

MAD News

Your Independent Local News Source

Marcham - Cothill - Frilford - Garford - Gozzards Ford - Tubney

September 2023 Vol 45 No.9 www.madnews.co.uk

Champions!



Leah from Fitness at the Farm Crowned Best Fitness Instructor in the UK at the Muddy Stilettoes Awards 2023. More on Page 12.

September Diary

Date	Event	Pg	20 Wed	Art Society Talk Albrecht Durer - Abbey Cinema - 1000 & 1400	5
4 Mon	Primary School Term starts	-	23 Sat	Charity Bingo! Southmoor - 1900 - See Ad	17
6 Wed	Short Mat Bowls season starts Large Hall - 1400 (1430 if community lunch served that day)	15	25 Mon	Marcham Society Talk - 'Alfred the Great' Marcham Centre - 1915 for 1945	9
11 Mon	Marcham Parish Council Meeting Marcham Village Hall - 1930	-	27 Wed	Thirsty Café Community Lunch, Marcham Centre, 12.00-14.00	
14 Thu	Marcham Society Midweek Walk	-	27 Wed	Abingdon Drama Club - Richard III	9
18 Mon	WI Talk - Martial Arts Womens Self Defence programme	14	- 30 Sat	Unicorn Theatre - 1930 (and 1430 Sat)	
19 Tue	Abingdon National Trust Group 'Oyez, Oyez, Oyez' Talk on Town Criers Trinity Church Hall, Conduit Road - 1430	7	October		
20 Wed	Deadline for next issue of MADNews, 17.00 Email editor@madnews.co.uk	-	20 Oct	Deadline for next issue of MADNews, 17.00 Email editor@madnews.co.uk	
			28 Sat	An Evening of Music Parish Church	13

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

STOP PRESS: It has been brought to our attention that the aerial view on the front of the June edition of MAD News was not credited. Apologies to Oliver (Ollie) Bayley. Keep up the good work Ollie, and we look forward to seeing more of your images in due course.

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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
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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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Marcham Parish Council

Electric blanket testing

How safe is your electric blanket? If the condition of a blanket is allowed to deteriorate there is the possibility of it becoming faulty, risking injury or fire. Oxfordshire residents are being encouraged therefore to take up the offer of a free electric blanket check, as part of the Oxfordshire County Council's programme to ensure everyone is safe, as well as warm, this Winter. To have your electric blanket checked, please telephone 01865 895999 or email duty.officer@oxfordshire.gov.uk. All checks need to be pre-booked. The actual location and specific time slot will be provided at the time of booking.

Checks are available in the Vale of White Horse area on Friday 22nd September and Friday 6th October. Other locations are on different dates. More information at
<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/free-electric-blanket-tests-coming-to-oxfordshire-this-autumn/>

Grants

The Parish Council considers any requests for grants at its November meeting. Grant requests are considered just once a year. Therefore, if there is any worthy and needy organisation where Marcham residents benefit, which is considering applying to the Parish Council for a grant, then please use the application form available in the publications section, on the Council's website. www.marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk, and enclose a copy of your organisation's accounts. The Council's grant policy too can also be found there. Details of where to send the application are on the form.

The deadline for submissions is 15th October, 2023. Applications received after that date or not on the application form will not be considered.

Parishioner of the Year

The Council is still inviting nominations for the Parishioner of the Year award. The award recognises individuals who make an outstanding contribution to the local community. 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 sent, to the Clerk, via email or hard copy. Address details below.

Oxfordshire County Council - 20 mph proposal for village roads

The County Council is reviewing the proposal to make most of the village roads 20 mph. The roads on new developments which have not yet been adopted by the County Council unfortunately have not been able to be included, as they remain private roads. The project team undertaking the investigations will report back on key outcomes, and their report is currently awaited.

Fettiplace Road / The Gap alleyway barrier

The remaining barrier at The Gap end of the alleyway has been removed by the County Council. The Parish Council has requested information from them as to the reasoning for this.

Play Area

At the time of writing, work has started on removing old items of play equipment, and preparing the site for the installation of new items inside the fence. Planning consent is required for the new items outside the fence, and that decision is awaited.

