

GREAT MILTON BULLETIN

July 2020

Published by the Parish Council

No. 555



Freedom of Information Act – Parish Council Publication Scheme

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides rights of public access to information held by Public Authorities. The Parish Council adopted a new publication scheme in November 2019: details can be found on the Parish Council Website at <https://www.great-milton.co.uk/freedom-of-information/>. Residents can see records of the policies and practices of the Parish Council including minutes, financial information and responses to planning consultations, on request from the Parish Clerk or via the website.

Great Milton Parish Council

Chairman:	Stephen Harrod	01844 278068
Ward:	Church Road to Monckery Farm/The Priory	
Vice Chairman:	Bill Fox	01844 279716
Ward:	Thame Road, inc Fullers Field and Green Hitchings	
Councillor:	Peter Fewell	01844 279400
Ward:	The Green from Priory Bank to Tara/Applewood	
Councillor:	Clyde Deacon	01844 278554
Ward:	High Street from North End Cottage to The Old Garage	
Councillor:	George Bennett	07482 339905
Ward:	Thame Road from Green Hitchings to A329	
Councillor:	Malcolm Horsley	07970 924194
Ward:	Kings Head House/Red Roofs to Wheatley Boundary	
Councillor:	Peter Allen	01844 278334
Ward:	Milton Common	

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer: Tim Darch – 01844 278347
contact@clerkgreatmilton.co.uk

Parish Council Representatives

Rec Ground Committee:	Michael Robinson, Michele Block
Old Field Charity:	Hazel Hand, Niki Patrick
Hard Surface Play Area:	Susan Read, Jon Devitt
Neighbourhood Watch:	Jola Miziniak
Kent & Couling Charity:	—
Sheppard Trust:	Ann Price, Pat Cox

Cover: The “Preston Star”. Worth seeing again in colour, I think.
Photo: Manny Stone.

Key Contacts:

Local Governance

Oxfordshire County Council	01865 792422	Oxfordshire.gov.uk
South Oxfordshire District Council	01235 422422	Southoxon.gov.uk
County Councillor: Stephen Harrod	01844 278068	steve.harrod@oxfordshire.gov.uk
District Councillor: Caroline Newton	07951 477144	caroline.newton@southoxon.gov.uk
Great Milton Parish Council		
Stephen Harrod (Chair)	01844 278068	
Tim Darch (Clerk)	01844 278347	contact@clerkgreatmilton.co.uk
Report potholes, fly-tipping, vandalism, broken paving		Fxmystreet.com
OCC Family Information Service	08452 262636	fis.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk
OCC Highways	0845 310 1111	highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Missed Bin Collection	03000 610610	admin.southoxford@biffa.co.uk
Bulky Household Waste Collection	01235 422406	waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk
SODC Housing	01235 422422	housing@southandvale.gov.uk
SODC Planning Applications	01235 422600	planning@southoxon.gov.uk

Services

Emergency - Police, Fire, Ambulance	999	
Police non-emergency	101	thamesvalley.police.uk
GP Surgery, Morland House	01865 872448	morland-house.co.uk
NHS non-emergency	111	nhs.uk
Gas Emergency	0800 111 999	nationalgrid.com/uk/safety/
Electricity Outage	0800 072 7282	sse.co.uk
Burst pipe or leak	0800 714 614	thameswater.co.uk
Floodline	0345 988 1188	gov.uk/check-flood-risk

Local information

St. Mary's Church: Rev. Simon Cronk		simon.cronk@btinternet.com
Methodist Church: Rev. John Anderson	01235 529563	
Neighbourhood Watch: Jola Miziniak	07917 676463	jolamiziniak7@gmail.com
Citizens Advice Oxfordshire	03444 111 444	caox.org.uk
The Maple Tree Children's Centre	01865 873916	mapletreecc@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Great Milton Neighbours Hall	01844 278415	
Great Milton Pavilion & Recreation Ground	01844 278116	
Great Milton Website		Carina.martin@gmail.com http://www.greatmilton.co.uk
Great Milton Bulletin	07554 516989	contact@clerkgreatmilton.co.uk gmbulletin@hotmail.co.uk
Great Milton Primary School	01844 279388	gmilton.org
Wheatley Park School	01865 872441	www.wheatleypark.org

Transport

Comet - for people without access to suitable public transport	01865 323201	oxfordshire.gov.uk/comet
Arriva (280) Bus	0344 800 4411	arrivabus.co.uk
Oxford Tube (Buses to London)	01865 772250	oxfordtube.com
Park & Ride		oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/parkandride
National Rail Enquiries	03457 484950	nationalrail.co.uk

CORONAVIRUS PRECAUTIONS

Sent to his staff by a friend of ours who works in hospitals and labs, Professor of Microbiology/Virology at Warwick. Feel free to pass on.

