

What's inside:
Blossom Festival
New Allotments
South Swindon In Bloom



SOUTH SWINDON PARISH SPOTLIGHT - SPRING 26

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SOUTH SWINDON



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CHAIR'S REPORT

Dear Parishioner,

We're moving into a busy 2026 with a bold programme of improvements for South Swindon. Some of this work has already started. By the time you read this a new allotment site at Badbury Park will be on the cusp of opening. The council has always recognised the importance that gardening brings to residents' wellbeing and the new allotments will offer an opportunity for residents to "grow their own"!

The allotments opening is just one of 42 improvement projects that are part of the council's Improvements Programme- an ambitious plan to make South Swindon even better. This programme can be split into five groups:

Parks improvement - Including converting the Town Gardens Bowl into a modern, 21st Century events venue.

New amenities - With new allotment sites, Oakfield Park in Walcot being transferred to the Parish and more Play Area refurbishments.

Improving our environment - Improving existing community gardens and establishing more of them.

Community & wellbeing - Helping residents become more physically active with new activities.

Service improvements - Making our vehicle fleet electric, and removing weed growth on paths.

Local Elections

This will be my last report before the local elections on May 7th. This edition of the **Spotlight** will look back at the many improvements this council has delivered with millions of pounds spent improving our amenities. I am proud of all that we have achieved and would like to thank our staff and partners for making these achievements possible. Most importantly I would like to thank all residents who have contributed to making South Swindon a great place to live.

For more information on the elections please visit Swindon Borough Council's elections webpage or contact the Parish Council CEO-
ceo@southswindon-pc.gov.uk.



Neil Hopkins, Chair

PARKS & OPEN SPACES UPDATE



The Parish Council painted a historic mural on the park's substation



The council carved a statue of Sir Daniel Gooch from one of the park's trees

QUEEN'S PARK

Queen's Park is a special amenity, and since taking on its management the Parish Council's focus has been on restoring the park's features, including the improved Mesothelioma Garden.

Parish Councillors recognise that park users have outstanding concerns, and they are determined to take action.

Improvements for Queen's Park

- ▶ Reopening the former Hothouse area, installing new flowerbeds, and exploring the potential for a new café
- ▶ Working with specialists to keep the duckweed off the lakes

GWR PARK

The council is proud to have transformed GWR Park in recent years, taking it back to its roots. We're now building on these successes with more improvements.

New Improvements for GWR Park

- ▶ Reopening toilets in the park
- ▶ A water refill station
- ▶ A trim trail along the outer edge of the field to encourage more "wild play"

Parish Councillors have enjoyed seeing the park transform in recent years and are determined to keep the momentum going to bring the park back to its former glory.



Cllrs Sam James and Patrick Herring at the refurbished Mesothelioma Garden



Hothouse remodelling work



**Left- Cllrs Kasmaty, Griffiths & Hopkins presenting the Green Flag award to park gardeners
Right- The council refurbished the Town Garden's historic aviary in 2023**

TOWN GARDENS

With 130 years of history, Town Gardens is a popular park that has received national recognition. Since managing the site in 2019 our two priorities have been to: celebrate and restore the park's heritage, and bring more activities and events to the park.

The first park heritage feature we restored was the historic entrance gates to the park (which were originally erected in 1904!) and we've continued to refurbish and install the park's other heritage features.

We have also introduced an extensive programme of events and activities in the park. These have primarily been focussed in The Bowl, but there have also been regular events in the Bandstand during the spring and summer.

Just outside the park the Parish Council refurbished the dilapidated Quarry Road Tennis Courts in 2023, thanks to £90,000 of funding from the Lawn Tennis Association.

Moving forward we will look to restore more heritage features in the park and develop our events programme further in The Bowl.

Key Town Gardens Achievements

- ▶ Rated most popular cherry blossom location in the UK in 2024
- ▶ Achieved Green Flag Status in 2025
- ▶ Delivered a successful programme of light trail events for 4 years
- ▶ Restored the Quarry Road Tennis Courts
- ▶ Historic aviary refurbishment

BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

For the last three years the Parish Council has collaborated with the National Trust to deliver a Blossom Festival around South Swindon.

