Little Milton Newsletter



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY: MAY 2025

DITTES	OILI	JON DIMINIT. WILL	1 2025
Thurs	1st	6.00 - 7.00 p.m.	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'
Tues	6th	9.30–10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	7th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge
		7.30 p.m.	Parish Council _ Pine Lodge
Thurs	8th	6.00 - 7.00 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
Frid	9th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sun	11th	10.30 a.m.	Family Service – St James'
		11.30 a.m.	Annual Parochial Church Meeting
			St James'
Tues.	13th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	14th	9.30 - 3.30 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge
Thurs	15th	6.00 - 7.00 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
		7.30 p.m.	WI Meeting -Pine Lodge
Frid	16th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit - Pine Lodge
Tues	20th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	21st	9.30 - 3.30 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge
Thurs	22nd	6.00 - 7.00 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
		7.00 p.m.	Craft Evening – Pine Lodge
Frid	23rd	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sun	25th	9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion BCP- St Peter's'
		10.30 a.m.	Benefice Morning Worship - St
			James'
Tues	27th	9.30–10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	28th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge
		11.00 a.m.	Sewing Group: Maggie 40 Chiltern
			View
Thurs	29th	6.00 - 7.00 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
Frid	30th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit - Pine Lodge
JUNE			
Sun	1st	9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion CW: St James'

<u>PLEASE NOTE</u> If in doubt please check with the event organiser that the event is still taking place at the date and time state

EDITORIAL

As VE Day approaches on the 8th of May I felt it was appropriate if as editor I reflected upon the occasion. I was involved in the events for the 50th Anniversary in 1995. It is hard to believe that was thirty years go. There was no editorial in the 1995 May newsletter but I did find an article written in September 1995 that I believe reflects a view that may still holds true today

Extract September 1995

LEST WE FORGET

I wonder how many of us will be around in 2045 to commemorate 100 years since the end of World War 2. For those of you, like me, intend to be here, I wonder if we will officially remember the War at all.

The question of whether such ceremonies should continue as our collective memory fades has arisen before and I dare say will arise again. The word in some quarters is that such days of remembrance will probably fizzle out if only because the participants in the war will become fewer and fewer, until inevitably there are none left. By implication, we can apparently just forget about the whole sorry episode and "look to the future".

This is a curious argument. By implication it means that the lessons of war are only relevant to the generation who lived through it. It also seems to suggest in rather patronising fashion that we only observe such days of remembrance for the sake of the remaining participants. My fear is that this argument will eventually predominate.

Here's a question – how many of us remember the English Civil War? None, I hope! Do any of us know what it was about? I suspect some know a few details- something to do with Cavaliers, Roundheads, Royalty and someone called Cromwell. At a national level it is certainly (but vaguely) remembered through a few quirky parliamentary practices. But we in Little Milton have particular reason to remember the Civil War. This village was in the front line during the summer of 1643. A major line of defence for the Royalist stronghold of Oxford ran along the river from Thame through Wheatley Bridge, Cuddesdon Mill and Chiselhampton Bridge where Royalist Garrisons were stationed. Food was taken from Great Milton and Little Milton by both armies. The Battle of Chalgrove took place just down the road.

The Civil War represented a major milestone in the development of this country yet so many people know little or nothing about it. My fear is that the memory of this Centuries World Wars will go the same way. However, my belief is that we need to keep reminding ourselves of these conflicts, or how our freedoms were won and how those freedoms were fought for when under attack. We also need to remind ourselves of the dreadful alternatives to peace. Moreover, we need to do this in 1995 and in 2045.

So next time you pop out for a video or buy a newspaper deriding the latest initiative, remember these basic freedoms were attained through violent bloodshed.....and be thankful for the peace we enjoy."

R Smith

I wonder how the writer of that article would feel today thirty years on. Would he feel that the memory of the sacrifices that were made in the Second World War to defend our freedoms were fading. I will leave that to the reader to make their own judgement.

On behalf of the village, I would like to thank Jane and Mark Willis for the commemorative booklet "Little Milton Remembers, 1939-1945". It reminds us of the sacrifices that the men of this village gave for our freedom.

Editor

SUMMARY FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 9TH APRIL 2025

Below is a summary of some of the topics and discussions which took place at the additional Parish Council meeting held in April.

Haseley Trading Estate

A reminder that a public consultation is planned for 28 April 2025 between 3-7pm at Pine Lodge, Little Milton.

