The Voice of the Village

Marsh Gibbon Newsletter September 2025 Issue 6

Straw Bales and Star Trails

While walking his dog one evening, villager David Sykes was struck by the sight of straw bales scattered across a field. He stopped to chat with farmer Nick Line, who was loading them onto a flatbed. After a warm conversation about the joys and challenges of farming life, Nick kindly repositioned a bale to help David get the shot he had in mind.

The sky looked far from promising, but was expected to clear around midnight. David kept busy with foreground compositions and listening to the familiar sounds of nocturnal wildlife that he's grown fond of during his astro wanderings. When the sky finally cleared, he set up his camera facing northwest to capture star trails. The final image combines a single foreground shot - lit with a low-powered warm light and a touch of torch painting - with 250 sky exposures.

In bed at 4.30am!

Welcome

As I write this, the rain is pouring down. There were times over the summer, as lawns turned brown and a hosepipe ban was enforced, that it felt like the drought would go on forever. Now autumn is sweeping in so quickly, its hard to believe how hot and dry it was just a few weeks ago. I hope these pages will spark happy memories and bring a smile to your face - and also remind you that, even on the coldest and wettest of days, there is a vibrant community just outside your door.

As well as the many clubs, sports teams, music groups and churches, we are also lucky enough to have a culinary pub, Saturday night food vans and the Village Hall Pop Inn, a shop, and now a fabulous weekend café as well. I recently popped into Motorsportopia at Bicester Road Services and I was pleasantly surprised - great coffee, lots of space and a really welcoming vibe. I'll definitely be back.

So I know it's tempting to stay cosy indoors, but I hope you will brave the weather because there's so much going on in our fantastic village - don't miss out! I know that in a few months times I'll be battling once more to fit it all into 24 pages.

Kath Pullen

The printing costs of TVOTV are supported by regular financial contributions by: MG Village Hall, MG Parish Council, Ewelme Almshouse Charity, MG Short Mat Bowls Club,MG Horticultural Society, Crafty Gibbons and advertising by local businesses.

If you would like to contribute an idea or article, or you have a business in Marsh Gibbon and you would like to sponsor or advertise in future issues, please email: marshgibbonvoice@gmail.com

Deadline for next issue: 31st March 2026

This newsletter is printed on 100% recycled stock using sustainable printing processes described as 'carbon neutral'.

Poppies for Marsh Gibbon

For VE Day in May, Mark Slingsby organised the display of Tommy Silhouette signs around the village. These will return - alongside poppies - for Remembrance Day in November. Huge thanks to Mark and his team for their efforts. The signs are from Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI), a national veterans charity supporting the Armed Forces, people with disabilities, and the unemployed, and they are sponsored by Bicester Horse Box Hire, LM Plumbing, New Pond Farm Livery, Automotive Extras at Bicester Road and Manor Farm Barn.

You never know when you pop down to The Plough if you will find the Marsh Mellows having an impromptu sing-along, or perhaps the Silver Band will be playing!

New to the Neighbourhood

David Sykes and Melinda Thurley moved from Hethe just over a year ago. They already knew several people in the village, partly because their son Nathan - now 24 and living in London - had attended the school, so they were delighted to find a home here.

David retired 3 years ago and his hobbies include photography, gardening, finance and house projects, while Melinda is an Executive Coach specialising in leadership and works at Said Business School in Oxford as well as for private clients. Melinda keeps fit with various sporting activities. They both love padel and are keen travellers.

David has been kind enough to share some of the results of his astro nightscapes on the Marsh Gibbon Village Chat on FaceBook, including the 'Straw Bales and Star Trails' on the front cover of this issue. Below is a shot of star trails over David and Melinda's house (left) and one of the Perseids meteor shower with the church (right).

Les Cross
News Flash

Doug Plant Wins Marsh Autumn Bog Snorkeling Event

One Saturday early in September a number of brave souls entered the autumnal leg of Marsh's annual pond clearance event. Group Captain Peter Ferens, First Sea Lord of the Townsend estuary, led by example delegating various disgustingly filthy jobs to his able band of crewmen.

A member of the special boat service was present and Martin Searle led a detachment of Royal Marines patrolling the now navigable channel. A particularly foul smelling trailer was filled with pond detritus and the Horticultural Society are holding a closed bids auction for anyone who would like to make use of this on their allotment. To cap a fine morning's work Doug Plant broke his bog snorkeling time trial record, and needed to order a new washing machine to cope with the added load.

MGHS Autumn Show Stuns!

A record year for entries resulting in the most fabulous display in the Village Hall with lots of people coming down for viewing! One of the judges remarked that the standard was the highest they'd seen at any local show this year and we can well believe it.

Winners: **Alison Buckley** - pictured right (Hewison Rosebowl; Society's House & Home Challenge Cup; West End Cup; Banksian Medal); **Alan Lambourne** (The Anniversary Cup, Millfield Cup); **Martin Searle** (Little Marsh Cup); **David Hazledine** (Novice Cup; Hine Trust Cup); **Estelle Fisher** (Hine Memorial Trust Challenge Trophy); **Helen Christie, Audrey Guiver** (Autumn Flower Cup); **Elizabeth Maker** (Plant Brothers' Cup); **Noah Griffin-Collard** - pictured below (Junior Challenge Cup); **Tony Hill** (Potato In A Bag Cup)

50th Anniversary Cake at the Spring Show

Marsh Gibbon Horticultural Society

Flower Festival

to celebrate their 50th anniversary

St Mary's Church, Marsh Gibbon

Saturday 27th - Sunday 28th September, 10am - 6pm

'Celebrating Together'

Come and see St Mary's Church transformed into a floral delight with colourful flower arrangements representing our clubs and societies.

Refreshments available.

The two-day festival will be rounded off with a 'Flowers and Fizz' service with the Worship Team at 5pm on Sunday. Do join us if you can.

The Edgcott & Winslow YFC Charity Tractor Run in aid of Thames Valley Air Ambulance delignthed young and old alike one Sunday in June as 45 tractors trundled through the villages

Available for hire

The Space at Barnwell Farm

Light, airy, and ... spacious

A brilliant new building nr. Marsh Gibbon, designed for business meetings, leisure activities and private functions.

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The Talented Crafty Gibbons

As we move into autumn we continue to celebrate the creativity and friendship of Crafty Gibbons. Some crafters have been heard to say they have hardly done a thing because they've been too busy nattering and catching up….and that's the point!

We were thrilled to create a special retirement gift for Reverend Canon David Hiscock. The postbox topper was designed and executed by our talented "knitting and crochet group", led by Claire Davis, and with the help of Suzette Stevens, Ann Ferens, Bridget Clapham, Claire Hunter and Sandra Hope. It sat on the village postbox and was warmly received by the community. Special thanks to Suzette who ensured it was preserved, *pictured right* being given to David as a keepsake.

We continue to learn and enjoy craft with one another both informally and with workshops. We have some very talented creatives within Crafty Gibbons who have led shell decoupage, card making, pottery and badge making. This year we have also been taught dry needle felting by an external artist, all great fun.

Currently we are busy planning our contribution for the Horticultural Society's Flower Festival later this month, led by Marion Ryley and Claire Perry.

The Crafty Gibbons meet at Marsh Gibbon URC chapel on the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month, and all are welcome.

In the sizzling week leading up to Saturday 21st June, temperatures soared to full-blown heatwave levels prompting Midsummer Gig in the Garden hosts Vikki and Tony Heath to give the green light for gazebos. But just as ticketholders started to arrive, the skies dramatically burst open! Thankfully, the sun made a swift and glorious comeback, and nothing could dampen the electric atmosphere in Marsh Gibbon. The crowd was buzzing, soaking up sensational live sets from local legends *The Indeedies* and *The Reformers*, before dancing and singing the night away to powerhouse tribute acts *Totally Take That* and *This is Queen*. It was a day of music, merriment and midsummer magic!

And speaking of magic, many of you will remember Tobias and his brilliant Snack Stand. At just 14, Tobias is raising £5,000 to join a life-changing expedition to Tanzania, where he'll take part in sustainable community and conservation projects. Instead of asking for a donation, Tobias approached Vikki with a proposal to earn his way by working at the event, and wow, did he deliver! His stand was a hit, and thanks to your support (and Vikki's promise to match half his profits), he walked away with an incredible £760.40. If you know of any opportunities to help Tobias reach his goal, please contact his mum Eleanor on 07515 548774 or eleanorjallum@hotmail.com.

Other causes that benefitted from the profits:
Marsh Gibbon Church of England School, Marsh Mellows Community Choir, and Poppies for Marsh Gibbon.

Photos courtesy of Sam and Steve Photography
@samandstevephotography www.samandstevephotography.com

Scouts go from strength to strength

As the Beavers begin their second year in Marsh Gibbon, a new Cubs section starts

Beaver Scouts - a fantastic term!

Our Beaver Scouts enjoyed a fabulous summer term, filled with fun activities like camping, sheep shearing, a police visit, firelighting and litter picking. All new experiences, and plenty of adventures for the Beavers to learn new skills and about working together as a team, it's been wonderful to see their enthusiasm and energy shine through each week.

Exciting News – Cubs in Marsh Gibbon!

We're thrilled to announce that our Cub Scouts section opened in September. This means our Beavers will have the opportunity to continue their Scouting journey, and more young people in the community can get involved in the fun.

We have lots more fun activities planned so If you know a young person who would like to join, or if you would like to support as a volunteer, we'd love to hear from you: deborahcross464@gmail.com

Beavers: Monday, 6-7pm, Cubs: Tuesday, 6-7pm, at the Village Hall (term-time only)

Summit to Success

You may remember from the last issue that 15-year-old Callum was fundraising for a 2026 trip to Tanzania, where he'll be supporting community projects. Well, Callum recently conquered the summit of Snowdonia - pictured here with his mum Anna and brother Noah - and even chose the tougher route back down!

He's now reached his main fundraising target for the trip, and just needs to cover the cost of vaccinations and visas. Alongside the sponsored walk at Snowdonia, Callum has been busy with car boot sales, gardening jobs around the village, and selling handmade record clocks.

His mum shared, *"He's been doing so well... I'm unbelievably proud of him and all his efforts. Now he's back in Year 11, working hard on his GCSEs, and still doing his best to raise the last bit he needs."*

gofundme

Scan the QR Code to donate to Callum's fundraiser

"Tanzania expedition school trip"

Hi, I'm Tobias, aged 14, and like Callum I'm raising money to go to Tanzania next year. I am halfway to my goal of £5k and to help boost my fundraising I'll be holding a village Christmas raffle.

I'd be incredibly grateful if you or your business could **donate a prize** - anything from products or service vouchers to gift baskets. All contributions will be acknowledged in my promotions and on tickets.

If you're able to support, please let us know: eleanorjallum@hotmail.com or 07515 548774. I'd be happy to collect the item at a convenient time .

I'll also be sharing how to buy tickets before Christmas via MG Facebook groups and other ways in the village.

Thanks in advance for your support.

ESTD 1647

THE PLOUGH INN

MARSH GIBBON

Christmas Day

Book early for our classic

Christmas Lunch with all the trimmings

Welcome drinks, gifts, crackers, wood fires, choice of menus and everything we can think of to make it a memorable celebration. £90

LUNCH: WEDNESDAY – SATURDAY, 12 – 2:30PM, SUNDAY: 12 – 4PM

DINNER: WEDNESDAY – SATURDAY, 6 – 9PM

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A Cracking Day!

MarshFest has been and gone for another year, and what a cracking do it was! This year's event celebrated fifty years since laying of the foundation stone for Marsh Gibbon Village Hall in December 1975, so rather than chasing profit the focus was on throwing a good old knees up.

Once again the whole village turned out and did themselves proud. From the arrival of the Classics to the Silver Band, the day buzzed with music, great food, flowing drinks & entertainment for all ages. Despite ordering record supplies of beer and cider, every barrel was emptied! As dusk fell, the crowd moved indoors where headline band The Spokes lit up the evening with more dancing, drinking and fun.

***Save the date**: Planning has already begun for **MarshFest 2026**, set for **Saturday 22nd August**.*

Rob Joins BarbersRide 2025 for Make-A-Wish

Rob Stevens recently joined a group of like-minded bikers from across the country, all with a desire to raise money for Make-A-Wish , a charity that helps to grant wishes for children with critical illnesses across the UK and Ireland. Over six days they rode from Newmarket to Southport calling at King's Lynn, Faversham, Southampton and Sandy.

Each evening they met at a barber's shop for more fundraising activities along with a beer or two.

Rob, pictured above, on the right with another biker, reflects, "*The ride was brilliant - at one point we had over 35 bikes, quite a spectacle as we rolled into a town centre each evening! Some of the bikes were LOUD - my ears were ringing for days. Most nights we were met by a Make-A-Wish rep who shared stories of the families we've helped, deeply moving and brought a lump to my throat.*"

Make-A-Wish UNITED KINGDOM JustGiving

Rob raised over £800 towards the team's target of £20,000.
Scan the QR Code for Rob's page.

Village Hall Update

In May, **Madelaine Orlando** *(pictured below with Sarah Dawson and Kathy Ingham)* stepped away from the Hall Committee after completing her full four-year term as Vice Chair. An absolute dynamo, she played a vital role in fundraising and the day-to-day running of the Hall. We are immensely grateful for her dedication and hard work, and wish her all the best in her newfound spare time.

Save the date: Saturday 25th July 2026
Village Hall Golden Anniversary Celebrations

Emily, Rob, Kathy, Elizabeth, Cathy

Marsh Gibbon Village Hall Committee

Louise Goodman, motorsport media personality, visited the village at the end of May for a Breakfast Club at The Plough. She was interviewed by Jonathan Cramp, sharing insights into her career in Formula One and British Touring Cars. Her stories featured some of the sport's biggest names, offering a fascinating glimpse behind the scenes of top-tier motorsport.

Weekly Activities

VH: Village Hall, Clements Lane
URC: United Reform Church, Tomkins Lane
SMC: St Mary's Church, Station Road

Monday

Bucks Simply Walk, meeting at 10.30am, at URC for a walk around the village (1 hour approx.)

Beaver Scouts, 6 - 7pm, VH

Indoor Bowls, 7.30 - 9.30pm, VH

Crafty Gibbons (2nd and 4th Monday), 7.30 - 9.30pm, URC

Tuesday

Marsh Minis - Baby & Toddler Group, 9.30 - 11am, URC (term-time only, £2)

Cub Scouts, 6 - 7pm, VH

Indoor Bowls, 7.30 - 10pm, VH

Bell Ringing Practice, 7 - 8.30pm, SMC

Wednesday

Tea & Cakes, 2.30 - 4pm, SMC

Tracy Norris Dance, 6 - 9pm, VH

Thursday

Board Games, 1.45 - 3.30pm, URC (tea and biscuit: £2)

Lunch Club every 1st Thursday, 12.30pm, URC, for villagers over 65. Booking essential, t. 01869 242634.

Silver Band Practice, 7 - 9pm, URC

Badminton Club, 7.30 - 9pm, VH, £4

Marsh Gibbon Classics Club every 1st Thursday, 8pm, The Plough

Bins Collection Day: Mondays (delayed following Public Holidays)
Download the app:
Aylesbury Vale Bin Collection

Motorsportopia Café
Saturdays and Sundays, 8.30am to 2.30pm

Friday

Café Connect, 10.30am - Midday, URC. Meet friends for a chat over cake and refreshments.

Live Music Night every 1st Friday evening, The Plough

Saturday

The Pop Inn, 6 - 10pm, VH (usually with Food Va)

Sunday

Farmers' Market every 3rd Sunday, 10am - 1pm, VH

The Marsh Mellows & Mini Mellows Community Choir Practice, 5 - 6pm (winter) or 6 - 7pm (summer), VH

St Mary's Church

Sunday Service: most often at 9.30am but can vary, expecially for festivals and special occasions.
Details of services can be found in the monthly 'Life Together' magazine.

Highway Christian Church

Sunday Service: 4th Sunday at 10am, Village Hall. www.highway.co.uk

United Reform Church

Sunday Service: 2nd and 4th Sunday at 10.30am, and other Sundays for special ocassions.

Bible Study: 1st Monday at 2.30pm.

UFC premises available for hire.

POST OFFICE

Marsh Gibbon Village Shop
Monday to Saturday 7am - 7pm
Sunday 8am - 1pm

The Plough Inn
Wednesday to Friday 4-11pm
Saturday and Sunday 12-11pm
Food Served: Weds - Sat, 12 - 2:30pm, 6-9pm; Sunday: 12 - 4pm

Dates for the Diary

September

Saturday 27th - Sunday 28th: **Flower Festival**, 10 - 6pm with 'Flowers and Fizz' service on Sunday at 5pm, St Mary's Church,

Saturday 27th: **Oktoberfest**, 2pm - late, The Plough. Free entry. German food and beer, band and much Gemütlichkeit. Steins available, lederhosen optional!

October

Saturday 11th: **MGFC Quiz Night,** 7 for 7.30pm start, Club House @ The Recreation Ground,£5 entry with a cash prize for the winners, all ages welcome.

Friday 17th: **Quiz Evening with Helen Barker**, 7.30 for 8pm start, 4 per team, £5 p.p., booking required (FOSM*)

Sunday 19th: **Community Litter Pick**, meet outside VH at 3pm, litterpickers, bags, gloves, etc provided

Friday 31st: **Halloween Party**, The Plough. Fun for the kids in the afternoon with fancy dress, face painting, spooky snacks, DJ and more (4 - 7pm, £5 entry) then adults through to midnight.

Marsh Merry Makers is for people who live in or near Marsh Gibbon who would like to get together for social events.

Bus Times (from bustimes.org)
18 to Bicester d. Mon-Fri 08:05, 10:05, 12:35. 14:35, 17:05
18 to Buckingham d. Mon-Fri 08:47, 11:17, 13:17, 15:47, 17:47
16 to Aylesbury d. Mon-Fri 06:35, 09:15, 13:47; Sat 07:00, 10:30, 14:53
17 to Aylesbury d. Mon-Fri 07:50
17 to Bicester d. Mon-Fri 15:36

November

Saturday 1st: **Children's Halloween Disco**, VH (details tbc)

Friday 7th: **Trees, Shrubs and Hedges for Small Gardens, by Chris Day** (MGHS**), 7.30 pm, VH

Friday 7th: **Introducing Burgundy**, The Plough. Multi-course wine tasting dinner hosted by experts from Musigny Ltd. Limited availability. £99 all-inclusive.

Sunday 9th: **Remembrance Service**, 9.30am, St Mary's Church

Sunday 16th: **Christmas Craft Market**, 10am - 2pm, VH

Saturday 29th: **Christmas Fayre,** 2 - 4pm, St Mary's Church

December

Friday 5th: **Christmas Cheer with Cheese and Wine** (MGHS**), 7.30pm**,** VH

Saturday 6th: **Silver Band & Marsh Mellows Christmas Concert**, 7pm, VH,

Friday 19th: **Carols Round The Tree,** 6pm, Ware Pond

Saturday 20th: **Christmas Concert with Rock'n'Roll Theme**, VH (date may change, look out for updates)

Saturday 21st: **Christmas Carols Service with Marsh Mellows Choir,** 6pm, St Mary's Church

Tuesday 24th: **Christmas Eve Crib Service**, 6pm, St Mary's Church

Wednesday 25th: **Christmas Day Service**, 9.30am, St Mary's Church

* **Friends of St Mary's (FOSM) Events**, email sddemellow@gmail.com

** **MG Horticultural Society Membership** is £8 p.p. (£6 Senior Citizen, £15 Family) or anyone can attend a talk for a small one-off fee. Contact annferens398@gmail.com

Another exciting (and dry!) summer at the Recreation Ground saw Marsh Gibbon Saturday cricket team achieve their highest Cherwell League finish in third, just missing out on the promotion places in the final game, when an eight match winning streak came to an end. Nevertheless, there were good causes for celebrations from performances across the whole summer, from both the Saturday and the Midweek teams.

The Club hosted the budding Oxfordshire stars of tomorrow with eight games between Oxfordshire boys and girls against other county teams, and once more enjoyed the inter-club Presidents Day match (club members celebrating pictured below).

Preparations for 2026 are underway, with the cricket square renovated and pre-season training set to begin at Stowe School in March. New players are welcome, please visit **marshgibbon.play-cricket.com**

Cricket Club Chairman Carl Needham is doing an incredible job of compiling a series of extremely comprehensive Village and Cricket Club history books, the first volume of which is available online on the Cricket Club's website, or a printed copy is on display at the Club House. Email ca_needham@yahoo.com to enquire.

Marsh Gibbon FC

First and Development Teams Training on Wednesdays, 7-8pm,
Sir Thomas Fremantle School, Winslow.
Vets games on Sunday morning at The Nest (OX27 0AT).
Contact Alex Piggott on 07564 540943

Aunt Sally Season Sparks Rivalry at The Plough

Once again The Plough kicked off the Aunt Sally season with two teams, captained by Lewis Wilson and Matt Orlando, both newly promoted to Division 3. The big question: who would earn bragging rights this year?

Plough 1s got off to a flying start with a cup win and opening league night victory, but momentum stalled, and they slipped into the bottom half of the table. Meanwhile, the 2s were chasing down the top teams and claimed two wins over the 1s - a flipped script from last season. But the story didn't finish there.

After a tough mid-season run, the 1s found their form, finishing strong with three wins and 11 points out of 15. That late surge propelled them to 4th place - just one point ahead of the 2s, who ended in a respectable 5th after fading in the final stretch.

With both teams comfortably clear of relegation, the 1s claimed overall bragging rights, while the 2s took pride in their two derby wins. However the season didn't end there, Plough 1s' anchorman Paul Symonds secured his third singles title, defeating 2s sharpshooter Kym Jones in a clean sweep. A cracking year for The Plough which had hosted the competition nights.

A special mention goes to Phil Carter, who earned a trophy for a magnificent sixer during the season.

Short Mat Bowls Club

At the time of the last issue, Marsh Gibbon were hoping to retain second place in the Vale League but despite winning our last game at Wendover, Beacon secured second place pushing MG into third. The John Robinson final was disappointing with Chinnor easily winning against a depleted MG side. Best to draw a veil over this and move quickly on!

This year's five-team Summer League saw Marsh Gibbon and Haddenham field a joint team due to player shortages. After going winless in their first seven matches, the combined squad secured a final-game victory against Widmer End, earning six points to finish third in the league behind champions Chinnor and Bellingdon.

The internal Doubles competition took place in the Spring and the pairing of Jim Brady and Gerald Hodges won with Julie and John Everett runners-up. The internal singles competition saw Grant Cross, John Everett, Carol Render, Derek Smith, Brian Hall and Gerald Hodges all win their matches to move into the second round. The Quarter finals saw wins for Grant, John and Gerald, joined by Derek in the semi-finals as the highest scoring loser.

The winter season begins with an away game at Long Crendon on 30th September. Matches will continue until April.

The Club is saddened by the recent passing of Vera Woods, our oldest member at 91. We will miss her cheeky smile and some rather good bowling. Former captain Merv Wilson also died following a long illness.

While we've had two members retire from the Club due to illness, we're pleased to welcome a couple of new members. We would love to see more people join us, no experience is necessary. We have weekly "roll-up" sessions on Monday or Tuesday evenings in the Village Hall (depending on our league matches). We have sets of woods you can borrow; just bring a pair of flat-soled shoes to change into. Your first three sessions are free!

For further information contact John Everett on 07969 106053.

MARSH GIBBON
TENNIS CLUB

The Tennis Club has had a successful season competing in the Aylesbury and District Tennis League, with its Mixed Doubles team finishing second in their division - beaten by just one point. The Women's Team is expected to finish mid-table, which is a great achievement following promotion last year.

Mixed Doubles Team: Andrea Healy, Liz Bruce-Kelly, Amanda Kent, Liz Kelsey, Caroline Crampton, David Pullen, Rick Bruce-Kelly, Al Hopkins, Robbie Homes.

Women's Team: Andrea Healy, Liz Bruce-Kelly, Sarah Sipple, Amanda Kent, Paula Kelly, Liz Kelsey, Jill Payne, Mel Thurley, Helen Barnes.

The Club offers three excellent macadam courts near the village hall, available for online booking. Members and non-members can play, with a 'pay and play' option for occasional players.

Our social tennis sessions create a relaxed atmosphere for all skill levels, while tournaments offer fun competition.

Interested? Contact Andrea Helay at healyandrea@hotmail.com

Local Clubs Nearby

Grendon Rangers Football Club
Launton Football Club
Moretonville Junior Football Club
Bure Park Football Club
S4A Sports (s4asports.co.uk)
Jamie Cassidy Soccer Schools
Claydon Cycling Club (Youth & Adult)

MARSH GIBBON
FRIENDS OF St MARY'S

Strengthening St Mary's

For many rural churches, reliance on community funding alongside rising costs means that closure is a real risk. And that includes St Mary's Church in Marsh Gibbon.

St Mary's has always embraced collaboration, seeking alternate funding, hosting different events and encouraging regular giving. More recently the *Friends of St Mary's* formed to help raise funds to preserve, maintain and enhance our historic church.

St Mary's: an 'anchor institution'

The *Friends* needed a starting point. In 2024, they began actively consulting the village to better understand how to further engage the community and secure broader support. To preserve the church, the Friends first wanted to assess the extent St Mary's contributes to Marsh Gibbon and overall community wellbeing. Only then could meaningful solutions be developed to strengthen its resilience.

A local survey revealed that St Mary's provides vital help when needed and that, for many, the very presence of the building is hugely significant. A majority of respondents also called for more music, community activities and talks, with many suggestions for how the Church could be used as a space for community events.

Over the summer of 2025, St Mary's has played host to several enchanting evenings: Music in Quiet Places, preceded by a fascinating historic village tour led by Roy Lambourne, a popular Hymns & Pimms service, and a joyful performance by the Marsh Mellows Community Choir. Art lovers enjoyed a vibrant weekend Art Show, while the Village Hall was bursting with activity during the annual Summer Fete. And there is so much more to come.

Impact - and thank you!

Financially, the impact has been significant: the number of regular donors has doubled, donations have increased by 69%, and over £6,500 has been raised through events enabling St Mary's to contribute £10,000 toward its 2025 Parish Share of £19,199. Thank you everyone for making this possible.

Despite this great progress, challenges remain. The retirement of Reverend Canon David Hiscock in May 2025 has left a clergy vacancy, with the first round of recruitment proving unsuccessful. A second round begins in September, with outcomes expected by November. In the meantime, running costs - insurance, heating, and further Parish Share payments - must still be met.

Maintaining momentum on all fronts

With fresh branding, a growing social media presence, and enthusiastic community involvement, the Friends are off to a strong start. Continued support from villagers - whether through donations, attending events or volunteering - is vital to keep St Mary's Church alive and thriving for future generations.

Joybells Ring Out at the Arts Festival

14 handbells, 10 enthusiastic bellringers and an appreciative audience witnessed a new musical act at St Mary's Church Art Festival on Friday 5th September.

To tunes such as English Country Garden, Little Brown Jug and The Skye Boat Song, visitors supped their drinks and wandered around the fabulous displays of artistic talent on view.

The bells, donated by Roger Landells of Twyford in memory of his wife Joy, have been entertaining and bringing joy at various events since the group was formed last year. Playing gentle, melodious tunes, the group has gained in both confidence and new members from Marsh Gibbon, Twyford, Edgcott and Grendon Underwood. What has been learned is that the ability to laugh and to count are key to a good performance, and our newest members have quickly developed both skills!

Outside recitals and fetes with a thunder and lightening backing track are not on the agenda for the future, but the group are available for bookings at indoor local events for a small donation, which will go towards the upkeep of the bells and the expansion of the repertoire.

Please contact Diane Hodges on:
07842 120947 / dianehodges21@gmail.com

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The End Of An Era

At the end of May we said goodbye to Reverend Canon David Hiscock with a service at St Mary's Church followed by a gathering at the Manor Farm Barn. The Marsh Mellows Choir sang, and there wasn't a dry eye in the house after Roy Lambourne's extremely moving speech which reflected the sentiment of the whole village. We wish David luck with his retirement in Chippenham, Wiltshire.

Hannah is Racing the Sun

On 27th September, Hannah Thompson will be taking on the incredible **Race the Sun** challenge to raise funds for Action Medical Research – a leading UK charity devoted to saving and improving the lives of babies and children through pioneering medical research.

Hannah and her brilliantly named team, *Cirque du Sore Legs*, will push themselves to the limit in this one-day triathlon-style event along Dorset's breathtaking Jurassic Coast.

Between sunrise and sunset, they'll tackle:
🚴 34 miles of cycling 🥾 8 miles of hiking 🚣 2 miles of kayaking
All in one day – no small feat! Let's cheer Hannah on and show our support.

If you'd like to help Hannah and her team raise much needed funds for Action Medical Research, you can donate by scanning the QR code:

JustGiving
Hannah's fundraiser for Action Medical Research:

Hannah sings with **The Marsh Mellows** who are performing in support of Action Medical Research on **Friday 10th October, 7pm**, **St George's Church, Evenley**
Tickets £15 (includes drink & hot food)
t. 07708 539191 or e. josegolding@outlook.com

Our Silver Band Needs You!

Are you looking for a warm, welcoming community where you can make music, meet new people, and be part of something special? Marsh Gibbon Silver Band might be just the place for you!

Our village band has been at the heart of Marsh Gibbon for over 150 years, bringing people together through the joy of music. Whether you're an experienced player or have never picked up an instrument before, we would love for you to join us. We welcome players of all ages and abilities, so whether you're dusting off an old skill or eager to try something new, there's a seat waiting for you!

We rehearse every Thursday from 7:15pm to 9pm at the United Reformed Church.

Our practices are always full of laughter, encouragement, and, of course, great music. Come along, give it a try, and see why Marsh Gibbon Silver Band has been a beloved tradition for generations. We can't wait to welcome you!

Feel free to drop by on a Thursday evening or email melanie.rose@sky.com.

Let's keep the music alive together!
🎶✨

New Café Opens in Marsh Gibbon

Locals and visitors alike have been enjoying a new motor-themed café that has opened up at Bicester Road Services. Motorsportopia Café is open on Saturdays and Sundays, 8.30am to 2.30pm, offering coffees, breakfast baps and burgers with local meats, and fresh baked goods from our very own village Back Garden Bakery. Not just for petrolheads but chances are you'll find some interesting cars and bikes parked outside! There are full-motion VR racing simulators in the car park, as well as an F1 Experience Tub Simulator.

News from Ewelme

The second in a series of bulletins from the Ewelme Almshouse Charity.

In the last issue, we heard that Sam Cunningham, Warden for residents in Sufflok Court, had arranged for a Scams Advisor from Age UK to give a talk in the village, and that went ahead in April.

In this issue we meet Angharad Saunders, Trust Manager, who oversees the Charity's day-to-day operations and leads its strategic development.

Angharad says of her role, *"It brings something different every day. I can spend a morning at a Board meeting or advising Trustees, and by afternoon I could be at a residents' event or reviewing internal processes. The EAC is a small charity so I am involved in everything from strategy and policy to delivery and communications. I get to work on projects big and small, with Trustees and with residents, and with our small but dedicated team who all come together to create a very special place to work."*

Angharad and Michelle Andrews are planning a visit to the village to give a talk. Michelle manages the Ewelme Exhibitions Endowment, which provides funding to Marsh Gibbon School and offers bursaries for children across the Ewelme estate areas. Their talk will explore the distinct yet interconnected nature of the charities, outline their charitable powers, and highlight their work in Marsh Gibbon and the wider estates.

Each year, Trustees and staff visit one of the Charity's estates. It is an opportunity for them to meet tenants and residents, talk with farmers, see new developments on their farms and learn more about current practices and challenges across the estate. This year saw us in Marsh Gibbon learning more about robotic milking, rare breed herds and farm diversification. Our thanks to all the tenant farmers for taking the time to give us an insight into their day-to-day work.

The Day a Man Stopped a Train

Not many folks can claim to have single-handedly stopped a train on its tracks, but forty or so years ago a man from Marsh did just that.

Walter 'Woggle' Herring, born in Clements Lane in 1922, was one of eight siblings. He and his four brothers worked on Marsh Gibbon farms - milking, shearing, thatching, hedge-laying and, later, driving tractors. During the war, they served in the Home Guard. Walt became the village sexton, faithfully ringing bells, digging graves, lighting winter church fires, and winding the church tower clock daily. He also played tuba in the silver band.

One summer's day in the early 1980s, Walt was muck spreading near Poundon. On his way back, towing an empty spreader, he approached a gated level crossing. As he eased the tractor onto the tracks, his view of the railway obscured by overgrown hedging, a diesel locomotive hauling 30 freight trucks thundered into view. The train clipped the front wheel, spinning the tractor 90 degrees and missing Walt's leg by inches. Miraculously unhurt but deeply shaken, both he and the train driver were left in acute shock. Walt was taken to the surgery in the Reading Room where Dr Woodruff prescribed 48 hours of bed rest and sedation.

Walt never got behind the wheel of a tractor again, but he returned to work and lived to the age of 80. In later years, he was sadly the victim of a distraction burglary, yet he continued to serve others and the church with quiet dedication, just as his ancestors had before him. Walt didn't have children of his own, but his nephew Edwin - son of his brother Ted - still lives in the village and carries on that same spirit of service, opening the church each day and leading the bell ringers as Tower Captain.

Edwin Herring

Ted Herring

Walter Herring

Past Times: The Reading Room

A short history of the now-residential dwelling off Church Street

When Sir Henry Acland, Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford University and, by virtue of that office, Master of the Ewelme Trust, set about rebuilding much of our village, his main priority was the health and social improvement of the people of Marsh Gibbon.

One consequence of those improvements was the building of the Reading Room for the villagers to use. Built in 1890 it was opened in March 1891. It contained a Games Room, a Newspaper Room, and accommodation for a resident caretaker.

A visiting doctor was also arranged to provide healthcare and advice in a surgery, which continued in the Reading Room well into the 1970s - long after the room itself ceased to function in its original role. The service was run by the Steeple Claydon surgery.

But it was its role as a Reading Room that was the most significant part of the enterprise. Sir Henry became its President, with a formal committee, Chair, Treasurer and annual meetings. Sir Henry arranged for daily newspapers to be provided, which included *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Graphic.*

A library was set up with books coming out of Oxford on scientific, educational, and geographical subjects, as well as agricultural papers. Sir Henry himself gifted a 35 volume set of books to the Reading Room.

The rooms were open daily (six days) throughout the winter months, but closed for a period in summer when most members were busy in the fields or their gardens.

In November 1894, Sir Henry invited members and their wives to a 'sumptuous' tea in the Reading Room. They adjourned to the Newspaper Room, where he reportedly delivered 'an impressive and valuable speech,' stating that when he first came to Marsh, he found much in need of reform and felt it his clear duty as Trustee never to cease in his endeavours to improve the condition of the working classes. He retired as President at the end of that year, but the Reading Room continued to thrive. Annual suppers took place in the schoolroom, social evenings enlivened by speeches, toasts, and a variety of vocal and instrumental music.

Sir Henry died in 1900, but he is remembered in the village through the naming of Acland Terrace, eight dwellings beside the Reading Room on Church Street. A biography of Sir Henry, published in 1903, was presented to the Reading Room.

The First World War brought this chapter of village life to a close. The building was eventually converted into a private residence, along with the adjoining surgery, which later closed. It remains a home to this day.

Roy Lambourne

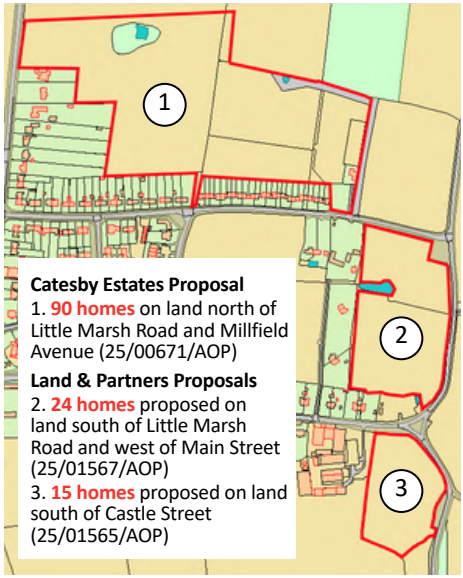
Parish Council News

Transitions with Thanks and Welcome

In May, we had the small matter of local elections. While the council elections were uncontested, we bid a fond farewell to Councillor Liz Taylor, retiring after many years of dedicated service - our heartfelt thanks go to Liz for her outstanding contribution.

We're delighted to welcome Patrina Needham as a newly co-opted councillor. Patrina brings a wealth of experience and will undoubtedly be a valuable asset to both the Council and the wider community.

Congratulations to Frank Mahon and Patrick Fealey on their re-election as Buckinghamshire County Councillors, we look forward to continuing our work with them. Our sincere thanks to retiring Councillor Angela MacPherson for her support of Marsh Gibbon during her time with Buckinghamshire Council.



Update on Planning Applications

As many of you will know, planning matters have dominated the Parish Council's agenda in recent months. We've received several significant applications, and have formally objected to all of these proposals. We're grateful for the strong support from residents and neighbouring Parish Councils in backing our objections.

We were especially pleased to see the issue highlighted by a BBC reporter in an excellent article:

BBC NEWS

Home | InDepth | Israel-Gaza war | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics | Culture

England | Local News | Beds, Herts & Bucks

Villagers battle 'nightmare' plans for 90 new homes

Patrina Needham and Mark Benzing said Marsh Gibbon would not cope

Chris McHugh

BBC News, Buckinghamshire, Marsh Gibbon

15 June 2025

A proposed housing development on the edge of a village has been described as a "nightmare" and "just too big" by residents.

We are currently awaiting a decision on the Land & Partners applications, which we expect soon.

The Catesby proposal will be considered by the full planning committee at Buckinghamshire Council. Once the date is confirmed, we will notify the village and encourage as many residents as possible to attend and show their support for our objection.

Pothole World Revisited

Marsh Gibbon residents will have noticed a real improvement in recent months to the surface of Blackthorn Road heading into the village as far as Cutters Bridge.

I'm pleased to say that the potholes, which made navigating this road a veritable drivers' nightmare have finally been filled and a large proportion on the Oxfordshire side has been substantially patched. The road is still something of an eyesore and really should have been completely resurfaced, but it is now much safer to drive on - a welcome result after our long-running Pothole World campaign.

However, all this patching means the central white lines have virtually disappeared, and they desperately need to be reinstated before winter, when the mist and fog regularly descends. As Marsh residents know, in thick fog those white lines are less "nice to have" and more "the only thing stopping you from ploughing into a hedge".

I contacted Oxfordshire County Council to request that the lines be repainted urgently and received the following gem from the Traffic and Road Safety Team:

"Thank you for your report. We have added the refurbishment of these road markings to our 2025/26 financial year schedule. An exact date for completion cannot be provided at this time."

In other words: sit tight, squint hard, and good luck out there. This is, of course, a completely unsatisfactory response and I am now chasing them for a specific date when the work will actually be done.

Perhaps we'll need another road sign entitled WHITE LINE WORLD?!

Marcus Payne

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hudsontherapy@outlook.com

www.hudsontherapy.co.uk

A low-flying Airbus A400M Atlas from RAF Brize Norton was seen and most definitely heard one Tuesday earlier this month, photograph curtesy of Sue Broom.

FixMyStreet

Report problems like fly-tipping or potholes. Simply provide the location along with a description and it will be forwarded to the council. Download the app or go to **www.fixmystreet.com**

Thank you to Jonathan Barker @johnathnat photographer at the MarshFest Beer Festival