

AUTUMN 2025

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER



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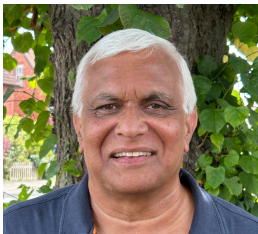
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UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL



Dear Residents

I am pleased to lead a dedicated team of councillors and staff who play a vital role in connecting village groups and organisations with the Parish Council. They actively participate in community initiatives such as Marden in Bloom, the Dementia Group, the History & Heritage group and Marden Wildlife regularly attending meetings and events to gather feedback and address local concerns. Their partnership working with the Police, Residents Associations, the Patient Participation Group, Marden Medical Centre, Marden Church, Marden Primary Academy and the Community Forum, ensures that diverse community voices are heard, demonstrating a continuing commitment to supporting and improving village life. Having held an initial 'Meet the Councillors' session with Councillor Kate Tippen in August, further open meetings are planned to ensure Councillors are accessible to residents.

The new Resilience Plan, as outlined later in this Newsletter will help to ensure we are ready to meet the challenges we might face when dealing with emergencies and climate issues and volunteers from the community will be needed as this takes shape.

This work is made possible by the dedication and hard work of the Parish Clerk, Alison Hooker, and the Deputy Clerk Rachel Weeks and their support staff.

The Parish Council are very aware that residents are concerned about how some future planning proposals might affect the village, and we are determined to communicate as openly as possible with residents and act with the best interests of the Parish.

Best Wishes
Councillor Adrian Rabot

GENERAL UPDATE

After the hottest summer on record, the much-needed rain arrived in September, and the autumnal chill has now set in. While stark changes in weather patterns because of climate change pose a number of challenges, they can also cause an explosion of brighter colours during the autumn – it is expected that the leaves will be more spectacular than ever and hopefully our lovely parish will look beautiful. Over the shorter colder and crisper days, we hope that you will continue to be active and support your local community and events (see further on).

The Parish Council team is made up of an eclectic mix of people – ranging from civil engineers, drainage experts, administrators, an ex-police superintendent to a building engineer and insurance/finance experts - and we try to combine all our skills and knowledge to help to improve the life of Marden residents. The cogs of the wheel grind slowly in local government and it's often very frustrating, but the Parish Council has no political agenda - we are here as

your elected representatives to help to support our community.

We are committed to maintaining regular communication with residents through a number of different channels and we aim to provide you with as much information as we can - not just on the work that the Parish Council is undertaking – but health & well-being, police information, what’s going on in our community etc - via our newsletters, weekly e-newsletter, the village noticeboards and on social media. If residents need to raise any issues or have any suggestions, please pop into the Parish Office for a chat with Ali or Rachel. Alternatively, you can call them on 01622 832305 or email: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk. – they are available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 12 noon in the Parish Office. The Parish Council’s Facebook page is also a good source of information, and it would be great if you could follow or give us a like at: <https://bit.ly/MardenFacebook>



Meet the Councillors

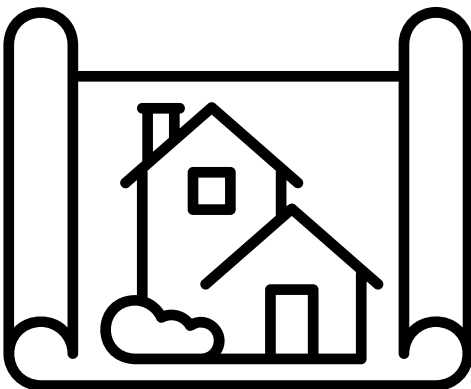
Councillors are here to support residents as much as we can and we thought it would be useful to restart the ‘Meet the Councillors’ sessions.

On 23rd August several councillors met outside Marden Library where they chatted to a number of residents. We are hoping to hold these sessions on a bi-monthly basis and have arranged the next two dates on Saturday 29th November and Saturday 31st January outside Marden Library from 11.00am to 12noon – come along and say hello.

PLANNING UPDATE

Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan

The Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2021-2038 was adopted in March 2024. Regrettably, Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) has officially lost its 5-year land housing supply (reduced to 4.5 years) and speculative planning applications are flooding in. Unfortunately, this means in planning terms a ‘tilted balance’ in developers’ favour without this 5-year land supply. This situation has not been helped with Central Government’s requirement for an additional 10% more house building along with delays on the three garden sites and a slow housing market. However, MBC favour sites already in the local plan and not speculative applications.



Land North of Marden

The Parish Council understands that residents are nervous about the possibility of a speculative planning application for Land North of Marden. This site has been on the radar since 2019 at the MBC Call for Sites consultation and this site wasn't included in the MBC Local Plan adopted in 2024, although other garden community sites were.

A Full Parish Council meeting took place on 9th September where the Chairman Cllr Adrian Rabot read out a statement giving an update on Land North of Marden. Borough Councillors Grace Couch, Claudine Russell and Mike Summersgill, and our County Councillor Brian Black also addressed the meeting which was attended by quite a few residents. The minutes of this meeting can be found at:
<https://bit.ly/FullCouncil09092025>

This meeting was for the Parish Council to provide as much information to residents as possible and we will keep you informed throughout the stages of public consultation and the planning process as we want to bring everyone into the conversation at an early stage. The meeting was not a decision-making meeting, and councillors did not vote on whether they agree or disagree with the proposal - that will come at a later stage when and if a planning application is submitted.

It is important to know that councillors must be very careful not to give their opinion as to whether they agree or disagree with this potential proposal. Councillors must maintain an open mind until all the facts are available. If the Parish Council makes any public statement, in support or against this proposal before an application is submitted and discussed at a Parish Council meeting, then they run the risk of the applicant claiming we were not looking at the application with an open mind as we had pre-determined our view. The consequence would be that the Parish Council's view would not be taken into account when a final decision is made.

Furthermore, the Parish Council makes recommendations to the relevant planning officer only - it does not decide on planning applications - the final decision to grant or refuse planning applications rests with the Local Planning Authority, usually MBC.

Other Planning News

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

The contentious planning application for a chicken farm at Reed Court Farm on Hunton Road was refused earlier this year. The developer has six months from the refusal date to consider an appeal which has not happened.

Thank you to those residents who attended the Planning Meeting on 7th August to express their concerns on the full planning application for land adjacent to 16 Lucks Way for the erection of a two-bed detached dwelling house. Councillors voted unanimously to refuse this application which MBC has now refused.

Marden Neighbourhood Plan Review (MNP) – Regulation 14 Consultation

The Parish Council has been reviewing and updating the MNP which is a legal document and is part of the planning policies within Maidstone Borough Council (MBC).

Councillors refer to the policies when considering planning applications to ensure they are compliant, and MBC take them into consideration when assessing planning applications.

It’s designed to ensure that Marden will continue to be a thriving parish, to maintain its individual character, heritage and community spirit. It aims to balance the existing and future needs of residents and businesses to fulfil Marden’s function as a Rural Service Centre, by managing the expansion of housing provision, employment, education and recreation opportunities, whilst retaining and enhancing the natural beauty and biodiversity of the surrounding rural area.

