

Your Council Tax 2010/11

for Maidstone Borough



This booklet contains details of how your council tax contributions are used to provide services in your area.



Kent & Medway
Fire & Rescue Authority



Contact Information

If you have any comments or questions about the information provided, please contact the appropriate authority:

Maidstone Borough Council

Telephone: 01622 602000

Email: customerservices@maidstone.gov.uk

Write to:
Maidstone Borough Council,
Maidstone House, King Street,
Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ

Website: www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk

Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority

Telephone: 01622 692 121

Email: KFRSFinance@kent.fire-uk.org

Write to:
Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue
Authority, Headquarters, Straw Mill Hill,
Tovil, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6XB

Website: www.kent.fire-uk.org

Kent County Council

Telephone: 08458 247 247

Email: council.tax@kent.gov.uk

Write to:
Kent County Council, Room 3.08,
Sessions House, Maidstone,
Kent ME14 1XQ

Website: www.kent.gov.uk/financialpublications

Kent Police Authority

Telephone: 01622 677 055

Email: kpaenquiries@kent.pnn.police.uk

Write to:
Kent Police Authority, Gail House,
Lower Stone Street, Maidstone,
Kent ME15 6NB

Website: www.kentpoliceauthority.gov.uk

If you have a question about paying your council tax bill or claiming a council tax rebate, please contact your local borough, city or district council.

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Let Direct Debit take care of your Council Tax

- No reminders
- No hassle
- No worries



Note

Setting up couldn't be easier. Give us a call, have your bank details ready and by the end of the call it is done.

Do it Direct – Phone: 01622 602003

The table below shows how your council tax is divided between the different authorities. Some areas also pay tax to a parish council. This amount varies so the charges are shown separately on pages 12 and 13 of this leaflet).

House Band	Kent County Council £	Maidstone Borough Council £	Kent Police Authority £	Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority £	Total council tax (excluding parish precepts) £
A	698.52	148.26	92.45	45.30	984.53
B	814.94	172.97	107.86	52.85	1,148.62
C	931.36	197.68	123.27	60.40	1,312.71
D	1,047.78	222.39	138.68	67.95	1,476.80
E	1,280.62	271.81	169.50	83.05	1,804.98
F	1,513.46	321.23	200.32	98.15	2,133.16
G	1,746.30	370.65	231.13	113.25	2,461.33
H	2,095.56	444.78	277.36	135.90	2,953.60

Maidstone Borough Council's budget for 2010/11

Each authority mentioned below has a separate section of the leaflet. (The figures exclude parish precepts.)



- Kent County Council - 71%
- Maidstone Borough Council - 15%
- Kent & Medway Fire and Rescue Authority - 5%
- Kent Police Authority - 9%

Maidstone Borough Council

Who pays council tax?

Council tax has to be paid for most homes, whether rented or owned, lived in or not. There is one bill for each house and this will normally be paid by the occupier(s). The amount you pay depends on the band of your property

which is based on 1991 property values and where you live. Value bands, share of Band D and the amount due for 2010/11 are shown below. This does not include parish charges.

Property	Property Value	Share of Band D	Council Tax (£.p)
A	Up to £40,000	6/9ths	984.53
B	£40,001 to £52,000	7/9ths	1,148.62
C	£52,001 to £68,000	8/9ths	1,312.71
D	£68,001 to £88,000	1	1,476.80
E	£88,001 to £120,000	11/9ths	1,804.98
F	£120,001 to £160,000	13/9ths	2,133.16
G	£160,001 to £320,000	15/9ths	2,461.33
H	Over £320,000	2	2,953.60

For all enquiries about bands contact:
The Listing Officer, Union House, Eridge Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 8HF.
Telephone: 01892 796 700

Why do we have to pay council tax?

Council tax helps to pay for Kent County Council, Maidstone Borough Council, the Kent Police Authority, Kent Fire & Rescue Service and parish councils. The tax is

shared between the authorities as shown on page 4. Not all areas pay tax to a parish council and the amount varies, so these are not shown.

