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June 2026 Vol 48, No. 6

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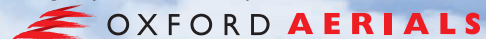
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Hi Everyone,

Well done to the Events team for a wonderful Big Weekend in May

Cheers

Kay

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PROOFREADING

The MADNews Team

DEADLINES

All entries including articles, notices, reports and advertising:

5pm 15th of the month

ADDITIONAL COPIES

These are available from Marcham Village Shop. 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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MP

Layla Moran layla.moran.mp@parliament.uk

MARCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Council was held on 11th May and Mark Harvie was elected chairman for the forthcoming year. Some working groups were set up to deal with the day to day working issues of the council, such as an administrative group to consider the effectiveness of internal audit, as well as groups to consider allotment matters, footpaths etc.

UPCOMING MEMORIAL TESTING IN THE CEMETERY AND CHURCHYARD

As part of the Council's commitment to maintain a safe environment for all visitors and workers within the Cemetery and Churchyard, it has arranged for a contractor to undertake essential memorial testing to ensure that memorials are secure and do not pose a risk to public safety. We understand that this process may cause some concern, and we encourage families and visitors to contact their local councillor or clerk, if they have any questions or would like more details. The date for the testing will be advertised once it is known, but is likely to be over the summer period. The Council will keep parishioners informed and will provide more information when known.

VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

When a new housing development takes place, funds can be collected from a developer to help offset the demands that the development places on the area. If the funds are not used within a certain timeframe, they can go back to the developer. The District Council is holding some funds, particularly for indoor sport and public art, which are available. The Council does have some suggestions for the use of the funds, but wondered whether there was any village organization interested in applying. Any application needs the support of the Parish Council, and needs to meet certain criteria, so please contact your local councillor in the first instance to find out more about what is required. As an example of local public art, there are 2 new recently installed bench seats in the Anson field and on the village green.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2026

The Council was pleased to see residents from the village attend the annual parish meeting. This is the meeting where electors can attend, speak and vote if the need arises on topics relevant to the area where they live. The Local Government Act 1972 states that the Chairman of the parish council shall preside, so the job of running the meeting fell to Mark Harvie. There were very interesting speakers, from not only the parish council, but updates on the past year's activities were given by Lindsay Priddle, head teacher at Marcham Primary School. In addition 2 of the organisations, the Abingdon Bridge and Marcham Community Group, that had received grants from the Parish Council, spoke about how the funds awarded had

supported their work. The Abingdon Bridge helped young people between the ages of 13 – 25 take confident and practical steps towards their wellbeing, independence and future. The other grant recipient, Marcham Community Group, outlined how they not only managed the hall building, but through its activities, supported a network of local life and provided a public service.

The District Councillor, Cllr. Rob Clegg, and the County Councillor, Cllr. James Plumb too outlined their busy year.

Mark Harvie showed slides on some of the topics covered by the parish council, consisting of grants awarded and how to apply for funding, clearance and other works at the allotments, and grass cutting not only on the usual parish council areas but also on highway verges. Ongoing projects included resurfacing of footpaths, the bench seats, and tree works. The council had approved funds to improve the conservation area notice board in the Churchyard. Future projects undergoing investigation were: the war memorial - improvements to maintenance and also art work, a bus shelter opposite Duffield Place, and memorial testing in the cemetery and churchyard. There are vacancies on the council and its working groups. If anyone is keen to help plan to improve the area and serve on the groups, then you would be welcome, please contact your local councillor or the clerk.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no new planning applications debated at the last parish council meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 8th June 2026 at 7.30pm at Marcham Centre. The Council meetings are open to the public, and the Council welcomes anyone who has issues to raise on parish matters to attend, or speak to their local parish councillor.

Please check the Council's website in case arrangements change.

Clerk to the Council:

Mrs. L. Martin, 90 Howard Cornish Road

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clerk@marchamparishcouncil.gov.uk

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This month's cover photo is
Marcham Big Weekend May 2026.

by Dai Davies

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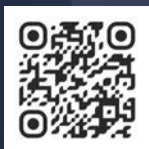
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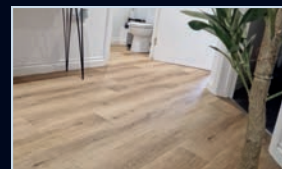
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THE MIDWEEK WALK

Thursday 4th June at 12.30pm
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THE MONTHLY TALK

'Oxfordshire : A way with waste!'

by Paul Dumbleton

Monday 22nd June at 7.30 for 7.45pm
Main Hall, Marcham Centre, Barrow Close, OX13 6TY



Paul Dumbleton's talk "A way with waste!" will explain how Oxfordshire has historically dealt with its waste and why things have recently changed. He will then discuss the future of waste and recycling in our county.

Paul specialises in the technical separation of waste to produce value added products for both recyclables and recovered fuel. He is a senior waste management professional with over 30 years experience in the industry, working predominantly for international waste management and renewable energy companies, with time spent in Europe, North America and Africa.

Members free of charge, Guests welcome at £5

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

Please contact: admin@marchamsociety.org.uk

Quiz

Test your knowledge with our monthly questions

1. Which British author wrote *The Ipcress File* and died this year?
2. What is the constitutional capital of the Netherlands?
3. What is the dot over the letters i and j called?
4. Which England football team is nicknamed "the Eagles"?
5. What is the largest national park in England?
6. Who appears on the current £10 note, in addition to the monarch, issued by the Bank of England?
7. What was the 1913 Morris Oxford nicknamed?
8. Which UK artist painted matchstick men, cats and dogs?
9. What opened in Illinois in 1955, led by Ray Kroc?
10. Which town claims to be Britain's oldest continuously inhabited settlement?
11. Approximately how many native bee species are there in Britain?
12. In what year was the first debutantes' ball held at Buckingham Palace?