As part of Regulation 14, we consulted with various groups, statutory bodies, stakeholders, businesses, village groups and residents on the proposed changes to the MNP. The document was submitted to MBC but unfortunately, we need to repeat the consultation as we did not submit a modifications statement which is currently being worked on.

You can find the current draft document at:
<https://bit.ly/VisionforMarden2037>

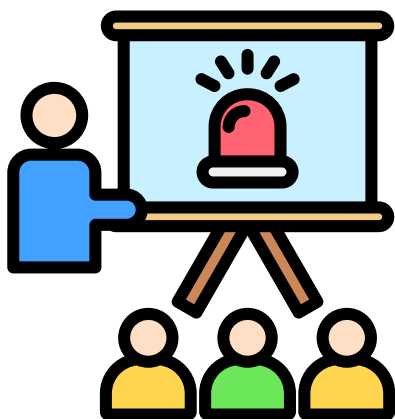


PROJECT UPDATE

Marden Parish Emergency Resilience Plan

The Parish Council has now drafted a new version of what was the previous Emergency Plan into a Parish Emergency Resilience Plan in line with new guidelines from the Kent and Medway's Resilience Forum. This will 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. The Parish Council may be asked to support these agencies with these incidents and 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 assistance arrives and it will do this more effectively if it has a plan in place.



To be able to set up this Emergency Resilience Plan, we are putting a shout out for volunteers with an IT background, communications, fire, medical, 4x4 and chainsaw licence holders to come forward to sit on the Resilience Planning Sub-Group and be included in the contact list for emergencies. If you would like to be part of this important community resilience plan, then please either email Ali: clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or call 01622 832305.

The Parish Office will also be contacting village groups and organisations for involvement to assist in emergencies and to investigate facilities as rest centres.

Meeting with MP Katie Lam

The Parish Council has invited our MP Katie Lam to come along to Marden to meet Parish Councillors which has been tentatively arranged for Friday 16th January. Katie will also be visiting Marden Primary Academy. We will update residents in the next newsletter.

Marden at Christmas

Date for your diary: Saturday 6th December 2025. For more information, see the back page.

Marden Annual Parish Meeting (APM)

The Annual Parish Meeting is a meeting of all the local government electors for the Parish and is called by the Chairman of the Parish Council, six local government electors or two Parish Councillors.

It is held to provide the opportunity to discuss local matters and receive Council and village annual reports and is distinct from a Parish Council meeting.

According to the Local Government Act 1972, every parish must hold this meeting annually between 1st March and 1st June. The meeting allows residents to voice their opinions and engage in discussions about parish affairs. It serves as a direct form of democracy enabling community involvement in local governance.

Councillors are currently exploring ways on how the APM can be presented in future and if you have any suggestions, please email Ali in the Parish Office.

Marden Summer Play Scheme

The Summer Play Scheme was held with attendance reaching up to 48 children each day and sadly not all children who applied could be accommodated due to capacity limits at Scout HQ.

Congratulations to Jen Ward and her team on running such a successful scheme. The staff all worked so hard and provided a lot of activities, sporting events and general fun for all those who attended. Unfortunately, we have been informed that we are unable to hold the play scheme at Marden Primary Academy at any time in the future so we are currently looking at options for 2026.

Get It Hot Off the Press – Marden Village News

Sign up for the weekly e-newsletter providing information on what's happening not just with the Parish Council, but roadwork updates, police communication, other village organisations, etc. This is especially helpful to those residents who are not on social media so why not sign up and find out what's going on?

SIGN UP FOR MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL'S WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER



Sign up to receive information on:

- Local roadworks and road closures;
- Events happening in the area;
- Forthcoming Parish Council meetings;
- Local services and information; and
- Much more....



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

Allotments at Highwood Green

Finally, there is some news about the allotment site at Highwood Green. The S106 Deed of Variation document which allows Redrow to transfer the land to the Parish Council has been signed off by MBC's legal department and Redrow must transfer the allotments to the Parish Council by 26th November.

Allotments at Highwood Green

(Contd)

However, before the transfer is complete, we need to ensure that all the work we specified a long time ago is completed by Redrow at the allotment area. Hopefully we will be able to start things rolling in the New Year and we will update residents in the Spring newsletter.

Marden Playing Field Changing Rooms

Marden Parish Council recently submitted a formal planning application to Maidstone Borough Council which has now received approval. We are now seeking budget costs for the works, and the project will mainly be funded with S106 monies received from Highwood Green, Windsor Meadow and Parsonage developments which cannot legally be used elsewhere. If further funding is needed to complete the project, then we will seek grants from outside bodies and will not be using money from the council tax precept.

Public Conveniences Solar Panels & Water Fountain Station

Whilst Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) own the public toilets building, the Parish Council maintains this important village facility. As part of our environmental responsibilities, the Parish Council have been exploring the possibility of installing solar panels on the roof to offset the cost of electricity in the toilets and a water

fountain station outside the facility. A structural survey has been undertaken which advises that work should be undertaken to the roof to bear the weight of the panels. A draft license for building alterations has been received from MBC, and we have obtained a couple of grants towards funding the panels. It was agreed at Full Council on 14th October to continue with this work and hopefully will be completed early 2026.

Litter Bin Audit

The Parish Council undertook a litter bin audit in the village and one area in the High Street (near the Post Office Café and Marden Bakery) needs a bin where a lot of rubbish is often deposited. Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) advised they are unable to provide any new bins in the parish but are happy to relocate one. However, a new bin has been installed outside OneStop and a twin bin outside of Kebab Fish Knight and Nisa store. MBC agreed to move a bin opposite the West End Stores to the corner of Albion Road/High Street and the Clerks have chased MBC to see when this will be done.

Fingerpost at Plain Road/Thorn Road Junction

This important heritage asset was demolished in 2022 and has been a source of great frustration – another example of the cogs grinding slowly in local government. Having secured a contractor to remove the post and another contractor to repair it, we were

then advised by KCC that we are not permitted to reinstall a cast iron signpost on safety reasons. Our County Councillor Brian Black has kindly agreed to help, and he has raised the issue with a cabinet member on KCC. However, if this is not possible, the Parish Council will consider replacing it with a wooden sign instead of cast iron (like the one at the Goudhurst Road/Plain Road/Sheephurst Lane junction).

Christmas Lights in the Village

The Parish Council is hoping that we will receive a donation from our County Councillor to have another lamppost adorned with a wraparound Christmas light. The lights are installed on lampposts at the beginning of December from the High Street to the West End to brighten the village centre up over the festive period.

HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Marden Parish Council Highways Working Group

As a result of the recent Marden Community Survey, highways were in the top three issues residents would like the Parish Council to address. A Highways Working Group has been set up specifically to put more focus on highways issues, monitor the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) - not just on its progress but recommend any additions - and monitor the annual prioritisations. The working group will proactively identify where there are highways concerns and seek appropriate solutions

and monitor highways maintenance such as footways, faint lines in the village etc and draft responses to any surveys relating to highways.

Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

Highways issues continue to be a cause for concern for all, and we asked for residents' views at a consultation earlier this year about the HIP. Cllrs reviewed your comments and sent the Highways Improvement Plan Priority List to KCC Highways for 2025/26 earlier in the summer (see list below). A site meeting was held on 8th September with a representative from Kent Highways and Cllrs took the representative to the sites to see first-hand our concerns. Councillors will be reviewing the recommendations from Kent Highways and will update in future newsletters.

