



# COUNCIL TAX & BUDGET INFORMATION 2024/25



**Bedfordshire**  
Fire & Rescue Service



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 WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE

 WE DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

 EVERY CONTACT COUNTS

 WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK

# INTRODUCTION

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service delivers a first class and effective prevention, protection and response service to the people of Bedfordshire through our highly trained and well-equipped personnel, giving you an outstanding fire and rescue service. Our focus until 2027, as stated in our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), is on the following **six priorities**;



## PREVENTING

... fires and other emergencies from happening.



## PROTECTING

... people and property when fires happen.



## RESPONDING

... to fires and other emergencies promptly and effectively.



## EMPOWERING

... our people as we work together to make Bedfordshire safer.



## UTILISING

... our assets and resources efficiently and effectively.



## MAXIMISING

... the use of data and digital solutions to drive improvements.

### Emergency Incidents:

During the last full year period (2022/23), Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service responded to a total of 7,780 emergency incidents across the county.

These incidents comprised various categories:

**Fires:** A total of 2,131 fires were attended to by our dedicated teams. Among these, 758 were identified as having been deliberately started.

**False alarms:** There were 2,794 incidents classified as false alarms, with 95 of these deemed malicious in nature. Additionally, we received 53 hoax calls that did not warrant attendance.

**Other non-fire incidents:** Our teams also responded to 2,855 non-fire incidents, including 435 road traffic collisions, 194 flooding incidents, and 86 animal rescue incidents. Moreover, we provided assistance in various capacities to other agencies such as the police and ambulance services, highlighting our commitment to collaborative emergency response efforts.

### Preventive measures:

In addition to our emergency response efforts, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service remains dedicated to proactive measures aimed at preventing emergencies and safeguarding the community:

**Home Fire Safety Visits:** Our teams conducted 8,142 home fire safety visits during the reporting period, reaching out to residents to assess and mitigate fire risks. As part of these visits, 4,215 10-year battery smoke alarms were installed to enhance the safety of households across the region.

**Fire Safety Audits and Inspections:** A total of 2,811 fire safety audits and inspections were carried out, ensuring that local businesses and establishments adhere to fire safety regulations and standards. These efforts are essential in promoting fire prevention and mitigating risks in various settings.

### Conclusion:

The year 2022/23 presented diverse challenges for Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, with our teams demonstrating unwavering dedication and professionalism in responding to emergencies and promoting fire safety within the community.

As we continue to evolve and adapt to emerging risks, we remain committed to our mission of protecting lives and property through proactive measures and effective emergency response.

# IN NUMBERS


 **7780**  
emergency incidents attended

 **2131**  
fires attended

 **435**  
road traffic collisions


 **194**  
flooding incidents

 **86**  
animal rescue incidents


 **5169** other special incidents  
(including assistance to other agencies, medical incidents, etc.)

 **758**  
deliberate fires

 **95**  
malicious false alarms

 **53**  
hoax calls (not attended)

 **8142**  
Home Fire Safety Visits

 **2811**  
fire safety audits and inspections



Our firefighters do more than just fight fires. They also visit schools and community events to share safety advice. We collaborate with the ambulance service to support the most vulnerable people when they need assistance. We check fire hydrants to make sure they work and aren't blocked by parked vehicles.

We also visit vulnerable people's homes to provide safety advice and install equipment like smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. We talk about health, wellbeing, and preventing crime. If needed, we connect people with other agencies for further support.



Our dedicated support teams persistently strive for the optimal use of resources, maintaining financial balance, and guaranteeing the effective upkeep of our firefighting equipment. Ensuring good health and safety practices, they communicate seamlessly, both internally and with our valued council taxpayers. Collaborating with our blue light partners remains a cornerstone for enhanced services at a reasonable cost.

For just £2.17 a week (for a Band D property), Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service stands committed to providing a continuous, year-round emergency service. This funding enables us to respond swiftly to incidents, manage risks efficiently, and decrease the number of emergency callouts. Our commitment to the development of our colleagues ensures a secure, fair, and supportive work environment for everyone.

The recent decision by Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority, approved on Tuesday, 13 February involves a 2.99 per cent increase in the council tax precept. This translates to a modest £3.27 per year for a Band D property, essential for balancing the budget amid unprecedented financial challenges. This increase, coupled with substantial efficiency savings and judicious use of reserves, underscores our commitment to fiscal responsibility.



**Cllr Jacqui Burnett**

Chair, Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacqui Burnett'.



**Andrew Hopkinson**

Chief Fire Officer, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Hopkinson'.

# REVENUE BUDGET

Our revenue budget delineates the necessary funds for the day-to-day operations of the Service. The recent increase in this year's council tax, amounting to £3.27, equates to just over 6 pence per week for a Band D household.

This year, the Authority has observed a modest rise in Government grant, amounting to £174k compared to the previous year (2023/24). However, the impact of inflation is forecasted to escalate our operational costs by £1.387m.

# CAPITAL BUDGET

Our capital programme outlines investments in essential assets such as fire stations and fire engines. Annually, the Authority devises a rolling four-year plan for capital projects. The projected capital expenditure for this fiscal year amounts to £1.149m, primarily funded by contributions from the revenue budget.

