

A photograph of a path lined with yellow daffodils in a wooded area. The path is on the left, and the daffodils are in full bloom, filling the foreground and middle ground. The background consists of tall, thin trees, some with bare branches and some with green foliage, suggesting a late winter or early spring setting. The lighting is soft, possibly from a low sun, creating a warm atmosphere.

Little Milton *Newsletter*

March 2025

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY: MARCH 2025

Sun	2nd	9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion CW St James'
Tues	4th	9.30–10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	5th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge
Thurs	6th	6.00 – 7.00 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
Frid	7th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sun	9th	10.30 a.m.	Family Service – St James'
Tues.	11th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	12th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m. 7.30 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge Parish Council -Pine Lodge
Thurs	13th	6.00 – 7.00 p.m. 7.30 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine Lodge WI Meeting – Pine Lodge
Frid	14th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit - Pine Lodge
Tues	18th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	19th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m. 7.00 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge Craft Evening – Pine Lodge
Thurs	20th	6.00 – 7.00 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
Frid	21st	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sun	23rd	9.00 a.m. 10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion BCP- St James' Benefice Morning Worship – St Mary's
Tues	25th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	26th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m. 11.00 a.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge Sewing Group: TBA
Thurs	27th	6.00 – 7.00 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine Lodge
Frid	28th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit - Pine Lodge
Sun	30th	10.30 a.m.	Benefice Holy Communion
APR			
Sun	2nd	9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion CW – 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.

SUMMARY FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 12TH FEBRUARY 2025

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

Report by District Councillor

In addition to the monthly written report Georgina Heritage added that the Government has confirmed that Oxfordshire will not be in the first tranche of local government reorganisation, meaning County elections will go ahead in May.

Planning

It was noted that planning application P24/S2595/FUL - 18 Thame Road, Little Milton, OX44 7PZ - Form vehicular access and 2x off street parking spaces. (Amended plans received 17 December 2024) – has been withdrawn prior to determination by the District Planning Authority.

The developer of the site at Milton House, invited members of the Parish Council and interested residents to view building materials being used. This was a promise made at the planning application stage. Sample panels of brick, stone cladding and slate were available. It was clear at the meeting that the materials were exactly as expected. The site manager discussed and answered all questions raised. It was agreed a sweeper machine will be used to clean mud from the road.

Village Shop

A proposal to replace the shop frontage (access door and glass side panels) had been circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting together with a quotation from a local company. The frame will be made from aluminium rather than soft wood to increase longevity.

Resolved that a second quotation is obtained and that a maximum of £4,390.00 is set aside from Community Infrastructure Levy funds for the project.

Reports from Councillor Representatives

Open Green Spaces

Cllr Harrison met with Roger Stace, Senior Land Manager at Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), along with two residents from the village.

The purpose of the meeting was for BBOWT to show what flood mitigation has been carried out on their reserve in Little Milton. Particularly as SSE had felled a series of large trees along the lower part of the stream that runs through the reserve because of risk to the power lines. BBOWT had improved water storage in the dam adjacent to where the trees were felled and plan to replant the area with suitable trees to improve flood mitigation. They have identified a further site upstream in the woods which lends itself to further damming and are planning to develop this as a further catchment dam. Subject to a grant from the Rivers Trust, BBOWT would like to meander the stream along meadow field as a further mitigation of flooding and to create biodiversity. The sum of £938 from the District Councillor Community Grant fund has been received. Cllr Harrison will order the flood mitigation equipment and check whether any training is required to operate it. Resolved that a lockable storage container is purchased at a cost of approximately £270.00 in which to store the new flood mitigation equipment.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Wednesday 12th March 2025**, 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: 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 – MARCH 2025

	Brown	Grey	Green	Food
4th March	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
11th March	No	Yes	No	Yes
18th March	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
25th March	No	Yes	No	Yes
1 st April	Yes	No	Yes	No

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR GEORGINA HERITAGE UPDATE

As I write this report, there has been no update from Government on Oxfordshire's position. However I thought it would be helpful for parish councils to be aware of the preferred direction of our Council Leader Cllr David Rouane, who is working closely on this matter and involved in daily meetings and discussions in the interests of South

Oxfordshire residents. His Leader’s Update issued on 24th January is as follows (and a press release was issued to summarise the same):

“Following the publication of its White Paper before Christmas, the government asked upper tier authorities (the County Council in our case) to respond with their views on the nature and pace of change. With this in mind, their cabinet met on 9 January and I, along with the leaders of the other district councils, took the opportunity to set out our view.