- Bend at West End - a timeline of accidents has been sent such as vehicles hitting walls, fences and lamp columns, HGV's mounting the footways etc.
- B2079 Beech Bridge - The narrow carriageway between Beech Bridge Cottages and south of the junction with Roughlands Lane resulting in kerb/verge damage from vehicular over-running particularly HGVs mounting the verge.
- Howland Road (bend at Rose and Crown Cottages) - as residents are all too aware, this is a dangerous and blind bend where parking is permitted with no proper footway,

Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

Contd

- Howland Road (bend at Rose and Crown Cottages) Contd - and many vehicles drive too fast often hitting stationary vehicles. There is no off-road parking for residents, so all cars are parked on the road leaving only a single width road for driving around the bend.
- B2079 Winchett Hill to Marden Beech -The road is heavily used by motorists including HGVs, farm vehicles, cars and cyclists and several accidents have occurred where vehicles have ended up in residents' gardens.
- Dropped Kerbs - some footways in the village centre lack dropped kerbs for those residents' using wheelchairs, pushchairs etc and many others lack tactile paving for the visually impaired. The locations where there is a need for dropped kerbs are in Goudhurst Road - entrance to Marden Primary Academy, High Street - at entrance to the Old Market, Chantry Road/Lime Close junctions and Chantry Road by the bungalows.
- Pedestrian Crossing in the High Street - it has been highlighted by residents that an additional crossing is needed in the High Street by the pharmacy, but Kent Highways has advised this is not feasible as it does not meet the criteria and it would be very difficult to site a formal crossing in this locality and achieve the 5m minimum clearance from any

junctions or accesses that are required. A signalised crossing would cost in excess of £200,000 and unfortunately Kent Highways are not able to facilitate or fund.

At the site meeting, Cllrs also mentioned that cars are sometimes being parked on the newly extended footway at the Pattenden Lane junction and the Kent Highways Design Team will visit the site to see what can be done to prevent this happening in the future. Cllrs also requested that the DYL at the junction be reinstated.

Kent Highways are also looking at installing a village gateway sign by the planter in Maidstone Road and now Marden in Bloom have received a license for the planter there, hopefully Kent Highways will install the sign.

The results from the Traffic Regulation Order for Single Yellow Line proposals in Goudhurst Road (9.30am-10.00am) and Double Yellow Lines in Albion Road have now been approved and installed. You can find the HIP document: <https://bit.ly/MPCHIP2025>

Speed Watch

The Parish Council carried out a speed watch session in July in Pattenden Lane when 47 vehicles were recorded as speeding and four vehicles were sent a warning letter as it was not the first time they had been recorded by a Speed Watch session. Another session took place in August on the Goudhurst Road, without any speeding vehicles recorded, and then another session in

Pattenden Lane on National Speed Watch Day on 12th September when 12 vehicles were recorded as speeding (the fastest at 49mph).

If you are concerned about speeding around the village, then why not sign up for Speed Watch? You just need to undertake some online training that doesn't take long and for further information, please contact Lisa either by email: adminassistant@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or call 01622 832305 with your details.



Hedges or Trees Encroaching the Public Highways and Footways

Narrow footways particularly in Church Green, High Street, Howland Road and the West End can make it difficult for buggies and assisted vehicles to navigate especially when there are overhanging/overgrown hedges/trees. If there is overhanging vegetation on a public road or footway, you can let Kent Highways know who have an obligation to ensure private property owners cut back any hedges, vegetation or shrubs that encroach onto the highways. They require private property owners to cut back any vegetation from streetlights to allow the full beam of light to shine onto the ground and ensure the full width of the footway

is available for use by pedestrians. You may receive a letter from Kent Highways asking you to trim back your vegetation and they will check the progress of the work.

If highway vegetation is overhanging your property, you have the right under UK law to cut it back to your property boundary. For more information or to report a problem, check out: <https://bit.ly/KCCVegetation>

DRAINAGE & WATER

Flooding and drainage continue to be high on the Parish Council's agenda and over the spring and summer, we were fortunate there were no problems. Let's hope this autumn/winter, we have no issues, and the Flood Wardens don't need to be called out.

Despite the extensive work undertaken by Southern Water last year, Maynards Sewer overflowed yet again at the beginning of the year. We have chased Southern Water requesting full details on the questions raised in a letter sent in January, but still no updates have been received.

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 road's flood becoming dangerous to drive. We have been given permission by Kent Highways to close roads in the event of flooding.

DRAINAGE & WATER CONTD

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 please 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.

In previous winters we have experienced very heavy episodes of ice and snow 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.

You can find information on local drainage and flooding on the Parish Council website:

<https://bit.ly/MPCDrainageandFlooding>

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. With pressure on public services including the NHS, it is important that we continue to increase awareness on health-related matters across the community to make residents more aware of self-help and to continue to support Marden Medical Centre as much as we can. The Marden Community Forum is made up of representatives from the Parish Council, the Medical Centre, Marden Church, Marden Primary Academy, the PPG, Marden Pre-School, Maidstone Family Hubs etc who discuss health and wellbeing issues so we are aware of what is going on in our community and can help signpost each other and residents on health and wellbeing matters.

Marden Community Health & Wellbeing Contact List

The Marden Community Health & Wellbeing Contact List has been updated and you can find it on the Parish Council website at:

<https://bit.ly/MPCWellbeing>

It's also in PDF format if you wish to print a copy and copies will also be available in the Library, Medical Centre and Marden Church.

Health & Wellbeing Support in Marden

Marden no longer has a community warden, a Children's Centre or any youth support services and now we have little support from the charity Involve which puts additional pressure on our already overstretched Medical Centre. Marden is fortunate that Marden Foodbank provides excellent voluntary work to those vulnerable members of the community spearheaded by Marden Church.

The Involve Children's Navigator/Worker still attends Marden Foodbank regularly and signposts residents who have need of the service, but the regular support to fill in forms etc is no more and the Medical Centre no longer has a link worker. A representative from the KCC Family Hubs does attend the Foodbank when she can and will be supporting the new S.E.N.D. group and hopefully at Marden Primary Academy as KCC has also reduced access to the S.E.N.D services at the school.

Involve Self-Referrals

Involve does accept self-referrals to their ICB social prescribing service which covers Marden and referrals can be made directly via the following link: <https://bit.ly/Involveover18s>

or if you want to complete a self-referral form:

<https://bit.ly/InvolveReferral>

For parents, please speak to your GP who will make a referral to the team as required. For any pre-schools, schools or parish councils in the Weald, you can email Katie Filmer: katie.filmer1@nhs.net

S.E.N.D Help Marden

We were delighted to hold the very first S.E.N.D Help Marden session in September. It was wonderful to see families come together to share experiences and support one another on the journey of raising children with special educational needs and disabilities.

A heartfelt thank you to Marden Church for all your support, and to everyone who has encouraged and supported the launch of this group – your kindness has made it possible. We are also excited to share that S.E.N.D Help Marden is now on Facebook, where you can find updates on future sessions and resources, as well as connect with us directly.



