

GREAT MILTON BULLETIN

February 2017

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Great Milton Parish Council

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

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer: Helen Cherry – 07554 516989

21 Fullers Field, Great Milton, Oxford OX44 7PJ.

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:	Lesley Bush, Liz Sands
Kent & Couling Charity:	Cynthia D'Anger
Sheppard Trust:	Ann Price, Pat Cox

Parish Council Publication Scheme (*Freedom of Information Act*)

Residents of the Parish can see the records of the Council held by the Parish Clerk or learn where they may be accessed. These records include minutes, financial information, and responses to planning consultations. Applications can be made to the Parish Clerk and documents viewed by appointment. Any copies required will be charged at 10p per page.

Front Cover

Fungi at Pippins.

Photo: Pat Cox.

If you have any photos of the village or events, we would love to include them!

In My Opinion...

I am taking this opportunity to let you know what is going on at County Council regarding the possible reorganisation of local government in Oxfordshire.

Abolishing all of Oxfordshire's six councils and creating one new unitary council would save £20m each year – money that would pay for better services and keep council tax low. That would fill over 300,000 potholes or provide 1 million hours of home care.

The new council would be simpler for residents and business, with one website and one point of contact. Environmental services such as street cleaning, countryside services and grounds maintenance would be properly joined up and managed locally to respond to community needs.

One councillor would represent your community and be accountable for all services. As members of an 'area board' serving the existing district or city areas, each councillor would take decisions affecting their community and also the county as a whole.

Bringing together social services, housing, leisure and welfare benefits means joined up support for people who need extra help, improving health and wellbeing.

Joining up planning, housing, jobs and transport means Oxfordshire's housing shortage can be addressed, along with investment in vital infrastructure such as roads.

Without changing local government in Oxfordshire, further service cuts may be needed. The government is reducing funding and a unitary council is more financially sustainable in the long term. Growth in homes and jobs also increases income from council tax and business rates needed to pay for public services.

These are draft proposals. We want to hear views from residents before submitting a unitary bid to government. To find out more and have your say, go to www.oneoxfordshire.gov.uk or visit your local library. In my opinion, this is an important consultation so please let us have your feedback.

You can also get in touch with me if you would like to understand more about this proposal.

Don't let apathy rule in 2017!

Steve Harrod, Chairman



Parish Council Notes

The January meeting of Great Milton Parish Council was chaired by Cllr Peter Fewell (Chair & District Councillor), Cllrs Peter Allen, Rosalind Deacon and Gwen Harris in attendance. Also present were Helen Cherry (Clerk) and no members of the public. Apologies were received from Cllrs Stephen Harrod and Bill Fox. The next meeting will be held on Monday 20th February at 7.30pm in the Pavilion.

Planning Applications

GMPC recommended 'No Strong Views' on the following planning applications received from SODC:

P16/ S4277/FUL – The Oxford Belfry Hotel

Conversation and extension of existing barn buildings to create two dwelling houses.

P16/S4268/HH – Cranmer Rise. The Oxford Belfry Hotel

Single and two storey extensions and refurbishments of existing dwelling house.

P16/S4278/HH – 11 Fullers Field.

Proposed garage conversion.

P16/S3980/FUL – Heath Farm Thame Road Great Milton OX44 7JD

Proposed conversion of agricultural building for commercial (B1) uses.

P16/S3603/FUL - The Oxford Belfry Hotel London Road Milton Common

Amendment : No. 1 - dated 21st December 2016 Proposal : Erection of Two Detached and Two Semi-Detached Houses.(as amended by Drawing 002a accompanying e-mail form agent received 21 December 2016 and letter to Tiddington Parish Council relating to visibility).

Planning decision notices received from SODC

SODC granted planning permission for:

P16/S3466/FUL Application proposal, including any amendments

Demolition of existing building and erection of a single storey dwelling; provision of garden and parking. As amended by Agent's email and revised plans received on 25 November 2016. Site Location : Swarebrook Lower End Great Milton OX44 7NJ

Bank Reconciliation

Full Bank Reconciliation up until 30th December 2016 was received. The closing balance was £22,016.06.

Dates for Great Milton Parish Council meetings 2016

To note the change of date for April meeting – Tuesday 18th April

All other GMPC meetings will remain on the third Monday of the Month at 7:30pm in the Pavilion, Great Milton.

