

Runnymede Borough Council

Annual Report

April 2021 - March 2022

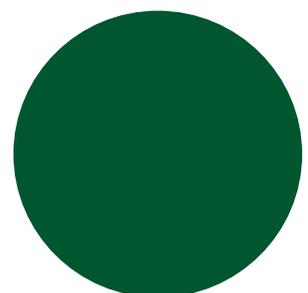
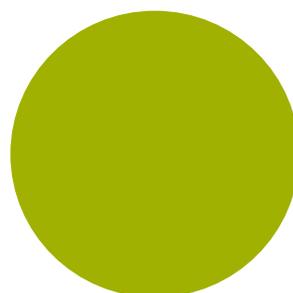
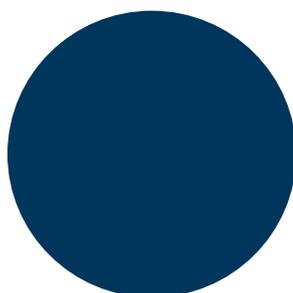
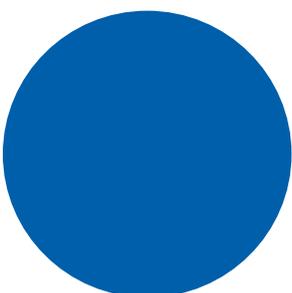




**Liberty House,
Magna Square, Egham**

Contents

Leader of the Council's message	04
Chief Executive's analysis	05
About our Borough	06
About Runnymede Borough Council	08
Our strategic framework	10
Projects portfolio review	12
Performance snapshot	13
Supporting local people	14
Case study: improving our housing service	15
Enhancing our environment	16
Case study: Smartening up our towns	17
Improving our economy	18
Case study - Magna Square, Egham	19
Organisational development	20
Case study - Working with other councils	21
Financial information	22



Leader of the Council's message



**Cllr Tom Gracey,
Leader.**

As I look back at the last year, the picture is one of transition for our Borough and also for the Council. Together we supported our communities through the pandemic, we mourned for family and friends lost, and we moved forward.

Many of us embraced new ways of working and a sharper awareness of the steps we can all take to keep the virus at bay. At the Council this meant our committee meetings were held online for a period of time while the Government allowed us to do so. While the legislation allowing for online only meetings has now lapsed, my expectation is that we will soon live stream public meetings from the Civic Centre to show more of the way decisions are made.

For most of our staff, transition meant having to adapt working practices. Following this the Council has now adopted a broader flexible working policy. Staff worked incredibly hard to maintain service delivery and provide additional support throughout this time. The Council employs less than 500 people to provide all our services. I thank them for their very hard work on behalf of local people.

I became Leader of the Council in May, just after the close of the financial year which this report covers. I give credit to Cllr Nick Prescott, who chose to step down after the election, for his five years as Leader. It is a complex role and while we all have our own approaches to the position, the primary interest for he and I has always been the wellbeing and success of people living and working in Runnymede and the continued prosperity of our Borough.

This report presents our successes and activities during the last year. There are many, and I am incredibly proud to lead a Council which

punches well above its weight, delivers excellent services, has stable finances, consistently delivers for residents and modernises to reflect changing demands. We continue to do all this whilst charging the lowest Council Tax in the county.

The real test of our success is how what we do as a Council meets the needs of you, our residents. Everyone will have had engagement with our services, either through communication with our staff or through delivery of our services, including maintaining our parks and open spaces and refuse collection. The feedback we receive is that the clear majority of residents are happy with services, and where any issues do arise we aim to deal with them swiftly and fairly. This is an absolute priority for both me and the Council as a whole, and I encourage residents to provide input and feedback so we can continue to improve and enhance our services for you.

My own highlights from the year, when I served as Deputy Leader, include the wholesale improvement in our housing service, upgrades to security at our open spaces to stop unauthorised encampments, the progress on Magna Square in Egham and the formalisation of our community services partnership with Surrey Heath Borough Council.

We are already delivering many more great results – including improvements to resident engagement and accessibility of services, improving the energy efficiency of homes, delivering more new social housing and investing in new and improved community sports and leisure facilities. I am proud of our achievements set out in this report and those we continue to deliver for all our residents.

Chief Executive's analysis



Paul Turrell,
Chief Executive.

After 13 years as Chief Executive at Runnymede, I am proud to look across this Council and see the breadth of change and improvement my staff team has achieved to better serve our borough.

I am proud too, of the leadership we have shown when the pressure has been on us. From the floods in 2014 to the pandemic, as well as in many smaller situations, we have pulled together. This does not happen by accident: it has been achieved through long term relationship building, listening, supporting local groups, acknowledging their skills and taking the lead ourselves where necessary. We have shown that by focussing on the long term, detail and tangible results, rather than being caught up in structures and process, we really can get things done.

As a Council, Runnymede has a dedicated and capable 11-strong senior leadership team: a mix of longstanding colleagues with a deep understanding of our way of operating, and newer faces who bring fresh ideas.

Alongside our senior leaders, I have seen examples over this year of staff delivering innovative ideas, working hard and adapting to the post-Covid-19 reality.

Through a voluntary redundancy programme we released money to create new posts which contribute to the overall success of the Council. It is also pleasing that we have been able to keep on recruiting to fill positions and ensure services were kept running.

The committee system and member working parties we operate means all councillors can get involved in decision making. Relations between councillors and senior staff are

robust and healthy, and our members continued to champion the interests of their wards over the last year.

Our finances are stable and balanced with strong levels of reserves. Our income comes from diverse sources (Council Tax accounts for 11 per cent of overall income) and our finances are subject to stringent checks and balances from outside bodies, experienced staff and councillors.

To create a funding stream to avoid any cuts to services following the decline in Government funding, we entered very carefully into property ownership a decade ago. We have built a geographically spread portfolio which has a value substantially higher than the borrowing we secured from HM Treasury to pay for it. Income from this portfolio has supported £200 million of regeneration in two of our town centres.

As a result, Addlestone One including our new combined civic centre, library and police station and Magna Square both bring great credit to this borough. Amongst many achievements, their progress during the 2021-22 year are the real highlights for me as they demonstrate what is possible with vision and proper planning and integrated working.

About our Borough

Runnymede is characterised by its small towns and villages, each with a distinct character to them.

Egham is an historic university town and home to Royal Holloway, University of London, while Chertsey has held a royal charter giving it the right to hold a market since 1599, and is home to St Peter's Hospital.