Planning

P25/S1079/HH – Southerndown Cottage, Haseley Road, Little Milton, OX44 7QE Insertion of two pitched roof window dormers

Resolved to Fully Support the application

Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) Broadband Provision

Chiltern View is the only area in the village without access to FTTP. Two residents have taken up the challenge and asked questions of the digital team at Oxfordshire County Council and Building Digital UK (BDUK). A letter has been sent to Freddie van Mierlo MP. BDUK, through Freddie van Mierlo have indicated that Chiltern View are included in their future plans. Airband has confirmed it is prepared to look again at provision in this area. The residents, with Cllr Horwell will continue to liaise with stakeholders and update the parish council.

Reports from Councillor Representatives

Open Green Spaces

Whips have been planted along the boundary of the recreation ground. Whilst doing so it was noted that previously planted hedging is doing well. Cllr Harrison is in the process of submitting a grant application to Oxfordshire County Council for funding towards a flood mitigation scheme.

Playground

Ground nesting bees are active in the playground, activity usually only lasts for a few weeks and the bees are considered docile and harmless. Cllr Wakeling will put up laminated information signs in the areas where the bees are active.

MUGA

Cllr Horwell to supply measurements of the basketball backboards to a local company who have agreed to make new boards. The hoops are in good condition, but the nets need replacing. The booking system is ready to go live very soon, Cllr Horwell to ensure the shop has a supply of new tokens for the lights. Plans are moving forward for an official opening in the summer.

Correspondence

The parish council received a letter from Freddie van Mierlo MP regarding the shambolic nature of the water industry, in particular Thames Water and his campaign to hold them to account. It was agreed that Cllrs Horwell and Sheppard will reply on behalf of the parish council providing data on pumping trucks in the village, including

the closure of the road whilst the trucks are in situ, the noise and the possibility that with some reorganisation room could be made for the trucks to park on site. Data on sewage leaks and flooding will also be supplied.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 14th May 2025**, in Pine Lodge, commencing at 7pm, everyone is warmly invited to attend to hear what has happened over the last year, including a report on past and future projects on which Community Infrastructure Levy receipts are spent.

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

Andrea Oughton, Parish Clerk

Current Council members

Current Council members	
Councillor François 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: Freddie Van Mierlo	07944 492438
	freddie.vanmierlo@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 – MAY 2025

	Brown	Grey	Green	Food
7th May ++	No	Yes	No	Yes
13th May	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
20th May	No	Yes	No	Yes
28th May ++	Yes	No	Yes	No

⁺⁺ Change of day due to Bank Holiday

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING WEDNESDAY 14th MAY 2025 7.00 p.m. in the Pine Lodge

The Annual Parish meeting will take place in the Pine Lodge on Wednesday 14th May 2025, commencing at 7.00p.m.

This meeting is not a Parish Council meeting but a meeting at which the Council and other relevant organisations report on their activities during the past year.

Everyone is warmly invited to attend to hear what has happened over the last year, including a report on past and future projects on which Community Infrastructure Levy receipts are spent.

The meeting allows villagers to raise any matters for discussion. The Parish Council cannot be bound by any decision of the meeting but would need to take note of the comments.

Andrea Oughton Parish Clerk

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR GEORGINA HERITAGE UPDATE

Meetings and Council Activity

For the Haseley Brook ward, the biggest news item over the past month has been the announcement from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse councils that they are the new owners of Haseley Trading Estate and, subject to planning, the site will be used as a long-term vehicle depot for waste and street cleaning fleet. This is something I was admittedly nervous about initially, as I was concerned that without full explanation, local residents may assume that the estate is intended to be a waste transfer station. It's very important to me that our residents can feel assured of transparency and our parish councils are fully informed. With this in mind, I contacted Andrew Busby, Head of Development and Corporate Landlord, who was in agreement and gave me the opportunity to work with him and other officers in their communication plans. As a result, I was pleased that Andrew Busby and his colleague Andrew Waterman offered to attend the March parish council meetings of those villages closest to the trading estate. The parish councils in this ward which are not in such close proximity received a separate communication, and there will be lots of opportunity for engagement and for questions to be answered.

To clarify, the new site would be used as a depot for parking waste and recycling collection vehicles, street cleaning vehicles, and for vehicle maintenance. There would be no storage or disposal of waste. The current vehicle depot in Culham is due to be redeveloped for new homes, and the existing contract and lease expires in 2026, so the councils have spent a very long time searching for a suitable new location to ensure statutory waste collection services are not interrupted in any way.

