

SPRING 2021

# MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

## NEWSLETTER



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# WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

**LESLEY MANNINGTON**



Welcome to our Spring Newsletter which contains masses of useful information and internet links to keep you all up-to-date in the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. Like many of you, when this all first emerged, I hoped we would see daylight before long. Well, it has been a long night and for lots it has brought much sadness.

Many of us will have been touched, either because we know someone very close who has contracted the virus or have lost someone dear. I doubt that anyone has been immune to the ravages of this awful infection. However, we must endeavour to be positive – life in whatever form goes on.

As Chairman, I would like to say a big thank you to those of you who have been supporting others who are in need of assistance in our parish.

We have heard back from some of our own Community Assistance Group volunteers of how they are helping their paired person/family and it is wonderful to hear about the relationships they have developed over the past year. What fantastic community spirit we have in Marden! We hope that, in the future, we will get to be able to show our appreciation face to face when restrictions allow.

I'm still missing my grandchildren and the youngest who is just starting to talk, was watching Bedknobs & Broomsticks and decided that Angela Lansbury was Grandma! I take that as a compliment! Although his older brother did point out that Grandma wasn't a witch!

Many of you may well have seen the Handforth Parish Council Zoom meeting which went viral on social media and in the press. To many it was an amusing aside to the current continual Covid news but I'd like to assure you all that it was not typical of Parish Council behaviour. It certainly provoked masses of social media comment and amusement. It certainly highlighted the existence of parish councils.

And that brings me round to the local elections which are confirmed for Thursday 6th May 2021. If you feel that you can contribute to the work of the Parish Council, why not stand for election?

Notes from the Mannington kitchen: a reminder of where we might like to be – Italian Amaretti biscuits; apfelkucken and Greek Briam (vegetable stew). We can but wish. But nothing goes to waste in this household!

*Cllr Lesley Mannington*

**MAKE A CHANGE**  
BECOME A COUNCILLOR



# CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

The battle of this exceptional and unprecedented pandemic continues with the surge of the mutant strains of COVID-19 and for so many of us it has just got harder. With the astonishing achievement of our scientists on the vaccines being developed so quickly, there is a glimmer of hope in sight and finally we can see a light at the end of what has been a very long tunnel.

The rollout of the vaccination programme to everyone is a huge logistical exercise and let's hope it will lead to a gradual easing out of lockdown. Meanwhile, we should not become complacent and continue to 'stick to the rules' – stay at home unless we absolutely have to go out. We must help to save lives, protect those that we love and relieve the overwhelming strain on our NHS and our care sector.

Nevertheless, we must try to stay positive, strong and optimistic – at least Spring is around the corner to help lift our spirits. In the words of the inspirational beacon of hope Captain Sir Tom Moore (who raised an amazing £32.7m for the NHS): "Tomorrow will be a better day – the sun will shine again and the clouds will go away."

Sir Tom was a hero in the truest sense of the word who sadly passed away on the 2nd February.



In the face of the huge challenges presented by COVID-19, the public spirit and resilience of our community in Marden has been so inspiring. Many of you have worked together so hard throughout this horrendous crisis and we should keep on harnessing this exceptional community spirit. The generosity that has been shown and the many ways you've stepped up to support those in need and the efforts taken to brighten someone's day, have all made a huge difference. Once again, we would like to thank all of you who have been part of this – let's keep up the good work and continue to pull together as a Community. Our thoughts and condolences go out to those who have lost someone during this crisis.



We were very sad to lose Lady Sue Fenn in January. Sue was involved in village life and she will be sorely missed.



## **Coronavirus Update (Contd)**

Well done to all our local businesses who have rallied through and hope for those who have been forced once again to close, you will be able to continue to operate once we come out of the current lockdown. Please keep on supporting our local independent businesses who have worked so hard and helped us through this crisis.

Another thank you to the courageous and selfless front-line workers – not just our amazing NHS and care workers, but shop workers, transport staff, pharmacists, teachers, police, armed forces, emergency services and many others who have kept our country going during our biggest crisis since the Second World War. You are all unsung heroes who deserve to be recognised for all that you do.

## **PLANNING UPDATE**

### **Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Local Plan Review – Regulation 18b**

As you will all be aware, MBC held a public consultation (Regulation 18b) about its approach to the Local Plan Review which closed on 8th January 2021. This was the next stage of informal stakeholder and public involvement in the local plan review process. The consultation document set out the preferred spatial strategy for future development, proposed amendments to existing strategic and development management policies and new development management policies for the period 2022-2037.

Marden Parish Council (MPC) reviewed all the consultation documents extensively and approved its expansive response at a meeting in December which was sent to MBC on 17th December.

Many thanks to all those residents who took the time to respond to this important Consultation - the documents were certainly lengthy and time-consuming to read.

Fortunately, site 309 - Garden Community - North of Marden was not included in the Preferred Approaches consultation and Marden Parish Council, along with most residents, welcomed this omission.

The Parish Council once again submitted and expanded upon their reasons for the unsuitability and unsustainability of this site. However, the two sites that were included in the Preferred Approaches Consultation were site 295 – Land North of Copper Lane and site 314 – Land East of Albion Road.

MPC responded in great detail, with the assistance of residents, on both these sites explaining their unsuitability. We also commented on the content of the Spatial Strategy, Spatial Strategic Policies Document and Policies Map and the Non-Strategic Policies – Development Management Preferred Approaches Document.

## **Planning Update (Contd)**

We are keeping a watchful eye at MBC's Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee (SPI) and Planning meetings over the next few months where they will be discussing updates on the Local Plan Review and the responses to the Regulation 18 Public Consultation and on any other developments that may come forward.

MBC has received over 3000 responses to the consultation and it is expected that the result of the consultation will be presented to the SPI Committee on 9 March 2021. You can find the Parish Council's responses to all the Local Plan consultations on the Marden Parish Council Website.

Currently, the proposed timetable for the MBC Local Plan Review is as follows:

- Regulation 19 – June 2021
- Submission (Regulation 20) – December 2021
- Examination (Regulation 24) – May/June 2022
- Main Modification Consultation – August 2022
- Plan and associated documents to MBC Full Council – October 2022

## **Reed Court Farm, Hunton Road - Planning Application MA/20/505751**

This planning application proposes to erect a new free-range egg farm consisting of three hen houses with extensive outdoor ranges and fencing, formal vehicle access from Hunton Road and associated parking, landscaping, woodland and tree planting, drainage and other associated works. This application was discussed at the Parish Council Planning Meeting on the 5th January where Councillors unanimously objected and requested it be called to Maidstone Borough Council Planning Committee. The "We Love Chainhurst" group was congratulated on the immense amount of technical evidence they had prepared.

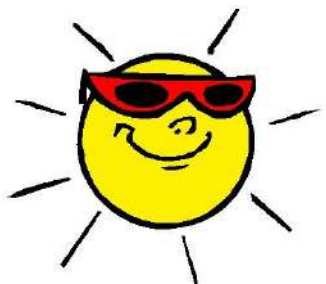
This complex application has numerous material planning considerations raised by local residents and statutory consultees, and many questions remain unanswered in the supporting documents. Therefore, unless and until these matters can be satisfactorily addressed, the Parish Council objects to the application on the basis that the site is unsuitable for the proposed development and it appears there are significant environmental and highway impacts that cannot be appropriately mitigated. You can find the Parish Council's full response in the Minutes of 5th January 2021 on the Parish Council website:

# GENERAL UPDATE

## Parish Council Finances

Councillors have undertaken a thorough review of the parish finances and we are delighted to announce that we do not need to increase the amount of money collected from residents to be spent in Marden in the next financial year from April 2021. This is especially important in the current economic crisis.

The Parish Council always strives to be prudent and diligent with our finances. The Precept is collected by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) on behalf of the Parish as part of the Council Tax and we will make every effort to maintain the existing level of service as well as staying on a sustainable financial footing. This means that a Band D taxpayer will remain at £74.57 per annum or £6.21 per month and this will be the third year without an increase.