Addlestone is a newer town which is also the administrative centre of the borough, being home to both Runnymede Borough Council and Runnymede Beat (Surrey Police). It is the home of the Borough's only social housing tower block, Surrey Towers.

The Magna Carta was sealed in the Borough in 1215, on the banks of the River Thames, and this historic link with democracy, law and the rights of the individual remains a regular feature of the area.

The small community at Longcross to the west of the M25 is soon to become much more prominent as it will become home to one of Surrey's first garden villages. Development of phase one of the programme began several years ago but the next phase will see 1,700 homes built, with accompanying infrastructure.

The neighbouring Longcross film studios signed a long term lease with Netflix in September 2021 where sound stages, studios, and production facilities will be built.

East of the M25, Thorpe became the first community in our Borough to successfully deliver a Neighbourhood Plan. After many years of research and development, councillors adopted the plan in May 2021 and it will now be considered alongside

national and local planning policy when applications are received in its area.

Statistical snapshot

Runnymede has a higher percentage of working age residents, representing 65.6 per cent of the population, (Surrey average of 61.1 per cent. Source: Surrey County Council Local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment). Most recent evidence shows 13,943 state pension claimants and 1,172 Pension Credit claimants.



Map of Runnymede

This latter figure represents 7.7 per cent of pensioners who receive Pension Credit (Surrey average of 6.2 per cent). Source: Department for Work and Pensions.

Runnymede has a higher participation rate in the workforce compared with the regional and national rates. Office for National Statistics figures suggest 85.9 per cent (53,200) of the working population are economically active.

Runnymede residents have higher earnings than the UK average, but lower levels than the Surrey average. Workplace earnings are higher than resident earnings suggesting there are a number of well-paid jobs in Runnymede, but a higher percentage of these are held by in-commuters rather than residents.

Between September 2020 and August 2021 there were 9,094 recorded crimes, a rate of 100.7 per 1,000 population (Surrey average 79.7 per 1,000).

Economy and business

Runnymede's economy is the largest in The Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership area (which covers seven Surrey boroughs), according to the ONS. The economy stands at £5.8 billion gross value added. Runnymede is also amongst the most competitive local authority areas of England outside London.

The Borough is home to the headquarters of companies including Samsung and Astellas Pharmaceuticals, as well as VMware, salesforce.com, Gartner UK, Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals, Centrica and Future Electronics.

Research and development

The highly respected Animal and Plant Health Agency, an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is based in New Haw.

It works to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.

Its priorities during the past year have been to control and eradicate plant and animal diseases, manage outbreaks and provide science-based evidence and advice to inform policy makers. It carries out a considerable range of scientific research, collaborating with universities and institutes worldwide.

The presence of Royal Holloway, University of London, in the Borough, also drives our economy. The University's 2020-21 Annual Report listed total income of £189m, with research income of £18m, plus £20m of grants from the Office for Students and Research England. It listed 11,314 full time equivalent students, many of whom live and spend in the Borough, and 1592 full time equivalent staff.

Tourism

In addition to business, the Borough's location on the edge of Windsor Park also drives a healthy tourist economy.

During the winter of 2021-22, the brand new Fairmont Windsor Park hotel opened, providing 200 luxury rooms and suites.



Fairmont owner Surinder Arora, with his wife Sunita Arora, Sir Cliff Richard, former Mayor Cllr Elaine Gill and husband Harry Gill at the hotel's opening.

Virginia Water and Savill Garden are both highly prized assets locally, bringing visitors from across the region. Thorpe Park continues to be a major attraction for families from across the UK.

About Runnymede Borough Council

We are part of a two tier local government structure alongside 10 other borough or district councils and a county council covering the county of Surrey.

Runnymede Borough Council is based in the Civic Centre in Addlestone. The Council also has operational bases in Chertsey and public facilities including a museum, day centres and community halls across the area.

The Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive and Strategic Leadership Team are responsible for service delivery and staffing. We are governed by our Constitution which sets out policies related to employment, conduct, public finances, decision making and many other topics.

We have 41 elected Councillors operating in a committee structure and the Leader of the Council is the leader of the largest political group. We elect by thirds, meaning in a standard four year cycle, one third of our members are elected each year, with the county council elections in year four.

During 2021-22 the Council was Conservative-led with Runnymede Independent Residents' Group, Liberal Democrats, independent councillors, the Runnymede Residents and Community Group and Labour forming the opposition.

The Council has a revenue budget of around £50million per year which pays for the services we provide, including the salaries of the staff. Funding for this comes from a number of sources including rental payments from our property portfolio which provides 42 per cent of our income, and Council Tax which provides about 11 per cent.

A voluntary redundancy scheme during the year saw the departure of around 20 staff, which created a financial saving meaning new posts could be created to support a modern local authority, examples are below.

Climate Change Officer

Our commitment to reducing the Council's impact on the climate forms a growing part of our work. We have recruited Sarah Hides as Climate Change Officer.

Sarah holds degrees in Marine Environmental Chemistry and Aquatic Resource Management and joined the Council in January 2022. She has previous experience as a policy advisor to DEFRA.

Her role is to support the delivery of the Climate Change Strategy, including carrying out research, co-ordinating efforts between Council service areas, engaging with the public and monitoring our performance.



