

# MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

## NEWSLETTER



### A LOOK AT THIS ISSUE:

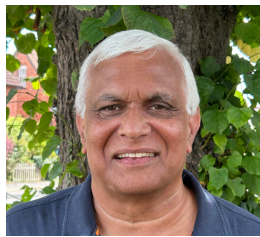
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## UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL



Dear Residents

It is an honour to be able to serve as the new Chairman of the Parish Council and be able to lead such a dedicated experienced team of councillors and staff, led by our Parish Clerk, Alison Hooker. I would particularly like to thank Kate Tippen, who has stepped down as Chairman, for her many achievements and hard work over the years for the community. She has brought a wealth of knowledge, expertise and experience to the post and her experience will, I'm sure, continue to benefit the community.

Recently, our long-serving cemetery caretaker, Ian Jones, retired and will be much missed. I'd like to welcome Neil Watkins our new groundsman who has got off to an excellent start.

The VE day Beacon Lighting Ceremony on 8<sup>th</sup> May at Southons Field was a great success and was a proud moment for the community to honour the sacrifices made by the generation of heroes who gave so much for our freedom.

We're delighted to welcome Cllr Neil Griffiths who was co-opted in May. Neil has a wealth of experience as an engineer which will be of value in helping to contribute to the work of the Parish Council.

I hope to be able to contribute to the life of the community in Marden by helping

to bring new activities for young people whilst still maintaining the peace and tranquillity that all of us enjoy.

*Best Wishes*

*Councillor Adrian Rabot*

## GENERAL UPDATE

All at Marden Parish Council would like to thank Cllr Kate Tippen who has been our dedicated chairman over several years. She has led the team and worked incredibly diligently and conscientiously to achieve successful outcomes and goals for the Parish Council – undoubtedly Kate will continue working just as hard despite standing down as chairman and we look forward to building on her achievements and continuing the positive momentum within the council.



As you know our long-standing cemetery groundsman Ian Jones has now retired, and we would like to introduce our new parish groundsman, Neil Watkins, who is undertaking general and grounds maintenance tasks in the cemetery and around the village. We wish Neil all the best in his role and please say hello when you see him out and about working around the village. We would also like to thank Graham Carey who has been doing various ground maintenance jobs for several years as a contractor.

## **Kent County Council May Elections**

Firstly, we would like to express our thanks to Lottie Parfitt who has been our County Councillor for the last few years. Lottie worked extremely hard for Marden and was a very dedicated councillor on Kent County Council.

Welcome to our new County Councillor Brian Black who has been elected to Maidstone Rural South division. Brian has already attended the Annual Parish Council meeting to introduce himself and to see how he can help on any issues. We trust that he will work with us to ensure Marden is fully represented at the County Council.

Congratulations also to our Borough Councillor Claudine Russell who was also elected as a County Councillor in Cranbrook Division – good luck Claudine in your new role as well as still representing Marden with your borough councillor hat on.

## **Quality of Life Survey**

### **How you Feel About Marden**

In the Spring Newsletter, e-Newsletter, noticeboards and social media, the Parish Council gave everybody in the parish the opportunity to complete the 'Quality of Life' survey and thank you to all those residents who took the time to complete it. We asked you how you feel about Marden, the community and facilities.

We have collated and analysed your feedback, and the overall survey reflects a generally positive sentiment about life

in the village with a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, an appreciation of the strong sense of community and you are broadly happy with local facilities. It illustrated that Marden residents care deeply about their village's safety, cleanliness, community resources and connectivity.

The three main priorities that have come out of the survey are:

- opposition to more housing development
- highways and infrastructure
- youth provision and police presence/safety – see articles below

The Parish Council has listened to your comments, and we will aim to help to improve these facilities and continue to enhance what we offer to the local community.

## **Marden Annual Parish Meeting (APM)**

An Annual Parish Meeting is a gathering of parishioners to discuss local matters and is distinct from a Parish Council meeting. According to the Local Government Act 1972, every parish must hold this meeting annually typically scheduled between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> June. The meeting allows residents to voice their opinions and engage in discussions about parish affairs. It serves as a direct form of democracy enabling community involvement in local governance.

# GENERAL UPDATE CONTD

## Marden Parish Meeting Contd

The Annual Parish Meeting of Electors for 2025 took place on Tuesday 8th April in the Memorial Hall. The Parish Council gave an update on its activities, and our speakers were Sue Eltringham who runs "Sporting Memories" and Ben Thompson from Natural England who works closely with the Marden Farmers Cluster group. Thanks to those residents who came along and to those village organisations who reported on their activities over the last year.

Councillors are currently exploring ways on how the APM can be presented in future and if you have any suggestions, please email Ali in the Parish Office. You can find all the reports on the Parish Council website:  
<https://bit.ly/MPCAnnualReports>



## Community Consultation Open Morning

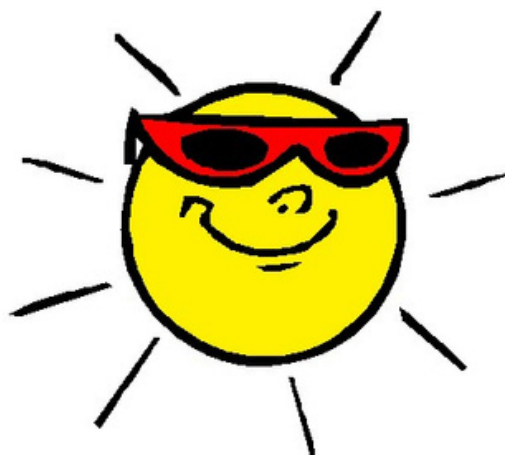
Many thanks to all those residents who attended the Community Consultation Open Morning on 22<sup>nd</sup> March with consultations on the Marden Neighbourhood Plan Review Regulation 14 and Open Space Byelaws, along with the "Quality of Life" survey for Marden residents.

We also asked residents to come up with suggestions for the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) and Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP) - see these further on in this newsletter.

## Marden Summer Playscheme – Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July to Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025, Marden Scout HQ

Although the Parish Council is delighted to announce that the Marden Summer Playscheme is back again and will be held at Marden Scout HQ next to the Library car park under the excellent management of Jen Ward we are sad to report that this is already full as we are having to restrict numbers due to the size of the venue.

The theme this year is "Summer Festival" and the end of scheme party will take place on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August with the inflatable assault course. Children will enjoy fun and creative indoor and outdoor activities such as drama and sport, painting, arts & craft, fun games, music & dance, pool table, table tennis and inflatable.





## Marden Parish Council Finance Committee

Marden Parish Council Finance Committee meets at least four times a year to discuss the financial aspects of the council. You can find the annual Finance Committee report presented at the Annual Parish meeting on the website: <https://bit.ly/MPCAnnualReports>

### Annual Accounts for 2024/25

Budget	Expenditure	Income
Staffing (admin/caretakers/ play scheme)	£121,155.10	£0.00
Administration	£20,851.88	£0.00
Newsletter, advertising etc	£5,716.77	£0.00
Vehicle/machinery	£5,245.78	£0.00
Finance	£1,610.25	£986.32
S106/CIL	£1,846.80	£11,165.40
Miscellaneous	£432.82	£0.00
Grants/Donations	£650.00	£6,529.17
Christmas	£5,885.59	£709.29
Public Conveniences	£14,847.08	£0.00
Public Works Loan Repayment	£18,237.92	£0.00
Neighbourhood Plan	£412.75	£0.00
Open Spaces	£12,528.27	£782.50
Other Amenities	£1,981.58	£0.00
Play Scheme	£1,797.71	£5,977.00
Highways	£3,457.00	£0.00
Cemetery	£2,424.05	£6,684.00
Precept/Parish Services Scheme	£0.00	£191,244.98
Capital	£3,000.86	£0.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£222,082.21</b>	<b>£224,078.66</b>
<b>As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024</b>	<b>Current Financial Assets</b>	<b>As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025</b>
£3,359.52	VAT Repayment	£4,143.04
£11,430.89	Nat West (revenue)	£4,723.66
£72,396.36	Santander (Capital)	£72,156.83
£6,153.94	Unity (revenue)	£13,342.63
<b>£93,340.71</b>		<b>£95,366.16</b>

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.  
*Alison Hooker, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Marden Parish Council*



# GENERAL UPDATE CONTD

## VE Day

Thank you to all those residents who came along to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day on 8<sup>th</sup> May in Southons Field with the lighting of the beacon, a Parish Council BBQ and refreshments served by the Marden WI who made the official Women's Institute Orange and Ginger cake. The church bells rang, and the Forte Music choir performed the national song "I Vow to Thee My Country" whilst Cllrs Anne Boswell and Kate Tippen read the tribute. We also recognise VJ Day on 15<sup>th</sup> August which celebrates victory over Japan and the real ending of WW2.



