



Mill Bridge restored!



Full story and more images on pages 4/5

Poppy Appeal.

For many years, our local Poppy Appeal has been undertaken by Malcolm and Christine Denton, showing outstanding dedication to this very worthy cause, for which they deserve enormous thanks. Now, they have decided to hang up their collection boxes, with Jamie Butcher taking over the responsibility. Jamie introduces himself on page 3 and has provided information about this year's arrangements. Please give generously.





Editor's Column

Small Village, Big News

How fortunate we are to be able to visit the newly refurbished Crown. Thanks to Laura and Ricky (pictured on page 10), in conjunction with Oak Taverns, Marcham now has a hostelry which has been desperately needed for years.

Good Morning Campers

Visiting Marcham on September 27th was a school Party from near Antwerp in the Netherlands, who were here for five days to improve their English language skills.



Their tutor writes... [in her best English]

It is great to hear that Marcham is developing into a thriving young town.

Our school has the tradition of going on different camps during the last week of September. This is only for the students who take their final exams in May. Students get to choose on which camp they want to go. This year we could choose between Berlin, Munich, the Ardennes and Oxford. Of course we chose Oxford.

We stayed at the Hill End Outdoor Education Centre for four nights so we were in the UK for five days.

The third day, our teachers gave us an assignment. We were with a group of 45 students and we were divided in groups of eight or nine student. Every group was dropped in another little village or town. The assignment was just talking to the local people and developing our skills in talking English.

Thats the story behind our visit to Marcham. It is great to hear that you aren't really crazy!

[A reference to MAD News!]



Ring found in Marcham
Phone Editor - number in panel above



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DEADLINES

Advertising: 5pm 15th month

Other copy: 5pm 20th month

except for the Jan edition 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.

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robert.clegg@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

For other councillors go to

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk



My name is Jamie Butcher and I have taken over the position of District Poppy Appeal Organiser, for some years undertaken by Malcolm and Christine Denton in Marcham.

As per previous years there will no longer be any door-to-door collections, but Donation Boxes will be located at:

- Marcham Village Shop & Post Office
- The Marcham Centre
- All Saints Church
- Appleton Shop & Post Office

Collection points will be available in Garford village, Local Pubs, schools and Millets/Webbs Garden Centre.

Pin Badges can be reserved/ordered via emailing jamiebutch@hotmail.com or messaging me on 07342 812801 and collected from Longfields (details by return text message).

Your support and generosity last year helped us raise over £5,000 which is a tremendous amount, and we thank you in advance for your donations for this year's Poppy Appeal. All your donations are invaluable in enabling the Royal British Legion to provide life-long support to serving and ex-serving members of the British Armed Forces and their families.

Jamie Butcher.

This year's Poppy Appeal will run from 22nd October to the 14th November
With Remembrance Sunday being 12th November

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admchristmastrees@gmail.com

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1 2014 - designated dangerous



2 2017 - boarded up and derelict



3 The bridgebuilding team



4 The finished article - and what a beautiful example. Well done and thank you Greenford.

A Recent History of Mill Bridge

After a small section of the crown of the bridge had collapsed, it was deemed necessary to close it on the grounds of safety in July 2013. Work started on the repairs in August 2023, beginning with clearance of the vegetation which had grown extensively in the ten years since its closure. The arch, piers and parapets were re-built, with some re-shaping of the water channels beneath to reduce erosion. A stainless-steel reinforced concrete cap was laid over the crown to spread loads more evenly across the bridge and reduce the risk of a future collapse of the kind that happened ten years ago.



An enthusiastic group of villagers celebrate the re-opening of Mill Bridge

Bridge images: cover & p4 © Jim Asher, p5 (above) © Bartle Frere

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Establishing Wildflower Meadows

Fancy a lovely carpet of colour, buzzing with bees, crickets and butterflies through the summer months? Here at Bothy we have established several wildflower meadows on our poor, sandy soils in parallel with our vineyard activities. Since we removed the vines, we have expanded these meadows, with rewarding and fascinating results. However we continue to learn – here are some tips.



Establish what your soil type is. This is important as different plants require different conditions to flourish. Generally, the poorer quality the soil and lower nutritional status, the easier it will be to establish a diverse meadow.

The plants such as aggressive grasses already on rich soils will outcompete many wildflowers unless help is given. Establishment requires a degree of open soil. If the soil is rich we would advise applying a weed killer in the summer while the plants are actively growing and then raking off the dead thatch to leave the soil bare. With poor soils one might get away with a close mow (with the mowings removed) followed by a good harrow to leave at least 50% of the area bare.

