

Marcham & District News

COTHILL – FRILFORD – GARFORD – GOZZARDS FORD – MARCHAM – TUBNEY

Your Independent Local Newsheet – www.madnews.co.uk

FEBRUARY 2023 VOL: 45 No: 2

READ & RECYCLE!

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▲ Good luck to all Bunnies!



▲ Little Angels indoors and out see page 11



▲ Preschool squelching in the mud! see page 13



▲ Christmas for Sweetbriar see page 7



▲ Marcham Village Shop and Post Office has changed its opening hours see page 5

February Diary

Date	Event	Pg		
1 Wed	Welcome Wednesday with Harmony InSpires, Marcham Centre, 19.15	17	20 Mon	Deadline for next issue of MADNews, 17.00 Email editor@madnews.co.uk
2-4	Snow White and the 7 Dwarfs, WADS, Wootton	15	20 Mon	Deadline for WRSE Consultation
3 Fri	Quiz Night at Marcham Centre, 20.00	9	20 Mon	Marcham WI: Al Sylvester, Marcham Centre, 19.30
7 Tue	OAHS Lecture: Giles Gilbert Scott, online, 17.30	17	21 Tue	Abingdon National Trust: Rotary, Trinity Church, Abingdon, 14.30
9 Thu	Marcham Society Midweek Walk	9	21 Tue	OAHS Lecture: Oxford's Wesleyan Preachers, online, 17.30
13 Mon	Marcham Parish Council Meeting, Marcham Village Hall, Marcham Centre. 19.30	3	23 Thu	Marcham Society Astronomy Group, Marcham Centre, 19.00
15 Wed	Abingdon Arts Society: The Art of the Cartoonist, Abbey Cinema, 10.30 & 14.00	13	27 Mon	Marcham Society: Judith Webb, Marcham Centre, 19.15
15 Wed	Deadline for Millets Competition	17		
16 Thu	Boozy Books, Mostly Books, Abingdon, 19.00-20.30	17		

Details of events may change after publication, please check with the relevant organisers before attending events

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Dear Readers

Thanks for all the comments saying that MADNews in print and online is really appreciated around the community. I am very confident that it will continue for many years to come as there are plans to create an editorial team – more details next month! Have you been to the Centre to see the great job that the volunteers have done in giving it a deep clean and new colour palette?? If not, why not go next time the Thirsty Cafe are there and grab a drink and a snack and admire the view!

Until the next time



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Other copy: 5pm 20th month
except for Jan when it is 15th Dec for both

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These are available free from Marcham Post Office or the Editor. Postal copies are also available – contact the Editor.

DISCLAIMER

We apologise in advance for any errors that may creep into MADNews (online or print), or omissions that creep out - we don't do it on purpose! The Editor reserves the right to alter, omit or hold over copy to another issue. The views expressed in the Marcham & District News are not necessarily those of the editorial team, who are all volunteers.

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DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Marcham and Shippon
Catherine Webber, Orchard Barn, Sutton Wick Lane, Drayton OX14 4HJ
Tel: 07357 464699

catherine.webber@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

For other councillors go to www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk

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February 2023

MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL Council Tax 2023/24 – Council Tax Freeze at parish level

The Parish Council reviewed its comments from the December's finance meeting and has now finalised the budget for 2023/24. It is requesting £71,500 from the Vale of White Horse District Council to help with the costs of running the parish. The Parish Council is very aware of the economic climate, rising costs and expenses for parishioners. It has therefore worked hard to control its spending, and resolved to keep the part of the Council Tax paid to the Parish Council exactly the same as last year. Applying a Council Tax freeze means that individual households will continue to pay the same amount of £76.77 per Band D property. The budget can be found on the Council's website www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk. As well as needing to undertake regular maintenance, and grass cutting within the village, the Council has set aside funds for awarding £7500 in grants to organisations that support the parish, and has carried forward £5000 towards the costs of progressing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Parishioner of the Year – Reminder – Last Chance for nominations

The Council is again considering the possibility of an award for 2022, to be presented at the annual meeting of electors later this year. The Award recognises the efforts of local people who at any time have significantly contributed to life within the parish. The Council would invite anyone who wishes to put forward a new suggestion, to submit a short statement of not more than 200 words, as to whom he/she wishes to nominate, and the reasons why the person should receive the award. All nominations to be emailed to the Clerk at the email address below. All names previously given will be carried forward and added to the ones received. The Council has a working group who prepares a short list from which the Council selects the worthy recipient.

Thames Water Resources Management Plan consultation

Water supply is under severe pressure, and Thames Water is obliged to plan for the future. They have recently published the draft Water Resources Management Plan and have launched a public consultation exercise on it. It explains how they plan to meet the water resource challenge, by fixing leaks more rapidly, reducing water consumption, and investing in new infrastructure including the new reservoir in Oxfordshire just south of Marcham, as well as other measures. There are differing opinions on the need for the reservoir, so it is important that they collect the views of residents.

Further information is available on Thames Water's website <https://thames-wrmp.co.uk> or at a pop up event on Wednesday 1st February 2023 at Westgate Centre, Oxford, and a community information event on Saturday 18th February, 2023 between 2.00

p.m. – 8.00 p.m. at Steventon village hall, where representatives from Thames Water will be in attendance to answer questions.

