

SOUTHROP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 5th May 2022

IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SOUTHROP AT 6.30PM

This is NOT a Council meeting; it is a meeting of the residents of Southrop Village. The format of the meeting provides the opportunity for local organizations to report directly to the people of Southrop. Residents will have the chance to ask questions, in an open forum. Refreshments will be available.

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Jones, County Cllr Dom Morris, District Cllr Theodoulou, Ms. R Reid.

2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting May 2019

The Minutes from the meeting held in May 2019 were approved and were signed by Cllr Guest as Chairman of the Parish Council.

3. Report from the Chair – Southrop Parish Council

This is our first "live" APM since May 2019 and I'm delighted that you have been able to join us this evening!

I shall be reporting on the Parish Council's activities during the year and then the other village organisations will be reporting on their activities. There will be the opportunity for questions after each report.

SPC meetings

There were 6 SPC meetings in the year to 31 March 2022, all but one of which were live meetings.

SPC Finances

At our previous year end, 31 March 2021, we had reserves of £15,146. We decided to leave the annual precept unchanged at £12,500. Expenditure during the year was some £6,200 less than our income, so our reserves increased to £21,372 as at 31 March 2022.

This means that our reserves are now back to the level they were two years ago, before the £10,000 grant we made to the Village Hall. This leaves us well placed to assist with future capital projects which we think will be of benefit to Southrop.

Roads

We continue our constructive dialogue with Dan Tiffney, the recently appointed Glos. Highways Manager responsible for our area.

Dan has been most supportive, and we thank him especially for finally expediting the removal of the "temporary" red emergency barriers near the bridge and their replacement with permanent wooden barriers and reflective posts.

Dan has also helped secure agreement to resurface the stretch of the road from the bridge to The Swan, scheduled for this financial year. We are pushing for the remainder of the main road through the village to be resurfaced too, though the timing of this, if we are successful, is uncertain.

We have also drawn their attention to the dangerous South Farm crossroads.

Footpaths

We also continue our good working relationship with Malcolm Higgins, the Cotswold AONB Voluntary Warden responsible for footpaths in our area.

We would like to thank Malcolm and his team for the much good work they have done in and around the village; recently, this has included better signposting of footpaths and the replacement of the kissing gate allowing access from the road to the Jubilee Close field.

Planning

We continue to monitor all local planning applications, recording comments with CDC where appropriate.

We have made efforts to understand how and why CDC come to some of their planning decisions.

CDC have changed how planning matters are dealt with and there has been considerable dissatisfaction amongst many Parish Councils about the effect of these changes.

We have met with CDC leaders and representatives of other Parish Councils both privately and in public forums proactively to improve the situation. This is ongoing and seems to be bringing some constructive progress.

Speeding

This continues to be a problem in the village. We thank Bob Gowland for his efforts in controlling the situation and monitoring the possible introduction of automatic speed cameras which at last seems to be making promising progress.

Annual Litter Pick

We arranged the Annual Litter Pick over the weekend of 2/3 April and, once again, this was a great success with many volunteers stepping forward to help with all the roads in the village and much of the surrounding area covered.

Community Emergency Plan

This is a plan SPC prepares to guard against the effects of emergencies such as flooding, loss of power or water supply etc. It has very recently been updated.

The Swan

SPC was successful recently in its application to CDC to register The Swan as an Asset of Community Value. This recognises the value of The Swan as a pub and generally as an asset for the village.

We understand that Thyme has no intention of selling The Swan or seeking a change of use, but if this were to change then SPC would be informed and the village would have the opportunity to make an offer to buy The Swan.

Grasscutting

SPC last year employed Willow Gardening Services as our contractor to cut the grass on the verges and footpaths in the village.

They completed their first cut this year about a week ago and we hope you like the result!

Although this is essentially a Glos. CC obligation, it often doesn't get done, so we prefer to use our own contractor and recover an agreed contribution from GCC.

Cllr T Guest – Chairman

Q: Regarding Speed cameras –

A: Cllrs Giles and Guest explained that new types of speed monitoring equipment will soon be available. There has been a delay release of this equipment due to issues with data protection, which have now been resolved. There are two units, one is semi-automated and the other fully automated allowing images to be transmitted directly to the police at certain times of the day. Cllr Guest explained that the fully automated unit was expensive but would be worth installing in the village, given the extent of vehicles speeding. This unit is being trialed in Stroud and a other areas, and information on its wider availability is being sought.