Sow seeds in the autumn or early winter. Many seeds require a substantial cold period before they will germinate. Roll or walk the seeded area to ensure the seeds have good contact with the soil.

Choose the seeds of plants which are suitable for your soils. I purchase my seeds from Emorsgate - <https://wildseed.co.uk/> - which offer a variety of seed mixtures for different soil types as well as the seeds from single species: all sourced from the UK.

I feel that the sowing rates recommended tend to be on the high side. Having fine, native grasses in the mixture is important as they are the food for a range of caterpillars and other insects. But I have halved the sowing rate for the grass and wildflower mixture and added more of the wildflower only mixture.

Emorsgate recommend cutting the meadow in mid-August. In our meadows some of the later flowers are still in bloom at this time so we don't tend to cut back until the early winter. This also gives time for birds to enjoy some of the seeds and reptiles (of which we have lots) to go into hibernation (and thus avoid being killed by the mowing). After mowing the dead vegetation should be raked off to keep the soil fertility low.

For more information please contact me on richard@bothyvineyard.co.uk or join the local parishes wildflower verges project started by Beatrice Hoffman.

A Gardener's Optimism

At a challenging time for many, we need to grab hold of the positives in life and the world. Optimism is something we need to cultivate, in ourselves, those around us and our communities. Saving the seeds of optimism is one thing, knowing how to grow them, tend them, harvest them, is another. Gardeners are the unexpected teachers and mentors of this. Due to gardeners' optimism, they are almost always a sustaining influence.

A gardener is always planning ahead with a clear vision, whether they are flower gardening, vegetable gardening, alpine gardening, tree, shrub or rose gardening, they are always thinking ahead. They are sowing seeds to provide plants for the future, pruning something to turn it into the shape they want. Or feeding plants and the soil so they grow better going forward, or training something so that it covers a wall a bit more.

All that is a euphemism for cultivating and tending optimism in ourselves, others and in our communities. It all takes time and sustained effort.

A good starting point is just to smile and say hello to people we see in the street. Sow the seeds by just being nice, tend those new connections by genuinely asking how people are or if they need anything. A gardener's optimism is something we need to tap into as we move into the shorter days, longer nights and the time of year when we naturally want to hibernate.

It's a time of year where our neighbours could be struggling behind closed doors so let's grab hold of the positives in life taking seasonal inspiration from any gardeners in our community and start to build connections and support people who may be struggling.

Happy Gardening!
Stuart Mabbutt
Wildlife Gardening Specialist
01865 747243
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Astronomy

...and further to the article from last month - 'The Thing that fell to Earth'
an email sent from Croydon High School

Thank you so much again for being part of the retrieval process of our payload.

I'd like to introduce you to Astrogazers first, I formed the club in 2021 when I joined Croydon High School. Along with the girls in my club, we planned the launch of the weather balloon to reach the edge of space for over a year before conducting our first launch in June 2023. Due to the strong gusts, it caused the cords to burn and result in an unsuccessful launch. Despite the disappointment, we saw this as an opportunity to learn from mistakes and plan meticulously to launch again. Mission Aspiration is the name for our second launch and this time, we successfully launched two weather balloons!

Here is a link to a news article from University of Bath:

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/announcements/schoolgirls-weather-balloon-set-to-soar-to-edge-of-space/>

We had two chase teams to retrieve the payloads. The teachers who were chasing the payload which landed near you were, Johann Ting and Badshah Kazi. The girls and I were chasing the payload which landed in Lock Wood.

You can check out Astrogazers YouTube and Instagram account to see our journey so far.



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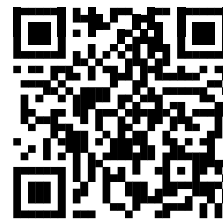


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"The Visible Universe"
(Capturing the entire celestial sphere in a single image)
a talk to the Astronomy Group by Max Whitby

**Thursday 23rd November at 19.00 in the Small Hall,
Marcham Centre, Barrow Close, OX13 6TY
All members are welcome. Guests £5.00**

'The Visible Universe' is a book of breathtaking inspiration and motivates many to venture outside and take in the majesty of the night sky. Max Whitby, co-author of the book, has worked for the BBC where he produced films for the Horizon series. He has two BAFTA awards for his work.

