

Marcham & District News

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

MAY 2023 VOL: 45 No: 5

READ & RECYCLE!

FREE



The Coronation of Their Majesties KING CHARLES III & QUEEN CAMILLA

You are cordially invited...

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our King's Coronation

on Sunday 7th May at Marcham Centre

May Diary

4 Thur	Local Elections 2023	7	20 Sat	Deadline for next issue of MADNews, 17.00 Email editor@madnews.co.uk	
7 Sun	Coronation Community Day, Marcham Centre	5	22 Mon	Marcham Society: Chimney Meadows, 19.15	9
12-13	Marcham Big Weekend, 12.00 – 21.00	7	24 Wed	Marcham Parish Meeting, Marcham Village Hall, 19.30	9
14 Sun	Flexicare Sponsored Walk	14	24 Wed	Community Lunch, Marcham Centre, 12.00-14.00	13
14 Sun	RDA Plant Sale, Southmoor, 10.00-13.00	11	24 Wed	'In Conversation', Mostly Books, 19.00	19
15 Mon	Marcham WI: Royal Footman, Marcham Centre, 19.30	9	27 Sat	People's Countryside Debate, Bothy Vineyard, 15.30	15
16 Tue	Marcham Parish Council Meeting, Marcham Village Hall, 19.30	3			
17 Wed	Abingdon Arts Society: Downton to Gatsby, Abbey Cinema, 10.30 & 14.00	7			
20 Sat	Abingdon Air and Country Show, Dalton Barracks, 10.00-17.30	7			

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

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Bank Holiday 2023 Waste Collections

~~Wednesday 3 May~~ **Thursday 4 May Rubbish & Food Waste**

~~Wednesday 10 May~~ **Thursday 11 May Green, Food & Garden Waste**

~~Wednesday 31 May~~ **Thursday 1 June Rubbish & Food Waste**

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Dear Readers

May is an exciting month with council elections, Coronation parties, The Big Marcham Weekend, the annual airshow, a Countryside Debate and lots of bank holidays! *The revised waste collection dates are opposite.*

There will also be another Community Lunch on Wednesday 24th catered by Thirsty Café in Marcham Centre, a sponsored walk and Art Weeks is on from 6-29 May (see page 14).

We have another in the occasional series of Hidden Lives this month: Joe Featherstone – who made a career by jumping out of planes!

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

DISCLAIMER

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

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PCSO Rich Osborn C9323
Richard.Osborn@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk for Marcham
07980 924693

Or just dial 101 (non-emergency) and omit the C from his number to leave a message.

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

Richard.webber77@ntlworld.com

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Marcham and Shippon
TBC

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

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May 2023

MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL Annual Meeting for Electors

A meeting for all in the parish to attend and learn more about what is happening in the area. See advertisement on page 7.

Elections – Thursday 4th May, 2023 – ID Requirements

Please remember your photographic ID when going to vote. This can be your passport, driving licence or blue badge, bus pass, voter ID document, or certain other government issued documents. You will need to show your photographic ID before being issued with a ballot paper. You will not be able to vote unless you have proof of ID with you.

Parish Council Election

There are 10 seats on the Parish Council. 9 nominations were received by the Vale of White Horse District Council, so no formal ballot to elect parish councillors is required. The Parish Council itself can proceed to co-opt a 10th person to complete the Council. Anyone interested should contact the Clerk. The 9 councillors who have been elected without contest are: Chitvan Amin, Sheena Bigden, Warren Brooker, Mark Harvie, Michael Hoath, Ruth Mander, James Plumb, Suzanne Saunter, and Joe Withers. These councillors live in slightly different parts of the neighbourhood, so residents are evenly represented. As Marcham is not warded, should you need any assistance with Parish Council matters, then you can approach your nearest councillor. The new Council will commence from 9th May, 2023, with the first meeting being held on 16th May.

Path – Howard Cornish Road to Harding Way – Closure for Tree work

Please note that the path from Howard Cornish Road to Harding Way will be closed mid May for approximately 3 days to allow for essential tree work to take place. The aim is to start the works on Tuesday 16th May through to Thursday 18th May. The Council apologises for any inconvenience, but the closure is needed to ensure the safety of the public whilst the works take place.

Marcham Play Area

The Parish Council has been working with the selected playground manufacturer, and their design was out for consultation in March. Comments on the design have been analysed. The Council has received 151 responses, 95% of those were Marcham residents, and 74% brought children to the play area. Some people may have misunderstood the questions, as their comments related to the existing equipment rather than the new proposals. Comments, on the whole, were very positive saying that the range of equipment is much better than what is there at the moment. There was a request for items for older children and adults, such as a zip wire, skate ramp, trampoline and outdoor gym area, as well as for items suitable for the less mobile. Concerns were raised by some about anti-social behaviour, noise and intrusion that would follow if a new play area were provided.