War Memorial

Further to the previous article in MAD News, the Parish Council has set up a working party to provide a forum for the local discussion that is taking place regarding the war memorial, and its current situation on the main A415. Marcham has changed significantly since it was first erected and has a substantial volume of traffic which now passes along that road, potentially putting it at risk. If you are interested in joining the group to help think through the issues surrounding the war memorial, gather local views, debate the concerns, and provide recommendations to the Parish Council as to the way forward for the war memorial, then please contact the clerk at clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Play Area - Update

The local working group continues to meet to discuss design proposals for a new area, which have now been received from play equipment manufacturers. Costings and availability of funding are now being balanced. It is hoped to be able to share the information with the parish in the not too distant future.

Planning Applications considered by the Council


There have been no recent planning applications received for comments from the Parish Council.

Date of Next Council Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday 13th February, 2023 at 7.30p.m. in the Village Hall, Barrow Close OX13 6TY. Please check the Council's website www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk in case arrangements change.

Clerk to the Council:

Mrs. L. Martin, 90 Howard Cornish Road
Tel: 01865 391833
clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk
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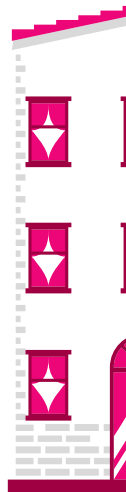
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Citizens Advice has expressed concern that people in need are not taking advantage of cheap broadband and mobile phone schemes set up specially to help them. Loosely termed “social tariffs” or “essential broadband”, these schemes are discounted deals intended for those on Universal Credit, Pension Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, and some other benefits. Statistics show that only 1.2% of those eligible to register for these low tariffs have done so, although they could save over £100 a year.

Social tariffs are provided in the same way as normal phone and Internet packages, but at a lower price. Network providers liaise with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to ascertain customers’ eligibility, and the DWP is required to provide only the necessary information, so that personal information remains safe.

At the time of writing, not all telecom companies offer social tariffs but it is possible for those who qualify to switch to a supplier that does provide them. The usual fees for switching contracts, leaving a contract early or terminating them have in many cases been scrapped for those on benefits who qualify for these tariffs – but check with your supplier to make sure.

More information is available on the Citizens Advice website <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk> or you can call Adviceline on **0808 278 7907**. You can also go to <https://www.gov.uk> and search for “cheaper broadband” or to <https://www.ofcom.org.uk> (search “social tariffs”).

A Big **Thank You** to the 70+ people who turned up @ the MC on 20th January and to the many people who have sent letters of support for the project. Following a short presentation explaining the Asset of Community value (ACV) process, there was over an hour of very positive Q&A. In conclusion there is more than enough support to complete the application and apply for an ACV Order. The steering committee will aim to complete this process by the end of January. An email address will be set up, and an online survey created; the aim is to keep the whole community informed and involved as the process evolves.

Cheers

Neil Rowe (on behalf of the steering committee)
Updates via Facebook and MADNews.



Marcham Village Shop & Post Office
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Facebook: [marchamvillageshop](https://www.facebook.com/marchamvillageshop)



Monday – Friday: 0830-1700
Saturday: 0830-1200
Sunday & Bank holidays: Closed

Important Update

We are sad to say, that we have recently lost a number of volunteers who manage the Post Office duties. As a result, we have had to reduce the opening and closing hours slightly to accommodate the fewer staff numbers. We are extremely grateful that the remaining PO volunteers have agreed to extend their working hours so that we are still able to open for 8.5 hours in the week and 3.5 hours on a Saturday. Our NEW opening and closing times are above.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank these volunteers for their help and support over the last 10 years. Without their support, the shop and post office would not be open now.

New volunteers are always welcome. If you are interested in joining our little group and helping to serve the community, please come into the shop and let us know. We only need 2 hours a week of your time, so if you are at a loose end and can spare the time, we would love to hear from you.

We are always looking for new products so keep an eye on the display by the till and in the window ... and let us know if there is something that you would like us to stock.

Valentine’s day is fast approaching (14 February), which is closely followed by **Shrove Tuesday** (Pancake day, 21 February). We currently have a lovely selection of chocolates, wines, beers and other gifts for that special person, and we stock all that you need to make that super pancake.



Can You Help?

Marcham Post Office needs more volunteers to keep it running. You will get full training and support from all your colleagues, so if you are friendly and comfortable using a touch screen, come and have a chat!

Old stamp deadline

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for more details or ask for a form at the PO. *Sorry, you can't swap them with us.*

Due to an 'cyber incident', there is ongoing disruption to international post sent by Royal Mail. We can currently accept letters and cards but nothing that needs a customs declaration! You may still send pre-paid Parcel Force parcels www.parcelforce.com/sending-a-parcel.

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Our lovely *Christmas raffle* was won by **Jenna-Marie**, who has recently moved into the village. Congratulations and we hope you enjoy the contents.

And well done to the eagle-eyed winners of the *Naughty Elf* competition: **Monty Frost; Aiden Lunn and Dana Rubenstein.**

Thank you to everyone for using your local Village Shop and Post Office and we look forward to seeing you again very soon.

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Christmas dinner with all the trimmings was served up to the residents of Sweetbriar to start the Christmas festivities in our wonderful village hall.