Summary of Maidstone Borough Council Revenue budget:

During 2010/11 Maidstone Borough Council will spend £22.812 million on services that fall into the summarised categories in the following table:

	2010/11	2009/10	2010/11	2009/10	2010/11	2009/10
	Gross Expenditure		Gross Income		Budget Requirement	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Highways	7,254	7,264	4,041	4,313	3,213	2,951
Planning & Economic Development	6,553	7,047	3,388	1,985	3,165	5,062
Recreation & Tourism	6,304	6,401	1,857	1,590	4,447	4,811
Environmental Health	1,743	1,957	56	51	1,687	1,906
Refuse collection & Disposal	4,719	4,957	884	1,113	3,835	3,844
Housing	43,125	37,935	38,037	30,422	5,088	7,513
Other Services	17,651	11,198	15,694	14,061	1,957	-2,863
Transfers to/from reserves	0	0	580	929	-580	-929
	87,349	76,759	64,537	54,464	22,812	22,295
Estimate of reserves at year end					3,645	5,043

- The gross income figure of £64.537million includes £49.035million in specific grants. (£39.548million in 2009/10)
- Housing includes the cost of the housing benefit system and the related grant from the Department of Works and Pensions.
- Other Services contains appropriation accounts that ensure the capital charges and pension adjustments have no effect on the council taxpayer.

- The council plans to transfer £0.580million from balances in 2010/11. Balances at 31/03/2010 will be £3.645million.
- The budget requirement is £22.812million. This equates to £157.32 per head of population. (£153.75 in 2009/10).

Changes in Maidstone Borough Council Budget Requirement:

The following details the changes in the budget requirement between 2009/10 and 2010/11:

£'000	
Net budget 2009/10	22,295
Inflation and other cost pressures	10,829
Service growth	720
Decrease in other income	61
Increase in benefit and other grant	-9,487
Service savings	-1,606
Net budget 2010/11	22,812

Funding Sources:

The funding of Maidstone Borough Council budget requirement comes from the following sources:

£'000	
Council tax adjustment	10
Revenue support grant	1,206
National non-domestic rate	8,305
Council tax	13,291
22,812	



Summary of Capital Expenditure:

During 2010/11, Maidstone Borough Council is also planning to spend £9.216million on Capital Expenditure on the following services:

Service	£'000
Community services	81
Environment	0
Leisure and culture	4,147
Regeneration	4,618
Land, property and other assets	370
Net budget 2010/11	9,216

This is to be funded by	£'000
Capital receipts	3,268
Capital grants and other funds	5,948
	9,216

Performance & Efficiency

The Audit Commission assesses how well councils deliver services that are good value for money and deliver outcomes for local people. In 2009 Maidstone Borough Council was assessed as performing well on our overall organisational assessment and performing excellently on the Managing Performance element. Our results put us in the top 18 performing councils in the country.

For many years the Council has produced cash based efficiency savings to support its priority services. From 2010/11 onward the Council is required to make a formal statement of its gains from efficiency and this statement is shown below.

Efficiency information

Councils must provide efficiency information to all council tax payers with the first bill sent each year. This year's information relates to the Borough Council, County Council, Fire & Rescue Authority and Police Authority.

The efficiency information shown is prescribed by central government. Efficiency is defined as either achieving the same results for less money (cash-releasing) or increased results for the same money (non-cashable).

The efficiency information shown in the table on page 7 relates to cash-releasing efficiency savings only, and for each authority consists of:

- the efficiency savings achieved in 2009/10;
- an estimate of the cumulative efficiency savings to 2010/11; and
- the impact of the efficiency savings for a 'Band D' property.

For comparison we also show the average impact of efficiency savings for a 'Band D' property for all similar authorities in England (the 'relevant benchmark').

This information provides the latest estimate of efficiency savings used to reduce or hold down the cost of delivering services. Council tax only

funds part of those services, so savings made cannot all be put towards reducing pressure on the level of council tax bills.

Please note that the efficiency information provided does not take account of the amount of savings previously achieved, and therefore how efficiently an authority is already being run. It is only one of several measures which assess how efficiently an authority is being managed.

We can assure you that the Borough Council, County Council, Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police Authority are all committed to providing excellent public services and good value for money. We are continually working to improve efficiency in order to keep council tax increases to a minimum whilst maintaining the services our residents expect and deserve.

Authority	Efficiency savings in 2009/10	Estimated cumulative efficiency savings to end of 2010/11	Estimated cumulative efficiency savings per Band D dwelling	Relevant benchmark
Maidstone Borough Council	214,000	1,921,000	33	41
Kent County Council	44,946,000	69,000,000	128	98
Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority	1,002,000	1,871,000	3	4
Kent Police Authority	14,587,000	31,587,000	50	54

Council tax discounts, exemptions and benefits

Most people have to pay the full amount, but there are discounts and exemptions.

Do I qualify for a discount?

A 25% discount is available when only one person over the age of 18 has their sole or main home at the dwelling.

A 10% discount is available for properties that are regarded as being a second home (where the property is unoccupied but furnished and the owner lives elsewhere). In such cases 90% of the charge will be payable.



