

Parish Council Report

As this is the final issue of Moulsford News for 2020 it is worth reflecting on what has been a difficult year. Last month we reported on the very sad news that Miles Powell had passed away. Miles is rightly known as the driving force behind the project to re-build the Pavilion, providing the village with an excellent community asset located on the recreation ground, our greatest natural asset in the heart of the village. Miles also deserves recognition for the length of his commitment to the village, serving 16 years on the Parish Council while also working and bringing up his family. Without such commitment Moulsford would be a much poorer place to live in and Miles has set a great example of the value of providing service to the community.

The Parish Council has continued to tackle the usual issues plus those arising from Covid-19. Planning issues always take a considerable amount of attention as we try to balance the plans and needs of individuals and businesses within our context as a small village in the North Wessex Downs AONB. The major planning application by the Friends of the Elderly is still under consideration by SODC following very strong opposition from the village and, despite SODC refusing their planning application, Cranford House School have gone ahead and introduced mobile floodlighting. The PC has received many complaints about the environmental impact of these floodlights and we have advised that the best approach is to contact SODC using the planning enforcement process.

Covid-19 became the #1 priority for us all in 2020 and, unsurprisingly, the 2nd wave hit us last month. The Moulsford support network established in March has been reviewed and stands ready to provide help as required. Please contact Bernadette Sachse or your street co-ordinator if you would like a bit of help or just a chat. There is a lot of interest in the Covid-19 rules for this Christmas and I'm sure we all understand that things will not be "normal". So, if you think a neighbour may appreciate some help or support then please reach out and see what you may be able to do.

Village entertainments have been another victim of Covid-19 as the restrictions for using the Pavilion became prohibitive. Government guidance changed frequently as the pandemic progressed but the Pavilion Management Committee managed to re-open to hirers for a short time before having to close again for the November lockdown. It was a similar story with the playground as we interpreted and implemented government guidelines in a largely successful desire to keep it open - hopefully this was appreciated by many harassed parents!

Progress may be slow but we are getting closer to the start date for the planned sewage treatment plant works has been postponed to 4th January 2021. However, SODC and/or its contractor is expected to take possession of the land on 11th December. Sometime thereafter we expect the area of the work site only to be security fenced.

Those allotment holders likely to be affected by the works have already been notified directly. After 11th December, and for the duration of the works there will no longer be access to the allotments site from Underhill. Only those with access from their gardens will be able to access the site. The hope is that those without garden access can ask a neighbour or friend in Underhill to permit temporary access through their own garden. Please let the parish council know if you experience any difficulties during the works so we can advise SODC and contractor.

We are pleased to announce that Paul Holmes will become the new editor of this Moulsford News publication and will take up the reins in the New Year. Bernie Sachse has edited the newsletter for six years and is handing over this key part of our village communications. Bernie has been a brilliant Editor and deserves our thanks. We are also very grateful to Paul for stepping forward and taking on the role to ensure the continuation of such an important role in our village.

And finally we would like to send Seasons Greetings to everyone in the parish. It's been a tough year but stay safe and let's all look forward to better prospects in 2021.

High Speed Broadband potential in Moulsoford

Private homes and businesses in Moulsoford now have a chance at getting high speed Gigabit fibre broadband into their homes and work premises. This is under a local and central government Gigabit voucher scheme which awards up to £7,000 per applicant towards the cost of installation.

To see if your home/workplace falls under the scheme, please see the coverage map at: <https://digitalinfrastructureoxfordshire.co.uk/>.

But first we need to test local interest. The parish council has set up a survey in the village Facebook group for residents to vote. For those who do not use Facebook, please email gigabit@moulsoford-pc.org.uk so we may register your interest.

We are also hoping that someone would be interested in stepping forward as local broadband champion to help get things moving, with the support of the parish council. Please email gigabit@moulsoford-pc.org.uk if you think you could help in getting the scheme off the ground.

From the Vicar

Andrew Petit



My dear friends,

We've all been saying that this year's Christmas will be like no other, since despite the Government relaxing the Covid restrictions for the 5 days around Christmas, there will still be many things that we cannot do in terms of travelling to see wider family or dear friends, and limitations preventing us from doing many things we normally associate with Christmas. For many, this year's Christmas will also be tinged with sadness at the loss of a loved one, or anxiety about what the future holds.

