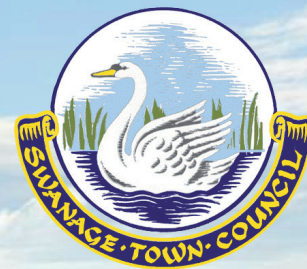


# Swanage Town Council

## ANNUAL REPORT 2024



### Mayor's Report

**As we mark the halfway point of my third term as Mayor, it is a great honour to continue leading the Town Council through this milestone year - our Golden Anniversary.**



For those who attended the celebratory service at St. Mary's in October, it was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the council's achievements and thank the councillors and staff who have dedicated themselves to serving our town over the past 50 years.

Since May, we have welcomed six new councillors to our team. Behind the decisions guiding our community lies a significant commitment of time and effort - countless hours spent in meetings, workshops, and committees. Every councillor, past and present, who has taken on this often thankless but vital role deserves our gratitude. Supported by our officers and staff, the Council continues to work tirelessly on behalf of local residents.

This past year has been filled with exciting and joyous events. Our town's vibrant festivals - the Pirates, the Fairies, the Seafood, and the Jazz and Blues, along with the ever-popular Carnival - brought residents and visitors together to celebrate Swanage's unique character. These events, driven by the hard work and creativity of so many, are a testament to our thriving community.

At the Annual Community Awards event the work of our many volunteers is celebrated. Nomination forms for the 2025 awards will be available shortly!

One shining example of our town's success is the Swanage

Information Centre on the seafront, which has once again been honoured with the prestigious Gold Tourism Award.

Looking ahead, we face some significant challenges, particularly regarding coastal erosion and land instability. Critical areas such as the seafront and Peveril Point will require millions of pounds of investment to protect them for the future. The Council has devoted considerable time over the last year exploring how these issues can be addressed while making sure that the Council has a sustainable financial future. Councillors recognise the importance of residents contributing to these decisions and extensive public engagement is planned for the spring of 2025.

We must also continue supporting the various community groups many of which are supported by Council funding. For example, the proposals for a new community sports facility at Day's Park represents a considerable but essential investment in our town's wellbeing and future.

Despite these challenges, I am confident that our community's renowned spirit will help us navigate the road ahead. Together, we can turn these obstacles into opportunities to strengthen and improve our town.

