



# Marcham & District News

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

Your Independent Local Newsheet – [www.madnews.co.uk](http://www.madnews.co.uk)



MARCH 2020 VOL: 42 NO: 3

READ & RECYCLE!

FREE



▲ Come and Join the Midweek Walkers see page 7

▲ Pre-school get stitching see page 11



▲ Marcham's new hall is looking good see page 9



▲ Little Angels in the tunnel and drawing away their worries! see page 11

*Don't Forget to put your clocks forward by one hour on 29th March*

## Diary for March

10 Tue	Singing is Good for You, Duffield Place, 14.00-15.30	7
10 Tue	Marcham Society: Liz Woolley, All Saints' Church, 19.30	7
11 Wed	Marcham Parish Council Meeting, Duffield Place, 19.30	3
12 Thu	Midweek Walk: The Tite Inn, Chadlington 12.30 lunch / 13.30 walk	7
14 Sat	Table Top and Car Boot Sale, Hanney WM Hall, 10.00-13.00	13
15 Sun	Music in the Vale: Springtime Variations, Stanford-i-t-Vale, 15.00	2
18 Wed	Abingdon Arts Society: Raphael, Trinity Church, Abingdon, 10.30 & 14.00	2
19 Thu	Marcham WI: Annual Meeting, Denman College, 19.15 <b>** earlier than usual!</b>	7

20 Fri	<b>Deadline for next MADNews, 17.00</b> <a href="mailto:editor@madnews.co.uk">editor@madnews.co.uk</a>	
21 Sat	Denman Faberdashery Sale, 10.00-15.00	13
21 Sat	ABRAIL20, Abingdon College, 10.00-17.00	13
21 Sat	Wantage and Grove Lions: Cash Bingo and Raffle, Grove, 18.45	13
24 Tue	Singing is Good for You, Duffield Place, 14.00-15.30	7
26 Thu	Jim Moray with Tom Moore, Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon, 19.00	19
28 Sat	Sing The Roling Stones with Jo Sercombe, Steventon, 10.00-16.00	2
31 Mar – 2 Apr	Frankenstein, Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon, 19.30	5

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

## THINGS TO DO

### Mothering Sunday 22nd March 2020

Spoil Mum, Auntie, Sister, Daughter or anyone  
in your family!

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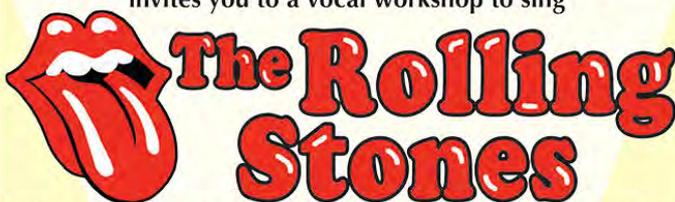
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For further information please contact Christine  
on **07787 831831** or email [tickets@harmonyinspires.org](mailto:tickets@harmonyinspires.org)

Limited number of places so early booking advisable!



The Arts Society Abingdon (ex ADFAS) is holding  
its monthly lecture on **Wednesday 18th March,**  
**10.30am and 2.00pm,** at Trinity Church, Conduit  
Road, Abingdon, OX14 1DB.

**Raphaël: Painter of Perfection**  
by Arts Society Lecturer Paula Nuttall

Raphael was one of the greatest and most influential of all painters  
– a superstar even in his own lifetime, who remains a byword  
for classic perfection. Charting his astonishing artistic evolution  
from his early years in Florence, Paula looks at his meteoric rise  
to fame at the papal court in Rome, to his sudden death at the  
height of his powers aged only 37. A timely lecture 400 years after  
his death in 1520.

Non-Members welcome, £6.00. The lectures are one hour long,  
but leave extra time for announcements etc.

For more information on future lectures and other  
activities see [www.theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk](http://www.theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk) or  
email [info@theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk](mailto:info@theartsocietyabingdon.org.uk)

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### Springtime Variations

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mailing list and obtain advance information on future concerts please  
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[www.musicinthevale.net](http://www.musicinthevale.net)



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& Southmoor  
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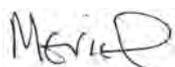
For more information contact Mick 01865 820818

Dear Readers

Spring is definitely on its way– the birds are tweeting, the clocks are going forward, daffs and snowdrops are everywhere and the roads are being dug up!

I have had the privilege of viewing the new community centre from the inside (rather than just peering in through the windows!) and it is all looking wonderful. Please read the note about access to the field on page 5, as it will be restricted until work on the pitches is complete.

Until next time



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Jane Mander

**DEADLINES**

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

**ADDITIONAL COPIES**

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.

**POLICE**

PCSO Rich Osborn C9323  
[Richard.Osborn@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Richard.Osborn@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk) for Marcham  
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Tel: 01235 534001

[Richard.webber77@ntlworld.com](mailto:Richard.webber77@ntlworld.com)

**DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

*Marcham and Shippon*

Catherine Webber, Orchard Barn, Sutton Wick Lane, Drayton OX14 4HJ  
Tel: 01235 534001

[Webbercatherine1@gmail.com](mailto:Webbercatherine1@gmail.com)

For other councillors go to

[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

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**MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

**Annual Meeting of Electors**

The Annual Meeting of Electors will take place in May. This year the guest speaker will talk about ways of assisting local communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live and work, by producing a neighbourhood plan. The plan would develop a shared vision for the neighbourhood, from identifying and protecting assets to helping control what happens in the locality. This is a meeting for anyone in the parish, where you too can hear short reports from the Parish Council, your District and County Councillors and Marcham School on what has been happening over the last 12 months. More details next month.

