

What if I am having difficulty paying rates by the due dates?

If you are unable to pay your rates due to financial hardship, you can apply to the Shire for a custom payment arrangement. The Shire offers the option of paying via a weekly, fortnightly or monthly direct debit from your bank account as long as the arrangement has the debt paid by 30 June. An administration charge per property will apply for each plan, and interest will accrue daily on the balance of the overdue account, until it is fully paid.

Should there be any reason why a payment is not expected to be made in full by its due date, then please contact the Shire's Rates Officer before the due date to discuss the matter further.

If a payment is not paid in full by its due date and a customised payment arrangement is not entered into, then that amount falls into arrears and may be recovered through a court without further notice. Costs of legal proceedings will be added to your account.

Why are my rates so different to my neighbour?

Rates are calculated based on individual property valuations. Variations in these valuations will result in different rates levied for each property. There are also other variables in service charges that might apply from one property to the next.

Who assesses the Valuations on which rates are based?

Landgate (Valuer General's Office) provides valuations for every property within the Shire – a Gross Rental Value (GRV) or an Unimproved Value (UV). A GRV revaluation occurs once every three to six years as determined by the Valuer General. Valuations for UV properties are supplied annually.

What can I do if I disagree with the GRV or UV valuation of my property?

If a ratepayer believes their property has been incorrectly valued they may lodge an objection with Landgate. Any objection against your property valuation is to be lodged with Landgate within 60 days of the date of issue of your rates notice. Please visit Landgate's website at www.landgate.wa.gov.au for further information.

Rates are required to be paid by the due date, irrespective of whether an objection has been lodged. Any reduction in rates as a result of a successful objection will be allocated to any balance outstanding or refunded to you.

What happens with rates if I sell or buy a property?

If you use a settlement agent then generally you do not need to do anything as they will pay any outstanding balance to the Shire at settlement. They will calculate your portion of rates on a pro-rata basis and should provide you with a statement at settlement which will indicate any adjustments made for rates you have already paid.

What are interim rates?

Some ratepayers may be issued an additional rate notice during the year. This is referred to as an Interim Rate Notice. An Interim Rate Notice is a result of changes that have happened to the property which require a rating adjustment to be calculated after you have been issued with the original rate notice.

These notices are required to be issued by the Shire for various reasons such as:

- * If Landgate considers that the valuation (GRV or UV) of a ratepayers' property has changed;
- * Subdivision / Strata of land or amalgamation of land;
- * Improvements or additions to the property including building a new house and, alterations and additions to an existing home including sheds;
- * Demolition of any improvements; and
- * Addition or removal of rubbish or recycling collection services.

An Interim Rate Notice will be accompanied by a letter of explanation including the details of the reason for the amendment and effective date of the valuation.

I don't use the tip so why do I have to pay a Landfill Rate?

Council charges on all rateable properties a landfill rate under Section 66 of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007.

This section of the Act allows Council to impose on rateable land within its district, and cause to be collected, an annual rate for the purpose of providing for the proper performance of all or any of the waste services it provides. The cost of providing waste services (excluding rubbish collection

services) is divided equally between all ratepayers of the Shire (i.e. all rates assessments have the same charge for the Landfill Rate) regardless of whether you use the waste facility.

What is the Swimming Pool Inspection Fee?

State Government legislation requires all private swimming pool enclosures to be inspected at least once in every four years. The Shire's fee for this service is charged per annum for each registered pool enclosure and is included on the annual rates account. This annual fee is designed to recover the cost of an inspection within the four year inspection cycle. All pool owners are encouraged to properly maintain their pool enclosures in the interest of safety.

What is the ESL and how is it calculated?

The Emergency Services Levy is a State Government levy for which Council is the collection agent. The amounts to be charged are set by the State Government and included on your annual rates account. All funds collected by the Shire from the ESL are forwarded to the Department of Fire & Emergency Services (DFES).

How do I advise my change of address?

If you have recently changed your postal or email address, or other contact details, please inform the Shire by completing the Change of Details form available on our website.

<https://www.bridgetown.wa.gov.au/contact-us/contact.aspx>