**Information for South and Vale residents about the £150 ‘rebate’ to help with energy bills**

Thousands of council taxpayers in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse will soon receive a £150 council tax ‘rebate’ to help with rising energy bills.

The government has announced that [**most households in council tax bands A-D will be eligible for the rebate**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/households-urged-to-get-ready-for-150-council-tax-rebate) however, contrary to some reports, **the ‘rebate’ will not be taken off people’s council tax bills** when they are issued.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are putting arrangements in place to make a separate payment to households as soon as possible.  Here’s how the payments will be made:

* **If a household pays their council tax by direct debit –**they should be able to receive the £150 directly into their bank account.  South and Vale are hoping to start making these payments by the end of April.
* **If a household is not on direct debit** – it will take longer to make these payments as the councils will need to write to them to confirm their bank details.

**To ensure the councils can carry out this work as quickly as possible, they are asking people not to contact them to chase the ‘rebate’ payment.**

To receive the £150 payment as quickly as possible, residents can still sign up to pay their bill by direct debit – for more information on how to do this, visit [**southoxon.gov.uk/counciltax**](http://southoxon.gov.uk/counciltax) or [**whitehorsedc.gov.uk/counciltax**](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/counciltax).

Cllr Andy Crawford, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Assets at Vale of White Horse District Council, said: “With annual council tax bills going to all households this month we know people will be keen to know what’s happening with the ‘rebate’.  There’s a lot of work involved, but I can assure everyone that we are working hard to ensure this payment can be made as quickly as possible."

Cllr Leigh Rawlins, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property Assets at South Oxfordshire District Council, said: “I know many people are concerned about rising energy costs so it’s very important that they receive this money quickly.  If you are not on direct debit, I urge you to sign up now as this will help to ensure that you’ll receive the money as soon as possible.”

Limited funding will also be made available for households in need who would not otherwise be eligible for this energy rebate. This will be a local discretionary scheme and details will be made available on the council’s website in due course.

If you are struggling to pay your council tax bill, please visit [**southoxon.gov.uk/counciltax**](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/counciltax) or [**whitehorsedc.gov.uk/counciltax**](https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/counciltax) to find out about the support available or call 0345 302 2313 (South) or 0345 302 2315 (Vale).

For advice if you are struggling to pay other bills please visit Citizens Advice website – [citizensadvice.org.uk](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/) or Vale Community Impact – [**vci.org.uk**](https://www.vci.org.uk/)

For more information, visit [**southoxon.gov.uk/counciltax**](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/counciltax) or [**whitehorsedc.gov.uk/counciltax**](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/counciltax)