



COUNCIL TAX

2010-2011

How much you pay...
Where your money goes...


Sunderland
City Council

Need a hand paying your rent or Council Tax?

One free phone call is all it takes to find out if you can save money on your rent or Council Tax.

Make sure you get what's yours...

Call free on **0800 633 5853**, pop into a Sunderland Customer Service Centre or email enquiries@sunderland.gov.uk

YOUR COUNCIL TAX BILL...

The current difficult economic climate impacts upon us all and the likely spending cuts that the government will make in the future will no doubt affect local authorities throughout the country.

Sunderland City Council is not only very effective at budgetary planning and control, but has always been focussed upon delivering the best services for the least cost. We are continually innovating and finding new and more efficient ways of providing the services that the people of Sunderland need, want and benefit from.

In 2010-2011 we plan to spend over £784m to provide services for the 280,300 residents of Sunderland.

Council Tax is just 12% of the council's budgeted income. It helps to pay for around 800 different services - overleaf you can see what you will be getting for your money.

This year we have ensured that the increase in Council Tax is as low as possible without impacting on services. In fact it is the lowest percentage increase, at 1.2%, in over ten years – and once again indications are that we will continue to have the lowest Council Tax in the region. We managed to do this by making efficiency savings of around £7.7m.

This means you continue to get top quality services at what we believe is very good value for money.

Alongside your day-to-day services, we have also had some major achievements for the city. Amongst others:

- We opened Hetton and Silksworth Community Pools
- We generated 1,500 jobs and secured investment of £140m
- We opened Beckwith Mews, Grindon Mews and Woodridge Gardens Extra Care Schemes
- We opened Castle View and Red House Academies and Washington School whilst the refurbishment of St Roberts commenced
- We secured £1m funding to remodel and refurbish Marine Walk at the seafront at Roker
- We opened our 10th Customer Service Centre and redeveloped the Library and Customer Service Centre in Washington

We hope you'll agree that you get a lot for your money in Sunderland.



Paul Watson

Cllr Paul Watson

Leader of the Council



D. Smith

Dave Smith

Chief Executive

Delivering services for a better future


Sunderland
City Council

YOUR COUNCIL TAX HELPS

Based on an average Band A Council Tax bill of approximately 64% of homes are in Band A in Sunderland

Children's Services

Providing services which help keep children safe and healthy and services for children, young people and families through Schools, Children's Centres and Youth Projects.



Other services

These include the central services that help keep the rest running, such as finance, human resources and democratic services, but also includes some other high priority services such as community safety.



Recreation and tourism

Providing sport and leisure centres, museums, libraries, theatres and other visitor attractions and events.



Refuse collection, disposal and environmental health

Collecting and recycling your rubbish, street cleaning, maintaining parks and open spaces and everything else that helps to keep the city clean and green.



Adult Services

Looking after vulnerable people who need care and support to help them live as independent, healthy and active life as possible.



Highways

Maintaining over 750 miles of roads, 1,500 miles of footway and 48,000 street lights right across the city.



PAY FOR ALL OF THIS...

£17 per week –

Sunderland
City Council

ITEM	NET COST PER WEEK AT BAND A
ADULT SERVICES	£2.42
PROVISION FOR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND CONTINGENCIES	£0.73
CHILDREN'S SERVICES	£6.91
RECREATION AND TOURISM HIGHWAYS	£0.99
REFUSE COLLECTION, DISPOSAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	£0.63
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	£0.68
GENERAL FUND HOUSING SERVICES	£0.62
OTHER SERVICES	£0.86
LEVIES	£0.69

COUNCIL SERVICES NET COSTS **£15.21**

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY PRECEPT £1.07

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY PRECEPT £0.94

TOTAL BAND A WEEKLY CHARGE **£17.22**

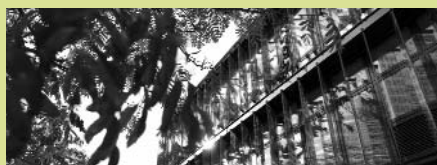
THANK YOU

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Planning and economic development

We provide planning services that assist existing businesses to develop and also help to attract new businesses to the city. We also provide advice and support to enable them to sustain their development and be competitive. Our Economic Masterplan will set out a plan for how Sunderland will earn its living over the next 15 years.