Helen Cherry, Clerk to Great Milton Parish Council

Great Milton Parish Council				
Bank reconciliation				
Balance at bank as at 30 December 16		£	Book balance as at 30 December 16	£
Current account		12,431.27	Brought forward	17,537.66
Santander Business Reserve Account		10,174.89		
		<u>22,606.16</u>		
Add: Outstanding lodgements	Current year	0.00	Receipts	17,080.86
	Previous years	0.00		
Less: Unpresented cheques	Current year	-540.10	Payments	-12,602.46
	Previous years	-50.00		
Reconciled balance		<u>22,016.06</u>	Carried forward	<u>22,016.06</u>

Unpresented cheques brought forward from earlier years and still outstanding		
Number	Name	Amount
Payment - Donation (1779)	St - John Ambulance	£50.00
Unpresented lodgements from earlier years & outstanding		
Number	Name	Amount

ONE New Council for the Whole of Oxfordshire?

Have your say.

Oxfordshire county council wants to know what you think about its draft proposal to abolish all six councils in Oxfordshire and replace them with a one new council for the whole county, called a 'unitary' council.

Why change?

Central government is changing the way councils are funded, and councils will soon have to pay for services mainly from council tax and business rates. Unless local government is reorganised, Oxfordshire councils will not be able to pay for vital public services for local communities and vulnerable people as the population increases and gets older.

The proposal

Oxfordshire currently has a two-tier local government – a county council plus five district and city councils. Oxfordshire County Council thinks that all of Oxfordshire's six councils should be abolished and replaced with one new unitary council which would save £20m each year – money that would pay for better services and keep council tax low. That money would be enough to fill over 300,000 potholes or provide

1 million hours of home care.

The new council would be simpler for residents and business, with one website and one point of contact.

One councillor would represent your community and be accountable for all services. As members of an 'area board' serving the existing district or city areas, each councillor would take decisions affecting their community and also the county as a whole.

Environmental services such as street cleaning, countryside services and grounds maintenance would be properly joined up and managed locally to respond to community needs.

Bringing together social services, housing, leisure and welfare benefits would mean joined up support for people who need extra help, improving health and wellbeing. And joining up planning, housing, jobs and transport would mean Oxfordshire's housing shortage can be addressed, along with investment in vital infrastructure such as roads.

Without changing local government in Oxfordshire, further service cuts may be needed. The government is reducing funding and a unitary council is more financially sustainable in the long term.

Oxfordshire County Council believes a new council for the whole county makes most sense. Simpler. Better services. More local. Lower cost. That's what 'One Oxfordshire' means.

Join the debate

This is a draft proposal and Oxfordshire County Council wants to hear from residents, before finalising the proposal and sending it to the government for a decision.

To find out more and have your say, go to www.oneoxfordshire.org or come to a drop-in event at a library near you. Dates of the events are available on the website.

Ramblings from the Rectory

I am so grateful that I had some spiritual foundations in my life at an early age. I can't claim that I was particularly religious but my family regularly went to church on a Sunday, it was just something we did. I also believe that I had an awareness of what I can only describe as a sense of the 'other' from a young age.

It is said that faith is learned at our grandmother's knee. My own grandmother, my father's mother (I sadly never knew my mother's parents) was quietly devout, the daughter of a clergyman, whose last parish was just across the way in Garsington. She was never strident about her faith, but I was always aware that it was a part 

Services in Our Benefice for February

	St. Mary the Virgin Great Milton	St. James' Little Milton	St. Peter's Great Haseley
Sunday 5th <i>4 Sun before Lent</i>	Holy Communion BCP 8:00am		
	Benefice Service at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle – 10:45am		
Sunday 12th <i>3 Sun before Lent</i>	Holy Communion CW 9:30am	Family Service 11:00am	Holy Communion BCP 8:00am
Sunday 19th <i>2 Sun before Lent</i>	Family Service 11:00am	Holy Communion BCP 8:00am	Holy Communion CW 9:30am
Sunday 26th <i>Sun next before Lent</i>			Benefice Holy Communion CW 10:00am

Services in Our Benefice for March

	St. Mary the Virgin Great Milton	St. James' Little Milton	St. Peter's Great Haseley
Wednesday 1st <i>Ash Wednesday</i>		Holy Communion 7:30pm	
Sunday 5th <i>Lent 1</i>	Holy Communion BCP 8:00am	Holy Communion CW 9:30am	Family Service 11:00am

of her, as was her service and commitment to her local North Devon parish church. I remember her funeral, taken by her friend Revd John Pollack, a Christian writer of some note who had retired to the North Devon village where she lived. The reading was from Romans 8, the great conclusion of the most majestic chapter of Paul's greatest letter. 'I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything in all 

creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.’ John Pollack had written a notable biography about Paul, this particular reading was found marked in my grandmother’s bedside Bible on the night she died.

As I grew older, churchgoing waned, although I did have a bit of a religious revival when I was fourteen when I asked to be prepared for confirmation. For a season I took it all very seriously, but that soon fizzled out to be relegated to Christmas and Easter, with the occasional foray to join my father at the odd 8.00am communion at our local church where he assisted with the services. I was the youngest person there by many decades whenever I went! However I rather loved the peace of it which remains with me today.

