



Our budget and your council tax

Increased funding for vital day-to-day services, sound financial management, and intelligent investments to improve our county are at the heart of the County Council's budget for 2022/23.

The 2022/23 budget directly supports [Our Council Plan](#), which sets out how money should be spent and performance measured.

New investments include:

- increased day-to-day funding for adults and children's social care
- an extra £10m investment in climate change to support the Council's carbon net zero strategy
- £2.6m boost for highways across the county.



The budget for the year ahead has been carefully balanced to meet the needs of our county in these ongoing uncertain times while taking positive steps for years to come.

The agreed budget means council tax will rise by 2.99%. This includes a 1.99% general increase, plus an additional 1% dedicated for adult social care.

[More info about our budget](#)

West Sussex stands with Ukraine



West Sussex stands in solidarity with Ukraine and our thoughts and prayers are with those affected by the conflict in the country.

At a meeting of the County Council on Monday this week there was unanimous cross-party agreement among councillors representing communities across West Sussex for the unflinching support for the people of Ukraine.

Chairman Councillor Pete Bradbury is writing to the Ukrainian ambassador to the UK to express the County Council's support, and we will soon be flying the Ukrainian flag at County Hall in Chichester.

If you would like to help, we encourage you to take a look at the national and international aid organisations who are running appeals to support people caught up in the conflict. The [Disasters Emergency Committee](#), [British Red Cross](#) and [UNICEF](#) have information on their websites, including how to donate safely.

You can find the latest information for [support for family members of British nationals in Ukraine, and Ukrainian nationals in Ukraine and the UK](#) on the gov.uk website.

For Ukrainians seeking refuge in the UK, the County Council's Resettlement Team is ready with our local and national partners to welcome and support families and individuals, and we await further guidance from the government on its plans.

We'll be updating the [refugee resettlement pages of our website](#) as more information becomes available. You'll also find here more about the team's ongoing work to support refugees who've arrived in West Sussex from across the world, and how you can help.

[More information](#)

Covid-19 update



Covid-19 restrictions across England were lifted last week.

Further national changes will be taking effect soon, including the removal of free access to universal symptomatic and asymptomatic testing from 1 April 2022.

In its plan [Living with Covid-19](#), the government has said it will update guidance on the ongoing steps people with Covid-19 should take to minimise contact with others.

We'll help share this information once it's published.

In the meantime, there are many easy and simple things we can all continue to do to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 and other infectious diseases:

- [Get vaccinated](#)
- Let fresh air in if meeting people indoors, or meet outside
- Wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces, especially where you come into contact with people you do not usually meet, when rates of transmission are high
- Try to stay at home if you are unwell
- Take a test if you have Covid-19 symptoms and stay at home and avoid contact with other people if you test positive
- Wash your hands and follow advice to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'.

Case rates are coming down across West Sussex. In the seven days to February 24th, there were 4,365 new cases reported. Our rates are, however, still above those for both England and the South East region. Visit our [data dashboard](#) to find out more.

[More local information on Covid-19](#)

National No Smoking Day - 9 March

It's never too late to quit and next week's National No Smoking Day is the perfect opportunity to join the millions of smokers looking to do so.



Over recent years smoking rates have gradually fallen, but it's estimated that approximately 70,000 West Sussex residents still smoke, and a recent study found that smoking rates among young adults in England have increased during the pandemic.

Stopping smoking is the single most important thing you can do to improve your health and the health of the people around you. And, if you have professional support from a stop smoking advisor, you are three times more likely to be a successful quitter compared to trying alone.

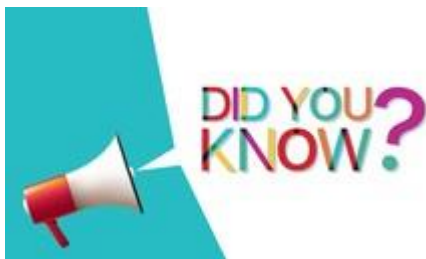
For details of the local support available to help you stop smoking, visit our West Sussex Wellbeing website below.

If you used to smoke and want to share your journey to quitting, please do. Share your story with us on Twitter [@WSCCNews](#) or on Facebook [@WestSussexCC](#) using the hashtag #NoSmokingDay22.

Local help to quit smoking

More news

- Almost nine out of ten children in West Sussex [have again been given their first preference secondary school for this September](#). All 9,280 pupils who applied for secondary school have been offered a place in a West Sussex school, with 97.4% offered one of their three preferences.
- Proposals to make [the neonatal service at St Richard's Hospital in Chichester into a Special Care Unit](#) will be discussed at the next meeting of the County Council's Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee on Monday (7 March).



March is [Wellbeing Month at our West Sussex Libraries](#) – celebrating all the ways that books, reading and local libraries can help people stay healthy and well. When was the last time you visited one of our libraries?

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