

LOCAL COUNCIL  
AWARD SCHEME  
QUALITY GOLD

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25<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Sirs

### COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW MOULTON PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE

Moulton Parish Council wish to recommend the following amendments to the current Moulton parish boundary: include the whole of Moulton Leys (both Manning Road and Cottingham Drive developments) and a small number of properties in Overstone/Overstone Leys:

#### **1. Moulton Leys**

(see **Appendix 1**) The area covered by the current polling district BBP1 (Moulton Leys 1845) currently sits within the Boothville and Parklands Ward. The current polling district formed part of the outer edge of the former Northampton Borough Council boundary with Daventry District Council and is an historical boundary that does not reflect the current community. Moulton Leys is a distinct settlement to Northampton and is coalescent with the village of Moulton. It is separated from Northampton by Moulton Way, which at this point forms a division between the urban area of Northampton and the rural area to the North. Residents of Moulton Leys use community facilities in Moulton: Moulton Community Centre and Library, Moulton GP Surgery, Moulton Primary School, Moulton Sports and Science College, churches, shops and other leisure and entertainment facilities and attend village events. Moulton Leys residents receive copies of the Moulton Scene (Moulton parish magazine) and identify as Moulton residents. The proposed ward boundary change incorporates Moulton Leys into Moulton ward from May 2025. This move will in turn automatically realign the Northants Police policing boundary moving Moulton Leys from Northampton Suburban (Kingsthorpe, Headlands and Boothville) to Daventry (Brixworth and Moulton). Moulton GP Surgery and Moulton Parish Churches all include Moulton Leys within their respective boundaries, leaving the current political boundary the only anomaly.

#### **2. Overstone/Overstone Leys**

(see **Appendix 2**). The Northampton North Sustainable Urban Extension (NNSUE) of 3600 homes is mainly sited within the adjacent parish of Overstone. The current parish boundary between Moulton and Overstone cuts directly through Phase 1 of the NNSUE leaving some properties in Moulton parish and next-door neighbours in Overstone parish. The new A43 bypass provides a definitive boundary between the settlement of Overstone and NNSUE Phase 1. Properties in Overstone parish Phase 1 are coalescent with Moulton parish. Residents of Overstone Leys use community facilities in Moulton: Moulton Community Centre and Library, Moulton GP Surgery, Moulton Primary School, Moulton Sports and Science College, churches, shops and other leisure and entertainment facilities and attend village events. Overstone Leys residents receive copies of the Moulton Scene (Moulton parish magazine). Overstone is already sited within the current Moulton ward so is already aligned with the Northants Police policing boundary, Moulton GP Surgery and Moulton Parish Churches.

## **Finance**

Moulton Parish Council (MPC) are aware of the current disparity between Band 'D' properties in the 3 communities and a realignment would increase the council tax payments for residents of Moulton Leys and Overstone. MPC would seek to mitigate this increase for residents by providing many, many value for money services to assist residents with the uplift in council tax payment. Details of this mitigation can be found throughout our response. MPC would request the removal of the 'special expenses' payment of £11.02 per annum currently paid in addition to council tax by residents within Moulton Leys for greenworks. This cost is already included within MPC's council tax element. Through the harmonization process, MPC will seek to remove this historical disparity.

MPC acknowledge that this will lead to an increase in council tax for some residents but guarantee that every penny of council tax paid to MPC will be spent in the local area to support local residents, improve their daily lives and maintain and enhance the local area and, not, as is the case now, on one off events in Northampton Town Centre and other areas within the Northampton Town boundary.

## **Governance**

Moulton Parish Council has an exemplary track record in governance and has recently been awarded the following accolades:

**2018 ACRE Village of the Year Award**– awarded for the strength shown in retaining a sense of identity as a community as the population expands.

**2022/23 NCALC Council of the Year**– awarded for our Health and Wellbeing outreach provision.

**December 2023 Local Council Award Scheme**– Quality Gold accreditation. Moulton Parish Council is the **first** and **only** council in Northamptonshire to be awarded this prestigious accreditation. Parish council members are experienced in business and community matters and work well with the Parish Team to deliver a wide and varied package of services that have a positive impact on the daily lives of residents.