Bid Writer and Grants Officer

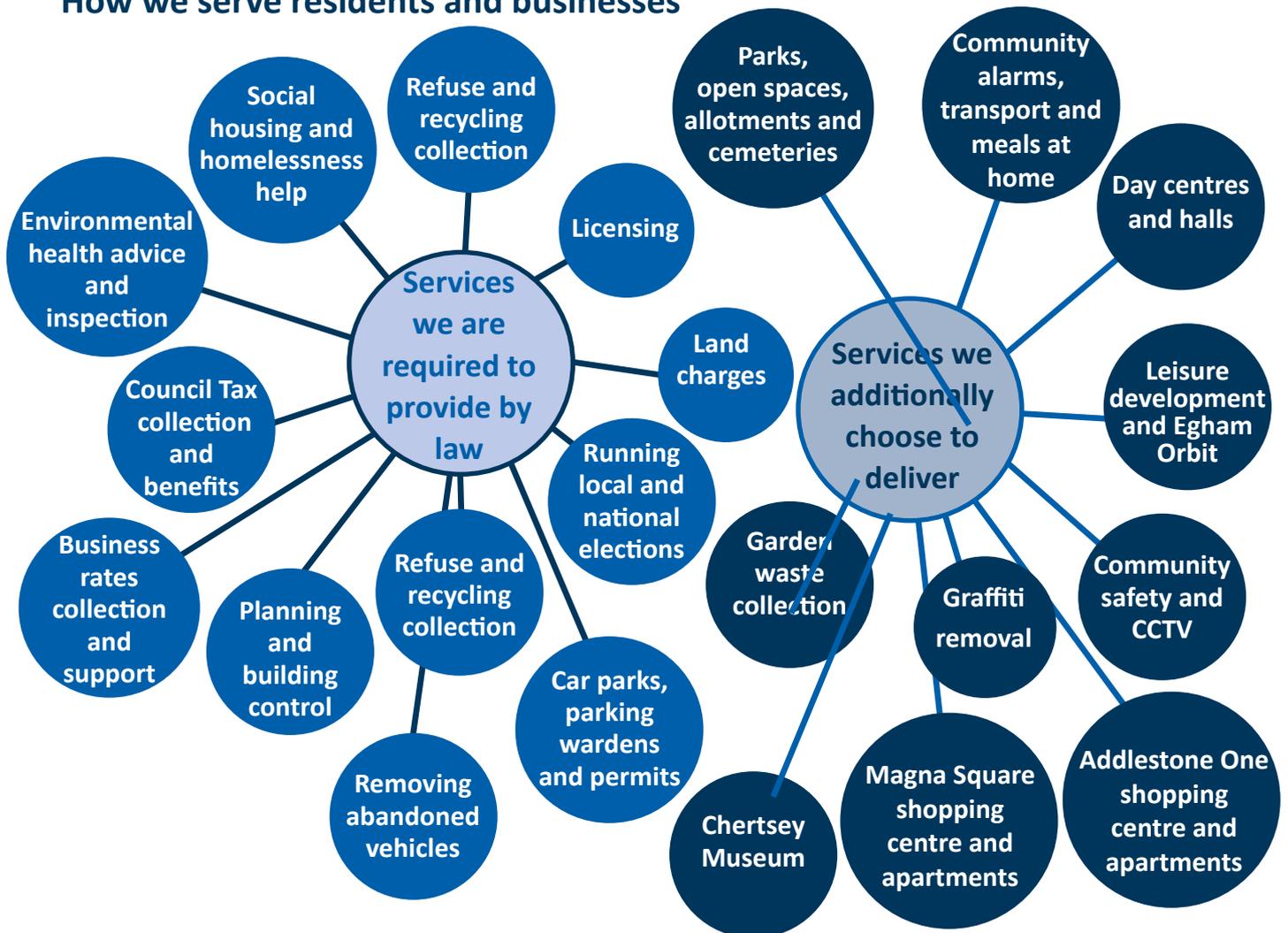
Grant funding is available to the Council from multiple sources, but we operate in a competitive environment with 332 other local authorities.

We have employed Howard Collins, an experienced bid writer, to source and co-ordinate large scale applications. These have the potential to bring in hundreds of thousands of pounds of extra funding.

Howard will work across the Council, and potentially with other partners to develop projects which are likely to attract funding, bringing together bid teams to provide the evidence for applications. He also advises individual service areas of smaller funds.



How we serve residents and businesses



Senior HR Business Partner

Ensuring the Council has the right staff in the right role at the right time and that they, managers, and senior leaders, are well supported is vital.

We have recruited Joanne Attrill to provide expert advice, commission learning and development as well as managing casework.

Joanne has previously worked as a HR consultant in multiple fields. Her specialisms include employee relations, wellbeing and management coaching/development. Joanne is degree and Masters qualified, a Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and is an accredited Institute of Leadership and Management Workplace Investigator.



Engagement and Inclusion Officer

Our Housing service is the landlord to 2,897 households and during the past year the Council has made a step change in how we explain our work and listen to tenants.

Kate Hall, Engagement and Inclusion Officer, is responsible for this work on a day to day basis. Her role includes listening to residents' views, devising innovative ways to consult and creating evidence bases for new policies, service and estate improvements, or ways of working.

Kate's background is in estate agency and as well as organising surveys, keeping our web pages up to date and meeting tenants, she also provides feedback information.



Our strategic framework

As an organisation, the framework which guides us is important, and it is based on themes, values, goals and our overall vision. Our vision is the overarching direction we set ourselves. The values, goals and themes are the structures we use to work towards our vision.

This framework was agreed in 2016 as part of our four year Corporate Business Plan. We set them out here as a reminder to ourselves and to residents.



OUR VISION

“To be a vibrant borough with a high quality environment, where we maximise opportunities with partners to provide services that are highly regarded by local people”

Our corporate themes

The way we categorise the many strands of work we carry out, so residents can see what our priorities are.



Find out more about how the Council has been supporting local people, enhancing our environment, improving our economy and developing our organisation from page 14-21.

Our corporate values

The foundation on which we perform our work and conduct ourselves.

We are:

Customer-focused: We put our customers at the heart of what we do and they will be able to interact with us in the way they want.

Performance driven: We strive for excellence in all we do.

Innovative: We aim to creatively improve our services.

Passionate: We empower our staff to be passionate about all we do.

Promoting equality and diversity: We believe in fairness and creating a diverse workforce so we can draw upon a wide range of views and experiences to meet the changing needs of our customers.

Delivering excellent value for money: We strive to be as efficient and effective as possible.

Our corporate goals

Our broad guiding principles.

We will aim to:

- ✓ Deliver cost effective services.
- ✓ Be financially stable.
- ✓ Have very satisfied customers.
- ✓ Provide customers with a range of channels to interact with us.
- ✓ Have sound leadership and governance.
- ✓ Train, develop and motivate our staff.
- ✓ Have a clear performance management system.
- ✓ Be a more agile organisation which is responsive to changing circumstances.

Projects portfolio review

Our Chief Executive's Office co-ordinates and monitors a rolling portfolio of approved projects to track progress, delivery, spending and use of staff resources. This is carried out using a best in class project management methodology to ensure clarity and is reported to councillors quarterly for accountability.

During 2021-22, 18 projects within the portfolio were completed and delivered:

Public facing projects

Social housing improvement. Major refurbishment and upgrade of a property in Addlestone, ahead of occupation by residents from our waiting list.

Security of open spaces. Following a rise in unauthorised encampments, 27 sites had work carried out to improve boundary security. This included installation of height barriers, bollards, railings and gates.

Surrey Towers improvements. The project addressed passive fire prevention works, and replaced kitchens and bathrooms due for replacement within less than five years.

