

SUMMER 2024

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER



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Northern Lights over Great Cheveney Farm - Copyright Ian Boswell



UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL



Dear Resident

We were delighted so many residents joined us to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day on Thursday 6th June when the beacon was lit in Southons Field. There was also a short church service followed by the Church Bells being rung by the Marden Bellringers. The event was kept low key for this very poignant event and many thanks to all those residents who came along to show their respect. Also, many thanks to the Marden Fire Service who lit the beacon for us.

The Parish Council election in May was uncontested and nine of the existing Parish Councillors were re-elected; Richard Adam, Matt Besant, Anne Boswell, Theresa Gibson, Ian Newton, Adrian Rabot, Mike Summersgill, myself and Andy Turner. The Council have once again voted me in as Chairman and Theresa Gibson will serve as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year. We look forward to our new term of office and hope that we can deliver positive change for our community. Our thanks go to Cllrs Jean Robertson and Tom Stevens for all their hard work and dedication to the Parish Council over the past few years and it's very sad to see them go and wish them well for the future.



We now have two vacancies on the Parish Council – if you are keen to influence change in the community now is your opportunity – see further information below.

We look forward to hosting our ever-popular Summer Play Scheme in July. This year must be a record breaker as all places were taken within 3 days of opening the bookings.

Best Wishes

Councillor Kate Tippen

Co-option

The Parish Council has the authority to co-opt two new Councillors onto the Parish Council. As a Parish Councillor you have the opportunity to influence change and instigate projects that have a positive impact on our community. Councillors come from all walks of life and have many different types of experience. If you are interested in joining our very committed team, you can find out more about the role of a Councillor, or if you wish to obtain an application form, please either call Ali or Rachel in the Parish Office on 01622 832305 or email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk Parish Council and Election information can be found at: bit.ly/MPCElectionInfo. Closing date: Wednesday 31st July 2024.

GENERAL UPDATE

Borough Councillor Elections

We would like to welcome our new Borough Councillors who were elected for Marden & Yalding Ward on 2nd May. Congratulations to Cllrs Claudine Russell, Mike Summersgill and Grace Couch and look forward to working with you all. Their contact details can be found at the back of this newsletter.

Many thanks go to our outgoing Borough Councillors David Burton who has been the leader of Maidstone Borough Council for the last few years and Annabelle Blackmore for all your hard work.

Marden Parish Council Mission Statement and Community Engagement

Marden Parish Council tries to make a positive difference to all the residents we proudly serve and try to play our part in helping tackle some of the biggest challenges of our time which is now becoming firmly embedded in the everyday work we undertake. We seek 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 providing residents with information and what is happening within the village, health & wellbeing and the hot topic of sustainability and the environment.

The Parish Council has now adopted a Mission Statement:

“Marden Parish Council aim to promote a thriving community where housing, employment, education and health and wellbeing opportunities exist for all, whilst conserving and enhancing its heritage, environment and community spirit.”

If you 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 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.

Annual Parish Meeting (APM)

The Annual Parish Meeting of Electors for 2024 took place on Tuesday 2nd April in the Memorial Hall and many thanks to those of you who came along. Along with reports from the Chairman of the Parish Council, Chairmen of Amenities, Finance and Planning Committees and village organisations, we welcomed speakers from Marden Wildlife and Marden Primary Academy. You can view all the reports on the Parish Council website: <https://bit.ly/MPCAnnualReports> A leaflet is included in this newsletter which gives all the reports from Council and Committees.

Annual Accounts for 2023/24

Budget	Expenditure	Income
Staffing (admin/caretakers/ play scheme)	£113,273.48	£0.00
Administration + IT upgrade	£23,062.18	£0.00
Newsletter, advertising etc	£4,148.22	£0.00
Vehicle/machinery	£5,123.80	£0.00
Finance	£245.37	£178,163.52
S106/CIL	£1,540.00	£1,540.00
Miscellaneous	£10,113.61	£0.00
Grants/Donations	£1,700.00	£7,000.00
Christmas	£4,759.67	£607.40
Public Conveniences	£10,291.97	£0.00
Public Works Loan Repayment	£18,237.92	£0.00
Neighbourhood Plan	£0.00	£0.00
Open Spaces	£13,175.65	£0.00
Other Amenities	£1,953.10	£670.00
Play Scheme 2023	£1,597.33	£5,485.50
Highways	£1,710.00	£0.00
Cemetery	£1,533.47	£4,680.00
Parish Services Scheme	£0.00	£8,454.20
Capital	£5,401.82	£0.00
Total:	£217,867.59	£206,600.62

As at 31 st March 2023	Current Financial Assets	As at 31 st March 2024
£1,001.00	VAT Repayment	£3,360.00
£20,830.00	Nat West (revenue)	£11,431.00
£71,734.00	Santander (Capital)	£72,396.00
£9,515.00	Unity (revenue)	£6,154.00
£103,080.00		£93,341.00

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as of 31st March 2024 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

Alison Hooker

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Marden Parish Council

Parish Council 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. All residents are welcome to attend any Parish Council meeting and raise issues of concern with the Council. It is useful to know in advance what issues you have so if you have something you wish to raise either with Council or on an item on the agenda, you are welcome to send this to the Clerk prior to the meeting for it to be raised on your behalf. You can find all agendas and minutes on the parish website: <https://bit.ly/MPCFullCouncil>

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



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.

Marden Summer Playscheme – Monday 22nd July to Friday 2nd August 2024

The Parish Council is delighted to announce that the Marden Summer Playscheme is back again, but we have had to change back to our old venue at Marden Scout HQ next to the Library car park under the excellent management of Jen Wardley due to building work at Marden Primary Academy.

Due to being at the Scout HQ we have had to restrict our numbers and unfortunately we are now fully booked but fingers crossed we can return to the school in 2025 when we will be able to increase our numbers again.

PLANNING UPDATE

Adoption of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review 2021-2038

After two years of scrutiny and hearings, the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review 2021-2038 and associated Policies Map were adopted by MBC at its meeting on 20th March 2024. The Local Plan Review provides a comprehensive planning framework for the borough for the period 2021 to 2038. It sets out the policies and plans to guide future development to 2038. The Policies within the Plan will be used to determine planning applications in the Borough. The Local Plan Review replaces the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2017) with some of the adopted Local Plan 2017 policies still being relevant and retained. However, two groups, not from Marden, have applied for Judicial Reviews to challenge the way in which the decision to adopt the Local Plan has been made. The Plan continues to hold full weight in the planning process until the outcome of these reviews is known, which could be many months away.

Planning legislation requires that decisions on planning applications should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless there are other, relevant planning reasons that mean an alternative decision should be made. You can view the adopted Local Plan Review,

PLANNING UPDATE CONTD

Planning legislation requires that decisions on planning applications should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless there are other, relevant planning reasons that mean an alternative decision should be made. You can view the adopted Local Plan Review, Policies Map, Adoption Statement, Final Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) and Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement on the MBC's website: <https://bit.ly/MBCPlanReview>

The Local Plan Review, the Policies Map and the final Sustainability Appraisal is also available to view at Marden Library – open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 10.00 to 17.00 (closed 13:00 – 14:00); Saturday 09.00 to 13.00 (closed Mondays).

With the adoption of the Local Plan Review, the Development Plan for the Borough now comprises:

Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review 2021-2038 (2024), Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 as amended by Early Partial Review (2020), Kent Mineral Sites Plan (2020), North Loose Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031 (2016), Loose Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2031 (2019), Marden Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2031 (2020), Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031 (2020), Lenham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2031 (2021), Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2031 (2021) and Otham Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2035 (2021).

