

Parish Council Update – February 2026

Welcome to 2026, so with the festive season well past, it is a great time to focus on 2026 and ensure we stick to those new year's resolutions. As we start into 2026, we are aware that not all residents get the chance to pop into our parish meetings so this magazine provides a great opportunity to set the tone for the months ahead, by updating ongoing projects, identifying new priorities, and continuing to build on the progress we made last year. Your input, ideas, and involvement are what make this parish thrive, and we're grateful for the commitment each of you bring.

Planning Highlights

A parish council is a *statutory consultee*. This means Swindon Borough Council must notify the parish council about planning applications, but the parish council does not have the power to make the final decision to approve or refuse them, that decision is made solely by Swindon Borough Council. The parish council's role is to provide local knowledge, raise concerns or objections, and represent the views of the community. Its comments are considered as part of the decision-making process. Members of the public can view applications, read parish council comments, and submit their own feedback here:

https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20268/planning_applications/380/view_or_comment_on_a_planning_application

Applications Received

Application Ref: S/25/1500 Description: Erection of 5 No dwellings. Site Address: Land At Eden Field, Kingsdown Lane, Blunsdon Swindon SN25 5DL Decision: The PC objected.

Application Ref: S/HOU/25/1646 Description: Erection of rear dormer windows and loft conversion. Site Address: 30 Thames View, Blunsdon, Swindon SN26 8AQ Decision: The PC has no reason to object.

Application Ref: S/HOU/25/1651 Description: Erection of side dormer windows, raising of existing roof. Site Address: 24 Sutton Park, Blunsdon, Swindon SN26 7BB Decision: The PC objected.

Application Ref: S/RES/25/1647 Description: Reserved matters application in respect of scale, layout, appearance and landscaping in relation to approval of outline application reference S/OUT/20/0549 for the erection of 8 no self-build dwellings. Site Address: Land East of Woodbine Cottage, Kingsdown Lane, Blunsdon Swindon SN25 5DL Decision: The PC objected.

Application Ref: S/HOU/25/1662 Description: Amendment to roof construction of previously approved single storey side/rear/Ext REF: S/HOU/25/0099/WOODCL Site Address: 93 Ermin Street, Blunsdon, Swindon SN26 8AA Decision: The PC has no reason to object.

Decisions Made by SBC

S/ADV/25/1441 Description: Proposed Double-sided digital Bus Shelter advertising displays to replace existing Double-sided internally illuminated 6-sheet Bus Shelter advertising displays. Site Address: O/S Unit A Stephenson Road, Cricklade Road Swindon. Decision: Granted Consent

Projects & Improvements

The Blunsdon office is now officially based at Linley Road, Blunsdon SN26 7AP, it will provide an ideal base for staff and councilors to have meetings, a hot desk for clerical staff and an ideal site for the caretakers to plan their schedules and

workload. We will soon be having a post box here, so this should be used for the parish council items, and community suggestions, as well as general post. Note all mail for the preschool should still go to the village hall post box.

The MUGA site was full of activity over the last few months, we are pleased to say that the site provided the winter training and helped lots of teams keep to their fitness etc., from the end of February there will be a number of timeslots available as football teams will return to the fields. The facility is also set up for tennis courts, so if there are any local teams or individuals that would like to book a regular weekly slot then now is the time to let us know.

Community Groups & Events

- Golden Gatherings will continue for 2026 with fantastic news that funding has been offered by the Prestbury Trust (St Leonard's Church) a BIG thank you to them. Please keep an eye out for this project led by Hazel Wakefield. We will share dates in future magazines and on social media.
- We have a number of regular groups hiring the facilities within the village. If you are a regular booker and would like us to share your classes on our website, then please get in contact.

Speed watch Update

Across these locations, most drivers were travelling within the 30mph limit. However, the session near the Telephone Box recorded noticeably higher speeds compared with the other sites, highlighting it as an area where driver behaviour continues to be a concern. The remaining locations showed generally good compliance, with only a small number of vehicles exceeding the limit.

The Parish Council is grateful to the volunteers who give their time to support this work. Their efforts play an important role in keeping our roads safer and raising awareness among drivers passing through Blunsdon. If you have a little time to spare and would like to support this work, please get in touch at ianjankinson@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk.

