

Council Tax

2025/26



www.bexley.gov.uk



The best way to report, apply, and pay for services is on our website.

Search our website for all our services including Housing, Waste Services, School Admissions and Blue badges.

To make an appointment, please visit the service page on the website.

Council Tax or Housing Benefit

Call **0345 302 2317**

Cost of living help and advice

www.bexley.gov.uk/cost-of-living

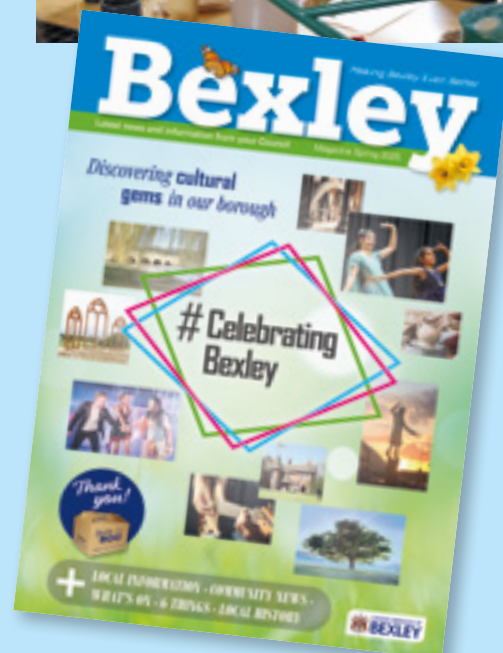
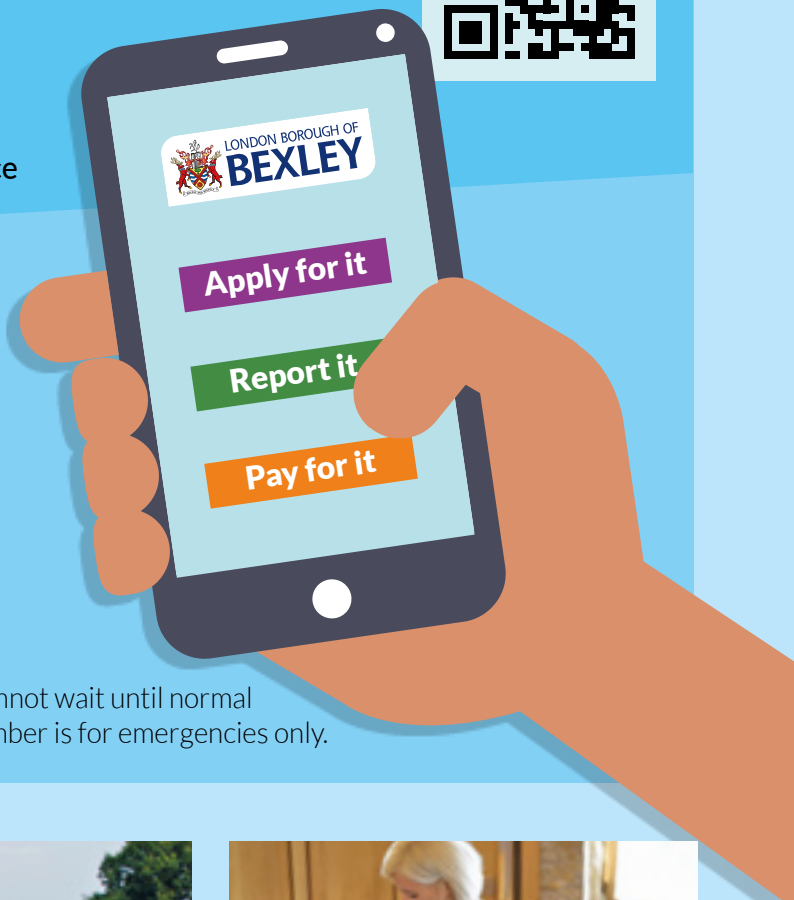
Safeguarding

If you have concerns about the safety of a child call **020 3045 5440**

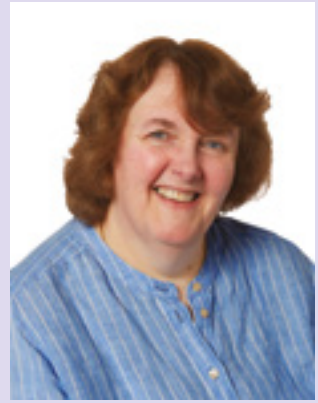
If you have concerns about the safety of an adult call **020 3045 5159**

Out of Hours

If you need urgent assistance and your emergency cannot wait until normal office hours call **020 8303 7171**. Please note this number is for emergencies only.