Projects for this year include:

- Investment in our Computers/Technology
- Investment in the modernisation of our buildings

# EFFICIENCY SAVINGS

An efficiency saving occurs when the cost of an activity is reduced but its quality and effectiveness remains the same or improves. The coming years will see the Service transform and make unprecedented efficiency savings. We need to find savings of £1.35 million to balance our budget in the next three years – but we also will need to invest to build solid foundations to ensure we keep pace with the growth across Bedfordshire and the evolving demands on the fire and rescue service.

We will see great transformation in how we provide key services as we drive forward our invest-to-save agenda, whilst protecting frontline services as we work together to make Bedfordshire safer.

The Fire and Rescue Authority continues to focus on finding new ways to deliver the highest quality services at the lowest possible cost.

Some of the key areas where the Authority has been achieving its planned efficiency savings include:

 **Total achieved and planned savings and efficiencies between 2010/11 and 2023/24 total nearly £8m, with further savings and efficiencies planned between now and 2027/28.**

- 💧 Savings in managerial and support staff costs through shared service arrangements, organisational restructure and improvements to working systems.
- 💧 Savings to the public through collaborative work.
- 💧 Procurement savings from new contracts.
- 💧 Income generation.

## AUDIT JUDGEMENT ON VALUE FOR MONEY

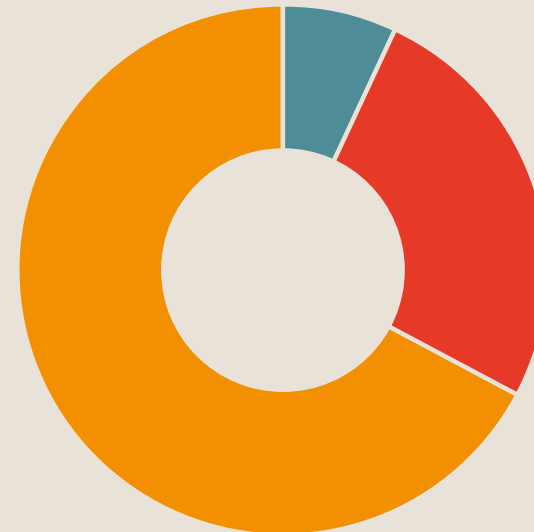
In the most recent Annual External Audit Letter from Ernst & Young on the 2021/22 accounts, the Fire and Rescue Authority was awarded an 'unqualified conclusion', meaning that we were judged to have satisfactory arrangements in place in all areas. We are yet to receive the audit opinion for 2022/23 due to a delay in the audit of our accounts.



# FINANCIAL CHARTS

## Where does the money come from?

	2024/25 (£m)	2023/24 (£m)
<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>43.1</b>	37.6
● Income	-3.3	-2.7
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>39.8</b>	34.9
● Central & Local Government Funding	<b>13.6</b>	9.9
● Council Tax	<b>26.2</b>	25.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>34.9</b>



**61% COUNCIL TAX**  
**31% CENTRAL & LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING**  
**8% INCOME**

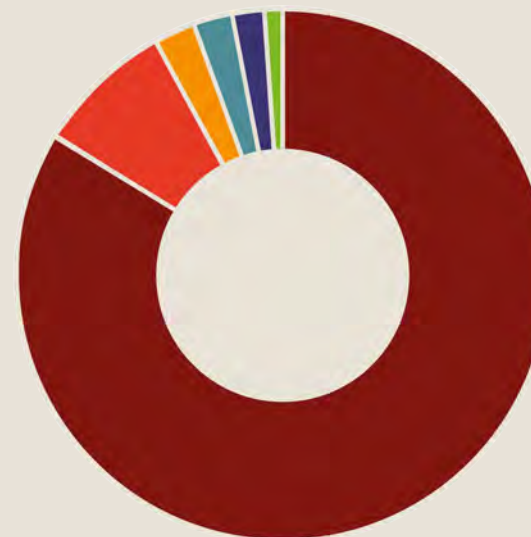
## What the money is spent on

	2024/25 (£m)	2023/24 (£m)
● Employees	32.9	29.4
● Premises	1.1	0.9
● Transport	0.8	0.7
● Supplies & Services	3.4	3.2
● Agency & Contracted Services	0.6	0.5
● Capital Financing	1.0	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>37.0</b>
<b>Reserves Funding</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-2.1</b>
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>34.9</b>

The Band D council tax for 2024/25 will be **£112.72**. The Fire and Rescue Authority has agreed on a budget requirement of £39.829 million for 2024/25.

## Council Tax Per Band

Valuation Band	Council Tax for 2024/25
A	£75.15
B	£87.67
C	£100.20
D	£112.72
E	£137.77
F	£162.82
G	£187.87
H	£225.44



**83% EMPLOYEES**  
**8.5% SUPPLIES & SERVICES**  
**2.5% CAPITAL FUNDING**  
**2.5% PREMISES**  
**2% TRANSPORT**  
**1.5% AGENCY & CONTRACTED SERVICES**






# Bedfordshire

## Fire & Rescue Service


## CONNECT WITH BFRS

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 [bedsfire.gov.uk](https://bedsfire.gov.uk)

   @bedsfire

 contact [BFRS](#)

 **BFRS Headquarters**, Southfields Road, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7NR



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