

Forest Heath

Council Tax and financial information

2011/2012

NHS
information
included



How we spend your money – services, plans, discounts, exemptions and benefits.

A publication produced in partnership by:



Forest Heath
District Council

SUFFOLK
POLICE AUTHORITY



Suffolk
County Council

Page

Contents

2	Where your Council Tax goes
3 to 7	Forest Heath District Council
8 to 11	Suffolk County Council
12 to 15	NHS Information
16 to 19	Suffolk Police Authority
20	Who has to pay
21 to 23	Discounts and other information
24	Contacts and Translation Information

Where your Council Tax goes

In 2011/2012, people who live in Forest Heath will pay £25.4 million in Council Tax. This money goes to the following.

- ▶ Suffolk County Council gets £20.1 million (79.1% of the total).
- ▶ Suffolk Police Authority gets £2.9 million (11.3% of the total).
- ▶ Forest Heath District Council gets £2.4 million (9.6% of the total).

These authorities also get money from the Government, from fees and charges and from Business Rates to pay for the services they provide. Business Rates are collected locally but put in a national fund before being given back to authorities. The amount they get depends on the number of people living in their area.

The district council collects the money on behalf of all the authorities.

What you pay for services

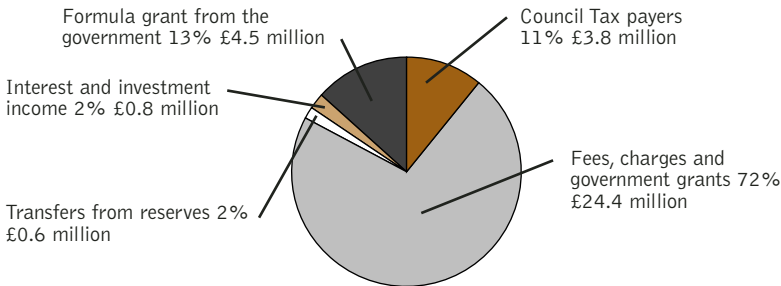
Band	Suffolk County Council	Suffolk Police Authority	Forest Heath District Council	Total	
	This year	This year	This year	Each week	This year
A	£751.02	£107.16	£91.62	£18.27	£949.80
B	£876.19	£125.02	£106.89	£21.31	£1,108.10
C	£1,001.36	£142.88	£122.16	£24.35	£1,266.40
D	£1,126.53	£160.74	£137.43	£27.40	£1,424.70
E	£1,376.87	£196.46	£167.97	£33.49	£1,741.30
F	£1,627.21	£232.18	£198.51	£39.58	£2,057.90
G	£1,877.55	£267.90	£229.05	£45.66	£2,374.50
H	£2,253.06	£321.48	£274.86	£54.80	£2,849.40

If you have a parish or town council in your area, your final bill will also include a contribution to them. Your bill will give you the full details. The average total cost for a band D property is £1,498.77

Our pledge to you

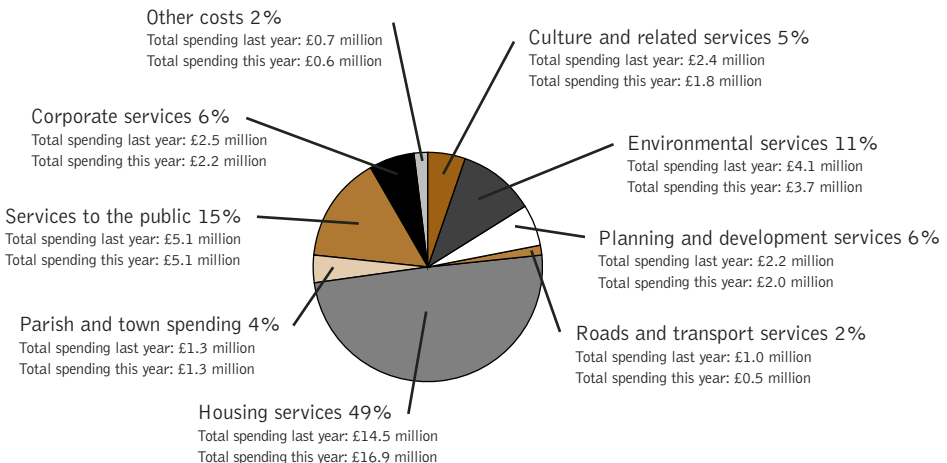
As a publicly funded organisation, Forest Heath District Council is committed to providing as much information as possible about the way we work and the way your money is spent. On the Council's website you will find a summary of the ways we do this including Payments to Suppliers (everything we've spent over £500 inclusive of VAT); details of elected Members' Allowances; Senior Officers' remuneration and Council Tenders and Contracts. Visit www.forest-heath.gov.uk to access the information.

Where the money comes from



How we spend the money

Total spending last year: £33.8 million Total spending this year: £34.1 million





Changes in spending between 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 for Forest Heath District Council

The following is a summary of the main increases and reductions.

