

# Your council tax and business rates explained 2009–2010

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This booklet sets out the council's spending plans and information on council tax and business rates for 2009/10

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This leaflet is available in large print, Braille,  
on audio-tape or in different languages.

**Telephone** 0117 975 5785 • **Fax** 0117 975 5730 • **Textphone** 0117 975 5785

**Email** [communication.taxation@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:communication.taxation@bristol.gov.uk) to obtain the version you want

For information online look for the ♻ symbol

## Priorities for our city

This year's budget is focused on delivering four key priorities:



## An improving council

Bristol City Council has been awarded a two star rating and described as “improving well” by the Audit Commission in their latest Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

The table below summarises the council’s “scores” for key areas of its work – and shows the real progress the authority has made over recent years.

	2005	2006	2007
Use of Resources	2	3	3
Benefits	3	3	3
Children and Young People	1	1	2
Culture	1	2	3
Environment	2	2	2
Housing	2	3	2
Social care (adults)	2	2	3

For more information on the Audit Commission report visit

🔗 [www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/press-releases/2008/feb/CPA2007.en](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/press-releases/2008/feb/CPA2007.en)

## How the council works

The people of Bristol are represented on Bristol City Council by 70 elected councillors – two for each of the city's 35 electoral areas (wards). Annually, these councillors elect a leader and executive members from amongst their number to form a cabinet. The Cabinet provides accountable leadership to the city and takes key policy decisions on behalf of the council.

🔗 [www.bristol.gov.uk/cabinet](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/cabinet)

All councillors meet throughout the year to agree major policy issues not delegated to the Cabinet including the priorities, budget and council tax set out in this booklet. Councillors also serve on regulatory committees dealing with planning applications, licensing matters and public rights of way. Cabinet, council and regulatory meetings are held in public. Residents and local businesses have a right to make submissions about important issues to these meetings – 🔗 [www.bristol.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/meetings)

## Delivering services

On a day-to-day basis, services are delivered by officers employed by the council. These employees are led by a Strategic Leadership Team consisting of the Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Directors for Resources; Transformation; Health and Social Care; Children, Young People and Skills; Neighbourhoods and City Development. The city's Director of Public Health – a joint appointment with Bristol NHS – is also a member of the Strategic Leadership Team.

🔗 [www.bristol.gov.uk/services](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/services)

🔗 [www.bristol.gov.uk/management](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/management)

## Monitoring progress

Councillors also serve on scrutiny commissions and select committees that advise the Cabinet and chief officers on policy, monitor services and hold the Cabinet to account for its decisions – 🔗 [www.bristol.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/scrutiny)

The public also plays an important role in scrutinising services by taking part in consultations and giving feedback through our “fair comment” system. Visit 🔗 [www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/council-and-democracy/](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/council-and-democracy/) and click on the **Comments, compliments and complaints** link.

## Spending and the council tax 2009/10

The city council has set a council tax of £1,312.70 at band D for 2009/10. This is an increase of 3.2% over 2008/09. When the amounts required by the police and fire authorities are added to this, a total tax of £1,532.59 will be due for a band D property.

The average council taxpayer in Bristol pays approximately 75% of a band D council tax.

As well as providing for pay and price inflation, the council's budget for 2009/10 includes a net increase in spending on services of around £1million, after taking account of efficiency savings across all services and other adjustments amounting to some £8million. The overall budget is funded by an increase in central government grant, slightly above the national average, the availability of one off resources (mainly underspends from previous years and council tax collection fund surplus) and the 3.2% increase in council tax – well within government target levels.

In addition to backing a range of ongoing projects to improve services, the budget includes vital new funding to deliver the council's top priorities, including:

- ≡ An extra £2 million to support older and disabled people live independently, including a new Very Sheltered Housing complex at Monks Park
- ≡ An extra £530,000 to provide more intensive care for young adults with learning difficulties
- ≡ £400,000 to support services for “looked after” children and children at risk
- ≡ £470,000 to deliver frequent and better quality grounds maintenance
- ≡ £460,000 to maintain a range of community-based projects that protect the health and wellbeing of young people and promote community cohesion
- ≡ £280,000 investment to deliver free swimming sessions for the over 60s and under 16s – funded by special government grant
- ≡ £340,000 to improve recycling services
- ≡ £100,000 to help tackle traffic congestion, whilst maintaining support for community transport, park and ride services and “non commercial” bus contracts
- ≡ An extra £120,000 to enable community use of sports facilities in new and refurbished secondary schools
- ≡ Further investment of £185,000 to develop Neighbourhood Partnerships

## How the council tax is calculated

The council decides how much it needs to spend on all the services for the coming year, taking account of the need for services and the impact on the council tax. It then deducts the amount it expects to raise in income from services and the contribution from central government. This leaves the amount that needs to be raised through the council tax. For 2009/10 this is £174.4m.

The sum is then divided by the city's taxbase. This is the total number of properties in each of the eight valuation bands, adjusted to a band D equivalent and to allow for discounts and the predicted collection rate.

The taxbase for 2009/10 is 132,818.

