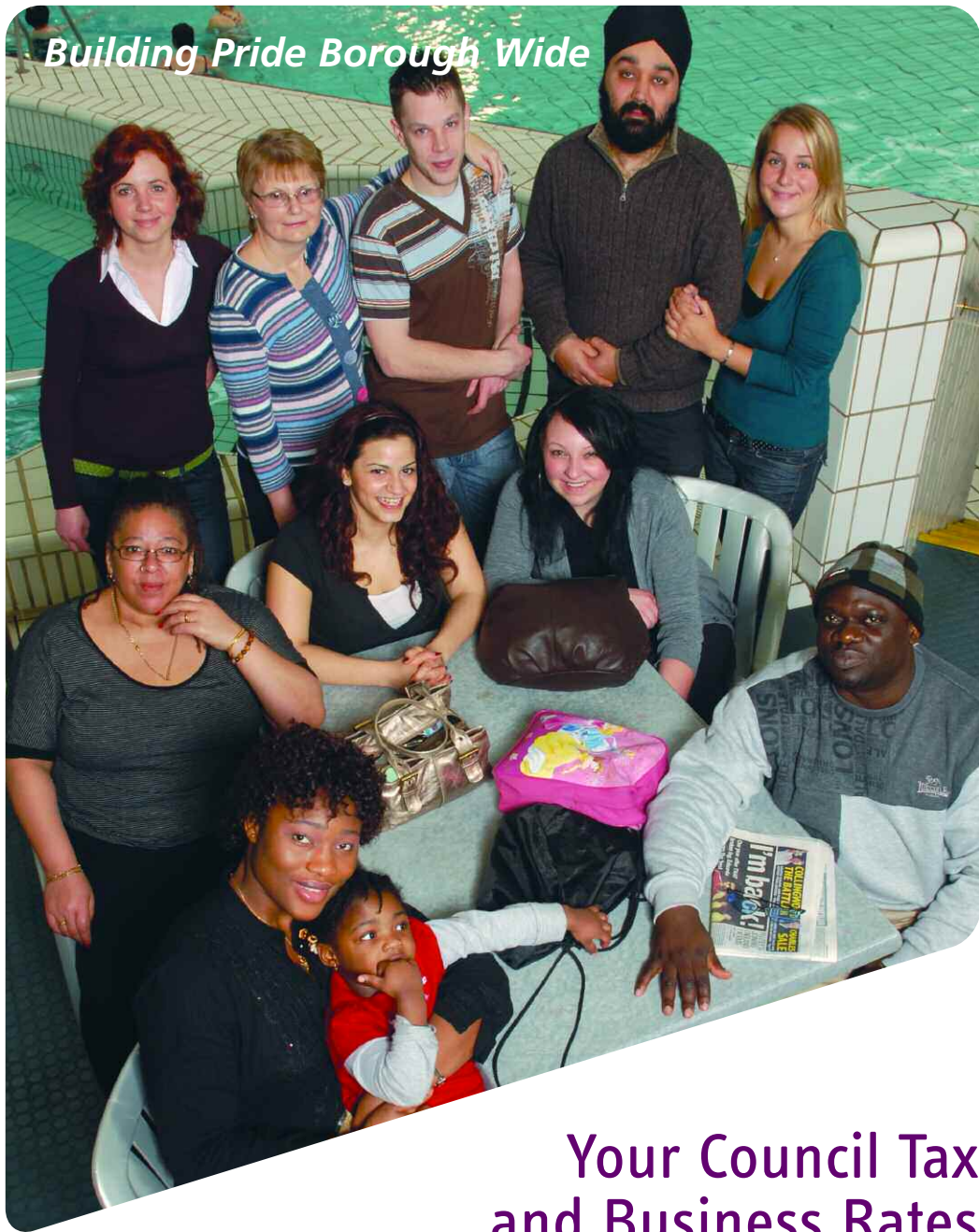


Building Pride Borough Wide



Your Council Tax and Business Rates 2009-2010



**London Borough
of Hounslow**

Contact us

It's quick and easy to access our services online at www.hounslow.gov.uk. Email us direct, or call the numbers below.

