

Forest Heath

Council Tax and financial information
2010/2011









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

A publication produced in partnership by:



Useful contacts

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Suffolk IP14 1AD.
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-  www.suffolk.gov.uk

Contact Suffolk Police Authority:

-  01473 613500
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Martlesham Heath, Ipswich,
Suffolk IP5 3QS.
-  In an emergency dial 999
-  spa@suffolk.pnn.police.uk
-  www.suffolkpoliceauthority.org.uk

Becoming more efficient

All councils, fire and rescue authorities and police authorities have to include in their council tax information the amount of efficiency savings they have made since April 2008. Efficiency savings are made when the cost of carrying out an activity falls, but the effectiveness of the activity is not reduced. This table shows the level of savings that were achieved by the end of March 2009, and which are due to be made by the end of March 2010.

	Saving by end March 2009	Saving by end March 2010	Saving per Band D property	National average saving for similar authorities
Suffolk County Council	£43,251,000	£49,701,000	£197	£98
Forest Heath District Council	£576,873	£1,196,520	£69.46	£22
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Authority	£416,000	£631,000	£3	£4
Suffolk Police Authority	£3,159,000	£7,205,000	£29	£54

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Where your Council Tax goes

In 2010/2011, people who live in Forest Heath will pay £24.6 million in Council Tax. This money goes to the following.

- ▶ Suffolk County Council gets £19.4 million (79.1% of the total).
- ▶ Suffolk Police Authority gets £2.8 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 £1,497.48



Your priorities, our achievements

We want to help create a district that is clean, green, safe and prosperous for all residents and visitors. In 2009/10, we published our latest Council Plan on our website www.forest-heath.gov.uk and in our residents' magazine, Forest Heath News. Here we have included some of our goals and how we will be measuring success. How we got on will be included in next year's plan.

We asked where you wanted us to concentrate our work, and as a result of your views, we have been working on improvement areas across seven priorities. Examples of what we have achieved in 2009/10 include:

Affordable and Accessible Housing - we have established a landlords' forum, designed to improve rented accommodation. We have worked to enable the completion of almost 200 additional affordable homes across the district.

Community Engagement and Communication - we have improved our Mildenhall and Brandon offices for our customers and the refurbishment of our Newmarket office is near completion.

Community Safety - the West Suffolk SoS bus was launched in Newmarket and we are working with partners on a range of initiatives, for example to reduce alcohol related anti-social behaviour and to provide counselling for drug and alcohol abusers.

Economic Regeneration - we are improving our town centres and work has started on the new superstore in Mildenhall. In partnership with others we have helped local business to respond to the economic recession.

Outreach Projects for Younger People - Our popular Play Rangers are providing free after school and holiday activities across the district. We have attracted money to Forest Heath to improve play areas across the district.

Environment and Street Scene - our 'No Excuses' campaign is raising awareness of the problems litter causes. We are working in partnership with others to improve our waste and recycling services.

Transport - we continue to lobby for the early dualling of the A11. Parking is an issue and we are looking at solutions through the development of a Long Term Parking Strategy for Newmarket.

Performance

Description	Outturn – six months April to September 2009*	Suffolk average
Proportion of Council Tax collected – whole year estimate based on actual figure as at 30th September 2009	98.3%	98%
Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change of events	10.6 days	13 days
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) – estimate for the whole year	197	109
Processing of planning applications – percentage of planning applications determined in a timely manner –		
Major – 13 weeks	60.00%	78%
Minor - 8 weeks	83.02%	84%
Other - 8 weeks	95.52%	92%
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	48.59%	48.1%
Percentage of municipal waste land-filled	54.56%	53.2%
Street Cleanliness – percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as falling below an acceptable level –		
Litter	4%	3%
Detritus	19%	15%
Graffiti	1%	1%
Fly-posting	0%	0%

* Unaudited figures

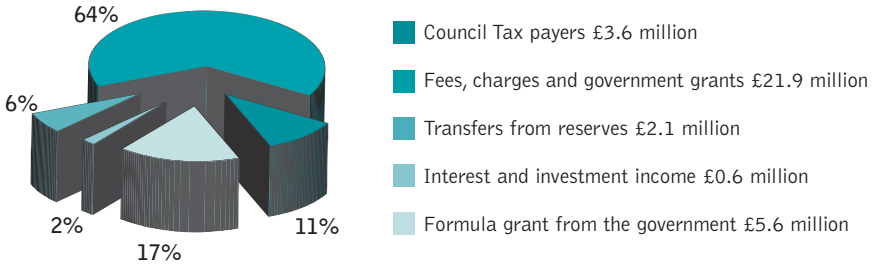
These are a selection of the performance indicators (PIs) that all councils collect. We and the Government use them to measure progress and achievement.

