

# YOUR COUNCIL TAX EXPLAINED 2020/21



For more information about council tax and ways to pay, visit [sutton.gov.uk/counciltax](https://www.sutton.gov.uk/counciltax)



# A MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER



We are ambitious for Sutton. Improving Sutton High Street and our district centres, local neighbourhoods and open spaces, building new energy-efficient council homes and creating the London Cancer Hub: these are just a few of the pioneering projects we're delivering while continuing to do everything else you expect of your local council.

Our ambition is not being diminished by 10 years of Government austerity. But it does mean we need to do more with less. Since 2010 our core central Government funding has been reduced by more than 60% in real terms. For every £1 we got in 2010 we now get just 40p.

While we're managing with less, more people than ever need our help. Almost two-thirds of our budget cares for older people, looks after vulnerable children, supports people with learning difficulties and helps those with physical disabilities live independently. Ten years of Government-imposed austerity means we're often the final safety net for those most in need.

We are determined these challenges will not stop us achieving our ambitions. We're proud that the majority of residents think we spend your council tax responsibly. We have already made savings of £96.4million since 2010 and the changes we've made will continue to save us money every year.

To help us deliver our shared ambitions, while delivering services for adults and children, we have taken the difficult decision to increase council tax this year. Council tax is increasing by 1.99%.

This will help us cover our costs (due to rising prices) and contribute towards the increasing costs of caring for those who need us.

The Government has decided that, in order to manage the increasing costs and demands on adult social care, local authorities have to cover the funding gap themselves by taxing residents. We therefore have little choice but to also apply the Government's 2% adult social care tax. This can only be used to support the most vulnerable older people in Sutton. This would not be necessary if the Government solved the national adult social care crisis. These two increases will mean Band D households will pay an extra 52p a week in council tax and 53p a week in adult social care tax.

This is not a decision we took lightly. Increasing council tax and using the adult social care tax is the only way we can raise the money we need to look after people in Sutton when they need us.

Your council tax protects those needing our care, while helping us deliver our ambitious projects to bring new jobs, homes and improvements to Sutton. I want to say a huge thank you for helping us ensure Sutton remains a great place to live, work and raise a family.

Yours faithfully,



**Councillor Ruth Dombey**  
**Leader of Sutton Council**

For a full breakdown of how council tax is spent in Sutton, please see page 5. You can also find more information at [sutton.gov.uk/counciltax](https://sutton.gov.uk/counciltax). If you need assistance please call 020 8770 5000 and select option 1.

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# WHERE SUTTON COUNCIL'S MONEY COMES FROM AND HOW IT'S SPENT

## Sutton Council's money come from:

	£m
Business rates retention scheme	(£43.1)
Government grants	(£13.7)
Other (net collection fund adjustment)	£0.000
Council tax requirement	(£105.01)
	<b>(£161.8)</b>

## How it's spent:

	2020/21
Adult Social Services	£64.7
Children's Social Services and Education	£40.6
Environment, Housing and Regeneration	£33.5
Resources directorate	£16.9
Chief Executive's directorate including Public Health	£22.7
Non Service Budgets	(£16.5)
	<b>£161.8</b>

Please note: Figures in brackets represent income, savings or a surplus.

# HOW YOUR COUNCIL TAX IS CALCULATED

## Sutton's estimated expenditure and income for 2019/20 and 2020/21

	2019/20 Net expenditure	2020/21 Gross expenditure	2020/21 Gross Income	2020/21 Net expenditure
<b>Council Directorates</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Chief Executive's	22,519	36,332	(13,611)	22,721
Environment, Housing and Regeneration	31,872	50,754	(17,294)	33,460
People's	93,326	244,039	(138,720)	105,319
Ring fenced Better Care Funding joint NHS/local authority grant	0	12,911	(12,911)	0
Ring fenced Public Health Grant	0	9,555	(9,555)	0
Resources	20,730	97,730	(80,872)	16,858
Interest, levies, reserves and other centrally held budgets	(12,318)	(860)	(15,689)	(16,549)
<b>Total</b>	<b>156,129</b>	<b>450,461</b>	<b>(288,653)</b>	<b>161,809</b>
Non-ring fenced core grants	(11,951)			(13,664)
<b>Net budget requirement</b>	<b>144,178</b>			<b>148,145</b>
Revenue Support Grant	0			(6,717)
Business rates	(26,712)			(16,967)
Top up grant	(15,731)			(19,451)
Collection fund surplus - council tax	(529)			(177)
Collection fund surplus - NNDR	(580)			177
<b>Amount from council tax</b>	<b>100,626</b>			<b>105,010</b>

Please note: Figures in brackets represent income, savings or a surplus.

