

Little Milton *Newsletter*



January 2026

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY: JANUARY 2026

Thurs	1st	1.00 – 2.00 p.m. 6.00 – 7.00 p.m.	Pilate- Pine Lodge Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
Frid	2nd	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sun	4th	9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion CW St James'
Mon	5th	5.15 – 6.00 p.m.	Kids Karate – Pine lodge
Tues	6th	9.30–10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Thurs	8th	1.00 – 2.00 p.m. 6.00 -7.00 p.m. 7.00 p.m.	Pilate- Pine Lodge Exercise Class – Pine Lodge WI Dinner
Frid	9th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sun	11th	10.30 a.m.	Family Service – St James'
Mon	12th	5.15 – 6.00 p.m.	Kids Karate – Pine lodge
Tues	13th	9.30–10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	14th	7.30 p.m.	Parish Council – Pine Lodge
Thurs	15th	1.00 -2.00 p.m. 6.00 – 7.00 p.m.	Pilate- Pine Lodge Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
Frid	16th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Mon	19th	5.15 – 6.00 p.m.	Kids Karate – Pine lodge
Tues.	20th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Thurs	22nd	1.00 -2.00 p.m. 6.00 – 7.00 p.m.	Pilate- Pine Lodge Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
Frid	23rd	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sun	25th	9.00a.m.	Holy Communion BCP St James'
Mon	26th	5.15 – 6.00 p.m.	Kids Karate – Pine lodge
Tues	27th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Thurs	29th	1.00 -2.00 p.m. 6.00 – 7.00 p.m.	Pilate- Pine Lodge Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
Frid	30th	9.30 a.m.	Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
FEB			
Sun	1st	9.00 a.am	Holy Communion – St James'

PLEASE NOTE If in doubt please check with the event organiser that the event is still taking place at the date and time stated.

EDITORIAL

I would like to wish all our readers a Very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

At the beginning of each year, I reflect on the challenges of the previous year and “foolishly” hope that we might return to normality. I probably delude myself as each New Year will bring its own challenges and whatever normality means is but a dream.

However, we do all need to seek inspiration and hope as we look ahead to 2026. I have again taken the opportunity of listing some quotes that might help us think about what we can do in our lives.

A traditional universal message for us all

Should old acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should old acquaintance be forgot,
And old lang syne!
For old lang syne, my dear,
For old lang syne.
We'll take a cup of kindness yet,
For old lang syne.

~ *Robert Burns*

New Year quotes about new beginnings

Believe in yourself and all that you are. Know that there is something inside you that is greater than any obstacle.”

– **Christian D. Larson**

“Every single year, we’re a different person. I don’t think we’re the same person all of our lives.”

– **Steven Spielberg**

“The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today.”

– **Franklin D. Roosevelt**

“Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value.”

– **Albert Einstein**

“Don’t be afraid to give up the good to go for the great.”

– **John D. Rockefeller**

“Change can be scary, but you know what’s scarier? Allowing fear to stop you from growing, evolving, and progressing.”

– **Mandy Hale**

“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.”

– **Harriet Tubman**

“Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions.”

– **Dalai Lama**

“Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it.”

– **Earl Nightingale**

“There are better things ahead than any we leave behind.”

– **C.S. Lewis**

“Sometimes the smallest step in the right direction ends up being the biggest step of your life. Tiptoe if you must, but take a step.”

– **Naem Callaway**

I am often told by new and established residents that our village is a great place to live as they enjoy the tranquillity of a rural community and the efforts of volunteers who make our local organisations appear to work so smoothly. I have highlighted this regularly in my editorial the challenge for each organisation to develop a succession plan to allow these vital community services to continue. This is a message that needs to be stated every year. We need to generate the interest and hopefully the enthusiasm for villagers to consider putting themselves forward in the future but the work starts now. I would like to thank on behalf of all our organisations the generosity of our residents in supporting their hard work and dedication.

The Parish Council has continued to represent our community and plays an important role in influencing various Partners in Local Government. The recent planning application on the Haseley Trading Estate for a refuse lorry depot generated a considerable level of opposition that the Parish Council represented on our behalf. . Sadly, the outcome was not what we would have liked.

The A329 has taken up Parish Council time since the mid 1970's when it was upgraded from a B road. This change brought in its wake a significant increase in traffic and HGV's We appreciate the efforts that the current Council has made to persuade OCC to have a weight limit on the road. I need to comment on the enforcement of the speed limit particularly since the 20 mph was introduced in 2024. A recent incident of two vehicles legally parked on Church Hill/ Stadhampton road highlighted the strong concerns in the village that this action had for safety and environmental matters whilst the action was supported as it addressed the real or perceived issue of speeding. It could have been on Thame Road, High Street or Haseley Road. The positive outcome is that the Parish Council will address the concerns and bring forward an action plan. My message would be to use the designated channels to pursue concerns and not take actions that could cause disharmony in our community. The current term of office for the Parish Council will end in April 2027 and there will the election of a new Council in May 2027. This an opportunity for you to serve your community. I plant the seed! I would like to thank the Council on your behalf for the all the work they do.

The Village Hall committee provide an excellent facility that is hired out for regular and one-off hire. They also provide social events for our community of which the fireworks night is must attend event. . The Committee perform an excellent job but will always welcome new committee members or as supporters of particular events e.g. Quiz Nights Make a point this year of coming to the Annual General Meeting to visibly offer your support. A big thank you to the committee for maintaining this vital village asset.