We don't actually know what day of the year Jesus was born, but it is entirely appropriate that we celebrate his birth at the darkest time of year. For Jesus came to bring hope and rescue from a world locked in the darkness of oppression, fear and anxiety. This is the reason that the message of Christmas speaks so deeply to our hearts and our imaginations. Think of how many Christmas cards depict light shining in the darkness, whether it is the wise men following the star of Bethlehem, the shepherds on a starlit hillside, or the warm glow around the manger radiating into an unlit stable or even further out into a darkened world.

Jesus was acutely aware of the sorrows and troubles weighing down those around him and to each one he brought hope and grace and the transforming power of his love. It is therefore highly appropriate that the C of E has decided this year on the Christmas theme of *Comfort and joy* – words which of course from the old folk carol *God rest you merry gentlemen*, and which sum up the message of the angels to the shepherds – some of the most down-trodden people of their time; for *comfort and joy* surely sum up the impact of Jesus on people's lives.

As we plough on through these dark and difficult times let's use this year's Christmas season with all its limitations as an opportunity to focus on the real message of Christmas: *whatever challenges you are facing, God knows you and loves you so much that at that first Christmas He became a human being to walk beside you in those difficulties and to renew your life with his love and grace.* That is certainly something that brings both *comfort and joy*.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas,

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Andrew'.

The Vicarage, Church Road, Cholsey, Oxon OX10 9PP. Tel: 01491 651216 andrewpetit@virginmedia.com

Church Services December 2020 / January 2021

<i>subject to Government Covid rules</i>			
6 th December	2 nd Sunday of Advent	9.30am Parish Communion (<i>traditional</i>)	Church
13 th December	3 rd Sunday of Advent	9.30am Faith explored Service <i>with Communion</i>	Church
20 th December	4 th Sunday of Advent	9.30am Parish Communion	Church
<i>The week before Christmas</i>		Carol service – see below	Outdoors
25 th December	Christmas Day	10.00am Christmas family celebration with Communion	Church
27 th December	1 st Sunday of Christmas	9.45am Joint Zoom service Contact andrewpetit@virginmedia.com for login details	Online
3 rd January	2 nd Sunday of Christmas	9.30am Parish Communion	Church
10 th January	The baptism of Christ	9.30am Faith explored Service <i>with Communion</i>	Church
17 th January	2 nd Sunday of Epiphany	9.30am Parish Communion	Church
24 th January	3 rd Sunday of Epiphany	9.30am Morning Praise	Church
31 st January	4 th Sunday of Epiphany	9.45am Joint Parish Communion with Cholsey	<i>t.b.a.</i>
7 th February	2 nd Sunday before Lent	9.30am Parish Communion	Church

Great News.....we can join together to sing Christmas Carols!!!!

Where: on the Recreation Ground

When: Monday 21st December (or Wednesday 23rd if the weather is bad)

Time: 18:00 to about 18:45

Singers, instrumentalists, readers needed.....contact Twinks Kerr (651458) if you are able to help.

Monthly Coffee Shop

Gail Slinger



The next **Village Coffee** is on **9th December 2020**, everybody put your kettles on and have a great cup of coffee or tea with a fab, fab treat in your own kitchen and don't forget that Christmas tippie for December.



Or you could join us for the Zoom Coffee Gathering, each month we see new faces and old faces joining in. It's lovely to see you all. Perhaps Ted can be persuaded to play a tune or two for us to enjoy and get into the Christmas spirit.

Just send me your email address to get the Zoom link.

Keep Safe everyone until we can all meet again in the Pavilion but not this year, let's hope 2021 will be a better year for gatherings.

December's date: Wednesday 9th December 2020

January's date: Wednesday 13th January 2021

The Boys Brigade and Girls Association

Nev Keating



2021 will bring great opportunities to the young people of Moulsoford. The Boys Brigade and Girls Association will be expanding to include activities for all young people in Moulsoford. The BB are the worlds oldest and largest Christian youth work provider.

From early in the new year they will provide activities for all ages from school year One.

Activities will include Arts, Crafts, Sports, Skills, Leadership, Community and faith based activities. From March activities will also include kayaking and paddle-boarding. An 8 day summer camp is booked and planned for the school holidays along with many other activities.

For those in school year 9 and above we will be offering the Duke of Edinburgh's award programme. If you have started your award with another provider and have been unable to complete your award, you will be able to complete your award with us.



To register an interest or find out more information please contact the BBGA at WallingfordBB@gmail.com.

