

Your Council

Delivering for Swindon 2018-19

Find out inside how you could win great prizes donated by local businesses



www.swindon.gov.uk



SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Council Leader's introduction

Welcome to the latest council tax booklet explaining how we receive our money and how we spend it on delivering hundreds of services each day. Once again this booklet is being delivered with your council tax bill or as an online link to those of you who have chosen to receive your bill electronically.

2017-18 was another successful year for the Council as we made great progress on our priorities and pledges, from major road projects including Akers Way and M4 Junction 16, to significant improvements in our education results.

Swindon can look forward to an exciting year in 2018-19 as we take major steps forward, building new homes at Wichelstowe, improving the town centre and developing new leisure opportunities such as the £270m development of North Star which you can read about later in this booklet.

It will also be a big year for the Council as we start to provide services for you in a much more efficient way, by making the most of online channels that many of us already use for shopping, banking and other services on a daily basis.

We still have the ongoing challenge of providing our services with less money which is why you will see your council tax bill going up. I believe this money will be well spent and I urge you to read on to see where your money goes and how we are using it to benefit the town and everyone who lives here.

We welcome your feedback on this booklet. If you read on you will find further details of how you can do this and also be in with a chance to win one of the great prizes donated by local businesses.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Renard'.

Cllr David Renard, Leader of the Council

Overview of the Council's budget

Swindon Borough Council's net budget for 2018-19 is £140m. This is funded by council tax payers, a share of the business rates collected locally and Government grants.

The Government has been reducing local authority funding for some years in order to minimise the national debt. This has meant the Council's income has reduced at a time when demand and the cost of delivering services is rising.

The Council uses its budget to provide hundreds of different services to the residents of the borough, some of which are highly visible, such as waste collection and road maintenance. Other services often go unseen, such as providing foster carers for children in crisis, caring for older people, carrying out food hygiene inspections and providing education for children with special needs. The Council can choose whether to provide some of these services or not, whereas others are statutory and must be provided by law.

During the last decade the areas where the Council spends its money have changed dramatically. As demand for our statutory children's and adult's services has increased significantly, the Council's budget has reduced, meaning a lot less can be spent on many services residents are used to.

The Council has to save a further £30m before 2020 to make sure the budget stays balanced. A programme of work has been developed to achieve this challenge which will mainly focus on using technology and digital customer services to save costs.

This year's average council tax has increased by 4.99%. This includes a rise of 2.99% for general funds (which can be spent on any services) and 2% which is ring-fenced for adult social care.

For more detailed information on your bill please visit www.swindon.gov.uk/annualreport



Where our income comes from

Before the start of each financial year, the Council has to set a budget for its day-to-day expenditure. The Council is required by law to set a balanced budget. The expenditure cannot be more than the Council's income which comes from a number of different sources and is sometimes ring-fenced for certain services.

General grant from the Government

This is the revenue support grant that the Council receives from the Government. It can be used to pay for any service.

Specific grants

Given to us by the Government to be used on very specific services such as running schools, health prevention work, road improvements and housing for vulnerable people. This money can only be spent on the service it is earmarked for.

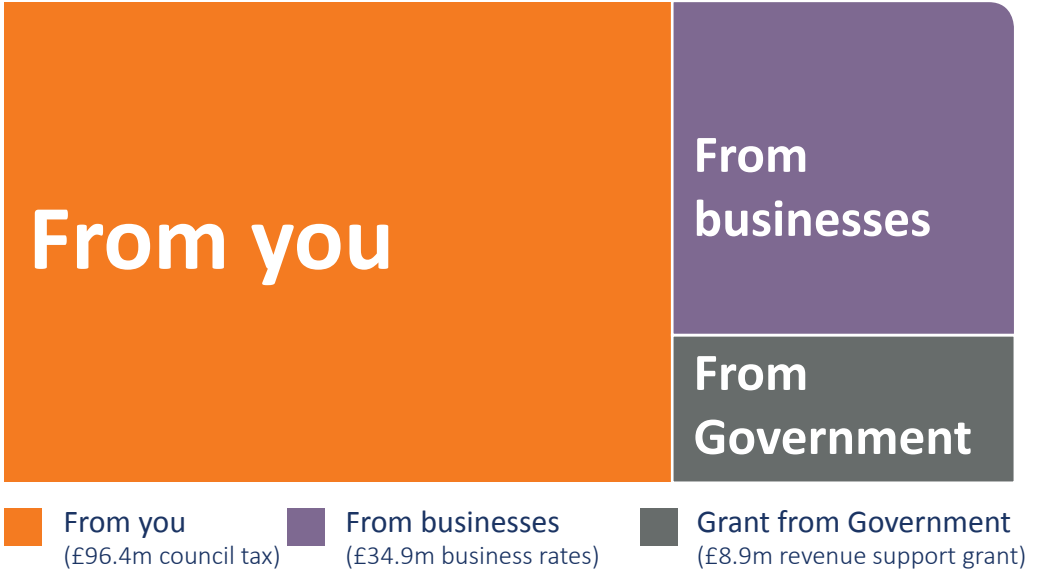
Other grants

The Government and other organisations make money available for specific things such as major road improvements and heritage projects. This sometimes enables councils to spend more freely on certain projects where other departments can be struggling. Grants are not widely available and are limited, which means there is a lot of competition for funding.

