

Council Tax Base Setting 2026/27

Council Tax Base Calculation



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 make arrangements for the setting of the Council Tax. The arrangements include the determination of the Council Tax Base. A Council resolution is necessary. The decision must be notified to the major precept authorities.
- 1.2 For the year commencing 1 April 2026, the major precept authorities will be Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority.
- 1.3 The Council must determine its Council Tax Base for 2026/27 during the period 1 December 2025 to 31 January 2026. The Council Tax Base is the measure of the taxable capacity of an area, for the purpose of calculating an authority's Council Tax. It represents the estimated number of Band D equivalent chargeable dwellings for the year. It also takes into account the authority's estimated Council Tax collection rate. The level of Council Tax subsequently set must be determined using the Council Tax Base figure. The Council Tax Base calculation is attached in Appendix B.
- 1.4 The calculation of the Council Tax Base allows for discounts under the Council Tax Support Scheme.

2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to propose to Council the Council Tax Base of 76,887. The Council Tax Base for 2025/26 was 76,557, an increase of 330.
- 2.2 The Tax Base calculation reflects the impact of the Council Tax Support Scheme, including any agreed changes to the scheme for the coming year. These adjustments ensure that the Tax Base accurately accounts for the level of support provided to eligible households.

3. TAX BASE CALCULATIONS

- 3.1 Council Tax Base figures are calculated by the billing authority as the aggregate of the "relevant amounts" calculated for each property valuation band multiplied by the estimated "collection rate" for the year.
- 3.2 Relevant amounts are:
 - (a) The number of chargeable dwellings in that band shown in the valuation list as at 10 September 2025 (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) return – Council Tax Base (CTB));
 - (b) The number of premiums, discounts, disabled reductions and exemptions which apply to those dwellings;
 - (c) Estimated changes in the number of chargeable properties between 10 September 2025 and 31 March 2027;
 - (d) Impact of the Council Tax Support Scheme;
 - (e) The number of Band D equivalents within each different band.
- 3.3 The collection rate is the billing authority's estimate of the total amounts of 2026/27 Council Tax which will ultimately be paid or transferred into the Collection Fund.

- 3.4 This report assumes a collection rate for Council Tax of 97.5%. This rate reflects recent arrears collection performance, the pattern of write offs and the impact of Universal Credit. Analysis of collection rates across the age profile of debts suggests that an eventual collection rate of 97.5% is realistic and prudent in the current economic climate.
- 3.5 Appendix C shows the tax base used for the previous three years for comparison.
- 3.6 There are assumption in the tax base for growth, but the actual increase on the previous year's tax base was limited. The total number of dwellings in the valuation list as at 10 September 2025 was 123,424 compared to 123,273 in the valuation list as at September 2024. This represents a small increase of 151 dwellings on the previous year. There is a risk that this may impact on the Council Tax surplus/deficit position at the end of 2026/27.

4. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

- 4.1 Plymouth City Council provide a local assistance schemes known as Council Tax Support and a discretionary Exceptional Hardship Scheme. The main Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme requires all working age claimants to make a minimum 20% contribution towards their Council Tax bill. All local authorities administer the same Council Tax Support scheme for Pension Age council tax payers under regulations prescribed by central government.
- 4.2 Plymouth operates an income banded working age CTS scheme. The amount of support awarded is based on the composition of the household and the income band in which the household income falls. Those on a basic qualifying benefit, known as a passported benefit, and those who receive a war pension or war disablement benefit receive a maximum 80% towards their Council Tax.
- 4.3 CTS continues to provide vital support for many households in the city who have low incomes. It is expected that the caseload and scheme cost within 2026/27 can be funded within the available financial envelope.
- 4.4 All councils are required to annually review their local CTS schemes. Plymouth has reviewed the CTS scheme during 2025 to consider changes that could provide more financial support to families with children. To make these changes the current systems need to be developed to ensure a revised scheme can be administered, prior to any public consultation that would need to be undertaken. In light of these circumstances, Plymouth has decided not to make any changes to the scheme for 2026/27.
- 4.5 It is worth noting that just under 20% of all households in Plymouth are now in receipt of this support, a proportion that has remained broadly stable for several years. The increase in the total cost of the Council Tax Support Scheme (set out below) reflects annual Council Tax uplifts rather than growth in claimant numbers.

	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
Total Council Support	16.971	16.981	18.935	20.181	21.535	22.145

Council Tax Base Calculation Table 2026/27

[illegible]

APPENDIX C

C. Council Tax Base - Previous Years									
	2023/24			2024/25			2025/26		
Band	Number of properties	Estimated Collection Rate	Adjusted Band D Equivalent	Number of properties	Estimated Collection Rate	Adjusted Band D Equivalent	Number of properties	Estimated Collection Rate	Adjusted Band D Equivalent
A	48,050	97.5%	19,508	48,156	97.5%	19,681	48,103	97.5%	20,078
B	33,261	97.5%	19,664	33,322	97.5%	19,776	33,380	97.5%	20,098
C	23,575	97.5%	17,420	23,641	97.5%	17,526	23,673	97.5%	17,701
D	10,213	97.5%	8,551	10,278	97.5%	8,567	10,305	97.5%	8,695
E	5,186	97.5%	5,578	5,206	97.5%	5,616	5,238	97.5%	5,707
F	1,859	97.5%	2,456	1,877	97.5%	2,477	1,894	97.5%	2,525
G	614	97.5%	862	618	97.5%	869	624	97.5%	903
H	55	97.5%	42	55	97.5%	45	56	97.5%	47
Total	122,813		74,081	123,153		74,557	123,273		75,753
MOD			810			832			804
Tax Base			74,891			75,389			76,557