The county average is worked out with the figures from the following councils: Ipswich Borough; St Edmundsbury Borough; Waveney District; Forest Heath District; Babergh District; Suffolk Coastal District and Mid Suffolk District.

These figures are the actual six monthly return up to 30 September 2009. Some of the figures have been estimated to the year-end to give us yearly figure for comparison.



Where the money comes from



How we spend the money

Total spending last year: £30.1 million Total spending this year: £33.8 million

Culture and related services
 Total spending last year: £2.5 million
 Total spending this year: £2.4 million

Parish and town spending
 Total spending last year: £1.1 million
 Total spending this year: £1.3 million

Corporate services
 Total spending last year: £3.0 million
 Total spending this year: £2.5 million

Environmental services
 Total spending last year: £4.6 million
 Total spending this year: £4.1 million

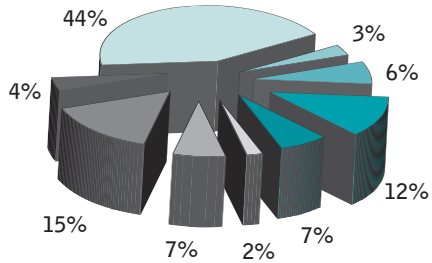
Services to the public
 Total spending last year: £3.5 million
 Total spending this year: £5.1 million

Other costs
 Total spending last year: £0.5 million
 Total spending this year: £0.7 million

Planning and development services
 Total spending last year: £2.5 million
 Total spending this year: £2.2 million

Roads and transport services
 Total spending last year: £0.9 million
 Total spending this year: £1.0 million

Housing services
 Total spending last year: £11.5 million
 Total spending this year: £14.5 million



Changes in spending between 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 for Forest Heath District Council

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

	£ (000's)
Budget requirement 2009/10	7,800
Reduction in interest received due to economic conditions and capital investment in projects for the residents of Forest Heath	466
Inflation allowance	138
Decrease in fees and charges and government grants	372
Decrease in cost of service provision	-356
Decreased net cost of benefit granted	-26
Reduction in contributions from reserves	565
Efficiency / Value For Money Savings	-974
Budget requirement 2010/11	7,985

Do more online

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

www.angliarevenues.gov.uk • www.forest-heath.gov.uk

All of the following 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
 - ▲ choice of payment dates
 - ▲ Direct Debit guarantee protection
- ✓ Request a payment barcode for Council Tax and Business Rates
- ✓ Sign up for E-billing for Council Tax and Business Rates and receive your bill by email – the environmentally friendly option
- ✓ View Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefit accounts online
- ✓ Calculate entitlement to Benefits





Parish Council Taxes for a band-D property

Parish	2009/2010 Parish precept £ (see note 1 below)	2009/2010 Tax base (see note 2 below)	2009/2010 Amount band D £ (see note 3 below)	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)
Barton Mills	15,000	304.29	49.30	16,171	307.43	52.60
Beck Row	28,869	733.27	39.37	29,158	759.97	38.37
Brandon	194,897	2,674.23	72.88	191,857	2,720.72	70.52
Cavenham	425	45.74	9.29	425	45.23	9.40
Dalham	1,750	123.73	14.14	2,000	122.53	16.32
Elveden	1,200	100.66	11.92	1,200	102.41	11.72
Eriswell	3,465	62.44	55.49	3,900	66.22	58.89
Exning	48,700	731.12	66.61	49,674	729.63	68.08
Freckenham	7,500	132.59	56.57	7,600	134.36	56.56
Gazeley	7,200	270.55	26.61	8,100	271.77	29.80
Herringswell	2,600	95.63	27.19	2,860	100.40	28.49
Higham	0	66.55	0.00	0.00	69.89	0.00
Icklingham	10,500	149.93	70.03	8,000	151.94	52.65
Kentford	6,000	155.79	38.51	6,000	173.71	34.54
Lakenheath	90,300	1,294.08	69.78	93,645	1,306.57	71.67
Mildenhall	262,890	2,760.55	95.23	266,793	2,820.98	94.57
Moulton	26,864	445.21	60.34	36,864	429.25	85.88
Newmarket	377,712	5,350.81	70.59	461,340	5,601.86	82.35
Red Lodge	41,158	800.84	51.39	51,020	884.74	57.67
Santon Downham	4,500	90.82	49.55	4,500	91.03	49.43
Tuddenham St Mary	5,500	145.38	37.83	5,500	145.51	37.80
Wangford	0	4.23	0.00	0.00	4.02	0.00
Worlington	6,831	193.95	35.22	7,173	185.65	38.64
Total precept	1,143,861			1,253,780		
Total taxbase		16,732.39			17,225.82	