The full meeting can be watched [via the Oxfordshire County Council \(OCC\) website](#) but the points which I made were:

- that we should act quickly in order to give residents and businesses confidence that we will continue to deliver excellent services, and;
- that there was a broad consensus that the footprint of the Strategic Authority should be guided by existing institutions such as the Thames Valley Police or the integrated care board area (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire & Berkshire West) and that we should make this preference known to government.

Given that this is a decision for OCC, as the ‘upper tier’ authority, I had intended to leave my comments there. However, since then, Oxford City Council has written to the minister expressing a different (minority) view and the leader of Swindon [has written in their local newspaper](#) about their preference to join a Mayoral Strategic Authority with Oxfordshire and others.

It is my view that we should be looking to work together in a Strategic Authority with those councils in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire who wish to join with us. This is because: these areas all have vibrant economies which will contribute to the sustainable growth which the government is looking for, we have a record of working together in the police and health authorities, we have a shared identity as part of the South East Region, and we have historical connections in that much of South Oxfordshire was in Berkshire prior to the previous local government reorganisation.

As I reported to the December Council meeting, “At the invitation of the Leader of Swindon Borough Council, I joined other council leaders from Oxfordshire and Berkshire to discuss the potential shape of any new Combined Authority, and specifically whether Swindon should be included in any submission made by us.

After listening to the arguments, I have written to the participants to say that I do not support this idea. The reasons for this were that Swindon does not meet the conditions which I have set out above for joining together: They are in different health and police geographies, their long-term identity is one of being the ‘Gateway to the West Country’ not part of the South East, we have no historical ties, and they are at a very different stage in the economic cycle.

OCC sent their letter and are expecting a reply next week, although government responses don’t always run to time, and Oxford City Council have invited council leaders to a meeting on 31 January to discuss this ever-moving picture. I would prefer that OCC made their position clear on a preferred geography as soon as possible and have asked their Leader to do so”.

NPPF and Joint Local Plan Update

In mid-January officers ran a planning training session to update councillors on local and national policy. The update covered the new National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024), what’s on the planning horizon from government for 2025, and the

proposed AI growth zone at Culham, although things are moving fast in the planning world so did not cover more recent announcements like the revival of the Ox-Cam Arc.

There was good news on the Joint Local Plan, which was submitted for independent examination on time in December, with Inspectors Bust and Mulloy appointed at the end of December. By completing and submitting the Joint Local Plan to an accelerated timetable, under transition arrangements it will be tested against the previous housing numbers and the government planning policies set in the NPPF 2023, rather than the new (higher) housing numbers and new policies of the new NPPF 2024.

At the moment when making decisions on planning applications, appeals and enforcement, the adopted local plans and made neighbourhood plans form the development plan, and the emerging Joint Local Plan policies hold limited weight during the examination period (or moderate weight in the case of a minority of policies which attracted little or no objection).

Although the Joint Local Plan will not be required to meet the new higher housing numbers, and once adopted the housing numbers will be pinned to those in the Joint Local Plan for five years, the new NPPF requires us, straight away, to calculate housing land supply differently. A key change is that all authorities must now demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, regardless the age of their local plan. This reversed the changes in the previous NPPF, which had withdrawn the 5-year land supply test for councils where their plan was less than five years old – as is the case in South Oxfordshire. Furthermore, the new NPPF removed a lower, 4-year test for councils who did have to demonstrate a 5-year supply where that council had consulted on a new plan with housing targets and allocations – as is the case in South Oxfordshire with the JLP. Finally, the NPPF requires that all authorities add a 5% buffer on top of the housing requirement, which raises the bar further still. Under the new calculations, South Oxfordshire has a land supply of 4.5 years.