	£ (000's)
Budget requirement 2010/11	7,985
Reduction in interest received due to economic conditions and capital investment in projects for the residents of Forest Heath	-98
Inflation allowance	62
Decrease in fees and charges and government grants	226
Decrease in cost of service provision	-638
Decreased net cost of benefit granted	-18
Increase in contributions from reserves	951
Savings Programme	-1,457
Budget requirement 2011/12	7,013

Do more online

Receive your bill by email, keep track of your account or pay for council services through either of our secure websites:

www.angliarevenues.gov.uk

www.forest-heath.gov.uk



A range of services are now available online:

- @ Pay your bill or for services using a debit card
- @ Set up a Direct Debit to pay your Council Tax and Business Rates
 - Safe and convenient
 - Direct Debit guarantee protection
- @ Sign up for e-billing for Council Tax and Business Rates and receive your bill by email – **the environmentally friendly option**
- @ View your Council Tax and Business Rates accounts and Benefit claim details
- @ Apply for a Council Tax discount or exemption
- @ Submit an online claim for Housing and/or Council Tax Benefit
- @ Online Benefit calculator – see if you may be entitled
- @ Download useful forms and leaflets



Forest Heath
District Council

**'New, improved and easy to use.
Log into our website whenever you choose!'**

www.angliarevenues.gov.uk



theangliarevenuespartnership

Parish Council Taxes for a band-D property

Parish	2010/2011 Parish precept £ (see note 1 below)	2010/2011 Tax base (see note 2 below)	2010/2011 Amount band D £ (see note 3 below)	2011/2012 Parish precept £ (see note 1 below)	2011/2012 Tax base (see note 2 below)	2011/2012 Amount band D £ (see note 3 below)
Barton Mills	16,171	307.43	52.60	16,867	320.66	52.60
Beck Row	29,158	759.97	38.37	29,889	831.15	35.96
Brandon	191,857	2,720.72	70.52	199,355	2,761.75	72.18
Cavenham	425	45.23	9.40	450	46.48	9.68
Dalham	2,000	122.53	16.32	1,000	122.76	8.15
Elveden	1,200	102.41	11.72	1,100	101.13	10.88
Eriswell	3,900	66.22	58.89	4,081	65.74	62.08
Exning	49,674	729.63	68.08	51,164	735.47	69.57
Freckenham	7,600	134.36	56.56	7,700	136.62	56.36
Gazeley	8,100	271.77	29.80	8,100	275.02	29.45
Herringswell	2,860	100.40	28.49	2,730	93.56	29.18
Higham	0.00	69.89	0.00	0.00	67.02	0.00
Icklingham	8,000	151.94	52.65	9,500	153.55	61.87
Kentford	6,000	173.71	34.54	6,000	196.71	30.50
Lakenheath	93,645	1,306.57	71.67	98,327	1,349.32	72.87
Mildenhall	266,793	2,820.98	94.57	269,693	2,902.48	92.92
Moulton	36,864	429.25	85.88	36,864	441.74	83.45
Newmarket	461,340	5,601.86	82.35	495,740	5,679.18	87.29
Red Lodge	51,020	884.74	57.67	63,938	1,108.75	57.67
Santon Downham	4,500	91.03	49.43	4,500	91.58	49.14
Tuddenham St Mary	5,500	145.51	37.80	5,000	145.43	34.38
Wangford	0.00	4.02	0.00	0.00	4.06	0.00
Worlington	7,173	185.65	38.64	7,889.80	188.55	41.84
Total precept	1,253,780			1,319,887.80		
Total taxbase		17,225.82			17,818.71	

Note 1 : Precept - an order issued by one local authority to another specifying the rate of tax to be charged on its behalf.

Note 2 : Tax Base is a figure used by local councils to work out the band D parish amount.

Note 3 : The amount you pay will be different if your property is in another tax band.



Parish and town council precepts of more than £140,000

Regulations say that we must show details of service spending if a parish or town council's precept is more than £140,000

Brandon Town Council	2010/2011 estimate			2011/2012 estimate		
	Gross spending	Income	Net spending	Gross spending	Income	Net spending
	£ (figures in thousands)					
Administration	106	0	106	110	0	110
Cemetery	12	-6	6	14	-6	8
General services	6	-3	3	7	-3	4
Old School House	18	-2	16	18	-3	15
Leisure services	24	0	24	24	0	24
Street lighting	32	0	32	35	0	35
Other expenses	5	0	5	3	0	3
	203	-11	192	211	-12	199

Mildenhall Parish Council	2010/2011 estimate			2011/2012 estimate		
	Gross spending	Income	Net spending	Gross spending	Income	Net spending
	£ (figures in thousands)					
Administration	83	0	83	83	0	83
General services	123	-8	115	117	-9	108
Leisure services	133	-57	76	137	-59	78
From Reserves	0	-7	-7	0	0	0
	339	-72	267	337	-68	269

Newmarket Town Council	2010/2011 estimate			2011/2012 estimate		
	Gross spending	Income	Net spending	Gross spending	Income	Net spending
	£ (figures in thousands)					
Administration	170	0	170	170	0	170
Cemetery	62	-28	34	61	-33	28
Disused Churchyard/ Memorials	14	0	14	11	0	11
General Town Services	105	-9	96	116	-14	102
Memorial Hall	774	-700	74	117	-29	88
Leisure and Sport Facilities	83	-10	73	103	-7	96
	1,208	-747	461	578	-83	495



Direct Debit – the safe and easy way to pay

Did you know approximately 14,000 Council Tax payers in Forest Heath already pay by this reliable method?



Let Forest Heath District Council do the work for you – we have made Direct Debit as convenient as possible.

