

Swindon News

Your Council, Your Views

Issue 73 June 2008
www.swindon.gov.uk

Four page pull-out

Culture Swindon

4 page summer supplement

Councillors

Your new Councillors

Swindon Direct

Your one-stop-shop for
Council information

Recycling update

Win, win, win

Some great prizes including
a family ticket to all the
Bowl Concerts and the
Theatre in the Park

Half Marathon

Tips and advice

Peter Pan

flies into Lydiard

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inside this issue



Cover photo
Peter Pan
Open air theatre
production. See the
summer supplement.

© Heartbreak
Productions

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Special features

Starting on page 9 - your Councillors for 2008/9
Four page supplement - culture events for the summer

Job opportunities

For jobs at Swindon Borough Council visit
<http://www.swindon.gov.uk/jobvacancies.htm>.

“
welcome

Welcome to your new look Swindon News which aims to help everyone feel better informed about what the Council is doing, and better able to access the services we provide.

I am determined to ensure that the Council is in touch with local people and Swindon News is just one of the ways of doing this. You can also use our website (www.swindon.gov.uk) to find out more information about events in the borough, what the Council is doing and how you can get involved.

Your ward councillors are listed on the centre spread and I encourage you to contact them if you have any concerns about your local area, or better still, if you have any ideas about how to change and improve things in your communities.

We all have a part to play making Swindon a great place to live and work and I look forward to working with you to achieve this.



**Roderick Bluh,
Leader of the
Council**

Roderick

”

Award launch gets royal seal of approval

A royal visit marked the start of a campaign to encourage Swindon businesses to promote The Duke of Edinburgh's Award to their employees.

His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex attended the Swindon Borough Council launch event at Lydiard Park in March. The Council holds the licence to deliver the Award across the Borough, and more than 1,500 young people have enrolled on the personal development programme so far.

Recently, the council and some local businesses made the Award available to employees, and it is hoped that more businesses will follow this lead. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award can be undertaken by young people aged between 14 and 25.

To find out more about the Award, Swindon Borough Council's Award office can be contacted on (01793) 466546 or email theaward@swindon.gov.uk



Congratulations to Victoria Cloete, Alexandra Wojewodka-Dunn and Robert Morton who received a Gold Award certificate during the event at Lydiard House.

Swindon direct

Swindon Direct has been created to transform your experience of doing business with the Council, and to give top quality customer service. The new facilities in the fully-refurbished One Stop Shop and new contact centre, along with the recently extended opening hours, now allow everyone access to Council services in the most convenient way and at a time to suit you.

Swindon Direct currently deals with enquiries for:

- Car Parking
- Housing
- Waste & Recycling
- Swindon Commercial Services and General Enquiries
- Residential Services
- Planning
- Building Control
- Environmental Improvement
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Family Information Services



National Concessionary Bus Pass applications and Mobility Travel Voucher Scheme (mobility vouchers) applications will be processed in the Swindon Direct One Stop Shop from Thursday 10 July 08. These services will no longer be processed from Premier House reception. Email and telephone enquiries will remain the same for the time being.

One Stop Shop

Customers wishing to call in person should go to the One Stop Shop reception desk at Wat Tyler House, Swindon. The entrance is located at the junction of Princes Street and Beckhampton Street.

Opening hours

Monday	8am – 6pm
Tuesday	8am – 6pm
Wednesday	8am – 6pm
Thursday	8am – 8pm
Friday	8am – 6pm
Saturday	9am – 1pm

Contact Centre

Direct dial numbers

- Waste and Recycling 01793 445501
- All Housing Enquiries 01793 445503
- Car Parking 01793 445506

General Enquiries (telephone & email)

- 01793 445500
- Email: customerservices@swindon.gov.uk

Opening hours

Monday	8am – 8pm
Tuesday	8am – 8pm
Wednesday	8am – 8pm
Thursday	8am – 8pm
Friday	8am – 8pm
Saturday	9am – 1pm

For postal enquiries please write to:

Customer Services
Civic Offices
Euclid Street
Swindon
SN1 2JH

We are committed to making it as easy as possible for everyone to access the Council services they need. Over the next twelve months we will be introducing more direct dial numbers and new initiatives to put you at the heart of everything we do.

Community Safety Partnership

Making Swindon Safer

Crime, including robbery and thefts, has reduced in Swindon in the past year - thanks in no small part to the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

The Partnership, which was formed four years ago by Swindon Borough Council, the Police, Fire, Ambulance and Probation services, and the Swindon Primary Care Trust, is also tasked with reducing anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, and the effects of drug and alcohol abuse.



Along with the crime reduction, which is down by just over four per cent, there has been a big reduction in the amount of graffiti in the town, which is down by a quarter – again as a result of the agencies which make up the partnership working together.

Richard Palusinski, the head of the partnership, says:

“Making Swindon a safer place is ultimately what the partnership is all about.

“It’s recognised that individual organisations, such as the police, health services or the council are more effective when they tackle problems together rather than individually.”