## Marden Playscheme 2021

With the Government announcement on 22nd February, it is hoped that the restrictions could be lifted on 21st June. Marden Parish Council hopes that this year's play scheme can go ahead from 26th July to 6th August. This will be confirmed in June as to the final details via social media and our Summer newsletter.

## Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council is legally permitted to hold virtual Council meetings until 7th May 2021, and we have been fortunate through this pandemic that it has been "business as usual". After this date, unless Government amend the regulations, the Parish Council will need to consider face to face meetings and what this will entail. We have been able to carry on as normal thanks to our great Clerks and despite only being able to meet remotely, we achieved a lot last year.

Alison our Parish Clerk thinks 2020 was the busiest and most challenging in the 18 years she has worked for the Parish Council.

Our accomplishments include the adoption of the Marden Neighbourhood Plan, an enormous amount of work on the Maidstone Borough Council/Local Plan Review, drafted and agreed the Marden Highways Improvement Plan, drafted the Marden's Infrastructure Spend Plan, progressing with the Allotments albeit slowly, lobbying for youth provision in the village and more equipment being installed at the Playing Field.

Rachel, our Deputy Clerk, managed the volunteer database for the Community Assistance Group and helped to improve our communications with increased use of Facebook for news and up to date information and creating the Parish Council "Weekly Village Round Up" e-newsletter .

### General Update (Contd)

The Parish Council has now reverted to holding meetings in the usual pattern each month - Planning on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday, Full Council on the 2nd Tuesday, Amenities on the 4th Tuesday and Sub-Committee meetings on an ad hoc basis. The Parish Council likes to encourage members of the public to attend meetings and if you wish to take part, there is a Zoom link to the meeting at the end of the Agenda which you can find on the Parish Council website [www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](http://www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk). They are also uploaded to our Facebook page and placed on Notice Boards.

Residents are also invited to make comment to the Clerk before 5pm on the date of the meeting. We do have a Public Participation Policy which you can find on our website. The Clerks are currently working from home and can be contacted during the working hours of 9am-5pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Whilst the Parish Office is closed, the post box is being emptied regularly. If you have a query or need assistance, please see the Clerks' contact details on the back page.

### Parish Council e-Newsletter – “Weekly Village Round Up”

In addition to the Parish Newsletter which is produced three times per year and delivered to every household in the Parish and our regular updated social media such as Facebook we

### Sign up for the Marden Parish Council Weekly E-Newsletter here:

**SIGN UP NOW**



Use this QR Code on your mobile phone:

- Open your camera
- Hold it over the code
- Click on the link to browser
- Fill in your details



Alternatively, go to:  
<https://bit.ly/MPC-E-NewsletterSignUp>

thought it would be useful for those residents who are not on social media, to produce a weekly e-newsletter. This will include updates on roadworks, flooding issues, parish council agendas, minutes, signposting to services, Government advice etc. We started to issue e-newsletters at the end of January and if you are interested in receiving them, either use the QR code above or you can register by typing in the link and follow the instructions. The Parish Council is also considering issuing short videos to update the community on various matters. We are currently drafting a Communication Strategy as our aim is to get as much information out to the community as possible. Please remember Marden Parish Council is here to provide support and help residents with issues – our mission is to communicate and engage effectively with our community.

## Parish Council Elections Thursday 6th May 2021

The Parish Council elections are scheduled to be held on the 6th May 2021 (these are normally every 4 years, however due to the pandemic and elections were cancelled in 2020, this will be a 3 year term). The Government is currently proposing that they will go ahead as planned. Government guidelines stipulate that you will need to wear a mask when entering the polling station and to take your own pen/pencil to mark the ballot paper.

There will also be Borough and County elections at the same time. A Councillor's role on the Parish Council, among other things, is to represent the interests of the whole community, to understand the needs of different groups (such as the young and elderly), to have responsibility to be well-informed, especially about diverse local views and to stimulate discussions to inform the decision makers to lead to actions being taken. You must also be prepared to attend at least two meetings a month depending on which Committee you are appointed to.

If you are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor and feel you have something to offer the village, please contact Ali for more information. You must be a British or Commonwealth citizen, be 18 or over, be on the electoral register for the parish, work within the parish and/or live within 3km of the parish boundary to stand for election. More information can be found on our website at <http://bit.ly/MPCElectionInfo> and The Electoral Commission website at <http://bit.ly/ElectoralCommissionPC>

## How will you vote at the elections in May?



The  
Electoral  
Commission

YOUR VOTE MATTERS  
DON'T LOSE IT



## Annual Parish Meeting (APM) 2021

The Parish Council was unable to hold the Annual Parish Meeting in 2020 because of COVID-19 restrictions. At this point in time it is unclear if we will hold a virtual APM in April or face to face in May, (it has to be held between 1st March and 1st June).

The APM is an ideal opportunity to learn about the work that has been undertaken over the past year in Marden and to receive reports from village organisations and groups.

We usually arrange a couple of speakers and all village organisations will be contacted at some point to provide a report for 2020 (if they have anything to report) which will be available on the Parish Council website. Further details will be circulated once we know when and how the APM can be held this year.



# PROJECT UPDATE

## Marden Emergency Plan

Marden Parish Council has started to draft a parish emergency plan to be used in the event of an emergency affecting our community and is asking for anyone who would be interested to help set up an Emergency Plan Steering Group.



In most cases, emergencies are dealt with by the emergency services and other key responders, such as health authorities, local authorities and utility companies who all have well-rehearsed plans to deal with such situations. However, there may be circumstances, such as widespread flooding, heavy snow or severe storm damage, where the arrival of the emergency services and other responders could be delayed, or when essential utilities and highways access may be compromised.

In these circumstances, we are sure you will agree that it is important that our community can help itself until help arrives and it will do this more effectively if it has a plan. As part of this plan, we are looking to set-up a “Community Response Team” of volunteers who would be willing to assist should an emergency occur.

We are particularly keen to hear from members of our community who have resources, equipment or skills (eg 4x4 vehicles, tractors, chain saws (with certificate), trained medical staff), but any assistance you can offer would be gratefully received.

If you would like to volunteer as a Community Response Volunteer or on the Steering Group, please contact Ali at the Parish Office. We very much hope that we would never have to call on your services but communities that are prepared for emergencies have a better chance of recovery than those who are not prepared.



We already have a network of Flood Wardens and their work will link into the Emergency Plan. If you would like to volunteer as a Flood Warden please let Rachel, our Deputy Clerk know.

This is entirely on a voluntary basis and therefore if you wish to do so you may withdraw your name from the list at any time. All volunteers, providing they adhere to the role of an Emergency Plan volunteer, will be covered by Marden PC’s insurance.

**Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP)**

The Parish Council has continued to work on the important ISP Parish ‘Wish List’ which has been based on residents’ preferences made at the Consultation in November 2019. The ISP is a working document and another public consultation will be held once the pandemic has eased. In the meantime, if you have any comments you wish to make, please forward to: [clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk).

The purpose of the plan is to identify the infrastructure and investment needed by the Parish and we have started to allocate capital funding towards potential projects as well as any CIL money we receive. You can view the draft document and a FAQ: <http://bit.ly/MPCISP>

**Assets of Community Value (ACV)**

An ACV Steering Group was formed in 2019 to investigate Marden’s potential Assets of Community Value. ACV’s form part of the Community Right to Bid. This allows communities to nominate buildings or land for listing by the local authority (MBC) as an Asset of Community Value. It acts as a first step in identifying and nominating buildings or other assets whose main use or purpose is the furthering of social well-being or social interests of the local community. Once the list is accepted by MBC the local community will be informed if the ACV is listed for sale with the five-year listing period.

The community can then enact the Community Right to Bid which gives them a 6-month moratorium to determine if they can raise the finance to purchase the asset.

An initial list of potential ACV’s within the Parish boundary was drafted by the Steering Group and it was agreed that the public houses in the Parish were of highest priority. A letter was presented back in 2019 to both The Unicorn PH and West End Tavern explaining what an ACV is and how this would not affect their business, just merely act as a safeguard in case the public house is placed on the market for sale.