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	2009/2010 estimate			2010/2011 estimate		
	Gross spending	Income	Net spending	Gross spending	Income	Net spending
	£ (figures in thousands)					
Administration	109	0	109	106	0	106
Cemetery	10	-6	4	12	-6	6
General services	7	0	7	6	-3	3
Old School House	18	0	18	18	-2	16
Leisure services	25	0	25	24	0	24
Street lighting	30	0	30	32	0	32
Other expenses	2	0	2	5	0	5
	201	-6	195	203	-11	192

Mildenhall Parish Council	2009/2010 estimate			2010/2011 estimate		
	Gross spending	Income	Net spending	Gross spending	Income	Net spending
	£ (figures in thousands)					
Administration	80	-6	74	83	0	83
General services	123	-8	115	123	-8	115
Leisure services	136	-56	80	133	-57	76
From Reserves	0	-7	-7	0	-7	-7
	339	-77	262	339	-72	267

Newmarket Town Council	2009/2010 estimate			2010/2011 estimate		
	Gross spending	Income	Net spending	Gross spending	Income	Net spending
	£ (figures in thousands)					
Administration	150	-5	145	170	0	170
Cemetery	58	-35	23	62	-28	34
Disused Churchyard/ Memorials	11	0	11	14	0	14
General Town Services	98	-10	88	105	-9	96
Memorial Hall	57	-13	44	774	-700	74
Leisure and Sport Facilities	70	-4	66	83	-10	73
	444	-67	377	1,208	-747	461

Message from the leader

Suffolk County Council is committed to delivering the best possible services for you, at a price we can all afford.

Whether it's helping the local economy to weather the recession; helping local people get skills; giving young people the best possible start in life in children's centres and schools; taking care of older people; making sure that our roads and transport systems are up to scratch; or protecting the public through our fire services, we are determined to deliver excellent value for money.

In these difficult economic times, and with an ageing population, more people than ever need our help, so we need to balance the increase in demand for our services, with keeping council tax rises as low as possible.

That's why we've decided to keep our council tax rise this year to just 2.4% - the second year in a row we have delivered our lowest ever increase in the history of the county council. This works out at just an extra 50p a week for households in a Band D council tax property.

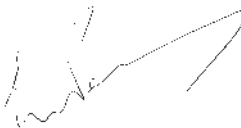
We also know that it's important to continue to invest in vital frontline services so that we can deliver our priorities to improve the lives of Suffolk residents. This year we will be planning to spend an extra £1.5m on roads maintenance to help deal with the effects of the recent cold spell, £1.7m to continue the investment in social workers to help support vulnerable children and their families, and £4m to help care for older people who most need specialist support.

Having made savings of £70m over the last four years, we are now one of the two most cost-efficient county councils in the country. There are a further £9.3m of savings planned for the next year.

We will continue to work innovatively and in partnership with others across the public sector in Suffolk, such as the police and the NHS, to reduce costly duplication, to ensure that we are providing the best possible services, and to deliver the best possible value for money. You can find out more about this work and our spending plans on the next few pages.



Jeremy Pembroke,
Leader of Suffolk County Council



Councillor Jeremy Pembroke

Leader of Suffolk County Council

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Our spending plans

Last year we spent an extra £5.6m on care for older people, an extra £3m on protecting vulnerable children and young people, £2.1m for the cost of the government's landfill tax and an extra £4m to manage and reduce the amount of household rubbish, as well as £15.1m to cover inflation costs.

This year, areas that are being prioritised for extra spending include:

- £1.5m to fill the potholes caused by the effects of the particularly harsh winter
- £1.7m to recruit and train new social workers to help support vulnerable children and their families
- £1.6m to pay for the higher numbers of young people coming into the care system
- £4.0m to help care for older people who most need specialist support
- £1.6m to pay for the government's tax for burying rubbish

We plan to spend £140m to improve buildings and roads. This includes £68.7m for school buildings, which will help to deliver our priority to transform learning and skills in Suffolk. It also includes £20m to improve the county's transport infrastructure.