The Council appreciates the residents' patience and understanding during the time the area has had to be closed, particularly as this is during part of the school holiday. However, it was important to have good ground conditions for vehicles, and avoid times when the sports pitches were in use.
...cont'd on page 5

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Council Report cont'd

Mill Road - Bridleway 17 to Drayton

The County Council has advised that works have now started to repair the bridleway bridge. The duration of the works is estimated at up to 12 weeks, but due to the age and condition of the structure this may extend depending on how things progress.

Once the major reconstruction works are complete, clearance works to the actual bridleway south of the bridge will take place so that hopefully, in the not too distant future, there will be a clear route through again, for pedestrians, cyclists and horses.

Planning Applications considered by the Council
P23/V1337/LB Re-point north facing wall of the property, replacing existing degraded lime mortar with a like-for-like material at 4 North Street. The Parish Council had no objections

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

Email: clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting will take place on Monday 11th September, 2023. Please check the website for the latest information in case arrangements change.



The Garford singers had a croquet party with supper on the lawns at Millets Farmhouse. The whole evening was a great hit!!!!

Huge thanks to our musical maestro, Ben who is so well supported by Carolyn. If anyone would like to join the choir, just let Carolyn know.. see email address for St. Lukes...back page.

20 September

ALBRECHT DURER: Life, Ego and Afterlife

Albert Godetzky

In his day Albrecht Dürer was a larger-than-life figure. Through the high quality of his woodcutting, and the facility with which printed culture could be disseminated, Dürer became an international success. Not a stranger to a mode of self-fashioning that would sit comfortably in today's social media channels, Dürer crafted a legacy for his art through prints, paintings, and copious writing. This lecture traces the artist's origins in his goldsmith father's workshop in Nuremberg, his ambitious travels in Italy and subsequent patronage by the Habsburgs.

The talk will be held at The Abbey Cinema at 10.30 and 2 pm.

For further details please contact us at info@theartssocietyabingdon.org.uk

Welcome to your new look MAD News. Over the next few months you will notice changes to the overall appearance to bring a fresh, modern feel to our publication. Behind the scenes is a new editor who will be pleased to receive news, announcements, articles, images and of course advertising, in fact anything which will be of interest to readers in our thriving villages. I look forward to taking MAD News forward as an integral part of life in the Marcham area, and of course, I thank you for your ongoing support.

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Marcham Village Shop and Post Office

We are appealing for witnesses and dash-cam footage following a multiple vehicle collision on the A34 northbound.

At around 1.20pm on Friday (18/8) six vehicles were involved in a collision on the northbound carriageway of the A34 underneath the Botley interchange.

A white Mercedes Benz Tourismo coach is believed to have collided with stationary traffic.

Two people were taken to hospital but have since been discharged with minor injuries.

No arrests have been made, but our investigation is ongoing.

PC Shaun Kipling of the Joint Operations Roads Policing Unit, said: "We are appealing for anyone who witnessed this collision or may have dash-cam footage to please get in touch.

If you have footage please upload it to our online portal page, or if you have witness information please call 101 quoting reference 43230369982.

It seems that this year's harvest has been particularly good for plums, beans, beetroot and courgettes. Thank you to all the budding gardeners who donated stock to the shop. We had some very grateful customers and some lovely comments.

We're always on the lookout for new and exciting things to sell in the shop. We have recently introduced rabbit and fish food and some new food and treats for cats and dogs.

We are also now selling local honey from Marcham, East Hendred and Abingdon. All the suppliers produce small quantities and the Marcham and Abingdon honeys are exclusive to our shop. Apparently, if you suffer from hayfever and eat the honey produced from local pollen, it is said to help alleviate some of the issues.

Later than planned, but in the coming weeks, we are hoping to trial the sale of Hedges meats. Hedges are able to provide most cuts of meat, so we will have a current list with prices on display in the shop. Customers will be able to place their order, along with payment, by close of play on a Wednesday ready for collection on the Friday. More information will be available in the shop, and the staff will also be able to advise.



Don't forget that, along with all the regular Post Office items, we sell gift cards which are great for any occasion!

And, for that last minute trip to Europe, we also sell Euros. You can order any currency with us or online and get it delivered to us or your home.

Thank you to all our wonderful 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.

