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Little Milton
Newsletter

March 2024

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY: MARCH 2024

Frid	1st	9.30 a.m.,	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sun	3rd	9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion CW St James'
Mon	4th	10.30-11.30a.m	Fitness/Yoga – Pine Lodge
Tues	5th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	6th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge
Thurs	7th	6.30 – 7.30 p.m. 7.30 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine :Lodge WI – Pine Lodge
Frid	8th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sun	10th	10.30 a.m.	Family Worship (Mothering Sunday) St James'
Mon.	11th	10.30-11.30a.m.	Fitness/Yoga – Pine Lodge
Tues.	12th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	13th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m. 6.00 p.m. 7.30 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge Compline- St James' Parish Council– Pine Lodge
Thurs	14th	6.30 – 7.30 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine :Lodge
Frid	15th	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit - Pine Lodge
Mon	18th	10.30-11.30a.m.	Fitness/Yoga – Pine Lodge
Tues	19th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	20th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m. 6.00 p.m. 7.00 p.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge Compline St James' Craft Evening – Pine Lodge
Thurs	21st	6.30 – 7.30 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine :Lodge
Frid	22nd	9.30 a.m.	Keep Fit – Pine Lodge
Sat	23rd	2.00 – 4.00 p.m.	Spring Fayre: Pine Lodge
Sun	24th	9.00 a.m.	Benefice Family Communion – St James'
Mon	25th	10.30-11.30a.m.	Fitness/Yoga – Pine Lodge
Tues	26th	9.30– 10.30 a.m.	Exercise Class- Pine Lodge
Wed	27th	9.30 – 3.30 p.m. 11.00 a.m.	Adv. Textile workshop – Pine Lodge Sewing Group Venue to be confirmed
Thurs	28th	6.30 – 7.30 p.m.	Exercise Class – Pine :Lodge
Frid	29th	9.30 a.m. 11.00 a.m.	Keep Fit - Pine Lodge Service of Reflection – St James'
Sun	31st	9.00 a.m.	Benefice Communion CW St Mary's

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

SUMMARY FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL WEDNESDAY 14th FEBRUARY 2024

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

Planning

Joint Local Plan (JLP) – Preferred Options Consultation

Notes on the JLP prepared by Mr Barry Coward were discussed along with information from Haseley Brook Action Group. The Parish Council agreed that the latest proposals for housing in the area is good news. Development at Chalgrove airfield has been removed and Harrington is not included on the list of possible sites.

Resolved that, based on discussions, Cllr Wakeling will submit a response to the consultation on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council thanked Mr Barry Coward for reading through the latest JLP and producing his report for the Parish Council.

It was noted that the consultation period had been extended to 26th February 2024

Report by District / County Councillor

District Councillor Georgina Heritage had circulated her report prior to the meeting. Cllr Heritage added that she had attended a meeting at which the new joint Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) was adopted. The Plan focusses on reducing traffic emissions. It was noted that while most areas across both districts have very good local air quality there are several hotspots (Air Quality Management Areas) which include Henley, Wallingford and Watlington.

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) are providing financial support for residents and businesses who were affected by flooding during storm Henk between 2nd and 12th January 2024. Cllr Horwell will publicise the information and link via social media.

Little Milton Village Shop

A joint meeting of representatives from the Village Shop, Village Hall and Parish Council has taken place. The latest financial projections for the shop look a little better than they did towards the end of last year, mostly due to improved turnover and a significantly lower projected wage bill. However, given the lower number of paid hours the need for volunteers to help with the shop is critical.

Solar panels on the village hall and shop, as a means to lower energy costs (which remain a large part of the shop's outgoings) is to be investigated, along with sources of grant funding. Future CIL monies could contribute towards the cost. The project will be approached in a collaborative way to ensure it is paid for optimally and within the governance structures of the three entities.

Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)

Cllrs van der Merwe, Horwell, the Parish Clerk and Mr Paul Connolly met with the contractor on 24th January 2024 to discuss the refurbishment of the MUGA. The contractor suggested works may start mid spring / early summer.

Costs have risen by 15% from the original quotation. Total cost is £62.5k (originally £54k). Upgrading the surface to a longer lasting and superior synthetic surface was discussed. Upgrading both courts will increase the cost by approximately £4k. To stagger costs the upgraded surface could be applied to the football court and a tarmac surface laid on the tennis court first (which must be done anyway) and then provide a synthetic surface at a later date. The parish council will decide on how to proceed with the surfacing at a future meeting.

Playground

Four quotations to replace the wooden fence around the playground, including the access gate were presented. After discussion it was agreed to award the work to the company with the lowest quotation. **Resolved** to replace the wooden fencing at a cost of £5,750.00 excl. vat. Agreed to contact County Councillor van Mierlo to ask for grant funding towards the cost.