Nomination forms have now been drafted for The Unicorn and West End Tavern and contact is being made with the landlords/tenants again due to the time lapse since last being contacted. If all in agreement these will be submitted to MBC for consideration. The Stilebridge Inn public house has been closed for some time and has been up for sale and it is proposed that this will be the next nomination that will be submitted to MBC as an ACV.



## Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

As reported in the last newsletter, the Parish Council has collated a proactive list of highways' measures for the Parish which includes the suggestions of residents which has been submitted to Kent Highways. Unfortunately, this submission does not automatically mean that the work will be undertaken, but it is hoped that it will be assessed as to whether it meets KCC highways criteria and costs. We have set aside some capital funding towards some works as well as any CIL money we may receive. You can check out the HIP on our website: <http://bit.ly/MPCHIP2021>

## Allotment Update

The Parish Council is slowly making progress with Redrow on the transfer of the freehold land at Highwood Green to the Parish Council which has been delayed because of the pandemic. We understand how frustrating this must be for those residents who want to make a start on their allotment plots and the setting up of the Dementia Garden, but rest assured we are making this a priority.

However, despite chasing Redrow, they still need to agree a specification and ongoing management plan with Maidstone Borough Council as part the Section 106 agreement. We are currently drawing up the formal Tenancy Agreement, and once this has been agreed with the newly formed Allotment Society, will be provided to Redrow as part of the legal agreement.

# HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT

## Kent County Council Highways Fault Reporting and Parish Portal

You can report non-urgent issues online including street light faults, potholes, drainage, traffic signal faults and overgrown vegetation (including hedges and grass):

[www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults](http://www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults)

The Parish Council have registered to receive up-to-date information on the KCC Highways Parish Portal.

## One Network

This useful tool reports on traffic restrictions and roadworks in Kent. The dates and times may vary but the Parish Council aim to keep residents updated by posting on Facebook and via the new e-newsletter on a weekly basis from the notifications received from one.network.

## Emergency Road Closures

We reported on Emergency Road Closures in the last newsletter and the disruption and delays they were causing in the village. Despite lobbying our County Councillor to take up with Kent Highways and speaking with Kent Highways directly, they still appear to be happening. The Parish Council will continue to chase on this.





### **Speed Indicator Device (SID)**

The posts for the SID device have now been installed in the three agreed locations and these were the only permissible sites that have been assessed by Kent Highways. We are awaiting handover before completing the scheme but unfortunately this is on hold until we are able to meet face to face.

As previously advised, Councillors met with representatives of Kent Highways a couple of years ago to look at possible positions in Howland Road, Goudhurst Road, Thorn Road, Maidstone Road and Pattenden Lane. Kent Highways have strict criteria they need to adhere to including safety of anyone moving the sign. Unfortunately, there were no suitable locations in Pattenden Lane or Maidstone Road.

The SID will be in situ at each location for a period of 1-3 months and then moved by the Village Caretaker. Hopefully, once this device is up and running, it will help deter speeding along these roads particularly those entering the village on the Goudhurst Road.

### **Speed Watch & Lorry Watch**

Yet again because of COVID-19 and social distancing, the Speed Watch and Lorry Watch schemes have been put on hold. The Parish Council will make it a priority to kick start these projects as soon as it is deemed suitable.

## **OPEN SPACE**

If the ongoing pandemic has taught us anything, it's how much we value our local parks and open spaces. We are so fortunate in the Parish to have so many and an abundance of Public Rights of Way. Could we please ask residents when using the play areas to continue to follow the rules – maintain social distancing at all times, hand cleaning to be undertaken before and after using equipment, parent/carer to be advised to clean down equipment before and after use and no food or drink in the play area.



### **Southons Field**

Because of the big increase in use of this lovely open space and the deterioration of the existing picnic benches, the Parish Council will be installing six new benches including two with wheelchair/pram access. We are currently looking into the best way of anchoring the benches into position to prevent them from being moved around which unfortunately causes damage.



### ***Southons Field (contd)***

The Parish Council has allocated some capital expenditure towards the purchase of more equipment in the field and have also been awarded a donation from the KCC Member Grant Scheme. As suggested by a few residents, we are looking at installing a bay of swings with this funding – 1 nest swing, 1 flat swing and 1 baby swing later in the Spring near the Play Trail. There is also a box of Community Games available for families/village groups for use in the field. Once Coronavirus restrictions have been lifted, you can contact Ali or Rachel if you would like to borrow them.

Thank you to the resident who has put up the "Room on a Broom" picture hunt around the field – such a lovely idea for children to do.

Please note the field is open during daylight hours only – Sept-Oct 7am-7pm; Nov-Jan 8am-4pm; Feb-March 8am-6pm (dusk if earlier); April-Aug 7am-8pm. We would also ask if you could kindly respect the privacy of residents who live adjacent to the field and there should be no access to the woods.



### **Playing Field**

We understand residents' continuing concerns regarding the issues around the youth shelter. Our PCSO Nicola Morris and colleagues regularly visit the field and chat with the youths. She is also in contact with the parents of those youths who misbehave.

The recent undesirable graffiti on the youth shelter has been removed by our Caretaker and this was reported to Nicola and 101 as criminal damage. The Parish Council will shortly be installing some CCTV to help monitor the situation.

The outdoor gym equipment should have been installed in January but because of the weather, has been postponed. As per the public consultation we held in 2019, 2 sets of 3 pieces of equipment will be placed near the play area and by the footpath for easy access. New litter bins and benches will also be installed which have been taken from the S106 money allocated to the Playing Field.

We would also ask if you could kindly respect the privacy of residents who live adjacent to the field.

## Marden Cemetery

The Cemetery is such a peaceful and wonderful open space with a plethora of wildlife in the hedgerows and areas around. There are several bird feeders which attracts many birds. Posters have been placed on the signage board requesting that visitors consider using more sustainable flower tributes and endeavour not to leave plastic on graves and interment of ashes' plots.

## POLICE & CRIME UPDATE

Since the Autumn Newsletter was issued, there have been various crimes of note which include criminal damage and a number of thefts and burglaries. There have also been a few anti-social behaviour reports such as nuisance motorbikes. Nicola Morris, our PCSO, continues to work with Golding Homes and MHS Homes on various issues.

Kent Police have also attended calls in relation to coronavirus breaches and fixed notice penalties have been issued. If you have evidence of any coronavirus breaches, please report incidents to 101.

There has been a rise recently of outbuildings being broken into and various items such as power tools and quad bikes being stolen. Please make sure your outbuildings are secure. If you do have a break in or have any information regarding stolen items in the area, please do report it by calling 101.

Residents are the 'eyes & ears' of the village, so please continue to report incidents as it helps to put extra resources into the parish and Kent Police try to collate as much evidence as possible. In an emergency call 999, or if you have any names or information on any crime in the Parish, please call 101.

Alternatively you can report an incident or if you witness something which could be helpful in an investigation, you can check out the Kent Police Appeals page: <http://bit.ly/KPAppeals> For Kent Crimestoppers anonymously, dial 0800 555 111 or check out their website: [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

If you need to report incidents on trains or at the train station, please text the British Transport Police on 61016 to report non-emergency incidents on trains or dial 0800 405040 to give more information.

Because of current restrictions, the Parish Police Surgeries and Maidstone Community Protection Team sessions are not able to take place, but they will be reinstated once it is safe to do so.

**CrimeStoppers.**  
**Speak up. Stay safe.**



## **Beware of Scammers**

If people use telephone call blockers/screening they may not be able to receive a phone call for their COVID vaccination appointments but will receive a letter instead. No one is required to pay as they are free. In a recent scam, a person was cold called and told that she needed to pay for the injection that she was about to receive and it would be refunded (a lie). Unless previously arranged eg. if you are housebound, no one would just turn up on your doorstep!

People are still being scammed out of thousands of pounds by scammers pretending to be from the Metropolitan police or police from another county. They ask for help in a fraud case and tell victims not to tell anyone what is going on in case the other people are involved. The police or any other agency would not ask residents to do this. The scammers have even collected victims and driven them to London or another location in order to take out or transfer money or buy expensive items that are handed over to the scammers immediately or by arrangement. Please always check with family, trusted friends, Kent Police (using 101 or 999 if the people are with you) no matter what someone tells you!