Service delivery projects

Tree management software. New software to record inspections and improve management of trees in the Council's remit to maintain.

Replacement of our cash receipting system to improve how payments are handled.

Implementation of software and processes to reduce costs and standardise recruitment of temporary workers.

Depot feasibility study. Our depot buildings and facilities are in need of upgrading. An initial feasibility study has been completed to gather information pending future works.

Hybrid Mail implementation. Hybrid Mail is a system whereby Council letters are securely sent to a third party to print and post, which releases staff resources for other work.

New Revenues and Finance letter distribution process. Similar to Hybrid Mail, this project implemented a technological solution to convert and distribute documents intended to be sent as letters.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Following introduction of the levy rates last year, an online charging system was built to collect fees from future developments to offset infrastructure requirements. This includes a CIL calculator for developers to calculate indicative fees prior to application.

Grounds maintenance options appraisal. The way we manage our parks and other open spaces has been reviewed, with options for future management arrangements appraised.

Other completed projects within the portfolio referenced elsewhere in this report:

- ▶ Community Services Partnership with Surrey Heath Borough Council.
- ▶ Website and customer relationship management system.
- ▶ Development Management system upgrade.
- ▶ Electronic Document Management System upgrade.
- ▶ Revenues and Benefits system upgrades.
- ▶ Housing back office system upgrade.
- ▶ Modern.gov implementation.

As well as these projects completed during this financial year, a further 30 are live and in progress, with completion planned for the current or next year.

Performance snapshot

As a publicly funded organisation, we keep detailed statistics on our performance over time. Here we give an indication of how we judge our performance and the work we do to support local people and to meet statutory duties.

Statistics snapshot

Topic	Target	Achieved
'Major' planning applications processed to deadline.	60%	93.3%
'Non-major' planning applications processed to deadline.	80%	90.2%
'Other' planning applications processed to deadline.	85%	92%
Bins collected on schedule.	99.9%	99.9%
Street cleansing requests.	600	334
Invoices paid in 30 days.	98.0%	96.8%
FOI requests processed within timeframe.	99.0%	93.1%
Satisfaction with Housing reactive repairs service.	95.0%	96.1%
Households in B&B accommodation, over two weeks per quarter	16	16
Community meals served.	39,700	42,250
Staff sickness (average)	4.6 days	3.9 days
Phone calls received by Customer Services	No target	124,616
Visitors to Civic Centre reception	No target	7,839
Penalty Charge Notices issued.	No target	7,557

Our Revenues Team collected 98.3 per cent of Council Tax payments and 99.1 per cent of Business Rates payments. They also processed 8,540 letters to local residents and businesses.

Colleagues in our Housing Benefits Team processed 2,867 new claims, 51,319 changes to existing claimants' circumstances and handled 9,074 telephone calls.

The team also administered the Government's Household Support Fund, dealing with 564 applications and paying out £84,630 to help individuals and families.

Our Communications Team's work delivered a 2.5 per cent increase in reach and 2.6 per

cent increase in visits to our facebook page.

Posts, videos and photos published by the team were seen 133,033 times and 10,595 people visited the page. In addition, 1,016 new people followed the Council's page, allowing our content to display in their news feeds. This compares to 508 new followers the previous year.

During the 2021-22 year the team also starting using the [nextdoor.co.uk](https://www.nextdoor.co.uk) community website which has 15,901 members who are verified Borough residents.

The Council's monthly staff e-newsletter was published 12 times and two Chief Executive's forums were organised and hosted.

Supporting local people



This theme involves improving quality of life, developing healthier and safer communities, improving life chances, listening to and representing local people.

► In May 2021 we delivered elections for one third of our own councillors, Surrey County Council and Surrey's Police and Crime Commissioner. Organising the Police and Crime Commissioner election placed a greater burden on our Elections and Communications team, which led a county-wide promotional campaign to encourage voting. Newly elected commissioner Lisa Townsend visited the Council in March 2022 to observe our highly regarded CCTV operation.



Surrey PCC Lisa Townsend, visiting Safer Runnymede control room.

► In January 2022 Councillors committed to work towards net zero carbon emissions for our own services and operations by 2030. During the year a comprehensive Climate Change Strategy was researched and developed by the Chief Executive, Head of External Projects and Climate Change, and Head of Public Relations.

► In August 2021, we launched our fully accessible website and intranet. The website provides greater functionality, including One Account which allows single access to multiple services.

Importantly, several back office systems

now integrate into the website improving connectivity and reducing low level data entry for staff. This includes NEC, used by our housing, revenues and benefits teams and Bartec, used by our refuse and recycling teams and Modern Gov, used by our Democratic Services team. The new Internet platform allows for a more dynamic range of content improving the level of information available to our staff and residents.

Financial support

► During the year the Council secured more than £4 million from Government to help residents on lower incomes to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

► Our Head of Housing Solutions brought in five grants worth £788,000 from Government and other sources to support rough sleepers including ex-offenders. As a result the Council donated £2,000 to The Salvation Army and £1,000 to local charity JustAHelpingHand.

► The Holme Farm project in New Haw was supported with a £25,000 grant, enabling its initial preparation work to continue. See page 16.

► Addlestone Canoe Club's new club house opened during the year, thanks to £150,000 of financial support from the Council. The Club has an enviable record at competitive levels and provides sporting opportunities for hundreds of local people.

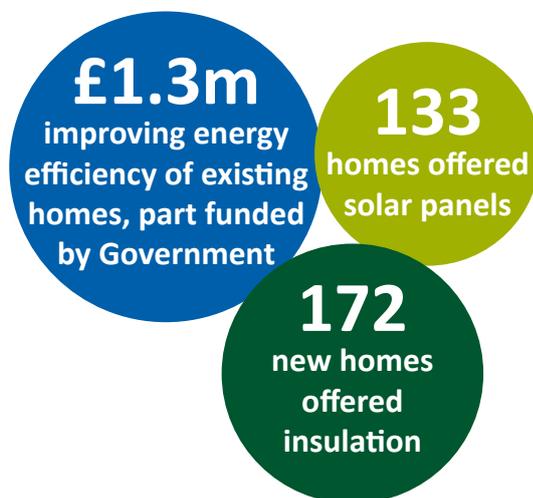


Supporting local people case study: Improving our housing service

Our Housing service is responsible for over 3,000 homes; during 2021-22, significant progress was made in modernising its operations with steps towards ISO 9001 accreditation. Plans were approved for investment in homes and services to support local people. We also worked with social housing provider partners to deliver 94 new housing association homes.