There was one other constant that sowed spiritual seeds in me, the work of CS Lewis. I had discovered the Narnia Chronicles when I was about eight years old and devoured them. In my later teens I had all but drifted away from the Church and a conscious acceptance of the Christian faith but I was searching spiritually. Whilst at Polytechnic in Wales I was challenged by a christian staff member who became a friend of mine to look again. One of the great services he did me was to re-introduce me to C.S Lewis, this time his science fiction trilogy, ‘Out of the Silent Planet’, ‘Perelandra’ (Voyage to Venus) and ‘That Hideous Strength’. I was entranced by these books and then went on to read ‘Mere Christianity’ and the ‘Problem of Pain’. I read ‘The Pilgrim’s regress’, Lewis’ re-telling of the Bunyon classic and both his Screwtape books. ‘The Great Divorce’ (an essay on the nature of heaven and hell) totally captured my imagination as did ‘Surprised by Joy,’ Lewis’ autobiography of his spiritual journey from atheism to christian belief. I was moved by his personal essay on grief in ‘A Grief Observed’. These books have remained my companions and sources of encouragement throughout my adult life. I was also delighted to discover C.S. Lewis’ friendship with JRR Tolkien and the influence that Tolkien had on Lewis in his journey to faith, although Tolkien was disappointed that Lewis did not embrace Roman Catholicism.

But I now see these later developments as building on foundations that were laid at an early age. It is something that is exercising my thinking here at the moment. Only this morning I read in the Psalms: ‘Walk about Zion, go around her, number her towers, consider well her ramparts, go through the citadels, that you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God forever and ever. He will guide us for ever’. (Ps 48: 12 -14). Zion was another name for Jerusalem, it is a reminder that the things of faith, even in the city that was to epitomise faith (but rarely did!) had to be passed down to the next generation for good spiritual foundations to be built. I visit our two local schools weekly and do my best to breath in something of the christian story and as I do so I wonder where else are these children getting this story? I am not talking

about good social values and good upbringing and parenting. We can want the world for our children but we can leave out the most important thing, something ultimately far greater than anything the world can offer, the reality of God. Without that what are the spiritual foundations being built for this next generation? When I was a curate in my thirties, I took part in a youth activity with other churches in Cheltenham. One of the salutary exercises was when a bunch of youngsters took a video camera onto the streets and asked other youngsters some very basic questions about the Christian faith. It was a wake up call to hear the answers. On the streets of Cheltenham in the 1990's Most teenagers knew little or nothing about the Christian story, about Jesus and who he was. Things have certainly not got better since then. I reflected earlier that it has been said that faith is learned at our grandmother's knee, but I wonder how many grandmothers today actually have had a faith story to pass on to their children let alone their grandchildren? There have been too many generations now when the message 'this is God' has not been heard.

I have no easy answers to this challenge. I have no easy answers how to halt and turn around the numerical decline that small churches such as ours have experienced over the last few decades in the face of rapid cultural changes. This is not the case everywhere, for instance our last church was growing, but it has been the case here. I remain absolutely convinced though of the reality of God, that this reality has been and can be known in Jesus, Immanuel, God with us. I remain convinced that in the face of the challenges and anxieties our world faces, and God knows they are many at the moment, we need once again to re-discover and pass on to the next generation a real foundation of hope, hope in the living God. I also celebrate, that despite limited resources, each of our churches are taking seriously this challenge, welcoming and encouraging and so helping to build good foundations for new generations. There is more work to do, and some re-thinking to come but no one in our churches is questioning the priority of reaching the next generation with the message 'this is God.'

Writing this has re-awakened a desire to re-visit one of my influences. C.S. Lewis' Mere Christianity I think, a real classic!

Simon

Lent 2017

Lent starts with Ash Wednesday on Weds March 1st. There will be an Ash Wednesday service at St James Little Milton on that day at 7.20pm.

There will be three lent lunches again this year and also evening services of Compline at each of the Churches. More details will follow in the March newsletters.

There will also be a Lent group beginning on Tuesday 7 March. There will



be four sessions looking at a presentation Cath and I went to at Spring Harvest three years ago. Spring Harvest is a teaching and worship event that takes place over several days in the rather surreal setting of Butlins in Minehead, it has fed and enriched us over the years and I am delighted that a small group from this benefice will be going this year. One of the key highlights for me is an hour long presentation of a theme every morning. In 20014 we were privileged to be led by Simon Ponsonby, the teaching Pastor at St Aldate's church in Oxford. His talks that year were dynamic and engaging, looking at the nature of God as Trinity, Unfathomable Father, Unbeatable Son and Unstoppable Spirit. For his fourth talk (which actually came third in sequence) he paused to consider the theme 'Confidence in the Bible.' This has a slightly less snappy title but was an astonishingly good talk.

