

Tax haven in Oxfordshire

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[Swinford Toll Bridge Up For Sale In Oxfordshire: Buyer Gets Tax-Free Income Due To Traffic Tolls | Business | Sky News.](#)

A picturesque bridge over the River Thames that has the added perk of being a tax haven has gone on public viewing ahead of going up for auction.

The Swinford Toll bridge in Oxfordshire was built 240 years ago and an old Act of Parliament rules that its owner can collect a toll from those crossing the river - without being subject to tax.

What's more, the bridge owner enjoys something of a monopoly as the Act also states that no other river crossing can be constructed for three miles in either direction.

Currently around 10,000 vehicles use the crossing every day, with cars paying 5p to cross and double-decker buses 20p.

Despite appearing small, the tolls give a relatively healthy return to the owner, generating a gross profit of £200,000 a year.

But as ever, there is a real cost of this tax abuse on local people:

[A]ny potential buyer will have to cope with disgruntled local residents who want the toll to be scrapped.

They argue that it slows down traffic dramatically on an already-congested route, causing fumes to be pumped into the air, and describe the enforced payment as "highway robbery".

More than 750 people have already signed a petition asking their local MP - who happens to be one David Cameron - to have the local council compulsorily purchase the bridge and scrap the tolls.

Such anomalies - like the status of many of secrecy jurisdictions - which makes them rent seeking legislatures for hire - need to be abolished.