Making Suffolk exceptional through the recession

Councils and other public sector organisations across the nation are having to work out how to rise to the challenge of the recession and public sector spending cuts, where the demand for public services will increase, but there will be much less money to fund them.

At Suffolk County Council we are rising to this challenge by becoming more creative and innovative in the way we deliver services. This includes working with partners across Suffolk – including other councils, the NHS, the police, the private sector and voluntary organisations – so that we can cut out costly doubling up of services. The old way of Suffolk councils delivering services alone is over; we are thinking and acting wider, for example, working with the NHS and voluntary sector to deliver services to elderly people.

Suffolk County Council approved this new approach last autumn, with councillors recognising that this is the way forward. Leaders in local government and across the public sector in Suffolk recognise the importance of joining up services to make them more effective. By doing this we can ensure that the county has the best possible services, at a price we can afford.

- The new Gainsborough Community Library in Ipswich is the result of a successful community project, involving local people making key decisions about how the new library looks and operates.

- There will be a total of 48 children's centres open in Suffolk by the end of 2010, offering a range of services for families with children from birth to five years old.



The Suffolk Story

Suffolk County Council has set out its five main areas for action in a document called the Suffolk Story. These priorities tackle the challenges where we need to do more to achieve the 20 year vision for Suffolk.



1. A strong and dynamic jobs market

- We want to help Suffolk's economy through the recession
- We want a diverse economy offering well paid and skilled jobs
- People should be able to have ambitions and achieve them in Suffolk

2. Transforming learning and skills in Suffolk

- We want our young people to get good exam results wherever they live in Suffolk
- We want more training offered at work
- We want graduates to study and stay in Suffolk

3. Protect vulnerable people and reduce inequalities

- We want everybody to have a high quality of life wherever they live in Suffolk, so we will work to reduce inequalities especially in Ipswich, Lowestoft and market towns such as Haverhill
- We want to help people to help themselves live full and happy lives

4. Be the greenest county

- Being the greenest county means protecting our beautiful countryside
- It means developing businesses that can create a low carbon economy in Suffolk
- It means supporting local food and drink production
- It means ensuring our new buildings are as green as possible

5. Deliver great services at exceptional value

- We must innovate to deliver excellent services – but keep our costs low
- The future is collaboration across all Suffolk public services

- Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has been judged as performing well by the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Area Assessment. It has the lowest cost per head of population in England, maintains high performance and was praised for working well with partners and delivering a wide range of community initiatives.
- The £65m state-of-the-art Suffolk One development will open its doors on the outskirts of Ipswich this September, helping to transform learning and raise aspirations and achievement for over 2000 16 to 19 year olds.

- Vulnerable people in Suffolk will benefit from the new Homeshield Plus programme. A team of trained officers will carry out free visits, providing advice and options on safety, security, health and benefits, to help people live more safely and securely in their own homes.
- Felixstowe, Hadleigh and Mildenhall Household Waste Recycling Centres are being improved with better layouts, new containers for glass and paper recycling and new furniture re-use areas.

Suffolk County Council is 'performing well'

Suffolk County Council is very proud to have been judged as 'performing well' by the Audit Commission (the independent body that monitors councils' performance).

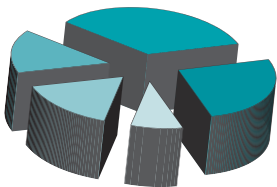
The Audit Commission has also identified three areas of "exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from". These are badged as 'green flags' and Suffolk has been awarded the highest number of green flags out of anywhere in England. Our areas of innovation are:

- Coastal protection at Bawdsey.
- Developing green technologies in wind and wave renewable energy – partners in Suffolk have taken advantage of proposals for wind and wave power off the Suffolk coast to encourage new companies to move into the Lowestoft area. When complete, 140 wind turbines will produce as much renewable electricity for the national grid as Suffolk already uses.
- Tackling street prostitution in Ipswich – following the murders of five women in Ipswich, Suffolk Police, Suffolk County Council, Ipswich Borough Council and the Icen project worked together to improve the lives of many vulnerable sex workers and their families. Access has been given to rehabilitation, training and housing as well as countering drug addiction.

