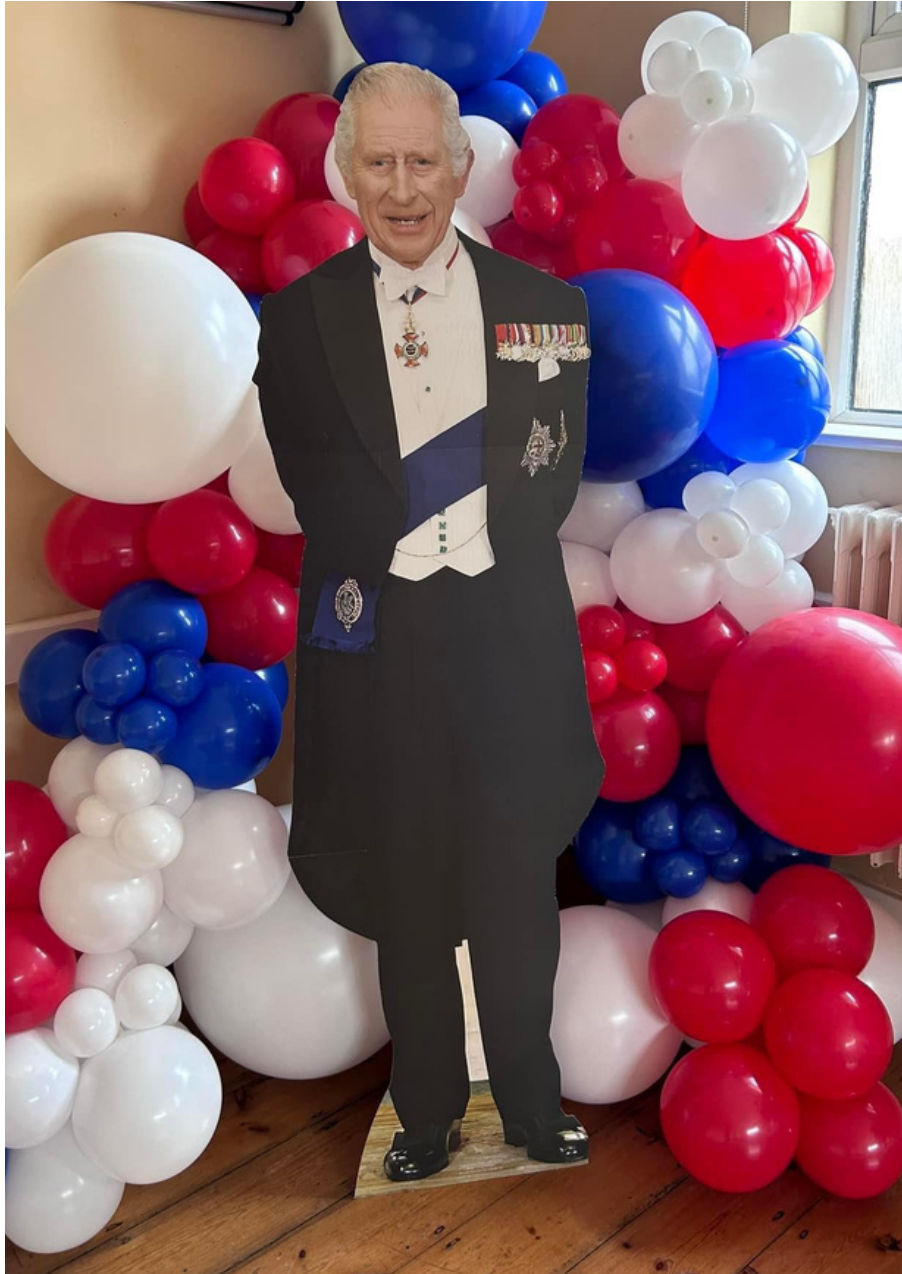


MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER



A LOOK AT THIS ISSUE:

PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCIES - PAGE 3

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2022/23 - PAGE 4

CHANGING ROOM CONSULTATION - PAGE 21

KALC COMMUNITY AWARD - PAGE 26



UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL



Dear Resident,

Parish Councillors have once again asked me to chair the Parish Council, a role I am privileged to accept.

Your Parish Council has, as ever, been busy with all the normal parish council matters, including reviewing and commenting on every planning application submitted in the Parish; revising the Marden Neighbourhood Plan; closely monitoring our financial situation and organising the Coronation festivities. This is only a small taste of the many matters we deal with and if you are interested in becoming a parish councillor and having an input into the running of our community then we have 2 vacancies. Please contact Ali, our Parish Clerk, for more information.

I would like to thank Cllrs Matt Burton and Chris Barker, who recently resigned from the Parish Council, for their hard work during their time as councillors and wish them well for the future.

We were sorry to hear of the passing of Bev Reid who served as a Parish Councillor for many years.

Our Coronation festivities didn't go quite as planned thanks to the vagaries of the British weather. However, our changed venue to the Memorial Hall didn't seem to dampen people's spirits and everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves on the day.

Many people in our community are still struggling financially and the Food Bank is busier than ever. I urge any of you who can help the Food Bank to donate what you can. You'll find more information in the newsletter.

I hope everyone has an enjoyable Summer and the weather is kind to us.

Warm wishes
Cllr Kate Tippen

GENERAL UPDATE

Welcome to our new Administrative Assistant

It is with regret we had to say goodbye to Hollie Savory, our previous Admin Assistant, in March. We are pleased to welcome Lisa Stevens who started the role in May and wish her all the best – we are sure Lisa will be a great asset to the Parish Council team.



Meet the Clerks

For the time being the Clerks won't be holding Meet the Clerks at the Vestry Hall. However, they are still available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 12noon in the Parish Office if you want to pop in for a chat, raise any concerns or have any questions.

Marden Summer Playscheme
Monday 24th July to
Friday 4th August
Marden Primary Academy

Marden Parish Council is delighted to announce that the Marden Summer Playscheme will take place under the new management of Jen Ward at Marden Primary Academy from Monday 24th July to Friday 4th August. The scheme is for 5-12-year-olds (please note your child must have reached the age of 5 by 1st September 2022 and will include Year 7 children).

Registration forms are available from the Parish Office and School Office or online at: <https://bit.ly/Playscheme2023>

This year's scheme has proved very popular and spaces are now limited.

Let your children join us for two weeks of fun and laughter. This year our theme is 'Express Yourself!' There will be so many different ways to do this – whether they are keen sportsperson or a future fashion designer they can come and express themselves in whichever direction our activities take – doing the things they already love or trying things they didn't know that they would enjoy!

Marden Celebrates the King's Coronation

The spectacular King's Coronation took place on Saturday 6th May followed by a Coronation Concert on Sunday 7th May and we send our warmest wishes to our new Monarch, King Charles III for a long, happy and peaceful reign.

The Parish Council had everything prepared for Marden's very own King's Coronation event which was planned to take place in Southons Field on Monday 8th May. The weather forecast had been threatening rain for that afternoon for some time. Some stallholders were concerned about the possibility of rain and at the last minute a decision was made not to take the chance and the venue was switched to the Memorial Hall. Most of the stallholders were still able to come to the new venue and we are sorry to those of you who thought it wasn't suitable to accommodate your requirements.



Thank you to everyone who came along to support the event and it was wonderful so many residents came along to visit the stalls - the hall was jammed with people, and it turned out to be quite a success. We understand for many of you it was disappointing not to celebrate in Southons Field, but hope you understand our decision to switch venues.

GENERAL UPDATE CONTD

Annual Parish Meeting (APM)

The APM took place on Tuesday 4th April in the Memorial Hall and verbal reports included the Chairman of the Parish Council, Amenities, Planning, Parochial Charity, Marden Parish Church, Marden Village Club and Marden Wildlife Group. Representatives from Marden Dementia Friendly Community and the Community Protection Team also gave talks on what they had been doing over the past year in and around Marden. Our Borough Councillor Annabelle Blackmore gave an update on Maidstone Borough Council. You can view all the reports on the Parish Council website:

<http://bit.ly/MPCAnnualParishMtgs>
or contact the Parish Office for a copy.

Parish Council Meetings

Parish Council meetings are held every Tuesday and agendas can be viewed on the noticeboards around the village and on the Parish Council website. They are also published on our Facebook page and in the weekly e-Newsletter.

Parish Councillor Vacancies

The Parish Council is sad to advise that Cllr Chris Barker and Cllr Matt Burton have taken the decision to resign. We are very grateful for all their support and service over the last few years and wish them both all the best.

Following the resignation of Cllrs Barker and Burton, Marden Parish Council has been given the authority to co-opt two new Councillors onto the Parish Council. If you want to find out more about the role of a Councillor, or you wish to obtain an application form, please either call Ali in the Parish Office on 01622 832305 or email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk. Details can also be found on the Parish website on the home page. Closing date for applications is Friday 28th July.