Together with the amounts which are required by the police and fire authorities, this produces the total council tax to be set and collected by the council. In 2009/10 the total tax will be made up as shown:



Depending on which valuation band your



property has been placed in by the Valuation Office, and subject to any discounts, the amount you will actually be required to pay is set out below.

Band	Proportion of B and D	Bristol City Council	Police authority	Fire authority	Total
		£	£	£	£
A	6/9	875.13	107.51	39.09	1,021.73
B	7/9	1,020.99	125.42	45.60	1,192.01
C	8/9	1,166.84	143.34	52.12	1,362.30
D	9/9	1,312.70	161.26	58.63	1,532.59
E	11/9	1,604.41	197.10	71.66	1,873.17
F	13/9	1,896.12	232.93	84.69	2,213.74
G	15/9	2,187.83	268.77	97.72	2,554.32
H	18/9	2,625.40	322.52	117.26	3,065.18

Further information on the spending plans of the fire and police authorities is included on pages 22–24 and pages 25–28.

## How does Bristol's council tax compare?

Bristol's band D council tax for 2008/09 (including the amounts required by the police and fire authorities) is 45th highest in the country, 7.8% above the national average. This reflects historically high spending relative to government funding levels on education and social services.



Council tax levels 2008/09  
(including police and fire):



Bristol  
£1,482



National average  
£1,374

However, the **average** council tax for all chargeable dwellings in the city is lower than the band D figure. This is because more properties fall in the lower tax bands than into the higher tax bands. In 2008/09, over 60% of the total number of chargeable properties in Bristol are in bands A and B, and because of this, Bristol's average tax is around 1% below the national average.

## Efficiency performance

In 2008/09, the council set a target of £9.8m for efficiency savings in the year. This represents 2.1% of expenditure in 2007/08 (the measure which is prescribed by the government). In terms of a Band D council tax, this level of savings would equate to £76, which compares to a figure of £78 for local authorities of the same type. Targets for efficiency savings are set across the council and enable investment in priorities for service improvement.

## Spending on services and government funding

The council's net spending is financed by support from the government, with the balance being met by the council taxpayer. Support from the government is through the formula grant. This is paid to the council as a contribution towards its total spending and comprises the national non-domestic rate (the “business rate”) and a general grant, known as the revenue support grant.

The amount of revenue support grant paid depends on the government's formula for assessing the relative needs of each council. The formula also includes an adjustment which recognises differences in the amount of local income which individual councils have the potential to raise. Individual councils are guaranteed a minimum increase in grant, which is paid for by limiting increases above this level. Bristol's grant for 2009/10 is reduced by £5.5m as Bristol's “contribution” towards the cost of meeting these minimum increases.

Bristol's formula grant for 2009/10 amounts to £162.8m and will meet around 45% of the council's net budget. The grant is 3% above the equivalent figure for 2008/09 and compares with a national increase of 2.8%. Spending on schools is funded separately by the government, through the Dedicated Schools Grant.

As well as central government grant, the total amount which council taxpayers are asked to meet also takes into account any council tax brought forward from the previous year (the collection fund surplus):

	£m	£m
Net budget requirement (see following page)		361.5
Less revenue support grant	30.5	
– share of national non-domestic rate	132.3	
– area based grant	23.9	
– collection fund surplus	0.4	
		(187.1)
<b>Amount to be met by council taxpayers</b>		<b>174.4</b>

## How does the council plan to spend the money?

In the year beginning 1 April 2009, the council is planning to spend a total of £361.5 million on the provision of services to the citizens of Bristol. The expenditure and income for each of the main services is set out below:

2008/09			Services	2009/10		
Total spend	Income	Net spend		Total spend	Income	Net spend
£m	£m	£m		£m	£m	£m
328.0	250.3	77.7	Children and young people's	323.6	243.2	80.4
165.5	49.6	115.9	Adult community care	164.2	43.1	121.1
44.4	19.8	24.6	Highways and transport	37.1	12.1	25.0
27.8	3.1	24.7	Refuse collection and disposal	28.6	2.1	26.5
40.1	6.7	33.4	Leisure and recreation	45.7	10.3	35.4
134.4	131.5	2.9	Housing and council tax benefits	168.4	165.3	3.1
135.0	74.1	60.9	Other services	147.0	87.6	59.4
<b>875.2</b>	<b>535.1</b>	<b>340.1</b>	<b>Total spend on services</b>	<b>914.6</b>	<b>563.7</b>	<b>350.9</b>
2.6	–	2.6	Contingencies	2.1	–	2.1
21.0	11.0	10.0	Capital financing costs	15.9	5.0	10.9
0.8	–	0.8	Land drainage/flood defence	0.8	–	0.8
<b>899.6</b>	<b>546.1</b>	<b>353.5</b>	<b>Total spend</b>	<b>933.4</b>	<b>568.7</b>	<b>364.7</b>
		–	Transfer from reserves and balances			(3.2)
		<b>353.5</b>	<b>Net budget requirement</b>			<b>361.5</b>