Our Village Shop and Post Office are a very important amenity and one that has gone from strength to strength. The shop has benefitted from the installation of solar panels after securing grant funding. It will get a further boost when the expensive energy contract comes to an end in January 2026

Our Shop/Post Office is a vital community asset that we need to do all we can to ensure its long-term survival. This will depend upon being able to broaden the support of volunteers both for those working in the shop and the work done by those outside the shop. Perhaps this is something that you could offer and I urge you to contact Kevin Hunt. We welcome Clare as shop manager/postmistress and thank Alison for her dedicated service as shop manager/postmistress for fifteen years. This leads me into thanking on your behalf the excellent work done by Kevin and the Shop Committee, Julie, Clare and all the volunteers.

We are fortunate to have an excellent school that is supported by Sarah and her hardworking staff and governors as well as a community that values their efforts.

Our pub has now become established with Ben and Charmain and we thank them for keeping this prized asset alive and thriving in our community

St James' has a dedicated PCC as well as a number of volunteers who clean the church, decorate the church with flowers, maintain the churchyard, and a special word for Geoff Quaiermain for his contribution in the churchyard. I thank them for their hard work. St James' will have a new Rector in 2026 as Simon has retired after ten years.

The Church is a key cornerstone of our community and I am sure that sentiment is supported by both church and non- church members of our village.

The publication and distribution of our Newsletter is something that happens each month and I am sure that the Village would like to say thank you to all who are involved. I am pleased to say that MP Printers in Thame provide an excellent service and my thanks to the distributors who diligently deliver a newsletter to each house. As editor I appreciate the excellent photographs that I receive from some of the village photographers and most importantly to all the correspondents who submit their articles each month.

Finally on your behalf I would like to thank Judith Edwards our County Councillor and Georgina Heritage our District Councillor for all their support.

2026 will continue to challenge our community and those involved in the day to running of the various organisations that we all use and value. If we all enjoy the village, we live in let us all make every effort to ensure that Little Milton continues to be a great place to live and keep a watchful eye for your neighbours.

Editor

SUMMARY OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 10th DECEMBER 2025

Below is a summary of some of the planning discussions that took place at the Parish Council meeting held in December.

Several residents attended the Parish Meeting and spoke during the Public Forum to express their anger and concern related to two vehicles parked on the A329. Below is an extract from the draft minutes related to the item.

A329 – Parked Vehicles

Several representations from residents had been received regarding two vehicles on the A329 that had been parked there for several weeks. Cllr van der Merwe has spoken to the owner of the vehicles in a personal capacity to try and gain a better understanding

of why the vehicles had been parked on the road. This afternoon the vehicles were removed by the police.

District Councillor Heritage supported gathering vehicle data via a traffic `survey and will pass on a request to County Councillor Judith Edwards to ask ``the County team to contact the Parish Council.

It was agreed to progress the installation of a Speed Indicator Device on Church Hill (A329) as soon as possible. It was noted that Cllr Sheppard is due to meet with a member of the County Highways team next week to agree the exact location of the device.

Resolved that a traffic survey covering all areas of the village is undertaken as soon as possible. Data from the survey will be collected and used to inform future decision making. The survey data will be communicated to residents through the village newsletter and electronically.

{Post meeting note: The owner of the vehicles submitted the following statement to the Parish Council on Tuesday 16 December - 'Two vehicles were parked lawfully on the road while works at my property were underway. Thames Valley Police officers confirmed the vehicles were legally parked before removal. Any traffic calming effect was incidental.'}

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Wednesday 14th January 2026** in Pine Lodge, commencing at 7.30pm.

Please visit the Parish Council website to read full minutes of Parish Council meetings.

Andrea Oughton, Parish Clerk

Current Council members

Councillor Francois Van Der Merwe (Chairman)	07740 438770
Councillor Howard Harrison	01844 279946
Councillor Adam Sheppard	01844 279217
Councillor Ed Horwell	07527 346187
Councillor Giles Denby	07484 187852
Councillor David Wakeling	01844 278014
Parish Clerk Andrea Oughton	clerk@littlemilton.org.uk
County Councillor: Judith Edwards	judith.edwards@oxfordshire.gov.uk
District Councillor Georgina Heritage	georgina.heritage@southoxon.gov.uk

SODC: WASTE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

The minimum charge is £53.50 for up to 3 items and £10.25 for each additional item. There is a maximum of six items per collection day: if you have more than six, you'll need to book another collection day. Please note that a bed and mattress count as 2 items and a three-piece suite (consisting of 1 settee and 2 chairs) counts as 3 items.

Before you contact us to book your bulky waste collection, have a good think about whether you have any other big items to dispose of. Once we have processed your booking, we are unable to make any alterations or add any other items – even if you have only booked one or two items.

To arrange this service residents can call the Public Amenities Team on 01235 422406 or book on line from the Council's website www.southoxon.gov.uk

Give your furniture to a good home

Have you considered donating your furniture to charity or a good home? Emmaus is an Oxford based charity that will come out to all areas of the county and collect unwanted furniture free of charge. For legal or practical reasons this does not include soft furnishings without a fire label, safety items, or any item that is not in a saleable condition. Please [visit the Emmaus website](#) for more details.

BIFFA: WASTE COLLECTION DATES – JANUARY 2026

	Brown	Grey		Green	Food
7th January++	Yes	No		No	Yes
13th January	No	Yes		No	Yes
20th January	Yes	No		Yes	Yes
27th January	No	Yes		No	Yes

++ Bank Holiday date change; no garden waste

UPDATE FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR – GEORGINA HERITAGE

Joint Local Plan

We have an important update on our Joint Local Plan (JLP)... The Joint Local Plan is at the examination stage, and some recent correspondence from our Joint Local Plan Inspectors provides welcome news.