Reed Court Farm – Proposed Chicken Farm, Hunton Road

This contentious planning application has been rolling on since 2020. The application is for the erection of a new free range egg farm consisting of 2 hen houses with extensive outdoor ranges and fencing, formal vehicle access from Hunton Road and associated parking, landscaping, woodland and tree planting, drainage and other associated works. Additional important information is still awaited from the applicant's agents. Once this is received by MBC and checked, a re-consultation will need to take place and is likely to be discussed by the MBC Planning Committee in September (though subject to change). You can check it out on the MBC Planning Portal: <https://bit.ly/ReedCourtPlanning> and the Parish Council's response recommending refusal being contrary to a number of Marden Neighbourhood Plan policies: <https://bit.ly/MPCReedCourtResponse>

Marden Neighbourhood Plan Review (MNP)

As previously advised, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has been reviewing the MNP and cross-referencing any changes in the MBC's adopted Local Plan Review and variations to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Maidstone Borough Council has responded on our proposed amendments and the plan does not need to be taken to full referendum but may need to go to examination.

Prior to the newsletter going to print we received the response to our amendments. These will be discussed at the next meeting of the MNP and an update will be provided in the Autumn Newsletter. 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.

PROJECT UPDATE

Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP)

An ISP is a list of the projects that are of priority to your community, and it should address the key issues that are important to the area. A public consultation was held in 2019 and Marden Parish Council drafted its Infrastructure Spend Plan (ISP) which is a working document. We held another consultation on 9th March to gain residents views and comments on the document and the feedback from this is currently being reviewed.

You can find the document on our website: <https://bit.ly/MPCWishList>
If you wish to add something, please forward your suggestion to Ali at: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk.

Allotments at Highwood Green

Many apologies to all those residents who are still waiting to get to work on their plots and once again movement with Redrow has been stalled as Redrow have not yet resolved the issues around the parking spaces.

The Parish Council recently held a meeting with Redrow and we are committed to finding a way forward that suits the needs of all parties.



Windsor Meadows and The Parsonage Footpath

The Parish Council has now completed the project of linking up the path between Windsor Meadows and the Parsonage developments, and a hardstanding footway has been created. Unfortunately, it has been pointed out by a resident that a dropped kerb/ramp needs to be installed for wheelchair users and a temporary measure has been put in place. We are getting a quote for a more permanent solution.

Assets of Community Value (ACV)

The West End Tavern has now been listed by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) as an ACV as well as The Unicorn public house which was listed as an ACV in 2020. Councillors will be holding another meeting shortly to discuss the list of parish assets which consists of buildings and open space in the parish. If you would be interested in attending, please let Ali the Clerk know. You can find a list of Marden's Community Facilities at: [https://bit.ly//MPCAssetsofCommunityV
alue](https://bit.ly//MPCAssetsofCommunityValue)

Fingerpost at Plain Road/Thorn Road Junction

The fingerpost sign at the junction of Plain Road and Thorn Road was severely damaged some while ago and the base of the sign needs to be dug out to remove the sign before work on the fingerposts can be undertaken. A contractor should be undertaking this work shortly.

HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Community Speed Watch – Keep Your Speed Down!

As we all know the amount of traffic and speeding is a big issue in the parish. The Parish Clerk has been liaising with Kent Police to set up Speed Watch who have provided a link to training. For those residents who are interested in volunteering, please email Ali: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or call 01622 832305. Kent Police are looking at locations to assess if they still meet the criteria and if there are any other locations that can be used.

In April the local Beat Officers undertook speed checks on Pattenden Lane after numerous requests from residents about speeding through this busy road. Multiple vehicles were stopped and given strong words of advice around road safety and what speeding can cause. This check proved that a lot of the vehicles stopped were local residents themselves and numerous speeding tickets were issued.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition Camera (ANPR)

At the suggestion of a resident, the Parish Council has been investigating with Kent Police about the feasibility of an ANPR camera in Marden which they may consider, but traditional roadside activity such as speed watch needs to be in place. ANPR technology helps to detect, deter and disrupt criminal activity at a local, force, regional and national level. This includes travelling criminals, organised crime groups and terrorists. It provides lines of enquiry and evidence in the investigation of crime and is used by forces throughout the UK. It is thought that around 60% of traffic using the main roads in Marden are just passing through and the 30mph maximum speed limit is not being adhered to.

As a vehicle passes an ANPR camera, its registration number is read and instantly checked against database records of vehicles of interest. Police officers can stop a vehicle, speak to the occupants and, where necessary, make arrests. ANPR has proved to be important in the detection of many offences, including locating, for example, people wanted for arrest or missing, witnesses, stolen vehicles, uninsured vehicles and uncovering cases of major crime.



Parish Council Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

As you are aware, the Parish Council has developed a HIP after public consultation 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. The Parish Council held a meeting a few months ago with Kent Highways regarding our highway priorities which were listed in the Spring newsletter. Below you can read the outcome of this meeting:

- Goudhurst Road single yellow lines (SYL) – the Parish Council recently met with Kent Highways to review the proposals for Goudhurst Road and we are awaiting revised plans from them.
- Pattenden Lane Junction – Marden Parish Council has agreed to fund the design fee for the narrowing of the junction at Church Green and we are awaiting plans from Kent Highways.
- Maidstone Road Village Gateway – Costings are being obtained from Kent Highways for the existing village sign by the planter to be upgraded to a gateway.
- Maidstone Road HGV signage – Kent Highways placed the signage in the wrong position when installed and they have agreed to improve the signage and cover the cost.
- Albion Road Double Yellow Lines (DYLs) - A pre-consultation was held with residents in the vicinity for DYLs on Albion Road and the vast majority of residents were in support of the proposal for DYLs from Stanley Road to Seymour Drive and from Stanley Road to a point agreed with Kent Highways. Kent Highways have agreed to go ahead with this proposal.
- Maidstone Road junction with the High Street – there has been a dramatic increase in HGVs using this junction causing damage to properties and risk of injury to pedestrians and it was requested that bell bollards be installed like the ones outside Cornerways. However, Kent Highways has very strict criteria for bell bollards and are not willing to install.

We will keep you updated in the newsletter about highways improvements and you can find the HIP document on the website: <https://bit.ly/MPCHIPFeb2023>

The State of the Road Network

The damage to our road network is blatantly clear to see which has been compounded by torrential rain over many months as well as freezing conditions. It would cost Kent County Council to repair and bring up to standard the entire Kent network £700m. This puts the Government's announcement which allocated KCC £134m over the next 10-11 years into context and whilst it will help, it's hardly transformational.

HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT CONTD

Parking Issues in the Village

Concerns have been raised over several years about the parking/traffic issues in Goudhurst Road especially at school pick up and drop off times. The Parish Council, Borough Councillors and Kent Police held a meeting with Maidstone Borough Council in April about the continual parking issues outside the school which we have now discussed with Kent Highways and are awaiting revised plans to be changed from 8am-9am and 2pm-4pm which Kent Highways are considering.



Concerns have also been expressed by residents over parking issues at Church Green particularly outside the dental surgery and we are seeking the assistance of our Borough Councillors and contacting Kent Police representatives about the problem.

The yellow lines in this area are faint and the Parish Council will be looking at any other faint yellow lines in the village and will ask Kent Highways to repaint them.

Kent Highways has advised that the continued problem of parking in Pattenden Lane is an enforcement issue, and this has been raised with the MBC Parking Enforcement team.

First Stage of Step Free Access at Marden Station

The lack of a lift at Marden Station causes a problem for so many residents using the station and if there was step free access it could mean sustainable travel for more people. The good news that the Department of Transport has recently announced that the possibility of Step Free Access at Marden Station has moved to the next step of feasibility testing and, if successful, will be taken forward as part of the Access for All programme. However, this is the first step of the process and until we have confirmation of the planned start and end dates from Network Rail/Southeastern, we need to remain circumspect.

Many thanks go to our previous MP Helen Grant and Borough Councillor Claudine Russell for working with the Parish Council and lobbying and supporting this important initiative at the station.

For more info:

<https://bit.ly/TrainAccessForAll>

Pothole Blitz

KCC is undertaking a pothole blitz and the funding gives KCC a degree of confidence to set longer-term plans. KCC is committed to repairing them, but they need to know where they are. Whilst Operation Pothole is now progressing, if you spot a pothole in the parish, KCC has a very easy to use online tool to report damaged roads as well as other highway issues. If you add your details to the report, then you will receive confirmation that it has been logged and you can check progress towards the repair at: <https://bit.ly/KHReportAProblem>



Utility Roadworks

Emergency road closures are a pain in people's lives. They spring up instantly and seemingly with no thought or consideration for planned or scheduled works that are currently going on. As a consequence, KCC have set up a project team to look at the whole issue which is more complicated than might be supposed. A significant percentage of utility roadworks are classed as emergencies which means KCC gets no notice of them and only has to be informed two hours after they start. Over 30% of road closures are done under emergency powers.

DRAINAGE & WATER

A recent study shows there has been 20% more rain in the last few months with an increase in rainfall intensity in the UK because of global warming – not only is our climate getting warmer but wetter. Despite the high volume of rain over the last few months, surprisingly there has been no flooding issues in Marden.

The Parish Council has been investigating the issue with the Maynards sewer frequently overflowing and trying to track down the source of this ongoing problem. We wrote to Southern Water a couple of months ago but have yet to receive a response. You can find information on local drainage and flooding on the Parish Council website: <https://bit.ly/MPCDrainageandFlooding>

OPEN SPACE

Marden Playing Field Changing Room Consultation

On 9th March the Parish Council held a public consultation at the Vestry Hall on the proposals for the old changing rooms in the Playing Field. Thank you to those residents who attended, and the majority of responses were in favour of refurbishing the building as a community space. Opening times, lighting and security will be taken into account and a draft planning statement is being prepared and will be reviewed at the July Full Council meeting along with the proposal to submit a planning application to MBC.

OPEN SPACE CONTD

Marden Playing Field, Southons Field & Napoleon Drive Play Area

Grass cutting was delayed in the Spring because of the wet weather, and you will have noticed that the boundaries have been left uncut which is part of the Parish Council's sustainable management plan. A Flymobile has been installed in the Playing Field play area and a new football goal placed in Southons Field. The Parish Council has agreed for a resident to install a memorial bench on the grassed area in the Napoleon Drive play area.

Marden Cemetery

Some of the areas on the boundary of the cemetery and old graves have also been left uncut to encourage wildlife.

The testing of memorials in Marden Cemetery is a legal requirement for the Parish Council and memorial testing was recently undertaken of all the memorial stones to check whether any are unstable/unsafe. Unfortunately, some of the memorial stones have been deemed unsafe and a notice has been placed on each one and the dangerous ones have been laid down. Grave owners will be contacted but for some of the memorial stones, a contact is unknown.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Marden Children's Centre Closure

By the time this newsletter goes to print, Marden Children's Centre will

have closed as KCC is implementing their Family Hub model across Kent and closing many of the existing children's centres. We had been assured by KCC that it would not close until a reliable and comprehensive outreach community service for residents was going to be delivered.

This is such bitterly disappointing news for the village and has serious implications for all those families who use its services.

Our County Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid has met with the KCC Cabinet Member who has apologised on the way this has been handled, and we are awaiting a full explanation as to why we were not informed in advance of the closure, but more importantly how these services will be delivered in Marden now they have no building to operate from.

You can find your nearest Family Hub at: <https://bit.ly/KentLocalHub>

There are various hubs in Maidstone at Park Wood, Greenfields, South Borough and West Borough.

Kent Community Warden Service Review

After a public consultation last year by KCC on the future of our community wardens, an announcement is imminent. We understand that there will be a reduction in community wardens which will have an adverse effect on adult social care.

Our current community warden, Mira Martin, has proudly served Marden and Staplehurst for 17 years and she has been an invaluable help in the community. She has dealt with wide-ranging issues such as agency referrals and the welfare of individual residents, carrying out home visits and assisting residents to access the relevant services they need as well as visiting village groups to see what help she can offer. Hopefully we will hear soon on what the ongoing plan is for this important service.

Social Prescribing - Involve

As reported previously, social prescribing aims to improve the health and wellbeing of clients by linking them to their community and helping them access things such as groups, activities, and other services in the local area. They co-create action plans based on what is important to each person and encourage and motivate people to reach their goals. They work with people around their non-medical needs such as providing support with completing forms, helping people access financial and debt advice etc.

The Children's Health and Wellbeing Navigators support children and their families around long-term health conditions including neurodiversity which is open to children from birth to 18 years old and for young adults with Special Education Needs, the service can extend to 24.

Please contact Marden Medical Centre for a referral to Involve social prescribing or children's navigation. These are free services funded by the NHS.

The NHS App

Marden Medical Centre is keen to encourage patients with the NHS App to use it for requesting repeat medication. It is simple to use at any time that suits patients, creates a record of your request directly to your medical records and reduces the workload for our busy dispensing team. Patients can use the NHS App to view their previous orders and request a repeat prescription if the medication item is available to order. It is a completely free service which is quick, easy, and convenient for patients. When a patient selects a repeat prescription request, it is sent directly to the Surgery for sign-off and then issued directly to the nominated pharmacy or prepared ready for collection at the surgery. Orders can be made at any time at a patient's convenience, they do not have to wait for the Surgery to open. Once they have placed an order, patients can view their repeat prescriptions status and history, including when an item was last ordered



HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

Prescription for Nature in Marden

Dr Julie Morgan

Marden Medical Centre with our Patient Participation Group (PPG), Marden Wildlife and Marden Parish Council have collaborated to develop the Prescription for Nature Project in Marden. Nature prescribing, also known as green social prescribing, is a means of supporting people to engage in nature-based interventions and activities to improve their mental and physical health and wellbeing. The approach is based on growing evidence that spending time in natural spaces can have positive effects on physical and mental health including reducing stress, anxiety, depression, and loneliness.

We were keen to develop a local scheme which encourages people to connect with the beautiful countryside and nature spots we have in and around Marden but also to engage with the enthusiasm and expertise of the local wildlife, nature and wellbeing groups in the village. We were inspired by the findings of the RSPB Nature Prescriptions project.

Over 30 patients have so far been offered a Prescription for Nature pack after a consultation with a health care professional. The pack includes a leaflet (or prescription) with suggestions to connect with local nature resources, a pack of nature postcards with beautiful local images

which we hope will support the information given on the prescription leaflet and a basic map of the local nature spots. Feedback from professionals using the leaflet has been very positive and we will soon be evaluating how it has been received by patients.

Over the coming weeks look out in the surgery for the display of nature themed artwork which has been produced by children at Marden Primary Academy. This will be a lovely addition to the project, and we are very grateful for their enthusiasm and support. Please also enjoy the beautiful nature photos in the corridor at the end of the building. These were kindly donated by a local wildlife enthusiast.

For more information on the project, local wildlife activities and a map of local nature spots and photos, please visit the Marden Wildlife website: and check out the Prescription for Nature section:

<https://bit.ly/MWPPrescription>



Marden Dementia Friendly Community – Rachel Chacon

A tour of Hush Heath Manor Garden and a free lunch at Balfour Winery took place on 4th July which was very kindly hosted by Leslie and Richard Balfour-Lynn.

Once a month free pub lunch to a Marden resident who is living with dementia and their carer – they are held on the first Thursday of the month 12/12.30 till 2pm. Please come along and chat and share, laugh and walk out without paying! The next one is being held on Thursday 1st August at the West End Tavern but please let the new managers, Baba and Debs know on 01622 831956. On Thursday 5th September it will be held in The Unicorn. Free seated exercise class each Friday in the John Banks Hall until the Congregational Hall is repaired at 10.30am + refreshments & chat, laugh. It's FREE and reduces your risk of dementia as well as other conditions too.

