# Councillor Reports February 2026

## Table of Contents


Councillor Reports Febuary 2026....1
Peter Coombes....1
Trees and Green Spaces....1
Ed Crowther....1
Website and Social Media....1
Allan Kerry....2
Speed Indicator Device (SID)....2
Sarah Webb....2
Bus Back Better February 2026....2
Updates Planning Report January 2026....3
Slades Hill/Knights Meadow Update February 2026....4
Dominic Savage....9
LCN Report....9
Stephen Hood....10
Templecombe Together....10


# Peter Coombes

## Trees and Green Spaces

No major updates from me

Working on rec trees 22/2 going ahead

We have been successful with woodland trust grand for trees we have 210

due November 2026

# Ed Crowther

## Website and Social Media

Nothing to report this month.

I will be attending LCN webinars later this month
of particular interest will be the one on Assertion 10
regarding Website accessibility.

Will update the council at the March meeting.

# Allan Kerry

## Speed Indicator Device (SID)

2025 SID Summary and Conclusions

An analysis has been carried out on the Speed Indicator (SID)results for the year 2025 looking for traits in driver behaviour in our 20mph speed zone between Yarn Barton/Vine Street and the light controlled crossing at the Railway Bridge.

- Most of the traffic (73% average)) seems to travel at 20mph or lower. This could be because the 20mph road signs are being seen and obeyed, however at busy times when traffic is flowing in both directions it is more likely that the space available is the major cause. As traffic volume lowers the speed of vehicles increases because there is more available space.
- A significant proportion (22% average) travels at speeds between 20mph and 26mph (the speed at which a fixed penalty notice (FPN)could be given). This could indicate that people are responding to the flashing sign as they approach the SID having missed or ignored the signage by slowing down.
- More worrying is the 5% of drivers who clearly ignore both the signage and the SID warning and travel at speeds above the 26mph and continue to drive at excessive speeds on a narrow road with a number of blind exits and a 90 degree bend at East Street. Speeds in excess of 50mph have been measured
- Additional observations are that:
  - The location of the SID does not appear to make a difference
  - Leaving the SID in place for periods longer than a few weeks causes a significant reduction in the number of drivers travelling at 20mph or lower with a corresponding increase in the traffic above the 26mph FPN level with a highest recorded speed in excess of 60mph in the High Street.

Overall conclusion - The SID is helpful for reminding most people of the speed they should be driving at but there are drivers who completely ignore both the signage and the SID.
The traffic flow is much improved since the removal of the Build Out when frustration and blockages to flow caused more aggressive driving at the build out.

We have engaged with the police about them carrying out regular speed checks but understandably due to more serious pressures on road safety eg fatalities on A361 and A303 it has not happened

# Sarah Webb

## Bus Back Better February 2026

The Department for Transport (DfT) have announced that Somerset Council will receive £13.1m of additional funding to support both bus Services and network infrastructure in Somerset . The additional funding is to be rolled out between 2026 and 2029, would help local travel become more reliable.
The three-year funding commitment is designed to give councils the certainty to create longer-term plans around bus travel, rather than running on a year-by-year basis.

The current Timetable for the 58 route from Wincanton to Yeovil via Templecombe operated by First Bus (Buses of Somerset) can be found at https://www.firstbus.co.uk/somerset/plan-journey/timetables.
In January 2026, Somerset bus fares will largely be capped at a maximum of £3 for single journeys under the national fare cap scheme, with First Bus implementing £2.40 for short hops (under 3 miles) and offering Tap On Tap Off for best value, while child fares are half price, all part of a simplified zone system (Taunton, Yeovil, Bridgwater, Network).
Key Fare Details from January 2026:

- National £3 Fare Cap: A government-backed scheme keeps most single bus journeys in England, including Somerset, at a maximum of £3 extended in most areas until March 2027
- First Bus Somerset Changes:

◦ Short Hops: Journeys under 3 miles cost £2.40.
◦ Longer Journeys: Max out at £3, aligning with the national cap.
◦ Child Fares: Half the adult single fare.

