

What is Council Tax?

Council Tax is a locally set tax that is charged on domestic properties which helps to pay for the services provided by all the local authorities in your area. These include Broadland District Council (BDC), Norfolk County Council (NCC), the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk and the Town or Parish Council where you live.

What is a precept?

A Precept is the amount a council requires to fund its operations, after predicted income has been taken into account. This also applies to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Unlike District or County Councils, Parish and Town Councils do not receive any direct funding from central government and rely on their precept plus any other income they generate from services or facilities they provide.

The precept requirement for each organisation is added together by the District Council and forms the overall Council Tax for each property.

Council Tax is spent on major services including:

- Children’s social care (NCC)
- Waste collection and processing (BDC)
- Support for the elderly and vulnerable (BDC & NCC)
- Schools, education and youth services (NCC)
- Preventing homelessness through social housing (BDC)
- Maintaining open spaces (Parish/ Town Councils)
- Roads & highways (NCC)
- Streetlight maintenance Parish/ Town & NCC)
- Fire Service (NCC)
- Planning and building control services (BDC)
- Coroners, registrars, courts and elections (BDC & NCC)
- Street cleaning (BDC)
- Flood defences (NCC)

The council tax paid by you to Sprowston Town Council together with the income generated from our services fund the management and maintenance of:

- 92 allotments
- Sprowston’s 10.5-acre cemetery and visitor centre

- 8 parks and playing fields, including football pitches, tennis courts, bowls green and play equipment
- Sprowston Diamond Centre
- The Millennium Woodland
- Over 800 streetlights
- Seating
- Bus shelters
- Additional verge cutting

Sprowston Town Council
Income & expenditure budget year ending 31 March 2025

Function	Precept	Income	Expenditure	Transfer from reserves
Administration	248,322	11,000	276,367	
Allotments	3,113	5,259	8,372	
Cemetery	0	135,250	118,205	
Grants to Community groups	32,495	39	32,534	
Sprowston Diamond Centre	155,185	86,000	241,185	
Parks and open spaces	282,974	16,250	326,818	27,595
Streetlights & Verges	89,605	14,417	392,097	288,074
Viking Centre running costs	29,164	7,636	36,800	
Total	840,858	275,851	1,432,378	315,669

Future responsibilities will include the play parks, open spaces, car park and skatepark on the White House Farm development when completed. The Councils expected expenditure for 2024/25 is £1,432,379 and will result in a 5.30% increase on a Band D Tax Rate of £6.75 per year (12.9p per week) The Council’s predicted 2024/2025 energy costs for our current street lighting stock is £99,000.00. If lanterns are changed to LEDs the projected energy costs would be less than £25,000. The transfer of £288,074 from reserves (existing savings) will fund the replacement of 700 street lights with energy efficient self-fault reporting, fully programmable LEDs. A further transfer of £27,595 from reserves will fund construction of a hard surfaced pathway along the public right of way from Church Lane through Millennium Woodland to Wilks Farm Drive open space.

Council Tax Assistance Scheme

Broadland District Council has a local Council Tax Assistance Scheme to help residents on a low income. The amount of help depends on factors such as your age, income, savings, who lives with you and how much you pay. Contact the Benefit Service if you think you may be entitled and to make a claim Online: www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/benefits Tel: 01603 430602 Email: benefits.bdc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

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Telephone enquiries: Mon - Fri 9.30am - 1pm & 2pm - 4.30pm (after hours answerphone)

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Town Council Offices: Recreation Ground Road, Sprowston, Norwich, NR7 8EW

**Sprowston Town Council and Sprowston Diamond Centre**

Sprowston Matters



The official newsletter of Sprowston Town Council Issue 65 Spring 2024

The Viking Centre

We are delighted to announce the sealed tender process for development of the Viking Centre has been completed and the contract awarded to local building contractors Draper & Nichols Ltd.

The car park has been cordoned off and site office erected.

Work has commenced to clear and set out the rear of the site in preparation for construction of a new extension, and to strip out mechanical and electrical services in the existing building.



Scaffolding is expected on site during April to secure the roof and either replace, infill or repair the many windows.

When complete the newly resurfaced 30 space car park will be enclosed with bow topped fencing and gates and include a number of Electric Vehicle charging points.

On the ground floor the large bay-fronted space, previously the main restaurant and bar, has been reserved for a Community Cafe or similar social enterprise and will include a small veranda for outside seating.

Two multi use rooms (currently the kitchen and small hall) are intended to suit local clubs and societies looking for a venue to hold regular meetings.

