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all your news from the community

Summer 2025



Your Councillors

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| <p>04. Mayor's Message</p> <p>05. Your New Councillors</p> <p>06. Town Council News</p> <p>07. Civic Celebration</p> <p>09. Annual Parish Report 2025</p> <p>18. Beyond Boundaries Foundation</p> | <p>19. Regatta & Festival</p> <p>20. Marlow Tastes</p> <p>21. Marlow Energy Group</p> <p>22. Marlow C of E Infant School</p> <p>24. Smartphone Free Childhood</p> <p>26. Banking Hub</p> |
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the **marlovian**
 all your news from the community

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Mayor's Message

A privilege and a promise: Serving our wonderful community

I am absolutely delighted and deeply honoured to have been elected Mayor for the coming year. This opportunity to serve is not only a privilege, but also a responsibility I embrace wholeheartedly on behalf of our vibrant and caring community.

For the past 20 years, I've been fortunate enough to call Marlow my home. I've walked its streets nearly every day—sometimes just to get from A to B, other times simply to enjoy the rhythm of daily life here. Over the years, I've come to know so many friendly faces, familiar doorways, and tucked-away corners that make this place so unique. It's been a daily reminder of how lucky I am to be part of such a spirited, resilient, and kind-hearted community.



*I promise to serve with
dedication, with openness, and
with a firm commitment to do
good for others*

As I look ahead to the year to come, I feel inspired and energised. I promise to serve with dedication, with openness, and with a firm commitment to do good for others. Together, we have so much to be proud of—and so much more we can achieve.

Thank you for this opportunity. I'm excited for what lies ahead.

Cllr Muryel Boulay

Marlow Town Mayor

Being elected as Mayor feels like a natural next step in a journey that has always been about connection and care. I've spent my career working with well-known brands in leadership and international roles around the world. These days, I run my own business, helping organisations with their sustainable practices. I believe in practical, honest leadership and bringing people together to get things done — experience I'm keen to share in a Chair role. I'm already actively involved as a trustee of Marlow Refugee Action and Pocket Wilding of a couple of our local organisations, and through that work, I've witnessed first-hand the power of collaboration and shared purpose.

Now, as Mayor, I'm excited to continue building on that foundation—bringing people together, listening closely, and helping to steer positive initiatives that benefit all of us.

Outside of committee meetings and community projects, I do try to keep a bit of balance in my life. I'm a great believer in mindfulness and well-being, so I find peace and energy in the wonderful yoga and meditation classes run by our brilliant local teachers. I also love spending time outdoors, often helping friends with their allotments. There's something truly grounding about working with the soil and being part of the seasonal rhythms of nature.





Your New Councillors

Marlow North & West Ward

Cllr Muryel Boulay
Town Mayor 2025-26

E: cllr.mboulay@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Cllr Paul Burden

E: cllr.pburden@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Cllr Olwen Elliott

E: cllr.oelliott@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Cllr Gary Nuttall

E: cllr.gnuttall@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Cllr Liz Riches

E: cllr.lriches@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Cllr Frank Schoofs

E: cllr.fschoofs@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Cllr Justin Whelan

E: cllr.jwhelan@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Marlow South East Ward

Cllr Emma Hawkins

E: cllr.ehawkins@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Cllr Jennifer Simnett
Deputy Mayor 2025-26

E: cllr.jsimnett@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Cllr Kathy Thomson

E: cllr.kthomson@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Marlow South Ward

Cllr Mark Skoyles

E: cllr.mskoyles@marlow-tc.gov.uk



Cllr Jocelyn Towns

E: cllr.jtowns@marlow-tc.gov.uk





Town Council News

Summer 2025

Grants information & how to apply

The Town Council has up to £8,000 for 2025-26 to distribute grants to community groups, charities and local organisations who benefit Marlow, its residents, visitors and the wider community. Applications are considered at each meeting of the Resources Committee. All applications must be received three weeks prior to the date of the meeting to be considered for a grant. A Grant Application Form is available on the Council website www.marlow-tc.gov.uk/grants

Save the dates

- 15th July Swan Upping
- 9th November Remembrance Parade and Service
- 20th November Christmas lights switch on
- 16th December Carols on The Causeway

Bunting

Colourful red, white, and blue bunting has been installed throughout Marlow by Marlow Town Council, bringing a festive and patriotic atmosphere to the town. Draped across the High Street and Market Square, the vibrant decorations add a cheerful touch in preparation for upcoming community events and celebrations. The initiative aims to enhance the town's welcoming spirit

while uniting residents and visitors in a shared sense of pride and tradition.

Best Kept Village

Marlow is gearing up for the annual Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village Competition this year, aiming to present itself at its absolute best for judging between 1st June and mid-July. The competition, established in 1957 under the guidance of Sir Francis Dashwood and the Local Councils' Association, draws participants from villages and towns across Buckinghamshire looking to showcase their unique charm and character. The objective is to encourage entrants to work together as a community, involving all age groups, to make villages and towns more attractive places for residents and for visitors. Marlow won the Michaelis cup in 2024.

Marlow is gearing up for the annual Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village Competition this year



Photo: (left) Bunting, (right) Best Kept Village Picture, Credit: Paul Merchant My Marlow

Civic Celebration

Marlow celebrates the town's community spirit



At the Mayor's annual Civic Celebration at All Saints' Church on The Causeway on Sunday, 23rd March, Marlow residents came together to celebrate the town's community spirit and togetherness.

The Mayor's Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Barbara Whitehead, who has contributed much to the Marlow community over the past 70 years. The award, presented by The Countess Howe, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, recognised Barbara's unwavering commitment and invaluable contributions to local initiatives within the town.