"Stonyborow - a clue to Roman settlement in rural Oxfordshire?"
a talk by Abigail Lloyd

**Monday 27th November at 19.15 for 19.45 in the Main Hall,
Marcham Centre, Barrow Close, OX13 6TY**

Some field-names have been lost, yet they are still recoverable from past records. They are valuable sources for the history of a landscape and its people. Through analysis of the field-names and charter bounds of Whitehill Township, Tackley, Oxfordshire, and one field-name in particular, 'Stonyborow', combined with recent archaeological data discovered in the area, light is shed upon Roman settlement near 'Akeman Street'.



Stonyborow: a clue to Roman settlement in rural Oxfordshire?

Abigail Lloyd



Abigail Lloyd researches the historical landscape, focussing particularly on old buildings, churches and the bigger picture revealed through Early Medieval and Medieval place-names. She is a committee member of the Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society. She is also a research assistant for the English Place-Name Society and she is completing a PhD on Early Medieval place-names.

All members are welcome. Guests £5.00 For more information:

Email: marchamsociety@gmail.com

Website: www.marchamsociety.org.uk

Facebook: [marchamsociety](https://www.facebook.com/marchamsociety)



Our hosts, Laura and Ricky - during a quiet moment



The Packhorse Lane bar



The North Street bar

Marcham WI



Get ready for Christmas! For our November meeting, as it is in the run up to Christmas, we will be holding a craft evening making Christmas decorations. So come along, have some fun and see what we've got planned for the evening.

We also very much hope to see you all at the Christmas Craft and Gift Fair that we are running in the Marcham Centre on Saturday 18th November, from 2pm to 4.30pm, when there will be lots of ideas for Christmas gifts and we'll also be serving refreshments. So come along and bring your friends and neighbours as it is free entry. Monday 20th November at 19.30.

All visitors to our meetings are welcome.
For further information, please contact:

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Marcham Village Shop and Post Office

Opening hours

Monday-Friday – 08:30-17:00 hrs

Saturday – 08:30-12:00 hrs

Sunday and Bank Holidays - closed

Well, well, well... Christmas is just around the corner. The Christmas window display is imminent, along with a 'Naughty Elf' quiz for children aged 10 or under. Each Friday for 4 weeks, starting from 1st December, the Naughty Elf will move around the shop, and it will be up to the children to let us know where the Elf is residing. Quiz forms will be available in the shop from the end of November. There will be prizes for all winning entries and these will be distributed on Saturday 23rd December.

We are having more **electrical work** done in the shop, which may impact the Post Office and payment at the shop till. The work is due to be done on Tuesday 31st October and Thursday 2nd November. The shop and Post Office will be closed Tuesday 31st October between 08.30 – 13.00 as we will have no power - we hope to be able to serve during the rest of the works, but we will keep you informed and let you know if we need to close. We are hoping that this will cause as little disruption as possible.

Over the next few weeks we will be introducing new products in the shop specifically for Christmas. although there is no reason why these can't be bought for any other occasion. Products will include lovely tins of Ginger Thins biscuits, Christmas Gin, tin soldiers filled with chocolate fudge, gift wrapped jams, bottle bags, gift bags and more.



Don't forget that you can order your weekly meat or Sunday lunch joint from Hedges meats via Marcham Village Shop. Details are available from the counter. The recently established ordering is going well, and we hope that this service is what you need. If you have any comments on how we can make this better, please leave your message with a staff member and we will endeavour to take your comments on board. Full details regarding the ordering process, including prices, are available in the shop.

A note for your diary: last posting dates for Christmas:

Monday 18 December	2nd class & 2nd class signed for
Tuesday 19 December	1st class & 1st class signed for
Wednesday 20 December	Pre-paid on-line Royal Mail Tracked 48®
Thursday 21 December	Pre-paid on-line Royal Mail Tracked 24®
Friday 22 December	Special Delivery Guaranteed®

Our Christmas and New Year hours will be published in December's edition of MAD News, but please note that we always close on bank holidays.

Thank you, as always, for supporting your local Village Shop and Post Office and we look forward to seeing you again very soon. If you would like to volunteer in the shop, we only require 2 hours of your time a week. Please come into the shop and let us know if you're interested.