The Council has carefully considered all comments, and the manufacturer has worked again on the design, adding space for benches and picnic table, and possible chimes. Consideration has been given to the location

of the taller items. Items within the fence have been changed around, but the items for older children outside of the fence remain in their planned position. There is a restricted space available as sports pitches are close by, and there is a need to protect all users of the field, as well as occupants of housing, yet at the same time provide facilities for a fast growing village. The Council has lodged a planning application, and is now talking to the manufacturer regarding timescales for installation.

Waste Disposal / Grass Cutting

It is that time of year when we are all out cutting grass and managing our gardens. The Council would remind you that the Vale of White Horse District Council provides a successful recycling and waste collection service for all its residents in the district. In addition the recycling centre at Drayton is open all week from 8.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. on all days other than a Thursday when it is open even longer until 8.00 p.m. Please do not fly tip grass and garden waste on highway verges, private land, paths, in the Arboretum and Anson playing field, as such action interferes with the enjoyment of these areas, and can result in composting grass odours which in turn are a nuisance to those who live nearby.

For those of you undertaking DIY works, please note that Oxfordshire County Council has increased its charges slightly, for the disposal of items such as rubble, soil, fence panels, work tops, sinks and bathroom fittings. Charges can be paid at the Recycling Centre by card only. No cash is accepted.

Parishioner of the Year

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

Planning applications

No applications were considered at the meeting last month..

Date of Next Council Meeting:

The first meeting of the new Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 16th May, 2023 at 7.30p.m. in the Village Hall, Barrow Close OX13 6TY.

Please check the Council's website in case arrangements change

Clerk to the Council:

Mrs. L. Martin, 90 Howard Cornish Road
Tel: 01865 391833
clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk
www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk

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The Coronation of Their Majesties
King Charles III & Queen Camilla
to be celebrated on Sunday 7th May

- 10:30am Open-air church service marking the coronation
Marcham Centre - open to everyone
- from 12 noon Marcham Centre Bar open
Marcham Classic Car Club will be showing a
selection of classic cars on the Anson field
- from 12:30pm Bring-and-share picnic lunch
No 12 Jazz band will be performing on the patio
There will be tables and seating available outdoors,
but do bring a folding chair or blanket, if you have
one, to help seat as many as we can. Indoor seating
is also available
Thirsty Cafe will be serving a BBQ, no need to pre
order (see page 13 for details)

Join us in celebrating this special occasion

**Marcham Village Shop
& Post Office**
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Now that Easter has passed, we look forward to welcoming a new Monarch to the throne. Saturday 6th May sees the coronation of King Charles III – the majority of us have never witnessed a coronation and only knew the late Queen Elizabeth II as head of the British Monarchy. As a result, we will have 3 bank holiday Mondays in May and the shop will be closed.

In addition to our usual supplies, we are planning to stock some gardening items this month which will include flowering plants, tools, compost etc.



Thank you to all our lovely customers for supporting your local Village Shop and Post Office and we look forward to seeing you again very soon. Volunteers are always welcome, and we only require 2 hours of your time a week. Please come into the shop and let us know if you're interested.

May Bank Holidays
We will be **CLOSED** on
Monday 1st May
Monday 8th May
Monday 29th May

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

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PRIZES INCLUDE	
1 x pair return tickets on Eurostar	
2 x Adult & 2 x Child Tickets for Battle of the Proms at Blenheim Palace	
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LOCAL ELECTIONS 2023

It's time to choose who represents you



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12TH/13TH MAY 23

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ENTERTAINMENT

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On Thursday 4 May 2023, everyone aged 18 or over who is eligible will have the chance to vote in the district council election.

By voting in this election, you will help to choose local councillors to make decisions on important issues, such as where we should focus our efforts locally to help tackle climate change, where and how new housing gets built, how we work to ensure there's enough affordable housing and much more.

Residents in some areas will also be able to vote in parish council elections.

For all you need to know about the local elections, visit our website whitehorsedc.gov.uk/elections

New for 2023 – to vote at a polling station in this election you must bring photo ID!



The Arts Society Abingdon LECTURE

**Wednesday 17th May,
10.30am and 2.00pm**

Abbey Cinema, Abbey Close, Abingdon OX14 3JD

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Andrew Prince

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Visitors are very welcome to attend this lecture, cost £6.00. Lectures last 1 hour but allow extra time for announcements etc.

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

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Marcham WI

Next Meeting:
 7.30pm Monday, 15th May 2023
 At the Marcham Centre

Speaker: Ian Scott-Hunter,
'Memories of a Royal Footman'



As May is the month of the Coronation, we will be celebrating with a royal theme, when we welcome Ian Scott-Hunter, who will be telling us about his time as a royal footman. He travelled the world on state visits as part of Her Majesty, The Queen's entourage during the 1970s, when he sailed on the Royal Yacht Britannia and even walked some of the Monarch's corgis. We are very much looking forward to hearing about his time with the Royal Household and what goes on behind the scenes.

In keeping with the royal theme, we will be having a **'red, white and blue'** raffle this month and any donations will be very welcome and much appreciated.

