

# **MIDDLETON PARISH COUNCIL**

The Annual Meeting of the Parish was held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 6.30 pm in Cottingham and Middleton Village Hall Annex.

**Present:** Cllrs Coughlan (Chair), Boucher and Bowyer, Mrs Medwell (Clerk), PC Rudkin, PCSO A Wallace and one member of the public.

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## **1. To approve apologies for absence:**

Cllr Hallam-Wall.

PLR Del Robertson

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## **2. Chair's Annual Report 2025-26 - Cllr Sian Coughlan:**

Middleton Parish Council (MPC) currently comprises four serving Parish Councillors: Sian Coughlan (Chair), Caroline Boucher (Vice Chair), Katy Bowyer, and Darren Hallam-Wall, who recently joined the Council. Earlier this year, Teresa Denton stepped down from her role as Parish Councillor. As a result, there are vacancies within the Council, and we are actively seeking residents from Middleton and the surrounding areas to join us. The Council continues to advertise these positions and has received some recent interest from potential candidates.

As Chair of MPC, I would like to formally express my gratitude to Teresa Denton for her dedication and hard work during her tenure. On behalf of the Council, I wish her every success in her future endeavours.

### **Village Fete**

In July 2025, the village came together for the annual Village Fete, which proved to be an extremely successful occasion. Despite the wind, the weather remained dry and sunny, allowing community members to enjoy a full day of activities. The event featured a variety of stalls offering home-made produce and home-grown plants, engaging children's activities, the presence of local Highland cows and Valais sheep, historic farm vehicles, and excellent musical entertainment. Funds raised during the fete supported several Middleton and Cottingham community projects, including the school and the church. We extend our sincere thanks to everyone involved in organising and assisting with this wonderful event, and to those who contributed on the day, helping to raise a significant sum for many good causes.

### **Planning**

Throughout 2025, several planning applications for properties in Middleton were submitted and reviewed by the Parish Council. No comments were submitted by MPC, and some applications have subsequently been granted planning permission by the Local Planning Authority.

#### **Oakley Park**

The Retrospective Planning Applications for Oakley Park and Peasdale Hill, which MPC objected to in 2021, were appealed to the Planning Inspectorate and determined in 2024. The Oakley Park appeal resulted in permission being granted for a total of ten pitches. Following this decision, the landowners unlawfully levelled the land on the South field, laid hardcore, erected fencing, installed a septic tank, drainage, and standpipes, apparently preparing for at least twenty-four additional static homes, contrary to the conditions set out by PINs. After extensive discussions with North Northants Council (NNC), four Enforcement Notices and four Stop Notices were issued to the landowners in September 2024. Two of these Enforcement Notices have now been appealed. MPC continues to pursue NNC regarding this matter and awaits the outcome of the appeals with the Planning Inspectorate.

#### **Peasdale Hill**

The appeals related to Peasdale Hill have been fully dismissed by the Planning Inspector. Middleton Parish Council is currently awaiting confirmation from NNC for a Magistrates Court date, which will begin the

process to move the occupants off the land and restore its condition. NNC has advised that this process may take some time.

### **Gypsy and Traveller Update Meetings with North Northants Council**

Quarterly meetings concerning Gypsy and Traveller matters continue to take place, attended by NNC Council Officers and Chairs from several local parish councils, including Middleton, Loddington, Braybrooke, and Broughton. NNC Senior Management and Planning Officers provide regular updates on progress regarding the GTAA update, five-year land supply, site allocations policy, and unauthorised development planning appeals and enforcement. Dialogue remains ongoing between MPC and NNC on these important topics.

MPC continues to lobby NNC officers, MPs, and their representatives for changes to planning legislation, especially concerning unauthorised developments and licensing laws for Gypsy and Traveller sites. NNC also plans to meet with MPs and their representatives to discuss these legislative issues further.

### **Highways and Flood Resilience**

Given the risk of flash flooding, MPC works with NNC to ensure that all drains at the bottom of Main Street, at the junction with The Hill, and all drains and gullies up The Hill and at the top of the village at the Triangle are regularly checked and kept free from blockages. The roads are also swept clear of leaves.

In 2025, after extensive lobbying by MPC, NNC Highways undertook a major project at the bottom of The Hill to increase the number of drains and gullies, install protective bollards outside Woolpack House, and alter the road's camber in hopes of alleviating future flooding issues.

Further works are planned for 2026 to investigate and improve drainage on the Jurassic Path and The Hill, and to unblock gullies along the East Carlton Park wall line. Dialogue with NNC officers and Kier Highways continues, and the work completed so far has significantly improved the flooding situation.

### **Play Area Improvement Project**

MPC is working with CPC and several residents from both villages to look at improvements to the Play Area situated at the bottom of the recreation field. This is an ongoing project that will require grant funding.

### **Footpath Warden**

MPC notes that the Footpath Warden role now reports directly to NNC. Nonetheless, Councillors remain vigilant about blocked footpaths and report any issues using the Fix My Street platform to NNC.

### **The Orchard, Culvert and Obelisk, Glover Court Area**

The Council has engaged Steve Morphy to maintain the Culvert, Obelisk, and Orchard areas of Middleton village. The standard of work has been excellent. MPC continues to monitor the area next to Glover Court for Japanese Knotweed and is pleased to report that there are currently no signs of its reoccurrence.

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## **3. Accounting Statement 2025-26:**

	<b>INCOME</b>	
	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
PRECEPT	11,347	11,347
MOWING GRANT	331	0
INTEREST	209	283
VAT	45	62
ORCHARD MAINT. CBC	3,920	1699
GRANTS (Website/Defibrillator)	0	0
	<b>15,852</b>	<b>13,391</b>

## EXPENDITURE

	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
AUDIT FEE	150	150
GRASS CUTTING	2,020	2150
HALL HIRE	72	79
CLERK SALARY/PENSION	5,186	5,497
NEWSLETTER	163	167
ORCHARD	1,699	890
OFFICE EXPENSES	238	192
PLAYING FIELD	1,427	532
TRAINING	0	0
CHURCH YARD	250	250
INSURANCE	167	300
VILLAGE COSTS	40	180
MEMBERSHIPS	370	381
DONATIONS	13	20
VAT	54	30
DEFIBRILLATOR	186	100
WEBSITE / BANK	211	303
DATA PROTECTION	40	52
	<b>12,286</b>	<b>11,273</b>

**Balance of Reserves as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 = £11,511.00**

The full End of Year Accounts can be found on the Parish Council website at [www.middleton-northants-pc.gov.uk](http://www.middleton-northants-pc.gov.uk)

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### **Open Forum:**

There was nothing raised.

Meeting closed at 6.35pm.