Information/Switchboard	020 8583 2000	Parking	020 8583 6666
Out of Hours		Illegal Parking Hotline	020 8583 5450
Emergency Service	020 8583 2222	Pest Control	020 8583 5082
Abandoned Vehicles	020 8583 5555	Planning Applications: Chiswick Area	020 8583 4998
Adult/Community Education	020 8583 6000	Isleworth & Brentford Area	020 8583 4970
Animal Warden	020 8583 5555	Hounslow, Heston & Cranford Area	020 8583 4965
Births, Deaths & Marriages	020 8583 2090	Feltham, Bedfont & Hanworth Area	020 8583 4940
Building Control	020 8583 5404	Planning Enforcement	020 8583 5188
Business Start Up Advice	0845 330 9105	Rubbish, Waste and Recycling	020 8583 5555
Committee Meetings	020 8583 2063	Roads & Pavements	020 8583 5555
Consumer Protection	020 8583 5555	School Admissions Primary and Secondary Schools	020 8583 2721
Councillors	020 8583 2250	Adult Social Care (Older people and people with a disability)	020 8583 3100
Council Tax	020 8583 4242	Children's Social Care	020 8583 3200
Education		Street Cleaning	020 8583 5555
General Enquiries	020 8583 2600	Street Lighting	020 8583 5555
Electoral Registration	020 8583 2107	Student Services	020 8583 2811
Empty Property Hotline	020 8583 3863	Tourist & Leisure Information	0845 456 2929
Graffiti Hotline	020 8583 2620	Translation & Interpreting Unit	020 8583 2299
Highways	020 8583 5555	Youth Services	020 8583 2947
Homelessness	020 8583 3842		
Housing Advice	020 8583 3844		
Housing Benefits	020 8583 4242		
Hounslow Homes Customer Service Centre	0800 085 6575		
Landlord & Tenant Advice	020 8583 3844		
Libraries	0845 456 2800		
Noise & Air Pollution	020 8583 5555		

Leader's introduction



With the economic crisis continuing to bite, the year ahead looks like being a difficult one for residents and businesses. In uncertain times, it is our job to help where we can, to provide services, advice and support that make a real difference, and to ensure that we do not add to the burdens faced by families, the young, old and local businesses. That is why, for the third year running, there will be no increase in Hounslow's share of your council tax bill. This will keep more money in your pocket; it is an achievement I am intensely proud of.

2009 will be the third consecutive year we have not increased our level of council tax, and this year the Mayor of London is doing the same.

We have not forgotten that you are also entitled to better services. I know that you deserve more from your council, and am determined that you will continue to get more, and of a better standard.

Like you, I want to live in a borough we can all be proud of. Our aim of Building Pride Borough Wide is becoming a

reality through the 10 promises we have made. You can read more about our 10 promises in this booklet.

From investing in community safety and CCTV, to wiping out graffiti and planting 1,000 new trees, your council is working for you.

As well as delivering on our promises, we will continue to deliver hundreds of other vital local services – planning advice, care and protection for vulnerable children, trading standards advice, highways improvements, fraud investigation and benefits advice, to name but a few.

For the third year in a row, our element of the council tax represents real value for money. During the year ahead, we will continue to put your needs first, deliver better services and keep as much money in your pocket as possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Peter Thompson
Leader
Hounslow Council



We promise to keep your weekly collections of household rubbish and recycling, and introduce new plastics and food waste recycling services

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How much is my Council Tax?

Your Council Tax 2009/2010

Band	Hounslow (£)	GLA (£)	Total (£)
A	727.10	206.55	933.65
B	848.28	240.97	1,089.25
C	969.47	275.40	1,244.87
D	1,090.65	309.82	1,400.47
E	1,333.02	378.67	1,711.69
F	1,575.38	447.52	2,022.90
G	1,817.75	516.37	2,334.12
H	2,181.30	619.64	2,800.94

GLA = Greater London Authority

Levies

Hounslow's budget requirement includes levies payable to external bodies for the services they provide. The individual levies payable are:

	2008/2009	2009/2010
	£	£
West London Waste Authority	6,104,021	7,024,151
Environment Agency	171,060	171,079
London Boroughs Grant Scheme	766,738	768,774
Lee Valley Regional Park Authority	258,515	262,328
London Pensions Fund Authority	357,069	345,988
	7,657,403	8,572,320

Our 10 promises to you

We want this borough to be a community where you feel proud to live and work, and we want the council to be an organisation that listens and delivers for you.

To deliver this vision, we are making 10 promises for how, together with you, we want to transform the borough for all who live, work, or visit here.

The 10 promises

1. Keep council tax low

For the third year running we are freezing our share of the council tax bill, so we don't need to ask you for more money.

Low council tax means more money in your pocket. We are delivering this freeze through radical changes in how we deliver all services. In 2009/10 we will deliver a savings package of £16.8 million which is this year's contribution to a three year target of £53 million. These savings will be implemented over three years to keep council tax bills low, and to invest in improving the services you have said are important.