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, or if you wish to be added to our mailing list, please call Rachel on 01622 831941 or email: mardendfcinfo@gmail.com

Come & Sing Group Sarah Emmanuel

Come along and meet people, make new friends, and raise your voice together in song - all are welcome.



Come & Sing runs on alternate Thursdays at 2.30pm in the Vestry Hall with singing followed by tea, cake and time together. £1 per session to cover costs. Improve your breathing and well-being, enjoy new songs, rediscover old ones and have fun! Contact Sarah on 01622 832925 or Marden Medical Centre 01622 831257.

Our next session is on 4th July, but on 16th July a special party is being held at Balfour Winery with tea/coffee and cakes hosted by Leslie & Richard Balfour-Lynn – please let Sarah know on 01622 832925 if you would like to go along to this lovely event.

Marden Community Charity

On 21st April the Marden Community Charity was delighted to support a charity concert in Marden Church given by the choir of HM Tower of London conducted by Colm Carey. An evening of uplifting seasonal music and poetry was followed by a raffle and thanks to the generosity of those attending, and our sponsors, we were pleased to donate £1,500 each to Marden Foodbank and Marden History Group.

HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

Marden Foodbank – Rev Nicky

The Foodbank runs out of the Vestry Hall every Monday between 9.30am and 11.30am. Anyone in need of food is welcome to come along and receive a bag. The foodbank is still very much in demand and our stocks are running a little low. We would be grateful for donations of the following items: tinned soup, tinned tomatoes & vegetables (carrots, potatoes, sweetcorn etc); tinned meat & fish; cereal, milk, fruit juice & squash; pasta & rice; baked beans, spaghetti & macaroni cheese; tinned puddings & custard; jars of pasta or curry sauce; toiletries. All donations can be dropped to the Vestry Hall on a Monday morning or left on the Vicarage doorstep at any time. For further information about the foodbank please contact Kathy Young on 01622 831890 or email: office@mardenchurch.org.uk. Thank you.

Marden Community Lunches

Thank you to Janet McIntosh for kindly organising the community lunches and the next one will be held on Monday 15th July at 12.30pm in the Vestry Hall. The aim is to provide a hot meal for the frail and elderly, especially those who live alone and would enjoy the company as well as the food. The cost is £5 for a home-cooked two course meal plus tea/coffee. For more info or if you would like to help, please contact Janet on 01622 831256.

NHS Virtual Wards

Maidstone and Tonbridge Wells NHS Trust is recognised as being a leading adopter of Virtual Wards. Some Marden patients have already been supported by their services and some of you might in the future when a hospital stay might typically be required. For more information check out:

<https://bit.ly/NHSVirtualWard>



Virtual wards, also known as hospital at home, provide patients with the care they need at home instead of being in a hospital setting. These remote services use technology to support patients who would otherwise be hospitalised, ensuring they receive acute care, monitoring, and treatment in their own homes or care facilities. You may be provided with an iPad, pulse oximeter, scales, blood pressure cuff, thermometer (subject to your clinical need). NHS Virtual wards offer several benefits including reducing congestion; cost-effectiveness as they minimise the need for hospital admissions and reduce the strain on healthcare resources; free up beds for critical or urgent cases; and complementing the existing work of healthcare professionals allowing patients to be monitored from home until their treatment is complete.

This approach can lead to shorter hospital stays and better patient outcomes. In summary, NHS virtual wards enable patients to receive necessary care safely and conveniently at home, contributing to improved healthcare delivery and resource utilisation. If any Marden Medical Centre patients have any experience of the MTW virtual ward service and are prepared to share some feedback – please let John Haddow, Chair of PPG know via email: johnehaddow@yahoo.co.uk

ReferKent

ReferKent is an interactive online referral system that aims to strengthen referrals across Kent for adults and families and allow users to refer to organisations directly and help those who are experiencing or are at risk of hardship.

The system is available on mobile and desktop devices; free for organisations who support Kent residents; quick, GDPR-compliant, and secure; and supported by the Helping Hands Scheme. It's easy to track and check referrals to make sure the residents are being helped by the right people.

Before the introduction of ReferKent, organisations sent residents from one to another. Residents were often left feeling deflated and falling further into hardship. We hope our system will bridge the gap between signposting and referring. Check out: <https://bit.ly/KCCReferKent>

Kent County Council (KCC) - Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care is the biggest aspect of KCC's statutory responsibilities, but there are some initiatives happening which are showing green shoots of delivery, but it is early days and the problem is ever-increasing. For more information, check out: <https://bit.ly/KCCAdultCare>

Kent Connect Support

Kent Connect Support give you answer to common questions, information and advice to help you to look after yourself, stay independent and connect. Check out: <https://kent.connecttosupport.org/>

KCC Technology Enabled Lives

KCC have launched a new Technology Enabled Lives service with a raft of digital technologies with the aim to keep people living independent healthier and longer lives in their own homes. For more information, check out: <https://bit.ly/KCCTels>



SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE

Keep Britain Tidy Spring Clean Up

The Parish Council held another successful litter pick on 16th March – the sun shone and around 44 adults, 10 police cadets, members of the Scout Group and children attended.



The majority of the village roads were picked along with several outlying roads with around 60 bags of rubbish collected. Thanks go to Cllr Ian Newton and Chris Barker who drove around collecting all the bags. The residents of Chainhurst also undertook a litter pick on 23rd March. Many thanks to everyone who turned out to help with these great community events working together to keep our lovely parish of Marden tidy. Once again can we thank all those wonderful residents who regularly litter pick around the village – you are stars!

Parish Council Environmental Group

The Parish Council now has a statutory duty to exercise all its functions with regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity and this includes raising public awareness of biodiversity issues in the community. Five Parish Councillors sit on the Environmental Group, and we would like to extend this group to any residents or businesses who would be

interested in helping with the project. Please let Ali know if you're interested either by emailing: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or ringing 01622 832305.

A letter will be sent to our new MP in the Weald of Kent constituency on how they stand and what actions they plan to take on environmental issues. The Environmental Group endeavours to provide information on sustainable initiatives which you can find below.

Carbon Literacy

Reducing Your Carbon Footprint

Carbon Literacy is an awareness of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis. In the Spring Newsletter Cllr Anne Boswell, who has attained Carbon Literate accredited status, advised on her personal action of becoming a Flexitarian and gave a number of hints and tips on how to reduce your carbon footprint.

Cllrs Adrian Rabot and Mike Summersgill have also attained Carbon Literacy accredited status and now have an ambassadorial role to promote and put into practice carbon issues in the Parish.



Here is Cllr Rabot's personal action on reducing his carbon footprint:

"I recently undertook Carbon Literacy Training to learn which activities have the biggest impact on our carbon footprint. The training helped me understand that my consumption of red meat, more so from outside the UK, is one of the biggest contributors to my personal carbon footprint, so I have decided to reduce this considerably. In addition to promote biodiversity and personally address climate change, I will recycle organic waste more efficiently by using a 'hot bin' at home.

At a Parish Council level, I will try to ensure that buildings the Council are responsible for making use of solar energy where possible and I will try to secure funding from grants, businesses, and other organisations to facilitate this. Where possible I will also try to ensure that these buildings are as energy efficient as possible, by having energy conserving insulation, heating, and lighting when work is carried out to modernise or develop these buildings."

Members of the Parish can learn how to assess their own carbon footprint by logging onto the following calculator provided by the WWF:
<https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>

Earth Charter Project

The Earth Charter is an ethical foundation for a way of life and has been endorsed as a guide for policy making in a number of countries.

A Marden resident and anthropologist has been involved in the Earth Charter and is very keen for Marden to be part of this project.

The Parish Council has given its endorsement to take the project forward but to keep it simple. Councillors are holding a brainstorming session in July to map out where we are with environmental issues in the parish and what we can do going forward and tie in some of the Earth Charter principles. We will give an update in the next newsletter.

Solar Panels

Whilst Maidstone Borough Council own the public toilets building, the Parish Council maintain this important village facility. We are considering installing solar panels on the roof and have received a quote and are now exploring how this could be funded via a grant.

Hedgerows

Hedgerows have indicated land boundaries and contained livestock since the Bronze Age. But for wildlife, these strips of shrubs and trees are more than just a means to mark an edge. Hedgerows create a diverse habitat and wildlife-rich environment which has been shown to provide health and economic benefits. They provide a place to raise a brood, an opportunity to forage for food and a highway to connect habitat.

SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE CONTD

Hedgerows Contd

Did you know that hedges support up to 80 of our woodland birds, 50% of our mammals and 30% of our butterflies? They enable wildlife to move through the countryside, protect soils from wind erosion, and provide shelter for people and livestock and habitats for pollinators.

The UK Government is now on course to reinstate the prevention of agricultural hedge cutting during nesting season from 1st March to 31st August and guarantee a 2-metre buffer strip surrounding hedgerows free of cultivation and pesticides. This means that breeding habitats for threatened wildlife have been safeguarded. The Parish Council is drafting a specific Hedgerow & Borders Management Policy to accompany our robust Tree Management Policy and once agreed, want to take a parish-wide approach by linking in with the local farming network/ Farmer Cluster to work together to protect and enhance the hedgerows in Marden and surrounding parishes.

Garden Hedgerows

You can still do your bit at home too – why not help the wildlife in your garden by planting a hedge rather than erecting a fence even if you only have a small space? Planting a native hedge with a mix of different

indigenous species is a wonderful way to enhance your garden while benefiting wildlife and the environment. By planting a native hedge, you'll create a beautiful and ecologically valuable feature in your garden.

Pond Restoration Project

As part of the Parish Council's biodiversity responsibility, we have planted many trees and saplings in our open spaces including 1,000 whips to form a hedgerow on land behind Marden Cemetery that we own and another 1,000 whips as part of the Kent Plan Tree initiative in February.

The Environmental Group is planning our next biodiversity project and considering the restoration of some of our village ponds possibly with the help of the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership, but this would require funding. We have a vast network of ponds in our parish in the Low Weald and they are so important for wildlife particularly for the protected great crested newts. Ponds could be used as Biodiversity Net Gain in the future. Whilst Cllr Mike Summersgill is a pond warden for Hunton, it would be really useful if there is a resident with some knowledge/ expertise in this field who would be interested in becoming a pond warden for Marden. Please let Ali, the Clerk know by email if you would like to take on this role.

Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway

This is a local nature recovery strategy which is being established under the Environment Act 2021 as part of the Government's commitment to halting the decline of biodiversity in England.

This is a DEFRA funded project led by KCC and the strategy will help to shape what our nature and landscape will look like in years to come. Marden Wildlife have been busy taking part in this strategy and the Parish Council has mapped its open spaces and wildlife on the Making Space for Nature app. If you look at the mapping, it looks like Marden is at the forefront in Kent. Weblink here: <https://bit.ly/MSFNKent>

If you are a regular visitor to any of the Parish Council open spaces – Southons Field, Marden Playing Field and Marden Cemetery, please keep an eye out for any wildlife you spot such as birds, butterflies etc and let us know.

Award of Honour

Many congratulations to Lou Carpenter who was presented with an Award of Honour at the South of England Agricultural Show by HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh.

It recognises the significant contribution Lou has made in bringing farmers and community together, enhancing their enjoyment and the benefits that better

biodiversity brings to food production and peoples' appreciation of the countryside. Well done Lou!



Kent Men of Trees

Last summer, Cllr Anne Boswell and Tree Warden Charlie Edwards walked around with a representative from the Kent Men of Trees, and we received their report in February. Marden was highly commended by the judging panel - they were impressed with the rich mix of species and varieties across the Parish creating attractive framing of the countryside, the amenity land and built environment, an active and enthusiastic Parish Council and much evidence of managed tree care and renewal. It is doubtful that this initiative will be undertaken this year.



Kent County Council Public Rights of Way (PROW)

Respect, Protect, Enjoy

We all know how important getting out into nature is for our health and wellbeing and we are very fortunate in Marden to have a big network of PROWs – in fact 35 miles of them! There is guidance on how these public rights of way should be treated and respected by all users in The Countryside Code: <https://bit.ly/UKCountrysideCode>

Most of the footpaths are over farmland where crops are grown which end up in the food supply chain and for that reason it's really important that you don't let your dogs or children run into a field full of crops – this could be anything from wheat, oats, vines, rapeseed to apples and pears. The footpaths cross privately owned land and the only right you have is to walk on the route of the footpath and not to stray off it.

However, some landowners are relaxed about people straying off a PROW. Sometimes there is a lack of signage along the PROWs, and you may be unsure of the exact route of a footpath. The Parish Council is contacting KCC to try to provide more footpath signage along some of the paths. There is also some very good information available such as the Ordnance Survey app which you can download onto your phone and the KCC website has details of all footpaths in Kent:

<https://bit.ly/PROWMap>

The Marden Walking Group has produced an excellent set of local walking leaflets which can be purchased from No47, Marden Library and Little Marden Farm Shop and Country Store for £5. There is also a map of all Marden's public footpaths outside the Library.

It is important that the PROWs are kept clear and the KCC PROW officers are often out and about fixing problems, but if you want to report any non-urgent issues such as broken stiles, overgrown vegetation or fallen trees, damaged or dangerous path surfaces, damaged or missing signposts, you can submit a separate report for each individual problem online: <http://bit.ly/ReportAProblemPROW> and you can find a map of the parish's PROWs: <http://bit.ly/MardenPROW> or check out: <https://bit.ly/KCCRightofWay>

There have been reports of dogs straying into residents' gardens. Can we please ask that dog walkers restrain from allowing their dogs to run into private gardens and keep them on a lead.

SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE CONTD

Marden Wildlife Update – Ray Morris

So far, the year has been busy on several fronts. Hedgerow recording and hedge laying are new initiatives by both Marden Wildlife and some Marden Cluster farms. Regeneration of scarce local wildflowers to help create new meadows is having some success thanks to green-fingered Marden Horticultural Society members, and the prospect of the local Wild Service (Chequer) tree providing its autumn gold is becoming more likely as MHS are also propagating seeds from local specimens for a new generation of this Low Weald speciality.

Manor Farm in Battle Lane is now designated as an educational resource for schools by DEFRA and plans are being drafted for local primary and secondary schools to carry out a range of curriculum activities in Marden's outdoor and increasingly biodiverse classroom.

Despite the recent theft of £500-worth of trail cameras gathering important data, work with KWT and RSPB's Operation Turtle Dove continues this summer, with more doves being tagged and the data collected informing the work of local landowners to help this rare species. The project will be the subject of a KWT podcast later in the summer, and we are working on the possibility of

celebrating the doves' story through drama and music activities with schools and other groups. Learn more from the Marden Wildlife Facebook page or email: mardenwildlife@gmail.com

It's Swarm Season for Bees Caroline Field

Laddingford & District Beekeepers

In spring and early summer, the numbers of bees in our hives rises very quickly and if colonies start to feel cramped, they are likely to swarm. They will create a successor queen cell and the old queen and many of the bees will leave the hive, leaving the hive to the new queen. The swarm will typically settle in a dense ball. Scout bees will set off in search of a new nest site and, any time from a couple of hours to a day or so, the bees will head off to their new home.

