

Blewbury Parish Council

Clerk to the Council
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MINUTES of the meeting of the

Parish Council held on **Wednesday 18th March 2026** at 7.00 pm in the Melland Room at the Blewbury Clubhouse.

In attendance:

Cllr. Julia Saunders- (Chair)
Cllr. Anne Millman
Cllr. Andrew Calder
Cllr. Andy Evason
Cllr. Lee Robinson
Cllr. Mark Shayler
Cllr. Sarah Parkin
Cllr. Shelia Austin
Cllr. Benedict Scott
Parish Clerk: Michelle Taylor
4 x Members of the public

1. Apologies for Absence

-County Councillor Cllr Rebecca Fletcher
-District Councillors Hayleigh Gascoigne, Debra Dewhurst and Andy Cooke
-Iain Wood-Village Lengthman

2. Declarations of Interest- None

3. Public Participation- None

Planning Matters

4. Planning Updates

4.1. Planning Applications – for review and comments

- [P26/V0292/HH](#) Orchard House Chapel Lane Blewbury Didcot OX11 9PQ

Proposal: Proposed single storey rear extension, remodelling works including recladding of existing garage, replacement of front porch-veranda structure, changes to the fenestration and the introduction of PV panels.

BPC- has no objections to this planning application.

- [P26/V0326/FUL](#) Downside Farm Woodway Road Blewbury Didcot OX11 9EX

Proposal: Erection of storage barn

BPC- has no objections to this planning application.

- [P26/V0331/AG](#) Winterbrook Farm Bessels Way Blewbury Didcot OX11 9NL

Proposal: Straw shed

BPC- has no objections to this planning application.

- [P26/V0323/FUL](#) Downside Farm Woodway Road Blewbury Didcot OX11 9EX

Proposal: Erection of extension to existing workshop to form an office.

BPC- has no objections to this planning application.

4.2. Planning Decisions from Vale of White Horse DC – **No new planning decisions**

Reports & Updates

5. County Councillor- Cllr Rebekah Fletcher-Apologies acknowledged. March report received and circulated to Council. **Appendix 1 (BPC Website)**

6. District Councillor – Cllr. Hayleigh Gascoigne, Cllr. Debra Dewhurst and Cllr. Andy Cooke-Apologies acknowledged. March report received and circulated to Council. **Appendix 2 (BPC Website)**

Clubs and Societies

7. Clubhouse

7.1. Council to note Hall Administrator Report. February report circulated to Council.

7.2. Roof Repairs. Update on the repair to the Clubhouse roof ahead of the Cricket Season. **(AM & SA)** Cllr. Austin reported communications are still ongoing with the Cricket Club to agree on the best possible preventive measures to protect the Clubhouse roof and a report will be given at the next meeting of Full Council in April.

7.3. To approve the Clubhouse Risk Assessment **(AM)** Council agreed to adopt the Clubhouse Risk Assessment to be reviewed annually.

7.4. To approve to appoint Red Box Fire Control to review the Clubhouse Fire Risk Assessment at a cost of £425.00 + VAT. Council agreed to approve the appointment of Red Box Fire Control to review the Clubhouse Fire Risk Assessment at the cost of £425.00 + VAT.

7.5. To approve the price increase for hire of the Clubhouse- Circulated to Council. Proposal from the Clubhouse Working Group. **(AM)** Council agreed to approve the proposed recommendations from the Clubhouse Working Group. Price increase to commence 1st May 2026.

8. Tennis Club

8.1. To receive an update on the Tennis Club lease. **(AM)** Cllr. Millman announced the Tennis Club lease has now been finalised and is awaiting signatories from both parties.

9. Traffic & Safety

9.1. Speedwatch data report for February and data trends over time- Circulated to Council and noted.

9.2. Update on installation of traffic calming measures; Wig Wags, informal bollards, crossing at Savages **(AM)** Cllr. Millman announced a further update will be given at the next meeting of Full Council as the lead officer at OCC is currently on annual leave.