It is clear that we are all going to be exposed to the new Coronavirus called SARS-Cov-19. What we can do is slow the rate of infection so that no organisation is overwhelmed by staff being sick and diminishing the chances of adequate treatment for those seriously affected.

The following precautions are generally seen to be a way of reducing virus spread and contagion:

- 1) Avoid handshaking, kissing as greeting! Use a fist bump, slight bow, elbow bump, etc.
- 2) Use ONLY your knuckle to touch light switches, lift buttons, etc. If you go for petrol lift the fuel nozzle with a paper towel or use a disposable glove.
- 3) Open public doors with your closed fist, clothed arm or hip. Do not grasp the handle with your hand, unless there is no other way to open the door. Especially important on lavatory and post office/commercial doors.
- 4) Use disinfectant wipes or gloves in supermarkets to wipe handles on trolleys or baskets, including the handle and child seat in supermarket trolleys.
- 5) Wash your hands with soap for 10-20 seconds and/or use a greater than 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer whenever you return home from ANY activity that involves locations where other people have been.
- 6) Keep a bottle of 60% alcohol hand gel available at each entrance to your home AND in your car for use after getting petrol or touching other contaminated objects when you can't immediately wash your hands.
- 7) If you cough or sneeze use a disposable tissue and discard carefully. Use your elbow to catch sneezing or coughing as a last resort. The clothing on your elbow will contain infectious virus that can be passed on for a number of days (presently unknown).

Stock that may be useful to you:

Latex or thin polythene gloves for use when going shopping, using a garage forecourt pump, and all other outside activity when you come in contact with contaminated areas.

Stock up with at least 60% alcohol-based gels.

Remember that your credit/debit card will be handled by others unless you have a touch card for payments.

This virus is spread in large droplets by coughing and sneezing. This means that the air will not infect you but the virus will remain viable on surfaces for up to a week — everything that is associated with infected people will be contaminated and potentially infectious. The virus is on surfaces and you will not be infected unless your unprotected face is directly coughed or sneezed upon.

This virus only has cell receptors for the lungs. The only way for the virus to infect you is through your nose or mouth via your hands or an infected cough or sneeze onto or into your nose or mouth. Remember to avoid putting your unwashed hands near your face.

Masks do little if anything to stop cross-infection but they stop you putting your hands onto your nose or mouth.

There is some limited evidence that zinc lozenges will stop virus replication in the mouth and nose.

The Bulletin

Due to issues surrounding delivery and a reduction in the volume of news items, The Bulletin will not be distributed on a house-to-house basis until further notice. However, a link to the electronic version can be found on the Parish Council website (www.great-milton.co.uk): additionally the village shop will stock 50 copies specifically for those unable to access the website. Please contact the Parish Clerk if this raises any concerns.

Parish Council meetings: UPDATE

Due to restrictions currently imposed by UK Government on indoor gatherings of more than two people, Parish Council meetings are being held virtually until further notice. Meetings are held on the third Monday of the month as usual, via a virtual meeting platform. The agenda is published on the Great Milton village website no later than the Wednesday prior to the meeting, along with an access code for the meeting. Business is conducted broadly as per a standard meeting, with one or two small variations (cheques require two signatures so are approved at the meeting and signed the next day). All are welcome to participate in the virtual meetings: if you have any issues with access please contact Tim Darch (Clerk/RFO, Great Milton Parish Council) on 01844 278347.

The Clerk is always available should you have any queries or concerns, whether related to Coronavirus or other matters. Any necessary updates will be relayed via the Parish Council website (www.great-milton.co.uk) or via noticeboards.

Tim Darch, Clerk/RFO, Great Milton Parish Council

Draft Parish Notes – June 2020

The meeting was conducted through a video conferencing facility. The new arrangements for the Parish Council are allowed under the following Regulation:

The Local Authorities And Police And Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility Of Local Authority And Police And Crime Panel Meetings) (England And Wales) Regulations 2020

All councillors attended the meeting. Also in attendance were Tim Darch (Clerk), Michael Tyce (Chairman, Waterstock Parish Meeting) and Judith Jones (Director, Witherslack Group).

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held virtually on Monday 18th May 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings, and were physically signed during the meeting.

Ad hoc updates from the County Council and District Council are currently being received regularly in lieu of monthly reports. These are being cascaded to residents as a matter of course.

Ad hoc updates from the County Council and District Council are currently being received regularly in lieu of monthly reports. These are being cascaded to residents as a matter of course. A written monthly report from the District Councillor was received in her absence by the meeting: this is available on the village website.

