



Cllr Sarah Nelmes  
Leader of the Council

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*Dear resident,*

It is a tough time for many people at the moment. I know so many of us are facing increasing pressures with rising energy costs, inflation and the overall cost of living.

If you are struggling with rising costs you can find a wealth of information on support and services available across the district on our website: **[www.threerivers.gov.uk/page/costofliving](http://www.threerivers.gov.uk/page/costofliving)**

Across the country inflationary pressures are affecting the way households, businesses and organisations work and what they can afford to do - it is the same for Three Rivers District Council.

My first priority as leader of this council is you, the residents of the district, and ensuring we continue to provide the services you value as cost effectively as possible. So we have not cut services or support in the way that some other councils have.

Unfortunately, as we rely on income to provide these, we have had to increase the council tax to cover increased costs. Even with this increase Three Rivers remains one of the lowest council tax authorities in Hertfordshire and the country. **This year we have kept the council tax increase to less than 2p per day (13p per week) for the average Band D property. That is a rise of £6.94 a year.** As you will see from your enclosed bill the vast majority of what you pay goes to Hertfordshire County Council and then the Police Authority. The Three Rivers council share is only 11p in every pound of your council tax bill. It is even less if you live in an area with a parish council.

I want you to know that it is an extremely difficult decision to ever raise council tax, and not something we take lightly but, with high inflation, especially on materials, it is not something we can cover with existing income.

**We continue to invest in our parks and open spaces such as the new facilities at Denham Way Playing Fields and South Oxhey Playing Fields as well as the award winning Leavesden Country Park, and have plans to improve the Rickmansworth Aquadrome. We have planted hundreds of trees as part of the Queen's Green Canopy and in memory of the late Queen Elizabeth II. We are continuing to fund rewilding and many other biodiversity projects including, for example, air-source heat pumps, as we aim the council towards our net-zero carbon target.**

I was delighted that our leisure centres, in partnership with Everyone Active, received an "excellent" rating from Sport England. In August, with Communities 1st, we launched a new door-to-door shopper bus service to help people with mobility issues. And we are improving more of the district's towpaths to encourage cycling and walking. These are just some of the items your money has been spent on, in addition to providing first-rate services such as our refuse and recycling – for which we are one of the top rated councils in the country.

In this time of need we do provide help and support with making your home warmer and reducing energy bills. To check your eligibility for energy efficiency grants, you can call our free Home Energy Support Service on 0800 107 0044 or visit our website for further information.

Don't forget you can keep up-to-date with all the work the council is doing throughout the year ahead by subscribing to our e-newsletters. Simply visit our website **[www.threerivers.gov.uk](http://www.threerivers.gov.uk)** or scan the code below.

*I wish you all the best for 2023,*

**Sarah Nelmes**

Councillor Sarah Nelmes  
Leader of Three Rivers District Council

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