The plan is to redevelop and retain one of the existing buildings and make improvements to the site, which will include improving the screening with planting and managing the adjoining woodland, which has suffered some neglect in recent years. They will also be reviewing their vehicle movements to keep the impact on the surrounding areas as minimal as possible.

The new owners intend to be good neighbours and show respect to the surrounding villages. If you have any questions about the intentions for Haseley Trading Estate I am very happy to assist in getting them answered for you.

Subject to planning approval, the new depot would operate from the summer of 2026. There will be lots of opportunities to engage and ask questions, including a public dropin event on 28 April at Little Milton Village Hall between 3pm and 7.30pm. There is no need to book.

There is also a link to information about the site here: <u>Haseley Trading Estate - South</u> Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council

Everyone Active Grant

We're so pleased to have been able to increase our grants offer as part of this year's budget, and the Everyone Active offer has proved so successful that I requested we continue it, as it was originally budgeted as a shorter-term grant. The scheme is now open, and community organisations can apply for up to £1000 for projects that will help communities become more active or sustain activity. For example, for leisure or playground equipment, to run training courses to help improve physical/mental wellbeing, or even to help set up a community garden.

Locally, Thame the Disc (ultimate frisbee) have benefitted from an Everyone Active grant, and I'd love to see some Haseley Brook organisations benefit from the funding, so please spread the word.

The grant scheme will close once all the budget is spent, or at midday on **Monday 26 May**, whichever is sooner. More information about the grant scheme can be found here: Everyone Active grant scheme - now open - South Oxfordshire District Council

Organisations are also welcome to contact the council's Community Enablement team on 01235 422405 or email grants@southandvale.gov.uk

Local Government Reorganisation Update

Such updates are inevitably becoming a regular feature of my monthly reports, and this month I have the opportunity to introduce Ridgeway Council, a proposal to create a new council that reflects the make-up of our rural and market town identity and maintains local representation.

An initial proposal has been submitted on behalf of West Berkshire Council and the district councils in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse for the creation of a new unitary council that would see the three areas combined. The move is in response to the government invitation following its announcement in December 2024 to end two-tier authorities like those in Oxfordshire.

As part of the shake-up of local councils, the government has also indicated all unitary authorities will need to serve around 500,000 residents or more, which will require West Berkshire Council - which covers around 170,000 people - to merge with neighbouring councils.

Ridgeway Council forms one half of a two-unitary council proposal for Oxfordshire, with the other half made up from the district council areas of West Oxfordshire, Oxford City and Cherwell. West Oxfordshire District Council and Cherwell District Council have confirmed they will be developing the North Oxfordshire Council half of the proposal, complementing the Ridgeway Council work being carried out by West Berkshire, South Oxfordshire and the Vale, coming together to create a proposal for two unitaries covering what is currently Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. With strong demographic and economic similarities and significant historic ties between South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and West Berkshire, the three councils have now produced a detailed interim proposal document, which is available on their new website dedicated to keeping the public informed about the proposal at ridgewaycouncil.org.uk. The proposal is being developed under the title 'Ridgeway Council' which is named after the famous 5,000-year-old trail that travels through the heart of the three council areas.

At their respective Executive and Cabinet meetings, members from all three councils agreed to support the submission of the interim proposal. Following the government's request that Oxfordshire authorities submit interim proposals together, the County Council has submitted an outline proposal for the Ridgeway Council and North Oxfordshire Council to the government, alongside two other options being developed in Oxfordshire which include a county-wide Oxfordshire proposal.

There will be opportunities in the coming months to hear the views of our communities before the final proposal is submitted, and the councils will also continue working positively and collaboratively with the other authorities in Oxfordshire.

Fly Tipping

With so many parish litter picks taking place across the district in recent weeks, I'm aware of the extent of fly tipping in Haseley Brook and have been engaging with the Waste Team to assist some of the parish councils in my ward with problem areas.

I hope residents will at least be encouraged to know that there are now stricter penalties for fly-tipping, littering, and for householders who fail to ensure that their waste will be disposed of legally. This is part of a national crackdown on anti-social behaviour and the new penalties begin on 1st April. Key changes include:

- **Householder duty of care breaches**: on-the-spot fines will rise from £300 to £600.
- **Fly-tipping**: maximum fixed penalty notices will increase from £400 to £1,000.
- Littering and graffiti: fines will rise from £80 to £500.