Next Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 13th March 2024, 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 £49.50 for up to 3 items and £9.50 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 counts 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 2024

	Brown	Grey	Green	Food
5th March	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
12th March	No	Yes	No	Yes
19th March	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
26th March	No	Yes	No	Yes

BENEFICE SERVICES FOR MARCH 2024

Sunday 3rd March
9.00 Holy Communion — St James' Little Milton
10.30 Family Worship — St Peter's Great Haseley

Wednesday 6th March
6.00 p.m. Compline — St Peter's Great Haseley

Sunday 10th March (Mothering Sunday)
9.00 Holy Communion — St Mary's Great Milton
10.30 Family Worship — St James' Little Milton

Wed. 13th March
6.00 p.m. Compline — St James' Little Milton

Sunday 17th March
9.00 Holy Communion — St Peter's Great Haseley
10.30 Family Worship — St Mary's Great Milton

Wed. 20th March
6.00 pm Compline — St Mary's Great Milton

Sunday 24th March (Palm Sunday)
9.00 Holy Communion (BCP) — St Peter's Great Haseley
10.30 Benefice Family Worship — St James' Little Milton

Thurs. 28th March (Maundy Thursday)
7.00 p.m. Compline — St Peter's Great Haseley

Friday 29th March (Good Friday)
11.00 a.m. Reflection Service — St James' Little Milton

Sat. 30th March
7.00 p.m. Easter Vigil — St Peter's Great Haseley

Sunday31st March (Easter Sunday)
10.30 a.m. Easter Day Family Holy Communion — St Mary's Great Milton

GREAT MILTON METHODIST CHURCH SERVICES: MARCH 2024

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

Date	Time	Church	Preacher	Comment
3rd March	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	Alistair Jackson	
10th March	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	Revd John Anderson	
17th March	11.00 a.m...	Great Milton	Rev Stephen Spain	Holy Communion
24th March	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	Paul Rosentall	
31st March	11.00 a.m.	Great Milton	LA/ Revd Stephen Spain	Holy Communion

CHURCH CLEANING ROTA FOR MARCH

W/E 3rd March – Mrs M Davies & Mrs S A Dennis
W/E 10th March – Mrs L. Lovegrove & Mrs C Coward
W/E 17th March – Mrs A Jones & Mrs Sarah Holifield
W/E 24th March – Mrs E. Summers & Mrs Wendy Newby
W/E 31st March – Mrs A Blagg & Mrs C D'Aeth

CHURCH FLOWER ROTA FOR MARCH

W/E 3rd March - Lent
W/E 10th March - Lent
W/E 17th March - Lent
W/E 24th March - Lent
W/E 31st March - All helpers

Teresa Quested 278922

RECTOR'S PINT

Easter this year may coincide well with the Spring daffodils, and that is because Easter is relatively early, on March 31st. The dating of Easter is taken from the Gregorian calendar, and it can occur on any Sunday between March 22nd and April 25th, a wide parameter. The Eastern Orthodox Church has a different dating system, taken from the Julian calendar. Here, I'm confining myself to the Western Gregorian dating. Over a 500-year period (from 1600 to 2099) Easter will most often be celebrated on either March 31st or April 16th, so we are spot on this year!

Easter Sunday always occurs on the first Sunday after the Paschal full moon, the full moon that occurs after the Spring Equinox. In the Christian story, the Last Supper, the final meal Jesus shared with his disciples on the night before his crucifixion was a Passover feast, itself one of the principal festivals that was always celebrated on, or near, the time of a full moon. That is the theory at least, that the dating of Easter links us to the Jewish lunar calendar, but there are plenty of well-qualified commentators who say that in practice it has not always worked that way!

Whatever its origins, there have been many calls to standardise the date of Easter over the years, not least from within the Church. In 2016, our present Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby said he believed that the date would be fixed by 2026 to either the second or third Sunday in April.

For many, perhaps most people, the significance of Easter has primarily become linked to cute bunnies, fluffy chicks and chocolate eggs. But for Christians, Easter Sunday is

a celebration of the claim of the actual and physical resurrection from the dead of a man whom his followers very quickly came to believe was God. I do the job I do because I believe that claim to be true.

I suppose it might make practical sense and would be convenient for us all to fix the date of Easter as a part of the school holiday and as the centrepiece of a set bank holiday weekend. However, in a world in which everything is directed towards our own convenience, and in where so much is standardised, I think it is wonderful, however impractical, that we have held onto a tradition which is *not* simply for our convenience and there is nothing standardised about Easter! It is a reminder that God does not follow our agenda, but that we are invited to follow his, however 'inconvenient' that might be.