“It’s also about reducing the fear of crime, which can have such a negative effect on people’s lives. In truth, compared to many places of a similar size, Swindon actually has a relatively low level of crime and disorder, but clearly there are problems and we’re determined to sort them out.”

People wishing to contact the Partnership can do so via the council’s main contact number, 445500 or by visiting the Partnership web site at www.swindon-csp.org.uk

Private Sector Leasing Scheme -

A new scheme, the Private Sector Leasing Scheme, has been set up by Swindon Borough Council to help reduce the number of homeless families staying in bed and breakfast or hostel accommodation. The scheme will reduce the cost to the Council of providing temporary accommodation for the homeless.

The Scheme will involve the Council taking a 3-year lease of suitable properties from private landlords, and then subletting them on a short-term licence to homeless families. Landlords will then be guaranteed to receive rent on favourable terms over the whole 3-year term.

Rent Guarantee for Landlords

For example, the rent payable on a 3-bedroom house is £575 per month. Landlords can have peace of mind, especially in the current economic climate, as the Council will also provide a management service and will carry out regular inspections of the property. Landlords who have already let their property under the PSL scheme are delighted:

“We recently purchased the property with the intention of letting it to the Council under the scheme. Our application was processed extremely efficiently and nothing was too much trouble without exception for all the people involved. We look forward to working with them again shortly when our next property purchase is completed.”

If you are a property owner and would like to rent your property to the Council, further details and an application pack can be found on the Council’s website www.swindon.gov.uk under ‘Housing – Private Sector Leasing’. Alternatively, please contact the Council’s PSL team for further information and an application pack. PSL Team tel 01793 463578 or 01793 464493. You can also contact the PSL Team by email at: aboatwright@swindon.gov.uk and plloyd@swindon.gov.uk

your recycling news



Plastic bottle recycling

Recycling just one plastic bottle saves enough energy to power a 60W light bulb for six hours. (Source: Recoup)

Since the launch of the kerbside plastic bottle recycling scheme last year, we have collected 637 tonnes of plastic bottles - bottles that would otherwise have been buried in landfill.

Plastic bottles are collected every 2 weeks, and should be placed out for collection in the special Swindon Borough Council easy-tear sacks. The Council will deliver 13 free sacks every year to each household, equivalent to one every 4 weeks.

You will receive your free bags, depending on your collection day, between June and October 2008.

Plastic bottle Collection Day	Bag Delivery date
Monday	June
Tuesday	July
Wednesday	August
Thursday	September
Friday	October

Extra plastic sacks can be purchased for 20p each from Council outlets such as libraries, leisure centres, and the Visitor Information Centre. For a full list please visit www.recycleforswindon.com or telephone the Council on 445501

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One year on.....

It is now one year on from the launch of your new recycling service, and the amount of recycling we receive from you continues to increase.

Over the last year we have collected

- 4169 tonnes of glass
- 418 tonnes of tins & cans
- 9,882 tonnes of paper
- 637 tonnes of plastic bottles
- 11,900 tonnes of garden waste

To put these figures into perspective, a double-decker bus weighs eight tonnes.

So what happens to the recycling once we've have collected it?

Aluminium cans are sent to Warrington, in Cheshire where they are shredded, melted down, and made into giant ingots. The ingots are then sold to companies and made into new car or plane parts, or maybe the can containing your next drink.

Steel cans are sent to a steel works in Port Talbot, Wales to be turned into ingots of steel and sold to be made into new steel products.

Glass is sent to South Yorkshire where is crushed and added to a mix of raw materials that make up new glass containers. Glass can also be used in unusual products such as new bricks.

Textiles are sent to a sorting plant in Devizes where re-usable materials are sent to developing countries. The remaining textiles are recycled into wiping cloths for industry, filling for soft furnishings, or carpet underlay.

Garden waste is composted locally at Brinkworth. Local farmers use the finished compost on their fields.

Paper is taken to London and sorted into different grades. The good quality paper is sent to Scandinavia to be turned into newspaper and the poorer quality goes to Indonesia to be made into paper packaging, including cardboard.

Plastic bottles are sent to Preston in Lancashire to be sorted into different polymer types. The bottles are easily identifiable by shape & colour, unlike tubs, pots and trays. From Preston some bottles are recycled in the UK, and others are sent to China to be used for packaging.

Did you know?

We produce and use 20 times more plastic today than we did 50 years ago.
Source: WRAP

Waste Wardens

The Council's Waste Wardens (pictured below) are here to help with any waste issues you may have.

They can provide advice on all aspects of recycling and refuse, from what to put in your orange box to the disposal of electrical items.

For larger families, where one wheelie bin may not be sufficient, a waste warden can carry out an assessment to see if a second smaller bin can be supplied. This involves them checking what rubbish the household is throwing out to make sure there are no recyclable materials going into the wheelie bin and taking up room for non-recyclable waste.


The Waste Wardens are also available to give talks to local community groups and schools. You can contact the Waste Wardens by calling 445501.

