

News from Marden Parish Council

www.mardenpc.kentparishes.gov.uk



Spring 2014

Letter from the Chairman of the Parish Council

Dear resident

Belated Happy New Year to you all and I hope everyone had a happy Christmas despite the dreadful weather causing problems with flooding and sewage (see below for further details) which still continues. Let's hope Spring arrives soon.

What a successful event 'Marden at Christmas' turned out to be and can I pass my thanks onto everyone who helped make it such a great day especially to Father Christmas and his helpers, the children who raised money for the Kent Air Ambulance on the Chinese Raffle stall and to Marden Business Forum who so generously provided presents for the children. The Church Bells rang as residents wrapped up warmly at the Allen's to sing and enjoy carols to the Silver Band followed by the Weald of Kent & Boughton Monchelsea Morris dancers. Parish Councillors served refreshments dressed as elves and children had their faces painted. Father Christmas made a brief appearance before taking up 'residence' in his grotto at the Memorial Hall where there were craft stalls, tea and cakes served by the WI and lots of children enjoying visiting Santa. The Parish Church also held a Christmas Tree display and served some warming soup. We've received great feedback on what is such an important village event engaging the whole community. Thanks must also go to Erika and Alison in the Parish Office for organising the whole event.

Once again we have been reviewing parish finances and you will find more information below. We are holding a Village Clean Up on Saturday 22nd March and our Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Tuesday 13th May when everyone is invited to come along to hear more about the work of the Parish Council.

Yours

Dorothy Reed

Dorothy Reed



Flooding/Sewage Issues

The recent flooding has illustrated the significant shortcomings of the village's foul and surface water drainage systems and, as you will see, we have enclosed an information sheet on 'How to Report a Flood Whilst it's Happening' which we hope will be of use to you.

Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRA) date back to May 2008 and the Parish Council are proposing to ask them to update this as soon as possible taking into account:

- the latest flooding information
- KCC's recent Surface Water Management Plans for Maidstone
- the Environment Agency's updated River Medway Catchment Flood Management Plan
- the new and updated maps showing risk of flooding from rivers and sea, surface water and reservoirs issued by the Environment Agency in late 2013
- major developments approved since publication of the current SFRA and planned land allocations for major housing and economic development sites in the emerging Local Plan process.

The Parish Council in conjunction with the Marden Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group are also :

- arranging a meeting with Kent County Council, as recently appointed Lead Local Flood Authority, to discuss the various problems in Marden. If you have experienced flooding at any time, you can tell KCC by filling in the 'Flood Recording Tool' in the Flood Risk Management page of the KCC Environment & Planning website.
http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning.aspx
- contacting Southern Water to find out how old the sewers are in Marden and to discuss the failures of their wastewater drainage system in Marden because of the sewage emerging out of manholes in times of heavy rain particularly in The Cockpit area.
- looking into the possibility of revamping the Parish Emergency Plan

Planning Update:

The Parish Council met with Maidstone Borough Council last November. The meeting included representatives from all agencies (with the unfortunate exception of Southern Water). The meeting was held to discuss the possibility of phasing development within the parish. It is hoped that Maidstone Borough Council will give serious consideration to the cumulative impact of successive housing applications on Marden. It is not yet clear how this issue can be addressed through the planning system however the Parish hope to meet once again with the key decision makers at Maidstone Borough Council. The Parish Council have also been in direct correspondence with the Government's Planning Minister.

MAP Depot/Redrow Site -

The MAP Monitoring Committee comprises members of the Parish Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Redrow who will meet to monitor progress and ongoing issues at this new village development. Work is due to commence in March. It is

understood that Redrow will be writing to neighbouring residents. Information is also available on Marden Parish Council's website. The Site Foreman is Nick Smith and if you have any issues, please either call 07825 796179 or email nick.smith@redrow.co.uk Normal working hours are Monday-Friday 8am-6pm and Saturdays 8am-1pm. However there may be some occasions when work is undertaken outside these hours for highway or safety reasons. Redrow will also try to programme deliveries outside peak traffic periods e.g. school drop off/pick up times and residents will be given advance warning of any noisy activities such as demolition, piling etc.

Marden Website

Have you visited Marden Parish Council's website www.mardenpc.kentparishes.gov.uk recently? There is now a page entitled "Large Planning Applications/Developments" which lists all the development applications within the parish together with the latest information regarding each site.

Marden Facebook Page

Marden Parish Council has a Facebook page which provides details of all its meetings and links to the agendas. It will also be used to advertise consultations and other information relevant to the whole village. Click on it and become a friend.