Moulsford Recreation Ground: the green heart of our village

We are excited to be able to share with you a first look at the ideas coming out from our work with Carolyn Place and her team at ASA Landscape Architects exploring the potential of our Recreation Ground. Carolyn has produced a map of the Rec for us, showing how different areas around the Ground could be used for different activities and features while keeping the main pitches open. In particular, we've been thinking about improving accessibility to the Ground for all, so the map shows how a new playground area could be created near the Pavilion. You'll also see a trim trail around the edge to support exercising outdoors, which we know people were interested in from last year's survey. You might also notice quite a few more trees shown across the ground, to gently divide up the space, give people more places to sit under, kids to enjoy playing around and to soften some of the boundaries. We'll also be taking a look at providing an activity area for older children and we'll be thinking about car-parking, access to the Pavilion and overall security of the Rec.

This map is a very early draft, so we haven't got into much detail yet and nothing is set in stone - there's a lot of thinking and planning still to be done, not to mention community discussions. The Parish Council are setting up a working group to take the project forwards and it would be great to have more people involved in sharing their ideas and thoughts about this valued village space. So, if you're excited about the potential of the Rec and want to help, or if you just want to give us some feedback, please do get in touch!

Contact Cllr. Jo Baker at: jbaker@moulsford-pc.org.uk

This project has been supported by a grant from District Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson: thank you!



Almost exactly five years ago in early 2015, we wrote about dark skies and the issues of light pollution. Moulsoford is part of a specially protected landscape, lying within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and looking across to the Chilterns AONB immediately across the river. The protection of the AONB also extends to our night skies, which are recognised as 'intrinsically dark', and, under an internationally recognised scheme, deserving of a level of environmental protection secondly only to the protection zone of a UNESCO designated Starlight Reserve (Institute of Lighting Professionals, 2020). Our dark skies are a natural and beautiful aspect of our rural setting and a crucial part of Moulsoford's character, valued by many residents who expressed their concerns in objecting to planning proposals for heavily lit developments at the Old Vicarage and Cranford House School.

Light pollution by its nature is incremental, steadily increasing gradually over time with the light spill from new development or with the addition of new lighting on older properties. Since we originally wrote this, there is some evidence to suggest that improvements in street lighting technology may have reduced skyglow in some areas. Nevertheless, overall levels still seem to be on the increase, with security and other floodlighting a key problem. If you have security floodlights, please look at the advice links below to get the best out of your lights and prevent them affecting others.

As we approach the longest nights of the year and with the current concerns over dark and light across the village, it seemed appropriate to share this piece again with update resources. Still wondering why? Just take a moment on a clear dark night this winter to switch off your lights, go dark and look up: not just for a bright star guiding the way, but all the rest as well.

Wild About Moulsoford, February 2015

In February, with the sparkle of Christmas and the New Year a fading memory, the long dark winter nights can weigh heavily even though they're shortening. We miss the warmth and light of the sun, the promise of which can still seem a long way off. The cold nights perhaps bring back some deep-seated fears of the dark and unknown, from ancient times past when beyond the light of the campfires real dangers could lurk.

And yet, this winter, we've both found ourselves really noticing its dark nights as something special. Being routinely out and about at night as part of his work Nigel has always appreciated nights as the time when the human world takes a step back and gives ground to nature. He regards sharing the secret night-lives of our wild neighbours, including deer, foxes, badgers, rabbits, owls, hedgehogs, badgers, nightjars and many more as a great privilege. On the other hand, Jo has often found the nights of February more of a challenge, but this season has been wanting them even darker! Why? Because this winter we discovered that dark nights are as threatened and precious a part of our village's natural world as any stag beetle, peregrine falcon or brown hare.

The Campaign for Rural England (CPRE) rates dark nights and starry skies as a vital difference between rural and urban environments. Most of us would describe Moulsoford as a rural location and on a good clear night, we've always reckoned that Moulsoford has pretty good dark skies and have enjoyed many a summer night sat out enjoying the stars. However, over Christmas and New Year, we were reminded what truly dark skies are like, treated to the experience of clear frosty nights in the New Forest and north Devon. We gazed up awed at the twinkling diamond dust spread across the black velvet of the heavens, the Milky Way arcing overhead and we were even lucky enough to catch the streak of a shooting star blazing a brief passage through the firmament.