Two red flags were given showing that more work is needed in addressing the lack of high value jobs in rural areas as well as learning and skills levels in Suffolk. These are already two top priorities for the county that partners are working together to improve. For example, one way in which the county council is tackling the learning and skills red flag is through the Schools Organisation Review. This is reviewing the structure of schools in the county, as results show that Suffolk children in two-tier areas do five per cent better than Suffolk children in areas with middle schools.



Where the money comes from

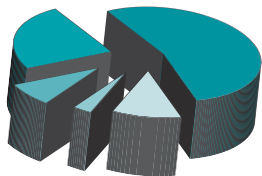


- Council Tax £286m
- Dedicated Schools Grant £378m
- Formula grant from the government £169m
- Specific government grants £173m
- Fees, charges, contributions from other organisations and reserves £92m

Where we spend the money

Total spending this year: £1098m

Total spending last year: £1064m



- Children and young people (includes schools)
 Spending this year: £597.3m
 Spending last year: £579.6m
- Adult and community care services
 Spending this year: £261.2m
 Spending last year: £247.4m
- Environment and transport
 Spending this year: £83.6m
 Spending last year: £82.6m
- Public protection
 Spending this year: £32.3m
 Spending last year: £33.3m
- Other costs
 Spending this year: £123.9m
 Spending last year: £121.1m

This year the council tax bill has gone up by 50 pence a week for Band D properties – that’s equivalent to 2.4%, our lowest council tax increase. We will continue to maintain a balance between meeting the needs of those who use our services, and keeping council tax as low as possible. This has been achieved by saving £9.3m through efficiencies, absorbing cost increases and by managing our finances more effectively.

The main changes in our spending are:

- £3.9m for inflation.
- £5.1m to cope with increased demand for our services, for example because more elderly people are living for longer in Suffolk and higher costs for looked after children.
- £6.3m for other unavoidable cost pressures, such as needing to spend more on protecting vulnerable children and adults (£2m), increased landfill tax (£1.6m), extra for home to school transport (£0.8m) and more money to help pay for the capital programme (£1.6m).
- £1.5m as a one off contribution to repair the roads after the impact of the severe winter weather.

Working better together

Here in Suffolk we are looking at better ways of working together so that we can cut out costly duplication, and still provide excellent services.

Each year, around £4.8bn of public money comes into Suffolk. Twenty two chief executives and leaders from across Suffolk have mapped out how this money is spent, in order to look at new partnerships and activities to make best use of it. The aim is to focus on the big issues for the county – improving skills and jobs, creating a better, greener environment, raising aspiration and helping communities to help themselves.

Suffolk is one of the safest counties in the country with low levels of crime. The perception of crime and anti-social behaviour is also low in the county. However, surveys have shown that local people view tackling anti-social behaviour as a key priority for the police, local councils and other partners to work together to deal with.

Here are some examples of the successful partnership work that has been carried out so far to tackle these issues.

Ipswich reduced street drinking and associated anti-social behaviour in the town centre

Ipswich Borough Council introduced a Designated Public Place Order, the Central Ipswich Safer Neighbourhood Team appointed a Street Drinking Liaison Officer, enforcement action days were held, and street drinkers had their alcohol confiscated.

St Edmundsbury tackled criminal damage to the youth shelter in Lawson Place

Bury East/West Safer Neighbourhood Team and youth workers identified that young people wanted to personalise the youth shelter and underpass, and a professional street artist was arranged to help with the project.

Mid Suffolk addressed anti-social behaviour caused by youths at Wattisfield Community Centre

Officers from Mid Suffolk North Safer Neighbourhood Team increased patrolling, crime prevention advice was given to residents and young people took part in a sports programme in the summer holidays.

Babergh tackled youth disorder and anti-social behaviour in Mayflower Way

Action was taken against those responsible, including four arrests, and nine people signed Acceptable Behaviour Contracts. There were activities for young people and community wardens provided new bins, arranged community litter picks and removed graffiti.

Waveney reduced nuisance and criminal damage at Nicholas Everett Park, Oulton Broad

Officers from the Lowestoft South Safer Neighbourhood Team increased high visibility patrols, seized alcohol, dealt with offenders and spoke to parents. Waveney District Council helped provide activities, such as the mobile youth club Four Towns Bus.

Forest Heath reduced graffiti in Newmarket

The Newmarket Safer Neighbourhood Team worked with Neighbourhood Watch coordinators to help identify individuals causing graffiti. A designated graffiti wall was set up during the summer for young people to use.