Trust your instincts if something strikes you as being a bit odd and run it past someone else first - don't feel pressured into making on the spot decisions. If you would like information about the different types of scams around and you have access to the internet please check out: <http://bit.ly/KCCScams> or [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/) Alternatively, call Mira Martin the Community Warden (contact details on the back page).

## **HEALTH & WELLBEING**

### **Transport to Your Covid-19 Vaccination**

A very kind resident has offered his services for free to any residents struggling to get to Headcorn Aerodrome or any other sites for vaccinations. If you or anyone you know is having difficulty in getting to vaccination appointments, please contact Cameron Peachey on 07713 346112. Thank you Cameron, another unsung hero!

### **Post-Covid Recovery Advice**

If you have been unfortunate to have suffered from coronavirus and your recovery is taking some time, a support hub has been set up by Asthma UK and the British Lung Foundation to provide information and dedicated support for people who have been diagnosed with Covid-19 and their family members. This can be accessed at: <https://www.post-covid.org.uk/>

### **Post-Covid-19 Recovery Advice (Cont)**

Post-Covid effects could include muscle weakness and joint stiffness, extreme tiredness/fatigue and lack of energy, loss of appetite and weight loss, sleep problems, mental abilities e.g. not being able to remember some events, think clearly and being forgetful, changes in your mood, anxiety or depression, nightmares or flashbacks, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The following link also takes you to advice on breathing, swallowing, clearing the lungs and exercises to help with recovery:

<http://bit.ly/CoronavirusRecovery>

### **Kent County Council Symptom-Free Testing**

Everyone without symptoms should get tested every 2 weeks especially if you're leaving the house for an essential reason such as going to work or shopping for necessary goods. Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms, so get tested regularly to make sure you are not unknowingly spreading the virus.

You can book an appointment at any of the 24 sites across Kent and sites closest to Marden are The Hop Farm at Paddock Wood and Cranbrook Vestry Hall (near the church). These sites are in addition to the regional and local testing sites for people who have symptoms and are being funded by central Government to support local councils and help reduce Covid-19 rates. For more information, click on the link below for more information:

<http://bit.ly/KCCSymFreeTesting>

### **Marden Medical Centre Update**

Many thanks again to our wonderful Medical Centre who is working hard to ensure we are all looked after during these difficult times and they have had to make significant changes to the way they operate. Please be understanding with our wonderful team – they have your best interests at heart.

Please only enter the surgery building if you have a pre-booked appointment or are collecting medication from the dispensary. Collection times are now: 8:30am-1pm and 2pm-6pm. A mask must be worn at all times in the building. To maintain safety for all our patients and staff, all requests for an appointment are initially triaged by phone: the clinician will decide with you if a subsequent video consultation, “face-to-face” appointment or home visit are required. Phone calls can be booked online using Patient Online Services (see details below) or by calling the surgery from 8:30am.





### Marden Medical Centre Update (Cont)

We have also recently launched a new online consultation platform “e-consult” which allows you to access advice for health conditions and make requests for NON-URGENT advice and treatment by the end of the next working day. Please see our website for further information: <https://www.mardenmedicalcentre.nhs.uk/>

After many months of planning, we are delighted to announce that our portacabin should be installed by the middle of March. This will provide us with much needed additional clinical and administrative space. Thank you to all our patients and the community of Marden for all your support during what remains a very challenging time for us.

### Download the myGP<sup>®</sup> app



### Online Access at Marden Medical Centre

The Medical Centre is trying to encourage use of the online and paper-free services they offer at the surgery. These enable repeat prescriptions and appointment bookings as well as many other features.

There are two ways to access this facility:

- IF YOU HAVE A SMART PHONE OR WIFI ENABLED TABLET you can download the NHS App from Play Store or the App Store etc. You will need to have a current UK passport or drivers licence to activate the App. This is a very slick service which has been simplified during the pandemic and is entirely secure.
- IF YOU PREFER USING A PC OR LAPTOP then ask or call reception for a telephone assessment with reception (01622 831257) within a week at which we may be able to verify your identity with questions using our medical records. After this you should get an email with links to several websites (Patient Access, MY GP etc) and some secure codes. This will let you open an account via the website. If you have forgotten your password and these websites cannot help, then you can start again with either option above.



**Marden Medical Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG)**

The Marden Medical Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG) acts as a patient voice, representing patient’s views, and helping the GPs deliver high quality health care services. The PPG is free to join, you will receive regular health & well-being information by email and receive the bi-annual Newsletter.



Our next virtual meeting will be held on Thursday 18th March 2021 at 7.00pm and our guest speaker will be Craig Brown from the NHS Kent and Medway Primary Care Network (PCN) organisation:  
<https://www.kentandmedwayccg.nhs.uk/about-us/who-we-are/primary-care-networks>

You do not need to be a PPG member to participate in PPG meetings which last about 60 minutes. For more information on why you should consider joining the Group, please visit our website:  
<https://www.mardenppg.org.uk/>

Or you can find us on Facebook by searching for Marden Medical Centre PPG.

Please contact [ppg@mardenppg.org.uk](mailto:ppg@mardenppg.org.uk) or give me a call on 07769 53 88 97.  
*John Haddow, Chairman*



**Health, Wellbeing and Key Community Contact List**

Marden Medical Centre, the Patients Participation Group and Parish Council have collated a useful contact list leaflet for residents to refer to which is enclosed within this Newsletter. We want to reach out to as many residents as possible, especially those who have no online access. There is a plethora of health and wellbeing advice and support available and this list will be updated on a regular basis.



**Community Assistance Group**

The Parish Council is concerned about those residents who are vulnerable or are self-isolating, and it is essential that we reach out to as many of you as possible so that nobody falls through the cracks. Should anyone need assistance with shopping, prescription collection etc, please do not hesitate to contact Rachel on 07940 241333 or email: [deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)

## Community Assistance Group (Cont)

We would like to say a big thank you again to all of you who signed up with the Parish Council to be a volunteer for the Community Assistance Group, and even if you didn't sign up but have been helping a neighbour, we really appreciate the efforts volunteers have made with assisting those who are vulnerable in our Parish. It is in times of need that a community really does pull together and help others who are less fortunate.



## Knock& Check

There is a wonderful initiative called the Knock and Check service which asks people to check on their neighbours or any known residents living alone. Please have a read: <http://bit.ly/KnockandCheck>



## Marden Food Bank Update

Marden's Food Bank was set up in response to the supermarket crisis and the shielding of vulnerable individuals last March at the start of the Coronavirus crisis. As the pandemic grew, national lockdowns were set; schools were closed; the furlough scheme was introduced and businesses struggled to survive – which meant that many families and individuals had an immediate income crisis. We are incredibly thankful to have been able to keep this initiative going for nearly a year now - this has enabled us to continue to support our community at a really difficult time and more good news is that we now have plans to be able to make this a permanent resource for our village.



We see people from all walks of life - rising living costs, an unexpected expense, changes to income and/or benefit loss are all reasons why someone might find themselves in need of a food bank. Perhaps a family problem or illness has seen them without anywhere else to turn. What is important is that when food becomes scarce, there is somewhere to turn and someone to talk to.