Our opening and closing times for the Shop and Post Office are as below:

Monday-Friday – 08:30-17:00 hrs
Saturday – 08:30-12:00 hrs
Sunday and Bank Holidays - closed

On Tuesday September 19 2023, Patrick Bird, one of Abingdon's Town Criers, will give a talk to the Abingdon & District National Trust Association entitled **Oyez, oyez, oyez**: A call to find out exactly what a Town Crier is and does. A town crier, also called a bellman, is an officer of a royal court or public authority who makes public pronouncements in the streets as required. The Normans brought this with them in 1066 and the tradition of crying has been continued ever since. Abingdon has the only Guild of voluntary Town Criers in the UK and dress in the traditional colours and coat of arms of Abingdon. The Criers can often be seen on official occasions and announcing events around the Town. Patrick is a member of the Abingdon Guild of Town Criers and is going to tell us just what all this means. The meeting is at Trinity Church Hall, Conduit Road, Abingdon OX14 1DB at 2.30pm and everyone is welcome. Non-members are asked for a donation of £4. For more information visit www.abingdonnt.org.uk or call Ruth on 01235 524119.

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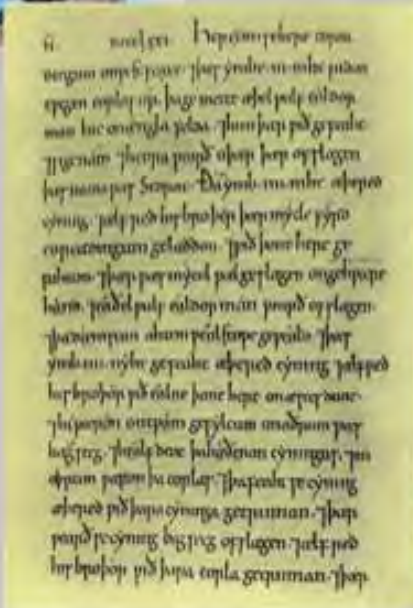
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The Marcham Society

Alfred the Great: Local Lad Made Good

Mike Cooper



Monday 25th September 7.15 for 7.45pm after the AGM Main Hall Marcham Centre

This talk will be an introduction to the life and times of one of the best known Anglo Saxon kings. Alfred was born in Berkshire, fought a strategic battle at Reading and some would say saved England from the Vikings.

Mike Cooper has had a lifelong interest in history, especially military and local history. He enjoys speaking to a curious but non-specialist audience!

Following a history degree at the University of Reading Mike worked as a librarian, with both the University and with Reading Library. In addition to work on librarianship, he has published three books on the history of Reading.



For more information
MarchamSociety@gmail.com
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MARCHAM PRE-SCHOOL

The Olympics have arrived in Marcham! In preparation for our final sports event, the children have been making their own country flags at home.. and have completed their very own Olympic Torch Relay!

We have a range of sports arranged for the children to compete in over the coming weeks and are very much looking forward to having some super fun events in the run up to the end of the year.

If you'd like to join us at Marcham Preschool please do get in touch... Call us on 01865 392101 or email marcham-preschool@hotmail.co.uk to arrange a visit or to receive an application form.



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ANSON TRUST GRANT FUND UPDATE

Over the last 12 months the Trust has approved over £30,000 of grant requests to organisations throughout the village, including £5,200 towards Marcham Primary School's flourishing community garden.

So far we have approved 83% of the grant requests that we have received and 98% in terms of the value of those requests. And we still have over £40,000 available for new grant opportunities!

We will consider grants of £250 or more and we will always try and review any requests quickly. For more information on our Grant Making Policy and a copy of our Grant Application Form please go to ansontrust.org/grant-giving.

Our charitable objectives are fairly broad in terms of community support and we are particularly keen to support non-commercial initiatives, schemes and projects that:

- Help provide, maintain or expand new activities or services whether that be the acquisition of new equipment/kit, subsidy of group educational and self-development trips, part funding of larger projects, etc.
- Provide assistance to those individuals in our community that need support
- Build stronger local organisations through training, awareness programmes and the promotion of diversity and inclusion.

In short, we're here to help so please let us and if you are not sure if you would qualify for a grant then by all means email us at ansontrusenquiries@gmail.com and we will let you know on a non-committal basis if your idea is the sort of thing that we could support.

Chris Hillier on behalf of the Trustees of the Anson Trust.