Suffolk Coastal tackled anti-social behaviour and underage drinking

With the help of Safer Neighbourhood partners, young people carried out fundraising activities and bid for grant funds to build a state of the art shelter in the old play area in Seaman Avenue, Saxmundham.

We use your council tax money to help keep our county safe.

Suffolk Police Authority has a duty to ensure that policing in Suffolk is both efficient and effective.

The Authority is an independent body made up of nine elected councillors and eight independent members from the local community, including one magistrate.

Its key responsibilities include:

- ▶ making sure Suffolk Constabulary does all it can to improve policing in our local communities;
- ▶ setting the budget for policing in Suffolk. The government awards an annual grant to the Authority, which is supplemented by your council tax contribution. The level of this contribution is decided only after the Authority has consulted widely with the public and local businesses. The Authority has to strike a balance between keeping council tax increases as low as possible, while ensuring an effective policing service that local people have come to expect;
- ▶ seeking the views of local people on policing priorities, through consultation including public meetings and surveys;
- ▶ setting policing objectives and targets, based on national priorities and local needs;
- ▶ monitoring police performance against objectives and targets and holding the Chief Constable to account;
- ▶ working closely with a range of partners in the county, to make our communities safer;
- ▶ monitoring complaints made against the police; and
- ▶ appointing the Constabulary's Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constables.

More information about the Authority, its membership and when it holds its meetings can be found on its website at www.suffolkpoliceauthority.org.uk



Your money helps us to provide a first class service to the people of Suffolk.

We are dedicated to meeting standards defined in the national Policing Pledge

Suffolk is a safe county – and our performance in keeping it safe has been consistently strong. We are continuously looking at ways to improve the service we provide, in line with the National Policing Pledge, to which we are fully committed.

The pledge sets out clear standards for all forces - and informs the public of the quality of service they should expect from their police.

We are committed to meeting the challenge of keeping crime down, while focussing on the quality of service issues that are so important to our public. Our Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) are crucial to this commitment.

Suffolk has 30 SNTs across the county. Each SNT provides accessible and responsive local policing, aiming to make local communities even safer, working with partners including local councils, to tackle issues ranging from crime and anti-social behaviour to noise and litter.

SNTs work with their local communities to set dedicated policing priorities relevant to the local area. Local people are encouraged to meet their SNTs to help identify local priorities. Each team then keeps the community updated on progress through websites and newsletters. Local feedback has been encouraging, with latest survey statistics up to January 2010, showing that more than 90% of local people feel safe in their communities.

You can find out who is in your SNT, details of its priorities and dates of street meets and tasking meetings by visiting www.safersuffolk.org.uk. Police Authority members have a link to SNTs in the county to help monitor performance.

Continued improvement has been made in other key areas such as answering telephone calls. We are well within our target time of 10 seconds to answer 999 calls. In fact during 2009 we answered all 999 calls within an average of just **two seconds**.

The full Policing Pledge can be viewed by visiting www.suffolk.police.uk



We will continue to work towards increased efficiency, achieving more for your money and reducing costs.

Suffolk is a low cost, high performing force. Our aim for the year ahead is to continue to:

- ▶ improve on our current good performance despite the tough financial climate;
- ▶ make best use of our resources by working more effectively.

During the last year, we have introduced a number of changes to make us more efficient. These include:

- ▶ the freeing up of front line officers' time with the introduction of the Crime Investigation Bureau (CIB) in September 2009. The CIB is made up a team of police officers and staff who carry out initial investigations into reports of crimes that are not in progress, such as thefts and criminal damage.
- ▶ These cases are then referred to the newly established Investigative Response Team (IRT), which makes appointments to visit victims and witnesses at a time convenient to them.

This year, additional changes to increase efficiency will include:

- ▶ locating our response officers at key locations across the county, ensuring optimum geographical coverage and fast response times.
- ▶ Enhancing the use of our Automatic Vehicle Location Systems (AVLS), which are fitted in every response vehicle. This will enable us to dispatch the nearest available unit to an incident, ensuring even faster response times.
- ▶ Revolutionising an officer's working day with the introduction of handheld mobile data. Plans are in place to allow officers to access information at the touch of a button, freeing up more time to be spent on the beat, without the need to go back to a station to record information.