Message from the Leader of the Council



Council staff deliver vital services to more than 250,000 residents in our Borough, including the social care services that account for most of our spending.

We understand that many residents are under pressure due to the cost of living. As always, we continue to work hard to ensure we spend your money sensibly.

In the past year, for example, we have introduced a new bin collection look-up tool online, collected 99.9% of bins correctly out of a million bins per month, set up more than 100 new electric charge points in residential streets across the borough, invested £1 million in supporting foster carers, set up a new Care Finder platform for adults and supported many residents facing challenges posed by the cost of living.

Your Council Tax goes towards paying for services we all depend on, but much of our budget comes from Central Government funding. However, the way this is allocated is outdated. As an Outer London Borough, our population is growing but our allocation has not kept pace with increasing demands and costs.

We work hard to keep our spending within our means despite the challenges. In contrast to some councils, we have set a balanced budget for the year ahead. We will be investing more than:

- ▶ **£500m** in day-to-day services in 2025/26, including:
 - **£91 million** to provide social care for around 5,500 children and young people and education provision (excluding schools)
 - **£135 million** to support around 8,700 adults through social care
- ▶ **£262 million** over four years through the Capital Programme, including £86m in 2025/26 Capital Programme projects such as:
 - **Over £1.8m** to support street properties for adult social care
 - **Nearly £9m** for school special education needs provision
 - **£0.86m** for school capital maintenance
 - **Over £0.98m** for the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points
 - Funding for playgrounds, potholes, highways repairs, Erith regeneration, road resurfacing, new homes and affordable homes through BexleyCo and the procurement of a modern new CCTV system.

In total, we will be spending an average of about £1.4m per day.

The Council is not the only organisation providing public services in the Borough that are partly funded from your Council Tax. This booklet sets out where the money to pay for Council and other local services comes from and how it is spent.

Additional hurdles arise next year, including the Government's decision to increase employers' National Insurance Contributions, which could cost the Council many millions of pounds of additional expenditure over the medium term.

Whatever challenges we face, we will always aim to do the best for our Borough and the people who live here. We will lobby for fairer funding from Central Government and continue to work hard to provide the best possible value for your money on the services you value and to support those who need it most.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teresa O'Neill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Councillor Baroness O'Neill of Bexley OBE
Leader of the Council

Council Tax for 2025/26

Bexley's Council Tax requirement will result in a Council Tax for band D property with two residents of £2,258.03 in 2025/26

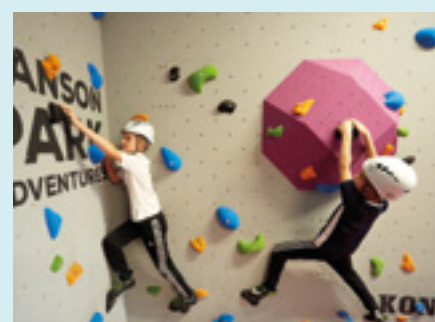
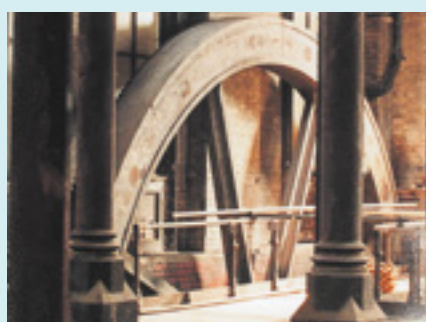
A comparison of Bexley's and the Greater London Authority's Council Tax for 2025/26 with last year is shown in the table below:

Taxing Authority	2024/25	2025/26	Change
London Borough of Bexley	£1,683.64	£1,767.65	4.99%
Greater London Authority	£471.40	£490.38	4.03%
Total Tax at Band D	£2,155.04	£2,258.03	4.78%

