



Chair's opening remarks

Firstly an apology – it has been over two years since you last received a Parish Council newsletter – this is a longer gap than we intended and we will aim to issue full newsletter updates more frequently going forward. However, as you will see from the content in this newsletter, we have been busy during the last two years, and I hope you enjoy reading about what we have been up to and the key local issues. If you have questions or comments about any of these items, or if you think there are other issues we should be considering, please get in touch.

I would like to thank all my fellow councillors for their efforts during the past couple of years, including during the challenging times we have faced since the pandemic began in early 2020. In addition, I would like to thank everyone who has gone out of their way to help neighbours and the wider the community since COVID hit us, reminding us what a lovely area we are fortunate to live in.

Most importantly I wish all our residents a happy and healthy 2021. Clearly the challenges of the pandemic are going to be with us in the early months of the year, but I am genuinely hopeful that from Spring/Summer onwards we can start to enjoy some of the many things the pandemic has taken away from us.

Who we are?

Your South Milford parish councillors are Chris Gore (chair), David Gigg (vice chair), Julian Donnelly, Rita de Faria Dean, Georgina Houston, Tim Grogan, Simon Brooksbank, Glenis Shaw and Kelly Diamond. We are supported by Ann Rowling as the Parish Clerk. The parish councillors are all unpaid volunteers. We work hard to make our parish a better place to live, work and play. This is not always an easy task, particularly since we have no direct powers and limited finances, and often require support from Selby District Council (SDC) and/or North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) to take action and deliver change.

When and where do we meet?

Our meetings are traditionally held at Grove House, on Grove Crescent in South Milford. However, since lockdown, in line with guidance, our meetings have been held via an online platform (Google Meet), details of which will always be shared along with the agenda ahead of the meeting. Although there is no substitute for face-to-face meetings, these virtual meetings have been well organised and are proving to be a great option whilst the more traditional meetings are not available to us.

Our meetings are held most months and are often (but not always) on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm. Check our website, Facebook page or notice boards for meeting details. Meetings are open to the public and you do not need to book ahead to attend, although only items on the agenda can be discussed. Please contact the Clerk in advance if you wish to add an item to an agenda.

How to contact us?

South Milford Parish Clerk (Ann Rowling)

01977 681517 or annrowling@gmail.com

Parish Council website www.southmilfordparishcouncil.co.uk

Follow us and contact us via our Facebook page

Selby District Council

01757 705101 or www.selby.gov.uk

North Yorkshire County Council

01609 780780 or www.northyorks.gov.uk

South Milford Community Support

The Parish Council continues to support the South Milford Community Support group, formed at the start of lockdown in March last year in response to the pandemic. The group offers help and assistance to those in need of food/supplies, support, advice or just a friendly chat! Clearly this support is very important during the challenging months ahead. The group is supported by volunteers from our wonderful surrounding villages and the council would like to thank all these volunteers for their efforts. A flyer with more information and contact details is included with this newsletter – please use this support if you need it.

Dog Exercise Area

The Parish Council is considering using its remaining Section 106 monies (funds available for use to improve open spaces following previous housing developments in the village) to fund the creation of a dog exercise area. The Parish Council understands that there is demand for such a facility for the people of South Milford and Lumby. The only possible site for this would be the Old Quarry, to the right of Westfield Lane, under the trees on the way out of the village. A dog exercise area here would be: for the exclusive use of dogs; large enough to allow the dogs to run, play and be properly exercised; and be fully enclosed and safe. It would be set back from the road to allow a wide walk way off the road for pedestrians.

There are still various hoops to jump through to turn this into reality (including planning approval), and we would appreciate residents views (for or against) regarding this initiative – so please do get in touch if you have any thoughts about this.

Primary School Library

One of the highlights for the council in 2019 was being able to make a significant contribution towards the creation of the new library at South Milford Parish School. This facility is now fully complete and benefits hundreds of children in our village, providing a rich environment for reading enjoyment and our support of this project is something we are very proud of.

Planning

While SDC's role is to rule on planning applications, the Parish Council's role is to comment on the applications as representatives of the Parish. The Parish Council has no power to permit or refuse planning applications.

SDC's planning website is www.selby.gov.uk/planning where residents can comment and obtain guidance on planning applications. If you are thinking of making comments to SDC regarding planning applications, please consider attending the relevant Parish Council meeting (where the application is on the agenda) to air your views and obtain guidance from the Council regarding your comments.