Visitors and new members are always welcome.
 For further information, please contact:
 Pippa Hoath 01865 391349 pippahoath@gmail.com

MARCHAM PRE-SCHOOL



It's always tricky each month to think of just one thing to share with MADNews readers that encapsulates everything about Preschool and how we support the children.


One interest that has persisted over the last few weeks is **BIG construction!** The children have been using blocks, bricks and boxes to create, stack, build and balance.... learning new words, developing motor skills, and of course, resilience!

We have also continued with our exploration of spring time by learning the names and 'songs' of a variety of garden birds, we've made bird feeders, and examining worms....

We very much follow the interests of the children, which means we never know which direction our teaching (and their learning!) will go! And that's why we all love the Early Years..

Please do get in touch if you would like a prospectus or an application form. We accept children from age 2, however we recommend that you register your interest as soon as possible (it's never too early, so even if you have a newborn, let us know!). Call us on 01865 392101 or email marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk to arrange a visit or to receive an application form.






The Marcham Society

Monday 22nd May
7.15 for 7.45pm
Main Hall
Marcham Centre

Chimney Meadows floodplain restoration

Lisa Lane

Lisa Lane started working for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) in 2004, as Chimney Meadows Project Officer, creating a nature reserve from a mixed commercial farm.



The nature reserves that BBOWT manages are unique and special havens, alive with plants, birds, mammals and insects. Whilst being important refuges for wildlife, it is increasingly clear that these isolated areas of habitat surrounded by relatively hostile urban, agricultural and industrial landscapes are not enough. The way forward is nature conservation on a landscape scale, working with others to create a Living Landscape for people and wildlife.

Upcoming Events (please check with the organisers)

- Thursday, 4th May: Marcham Society Midweek Walk – for more details contact e.dunford@btinternet.com 01865 391439

For more information contact membership@marchamsociety.org.uk
www.marchamsociety.org.uk
Facebook: marchamsociety

NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL MARCHAM PARISH MEETING

This year the annual meeting for electors will take place on Wednesday 24th May, at 7.30 p.m. in the village hall, Barrow Close.

This is the meeting, open to all registered electors of Marcham, where you can raise issues about the village or wider parish, and discuss and even vote on any local topics. There will be reports from Marcham Primary School, and from local councillors. An update will be given on the new Play Area and Neighbourhood Plan, but there will be no separate guest speaker as such.

It provides an opportunity to hear what has been happening in the immediate area.

So please join in.
 Light refreshments will be available
You are invited to take part

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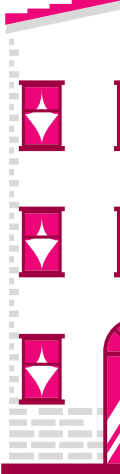
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Well April has certainly flown by hasn't it? Although the sunshine has got us excited for blue skies and warm weather, those April showers have kept us grounded! What else is there to do but put your wellies on and splash in puddles?



We've absolutely loved getting out and about in the village and as we have been learning about spring time and life cycles, it's been brilliant to be able to visit the pigs and chickens and begin to start growing some veggies in our planters! We feel so grateful to be able to experience all the lovely things that come with being in a village setting.



As well as this, we have been super busy getting prepared for our Coronation Party on 5th May! All our families are invited to join us from 3.30pm for sandwiches, cake and face-painting as we celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. It's going to be so fun!

You may have noticed that our Forest School area has been fenced in now to keep our Little Angels as safe as possible while they enjoy their forest school

lessons. Big thank you to Oxford Exteriors for doing such a great job! I'm sure you'll all agree it looks very smart now.



We really hate to disappoint families, but we are currently full! Unfortunately, we have no guaranteed spaces until 2025 so if you are thinking about adding a new Little Angel to your family, please contact us sooner rather than later!

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

T: 01865 819992E: info@littleangelschildcaregroup.co.uk

www.littleangelschildcaregroup.co.uk

follow us on Facebook: [littleangelsmarcham](https://www.facebook.com/littleangelsmarcham)

The Abingdon Group of Riding for the Disabled are holding their annual fundraising

Plant Sale

with craft and children's stalls, a cake stall and refreshments on Sunday 14 May 10am to 1pm at Lower Lodge Riding Centre, Charney Road, Southmoor, OX13 5HW.

All enquiries to sarahwilkinson123@gmail.com



MARCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS



We had a busy and exciting end to the spring term.

The Year 3/4 play was brilliant. Absolutely brilliant. An enormous 'Well done' to the pupils on their performance of Roald Dahl's "Cinderella". As a growing school, we've always had a KS2 performance, but we are too large for that now and this year has been the first time that we've had a separate play for lower Key Stage 2. They sang beautifully (with many wonderful soloists), acted with passion and enthusiasm. Everyone was clearly having a great time on stage. Well done to the Kangaroos and Meerkats - You did yourselves proud! An enormous thank you to the staff, particularly Miss Taylor who managed the production and to Mrs Robinson who organised all the props. "It was a triumph."