Planning Minister Matthew Pennycook has issued a [ministerial statement](#) confirming that the Government is intending to remove the duty to co-operate as a requirement in the planning system through new planning regulations to be laid early in the new year. In a letter to the Planning Inspectorate, the Minister then asked Inspectors of plans currently at examination (like our JLP) to begin any necessary dialogue with councils in advance of the Regulations coming into effect.

The JLP Inspectors have therefore written to us at South and Vale seeking our views on the implications and in particular how we wish to proceed. You can read the letter [here](#). We will be writing back soon and will send you a copy of the letter once it's published on the [JLP examination webpage](#).

For more detailed information and a timeline of recent JLP events:

Date	Event
9 Dec 2024	The Joint Local Plan 2041 was submitted to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination
3-5 June 2025	Joint Local Plan examination hearing sessions held at Milton Park
26 Sept 2025	Joint Local Plan Inspectors sent a letter to the Councils, examination library reference: <u>ID10</u> concluding that they have found that there has been a failure to adequately discharge the Duty to Cooperate. They set out that there are two options open to the councils: to withdraw the JLP from the examination or to ask that they write a report setting out their conclusions.
1 Oct 2025	The Councils issued a joint Press Release regarding the Inspectors' 26 Sept letter, <u>South</u> and <u>Vale</u>
6 Oct 2025	The Councils responded to the Inspectors' letter ID10, examination library reference: <u>LPA39</u>

8 Oct 2025	The Councils issued a joint Press Release regarding the 6 October response to the Inspectors, South and Vale
9 Oct 2025	<p>The Minister for Planning and Housing, Matthew Pennycook, wrote to the PINS' Chief Executive, Paul Merton - urging the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) to adopt an “appropriate degree of flexibility” during examinations.</p> <p>He wrote “the final set of local plans being delivered within the current system remain essential to facilitating the effective delivery of housing, jobs and infrastructure. It is therefore critical that Inspectors approach examinations of current system plan with the appropriate degree of flexibility. The evidencing of expectations to establish whether the legal and soundness tests have been met – including with respect to the Duty to Cooperate – should be proportionate to the context in which plans in the existing system are being prepared.”</p>
20 Oct 2025	The Councils wrote to the Inspectors again, asking them to reconsider their initial conclusions (examination library reference: LPA40)
31 Oct 2025	The Inspectors acknowledged receipt of the Councils’ 20 October letter. They confirmed they will consider the Ministerial letter and the views expressed by the Councils in the letter. They also confirmed that they will provide a more substantive response in due course. (examination library reference: ID11)
27 Nov 2025	The Minister for Planning and Housing, Matthew Pennycook, released a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS), stating: "...to help drive local plans to adoption as quickly as possible and progress towards our objective of universal local plan coverage, we have decided not to ‘save’ the Duty, thereby removing this requirement for plans in the current system."
27 Nov 2025	<p>The Minister for Planning and Housing, Matthew Pennycook, wrote to the Chief Executive of the Planning Inspectorate, Paul Merton - regarding the update to the Duty to Cooperate.</p> <p>He wrote “The Duty will therefore cease to apply when the Regulations come into force early next year, including for plans at examination at that point. On the basis of the government’s firm intention to abolish the Duty for the current system, examining Inspectors may wish to begin any necessary dialogue with LPAs in advance of the Regulations coming into effect, with reference to this letter. Of course, LPAs should continue to collaborate across their boundaries, including on unmet development needs from neighbouring areas and Inspectors should continue to examine plans in line with the policies in the NPPF on ‘maintaining effective co-operation’.”</p>
28 Nov 2025	Joint Local Plan Inspectors sent a letter to the Councils (examination library reference: ID12) seeking our views on the implications of the WMS and the Minister’s letter for the Examination and in particular how we wish to proceed.

Five out of seven councils back the two-unitary proposal for council reorganisation

A consensus emerged for the shape of Local Government Reorganisation in the area after five councils in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire formally supported a proposal for two new, innovative, and locally accountable unitary authorities, aimed at addressing current inefficiencies, enhancing services, and saving millions in response to the government's call for reform of council structures.

After reviewing all three proposals for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire, the majority of councils in the area have agreed that the two-unitary option offers the best outcomes for local residents when a decision is made by government next year.

As the councils discussed the options, the key areas were:

- **Delivering better services:** The proposal responds to what residents have said needs improving, from highways and social care to planning.
- **The best financial outcomes:** Delivers the greatest potential savings (£59.8m annually) and lowest financial risk of all three proposals, helping to protect key services and ensure long-term stability across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.
- **Boosting both rural and urban economies:** Drives sustainable growth across Oxford, market towns and rural areas, creating more jobs, better transport and the right homes in the right places.
- **Creates councils responsive to their communities:** Keeps councils close to all local communities and tailored to their specific needs, ensuring strong local accountability and representation.

Forming two unitary councils has the potential to save the most money of all the proposals for the area (based on shared PwC modelling) and, at the same time, creates authorities that are big enough to be efficient, stable, and reliable, but small enough to care for and be responsive to communities.

The Councils also raised concerns about the other proposals.

For the single-unitary proposal, they expressed concerns that it was too large, would be far too distant from communities and did not show the ambition local communities and businesses deserved.