## Parish Council Communications

We are committed to maintaining regular communication with residents through a number of different channels and we aim to provide residents with as much information as we can on the work that the Parish Council is undertaking in our newsletters, weekly e-newsletter, the village noticeboards and on social media.

The Parish Council is holding "Meet the Councillors" session on Saturday 23rd August at Marden Library from 11.00am to midday as we are keen to engage with as many residents as possible. Please pop along and have a chat and raise any concerns.

If residents need to raise any issues or have any suggestions, please pop into the Parish Office for a chat with Ali or Rachel. Alternatively, you can call them on 01622 832305 or email: [clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk) or [deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk). – they are available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 12 noon in the Parish Office.

The Parish Council's Facebook page is also a good source of information, and it would be great if you could follow or give us a like on our page: <https://bit.ly/MardenFacebook>

## Spring Clean Up

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who gave up their Saturday morning back in March to help to clean up Marden. More than 60 residents were joined by the Police Cadets, Beavers and Scouts with over 200 bags of rubbish being collected which really helped to tidy up the village centre and our beautiful country lanes. A special thank you goes to Chris Barker and Cllr Ian Newton who had the horrible job of collecting all the bags of rubbish. It's a great community event working together to keep our lovely parish of Marden tidy.



There were lots of cigarette butts in the centre of the village particularly in the High Street, Red Bull and Stella cans, bottles of urine, lots of sweet wrappers, laughing gas cannisters particularly in Underlyn Lane where there is always a horrendous amount of rubbish. Thank you also to the Marden Plastic Free campaign who helped and undertook a plastic audit – see the article further on.



### **Litter Pick Heroes**

We know we have many committed members in our community who go out there and regularly litter pick around the village and lanes. You obviously love where you live and

want to make a difference to the environment on our doorstep by volunteering your time to pick up litter, improve and protect local spaces, protect local wildlife, and by encouraging others to reduce waste and live more sustainably – you are litter pick heroes and stars – we know who most of you are!

### **Did you know that dropping litter is illegal?**

People who drop litter can be fined or face prosecution in court. Authorised officers have the power to issue a fixed penalty charge of up to £150 for a litter offence, as an alternative to prosecution. You can name and shame offenders by reporting to: <https://bit.ly/LitterOffence>



### **Get It Hot Off the Press – Marden Village News**

Sign up for the weekly e-newsletter providing information on what's happening. This is especially helpful to those residents who are not on social media so why not sign up and find out what's going on?



# PLANNING UPDATE

## Marden Parish Council

### Planning Committee

Planning meetings continue to be held in the Parish Office twice monthly and occasionally in the Old School Room for some of our larger planning applications or where large numbers of the public wish to attend. You can find the annual Planning Committee report presented at the Annual Parish meeting on the website: <https://bit.ly/MPCAnnualReports>

You may have heard the ‘rumblings’ that the 2,000 houses north of Marden has reared its head yet again and we understand that a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) has been signed between MBC and the developer. At the time of going to print, there is no more news. A PPA is a voluntary agreement between MBC and the developer and brings people together to agree the best way to take a development proposal through the planning process.

We have also heard no more news on the development of land east of Albion Road and North of Copper Lane for the erection of up to 117 dwellings, which has been permitted by the Government Planning Inspector. Undoubtedly the developer will be submitting a full planning application shortly.

The contentious planning application for a chicken farm at Reed Court Farm on Hunton Road was finally refused by MBC a few months ago. The applicant

now has six months from the refusal date to consider an appeal.

### Marden Neighbourhood Plan Review (MNP) – Regulation 14 Consultation

The Parish Council has been reviewing and updating the MNP which is a legal document and is part of the planning policies within Maidstone Borough Council (MBC). Councillors refer to the policies when considering planning applications to ensure they are compliant, and MBC take them into consideration when assessing planning applications. It’s designed to ensure that Marden will continue to be a thriving parish, to maintain its individual character, heritage and community spirit. It aims to balance the existing and future needs of residents and businesses to fulfil Marden’s function as a Rural Service Centre, by managing the expansion of housing provision, employment, education and recreation opportunities, whilst retaining and enhancing the natural beauty and biodiversity of the surrounding rural area.

As part of Regulation 14, we consulted with various groups, statutory bodies, stakeholders, businesses etc. Thank you to all those residents, village groups and consultees who commented on the proposed changes to the MNP. These are currently being analysed to see what further amendments can be made before submitting to Maidstone Borough Council.



We are hoping it does not need to be taken to full referendum but will probably need to go to examination. You can find the current draft document at: <https://bit.ly/MPCMNPR14>

### **Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHA)**

Non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their heritage interest, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. These can include those identified by a local planning authority such as 'local interest' buildings.

MBC's current list of NDHAs includes the pump house at Highfield House in Maidstone Road, the hopper huts at Blue House Farm, and the Congregational Chapel in West End. As part of updating the Marden Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council is now considering other possible NDHAs in the parish to afford them protection.

Thank you to the Marden History Group for your suggestions which include the Unicorn Public House, the West End Tavern and Forge, Edwin Villas in Goudhurst Road, village milestones, the parish pump at the Allens, mounting blocks (High Street, outside the Taj of Kent and Gatehouse Farm), the Pluto pipeline, air-raid siren outside Marden Library, K6 telephone box, Marden

airfield memorial, cast iron fingerpost signs and the post-box outside the Old Post Office building. If residents have any more suggestions, please let Ali know and once we have collated all the suggestions, we will submit to MBC for consideration.

## **PROJECT UPDATE**

### **Marden Parish Emergency Resilience Plan**

The Parish Council has now updated the previous Emergency Plan into a Parish Resilience Plan in line with new guidelines from the Borough's Resilience Forum. This will be used in the event of an emergency affecting our community and Councillors will be meeting shortly to progress the plan further. More information will be provided in the next edition of the newsletter.

### **Marden Playing Field Changing Rooms**

As residents will be aware, a public consultation was held last year where most responses were in favour of refurbishing the building as a community space. Marden Parish Council recently submitted a formal planning application to Maidstone Borough Council which has now received approval with several conditions. The next step is seeking quotes for the works and the project will mainly be funded with S106 monies received from the Highwood Green, Windsor Meadow and Parsonage developments which cannot legally be used elsewhere.

# PROJECT UPDATE CONTD

## **Marden Changing Rooms Contd**

If further funding is needed to complete the project, then we will seek grants from outside bodies and will not be using money from the council tax precept.

## **Marden Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP)**

An ISP is a wish list which identifies all the improvements the Parish Council and residents would like to see in the village and has been compiled after various consultations over the past few years. Some of the small items the Parish Council should be able to fund, but large, more ambitious plans such as a new pavilion at Southons Field are longer-term and will require a greater level of funding.

At the Open Morning in March, we asked residents for their suggestions, but no specific items were raised which weren't already in the ISP document which you can find on our website:

<https://bit.ly/MardenISPUpdated>

If you wish for Councillors to consider other suggestions, please forward to Ali at: [clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)

## **Public Conveniences Solar Panel Project**

Whilst Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) own the public toilets building, the Parish Council maintains this important village facility.