Answers on page 19



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Thirsty Community Café

Find us in the Marcham Centre, OX13 6TY. We open on Wednesday 8.45-11.30 and Saturday 9.00-11.30. serving delicious, local food and hot drinks. 'Natural Bread' run alongside us on Saturday mornings; bringing you your fresh bread and pastry fix.



Our upcoming June dates are as follows:

- Stay and Play - 3rd June
- Toasted - 8th June
- Community Lunch - 17th June
- Farmers' Market - 27th June

BIG WEEKEND AND FARMERS' MARKET

Thank you to everyone, volunteers and customers alike - for coming along to the Big Weekend and supporting Thirsty Café's BBQ. We sold out of everything!

Thank you also to those who attended the Farmer's market, which will return once more on 27th June from 9:00 - 12:00. You will find sweet and savoury treats, local crafters and food suppliers.

GIVING BACK TO MARCHAM

Pay it forward with Cup of Love

Thank you to everyone who has donated café items to the 'Cup of Love', pay it forward scheme. It is our hope that people will feel free to use these little post-its should they wish to.

- To donate, please ask at the till.
- To redeem, simply take a sticker of your choice and hand it to one of our servers by way of payment.

VOLUNTEERING

Thirsty Café thrives upon the generosity of its volunteers. If you feel like you could help us once a month, please email Nicci Sawhney hello@thirstycafemarcham.co.uk

Website: www.thirstycafemarcham.co.uk

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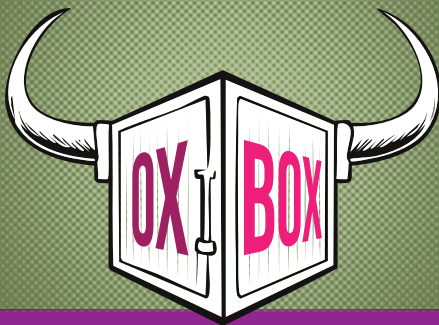
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MARCHAM PRE-SCHOOL

This term the children have been learning about different types of transport... from trains and cars, to buses and hot air balloons! It's been a fantastic opportunity to think about shapes in the environment and the children have been creating their own vehicle models with circles, squares and triangular windows. A very popular activity (and an effective way to develop their fine motor skills) was weaving paper for the hot air balloon baskets... don't they look amazing?



We will also be teaching the children about road safety - so if you see us walking around the village, please do not stop your car to let the children across the road, we need to practise stopping, looking, listening and waiting - thank you!

We have also been planting seeds and watching them grow and change - quick growing beans as well as planting some vegetables in our 'root viewer' so we can explore how they grow beneath the soil. Each day the children arrive with excitement to see what changes have occurred overnight! We have a new Marcham Pre-school Garden and plan to create a sensory space with herbs and flowers. If there are any gardeners in the village and you have any plants/flowers/herbs to spare, we would love to give them a new home.



If you would like to find out more about Marcham Pre-school, our Prospectus is available at www.marcham-preschool.weebly.com or you can contact us at admissions.mps@outlook.com

We recommend getting in touch as early as possible as spaces are limited and fill quickly each year.

Nicky Sanford, Early Years Teacher
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The Marcham Big Weekend last month was a huge success! The Shop supported the event with gusto, selling ice-creams and snacks, and easing the pressure on the bar by selling bottled and canned drinks. We also donated a whopping £1000 to help with the overall organisation. We are very proud to have been able to support the Big Weekend, and this is all thanks to you, our customers, who have supported our Community Shop and Post Office over the last year – please do keep using this marvellous asset at the heart of the community. Contributions and Support has been provided to:

SAFE (Support for Young Victims of Crime) – £50



Kit for Marcham Colts – £1000

Kit for Marcham Colts under 6's – £347.42

Marcham Primary School - £1500

Air Fryer and Microwave Oven for the staffroom, and a Sandpit, for Marcham Primary School – £350

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Easter Eggs for Marcham Big Easter Egg Hunt – £130.61

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Marcham Society - £200

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NEWS FROM MARCHAM SCHOOL

During another busy and successful half term at our school our pupils have taken part in a wide range of exciting activities and achievements.

On Sunday 26th April, twenty-one pupils from Marcham took part in the Schools Triathlon for Restless Development. Before the day they had spent time fundraising for this event and then during that day took part at Abingdon School. Teams from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 took part; swimming 50m, cycling 1000m and running 750m. The children showed excellent determination, teamwork and sportsmanship throughout the event, and we were incredibly proud of their efforts and enthusiasm.

We are also delighted to announce that the school has achieved the Silver School Games Award in recognition of our commitment to physical education, sport and active lifestyles. With a significant number of young people competing in local inter-school competitions this year, we are extremely proud of our pupils for their dedication to all aspects of school sport. This is a wonderful achievement for both pupils and staff.

In the Meerkats classroom, pupils have been developing their persuasive writing skills. They wrote thoughtful and convincing letters raising the awareness of plastic pollution. Having written their letters, the class then walked around the village to post their letters. They also decided to send a copy of their letters to Sir David Attenborough to celebrate his 100th birthday and to show the impact that his research has had on their writing and plastic pollution around the world.



Across the school, pupils have also been completing their statutory assessments this term. We are extremely proud of the positive attitudes and hard work shown by all children during these important assessments.



A selection of pupils also took part in Maypole Dancing performance at the village Big Weekend celebrations. The children had been practising for the school celebration event and enthusiastically shared this traditional performance with the local community.

LINDSAY PRIDDLE

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



MESSAGE FROM MRS HUTCHINSON

Where has the time gone? I can't believe that School is already into the summer term - I still think in academic calendar terms and probably always will. However, hearing good things about Marcham School and the community brings me joy.

I thought that I would share with you what I have done with the very kind gifts given to me when I left Marcham School. You may remember my passion for dance - salsa dancing in particular - and with your monetary gift I have been able to book a salsa weekend in London in May. I am very excited and have had to buy another pair of shoes!

I am also a fan of music and bought myself a bass recorder, which I love. I thought it was big - until I was at a recorder weekend and stood next to a Contra bass (see photo below). Now, they are enormous!

The pear tree you gave me is in full bloom and the rose has burst into life.

Thank you, again, for your kindness. Go well and safely



The Arts Society Abingdon LECTURE

Wednesday 17th June
10.30am and 2.00pm
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Carole Petipher

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



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Marcham Centre

FIVE YEARS AT THE HEART OF MARCHAM: A REPORT FROM THE MCG

It is hard to believe that we have passed our five-year milestone of the Marcham Community Group (MCG) managing the Marcham Centre. When we took on this responsibility, our goal was to create a high-quality hub for the people in and around our village. Today, looking at the hive of activity every week, it's clear that the Centre has become much more than just a building—it is a vital public service.

MORE THAN JUST FOUR WALLS

From our volunteer-run pop-up community Café, Thirsty, which brings neighbours together twice a week, to hosting community engagement events like the recent Thames Water local works hub, the Centre is a support network for local life. Whether it's a Slimming World weigh-in or an all-important 6th birthday party, we are proud to provide the space where Marcham happens.

INVESTING IN OUR FIELDS (AND PRAYING FOR THE WEATHER!)

Our playing fields are a jewel in the village crown, but as anyone who has stepped outside lately knows, the last two years of weather have been... *challenging*. Thanks to a grant from the Parish Council, we have been able to keep up with essential grass cutting. We are investing heavily again this year to keep the pitches in top shape for the Cricket Club and the Footballers —though we are all quietly praying for a bit of decent weather to help us along!

THE BAR: DRINKING FOR A GOOD CAUSE?

While we receive support for the fields, we are also proud to be a *giving* organisation. Through the profits from our Trading Company, essentially the bar money this last year alone, we were able to distribute nearly £10,000 back into the community.

This funding helped:

- Repair, insure, and service the Marcham Community Mini Bus.
- Buy brand new kits for the Marcham Colts footballers.
- Fund a Forensic Science evening for the Guides, creating spaces for children who wouldn't normally have been able to attend.

We also continue to subsidise hall hire for groups like the Marcham Society (happy 30th anniversary!), our uniformed organisations, the School PTA, and the dedicated volunteers at MADNews.

STEADY RATES IN UNSTEADY TIMES

Financially, we are stable, finishing the year with an income of roughly £103,000. However, we know that the cost of living isn't just a headline—it's something everyone in Marcham is feeling.

In recognition of the pressure on personal finances, the MCG has made the deliberate decision to hold our hire rates steady this year. Despite the rising costs of utilities and maintenance that we face as a facility, we believe it is vital that the Marcham Centre remains affordable and accessible for every resident.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

We are also planning for the long term. Our *Sinking Fund* now stands at over £20,000, ensuring that when the building eventually needs major repairs, the funds are already there to protect the hall for the next generation without needing emergency bailouts. Our goal for the coming year is simple: we want to see even more of you. We want the Marcham Centre to be your first choice for every party, meeting, and club. This space belongs to you, thank you for continuing to use it, support it, and make it the heart of our community.

Interested in hiring a space or starting a new club? Visit our website or pop in for a chat!

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

Operated by Marcham Community Group (MCG)
Registered in England 7470307 Charity No. 1144407



MARCHAM FARMERS' MARKET



There was plenty of community spirit on show at the recent Marcham Big Weekend, with the 7th Abingdon Scout Group helping bring our junk recycling project to life. Using empty plastic milk bottles, the Scouts created fantastic cow-shaped bunting, proudly displayed at the Thirsty Farmers Market stall throughout the day. A huge thank you to everyone involved for their creativity and hard work.



It was a great day all round and we hope visitors enjoyed some of the delicious local produce on offer — from the first early strawberries of the season to fresh bakes from Natural Bread and the ever-popular samosas from Pindy's. We're proud to support local producers and showcase the fantastic food being made right here in Oxfordshire.

Milk was a big focus for us this month, and we hope lots of you enjoyed trying our milkshake tasters. Did you know whole milk is seeing a resurgence as more people rediscover its flavour and less processed nature? Have you made the switch back yet? If not, why not come along to the next Farmers Market on 27th June and give it a try?

We're hoping to have the first spring greens, early potatoes, beans and peas available, alongside local meat from Hedges, eggs from Billys Eggs and if you are gluten free why not try award winning bread from Sage Bakery. Make the farmers market your first stop before the "big shop" and stock up on fresh, seasonal, locally produced food. Save the date - 27th June 9-12.

We are looking for volunteers to join our friendly team. Please contact us on [facebook.com/marchamfarmersmarket](https://www.facebook.com/marchamfarmersmarket) or farmersmarket@thirstycafemarcham.com

Love dogs? Have time to spare?

Why not become a Volunteer Puppy Trainer?



