PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Best Kept Garden Competition

Final judging for this competition took place at the end of April, and all winners are being notified. It is proposed to present the prizes at the Annual Meeting for Electors in the parish which will take place on Wednesday 26th May in the Institute at 7.30 p.m. A full list of winners will appear in next month's issue and will also be displayed on the Council's noticeboard.

Affordable Village Housing

The planned deadline for receipt of survey forms was l5th April and it was hoped that the Rural Community Council would be able to provide an analysis of the survey to the Parish Council at its May meeting. However, in view of the postal strike and as forms are still being delivered by Royal Mail to O.R.C.C. it has decided to postpone preparing its analysis until the end of May. If there is anyone who missed the original deadline and wanted to complete a form, then there is still a chance you can do so by posting it direct to O.R.C.C. in the envelope supplied with the form by 20th May. Survey forms and those to register on the Vale of White Horse District Council's Waiting List are available from the Parish Clerk.

Community Award

The Council is conscious that there are many good and kind people who voluntarily give their time and energy working within the community and making improvements for the benefit of others. The Council has decided to start an annual award scheme for people who have made a real difference to the community. The Council is currently preparing a Certificate to be presented to this year's recipient and will be donating £100 to a local organisation or suitable cause within the parish chosen by the recipient. The Certificate will be presented at the Annual Meeting for Electors on 26th May.

ANNUAL MEETING FOR ALL ELECTORS IN THE PARISH

This meeting will take place on Wednesday 26th May at 7.30 p.m. in the Institute, North St.

There will be reports from the Parish Council, the District and County Councillors on local government matters over the past year. The Primary School will give an update on the School's achievements and representatives from the Anson Trust will be reporting on the current position regarding the Institute and proposed new community facilities in the village. In addition the prizes for the Best Kept Garden Competition will be presented as well as the Certificate for the Community Service Award.

This year refreshments in the form of cheese and wine will be available at the end of the meeting.

All electors are entitled to attend and raise matters relating to the parish so put a note of the date in your diary now.

Bus to Witney

Back in 2002 Oxfordshire County Council looked at the feasibility of introducing a service from Abingdon to Witney but the most competitive tender was too expensive. The problem was referred to the Oxfordshire Rural Transport Partnership who began to review the opportunities a bus would afford the residents of the towns and surrounding villages. The Partnership began seeking funding and working with the County Council. Funding has been achieved to run the service for three years. Work is now in hand finalising timetables and other details to begin the service on 5th July. The bus will come from Abingdon through Marcham along the A415, stopping at Millets Farm on its way through other villages to Witney. It is now the turn of residents to support the service to ensure that in three years time it is viable to continue.

Upper Thames Reservoir Proposal Update

Every five years Thames Water submits a Strategic Business Plan to Ofwat which outlines the main investment requirements for the immediate future and in the case of water resource development the longer term. Thames Water's latest projections show that they still need to plan for a major new water resource to help meet the likely demand for water in the future. This would be a long-term strategic option, in addition to other activities such as demand management and a major programme of water mains renewal to reduce leakage. If a reservoir remains their preferred scheme, they may submit a planning application in about three years. In order to prepare for this they need to take steps now to ensure that they have in place a number of studies that are required in support of any application. Thames Water is advertising two contracts for consultants who could work on environmental, town planning matters and engineering issues. The consultant will review the need for a major resource, the alternative options and the outline design of a possible reservoir as well as examining the likely impact of a reservoir on the local environment. The successful consultants will probably begin work in September.

Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 12th May, 2004 at 7.30 p.m. in the residents' lounge Duffield Place.

Clerk: Mrs. L. Martin, 90 Howard Cornish Road, Marcham Tel: 01865 391833

Dear MADNews

Vandalism along the walkway between Morland Road and Anson Close on Friday 16 April 04 at about 10.30 pm.

Four teenage boys caused some damage on Friday evening. I watched one boy kick a hole in some fencing, then they made their way down Anson Close and the same boy kicked a parked car, causing damage to a wing mirror. Later, I saw damage to the line of wooden posts supporting rose bushes, which border the walkway.

I don't know where these boys live but their parents must have some idea that their sons were out at night in Marcham on that evening.

This is not the first time I have witnessed vandalism in Marcham. Please can the parents of these boys talk to them and ask them not to vandalise other peoples' property. The Police have been informed.

Name and address supplied

Dear MADNews

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

At approximately 2215 hours on Friday 16 April, four youths were observed wilfully damaging a number of cars and fences in the Howard Cornish and Anson Close area of Marcham. The incident has been reported to the Police and is currently being investigated. If you have any information that may assist the Police, please call 0845 8505505 and quote crime report number ME1736 285/04. Alternatively, email StopASBinMarcham@aol.com and your information will be forwarded on to the Police. Anti-social behaviour by a small minority of youngsters appears to be on the increase in the village. Don't turn a blind eye; report any anti-social behaviour that you witness to the Police. This will help to ensure that Marcham remains a pleasant village to live in.

Name and address supplied

LOST CAT

We have lost a cat and hope that someone may have seen him in or around Marcham. His name is **Sooty** and he is a very friendly 10 month old black cat with a white tip on his tail. He wears a yellow reflective collar with a tag and bell on it. He may possibly have jumped into someone's car or got himself looked in a shed or garage. He is very much missed and we would love to have him home so if you think you may have seen him could you please call Cath on (01865) 391380 or 07812 957014. Thank you very much.

To get your letter included please write to the editor by 20th month latest