All Saints & St Lukes Churches



I feel that the season of Remembrance will be a bit different this year. I think it will be more understated about the past because of what is happening in the present. In Israel and Gaza, and not forgetting Ukraine, we have witnessed on our newsfeeds the full horror of war, and it has been truly shocking to see the brutality that man is capable of. Remembrance events in the UK seem to have gathered pace and prominence since the turn of the millennium. Some have suggested this stems from the unpopular wars fought in Iraq and Afghanistan in the early 2000's, the loss of British troops, and the way the internet has brought the watching public closer to the frontline. Covid and clapping have carried on that growth of commemoration, and so yet again, with poignancy and thankfulness, at the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them. It is important we always do, and so we always will. But this year praying for peace seems the most important thing to do. Most people long for peace on earth, and the goal of many of the world's religions is for differing visions of peace. It's a tragic irony of history then, and a sad indictment on the hearts of mankind, when those different visions of peace have taken people to war. People will do awful things in the name of religion especially when it is blended with nationalism. However, I'm reminded of the time when Jesus came into Jerusalem as King yet riding on a lowly donkey. Despite the adulation of the crowd waving palm branches, he wept. He wept because the people did not know what would bring them peace (Luke 19:42). Days later he would be crucified, delivered over to death, absorbing all our wrong-doing that we might have the peace of forgiveness with God. The witness of the Bible is that Jesus alone brings true peace on earth – peace with God, peace within ourselves, and peace with others. And one day that peace will extend to fill the whole earth because of the cross. That's a peace worth praying for. There will be Remembrance services on Sunday 12th November in Marcham (All Saints at 10am) and in Garford (outdoors at the war memorial at midday).



Line dancing in aid of MML



*A Cessna 152 awaiting take off
In aid of MAF - Full story in future issues*

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families@allsaintsmarcham.org

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Youth Worker
07888 331708,
rob@marchamyouth.org

Tamsin Gilbert

Parish Administrator
info@allsaintsmarcham.org

www.marcham-with-garford.org.uk



Following the success of our Christmas Tree Extravaganza last year, we are expanding it around the village. We plan to create a Christmas Tree trail around Marcham and are inviting households or organisations to decorate a tree. If you'd like to participate, please email families@allsaintsmarcham.org by 13th November, telling us your name (or the organisation's) and the address where the tree will be.

We can provide a small tree if needed. A trail map will be available from Friday 15th December. Further details (such the theme of the decorations) will be available in next month's MAD news.

Regular services (All Saints)

10.00: Morning Service at All Saints'

18.00: Evening Service

Wednesday Holy Communion 10.30 at Duffield Place



St Lukes

Sunday 5th November 11.00: St Lukes Patronal Festival

Sundays November 12th, 19th, 26th:

Church open for quiet prayer 11.00-12.00.

Sunday 3rd December 18.00: Advent Carols at Garford

Contact: Carolyn Whiting

st.lukes@allsaintsmarcham.org

Parish Council News

New Councillor – Vacancy

Suzanne Saunter has resigned her role as a parish councillor owing to her other commitments. There is therefore a vacancy on the Council. If you are passionate about the local area, and care about where you live, and wish to be part of the team trying to make a difference to the immediate area and wider parish, then please contact the clerk, whose details are overleaf.

Remembrance Sunday 12th November

Road Closure A415 Frilford Road, Church Street and New Road

The Parish Council has applied to the Vale of White Horse District Council for a road closure order on Sunday 12th November, to close New Road, Church St and the section of the A415 between North St and Church St between 10.45 a.m. and 12.15 p.m., to aid wreath laying at the war memorial. The closure is not expected to be operational throughout the whole of this time, so there should be minimal disruption to bus services. Anyone attending the Remembrance event at the war memorial is reminded that covid is still about, so please be mindful of distancing and staying safe. 7 Regiment local support at Logistic Corps at Dalton Barracks is undertaking work, such as litter picking and tree planting in the local community as part of a wide divisional initiative. They have been asked to help with tidying the war memorial in readiness for Remembrance Sunday.

Fireworks

Again, the annual reminder for those of you who may have purchased fireworks and intend letting them off in your garden, please be considerate to neighbours, the many pets and animals, and wildlife in the village. Please notify others when any fireworks are going to be lit so that villagers are aware and arrangements can be made to keep pets indoors.

Harding Way – trees on first open space

Unfortunately the second set of trees have died on the open space nearer the junction with Sheepstead Road. The Council is arranging to have these removed.

North Street – Bus stop outside the Post Office / Steps leading to public footpath

The Council has considered whether anything could be done to help people getting on and off the bus outside of the Post Office, as often the bus has to stop in the road, and not up against the kerb. It concluded that very little could be done as there is the driveway entrance into Sweetbriar, and moving the bus stop was not a solution, as the road is too narrow, or too near the corner with the A415.

