

2016 South Norfolk Council Annual Report

Council Tax

Although South Norfolk Council has frozen tax for seven of the last eight years funding from Government is about to change and the Council will have to contribute more to cover the cost of the services it provides. This year Council Tax will go up by 3.3% which is approximately £4.30 a year or 36p per month for a Band D property.

New homes

This year we have started building homes on two sites that we own to make money for the future.

We currently have the 4th highest New Homes Bonus of all districts but this bonus scheme is due to change.

Local Development Plan

The adopted Local Plan documents, showing the number of houses allocated to each village for the next ten years, are now on the website and show each settlement alphabetically. (<http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/4620.asp>)

Broadband

The Government wants 95% of the country to be able to access superfast broadband by 2017 and the County Council has been working with matched government funding to cover much of Norfolk.

South Norfolk Council has allocated funding for the more difficult to reach areas in the district and is appointing a part-time Broadband Consultant to help decide the best system for achieving this.

Bin Collections

We are about to start operating a four day bin collection scheme, Tuesdays to Fridays. This will mean we do not have to collect everyone's bin a day later after Bank Holidays and it will save money on overtime that we have to pay for Saturdays to catch up on collections. Also, new routes will help ensure our waste and recycling service is as efficient as possible. Mondays will be used for maintenance, etc.

Recycling

The WEEE events to collect and recycle electrical goods were so successful that they have been extended to recycle other items eg. textiles, books, boardgames and

furniture. The items are available for people to take away on the day, for a small donation, or donated to charities.

Leisure Centres

We have invested in refurbishing our leisure centres to help people of all ages keep fit and healthy.

We continue to provide full day Kids Camp activities for children during school holidays to provide cover for working parents.

Tree Wardens

The Parish Council's voluntary Tree Wardens have just set up their own independent group called The South Norfolk Tree Warden Network. They are currently developing their own website and will be hosting this year's East of England Annual Regional Tree Warden Forum.

Awards Schemes

This year we have held a retail awards scheme to help promote businesses in our market towns as well as our usual Community Award Scheme to thank the volunteers in our area.

Grants schemes

We will be continuing the Members Grants Scheme this year, where each member of the council is allocated £1,000 to use for grants within their Ward.

Forget Me Not grants of up to £1,000 are available to provide improvements or adaptations to the home of somebody with dementia to help them live independently for longer.

We are also offering grants of up to £400, to help villages put on an event to celebrate the Queen's ninetieth birthday and the fact that she is now the longest serving monarch.

Open Day

We will be holding our annual open day, South Norfolk on Show, on July 17th with local organisations and businesses joining us to promote services across South Norfolk.

Margaret Dewsbury