

# News from Marden Parish Council



Spring 2016



[www.mardenpc.kentparishes.gov.uk](http://www.mardenpc.kentparishes.gov.uk) 01622 832305 Alison: [mardenpc@btconnect.com](mailto:mardenpc@btconnect.com) and Erika: [erika.mardenpc@btconnect.com](mailto:erika.mardenpc@btconnect.com)

## Letter from the Chairman of the Parish Council

Dear Resident,

Spring is hopefully around the corner, and as you will see below, lots of events are happening throughout the Spring and Summer in our vibrant village, including the Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations.

A big welcome to any new residents who have recently moved to the village, and if you haven't received a

'Welcome Pack' from the Parish Council containing essential local information, then please email or call the Parish Office. If you have a new neighbour, please ask them to contact Alison.

Councillors have been reviewing the parish finances for 2016/17 and you will find details of this below.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Tuesday 5th April at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall when everyone is invited to come along to hear more about the work of the Parish Council and other village groups.

On Thursday 5th May, the Parish Council is up for re-election and if you are interested in becoming a Councillor and feel you have something to offer the village, please contact Alison for more information (see below) – and please - don't forget to vote!

The next Village Litter Pick is being arranged for Saturday 5th March to coincide with the 'Clean for the Queen' weekend to celebrate HM's 90th birthday and the newly-formed 'Marden in Bloom' group, which has the endorsement of the Parish Council, have entered the 2016 South East in Bloom competition. Their important message is 'It's all about Village Engagement' and would like as many residents and groups in the village to participate - it's not just about trying to making the village look pretty (more information below).

We now have a new Facebook page via [www.facebook.com/mardenpckent](http://www.facebook.com/mardenpckent) which provides snippets of information or check out meeting dates, agendas, minutes etc on the Marden Parish Council website <http://www.mardenpc.kentparishes.gov.uk/>

Regards.

*Dorothy Reed*  
Dorothy Reed



## Parish Council Finances

We have undertaken a thorough review of our financial situation and have concluded that we need to increase the amount of money we can collect from residents to be spent in Marden. This is called the Precept (collected by Maidstone Borough Council on our behalf as part of the Council Tax) in the next financial year from April 2016. We need to do this in order to ensure that the Parish Council stays on a sustainable financial footing and to maintain the existing level of service. This means that a Band D tax payer will see an £8.35 per year increase, or 69p per month in the next financial year.

## Parish Council Elections – Thursday 5th May 2016

The Parish Council is up for re-election on the 5th May, and if you are interested in becoming a Councillor and feel you have something to offer the village, please contact Alison for more information. The criteria includes that you are British, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union; over 18 years of age; are registered to vote in the area or if you have lived, worked or owned a property in Marden for at least 12 months before the election. If you would like to get involved with the work of the Parish Council, why not consider standing for election?

## Planning Update

Many local residents have commented about the 'pineapples' atop the pillars at the entrance to the new Highwood Green development on the Goudhurst Road. We didn't like them either! And the upshot is that following amicable discussions with the developers they have been removed and the amended entrance will now be more in keeping with the area. As far as the development planned for the other side of Goudhurst Road opposite Highwood Green – The Parsonage – is concerned, the Parish continues to be consulted on the current amended plans and endeavours to recommend design features to complement the area. Keep an eye open on the Parish website and notice boards for any meetings relating to this and other planned developments in and around the village.



The Marden in Bloom group are entering the 2016 South & South East in Bloom competition and judging will take place in July.

We are currently fund-raising to kick-start our project and this year's plans are to install planters around the village with a red, white and blue theme in honour of HM's 90th birthday celebrations. We are also aiming to brighten up a few areas such as the Memorial Hall dependent upon monies raised. We will shortly be contacting all village groups and businesses for their thoughts on ways they can help or participate.

## Calling all Marden Residents & Businesses – ‘Best Floral Display’!

As part of the South & South East in Bloom campaign, Marden will be holding a ‘Best Floral Display’ competition. There will be two categories: ‘Best Home’ and ‘Best Business’ with a prize and plaque for each and judging will be during the first two weeks of July. This is a chance for all you ‘green fingered’ Mardenians to brighten up your neighbourhood and will also help to fund raise for bigger projects too. If you want to participate, the theme is red, white and blue.

The Marden in Bloom project is about village engagement and participation and a chance to be proud of the village you live in. We are currently putting together a website <http://www.mardeninbloom.co.uk> or like our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MardeninBloom> If you would like to become a volunteer or have any suggestions, please contact [anne.boswell@gmail.com](mailto:anne.boswell@gmail.com) or call 01622 833351. Come on Marden, let’s get our village looking beautiful!