• Tap On Tap Off: Using contactless, you automatically get the best fare, with daily and weekly caps ensuring you never pay more than the zone limit.

• Fare Zones: Simplified into Taunton, Yeovil, Bridgwater, and Network zones for easier understanding.

How to Check Fares:

• Use the First Bus app or website to plan journeys and see specific prices.

• Check the Think Travel website for general updates and participating operators. Planning Report – Significant

## Updates Planning Report January 2026

New
Reserved Matters approval for the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale in respect of 140 no. dwellings in accordance with Conditions 1 and 2 of the Outline Planning Permission 22/03560/OUT
Land OS 6975 South Of Bowden Road Templecombe Somerset

Ref. No: 25/02759/REM Received: Fri 14 Nov 2025 Validated: Mon 19 Jan 2026 Status: Awaiting decision

26/00049/DOC1|Discharge of Condition No. 09 (Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)) of planning application 22/03560/OUT Land OS 6975 Bowden Road Templecombe Somerset.

Received: Fri 09 Jan 2026 Status: awaiting decision

This relates to the Archaeological Evaluation.

Reserved Matters application for the approval of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of 49 dwellings following outline approval 19/01604/OUT; Outline application with all matters reserved save for access for residential development for up to 49 dwellings including landscaping, drainage and new vehicle access from West Street Open for comment icon
Land At Coombe Farm Os Plots 4300 Part And 4613 Pa West Street Templecombe Somerset BA8 0LG

Ref. No: 24/01732/REM Received: Fri 26 Jul 2024 Validated: Thu 22 Aug 2024 Status: Awaiting decision

Pending

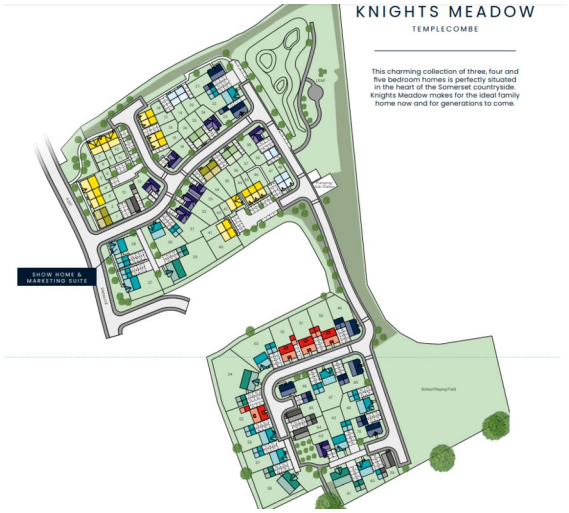
24/01732/REM Reserved Matters application for the approval of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of 49 dwellings following outline approval 19/01604/OUT; Outline application with all matters reserved save for access for residential development for up to 49 dwellings including landscaping, drainage and new vehicle access from West Street .

Most recent update: 19 Jan 2026 Amended plans and documents submitted to provide a comprehensive response to matters raised by consultees to the Reserved Matters submission.
The initial Reserved Matters application proposed 22 open market units and 27 affordable housing units. Magna Housing now intend to bring forward all the units as affordable housing with 35% (17) as the s106 requirement and the remaining 65% (32) as additionality housing i.e. delivered with Homes England funding. Of the 17 s106 affordable units, 8 are for social rent and 9 shared ownership. Of the remaining 32 additional units, 21 will be for social rent and 11 shared ownership. In total the site will secure 29 social rent units and 20 shared ownership units.

21/02436/FUL Demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of 18 detached bungalows with associated parking and access. Knights Templar Court Nursing Home Throop Road Templecombe Somerset BA8 0HR.

No further update:
20 May 2024 Appeal decided and allowed subject to conditions.

