

## Priorities and Budget 2026-27: Survey

Many thanks for your interest in completing our Priorities and Budget 2026-27 survey.

Once you have completed the survey, please return it to our Customer Service Centre in person or via post at the following address:

**Communications Team, Customer Service Centre, Mandela House, 4 Regent Street, Cambridge, CB2 1BY.**

**The survey closes on Sunday 16 November 2025.** Any responses received after this date will not be considered.

If you are in need of any further assistance, please email us at [communications@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:communications@cambridge.gov.uk).

Or call our Customer Service Centre and ask for the Communications Team on 01223 457000 (open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5.15pm).

### Background information

Cambridge City Council is setting its General Fund budget for 2026-27. It uses the budget setting process to decide how much to invest in each of its services to best meet the needs of the City's residents, communities, economy, environment and nature in accordance with council's vision and strategic objectives.

To meet its statutory duty to balance the budget, the council will need to make recurring savings of £0.75m in 2026/27 and a further £0.75m in 2027/28.

This consultation is asking for your views on how the council should prioritise its spending for the 2026/27 budget year and beyond.

Rising demand for services and historic public sector austerity means the City Council, like many councils, faces increasing financial pressures on its revenue budgets. Between 2016 and 2022, the previous government reduced the City Council's core spending power by 17%.

At this time, Cambridge was also experiencing the fastest population growth in England. As a result, in 2025/26 we have £6.7 million less to spend than we would have done had our funding kept pace with inflation.

In the face of this pressure, we have invested to improve the economy, efficiency and effectiveness on how the council is managed and its services are designed and delivered.

The savings made along with a review of fees and charges enabled the council to set a budget for 2025/26 that will deliver savings of £4.9 million every year. The City Council is delivering this saving without large cuts to frontline service council services whilst accommodating some unavoidable revenue pressures.

The council is committed to continuous improvement in service outcomes and fulfilling its duty to balance the budget. The council is setting a target to save £1.5 million per year by 2027/28 towards a 5 year forecast savings requirement of £3.6m.

### **Where the council's money comes from**

The council will spend approximately £113.4 million on delivering services in Cambridge in 2025/26. The council's money comes from various sources including fees for services, business rates, government grants and council tax.

In 2025/26, the Council Tax for a band D property in Cambridge is £2,355.41 per year of which Cambridge City Council keeps £232.13. The council tax makes up just 9% of the City Council's income.

You can find out more about where the city council's money comes from and how council tax is distributed on our website.

### **Council homes**

In addition to the income above, the council is also landlord to more than 7,500 council homes. The law requires that the rent paid by our tenants is kept separately to pay for housing services, such as repairs and maintenance, and cannot be spent on other council services. Similarly, it is not permitted to fund housing services from council tax. These rules ensure fairness both for council tenants and taxpayers. Those funds are not within the scope of this survey.

### **Personal data**

We will submit your input to Cambridge City Council's online participation platform. If you want to receive updates relevant to your input by email, please fill out the following fields on this page and we will create an account for you. Your data will not be public and will only be used by Cambridge City Council. If you do not agree for us to use your personal data in this way, you can leave them empty.

**First name(s)** (optional)

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**Last name** (optional)

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**Email address** (optional)

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☐ By checking this box I consent to my data being used to create an account on Cambridge City Council's participation platform.

**1. Are you responding on behalf of a business or community group? (mandatory)**

*\*Choose as many as you like*

- ☐ Business
- ☐ Community group
- ☐ None of the above

**2. What is the name of your business or community group? (optional)**

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**3. What is your postcode? (mandatory)**

We may use postcode information to invite you to take part in consultations that particularly affect your local area, such as consultations about children's play areas in your local park or community centres in your local area. We may also use it to help us to analyse the results of consultations, for example to find out what residents in a particular ward think about a particular proposal for the city. - If you are answering on behalf of a business or community group, please use the postcode connected to the business or community group.

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**4. What is your year of birth? (optional)**

We may use this information to help us to analyse the results of consultations to find out what residents in different age groups think about a proposal for the city.