A massive thank you to **Liz Mason, Eileen and Mike Donnelly, Chris Moodey** for organising today's event and to **Leon** for helping prep in the kitchen. Also a huge thank you to **Neil Rowe** for the beautifully moist turkey.

A very happy time was shared and had by all.

Here's to 2023

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Marcham WI

Next Meeting:

Open Meeting - all welcome

Al Sylvester: The Southern Reach

7.30pm Monday, 20th February 2023

At the Marcham Centre

As so many of you enjoyed Al Sylvester's talk at last year's Open Meeting, we have booked him again, talking on a different topic, for February when we will be having our Open Evening. Everyone is welcome, so please come along and bring your husbands, partners, friends and neighbours to listen to our speaker, **Al Sylvester**. This time, the subject of his talk will be The Southern Reach, an epic tale of leading the RAF's first unsupported attempt on the Geographic South Pole.

Wine and Cheese will be served following the talk. We hope to see you there for a sociable evening with friends old and new. All visitors are welcome - £5, including cheese and wine.

For further information, please contact:

Pippa Hoath 01865 391349

pippahoath@gmail.com



TIME TO GET WALKING AGAIN!

With spring on its way we start to think about getting out to walk in the beautiful countryside again, but where to find new and interesting walks?

Walking in Oxfordshire <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/oxfordshire> has loads of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

John Harris (who maintains the website) said 'There is so much walking information on the web but it is difficult to find. Walking in Oxfordshire (part of the Walking in England website) has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you'.

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

So home or away, check out the website and get walking!

John Harris

www.walkinginengland.co.uk

john@walkinginengland.co.uk



The
**Marcham
Society**

Monday 27th February
7.15 for 7.45pm
Main Hall
Marcham Centre

The Wildlife of the Rare Fens and Salt Spring of the Marcham Area

Judith Webb

The Marcham area is blessed with a number of very important wildlife sites: rare and ancient alkaline fen wetlands, salt spring areas, dry sandy heathy soils and old sandpits. This talk will explore the amazing biodiversity present in the wetlands and will discuss how it all relates to geology, historical human occupation and land-use management. It will also consider the threats to wildlife survival with Climate Change, the needs of agriculture and growing development pressures in the area.



Small red damselfly



Cothill Fen



Marsh helleborine orchid

Judy Webb is a local ecologist who has long had a fascination with the rare plants and animals of this area and has carried out study and research particularly on the fen areas at Cothill, with a focus on rare plants and rare insects of the site.

Upcoming Events

- Thursday, 9th February 12.30pm - **Marcham Society Midweek Walk** – contact e.dunford@btinternet.com
- Thursday, 23rd February 7pm - **Marcham Society Astronomy Group, Small Hall @ Marcham Centre** – contact jim.asher@btinternet.com. This month there will be a talk on 'The Mythology of Constellations' by Simon Blackmore
- Monday 27th February 7.15pm Marcham Centre Main Hall **Judith Webb** – Wildlife of Marcham – see above

For more information contact membership@marchamsociety.org.uk

www.marchamsociety.org.uk

Facebook: [marchamsociety](https://www.facebook.com/marchamsociety)

QUIZ NIGHT – ALL WELCOME
FRIDAY 3 FEBRUARY – VILLAGE HALL



A Quiz night will be held in the Main Hall in Marcham Centre, starting at 8.00 pm
Questions are on a range of subjects and aimed at everyone's ability! Teams of up to five people. £10 per team.
Everyone welcome, just turn up on the night for a friendly evening of fun and banter.



Bar Open, for those interested!

More dates: 3 and 31 March

For further information call [Trevor Hill on 01865 391321](tel:01865391321)

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MARCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS
What an achievement! Marcham CofE Primary School have received an award for being in the top 25% of primary schools for attendance during the Autumn term:



Would you like more insight and involvement in Marcham CofE Primary School? We currently have a vacancy for a **Co-opted Community Governor**. We are looking for someone who has the desire to make a difference to the lives of the children of Marcham School. The position is available to anyone aged 18 or over, who lives or works in the Marcham, Frilford or Garford community.

The main role of the governing body is to help raise the standards and performance of the school by supporting the work of the headteacher and the staff. Governors will support and, at the same time, challenge headteachers by gathering views, asking questions and deciding what is best for the school. Governors make important decisions on policies and strategies and have to stand by their decisions. The governing body is answerable to parents and the wider community. Governors are required to play an active part in the decision making process of the school, getting involved in real issues. The role of Governor is tremendously rewarding with the satisfaction of making a significant contribution to the promotion of high quality teaching, a love of learning and knowing that children will benefit from your efforts.

We are ideally looking for someone who has no parental responsibility for a child/children presently at the school, in order to broaden our outlook and effectiveness. There are no pre-requisite skills to becoming a governor; you do not even have to have previous experience or knowledge of the school. However, the ability to work as part of a team, a readiness to accept responsibility and the confidence to ask questions, listen and learn all form part of the role. There are a range of skills that members of the governing body may be able to bring with them from their experiences at home and in work such as financial planning and personnel issues, which will enhance the effectiveness of the governing body.