OVER £30,000 IN GRANTS APPROVED IN 2023

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Personal Care & Fitness

Muddy Stilettoes cont'd from Page 1

The recognition is a testament to Leah's outstanding dedication, passion, and commitment to fitness, setting a new standard for achieving balance and wellness.

Since its establishment in 2018, Fitness at the Farm has become a popular destination for fitness enthusiasts seeking an all-encompassing outdoor experience. Under Leah's exceptional guidance, the facility has flourished, offering an extensive range of fitness programs tailored for individuals of all fitness levels. With something for everyone, and an ever-growing offering that includes circuits, small group training, Box Fitness and more.

Fitness at the Farm has recently expanded its amenities by introducing Sauna at the Farm, and features an outdoor wood fired sauna and hot tub, a cold plunge, hot showers, and changing rooms, making it a perfect space to unwind and recharge amidst the scenic views.



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Community Events

As most people are aware, diet is a key part of the treatment of both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes. Understanding the reasons why what we eat and how much we eat, are so important for people with diabetes can be difficult and confusing, especially at diagnosis. There are many different diets and the choice of diet for each person is dependent on factors such as lifestyle, belief, culture and health.

Help with learning about diet and the roles of various foods and drinks is important, especially at the present time when people are often not receiving face to face health care appointments and food costs are high.

People need dietary information and the InDependent Diabetes Trust (IDDT) has published a new FREE booklet, 'Diet and Diabetes'. It provides information about the most common diets, food labelling, weight loss, the importance of food groups and much more. It also works well alongside our popular FREE booklet, 'Diabetes Everyday Eating', which contains a 28-day meal plan of breakfasts, lunches and evening meals.

We are happy send this new FREE booklet 'Diet and Diabetes' and 'Diabetes Everyday Eating' to your readers if they contact IDDT on 01604 622837, email enquiries@iddtinternational.org or write to IDDT, PO Box 294, Northampton NN1 4XS.

We do hope you will let your readers know how we can help.

Jenny Hirst
IDDT
Tel 01604 622837



Gardening / Pre-School

The Million Dollar Question

At a time when Rishi Sunak, the UK Prime minister, has given the go ahead for fossil fuel extractions, and an eye-watering volume of oil and gas drilling licences in the North Sea, we can be left thinking how can our gardening contribution, or appreciation of local green spaces, make a difference to the environment in the face of this onslaught.

The million dollar question is, can we as individuals make a difference to the changes we are experiencing in the world's climate? When people like Mr Sunak have their fingers in what many would call the wrong pies, how can what we do make a difference to his far-reaching decisions? I feel the answer is yes though the challenges for us as individuals appear insurmountable and demoralising. The bottom line always remains the same for me though, most things come down to individual actions, brought together to build up a head of steam and positive momentum within communities and society as a whole.

What difference can an appreciation of the local green space have on the world's climate? Well, that appreciation and enjoyment can be infectious, and can foster an understanding of what could be lost if these green spaces disappear under concrete. Making nature part of people's daily lives is a great first step in getting them to protect it.

The government has a drive to make green space accessible to everybody within 15 minutes of where we live. Yet many of these green spaces are not accessible to people with cognitive, visual, hearing and mobility impairments. The understanding of accessible countryside needs to be expanded.

Bringing it back to our own gardens or even allotments, how can we as individuals make a difference to the world's climate? Well, without making them look like tipping grounds for collected rubbish an important step could be to take up the reduce, reuse and recycle concept.

Maybe take a step back when bringing new objects, materials and plants etc onto your plot and think do I really need this? This is the reduce aspect.

Another aspect to consider in your garden is to see what you already have and transform it into a new use and into a new incarnation. That's the reuse phase.

Then finally look at the recycle stage within your garden.

You may feel what's the point when the world's grand polluters are running rampant. All any of us can do though is focus on that which we can change, setting aside the stuff we can't.

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Marcham WI

Monday, 18th September 2023
 Jordan Squires from Cando Martial Arts
 7:30pm at The Marcham Centre



We are looking forward to seeing you all at our next meeting after the summer break. At our September meeting we will be welcoming Jordan Squires from Cando Martial Arts, who will be giving us a taster session to the Safe on the Street Women's Self Defence programme. We hope to see you there.

'Save the date'

On Saturday 18th November from 2pm to 4.30pm, we are organising a Christmas Craft Fair in the Marcham Centre. If you would like a stall, or some more information, please contact Marcham WI at the email address below.