More detailed information on the council's spending is contained in the Revenue Budget 2009/10. This can also be accessed in the Central Library, or via the council's website at [www.bristol.gov.uk/budget](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/budget)

## Why has council spending increased over last year?

The council's net spending has been fixed at £361.5 million for 2009/10. This compares with the 2008/09 budget of £353.5 million, including expenditure funded from the area based grant. This represents a net increase of £8 million, or 2.3%. The changes from 2008/09 are as follows:

	£m	£m
<b>Budget 2008/09</b>		<b>353.47</b>
<b>Additions:</b>		
Pay and price inflation	10.44	
Net growth in spending on services	9.33	
Other adjustments	1.20	
		20.97
<b>Reductions:</b>		
Efficiency improvements	(8.00)	
Increased use of balances and reserves	(3.19)	
Reduction in spending from Area Based Grant	(1.76)	
		(12.95)
<b>Budget 2009/10</b>		<b>361.49</b>

## Levies on the council

The Environment Agency and Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board charge the council by way of a levy for flood defence and land drainage. Details are as follows:

	Gross Exp	Total levies requirement	Levy on city council
	£m	£m	£'000
Environment Agency			
– Midlands Region	56.0	3.1	3
(2008/09)	(44.3)	(3.0)	(3)
– South West Region	31.8	3.1	402
(2008/09)	(34.6)	(3.0)	(390)
Lower Severn IDB	1.5	0.7	398
(2008/09)	(1.3)	(0.7)	(379)

## Facts about your council tax bill

Council tax is based on two adults living in the property.

- ≡ If only one person is resident they may be entitled to a 25% discount.
- ≡ If nobody is resident the bill may be reduced by up to 50%.
- ≡ Some properties could be 100% exempt even if they are occupied.
- ≡ Certain types of people may not be counted as adults living in the property for council tax purposes.

### Discounts

The following people are not counted as adults living in the property for council tax purposes:

- ≡ Full-time students, student nurses, apprentices, youth training trainees and foreign language assistants.
- ≡ 18- and 19-year-olds who are at, or have just left, school or college.
- ≡ Patients resident in hospital or who are being looked after in care homes.
- ≡ People who are severely mentally impaired.
- ≡ People in certain hostels or night shelters.
- ≡ Care workers on low pay, usually for charities.
- ≡ People caring for a disabled person who is **not** a partner or child under 18.
- ≡ Members of religious communities.
- ≡ People in detention (except those in detention for non-payment of council tax or a fine).
- ≡ Spouses of students where they are non-British subjects and are prevented by immigration regulations from taking paid employment or claiming benefits.
- ≡ Members and dependants of visiting forces.

You must tell us, within 21 days, of any change of circumstances that may affect your entitlement to an exemption or discount.

## Exemptions

Some homes are exempt from council tax. These include properties occupied only by students, people aged under 18, people who are severely mentally impaired, or annexes occupied by a dependant relative. They also include empty properties which:

- ≡ are unfurnished (exempt for up to six months)
- ≡ are owned by a charity (exempt for up to six months)
- ≡ require or are undergoing structural alteration or major repair (exempt for up to twelve months).

If you own an empty property that you would like to bring back into use, call the Empty Properties Officer for free advice on 0117 914 1200.

## Second homes

If you have an additional furnished property or a second home you may qualify for a discount on bills of 10%. However, there are certain circumstances – for example where the liable person is required to live in job-related accommodation elsewhere as part of their employment – where the discount will be 50%.

## Reduction for people with disabilities

If someone in your home needs an extra room or space to meet their special needs arising from a disability, you may be entitled to a reduced council tax bill. Your bill may be reduced by one band or, if your property is in band A, you will be entitled to a reduction equivalent to one-ninth of the band D charge.

## Council tax valuation bands

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA), part of the Inland Revenue and not the city council, has put every property into one of eight valuation bands. A full list of these bands is available on the VOA website at [www.voa.gov.uk](http://www.voa.gov.uk).

Your bill states which band applies to your home. The valuation is based on an estimate of how much it was worth on 1 April 1991.

Valuation band	Range of value: From	To
A	Up to and including	£40,000
B	£40,001	£52,000
C	£52,001	£68,000
D	£68,001	£88,000
E	£88,001	£120,000
F	£120,001	£160,000
G	£160,001	£320,000
H	More than £320,000	

## Appeals

You may appeal against the band in which your property has been placed if you are the new taxpayer for the property (within six months). Grounds are restricted and depend upon certain material changes in the property value. Information can be obtained from the Valuation Office Agency, 4th Floor, City Point, Bristol BS1 6PL. Telephone 0117 930 2200.

You can appeal to the council if you think you are not liable to pay council tax, for example because you are not the resident or owner, or because your property is exempt.

An appeal against your banding or your liability does not allow you to withhold payment. If your appeal is successful you will be entitled to a refund of any overpaid tax.

## Council tax benefit

You can claim benefit to help with your council tax if you are on a low income and have less than £16,000 savings.

Second adult rebate can be applied for if you do not have a partner but share your home with someone over 18 who is not paying rent and is on a low income.