Correspondence and Public Discussion

Michael Tyce (Chairman, Waterstock Parish Meeting) addressed the meeting regarding proposals for a distribution and warehousing centre potentially employing up to 3,500 people on the site of Waterstock Golf Course, and the suggestion that a campaign group including Waterstock, Great Milton and Tiddington villages be established to represent shared concerns with the proposed development. The proposed site will cover 200 acres, though there is an option on 300 acres of nearby agricultural land which could bring it to 500 acres, 2/3 the area of Thame. The significant concerns of Waterstock Parish Meeting relate to significantly increased vehicle and HGV movements on the A418 and the surrounding road network and the change of land use in the Green Belt from green recreational land to an industrial site, generating significantly increased CO2 emissions. Judith Jones, representing the Chilworth schools opposite the golf course, shared Mr Tyce's concerns, with particular regard to issues with pupil and parent safety that may result from significantly increased traffic on the A418.

Cllr Fewell asked about reports that the land was contaminated. Mr Tyce reported that some contamination had been discovered in the waste used to construct the golf course, and that despite a court order to remove the waste this had not been

actioned and it was too costly a task for OCC as the waste authority to take on. Cllr Horsley questioned whether an alternative proposal for something more lucrative than the reportedly little-used golf course (perhaps a hotel) may be more palatable to the landowners. Mr Tyce said that he couldn't second-guess either the landowners' or SODC's view on that prospect.

In response to a suggestion that it was unlikely that large sites like this and Harrington would be included in the Local Plan despite playing on the requirement for a local and national economy boost, Mr Tyce felt that some sites currently in the Local Plan may be thrown out. The planning inspector would then have to consider the consequences: although he would not be able to put sites into the plan himself, it may put pressure on SODC to do so.

After some further discussion it was AGREED unanimously to support Waterstock Parish Meeting in their campaign against the suggested proposal for a distribution and warehousing centre on the site of Waterstock Golf Course. Cllr Harrod requested that Michael Tyce keep in touch with the Parish Council regarding any developments.

Planning Applications

No planning applications have been received from SODC since the last meeting.

The Parish Council has become aware of application P20/S0595/FUL Land to the East side of Junction 8a, M40, Waterstock, Oxfordshire, for 3 mobile homes, registered on the 12th March 2020, having received no notification in March when it was originally deposited. The clerk has asked SODC via Cllr Caroline Newton why the Parish Council was not advised of the application or consulted on it as a neighbouring parish.

Financial Resolutions

The following cheques for payment were approved to be physically signed along with associated invoices subsequent to the meeting:

Tim Darch. Salary,Tax and Expenses. £488.34

Jonathan Dudley. Bulletin production June. £98.20

Green and Growing. Village mowing April/May. £372/£966

Community Heartbeat Trust. Annual Maintenance Contract. £162

Three Villages Car Scheme insurance premium. £42

Castle Water. Allotment supply. £23.24.

The monthly bank reconciliation, accounts and bank statements were received and approved. The reconciled bank balance as at 3 June was £37,428.97.

Submission of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Part 3 for the year ending 31st March 2020 was noted.

The commencement of the Exercise of Public Rights period was noted, during which the Parish Council's accounts can be freely examined. This period begins on

Monday 15 June and concludes on Friday 24 July.

The submission of the application for the refund of £1140.72 VAT incurred between April 1 2019 and March 31 2020 was noted.

Parish Clerk and Councillors' update of matters in hand

Having been notified by SODC of increased costs for dog bin emptying from £0.77 to £3 (2020-21) then £6 (2021-22) per collection, alternative options have been investigated. However of the two companies contacted one was not interested and another charged £5.40 per bin, significantly more than this year's cost. After discussion, it was AGREED that the removal of dog bins to reduce costs seemed a backwards step for village hygiene, and that an appropriate increase in the precept request will be sought to cover the cost of SODC continuing to empty the existing bins.

A local resident has kindly offered to refurbish the noticeboard near the shop. The project is now complete: the wood has been stained and protected, the engraved upper section replaced and the Perspex windows renewed, giving the board a new lease of life and saving the Parish Council a significant sum. The board at Milton Common is also being refurbished. Many thanks to the resident concerned for their time, enthusiasm and expertise.

Overgrown 'vision plays' at all junctions have recently been mowed by OCC.

Proposed revisions to Great Milton village website

A survey has been published seeking opinions on the Great Milton website with a view to some amendments and improvements while looking to comply with forthcoming changes to accessibility legislation. A link to the survey appears on the website and in the July Bulletin, and has been circulated to those who receive e-mail updates. The initial response rate has been encouraging: all suggestions will be considered.

COVID-19: update on village response/impacts

Financial contributions from the Parish Council towards the Covid-19 volunteer effort were discussed. The £500 donated from Cllr Caroline Newton's Covid fund was intended to support Laura Putt's 'care packages': however these have ceased for the time being so it was agreed to direct these funds instead to the Kent and Couling Charity, with the suggestion that they are 'earmarked' for Covid-related support for the time being. The Parish Council will consider further support should it be necessary, and will continue to monitor the financial situation via the organisers of the Great Milton Against Coronavirus response.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm. The next meeting of Great Milton Parish Council is currently scheduled to be held virtually on Monday July 20th starting at 7.30pm.

