

2. Bridget Wayman, Wiltshire Councillor

To reduce phosphates into the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (and this includes the Nadder, Wylye, & Ebbles tributaries) Wiltshire Council has received funding from Government for residents to 'Revamp Their Tank'. This is a 100% funded grant to replace your old septic tank if you are close to a watercourse. Please see this link [Biodiversity and development - Wiltshire Council](#). Council officers will screen all applications to determine eligibility.

At full Council on 22nd February, Wiltshire Council approved the budget for 2024/25 with an increase in Council Tax of 4.99%. The total budget is £486m, three quarters of the funding coming from Council Tax. For every £100, £38 is spent on vulnerable adults and £21 on vulnerable children, £9 on waste collection and disposal.

From the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), South West Wiltshire has a population of 22,611, of which 30.4% are 65+ year olds – it is 22% across the whole of Wiltshire. The prevalence of dementia is 1.1% (0.9% Wiltshire) and 24% of people 50+ are disabled (25% Wiltshire). Wiltshire's population of 65+ is projected to increase by 43% by 2040 from 1/5th to nearly 1/3rd. Currently, 18% of 65+ are living on their own (14% Wiltshire).

We have 15.4% of homes in fuel poverty (10.4% Wiltshire) [Not sure how this is calculated, but probably has something to do with the lack of mains gas.]

14.6% of children under 16 lived in a low income family – about 500 children (12.7% Wiltshire). 19% of 4-18 year olds have special educational needs – these are costly services and demand is also likely to rise.

Not only is Wiltshire as a whole going to have to deal with the increase in demand for services for older people, but SWW is likely to experience greater demand. We need to continue to support existing services and provide new ones to help maintain a healthy and thriving population.

It is extremely fortunate that through prudent management the Council is well placed financially, but there are always risks and a tight grip needs to be kept on spending. However, an additional £10m has been allocated to spend on Highways over two years as the Council is well aware of the effects of the weather on our roads over the past couple of years and exacerbated more recently with the near constant and heavy rain. It will probably take much longer than two years for our roads to return to a decent state. An extra £1m has been allocated over three years for an additional gully tanker to add to the existing three. With over 80,000 gullies, it takes time to empty them all, but the additional tanker will help keep our roads clearer of standing water and prevent property flooding.

Wiltshire and Swindon are producing a joint Nature Recovery Strategy. This is in the early stages of development and the Council carried out a survey in March to help discover your priorities for nature recovery. Please follow the link to the page on the Council's website where you can sign up to receive the Newsletter for future events and surveys . [Wiltshire and Swindon Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Wiltshire Council](#).

From May to July there will be a series of surveys and workshops to establish priorities.

I know many residents attend the Hindon surgery. The proposed development in Hindon with 31 houses and a new surgery was approved by the planning committee back in April last year. Since then

the developer has been in negotiation with the Council over the S106 Agreement, but that has now been sent off the rails by the introduction by the Council of new charges for phosphates. It is a complicated story, but means that the developer must either pay a large bill to the Council which could affect the viability of the scheme, or redesign the scheme for additional phosphate mitigation. I am very concerned that this could affect the delivery of the new, improved doctors surgery and the provision of the affordable housing.