In this, I remain a traditionalist, although in the event of change I wouldn't fight too hard against it. The meaning, not the date is the most important thing, and every Sunday is a 'Little Easter,' the Commemoration of the Resurrection.

Alleluia, Christ is risen!

Simon

DATE OF NEXT SEWING GROUP

This month we are meeting on Wednesday 27th March from 11.00 a.m. onwards. The venue is to be agreed. Please telephone Sally Ann on 01844 278029 if you would like to come along and join us. We'd love to see anyone new, especially if you have just moved into the village and want to meet a few locals

Sally Ann Dennis

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE PINE LODGE

A date for the Diary - "**Spring Fling**". We have booked an outstanding 18 piece Jazz Band for Friday evening 3rd May with doors opening at 7:30pm. There will be a Pig roast and an open bar. Tickets are £16 per person (including food) will be on sale in the village Shop and online*.

In March we will be launching a new web site for the Village Hall that includes an online system for booking for making bookings and selling tickets to village events. On the Activities page you will see that we now have 2 new classes at the Hall. Little City for under 6's, and Dance school.

Regular activities in the Hall include:
Mondays at 10.30 am **Yoga & Fitness** with Yvonne
(y.cartwright@btinternet.com)
Tuesdays at 9:30 am, and **Thursdays** at 6:00 p.m. **Keep Fit** on with Alyce
(alycefwf@gmail.com)
Wednesday 9:30 am **Advanced Textile** on workshop with Amargeet
(amarjeetnandhra@virginmedia.com)
Thursdays 6:00 pm Dance school (megan_ah@hotmail.com)
Fitness with Focus 9:30 am (mobility and stretching) on with Alyce
(alycefwf@gmail.com)
Little City once a month on a Thursday (**rosie@littlecityuk.com**)

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

Crafts 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. contact Kath Stacy kathstacey@yahoo.co.uk
Parish Council 2nd Wednesday 7:30 p.m. For further details contact clerk@littlemilton.org.uk
Village Hall committee 2nd Tuesday 7:30 p.m. For further details contact giles.pinelodge@gmail.com

For details of, news, booking info and the online events calendar please view the Pine Lodge : : https://lmvh.org.uk/

FRIENDS OF WELLS FARM

Feb has been very mild for sure. I recall trying to plant a hedge mid-February about 10 years ago to find it began to snow and got so cold we had to abandon the work party. Same date in 2024 and it is 16 degrees! Early Feb I saw a small tortoiseshell butterfly and a small white as well as a couple of bumblebees. Blackthorns started flowering from the 10th and the daffodils are coming out. There were even celandines in flower in Long Meadow! So I am just recording these occurrences as a future record. Oh and two chiffchaffs were calling at the allotments mid-February. I have not heard them this early but looking at the British records database it appears some of them are either migrating from the Mediterranean much earlier or even staying here over winter.

Wells Farm now has an almost perfect habitat for yellowhammers. Our wild canaries. The like areas with nice hedgerows and rough grass areas nearby where they nest on the ground. This is partly why the signs along the bridle path ask people to keep their dogs on the path and not wander off to disturb nesting birds. So please keep your dogs on the paths.

Resident badgers are very busy and as we move towards April, the cubs will start to venture out. I recorded three of them removing one of my trail cameras from a fence and playing with the Velcro tether. Glad I had a second camera watching the first!

Some of you may have seen my post about an incident reported to me by a resident when walking their dog one Friday evening. They came across some people hare coursing, with their dogs chasing the hares across the fields and killing them. Sadly hares have been absent the last two times I have checked for them. If you do come across such activities report them to the wildlife crimes officer or BBOWT if on our reserve.

I hope you have seen the progress made one the hedge laying along the bridle path on the north east corner. There will be a work party on 17th March which will be the last time we can do this. Look out for the notice boards indicating dates in case I can arrange others. Meet at the barn 10am then head up to the north east corner. We do Midland style which basically involves stakes for support and twister binder or heather across the top to hold things securely.

Lastly, please keep your dogs under control and tidy up after them. I found a poo bag chucked into the area where our school children do forest school. Who does such a thing???

Paul Jeffery (Tel: 278 424 Email: Paulj201@hotmail.com

FRIENDS OF LITTLE MILTON SCHOOL- 200 CLUB

February winners will be published in the April Newsletter

Diane Austin (Organiser)

Little Milton Spring Fayre

AT THE PINE LODGE AND PLAYGROUND AREA

SATURDAY 23RD OF MARCH

2-4 PM

-AFTERNOON COFFEE & TEA

-EGG HUNT IN THE FIELD

-CHOCOLATE TOMBOLA

-HOMEMADE CAKE STALL

- ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

-EASTER COOKIES TO DECORATE

AND MUCH MORE!!!

