

# Have Your Say

## Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation 2025/26

Like the vast majority of local authorities, Brent is facing an extremely challenging financial situation. On top of £222m in cuts made since 2010, a further £16m must be saved in 2025/26 to balance the budget.

This means that we are having to explore potential changes to Brent's Council Tax Support scheme, to bring it more into line with other London boroughs while ensuring that our limited resources are targeted at the people most in need.

The proposed changes only affect working-age households. Pensioners are exempt and their current scheme, which can cover up to 100% of their Council Tax bill, will not change.

### **Residents are invited to share their views on the proposed options.**

Option 1 - Making changes to the current scheme from April 2025

- Every household (apart from pensioners) will need to pay something towards their Council Tax bill (a minimum of 35%) with reduced levels of support across all incomes. Support will still be available for the borough's most vulnerable residents, including those with exceptional circumstances.
- To introduce two flat-rate deductions to Council Tax Support for households with non-dependents (£8 per week deduction for non-dependents who are "out of work and £20 per week deduction for non-dependents who are "in work") to replace the current system of varying rates based on income.
- To limit backdating of new Council Tax Support claims to one month, in line with Housing Benefit and Universal Credit.

Option 2 - Keeping the current scheme

Make no changes and keep the current Council Tax Support scheme in place. This would require finding £5million in savings from other council services. The council needs to save £16million by 2025/26 to balance the budget, and leaving the scheme unchanged will require more severe cuts in other vital service areas. A draft budget outlining the full suite of proposed savings will be published on [www.brent.gov.uk](http://www.brent.gov.uk) in November 2024.

The consultation is now live and will run until **Sunday 15 December 2024.**

To take part and share your views, please visit:

[www.bit.ly/council-tax-support-scheme](http://www.bit.ly/council-tax-support-scheme)

or scan the QR code on below:



The Council will be holding a number of face to face drop-in sessions over the next few weeks, please look out for further details on our website.

A list of frequently asked questions can be found at: [www.bit.ly/council-tax-support-scheme](http://www.bit.ly/council-tax-support-scheme).

If you would like further information or to request a paper copy of the consultation, please email [cts\\_consultation@brent.gov.uk](mailto:cts_consultation@brent.gov.uk).

### **What happens next?**

Once the consultation closes, all responses will be thoroughly reviewed and analysed. The feedback will help shape the final decision on the scheme, which will take effect in the 2025/26 financial year.

The results will be published at: [www.brent.gov.uk](http://www.brent.gov.uk)

It's important for us to hear residents' views and we encourage you to share your feedback during the consultation.