

AUTUMN 2023

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER



Copyright Helen Montague

A LOOK AT THIS ISSUE:

PLANNING UPDATE - PAGE 12

PROJECT UPDATE - PAGE 13

HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT - PAGE 15

WHAT IS GOING ON IN MARDEN - PAGE 25



UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL



Dear Resident,

What an amazing Indian Summer we have had, but as I write this it looks like the weather is going to become more autumnal very soon. This is likely to bring the usual flooding risk and I urge everyone to be prepared, you will find useful information in this newsletter. This newsletter is packed with valuable information for everyone in the Parish, so please read all of it.

Your Parish Council continues to work on your behalf. Between now and Christmas we will be responding to Maidstone Borough Council on the outline planning application for the land at Albion Road/Copper Lane. More information later in the newsletter. We will also be looking very carefully at the main modifications recommended by the Inspector to the Draft Maidstone Local Plan and particularly the impact on Marden.

The Marden Foodbank, run by Marden Parish Church, is a vital source of help for many of our residents. They rely entirely on donations, so I urge you, if you are able, to please consider donating to them. There is more information in the newsletter.

Finally an important date for your diary. The ever popular Marden at Christmas is being held on Saturday 2nd December.

It will follow the usual format – look out for information about the day.

Warm wishes

Cllr Kate Tippen

GENERAL UPDATE

We try 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 and on social media and give village organisations the opportunity to report on what they are up to. In the newsletters we particularly focus on health & wellbeing and the hot topic of sustainability and the environment.

If you need to raise any issues, 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 or deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk. The Clerks are not currently holding “Meet the Clerks” at the Vestry Hall but are still available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 12 noon in the Parish Office.

GET HOT OFF THE PRESS MARDEN VILLAGE NEWS!!

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

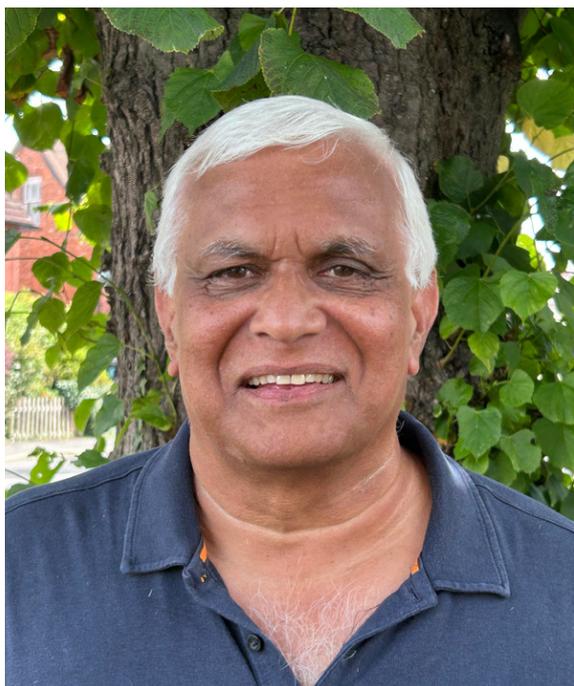
Use this QR Code on your mobile phone:

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



Alternatively, from your search engine type:
<https://bit.ly/MPC-E-NewsletterSignUp>
Or call or email Rachel on: 01622 832305 or deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk who can add you to the mailing list.

Welcome to our new Parish Councillors



Following the resignations of Cllrs Chris Barker and Matt Burton two new Councillors were co-opted at the Full Council meeting on 8th August to make our numbers complete. Please welcome Cllr Adrian Rabot and Cllr Mike Summersgill and we look forward to working with them both on our team.



Marden Parish Council Mission Statement

Parish Councils are the part of local government which is closest to the people and has a number of responsibilities which it exercises on behalf of Marden residents – our village communities and our residents are the most important assets we have. Parish Councillors are elected (or co-opted) representatives and many issues we deal with are fairly complex and not straightforward and can often take a long time to resolve or implement – unfortunately there never seems to be a quick fix solution.

We are currently looking at formulating a mission statement and once drafted, we will consult with residents on whether you agree and what you would like us to do. We will report on this in the Spring Newsletter.



Marden Parish Meetings

Parish Council meetings are held on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm. Full Council is held on the second Tuesday of each month and Amenities on the fourth Tuesday of each month both of which are at The Allens in Albion Road. Planning is held on the first and third Tuesday of each month and Finance quarterly both in the Parish Office at the Memorial Hall.

GENERAL UPDATE CONTD

Marden Parish Meetings (Contd)

If you wish to attend a meeting, please contact Ali (or Rachel in the case of Amenities). Alternatively, if you have an item which you would like Cllrs to consider/discuss, please let either Ali or Rachel know 10 days before the relevant meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend a meeting and raise an issue/concern but please note that Cllrs may not be in a position to respond immediately. All agendas are displayed on the Parish Council Notice Boards, in the weekly e-Newsletter and posted on our website each week. You can find the agendas and minutes on our website:

<https://bit.ly/MinutesandAgendas>

Marden Summer Play Scheme

Although the weather wasn't always kind, the Summer Play Scheme was a great success with up to 64 children attending each day and it was a shame that we were unable to accommodate all the children that applied as it was over-subscribed.



Congratulations to Jen Ward and her team on running such a successful scheme. The staff worked so hard and provided a lot of activities, sporting events and general fun for all those who attended.

Looking at the children's faces when leaving they thoroughly enjoyed their time meeting school friends and making new ones along with playing sports and doing arts and crafts. Ray Morris from Marden Wildlife and Kirsty Swinnerton from the Kent Wildlife Trust spoke to them about owl pellets and lots of children loved dissecting these to find bones of small mammals and the tracking of the Turtle Doves which visit Marden. The Parish Council received excellent feedback from parents/carers and hopefully this successful scheme can run again next year.



Meetings with Borough & County Councillors

The Parish Council tries to hold regular meetings with both our Borough Councillors and County Councillor to lobby them on various issues and they provide us with information on what's happening at Maidstone Borough Council and KCC. These meetings are very useful and are a good way of keeping in touch and ensuring we are all "singing from the same page".

Parish Council Elections – May 2024

In May 2024 the Parish Council is due for re-election and if you are interested in becoming a Councillor and feel you have something to offer the village, please contact Ali for more information. The criteria includes: you are British, or a citizen of the Commonwealth, are 18 years or over, are registered to vote in the area or if you have lived, worked or owned property in Marden for at least 12 months before the election. If you would like to get involved with the work of the Parish Council, then why not consider standing for election?

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 Marden Community Engagement Forum, which meets every couple of months, is a useful interactive group helping to link up different aspects of health and wellbeing.

Family Hub Services Consultation

Earlier this year, KCC ran the Community Services Consultation which recommended the closure of Marden's Children's Centre. The proposals put out for consultation included a reduction in the number of buildings currently being used to deliver services for children, young people and families.

The Parish Council held a meeting in early Spring with our County Councillor, Lottie Parfitt-Reid, and a representative from KCC outlining our concerns on the serious implications to Marden if the Children's Centre closed.

In our response to KCC, we highlighted the 2021 Census revealed that the parish of Marden has significant need. For example, there are 977 children aged 15 years and under living in Marden – an increase of 31.5% compared to the 2011 Census. There has been a 105% increase in the number of 0–4-year-olds in the period and a 37.6% increase in 5–9-year-olds. Marden Medical Centre is seeing more families being impacted by mental health etc. and there is clearly a need for community services for children and young people in Marden, which is local, responsive, accessible and meeting the needs of the local population.