New Street Names

The Parish Council were invited by Maidstone Borough Council to submit street names for the MAP Depot site, and to mark the WW1 centenary, chose to commemorate WWI veterans with connections to Marden. This link takes you to the names agreed at the Full Council meeting in December:

<http://www.mardenpc.kentparishes.gov.uk/UserFiles/file/Minutes/Approved%20Full%20Council%20minutes%20101213.PDF> If, and when, future new developments are built in Marden the Parish Council would like to receive your suggestions on road name themes (not apples or cherries as there are a number of roads already in the village named after these fruit). Please contact Ali at the Parish Office if you have any ideas.

The Parsonage – MA/13/0693

– Despite lobbying and the Parish Council voicing their concern on the determination of applications in a piecemeal fashion with the cumulative impacts that individual application proposals will have on the sustainability of our community in Marden, it is disappointing to learn that Maidstone Borough Council have passed the outline planning application for a residential development of up to 144 dwellings at the Parsonage, land east of Goudhurst Road, and is now subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement. You can view the Maidstone Borough Council Agenda & Draft Minutes on the link below:

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=112&MID=1908#AI17000>

Cricket & Hockey Club - MA/13/1928

This Planning Application was discussed at a Parish Council Extraordinary Full Council Meeting on 21 January on the proposed erection of 124 dwelling at the current Cricket & Hockey Club site. All comments were debated and duly noted from the public and Parish Councillors recommended refusal on a number of grounds based on the current application and

to go to Maidstone Borough Council Committee.

The Parish Council have requested a meeting with the agent of the proposed development regarding the layout and design of this development. You can view the draft Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting on the Parish Council website: <https://www.kentparishes.gov.uk/system/controlpanel/sitesettings.cfm?sid=minute>

Village Green Application

The Village Green Application at the Cricket & Hockey Club - the outcome of the recent enquiry should be announced in March.

Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan Consultation

Although no link is available at the time of this newsletter going to print it is now known, following the Maidstone Borough Council's Planning, Transport and Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting, that the public consultation is due to commence on Friday 21st March 2014 and close on Wednesday 7th May 2014 at 5pm. However until the draft plan is approved for consultation there is not a link on Maidstone Borough Council's website. Please, therefore, keep a look out for posters around the village and on the Parish Council Website/Facebook page for more details.

Marden Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is hoping to submit their first draft Neighbourhood Plan for Marden to Maidstone Borough Council this Spring. The process will also involve the distribution of a questionnaire which the group urge all residents to complete. A further Open Day is also planned for June – your involvement is always welcome. <http://www.marden-neighbourhood-plan.org.uk/>

Maidstone Borough Council's Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy

Alongside the emerging Local Plan, Maidstone Borough Council have also compiled a Green & Blue Infrastructure strategy which proposes to cover all green space and water of public and natural value to help the borough remain an attractive place to live and work for the years to come especially with all the impending new development across the borough. Both the Parish Council and Marden Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group submitted their comments on the proposed document to Maidstone Borough Council which included bias towards urbanisation, no reference to footpaths and how it could affect planning policy in the future. The consultation period has now closed but you can view the document on the following link:

<http://maidstone-consult.limehouse.co.uk/file/2746984>

Parish Council Finances & Council Tax

The Parish Council receives funds from a number of sources the bulk of which comes from the Precept which is collected for us by Maidstone Borough Council as part of the Council Tax. The Precept is used to fund the majority of our activities including the upkeep of the public toilets, ongoing maintenance at the Playing Field and Southons Field (other than mowing), Cemetery maintenance, the Christmas celebrations, salaries and office costs.

The former Concurrent Functions Grant scheme has now been replaced by the Parish Services Scheme grant from Maidstone

Borough Council and we only receive a small proportion of previous funding which is used for open space maintenance (i.e. Playing Field and Southons Field mowing) and notice board maintenance. We also receive some income from burial fees and play scheme.

After much discussion, the Parish Council has now set the Precept for the 2014/15 financial year at the same amount as last year. However, as the Localising Support for Council Tax has been reduced, for a Band D property the portion of your Council Tax which relates to Marden will increase slightly from £52.37 to £52.74 (or 37p increase per year) to maintain services at the current level.

“Keep Marden Beautiful”

Village Clean Up – Saturday 22 March



Do you want Marden to look like this? The photo above is a bag of domestic rubbish dumped in Shephurst Lane last October. Not only is it illegal to dump rubbish, it's also very selfish and anti-social. If you spot fly tipping please call Maidstone Borough Council on 01622 602759.