Tim Darch. Clerk/RFO, Great Milton Parish Council

Great Milton website: Have Your Say...

The Parish Council is planning revisions to the Great Milton village website to comply with changes to legislation. As part of that process the content and navigation of the site will be reviewed.

We have created a completely anonymised survey to gather your views and opinions on the website and would be very grateful if you could take a couple of minutes to complete it.

Link to survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/86VQWRY>

The website can be accessed at www.great-milton.co.uk, from where the survey can also be accessed via the news item on the 'Home' page.

If you wish to comment but can't access the internet or would rather not complete the online survey, please feel free to call Tim Darch, Parish Clerk on 01844 278347.

Many thanks,

Cllr Steve Harrod. On behalf of Great Milton Parish Council

Thames Water

As a provider of life essential supplies, Thames Water work hard to ensure water never stops flowing but from time to time, things can go wrong. In these events, we try to deliver bottled water to people with water-dependent medical conditions (i.e. at-home dialysis) and to those with mobility issues, first of all. As key workers, we support the NHS, the councils, our carers and charities in order meet the needs of our customers in vulnerable circumstances. You can benefit from our free priority services: get in touch by emailing Tania.christie@thameswater.co.uk (or ask a friend to email for you and we can call you back) - we would like to know that we can add that extra layer of support to help increase your feeling of wellbeing and independence at home knowing that we are here for you when you need us. If you have online access, you can find more about becoming a priority customer and register at thameswater.co.uk/extrasupport. If you have no internet access, we can register you over the phone (0800 009 3652 option 3) or send you a paper application form in the post with a free return envelope.

If you need help with paying your water bills, find out more at <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/my-account/billing-and-payment/help-paying-your-bill>

And last but not least, we developed some fun water testing games to pass the time: <https://youtu.be/oJ5DIE-3SKI> I hope you enjoy them.

Opening of the Church

I am pleased to say that we will be opening the Church once a week on a Sunday. We do not have the resources to clean at the end of every day after it has been opened, however as after 72 hours there will be no risk of picking up any nasty virus it was felt best to restrict access to once a week. For the time being the Church will therefore be open from Sunday, 21st June and every Sunday following from 9.00 am to 5.00pm. The exception will be if we have to adapt around any funeral that might take place.

If you visit, we have provided hand sanitiser (which we hope will be left in the Church!) please be mindful of others and keep a sensible distance while you enjoy the peace and space and hopefully the comfort that being in the Church will bring.

Although this is a small step we believe that it is important that we do this especially for any in the Village who might like to seek out the Church as a place of peace, sanctuary and prayer.

Simon Cronk, Rector, on behalf of the PCC.

The Rector's Pint

I have been asked by one of the Village Newsletters to confine my ramblings to around 500 words, As these go to all three villages and I don't normally produce three distinct pieces this will confine my scope. This will be good news to you if you read and probably good discipline for me as I write!

I have also decided to 'rebrand'. This will now be called the Rectors Pint! - as a pint is near enough a half litre (500 mls). If I were to create a brew of my own, it would be called 'Old Cronky', perhaps I should rename as that?

Occasionally, one comes across very cheerful people who have been positively enjoying this experience we have been going through. They are rare but they are out there, although even they are now beginning to be less evident.

Back here on planet earth, for the rest of us this is an ordeal and for some it has been very hard. Am I allowed to make a confession? as the Vicar (sorry Rector) there are days that I have found tough. I wrestle with guilt of course (that is in my nature I am afraid) Who am to find this difficult compared to so many? I live in a fabulous place, I have really appreciated the abundance of nature that exploded in the Spring. My normal morning walk with Dylan is alive with the call of skylarks and the wild flower borders on the edge of one of the fields have been magnificent. Thank you so much Peers farm for this, a gift to nature of course but also a gift to the human soul.

And yet, there have been some days that have been a bit tough. I would hesitate to use the word depression, I lived alongside that for many years as I grew up and so I know what it looks like. However there are days when it has been just so hard to even face the minimum of tasks when everything has seemed so tortuously difficult.

This then of course adds to the guilt that is already there, the 'who am I, fortunate as I am?' thoughts. Doubly so, because of my particular role there is an irrational sense that I should somehow be able to transcend such things.

The thing is, I need to remember that it is alright to have days like this, indeed I suspect that for many of us it is unnatural not to!

And so once again, the Psalms to the rescue. I am increasingly grateful for this repository of human spiritual honesty. How about this from one of them, Psalm 88:

'O Lord, God of my salvation, when at night, I cry out in your presence, let my prayer come before you; incline your ear to my cry. For my soul is full of troubles.....'

A tad dramatic perhaps but the point is it is alright to be honest with ourselves, find one or two trusted people and be honest with them, and even, now here is a radical thought, how about being honest with God?