## Number 28 Bus Service

There has been much concern over the NuVenture’s cancellation of the number 28 bus from Marden, particularly by parents whose children use the service to schools in Maidstone. With the intervention of our MP Helen Grant, County Councillor Paulina Stockell as well as the Parish Council, Kent County Council (KCC) have now thankfully reinstated the service which is being operated by 1st Bus Stop.

## Flooding in Pattenden Lane

Pattenden Lane still continues to flood as no improvements have been made regarding the recent flooding under the railway bridge. It is understood that residents have been informed that Kent County Council would not be taking any further action due to lack of funding. The Parish Clerk is continually logging this on the Kent Highways website and will follow up and lobby our County Councillor Paulina Stockell.

## Marden pronounced ‘Best Treed’ Village in Kent

In last year’s ‘Kent Men of Trees’ competition Marden was considered by the judges to be the best treed village – what an amazing accolade and certainly one we should be very proud of. As a result, we have received a voucher towards purchasing a new tree which will be placed along Rookery Path.

## Proposed Parking Restrictions

The new parking restrictions in Marden High Street which Maidstone Borough Council are planning to implement have been delayed as several changes need to be made to the Order. You can view the changes on MBC’s website ([www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk)) or a copy is held in the Parish Office.

## Speedwatch

A trial speed watch was held back in December and two volunteers met to set up the equipment. They observed very considerate drivers pulling in and allowing each other to pass at safe speeds. They spoke to several neighbours who were

delighted to see them in action and the offer of training for more volunteers was made. No speeding was recorded, which is a success – we do not want drivers exceeding the speed limit in Marden.

Our village Firemen have very kindly offered to help out and if you would like to become involved, after initial training, it would only take an hour or two of your time per session. Please contact Erika in the Parish Office - we need you!

Please note, because of the current National Speed Limit in Chainhurst, volunteers are unable to undertake Speed Watch in that area.

## Chainhurst Speeding

Kent Highways, as authorised by our County Councillor Paulina Stockell, undertook a traffic survey in Chainhurst because of speeding concerns. However they have now raised issues regarding restrictions/speed limits in that area and the Parish Clerk has contacted Kent Highways to enquire what the next step is. The Parish Council will continue to monitor the situation.

## Speeding in the Village

As previously advised, the Parish Council met last year with our County Councillor and Kent Highways over the issue of safely crossing roads in Marden. Councillors discussed how we could overcome this problem and the possibility of installing a pedestrian crossing. The Parish Clerk is chasing our County Councillor to see if there are any funds available to undertake a feasibility study which would then be put before Kent Highways for their recommendation. Watch this space!

## UPDATE ON PARISH MATTERS:

- Fingerposts – We are aware that some of the Parish fingerposts need attention and we are endeavouring to find someone who would be interested in refurbishing them. The ‘Marden in Bloom’ group are particularly keen on cleaning up the sign outside the Post Office (opposite Maidstone road junction) and if you know of anybody, please ask them to contact the Parish Office.
- Junction of Hunton Road and Green Lane – The Parish Council have made contact with Kent Highways regarding the lack of give-way signage at the junction of Hunton Road and Green Lane. Kent Highways have now responded to advise that because of reduced budgets and the fact there have been no recorded personal injury crashes at this location for the past three years, Kent Highways are unable to assist with our request for a new sign at this moment in time.
- Public Car Park – A new sign has been erected and the parking restrictions are already being enforced with 32 Penalty Charge Notices being issued. Please note that the car park is closed from 7.15am-8.15am Monday to Friday.
- Litter Bins – Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) have recently installed some new litter bins around the village and these bins can be used for depositing dog waste as well.
- Anti-Social Behaviour/CCTV – Due to problems with the supplier, the CCTV camera which was to be placed close to the Public toilets to help deter any anti-social behaviour, has still not been installed. However, if you want to report any anti-social behaviour, please call 101 as soon as possible so PCSO Nicola Morris can provide sufficient evidence to Maidstone Community Safety Unit. Nicola has also been monitoring activity in various hot spots in the village in the evenings.



- The Kent Air Ambulance clothing bin – This is due to be removed by beginning of February as it frequently overflowed and was not emptied regularly. This will now free up a couple of extra car parking places. You can put out your discarded fabrics/clothing with the green recycling bin.
- Cemetery – We will shortly be planning the layout of the new sections in the cemetery, and if anybody would like to make a donation towards the planting of this area, please let Alison know.
- Napoleon Drive Play Area – the Parish Council is currently finalising the transfer of this play area from Taylor Wimpey and hopefully, at some point, we will be able to replace the current play equipment for the under 5's dependent on Developer Contribution monies.

