

# WANT TO KNOW WHERE YOUR COUNCIL TAX GOES?

# 80%

funds **vital social care**  
services for **adults** and  
**children** in Swindon

# WELCOME

## TO THIS YEAR'S COUNCIL TAX BOOKLET

**Around 80 per cent of the Council's £166.4m budget in 2023/24 will be prioritised on essential social care services to support the wellbeing and safety of residents.**

The remaining 20 per cent will fund day-to-day services to benefit all residents, including extending the food waste collection service to households across the Borough from this autumn.

Like most local authorities across the country, we need to close an unprecedented gap between our income and expenditure in 2023/24.

This has been caused by record levels of inflation (£22.3m) and service cost pressures (£17.5m), meaning the Council must achieve £26m of savings in 2023/24. Our legal duty to make ends meet is also why councillors voted to increase council tax bills by an average of £6.39 per month, excluding precepts from other bodies.

**Read on to find out how we are maximising this funding, to benefit Swindon's residents.**

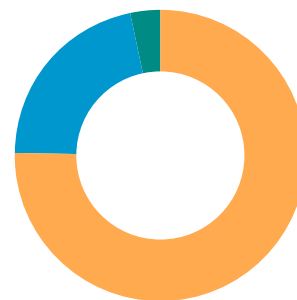
**Councillor David Renard**  
Leader of the Council

## THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET EXPLAINED

Council tax makes up the largest proportion of our day-to-day budget used to fund services, known as the general fund or main revenue budget. Around **80 per cent of this budget** will be spent on social care in 2023/24.

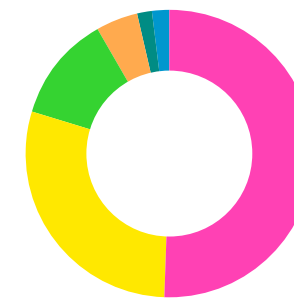
The pressure on public finances means we receive far less from government grant funding than in the past. It accounts for 3.1 per cent of the budget in 2023/24.

### WHERE THE BUDGET COMES FROM



● Council tax	<b>£125.4m</b>
	<b>(75.4%)</b>
● Business rates	<b>£35.8m</b>
	<b>(21.5%)</b>
● Government revenue support grant	<b>£5.2m</b>
	<b>(3.1%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£166.4m</b>
	<b>(100%)</b>

### WHERE THE BUDGET GOES



● Adult services	<b>£84.2m</b>
	<b>(50.6%)</b>
● Children, families and community health services	<b>£48.4m</b>
	<b>(29.1%)</b>
● Waste collections, country parks and tree maintenance	<b>£17.9m</b>
	<b>(10.8%)</b>
● Economy, development, skills and libraries	<b>£7.5m</b>
	<b>(4.5%)</b>
● Highways and buildings	<b>£5.5m</b>
	<b>(3.3%)</b>
● Keeping people safe (incl. community safety, emergency planning and trading standards)	<b>£2.9m</b>
	<b>(1.7%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£166.4m</b>
	<b>(100%)</b>

# 80%

## OF OUR BUDGET WILL PROVIDE SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

The lion's share of our day-to-day budget this year will be spent on providing social care services to look after and protect adults and children. Below are examples of the support this paid for in 2022/23:

£21.6M

on placing an average of 265 children in care placements

£11.8M

on residential placements for an average of 42 children with complex needs

£27.8M

on residential or nursing care placements for 567 people

£22M

on providing daily help so 1,475 people can live safely in their own homes

£15.6M

on supported living care for 194 people

### HOW WE SUPPORT RESIDENTS' SOCIAL CARE NEEDS:

**1**  
WE ASSESS EACH  
ADULT'S AND CHILD'S  
CARE NEEDS

**2**  
WE WORK OUT  
OUR FINANCIAL  
CONTRIBUTION AND  
COMMISSION A  
CARE PROVIDER

**3**  
ADULT OR CHILD  
RECEIVES CARE AT  
HOME OR IN THE  
COMMUNITY



# Providing care for one adult costs **£24,365** on average per year

Adult social care covers a wide range of services. These help people who are older or those living with disabilities or physical or mental illness live independently and stay well and safe. It includes:

- Personal care such as support with washing, dressing and getting out of bed
- Helping people stay active and engaged in their communities
- Supporting people in their own homes (home care or 'domiciliary care')
- Support in day centres
- Care provided by care homes and nursing homes ('residential care')
- Services to help people regain independence (for example, after they leave hospital)
- Aids and adaptations for people's homes
- Help and advice for family carers

## THEO'S STORY\*

Theo had been in a care setting for much of his younger life. Our Transitions team helped him to decide about his future and found out his hobbies and what he likes to do. Someone from the team sourced a job that suited Theo's interests and then worked with him and the employer for six weeks to settle him in. During this time, Theo learned about the expectations of the job and the employer learned how to make reasonable adjustments to support and welcome him to the workplace.

**This short-term intervention has potentially reduced the need for longer-term support, which can cost over £1,000 per week. More importantly, it has given Theo a much better future.**



\* Not real names or images of residents

## HARRY'S STORY\*

Harry is a young adult with a learning disability who lives with his family in Swindon. We supported them with daily home care to help Harry and his family with washing and dressing. He also attends a college every day to help him learn life skills. A respite break is arranged for Harry so that he and the family can have a break from each other every so often. **Harry pays a small contribution from his benefits towards the support and we fund the rest, at a cost of £450 per week.** We will be working with Harry and his family to help him live more independently.

# Providing a care placement for one child costs **£81,300** on average per year

Children's social care refers to all forms of personal care for children and young people who need extra support. Good social care opens up opportunities and improves mental health. It has the power to change young people's lives.

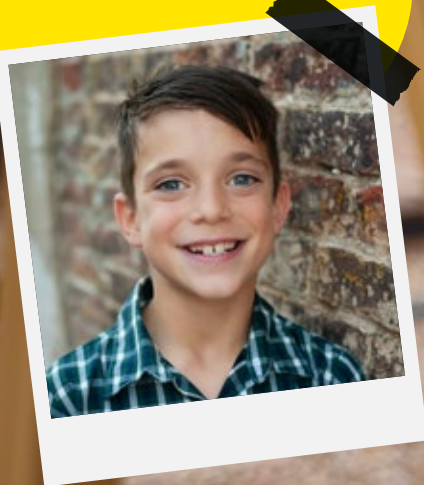
Child protection services are there to look after children and young people who are at risk of significant harm. This includes harm from physical, emotional or sexual abuse, and neglect.

As a council, we have a legal responsibility for the children we look after who live with foster carers or in residential care on either a short or long-term basis.

## BEN'S STORY\*

Ben, aged 10, has recently been diagnosed with ADHD and his parents often struggle to find the best ways to support him, which has led to arguments and a strain on relationships.

**We funded the £400 cost for his parents to attend a 10-week Managing Challenging Behaviour programme.** They now have a better understanding of his needs, and know how to best support him.



## AMY'S STORY\*

Amy, aged 11, received play therapy through a Therapeutic Social Worker based in the Parenting Hub, at a cost of £1,500. After 30 sessions, Amy's school attendance and attainment have improved and she has made new friends.

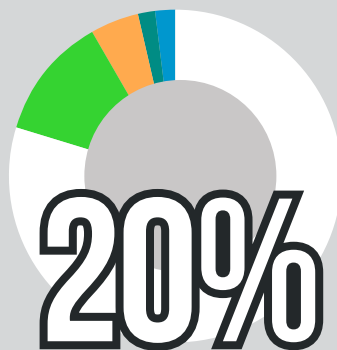
## LISA'S STORY\*

We recently supported Lisa, aged 39, to make positive changes which meant her two young children can remain safely in her care. Without this support, her children would have needed to move into foster homes, which can cost **£300 per week to provide.**



*\* Not real names or images of residents*

The remaining 20% of our day-to-day budget is used to deliver hundreds of other services which typically benefit all residents.