Parish Council e-Newsletter Weekly Village Round Up

Have you signed up for the Parish Council e-newsletter yet?

The “Weekly Village Round Up” is sent out every Friday and is full of local news, information and updates and lands direct in your inbox.

You can sign up by either emailing Rachel at deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or by typing in the weblink below:

<http://bit.ly/MPC-E-NewsletterSignUp>

You can also scan the QR Code below via your mobile phone camera and clicking on the link:



Annual Accounts for 2022/23

Budget	Expenditure	Income
Staffing (admin/caretakers/play scheme)	105,537.78	0
Administration	14,768.81	0
Newsletter, advertising etc	4,988.42	0
Vehicle/Machinery	4,145.55	0
Finance	1,374.50	168,322.16
S106/CIL	0	1,104.56
Miscellaneous	234.46	
Christmas	5,825.92	854.46
Public Conveniences	9,846.89	0
Public Works Loan repayment	18,237.92	0
Neighbourhood Plan	560.20	0
Open Spaces	8,946.10	377.50
Other Amenities	4,266.30	2,830.47
Play Scheme 2022	1,842.68	4,341.50
Highways	4,850.00	0
Cemetery	1,250.48	6,855.00
Parish Services Scheme	0	8,206.00
Capital	3,070.88	0
TOTAL	£189,746.89	£192,891.65

As at 31 st March 2022	Current Financial Assets	As at 31 st March 2023
£6,643	VAT repayment	£1,001
£8,089	Nat West (revenue)	£20,830
£71,587	Santander (capital)	£71,735
£13,617	Unity Bank (revenue)	£9,515
£99,936	TOTAL Financial Assets	£103,081

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31st March 2023 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

Alison Hooker

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Marden Parish Council



HEALTH & WELLBEING

The Parish Council tries to provide as much information as possible on Health & Wellbeing and the 'Key Community Contacts' list was delivered with every newsletter in March which we hope you found useful.

Marden Medical Centre Update Dr Julie Morgan

New Phone System - Thank you for your patience as we have continued to adjust to our new phone system, it is now fully operational and working well. The new technology has enabled us to analyse data which shows when demand is highest and shows how promptly calls are answered. In April the average time for a call to be answered was 3 minutes 41 seconds; the phones are at their busiest between 8:30-9am but remain busy throughout the morning; there is less demand from 4pm.

If you need to phone for blood test results or other routine queries, we encourage you to do this after 4pm when the phone lines are quieter.

NHS App - The quickest way to access your results, request repeat prescriptions, book appointments and view other aspects of your medical record is via the NHS App: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/about-the-nhs-app/> and we would encourage everyone to access this. Download the free NHS app from your App Store or Google Play store. Please avoid other NHS apps or My GP.

The app will also allow you to get health info and advice, manage your appointments, see your records including test results and order prescriptions. The following will be required to enable the App: a smart phone with camera, an email account, your NHS number which is on most printed prescription info and a photo ID such as passport or driving licence.

It will take a few minutes to do and a few hours to be verified. You will need to send a picture of the ID and then record a short video. Every step is explained. Our PPG has kindly offered to support people who need help with accessing the app. Please contact reception who can arrange for someone to make contact with you.

Self Help - Although our appointment availability is good, demand is high, and we are keen to ensure that you are seen by the person or service who can best help you in an appropriate timeframe: this will not necessarily be a GP.

Our reception team have all been trained to offer to refer you to other NHS services without the need to speak to a GP. These include:

- *For Eye Symptoms* - The acute primary care ophthalmology service. You can call them direct on 01622 890044. The nearest provider is Headcorn Eye Centre. You will be seen by a highly trained optometrist.

- *Pharmacy First* - As qualified healthcare professionals, pharmacists can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines for a range of minor illnesses, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, tummy trouble and aches and pains.
- *First Contact Physiotherapy* - Physiotherapists with enhanced skills who can assess most musculoskeletal problems.

For more self-help options please visit our website:
<https://www.mardenmedicalcentre.nhs.uk/self-help-centre>

Mobile Van Eye Test Vehicle Wednesday 12th July – 10am-3pm in Marden Library Car Park

The Kent Association for the Blind's mobile van eye test vehicle called 'Iris' will be coming to Marden on Wednesday 12th July from 10am-3pm. Iris is packed with equipment, resources and technology and its staff and volunteers provide help and advice to existing clients with sight impairment, new clients and the general public. Iris raises awareness of the importance of good eye health including having regular eye tests. So please go along and see how they can help. You can check out their website: <https://www.kab.org.uk/get-support/help-advice/iris-mobile-sight-centre/>



Involve - Social Prescribing Stephanie Gutheridge

Social Prescribing aims to improve the health and wellbeing of clients by linking them to their community and helping them access things such as groups, activities, and other services in the local area. We co-create action plans based on what is important to each person, and we encourage and motivate people to reach their goals. We work with people around their non-medical needs and below are some of the ways we have supported people:

- Linking them to specialised mental health support e.g. mental health nurses, counselling, and mental health employment services.
- Providing support with completing forms including benefit and housing applications.
- Encouraging them to try wellbeing activities e.g. gardening, arts and crafts, singing.
- Signposting to support and advice around exercise and nutrition.
- Helping people access financial and debt advice.
- Applying for funding, energy vouchers, and referring to foodbanks to help with the increasing costs of living.
- Signposting to support groups and resources to help people manage long-term health conditions.

HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

Involve - Children's Navigation

The Children's Health and Wellbeing Navigators support children and their families around long-term health conditions including neurodiversity. Whilst supporting the young people, we collate and provide information that ensures parents and/or carers feel empowered, comfortable and confident approaching all relevant professionals on behalf of their child. This is ultimately so that the young people we are working with feel supported and listened to by all services. Our role includes:

- Supporting parents with ADHD and ASC referrals, helping families and professionals to complete the relevant paperwork.
- Ensuring pivotal multi-agency working to support the child as holistically as possible.
- Liaising with education professionals, social workers, Early Help support workers and CAMHS to name a few.
- Signposting families to Social, Emotional, and Mental Health support groups, community resources and inclusive activities.

The Children's Health and Wellbeing Service is not time limited as it recognises the long-term needs of families, whilst being action focused, seeking to provide guidance, enablement and motivation for children, young people, and families to support themselves.

The service is open to children from birth to 18 years old and for young adults with Special Educational Needs the service can extend to 24. Support can be offered for transitioning into adult support services once their time with Children's Health and Wellbeing has come to a natural end. Please contact Marden Medical Centre for a referral to Involve social prescribing or children's navigation. These are free services funded by the NHS.

Involve Kent provides other services too. The Actively Involved service, covering West Kent and North Kent, aims to improve health and happiness for those 55 and over, or living with complex health conditions. It achieves this by tackling the root causes of ill health, which can include isolation, loneliness, and frailty.

Our Community Navigation and Carers services are available in West Kent. Community Navigators also work with those 55 and over or living with complex health conditions, to support them to explore and build social networks, access the health and social care system, and arrange assessment and identification of adaption, equipment, and assistive technology needs.



The Carers service offer carers assessments, help with applications for a Carers' Emergency Card, training, support, information, and advice to anyone who provides care, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without your support.

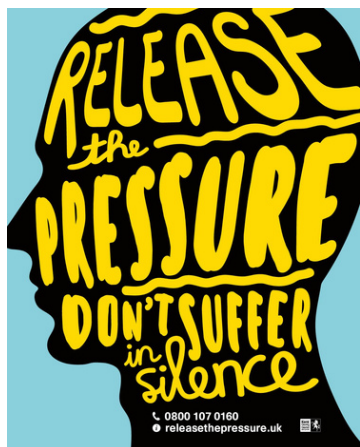
To make a referral to Actively Involved, please email:

active@involvekent.org.uk

To make a referral to Community Navigation or Carers, please email:

communitynavigation@involvekent.org.uk

For further information or if you would prefer to refer by telephone, please phone 03000 810 005.



Involve – Marden Food Bank Sarah Smith

Social Prescribing Link Worker

Sarah attends the Marden Food Bank on the second Monday of each month where she is available to speak with residents who want to talk about any issues affecting their wellbeing and no appointment is necessary.

Recently this has included support to deal with damp issues within housing, making applications to the housing register and uploading relevant documents, and applying for grants to cover basic needs such as energy, food and household appliances. Many people are still struggling financially with day-to-day living and this is having a detrimental impact on their mental health and well-being. The first DWP cost of living payment of £301 should now have been paid out for those on DWP benefits, including those on tax credits, with a further £600 to follow later this financial year.