A 50% discount is available in some cases. This is usually where a property has to be left empty because the owner is required to live elsewhere as a condition of his employment or e.g. a serving member of the armed forces who has to leave his property empty whilst he must live in military accommodation elsewhere in the country.

No discount is available for a property that does not have anyone living in it as their sole or main residence and which has been empty for a long time. This is usually after an exemption has been allowed, but the exemption has ended - e.g. an initial Class C Exemption has been allowed for the maximum 6 months, after which time, the full charge becomes due and payable.

Some residents may not be included when the number of occupiers is counted. These are:

- Students and student nurses;
- 18 and 19 year olds who have just left school;
- people aged over 18 still receiving Child Benefit;
- apprentices and youth training trainees;
- people who are severely mentally impaired;
- registered foreign language assistants;
- people living in hospitals or care homes;

- people staying in certain hostels or night shelters;
- careworkers on low pay (usually working for a charity);
- people living in a property to provide care to a disabled person (unless this person is a spouse or child under 18);
- members of religious communities (e.g. monks and nuns);
- members of visiting forces and certain international institutions;
- people in prison (unless this is for non payment of Council Tax or a fine); or
- people with diplomatic privileges or immunity.

Do I qualify for disability relief?

If anyone living in a property is disabled and uses a wheelchair indoors, or needs an extra room, extra bathroom or extra kitchen, you may qualify for a disability relief.

If you qualify, you will be sent an amended bill that will charge you for a property that is in the band below the one it actually is. If your property is in the lowest Band A, you will get a reduction of 1/9th of the total amount for a Band D property.

Do I qualify for an exemption?

Some properties are exempt from council tax.

Any property which becomes unoccupied and unfurnished, or is newly built, ready to live in but not yet occupied, is exempt for up to six months.

A property that needs structural or major repair work to make it fit to live in is exempt for up to 12 months, including a maximum six months from when it is ready to live in.

Exemptions usually apply to unoccupied property such as:

- It is left empty by someone who has gone into a hospital or care home permanently;
- It is left empty by someone who has moved to receive personal care, but not into a care home or hospital;
- It is left empty by someone who has moved to provide personal care to another person;
- It is a separate part of an occupied home but cannot be let separately, for example, a granny annexe;
- It is left empty because the person living there has died and probate or letters of administration are due;
- It is left empty because occupation has been prohibited by law;
- It is left empty because it has been repossessed by the mortgagee;
- It is left empty because it has bankrupt's trustee;
- It is left empty because the person

living there is in prison (unless this is for non-payment of council tax or a fine);

- It is owned by a charity (maximum exemption – six months);
- It is waiting to be lived in by a minister of religion;
- It is owned or leased by a student who is studying elsewhere; or
- It is an unoccupied pitch for a caravan or a mooring for a boat.

Sometimes a property can be exempt even when it is occupied, for example:

- Student halls of residents;
- When all occupants are full time students or aged under 20 and have just left school or college;
- When all occupiers are under 18 years of age;
- When all occupiers are severely mentally impaired;
- When all occupiers are either full time students or severely mentally impaired;
- Forces barracks or married quarters;
- When all occupiers are members of a visiting force;
- When all occupiers have diplomatic privileges or immunity;
- When it is a separate home but part of another property and the occupiers are dependent relatives of the family in that property.

Do I qualify for council tax benefit?

You may apply for benefit if you are liable for the council tax payment and:

- You are on a low income;
- You (and your partner) are on Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance (income based), Pension Credit or a low income; or
- You are living with other adult(s) (not a spouse or partner) and they are on Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance (income based), Pension Credit or a low income.

To apply for these benefits, phone the benefits helpline on 01622 602 557 or call in at the council offices.

Tell us if things change

If you have a reduction of any sort, it will be shown on your bill. If your circumstances change, you must tell the revenues section within 21 days. If you do not, you may have to pay a penalty.

For more information or if you have any questions about council tax, housing & council tax benefit, or business rates:

- Council tax -
Telephone 01622 602 003
- Housing or council tax benefit -
Telephone 01622 602 557
- Business (or non domestic) rates -
Telephone 01622 602 230
- For those residents who are hard of hearing, we operate a Minicom service on 01622 6022 224 (Minicom users only)
- Collect a leaflet from The Gateway in King Street
- Write to the council's revenues section
- Visit our website at www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk, or
- Email customercare@maidstone.gov.uk

Paying the monthly instalment

- Some people tell us they cannot pay their instalments on the due date because they do not get paid until the end of the month. Our advice is for each instalment to be paid from your previous month's income, starting in March, when most people do not have an instalment to pay.
- If you need advice about making a payment, please contact us as soon as possible on 01622 602 003.