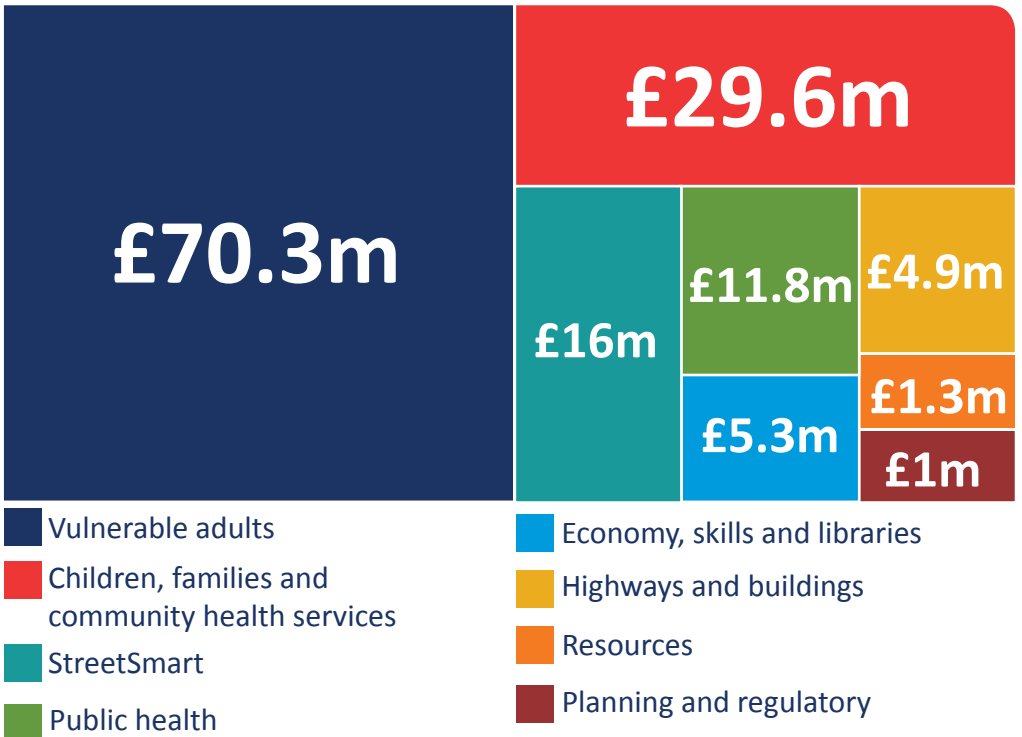
Other income and council tax

The Council collects income from a number of sources including parking, housing, fines, waste removal and council tax. This money can be spent on any service but is sometimes ring-fenced to the service area that collects the income such as bus lane fines which go straight back into road improvements.

Where the money comes from



Where the money goes





Support for vulnerable adults and children

We have budgeted £111.7m to be spent on supporting vulnerable adults and children in 2018-19, including public health. That is 80% of the total budget compared with 48% ten years ago.

A relatively small percentage of the borough's population needs these services but they are very important to the people who receive them and their families.

Adult social care services provide support to both older people and working age adults who have physical disabilities, mental disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health conditions or those who are generally frail. They also provide support for carers and the voluntary and charitable sector that includes:

- Home-based services for people who can live at home but, due to a disability, need help with everyday activities
- Adaptations like ramps, lifting equipment or mobility aids to help keep people mobile and living at home, out of more intensive care settings
- Residential support in specialist care homes

Children's services protect and care for children and young people in the borough who are in a vulnerable situation including:

- Dedicated social workers to support families and make sure children are safe and live in a positive environment
- Foster care and adoption for children who have either lost their parents or who can no longer stay with their families
- Assistance for disabled children such as equipment and specialist therapies
- Prevention of child exploitation including sexual and other illegal purposes like drug running
- Support for young offenders

Did you know?



Residential care for someone with learning disabilities costs around £80k per year

Did you know?



One child in care can cost up to £1.8k a week, especially if placed outside Swindon

Did you know?