Any technical, administrative or logistical hurdles should not be placed in the way of doing the right thing for the residents of Moulton Leys and righting an historical arbitrary boundary. The proposed boundary changes better reflect our local community and is reflective of community identity and interests.

The inclusion of the two areas into the Moulton parish boundary aligns with West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Vision as outlined in the Corporate Plan and Cllr Nunn's statement on Community Governance Review:

### **WNC Corporate Plan**

#### **Our vision**

Our vision is to make West Northants a great place to live, work, visit and thrive, a place:

- where there is opportunity for all – where children are given the best start in life and vulnerable children are supported and protected. A place where all young people grow up qualified and inspired to succeed
- where people are proud to live, with strong sustainable communities, decent homes, a fulfilling job, and stress free travel through well connected places
- where people are supported to live independent, self-sufficient lives and where everyone has the best life chances
- where services are joined up and if you need a helping hand you'll get it
- with a thriving and prosperous economy that draws in investment, visitors and talent
- where we have modern towns but where rural character is cherished
- at the forefront of action on climate change with clean air, sustainable growth and a flourishing natural environment.

Cllr Jonathan Nunn, Leader of West Northamptonshire Council states the following:

*Parish councils can provide a formal local government voice for their residents, and services for local people such as clubs for youth, elderly, parents, sports & leisure facilities, libraries, additional care for the local environment, and much more. So the Community Governance Review is more than a process—it's an invitation for you to bring positive change to your local community by getting involved in shaping the future of West Northamptonshire.*

*Your input will contribute to building local parish and town council arrangements that best reflect your local community and that will stand the test of time. Councillor Jonathan Nunn, the Leader of West Northamptonshire Council*

The proposed realignment supports the Localism Act of 2011 which facilitates the devolution of decision-making powers from central government control to individuals and communities. The Act aims to decentralise power from Whitehall and back into the hands of local council and communities to act on local priorities. MPC holds the General Power of Competence (GPC), a power given to suitably qualified parish councils by the Localism Act of 2011. The GPC is the power of first resort and gives councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation.

The Executive Officer, Finance and HR Manager and Parish Administrator all hold the CiLCA qualification (Qualified Clerk). The EO is CIPD qualified and holds the Level 4 Community Governance qualification. A comprehensive Staff Training and Continuous Professional Development programme for all staff is in place.

Moulton Parish Council consists of 14 councillors, we are not proposing to increase this number. One of our councillors already lives on Moulton Leys and for the May 2025 council elections we will actively recruit councillors from Moulton Leys and Overstone to ensure representation for all areas.

MPC has developed a Five-Year Business Plan (2023-2028) [KMBT\\_C454-20160408164642 \(moultonnorthants-pc.gov.uk\)](#) which is updated quarterly. Once confirmed, the formal integration of residents and new areas will be added into the short- and medium-term projects.

Moulton Parish Council has a Neighbourhood Development Plan (2014-2029) [Neighbourhood Development Plan | Moulton Parish Council \(moultonnorthants-pc.gov.uk\)](#) in place. 2024 is a review year with consultation scheduled throughout this year and early next. On determination of the CGR, the two areas will be incorporated into the Moulton NDP area and residents included in the consultation process.

Once the realignment of the ward boundary has been officially ratified by Parliament, the Northants Policing boundary will be aligned. Moulton GP Surgery and Moulton churches boundaries already include Moulton Leys and Overstone/Overstone Leys. The parish boundary is the anomaly.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

Moulton Parish Council has worked in partnership with Moulton GP surgery since 2015 and developed a comprehensive, holistic Health and Wellbeing Strategy [moulton-and-surrounding-areas-health-wellbeing-strategy-august-2023.pdf \(moultonnorthants-pc.gov.uk\)](#). Our Health and Wellbeing (H and W) Strategy aligns with the West Northants Council 'Live Your Best Life Strategy' and encompasses Moulton Surgery boundary i.e. includes residents living in Moulton Leys and Overstone/Overstone Leys. Our H and W Strategy is used as an exemplar for Northamptonshire and adjacent counties to follow.