However, it's important to note that in the NPPF there is some protection for areas with a neighbourhood plan that is less than 5 years old and which contains housing policies and housing allocations. Officers anticipate extra interest in neighbourhood planning, and now is a very good time for town and parish councils to produce a neighbourhood plan, or update one in a neighbourhood plan review. For those parishes without a plan, please contact the neighbourhood planning team for help and advice via planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk.

Garden waste service changes in South and Vale

Residents who use the garden waste service in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts will have a change to their service subscriptions this year.

Each year, the two districts combined collect around 25,500 tonnes of garden waste, and a change to how the popular service is paid for is coming this spring to improve the efficiency of the subscription process for residents.

South and Vale District Councils are introducing a permit scheme from April 2025 that will involve customers receiving a sticker permit for their bins to identify them as fully paid-up garden waste customers. This kind of scheme is offered successfully by many other local authorities, including in neighbouring West Oxfordshire.

As this is a change to how the garden waste service is managed, there are actions subscribers will need to take to continue receiving garden waste collections. The new permit payment system opens towards the end of February.

When the new system goes live, all existing customers will be invited to subscribe to the service. Existing customers will be notified directly, with full information on the council websites and each house getting a bin hanger flagging the changes. Customers will then need to make an annual payment for a permit – this replaces the existing direct debit scheme. Everyone’s payment year will run from 1 April to 31 March each year.

FAREWELL

GILLIAN

Gillian who lived in Old Field has moved to a new home and would like to thank her neighbours and friends for all their kindness over the last twenty-one years.

JOYCE INGE & GEORGE INGE

Joyce and George Inge have played a significant part in in our village over the past forty-seven years. They hosted the village fete at the Old Vicarage for over ten years and George was vice chairman of the Parish Council for several years in the 1990’s. Therefore, it is with some sadness that Joyce has moved to a new home in Great Haseley and George is now being looked after in a care-home. As someone who had a close connection with them, I would like to extend our appreciation to them for all they have done and wish them well.

Editor

GREAT MILTON METHODIST CHURCH SERVICES: MARCH 2025

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

Date	Time	Church	Preacher	Comment
2nd March	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	Revd. Stephen Spain	Holy Communion
9th March	11.15 a.m.	Great Milton	G Thompson	
16th March	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	Local Arrangement	
23rd March	11.00 a.m..	Great Milton	David Harper	
30th March Mothering Sunday	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	Revd. Stephen Spain	Holy Communion

BENEFACTIVE SERVICES FOR MARCH 2025

Sunday 2nd March

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

Wednesday 5th March Ash Wednesday

19.00	Holy Communion	St Mary’s Great Milton
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Sunday 9th March

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

Wednesday 12th March

19.00	Compline	St Peter’s Great Haseley
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Sunday 16th March

9.00 Holy Communion

10.30 Family Worship

St Peter's Great Haseley

St Mary's Great Milton

Wednesday 19th March

19.00 Compline

St James' Little Milton

Sunday 23rd March

9.00 Holy Communion BCP

10.30 Benefice Morning Worship

St James' Little Milton

St Mary's Great Milton

Wednesday 26th March

19.00 Compline

St Mary's Great Milton

Sunday 30th March

10.30 Benefice Holy Communion

St James' Little Milton

Wednesday 2nd April

19.00 Compline

St Peter's Great Haseley

Sunday 7th April

9.00 Holy Communion

10.30 Family Worship

St James' Little Milton

St Peter's Great Haseley

LENT LUNCHESES

These are held in each of the different villages within the Benefice during Lent for folk to get together over a bowl of soup with bread and cheese and to raise money for Christian Aid... Last year just under £600 was raised. Essentially, we gather to chat and meet each other in four different houses on the dates below....each lunch is held on a Wednesday between 12.30 and 2.00pm. All are welcome!