As part of our environmental responsibilities, the Parish Council have been exploring the possibility of installing solar panels on the roof to offset the cost of electricity in the toilets. A structural survey has been undertaken and a licence for building alterations is being sought from MBC, and we have received a couple of grants towards funding the panels. Before making the final decision, we are undertaking a cost benefit analysis.

## **Allotments at Highwood Green**

The good news is the S106 Deed of Variation document is currently being signed which will allow Redrow to transfer the land to the Parish Council and Redrow will be back in touch once completed. However, it is understood that Redrow are still trying to find a management company to take on the parking spaces which is stalling the situation.

## **Fingerpost at Plain Road/Thorn Road Junction**

This important heritage asset was demolished in 2022 and has been a source of great frustration. Having secured a contractor to remove the post and another contractor to repair it, we were then advised by KCC that we are not permitted to reinstall a cast iron signpost on safety reasons. Our new County Councillor Brian Black has agreed to help resolve this issue, but if this is not possible, the Parish Council will consider replacing it with a wooden sign instead of cast iron (like the one at the Goudhurst Road/Plain Road/Sheephurst Lane junction).

# HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT

## Speed Watch Day of Action in September

Cllrs Adrian Rabot and Mike Summersgill arranged for equipment at the Marden Motor Show in May to publicise Speed Watch and to try to recruit volunteers. The Police Cadets, children and adults enjoyed being involved with how the camera would measure speeds. There will be a Speed Watch Day of Action in September. Please look out on social media and noticeboards nearer the time for further details.

If you are concerned about speeding around the village, then why not sign up for Speed Watch as we need more volunteers? You will need to undertake some online training that doesn't take long and for further information, please contact Lisa either by email:

adminassistant@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or call 01622 832305 with your details.

If you see a speeding vehicle, please make a note of the registration number and inform the Police. Our Police Beat Officers do undertake regular speed checks particularly in Pattenden Lane where speeding is a big issue.



## Parish Council Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

Highway issues continue to be a cause for concern for both the Parish Council and residents. Our Highways Improvement Plan (HIP), which has been developed out of various consultations, is finally starting to see some benefits. We have long been concerned about pedestrian safety at the top of Pattenden Lane where the very wide road mouth meant that pedestrians were often taking their life in their hands when crossing the road. Kent Highways produced a carefully measured plan to widen the pavement and put in much needed dropped kerbs. It was not possible for Kent Highways to widen the pavement on the shop side of the junction as well as the other side as this would have restricted the width of the junction too much. Whilst turning into the junction is now tight, it means that vehicles slow down. The results from the Traffic Regulation Order for Single Yellow Line proposals in Goudhurst Road and Double Yellow Lines in Albion Road has now been approved and Kent Highways are currently drawing up designs.

We asked for your views about the HIP, including any additions and priorities through a consultation which closed at the end of April. Cllrs are reviewing the comments and will be prioritising the top 5 issues for KCC Highways for 2025/26 which will be submitted to the Full Council meeting in August.

# HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT CONTD

## **Village Gateway Sign in Thorn Road**

The village gateway sign was finally reinstalled by the bend in Thorn Road after it had been badly damaged by a vehicle, but shortly after the sign collapsed. We have asked Kent Highways if once again this can be repaired. Can we ask residents to please slow down whilst approaching this bend – remember there are runners, walkers, cyclists and horse riders using that road as well as vehicles.

## **Marden Railway Station**

Councillors held a meeting in April with Southeastern raising various issues/suggestions at Marden Station which had been discussed back in January 2024. These issues are currently being looked into by Southeastern and Network Rail and hopefully we will be able to report further in the next newsletter. Last year Marden was selected as one of the stations for the Department of Transport's 'Access for All' grant funding for the next cycle of works. The next stage was subject to a detailed technical assessment for the possibility of a much-needed lift being installed at the station and we have requested that Network Rail be asked for an update on the position.

## **Roadwork Disruptions**

Emergency road closures are a bane in our lives. They spring up instantly

and seemingly with no thought or consideration for planned or scheduled works that are currently going on – Satnavs not being accurate causing delays to journey and people frequently ignoring road closure signs as so often they are left in place after the works have been completed.

KCC is responsible for looking after all public roads in Kent and motorways and trunk roads are the responsibility of Highways England. KCC work all year to improve and maintain Kent's roads and pavements. Alongside the utility companies, they aim to provide as much notice as possible to prepare for the works. A significant percentage of utility roadworks are classed as emergencies which means KCC gets no notice of them and only needs to be informed two hours after they start, and these emergency cases may not be shown on the roadworks map.

Figures from KCC show a 56% rise in road closures in the last four years linked to work being carried out by utility companies. Statistics show that over 30% of road closures are done under emergency powers and apparently there are around 200 different organisations who have the right to dig up the roads! As you can imagine this makes it very difficult for KCC to co-ordinate road closures.

Loose Road in Maidstone is a typical example where SGN had to dig up the road for gas repairs for quite a few weeks causing absolute chaos.



A full survey should be carried out following all major works and our new County Councillor Brian Black will endeavour to ensure that the new administration on KCC follow proper procedures such as conducting full post-work surveys.

If you notice any confusing roadwork signs around the Parish, then please call 03000 418333. The Parish Council notify of any road closure works on their Facebook Page and in the weekly e- Newsletter. For more information, check out:  
<https://bit.ly/KCCRoadworks>

## **DRAINAGE & WATER**

Flooding and drainage continue to be high on the Parish Council's agenda, and we were pleased that Southern Water has invested over £800,000 to improve the sewerage network in the village. As you know, the heavy rain in the winter resulted in Maynards Sewer overflowing yet again despite the extensive work undertaken by Southern Water.

The Parish Council wrote to Southern Water in January to clarify what work had been undertaken so far, but in their response, they referred more to the work in Horsmonden rather than in Marden and no information had been given regarding the Maynards drain. Ali has once again chased Southern Water for full details on the questions raised in the letter sent in January.

There are still problems under Pattenden Lane railway bridge, and this has been raised both with the Kent Highways Manager and with Network Rail.

The water leak at Church Green which started in February and caused disruption in the village was finally repaired by South East Water in early May despite it being reported on numerous occasions by both the Parish Council and residents. It appears that a stretch of the road has dipped since the leak began and we have asked that this be monitored. South East Water have apologised for the disruption the leak caused and said that finding and fixing leaks and saving water is one of their top priorities - so much for their 'Every Drop Counts' campaign - thousands of gallons of water must have been wasted going down the drains with this leak!

You can find information on local drainage and flooding on the Parish Council website:  
<http://bit.ly/MPCDrainageandFlooding>



# OPEN SPACE

## Parish Council Amenities Committee

The Amenities Committee oversees the green spaces in the village – the Playing Field, Napoleon Drive Play Area, Rookery Path and Southons Field, as well as Marden Cemetery and the Public Toilets. You can find the annual Amenities Committee report presented at the Annual Parish meeting on the website: <https://bit.ly/MPCAnnualReports>

### Marden Playing Field, & Napoleon Drive Play Area

Finally, additional CCTV cameras have been installed in Marden Playing Field and at the request of residents, two fixed junior football goals and a couple of picnic benches outside the play area for families to enjoy whilst the children play have also been installed. Thank you to Marden Pre-School Playgroup for kindly donating the children's picnic bench to the Parish Council which has been placed near the new picnic benches.



Prior to the Covid lockdown a 'Happy to Chat' sign was in place at the Ken Rhodes bench outside Marden Library. At the request of a resident 'buddy bench' plaques will be installed on two benches in the playing field for people to sit, chat and connect.

### Southons Field

We are often asked by residents why dogs are not allowed (apart from assistance dogs) in this beautiful field. It is frequented regularly by families where children can run around safely. Some residents tell us that they prefer to take their young children to the field rather than Marden Playing Field where dogs run around without a lead and because of the issue with dog fouling.