1.32%

of our day-to-day budget is prioritised on routine road maintenance.

3.24%

of our day-to-day budget pays for around 10 million waste and recycling collections every year.

Money spent on filling potholes and fixing damaged road patches is separate to the central government grant funding we receive for major road upgrades, which can only be spent on those projects.

From April 2021 to March 2022, **10,769 pothole repairs were completed** across Swindon.

As our budget is limited, we risk assess and prioritise repairs based on safety criteria.

Report a pothole by scanning this QR code on your smartphone or at [www.swindon.gov.uk/potholes](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/potholes)



A food waste collection service will start to be rolled out to every Swindon household from autumn 2023.

This is one of the actions in our plan to address the climate emergency. Recycled food waste can be converted into fertilisers for agriculture or into natural forms of energy which are a good alternative to fossil fuels.

Find out more about recycling in Swindon by scanning this QR code on your smartphone or at [www.swindon.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/recycling)



This booklet is made from 100% recycled paper.

Please recycle it after you have finished with it.

We know how much Swindon's beautiful country parks are loved and enjoyed by residents and visitors throughout the year.

If we want to make significant improvements to our parks, we often have to rely on local funding linked to local housing development. For example, £500,000 is being spent on the brand-new accessible play park at Coate Water. Other improvements include:

- Upgrading the children's play area at Lydiard Park
- A new 18-hole adventure golf course in the grounds of Lydiard House
- Refurbishing and cleaning the iconic Coate Water diving board
- 'Every Cloud Arts & Crafts' community engagement activities at Stanton Park



**0.04%**

**of our day-to-day budget goes towards the maintenance of these cherished spaces.**

Funding for arts and culture makes up 0.66 per cent of our day-to-day budget. That includes the running of STEAM Museum and Lydiard House Museum.

Work is underway to create a new home for Swindon Museum and Art Gallery at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street.

This new accessible facility will create additional space for permanent and temporary exhibitions, as well as hosting learning programmes for local schools.



**Funding for arts and culture makes up**

**0.66%**

**of our day-to-day budget.**

We're here to make sure Swindon has the homes, jobs and infrastructure to support the town's growing economy.

0.06 per cent of our day-to-day budget is spent on planning, with the team dealing with everything from home extensions to major planning applications for housing developments and employment sites.

Your council tax also contributes towards our work to manage large-scale developments across the town.

# 0.06%

## of our day-to-day budget is spent on planning.

# 1,000

planning applications processed in 2021/22.

# 1.26%

## of our day-to-day budget is spent on libraries.

# 259,512

books, e-books, audiobooks and magazines borrowed in 2021/22.

Trained library staff at Central Library, Highworth Library, North Swindon Library, Park Library and West Swindon Library are now helping residents access a range of council services and information.

Residents can use self-service machines to make requests like ordering a new wheellie bin, applying for a blue badge or renewing a bus pass. For full details of the services available, visit [www.swindon.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/libraries)



# OTHER SERVICES FUNDED BY **20%** OF OUR BUDGET

We aim to make our remaining funding not spent on social care work as hard as possible for residents.

Throughout the winter months, we regularly grit 210 miles of roads.

It costs around £2,500 for all vehicles and drivers to carry out a night's operation, so we only do this when we definitely have to.



Our Register Office conducted 442 weddings and civil partnerships in 2021/22.

3,910 births and 2,338 deaths were registered in Swindon.



As a local authority, it's up to us to allocate school places for children across Swindon.

In 2021/22, more than 96% of children were given a place at one of their top three choices of secondary school and 99.5% got one of their top choices of primary school.



In 2022, we followed up 258 stray dog reports and, where possible, reunited them with their owners. We also helped people look after their pets safely, dealt with dog fouling complaints and followed up on reports of dog attacks.



**62 fines**  
were issued

during 2021/22 to people who illegally fly-tipped their rubbish on our streets.



**1,767**

food hygiene inspections were carried out across Swindon during 2021/22.



## ADDITIONAL GOVERNMENT MONEY

In addition to the day-to-day budget used to fund services, we receive additional funding from the Government which we have either successfully bid for or been allocated.