If you are interested in becoming a governor and are enthusiastic and committed about making a difference to the pupils at Marcham, then getting involved and finding out more is easy:

- Visit the governor page of our website and approach one of our current governors: www.marcham.oxon.sch.uk/marcham-governors/
- Find out more about the role visit www.direct.gov.uk

The Headteacher (Viv Hutchinson) can be reached at school on 391448, or at office.3235@marcham.oxon.sch.uk and the Chair of Governors (Christopher Frost) at MarchamChair@outlook.com They will be happy to help you take the next steps.

To see what else the school has been up to go to www.marcham.oxon.sch.uk/class-pages/

We have welcomed everyone back for what we hope will be a wonderful 2023 here at Little Angels,



Yellow Room

The children have had a productive start to the year and joined in with the Kite Festival which took place at the start of the month. The children created their own kites and took them outside in the garden to see them blow round in the wind. The cold weather has been an interesting learning experience for the children, The adults have left water in the trays outside in the garden overnight so that the children have experienced the natural forming of ice. On one occasion balls were left in the water at night and the following day the Yellow Room toddlers were intrigued to see the balls stuck in the ice. And then later when the ice melted, they could pick up the balls. Those inquisitive faces are what makes our days so worthwhile and interesting and never too young to experience science.



Green and Teal Room

The Green and Teal Room have been focused on Chinese New Year, this is the Year of the Rabbit and the children used white paint and their hands to create rabbits. The sensory trays had a variety of coloured rice, noodles along with chopsticks, and bowls creating a sensory area which was well used. The Chinese lanterns that the children made were hung and decorated the rooms and the children were read the story of the Great Race which explains all about the 12 animals in the Chinese calendar. At meals times the children ate, spring rolls, rice dishes and they all had a fortune cookie to break open and eat. Mark-making of Chinese writing, along with hats and firework pictures and other activities completed an amazing Chinese New Year experience for everyone, including the adults!

The Teal and Green children's garden has been a beautiful natural world which the children have been keen to embrace during this cold January. Every morning the children were running into the garden to look at glistening cobwebs and white frost covering tree branches. They were mark-making on the frosty ground and checking experiments with ice and water which some of them had left overnight before they went home to see the difference in the morning when they returned. The frosty slides and the trees dripping water as they thawed out during the day was science in its natural habitat.

Burns Night

To join in with Scotland to celebrate Robert Burns, the children looked at Scottish traditions of kilts and listen to bagpipes music and Scottish dancing, along with trying some Scottish favourite foods. The children particularly liked the Raspberry Cranachan which had oats, honey, cream and raspberries. The children also learnt the song and actions to Auld Lang Syne, joining together to hold hands in a circle and sing. A great fun day was had by all.

"Oidhche Bhlàs Burns" to you all

If you are interested in securing a place for your child please contact us:

T: 01865 819992E: info@littleangelschildcaregroup.co.uk
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MARCHAM PRE-SCHOOL

It's been a super exciting month at preschool.... The children have been exploring mud in our Wild Patch... thick oozy mud... we can't go over it... we can't go under it... we had to go through it! We squelched and we squerched.... We stomped and we splashed!



The children have also been discovering shapes and using soft play blocks to create obstacles and foam shapes to create pictures. Our core book this term is **Zog** and we were delighted to offer a day of 'Dragon School' where we learnt to fly, breathe fire and rescue princesses!

If you would be interested in your child joining preschool for September 2023, please note that our admissions policy requires applications to be submitted by 31st March in order to be considered for a place during our initial allocations. We can accept children from their second birthday. Please do get in touch to discuss your requirements and request an application form.... Spaces are limited and we already have a big waiting list for September 2023.

To find out more please visit www.marcham-preschool.weebly.com or contact us at marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk, 01865 392101

Gardeners Take Many Forms

Heard it said the other day that someone didn't like fruit and veg as they felt there would be worms and beetles inside, having buried in during the growing and storage process. I wonder if they had considered all their other foodstuffs they did eat, like meat, are also exposed to hormones, bacteria, and viruses as well? Heard it said people don't like gardens as they are full of insects and spiders etc and prefer more urban or indoor spaces. Wonder if they ever considered that insects and other microscopic lifeforms, inhabit with us what we call man-made environments?



My point is simple: ecosystems take many and varied forms, and we can never hope to eradicate all lifeforms and have a pure sterile environment that just we humans inhabit.

It's another set of examples of us wanting to control everything and the world around us. It's a battle we can never win. Believe me, I've tried. Yet we quickly fall back into that habit even if we've got ourselves out of it.

So, if you are planning to do more gardening during the coming season, whether that be traditional manicuring gardening, or wildlife gardening, try not to be too controlling. What grows grows, what dies dies, what thrives thrives, what fails fails.

It's all about enjoying building the jigsaw and putting the pieces of the picture together. You might not feel you have green fingers, but give it a go, if you can progress one more step than you did in previous years, that's a success. Expectations can sometimes self-sabotage us before we even start.

Gardeners take many forms, but underneath we are all just winging it, with some appearing more confident than others. The reality, is all gardeners are taking a step into the unknown, with no gardener really in control.

Happy Gardening!