**North Street (southern end) – condition of pavements**

The County Council has now inspected the pavements, and has concluded that they were not at the stage of requiring immediate works. The County Council will keep them under review.

**Oxfordshire County Council - Draft Minerals and Waste Sites Plan**

The Parish Council has looked at this plan and the sites proposed. There is a site at Grove which is not too far away, and the Parish Council has expressed concern regarding the additional traffic that it would generate through Marcham given the Air Quality Management Plan. The consultation is open until 4th of March. Anyone wishing to comment can find the documents on the County Councils website under “Consultations”.

**Vale of White Horse District Council – S. 106 Planning Art Fund**

The District Council collects funds from new developments to go towards the provision of art in the Vale of White Horse area. Funds have been raised from the housing developments in the parish which have to be spent on site or within the vicinity. Various criteria have to be met, such as having permanent public access to the artwork, and obtaining the support of the Parish Council. The Council has been looking at ideas where the art funding could be spent within Marcham.

**Planning applications considered by the Parish Council**

Amendment to MW.0049/11 for change of use from agriculture and to site for importation and storage and screening of waste soils at Swannybrook Farm, Kingston Bagpuize. The Council objected as additional vehicle impact would be detrimental to the amenity of the residents who lived within the air quality management area.

P20/V003 /HH demolition of conservatory and erection of single storey rear extension at 6 The Farthings. The Council had no objections, but commented on the

accumulative effect on the wider area of the loss of permeable land.

P20/V0168/HH single storey side extension to create study and utility room at 22 Anson Close. The Council had no objections, but commented on the accumulative effect on the wider area of the loss of permeable land.

P20/V0210/DIS discharge of conditions - parking, footpath link, travel information, charging points for erection of 47 dwellings on land off Sheepstead Road. Council expressed concern regarding speeding traffic in Sheepstead Road and the moving out of the 30 mph speed limit. It wanted all properties to have electric charging points.

**Date of Next Council Meeting:**

Wednesday 11th March at 7.30p.m. in the residents’ lounge, Duffield Place. Please check the Council’s website in case arrangements change.

**Clerk to the Council:** Mrs. L. Martin, 90 Howard Cornish Rd, 01865 391833  
[clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk)  
[www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.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.

**MINIBUS SERVICE TO TESCO**



There is a **weekly run on Mondays to Tesco** for any residents with transport difficulties. Leaving Duffield Place at 9.45am (and other places by arrangement) and returning from Tesco at around 11am - a voluntary contribution (min £2) to cover costs. Can you spare a couple of hours every few weeks to join our rota - or would you like to join the passengers?  
Contact Marion Belcher on 07507 797757 for more information

Planning a night out with friends?  
A birthday trip with the kids?  
A family trip to the beach?  
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Dear Editor

I moved out of the village almost 20 years ago when I remarried, but have kept in close contact with Marcham through WI, Singing is Good For You, and various other activities. I never had the privilege of knowing Chris Ricketts, although I knew of her. She was involved in so much of village life, and gave a huge amount of her time to various groups and organisations. Without doubt she will be sadly missed.

I heartily endorse Martin Thorne's suggestion that the new Community Centre be named after Chris. It is surely a fitting tribute to this very special lady.

CAROLE SANDS

**SPORTS PITCH WORKS ON THE ANSON FIELD**

As the village is aware, the new community building is in its final stage of construction by Thomas Homes. The next stage is for White Horse Contractors to commence the sports pitch works. This work is due to start w/c 16th March, with fencing work to secure the area, starting imminently.

Please note that during the earth works period, to comply with health and safety, there will be no access to the Anson Field for the general public, including the play area. The footpath along the southern boundary will remain open at all times, however, **the footpath entrance from Tower Close will also be closed for access.**

It is hoped that the earth works phase will take 4 weeks to complete but this is of course dependent on the weather.

Once the new pitches have been laid, fencing around the new pitches will be erected allowing access to other parts of the Anson Field. The play area will be usable again, a link will be created from the Tower Close access and the footpath along the southern boundary will be unaffected.

White Horse Contractors will be maintaining the pitches during the 12 month establishment phase. This will include regular mowing, fertilizing and selective herbicide application, with all fencing currently expected to be removed by March 2021.

THE ANSON TRUST

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



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**Bring this leaflet, check out our competitive prices & have a free hot drink!**

**Frankenstein  
by Nick Dear  
based on the novel  
by Mary Shelley**

Tuesday 31 March  
Wednesday 1 April  
Thursday 2 April  
@ 7.30pm  
Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon, OX14 3HZ  
Tickets: £10 (age 12+ only)  
from: Mostly Books 36 Stert St, Abingdon OX14 3JP  
moonhawk.org  
or on the door



Moonhawk, the new theatre company based in Abingdon-on-Thames, has been created to give opportunities to actors and technicians of all ages with a focus on supporting performers wanting to go to drama school. The company will be performing a wide range of different plays, both new and old. We welcome anyone interested in all aspects of theatre production on or backstage.

The company's first production will be Frankenstein by Mary Shelley. The story was written by the 18 year old Mary in 1816! It was created as part of a competition between Mary, her husband Percy Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron to see who could write the best horror story. After days of thinking, Mary had a dream about a scientist who created life and was horrified by what he had done. The novel was first published, anonymously, when she was only 20 years old.

## HOME & GARDEN

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*References Available*

Proprietor: Mr A Bunce

### LOTTERY WINDOWS

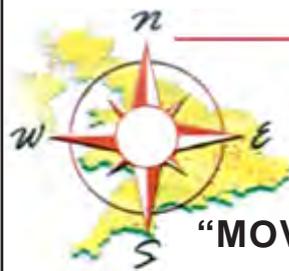
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and have a delicious light lunch!*

**Dates for this Term**

4th March	18th March
11 March	25th March

## Marcham WI

**Date:** Thursday, 19th March  
**Time:** 7.15pm  
**Venue:** Denman College  
**Topic:** Annual Meeting



Our Annual Meeting is on 19th March when we'll be choosing a President and Committee for the next year. Following the business of the meeting, we will welcome our speaker Jane Bowler from **Dews Meadow Farm**. Many of you will already know Jane from a local family farm producing specialist food, which can be found in Marcham Village Shop. If you do, or if you don't, come and find out more about how the food and sausages are made just up the road. We'll also be having a food themed raffle, so any donations will be welcome.

**Please note the slightly earlier start time of 7.15pm.**

*New members and visitors are always welcome  
Visitors £5, members free*

*For further information, please contact:  
Pippa Hoath 01865 391349 pippahoath@gmail.com*

### National Trust: Abingdon & District Association

2.30-3.30pm Tuesday March 24th

Trinity Church Hall, Abingdon

The House of the Future



National Trust

On Tuesday March 24, Jonathan Finnerty will tell us about the House of the future, house for the future: buildings to help save our planet.

One of the big challenges today is sustainable and affordable housing. Green Unit has designed an exciting way to cope with this, creating spaces that can change and grow as you do. This is a really fascinating project that has huge potential and ticks all the boxes for the environment and low-energy. Based in Chiselhampton and made there, the pods are built to exact client needs. These eco-friendly buildings are very versatile as well as attractive. The event takes place at Trinity Church Hall, Conduit Road, Abingdon OX14 1DB at 2.30pm. There is a donation of £3 only for non-members and everyone is welcome. For more information, ring Ruth on 01235 524119..

### MARCHAM SOCIETY MIDWEEK WALK:

**Thursday 12th March**

For this spring walk of just over 4 miles we will meet for lunch at 12.30 at The Tite Inn, Mill Close, Chadlington, OX7 3NY (Grid Ref: SP 324 224). Heading out of the village on Chipping Norton Road, Mill Close is on the left. We will start our walk from the Inn at 1.30 and will be enjoying good views across the Edenlode Valley. There is a fairly large car park but the Inn itself is quite compact and very popular so best to arrive no later than 12:30. Phone John Guast on 391420 for further details. If you are not on our mailing list please let us know your contact details - since very occasionally late changes need to be made.. Members free, non-members £1. We always welcome new walkers.



### MARCHAM CRICKET CLUB NEWS

It's that time of year again, when willow starts to strike ball, hopefully! The first test of this starts at indoor nets on Friday 28 February, and continues every Friday evening through to 24 April. This takes place at Radley School from 7.30pm until 9.00pm. This has proved an ideal location, with excellent facilities. No excuses for being 'yorked' or wide deliveries!



The club again has two teams in the Saturday OCA league, with a full fixture list throughout the summer. The first team are hoping to build on its mid-table division 3 position of last year, and the seconds to at least finish one position higher in its league. No guesses as to where we finished!

The fact that there is a significant difference in abilities between the two teams ensures there is the right level of participation available for all cricketers. On this basis the club (as always) is looking to welcome new players, young or old; experienced or beginners.

We are a likeable bunch, who enjoy the challenge of bat and ball with banter, humour, and everything that goes with it! So if you are interested, please speak to secretary Trevor on 07748696733 or e-mail [trevor3chancel@aol.com](mailto:trevor3chancel@aol.com). Alternatively for nets contact Chris Webb at [chris.webb32@hotmail.com](mailto:chris.webb32@hotmail.com)



### The Development of Oxford's Suburbs

1850-1914

Liz Woolley

*All Saints' Church, Marcham*

**7.30 for 7.45pm Tuesday 10th March**

Non-members always welcome £3

Further details: Sheila Dunford (391439)

[www.marchamsociety.org.uk](http://www.marchamsociety.org.uk)

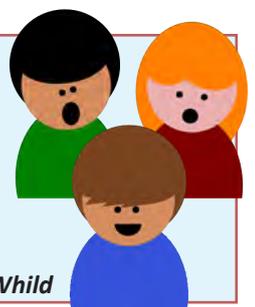
### SINGING IS GOOD FOR YOU!

Tuesday 10th and 24th March

From 2 – 3.30pm in the residents' lounge at Duffield Place

- Sing a wide range of popular songs
- Get to know fellow villagers and forget your aches, pains and woes!

Phone 391270 for more details *Christine Whild*



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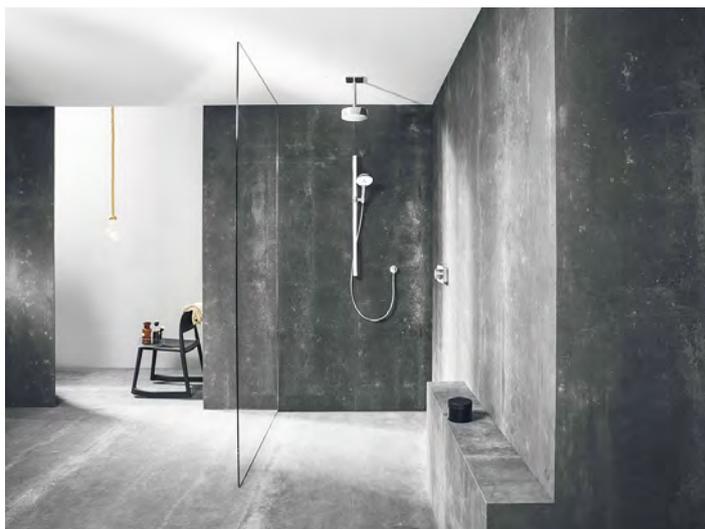
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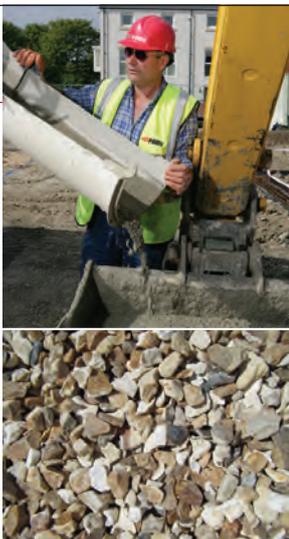
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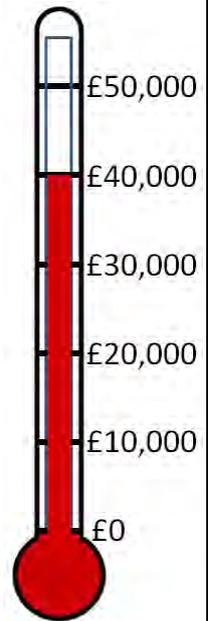
## Our new hall is nearing completion!

Building work on the new hall building and fitting of all internal installed equipment is nearing completion. During March, the completed building will be surveyed, snagging will resolve any residual issues and documentation on the building and its systems will be compiled ready for handover when our furnishing and fitting work starts. The exact timing will depend on completion of all legal arrangements.

In parallel with the building handover, construction work (already started) on the MUGA will continue and work will start in early March on grading and re-seeding the playing pitch areas. During this time large areas of the field will be fenced off over several months for ground work and grass-seeding, and access will be very limited. We hope that people will be patient over this period while the work is done and the new grass is established.



Fund-raising continues for the furnishings and fittings needed to bring the new hall into operation. We will announce the outcome of the Moonrakers concert in the next issue of MAD News. Sponsor-a-brick, at the village shop, has now reached a total of **£3300**. We hope to make it to the target of **£4000** before the hall opens—please help us do this!



The Senior Citizens Club, which has been formally wound up, has decided to donate its bank balance of **£1512.09** to the fund—we are very grateful for this generous donation.

We have received a cheque for **£408** from Waitrose Abingdon as a result of the December token scheme. Thank you to all those Waitrose shoppers who supported MCG in the run-up to Christmas.

We would also like to thank Eileen’s Abingdon for a very helpful donation of **£100** towards our fund.

We are in the process of confirming hall bookings with potential users. To make sure your request is in our system, please contact [jim.asher@btinternet.com](mailto:jim.asher@btinternet.com) if you have not heard from us recently.

The board of trustees of MCG currently has two vacancies. We have one candidate who has offered to join us and we are also keen to fill the remaining vacancy. If you feel you have skills, experience and some time available to help us, please contact Jim Asher (391727) to discuss what is involved—without obligation at this initial stage. The current trustees are: Jim Asher, Dan Barnes, Carolyn Blackmore, Suzanne Crafer, Adam Grady, Trevor Hill, Ruth Mander and Colin Trinder.

We will keep you updated on progress here, with updates, photos and posts on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/marchamcentre/](https://www.facebook.com/marchamcentre/) or [@marchamcentre](https://www.instagram.com/marchamcentre), and our website, [www.marchamcentre.org](http://www.marchamcentre.org). We are happy to answer any questions you may have.



Our new Marcham Village Hall is nearing completion!



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**Familiarity And Reliability**

I'm compiling this article, sat in front of a winter warming open fire, in one of my favourite watering holes in the Peak District. The Rambler in Edale, surrounded by the familiarity of this long established pub, its black and white imagery on the walls, going back 100+ years. Scenes from locals, scaling the nearby Kinder Scout mountain, that I can see out the window. Or images about their farming life, here in the Hope Valley.



I can see Kinder out of the window by turning my head like an owl, but in front, out the other window, I can see Mam Tor, with it remains of the road from Castleton still visible at some angles, even though it was abandoned in 1979 due to subsidence. Mam Tor isn't known locally as Shivering Hill for nothing, it's always on the move as it just a pile of loose shingle.

Comforting are the sounds of the familiar bar staff and the licensee who has finally made the place a going concern since arriving around 2013.

Familiar too are the taps on the bar, or the reliable food menu. We all have these bolt holes. Somewhere we know, can rely on, feel safe in.

Your garden offers a safe, familiar place for the wildlife that colonizes. Is it a reliable habitat though? Does our gardening, maintenance and husbandry develop or destroy habitats? Without an eye on the bigger picture about how our garden's micro habitat fits in with what's going on in the wider community; it's hard to know.

It may be your garden links up with what's happening out there in the local area, offering a green corridor and refuge with which wildlife can move between locations. It could be your garden offers something that's missing. Whatever, don't change things too quickly, or too often. Your garden's wildlife likes familiarity and reliability, just like me, in my Peak District retreat.

*If anything changes here, it's not the same. If anything alters too much in your garden, what impact does that have?*

**Happy Gardening!**

**Stuart Mabbutt**

01865 747243 [www.wildmaninspires.co.uk](http://www.wildmaninspires.co.uk)



**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO LISTEN TO CHILDREN READ IN LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Can you spare an hour or two a week to listen to children read in a local primary school? Schoolreaders is looking for more volunteers in Oxfordshire to carry out this important role.

Reading time for many children at home and at school is often insufficient and one in four children are now leaving primary school unable to read to the required standard. This can have a lifelong consequence. No qualifications are necessary, just a good command of spoken and written English.

Schoolreaders is flexible and will match your availability to an appropriate, local school. Our volunteers find the scheme incredibly rewarding, knowing that a few hours helping a child learn to read each week can have such a great impact on their life chances.

Please visit the website [www.schoolreaders.org](http://www.schoolreaders.org) to join or call 01234 924111 for further information. Charity Number: 1159157

**MARCHAM PRE-SCHOOL**

At Marcham preschool we are committed to providing experiences that extend children's knowledge and opportunities. So just one of the things we planned last month was a 'mending week', with the chance to (safely) explore a sewing machine and make their own bag! The children were fascinated by the machine and were so pleased to get to push the foot pedal and watch the fabric being stitched! We also repaired some toys and clothes much to their delight!



We have also had a visit from a bagpipe player and competed in some Highland games!

We have limited availability for September 2020 so please do get in touch NOW if you are interested in finding out more - we take children from two years old and have a waiting list for September 2021! It's never too early to register your interest, whether you are pregnant or have just had a baby - times goes so quickly - don't miss out!

**Nicky Sanford,**

Early Years Teacher, Marcham Pre-School

01865 392101 [Marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk)

[www.marcham-preschool.weebly.com](http://www.marcham-preschool.weebly.com)

**Baby Room** Our smallest Little Angels have been getting creative this month! Enjoying lots of different mark-making activities. From



painting their hands to sand and water play! It's been messy but lots of fun! They have also been exploring our outdoor learning garden, crawling through the tunnel and being brave going down the slide.



**Toddler Room** Our toddlers love the great outdoors. They have been making their key persons some

delicious mud pies this month! Their creations have been amazing; they have been collecting all the fallen leaves from the trees during the windy days and turned them into leafy mud biscuits – yum yum! We are so proud of all our new Little Angels who have joined our family, they have all settled in so quickly! Well done and welcome to the family!

**Preschool Room** Our oldest Little Angels have been celebrating 'Bravery' this month as we learned all about being brave during Children's Mental Health Week. We spoke about how we try new things and how taking a step out of our comfort zone makes us brave. The children listened to a story about Loz The Worry Monster and they even designed their very own worry monster that can listen to all their worries. We are so proud of all our Little Angels They are brave every day whether it is taking their first steps, not giving up on a puzzle or making new friends!

**Our spaces are filling fast! If you would like some information about a space for your baby, toddler, or pre-schooler please just give Gina a call on 01865 819992 to arrange an appointment.**

[www.littleangelschildcaregroup.co.uk](http://www.littleangelschildcaregroup.co.uk)

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 We currently have people making cards, jewellery and exquisite lace, plus knitting and sewing!  
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 NB people 16+ only due to the pins, needles, scissors etc!

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**DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT****The Vale Budget**

On Wednesday, 12th February, the Vale produced and passed their new budget under extremely difficult conditions.

To remind you where local councils raise money....., they depend on three money strands:

- Government grants or New Homes Bonus.
- Business rates.
- Council tax.

Over the last decade local government has been hit disproportionately by austerity and has had 40% of its budget removed in stages. First, the Government withdrew the government grant and replaced it with the New Homes Bonus in an attempt to stimulate house building. On its own this did not work and house building remained sluggish, so little money was coming in. Then the government introduced the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework), which is the strict criteria set down for all house building. This jerked house building into action, and as a result houses started to be built much more quickly and the local council found their coffers filling up. But last year the Government removed the New Homes Bonus and replaced it with nothing! This was a big blow to us when we had just taken power in the Vale.

Secondly, the Vale is in the peculiar position of getting in very little business rates mainly because, surprisingly, it has very few businesses which they can charge with business rates. What about Milton Park, I hear you say? But Milton Park is an Enterprise Zone and these Zones are exempt from paying business rates. It is the government's way of encouraging businesses to thrive. In the past, this did not matter so much to the Vale, as Didcot A brought in a lot of revenue, but then it was dismantled, so that source dried up.

Thirdly, the previous council prided themselves on keeping council tax very low ... it is one of the cheapest council tax areas in the country. As we cannot raise council tax by more than 2% a year, we cannot improve the financial situation very much.

The result therefore was that it looked as if we would not be able to balance the budget this year! What could we do?

Everybody in the council, officers and councillors alike, was instructed to search in any way they could to find that little bit of saving. Each cabinet member worked hard with their officers in their department, nit-picking the accounts etc. Many hours of work were put in. And the impossible happened. The budget was made to balance and was signed off by the 151 officer. Furthermore, £600,000 was saved to start a new Local Plan, in which we hope to put new policies to fulfil those promises we made to our electorate; £100,000 was saved to start work on climate change, spearheaded by the climate change committee; single parents with children under the age of five will have their council tax reduced; more disabled people will be eligible to be exempt from council tax by widening the definition of "disabled" and a small number of people, who qualify for bereavement support payments, will have their council tax reduced.

It has been an exhausting time, especially for the Vale officers, but we got there in the end. Now we wait to hear what the government is planning to give local councils in place of the New Homes Bonus. After all, it seems to be on a spending spree now, and what better way to spend than to give local councils money to improve the lives of their constituents!

CATHERINE WEBBER Cllr VWHDC - DC for Marcham Ward  
01235 534001 or Webbercatherine1@gmail.com

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT****"The blame game."**

When things go wrong, it seems there is always someone to blame. "Heads must roll!" or, more recently, "Deputy Heads must roll". It seems that if heads of some sort don't roll, we are never satisfied. In politics, at all levels, it seems that this rule is even more fiercely applied than elsewhere. If the social worker did not pick up on someone in trouble, or the train doesn't run to time, or the bus doesn't turn up, or the pothole hasn't been filled, or the streetlamp has been off for months, or my neighbor is annoying me, someone is always answerable. Whilst it may be true that everything that goes wrong is always at least one person's fault, society often seems to want to spend more time and energy discovering who

is to blame than it does in trying to ensure that the same mistake doesn't happen again.

I wonder how many well-meaning, hard-working people have suffered as a result. I am not talking about scapegoating here – that is unforgivable – I am talking about people who may well have got things wrong, but who are then asked to pay a far too heavy price as a result of society's attitude to blame.

So, why am I writing this? As a District and County Councillor, I am often painfully aware of how blame can be shunted around because no-one is prepared to risk being blamed.

"That's not my job, it's his/hers"

"That's not my department, it's theirs"

"That's not my Council's responsibility, it's the other's"

"I never received the email."

"Government won't give us the money to do it, or to do it better."

I receive more than a dozen or so emails a day requiring me to act. Here is how I apportion blame:

- As far as possible, I try to act quickly (Not always successful – my fault)
- I nearly (my fault) always manage to pass on to a relevant officer or council department the concerns expressed in the email. Quite often, I have to follow up with a further request (their fault) to get anything done. Sometimes, in the eyes of the email writer, I am wholly responsible for the issue (not fair, their fault). Sometimes things slip through the net because I thought the problem was resolved (my fault) or because someone at a Council has let it slip (their fault) or nothing can be done (government's fault or everyone's fault).

I am sure you get where I am going with this. In the end, the only thing that really matters is that the problem is solved and, if it can't be, it is passed on or up to someone else who may be able to solve it.

It seems that "pinning blame" on someone has become an objective above all else and this does not necessarily create an atmosphere where individuals work best, where councils and councillors work best and where society works best. Blame properly and fairly applied should improve things. It should always be tempered with patience and understanding that people make mistakes and, in most cases, they are the people most likely to avoid the same mistakes in future.

RICHARD WEBBER Cllr OCC SC & Marcham Division.  
Richard.webber77@ntlworld.com or 01235 534001

**NEWS FROM DAVID JOHNSTON**

The first weeks as an MP are a whirlwind, whether you've worked in politics or not before. I haven't worked in politics before, but even as someone who has run organisations it is a considerable adjustment, and it is just as much of one for those who've worked for MPs or Ministers before. One challenge is simply finding your way around: although the House of Commons is supposed to have only 4 floors, all the nooks and crannies mean it has around 65 different levels! One of the campaign volunteers was pleased to see me on BBC news, she was just slightly disappointed I was in the background looking lost.

The moment you are elected you begin receiving 150-200 emails every day, but you don't have an office or any staff and so people end up waiting for you to reply a lot longer than you want them to. I try and always prioritise constituents in urgent need first, followed by local organisations as national ones just bombard all MPs regularly whether or not you have any direct connection to the issues they deal with. I have picked up some local campaigns where my predecessor left off, including that to try and reopen Grove station. I've also become patron of 2 local charities, Play2Give and Secret Santa 365, both of which may well be familiar to you.

Beyond the constituency, I was pleased to get my maiden speech out of the way on 14th January, during a debate on education. I was asked to be the Conservative Co-Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on social mobility, given my background in running charities that tried to improve social mobility before coming into politics. I have also been elected to the Education Select Committee. I look forward to learning how both types of structure can influence policy.

*continued on page 17*



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**Neighbourhood Team  
Newsletter for Marcham  
Anti-social behaviour (ASB)**



Last month we reported that 4 young males had been voluntarily interviewed in relation to ASB in Park Road, Abingdon. They all admitted to causing ASB and are being dealt with through the Youth Justice system. They have been referred to the Youth Offending Team and there has been a marked decrease in issues in the area since they were spoken to by police.

A young male has been issued a Youth Restorative Disposal and placed on an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) after he was voluntarily interviewed in relation to a criminal damage in the town centre. The male admitted breaking a glass door at Poundland, Abingdon. Our work has been ongoing in deterring and disrupting the anti-social behaviour that has been occurring in the town centre. Further letters have been sent to parents of young people that have been spoken to in relation to their behaviour. We were invited by the head teacher of Larkmead School to discuss the ASB and to see how we could work together. It is positive to see a school wanting to work in partnership with the team to combat the issues.

**Burglary** We have seen a slight decrease in residential burglaries over the last few weeks. However, we would advise residents to remain vigilant and to report any suspicious behaviour by calling 101 or 999 in an emergency. **If you would like any crime prevention advice, please contact the team by emailing [AbingdonNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:AbingdonNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)**

**What the neighbourhood team have been doing**

The Neighbourhood Team offered crime prevention and burglary advice at the opening of the new Seacourt Hall in Botley. The building is home to Botley Baptist Church, the library, the parish council, Kumon study centre and the Botley community centre.

PCSO's Ali Blood, Maddie Highmoor and Susie Morley gave a presentation to 'Back to 35' at Abingdon Baptist Church on 'Courier Fraud' - what to do if you have been a victim and how to prevent becoming one.

PCSO Sue Haynes and a South & Vale Police Cadet gave a road safety talk to reception class children to remind them how important it is to hold an adult's hand when crossing the road, to always look both ways and listen to hear if there are any vehicles coming.

Several members of the team attended a 'Deaf Awareness' event at our TVP training college with guest speakers from the Mary Hare School, who gave us the opportunity to learn some Sign Language.

**Have Your Say meetings**

Please come along and speak to a PCSO about any local concerns:

- Monday 9th March 2020, 10am-12pm at the Monday Market, Market Place, Abingdon with PCSOs Ali Blood, Susie Morley & Maddie Highmoor who will be joined by NatWest Community Banker, Richard Anderson.

- Wednesday 11th March 2020, 1pm-2.30pm at Nationwide, Abingdon with PCSOs Susie Morley & Ali Blood who will be offering fraud prevention advice along with staff from the building society.

- Saturday 14th March 2020, 10.30am- 11am at Peachcroft Christian Centre with PCSO Selene Moquet.

- Tuesday 17th March 2020, time TBC at NatWest, Market Place, Abingdon with PCSOs Ali Blood & Susie Morley who will be assisting staff with their 'Friends against scams' event.

**Contact us** If you want any advice or to contact the neighbourhood team you can call us on the police non-emergency number 101 or if it is an emergency then dial 999. You can also contact us via email [AbingdonOuterNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:AbingdonOuterNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk). To view information on your neighbourhood team visit the Thames Valley Police website at: [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk). Receive free local crime alerts and crime prevention advice by registering at [www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk](http://www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk) today. The Thames Valley Police Twitter account is kept up to date with what we are up to; please follow us @TVPSouthandVale

One of the privileges of being an MP is that every week you see more of what your constituency has to offer and more of the great initiatives that local people are involved in. I am writing this in the middle of February having just visited the 21 acre site of the Didcot Railway Centre, getting a great behind the scenes look that I'm keen for my mother, a railway enthusiast, to experience. I also went along to the Big Fix Repair Cafe organised by Sustainable Didcot, in which volunteers mend everything – from toys and clothes, to tools and electricals – so that the items get a new lease of life and don't end up in landfill. Having just collected the keys to the new home we'll be living in in the constituency, I am looking forward to immersing myself in the community more fully.

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

**Abingdon Reservoir – Latest News from GARD**

Ofwat and The Environment Agency have responded to water companies' plans by requiring a major strategic study to inform fresh plans for water resources across the South-East. GARD will be closely monitoring developments during the research period, likely to be the next three years. In the meantime, GARD will continue to:



- Keep up the pressure on the water companies and continue to ensure that government ministers, local MPs, councillors and all other stakeholders are kept well informed.
- Work with local parish, district and Oxfordshire County Council, encouraging them to engage with the consultation process. Some have registered their interest as stakeholders in the strategic study, and more have agreed to.
- Press our view that the abandonment of water companies extracting from threatened chalk streams, something which we wholly support, does NOT require the reservoir to be constructed (as is put out in Thames Water and Affinity Water propaganda). In concert with CPRE in Oxfordshire and Hertfordshire we will press for our cheaper, more easily delivered options, using existing reservoirs near London or water transfers from the Midlands to supply the Hertfordshire Chiltern area and take the pressure off the streams.

Additionally:

- Commission an extended study into the issue of flooding in the reservoir area. We hope this will provide detailed information about the risks for each of the surrounding villages and South Abingdon.

**GARD's AGM will be on Tuesday 28 April** at 7:30 pm in the Millennium Room, Steventon Village Hall. We urge you to attend if you can. We are also looking to broaden our committee and would particularly welcome interest from villages other than Steventon. Please contact Deborah Bennett at [gard.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:gard.secretary@gmail.com) for further information.

[www.abingdonreservoir.org.uk](http://www.abingdonreservoir.org.uk)

**DRAYTON SEQUENCE DANCE CLUB**



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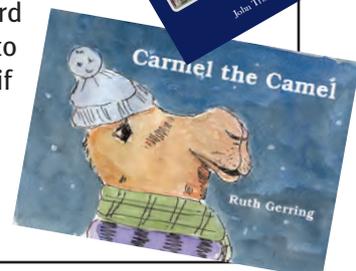
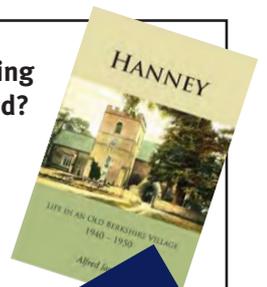
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# Household Waste Recycling Centres

**Closed for 2 days in March & April**

During March and April, your Household Waste Recycling Centre will be closing for two days to carry out a deep clean and essential maintenance

Closing dates:

Alkerton (Banbury)	Tues 3 & Wed 4 March
Ardley (Bicester)	Tues 17 & Wed 18 March
Dix Pit (Stanton Harcourt)	Tues 24 & Wed 25 March
Drayton (Abingdon)	Tues 28 & Wed 29 April
Oakley Wood (Wallingford)	Tues 31 March & Wed 1 April
Redbridge (Oxford)	Tues 10 & Wed 11 March
Stanford (Faringdon)	Tues 21 & Wed 22 April

Visit [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wasteclosure](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wasteclosure) for full details, including details of your nearest alternative site during closures

For those residents with van or trailer permits, please note these can be used at any of our centres

Oxfordshire is the top performing county in the country, recycling 58% of household waste. Our residents help to make that happen but there is still more we can do to increase the county's recycling.

The Waste Wizard is the county council's response to the evil spell that no-longer-needed items sometimes cast over residents when it's time to recycle or reuse them. The online tool allows anyone bewitched by the bin to type in the name of any item along with their postcode to find out whether it can be repaired, reused, donated, recycled or if it needs to go into a specific bin or can be disposed of at a Household Waste Recycling Centre.

There's lots of different ways to get rid of waste but you only need one Waste Wizard to help make sure you do the right thing.

Boost the number of items that get repaired locally

Increase the number of items reused or donated

Cut the amount of contamination in kerbside collection bins

Ensure anything that can't be reused, repaired or donated is properly recycled or disposed of.

*Get your waste to the right place*

*Type in your postcode and the name of any item to find out whether it can be reused, repaired, donated, recycled, if it needs to go into a specific bin or can be disposed of at a Household Waste Recycling Centre - [oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard](http://oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard)*



Fyfield and Tubney Churches

## JUMBLE SALE

Saturday 4th April 2020 at 2.00 pm  
Southmoor Village Hall  
OX13 5BY

Accessories, Books, Bric-a-brac,  
Clothes, Raffle, Jewellery, Teas, etc.

Free Entry



# share your warmth

For many older people, the winter fuel payment is vital to help them meet increasing fuel costs and stay warm this winter. But not everyone needs their winter fuel payment to keep warm this winter. That's why Age UK Oxfordshire, together with Active Oxfordshire, have teamed up to offer you an alternative way you could put your winter fuel payment to good use. You could choose to donate it and help people in Oxfordshire to become more physically active and combat loneliness. Share your warmth this winter!

Being physically active quite literally makes us feel warm and we all know the many health benefits of being physically active; and exercising as part of a group is also a great way to be socially connected to others to feel emotionally warm, which we know is so important for our mental health and wellbeing.

For some people who are housebound, and are not able to attend an exercise class or activity, loneliness and depression could easily take hold. Age UK Oxfordshire, with Active Oxfordshire's support, are working every day to enable people to be more active in later life and to bring people together to enjoy life. They need your help to reach more people with more activities and support.

Your £200 would:

- support 20 housebound people to do specialist seated exercises at home with a home exercise pack
- support 40 older people to attend a tailored group exercise class, keeping them active, mobile and socially connected.
- enable 100 housebound older people in Oxfordshire to receive a friendly phone call

<https://justgiving.com/campaign/shareyourwarmth>

or send your cheque to: Fundraising, Age UK Oxfordshire, 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT

Anna McKay [annamckay@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:annamckay@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk)  
0345 450 1276

Thursday 26th March

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# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

[www.marcham-with-garford.org.uk](http://www.marcham-with-garford.org.uk)



Dear Friends,

I hope you have survived the winds and rains of last month without too much discomfort - it was certainly a month of storms.

Although the weather has been rough, the first signs of spring are all around us. We have snowdrops, daffodils and crocuses in flower in our garden, and buds on many of the shrubs. Wonderful - signs of life and hope in the warmer months ahead.

In the Church, March is also a month of hope. Lent is in full swing, with the opportunity for reflection and preparation for Easter. Along with Lent, in All Saints' we celebrate Mothering Sunday on 22nd March, together with our Annual Parochial Church Meeting [APCM], and the following Sunday, the 29th March, we welcome Bishop Colin who is coming to conduct a Confirmation service, when two of our teenagers will be affirming their faith, along with two other members from another church. It will be a truly celebratory service.

Allowing ourselves space for spiritual reflection is life affirming. Anxiety and stress are all too familiar in many lives these days, and taking 'time out' for quiet reflection can be of real help when life is pressing in from many sides. All Saints' is open in daylight hours as a place for quiet reflection and prayer, to be still, and let the strains and stresses fall away, even for a short time. 'Be still and know that I am God' says God through the Psalmist in Psalm 46: 10. And in the well-known Psalm 23, there are these words: '... he [God] leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul.' Or, as a more modern translation says: '... he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength.'

One summer, my wife and I were in the Lake District. It was early evening, and as we drove beside Buttermere and on to Crumock Water, we turned a corner to see the most amazing view: the water on the lake was still, reflecting the colours of trees and bushes, and the deep blue of the sky, and the reflections of the hills around was almost perfect. It was a breathtaking moment, and we simply stopped and caught our breath - the whole scene was one of deep peace, and quietness, and one of incredible beauty. A few minutes later, it was gone, the sun dipped beyond the horizon of the hills, and the colours dimmed as the light began to fade. But what a moment!

This March, I hope you can make time to be still, and allow God to lead you beside those 'quiet waters' of His presence, and allow His Holy Spirit to restore your soul, your innermost being. Jesus is the 'Prince of peace' and In His presence life can begin to make sense once again, and the pieces of life's jigsaw begin to fit together once more.

May God hold you and those you love in His peace this springtime, and give you hope for whatever lies ahead.

With my warmest gratitude,  
Richard

**Regular events: Sunday services** at 10am & **5pm**, **Toddler Group**, Tuesdays 10.00am-11.30am **Wednesday mid-week communion, 10.30am** in Duffield Place Lounge. **Village Café**, Wednesdays 12pm in the Baptist Hall during March **Friday Club**, 5.30-6.30pm at All Saints' Church (primary-age)

#### **Contacts:**

**Rev. Canon Richard Zair** 391319 [vicar@allsaintsmarcham.org](mailto:vicar@allsaintsmarcham.org) **Jill Rowe** *Children's and families Minister* 390885 [families@allsaintsmarcham.org](mailto:families@allsaintsmarcham.org) **Rosemary Siebert** *Associate Priest* 07763330113 **Rob Finch** *Youth Worker* 07888331708, [rob@marchamyouth.org](mailto:rob@marchamyouth.org) **Tamsin Gilbert** *Parish Administrator* 391319 [info@allsaintsmarcham.org](mailto:info@allsaintsmarcham.org)