Valuation Band	Range of Values	2024/25	2025/26
A	Up to and including £40,000	£1,436.69	£1,505.35
B	£40,001 - £52,000	£1,676.14	£1,756.25
C	£52,001 - £68,000	£1,915.59	£2,007.13
D	£68,001 - £88,000	£2,155.04	£2,258.03
E	£88,001 - £120,000	£2,633.94	£2,759.81
F	£120,001 - £160,000	£3,112.84	£3,261.60
G	£160,001 - £320,000	£3,591.73	£3,763.38
H	More than £320,000	£4,310.08	£4,516.06

Bexley's Budget and Council Tax Requirement

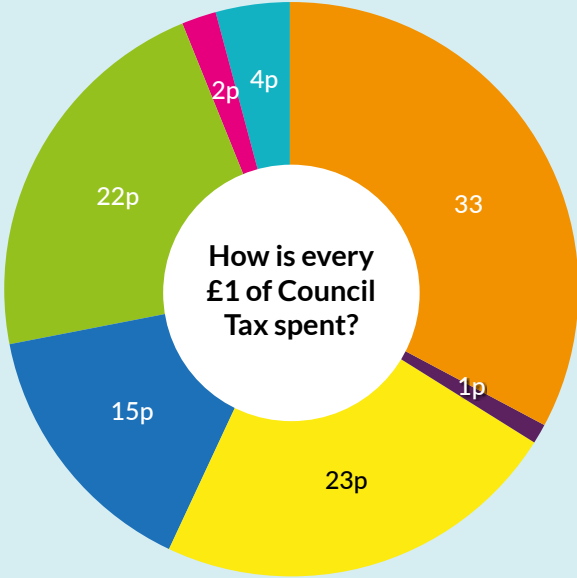
	2024/25			2025/26		
	Spending £m	Income £m	Net Spending £m	Spending £m	Income £m	Net Spending £m
Adult Social Care and Public Health	109.049	(38.164)	70.885	128.701	(52.294)	76.407
Chief Executive's Office	4.850	(0.113)	4.737	4.649	(0.044)	4.605
Children and Education	62.631	(13.822)	48.809	82.950	(26.115)	56.835
Finance and Corporate	95.030	(67.590)	27.440	98.119	(67.553)	30.566
Place	80.207	(38.201)	42.006	84.044	(38.751)	45.293
Schools DSG	105.717	(105.717)	0.000	127.319	(127.319)	0.000
Spending on Services	457.484	(263.607)	193.877	525.782	(312.076)	213.706
London-wide payments and levies			7.254			8.111
Net Financing Costs			12.462			12.962
Contingency Provision			2.700			2.700
Centrally Held			21.151			21.253
Net Spending to be Financed			237.444			258.732
Income from Business Rates and Revenue Support Grant			(53.152)			(60.163)
Other Core Grants			(34.511)			(44.353)
Use of Reserves			0.100			(1.600)
Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit						1.700
Contribution from Voluntary Minimum Revenue Provision			(8.469)			(3.697)
Amount to be met from the Council Tax			141.412			150.619
Taxbase			83,991.9			85,208.8
Bexley Council Tax			1,683.64			1,767.65



What we spend

The Council has a good track record for financial management and efficiency, making year-on-year savings to keep costs down and improve services.

Over the last 15 years we have saved £146m. In 2025/26, the Council is expecting to raise £151m from Council Tax income and here is how we expect to spend the money.



- Adult Social Care and Public Health
- Children and Education
- Chief Executive's Office
- Finance and Corporate
- Places, Communities and Infrastructure
- Levies
- Financing Costs and Contingency