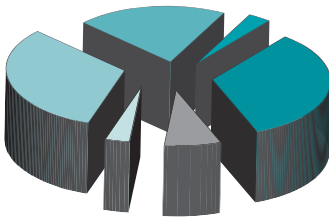
Alongside these changes, we continue to progress our collaboration with Norfolk Constabulary. This helps us move towards the goal of enhancing the capability of frontline policing.

Following the successful implementation of the joint Major Investigation Teams and Witness Protection Unit, a Review Team has been established, which will seek to develop the effectiveness of departments that support frontline policing, but with significantly fewer resources.

Progress is underway in the development of six new joint Police Investigation Centres (PICs) across the two counties.

We will also be progressing further work with five other forces in the area of Serious and Organised Crime.

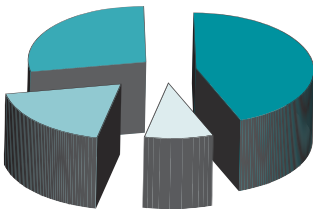
Where the money comes from



- Police grant: £42.8 million
- Revenue support grant: £3.8 million
- National Business Rates: £26.2 million
- Council Tax: £40.8 million
- Fees, charges and interest: £4.4 million
- Specific grants: £9.6 million

Where we spend the money

Total spending last year: £124.4 million Total spending this year: £127.6 million



- Police officers
Total spending last year: £55.6 million
Total spending this year: £56.6 million
- Support Staff and Community Support Officers
Total spending last year: £32.3 million
Total spending this year: £35.7 million
- Premises, equipment, supplies, services and transport
Total spending last year: £24.7 million
Total spending this year: £23.6 million
- Police pensions
Total spending last year: £11.8 million
Total spending this year: £11.7 million

After taking into account income, the net budget is £113.6m.

This represents an increase of 2.92% over 2009/10.

As a result, the Police's part of the Council Tax is rising by 3.00%.

This means the charge for a Band D property this year will be £160.74, a rise of £4.68.

Efficiency savings achieved during 2008/09 were £3.159m

By 31/3/2010, savings achieved during 2009/10 are forecast to be £4.046m.

The cumulative savings of £7.205m over two years equal £29 for the average Band D dwelling.

Who has to pay the Council Tax?

There is one 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
- People who own property but do not live in it

How is the tax worked out?

The Valuation Office Agency of the Inland Revenue puts each home in one of eight 'valuation bands' based on how much it would have cost on the open market on 1 April 1991. Your band is shown on your bill, or you can see it at www.voa.gov.uk

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

Valuation appeals

If you do not agree with the band for your home, and you have been the taxpayer there for less than six months, write to the Valuation Office Agency at 6th Floor St Clare House, Princes Street, Ipswich IP1 1LR.

Phone: 01473 587800

Important

Making an appeal of any kind does not allow you to stop paying the tax. If your appeal is successful, you will be refunded any tax you have overpaid.

Discounts

The Council Tax bill assumes there are at least two adults living in the home. If there is only one adult, there is a 25 percent reduction. If the property is a second home, there is a 10 percent reduction. All adults count for the tax unless they are:

- 18 or 19 years old and at, or have just left, school;
- a full-time student, a student nurse, an apprentice or a youth training trainee;
- severely mentally disabled;
- a patient living in hospital permanently;
- being looked after in a care home;
- a care worker working for low pay (usually for a charity);
- caring for someone with a disability who is not their husband, wife or partner or a child under 18;
- a member of a visiting force or certain international institutions;
- staying in certain hostels or night shelters;
- in prison (but not people in prison for not paying Council Tax or a fine);
- a member of certain religious communities (for example, monks and nuns); or
- a foreign diplomat.

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

Should you get a discount?

To find out, add up all the adults who live in your home, including yourself, then take off those who do not count for the tax. If this leaves one person who counts for the tax, you should get a 25 percent discount. If no-one counts for the tax, you should get a 50 percent discount except for the following:

- second homes that qualify for a 10 percent discount (unless the person who has to pay the Council Tax has to live there as part of their job). Second homes do not include a pitch for a caravan or a mooring for a boat.
- homes which are empty and have hardly any furniture, after a period of exemption (see page 22). These do not qualify for a discount.

Reductions for people with permanent disabilities

If you, or someone who lives with you, needs a room to meet special needs (for example, an extra bathroom or kitchen or other room) or use a wheelchair in your home, you may be entitled to a reduction in your Council Tax bill.

Exemptions

The homes in the list below are exempt from Council Tax. This means that the person responsible for the tax has nothing to pay.