Stuart Mabbutt

01865 747243 www.wildmaninspires.co.uk

Abingdon & District National Trust Association

2.30pm Tuesday 21 February

Trinity Church Centre

Conduit Rd, Abingdon OX14 1DB

**ROTARY - In Abingdon for good
not many people know that**



Richard Kirby

On Tuesday 21 February 2023, Richard Kirby will tell us about **ROTARY - In Abingdon for good - not many people know that**. The perception of many is that Rotary is a lunch club for old men. Yes, you can find that style of club if you look hard, but increasingly Rotary is changing into a service organisation working for the good of the world. For example, the Rotary Club of Maidenhead Bridge meet with their toddler children in a coffee shop on Sunday Mornings. There are e-clubs which span vast distances and only meet online, and so on. Abingdon's club meets in the pub on Wednesday evenings, where, over drinks, events are planned which will benefit the community and raise money for local and international charity. In this talk, Richard will look at the origins of Rotary, the organisation required to control 1¼ million Rotarians, its values and achievements which are possibly unknown to you, and how it manifests itself in today's community, doing good. Richard has been an active Rotarian for 15 years, a Paul Harris Fellow, President of the Abingdon Club on two occasions and chairs the working group that manages the Rotary international post-graduate scholars in Thames Valley - 31 this year - bringing in some £1½ million to the local economy. He is also fondly known to many in Abingdon as the quizmaster of DNAPQ, a style of quiz he conceived in 2014. This will take place in the Trinity Church Hall in Conduit Road, Abingdon OX14 1DB at 2.30pm and all are welcome. Non-members are asked for a donation of £4 but you can join on the spot for £12 and get all 6 annual talks for free, as well as other goodies.

For more information, ring Ruth on 01235 524119
<https://abingdonnattrust.chessck.co.uk/>



The Arts Society Abingdon LECTURE

**Wednesday 15th February,
10.30am and 2.00pm**

Abbey Cinema, Abbey Close, Abingdon OX14 3JD
The Art of the Cartoonist
by Harry Venning

In 'The Art of The Cartoonist' Harry Venning will trace the history of his profession with examples from early practitioners like Cruickshank and Hogarth, to more contemporary artists such as Giles and Schulz, bringing events right up to date with cartoons produced fresh on the page that day as Harry draws live. Prepare to hear some tricks of his trade, learn where to put eyebrows for maximum effect and discover exactly what the Eskimo brothers said in 'The Funniest Joke Ever' (possibly).



Held at the Abbey Cinema at 10.30 and 2pm on February 15th. For details contact Arts Society Abingdon..

Visitors are very welcome to attend this lecture, cost £6.00. A link to Zoom will be sent to every member 24 hours before the scheduled talk for those members unable to attend in person. Please email info@theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk for further information on the venue, any latest changes and updates. Lectures last 1 hour but allow extra time for announcements etc.

For more information on future lectures and other activities see www.theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk or email info@theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk

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It was great to welcome back our regular customers and new faces for the New Year, with many people saying how they missed Thirsty Cafe over the Christmas period. For those who have not yet visited us, we are at the Marcham Centre on a Wednesday and Saturday morning 9am-11.30am. We sell a wide range of cakes as well as sausage rolls on a Wednesday and bacon, egg and sausage baps on a Saturday.



Thirsty cafe is introducing a 'Cup of Luv'

Cup of Luv is a way that you can buy a drink, cake or butty for someone else. At our till we now have a board with vouchers for the free drinks etc.

How does it work? Anyone can buy a voucher just pay at the till as normal and let us know it is for a **Cup of Luv** and a voucher will be added to the board. To use a voucher choose one or two and order and pay with the voucher. A **Cup of Luv** is for the days we could do with a little extra. Our community have it covered to help one another.

We are volunteer-led and are very keen to have more people joining our team. This is a great way to get to know other people in the community. There are all sorts of ways people volunteer and you can give as many hours as you want. Please contact us if you want to know more.

Café open Wednesday and Saturday, 9 – 11:30 am

Website: www.thirstycafemarcham.co.uk

E-mail: hello@thirstycafemarcham.co.uk

The Thirsty Cafe will be closed on Saturday 11th and Wednesday 15th February for half-term.



Marcham Centre

MARCHAM CENTRE – REDECORATION



Thanks to a dedicated team of volunteers who put in many hours of work over the festive period, we completed a deep clean and redecoration of the village hall, with installation of new dado rails on the walls, painted light grey below. It is looking much more homely, so the team can be proud of their remarkable achievement. We opened again to hirers on schedule and we hope you will be able to agree with this when you next visit.



After a delay, we have had the boot scraper and two new litter bins fitted, so we look forward to keeping the outside of the hall clean too!

COMING EVENTS AT MARCHAM CENTRE

Friday 3rd February: Quiz Night: Adults only - 7:30 for 8pm prompt start

Friday 3rd March: Quiz Night: Adults only - 7:30 for 8pm prompt start

Friday 10th March: Family Bingo: 7.00pm for eyes down at 7.30pm

Indoor short-mat bowls in the Large Hall on Wednesday afternoons 2pm–5pm – contact Colin Trinder (391718) or just turn up. Beginners and experienced players are equally welcome.

Table Tennis - the table tennis table is available to hire, for periods of an hour or more. This can be made by booking a slot in the meeting room via the www.marchamcentre.org website. Please note: this room is used for other purposes, so you will need to book and pay the 'local user' fee of £8 per hour. Please remember to bring your own bats and balls.