Currently the Waste Wardens are focusing on enforcement issues, such as fly tipping.



Win the new 'Recycle for Swindon' Jute Shopping Bag

For a chance to win a reusable 'Recycle for Swindon' bag, email swindonnews@swindon.gov.uk by 17 July. We have ten bags to give away to ten lucky readers. It is estimated that 13 billion plastic bags are used in the UK alone. (Source: Defra). If shoppers used re-usable bags more often, it would make a significant difference to this figure.

 The information you have provided will be used for the competition only & will be destroyed after the winners have been chosen.



love food hate waste

The "Love Food, Hate Waste" campaign aims to raise awareness of the need to reduce the amount of food that we throw away, and how doing this benefits us as consumers and the environment.

Around a third of all the food we buy ends up being thrown away when most of it could have been eaten – it's not just peelings, cores and bones.

Sadly, we could fill 12 double-decker buses with just the whole apples we throw away – every day – in the UK.

And the picture is just as alarming for many of the other fruit and vegetables we buy. Most of these nutritious foods get thrown out because they rot before we can eat them.

So why does cutting food waste matter?

There are serious environmental implications. The amount of food we throw away is a waste of resources because of the energy, water and packaging that is used in food production, transportation and storage.

Cheese is a good example – feeding and milking the cows, cooling and transporting the milk, processing it into cheese, packing it, getting it to the shops and keeping it constantly at the right temperature all requires energy and resources. If it then gets thrown away it will most likely end up in a landfill site, where, rather than harmlessly decomposing as many people think, it rots and releases methane, a powerful greenhouse gas.

If we stopped wasting food which could have been eaten, it would have the same impact on carbon emissions as taking 1 in 5 cars off the roads.

Despite this, a small amount of food waste is inevitable. Egg shells, banana skins and tea bags are never going to be on the menu, but they can be composted along with the peelings and the cores.

Visit www.recyclenow.com for all you need to know about home composting and www.lovefoodhatewaste.com to find out more about the Love Food, Hate Waste campaign.

Council Chief Executive on the run

Gavin Jones, Swindon Borough Council Chief Executive, strives to lead by example and he's exercising this belief by entering the Nationwide Swindon Half Marathon.

Gavin reckons if he can do it, anyone can. He said: "The last time I ran outside was cross country at school, so it's a tough challenge for me."

"I helped at the event last year and was inspired by the participants who, along with the enthusiastic organisers, create such a fantastic atmosphere. I like setting myself goals, so pledged to run it and have no regrets. In fact I'm really enjoying preparing for the big day."

This year the Nationwide Swindon Half Marathon and Fun Runs, organised by Swindon Borough Council and sponsored by Nationwide, take place on Sunday, 12 October.

In addition to the 13-mile event, there is also a five-mile multi-terrain run and two-mile fun run.

And the benefits of running are more than just physical.

Gavin said: "Running out in the fresh air is a great feeling and a good way to clear your mind. Best of all, I come back with more energy than when I started. My advice to anyone thinking of running the half marathon is to go for it – and good luck with your training."

For more information visit www.swindon.gov.uk/halfmarathon or call: 01793 511033.

Gavin's Top Training Tips

Don't Be Afraid. Committing to running a half marathon can be daunting. But the first step is definitely the hardest, so be brave and set yourself a challenge.

Start Training Now. It's too easy to say tomorrow or next week. The sooner your training starts, the more prepared you will feel – mentally and physically.

Build Your Distance Gradually. I'm now up to 10km, but I started doing just a couple of miles. Increasing the distance at intervals reduces the risk of injury.

Wear The Right Shoes. It's worth investing in a decent pair of trainers – your feet will thank you for it. You can even get special running socks, which seem to work because I haven't had any blisters yet.

Come and celebrate
10 years of Forest Fun at

Forest Festival & Woodland Games Event



www.forestweb.org.uk



Saturday 30th
August 2008

The Lawn, Old Town,
Swindon
10am - 5pm

Free family
event



Green Exercise



SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Run for fun, run for a challenge, run as a family

Sunday 12th October 2008

2 mile Fun Run for all the family

5 mile Multi-Terrain

Participants must be
15 years or over

Goody Bag, Medal, T-shirt

Children under 8 yrs old must be accompanied by an adult who has entered the 2 mile fun run.

Register now. Call us: (01793) 511033
E-mail us: swindonhalfmarathon@swindon.gov.uk
Visit us: www.swindonhalfmarathon.co.uk



Swindon
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015-972-1022 FM - DAB - ONLINE

SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Your Councillors

Your Councillors 2008/09

Here is your new Council line-up following the recent local elections.

Your Councillors work to represent the interests of people in the wards where they have been elected.

If you have concerns or issues that you feel need addressing, then your Councillor may be able to help.

Councillors also represent the interests of the borough as a whole, and are responsible for the budget that provides many of our essential services.