This money is often provided on a one-off basis or must be spent within a limited time period.

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It can only be spent on the purpose it has been granted for.

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Here are some examples:

- **£100 million** investment in town centre projects to enhance the public realm, transport links, heritage assets and kickstart further regeneration. This includes the major upgrade and transformation of Fleming Way currently underway
- **£150 million** to complete major highways schemes to future-proof key gateway road junctions to the east of Swindon, before building starts on the 8,000-home New Eastern Villages (NEV) - the largest greenfield development in the country

We also receive a public health grant to help protect and improve the health of our residents.

For example, in 2021/22, the Live Well team supported 697 residents to either quit smoking or increase their physical activity by finding ways to do so in their local community. We also helped 403 people to return home safely from hospital by doing things like moving furniture to make way for a hospital bed, popping the heating on or making sure there's milk in the fridge.



# £4.5M COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

Since October 2021, households across Swindon have benefitted from £4.5m of government-funded support, which we administered, including:



## 45,675

vouchers issued to help towards energy costs, food and fuel



## £291,000

given to charities and organisations to continue their brilliant work supporting residents

## 100+

families in need given slow cookers as part of a pilot to help them cook nutritious meals in a cost-efficient way



If you or someone you know is struggling with living costs, scan this QR code with your smartphone or visit [www.swindon.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/costofliving) to find out what support is available.



# HELPING PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

# £1.4M

is spent each year  
on supported  
housing projects and  
outreach services.

**These support services are mainly funded through dedicated grants from the Government.**

Last year in Swindon, we helped **491** homeless households to find suitable accommodation and prevented **345** households from becoming homeless.

The team work with individuals to understand the support that's right for them. For example, last year our team were in contact with a rough sleeper after a relationship breakdown who was also experiencing an alcohol addiction and some mental health challenges. Despite an offer of safe and warm accommodation, he explained he preferred being outside as he felt claustrophobic when inside.

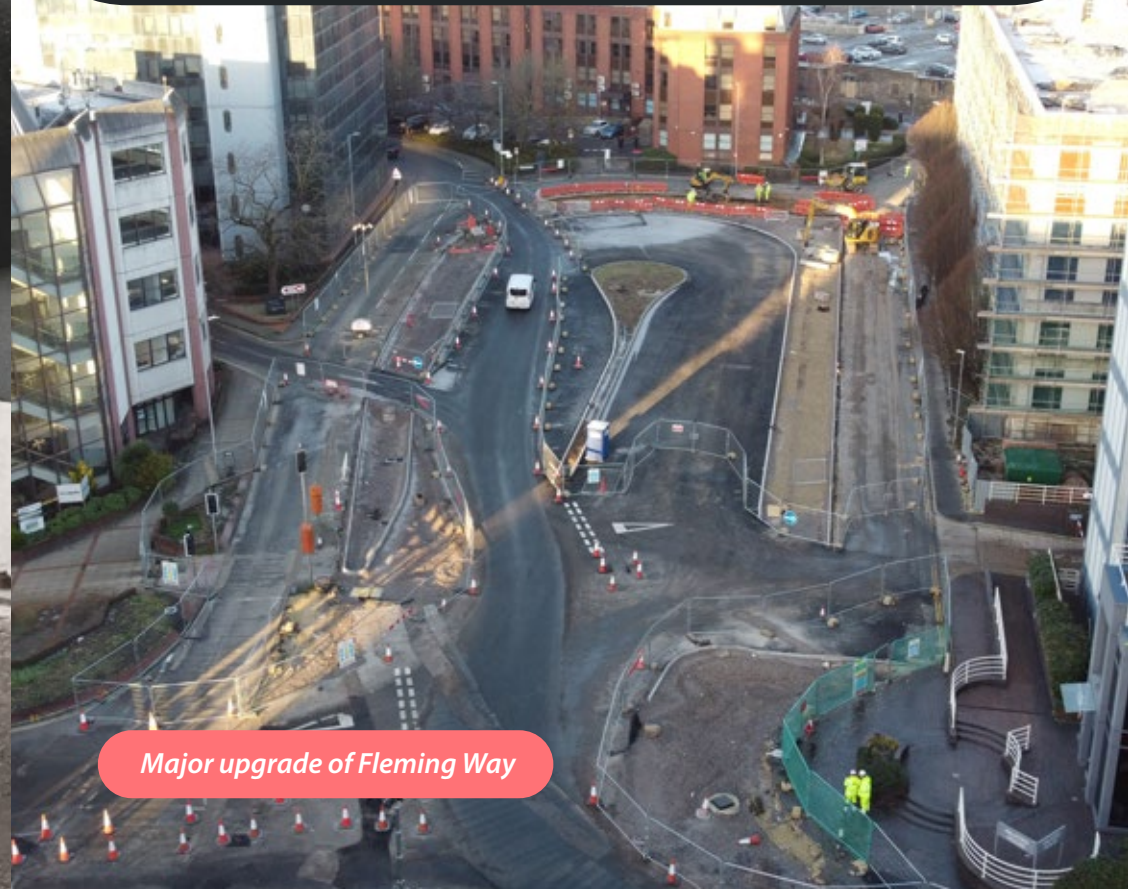
After joint work with mental health and drug and alcohol services, we established a trusted relationship with him which means he is now being safely accommodated and continuing to work with support services.