A residential care placement for an older person costs around £26k per year

Did you know?



At the end of January this year, 349 vulnerable children were being looked after by the Council

Progress on our priorities and pledges

Over the past year we have made a lot of progress towards realising our vision, priorities and pledges.

To find out more about the work we are doing to improve Swindon visit www.swindon.gov.uk/vision



Priority one: Improve infrastructure and housing to support a growing, low-carbon economy.



Priority two: Offer education opportunities that lead to the right skills and right jobs in the right places.



Priority three: Ensure clean and safe streets and improve our public spaces and local culture.



Priority four: Help people to help themselves while always protecting our most vulnerable children and adults.



Greenbridge roundabout has been improved to ensure it can cope with the extra traffic generated by the 8,000 new homes to be developed at New Eastern Villages



The £10m redevelopment of Sussex Place was completed and won the Local Authority Building Control West of England Award for Best Social or Affordable New Housing Development



By January this year we had exceeded our target of ensuring that 95% of the borough had access to the Government's standard for Superfast Broadband, including some of our most rural areas



A new solar farm at Barnfield will deliver 2.5 megawatts of renewable energy which is enough to power 600 homes for a year. Borough-wide, we hope to produce 200 megawatts annually by 2020



The Council set up Switch on to Swindon to improve Swindon's reputation and attract investment to the town



A new state-of-the-art health centre opened in the town centre as part of the Kimmerfields regeneration scheme



Seven new homes have been built in Euclid Street. It is the first development from the Council's new housing company that will increase income to vital services through the sale of houses



Investment in schools has continued with a new school due to open in September 2018 at Tadpole Farm. A further two new schools are due to open in Swindon over the next two years



We completed £900k of improvements to Akers Way, improving the 70-year-old road base and providing a long lasting road surface. Over 390m³ of concrete was poured and 3.7km of new kerbing laid



Swindon continues to be an area of high employment. We have the third highest level of employment of any UK city, significantly higher than the national average



The Swindon Challenge programme, led by the Council, has made big improvements to education in Swindon:

- Swindon is the most improved local authority in the country for results at primary school
- 88% of **all** our schools have achieved good or outstanding Ofsted ratings
- Swindon is one of the ten most improved councils in the country for phonics



We are working closely with parish councils to help them provide high quality services across the borough including grass cutting, litter picking and removing graffiti



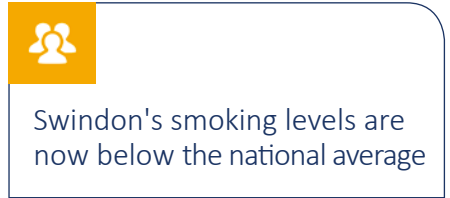
Following the reorganisation of Swindon's Library Service in 2017, a new extended access system has been successfully introduced at the borough's five core libraries



Our Community Health Service, which provides nursing and health visiting among other services, was praised by Government regulators for the high quality care provided to children in Swindon



75% of the older people we have supported are now back living full independent lives



Swindon's smoking levels are now below the national average



Our temporary winter housing project, in a repurposed health centre, worked with 12 rough sleepers to help them get their lives back on track



We worked hard to make sure all our tenants living in tower blocks felt safe following the Grenfell Tower tragedy. We are also investing in extra safety measures in council-owned accommodation

Improving Swindon's economy and infrastructure

Ensuring Swindon has a vibrant economy is one of the Council's key priorities. A strong economy provides jobs for residents, better shopping, culture and homes. Plenty of progress is being made towards this aim, which includes delivering on the projects below:

Improvements to Wellington Street

Wellington Street is a key gateway, linking the railway station to the town centre. We are upgrading this thoroughfare to make it more attractive for residents and visitors. The work includes adding new crossings with raised surfaces and ramps to improve accessibility for pedestrians and those with mobility impairments.

New bus station

Part of the wider plans for the town centre, and the regeneration of Fleming Way, include a new bus station. Designs are being drawn up and we are now in the process of identifying the funding needed.

Highways improvements

We have been leading the £11.5m improvements to Junction 16 of the M4 so the highway interchange will be able to cope with larger volumes of traffic. When this is completed, work to improve Junction 15 will begin. Further schemes in the pipeline include upgrading Mannington roundabout and £4m improvements to Mead Way.

North Star leisure complex

Ambitious plans to build a £270m leisure complex at North Star are expected to attract millions of extra visitors a year and put Swindon firmly on the map as a regional leisure destination. Outline plans for two indoor ski slopes, 130-bed hotel, 14 screen cinema with the largest IMAX screen in the country, a new tenpin bowling alley and other attractions were approved in November 2017. The scheme will also provide shops and restaurants and will generate hundreds of new jobs, while providing a significant boost to the town's existing economy. Developers Seven Capital have submitted a detailed planning application which will be reviewed by the Council this year.