The service also featured talks by two local volunteer organisations: Lighthouse, the group that runs holiday clubs for children, and Marlow Age Concern. Their speeches underscored the importance of volunteering and the impact of dedicated individuals who give their time to help others.

The gathering was treated to musical performances by Sir William Borlase's School chapel choir and a poetry reading by Arran Bligh, a student of Great Marlow School.

The event was a moving tribute to the Marlow's community and a celebration of the many individuals who work tirelessly to make it a better place for all.



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ANNUAL PARISH REPORT 2025

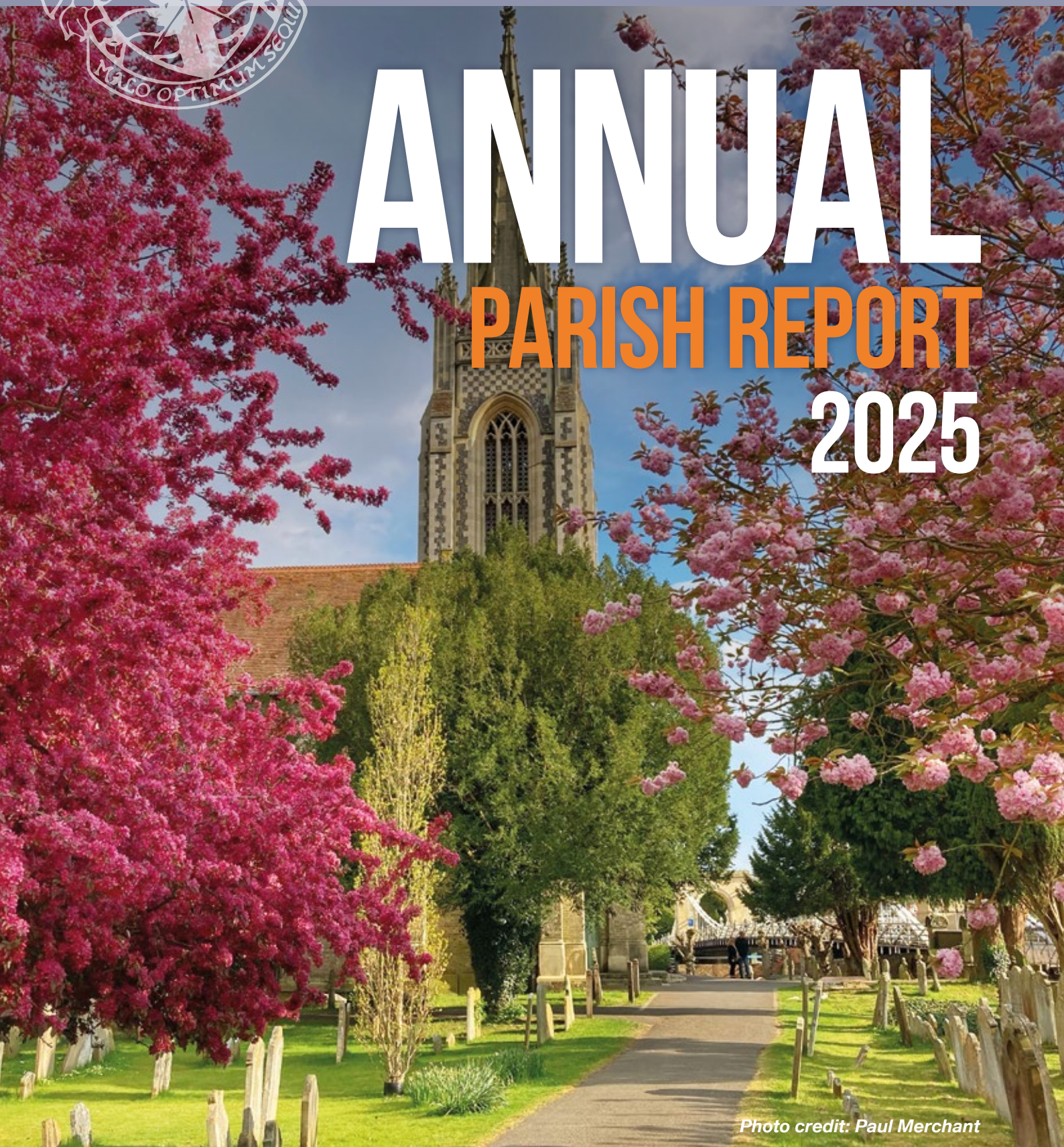


Photo credit: Paul Merchant

MARLOWTOWNCOUNCIL

MAYOR'S

REPORT 2024/25



It is with great pleasure that I present this Annual Parish Report, reflecting on the past year's accomplishments, challenges, and future aspirations.

This report serves as an overview of the work undertaken by Marlow Town Council and the collective efforts of our dedicated community. Marlow has shown resilience and continues to grow and flourish in spite of the challenges many towns face nationwide.

Throughout the year, Marlow Town Council has been actively engaged in ensuring the well-being and prosperity of our town. Our regular council meetings have been held, allowing for open discussions on important issues affecting our community. We have continued to work closely with Buckinghamshire Council, local organisations, Marlow's Chamber of Trade and Commerce and residents to address concerns and implement positive changes.

Serving this community as a councillor over the past four years, and the last two as Mayor, has been one of the greatest privileges of my life, and I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to have met so many residents, to listen to their stories, to celebrate their successes, and to support them in time of need. Over the past year, I have had the pleasure of being invited to attend a variety of events such as the Marlow Art Trail, Sir William Borlase's Grammar School 400 celebrations, representing Marlow Town Council at Marly Le Roi's Remembrance Day Service, attending Marlow Sea Cadets Christmas dinner and awards evening and hosting Marlow Town Council events.