# Slades Hill/Knights Meadow Update February 2026



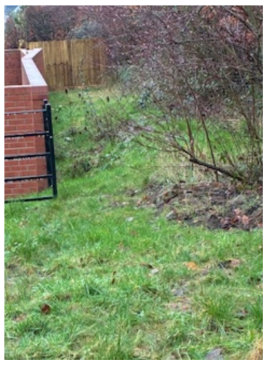

A letter regarding the current issues at Knights Meadow has now been sent to Sarah Dyke MP
In Late December residents were advised by Tilia that further landscaping would commence in January including:

- Turf for the frontage of the development on the right-hand side entrance into the development and also to the areas near the pedestrian footpath link.
- Installation of a lifebuoy post to the attenuation pond, installation of a bollard near plot 21 to stop cars driving over the footpath and close board fencing installed to either ends of the maintenance corridors around the development.
- Stone picking and seeding within public open spaces across the development by the landscaper.
- Within the next 4-6 weeks the finishing of the school playing field by importing soil to then continue with spreading the topsoil over the field to complete the area, which is anticipated to take 10 days once started.

There was no update as to the opening of the LEAP, completion of the traffic calming measures, ongoing maintenance if the public open spaces or completion of the planting scheme.

- So far only a limited amount of laying of turf has actually taken place and in the last week the Installation of a lifebuoy post to the attenuation pond, installation of a bollard near plot 21 to stop cars driving over the footpath and close board fencing installed to either ends of

the maintenance corridors around the development has taken place. 



Unfortunately this has resulted in all entry points being blocked for any access including any emergency access to address oil leaks and agreed maintenance requirements to protect the gabion walls on the Hamlet and Blackmore Vale boundaries. Furthermore the existing issues regarding fence boundaries have been built within the required 3m buffer zone around Blackmore Vale Close and The Hamlet, compromising emergency access and structural protection have not been addressed.

 New end fence panel at an angle and is still only 2.4m

In addtion the positioning of wooden posts by the attenuation pond appears to further limit vehicle access to the side of the attenuation pond which is a planning requirement for ongoing maitainence of the attenuation pond area.

**1. Breach of Planning Conditions**

The Parish Council has been notified by Neil Waddleton Senior Specialist from Enforcement, Somerset Council that following a site visit with Tilia Homes on the 14th October 25, Tilia Homes were given 2 weeks from the meeting to engage in various specialists to help them progress the site. They will then feedback on a program of works. Tilia also suggested that they would engage where appropriate with the residents of the development. I understand that many Knights Meadow residents have been emailed by Tilia regarding the proposed submission of a planning application/s to address some of the current issues.

Currently the Parish Council has received no further updates.

The breach of a number of planning conditions, non-compliance with the Section 106 agreement, and elements of non-delivery include:

**3m Offset Non-Compliance**: Fences have been built within the required 3m buffer zone around Blackmore Vale Close and The Hamlet, compromising emergency access and structural protection.

1. **Missing Access Gate/Fence**: No gate installed to control/permit emergency access
2. **Section 106 Agreement Failures**

- **LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play)**:
  - Construction only began in April 2025 despite reaching 50% occupancy.
  - Built on a steep mound, posing safety risks for young children.
  - Location deviates from approved plans and affects privacy of nearby homes.
- **Travel Plan Non-Compliance**:
  - No appointed Travel Advisor.
  - Missing signage, community notice board, and green travel voucher scheme.
  - No cycle/motorcycle parking or secure storage.
  - Garages lack required EV charging sockets.

1. **Drainage and Landscaping Issues**

- **Drainage Risk**: Excess soil against gabion wall may affect drainage and stability.
- **Attenuation Pond**: Appears to exceed slope limits (1:3), potentially breaching open space requirements and safety standards.
- **Tree planting and Maintenance**: Sporadic planting and lack of maintenance despite LEMP (Landscape & Ecology Management Plan) approval.
- **Tree Root Damage**: Protected trees have had roots cut, risking tree health and stability.

1. **Unfulfilled Commitments**

- **School Expansion/Burial Ground Land Transfer**: Not completed as per the Section 106 agreement.
- **Completion of path to link site to Church Hill**

With regards 106 obligations we are still awaiting a response regarding a review and comment on the triggers in the 106 agreements and confirmation of what action is being taken in respect of this.

