Council Tax for Somersham 2024-2025

There have been a lot of comments on social media recently about the level of council tax in Somersham compared to other towns and villages. This has also led to some ill-informed comments and speculation. Hopefully you will find the following information useful.

Parish Councillors are elected by parish residents every four years to take decisions on behalf of the community. They receive no remuneration. The role is entirely voluntary. All meetings are held, and decisions taken in public every four weeks with agendas published beforehand. Each meeting includes a public forum where all are welcome. Meeting minutes and accounts are all published on the council website.

The parish precept, or Council Tax demand, is a simple calculation. It is the number and cost of facilities divided by the number of taxable properties.

In response to local expectations the council has over the last 25 years been proactive and ambitious, seeking to provide as much as possible for local residents. As a result, Somersham has far more to offer than any other village in this part of the county. This includes the Millennium Sports Facility, Norwood Recreation Field, Play Area, Multi-Purpose Sports Area, Squash Court, Car Park, Library, Lake, Nature Reserve as well as the Timebank and Changing Lives activities, plus a full time Lengthsman. Highway improvements have also been introduced in response to residents’ complaints about speeding traffic. These are all provided or assisted by your parish council and managed by staff (six members of staff in total) and an office.

As the village grows over the next few years, the number of tax contributing households will increase, without the need for any significant increase in facilities. This means that council tax should not need to rise as it has in the past.

Comparison has been made with St Ives which charges less Council Tax. St Ives Town has four times the number of properties, but their council does not provide four times the benefits. Market Towns are different in that they are seen as strategic settlements expected to cater for a much wider geographical area than the town. Consequently, the Sports and Leisure facilities, Library, Car Parks etc are provided by the County and District Councils, not the Town council. Market towns also qualify for grants from the Combined Authority.