All local Councillors' contact details are available on the Council's website at www.swindon.gov.uk

Council Meetings

Full Council - 7pm
17 July, 25 September

Cabinet - 6.30pm
(open forum) - 6pm
23 July, 10 September

Scrutiny - 6.30pm
30 June, 14 & 28 July,
15 September

Planning Committee - 6pm
8 July, 12 August, 9 September

Standards Committee - 5pm
14 July

Audit Committee - 5.30pm
23 September



1 Blunsdon



Doreen Dart

2 Highworth



Anthony Peake



John Short



Melanie Duff

3 Abbey Meads



Vera Tomlinson



Justin Tomlinson



Peter Stoddart

4 Haydon Wick



David Renard



Ian Dobie



Rex Barnett

5 Penhill



David Glaholm

5 Penhill



Paul Baker

6 St Philip



Sinead Darker



Paul Findlow

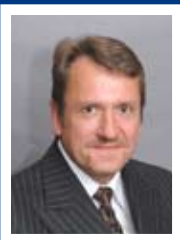


David Sammels

7 Moredon



Stephanie Exell



Colin Lovell



David Wren

8 Shaw & Nine Elms



Nick Martin



Keith Williams



Garry Perkins

9 Western



James Grant



Des Moffat



Kevin Small

10 Gorse Hill & Pinehurst



Maurice Fanning



Ray Ballman



John Ballman

11 St Margaret



Mark Edwards



Russell Holland



Raymond Fisher

12 Freshbrook & Grange Park



Michael Bray



Michael Dickinson



Peter Greenhalgh

13 Toothill & Westlea



Steve Wakefield



Mary Martin

14 Central



Derique Montaut

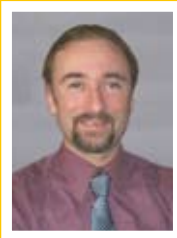


Robert Wright



Junab Ali

15 Eastcott



Martin Wiltshire



David Wood



Stan Pajak

16 Walcot



Peter Mallinson



Mavis Childs

17 Parks



Graham Cherry

17 Parks



Fay Howard



Steve Allsopp

18 Covingham & Nythe



Dale Heenan



Philip Young






Glenn Smith

Swindon Wards

- 1 **Blunsdon**
- 2 **Highworth**
- 3 **Abbey Meads**
- 4 **Haydon Wick**
- 5 **Penhill**
- 6 **St Philip**
- 7 **Moredon**
- 8 **Shaw & Nine Elms**
- 9 **Western**

- 10 **Gorse Hill & Pinehurst**
- 11 **St Margaret**
- 12 **Freshbrook & Grange Park**
- 13 **Toothill & Westlea**
- 14 **Central**
- 15 **Eastcott**
- 16 **Walcot**
- 17 **Parks**
- 18 **Covingham & Nythe**

-  Conservative
-  Labour
-  Liberal Democrat
-  Independent

Please turn over for wards Dorcan, Old Town & Lawn, Wroughton & Chiseldon and Ridgeway