Levies

We pay a direct levy to the Integrated Transport Authority to provide financial support to help fund public transport and to the Environment Agency to support flood defence works.



Housing services

Making sure everyone has the chance of a decent home, and help, where needed, with Housing Benefit.



Contingencies and strategic priorities

Whilst all known expenditure pressures have been provided for within the budget, there is still uncertainty over some costs and it is important that we have sufficient contingencies to meet emergency funding requirements. In addition, provision is made for a range of strategic priorities including safeguarding of children, youth services, provision of free personal care for adults with assessed high care needs, and waste disposal costs.

Precepts

We collect your contribution towards our police and fire and rescue services which is set by them.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION...

Government legislation means that certain financial information must be included with the Council Tax bill for the City Council, the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and the Northumbria Police Authority in a prescribed format and this is set out on pages 10 to 14 of this booklet.

Other financial information has also been included to show next year's spending on council services, the income to be received, and information on both efficiencies achieved to date and those forecast to be achieved in the future. Also, information is included on how well Sunderland's Council Tax compares to neighbouring and other similar councils.

In relation to Sunderland's Council Tax, the views of residents and other key stakeholders have been taken into consideration in setting the budget for the council in 2010/2011. The level of Council Tax for 2010/2011, with an increase of 1.2%, reflects the prudent approach the council continues to adopt when managing its finances and means that the council can continue to deliver value for money services to the people of Sunderland.

With regard to the council's performance in realising efficiency savings, detailed information is set out on page 10. The council continues to achieve above average performance in this critical area and meet government targets.

The council's accounts are subject to detailed scrutiny and audit by independent auditors designated by the Audit Commission. In addition, the auditors also assess how well the council uses its resources and achieves value for money. The council continues to receive both an unqualified audit opinion on its accounts and to achieve a high score in 'Managing its Finances' category of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment which is independently assessed by the external auditor.

Your Council Tax bill, included with this booklet, shows the amount you are required to pay for council services, and also includes the amounts to help fund both the Fire and Rescue and Police services.

There are various ways to pay Council Tax and these are explained in full on the back of the bill along with information on how you may be entitled to claim Council Tax Benefit, and thereby reduce the amount payable. The free phone number for all benefit enquiries is 0800 633 5853.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Beardmore', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Keith Beardmore

Director of Financial Resources

**Find out if you can save
money on your Council Tax...**

Call free on 0800 633 5853

WHAT YOU PAY

Normally the person living in the property will be responsible for paying Council Tax if it is their main home and they are over 18 years of age.

The amount of Council Tax that you pay depends on the value of your home. More valuable properties pay more Council Tax.

Each home is placed in a valuation band based on what your home was valued at, or would have been valued at, in 1991.

The table below sets out the Council Tax levels for 2010-2011 for Sunderland for each valuation band. Your Council Tax bill states the band that applies to your property.

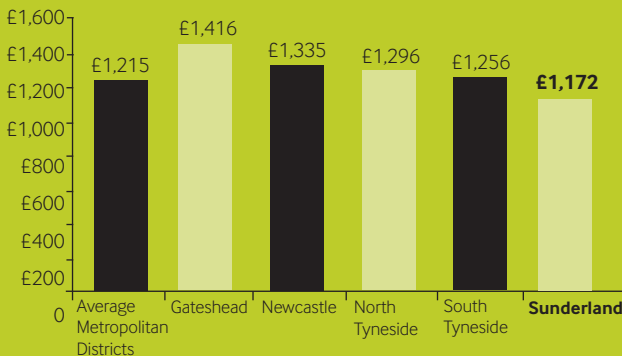
Valuation Band	City Council Tax level	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority Tax level	Northumbria Police Tax level	Total Council Tax level
	£ P	£ P	£ P	£ P
A	790.64	48.77	55.79	895.20
B	922.41	56.90	65.08	1,044.39
C	1,054.19	65.03	74.38	1,193.60
D	1,185.96	73.16	83.68	1,342.80
E	1,449.51	89.42	102.28	1,641.21
F	1,713.05	105.68	120.87	1,939.60
G	1,976.60	121.93	139.47	2,238.00
H	2,371.92	146.32	167.36	2,685.60

HOW DOES SUNDERLAND'S COUNCIL TAX COMPARE?