For the three-unitary proposal, they expressed concerns that it would not create financially sustainable councils, did not meet the government criteria, and would negatively impact Oxford and the green belt.

The proposal was submitted to the government by the 28 November deadline, and it is anticipated that the government will consult on all proposals for the area in spring 2026 before deciding later in the summer. The government's preferred model is scheduled to become fully operational in 2028.

Residents can read the full proposal or a shortened version on the website www.twocouncils.org. The proposal covers all the key points, including how services will be run, financial modelling, implementation plans, and the vision for the future.

Over £700,000 of funding approved for new community and youth centre in Thame

£779,246 of funding has been approved as a contribution towards the building of a new Community and Youth Centre at Southern Road Recreation Ground in Thame. Thame

Town Council will receive funding from SODC to create a modern, welcoming facility for residents to enjoy, helping improve emotional and mental wellbeing. With the funding agreed, Thame Town Council can now move forwards with plans to demolish the disused changing block and build a new community and youth centre. The new facility will provide young people with a safe space for their own use with support from youth workers, and where people of all ages can organise and join activities, and meet others.

The building will include flexible and rentable spaces including a new 200-capacity community hall for events, lectures, conferences, health and wellbeing, fitness and arts activities, a music room, kitchen, and a dedicated youth club, and small group and one to one consultation space. It will also offer EV charging, bike racks, and improved access to green space. There will be a refreshed play area, accessible toilets with baby-changing facilities, seating, and an income-generating kiosk.

The project will provide a permanent home for the Thame Youth Project Group and will help reduce anti-social behaviour in the area, improve wellbeing, and offer new opportunities and skills for local people in the community

The new funding for the project comes from Section 106 – this is the funding the council collects from housing developers to support the growth of the district when new developments are built.

GREAT MILTON METHODIST CHURCH SERVICES: JANUARY 2026

For further info. Please contact Rev. Stephen Spain on 01865 763676

Date	Time	Church	Preacher	Comment
4th January	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	Paul Rosentall	
11th January	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	David Harper	
18th January	3.00 p.m...	Great Milton	Graham Thompson	
25th January	9.30 a.m..	Great Milton	Rev Stephen Spain	

BENEFICE SERVICES FOR JANUARY 2026

Sunday 4th January

9.00	Holy Communion	St James' Little Milton
10.30	Family Worship	St Peter's Great Haseley

Monday 5th January 2026

5.00 pm	Sung Compline by candlelight	St Peter's Great Haseley
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Sunday 11th January

9.00	Holy Communion BCP	St Mary's Great Milton
10.30	Family Worship	St James' Little Milton

Sunday 18th January

9.00	Holy Communion	St Peter's Great Haseley
10.30	Family Worship	St Mary's Great Milton

Sunday 25th January

9.00	Holy Communion BCP	St James' Little Milton
10.30	Benefice Morning Worship	St Mary's Great Milton

CAROL SINGING AROUND THE VILLAGE

Around 20 of us set off from Oldfield as advertised in the newsletter... Beginning up on Thame Road and including a “happy birthday” song for Gilbert, 92 the previous day...! We then took our usual route and were delighted to find some new folk opening their doors and one lovely gentleman in Oldfield ready and waiting with a Christmas card for us all as well as a kind donation for the porch... Bless you Peter! It was wonderful to see some very small people and babes in arms being brought out to listen to the carols... We were very pleased to be joined by Sarah, to whom we had sung on her first day in the village last year.... Yet again, we were royally entertained at the Manor with delicious mince pies and champagne, rounding off a truly special evening for all of us who sang and all who listened. Our collection for the porch raised £117.26p so thank you everyone for your support and encouragement... Thank you, Little Milton

S.A.Dennis

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Mind the gap!

I suspect we are all rather tired of being constantly reminded to “mind the gap between the train and the platform”. As a young boy I used to enjoy looking down through the gap, to see the rails and the wheels, and especially the couplings between carriages, while always of course being careful. And “mind” can mean much more than simply “beware of”. It really means “remember”, “pay attention to”, “look at and think carefully about”, and has overtones of care, applying oneself, and so on. “Minding the gap” can be a positive experience.

We may all be aware of gaps in our lives this January. Some can be addressed easily enough: lack of exercise, for instance, by making a resolution to take more. A financial gap may in some cases be eased by more prudent budgeting, or by an extra income-producing activity, or by a change of tack. I am told that some of those laid off by *Le Manoir* at this time are taking the opportunity to start a course or a new job. For those who are really struggling to make ends meet, we may be able to help close the gap ourselves by supporting the Thame Food Bank, as we try to do by our monthly collections.

Some gaps may be very painful, for instance those left by the loss of a loved one, whether human or animal. These can never be filled to the extent of removing the deep sense of loss, but friends and family can at least help by being there and offering practical and emotional support. If we know someone who has been bereaved, let's weep with them and smile with them, hug them, and never avert our eyes or cross the road to avoid meeting them.

The season of Advent (before Christmas) reminded us that the painful centuries-long gap of God's apparent absence from his people's lives was coming to an end. The promise of “Emmanuel, God with us” was and is a very powerful encouragement. When Jesus came to fulfil that promise it was like a honeymoon period for those who lived closely with him. When he left them, first in death and then a few weeks later in the Ascension, they were devastated. How would the gap in their lives ever be filled again?

But Jesus promised: “I will not leave you comfortless (literally: orphans), I will come to you.” He sent his Holy Spirit to make his presence real to us. He longs to fill the “God-shaped gap” that the seventeenth-century scientist and writer Blaise Pascal

identified in the human heart. Christians down the ages have found that he does just that.