Here are the most significant recent planning applications, together with some that have attracted high levels of resident interest:

- **The old Sand Lane stores** – There have been various applications for residential dwellings on this site. The most recent application was for 3 detached houses (with appropriate parking provision) which the Parish Council did not object to, and this has been approved by SDC.
- **Roadchef service station** – In summer 2019, Roadchef submitted plans for a service station on the land between the South Milford Hotel and the motorway. The Parish Council made no objections but asked SDC to consider adding conditions regarding the percentage of employees living within a set distance from the proposed site and Roadchef's engagement with the local community to deliver appropriate social value benefits. The status of this application is currently still pending with SDC.
- **Conversion of South Milford Methodist Church into four townhouses (7 High Street, South Milford)** – The Parish Council (together with several local residents) objected to this application at the time on the grounds of insufficient parking (the plans had no off-road parking) and we were surprised that it was approved by SDC, in an area where street parking and highway safety is already an issue. We have taken this up with SDC, as it appears to be a strange decision and counter to past SDC decisions and comments regarding parking requirements.
- **16 Low Street (near the Cumin Lounge)** – There have been significant delays and various applications for developments on this site. The most recent application was for four houses (with appropriate parking provision) which the Parish Council did not object to, but this has not yet been approved by SDC.
- **China Palace** – There was a recent application to demolish the current restaurant and erect 8 houses on the site. The Parish Council did not object to this, although we sought clarification regarding parking provisions for the cottages opposite the current restaurant building. Note that objecting on the grounds that we would like to retain the restaurant as an amenity in our village would not be classed as a valid reason for objection by the planning officers (this would not be a "material planning consideration"). The status of this application is currently still pending with SDC and in the meantime the restaurant continues to trade, subject to COVID restrictions.

Highways

Based on residents' comments and our views, below is a summary of the current main highways issues in the Parish:

Traffic and parking on Low Street, particularly close to the Cumin lounge – we have examined the issues at length, including raising them with the Highways team at NYCC, and have not been able to find any workable solutions. We have considered payment bollards, additional yellow lines and possible resident only parking permits (which are currently not supported by NYCC). Therefore, the main message regarding this issue is that all parking needs to be done with consideration for others, and clearly drivers should drive carefully and sensibly along this stretch of road.

Speeding – Various residents have written to the Parish Council with concerns regarding speeding traffic, including through Lumby and on Sand Lane, High Street and Low Street in South Milford. The Parish Council discussed the possible courses of action.

- One option which NYCC Highways has recommended is the Community Speed Watch programme. This initiative allows residents to be actively involved in addressing speed concerns, with the support of North Yorkshire Police and full training and equipment provided. If you are interested in volunteering to be part of a team in either South Milford or Lumby, please contact us. If there are sufficient numbers, we will try set up a Community Speed Watch group later this year.
- Another option is for the Parish Council to acquire a vehicle activated sign (a flashing sign displaying vehicles' speeds and encouraging them to slow down) – this would be moved across different locations in the parish. The sign costs multiple thousands of pounds, plus the cost of preparing the site, installing the sign and public liability insurance. There is a process to be followed so that NYCC authorises the installation of the sign. Additionally, the sign would need moving every few months so ensure continued impact on drivers' behaviour. To date, this option has been ruled out on cost, long-term impact and practical grounds, but this could be re-considered in the future.

HGVs through the village – The Council is aware of the issues with HGVs using unsuitable roads within the Parish, causing various problems and structural damage in some cases. We have worked with NYCC to erect sufficient and appropriate weight restriction signs (resulting in some new signs), and are currently reviewing the position of all such signs in the Parish, with the likely result being a request for further such signs.

Finally on highways, we lobbied for some time to have double yellow lines to stop the parking at the junction of Sand Lane and Low Street, which has led to safety concerns. These yellow lines have now been put in place, however to have greatest impact ideally they continue further up Sand Lane. The Parish Council has spoken to NYCC Highways team about extending the double yellow lines, but unfortunately the NYCC Highways team have stated that any such request would not be successful.

