

Winchester City Council parish update March 2024

Council budget approved for 2024/2025

Councillors approved a balanced budget for Winchester City Council at a council meeting on 22 February. The approved budget reflects continued investment in the Council Plan priorities, a below inflation increase in council tax and plans to improve online access for customers as part of a wider transformation programme.

Key highlights include:

- A below inflation rise in Council Tax for city council services (an increase of £4.07 per year for a Band D property, or 2.6%.)
- Investment in the council plan priority of 'Greener Faster' – This includes expanding recycling and introducing doorstep food waste collections and reducing carbon emissions in the waste vehicle fleet.
- Recognising the ongoing cost of living pressures for residents, budget has been set aside for a council tax support fund and the extension of the exceptional hardship fund.
- Investment in the Council Plan priority of Homes for All, providing additional support for the council's homelessness prevention strategy.
- Over half a million pounds of **investment to refurbish Winchester's public toilets.**

At the full council where the budget was approved, it was acknowledged that (as with the rest of the country) the financial landscape is particularly challenging for local government with uncertainty about future funding. A transformation programme (TC25), which has already identified immediate savings, has been launched to address a future funding gap challenge. Included within it are plans to improve customers' access to the council by improving the council's online services.

Bushfield Camp – new survey by developers

A new survey has been launched by the Bushfield developers that focuses on "safeguarding" "legacy land", which asks for views to *"understand how the Church Commissioners for England will commit to safeguarding a very large proportion – and in fact the majority – of the site as accessible, green open space. Through our online survey, we would like to understand how we can work together to maximise the potential of the legacy land as part of Bushfield's future redevelopment."*

The questions focus on awareness of the status of the site at present in terms of accessibility, preferred uses, perception of safety when accessing the site. The presentation of the survey has a clear angle (e.g., stating a commitment to "provide... over half the whole site for use as a new, publicly accessible open space" and "goal to deliver better access to Drovers Field". To view and respond to the survey visit:

<https://bushfieldcampregeneration.co.uk/legacy-land/>

Winchester Repair Café receives Mayor's Community Award

One of the ward's most inspiring volunteer groups – the Winchester Repair Café – which meets at the Baddger Farm Community Centre – is being honoured with a Mayor's Community Award in recognition of its contribution to the community. The team from the group will be attending an awards ceremony hosted by WCC on 7th March.

Fly-tipping prosecutions

Winchester City Council is pursuing a zero-tolerance approach to fly-tipping by prosecuting offenders. It has recently reported a third successful fly-tipping prosecution in four months (following fly-tipping prosecutions have also been achieved by Winchester City Council in November 2023 and January 2024). By prosecuting in this way, offenders risk a prison sentence of up to five years and receive a criminal record.

To report fly-tipping to WCC, residents can use the Your Winchester app or report form - [Fly-Tipping - Winchester City Council](#) - or call via Customer Services Team on 0300 300 0013.

Wellbeing Walks

WCC is running weekly Wellbeing Walks across the district to help people get out and about safely in the fresh air whilst also meeting friendly people. The walks are run by qualified leaders:

Winchester City, Wednesdays, 9:15am
(approx. 60 minutes)
Kings Walk
(Outside The Nutshell, SO23 8AF)

Colden Common, Wednesdays, 10:30am
(approx. 60 minutes)
Colden Common Community Centre (SO21 1UU)

More details of how to join a walk – or become a walk leader at at:
https://www.winchester.gov.uk/sport/active-lifestyles-scheme/health-walks?fbclid=IwAR2np9_tYv92cTbFBRsoN6vc2BDUWoxT6X7s5Cx8_BMdFp3I2F0ZYLKO_Jo

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