Here's a prayer: Father, I am choosing to rest in You and to allow Your peace to calm me in my current circumstances and to strengthen me with the courage to face these challenges with Your Spirit by my side. Amen.

Simon

Thank You Local Volunteers

We are sure we are writing on behalf of many of you to say a huge thank you to Jane J and the team of volunteers she co-ordinated and Laura P with her amazing supporters who helped her put together 35 lovely weekly treats for those who were isolated within their homes. So many were involved – those who donated both financially or with produce, the bakers, deliverers (all with cheerful smiles), Dave with his truck and the shoppers. It brightened up the week. We were lucky to receive such lovely produce from Le Manoir also.

Our shop (Christine, Sharan and Pat), The Bull, Church services (via zoom) and surgery adapted so efficiently to the situation and thanks should be extended to all those who helped with prescription collections.

Hopefully we can be more free to go out now while keeping an eye on those who might still need support. If you had to be in lockdown, Great Milton was a good place to be.

Clare and Eleanor BP

Bus Update

A trial Saturday service will be added to route 275 effective from the first weekend in September 2020, leaving the village and returning from Oxford at the same times as the weekday journeys.

The A40 is closed between Tetsworth and Postcombe for at least 20 weeks. As a result, service 275 will divert via the M40 from Lewknor and will not serve stops in Milton Common east of the A40. A shuttle service is in operation so that passengers from Milton Common can connect with buses at Lewknor.

275S Tetsworth and Postcombe Shuttle - A40 Closure				
Mondays to Fridays (except Public Holidays)		from 22 June 2020 until further notice		
<i>Service Number</i>	<i>275S</i>	<i>275S</i>	<i>275S</i>	<i>275S</i>
MILTON COMMON, Common Cottage	08:48	10:18	11:48	13:21
Tetsworth, The Green	08:52	10:22	11:52	13:25
Postcombe, top of Salt Lane	09:02	10:32	12:02	13:35
Lewknor, Lambert Arms	09:05	10:35	12:05	13:38
LEWKNOR, M40 Junction 6 (opp. Bus Shelter)	09:06	10:36	12:06	13:39
Connecting 275 bus:				
LEWKNOR, M40 Junction 6	09:11	10:41	12:11	13:44
HIGH WYCOMBE, Bus Station	09:52	...	12:52	...
OXFORD, Carfax	...	11:19	...	14:24
<i>Service Number</i>	<i>275S</i>	<i>275S</i>	<i>275S</i>	
<i>Notes</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i>	
Connecting 275 bus:				
OXFORD, Carfax		11:30		
HIGH WYCOMBE, Bus Station		10:00	13:05	
LEWKNOR, M40 Junction 6		10:41	12:11	13:44
LEWKNOR, M40 Junction 6 (Bus Shelter)		10:46	12:16	13:50
Lewknor, Lambert Arms		10:47	12:17	13:51
Postcombe, top of Salt Lane		10:50	12:20	13:54
Tetsworth, The Green		11:00	12:30	14:04
MILTON COMMON, Common Cottage		11:04	12:34	14:08
Note R - Shuttle buses from Lewknor only run if passengers on board. Buses will wait for late running service 275 journeys				
At Lewknor M40 Junction 6:				
For High Wycombe, 275 buses depart from Stop B (the bus shelter side)				
For Oxford, 275 buses depart from Stop C (opposite the bus shelter)				
No Saturday or Sunday service				

Volunteers Make All the Difference in South and Vale

The leaders of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils have offered their heartfelt and sincerest thanks to the thousands of volunteers that are helping in their communities.

Within days of lockdown starting, charities and voluntary groups in our districts were helping those in need. As it became clear more support was required hundreds of residents set up informal help groups in their local communities to make sure their most vulnerable and isolated neighbours were able to get help.

They used the powers of social media to recruit other volunteers and to get the message out to those who needed it. They also used more traditional methods to reach people, such as telephone calls, door-knocking and posting home-made leaflets through their neighbours' doors.

There's no doubt these local heroes have saved lives in their communities – they have been the backbone of the country's response to the crisis.

To help coordinate the community response, the district councils set up a community hub, which has helped bring the hundreds of independent groups and individuals into a huge linked network of volunteers responding to requests for help.

Working together with the district councils and others, local volunteer groups have made an enormous difference to people who are having to self-isolate. They're carrying out tasks that in normal circumstances would normally seem simple such as doing the food shopping or picking up people's prescriptions.

More than 30 members of staff at the council have been redeployed to work on a community support helpline to support the coordinated effort across the county. So far, the helpline has referred 910 people onto community groups for ongoing support. The district councils have also created a food hub, which has supplied meals for 783 adults and children.