Investment

We're investing in our houses and flats to bring them to, or closer to, the standards the Council, Government and tenants themselves expect.



The majority of the construction work on nine new homes in Addlestone took place and the development has won a Safer By Design Award.

- ▶ We initiated a £1.7million programme to modernise our Independent Retirement Living sites. It includes upgrading communal areas, creating mobility scooter storage, digitising alarm call systems and improving gardens.
- ▶ In June 2021, we told tenants we would invest £40m to improve their homes between March 2022 and March 2026. This includes 900 new kitchens and 1,000 bathrooms. New windows, doors and roof tiling will be brought in as part of the work which started during the summer months.
- ▶ Surrey Towers has also been the subject of an improvement programme.



Andy Vincent, Corporate Head of Housing receives the Safer by Design Award from Inspector James Wyatt.

Service reform

New or updated policies, strategies and contracts have been developed, providing clearer objectives and targets as well as consistency in how services are provided.

There has been a step change in how the views of tenants and leaseholder are listened to and taken into account.

To keep tenants informed, two printed newsletters and an annual report were sent to all households during the year.

We have also improved our digital engagement with significant improvements to the website and preparations for a dedicated portal for tenants and leaseholders.

The Corporate Head of Housing has driven these changes, in tandem with the Council's Housing Committee, during his first year in the role which broadly overlaps this Annual Report's timeframe.

His appointment followed a period of management by a consultant director.

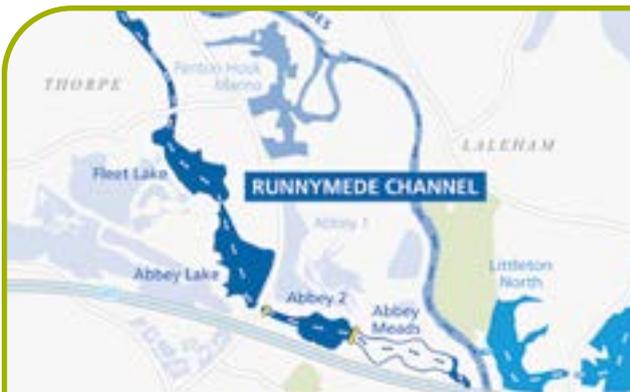
Enhancing our environment



Runnymede is one of the most attractive boroughs in Surrey, and we work hard to keep it that way. We brought refreshed commitment to protecting our climate as well as supporting organisations planning to make a difference themselves.

River Thames Scheme

The River Thames Scheme will help alleviate flooding in the Borough and the Council has previously committed £5m to this programme. In addition to two new 'man made rivers' to channel excessive ground water away from homes, new wildlife habitats, walks, open spaces and environmental improvements will be included. The Council has been involved in



This map shows the area the River Thames scheme will cover.

complex negotiations with the Environment Agency, county council, Government and other borough councils, to ensure this programme is delivered smoothly. This has resulted in a service level agreement and an outline business case being accepted by the Treasury. Runnymede also accepted the role of co-ordinating a secretariat to support the programme.

Holme Farm

In February, the Council granted £25,000 to the Community Workshop and Gardens at Holme Farm in Woodham. Part of the work being carried out by the charity is to rewild much of the land, restoring insect and other

wildlife. Proposals have been made for a workshop, allotment, sensory garden, apiary, biodiversity, arts and crafts.



Councillors, volunteers and local MP Ben Spencer at the Holme Farm site in New Haw.

Longcross Garden Village

In March, the Council received a planning application for 1,700 new homes, landscaping, infrastructure and environmental improvements at Longcross, creating Runnymede's first garden village. It is on land allocated for development in the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan and will deliver a development of the highest quality with a sustainable mixed-use community and a wide variety of housing types.

Mayor's Legacy of Trees

During her Mayoral year, Cllr Elaine Gill made tree planting a priority, and worked with schools and other organisations to plant saplings. The project enthused children and encouraged them to think about the environment and the importance of trees in their local area. In total 54 trees were planted and encompassed the Queen's Green Canopy, a tree planting initiative launched to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

Enhancing our environment case study: Smartening up our towns

Government funding has helped us invest in improvements to the street scene in our towns and to gather evidence for specific projects which together play a role in both enhancing our environment and improving our economy.

Our Town Centres Manager co-ordinated the use of our £159,000 allocation from the Government's Covid Welcome Back Fund, which we used in a number of ways.

We began developing ideas for improving the visitor economy in Runnymede by commissioning experts to carry out a feasibility study.

The funding was also used to deliver the following improvements:

- ▶ We brought in new town centre Christmas lights for Windsor Street, London Road and Guildford Street in Chertsey to improve the vibrancy of the town centre during the festive season.



Floral baskets in our towns were sponsored by the Welcome Back Fund.

- ▶ In addition, we funded installation experts to put Christmas lights in place across the borough's town centres.
- ▶ We funded new street lights to improve the look and feel of Egham High

Street to create a safe and more pleasant environment for shoppers and leisure visitors.

- ▶ Seasonal floral baskets, troughs and bedding plants were paid for which bloomed during winter and spring.
- ▶ Maintenance and repairs to wooden bus stops and benches was carried out across the towns. In total 11 bus shelters and 33 benches were cleaned, repaired, painted and refreshed.

Using the Welcome Back Fund to support these activities meant that Council Tax money did not have to be used.

As well as the above actions we also commissioned digital media specialists to run a series of workshops aimed at small businesses.

- ▶ Three interactive sessions gave businesses taking part a greater understanding of how digital marketing could be used to aid growth. Targeted at Runnymede based businesses, the sessions were attended by those operating both online and based locally in our towns.
- ▶ Safety Signage was produced at the start of Covid-19 to remind locals to use their PPE and to support local businesses by shopping local. Window stickers were also produced to support the "Shop Safe Shop Locally" campaign.

Money supporting the Welcome Back Fund was provided via residual funds from the European Union Regional Development Fund, via the Government.

Improving our economy



Our Borough has one of the largest economies in the region, but during the year Coronavirus placed a strain on businesses of all types. We took action to provide support and advice where possible to help businesses thrive.

During the year our Revenues team administered £4.2m of Government-backed support to 732 businesses through six different grant schemes, often at very short notice.