PLEASE JOIN US AND SUPPORT THE ORCHARD AND LITTLE MILTON SCHOOL!!!

TONS TOGETHER (LITTLE MILTON) WI

In February we had a fun night making and eating pancakes, including gluten-free ones, and made Mardi Gras masks. Thank you to the kind people who donated and leant us hot plates. We held a special raffle for an Afghan girl who lives with a host family in Stadhampton in the school holidays. She would love to visit her mum and the rest of her family in a refugee camp near Munich so hopefully we've helped towards achieving her dream.

Eleven of us also went for dinner at the Westgate, then onto the theatre to see the Oxford Operatic Society's Oliver. A wonderful night and stunning show.

On **Thursday 14 March** hear all about our year and future plans at the **AGM**, followed by a talk from **Alex Pyle of SODC about Waste & Recycling.** Everyone welcome, men too! Visitors £5.

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

We meet every 2nd Thursday of the month in the Pine Lodge OX44 7PZ at 7.30pm

Too shy to come by yourself or need a lift? Contact us & we'll find you a WI buddy.
Like us at ***www.facebook.com/lmpinelodge***

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

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

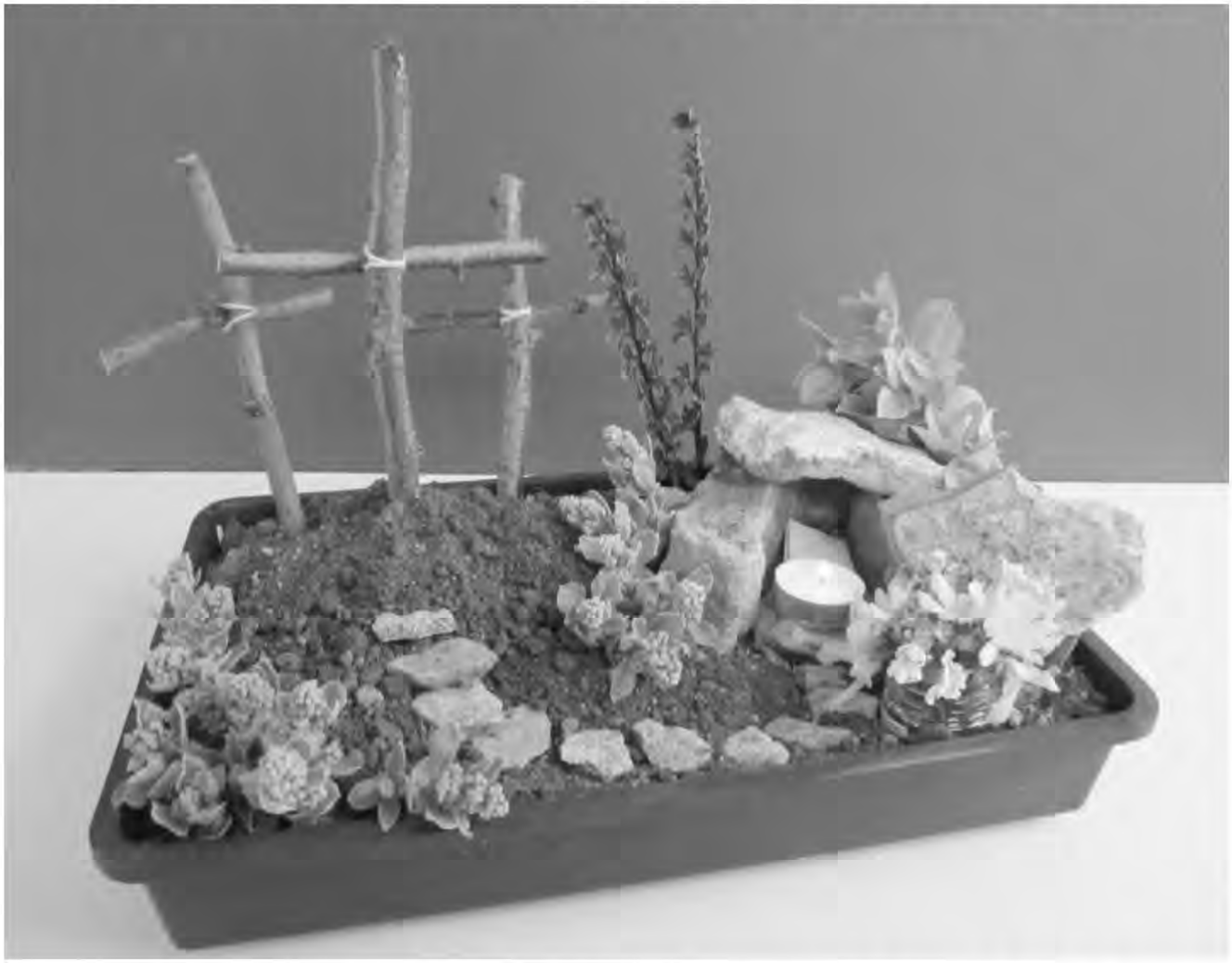
Spring Fling – Jazz evening
Friday 3rd May
Little Milton Village Hall
Doors open 7:30 pm

Get ready to swing to the vibrant sounds of The Carpathians Big Band!