If the Holy Spirit can fill that most fundamental gap, he can help to fill other gaps in your life. Have you tried praying about them? In our family, if someone loses something and can't find it, one of the others will ask: "Have you prayed about it?"

Well, have you? Happy New Year!

Tony Garfitt
Licensed Lay Minister

CHURCH CLEANING ROTA FOR JANUARY

W/E 4th January	—	Mrs L. Lovegrove & Mrs C Coward
W/E 11th January	—	Mrs A Jones & Mrs Hil Pennick
W/E 18th January	-	Mrs Maggie Bell & Mrs Wendy Newby
W/E 25th January	-	Mrs A Blagg & Mrs Cathy D'Aeth
W/E 1st February		Mrs M Davies & Mrs S A Dennis

CHURCH FLOWER ROTA FOR JANUARY

W/E 4th January	—	Teresa Qusted	
W/E 11th January	—	Teresa Qusted	
W/E 18th January	—	Teresa Qusted	—
W/E 25th January	—	Teresa Qusted	

Church Flowers

The rota for next year will be available in January. If there is anyone who would like to join our small but happy group, please let me know.

Also, if anyone wants to give a donation so that flowers can be put in church to remember someone on a special day, we would be happy to oblige.

Teresa Qusted 278922

FRIENDS OF LITTLE MILTON SCHOOL- 200 CLUB- DECEMBER

1st	No	£10.00
No	No	£8.00
3rd	No	£6.00

Detail;s in the February newsletter

On behalf of The Friends of Little Milton School

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Saturday afternoon on December 6th and it was time for another Little Milton special The Christmas Fayre. This is so wonderful because 4 organisations work together to make the event one of the highlights of the year.

I cannot express enough thanks to all those who made it possible – the makers, bakers, crafters, raffle sellers, children's activity organisers, stall holders, table movers, drinks sellers, donators and, of course, all of you who turned out in such fantastic numbers to show your support.

Over the years so many groups from the village have shown their skills at decorating Christmas trees and making wreaths. This year they were challenged to design a "Stained Glass Window" and the results were truly amazing. We hope you came along

to view the hidden talents of Little Milton! Many of them will be on display in the church until the end of January.

A special thank you to Santa who found time in his busy schedule to pay us a visit. X
All the profit will be shared between the School, the Orchard and St James's Church.
A very Happy New Year to you all.

Teresa

FRIENDS OF WELLS FARM

Happy New Year to you all. January brings new beginnings and glimpse of Spring. Last year's bumper berry hedgerows will have provided many birds with plenty of food for the winter, but for seed eater, wild food is now running low. Now is the time when they need you the most. If you have feeders, make sure you clean them out and put enough food to satisfy the needs of the goldfinches, greenfinches and many other birds. Any old apples can go out for the blackbirds too. You might even get a little bank vole appear on your feeder if they can get to it. Bank voles are harmless rodents that live in hedgerows or dry-stone walls and are a bit like a mini "Ratty" from "Wind in the Willows", which was actually a water vole.

Last winter on the reserve we recorded a record 65 harvest mouse nests around the two Cremar fields and along a hedgerow bordering Long Meadow. I believe the significant increase in nests was partly due to the fields being unfarmed, the edges left unmanaged and a wetter year, meaning good grass growth. This year is a very different story. With the government's abrupt halt to the SFI grant applications, four Wells Farm fields had to be returned to arable and a tenant farmer was found. Sadly, the field edges where many of the nests were, was cleared more than instructed and this year's survey showed no nests whatsoever. The colony in that area may have been wiped out. Luckily, there was a good patch of rough field edge at the end of the reserve by the ditch bordering Linz field, and we have recorded 14 nests so far in a small patch. Nature will try and survive if given somewhere to do so. I am running another survey in January so if you want to find out more, just contact me.

We hear in the news of people complaining about the destruction of Amazon or Asian rainforests, but virtually nothing is reported closer to home. Our government has slashed funding for conservation, halting grants, significantly reducing money to fund Natural England, removing protection for bats and other wildlife by relaxing the need for surveys on new builds and extensions. I have now heard rumour that they are going to stop Biodiversity Net Gain grants for small sites. This has affected BBOWT, and many other wildlife trusts significantly, leading to loss of jobs and less people able to conserve what we have left. I understand that being a member of organisations such as BBOWT is ever more important, so if you use Wells Farm regularly, enjoy seeing it from your garden or want to make a local difference, please become a member or renew your existing one. Our Wildlife needs you!

Thames Water have recently been on site, albeit initially treating one of the fields as a quadbike race track! They were allowed on site to seal the pipe that runs from the Haseleys to our pumping station. The idea is to stop water ingress causing an overload of the pipe, although I personally struggle to see this working. I wonder where the waste water from the council refuse vehicle cleaning will go?

A while back, BBOWT were awarded £20,000 to carry out some flood mitigation on the reserve, but have discovered they also need planning permission which is why nothing has yet happened. Give with one hand and take with the other, I guess.

However, there is a good chance some work can be done early in the New Year without such challenges. Will keep you posted.

I am starting up the work parties again this year. If you want to get involved, please drop me a message. You can make a real difference by just spending a few hours helping to keep the paths clear, remove vegetation, repair gates and stiles plus lots more. Email below.