We have shown these talks several times to various groups all of who have been enlightened and encouraged by them. The Lent group will take place on Tuesdays on 7th 14th 21st and 28th March. It is likely that they will be at the Rectory, however it really will be a first come first serve event as we will have to accommodate in our lounge which has limited seating. If anyone would like to be involved please therefore let me know well in advance.

Simon

Great Milton Methodist Church Services

For further info. please contact Rev Adam Stevenson on 01491 613223

February 2017				
Date	Time	Church	Preacher	Detail
5th	11:00am	Gt. Milton	Adam Stevenson	Holy Communion
12th	11:00am	Gt. Milton	Simon Pillinger	
	6:30pm	Oxford	Circuit Service at Wesley Memorial Methodist Church	Circuit Service Holy Communion
19th	11:00am	Gt. Milton	Graham Kirby	
26th	11:00am	Gt. Milton	David Bull	

Neighbours Club

At our Christmas Lunch on the 8th December it was suggested that Club would start again on the 19th January, however it was subsequently felt that this was rather late in the month so we actually held our first meeting on the 5th January 2017 (we missed each other!) It was a very informal meeting (just a cup of tea and a chat really).

At our next meeting on the 19th January we will hold our A.G.M. plus a Bring and Buy, and Norman will talk to us about his metal detecting. At that meeting Celia will circulate financial statements which we will discuss with her but, as the Sheppard Trust does not meet until the evening on the 19th January, we do not yet know how much, if any, we will receive from them this year.

It was suggested that we hold a meeting in Fullers Field on Monday the 30th January at 2:30pm to discuss this year's outings; please come along with your suggestions.

We are now looking forward to our outing to the pantomime at Wallingford on the 18th January.

Forthcoming Events - February

Wed 15th - Lunch and skittles at The Ferryman, Bablock Hythe



GREAT MILTON
HISTORY SOCIETY

The Foresters Banner

Thursday February 16th 2:30 – 4.30pm

Neighbours Hall

Join us at the Neighbours Hall for a rare chance to study this beautiful piece. Great Milton is fortunate to have such an important relic of past customs in its care. Because of the vast size, displaying the banner is tricky, so make the most of this occasion and come and have a leisurely look.

Barry Toomey of the Foresters will give us the history and background story.

Tea and biscuits will be served. Free entry.



Charles Peers
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Dear Editor.

I write of my concern at the Villages of Great & Little Milton and the Haseleys' response to the cutting of all the bus service to our villages. On mentioning and making a suggestion to the Parish Councils of the Miltons I understood from what surveys they had done there did not seem any appetite to take the matter any further.

I feel very concerned for those who are now finding it difficult to get out of the village, to cope with the general routine of life, without relying on the generosity of neighbours, or the comet service that has to be organised well in advance and leaves in my mind a lot to be desired, or a Taxi. If we had control of a bus service we could hone it to our own requirements and suit our own needs, for instance morning runs to work, the rest of the day just run to Asda, the surgery, and other transport network as required, then possibly a couple of runs to Thame on a Tuesday, possibly a delivery service between our three villages, in an attempt to declutter our roads.

Surely between the three villages we could come up with a cooperative scheme that could run a service, after all we bought the village pub why not a village bus service. This need not be an expensive service like that provided before, just one that connected the three villages with the rest of the network.

To finance this would it not be possible that those who were interested in helping the community, and those less able, set up a community fund as a loan or shares, this money would then underwrite the co-op or company, or whatever was decided upon. There may be other sources of finance from various funds to help set up this sort of initiative.

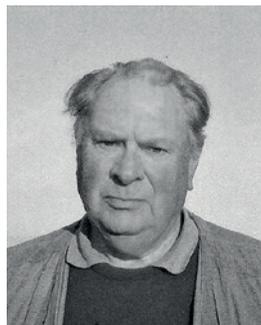
I think it just wants a few interested people to get together and come up with some proposals. This note is only a sketchy idea of what could happen in time, if anyone is interested please make contact with me in writing, email or letter left at Gt Milton PO by the end of the month.

