



Your Council

Working for Swindon



2022

2023



SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Introduction

Cllr David Renard

Leader of the Council

Thank you for reading this year's council tax booklet.

It often comes as a surprise when people learn that around 80% of our budget is spent on social care services that provide a lifeline and safety net to residents who need them most.

Social care involves supporting residents who are older or living with a disability or physical or mental illness, to live independently and stay safe and well. It also involves safeguarding and supporting children, young people and their families.

This vital care directly benefits a relatively small number of residents, yet demands the lion's share of our funding. But we're squeezing the most from the remainder to provide services across the community.



Our Council Plan 2022–25 sets out our priorities for the next four years. This includes building new homes, creating more school places, upgrading roads, and enhancing our country parks and leisure facilities. We're also leading over £100m of investment in town centre projects to help stimulate commercial investment in new shops, amenities and homes.

Across education, health, crime, the local economy and climate change, we're working with partners to improve the quality of life for Swindon residents now and in the future.

None of this is possible if we don't live within our means. That's why we continue to manage our budget responsibly and make every pound count.

Overview of our budget

Our net budget for 2022/23 is £156.7m. This is funded by council taxpayers, a share of the business rates collected locally and government grants.

We use our budget to provide hundreds of services to Swindon's residents. Many of our services are highly visible, like waste collections and road maintenance. But many others go unseen, for example providing foster carers for children in crisis, caring for people with mental or physical difficulties, and over the past two years, supporting residents through the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year, over 80% of our budget will be spent on helping those who need it most in our community, and with demand and costs for these services continuing to increase, it means a lot less can be spent on other services.

Recognising the rising demand and costs, the Government has increased the social care grant for 2022/23 and has allowed councils to raise council tax through the adult social care precept you will see on your bill.

However, to keep our budget balanced, which is required by law, we must also deliver savings of £11.3m in 2022/23.

This year's average council tax bill has increased by 2.99%. This includes a rise of 1.99% for general funds (which can be spent on any services) and 1% which can only be spent on adult social care.

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



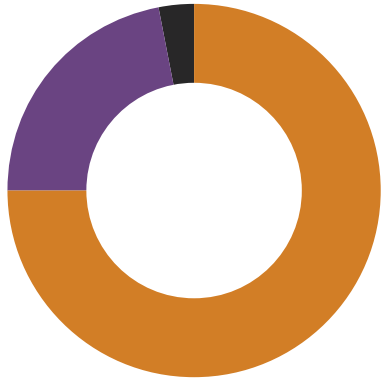
Let us know what you think of this booklet by scanning the QR code, visiting smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ctaxbooklet2022 or calling **01793 445500** to complete the survey over the phone.

This booklet costs 16p per household to produce. To find out how to switch to a digital bill and access this booklet online, visit: swindon.gov.uk/annualreport

If you require this booklet in another format email: customerservices@swindon.gov.uk

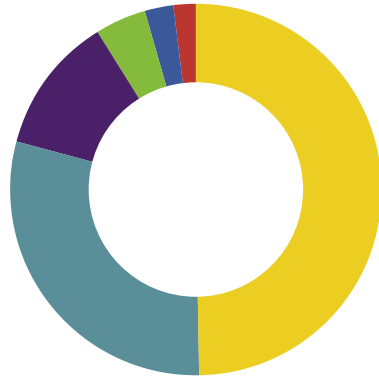
Where the budget comes from and how it's spent

Where the budget comes from



Council Tax	£118m	(75%)
Business Rates	£34.2m	(22%)
Government Revenue Support Grant	£4.5m	(3%)
Total	£156.7m	(100%)

Where the budget is spent



Adult services	£78m	(49.8%)
Children, families and community health services	£46.3m	(29.6%)
Waste collections, country parks and tree maintenance	£18.5m	(11.8%)
Economy, development, skills and libraries	£7.1m	(4.5%)
Highways and buildings	£3.8m	(2.4%)
Keeping people safe (incl. community safety, emergency planning and trading standards)	£3m	(1.9%)
Total	£156.7m	(100%)



A resilient economy

We're working closely with local partners to help secure a bright future for two major employment sites in Swindon.

The local economy bounced back after the closure of the Honda plant in South Marston last July.

Former Honda and supply chain workers with sought-after skills have found new opportunities, while the new £400m Amazon logistics centre at Symmetry Park has created 2,000 local jobs.