Q: Regarding grasscutting and the danger at the Fairford/Southrop/Quenington/Lechlade crossroad particularly in the summer months when foliage is abundant, and visibility is restricted.

A: Cllrs explained that a new contractor had been appointed last year and has recently carried out the first cut for this year. It was hoped that residents were

pleased with the result. It was agreed that the contractor would be asked to extend the verge cutting to cover the verge upto the Southrop sign on the Fairford road. The SPC would also be contact Glos. Highways regarding the crossroads and cutting back the trees and shrubs.

4. **Financial Report** - The Financial report covered in the Chairmans Report above.
5. **Report from County/District Councillor** – No report was available from the District Councillor in his absence; however, County Cllr Morris had submitted a report which was read out by the Clerk and is as follows:

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY
COUNCILLOR REPORT



It was a huge privilege to be elected as your new County Councillor in May to represent Fairford, Lechlade and the Villages division of Gloucestershire County Council for the next four years. My family have lived and farmed amongst you for over sixty years, so I feel fortunate to serve you.

I met a huge number of your out on your doorsteps, but I am conscious that Covid meant that I could not meet you all. We live at Coneygar Farm, Quenington. I have spent the last 15 years advising the UK government in war zones around the world including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Nigeria and Mali. Whilst dad is still very much the boss on the farm the plan is for me to do more and more.

My Priorities

Getting elected is like nothing I have ever done before and I certainly felt the weight of responsibility on my shoulders. I have prioritised:

Repairing our roads

Reducing speeding in our communities and driving through automated speed watch

- Stopping the discharge of sewage into the rivers Coln & the Windrush
- Working with our Police Commissioner to reduce rural crime
- Better preparation for flooding
- Helping communities to Build Back Better after the pandemic

I currently serve on the following committees:

Chair Environment Scrutiny Committee

Commons & Rights of Way Committee

Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee

Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee

In addition, I was recently appointed as a Highways Customer Champion in recognition of my campaigning to improve things faster on our roads and give you a better experience when you engage with our Highways.

GCC Update

The County-council part of Council Tax was pegged at a 2.99% increase. 1% of that being ring-fenced for Adult Social Care. Hopefully, this was considered an acceptable increase given the emerging inflation figures. This was probably the most positive funding-settlement from central government for a generation. This enables Adult Care and Children's Services Budgets to have realistic increases in funding given demographic pressures on both those services of around 10% growth per annum. Government was also true to its word and fully-funded the additional costs incurred due to Covid.

We're also investing more money into highways maintenance, fixing potholes and highways safety schemes, including a £30,000 a year Highways Local fund at the discretion of your county councillor.

A new four-year Capital programmes has also been confirmed of £100 million into roads resurfacing schemes, £145 million into new schools & refurbishment across the county and further investment in cycle routes and drainage schemes.

Excellent news, locally, that Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service will be retained within GCC and not hived-off to the Police. I think that adds significant protection to Fairford's Community Fire & Rescue Station and I want to thank the team for all that they do to keep us safe – we have had our fair share of visits from them on the farm!

Highways - can I please thank everyone for their continued patience when it comes to local roadworks. Traffic lights can be very frustrating but, ultimately, are necessary as we continue the major task of rebuilding and enhancing our local infrastructure - whether it be our roads, electric, water or gas supplies,

upgrading of broadband or cycle routes. Locally, I'm delighted that the county council has now completed the scheme in Kempsford and more will follow.

Delivering

I'm pleased to have been able to secure grants recently from Gloucestershire County Council under the "Build Back Better" grant schemes, these include supporting:

- Construction of the exciting Fairford Skate Park
- Lechlade Music Festival
- Fairford Parish Football Club
- Whelford Village Hall
- 1st Kempsford Rainbows
- Fairford library
- Quenington Brownies

I remain incredibly excited about supporting the construction of a Fairford -Lechlade Multi-Use Path and determined to find a way of making this happen. It is a fab way of reconnecting our communities, driving tourism and healthy living.