Everyone is welcome, and we look forward to seeing you at our next gathering. Sessions are held every other Tuesday (second and fourth Tuesday) from 9.30am-10.30am in the Vestry Hall term time only. Tea, coffee and cake will be provided for a small donation.

HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

KCC Maidstone Family Hubs

You can find advice, support and services on the KCC Maidstone Family Hubs to help throughout your family journey, from newborns to 19-year-olds, or up to 25-year-olds with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Check out:

<https://bit.ly/KentLocalHub>

or to follow the latest news, classes and information check out their Facebook page.

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

Kent County Council – Health

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



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

ReferKent

ReferKent is an online directory of groups and services which aims to strengthen referrals across Kent for adults and families. It allows users to refer to organisation directly and help those who are experiencing or are at risk of hardship. To find out more please visit: ReferKent - for organisations who support Kent residents - Kent County Council

Marden Charity

Marden Charity is here to help you. For further information on this charity please refer to: <https://bit.ly/MardenCharity>



Free CPR Training Sessions

The Patients Participation Group (PPG) is hoping to arrange a couple of CPR training sessions in the village over the next year either at Marden Memorial Hall or the Parish Church to increase awareness of CPR and Defibrillator usage so watch this space....

NHS Stop Think Choose Campaign

As everyone knows, NHS services are very busy and it's important to come forward with any health concerns, but you can help ease the pressure by choosing the right service.

Emergency departments are currently extremely busy treating high numbers of patients. This service is for those who need it most – like people with severe chest pains, serious head injuries, loss of consciousness or breathing difficulties.

Please help the NHS to protect emergency departments by using an alternative service if you have a less serious condition. So please check out Stop Think Choose to ensure you are contacting the correct service:
<https://bit.ly/KMHealthService>

Marden Dementia Friendly Community (MDFC) – Rachel Chacon

The monthly free lunches continue on the first Tuesday of the month alternating between The Unicorn and Marden Village Club and are open to someone with dementia and a carer.

The two seated exercise classes continue with Millie on a Monday and a Friday and are both well attended, but we now need to charge £3.50 per head as our funds are diminishing. The classes are part of our project to 'Reduce Your Risk' and are open to anyone living in Marden.

With the grant awarded by MBC last year, we are funding the new 'Play On' group set up by Sue Eltringham.

This has started off very well and although most of it is funded by this grant, we need to raise more funds to complete the project and plan to apply for grants. We also receive donations from the K20 Cycling Club as one of their chosen charities. If you are living with dementia, you are entitled to apply for a grant to help you with any extra expenses or maybe just to treat yourself to a special day out. If you wish to be added to our mailing list or would like more information or advice, then please email:
mardendfcinfo@gmail.com or call Rachel on 07771 770541 for more info.

Marden Foodbank – Donations Needed

The Foodbank runs out of the Vestry Hall every Monday morning between 9.30am and 11.30am. Anyone in need of food is welcome to come along and receive a bag.

We would be grateful for donations of the following items: tea & coffee, milk, fruit juice and squash, jam, tinned soup and vegetables (carrots, potatoes, sweetcorn etc), tinned tuna, macaroni cheese, tinned ravioli etc, pasta and rice, jars of pasta or curry sauce, tinned meat or pies, tinned puddings and custard, toilet rolls, shampoo and soap.

All donations can be dropped to the Vestry Hall on a Monday morning or left on the Vicarage doorstep at any time. Thank you.

HEALTH & WELLBEING CONTD

Marden Foodbank Contd

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

The Importance of Volunteering – It's Good For Your Wellbeing

The Greek philosopher Aristotle once said that the essence of life is “to serve others and do good”. Volunteering is so important as it offers essential help to worthwhile causes, people in need and the wider community and in Marden we are so fortunate to have so many volunteers helping to make our community a better and happy place – so a big thank to all of you who volunteer.

Did you know there are many health benefits of volunteering such as stress reduction, boosting mental and physical health, combating depression and providing a sense of purpose? Volunteering doesn't have to involve a long-term commitment – just giving in simple ways can help those in need and improve your overall health and happiness. It connects you with others and gives you a sense of purpose – if you feel lonely, isolated or simply want to widen your social circle, volunteering in your local community is an important and often fun way to meet new people and allows you to meet a wide variety of people from all walks of life.

SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE

Parish Council Environmental Sub-Group

If you are interested in joining the Parish Council Environmental Sub-Group and helping with this project, please let Lisa know either by emailing: adminassistant@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk or ringing 01622 832305.

Hedge Planting behind Marden Cemetery

The Parish Council has already planted many saplings on our open space, and we planted 1,000 whips to form a hedgerow on land behind Marden Cemetery and another 1,000 whips as part of the Kent Plan Tree initiative. The aim of the project is to create a new ‘mini woodland’ for Marden as part of an expansion to Marden Cemetery. Fortunately, most of the saplings have survived.

The Parish Council has now applied for free saplings from Maidstone Borough Council to enable the boundary hedge at the back of the cemetery to be completed.

This is due to be held on Saturday 24th January from 9.30am (date will be confirmed nearer the time) and we are hoping the Police Cadets will be assisting with the planting of 1,000 indigenous hedge whips - it would be great if we could have some volunteers to help; just bring along a spade and get digging!

Please email Rachel, the Deputy Clerk: deputyclerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk to confirm the date - getting out in the cold fresh winter air and feeling you're doing something worthwhile in the community is good for the soul!

Nature Recovery Fund

Maidstone Borough Council has been awarded £500,000 for communities for nature recovery projects in Maidstone. The Parish Council has submitted an Expression of Wish form to MBC to apply for some of this funding to undertake a project within the village. We have a few ideas up our sleeves, but this will be dependent on the required criteria.

Green Homes/Retrofit

Retrofit refers to any improvement work on an existing building to improve its energy efficiency, making them easier to heat, able to retain that heat for longer, and replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy.

The Parish Council is currently exploring the possibility of KCC organising a Green Homes event in the Spring which has already been run with Maidstone and Bearsted Climate Action Networks (CANs).

The event aims to help residents to better understand how to improve energy efficiency in their homes and grants and advice to install measures such as insulation, solar PV and heat pumps will be shared.

Idling – Switch Off Your Engine

(Endorsed by Marden Medical Centre)
Idling means leaving a vehicle's engine running while it is stationary. While this is often because of everyday traffic, there are some instances – such as waiting for children outside schools and sitting in total gridlock – when idling is not necessary and should be avoided.

Idling is endemic in our village particularly outside Marden Primary Academy at pick up and drop off times, outside shops and the Medical Centre.

Why is idling bad? Idling, instead of turning your engine off while stationary, increases the amount of exhaust emissions in the air. These emissions contain several harmful gasses including carbon dioxide, which is bad for the environment and contributes towards climate change, as well as a range of other harmful gasses including nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons.



SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY & CLIMATE CHANGE CONTD

Idling - Switch Off Your Engine Contd

Pollutants from cars are linked to a range of health problems, from allergies and skin irritation to heart disease and respiratory problems such as asthma. Long-term repeated exposure to diesel exhaust fumes may also increase the risk of lung cancer, according to the World Health Organisation and there is growing evidence that some neurological conditions (e.g. Parkinson's Disease) can be linked to exposure to air pollutants.