The festival has focused on engaging residents with the nature and wildlife that's right on their doorstep, **celebrating the beauty of the Town Gardens as the 'best cherry blossom spot in the UK'**.

South Swindon Parish Council proudly brings back this parish-wide celebration of spring, in partnership with the National Trust, throughout April 2026.

The festival brings together nature and wellbeing, through a programme of activities for all ages, timed to coincide perfectly with the peak of the blossom season.

Families are invited to get outdoors and explore local green spaces through activities including bat and wellbeing walks, pond dipping and community picnics.



Councillors formally opened the GWR Park Blossom Circle in 2023, alongside the National Trust Director General & the Historic England CEO

Younger audiences can take part in Stories Under the Blossom, crafty afternoons and lively family fun days, with local vendors and entertainment throughout the festival.

Full event details, dates and locations are available here-
www.southswindon-pc.gov.uk/blossom



Cllrs Amin, Allsopp & Bushell welcomed the refurbishment of the Buckhurst Play Area

PLAY AREAS AROUND SOUTH SWINDON

Over the last 8 years, Councillors have successfully pushed for more than £1m of investment into Parish Council Play Areas, significantly enhancing the play spaces for our young people. 13 Play Areas and 1 skate park have received improvements.

When rolling out this programme of investment, the objectives of Parish Councillors have been to increase the play value of each space, introduce more active equipment, and make each play space as accessible as possible. Moving forward, Parish Councillors plan to further invest in our play spaces.

Recent Play Area Investment-

Buckhurst Play Area- £105,000

Buckhurst Skate Park- £155,000

Westcot Recreation Area- £75,000

Next Play Areas for Investment-

Rushey Platt Play Area

Wills Avenue Play Area

Cavendish Green Play Area



Cllrs Janine Howarth and Sam James supported the improvements at Westcot Play Area



BRIGHTER BROADGREEN

The Council's Broadgreen Improvement Plan is well under way, improving the area around the Broadgreen Community Centre and Park, contributing to wider Brighter Broadgreen efforts in the community.

Broadgreen Improvement Plan Includes:

- ▶ A new notice board to share what activities are taking place in Broadgreen
- ▶ New equipment for 'Broadgreen Box'
- ▶ Community Gardening and new planting schemes

Brighter Broadgreen is a community led initiative, where members come together to share ideas and help build on what is already strong in Broadgreen. Brighter Broadgreen was established as a multi-agency initiative, specifically focused on addressing crime and uplifting the community.

The 'Broadgreen Box' is a community storage shed, stocked with play equipment which can be freely accessed by the local community. The box was funded by Wiltshire & Swindon Sport (WASP) through the Sports England Active Place Partnership. We want to thank those in our community who have looked after this equipment so well, returning items and even donating additional equipment for others to enjoy.

If you are interested in supporting community initiatives in the Broadgreen area, please come along to the next community catch up session or contact communities@southswindon-pc.gov.uk

For more information on what's happening in Broadgreen, visit the website by following the QR code



CLLrs Howarth, Cardoso & Dias highlight improvements



ALLOTMENTS

Parish Councillors are proud to be opening Swindon’s first new allotment site in 10 years! The site will open imminently at Badbury Park with a second site opening later this year.

These openings build on the investment the council has made on its existing allotments, with an Allotments Officer employed to ensure a smoothly run service.



Cllrs Hopkins, Banwell-Moore and Le Coyte Grinney at the Badbury Park Allotment site

South Swindon Parish Spotlight Advertising Rates

The South Swindon Parish Spotlight is produced by South Swindon Parish Council and is distributed four times a year to 20,000 households covering the parish.
The publication covers the Parish Council’s activities, services and past and future events.



	Rate
1/4 Page	£47
1/2 Page	£90
Full Page	£138
Inside Cover	£157
Back Cover	£181



*All prices shown are exclusive of VAT, which is applicable

If you're interested in advertising in the South Swindon Parish Spotlight, please contact:
communications@southswindon-pc.gov.uk

YOUTH

Badbury Park Youth Club Opening!

South Swindon Parish Councillors have agreed to open a new Youth Club at Badbury Park! Opening its doors in March, this will be the third Youth Club the council has opened since agreeing its Youth Strategy in 2024.