At some point, it is on our 'Wish List' to install another piece of equipment to add to the existing play trail and swings. If you would like to hire or use the field, please email Rachel: [deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk)  
Summer opening hours: April to August 7am to 8pm and Autumn opening hours: September to October 7am to 7pm. The access gate will be locked during the hours of darkness.

### Marden Cemetery

Our peaceful cemetery is full of wildlife and biodiversity, and our new groundsman Neil has worked extremely hard helping to make it look beautiful.

Most of the 2,000 saplings that were planted at the back of the cemetery are doing well and the area will be mowed in the autumn once they are more established.

You can check out the cemetery rules and regulations at <https://bit.ly/MPCCemetery>

# HEALTH & WELLBEING

The Parish Council tries to promote health and wellbeing in the community and provide as much information as possible in each newsletter and on social media. The Community Contact list is currently being updated, and you can find it on the Parish Council website at: <https://bit.ly/MPCWellbeing>. Copies will also be available in the Library, Medical Centre and Church.

## Community Services

At times, Marden feels very isolated and unsupported especially by Kent County Council. Their budgetary problems are well publicised but for our community, it means we no longer have a community warden, a Children's Centre or any youth support services. This means vulnerable members of our community must rely on other services such as the excellent voluntary work undertaken by the Food Bank and puts more pressure on our already overstretched Medical Centre.

The Parish Council would like to thank Rev Nicky for all the sterling work she undertakes in the village helping residents – you are a true community spirited star!

If you do have any concerns, please do let the Parish Council know, or worries about crime, ASB etc, please report this to Kent Police via the online reporting tool or live chat on the Kent Police Website or call 101 or 999 if a crime is in progress.

## Welcome to SEND Help Marden

This group has been created as a safe, supportive space for parents, carers, and families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Whether you're just beginning your journey or have years of experience, this is a place to connect, share, and learn together.

Our goal is to provide understanding, encouragement, and practical support through shared experiences. Together, we hope to create a community where no one feels alone, and every voice is valued.

Please join us on Tuesday 9th September 9.30am - 10.30am at the Vestry Hall then every other Tuesday, term time only. Tea, coffee and cake will be provided for a small donation.



## Marden Medical Centre Update Dr Julie Morgan

High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) - Hypertension can lead to serious problems like heart attacks or strokes, it affects more than one in four adults in England and is the second biggest risk factor for premature death and disability.

# HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

## Marden Medical Centre Update Contd

Hypertension is very common, especially in older adults. There are usually no symptoms, so you may not realise you have it. Reducing high blood pressure dramatically reduces the risks of strokes and heart attacks. We are currently focusing on optimising blood pressure control in our patients with Hypertension but are also looking to identify those who have not yet been diagnosed. If you are aged 40 or over and have not had your blood pressure checked for more than 5 years, we will be contacting you and suggesting you either:

- Submit home readings (if you have a monitor)
- Attend Marden Pharmacy for a free blood pressure check
- Use the automated machine in our lobby area
- Book an appointment with our GPA

For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/risk-factors/high-blood-pressure>

Please be kind to our staff - Our reception team have been working particularly hard over recent weeks as they continue to ensure that the needs of all our patients are met and that the new members of the team are trained. Their role is a very challenging one, sadly this is not always appreciated, and they are met with hostility from a small minority of patients.

90% of the daily contacts in the NHS happen through General Practice and receptionists are the first point of contact for people in need. Please remember that they are doing their best to help people, listen to their stories and arrange the help required. When you contact us, please remember to treat our team with respect and that small acts of kindness, such as a 'thank you,' can make a positive impact on their day, and help them feel valued and appreciated. Thank you for your support.

## KCC Maidstone Family Hubs

The KCC Family Hubs are hoping to set up a Chill & Chat session potentially once a month at Marden Food Bank giving help and advice to residents – further details to follow.

You can find advice, support and services on the KCC Maidstone Family Hubs to help throughout your family journey, from newborns to 19-year-olds, or up to 25-year-olds with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Check out:  
<https://bit.ly/KentLocalHub>  
or to follow the latest news, classes and information follow their Facebook page called Maidstone Family Hubs.





In addition they also have a Digital Team which has an abundance of information and for young people there is an Instagram page: [maidstonefamilyhubs11to19](#).

### **Kent County Council – Health**

There's a plethora of information on health on the KCC website such as mental health, drug and alcohol support, sexual health, managing a long-term health condition, school public health service, safe sleep for you and baby, smoking and young people, pregnancy and the first two years, NHS screening etc. Just check out for all the information at:

<https://bit.ly/KCCHealth>

If you do need urgent help for a mental health crisis or emergency, you should get immediate expert advice and assessment by calling: NHS 111 Option 2. It's important to know that support services are available for you to access whatever you're going through. You can find more info at: <https://bit.ly/NHSMentalHelp>

### **Kent Together – Cost of Living Support**

If you have money worries or are looking for ways you can make your money go further, Kent Together can help you to find your way through to the advice and support available. They can advise on urgent help and support, reducing your energy bills, checking benefits eligibility, pension credits, help for households and money helper. So check out: <https://bit.ly/KCCCostofLiving>

### **Urgent Treatment Centres (UTC)**

Did you know there are urgent treatment centres based at Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks Hospitals which are open from 8am-8pm seven days a week 365 days per year? They have one GP providing up to 32 appointment slots per day. The service is suitable for same day appointments that cannot wait 24 hours to be seen. Patients can be seen by a GP in the UTC either by obtaining an appointment through NHS 111 by asking for a booked appointment, or alternatively signposted to attend as a walk-in.

### **Children's and Young People's Mental Health Practitioner Workshops**

The Children's and Young People's Mental Health Practitioners (CYPMHP) provide mental health support for young people and their families in the Weald area of Kent. This could be by providing one-to-one sessions or by holding workshops and groups to help increase mental health support in the local area.

If you joined one of the workshops and feel that your child would benefit from more support from their service, please speak to your GP or visit the website for more information:

<https://bit.ly/WealdCHW>

### **Marden Charity is here to help you**

If you need a bit of financial support or for any further information please email: [mardencommunitycio@gmail.com](mailto:mardencommunitycio@gmail.com) or check out: <https://bit.ly/MardenCharity>

# HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

## Digital Help at Marden Library

Whether you are using a mobile or laptop device, the NHS App as well as other digital devices, Digital Help volunteers can assist you. The sessions are held in Marden Library every third Friday of the month from 2pm-4pm – 18<sup>th</sup> July, 15<sup>th</sup> August, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 17<sup>th</sup> October, 21<sup>st</sup> November and 19<sup>th</sup> December.

To book a session with Digital Kent at selected libraries including Marden Library check out:

<https://bit.ly/DigitalKentSessions>  
or email: [digitalhubs@kent.gov.uk](mailto:digitalhubs@kent.gov.uk) or call the team on 03000 40950.

## Marden Dementia Friendly Community (MDFC) – Rachel Chacon

Dementia Awareness Week was 19th-25th May and Rev Nicky organised an evening for us to paint forget-me-nots on stones in Marden Village Club. The stones were then placed around the village for people to find and place in the sculpture in our planter at Marden Library. If you missed this opportunity don't worry as the sculpture will remain there indefinitely.

Just place any stone in there to remember anyone you have known who has lived with cognitive issues. We believe everyone has been touched in some way by this terrible condition and this is how we have chosen to raise awareness in Marden.

The monthly free lunches continue on the first Tuesday of the month alternating

between the Unicorn and Marden Village Club. In June Leslie and Richard Balfour invited us again to their beautiful gardens at Hush Heath Manor followed by afternoon tea at the Winery which was a delightful treat.



The two free seated exercise classes continue with Millie on a Monday and a Friday and are both well attended. The classes are part of our project to 'Reduce Your Risk'. Donations are always very generous from the group, but from June we are charging £3.50 per head as our funds are diminishing. These events are open to those living with cognitive issues and a carer. With the grant awarded by MBC last year, we are funding the new 'Play On' group set up by Sue Eltringham. This has started off very well and although most of it is funded by this grant, we need to raise more funds to complete the project. We have plans to apply for grants and organised a fundraising evening at Marden Village Club on 20<sup>th</sup> June when Mervyn and The Rockets entertained club members and their guests. They did not charge us because they all have a family member living with dementia and are all very motivated to support us.

