

SOUTHROP PARISH COUNCIL

January 2026

Happy new year to you all and welcome to the first Parish Council newsletter of 2026.

THYME PLANNING APPLICATION

You will all know that Thyme submitted a planning application last July to enlarge the Thyme operation by constructing three new bedrooms, and associated spa and leisure buildings, in a small field between Thyme and the Dovecote. This caused significant controversy in the village with around 50 objections lodged with CDC and around 35 support comments.

The application was referred to the CDC Planning and Licensing Committee (the "Committee") on 10 December 2025 where the Committee unanimously decided that a site inspection by members of the Committee was appropriate. This visit occurred on 7 January and the matter was then referred back to the Committee at its next meeting on 14 January. On the 14 January the application was permitted, with 5 members voting in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. More than 20 conditions have been attached by CDC to the permission including some designed to ensure that the development does not cause unnecessary noise or light pollution. We hope to liaise with Thyme, where appropriate, on how the conditions might best be applied.

QUARRY VIEW

In our newsletter last January we reported on a possible affordable housing development of approximately 12 houses on a 1 acre field owned by CDC near Quarry View. We learned about this at a very early stage and commissioned a Planning Consultant's report.

This report, which we immediately submitted to CDC, highlighted that the proposal would have breached several of CDC's planning guidelines, including the number of additional affordable homes permitted in a small village such as Southrop. Since submitting the report we have received no further communication from CDC on the subject.

30 ACRE FIELD

The much loved 30 acre field known as Wall Ground, entered from Eastleach Road beside Fyfield Manor, had been advertised for sale for some considerable time, but contracts for its sale were, we understand, exchanged (but not completed) only last Autumn.

We also understand that the buyer, whose name we do not know, told the vendor that the intention was to continue to use the field for grazing. However, shortly after exchange of contracts the field was put up for auction, by London based auctioneers Barney Estates, in 11 lots. This seemed to come as a complete, and unwelcome, surprise to the vendor and her advisers.

We now understand that the sale will not proceed.

LITTER PICK

This year we'll be organising our annual litter pick on Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 March. Do come along for an hour or two if you can and help restore the village to pristine condition! We'll be including further details in the March/April CHEQS magazine and on the village Facebook page.

SIZE OF SPC

The merging of County and District Councils to form a Unitary Council in 2028 will undoubtedly have an impact on parish councils' functions. This, together with possible growth in population size as a result of prospective changes to the Local Plan, may require an increase in the number of councillors. To that end we have applied to increase the number of parish councillors we are allowed to have from 5 to 7. The SPC already has a high work load as seen from various events, and that is likely to continue as we see more planning applications, especially with the government's new building targets and the rise of speculative developers. We need to be able to spread the load, and hopefully broaden the range of expertise at the same time. If you are interested in being a councillor, please let us know!

2026/27 PRECEPT

We've also decided to increase the village precept this year from £16,000 to £17,500 due to the expectation that these government changes will necessitate higher expenditure. There will be some capital expenditure/grants too, such as a grant to the playground refurbishment (further details below).

That said, we've tried to keep the increase to a modest figure; the average band D house will experience an annual uplift in precept from £94.26 to £99.26 which equates to a 5.66% increase, or 10p per week.

NEW VILLAGE ASSETS

We have invested in a few village assets (tannoy system, mobile credit card machine) which are now being used by multiple village institutions. Last year, with the Fete Committee, we invested in two storage containers for the village. These are placed in a corner of Jubilee Field and the village institutions have already put these into use. Thanks to the villagers who placed and commissioned these! The SPC has just purchased a mid-sized marquee to augment the current "big tent" which will be used by the Shoot, Fete and Village Hall.

SOUTHROP FETE 2026

The 2026 village fete is to be held on Saturday June 20th, which happens to be the centenary of the Wadham sale of 1926. Last year the fete made an unprecedented £15,000. After buying two storage containers for village use, the rest was distributed to the school, playing field, church and village hall. Representatives from these form the fete committee: a great way to bring the village together! But as usual, the committee seeks helpers. This year, the committee has agreed to support the renovation of the playground; stand by for more information as we get closer to the day.