The Family Hub consultation followed on from the KCC Community Services Consultation, which closed on 13th September, and focuses on KCC's Family Hub service offer. It describes the range of services that would be available under the Family Hub model and the different ways they could be delivered. It refers to co-location of a range of partners in Family Hubs and an enhanced outreach and digital offer. The current internal and external services are being reviewed to ensure that they are aligned with the new Family Hub model.

HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

The responses to both these consultations will inform KCC's thinking on: the types of services that Kent residents need; the best ways that services can be delivered; the buildings that will be Family Hub sites and those that will no longer be available; which services will be co-located; where outreach services need to be and what residents would benefit from the most; what the digital offer will look like and how people will be impacted by the changes; and how they might be able to lessen negative impacts.

The Parish Council responded to the consultation and all we can hope is the existing Children's Centre in Marden is not closed down and becomes one of the Family Hub sites. You can check out the consultation at:

<https://bit.ly/KCCFamilyHubs>

Warm Hubs

Marden Village Club are delighted to confirm that they will be relaunching their Warm Hub from Thursday 2nd November from 10am - 2pm, and every Thursday thereafter. This is open to everyone, not just members. The bar will be closed, but they shall be offering a lovely warm space with hot drinks.

Marden Food Bank – Kathy Young

Many families and individuals in our village are continuing to face a difficult time, but at Marden Foodbank we work to support all in our community and signpost them to help where we can.

Visitors to the Foodbank are welcome to call in to the Vestry Hall on Monday mornings from 9.30am-12 noon to meet with Rev Nicky and the team, or to talk to colleagues from Involve Kent or Talking Therapies who drop in on a monthly basis - charities who provide advice, encouragement and support to resolve problems affecting an individual's health and well-being.

Marden Foodbank also supports Marden Pre-School with various breakfast items on a monthly basis, to help them feed children who are arriving hungry.

You may not know, but our Foodbank is solely reliant on donations. We only manage to continue to stay open because of generous donations from the village who donate food and money to keep this resource going. So please continue to give generously and thank you everyone for your continued support and understanding.



Marden's Dementia Friendly Community – Rachel Chacon

- We are continuing to support the seated exercise class on Fridays in the Congregational Chapel. It is run by Hamish, a qualified physiotherapist. It's free, it's fun and it's friendly!

- There's a free monthly lunch at the West End Tavern for those living with dementia and a carer. Come along at 12.00 noon on 2nd November and 7th December – no need to book. We will be continuing this in the New Year and alternating with The Unicorn to enable those at the other end of the village to attend - dates to follow.
- The Library Coffee Morning on Thursdays at 10am-11am is growing and is also free, fun and friendly so please pop along and find out.
- Our Christmas Event is planned for Thursday 30th November from 12pm-2.30pm with entertainment from Forte Music in Marden Village Club.

If you wish to be added to our mailing list, please email:

mardendfcinfo@gmail.com or call Rachel on 01622 831941 for more info.

Marden Children's Centre

Bridget Manser

It's great to see that the Centre is getting busier now we have included our Rhyme Time session to our timetable for children aged 0-2 years. In the holidays our Stay and Play sessions and events are open to children up to the age of 11 years. The event we ran in Staplehurst in the summer with our colleagues in the Youth team was a great success with over 800 people attending!

We are constantly updating our Facebook page with all the groups and events we offer in the Maidstone and Rural area so watch this space.

We hope to see more of you at the centre as it's a good way to meet and interact with new people, especially if you are new to the area or you are just looking for some advice and support. If you would like to make contact, please visit the Maidstone Children's Centre Facebook page or email: mardenchildrenscentre@kent.gov.uk

Clinical Pharmacist

Welcome to Chinny Orakwe who works as the Clinical Pharmacist at Marden Medical Centre. At the surgery, Chinny reviews patients' repeat medication and is happy to answer queries. In clinic, she conducts reviews with people who live with high blood pressure, high cholesterol, dementia, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, frailty, heart failure and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. She can see patients face-to-face or can undertake reviews by phone. Chinny liaises closely with the GPs at the Medical Centre to discuss patients care and you can book an appointment through the reception team.

First Contact Physiotherapy Service

If you have a musculoskeletal issue, such as a bad back or neck or joint pain, you can ask to book directly with the First Contact Physiotherapist. The initial telephone consultation will be an in-depth discussion about the injury/condition and a plan will be put in place where possible, which would normally include exercise programming, advice or education where appropriate.

HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

First Contact Physiotherapy Service Contd

The team can make ongoing referrals where necessary - a face-to-face physiotherapy assessment can be made and to book an appointment, contact the Surgery reception team and ask for an appointment with the First Contact Physiotherapist. The receptionist will ask you some questions to check that you meet the criteria for the service. You do not need to see your GP for this service, you can go straight to the First Contact Physiotherapist.



Come & Sing Group – 2.30pm on alternate Thursdays in the Vestry Hall - Sarah Emanuel

Why not go along and enjoy a good old sing song? All are welcome and sing to improve health, boost well-being or just for the joy of singing. Here are the dates for the autumn months: November 2nd, 16th and 30th and December 14th for a Christmas celebration. If you would like to go or have any questions, please call Sarah on 01622 832925 or email: emanuelfamily@btinternet.com

Marden Community Lunches

The last lunch of the year will be held on Monday 20th November. As usual the time is 12.30pm at the Vestry Hall. The cost is £5 for a two-course home cooked meal. If you are able to help with cooking at any of the lunches or require more information, please contact Janet McIntosh on 01622 831256.

Hi Kent - Social Groups

Want to join a friendly group run by people who have your best interests at heart? Hi Kent are setting up social groups across the county to give people living with hearing loss the opportunity to meet others with the same challenges and chat over a cuppa and cake. Sometimes they will arrange for speakers and therapists too. This is a new venture for Hi Kent and they are excited to bring people together especially when so many have been isolated indoors.

There's a group now in Staplehurst who meet on the third Thursday of every month from 10.30am-12 noon at the United Reformed Church, High Street TN12 0AS and in Maidstone who meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 10am-12 noon at the United Reformed Church, 67 Week Street ME14 1QU. You can check out their website: <https://hikent.org.uk/> and go to social activities under social groups and it will tell you where all the groups are.

Maidstone Borough Council Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO)

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) recently held a Dog Control PSPO Consultation to try to encourage responsible dog ownership. The existing Public Space Protection Order for Dog Control outlines measures to protect the Borough's public spaces and the community. As a result of the consultation, MBC is introducing further measures to clamp-down on unacceptable behaviour. The MBC Public Space Protection Order for Dog Control will be updated on 21 October 2023, and will enable the Council to issue Fixed Penalty Notices of £100 to irresponsible dog owners. MBC is asking members of the public to report issues such as dog fouling, nuisance dogs, dog attacks, or dangerous dogs to Kent Police.

A serious element of dog ownership is the risk of harming another dog or a person, regardless of their breed or size. Dog attacks on people or animals are serious offences that result in prosecution, fines or even imprisonment in line with the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

Keeping dogs under proper control is the responsibility of every dog owner and from October, it will remain an offence to allow them to wander or roam loose without a person accompanying it or to not keep a dog on a lead when requested by an authorised officer. It is also an offence to take or allow a dog into play areas and tennis courts owned by MBC.