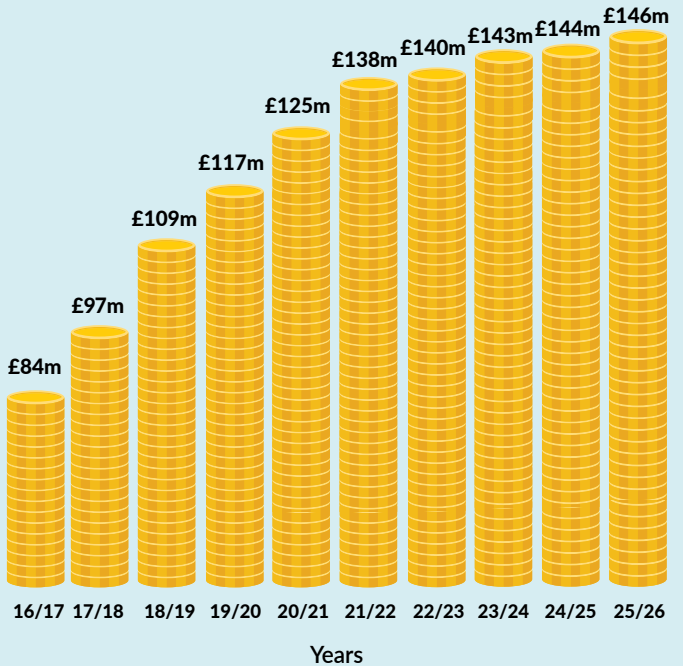


Changes since last year

	£m
Net increase in Spending on Services	18.129
Demographic increases and Inflation	0.102
Increase in Net Financing Costs	0.500
Increase in contribution from voluntary MRP	4.772
Decrease in Contingency	0.000
Collection Fund Surplus/ Deficit	1.700
Income from Business Rates	(7.011)
Increase in Other Core Grants	(9.842)
Increase in Council Tax Revenue	9.207

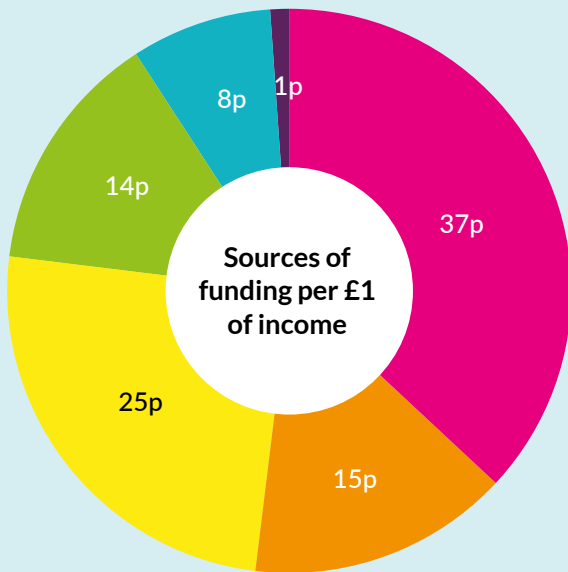
What we have saved

The Council has a good track record for financial management.



How is it paid for?

Council Tax is just one of the Council's sources of income.



- Council Tax
- Business Rates & Revenue Support Grant
- Government & Other Grants
- Fees, Charges and Rents
- Other Income
- Contribution from Voluntary Minimum Revenue Provision

Adult Social Care

Adult social care is one of the main services provided by the Council. Councils nationwide are facing substantial cost pressures in providing adult social care services. This is due to:

- increasing numbers of people requiring care
- the rising cost of providing care
- Government funding for councils remaining constrained



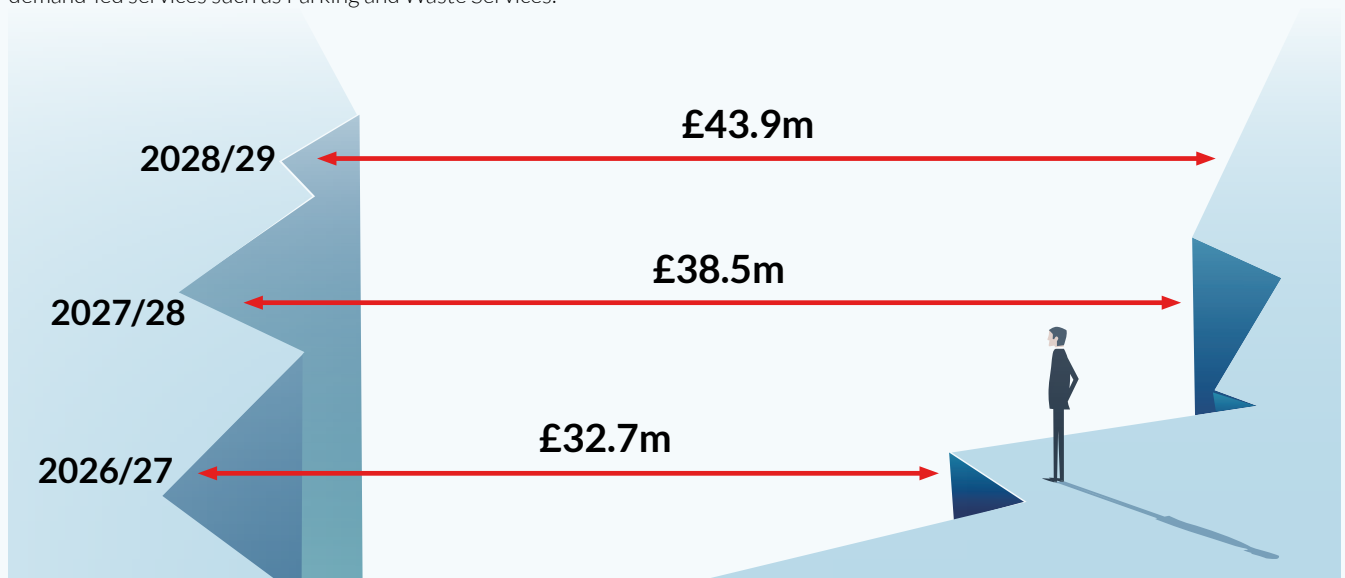
To help fund these pressures, the Government expects councils responsible for providing adult social care services to have an adult social care precept. The introduction of an adult social care precept was originally announced as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2015 and has continued each subsequent year. The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2025/26 allows local authorities with adult social care responsibilities to raise Council Tax above the referendum limit via an increase in the adult social care precept of 2%.