Queries too have been raised regarding the uneven steps leading up to the footpath which runs alongside the Anson Field. These have been referred to the County Council in the first instance.

Play Area

At the time of writing, the play area has undergone a second safety inspection, and unfortunately queries have again been raised. The Council has been working closely with the contractor in order to rectify the issues as quickly as possible. The Council fully understands the frustration it is causing to those who are very keen to try out the new area, but in the interests of everyone's safety it is important that there are no issues with the equipment before the public can have access.

Mill Road bridleway 17 bridge

The architect for the bridge restoration works confirmed to the Parish Council that it was going to be open again to the public from 18th October onwards. This is good news. The Council is very grateful for all the hard work put in by all those involved, and expresses its gratitude to the large team of people for their co-operation throughout and for enabling the project to reach fruition.

Planning Applications considered by the Council

P23/V1077/RM Application by Bloor Homes for up to 90 houses south of the A415 – The Parish Council maintained its concerns regarding loose material being used for paths, and requested tarmac or other harder surface. It wanted construction traffic to use the A415 and not pass through the residential streets of the village, with the 30 mph limit being moved further eastwards at the start of the project. It referenced parking on the site, and wanted to ensure there were sufficient spaces plus plenty for visitors. It also made reference to the future possible link path to the adjacent site, and to the management of the play area. The capacity of the Thames Water pumping station too is of concern. It was pleased to note that a tree to mark the Coronation of Kings Charles III is to be planted as a feature within the development.

cont'd...

Parish Council News - continued from previous page

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

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 13th November, 2023 at 7.30 p.m.
in the village hall, Barrow Close.

Please check the Council's website for the latest information in case of changes.

Marcham C of E Primary School

We are already half a term through an exciting new school year!

You may remember, back in June, that we were inspected by OFSTED. We waited a long time for the report to be published so we could share the outcome but it finally arrived in September and it can be found on the Ofsted Website. It does make GOOD reading and is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the staff and governors at Marcham School, the engagement of the pupils and the support of the parents and our wider community – thank you to all. Although it is nice to be appreciated for all efforts made to provide the best education we can for the children of Marcham School, we are always aiming to “get better at getting better” and are well into another year of hard work and even further progress.

We are enjoying the fruits of many exciting projects that benefit our children – The Anson Trust has resourced the school with the ability to buy many, many, many new books that will encourage our children over many generations in our Reading School.

There has been a refurbishment of the KS1/EYFS play area as part of the Marcham School and Marcham Pre-School Partnership. It's now a fantastic space to play and to learn. We are hoping to make a big fuss of all the developments that have taken place (and the many supporters of the project from our local community), once it is completed.

The school garden had a fabulous first summer, growing quickly into a jungle and producing an abundance of vegetables. The children were excited to plant seeds and see how quickly they grew into food and beautiful flowers. One class even had a six headed sunflower! Each class watered and maintained their own planter, and have reaped the benefits with a large harvest of potatoes, peas, cucumbers, mange tout and tomatoes. It provided a quiet space for children and staff to use through the summer months, and teachers utilised the space for a variety of lessons that included measuring the growth of sunflowers, and teaching the lifecycle of a plant. The garden was abundant with huge pumpkins and red tomatoes that the children enjoyed in school.

As produce ripened over the summer, a team of parent volunteers picked it and left it out for the whole community to enjoy. Thank you to the Anson Trust, the PTA and all the wonderful families who helped set the garden up in May and continue to support it.

To see what else the school has been up to you can see the Latest News on the website or go to the Class Pages <https://www.marcham.oxon.sch.uk/class-pages/>

Prospective Parents

We look forward to welcoming prospective families to our school as we hold 'Open Mornings' on the following days:

Thursday 2nd November 2023 at 09.30
Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 09.30

Please contact the school office to register your interest in one of the dates.

<https://www.marcham.oxon.sch.uk/school-admissions/>

Please see the information on our website and do contact the school office for more information on admissions.

(office.3235@marcham.oxon.sch.uk).

...more overleaf



A note from the new Chair of Governors at Marcham C of E School.

I wanted to introduce myself as the new Chair of Governors at Marcham and also explain a little about what the governing body does, but firstly I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to Chris Frost, who has stepped down after a very successful two years as Chair and several more years serving as a parent Governor. I have children in Year three and Year five at Marcham. I have a background in different roles within primary education and I am currently teaching at a local primary school. It is an exciting time to take on the role of Chair of Governors at Marcham after an extremely successful Ofsted inspection; I am sure you will join me in thanking all the staff for their constant hard work in making Marcham the school it is.