Immerse yourself in a 16-piece ensemble blending jazz, swing, blues and pop — your ticket to timeless musical euphoria

Tickets **£16 per person** including food. On sale at Little Milton village Shop or online at the Little Milton village Hall website. : https://lmvh.org.uk/

CHILDREN'S CRAFT MORNING



MAKE YOUR OWN EASTER GARDEN ON A TRAY

ST PETER'S CHURCH, GREAT HASELEY
SATURDAY 23 MARCH 2024

10.00 – 12.00 (REGISTRATION FROM 9.30)
PLEASE BOOK AS SPACE IS LIMITED: TEXT OR WHATSAPP TOBY GARFITT ON 07941 164038

COST: £5, TO COVER ALL MATERIALS (LET ME KNOW IF THAT'S A PROBLEM). PAY BY CASH OR CARD, ON ARRIVAL.

THERE IS PLENTY OF PARKING, AND THE CHURCH HAS TOILET FACILITIES

NEWS FROM LITTLE MILTON SCHOOL

Small School, Big Heart, Great Start

As another busy week in school draws to an end, it feels remarkable that we have reached the end of this first half of the spring term as it has been a short half term that has flown by.

We have recently had our annual visit from our School Improvement Partner and a member of the County Improvement team, who spent a day with us in school monitoring teaching and learning, evaluating books and advising us about our school priorities. We were proud to celebrate successes in our school, but as always, we are reflective about how we can improve. We have yet to receive the final report but will be working on actions when we get it. You may have read in the media that attendance is a national focus for all schools at the moment and this an area that we need to improve.

As it was 'Safer Internet Day' recently, we have been checking that children know how to stay safe online and it was the focus of one of the assemblies this week. Online safety is so important and we revisit safe online behaviour at the start of each term and more frequently when necessary.

On Wednesday, we met our new LCSS (Local Community Support Service) link worker, who discussed local community services that she can offer to help families who may need support. She was pleased to learn that we had already planned a parent workshop focussing on the brain and strategies for dealing with stress and anxiety scheduled for after half term.

This morning's Good Work Assembly was the perfect end to the week, with plenty of hard work and efforts to celebrate! Thank you to all the family members who join us each week either in person or online as it is important to us that parents feel welcomed and involved in their child's learning. We would also like to thank our amazing staff team, who work tirelessly to ensure that the children at Little Milton Primary get the best start in life.

Whilst we are glad to have a break next week, we are also excited for the next half term as we have many more fantastic opportunities to look forward to including our annual 'Book Week' to promote a love of reading

Hannah and James Co-Headteachers

WELLS FARM ALLOTMENTS

Our Annual meeting is on 3rd March from 3pm at the allotments. If anybody is interested in having a plot just come along! I plan to be onsite on the 2nd for a blitz day and will be armed with a brush cutter to help anyone who needs heavy duty plot clearance. It is such a lovely place and we may get the chance to see some badger cubs towards the end of this months as the badgers have informed me (by digging) that they would like to take on plot 1!! It has been so mild that planting a few potatoes last month seemed like a good idea. But March is a good time for them as well as onions, parsnips and carrots. It is good to plan the plot and clear a bit at a time. You will be rewarded and the birds will cheer you on ☺

Paul. (paulj201@hotmail.com

VIEW FROM VIEWS

Typical/sods law we have just participated in the "Big Farmland Bird Count" parking ourselves on 3 successive days in a spot that, whenever we walk past, 2 to 3 times a week, there are usually birds of all species flying around (Greenfinches, Yellow Hammers, Jays, woodpeckers, fieldfares, to name but a few) but on the 3 days nothing except the normal birds we see every day, Blue & Great Tits, Dunnock and Chaffinch, and not really many of these. I mention 3 successive days as the first day it was late in the day, usually more bird activity in the morning. The second day dull and, the third day as it was really nice and sunny, we thought this would be the day, but no. The only redeeming factor was that on the third day, a Yellow Hammer decided to perch not 10 yards from us and, stayed for at least 10 minutes just resting or just doing things that a yellow Hammer does. Of course, by siting ourselves by a hedge we missed the many Skylarks and Buntings that, are most found in open fields, of which we seem to have a plenty.

