



Service Delivery

Planning Policy
Swindon Borough Council
Wat Tyler House
Beckhampton Street
Swindon
SN1 2JH
Tel:- 01793 466513

Via email

Please ask for: Alice Bates

Email: abates@swindon.gov.uk

Date: 15 November 2019

Dear Councillors,

Consultation on BT programme of intended public payphone removals

BT has instigated a public consultation on their proposals to remove 24 payphone callboxes within the Borough. Notices have been posted in each of the relevant phone boxes to inform users and passers-by of the proposals and the consultation process. In addition, Swindon Borough Council (SBC) has been advised that as the 'local public organisation' it has a responsibility to consult local councils, community groups and residents.

We understand that there are 7 payphone callbox(es) within your parish as detailed below:

Address	Post code	No of calls
Westlea Drive	SN5 7AN	0
Halifax Building Society, West Swindon, District Centre, Westlea	SN5 7BL	150
Sudeley Way, Grange Park	SN5 6EA	0
Shaw Village Centre, Ramleaze Drive, Shaw	SN5 5PY	0
Village Centre Freshbrook	SN5 8LY	17
Stokesay Drive Toothill	SN5 8DR	7
Colchester Close Toothill	SN5 8AG	138

We would be grateful if you would:

- publicise the proposal to remove the callbox(es) amongst local residents encouraging them to forward any responses to yourselves or to SBC (using the contact details below), and

- Consider the proposals as a Council and inform SBC of your recommendation.

We will also be putting the details of this consultation on the SBC website as soon as possible.

Responses should be sent to either forwardplanning@swindon.gov.uk or Forward Planning, Swindon Borough Council, Wat Tyler West House, 5th floor, Beckhampton Street, Swindon SN1 2JG.

BT offers 3 possible responses to the proposal to remove a callbox:

1. Agree to the removal
2. Adopt the callbox. Where the local callbox is a traditional red phonebox, BT are encouraging communities to purchase for £1 in order to use the box for the benefit of the local community benefits eg as a library. Further information on this process can be found at: <https://bt.com/adopt>
3. Object to the removal. Ofcom Regulations state that BT has a duty to provide 'reasonable geographic access to public call boxes' and offer the following as relevant factors to consider in relation to each callbox:
 - Whether the area in which the box is located has a relatively high proportion of people on low incomes or in rented properties who could be less likely to have access to mobile or fixed line telephones.
 - Whether the area requires a phone box for emergency calls, perhaps near an accident black spot or near to a community facility.
 - Whether the area has poor or sporadic mobile network coverage.
 - The level of call volumes made from callbox which can give an indication as to its usefulness or value to the community.

A case will need to be argued for each objection, backed up with evidence.

Proposed Timescales:

We are proposing the following timetable:

By	Action
Friday 15 November	SBC notifies all parish councils, residents associations and community groups.
By Friday 13 December	Parish councils and community groups carry out local consultation and consider how they want to respond to the proposal to remove their local call box(es). SBC to be informed of the local responses to the proposal and of their recommendation.
By Tuesday 14 January	SBC's Planning Committee considers local responses and recommendations to the proposal

	and makes an initial draft decision on the future of each phonebox. SBC publicises the draft decision and invites further responses.
By Tuesday 11 February	Swindon Council to make final decision based on the responses received from parish councils and local community groups. SBC to make a formal response to BT.

We appreciate that these timescales are tight, however we did not receive notification from BT until after the notices in the callboxes had been posted. Your assistance and participation with this issue is very much appreciated.

Yours faithfully



Alice Bates
Planning Policy