Amazon's logistics centre was built by Panattoni, Europe's largest developer of new build industrial and logistics facilities. Panattoni has also agreed to acquire the former Honda site and is progressing plans that could see 7,000 direct new jobs created over the next 10 years through a £700m investment.



Investing in Swindon's road network

Investing in the expansion of our town's road network is essential if we're to accommodate Swindon's growing population and create a sustainable future for our town.

Over £170m is being invested in Swindon's roads through strategic transport schemes, secured largely through successful bids to central government. We'd like to extend our thanks to local residents and businesses for their patience while improvements are made to increase the capacity of the Borough's roads.

To stay up to date with all our road projects, sign up to the Highways News e-newsletter: [swindon.gov.uk/newsletter](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/newsletter)



Junction 15 of the M4



Wichelstowe Southern Access



White Hart junction

Maintaining Swindon's roads

We know a key issue for residents is the condition of Swindon's roads. While the majority of our budget is spent on social care services, like most local authorities, we continue to repair potholes and maintain our roads using our finite resources by risk assessing and prioritising repairs that pose a safety risk.

The Local Government Association has estimated that there is a £10bn backlog of local road repairs across the UK.

Rules around how local government funding can be used means we're unable to reallocate money from other projects (for instance, major road schemes) to fix more potholes in the Borough.

But through proactive road inspections and reports from the public, our team is currently carrying out up to 100 road repairs every working day.

For further information on how we manage potholes, or to report a pothole, visit our website: [swindon.gov.uk/potholes](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/potholes)



Providing a lifeline for residents who need us most

If you don't access social care services yourself, or know a relative or friend that does, you might not know a great deal about what 'social care' actually is.

Social care includes all forms of personal care and practical assistance for children, young people and adults who require extra support and need to be kept safe.

Adult social care covers a wide range of activities to help people with mental or physical difficulties live an independent and safe life. This could include help with washing, dressing and getting out of bed, as well as helping people stay active and engaged in their communities.

Social care support can be provided to adults in their own homes, in a residential setting, or through services that help them get back on their feet and regain their independence. It's our responsibility to assess people's needs and, if individuals are eligible, fund their care.

With more people living longer, and a greater number of working-age adults having a disability, the demand for adult social care is rising. In Swindon, there are more adults aged 18 to 64 who rely on long-term support than the number of people aged 65 and over who do.

We're also responsible for providing children, young people and their families with extra help and support when they need it, and if children can't live with their own families, we care for them at a critical point in their lives.

While only a relatively small proportion of people need these services, they are incredibly important to those who depend on them.

Here are some examples of how our services helped residents who needed us most last year:

1,047
residents aged 18 to 64 in receipt of long-term support

1,029
people supported to return home from hospital

12,537
children given support from our Early Help services, which include health visiting, youth engagement, family support and mental health support

412
children who couldn't be cared for by their parents have been assessed, supported and placed according to their needs

293
residents helped to live independently in supported living accommodation

2,247
children assisted by an Education, Health and Care Plan to support their special educational needs

729
residential or nursing care placements provided for residents

758
residents given daily help to live independently at home

The time to act on climate change is now

Swindon is stepping up and taking action to respond to the climate crisis. The ongoing 'Be the Change' campaign, which launched last summer, showcases how people and organisations across Swindon are rethinking their day-to-day behaviour, choices and purchasing decisions to live more sustainably.

The Government has set a target for the UK to reach 'Net Zero' by 2050. That means reducing greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, with the remaining amount absorbed (for example, through forests) or removed using technology.

Across the UK, new policy, investment and technology is supporting the transition away from fossil fuels, creating more sustainable ways for us to travel, heat our homes and live our lives.

We are playing our part. While local authorities are only directly responsible for between 2 and 5% of their local area's emissions, we are using our powers and influence to support wider local action to reduce emissions and prepare Swindon for a changing climate.

To find out more, including how you can help make a difference, visit: [swindon.gov.uk/bethechange](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/bethechange)



Our Net Zero Emissions Action Plan sets out our initial contribution – here's a quick snapshot of what we're doing:

- Switching over 25,000 street lights across the Borough to more energy-efficient LEDs
- Expanding the number of electric vehicle charging points in Swindon. Last year, 22 on-street electric vehicle charging bays were installed in Central Swindon and Eastcott
- Replacing our existing petrol and diesel vehicles, that have reached the end of their service life, with low emission alternatives including hybrid and electric vehicles



Could solar panels be right for you?

