

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL: Quality Gold Criteria 4

Provides leadership in planning for the future of the community

See also Marden Parish Council Planning Policies - [Planning Policies and Procedures - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

Marden Parish Council Planning Committee meets twice a month (1st and 3rd Tuesday) and the agenda is published on the Parish Council website ([Planning Committee Minutes & Agendas - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)) on parish notice boards, social media and e-newsletter. These meetings are open to the public.

If public are unable to attend they can send their comments which are provided to the Planning Committee Cllrs. Public are also advised to send their comments direct to the local authority to ensure their voice is heard.

The Local Authority (Maidstone Borough Council) sends details of planning applications to the Clerk which are added to the next planning agenda. The Clerk also views the local authority website to ensure that there are no applications which have been missed – this may be for submission of details, non-material amendments, Conservation Area applications etc. All applications are responded to within their time limits.

MPC responds to all planning applications within the Parish, providing constructive, planning led feedback. Marden PC Planning Committee is permitted to request applications be called in to the local authority's planning committee and if this occurs a Parish Cllr will attend to speak.

Marden Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) was adopted in July 2020 and forms part of the local authority's planning documents and policies from the MNP are referred to when responding to an application. The MNP is more than just a "planning" document. It contains a vision for Marden and policies to deliver this vision.

A consultation was held in 2022 looking at the future of Marden and the responses from this would be fed into the Neighbourhood Plan Review which is currently being drafted. [Vision for Marden 2037 - MNP Review - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#). The Neighbourhood Plan has policies which encourages the continued use of shops rather than converting to properties. Marden has a large business area and the Parish Council has worked in the past with Marden Business Forum to encourage businesses, both large and small, to use the facilities within the parish and which continues to expand.

The Parish Council has developed an Infrastructure Spend Plan [Microsoft Word - Infrastructure Spend Plan v12 January 2024 \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#) which lists all the infrastructure improvements needed now or in the future as well as a Highways Improvement Plan [Microsoft Word - Highways Improvement Plan v18 January 2024 \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#). Both these documents have been devised from previous consultations and comments raised by residents via email or at Parish Council meetings. They are both a live document and a regularly updated and reviewed. Prospective developers are encouraged to take account of these documents when preparing a planning application for a major development.

If a developer approaches Marden Parish Council for a meeting to discuss a prospective or agreed development then those meetings are always held in public, with residents given the opportunity to comment. Recent large planning applications have been for the five new developments (between 2013 and 2018) within the village totalling 572 dwellings; a proposed development of 117 dwellings (2023); and a chicken farm proposal on the outskirts of the village (2020-to date).

The Parish of Marden is located within Maidstone Borough Council, whose Local Plan was adopted in 2017 and is currently under review. MPC has been actively involved in both the 2017 Local Plan and the 2024 revision.

Marden Parish Cllrs regularly attend planning training provided by the local authority, Kent Association of Local Councils and other agencies.

Parish Councillors are members of the Patient Participation and Community Forum Groups where discussions are held on the health and wellbeing of the community and how the Parish Council can assist. The Parish Council has worked with Marden Wildlife on an area of Council owned open space to provide QR Codes of wildlife in the area where residents can walk around and use their phones to record sightings etc.

The Parish Council have worked with residents and actively engaged with businesses to put together a list of assets of community value and have been successful in having two public houses added to the local authority list and the Council actively promotes businesses and residents to use Council owned, and other, open spaces and buildings for usage for everyone's health and wellbeing.

The Council is currently actively seeking to repurpose the use of the recreation ground pavilion / changing rooms to accommodate a small community room to allow yoga/pilates/keep fit groups to use in the vicinity of trees and open spaces.

Cllrs are actively involved with visiting the Primary Academy to discuss planning issues [Council Participation - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#) and the Summer Play Scheme is held here which promotes healthy living, social skills and interaction for children aged from 5 to 12.