As Mayor, I have witnessed first-hand the incredible generosity and kindness that define our town. From volunteers giving their time to help those in need, or keeping our town clear of litter, to businesses supporting local initiatives, to neighbours looking out for one another, the spirit of unity that thrives here is truly remarkable.



Photo: Marlow Civic Celebration. Credit: Jon Perry, Marlow Camera Club

➔ I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to have met so many residents



Local elections took place on 1st May and a number of existing councillors retired on that date. It is therefore appropriate that I extend a special thanks to them, including

Cllr Richard Scott, who has served this town, Wycombe District and Buckinghamshire councils with distinction. As our longest-serving Mayor, holding office six times and dedicating over 22 years to public service, his leadership has been invaluable.

Cllr Roger Wilson, who has served this town and Wycombe District councils with dedication and held the position of Mayor in 2005 and 2010.

Cllr Neil Marshall, who has also served this town, Wycombe District and Buckinghamshire council held the office of Mayor in 2008 and 2009, and played a key role in planning leadership at the county level.

Cllr Roy Cadman, for his dedicated service and relentless efforts in maintaining and strengthening our town's external twinning associations.

For those moving on to new ventures or remaining in service my heartfelt thanks go to the following councillors:

Cllr Chris Funnell, Leader of our council, who also served the town as Mayor, for his unwavering commitment to the town and council and his business leadership.

Deputy Mayor Cllr Colleen Stapley, a powerhouse of organisation who has single-handedly driven and shaped our Environment and Welfare Committee.



Cllr Natalia Mityaeva, who has carefully managed our finances, ensuring cost reduction and sustainability, keeping expenses down for Marlovians.

Cllr Carol Heap, Cllr Chris Hoyle and Cllr Jocelyn Towns

For those continuing their public service, we wish you the best of luck in the future. Your commitment has been truly inspiring, and it has been a privilege to work alongside such a devoted team.

Finally, I sincerely thank our council officers for their invaluable support and guidance. Your professionalism, expertise, and tireless work have been instrumental in delivering meaningful outcomes for our town.

As I prepare to pass on the responsibilities of this office, I do so with immense pride in what we have achieved together and with great confidence in the future of our town. My hope is that we continue to nurture this strong sense of community, to support one another, and to remain steadfast in our commitment to making this town the best it can be for generations to come.

Your feedback and participation are always welcome, and I encourage you to stay engaged with Marlow Town Council's work.

Thank you for your continued support.

Cllr David Brown

Town Mayor

LEADER'S

REPORT 2024/25

Leader Cllr Chris Funnell

“The heart of true leadership beats strongest in the unseen and the true measure of progress is often found in quiet work and resilience”



As we have come to the end of another electoral term this year, we don't just celebrate what was achieved, but the collective spirit that made it all possible.” As you read this report, a new team of councillors will have taken office following the May elections. With 11 out of our 12 councillors either retiring or moving on to new opportunities, this is unprecedented change, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my fellow councillors for their future and their families for their dedication and service as volunteers to our town. As Leader of Marlow Town Council and a former Mayor, I have had the immense privilege of guiding our team through both challenges and opportunities, local initiatives, and a commitment to strengthening our community.

During our tenure we have focused on making Marlow a great place to live, work, and raise a family. In the wake of COVID, many communities have felt a subtle but significant shift—a rise in expectations without a matching rise in patience or resilience. Long periods of isolation and disruption has, for some, frayed the social fabric, leading to a greater sense of personal entitlement and a lower tolerance for delay, compromise, or discomfort or change. Social media is now the judge and jury, but true community is built

not just on rights—but on shared responsibilities and kind and active engagement. The strength of Marlow is for the whole community and not just the few.

As we look to the future - Marlow has never been more vibrant, prosperous, or forward-thinking. Marlow is thriving, with local businesses flourishing and footfall in our town centre increasing by 12% over the past year alone. Employment figures indicate a rise in job opportunities within our community, and through strategic planning and financial management, we have sustained crucial local services and infrastructure. Most importantly, we have achieved this while maintaining a zero increase in Marlow Town Council and built incredible financial reserves and resilience for the future.

A call to action - The future of our town must now focus on the proactivity not only of our local council volunteers but our elected Marlow Buckinghamshire councillors to play a crucial role in advocating for our town at the county level and embracing ever harder. It is vital that our county councillors remain proactive, avoid delays, and consistently champion Marlow's needs.

The years ahead hold immense promise for Marlow, bold leadership and a commitment to local empowerment. As we build on our successes, it is essential to ensuring Marlow continues to thrive.

Neighbourhood planning will be instrumental in shaping our town's future and reinforcing our philosophy of being open for business, employment, and the future of our young people and the care of our older residents.

To the new team as we pass on the baton, we wish you every success as you take on these critical roles. Your time in public service will be an invaluable and enriching experience—one that requires humility, perseverance, and commitment to serving your town, best wishes!

Finally, as I also bid farewell to my council service, I reflect on the great honour it has been to serve in these past eight years, a true privilege, and I am deeply grateful for the support of this wonderful community. As I move on to new ventures, I look forward to seeing you around town.

“Once a Marlovian always a Marlovian “

Thank you, Marlow.



→ The strength of Marlow is for the whole community not just the few



Chairman, Cllr Richard Scott

Marlow Town Council is a statutory consultee to the local planning decision making process within Buckinghamshire Council. The Planning and Transport Committee meets every three weeks to review applications in respect of planning, arboriculture, licencing and other planning matters within the Marlow town boundary. The committee consisted of five very experienced members who carefully examine all applications and consider other consultee and residents' submissions to the planning portal. Appropriate comments and/or objections are promptly submitted to the Planning Authority. The bulk of applications reviewed each year are for minor extensions or changes of use and we have a strong correlation with the Planning Authority's subsequent decisions.

