



## Service Delivery

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

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Via email

Please ask for: Karen Phimister  
Direct Dial No: 01793 466433  
Email: [kphimister@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:kphimister@swindon.gov.uk)  
Date: 21 October 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Consultation on BT programme of intended public payphone removals**

BT has instigated a public consultation on their proposals to remove 44 payphone callboxes within the Borough – please see attached list. 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 would be grateful if you would publicise the proposal to remove the callbox(es) amongst your residents or within your community group, encouraging them to forward any responses to yourselves or to SBC (using the contact details below), and/or making your own collective response.

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](mailto:forwardplanning@swindon.gov.uk) or Forward Planning, Swindon Borough Council, Wat Tyler West House, 5<sup>th</sup> 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 in the document attached and at:

<https://business.bt.com/content/dam/bt/business/PDFs/payphones/Adopt-a-Kiosk-Brochure.pdf>.

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 a 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:**

Swindon Borough Council has been given until 16 January 2017 to respond to this consultation and to make our recommendations as to the future of each of the 44 callboxes. We are therefore proposing the following timetable:

By	Action
Friday 21 October	SBC notifies all parish councils, residents associations and community groups.  SBC publicises the consultation on SBC website.
By Friday 18 November	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 Friday 16 December	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 Monday 16 January	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.
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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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Phimister', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Karen Phimister  
Planning Policy