If you are already receiving council tax benefit, any new entitlement will be worked out automatically and should be shown on your bill. If you wish to notify us of a change in circumstances, please contact the Benefits section.

Applications should be made as soon as possible, as we can only pay benefit from the Monday after the date of your claim. A form can be obtained from any Customer Service Point or by ringing the Benefits section (see page 19) or from the council website at  [www.bristol.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/benefits)

## Facts about business rates

Non-domestic rates, or business rates, collected by local authorities are the way that those who occupy non-domestic property contribute towards the cost of local services. Except in the City of London where special arrangements apply, the rates are pooled by central government and redistributed to local authorities as part of the annual formula grant settlement. The money, together with revenue from council tax payers, revenue support grant provided by the government and certain other sums, is used to pay for the services provided by your local authority and other local authorities in your area.

### Rateable value

Apart from properties that are exempt from business rates, each non-domestic property has a rateable value which is set by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), an agency of HM Revenue and Customs. It draws up and maintains a full list of all rateable values, available on their website at [www.voa.gov.uk](http://www.voa.gov.uk). The rateable value of your property is shown on the front of this bill. This broadly represents the yearly rent the property could have been let for on the open market on a particular date. For the revaluation that came into effect on 1 April 2005, this date was set as 1 April 2003.

The valuation officer may alter the value if circumstances change. The ratepayer (and certain others who have an interest in the property) can also appeal against the value shown in the list if they believe it is wrong.

Further information may be found on the VOA website or from:

- ≡ The Valuation Office Agency (Bristol)  
4th Floor, City Point  
Temple Gate  
Bristol BS1 6PD  
Telephone 0117 930 2200

### National non-domestic rating multiplier

The local authority works out the business rates bill by multiplying the rateable value of the property by the appropriate multiplier. There are two multipliers: the standard non-domestic rating multiplier and the small business non-domestic rating multiplier. The former is higher to pay for small business rate relief. The government sets the multipliers for each financial year for the whole of England. The multipliers change each year in line with

inflation and to take account of the cost of small business rate relief. In the year of a revaluation, the multipliers are set at a level which will keep the total amount raised in rates after the revaluation the same as before, plus inflation for that year. The current multipliers are shown on the front of the bill.

### **Transitional arrangements**

Property values normally change a good deal between each revaluation. Transitional arrangements help to phase in the effects of these changes by limiting increases in bills. To help pay for the limits on increases in bills, there also have to be limits on reductions in bills. Under the transition scheme, limits continue to apply to yearly increases and decreases until the full amount is due.

The scheme applies only to the bill based on a property at the time of the revaluation. If there are any changes to the property after 1 April 2005, transitional arrangements will not normally apply to the part of the bill that relates to any increase in rateable value due to those changes. Any transitional adjustments are shown on the front of this bill.

Further information about transitional arrangements and other reliefs may be obtained from Bristol City Council or the website

🔗 [www.mybusinessrates.gov.uk](http://www.mybusinessrates.gov.uk)

### **Unoccupied property rating**

Business rates will not be payable in the first three months that a property is empty. This is extended to six months in the case of certain industrial properties. After this period, rates are payable in full unless the unoccupied rate has been reduced by the government by order. In most cases, the unoccupied property rate is zero for properties owned by charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs. In addition, there are a number of exemptions from the empty rate. Full details on exemptions can be obtained from the local authority. If the unoccupied property rate for the financial year has been reduced by order, it will be shown on the front of this bill.

### **Partly occupied property relief**

A ratepayer is liable for the full non-domestic rate whether a property is wholly occupied or only partly occupied. Where a property is partly occupied for a short time, the local authority has discretion in certain cases to award relief in respect of the unoccupied part.

## Small business rate relief

This relief is only available to ratepayers who apply to their local authority and who occupy either:

- ① one property; or
- ② one main property and other additional properties, providing those additional properties each have a rateable value of less than £2,200.

The rateable value of the property mentioned in ①, or the aggregate rateable value of all properties mentioned in ②, must be under £15,000 outside London or £21,500 in London on every day for which relief is being sought. If the rateable value, or aggregate rateable value, increases above those levels, relief will cease from the day of the increase.

Ratepayers who satisfy these conditions will have the bill for their single or main property calculated using the lower small business non-domestic rating multiplier rather than the ordinary non-domestic rating multiplier that is used to calculate the liability of other businesses.

In addition, if the single or main property is shown on the rating list with a rateable value of up to £10,000, the ratepayer will receive a percentage reduction in their rates bill for this property up to a maximum of 50% for a property with a rateable value of not more than £5,000.

If an application for relief is granted, provided the ratepayer's circumstances do not change, the application will not need to be renewed until the next revaluation of non-domestic premises, which happens every five years. Certain changes in circumstances will need to be notified to the local authority by the ratepayer (other changes will be picked up by the local authority). The changes which must be notified are:

- ① the ratepayer taking up occupation of a property they did not occupy at the time of making their application for relief; and
- ② an increase in the rateable value of a property occupied by the ratepayer in an area other than the area of the local authority which granted the relief.