Visitors and new members are always welcome. For any further information, please contact:

Pippa Hoath: 01865 391349
pippahoath@gmail.com

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



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Marcham Centre, Groups & Activities

To all Marcham Society members

We are now in the last month of our 22/23 membership year and the Committee have recently discussed the relevance of having a "Family" membership in the new 23/24 season. The word "Family" has often been found to cause confusion as it can be interpreted in many different ways. So to be fairer to all and to streamline the system, it would be simpler to have just one category of membership, ie 'single membership'.

Under this proposal all members will pay a subscription of £12 a year with the membership year starting as before on the 1st September and we very much hope our members will agree to this. Visitors are always welcome of course, at a charge of £5 per person.

However this does require a small change to our Constitution and consequently we need to put this proposal to the AGM on 25th September. Our plan is to adopt the new scheme provisionally with effect from 1st September this year and trust it will then be approved at the AGM. If the proposal is rejected we shall revert to the previous scheme and the Treasurer will adjust everyone's payments accordingly.

All members who have already paid their £12 subscription for 2023/24 will have a vote at the AGM and we will need a quorum of 50%. However, there may be some who cannot attend the AGM to vote, in which case they will be entitled to appoint a proxy at the meeting. To do this they should email shirley.marsoc@gmail.com advising the name of their proxy or alternatively, let me know which way they would like to vote.

On or about 1st September our Membership Secretary, Simon Blackmore, will be contacting all current members inviting them to renew their membership under the terms above.

We are looking forward to an exciting programme in the year ahead, covering monthly talks, astronomy, events, visits and walks.

Details are on the website: <https://www.marchamsociety.org.uk/programme.php>

Thank you for your support.

With best wishes
Shirley Eccles
Secretary.

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MCG News – September 2023 issue

Back to full strength after the summer lull
After the relatively quiet summer holidays, we go into the autumn season with a strong level of bookings. If you are a regular user, we are keen to retain you, so please make sure that you have made your bookings in the system. We don't want you to lose out if you have not done so.

MCG Investment Fund

If your club or other group activity needs support to further the interests of our community, and you are interested in making an application for investment funding, please email admin@marcham.org for further details and an application form.

MCG Membership

Marcham Community Group relies on its members to support what we do – running Marcham Centre and the MCG Community Investment Fund. Please do your bit to support us by becoming a member of Marcham Community Group (£5 for single membership, £8 family). You can download an annual membership form from the MCG website (www.marcham.org) or by sending an email to membership@marcham.org.

If you are already a member, but have not yet renewed your membership for the current year (April 2023-March 2024), please do so as soon as possible. Your support really counts!

Volunteers

Marcham Community Group relies heavily on volunteers to support the operations of Marcham Centre. As well as support for hall operations and volunteers for the bar, we are looking for volunteers with finance experience to assist us with day to day book-keeping. Please contact jim.asher@btinternet.com, if you are able to help. You could be making a difference!

New ideas welcome

If you have any ideas for a new activity or a new group which could take place at Marcham Centre, we would love to hear from you. **There are slots available in our weekly schedule and we would like to fill them.** Please contact jim.asher@btinternet.com with your thoughts.

Indoor short-mat bowls at Marcham Centre will resume on Wednesday 6th September at 2pm. Please contact Colin Trinder (c_trinder@btinternet.com) or just turn up.

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

Holidays

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County Councillor's Report

Drayton 20mph Zones

3 years ago the County Council unanimously passed a motion calling for the consideration of 20mph limits in any County Parish that requested them. At the time I do not believe any of us thought that such a policy would be quite so well received. To date, only a tiny majority of Parishes have failed to take up the offer or show interest. If my own mailbox is anything to go by, I would say that those in favour outnumber those against by more than ten to one.



Understandably, the police are concerned over the potential pressure on their resources of enforcing these speed limits. However, the evidence so far is that 20mph limits do indeed bring down average speeds in our villages making life for residents, quieter, safer and more pleasant. Of course there are some concerns over potential consequences. Some Bus companies argue that the limits could make it harder for them to keep to their timetables. There is not enough evidence one way or the other to know the answer. A minority of residents argue that 20mph is annoyingly slow and leads to impatience and bad driving. Again, there is too little evidence to be certain, and it seems probable that it will take some time for drivers to become accustomed to slower speeds in all built up areas. What evidence there is, suggests that there is a driver learning process, but that 20mph limits lead to traffic flowing more smoothly and there is little impact on journey times. In our immediate area, Shippon's 20mph zone is already operational. Drayton's is well underway and all the other Parishes are investigating where 20mph limits might be needed.