The three first-floor rooms with shared amenities will be available to rent or hire on a flexible basis for a range of activities from treatment rooms, informal meetings or office space. Our first customer being Sprowston Youth Engagement Project (SYEP) who will be making the Viking Centre their new home.

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SPROWSTON Summer Fete

We are well on our way organising the summer fete. The popular Brewery Tap is back (with additional seating) 2 of 3 live music acts confirmed and the Fool Hardy circus gearing up to wow us with their skills and antics.

Face painting, free bouncy castles, balloon modelling, crafting, wandering entertainers and a range of food vendors.

Join us on Saturday 13 July 2024, 1.00pm - 5.00pm.

If you are interested in being a stallholder, please contact us. Tel: 016034006 Email: townclerk@sprowston-tc.gov.uk for an application form. Pitches are free for charities and non-profit making organisations, £15 for businesses and £20 for caterers.



Chairman's Chat by Councillor Bill Couzens

Hello everyone, what a strange winter we've had with little cold weather to speak of and new shoots now appearing. First, some good news of a couple of projects that are being provided using money the council receives from house builders via CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). We receive 25% of the levy as we have a Neighbourhood Plan in place. Councils without a Neighbourhood Plan get only 10%.

By the time you read this, our contractors, local firm Draper & Nichols Ltd, will have started work on the new Viking Community Centre on Tills Road. We are looking forward to welcoming you all to the new facility, which should open in November. However, it's an old building which has been left untouched for some time so who knows what the builders will uncover. Our final plans, which were drawn up after consultation with you our residents, can be seen at the Council Offices. There has been a lot of interest from local groups already. High on the list from the survey was a Community Cafe. We'd really love to hear from any local charities or social enterprises who would be prepared to manage it.

You will have seen, no doubt, that the area off Blue Boar Lane opposite the garden centre has been cleared and is being prepared for a recreational area. This will include our long-awaited skate park, also to be provided using CIL and a commuted sum from a previous development. We don't yet have a date for the hand-over of the site to us, from the developers so that we can get started but we will continue to work towards getting it completed as soon as we can. It's with the developers, Broadland District Council and Norfolk County Council at the moment. This is a facility that has been on the "to do" list for as long as I can remember so we are all looking forward to getting it built as soon as we can. We have interest from several local groups who want to help with the design of the area.

Not connected to CIL is the outstanding issue of the gritting of Atlantic Avenue during winter which is still yet to be resolved between the developers and Norfolk County Council. The Town Council and new District Councillors are working hard to try to get the issue resolved.

Next on the list of good news is this year's free Summer Fete to be held on The Rec on Saturday 13 July 2024. We had a lot of positive feedback from you following the last two very successful Fetes and this year it will again have lots of free activities for children and some at minimal cost. I've emphasised free because, talking to some of you last year, I found that the potential cost, especially if - like us - you have several children or grandchildren, could be a barrier.

If you are interested in a stall or would like to showcase your group's work in the arena, please contact the Town Council. If you remember last year, we had the Angel Baton Twirlers and the Lowestoft Dog Agility Team, both of which were warmly received. We also had traditional Fete games of egg & spoon races, sack races and three-legged races. This year we have already booked the Foolhardy Circus but more will be very welcome. We also need acts for the music tent too.

One last item before I close. The Town Council will be replacing all our old street lights for new LED lights. These will bring benefits in cost and carbon emission reduction as they use less electricity and are more reliable. They can be better tailored to our needs and that of wildlife; and will be fully managed so that they will be repaired or adjusted more quickly. If you have any views on how your area should be lit (e.g. part time, dimmed or left with exactly the same level) please contact the Town Council.

I'm always happy to talk to you on any subject to do with the Town Council so if you see me out and about feel free to come and say hello. We'd also really love to see more residents at our monthly Town Council meetings held on the fourth Wednesday of every month, 7.30pm at the Council Offices.

Annual Town Meeting

Did you know?

Annual Parish or Town Meetings are a legacy from the Middle Ages, when Local Councils did not exist, and all local decision making was carried out by meetings of the whole community.

Sprowston's Annual Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday 27 March 2024 in the Council Chamber, Council Office, Recreation Ground Road, Sprowston, commencing 7.00pm. Refreshments available from 6.45pm.

Any registered elector may ask a question of the Council which will usually be answered by the Chair, the Clerk of the Council, or a designated Councillor. An elector is welcome to make a suggestion and comment on anything pertinent to the residents of Sprowston.

We look forward to seeing you there.

D-Day 80 Remembrance

Join us on Thursday 6 of June 2024 in the grounds of St. Mary and St. Margarets Church, Church Lane to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

Music by Hellesdon and Sprowston Brass Band.

