

SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2024/25

1. Setting the Council Tax Base

1.1 The council tax base is the link between the Council's budget and the level of council tax. The tax base will be used to calculate the council tax in Sefton, once the Council's budget has been agreed. The Council is required to calculate its own tax base as well as the tax base for each parish council within its boundary and have them approved by the 31 January 2024.

1.2 The calculation of the council tax base takes into account many factors such as the rate of new building and the trends in people living on their own (Sole Occupier Discounts).

1.3 The tax base calculation assumes a long-term collection rate of 97.25% in 2024/25, which is an increase of 0.25% from the rate assumed in 2023/24.

1.4 The Council currently applies a 100% premium on homes left empty for 2 years years or more. The Council has the option to apply this premium on homes left empty for 12 months or more from 1 April 2024. The implications of this option are considered elsewhere in this report. Two alternative tax base figures for Sefton Council and each parish area are presented below:

Option A: the premium continues to apply only after 2 years or more.

Option B: the premium is applied after 12 months or more.

2. Council Tax Base for Sefton Council in 2024/25

2.1 An analysis of the changes between the 2023/24 and the 2024/25 tax base is provided in the table below:

Tax Base for Sefton Council		Band D Equivalents		
		2023/24	2024/25	Change
H	<u>Chargeable Dwellings</u>			
	Dwellings on the Banding List	112,838.2	113,369.8	531.6
	Exempt Dwellings	-2,235.2	-2,426.9	-191.7
	Disabled Persons Reductions	-152.8	-159.7	-6.9
		110,450.2	110,783.2	333.0
Q	Discounts	-10,468.0	-10,593.4	-125.4
E	Empty Homes Premium	898.8	890.2	-8.6
J	Adjustments	-506.0	-398.6	107.4
Z	Council Tax Support Scheme	-12,070.3	-12,019.2	51.1
B	Collection Rate Adjustment	-2,649.1	-2,438.2	210.9
	MOD Properties	8.0	8.0	0.0
	Council Tax Base (Option A)	85,663.6	86,232.0	568.4

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E	Premium of 100% applied on homes left empty for 12 months from 1 April 2024.	0.0	226.9	226.9
	Council Tax Base (Option B)	85,663.6	86,458.9	795.3

2.2 The main reasons for the changes in the tax base are:

Dwellings on the Banding List: The number of properties on the Banding List has increased by 558 (+0.4%) in the year.

Exempt Dwellings (A-W): The number of dwellings subject to an exemption increased by 217 (8.0%). The largest increases were in the number of Class F exemptions (dwellings left empty by deceased persons) and Class E exemptions (an unoccupied dwelling which was previously the sole or main residence of a person who has moved into a hospital or care home).

Sole Occupier & Status Discounts: The number of dwellings receiving a 25% discount due to single occupancy has increased by 361 (+0.7%).

Empty Homes Premium: The number of dwellings left empty for more than two years has reduced by 31 (-3.7%).

Adjustments: The taxbase forecast assumes a lower level of growth in discounts and exemptions over the next year.

Council Tax Support Scheme (CTRS): The number of pension age claimants has reduced over the last 12 months.

3. Council Tax Base in Parish Areas for 2023/24

3.1 There are also new tax base figures for each parish area in 2024/25. The following tables provide details of the proposed new tax base for each parish compared to 2023/24 under both alternative options:

Tax Base for Parish Areas (Option A)	Band D Equivalents			%
	2023/24	2024/25	Change	Change
Parish of Aintree Village	2,056.7	2,073.2	16.5	0.8%
Parish of Formby	9,154.4	9,200.1	45.7	0.5%
Parish of Hightown	867.6	872.5	4.9	0.6%
Parish of Ince Blundell	173.1	173.7	0.6	0.3%
Parish of Little Altcar	434.0	449.6	15.6	3.6%
Parish of Lydiate	2,109.2	2,104.9	-4.3	-0.2%
Parish of Maghull	6,878.1	6,914.3	36.2	0.5%
Parish of Melling	1,098.0	1,117.0	19.0	1.7%
Parish of Sefton	324.7	327.2	2.5	0.8%
Parish of Thornton	778.9	771.1	-7.8	-1.0%

Tax Base for Parish Areas (Option B)	Band D Equivalents			%
	2023/24	2024/25	Change	Change
Parish of Aintree Village	2,056.7	2,079.9	23.2	1.1%
Parish of Formby	9,154.4	9,222.3	67.9	0.7%
Parish of Hightown	867.6	874.0	6.4	0.7%
Parish of Ince Blundell	173.1	174.0	0.9	0.5%
Parish of Little Altcar	434.0	450.5	16.5	3.8%
Parish of Lydiate	2,109.2	2,110.2	1.0	0.0%
Parish of Maghull	6,878.1	6,920.9	42.8	0.6%
Parish of Melling	1,098.0	1,118.2	20.2	1.8%
Parish of Sefton	324.7	327.6	2.9	0.9%
Parish of Thornton	778.9	772.5	-6.4	-0.8%

- 3.2 The tax base calculation for each of the parish areas is based on the same assumptions made in the calculation for Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 3.3 The higher percentage increases in Little Altcar and Melling parish areas are due to housing development. The reductions in Lydiate and Thornton Parish Areas are due to growth in exemptions in those areas.