## Marden at Christmas



Another successful 'Marden at Christmas' event took place in December. The festivities began at The Allens with carol singing led by the 'Village Voices' and entertainment by the Weald of Kent & Boughton Monchelsea Morris dancers. The Parish Council elves served warming refreshments and provided face painting for the children. Father Christmas made a brief appearance before his sleigh delivered him to the Memorial Hall where lots of children were waiting to visit him. En route to the hall there were refreshments in the Unicorn; the Scout Group served 'Toasted Smores' at the Vestry Hall; Marden Church served warming soup where a Christmas Tree display was taking place, Kebab Fish Knight gave out chips and the West End Tavern hosted Anno Gin, 12 Bar Brewery & Turner's Cider together with serving turkey burgers. Whilst Father Christmas handed out gifts to the children, people busied themselves at the craft fair and refreshments were served by the WI and Ballards Butchers.



So many thanks to Erika Lock and Alison Hooker for all their hard work in organising the event and everyone else who

helped make the day such a success. Thanks also go to Marden Business Forum for providing and wrapping Santa's presents in Lapland and to all the other village organisations who were involved, especially the 'Village Voices'. The date for this year's Marden at Christmas will be on Saturday 10th December – please put the date in your diaries.

If you have any ideas of ways to change/improve this day please come along to the meeting on 24th February at 7.30pm in the Parish Office meeting room or email Erika with your suggestions.

## Lots going on in Marden

Any groups, organisations or businesses who are arranging an event, please call Erika on 01622 832305 or email [erika.mardenpc@btconnect.com](mailto:erika.mardenpc@btconnect.com) who will place the event on the Parish Council website under 'Village Events'. Let's keep our village connected!

### Ladies Fashion Show

**Tuesday 1st March from 7.30pm at the Memorial Hall**

This is a fund-raiser for both 'Marden in Bloom' and Breast Cancer Research. So come on all you ladies and have a bit of fun – the fashion show is for all ages and sizes. Posters will be around the village soon and tickets will be on sale at various locations - £5 per ticket. 'Travelling Trends' have a vast collection of clothing from many high street stores, individual boutiques and designers and offer an excellent range of sizes so carry something for every lady. There will be a live catwalk show modelling some of the outfits and prices range between 30% and 50% off RRP.

**Marden Primary School PTA – 'Get Back to the 80's Disco' – Friday 4th March from 7.30pm**

Tickets £5 on sale from the School Office, Crowhurst & Tompsett and West End Stores – 80's fancy dress optional but not essential.

### Marden Theatre Group "A Fete Worse Than Death"

The Group will be performing this comedy in the garden of the Old Vicarage, Maidstone Road, Marden on 24th, 25th and 26th June 2016. Auditions, which are open to all who are interested in performing, will be held in the John Banks Hall, Goudhurst Road, Marden on Sunday 20th March at 3pm.

## 'Clean for the Queen' Village Litter Pick

**Saturday 5th March**

We are once again calling for volunteers to help out at the village clean up on the morning of Saturday 5th March which coincides with the 'Clean for the Queen' weekend to celebrate HM's 90th birthday. You will be provided with a picker and bags and are covered by the Parish Council's insurance. Please contact Alison for further details and to register your interest. Litter picks are also part of the 'Marden in Bloom' competition, so please help out to 'Keep Marden Beautiful'. Once again many thanks to those thoughtful residents who regularly Litter Pick around the village – what caring citizens you are.

## Annual Parish Meeting Tues 5th April

This is an ideal opportunity to learn more about the role of the Parish Council and the work that has been undertaken over the past year. Organisations will shortly be contacted to provide a report of their activities in 2015 and these reports will be available on the evening and on the Parish Council website

following the meeting. Tea & coffee is served at 7pm and the business begins at 7.30pm. After the meeting everyone is invited to stay to meet Parish Councillors over refreshments. Speakers are currently being booked and if you have anything of interest you wish to hear about that is relevant to the village, please let Alison know.

## Marden Garden Party to Celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday

**Saturday 23rd April in Southons Field from 2pm**

To celebrate HM's 90th birthday, please come along with your picnic, dress up in your red, white and blue and be entertained by the 'West Kent Big Band' with a bit of swing and hosted by Keith from the Unicorn. Entry is via donation and any money raised will go towards 'Marden in Bloom'. Just a simple affair, lots of bunting with a few fun games and a good old wheelbarrow race. Further details to be posted on Marden In Bloom Facebook and posters around the village and let's hope the rain keeps at bay. Please note that no bicycles, BBQs or dogs are allowed on the field

## Parish Council Elections

**Thursday 5th May at the Memorial Hall**

Prior to the 5th May you will be receiving your voting papers so make sure you are on the electoral roll. You can contact Maidstone Borough Council by emailing [registration@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:registration@maidstone.gov.uk) or telephoning 01622 602007 for further information.

## Marden's Big Musical Picnic is back!

**Saturday 4th June Southon Field: 2.30pm to 8pm**

The Friends of Marden Heritage's Big Musical Picnic was another resounding success last year and it turned out to be such a beautiful evening. It will involve a lot of music, family fun, games and races, some interesting stalls are booked, there will be childrens' activities as well as tea, coffee, homemade cakes and biscuits, cider, ice cream and more. Tickets £5 adults, £2 children (5-15) and £4 concessions. Please see posters around the village nearer the time. Please note that no bicycles, BBQs or dogs are allowed on the field.

## Summer Play Scheme

**Monday 25th July to Friday 5th August**

The Summer Play Scheme had another resounding success last year and the Parish Council is currently in the process of planning the Summer Play Scheme which will run for the first two weeks of the Summer holidays from 9.30am to 3.30pm for 5 to 11 year olds (please note that children have to have reached their 5th birthday by 1st September 2015). Further information will be available in the Summer Newsletter and registration forms can be picked up from the Parish Office or Primary School from 6th June.

## Local Heroes

If you would like to nominate a special 'Local Hero' please email [anne.boswell@ymail.com](mailto:anne.boswell@ymail.com). 'Community Engagement' is what it's all about'.

## NatWest Mobile Bank

**Tuesday 2.15pm-3.15pm in Public Car Park**

Because of the closure of the NatWest branch in the High

Street, NatWest are now running a mobile branch on Tuesdays from 2.15pm-3.15pm in the car park behind the Library. This is primarily for private customers, but NatWest are happy to deal with business banking as well.

## Police Surgery

Your local officer PCSO Nicola Morris will be holding a surgery at Marden Train Station on the following dates:

Sat 6th Feb – 2-3pm

Mon 15th Feb – 7-8pm

Sat 19th March – 2-3pm

Sat 2nd April – 11am-12pm

Weds 13th April – 7-8pm

These surgeries are on a first-come/first-served basis, but it's your opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have on crime and anti-social behavior.

## Freighter Service in Marden

At the time of going to press, no further dates were available on the Maidstone Borough Council website. Please check out: <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/binsandrecycling/saturday-freighter-service2>

## Parish Office Opening Hours:

If you would like any info or advice on a Parish matter, please feel free to call into the Parish Office. Opening hours are: Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am-12pm.

## Useful information:

### Borough Councillors

Annabelle Blackmore	01622 833299 <a href="mailto:annabelleblackmore@maidstone.gov.uk">annabelleblackmore@maidstone.gov.uk</a>
Steve McLoughlin	01622 820551 <a href="mailto:stevemcloughlin@maidstone.gov.uk">stevemcloughlin@maidstone.gov.uk</a>
David Burton	07590 229910 <a href="mailto:davidburton@maidstone.gov.uk">davidburton@maidstone.gov.uk</a>

### County Councillor

Paulina Stockell	01622 842508 <a href="mailto:paulina.stockell@kent.gov.uk">paulina.stockell@kent.gov.uk</a>
------------------	--

**Parish Council website:** [www.mardenpc.kentparishes.gov.uk](http://www.mardenpc.kentparishes.gov.uk)

**Police Contact:** PCSO Nicola Morris – 101 or  
[Nicola.morris@kent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Nicola.morris@kent.pnn.police.uk)

**Community Warden Contact:** Mira Martin – 07969 584179

**British Transport Police:** Freephone 0800 405 040

### Your Local MP:

Helen Grant, MP for Maidstone and the Weald, holds regular surgeries in the constituency. If you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss an issue of concern to you, please e-mail Helen at [helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk) or telephone 020 7219 7107 [www.helengrant.org](http://www.helengrant.org)

### Fault Reporting:

Maidstone Borough Council Flytipping, Abandoned Vehicles, Dog Fouling, Street Cleaning – 01622 602162  
[www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk)

### Kent County Council:

The Parish Council frequently liaise with Kent Highways over the state of the roads and drains in the village. For any Pothole and other road issues, Vegetation and Street Lighting – please call 03000 418181 or via their website [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk)



Graphic design & print by **Custom Marketing Resources**, Chainhurst  
01622 820841 [creative@cmr-group.co.uk](mailto:creative@cmr-group.co.uk) [www.cmr-group.co.uk](http://www.cmr-group.co.uk)