If you are living with dementia, you are entitled to apply for a grant to help you with any extra expenses or maybe just to treat yourself to a special day out. If you wish to be added to our mailing list, please email:

[mardendfcinfo@gmail.com](mailto:mardendfcinfo@gmail.com) or call Rachel on 01622 831941 for more info.

### **Marden Foodbank – Rev Nicky Harvey**

The Foodbank continues to run every Monday between 9.30am and 11.30am supporting the people of Marden. Over the last few months there has been an increase in the number of people using the foodbank. We regularly support 25 to 30 people each week.

We are extremely grateful for all the donations we receive. All donations can be dropped to the Vestry Hall on a Monday morning or left on the Vicarage doorstep at any time. We are always in need of donations of non-perishable goods: pasta, rice, tinned vegetables, soup, baked beans, pasta sauce, milk, squash, custard, rice pudding, cereal, tinned fish and meat.



For further information about the foodbank please contact Kathy Young 01622 831890 [office@mardenchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@mardenchurch.org.uk). If you or anyone you know is in urgent need of help from the foodbank, please call Rev Nicky on 01622 831379 at any time.

## **SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **Parish Council Environmental Sub-Group**

If you are interested in joining the Parish Council Environmental Sub-Group and helping with this project, please let Lisa know either by emailing:

[adminassistant@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk](mailto:adminassistant@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk) or ringing 01622 832305.

### **Let's Talk Waste**

The Maidstone Borough Council Waste Management Team is available from June to come and deliver a presentation and discuss the recycling and waste services provided across the borough of Maidstone. They will include information on 'Why is the recycling material collected the way it is? Where does it all go to? What happens to it?'

If there is a village group out there who would be interested in a visit, please email: [recycling@Maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:recycling@Maidstone.gov.uk)

### **Marden Wildlife Hedgerow Project Liz Taylor**

As part of Marden Wildlife group's efforts to record the rich diversity of wildlife found in the parish, attention has turned to the humble hedgerow, a landscape feature we often take for granted, yet one that gives the English landscape its distinctive character and appeal.

# SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE

## Marden Hedgerow Project Contd

A hedgerow survey group was set up two years ago and volunteers have been busily scrutinising hedgerows on Manor Farm and Little Mill Farm (both part of the Wildlife Farm Cluster). This has proved to be not only a fascinating learning experience, but also a chance to socialise with like-minded people and see bits of countryside not usually open to access. We've been using the "Great British Hedgerow Survey", a method that assesses hedges for their value as a "wildlife habitat" looking at three main aspects – biodiversity, connectivity and structure – scoring hedges on each factor and overall, as well as generating management advice to improve each hedge. Farmers can then use the information to apply for grants for hedge planting, management and improvement under the Sustainable Farming Incentives scheme.

If you fancy the idea of nosing around the hedgerows this summer, please get in touch with Liz Taylor by emailing: [ramshillhouse@btinternet.com](mailto:ramshillhouse@btinternet.com) who organises sessions on random days and you can sign up by WhatsApp poll. The sessions usually last a couple of hours and there is no special experience or knowledge required.

For information, Marden Parish Council has a hedgerow policy to help to protect hedgerows under its ownership.



## Join the Movement for a Plastic Free Marden!

This inspiring campaign was launched by passionate residents Silvia Ferrero and Elle Parker, alongside Cllr Anne Boswell. Since the project's kick-off in November, we've introduced the campaign to a wide range of supporters - including residents, borough and parish councillors, local businesses, village groups, and the Principal of Marden Primary Academy.

To achieve our goals, we need your help and we're looking to:

- Sign up at least 15 community allies (village groups/organisations) - Marden in Bloom, Marden Dementia Friendly Community group and the Scouts are already on board!
- Recruit at least 5 independent business champions
- Host at least two community events per year to raise awareness and inspire action

In January, we held our first Steering Committee meeting, bringing together dedicated residents and



three parish/borough councillors to guide our efforts. We've already applied for Plastic Free Community status, and the Parish Council is leading by example by removing three single-use plastic items from its premises.

*Spring Clean Success* - we joined Marden Parish Council for the Village Spring Clean in March and it was a fantastic turnout - thank you to everyone who took part! We were also joined by the lovely Alicia from Zero Waste on Wheels, who brought her mobile refill shop to the event. She offered a brilliant range of plastic-free alternatives, from toiletries and household cleaning products to olive oil - all eco-friendly and refillable.

We'd love to hear from you if you want to make a difference to help shape our plastic-free future and work together to create a cleaner, greener Marden - so if you're interested in hosting a community event, joining the Steering Committee or becoming a business or community ally please get in touch today to be part of this exciting journey toward a cleaner, greener Marden by emailing: [plasticfreemarden@gmail.com](mailto:plasticfreemarden@gmail.com)

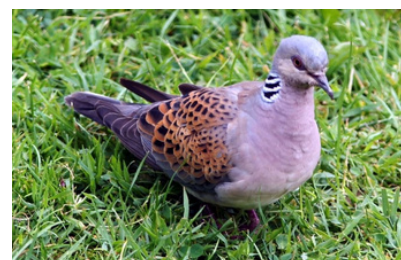
### **Marden Wildlife Update – Ray Morris**

As we approach midsummer the group's survey work increases with the longer days and burgeoning plant and animal populations. Survey work commissioned by Natural England is being carried out on local farms to assess the impact of conservation

farming methods on local moth and butterfly populations. Our established monitoring programme has developed to the extent that we have sufficient members with the necessary expertise to conduct these surveys to a high scientific standard.

The return of rare Turtle Doves from West Africa to breed in Marden is also being monitored with our programme of colour-ringing so that we can estimate survival and productivity – essential if they are to avoid extinction as a UK breeding species. With Kent Wildlife Trust staff, we have fitted the first of five GPS tags (funded this year by Natural England) to track individuals to better understand the species' use of local farmland. In these times of rapid (and increasingly uncertain) changes to agriculture, local landowners need all the assistance they can get in managing their land for our precious wildlife.

None of this could be achieved without the considerable contribution made by our volunteers – from beginners to experts – carrying out simple (but interesting and most definitely important) tasks as well as more advanced activities. If you would like to swell their numbers do let us know: [mardenwildlife@gmail.com](mailto:mardenwildlife@gmail.com)



# SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE CONTD

## **Marden Farmer Cluster**

### **Lou Carpenter**

Farmers talk about the weather all the time and it affects us hugely. The weather over the last few months has been extreme. After a difficult harvest, the continuous rain meant that some crops weren't sown in autumn, others were late in. Spring has been abnormally dry with hot and cold spells making spring sowings hard. The reality for most is that the cereal harvest will be short this year. Although very dry as I write, it could be completely different by harvest. Please remember that during harvest those same tractors that delighted Marden at Christmas will be working flat-out to bring in the crops while they can. So, if you're held up by one of these, please bear in mind that the tractor is going as fast as it safely can, and we thank you in advance for your patience.

We're looking at ways to make our farm environmental schemes more potent by coordinating and aligning them between cluster farms. This greater connectivity should enhance nature recovery while still delivering good food to the public. A lot of studying farm maps!

We are currently providing support to Marden Wildlife/NE/ Kent Wildlife Trust's Turtle Dove initiative. We scatter seed supplied by RSPB Operation Turtle Dove. We maintain these feed-strips for

the season and make sure they're kept topped up. Some of us are rewarded by a visit from these rare birds. That's a real treat to cheer farmers in an otherwise anxious time. See more at:  
<https://mardenfarmercluster.org/>

## **Marden Community Eco Hub**

Many of you will be aware there is a Marden Community Eco Hub page on Facebook for sharing eco-friendly ideas and residents use the page to rehome unwanted items – an excellent way to recycle goods. You will also find information on there about the Marden Plastic Free campaign.