It should be noted that the precept just funds some of the pressures in adult social care. A large amount of all the council tax the Council receives is also used to fund adult social care. Further sources of funding which are used to help provide adult social care include business rates and Government grants.

The future budget gap

The Council has set a balanced budget for the 2025/26 financial year, however there are many challenges ahead. The forecasted budget gap is set to reach £43.893m by 2028/29 due to rising costs, pressures and demands on services and ongoing economic uncertainty. There continues to be increasing spending pressures in a number of key services, including both Children and Adult Social Care, Special Education Needs Transport, Emergency Accommodation and other demand-led services such as Parking and Waste Services.

Uncertainty around the state of the economy over the next few years will also have an impact. Energy prices, inflation and interest rates have a direct impact on the Council, the amount we pay for services and the income we are able to collect. Our challenge is to continue to provide good quality and affordable public services, while balancing our income and spending levels in the current challenging circumstances.



Environment Agency

The Council Tax (Demand Notices) (England) Regulations 2011.

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.

Environment Agency Southern Region

The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood and coastal erosion risk management for 3540 kilometres of main river and along tidal and sea defences in the area of the Southern 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:

Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee		
	2024/2025 '000s	2025/2026 '000s
Gross Expenditure	£114,288	£112,978
Levies Raised	£1,642	£1,691
Total Council Tax Base	1,935	1,966

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 3.0%

The total Local Levy raised has increased from £1,642,087 in 2024/2025 to £1,691,349 for 2025/2026.

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.

Environment Agency Thames Region

The Environment Agency has powers in respect of flood and coastal erosion risk management for 5200 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		
	2024/2025 '000s	2025/2026 '000s
Gross Expenditure	£154,702	£126,785
Levies Raised	£12,776	£13,030
Total Council Tax Base	5,365	5,453

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 £12,775,615 in 2024/2025 to £13,029,850 for 2025/2026.

Help with your finances, bills and Council Tax

We know these are challenging and difficult times for many families and households and some face uncertainty and hardship. Help and advice is available and if you are experiencing difficulties or worried about your finances there are ways that the Council and organisations we work with can help.


If you are on a low income and having problems paying your Council Tax, you can apply for the Council Tax reduction scheme.

Anyone of working age is required to pay a minimum of the first 25% of their Council Tax bill, although pensioners will still be able to receive maximum support.

If you think you may qualify for help with paying your Council Tax then you can claim online at www.bexley.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport

If you wish to spread your payments over 12 instalments instead of 10 please contact us as soon as you receive the new Council Tax bill.

If you wish to seek financial advice from an independent body there are a number of organisations who can provide advice such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Christians Against Poverty, New Community Debt Advice Service, Step Change Debt Charity and Shelter. Further details are available on the Council's website www.bexley.gov.uk/benefits-and-financial-help

The credit union is a not for profit financial co-operative that is open to residents and fully supported by the Council. Members can make regular savings and take out small loans. More information can be found at: www.gbcreditunion.com or by ringing 020 8855 4344

Introduction

The Mayor of London's budget for 2025-26 sets out how he will fund his plans to continue building a fairer, safer, and greener London for everyone and provides resources to improve key public services in the capital. The budget ensures investment to tackle crime, build more affordable homes, reduce street homelessness, improve our transport network, and ensure London remains a world-leader in tackling air pollution and the climate crisis.