Flood Information

Having lived on the banks of the Coln and seen the near miss in 2020 flooding is often on my mind. The county council website has recently been updated with a "Flood Guide". A "button" at the top of the home page on the GCC website, www.gloucestershire.gov.uk will take you through to comprehensive information about what to do if you are threatened by flood waters.

Tour of Britain

In September the "Tour of Britain" cycle race comes to Gloucestershire. We have both a Start and Finish stage in the Men's race as well as part of the Women's race coming through too.

Finally, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can help in any way with any county-council related matter: Dominic.Morris@gloucestershire.gov.uk

6. **Report from the Chair – Southrop Village Hall Committee**

Margaret Davey read out the report submitted from the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee.

- **Overview**

Another quiet year due to COVID
Shop and post office continue
Coffee morning still a success
School activities continue

- **Committee Changes**

New Vice Chair – Ed Morris
New Committee member – Gretchen Shoring
New Secretary – Rhona Reid

- **Funding and Grants**

None received during the period
"Village Gathering" event raised funds
Plans to carry out events throughout the year to continue to raise funds in the normal way

- **SVH 2025**

Plans being agreed and drawn up by our draftsman
Engagement with the Council expected throughout the year to progress plans

-**Summary**

New members joining with good contributions so far
Building work being progressed towards a planning stage
Events to be held as normal now restrictions have been lifted

Duncan Smith - Chair of Trustees

7. **Report from Jubilee Close Committee and selection of new Committee.**

Andy Howarth presented a report from Jubilee Close Committee: -

- Field - In very good condition. Mowing is underway and we are in the second year of our two-year contract. We should soon put this to a competitive tender process to ensure we are getting value for money.
- Saplings - After a recent inspection we have noticed some have died. Work is planned to trim around the others to allow light, nutrients and water to reach the roots of the surviving saplings. This will also cut back the sloe bushes which are sprouting up again.
- We could as a committee remove the dead saplings and replace them with fruit trees to create a community orchard - Free apples, pears, plums etc to those who want to pick their own.... One for discussion
- Pavillion - Overall in good condition but with some maintenance required. We have a couple of people looking at this and work is to be completed as soon as we can.

To do list

Confirm the boundary line between the field and Box Bush Cottage - This is underway and should hopefully be resolved quickly.

New goal nets - You may or may not have noticed we have some new goal nets. These were kindly organised by Geoff Craig and donated by Mr Manjit Dale. Leonard has kindly agreed to write to thank him.

Q: Regarding future plans for the pavilion –

A: Not a great building – best option is to knock it down and rebuild but there may be restrictions. Looking at MUGA

Cllr C Brickley suggested that an outline plan should be drawn up and sent out to the village in the form of a survey. She expressed concerns that the field is hugely under used resource and that the SPC would look favourably at an application for capital investment. Requires a long-term plan and should be considered in parallel with the Village Hall upgrade.

8. Report from St. Peters Church

Report was received from Jerry Hibbert, Charles Llewellyn and Margaret Davey.

Jerry Hibbert reported as follows:-

- Services back to normal every Sunday at 9.30am. Evensong once a month especially in the summer months with the lighter evenings. These are all well attended.
- Creation of a Garden of Remembrance for the interment of ashes. A specific area has been reserved for the interment of ashes either loosely or in bio-degradable caskets. This will last for the next 50+ years. No markings will be permitted where ashes lie but a place for plaques is being looked at.
- Church heating – boiler needs replacing – no oil-fired heating will be considered, and gas heating isn't possible, so electric heating is the only option, which is expensive.
- Thanks to Margaret Davey, Martin Bacon and Charles Llewellyn and of course the Vicar and his team.
- Fund raising – See report from Charles Llewellyn below.