Notification of these changes must be given to the local authority within four weeks of the day after the day the change happened. If this happens, there will be no interruption to the ratepayer's entitlement to the relief. A notification that the ratepayer has taken up occupation of an additional property must be by way of a fresh application for relief; notice of an increase in rateable value must be given in writing.

Full details on the eligibility criteria and on how to apply for this relief are available from the local authority.

### **Charity and registered community amateur sports club relief**

These are entitled to 80% relief where the property is occupied by the charity or club and is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes or as a registered community amateur sports club. The local authority has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill.

### **Non-profit making organisation relief**

The local authority has discretion to give relief to non-profit making organisations.

### **Hardship relief**

The local authority has discretion to give relief in special circumstances.

### **Schedule of payments for certain backdated liability**

Ratepayers who face certain backdated liability may be able to discharge that liability over up to eight years by agreement with their billing authority.

This may be possible if the backdated liability has arisen as a result of an alteration to a ratings list which:



- ≡ means a hereditament is shown on that list for the first time;
- ≡ has effect from a day that is at least 33 months prior to the date the alteration is made;
- ≡ is made on or before 31st March 2010; and
- ≡ is not the result of a proposal by an interested person made under the Non-Domestic Rating (Alteration of Lists and Appeals) (England) Regulations 2005.

To be eligible, ratepayers must have occupied one or more properties affected by the type of rating list adjustment above, within the billing authority area, between the effective date of the list alteration and the date it was actually made, for 33 months or more. Ratepayers are not eligible if they were previously liable for rates in respect of a property “preceding” the new property assessment (ie a property that forms a part of a new merged property or a part of a property that has been split into two or more new properties).

With the agreement of their billing authority, eligible ratepayers will be able to discharge any outstanding liability that accrued between the effective date of the relevant list alteration and the date the alteration was made over a period of up to eight years.

Further details on the criteria and the process to obtain a schedule of payments are available from your local authority.

### Rating advisers

Ratepayers do not have to be represented in discussions about their rateable value or their rates bill. Appeals against rateable values can be made free of charge. However, ratepayers who do wish to be represented should be made aware that members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS –  [website www.rics.org](http://www.rics.org)) and the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV –  [website www.irrv.org.uk](http://www.irrv.org.uk)) are qualified and are regulated by rules of professional conduct designed to protect the public from misconduct. Before you employ a rating adviser, you should check that they have the necessary knowledge and expertise, as well as appropriate indemnity insurance. Take great care and, if necessary, seek further advice before entering into any contract.

## Paying your council tax or business rate



Pay by direct debit and avoid the risk of incurring recovery costs due to late payment.

You are safeguarded by the direct debit guarantee that automatically allows the return of any payment to your bank account if either the city council or your bank makes an error.



You can pay at any of these outlets using your plastic payment card or bar-coded document (such as your bill). A list of the outlets in the Bristol area is available on the council tax website.



You can pay over the phone with a debit or credit card on 0870 707 7776. This is a 24-hour service, available seven days a week.

Details of all the payment methods available are shown on the back of your bill.

## Online services

You can access facilities online for:

- ≡ seeing a statement of your account giving information about liability, payments, balances and reliefs
- ≡ enabling you to make payments via the Internet
- ≡ seeing detailed information about council tax and business rates via the council website, including e-forms for applications for certain reliefs, advising change of address, making an enquiry, or e-billing enabling you to receive bills electronically.

## How to contact us

- ≡ Council tax or business rates

Write to: Amelia Court, Pipe Lane, Bristol BS99 1ZG

Helpline: 0117 925 0981

Fax: 0117 975 5730

Minicom: 0117 975 5785

Website: [www.bristol.gov.uk](http://www.bristol.gov.uk)

email: [council.tax@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:council.tax@bristol.gov.uk) or [business.rates@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:business.rates@bristol.gov.uk)

- ≡ Council tax benefits

Write to: Benefits Section, PO Box 43, Bristol BS99 1BF

Helpline: 0117 922 2300

Fax: 0117 903 7051

Website: [www.bristol.gov.uk](http://www.bristol.gov.uk)

email: [www.benefits.enquiry@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:www.benefits.enquiry@bristol.gov.uk)

**2005-2006**

*Promoting Racial Equality*

**2006-2007**

*Transforming the Delivery of  
Services Through Partnerships*

**2007-2008**

*Healthy Schools*

**2007-2008**

*Preventing and Tackling  
Anti-social Behaviour*




## Key council services – contacting us online or by telephone

For online services, go to the council's website  [www.bristol.gov.uk](http://www.bristol.gov.uk) and add the ending as listed below:

Service	Online service or information	Phone
Abandoned vehicles	/vehicles	0117 922 2100*
Benefits – council tax and housing	/benefits	0117 922 2300*
Business rate – information	/rates	0117 925 0981
Consumer advice	/tradingstandards	0845 4040506
Council tax – information	/counciltax	0117 925 0981
Council tax and business rates – make a payment	/pay	0870 7077776
Council tax and business rates – online statement	/access	0117 925 0981
Fostering and adoption	/fostering	0117 954 8545
Highways and drainage	/streetcare	0117 922 2100*
Homelessness – advice (single people)	/homeless	0117 914 1188
(families)		0117 353 4007
Jobs with the council	/jobs	0117 922 4499
Libraries – automated renewal service and opening hours	/librarycatalogue	0845 0020777
Licensing	/licensing	0117 914 2500
Museums	/leisure	0117 922 3571
Parking services	/parking	0117 922 3091
Parks enquiries	/leisure	0117 922 3719
Planning enquiries	/planning	0117 922 3097
Pollution – noise, air etc	/pollution	0117 922 2500*
Recycling and waste collections	/recycling	0117 922 2100*
Register Office	/register	0117 903 8888
Roadworks helpline	/roadworks	0117 903 1212

Service	Online service or information	Phone
Roads and pavements – repairs	/streetcare	0117 922 2100*
Schools admissions	/schooladmissions	0117 903 7694
Social services – for adults: Care Direct	/caredirect	0117 922 2700*
for children at risk	/childprotection	
emergency out of hours		0145 461 5165
Street lighting – faults	/lighting	0117 922 2100*
Traffic lights – faults	/trafficlights	0800 854229
Traffic management	/traffic	0117 903 6822

Visit  [www.bristol.gov.uk/services](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/services) for our growing list of online services.

Services marked \* are handled by our Customer Services Centre – open from 8.30am to 8pm weekdays (housing and council tax benefit 8am–8pm).

The council's main switchboard number is 0117 922 2000.

Genuine out-of-hours emergencies relating to council services can be reported to 0117 922 2050.

## Your councillor

Each electoral area of the city (ward) is represented on the council by two elected local councillors.

For details of how to contact your local councillor visit  [www.bristol.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/councillors) or call 0117 922 2652.



## AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

**Our Mission: to improve public safety through preventing, protecting and responding.**



We play a crucial role in protecting our communities by working hard to prevent emergencies happening. We also ensure that we are ready to respond to fire and other emergencies, whether they are a result of accidents, nature or of terrorist activities.

### Efficiency information

Avon Fire Authority expects to make £604,000 in efficiency savings in 2008/09. This represents, under government targets, 1.8% as a percentage of the 2007/08 spend.

The value of forecast savings on a Band D Council Tax is £2, which is equal to the national average for similar authorities.

Avon has the sixth lowest Council Tax of the Combined Fire Authorities.

### Where each pound goes



For further information please contact: Avon Fire & Rescue Service, Temple Back, Bristol, BS1 6EU Telephone: 0117 926 2061 [www.avonfire.gov.uk](http://www.avonfire.gov.uk)

## Annual budget

The Council Tax for The Fire Authority is set at £58.63 per Band D property. This is equivalent to an annual increase of £2.62 (5 pence per week) (4.68%) on last year. The Authority has set its budget at £46.124m.

The budget includes allowance for the cost of inflation, improvements to our service identified within our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and capital funding costs.

## Spending plans

	2008/09 (£m)	2009/10 (£m)
Total fire expenditure	47,257	46,308
Use of reserves	- 0,490	- 0,300
Income	- 1,855	- 1,664
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,912</b>	<b>46,124</b>
Revenue support grant	3,010	4,642
Share of NNDR*	21,621	20,113
Council tax (£ per Band D property)	20,153	21,238
Collection fund surplus	0,128	0,131
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,912</b>	<b>46,124</b>

\* NNDR - Business rates

The main changes in spending from 2008/09 to 2009/10 are identified below.

Main changes in expenditure	(£m)
<b>2008/09 Budget requirement</b>	<b>44,912</b>
Inflation	1,047
Capital Financing/Lease charges	0,170
Other	0,189
Use of reserves	- 0,010
Savings	- 0,184
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,124</b>

## Capital requirements

The Authority has set a Capital Programme for 2009/10 of £2.650m, compared with £2.850m for 2008/09. The programme includes refurbishment and relocation of premises, vehicle replacement and support for home fire safety initiatives.

Capital Budget £m	2009/10 (£m)
Premises and IT	0,800
Vehicles	1,200
HQ and special projects	0,350
Community fire safety initiatives	0,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,650</b>

The fire authority publishes lots of other information on our performance planning and budgets. You can find more information by visiting [www.avonfire.gov.uk/Avon/AFRS+2009](http://www.avonfire.gov.uk/Avon/AFRS+2009)

# More than half of all house fires in the Avon area start in the kitchen.

Never leave cooking unattended.

If a pan does catch fire:

- Don't move it;
- If it is safe to do so, turn off the heat; and
- Never throw water on it, this will only make the fire worse.

## Get out, stay out and call 999.

[www.avonfire.gov.uk](http://www.avonfire.gov.uk)



### Know your escape route

Planning ahead could help save lives if a fire breaks out in your home.

Knowing what to do if your smoke alarm goes off and how you and your family would escape could make the difference between life and death.