19 Dorcan



Andy Albinson



Kevin Parry



Roderick Bluh

20 Old Town & Lawn



Mike Bawden



Fionuala Foley



Brian Mattock

21 Ridgeway



Andrew Bennett

22 Wroughton & Chiseldon



Brian Ford



Eric Shaw



William Morton

Swindon Wards

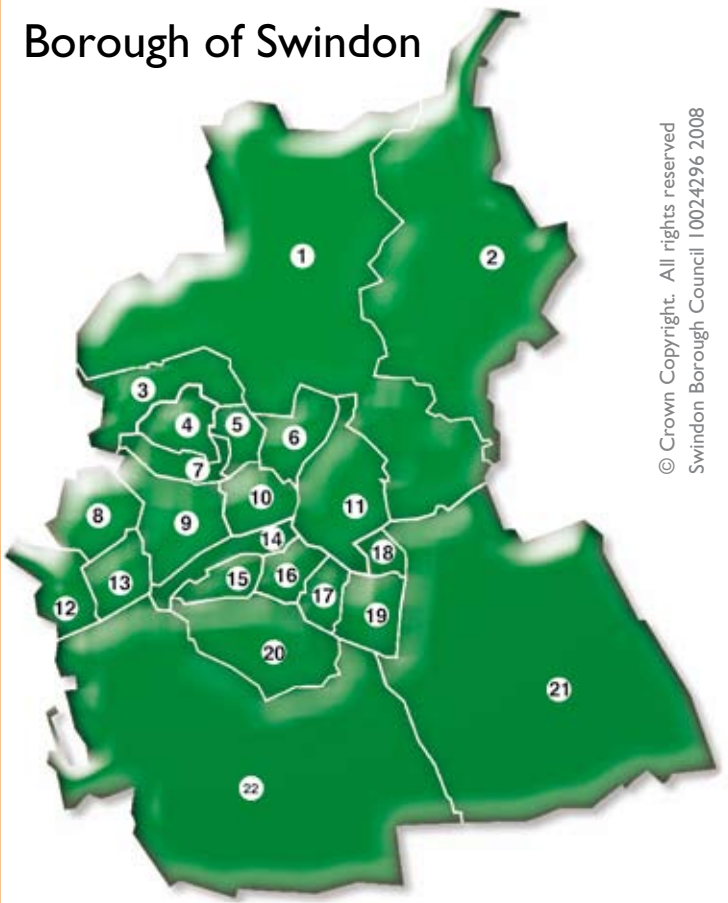
19 **Dorcan**

20 **Old Town & Lawn**

21 **Ridgeway**

22 **Wroughton & Chiseldon**

Borough of Swindon



This information about your Councillors is available on the internet at www.swindon.gov.uk Go to Council & Democracy, and click on 'Committee and Member Services'. It can be produced in a range of languages and formats (such as large print, Braille or other accessible formats) by contacting the Customer Services Department. **Tel:** 01793 445500 **Fax:** 01793 463982 **Email:** customerservices@swindon.gov.uk

The Councillors who serve on Swindon Borough Council must comply with a code of conduct, and as your elected representatives, you have a right to hold them to account if they fail to live up to it.

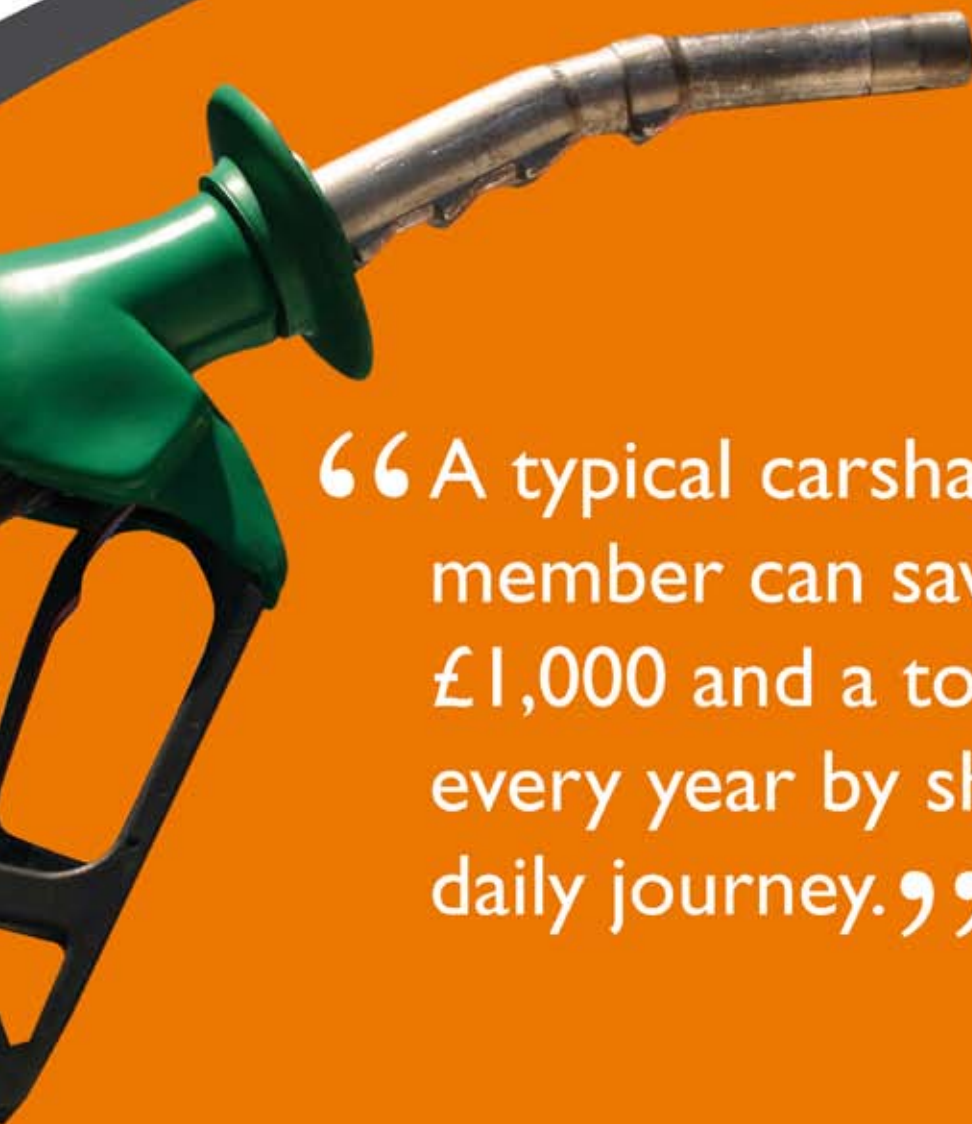
The code of conduct, along with the register of members' interests, is available to view on the council's website or can be inspected during office hours at the Civic Offices in Euclid Street.

If you believe you have reason to complain about a councillor, co-opted member or a member of a town or parish council, you can discuss the issue with the monitoring officer, Stephen Taylor, or complain to him directly in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and enclosing supporting evidence if appropriate.

Responsibility for considering complaints against elected members has recently passed from the Standards Board for England to the independent Standards Committees of local councils.

Stephen Taylor can be contacted on 01793 463012, by e-mail at staylor@swindon.gov.uk or in writing to The Monitoring Officer, Swindon Borough Council, Civic Officer, Euclid Street, Swindon SN1 2JH.

Share the car, share the CO_2 sts!



“ A typical carshareswindon.com member can save around £1,000 and a tonne of CO_2 every year by sharing their daily journey.” (2008.liftshare.com)

Sign up for **free** at www.carshareswindon.com

Come on, *let's share*

TRAVELWISE



SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Students shine at Film Awards

Swindon students got a taste of the Oscars when they scooped a top national film award. Students from Isambard Community School went to a star-studded ceremony in London to pick up a First Light Movie Award in the 'best documentary' category.

The winning film, entitled 'The Child and Me' was made by five Swindon primary schools with Swindon Borough Council's Create Studios. With the help of Create Studios' outreach wing Mobile Media, the children worked with industry professionals, learning scripting, creative writing, filming and acting skills.

They made a sensitive documentary, following the story of their transition between primary school to the new Isambard Community School which they now attend: from girls and boys to young women and men, from different backgrounds and homes, to fellow students forging the identity of a new community. The First Light Movie Awards, which took place in March, is a prestigious event held each year in London, featuring various celebrities. This year First Light judges included Orlando Bloom, Kevin Spacey, Nira Park, Stephen Fry and Sam Mendes.

To find out more about Create Studios, visit the website www.createstudios.org.uk or call: (01793) 465399.

Photo: Mobile Media with Andy Burnham MP, Culture Media and Sport Secretary and well known Children's Presenter Lizo Mzimba.

Go for Gold at your local library with 'Team Read'

Swindon Libraries' Summer Reading Challenge for children will be called 'Team Read' this year.

The Reading Challenge encourages children to read for enjoyment over the summer holidays. Last year around 2,000 Swindon children participated in the "Big Wild Read", joining 650,000 children nationally. Research shows that the annual scheme improves children's reading confidence and sends them back to school fired up and ready to learn. It is now the UK's biggest promotion of children's reading and attracts major partners like the BBC.

Team Read is all about the joy of reading and completing the challenge with achievable targets along the way. Children can choose and read six books over the summer holidays, with friendly library staff on hand to give advice and guidance.

The challenge runs from Saturday 19 July to Saturday 13 September, and children can register in their local library from 5 July. www.swindon.gov.uk/libraries

As fuel costs rise, why not leave the car at home and take the family on the bus?

£6 family value ticket*

Family DayRider
*2 adults and up to 3 children

Allows one day's **unrestricted** travel on Thamesdown and Stagecoach buses in Swindon

Thamesdown

Swindon Borough Council set to reduce its carbon footprint

With the cost of energy soaring, everyone is feeling the pressure - and Swindon Borough Council is no exception.

But the council is determined to buck the trend and peg its current £5million annual bill at the same level for the next five years with a series of energy-saving measures.

In the process, it will reduce its 'carbon footprint' by preventing an additional 35,000 tonnes a year of CO₂ being pumped into the atmosphere from the energy it would otherwise have used.

The council has been working with the Carbon Trust to identify where it can save energy across its whole range of activities and services, from care homes, leisure centres and offices, through to street lighting and vehicle fuel.

With the Trust, the council has now identified 200 separate energy-saving opportunities, from which a short list of projects has been drawn up for action over the next five years to 2013. Phase One is now underway.

Cllr Brian Mattock, Swindon Borough Council Cabinet Member for Local Environment and Sustainability, says: "If we are to persuade everyone in Swindon to save energy, the council has to set an example. It's all about making Swindon more sustainable, by balancing our environmental, social and economic needs. An added benefit is that we will save money, which can be directed to other council services."

Council employees have already been doing their bit by working with the 'My Energy' project, which promotes energy saving in council buildings. Over 50 members of staff at 18 council sites have volunteered as 'green champions' by been helping to introduce and monitor energy-saving measures.



Free insulation for the over 70s

If you are 70 years old or more you are now entitled to get free cavity wall and/or loft insulation* regardless of income.

* Loft insulation can only be topped up if there is currently 4 - 6 inches of insulation or less. Cavity Wall Insulation will only be suitable in certain properties. To register call the Wiltshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre free on: 0800 512 012.

Over half the heat lost in the home is lost through un-insulated walls and the loft space. Getting your home properly insulated benefits your pocket, your health and the environment.

This information is provided by the Swindon Energy Project, which is funded by Swindon Borough Council and the ScottishPower Energy People Trust.