Building a brighter future for Swindon

Hundreds of millions of pounds will be spent on new homes and roads to support Swindon's dynamic economy over the next 20 years. The borough's growing population means new homes are crucial for Swindon's future. Swindon has one of the highest employment rates in the country and land has also been set aside for new businesses to create more jobs. To keep pace with new development, major work is taking place on the borough's road network to increase capacity.



At Wichelstowe we have entered into a joint venture agreement with Barratt Developments to build around 2,750 new homes. The work at Wichelstowe will also include a district centre, brand new secondary and primary schools as well as a flagship Hall & Woodhouse café, bar and restaurant. We will shortly start building 85 new homes through our housing company at Canalside in Wichelstowe.

Artist impression



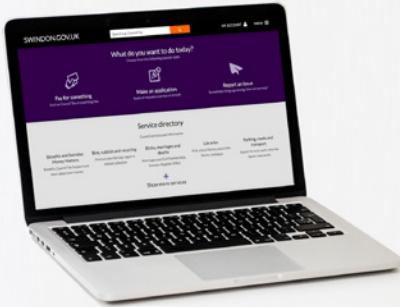
Outline planning applications have been submitted for the New Eastern Villages which will provide 8,000 new homes, a district centre, schools and industrial land to the east of the A419 and either side of the A420. Improvements have been made to the surrounding road network at Symmetry Park on the A420 and Greenbridge roundabout.

The regeneration of the former Oakfield Campus is one of our 30 pledges. This will happen thanks to a new partnership approach with Nationwide Building Society, who will invest £50m into the site to build around 200 quality homes, including affordable properties. Subject to planning permission being granted work will start in 2019.

Artist impression



Save time by reporting council issues online



Many of our services are now available online via our website.

By using 'My Account' you can report issues and track your enquiry through to completion. This saves you time and the Council money which can be spent on delivering services for you and other Swindon residents.

Visit www.swindon.gov.uk and look for 'My Account' in the top right corner of the homepage. Over 60 services are available online including:



Dog
fouling



Fly
tipping



Missed
collections



Report
graffiti



Street
lighting



Street
cleaning



Garden
waste

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Paperless

If you pay by Direct Debit, email your council tax account number, preferred email address and surname to swindon.counciltax@secure.capita.co.uk



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Monitored Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

 [@SwindonNews](https://twitter.com/SwindonNews)

 [SwindonBoroughCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/SwindonBoroughCouncil)

You can also stay up to date with news, travel and events by signing up to receive our regular e-newsletters:

www.swindon.gov.uk/newsletter

This publication is delivered to approximately 84,000 households throughout the borough. If you have any questions please email communications@swindon.gov.uk

The information contained in this booklet is available at www.swindon.gov.uk/annualreport and can be reproduced in large print or other accessible formats by emailing customerservices@swindon.gov.uk

Information correct as of 23/02/18
D2446/18 FOI 4151/18

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produce

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www.swindon.gov.uk/mygardenwaste



Join our amazing foster carers and change the life of a child in Swindon

If you have space in your heart and your home, you could change the future of a child or young person. To find out more about fostering in Swindon and receive advice and support on your journey visit www.swindon.gov.uk/foster or call us on 07917 503 447



Free prize draw

Your feedback matters to us so please take the time to let us know what you think of this booklet. By filling out a short online feedback form you can enter a free prize draw.

All three prizes displayed on this page have been donated free of charge by local businesses.

Prize draw closes 30 March 2018.
Winners will be chosen at random.

For more information and full terms and conditions please visit:

www.swindon.gov.uk/CTprizedraw



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Where your money goes

Your council tax bill 2018-19

Where every £1,000 of your council tax goes

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Caring for older people & adults with special needs | £489 |
| Protecting children & vulnerable young people | £209 |
| Waste collection & disposal | £88 |
| Investment in major projects | £54 |
| Supporting young people (not including schools) | £36 |
| Leisure, libraries & culture | £23 |
| Law & democratic services e.g. council meetings | £22 |
| Revenues, benefits & customer services | £20 |
| Housing the homeless & housing planning | £19 |
| Street cleaning & street lighting | £19 |
| Keeping people safe e.g. food hygiene inspections | £11 |
| Maintaining roads & grounds | £8 |
| Business support, insurance costs, HR, IT, communications and financial support | £2 |

| | |
|--------------|---------------|
| TOTAL | £1,000 |
|--------------|---------------|



This bill only represents services directly funded by residents' council tax. Other council services such as planning, car parking, schools and public health are funded by the income they raise or specific grant funding rather than council tax and so are not included in the figures above.