During the pandemic, MPC developed a bank of volunteers (over 150) who supported all residents living within Moulton GP Surgery boundary with shopping, hot meals, prescription collection etc. Approximately half of the volunteers came from Moulton Leys and many still work with us today. We worked in partnership with the Emergency Planning Team (NCC at the time) leaving them free to

support other communities in the county. Moulton Community Centre was and still is used as a Covid and Flu vaccination centre for the area.

### **Local Area Partnerships**

Moulton and Overstone parishes sit within the Rural North (DSN1) LAP and Moulton Leys within Northampton North (N5) together with Kingsthorpe, Boothville, Headlands and Parklands. Our Executive Officer is part of the DSN1 working group, the only parish council in West Northants to be invited to join and attend LAP meetings.

DSN1 priorities are:

1. Carers
2. Older people
3. Social isolation

The DSN1 priorities are included in our H and W strategy.

N5 LAP area has the highest number of over 65-year-olds and concerns include:

High levels of crime and ASB

Poor levels of connection

Life expectancy is lower than the national average for both males and females

Priorities include:

1. Police after school activities to reduce ASB
2. Chatty café
3. Asset mapping for warm spaces and foodbanks.

The priorities for N5 mainly focus on the areas of Kingsthorpe and Boothville.

Common themes across all LAP's are:

- Welcoming Spaces
- Active Lives
- Dementia
- Reduce pressure on statutory services
- Carers

As well as supporting the priorities for DSN1 we already support the priorities for N5 and the common themes in the following ways:

1. Super relationship with our local Policing team, PCSO's visit both schools in Moulton and take part in story times etc at Moulton Community Centre. We have an excellent relationship with Moulton Sports and Science College (MSSC) and see an increasing number of young people from MSSC meeting at the library each evening after school. Free Care Packs of Toiletries, toothpaste, sanitary products sexual health protection information (requested by Moulton GP Surgery) etc. are available. We are also able to pass on any safeguarding issues.
2. A Chatty Café Scheme is one of many cafes/groups/events held at Moulton Community Centre. We welcome residents from any area to join us at the Centre.
3. Moulton Community Centre has operated as a Warm Welcoming Space since September 2022 and is open 7 days every week. Hot food and hot and cold drinks are available every day after 4pm. Families and residents experiencing hardship can access hot food and drinks throughout the day. Our Community Food Larder runs weekly each Wednesday and is available to anyone for the purchase of cheaper groceries and free fruit, vegetables and bread. We also respond to requests for emergency food parcels from Moulton GP surgery, Moulton Primary School, MSSC and Adult Social Care Team at WNC. Referrals include residents and families from Moulton Leys and Overstone/Overstone Leys.
4. 2024 will see Moulton listed as 'dementia safe' community, following guidance from our GP Surgery we are launching a comprehensive initiative 'The Silver Living' Project aimed at supporting older residents in the community, especially those residents living with dementia or residents caring for someone with dementia.
5. We work with Northamptonshire Carers and WNC Supporting Independence Programme (SIP) to support carers in our area.

### **Community Transport**

Moulton Parish Council has been awarded £35,000 S106 monies to provide a Community Transport Scheme. The scheme is an extension of our established Volunteer Driver Car Scheme and is open to all residents living in the Moulton GP surgery boundary. The scheme will provide transport to and from medical appointments, Moulton Community Centre and local shops and supermarkets.

### **New Healthcare Centre**

For the last 15 years, Moulton Parish Council has been working with Moulton GP Surgery to find land for a new Healthcare Centre to support the growth in population. MPC own 1 acre of land opposite Moulton Community Centre, designated as the site for the new Healthcare Centre. Planning for the Centre is currently underway. The new Healthcare Centre will complete the 'Community Hub' for residents of Moulton and the surrounding communities.