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**5. Are you a student? (optional)**

*\*Only choose one option.*

- ☐ Yes - Full-time
- ☐ Yes - Part-time
- ☐ No

**6. What is your ethnic group? (optional)**

We may use information on your ethnicity to help us to carry out consultations to understand the needs of minority ethnic groups in the city. It will also help us to analyse the results of consultations to find out what residents in different ethnic groups think about a proposal for the city.

*\*Only choose one option.*

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|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Arab   | <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi                                      |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British: Chinese  | <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British: Indian   |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British: Pakistani  | <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British: Any other Asian background (please give details) |
| <input type="radio"/> Black or Black British: African  | <input type="radio"/> Black or Black British: Caribbean  |
| <input type="radio"/> Black or Black British: Any other Black background (please give details) | <input type="radio"/> Mixed: White and Asian   |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed: White and Black African   | <input type="radio"/> Mixed: White and Black Caribbean   |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed: Any other mixed background (please give details)                  | <input type="radio"/> White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British                     |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller  | <input type="radio"/> White: Irish   |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Roma  | <input type="radio"/> White: Any other White background (please give details)                  |
| <input type="radio"/> Any other ethnic group (please give details)                             |  |

**If 'Any other ethnic group (please give details)', please specify**

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**7. Do you currently have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more? (optional)**

We may use information on any disability you may have to help us to target consultations on proposals that may particularly affect residents with a disability, such as consultations on Shopmobility or accessibility of public toilets. We may also use it to help us to carry out consultations to understand the needs of disabled people in the city, or to analyse the results of consultations, for example to find out what disabled residents think about a proposal for the city.

*\*Only choose one option.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**8. What is your current total annual household income, including pay, benefits, pensions and investments? (optional)**

We may use information about your household income to help us find out what residents with different levels of incomes think about our services or facilities. We will not use the data for any other purposes.

*\*Only choose one option.*

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| <input type="radio"/> Less than £10,000    | <input type="radio"/> £10,000 to £19,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> £20,000 to £29,999   | <input type="radio"/> £30,000 to £39,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> £40,000 to £49,999   | <input type="radio"/> £50,000 to £59,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> £60,000 to £69,999   | <input type="radio"/> £70,000 to £79,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> £80,000 to £89,999   | <input type="radio"/> £90,000 to £99,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> £100,000 to £119,999 | <input type="radio"/> £120,000 or more   |

## Section 1: Council vision and priorities

The council's vision sets out our six key priorities.

- Residents enjoy a high quality of life and exemplar public services
- Decarbonisation and sustainability are central to prosperity
- Innovation benefits people and planet
- Development is sustainable and inclusive
- Arts, sports, and culture are thriving
- Democratic accountability is genuine and accessible

Visit [our vision](#) webpage for a more detailed breakdown of these priorities.

### 1. How should the council approach its six priorities moving forward?

*For each row, mark one circle with a cross to indicate your preference.*

	Spend more on this	Spend the same on this	Spend less on this
Residents enjoy a high quality of life and exemplar public services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decarbonisation and sustainability are central to prosperity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Innovation benefits people and planet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Development is sustainable and inclusive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arts, sports, and culture are thriving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Democratic accountability is genuine and accessible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- 2. Do you have any further comments to make regarding the six priorities in the council's vision? (optional)**

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## Section 2: Council services

The council delivers a wide range of services to Cambridge's residents, businesses and visitors. The questions below ask for your opinion about a selection of council services for which you make a small contribution through your council tax. Please use the matrix below to tell us whether you think we should spend more, less or about the same amount of money on each of the following services.

### Sport and Recreation

This includes the provision of leisure centres, swimming pools, tennis courts, pavilions and other sports facilities throughout the city.

Many sports and leisure facilities are funded primarily through charges to users, for example for the use of city centre swimming pools and tennis courts. There is also a small contribution from Council Taxpayers. A band D household contributes **£4.93 per year** towards this service, helping to ensure more people can utilise these facilities

### Streets and Open Spaces

This includes cleaning and maintenance of many of the city's open spaces, children's play areas, local nature reserves and public toilets, emptying bins in public spaces, street cleaning, tree planting and maintenance, and management of grazing on common land, as well as public realm enforcement.

Whilst some income is generated from car parking and property letting (e.g. kiosks), this covers only a small proportion of the amount spent. A band D household contributes **£31.36 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

### Public Safety

This includes working with communities to resolve safety and nuisance concerns, addressing anti-social behaviour and environmental enforcement as well as a 24-hour city centre CCTV service and extended nighttime street lighting.

