

YOUR COUNCIL TAX EXPLAINED 2021/22



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



Dear resident,

I know that the last 12 months have been challenging for so many of us, and I would like to thank the very many people who have helped to keep Sutton safe.

During this time, staff at the Council have continued to deliver more than 800 vital services while responding to the pandemic. From setting up the food hub to supporting local businesses, we've helped our community to deal with the health and economic challenges created by this terrible pandemic.

Over the next 12 months, your council tax will allow us to deliver the services so many people rely on while supporting Sutton's recovery through projects such as The London Cancer Hub, regenerating our district centres and tackling the Climate Emergency.

Value for money is at the heart of everything we do: we have responded to years of central government cuts by making savings wherever we can, and have delivered £96.4m savings since 2010. In addition, we have identified ways to save a further £5.6m in 2021 - 2022.

But these savings alone are not enough to meet the rising costs of providing care and support to more and more of our residents. To protect your vital services, we therefore need to raise council tax by

1.5% and have no choice but to take up the Government's suggestion to apply the 3% adult social care tax. We understand that these increases come at a particularly challenging time for many of you, and have done everything we can to keep them as low as possible.

The Mayor of London has also decided to increase the Greater London Authority (GLA) tax by 9.5%. This money goes towards the Metropolitan Police, The London Fire Brigade and Transport for London.

This means the average Sutton household (Band D) will pay an extra 41p a week in council tax, an extra 82p a week for the adult social care tax and an extra 61p a week for the GLA precept.

Thank you for helping us to protect the lives of some of the most vulnerable people living in our borough, while bringing new jobs, homes and improvements to Sutton.

Yours faithfully,

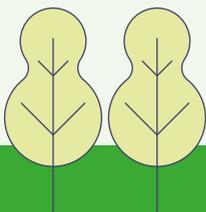
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruth Dombey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D'.

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. If you need assistance please call 020 8770 5000 and select option 1.

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| A message from the Leader | 2 |
| Where Sutton Council’s money comes from and how it’s spent | 5 |
| How your council tax is calculated | 6 |
| Levy information | 7 |
| How much will I pay from April 2021?..... | 8 |
| My account..... | 9 |
| Council tax reduction | 10 |
| Crisis loans and grants scheme | 11 |
| Council tax exemptions, discounts and premiums..... | 12 |
| Fighting fraud | 14 |
| How to pay..... | 16 |



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

Sutton Council's money comes from:

| | £m |
|--|-----------------|
| Business rates retention scheme | (£36.9) |
| Revenue support grant | (£6.8) |
| Other (net collection fund adjustment) | £1.5 |
| Council tax requirement | (£108.1) |
| | (£150.3) |

How it's spent:

| | 2021/22 £m |
|--|---------------|
| Adult Social Services | £62.5 |
| Children's Social Services and Education | £44.7 |
| Environment, Housing and Regeneration | £33.4 |
| Resources | £22.0 |
| Health & Wellbeing | £6.8 |
| Non Service Budgets | (£19.1) |
| | £150.3 |

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

HOW YOUR COUNCIL TAX IS CALCULATED

Sutton's estimated expenditure and income for 2020/21 and 2021/22

| | 2020/21 Net expenditure* | 2021/22 Gross expenditure | 2021/22 Gross Income | 2021/22 Net expenditure |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Directorates | £'000 (thousands) | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Health & Wellbeing | 7,867 | 9,865 | (3,037) | 6,829 |
| Environment, Housing and Regeneration | 33,460 | 51,168 | (17,749) | 33,418 |
| People's | 92,408 | 234,175 | (139,924) | 94,251 |
| Ring-fenced Better Care Funding Joint NHS/local authority grant | 0 | 12,911 | (12,911) | 0 |
| Ring-fenced public health funding grant | 0 | 9,555 | (9,555) | 0 |
| Resources | 25,246 | 105,223 | (83,234) | 21,990 |
| Interest, levies, reserves and other centrally held budgets | 2,828 | 10,982 | (1,460) | 9,522 |
| Total | 161,809 | 433,879 | (267,869) | 166,010 |
| Non-ring-fenced core grants | (13,664) | | | (15,756) |
| Net Budget Requirement | 148,145 | | | 150,254 |
| Revenue support grant | (6,717) | | | (6,754) |
| Business rates | (16,967) | | | (17,467) |
| Top-up grant | (19,451) | | | (19,451) |
| Collection fund deficit (surplus) - council tax | (177) | | | 824 |
| Collection fund deficit (surplus) - NNDR | 177 | | | 703 |
| Amount from council tax | 105,010 | | | 108,109 |

*20/21 figures restated to reflect changes in Council structure and to allow for easier comparison.

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

Changes in the Council's expenditure

£'000

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Council tax requirement 2020/21 | 105,010 |
| Inflation | 2,879 |
| Additional costs from continuing budget pressures and income shortfalls | 6,988 |
| Transfer to capital, provisions and reserves | 0 |
| Efficiencies, cost reduction measures and other savings | (5,666) |
| Collection fund surplus decrease | 1,527 |
| Increase in business rates income | (537) |
| Increase in grant income funding & Better Care funding | (2,092) |
| Council tax requirement 2021/22 | 108,109 |

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 over 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 hence are included in the calculation of the Council's own Band D tax. The amounts included are shown in the tables below:

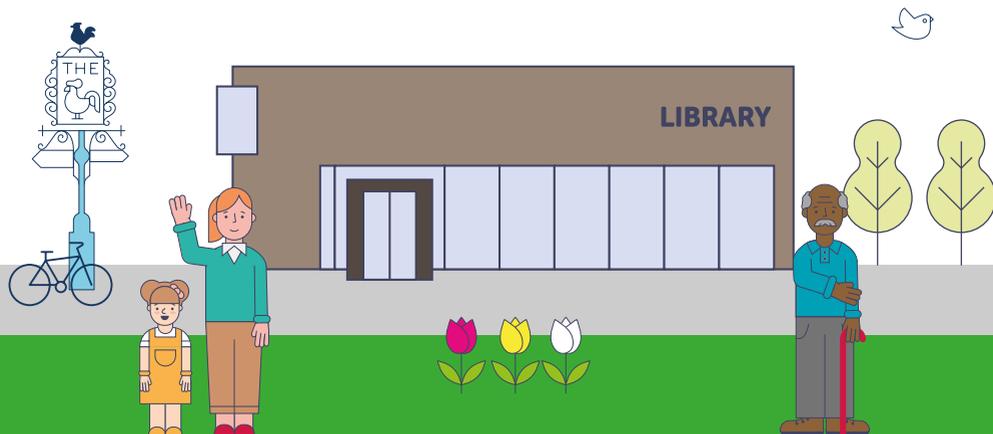
| Amount paid by Sutton: | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Levies - 2021/22 | £ | £ |
| Environment Agency | 168,000 | 170,000 |
| Lee Valley Regional Park Authority | 172,000 | 174,000 |
| London Pensions Fund Authority | 248,000 | 247,000 |
| Total | 588,000 | 591,000 |

HOW MUCH WILL I PAY FROM APRIL 2021?

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.

| Valuation Band | Range of Values (£) | Sutton Council General (£) | Sutton Council ASC Precept (£) | GLA (£) | Council Tax (£) |
|----------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| A | up to 40,000 | £882.51 | £112.75 | £242.44 | £1,237.70 |
| B | 40,001-52,000 | £1,029.60 | £131.55 | £282.85 | £1,444.00 |
| C | 52,001-68,000 | £1,176.68 | £150.34 | £323.25 | £1,650.27 |
| D | 68,001-88,000 | £1,323.77 | £169.13 | £363.66 | £1,856.56 |
| E | 88,001-120,000 | £1,617.94 | £206.71 | £444.47 | £2,269.12 |
| F | 120,001-160,000 | £1,912.11 | £244.30 | £525.29 | £2,681.70 |
| G | 160,001-320,000 | £2,206.28 | £281.88 | £606.10 | £3,094.26 |
| H | more than 320,000 | £2,647.54 | £338.26 | £727.32 | £3,713.12 |

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



MY ACCOUNT MAKES IT EASY

If you are paying council tax, business rates, receiving Housing Benefit or a council tax reduction, you can view your account online. Landlords can also 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 a landlord)

Your account details are held securely, so you will need to register for an online account. Visit sutton.gov.uk/myaccount

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 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**

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.

For more information, or to check if you could be eligible, please go to **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 are struggling financially. 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 for 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

.....

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.

Please go to sutton.gov.uk/crisisloansandgrants for more details 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).

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. From 1 April 2021, the following premiums apply:

- For properties that have been empty and substantially unfurnished for two or more years, but less than five years, the premium is 100%. This means you will be asked to pay 200% of the full council tax bill.
- For properties that have been empty and substantially unfurnished for five or more years but less than ten years, the premium is 200%. This means you will be asked to pay 300% of the full council tax bill.
- For properties that have been empty and substantially unfurnished for ten years or more, the premium is 300%. This means you will be asked to pay 400% of the full council tax bill.

If a premium becomes payable during the financial year, a revised bill will be issued to you.

As this premium applies to the property, a change of ownership or tenancy will not affect the premium. If, when you purchased or leased your property, it had already been empty and substantially unfurnished for two years or more, you will have to pay the extra council tax.

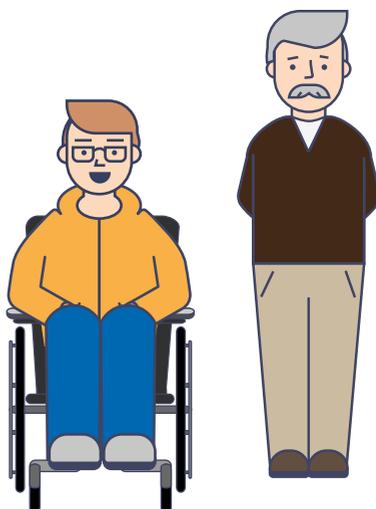
Some properties are still eligible for an exemption. For further details or to make an online application visit **sutton.gov.uk/counciltax**

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**



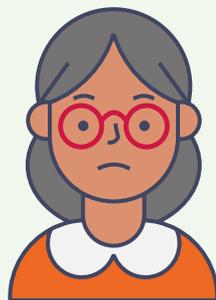
IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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. 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

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.



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, where fraud is detected, immediate action is taken, offenders are prosecuted and losses are recovered.

PAY BY
DIRECT DEBIT
FOR YOUR



CHANCE TO WIN
£100 CASH



Sign up now by going to
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



Go online: 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

12

Want to pay your annual bill with 12 monthly instalments?

Email us at counciltax@sutton.gov.uk

CHECK YOUR ACCOUNT



Go to sutton.gov.uk/myaccount to opt for e-billing, see details of your bills, payments, instalment dates and discount or exemption if applicable.

UPDATE YOUR ACCOUNT



Go to sutton.gov.uk/myaccount to let us know if you move house, change your name or to claim a single person's discount.

For more information about council tax and ways to pay, visit sutton.gov.uk/counciltax