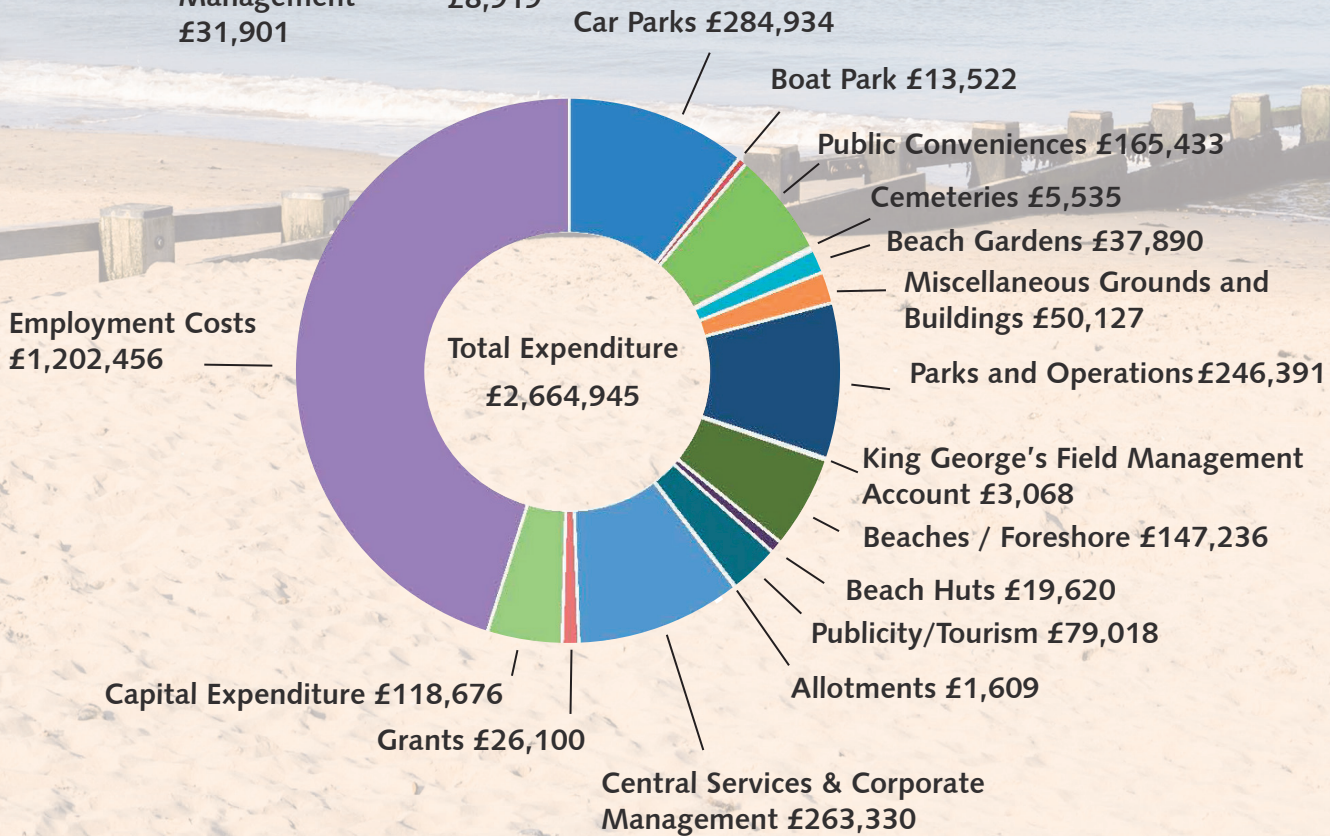
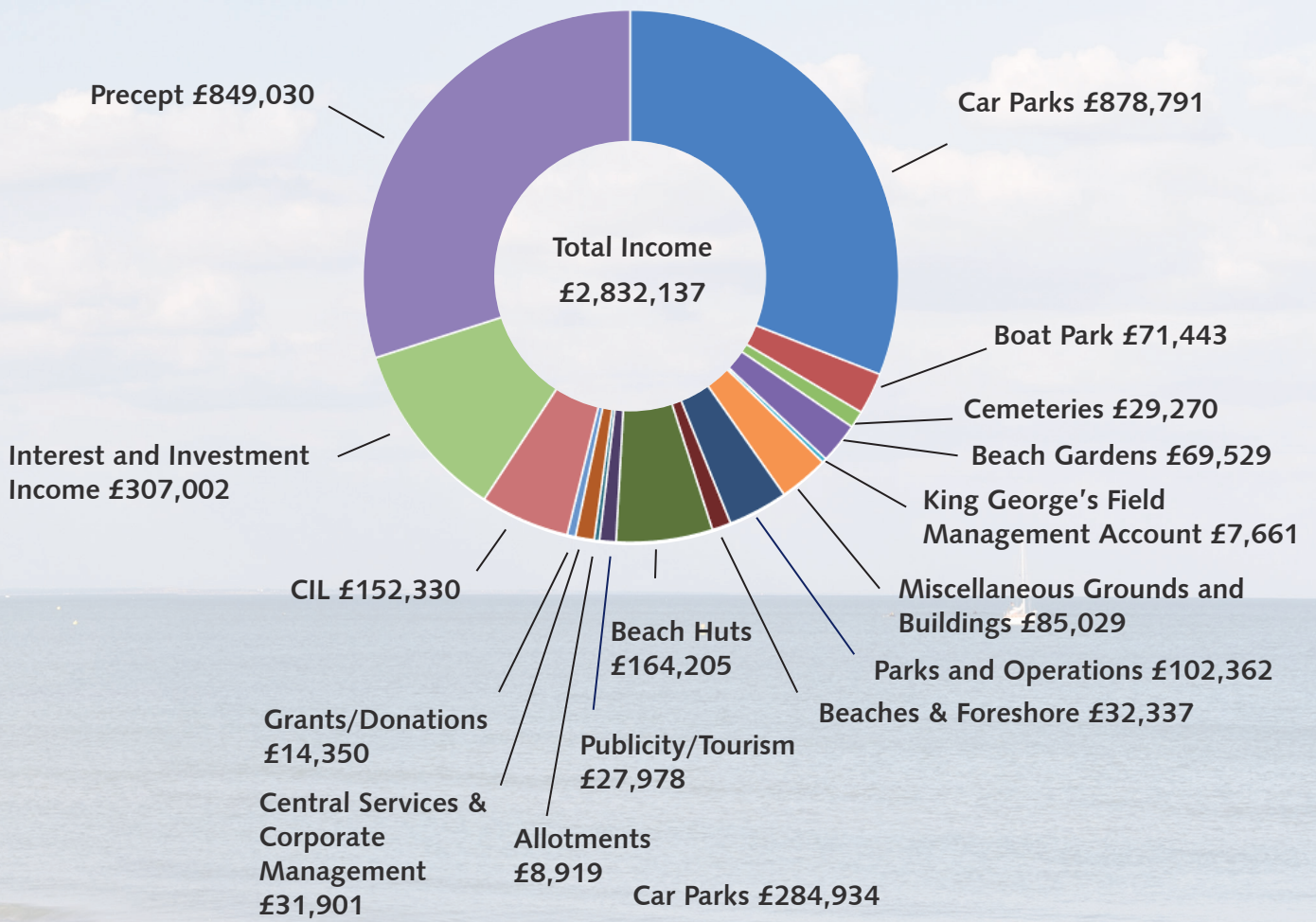
Let's work hand in hand to make this coming year another to be proud of, ensuring that Swanage remains the place we all love and cherish.