Changes in the way traffic and driving is managed bring out strong feelings initially but Oxfordshire's immediate path on this issue is set.

Grass verges

There has been much local concern around grass cutting and road safety in recent weeks as the weather has encouraged rapid growth of roadside vegetation. There has also been concern that cycle and pedestrian paths have become restricted and even blocked. If we are trying to encourage people to get out of their cars and cycle or walk, it is important that we keep our paths open and conducive to cycling and walking. Many people are passionate about roadside plant diversity. Growth at road junctions is a major concern for road users of all types. Budget cuts over the past 20 years have led to reduced amount of grass cutting down to one per year leading to very careful decisions having to be made over when to carry out grass cutting depending on each year's weather patterns.

Clearly, there is a balance to be had over how we treat our roadside verges. The present policy is one cut per year and junction cuts where safety is the major issue. Junctions are currently cut on a priority basis – major junctions first.

Mill Rd Bridge, Marcham

Good news for Marcham (and indeed Drayton) residents is that work is due to start on the bridge imminently and the work completed this summer. Both Parishes are keen to work together to restore access to the bridge as soon as possible.

HIF1 Road

The major concern for Appleford, Sutton Courtenay and Milton is the OCC Planning and Regulation Committee's decision on the proposed new HIF1 Road. After 4 postponements, the application will be heard on July 17th and 18th. The meeting will be on line. (Update: the application was heard and rejected.)

Richard Webber Cllr
Richardwebber777@gmail.com
07546571521

District Councillor's Report

One might think that something so basic as sewage treatment would be a simple, unexciting topic but, alas, you would be wrong. The crisis in the national water industry is receiving attention from the national media, but how does Thames Water and the Vale of White Horse fit into all of this?

As the water company servicing the area, Thames Water has a legal obligation to meet the capacity need for sewage treatment of the local population: it cannot refuse to connect new housing to the sewage treatment network because there is insufficient capacity, and must instead increase its capacity to treat the sewage that these new residents will produce. As a profit-making business, however, TW has shown that is reluctant to even think about increasing capacity until after this new housing has actually been built; this introduces a time lag between the need for extra capacity and its supply. During that lag



period, the under-capacity often leads to the sewage being discharged into our rivers and streams, which is toxic to wildlife and deeply unpleasant to local residents. Given the rapid growth of housing across the Vale under the Local Plan adopted in 2016-2019, there has been a corresponding rapid growth of sewage production, but far too little yet in the way of extra sewage treatment capacity.

Not all of this is TW's fault: it wasn't until 1975 that building regulations were updated to force a separation between the sewage and the surface water drainage, so rainfall onto these older houses pours into the sewage network, overwhelming it; housing developers vary in their behaviour when adhering to the rules; and a minority of farmers allow considerable run-off of fertiliser from agricultural land into nearby streams and rivers. The lack of forward-thinking by TW is inexcusable, however, and it reveals a deep flaw in the privatisation of a monopolistic industry such as water.

At the July meeting of all Vale councillors, we debated a motion on sewage treatment and resolved a number of actions: (1) adding our pressure to that put upon TW, both directly and via local MPs; (2) investigating what extra legal routes are already available to us for holding TW to account; and (3) exploring how the need for sufficient sewage capacity can be factored into the planning application process. These won't fix the problem overnight, but they're all steps in the right direction. Look forward to the day when we can stop thinking about sewage once more!

Cllr. Dr. Robert Clegg
District Councillor for Marcham Ward
Phone: 07784225290
Email: robert.clegg@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

MP's Report

As I mentioned in my last article, access to childcare is something that is regularly raised with me on the doorstep, and I launched a Childcare Survey last month to give parents and guardians across the constituency the chance to tell me about their experiences. Thank you to everyone who took part.