## Changes in the Council's expenditure

£'000

<b>Council tax requirement 2019/20</b>	<b>100,626</b>
Inflation	2,811
Additional costs from continuing budget pressures and income shortfalls	7,432
Transfer to capital, provisions and reserves	2,089
Efficiencies, cost reduction measures and other savings	(5,970)
Collection Fund surplus decrease	1,109
Increase in Business Rates Income	(692)
Increase in grant income funding & Better Care Funding	(2,395)
<b>Council tax requirement 2020/21</b>	<b>105,010</b>

## HOW MUCH WILL I PAY FROM APRIL 2020?

The amount of council tax you pay is based upon a valuation of your property that was set by the Valuation Office Agency in 1991, which allocates each dwelling into one of eight bands. Your council tax bill shows which band applies to your dwelling.

Band	Range of Values (£)	Sutton General (£)	Sutton adult social care (£)	GLA (£)	Council Tax (£)
A	Up to 40,000	868.25	84.17	221.38	1,173.80
B	40,001 - 52,000	1,012.93	98.22	258.28	1,369.43
C	52,001 - 68,000	1,157.64	112.25	295.17	1,565.06
D	68,001 - 88,000	1,302.34	126.28	332.07	1,760.69
E	88,001 - 120,000	1,591.75	154.34	405.86	2,151.95
F	120,001 - 160,000	1,881.16	182.40	479.66	2,543.22
G	160,001 - 320,000	2,170.57	210.47	553.45	2,934.49
H	More than 320,000	2,604.68	252.56	664.14	3,521.38

If you believe the banding of your property is incorrect, visit [voa.gov.uk](http://voa.gov.uk)  
Making an appeal does not allow you to withhold a payment.

# LEVY INFORMATION

The council tax you pay includes amounts collected on behalf of other statutory bodies, known as levying bodies. These bodies pay for the net cost of their services by issuing a levy on each billing authority in their area, after deducting all other sources of income raised. The money due is included in your council tax bill and is paid to each body during the year.

Unlike the Greater London Authority (GLA) precept, levies have to be included as part of the Council's own budget calculations and are included in the calculation of the Council's own Band D council tax. The amounts included are shown below:

<b>Amount paid by Sutton:</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
<b>Levies - 2020/21</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Environment Agency	167,000	168,000
Lee Valley Regional Park Authority	174,000	172,000
London Pensions Fund Authority	252,000	248,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>593,000</b>	<b>588,000</b>



# COUNCIL TAX SELF SERVE

You can use this service to tell us if you move house, change your name, want to claim a single person's discount or set up a Direct Debit. This is quick, easy and secure, whether you are an owner, tenant, landlord or letting agent. Our records will be updated and a new bill automatically sent or emailed to you (see My Account overleaf) within seven days.

## You can notify us of the following:



A move into, out of or within the London Borough of Sutton. Only use this service if your whole household is moving.



You are the sole occupier of a property and wish to claim a single person's discount.



The name(s) on your council tax bill are incomplete, incorrect or misspelled.



You'd like to set up a Direct Debit with us.

If you are already a council tax payer in the London Borough of Sutton you will need to have your existing council tax bill in front of you to help answer some of the questions. To use this service please visit **[sutton.gov.uk/myaccount](https://sutton.gov.uk/myaccount)**

# MY ACCOUNT MAKES IT EASY

If you are paying council tax, business rates, receiving Housing Benefit or a Council Tax Reduction, you can now see your account online. Also, landlords can see information about Housing Benefit payments made to them in respect of their tenants. Depending upon which service you access, you will be able to choose to receive future bills by email and to see:

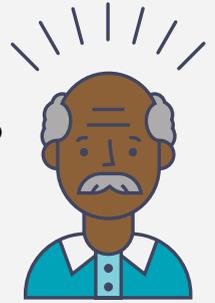
- A list of your payments
- The instalments still to be paid
- Discount and exemption details
- PDF version of your council tax or business rates bill
- PDF versions of notification letters or payment schedules (if you are a landlord)

Your account details are held securely, so you will need to register for an online account. Visit **[sutton.gov.uk/myaccount](https://sutton.gov.uk/myaccount)**



## FIGHTING FRAUD

We are working hard to make sure that council tax payers aren't carrying the burden of those people who don't pay their bills, or fraudulently claim Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction. Ultimately, fraud diverts money away from front line services and council budgets.



In response to the risk of fraud, we have a range of measures in place that identify potential fraud. We also work closely with the police and other partners in the public sector to ensure that immediate action is taken where fraud is detected, offenders are prosecuted and losses are recovered.

## COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION

The scheme provides financial assistance to council tax payers on a low income by reducing the amount of council tax they have to pay.

If you need help paying your council tax you might be entitled to a Council Tax Reduction.

Depending on the level of your income, you could receive a discount off your council tax.

For more information, or to check if you could be eligible, please go to **[sutton.gov.uk/makeabenefitclaim](https://sutton.gov.uk/makeabenefitclaim)**

# EXTRA HELP AVAILABLE FOR COUNCIL TAX AND RENT

If you are entitled to a Council Tax Reduction, Universal Credit or Housing Benefit and are still struggling to meet your council tax payments or rent, you can apply for a hardship fund payment for council tax or a discretionary housing payment (DHP) for your rent.