The Youth Club will be at the Badbury Park Community Hub between 5.30pm-7pm every Tuesday. Opening on the 3rd March with an open day for families to visit, and the first Youth Club opens on the 10th March. **Know a young person who lives in the area? Please drop in or contact us at youthwork2@southswindon-pc.gov.uk**



CLlrs supported the opening of Badbury Park Youth Club

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

SOUTH SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL YOUTH TEAM ARE LOOKING FOR ENTHUSIASTIC INDIVIDUALS TO JOIN OUR VIBRANT TEAM OF YOUTH CLUB VOLUNTEERS

SOUTH SWINDON YOUTH CLUB TUESDAYS 6:30-8:00PM	DELIVER EXCITING ACTIVITIES AND GAMES THAT INSPIRE, EDUCATE AND ENTERTAIN YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR YOUTH CLUBS WHILST HAVING FUN YOURSELF!
EASTCOTE YOUTH CLUB THURSDAYS 5:30-7PM	
BADBURY PARK YOUTH CLUB TUESDAYS 5:30-7PM	

YOUTHWORK2@SOUTHSWINDON-PC.GOV.UK
07432620085

Youth Service

Do you live in South Swindon? Do you know a young person who could benefit from more personal development?

The Parish Council offers a range of fun games and activities, through youth clubs, events, public art and new residential activities, with a chance to make friends with others.

Visit our Youth webpage for more information-

www.southswindon-pc.gov.uk/services/youth-service

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SN1 3LZ
AGES 11-16

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WOULD LIKE TO REGISTER, PLEASE CONTACT LOREL BY EMAIL OR TELEPHONE

YOUTHWORK2@SOUTH5WINDON-PC.GOV.UK 01793 312006

QR CODE

SWINDON

EASTCOTT Community CENTRE

THE BOWL

In 2025 the Parish Council hosted a variety of events throughout South Swindon, with over 15 events taking place inside The Bowl in the heart of the beautiful Town Gardens, Old Town. From comedy nights and music festivals, to open air theatre and local author visits, 2025's season truly had something for everyone to enjoy. Following the success of these events, the Parish Council is very pleased to announce the line up for summer 2026, with ticket prices still frozen since 2024!

The season will kick off with a celebration of the 90th anniversary of The Bowl from 3rd May and will continue through June and July weekends with Comedy at the Bowl, a range of acclaimed tributes, and a variety of open-air theatre to suit all tastes. A dedicated week of children's events, featuring The Great Baldini, KAPOW Wrestling, Rock the Tots and many more will start off the summer holidays in July and early August, and the season concludes with two outdoor cinema screenings at the beginning of September.

Find out more and book tickets at www.towngardens-swindon.co.uk



2026
THE BOWL

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SOUTH SWINDON IN BLOOM



South Swindon has once again been awarded a Gold Medal in South West in Bloom. This year, we also received the Urban Communities Trophy - a special recognition of the strength and diversity of our community-led work. When they visited, the South West in Bloom Judges were particularly impressed by how many community gardens we have across South Swindon - the highest number in the South West.

Our work reflects the three pillars of Bloom: horticulture, community and environment. South Swindon in Bloom is about small, positive actions that improve our communities. Planting, tidying, caring, improving wellbeing, strengthening connections and building pride in our surroundings.

There are still many streets, neighbourhoods and schools yet to be involved. Together, we can help more people feel connected to where they live, and to each other.



For more information or to get in touch contact **communities@southswindon-pc.gov.uk**

SOUTH SWINDON'S GARDENING COMMUNITY

OLD TOWN COMMUNITY GARDENERS

A group of 10 people looking after 10 gardens for the last 10 years. They enjoy creating and maintaining gardens in Old Town, including flower beds near Mr Cod's fish shop, Station Approach and the Marriott roundabout.



Old Town Community Gardeners

GAP

At The Gap, gardeners are eagerly waiting for the weather to improve so they can get planting for 2026! The committee are also looking into fundraising ideas and possible community days. If anyone would like to visit or volunteer please feel free to contact them at thegapswindon@yahoo.com. All would be very welcome!