With regards the travel plan we are still awaiting a response regarding a review and comment from Highways Development Control of what action is being taken in respect of this

**2.Current status**

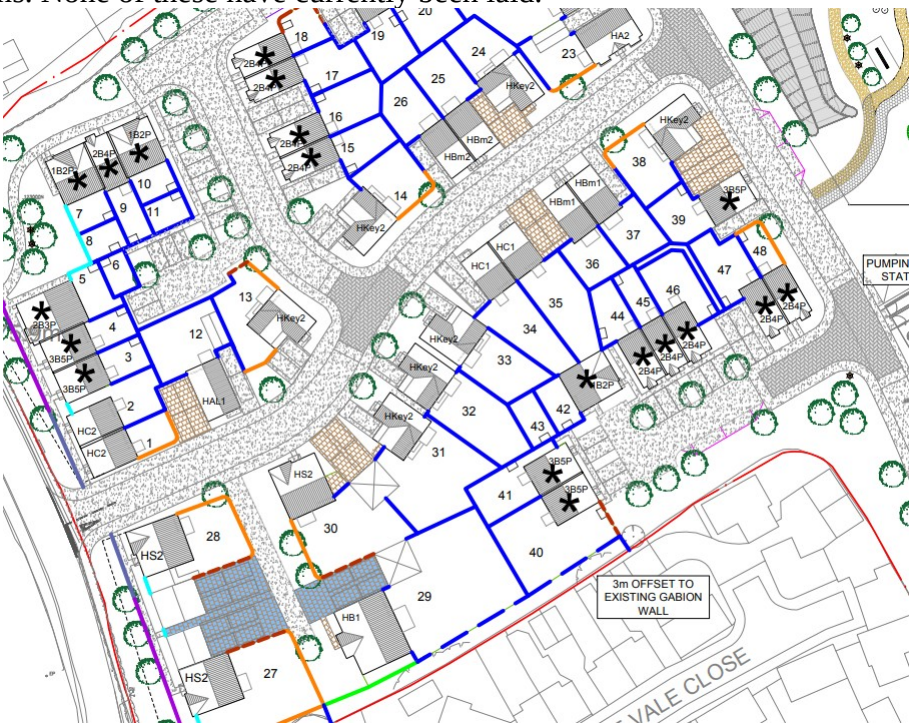
The site was fully occupied at the beginning of October. Tilia has left the site. It should be highlighted that reserved matters approval was granted on: 9 July 2021. This permission was only granted on the basis that all of the conditions are fully complied with and failure to comply with the requirements of each and every condition as detailed may become the subject of enforcement action by Somerset Council.

02. All the features/measures identified within the Ecology Strategy Plan shall be provided within the development site prior to the occupation of the 70th or last dwelling to be constructed on the site

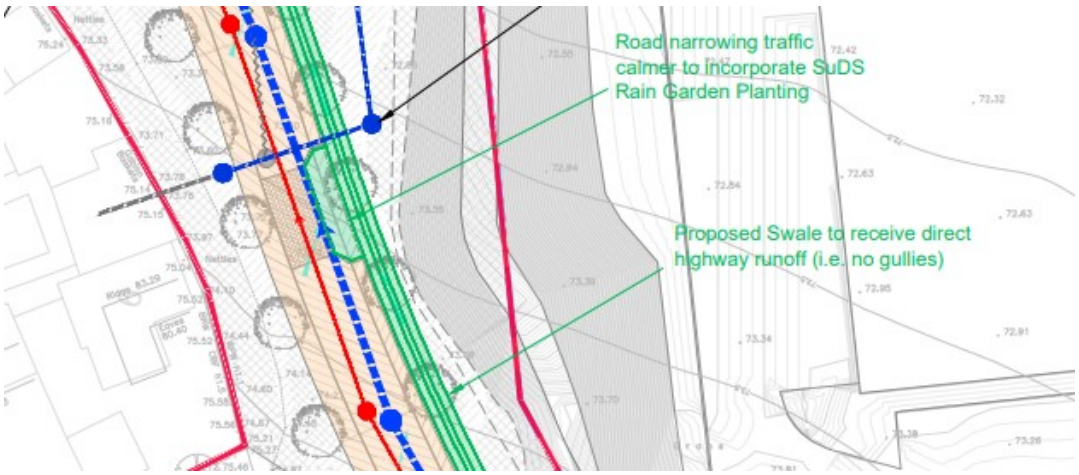
05. The landscaping scheme shown on the approved plans shall be carried out within the first dormant planting season (November to February inclusively) following the first occupation of the