We also had the **Experience Easter** event at All Saints Church, which was a lovely encounter for the children (and staff) of the Easter story. It was sensitively and thoughtfully portrayed by volunteer parishioners and the children have been talking about it very fondly. It was a wonderful way to experience the story that underpins the Christian faith.



Our **Easter Service** would have included many parents and members of our wider school community had we been able to hold it outdoors, as planned. It was still a wonderful event in which the children retold the story of Easter beautifully, with readings and tableaux for each event.

School engagement with our community continued through **Thirsty Café** (who have re-started catering for a Community lunch on Wednesdays). Some of our Year 5 pupils went along with Ms Nuzzolese, under the direction of Anne Wilson and Sarah Lunn, to help to put out and set tables for this event. I know that the children got a lot of satisfaction from being able to serve others and were very keen to do so. It was a rewarding example of their being responsible and stepping up to do the things that need to be done. We look forward to helping out again!



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

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Sunday 7th May - see page 7

As part of the Coronation Big Picnic celebrations Thirsty Café is providing a BBQ serving burgers, hot dogs and extras like bacon, cheese, onions and coleslaw. Vegan options are available. Serving from 12.30pm. There is no need to preorder.



The Big Marcham Weekend Saturday 13th May

The annual celebrations are even bigger and better this year. Thirsty Café will be on the field serving a BBQ and also tea, coffee, cold drinks and cakes

From 12noon till 4pm.

Following on from the success of the two trial **Community Lunches** in February and March, we have confirmed dates for three more lunches.

On the fourth Wednesday of the month. 24th May, 28th June and 26th July. From 12noon to 2pm.

The lunch is in addition to the regular café sessions on a Wednesday morning.

Saturday 24th June Coffee Tasting

Thanks to generous donations from All Saints and The Anson Trust along with fundraising activities we have been able to buy a new coffee machine. In celebration we are holding a special coffee tasting event where you get to choose our house coffee. Join us for pastries, learn a little about coffee and taste different coffees, many from small local roasters, and join us in having a fun morning.

Come on your own or book a table. Tickets and more information on our website www.thirstycafemarcham.co.uk.

Thirsty Cafe is closed on Saturday 6th May

Dates for Diary

August Cafe closing for the summer.

Saturday 24th September Millets 5K

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

Website: www.thirstycafemarcham.co.uk

E-mail: hello@thirstycafemarcham.co.uk



The Crown as a Community Pub Update

There is little to report this month as we wait for the VoWH Community engagement team to evaluate our application for a Valued Community Asset Order on the Crown. They have until about the 19th of May to determine if the evidence reaches the threshold to justify granting an Order. The site is still under offer from a developer, but the sale has yet to complete. If the order is granted it would remain in place whoever owns the freehold. This will give the community a voice over future use of the site, and any subsequent planning application for at least 5 years. Should our application be successful the steering group will reach out to the current owners and the developer to discuss the options and the best way forward for all parties.

Updates via MADNews and village Facebook page for now.

Cheers

NEIL ROWE

(on behalf of the steering committee)



It's Still Something Many of Us Do



I'm noticing already, people are growing different things in their garden this year, or maybe growing their usual things, but in a different way.

Whether or not we realise it, my Spidey Sense tells me it's an example of us gardeners, us growers, us as a species, already adapting to the different growing conditions we get these days.

Whether that's man-made climate change, or natural climate change, or just the heatwaves we've experienced over the last two summers, causing this change in behaviour in the people I've seen out gardening lately. It's still that healthy year-on-year adaptation process we gardeners go through, have always gone through, and will always go through.

Gardening and wildlife gardening is thriving and well, but it seems the concept of gardening and how we do it is changing, largely due to modern living. It still survives though and will be a popular pastime for generations to come yet.

Since I wrote the last article, I've spent time in cafés of local garden centres, people watching, especially over Easter. I overheard many conversations of people questioning if certain things will grow now conditions are dryer? The message is out there on some level, it clearly doesn't need commentators, experts, or article writers to keep telling us. Things are changing and from the conversations I overheard, they are changing permanently.

I'm really interested to hear if and how you are gardening differently this year. I'd like to hear why you are doing it, and what you are doing differently. I think a lot of shared learning can come from that.

Whether you are gardening the same this year, or completely differently, just get out there, give it a go. It's not something old people do, it's something we all do, even if we just have a few pots here and there. Enjoy.

Happy Gardening!

Stuart Mabbutt

01865 747243 www.wildmaninspires.co.uk

See page 15 for a live event with Stuart and William at the ex-vineyard in Frilford.

TABLE TOP SALE

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Flexicare Community Walk

Sunday 14th May 2023

Walk, run or cycle circular routes of varying lengths across the Ridgeway. A wheelchair/buggy accessible route is also available. Refreshments will be provided.

Starting at Snells Hall, East Hendred, OX12 8LA

Raising money to support Flexicare, an Oxfordshire based charity providing a free, specialised sitting service for families with a severely disabled child.