Rural though we are in Moulsoford, our starry skies are nevertheless significantly affected by light pollution and it is unfortunately on the increase. CPRE records show between 1993-2000, light pollution levels increased in Oxfordshire by 20%. Records are not yet available for more recent changes, but it's safe to say it's not got any darker. Located between the bright urban supernova of Reading and Oxford, with Didcot and Wallingford not far away and increasing development in Cholsey, Moulsoford already arguably qualifies as having a suburban sky according to some light pollution mappers. But it is not just development in our region that is bleaching the stars

from our skies, it's our immediate local lighting as well. The past few years has seen an increase in Moulsoford's own light levels, in particular of private security lights and floodlighting around the village. While some of this lighting may be necessary for safety, badly placed or directed lights are causing light pollution – it is shining up, adding to skyglow and across other properties as light trespass.

Well, you may wonder, apart from missing out on a few stars, what's the bother? Light pollution has significant negative effects on wildlife, in particular messing up animals' and plants' sense of seasonality and also their nocturnal navigation systems, which can have fatal consequences. But, it's not just an issue for wildlife welfare – it's also an issue for human health. Light pollution has been linked to numerous problems including poor sleep and stress, which may seem obvious. Less apparent, but now being seriously investigated, are the links that are emerging between light pollution and cancer. It seems that when we sleep under the influence of electric light, our bodies produce less of the hormone melatonin, which is a key part of our immune systems. Our quality of life is reduced by light pollution; we need dark nights. It's also a massive waste of energy. The next time you see the skyglow of streetlights from Wallingford, remember that's your tax beaming up into the night...

It's a tricky one, as we might think in our rural location that our lights are helping keep us safe from crime. Not necessarily, it would appear. Badly placed lighting, particularly if it's illuminating horizontally rather than downwards, can actually assist criminals by creating glare that can dazzle potential witnesses and prevent security cameras from operating properly (as well as annoying the neighbours). Also, as the Campaign for Dark Skies thoughtfully points out, who really benefits from a light on at 3am in an out of the way garden – the homeowner tucked up in bed, the police miles away or the burglar sorting his tools under the helpful light? According to many sources, there are no clear links between more lighting and reduced crime – in fact some studies have shown that reduced lighting has actually resulted in reduced crime!

All of our reading on this subject has really got us thinking and looking at light and dark differently this winter. It's a complex debate and we'd encourage readers to have a look at some of the links below for more information. In the meantime though, we'd like to ask Moulsoford's property owners with external lights to take a look at them and see if they're creating problems rather than solving them.

Over Christmas, our son Will has learnt to say "Stars" and "Dark", the latter almost always whispered mysteriously; "Dar..." We'll be doing our best to make sure that both will still be available when he grows up, starting with altering what we now know to be a terrible light over our own front door!

For more about dark skies and why they matter:

- Campaign for Rural England Night Blight: <https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk>
- CPRE Dark Skies and Star Count: <https://www.cpre.org.uk/what-we-care-about/nature-and-landscapes/dark-skies/>
- Commission for Dark Skies: <https://britastro.org/dark-skies/>
- Dark Sky Discovery: <http://www.darkskydiscovery.org.uk>

For more about security lighting:

- Institute of Lighting Professionals: <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/getting-light-right-defra/>
- British Astronomical Association: https://britastro.org/dark-skies/cfds_advice.php?topic=security

For detailed guidance:

- ILP 2020, Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light: <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-1-for-the-reduction-of-obtrusive-light-2020/>

Planning Applications & Decisions

Moulsford News and Planning deadlines invariably mean that the planning information above is out of date by the time of reading. For a current view of planning, please visit the online planning portal here: <http://www.moulsford-pc.org.uk/community/moulsford-15214/planning-tracker/>

Planning Enforcement Case

SE20/402 Cranford House School Moulsford, OX10 9HT	Without planning permission, the erection and use of floodlighting.	Date received: 10/11/2020
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Keep in touch!

If you're planning local events, doing something for charity, or simply have something to say, Moulsford News wants to hear from you.

You can reach the editor, Bernadette Sachse by email:

moulsfordnews@moulsford-pc.org.uk

For advertising contact Emma Reynolds at: reynolds743@btinternet.com

**Deadline for Feb edition
Weds 20th January 2021**

Moulsford Parish Council Meeting

Weds 8th December

7.30pm via Zoom video call

Please contact parishclerk@moulsford-pc.org.uk for joining details should you wish to attend.



FREE TESCO BUS SERVICE

The T3 service runs on **Thursdays** and departs from the end of Underhill/main road bus stop at **9.20am**. It then picks up at the Recreation Ground bus stop at **9.22am** and after routing through the villages of East Hagbourne, Blewbury, Cholsey and South Moreton arrives at Tesco at **10.10am**.