If you wish to book a room at Marcham Centre, please use the booking request system on www.marchamcentre.org or contact our Coordinator: coordinator@marchamcentre.org

Marcham Centre, Barrow Close, Marcham OX13 6TY
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Ten Poems of Kindness competition to have it printed on a postcard!

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For more information go to :

candlestickpress.co.uk/competitions

Deadline is midnight on 28th February 2023

Good luck!



The prize for our February competition is a voucher to spend in Millets Farm Shop.

First find all the words in the list of fruit and vegetables the Millets grow on their farm. Words can go in any direction and share letters as well as cross over each other. Once you have found all the words, copy the unused letters starting in the top left corner into the blanks to reveal the hidden message. Send your entry to editor@madnews.co.uk before 5pm on 15th February.

apple	F R T P A R S N I P R
asparagus	S E A O S H L L E E K
carrot	O U C E R A L P N R O
leek	R D G O P R U C I S E
parsnip	O H C A T X A I K P Q
pear	H A U X R A P C P R D
plum	B P T B P A T S M O A
potato	P L S P A I P O U U P
pumpkin	L L L C G R D S P T E
rhubarb	U E U N B S B E A K Z
sprout	M L Q Y D S Q U A S H
squash	

https://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/

Our competition to win tickets for 2 adults and 2 children to **Millets Wildside Falconry and Wildlife Centre...** has been won by **Charlotte Boyle!**

Maddie was hiding the letters that made the name of the heaviest owl at the centre – **ELLIE**

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OAHS FREE Lectures in 2023 will be on Zoom on Tuesdays starting at 5.30pm. *All are welcome, but you will need to book a place through our website oahs.org.uk/lectures.*



• **7 February**
Giles Gilbert Scott
in Oxford
David Lewis

• **21 February**
Oxford's Wesleyan
Local Preachers,
1830-1900
Martin Wellings

Bookings for our 2023 lecture series is now open – more details can be found online: oahs.org.uk/lectures

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

For this report, I have picked out a few issues which I think might interest you, so read on!

Photo IDs needed to vote at elections

The government has introduced a requirement for all voters to show a photo ID at a polling station at some elections. This will apply for the first time in England at our local district elections on Thursday, 4th May 2023.

Acceptable forms of photo ID will include, but are not limited to, passport, driving licence (including provisional licence), disabled parking blue badge, certain concessionary travel cards and identity cards with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme). Anyone who doesn't have acceptable photo ID can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate. The deadline to apply for this ID for the local elections is 25th April. If you want to know more, please visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID or call the Electoral Commission on 0800 3280280.

Household Support Fund opens

For those who are struggling and can't afford essentials over the Winter months, there is a third round of funding which will be tailored to individual needs and will focus on food and fuel vouchers. More information is published on the Vale council's Living website pages or you can call 01235 422600

Great British Spring Clean

This year the Vale will again be supporting the Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean by loaning litter pickers, high-viz jackets and bags to community litter picking groups and individuals.

The event runs from Friday 17 March to Sunday 2 April. Equipment can be booked by completing and returning the booking form and declaration document to waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk. The forms are available on the Vale litter picking pages.

Equipment is limited, so to avoid disappointment bookings should be made as soon as possible. Furthermore, you can make bookings for litter picking equipment at any point during the year, not just during The Great British Spring Clean!

Council will tackle food poverty and promote sustainable local production

Oxfordshire County Council has allocated £250,000 of funding to be divided between district and city councils to help create and deliver their local food action plans. The Vale will use the funding to work with its partners to create and deliver a local food action plan in 2023. Covid-19 brought the issues of food insecurity, access to healthy, affordable food and the impact of these on health into sharp focus. Oxfordshire food banks saw a three-four-fold increase in use, with a conservative estimate that around 6,000 people a week required support to access food. Local community food networks across the district rose to the challenge, but it became clear that there was a need for an end-to-end strategy covering all key organisations and stakeholders in the Oxfordshire system. The district and city councils agreed that Oxfordshire County Council would commission Good Food Oxfordshire to develop a food strategy for Oxfordshire. Now the Vale has a Food and Farming Champion, **Cllr. Paul Barrow**, to help reduce food poverty by promoting food production, distribution, and healthy eating across the district and so work towards the vision of Oxfordshire Food Strategy.

Vale Cabinet approves changes to car park permits

Car parking permit fees in the Vale of White Horse District are likely to increase slightly, following a decision at a Cabinet meeting to raise permit costs by ten per cent, in line with inflation levels. From April 2023, monthly permits to district council car parks will increase by £7 on average, with annual permits increasing £81 on average, to help support the delivery and maintenance of the car parks. As a largely rural district, the Cabinet acknowledged the importance of car parks in allowing residents to access their town centres and support the



local business community, which is more important now than ever in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and rising costs of living. To help ease the pressure on residents and local businesses, hourly parking charges remain the same, and one-hour free parking will still apply in Abingdon, Faringdon and Wantage car parks, with two hours free in Faringdon's Southampton Street car park.

I hope you have found this useful. Please feel free to contact me if you need clarification or want to raise another issue,

CATHERINE WEBBER Cllr VWHDC

District Councillor for Marcham Ward

Phone: 07357 464699/ 01235 534001 or webbercatherine1@gmail.com

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

RESERVOIR YOUR CHANCE TO RESPOND...