The dates and venues for this year are:

Wednesday 5th March

Orpwoods Cottage, Thame Road, OX44 7HZ, Trudy's home in Great Milton, Tel. 01844 279380

Wednesday 12th March

Church Farm (next to Great Haseley Church) Judy Alexander's home, OX44 7JZ, Tel. 07702345195

Wednesday 19th March

Spring Cottage, Haseley Road, Little Milton, OX44 7PP c/o Sally Ann Dennis, Tel. 01844 278029

Wednesday 26th March

Northend Cottage, Great Milton, OX44 7NF c/o Jane Jefferis, Tel. 01844 278743

Please do telephone any of the hosts if you need further directions...

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible and to sharing wonderful conversation, delicious soup and Manoir rolls etc.

S A Dennis

RECTOR'S PINT

Every Wednesday morning, I meet with our two lay ministers, Toby Garfitt and Tony Jefferis to pray together and plan ahead for our work in our churches and schools, (Toby and I share in collective worship in both schools, Great Milton and Little Milton, taking turns week by week). We read from scripture, often choosing the Psalms, using the daily selection from the Church of England cycle of readings.

I have written about this before, but over the years the Psalms have been a tremendous resource, particularly when I have found the going tough. The Psalms are a repository of the full range of human experience and emotion, a reminder that life can throw many surprises at us, joys and sorrows, elation and rejoicing, but also times of dark despair. They don't pull any punches, and what I love about them is that we find in these verses honesty about the human experience. For instance, as I write, it is a Wednesday, and this morning, Toby, Tony and I read from Psalm 13:

*How long will you forget me O Lord; for ever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long shall I have anguish in my soul
And grief in my heart, day after day?*

The Psalm goes on for a few verses and ends:

*But I put my trust in your steadfast love;
My heart will rejoice in your salvation.
I will sing to the Lord,
For he has dealt so bountifully with me.*

It's an act of defiance, a statement that declares that the present situation is not the whole picture, that we can bring everything to God, and in doing so we can learn to trust, and be held in God's strength, even (or especially) in times of weakness. I have known many challenges in my faith journey as a Christian, I am so thankful for the Psalms which have helped me through.

I have also written before, that when I read the Psalms, I also read alongside from a wonderful book called *David's Crown*, by Malcolm Guite, which mirrors the Psalms. His poems are not interpretations, they are responses to each Psalm. So for instance, for the same Psalm 13, he begins:

*Come down to free us, come as our true friend,
How long, how long? Oh do not hide your face
Or let me sleep in death, but light my end
Till it becomes a bright beginning. Place
Your wounded hands in mine and raise me up
That even grief may turn to grace.*

Honesty about the human condition brings us, of course, into Lent. Used well, it's so much more than giving up chocolate! It is a journey of honest self-reflection, which leads us to God's grace, forgiveness and renewal. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. This year it falls on March 5th, and we will have a simple and reflective Holy Communion service at 7.00pm at St. Mary's Great Milton. I hope you will want to join us.

May you have a blessed Lent.

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May you have a blessed Lent.

Simon

CHURCH CLEANING ROTA FOR MARCH

W/E 2nd March	–	Mrs A Jones & Mrs Sarah Holifield/E
W/E 9th March	–	Mrs Maggie Bell & Mrs Wendy Newby
W/E 16th March	–	Mrs A Blagg & Mrs Cathy D'Aeth
W/E 23rd March	–	Mrs M Davies & Mrs S A Dennis
W/E 30th March	–	Mrs L. Lovegrove & Mrs C Coward

CHURCH FLOWER ROTA FOR MARCH

W/E 2nd March	-	Chris
W/E 9th March	-	Lent
W/E 16th March	-	Lent
W/E 23rd March	-	Lent
W/E 30th March	-	Lent

FRIENDS OF LITTLE MILTON SCHOOL- 200 CLUB

The February winners will be published in the April newsletter.

Dinae Austin on behalf of The Friends of Little Milton School

FRIENDS OF WELLS FARM

You can almost feel everything stirring from winter. Birds singing, leaves beginning to form, bulbs flowering, blackthorn soon to flower, hares boxing and bumblebees appearing! Head out and enjoy the spectacle on our doorstep.

