Chairman's Report to the Flax Bourton Annual Residents' Meeting 2026

The Parish Council has met regularly during the year and councillors have attended forums and meetings with North Somerset Council. Council meetings are now held in the Hall of the Flax Bourton Village Hall (The Hub) on the second Monday each month except August. Residents are very welcome to attend.

During the year we worked closely with North Somerset Highways on the main issues for the Parish including flooding and road safety.

A major drainage scheme was carried out during the summer to address the serious flooding at the junction of Post Office Lane which had persisted for many years. This proved to be successful during the subsequent heavy autumn storms. In the present difficult financial circumstances, we were very fortunate that substantial funding was approved by North Somerset for this work.

New 'Flax Bourton' signs have been installed at the Backwell end of the village and the demolished bus shelter at The Grange has been replaced. We are awaiting replacement of the parish boundary sign.

We continue to press for the completion of the A370 road safety scheme following the implementation of the first phase. The remaining works comprise the provision of central islands for pedestrian crossing points, improvement to pavements and extension of the cycle path at the end of the bypass to a safe crossing point. The Parish Council has set aside significant funds as a contribution but this work is not currently programmed by North Somerset. We are hoping that funds can be made available from the government sponsored Bus Service Improvement Plan for access to bus stops.

Progress was made with improvements to the pavement from the village to Backwell Farleigh which is frequently obstructed by weed growth. We are seeking a permanent solution to maintenance as this is the main route for schoolchildren to Backwell school.

We have worked with the Footpaths Officer to achieve repairs and improvements to the network of footpaths around the village.

We are progressing the acquisition of the area of designated community land adjacent to the primary school. This achieved considerable support at a recent public meeting.

Other activities include:

- Provision of an additional defibrillator at Post Office Lane.
- Replacement of defibrillators at the Village Hall and at the Primary School which had reached end of life.
- Carried out tree safety work at the Farleigh Green playing field.
- contributed to the consultation on the North Somerset Local Plan which will set out policies for development in Somerset up to 2037/9. The plan is expected to be adopted in 2027.

We are grateful to the Hub CIO who manage the Village Hall on behalf of the community. The Parish Council has jointly contributed to fabric repairs. A new externally accessible WC is planned for users of the playing fields.

I should like to extend thanks to members of the Parish Council and volunteers who have made a valuable contribution to our community, especially to our District Councillor Annemieke Waite and to Helen Nelson our Parish Clerk and Frank our Village Orderly. Also, we welcome Charlie Apps and Sue McKinney as new Parish Councillors. There are currently two further vacancies on the council which we are seeking volunteers to fill.

Geoff Coombs
Chair of Council