### **Community Facilities**

#### **Moulton Community Centre and Library (MCC)**

MCC is owned and managed by Moulton Parish Council and opened in June 2017 to provide the community infrastructure to support the growth in population in Moulton (including Moulton Leys) and the adjacent NNSUE. MCC is a fabulous building which has become the focal point for the community. Residents from Moulton Leys and Overstone/Overstone Leys are amongst the most frequent visitors. Several local groups and exercise classes are based at MCC. MCC is so popular, a café extension was added last year to accommodate the number of visitors. In order to 'future proof' the centre, plans have been drawn up for a two-storey extension as and when funds allow.

#### **Moulton Community Managed Library (CML)**

Since becoming a CML in January 2021, user numbers have increased dramatically and number between 10,000 -12,000 visitors each month. Moulton CML is home to the Health and Wellbeing Hub and delivers many events and initiatives every day for all ages. Hundreds of families visit us every day during the school holidays where we provide free or very low cost activities for children of all ages. As well as residents from Moulton, many visitors and library volunteers live in Moulton Leys or Overstone/Overstone Leys.

#### **Moulton Football Club (MFC)**

MFC is owned by Moulton Parish Council but is managed and maintained by Moulton Magpies Football Club. MFC is home to 28 football teams, 380 players and 120 walking footballers – children and adults from Moulton Leys and Overstone/Overstone Leys are very much part of the set up at MFC. MFC engages 90 formal coaches and 30 volunteers, a good number of whom are living on Moulton Leys.

Picnics - a wraparound before/after school and holiday child care business operates from MFC providing vital child care for 90 local families with children attending Moulton Primary School and the younger year groups at MSSC.

Moulton Parish Council submitted a planning application last year for a two-storey extension to provide additional community facilities. The planning application was approved in September. As soon as funds allow, the extension will be built to deliver further community facilities for local residents.

There are numerous other community facilities present in Moulton that make Moulton one of the most sustainable, self-contained communities in West Northants and they include:

Moulton Theatre  
Moulton Leisure Centre  
Local supermarket  
Post Office  
Pharmacy  
Car Repair Garage

All these facilities are used regularly by residents from Moulton, Moulton Leys and Overstone/Overstone Leys.



Moulton is home to many groups:

Scouts/Girl Guides etc

Gardening Society

Sports clubs etc

Membership is made up of Moulton, Moulton Leys and Overstone Leys residents.

### **Education**

There are several preschool and nursery establishments in Moulton, used by residents living in Moulton, Moulton Leys and Overstone Leys.

**Moulton Primary School** includes Moulton Leys in their catchment area.

**Moulton Sports and Science College** – Moulton Leys, Overstone and Overstone Leys are all included in the catchment area. A high proportion of pupils on the school roll live in Moulton Leys.

Such is the number of children attending both Moulton schools that a walking bus is in operation from Moulton Leys to Moulton Primary School. During the last 10 years, any housing development planning application in Moulton parish has provided an improvement to Safer Routes to School at the request of Moulton Parish Council. The Safer Routes to Schools improvements (footpath and new entrance to MSSC) contained within planning application DA/2018/1042 was specifically requested by MPC to protect children walking from Moulton Leys into Moulton village.

Higher education is available at Moulton College.

### **Places of Worship**

There are 3 churches in Moulton and all 3 church families include Moulton Leys in their catchment areas.

#### **Moulton Church**

30 families and 15 volunteers, 1 church warden and 1 staff member live on Moulton Leys

### **Moulton Cemetery**

In 2008, Moulton Parish Council created a Scattered Ashes Area specifically to cater for residents wishing to be interred in Moulton Cemetery but not having the required eligibility. Full burials for non-residents are still not available. Should eligibility be proved, residents outside the current parish boundary must pay a non-resident fee, 3 times that of Moulton residents. The current situation is very distressing for residents of Moulton Leys as they automatically presume that entitlement exists as they live in 'Moulton'. [Cemetery Regulations | Moulton Parish Council \(moultonnorthants-pc.gov.uk\)](https://www.moultonnorthants-pc.gov.uk)

Overstone Parish Church has very few grave spaces remaining. Realigning the boundaries between Moulton, Moulton Leys and Overstone/Overstone Leys will not only remove a degree of pressure from West Northants Council and Northampton Town Council to provide grave spaces but enable residents from Moulton Leys to be buried in Moulton Cemetery at the resident rate.

