



Budgeting for your new home

If you would like this information in a different format, for example, Braille, audio tape, large print, computer disk or in another language other than English please telephone 0117 35 25327.

Introduction

Getting your own home involves taking responsibility for a number of costs over and above your rent.

If you already are a tenant, you will have a pretty good idea of what these costs are for your household ; but if you are thinking about renting out a council property for the first time, this factsheet will give you some average estimate costs that will help you decide if you can afford renting a council property.

Rent, Service Charges and Council Tax

Rent

Paying your rent is essential. We will take you to court if you do not pay your rent on time.

The charges below are some **AVERAGE weekly** rent figures for different Bristol City Council properties.

Studio flat	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
£66	£76	£87	£94	£102

If you are on low income, you may be able to apply for Housing Benefit to help you pay your rent.

Service charges

If you live in a block of flats, you may also have to pay service charges.

There are the maximum service charge that you could be paying per week:

Caretaking	CCTV	Digital TV	Comm. Aerial	Laundry
£9.84	£5.75	£0.88	£0.88	£1.63

Council Tax

You also have to pay for your Council Tax in addition to rent for general services provided by BCC (such as bin collection) or services the council has to contribute for such as Fire Services and Police.

Band A £21	Band B £25	Band C £28	Band D £32	Band E £39
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If you live in a property on your own, you may be entitled for a discount. This may also apply if you are substantially or permanently disabled. Depending on your circumstances you may be entitled to Council Tax Benefits.

To find out which band a particular property is in, go to:

<http://www.voa.gov.uk/cti/InitS.asp?lcn=0>

Water and Sewerage

Water charges are either based on the rateable value of the property or on the actual water used if there is a meter fitted. Properties without a meter are charged a fixed amount regardless of the amount of water used.

Bedsit / 1 bed £4.90	Other £6.76	Semi Detached £8.47	Detached £9.16
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Gas and Electricity Costs

You will need to light and heat your home and operate your electrical appliances. Not all our properties (especially flats) are fitted with gas. It is usually cheaper for your to use the same supplier for your gas and electricity rather than separate companies.

These are the AVERAGE figures for gas, electricity and dual fuel. However, the costs will vary according to the utility provider you choose.

Some of our properties will already be registered with SSE for your electricity and gas, but we advise that you regularly shop around to get the best price.

Gas	Yearly Cost	Monthly	Weekly
1 / 2 bed flat – single person / couple	£795	£67	£16
2 bed house / flat – single person / couple with children	£1,470	£122	£28
3 / 4 bed house – single person / couple with children	£1,931	£161	£37

Electricity	Yearly Cost	Monthly	Weekly
1 / 2 bed flat – single person / couple	£808	£67	£15
2 bed house / flat – single person / couple with children	£1,304	£109	£25
3 / 4 bed house – single person / couple with children	£2,078	£173	£40

Dual Fuel	Yearly Cost	Monthly	Weekly
1 / 2 bed flat – single person / couple	£1,017	£85	£20
2 bed house / flat – single person / couple with children	£1,573	£131	£30
3 / 4 bed house – single person / couple with children	£2,339	£195	£45

Dual fuel means that you receive your gas and electricity from the same energy supplier rather than from two different suppliers.

TV and Telephone Costs

TV Licence

Yearly Cost	Monthly Cost	Weekly Cost
£146	£12	£5.50

If you are over 75, you get a free TV licence. If you are moving, your TV licence does not automatically move with you – you'll have to make a change of address.

Satellite / Cable TV

	Yearly Cost	Monthly Cost	Cost
Satellite / Cable package	£192 - £540	£16- £45	N/A
Freeview	N/A	N/A	£18

Landline and Mobile Phone

	Yearly Cost	Monthly Cost	Quarterly Cost
BT line rental + cost of calls	£170	£15	£43

If you have a landline, you may also benefit from getting broadband to access the internet. Line rentals and cost of calls may vary between suppliers.

Food and Other Household Costs

Food

For food and other household expenses, you should allow on average:

- £25-£35 per week, per adult
- £25-£30 per week, per child

This may vary if a member of the household is on a particular diet.

School meals

If your children have school meals, you have to budget for this:

	Daily Cost	Weekly Cost
Reception, Year 1 & 2	Free	Free
Primary School	£2.25	£11.25
Secondary School	£2.50	£12.50

Children may be entitled to free school meals if their parents are in receipt of certain support benefits. Please call Bristol City Council on 0117 903 7990 or email:

free.school.meals@bristol.gov.uk

Clothing

- Allow £30 - £50 per month, per child (particularly when they are young)
- Allow £30 - £40 per month per adult

Travel

Car: If you own a car, your need to allow for the amount you spend on petrol, tax and insurance, maintenance, MOT and service.

Public Transport: the cost of buses in Bristol (First Bus) varies:

	Day Rider	Weekly Cost	Monthly Cost
Child (5-15 years)	£2	£8.50	£33
16-21 yrs & students	£2.80	£11.90	£46.20
Adult	£4	£17	£66

First Home

If it is the first time you are setting up your own home, you'll have to think about getting furniture. This is an extra cost that you also have to think about: bed, settee, fridge, curtains, cooker, table... You can ask friends for spare furniture or go to websites like Freecycle.

Based on your circumstances, you may ask if you can have a furnished tenancy ; you would have to pay a higher rent in exchange for a furniture pack. Having your own home is very exciting but also very expensive ; you need to make sure you can afford it before bidding for a property.

Working out Your Budget

Money going In	Weekly	Monthly
Wages		
JSA		
Income Support		
Incapacity Benefit		
Child Benefit		
Child Tax Credit		
Working Tax Credit		
Pension		
Pension Tax Credit		
Maintenance		
Other		
TOTAL (A)		

Money going Out	Weekly	Monthly
Rent (after Housing Benefit)		
Service charges (inc. laundry)		
Council Tax (after CT Benefit)		
Water		
Gas		
Electricity		
Home Contents Insurance		
TV Licence		
Cable / Satellite TV		
Food & other household		
Clothing		
Landline / Mobile phone		
Car insurance and Tax		
Petrol / Diesel		
Public transport		
Child Care Costs		
School meals		
Credit and store cards / loans		
Extra: going out, birthdays...		
Other		
TOTAL (B)		

What is left (disposable income) Total (A) – Total (B) =

If the result is positive, then you can probably afford a council property, based on your current circumstances.

If the figure is negative, that means that you would be paying out more than you would get in each week – meaning that you would be in debt. If that is the case, we advise you to look again at your income and expenditure and consider if you can realistically set-up your own home at present.

Financial Advice

If you need help or advice on managing your money or pay off your debts, there are a number of agencies here to help you:

- Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) 0844 994 718
- National Debtline 0808 808 4000
- PennyWise project– over 25 years 0117 970 4548
- Cashpoint project – under 25 years 0117 317 8800

Disclaimer:

Bristol City Council has taken reasonable care to ensure that the information provided is accurate. However all the figures provided are estimates and used as an illustration only. They will vary depending on your circumstances.

We will not be held responsible for any direct or indirect loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of any reliance, by any person, on any inaccuracy, error or omission within this document.

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