Footpaths

Public footpaths and bridleways are shown in NYCC's Definitive Map (www.northyorks.gov.uk/rights-way-maps click on 'View public rights of way'), and this prevails over the Ordnance Survey map if there are discrepancies. The Parish Council is pleased that the public has been using the public footpaths more since the first lockdown. However, a plea to please respect these rights of way and the environment we live in. Please stay on the paths, do not cross farmers' fields or walk on tracks which are private land, and do not leave litter and/or dog waste behind.

The Council has continued to work on various footpath issues within the Parish in the past few years, and has recently formed a team (including councilors and residents) to audit all footpaths in the Parish, with aim being to have them preserved as rights of way and appropriately maintained. Please get in touch if you'd like to join this team.

A separate joint statement from South Milford and Monk Fryston Parish Councils covering the current position regarding the Turpin Lane right of way near at Milford Grange and the footpath from Long Heads Lane to the A162 at Cass Lane, is available on our website, so we will not cover these here. NYCC has confirmed that the cut-through from Common Lane to the bypass (opposite Milford Plants) is a public bridleway, and this has now been marked on their definitive map, preserving it for future use.

NYCC has recently confirmed that London Road (at the back of the China Palace) ceased to be a public highway when the bypass was completed, and it does not have public footpath or bridleway status. The Parish Council is aware of the recent private land signs erected by residents – these were approved by NYCC and are legitimate given the route is not currently a public right of way. We are continuing to investigate this with the landowners and NYCC, with our aim being to ensure that this heavily used walking/running route remains useable by the public. Please await further updates, but in meantime the residents have kindly confirmed that considerate and polite pedestrians and cyclists can continue to use the London Road route.

South Milford Football Club

There have been significant positive developments at the football club in recent times. The re-formation of a senior team, to go with the successful junior teams as well as various projects to improve the facilities. These include pitch improvements, floodlighting and most significantly a changing room building. The latter is supported by significant donations from the FA, Selby's Community Engagement Forum, the Parish Council and a local benefactor. We are hopeful that this project will come to fruition in 2021, and we would like to thank all the volunteers at the Club who have worked so hard on turning this dream into reality.

Post Office update

Following the closure of the old Post Office at Sand Lane stores the Parish Council has worked with the Post Office and been successful in re-establishing a post office service for the village. This service is available Monday and Wednesday afternoons (12:30 – 2:30pm) at Grove House on Sand Lane, and the Post Office have done their best to maintain this even during COVID restrictions.

South Milford and Lumby District Councillor – Tim Grogan

In 2019 Parish Councillor Tim Grogan successfully competed in the District Elections and became our representative on Selby District Council. Here are Tim's thoughts in respect of his district council role...

"Since being elected as District Councillor for South Milford and Lumby my time has been spent on a variety of challenges. I have also received lots of training and currently serve on the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime panel, in addition to Selby's audit, planning and Policy Review committees.

I wanted to become a Councillor as I felt I could make a positive impact upon the lives of those living in South Milford and Lumby. I was aware of how easy it is to become cynical about your local council, especially as a former council Enforcement Officer who regularly fielded residents' many and varied complaints. However, appreciating the rewarding and fulfilling experience of resolving problems, and witnessing the changing of attitudes, makes all my efforts very worthwhile.

I know all too well that there are matters that SDC does get wrong and residents can play their part in bringing any difficulties to my attention. I can assure any of you that contact me that I will do all I can to right those wrongs."

Proposed unitary council

There are proposals to simplify and streamline the tiered council structure we currently have, where we sit under both SDC and NYCC. Under these proposals, district councils would disappear, with their responsibilities being assigned to the new unitary council (which would be split into various geographic areas). Town and Parish councils would remain, potentially with additional responsibilities, where this is possible and deemed efficient. We will provide updates as and when we have more certainty about these changes.

South Milford Against Flooding (SMAF)

SMAF and associated volunteers have continued their work preparing for the construction of a "slow the flow bund" on land near Steeton Hall. This "bund" is designed to allow flood water to pass through at a slower rate and over a longer time, an approach known to be successful at combating flooding. The bund itself will be funded by the Parish Council and we would like to thank SMAF and associated volunteers involved in trying to bring this project to fruition. We are hopeful that the bund should be constructed in the coming months.

Poppy display

A local resident is kindly co-ordinating knitted/crocheted poppies to form a large village display for Remembrance Day 2021. If you would like to be involved in this, please contact the Parish Council and we will pass your details on.