Diesel vehicles, older ones in particular, are thought to be one of the biggest contributors to the problem due to high levels of nitrogen oxide and particulates.

So, let's try to keep our village pollutant free and our children healthy - please consider these factors and switch off your engine!

Kent Friends of the Tree Competition 2025

In liaison with various village groups and our Tree Warden, the Parish Council entered 'Sylvia' into the Tree of the Year Competition on behalf of Marden.

'Sylvia' who is a Beult Oak (named by one of the members of Marden Wildlife after the Goddess of the Forest) is accessible on the boundary of the parish just off the PROW KM229 which runs from Chainhurst to Stilebridge and is a very well used path where people can make a circular walk of the riverside land.



It is estimated that the tree is 300-400 years old and was 'pollarded' in ancient time and is thought to be the most beautiful oak in our area. 'Sylvia' has many burrs which hint at her great age, and she has probably been an important part of the Beult landscape for hundreds of years. She delights many riverside footpath walkers and her beauty, age and contribution to the landscape add further poignancy to this claim.

We have yet to find out whether 'Sylvia' has won this prestigious competition in Kent, but she would be very pleased if you went to visit her!

Join the Movement for a Plastic Free Marden!

Since the project was launched last November, we've introduced the campaign to a wide range of supporters including residents, borough and parish councillors, local businesses and village groups. The Steering Committee which is made up of dedicated residents and three parish/borough councillors has met on a few occasions and we are

slowing progressing the project forward. We've already applied for Plastic Free Community status, and the Parish Council is leading by example by removing three single-use plastic items from its premises. To achieve our goals, we need to sign up at least 15 community allies (village groups / organisations) and all village organisations have been contacted asking for your support; recruit at least 5 independent business champions; and host at least two community events per year to raise awareness and inspire action. All you need to do is sign-up to remove 3 single-use items from your operations – such as packets of biscuit/sweet wrappers, cling film, plastic cups/plates.

So please help us make a difference to help shape our plastic-free future and work together to create a cleaner, greener Marden – we'd love to hear from you just email:
plasticfreemarden@gmail.com



Marden Wildlife Update

Lou Carpenter & Ray Morris

A productive summer culminated in a successful showing at the Weald of Kent Ploughing Match: our joint display with Kent Wildlife Trust, and the Marden Farmer Cluster, took first prize as the most informative stand.



Foremost on our display was the groundbreaking work raising scarce wildflowers to re-populate local meadows, and the restocking of local woodlands with 'genetically appropriate' Chequer trees, both of which have been helped by a bespoke nursery facility on a local farm with support from KCC, South East Water and Chambers Flower Farm. As well as trialling the re-introduction of disease-resistant Elm trees, this work will eventually provide Marden residents with a glimpse of what their forbears experienced before the huge, and largely detrimental to wildlife, post-war changes to rural Kent.

Our joint Marden Wildlife/Kent Wildlife Trust Turtle Dove study, with further funding from Natural England this year, continues to break new ground. GPS tracking reveals unexpected information about their occupation of both the Low and High Weald as they adapt to changes in land use. It seems Marden may now host an increasingly important 'hot spot' for the UK's most endangered birds on their autumn migration.

SUSTAINABILITY, BIODIVERSITY POLICE & CRIME UPDATE & CLIMATE CHANGE CONTD

Marden Wildlife Update Contd

More ancient hedgerows have been surveyed for the national register and members' surveys continue to shine a light on local biodiversity. Recording all this information is no mean feat and we are proud that our own Karen Latchford has been shortlisted for an award from the National Biodiversity Network for tirelessly building Marden's prominence in the National Biodiversity Atlas. Well done, Karen!

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

mardenwildlife@gmail.com



Food Composting

MBC's Waste Team are encouraging all residents to compost their food waste using the separate food bin. You can purchase a food caddy bundle for £10, which includes a large food bin, small kitchen caddy for inside your home and one roll of five-litre food sacks. Check out: <https://bit.ly/MBCFoodWaste>

Police Surgeries

Over the last few months several police surgeries/drop-in sessions have been organised – PCs Chad Maskell, George Head and our PCSO Becky Mount attended the Village Café on 13th June and 24th October, and at the Marden Dog Show on 10th August. At the session in the Village Club on 26th August concerns were raised over catapults (see article below). The next Police Surgery is in the Village Club on Monday 17th November between 5.00pm and 6.00pm.

These sessions are a good opportunity to raise any concerns you may have face-to-face and for the police to gather intel on what is going on in the village. You can also find out what your local officers are doing to tackle the issues that matter to you and learn more about how they are working to keep Marden safe.

Crime Update

Our Community Police Officers work closely with the Parish Council on enforcement and engaging with residents to gather intelligence.

Over the past few months there has been a number of anti-social behaviour incidents in the village the majority of which have been reported via 101. In June there was a police raid involving drugs and firearms and four people are under caution.

In the summer there was damage to benches on Southons Field, vandalism in the public toilets, various catapult issues, a suspected arson attack in August (see below) and a pony & trap was reported in Marden Playing Field etc.

Please remember it is so important to report any incidents of ASB and other non-emergency incidents to 101 or help to keep Kent Police phone lines free for emergency calls by reporting non-urgent incidents online. It's easy, user-friendly and you can do it at your own pace. Your safety matters.
<https://bit.ly/KP101Report>

Launch of Marden Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Kent Police held a stall at the Marden Dog Show in August where they launched a brand-new Neighbourhood Watch scheme for the area. Quite a few residents signed up and Ali has emailed those residents and will forward their details to Kent Police who are co-ordinating the scheme. If you want to make a real difference in your community and are interested in getting involved in the scheme, then please let Ali know.

Catapult Issues

Escalating catapult crime has become a real problem and there is intense peer pressure on social media sites like TikTok and Snapchat for youths to possess a catapult. As residents well know, there have been quite a lot of incidents in Marden alone.



Kent Police is cracking down on catapult crime after a man was reportedly shot in the face and a series of attacks on wildlife.

The force currently receives an average of 14 reports of catapult use per day, and officers will make an arrest and bring offenders to court if necessary. In July, officers sent a letter to schools warning there had been an increase in the weapons being used to harm or kill wildlife and damage property.

Catapult incidents are often under-reported so Kent Police are committed to tackling this issue head on and police will speak to parents and issue a Community Protection Warning that requires them to ensure their children do not carry or use catapults in public.

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

POLICE & CRIME UPDATE CONTD

Marden Community Survey – What are the Three Priorities in Your Ward?

Our PCSO Becky Mount would be very grateful if residents could give their feedback to Kent Police on what your three priorities are in Marden.

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



Kent Police – Annual Police Survey

Do you feel safe where you live? Do you think Kent Police are doing a good job? Do you think there are areas where they can improve?

The Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott has launched his Annual Policing Survey. Please have your say by filling out this anonymous survey: <https://bit.ly/KentPCCConsultation>

Nuisance Vehicles In Marden and Staplehurst – We Need your Help

Kent Police are aware of ongoing concerns regarding nuisance vehicles in the Marden and Staplehurst areas. These include vehicles causing noise disturbances, dangerous or antisocial driving, abandoned or untaxed vehicles, off-road bikes or quads on public land. Our Community Police Officers and PCSO are working closely with local partners to identify and act against those responsible. Your reports help us build a clearer picture and take targeted enforcement. If you witness nuisance vehicle activity, please report it online at www.kent.police.uk/report, or call 101 (or 999 in an emergency) or share dashcam or CCTV footage if available. Please include time and location, vehicle description (make, model, colour, registration) and nature of the nuisance.



e-Scooters

Following numerous reports of the illegal and anti-social use of e-scooters, Maidstone Police are actively tackling the use of them. At the time of writing, 63 e-scooters had been seized this year. We remind everyone that e-scooters are illegal to use in a public place. They require valid insurance, a valid driver's licence and MOT.

My Community Voice (MCV)

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

Crimestoppers – Speak Up and Stay Safe

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

WalkSafe Safety App

Kent Police have launched a safety app. WalkSafe is for anyone to use, regardless of gender and is a mobile app that allows users to share their location with trusted contacts, plan safe routes, and access real-time safety alerts. It also includes features such as:

- Live location sharing with family or friends
- Route planning with safety ratings based on local crime data
- Emergency alerts that can be triggered quickly if the user feels unsafe
- Check-ins to let loved ones know they've arrived safely

The app also allows users to report local issues, for example poor street lighting and cat-calling. This data is fed back to police, allowing for targeted operations and improvements to the local community.

e-Watch Newsletter – Community Safety Info Hub

By signing up to this email newsletter, you can check out information on Kent Police news and crime figures in your area, NHS Kent & Medway Clinical Commissioning Group, Kent Fire & Rescue, KCC, Scam Alerts, Action Fraud, Trading Standards, Food Standards Agency, KCC Traffic information. <https://bit.ly/EWatchArea>

Suspected Arson Attack in Marden

Our hearts go out to the family whose home was destroyed in a suspected arson attack in Battle Lane on 20th August – it had been the family home for 47 years. Eleven fire engines were sent to the property where the extensive fire was brought under control and extinguished after several hours. Officers are appealing for information and confirmed the incident is being treated as arson. Police are also investigating if a burglary reported at the property on 11th August is connected.



YOUTH PROVISION

As you know, KCC no longer have the resources to run a youth club in the village and thank you to those residents who provided feedback on the Quality-of-Life Survey which included improved youth provision, more activities for young people and creating a youth club.

A Blue Light Event was held in Staplehurst in August by Kent Police for 14-25-year-olds and they would like to run this event again next year to encourage community contact with ward police and the community protection team. Hopefully this event can be run in Marden.



Kent Cricket Community Trust

CLlr Adrian Rabot has been engaging with the Kent Cricket Community Trust to explore if their unique mobile engagement hub – the No Boundaries Bus - can be brought to Marden next year to undertake some detached youth work. This specially equipped minibus features DJ decks, PlayStation 5 consoles, and a chill-out space, creating a safe and inspiring environment for young people to connect and play. It's a mobile community centre that supports structured multi-sport sessions and offers a space for creative downtime. If we are successful in securing a few sessions at Marden Playing Field next year, we will let residents know.

OTHER PARISH INFORMATION

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

As reported in the summer newsletter, Sue Eltringham was presented with this award for all her efforts and volunteering she has done in our village including all her hard work running the extremely successful Sporting Memories group and now the new Play On group.

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 2025.

Marden Memorial Hall Update October 2025

The original Memorial Hall building dates back to the 1860's, with additions in the 1930's and more recently in 2010. The Hall Trustees are regularly ensuring that maintenance is kept up to date and where possible improvements take place.

The floor of the Main Hall has been sanded and resealed since our last update about improvements to the Hall.

A large automatic projector screen has been installed in the Main Hall so that all our halls now have projector screens. The Ladies toilets have been completely re-furbished this Summer and the rear lobby has been decorated. In addition, Trustees have purchased a new range cooker for the kitchen. Plans for 2026 include upgrading the kitchen as well as completing the re-decoration of the halls and all lobby areas.

Since installing solar batteries, to complement our solar panels, in August 2024 on average about 50% of our electricity has been self-generated, rising to over 80% in the sunny summer months.

Our thanks go to Marden in Bloom who have done such a great job with the garden area and planters at the front of the Hall.



The Memorial Hall complex consists of 3 halls all available for hire. If you are interested in hiring one of the halls please see our website: <https://bit.ly/MardenMemorialHall> for details of our halls, pictures and availability. To book please either email: mardenmemorialhall@yahoo.co.uk or call 07737 521761.

Community Statement on Flag Displays from Maidstone Borough Council

Recent flag displays have prompted a range of views within our community. In a democracy, people will hold differing opinions, and respectful dialogue is key to maintaining cohesion.

While many individuals engage in public displays lawfully and peacefully, it's important to remain mindful of the broader context. National safeguarding guidance highlights that, in some cases, such displays may be used to provoke or signal affiliation with divisive ideologies. This does not reflect the intentions of the majority, but it is a risk that public bodies are asked to monitor.

It is important that residents seek reliable information, avoid misinformation on social media, and continue to support one another in creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful community.

Any flags, graffiti, or public messaging that contain racial, hateful, or extremist content should be reported to the relevant authorities, such as the Maidstone Borough Council or Kent Police.

For further information, please refer to national guidance on flag flying provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

OTHER PARISH INFORMATION CONTD

Marden Library

The library was a busy hub over the summer, and the main event was the annual Summer Reading Challenge. This continues to grow in popularity, and we are delighted to see the increasing numbers of children registered with Marden Library taking part and completing the challenge. In 2024, 30 children registered with a total of 92 books read and in 2025, 38 children registered with a total of 109 books read. The children and parents have all been so enthusiastic and feedback has been amazing.

We also hosted “Story Garden” themed story and craft sessions and these, thanks to our lovely volunteers, proved very popular. Our next exciting event is the ‘Celebration of 200 Years of Railways’ which started in September. Children can collect a ‘Passport’ from our library and collect stickers from libraries where there is a Station. If they can collect 2 or more stickers from different districts, they will be able to visit Kent History and Library centre for a prize from a lucky dip. The ever popular children’s events restarted in the autumn term:

3:30pm on Thursday - Fun with Homework Club

10:30am on Friday - Rhyme Time (bookable)

10:00am on Saturday Lego Club

Do call in to the library if you would like more information on any of these clubs. We are open Tuesday to Friday 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm and on Saturdays 9am to 1pm.

Leigh Primary Academy - Hannah Penning, Principal

As we embark on another academic term, we are pleased to provide you with an update regarding the ongoing developments within our school community.

During the summer holidays, building work on our new EYFS/Year 1 building has continued, and we are excited to report that there is now a visible structure. In the upcoming weeks, various groups of children will have the opportunity to visit the site and learn more about the building process, fostering their engagement in this important development.

This academic year has already presented us with numerous enriching learning experiences. The EYFS children had the pleasure of being visited by a representative from the Blue Cross, who provided insightful teachings on animal care. Moreover, we recently participated in our first sporting event of the year - a girls' football competition held at the Gallagher Stadium, which was a wonderful opportunity for the children to showcase their skills and teamwork.

Additionally, Year 6 benefited from a visit by one of our parents, an expert in artificial intelligence (AI). This session allowed pupils to explore the potential positives of AI while also considering the challenges it may present. The children were further enlightened by a magistrate who spoke about their role and the essential skills involved in the judicial process. Our entire school community was also treated to a captivating woodwind demonstration by one of our visiting music teachers. We eagerly anticipate many more exciting experiences as we continue through the year.

Safe Anaesthesia Worldwide (SAWW) – Carol Newman, Secretary

Safe Anaesthesia Worldwide (SAWW) is a local charity with an international reach that works to improve anaesthesia services in low-income countries. Worldwide 5 billion people lack access to safe anaesthesia and surgery and as a result, millions suffer disability or death.

SAWW works to change this by providing suitable equipment and training to hospitals in poor countries. Recent donations have included sending:

- A Glostavent anaesthesia machine for a new operating theatre at Edna Adan Hospital, Somaliland.
- Two respiratory devices (CPAP) to treat babies with life-threatening breathing difficulties at Chaurjahari Hospital, Nepal.

- Five patient monitors, crucial for monitoring the condition of patients during and after surgery, to Adigrat Hospital, Ethiopia.
- Adult and paediatric intubation mannequins for instructing trainee anaesthetists to safely intubate patients, to the University of Graben Hospital, Democratic Republic of Congo.

The impact of all these donations has been to improve anaesthesia services, prevent suffering and save lives. Thank you to everyone who enabled SAWW to make these donations. SAWW wouldn't exist without the goodwill and generosity of the local people who have supported our work.

We have many more requests from hospitals waiting desperately for donations. If you would like to fundraise for us, please get in touch. Our latest Annual Report will be available shortly and to receive a copy please join our mailing list via our website:

<https://safe4all.org.uk/newsletter>

Or email us at info@safe4all.org.uk

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN

As ever, 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>

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

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

As always our community led village had numerous events over the Summer including the Rude Mechanicals performance in June; the Saints-v-Sinners Cricket Match and Marden Theatre Group's outstanding performance of 'Little Shop of Horrors' in July; Marden in Bloom's Dog Show, Marden Horticultural Society's cream tea to raise money for the Marden Wildlife group and the cream teas at the Vicarage in August; the Art in the Garden event in the Village Club, the WET Mugs Macmillan fund raising coffee morning in the Unicorn and the combined Marden Church/Village Club Applefest in September; and finally the ever popular Marden in Bloom's Music Scarecrow Safari in October. Never a dull moment in Marden!



You can also check out the "Village Diary" to find out what's on in and around Marden on the church website: www.mardenchurch.org.uk or if you have something to add, then email: diary@mardenchurch.orguk

Here's a taste of what's happening this Autumn/Winter:

Christmas Market

At St Michael and All Angels Church on Friday 28th November 6-8.30pm and Saturday 29th November 10-12 noon.

Marden at Christmas

Taking place on Saturday 6th December.

Light It Up Tractor Parade 2025 – Sunday 21st December

Weald of Kent Young Farmers Club will once again be parading through the villages with their very festive tractors! This year's date is Sunday 21st December. Goudhurst is the first village, at 5pm, Cranbrook 5.45pm, Staplehurst 6.15pm, and Marden will wave them along at 6.45pm. As usual, spectators are asked to stand on pavements, or in a safe place well back from the tractors, and dress brightly or carry a torch. Get there early, park nicely, wave madly, give generously! This year the club has it's own JustGiving account, so there will be less bucketeers about. JustGiving allows the club to claim Gift Aid, meaning the tax man adds a little bit to your donation. This also means the club is able to spread the love round a few more local charities too, to be announced in November. The Air Ambulance Kent Surrey and Sussex will still be a major beneficiary. Here's our JustGiving page:

<https://bit.ly/TractorGive>

For more info on the parade, use this link: <https://bit.ly/XmasTractor>

This page is kept up to date in the run up to the event. If your business or community group is joining in the fun in some way, let us know by emailing wealdofkentyc@gmail.com and we'll add you to the page. Or follow our Facebook page [@wealdofkentyc](https://www.facebook.com/wealdofkentyc). Love and lights!



Christmas Day Lunch Thursday 25th December

If you are over 55, a Marden resident and think you might be on your own this Christmas, why not book in for Christmas Lunch in the Vestry Hall? Enjoy Christmas Day in the company of others, with a home cooked dinner with all the trimmings, served with some festive cheer!

12.30pm – Arrive at the Vestry Hall,
Church Green, Marden

1.00pm – Traditional Christmas
dinner, including 1 glass of wine
/non-alcoholic drink

Christmas pudding served with
cream or custard

3.00pm – Afternoon ends with King's
Speech

Places are limited and on a first come, first served basis. A minimum donation of £5 per person required, to be received by 1st December. Sorry – no dogs allowed.

To secure your place, please email:
Sue.Eltringham@SEEOccupationaltherapy.co.uk

“Come & Sing” Group

Sarah Emmanuel

All are welcome to come and sing to improve health, boost well-being, for good company or just for the joy of singing! We sing well-loved songs from a variety of genres followed by tea, cake and time together. We meet on alternate Thursdays at 2.30pm in the Vestry Hall. £2 per session to cover costs. On the following Thursdays in the Vestry Hall at 2.30pm: 30th October, 13th & 27th November and 11th December (Christmas Party). Please contact Sarah on 01622 832925 or email: emanuelfamily@btinternet.com for more information.

Little Fishes Baby & Toddler Group

Little Fishes baby and toddler group runs in the Vestry Hall every Wednesday during term time between 9.30am-11am. All parents and carers are welcome to go along with their little ones. There is no need to book just turn up as and when you are able to. Suggested donation for each session is £1. For more information, please contact Kathy: office@mardenchuch.org.uk or Rev Nicky: rev.nicky@gmail.com

Marden History Group & Heritage Centre Richard Adam, Chairman

During the summer the History Group mounted a display of 'Then and Now' in and around our village. Did you come along and notice the differences? The Group joined in with the Heritage Open Day, a national event, which this year centred on architecture. The Group was well placed to connect with this subject with its surveys on Weald timber-framed properties around the parish.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

Marden History Group Contd

Then on 22nd October Chris Levett gave a seasonal talk at the Village Club about hops, and we are extremely appreciative to the Club as a central venue for a lot of our events. As it is the 200th anniversary of the railways this year, we have invited Graham Tippen to give an illustrated talk about its presence in Marden and how it has developed or changed over the years. It's being held in the Vestry Hall at 2.30 p.m. on Sunday 23rd November. As usual, donations towards the work of the History Group will be welcome. Come along after your Sunday lunch and be historically entertained.

We have a new Steering Group member in Jonathan Fenn who brings his expertise to the work of our voluntary organisation. Additionally, Diane Fisher continues to welcome group visits of pupils from Marden's primary academy, to learn about their local history. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for our future events and exhibits, as well as event posters which can be seen at various locations around the village: history@mardenhistory.org.uk

Marden Horticultural Society

Julie Nicol, Chair

The lovely autumn shades are all around us and there is plenty of tidying to be carried out to keep us active. Pruning and leaves to sweep, the last vegetables, and fruit to pick, and green houses to clean out to name but a few.

The autumn flowering plants are available to brighten our gardens winter pansies, chrysanthemums, cyclamen, wallflowers and soon time to plant our bulbs. Even the smallest gardens can keep us busy.

We also have many interesting monthly speakers and outings of interest. In July we travelled to London's Horniman gardens and museum which was enjoyed by everyone and in October the talk was on growing plants for Chelsea. On Tuesday 11th November the talk will be 'Late Flowering Perennials and Grasses' and on Tuesday 9th December 'Myrrh, Mistletoe and Mischief' all at 7.30pm in the Vestry Hall. For more information visit our site

<https://www.mardengardeners.uk>

We always welcome new members to our friendly group.

Marden in Bloom

Anne Boswell, Chair

We're sure you'll agree that the planters were ablaze with colour over the summer. The 'Bloomers' worked hard to keep them looking good and watered and thanks to those residents who also helped with the watering. Many thanks to Golden Hill Nursery for donating a lot of the plants but the star 'Bloomer' is Steve Arnold who grew from seed the brightly coloured plants which gave the planters that extra special 'je ne sais quoi'.

We have been busy replanting the planters around the village for the winter, tidying the beds at Marden

Library and Memorial Hall and will be having another Bulb Planting Session.



The Marden Dog Show was a great success in August – over 50 dogs entered the different categories who were all very well behaved. Thanks also to those residents who came along to support us at the Bulb Sale in September and our AGM took place on the 28th October.

As ever the Scarecrow Safari in October with a musical theme went down a storm with 16 fantastic entries and it was wonderful seeing so many people walking around the village especially the children. Congratulations go to Stanley's Garage who won with their Dolly Parton entry, second was K-pop made by the Snow family children and third place with the commendation for recycling was Willow End Tea Room for Elvis Prestea. Well done everybody!



Marden Oddfellows

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 on 07910888607 and I can explain in more detail of what we can offer. You never know, it may be the best decision you ever made.

Marden Play On – Sue Eltringham

“Play On!” takes place in the Vestry Hall every Thursday at 11.15am-12.20pm in the Vestry Hall. it’s a group to encourage members of the community to stay active and reminisce together.

At ‘Play On!’ we reminisce about past sporting events and achievements from days gone by, this has included a wide range of memories; from medals gained from the Marden Harvest festival, rowing awards and photographs and even pin badges awarded for a ‘hole in one’ whilst playing golf! There is no point keeping all you precious memorabilia in a box in the attic..... we like to share the memories together!

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARDEN CONTD

Marden Play On Contd

It's not all about sports; the group reminisce about a variety of topics from the 'the good old days', such as pubs in and around Marden, school days and playground games, the cinema, foods from days gone by, scouts and guides or TV & Radio shows.

'Half time' refreshments are served, followed by an activity together. Nothing too strenuous, but just something to keep active and more importantly to laugh together.

It might be exercising your brain with a quiz, dominoes tournament or a game of marbles or something more physical such as curling, boccia, table tennis or archery! There is something for everyone! For further details email: sue.eltringham@SEEOccupationaltherapy.co.uk

Marden Society – Steve McArragher

We continue to organise monthly talks on a variety of subjects as follows:

- Wednesday 26th November - "King Harold's March to London: the 1066 Harolds Way" by David Clarke - this follows the route along the Roman roads, still used in 1066, from London to Rochester on Watling Street then through Maidstone, Staplehurst and Bodiam to Hastings.

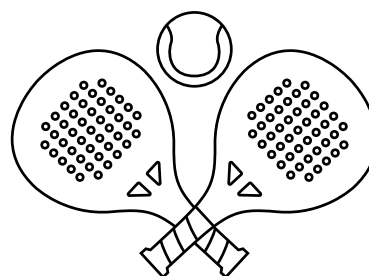
- Wednesday 10th December - Christmas Folk Concert - Gavin Atkin and his group will come to entertain us with some old carols and Christmas songs that are known to have been sung or composed in Kent. This is an extra meeting this year.

However, we have changed the time of our talks to afternoons to try and attract more people, so all further talks will now start at 2.30 p.m. still in the Vestry Hall with a raffle followed by refreshments after the talk. If we cannot get better attendance at our meetings, we are considering closing the Society next year so please "Use it or Lose it"

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

Marden Sports Club –Sport For All Russell Wheldon

At a time when we're all trying to be healthier and more active, Marden's local sports club is thriving with 12 adult hockey teams, 4 adult cricket teams, popular social tennis and now 2 floodlit padel courts - and that's before mentioning the hundreds of juniors!



Padel has been a revelation, offering a new sport to many: easy to pick up and get started, and great fun for all ages and abilities too. No wonder it's the world's fastest-growing sport. Come and have a go: just download the Marden Sports Club app, register, and book a court. Play between 9am-10pm, 7 days a week. Bats can be hired at the bar (£3).

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.mardensportsclub.com or email admin@mardensportsclub.com

Marden Sporting Memories Sue Eltringham

Marden Sporting Memories (MSM) meet to talk and reminisce about past sporting occasions and catch up on the weekly sports events. The group meet every Tuesday at Marden Sports Club. We are very grateful to Martin, the club manager for his help each week and to Marden Sports Club for supporting MSM.

Over the past few months, the group have had a variety of visitors including, local Marden cricketer Ben Tomkinson and former Welsh Rugby International & British Lion, John Taylor. The group enjoyed summer trips to the Lashenden Air Warfare Museum at Headcorn Aerodrome and to Willows End Tea Rooms in Collier Street.



The visit to Monk Lakes organised by 'Cast a Thought' was a huge triumph and we hope to make this an annual event. This trip was possible thanks to a successful funding bid to the Marden Community Fund. You can read more here: <https://bit.ly/MardenMemFish>

In September the group collaborated with Brigade Fitness to launch a new trike, in memory of former MSM member David Williams. Members of the group were able to experience cycling again; several of the group had not ridden a bike for over 40 years!

If you, or anyone you know has an interesting sporting story or physical challenge that you would like to share with the group, we would be delighted to hear from you?
mardensportingmemories@gmail.com

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

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

SIGN UP FOR MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL'S WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER



Sign up to receive information on:

- Local roadworks and road closures;
- Events happening in the area;
- Forthcoming Parish Council meetings;
- Local services and information; and
- Much more....



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

PARISH COUNCIL COUNCILLORS, CLERKS AND OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

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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

Lisa Stevens

adminassistant@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 01622 832305



@MardenParishCouncil



@mardenkentpc



@mardenparishcouncil

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



Marden at Christmas

SATURDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2025

10.30AM AT THE ALLENS

**MUSIC, REFRESHMENTS AND
MORRIS DANCING**

**SHOPS, LOCAL BUSINESSES, MARDEN SCOUT
GROUP AND MARDEN PARISH CHURCH
ARE ALL TAKING PART**

12.00-3.30PM MEMORIAL HALL

CRAFT FAIR AND SANTA IN HIS GROTTO