We prepare the annual council tax bills from the end of February to mid-March each year, and during this time all our computer systems are set up to work on this process.

If you have written to us during this time to say you have moved, or are querying the amount on your bill, please be patient. We will be in touch once the billing process has finished. This statement and the accompanying account constitute the demand note prescribed by the council tax and non domestic rating (Demand Notices) (England) Regulations 1993 (as amended).



Parish Precepts and Band values

Please contact your parish council for information about the services it provides.

Parish	Precept (£)	Band D Precept per dwelling	Band D total Council Tax (£)
Maidstone Borough	-	-	1,476.80
Barming	11,845	15.66	1,492.46
Bearsted	90,000	24.70	1,501.50
Bicknor	-	-	1,476.80
Boughton Malherbe	1,400	6.18	1,482.98
Boughton Monchelsea	35,400	28.49	1,505.29
Boxley	78,015	20.05	1,496.85
Bredhurst	8,500	46.94	1,523.74
Broomfield & Kingswood	32,000	45.05	1,521.85
Chart Sutton	14,750	35.17	1,511.97
Collier Street	9,814	27.33	1,504.13
Coxheath	49,140	30.96	1,507.76
Detling	16,859	43.96	1,520.76
Downswood	22,000	25.28	1,502.08
East Sutton	5,000	35.01	1,511.81
Farleigh East	17,890	25.86	1,502.66
Farleigh West	10,000	44.90	1,521.70
Frinsted	-	-	1,476.80
Harrietsham	24,400	27.31	1,504.11
Headcorn	68,090	45.84	1,522.64
Hollingbourne	16,000	35.10	1,511.90

Parish	Precept (£)	Band D Precept per dwelling	Band D total Council Tax (£)
Hucking	-	-	1,476.80
Hunton	14,000	43.36	1,520.16
Langley	18,406	35.73	1,512.53
Leeds	17,214	48.06	1,524.86
Lenham	54,333	37.88	1,514.68
Linton	5,445	21.00	1,497.80
Loose	43,662	41.37	1,518.17
Marden	61,000	37.50	1,514.30
Nettlestead	6,400	18.37	1,495.17
Otham	6,835	30.16	1,506.96
Otterden	-	-	1,476.80
Staplehurst	73,500	31.15	1,507.95
Stockbury	9,000	26.98	1,503.78
Sutton Valence	22,000	33.57	1,510.37
Teston	9,250	28.47	1,505.27
Thurnham	11,646	21.69	1,498.49
Tovil	47,940	38.77	1,515.57
Ulcombe	8,363	20.93	1,497.73
Wichling	-	-	1,476.80
Wormshill	-	-	1,476.80
Yalding	46,000	45.00	1,521.80

A table showing the value of council tax across all bands will be published in the Kent Messenger and on the council's website (www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk).

Copies can also be supplied upon request. Alternatively you can calculate the tax in other bands by using the information in the share of Band D column on page 3 e.g. for Band A divide the Band D figure by 9 then multiply it by 6.

Key Services Provided by Authorities

The table below highlights the key services provided by authorities.



- Community and housing
- Refuse collection and recycling
- Environmental services and licensing
- Council tax collection and housing benefits
- Leisure services
- Street cleaning and parking
- Planning services



- Children and Families, including Education
- Adult Social Services
- Highways and Public Transport
- Libraries
- Youth Services
- Waste Disposal
- Trading Standards



Kent & Medway
Fire & Rescue Authority

- Responding to fires and other emergencies
- Rescuing people from road traffic collisions
- Promoting road safety
- Educating people about fire safety
- Completing free home safety visits
- Ensuring businesses are protected from fire
- Being prepared to deal with emergencies

Kent
Police
Authority



Kent Police Authority is an independent body that oversees Kent Police. We make sure there is an efficient and effective police service that includes:

- Responding to crimes, incidents, and calls for assistance
- Investigating serious offences including homicide
- Proactively investigating serious and organised crime
- Preventing road traffic accidents
- Working with partner agencies to address local problems in your neighbourhood

Town or parish council

- Maintaining local assets including allotments, common lands, burial grounds, play areas, tennis courts, litter bins, seats and ponds.
- Town and parish councils are consulted on all planning applications affecting their areas.