For talks, workshops, events, training and home visits call 01793 463679 or email lucyr@wiltshirewildlife.org

Swindon PCT takes Pole Position

Swindon Primary Care Trust has scooped two awards for its innovative projects. The Swindon Telehealth project, which uses advanced technology to improve the quality of life for people with respiratory disease, and the Daniel Gooch Medical Practice, which meets the health needs of hard to reach groups, were hailed 'best in the South West' at the regional Health & Social Care awards, held in Yeovil, this spring. www.swindonpct.nhs.uk

healthy eating for schools

Swindon College and Swindon Borough Council are working in Partnership to deliver a Healthy Eating Initiative Programme. Staff from the College's Catering and Hospitality Department are touring schools across Swindon, delivering 'live' cookery demonstrations and teaching parents and children how to cook and eat healthily.



Swindon College Catering Staff have entertained parents and children by running a series of challenge events that are similar to Ready, Steady Cook! The demonstrations have provided opportunities to taste fruit and vegetables that pupils may not have tried at home or seen before.

Staff from Wanborough Primary School commented:

'It was a superb evening. The organisation, skills and professionalism of the staff was admired and appreciated by all who attended. The enthusiasm of the children and parents was very apparent. A truly captivating evening. Thank you so much Swindon College Catering team!'

The following schools have been involved with the cookery demonstrations are: Chiseldon, Wanborough Primary, Kingsdown, Commonweal, Greendown, Oliver Tomkins Junior, Eastrop, Colebrook, Ridgeway, Holy Rood, Greendown and South Marston.

As part of the Healthy Eating Programme, Swindon College is working with schools offering free or subsidised training, funded by Swindon Borough Council's 'Transforming School Food' initiative. Healthy Eating Workshops have been created for pupils, parents and staff, which include: bread making, pasta dishes, healthy lunch boxes, wok cooking, war food and healthy cooking. Vocational courses such as NVQs in Food Preparation and Food Safety can be delivered in the workplace for school catering staff.

If you would like to find out more about the healthy eating initiative please contact Jacki McIver on 01793 498404 or email jackimciver@swindon-college.ac.uk. You can also speak to Kerry Davison (School Meals Project Manager for Swindon Borough Council) on 01793 465764.

Free School Meals

Your child can have a free school lunch if you are a parent or carer who is receiving other benefits. Please use the list below to check. Children who are receiving free school lunches may also qualify for financial assistance on UK residential school trips. Your child's school will be able to give you more information on this.

Free School Lunch Entitlement

Parents who are currently in receipt of the following benefits can have free school meals for their children.

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Guaranteed Pension Credit
- NASS Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) that as of 6 April 2008 does not exceed £15,575.

We will need proof of benefit before we will be able to process any claims and this must be no more than 3 months old. If you have any questions about free school lunches, please contact 01793 445500.

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See the difference school food can make to your child - they might even enjoy them for free. Sign up here today or visit us online for more information and the chance to win some great prizes.

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www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/tasty



Evening Star returns to Swindon

At the end of August, Evening Star - the last in a long line of steam locomotives - returns to the site where she was built.

The famous locomotive will be on display at STEAM - Museum of the Great Western Railway - Station Platform and visitors will have the chance to climb into the cab and get a feel for what it was like to drive her in the great days of steam. It is hoped that many Swindon men and women who remember her will come and share their memories with visitors.

The name Evening Star was decided through a competition among railway workers and her nameplate was unveiled on 16 March 1960.

Come and experience Evening Star's magic for yourself – alongside the many other great locomotives and interactive displays at STEAM. To find out more about STEAM's many special events, visit www.swindon.gov.uk/steam

Competition

Here's your chance to win a free family ticket to STEAM. Just answer the two questions below and e-mail to swindonnews@swindon.gov.uk.


The first two correct entries received will win a family ticket.

Question 1

How was Evening Star's name chosen?

Question 2

What year was Evening Star's nameplate unveiled?

 The information you have provided will be used for the competition only & will be destroyed after the winner has been chosen.

SureStart - working for children and parents

Every child deserves the best possible start in childcare and education, and with the help of the Swindon SureStart Partnership this ambition is being realised.

A team is working hard to improve the quality of life for Swindon children and their parents by giving free advice, support and funding to the community on behalf of Swindon Borough Council and other organisations. This could be free training for childminders, special needs assistance, improving existing childcare facilities, or providing information on childcare costs.

Swindon SureStart Partnership manager Carmel Burton said: "Before this service existed parents were struggling. Breakfast and after-school clubs were virtually unknown. Recently a parent commented that no child facilities in the past meant she had to work part time, whereas now her younger child is able to access both breakfast and after-school care, which means that she can work full time. She also knows about the tax credit system, which means that she gets considerable help with the cost of her childcare."

But the team's work doesn't end there. Children Centres now form an important part of the partnership's work, providing services for families with children under five years old. This includes health, parenting and family support, and early education. Ten of these centres are now open in Swindon, with four more opening in the next two years, in addition to the Family Information Service at the Council's One Stop Shop (Telephone 445500).