- You're in control – Direct Debit Guarantee protection
- Fast & hassle-free. Once in place, there's nothing more to do:
 - no more queuing at the bank or post office
 - no more cheques to write
 - no more payment dates to remember – payments happen automatically
- A choice of payment dates – 1st and 15th of the month – pick a date to suit your budget and avoid receiving reminders and incurring extra costs

To set up a Direct Debit:



Contact the Council Tax office on **(01842 756567)** to set this up over the telephone. Please have your account reference number and bank details to hand.



Visit www.angliarevenues.gov.uk or www.forest-heath.gov.uk at any time of the day or night and submit your details securely online.



Complete and return the mandate which you will find enclosed with your bill.

Message from the leader

Along with county councils across the country, we are currently experiencing some of the most challenging times in living memory.

We are reliant, for the majority of our funding, on money from central government. With the Coalition focusing on cutting our national deficit, local councils are being expected to shoulder a large share of the cuts. For Suffolk County Council, this means a need to make savings of £43 million in 2011/12.

Over the next four years, these reductions are likely to total £125 million. This is the toughest financial climate Suffolk has ever seen.

I have always said that our priority must be to protect the most vulnerable, while cutting waste and bureaucracy, and keeping council tax increases as low as possible. This is even more important now the cost of living is increasing for households across the county.

To help Suffolk residents in these challenging times, we have ensured there will be no increase in council tax.

The twin challenges of having to meet increased demand for our services, while receiving much less Government Grant means that we cannot carry on providing services in the same way we have done in the past.

In this year's budget, the majority of spending reductions have come from improved efficiency and finding new ways of providing services. In doing so, we have fought to keep cuts to frontline services to a minimum. Painful as they are, only 18% of our reductions are cuts to frontline services.

In future years, this may not be possible. That is why it is so important that we re-design our services, and, where it is more effective, look to others to deliver the service on our behalf.

We are developing our New Strategic Direction for precisely this reason. It is our plan for ensuring that we can continue to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities in the new financial climate. In doing so, we hope to be able to ensure the most valuable services can continue, perhaps in a different form, but in a way that meets the needs of local communities. If we did not follow this path, I sincerely believe we would be left having to cut exactly the services that we all want to see maintained.



Jeremy Pembroke,
Leader of Suffolk County Council

As part of our plans, we are working with local groups and organisations to enable them to deliver more services on our behalf. This will mean the council will look very different in the future, with a number of services currently provided by us being delivered through social enterprises, charities, local councils, community organisations and local businesses.

You can read more about the New Strategic Direction and our spending plans over the next few pages.



Councillor Jeremy Pembroke
Leader of Suffolk County Council
Email: jeremy.pembroke@suffolk.gov.uk
Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2BX

Suffolk's New Strategic Direction: Key facts

- It is not an option to 'do nothing'. We have to reduce costs by around 30% due to reduced government funding. The New Strategic Direction is the council's alternative to year on year cuts to frontline services.
- We will not be outsourcing all of our services to a big private sector company. Some services currently being delivered by the council will, in the future, be delivered through social enterprises, charities and community organisations based in Suffolk and employing local people. This means taxpayers money will stay in Suffolk for the good of Suffolk people.
- There is no specific timeline for the New Strategic Direction to be completed by. However, we want to see some services being delivered in different ways from April 2011. This will help to minimise the need for cuts to frontline services in the future.
- We want services which better meet local needs, rather than a 'one size fits all' approach. By reducing our involvement in delivering services we will be better placed to challenge and influence the quality of services being provided.



- We will not hand over the running of a service to others until we are satisfied that appropriate long term plans are in place.
- We are working with public sector colleagues to reduce duplication across organisations and to make services easier for customers to access.

For more information about the New Strategic Direction visit:
www.suffolk.gov.uk/nsd

Our Spending Plans

Our grant from government has been reduced by £37m (before applying the council tax freeze grant of £7m). This has meant savings of £43m have been identified to compensate for this loss of grant and to provide extra money for some unavoidable cost pressures. These include:

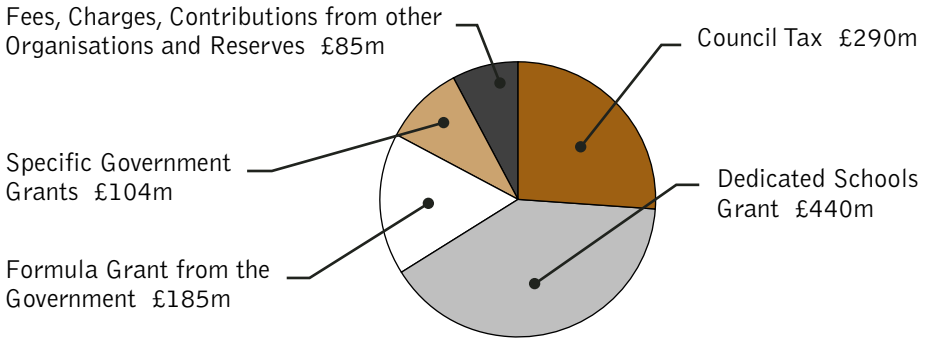
- £4.4m for inflation.
- £3.3m to help to care for the increasing number of elderly people that require our support.
- £2.1m to pay for the higher numbers of children who have complex care needs.
- £1.5m for Landfill Tax.
- £2m to pay for borrowing costs towards the capital programme.

In addition, a one off service development fund of £1.7m has been set up. This will allow time for proposals to be developed with communities and other organisations for them to take on some of our services, which otherwise would have to stop.