Under the law, householders must ensure that their waste is disposed of legally and responsibly. Even when hiring someone to remove rubbish, you remain accountable. If someone's waste is found fly-tipped and they have failed to verify that the person or trader was legally authorised to handle it, or they failed to retain documentation, they could face an on-the-spot fine. If you're intending to have waste removed from your property, please follow this advice:

 Check waste carriers: always verify that the person removing your rubbish is a registered waste carrier. Use the Environment Agency's public register -environment.data.gov.uk/public-register or call 03708 506 506.

Keep Records: obtain a receipt or transfer note with details of the waste carrier, their contact information and where your waste will be disposed of. Also, record the vehicle details, such as make and registration

TERRY COOPER

The family are sad to report the death of Terry Cooper on the 9th April at the age of 90. Terry had been having increasing health issues since the beginning of the year and was taken into the JR on 1st March. When it became clear he would not be coming home, he was moved to Sobell House, where he passed away on the 9th April.

Terry grew up all his life, and loved living in Little Milton, He had seen many changes in the village, and had many a story to tell about the old times, the many villagers he knew and the variety of local sports teams/organisations/acquaintances he took part in, and was involved with.

A cremation will take place at Oxford Crematorium on 6th May at 12.30 and then afterwards at Lt Milton village hall, from 2pm until 5pm, where Ray, and the family, welcome you to come along and share your memories of Terry.

The family would also like to express their thanks for all the support, cards and good wishes that so many have offered and for all the friendship and support that Terry received over the years.

Ray Cooper

GREAT MILTON METHODIST CHURCH SERVICES: MAY 2025

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

Date	Time	Church	Preacher	Comment
4th May	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	Local Arrangement	
11th May	11.15 a.m.	Great Milton	Rev Stephen Spain	Christian
				Aid Sunday
18th May	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	Liz Spain	
25th May	11.00 a.m	Great Milton	David Harper	

LENT LUNCHES

Sunday 4th May

These have once again proved popular and this year truly inclusive and Ecumenical as the Methodists in Great Milton also hosted a lunch. Warm thanks to all those who hosted these five Lent Lunches – Judy, Jane and Tony, Sally Ann and Ian, Trudy and the Chapel and to all who gave much needed help at each of the different venues...The individual lunches raised £170, £290, £180, £120 and £122. Envelopes were available for one of the lunches enabling people to Gift Aid and adding an extra £26.25. The Grand Total this year came to £908.25. THANKYOU to those who hosted, those who came, those who gave and to the Manoir for the delicious Bread Rolls...

S A Dennis

BENEFICE SERVICES FOR MAY 2025

Sunuay	4th May	
9.00 10.30	Holy Communion Special Rogation Service	St James' Little Milton Service will be held at Field Farn OX9 2HQ (the turning for Barr Builders on the left just
		past The Oxfordshire Golf Club
Sunday	11th May	
9 .00	Holy Communion Family Worship	St Mary's Great Milton St James' Little Milton St James' Little Milton
Sunday	18th May	
	Holy Communion	St Peter's Great Haseley
10.30		St Mary's Great Milton
11.30		St Mary's Great Milton
Sunday	25th May	
	Holy Communion BCP	St Peter's Great Haseley
	Benefice Morning Worship	St James' Little Milton
Thursd	ay 29th May -Ascension Day	
7.00	Holy Communion	St Peter's' Great Haeley

RECTOR'S PINT

I rarely stray into comment which might be seen in any political light, but I feel compelled to do so now.

I understand that as a nation, we face enormous financial challenges. However, I believe that decisions from the Government, as outlined in the recent Spring Statement, will penalise those who are the most vulnerable, particularly disabled people. This is morally wrong and could fuel also a narrative of the 'undeserving poor'.

In January, a group who call themselves Patriotic Millionaires polled over 2,300 respondents from G20 countries who represent the richest five percent in the world. Seventy four percent of those polled supported higher taxes to help address the cost-of-living crisis and improve public services. What I find significant is that those with the broadest shoulders are saying that it would be morally reasonable to ask them to bear a heavier load rather than further penalise those who are already overwhelmed. I'm aware excessive wealth does not necessarily lead to excessive generosity, but I see some hope in that poll; it is a profoundly Christian view.