So what should you do if you see a swarm? You don't have to do anything! Bees are not very aggressive when swarming and, if left to themselves, they will soon move off on their own accord. So you can just enjoy this amazing phenomenon. However, your local beekeeper will thank you if you call them. If a swarm is in a public place, it's best to collect it for the safety of both people and bees. If it is within reach, the beekeeper will collect it and deliver the colony to one of their empty hives and this is best for the bees too as the majority of swarms will fail to find a suitable new home on their own and will die out.

SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE CONTD

It's Swarm Season for Bees Contd

In the first instance, please check out the BBKA website Swarm page:

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/find-a-local-swarm-collector> where you will find a map, enter your postcode to find your nearest beekeeper to remove a swarm if it's possible to do safely or email: contact

chair@laddingfordbeekeepers.co.uk.

The process of collection is fascinating to watch from a safe distance.

We do get a lot of calls from people who think they have a swarm when in fact they have a lot of bees (or even wasps!) feeding on a plant! Swarming bees will be clustered in a very distinctive dense ball, usually in a tree or under an eave.

Don't forget to look out for invading Asian hornets this summer - with a darker body and bright yellow legs. Take a photo, trap if safe to do so, and tell a beekeeper.

Marden Medical Centre - Sustainable General Practice – Dr Julie Morgan

The NHS is responsible for 4-5% of the UK's carbon footprint. To have a 50% chance of avoiding the consequences of >1.5°C of warming, our global carbon emissions will have to reach net-zero by 2050.

We have signed up to the RCGP's Green Impact for Health Toolkit and are proactively looking at ways that we can improve our sustainability, reduce our carbon footprint and adapt to climate change. Amongst other initiatives we are looking to reduce our energy consumption, rationalise our waste management and recycling and improve efficiencies in prescribing. Where appropriate patients on metered dose inhalers for asthma are being offered a switch to dry powder inhalers - switching to dry powder inhalers more than halves the carbon footprint of asthma treatment, it doesn't worsen symptoms and is a good option for most patients and the planet. We are also exploring the feasibility of solar panels and electric charging points for cars.



POLICE & CRIME UPDATE

Your Community Safety Unit (CSU)

PC Chad Maskell and PC Charlotte Bingham have taken over the beat ward of Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn (which includes Yalding and Nettlestead) and have been finding their feet with their new roles. So far, they have tried to dedicate time to each of the wards equally and fairly and have recognised how demanding these wards can be with its ASB, shoplifting, vehicle crime, local crime etc.

After speaking with the Parish Council, shop owners and residents, they are happy to report that there has been a decrease in ASB, shoplifting etc since their arrival.

They have been working tirelessly around all of these issues and have tried to integrate into the wards with their faces being out there. They have also been trying to work with as many agencies as possible including the local parish, neighbourhood task force, Maidstone Borough Council and others. The Parish Council have held a number of meetings with the beat officers already who plan to attend some council meetings.

The beat officers have started and will continue to undertake numerous speed checks; lots of foot patrol and proactive patrol; interaction with the local shops encouraging them to report all crime; days of action where there are multiple patrols out looking for specific crime and being visible; vehicle seizures and dealing with 999 calls.

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.

If you are tenants of MHS Homes you can report ASB via the following link:
<https://bit.ly/MHSAntiSocial> and if you are tenants of Golding Homes you can report ASB via the following link:
<https://bit.ly/GHAntiSocial>

My Community Voice

Police Officers use My Community Voice to publicise their daily activity and gives people a chance to respond and ask questions.

The service sends updates about your local area directly from the police officers themselves and if you have anything else you would like them to investigate, please feel free to respond to any post they put up. You can sign up to receive alerts via:
<https://bit.ly/ComVoice>

Also, if you see crime in action or anything you think maybe suspicious, please call 101/999 or report it online via the Kent Police Website.

Wildlife Crime

Report, Report, Report

In April, Borough Councillor Claudine Russell, the Parish Council, our Beat Officers and Marden Wildlife representatives had a useful discussion regarding ongoing concerns about wildlife crime. Again, you need to report all crime including feeling threatened by someone's behaviour and if it's in progress, call 999.

A tip is to have what3words.com on your phone and look up your position before ringing. All calls are recorded and counted and lead to resources being allocated to the areas registering most. All 101 calls are checked by the beat officers at the start of their shift.

POLICE & CRIME UPDATE CONTD

Wildlife Crime Contd

Offroad motorbikes and catapults are also concerning issues and the police have to follow strict guidelines e.g. pursuit of a minor on a bike or any rider not wearing a helmet is forbidden. In respect of catapults, shooting at wildlife and property doesn't make them an offensive weapon and police resources are more likely to be allocated if people are targeted/hit.

Fly Tipping – Report, Report, Report

Fly tipping is unnecessary and anti-social, but unfortunately it frequently occurs in the parish and Maidstone Borough Council respond quickly to fly tipping reports. It is easy to report via the MBC website and if you add your details you will get an update about the fly tipping:
<https://bit.ly/MBCFlyTipping>

Country Eye App

You can also report fly tipping via the Country Eye App which is for people living and working in the rural community in Kent. It records and disseminates information using smartphone technology and designed to help communities and residents to receive information and report issues quickly and efficiently. The Country Eye team analyse the information and disseminate it as appropriate. This may include email, text or broadcast to other subscriber's smartphones.

The Country Eye app identifies the following Categories:

- Animal, Wildlife Crime – Hare Coursing, Poaching, Suspicious Behaviour
- Aviation – Low flying Aircraft, Unusual Activity, Suspicious Behaviour
- Farm Crime – Arson, Suspicious Behaviour, Trespass
- Fly Tipping
- Heritage Crime – Metal Detecting, Night Hawking, Off-Road, Suspicious Behaviour
- Kent Fire & Rescue – Hydrant Reporting and Water Reservoirs/Storage on Farms
- Maritime - Suspicious Vessels, Vehicles, Behaviour
- Potholes and other KCC Highways issues.
- HGV Watch



Unlike messaging using Social Media groups, the integrity of information from Country Eye has been accepted as evidential by the Crown Prosecution Service and is also GDPR compliant. Country Eye has links to the following Agencies: Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, KCC Intelligence Unit, Special Branch, the 13 Borough/District Councils in Kent, Kent Heritage Watch, Kent Neighbourhood Watch, Kent Wildlife Trust and HGV Watch. Check out: <https://bit.ly/CountryEyeApp>

Kent Police Rural Task Force

Rural Matters is a quarterly magazine for residents and businesses. The magazine includes the latest news on the Kent Police Rural Task Force and rural policing in the county. Check out the following link:

<https://bit.ly/KentRuralMatters>

Crime Reports

Whilst Councillors meet occasionally with our Beat Officers, we no longer receive regular crime reports, but in March crime figures were down about 20%. 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.

YOUTH PROVISION

Marden Youth Club

The youth club in Marden is not currently running as there has been changes in KCC youth provision, so the Parish Council is arranging a meeting with KCC to understand their plans going forward.

Involve – Weald Young Adults Group

The Weald Social Prescribing Group are exploring the opportunity to create a social group for young adults in the Weald area. They have noticed that young adults in the Weald are often socially isolated and/or

experiencing low mental health, and that finances and transport can be barriers to accessing social activities in the surrounding towns.

They are proposing to create a space for 18-25-year-olds to meet more people in their local area and form friendships. This would be piloted online initially, and some in-person activities may be arranged if the group was interested.

They would facilitate these meet ups and arrange ice breaker activities and games, as well as ask the participants for feedback and suggestions on what they would like from the space. The group will run fortnightly on a set weekday (tbc) between 5.30pm to 6.30pm.

They are aiming to launch this group in the next couple of months if there is sufficient interest, so please contact them if you know of anyone who may be interested and they are happy to send you more details and promotional material. Please email: westkenthealth.wealdpcn.socialprescribers@nhs.net.



OTHER PARISH INFORMATION

KALC Community Award

It has become the tradition that the Kent Association of Local Councils (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.



Congratulations this year go to Eunice Doswell who has lived in Marden for very many years and has devoted much time and expertise to the development of the History Group and the Heritage Centre. Eunice does sterling work both at the Heritage Centre and at home, on anything of historical interest in Marden, particularly since the Heritage Centre was established in 2007 under the then Chairmanship of the late David MacFarland. The work of the centre has been acknowledged with special awards, and Eunice continues to highlight all sorts of interesting information and archives which those who are researching Marden connections can access. Well done Eunice on all your hard work and dedication.

Marden Library

Everyone is welcome at Marden Library and is 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. As ever, we update our selection of fiction and nonfiction books regularly and can reserve a book from any of our Kent libraries.

Please take a look at our event schedule:

- Tuesday: Games & Chat - 2pm-4pm. The game is currently Upwords but new suggestions are always welcome. Held weekly.
- Wednesday: Preschool story time 2.15pm-2.45pm. First Wednesday of every month.
- Thursday: Stay & Chat from 10am. Chat about days gone by with free tea and coffee. Held weekly.
- Homework Club: 3.30pm-4.30pm. Open to all children. Held weekly. Term time only.
- Friday: 0-5 Rhyme Time 10am-10.30am. Held weekly. Term time only.
- Saturday: Lego Club 10am-11am. Held weekly. Term time only.

Book Groups meet to chat over the book for that month which is held monthly. Keep checking social media for children's craft events in the library and up to date information of our clubs and sessions.

Marden Library Contd

Marden Library is open Tuesday to 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 or pop in and see us.

Marden Primary Academy Hannah Penning, Principal

Art project - The Eco Warriors and Wellbeing Pupil group are very excited to be working on a nature-themed art project for Marden Medical Centre. They have been creating some wonderful pieces of artwork using a range of mediums some of which include: clay, watercolours and pastels. The children are thrilled to be working with the community to help others.

PSQM - We have recently been awarded the Primary Science Quality Mark. This quality mark shows that we have demonstrated a significant commitment to science leadership, teaching and learning. We are very proud of this achievement and to be recognised for the high-quality science lessons taught at Marden.

Visitors - As part of our curriculum enrichment, we have continued to have lots of visitors to support the children's learning. Kent Music delivered a fantastic assembly, demonstrating how a range of instruments can be played together to produce a piece of music. Beech class was also visited by members of the

Parish Council 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 of the visitors so far this year, your support is very much appreciated.

Showcasing Marden Businesses on BBC Radio Kent

Olga Rance, who runs the Old Post Office Coffee House, has once again shown us her entrepreneurial skills. In May she arranged a week of presentations with Dominic King from BBC Radio Kent to showcase some of our amazing businesses in Marden.

You can catch up on BBC Sounds forwarding the show to 1 hour 12 minutes to find the segment. Well done Olga and all those who attended.

Safe Anaesthesia Worldwide (SAWW) – Carol Newman, Secretary

The charity SAWW is based in Marden and provides anaesthesia services wherever needed to enable essential surgery to save lives. Most recently SAWW donated an anaesthesia machine to Nkwen Hospital in Cameroon that cares for the poorest people. Access to health care is a major struggle for the many impoverished citizens of Cameroon.

Residents of the parish continue to generously support SAWW for which we are extremely grateful. Our special thanks to Marden Parish Church for kindly donating £388.

OTHER PARISH INFORMATION CONTD

Safe Anaesthesia Worldwide Contd

Fabulous fundraiser Olga Rance of the Old Post Office Coffee House raised £2,029 by undertaking a charity boxing match and postman Nick Strace ran the Brighton Marathon to raise £1,082. Our thanks to everyone who supported them and contributed to SAWW's work.

We hope to put a team together to enter the Dragon Boat Race at Bewl Water on 31st August. If you are interested in joining this fundraising event, please email: info@safe4all.org.uk

SAWW was founded by local resident Dr Roger Eltringham and his book 'Laughing Gas' can be purchased in The Little Marden Farm Shop and Country Store and No. 47 gift shop. All proceeds go to the charity. To donate or learn more please visit our website www.safe4all.org.uk Thank you.

Marden Parish Church – Rev. Nicky

Services - 8.00am Holy Communion using traditional language and 10.30am services 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 visitors and anyone who would like to spend some time in reflection or prayer. Church website www.mardenchurch.org.uk and Facebook page @churchinmarden for our up-to-date 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 newssheet, 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 - At Marden Church we enjoy celebrating with you the happy occasion of a Wedding. Congratulations if you have just got engaged or are planning your wedding. If you are looking for a place to get married, please do consider Marden Church. We are happy to work with you to provide the service you would like – an intimate service or large celebration - and there are many options!

If you would like to contact Rev Nicky about Baptism, Marriage, Blessing or arranging a funeral please contact on 01622 831379 or rev.nickyharvey@gmail.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 lucky to have so much going on in our lovely village – true community spirit.

Lots has been going on so far this year including the church bells being reinstalled after refurbishment and it was wonderful hearing them being tolled once again; Marden in Bloom's Fashion Show at the Memorial Hall in March; the outstanding Spring Charity Concert in Marden Church in aid of Marden Foodbank and History Group with the choir of the Chapels Royal in April; in May Marden Motor Club held their annual motor show in Southons Field, Marden Bowls Club held an Open Day, Marden Horticultural Society held their annual plant sale and Marden in Bloom removed most of the old village planters and installed new ones. In June the 'Rude Mechanicals' performed another amusing comedy outdoors in Southons Field and Marden in Bloom held another successful Garden Safari around the village..



Hazlitt Theatre Summer Touring Show Thursday 22nd August at 6pm in Southons Field

We are pleased to announce that the Hazlitt Theatre will be performing 'The Three Musketeers' on Thursday 22nd August at 6pm in Southons Field. Details can be found at: <https://bit.ly/HazlittThreeMusketeers>

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

Marden Cricket, Hockey & Tennis Club Wimbledon's First Female Chair Opens New Padel Courts

Debbie Jevans CBE, chair of Wimbledon's All England Lawn Tennis Club, visited Marden Sports Club on 14th June to officially open the new padel courts. Despite being in the run up to Wimbledon she took time to take part in an exhibition match as part of the celebrations. A former junior Wimbledon champion herself, she was director of the Women's Game at the International Tennis Federation, then Director of Sports for London 2012 Olympics, Chief Executive for the 2015 Rugby World Cup, and a non-executive director of the English Football League.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

Marden Cricket & Hockey Club Contd

Padel is seeing a huge surge in popularity, reputedly the fastest growing sport in the world and now sweeping across the UK. It's a fusion of tennis and squash, played with solid bats and in an enclosed court, allowing players to hit off the glass walls. The big appeal is padel's simplicity, its sociable nature and the fact that anyone can play, regardless of fitness or strength.

Marden Padel Club, part of Marden Sports Club has two brand new courts, overlooked by the viewing balcony of the clubhouse. Courts will initially be open to everyone - non-members as well as existing members. Courts can be booked online or via the app (from £6 per hour for 4 players) and a range of coaching, informal clinics, Mix In sessions and social activities are planned. All details can be found at www.mardensportsclub.com/padel or via Julia on admin@mardenchc.co.uk

Marden History Group

Imogen Wedd, Chair

If you have an interest in all things historical, particularly locally, we welcome volunteers to become involved in the work of the Marden History Group. Do get in touch if you are keen to help us. You can contact us by email on history@mardenhistory.org.uk, by our Facebook page, or just by popping into the Heritage Centre during opening times.

Marden Horticultural Society (MHS)

Julie Nicol, Chair

MHS continues to flourish with many spokespeople and trips out. Our main ones this year being a visit to Chambers Farm Flowers, Kew Gardens and Wisley. Our talks this year are on various topics from dahlias, water gardening, pruning, Scotney castle grounds, and even wonky parsnips!

Our annual plant sale was once again a great success in the village and we're holding a summer social, Christmas social evening, competitions, and monthly raffle. Members do not all have massive gardens, but an interest in all things growing in our wonderful Kent - the garden of England.

For more information, please check out <https://www.mardengardeners.uk> or email: info@mardengardeners.uk

Marden in Bloom

Anne Boswell, Chair

What busy bees the 'Bloomers' have been replacing 10 of the village planters. The Marden Charity kindly provided a grant towards the cost of the planters and thanks go to Rob Thompson for all his hard work on this project and to Steve Arnold and John Moughtin for helping out.

Hopefully they will last for a few years and are based on traditional apple bins - rural and rustic! If you enjoy the planters around the village, can you please help out watering your nearest one or do a bit of deadheading.

You will have noticed that a bench has been installed at Marden Medical Centre by the 'Bloomers' Rob and Steve which has been funded by the Friends of Marden Medical Centre – a nice place to sit and enjoy the herb planter.



The Garden Safari took place on 30th June and thanks to all those residents who kindly opened up their gardens – such a lovely event wandering around the village with refreshments served in Southons Field and Anno G&T's in one of the gardens.

Heroes & Villains Scarecrow Safari - Saturday 5th October - Get your thinking hats on for the next Scarecrow Safari. Watch out for details nearer the time. For more info, please email: anne.boswell@gmail.com or give our Marden in Bloom Facebook page a like.

Marden Oddfellows

Make new friends and join a society that cares– Julie Broomfield

The Oddfellows Society is a small friendly society, which runs every Friday in Maidstone and the 2nd Monday in every month in Marden. Are you looking to bring invaluable laughter into your life, make new friends, chat, learn new activities, crafts, or share your own crafts?

We also organise cost effective trips throughout the year which do not break the budget. If you would like further information, call Julie on 07910 888607. You never know, it may be the best decision you ever made.

Marden Scout Group – Shout out for volunteers – Louise Holborow, Secretary

Beavers is the first section of the Scout Group, and they start at 6 and then at 8 they move up to Cubs. We have 20 Beavers in Marden and meet every Tuesday during term time. We have a lot of fun, combining educational activities with games and often food, with many varied activities. We all tie dyed our t shirts on National Tie Dye Day, then wore them to Beavers the following week. A group of Beavers represented the troupe at the St George's Day march and service in Maidstone in April. We have been to Gravity, where the trampolines were everyone out and we have learned about Lord Baden-Powell who started the Scout movement, and we know about St George too. If you see us walking round the village on a Tuesday night, we will be doing a Treasure Hunt or hike. Say hello or give us a wave!

We are looking for volunteers to continue these fabulous experiences for the young people of our community – giving them the skills to succeed in life. If you are interested in a rewarding chair, section volunteer or general support role contact: gsl@mardenscouts.org.uk

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

Marden Society – Steve McCarragher

Our programme of talks in Autumn 2024 will continue as follows:

- *September 25th: Pocohontas, the non-Disney story by Cristoph Bull* - This is the true story of how Pocohontas, daughter of Powhatan the Native American chief tribal chief, married British settler Thomas Rolfe and came to England. She became a celebrity in English society, but sadly died in 1617 in Gravesend, just before she was due to return to America. Cristoph is a well-known local historian and led our summer outing tour of Cobham Hall.
- *October 23rd: Marden Wildlife by Ray Morris* - Ray will update us on the activities of Marden Wildlife, which goes from strength to strength.
- *November 27th: A Magic Lantern Tour of Kent by Gerald Cramp* - This will cover an introduction to magic lanterns including the one to be used later in the presentation, a short guide to Kent in the 19th century and the showing of original glass slides.

Marden Sporting Memories

Tuesday 2.30pm-4pm

Marden Cricket & Hockey Club

Marden Sporting Memories is a group where adults meet to talk and reminisce about past sporting occasions; and catch up on the weekly sports events, whether that's local sports, national or on the international circuit. The group have had some fabulous visitors to share their

"Sporting memories" from the world of rowing, golf, a hockey umpire, a spitfire pilot and even Olga Rance from Marden Post Office Coffee House, telling us about her fundraising boxing match! There are 'half-time' refreshments, then the club members enjoy a variety of physical activities; all very light-hearted – lots of laughing and reminiscing. In August the group have a trip organised to Canterbury to watch Kent take on Durham for a one-day cricket match; a day to create more sporting memories together. This popular group is currently full, but there is a waiting list, so please email should you wish to be added to the waiting list. Can you help? We are looking for people who would like to share their sporting memories with the group. Do you, or someone you know, have an interesting sporting or physical activity story to share? Please contact Sue Eltringham by email: mardensportingmemories@gmail.com or 01622 833053.



Marden Theatre Group - Sister Act **24th-27th July**

Marden Memorial Hall

Our next production will be the feel-good musical, Sister Act. When casino singer, Deloris, witnesses her mobster boyfriend commit a murder, the police place her in witness protection with the nuns in a San Francisco convent.

Deloris initially struggles with the strict rules but soon finds her feet as she transforms the convent's choir into a singing sensation. This promises to be another fantastic show, so please buy your tickets now via the link on our website: mardentheatregroup.co.uk

Save the date – Saturday 21st

September - this year marks the 50th anniversary of Marden Theatre Group. We are planning a celebration to mark this milestone – a meal with entertainment and bar – in the evening of Saturday 21st September at Marden Memorial Hall. We very much hope that members (past and present) and supporters of MTC (all you lovely audiences) will join us in raising a glass (or two!) and sharing some memories. Further details will follow in due course but please save the date!



Marden Walking Group

There is now considerable evidence that walking in nature can improve both your physical and mental health. If you are interested in exploring Marden and the surrounding countryside, Marden Walking group has produced two sets of six guides of walks around Marden which follow designated footpaths and include points of interest. They are available to purchase from No 47, Marden Library and the Little Marden Farm Shop and Country Store. For a more social walk, Marden Walking group also hold regular walks.

One every Saturday at 2pm from Marden Library which are short walks of approximately an hour. On the first Sunday of the month there are longer walks which start at 10am from Marden Library - they are between 5-7 miles in length and often follow a route from the published guides around Marden. Details are published each month in the Parish Magazine. Once a week in the Spring and Summer, a section of a long -distance pathway is walked and covers approximately 8 miles. So far, the group has completed the Saxon Shore Way, the Weald Way, the Tunbridge Wells Circular Walk, the Greensand Way and the South Downs Way. Currently they are walking the Sussex Border Path. If you enjoy walking in a friendly social atmosphere, why not join us. Please contact either Steve McArragher on 01622 831007 or Sian Burr on 01622 831106. Remember always to respect the countryside and keep to the footpaths.

Wet Golfers Society

Sue Attwood, Hon Secretary

Golfers - do you know about your local Golf Society? We are a very friendly group with both male and female members and also include golf widows and widowers in our activities. Our Golf Days – 7 this year – and usually after breakfast and 18 holes which conclude with a dinner at the West End Tavern, which is our clubhouse. Anyone who would like to know more or “try before you buy” please contact our Captain Paul on 07831 463446, or email: wetgolfers@gmail.com

PARISH COUNCIL COUNCILLORS, CLERKS AND OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

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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

Kent County Council

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

Telephone: 08458 247800

Website: www.kent.gov.uk

ADMIN ASSISTANT

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CARETAKERS

Ian Jones

Chris Prince



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