KCC Community Services Consultation - Marden Children's Centre

As reported in the last newsletter, the KCC Community Services Consultation (which has now closed) recommended the closure of Marden's Children's Centre and we asked as many residents as possible to respond to this consultation. The Parish Council held a meeting in early Spring with our County Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid and a representative from KCC outlining our concerns on the serious implications to Marden if the Children's Centre closed. Maidstone Borough Council is also against the closure.

In our response to KCC, we highlighted the 2021 Census revealed that the parish of Marden has significant need. For example, there are 977 children aged 15 years and under living in Marden – an increase of 31.5% compared to the 2011 Census.

HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

KCC Community Services

Consultation – Marden Children's Centre (Contd)

There has been a 105% increase in the number of 0-4-year-olds in the period and a 37.6% increase in 5-9-year-olds. Marden Medical Centre is seeing more families being impacted by mental health etc. and there is clearly a need for community services for children and young people in Marden, which is local, responsive, accessible and meeting the needs of the local population. The feedback is currently being analysed and a consultation report is due to be discussed at the KCC Cabinet in July. All we can hope for is that KCC decide the closure of Marden Children's Centre is not the way forward.

Marden Children's Centre Update

We will be opening the centre on Tuesdays adding an additional Rhyme Time session to our timetable for children aged 0-2years. In the summer holidays our Stay and Play sessions and events are open to children up to the age of 11 years. This summer we are holding an event in Staplehurst. We are constantly updating our Facebook page with all the groups and events we offer in the Maidstone and Rural area so watch this space. We hope to see more of you at the centre as it's a good way to meet and interact with new people, especially if you are new to Marden. If you would like to make contact, please visit the Maidstone Children's Centre Facebook page or email: mardenchildrenscentre@kent.gov.uk



Marden Dementia Friendly Community/Living Memories by Rachel Chacon

Good news from the Marden Dementia Friendly Community! Reducing your risk of dementia is one of our projects for this year. Regular exercise is known to help with this and of course also helps with many other conditions too. So, we are offering to pay for the seated exercise class in the Congregational Hall on Fridays at 10.30am for the next two months, which started on Thursday 2nd June and runs until 27th July. This is run by Hamish, a qualified Physiotherapist and will extend to a second class when numbers permit. So please drop in and give it a go and it may be possible to extend the offer for longer than two months, we will keep you posted.

We are also going to be setting up a free monthly lunch in the West End Tavern for those living with dementia and their carers. This will provide a sociable opportunity for people to share their stories/worries. So please watch this space and we will keep you posted. Contact info - email: mardendfcinfo@gmail.com or call Rachel on 01622 831941.

Marden Warm Hubs

Because of the financial crisis, escalation in food prices and fuel poverty, the Warm Hub initiative was set up and a list of Warm Hubs was circulated to all residents with the Autumn Newsletter. Now that the weather is warmer and heating is not such an issue, the Warm Spaces have been disbanded and will be reviewed once Autumn arrives. Many thanks to all those village businesses and organisations who welcomed residents to a warm space.

The Friendly Bench Initiative Connecting People to the Community

The Friendly Bench initiative aims to tackle loneliness, social isolation and build community cohesion. The Parish Council will shortly be placing 'Come & Chat' signs on a couple of benches around the village.

'We Are With You'

With You is a charity offering free talking therapies like counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) in Kent & Surrey and they are expanding their connections with residents in Marden. They can help with a range of mental health problems including stress anxiety and depression.

You don't need a referral from your GP, but you do need:

- To be aged 17 or over.
- To be registered with a GP in Kent or Surrey.
- Complete a self-referral form.

For more info, check out:
<https://bit.ly/Kentwearewithyou>

Marden Foodbank Donations Wanted!

Mondays 10am-12pm – Vestry Hall

Marden Parish Church have been supporting our community with their local Food Bank which runs on Mondays from the Vestry Hall from 10.00am till 12.00pm. Their stocks are running low so if we all added something into our weekly shop which we could donate, this would keep this much needed initiative going.

All donations of food are welcome as well as the following items: washing powder/liquid (smaller sizes please so they are easy to carry), tinned meat products, cooking sauces, tinned vegetables, puddings, tea, coffee, sugar, cereal & long-life milk.

They are also grateful for donations of bubble bath, shower gel, deodorant, shampoo and sanitary products. We unfortunately cannot accept any cleaning products due to health and safety.

Many thanks to all those who raise money and donate to this very important initiative. The Parish Council also applied for a grant through KCC's Cost of Living Grant to support Marden Foodbank.

For more information, click here:
<https://bit.ly/MardenFoodBank>

HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

Marden Community Engagement Forum

The Marden Community Engagement Forum is a very useful collaborative liaison group who link up and share information every couple of months to try and tie up missing links on health and wellbeing issues. Members include Marden Medical Centre, the PPG, the Childrens Centre, Parish Church, Involve, Marden Dementia Friendly Community group, the School, Village Community Warden, Marden Pre-School Play Group, the Parish Council etc.

Marden Community Lunches

During the months of summer, please phone well in advance to let Janet McIntosh on 01622 831256 know you are going away on a lunch day.

Paddock Wood & District Lions Club Amber Small, President

Paddock Wood & District Lions Club is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year and remains as busy as ever. We cover a large area in the Weald including Marden. Our aim is to serve our community and fundamentally we try to make a difference to individual's lives – welcoming enquiries from organisations, social workers, schools and families.



Over the past year, we have been increasing our spending in the community as we continue to receive more requests for assistance. Recent examples include the provision of white goods for struggling families placed in accommodation with no furniture, our Winter Fuel project to support individuals to pay their energy bills and helping deserving children with the uniform cost for secondary school.

We have continued our most popular fundraising and community events such as Santa's Sleigh, the Easter Egg Raffle, Big Band Night and Rockin' in the Rec, our free live music event, the Carnival & Fete and the East Peckham 10k Run will all be taking place in July.

Like other charities, we rely entirely on volunteers who have been working incredibly hard this year to ensure our fundraising events are a success and that we can continue to help those who most need it.

Further info can be found on our website:
www.paddockwoodlions.co.uk or our Facebook page - Paddock Wood & District Lions Club.

We are a very friendly club with a huge age range from 28 to 75 so if you are interested in potentially becoming a member, please email:
enquiries@paddockwoodlions.co.uk or ring 0345 8339564 for a chat.

Weald Club For The Disabled

We are a small friendly group run by volunteers who meet on alternate Fridays at The McCabe Centre in Staplehurst for fun and food.

If you are disabled in any way no matter how minor and live at home or with relatives, we would love you to join us. Transport can be provided in our bespoke minibus and there is an escort on the bus who can help with any mobility problems.

We start the day at around 10.30am with tea/coffee and biscuits and a time to chat followed by a two-course lunch (special diets can be catered for). After lunch there are optional games such as bingo or bocchia. We charge a small fee of £4 to help cover costs.

From time-to-time outings are arranged such as visits to garden centres for lunch and shopping, trips on the Medway and other historic places.

So, if you feel this could be for you, please contact Julie on 01580 890688 for a chat and more information.



“Come & Sing” – Sarah Emanuel

The next meeting will be on Thursday 6th July in the Vestry Hall at 2.30pm. A Summer Garden Party is being held at Stonepit Farmhouse, Howland Road on Thursday 20th July at 2.30pm.

All are welcome to go along and sing to improve health, boost well-being, or just for the joy of singing. They sing well-loved songs from a variety of genres. You can stay for tea & cake afterwards. If you'd like to go or have any questions, please call Sarah Emanuel on 01622 832925 or email: emanuelfamily@btinternet.com

Calling all Village Groups and Societies - Marden Community Charity

The objective of the charity is the relief of financial hardship, either generally or individually, of people living in Marden Parish by making grants of money for providing or paying for items, services or facilities.

There are 3 strands to the charity:

- Support individuals who are suffering financial hardship by making grants of up to £100 available towards the purchase of specific items:
- Grant of up to £500 to village organisations to assist with specific projects for the benefit of the people of Marden
- Grant of up to £100 towards the support of education and training of the children and young people of Marden.

HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

Marden Community Charity (Contd)

Over the past year we have worked in conjunction with the food bank to make several grants to residents who are suffering severe financial hardship. We have contributed towards the cost of the new rear door at the Memorial Hall and supported the Youth Club.

Trustees are particularly keen to support village organisations and encourage any group to apply for a grant towards a specific project. More info can be found at:

<https://bit.ly/MardenCharity> or email: mardencommunitycio@gmail.com

SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE

Parish Council Environmental Group

Due to various commitments the Environmental Group hasn't met since February, but at our next meeting we will be finalising the Parish Council's Estate Management Plan which looks at realistic and manageable ways in which the Parish Council operates and will incorporate a more sustainable mowing strategy. If you are interested and would like to attend any future meetings please let Ali know either by emailing clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or ringing 01622 832305. In the last newsletter we reported on Marden's Carbon Emissions Calculator which you can find on the Parish Council website:

<https://bit.ly/MPCEEnvironment>

The Environmental Group endeavour to provide information on sustainable initiatives which you can find below.

The Queen's Green Canopy

As part of the Parish Council's biodiversity responsibility, last Autumn several trees were planted at the Playing Field and Rookery Path. In early Spring Cllr Matt Besant acquired 500 saplings which were planted at the Napoleon Drive play area, Rookery Path and the Chestnut area off the Playing Field. So many thanks to Adrian Rabot who organised the Police Cadets to help plant them. Hopefully they won't die or be destroyed like the saplings which were planted on various new developments a couple of years ago.

Roger Butler from Golden Hill Nursery kindly donated an oak tree which was planted in Southons Field as a memorial tribute for HM the Queen Elizabeth II – thank you so much for your generosity.



The Parish Council will also be planting a memorial tree for HM King Charles III – this will hopefully be a Chequer tree which has been grafted from an existing one in Southons Field.

KCC have a 'Kent Plan Tree Initiative' and Cllr Besant is liaising with KCC to find an area on Parish Council owned land where more trees/saplings can be planted. KCC are in the process of bidding for funding and if they are successful, they will assist with the planting next Winter. We will report further on this in the Autumn newsletter.



Spring Litter Pick

Our Spring litter pick was held in March and thanks go to all the people who turned out to do a dirty job particularly after all the long-wet conditions and muddy ditches. The parish looked a lot better for it, but on bin collection day two days later, there were high winds sending bins and rubbish flying!



#LitterHeroes

A big thanks as ever to all those residents who regularly litter pick around the Parish. A #LitterHero is someone that is interested in actively volunteering their time to pick up litter, reduce waste and improve the environment around them. 'Keep Britain Tidy' believe in sharing the results of your litter picking and have developed a Collect & Count form for #LitterHeroes to log their litter-picks.

They use the information to monitor and demonstrate the scale of the national litter problem and the impact of volunteer action. The data they collect helps them to lobby government, campaign for a Deposit Returns Scheme and map national litter problems. For more info: <https://bit.ly/MardenLitter>

Please let Ali the Parish Clerk know if you apply for the Collect & Count form so we can monitor the good work of our #LitterHeroes.

Marden Wildlife Update – Ray Morris

Summer, with its burgeoning vegetation and wildlife, has members enjoying and actively seeking out (or leisurely looking for it from a garden lounger - why not?) the parish wildlife. As usual, previously unrecorded species are being discovered in good numbers, with members creating their own interest groups for in-depth looking. Plant hunters are investigating unexplored pockets of woodland and newly established wildflower meadows as well as roadside verges left largely un-mown as we become more aware of biodiversity loss.

Gardeners are propagating scarce wild plants to repopulate local colonies, while insect enthusiasts are finding ever more new species of invertebrates – the beetles, bees, spiders and moths that depend on them.

SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE CONTD

Marden Wildlife Update (Contd)

A new site has been established for a dormouse study, and there are plans afoot to investigate and record the hedgerows such small animals depend on. Birds continue to feature highly, not least because many farmers are actively adopting wildlife friendly land management as well as growing food. Along with Kent Wildlife Trust, our volunteers are continuing the use of specialist ringing techniques and GPS technology to examine the link between rare turtle doves and their use of farmers' provision for them. Keep up with our findings on our Marden Wildlife Facebook page. If you'd like to be actively involved, email us on mardenwildlife@gmail.com



Can I Really Get a Free Insulation Grant?

Insulation grants are available to eligible households under the government backed ECO4 scheme with funding coming from the UK's main energy providers. The scheme provides funding for households to help them improve the energy efficient (EPC) of their homes, reduce their carbon footprint and make savings on heating bills.

Qualifying benefits include several income-based benefits, as well as Jobseekers Allowance and Income Support. However, there are several more ways you could be eligible for a grant without needing to be receiving benefits. For more info: <https://bit.ly/eongrants>

Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Grant

The EV charge point grant provides funding of up to 75% towards the cost of installing electric vehicle smart charge points at domestic properties across the UK. It replaced the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme (EVHS) in April 2022. Only landlords and individuals that own or rent a flat can apply for this grant. For more information: <https://bit.ly/GOVElectricVehicleGrant>

Sustainable Warmth Grants

This government grant scheme is designed to fund energy-efficiency upgrades for those residents who are most likely to be impacted by the cost of rising bills. These improvements will help residents to use less energy and spend less on their energy bills. The grant will cover a range of energy-saving home improvements designed to balance the needs of residents with carbon reduction and grant availability. EON is the supply partner for Maidstone Borough Council and will manage the process. If you know some who may benefit, please let them know about this scheme. You can find out if you are eligible: <https://bit.ly/eongrants>

Help Identify Cost Recovery on your Utility Bills

You may already be acutely aware of the challenges the sector faces with the current cost-of-living and energy crises. As the UK's leading energy broker for the not-for-profit sector, Utility Aid is here to help you look at ways in which you can identify potential areas of cost recovery on your utility bills and support you in reducing energy consumption and wastage. Utility Aid doesn't just support energy procurement, they also provide a range of services to support you with Net Zero and Carbon Reporting check out:
<https://bit.ly/SaveMoneyUtilityAid>

PLANNING UPDATE

Report from APM

You can find the Annual Planning Report presented by Cllr Andy Turner, Chairman of the Planning Committee on the MPC website:
<http://bit.ly/MPCAnnualParishMtgs>

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Local Review Regulation 22

The review of the Maidstone Local Plan (adopted 25 October 2017) was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in March 2022. Following the Stage 1 hearing sessions the Inspector wrote to MBC setting out an initial assessment regarding some legal and soundness matters concerning the Spatial Strategy and he requested MBC provide additional evidence.

The Maidstone Stage 2 Hearings with the Inspector is currently underway. You can find all documentation that has been submitted to the examination on the following link:
<https://bit.ly/LPR-Reg22>

LPRSA295 – Land at Copper Lane & Albion Road

On the 18th May, the Site Allocation for Marden – LPRSA295 Land at Copper Lane & Albion Road (113 dwellings) - was examined by the Inspector along with representatives from MBC, CPRE, KCC, Rydon Homes and a member of the public.

It was questioned whether the proposed allocation and policy framework for this site was justified and effective having regard to the landscape, the highway network including connectivity for all users to services and facilities in Marden, biodiversity and the amended boundary.

Kent Highways questioned the access in Albion Road where it is likely that many of the vehicle trips associated with the development will route to and from this northern section of Albion Road. This route commonly features on-street parking which reduces the available carriageway width and prevents continuous two-way traffic flow. Additional vehicle movements would be expected to increase vehicle conflicts and delays in the absence of mitigation.

PLANNING UPDATE CONTD

LPRSA295 – Land at Copper Lane & Albion Road Contd

It was noted that the main modifications to the plan did not include a requirement to mitigate any impacts on Albion Road and Kent Highways regards it necessary for soundness that the policy incorporates a requirement for mitigation measures on Albion Road to be provided in the overall interest of highways safety.

Maidstone Borough Council Design & Sustainability Development Plan Document – Regulation 18

Maidstone Borough Council launched a Regulation 18 consultation on the Design and Sustainability Development Plan – Preferred Approaches Document and the consultation closed on the 12th June. This document follows on from the first consultation which took place at the end of 2022 and incorporates the initial draft of specific policies. You can find the documentation via this link: <https://bit.ly/MBCDesignSustainability>

Marden Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) Review

In May 2022 the Parish Council held an open day to kick start our Marden Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) review process asking residents about their vision for Marden and we have considered your feedback and suggestions. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group are reviewing and cross-referencing any changes to the MBC's emerging Local Plan and variations to

the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). We are checking if the existing MNP policies are still current and in conformity with these two documents.

The MNP is a legal document and is part of the planning policies within MBC. Councillors refer to the policies when considering planning applications to ensure they are compliant. Once we feel the reviewed document is ready, we will conduct a consultation for members of the community and Maidstone Borough Council.



Reed Court Farm – Proposed Chicken Farm, Hunton Road

At the time of writing, this complex application for the erection of a new free-range egg farm consisting of 3 hen houses with extensive outdoor ranges, fencing etc had still not been discussed at the MBC Planning Committee. This application was first submitted to MBC in December 2020 and the Parish Council has continued to recommend refusal.

PROJECT UPDATE

Allotments at Highwood Green

The Parish Council understands the importance of allotments from a health & wellbeing perspective, and we recognise residents' frustration at not being able to start using their plots at Highwood Green and the Marden Dementia Friendly Community group not being able to create the dementia garden.

The long-drawn-out saga continues, but there may finally be a dim light in the tunnel now Redrow have at last accepted our position and are prepared to only transfer the allotment site to us. It is currently in the hands of solicitors and hopefully there will be better news to tell in the Autumn Newsletter.

Windsor Meadows and The Parsonage Developments – Joining Up the Footway

On the Parish Council's Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP) one of our priority items is joining up the footway between Windsor Meadows and The Parsonage developments. We understand this footway gets extremely muddy and difficult for buggies and wheelchair users to negotiate for much of the year.

The Parish Council has received some funding from MBC's 'Love Where you Live Grant' which we would like to put towards the cost of the laying of a hardstanding footway to link up the developments and we are currently trying to reach an agreement with the developers/management companies.

This would essentially create a circular route around the village that would be entirely paved – a very useful connection. We will update you in the Autumn Newsletter.

Marden Library Footway Extension

As residents are aware, last year the Parish Council created a new footway and flower bed at the library area. We are now looking at completing the final section of the footway and this area is owned by Maidstone Borough Council who has given us permission to undertake the additional works. We are currently going out for quotes and will hopefully have an update for you in the next newsletter.



Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP)

As mentioned above, the Parish Council has an Infrastructure Spend Plan/'Wishlist' which identifies all the improvements we would like to see in the village. Some of the small items the Parish Council should be able to fund, but large more ambitious plans such as a new pavilion and utilities at Southons Field (which is a priority item), are longer term and will require a greater level of funding. You can find the document at: <https://bit.ly/MPCWishList>

PROJECT UPDATE CONTD

Fingerposts

The fingerpost sign at the junction of Plain Road and Thorn Road was severely damaged prior to Christmas and the Parish Council is still waiting to hear back from KCC to pursue the ownership/refurbishment.

There was an issue in removing the fingers from the post at Maidstone Road/High Street junction and a local contractor should be carrying this work out as well as repainting the posts at the Howland Road/Battle Lane junction.

HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Parish Council Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

Highways issues continue to be a cause of concern for residents. We have developed a Highways Improvement Plan which currently has 24 outstanding items on it. Kent Highways are supportive, but lack of funding means it is doubtful that many of the identified issues will be resolved in the near future. The Parish Council will continue to push for funding to get some of the key issues dealt with. Several residents have raised their concerns about speeding in the village. A 20mph speed limit within the built-up area has been added to the HIP document which you can find on the Parish Council website: <https://bit.ly/MPCHIPFeb2023>

Marden Railway Station and Bus Services

Marden Parish Council (MPC) represents the users of the railway and bus services. Bus services are always a concern, and we respond to consultations held by KCC especially as Marden's bus service is so infrequent.

We are fortunate to have a good train service in Marden and South Eastern hold regular stakeholder forums which the Parish Council attend. One issue which has been ongoing is the missing train in the morning which means that later trains are more packed.

We have been trying to arrange a meeting with South Eastern and Network Rail to look at improving the facilities for some while. We continue to press for step-free access to the down platform. The Department of Transport provide funding which the Parish Council, MBC and MPs push for Marden each year. We are also aware of the threat, albeit not immediate, of closing ticket offices which we are keeping an eye on.



Potholes

Report, Report & Report!

The massive amount of potholes has become even more of an issue often causing damage to vehicles. Just keep on reporting to Kent Highways – the more complaints they receive the more likely they are to repair the potholes or the resurfacing of larger sections of road to improve quality.

Please report potholes via:

<https://bit.ly/KHReportAProblem>

Kent Highways recently improved the road surface (Microsurfacing) in Pattenden Lane between the junction of West End and Underlyn Lane.

OPEN SPACE

You can find the Annual Amenities Report presented by Cllr Anne Boswell, Chairman of the Amenities Committee at the Annual Parish Meeting on the MPC website: <http://bit.ly/MPCAnnualParishMtgs>

As part of 'No Mow May', the Parish Council is creating an Open Space Maintenance Strategy leaving some of the boundary areas around the Parish Council open spaces to rewild and soften the management regime. However, most of the areas in the Playing Field and Southons Field need to be kept mown as they are areas that are used for recreational and event purposes. This also applies to Marden Cemetery as there is an expectation that the areas around the graves and interment of ashes areas need to be kept neat and tidy.

Marden Playing Field

The Parish Council is considering renaming Marden Playing Field to King Charles III field and we are exploring how this process can be undertaken. We are hoping to replace the missing piece of equipment in the play area at the playing field with a Flymobile and we are still waiting to hear from the insurers on the vandalised picnic table at the Napoleon Drive play area. Additional CCTV cameras will hopefully be installed soon. We understand there is an accessibility issue for mobility scooters and buggy users with the gates near the entrance to Rookery Court as the turning circle is quite tight and we are looking into rectifying this.

Southons Field

Two more benches have been installed in Southons Field near the Play Trail – one is a children's picnic table and the other with wheelchair access. Please be aware that no BBQs are allowed on Southons Field especially disposable BBQs (these are dangerous and can burn the grass). We are hoping to replace the dilapidated access gates this year.

Marden Cemetery

The Scattering of Ashes area at Marden Cemetery should be created this year and we are initially going to trial growing wildflowers around the tree. There is a lot of wildlife at the cemetery and it's a lovely place to sit and enjoy.

Changing Room Public Consultation

The Parish Council still has S106 monies left to spend at the Playing Field which cannot legally be spent elsewhere. We have already installed various pieces of equipment, benches, bins etc.

Thank you so much to those residents who responded to the Consultation which closed in April, and we have considered some of your ideas which will be added to our Infrastructure Spend Plan such as picnic tables and Skate Park (which is not an option at that location as it would need to be away from residents).

The results are as follows:

- Use as a dedicated youth facility with controlled supervision – 76.47%
- Demolish the existing building and replace with a small building for storage – 14.71%
- Any other suggestions from residents – 8.82%

We are conscious that Marden does not have a dedicated youth facility and the continual expansion of the community means this has become increasingly important and this consultation has confirmed residents' preference is to use the existing building for a dedicated youth facility.

The Youth Club is keen to operate at an outside location to enable them to participate in sporting activities and the John Banks Hall at the Memorial Hall they currently use does not have any open space and little storage room (see article below under Youth Provision).

The building would not just be for the exclusive use for youth provision but could also be used for other village groups and events. We would like to reassure nearby residents that the building would only be open to the youth club under controlled supervision. The old changing rooms were no longer required by the Marden Minors veteran teams who played at the Playing Field. The shower facilities in the run-down building are in a poor state, need renovation and are costly to run.

The Parish Council has put together a Scope of Works for three options:

1. Convert the existing building into a hall with a single disabled toilet and kitchenette included within the structure.
2. Include a small side extension to allow for a disabled toilet and a small amount of storage enabling the entire hall to be utilised as one space.
3. Providing a larger extension to include a kitchen, toilets and storage.

The Scope of Works is being submitted to various Architects for Councillors to better understand the level of work required and to seek construction quotes. Once agreement has been reached on the way forward, the Parish Council will submit a planning application to MBC. We will update you in the Autumn Newsletter.

POLICE & CRIME UPDATE

Neighbourhood Task Forces (NTF)

A new neighbourhood policing module is going live in June and Marden ward cluster (which includes the whole of the Marden and Yalding Ward and Staplehurst) will have one or two dedicated beat officers. This is 'work in progress' and undoubtedly tweaks and changes will need to be made and is unlikely to be at full strength until early 2024.

Kent Police recently undertook a review of its neighbourhood policing service. The working practices and achievements of the Maidstone Task Force (MTF), including their recent work in Marden and Yalding, were key considerations in the development of the new model. This will see Task Forces introduced into all Kent local authorities and will be known as Neighbourhood Task Forces (NTF). The benefit for Maidstone is the new task force will be bigger with two Sergeants and their respective teams, joined by two Community Protection Officers, an assistant Community Protection Officer and various partners in delivering the same style of partnership working to a wider area. The NTF will also include several PCSOs from across the borough including Marden's PCSO Nicola Morris enabling them to retain their local knowledge and links for the new team. The new NTF and Beat Officers will be in contact with the Parish Council as soon as they are operating in Marden.

We have been assured that any high-risk cases known to the existing MTF will continue to be worked, as appropriate, to protect the community and residents involved.

The new NTF will deliver the following key functions:

- Enhanced Partnership Working and Problem Solving.
- Focus on repeat victims and locations to reduce demand.
- Supporting local (beat) officers with problematic issues.
- Assist with seasonal plans and county priorities, such as the safety of women and girls in our communities.

PCSO Nicola Morris

The Parish Council would like to express our thanks to PCSO Nicola Morris who has served Marden for a number of years – her local knowledge and passion in our community has been outstanding and we wish Nicola well in her new role. However we will still be seeing Nicola and her fellow PCSO colleagues around the Parish as part of the new Neighbourhood Task Force.



POLICE & CRIME UPDATE

Community Protection Team (CPT)

The CPT will still work in collaboration with the new Neighbourhood Task Force. They work on anti-social issues such as horses and noise, with the British Transport Police and youth engagement. Members of the CPT attended the 'Cost of Living' Roadshow in February and have been raising awareness of domestic abuse alongside the Medical Centre.

CPT has a multi-agency approach to tackle local issues, currently working at hotspot areas in the village, installing CCTV and issuing CPN and injunctions to residents causing problems. Marden was thanked for being such a supportive village which makes their job easier with information gathering from local communities and on occasional Friday mornings, they pop along to the Village Café in the Vestry Hall to have a chat with residents.

General Update

The Marden Task Force (MTF) undertook a Quality-of-Life survey of businesses in Pattenden Lane. 95% felt either satisfied/fairly satisfied with safety in the area and 30% raised the issue of parking. They have been monitoring parking and vehicular offences and a Traffic Regulation Order is being applied to reduce parking.

Safest Together - British Transport Police App

Travelling without paying, anti-social behaviour and other risk-taking behaviour is a growing concern on trains. It also leads to increases in these behaviours in areas where young people meet but might not be local to the area.



British Transport Police have developed a free Railway Guardian app which allows you to report crimes or concerns on the rail network, share your journeys with trusted contacts and get access to news, guidance or support. Details of the app can be found here:

<https://bit.ly/BTPRailwayApp>

By downloading the app, help is at hand if you need it - small actions can all play a part in making everyone's journey safe.

Dog Fouling – Please Pick Up Your Dog Poo!

We are very grateful to those dog owners who are fastidious about collecting their dog's poo, but it's such a shame that just a few uncaring dog owners spoil things for others particularly on Marden Playing Field and surrounding footpaths.



The Parish Council provide dog poo bags at the Dog Bag Station in the playing field.

Marden is currently being monitored by Maidstone Borough Council's Enforcement Officers and they are asking for your help identifying irresponsible dog owners so they can educate them or bring them to justice, and you can help drive down this anti-social behaviour. Their ResponsibleK9 initiative is devoted to encouraging responsible dog ownership and your help on this will protect your neighbourhood.

So please be vigilant and help to tackle this vulgar and irresponsible issue. If you see any dog fouling problems and manage to take a photo or description of the dog and/or owner, please email: enforcementoperations@maidstone.gov.uk or call 01622 602202. A Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) could be imposed and offences for breaching the PSPO carry a fixed penalty of £100 or reduced to £80 if paid within 14 days. PSPO's can also apply for not keeping your dog under proper control. For more information: <https://bit.ly/DogControlPSPO>

DRAINAGE & WATER

Flooding Update

Flooding continues to be a problem after heavy rain. You will all remember the extremely heavy rain we experienced last November which seemed to go on for most of the month. This caused two notable problems and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The first was flooding and impassable roads. The good news is that KCC have provided us with flood warning signs that we can put out on road junctions where we know the road has flooded.

We are indebted to the flood wardens who keep in regular contact when we are at risk of flooding and put out the signs when needed. We use social media to warn people of flooding and encourage people to find alternative routes.

The second problem is sewer flooding which occurs mainly on the path from Goudhurst Road to Maynards and in Roughlands Lane. Between the beginning of November and the beginning of January, Cllr Kate Tippen contacted Southern Water no less than 8 times about sewer flooding and called a meeting with Southern Water in early December to understand the cause of the sewer flooding and what remediation is planned. It was a positive meeting, which was reported in the Spring newsletter.

DRAINAGE & WATER CONTD

Flooding Update Contd

The main problem is that much of Marden's surface water especially from the older properties runs off into the foul sewer, which it shouldn't do, thus causing an overload at the pumping stations in periods of heavy rain. Southern Water assured us that they are very aware of the problem and that their engineers are looking at the best ways to mitigate. This all comes down to money and the hope is that Marden will feature in their 2025 strategic plan. In the meantime, the flood wardens will continue to monitor the situation and report all incidences to Southern Water.

The river and ditch drainage system around the parish is complex. The main rivers – the Teise and the Beult – are under the management of the Environment Agency, but all the streams and ditches that make up the drainage network are looked after by the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board. We had a useful meeting with them as we are particularly concerned about the road flooding in Plain Road and Hunton Road at the Mill. Their main message is that climate change is alive and well and excessive rainfall and subsequent flooding is now the norm and not the exception. They are looking at plans for natural flood management and wet woodlands to try and contain water higher upstream, but all these are long term ideas and could take many years to come to fruition.

Marden Parish Council, in collaboration with the Environment Agency and Kent Resilience Forum, has developed a Community Flood Plan for Marden which was reviewed in March.

It identifies actions to be taken when there is the risk of flooding which are communicated via social media and the e-Newsletter.

YOUTH PROVISION

Marden Youth Club

Thursdays 6pm-8pm

Marden Playing Field and Cockpit Play Area

The Maidstone Youth Hub are providing a mixture of activities from arts and crafts, pool, table tennis and group games with a specific focus on skills like teamwork and communication and currently have around 20 children attending.

They are utilising outside space for sports like football and dodgeball and the youths are enjoying running about and having fun. They are also being educated around different subjects like alcohol.

Many thanks to the lead Rob Yorke who has spent so much time setting the youth group up.

This Summer their preference is to be outside so they will be using the Playing Field and Cockpit Play area for their activities and will return to the John Banks Hall in October.

OTHER PARISH INFORMATION

KALC Community Award

It has become the tradition that the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) Community award for someone in our community who has gone above and beyond in their service to the community is awarded at the Annual Parish Meeting. Over the last year the war in Ukraine has been much on our minds and Marden has played an important role in supporting those who have left their country and settled in our community as well as sending support out to Ukraine.



The Marden effort has been masterminded by Olga Rance of the Old Post Office Coffee Shop who as most of you know is from Ukraine. Since the start of the war Olga has worked tirelessly to help her fellow citizens in Ukraine and those who are living as guests in Marden and the surrounding area. From organising collections of much needed supplies to the amazing concert held in Marden Church after Christmas, Olga has truly dedicated herself to doing what she can for her fellow citizens – many congratulations Olga you really have made a big difference.

Cost of Living Roadshow

The Parish Council in liaison with Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) organised a 'Cost of Living' Roadshow in February where representatives from MBC, Golding Homes, MHS, South East Water and Involve amongst others were present. We hope this was a useful source of information for residents.

Clean, Safe, Green Charter Marden Mandie Stallard, Golding Homes

Golding Homes and MHS Homes are working in partnership to deliver a Clean, Safe, Green Charter for Marden. Plans to develop this Charter are well underway following the resident consultations that took place in January.

All your feedback from the consultation was presented to local service providers (Marden Parish Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council, Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue) which gave them an insight into what your concerns were for your local area. They discussed ways that they could work together to address the priority concerns and how they could make it easier for residents to report issues to them.

The Charter document is currently being drafted and will be launched later this summer. Residents will be invited to join and witness the stakeholders signing their pledge to help make Marden cleaner, safer and greener.

OTHER PARISH INFORMATION CONTD

Marden Royal British Legion

Colin Fry

I feel it incumbent upon me to mention the local involvement with the Royal British Legion which, sadly, is now officially at an end. This is due entirely to the indifference of the Kent Region towards our very existence. Some 18 months ago a meeting in The Village Club was held and all local members along with many new potential members were invited to attend. An RBL representative attended with a view to recruitment and to reaffirm our status as a 'Sub Branch'.

Absolutely nothing was progressed by the RBL and their representative promptly retired leaving our already uncertain status hanging in limbo. Since then, a half-hearted approach by the Sussex Region resulted in failure to obtain any success in securing new officers for the Branch and it was swiftly closed. And that is exactly where we stand currently. It would be nice to think we as a village will have official representation at some stage in the future but for the moment it is all very disappointing!

Marden Primary Academy

John Weir, Chair of Governors

The school was subject to a full inspection by Ofsted in late February 2023 and the full report was published in April.

We are delighted with the overall "Good" outcome and the three sub-areas identified as "Outstanding", which is the highest grade that Ofsted can award.



The Ofsted report signals a considerable and incontrovertible transformation at Marden Primary since it joined the Leigh Academies Trust (LAT) in September 2020. The last visit by Ofsted, before the Governing Body decided to join LAT, identified several areas in need of improvement within the school. It's very pleasing to see the full impact of the staff and pupils' hard work recorded in the recent positive inspection report. The full report can be accessed at:

<https://bit.ly/MardenOFSTED>

Some Ofsted highlights include:

- Marden Primary Academy is a happy school where pupils immerse themselves in the life of the school and local community.
- Leaders have implemented a new and highly ambitious curriculum for all pupils.

- Pupils enjoy school. They work hard and take pride in their work. Learning is their priority, and they come to school ready to listen and engage.
- Governors and leaders at all levels have worked tirelessly to ensure that the school has experienced substantial and positive change.

Marden Primary will expand to two-forms of entry from September 2023. Until now, 40 children have been admitted to Reception and that will rise to a maximum of 60 children from September. To support the continued growth of the academy, Kent County Council (KCC) has agreed, in principle, to invest in extended and updated facilities which is likely to include a new school building for Early Years and Key Stage 1. Discussions are ongoing with KCC and we will let you have more detailed information on new school facilities once we are in a position to do so.

Since his appointment in June 2021, our Principal, Mr Dosad has played a major part in transforming the prospects of Marden Primary with support from his excellent team and the wider Trust. He has decided that now is the right time to move onto a new role nearer to his home and hand over the position of Principal to someone else from September who will take responsibility for the next phase of the journey.

Under Mr Dosad's leadership, the academy has experienced significant growth and improvement, reflected in the recent successful Ofsted inspection. His commitment to the academy, the wider community and on fostering a positive learning environment has contributed to the creation of a strong and supportive school community.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN?

As ever a very warm welcome to all new residents who have recently moved to the village. As you can see there's always plenty going on and we hope you will all be very happy here in our friendly community. Our Village Welcome Pack can be found: <https://bit.ly/VillageWelcomePack>

Here's a flavour of what some of the village groups are up to this Summer:

Hazlitt Theatre Production

Tuesday 15th August

Southons Field at 6.00pm to 7.00pm

Set sail with Hazlitt Theatre for their annual Open-Air Tour at Southons Field with the swashbuckling tale of Treasure Island.

Grab a picnic, rugs and join them to watch this family friendly story unfold. Tickets £5 each or £15 for a Family ticket of 4. All ages welcome.

See link for further details: <https://bit.ly/HazlittMarden>

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN? CONTD

Little Fishes Baby & Toddler Group **Wednesdays during term time** **9.30am-11am – Vestry Hall**

All parents and carers are welcome to come along with their little ones. There is no need to book just turn up as and when you are able to. Suggested donation for each session is £1. For more info, please email Kathy: office@mardenchurch.org.uk or Rev Nicky: rev.nickyharvey@gmail.com

Marden Memorial Hall

Unfortunately, we are having to change our mobile number due to circumstances outside of our control so please make a note of our new number from now on: 07925 220097

At it's AGM in April Tom Stevens, as one of the Trustees, was elected Chairman for the forthcoming year.

It was with regret that we said goodbye to Shaun, the hall caretaker, in January and to Hannah, the Facilities Manager, in May and we thank them both for all the work they have done over the years they have been with us.

We now have vacancies for their positions both working 10 hours per week and if you are interested please email mardenmemorialhall@yahoo.co.uk or ring Ali at the Parish office for a copy of the job description and an application form.

Marden Bowls Club

Brian Cooper, Club Secretary

The outdoor season is well underway, and we are starting an established fixture list of League and Friendly games. The recent good weather has meant that work on the green has resulted in a wonderful playing surface for this time of the year. Also, our roll-ups have started on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday starting at 2pm for friendly casual bowling. Anyone wanting to try bowls, men and ladies, can come along to these sessions but please let me know.

At the end of May we had a ceremony to name our Clubhouse "The Mick Collins Clubhouse". Sadly, Mick passed away last November after spending many years working tirelessly at Marden Bowls and Village Clubs. In addition to club members the occasion was attended by family members, friends and representatives from our County Bowling Association. Marden Bowls Club is a tremendous asset to the Village, established over fifty years ago. We are a friendly crowd; the Clubhouse has a bar and social events are held during the Summer. A lot of residents in the village do not know where we are. The entrance gate is adjacent to Bowling Green Cottage which is opposite the Village Farm Shop. We have just launched our new website so please check it out: www.mardenbowlsclub.co.uk For more info, please email: briancoopermbc@gmail.com or call 07801 594147. You can also visit our Facebook Page.

Marden Cricket, Hockey & Tennis Club Saints-v-Sinners Cricket Match Sunday 16th July

Now in its 19th year and Marden's oldest sporting rivalry! This long-established fixture features top 'athletes' battling it out in good humour, and always comes with a thrilling finale. A fun afternoon for all and a fund-raising opportunity for the church bells restoration project. Free access from 1pm with parking. Bar open, BBQ, bring a chair/rug.

Fancy trying some tennis? We welcome beginners, 'rusties' and juniors. Just message: tennis@mardenchc.co.uk and we'll take it from there.

Fancy trying some hockey? We'll be running free taster sessions in August - Mondays from 7.30pm, starting 7th August. Sticks can be provided. If you are interested in finding out more please email: backtohockey@mardenchc.co.uk or visiting the website: www.mardenchc.co.uk

Marden History Group Lesley Mannington, Chair

Despite the changeable weather around the Coronation and Marden's celebration moving to the Memorial Hall, the event was well attended and the History Group's Lucky Dip was again very successful in raising funds for the running of the Heritage Centre in the Library.

During the Spring we organised a meeting when Tony Singleton gave an

illustrated insight into timber framed properties in Marden. It proved to be standing room only with interest shown from Marden's community. He continues to research Wealden timber framed houses in Marden. Phillip Day also treated us to a film showing of his latest World War II film in April. Another very interesting film to add to Phillip's stable of World War II reminiscences. The Centre has registered for the Heritage Open Days which are held nationally. The tag line this year is 'Creativity Unwrapped' and our exhibit will showcase some of the creative talents in Marden. The event is held between 8th and 17th September on the days when the Centre is open.

If you have an interest in local history, do get in touch via the website: www.mardenhistory.org.uk/home/ or pop into the Centre during opening times and see if you would like to help out.

Marden Horticultural Society Sue Pennicott, Chair

We would like to thank everyone in the village who came to our Annual Plant Sale on 13th May, it was a very well supported and successful event.

We are now having a break from our monthly evening meetings (our last being in June when the speaker was highly regarded plantsman, and Chelsea Flower Show exhibitor, Steve Edney). However, we have garden visits over the summer instead.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

Marden Horticultural Society Contd

The next is an evening visit to Boldshaves on 11th July and in August there is a coach trip to the RHS Hyde Hall flower show. Further detail on these outings, which we offer to members at a subsidised rate, are on our website.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 12th September at 7:30pm, when the talk is "How garden designers lead us up the garden path". New members are welcome – both gardening novices and those who are more experienced. Our annual subscription is £20. Prospective new members may come to one talk free of charge as a "taster" to see whether the society is for them. For more information on upcoming events and the society's activities: www.mardengardeners.uk or email: info@mardengardeners.uk or telephone or text Sue on 07762 059412.



Marden in Bloom

Anne Boswell, Chair

Thanks to those of you who supported our 'Charlie's Chocolate Palace' at the King's Coronation event. We hope you enjoy the summer planters to help brighten up the village and please give them a water especially in dry hot weather.

We've handed out lots of packets of Sunflower Seeds and if you want to enter our Sunflower Competition, please send your photos (jpeg images) to anne.boswell@ymail.com by Friday 29th September.

A big thank you to our sponsors: Golden Hill Nursery, the Village Club, Peter Hall and Stanley's Garage, and to Kate Hargreaves for once again giving us a generous donation.

Garden Safari

Sunday 2nd July – 1-5pm

Quite a few gardens will be open with refreshments served in Barnes Walk/Southons Field and maybe a G&T in a garden en route! Maps will be available online or in village shops soon.

Scarecrow Safari

Saturday 7th October

The theme this year is Disney Characters. Details nearer the time.

We always need help with our projects, especially at the Library area and the wildflower meadow in Southons Field, so if you could help the Bloomers even for an hour or so please email:

anne.boswell@ymail.com or give us a like on our Facebook page.



Marden Motor Club

The Marden Motor Club had a good start to its 61st year with a well-attended AGM in January. Membership numbers have been growing continuously over the last years and our monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of the month are now usually attended by 15+ members, which necessitated a change of meeting venue to the Marden Village Club. We enjoyed presentations, quizzes and treasure hunts with our vehicles so far this year together with breakfast meets at various cafés in the vicinity. Our main event was the Marden Motor Show on 27th May. Almost 200 cars, motorcycles, commercial vehicles and tractors converged on Southons Field for display in warm, sunny weather. Large numbers of people from the village enjoyed looking at the varied array of vehicles and the catering outlet and ice cream van were kept busy all afternoon! Next year's Show will be held at the same venue on Saturday, 25th May, 2024.

New members are always welcome, please contact the Club Committee via www.mardenmotorclub.org or just attend one of the meetings.



Marden Society

Steve McCarragher, Chair

After our summer outing to Wildwood, we continue with our autumn programme of talks as follows:

27th September: "Hampton-on-Sea, For the Want of Five Shillings a Village was Lost" by Geoff Turner.

25th October: "The Old Vicarage" by Toby Spanier. Toby has lived in the old Marden Vicarage for several years and will tell us about its design, history and renovation.

22nd November: "Tom Crean, unsung hero of Antarctic Exploration" by Michael Smith. Tom served on three Antarctic expeditions with both Scott and Shackleton and outlived both. However, he never spoke about his exploits and was overlooked for 80 years.

All our talks are at 7.30pm in the Vestry Hall and are free and open to all, with a raffle and refreshments served after the talk. We only ask that you buy at least one raffle ticket! We are also collecting food donations for the Food Bank and a box is provided for these. For further information contact Steve at steve.mccarragher@btinternet.com or 07946 532591.

Marden Sporting Memories

Tuesdays 2.30pm-4pm

Marden Cricket & Hockey Club

Marden Sporting Memories is a group where older adults meet to talk and reminisce about past sporting occasions and to catch up on the weekly sports events, whether that's local sports, national or the international circuit. We enjoy 'half-time' refreshments, then play some gentle sports together on a very light-hearted level – lots of laughs. We occasionally have visitors to the group and enjoy hearing their sporting memories. Sporting Memories Network run clubs across Great Britain with the aim of helping older people to reminisce, replay and reconnect through the power of sport and physical activity. If you would like to read more about the organisation:

www.sportingmemoriesnetwork.com It is FREE to attend – FREE refreshments – FREE parking (full disabled access). For further details, please email Sue Eltringham: MardenSportingMemories@gmail.com or call 01622 833053.



Marden Theatre Group “Calendar Girls, The Musical” 26th to 29th July

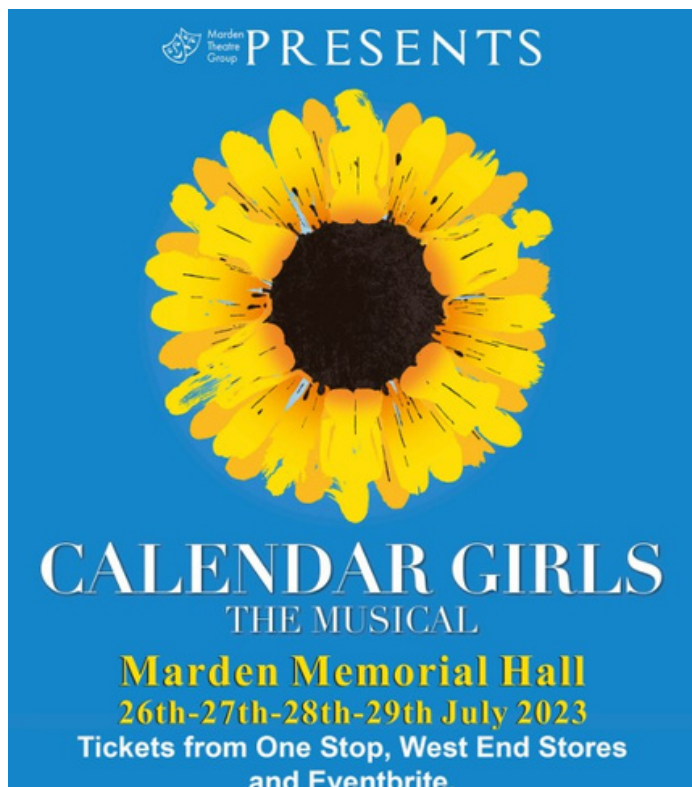
Marden Memorial Hall

Marden Theatre Group are proud to announce their next production will be “Calendar Girls The Musical!”.

Tickets are now on sale for Calendar Girls The Musical! Buy them in person from One Stop Marden and West End Stores Marden or from Eventbrite (ticket fees apply).

Come and see this wonderful show, based on the true story of a group of WI women who defied traditions to support a much-loved friend and raise money for charity.

Join us for an evening packed with music, humour and the touching story of the first WI nude calendar.



Marden Walking Group

Explore the country surrounding Marden and discover the beneficial effects of observing nature. Walking can also improve your well-being, so why not combine the two? Marden Walking group has produced two sets of six guides to walks around Marden, which follow designated footpaths and include points of interest. These are available to purchase from "No 47", Marden Library and the Farm Shop. If you enjoy walking in a friendly social atmosphere, we hold regular guided walks. There is one every Saturday, starting at 2pm from the Library - these are short walks of approximately an hour. On the first Sunday of each month there are longer walks of 5-7 miles, usually starting at 10am from the Library and finishing by lunch time. These often follow a route from the published guides. Details of both Saturday and Sunday walks are published each month in the Parish Magazine. Also, during the Spring and Summer months a long-distance pathway is walked in sections of around 10 miles once a week. For more information, please contact either Steve McArragher on 01622 831007 or Sian Burr on 01622 831106. Remember always to respect the countryside and keep to the footpaths.

Marden Village Café

Fridays 10am-11.45am Vestry Hall
Go and enjoy a cup of coffee/tea and fresh homemade cakes. Meet new people for a chat – old and young - at this local community cafe.

Staplehurst Village Golf Club

Jane Annetts, Chair

Staplehurst Village Golf Club is a not-for-profit club run by volunteers for the benefit of the local community situated on Clapper Lane and has around 400 members and over 150 of these come from Marden.

It is a 12 hole, 39 par, 1,697-yard pitch and putt style course set in attractive parkland and the course consists of 9 par 3 and 2 par 4 holes, all made tricky by the abundance of trees! The course appeals to a wide range of players and is ideal for both beginners and experienced players wanting to improve their short game.

There is no club house and no restrictive rules – you don't need to book tee times or wear any special attire. The atmosphere is relaxed, informal and very friendly. The course is open from dawn to dusk. As the course has no club house it is a member only club, but costs are very reasonable reflecting our aim to make the sport available to all.

An adult 5-day membership costs £105, a 7 day membership £125 and Junior membership (under 18) is £60. Members can play as many times as they wish in the year and a guest costs £5.00.

For a free trial or more information phone Jane 07746623303 or email: jane.annetts1@btinternet.com
www.villagegolf.org.uk

PARISH COUNCIL COUNCILLORS, CLERKS AND OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

CHAIRMAN

Cllr Kate Tippen - 01622 832305
kate.tippen1@gmail.com

VICE CHAIRMAN & CHAIRMAN PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Andy Turner - 07803 598813

VICE CHAIRMAN PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cllr Matt Besant - 01622 832305

CHAIRMAN AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Cllr Anne Boswell - 07808 868703

VICE CHAIRMAN AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Cllr Jean Robertson - 01622 831331 / 07950 816370

CHAIRMAN FINANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr Richard Adam - 01622 831673
mpc@tn12.uk

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Cllr Ian Newton - 01622 831832

Cllr Tom Stevens - 01622 832305

Cllr Theresa Gibson - 01622 832305

There are currently two vacancies

PARISH CLERK

Ali Hooker
Telephone: 01622 832305
Mobile: 07376 287981
Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

DEPUTY PARISH CLERK

Rachel Gillis-Coates
Telephone: 01622 832305
Mobile: 07940 241333
Email: deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Lisa Stevens
Telephone: 01622 832305
Email: adminassistant@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Cllr David Burton - 07590 229910
david.burton@burtons.uk.com

Cllr Annabelle Blackmore - 01622 833299
annabelleblackmore@maidstone.gov.uk

Cllr Claudine Russell
claudinerussell@maidstone.gov.uk

COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Lottie Parfitt-Reid - 07919 360000
lottie.parfittreid@kent.gov.uk

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Helen Grant MP - 0207 219 7107
helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk

KENT POLICE

Emergency: 999
Telephone: 101
<https://bit.ly/KPReportACrime>
<https://bit.ly/KPRuralCrime>

COMMUNITY WARDEN

Mira Martin
Mobile: 07969 584179
Email: mira.martin@kent.gov.uk

BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE

Freephone: 0800 405040
Text: 61016

FAULT REPORTING

Maidstone Borough Council
(for Flytipping, Abandoned Vehicles, Dog Fouling and
Street Cleaning)
Telephone: 01622 602162
Website: www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/do-it-online/report-it

Kent County Council
(for Potholes, other Road Issues, Vegetation and Street
Lighting)
Telephone: 08458 247800
Website: www.kent.gov.uk

For regular parish information, updates and events, follow us on:



@MardenParishCouncil



@mardenkentpc



@mardenparishcouncil

Marden Parish Council, Parish Office, Marden Memorial Hall, Goudhurst Road, Marden, TN12 9JX

Website: www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk - Office Telephone: 01622 832305

Office Opening Times: Monday, Tuesday and Friday 10.00am to 12noon