# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Council Tax Reduction Scheme Annual Report 2019‑20** |
| **DATE** | **24 July 2020** |
| **BY** | **Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Trefnydd** |

Today, I am publishing the Council Tax Reduction Scheme Annual Report for 2019‑20.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed of the findings of the research. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns, I would be happy to do so.

[https://gov.wales/council-tax-reduction-scheme-annual-reports](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fgov.wales%2Fcouncil-tax-reduction-scheme-annual-reports&data=02%7C01%7CDanielle.Chamberlain%40gov.wales%7Cf2f618376df54308320e08d82e058ff9%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637309948702533246&sdata=JtW%2FayN1pbhITZuFxwqgwaFMBpTFll7Vnd3jEebhZ1o%3D&reserved=0)

Since 2013-14, the Welsh Government has continued to protect vulnerable and low‑income households across Wales by maintaining full entitlements to support with their council tax bills under our Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS).

We have continued to support the scheme with the provision of £244m in the annual local government settlement. The tailored nature of our national scheme means that this support is targeted towards those who need it most.

In 2019-20, this meant that over 275,000 vulnerable and low-income households – around one in five households – benefited from a reduction in their council tax. Of these, approximately 220,000 paid no council tax at all.

Despite our continued support for the most vulnerable households in Wales, the report suggests take-up of the CTRS gradually decreased over the course of 2019-20. Due to the timing of this report however, it does not take into account the economic impact of Covid-19, and CTRS caseload is expected to have increased in recent months.

As always, and particularly in the current uncertain and challenging circumstances, I would encourage everyone to check our website to see whether they are entitled for help with their council tax bill under our reduction scheme or one of the other discounts which are available:

<https://gov.wales/pay-less-council-tax>

I am grateful for the continued assistance of local authorities in delivering the CTRS and in helping to ensure that this important financial support reaches eligible households. I remain committed to ensuring further action is taken to mitigate the consequences for people affected by the UK Government’s welfare reforms, as well as supporting vulnerable households in response to Covid-19.

We also continue to make progress with the extensive programme of work to examine how the council tax system could be improved over the medium and longer term to deliver on our commitment to make council tax fairer. I published a progress update on this work programme on 5 November 2019. This can be accessed via the following link:

<https://gov.wales/reforming-local-government-finance-annual-updates>