Register at www.flexicare.org/events
or to donate visit www.flexicare.org/donate

Registered Charity Number: 1172635 flexicareoxford 

Vicky's After School Club

Breakfast and After School Club now open at Marcham Primary School
providing quality, affordable and accessible childcare for children aged 4-11 years of age

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Oxfordshire Artweeks is the UK's oldest and biggest artist open studios & pop-up exhibition event. The next festival takes place from 6th-29th May 2023

www.artweeks.org



THE FRIENDS OF THE BBOWT COTHILL RESERVES

The Cothill area is extraordinarily rich in wildlife, from the internationally important Cothill Fen, with its ancient fen, to Dry Sandford Pit with its intriguing young fen and Hitchcopse Pit, formerly a quarry, now a haven for rare solitary bees and wasps. The Friends were founded in 1987 in memory of gifted local botanist Jeremy Milton. Members receive information about the Reserves and enjoy expert led walks. There is no membership fee and no obligation to carry out work on the Reserves. The Friends is not a fund raising body. If you would like to know more about the Friends please contact secfcr@gmail.com



Local Podcast Goes Live in Oxfordshire

Saturday 27 May 3.30pm

Bothy Vineyard, Frilford Heath OX13 6QW

A popular podcast, People's Countryside Environmental Debate Podcast, which attracts thousands of listeners worldwide, is going fully live for the first time in Oxfordshire this May

Three exciting guest panellists

- Tommy Serafinski, an outdoorsman and public speaker with a passion for exploring human-wildlife relations.
- Oliver O'Dell of Smart Greens UK, a horticultural Social Enterprise that teaches an innovative STEM programme to young people across Oxfordshire, using both traditional growing and Aquaponics
- Richard Benwell, Chief Executive of Wildlife & Countryside Link, a coalition of 70 nature charities. He is also Chair of Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership and a Trustee of UK Youth for Nature.

Richard and Oliver will jointly lead a discussion around are we really facing a water supply crisis? Is it realistic to rely on our freshwater environments to help meet the needs of consumers, growers, agriculture and nature, or are there further alternatives to help fill the void?

Timetable

3:30pm-4:30pm Guided Walks (Optional).

5pm-6pm Interactive conversation with guest panelists.

6pm-6:15pm Interval.

6:15pm-7:15pm Interactive conversation around audience question + interactive sharing experience.

7:15pm-9pm Buffet meal for continued conversation (Optional).

After almost five years of bringing the big issues of nature, philosophy, climate, the human condition and social justice to the everyday person in the street with their easy and approachable style, Oxford boys William Mankelow and Stuart Mabbutt have decided to go live. Their new show "Environmental Debate Live and Unscripted", which is the podcast format expanded for a live audience, will take place in the grounds of the former Bothy Vineyard in Frilford Heath near Abingdon. The event will be held on Saturday 27 May, from 3.30 pm onwards.

The event is in aid of wildlife charity Wild Oxfordshire, with 50% of the profits donated directly to them.

A leisurely guided walk around the old vineyard before the debate, with its wildflower meadows and new pond will be an additional attraction. An optional dinner over which the audience can continue their journey of exploration can also be bought with the tickets. This is entirely an outdoor event, and we regret that there is only partial disabled access.

Tickets and more information are on sale at <http://bitly.ws/zBBC>



Marcham Centre

MARCHAM CENTRE PLAYING FIELDS

We have a steady schedule of regular hirers using our facilities to provide a range of classes, clubs and other activities. There are a number of slots available, especially during the day on weekdays, where we can accommodate more activities. We would like to see full use being made of our facilities.

You may be involved in an activity outside of Marcham that is looking for a new venue, or wishes to extend to provide more classes and would be interested in coming to Marcham. There is also scope to provide meeting space, for example, for businesses with people working from home looking for a place to hold regular team meetings. If you know of such an opportunity, please let us know (contact details below).

FIELD USE

We are carrying out remedial work on the part of the playing field that was not re-worked during the building of Marcham Centre (between the Tower Close entrance and the hall). It would help if we could avoid heavy use of this area while the ground is being restored. You are welcome to use the other parts of the field for activities such as informal football or other games.

NEW BENCH

Thanks to a donation from Sian Liwicki and Andrew James, we have a new recycled polymer bench, which is currently located just outside the patio fence. The bench commemorates Dorothea and Roger Fisher, who were the founders of the Bothy Vineyard. We hope it will be well used.

COMING EVENTS AT MARCHAM CENTRE

Sunday 7th May: Coronation Community Day: Open air church service for all; Community lunch (please bring your own picnic) with Thirsty Café Barbecue, band and bar and patio open. Come and join this celebration for an important day in our country's history and a celebration of our local volunteer activities. More details are shown on page 5.

Friday 12th-Saturday 13th May: Big Marcham Weekend: The big event for the whole community and a showcase for our wide range of volunteer activities. See separate notice on page 5 for more details.

Indoor short-mat bowls has now finished prior to the start of the outdoor season. Indoor bowls will resume at Marcham Centre on Wednesday 6th September.

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

If you wish to book a room at Marcham Centre, please use the booking request system on www.marchamcentre.org or contact our Coordinator by email coordinator@marchamcentre.org or by phone **01865 507211**.