first dwelling; with the landscaping scheme fully implemented prior to the first occupation of the 70th dwelling (or the last dwelling built on site).
06. All boundary treatments shall be provided on the site in accordance with the approved hard works and boundaries plans. Boundaries to individual properties shall be erected prior to the first occupation of the dwelling to which the boundaries relate, and all other boundary treatments shall be erected within 3 months of the substantial completion of the development. Once provided the boundary treatments shall thereafter be permanently retained.
07. The footpath link between the application site and Church Hill shall be provided in full and available for use within 3 months of the substantial completion of the development in accordance with the approved plans and in accordance with a footpath lighting schedule that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
It would therefore be reasonable to expect conditions 6 and 7 be met by the beginning of December and conditions 2 and 3 now be met but they currently all remain outstanding.

- The Amended Plan Hard works and Boundary Plan Sheet 1 of 2 shows areas of block paving at junctions. None of these have currently been laid.




In addition Highways and Transportation advice on the planning application was that ‘Road 4 is effectively straight. Traffic calming will be required to ensure road speeds meet the 20 mph design speed requirement’.
In the Planning Officers Report it was also commented that Highways safety was also on the basis ‘To address traffic speeds within the site on the spine road, the applicant has introduced traffic calming measures which are acceptable.



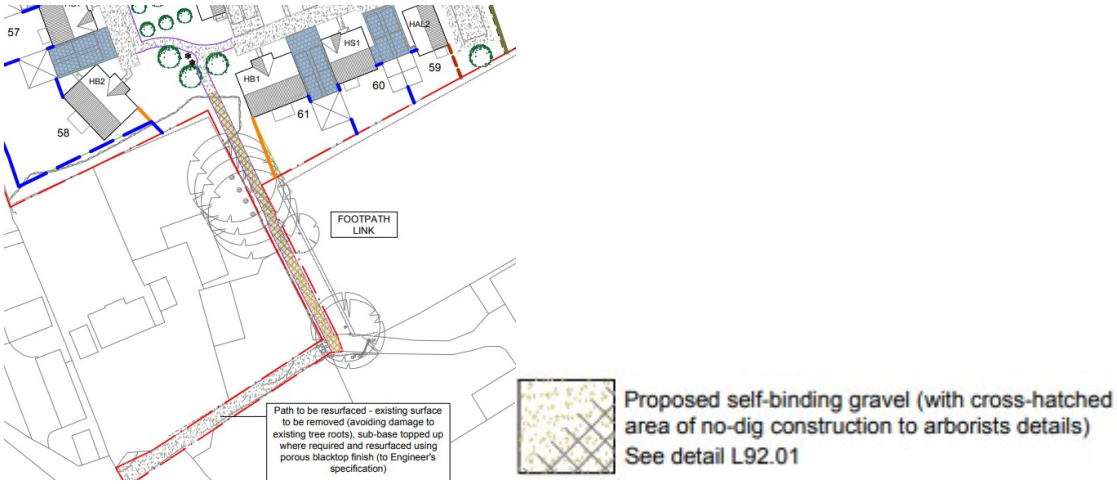

It was noted that 'The SUDS scheme has been further amended and improved by adding permeable block paving in areas throughout the site, connecting some rwps to the permeable paving areas, proposing permeable paving for the footpath surface, permeable surfacing within the RPA within the site, and by connecting the road narrowing traffic calming feature adjacent to the Thales bund into the swale between the highway and bund. It is considered that as long as the drainage/SUDS scheme is implemented in accordance with the approved details the development would be served by a suitable drainage strategy in accordance with the NPPF. The road narrowing scheme and Rain garden planting located at the bottom of Blackmore Vale Close has not been implemented

- The LEAP remains closed and the school playing field incomplete. The amount of rubble remaining within the surface is a huge concern and there has been on obvious maintenance of the existing areas of vegetation.