Cllr Emily Smith, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council said, "I'm extremely proud of the hundreds of local volunteers that have been helping their neighbours and some of our most vulnerable residents. I hope the work that we have been able to do as a council creates a long-lasting legacy of active community groups that support vulnerable and isolated residents far beyond this pandemic to support ever more cohesive and connected communities"

Cllr Sue Cooper, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council said, "We are so grateful to our local community groups, volunteers and own staff that have stepped up and helped to provide all the extra support. Without them, vulnerable people would have undoubtedly suffered so much more during the pandemic."

Banner and Band Outside The Bull Inn

By Nick Belcher and Geoffrey Claydon

Have you seen this photograph in The Bull Inn? It's been there for years. During lockdown I decided to find the story behind it and to add a bit of colour to liven it up. So I teamed up with Geoffrey Claydon from the Great Milton History Society. We looked through the archives and gathered some interesting information.



Photograph by Alfred Burrows, revived by Nick Belcher 2020

What was going on?

The photograph features the Great Milton Ancient Order of Foresters meeting outside The Bull Inn in 1911. This was where they held their regular monthly meetings. It is probably the day of their summer fete and they are gathering for a parade to church. Leading the procession is the Oakley Brass Band with their smart uniforms and sparkling instruments.

Who took the photograph?

According to the Great Milton History Society booklet 'Tales of Great Milton' the date of the photograph is 1911. It was probably taken by local photographer Alfred Burrows who lived at the saddlery.

Who were the Foresters?

In the 1890's Great Milton labourers earned some of the lowest agricultural wages in England. There was no social security. Being ill meant paying the doctor, being away from work meant no wages; dying could mean a pauper's grave. This is where the Ancient Order of Foresters played its role. It was essentially a Friendly Society, members would pay a modest contribution each week in return for mutual support in times of sickness and distress.

Foresters in Great Milton

The Great Milton 'Ashurst' Foresters was formed in 1882, and their branch or court number was 6961. Around 1911 they had a membership of 600-700 with assets of £1,722. They would meet in The Foresters Hall, a large wooden building behind the Bull where the car park is today.

At these meetings a panel of Officers, led by the Chief Ranger, would meet to assess who in the village needed help. They would agree what funds would be made available.

Geoffrey Claydon's family has lived in the village for generations and his father

Edwin was a Chief Ranger in the Foresters and so was his Grand Father George.

The story goes that Geoffrey's Grand Mother developed serious dental problems and needed treatment by a specialist in Oxford. It was expensive and although her husband George received some financial support it was not enough. So he sold his precious wheel barrow to get the extra cash!

The Foresters organisation still exists today and is called the Foresters Friendly Society.



What's the banner about?

Here we see the unfurling of the banner by members of the Great Milton History Society. On the front is an embroidered scene of a biblical event. On the reverse side are details of the Great Milton Foresters Court. The embroidery shows two archers with their bows and arrows. Why archers you may ask?

The Robin Hood connection

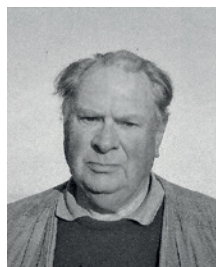
Foresters around the country adopted the symbol of a bow and arrow. It represents "The Bow of Benevolence speeding the Arrow of Assistance". In the public's eye, this was linked with the Robin Hood story. Many Forester Courts were named after the Sherwood Forest outlaws.

For more info call Nick Belcher on 07976 684009 or visit www.nickbelcherphotography.co.uk or why not visit the Great Milton History Society when things get back to normal.



View from Views

Over the last few months we have had sightings of a bird we could not identify in the end came to the conclusion that it was a Goss Hawk, now sadly I fear it has gone to pastures new no sighting in the last few weeks. This wretched lockdown has had the bonus, not only the weather, but also having time to observe the wildlife around, they certainly have had a superb breeding season, but seem to have taken advantage of the quieter times. Our garden was regularly visited (usually about 6pm) by a pair of reasonably rare English Partridge, unfortunately at the beginning of June they have met a sticky end first one then the other. We were able to watch a family of Sparrows hatch and fledge from a nest box, not something they normally do. We had hoped it was Tree Sparrows who apparently will frequent nest boxes, sadly it was not. The Cuckoo has



been more in evidence this year I guess due to the quietness in the country side. These are some of the bonuses of this long lockdown, that we in the countryside have been able to enjoy but I feel really sorry for those in small accommodation in towns and cities it must be hell. This of course does not excuse the behaviour of some when first restrictions were lifted, by coursing damage, creating litter, as well as leaving gates open allowing livestock to escape and in one case reported a farmer having to spend hours sorting out sheep flocks that had got mixed with their neighbours.