In recent years, Sunderland has consistently had the lowest Council Tax in the Tyne and Wear area and in the last 3 years, the lowest in the North East region. This compares

favourably with the average for Metropolitan District Councils throughout the country and reflects the prudent approach the council has taken in setting the Council Tax.

Band D Council Tax levels for 2009-2010 for the City Council (excluding Fire and Police)

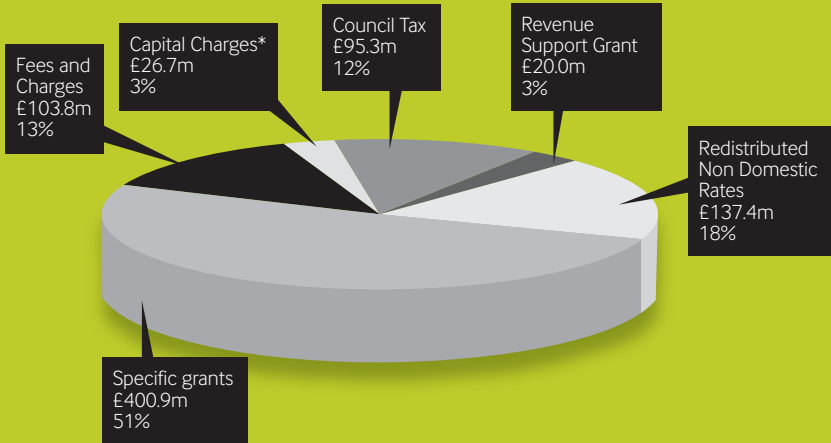


Indications are that for 2010-2011 the amount you pay in Council Tax will again be the lowest in the North East region.

WHERE THE MONEY WILL COME FROM IN 2010-2011

The council provides a wide range of services including schools, caring for the elderly, collecting rubbish and providing leisure facilities. The cost of running and maintaining the day-to-day services provided by the council is called Revenue Expenditure.

The Council Tax you pay forms only part of the funding to pay for these services. The chart below shows the various sources of funding.



Total Income
£784.1m

* Capital charges amounting to £26.7m are included in gross expenditure and income in accordance with the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice. This is a notional charge that has no impact on the level of Council Tax.