- Residents remain concerned at what point the management company will take over and address existing maintenance issues as well as completion of other conditions.
- Bat and Bird boxes as well as hedgehogs passes appear also to be outstanding and should have been completed before the last house was occupied.

- All planting and maintenance schedules for the site are detailed in the LEMP – Land Environmental Management Plan which the planning officer stated was approved " On the strict understanding that the maintenance management regime specified in this approved LEMP document are fully implemented and strictly adhered to",
- Planting has not been completed and in addition a number of residents have observed the trees on top of the bund require work to adjust ties and supports. The few trees already on site also require maintenance.
- A large number of areas designated Public Open space (POS) remain closed and a number of accessible areas have not been turfed or seeded with stones and rubble on the surface.
- There are also some significant issues with regarding pavement design and potential hazard including the installation of drainage covers over tactile paving.
- Site fencing has been removed resulting in no control of access of the 3m offset.
- The footpath linking the site to Church Hill has been surfaced up to the boundary of the site itself. The final link behind the school playing field has been cleared of vegetation but no further progress has appeared to be made.




- The Parish council is pursuing the 106 agreement relating to the burial ground extension.

# Dominic Savage

## LCN Report

Meeting Report: Local Community Network (LCN)
Meeting Date: 21st January 2026 Location: Castle Cary

Highways Update
Next Meeting: Scheduled for 3rd March in Castle Cary. The A375 is a key agenda item, and the Highways Service Manager will be in attendance.

Katherine Beverley (Arts Engagement Manager)
The team is in its 3rd year of Arts Council funding (£760k total, with a possible 2-year extension). Play Days: Running twice yearly (Summer and Feb half term) in Wincanton, Chard, Langport, and Yeovil. Memory Choir: Launching in Yeovil for those living with dementia. Accessibility: Subsidised £3 tickets for low-income

households and the SHINE bursary for classes. Outreach: Funding for "Take Art" rural touring has been cut; the team is actively looking for new rural outreach opportunities. SALC (Lily): Over £500k has been distributed across 60 grants. A small amount of funding is still available. Lily is available to assist us in identifying funding for specific parish projects.

Balsam Centre (Wincanton): Communication: Parishioners are encouraged to sign up for their Friday Bulletin for regular updates. Emily Spark is the temporary development manager focusing on getting volunteers out to support those in need.

Somerset Bus Partnership: Discussion highlighted the poor integration of current services. Glastonbury Trainlink: A pilot service is being planned to connect Glastonbury to Castle Cary station. They need to raise £120,000 (or an initial project launch fee) to get the service running.

Local Plan Update - Work is ongoing; however, there were no significant updates to report at this stage.
Current Consultations

- Beyond the Precept (11/02/26): Note there is a £35 fee to participate.
- Charitable Collection Licences Policy
- Domestic Abuse Strategy (Open until 26th Jan)
- Somerset Food Survey

Upcoming meetings

- Next LCN Meeting: 22nd April
- LCN AGM: 15th July

# Stephen Hood

## Templecombe Together

Templecombe Together provided the New Year Community Lunch on January 17th.

The lunch was well attended by our regular diners together with others attending for the first time. We had over 30 diners in total, so a great success.

February is to be a busy month for our Committee as we are providing both a Parish Lunch and our monthly Community Lunch.

Soup Mondays are also to go ahead each Monday in February and March and once again we are collaborating with Templecombe United Reform Church who are hosting the event.

Our AGM will also take place towards the end of Feb., date to be confirmed