Drill display by 231 (Norwich) Squadron Air Training Core.

Lighting of the Beacon at 9.15pm and reading of The International Tribute by Chairman of the Council, Bill Couzens followed by a reading by Reverend Tim Yau.

Event opens at 8.30pm, refreshments available.

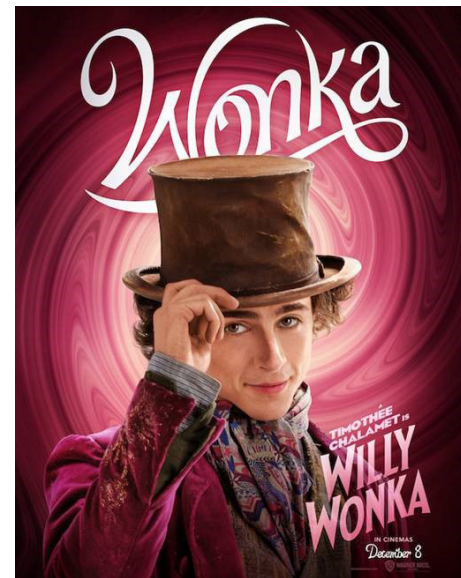
We encourage people to walk to the event however, there is free parking in the adjacent Church Lane car park.

The event is free, but space is limited. Entry on a first come, first served basis.

the Viking Centre, continued
from the front page

The cellar will be converted into a large storage area for regular hirers of the centre.

As previously mentioned, this refurbishment project will be entirely funded from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts from housing development companies who build housing estates in the area. The Council is restricted to spending CIL money on amenities such as parks, woodlands, play areas, community buildings etc. We do not have the legal powers to spend it on provision of Drs. surgery's, dentists or schools which are the responsibility of Integrated Care Boards (NHS), the Local Education Authority (NCC) or the Department of Education. If we do not spend the money within five years it is returned to the developer.



Easter Holiday Cinema



Join us for a children's film show screening of "Wonka" (Cert. PG), based on the character of Willy Wonka, created by Roald Dahl.

Thursday, 4 April 2024, 10.00am at Sprowston Diamond Centre. Tickets £2.00 each (adults and children), pocket money tuck shop, tea and coffee available for purchase.

No need to book, tickets purchased on arrival. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.



There's lots going on at Sprowston Diamond Centre

Join one of the many adult learning classes provided by Norfolk County Council. Currently Lip Reading, Italian and Spanish classes.

Sign up for one of the many activities for adults and children from family history research, jewellery making, dance, sensory baby and toddler classes, yoga, pilates and keep fit.

Why not watch a range of new and popular films at our Community Cinema held on the first Monday of each month (unless a Bank Holiday then it's the following Monday). Details on Council's noticeboards and website.

What's more we have singing, sewing, badminton and music practice groups and hope to welcome a table tennis club in the future.

Sprowston Community Dementia Café, a friendly group offering both professional and peer support to those who are affected by memory loss can be found in the School Room every third Thursday of the month 10.00am - 12.00pm. The café provides fun and laughter, activities and occasional speakers, free refreshments and disabled parking. There are plenty of volunteers on hand to help and no booking is necessary, just turn up and join in.

Your local Police Safer Neighbourhood Team hold their priority setting meetings at the centre giving residents an opportunity to raise any concerns they might have regarding the town.

The Redeemed Christian Church hold Sunday Services from 10.30am. All welcome

Sprowston Youth Engagement also hire our facilities for various youth projects throughout the year.

We have been pleased to accommodate NHS Wellbeing checkups and diabetes prevention programmes which have been running throughout the year.

The centre has hosted a variety of family celebrations including naming ceremonies, baby showers, birthday parties and even the occasional wedding reception.

It is also regularly hired for meetings, seminars, conferences and training events by a range of businesses, charities, other public organisations and local authorities.

We have two full size Badminton courts available for hire on a casual or regular basis.

The centre includes changing rooms with lockers and showers, three kitchens, baby changing facility and is fully accessible.

In the Pavilion on Sprowston Recreation Ground:

Little Dragon Norwich Puppy and Dog training, mixed ability Pilates with Chill Pilates and physio-led Pilates with Claire Gurney.

The Pavilion can also be hired for small parties, baby showers, afternoon tea and other family gatherings.

For information about these classes and groups please contact them directly. Details available from our website or the Council office.

If you are interested in hiring our facilities, please email sdcs@sprowston-tc.gov.uk or telephone 01603 408063. Hire fees and venue details can be found on our website www.sprowston-tc.gov.uk