## Marden Food Bank (Cont)

Can we take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude for all your efforts at fundraising, dropping off bags of shopping and ensuring we have the funds available to purchase food and keep this going - how we treat each other when life is hard speaks volumes about us as a community. If you wish and are able to make a financial donation, please contact Jane Lowther treasurer@mardenchurch.org.uk or phone 01622 832974 or email: office@mardenchurch.org.uk or call 01622 831890

*Kathy Young*



## Marden Dementia Group

The Dementia Friendly Community Marden Group and "Living Memories" are looking forward to seeing you all again and making progress with community projects, in particular the allotments which will also provide a meeting space for all our villagers with special needs. If you have not already registered with us and would like to support us once we are up and running again, please email: rachel\_chacon@hotmail.co.uk or gail.jessel@hotmail.co.uk

*Rachel Chacon*



## Kent Together – Looking After Your Mental Health & Wellbeing

For many people, Coronavirus has created uncertainty and anxiety and the constant news can feel overwhelming. This anxiety is natural and we are all feeling it. Fortunately, there are things that we can do to protect our mental health and to support the wellbeing of our friends and family. There are local activities, inspiration and a handy list of resources and services to get you started. If you need help now, find how to access urgent support by looking at this link:

<http://bit.ly/KCCKentTogether>

If you are vulnerable and need urgent support that cannot be met through existing support networks, you can find answers to common questions on the link above. They can help with making sure you have enough food and supplies, picking up prescriptions and making sure you have someone to talk to by phone, Skype or Facetime. If you are unable to use the online form, call the helpline. Deaf British Sign Language users can text the Sensory Services team on 07920 154315 for helping make a request.



## Local Mental Health Support

A resident in Marden has generously offered her mental health services to those in the village who require support free of charge during this difficult time in Lockdown. If you would like to take part or enquire further, please join the Marden Wellbeing Group Facebook group for more information.

## Mental Health and Support with Addictions

During this pandemic, there has been a lot of information about the virus and its effects on mental health because of the social, financial and psychological implications it carries which can seriously impact on mental wellbeing. If any residents need help, has relatives or friends who need support with any addiction or mental health issues, please check out this link for guidance and helpful information:

<http://bit.ly/RehabAddiction>



## Loneliness during the Coronavirus

The Mental Health Foundation is part of the national mental health response during the coronavirus outbreak. The Government advice is designed to keep us safe, is under constant review and will be different depending on where you live. Please check out:

<http://bit.ly/COVIDLoneliness>

## Marden Children's Centre

As you know Marden Children's Centre is still closed, but that doesn't mean they have disappeared. We have supported over 30 families in the last few months at the food bank and in addition, the members of the team would like to say a huge thank you to all the people who donated to 'The Wishing Tree' that they set up for vulnerable families to receive presents for Christmas. In total 67 children got gifts this year and hopefully brought smiles to lots of faces in these tough times.

The staff are still engaged in sending out weekly emails to families in the area for things to do and have now added a "Let's cook together" one too. On the Facebook page, they are hosting virtual groups for Bumps2babes and Under 1's and are also advertising up and coming courses that are being run virtually by Adult Education. There will be future courses being run by Maidstone Children's Centres too. Please visit the Maidstone Children's Centre Facebook page or email:

[mardenchildrenscentre@kent.gov.uk](mailto:mardenchildrenscentre@kent.gov.uk)  
or call: 03000 415665

*Kasha De Verny*



# DRAINAGE & WATER

## **Review of Marden Flooding and Surface Water Management Plan**

Once again, the Parish has endured another long spell of extremely wet weather over the last few months which has resulted in many flooding issues and various road closures including Green Lane, Plain Road, Hunton Road and Sheephurst Lane. Thank you to all those residents who have provided extremely useful evidence of the flooding and sewerage problems – please keep sending it in to: [clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)

Marden does have a long history of flooding from a variety of sources, some of which are shared with other parishes in the Low Weald such as Collier Street, Staplehurst and Headcorn, and others being specific to the village and its surroundings. Sources of flooding include river, surface water, sewer and groundwater.

Flood management responsibilities are fairly complex and are shared by a variety of agencies including the Government, Environment Agency (EA), Kent County Council (KCC), Landowners, the Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board (UMIDB), Maidstone Borough Council (MBC), Southern Water (sewerage) and South East Water (drinking water supply).

The Parish Council has now drafted an extensive review of Marden flooding issues and required actions which was ratified at Full Council on the 9th February. It logs all the areas where there are issues such as foul and surface water flooding at The Cockpit, surface water flooding in Howland Road, Goudhurst Road and Battle Lane, fluvial flood risk at Wheelbarrow Estate and Plain Road, repeated foul sewer flooding along Maynards footpath and nearby houses, various sewer flood events e.g. Pattenden Lane, Sovereigns Way and Marden Beech.

The Parish Council will now put pressure on the Kent County Council as leading flood authority, in the first instance, to try to mitigate the issues. Can we put a shout out to residents if they are experiencing sewage issues, to contact Southern Water so they have a better picture of events and where they are happening. Our MP Helen Grant is also pressuring Southern Water as Staplehurst are having similar issues. The first Marden Surface Water Management Plan was completed in February 2017 by Kent County Council (KCC) and the Parish Council has undertaken a periodic review of the action plan. However, because of the ever-growing list of flooding issues in Marden which have now been logged, we are pressing KCC for this plan to be urgently updated. You can find the document on the KCC website: <http://bit.ly/KCCMardenWater>

## Maynards Footpath

Many of you will be aware that the footpath between Maynards and Goudhurst Road has flooded many times this Winter due to water and sewage coming out of a manhole after heavy rain. The Parish Council has been pushing Southern Water to investigate why this has happened (not just this Winter but for a number of years) and to resolve the issue. Southern Water has now undertaken a survey of the sewer and found that a section of the pipe has an accumulation of debris which is causing 75% of the pipe to be blocked. They have assured us that this is at the top of their remedial action list and will be cleared soon by using high pressure jetting equipment. We very much hope that this will put an end to the problem.



## Marden Flood Wardens

A number of residents in Marden, including the Vice-Chairman and Deputy Clerk, undertook Flood Warden Training in November. The Flood Wardens are now actively monitoring the flood situation whenever we have heavy rain and arranging for urgent messages to go out to residents via Facebook. If anyone else would like to train to become a Flood Warden, please let Rachel know.

## Dealing with Problems in Private Drains

We can all play our part to prevent the sewers in Marden becoming blocked by only putting the right things down the drain. Southern Water, who are responsible for our sewers, has issued a leaflet – check out:

<http://bit.ly/PrivateDrainsLeaflet>

Here are a few key steps to deal with blockages in drains:

- Kitchen – pour excess fat into a container and dispose of in the bin and not down the sink
- Drains – motor oil, paint and other waste must never be poured into drains as many flow into rivers and coastal waters
- Bathroom – only flush the ‘Three Ps’ – pee, poo and paper. Items such as wipes, sanitary products, nappies and cotton pads/buds should go in the bin as they can cause blockages
- Check your Connections – appliances such as washing machines and even toilets can be connected to the wrong pipes, meaning untreated water drains directly into rivers and coastal waters. Visit: [connectright.org.uk](http://connectright.org.uk) for advice on checking your connections.



# CLIMATE, SUSTAINABILITY AND BIODIVERSITY

## Keep Marden Tidy

### Village Litter Pick

The current Government guidelines on litter picking is to take a precautionary approach and any organised litter picking events should not take place until further notice. Therefore, the Parish Council will be looking at organising a litter pick event hopefully in the Autumn. Should you choose to pick up litter on your daily exercise, please ensure you do so safely and in line with the latest Government guidance.

### "Keep Britain Tidy" Campaign

As we are at an ecological crisis point, it has never been more important to stop unmanaged plastic waste from harming our wildlife. The "Keep Britain Tidy" Campaign advocates improving the environment on your doorstep - litter blights our streets, parks and beaches and costs us millions of pounds to clear up every year. "Keep Britain Tidy" wants to inspire people to eliminate litter now and for future generations. It's not just about getting people to pick up litter but changing behaviour permanently by spotlighting the problem daily and offering creative solutions. "Keep Britain Tidy" work with people, businesses, local authorities and government to educate, innovate and inspire - improving the environment on everyone's doorstep. Check them out: <http://bit.ly/KeepBritainTidy21>

## Thank You - Marden Wildlife Group

A huge thank you to all those local farmers, bird and wildlife experts who are being so proactive with our local wildlife. We are so lucky to have such dedicated and knowledgeable people and farmers doing all they can to support and enhance the local wildlife.