10. Environment

10.1. Cob Wall Ownership/Maintenance/Village Fund **(AC & JS)** Cllr. Saunders announced a celebration of the Cob Walls will be arranged later in the year to include a maintenance workshop for residents to attend. Date to be confirmed.

10.2. A417 London Road flood alleviation **(AE & AM)** Cllr. Millman reported on the recent review that was carried out by the Highways team of which both Cllr. Millman and Cllr. Evason attended in the village, and reported on all areas concerned, confirming dates and timelines of which the areas are due to be cleared/repared.

10.3. Church End flood alleviation **(AE & AM)** Cllr. Millman announced a further update will be given at the next meeting of Full Council in April as additional information in due to be received in the coming weeks.

10.4. The Cleve / Spring Lane **(AC, JS & LR)** Cllr. Saunders announced letters have now been sent to all residents adjacent to Spring Lane. One resident replied given reference to a map of the common land. A land registry search was then carried out which resulted in the land not being adopted or registered to any accompanying properties, confirming the land is the responsibility of the Parish Council to maintain. Council agreed to make contact with the concerned resident asking if they have documentation showing ownership of the land known as Spring Lane prior to any works being carried out.

10.5. EV Chargers- Blewbury Village Hall **(AE & LR)** Cllr. Robinson announced two EV Chargers are due to be installed the week commencing the 5th May 2026 in the Village Hall Car Park.

10.6. Review of BPC Neighbourhood Plan update: **(AM & LR)** Cllr. Millman and Cllr. Robinson announced reviews of the Neighbourhood Plan is ongoing.

10.7. To receive an update on installing a bench at the bus stop near Savages A417 **(AC)** The Clerk confirmed Highways has now given BPC authority to install a bench by the bus stop and this will need to be funded and maintained by BPC. Council agreed to purchase and install a concrete constructed bench to ensure stability by the roadside.

Administrative Items

11. Approval of Minutes

11.1. The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 18th February 2026 were approved.

11.2. Parish Councillor Roles and Responsibilities-To review and update. Council members reviewed all roles and responsibilities at the meeting. Document to be updated and circulated to all Council members.

11.3. To review the effectiveness of Communications **(AM)** Council agreed to ensure any additional communications to be placed in the noticeboard outside the school as this is still owned by the Parish Council, along with the Website, Bulletin and social media.

11.4. Plan for AGM 2026. Council agreed for the AGM to be held on Thursday 21st May 2026 in the Village Hall jointly hosted by the BVS. List of attendees and schedule of the event to be confirmed at the meeting of Full Council in April.

12. Finance

12.1. February payments were approved:

12.2. To approve the appointment of AJ Auditing- Internal Auditor (**LR, JS & AC**)
Council agreed to appoint AJ Auditing to carry out the internal audit review at yearend 2025/26.

Projects & Ongoing Matters

13. Skatepark Tender Update (AE & AC)

To receive an update from Skatepark Working Group to include Comms. Cllr. Evason announced contracts have now been signed and the funding approved by the FCC. Council agreed to continue with the FCC funding and to authorise Michelle Taylor as Parish Clerk/RFO to sign the funding agreement on behalf of Blewbury Parish Council. Cllr. Austin announced a meeting would be taking place next week with Bendcrete, then a further meeting would then be held at the village hall for all residents to attend. Date to be confirmed. Cllr. Austin also announced the pump track would be included within the refurbishment.

Thanks was given to Paul Whitehead for all his handwork in securing the grant money of over £50,000 for the skatepark refurbishment and his support to date.

Correspondence & Reports

14. Action Points

See Appendix 1 for update on actions.

15. Chairman's Report

For information only – any additional updates. None

16. Councillors' Reports

Other updates from Parish Councillors (not listed on agenda)

Cllr. Robinson announced the smart meter for the Clubhouse is due to be installed once the borehole equipment has been moved out the way for safe installation.