Therefore, I was very glad to see the following statement from the Diocese of Oxford:

"Our work across the diocese with foodbanks, Warm Spaces and the like, tells us that a huge proportion of people in poverty are disabled. Nearly half of families living in poverty already include a person with a disability. Two in five people receiving disability benefits experience hardship, or are unable to afford enough food, heat their home adequately, and/or pay household bills. Disabled people are disproportionately relying on food banks – 69% of people referred to food banks are disabled, and 75% have at least one disabled person in their household.

"As a church we stand against the benefit cuts, which we believe will penalise some of the most vulnerable in our society, and will push more people into poverty.

"These cuts are significant – the Government plan to take £5bn from welfare provision by 2030, focused on restricting the PIP (personal independence plan) qualification. This means that between 800,000 and 1.2 million people will lose support they currently receive (of between £4,200 and £6,300 per year)".

In response, the Area Bishop of Dorchester, Bishop Gavin has said:

"Churches are the largest providers of food banks. Instead of closing these down, as we might hope to be able to do, we'll be opening more of them as we respond to the increased need that will inevitably result from these cuts to vital welfare payments. We cannot know the extent of the impact of these cuts, but what we can be certain of is that they will affect some of the most vulnerable people in our society. People who are already struggling will face challenges far greater than they should be."

If you feel strongly about this, you can make your views known by writing to our MP. There is also a consultation on the green paper that is asking particularly for the views of disabled people. If you are interested, simply do an internet search for 'pathways to work consultation'.

I believe that where we, as Christians, feel that Government plans do not reflect our Christian values, we should take the opportunity to make our views known; to stand up and be counted.

Simon

RINGING FOR VE DAY

On 8th May 1945, bells rang out across Britain as the nation took to the streets in celebration of Victory in Europe Day – the surrender of the German forces and the end of the Second World War in Europe.

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of this event and to pay tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice, the bells of St James's will ring at 2 pm on 8th May 2025. Many other churches across the country will also ring their bells during the course of the day.

A special service is to be held in Westminster Abbey earlier in the day. Eighty years ago, short services of thanksgiving were held in the Abbey every hour from 9 am to 10 pm, attended by around 25,000 people.

Catherine Hughes-D'Aeth (Tower Captain)

CHURCH CLEANING ROTA FOR MAY

W/E 4th May	_	Mrs L. Lovegrove & Mrs C Coward
W/E 11th May	_	Mrs A Jones & Mrs Sarah Holifield/E
W/E18th May	_	Mrs Maggie Bell & Mrs Wendy Newby
W/E 25th May	_	Mrs A Blagg & Mrs Cathy D'Aeth
W/E 1st June	_	Mrs M Davies & Mrs S A Dennis

CHURCH FLOWER ROTA FOR MAY

W/E 4th May	-	Cathy
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W/E 11th May

W/E 20th May

W/E 27th May - Chris

FRIENDS OF LITTLE MILTON SCHOOL- 200 CLUB

The winners of April and May will be published in the June newslwtter Dinae Austin on bealf of The Friends of Little Milton School

FRIENDS OF WELLS FARM

The word "May" is often used to describe the blossom on hawthorn bushes in the hedgerows. These flowers are so Important for insects at this time of year but also for harvest mice who will climb up to feed on then at night.

Last month a few trees came down and were removed by the boardwalk. The ground had destabilised as a result of prolonged wet conditions followed by a long dry spell so a gusty day was enough to finish them off.

In lake April we had over a hundred sheep visit the farm for treatment to prevent "Blue tongue". The viral disease is usually transmitted by midges and is often fatal. severe conditions show as a blue tongue hence the name. This month the sheep will be shorn usually in the second week by a chap from North Wales who has been doing them here for many years. You might get the chance to see it happening on morning if you are lucky.

Last month a Little owl survey was carried out. This is done by playing various calls through a speaker set up at various points around the reserve which will attract any of them over If they are about. At the end of the first night's survey an owl appeared right by the barn so we do have then back at Wells.

WELLS FARM ALLOTMENTS

Lovely to see so many plots being put to use this year. This month there is still time to grow beans and it is worth planting a few more every two weeks to extend the harvest period.

The weather should be warm enough for squashes to go out in the ground possibly outdoor tomatoes.

The well pump has a split in it and so there is a slight leak which will need a repair at some point but it still works. Try not to bash the handle against the leaky spot though.