The requirement to keep a dog on a lead within the grounds of the cemetery and crematorium has been extended to the town centre. MBC has also introduced a new requirement for dog owners to limit the number of dogs that they walk to four anywhere in the Borough of Maidstone unless they are a licensed dog boarder or registered to MBC's Professional Dog Walkers Scheme. These offences all carry a fixed penalty of £100. If people witness someone failing to pick up after their dog, they can report it to the MBC Community Protection Team either online via the website: <https://bit.ly/MBCComProtect> or call 01622 602162. You can also report irresponsible dog owners to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Marden Medical Centre - Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The PPG works in partnership with the Marden Medical Centre to:

- Foster improved communication between the Marden Medical Centre and its patients;
- Help patients to take more responsibility for their health;
- Contribute to the continuous improvement of services and the quality of care;
- Provide practical support for the practice and help to implement change.

The PPG meet three or four times a year. If you are a registered patient at the Marden Medical Centre, you are invited to join the PPG. Pick up a leaflet at the centre or email membership@mardenppg.org.uk.

SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE

Parish Council Environmental Group

Five Parish Councillors currently sit on the Environmental Group, and we would like to extend this group to any residents who would be interested in helping with the project to assess the practicalities of a local action plan and what realistically is achievable. Please let Ali know if you're interested in being part of the group either by emailing: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or ringing 01622 832305. The next meeting is 21st November at 6.00pm at the Parish Office. We have finalised the Parish Council's Estate Management Plan which looks at realistic and manageable ways in which the Parish Council operates and a sustainable Maintenance Strategy for Southons Field, Marden Cemetery and Marden Playing Field has been agreed which will come into operation in 2024.

Kent Men of Trees

On a hot September afternoon, Cllr Anne Boswell met with a representative from the Kent Men of Trees (KMOT) and our volunteer Tree Warden Charlie Edwards where they identified and investigated all the trees on the Parish Council open spaces. The representative from KMOT was surprised at the huge number of trees the Parish Council were responsible for and was very impressed.

Hopefully we will receive a report soon on how we got on and will report back in the Spring Newsletter.

Kent Plan Tree Initiative Marden Cemetery

Marden Parish Council is very aware of its biodiversity responsibility, and we have planted many trees and saplings in our open spaces over the last couple of years.

We have been liaising with KCC on their Kent Plan Tree initiative to find an area on Parish Council owned land where more saplings can be planted. Marden Cemetery is owned by the Parish Council and the good news is that KCC have received the funding for 1,000 saplings which we are planning to plant in the field behind Marden Cemetery (which we also own), and this has been agreed with the farmer who is currently maintaining the area. This is also a great opportunity to create an area of wildflowers and feeding strips and we are hoping to plant the saplings from 12th to 15th February 2024. So a shout out for volunteers to help with this important community initiative – please email Rachel, the Deputy Clerk if you would like to give us a hand: deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk



Marden Wildlife Update

Ray Morris

Representatives of Marden Wildlife and Marden Farmer Cluster attended the launch of Natural England's Nature Recovery Plan at the House of Lords. Local farmer Peter Hall was one of four speakers and described Marden Wildlife's part in linking the community with the work of farmers. This was well-received and has triggered further interest in the village.

A ground-breaking initiative has been created with Marden Horticultural Society to increase numbers of some of our scarcest plants. Gardeners have grown these from cuttings and seeds taken from wild specimens, to be planted out to increase the local distribution with genetically appropriate stock.

Our work with Kent Wildlife Trust to study the local Turtle Doves' use of the area continues, revealing interesting results that will help local landowners consolidate Marden as one of the UK's most important centres of this rare farmland bird. The Second Day of Christmas is still in safe hands! Keep up with our findings on our Marden Wildlife Facebook page. If you'd like to be actively involved, email us on mardenwildlife@gmail.com or visit our website mardenwildlife.org.uk.



Nature Overhead Survey

The Natural History Museum is undertaking a survey to discover how noise pollution affects insects and the ecosystems they support. They need your ears and eyes to record the sounds and sights of nature along UK roads. Insects are vital for many habitats, but they may struggle to communicate in noisy environments. To take part, simply choose a nearby road, look for insects along a short section of it, and make a five-minute sound recording of the surroundings. To take part in this survey check out: <https://bit.ly/NatureOverhead>

Water Refill Station

The Parish Council has been considering installing a water refill station on the outside of the public toilets for some while. The building is owned by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) and it has now transpired we require a Licence for Alterations from MBC which is costly. Councillors considered the total costings for this project against the benefits to the community and it was resolved not to take the project forward and use the funds towards another project.

Maidstone Eco Hub

The Maidstone Eco Hub held a pop-up information centre during the summer to help support residents to live more sustainably, save money and reduce your carbon footprint. At some point they may roll this initiative out to another part of the borough. You can find more info at: <https://bit.ly/MaidstoneEcoHub>

SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE CONTD

Green Doctor

Green Doctor offers free, impartial advice and support to help you save energy, reduce your bills and live in a warmer more comfortable home. When you sign up for a visit they can identify causes of heat loss in your home, help identify and tackle damp or mould problems; offer useful tips for energy and water whilst ensuring your home stays safe and comfortable; installing small energy and water efficiency measures such as draft excluders; supporting you to switch energy providers and to access other support such as emergency heating; government subsidies or grants; advice on energy or water debt. Visit the Green Doctor website for more info:

<https://bit.ly/GreenDoctorGroundwork>

Free Recycling for Your Unwanted Devices – Digital Kent

The Digital Kent team are managing a number of projects including secure recycling of unwanted business, charities and other organisation devices. They use a specialist process to ensure 100% data-wiping, to the strictest UK legislative standards, with data erasure certification provided back to the business or organisation. Items are then refurbished and reused to support those in the community who need a device or recycled with a zero-landfill policy.

If you have items to dispose of, you can book a collection online:
<https://bit.ly/DeviceRecycling>

Asian Hornet Threat to Kent Bees

Kent beekeepers are on high alert monitoring for Asian hornets, an aggressive new arrival from the continent. They have been spreading rapidly across Europe causing devastation to local bee populations, both wild bees and in apiaries.

This year, in 2023, has seen a significant increase with 23 confirmed sightings by early September, including some in our area. It is looking increasingly likely that they are becoming established in England, rather than just one-off arrivals blown over the Channel or arriving in vehicles.

The Asian hornet is slightly smaller than the native hornet but more aggressive and they can attack and wipe out entire colonies of honeybees. One hornet's nest can eat through 12.5kg of bees in a season and is distinguished by its bright yellow legs. If you do see one, try to take a photo for identification or, if you can trap it safely, freeze it, in the trap, for 24 hours to kill it but do take care because they can be aggressive and deliver a very nasty sting. Sightings should ideally be reported direct on the Asian Hornet Watch app, but, alternatively, you can contact Judy Taylor who is one of the beekeepers in Marden on 07941 584521.

