

South Milton Newsletter

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

January 2024 No 144

Pressure put on water company to ensure beach lagoon is safe

Local councillors expressed concerns about overflows from the village sewers and the treatment plant, and consequent pollution downstream with the potential impact on water quality of the lagoon behind South Milton Sands and the sea, when they met South West Water representatives.



Nick Townsend (left, Mike Hodges and district councillor Samantha Dennis at South Milton water treatment plant

Parish Council vice-chairman Nick Townsend said: "SWW's position is that as the overflows are from a permitted CSO (combined sewer overflow) they had met their obligations and issues downstream were the responsibility of others. This stance was not accepted but it was agreed that those present could not resolve this matter.

"It was agreed that the matter would be raised by our district councillor Samantha Dennis for resolution at a meeting organised by SHDC where SWW and all the relevant Government agencies would be present.

"SWW's acknowledgement that the

flows into the treatment plant are excessive is a significant step forward, and we must now press them to investigate the cause(s) and rectify these.

"Similarly, we must press for resolution of the current impasse on dealing with the potential impacts downstream."

Samantha Dennis said: "We discussed the storm overflow and capacity issues, where extra surface water might be entering the system, and how we can warn people of the risks of playing in the lagoon when the sand bank forms.

"It was a positive meeting with actions for us to take away and work on."

Village supports Foodbank in various ways

Generous residents have donated £780 to Kingsbridge Area Foodbank from events connected to the village hall.

The bulk of the money was collected as a result of a driftwood tree (pictured) where Christmas messages to village friends were left in lieu of cards, and a donation to the foodbank invited.

This was a first for the village, and proved to be popular, but there were still many cards left in the box, which were sorted and distributed around the village by hall committee members and friends.

The foodbank also received a generous amount from the Wednesday morning Coffee Break and, in November, received £200 following the Village Quiz.

There are many village residents who volunteer at the foodbank, either as packers or delivery drivers, and newcomers are always warmly welcomed. It



is based in the former Cornwall Farmers building in Wallingford Road.

Jackie Visser, the chairman of the trustees, will be the speaker at the February meeting of Thursday Club.

Traditional events on the hall calendar

A Burns' Night supper on January 25 and a Valentine's tapas evening on February 14 are two big dates on the forthcoming village hall calendar.

The hall committee has agreed to hall hire charges at the present rate for 2024, and has also announced that bar prices will remain unchanged.

A bench in memory of Tim Lewis, a

parish councillor and hall supporter, who died in May 2022, has been placed on the hall lawn, which is visible again from the road following the removal of the conifers surrounding the wall memorial. The trees grew taller than expected and the decision to fell was taken after consultation with all the relevant partners.

Kitchen makeover nearing completion

The village hall kitchen and committee room have been given a makeover by members of the committee, led by chairman Steve Harding and treasurer Tony Burn. The work surfaces, cupboards and drawers, hob and dish washer have all been renewed, and more space has been created by fitting cupboards and drawers in the committee room. The next step is to replace the floor covering.

While the need for a revamped and extended kitchen was obvious, the committee gave serious consideration to the timing in view of the well publicised

proposal to redevelop the hall in the next few years. In the end it was decided that current users deserved better.

Building a new hall depends on many things, not least of which is raising the funds. While its construction, subject to planning approval, will be on the same site, it will have a car park attached as per an arrangement with neighbouring landowner Andy Bond, whose Dairy Site at Sutton is the subject of a housing project as part of the village's Neighbourhood Plan.

Dairy Site in the news, next page.

Village Hall diary

January

4 Bowls match
5 VH Committee meeting
6 Pub night
8 Soups and Puds
10 Skittles
11 Thursday Club
12 Bowls match
18 WI
22 Parish Council
25 Burns' Night Supper
Table tennis most Mondays
Bowls Club on Tuesdays
Coffee Break on Wednesdays

February

1 Bowls match
3 Pub night
7 Climate and Nature Group
12 Soups and Puds
14 Valentine's Tapas Night
15 WI

16 Bowls match
22 Bowls match
26 Parish Council
28 Bowls match
Table tennis most Mondays
Bowls Club on Tuesdays
Coffee Break on Wednesdays

March

1 VH Committee meeting
2 Pub night
6 Bowls match
11 Soups and Puds
13 Skittles
21 WI
25 Parish Council
Table tennis most Mondays
Bowls Club on Tuesdays
Coffee Break on Wednesdays

Website: www.southmiltonvillagehall.uk



A long road ahead? Andy Bond (left) Nick Townsend and Graham Collyer remain in step about the plan for a new housing development in South Milton

National paper takes a look at our Dairy Site proposal

Whether or not a small area of the village will be developed with 18 homes remains to be seen, although owner Andy Bond is determined building will begin “within a year or two”.