A new Local Plan for Buckinghamshire is currently under development and in due course, this will supersede the old Wycombe District Local Plan. It is unlikely that it will have any major impact on Marlow. However, following its publication, the Town Council will consider whether the plans for Marlow require further consultation and comment including the possible preparation of a Local Neighbourhood Plan. The final submission date of the plan to Government is December 2026.

I commented on vacant bank premises in last year's report and it is disappointing to see that two of these still remain empty despite extensive marketing. The old Nat West bank has been successfully converted into a furniture



and accessories business. It would be good to see these and other unoccupied premises brought back into use to further enhance our busy town centre. On the positive side, Buckinghamshire Council just has announced that it is working with Cash Access UK to provide a temporary banking hub with the anticipation of a permanent hub when suitable premises can be found. In addition, Buckinghamshire Council has also approved maintenance work on Marlow bridge and the Town Council was pleased to support the planning application for a new canoe club building under the bridge, as part of this.

We are always mindful of the challenge of parking availability in the town, largely brought about by the vibrancy of the town itself. Solutions that satisfy residents, visitors and inward commuters (all of whom are essential to the viability of the town) continue to prove very challenging. We have again engaged with Buckinghamshire Council to review a proposal which we submitted to the old Wycombe District Council for an appropriately designed multi-storey parking for the central car park situated to the rear of Sainsburys supermarket.

The Town Council contributes to a Buckinghamshire Council bus that provides town-wide weekday service and on certain days goes to High Wycombe and Maidenhead. During the year, we have worked with Buckinghamshire Council to review options for improving this service to have a more regular timetable. This service is available to all residents, but regrettably, is still only used by a small number. Details of the services are available on our website and in the Marlovian magazine.

The Committee is looking forward to another busy and productive year for Marlow.

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

REPORT 2024/25

Chairman, Cllr Natalia Mityaeva

As we wrap up the 2024-2025 financial year, Marlow Town Council is pleased to report another year of strong financial management and consistent service delivery. Despite wider economic pressures, we have continued to run essential services and community events without raising the parish tax for a second year in a row. This reflects our focus on careful budgeting and making the best use of public funds.

While a small deficit is expected for the coming year, it is manageable and has been planned for within our broader financial strategy. Our income stands at around £457,000, with an additional £76,000 expected from investments



and local services. These funds have allowed us to keep key community services in place, including the town bus, private park security, and various environmental projects such as rewilding.

We've continued to support local events such as the Remembrance ceremony, Christmas activities, and other town celebrations. We've also maintained high standards across public spaces, with regular grass cutting helping to keep the town tidy and well cared for throughout the year. Our ability to maintain services without increasing council tax is the result of closely managing costs while focusing spending on areas that matter most to residents.

Looking ahead to 2025-2026, the Council remains financially stable and fully committed to keeping Marlow clean, safe, and running well. We'd like to thank our residents for their continued support and involvement in helping make Marlow a great place to live.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

REPORT 2024/25

Chairman, Cllr David Brown

The Community Committee was established to lead local events and strengthen community spirit across Marlow. Our focus areas include economic development and tourism, community safety, community engagement and cohesion. We are proud to organise key annual events such as the Remembrance Service and Parade, the Christmas Lights Switch-On, and Carols on The Causeway, all of which receive outstanding support from residents. Owing to their growing popularity, enhanced road closures and additional public safety



measures have been introduced to accommodate the large crowds in attendance.

A particular highlight this year was winning the Michaelis Cup in the small towns category of the Best Kept Village competition. This achievement reflects the ongoing efforts of Marlow Town Council and its contractors to ensure that Marlow remains clean, attractive, and welcoming for both residents and visitors. We were also thrilled to see our town recognised as one of the top ten best places to live in the South East by The Sunday Times.

As we prepare to pass the baton to a new group of dedicated councillors, we do so with pride in the strong foundations we have laid and confidence in Marlow's continued success.

→ We'd like to thank our residents for their continued support

ENVIRONMENT & WELLBEING COMMITTEE

REPORT 2024/25

Chairman Cllr Colleen Stapley

This past year we have continued, modified and introduced new various environmental and wellbeing initiatives with the vision to improve our local environment and residents' wellbeing.



Table Tennis

After over a year's wait, we finally got approval to buy and install a table tennis table from The Higginson Park Trust. There aren't many entertainment options for young people who are too old for the playground (or adults) so we wanted to add something to entertain them as well. The Little Green Boat Company café will kindly watch over the table and rent bats and balls for those who don't bring their own. The table needs to get good usage (especially over the spring/summer months) as the trust has given it a trial period and if it isn't used enough, they will remove it.

Path of Positivity

It's no secret young people today suffer with poorer mental health than previous generations. Part of our committee's goal is to improve residents' wellbeing, so we wanted to focus on helping young people feel a little better about themselves or life in general which is how the The Path of Positivity was born. This initiative's objective is to turn a dull walk into an uplifting destination filled with positive messages and murals designed by students from Marlow schools to bring a smile or confidence boost to themselves and their peers. Marlow Football Club gave us permission to transform their concrete wall alongside the footpath connecting Oak Tree Road to Trinity Court. This path is ideal because it is used by students from Marlow CofE Infant School, St. Peters, Holy Trinity, Foxes Piece, Borlase, and Great Marlow.