How the passage of time changes things, ever since planting of our crops in the autumn I have commented many times how our Oil Seed Rape (OSR) has looked so awful and how 60% would be a right off, we debated in the middle of March on whether it should be destroyed in favour of something else, at the same time the Wheat (WW) was still looking fantastic. Now however quite the opposite is the case the OSR has miraculously recovered, and the WW is suffering from the lack of rain, unbelievable how the tables have turned. The OSR will never be a good crop but when we looked at it just as the lockdown kicked off the debate was as I mention above, in the end we decided on balance to leave it. The WW is really suffering, it is really disappointing to watch a crop you have nurtured all through a difficult winter, just to shrivel up before your eyes, a whole year's work for now't, that's farming! We are lucky as we have been able to create other income streams, had we not, I fear it could have a financial disaster for us, which does illustrate how financially precarious farming is. What little rain we did have around 6th to 15th June does seem to have had some effect, I fear very little, on which note it is interesting that on the 6th we only had 7mm but the other side of the village (1 mile at most) had 17mm I understand.

It looked as if our negotiators over trade with the US are beginning to back down over food standards, it now looks as if DEFRA has been able negotiate a tariff on products of a lower standard. This would have allowed for the import of food produced to a lower standard than ours. Even Theresa Villiers our previous minister, commented that it was the wrong direction for us and that it would destroy British Agriculture, she would have been the one person who I would not have thought would have given Agriculture a second thought. It is not that these foods are necessarily dangerous or substandard, it is the fact that Farmers in that country with the use of chemicals, hormones & animal welfare practices, that have, due to public pressure, been banned in this country. It seems irrational to me that the same public will be expected, possibly without knowing, to buy this food. Of course it will be cheaper, which will benefit many, but will make it almost impossible for British farmers to compete. Labelling may well help but who knows. Many of the chemicals we have been using in this country have been banned, due to the thought they may be dangerous, some even contribute to climate change, the problem is that these sorts of chemicals are widely used in other countries, and are aids to cheaper production. Prince Charles has also made the comment that when we start to recover from our present restrictions, we have the chance, having seen the effect of less pollution on everything, to take the opportunity to keep it this way. This of course includes food production.

We now learn that, not only have we to put up with the pressure of HS2 in our area, 3,000 houses in Chalgrove, ? 6,000 Harrington, a possible power station, and two large solar farms at Tetsworth, leave alone all the gravel connected will need to come from somewhere. Now there is a proposal to develop the Waterstock Golf Course as a transport hub, which would indicate to me that the proposed Expressway is still on the cards. This is particularly worrying as the planned area will take in land that borders the River Thames, that some have worked so hard lately with great effect to improve. Some of us also have spent a great deal of energy, with the help of Government (taxpayers) money, over the years to improve wildlife and the environment. Just recently Waterstock has been designated an area of special wildlife importance. This development along with a proposed travellers site (see www.southown.gov.uk PO/SO593/Ful) between it and the M40 also running down to the river, will severely affect the possibility of River pollution and destroy other conservation issues carried out in this particular area. This is another nail in the coffin for all the good works in the area to restore what we have lost, all in the name of human development, there is far too much of this going on in this area, which is likely to be overrun with development. Just hope this does not just slip by due to the lockdown and usual Government intervention.

Charles Peers

P.S. Not hours after this was sent off to the editors we had 17mm of rain at Views Farm; an absolute god-send. Hopefully will alter some of our crops and comments I may have made.

Little Milton WI

Thank you to the members that joined our WI zoom in June. It was lovely to see you all again and catch up. We did it in two sessions as our first 40mins ran out but luckily you can restart and go again. Our next meeting is on Thursday 9th July. Our plan was to have a Wimbledon tea party in Anne's garden. This may still go ahead if the weather is nice and if we're allowed to meet in larger groups. If not, we'll be zooming again. Let me know if you'd like to join us and I'll send you the details. Everyone welcome. Please phone, email or join us if you're feeling lonely, want a chat, fancy joining WI or need anything. Do you live in Little Milton, Great Milton or The Haseleys, want to meet new people, make new friends? Then join Little Milton WI and meet like-minded, local women of all ages in an informal, friendly group.

We meet every 2nd Thursday of the month at 7.30pm

Too shy to come by yourself? Contact me & I'll find you a WI buddy.

Like us at www.facebook.com/lmpinelodge

Details & news on the Pine Lodge page at www.littlemilton.org.uk

Kath Stacey 279438 or email littlemiltonwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

Great Haseley and District Horticultural Society

What an amazing spring and early summer we have had for the lockdown time. Seemingly endless sun and heat has meant that life did not seem as dull as it might have been. Many plants have flowered and gone over ahead of their time such as Irises, but some have come along at exactly the usual time. Geranium magnificum is a large flowered purple hardy plant which always flowers in early June. It only flowers once and, as the flowers fade, it is important to cut it down to the ground and, within a few weeks, it will have lovely fresh foliage to see it through to the winter.

The lovely weather produced drought very early and watering became onerous in April and May. The water ran out on the veg patch and daily water transport from the garden became necessary. This prompted my other half to invest in a large water tank which is now connected to the guttering on the main greenhouse on the veg patch. The idea was for this to fill over next winter with the winter rain. Suffice to say that recent heavy rain means that it is now half full which means it will be many weeks before we run out again. I'm loving the rain as it gives me a break from watering and it is so much more effective than a watering can; the garden looks refreshed and happy. However, this also means the weeds will be romping away. Vigilance is required.