Our beekeepers have been setting monitoring traps in our apiaries for several years. Now, in areas where sightings are confirmed, we are ramping up operations, setting thousands of traps. We're keen to work with local groups who can help us so, if hornets arrive in your village, please do support the efforts to stop them becoming permanent residents. As soon as a sighting is confirmed, attempts will begin to find and destroy the nest. If the Asian hornet does become established, there will be a huge impact on both beekeeping and wild bee populations. The hornets target and lurk outside hives, capturing returning bees and dismembering them to provide food for the hornet's young. Beekeeping will become even more difficult and costly due to colony loss and the efforts involved in trapping and deterring the hornets. Wild bees, outside the protection of the apiary are likely to be even more severely affected. Let's hope we can work together to keep them at bay. If you want to keep abreast of bee-keeping activity in our area, please do visit and 'like' our Laddingford and District Beekeepers Facebook page. Caroline Field, Laddingford and District Beekeepers Association

PLANNING UPDATE

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Local Review Regulation 22 – Main Modifications Consultation

The main part of the examination stage for MBC's Local Plan Review (LPR) with the Government Inspector has now finished and the independent Government Inspector has recommended some main modifications that are necessary to allow the plan to be adopted. The Main Modifications consultation is now open until Monday 13th November and residents and businesses are being encouraged to take part and have their say via the MBC website: <https://bit.ly/LPR-Reg22>

Land East of Albion Road and North of Copper Lane

As many of you are aware, MBC's draft Local Plan Review allocated a further development site in Marden at Copper Lane and Albion Road which has been accepted as a principle of development by both MBC and the Inspector. Now the adoption of the MBC Local Plan review is imminent, it is very likely that this site will go ahead despite Kent Highways concerns about the mitigation of the impacts on highways safety on Albion Road. The Parish Council, at the time of the newsletter going to print, is looking at the application for 117 new homes from the developer, Rydon, and will be submitting a response back to Maidstone Borough Council. Once sent the response will be able to be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/CopperLaneApplication> You can find the Parish Council's initial response in 2021 to the proposed development on our website: <https://bit.ly/MPCCopperLane>

Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!



Report through the Asian Hornet Watch app or www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport



PLANNING UPDATE CONTD

Marden Neighbourhood Plan Review (MNP)

As previously advised, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has been reviewing the MNP and cross-referencing any changes to MBC's emerging Local Plan and variations to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The suggested amendments have now been sent to MBC for review and we are awaiting feedback. We are not proposing to add any new policies but have updated and strengthened sections such as the natural environment, infrastructure and economy. Dependent upon whether MBC feel we need to hold a public consultation on the proposed changes, we are hoping to adopt the updated document early in 2024. The MNP is a legal document and is part of the planning policies within MBC. Councillors refer to the policies when considering planning applications to ensure they are compliant.

Reed Court Farm – Proposed Chicken Farm, Hunton Road

At the time of going to print, there was no update on this complex and extensive planning application as it has been delayed going to Maidstone Borough Council's Planning Committee as they are awaiting new ecology reports. If these are received in time, it will go to the November meeting.

PROJECT UPDATE

Marden Library Footway Extension

The Parish Council is delighted that the extension to the side of the library footway has now been completed and thanks to the contractor Wright Landscapes who made such a good job of finishing this project. We have had some positive feedback from residents who can see the benefit of this footway. We hope residents have enjoyed the flower bed which both Parish Councillors and Marden in Bloom help to tend.



Windsor Meadows and The Parsonage Developments – Joining up the Footway

One of the Parish Council's priorities on the Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP) is joining up the footway between Windsor Meadows and The Parsonage developments. We have received some funding from MBC's 'Love Where you Live' grant which we plan to put towards the cost of the laying of a hardstanding footway to link up the developments. We have heard back from the management companies that they are happy for us to go ahead. The proposed path has been discussed with a KCC PROW Officer and the current 'gap' fortunately does not affect the existing public footpath.

Fingerposts

The fingerpost sign at the junction of Plain Road and Thorn Road was severely damaged prior to Christmas and the Parish Council has been liaising with Kent Highways who have now confirmed they won't undertake the refurbishment. Fortunately, our County Councillor, Lottie Parfitt-Reid, has agreed to put some grant funding towards the cost of the repairs of the damaged fingerpost and the contractor is hoping to commence work in December/January. There was an issue in removing the fingers from the post at Maidstone Road/High Street junction and a local contractor has now carried out this work as well as repainting the posts at the Howland Road/Battle Lane junction.



Marden Parish Emergency Plan

The Parish Council has started to draft a parish emergency plan to be used in the event of an emergency affecting our community. 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 or a train crash, 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 it is important that our community can help itself until help arrives and it will do this more effectively if it has a 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 (e.g. 4x4 vehicles, tractors, chain saws with certificate, trained medical staff), but any assistance you can offer would be greatly received. If you would like to volunteer as a Community Response Volunteer, please contact Ali at the Parish Office. All volunteers, providing they adhere to the role of an Emergency Plan volunteer, will be covered by the Parish Council's insurance. We already have a network of Flood Wardens and their work will link into the Emergency Plan.

HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Community Speed Watch – Keep Your Speed Down!

The Maidstone Community Safety Unit had a blitz regarding speeding motorists and mobile phone use and several drivers were dealt with for offences and vehicles seized for no tax as well as drivers warned regarding their driving skills or lack of them.

The Parish Council along with residents is concerned about the amount of traffic and speeding which are causing so many problems in the village and we understand how important it is to start up the Speed Watch scheme. We have the necessary equipment and are in the process of the sites being re-evaluated to meet the criteria. If there is anybody who would like to be a Speed Watch Co-ordinator or would like to volunteer, please email Ali: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or call 01622 832305. Apologies to those residents who have already come forward to help and Ali will be in touch once we're up and running soon.



Parish Council Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

As you are aware, the Parish Council has developed a HIP which currently has 24 outstanding issues on it. As previously explained, Kent Highways are supportive, but lack of funding means it is doubtful that many of the identified issues will be resolved soon. Councillors recently reviewed the document:

- Single yellow lines in Goudhurst Road (from end of current parking restrictions to village boundary) – residents in this vicinity have been informally written to asking for their comments prior to submitting a request to Kent Highways.
- Double yellow lines from Stanley Road to Seymour Drive and from Stanley Road to a point agreed with Kent Highways – residents in this vicinity have been informally written to asking for their comments prior to submitting a request to Kent Highways.
- HGV signage on B2079 (both sides) and Maidstone Road (junction with Underlyn Lane) – the Parish Council has agreed to fund the Kent Highways design team to draw up plans regarding new improved signage. Once this has been organised, we will further investigate what can be done at Pattenden Lane/Church Green junction.

- Bollards on High Street/Maidstone Road junction – Kent Highways have advised that the location does not meet the criteria but would monitor the situation. Councillors will reconsider this item at the next review of the document.
- Village Gateway in Maidstone Road – there is not enough room on the verges at the proposed location near the 30mph signage and this will be considered at the next review.

The proposed dropped kerbs at the school were marked out several months ago but have not been installed so the Parish Council has chased Kent Highways.

A 20mph speed limit within the built-up area has been added to the HIP document. Speed limits of 20mph are designed to reduce the severity of injuries suffered in accidents and the implementation of such schemes is the responsibility of local authorities.

However, the recent government announcement said its plan is to review guidance on 20mph speed limits in England to prevent their use in areas where it's not appropriate.