As I write, some of the sheep (Hebridean) have been moved to Long Meadow for fresh grazing and to knock back the taller grass. This will help the wild flowers later in the summer to compete. The cattle have pretty much eaten all of the grass they can in Blenheim fields so may be in one of the closer fields to the barn. Sadly, one of them had developed a possible leg or hip fracture last month and in the end had to be put down. These such occurrences are very difficult to manage and emotionally for the stock watchers as well as BBOWT staff. The other five are okay and have adjusted to the loss of one of the heard.

Please keep your dogs under control through the fields especially where there are livestock. There have been instances across the country where dog owners have been prosecuted because of their dog attacking sheep or cattle. Sheep are particularly vulnerable so please use a lead.

Paul Jeffery - Reserves Warden (paulj201@hotmail.com)

WELLS FARM ALLOTMENTS

By now those who want to have an allotment or renew their tenancy have responded to the renewal notification I sent out last month. Please do not forget to pay! We do still have a few plots of different sizes free should anybody fancy trying their hand. Just contact me via email (paulj201@hotmail.com).

Happy growing!

Paul Jeffery - (paulj201@hotmail.com)

DATE OF NEXT SEWING GROUP

The next meeting of the sewing group will be on 26th March, the venue to be confirmed

Sally Ann Dennis

TONS TOGETHER (LITTLE MILTON) WI

A really interesting talk by Dave Gilbert of Thames Valley Air Ambulance in February, with a great turn-out of members and visitors. We also raised £69 for this well deserving charity with our raffle and card sale.

On Thursday 13th March 7.30pm, we have our AGM, followed by a Trip down memory lane. Bring along interesting items with a story or memory, maybe something precious to you or a mystery object to quiz us. We'll also have the WI archives on display. Come and find out our plans for 2025/26, become a member for £51 or just come along for tea, cake and chat. Everyone always welcome, men too! Visitors free of charge this month.

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/Impinelodge

Pine Lodge website: www.lmvh.org.uk

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

VIEW FROM VIEWS

After what I would call a rather depressing winter at last not only can we look forward to the coming of spring and more cheerful weather but, I think the birds feel the same as suddenly they seem to be more vocal. Although we have probably had the same amount of rain as usual it has been in first and starts heavy downpours and then a lull, having said that the ground is saturated, evidenced by pools of water in most fields when it rains. Also, the flooding on the river has not been so bad, we have seen the fields now and again, I think that the levels have been higher than in the past. However, every time the floods disappear it is noticeable flocks of Egrets appear in every increasing number, up to 20 I reckon, I am sure some of them are the Cattle Egrets which are I believe somewhat rare. The winter on the whole has been mild, in spite of being miserable of late, I am though concerned that there is enough feed for the small birds, in spite of the fact we feed them at this time of year, the Government are supposed to be helping finance this but, at the moment have paused the payments, as they are short of money, I guess they do not understand that the birds don't understand Government finances, not sure that I do either, regard less of this we will continue our annual feeding regime, we can't allow them to starve. Doesn't matter to the Government as they can blame the farmers.

I mention above how dull the weather has been really depressing cold dank dull miserable let's hope things will look up once spring comes, (although the third week in Feb things looked better) or when this gets to you. By the time of writing most of the crops were beginning to look as if they had had enough of this weather too, we only need a few days sunshine and a little warm for these few days and all would look so different we will wonder what our fears were all about. Having said that Partridges have started to pair up, Hares acting out their normal March Hare episodes, and birdsong increasing by the day, so it is really looking as if Spring could be just round the corner.

Just recently I attended some very interesting and informative seminars, instigated by our Thame Catchment Farm Cluster, on Hedge Row Management and, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), both exceptionally good and informative. The one on Hedges showed up what was both good and bad in how we are managing our own hedges, but the IPM illustrates that although we are following some of the principals there is still a lot more we can do. The principal of IPM is actually fairly obvious in that one predator is usually predated by something else, so if you kill the predator chemically then its predator may starve so as time goes on it can all be self-defeating, that by encouraging the predator's predator, with some plant that it likes, you could solve your problems without the use of chemicals and expense. Obviously, it is not as simple as that but it shows there are other ways of controlling pests other than using something out of a can, and basically this is what is behind IPM. As part of this story, it has been announced that the ban on the use of a certain chemical on sugar beet, that has been allowed in the past will now stand, this ban also includes many other crops, Rape in particular, that is why we know many have stopped growing this crop, so we now have to import similar oil, which will be produced using these banned chemicals. Although, I am not against this ban as the said chemical has an effect on bees, the problem is that what food we have to import to replace that which we cannot grow, will almost certainly have been treated with chemicals banned in the UK, so what has been gained.