Development is still at the pre-planning stage, but Andy said: “We’re just ordinary people who want to do what’s best for the community. Everyone accepts we need more houses. The only people I’ve come across who object to more houses have nice houses themselves.”

Andy, together with parish council vice-chairman Nick Townsend and former councillor Graham Collyer, both of

whom were members of the council’s Neighbourhood Plan steering group, were interviewed by a reporter from the Telegraph for its online money section.

When planning an article about “To build or not to build?” the paper was directed to South Milton. It said it was the question “at the heart of a battle playing out across Britain, as an acute housing shortage rubs up against a deep-seated desire to protect green and pleasant land”.

The location for the proposed development, known as the Dairy Site, is part of a farm on the edge of the village out-

Continued on opposite page

Village housing plan gets national coverage

Continued from previous page
side the conservation area.

Nick Townsend believes the new homes will not detract from the village's charms. "The location within the AONB is about as good as you could get as it's tucked away and not visible, except very locally," he told the paper. "An old barn is occupying the site at the moment.

"We were told it was going to become redundant. We are effectively building on a site that is already developed."

The neighbourhood plan stipulates that six of the proposed houses will be "affordable", six will be self-builds, and six will be available on the open market.

The planning authority had initially floated a target to build 39 new homes in the parish over the 15-year period of the neighbourhood plan. However, Nick Townsend told the Telegraph that the small size of the community meant that number was "ridiculous".

"We tried to put boundaries on what we thought was acceptable. In the questionnaire we sent out to residents, people said they wanted more affordable housing for locals."

The plan also gives South Milton's residents control over who will live in the homes once they are built. Twenty-one per cent of houses in the village are second homes, but the Dairy Site development will be subject to the "St Ives clause" which stipulates that the homes will be for people who live and work in the area, the article stated.

The plan, which requires the developer to provide a car park for the village hall and land for a playground, won overwhelming support from the village's roughly 400 inhabitants in a referendum held in 2019.

Below: A view of the Dairy Site at Sutton where housing has been supported by village residents



Village Quiz attracts a full house

Geoff Bell (right) receives the cup from hall chairman Steve Harding after a successful Village Quiz.

The winning team of Geoff and Cherry Bell, Paul and Andrea Davies and Mike and Lorna Davies finished comfortably ahead of nine other teams in the annual contest, organised by Graham and Ann Collyer



Winter life at South Milton Sands

In spite of the rain and storms, the beach boardwalks have held up well. Rodney Stidston has piled material up on the beach end of the top boardwalk where it had washed away, and is regrading the track again.

The winter brings many wading birds and ducks to the Devon Birds reserve behind the car park so it's always worth a look if you are on site. There have also been large flocks of oystercatcher and sandling on the beach early in the morning before many people are around. It's also worth looking out for

the many mermaids' purses on the shoreline — the eggcases of shark, skate and ray. They are washed up at this time of year, and you can take part in the Shark Trust Great Eggcase Hunt, a citizen science project (www.sharktrust.org).

A thank you to all who quietly litter-pick the beach and help keep it clean; to our car park team; and to the Rogers family for their tireless work locking the overflow park on the late summer evenings to help stop issues of overnight camping. Emma Reece (National Trust)

Early Christmas dinner for Thursday Club



Pictures by James Day

Ten days before Christmas nearly 30 people attended the Thursday Club Christmas lunch at the golf club. It was a tasty meal and there was much to talk about. There were plenty of raffle prizes for everyone to win something.

At November's meeting, village resident Lucy Cartwright (right) spoke about her life as an illustrator. She enriched her talk by showing us many designs she had created over the years. Some appear on her greetings cards and illustrations for books, and have also been printed on to velvet fabric.

On January 11 Roger Barrett will give a short history of Salcombe and its surrounds, and in February Jackie



Visser from Kingsbridge Foodbank asks "Who needs a foodbank?"

Gaynor Day

Charity Christmas Fair at The Barn a great place to buy local craft gifts

Paul and Paula Booker opened The Barn on a cold November weekend for local craftspeople to showcase their wares, and offer a wide selection of Christmas gifts—in support of Devon Air Ambulance.



Village residents Emma Halmshaw (above) and Lucy Cartwright were among the stallholders



Editor: grahamcollyer46@gmail.com