Marcham Centre, Barrow Close, Marcham OX13 6TY
enquiries@marchamcentre.org www.marchamcentre.org
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Charlotte Jane Cakes

An occasional series where we find out a bit more about residents that we may only nod to! Thanks to Annie for writing the words, Joe for providing the photos and Jeremy for giving us the starting point.

GEORGE ALLEN FEATHERSTONE (Joe) joined the Royal Air Force as a Radar Technician to complete National Service in 1954. He loved the lifestyle. He got paid 2s 6d and three meals a day. He loved it so much he remustered into the Physical Training (PT) branch as a Regular Serviceman. This increased his wages threefold and he was posted to St Athan to complete his basic training. All members of the PT branch were required to specialise within the branch. Joe chose parachuting and became a Parachute Jumping Instructor (PJI).



He had two tours with the RAF Falcons Parachute Display Team. This was to take him all over the world promoting the Royal Air Force. This included a 6 month tour of Australia, and a 3 month tour at Fort Bragg in America.



His first operational service was in Libya in the late fifties and early sixties. He was then posted to RAF Turnhouse which is now Edinburgh Airport, and to the South of France for three years.



On return to the UK he was based at RAF Abingdon where he was involved in the trials for the new square steerable chutes. These trials were completed in all weather conditions including jumping into the jungle, into water and at night.

Joe saw service with various Airborne Regiments of the Army as their PJI. During this time he trained and despatched thousands of trainee parachutists. He served multiple detachments with the Special Forces and the Territorial Army. During his 35 years service he completed 732 military parachute jumps and over 2,000 sports parachute jumps. He retired from the RAF in 1989 and worked with the civil service for a couple of years before retiring completely.



As a consequence of his jumps Joe has had two hips and a shoulder replaced and now sets off the alarms at airport security!

Joe moved to Marcham while serving at RAF Abingdon in the early sixties. He is now living a quieter life enjoying his garden and greenhouse; and can be found on Monday evenings playing bridge at Marcham Centre.



DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT MARCHAM?**

As this is my last article for the Mad News, before I hand over to your next District Councillor on May 9th, I thought I would use this opportunity to look back over the last 10 years and highlight what I have found special about the village of Marcham.

My overwhelming impression of Marcham has always been its wonderful community spirit. This was very evident during Covid when, amongst other kind help, an active Covid support group was formed to help those who had to self-isolate or who had other issues. And right at the centre of any community movement, such as this, we usually find Marcham church which works quietly and compassionately with the residents of Marcham.

To help support this community spirit, Marcham can now boast a wonderful Community Centre...the village Hall...which is well placed in the centre of the village on the Anson field. This building now hosts many events and meetings and always seems to be buzzing with activity.... there are yoga classes, bingo sessions, WI meetings, bridge meetings, Marcham Society meetings, Parish Council meetings, church breakfast meetings to name but a few. And to allow people to meet for a chat over a drink or meal there is the Thirsty Café, a very popular facility where again you see members of the church amongst others giving their spare time. Go in on a Saturday morning when you can smell the mouth-watering smell of coffee and sizzling bacon.

Outside the hall there are sports facilities for cricket, football, tennis and a MUGA where you can hear excited young voices urging each other on. And the hall has excellent facilities for visiting sports teams and even a bar where people can celebrate or commiserate after a match. This bar has become very popular and people can spill out onto a terrace outside.... it is lovely to see families getting together to chat over drinks and nibbles while children can play safely nearby. Walking around Marcham is something I enjoy, as, apart from the obvious routes, there are little, secret paths or tracks leading to open spaces, new developments or just connecting areas together. I particularly love those you find around the church and its burial ground or running through new developments, where you can see how each house gradually marks itself out as special with individual additions, plants etc. This need to connect up areas was always uppermost in my mind, whenever a new development in Marcham came forward, to keep Marcham an open, sharing village.

And then there is the Village Shop and Post Office in North Street. Again, the community spirit of different residents willing to give their time to help run and serve in the shop or PO shines through. It was Richard's and my privilege to help in the shop for a few years and I loved meeting old and new faces over the counter. School children spilling off the school bus was always a challenge as they chose their sweet treats! Richard and I even held some monthly surgeries there, using a small corner with a rickety table to listen to people's problems. It was at one of those surgeries that I met someone who was deeply concerned about the poor air quality in Packhorse Lane which led me to get the Vale to relook at how we were monitoring the Lane. This led to the Lane being classified as an AQMA (Air Quality Management Area).

The village school is a real asset to the village and its success is evident by the need to expand it with an extra classroom so that it can cater for those children of Primary school age. We don't want to get into the situation where small children have to bus to another Primary school because their village school doesn't have enough spaces to cater for them.

Closely supporting the school is the village nursery, Little Angels. Some of us remember it doing a great job in quite spartan conditions



next to the old wooden village centre on Anson Field. Now it can boast a purpose-built building near to the new village hall where the youngest children can enjoy all its marvellous facilities. With all the new developments in the village, Little Angels is supplying a much-needed facility for young working families.