Whilst some community safety activities are funded through specific grants, there is still a cost to taxpayers. A band D household contributes **£8.96 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

### Waste and Recycling

This includes the collection of waste and recycling from domestic premises across the city, and transfer for onward processing and disposal. The Council also operates a trade waste service where businesses can pay for the collection and disposal of waste from commercial premises – this service generates a surplus which is used to subsidise domestic collections.

A band D household contributes **£19.43 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

### Community Centres

This includes the operation and support of community centres across the city. Rooms are available for hire by the community for activities or events.

Whilst income is generated from the hire of facilities, there remains a cost to taxpayers. A band D household contributes **£8.03 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

### Community Services



This includes neighbourhood community development, preventative health, wellbeing and equalities programmes.

A band D household contributes **£15.18 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

## **Cultural Services**

This includes a programme of free cultural events throughout the city from Fireworks night, Out of the Ordinary and Music in the Parks alongside income-generating activities such as the Corn Exchange.

Many cultural events generate income from venue hire and/or ticket sales, but this does not cover the full cost of the council's cultural programme. A band D household contributes **£7.80 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

## **Grant Support**

This covers a programme of grants to support the voluntary and community organisations operating within the city, for example Citizens Advice.

A band D household contributes **£13.03 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

## **Environmental Health**

This includes a range of statutory functions including pollution control, licensing, food hygiene inspections, and enforcing private sector housing standards, with statutory nuisances such as noise.

A band D household contributes **£10.85 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

## **Housing and Homelessness**

This includes the allocation of social housing, housing advice, costs relating to the prevention and relief of homelessness including temporary accommodation costs.

The council receives central government grant to cover some, but not all, of the costs associated with homelessness. A band D household contributes **£24.22 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

## **Customer Service Centre**

The council operates a customer service centre (CSC) to deal with enquiries from residents, local businesses and visitors. The CSC is available by telephone and email Monday-Friday, and for in-person appointments Wednesday-Friday.

A Band D household contributes **£13.17 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

## **Greater Cambridge Planning Service**

The Greater Cambridge Planning Service is a shared service covering Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. It is responsible for the administration of all planning applications relating to the city and has a statutory duty to develop the shared Local Plan (a document that helps ensure community interests are protected when planning decisions are made) and for enforcement against poorly built or non-compliant development.

Whilst the service generates some of its own income (e.g. through planning application fees), it is restricted by government rules in how much it can charge for many of its services, and the income does not cover the full cost of the service and its statutory duties. A Band D household contributes **£11.05 per year** towards this service from Council Tax.

**3. How important is it for the council to spend money on these services?**

*For each row, mark one circle with a cross to indicate your preference.*

	Very important	Slightly important	Not very important	Not at all important
Public Safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sport and Recreation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Streets and Open Spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waste and Recycling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Centres	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grant Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental Health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing and Homelessness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Customer Service Centre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Greater Cambridge Planning Service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**4. Do you have any further comments to make on how we spend money on council services? (optional)**

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### Section 3: Council Tax

Council Tax forms an important component of the council's overall funding. Of the £113.4 million the council will spend on services in 2025/26, Council Tax accounts for around £10.6 million, or 9% of the council's total spend.

In 2025/26, the Council Tax for a Band D property in Cambridge is £2,355.41 per year. However, Cambridge City Council only keeps £232.13, or just under 10%. The remainder is shared between other local authorities as follows:

- Cambridgeshire County Council: £1,700.64, 72.2%
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Police: £299.43, 12.7%
- Cambridge City Council: £232.13, 9.9%
- Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service: £87.21, 3.7%
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority: £36, 1.5%
- **Total Band D Council Tax: £2,355.41, 100%**

5. **Bearing in mind Cambridge City Council's share of Council Tax of £232.13 per year, how would you rate the council as a whole in terms of value for money for Council Taxpayers?** (optional)

*\*Only choose one option.*

- |                                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Excellent  | <input type="radio"/> Good |
| <input type="radio"/> Acceptable | <input type="radio"/> Poor |
| <input type="radio"/> Very poor  |                            |