Another update will be given in the next newsletter, but you can find the up-to-date document on the Parish Council website:

<https://bit.ly/MPCHIPFeb2023>

Village Footways

We are all concerned with the poor state of some of the village footways (pavements) and the Parish Council is considering placing this issue on the Highways Improvement Plan. Many of the village footways are uneven particularly from the West End Tavern to the junction at Pattenden Lane making it difficult for some pedestrians particularly wheelchair and buggy users. However, it would take a considerable amount of money to be able to repair any of them. The clerks are undertaking an audit of the village footways and will report back.

Marden Railway Station

The Parish Council last held a meeting with Southeastern in 2019 and we have been pressing for another meeting for some time. Finally Southeastern and Network Rail agreed to meet with Councillors in July when quite a number of issues were raised:

- Refreshing parking bay markings and double-yellow lines on access; replacing damaged traffic signs on access; ongoing drainage problems; rail replacement bus arrangements; approach road lighting; road and car park surfacing repairs; installation of litter bins on the platforms; stop markers on down platform; the possibility of replacing some of the fencing that is not pleasing to the eye especially at a rural station.

HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT CONTD

Marden Railway Station Contd

- We also asked if a fire hydrant could be installed and what happens when the car park becomes full again. Southeastern gave an assurance that this will be monitored, and other options considered if the car park was overused in the future.
- They advised that the Department for Transport had asked Southeastern to supply statistics of users and the cost of free WiFi on trains as this facility may be lost.
- It was questioned why the 7.35am train did not stop at Marden anymore which has an impact not just on commuters but school children trying to reach Paddock Wood, Maidstone and Tonbridge. Unfortunately Southeastern's train planning team believes it gives a faster journey for those travelling from Ashford where generally the larger passenger volume board and would be difficult reinstating the service in the current climate.
- There may be funding available to improve the access to the ticket office and are awaiting more information. If some funding becomes available, Marden in Bloom will consider replanting the beds at the front of the station with the assistance of the Community Payback Team.

- Concern was raised about the large amount of rubbish behind the fencing on Network Rail land under the Pattenden Lane railway bridge and hopefully this will now be cleared.

Ticket Office Consultation. As you will be aware, Southeastern is conducting a Ticket Office Consultation on a phased approach on the closure of various ticket offices. The second phase is due this Autumn and we have been assured that there would be no loss to office hours at Marden, but there may be changes in how the ticket office/office staff would work and different options of obtaining tickets etc. The Parish Council raised concern that the ticket machine was frequently broken and often a queue formed during the morning rush hour.

Step Free Access. The current round of 'Access for All' grant funding is with the Department of Transport. Marden is included on the list and on the top 10 of their stations. If successful, funding would be available not just for the step-free access but the surrounding area.

Cycle Parking. There are new cycle parking facilities which was funded from S106 money. The cost of obtaining a fob for access is £15 per annum or can be purchased for shorter periods and cyclists can access bike pumps etc within the facility.

Southeastern will monitor the cycle hub as the Parish Council asked why the secure area was so big and whether the 'free' area of storage should be larger.

DRAINAGE & WATER

As most residents will know, flooding is a risk for all of us every year throughout the Autumn and Winter when we quite often have heavy and prolonged rain and some of our roads flood, becoming dangerous to drive. We have been given permission by Kent Highways to close roads in the event of flooding. We are grateful to those residents who are flood wardens and hold road closure signs to put them out in the event of flood. Marden is part of a group along with Collier Street, Yalding and Hunton that will co-ordinate road closures in the area when flooding is a risk and work alongside agencies such as the Environment Agency, Maidstone Borough Council, Kent Highways and the Police. Marden Parish Council, in collaboration with the Environment Agency and Kent Resilience Forum, has developed a Community Flood Plan for Marden.

The roads that may need to be closed if there is flooding are: Sheephurst Lane, Plain Road, Green Lane and Hunton Road from the end of Pattenden Lane through Chainhurst to Hunton Bridge. If any of these roads are on your normal route, then why not check out alternative routes now rather than waiting until they have been closed? It may not be possible to put out diversion

signs so remember the safest route will always be the main roads and high ground.

The other problem is sewer flooding which occurs mainly on the path from Goudhurst Road to Maynards, Sovereigns Way and in Roughlands Lane. If you recall, this was a persistent problem in January and Southern Water were being contacted regularly to sort the issue out. An extensive report on surface water, sewage and the complex river and ditch drainage was reported in the Summer Newsletter which you can find on the Parish Council website:

<https://bit.ly/MPCSummerNews>

Last Winter we also experienced a very heavy dose of ice and snow in December and if this happens again, please note that most of our lanes are not treated and can become very icy. As ever be prepared and identify safe routes and use the main roads wherever possible.

OPEN SPACE

Our Caretaker Chris Prince inspects all the play equipment on a weekly basis at the Playing Field, Napoleon Drive and Southons Field and an annual play inspection is undertaken by a professional company to ensure all the equipment is safe. If an issue is identified, then appropriate action is taken to repair and make good.

OPEN SPACE CONTD

Changing Room Public Consultation

As reported in the last newsletter, the consensus of residents' responses (76.47%) to the consultation which closed in April was to use the old changing room building as a dedicated youth facility with controlled supervision. The building would not just be for the exclusive use for youth provision, but could also be used by other village groups and events.

The Parish Council has now appointed an Architect with a Scope of Works who is currently in the process of drawing up plans for the 3 options: 1. convert the building into a community space with a single disabled toilet and kitchenette included within the structure; 2. include a small side extension to allow for a disabled toilet and a small amount of storage enabling the entire community space to be utilised as one space; 3. providing a larger extension to include a kitchen, toilet and storage area. Once these plans have been received, a further public consultation will be held.

Marden Playing Field & Napoleon Drive Play Area

As previously reported, the Parish Council is in the process of renaming the field to King Charles III field but as ever the wheels are slowly turning!

Some of the wet pour in the Napoleon Drive play area had to be replaced

because of tree root damage and our Caretaker has managed to repair the vandalised picnic table until a new piece of equipment is sought. The piece of equipment in the play area which was removed some time ago should be replaced soon and hopefully the additional CCTV will be installed.

It is concerning that the field was set alight during the September heatwave and broken glass left shattered across the grass. If you notice any incidents like this or any anti-social behaviour, please report to 101.

Southons Field

This lovely dog-free open space has been used by so many residents during the Summer enjoying a picnic, the play trail, swings and football goals. Two more picnic benches have been installed and the old entrance gates have recently been replaced.



There have been a few incidents of disposable BBQ's being used which is not allowed and a potential fire hazard especially when the grass is very dry.

Occasionally residents bring dogs into the field and sometimes not on a lead – only assistance dogs are allowed. You can find the rules of the field on the Notice Board near the entrance.

The access gate will be locked during the hours of darkness as follows:
November-January 8am-4pm,
February & March 8am-6pm (or dusk if earlier), April-August 7am-8pm,
September-October 7am-7pm. April-August 7am-8pm. We would be grateful if residents could vacate the field once the gates are closed and not climb over the new gates.

Marden Cemetery

Our beautiful well-tended cemetery is a peaceful place to sit, reflect and take in nature. We are hoping to create a small wildflower patch this Autumn under a tree in the new section for the scattering of ashes. If you would like to scatter your loved one's ashes, then please let Ali know: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

POLICE & CRIME UPDATE

Your Community Safety Unit

Your Community Safety Unit is a group of local police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) with a sergeant and inspector dedicated to serving your community.

The team is made up of officers based in your area, supported by additional officers from the wider force.