Smartphones and Children Statement

It is almost impossible not to see or hear someone talking about the negative implications of smartphone

usage on young people on a global scale and we believe this is a topic that will only continue to grow. Marlow alone has 500+ families who are part of Smartphone Free Childhood groups advocating for parents to delay smartphones until 14 or older and to remove smartphones in Marlow primary and secondary schools to eliminate the pressure placed on parents to purchase smartphones in the first place and remove distractions and other negative effects on young people. We are not involved in funding or running schools at a town council level. However, we recognised the need to act now to ensure we look after our young residents' wellbeing and therefore brought forward a statement of support for all Marlow primary and secondary schools to create smartphone free learning environments which was passed by full council in January.

Trees for Schools

Local schools have been contacted to participate in planting trees on school grounds that provide shade for students. Nick Rowcliffe from ReLeaf Marlow met with schools to identify and purchase the right trees for their space, organised the planting, brought all the gear, dug the holes and planted the trees with others from ReLeaf (and Borlase students for their trees). We have planted three cherry trees, a yew and holly hedge at Borlase, six trees at Marlow CofE Infants School (hawthorn, rowan, field maple, whitebeam, hazel and cherry plum) and discussions are underway to plant over 20 trees in the field and school frontage of Holy Trinity.



Increasing Biodiversity

We worked with national charity Pocket Wilding (based in Marlow) to increase biodiversity, create shade and generally make Seymour Park more resilient to climate change. Pocket Wilding, The Chiltern Rangers, Borlase

→ We have a vision to improve our local environment and residents' wellbeing

ENVIRONMENT & WELLBEING COMMITTEE REPORT 2024/25 CONTINUED...

School and Marlow's environmental groups along with a team of volunteers planted new native hedgerows along the fence to provide food and habit for wildlife, a hazel coppice, Hawthorne scrub and a native wildflower patch. Mature trees were planted next to the playground to provide shade for children and equipment, and support bird populations.

No Mow May

Our efforts with growing native wildflowers and long grass over the past two years has helped local pollinators as intended. However, as a council we are not the majority landowner – residents are. With the unpredictable growth from the weather and risk of potential driving hazards we decided we need residents to lead 'No Mow May' going forward. All residents can support



pollinators throughout April/May and longer with just a shoebox size of grass left wild to provide food and shelter for pollinators. A 'No Mow May' participation poster was included in the March Marlovian for residents to cut-out and place with pride in their window.

Wild Verges to Wild Greens

The objective of Wild Verges is to help rewild land so that natural wildflowers (nettles, thistles etc. that people call weeds) could return to help support our pollinators. The rewilding process takes years for the long grass to recede and the naturally occurring wildflowers to take over. However, we noticed in our two-year trial that only some areas managed to grow any wildflowers. Less wildflowers than expected combined with narrow road verges led us to concentrate our efforts on large green spaces instead. Many Wild Green spaces will be enhanced with native UK wildflower seeds in an undulating wave-like pattern which will be frame mowed with surrounding grass cut short to keep the pollinator rich areas looking purposeful, more visually interesting and attractive.

YOUR COUNCILLORS 2024/25

Marlow North West Ward

Cllr David Brown



Cllr Roy Cadman



Cllr Natalia Mityaeva



Cllr Carol Heap



Cllr Chris Hoyle



Cllr Neil Marshall



Cllr Roger Wilson



Marlow South East Ward

Cllr Chris Funnell



Cllr Colleen Stapley



Marlow South Ward

Cllr Richard Scott



Cllr Jocelyn Towns



To get in touch with a Councillor for your ward, please visit the 'Your Councillors' page on the Marlow Town Council website where you can find their contact information.



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Beyond Boundaries Foundation — Events

Bespoke wellness for the community from new charity

As a newly registered charity based in the Counties, Beyond Boundaries Foundation is dedicated to making life-changing complementary and holistic therapies accessible to all, focusing on supporting vulnerable people facing physical, mental and emotional health challenges.

Through talks, workshops, events and the online resource hub, The Buzz Hub, the charity provides practical complementary and holistic resources for tackling anxiety, depression, pain, mobility, grief and so much more. The charity focuses on empowering people to manage their challenges and thrive.

As with all the charity's services, The Buzz Hub can support anybody looking to improve their health and wellbeing, offering something for everyone, including breathwork, yoga, mindfulness, meditation, pilates, mobility sessions and more to ease symptoms and relax.

Access to *The Buzz Hub* is completely free of charge for individuals who meet the foundation's eligibility criteria, ensuring that those who need it most are never held back by cost.

Beyond Boundaries Foundation was founded by Denise Greene who after overcoming and managing her own health struggles, knows that incorporating holistic practices into a daily lifestyle alongside mainstream care plays a key role in symptom management and health. This combined transformative approach and personal experience truly ignited her passion for empowering others to access the same healing tools, whatever their life situation.

For Denise: "My ambition with Beyond Boundaries Foundation is to break the boundaries of health and wellbeing by delivering tools and resources that empower everyone to live their best life, thus 'choosing to LIVE, not just exist!' Our personal best physical, mental and emotional health is something that we should all be entitled to experience."

Beyond Boundaries Foundation is excited to announce their very first charity fundraising event taking place here in Marlow on Wednesday, 9th July 5 - 8.30pm at the Court Garden House, Pound Lane, Marlow, SL7 2AE.

Spend a summer's evening by the river, helping to raise money for the charity and supporting your local community.

What to expect?

- Clothing Swish - bring four good as new items, exchange them for four tokens to exchange for items 'new to you'.
- A Silent Auction - with many items to bid for to get you 'summer ready'.
- 1-2-1 Taster Treatments - including reflexology, massage and reiki (minimum £10 donation).
- Plus a paid bar so you can relax with friends, enjoy the beautiful location and soak up the 'self-care and pampering' atmosphere!

Tickets: £10 per person and to find out more visit: www.beyondboundariesfoundation.org/launch-into-summer or scan the QR Code below.



Every ticket sale and donation will help make a difference and support those disadvantaged in the local community.