I will be sharing the findings with Ministers at the Department for Education, but the headline results included 95% of people saying we need more childcare infrastructure (much like most other infrastructure!) and 95% of people supporting the Government's plan to expand free childcare to 30 hours every week for children from 9 months old until they start school. This is the largest ever investment in childcare and will hopefully make a huge difference to the 75% who said that cost has been an issue in accessing childcare.



This month I was pleased to host my third annual Wantage and Didcot Climate Summit featuring a keynote speech by Grant Shapps, the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, who took questions on everything from renewables to transport. We also welcomed local and national experts including Mike Blanch from the Westmill Sustainable Energy Trust, Jack Richardson from Onward and Professor Adrian Bull from The University of Manchester to talk and take questions about wind, hydrogen and nuclear energy. This was followed by the chance to question Thames Water's Director of Sustainability on water quality and tackling storm overflows. It was a very interesting event, and you can watch the recording on my website.

I also hosted a Crime Summit with Thames Valley Police in Wallingford this month after a local resident wrote to me with concerns about crime. It was a productive discussion about lots of issues and there were several things that TVP committed to go away and look at – including the time it takes to report an incident of anti-social behaviour online.

In addition, I hosted a Farmers' Forum for local farmers with the Farming Minister, Mark Spencer. We had a wide-ranging discussion about food production, farming incentives, the challenges for beef/pig/dairy/arable farmers, the environment and much more.

It is always a pleasure to welcome constituents to Parliament, and it was great to meet with Sarah and a group of young people from SOFEA when they visited again for a tour. I helped organise this after a visit I made to them recently – they do great work for the local community.

As one of the patrons of Play2Give I try to get to as many of Andy Baker's events as I can and this month he was running a great football tournament in Wallingford, which raised over £4,000. Well done, Andy!

In other news, my campaign for the local AEAT Pensioners hit another milestone as Parliament's Public Accounts Committee finished their inquiry that I helped secure and made recommendations to Government. This is a campaign I will continue to support.

As ever, if I can help with anything please email me via david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk.

ALL SAINTS' & ST. LUKES CHURCHES

www.marcham-with-garford.org.uk



Come ye thankful people come

Gratitude begins with an attitude that “it’s not all about me”, and Harvest time is a valuable annual reminder that we have so much to be grateful for. Yes – many necessary things come at astronomical prices these days.... fuel, food, insurance and mortgage payments. It feels like every household purchase must pass through an ever-finer filter of “is this really value for money?” However, it is worth the reminder that in a country such as this one, we still have so much to be thankful for, even if stuff costs loads more than it did. As we look across harvested fields already being drilled for next year, to be alive in rural Oxfordshire in 2023 is to be blessed with so much... healthcare, security, fresh air, freedom, connectivity, education, sport, wildlife, water, landscape, culture, and an abundance of locally produced food. I’m sure you can add to that list. In a world where it seems many people are obsessed with grievances, rights and identities, it is good for us to count our blessings from time to time, and what better time than Harvest? I realise not everyone is going to come in thankfulness to God for the ways in which he has blessed. Some simply do not believe in him. But for many others, those who might not call themselves Christians or regularly engage in Christian worship, that sense in their hearts that there is someone out there who has sought to bless them is clear and profound. Healthy societies, communities and households are thankful ones. It’s chicken and egg. But for some, me included, it is as the old hymn goes: “all good gifts around us are sent from heaven above, then thank the Lord, oh thank the Lord for all His love.” There will be Harvest services again this year at St Lukes and All Saints Churches, and at Marcham Primary School too.

St. Luke’s, Garford

HARVEST SERVICE on Sunday 3rd September, at 11.30am, followed by a shared lunch in the village hall.

Sundays Sept 10, 17, 24: church open for quiet prayer 11am-12pm.

Contact: Carolyn Whiting

st.lukes@allsaintsmarcham.org



Regular services

10am: Morning Service at All Saints’
6pm: Evening Service

Wednesday Holy Communion
10.30am at Duffield Place

Sunday 24th September: morning service at 11am after **Millets 5k** – you can sign up to run HERE: <https://www.thirstycafemarcham.co.uk/>

Contacts:

Rev. Nick Weldon Vicar vicar@allsaintsmarcham.org 01865 391962, **Rob Finch** Youth Worker 07888331708, rob@marchamyouth.org **Jill Rowe** Children and Families minister families@allsaintsmarcham.org **Tamsin Gilbert** Parish Administrator info@allsaintsmarcham.org