# INVESTING IN THE TOWN CENTRE

We successfully secured over £100 million of mostly government funding to invest in Swindon's town centre. While most of the land and buildings are owned by private companies, we are upgrading the public realm, transport links and refurbishing Swindon's heritage buildings.

This will help to increase land values and stimulate additional investment in new amenities, offices and homes in the town centre.

Find out more about other town centre projects by scanning this QR code on your smartphone or at [www.swindon.gov.uk/towncentreregeneration](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/towncentreregeneration)



*Major upgrade of Fleming Way*

# MAJOR ROAD UPGRADES

MORE THAN

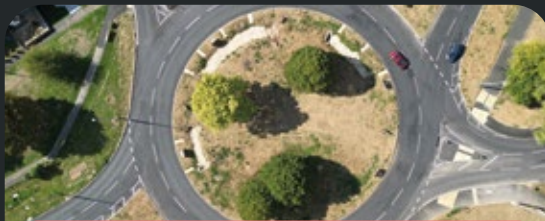
# £150M

has been invested in major upgrades of key junctions and roads over the last five years.

Most of this funding came from successful bids to the Government. The majority of the work has been completed over the last year to future-proof the road network for thousands of new homes over the next 20 years.



M4 Junction 15



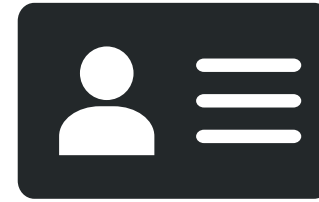
Piccadilly Roundabout



White Hart Roundabout



Moonrakers Junction



# TAKE PHOTO ID TO VOTE ON 4 MAY

**Borough and Parish elections are taking place in Swindon on Thursday, 4 May 2023.**

Under a new law, voters in Swindon will need to show an approved form of **photo ID** to vote at a polling station. Accepted forms of photo ID include passports, photographic driving licences, biometric immigration documents and some concessionary travel passes.

**You cannot use your polling card as ID.**

You can still use your **photo ID** if it's out of date, as long as it still looks like you. The name on your ID should be the same name you used to register to vote. Only original documents will be accepted.

If you don't have accepted **photo ID**, you can apply for a free voter ID document before 25 April, known as a Voter Authority Certificate.

**For more information, scan the QR code, visit: [www.swindon.gov.uk/voterID](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/voterID) or call Customer Services: 01793 445500**



# SCAN ME

# WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES

Your council tax bill 2023/24



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.

This booklet costs 15p per household to produce. To find out how to switch to a digital bill and access this booklet online, visit: [www.swindon.gov.uk/annualreport](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/annualreport)