Beyond Boundaries Foundation is a registered charity in England and Wales (no 1211857)



Photo: Beyond Boundaries Foundation, Founder, Trustees & Ambassador

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Marlow Tastes



Marlow restaurants host hundreds of diners for charity

On Tuesday, 22nd April, Marlow's streets were busy as over 1,200 journeys were made by foot between eight of the town's restaurants to raise money for local charities.

Marlow Tastes, the town's exclusive 'safari' supper organised by Marlow Thames Rotary, started with a reception at All Saints Church. None of the 420 diners then knew which restaurants they were visiting for each course of their gourmet meal.



As well as showcasing some fine dining, the adventurers raised a record £16,000 to support Dementia Action Marlow and the Marlow Opportunity Playgroup which

supports the plight of very young children with special needs.

John Bromwich of Rotary explained: "The progressive supper is unique to Marlow, a town gifted with fine restaurants. It was an opportunity for everyone to have a novel dining experience at new venues while raising much-needed funds for good causes.

"It was the third year of Marlow Tastes and the event involved over 70 volunteers in a complex and demanding schedule."

The lead sponsor was Macbeth Insurance Brokers, who recently relocated their second office to Mere Park, Marlow. Another local group, BP Collins Solicitors, sponsored the reception. Local businesses donated 60 prizes for the raffle, which included a meal for 10, cooked and served at home.

Marlow has three highly active Rotary clubs providing support and funds where most needed. One of many highlights is the Santas Fun Run which attracts 3,000 contestants from a wide area.



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Marlow Energy Group

Events

Smart Energy Show helps householders manage their energy

Marlow Energy Group (MEG) held its second Smart Energy Show on Saturday, 5th April at Great Marlow School (GMS) and drew over 200 volunteers, exhibitors and visitors. The aim was to provide local householders an opportunity to learn more about reducing energy losses, managing energy use, and new technologies designed to create a more sustainable future.

Joy Morrissey, MP, opened the show thanking all those involved and emphasised the importance for UK householders to manage their energy and by doing so, save money and reduce the carbon impact of the country.



The show comprised of 16 exhibition stands including suppliers of solar systems, heat pump systems, electrical battery storage systems, smart control systems, heat storage systems, advisers on insulation, draught reduction, energy assessments, and builders and architects specialising in low energy make overs. Outside, owners showed the electric cars they use, and E-Bikes were available to try out.

MEG would like to thank local businesses Kimble Solar, Solarbility, IZ Energy, Energy 2, Eco-Tiffin, Delta T Eco-Heating, Econic Energy, Heppelthwaite, Oxon Energy, Save Energy, Draughtbusters, Saddle Safari and Scandilicious for their expertise and support as exhibitors and caterers.

Community stands at the show included Marlow Energy Group, Marlow Electric Vehicles Facebook Page, Transition Town Marlow (the charity behind Releaf, Wombles, Repair Café, Active Transport and Marlow Market) and Bridge Hydro. Many exhibitors used the opportunity to provide short talks about their technologies in a parallel session.

MEG would like to thank GMS for use of the space for the show, and the GMS Facilities staff for help in

www.marlow-tc.gov.uk



planning and moving school furniture to match the layout requirements of the day.

It would have been impossible to mount the show without financial support from Marlow Environmental Trust, Marlow Round Table and Marlow Town Council.

Feedback indicated that visitors were delighted to learn more about technologies that they had an interest in and exhibitors talked to many interested, potential customers.

Marlow Energy Group's next public event will be "Open Houses," where at least six homeowners will open their homes to local residents interested in learning more about the technologies they've implemented in or on their properties



MEG is also looking for householders this coming winter, who want to have their houses surveyed to identify areas of heat loss. MEG undertakes these surveys free of charge and provides an illustrated report using Thermal Imaging Camera images taken by trained MEG volunteers. If you wish to take advantage of any of these services, please contact us at [**marlowenergygroup@gmail.com**](mailto:marlowenergygroup@gmail.com).

Marlow C of E Infant School

Shining as a Green Flag Eco-School



Marlow C of E Infant School now proudly holds the prestigious Green Flag with distinction status, a symbol of excellence in environmental education and action. This recognition reflects the school's commitment to sustainability, student-led initiatives, and fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.

Green Flag status signifies that the school has gone beyond classroom learning to embed sustainability into its daily operations, curriculum, and community involvement.

The journey to become a Green Flag holder with distinction started five years ago.

A commitment to change: Declaring an emergency

In 2019, Marlow C of E Infant School declared an environmental and climate emergency, driven by its passionate Eco Warriors—a team of Key Stage 1 students elected to lead the school's eco-initiatives. This declaration was more than symbolic; it set the foundation for transformative changes throughout the school. To make these changes they chose to focus on:

- Looking for different ways to save, recycle and reuse the Earth's precious resources.
- Being courageous advocates for the preservation of the environment and particularly habitats.
- Finding alternative ways to save energy.

Eco Warriors driving change

The Eco Warriors play a central role, encouraging their peers, staff, and families to adopt eco-friendly habits and think globally while acting locally. Over the last five years the Eco Warriors have spearheaded a number of projects which have had a measurable impact, including but not exclusively:

- **Sustainability:** They transitioned the school's milk delivery system from single-use cartons to reusable glass bottles, significantly reducing plastic waste.
- **Waste Weeks:** Through campaigns to donate unused toys and recycle e-waste, they've encouraged the community to think critically about consumption and landfill waste.
- **Eliminating single-use plastic:** The school replaced single-use paper and laminates with reusable fabric and cardboard, reducing waste from classroom decorations.
- **Litter:** Reducing litter which is harmful to wildlife and looks untidy is something that the Eco warriors are keen to do. The school has a 'Tidy Up team' that meets every week to go out into the community to litter pick. They have also participated in the Great Big School Clean with other schools in Marlow.
- **Water:** They have encouraged the rest of the school to help children in other countries by taking part in campaigning and fundraising as part of a World Water Day challenge, focusing on Sustainable Development Goal 6 and participating in Toilet Twinning.