Maidstone Borough Council has:

- Helped 36 businesses with advertising, during the recession;
- Launched the Maidstone High Street regeneration project;
- Worked with other councils to improve services and cut costs;
- Worked with the police to remove abandoned cars;
- Helped unemployed young people with apprenticeships;
- Gave Park Wood residents more say in their area;
- Started £4.5m of improvements to Maidstone Leisure Centre;
- Improved Brenchley Gardens;
- Won a £2.5m grant for Mote Park;
- Worked with partners to deliver 400+ affordable homes - protecting local jobs;
- Prevented 400 families becoming homeless;
- Increased the amount of waste recycled by 20%.
- Helped older and vulnerable people with a handy-person scheme

Kent County Council

Budget and Council Tax 2010/11

In the medium term, we cannot be sure of the funding we will receive. We expect that, when the Government Spending Review is announced after the forthcoming general election, we will have less funding than we do now.

Although we cannot know the scale of these reductions, our new financial plan pre-empted this with anticipated savings of around £200million over the next three years.

Even so, we have to increase our spending in some areas in order to cope with the growing demand for many of our services. With an increasingly ageing population and more people with disabilities, we must provide more care and support for their greater needs. In addition, referrals to children's social services have increased dramatically since the Baby Peter case.

Over the next three years, we will spend £1.5 billion on Kent's capital building

programme to improve schools, highways and community facilities including libraries, museums and galleries.

We recognise the continuing financial strain that Kent residents, businesses, charitable and voluntary organisations, and public sector partners are under. So we will continue to support economic recovery in Kent through the Backing Kent Business and Backing Kent People campaigns.

It is clear from these challenges that we will face some difficult decisions in the coming years, and we will not avoid this responsibility. We will continue to squeeze further efficiency savings from the organisation whilst minimising the impact on front line services.

In setting our council tax level for 2010/11, we believe we are setting the right priorities for Kent, whilst recognising the need to keep council tax levels as low as possible.

Our Performance

In December 2009, the Audit Commission announced that we had again achieved the highest possible score ('Performing Excellently') in the Comprehensive Area Assessment, for the sixth year running.

As you will have seen from earlier in the leaflet, we have delivered ongoing annual savings of £69million since 1 April 2008.

For more information on performance
Visit: www.kent.gov.uk/cpa
Email: performance@kent.gov.uk
Write to: Kent County Council,
Room 1.63 Sessions House,
Maidstone,
Kent ME14 1XQ.

Our goals

Our long-term plan, the Vision for Kent, sets out how we will:

- increase Kent's prosperity through business growth and job creation
- transform education
- care for older people
- reduce congestion
- improve health and quality of life
- create quality homes in a well-managed environment
- make Kent a safer place
- continue to improve services while keeping council tax down



Where your money goes

The council tax you pay to us helps us to provide quality services that make a positive difference to people's lives. For example, it helps contribute towards:

- 570 schools and other services which support 250,000 children and young people, and their families.
- 30,000 people who can live in their own homes with the personalised care we provide. We also support 6,500 people in permanent residential and nursing care.
- maintaining 5,000 miles of roads and 4,200 miles of paths and public rights of way.
- Skills Plus, who help around 3,400 people improve their numeracy and literacy ability.
- 100 libraries that lend nearly 6.6million books per year.
- our apprenticeship and vocational training schemes that help young people find rewarding work.
- 13,000 young people to travel by bus with the Kent Freedom Pass, helping to reduce traffic and pollution.
- maintaining 22 country parks and picnic sites.
- promoting road safety and health, and our 101 community wardens who work with our partners to keep Kent safe.



Photo courtesy of careimages.com



Photo courtesy of Explore Kent



KCC Services 2010/11	Total Spending £'m	Net Spending * £'m	Net Spending per day £'000
Children, Families and Education	1,591.7	362.7	994
Adult Social Services	460.7	356.5	977
Environment, Highways and Waste	177.7	157.5	432
Communities	157.0	100.4	275
Regeneration and Economy	44.6	41.7	114
Corporate activities	177.3	120.3	330
Less: Charges included in the above for use of capital assets~	-195.9	-195.9	N/A
Area Based Grant		-96.6	N/A
Budget 2010/11	2,413.1	846.6	2,320

* Net spending is funded from government grant and council tax

~ We have deducted these charges as they are accounting entries and have no impact on our budget or council tax

- **If you are on a low income** with less than £16,000 in savings (this limit does not apply if you receive Pension Guarantee Credit) you may be able to get some help with your council tax. To find out whether you would qualify, please contact Kent Benefits Partnership on 0845 345 0310 or contact your borough, city or district council.
- **If you are a small business** with premises with a rateable value of less than £18,000, you may be entitled to some relief from your business rates. Contact your borough, city or district council for details.