Let's all do what we can to keep Marden beautiful and help the Parish Council who are organising a Village Clean Up on **Saturday 22nd March**. So far 10 volunteers have come forward and if you would also like to join the litter pick around the village, please email erika.mardenpc@btconnect.com or call the Parish Office.

The Youth Group, led by Natalie Penfold the Youth Worker, did a great job of litter picking around Marden last November to raise money for Children in Need with around 15 young people helping out despite the pouring rain. Well done guys and what a great initiative and achievement.

Annual Parish Meeting

Tuesday 13th May at 7pm – Memorial Hall

This is an ideal opportunity to learn more about the role of the Parish Council and the work that has been undertaken over the past year. Organisations will shortly be contacted to provide a report of their activities in the 2013 and these reports will be available on the evening and on the website following the meeting. Tea and coffee is served at 7pm and the business begins at 7.30pm. After the meeting everyone is invited to stay to meet Parish Councillors over cheese and wine. Speakers are currently being booked and if you have anything of interest you wish to hear about that is relevant to the village, please let Ali know.

Summer Play Scheme

Monday 28th July to Friday 8th August

After a very successful year in 2013 Marden Parish Council has agreed to continue with two weeks/all day (9.30am to

3.30pm) for 2014 Play Scheme and this will run from Monday 28th July to Friday 8th August at Marden Scout HQ from 5 to 11 year olds – please note that children have to have reached their 5th birthday by 1st September 2013.

This year's theme is “Out Of This World” and Jen Hindley has agreed to come back again and lead the scheme for the third year running – Thank you Jen. Registration forms will again be available from the Parish Office from **2nd June**. Maidstone Borough Council offers a grant to help towards the running of play scheme which the Parish Council will be bidding for later this year. If the bid is successful this will help the Parish Council run the scheme. The fees will be published in the next newsletter once the grant amount is known. We look forward to seeing everyone there again this year.

Marden Memorial Hall – 200 Club

Please help the Memorial Hall Roof Fund raise money towards the cost of a new roof, which is urgently needed, by joining the 200 Club lottery. For £1 per month per number (payable annually for the calendar year) you will be placed in a monthly draw to win up to 50% of the total income collected each month. Members are permitted to join at any time throughout the year paying £1 for each calendar month for the remainder of the year. Please contact Geoff Burr on 01622 831106 for an application form.

Police Contact Point

The mobile Police Station will be visiting Marden Library car park, High Street, Marden on 20th February, 6th March and 20th March from 5pm to 6pm. Please use this as a point of contact to discuss any policing issues with a neighbourhood officer, get expert crime prevention advice, have your say on policing in Kent and pick up free crime prevention item (subject to availability).

New Play Equipment for Playing Field

A Consultation Day was held on 24th January where four play equipment options were displayed covering primary school age children. Both parents and children had the opportunity to choose their favourite and to give feedback on the proposed new equipment. Once the feedback has been analysed, the Parish Council will decide on the best supplier and hopefully new equipment will be installed sometime in the Spring. It will be great for the village children to finally have some more up-to-date equipment and we hope they have fun trying it out....watch this space!

Maidstone Borough Council Draft Play Area Strategy

Maidstone Borough Council has recently published a draft Play Area Strategy for the borough and are planning to invest £1.75m on improvements to play areas. Whilst Marden Playing Field (which is owned by Marden Parish Council) is classed as a ‘Strategically Important Play Area’ and hopefully will receive some matched funding to upgrade, regrettably the Cockpits Play Area (which is owned by Maidstone Borough Council) has been classed as a ‘Non-Strategically Important Play Area’ and Maidstone Borough Council will possibly be looking for a Community Group to take over or will remove the play equipment within one year. The Parish Council will be giving their feedback to Maidstone Borough Council but please have a look at the plan on the Maidstone Borough Council website and make sure everyone knows what you think. The

Consultation Period is until 7th March and you will find the consultation on the following link:
<http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/current-consultations/draft-play-area-strategy>

Road Crossing Patrol at Marden Primary School

Various school representatives and Parish Councillors recently met with Kent County Council to ascertain why a Road Crossing Patrol was no longer provided in Marden. It was strongly emphasised that safety of the children was paramount especially on such a busy main road with parking issues at school drop off/pick up times, movement of HGV lorries etc. As a consequence of the meeting, a risk assessment will be undertaken by Kent Highways, signage etc will be investigated and hopefully Kent County Council will revert back with a positive way forward on their findings.

