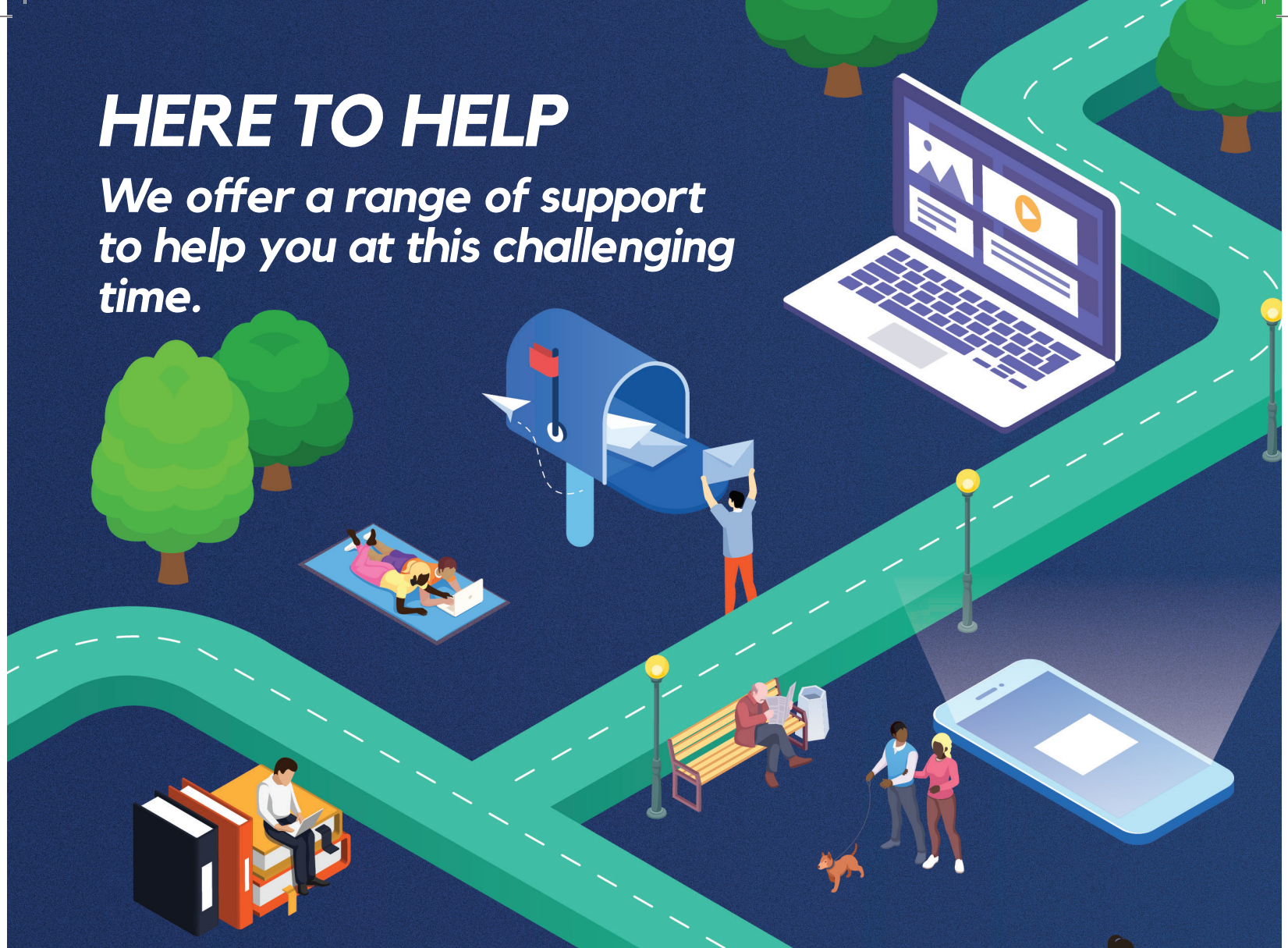
Waltham Forest Funding 2023/24



Local Council Tax	55%
Local Business Rates	12%
Government Grants	33%

HERE TO HELP

We offer a range of support to help you at this challenging time.



Discretionary Housing Payment

A scheme that can offer additional support with rent payments for residents receiving Housing Benefit or getting help with housing costs through Universal Credit.

Discretionary Council Tax Hardship Scheme

For those experiencing financial difficulty beyond their control. This financial support can be awarded in addition to Council Tax Support and also help residents in temporary financial crisis who are not receiving Council Tax Support. Find out more and apply online.

Council Tax Support

This financial support helps individuals and families on low incomes to pay their Council Tax bill by reducing the amount they have to pay. Applicants of working age can get a reduction worth up to 85% of their bill and those of pension age up to 100% of their bill depending on their circumstances.

Local Welfare Assistance

Help for you or your family if you are in severe financial hardship and cannot afford basic essentials

Wider cost of living support

We are supporting our residents with the cost of living crisis, including financial aid, warm spaces and meal vouchers.



To get more support to pay your council tax, please visit:
www.walthamforest.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport