

Marcham & District News

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

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



FEBRUARY 2016 VOL: 38 NO: 2

READ & RECYCLE!

FREE



▲ Dragon in Mill Road page 7



▲ Marcham WI have a taste of Zumba

▲ Pre-School's special delivery page 15



▶ Little Angels get tactile page 15



▲ Marcham villagers view the new plans page 5



▲ The shop's new floor (and Alice serving sweeties!) page 9



Diary for February

3 Wed	Deadline for comments on Planning Application	5	11 Thur	Music at the Unicorn: Charlie Dore, 19.00	9
5 Fri	Marcham Cricket Club AGM, Clubhouse, Anson Field, 20.15	7	18 Thur	Marcham WI, Denman College, 19.30 Ian Jones Bomb Disposal	7
6 Sat	Welcome to Marcham, for all villagers – old and new, The Crown, 18.00	17	20 Sat	Councillors' Surgery, Marcham Shop, 09.00 – 11.00	13
6 Sat	Marcham Ex-Servicemen's Club: Doug Loveridge, 20.30	15	20 Sat	Deadline for March MADNews, 17.00	
9 Tue	Singing is Good for You, Duffield Place, 14-15.30	9	23 Tue	Singing is Good for You, Duffield Place, 14-15.30	9
9 Tue	Marcham Society, All Saints' Church, 19.45, Clare Sargent, The History of Radley College	9	23 Tue	Marcham Ex-Servicemen's Club AGM, The Club, North St, 20.00	7
10 Wed	Marcham Parish Council Meeting, Duffield Place, 19.30	3	25 Thur	Mobile Library, Sweetbriar 14.35 – 15.00	
11 Thur	Mid-Week Walk, The Three Horseshoes, Donnington, 12.30 lunch / 13.30 walk	7	26 Fri	Coffee Morning in aid of Nyakabungo Girls School, 50 North St, Marcham, 10.30 – 12noon	15
11 Thur	Mobile Library, Sweetbriar 14.35 – 15.00		26 Fri	Quiznight, MSSSC, Anson Field, 20.15	7
			27 Sat	Jumble Sale in aid of Fyfield and Tubney Churches, Southmoor Village Hall, 14.30	17

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

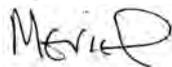
Dear Readers

I am feeling hopeful that there is a pinpoint of light at the end of this very dark tunnel – *if* we can get a majority of people in Marcham (and beyond) to agree to this new plan for village facilities. I know that I am meant to be impartial as editor but I feel this plan is “the one” and I can’t imagine that any other developer would touch the project with a bargepole if this one fails.

I am also sure that if we ALL work together we will have a great village hall that caters for all that we want to do here, from the smallest Brownie to the tallest goalkeeper, the youngest baby to the oldest cafe-goer and all those in between.

Please take a few minutes to look at all the plans, make comments to the Vale and have your say about the hall, *whatever you think*. Without us all coming together, we’ll get nothing.

Until next time



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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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PCSO Myra Stokes (for Garford)
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Call 0800 555 111 (anonymous calls)

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Call Free from any phone - 111

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Richard Webber, Orchard Barn, Sutton Wick Lane, Drayton OX14 4HJ
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richard.webber@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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For other councillors go to

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk

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MARCHAMPARISHCOUNCILNEWS

Council Tax 2016

The Parish Council has carefully considered its budget for 2016/2017 looking in detail at its income and expenditure. The Parish Council has resolved that it requires funding of £42,000 for the next financial year. The Vale of White Horse District Council will provide a grant to the parish of £619, as part of the council tax reduction scheme, and the remaining parish council tax element will be £41,381.

Anson Trust/Thomas Homes – planning application

The Anson Trust/Thomas Homes have now lodged a planning application for housing, new village hall, multi-use games area and nursery on the Anson field, and new housing and conversion of the Institute on the North Street site. The Parish Council will be discussing the application at its February meeting in order to decide its comments to the Vale of White Horse District Council. If anyone has any particular view or thoughts about the application then please let the clerk know.

Parishioner of the Year Award

Thank you to all of you who have taken the time and trouble to write to the Council to put forward nominations for the Parishioner of the Year Award. The Council has a working party that is now considering all the nominations in order to prepare a shortlist for the Council to consider in due course. Should there be anyone who has forgotten to submit their nomination, please contact the clerk immediately.

Parish Council Vacancy

Parish Councillor Samantha Turney has resigned her seat on the parish council. She has served the parish for over 10 years working enthusiastically on behalf of the residents. The Council would like to express its gratitude for her contribution and admirable service to the parish. If there is anyone who is interested in joining the Council then they are invited to contact the Parish Clerk for further information about the role, and how to apply.

Bridleway 17 – Bridge Closure at end of Mill Road over river Ock

A closure order has been made to enable bridge reconstruction which is yet to be commenced. The effect of the order is to temporarily prohibit persons and vehicles using the bridge that spans the river Ock south of Marcham Mill. The closure order has been made until 21st January 2017.

New Housing Developments – Marcham

On the new developments in Marcham 40% of the housing will be social housing. This is split in accordance with Vale of White Horse District Council policy as 75% rented and 25% shared ownership. 20% of

these affordable new build properties are allocated to households with a strong local connection. This is defined as applicants who are currently living in the parish and have lived there for five years out of the last eight, or where an applicant has lived in the parish for at least five years and their parents or children still live in the parish and have done so for 10 years. If you are interested in such accommodation on the new developments then information about joining the housing register can be found on the Vale of White Horse District Council’s website at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk or by telephoning 01235 520202.

Planning applications

The Council has considered the following planning application:

P15/V2864/LB Take down upper part of existing wagon entrance to Tithe Barn, removing 20th century alterations, replace doors to original height, construction of stone gable and reform roof covering with Stonesfield slate at 15 Church Street. The Council had no objections to the proposal.

Date of Next Council Meeting:

Wednesday 10th February 2016 at 7.30 p.m. in the residents’ lounge, at Duffield Place.

Clerk to the Council: Mrs. L. Martin, 90 Howard Cornish Rd, 01865 391833
clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Any member of the public is most welcome to attend any of our meetings. There is a section near the start of each meeting for public participation, where any member of the public is able to speak about any topic which is relevant to the work of the Parish Council (for a maximum of three minutes). Members of the public are also welcome to observe some or all of the rest of the meeting.
www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk

SPEED LIMIT ON SHEEPSTEAD ROAD

The 30mph limit has been extended on Sheepstead Road to include the entrance to Harding Way, the King’s Field development. So don’t forget to slow down a bit earlier when you come into the village from the north.



Local cattery help wanted:
feeding, cleaning, admin.
Must love cats and have car.
Get in touch if you’re interested!
Email: catteryhelpwanted@gmail.com



Community Facilities Steering Group

Over 200 Marcham people came to the public consultation event held by the Community Facilities Steering Group at the school on Saturday 16th January. We heard presentations about the formal plans submitted to the District Council in December, finances and management arrangements, and had an opportunity to discuss details of the plans and the benefits to the community with the Anson Trust and Thomas Homes. We are very grateful to all who came to the event and for the huge positive support that you gave for the plan.

Important – the Marcham community needs your help now

This application is complex for the Vale planners and it will need significant community support to enable the planning application to be approved. It is therefore important that as many people as possible send in comments to the Vale Planning Office, whether you support or oppose the proposals. The Planning Committee will take note of all individual letters or emails received during the consultation period.

You can make a comment on-line, using the Vale of White Horse website, under application number P15/V3042/O, through the following link:

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P15/V3042/O

This is the Vale’s preferred route and, for most, the quickest way to provide comments, although you can also submit comments in a letter to: The Planning Office, Vale of White Horse District Council, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB. You can also find this link on the MADNews website - *see below*.

The deadline for submitting comments is 3rd February 2016 so please comment NOW.

Time is short, and there is no other viable way forward to provide these much-needed facilities. If you support this proposal, please help us to make sure that we can obtain planning permission by making your comments to the Vale of White Horse.

Full details of the planning application, a summary of the presentation on 16th January, how to make comments to the Vale and how to give your views on what should be in the hall, please go to the MADNews website (**www.madnews.co.uk**). Thank you to all who have already submitted positive comments – it should make an impact.

We have still to work out details of internal arrangements for the community hall (it is in outline only in the formal plans at this stage) and we have received many ideas on what should be included in the building. CFSG will be working over the next few weeks to develop a functional specification for these requirements so that we can brief the architect to develop an internal plan for the building.

The Community Facilities Steering Group (CFSG) was set up with the clear objective of developing plans for new community facilities in Marcham and is made up of representatives from local groups with an interest in village facilities. If you wish to have more information on the CFSG, or you think you can help, please contact Jim Asher (391727).

CFSG - Opportunities without Obstacles

Dear Editor

When do we apply for a village hall?

RIGHT NOW

How do we apply for a village hall?

WRITE NOW*

RJM

(Or go online see above!)



Dear Editor

A generous member of the village has donated a considerable supply of spring bulbs that have been planted around the churchyard by a team of young people. This will be an ongoing project to provide some welcome colour in the spring. On behalf of the village I would like to thank the generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous.
MALCOLM DENTON

February 2016

Dear Editor

Having lived in the village of Marcham for nine years we have become used to our occasional power cuts, the ones which occur for a short while during the night and which mean resetting the oven, the radio, commuter and so on, but this one was different. We would be classified as ‘elderly’ and, as such, we need to visit the bathroom during the night and early in the morning. On 7th January at 6 a.m. we found total darkness, no streetlights, security lights, or our favourite little light to guide us on our route from bed to bathroom. Whilst I searched for our torch my husband attempted to get to the bathroom and lost his balance, crashing to the floor, collecting bruises and abrasions as he fell. One such abrasion led to a later call to the duty doctor to check on his treatment for this. Our ‘new’ phones connected to the electricity supply were useless and our ‘mobile’ could not pick up a signal! Our small battery radio (Radio Oxford) told us of a power cut in Witney but not in Marcham and, of course, as usual only part of the village was affected. I finally hailed a ‘dog walker’ and asked her if she knew any information as to when it would be restored. I learned later that the sheltered housing

MADNews is online: www.madnews.co.uk

development of Sweet Briar was also ‘off’. As to heating, we were fortunate that we had a gas fire in the lounge, and a gas hob in our kitchen/breakfast room. Having gone off around 5.30 a.m. power was finally restored at 10.30 a.m. We were told that it was to do with a sub-service station at Willow Farm. If a power cut of this length is pre-arranged, surely it would be courteous to inform householders beforehand. We have purchased a battery-operated LED torch\ nightlight and now make a point of knowing exactly where our good torch is from dusk to dawn each day.

I have asked for my name and address to be withheld by the Editor - we are not seeking sympathy, merely good practice to be established by the power companies.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

Have you got a view on recent events or future plans? Write to MADNews and share your ideas. You can send an email to editor@madnews.co.uk, put a letter in the envelope in Marcham Village Shop or drop a note through the door at 8 Orchard Way, Marcham. Deadline is the 15th of each month ... **looking forward to hearing from you.**

**MID-WEEK WALK:
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 11TH**

For this month's walk we will go to The Three Horseshoes Inn near the junction of Ship Lane and Castle Lane in Donnington, just north of Newbury (Map Ref SU465687 just west of the B4494 from Wantage to Newbury) at 12.30pm for lunch. We will be passing the Castle, site of the 2nd Civil War battle of Newbury, the hamlet of Bagnor and Snelmore Common in a walk of four miles.



Members free, non-members £1. We welcome new members. Ring Eric Dunford on 391439 for lifts and further details.

MARCHAM CRICKET CLUB

The Club's 2016 OCA Season opens with the 1st XI at Home to Visitors Chesterton on 30th April. For the 2nd XI the Season begins on 7th May Away to Risinghurst II.



In preparation for the new season, Nets are being held at Radley College 19.30 to 20.30 commencing Friday 1st April. All levels are welcome to attend

The AGM is scheduled for Friday 5th February at 20.15 in the Clubhouse.

As usual, please contact Trevor Hill (381321) for any information relating to the Club - including playing, or umpiring for Marcham. And finally ... Trevor Bailey once announced that "On the first day, Logie decided to chance his arm and it came off".

CSB

**MSSSC: Marcham Sports, Scouts & Social Club
The pavilion & field off Morland Road**

**Quiz Night
FRIDAY 26 February**

This month's quiz will be held on Friday 26 February in the Sports and Social Club on the Anson Field, starting at 8.15pm. Questions are on a range of subjects and aimed at everyone's ability! The quiz nights run on the last Friday of each month. Teams of up to four people are invited, but if you are alone or a couple, come along, and we could fit you into an existing or even new team!

Everyone welcome, members and non members. Just turn up on the night for a friendly evening of fun and banter.

Further details from Trevor Hill - 01865 391321

*Everyone welcome - members AND non-members
We look forward to seeing you at the club*

Marcham WI

Next Meeting

Date: Thursday, 18th February
Time: 7.30pm
Venue: Denman College



For our next meeting on Thursday 18th February, we are looking forward to welcoming **Ian Jones** who will be speaking on 'Bomb Disposal'. We hope that you will all be able to come and join us and, as this month will be our Open Meeting, we hope you will bring along your friends, husbands or partners to hear what promises to be a fascinating talk.

Wine and cheese will be served following the talk
New members and visitors are always welcome.

For further information, please contact:

Pippa Hoath 01865 391349 pippahoath@gmail.com

**MARCHAM AND DISTRICT
EX-SERVICEMEN'S CLUB**

As printed in the August 2015 MADNews. Due to the proposed redevelopment of the Institute site. The Club has been give notice by The Anson Trust to vacate the premises by the 25th March 2016.

**The AGM has therefore to be brought forward and will
be held in The Ex Servicemen's Club on
Tuesday February 23rd. 2016 at 8pm**

All registered members are encouraged to attend and reminded that in accordance with the Club rule number 15, any proposal from the membership must be submitted and received by the Secretary, in writing 14 days before the AGM so as to be displayed in the Club. The member submitting the proposal must be a full member and be present at the AGM.

AGM Agenda 23rd February 2016: Apologies, Minutes of 2015 AGM, Matters Arising, Chairman's Report, Treasurer's Report, Election of Officers, Election of Committee, Any Other Business, Financial Statement & Report for the year ending 29th February 2016 from the Accountants will not be available.

Disposal of Club fittings and furnishings

The Anson Trust has given the Club notice to vacate the premises by 25th March for proposed re-development.

After the AGM on Tuesday 23rd February 2016, **FULL MEMBERS** will have the opportunity to view and bid for the Clubs fittings and furnishings.

Reasonable bids only will be accepted at the discretion of the Committee, whose decision will be final.

Payment must be made on the night and items can be collected after 29th February by arrangement with the Club Committee.

Items remaining after the 1st March may be viewed and bids made by **MEMBERS AND NON MEMBERS** on **Saturday 6th March** when the Club will open for the last time in its present home for the last 60 years.

Removal of items to be arranged and agreed by the Committee.

Please note that some of the items of higher value will have a reserve price attached.

**MARCHAM AND DISTRICT EX SERVICMEN'S CLUB
NORTH STREET, MARCHAM OXON OX13 6NG
January 2016**

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION by 1ST April 2016

As included on page 5 of September 2015 MADNews.

Due to the proposed redevelopment of the Institute site , the Club has been given notice by The Anson Trust to vacate the premises by the 25th March 2016.

It is the current Committees decision NOT to close the Club, but to keep the Club going in case new premises become available in the future development of the village.

ALL FULLY PAID UP MEMBERS ON 1ST January 2016 WILL REMAIN ON THE MEMBERSHIP LIST*, BUT WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO REGISTER OR PAY A SUBSCRIPTION UNTIL THE FUTURE OF THE CLUB IS CLARIFIED.

NO NEW APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP CAN BE ACCEPTED

Please note that past members who failed to register by April 1st 2015 are no longer considered as Members, heir names have been removed from the current Members register.

*Membership list is available to view in the Club during opening hours
Chairman 1st January 2016

Bank Balance
£20,193

Local Events
£11,830

Donations
£8,260

2014 - 2015 Membership
Voting: 72 Junior: 18

5p Coins
6804

Marcham
Community
Group



Dates for your diary in 2016...

Marcham Community Group continues to work with the other groups in the Community Facilities Steering Group (CFSG, see page 5) on plans for the new facilities in Marcham. We are also making plans for some community events in 2016 - so this is a good chance to put these dates in your new diary and to offer your help.

Isis Orchestra concert in Marcham Church—Saturday 14th May 2016: MCG will be providing food and refreshments, with proceeds from the evening going to support community facilities. Please come and support this evening of great orchestral music.

Q90B—Saturday 11th June or Sunday 12th June: a community-wide event for all the family, to mark the Queen's 90th birthday. Details to be announced.

Apple Day—Saturday 15th October: a fun event for all the family.

This is also an advance warning that we will be looking for volunteers to help on the day and in preparations!

Please contact Jim or Denise Asher on 391727 if you can help.

Dates for your diary in 2016...

Marcham Community Group: Company No 7470307 Charity No 1144407
391727 (Jim) admin@marcham.org

www.marcham.org




CHARLIE DORE
www.charliedore.com
Support: Kiva
<http://kiva.michaelamos.net>
Thursday 11th February
Doors: 7:00pm Music: 7.15pm | £12
Abingdon Unicorn Theatre
Tickets: www.musicattheunicorn.org.uk
& REMADE GUITARS, (Stratton Way) Coxeter House



SINGING IS GOOD FOR YOU!
2.00-3.30 pm on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays
Tuesday 9th and Tuesday 23rd February
We meet in the common room at Duffield Place. Come and join us, you will be sure of a warm welcome ...
and tea and cake!
Phone 391270 for more details *Christine Whild*

Marcham Village Shop and Post Office
Call us...
Shop: 391 993
Post Office: 391 940

Don't forget our new closing times

Mon - Fri: 07.30 - 17.30

Sat - Sun: 08.00 - 12 noon

Last Post Guaranteed Collection Times: 16.45pm weekdays and 10.20am Saturday so make sure your post is with us by 16.45 or 10.20 AT THE LATEST to ensure you catch that day's postal collection.



Visit us on Facebook:
facebook.com/marchamvillageshop

Come in and see our new floor and see what we have for your February celebrations Lemons and flour for your pancakes, noodles for Chinese New Year and of course you can romance your beloved on Valentine's Day with a bag of jelly babies - only 50p a quarter!



The
**Marcham
Society**

All Saints' Church, Marcham
7.45pm Tuesday 9th February

Evening Meeting
Clare Sargent
The History of Radley College

Non-members always welcome £2 www.marchamsociety.org.uk
Further details: Sheila Dunford (391439) or Judith Fontaine (391275)

ED VAIZEY WRITES...

May I wish all of my constituents a very happy new year. I hope 2016 will be a great year for you. There are, of course, many exciting events and milestones, not least the Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations in June and the Rio Olympics.

The New Year is also a time when we get to celebrate those that have served our communities, industries and country. This year's New Year honours list included constituents such as Judith Hackitt, chair of the Health and Safety Executive, who has been made a Dame, and Grace Jackson who was awarded an OBE, for services to the Ebola Crisis Response in West Africa. Many congratulations to all the recipients. By the way, anyone can nominate someone for an honour. If you think there is someone who deserves one you can nominate them at <https://www.gov.uk/honours>

It's never too late to make a new year resolution. A new local physical activities program, which may be of interest to you, has been set up. Go Active Gold will offer support for people in rural areas, age 60 and over, to live more active lifestyles. Run by Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils, funded by Sport England, you can have a go at many different activities including; Table Tennis, Golf, Bowls, Yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, Nordic Walking and Dancing. Contact the team on 01235 540367 or go to www.southoxon.gov.uk/gold or www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/gold, to find out more.

My mailbag this month has been dominated by global issues such as religious freedom, the eradication of Polio, and opposition to the use of the death penalty. On the latter, the UK uses targeted diplomacy to persuade other governments to abolish the death penalty. In 2014 there were still 22 countries that executed people, while 140 countries were abolitionist in law or practice. I welcome the further efforts of the Government to see the long term trend towards abolition continue throughout this Parliament.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any pressing issues that you would like help with. Either myself or one of my team will get back to you as soon as possible and do what we can to assist. You can contact me on any matter at the House of Commons, SW1A 0AA, 020 7219 6350 or dicksonce@parliament.uk. Email is the quickest and most reliable way to get in touch, as I keep a very close eye on my emails and can reply very quickly. I also send out occasional general interest emails about developments in the Wantage and Didcot Constituency. If you would like to be added to the distribution list, please do email my office at badyaljb@parliament.uk or sign up at www.vaizey.com.

ED VAIZEY, MP Wantage and Didcot (Conservative)

COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORT**The County Council Budget**

By now many of you will be heartily sick of hearing about the state of the County Council's finances. Me too! Now that the full implications of Mr Osborne's Autumn Statement have become clear, it has been calculated that the £50m extra savings required in December has now become £70m. And it is the Shire Counties of England that have been singled out for special treatment. I can buy the argument that we must pay off the mess of 2008 and that it is a bigger mess than we first thought, but why we have to do this by a particular date of Mr Osborne's choosing escapes me. Further pain could be avoided by acknowledging that we need a couple more years to get the economy back to where we want it. But the government that the country voted for last May has laid down the timetable, so we are where we are.

The trouble is that the challenge of setting a budget in the current February 2016



climate of austerity swamps everything the Council does. There is little time, energy or even manpower (thanks to cuts already made) to focus on anything else than how to make a shrinking sum of money cover ever increasing obligations (mostly caused by steadily increasing child and adult care costs). Such is the shortage of manpower that far too few people are engaged in trying to find new ways of saving and generating money. Almost everyone is in the business of taking on ever more work and hoping to keep their jobs. Local democracy and party politics has become almost irrelevant, as there is no money or time to do anything differently. It is, in short, a battle for survival.

The Council has a legal obligation to set a balanced budget in February. If we do not do this, we are told that we could face dire penalties collectively and even individually. It looks likely that we could rearrange things (playing a few accountancy tricks) to produce a managed budget for one more year, after that we face a mountain. So all we can look forward to is gaining a little more time to pull things around. We cannot afford to waste the little time we have. We need to engage and involve the Counties residents, the City, District and Parish Councils in imaginative ways of generating income. We are forever being told that Oxfordshire is one of the wealthiest counties in the country – there is no shortage of money. But in whose pockets is that money? The County Council must get more involved in the County's thriving economy. It should be joining the action.

The alternative is to lose our Children's Centres, lose all our subsidised Bus Services, isolate our Rural Communities, and continue to spend all our time worrying about what to cut next as more and more people fall into vulnerability.

It's pretty depressing news for the New Year.

So is there no light at the end of the tunnel? Here are a few ideas that might, at least, help to improve things in the mid term.

1. An Oxfordshire Unitary Council. No doughnut, no series of mini-unitaries – just one single authority saving at least £50m. All Councils (and Councillors) would have to agree to disband and have to agree to bring to an end the silo mentality of Oxfordshire politics. It will not happen overnight, but we should be talking about it now.
2. Sell/Rent County Hall in Oxford – a very valuable property in a key part of the City, already in the throes of development.
3. Warn all the people with whom we have major contracts, that either they come to the table to give us a better deal, or we break these contracts and renegotiate them with others.
4. Encourage District Councils (whose finances are benefiting enormously from New Homes Bonus) to take on some of the social care responsibilities currently funded by OCC.
5. Make all the above as public as we can so that everyone has to justify to Oxfordshire residents what they argue they could and could not do.

RICHARD WEBBER CLLR OCC

SC & Marcham Division.

Richard.webber77@ntlworld.com or 01235 534001

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT**Serving on a Planning Committee**

As some of you are aware, over the last two years I have been sitting on the Planning Committee which used to meet once a month, but with the heavy demand from more and more applications this last year, we have been meeting twice a month. These meetings can last any length from two hours to nearly five hours! As they are an integral part of the huge growth of housing in the Vale, I thought you might like to know a little about how they work.

A Planning Committee member will receive a copy of the next Planning Committee agenda the week before the hearing, so that he/ she can familiarise himself/ herself with the applications coming up. This involves a lot of reading and studying of the maps/

designs of each development, and sometimes some background research, and then you are expected either to join a set tour of the sites, which are to come before the committee, or you do your own tour in your own time. The important thing is that you are not approached on the sites by any interested party who might want to sway your thinking. You have to remain unbiased. You can receive literature and emails from parties, if they want to communicate with you, and it is up to you whether you read them or not. I usually read them.

The planning committee is made up of ten district councillors, seven Conservatives and three Lib Dems, with one Conservative chairing the meeting and sitting alongside the Vale officers. The room at The Beacon, Wantage, is laid out in a square with a bench of Officers forming one side, two benches of councillors facing each other on opposite sides of the square and finally the public forming the fourth side, facing the officers. On the wall behind the officers is a large screen where all the diagrams, photos and maps of each application are shown.

The procedure follows a set format guided by the chairman, and the public is given a chance to air its view. The Parish or Town council of each application, who have already submitted their views (usually opposing the application), can make a three minutes statement, which is followed by a further three minutes statement from an interested party who is also opposed to the application. Finally, the developer or supporter of the development will read his three minutes statement. Those six minutes from the public can range from being heartrendingly poignant and sad, extremely angry, coldly disparaging or quietly analytical. On the panel we often want to support their views but frustratingly our hands are tied by planning laws – laws that are coldly calculating so that as many houses as possible will be passed while we have a five year land supply need. It is not easy to have to comply with these laws but we do have the opportunity to question and challenge the officers on anything that we don't like or puzzles us. This can be a long process as there are ten committee members, all with a point of view. Finally, we are called in to make our decision ... either we pass the application without any extra conditions; or we pass it with further conditions which have been thrashed out in the debate; or we defer a decision as we feel that we need further investigations to be done; or we refuse it. To do the latter means that the developer is very likely to go to appeal and the inspector will have to make the final decision ... if he finds against us, which these days is more than likely because of the government's determination to build whatever the consequences, then the council will be fined, so it can be a very expensive move. You'll not be surprised to know, therefore, that the Vale officers strongly discourage us from refusing unless we have very sound planning reasons to do so. But, most unusually, we did refuse three applications a few weeks ago and we deferred a decision last Wednesday, 13th January. We now wait to hear what the inspector says about the refusals! And if there is a fine!

So that is the procedure in a nutshell. On the whole, it seems a fair way for each application to be discussed and analysed and of course we all agree that there is a great need for new housing, but I do worry that in the great rush to build, build, build, and with the planning committee being so tightly shackled by planning laws and guidelines, we are seriously at risk of destroying our villages, towns and countryside. What do you think?

Surgery Dates for your diary

Richard and I will be at the shop between 9.00 and 11.00 on Saturday, 20th February and 12th March. Please do come for a chat if you want to air a view or raise a problem. And in case we haven't said so, Happy New Year to you all.

CATHERINE WEBBER Cllr VWHDC

01235 534001 or catherinewebber@hotmail.co.uk

DRAGONFLIES AND DAMSELFLIES

It may not be the time of year to see Dragon and Damsel flies but worth thinking ahead to the coming season.

Of the 40+ species that inhabit in Britain, a quarter can be attracted to our gardens.

The others have more specific habitat needs.

To tell them apart, Damselflies are dainty and when resting their wings are parallel to the body, Dragonflies have wings at 90 degrees from the body when at rest.

Both need clean water, less that 70cm deep with plenty of submerged pond plants. They eat tadpoles, water insects and even small juvenile goldfish or other fish you may have.

Plants around the edge of a garden pond like loosestrife are good for adults to settle on and larvae to emerge from the water onto as they transform into winged adults.

Long grass near the pond but not casting a shadow over it offer up a further habitat dragonflies will be able to find food within. Plus nearby trees gives them somewhere to roost.

Some bare soil around the pond is good for some species as to is a half-submerged log which has a bit sticking out of the water. Some lay eggs on submerged wood, the bit sticking out of the water can be a perch where adults can hunt from.

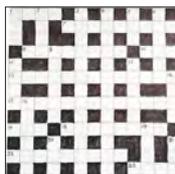
Plenty of simple ideas but all building into the jigsaw that is wildlife gardening.

Happy Gardening **STUART MABBUTT**

Wildlife Gardening Specialist 01865 747243



CROSSWORD BY ALISA - JANUARY ANSWERS



Answers

- Across: 1. Bath 7. Soda water 8. Distinct 10. Imp 13. Poor relations 15. Steering group 17. Sew 18. Trainers 22. Ock Street 23. Tyne
Down: 1. Bat 2. Taxi 3. Mobile library 4. Marcham guides 5. Gap 6. Denman 9. Sorrel 11. Spas 12. Pierce 14. Sips 16. Trench 19. Ruby 20. Ass 21. The Gap



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Abingdon Area Archaeolgoical and Historical Society

DRAGON IN MARCHAM

A dragon was seen in Mill Road on 14 January – but don't worry, it is just a new way of patching roads rather than anything from Game of Thrones! Thanks to Mike Hoath for the photo on the front page.

You can read more about it on the Highways Magazine website: <http://highwaysmagazine.co.uk/patching-dragon-used-on-uk-roads>.

Looking for local trusted services and events? Then please take a look at our new online directory and help support Oxfordshire mums in business.

oxfordshire.supermum.org



MARCHAM PRE-SCHOOL NEWS

Busy as usual and the preschool children are waiting for a new arrival (see photo), from role-playing new babies, giving birth and doctors, many of the situations are linked to their own home experiences. We have also been looking at our family Christmases and drawing our favourite presents. It all seems such a long time ago!

Our spaces are filling quickly and so if you would be interested in a place at Marcham Preschool please do get in touch as soon as possible. 01865 39201 or marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk
www.marcham-preschool.weebly.com

**CALLING ALL USERS OF PACKHORSE LANE**

After a joint meeting with officers from the Vale and OCC, I came away feeling rather dispirited about the future of Packhorse Lane with its dreadful traffic problem and seriously poor air quality. The OCC have agreed to look at the possibility of gated lights, which might be a partial answer, as it would stop those terrible clashes of vehicles travelling in opposite directions on the bends and, by slowing down the traffic, it may even deter HGVs from actually choosing this route. To keep the pressure on the authorities, could I ask all users (residents and anyone else) of the Lane to write down your particular stories of traffic incidents in the Lane over the years, ideally citing dates, names of companies of the offending vehicles, and accompanying pictures, if you happen to have some. Similarly, if you have any evidence of the air pollution affecting human health there, please send that to me too. You could either leave literature at the shop for me or send it by email.

CATHERINE WEBBER Cllr VWHDC

01235 534001 or catherinewebber@hotmail.co.uk

HEALTHWATCH OXFORDSHIRE IS YOUR VOICE ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Whether it is improving services today, or helping to shape them for tomorrow,  Healthwatch Oxfordshire is all about

enabling local voices to influence the delivery and design of local health and social care in our county. Not just for the people who use them now, but for anyone who might need to in future.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire was set up on April 1 2013, as a result of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The organisation sits alongside 151 other local Healthwatch across the country.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire hears what children, young people and adults have to say about health and social care services, whether that is praise, criticism or ideas for improvement. We strengthen the collective voice of patients and the public, so that service providers and commissioners listen to what they have to say. We then hold them to account on how they use the information we provide to shape, inform and influence service delivery and design.

In order to ensure that we have the best possible evidence and the widest possible views to influence the delivery and design of health and social care services, we need as many people as possible to speak out about their experiences, so that we can speak up on their behalf.

Healthwatch is independent, and we are accountable to the people of Oxfordshire, so please tell us how you would like to be treated and cared for, and what is important to you when using health and social care services, and we can make a difference together.

To find out more about Healthwatch Oxfordshire, please visit our website, www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Contact us on 01865 520 520 or

email hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

You can also follow us on Twitter @HealthwatchOxon and find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/HealthwatchOxfordshire

BABY ROOM

What a great start to 2016 we have had in the baby room, our theme has been Sensory. This has allowed us to follow the babies interests in exploring and feeling a range of textures and shapes. They have especially enjoyed our new sensory area which they helped create with pasta plates, rice play, playdough and water play! It has been messy!

They also like the new bottles we have made with everyday objects around the house - you can do this too! Let them explore the household objects such as spoons or your sponges in the bath, you will be amazed at how they are enlightened by seeing their actions can change the shape and size of different textured items! We have also enjoyed the warmer weather at the start of the month spending time in our garden, feeling the grass, sand and all the other garden items we could find.

PRE-SCHOOL ROOM

Oh no it isn't, oh yes it is!!!! We have been learning about pantomimes! We did a great production of Peter Pan, we turned our book corner into our very own pirate ship with a very convincing Captain Hook, who made Wendy walk the plank!!!! All had a important role and it was a great, interactive fun way to learn the story! We also learned about Cinderella and had a great time trying to find out whose foot would fit the slipper (and all the other shoes in our shoe shop!). While doing Puss in Boots - we explored our creative side and learnt how to draw rabbits and cats! While looking at Aladdin we went on a flying carpet ride, made wishes with a genie for all our family and friends and explored size with different shapes 'lamps' (jugs) in water play. It has been a very busy month!

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

Everyone has come back to the after school club in great form after the Christmas break. We have been looking at the food and drink we have when its cold outside - and it has been getting cold outside!! We have made a cup of soup by blowing paint! Hot chocolate with a range of craft materials - although they really wished for a real hot chocolate!!

There has also been great construction with the blocks, Lego - anything they can find! Along with beautiful music from our keyboard, great fun with football session with Serious4Sport and also looking at our letters in books or the writing table.

If you would like any further information about Abingdon Little Angels Nursery, Afterschool Club or Holiday Club please feel free to pop in or call us on 07516 474287.

**MARCHAM EX-SERVICEMENS CLUB ENTERTAINMENT**

8.30pm Saturday 6th February

DOUG LOVERIDGE

SINGER AND GUITARIST

WITH MUSIC OF THE 50's, 60's, 70's and 80's

Nyakabungo Girls' School, N.W. Uganda
There will be a COFFEE MORNING

at
50, NORTH STREET, MARCHAM
on

FRIDAY, 26th FEBRUARY
from 10.30 until 12.00 noon

Please support the Mary Wood Trust to help very needy girls from destitute families get a good education.
<http://marywoodtrust4uganda.org/page7.php>

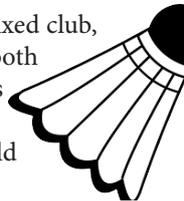



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 If interested please contact:
 Margaret O'Connor
 01865 391991 ext: 227
catering@denman.org.uk

Fyfield and Tubney Churches
 Jumble Sale
 2.30 pm Saturday 27th February 2016
 Southmoor Village Hall
 Free Entry
 Tea and Cakes
 Contact: Rosemary Kitto on 01865 390 466 or at
rosemarykitto@gmail.com

LOCAL BADMINTON CLUB

Do you want to play badminton in a friendly, mixed club, with a wide range of ages and abilities, for both social play and league matches? HLBC meets on Monday evenings at Larkmead School in Abingdon, from September to March, and would welcome new members.



To find out more contact: info@harwellbadminton.co.uk

OXFORDSHIRE RSPCA 5K RUN
Sun 20 March from 08:00 AM to 03:00 PM
Horspath Sports Ground Horspath Road
OXFORD OX4 2RR



Contact:
 Meggie Cook at meggie.cook@rspca-oxfordshire.org.uk or
 07808 719716

The day will include a 5k race, ideal for PB chasers through to first timer and a mini marathon (1 mile) race to inspire and involve juniors!

Running not your thing? why not bring along your friends, family and walk the course with us?

Or simply turn up to support others and help us to improve animal welfare across Oxfordshire.

More details: www.ticketsource.co.uk/date/188017

Local Fosterers Need Urgently
 (All expenses paid)

Could you help us to give animals a second chance?
 Please call us NOW 07887 475401 or
 email fostering@rspca-oxfordshire.org.uk

RSPCA Oxfordshire Branch, PO Box 931, Abingdon OX14 9HT
www.rspca-oxfordshire.org.uk
 National Cruelty Line: 0300 1234 999



Welcome Event
 Everyone invited to
 welcome newcomers
 to the village

Saturday 6 February 6pm
The Crown

Come and share your knowledge
Come and find out about
your new community

Activities available for small children

Organised by the 'Welcome to Marcham
Team' at All Saints' Church

For more information contact Ann Wilson on
391141 or Grace 0780 7707925

Alan the Postie is retiring!

Alan the postman is going to retire at the end of February. Those of you who live in the northern part of Marcham will know him well but he can be seen all over the place! He has been working in Marcham for well over 15 years and is a treasure – he knows so much about all of our postal needs, where to pop our parcels, how to treat our delicate letter boxes and when to use a bit of force on those with stronger springs ... and also just where to find letter boxes in some places!



If you would like to contribute to a leaving gift for him there is a collection box in the Marcham shop and a card to sign. We will let you know about the plans for the presentation when we know!

Can you help Medical Detection
Dogs save lives?



The charity Medical Detection Dogs is training dogs in the detection by scent of human diseases and life-threatening health conditions. We are a small group of volunteers, the Oxon and Cotswold support group, supporting the charity by giving talks and running local fundraising events and street collections. We are looking for help with our fundraising.

If you would like to join our group (mainly based in West Oxon), or volunteer for even one event a year, please contact: Heather Shute 01993 831909 or oxon.supportgrp@medicaldetectiondogs.org.uk

Also, if you would like a speaker to come to your local group, please contact us. www.medicaldetectiondogs.org.uk

Abingdon & District Model Railway Club Ltd.
presents
ABRAIL 2016
Model Railway Show
for modellers of all ages
10.00am – 5.00pm Saturday 19th March 2016

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DENMAN COLLEGE, MARCHAM

Did you know that you can stay at Denman College without being a WI member... **or even female?**

The courses are open to everyone and you can even book B&B. Everyone is welcome — men and women, members and non-members. You can even get married in Denman and take a Bridal Party Day course to create your own stationery, canapes and even perfect your “first dance”!

Pick up a brochure from the college or Marcham Shop call 01865 391991 or go to www.denman.org.uk




Do something amazing today – give blood
96% of us rely on the other 4% to give blood.

Please don't leave it to someone else. Most people can give blood. You can give blood every 16 weeks, and it only takes a few minutes.

To find a session contact
www.blood.co.uk 0300 123 23 23
If you are already a donor, why not take a friend next time!

If you are holding an event within or near the MADNews area, please contact the editor for more publicity!
01865 391725 or editor@madnews.co.uk

Earth Trust Events

Bird Bonanza! 7th February 2016 10am-2pm
Drop in and get to know our feathered friends!
Make a bird feeder, try some twitching and even build your own nest.
Prices & Booking £4 suggested donation per child, accompanying adult(s) free Drop in

Mud Pie Monday! 15th February 2016 10am-11.30am
Drop in for our first Mud Pie Monday - buckets of mud and buckets of fun! Wellies and waterproofs advisable.
Prices & Booking FREE taster session Drop in

Build a Bird Box 15th February 2016 2pm-3pm / 3pm-4pm
Take home a handmade bird box and help encourage more wildlife into your garden. Tools and materials provided.
Prices & Booking £10 per box Booking essential

Wildlife Wednesday 17th February 2016 10am-2pm
New for 2016: our roving Wildlife Wednesdays will visit a different Earth Trust community nature reserve during each school holiday. This half term, come and join us at Mowbray Fields in Didcot to learn about local wildlife and have lots of outdoor fun!
Where Mowbray Fields, Didcot, OX11 8SS
Prices & Booking £2 suggested donation per child, accompanying adult(s) free Drop in

Woodland Adventure 17th February 2016 10am-12pm
An expedition for 5-8 year olds. Use your detective skills to discover our secret destination where we will explore, build and play!
Prices & Booking £4 suggested donation per child, accompanying adult(s) free
No need to book but please arrive at the stated start time

Discover & Play 19th February 2016 10am-12pm
Forest School for the under-5s. Come and join us for a morning of play and discovery in our woodlands. Forest School offers hands on learning experiences in a natural environment. Sessions are led by a trained Forest School leader.
Prices & Booking £4 suggested donation per child, accompanying adult(s) free
No need to book but please arrive at the stated start time

All events will take at the Earth Trust Centre unless otherwise indicated
Contact: admin@earthtrust.org.uk
or 01865 407792.

Earth Trust Centre
Little Wittenham,
Abingdon OX14 4QZ
www.earthtrust.org.uk



Dear Friends,

New starts and new beginnings! This year sees the new shoots of some exciting happenings in both your Parish church and in the community. Let me explain:

New community facilities in Marcham: progress continues to be made for the planning of new facilities for the community, and I, for one, am looking forward to seeing this exciting project taking shape in the months ahead.

New Youth Worker: It's OK, Jill isn't leaving! We are looking forward to a new *additional* youth worker starting in the months ahead, to work with our older young people in both community and in the church. As I write this we are receiving a good number of initial enquiries to our advertisement, and, God willing, we hope to have someone in post after Easter. Exciting!

New men's night! Starting on 1st February some of us guys are meeting in the Crown at 8.00pm to enjoy a pint and a chin-wag. Why not come and join in - it would be great to see you!

New beginnings and God go together! God is constantly doing surprising things, creating new beginnings, enabling fresh starts in people's lives, bringing new life and hope in place of death and despair. Jesus once said: 'I have come that you might have life - life in all its fullness!' [John 10:10]

Many years ago God said: 'I am about to do a brand - new thing. ... Do you not see it?' The Spirit of God is constantly bringing about the new shoots of life and hope in people and places - but can we see them? May our eyes be opened to see what God is doing, and then let's join in!

Easter is just round the corner!

With my warmest greetings,

Revd Richard Zair

Regular church services

Sundays: 10am & 6pm at All Saints'
Wednesdays: 10.30am at Duffield Place

Over the next few months we will be delving into the book of Proverbs for a 'How to live wisely'. Come along to find out more.

We will also be promoting our small groups so if you would like to join one, please contact us!

SIT DOWN TO BREAKFAST STAND UP FOR FARMERS

Sunday 28th Feb, 9.15am

Fairtrade breakfast for all before the service



Contacts:

Rev. Richard Zair 391319(r_zair@yahoo.co.uk)
Jill Rowe Youth and Children's Minister 390885
Tim Jack Churchwarden 01865 864900
Tamsin Gilbert Administrator 391319
Parish Office: parish_office41@yahoo.co.uk
www.marcham-with-garford.org.uk

Men's Breakfast February 6th, 8.30am, at the Baptist Hall

Speaker: Graham Sykes

Chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford and a vintage motor car fanatic



WELCOME EVENT

Everyone invited to welcome newcomers to the village!

Saturday 6th February at 6pm

The Crown Pub



Contact Anne 391141 or Grace 07807707925

Parish people: Our prayers are with the family of Joyce Smith and Tony Woods who passed away last month.