The budget prioritises resources for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and London Fire Brigade (LFB) to keep Londoners safe. This includes resources for violence reduction initiatives, support for victims of crime, additional funding for frontline police officers, continued reform of the MPS and the delivery of projects to divert vulnerable young people away from gangs and violence. It also confirms funding to continue Universal Free School Meals in London's state primary schools for a further academic year until July 2026.

Council tax for GLA services

The GLA's share of the council tax for a typical Band D property has been increased by £18.98 (or 37p per week) to £490.38. The additional income from this increase in council tax will fund the MPS and the LFB. Council taxpayers in the City of London, which has its own police force, will pay £171.25.

Band D Council Tax (£)	2024/25	Change	2025/26
MOPAC (Metropolitan Police)	305.13	14.00	319.13
LFC (London Fire Brigade)	66.74	4.98	71.72
GLA	22.44	0.00	22.44
Transport for London	77.09	0.00	77.09
Total	471.40	18.98	490.38

Investing in frontline services

This budget will enable the Mayor to continue fulfilling his key priorities for London. This includes:

- 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, the disabled, armed forces personnel in uniform and eligible armed services veterans and protecting the Taxi card and Dial-a-Ride schemes
- Providing £147.5 million to continue to fund universal free school meals for London's estimated 287,000 state primary school children for a third academic year. By July 2026 it is estimated that this programme will have saved London families up to £1,500 per child since its introduction in September 2023
- Ensuring the MPS has the resources it needs to tackle violent crime by investing additional resources in front line policing and crime prevention. The Mayor has doubled investment in policing to help tackle crime, including recurring funding for 1,300 additional police officers funded from council tax and business rates income. While the Mayor provides MOPAC and the MPS with as much funding as possible, the impact of significant real-terms national government cuts over the last 14 years has left the MPS in a difficult financial position
- 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. The Mayor has funded more than 500,000 positive opportunities to help divert vulnerable young Londoners away from crime – including through London's Violence Reduction Unit

- Providing resources to roll out a transformation programme to support the LFB in implementing the recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and other key improvements. The LFB now responds to emergencies faster and is rated as outstanding in how it responds to major and multi-agency incidents
- Freezing bus and tram fares in 2025 and retaining the one-hour Hopper fare thus making transport more affordable for millions of Londoners. The Superloop network will also be expanded
- Building on the success of 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 saw over 500,000 passenger journeys between its opening date in 2022 and early 2025. This has made it the busiest rail line in the UK. This follows on from the opening of the Northern line extension to Nine Elms and Battersea Power Station in September 2021
- Rolling out new trains on the Piccadilly line, with the first new trains serving customers from 2025 and upgrading the signalling on the District and Metropolitan lines
- Continuing to improve accessibility across TfL's network, increasing the availability of step-free access and toilets. In 2025-26, TfL will increase investment in step-free schemes to make progress towards its goal of halving step-free journey times across the network, as well as its target of making 50 per cent of London Underground stations fully accessible. All 41 Elizabeth line stations are now step-free
- Continuing to tackle London's housing crisis, by investing £1.5 billion in 2025-26 to increase the number of Londoners who have a safe, decent and affordable home. The Mayor will also allocate resources to tackle homelessness and reduce rough sleeping
- Investing in schemes designed to make walking, cycling and public transport safer, cleaner and more appealing in partnership with London boroughs.

Summary of the GLA Group budget

The following tables compare the GLA Group's planned spending for 2025-26 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 and the fire brigade. Overall, the council tax requirement has also increased for this reason. There has been a 2 per cent increase in London's residential property taxbase.

Find out more about our budget at: www.london.gov.uk/budget.

How the GLA's budget is funded (£ million)	2025/26
Gross expenditure	17,961.6
Government grants and retained business rates	-7,676.0
Fares, charges and other income	-8,312.4
Change in reserves	-391.3
Amount met by council taxpayers	1,581.9

Changes in spending (£ million)	2025/26
2024-25 council tax requirement	1,490.3
Net change in service expenditure and income	348.8
Change in use of reserves	53.4
Government grants and retained business rates	-327.2
Other changes	16.6
Amount met by council taxpayers	1,581.9



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