Hearing Dogs for Deaf People is urgently looking for kind-hearted dog lovers in and around Marcham who would be interested in volunteering to care for and train a puppy who will go on to transform the life of a deaf person.

All costs are covered. No experience is necessary.
Visit hearingdogs.org.uk/volunteer/ or call 01844 348129

PERSONAL & SOCIAL

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SPORT REPORT

FOOTBALL

The Veterans season is now finished, and they won seven of the sixteen games they played, coming 4th in the Table. Well done The Vets! Marcham have enjoyed a good season, played 14, won 12, drawn 2 lost 0 and were second in the Table behind Berinsfield. Marcham Reserves have played 14, won 5, drawn 5, lost 6 and finished mid-table. Another really good year for the first team and a creditable year for the reserves.

AUNT SALLY

The season has started as last year with two Marcham teams and two Crown teams. The Marcham A lost their first match, Marcham B drew. The Crown A team beat Berinsfield 6 – 0 which will gladden the hearts of the footballers as Berinsfield have been their bête noire this season. Crown B drew 3 – 3.

CRICKET

The season started on 9th May with Marcham 1st team beating Oxford 4 by a healthy 133 runs. It was the Big Marcham Weekend over 9th May and Marcham 2nd had no game.

BLAME THE PIGEONS

Regular visitors to Marcham Centre and the fields a few weeks ago may have noticed a plethora of portly postprandial pigeons, satiated on 'Super Seeds' provided by the Marcham Community Group. If you were anticipating a verdant sward – blame the pigeons!

Marcham Annual Parish Meeting Public Notice

Thank You to all who attended the meeting
Mark Harvie, Chair of the Parish Council

PTFA Update



Marcham PTFA would like to thank everyone who supported our May school disco, which raised just under £400 for the school. A huge thank you once again to DJ Bidy for spinning the decks and keeping the dance floor busy all evening!

We also enjoyed seeing so many families at the Marcham Big Weekend. Thank you to everyone who stopped by our stall to make journey stick crafts, bought face jewels or picked up some second-hand uniform. A reminder that second-hand uniform is always available from the school reception. We are very grateful for the support, but please note we are not currently accepting any more uniform donations as we now have plenty in stock.

Recent PTFA funding has helped provide new plants and a gate for the school garden, as well as supporting current Year 6 leavers' activities trip.

We are now looking ahead to our biggest fundraiser of the year – the Summer Fete and Raffle on 3rd July. We already have some fantastic donated prizes from Miele, Whizz Pop Bang, Blenheim Palace, The Missing Bean and Loose Cannon Brewery. Look out for raffle tickets soon.

We are still looking for additional raffle prizes and stall holders, so if you would like to help or get involved, please contact us at marchampta@gmail.com.

See you on the 3rd July,

THE PTFA COMMITTEE



**Kennington
Memory
Club**

Living well with dementia



Scan Me

Providing safe and supportive day care for people with dementia and respite for their carers

KENNINGTON MEMORY CLUB AT ST ETHELWOLD'S GARDEN, ABINGDON

In common with many small local charities the Memory Club is always looking to raise extra funds, primarily to provide additional enrichment activities and experiences for our Members.

Any fundraising activity has the additional bonus of helping to raise awareness of the club and what it can provide for people living with dementia and their family carers.

This month, on Saturday 13th June, 2.30 - 4.00pm we'll be back in the glorious garden of St Ethelwold's House in Abingdon offering tea and home-made cakes. Please do come and say hello and enjoy the garden.

For enquiries about attending the club please contact our Organiser, Kay, by email organiser@kenningtonmemoryclub.org.uk or call 07852 883496.

Chairman, Kennington Memory Club

mostly BOOKS BOOK CLUBS

mostly-books.co.uk



Chapter Hunters: Our book club for readers aged 9-12(ish). Meets bi-monthly. Next meeting on July 14th. Tickets £8, including a copy of the book.

Adult Book Clubs also available

Eve Chase and Rosie Walsh at Mostly Books 2 June 7 - 9 pm Come and celebrate million-copy bestselling authors, Rosie Walsh and Eve Chase, at Mostly Books on Tuesday 2nd June 2026 to discuss their brand new novels, *The One Day You Were My Husband* and *The Secret Thread* Tickets (£6-£16)



Boozy Books: June 2026 (Independent Bookshop Week) Join us on Thursday 18th June for our next Boozy Books evening in celebration of Independent Bookshop Week 2026. The £30 ticket includes one paperback book from our selection, plus a tasting of three wines.

Tickets are available from the shop, or online: <https://mostly-books.co.uk/events>

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EVENTS

INSECT WEEK: TINY CREATURES, BIG IMPACT

They may be small, but insects make a **BIG** difference to nature recovery. From **22 June to 28 June**, the Royal Entomological Society's spotlight week is a celebration of all things insect.

And these small critters really do make all the difference, there are more than 24,000 species in the UK alone, and they can be found in almost every habitat. Their jack-of-all-trades role spans pollinators, predators, pests, parasites, and prey, and the study of insects has long been central to conservation, food production, medicine, and ecology.

At Wild Oxfordshire, insects are essential to our Yellow Wagtail Partnership project. Established in 2020 by patron Dr Robin Buxton, the Partnership works with the Earth Trust Church Farm Partnership and Lower Farm, to "learn and communicate as much as possible about the impact of different land management techniques both on this species and the wider environment".

As a migrant species, insects are a vital part Yellow Wagtail diets. However, recent changes in farming practice and other human impacts on the landscape have led to habitat and insect declines, harming Yellow Wagtail populations. They now find themselves on the conservation red list.