To support the community to power their homes through renewable energy, plans are being considered to offer a solar panel group-buying scheme in Swindon later this year. This would give households who own their own house, or who have permission from their landlord, the opportunity to get high-quality solar panels installed on their roof for a competitive price.

Email us at communications@swindon.gov.uk if you would like to receive further information on the scheme when available.

Here for Swindon through the pandemic

This time almost two years ago, the UK first introduced unprecedented measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 across the country.

None of us could have planned for, or predicted, how the pandemic would play out, but our teams have continued to work incredibly hard, with the support of residents and partner organisations, to care for and protect those most at risk. Much of their work goes unnoticed, but over the past year, this has included:

4,516

people vaccinated through 53 outreach vaccination clinics



43,801

COVID-19 test kits handed out across the community



1,681

hours of COVID-19 community engagement work carried out



£677,000

in self-isolation support payments distributed to eligible residents



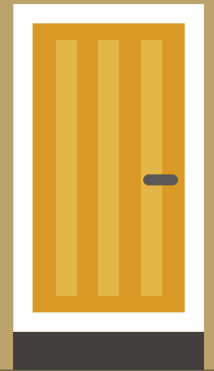
104

residents offered guidance and support after testing positive for COVID-19



813

doorstep visits to those who needed additional support



77

residents had essentials delivered to them when they were unable to leave home



580

volunteers helped to run the vaccine centre at STEAM Museum



816

responses to general COVID-19 enquiries



Investing in the town centre

Like town centres across the country, Swindon's high street is adapting to changing times and the needs of the local community; moving on from national chain and department store closures, and diversifying its offer beyond retail as more people choose to shop online and out of town.

Securing the town centre's position as a place people choose to live, work and visit, requires the combined efforts and investment of the private, public and voluntary sectors.

Working closely with our partners, we're striving to attract quality new investment that will make the town centre a more attractive and vibrant destination, with a diversified offer for visitors.



We're using our assets, powers and influence to unlock change – investing in public spaces, land and buildings in the town centre that we own, as well as coordinating the efforts of partners.

We're also leading on delivering £100m of investment in town centre projects over the next four years, secured largely through successful bids to central government. This is funding exciting projects that will

include revitalising the much-loved, Grade II* listed Health Hydro and refurbishing the Carriage Works to create a major employment hub that will be home to 1,000 highly-skilled workers.

Progress is being made. In the coming months, we will see the new Zurich HQ completed, a new bus interchange at Fleming Way under construction and the creation of a new, quality outdoor market as part of a major revamp of Wharf Green.

This investment will help increase land values and act as a catalyst for future private investment in new town centre shops, amenities and homes. Find out more at: [swindon.gov.uk/towncentreregeneration](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/towncentreregeneration)

Waste less and recycle more

Recycling at home doesn't need to be time-consuming or confusing.

Follow our quick guide and become a recycling expert in no time.

*This booklet is made from 100% recycled paper
Please recycle it after you've finished with it*

1

When it comes to recycling, many of us regularly recycle items from our kitchens but then forget to recycle items from other areas of our homes too.

You can recycle all kinds of everyday items in every room of your house – don't forget to check your bathroom, bedroom and living room.

2

Make sure you're putting the right stuff in your recycling boxes. If you put incorrect or dirty items in your recycling, it has the potential to spoil the entire lorry load of materials and may mean the items can no longer be recycled. To stop this from happening, check that your recycling is clean, empty and dry before it goes in your boxes. The same principle applies to your plastic recycling too.

3

All households are encouraged to have at least two recycling boxes, but more are available if needed. Group paper and card together in one recycling box, and metals, glass and aerosols together in another.

Use our handy A-Z guide if you're ever unsure of where to dispose of an item: swindon.gov.uk/recycling

It has never been easier to recycle your garden waste. Subscribe to our fortnightly service and, for an annual fee, your garden waste will be collected, composted and recycled into environmentally-friendly soil improver.

Sign up today:
swindon.gov.uk/gardenwaste



Tackling fly-tipping in Swindon

Fly-tipping is not only a criminal offence, it's unsightly and extremely costly to clear up, diverting much-needed funds away from other priority areas.

We've launched new initiatives to catch those responsible for fly-tipping and refreshed targets are in place to make sure 80% of fly-tipped waste is removed within three days of being reported.

Last year, our team handed out 62 Fixed Penalty Notices for fly-tipping incidents in the Borough. Money from these fines is being reinvested in the service to fund mobile cameras in fly-tipping hotspots across the town, helping us to catch offenders. Signage has also been put up in known fly-tipping areas to warn offenders that they will be caught.