Cllr Mike Davies and Matt French

BADBURY PARK

The Council has recently completed environmental improvements to the area outside the Badbury Park Community Hub. This includes the installation of new raised beds. Councillors and residents recently came together to help plant the beds, as designed by



Cllr Hopkins with volunteer community gardeners

the Parish Council's Community Gardener. This work will also enable the newly formed 'Badbury Bloomers' garden group to come together and continue engaging with nature.



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SERVICES UPDATE

An objective of the Parish Councillors has been to make South Swindon cleaner and greener, investing in its grounds and street cleaning teams.

The council continues to invest in its services with new equipment for staff, and they have recently recruited a new Community Gardener to support the Parish's many community gardens.

To keep South Swindon clean we now empty 400 bins across the Parish. Most bins are emptied 3 times a week, alongside litter picking duties, by our staff.

Councillors are keen to see further improvements ensuring our services are as efficient as possible.

Grounds & Street Cleaning Priorities

- Obtain a larger depot facility
- Acquire a fully electric vehicle fleet, saving tens of thousands on fuel
- Digitise the council's services, driving more efficient work routes



Councillors across the parish have supported the purchasing of new electric vehicles



Councillors have supported the recruitment of a new Community Gardener

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The advertisement features a background image of a large, ornate house. It includes a QR code and several logos, including the Royal Warrant logo and the Hillier Funeral Service logo.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Volunteers are essential to the Parish Council and the South Swindon community. We are committed to supporting the dedicated groups and individuals whose hard work helps our local areas thrive. There is a flurry of activity taking place across South Swindon and we appreciate everyone who works hard to support our communities.

Buckhurst Community Café

In January, Councillors supported the opening of a new Community Café at the Buckhurst Field Sports Pavilion, hosted by Swindon Robins FC who are working hard to engage with the communities of Walcot and Parks.

Funded by Wiltshire and Swindon Sport through the Swindon Physical Activity Place Partnership, the Café is open every Thursday from 1pm-2pm and everyone is welcome. It has led to many great conversations about existing activities and future projects.

The Council looks forward to supporting and delivering more activities through this project to bring people together and help everyone stay active.

What activities would you like to get involved in?

If you have any ideas for future activities in your area, please let us know!

Share your thoughts by emailing **communities@southswindon-pc.gov.uk** or completing one of our surveys online: www.southswindon-pc.gov.uk/yourviews



Cllrs Neil Hopkins and Steve Allsopp at the Buckhurst Community Café.

SWINDON
WOW
GUIDE

There are many other regular community activities taking place across South Swindon. Scan the QR code to see 'What's On Where' using the Swindon WOW guide, a directory of groups and activities for older people living in Swindon produced by Home Instead.



VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY ACTION DAYS

South Swindon is rich with individuals and groups who are passionate about making their community brighter and safer.

We've had various groups involved in community action, including schools, cubs/scouts, corporate teams and local residents.

If you are interested in organising your own Community Action Day with your councillors, please

contact communities@southswindon-pc.gov.uk.



Badbury Park Councillors with volunteers at the recent Badbury Park Community Action Day

NEW VOLUNTEER PLATFORM

Volunteers play a crucial role in supporting the work of the Parish Council and the wider community. There are many positive examples of volunteering across South Swindon, and we are committed to supporting the groups and volunteers who help our communities to thrive.

We have partnered with Voluntary Action Swindon and Central Swindon North Parish Council to provide a platform to connect volunteers with providers of volunteer opportunities. If you are interested in general volunteering in your area or across the Parish, please sign up using the new platform.

www.southswindon-pc.gov.uk/volunteers



TeamKinetic

PRIDE IN WALCOT EAST AND PARK NORTH

The Council is working alongside Walcot East Councillors and Heidi Alexander MP to engage with residents about the Pride in Place project, which is set to bring a government investment of £20m over 10 years to Walcot East and Park North.

A survey has been launched to find out how this money should be spent, and to help establish a board to represent the local community. Please share your views and get involved: www.heidialexander.org.uk/prideinwalcotandparknorthsurvey



OLD TOWN & BADBURY PARK LIBRARIES

The Parish Council is proud to have expanded the library service it offers to residents since taking over the management of Old Town Library.