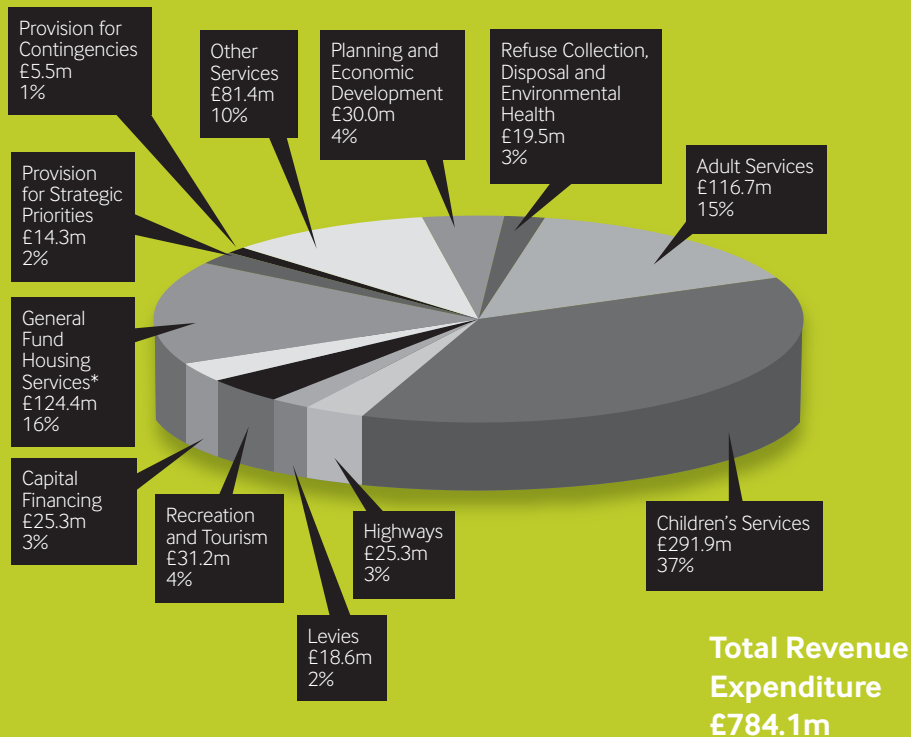
HOW RESIDENTS HELP SET THE BUDGET

We consult with thousands of residents all year round on a whole range of issues that help us plan our services and help to develop our city. It's only by residents telling us what they want that we can set the right priorities and make sure we're

delivering the things that really matter to people. At budget time we have additional consultation sessions and we're particularly grateful for the help and support of residents who are members of our citizens' panel, "Community Spirit".

WHERE THE MONEY WILL BE SPENT ON SERVICES FOR 2010-2011

The chart below shows what the council plans to spend on its services in 2010-2011.



* This excludes council housing costs as this service transferred to Sunderland Housing Group (now Gentoo) and now mainly consists of Housing Benefit payments.

BECOMING MORE EFFICIENT

All councils are required to measure and report the value of efficiency savings they have achieved since April 2008. For the 2010-2011 Budget, Sunderland City Council has continued to work hard to identify and deliver projects which both improve the services the council provides while achieving efficiencies. Services have been reviewed and modernised and there are a range of service improvement and council wide projects in place that will generate savings in 2010-2011 and beyond. An efficiency saving occurs when the cost of an activity falls, but its effectiveness is not reduced.

The table below shows the value of efficiency savings achieved by the end of March 2009 and forecast to be achieved by the end of March 2010:

	By March 2009	By March 2010
Sunderland City Council	£13,196,000	£21,171,000
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	£1,277,000	£2,619,000
Northumbria Police Authority	£10,548,000	£20,248,000
Total	£25,021,000	£44,038,000

The table below shows the value of gains forecast to be achieved by March 2010 for the average Band D dwelling and compares that with the average figure for similar authorities across England:

	Savings per dwelling	National average for similar authorities
	Band D	Band D
Sunderland City Council	£264.34	£227.00
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	£8.10	£4.49
Northumbria Police Authority	£43.72	£53.79
Total	£316.16	£285.28

Each year, councils are assessed by the Audit Commission on their use of resources and given a score out of 4 (4 being "performing strongly" and 1 being "inadequate performance"), 2009 represented the first year that performance was assessed under the new much tougher Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) regime. Sunderland City Council achieved a score of 3, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and Northumbria Police Authority also scored a 3. These scores recognise strong performance in making efficiency savings and improving services.

This year we have ensured that the increase in Council Tax is as low as possible without impacting on services.

THE MAJOR ISSUES IN SETTING THE 2010-2011 BUDGET

The budget for next year has been prepared taking account of the current economic conditions and increases in costs, for example waste disposal cost and payments to contracted service providers.

During the budget process, the council has used balances of £7.179m together with efficiency savings of £7.718m in order to enable spending pressures to be addressed and to allow for some additional investment in high priority services whilst limiting the increase in Council Tax.

The cost of services

In addition to services provided by the council, other bodies including the Northumbria Police Authority and the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority also provide services which the council must take into account. The table below gives a summary of the net cost of these services for 2010-2011 and how the Council Tax for Band D is built up.