Charles Peers

View from Views

The New Year was heralded by the news we did not want to hear and that was that the Avian Flu restrictions were to be extended until February 28th not a good start to the year, so our poor hens have to stay indoors for another 2 months. Tedious though it is it is better than getting infected and losing all our ladies, which judging by the outbreaks is a real risk. When the restrictions were first imposed, all we knew of was that some infected birds had been identified on the continent. This gave us a slight sense of security, as it had to cross the sea, but soon after we learnt of an outbreak in Lincolnshire, not too bad we thought that's on the east coast perhaps it will not come further west, unfortunately a few days later west wales reported an outbreak, followed by one in Yorkshire, then Glamorgan I think, and now seems all over England except for the South East where we are. This illustrates that for once DEFRA were right to impose the restrictions, I understand most of the reported cases in domestic birds have been back garden/yard flocks, that had not been shut in, so far no commercial flocks where proper precautions had been taken. We have disinfectant mats outside all our houses, and insist that feet are dipped before entering. A frequently asked question is how are the hens managing, well they cannot actually tell us but so far they seem ok, perhaps eating a little more food, difficult to comment on egg production as the new flock is just coming into full production anyway. Animals adapt very quickly as long as they have food and water what else do they want. The young flock had only just arrived on the farm, and consequently not yet let out, so in actual fact have no concept of what the outside world is all about. Our biggest worry is if any of them catch any infection, which would be passed on very rapidly, we can only cross our fingers that this will not happen. The ventilation on some of the airless mild days we have had recently where they could get damp through condensation, then when the weather turns cold, as it seems to alternate so frequently at the moment, puts them at particular risk, but so far so good.

The swings in weather of late would cause us great concern if we had livestock housed at the moment, as the scenario I have just mentioned would be the problem. On that very point it is interesting how different farms present different situations. On the Farm at Chiselhampton where we farmed before we came to the Views, we had a lot of ventilation problems, with cases of Pneumonia being common in young animals, but as soon as we moved, with the same stock, this problem virtually disappeared. It has been good though to see some frosts that must be doing some good, the



effect on some crops particularly the Oil Seed Rape is dramatic, just before Christmas it was almost as high as the tops of wellingtons, now it is only about ankle high. In other areas like road sides and rough ground, how the frost has cut back any vegetation left over from last summer, leaving everywhere looking so dull and drab, it is in these conditions where it is easy to see how lazy we all are, as all the litter we through out of our cars can be seen on the roadsides, why do we do it?

We have just started our winter wild bird feeding routine, should really have done so before but as there seems such an abundance of food around this year, that is until these recent frosts, I did not see the necessity anyway. It is good to note that the areas that we planted for the small farmland birds last year always have a lot of birds flying around, a real pleasure in fact and great satisfaction, as, for one, we can actually see the fruits of our efforts. I do not know if anyone else has noticed this winter how quite things seem to be often you can go out at night and not hear a sound, maybe this is just that as I write in the second week in January we are still not fully in gear after the Christmas break, it just seems noticeable. Also some times when out for a walk at this time of year it seems that all wildlife is either asleep or gone away, I can remember walking through one of our copses the other day and not only, not seeing a bird but not hearing anything either seemed very weird, the whole place seemed void of all living creatures.

On a really positive note I have to report that on driving along the A418 to Thame one day Recently, I could not believe my eyes on approaching North Western I noticed a large flock of birds, appearing almost to be a murmuration of Starlings, but the birds were too big, must be Pigeons I thought but too bigger flock for Pigeons, not thinking there was any area of Rape nearby. I was somewhat baffled, as I got closer I realized they were Peewits (Lapwings very much on the endangered list). This is great news especially as the conservationists and Farmers have done a lot of work on the River Meadows in that area, latterly to encourage wading birds, so it looks as if their works are having the desired effect. It really was a large flock not just a big one but enormous. “So eat your heart out some notable BBC Wildlife specialist,” and don’t blame the farmers again!

Charles Peers

Great Haseley and District Horticultural Society

It's very hard to get up the enthusiasm to go outside in the garden. I don't mind the cold too much, but I really hate wind as it makes everything so much harder. Rain is also not very helpful as it means standing on the soil is quite a problem. Ideally, if you need to be on the beds when the soil is very wet, you should stand on something which spreads your weight such as a plank of wood; this reduces the damage you do to the structure of the soil.

Tamsin, my occasional gardener, tells me that, when she was training, she learned that pruning roses was one of the few tasks that could be done in very cold frosty weather when many other tasks are difficult or impossible. I had always understood that the weather should be milder for rose pruning so this is a task I am tackling (with help from my better half) now which means it won't be hanging over us later in the season. Always remember the three Ds: dead, diseased and damaged. If you take care of all the stems which fit into these categories often there isn't much more to do. I aim for an open bowl shape with well-spaced stems cut to an outward facing bud. You should prune less hard those very vigorous varieties in order to help keep them smaller; it always goes against instinct to do this, but hard pruning to a very low size produces more growth than gentle tipping of stems. If you have a plant which has a very strong growing stem and a weaker shorter stem, prune the short stem even shorter and just take a little off the strong stem and new growth should be more evenly balanced.