The Parish Council have met with PC Carl Johnson and PC Will Dickinson who are responsible for Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn. As you can imagine, they are somewhat stretched but are hoping that additional cover will be employed in the future. However, both Carl and Will are very switched on with issues in Marden and work closely with local authorities, local organisations and community leaders to find useful, long-term solutions to local problems, while maintaining a wider focus on reducing crime across Kent. Please continue to report issues to 101 – the more that is reported, the more chance it will get dealt with.



Crime Update

The Parish Council no longer receives regular crime reports, but you can view the local crimes in the Marden and Yalding area by using the following link:

<https://bit.ly/KPCrimeMap>

This map uses data from local forces and the hotspots give only an approximate idea of where crimes happened – actual locations and details of crimes are kept anonymous and not all crimes that have occurred can be shown on the map.

POLICE & CRIME UPDATE CONTD

My Community Voice

The messaging service called My Community Voice helps residents, businesses, and community groups to keep in touch with their local policing teams. The service sends updates about your local area directly from the police officers themselves. You can sign up to receive alerts via:

<https://bit.ly/ComVoice>



Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

ASB is not a low-level offence and can devastate the lives of victims and communities and can be a precursor to more serious crime. It can result in a range of negative emotional, behavioural, social, health and financial impacts. Victims of ASB have the right to request a review of their case of ongoing ASB if they have reported 3 separate incidents of ASB within 6 months. The Case review demands that Police, Local Authority, and other relevant agencies (such as housing providers) come together to find a solution to stop ASB. For further information on ASB case reviews please see click on the following link:

<https://bit.ly/ASBCase>

If you have a crime or ASB incident to report or you wish to share information with Kent Police about a crime, ASB incident or a welfare concern, please use one of the online reporting or Live Chat options that can be found on the website: www.kent.police.uk or call 101. If there is a crime in progress or an immediate threat to life, please contact 999.

Kent Police Rural Crime Survey

The Kent Police Rural Crime Strategy is currently under review, and they are seeking the views of the rural community they serve to reflect the areas that residents would like them to focus and deliver on in the future.

To capture this information, they ask that residents take part in the Rural Crime Survey. It will only take a few minutes to complete and can be accessed through the following link: <https://bit.ly/KPCrimeRuralSurvey>

This is your opportunity for you to have an input on shaping rural policing for the next few years.



Horse Tethering

The Community Protection Team are unable to do anything about horse droppings when they occur in a public space, but you can report it to the Maidstone Borough Council's Street Care and Cleaning team who may be able to come out and clear it up: <https://bit.ly/MBCStreetCleaning>

There is nothing illegal about tethering horses, but the horse owner must ensure the horse's welfare needs are met.

YOUTH PROVISION

Marden Youth Club

They had a busy summer with a lot of young people attending their projects and trips during August and a lot attending a big event in Staplehurst. They have also been undertaking detached work with a few children. Marden Youth Group is now taking place on a Friday at the field just outside The Cockpit every two weeks. Many thanks to Rob Yorke and his team who have re-established the youth group. The KCC Family Hub consultation (as mentioned above) does not include the closure of youth provision provided directly by KCC.

OTHER PARISH INFORMATION

Clean, Safe, Green Charter for Marden

Golding Homes and MHS Homes have been working in partnership to deliver a Clean, Safe, Green Charter for Marden. A consultation took place with residents in January and the

feedback was analysed to help put together a Charter document which was launched on 2nd October. Each of the stakeholders – Golding Homes, MHS Homes, KCC, MBC, Marden Parish Council, Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue – signed a pledge to help make Marden cleaner, safe and greener which was witnessed by residents. The Parish Council's pledge is: "We will work with residents to promote considerate and neighbourly behaviour, encourage personal responsibility and work with relevant organisations to make Marden a clean, safe and pleasant environment and place in which we live. We will promote community spirit and take pride in where we live."

KALC Community Awards

As reported in the Summer Newsletter, Olga Rance who runs the Old Post Office Café was presented with this award for all her tireless efforts in helping her fellow citizens in Ukraine and those who have been living as guests in Marden and the surrounding area. Each year at the Annual Parish Meeting 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. If you would like to nominate somebody in the village who you think has served the community and made a difference, please let Ali know: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk by 31st December 2023.

OTHER PARISH INFORMATION CONTD

Marden Library

Everyone is welcome at Marden Library and it's free to join. We offer 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 15p for an A4 page.

We are launching new book groups, a Lego club for children and have a designated quiet room for studying or working. In Autumn we are starting two story time sessions for children, stay tuned for more information on this. On a Tuesday afternoon come and have a chat over a game of Upwords, Thursday mornings we offer free tea and coffee and chat about days gone by and Friday morning is Rhyme Time for babies and toddlers.

As ever, we update our selection of fiction and nonfiction books regularly and can reserve a book from any of our Kent libraries. Keep checking social media for children's craft events in the library and at Marden's Children Centre as we continue to build on the strong relationship we have together to support young families.

Marden Library is open Tuesday-Friday 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm. Saturday 9am-1pm.

If you would like to contact the library please call 03000 420 684 or email: mardenlibrary@kent.gov.uk

For more information on any of our services or if you would like to volunteer at the library please pop in and see us.

Marden Church - Rev. Nicky

The church is open for our normal pattern of services - 8.00am Holy Communion using traditional language and 10.30am services which alternate between Morning Worship on the 1st and 3rd Sunday's and Parish Communion on the 2nd and 4th.

The church is also open each day, for anyone who would like to spend some time in reflection or prayer. Do keep an eye on the church website: www.mardenchurch.org.uk and Facebook page @churchinmarden for our services and events.

Messy Church is for all ages and explores a theme or Bible story through art, craft, and activities and is a wonderful way to engage with families and children. We have a short act of worship too and then we have tea. If you would like to receive our weekly news sheet, please email office@mardenchurch.org.uk. Sunday Club for primary school age children runs on the Sundays on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. We also run the Little Fishes playgroup on Wednesday mornings, during term time, in the Vestry Hall.

Weddings & Baptisms - At Marden Church we enjoy celebrating with you the happy occasions of Baptisms and Weddings so do please get in touch if you would like to plan any of these special events. We are also here for those who sadly need to plan the funeral of a loved one. These services can take a variety of forms and we are here to help you plan the right service for your loved one when the time comes. Although the churchyard is closed for burials, we are still able to inter ashes for those who live in Marden.

Church Bells - The work on the bells started on 2nd October thanks to the generous support of the village in helping us reach the target of £52,000. The bells will be silent through October and November but should be back and ringing by Christmas.

Please don't hesitate to get in contact with us if we can help in any way. Ring the Vicarage on 01622 831379 or email vicar@mardenchurch.org.uk



Community Payback Team

Both the Parish Council and Marden Church use the Community Payback Team to undertake various projects. You may have noticed that the bollards at the junction of the High Street and Maidstone Road have been painted and we're sure you will agree these are looking so much better.

Marden Primary Academy

Mrs Hannah Penning

It gives me great pleasure to introduce myself as the new Principal of Marden Primary Academy. I feel extremely privileged to have been chosen to lead this wonderful school on the next stage of its journey. I have worked in education for over 16 years, 10 of which have been as a senior leader. During this time, I have worked across a range of schools with different contexts, most recently in Paddock Wood Primary Academy, and have had the chance to further develop my leadership skills by working with a range of experienced staff.