On the issue of the IHT we are now faced with, it is good to learn that, we are being supported not only a majority of the public, by our suppliers as they fear we will lack the ability or, the inclination to invest and, by the retailers who buy our products, as they will have to look further afield to get their goods to sell, not to mention that farmers are threatening to blockade their warehouses'. This of course will not help our food security which in the present global situation is a little worrying to say the least. Not to labour the point it will not have escaped anyone we are still demonstrating against as many farmers are really worried which way to turn. The Environmental Minister has the cheek to say we must look to other streams of income, what the hell have we been talking abo for the last30 or so years, and now I gather he has stated that he knows that farming is not profitable, that he will do all he can to help, he needs to talk to the supermarkets, wish him luck on that one. The trouble with diversification is that this will inevitably mean setting up a separate enterprise and, how will that then be taxed when it is handed on, at the higher rate I shouldn't wonder.

Charles Peers

Looking for a Friendly 5-a-Side Football Game After Work?

Join us for a weekly adult football game at Pine Lodge Astro!

When: Weekday evenings (day to be confirmed)

Where: Pine Lodge Astro

Who: Open to adults of all abilities—everyone's welcome!

It's the perfect way to relax after work, meet new people, and enjoy football in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

I'm gathering interest to get a group of players together and kick things off. If you're interested, don't wait—get in touch!

Contact: Gabriella Wilkinson (8CV)

 **07889 364 395**

 **glineker@hotmail.co.uk**

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE PINE LODGE

Have you got an idea for an event or activity for the local community that we could host at the Hall? Drop us a message and let's discuss it.

Need a private Meeting Room, we have 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 am Fitness with Focus (mobility and stretching) on with Alyce (alycefwf@gmail.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 3rd Wednesday 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, 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



MARCH NEWS – SPRING HEDGEROES AND GARDENS

Hedgerows in Spring

Spring is the season of growth, and our local hedgerows are no exception. This season you can expect to see hedge species beginning to flower. Blackthorn will begin to flower from early spring, blossoming before it's leaves even begin to show, into beautiful five petal white flowers strikingly similar to Hawthorn. Hawthorn, however, (like Buckthorn, Guelder Rose, Dogwood, Wayfaring, and Spindle) blossoms later in mid spring. Cherry Plum (which began to blossom in winter) will only continue flowering into early spring, preparing to bear berries in early summer.

All of these species are extremely beneficial to pollinators as well as other insects that feed on hedges (i.e., Chestnut moths and Brown hairstreak butterflies). Observe the wildlife benefits mature hedges offer this Spring and get ready to see it in your own local spaces once your newly planted hedgerows reach maturity!

A selection of Garden jobs to Help Wildlife this March

Everyone's waking up! But remember, it can still go below freezing in March...

- **Put out bird food** with high fat content to give extra energy when food is hard to come by. Suet treats like fat balls are ideal and sunflower hearts.
- **Feed hedgehogs** – more info below
- **Put in at least one hedgehog gap** – more info below
- **Have plants in your garden that offer winter/early spring nectar** – e.g. mahonia, ivy, willow, hellebores, crocuses and snowdrops to provide a boost for our pollinators after the dormant months. You can also start to think about sowing seeds. Have a look at the packets as many are now marked with a 'pollinator-friendly' symbol. Why not grow your own bird food this year and grow sunflowers?
- **Create a pond or improve yours for amphibians**
- **Leave perennials and herbaceous, hollow-stemmed plants unpruned until early April or late this month.** These will still be providing homes for overwintering invertebrates like ladybirds.
- **On freezing days, break the ice on bird baths and water bowls.** Refresh the water supply weekly.
- **Build a bug hotel**
- **Leave piles of leaves and logs undisturbed.** In mild weather, it can be tempting to get going in the garden but avoid the urge to tidy away leaf and log piles just yet. Wait until late this month or early April.
- **Avoid turning the compost heap until April,** even if conditions are mild. Frogs, small mammals, and insects may be hibernating, and any disturbance could harm them.
- **Check bonfires before they are lit** for sheltering and hibernating animals, such as hedgehogs, toads, frogs, and newts.