Marden Children's Centre

Thankfully as a result of the village Parent's Group, Parish Council and residents raising their concerns/issues to Kent County Council on the potential closure of the Children's Centre, it is now going to remain open but with reduced opening hours. Hopefully we will know further details soon.

Parking on Pavements

There is already enough parking and traffic problems within the village and there has been an increase recently of vehicles inappropriately parked on pavements. If you spot a vehicle wrongly parked, please call 101 and our PCSO Nicola Morris, or whoever is on duty, will try to attend and assess, contact the owner and get the vehicle moved on. Whilst Nicola cannot issue tickets, she can issue advice notices. It would also be helpful if you could take a photo of any inappropriately parked vehicle and send it to the Parish Office.

Marden Medical Centre

Patient Reference Group

Thursday 13th March at 7.30pm – Vestry Hall

All patients and staff at the practice are invited to attend and the most important agenda item will be the election of a new Committee for 2014 including the election of Officers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary). The meeting will last no longer than an hour followed by 'Drinks & Nibbles'.

Special Village People

It is important that Marden recognises those special residents who give their time and enthusiasm for others. Our thanks should go to Karen and Chris who organised the Christmas lunch in the Vestry Hall. 23 local residents were treated to a full Christmas dinner and were able to celebrate Christmas in good company. There was even a visit by Father Christmas. Many thanks to all who helped. Karen and Chris and their helpers provided an outstanding example of community spirit and their efforts are to be highly commended. If you know a special village person who has made a difference in the community please let us know via anne.boswell@ymail.com.

Winter Maintenance Programme

Kent County Council Highways Proposed Road Closures:
Sheephurst Lane – closed between B2079 Goudhurst Road and B2162 Maidstone Road

11 March 2014 for 15 days - 0830hrs to 1730hrs
Alternative route via B2079 Goudhurst Road, C50 Brenchley Road, C50 Goudhurst Road and B2162 Maidstone Road (and vice versa)

Spenny Lane and Claygate – closed between B2162 Maidstone Road and Jarmons Lane

25 March 2014 for 7 days - 0830hrs to 1730hrs
Alternative route via Jarmons Lane and B2162 Maidstone Road (and vice versa)

Marden Society

The Society programme kicks off on 26th February with the 'Development and Uses of Fingerprinting' with Mike Apps. On 26th March Peggy & John Scott, a Pearly Queen & King, will talk on the origins and roots of this well-known custom and on 23rd April Dr Ann Knief will give a talk on the Bevin Boys. Annual membership is £10 for 7 talks and a summer outing and all meetings held at 8pm in the Old School Room of the Memorial Hall. Mo Clayton, Chairman

Useful information

Parish Clerk: Alison Hooker / 01622 832305 /
mardenpc@btconnect.com
Asst Parish Clerk: Erika Lock / 01622 832305 /
erika.mardenpc@btconnect.com
Parish Council website: www.mardenpc.kentparishes.gov.uk
Police Contact: PCSO Nicola Morris – 101 or
Nicola.morris@kent.pnn.police.uk
Community Warden Contact: Mira Martin 07969 584179
British Transport Police: Freephone 0800 405 040

Fault Reporting:

Maidstone Borough Council Flytipping, Abandoned Vehicles, Dog Fouling, Street Cleaning 01622 602162 or website www.digitalmaidstone.co.uk

Kent County Council

Potholes and other road issues / Vegetation / Street lighting – 03000 418181 or via their website www.kent.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Watch

Marden Parish Council in partnership with your PCSO Nicola Morris, KCC Community Warden Mira Martin and Neighbourhood Watch are launching a Neighbourhood Watch initiative in the area. Neighbourhood Watch is one of the biggest and most successful crime prevention initiatives ever. It is a simple idea based on core values shared by millions of people around the country. It also cuts crime, helps and reassures those who live in the area and encourages neighbourliness and closer communities. Join us on Tuesday, 18th March – 6.30pm in The John Banks Hall, Goudhurst Road, Marden to learn more. If you need any further information please contact Nicola 07772225984 nicola.morris@kent.pnn.police.uk

Marden Pre-School

Marden Pre-school are holding their Open Day on Wednesday 19th March from 9am at Marden Memorial Hall. Tea, coffee and cakes will be available with lots of new exciting stalls. All residents are welcome to come along and support the local pre-school.



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