2. Invest £2 million to improve our parks, libraries and leisure centres

Leisure services and facilities in the borough are suffering from a decade of underinvestment, and we are determined to resolve this problem as soon as possible. To achieve this, an extra £2 million each



year is now being invested to improve parks, libraries and leisure centres. This means more choice of leisure and arts activities for you. Improving access to leisure facilities helps encourage people to improve their own health and fitness. Better libraries and museums help young people with learning and development, and gives all of us a chance to increase our knowledge and understanding.

3. Reduce the amount of graffiti and increase the number of graffiti crews on our streets

We want everyone to be proud of where they live. To help, we are investing an extra £280,000 to remove graffiti in Hounslow.

Since January, we have been running the most intensive clean up the borough has ever seen, focussing on key areas such as shopping parades, parks and alleyways. The number of graffiti patrols is being doubled to help clear new graffiti quickly, before it attracts more. Most graffiti on private property will be cleared free of charge, and graffiti removal kits or wipes are now available to residents.

Help us to tackle graffiti. If you see any, report it on our Graffiti Hotline **020 8583 5555** or to **streetcare@hounslow.gov.uk** and we will remove it.



We promise to reduce the amount of graffiti and increase the number of graffiti crews on our streets

We promise to invest £2 million to improve our parks, libraries and leisure centres





*We promise to plant
1,000 new trees across
the borough*

4. Plant 1,000 new trees across the borough

Expect to see your borough becoming even greener in future months, thanks to our promise to plant 1,000 new trees. The programme of planting began in January, with more than 200 new trees now lining streets across the borough. Further new trees will take root later in the year when the planting season starts again.

As well as providing natural habitats for birds and a wide range of insects, trees bring many wider benefits. In Hounslow the thousands of trees we provide and maintain:

- improve air quality by absorbing carbon emissions
- reduce the need for street repairs as the shade cast by trees helps to increase the life of road and pavement surfaces
- create a more pleasant environment around homes and communities
- bring a rich variety of colour to the whole borough all year round

5. Invest £250,000 and work with police and other partners to improve community safety

Crime and the fear of crime are some of the main concerns you have raised with us. In areas where people don't feel safe, they don't talk to

neighbours, or go out after dark, and criminals find it easier to operate. Fighting crime works when we get support from the local community.

We have created five new Neighbourhood Community Safety Co-ordinator posts, who will work with you and your local community to tackle crime.

The co-ordinators will work closely with the police and our partners to take action against perpetrators of crime. They will also ask you where the problems are and how we should tackle them.

6. Keep your weekly collections of household waste and recycling, and introduce a new plastics and food waste recycling service

It is now easier than ever before to recycle in Hounslow, thanks to the introduction of our new services. In fact we now offer one of the most comprehensive recycling services in London, with up to 70% of household waste now being recycled. If you aren't already doing so, please help us all and start recycling now.

Recycling is not only good for the environment, it's good for your pocket too. By reducing the amount of waste we send to landfill, we can reduce the amount of money spent on paying landfill taxes.

Green garden waste and plastics are collected on alternate weeks, with all other recycling and waste collected weekly. This means less disruption and less pollution, with only three collection vehicles coming down your road each week.

7. Invest an extra £2 million into keeping roads and pavements safe and in good condition

There is much work to do to improve the state of Hounslow's 763km of pavements and 432km of roads.

To tackle this, we have won £198 million from the government to transform roads and pavements in the borough, and to make them some of the best in the country.

The work will take a number of years to complete. In the meantime we are investing an extra £2 million into improving road and pavement maintenance.

This investment will increase safety, improve the look of the area, and help to encourage businesses to invest. One of our aims is to make Hounslow the major enterprise centre in west London. A well maintained road network is vital to this ambition.

8. Put more services onto www.hounslow.gov.uk

We all lead busy lives. You have told us that finding time to ring or call into one of our offices is getting harder and harder. That is why, in the next two years, you will see more and more of our services becoming available on our website **www.hounslow.gov.uk**

You can already use our website at any time day or night, to:

- pay your council tax, parking fines, rent or business rates
- make a planning application
- hire a hall
- report abandoned vehicles, graffiti and missed recycling and waste collections

www.hounslow.gov.uk was re-launched last year. The site not only has a new look, but is easier to use and offers a range of new services. The website improvements mean you can save yourself a trip and access services from the comfort of your own home. New features include the improved A-Z of council services, a quicker and more efficient search engine facility and new online forms.