Ponds, amphibians and the garden ecosystem

March is the key month for breeding amphibians - first frogs, then toads and later, newts. Toads tend to use big ponds to breed in, laying their ribbons of spawn near stems of submerged plants. Newts use their back legs to wrap their eggs in the leaves of marginal plants like the water-forget-me-not and brooklime. You may be able to see these folded leaves in June. This month, you can shine a torch into the water at night to see returning newts and you may even witness the male's courtship dance as they wiggle to show off their fabulous tails!

Ponds with fish aren't so good for our native wildlife as the fish will eat the eggs and young of amphibians as well as the invertebrates that the amphibians need to eat.

How to help:

- **Create a pond!** Ponds sustain two thirds of all of our freshwater life and improve the health of the entire garden ecosystem. If you don't have room for a big pond, why not put in a bucket pond? Go to the Wildlife Trust website for an easy how to guide.
- **Plant marginal plants** in the shallows and at the edge of your pond. Plant Life and Freshwater Habitats Trust have suggestions. Water-forget-me-not and brooklime are great for newts to lay their eggs and water mint is brilliant for insects. Brooklime is also used by dragonflies to lay their eggs on.
- **Make sure there is a way out** for amphibians and even hedgehogs that can end up drowned in ponds when they fall in after using it to drink from. You

can use planks of wood, piles of stones or make your pond have a shallow and gradual gradient.

Hedgehogs

Our hedgehogs will be waking up this month. With the unpredictable weather, their hibernation patterns are less certain but usually they won't go back into hibernation now until the winter. This means they will be hungry and thirsty after a long dormant period and will need to build their fat reserves and energy ready for the breeding season.

Feeding

- You can put out meat-based cat food for hedgehogs (with meat not fish). Go Cat dried cat biscuits are recommended as an easy option by the Kirtlington Hedgehog Highway group.
- Put out the food at dusk and remove any that's left the following morning so it doesn't go bad
- You can use a hedgehog feeding station to prevent cats from eating all the food. These include a right angle that the hedgehog has to use as they can bend at this angle easily whereas a cat cannot.
- Put out shallow water dishes or accessible ponds for hedgehogs to drink from
- Natural food sources come from our slugs, snails and other invertebrates. Do not use slug pellets or insecticides as these will also harm hedgehogs that eat the infected 'pests.
- Rats? I had rats come into my garden, so I didn't put out hedgehog food. I had to rely on the invertebrates to feed the hedgehogs. Fortunately, I had a hedgehog forage in my lettuce patch most nights and I ended up with very healthy, pest-free lettuce!
-

Breeding

- Not only will our hedgehogs be hungry, but they will also need to start roaming around to catch up with other hedgehogs and go to other foraging spots. Some hedgehogs roam up to a mile every night! We need to help them stay safe in their wanderings, off roads, and in gardens. This means we need to link our gardens together to make safe passageways!

Rhiannon Young – Wild Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Engagement Officer
<https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/>

BRITISH CLEAN UP 21st March – 6th April

I know that many of you enjoy playing your part in keeping your community clear and have been doing great work picking up litter in open spaces and public areas. Thank you! I hold litter bags and a few picking sticks if anyone wishes to do some local clear up. Please contact me at 27 Chiltern View.

Raymond Fergusson

ATTENTION DOG OWNERS

We are very lucky to have open spaces and countryside to walks our dogs. However, it comes with a responsibility to pick up their poo wherever it is deposited. Although most local dog owners are aware of their responsibility there are some who are less diligent. Can I urge that you pick up your dog's poo and deposit in any of the refuse bins around the village with a blue lining. As editor I am reminded quite frequently that not all dog owners take their responsibility seriously.