Paul Jeffery - (paulj201@hotmail.com)

DATE OF NEXT SEWING GROUP

Many thanks to Sarah McClean for hosting the group in April. This month in May the group meets at Maggie's home in Chiltern View on Wednesday May 28th from 11.00 onwards...Anyone new to the village (or old in the village) is welcome to join us. For further details telephone me on 01844 278029.

Sally Ann Dennis

TONS TOGETHER (LITTLE MILTON) WI

A big thank you to Alyce Hoban for talking to us in April about keeping fit and healthy. We even tried out some simple stretches and exercises we could do at home and some are now going to try out her class on a Thursday morning. Also, thanks to Lucinda for the lovely tea & cakes.

On Thursday 8th May 7.30pm, Simon Booker is going to present 'Strictly Nature', a talk about being a wildlife photographer, showing his films and photos. Everyone always welcome, men too! Visitors £6 or become a member for £51.

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

"Manna from heaven rain at last, see below"

"March in like a Lamb out like a Lion", not so this year a lamb at each end of the month and, very little rain to boot all I measured was 6.5mm, others locally I know had more, at least we had a month without the river being in flood. When walking a recently planted field we planted of Barley, I thought what a treat to be looking at a growing crop that was actually even all over, without bare patches where the ground had been too wet for seedlings to grow, which has not been the case for some 3 years. Unfortunately, the first few days of April remained the same as the last weeks of March,

with these crops now looking decidedly desperate for a drink, inspecting a crop of beans planted three weeks earlier some seeds had not even chitted. I had hoped that we were going to have a reasonable season but, it looked very uncertain just before it rained in the middle of April when, we had some soft refreshing rain (just what was needed). Hopefully now things will start to move on as they should do, the worry now is will once it starts to rain it may well forget how to stop, it looks though as if we may only get April Showers which will be fine, a balance so once again fingers crossed.

Has spring finally come and at last after a long dormant period, crops and plants in general have started to grow it has been a very slow spring so far, making it a late one. Lawns had only needed mowing twice up to mid-April. It is though, a joy to hear the birds singing again, with some migrants, of the feathered verity, suddenly being obvious. Recently when we first heard the Chiff Chaff it seemed you could hear them everywhere, making us think do they all come over together as a flock then spread out over the countryside, do all other birds do the same, there must be research somewhere that will tell us the answer. We now await more feathered migrants, Swallows, Cuckoos etc, to name but a few, they will all come and go again quicker than we like to think, then we will be back in to winter again.

This is more than can be said for Government support and, recognition of what we do, like, feed the nation! as they seem determined to cut out all our support. It concerns me that some people now do not understand why it is that we get Government support anyway, I think it is important to get the message over as to why it is. This system was introduced many years ago to keep the price of food low, and to make sure we could produce as much of our own food as possible, that now does not seem to matter. Now unfortunately the supermarkets have such a hold over the market that it would be difficult to change. Of course, most other countries subsidise their agriculture, this in turn alters the price of food anyway, so in order for home production to continue it has to be supported to compete, daft I know, like all fiscal plans. The whole system of support that is an essential part of farm income but is governed by Westminster, (or now it seems by Donald Trump). Now that we have a Parliament that does not have any members with a countryside or farming back ground it is difficult for them to understand our plight. As an example of this fact, I understand our deputy PM is suggesting that we should be grazing less sheep in moorland areas, does she not understand that it is sheep grazing that will help to keep dead vegetation to a minimum, it is this dead vegetation at times of dry weather makes the countryside to prone to wildfires. Even the Moorland association have appealed to Angela Raynor to halt her campaign against sheep.

The recent cover of the "Little Milton Newsletter" there was a lovely picture of a curlew, a bird that was becoming extinct is now breeding on the banks of our own river "Thame", thanks to the conservation works carried out by the "River Thame Conservation Trust" and of course, local farmers/landowners. It is a pity that it is this area that there is a planning application for a large residential and industrial development, I don't think the two will mix somehow. We are continually being bombarded by our before mentioned and, beloved deputy PM, that we must build, never mentioning that investment in sewage plants and other infrastructure must go hand in hand. Are we not surprised at being continually informed in the news, of sewage spillages in the sea and rivers, that our biodiversity is worse than any other country in the world, it is only common sense that the more you build the greater the pressure on nature and our sewage treatment works. Then of course to correct some of these ills, it is the taxpayer who is expected to pick up the bill, not those who are profiting from

development who are expected to right these wrongs. I maintain there should be no more development until the sewage systems can cope otherwise, we will disappear under a heap of you know what, greater protection of nature must be part of any development. Fancy it is not safe for the traditional ducking of the Cox after the boat race, just what do we think we are doing, don't our lords and masters understand!!!!!
"Please don't forget to sponsor me for the Treator Pun on the 1st lung I have a

"Please don't forget to sponsor me for the Tractor Run on the 1st June I have a JustGiving page and also there should be a sponsorship from, in Great Milton the shop and the Bull, in Little Milton the Post office and shop.

www.Justgiving.com/fundraising/Charles-peers5 many thanks in advance.