The council will also receive extra money from health of £8.8m to be spent on social care services. Plans are being agreed jointly with Health to ensure the funding is used in the most effective way for Suffolk residents.

We also plan to spend £121m on capital projects to improve our schools and roads. This includes £72m for school buildings which will help to deliver our priority to transform learning and skills in Suffolk. It also includes £33m to improve the county's transport and waste disposal infrastructure.

Where the money comes from

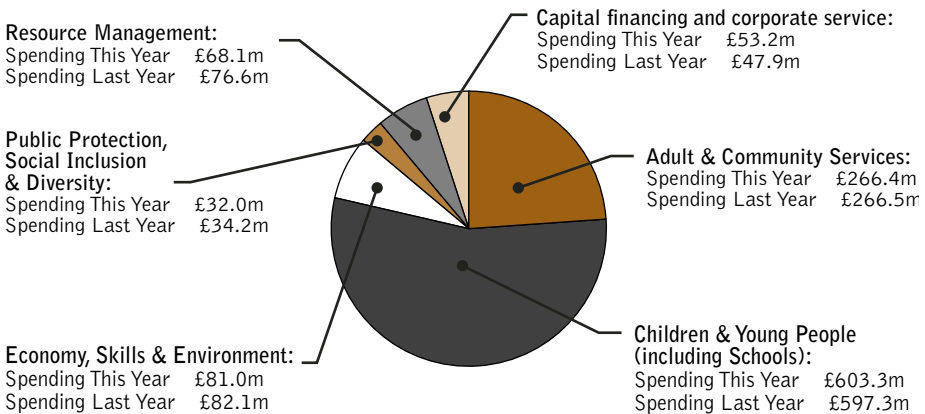


Where we spend the money

Total Spending this year £1,104m Total Spending last year £1,105m

This years spend figure is only £1m less than last years due to:

- Spending transferred from borough and district councils to manage concessionary fares (£8.6m).
- Government funding which the county council will be required to spend in order to deliver specific health programmes (£8.8m).
- Additional money provided by Government that will be spent in schools (£8.9m).
- Increased demand for council services and contingency (£13.2m).
- Increased cost to provide services (inflation) (£4.4m).



The NHS: Here for you

You will have heard a lot about the coming changes when GPs take over. A great deal of work is being done to make sure the changeover is as smooth as possible. In the meantime we remain focused on providing the best possible healthcare we can with the resources available. And here is how we do it:

- At the moment the NHS is broken down into two levels both sitting beneath the Government's Department of Health, which tells us what we should be doing
- The top level is the regional, strategic health authority (East of England) which works out how we go about carrying out the Government's wishes
- The second level is the primary care trust (PCT) which buys services for you
- In Suffolk there are two PCTs working for you. They are NHS Suffolk, which looks after the majority of the 700,000 people in the county and NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney, which looks after 230,000 people in the north of the county
- We make sure the right local healthcare services are in place when things go wrong with your health and we help protect your health by planning screening services to boost your natural defences
- The two PCTs work with West Suffolk, Ipswich and James Paget hospitals, local councils, Norfolk and Waveney and Suffolk Mental Health Trusts (currently going through a process to see if they can merge into one trust) GPs, dentists, pharmacies and other partners in the public, private and voluntary sector to do the best for Suffolk people
- It is our job to make sure there are safe, high quality health services which are free. It is also important that all services provide good medical results for the amount of money spent

Last year (2009-10) NHS Suffolk (NHSS) had a budget of £861.93m and NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney (NHSGYW) £370m, which was channelled into hospitals, doctors' surgeries, dentists and ambulances to name a few. (See p15 for more details on that).

This year (2010-11) NHSS has a budget of £905m and NHSGYW £404m to carry on buying the best services we can for you.

That said like all other services in the public sector the NHS has to make management savings, so that money can be ploughed back into frontline services, such as doctors and nurses.

While the NHS undergoes great change the quality of the services to you should not diminish as we aim to do the very best for Suffolk people.

NHS Suffolk still wants to:

- Improve the overall experience of healthcare services for everyone in Suffolk
- Make sure health services are the same for everyone no matter where they live
- Work with other organisations if it helps improve health services for you

And **NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney** pledges:

- To improve the health of the community by early identification of risk factors and better management of disease
- To improve access, choice and the way people can personalise their health
- Make every patient's experience the most important part of healthcare
- Work in close partnership with local government, hospitals and community groups

The NHS and you

A new future is emerging for the NHS and at the heart of it is the patient. Already patient views are taken very seriously within the NHS and with the changes ahead you will have an even greater voice in shaping healthcare for the county. We want to hear about your experiences when you need to use the NHS. It is this which helps us create the best services we can. For some of you that will mean writing to us, emailing us, or picking up the phone. For others who want to have greater involvement there are forums and groups.

NHS Suffolk and you

In NHS Suffolk we have the **Suffolk Health Forum (SHF)** and **Community Reference Group (CRG)**: they are our eyes and ears, making comments on all that we do from reading documents to telling us how services could work better for you.

Suffolk high school pupils will once again be sending out their own messages about smoking when they produce short films for the **NHS Suffolk Stop Smoking Oscars**. By hearing the views of teenagers it helps us come up with better ways to help prevent them from smoking in the first place.

Sometimes it is not easy for members of the community to come to us to talk, so we try to come to you with our annual **Community Conversations**. The aim here is to bring a number of doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers to your community so you can ask questions to the experts directly, and tell us how we could do better.

NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney and you

GYW is a member of the **Waveney Community Cohesion Partnership** which promotes community togetherness in Waveney to ensure services are sensitive and responsive to all members of the community. Members of the community such as young people, Gypsies and Travellers, homeless, and disabled people all have a voice at the partnership.

NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney works closely with the **Waveney Disability Forum** to identify and help resolve local health issues for people with disabilities. The Forum creates an opportunity for people with disabilities and disability organisations to come together to consult directly with Waveney District Council. Issues include services and facilities which affect people with disabilities.

Older people are heard on the panel called the **Voice Project**, which is an independent panel across the whole of Suffolk. The project aims to consult, involve and influence. Surveys are run on a quarterly basis to ask people how they feel about their community and if they are happy in their home as well as other areas such as end of life care and pets. The information is then fed back to key organisations.

Age UK leads the organisation, but funding is also provided by NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney and NHS Suffolk.

NHS information has been included this year to tell you more about services in Suffolk and to share the cost of producing this leaflet - our services to you are not funded by your Council Tax.

NHS Services

Dentists

There is an NHS dentist for everyone and it is not as expensive as you may think with an initial examination, X-ray, scale and polish just £16.50. Treatment is free for anyone 18 or under and exemptions apply for people on certain benefits. If in Suffolk find your nearest NHS dentist by calling PALS on 0800 389 6819 or use our online dentist locator at www.suffolk.nhs.uk, or for Waveney patients call 01502 719501 or visit www.gywpct.nhs.uk

Health trainers

Established in certain surgeries across Suffolk and the whole Waveney area, people can have up to six sessions with a health trainer during which time they will receive help and advice on healthy eating, increasing physical exercise, stopping smoking and reducing alcohol consumption. Call your surgery to find out more or if you live in Waveney ring 01493 656372 or email healthtrainers@communityconnections.org.uk

Smoking

Friendly advisors are on hand to give you information about all the latest methods of quitting and to help you through what can be a difficult time. You are up to four times more likely to quit successfully with help than going it alone. So, if you want to stop smoking call 0800 085 6037 or visit www.suffolkstopsmokingservice.co.uk. If you live in Waveney ring 0800 652 3477 or text QUIT to 65000.

Pals

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a free and confidential information service for people in Suffolk. PALS can:

- Provide details of your nearest GP, dentist, optician and pharmacist
 - Tell you the best place to get advice on healthy living – stopping smoking, health eating, drugs and alcohol
 - Help resolve any problems or concerns you have about NHS services in the county
- Call 0800 389 6819 or email pals@suffolkpct.nhs.uk if you live in Suffolk, or for people living in Waveney call 01502 719501 or email gywpct.PALS@nhs.net

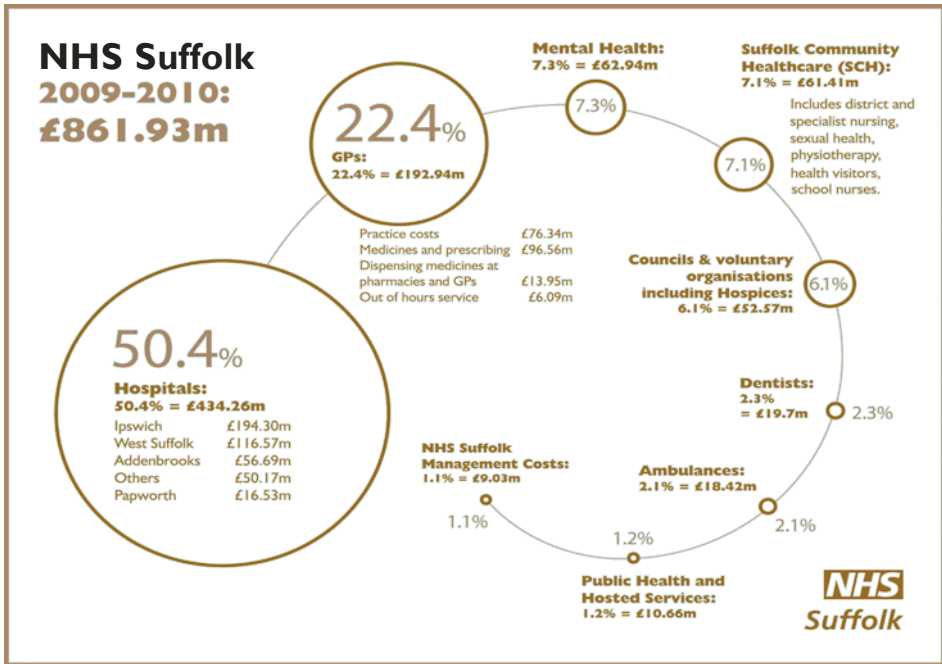
Sexual health

If you need help with a sexual matter we can help you. Our clinics across Suffolk can provide free, confidential and non-judgemental advice including preparation for pregnancy, unplanned pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual health and sexual difficulties. Also, our clinics can provide free supplies of contraceptives and advice on their use. For more information call PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) on 0800 389 6819, or 01502 719501 if you live in Waveney.

Out-of-hours

If you have a medical condition that cannot be treated at home - unless your condition is life threatening - the first course of action should always be to call your GP surgery. Outside normal surgery hours you will be put through to the out-of-hours service or asked to call the service directly on 0300 130 3066 or if in Waveney ring 0844 736 9530. For urgent dental requirements, when your usual dental practice is closed, call 0300 130 3065 or 0844 736 9530 if in Waveney.