Gardening tips for June

1. Want to help garden birds? Don't feed them in warmer months.

The RSPB has released guidance on feeding birds, stating that putting up bird feeders in your garden could be putting some species at risk of disease. Stop filling bird feeders with seeds and peanuts from 1 May to 31 October as will prevent too many birds gathering in one place. Instead, still put out small amounts of mealworms, fat balls or suet all year round.

2. Let the grass grow

June is peak time for insects like butterflies, bees, and beetles. Leaving even a small patch of lawn uncut creates shelter and food for the likes of Meadow Browns, Large Blue butterflies, and Thick-legged flower beetles.

3. Go chemical-free

Gardening organically is a good way to ensure that the food and plants you grow are free of pesticides or chemicals, and the wildlife will thank you for it too.

By stopping the use of chemicals, slugs, snails, and insects such as aphids will return, but don't worry! In time, so will their natural predators, such as hedgehogs and slow worms to help keep pest numbers down.

4. Keep Bird Baths Topped Up

Fresh water is essential for birds in warm weather. Keep a shallow dish with a few pebbles and help insects drink safely. However, only put out a bird bath if you can replace the water daily and clean the bird bath weekly to prevent the spread of diseases, especially in the warmer months.



Garden Opening for Flexicare



Sunday 7th June 1pm-5pm
10 Eynsham Road, Botley, OX2 9BP

Entrance free
but donations to Flexicare

Teas, cake and sale of
plants in aid of Flexicare

Beautiful organic garden,
wildlife pond and bee
habitat

Disabled access (with car)



Your support raises funds for Flexicare, a charity providing a free, specialist sitting and support service for families with a severely disabled child across Oxfordshire. Scan this QR code to donate, or visit <https://flexicare.enthuse.com/donate#>

FLEXICARE (OXFORD AND ABINGDON) REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1172635

A Fox's Field Notes on the Great Garden Humidity Debate

As the resident fox of this fine English garden, I consider myself something of a mediator. A philosopher. A connoisseur of compost heaps. And lately, I've found myself presiding over a rather heated, well, humid, discussion among my neighbours.

You see, summer humidity means very different things depending on whether you are (A) the size of a raindrop, (B) a bird who refuses to sit still, or (C) a prickly ball with opinions.

Let us begin with the aphid.

The Aphid's View: "Moisture Is Life, Darling." Aphids adore humidity the way humans adore a good cup of tea, excessively and with no sense of moderation. "This," one aphid told me while lounging on a rose stem like a tiny green aristocrat, "is the perfect climate. Dew on demand. Leaves as soft as steamed pudding. My pores have never felt so hydrated." Aphids don't technically have pores, but I didn't interrupt. One must let small creatures have their small delusions.

The Swift's View: "It's Like Flying Through Soup." Now, the swift, bless its frantic wings, has no patience for humidity. "Fox!" it screeched mid loop, "the air is thick. I'm basically swimming. I did not evolve for this." Swifts are dramatic by nature. They also refuse to land for more than three seconds, so their complaints tend to be shouted from above like feathery weather alerts. Still, I sympathise. If I had to chase insects through the atmospheric equivalent of lukewarm porridge, I'd be cross too.

The Hedgehog's View: "My Spikes Have Gone Frizzy." Finally, we come to Hedgehog, who waddled up to me one evening looking like a damp paintbrush. "Fox," he grumbled, "I am puffing out. Look at this. I'm supposed to be sleek. Aerodynamic. A woodland icon." I assured him he remained iconic. He snorted. "Everything sticks to me in this weather. Leaves. Grass. One time, a crisp packet." He paused. "Salt and vinegar, if you're wondering."

And What Do I, the Fox, Think? Humidity, to me, is simply another quirk of the garden, like the gardener's obsession with gnomes or the blackbird's ongoing feud with its own reflection. But I will say this, humidity brings out character. Aphids become spa enthusiasts. Swifts become airborne critics. Hedgehogs become reluctant fashion experiments.

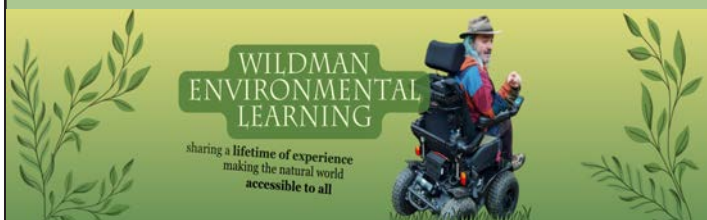
And me? I get front row seats to the finest natural comedy in Oxfordshire.

So the next time you step into a summer garden and mutter about the muggy air, remember: to some, it is bliss, to others, a burden, and to one hedgehog in particular, a personal grooming crisis.

As for me, I'll be under the elder bush, observing, pondering, and trying not to laugh too loudly. After all, a wise fox must maintain some dignity.



Happy Gardening!
Stuart Mabbutt,
Wildlife Gardening Specialist
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ALL SAINTS' & ST LUKE'S CHURCHES

www.marcham-with-garford.org.uk

Ahoy, Me hearties! What would you say you be lookin' for? Do you search for money? Happiness? Success? What is the greatest treasure you could imagine? The Bible says that Jesus offers a great treasure - a treasure that is worth searching for, worth doing anything to get hold of, worth any price. Do you know of a treasure like this? It requires no treasure map to find and



anyone can take hold of it. In fact, it is a treasure that Jesus gives to us as a gift if we just ask him. We think more about this and what it means for us every Sunday in All Saints Marcham at 10:30, and at our holiday club this summer - 'Treasured' - we'll be setting sail on the high seas to search for this greatest treasure and find out all about it - alongside plenty of other pirate-y fun! Come explore this treasure with us. Full details:

Monday 24th - Thursday 27th August (please note change of normal days)

10am - 2pm at All Saints' Church, Marcham

Open to all primary aged children, including those starting in September and those leaving year 6 (4 - 11 year olds).