Defibrillators

We have four defibrillators in our area at: Grove House, the BP garage, the Swan pub and one in Lumby. With surplus funds from the petrol station defibrillator fundraiser, together with a Parish Council donation, we hope to install a new defibrillator at the church hall on High Street in 2021.

Dog fouling and fly tipping

Unfortunately dog fouling in certain areas in and around South Milford is an issue. The Parish Council's powers regarding this only stretch to additional signage and dog litter bins – we have exercised these powers to some extent and it is not clear that any further such actions would have a material effect. **We would ask everyone to be considerate and civil on their walks and clean up after themselves and their dogs. We are lucky to live in such a beautiful area, but it is up to us all to maintain it!** If you have information about any offenders, please provide these details directly to SDC who will investigate and issue significant fines where sufficient evidence is provided. We have installed a few new litter bins recently, but please feel free to suggest to us other places that would benefit from a new litter bin and we will consider this.

We have sought to deter fly tipping in the area by erecting anti fly tipping signs at various hot spot locations, but unfortunately it does remain an issue. If you see any fly tipping in the local area, please report it to SDC – there is an automated form on their website (www.selby.gov.uk/report-fly-tipping-or-fly-posting) or you can call 01757 705101, or email cleanstreets@selby.gov.uk.

Sherburn Aero Club

Overflying planes from Sherburn Aero Club has been brought up as an issue by some residents for many years. The club has set flight paths for circuits that pilots should adhere to. These do not directly pass over the villages and can be viewed on the Club's website at www.sherburnaeroclub.com (under Airfield then Community). Whilst these flight paths avoid the villages of South Milford and Lumby, they do pass close to our residential areas, therefore we should expect significant light aircraft traffic in the skies close to us – noting that the Aero Club is a busy airfield used a lot for training purposes, meaning flying repeated circuits is very common.

We have representation on the Aero Club Liaison Group and flag concerns via this channel and at meetings of this group. At the most recent meeting the Club accepted that there had been some overflying of Lumby and South Milford, which it said had been addressed. The Parish Council was reassured that the Club records complaints and takes action where necessary.

Other than reporting planes clearly deviating from the set routes (see contact details below), there is little that residents or the Parish Council can do about this issue – noting that none of the regulatory authorities (including the Civil Aviation Authority) appear to have any powers (and/or desires) to act in this area. We believe that we should seek to maintain a positive relationship with the Aero Club, working with them in a fair and constructive way to manage this issue going forward. Independent of the Parish Council, a group of residents have formed to report incidents of overflying to the Club. Please contact the Parish Council if you wish to join this group.

Email – flightdesk@sherburnaeroclub.com

Phone number – 01977 682 674

South Milford Park

South Milford park (on High Street) is owned by the Parish Council. The park is run entirely by volunteers, known to us all as the Park Committee. The Park Committee is always looking for help in running the park. If you'd like to help out, get in touch via Facebook @SouthMilfordPark or via email to park@southmilford.org

The Park Committee is responsible for maintaining and developing this fantastic space to ensure that we can enjoy it now and into the future. The Parish Council supports the Park Committee as volunteers and by funding the park's maintenance. Kelly Diamond represents the Parish Council on the Park Committee.

The Park Committee and the Parish Council have worked with Powergrid to install an electric socket for the Christmas lights which can be used in future years, and hopefully enjoyed at Carols in Park (all being well) in December 2021.

Gritting

We have recently been subjected to a spell of cold weather, leading to a number of slippery mornings on the roads and pavements around the village. It is important to note that NYCC only grit main roads (see www.northyorks.gov.uk/road-gritting for gritting routes), meaning that the majority of roads in our Parish and all pavements will not be treated by the authorities.

However, we are blessed with a significant number of grit bins throughout the Parish, available for resident use. The Parish Council funds the grit in the bins and aims to keep them stocked wherever possible. A map showing the location of the grit bins is available on our website, but please let us know if you have any questions about this. During the recent spell of cold weather, we have received requests for new grit bins in some locations – the council will consider these, together with reviewing the position of all current bins, during 2021.

We no longer have a volunteer group responsible for organising the spreading of grit around the village. If anyone is interested in forming such a group (perhaps covering just the area around your house?), please let the Parish Council know. In the meantime, we would encourage residents to use the grit bins provided to treat pavements and any particularly dangerous stretches of roads around their homes.