The Governing body exists to serve three main purposes.

1. Ensure the school has a clear vision, direction, and ethos
2. Hold the headteacher and senior leaders to account for the educational success of the pupils and the school itself
3. To oversee the financial performance of the school in these very challenging times to ensure that the money the school receives is spent wisely.

As Governors we do so in a supportive and helpful manner. We meet with members of staff and have regular meetings ourselves to discuss strategic decisions. You can find out more about us and what we do on the school website.

We have some vacancies for Governors this year so if you feel you have the capacity and enthusiasm to join us, we would love to hear from you.

We are particularly looking for volunteers with a business or finance background but likewise if you are a lateral thinker and interested in the strategic development of the school with the enthusiasm to learn, then please do get in touch.

If becoming a school governor is something that you might be interested in then please fill out the attached form and send it to me at marchamchair@outlook.com

Best Wishes,
Jackie Sebire

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Thirsty Café

It was nice to welcome back new and regular customers after our summer break. For those who have not yet visited the cafe, we are at the Marcham Centre on Wednesday and Saturday mornings 09.00 to 11.30. We sell a wide range of cakes and now with our new coffee machine a wide range of coffees, as well as sausage rolls on a Wednesday, and any combination of bacon, sausage and egg baps on Saturdays.

Once a month we have a community lunch in partnership with Little Angels with everyone being welcome. Lunch is served between 12.00 and 14.00, and vegetarian options are available. The cost is £8.00 for adults and £4.00 for children.

The next lunch is on Wednesday 22nd November.



Our new coffee machine is proving to be a great success with people appreciating having a wider coffee menu. We had our AGM on Thursday 14th September where we saw it had been a year of growth, with Men's breakfast, Stay and Play, Community lunches, Live music events, 5k Millets run and private events. The Café has employed two part time managers and the café has been able to give out community grants. Hopefully with your support we will be able to continue to grow over the next year.

We are volunteer led and are keen to recruit extra volunteers. It is a great way to meet people in the community. There are all sorts of ways people can volunteer and you can give as many hours as you want. We especially need someone to help put up the tables and chairs at the beginning of the morning and help to take them down afterwards.

If you are thinking about participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, we provide volunteering opportunities in the village. We have lots of experience in supporting the young volunteers. Please contact us if you wish to find out more.

We would like to thank Millets Farm for hosting the 5k, and everyone who donated prizes.

Website www.thirstycafemarcham.co.uk

e-mail hello@thirstycafemarcham.co.uk

The advertisement for Millets Farm Centre features a dark green header with the text "Millets FARM CENTRE" and a stylized Christmas tree with a yellow star. Below the header, the text "FIELD | FAMILY | FORK" is displayed. The main body of the ad has a light green background with the text "Outstanding Christmas Meat!" in a large, bold font. Below this, it says "Don't forget to place your Christmas meat order online or with our expert butchers at the butchery counter!". At the bottom, the address "Kingston Road | Frilford | Nr. Abingdon | OX13 5HB" and the website "www.milletsfarmcentre.com" are listed.

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The Anson Trust have had a busy but enjoyable quarter reviewing grants from all corners of the village. We are delighted to have been able to approve almost all of the grants with some of the photos of the recent cheque presentations including new goals for the Marcham Colts, a coffee machine for the team at Thirsty Cafe and new books for the children at Marcham School here. We are keen to welcome more grant applications and have £40,000 still available to further good causes in the village and surrounding area, so please take a moment to visit ansontrust.org/grant-giving.



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County Councillor's Report

My least favourite road?

There are some issues that just never seem to go away. The A415 between Abingdon and Marcham has been a concern for many years. Fairly straight, not very wide, very busy but with little housing on either side, there have been safety issues all that time involving pedestrians, cyclists, private cars and HGVs. It took far too long to get the road reduced from derestricted to 50mph. Increasing traffic levels and the narrowness of the shared pedestrian and cycle path on one side are increasing calls for a further reduction to 40mph.



The section of the A415 between the A34 and Abingdon town centre is suffering from the same traffic increase. This leads to congestion all around the immediate area – congestion that affects bus timetabling and makes the delivery of a 4-way interchange at Lodge Hill ever more urgent.

It is the same A415 between Abingdon and Dorchester that is now ever more in the spotlight. The SODC local plan is for several thousand more homes at Culham. If and when the Didcot HIF1 Road is completed, it will deliver yet more traffic on this section of the A415.