The return service departs Tesco at **12 noon** returning to Moulsford at approximately **12.45pm**.

133/M1 Wallingford - Goring via Moulsford & Streatley

COMMENCING 1st SEPTEMBER 2020

Wednesdays only until further notice

Service number	133	
GORING Railway Station	09:08	
Swan Hotel	09:11	
Streatley, Primary School	09:14	
Moulsford Beetle & Wedge turn	09:18	
Moulsford, Old Vicarage	09:19	
Cholsey, Papist Way in. (A329)	09:22	
Wallingford Hospital	09:25	
WALLINGFORD Market Place	09:30	
Service number		133
WALLINGFORD Market Place		11:00
Wallingford Hospital		11:01
Cholsey, The Meadows		11:04
Moulsford, Old Vicarage		R
Moulsford Beetle & Wedge turn		11:07
Streatley, Primary School		R
Streatley, The Coombe		R
Swan Hotel		11:13
GORING Railway Station		11:23
WALLINGFORD Market Place		11:50

Service M1 is suspended until further notice

R Runs to these stops only for passengers already on the bus

Sorry, no service on Public Holidays

Please note: services are subject to change at short notice. Please check our website for the latest timings.

Moulsford Pavilion Hire Rates

The Pavilion is the ideal place to hire for your event and can accommodate a range of different activities. Standard hire rates as follows:

Hire Fees	Mon-Fri: Hourly fee up to 6pm	Mon-Fri: Hourly fee after 6pm	Weekend Hourly fee: Anytime
Village residents	£13	£15	£15
Non-residents/ Commercial	£16	£20	£20

Discounted rates are available for regular weekday evening bookings (Monday-Thursday). Special rates apply to weddings. The full list of rates can be obtained from the Bookings Secretary or can be seen on the Pavilion notice board.

To book call Karen Gilmore, Pavilion Bookings Secretary
07707 068151 or email
moulsfordbookings@gmail.com

The Moulsoford Village Boxing Day Walk

To
The Bell Pub at Aldworth RG8 9SE

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All Welcome

Subject to the Relevant Government Covid restrictions
Be Covid Aware.



Starts 10am, 26th December at the Post Box on Underhill
N.B. Wear appropriate clothing & footwear, and keep dogs on leads. Thank you.

Sudoku Challenge

9					2			6
	8				7		5	
		7			8	1		
			6			7	1	2
				5				
1	2	3			4			
		4	8			3		
	3		7				2	
5			4					1



Wallingford Museum's dedicated team of researchers are working with architectural model maker, Ben Taggart, to create a 1:300 scale model (1.5m x 1.6m) of Wallingford's royal castle as it may have been in the mid-14th century. This amazing collaboration draws on 15 years of research, unravelling the castle's history, using archaeology, geophysical surveys, LiDAR, maps, and the transcription, translation and analysis of many documentary records. Some of these records, from the 12th-19th centuries, also contain surveys with measurements, which greatly help the study.

Virtual meetings with Ben use all the available evidence to try to accurately position the walls, drawbridges, moats and buildings, such as the great hall, kitchens and stables, as they would once have looked.

The culmination of all this research will be this magnificent model of the castle at the height of its power, to share with everyone, once the museum reopens in 2021.

In 2021 the museum will celebrate its 40th anniversary - created and entirely run by volunteers since 1981. We look forward to re-opening in 2021.



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Katja Abel, Wellbeing Advisor, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire

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Sarah Elvy (Vice Chair)	37 Underhill	01491 651668	selvy@moulsford-pc.org.uk
Joanne Baker	2 Willow Cottages, Willow Court Lane	01491 652793	jbaker@moulsford-pc.org.uk
Ben Partridge	22 Underhill	07828 902947	bpartridge@moulsford-pc.org.uk
Bernadette Sachse	4 Valley Close, Goring on Thames, RG8 0AN	07812 601975	bsachse@moulsford-pc.org.uk
Geoff Twibell (Parish Clerk)	Greenhill Cottage	01491 282979	parishclerk@moulsford-pc.org.uk

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Anne-Marie Simpson	Mallards, Moulsford, Wallingford, Oxfordshire. OX10 9HR	01491 651298	Anne-Marie.Simpson@southoxon.gov.uk
Jane Murphy	Corner Cottage, High Street, South Moreton, Didcot. OX11 9AD	07970 932054	jane.murphy@southoxon.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Councillor

Mark Gray	5 Little Lane, Cholsey, OX10 9LX	01491 651333	limasheepdog@yahoo.com
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