Margaret Davey reported as follows:-

Application made to the Church **Don't be afraid; just believe."**

Mark 5 verse 36

- of England regarding the creation of a Garden of Remembrance. The particular department meet every 6 weeks. A notice was received earlier this week to confirm that the application has been approved and they now require financial information, which will go to the Chancellor of the Diocese in Gloucester. Quotes have been received for a stone wall at the bottom of the churchyard. This will consist of an 8m x 6m wall surrounded by gravel. This will be built in Cotswold stone and planted up with shrubs for each season. Ashes will be placed in specific area dependant on the time of year when interments take place. 2 very generous donations have already been received.
- Mr. Llewellyn reported as follows:-
- Introduction of St Peter's Church Restricted Fund
- The church needs to raise funds to pay its expenses of around £25,000 every year, before any special projects or major repairs.
- Half of these funds are needed to pay the parochial costs of the parish: clergy, vicar's expenses, holding services, the youth worker, and other charitable donations. These costs are met mainly from contributions to the Parish Giving Scheme, collections at services, gift aid, and from money box and card reader donations. The church has 41 adults from the village community that are on the Electoral Roll of the church, and many of these contribute in this way.
- The remaining funds are raised from fund raising events, legacies, and special appeals from time to time. These funds are used to pay for maintenance of the building and the churchyard, running repairs and administrative costs.
- Most historic churches, which are recognised as important assets of their local community, are setting up a restricted funds which receive monies from those people who wish their donations to be used solely for the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings and churchyard, and occasional contributions to

larger improvement projects. This is a particular opportunity for Southrop, where we have a beautiful Grade 1 Listed building which is nearly 1000 years old and amongst other interesting features includes a Norman font which is one of the oldest in England. It is an asset which the village can treasure. And it needs to be maintained in a good state of repair.

- The PCC has approved the setting up of St Peter's Church Friends Restricted Fund which will be used to receive donations in the way described above. A leaflet is being finalised and for those that would like to make regular donations a direct debit scheme will be set up. All donations can be Gift Aided if the donor so chooses. This will enable current and past members of the community to donate if they wish to do so.
- One of the immediate and urgent projects that has already attracted donations into the Fund is the proposed Garden Of Remembrance which Margaret Davey is designing and is seeking approval to establish from the Diocese of Gloucester.

9. **Report from Southrop Primary School Co-Head Teachers' Report to the Parish Council**

**Together we
can fly**

What if I fall?

Oh, but...

**What if
you fly?**



“

In our Christian school we treat everyone with respect and compassion. Our faith and friendships give us strength to persevere to achieve our aspirations.

We started this academic year with some Covid restrictions still in place, but with the belief that we needed our school community to find a new normal that worked for all. We welcomed five new reception children and one year 6 child into the school.

Although the pandemic was far from over and some remote learning has continued, we started the year thinking about how we can support our children to deal with the trauma of living through such extraordinary times. A member of staff has committed to training for a diploma from Trauma Informed Schools UK and we have updated our nurture cabin, which provides a safe space area, with sensory toys and lights and an outside pod. The children now have a brain break during the afternoon, doing breathing and other sensory activities. We have been very fortunate to receive funding from the Friends of Fairford and Lechlade Communities and the CHEQS and Local Villages Trust, which we have used to cover weekly Beanology wellbeing sessions for every child.

We have encouraged links with the local community, working with and visiting The Madhatter Bookshop in Burford, singing carols at Lechlade Garden Centre and helping at the village shop once a month. We have had a couple of visits to Thyme, who kindly hosted a staff training day on the first day back after Christmas. We have also restarted our worship in church monthly. The Year 5&6s enjoyed taking part in the Gloucestershire

Nature Quiz and we were very grateful for the help that David Chapman and Kathy Newton gave them to prepare. This year we started a Chess Club, which has been run by Stephen Wells, and Alec Atchison will soon be helping out too. We are also scheduled to visit the Ponsonby's farm at Lemhill.

We are still keen to enrich the children's education in whatever way we can. Trips have included The Ashmolean Museum, Cheltenham Literature Festival, Mary Arden's farm in Stratford and a residential in the Forest of Dean. The Reception and Year 1 children have continued at forest school weekly. Cookery sessions by Cooker Club have been Ancient Greek feasts and a Jubilee banquet. This term the children will also be enjoying alternative sports. They Year 4, 5 and 6s are having fencing lessons. Year 2 and 3 children will be completing 'Scooter Wise', a programme which helps children ride a scooter safely so that they can enjoy the freedom and fun. Scooters help improve coordination and enable children to learn how to balance using their weight. Reception and Year 1 will start Balanceability, a programme designed to help children gain the confidence and skills required to ride a pedal bike independently.

We continue to strive to improve the school site. The focus this year has been the wildlife garden. We have had working parties during the holidays and weekends to adapt the veggie plots, pull weeds, add plants to encourage insects and renew the gravel. We are keen to ensure the wildlife garden is also a place where the children can take time to enjoy nature and a moment of peace.