£40 per child for the week or £10 per day. Discount available for families of 3 or more attending all four days.

Booking forms coming soon!

Contact Jill Rowe for more info - 07811165351

REVD PHIL ROWLANDSON.

Contacts:

Revd. Nick Weldon *Vicar* vicar@allsaintsmarcham.org 01865 391962

Phil Rowlandson *Curate* curate@allsaintsmarcham.org

Rob Finch *Youth Worker* youth@allsaintsmarcham.org

Jill Rowe *Children & Families minister* families@allsaintsmarcham.org

Tamsin Gilbert *Parish Administrator* info@allsaintsmarcham.org

Ruth Atkins *Safeguarding Officer* safeguarding@allsaintsmarcham.org

Website: www.marcham-with-garford.org.uk

Regular Sunday services at All Saints' Church, Marcham

10.30am: Morning Service • 6pm: Evening Service

Wednesday Holy Communion 10:30am at Duffield Place

ST LUKE'S, GARFORD

St Luke's is open for quiet prayer 11am-12pm on Sundays with no morning service.

Sunday 7 June, 6pm

Communion Service
 led by Rev'd Nick Weldon

Contact: st.lukes@allsaintsmarcham.org

A sung Evensong was a wonderfully tranquil way to enter May with the church nestled in the calming and fresh greens of spring. The choir supported the beautiful tenor of James Hallinan who led the Versicles and the Stanford Nunc Dimittis and we enjoyed the modern harmonies of Goodall's setting of The Lord is my Shepherd. Evening services are always special at St. Luke's and we have another (Communion) on 7th June followed by refreshments, we do hope you will join us.



DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

May was, as ever, the month of council Annual General Meetings (AGMs). Besides the ceremony and formalities, announcements of formal role allocations, and usual council business, it's also a time to reflect on the events of the past municipal year and to look ahead to the next. I'm pleased to have been confirmed as continuing on the Vale's Cabinet for another year, still holding the portfolio of Environmental Services, Climate Action, and Nature Recovery.



At the Vale's AGM I was asked a formal Question by a fellow councillor about litter picking along the A34, which is the Vale's responsibility. The unfortunate situation is that our crews can only clear litter from such a fast road when National Highways (NH) blocks a lane (or both) for other maintenance, which often happens at night and/or at short notice. Co-ordinating the Vale's crews with NH's schedule is an administrative nightmare, leading to both inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Needless to say, I'm not a fan of either. I will soon be writing a formal letter to the Government asking for NH to take on litter picking responsibilities for roads where it restricts access to crews; if they accept, this will both save the taxpayer and lead to tidier roads.

Two motions were also passed at the Vale's AGM, and both carried unanimously: one called for Targeted Consultations on the aspects of Thames Water's (TW's) plans to build a huge reservoir to the south of Marcham, since these were poorly covered during the previous consultation; the Vale's leader will soon be writing to TW and the relevant branches of Government to request these. The other considered protection for Chalk Streams: we are blessed with several in our district, but these are under threat despite the valiant efforts of groups like the Letcombe Brook Project (LBP). We called for Government to implement buffer zones around chalk streams where new development would be blocked, and vowed that the Vale will continue supporting local groups like the LBP.

Lastly, I recently persuaded the Vale's Parks team to cut back the trees along Howard Cornish Road, since buses travelling the road towards Abingdon bash into them and create unwelcome noise. Due to it being bird nesting season, the team have only tackled the lower, most problematic branches for now; they will return later in the summer to finish off. The trees may look a bit strange in the meantime, but it's only temporary!

CLLR DR ROBERT CLEGG

District Councillor for Marcham Ward

Phone: 07784 225290

Email: robert.clegg@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

This month's edition of the MAD News marks one year since I was elected, so I wanted to take this opportunity to provide a summary of the various things I've been working on as your County Councillor over the past year.

Over the last twelve months, I've focused on the issues residents raise most often, particularly around things like roads, transport, flooding, and local services. Road safety on and around the A415 has remained a major concern, including speeding, HGV movements and junction visibility. I have raised these repeatedly with county officers and the Cabinet Member, including during a site meeting in Marcham.



A key development this year has been the Frilford & Marcham Transport Study, examining congestion, safety and traffic flow. This has informed proposed improvements at the A415/A338 Frilford Lights Junction, funded through developer contributions.

Planned measures include upgraded traffic signals, a new left-turn lane, improved pedestrian crossing on the A415, better footways and cycle routes, and stronger links to bus stops. I have also asked for a pedestrian crossing on the A338 Oxford Road, which is now being considered. However, I continue to press for stronger action to reduce HGV impacts through the village.

Potholes have filled my inbox this year and the condition of our roads remains a recurring issue. I've pushed for repairs to be carried out, and further resurfacing is scheduled across the area in the coming months. I have also supported smaller safety improvements including new junction protection markings on North Street and Mill Road, footpath realignment near the Marcham Centre, and refreshed 'Keep Clear' markings outside Marcham Primary School.

Flooding and drainage have also been persistent concerns. A new countywide gully-cleaning programme has seen drains cleared across Marcham, with another round planned later this year. I also pushed for action on a blocked culvert on the A415 and will continue to monitor the effectiveness of this over the coming months.