Last month I stated I would not mention the weather well, this month I feel I must, as a lot of happenings/decisions had to be made and, previous decisions altered for the coming season, due to crop failure, as we thought. After a long period of rain over the winter towards the end of January we were beginning to feel the worst was now over and we began to make plans for the spring then, once again on the 6th/7th/& 8th February the heavens opened once again dumping a further 40mm of rain over already saturated land. I have never in all my life known such flooding, our river meadows have been more or less underwater since the beginning of November, save a respite of two periods amounting to about 10 days in all. It seems that the Wheat crop is surviving except in the odd places where it has been under water for a period, the Rape has all but disappeared, and the Barley that we thought had also disappeared, actually looking as if most will recover, so plans we had made may now have to be rethought.

I think the reason that this flooding has been so bad this season, is because, after a wettish late summer followed by at least 100mm more rainfall between November and the end of January, than the same period last season. Our main issue this winter, has been to find the drains that obviously were not running as they should, to cope with all this extra moisture. These were laid by our predecessor in the 60's, to take water from the various springs that are plentiful hear. Anyone who knew dear old Gilbert Pickett will have heard him say Gt Milton was built on springs. One particular area of the farm has been extra wet and, on examination of the above drains it was evident they were not running as they should, were found to be full of matted roots, which would have let some water flow but not this year, in some instances we extracted a sausage of these some meters long. It seems odd as to why these roots get into the drains in this particular area, I think there could be two reasons, one we have planted trees and a hedge over them, two I reckon that during the very dry periods we have had these plants would be searching for moisture and the obvious place is a drain, as drains in other areas don't seem to suffer in the same way.

We are participating in one of the first initiatives to be involved with as a farm cluster member, in conjunction with the "River Thame Conservation Trust", to monitor the river for mink prior to the introduction of the native Vole, who have been forced out of existence by foreign Mink, emanating from the release of the animals from Fur farms many years ago, by activists against the trade and, irresponsible individuals. The fur trade has now been banned.

On the brighter side of things, we learn that Michael Gove has announced that there will be encouragement to build on Greenfield sites, and redundant Offices and shops for housing. Interestingly this initiative is now holding up the planning on a M & S store in London, there is good reason for this as, it seems to me to be a scandalous waste of materials to continue to pull down perfectly good buildings and, throw the debris away, all the carbon used to build etc. Like our own Council in Oxford now want to move the county office and presumably do the same with the existing buildings to be replaced by some other useless buildings that will add to the destruction of our lovely city centre. Another sanctioned expenditure is the electrifying of the buses, a worthy cause, but is it necessary in one hit. They can afford to spend money on these, but not on the upgrading of our "jerry" built schools, or provision of school minibuses to the extent that disabled children cannot access our study centre, when we are expected to provide disabled facilities.

If anyone is interested, it is worth accessing Rick Stein's programme BBC 2 14/2/24 and see the way agriculture may be going.

Charles Peers

SOUTH NEWS

Changes to postal voting and proxy voting

There are some important changes you need to know if you vote by post or by proxy:

- You now have to renew your postal voting application every 3 years.
- You can apply online, but you will need to prove your identity when you apply.
- There are now limits to how many people a voter can act as a proxy for.

To find out more, visit: electoralcommission.org.uk/waystovote

Come along to the compost giveaway

Calling all green thumbs and garden enthusiasts! With spring just around the corner, we are giving away free compost to help you to get your gardens flourishing, save money and reduce waste.

Sunday 17 March - 9am-11am in Crowmarsh, at the land of the former council office on Benson Lane, OX10 8ED – available to South Oxfordshire residents only.

You can fill up to 3 bags of high-quality compost per household. Just remember to bring your own bags and a spade! This offer is only available while supplies last.

Our friendly Waste and Recycling Team will also be on hand to answer all your composting questions and share tips to get you started at home.

Simply the best!

Residents in South Oxfordshire are officially the best recyclers in England!

The latest government recycling performance table ranked us top nationally for 2022/23 with 61.6% of all our household waste being recycled.

Thank you for all your efforts in helping us reach this incredible goal! We're sure that you will keep up the good work, but please do keep trying to reduce the amount of rubbish you throw away and reuse as many items as possible

The Great British Spring Clean

Following last year's success, we're again supporting the Keep Britain Tidy 'Great British Spring Clean' from Friday 15 March to Sunday 31 March.

Our litter picking equipment loan service is almost fully booked for this year's event, but remember, we have litter pickers, high-viz jackets and bags available for loan through out the year; so please get in touch with our Waste team if you are planning a litter pick from April onwards.