Forms can be filled in and, with a click of the mouse, are sent directly to the correct service, with no need to print anything, or to pay the cost of a stamp and envelope.

www.hounslow.gov.uk will have many more new features added over the coming months. Log on regularly to see if you can save yourself a journey or a phone call.

9. Bring new affordable family-sized homes into the borough

We want our borough to be a place where families choose to live and bring up their children. At the moment there is a shortage of affordable family-sized homes, and this leads to some families living in overcrowded conditions and others spending long periods in temporary accommodation. We are looking at what actions we can take to change this.

We are working with developers, social landlords and Hounslow Homes, to increase the number of larger houses - particularly those with three or more bedrooms - available in the borough. We are using our powers as a landowner, and our role as the strategic housing authority, to encourage this. We are also using our planning policies on housing choice to achieve this where possible.

The current housing market downturn will have an effect on the number of new homes which will be developed in the next few years, but we will encourage the development of as many affordable family-sized homes as possible.

10. Introduce CCTV to more of the borough

When we ask residents what would help them feel safer in their neighbourhoods and communities, and help to deter crime, they consistently tell us more and better CCTV. We are now investing in a pioneering scheme with the local police to provide new CCTV at ten key sites across the borough.

We are also expanding existing wireless networks to make it easier for portable cameras to be put up around the borough.

A new joint control room will help to share footage from the council's own cameras with the police for crime prevention.

Over the next few years, thanks to close working with police and residents, we are aiming to build safer and stronger communities.

Business rates

What are business rates?

Business rates (sometimes called non-domestic rates) are the way businesses and others who own or occupy buildings that are not homes, contribute towards the cost of local services.

Business rates are collected by us and sent directly to the Government, which decides where the money goes.



Help for business rate payers

Some organisations can get help with paying their business rates.

These include:

- Small businesses
- Registered charities
- Registered community amateur sports clubs
- Non-profit making organisations

A letter with more details of the help available has been sent to those businesses affected. If you believe your business falls into one of these categories, and you have not received a letter, please ring us on **020 8583 5708**.

How to pay



To pay by **Direct Debit**, call **020 8583 5708** to request a form between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday



To pay using the **internet**, visit: **www.hounslow.gov.uk**



To pay over the **phone**, 24-hours a day, call **020 8583 5959**

Get in touch

Email: **businessrates@hounslow.gov.uk**

Phone: **020 8583 5708**

Post: Business Rates Manager
London Borough
of Hounslow
PO Box 185,
Hounslow TW3 4WD

For more information, visit: **www.businesslink.gov.uk**

Help with paying your bill

Are you having money problems?

There are a number of places offering help and advice to residents.

1. Working and Child Tax Credits

If you are working or you are a parent, you could be entitled to Working and Child Tax Credits. Find out more at: www.hmrc.gov.uk or call their helpline **0845 300 3900** from 8am to 8pm seven days a week.

2. Working Tax Credit

If you are out of work or earning a low wage, you could be entitled to Working Tax Credit, or another state benefit. You can find out more at your local Jobcentre Plus office.

3. Help for pensioners

Pensioners on low incomes could be entitled to extra money from the Pension Credit.

To find out more visit: www.thepensionservice.gov.uk or call **0845 60 60 265**. Further information on the full range of benefits is available at: www.dwp.gov.uk/eservice

What happens if I can't pay?

If you have genuine difficulties in paying council tax or business rates, please contact us as soon as possible (see page 16).

What happens if I miss a payment?

If you miss a payment and don't make a suitable arrangement with us, a reminder will be sent out to request that the account is brought up to date.

What happens if I fail to pay?

If you then fail to pay, a summons will be sent for the full charge to be paid, and costs will be added. If the bill is still not paid, this can lead to a court order against you, and potentially bankruptcy proceedings.

Fraud

People who abuse the benefits system take money from those who really need it. We always tackle council tax benefit fraud. If you suspect that someone is falsely claiming benefit, please contact us at: **fraud@hounslow.gov.uk**, or by calling our 24-hour hotline **020 8583 2111**.

Information we hold about you

Information we hold about you in council tax records will be used for the billing, collection and recovery of the council tax. This information may also be used by us to carry out statutory duties and may be shared with internal departments and other organisations.

We promise to invest £250,000 in working with police and other partners to improve community safety



Three easy ways to pay

There are three easy ways to pay your council tax. All you have to do is choose the one that suits you.



- 1. Direct Debit** - fill in the form that came with the bill. If you pay by Direct Debit, you could win £1000 of shopping vouchers. Visit www.hounslow.gov.uk/council_tax for more information.