At a wider level, the Oxford Congestion Charge scheme was introduced in October despite strong public opposition. While I also personally opposed the scheme, I have helped residents understand permits and exemptions, in an attempt to navigate the process. There have also been consultations on the Fire & Rescue services and recycling centre changes; while the proposed changes to the Fire & Rescue service were scaled back, I continue to oppose the new recycling centre rules.

Looking ahead, the proposed South East Strategic Reservoir (SESRO) remains a significant issue. Whilst a decision on this will ultimately be taken by the Secretary of State, I supported a cross-party motion calling for stronger safeguards to protect local communities and will continue to actively monitor this as proposals progress.

I'd like to thank residents and the Parish Council for your engagement over the last year and I look forward to continuing to work on your behalf over the next twelve months. As always, if you'd like to stay up to date with what I'm doing around our division, do follow me on Facebook where I post regular updates: www.facebook.com/JamesRPlumb

JAMES PLUMB

County Councillor for Marcham and Cummor

Email: james.plumb@oxfordshire.gov.uk

MP'S REPORT

Local elections for the West Oxfordshire District Council have just finished as I write this. I'm absolutely delighted that residents chose to elect and re-elect Lib Dem candidates and councillors which means that the Lib Dems will continue to lead the district for a fifth consecutive year. I'm also delighted with the quality and quantity of Lib Dem candidates which won seats. They will serve their communities very well. Thank you also, to everyone who stood and who came out to vote, no matter which party.

I spent many, many hours speaking to hundreds of residents. It's clear that the country is pretty fed up with how our country is being run, and I am too. There is lots to improve, and what's felt locally is the quality of our roads. Their disrepair has been decades in the making and while visible progress is now being made, it's clear that much more needs to be done. I am working hard with officers and councillors to bring about improvements, some more immediate, some longer term.

One issue which continues to cause concern is the increase in heating oil prices as a result of the war in Iran. In April I



spoke in a debate in Westminster Hall about this and raised the experiences of people in Witney directly with the Minister. I highlighted that the scale of the support package clearly wasn't enough to meet the level of need and have said we need a longer term cap the cost of heating oil (similar to the caps we already have on other energy sectors such as gas and electricity), to protect households, mainly in rural areas like ours, from these large shocks.

Alongside other Lib Dem MPs for Oxfordshire, I went to a meeting discussing the East-West rail project between Oxford and Cambridge and the failure to get trains running now on the section closest to Oxford. This is not good enough and from a western Oxfordshire point of view, my main concern is ensuring that our area feels the benefits of East West Rail when it is delivered. Currently rail connections in our district are dire, yet the national government is seeking to put 18,000 homes into West Oxfordshire alone. This is far too many and we certainly cannot accept these houses unless we have the transport and social infrastructure to support them. To that end, I'm continuing to work hard towards rebuilding the railway which previously linked Witney and Carterton to Oxford. This will cut journey times by 70% making travel much easier for all of us and opening up job opportunities. Better connectivity would also attract more businesses and economic growth into Witney itself.

On April 23rd, we celebrated St George's Day with a wonderful array of community events. I first joined Carterton Town Council for a delicious lunch, organised by the excellent Lynn Little, supported by a very able group of volunteers. I also paid a visit to the brilliant Burford Cadets - an inspiring group of young people who are gaining some very useful skills and experiences.

The St. George's celebrations continued into the weekend, with a great celebration in Witney Town Square the following sunny Saturday, which included a fantastic performance from the Witney Vocals and Sonia Jarvis's superb Witney History tour! Well done everyone who made it such a success.

I was delighted to help open the SpecialEffect charity clay pigeon shoot at Enstone Airfield. SpecialEffect is a charity based in Charlbury who do great work, transforming the lives of people with physical challenges through the innovative use of technology. It was a pleasure to meet the charity's trustees and guests, and many congratulations on raising more than £40,000.

As ever, if you need my help, please contact me at charlie.maynard.mp@parliament.uk.

CHARLIE MAYNARD

MP Witney (for Frilford, Garford and most of Tubney)

OTHER REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

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Tubney Mark Coleman mark.coleman@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

MP Layla Moran layla.moran.mp@parliament.uk

Answers to this month's Quiz from page 7

1. Len Deighton
2. Amsterdam
3. A tittle
4. Crystal Palace
5. Lake District National Park
6. Jane Austen
7. The Bullnose
8. L. S. Lowry
9. The first McDonald's franchise (Ray Kroc's) in Des Plaines, Illinois
10. Abingdon-on-Thames
11. About 270
12. 1780





GROUP AGAINST RESERVOIR DEVELOPMENT

GARD is a local community group formed to campaign against Thames Water's proposals to build a reservoir south-west of Abingdon.

GARD NEWS UPDATE JUNE 2026

People matter: together we have a voice.
 SESRO / White Horse Reservoir does not have planning permission; Thames Water will not put in their application for a Development Consent Order until November 2026 at the earliest.
 Before this the battle is at the moment concentrating on the politicians. On 12th May, the regulator, Ofwat's agency RAPID, issued their final decisions on the 'Gate 3' milestone SESRO report submissions after considering comments on their draft from GARD, Oxfordshire County Council and others. Whilst their final decisions are not as strong as we would like, they nevertheless have demanded many priority actions from Thames for completion in the months ahead. Thames Water must carry out further work on the following: "risks of further cost escalation – how secure is the new cost; biodiversity and protected species; archaeology, water quality; flood risk; dam safety and whether the reservoir still represents the best-value option compared with alternatives (especially the Severn Thames Transfer option). The key is to make these actions stick and our MPs, led by Olly Glover are meeting Ofwat in early June to press home our requests on this set of actions.

