

Budget Planning— Work out your expenditure using the table below and check it against your income.

EXPENDITURE	
Rent	£
Council Tax	£
Water	£
Gas	£
Electricity	£
TV Licence	£
Home Contents Insurance	£
Food	£
Household expenses	£
Clothing	£
Telephone	£
Satellite TV	£
Internet	£
Car insurance/tax	£
Petrol/Diesel	£
Child Care costs	£
School Meals	£
Credit card	£
Loan Repayment	£
Store card	£
Other	£
Total expenditure	£
Total income	£
Income - expenditure	£



The cost of running your home



Moving into your new home is an exciting time but it can also be an expensive one. If you have already lived in a place of your own you may know how much it can cost to run a tenancy and manage household bills.

However, if this is going to be your first home you may not be aware of all the costs involved and you will need to think carefully about how much money you will need to set up your home and pay your regular bills.

This guide aims to give you an idea of the costs that you will have to budget for and what you may need to buy when you first move in. The personal budget planner on the back page can help you work you out how much it is going to cost to run your home.

YOUR PERSONAL BUDGET

The budget planner will help you work out how much it will cost you to run your home (expenditure).

If your income is less than your expenditure you may not be able to afford to run a home.

Be careful that you do not mix up monthly and weekly amounts.

To convert monthly figures to weekly figures, use a calculator to multiply the monthly figure by 12 and divide by 52. To convert weekly figures into monthly figures multiply by 52 and divide by 12.

If you are concerned and would like some advice on how you can manage your money please contact the Debt Support Trust on **0800 085 0226** or **www.debtsupporttrust.org.uk/moneymanager**.

OTHER SPENDING

'Other spending' is made up of a mixture of things that need to be budgeted for.

This type of spending will vary from household to household but might include, haircuts, children's pocket money, existing loans, house repairs and cable, satellite and internet.

Health costs—Don't forget the cost of prescription charges, dental treatment, glasses and sight tests for the whole household. Check to see if you can get help with these expenses.

School meals and meals at work—Remember, you will save money if you take a packed lunch to work or school. On average school meals will cost around £15 per week for secondary children and £10 for primary children. If you are in receipt of certain welfare benefits your children may be eligible for free school meals.

Transport—If you own a car you need to budget for the amount you will spend on fuel, tax, insurance, MOT, maintenance and parking. If you regularly use public transport you may find a travel pass more cost effective.

Repairs and house maintenance—Don't forget routine house repairs, repairs to washing machines, maintenance contracts and so on.

Hobbies and leisure—this might include clubs, pubs, outings, sports and gym membership.



FIRST HOME?

If this is the first time you have set up your own home there are extra costs you will need to think about in addition to the on-going costs described already.



You will need to think about the cost of furnishing your home so that you have all the essential items that you need.

- ◆ Furniture
- ◆ Carpets
- ◆ Curtains
- ◆ White goods such as a fridge and/freezer and washing machine
- ◆ Cooker
- ◆ Bed clothes
- ◆ Towels kitchen utensils, cutlery and crockery
- ◆ Television

Don't be tempted to buy these items by borrowing from a doorstep lender (these are legal money lenders but they charge very high rates of interest) or a loan shark (these are illegal money lenders and should never be used).

If using high street furniture shops always check the interest rates when paying by instalments. These are often charged at high rates and you will pay far more than just the price of the goods.

You may want to consider saving with a Credit Union instead. All saving members of the Credit Union (over the age of 18) are eligible to apply for a loan from £50 to £2,000.

The Credit Union offers a cheaper alternative to borrowing from doorstep lenders or some high street shops.

RENT

Please be aware that paying your rent is a priority and must be paid on time and in advance.

If you are on a low income you may be entitled to Housing Benefit or Housing Costs. The Housing staff can help you make a claim when you sign up for a property. If you aren't sure if you will qualify for Housing Benefit or Housing Costs contact either the local neighbourhood office or complete a trial benefit calculation at www.turn2us.org.uk and click on the benefits calculator.

If you are already receiving Housing Benefit or Housing Costs it is your responsibility to ensure that the Housing Benefit Department or Universal Credit has all the correct details. If there are any delays in processing your claim please contact the Housing staff.

For information on the changes following Welfare Reform please look at our website www.stpetershousing.org.uk

There are a couple of methods of paying your rent including Direct payments from your bank account or a Rent Payment Card



UTILITIES—GAS & ELECTRICITY



The costs for gas and electricity vary widely and it is worth shopping around for the best deals.