C of E School. The children using the Eco-Barn for their Outdoor Learning session

Eco-Barn: A Green Flag highlight

A key feature of the school's environmental programme is the Eco-Barn, a multifunctional outdoor learning space equipped with light and power. It enables students to engage with nature across various subjects, from science experiments to storytelling and art projects. The barn serves as a tangible symbol of the school's commitment to environmental education, aligning perfectly with the Green Flag ethos by providing sustainable, hands-on learning opportunities.

This practical approach helps pupils understand the importance of protecting the environment while instilling the skills and knowledge needed to make a difference

The Eco-Barn is used to discuss topics like renewable energy, sustainable construction, and biodiversity. This practical approach helps pupils understand the importance of protecting the environment while instilling the skills and knowledge needed to make a difference.

Weekly outdoor learning lessons also take place using the Eco-Barn which was constructed using some funding from the Buckinghamshire Community Board, for which the school is extremely grateful.

Solar panels

As one of the aims of the Eco warriors was to find alternative ways to save energy, the school embarked on an ambitious project to install solar panels. After successfully applying for grants and the fundraising efforts of parents and carers, a 28kw solar system was installed in the roofs of the school in the summer of 2023. Since commissioning the panels have yielded 45mwh of

which 42% has been sent to the Grid. This project has had such a positive impact on the school, Marlow and of course the environment.

Wild World and Nature Corridor

The Wild World, another cornerstone of the school's Green Flag efforts, has been transformed into a thriving hub of biodiversity. With features like Dragonfly Ponds, Grasshopper Meadow, and a Ladybird Bug Hotel, this area fosters outdoor learning while supporting wildlife habitats. Pupils have been deeply involved in designing, planting, and maintaining these spaces, learning about conservation and sustainability in the process.

Adding to this is the Nature Corridor, a rewilded area planted with native trees and uncut grass to provide habitats for local wildlife. Together, these spaces enhance biodiversity and teach students the interconnectedness of all life forms.

Walking the green path

The school's "Walk to School" initiative is another pillar of its Green Flag success. By encouraging families to walk, cycle, or "Park and Stride," the programme reduces pollution, eases traffic, and promotes health. Participation is rewarded monthly, reinforcing eco-conscious habits in students and their families.

A legacy of sustainability

Marlow C of E Infant School's Green Flag status is more than an accolade—it's a testament to its role as a leader in sustainability. From the Eco-Barn, to the Solar Panels and to the Wild World, the school demonstrates how education and environmental action can go hand in hand, inspiring the next generation to care for the planet.

We would like to thank the Oxford Diocese Board of Education, Buckinghamshire Community Board and Marlow Environment Trust along with the school's Parent & Friends Association for their support and funding which has allowed us to carry out and continue this vital work.



C of E school. Aerial view of the solar panels



Smartphone Free Childhood

Parents pledge to delay giving their children a smartphone

Hundreds of parents in Marlow have pledged to delay giving their children a smartphone in a bid to protect their mental health and extend their childhoods.

They are part of a rapidly growing movement of families in the town who are pushing back against the new “social norm” that sees children given smartphones.

More than 320 parents at schools across Marlow have pledged to postpone giving their children a smartphone until at least the end of Year 9 (age 14).

They are among more than 2,600 parents in Buckinghamshire who have also taken the pledge, which was organised by the national grassroots organisation Smartphone Free Childhood.

The group was founded last year in a bid to change the culture around smartphones. So far more than 200,000 parents across the country have joined, and the local branch – SFC Marlow - is thriving.

More than 700 parents from Marlow and Cookham have joined local Smartphone Free Childhood WhatsApp groups to support each other. Families from all the local primary schools have joined, plus Great Marlow School and Sir William Borlase.

They are all concerned about the new rite of passage that has developed where children are given smartphones at the end of primary school - if they haven't already got one.

Many parents who do not want their children to have a smartphone feel pressured to give them one, because they do not want their child to be left out.

More than 700 parents from Marlow and Cookham have joined local Smartphone Free Childhood WhatsApp groups to support each other



Smartphone Free Childhood believes collective action is the answer – as more parents delay, the social norm will change.

A survey of more than 500 Marlow parents found:

- 68% of Year 6 parents felt pressure to get their children a smartphone, compared to 28% in Year 5.
- 89% want phones banned from primary schools or locked away.
- 83% are in favour of a recommendation from schools to delay smartphones until at least 14.

It comes as concern mounts about the harmful impact smartphones have on young people. Netflix drama *Adolescence*, which highlights the dangers of unfettered access to the internet for teenagers, has pushed the subject further to the forefront of people's minds.

Evidence has linked smartphones to anxiety and depression, while also giving children access to pornography and violent content and exposing them to cyberbullying and grooming.

The average UK 12-year-old now spends 29 hours a week on their smartphone

But one of the major worries for parents is the sheer amount of time that children spend on their smartphones, meaning they miss out on real world experiences as simple as talking to their friends or going outside.