### Marden Wildlife Group Update

Marden Wildlife rounded-off its first year with new followers, new species discovered in the village (some, nationally rare insects and plants, others spectacular arrivals like the Great White Egret) and an outstanding new book celebrating the village's natural treasures. Members enjoy finding and recording anything and everything - from bats to butterflies and orchids to Odonata. Tracking turtle doves for the RSPB and helping local farmers increase yellowhammer numbers, have all helped maintain Marden's rural surroundings. We now boast more moth traps per household than anywhere in Kent! Villagers have taken to identifying these magical insects in their gardens, assisted online by our own experts.



*Redwing (red listed bird) – Sue Pennicott*



### **Marden Wildlife Group (Cont)**

Both restricted and inspired by lockdown, enthusiasts from all age groups enjoy activities ranging from finding caterpillars or snakes, to bird-ringing and recording important scientific data. As normality returns, guided birdwatching and bat walks, demonstrations and talks are planned. If you'd like to become involved (no knowledge necessary, just willingness to open your eyes to what's around you) check out our Marden Wildlife Facebook page or email: [mardenwildlife@gmail.com](mailto:mardenwildlife@gmail.com) There's a few copies of the book left – a stunning depiction of our wildlife by village photographers - available from Forty-Seven, or via our email.

*Ray Morris*

## **YOUTH PROVISION**

As we have reported before, there is currently no youth provision in the Parish after both KCC and the YMCA withdrew their services. Both the Parish Council and our County Councillor have been lobbying the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services expressing our concerns about the growing youth population in Marden and with no provision available to them. We are pleased to announce that KCC is now willing to help to try to build provision in Marden and Councillors met virtually with the Maidstone Youth Hub Manager in January who works closely with the Children's Centre.

She is confident there is scope to provide a weekly youth club session possibly on a Thursday evening, and long-term may be able to deliver two sessions per week for both younger and older children. There could also be an opportunity for local volunteers to be trained by the members of the Youth Hub. Following a meeting on 24th February, the Youth Hub Manager will be visiting our open space to speak with young people to get feedback on what their needs are in the village.

## **OTHER PARISH INFORMATION**

### **KALC Community Award Scheme**

Each year at the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) the Parish Council makes an award to a resident who has shown outstanding service to the community. This award is sponsored by the Kent Association of Local Councils, KCC and the High Sheriff of Kent.

The Parish Council agreed a nomination in January 2020 but were unable to present the award as the APM was cancelled due to the pandemic crisis.

It is with great pleasure to announce that a joint award was finally presented to Robin and Barbara Judd by Cllr Kate Tippen (socially-distanced) just prior to Christmas. Robin and Barbara met in Marden belfry and were married in the church in 1966. They have always lived in Marden and have served on a number of church committees and teams over the years. Robin was at one time Church Warden.

**KALC Community Award (Cont)**

They went to Marden Primary school as did their parents and their two children. Barbara taught there for 35 years and Robin was a Governor for some time. They have always been involved in village activities and clubs and enjoyed hosting village events on Southons Field for many years. Robin, a keen cricketer, played for the village teams and on gaining a qualification as a cricket coach, with friends, founded Marden Colts.



From 1964 Robin served on Marden Parish Council for 36 years, four as Chairman. An Independent member on Maidstone Borough Council, Robin represented Marden for 16 years and was Mayor of Maidstone in 1998.



Before selling to the Parish Council and with the help of Barbara's father, George Flisher, they planted a variety of interesting specimen trees in Southons Field.

On receiving the award Robin and Barbara said: *"We were totally amazed, totally dumbstruck and very humbled. It has been a privilege to have spent our lives in this lovely village and we have been very fortunate. The pandemic has been catastrophic in so many ways and we realise that it has offered major challenges to the Parish Council. We believe that when life returns to something resembling normal, the village will emerge with an even stronger sense of community."*



**Marden Library and Heritage Centre**

Our wonderful Library and Heritage Centre is still closed, but it is a promising sign that it may reopen at some point as Kent Libraries have recently undertaken external repair works to the building. Our County Councillor Eric Hotson continues to lobby the Cabinet Member responsible for Kent Libraries as have the Parish Council and History Group. The Library is such an important Community Hub for all ages and interests in the village with its numerous activities.

## **Census Day Sunday 21st March 2021**

The Census which happens every ten years, provides a snapshot of our society, our population, where we all live, what we all do and how things have changed in the last ten years. A successful census will ensure everyone from local government to charities can put services and funding in the places where they are most needed. This could mean things like doctors' surgeries, schools and new transport routes. That is why it is so important everyone takes part and we have made it easier for people to do so online on any device, with help available, and paper questionnaires for those that need them. In this Census, questions will be asked about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. For the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity. Your personal data is safe, protected by law and locked away for 100 years. No individual, organisation or even government department can gain access whatever the circumstances. Initial summaries of 'stripped' data from the Census are expected to be available within 12 months. For more information please visit: [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk) or email: [census.customerservices@ons.gov.uk](mailto:census.customerservices@ons.gov.uk) or call 01329 444972.

## **Marden Community Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)**

The Marden Charity is now up and running and waiting to receive applications from residents and village organisations. Since the charity was set up in 2020 the Trustees have approved several grants to individuals and village organisations including one to the Marden Food Bank to support its vital work in the village.

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 available for providing or paying for items, services, or facilities.

What type of things are covered?  
This is a grant to individuals living in Marden who are suffering hardship or illness, for specific purposes where funding is not normally available from other sources to assist with for example: sight, hearing or mobility; quality of life or social care; education and training for children & young people; education and training for health and social care professionals.

Grants will also be available to village organisations for specific projects.

How much can I apply for? All grant payments will be at the discretion of Trustees. A maximum grant of £100 will be payable to individuals and £500 to village organisations.

## **Marden Community Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Cont)**

How can I apply? Forms for both individuals and organisations can be downloaded from the Marden Parish Council website. If you are an individual applying for a grant the form will need to be countersigned by someone in a professional capacity who knows about your circumstances or one of the charity's trustees (you will find their names on the website). If you are applying on behalf of a village organisation you will need a trustee to countersign your application.

All the information about the charity and application forms can be found on the Marden Parish Council website: <https://bit.ly/MardenCharity> or email: [mardencommunitycio@gmail.com](mailto:mardencommunitycio@gmail.com)

Marden Community CIO ensures the security of personal data and all information is dealt with confidentially.

### **Marden Primary Academy**

It's been a strange time for all schools but having a new Principal and then going into lockdown has not been easy for the pupils, parents and teachers at Marden.

Despite this, it has been a pleasure getting to know the community and working with the staff to improve the provision at Marden Primary Academy, we even found time for some fun!



My job over the next term will be to find a permanent Principal for Marden and to ensure the handover does not unsettle things again for any of our learners.

Look out for our Weekly Newsletter to discover more about what's happening and what our pupils are learning. Check out: <http://bit.ly/MardenPrimaryAcademy>  
*Mrs L Fidock*

### **Community Warden Update**

Our Community Warden Mira Martin continues to walk around the village and deals with residents' concerns where she can or signposts them in the right direction to another service/agency. Mira also visited residents between lockdowns and continues to support them and keep in touch by phone/email and doorstep visit. She also deals with a number of referrals from partner agencies requesting welfare checks in Marden, can give advice and information to new and existing residents to access services they require or help tackle miscellaneous issues such as fly tipping and nuisance behaviour, or anything else you're unsure of or are worried about. You can contact Mira on 07969 584179 or email: [mira.martin@kent.gov.uk](mailto:mira.martin@kent.gov.uk)



## **Kent Support and Assistance Scheme for those in Crisis**

The Kent Support and Assistance Service (KSAS) may be able to help you if you are having serious difficulties managing your income or if you are facing exceptional pressures because of an emergency.