Grant Fund	Successful applicants	Total payments
Restart Grant	266	£2,258,684.00
Restart	100	£159,600.00
Additional Restrictions Grant Top Up	185	£678,164.00
Omicron Hospitality & Leisure Grant	98	£382,678.00
Omicron Hospitality & Leisure Grant	23	£66,337.00
February 2022	60	£473,344.00
Total combined payments	723	£4,018,807.00

► Addlestone's second Festive Fayre took place during November, co-ordinated by the Council, Addlestone One, the Community Centre and the Town Team. Business feedback was positive and it is estimated 1,000 people visited to enjoy live entertainment, an indoor crafts market, a treasure hunt and free tasters.



Lux project by Surrey artist Emma Leone Palmer at Addlestone One.

► We brought a visual arts experience to Addlestone, through the Lux project. An Addlestone One unit was taken over by

Surrey artist, Emma Leone Palmer who used LED technology and motion capture techniques to change the colour of the space in reaction to her movement as she painted.

► We produced a four year Economic Development Strategy which sets out a range of projects to support the local economy.

Local business engagement

Our Town Centres Manager launched town teams to work in partnership with businesses and community organisations to increase footfall from residents and visitors.

► Addlestone's Town Team has grown to 35 members since its first meeting in March 2021 and held its first face to face meeting in March 2022.

► Chertsey's Town Team met for the first time in July 2021 and since then has grown from six to 15 members.

► The Town Centres Manager also introduced a successful vegan market into Egham which now operates monthly.

Improving our economy case study: Magna Square, Egham

One of the most ambitious town centre regeneration programmes in Surrey, our £90m Magna Square development in Egham moved from architect's drawings to near completion during 2021-22.

Bringing new life to a tired section of the town's high street, our Magna Square development of apartments, shops, and leisure venues has made substantial progress. Two of the four buildings were completed during the year.

Parish Hall opened in September, providing self-contained accommodation for 100 students at Royal Holloway, University of London. The rooms are complete with private shower rooms and kitchen facilities.

The hall is run by Derwent Students, a leading provider of safe, stylish student accommodation in the UK.

Corn Merchant House followed, offering 26 affordable housing units to people on the Council's housing register. Neighbouring Gem House also contains affordable housing

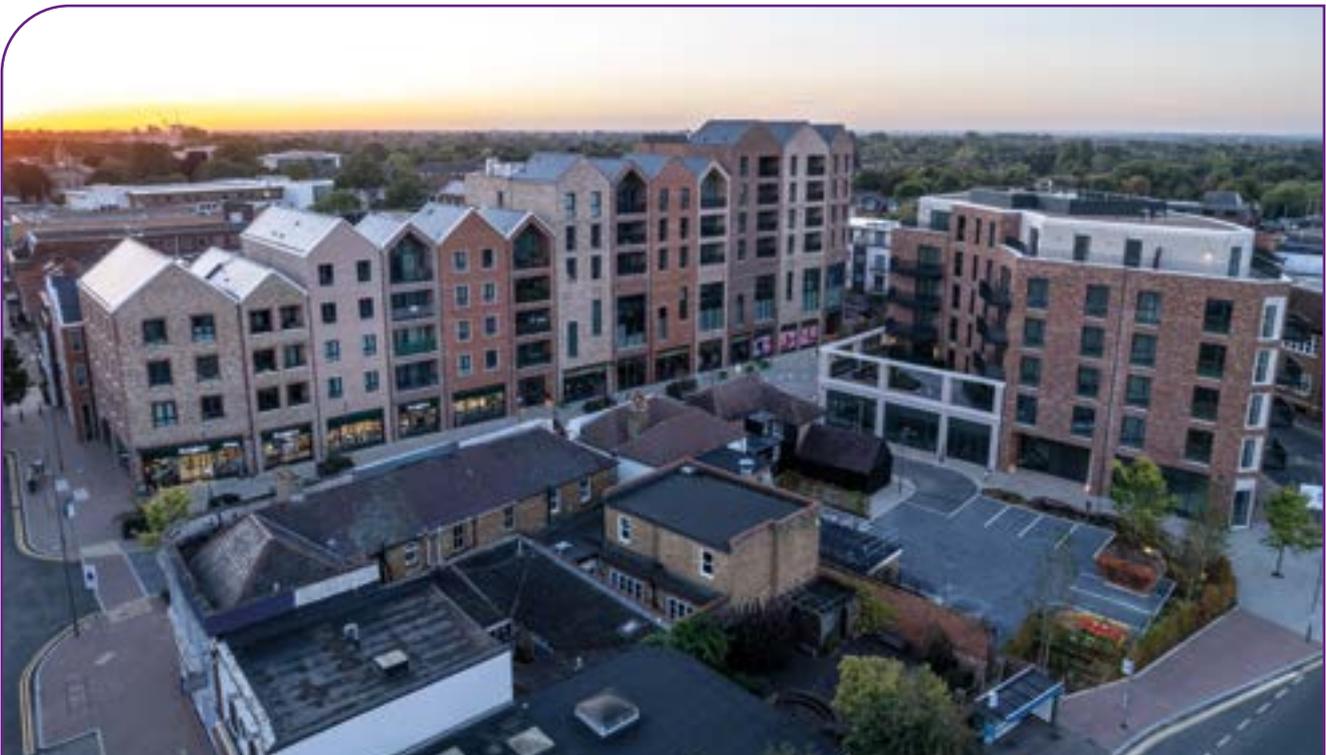
units, helping ensure living at Magna Square is available to a cross section of society.

There is a mix of studio, one and two bedroom apartments within the building, all featuring built-in kitchen appliances and modern bathrooms. There are three units specifically for disabled residents.

The affordable housing units are run by Accent Housing, a social housing provider.

Speaking at the time of the opening, Sarah Ireland, Executive Director of Development Sales & Home Ownership at Accent, said: "These newly built apartments have been built to a really high standard and specification and tick all the boxes when it comes to creating homes people can enjoy."

*Magna Square's development was completed in Spring 2022.



Magna Square, a modern mixture of commercial and residential buildings set in the historic town of Egham.

Developing our organisation



As a modern Council we are a flexible organisation, changing where needed to ensure services are run as efficiently as possible.

Staffing re-organisation

We carried out a voluntary redundancy programme. This allowed for reorganisation to meet the developing needs of our communities. Other staffing changes have also created scope for service redesign.