Unoccupied homes are exempt if they:

- A are a vacant home which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished and needs or is undergoing major repairs or undergoing structural alteration (exemption is allowed for up to one year only or six months after the work is finished, whichever is sooner);
- B are owned by a charity (exemptions are allowed for up to six months only);
- C are unfurnished (exemptions are allowed for up to six months only);
- D are left empty by an owner or tenant who was living there until going into prison;
- E/I are left empty by someone who has moved to receive personal care in a hospital or a home, or elsewhere;
- F are waiting for probate or letters of administration to be granted (exemption continues for up to six months after they are granted);
- G are empty because it is against the law for anyone to live in them;
- H are waiting for a minister of religion to move in;
- J are left empty by the owner or tenant who was living there until moving away to care for someone;
- K are owned by a student and were last occupied by that student;
- L have been repossessed;
- Q are the responsibility of a bankrupt's trustee;
- R are a site for an individual caravan or mobile home, or a mooring; or
- T are part of a property which also includes another home and cannot be let separately.

Occupied homes are exempt if they are occupied:

- M/Only by students;
- S only by people aged under 18;
- U only by people who have a severe mental difficulty and who would otherwise have to pay;
- V by a diplomat or member of certain international organisations; or
- W by an elderly or disabled person living in part of a home (an annexe) with a relative living in the rest of it.

Occupied or unoccupied homes are exempt when:

- O they are forces barracks or married quarters (the Crown will pay towards the cost of local services through a special arrangement); or
- P the taxpayer is in any visiting force (for example the United States Air Force), or is a dependant of a serviceman who doesn't normally live in the UK.

The categories above are only broad descriptions of the exemptions available. If you are waiting for the outcome of an application for an exemption, you must continue to pay the current bill. Exemptions need to be applied for and proof of entitlement supplied. When an exemption ends, we will send you a bill for the rest of the year's tax.

Please remember, if your circumstances change, you must tell us within 21 days.

Should you get help with paying Council Tax?

If you think you should get a discount, or shouldn't be paying Council Tax at all, please see the contact details on the front of your bill.

Please remember if your circumstances change, you must tell us within 21 days.

Reminders and summonses - paying by instalments

Everyone has the right to pay their Council Tax by instalments, but you must pay regularly and on or before the instalment 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 seven 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 that happens, you will have seven days to pay the balance of your account (the amount outstanding for the rest of the year).

If you do not pay your account in full, we will send you a summons for the outstanding balance. We will then add court costs to your account.

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.

Council Tax Benefit

Council Tax benefit helps towards the cost of Council Tax for people on low incomes. You do not have to be out of work to get this help. If you do not qualify for Council Tax benefit, you may be able to claim second adult rebate if there is someone (not your partner) living in your home who is on a low income and who is not paying you rent.

Cracking down on fraud

Councils have a duty to protect the public funds they administer, and may use the information held on their records for the prevention and detection of fraud. We may share this information with other organisations responsible for auditing public funds for these purposes.

All those receiving or applying for Council Tax benefit must, by law, provide original documents to prove their identity and income. This is to stop people receiving benefits when they are not entitled to them.

Could you save money on your council tax bill?

If you're on a low income, whether you're working or not, you could get help to pay your Council Tax bill. It doesn't matter if you own your home or not, and any other benefits you claim won't be affected by Council Tax Benefit.

To find out if you could get Council Tax Benefit contact your local district or borough council today.



If you need help to understand this information in another language please call **08456 066 067**.

Se precisar de ajuda para ler estas informações em outra língua, por favor telefone para o número abaixo.

Portuguese

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tych informacji w swoim języku zadzwoń na podany poniżej numer.

Polish

এই লেখাটি যদি অন্য ভাষাতে বুঝতে চান তাহলে নিচের নম্বরে ফোন করুন

Bengali

بەم زانیاری هەشێنی یە ب ت گەهێ هە یارمەر پ و ی سێت بەگەهێ
بەگە، وە ی خوارم ژمارەندی بەهێو بەزمان کی تر تکیایە

Kurdish

如果你需要其他語言來幫助你了解這些資訊，請撥以下電話。

Chinese

اگر شما نیاز دارید که این اطلاعات را به زبان دیگری دریافت کنید لطفاً به شماره زیر تلفن کنید.

Farsi

If you would like this information in another format, including audio tape or large print, please call **08456 066 067**.



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