How we spend your money



NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney

- £168.12m on general and acute medicine, including all services provided by James Paget University Hospitals
- £38.22m on community services such as physiotherapists and speech and language therapists
- £90.08m on primary care services including 27 GP practices, 48 pharmacies and 38 opticians
- £33.20m on mental health
- £12.28m on learning difficulties – including staff who work with children and adults
- £5.52m on maternity services
- £4.08m on A&E services at James Paget University Hospital and the minor injuries units at Patrick Stead Hospital in Halesworth and Beccles Hospital

Please note figures here are for 2009-10 as figures for 2010-11 had not been finalised at time of writing.

Your council tax contribution helps us keep Suffolk safe.

Suffolk is one of the safest counties in the country, with low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB).

By the end of December 2010, overall crime and incidents of ASB had fallen when compared with the previous year. Cases of 'rowdy and nuisance' ASB had fallen by more than 10% and over 90% of people surveyed said they felt safe where they live.

Suffolk Constabulary is overseen by Suffolk Police Authority, which consults with local communities, sets the Constabulary's budgets and monitors its performance.

Our main funding for policing in Suffolk comes from two sources:

- ▶ A grant from the Government.
- ▶ An annual council tax paid by all householders in Suffolk.

Suffolk Police Authority has frozen its part of the council tax in recognition of the financial pressures facing Suffolk's residents.

The Authority decides how our money will be spent and identifies the priorities for policing for the coming year. Decisions on the priorities for the Constabulary are made following consultation with the public and an assessment of operational and organisational risks.

During the next three years we will work to maintain the safety of Suffolk and to achieve this we will aim to:

- ▶ Reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- ▶ Improve the satisfaction of those that use our services and the confidence of the public in policing.
- ▶ Sustain the financial stability of Suffolk Police.

The force will be monitored by the Police Authority on how it is performing in various areas under each category. These areas are defined in part through the priorities you have told us are important. These include:

- ▶ Violence in public
- ▶ Drugs
- ▶ House burglary
- ▶ Robbery
- ▶ Speeding
- ▶ Anti-social behaviour

You tell us that ASB should be a priority for the police and extensive work has been undertaken to address this, including the introduction of dedicated, multi-agency ASB teams. These teams tackle the most complex cases of ASB and those individuals who repeatedly cause ASB issues. These teams, along with other areas of specialised work, have contributed to an overall reduction in ASB of just under 10% in 2010.

Feedback from the public indicated that the Constabulary needed to improve the way it keeps people informed, particularly those who report incidents or are victims of crime. The introduction of a Crime Investigation Bureau has significantly improved the immediate response and investigation of crime, and coupled with new procedures introduced for officers dealing with individual crimes, satisfaction levels have improved. Latest results show that 85% of victims surveyed felt that the Constabulary delivered a good or excellent service.

Your Police Authority has invested money wisely to help cushion the blow of financial cuts.

Towards the end of last year, the Government announced its four-year spending review, revealing some of the deepest cuts in public spending in decades.

The police service is taking its fair share of the cuts, which based on current national assumptions will equate to a reduction in funding for Suffolk of 14% over the next four years.

For Suffolk, this will mean finding savings of approximately £13.5 million between now and 2015, based on our current estimates.

All forces are facing a similar challenge as levels of funding shrink.

In Suffolk, this challenge will be particularly acute as we are already the second lowest-cost police service in the country, and have a relatively small budget, which relies more on government funding than on the council taxes paid by householders.

As part of our continual drive to provide value for money for Suffolk, we have extensively restructured the organisation to deliver more than £16 million cash savings and over £13.5 million in productivity and efficiency gains over the last 10 years.

The Authority anticipated the turbulent financial times ahead – and to help cushion the impact has built up reserves by more than £3 million over the last two years.

These reserves will now be used to help meet the costs of the significant organisational changes that are needed to achieve the savings required over the next four years. This has helped to enable us to freeze our element of the council tax this year.

The Authority and the Constabulary are working hard together to draw up plans for making the savings required while maintaining focus on ensuring that local people continue to receive an efficient and effective policing service.

This will mean that the way in which policing in Suffolk is delivered will significantly change to meet the savings required and a new form of service delivery will be created, which continues to provide effective policing – but with less money and fewer people.

The Police Authority's role of monitoring the performance of the Constabulary will be vital as the policing service is re-designed to achieve these savings.



Looking ahead – Delivering policing amidst financial pressures

We are committed to ensuring that our reduced resources are used in the most effective manner to ensure that our communities remain safe and that we have the correct staffing and skills to meet the demands placed upon us.

We are determined that visible frontline policing is not affected by the re-structure of our organisation.

The vast majority of our expenditure – over 80% - lies in paying the salaries of our officers and staff – so work has focussed on continuing to deliver policing services but with a much smaller workforce than the 2400 we have today.

To ensure that frontline policing is not affected we will primarily focus on reducing supervisory, management and non-frontline posts. Other areas that will help us make the necessary savings are:

- ▶ A recruitment freeze for police officers – and a policy of not replacing police staff posts as they become vacant.
- ▶ Continuing collaboration with Norfolk Constabulary, and other forces in the region. In particular, a programme to create a series of joint units with Norfolk Constabulary, which provide support to frontline services across both counties, will generate savings of at least £9.8 million for both forces over the next four years. The joint collaborative units will include finance, ICT, HR, Fleet Management, Estates and Procurement.
- ▶ Sharing buildings. The Authority is working closely with our local councils and other agencies to explore ways in which we can use our properties and estate more effectively. For example, it has purchased premises with Suffolk County Council, which will allow ageing properties in need of multi-million pound refurbishment to be sold. Other projects include placing Safer Neighbourhood Team officers in fire stations, council offices and schools.