One wonders what the congestion is going to be like during the construction of all these projects. Roll on autonomous cars and buses.

Drayton 20mph plans

20mph limits through our towns and villages are great for general health and a sense of well-being. As Drayton has discovered, the bus companies, understandably concerned about anything that interferes with their timetabling, have raised objections to some new 20mph zones. It has now been agreed that a new 20mph will be put in place in the High St and in the central section of Abingdon Rd., together with all the minor roads. Decisions on Steventon Rd and the northern end of Abingdon Rd will be negotiated when the long-awaited Neighbourhood Plan improvements are delivered. Some good news here, as we expect a firm timetable of delivery for these improvements in the New Year. Meanwhile, it will help the argument for increasing the 20mph zone throughout the whole village if more of us use our bus services. The sight of endless queues of single occupancy cars on the Drayton Rd is depressing.

HIF1, Sutton Courtenay and Appleford

With the final decision now in the hands of Mr Gove, the Secretary of State, and in expectation that the needs of District Councils to protect their Local Plans will take precedence, it makes sense to prepare arguments for every possible mitigation to be in place to minimise the impact of the new road on local residents. Such mitigation must include measures to sort out the noise issues in Appleford and the odour issues in Sutton Courtenay.

Mill Rd Bridge Marcham.

As I write, a grand formal opening event is being planned. This is great news for Marcham but also Drayton residents, walkers and cyclists.

VAS (Vehicle Activated Signs)

The new signs are now in place on the B4016 together with mounting poles in various positions between Drayton and Sutton Courtenay. With Parish Councils' ability to move the signs between the poles, we hope to get around the issue of drivers ignoring the speed signs through over-familiarity.

Party political Conventions.

Now that the party conference season is over, it is becoming ever clearer that, whoever is in power at the next election, England is going to be taking many more houses in the next few years. As one of the few parts of the country that is a net contributor to the national economy, we can expect continuous pressure to build more in our area. Hopefully, we can get the infrastructure that this housing will need. How we absorb this pressure, on top of the pressure from past lack of infrastructure provision and, of course, how we pay for it, will be the top major challenge for the new government.

Richard Webber Cllr

07546571521

Richardwebber777@gmail.com

District Councillor's Report

Single-use vapes

In the run-up to the October full council meeting, we were preparing a motion to ban the sale of single-use disposable vapes across the Vale. These are rarely recycled, despite containing batteries and other electronics, and are often marketed at children, with bright colours and sweet flavours. In the event, we were overtaken by central government announcing its own initiative on this topic. There is now a national consultation open at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/creating-a-smokefree-generation-and-tackling-youth-vaping> where residents are encouraged to share their views (until 6th December).

To clarify, the Vale is focusing attention on single-use disposable vapes. We have no intention of banning refillable vapes, as there is strong evidence that these are a valuable aid to smokers wanting to quit.



Real Living Wage

Now onto the items actually debated at the meeting: two motions were agreed. The first of these noted that, although the Vale already ensures that all directly employed staff receive at least the Real Living Wage, it was unable to become an accredited Real Living Wage employer as it did not have a clear commitment to ensure that all suppliers are also Real Living Wage employers. This is something that the Vale can now address through future procurement activities.

Period Poverty

The second motion at full council addressed what the Vale can do to alleviate period poverty across the region. With the cost of living crisis showing little sign of abating, too many are having to make the impossible choice between sanitary products and other essentials, such as food and heating. Having now agreed this motion, the Vale will now provide free sanitary products to anyone who needs them from our facilities, such as Abbey House and the White Horse Leisure Centre (both in Abingdon).

Climate Commitment

Residents will likely have heard of the Prime Minister's recent rolling back on climate emergency initiatives and commitments, including pushing back the bans on sale of fossil fuel cars, oil and LPG boilers, and new coal heating. When asked about this at full council, the Leader of the Vale Council, Cllr Bethia Thomas explained that although we remain committed to our targets for reaching net zero, some of our plans were based on the national legislation that is now being watered down. Like local authorities up and down the country, we are now assessing the implications of this on our strategy for meeting our targets and will then try to adapt so that we can (hopefully) still meet them.

Special Measures

Residents may remember that in June I wrote about a letter from central government to the Vale about below-target response times to planning applications. The Minister of State for Housing and Planning, Rachel Maclean MP has recently written again to note the improvement in our performance and to confirm that the Vale is no longer deemed at risk of being placed under special measures.