17. Future Agenda Items

- Neighbourhood Plan Review – (Following the adoption of the OCC Local Plan)
- Flooding Updates-A417 London Road & Church End
- To review the effectiveness of Communications
- Plan for AGM 2026

18. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 15 April 2026

PART 2

Exclusion of Press and Public

To resolve that under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. **None**

Appendix 1

County Councillor report

Date: March 2026

Author: Cllr Rebekah Fletcher

Parishes: Blewbury, Chilton, Harwell, Upton, Western Valley

Contact details: rebekah.fletcher@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Dear Parish Councillors and residents,

This month has been quite the mix; some progress on the roads, ongoing maintenance follow-ups from the winter weather, and important scrutiny work.

At County Hall last month, I attended another Education and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, where our role is to provide a critical, evidence-based eye on policy and process. I'm pleased that – despite some pushback – we have now agreed the terms of reference for a working group to conduct a deep dive into the circumstances surrounding one of our SEND schools that was placed into forced academisation. This was a distressing experience for both pupils and parents. It's vital that Oxfordshire County Council learns from this: if there were failings in communication or process, they must be recognised and addressed so that we can strengthen our approach going forward and ensure this can't happen again.

Last month I met Highways Engagement Officers in Blewbury, alongside representatives from the Parish Council, to look at several long-standing issues including damaged and faded signage, road repairs and persistent flooding locations. A number of these have now been scheduled for action, and I'll keep pressing for the remainder to be picked up.

Resurfacing is now complete at Milton Interchange, including the correction of some initial road marking errors at the contractor's expense. However, I've since been picking up several questions from residents about the new road markings. I'm following these up to make sure everything meets the required standard.

As the worst of the winter seems to have passed, I've once again escalated a number of flooding hotspots and areas where the recent freeze-thaw cycle has caused road surfaces to break down. London Road in Blewbury, the A4130 and its junction with Great Western Park, as well as High Street and Westfield in Harwell are all on my list, along with a push for a long-term fix on Hagbourne Hill. The current road width simply isn't suitable for the increased volume of HGVs, so I'm working with officers to find a permanent solution. I know residents are also concerned about the state of the Long Wittenham-Clifton Hampden bridge road. My colleague has escalated this (I take no credit!), and we should see 500 metres of "Bobcat" patching on both approaches to the bridge this month.

As always, all maintenance work is weather-dependent, so please be prepared for dates to shift if conditions worsen. And a reminder: if any patching or resurfacing fails within 12 months, it can be redone free of charge. If you spot a recent repair that hasn't held, please report it on FixMyStreet and mark it as a "failed repair" – it really does help uphold quality.

Best wishes

Bekah

Transport update

A4130 Steventon Lights scheme Phase 2 – from now until **April 2026**, Trenchard Avenue will be closed. There are multi-way signals on the High St but two-way traffic will be maintained (in narrow lanes).

A34 Northbound Chilton-Milton – 11th March to 14th March there is carriageway closure for white lining renewal overnight only from 9pm to 6am.

A34 Southbound Milton-Chilton – 16th March to 19th March there is carriageway closure for white lining renewal overnight only from 9pm to 6am. Please keep an eye out for additional A34 closures; there are a lot of them over the next couple of months but full closures are being kept to overnight works.

Harwell Link Road – 16th March to 16th April there will be multi-way signals that are likely to cause delays. I'll be keeping a particular eye on the quality of these works, as it's a road that was only surface dressed last year.

Dene Hollow, Chilton – 25th March to 27th March there will be a very short closure (outside Dalton House) while Thames Water put in a new water connection.

London Road/Blewbury Hill – 31st March – 2nd April there will be a full closure of London Road between Spring Lane, Blewbury and Stream Road, Upton. This is to undertake some **extremely** necessary patching works. We have been requesting fixes through here for a long

time, so please be understanding of the long diversion up Spring Lane, Hagbourne Road and through Didcot. (Also be aware, some more wins coming up in May with resurfacing works for Boham’s Road and A417 beyond Blewbury, towards Goring)

Please continue to report any highway defects on www.fixmystreet.com.