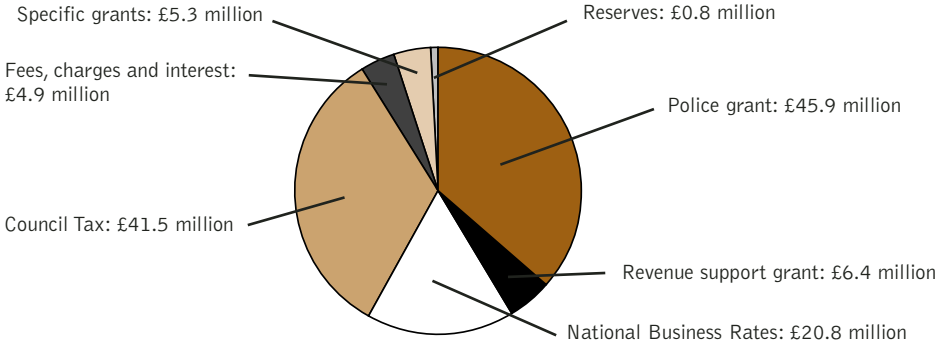
We will continue to invest in the county's 30 Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs), which are based at the heart of our communities, providing visible policing and dealing with local issues and concerns on a daily basis.

For information on your local SNT, visit: www.safersuffolk.org.uk.

Further details regarding our policing priorities and our performance can be found on our website www.suffolkpoliceauthority.org.uk or by calling us on 01473 782777.

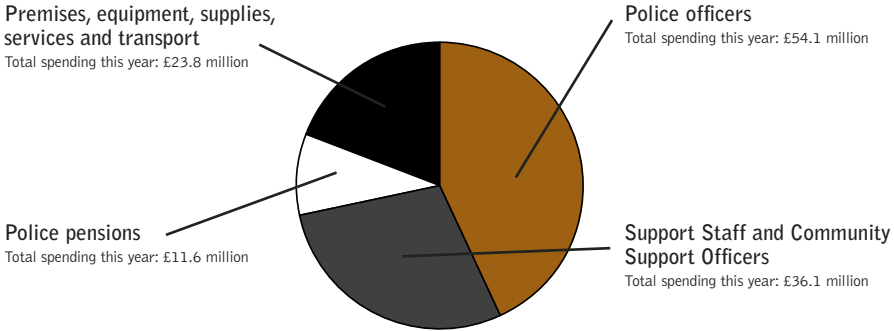


Where the money comes from



Where we spend the money

This represents a decrease in budgeted expenditure of 1.6% over 2010/11.



After taking into account income and the use of reserves, the net budget for 2011/12 is £114.6m

As a result, the part of the Council Tax for the Police is unchanged from 2010/11. This means the charge for a Band D property this year will again be £160.74.



Who has to pay the Council Tax?

There is one Council Tax bill for each home whether it is owned or rented. In most cases, the person (or people) aged 18 or over nearest the top of the following list is responsible for paying the tax:

- Owner occupiers
- Leaseholders
- People who pay rent
- Residents who have a licence to occupy the property, for example, people who live in tied cottages
- Residents with no legal interest in the property
- Non-resident owners

Council Tax banding and appeals

The amount of Council Tax you pay varies depending on the band that your property has been put into by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). The VOA puts each property into one of eight valuation bands based on open market values at 1 April 1991.

Valuation band	Value at 1 April 1991	Proportion of band-D tax
A	Up to and including £40,000	6/9
B	£40,001 to £52,000	7/9
C	£52,001 to £68,000	8/9
D	£68,001 to £88,000	1
E	£88,001 to £120,000	11/9
F	£120,001 to £160,000	13/9
G	£160,001 to £320,000	15/9
H	More than £320,000	2

Council Tax payers may appeal to the Valuation Office against the banding of their property:

- When a property is demolished
- When physical changes in the area affect the value of the property
- When a property is converted into flats

You can appeal within six months of:

- A valuation change to your property made by the Listing Officer
- A valuation band change to a similar property to yours as a result of a Valuation Tribunal decision
- Becoming the new tax payer

Making an appeal does not mean you can withhold payment of Council Tax. If your appeal is successful, future payments will be reduced and any overpayments refunded.

Contact

If you have any queries regarding the valuation or banding of your property, or wish to appeal, please contact:

**The Listing Officer, The Valuation Office Agency
St Clare House, Greyfriars, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 1LR**

Tel: 03000 506 030

Fax: 03000 506 090

Website: www.voa.gov.uk

Liability, exemptions and discounts

You can appeal against the council's decision that you are liable for Council Tax, that a property should or should not be exempt, whether a discount should or should not be allowed, or any decision taken by the council in relation to Council Tax Benefit (please refer to section on benefits for further details).

In the first instance, appeals of this nature must be made in writing to the address on your bill.

For benefit appeals, please write to the Benefits Manager at the same address.

Is my property exempt from Council Tax?