Pressure on service budgets in 2010/11

- Children's services – an additional £5.3million to strengthen children's social services, mostly to meet the 21.2% increase in referrals in the wake of the tragic Baby Peter case. Also, funding for additional early education places in the county will cost £5.8million.
- Social care – it will cost us £6.5million to help cope with increasing numbers of the very elderly and people with a disability, while maintaining the existing assessment criteria and providing preventative support to more people.
- Waste disposal – the increasing costs of disposal and landfill tax amounts to an extra £3million.
- Finance – funding our capital programme will cost an additional £10million including further highway maintenance.

Your council tax bill is made up of Kent County Council charges as well as the other authorities in your area. The council tax you pay for our services has increased by 2.1% from £1,026.27 to £1,047.78 for a Band D household, this equates to an extra 41p a week.

You might like to know that:

- we have savings and additional income planned this year of £24.7million. This is equivalent to £45 a year for a Band D property.
- we have already received £5.3million of our Icelandic deposits back and we expect that most of the money will be returned to us in due course.

Our spending and funding

	2009/10 Budget £'m	2010/11 Budget £'m
Budget 2009/10	821.7	821.7
Changes in service responsibilities and specific grant funding		30.6
Revised budget		852.3
Pay award and price inflation		7.2
Government/legislative pressures		11.1
Demand-led pressures		14.6
Schools budget increase		11.7
Service strategies and improvements		21.4
Sub-total of pressures		66.0
Net savings		-12.4
Income generation		-4.4
Dedicated schools grant increase		-14.7
Other grant increases		-8.3
Increase in the area-based grant		-31.9
Budget total	821.7	846.6
Business rates/general grant	-267.2	-275.7
Collection fund surplus	-0.2	-1.5
Council tax	554.3	569.4
Tax base (Band D equivalent properties)	540,115	543,481
KCC Band D council tax charge	£1,026.27	£1,047.78 + 2.1%

Total expenditure

Budget	2009/10 £'m	2010/11 £'m
Total expenditure*	2,299.4	2,413.1
Grants for specific services and other income	-1,477.7	-1,566.5
Budget	821.7	846.6

* Includes estimated levies from Environment Agency for flood defence (£344,000) and from joint sea fisheries (£264,000)



Kent Fire and Rescue Service **Helping keep Kent and Medway safe**

Round the clock, 365 days a year, Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority helps protect 1.7 million residents in 703,000 homes across the county. In 2009 we got the results of the satisfaction survey done as part of a national assessment. This showed 81.4% of residents are satisfied with our services, an improvement over 2006 and better than the national average.

Last year we:

- Dealt with over 37,500 emergency 999 calls – answering over 99% of them within 20 seconds
- Responded to nearly 22,000 fires and other incidents
- Reached 90% of fires in less than ten minutes
- Dealt with around 1,200 road traffic collisions
- Carried out 16,000 free home safety visits, fitting around 20,000 smoke alarms
- Educated over 95,000 children and young people on fire and road safety

All those services will be provided to you this year for just £1.31 a week (Band D property).

Value for money

Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority has been rated as one of the

top fire and rescue authorities in the country. We work hard to deliver our services in the most efficient way possible. This year the Audit Commission's report said that KMFRA "performs well, has strong leadership and manages its finances effectively".

Planning for the future

Our key issues in planning for the future are:

- More elderly people living alone, with mobility problems
- More people living independently with disabilities
- More people in poor or overcrowded homes
- More transient people in shared rented housing
- More extreme weather events
- More traffic on the roads
- New building materials and methods changing how fires spread

We are working with local authorities, the police and other agencies to:

- Make vulnerable adults safer, and help their families and carers reduce risks
- Reduce road deaths and injuries
- Minimise fire risks in new building types
- Reduce our impact on the environment
- Improve our response to extreme



weather events

- Support small businesses and the local economy
- Run our services so you get the most value for money

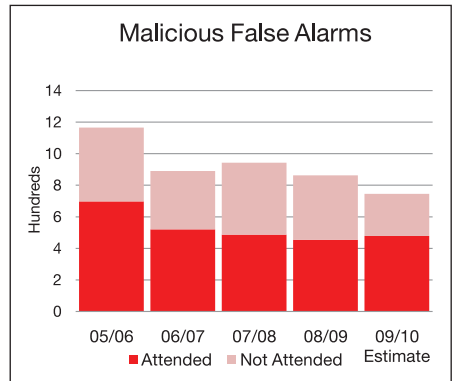
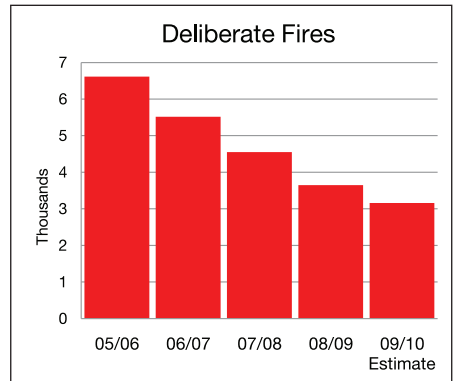
We are also reviewing the pattern of emergency cover for the area.