Discuss and remember the following points:

- Your best, quickest and safest route out is the way you always come into your home but think about other ways out too.
- Keep your escape routes clear of obstacles.
- Know where door and window keys are kept.
- Staying put may be the safer option.
- If your escape route is blocked, find a suitable room, ideally with a window which opens, call 999 and stay there until help arrives.

Walk the route with your family and check everyone is able to operate any locks.



## Avon and Somerset Police



### Our Pledge to You

Over 2008/09 the Constabulary has made notable performance improvements in many key areas. The detection rate has continued to increase to 27%, reflecting an improvement of 1.8% on last year. Additionally, good progress continues to be made for vehicle crime and criminal damage and we are seeing consistently higher levels of overall user satisfaction.

In 2009/10 the Police Authority's main goals are to ensure that our communities receive the very best possible police service within the resources available, and that people have the highest levels of confidence in the service we provide.

We are committed to delivering the aims of the national Policing Pledge that was launched across the country at the beginning of 2009. The Pledge contains ten clear commitments about the standard of service that you can expect to receive from us.

This includes ensuring that your Safer, Stronger Neighbourhood team works visibly in your area tackling your priorities and that you have regular opportunities to meet the team to let them know your views and to hear the progress they are making.

Locally, we are already increasing the information we provide to you. Names and contact details of the members of the Safer Stronger Neighbourhoods Teams, neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour statistics and the local priorities the teams are working to tackle are all available on the 'Local Area' pages of the Constabulary website: [www.avonandsomerset.police.uk](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk). You can also find the dates of your 'Partners and Communities Together' (PACT) meetings - your opportunity to have your say on the issues you would like the police and partners to tackle.

### The Budget 2009/2010... And What it Means to You

The budget process for 2009/10 has not been an easy one, as the Authority seeks to balance the policing needs of our communities with the impact of the downturn in the economy. The police budget and resulting increase in the police council tax precept seeks to maintain frontline police officer numbers and existing services.

In order to do this we have had to identify significant efficiency savings, which has been possible due to the work we have done with collaboration and partnerships like our joint venture with Southwest One Limited. However, even with these efficiencies, we have still had to make some difficult decisions to arrive at a balanced budget for the next year including reducing planned spending in a range of areas and holding some posts vacant for longer.

In 2009/2010 the Authority expects to spend £270.429 million (£260.223 million 2008/2009) on

policing services for you and your local community.

The police council tax precept forms part of the overall council tax you pay and details are shown on the face of your council tax bill.

This represents a total cost of £161.26 per year to the average council taxpayer in Avon and Somerset including the rise of £6.94 for 2009/2010.

This sum pays for the range of policing services, which can be broadly categorised as:-

- Reducing Crime
- Investigating Crime
- Promoting Public Safety
- Providing Assistance to the Public



# Avon and Somerset Police



## Down to detail

The following table shows the main reasons for the changes to the budget from 2008/09 to 2009/10 together with details of how the budget is financed.

	£m
Budget for 2008/09	260.2
Pay and Price Inflation	8.5
Commitments	3.8
Efficiency/Improvements and Savings	(2.1)
Budget for 2009/10	270.4
<b>This is financed by:</b>	
Government support:	
National Business Rates	58.3
Government Revenue Support Grant	13.5
Home Office Police Grant	107.9
Contribution from balances	0.5
Surplus on earlier years Collection Funds	0.5
Balance to be met by Council Taxpayers	89.7
	270.4

## Financial & statistical information 2009/10

### The Revenue Budget 2009/10



The Authority has set a budget requirement after deducting income from specific grants, fees and charges of £270.4m (£260.2m in 2008/09). The table shows that the majority of this is funded by Government and Home Office grants with the balance being met from Council Tax. The resulting increase in the Police Authority Council Tax Precept is 4.5%

## Capital Investment

The Authority has agreed a capital programme for 2009/10 of £28.1m (£15m 2008/09).

The programme includes continued investment in national information and communication systems, and replacement of police vehicles and equipment.

In addition it also includes the capital costs of progressing the Accommodation Review currently being undertaken by the Authority.

In agreeing the Capital programme, the Authority has approved a borrowing level of £24.5m (£10m 2008/09).

Details of the capital programme are as follows:

2008/2009	Details of Spend	2009/2010
£m		£m
4.5	Information and Communication Systems	2.7
2.6	Estates	20.5
4.0	Transport Services	2.5
0.4	Plant, Machinery and Equipment	0.4
3.5	Support Services Systems	2.0
<u>15.0</u>	<b>Total Spend</b>	<u>28.1</u>
<b>To be funded from:</b>		
£m		£m
2.6	Capital Grants	3.2
9.0	Borrowing	24.0
1.1	Revenue Contributions	0.7
2.7	Capital Receipts	0.1
(0.4)	Other Funding	0.1
<u>15.0</u>	<b>Total Funding</b>	<u>28.1</u>