You may be entitled to an exemption from Council Tax if your property is:

Unoccupied

- A Empty and substantially unfurnished and undergoing major repair works or structural alterations to render the property habitable (up to 12 months only)
- B Empty and owned by a charity (exemption up to 6 months only)
- C Empty and unfurnished (exemption up to 6 months only)
- D Left empty by a person in prison or other form of detention
- E Left empty by a person permanently resident in a hospital or care home
- F Left empty where the liable person has died and the deceased's executors or personal representatives are now liable (up to 6 months after grant of Probate)
- G A property where occupation is prohibited by law
- H Empty and held for occupation by a minister of religion from which to perform his/her duties
- I Left empty by a person receiving care
- J Left empty by a person providing care
- K Left empty by a student who owns the property
- L Unoccupied and in the possession of the mortgagee
- Q Left empty by a bankrupt where the Trustee in bankruptcy is liable
- R An empty caravan pitch or boat mooring
- T An unoccupied annexe unable to be let separately

Occupied

- M Halls of residence
- N Occupied by full-time students and non-British spouses of students
- O Occupied by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for armed forces accommodation (e.g. forces barracks or married quarters)
- P Occupied by a member of a relevant visiting force (for example, the United States Air Force)
- S Occupied only by persons aged under 18
- U Occupied only by persons who are severely mentally impaired
- V A property which is the main residence of a person with diplomatic privilege or immunity.
- W An annexe occupied by certain dependant relatives of the resident(s) living in the main property

Do I qualify for a discount?

The full Council Tax assumes that there are two or more adults living in a property. If only one adult lives in a property, the Council Tax is reduced by 25%. People in the following groups may not be liable for Council Tax and may not count towards the number of adults resident in a property:

- Full-time students and non-British spouses of students, student nurses, apprentices and Youth Training trainees
- Patients resident in a hospital or care home permanently
- People who are severely mentally impaired
- People who are staying in certain hostels for the homeless or night shelters
- 18 and 19 year olds who are at, or have just left school and child benefit is in payment
- Certain types of care workers, usually working for charities
- People caring for someone with a disability who is not a spouse, partner or child under 18
- Members of religious communities
- People in prison or other forms of detention
- People with diplomatic privilege or immunity
- Members and dependants of International Headquarters and Defence Organisations
- Members or dependants of visiting forces

Please remember that if your circumstances change, you must tell us within 21 days. If you do not, you may receive a fine

Circumstances where other discounts may apply

The Council Tax bill for a furnished property that is no-one's main home is reduced by 10%. Some job related dwellings may receive a 50% discount.

Reductions for the disabled

The Council Tax bill may be reduced for properties which have a special room set aside for the needs of a resident disabled person. An additional bathroom or kitchen required by the disabled person or sufficient floor space to allow the use of a wheelchair indoors may also qualify.

The relief is the equivalent to reducing the valuation band to the one below, and ensures that disabled people do not pay more because of a need for extra space.

The reduction includes band A dwellings.

If you think any of these may apply, please contact your local authority

Reminders and summonses

Everyone has the right to pay their Council Tax by instalments, but you must pay regularly and on or before the instalment due date. If your payments fall behind more than twice in a year, you can lose that right.

We check accounts every month. If you do not pay an instalment when it is due, we will send you a reminder asking you to pay it within 7 days. If you do not pay after the reminder, or it is the third time that you have fallen behind with your payments, you may lose your right to pay by instalments. If this happens, you will have 7 days to pay the balance of your account (the amount outstanding for the rest of the

financial year). If you do not pay your account in full, we will send a court summons for the outstanding balance. Court costs will be added.

If you are having problems paying your bill, tell us immediately. You might qualify for a discount, or we may be able to help by making a special payment arrangement.

Benefit information

Do you struggle to pay your rent or Council Tax? If you are on a low income, your council may be able to help you with Housing and/or Council Tax Benefit. Any Council Tax Benefit you are awarded will be used by the council to reduce your Council Tax bill. If you are entitled to Housing Benefit, this would be paid to you to pay your landlord towards your rent.

You could get benefit, even if you are working. However, if you have more than £16,000 in savings or investments you will not usually qualify. The benefit awarded depends on:

- The amount of Council Tax or rent you pay
- The needs of your family
- Your income
- Your savings
- Anyone else who lives with you

Even if you have claimed before and were unsuccessful, it may be worth applying again. The figures used to calculate benefit change each April, this means you may now qualify. **DON'T DELAY** – benefit can only start once you have made your application.

If you find that you do not qualify, you may be entitled to second adult rebate if there is someone other than a partner living in your home on a low income.

Any changes in your circumstances must be reported to the council. Do not rely upon any other agency to tell us.

If you would like more information or a claim form, please contact your local authority

Benefit theft – Fraud prevention

Many people assume that benefit theft applies only to those who are working for 'cash in hand' whilst claiming Job Seeker's Allowance. This is not the case. All benefit theft is a crime.

Benefit theft includes deliberately not telling us:

- You are now living with a partner
- About any savings or not telling us the right amount
- Children have left home
- You have started work, or about any earnings
- You have inherited money
- You are going abroad, living abroad or have changed address

There are no exceptions. People who knowingly withhold information or deliberately fail to report a change in their circumstances are benefit thieves.

If you suspect someone of being a benefit cheat you can report it by telephoning the National Fraud Hotline on 0800 854 440 or online at:

<https://secure.dwp.gov.uk/benefitfraud>