Our academic data this year continues to show significant improvement in all areas. We have continued our upward trajectory since the pandemic and are now pleased to see that a much greater percentage of our pupils are leaving us fully ready for secondary school. In Early Years, we have continued to build on our upward trend with 80% of our children reaching a good level of development. In Key Stage 1, we are now achieving above National results in all areas. In Key Stage 2, we have again continued to build on our results.

OTHER PARISH INFORMATION CONTD

Marden Primary Academy Contd

This year students achieved 9% above expected National standards in reading, writing and maths. Full details will shortly be available on our website which contains our weekly newsletter and much more information besides:

<https://bit.ly/MardenPrimaryAcademy>

I look forward to meeting with many of you in due course and to welcoming you to the school.

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>

It's been another busy summer in Marden with a number of successful events taking place at Southons Field such as the Marden Motor Club car show, the Rude Mechanicals production and the Hazlitt Theatre Treasure Island production.

Marden in Bloom's Garden Safari and the recent Disney Scarecrow Safari as well as the cream teas in Rev Nicky's Garden and the wonderful Art in the Garden Festival at Mill Farm House.

Here's a flavour of what's going on in the village this Autumn/Winter:

Marden at Christmas – Saturday 2nd December

Our much-loved community celebration is back, and you can find all the details in the separate leaflet. There are a few spare stalls to fill at the Craft Fayre in the Memorial Hall, so if you would like to book one, please email Rachel: deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

St Michael and All Angels Christmas Market

Join us this year on Friday 24th November between 6.00pm and 8pm and on Saturday 25th November between 10am to 12noon for our Christmas Market. Instead of our normal venue of the Vestry Hall, it will take place at the Church this year. There will be plenty of stalls including crafts, cakes and produce, bottle and chocolate tombolas, unwanted gifts, refreshments and much more. For further information please contact Kathy on 01622 831890 or email office@mardenchurch.org.uk.

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@mardenchurch.org.uk or Rev Nicky: rev.nicky@gmail.com

**Weald of Kent Young Farmer's Club
Tractor Run – Sunday 17th
December – 5-7pm**

The Weald of Kent Young Farmers Club are planning to hold another tractor run again this Christmas. It will run through Goudhurst, Cranbrook, Staplehurst and Marden but will go a bit slower in the villages. They will have more collection buckets around and they're also making space for a few more tractors. More details to follow.....

Claire Eckley, Weald of Kent Young Farmers Club



Marden Bowls Club

Brian Cooper (Club Secretary)

Our Short Mat winter season is held in Marden Bowls Club's pavilion. We 'roll-up' starting at 2pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, have a cuppa at half-time and finish at 4:30pm. We laugh a lot and dress is casual, apart from asking for a change into flat-soled shoes. For more details contact Malcolm Buller on 01580 892746 or come along to see what is involved. We can help with bowls and advice for new recruits. We occasionally have friendly matches against local teams too.

Unfortunately, the weather was not kind on our Charity Day. However, those that did attend helped raise £1,010. This will be shared equally between the Weald of Kent and the Heart of Kent Hospices. Thanks to all those members that donated so generously to our raffle and cakes. In an effort to publicise our club and its facilities, we would like to invite other clubs in Marden to have the opportunity to visit us and learn about lawn bowls. Last August we hosted a visit from the Marden Sporting Memories Club and they thoroughly enjoyed it. If anyone would like more information, please email: briancoopermbc@gmail.com or call 07801 594147 or visit our website: www.mardenbowlsclub.co.uk or www.facebook.com/mardenbowlsclub

Marden Cricket, Hockey & Tennis Club

Welcome to your local sports club. We are a thriving club with great facilities and a friendly welcome on the Maidstone Road near Marden cemetery.

Come and have a go at hockey - we have 12 adult teams (8 Men's and 4 Women's) plus hundreds of juniors. There are dedicated training sessions and coaching for all abilities and all ages. Cricket starts again in the spring and there's tennis all year round - try out our informal social sessions on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. Visit www.mardenchc.co.uk for more information. Or contact membership@mardenchc.co.uk

WHAT IS GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

Marden Cricket, Hockey & Tennis Club Contd

Looking for a venue? - Our spacious clubhouse has proved an increasingly popular choice for family events, birthdays, wakes and other functions. There's a well-stocked bar, and with ample parking, a lift and wraparound balcony, it's ideal. More info: www.mardenchc.co.uk/venue-hire or contact Harry to discuss your requirements: bookings@mardenchc.co.uk

Marden History Group and Heritage Centre – Lesley Mannington, Chair

It has taken a while, but the History Group has now completed all the negotiations with KCC regarding the next five years of the Heritage Centre located in Marden Library, with the Chair, Lesley Mannington, having signed off the Service Level Agreement with KCC Libraries. The Heritage Centre participated in the Heritage Open Days between 8th and 17th September when the national strapline this year was 'Creativity Unwrapped', so the artistic genius of Marden was on display during this period.

A talk has been organised with the War Graves Commission for Saturday 14th October in the Library and the next exhibition will feature Marden at War taking us up to Remembrance Sunday on 12th November, when the

History Group will be marking the day with its annual gathering alongside the Heritage Green.

As in previous years the WW2 siren will be operated, thanks to Nigel Jenner. We will be at the Marden at Christmas event in the Memorial Hall on Saturday 2nd December with a range of items on sale, just in time for your Christmas shopping! Please check out our website: www.mardenhistory.org.uk

Marden Horticultural Society Sue Pennicott, Chair

After a break from indoor meetings in July and August, our regular Tuesday evening meetings (on the second Tuesday each month, 7:30pm in the Vestry Hall) resumed in September. Coming up in November we have a talk on Flowers in Folklore and for our December meeting we are looking forward to an entertaining festive talk by Mig Kimpton. More information about these and future talks is on our website. We will also be holding our annual competition for the best Seasonal Table Decoration at the December meeting.

Winter is a relatively quiet time for us but very shortly we will be looking forward to sowing seeds for next year's plants. Throughout the year we hold seed, seedling and plant "swaps" giving members the opportunity to get plants for free and to try growing something new. We welcome new members – both gardening novices and those who are more experienced.

For more information please email: info@mardengardeners.uk or telephone or text Sue on 07762 059412.

Marden in Bloom – Anne Boswell, Chair

Thanks to everyone who came along to the bulb sale in September and the planters have been replanted with winter plants and bulbs to help brighten us up during the Winter.

What a roaring success the Disney Scarecrow Safari was on the 7th October on a wonderful hot day – the village was buzzing especially Southons Field. So many thanks to everyone who entered and made such creative scarecrows – what talented residents we have. Congratulations go to the winner for the amazing ‘Finding Nemo’, second place was the Scout’s entry ‘Jungle Book’, third place was ‘Alice in Wonderland’ followed by the Village Club’s ‘Pinochio’.

Undoubtedly, we will run the event again next year so please send your suggestions on a theme to: scarecrowmarden@gmail.com.



We’re holding various Bulb Planting sessions and it would be great if residents could give us a hand.

You just need to bring along a spade and get digging – just think how pretty it will look to welcome Spring – we have already planted over 25,000 naturalising bulbs around the parish:

- Windsor Meadows (Millwood) – Monday 23rd October at 9.30am – meet at open space area off Napoleon Drive/Campion Way
- Wildflower Meadow in Southons Field – Monday 13th November at 9.30am- meet in Southons Field off the Maidstone Road – this session is raking and bulb planting, so if you have a rake, please bring it along.