Music lessons have continued with the children having the opportunity to play guitar, ukulele, piano and drums. They also play the ocarina and the recorder as a whole class. The children have participated in the nativity, singing with sign language at Lechlade Garden Centre.

We hope this brief report has given members of the community a flavour of the range of activities that are part of the daily life of the school. Despite the challenges we have face this is a thriving and successful school, and we would like to feel that the whole community values having their own village school at the heart of their community.

Julia McLellan & Megan Davies - Co-Head Teachers

10. Report from Village Fete

Andy Howarth reported as follows:

- Despite asking for feedback on the fete's format, none was forthcoming, so we took no news as an acceptance and the green light to proceed
- The fete will follow the established format with the use of the Village Hall, closed road and Gore.
- Funds will be split as usual between the School, Church, Village Hall and Jubilee Close
- As every year volunteers are always welcome as are contributions to the bottle tombola, produce, bric-a-brac, crockery smash and cake stall
- A date of the 11th June has been chosen to hold the Fete.
- A road closure order has been applied for and a response is awaited. Volunteers are required to man the stalls. So if anyone is interested please contact Andy Howarth.

11. Report from the Police

A report has been submitted. Unfortunately, there were no representatives available to attend this meeting. The report is as follows: -

Your Neighbourhood Policing Team is a group of local police officers and Police community Support Officers dedicated to serving your community. The team is based at Cirencester Police Station and supported by additional officers from the wider area and Local Policing Team (999 responders). We cover Fairford & Lechlade along with 28 other Parishes. We provide Hi-vis patrols, tackle ASB, work closely with local authorities, community leaders and residents to identify community concerns for your area. This helps us to find useful, long-term solutions to local problems, while maintaining our wider focus on reducing crime across Gloucestershire. This report covers 25th April 2021 to 25th April 2022:
 Reported crimes = 11 (April 2021 – April 2022)
 Reported crimes = 5 (April 2020 – April 2021)
 A 120% increase

These are broken down as follows:

Offences	Year	Numbers	Year	Numbers
Burglary residential	2021-22	1	2020-21	0
Burglary business	2021-22	0	2020-21	1
Violence	2021-22	2	2020-21	0
Sexual offences	2021-22	1	2020-21	0
Assault with injury	2021-22	1	2020-21	0
Theft	2021-22	4	2020-21	1
Criminal Damage	2021-22	0	2020-21	2
Criminal Damage Arson	2021-22	0	2020-21	0
Other notifiable	2021-22	0	2020-21	0
Harassment	2021-22	2	2020-21	1
Obscene	2021-22	0	2020-21	0

Current plans for the coming year – work closely with NHW, Communities, Parish Council, School and Local partners. Continue providing visible patrols to reduce Anti-social behaviour and crime.

Speed enforcement with Trucam and Enforcement Van

Promote Community Speed Watch

Hold mobile Police information points

Offer Crime Prevention

The area currently has not Neighbourhood Police Officer but your PCSO's are PCSO 9302 Zee Bulbul and PCSO 9310 Angela Barker.

Sign up to your Community Alerts. Registration is simple and can be done by logging onto www.yourcommunityalerts.co.uk

Please report incidents or suspicious incidents to Police by phoning 101 or on-line by visiting www.gloucestershire.constabulary.uk

In an emergency always call 999.

Lastly, we would all like to thank Southrop Parish Council and the wider local community for their continued support to help make this village a safer place to live, work and visit.

12. **Other reports** **The Swan/Thyme**

Harry Shepherd, newly appointed General Manager of Thyme. Has worked in hotels across the country. Joined Thyme in November 2021. The Swan hoped that it would open on the 18th May 2022. It has had extensive work done with new kitchen and other repairs. Unfortunately, due to the shortage of staff for front of house it is now unlikely that the Swan will re-open in May. Five employment agencies are looking for staff. Consideration is also being given to how best to use the back room, previously the skittle alley and suggestions for opening a store selling dairy and meat products is being considered. The new Swan will be more of a pub serving pub food at reasonable prices.

13. Open Session

There being no further business the Annual parish meeting closed at 8pm.

Chairman..... Southrop Parish Council