For details on how to make a booking, see our litter picking webpage. Just remember, our Waste Team must receive completed forms at least two weeks before a litter pick takes place.

Helping us all breath more easily
Taking action on air pollution through reducing traffic emissions is an important focus for our council, as outlined in our recently adopted action plan.

We aim to do this by promoting healthier and cheaper options for short journeys, such as walking and cycling and - where vehicles are needed - we'll encourage more use of public transport and low emission vehicles such as Electric Vehicles.

The good news is that, in the last five years, most places in our district have seen a consistent reduction in nitrogen dioxide, a pollutant primarily linked to vehicle emissions.

As a big part of this, we recently adopted a new joint Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) with Vale of White Horse District Council which focuses on reducing traffic emissions. The plan aims to build on the success so far.

You can find more about the AQAP on our air quality page. For up-to-date info on air quality in specific spots in Oxfordshire see the OxonAir website

Energy saving advice
We are promoting advice and financial support available to you for energy saving measures ranging from draught proofing to solar panels.

Our new leaflet promotes direct support from the council as well as from partners such Better Housing Better Health and from government schemes. To view the leaflet, visit our page on retrofitting your home.

Easter holiday activities
Keep an eye out on our social media channels later this month for news of activities that we'll have available for young children, teenagers and their families during the Easter holidays.

Celebrate women with music, craft, art and theatre
Cornerstone Arts Centre is celebrating women through music, art, theatre and crafts next month in conjunction with International Women's Day on Friday 8 March.

From the 5 to 9 March, get involved with the Women's Week celebrations with art from Usha dapur Kar, from Oxford, in her first exhibition in the Cornerstone gallery, As SHE Likes It, a play inspired by #MeToo pioneer Patricia Douglas, Pop Divas Live! for young pop fans with some great hits from current female pop stars and a free craft drop in for children and adults.

To book tickets or find out more visit the Cornerstone website or call the box office on 01235 515144.

Source: South Oxfordshire District Council

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Saturday mornings (excluding Bank Holiday weekends) 8am to 10.30am, for ***pre-booked*** consultations only

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

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

The NHS launched the **Pharmacy First Service** (**PFS**) on 31st January (see NHS Pharmacy First Service (PFS) | NHSBSA) Appointments can be booked directly with participating pharmacies for the treatment of 7 common health conditions namely sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bite, impetigo, shingles, uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women.

Pharmacists can offer advice to patients and supply NHS medicines where clinically appropriate. This will help reduce the pressure on Morland House Surgery. As an example, appointments with Wheatley Pharmacy can be booked (often the same day) by phoning 01865 874047
or via the website www.wheatleypharmacy.com/book

Group Consultation Clinics – We are excited to offer group clinics for certain health conditions, currently menopause and diabetes. The benefits are many including a more thorough examination of your condition, having your questions answered, sharing issues with others going through the same issues, and spending longer with a GP.
For a wealth of information and guidance on managing a vast number of health conditions, symptoms, and treatment, please visit www.morland-house.co.uk
Also on the website are details of the new rules relating to accessing your medical records - see https://tinyurl.com/3879mz6p

RAMBLERS Thame & Wheatley

Walks Programme 2024

March

Thursday 7th	**Meet at Maidensgrove Common for an undulating 5½ mile walk via Warburg Nature Reserve.**
Sunday 10th	**Meet at Warborough, south side of the green, for a 7½ mile walk via Little Wittenham and Dorchester, with good views.**
Tuesday 12th	**Gentle, social, linear 2½ mile walk downhill from Bury Knowle park to St. Clements. Walk starts at 11am, but meet for coffee first in Headington at 10:30. Optional pub lunch at the end of the walk.**
Thursday 14th	**Meet at Bledlow for a scenic 5½ mile figure-of-eight walk via Lodge Hill.**
Saturday 16th	**10:30am Meet at the Lane End car park for a 4½ mile walk via Frieth. Maybe orchids at Moorend.**
Wednesday 20th	**Meet at Watlington (Town car park on Hill Road) for an 8 mile walk in the Chilterns. No steep climbs, but several stiles.**
Saturday 23rd	**Meet at Waterperry Garden Centre for a 6½ mile walk using the Oxfordshire Way via Ickford and Worminghall. Optional lunch in café at finish.**

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). Registered office: c/o Bates Wells, 10 Queen Street Place, London EC4R 1BE.

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As you might imagine the issues raised with me week by week are many and varied. Many emails are campaign emails drafted by a particular lobby group for constituents across the county to send to their MP. However a good number of emails are from constituents who have a particular problem that they want to raise. Some of these I can help with others I have to steer elsewhere. Among the issues raised it is not infrequent for people to have concerns around NHS services, which is something that I can sometimes help with. Problems with accessing GPs are not uncommon nor are concerns with accessing NHS dentists.