Charles Peers

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE PINE LODGE:LITTLE MILTON

Need a private Meeting Room, there is one in the Hall for hire by the hour. It can seat up to 10 people and has a large wall mounted monitor for video conferencing or presentations, plus WIFI.

Regular activities in the Hall include:

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

Tuesday 6:00 pm, Saturday 10:00-12:00 Dance school (megan_ah@hotmail.com)

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

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

Thursday 6:00 p.m. 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 p.m. contact Kath Stacy kathstacey@yahoo.co.uk

Crafts 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. contact Kath Stacy kathstacey@yahoo.co.uk

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

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

For details of, news, booking info and the online events calendar please view the Pine Lodge webpage at https://lmvh.org.uk/, or contact Linda Lovegrove linda.pinelodge@yahoo.com



Garden mini-meadows:

Spring has arrived, and with it comes the annual tradition of No Mow May: a movement urging people to lock up their lawnmowers throughout May, promoting biodiversity and supporting pollinators. It's an opportunity to witness the beauty of wildflowers and native plants, which thrive when lawns are left untouched. But this year, why not take it a step further and create a mini-meadow or grassland?

No-mow is great to show you where the wildflowers are in your lawn, i.e. what is already there naturally - making it the perfect 1st step of mini-meadow creation. If you want to provide the maximum food source for your pollinators, rather than mowing it all again in June, leave an area of it untouched throughout spring and summer and only mow it in September once the flowers have finished. This is the easiest way to grow a mini-meadow in your garden and means our native bees can easily find nectar sources throughout their most active months. You can always enhance this area with bulbs or by planting wildflowers (e.g., cowslips, ox-eye daisy or foxgloves).

Lawns, or sections of garden, can be turned into wildflower meadows in several ways, depending on how much time and effort you want to put in and the result you want to achieve:

- The easiest option is to simply leave some, or all, of your lawn unmown and to let the grass grow long where any wildflowers are already present and for them to be able to reach the height needed to flower. Mow and remove the cuttings in September.
- Another easy option is to plant low-growing wildflowers and spring bulbs in your lawn to create a flower-rich mown lawn. If your lawn already supports several low-growing wildflowers, this will lend itself to adopting this option. This is a good compromise as it requires less frequent mowing than a regular lawn but can still be cut before it gets long if you want a shorter, lawn-like finish. Species such as birds-foot trefoil and selfheal are great for butterfly species, such as common blue and small skipper, as well as other pollinators. These wildflowers can also cope with being mown since they can adapt to flower at a short height. Clover is another low-growing species favoured by bees.
- The third option is to convert a lawn into a wildflower meadow, which can be done over several years. There are lots of 'how-to' meadow guides out there. I would recommend Plantlife's 'How to Grow a Wildflower Meadow.' You can find it online at www.plantlife.org.uk/how-to-grow-a-wildflower-meadow
- Managing your lawn to both include both shorter and longer areas (to create structural diversity) will support the greatest diversity of species.

Whichever option you choose, mini-meadows are a boon for pollinators and massively increase your garden's biodiversity and benefit to wildlife. I had a hedgehog fossicking in my little wildflower border last year. Remember, your garden must work for you too, so why not have a play and trial different things?

So, as May unfolds and the grass grows taller, consider creating a mini-meadow. Let your lawn be a sanctuary for pollinators, and a testament to the beauty of nature. Together, we can turn our gardens into vibrant ecosystems which collectively make a real difference for nature. Happy gardening everyone!

Wild Road Verges

Over 700 species of wildflower grow on road verges, which provide important linear habitats and wildlife corridors. We can combat the 20% drop since 1990 in floral diversity (reported by Plantlife) of verges by adopting better management strategies to protect and cultivate grass verges. One of the best strategies to encourage your local parish to adopt is a two-cut management approach to suppress coarse grass whilst encouraging more diverse wildflower growth. See the graph below to work out which timing works best for your local area! The graph is taken from Plantlife's 'Managing grassland road verges: a best practice guide', which you can download from their website.