Paul Jeffery - volunteer warden (paulj201@hotmail.com)

WELLS FARM ALLOTMENTS

Finally, there is vehicular access to the site, with Thames Water completing their repairs to the pipe, although they have done a poor job of the gate. One of the posts has sagged so the gate rests on the floor. I am not holding out much hope on TW fixing it yet but will try and get through to them.

It is a good time to start planning your plots. What to grow, where to grow it. Maybe some initial ground preparation and the addition of composted material. Spreading leaves on top and covering will encourage the worms to take them underground and help you enrich the soil. Not long until the ground warms up and the planting season commences!

Thank you, Graham, for doing a repair on the leaky well head pump. I have also asked BBOWT for wood so the ramp to the shed can be repaired. Some bramble clearance is required, which will probably involve a brush cutter rather than a tractor. I also plan to do some more hedge maintenance which should provide bean sticks for anyone who wants them. I will arrange a catch-up meeting in a couple of months. We do have some vacant plots if anybody wishes to take one on and is prepared to do a bit of work getting them into shape. Just contact me and I can show you around.

Paul Jeffery (paulj201@hotmail.com)

CHRISTMAS FAYRE RAFFLE

Thank you to all those who supported us by buying raffle tickets. Here are the lucky winners!

1. £100.....Gaga
2. £50.....E. Griffiths
3. Luxury Hamper....Mark Vallance
4. Bottle of Gin....
5. Little Milton Shop Hamper.....Mark
6. Selection of wines.....A. Hane
7. Reindeer socks.....Sinead Donnelly
8. Bottle of Bacardi.....Shirley Leach
9. Bottle of Port.....SallyAnn Dennis
10. Duvet set.....Harry Samrai
11. Bottle of Gluwein.....Carol Pickering
12. The Beauty Room voucher.....Gill Hoban
13. Bottle of Ice Cider.....Lewis Family
14. 2 Bottles of Wine...John Grayson
15. Card Coffee Set.....Lisa White
16. Pink Coffee Set.....Angela

TONS TOGETHER (LITTLE MILTON)

In December we enjoyed learning about Quirky Christmas traditions from our favourite llama lady, Jayne, followed by Christmas treats and mulled wine.

We're out for our January meeting at the Seven Stars pub for the annual New Year dinner. See you back at the Pine Lodge in February for Adele's talk on conservation in Welgevonden, South Africa.

Do you live in Little Milton, Great Milton, The Haseleys, Stadhampton or surrounding villages, new to the area, want to meet new people, make new friends? Then join Tons Together WI and meet like-minded, local women of all ages in an informal, friendly group

We meet every 2nd Thursday of the month in the Pine Lodge OX44 7PZ at 7.30pm. Too shy to come by yourself or need a lift? Contact us & we'll find you a WI buddy.

Like us at www.facebook.com/lmpinelodge
Pine Lodge website: www.lmvh.org.uk

Kath Stacey 01844-279438 tonstogetherwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

VIEW FROM VIEWS

Now we start a new year, what will it bring for us, I am no soothsayer so will leave it at that. One thing I do know, at the time of writing (last year), that I have been alluding to the fact that we had had a kind autumn and how well all the Autumn planted crops were looking, that is except some 100 acres of wheat. What happened to the Wheat is that, being ultra efficient and forward thinking, with the conditions being so favourable we got on and sprayed the pre(crop) emergence weed killer, before the weather changed. As it happened, we had a downpour this being a soil acting chemical, was washed straight through the soil and, affected the germinating crop, so now we have a very uneven looking piece of Wheat, very disheartening when all other crops look so good for a change.

Some interesting wildlife sightings on Views Farm, (at night with night vision), a Peregrine Falcon, many hares that we don't see in the daylight, most extraordinary an Otter in a field at least a kilometre from the river, also a Chinese water deer. We think our efforts to clear the river of Mink has had some effect, as water vole have been sighted along the river.

In November last year there was a movement within some more forward-thinking MPs, that we should have a land use survey, being worried that we are hell bent on using productive agricultural land for solar panels, wind farms, energy crops, building, roads, reservoirs, to name but a few. Giving no thought to the question of the real possibility that we may need to produce our own food to survive in the not-too-distant future, come global conflict, which is looking more and more likely by the day. At the moment this alternative use of land is not a problem, if we just consider cereals to be honest, we have probably a surplus, we could/should be growing more pulses to save importing Soya grown where rain forests used to be. The problem with that statement is that we cannot produce these at a competitive price as the rest of the world, due to the fact our overheads are far higher than others.

The big problem with growing our own crops also is the harvesting, when we consider Fruits and vegetables, without foreign labour. It is difficult to understand why our own nationals don't seem to be able or willing to do this manual work. Having said that there

are many reasons for this, one that the work is very seasonal and what will they do when not needed, who will pay them when they are not needed for work, also there may not be enough workers in the locality which will create a travel issue. We do have to accept that we will have to get used to doing more menial tasks ourselves. With our current knowledge it would not be beyond possibility to be self-sufficient in most staples but, we need to be confident that we can get the Labour, at a price that the end product can stand, plus the financial confidence that the government will not plunder our efforts. We also need less unnecessary regulation, putting us at a disadvantage to our competitors.

“Kidlington Rubbish”, some agency’s eyes must have been shut, we now will have to pay for this why? I cannot believe that as this was first reported in September why it was not stopped until mid-November, someone was not on the ball, it was no good putting up a notice saying stop and, not following it up. There is the issue of 1000 dead fish in Roke marsh lake, honestly what is going wrong in our society, no one seems to care. Now we have just learned, via an enquiry made by our MP, through the freedom of information act, that “Homes England” have already spent some £25.5m on research into the development of Chalgrove Airfield, without consulting Martin Baker, who have said they are not able/willing to move. Plus, an additional £11m on land purchase, I think this all allows us to be critical of the powers that be.