What is improving?

We work with partners such as the police to achieve targets like reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads and reducing CO₂ emissions.

Achievements include:

- Deliberate fires down by 52% over the last five years
- Reducing false alarms – malicious false alarms down by 38% over the last five years, helping improve our response to real incidents
- Reducing road accidents – the number of accidents we attend has gone down by 15% over the last five years



Key Indicators	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
			Estimate
Total fires (per 10,000 people)	44.35	38.46	39.63
Accidental fires in the home (per 10,000 people)	11.48	11.12	10.93
Deliberate fires (per 10,000 people)	28.08	22.31	19.17
Road accidents attended (per 10,000 people)	7.45	7.69	6.85



Kent Fire and Rescue Service

Aim and objectives

We review our aim, objectives and values every three years, to make sure they stay up to date. After consultation, the following revised statement has been adopted:

Aim: To save lives and reduce risks – *‘there when you need us’*.

Objectives: We are committed to:

- Reducing the number of fires, deaths and injuries
- Reducing road accidents, deaths and injuries
- Being well prepared to deal with emergencies
- Providing high quality and value for money services
- Engaging with communities to raise awareness
- Reducing our impact on the environment
- Helping to improve the quality of life for local people
- Working with businesses to support the local economy

Values: As an organisation we will always:

- Put people first
- Value our staff
- Be open to change
- Work with others

Where your money goes

Revenue Budget	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000
Employees	58,344	58,459
Firefighters' pensions	1,339	1,385
Premises	4,137	4,418
Vehicles and travel	3,244	3,259
Equipment and supplies	5,104	6,891
Fees and services	2,119	1,358
Other costs	829	773
Contributions to capital	2,048	854
Debt financing costs	1,194	1,263
Gross revenue expenditure	78,358	78,660
Income	-5,386	-5,049
Transfers to/from reserves	-2,557	-1,007
Net budget requirement	70,415	72,604
Financed by:		
Formula grant	29,033	29,596
Collection fund surplus	15	154
Council tax	41,367	42,854
	70,415	72,604



Our budget for 2010/11

Each year, additional funding is required in the Authority's budget to meet the cost of inflation increases and the cost of nationally set pay awards. In overall terms, the net budget for 2010/11 is 3.1% more than in 2009/10.

The Authority also needs to invest in service improvements. To do this without making significant increases to council tax, the Authority must identify efficiencies and other savings that can be made without increasing the risk to public safety.

The Authority plans to make savings of £2.1m in 2010/11 (equivalent to 3% of the budget for the previous year). This will help fund new investment in training, new operational equipment and initiatives to improve public safety, in particular for vulnerable people and high risk households. The Authority also has a capital budget of £5.7m for investment in projects with long term benefits.

Our share of the council tax for a Band D property is £67.95, which is just 2.86% more than the equivalent charge of £66.06 for 2009/10 or an extra 4 pence per week.

Why spending has changed

Revenue Budget		£'000
Total budget 2009/10		70,415
Pay, prices and commitments		1,159
Service developments & pressures		3,146
Savings		-2,126
Movements in grant and reserve funded expenditure		10
Total budget 2010/11		72,604

Capital Budget		2010/11
		£'000
Premises projects		643
Investment in IS/IT		262
Vehicles & equipment		4,552
Regional Control Centre project		50
Community safety schemes		226
Total capital expenditure		5,733
Funded by:		
Borrowing		3,256
Revenue contributions		855
Capital grants		1,622
Total capital funding		5,733



Overseeing your policing

Kent Police Authority is responsible for an efficient and effective police Force - from officers, staff, buildings, to IT and equipment. We're an independent body made up of 17 members - a mix of elected councillors and local people. We hold the Chief Constable to account for police performance. Working together we aim to provide you with the best possible policing service.

'This year our main focus is on maintaining our police services. After much debate Police Authority members have agreed to a 2.99 per cent increase. For the average band D house this is a small increase of 8p a week – £4 a year – bringing the total police payment to £139 a year.