Recognising the importance of early years literacy the council opened Badbury Park Library in 2023 which primarily focusses on children. The council is now focussed on improving its service for adults with an improved adults section at Old Town Library and more opportunities for reservations to allow customers the chance to get the books they want.

Contact Details & Opening Times:

Old Town Library:

Email: oldtownlibrary@southswindon-pc.gov.uk

Phone: 07786 027185

Monday – Friday: 11am – 4:30pm

Saturday: 10am – 1pm

Badbury Park Library:

Email: badburyparklibrary@southswindon-pc.gov.uk

Phone: 07827 333664

Wednesday-Thursday: 10:30am-4:30pm

Friday: 11:30am-4:30pm

Saturday: 9:30am-1:30pm



Councillors have supported the growth of Badbury Park Library



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BUCKHURST IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Buckhurst Field Improvement Plan is the largest programme of investment the Parish Council has made, with nearly £900,000 spent on the recreation ground. Recognising the open space's importance, councillors have prioritised investing in its amenities and offering opportunities for young people, consulting residents to ensure we deliver what people want.

Now Parish Councillors are planning more improvements, focussing investment in the middle and upper fields. The council's plan is to make the space more of a park-like amenity.

Buckhurst Improvements - Phase 2

- ▶ More trees and landscaped amenities
- ▶ More free activities for residents
- ▶ Upgrade of Buckhurst Field Cyclepath
- ▶ New football pitch for community use



Above - Buckhurst Skate Park opening

Below - Cllrs Bushell and Allsopp support unveiling of Harry Scott bench



The Parish Council and local councillors have supported the recent investment into Buckhurst Field. This was recognised by national government, who recently visited the site

What do you get for your COUNCIL PRECEPT?

Did you know South Swindon Parish is the sixth largest Parish Council in the country? The budget for 2026-27 has been set and will see residents of an average band D property pay £3.65 per week for all of the services we provide.



YOUR COUNCILLORS



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For more details and contact information, visit
our website:

www.southswindon-pc.gov.uk/council/councillors

WHO DOES WHAT?

South Swindon Parish Council



Grass cutting



Dead Animal Collection

(public land only - report to SBC)



Shrub/Hedge Maintenance



Hypodermic Needle Collection

(public land only)



Tree Maintenance

(from ground using hand tools only)



Graffiti Removal

(small tags only)



Emptying Bins

(Dog & Litter)



Fly Tip Removal

(car boot size loads only)



Litter Picking



Allotments



Street Cleaning/Sweeping

(pavements only)



Play Area Maintenance

Swindon Borough Council



Adoption



Environmental Health



Adult Safeguarding



Highways



Benefits



Housing



Births, Deaths & Marriages



Libraries



Blue Badge Parking



Neighbourhood Wardens



Burials



Noise Nuisance



Child Safeguarding



Parking Enforcement



Council Tax



Planning Applications



Cremation



Recycling & Refuse Collection



Drainage, Flooding & Gully Clearance



School/Education

Elections & Voting

Tree Maintenance (Any work over 12ft)

CONTACT

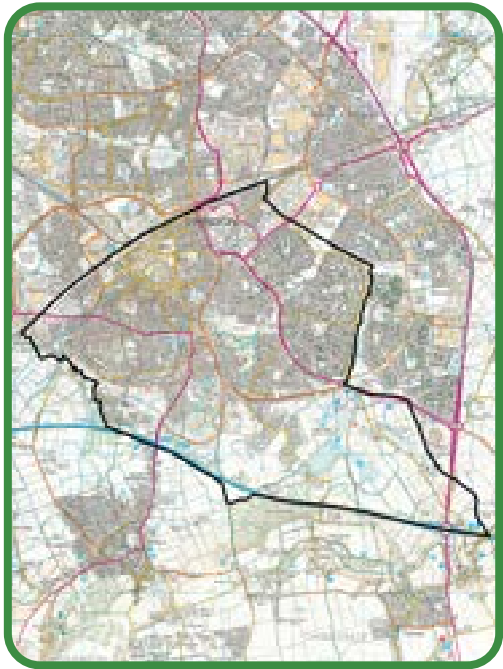
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