**Councillor Tina Foster, Town Mayor.**



In May 2024, the local elections took place and the Town Council welcomed newly elected councillors: Councillors Brookes, Coward, Dorrington, Lejeune, Sutton and Vile to the Town Council to join the re-elected councillors: Councillor Foster (Town Mayor) and Councillor Moreton (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Bonfield, Monkhouse, Tomes and Trite.

Income and Expenditure 2023/24



If you wish to receive future bulletins via email please provide your email address to [admin@swanage.gov.uk](mailto:admin@swanage.gov.uk)

# Achievements during 2024

## Community Services Committee

Swanage Town Council has been busy supporting various community initiatives and improvements. Here's a snapshot of recent progress:

**New Community Sports Facility:** Working closely with Swanage and Herston Football Club, plans for a modern sports hall have been submitted to Dorset Council. A community sports survey helped shape these proposals, and we eagerly await the planning decision so that fundraising can move forward.

**Skatepark Enhancements:** In partnership with the Swanage Skatepark Community Project, new skate equipment is on the way. SSCP has also planned exciting fundraising events for 2025.

**Enhanced CCTV Monitoring:** CCTV systems will soon be monitored from Dorset Council's control room, offering improved safety coverage.

**Station Approach Pedestrian Safety:** Improvements to Station Approach will begin in January 2025. Accessible Swanage has been consulted to ensure the changes benefit all highway users.

**Affordable Housing Development:** Proposals for Swanage Community Housing Group's first affordable housing project are being developed at the corner of Ulwell Road and Washpond Lane. More opportunities are being explored!

**Health & Wellbeing Hub:** The new Focus Centre, established by Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust, with the support of the Town Council, now offers residents access to vital health and wellbeing services.

**Museum Support:** The Council is helping Swanage Museum apply for grants to improve their building and secure its future.

**Road Improvements:** Recent upgrades to Cow Lane and Panorama Road have paved the way for these roads to be formally adopted by Dorset Council.

**Speed and Traffic Initiatives:** A new Speed Indicator Device on Valley Road is active, and the Council has supported community efforts to form a Speedwatch group to tackle speeding. In partnership with Dorset Council changes to traffic flow on Shore Road are being investigated.

**CanCare Garden:** Prince Albert Gardens now features the beautiful CanCare garden. A new information board will be installed soon to complete this serene addition.

**Keep in touch for more updates and ways to get involved in these exciting projects!**

Please visit: [www.swanage.gov.uk/Councillors.aspx](http://www.swanage.gov.uk/Councillors.aspx) for contact details of councillors.

## Environment & Green Spaces Committee

Swanage Town Council is making strides towards a more sustainable and vibrant community. Here's what we've been up to:

**Sustainable Energy:** Solar panels are now installed at the operations department offices, garage, and Beach Gardens pavilion, alongside LED lighting upgrades in key buildings - 50% funded by a Low Carbon Dorset Grant.

**Seafront Enhancements:** We've partnered with Dorset Council to develop proposals to stabilise and enhance Swanage Green Seafront.

**Eco-Friendly Beach Management:** A successful summer trial saw seaweed returned to the sea instead of being removed.

**Greener Transport:** The Council's fleet is now even greener with the addition of an electric vehicle, replacing a diesel counterpart. Plans for more EV charging points in town centre car parks are also underway.

**Community Sustainability:** Collaborating with Sustainable Swanage on initiatives like Repair & Reuse and Healthy Homes, we're championing practical ways to reduce waste and improve energy efficiency.

**Swan Brook Partnership:** Engaging the community on the health of Swan Brook has been a success, with open evenings and plans for the National Trust to lead future engagement on stream conservation.

**Beach and Town Cleanliness:** Our partnerships with Beach Buddies and Swanage Landers keep the beach and verges litter-free, ensuring a pristine environment for all.

**Motion for the Ocean:** We're creating an action plan for cleaner seas, working with Dorset Waste Partnership to improve waste collection and water-quality signage year-round.

**Biodiversity Boost:** A biodiversity audit of King George V and Queen Elizabeth II (Forres) fields is guiding efforts to enhance wildlife habitats while maintaining their full use for sports.