Cllr. Dr. Robert Clegg

District Councillor for Marcham Ward

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Email: robert.clegg@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

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Get help with home repairs



There are services and funds available to help people (owners and private tenants) stay independent, safe and well in their homes, and Oxfordshire County Council has developed a referral service to help residents (or carers) access the right organisations in their area, to get the help they need.

The type of help that can be provided are services such as new boilers, repairs to boilers, loft or cavity wall insulation, access to a local and trustworthy repairs service and general advice on how to stay safe, well and affordably warm in your home.

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MP's Report

I was really pleased with how my Pensioners' Fair in Wantage went. Lots of pensioners came and were able to get information and advice from a wide range of organisations that took stalls, including Vale Community Impact, Carers Oxfordshire, Thames Valley Police and Grove Day Centre. My thanks again to Driving Miss Daisy in Didcot for sponsoring it.

Last month, I officially opened Soha Housing's new building in Wallingford, Frances Curtis Court. It provides retirement living options and I was very impressed that they had managed to build it on time and on budget despite the pandemic. It was particularly nice that Frances Curtis's Grandson was able to be there for the event, too.

Andy Baker is a local hero in Didcot and I am proud to be a patron of his charity, Play2Give. It was great to be able to be at his 2023 Gatsby Ball last month, a really great event with 140 people in attendance. It celebrated his organisation having now raised more than £100,000 for Oxford Children's Hospital. Well done, Andy!

Two things for you and your families to participate in before next month. I have just launched my annual Christmas Card Competition for primary school children. It's open till the 13th November and entries need to be on an A4 page – the winning design will go on the front of my card!

I've also opened a survey asking what you think about the PM's proposal to increase the age you can buy cigarettes by a year every year so that a 14-year-old today is never able to buy one. Find details about both on www.david-johnston.org.uk. And do please sign my Grove Station Petition while you're there if you haven't!

It's been a very busy first few weeks as Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing. I've met with lots of individuals and charities that support work in the areas I'm now responsible for; helped to launch a new £70 million programme to improve the support children with special educational needs get; responded on behalf of the Government in a debate about the role of kinship carers (family members who take children in who can't live with their parents); hosted visits by Ministers from Sweden and the Netherlands to share ideas; and launched more of the Government's work to reform children's social care.

There've been plenty of visits, too – including to nurseries, a family hub, a children's home and the Seashell Trust, a charity that supports children with learning disabilities and autism. There's lots to do – the Special Educational Needs, Alternative Provision and Children's Social Care System are all being significantly reformed simultaneously and, at the same time, the Government is making the single largest investment in childcare ever to dramatically increase the free hours of childcare parents can claim. This constituency will always be my primary focus but I'm very much enjoying my additional responsibilities so far.

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



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November 2023

December '23

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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Deadline Day >>>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31 Shop & PO Closed between 08.30 and 13.00 see page 11	1 Ladies Coffee Marcham Centre 10.15	2 Primary School Open Day 09.30 - See p15 Shop & PO Electrical works - Caution See p11	3 Friday Club Marcham Centre 17.30-18.30 Fireworks! Keep your pets inside	4 Fireworks! Keep your pets inside
5 Fireworks! Keep your pets inside	6 Games Morning Duffield Place 10.00-12.00	7	8 Ladies Coffee Marcham Centre 10.15	9	10 Friday Club Marcham Centre 17.30-18.30	11 Remembrance Day 2 mins silence - 11.11
12 Remembrance Sunday Parish Church - 10.00 then Wayside Cross 11.00 A415 closed 10.45-12.15	13 Parish Council Meeting Marcham Centre 19.30	14	15 Ladies Coffee Marcham Centre 10.15	16	17 Friday Club Marcham Centre 17.30-18.30	18 Christmas Craft and Gift Fair See below
19	20 Games Morning Duffield Place 10.00-12.00 WI Xmas Craft Evening Marcham Centre 19.30 Deadline Day editor@madnews.co.uk	21	22 Ladies Coffee Marcham Centre 10.15 Community Lunch Marcham Centre 12.00	23 Astronomy Group Marcham Centre 19.00	24 Friday Club Marcham Centre 17.30-18.30	25
26	27 Marcham Society Marcham Centre 19.15	28	29 Ladies Coffee Marcham Centre 10.15	30	1 Friday Club Marcham Centre 17.30-18.30	2 Christmas Craft Morning All Saints 09.30-12.00

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