Thames Water's draft WRMP (Water Resources Management Plan) was published mid-December, and consultation ends Tuesday 21st March. The links to the responses are:

WRSE <https://wrse.uk/engagementhq.com/>

and you can see the draft Plan at

https://www.wrse.org.uk/media/va1bz21z/10306a_wrse-bv-plan-2022final_online.pdf

Thames Water: <https://thames-wrmp.co.uk>

and you can see the draft Plan at

thames-wrmp.co.uk/hearing-your-views/document-library

Traffic

It cannot be denied that our roads are becoming more and more congested. Even the rat runs are choked with rats. Whilst the pressure for more and more housing remains, and with it the pressure on County Highways to pass new developments, is it inevitable that things are going to get worse? The photographs attached show rush hour queues at Culham Bridge, Drayton Rd, and the A415 at Marcham. It would be only too easy to find many more. Have we already reached saturation point? The latest major housing development to be considered in our area is the Lioncourt development at Fyfield with 600+houses potentially spilling yet more cars on to the Frilford crossroads and Marcham. OCC Highways judge that the effect on Marcham will be marginal, but there are concerns that this argument must soon run out and the cumulative impact of several developments on the immediate and wider area must carry more weight. But spare a thought for OCC Highways and the District Councils. Under our current planning system, Districts have to offer up areas for thousands more houses in their Local Plans. OCC is then charged with trying to make our Highway network function properly and take all the resultant flak. Having just arrived back home from a photography session, having spent the best part of two hours driving a very few miles, I am struck by the irony of the damage we are causing to the environment, to our own physical and mental health and to the impact on local commerce. Are our only solutions growth at all costs and ever more roads?

A lighter note - New Year Resolution

Determined as I am to get out of my car and on to my bicycle whenever possible, I decided a few days ago that the weather was warm enough for a shopping visit to Tesco by bicycle. Yes, it had been raining, but the forecast looked promising. As we approached via the Ock Valley cycle path, we passed a pedestrian coming the other way who kindly warned us that the path ahead was flooded but just about passable. My wife went first through what looked like six inches of muddy water steering her way through an s bend in the path. She managed to get through safely so I followed. I could see that there was a short cut avoiding the s bend if I made straight for the dry path the other side. Older readers will know exactly what I mean when I say that my direct route went straight over a Dibley-scale pothole invisible under the mud. The bike suddenly disappeared underneath me and I fell in up to my waist. Unhurt but sodden, I picked myself up and squelched the last yards to Tesco to purchase new dry trousers and underwear. Having found great

value replacements, I made my way to the checkout while my wife did the shopping.

However, I had forgotten the issue of the security tag firmly attached to my new trousers. It seemed that the machines that remove security tags are firmly mounted on top of the checkout conveyor belts. It took a Tesco manager and two members of staff to manoeuvre me into the correct angle to allow the tag to be removed – much to the amusement of the checkout queue.

And the moral and new year resolution? Never try to outsmart the wife by suggesting a better way of doing anything. **Happy New Year**

RICHARD WEBBER Cllr OCC SC & Marcham Division.

Phone 01235 534001 or email Richard.webber77@ntlworld.com

MP'S REPORT

If you haven't heard from me since last year, then Happy New Year. Just before Christmas we had the sad news that a key community figure in Didcot, Hasnath Miah, died at the age of just 49 after a stroke. Hasnath had been homeless for part of his life and had been helped by local people, including through free meals, to get back on his feet. He swore if he was ever in a position to help others, he would do so. He developed a successful restaurant called Indian Dream, and in the pandemic began giving free meals to key workers, the homeless and young carers, just in the way he had been given food. In total he gave away more than 10,000 free meals.

I paid tribute to Hasnath in the House of Commons the following week in a speech including a number of local matters. I included my campaigns to see more GP surgeries here and to reopen Grove Station. I updated people on the Local Electricity Bill that I am the lead sponsor of, which aims to remove the barriers to community energy being created by local communities and sold to it.

And I talked about a couple of the things that have come out of activities I ran for the first time last year: firstly the crime summit, where antisocial behaviour was a recurring theme – something my boss in the Department for Levelling Up, Michael Gove, is now tasked with working up a strategy on – and my work experience campaign for local young people. Many employers have got out of the habit of providing work experience with so many staff now working from home, yet it's a vital way for young people without connections to learn about the workplace.

Work experience is of course a familiar theme from my pre-politics career working on social mobility, a topic I used for a PMQ I was drawn for in the first week back of the new year. You're 24 times more likely to become a doctor if a parent is one – only 6% of doctors come from a working class background – and 17 times more likely to become a lawyer. And as I wrote in a recent article, it's not just the responsibility of the Government or schools.

In brief: the Thames Water Resources Management Plan is currently open to consultation. Make sure you take part on their website at **thames-wrmp.co.uk** as it includes the reservoir proposal. You can respond to the Draft Regional Plan for the South East on the WRSE's website at **wrse.uk.engagementhq.com/our-consultation**. I know there have been Royal Mail problems again, so I've been highlighting these once more in parliament and with the company. And congratulations to both Grove and Southmoor Kebab Vans on being nominated for the Kebab Van of the Year Award.