At the other end of the scale is the facility for the older members of the village, Duffield Place. I have enjoyed many conversations with several of its residents and gleaned all sorts of interesting information about Marcham, such as when an old lady told me that she knew a nanny who said that Marcham has been asking for a by-pass as long ago as the 1930s. Will it happen one day? And closely allied to this home is Sweet Briar, a retirement housing complex, run by Green Square. It sits behind the community shop, so residents often pop into the shop for a quick chat. Again, I have got to know many of its delightful residents.

To draw all the residents together and keep them well informed, Marcham is very fortunate to have a really excellent, colourful village magazine (available as paper copy or online) in MADNews – all under the stewardship of editor Meriel Lewis.

Lastly, there is Marcham church. You will have noticed that I have referred to the church several times in this article and this is because it is a thriving, active church, always at the heart of the village life. I think this village would be very different and much poorer without the church. It is worth looking at the sand coloured building itself with its unusual twin east end windows, its chunky tower and interesting artefacts inside. However, you will notice that inside it is light and airy with moveable pews and stacks of chairs and tables, ready to rearrange when necessary. This is why it has been used for many meetings, celebrations, as well as parties, such as a Burns Night party where dancing and eating can be enjoyed. The building does not dictate what happens inside...the people do that.

So, having wandered around this special village of Marcham with you, it is time to thank you for all the support and help you have given me over the years, to ask you to do the same for my successor and to bid you all a fond au revoir.

CATHERINE WEBBER Cllr VWHDC

District Councillor for Marcham Ward

Phone: 07357 464699/ 01235 534001

or webbercatherine1@gmail.com

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**DIFFICULT CHOICES**

The problem of potholes has been in the news all over the country in recent months. We have had potholes ever since we had roads and tracks, but I don't remember them being as hot a topic as they are now.

Everyone would like our roads to be in mint condition at all times, but the cost of road maintenance has been rapidly rising over recent years and the ability to maintain our roads in reasonable condition has been becoming an increasing challenge for all councils. To upgrade all of Oxfordshire's roads to an ideal standard would cost several hundred million pounds and there would then be the cost of regular maintenance to keep them at that standard. The cost is more than the County's Adult and Children's social care put together. Not much wonder then that hard pressed Councils have, over the last 20 years, steadily made cuts to their road budgets in order to protect their social care and other services. It is all about priorities. Priorities for Councils and priorities for Government. In present economic circumstances, it is hard to see taxation increasing anywhere near enough to cover the cost of covering the upgrade to all the nation's roads.

Councils have tried various initiatives to begin to address the problem. Prioritising main roads over others has been tried but it leads to the question – just how bad do our rural roads have to get before deprioritising their maintenance becomes unacceptable?



“Prudential borrowing” against assets over many years requires substantial assets which few councils possess and few finance officers will countenance. Borrowing against future income growth depends on the growth happening and is a risky business.

Are there any other alternatives? And if we want roads in good condition along with everything else we want, we have to find a way of paying for it. Persuading road users (i.e. just about everyone) that they must pay through taxation presents a great political challenge – how could it be done? And how could it be done fairly? But then politics, we are told, is all about choices. We just need our politicians to be brave enough to make them while our road system is still usable.

And one final thought. Given the challenge of maintaining our present road system, does it really make sense to be building yet more roads?

RICHARD WEBBER Cllr OCC SC & Marcham Division.
Phone 0754 657 1521 or email Richard.webber77@ntlworld.com

MP’S REPORT

Depending on when you read this, you may still have time to complete my Health Services Survey. It’s 8 short questions about your experience of accessing services like GP and Dentist appointments and should take 5-10 minutes. You can complete it here: <https://www.david-johnston.org.uk/health>



Although I live in Didcot, I saw it and many other places in the constituency in a different light last month: from the back of a police car! No, I hadn’t done anything wrong, I’d asked to go on a ‘Ride Along’ with the local force to get a better insight into the demands on the police as they respond to the calls they receive at the station. It turned out to be a relatively quiet 4 or so hours, but it was nonetheless fascinating to talk to PCs David and Alex about their experience in the force, the things they’ve had to respond to, how they’re treated by the public and the things they’d like to see change. They perform a very difficult and vital role and I’m very grateful to them for letting me accompany them.

I continue to be on the case regarding the experience of parents and schools with Oxfordshire’s service for children with Special Educational Needs. I spoke in a debate in parliament about some of the problems and then met the Government minister responsible for SEND nationally. Oxfordshire has just been given a further £1 million by the Government to deliver outreach services from SEND specialists to support children with a variety of conditions including autism and moderate learning difficulties. But this won’t solve the problems people complain to me about regarding calls and emails not being answered and so I will continue to work on this.

On the subject of government funding, the extension to the Energy Price Guarantee for a further 3 months is welcome and will have saved the average household £1100 since it began, while Oxfordshire County Council has just been given a further £3 million to fix the potholes so many of you rightly complain to me about!