The support can be accessed via:  
<http://bit.ly/KCCSupport>

## **Maidstone Borough Council Covid-19 Grant**

Central Government has allocated funding to Maidstone Borough Council under the Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies to support people who are struggling to afford essential items due to financial hardship caused by COVID-19. This scheme is temporary and to be eligible for the scheme you must: be over the age of 16, live within Maidstone Borough, be able to demonstrate that the financial hardship is due to Covid-19 during the period July 2020-January 2021 and have household income less than £40,000 per annum. It is one application per household and can be used for any tenure whether private or social rent and homeowner occupiers – please check out the following link:

<http://bit.ly/MBCCovidGrant>



## **Maidstone Borough Council – Help with Council Tax and Benefits**

If you have been financially affected by the Coronavirus and are unable to make your Council Tax payments, please contact the Council Tax team on 01622 602003 or email:

[counciltax@midkent.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@midkent.gov.uk)

If you think you need any other assistance with benefits, please check out:

<http://bit.ly/MBCCTandBenefitHelp>

## **WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN?**



The Rude Mechanical Theatre Company is planning to perform in Marden once again this year on Saturday 3rd July at 7.30pm. This wonderful troupe of professional actors will bring 'Little Lily Harley' – a play about Charlie Chaplin's childhood in Lambeth – including their musical talents to Southons Field for a socially distanced, outdoor performance. Tickets are available from The Rudes' website, with your money back if you can't subsequently come. See their website for full details: [www.therudemechanicaltheatre.co.uk](http://www.therudemechanicaltheatre.co.uk). If you are unable to buy your tickets online, call Heidi or Nigel Scott on 01622 831364.

## What's going on in Marden? (Cont)

As ever, a big welcome if you are new to our lovely village, and you can find all the details in the "Welcome Pack" on the Parish Council website: <https://bit.ly/MPCWelcomePack>. With the ongoing crisis, it is sad village events have not been able to take place. We have so many Village Groups/Organisations in the village and many of them have been able to continue with "virtual" activities. Turn the page for a flavour of what some of the organisations have been up to.

### Marden at Christmas

The Parish Council had to make the difficult decision to cancel the usual Marden at Christmas event. To keep the spirit of Christmas alive, we arranged for Father Christmas and his Parish Elves to visit the children outside at various locations around the village, held an Elf Trail and a Festive Front Competition.



Many children also wrote to our special Father Christmas and received replies from him. We would like to thank all the entrants for taking part in the Festive Front Competition – all the displays looked fantastic and helped to brighten up the village at Christmas amidst this dreadful crisis.

Thanks also to those residents who voted and congratulations to the winner in 12 Haffenden Close – here they are accepting their Christmas Hamper from Marden Farm Shop.



### Friends of Marden Heritage (FOMH)

As we were unable to hold our usual January Quiz and we cannot have the Snowdown Choir concert in April, we are planning to organise a "Zoom Into Spring Quiz" on April 17th. You can enter this from the comfort of your home via Zoom - cost will be £5 per person - further details to follow. We also plan to defer the Choir Concert in Church till October, if we are allowed to. We also plan to hold a Virtual Zoom AGM on 11th May. We were sad to lose Lady Sue Fenn in January, who will be sadly missed by her colleagues in FOMH. She and husband Sir Nick were instrumental in establishing the Society. Sue volunteered to be on the Committee representing the Church, while Nick wrote the Constitution for us! Sue remained on the committee until her retirement last year and was always very generous with her time and supported FOMH in so many ways. She was a true lady, always very easy to talk to and interested in what others were doing. She just radiated warmth and we will miss her a lot.

For further info, please check out: [friends@mardenhistory.org.uk](mailto:friends@mardenhistory.org.uk) or email: [friends@mardenhistory.org.uk](mailto:friends@mardenhistory.org.uk)

### **Marden Art Club**

Some of us have been participating in Zoom get-togethers and mutual projects with other local artists up until Christmas. We hope to resume these soon until meeting face-to-face becomes possible again. We are only a small group and miss the contact and "critiques" of other people - someone else can often see where you are going wrong. The Club will definitely continue as soon as possible. If you would like more info, please email:

tillergirl2913@gmail.com or call 01622 831529.

*Mo and Vera*

### **Marden Bowls Club**

The Bowls Club celebrate their 50th Anniversary this year, and COVID-19 permitting, we have planned a Celebration Day on Monday 12th July together with celebration games against the County. We have also produced a book about the interesting history of the Club which will be made available from May. Given the reputation of our green we are again hosting some of Kent's top competitive games.

The season starts on Saturday 1st May with an Open Day at which we hope to attract new members to the Club. Proceedings start at 2pm, so please make a note in your diary. You will be made most welcome, all equipment will be provided, and you will only need flat soled shoes.

It is a game for the whole family. You can check out the website: <https://mardenbowlsclub.co.uk/> or the Marden Bowls Club Facebook Page  
*Mick Collins*

### **Marden Horticultural Society (MHS)**

The last meeting of MHS was in March 2020. After Lockdown, in the summer we invited members to join us in Southons Field for a chat. We swapped plants and bought face masks made by Jean; donations went to the Marden Food Bank. We visited Hole Park, Rolvenden with a talk by the Head Gardener. It is a lovely, interesting garden.

In November, monthly zoom meetings started; our speaker, Darren Lerigo, spoke about 'Clippings'. He clips the topiary at Charlotte Molesworth's wonderful garden in Benenden - Balmoral Cottage. In November, a plant swap outside the Vestry Hall raised over £150 for the Marden Food Bank. A book swap took place in the library car park. We organised a zoom Christmas quiz and in January had a fantastic talk by Steve Edney, previously Head Gardener at The Salutation Gardens and now Head Gardener for Canterbury Cathedral. Our first coffee morning was in January; it was great fun and covered many topics. We shall continue with these and our zoom talks until everything becomes 'normal' again. We welcome new members and any ideas and thoughts from existing ones to keep us all busy and entertained. Check out our website: <http://bit.ly/MardenHS>



### **Marden in Bloom**

Despite all the restrictions last year, we managed to complete our normal activities including planting another 5,000 daffodils in the parish - so over the last few years we have planted and donated over 20,000 bulbs around the village.

To lift your spirits in this exceptional time, we are planning to hold a 'Daffodil Trail' and will be issuing a map via Facebook and in some village shops of where they are positioned for residents to walk around the parish in March - look out for further details. Please post your photos on our Marden in Bloom Facebook page. We received some great entries for the "Best Tree" competition showcasing what wonderful trees we have in our Parish. Entries are currently on our Facebook page and please check out and give them a vote. We plan to hold a Plant Sale on Saturday 12th June near One Stop and online - watch out for further details. We always need help with our projects, so if you can help please email: [mardeninbloom@outlook.com](mailto:mardeninbloom@outlook.com) or call Anne on 07828 868703.

*Anne Boswell and the Bloomers*



### **Marden History Group/Heritage Centre Update**

We received a cheque for £220 from the Marden Cricket & Hockey Club and the repairs to roof at the Library have been undertaken. We are in contact with all volunteers and supporters on a monthly basis and have contact with individuals from time to time. We thank Mark Williams for his generosity in painting PLUTO, siren and unknown soldier and to Marden In Bloom for the Remembrance Day poppies. Various books are being written, wills being transcribed, Marden in lockdown being recorded and cataloguing continuing.

We thank Nigel Jenner and his men and Andy Wardley and his firemen for firing the siren on the 11th of the 11th at 11.00am. Philip Day has made 2 films. One about the story of Franz von Werra who crashed near Love's Farm on the Goudhurst Road and the other about the mystery of who crashed with their Dornier in Wilden Wood. To view these go to:

The Men Who Fell from The Sky  
<http://bit.ly/TheManWhoFellFromSky>

Fields and Their Secrets The Thirty Acres  
<http://bit.ly/TheFieldsandTheirSecrets>

Nigel Jenner and Chris Jenkins bedded the stone plaque commemorating Marden's Airfield, the ragstone provided by Gallagher's. For further info, check call 01622 832295 or see their website: <http://bit.ly/MardenHistoryGroup>

*David McFarland*



### **Marden Motor Club**

On Saturday 29th May, Marden Motor Club will be holding their annual Motor Show on Southons Field between 1.00pm and 4.00pm, COVID-19 restrictions allowing. The West End Tavern will be running a bar and BBQ and members of the Motor Club will be providing tea and home-made cakes. The last Show attracted over 100 cars and motorcycles and if you have an interesting vehicle you would like considered for display please contact us via email on: [nickfgow@googlemail.com](mailto:nickfgow@googlemail.com)

*Nick Ferguson-Gow*

### **Marden Parish Church**

Like many organisations, it has been a challenging time for the Church here in Marden. Usual services were unable to take place, especially over Christmas and with the current restrictions in place, the Church is sadly closed for worship on a Sunday. However, while the doors of our building are closed, our hearts are open, and the church is very much alive and active in the community and here to help in any way.