The frost damage last month has been long lasting – our neighbours' beautiful beech hedge has still not fully recovered. Another victim seems to be our beautiful apricot which is trained on a west facing gable and sheltered by the greenhouse. I had assumed the sad, dead leaves were a result of the drought, but a friend suggested the frost and I'm beginning to think she is right. The root stock is sending up shoots, but no top growth yet. The stems are green under the bark so we live in hope.

On the Saturday of the first weekend in June, the Great Milton Church Fete plant team held a socially distanced plant sale in our drive which we did not advertise outside the village (for fear of having too many people to deal with). As it turned out the weather was horrible with cold and very strong winds and winter clothing was the order of the day and, amazingly, many people came and we almost sold out. I hope people had a good morning and thank you to everyone who grew plants or helped and to those who came to buy. I was relieved to have much less watering to do, but pretty soon lots of rain came and the Sunday of that weekend contained all four seasons so we could have chosen a worse day!

As a result of being busy with the sale, I failed to pick the gooseberries which I had noted were ready on the Friday. By Sunday every single one was gone – many kilos – one bush was completely stripped with no damage whatsoever to leaves or branches. I was very sad as we had simply had no fruit at all last year. We have had gooseberries for over 25 years and normally they are unscathed until July when they ripen and the blackbirds eat their fill; clearly, they will have

to be protected. We have reached the conclusion that this is the pigeons in action. There are now so many that we don't seem to be able to go outside without disturbing them. It's beginning to feel like a Hitchcock movie. If anyone has any suggestions, I will be grateful to hear them.

The heat we are expecting this week, on top of all the rain, will make the weeds grow so keep on top of them.

Liz Moses

The Maple Tree

Although The Maple Tree remains closed at this moment in time, we are following Government guidance very closely to see when and how we may be able to re-open. We will keep you informed as soon as we have any news.

Don't forget that in the meantime that we are running a remote programme. Our Facebook page and website are very active and there are lots of fabulous ideas to do at home with your children as well as useful links to other trusted agencies. You will find cooking videos, gardening videos and much more - <https://www.facebook.com/TheMapleTreeWheatley/>

We continue to run interactive Facebook Live sessions on a Tuesday and Thursday morning at 11am for storytelling, singing (suitable for babies and children) and ideas for activities for you to do at home – do join us and request a favourite song or two.

If you or anybody else that you know has given birth during the pandemic, you are welcome to join one of our new virtual baby groups on a Wednesday morning for babies born in Oxfordshire since the 1st March 2020. These groups are very popular and we try to group parents with other parents from the same area - we already have over 70 new parents subscribed. If you would like to join us for the 10am session, email hayley@mapletree.org.uk and we will send you a zoom invite. You don't even need to switch your camera on if you don't want to. We have also run special one off courses such as Traumatic Birth, Sensory Play and Baby Watching.

If you need any support, do contact us either through our facebook page, by emailing Hayley or through our new web-site www.mapletree.org

We have been busy fundraising and applying for grants. Aviva are currently running a crowdfunding page where you can nominate The Maple Tree to receive much needed funds <https://www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/the-virtual-maple-tree> all donations are greatly appreciated.

Finally, a big thank you to one of our lovely mums, Anna O'Keeffe. Anna has run some virtual Tropic skincare events for us and she has also organised an online virtual quiz. Keep your eye on our facebook page for other upcoming events.

Stay safe!

Hayley Hayle (Coordinator)

Neighbours' Hall

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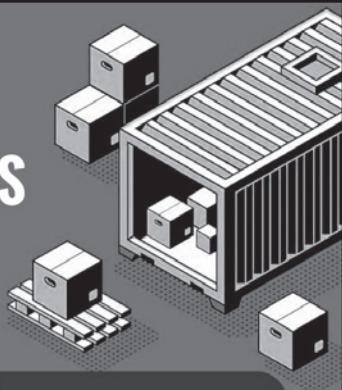
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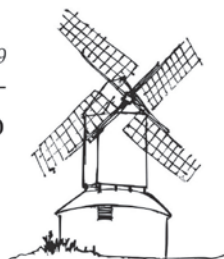
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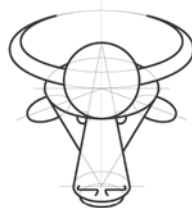
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contact carina.martin@gmail.com
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July

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|--------|
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| 7th Tue | World Chocolate Day (yum!) | — |
| 12th Sun | National Simplicity Day (omm...) | — |
| 20th Mon | Virtual Parish Council Meeting | 7:30pm |
| 30th Thur | International Freindship Day (aww...) | — |

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