Now is a good time to move roses or plant bare-rooted new roses. Roses should be properly dormant before they can be moved or, as I have found to my cost, the rootstock onto which the top growth is grafted will tend to send up shoots from damaged roots. These shoots will be unlike the variety you planted and will be vigorous, with more, smaller leaflets and, if allowed to flower, will have flowers like wild roses. Roses consist of the top growth which is 'budded' onto the rootstock which is tougher and establishes more quickly than the desired variety would do. Roses behave differently to other grafted plants as the union of the two parts should be planted well under the surface to avoid suckering from the rootstock. With other grafted plants, for example fruit trees, it is important to keep the graft well clear of the soil again to avoid suckering of the rootstock. I did not know this when I planted most of the roses in our garden...

Other jobs we have yet to complete include pruning the native hedge along the side of the back garden which needs to be done before it starts into growth and birds start to nest. Native hedging can be bought cheaply as very small plants which establish very quickly if kept well-watered in the early stages. We love this hedge which provides food and shelter for birds, although we have learned painfully that it would 

have been better to exclude blackthorn, which has vicious spines and suckers badly. I also would have excluded Cornus in the part behind the flower bed as its suckers are threatening to take over the entire bed. I never stop learning and, sadly, sometimes I forget my own lessons.

Liz Moses, Membership secretary

liz@moyses.org • 01844 279875

Please contact me for further details of membership which costs only £5 per family per year. Thank you to those members who have already paid their subscription for 2017 and may I remind other members that your subscription is now due and will be gratefully received.

John Howell MP writes...

Sometimes it seems that the same items dominate our new reports on a regular basis. Behind the scenes much goes on which, although less sensational in news terms, is important in our everyday lives.

For example the state of our roads is an issue regularly raised with me and a source of frustration for motorists. Government has ring-fenced money for their repair in the past and has now announced a dedicated £1,315,000 pothole fund for 2017/18. It is part of a £1.2 billion fund for local roads that the Government is allocating to councils to repair and rebuild our transport links. The total allocation for Oxfordshire comes to £19,409,000. This builds on the 1,036,000 we got last year in Oxfordshire.

The Prime Minister has also recently announced new measures to transform the way we approached and deal with mental health especially for children and young people where mental health problems are a growing concern. Each secondary school will be offered mental health first aid training to increase awareness around mental health and help to tackle the unacceptable stigma around the issue. To support this initiative, new proposals will outline how mental health services for schools, universities and families can be improved, so that everyone in the community is supported, at every stage of life. There will also be an expert review into how we can improve mental wellbeing in the workplace. I very much welcome this as there has not been sufficient focus on mental healthcare in this country. For too long there has been a stigma around mental health issues that is not replicated in physical health leaving people to suffer in silence and often get worse.

Of course, health care generally has been very much in the news with pressures reported on the NHS as demand is unprecedented. In the time after Christmas some

hospitals reported up to 30% increase on attendances at A&E compared to last year. A number of measures have been taken towards winter preparedness including an allocation of £400 million to local health systems and the largest ever winter flu vaccination programme. It is recognised that our healthcare professionals work hard and different action is being taken in different areas to locally manage specific concerns. Of course we can all help relieve the pressure by directing our own concerns to the appropriate resource and making greater use of our local pharmacists and NHS Direct.

Another hot topic is the growth in new housing. I have written about the changes to the planning system on several occasions and now would just like to report a new measure introduced by the Minister just before Christmas. He has set out another provision to strengthen those communities that have developed a Neighbourhood Plan. Where there is a Neighbourhood Plan there is only a need to demonstrate a 3 year land supply to be able to ward of aggressive development rather than a 5 year supply as prescribed in the National Planning Policy Framework. I appreciate that this may be complex but I am certain that for communities where this applies the implications will be clearly understood and welcomed.

If you would like to know more about my work you may like to be on the circulation list for my regular e-newsletter and special briefings sent on an occasional basis on specific issues. To be added to the list please email me at john.howell@oxfordshireconservatives.com.

For more information about my work both in Westminster and in the constituency please do visit my website which is regularly updated. The address is www.johnhowellmp.com.