Paying by Direct Debit and having the same supplier for gas and electricity (dual fuel) is generally the cheapest way to pay your bills, but be sure to check before you sign up. Many Energy Suppliers now offer cheaper Social Tariffs to those on low incomes so it may be worth asking if you qualify.

My Home Energy Switch offer a service to housing association tenants to help them find the cheapest energy supplier in their area. Details can be found on their website www.myhomenergyswitch.org.uk or you can call Freephone 0800 852 7660 If you are calling from a mobile phone, they will call you back. The service is completely free and will compare all energy suppliers in your area. They will even take care of the paperwork for you.

The amount you pay is not easy to estimate as the amount of energy you use is dependant on number of people in the household, tariff, method of payment, temperature preference etc.

If you are paying for gas and electricity by prepayment meter you may be paying more for your fuel than you need to be.

Please be aware that if you want to have internet access at home you will probably need to have a landline.

If you have a mobile phone you will need to budget for monthly contract costs or pay-as-you-go costs.



HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE

St Peter's (Saltley) HA does not insure your furniture, belongings or decorations against theft, fire vandalism, accidental damage and burst pipes.

If you buy insurance you are paying to protect your property just in case something goes wrong such as fire, flood or a burglary.

A home contents policy will normally include liability cover so that you are insured for claims made against you by a third party e.g. if you leave a tap running, causing water to damage another person's home and they claim compensation from you for the damage.

We would strongly advise you to take out home contents Insurance. Insurance does not have to cost very much and can be paid in one payment or fortnightly or monthly.

The National Housing Federation offers an insurance scheme for tenants called "My Home Contents Insurance" which offers affordable home contents insurance. Booklets are available at the management office or call 0845 337 2463 for further details or to take out cover.

TV LICENCE

If you have a TV then you must buy a TV Licence. It is illegal to watch or record any television programmes in your home without a licence and you could face a large fine or even imprisonment if you don't. This includes any streaming of live TV content via the internet e.g. BBC iPlayer, On-demand/catch up viewing is allowed but any live broadcast via Internet will require a licence.

It costs £159.00 per year for a colour and £53.50 for a black and white TV Licence which can be paid in one payment or instalments.

You may also be entitled to a reduced fee if you're blind, severely sight impaired, or live with someone who is blind or severely sight impaired.

You must inform the licencing authority of your new address. Contact can be made either via the website www.tvlicensing.co.uk/update, telephone on **0300 790 6131** or write to **TV Licensing, Bristol, BS98 1TL**.



WATER RATES

The charges on your bill will be for water, sewerage and surface water drainage. The water supplier for St Peter's properties is Severn Trent Water.

Customers can be charged by one of the following ways:

- Unmetered—based on the Rateable Value (RV) of the property
- Metered—based on actual water usage
- Assessed charge—based on an average usage for certain property types if a meter cannot be fitted.

Ways to pay

Severn Trent offer a range of ways to pay, including Direct Debit, by instalments at post Offices and PayPoint outlets or alternatively you may wish to use your own bank's online payment service or the "BillPay" service.

Old College House—water rates are paid directly to St Peter's.

Middle College House—some water rates are paid direct to St Peter's, others direct to Severn Trent. There is also a small drainage charge which tenants pay direct to Severn Trent.

South College House—water rates are paid direct to Severn Trent



COUNCIL TAX



Council Tax is the method by which the council collects money to pay for the services it provides and for services it has to contribute to i.e. the Police and Fire Service.

Council Tax is charged on a yearly basis and is usually collected over 10 months, however you can request it be paid over 12 months from April. The amount you pay depends on the value of your property you live in. The majority of St Peter's properties are in Band A.

The Band A charge for 2022/2023 is £1,205.50

From April 2013, Council Tax Benefit has been replaced by a local scheme of Council Tax Support. If you are on a low income, or get state benefits, the council tax support scheme may assist you in reducing your council tax bill.

Council Tax Support is capped at 80% which means that all people will have to pay at least 20% of their council tax bill.

The amount each household will pay will be dependent on their Individual circumstances. If you think you may be entitled to some help, please either go online to www.birmingham.gov.uk/benefits or visit your local Neighbourhood Office.

HOUSEKEEPING

Housekeeping covers lots of different items, including food, toiletries, cleaning materials, clothing and so on.



Make sure you include any extra costs you have because of an illness or disability. For example you might have a special diet which means you spend more on food.

TELEPHONE

If you choose to have a landline your telephone line rental will be from approximately £20 per month plus the cost of your calls. You may also have to pay a connection charge.

There are a variety of suppliers available and it is worth looking for the best deals suitable for you. If you have a PC, there are a number of web sites that can help you to compare deals.



www.uswitch.com or www.homephonechoices.co.uk