All the above just illustrates how our hard-earned wages are just wasted this is without mentioning HS2, welfare paying people who are better off on the dole, and allowing pressure groups to influence Government decisions on trivial issues that will hold up development unnecessarily. It is these smaller issues that costs a lot to circumnavigate making infrastructure projects delayed and over budget. Some of the so-called red tape is due to public pressure, so you could say it is our fault.

One bit of good news is that the appeal into the development of a transport Hub and science park at Waterstock, has been refused by the inspector, something I think none of us thought likely, so sometimes our representations do work for the public good. I doubt it though it will not be too long before something else rears its ugly head for us to lose a bit more to Nature.

On that note Happy & peaceful New Year! Charles Peers.

Charles Peers

DATE OF NEXT SEWING GROUP

Following our Christmas meal, we are back in business and will be meeting at Wayside, the home of Mary Harrison, on Wednesday, the 28th of January from 11 o’clock onwards... If you are considering a new year resolution perhaps you might like to consider joining our sewing group... We are a creative bunch but we also have lots of fun together and lots of chat as well as stitching...

S.A. Dennis (01844 278029

LITTLE MILTON CHRISTMAS CARD

A sincere and heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to this year’s Little Milton Christmas Card. Together we raised a fantastic **£2,085.50 for SeeSaw Grief Support**, which provides support for children, young people, and their families when they have been bereaved or when someone close to them is terminally ill. Your kind donations will help children all over Oxfordshire when they need it most. Thank you.

And congratulations to Dee Waldron, who won lunch for two at The Lamb!
May your 2026 be happy and healthy.

With love, Gabriella Wilkinson

DEADLINE REMINDER / ADVERTISING

Please note that unless articles are in the hands of the Editor by the 18th of the month (unless otherwise stated), such articles will miss the scheduled Newsletter. The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Parish Council. All material for inclusion in the December **2025** Newsletter should be with the Editor at 27 Chiltern View, Little Milton, by 8.00 p.m. on **18th November**. The Editor reserves the right not to print items submitted for publication and to edit those items, which are published.

All advertising enquiries should be directed to the editor by email at fergie.milton1@btinternet.com.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE PINE LODGE – LITTLE MILTON

For an early Valentine's celebration on Saturday 7 February, we have the return of the Carpathians band for a night of music and dancing, so make a note in your diary. For further details please check our website

Regular activities in the Hall include:

Monday Karate 17.15 – 18.00 Contact Matt (karateoxfors@gmail.com)

Tuesdays at 9:30 am, **Keep Fit** on with Alyce (alycefwf@gmail.com)

Wednesday 9:30 am **Advanced Textile** on workshop with Amargeet (amarjeetnandhra@virginmedia.com)

Thursday 10:30 am **Fitness with Focus** (mobility and stretching) on with Alyce (alycefwf@gmail.com)

Thursday 1:15 pm Pilates on with Lauren (lauren@pop-up-pilates.com)

Thursday 6:00 pm **Keep Fit** on with Alyce (alycefwf@gmail.com)

Friday 9:30 am **Fitness with Focus** (mobility and stretching) on with Alyce (alycefwf@gmail.com)

WI 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm
contact Kath Stacy kathstacey@yahoo.co.uk

Crafts 4th Monday of the month at 7:00 pm
contact Kath Stacy kathstacey@yahoo.co.uk

Parish Council 2nd Wednesday 7:30 pm For further details
contact clerk@littlemilton.org.uk

Village Hall committee 2nd Monday 7:30 pm For further details
contact giles.pinelodge@gmail.com

For details of Hall events, activities, information, or **to book the Hall** please follow the link to our online calendar on the Pine Lodge webpage at <https://lmvh.org.uk/> , or contact **Linda Lovegrove** linda.pinelodge@yahoo.co.uk

Walks Programme 2026

JANUARY

- Sunday 4th** Leisurely 4½ mile undulating walk starting in Stokenchurch, through beech woods on well-made footpaths with no stiles using Chiltern Way and Colliers Lane. Annual New Year walk, joint with Aston Rowant Parish Walkers.
- Thursday 8th** Scenic 5½ mile walk from Christmas Common through Queens Wood and Fire Wood and passing Pishill.
- Tuesday 13th** Gentle, social 2½ mile walk from Kingston Blount visiting Kiln Lakes Nature Reserve. Coffee stop at the finish at the Cherry Tree PH.
- Thursday 15th** Moderate 7 mile walk from Thame Town Hall via the Oxfordshire Golf Club to Rycote Chapel.
- Wednesday 21st** 6 mile meander from Garsington (check website for details of start place) over the fields to Denton and on to Cuddesdon.
- Wednesday 28th** Moderate 4 mile walk from Wheatley passing the windmill and Shotover House.
- Saturday 31st** Scenic 5½ mile walk with beautiful views from Lodge Hill, starting in Bledlow.

All walks start at 10am unless otherwise stated.

Please check the website to confirm details as programme subject to change:

www.ramblers-oxon.org.uk/thame-wheatley/walking.html

or phone 01844 213608

Leaders' contact details and suitability of walks for dogs can also be found on the website.