# Avon and Somerset Police



## Latest Force Performance against 2008/09 Policing Plan Targets

Indicator	Performance	Change on previous year	Target
Satisfied with the ease of contacting us *	91.6%	+1.2% pts	93%
Satisfied with the action we take at the scene *	79.2%	+2.3% pts	80%
Satisfied with our follow-up service *	66.7%	+3.4% pts	66%
Satisfied with service provided by our staff *	91.7%	+0.4% pts	93%
Satisfied with overall service *	81.3%	+0.7% pts	85%
Satisfaction rate of victims of racist incidents *	76.6%	+5.8% pts	75%
Percentage of complaints resolved locally (where local resolution is suitable) ****	62%	-8% pts	75%
Domestic burglary per 1000 households **	13.9	+3.3%	-15%
Robbery per 1000 population **	1.3	+6.6%	-10%
Theft of motor vehicles per 1000 population **	2.7	-17.5%	-10%
Theft from motor vehicles per 1000 population **	7.6	-15.9%	-10%
Life threatening and gun crime ** ****	640	+28.3%	0%
(of which gun crime) ** ****	113	-18.9%	0%
Detection rate for all crimes ****	27.0%	+1.9% pts	29%
Detection rate for domestic burglary ****	14.5%	+0.6% pts	18%
Detection rate for robbery ****	16.4%	-3.7% pts	22%
Detection rate for theft of motor vehicles ****	15.2%	-0.4% pts	20%
Detection rate for theft from motor vehicles ****	11.7%	+4.4% pts	10%
Detection rate for hate crime ****	34.3%	-3.2% pts	42%
Detection rate for violence against person ****		No Change	55%
Detection rate for rape ****	19.0%	-6.0% pts	28%
Fear of being a victim of domestic burglary	7.5%	*****	9.0%
Fear of being a victim of violent crime	8.4%	*****	12.3%
Fear of being a victim of vehicle crime	10.6%	*****	10.1%
Concern over levels of anti-social behaviour	11.6%	-2.4%	13.2%
Concern over local drug use/dealing	20.8%	-3.2%	21.6%
Fatalities or serious injuries resulting from road traffic collisions	Not available		511 for 2010
999 calls answered within 10 seconds	84%	+1% pts	90%
General calls answered within 40 seconds	80%	+10% pts	75%
Urban emergency incidents attended in 10 min	70.5%	-1.9% pts	75%
Rural emergency incidents attended in 20 min	83.6%	+0.1% pts	90%

\* 12 Months ending 30th November 2008

\*\* Annual estimate based on Apr-Dec

\*\*\* This has been broken down because the "life threatening" aspect has been affected by the change in guidance for recording violent crimes, where the crime is now recorded based on the "intent" of the perpetrator rather than the actual injuries sustained.

\*\*\*\* Position at 31st December 2008

\*\*\*\*\* Data no longer collected by the home office. Reported performance is at 31/3/08



# Avon and Somerset Police



## 2009/10 Objectives

### CITIZEN FOCUSED POLICING

- To improve the quality of service to our customers
- To increase trust and confidence in policing, especially among our minority communities
- To increase visibility and contact with our communities
- To reduce local disorder and anti-social behaviour, in particular alcohol-related violence
- To meet Policing Pledge aims for emergency calls
- To improve road safety

### REDUCING CRIME & BRINGING OFFENDERS TO JUSTICE

- To reduce crime and increase the proportion of crimes where the offender is brought to justice, especially for:
  - Robbery
  - Domestic burglaries
  - Racial and other Hate crime
  - Rape
  - Domestic violence
  - Violent crime
  - Vehicle crime

### PROTECTIVE SERVICES

- To continue to play a leading role in the provision of protective services in the region
- To continue to tackle major crime, particularly:
  - Organised crime involved in supplying illegal drugs
  - Offences against children
- To play our full part locally and nationally in counter-terrorism strategies
- To ensure effective plans are in place with our partners to deal with serious incidents

### PEOPLE & RESOURCING

- To use resources more efficiently to increase police officer time spent on local policing delivery
- To deliver a more representative workforce to reflect the diverse communities we serve
- To reduce sickness levels

## Performance Targets

Challenging performance targets have been set in the policing plan and the Constabulary's performance against these targets will be monitored and publicised by the Authority.

The targets reflect the determination of both the Authority and the Constabulary to provide the highest possible quality of policing services and criminal investigation, ensuring the communities of Avon and Somerset feel safe and have the highest possible levels of confidence in local policing.

Crime reduction targets include the further reduction of burglary, robbery and vehicle crime. In terms of detecting crime, the target is to raise the overall rate to at least 28%.

Regarding satisfaction levels for the ease of contacting us, the target is to raise this from its current level of 91.6% to at least 93%.

Performance targets also include reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions and improving the detection rate of rape to at least 22%.

## For further information

### Budget questions

Treasurer to the Police Authority,  
Valley Road,  
Portishead,  
Bristol BS20 8JJ.  
Tel: 01275 816380  
[www.aspoli.org.uk](http://www.aspoli.org.uk)

### Policing issues

Chief Constable  
PO Box 37,  
Valley Road,  
Portishead,  
Bristol BS20 80J.  
Tel: 01275 816006  
[www.avonandsomerset.police.uk](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk)