

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL: Quality Gold Criteria 2(a)

Engaging with diverse groups in the community using a variety of methods

Marden Parish Council (MPC) communicates with the community through a variety of ways. These include:

- Social media, including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Sharing information from Government, Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council, Kent Police, NHS and other local agencies. Posts include information regarding local roadworks, next MPC meetings, community events, village groups, the Marden Medical Centre and so on.
- Weekly e-newsletter which includes all the information above for those with an email address and who opt to receive the email.
- Hard copy newsletter which is packed full of local information, updates the community on all the projects and activities the Parish Council is undertaking and announcements. It also strongly focuses on health and wellbeing, environmental issues and all village organisations have an opportunity to give their input. This is created, printed and delivered three times a year to all addresses within the parish. There is gypsy and traveller site on the outskirts of the village which is owned by the local authority and Cllrs hand deliver newsletter to each pitch enabling an opportunity to engage with the residents.
- Notices and posters about forthcoming Council meetings and any other local events on the 6 Council notice board around the parish.
- Annual Parish Meeting, MPC events and consultations with residents where Councillors and Staff meet residents face to face.
- The Parish Office is open Monday, Tuesday and Friday between the hours of 10.00am and 12.00pm. The Clerks are available during these times for residents to come in to discuss issues face to face. Appointments can also be made outside of these but within office hours if these times are inconvenient.
- Contact can also be made with the Parish Council via phone, email, letter or via the Parish Council website.
- Bi-monthly drop-in sessions are now being held at the local Village Café on a Friday morning with Parish Council Clerks, Cllrs, Local Police and other agencies where residents can come along to raise any concerns. This is alongside the Parish Office being open three mornings a week for residents to speak to staff.

MPC provides a wide range of council activities that produce positive outcomes for the community.

These include:

- An annual Village Litter Pick which brings volunteers together to tidy up the village;
- A Summer Play Scheme which brings local children together and helps parents during the summer holidays and which the Parish Council is able to assist with funding for any family who are struggling financially;
- A Marden at Christmas village event which brings the community together to celebrate the Festive period.

The Council has also organised a number of events to celebrate national occasions such as the Queen's Jubilee and the King's Coronation that were enjoyed by the community.

MPC works alongside local organisations in the parish. These include the Marden Medical Centre, Marden Wildlife group, Marden Dementia Group, Marden in Bloom and the Marden Food Bank to name but a few. There is also a regular Community Forum call attended by the Parish Council and local organisations such as the Parish Church, Marden Primary Academy, Pre-School, Marden Medical Centre, Involve (local social prescribing service), etc who share local information amongst each other so that all work together well.

Marden has a settled gypsy and traveller population, some of which are hard to reach and also struggle with reading and writing. The Clerks assist where they can with helping to fill in forms (ie Summer play scheme, cemetery paperwork etc) and to help understand some of the agency websites which they may need to use.

Along with the above Marden also has a gypsy and traveller site within the parish which is owned and run by the local authority. Cllrs visit at least three times a year to hand deliver newsletters, speak to residents and take any concerns back to the owners of the site and will aim to stay in contact until the matter is resolved. Between these visits residents are encouraged to contact the Parish Council if they have any issues which they are struggling to get answers to from the local authority.

Unfortunately, the local Kent County Council run Youth Club and Children's Centre have closed but the Parish Council is now in talks with the County Council to set up new sessions within the village for parents and children aged between 0 and 18.

See also MPC website:

Newsletters (also hand delivered to every household in the parish): [MPC Newsletters - Marden Parish Council Marden, Tonbridge, Kent - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#) and weekly e-newsletters.

Consultations: [Marden Parish Council Consultations - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#) and [Changing Rooms Consultation - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

Annual Reports: [Annual Parish Meetings - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

Social Media: Facebook @MardenParish Council / Instagram @mardenparishcouncil / Twitter(X) @mardenkent-pc