These payments are designed to help those who need further help. Our budget is limited and will not be able to meet all requests. The Council's DHP/Hardship Fund policy prioritises help to keep people in employment, help the disabled and vulnerable in the community and takes account of levels of income and expenditure.

For more information, please visit [sutton.gov.uk/DHP](https://sutton.gov.uk/DHP)

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## CRISIS LOANS AND GRANTS SCHEME

Sutton Council has a scheme of support for households on low incomes in receipt of benefits who are suffering hardship or under exceptional pressure.

If eligible, support may be awarded in the form of food vouchers or a voucher to meet utility payments. In certain circumstances, the Council can also make awards for beds, fridges, fridge freezers and cookers. If a resident is re-settling into the community a broader range of furniture may be available and is assessed on an individual basis.

Please go to [sutton.gov.uk/crisisloansandgrants](https://sutton.gov.uk/crisisloansandgrants) for more detail on our scheme, eligibility criteria, how to apply, who we work in partnership with, how we will use your information and links to useful organisations in the borough that also support people in times of hardship.

# COUNCIL TAX EXEMPTIONS, DISCOUNTS AND PREMIUMS

Depending on your circumstances, your council tax can be reduced through discounts and exemptions, or you may be entitled to help through the Council Tax Reduction scheme (see page 11).

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## EXEMPT AND EMPTY PROPERTIES

Changes to legislation, which came into force from 1 April 2013, mean empty and unfurnished properties including those requiring or undergoing major repairs or structural alterations are no longer exempt from council tax.

Properties that remain empty (vacant and substantially unfurnished) for two years are subject to a premium which means you will be asked to pay 200% from 1 April 2019 of the full council tax bill.

Those properties that remain empty (vacant and substantially unfurnished) for five years are subject to a premium which means you will be asked to pay 300% from 1 April 2020. These will be issued at the time the premium becomes payable.

However, some properties are still eligible for an exemption. For further details or to make an online application visit [sutton.gov.uk/counciltax](https://sutton.gov.uk/counciltax)



## DISCOUNTS

You may be eligible for a discount if you live alone (excluding any children under 18) or if you or someone you live with:

- Has a disability and your home has been adapted to meet their needs.
- Is a full-time student, student nurse, apprentice or Youth Training trainee.
- Is severely mentally impaired, e.g. dementia, Alzheimer's disease.
- Is a person caring for someone who is not a spouse, partner or child under 18.

For further details on all discounts, including how to make an application, visit **[sutton.gov.uk/counciltax](https://sutton.gov.uk/counciltax)**

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Some discounts/exemptions are time limited. If your bill shows an exemption or discount to the end of the financial year you will be issued with a revised bill at the time the exemption or discount expires. If your bill indicates that an exemption or discount has been allowed and you are no longer entitled, or your circumstances change so you are no longer entitled, you must tell the council tax team within 21 days by emailing **[counciltax@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@sutton.gov.uk)**. If you fail to do so you may be required to pay a penalty.

Grounds for appeals against a decision regarding your council tax can be found on our website at **[sutton.gov.uk/counciltax](https://sutton.gov.uk/counciltax)**

PAY BY  
DIRECT DEBIT  
FOR YOUR



CHANCE TO WIN  
£100 CASH



Sign up now by going to  
**[sutton.gov.uk/directdebit](https://sutton.gov.uk/directdebit)** and you  
will automatically be entered into a  
quarterly free prize draw to win £100.

# HOW TO PAY, CHECK YOUR ACCOUNT OR NOTIFY US OF CHANGES

## How to pay:



Set up a Direct Debit: [sutton.gov.uk/directdebit](https://sutton.gov.uk/directdebit)



Go online: [sutton.gov.uk/payforit](https://sutton.gov.uk/payforit)



Call the 24 hour automated payment line: **020 8770 7887**



Pay with your Payzone card at post offices and newsagents that display the Payzone sign



Want to pay your annual bill with 12 monthly instalments? If so, please email us at [counciltax@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@sutton.gov.uk)

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## ACCESS YOUR ACCOUNT

### MY ACCOUNT

You can see your council tax, business rates or Council Tax Reduction online at [sutton.gov.uk/myaccount](https://sutton.gov.uk/myaccount). Choose to receive your bills by email, see copies of your bills, a list of your payments, discount or exemption details if applicable and when your instalments are due.

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## NOTIFY US OF CHANGES

### SELF SERVE

A quick, easy and secure way to tell us if you move house, change your name, claim a single person's discount or set up a Direct Debit - visit [sutton.gov.uk/myaccount](https://sutton.gov.uk/myaccount)

For more information about council tax and ways to pay, visit [sutton.gov.uk/counciltax](https://sutton.gov.uk/counciltax)