Well done to Anna Fisk who organised an eco-hub event in April where residents shared their unwanted items – such a great idea.

## **Maidstone Borough Council Biodiversity and Climate Change Newsletter**

If you would like to register for the regular newsletter from Maidstone Borough Council on Biodiversity and Climate Change please visit  
<https://bit.ly/MBCNewsletters>



# POLICE & CRIME UPDATE

## **New Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) and Community Police Officers**

Great news that Marden now has a new PCSO called Becky Mount who attended the Village Café on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June to introduce herself and she will cover the same ward areas as our two Community Police Officers – PC Chad Maskell and PC George Head. Becky will be able to undertake more foot patrols and community events. The ward area they all cover is Yalding, Collier Street, Hunton and Nettlestead Ward, as well as Staplehurst and Headcorn wards so as you can imagine they are well spread out and Becky is a much welcomed and needed resource for Marden.

Our new Chairman Cllr Adrian Rabot is working closely with Becky, Chad and George, along with the Community Protection team, on several initiatives in the village together with arranging further police surgeries.

## **Community Police Equine Hack**

Cllr Adrian Rabot kindly organised a Community Police Equine Hack in April along with Borough Cllr Claudine Russell when two Community Police Volunteer riders conducted a high visibility horse patrol around Marden starting from Horlands Farm in Summerhill Road to the centre of the village. This was also to make drivers and other road users aware of how to pass horses on the lanes.

## **Marden Community Survey What are the Three Priorities in your Ward?**

PC Chad Maskell and PC George Head would be very grateful if residents could give their feedback to Kent Police on what your priorities are in Marden.

You can scan the QR code below or alternatively if you are already a member of My Community Voice, login and complete the 'What are the 3 Priorities in your Ward' Survey. This should take you no longer than 2 minutes and helps Kent Police understand what matters to you.

My Community Voice (MCV) is a two-way engagement tool brought to you by Kent Police. By signing up, you can find out what's happening in your area, receive alerts from your local officers and tell them what matters to you. Find out more at: [www.MyCommunityVoiceKent.co.uk](http://www.MyCommunityVoiceKent.co.uk)



# POLICE & CRIME UPDATE CONTD

## Community Police Equine Hack Contd

Whilst no particular area was targeted, we are looking to arrange these hacks on a regular basis and it would be useful if the Community Police Officers and the Rural Task Force could also be present. Other patrols could be focused on village lanes and fields rather than just the centre of the village.



## Launch of Marden Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

The Parish Council alongside PC George Head will be launching the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme at the Marden Fun Dog Show to be held at Marden Playing Field on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> August hosted by Marden in Bloom, so please pop along if you would like to find out more information. If you already have a Neighbourhood Watch scheme for your road, please let Ali know.

## Catapult Issues

Whilst crimes have generally been lower in the parish over the last few months with a mixture of anti-social behaviour,

criminal damage, theft and domestic, one criminal damage incident reported was catapults being fired at two buses at Stilebridge on the A229.

Escalating catapult crime is becoming a real problem. There is intense peer pressure and on social media sites like TikTok and Snapchat for youths to possess a catapult. Across Kent there have been a number of attacks on people, wildlife, vehicles and property.

A campaign was launched to ban the sale and carrying in public of catapults and 100,000 signatures needed to be reached by the 27<sup>th</sup> May, but unfortunately only 24,520 were received. You can read the Government's response: <https://bit.ly/CatapultPetition>

If you know of anybody who has a catapult, please express your concerns about what damage can be done to both wildlife, property and people.

## Nuisance and Dangerous Bike Activity

The Safer Maidstone Partnership (SMP) is supporting a successful initiative from Maidstone Police to combat nuisance and dangerous bike activity. Last summer, 20 bikes were seized and this year the aim is to seize even more if necessary.

Operation Deplete, originally led by Kent Police and now supported by the SMP as part of a wider initiative, utilises specialist teams, technology such as



drones and information provided by community support to help improve safety and wellbeing across the borough. The operation was launched to address residents' concerns about the danger and disruption caused by illegal bikes, quadbikes and similar vehicles which will significantly impact offenders and demonstrate the power of collaborative working. The public is being urged to continue to report any concerns or incidents, so if you have witnessed illegal off-road riding, please report via 101 or Crimestoppers if you wish to remain anonymous.

### **Crimestoppers**

#### **Speak Up and Stay Safe**

Do you know something about crime in your community? People often feel that nothing gets done when they report a crime or get worried that if you report a crime the perpetrator of the crime will find out it is you, but rest assured your anonymity is 100% guaranteed with Crimestoppers. Call 0800 555 111 to contact the charity or check out: <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

However, please continue to report ASB and other non-emergency incidents to 101 or online at: <https://www.kent.police.uk/> – the more that is reported, the more chance it will get dealt with. Incidents need to be reported for the police to focus on the issue.

### **Action Crime for Fraud**

If you've been the victim of a scam, fraud or online crime (cybercrime) you

can report it to Action Fraud which is the national reporting centre for fraud and cybercrime. It collects reports about fraud on behalf of the police in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Reporting fraud and cyber crime | Action Fraud or call 0300 123 2040 (Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm).

## **YOUTH PROVISION**

As you know, KCC no longer have the resources to run a youth club in the village and thank you to those residents who provided feedback on the Quality of Life Survey which included improved youth provision, more activities for young people and creating a youth club. As mentioned above at Southons Field, there are a number of children who go to play football and play regularly without their parents/carers as they obviously feel it is safe there – this is so important in a society where letting your children out on your own is thought as a big risk. If the Parish Council were to provide a dedicated youth worker in the village, the costs would have to be borne from the parish precept and when we are in the process of setting the precept later in the year, we will consider the possibility of running one.

### **Football Coaching Sessions**

Cllr Adrian Rabot is meeting with Charlton Athletic Community Trust and Maidstone Borough Council to discuss offering youth engagement sessions at Marden Playing Field in the future so watch out for further details on social media and noticeboards.

## OTHER PARISH INFORMATION

### **Kent Association of Local Council's (KALC) Community Award**

It has become the tradition that the KALC Community award goes to someone in our community who has gone above and beyond in their service to the community and is presented at the Annual Parish Meeting.



Many congratulations this year go to Sue Eltringham for all her efforts and volunteering she has done in our village including all her hard work running the extremely successful Sporting Memories group – well done Sue.

### **Marden Pre-School**

Many congratulations to Marden Pre-School who have been rated outstanding in all areas by Ofsted from the quality of education to behaviour, personal development and leadership – what an accolade to achieve this. Well done to all the incredible staff for your hard work, passion and dedication.

### **Fire in Cranham Square**

We send our best wishes to those unfortunate residents in Cranham Square that were affected by the fire in April when a caravan caught alight in one of the gardens which unfortunately spread to a further three gardens and we hope you have raised enough money to help to restore your gardens.

### **Marden Library**

#### **Summer Reading Challenge**

We are delighted to be once again running our popular Summer Reading Challenge. The reading challenge is open to all primary school age children.

The goal behind the event is to encourage children to keep reading throughout the summer holidays, enjoying not just their books but also earning small rewards along the way and a certificate once they have completed the challenge. Each year there is a new theme and this year the theme is 'Story Garden' connected to adventures in nature and the great outdoors.

Children will be able to sign up from 5th July by calling in to Marden library (or any other Kent Library) to receive their Summer Reading Challenge pack and choose their books to read. We are also planning to have some events linking to the Summer Reading throughout the Summer holidays and will be able to share more details as soon as they are finalised.

Marden Library is open Tuesday-Friday 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm and on Saturday 9am-1pm. The library is free to join and offers a wide range of services including free access to books, audiobooks, computers and the internet. Access is available to the printer and photocopier, prices start at 20p for an A4 page. As ever, the selection of fiction and non-fiction books is updated regularly, and you can reserve a book from any of the Kent libraries. Please follow 'Maidstone Libraries' on Facebook or pop into the library for further information and future events.