You can also follow me on twitter [@johnhowellmp](https://twitter.com/johnhowellmp)
or on Facebook www.facebook.com/john.howellmp



GREAT MILTON HISTORY SOCIETY

Thursday February 16th

2:30 – 4:30 pm

The Neighbours Hall



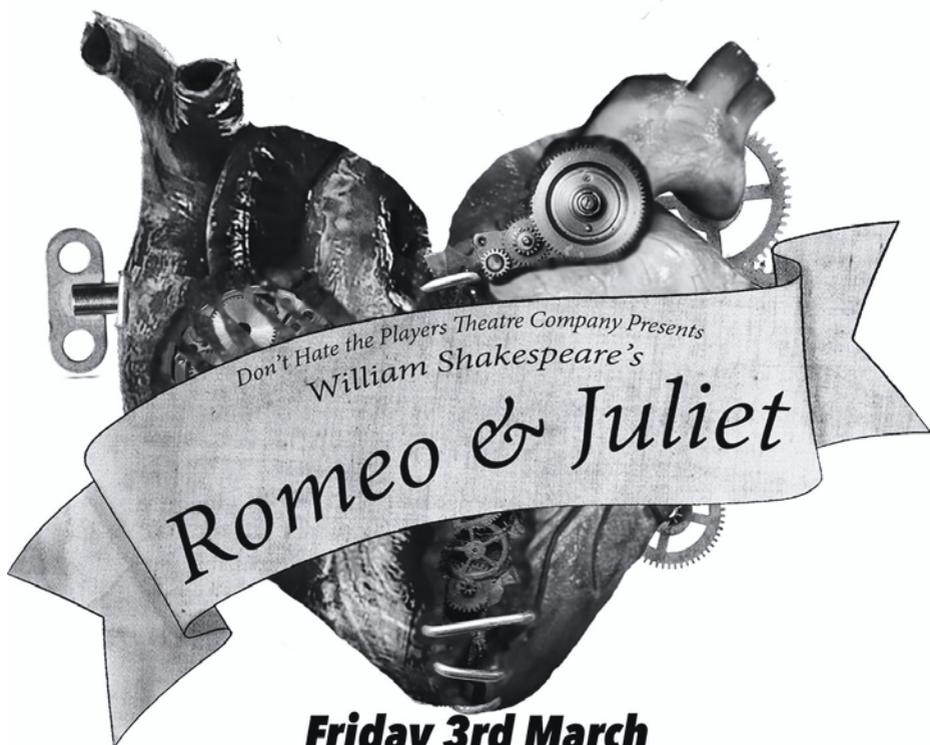
The Foresters Banner

will be displayed in all its glory
courtesy of The Neighbours Club.

Make the most of this
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Question and answer with
Barry Toomey of the Foresters

Tea and biscuits • Free Entry



Don't Hate the Players Theatre Company Presents
William Shakespeare's

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Friday 3rd March

7:30pm (Doors open at 7pm)

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£15 Adults, £12 Concessions

Tickets: From the Post Office

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7:30pm Saturday 1st April

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WHEATLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Vacancy – Parish Clerk

Wheatley Parish Council is looking for a highly motivated individual with an interest in the local community to become its next Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

This role includes administration, agenda preparation and minute-taking at meetings, advising Parish Councillors on procedural and legal matters, and supervision of the Council's three part-time workers.

Experience of local government or parish council work is an advantage (but not essential), as is experience of dealing with the public, working as a team and managing efficient administrative practices. Good computer skills are essential (MS Word and Excel) and experience of Sage financial package would be advantage.

The job will be based at the Parish Office at The Merry Bells, 89 High Street, Wheatley OX33 1XP, and will require some evening and occasional weekend working.

This position is for up to 35 hours per week paid at up to £26,000 (reduced pro rata for less than 35 hours) depending on qualifications and experience. A workplace pension is provided.

Candidates will be expected to hold CILCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration) or be prepared to study for the qualification and obtain it within two years. Training will be provided.

An application pack and supporting information can be obtained on application by emailing chair@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk.

The closing date for applications is 5 February 2017. Interviews will be held week commencing 6 February 2017

WHEATLEY PARISH COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER AND WELCOMES APPLICATIONS FROM ALL SECTIONS OF THE
COMMUNITY

PLEASE ADVISE IF YOU NEED ANY REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR ANY PART OF THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

We are looking for a bright and friendly part-time
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who enjoys being busy, to join our team at the
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training can be given to the right candidate.

Must be over 18 years of age.

Please **email sarah.wakeling@tiscali.co.uk**
or speak to **Alison Shelton on 01844 279 001**

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At the Pine Lodge, Little Milton
Every 3rd Wednesday of the month

15th February
7:30 – 10pm

Drop in or stay for the whole evening
Meet local crafters, make new friends
Come and continue a work in progress
Get advice, learn a new skill
Start a new project

All for only £2 including refreshments

All crafts and crafters welcome

For further details and news visit us at:
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www.littlemiltonvillagehall.org.uk

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Come and try our village

QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday

11th March

7:00 @ The Pine Lodge

Tickets include 2-course dinner

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Everyone welcome!
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Neighbours Hall

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Games Evening

At the Pine Lodge, Little Milton

Friday 24th February

7:00 – 10pm

There are so many wonderful new games around to share with our neighbours

On February 24th, March 24th & April 28th come and play board and card games

Bring a game that you can share with others

or come and learn some new ones such as 'Camel Up' or 'Carcassonne'

Come with the family or by yourself
Everyone welcome

£5 per person, £15 per family (minimum age 8)

Plus bar & snacks & free tea/coffee

Drop in or stay for the whole evening

For further details and news visit us at:

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www.littlemiltonvillagehall.org.uk

The Three Villages Car Service

The Three Villages Car service exists to help people who are having difficulty in getting to their doctors' appointments.