The Ramblers' Association is a registered charity (England & Wales no 1093577, Scotland no SC03979)

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The usual surgery opening hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm
Saturday mornings (excluding Bank Holiday weekends) 8am to 10.30am, for
prebooked consultations only

Enhanced access hours are offered outside these times, please speak to one of the care navigators on 01865 872448 for more information.

When the surgery is closed, please contact the Out of Hours service by phoning 111

A new Morland House Surgery **Facebook Page** has been created. This is to keep patients up to date with surgery news and health issues. Please like and follow.

Ordering Repeat Prescriptions: Please use the NHS App or log into your account on the NHS website. For more information on ordering, visit the 'prescriptions' page on our website.

Medicine waste costs the NHS around £300 million/year. Only order the medicines you need. Once medicine leaves a pharmacy it can no longer be re-used even if unopened.

Winter vaccinations are still available from local pharmacies to protect against serious illnesses like flu and COVID-19. For information, check eligibility and booking visit [Winter vaccinations and winter health - NHS](#).

Care Messages: The NHS App is now being used by MHS and other health providers to send you simple, secure messages on your phone about your care e.g. appointments, test results, reminders. Much quicker than waiting for a letter or phone call. See MHS website to find out how to turn on notifications in the NHS App and receive Care Messages.

Scam NHS cold calls - beware of fake calls from "receptionists" or "doctors" asking you to update your GP records or risk being removed from the surgery.

You and Your General Practice – this new NHS guide can be downloaded from the MHS website. It is great resource for all NHS patients, full of useful tips and helpful information.

Online Resources for Clinical Help Did you know that there are many local services to which you can make self-referrals without speaking to your GP? The Morland House Surgery website lists the various options. Visit [Self-Referral – Morland House](#)

Visit **Morland House Surgery Website** for a wealth of information and guidance on managing a vast number of health conditions, symptoms, and treatment: www.morland-house.co.uk For example:

- **Medical Records and Test Results** - guidance on how to access this information.
- **Pharmacy First Service (PFS)**, whereby pharmacies can treat directly seven common health conditions.
- **Group Consultation Clinics** – successful group clinics are currently being offered for the menopause and hypertension.
- **Breast screening** to detect the most common cancer in women
- **Whooping Cough** infections, symptoms and treatment
- **Weight Loss Medication**
- **Childhood Immunisation**

CHURCH CLEANING NEWS



The cleaners of Saint James' Church celebrated another year of cleaning with a wonderful meal up at The Lamb in December. George and Hannah looked after us superbly and we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves... Here's to another year of cleaning! We have been in business for many years and several of the group are still cleaning after 18 years and a few of us after 25 years... Here with an earlier photograph taken up at The Lamb for our Christmas meal in 2007...!





Dear residents of Little Milton,

As we move into the new year, I would like to send my very best wishes to everyone in the village. It has been a pleasure continuing to hear from residents in Little Milton, and I am grateful to everyone who has taken the time to share their concerns and priorities with me.

I am very much looking forward to visiting Little Milton School in early February. I have written to the Department for Education on the school's behalf to raise concerns around IT infrastructure, and I will continue to support the school in pressing for the investment it needs to ensure pupils and staff have reliable, modern facilities.

Many residents have raised concerns about flooding in the village, and I am pleased that Thames Water has now relined sections of pipework in Little Milton, which should help to alleviate some of these issues. I will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Road safety remains a key issue locally. I am pleased to see that the correct 20 mph signage has now been installed, following concerns raised by residents. I have also been working on behalf of constituents to help speed up pothole repairs, press for improved broadband connectivity, and represent residents in discussions aimed at mitigating the impact of the Haseley vehicle waste depot on the local community.

You may notice my constituency survey arriving through your letterbox around this time. I would be extremely grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete it. Your feedback will directly inform my work and priorities over the next year, and I want to hear what matters most to you.

Thank you for everything you do to make Little Milton such a strong and active community. I look forward to continuing to work with you in the months ahead.

Finally, if there is a local issue you would like to raise, or something you would like me to pursue on your behalf, please do get in touch. You can email me at freddie.vanmierlo.mp@parliament.uk.

**With best wishes,
Freddie Van Mierlo MP**

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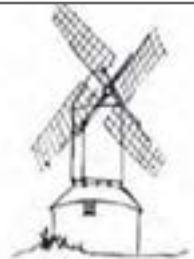
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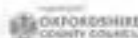


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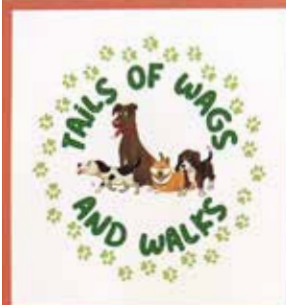
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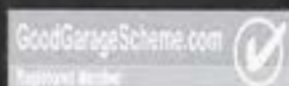
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Church: St James	TBA	Interregnum
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Little Milton School	01844 279310	Sarah Sandys-Clarke Head of School
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MUGA	Bookings for the courts are made at the Post Office	
Neighbourhood Watch		Contact Editor 01844 279150
Newsletter	01844 279150	Raymond Fergusson (Editor)
OCC	01865 792422	All enquiries
Parish Council	01844 278180 01844 875635	Francois Van der Merwe (Chair) Andrea Oughton (Clerk)
Pine Lodge	01844 278605 01844 279535 0844 7255568	Steve Willis (Chairman) Linda Lovegrove (Bookings) 24/7 Call out service
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For all other numbers go to website www.littlemilton.org.uk

Front Cover Courtesy of Brian Stacey



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