New Venue for Marden Mens Breakfast

Our next meeting will be on Saturday 11th November and will be at our new regular venue of the Old Schoolroom in Marden Memorial Hall. Entry will be via the rear door. We will still enjoy a delicious full English breakfast for a donation of £10.00, followed by an interesting talk.

Since November 11th is such a special day, we will be including an opportunity for members to share any stories they have from their families about life in the services, or at home during the wars. Our meeting starts at 8.30 am, and places may be booked through Geoff Burr – telephone 07973 118241, or preferably email geoffreyburr@btinternet.com Please book by Sunday November 5th to help the catering.

WHAT IS GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

Marden Society – Steve Mcarragher

Our Autumn programme of talks continues as follows:

25th October: “The Old Vicarage” by Toby Spanier. Toby and his family moved into the Old Vicarage a few years ago after restoring the house next to the church gate. He will tell us about the design and renovation of the vicarage and about Georgian vicarage life.

22nd November: “Tom Crean, unsung hero of Antarctic Exploration” by Michael Smith. Tom ran away from home at 15, served on three expeditions to the Antarctic, spent longer on the ice than either Scott or Shackleton and outlived both men. But he could never speak about his exploits and took his remarkable story to the grave.

Then after Christmas on 24th January 2024 we will hold our usual short AGM, followed by a wine and cheese social. Our committee is now down to the minimum level allowed by the constitution, so we are urgently seeking extra members. If anyone feels they might like to get involved, we would be very pleased to hear from you. All our talks are at 7.30 p.m. in the Vestry Hall and are free and open to all, with a raffle and refreshments served after the talk. We only ask that you buy at least one raffle ticket!

For further information contact Steve at steve.mcarragher@btinternet.com or 07946 532591.

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

Go and enjoy a cup of coffee/tea and fresh homemade cakes. Meet new people for a chat – old and young – at this local community café.

Marden Village Club

We are proud to report that we have won both Maidstone and Mid-Kent CAMRA Club of the Year for 2023, and are now in the top 16 clubs in the Country battling it out for the National CAMRA Club of the Year for 2023, which we won in 2022.

We will soon be holding our 3rd annual beer festival from Friday 20th October until Sunday 22nd October, offering a fantastic array of real ales and ciders, as well as some fabulous entertainment. Non-members are welcome to attend. Follow us on Instagram or Facebook for updates.

Our charity fundraising has gone from strength to strength this year, raising monies for our two charities: the refurbishment of the Church Bells in Marden and Hospice in the Weald. Last year we raised £12,500 for our charities, and we have already surpassed that this year.



WET Golfers Society

The WET Golf Society, affiliated to the West End Tavern, has enjoyed six Golf Days in 2023 at local courses including Sweetwoods, Kings Hill, Dale Hill and Hever Castle, where our flagship event takes place with members competing for the coveted Claret Jug. The Society started in 2019 and invites partners to the prize giving dinners. We also run a Social programme, over the summer we hold a knockout tournament at the Village Golf Club and some of our intrepid Golfers enjoyed a tour to Le Touquet. The Society supports Macmillan, the Cancer Charity.

Some of our members completed the Macmillan 72 hole Challenge again this year, playing a gruelling 4 rounds on the same day, and we held a Coffee Morning in September with a Prize draw raffle and plenty of baked goodies. These events, supplemented by raffles at our Golf Day dinners, have raised over £6,000 for Macmillan so far this year. We are a growing and inclusive Society with members from Marden and the surrounding area. Our members are a good variety of age and ability and we are proud to have women members too. If you would like to know more, please contact our Captain Paul Attwood on 07831 463446, or pop into the West End Tavern to speak to landlord and Society Member Del or email wetgolfers@gmail.com



2023/24 - WHO'S WHO AT MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL



Kate Tippen
Parish Councillor Chairman
Ex-officio on Committees and Sub-Committees



Andy Turner
Parish Councillor Vice Chairman
Ex-officio on Committees (Planning Ch.)

PARISH COUNCILLORS



Richard Adam
Finance (Ch.)
Planning



Matt Besant
Amenities
Planning (V/Ch)



Anne Boswell
Amenities (Ch.)
Finance
HR
Planning



Theresa Gibson
Finance
HR
Planning



Ian Newton
Amenities
HR
Planning



Adrian Rabot
Amenities



Jean Robertson
Amenities (V/Ch)
Planning



Tom Stevens
Finance



Mike Summersgill

CLERKS



Alison Hooker
Parish Clerk



Rachel Gillis-Coates
Deputy Parish Clerk

ADMIN ASSISTANT



Lisa Stevens

GROUND STAFF



Ian Jones



Chris Prince

Marden Parish Council, Parish Office, Goudhurst Road, Marden, Kent, TN12 5JX
Telephone: 01622 832305
Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk
Facebook: @MardenParishCouncil
Instagram: @mardenparishcouncil
Twitter: @mardenkentpc

PARISH COUNCIL COUNCILLORS, CLERKS AND OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

CHAIRMAN

CLlr Kate Tippen - 01622 832305

VICE CHAIRMAN & CHAIRMAN PLANNING COMMITTEE

CLlr Andy Turner - 07803 598813

VICE CHAIRMAN PLANNING COMMITTEE

CLlr Matt Besant - 01622 832305

CHAIRMAN AMENITIES COMMITTEE

CLlr Anne Boswell - 07808 868703

VICE CHAIRMAN AMENITIES COMMITTEE

CLlr Jean Robertson - 01622 831331 / 07950 816370

CHAIRMAN FINANCE COMMITTEE

CLlr Richard Adam - 01622 831673

mpc@tn12.uk

PARISH COUNCILLORS

CLlr Ian Newton - 01622 831832

CLlr Tom Stevens - 01622 832305

CLlr Theresa Gibson - 01622 832305

CLlr Adrian Rabot - 01622 832305

CLlr Mike Summersgill - 01622832305

PARISH CLERK

Ali Hooker

Telephone: 01622 832305

Mobile: 07376 287981

Email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

DEPUTY PARISH CLERK

Rachel Gillis-Coates

Telephone: 01622 832305

Mobile: 07940 241333

Email: deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Lisa Stevens

Telephone: 01622 832305

Email: adminassistant@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

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



@MardenParishCouncil



@mardenkentpc



@mardenparishcouncil

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

CLlr David Burton - 07590 229910

david.burton@burtons.uk.com

CLlr Annabelle Blackmore - 01622 833299

annabelleblackmore@maidstone.gov.uk

CLlr Claudine Russell

claudinerussell@maidstone.gov.uk

COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Lottie Parfitt-Reid - 07919 360000

lottie.parfittreid@kent.gov.uk

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Helen Grant MP - 0207 219 7107

helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk

KENT POLICE

Emergency: 999

Telephone: 101

<https://bit.ly/KPReportACrime>

<https://bit.ly/KPRuralCrime>

COMMUNITY WARDEN

Mira Martin

Mobile: 07969 584179

Email: 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

Kent County Council

(for Potholes, other Road Issues, Vegetation and Street Lighting)

Telephone: 08458 247800

Website: www.kent.gov.uk

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

Website: www.mardenkent-pc.gov.uk - Office Telephone: 01622 832305

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