### **Community and Connectivity**

People identify as communities, many residents living on Moulton Leys consider themselves to be 'Moulton' residents and a large number of families have long associations with Moulton, having grown up in the parish or have family members in the village. We are very keen to support families with this association and formally welcome them into the parish.

Overstone Leys is a new housing development which has not yet formed its own identity, it is separated from Overstone village by the new A43 bypass and naturally aligns with Moulton. MPC produces a parish magazine, Moulton scene, twice each year. The magazine is delivered to all houses in Moulton, Moulton Leys and Overstone Leys. Welcome letters are delivered to all new residents on Overstone Leys so new residents can see the facilities available to them in the area. Footpaths and cycleways from Moulton Leys to facilities in Moulton i.e. Village centre and Moulton Community Centre already exist. Footpaths lead from Overstone/Overstone Leys into Moulton.

### **Public Open Space**

Moulton Leys has 4 small areas of Public Open Space (POS) including one play area currently in the ownership of Northampton Town Council. The POS on Overstone Leys has not yet passed into MPC's ownership and is still owned and maintained by the developer. Moulton Leys POS and highways owned land is maintained by Veolia. It would be the intention of MPC to take ownership of any POS land in Moulton Leys and Overstone Leys and, current contracts allowing, take responsibility for the maintenance and enhancement of the areas as with all POS areas in Moulton.

### **Environment**

Waste collection - we are aware that waste collections for Moulton and Moulton Leys are on different days. We see no reason for this to change and would presume a simple recharging arrangement would be made to right any invoicing anomalies.

### **Policing**

Moulton and Overstone/Overstone Leys are policed by the Brixworth and Moulton local policing team. At present, Moulton Leys falls under the Northampton policing team. When the Moulton ward boundary is approved by Parliament, Moulton Leys will automatically fall under the Brixworth and Moulton policing team.

In summary, this submission has been prepared in line using the guidance from the Local Government Boundary Commission Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued to Principal Authorities. Moulton Parish Council firmly believe that the proposed changes reflect local identities and facilitate effective and local governance.

The following guidance from the Local Government Boundary Commission Guidance is particularly relevant and supports our submission:

#### *Paragraph 15*

*... 'over time communities may expand with new housing developments. This can often lead to existing parish boundaries becoming anomalous as new houses are built across the boundaries resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours. In such circumstances the council should consider undertaking a community governance review, the terms of reference of which should include consideration of the boundaries of existing parishes...'*

#### *Paragraph 51*

*... 'the identification of a community is not precise or rigid matter. The pattern of daily life in each of the existing communities, the local centres for education and childcare, shopping, community activities, worship, leisure pursuits, transport facilities and means of communication generally will have an influence...'*

#### *Paragraph 57*

*... 'place matters. Communities and Local Government's vision is of prosperous and cohesive communities which offer a safe healthy and sustainable environment. One aspect of this is strong and accountable local govt and leadership. Parsh Councils can perform a central role in community leadership. Depending on the issue sometimes they will want to take the lead locally while at other times they may at as an important stake holder or in partnership with others. PC's will want to work effectively with partners to undertake the role of 'place shaping' and be responsive to the challenges and opportunities of their area in a co ordinated way...'*

#### *Paragraph 58*

*... 'it is clear that how people perceive where they live – their neighbourhoods is significant in considering the identities and interests of local communities and depends on a range of circumstances – geography, make up of community, sense of identity...'*

Paragraph 65

*...wider initiatives such as quality parish scheme – parish councils well managed and good at representing local views will be in a better position to work closely with partner authorities to take more responsibility for shaping their areas development and running its services..'*

Paragraph 80

*...general rule should be that the parish is based on an area which reflects community identity and interest and which is of a size which is viable as an administrative unit of local govt...'*