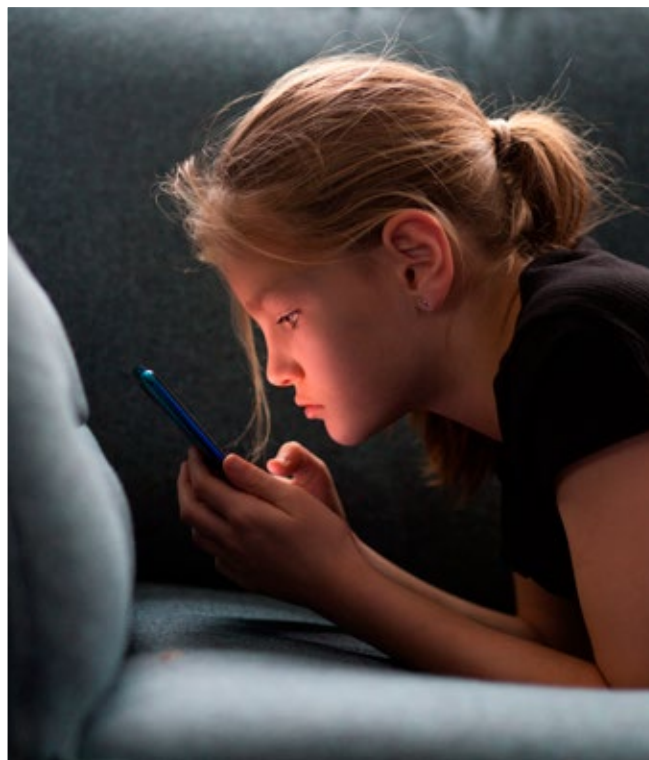
The average UK 12-year-old now spends 29 hours a week on their smartphone.

Jonathan Haidt, whose book *The Anxious Generation* sets out the harm social media and smartphones are doing to children, argues that smartphone use alters brain development during puberty, and it is this that is causing an epidemic of mental illness in the young.

Nikki Kimberg, spokeswoman for SFC Marlow said:
 “Many people don’t want to get their child a smartphone
 but feel they have no choice because everyone else is.

No parent wants to isolate their child from their friends. The solution lies in better regulation, but enacting legislation takes years – time that parents of children today don't have. In the meantime, our most powerful defence lies in banding together and taking collective action.”

SFC Marlow has created a network of parents whose children will start local secondary schools in September, to help parents find others who have chosen to delay.



The group also supported Marlow Town Council, which adopted a statement about the dangers of smartphones, and it also organised a sell-out event at Spinfield school.

Ms Kimberg said parents do have a choice. For parents who want to be able to track their child, SFC Marlow suggests using a dedicated tracking device instead of a smartphone, and giving the child a brick phone for calls and texts.

Parents can find out how many other children are without smartphones by joining their local SFC WhatsApp group at ***[whatsapp.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk](https://www.whatsapp.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk)***

To sign the Parent Pact go to: **parentpact.
smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk**





Cameo Club Marlow

Easter Tea enjoyed by members and guests

On 9th April, Marlow Cameo Club treated 70 members and guests, including Deputy Mayor Cllr. Colleen Stapley, to a special 'Easter Tea' in Marlow's Liston Hall, the first such event for several years. 'Cameo' is an acronym formed from "come and meet each other", words that sum up the ethos of the club which provides lunches in Liston Hall, Marlow on the third Wednesday of the month and offers transport for guests with mobility issues.



Whilst Cameo has been able to provide monthly lunches for its elderly, housebound and disabled guests for more than fifty years, the support of its volunteer members over recent times has enabled the club to expand its offerings while containing its charge for lunches to just £8.

Guests are welcomed and offered a glass of sherry on arrival and a choice of red or white wine or a soft drink to accompany their main course. Lunches are prepared and cooked in Liston Hall's kitchen and served by hostesses in the 'Garden Room'. The room provides a welcoming ambience with colourful table cloths and floral table decorations.

For some guests, the high point of the lunch is a selection of delicious desserts. The repast is completed with coffee and chocolates, by which time a free raffle is held and a little entertainment provided to conclude what is invariably a very happy occasion.

The club which currently has vacancies for both guests and volunteers. Further information may be obtained by telephoning Barbara Whitehead on **07795 205357**.

Banking Hub

New counter service banking in Marlow

Located in Marlow Library, Institute Road, the Banking Hub will be open on Monday-Friday from 9am-5pm. This will provide a counter service for day-to day transactions such as cash withdrawals, deposits, paying of bills, change-giving and topping up gas and electricity.

Community bankers from five different banks will be available in the Hub on specific days of the week. There will be a private space where you can speak to your community banker about more complicated banking enquiries, like payments and transfers, managing your account, and how to use online banking.

Marlow Library is the Hub's temporary home until a permanent town centre location has been found. Cash Access UK, who set up the Banking Hubs, are working on finding a permanent site now.

Over the last few years, one by one all the banks have closed in Marlow town centre, leaving residents and businesses with limited local banking services. Whilst online banking is convenient for many people, there is still a need for the face-to-face services banks used to

provide and are very much missed by residents and businesses.

The Banking Hub is the result of a community request for a Cash Access Assessment made by Councillor Carol Heap earlier this year. Cash Access UK carried out a detailed needs assessment and decided that a Banking Hub was recommended for Marlow.

Councillor Heap said "I am delighted to have been able to initiate this Banking Hub for Marlow. The response from residents and business has been overwhelmingly positive and I look forward to seeing the Hub develop into a true community asset that will benefit residents and businesses alike."





Join us for
our next
events

Ridley Manor care home, Lane End

Community café

Last Tuesday of every month, 3pm - 5pm

Open to all ages, bringing the younger and older generations together. Our monthly café offers a chance to meet the residents and other members of the local community, as well as providing guest speakers on specialist subjects or an activity to enjoy. Free refreshments will be provided.

Dementia caregiver support group

Last Wednesday of every month, 3.30pm - 5pm

This valuable support group is aimed at those who are caring or living with friends/family members with dementia.

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