If you spot any fly-tipping in the Borough, please report it to our team:
swindon.gov.uk/flytipping



Improving your experience at the HWRC

Last summer, we launched a new check-in system at Swindon's Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) to remove the need for residents to bring paperwork on entry and improve site safety for our teams.

The new system also allows us to understand how people are using the HWRC, to enable us to make data-driven decisions to benefit both you and the service.

These improvements were put in place in response to feedback received from residents and to support the HWRC to be more modern, efficient and effective.

To book a visit to the HWRC, please visit: swindon.gov.uk/hwrc



Our priorities for Swindon

We're committed to making sure Swindon continues to be a vibrant, modern place to live, work and play.

We know that we must prioritise and be clear about what we're going to do and when. To achieve this, at the end of last year we refreshed our priorities and pledges to reflect our current situation and the achievements which have been made.

Much of our progress towards realising the Council's vision has already been outlined in this booklet, but here are some of the other ways we are working for Swindon:

Priority one

Build an economy that works for you: creating more well-paid jobs, attracting further investment in our town and making Swindon a great place to start and grow businesses.

Priority two

Protect and enhance our heritage, cultural and leisure facilities: delivering improvements now and securing long-term investment.

Priority three

Deliver sustainable growth: through high quality affordable homes alongside infrastructure to support our growing town.

Priority four

Equip all our young people with the education and skills they need: through additional and enhanced skills and higher education opportunities.

Priority five

Make Swindon greener and more sustainable: we will help residents reduce their environmental impact and, as a council, we will aim to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2030.

Priority six

We will make Swindon safer, fairer and healthier: by helping people to help themselves while always protecting our children and adults, increasing health and wellbeing facilities and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.



Supporting young people to live healthy lives

In collaboration with our partners, we're working to reduce the number of children living with excess weight in Swindon. There are currently 116 families enrolled on our weight management programme, who are being supported with regular phone calls, home exercise plans, equipment and access to wider support and advice to help them lead healthier lifestyles.



Improving services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

In October 2021, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission visited Swindon to assess our SEND services and found that significant improvements have been made to our services since their last inspection in November 2018. To view the full report, please visit Swindon's Local Offer website.

Building affordable homes

The first phase of the £34m regeneration of Queens Drive will be completed this year, and will see 32 flats and 15 houses ready for occupation. Phase two of the scheme is now also underway. In total, the project will deliver 149 affordable homes by November 2023.



Preventing homelessness in Swindon

We're working alongside our partners to identify and provide a range of alternative pathways to prevent homelessness in Swindon. Thanks to this work, our team were able to successfully prevent around 250 households from being made homeless last year.

Providing school placements

Last year, of the 5,536 school applications received on time, 96% of pupils received their first choice primary or junior school and 87% of pupils received their first choice secondary school.

Resurfacing Swindon's roads

Last year, a number of the town's major routes were resurfaced, including Thamesdown Drive, Cheney Manor industrial estate, St Mary's roundabout and Vicarage Road. This work has helped to extend the life of these routes and improve the road surface for motorists.



Helping businesses reach Net Zero

In September, Swindon hosted an event for local businesses and organisations as part of a national Zero Carbon Tour across the UK. Businesses were given advice and support to help them reduce their emissions and learn from other local businesses who are leading the way.



Building a new community at the New Eastern Villages

So far, outline planning consent has been approved for 6,000 homes as part of the New Eastern Villages development which will be located to the east of the A419. These new homes will go a long way towards meeting house-building targets set out in our Local Plan and supporting Swindon's growing population.



Getting active with Beat the Street

The popular walking, cycling and running game, Beat the Street, returned in autumn 2021 and saw over 29,000 residents clock up an impressive 319,875 miles.

Where your money goes

Your council tax bill 2022/23

.....

Where every £1,000 of your council tax goes

.....

Adult services **£498.07**

Children, families and
community health services **£295.40**

Waste collections, country parks
and tree maintenance **£117.78**

Economy, development, skills and libraries **£45.17**

Highways and buildings **£24.48**

Keeping people safe (including
community safety, emergency
planning and trading standards) **£19.10**

TOTAL **£1,000**

The figures are provided for illustrative purposes. They do not include services provided through Housing Revenue Account, Dedicated Schools Grant or Public Health Grant as funding for these is separate to the general fund services.

For further information, please search 'open data and transparency' on our website.