If you have to get to your GP surgery or Thame Hospital for an appointment and need help getting there, give us a call and we will help if we can.

**Jane Jefferis – 01844 278743 or
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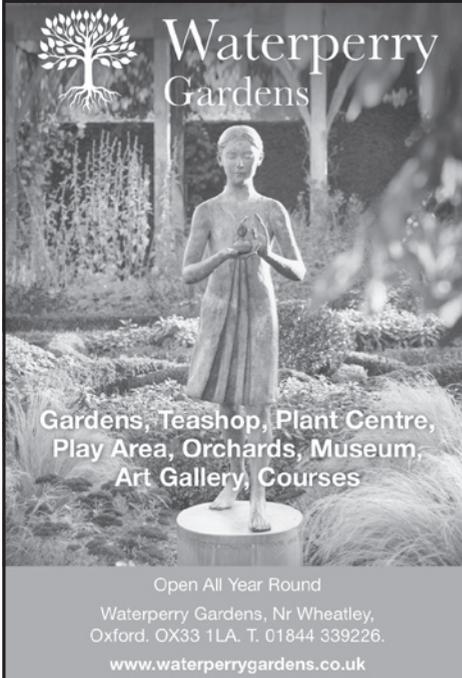
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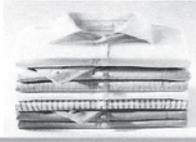
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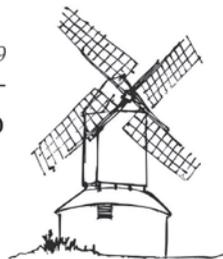
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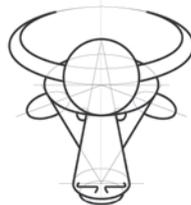
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Diary

- Monday Fitness & Yoga – The Neighbours Hall. 7:30pm – 8:45pm
contact Yvonne Cartwright – 01844 279205
- Tuesday Bingo – Neighbours Hall. 7:45pm *contact Ann Price – 01844 279474*
- Wednesday History Room Open at The Bull. 11:30am – 1:00pm
Fitness & Yoga – The Neighbours Hall. 6:00pm – 7:15pm
Athletics Club Training, Year 9-4. Evening. *enquiries.gmac@gmail.com*
- Thursday The Neighbours Club. Alternate Thursdays.
contact Janet Earl – 01844 279432
Sandy Lane Farm Market. 2:00pm – 6:30pm.
contact Sandy Lane Farm – 01844 279269 www.sandylanefarm.net
Badminton – Great Milton School Hall. 7:00pm – 10:00pm
contact Daphne Holland – 01844 214198
Bellringers – St. Mary's Church Tower. 7:30pm – 9:00pm
contact Pat Cox – 01844 279300. www.gm-bellringers.freeuk.com
- Friday Toddler & Baby Group – The Neighbours Hall. 9:30am – 11:30am
For more information contact Olivia – oliviahill@hotmail.com
- Saturday Athletics Club Training, Year 9-4. Morning. *enquiries.gmac@gmail.com*
Junior Sports – Recreation Ground. 5–11 years 10:00am – 12:00pm
contact Tash Groves – 01844 279637
Old Field: 2nd Saturday of each month. 10:15am – 12:00pm.
Contact Alex Kirkman – 01844 278090
Bingo – Neighbours Hall. 7:45pm *contact David Spiers – 01844 218345*

February

- 15th Wed Neighbours Club: Lunch & Skittles at The Ferryman, Bablock Hythe —
- 16th Thurs Foresters Banner on display in The Neighbours Hall. Tea & bics. 2:30pm
- 20th Mon Parish Council Meeting in The Pavilion 7:30pm

March

- 3rd Fri Romeo & Juliet in The Neighbours Hall. Tickets from the P.O. 7:30pm

April

- 1st Sat Mozart: Vespers and more... in St. Mary's Church 7:30pm

All copy (except adverts) to gmbulletin@hotmail.co.uk by **20th January 2017**.

Adverts to **Helen Cherry** 21 Fullers Field, Great Milton, Oxford OX44 7PJ.

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Paper copy to **Jonathan Dudley**

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The Editor reserves the right not to print items submitted for publication, and to edit those which are published.



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