As ever, if I can help with anything then do please get in touch via **david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk**

DAVID JOHNSTON OBE MP, Member of Parliament for Wantage, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA 0207 219 3858 Email: david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk

February 2023



GARD is a local community group formed to campaign against Thames Water's proposals to build a reservoir south-west of Abingdon.

**ABINGDON RESERVOIR
NOT A SOLUTION DURING DROUGHT**

MESSAGE FROM GARD to Thames Water: Stop the Reservoir, fix the leaks, transfer new water from the Severn. You have seen the banners – now you have a chance to make your own voice heard. **RESPOND NOW** to the Water Resources South-East (WRSE) plan and to Thames Water's Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP)-see our website for links:

Draft plans for WRSE were published mid-November, consultation ends Monday 20 February. Thames Water's WRMP was published mid-December, consultation ends Tuesday 21st March. Information and bullet points to help with the response are available now on the GARD website. You can make a difference to the outcome, as you did in March 2022. NB if there are two householders, it is helpful if both submit a response. Oxfordshire County Council, the Vale of the White Horse District Council and your MPs remain strongly opposed to the plan and these democratic representatives would like to know you have responded. A list of MP and Council contacts is on the GARD website; please copy your response to them and to GARD.

Abingdon Reservoir is still central to the plans with construction starting ahead of the Severn Thames Transfer, for no good reason. If the reservoir plan goes through, you will have to pay for the reservoir through your water bill, even though that money is needed to increase sewage infrastructure and fix leaks, and even before a drop of water is supplied by the reservoir.

The reservoir is a solution looking for a problem. In the plan, it is no longer to provide water for Oxfordshire and Swindon (as in 2010), nor mainly for London (as in 2019). Now the plan is to sell most of the water out of the water-stressed Thames region by pipeline to Portsmouth, for simple profit.

GARD is holding public meetings in February; so is Thames Water. Please come to ours for information and attend the Thames Water meetings to ask questions.

GARD:

Grove: Friday 27 January – WaGCG and GARD, Old Mill Hall, Grove 7.30pm

Steventon: Tuesday 14 February - GARD Steventon Millenium Room, 7.30pm

Abingdon: Thursday 16 February - GARD Preston Rd Community Centre, Abingdon

THAMES WATER:

Abingdon: Friday 20 January- Thames Water, Trinity Church Abingdon, drop-in

Oxford: Wednesday 1 February - Thames Water, Westgate pop-up

Steventon: Saturday 18 February - Thames Water, Steventon Village Hall, drop-in

The Oxfordshire County Council Water Summit took place on 30th November and provided a useful airing of the issues. GARD made a keynote presentation, giving our version of a feasible regional plan without any mega-Reservoir.

For updates, contact details or to join GARD visit: www.gard-oxon.org.uk or email gard.secretary@gmail.com / gard.membership@gmail.com

Facebook: @abingdonreservoir Twitter: @GARD_OXON

ALL SAINTS' & ST. LUKES CHURCHES

www.marcham-with-garford.org.uk



A New Story

Some movie fans may criticise modern cinema as being largely composed of remakes of classic films, sequels and dominated by a few major character franchises. However, it depends where you look, there are many new and fascinating stories being told and worlds that are created through recent movies – **there are new stories**.

The 22nd of February is Ash Wednesday, marking the beginning of the Christian season of Lent which last for 40 days (46 including Sundays) until the celebration of Easter and Jesus' resurrection from the dead. It is a time when people often choose to change something; fasting, giving up particular luxuries, committing to daily prayer or Bible reading etc. This is often done to help people focus on what's important at this time; in essence making space in their life for more of God as we prepare for Easter.

The number 40 is fascinating for many reasons. For instance, it is the only number in English spelt with its letters in alphabetical order. In the Bible, a quantity of 40 represents a significant period of time, usually of testing and trial. For instance, 40 years were spent wandering by Israelites in the desert and Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness, a time closely associated with Lent.

As well as being a powerful model for fasting and prayer, Jesus' time in the wilderness helped tell a **new story**. We are told in Matthew 4 that Jesus entered the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. In doing so, He is recreating the experience of the Israelites wandering the desert for 40 years before entering the Promised Land but is showing that He is bringing redemption and a better way to live. Where the Israelites complained about food, Jesus refused to turn stones into bread for himself. The Israelites repeatedly put God to the test, doubting his love and provision. Jesus refused to put God to the test by jumping from the Temple. The Israelites betrayed God and worshipped idols they made themselves. Jesus refused to worship any other than God the Father.

As you consider the period of Lent and whether you will mark it with some committed changes, consider it an opportunity for a **new story** – a chance for not only personal discipline but also to positively impact others and share the hope that is fulfilled in the Easter story.

Regular services

10am: Morning Service at All Saints'* MCC on 1st Sunday
11am-12pm: Open church at St. Luke's
6pm: Evening Service

Wednesday Holy Communion

10.30am at Duffield Place

Monday Games Morning, 10.30am in Duffield Place Lounge 6th & 20th Feb

Anyone is welcome to join us to play board games over a cup of tea or coffee. Just turn up!

Contacts:

Revd Nick Weldon Vicar vicar@allsaintsmarcham.org 01865 391962, Rob Finch Youth Worker

07888331708, rob@marchamyouth.org Jill Rowe Children and Families minister

families@allsaintsmarcham.org Tamsin Gilbert Parish Administrator info@allsaintsmarcham.org