### **Marden Primary Academy** **Hannah Penning, Principal**

*Sporting events* - This academic year, we have continued to participate in a range of sporting events, including football and netball. We were thrilled to win the LAT boys' football competition, and our netball team was highly commended for their efforts too. To support the children with their training, the PTA have kindly purchased new nets, bibs and equipment that are also used across all year groups as part of our PE curriculum. Just before half term, the Marden Cricket club invited KS2 to visit the ground and take part in a range of cricket activities, which the children thoroughly enjoyed. It was fantastic to work with the community, and we are looking forward to seeing the children use their skills when we take part in the Weald of Kent Cricket Cup tournament in July.

*Visitors* - As part of our curriculum enrichment, we have continued to have lots of visitors to support the children's learning. EYFS were recently visited by the Honduras Charity, which inspired the children to fundraise for them. Year 5 were visited by a range of people from different professions to learn about their jobs and the skills required to do them. Members of the Parish Council visited Year 3 to talk about planning as part of their inquiry. They were interested to learn about how the Parish Council works to protect and conserve our open spaces. Thank you to all the visitors so far this year - your support is greatly appreciated.

### **A Message from your MP - Katie Lam**

We're really fortunate that the Garden of England has so much to offer by way of flora and fauna: the wildflowers are in full bloom and our beautiful home is teeming with insect and animal life. As your Member of Parliament, it's my job to represent you and help solve the problems that you face daily. The most enjoyable part of my job, however, is championing our truly beautiful patch and promoting what makes it such a fantastic place to live.

That's why I'm excited to announce my brand-new Weald of Kent Awards, recognising the very best of our wonderful corner of Kent. This summer, I hope you'll join me in celebrating the unsung local heroes who help our communities thrive.

## OTHER PARISH INFORMATION CONTD

### A Message from your MP Contd

I want to shine a light on the Weald's favourite places to eat and drink, the very best Kentish produce, and the individuals, businesses and volunteer groups that go above and beyond to bring people together. Can you think of someone in your area who deserves to be recognised? If so, I'd love to hear from you! I'm inviting everyone in the Weald to nominate a winner from one or more of the following six categories:

1. The Weald of Kent Pub, Restaurant or Café 2025
2. The Weald of Kent Local Business 2025
3. The Taste of the Weald of Kent 2025
4. The Weald of Kent Local Hero 2025
5. The Weald of Kent Young Local Hero 2025
6. The Weald of Kent Heart of the Community 2025

If you know a worthy winner from your corner of the Weald, please do nominate them. Once the shortlist is decided, the finalists will be voted for by you, the people who know the Weald better than anyone else. I'll then announce the winner in August and present them with a fabulous Weald of Kent Award. Nominations are open on my website:  
[www.katieforkent.com/weald-of-kent-awards](http://www.katieforkent.com/weald-of-kent-awards).

As ever, if there's anything you'd like to speak with me about, don't hesitate to

get in touch. You can email me at [katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk), or speak to me on 01580 388344.

### Marden Parish Church – Rev. Nicky

*Services* - 8.00am Holy Communion (traditional language) and 10.30am services alternate between Morning Worship, 1st and 3rd Sunday's and Parish Communion on the 2nd and 4th. The church is also open each day, for visitors and anyone who would like to spend some time in reflection or prayer. Midweek Communion is every Thursday at 9.15am. Morning Prayer Monday and Wednesday at 8.45am  
Church website  
[www.mardenchurch.org.uk](http://www.mardenchurch.org.uk) and  
Facebook page @churchinmarden for our up-to-date services and events. To receive our weekly pew sheet, please email [office@mardenchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@mardenchurch.org.uk)

*Messy Church* - for all ages and explores a theme or Bible story through art, craft, and activities. We have a short act of worship and then we have tea. Held in the Vestry Hall  
next dates: July 13th and September 14th. Sunday Club for primary school age children runs on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.

*Youth Group* – faith based for Years 7-11. Contact Rev Vicki on  
[curate@mardenchurch.org.uk](mailto:curate@mardenchurch.org.uk)

If you would like to contact Rev Nicky about Baptism, Marriage, Blessing or arranging a Funeral (Crematorium or church) or Burial of Ashes (still permitted in new or existing family



graves) please contact: 01622 831379 or [rev.nickyharvey@gmail.com](mailto:rev.nickyharvey@gmail.com)

*Date for your diary* - Summer Fair  
Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July - 10am-2pm

### **Little FoxDen Nursery**

#### **Nicola Lawrence, Nursery Manager**

The Parish Council wish FoxDen Nursery all the best in their new venture and is a much-needed village facility. FoxDen Nursery has recently opened in the Old School House in Goudhurst Road (the old Children's Centre building) who are an independent nursery registered with Ofsted in April 2025. We can offer places for children within Marden village aged 3 months to school age. We are small, unique and our passion is being part of the children's development as they learn and grow. Between us here at FoxDen Nursery we have over 30 years' experience in the childcare industry as well as being mums ourselves. We can offer full time day care and are open 8am till 6pm all year round and we can't wait to meet some new families within the village. We will be holding more open days, so keep a look out on our Facebook page for these dates. Enquiries at: [foxdennursery@outlook.com](mailto:foxdennursery@outlook.com)

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

A very warm welcome to all new residents who have recently moved to the village, and you can find our Village Welcome Pack on our website: <https://bit.ly/VillageWelcomePack>

We are very fortunate to have so much going on and there are so many village groups who frequently interconnect/support one another.

Events this Spring included numerous Easter events at Marden Church and the Charity 'Scratch' concert, 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day with the lighting of the beacon, Dementia Awareness Week where painted 'memory' stones were placed around the village, the ever-successful Marden Motor Show in May and the fantastic Russett Runners 10k event on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

Here's a taste of what's happening this Summer:

### **"Come & Sing" Group**

#### **Sarah Emmanuel**

All are welcome to come and sing to improve health, boost well-being, for good company and the joy of singing! We sing well-loved songs from a variety of genres followed by tea, cake and time together. We meet on alternate Thursdays at 2.30pm in the Vestry Hall. £2 per session to cover costs – next date: 17<sup>th</sup> July. Please contact Sarah on 01622 832925 for more information.

### **Marden Village Café – Fridays 10am-11.45am in the Vestry Hall**

The Village Café is held every Friday morning from 10.00am-11.45am at the Vestry Hall offering homemade cakes, scones and hot drinks to anyone within our community at very reasonable prices. A warm welcome awaits you and children are very welcome.

# WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

## **Little Fishes Baby & Toddler Group**

Little Fishes baby and toddler group runs in the Vestry Hall every Wednesday during term time between 9.30am-11am. All parents and carers are welcome to go along with their little ones. There is no need to book just turn up as and when you are able to.

Suggested donation for each session is £1. For more information, please contact Kathy: [office@mardenchuch.org.uk](mailto:office@mardenchuch.org.uk) or Rev Nicky: [rev.nicky@gmail.com](mailto:rev.nicky@gmail.com)

## **Marden Bowls Club – Colin Smith**

We are a community-based sports club based in the heart of Marden and have been actively looking to boost our membership especially over the past few months. We are offering free membership for this season only, which includes our Indoor Short Mat bowls section which runs from September to March.

Bowls offers a friendly and social environment to meet new people and make long lasting friends from within the bowls fraternity. We offer the opportunity to play socially, with friendlies against local clubs or competitive bowls within the County and take part in national competitions.

It is a comparatively low-cost sport, we have all the equipment required you can use whilst you are learning and gaining the basics of our great sport.

We held two Open events in May to attract new members which attracted potentially a few new members. We welcome visitors to come along and watch our games; fixtures can be found on our club website. We have a beautiful setting, with good facilities and we believe we are a great village asset. Please get in touch if you are interested – check out: [www.mardenbowlsclub.co.uk](http://www.mardenbowlsclub.co.uk) or our Facebook Page.