Last Year 2009-2010 £m	Summary net cost of services	This Year 2010-2011 £m	Band D Council Tax £ p
93.856	City Council (including Levies)	95.185	1,185.96
5.806	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	5.872	73.16
6.513	Northumbria Police Authority	6.716	83.68
106.175		107.773	1,342.80

In addition Hetton Town Council is levying a precept of £53,000 in 2010-2011 (£51,455 in 2009-2010). This is equivalent to a Band D charge of £13.11 but is only paid by the residents of the Parish of Hetton Town Council.

Cost per head of population

The table below shows the total cost to each person in Sunderland of services provided by the council and Precepting Authorities after taking

account of the income received from Revenue Support Grant, Business Rates and the Collection Fund Surplus.

	Total Budget Requirement £	Revenue Support Grant £	Business Rates £	Collection Fund Surplus £	Net Budget Requirement £
City Council	901.52	(71.23)	(490.53)	(0.18)	339.58
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	54.49	(4.14)	(28.51)	(0.04)	21.80
Northumbria Police Authority	208.22	(93.92)	(88.48)	(0.04)	25.78
Total	1,164.23	(169.29)	(607.52)	(0.26)	387.16

BUDGET INFORMATION

Sunderland City Council budget information

Explanatory Notes

The Net Budget requirement is £95.2m with planned gross expenditure of £765.5m (£784.1m including levies) and gross income of £531.4m. The net increase in the total budget requirement is £3.7m, details of which are shown in the table opposite.

Borrowing liabilities outstanding at 31 March 2009 were £171.3m (of which £18.6m is on behalf of other public bodies such as the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority).

ITEM	£ M
INFLATION AND INCREASED COSTS	5.5
INCREASE IN LEVIES	0.2
CHANGES IN SERVICE LEVELS	42.1
INCREASE IN OTHER INCOME	(29.6)
CHANGE IN USE OF RESERVES / BALANCES	(6.8)
EFFICIENCY SAVINGS	(7.7)

	3.7

TC#



Last Year 2009-2010				This Year 2010-2011		
Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m		Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m
288.8	223.7	65.1	Children's Services	291.9	225.0	66.9
108.3	42.1	66.2	Adult Services	116.7	51.0	65.7
25.5	7.4	18.1	Highways	25.3	7.1	18.2
30.2	11.1	19.1	Planning and Economic Development	30.0	11.6	18.4
28.5	2.3	26.2	Recreation and Tourism	31.2	4.4	26.8
3.5	0.8	2.7	Environmental Health	3.6	0.9	2.7
14.5	1.2	13.3	Refuse Collection and Disposal	15.9	1.4	14.5
108.3	103.4	4.9	Housing (Non Council Housing Costs)	124.4	107.6	16.8
73.7	46.6	27.1	Other Services	81.4	47.3	34.1
0.0	28.0	(28.0)	Area Based Grant	0.0	39.5	(39.5)
24.8	0.0	24.8	Capital Financing Costs	25.3	0.0	25.3
706.1	466.6	239.5		745.7	495.8	249.9
12.0	0.0	12.0	Provision for contingencies	5.5	0.0	5.5
7.4	0.0	7.4	Provision for strategic priorities	14.3	0.0	14.3
0.0	2.8	(2.8)	Interest on Balances	0.0	1.7	(1.7)
0.0	0.4	(0.4)	Transfer to/(from) Reserves and Balances	0.0	7.2	(7.2)
0.0	25.1	(25.1)	Capital Charges	0.0	26.7	(26.7)
725.5	494.9	230.6	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	765.5	531.4	234.1
			Levies			
		18.2	Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority			18.4
		0.2	Environment Agency - Flood Defence			0.2
		249.0	TOTAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT			252.7
		29.0	Less Revenue Support Grant			20.0
		125.6	Redistributed Non Domestic Rates			137.4
		0.5	Collection Fund Surplus			0.1
		93.9	NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT			95.2

10,433 Total number of employees

10,764

BUDGET INFORMATION

Levies and precepts

Your Council Tax bill is made up of a number of elements besides the council's budget requirement. These include levies and precepts that the council is legally required to collect on behalf of other organisations. For Sunderland City Council these organisations are:

Levying Authorities

Environment Agency								
	Last Year 2009-2010			This Year 2010-2011			Change in levy (Total Budget Requirement) between years is attributable to:	£m
	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m		
Flood Defence	11.6	9.7	1.9	16.5	14.6	1.9	Inflation and other cost pressures	4.9
Transfer to / (from reserves)			(0.1)			0.0	Increase in grant	(4.9)
							Use of reserves	0.1
Levy			1.8			1.9	0.1	
Sunderland's share of the Environment Agency levy is £0.191m in 2010-2011 (2009-2010 £0.182m)								

Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority								
	Last Year 2009-2010			This Year 2010-2011			Change in the Total Budget Requirement between years is attributable to:	£m
	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m		
Tyne Tunnels	5.8	14.6	(8.8)	7.4	13.6	(6.2)	Inflation and other cost pressures	1.5
ITA	4.1	0.1	4.0	4.0	0.1	3.9	Increase in grant to Nexus	2.1
Grant to Nexus	102.2	0.0	102.2	103.7	0.0	103.7	Budget reductions	(0.7)
	112.1	14.7	97.4	115.1	13.7	101.4	Contribution from reserves	(0.8)
Transfer to Reserves			6.3			5.4	Decrease in Tyne Tunnel/ITA Income	1.0
Total Budget Requirement			103.7			106.8	3.1	
Less Rail Grants and Miscellaneous Grants			33.0			35.1	Sunderland's share of the Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority levy is £18.382m in 2010-2011 (2009-2010 £18.177m)	
Levy			70.7			71.7		

BUDGET INFORMATION

Precepting Authorities

Northumbria Police Authority

	Last Year 2009-2010			This Year 2010-2011			Change in Precept (Total Budget Requirement) between years is attributable to:
	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m	
Police General	339.4	54.3	285.1	344.3	51.8	292.5	Inflation and other changes £m 6.7
Total Budget Requirement			285.1			292.5	Variation in quantity / quality of service (3.3)
Less:							Change in other income 4.0
Police Grant			111.3			113.9	
Use of Balances			0.0			0.0	7.4
Total Net Police Expenditure			173.8			178.6	Sunderland's share of the Northumbria Police Authority precept is £6.716m in 2010-2011 (2009-2010 £6.513m)
Less Revenue Support Grant			26.0			18.0	This represents £83.68 of the B and D Council Tax and equates to a 2.90% increase over last year.
Business Rates			112.6			124.3	
Collection Fund Surplus			0.1			0.1	
Precept			35.1			36.2	

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

	Last Year 2009-2010			This Year 2010-2011			Change in Precept (Total Budget Requirement) between years is attributable to:
	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m	Gross Expenditure £m	Gross Income £m	Net Expenditure £m	
Fire Service	64.6	6.8	57.8	66.1	7.4	58.7	Inflation and other changes £m 1.4
Emergency Planning	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.0	Reduction in pension costs (0.1)
	65.2	7.4	57.8	66.7	8.0	58.7	Efficiency savings (0.7)
Contingencies			0.9			0.7	
Use of Balances			0.0			(0.1)	
Total Budget Requirement			58.7			59.3	Sunderland's share of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority precept is £5.872m in 2010-2011 (2009-2010 £5.806m)
Less Revenue Support Grant			6.6			4.5	This represents £73.16 of the B and D Council Tax and equates to a 0.91% increase over last year.
Business Rates			28.6			31.1	
Collection Fund Surplus			0.1			0.0	
Precept			23.4			23.7	

We would like to hear your views on the Council Tax booklet. Please fill in the form below and send it back to the address overleaf.

Tell us what you think:

The length of the booklet is:

The information provided in the booklet is:

The financial information provided in the booklet is:

I would like to see in the next Council Tax booklet:

Any other comments:

Community Spirit

FREEPOST NEA 834

Sunderland SR2 1BR