Other news and information

Harwell Campus consultation – Harwell campus is consulting on its long-term plans for the site. There will be a programme of in-person events, but you can also offer your feedback here:

www.harwellcampus.com/future-vision/

Local Government Reorganisation - Three different unitary models have been proposed for Oxfordshire. Ultimately, the government will decide which model to implement, but your feedback is invited by 26th March. More information is available here: <https://oneoxfordshire.org.uk/>

HWRC Booking System – You now need to book a slot to visit any of the Household Waste Recycling Centres. When visiting, you will need to bring proof of address. If you’re unable to sort your recycling in advance, you will be asked to do so onsite in the designated sorting areas. For more information or to book your slot, go to: <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/hwrcbooking> or call 01865 519800.

Carers Phone Friends – This service from Carers Oxfordshire offers support to unpaid carers by connecting them with trained volunteers who understand the challenges of caring. You can find out more, make referrals or volunteer here: <https://www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/carers-phone-friends/> or by calling 01295 234 850.

Councillor Priority Fund – All County Councillors have access to a pot of funding to support local community projects. Applications are open until November 2026. The minimum grant is £500, and there are rules regarding eligibility of applicants and projects. You can read more at <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/communities/councillor-priority-fund>

Councillor queries

Recent queries I’ve raised on behalf of residents and Parish Councils include:

Ticket description	Status	Outcome/latest information
Traffic calming Harwell village	IN PROGRESS	Works have now been confirmed. Latest update: I have still seen no notice on one.network for these works, suggesting road space still not booked. Have chased.
GWP adoption	ONGOING	Spine roads adoption currently stuck in negotiations between Leap Utilities, SODC and Taylor Wimpey. We can’t adopt any estate roads until the spine roads are adopted. Latest update: main spine road close to adoption once some verge clearance sorted – subject to confirmation of easements and adoption of sewers

Damage to electrical unit at skate park, GWP	ONGOING	Repeated damage to the electrical unit at the skate park – Taylor Wimpey are in discussions with SSE on providing a more robust housing unit. Still not happened and box broken into again – have followed up
Blewbury road safety	ONGOING	Funding for a puffin crossing at Savages has been submitted for inclusion in forward plan of works (2026/27 financial year)
Harwell roadworks	AWAITING RESPONSE	Investigation into the Grove Road works is ongoing – I have pushed for more information on this. Still waiting for a meeting. Have raised with Officers in context of roadworks in the area in general not meeting expectations
Road safety issues on A417	IN PROGRESS	Crossing confirmed at the Winnaway, with other speeding measures to be included as part of the works. Have asked for an update. Included in budget for 26/27
Coffin Way cycle path	IN PROGRESS	Requested briefing on previous work re: footpath/potential cycle route between Blewbury and Upton – relevant officer on leave. Meeting date being arranged
Newbury Road speed	AWAITING RESPONSE	Have asked about possibility of reducing the adopted section of Newbury Road to 20mph due to number of houses facing straight onto road and considerable traffic
Harwell – High St. flooding	IN PROGRESS	Visit undertaken 6 th Jan – waiting list for drain maintenance c. 10 months – have followed up with colleagues on interim measures.
Harwell – pavement repairs and maintenance	IN PROGRESS	Multiple road surface patches agreed but not yet scheduled due to ongoing bad weather. Pavements may potentially receive slurry treatment – awaiting news on this. Latest update: Church Lane, School Lane, Kings Lane, Jennings Lane, The Cleave, Brookside, Gaveston Road, Loder Road, Westfield, The Styles, Manor Green, Townsend, The Croft, Barrow Road, Tyrells Close, Broadway Close, and The Park – all earmarked for footway slurry. Additionally, Didcot Road, Blenheim Hill, and Burr Street are marked for footway reconstruction, while Westfield Road is set for carriageway surface inlay. Has been assigned to an engineer but not yet confirmed. Expected to be scheduled for late Spring/Summer.
Rat infestation	IN PROGRESS	Pest control should now have attended but still awaiting follow up – have chased
Blewbury Road signs	IN PROGRESS	Visit took place 19 th February – multiple signs scheduled for replacement.
Chilton vegetation clearance A34 crossings	COMPLETE	Clearance of Chilton footbridge/underpass across A34 - officers sent out to investigate, awaiting more information
Outcome of pothole trial	COMPLETE	2023 trial to test different types of pothole repair - what was the outcome?
Grove Road flooding	RESPONSE RECEIVED	Grove Road persistent flooding since 2017 – SODC engineer to visit but has to wait for current flooding to subside to investigate properly. Have chased now flooding receded
Bridleway resurfacing	COMPLETE	Harwell asked if they can undertake surface improvements to Green Road/Bridleway - response yes but with caveats - now with Parish Council
Blewbury flooding	AWAITING RESPONSE	Sheencroft corner flooding problems - escalated directly to officers at both OCC and VOWH
OFS reorganisation	AWAITING RESPONSE	Further questions from Didcot firefighters – handed over to cabinet member
Icknield Way footpath improvements	AWAITING RESPONSE	Query re: impassable footpath.
Reading Road - flooding	AWAITING RESPONSE	Flooding query - now that the weather has turned, asked for flooding sites to be reinvestigated.
Flooding Frank Williams Way	IN PROGRESS	TW have cleared the beany blocks and swales but the road is still a mess - have asked OCC road maintenance to pick this up now flooding seems much improved.
Hagbourne Hill improvements	AWAITING RESPONSE	Query re: safety improvements, kerbing/widening etc. – interim ditches filled with Type 1 stone but have asked for more permanent measures to be looked into
Pothole damage	COMPLETE	Private resident query relating to pothole damage claims
Alder View adoption	COMPLETE	Private resident query re: adoption of roads and sewers on Alder View development
Potholes escalation by Harwell Campus	AWAITING RESPONSE	Query re: pothole repair failure