Our services have gone online during the week and Sundays and are livestreamed through the Church Facebook page. This has enabled us to worship together from our own homes as well as reaching those who may not have normally come to church.

At this time, it is uncertain to say what form our Easter services will take this year but do keep a check on the church notice boards, church website [www.mardenchurch.org.uk](http://www.mardenchurch.org.uk) and Facebook page @churcheinmarden. If you would like to receive our weekly news-sheet, please email [office@mardenchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@mardenchurch.org.uk). Please don't hesitate to get in contact with us if we can help in any way or would just like a friendly call. Ring the Vicarage on 01622 831379 or email me on: [vicar@mardenchurch.org.uk](mailto:vicar@mardenchurch.org.uk) Stay safe and well.

*Rev Nicky Harvey*

### **Marden Scout Group**

With COVID-19 restrictions, Marden Scout Group have been unable to hold any face-to-face meetings and so continue to deliver the fun & adventure of Scouting through online and offline activities for all of our members. We thank all of our members and leaders that have continued to support Scouting in Marden and look forward to seeing all of our members when we are able to return to face to face meetings.

After many years of successfully delivering Scouting to quite literally hundreds of young people, our Jupiter (Monday) Beaver Leadership team stepped down at the end of 2020. While we have appealed for adult volunteers to come forward to form a new Leadership team unfortunately we have had to close Jupiter Colony until volunteers can be found. Volunteers do not need to have had previous experience in Scouting or running a similar Group.

### **Marden Scout Group (cont)**

As a Leadership Team new volunteers will bring their own skills and experiences and with the support of the Scout Group will be quickly finding their feet and making their own mark on the running of the Beaver Colony.

If you would like more information on joining our team then please email: [GSL@mardenscouts.org.uk](mailto:GSL@mardenscouts.org.uk) or check out the website:

<http://mardenscouts.org.uk/>

*Kieran Burns*

### **Marden Society**

Like all Societies we have not been able to meet for nearly a year. We have cancelled our AGM/social get-together - the current committee are happy to continue for another year - and a request to members for any interest in Zoom meetings received only one response.

Our current financial position is healthy and we won't collect subscriptions this year. As more and more of us receive the vaccine, we can only all hope that life will return to normal and we can meet up again. In the meantime, to everyone - keep well, keep safe,

You can check out the website:

<http://mardensociety.org.uk/>

If you would like more info, please email: [tillergirl2913@gmail.com](mailto:tillergirl2913@gmail.com) or call 01622 831529.

*Mo Clayton and the Committee*

### **Marden Theatre Group**



It has been a very long time since we have been able to put on a performance for the village. Before the pandemic hit, we were in the middle of rehearsing our next production of "Waiting For God" and this will be next on the list when we are able to do so safely. We were very sad to hear of the passing of Lady Sue Fenn who has been involved in the group for many years. Due to her continued commitment to the group (along with her late husband, Sir Nicholas Fenn) Sue recently became our President. Our thoughts go out to her family at this difficult time.

The Committee has been meeting via Zoom regularly and we are incredibly grateful to our community for the financial donations we received via our Justgiving page. Without you, we don't know if we would still be here so thank you for your support.

We may not be able to perform face to face, however, we have been busy behind the scenes rehearsing via Zoom on a radio play which we have entered into a competition with other Kent amateur dramatic groups. All will be revealed on our social media and website soon! We are all very excited!

If you are interested in acting, stage management or anything amateur dramatics then email us on [info@mardentheatre.co.uk](mailto:info@mardentheatre.co.uk) or find us on Facebook @mardentheatre.co.uk.

*Mo Gillis-Coates*

### **Marden Village Club**

At the end of 2020, the Village Club made a further donation to the Marden Food Bank to help those families in need. The New Year brings hope that the Club will soon be able to re-open its doors and welcome members back after what has been an extremely testing year for all. We would like to thank all our members for their continued support. If you are interested in joining, please email:

office@mardenvillageclub.co.uk  
*Marden Village Club Committee*

### **Marden Walking Group**

Sadly, due to the lockdown we are not able to organise any guided walks at the moment, and don't know when we can, but never fear we will get back to them in the future. Meanwhile please do get out for a fresh air walk whenever you can. The footpaths through fields are all very wet and muddy, but quite passable with good boots if you can stand a bit of mud. There are still a few sets of our Walking Guides available from the Farm Shop and No 47 at £5 per set of 6, and these will be reprinted shortly. We are also working on a new set of "Historic Walks" around Marden which will be available later in the year, when hopefully we will all be able to get out and enjoy them.

*Catherine Alderson*

### **Marden Women's Institute (WI)**

Marden WI ladies continue to keep in touch, by email and phone.

Last month we ventured into the wonder of Zoom, with a speaker and chat time. Thanks to Moira, our programme manager, we have speakers booked for February and March. The committee is happy to remain in place until we are able to have a face- to-face Annual meeting. Our ladies are keeping an eye on each other and know that help will always be available when needed. We can't wait to meet again! If you would like more info, then please either email: jmr28@btinternet.com or call 07950 816370.

*Jean Robertson*

### **Safe Anaesthesia Worldwide (SAWW)**

SAWW was set up in Marden in 2011 by a number of enthusiastic local trustees. Their objective was to advance health and save lives by the provision of anaesthetic equipment to deprived areas of the world and to support education and research to ensure its effective use, care and maintenance. In the 10 years since its foundation over £250,000 has been raised through a combination of lectures, the sale of paintings and from well-wishers in Marden and far beyond. Whilst the pandemic has limited SAWWs fundraising activities, it has still been able to send vital equipment to hospitals in need around the world. Many hospitals are still waiting for help, and if you would like to make a donation to this important local charity please check out their website: <https://safe4all.org.uk/>

*Roger Eltringham*

# PARISH COUNCIL COUNCILLORS, CLERKS AND OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

Due to the upcoming Local Elections, please only use the office number or the Clerks' mobile numbers after Thursday 6th May as some Councillors may not be re-elected on to the Parish Council. Councillor contact details will be made available on the next Parish Council Newsletter.

## **CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Lesley Mannington

## **VICE CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Kate Tippen

## **PARISH COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Richard Adam

Cllr Chris Barker

Cllr Anne Boswell

Cllr Maria Brown

Cllr Mick Jones

Cllr Ian Newton

Cllr Jean Robertson

Cllr Tom Stevens

Cllr Andy Turner

## **PARISH CLERK**

Ali Hooker

Telephone: 01622 832305

Mobile: 07376 287981

Email: [clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)

## **DEPUTY PARISH CLERK**

Rachel Gillis-Coates

Telephone: 01622 832305

Mobile: 07940 241333

Email: [deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)

Due to restrictions, the Parish Office is currently closed and the Clerks are working from home. Post is routinely collected. Please contact the Clerks on their mobile numbers in the first instance. We hope to return to the office when restrictions are lifted in the future.

## **BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

Cllr David Burton

Telephone: 01622 862595

Mobile: 07590 229910

Email: [david.burton@burtons.uk.com](mailto:david.burton@burtons.uk.com)

Cllr Annabelle Blackmore

Telephone: 01622 833299

Email: [annabelleblackmore@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:annabelleblackmore@maidstone.gov.uk)

## **COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Eric Hotson

Telephone: 01580 892312

Email: [eric.hotson@kent.gov.uk](mailto:eric.hotson@kent.gov.uk)

## **POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER**

PCSO Nicola Morris

Telephone: 101

Email: [nicola.morris@kent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:nicola.morris@kent.pnn.police.uk)

## **COMMUNITY WARDEN**

Mira Martin

Mobile: 07969 584179

Email: [mira.martin@kent.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.kent.gov.uk)

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



@MardenParishCouncil



@mardenkentpc



@mardenparishcouncil