- ▶ Our Commercial Services team was disbanded, rebuilt from scratch, and renamed Strategic Land and Property Assets. We have moved from a high-cost service partly staffed by consultants to an in house service with longer term approaches.
- ▶ Our Community Development and Community Services teams merged and a single management structure has been established.
- ▶ The Chief Executive's Office was re-launched with three heads of service driving internal projects, procurement and business planning, external projects, climate change and public relations.
- ▶ Extra Civil Enforcement Officer posts have been created, and line management moved into our Customer Services team. Enforcement Officers now work weekends and as a team for 14 hours per day instead of seven. New patrol routes have been created to target intelligence-led hotspots.

Agile working

Following Covid-19, we launched a trial agile working arrangement with supporting protocol. This allows most staff to work from home and the office, supporting work/life balance whilst retaining cohesiveness across the organisation.

Business planning

A new approach to business planning has been developed which will set the Council's

priorities until 2026. Significant work has been carried out by the Chief Executive and members of the Strategic Leadership Team to develop a new Corporate Business Plan and five underpinning strategies.

From these strategies will flow around 20 work programmes, and from them around 150 projects.

Human Resources

In addition to its own reorganisation which has created extra resource, all of the above work was supported by, or involved, Human Resources.

The team has also recruited three corporate heads of service and an Assistant Chief Executive, implemented software to improve the use of agency workers and improved the information available to potential employees.

Digital systems

We upgraded our telephony system allowing some staff to make calls via laptops. Our network and wifi has been refreshed and made more secure. The systems used by our Planning, Revenues and Benefits and Democratic Services teams have been upgraded or replaced.

Intranet

Our Communications team developed a brand new intranet, creating a greater resource for staff members to use.

The new site now includes easy ways to nominate colleagues for our employee of the month scheme and a digital suggestion box.

It includes information on our values, goals and themes, regular news updates, and advice about wellbeing.

Organisational development case study: Working with other councils

Collaborative working with other areas of the public sector is a key feature of how we develop as an organisation. These examples demonstrate how Runnymede has joined forces with other boroughs to achieve success and efficiency.

Community Services Partnership

Runnymede has established a successful operating model for delivery of highly localised support services which are valued by the public. These include meals delivered to people's homes, our GPS locator pendants, telecare monitors, day centres and community transport.

On 1 April 2021, after several years of working together with Surrey Heath Borough Council, a long term partnership to deliver a single service across both boroughs was launched.

Services are provided by Runnymede, and employees from Surrey Heath were transferred to us, but the partnership is genuine, with a joint Community Services Partnership Board having oversight. Senior leadership staff and elected councillors from both boroughs sit on the board, which has a remit to discuss:

- ▶ Performance management and key performance indicators.
- ▶ Human Resources, health and safety.
- ▶ Budget monitoring and growth requests.
- ▶ Growth opportunities and future contract opportunities.
- ▶ Future business planning.

The Corporate Head of Community Services at Runnymede leads the service and reports to the Chief Executive of Runnymede, whilst working closely with colleagues on Surrey Heath's leadership team.

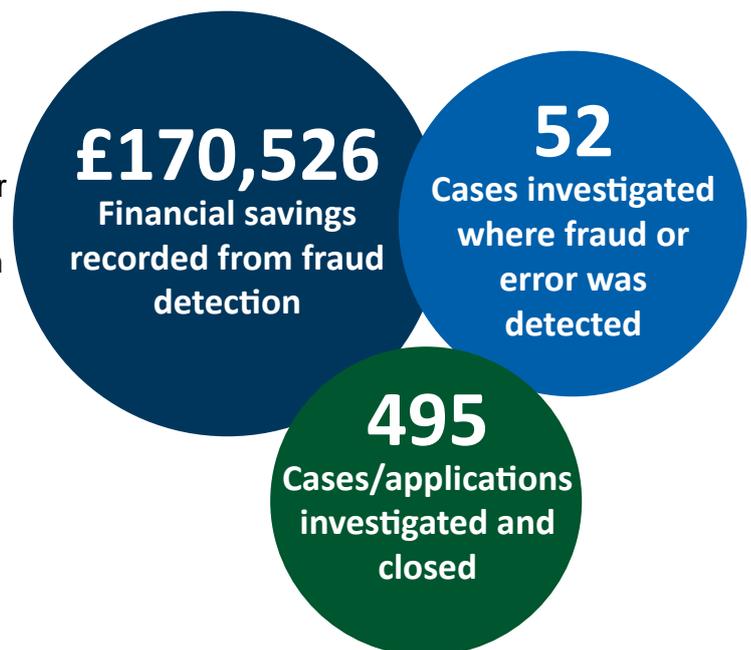
Since its launch financial savings have been made against the initial launch budget for both councils, without any compromise of service delivery or standards.

Fraud investigation

Ensuring public money is spent carefully and that people do not falsely claim support they are not entitled to is an increasingly important part of our work.

Since April 2018 we have worked with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council in this area expanding this arrangement in September 2021, following our own fraud investigator's retirement.

During the year:



Building Control

Building Control is an important function relating to the safety of new build and existing properties. Following the retirement of our Building Control Manager in March, we have entered a shared management arrangement with Surrey Heath Borough Council with a view to exploring a full shared service arrangement during the next year.

Financial review and information

Each year Runnymede Borough Council publishes a set of accounts. The accounts are an important element in demonstrating how we manage our finances. They show the money available to the Council and how it is used in providing services to the community.

The document that contains our full accounts for 2021-22 is called the Statement of Accounts and has to comply with accounting rules which dictate how the accounts should look and what information they should contain. A full copy of the Statement of Accounts will be available on the Council's website at: www.runnymede.gov.uk/finance

The following information is a simplified version of the figures contained within our accounts. It is based on management information, and is not an audited statement of accounts, but does give an accurate representation.

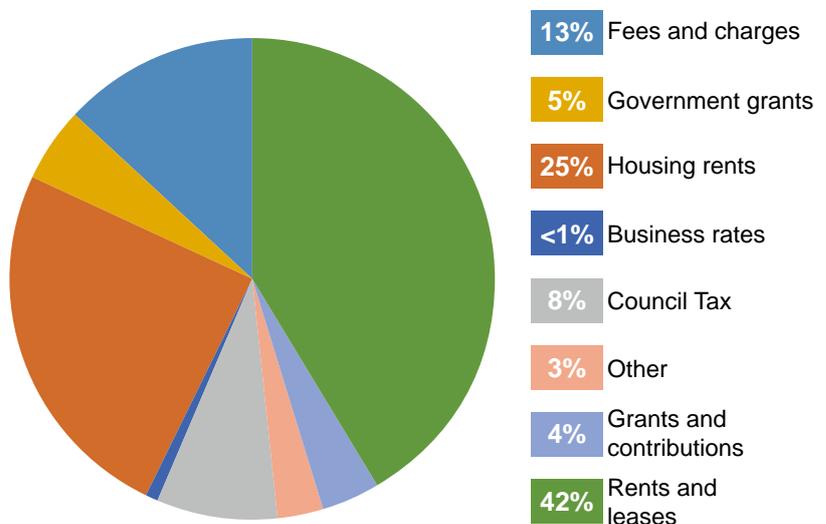
Our spending

Our spending is classified into capital and revenue. In general terms, our capital spending pays for the acquisition/creation of a new asset or the enhancement of an existing asset, and our revenue spending pays for day-to-day services and operations.