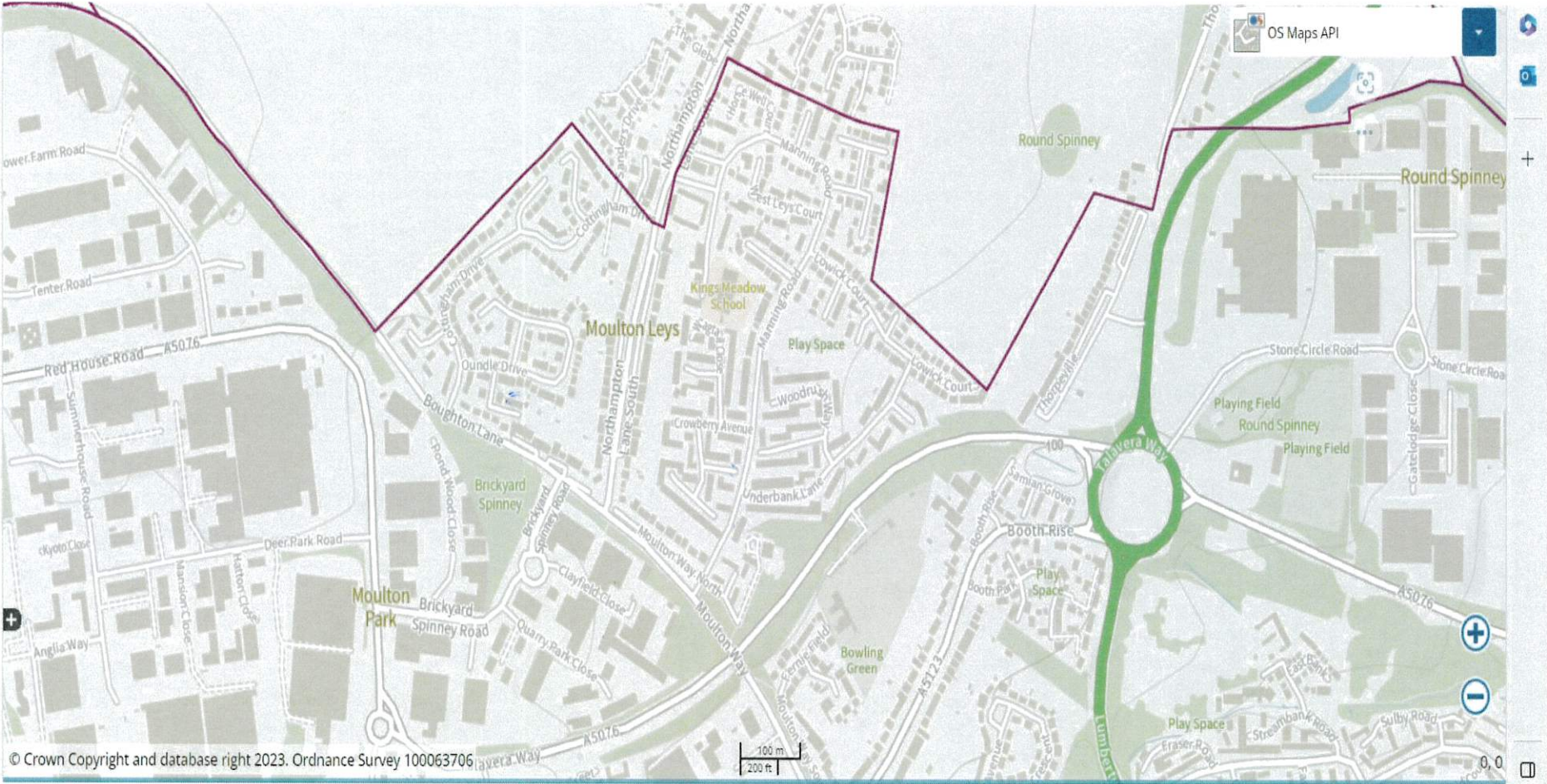
Yours faithfully



Jane Austin  
Executive Officer  
On behalf of Moulton Parish Council



# APPENDIX 1



# APPENDIX 2