SPEEDING

Our two east/west speed cameras seem to be doing their job. We have Police approval for a third camera on Lechlade Road, although we still await Highways. Meanwhile, due to villager concerns, we may seek to reinstate our hand held camera speed campaign on Lechlade road to curb the North/South traffic speeds. Volunteers welcome.

EASTLEACH ROAD FLOODING

It's disappointing that this continues to be a problem. We managed to get members of the Gloucestershire Highways drainage team and their engineer consultants out to Southrop in September to do a site visit. Several issues were identified and we were hopeful that solutions would be forthcoming. At the time of writing we still have nothing resolved, it seems due to lack of budget. We continue to press them for action to improve the situation.

BROKEN STEPS

The steps which bring you out from the footpath behind the school have been broken since last summer. This was reported to Gloucestershire Highways at the time and has been chased up twice since. Our latest communication with the Public Rights of Way department seems to have had a better result and we are hopeful that this will now be resolved promptly. Meanwhile, please continue to take care if you use that footpath.

VILLAGE WEBSITE UPDATE

We are pleased to announce that work is underway to modernise the village website. The goal is to bring the site up to current digital standards, ensuring it is easier to navigate on mobile devices and more functional for all users.

To make the new site truly representative of Southrop, we are seeking high-quality, high-resolution digital images of the village and its surroundings. We are particularly interested in shots of our key institutions, including the Village Hall, the School, and the Church. If you have any recent photographs you would be willing to share for use on the site, please contact the Parish Clerk.

DOG FOULING

While the vast majority of dog owners are responsible, there has been a recent and disappointing uptick in dog fouling on our village footpaths and pavements. This is never acceptable, but it is proving a particular challenge during the darker mornings and evenings when visibility is poor.

With many people—and especially children—walking to and from the school and village hall, the presence of dog waste on the paths is both unpleasant and a health hazard. Please ensure you always pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste in the bins provided. We all want to keep our village clean and safe for everyone to enjoy.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE VILLAGE SHOP AND POST OFFICE

Thank you gathering for Ken the Postie, Wednesday 11th March, Southrop Village Hall during Shop & Post Office morning.

Ken our fabulous village Postman retired on 24th December after 29 years, the last 14 spent in our parish. He was dependable, reliable and always jolly, ensuring our post was delivered safely and he will be missed very much.

Please come along to Southrop Village Hall on Wednesday 11th March to wish Ken a very happy retirement. He and his wife are arriving for 10am and it would be lovely to have the Village Hall full for their arrival.

There will be a collection for a gift of garden centre vouchers. Shelagh Benfield has offered to be treasurer for gift contributions, you can drop a contribution to her at the Village Post Office any Wednesday morning or drop it to her at Bristow's Close, Lechlade Road.

Any questions please contact Helen [07837117445](tel:07837117445)/helen.shaftoe@yahoo.co.uk

AND A MESSAGE FROM SOUTHROP SCHOOL PTA

The fantastic Southrop Jumble Sale is back!! Saturday 7th March 2026, 1-2.30pm at Southrop Village Hall!!! Get ready for a clear out of books, toys, clothes and any other household items!! (No electricals please)

Drop off times are:

Wednesday 4th March 9-11am

Friday 6th March 1-2.30pm

Saturday 7th March 10-11.30am

Collection or help clearing attics and sheds is available by request, directly to Rod Jones.

If you are able to help on a stall at the Jumble Sale that would be very much appreciated. Please let Kelly know PTA@southrop.gloucs.sch.uk

All proceeds to Southrop School PTA.

Thank you for all of your support.

Best wishes from your Southrop Parish Councillors

Tim Guest Russ Giles Peter Brickley Cathy Brickley Rod Jones

Clerk Vanessa Lawrence

If you want to contact us please use our email SouthropPC@gmail.com