Challenges and areas of focus

We'd like to share more with you. This section offers a few short snippets of what your councilors are currently working on, some positive, some more challenging, but all part of the real day-to-day work of serving our community. We believe in being open about the issues we're tackling, the progress being made, and the areas where we're still pushing for better outcomes. By sharing these updates, we hope to give you a clearer picture of the work happening behind the scenes and the commitment we hope to bring to every task, big or small.

Highways Sign: BPC are not pleased that a directional highways sign has appeared, directing traffic from Tadpole Garden Village into the village despite BPC querying that the Haul Road is not yet adopted by SBC and so Highways signage should not be in place.

High Street: The water leak is now improved in the High Street, the broken pipe and blocked gully has been repaired/cleared.

Back Lane/Front Lane: The leak in this area is still of concern, despite numerous attempts to request investigation with Thames Water they are still not addressing the problem.

Defibrillator for MUGA: BPC would like to express its sincere thanks to the Rapid Relief Team for funding a defibrillator and cabinet for the MUGA. This generous support provides a valuable resource for the whole community. We will now have 5 in the Village.

Ermin Street: Our landscaping project along Ermin Street was completed just before Christmas, supported in part by a £30,000 grant from the Trees for Climate fund. We have planted 4,000 native trees to form a new hedge that will

enhance pedestrian access from Ermin Street to the bottom of Blunsdon Hill. Alongside the path, we have added 7,000 native flower bulbs and sown 15kg of native wildflower seed into the grass banks.

Delivering the project on what was once the main trunk road to Cirencester was challenging, particularly due to the number of underground utilities, but the final results have been warmly received. We are grateful to Oliver Saunders, our Project Manager from Bath Land Management and the contractors involved and are now focusing on ongoing maintenance to ensure local people and wildlife benefit from these improvements for many years. We are committed to keeping the village an attractive and pleasant place to live and work.

Meet Your Councilor / Staff Member

Each month, we'll be introducing you to the people working behind the scenes at Blunsdon Parish Council.

Meet Councilor Paul Weston

Role on the Parish Council:

Paul joined Blunsdon Parish Council in September 2023 and has now served for over two years. His main focus is planning, but he also contributes across a range of other areas where his professional experience and practical skills add real value.

What Paul gets involved with:

Paul brings a thoughtful, analytical approach to council work, shaped by his background as a career engineer and a director in a global engineering company. His contributions include:

- Reviewing and advising on planning applications
- Offering insight on wider council matters where his expertise is helpful
- Supporting discussions on long-term projects and improvements
- Bringing a structured, problem-solving mindset to complex issues
- Championing the needs and perspectives of local residents

As the council's only Military Veteran, Paul is particularly passionate about supporting the Armed Forces community and ensuring their voices are represented.

His connection to the village:

Paul has lived in Wiltshire since 1991 and made Blunsdon his home in June 2022. He values the peace of village life, the open views, the greenery, and the strong sense of community that defines the parish.

What he enjoys about the village:

For Paul, the village's charm lies in its tranquility and the genuine community spirit that brings people together. He appreciates the friendliness of residents and the shared pride in keeping Blunsdon a welcoming place to live.

A few words about Paul:

Outside council work, Paul is an advanced driver and rider with the IAM and a keen motorcyclist. Each year he leads the Swindon Toy Run, delivering toys to the children's ward at the hospital, something he finds deeply rewarding. His long-standing commitment to community service made becoming a Parish Councilor a natural next step.

Dates for Your Diary

Parish Council Meetings – The next two meetings for the Parish Council will be on:

February's Full Council meeting to be held Monday 2nd February at 7.30pm

February's Finance meeting to be held on Monday 16th February at 7.30pm

If you want to come along, please let us know. Details are on the Parish Council notice boards, Website and FB page.

Contact: Ian Jankinson – ianjankinson@blunsdon-pc.gov.uk – 07702 684281

February 7th: Ward Surgery Meeting at The Village Shop (11:30am) is an informal drop-in session where residents can speak to their parish councilors about any local issues, ask questions, or get help. It's just a friendly, open time for people to raise concerns without needing an appointment, helping councilors stay connected with the community.

Did You Know?

Blunsdon sits on a site that dates back to Roman times, and archaeologists discovered that a Roman travelers' resting place once existed exactly where the Cold Harbour pub stands today. So next time you pass the Cold Harbour, you're walking over a spot that's been welcoming travelers for nearly 2,000 years.