- 2. Online** - simply go to www.hounslow.gov.uk/ct_payment and select "pay online".



- 3. Phone** - call our 24-hour automated service on **020 8583 5959**.

Help with paying your bill

Many people are missing out on money they are entitled to by not asking for help with their council tax. This could mean savings to you of hundreds of pounds a year.

Council tax benefit is paid to people on a low income, and who usually have less than £16,000 in savings. To find out if you are entitled to help with paying your bill, visit: www.hounslow.gov.uk/council_tax

You can also contact us by email on: counciltax@hounslow.gov.uk or by calling **020 8583 4242**.

Making your money go further

We have been working hard to improve the way we deliver services, and to save you money to keep the council tax bill down. To do this, we are part-way through an efficiency programme which has identified savings of £53 million. This is possible by working smarter, reducing bureaucratic structures, and removing surplus posts. All councils have to measure and report the value of efficiency savings they have achieved since April 2008. These are savings where the cost of a service goes down, but its effectiveness does not.

By the end of March 2009, efficiency savings achieved since April 2008 are forecast to be:

	Saving	% of expenditure
Hounslow	£8,033,000	3.7
London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority	£4,724,000	1.1

The original forecast does not include the savings from the first round of our £53 million efficiency programme. Adding these increases brings our forecast savings up to £11,602,100 by the end of March 2009, which is 5.3% of what we spent in the previous year.

This means that the savings for an average Band D property, including efficiency savings, is £138.

	Saving per average Band D home	Average for similar authorities¹
London Borough of Hounslow	£95	£128
Including efficiency savings	£138	£128
London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority	£2	£2

¹The comparative average for Hounslow is the average of all London councils. The comparative figure for the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority is that for other authorities exercising fire and rescue functions.

Budgetary information

Hounslow's Budget Requirement 2008/2009

Services	Gross Exp. £000	Income £000	Net Exp. £000
Central Services to the Public	31,766	26,627	5,139
Cultural, Environmental and Planning Services	41,281	11,368	29,913
Education Services	242,435	220,072	22,363
Highways, Roads and Transport Services	24,591	12,530	12,061
Housing Services	127,133	120,918	6,215
Adult Social Services	85,213	30,354	54,859
Children's Social Services	38,929	10,259	28,670
Law and Order	11	1	10
Corporate and Democratic Core	6,305	6	6,299
Non-Distributed Costs	2,455	47	2,408
Services Total	600,119	432,182	167,937
Precepts and Levies	7,657	-	7,657
Capital Financing Adjustment	(7,662)	-	(7,662)
Other Items	12,026	-	12,026
Total	612,140	432,182	179,958
Reserves	652	-	652
Budget Requirement	612,792	432,182	180,610

Why the budget has changed

Hounslow's budget requirement for 2009/10 has increased by £2.584m

This increase is attributable to:

	£000
Inflation	6,200
Reduction in interest from temporary investments	2,000
Growth and New initiatives	17,400
Less Original growth provision in 2008/09 approved budget	(5,000)
Less Savings approved in 2008/09	(16,744)
Other net changes	(1,272)

Increase in Net Budget Requirement 2,584

2009/2010		
Gross Exp.	Income	Net Exp.
£000	£000	£000
31,077	26,841	4,236
47,614	10,198	37,416
260,310	237,345	22,965
24,545	12,984	11,561
130,507	124,313	6,194
80,042	28,072	51,970
39,184	10,126	29,058
11	1	10
6,350	6	6,344
1,516	48	1,468
621,156	449,934	171,222
8,572	-	8,572
(5,326)	-	(5,326)
8,726	-	8,726
633,128	449,934	183,194
-	-	-
633,128	449,934	183,194



How the 2009/2010 Budget is to be funded

£000

Hounslow's 2009/10 Budget Requirement 183,194

Less: External Financing
 Combined Revenue Support Grant & Business Rates (90,127)

Council Tax Requirement 93,067

Tax Base (equivalent Band D properties) 85,332

Band D Council Tax £1,090.65

The Band D Council Tax is calculated by dividing the Council Tax requirement by the number of Band D equivalent properties.

Corporate Communications
London Borough of Hounslow
Civic Centre, Lampton Road
Hounslow TW3 4DN
Telephone: 020 8583 2000

www.hounslow.gov.uk

Translations and accessible formats:

ترجمے کی مفت سہولت (भाषांतरनी भइत सेवा)

अनुवाद की सुफ्त सेवा (उरनमे दी भइत सेवा)

020 8583 2299



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