**Beach Gardens** Earned the Green Flag Award, a testament to our commitment to quality green spaces.

**Together, we're taking meaningful steps toward a cleaner, greener Swanage. Thank you for your ongoing support in these efforts!**



To view a copy of the Corporate Plan document please visit: [www.swanage.gov.uk/Newsletters-Information.aspx](http://www.swanage.gov.uk/Newsletters-Information.aspx) or contact the Town Council to receive a paper copy: Email: [admin@swanage.gov.uk](mailto:admin@swanage.gov.uk) Tel: 01929 423636

## Planning & Consultation Committee

In 2024, the Planning and Consultation Committee considered and commented on 125 planning applications, and seven consultations on a variety of subjects, including proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, and new and updated Marine Conservation Advice packages regarding local Marine Protected Areas. As well as monthly meetings to review and comment on local planning applications, tree works and consultations, the Planning and Consultation Committee oversees the work of the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan sub-committee (SNP). The group's membership comprises six councillor members from the Town Council's Planning and Consultation Committee, along with up to six additional members who reside within the parish of Swanage.

The latest updates on planning and housing in Swanage include significant developments across several areas of interest:

### Draft Dorset Local Plan (DLP)

New government regulations and guidance are proposed, potentially reshaping how local plans are prepared, and it is anticipated that the new DLP will be adopted in May 2027.

### Purbeck Local Plan (2018-2034)

Good news - this plan was officially adopted on 18th July 2024! Key highlights include Policy H14, which addresses concerns around new build properties becoming second homes, aiming to tackle this critical issue in Swanage in the future.

### Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)

The draft HNA is undergoing amendments after detailed review. Concerns remain that Swanage needs more affordable and social housing rather than additional general housing stock. The revised document will be shared with SNP members soon.

### Looking Ahead

Upcoming discussions for the SNP's 'Task Teams' will cover Dorset Council's review of existing and proposed new Conservation Areas in the town, review of the existing Swanage Green Infrastructure Strategy, potential new townscape character areas, and a local green spaces and footpaths map.

### Engaging the Community: Updates on the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan (SNP)

Plans are underway to enhance community engagement around the Swanage Neighbourhood Plan (SNP). The Town Council is collaborating with Dorset Coast Forum

(DCF) to develop a communications plan for the SNP, and also the Green Seafront and Shore Road Enhancement projects.

*Stay in touch for updates as plans for community engagement take shape!*

## Tourism & Local Economy Committee

Celebrating Swanage: A Year of Achievements and Milestones!

2024 has been an incredible year for Swanage, filled with accomplishments and initiatives that continue to make our town a must-visit destination while enhancing the community experience. Here are some highlights:

### New Website Success

The *Visit Swanage* website launched in January 2024 under *Visit Dorset*, and it's already gaining traction with a growing number of users discovering all Swanage has to offer!

### Accessible Swanage

We're proud to support the Accessible Swanage Group, whose valuable input has shaped key projects like the Green Seafront and Station Approach improvements.

### Beachside Excellence

Two beach huts are now available year-round for use by charity and community groups. Financial support ensured lifeguard services kept our beach safe for all. For the 23rd consecutive year, Swanage beach has been awarded the prestigious Blue Flag!

### Eventful Swanage

Swanage hosted an incredible variety of events this year, from rowing regattas and running events to RNLI fundraisers, rotary events, and the spectacular Swanage Carnival.

### Strong Partnerships

We're maintaining close ties with key organisations like the National Trust, Swanage Railway, Swanage Museum, and the Chamber of Trade while collaborating with neighbouring parishes on tourism initiatives.

### Swanage Friday Market

Supported the provision of a thriving year-round market.

### Award-Winning Services

The Swanage Information Centre received the *Gold Award* at the Southwest Tourism Awards, recognising excellence in helping visitors to explore our town.

*Thank you to everyone who has contributed to Swanage's successes this year. Here's to an even brighter 2025!*



## Responsibilities:

**Dorset Council:** Council tax collection and benefit administration, countryside services e.g. Durlston Country Park, economic development, education, emergency planning, environmental health, libraries and archives, on street parking, planning, public health, registration Service, refuse collection and, recycling, roads and footpaths, social services, street sweeping, trading standards. Tel: 01305 221000.

**Swanage Town Council:** Allotments, bandstand, bathing zone and RNLI lifeguards, Beach Gardens sports park and Tea on the Green, main beach and foreshore, beach huts on Shore Road and Spa, boat park, bus shelters, car parks, CCTV, cemeteries, play areas, De Moulham Trust and grants, festive lights, historic monuments, market, memorial benches and public seats, public conveniences, public gardens, green open spaces and playing fields, public helpdesk (jointly with Dorset Police), skate park, Swanage Information Centre, Town Hall Tel: 01929 423636.