The Public Accounts Committee have held their hearing into the local AEAT Pension case I’ve been campaigning on behalf of and now we have to wait for their report in the coming weeks. I must give credit to OX10 Community Centre, Wild About Wallingford, the Town Council and Incredible Edible for keeping their Public Living Room going at the Bull Croft through a miserable afternoon of rain. It was designed to bring the community together and it did – at least some of them, and a great ukulele band. I had a good catch up with GWR about where next to take my campaign for reopening Grove Station – watch this space. Straight after my Apprenticeship Fair on 24th April at 12pm at Didcot Civic Hall, I

will start planning this year’s Wantage and Didcot Climate Summit – the date will be the 13th June.

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

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**CLOVER STROUD AND LUCY ATKINS
IN CONVERSATION**

Wednesday 24th May, 7pm at Mostly Books

Tickets cost £10 and can be purchased at Mostly Books or online at: <https://mostly-books.co.uk/product/clover-stroud-and-lucy-atkins-in-conversation/>

BOBBY PALMER - ISAAC AND THE EGG

Thursday 1st June, 7pm at Mostly Books

Tickets cost £8 and can be purchased at Mostly Books or online at: <https://mostly-books.co.uk/event/bobby-palmer-isaac-and-the-egg/>

**AN EVENING WITH REPAIR SHOP’S
SUZIE FLETCHER**

Saturday 24th June, 7pm at St Nicolas’ Church, Abingdon

Join us at St Nicolas’ Church for an evening with The Repair Shop’s Suzie Fletcher, as we round off Independent Bookshop Week on Saturday 24th June at 7pm.

Tickets cost £16 (including a copy of Suzie's book, RRP £14.99) or £8 (ticket only) and can be purchased at Mostly Books or online at: <https://mostly-books.co.uk/product/an-evening-with-the-repair-shops-suzie-fletcher-book-with-ticket/>

*Mostly Books is an independent bookshop at
36 Stert Street, Abingdon OX14 3JP Call 01235 525880
or email books@mostly-books.co.uk*



**Oxfordshire School Aged
Immunisation Service**

The School Aged Immunisation Service offer the following vaccines to eligible school aged children aged 5 to 16:

- Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)
- Tetanus, Diphtheria and Polio (TDP)
- Meningitis (ACWY)
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)
- Flu (seasonal)

If your child is educated at home:

- They can attend a local Community Based Clinic
- Please contact us (details below) to book into a clinic and to provide consent

If your child is in school:

- They will be offered their vaccinations at School
- The School will contact you directly with details

Contact us through our web address, by scanning the QR code or by calling 07920 254400

Or visit www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/imms

To translate our webpages to other languages please click:



ALL SAINTS' & ST. LUKES CHURCHES

www.marcham-with-garford.org.uk



Celebration Service
10.30am, Sunday 7th May
Marcham Community Centre

followed by..
Community Lunch on the field

Long to reign over us

I'm not sure about the quiche, but I am now looking forward to the Coronation. It's taken a while, but the closer we get to the 6th May the more intrigued I am. Like most people, I've never seen a coronation. At the time of writing the order of service has not been published, but the palace has said that the service will contain "the same core elements rooted in long-standing history and pageantry... while recognising the spirit of our times." Much has been made of how different the times are between the last coronation and this one. I wonder what the nation will make of the deeply symbolic and historic Christian elements of the service, and what impact they will have on Charles and his reign in our modern society. If you were watching in 1953 then you may have seen the Orb, the Sceptre, and the Sword. More likely, you've seen them on a visit to the Crown Jewels like me. The Orb and Sceptre are symbols of power, but both are topped by a cross indicating that the Sovereign is the servant of a greater King. The Sword is symbolic of the Sovereign's role in administering justice, but the sword has a blunt tip, reminding the monarch and his ministers that they should exercise mercy as well as judgement. In 1953, church leaders presented the Queen with a Bible, "to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the law and the Gospel of God... we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords." And famously, the only part of the service that was kept hidden from public view, she was anointed with oil to show she was set apart to serve. I guess we'll just have to see how Charles does it all. But it will be fascinating, and I hope, inspiring as we pray for him, the country and the commonwealth, longing that his reign will be marked by peace and prosperity for all. Above all, I long that as he serves in the years ahead, we will see the expansion of a greater King's reign – Jesus Christ's – whose mark will be all over the service on 6th May. **Do join us for a community service of celebration followed by lunch, 10.30am at the Marcham Centre on Sunday 7th May. Further details in this issue.**

Revd Nick Weldon

May 6th, 8.30am – Men's Breakfast

May 20th, 8.30am – Women's Breakfast

Look at our website for more details about our 10 days of prayer between 18-28 May – lots of activities to take part in.

Regular services

10am: Morning Service at All Saints'

11am-12pm: Open church at St. Luke's

6pm: Evening Service

Wednesday Holy Communion

10.30am at Duffield Place



Light up the world
in prayer
18th - 28th May 2023
thykingdomcome.global

Contacts:

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