

EDENFIELD COMMUNITY NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM MARCH 2026 UPDATE



The Forum's 2026 Annual General Meeting will take place on Monday 30th March at 7.45pm in the Community Centre. **The "Future of the Forum" will be a key matter for discussion** with further details on this issue set out overleaf. The meeting is open to all Edenfield residents (although only Forum members can vote on resolutions). As there are significant issues to consider, **please attend if possible as the more voices heard the better.**

TAYLOR WIMPEY SITE

As all are probably aware, work has started on the Market Street site with the creation of a temporary entrance. Behind this, the field is being levelled, and a small car park is to be created. Initially this will be used for site vehicles, but in due course will be available for use by the general public. The footpath on Market Street will be moved onto the site to widen the road and allow for the creation of a right-hand turning lane and permanent site entrance. This is likely to involve temporary traffic lights for several weeks in April.



Construction of three houses will start shortly in the field between Market Street and Mushroom House followed by a further twelve houses in the field accessed through the gap between Mushroom House and Alderwood Grove. A further 223 houses will gradually follow on the rest of the site but prior thereto there will be a considerable amount of ground stabilisation/levelling work to be undertaken.

NORTHSTONE SITE

The construction of 49 houses on the Blackburn Road site has already started and will continue over the next few months. Blackburn Road is to be both fully closed and partially closed for several weeks, possibly commencing in April but more likely May. It should be noted that Northstone have applied for planning permission for a further 46 houses to be built in the field adjacent to their current site.

Work on the Burnley Road car park will continue. Around June it will gradually open for school staff use and to parents for child drop off/pick up. Later in the year the car park will be available, outside of school hours, for use by the general public.

CHATTERTON HEY SITE

The Chatterton Hey site at the bottom of Exchange Street is currently in the process of being sold to a developer. Once sold it is likely planning permission will be applied for in respect of up to 100 houses. This will directly impact on Exchange Street, the Southern end of Market Street and Highfield Road. Any changes to parking arrangements and traffic flow will be dealt with as part of the planning application.

FUTURE OF THE FORUM (For discussion at the 2026 AGM)

Background

Whilst the formal objectives of the Forum are quite wide, the principal reasons for its creation were to (i) Create an approved Neighbourhood Plan for its designated area (broadly Edenfield) and (ii) Oppose the Local Plan proposal to build 100s of houses on Green Belt land in Edenfield.

The Neighbourhood Plan has now been created and came fully in force in April 2025. In theory planning applicants should now follow it and RBC should have regard to it when considering planning applications. Rossendale Council have approved the Local Plan, the Edenfield H66 Masterplan and planning applications relative to about 70% of the H66 housing allocation with the likelihood that the remaining 30% will follow suit in due course.

Overall, much of the original purpose of the Forum has ended. However, the Forum retains its “designated status”^{*} which means that it is entitled to update the Neighbourhood Plan. This is likely to be appropriate in the period 2027 to 2029 when the Rossendale Council Local Plan is to be reviewed/updated taking into account new government guidelines, in particular, the need for additional sites to be identified for house building. The Forum, with its “designated status”, will be part of this process which may help to resist or, at least, have a say in whether and where further house building will be permitted in Edenfield.

Current Dilemma

Some of the Management Committee have served for many years and are looking to reduce their involvement with the Forum. Despite efforts, it has not been possible to attract new Management Committee members. As a result, the burden of running the Forum is likely to fall upon a lesser number of individuals.

Possible Solutions

- 1) A number (ideally at least three) of individuals join the Management Committee OR
- 2) The Forum is dissolved such that its “designated status” is foregone but all administrative burdens are removed. The Edenfield Village Residents Association (EVRA) has indicated that it could take over monitoring compliance with the current Neighbourhood Plan, commenting on Planning Applications and liaising with the Council/Developers in respect of the developments currently in progress. Without “designated status” EVRA would not be entitled to revise the Neighbourhood Plan, and the benefit of the current Neighbourhood Plan would diminish as time passes OR
- 3) EVRA could take over the monitoring, commenting and liaising functions as per 2 above and the Forum could continue for a short period in a semi dormant state with a “skeleton” Management Committee. In due course it could be re energised, but this would need new individuals to come forward to join the Management Committee. In the absence of new individuals coming forward it is unlikely that the Forum would have the resources to deal with revising the Neighbourhood Plan.

Summary

The Forum has reached the end its original brief and is now at a crossroads. Should it disband or are there Edenfield residents who can become involved in the next stage?