It is then also important to collect the cuttings. Wildflowers of species-rich grasslands grow best in lower fertility soils, whilst high fertility soils support vigorous grass growth. Therefore, taking the biomass, and thus nutrients, they contain away from the verge can reduce the layer of dead grass or thatch and 'open up' the soil surface to allow seed germination. Repeated over several years, this benefits less robust growth and more diversity, and therefore less management is required to create beautiful natural spaces the roadside. See our guidance on verges on more https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/guidance/helping-nature-on-your-patch

Let it Grow - in our Community GreenSpaces!

The temptation for many of us can be to regularly mow our greenspaces and keep them looking as neat as possible but research by Plantlife has shown just how beneficial to wildlife the opposite can be. In their 'No Mow May' survey, Plantlife found that the highest production of flowers and nectar sugar was on grass cut once every four weeks. 'Short-grass' plants like daisies and white clover had a chance to flower in between mowing, boosting nectar production tenfold. Areas of grass that were left to grow for even longer periods of time were more diverse in their range of flowers, with other nectar-rich plants like oxeye daisy, field scabious and knapweed providing varied nectar sources well into late summer. At the end, you can take part in a survey by counting the flowers in a square metre of your green space and reporting it to Plantlife.

Find out more at https://www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay/

World Bee Day! 20th May

20th May is annual World Bee Day! Hopefully you're already helping bees get a wide range of diverse nectar sources by partaking in 'No Mow May'. Some other ways to help protect our declining bee populations include purchasing sustainable local honey, ditching harmful synthetic pesticides, providing a suitable water source for thirsty pollinators (can simply be a shallow bowl of water with stones in it for bees to land on), or hosting an event to raise awareness in your local area.

Thank you so much for all you have done for nature's recovery in the last year. Together we have brought people together, created more space for nature, and inspired more people to act for nature. Many people contribute to Wild Oxfordshire, and this support enables us to create a more natural, resilient, and biodiverse Oxfordshire for the benefit of all. If you would like to join in and are able to, we would greatly appreciate a contribution towards our work, either through a one-off contribution, or a monthlycontribution. Check out our website to find out more about the many ways you can support us and our recent achievements.

Imogen Parker (Wild Oxfordshire Community Ecologist)
https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/

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Enhanced access hours are offered outside these times, please speak to one of the reception team 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.

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

The NHS App is no longer accessible as a mobile app for anybody using older devices. Patients using the following operating systems will no longer be able to access the NHS App via the mobile app: iOS 12, 13 & 14 (iOS 13 & 14 can be updated to iOS15), Android 6 & 7. But you can still log in through the NHS website.

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** Group clinics are currently being offered for the menopause and hypertension. Eligible patients are being invited to attend, but if you would like to know more, please do contact us.
- Breast screening to detect the most common cancer in woman
- Whooping Cough infections, symptoms and treatment
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Walks Programme 2025

MAY

- Wednesday 7th Undulating 7 mile walk up Watlington Hill and through the Wormsley estate, starting in the Cowleaze Wood car park.
- Sunday 11th 6½ mile walk from the Old Kiln, Nettlebed, through Highmoor Woods and passing the Cheese Shed. No stiles!
- Tuesday 13th Gentle, social 3 mile walk from Christmas Common, layby side of road to Northend, hopefully to see bluebells. Coffee at the Spire & Spoke after the walk.
- Thursday 15th Scenic 6 mile walk from Waterperry Garden Centre, over the historic Bow Bridge and onto Ickford and Worminghall. Opportunity for refreshments at café at the end.
- Saturday 24th Meet at Great Kimble, off B4009 by Swan PH, for a scenic Chilterns 6 mile walk via Chequers Knap and Pulpit Hill Nature Reserve.
- Wednesday 28th Meet at Islip, car park opposite the Swan PH, for a 5½ mile walk via Noke, then down to River Cherwell, to follow the river back to Islip

All walks start at 10am unless otherwise stated.

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

<u>www.ramblers-oxon.org.uk/thame-wheatley/walking.html</u> 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 SC039799) and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales (no 4458492).

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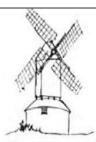


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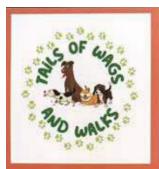
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