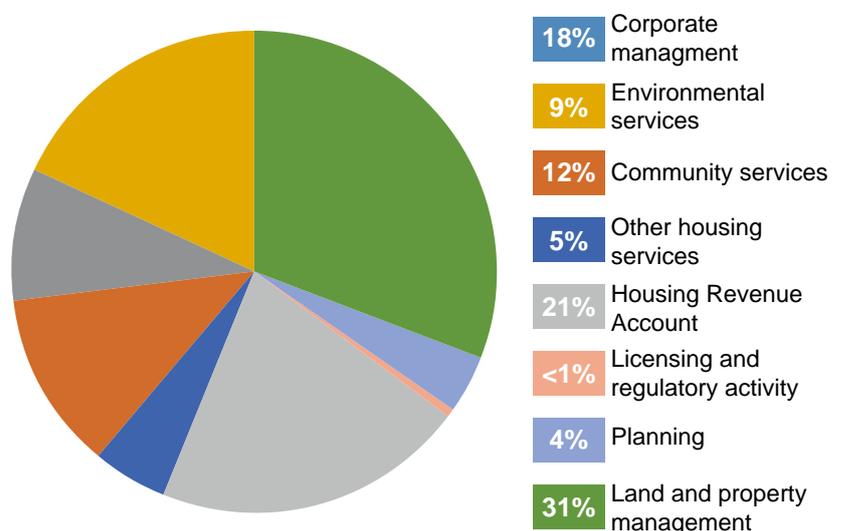
Revenue spending 2021-22

During the year, the Council spent its money on a wide range of services. This spending came to £53.5million and is split between General Fund services which are part-funded by the Council Tax, and a Housing Revenue Account which is funded entirely by Housing rental income.

Our income came from:



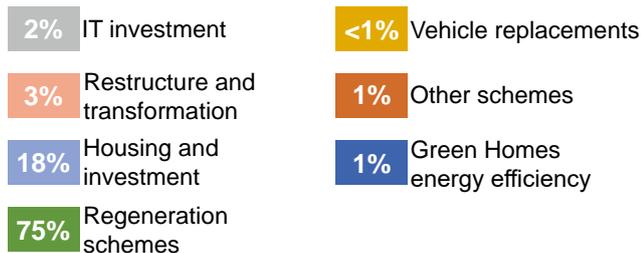
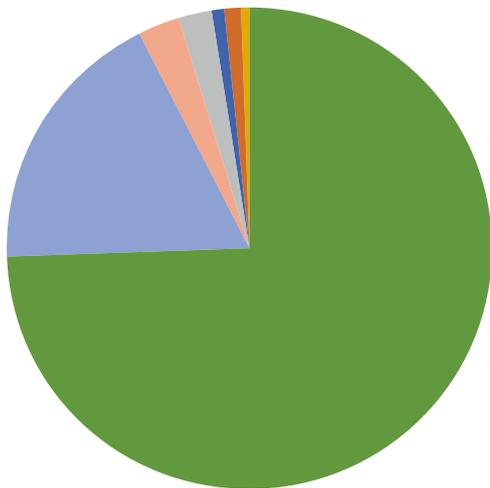
Our money was spent in the following areas:



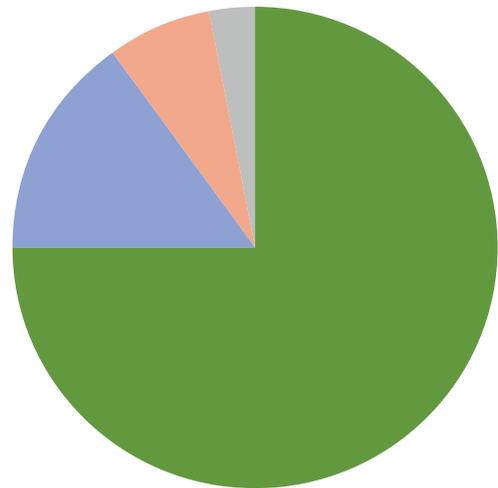
Capital income and spending 2021-22

We also spend money on buying and improving our land, property and other assets so that we can provide services to the community over the longer term. Capital spending in 2021-22 was £35.4million. These two charts show our capital spending and how it was funded.

Capital spending:



Capital income:



Collecting local taxes in 2021-22

Runnymede Borough Council collects residents' Council Tax. We pay Surrey County Council and Surrey Police their share of the Council Tax that they set each year. Runnymede Borough Council has the smallest share of your Council Tax bill. The Band D Council Tax and how this was shared during 2021-22 is as follows:

Council Tax - Band D	£	
Surrey County Council	1,549.08	77.10%
Surrey Police Authority	285.57	14.21%
Runnymede Borough Council	174.59	8.69%
Total	2,009.24	

In 2021-22 we collected £69million of Council Tax due – a collection rate of 98.29%.

The Council also collects business rates from all businesses in the borough. In 2021-22 we collected £47.6m of the business rates due - a collection rate of 99.07%. Runnymede Borough Council only gets to keep a very small proportion of the business rates it collects with the majority going to central government to be redistributed to fund other local authorities.

For all information contained within this document contact:

The Chief Executive's Office
Runnymede Borough Council
Civic Centre
Station Road
Addlestone
Surrey, KT15 2AH
Tel 01932 838383

Email: communications@runnymede.gov.uk

Publication date: October 2022

Please contact us if you would like more copies of this publication, or copies in large print or other formats.



[/company/runnymede-borough-council/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/runnymede-borough-council/)



[@runnymedebc](https://www.facebook.com/runnymedebc)



[@RunnymedeBC](https://twitter.com/RunnymedeBC)

Written and designed in house by the Communications Team.

Printed in Surrey on FSC approved paper.

<https://uk.fsc.org/>