Appendix 2

District Councillor Report

Local Government Reorganisation

The deadline for responses to the Local Government Reorganisation proposals is rapidly approaching. I urge all to give their opinions and make their voices heard – both as a Parish Council and individually <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/oxfordshire/>

I believe all three proposals have their issues – the One Council may be too remote from residents and overly focused on Oxford City (especially its transport/congestion issues), the Two Council one will need to ensure cross-boundary working and services are addressed (although I know this has been looked at), and the Three Council one does not meet minimum mandatory population sizes and splits multiple parishes, as well as having questions over financial resilience (and whether West Berkshire would still join with Vale and South Oxfordshire under those circumstances). However, everyone will have their own opinions and every voice should be heard.

SESRO news

Following an earlier letter to the Minister, we had a standard dismissive response, but with one very interesting element within it. In response to our concerns over the Dam Breach issues, the Minister stated (in an official letter which we can now cite) that Thames Water would be required to produce the Dam Breach Analysis for the DCO.

This is a significant shift, as Thames Water had been insisting that they only need to do it prior to filling the reservoir (that is – after DCO, after design, after construction, but before first filling it – so far too late to back out).

This was confirmed in a presentation by Thames Water to Parish Councils (and very helpfully picked up by GARD as well). This will NOT be allowed to go by. Personally, I intend to insist that Emergency Drawdown details, Flood Management, and all Emergency Plans should be presented at DCO as well, which could be problematic for Thames Water's designs to get this approved. After all, if the Dam Breach Analysis is needed for it, surely these should be as well?

We've also learned that they still haven't got lab results for their Clay Compaction Trial. They also intend to build a spur off of the A34 between the Drayton and Abingdon interchange, but have not given any reason why.

Bringing empty homes back into use

Over the past year, we've worked with the owners of 854 empty properties to understand why they are empty and offer support. This has already helped 232 homes return to use across Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire. Some of these homes are unoccupied for a good reason – such as undergoing major refurbishment or awaiting sale.

There are still around 1,162 homes that could potentially become homes again for residents. We offer homeowners information, advice and support to bring their empty properties back into use, including:

- Help to make the property more energy efficient
- Refurbishing the property including VAT reduction for renovation and alteration works

- Additional revenue by renting the property to a tenant in housing need, alongside financial assistance if the property requires minor refurbishment works before being let
- Additional revenue by letting privately
- Selling the property privately, through an estate agent or through auction

New electric waste vehicle

We have taken delivery of our second electric waste collection and street cleansing vehicle. This produces 70 per cent less in the way of carbon emissions and helps us towards our target of reducing carbon emissions and towards net zero. It's being used throughout both Vale and South by crews as part of their work on street cleansing, emptying litter bins, picking up waste collected on litter picks and clearing rubbish left as fly tips.

