

Council to mark historic VE Day, disposable barbecues banned at Coate Water, schools up for national awards and much more...

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NEWS

Council to mark VE Day with flag-raising ceremony



The photograph above shows a street party in full swing in Florence Street, Swindon, celebrating the end of the Second World War in 1945. Next Thursday (08 May) marks the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day (VE Day), when we remember and thank those who fought for our freedom.

Residents are invited to join a special flag-raising ceremony at 4.30pm on 08 May outside the council offices in Euclid Street (SN1 2JH).

The ceremony will pay tribute to the sacrifices of soldiers and civilians who lost their lives during the war, and will include hymns and speeches from both the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jim Robbins, and the Mayor of Swindon, Councillor Imtiyaz Shaikh. Local Brownies and Scout groups will also be present and residents are invited to bring food and drink to the ceremony for other guests to enjoy as part of a street party.

Building a Better Swindon



As part of our Council Mission to 'Build a Better Swindon', we are working to create a town ready for the challenges of the coming decades and where possible, leading town centre and travel improvements throughout the town.

How we've been building a better Swindon in 2025 so far:

- Work on the third phase of the Carriage Works regeneration has begun, transforming the historic building for future use
- Fleming Way has seen new murals, toilets, bus stops and greenery installed as work progresses on improving the road
- £100,000 has been given to Network Rail to design a new northern entrance to Swindon Station
- A number of roads, including Thamesdown Drive, Great Western Way and Queens Drive, received resurfacing work to improve them for drivers

There is much more to do. [Read more.](#)

Have your say on where you vote in future elections



Earlier this year, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England decided that Swindon would retain 57 councillors but that new wards were needed to match the Borough's growing population.

As a result, the Council now has to create new polling districts. This means where you vote may change, and we're now asking you to let us know where you think your local polling place should be.

A public consultation is currently running until Sunday, 8 June. [Find out more and have your say.](#)

What do you think of Swindon's parks and open spaces?



From Lydiard Park, to Coate Water, Town Gardens and Seven Fields, we want to know your views on the Borough's local open spaces.

Have your say on local parks and gardens, sports facilities, spaces for nature, play spaces, allotments and community gardens by taking a few minutes to [fill out the survey](#) before next Friday (9 May).

Your thoughts and feedback will be used to inform policies to enhance open spaces within the Council's new Local Plan, through the Open Space audit report.

Disposable barbecues now banned at Coate Water



Popular during the warmer months, disposable barbecues are often used by those visiting Coate Water country park. However, following some recent incidents including one that caused the damage to the bench pictured above, visitors are now prohibited from using them in the park.

But there are still barbecues available for hire at [Coate Water](#), and you can bring your own non-disposable barbecues. Anyone found using a disposable barbecue will be asked to extinguish it or it could be extinguished for them.

Disposable barbecues are also banned at [Lydiard Park](#), with some permanent ones available to hire if you're looking for a place to flip some burgers.

Two Swindon schools are in the running for national awards



East Wichel Primary School and Nursery, and Rodbourne Cheney Primary School, will be vying to take the crown of 'Primary School of the Year' in education's own version of the Oscars.

The Tes School Awards recognise the very best teachers and schools from UK state and independent schools, across early years settings, primary and secondary.

East Wichel Primary School and Nursery has also been shortlisted in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Setting of the Year. Meanwhile, Swindon-based Multi-Academy Trust, The White Horse Federation, is in the running for 'Inclusive Trust of the year'.

[Read more.](#)

Working towards making Swindon more welcoming



Working with residents and local businesses, we are committed to building a fairer Swindon by welcoming people seeking sanctuary.

Yesterday (1 May), we invited local businesses and people with lived experience to share stories and discuss how the Council and organisations across Swindon can support people seeking sanctuary. This is part of our efforts to make Swindon an officially-accredited [Borough of Sanctuary](#).

How stories can help you learn a new language



Children and parents have been learning a new language through the power of stories.

The 'Story Sack' programme, run by the Council's Warm Welcome Team, is a way for residents in Swindon to learn English by reading the same story in

English and their native language, then creating a bag filled with toys, clothes and teddy bears relating to that story for children to then use.

Over the past few months, those taking part have been working hard to create the colourful and creative story sacks which will be given to local schools in the coming months.

EVENTS



Race for Life

Embark on the Race for Life challenge at Lydiard Park tomorrow (3 May). The 5k is an achievable distance for you to go at your own pace to help fund life-saving cancer research. [Read more.](#)



Armed Forces Day

Armed Forces Day will be celebrated at Lydiard Park on 28 June to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. [Read more.](#)



Christ Church Dog Fun Run & Walk

Join the second Christ Church Dog Fun Run and Walk on Saturday, 14 June, with a 2km fun run and 5km competitive race, followed by a dog show, kids' activities and refreshments. [Read more.](#)



Craft and Flea at STEAM

Shop small and shop local on Sunday, 18 May at STEAM's authentic twist on the traditional craft market. It is £2.50 entry and under 12s go free. [Read more.](#)

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