On a twin track, there was unanimous condemnation from GARD, CPRE and Oxfordshire councils at all levels that Thames Water's January pre-DCO consultation was totally inadequate, with serious issues being either swept under the carpet with vague future commitments (flooding risk, traffic noise and pollution, risk of Dam Breach) or completely ignored (water quality dangers from the reservoir). At the Vale of White Horse District Council's Annual Meeting on 13th May, Council agreed to take this further by passing unanimously a motion requesting the Planning Inspectorate to demand seven Targeted Consultations from Thames Water about the issues of: Flood risk, Dam Breach risks; Emergency drawdown risks; Water Quality in the reservoir and environment; Biodiversity effects of the new enlarged project; Construction and construction traffic effects; and Security issues against terrorist threats. 'Targeted consultations' are a tool in the Planning Law to hold further consultation on the facts of a particular issue before an application for a DCO is lodged. In principle this is a very strong move by the Vale, but will need work to make stick. We are very grateful for councillors Andy Cooke (Drayton) and Peter Stevens (Sutton Courtenay) for proposing the motion and for the very forceful speeches in support delivered by Councillors Sally Wightman (Steventon and Hanneys) and Sarah James (Hendreds). GARD will alert people to any Targeted Consultations launched.

CAMPAIGNING: GARD will be at Q Gardens and Millets between 9.30 and 4pm on the days below, talking to the public, distributing leaflets, getting our petition signed, recruiting members. Feel free to join and support us.

Sunday 31st May MILLETS
 Wednesday 3rd June Q GARDENS
 Saturday 6th June Q GARDENS
 Wednesday 10th June MILLETS

Thanks to all who are volunteering to deliver leaflets round the area. JOIN GARD and work towards a full opposition at the DCO hearings early next year. We can show them that democracy works – three MPs, Oxfordshire County Council, the two District Councils, the town and parish councils: all these oppose the Reservoir plans. Add your name to the list of GARD members and be part of that opposition. The joining link is on the website: Group Against Reservoir Development | GARD. You can also find a link there to donate to GARD – we need funds to fight a DCO!

Come forward and volunteer – we shall be delivering leaflets to all the affected villages and we are planning events too. There are jobs small and large, active and more routine. Please get in touch at gard.secretary@gmail.com 07773 029409

Show that people matter. Join GARD to stop the Reservoir.
 Advance notice of the AGM: this will be on FRIDAY 3rd JULY
DEREK STORK, Chairman GARD.
 For more information www.gard-oxon.org.uk
 Facebook: @abingdonreservoir, Twitter @GARD_OXON
See the website for details www.gard-oxon.org.uk

JUNE 2026

The number in brackets refers to the page number where you can find more details

Abbreviations:

AS All Saints' Church, Marcham, **SL** St Luke's Church, Garford
DP Duffield Place, **MC** Marcham Centre

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 DP Community Games Group 10.30am-12.00 noon (7) MC Bridge 6.50pm	2 AS TredleyPeeps 10-11.30am	3 MC Thirsty Café with Stay & Play 08.30-11.30am (7) DP Holy Communion 10.30am (17)	4 Marcham Society Midweek Walk 12.30 pm (7)	5	6 MC Thirsty Café with Natural Breed 9-11.30am (7)
7 AS Morning Service 10.30am (17) Flexicare open garden tea and cake in Botley 1-5 pm (16) AS Evening Service 6pm (17) SL Communion 6pm (17)	8 DP Community Games Group 10.30am-12.00 noon (7) MC Toasted light lunch 12-2pm (7) MC Bridge 6.50pm MC Marcham Parish Council Meeting 7.30pm (3)	9 AS TredleyPeeps 10-11.30am	10 MC Thirsty Café 08.30-11.30am (7) DP Holy Communion 10.30am (17)	11 Milllets Farm Classic car meet 9.30am-11noon	12	13 MC Thirsty Café with Natural Breed 9-11.30am (7) Kennington Memory Club tea and cakes at St Ethelwold's 2.30-4 pm (15)	
14	15 MADNEWS DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE 5pm (LATE ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED) DP Community Games Group 10.30am-12.00 noon (7) MC Bridge 6.50pm	16 AS TredleyPeeps 10-11.30am	17 MC Thirsty Café 08.30-11.30am (7) DP Holy Communion 10.30am (17) MC Community Lunch 12-1.30pm Arts Society Abingdon 10.30am & 2pm (11)	18	19	20 MC Thirsty Café with Natural Breed 9-11.30am (7)	
21 AS Morning Service 10.30am (17) AS Evening Service 6pm (17)	22 DP Community Games Group 10.30am-12.00 noon (7) MC Bridge 6.50pm MC Marcham Society 7.30pm (7)	23 AS TredleyPeeps 10-11.30am	24 Royal Entomological Society's Insect Week 22-28 June (16)	25	26	27	
28 AS Morning Service 10.30am (17) AS Evening Service 6pm (17)	29 DP Community Games Group 10.30am-12.00 noon (7) MC Bridge 6.50pm	30 AS TredleyPeeps 10-11.30am				MC Thirsty Café 9-11.30am (7) MC Farmers' Market 9-12 (13)	
End of Insect Week (16) AS Morning Service 10.30am (17) AS Evening Service 6pm (17)	DP Community Games Group 10.30am-12.00 noon (7) MC Bridge 6.50pm	AS TredleyPeeps 10-11.30am					

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