Editor



Great Haseley Sports Club

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Adults & children's (aged 4+) lessons will be starting again in late March and run until early September. Dates to be confirmed shortly but please do get in touch ASAP to register your interest.



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Walks Programme 2025

MARCH

- Sunday 2nd** **Undulating 5½ mile walk from Cadmore End via Ibstone, Turville and Fingest.**
- Thursday 6th** **6½ mile walk from Swyncombe, following tracks and footpaths to and from Britwell Salome.**
- Tuesday 11th 10:30am** **Gentle, social 2½ mile walk from Berinsfield, Queensford Lakes Watersports Centre Car Park. Refreshments available at the Wandering Kitchen at the end.**
- Friday 14th** **5½ mile walk from Bledlow via Saunderton and Lodge Hill.**
- Thursday 20th** **7 mile mainly level walk from Dorchester, Bridge End car park, via Shillingford and Little Wittenham.**
- Saturday 22nd 10:30am** **5 mile Chilterns walk with good views starting at Turville Heath, ending at The Barn for refreshments.**
- Thursday 27th** **8 mile Chilterns walk from Watlington Hill NT car park. Generally fairly easy walking with some short steep climbs. Bring a picnic.**
- Saturday 29th** **5½ mile walk from Beckley, Abingdon Arms PH, with views across Otmoor and Beckley Park. Optional lunch at the pub at the end.**

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.

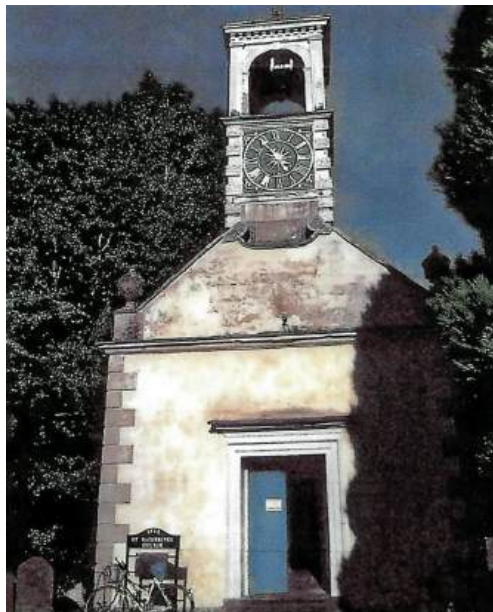
The Ramblers' Association is a registered charity (England & Wales no 1093577, Scotland no SC039799) and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales (no 4458492).

Sat 26th April 2025 - St Katherine's Church

Chiselhampton - (6.30 for) 7.00pm start

- Fund raising concert

- £15 (including drink & light refreshments - cash only please)
- Parking - follow signs on day



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House Surgery website lists the various options. Visit Self-Referral – Morland House
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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
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- **Whooping Cough** infections, symptoms and treatment
- **Drink Coaches** – take the quick and confidential text
- **Travelling abroad** – what MHS can and cannot do for you

A vibrant, colorful illustration for a Spring Fayre poster. The background is a light blue sky with a large white sun. The scene is framed by various flowers, including purple and blue pansies, white daisies, and yellow tulips. In the foreground, there's a brown pony with a long white mane on the left, a fluffy white lamb on the right, and several colorful Easter eggs (pink, green, yellow) in the center. Two orange rabbits are also visible near the eggs. The overall style is whimsical and cheerful, typical of a children's event poster.

Little Milton **Spring Fayre**

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A man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a blue shirt and a red patterned tie, is shown in profile, looking intently at a gold pocket watch he is holding. The watch has a white face with Roman numerals and is mounted on an ornate, sculpted gold case. The background is a wall with blue and white floral wallpaper and several framed pictures.

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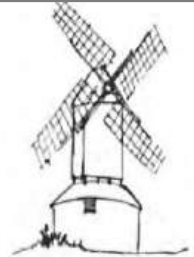


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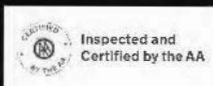
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MUGA	Bookings for the courts are made at the Post Office	
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OCC	01865 792422	All enquiries
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