'The decision follows months of discussions between the Chief Constable and members of the Kent Police Authority as to the pressures on the Force during 2010. This year has been one of the hardest decisions for the Authority as demands on policing continue. But I'm pleased to say this is in fact our lowest police council tax rise in the last ten years. No one likes putting up taxes but we're working within a very tight financial climate. The Authority needs to balance the pressures on the Chief Constable with a value for money service for the public – this year's police budget will be £285million.

'We've consulted widely about the increase and we are satisfied that this amount is the

very minimum we can set for this year's police council tax. There was considerable public support for an increase in the police council tax of between 2.5-4.99 per cent. We're the second lowest police council tax for a shire in England and Wales and I think that this shows how prudent the Authority is with finances – as recognised by our external auditors. We need to maintain the improvements the Force has made so far.

'We're already making savings in-house through our joint working with Essex Police but we need to do more. I'm really keen for Kent to become a top performing Force but we need to continue how we're doing – and do even more – to provide the best possible policing service we can.'

Ann Barnes,
Chair of
Kent Police Authority





How we're spending your money this year



- Investment will continue to be made in neighbourhood task teams dedicated to reducing anti-social behaviour and crime. The teams, made up of one sergeant and five police constables, were paid for through the last two council tax increases.

- We will set up a dedicated project team that will focus on finding where other savings can be made within the Force during the next four years. The Government has clearly signalled that in future years the financial climate will be extremely demanding.
- Public confidence is also high on the agenda. Funds will be invested in improving communications with the

public through ward based community safety newsletters. Residents will be able to find out how police, local councils and partner agencies are dealing with crime where they live. To view your latest edition visit:

www.kent.police.uk/newsletters

- We will also review how Kent Police is structured and find the best ways of working for the future. Part of this will involve a wide consultation programme by the Authority.
- Kent Police will visit all victims of crime, and repeat and vulnerable victims of anti-social behaviour during 2010/11.





Police spending

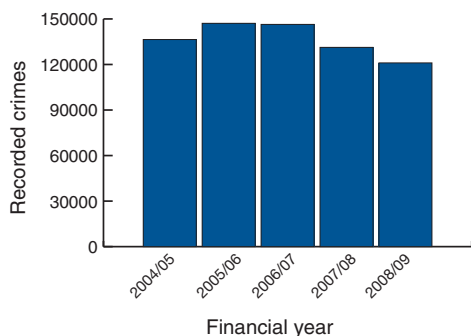
How we are funded	£'000	£/resident
Central Government grants	197,390	0.00
Council tax collected on above estimate in 2009/10	252	0.15
Balance to be met by council taxpayers in 2010/11	87,358	53.44
Total	285,000	53.60

Budget breakdown – what we are spending money on	2010/11 £'000	2009/10 £'000
Police pay	162,462	163,309
Police pensions	33,881	33,859
Support staff pay	88,914	86,045
Other expenditure e.g. premises, computers, transport	57,281	50,832
Gross revenue budget (total of above)	342,538	334,045
Income generated by external parties outside of Kent Police	-57,538	-57,555
Total	285,000	276,490

Budget breakdown – cost of service	2010/11 £'000	2009/10 £'000
Reducing crime	15,135	15,673
Investigating crime	120,044	118,400
Promoting public safety	102,388	96,542
Assistance to the public	44,733	43,300
Providing special protection and all other protection duties	250	194
Funds to run Kent Police Authority	1,694	1,569
Police pensions, including ill health and early retirement	2,840	2,736
Pension administration costs	181	176
Net income from chargeable services	-2,265	-2,100
Total	285,000	276,490

Why spending has changed	£'000
Revenue budget for 2009/10 (day to day running of Kent Police)	276,500
Pay and price changes	10,300
Critical policing pressures	300
Further efficiency savings	-2,100
Total budget requirement for 2010/11	285,000

Crime is going down across the county



In 2009 there were almost 30,000 fewer crimes than in 2004 and crime has fallen by a fifth (21 per cent) in five years.

Kent Police has also been recognised as providing a quality service. The Force was one of only eight in the country to achieve a good grade as part of the Home Office Policing Pledge. The Pledge sets out the minimum standards the public can expect.

Contact numbers

- In an emergency dial **999** if there is a threat to life or public safety, or a crime is in progress
- Call our single non-emergency number **01622 690 690** to report a non-urgent crime and anti-social behaviour

Have your say

We welcome your feedback.

Visit our website:

www.kentpoliceauthority.gov.uk

to tell us what you think.

You can also join us on



and



or take part in discussion groups or surveys email:

citizens.panel@kent.pnn.police.uk



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