I was therefore pleased to see recent Government announcements which I believe will help with both of these in due course. The Pharmacy First initiative is very welcome. This is an approach to make better use of the skills of pharmacists whereby they can offer treatment for some common health conditions themselves without the need to visit a GP or have a prescription. Pharmacists will be able to treat conditions including sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bite, impetigo, shingles, and uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women without the need for patients to see a GP or have a prescription. I have always felt that pharmacists have been undervalued and under used and so am delighted to see this avenue for treatment opening up.

I was also pleased to see the launch of the NHS Dental Recovery Plan. I know that it has not always been easy to access NHS dental services in the constituency and this plan seeks to encourage more dentists to offer treatment on the NHS. As always these things take time to roll out and I look forward to seeing this implemented locally with greater access to dental services available through the NHS.

Another common issue raised with me is the state of our roads. Towards the end of last year the Government announced substantial additional funding for resurfacing road. This money, £8.3 billion, is money redirected from the cancelled Phase 2 of HS2. Oxfordshire will get a total indicative additional funding allocation of £82,340,000. This will be spread over a period of time from 2023/24 to 2033/34, and in reality it will take that sort of time to plan for and resource the repairs needed. The money will be passed to local highways authorities to spend and in order to ensure transparency on the spending the local authorities are required to publish information on their websites on the spending. By mid-March we should see a summary of the plans for the next two years. I will be looking to see a fair allocation to rural areas where I believe the state of the roads is particularly poor and where public transport is most lacking.

As always I am interested to know the issues that concern constituents. The best way to contact me is via email: john.howell.mp@parliament.uk.

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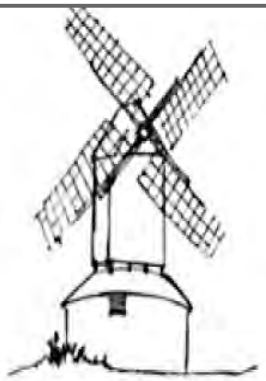

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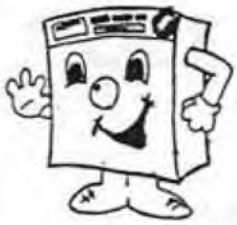

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Waterperry Gardens

March at Waterperry

The Gardens at Waterperry are springing ba into life with the daffodils in bloom in the meadow and with the national collection of Saxifrages at their best during March, spring is the perfect time to visit the gardens

Mother's Day

Sunday 10th March

The Gift Barn has some lovely Mother's Day gi and for a special Mother's Day. Treat mum to freshly prepared home-cooked food including hot and cold lunches Tea Shop also has a fantastic selection of afternoon tea treats.

Afterward, why not enjoy a stroll around the gard with a half-price entrance for all mums on Mothering Sunday!

National Gardens Scheme

Tuesday 12th March

Entry Fees to gardens for the day are being donated to various UK-based charities such as Marie Curie, Macmillan, Carers Trust, Hospice U and Parkinson UK.

www.waterperrygardens.co.uk

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KEY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Age UK	01865 890879	Naheed Qureshi
Citizens Advice Bureau	0808 278 7907	Thame & District
Church: St James	01844 278349	Revd. Simon Cronk
Doctors	01865 872448 111 0845 345 8995 999	Morland Surgery Out of Hours Service NHS Helpline Medical Emergencies
Little Milton Shop	01844 278175	Alison Shelton (Manager)
Little Milton School	01844 279310	Hannah Blest and James Bell Co-Head Teachers
Milk Deliveries	07773006485	SHT Ltd (Alan Woods)
MUGA	Bookings for the courts are made at the Post Office	
Neighbourhood Watch	01844 279468	Mark Willis
Newsletter	01844 279150	Raymond Fergusson (Editor)
OCC	01865 792422	All enquiries
Parish Council	01844 278180 01844 875635	Francois Van der Merwe (Chair) Andrea Oughton (Clerk)
Pine Lodge	01844 278605 01844 279535 0844 7255568	Steve Willis (Chairman) Linda Lovegrove (Bookings) 24/7 Call out service
Police	101	Thames Valley Police (Non-emergency)
Post Office	01844 279001	Alison Shelton (Postmistress)
Public Transport	01865 323201	Comet
SODC	01235 422422	All enquiries
Southern Electric	0800 0727 282	Emergency Number
Thames Water	0800 3169 800	Emergency Number
The Lamb	01844 279527	Ben & Charmain
Biffa (Verdant)	03000 610610	All enquiries

For all other numbers go to website www.littlemilton.org.uk

Front Cover: Daffodils at Rofford

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