## **Marden History Group & Heritage Centre - Richard Adam, Chairman**

If you pop into the Heritage Centre based in Marden Library, you will be able to see the latest exhibition which highlights “Then and Now”. From our Archives we have been able to draw on historical photographic pictures of how Marden has looked in the past, complemented with up-to-date images taken by Steering Group member Ian Newton. Penny Day has drawn together various items on display, again highlighting the theme, “Then and Now”.

This year depicts the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Railway and the Group is hoping to include this event in its 2025 diary. Watch out on social media, etc. for news on this aspect of Marden’s history. The Group has a Facebook page which is updated with current activities and information.

We will again be participating in the national Heritage Open Days in September, this year featuring Architecture.

The Group and Heritage Centre are well equipped on this subject, with a wide-ranging study on Wealden timber-framed houses. Our event will be mounted for 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> September at the Heritage Centre, but the archived details are available to view year-round.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in local history, we always welcome volunteers to help with the work of the Group. Get in touch if you would like to be involved: [history@mardenhistory.org.uk](mailto:history@mardenhistory.org.uk).

### **Marden Horticultural Society**

#### **Julie Nicol, Chair**

Summer appeared to arrive early which is lovely sitting in our gardens but also brought little rain. So, an evening or early morning watering has to take place which not only benefits the plants but aids our health with exercise and lifts one's spirits to see the daily changes.

We had an interesting talk from Jessica and the Bumblebee Conservation Society Trust who taught us all about the many different types to look out for and we even found out that there is one who only takes the pollen from Ivy. We also learnt how to identify the Asian hornet, and the way it kills our honeybees. We must all be vigilant, and report sightings.

At another meeting we had an informative talk on extra productive vegetables and making the most of even a small plot.

In May we held our annual plant sale at the Vestry Hall and grounds were packed with bedding plants, perennials, vegetable and house plants.

It was wonderful to see so many people and hear about their gardens. Some people were buying vegetable plants to grow for fun and of course to eat. One gentleman was buying a tray of sweetcorn as last year he grew some and was just going to pick them when a badger had beaten him to it!

For more information visit our site <https://bit.ly/mardengardeners>, or email [info @Marden Gardeners](mailto:info@MardenGardeners). We always welcome new members to our friendly group.



### **Marden in Bloom**

#### **Anne Boswell, Chair**

Thanks to those of you who came along to the quiz in April to help support Marden in Bloom – it was a great success.

The 'Bloomers' have been busy replanting the planters around the village, tidying the beds at Marden Library and Memorial Hall and re-seeding some of the areas in the Wildflower Meadow in Southons Field.

# WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

## **Marden in Bloom Contd**

*Fun Dog Show Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> August –  
11am-3pm at Marden Playing Field*

All you dog lovers and owners, please put the date in your diary. There will be 12 categories for your dog to enter and a dog agility area. It's a low-key event with cakes and soft drinks being served.

Please watch out for details on social media and posters around the village.

*Scarecrow Safari – Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October*  
this year the ever-successful event will have a "Music" theme - watch out for details nearer the date.

*Bulb Sale - Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September* in the High Street.

The "Bloomers" do as much as we can as volunteers but could do with a little more help especially with the watering of the planters. If you live near a planter, please give it a drink.



## **Marden Scout Group Kieran Burns (Group Lead Volunteer) and James Blythin (Assistant Group Lead Volunteer)**

As we approach the end of the Scouting year we would like to give a huge shout out to our wonderful volunteers who provide such amazing opportunities and experiences for our Beavers, Cubs and Scouts.

Whether it be preparing a schedule of activities, supporting the leaders to deliver the fun filled sessions, maintaining the grounds or behind the scenes admin tasks we are hugely grateful to these local heroes for their time, dedication and enthusiasm. This year, in particular, we would like to thank Andy Wardley for his boundless energy, leading well overdue maintenance tasks to renovate the Scout Hut building and grounds. The toilet has been replaced and improved, plans are underway to paint the interior and put in a fabulous fire pit outside. You have made such a big difference - thank you!

If you would like to volunteer with our fantastic team or have any questions about the Marden Scout Group please contact: [gsl@mardenscouts.org.uk](mailto:gsl@mardenscouts.org.uk).

## **Marden Sports Club Give Padel A Try!**

The world's fastest growing sport is now available to all at Marden Sports Club on the Maidstone Road (near the cemetery). Something of a cross between tennis and squash, played on an enclosed court with 4 players using solid bats rather than strung rackets. The glass walls can be used for play (like squash) and it's an easy game to pick up for all ages.

Padel is very sociable and great fun for all - no wonder it's growing fast around the world. Come and enjoy a session.



For advice on how best to get started, email George as below. All newbies welcome, with friendly guidance on hand. Download the Marden Sports Club app, register and book a court. Rackets available for hire and balls to buy. More info:

[www.mardensportsclub.com/padel](http://www.mardensportsclub.com/padel) or email: [padel@mardensportsclub.com](mailto:padel@mardensportsclub.com)

## **Marden Sporting Memories**

### **Sue Eltringham**

Marden Sporting Memories meet to talk and reminisce about past sporting occasions and catch up on the weekly sports events. Since the last update the group have had a variety of visitors including David Corry (father of Martin Corry Former England Rugby Captain & British Lion); Trevor Sturgess who shared his tales as a Sports Journalist (you can read more here <https://www.sportingmemories.uk/news/news/reporting-on-sport-from-the-middle-east-and-beyond/> ); Corrine Buckland, the former England Youth Korfbal Coach; Neil Brook-Johnson an Olympic Volunteer both in London and in Paris and Bille Eltringham, who shared her tales of sailing, including crossing the Atlantic aged 21.

The group were recently hosted for an afternoon by Marden Village Club where they enjoyed a game of darts, snooker and shuv ha'penny - thank you to Louise and all at the club for making that happen. In May, we held another 'away fixture' with a fishing trip to Monk Lakes, which has been organised by 'Cast a Thought'. We will report back in the next newsletter!

If you have an interesting Sporting story or physical challenge that you would like to share with the group, we would be delighted to hear from you: [mardensportingmemories@gmail.com](mailto:mardensportingmemories@gmail.com)

## **Marden Theatre Group**

### **"Little Shop of Horrors"**

The Marden Theatre group will be performing again from 31<sup>st</sup> July to 2<sup>nd</sup> August in Marden Memorial Hall. It's a thrilling, hilarious and slightly twisted ride as a small-town florist and his carnivorous plant bring chaos, comedy and a whole lot of heart to the stage.

Tickets are on sale at:

<https://mardentheatrecompany.co.uk/buy-your-tickets-here/>

## **Play On! – a new community group in Marden**

Have you always enjoyed taking part in sports, games and physical challenges? Do you miss being part of a team or just being together in a social group?

If you would like to meet up to "reminisce about the good old days" of being active and to 'Play On' by taking part in activities and games with others, then why not sign up for this group? For anyone aged 50+ and a resident in Marden – limited spaces available – free to attend – free refreshments. Thursdays from 11.15am-12.30pm in the Vestry Hall, High Street, Marden.

To book a place or for more information, please call Sue on 01622 833053 or email:

[Sue.Eltringham@SEEoccupationaltherapy.co.uk](mailto:Sue.Eltringham@SEEoccupationaltherapy.co.uk)

# **GET HOT OFF THE PRESS MARDEN VILLAGE NEWS!!**

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

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

**SIGN UP NOW**



Or call or email Rachel on: 01622 832305 or  
deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk who can  
add you to the mailing list.

# PARISH COUNCIL COUNCILLORS, CLERKS AND OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

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Katie Lam MP

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katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk/www.katieforkent.com

## **KENT POLICE**

Emergency: 999

Telephone: 101

<https://bit.ly/KPReportACrime>

<https://bit.ly/KPRuralCrime>

## **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)

## **ADMIN ASSISTANT**

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**Marden Parish Council, Parish Office, Marden Memorial Hall, Goudhurst Road, Marden, TN12 9JX**

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**Office Opening Times: Monday, Tuesday and Friday 10.00am to 12noon**



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