And the needs of older children are not forgotten. By 2010 all Swindon schools will offer parents access to varied activities, including study support, community use of school buildings, parenting support, and access to specialised services.

Carmel added: "The partnership started in 1999, albeit under a different name and on a smaller scale. Children have always been at the heart of this work, and although it has been a challenge, the results are very rewarding. We can now see the fruits of our labour and this tells us we are heading in the right direction." For more information, visit the website www.earlyyearschildcare.org or call (01793) 466491.

parks & open spaces

For more than half a century since it was opened by the then Princess Elizabeth, Swindon's Queen's Park has provided happy memories for generations of families.

Queen's Park is one of the few municipal parks built since the second world war - its creation reflected Swindon's prosperity and growth in the 1950s - and it's on the National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Plans are now being made to renovate the park, off Drove Road - and the council would love to hear your views on how it might look. (continued opposite)



Opening times of Town Gardens cafe

The kiosk in the Town Gardens, Old Town reopened on Saturday, 24 May. The opening hours are Monday to Friday, 9am until 5pm, Saturday and Sunday, 10am until 4.30pm.

Have you seen the new Swindon Rangers events guide?

Lots of activities are listed including walks, talks and lots of fun family activities. You can pick up copies of the guide at council owned properties including the Link Centre, Oasis and all libraries.



five top gardening tips

Brought to you by Swindon Borough Council's Parks Team

- 1 To help keep moisture in the soil, apply good quality mulch. Look for good quality composted tree wood or bark chips and spread 50mm or two inches deep. Remember to top up each year as some always rots down into the soil improving it as it goes.
- 2 Look for mulch chips that are fairly small in size as this forms a dense mat that helps to prevent weeds.
- 3 Use a bucket of water to water pots, tubs and baskets instead of a hose pipe as the water just runs through the compost and is wasted. Place pots in a bucket of water until the surface is wet, and then set aside.
- 4 Deadhead flowers to promote further flowering and reduce the risk of fungal disease.
- 5 Look out for ladybirds and their larvae. The larvae are up to 10 times hungrier than their parents and are an excellent eco-friendly alternative to pest sprays to control aphids. Carefully placed on to your precious plants they will clear it of bugs in minutes!



Swindon's Museum and Art Gallery in Bath Road is keen to hear from anyone with fond reminiscences, stories, anecdotes and photographs of the park to share them for a public exhibition which is currently underway.

Cllr Brian Mattock, Swindon Borough Council cabinet member for Local Environment and Sustainability says: "Parks and open spaces are hugely important, giving people much needed space to relax and wind down, even if it's just over a lunch hour.

"Queen's Park has played a big part in the leisure time of Swindonians for the last half century, and now they can contribute their views on its future, and memories of its past."

Possible options for renovation include the recreation of the glasshouse and conservatory, from which only the pillars remain, and restoration of the walk around the lake which has been made impossible due to a major landslip.

To give your views on the future of the park, e-mail queenspark@swindon.gov.uk or write to Martin Hambidge, Parks and Open Places Manager, Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon SN1 2JH.

Did you know?

Did you know 100,000 bedding plants are planted in the parks, housing areas and roundabouts every spring?

Big Screen switched on - New Central Library opening soon

Swindon's thirty year wait for a decent Central Library is about to end, with the news that the new £10million building - which has been rising from the ground behind the Town Hall - will open its doors to the public on 20 October.

The announcement comes shortly after the unveiling of the new-look Wharf Green in the town centre, complete with the only BBC Big Screen in the South-west.

It will have taken less than two years to build the new library, which is a blend of the traditional and modern. Although it has been constructed of traditional materials to complement the Victorian town hall, it has already won a prestigious national award for its innovative environmental design.

Among its features are rainwater recycling for plant watering and flushing toilets, solar power to provide hot water, and entirely natural ventilation.

Cllr Phil Young, Swindon Borough Council Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Economic Development says:

"The delivery of Wharf Green and the imminent opening of the library are proof that work to give Swindon a town centre we can all be proud of is now well underway. There are a number of major and exciting projects in the pipeline which will transform Swindon, and people's views of the town, over the next few years."

Swindon Libraries provide an outstanding selection of online information resources to members not only from every Swindon library, but also from your own PC.

The range of topics covered is very comprehensive, from news and travel to science, literature and family history.

Why not check out www.swindon.gov.uk/libraries where you can also renew and request books.



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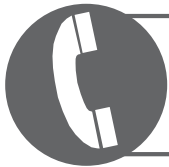
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One Stop Shop & Contact Centre  

9am - 1pm

Saturday

445500



Waste
445501



Housing
445503



Parking
445506

www.swindon.gov.uk



Did you know?

Did you know you can use fitness facilities at Council leisure centres for less than £1 a day?

When you sign up for a X-Training Passport you gain unlimited use of 6 gyms, 5 swimming pools, more than 90 fitness classes, climbing wall, sauna/steam rooms, athletics track and ice skating.

Visit www.swindon.gov.uk/leisuepassports for more information.