All the best,

Andy

Appendix 3

Finance February 2026			
Inv Date	PAYMENTS TO APPROVE IN MEETING	Payee	Amount
12.03.2026	Village Hall EV chargers	A3A Energy Ltd	6,319.80
03.03.2026	ONPA Annual Membership	Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plan Alliance	50.00
26.02.2026	OALC Annual Membership	Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils	416.95
27.02.2026	ROSPA Inspection	Play Safety Ltd	528.00
23.02.2026	Water Inspection-Clubhouse	Vale of White Horse	356.60
	PAID: Salaries for February Month, Paid on 04.03.2026		
04.03.2026	February Cleaning Clubhouse & Village Hall	Jayne Newman	397.40
04.03.2026	M Taylor, February	M Taylor	1,483.85
04.03.2026	Expenses, Working from home allowance, February	M Taylor	26.00
04.03.2026	Village Hall and Clubhouse Administrator Salary, February	Helen Evi Holroyd	1,045.85
04.03.2026	Expenses, Working from home allowance, February	Helen Evi Holroyd	26.00
04.03.2026	Lengthman Service Salary, February	Iain Wood	960.11
04.03.2026	Employer/ee Tax/Ni Contributions, February	HMRC	649.23
04.03.2026	Payroll, February	SME Accounting Services Ltd	20.00
	PAID: Direct Debits/Standing Order		
04.02.2026	BT Group PLC-Internet (Clubhouse)	Bt Group PLC	35.69
23.02.2026	Waste Collection	Biffa	173.52
17.02.2026	Clerk and Lengthmans Pension Contributions, January	NEST Pensions	181.85
17.02.2026	Bank Charges	Lloyds	8.50
	PAID: Since previous meeting		
10.02.2026	Batteries-Voice Recorder	Morrisons	5.80
17.02.2026	Anti Virus Renewal-Clerk's Laptop	Norton	89.99
19.02.2026	Clerk's Mobile Phone-Top-up	EE	20.00
	Total Expenditure		12,795.14
	RECEIPTS		
11.02.2026	VAT Q2 Refund	HMRC	2,532.21
19.02.2026	VAT Q3 Refund	HMRC	3,754.07
25.02.2026	Skatepark Donation	Blewbury Players	1,645.00
30.02.2026	Deposit Account Interest for February	Lloyds	136.42
	Total Income		8,067.70

Appendix 4

Actions from March Meeting, table 1

Item	Action	Ownership
7.4	To appointment of Red Box Fire Control to review the Clubhouse Fire Risk Assessment	Clerk
10.4	To contact resident regards to ownership of Spring Lane	Cllr. Saunders/Clerk
10.7	To obtain quotations for concrete constructed bench	Cllr. Shayler/Cllr. Calder

Outstanding Actions from previous meetings - table 2

Item	Mtg	Action	Ownership	Update on action
8	December	Clubhouse roof tile repair	Cllr. Austin	In Process
10.2	December	Clubhouse Roof Repair- Research into preventive measures to protect the Clubhouse Roof from further damage during the Cricket season.	Cllr. Millman and Cllr. Austin	In Process
10.3	December	Removal of shrubs in Clubhouse Car Park to allocate extra parking	Iain/Cllr. Shayler	Ongoing
13.2.1	December	To review land registry for Spring Lane	Clerk	In progress
15.4	January	Transfer their current 32-day notice account with Lloyds to Unity Trust Bank.	Clerk	In Progress
16	January	Transfer of email accounts to gov.uk	Clerk	In Progress
12.2	February	Cob Wall Ownership/Maintenance- To set a date for a workshop day for residents	Cllr. Saunders/Clerk	In Progress
14.4	February	Transfer of the Current Account from Lloyds to Unity Bank	Clerk	In Progress

