

Letter from the Leader of the Council



Dear resident

I'm pleased to be able to tell you that Council Tax bills in Croydon will increase by just 3.53%, in April, the lowest increase for six years. This means that the typical family living in a Band D home will pay just 92p a week more.

Croydon Council's element of your Council Tax bills will increase by 3.99%, honouring our election pledge to keep annual increases below 4%. This is below the current retail price index (RPI) measure of inflation and in line with increases elsewhere in the country. It is still higher than we would have liked to have asked you to pay but this is because the level of funding Croydon receives from central government is inadequate. Croydon will receive an increase of just 2% in 2008/09, well below the rate of inflation and the lowest increase of any council in the country.

All the extra money we are raising through Council Tax will be used to improve services including:

- introducing more Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers to assist the police in the fight against crime and anti-social behaviour;
- a multi-million pound investment to make it easier for people to recycle by extending kerbside collection of cardboard, plastics and green waste across the borough, providing recycling facilities for more blocks of flats, and upgrading some of our Neighbourhood Recycling Centres;
- £500,000 to improve attendance and behaviour at our schools and attainment in the keys subjects of English, Maths and Science;
- extra investment for care of some of the most vulnerable people in Croydon who have disabilities or mental health problems;
- funding to keep Purley Pool open until the new leisure centre opens at Waddon and to re-develop Thornton Heath Library.

In addition, we have announced a five-year draft capital programme of £255 million including funding to regenerate Coulsdon, South Norwood and Waddon, extra money for maintaining our roads and investment in our call centre and One Stop to make it easier for residents to access Council services.

The attached booklet tells you what the Council is planning to do for you next year and explains in more detail about how your Council Tax is calculated. More information can be found on our website at www.croydon.gov.uk

Rest assured, we shall continue to do everything we possibly can to make Croydon a top performing council that delivers high quality, affordable services that meet your needs, in other words, *a place to be proud of.*

Mike Fisher
Leader of the Council