

2026-2029

Strategic Plan

MARLOW



MARLOW
TOWN COUNCIL



This is Marlow's plan.

And it belongs to all of us.

Marlow Town Council has worked on a three-year plan: we want every resident to know what's in it, why it matters, and how you can be part of it. This isn't a document that sits on a shelf. It's a set of real commitments, real projects, and real people working to make Marlow better.

Everything we do is guided by two simple ideas:

"Marlow will be a town where people are proud to live — clean, green, connected, and ready for whatever the future brings."

And the way we'll get there:

"We will listen to our residents, manage our resources wisely, and partner with local organisations to deliver real improvements across four priorities."

The team behind it all

Before we get into the projects, a word about the people who make it all possible. Marlow Town Council's office staff are the engine behind everything in this plan. While councillors lead on projects and strategy, our office team keeps the Council running every single day — answering residents' calls and emails, coordinating with Buckinghamshire Council, administering grants, managing our assets, and supporting every meeting, event, and initiative. They are why things get done, and they deserve to be recognised for it.

Our strategic themes

- Caring for our Town
- A connected community
- Getting around more easily
- Making the most of what we own

1. Caring for our town

Is our river safe? Are our streets clean? Are we ready for climate change? We're going to find out — and do something about it.

Marlow is a beautiful town. But beauty takes work and climate change means that work is getting harder. This theme is our commitment to protect the environment we all love, keep our streets and parks clean, and make sure our community is ready for whatever the future brings.

Behind the scenes: *Our office team liaises daily with Buckinghamshire Council and the Environment Agency, coordinates grant applications for environmental projects, and makes sure residents' concerns about the local environment reach the right people.*

The projects

Is our river safe to swim in? We're going to find out — and tell you.

- **River water testing** - Cllr Boulay & Cllr Elliott

We're working with Marlow Society and the rowing club, alongside with our neighbouring towns to set up testing of river water in the Thames for sewage contamination. We aim to publish the results so rowers, swimmers, anglers, residents, and visitors can keep themselves informed and safe. We'll contribute to the collective along the river to influence key players such as Thames Water and the Environment Agency to restore water quality and nature depending on it.

→ **Interested in volunteering to help with testing? Get in touch with the Council:**
office@marlow-tc.gov.uk

What happens to Marlow if the river floods, the power goes out, or something else goes wrong?

- **Getting ready for extreme events** - Cllr Nuttall & Cllr Elliott

We're building practical guidance and resources to help residents prepare for emergencies — from floods to power cuts. We'll work with emergency services and national frameworks to make sure Marlow has a clear, accessible plan.

→ **Watch out for more information coming soon on the Council website.**

A cleaner Marlow starts with all of us.

- **Tackling waste & litter** - Cllr Hawkins & Cllr Simnett

We're working with High Street businesses, schools, parks, and residents to make Marlow cleaner and greener. From smarter bins to youth 'adopt a street' schemes, to working with Buckinghamshire Council's new litter enforcement team — this is about civic pride, and it belongs to everyone.

→ **Schools, businesses, and community groups: talk to us about getting involved:**
office@marlow-tc.gov.uk

The Climate Adaptation Plan: investing now to prepare for the future.

- **Community Resilience** - Cllr Boulay, Cllr Whelan & Cllr Schoofs

We're creating a Strategic Adaptation for Emergency Resilience (SAFER) plan for Marlow, following a model developed by the Climate Majority Project — and we want residents to help write it. A community forum will bring people together to identify Marlow's biggest climate risks and decide how we respond.

→ **Watch out for more information coming in soon on the Council website.**

2. Getting around more easily

Whether you walk, cycle, drive, or take the bus — getting around Marlow should be safer, simpler, and less stressful.

We don't control Marlow's roads — Buckinghamshire Council does. But we can build the evidence, make the case, and push hard for the changes residents want to see.

Behind the scenes: *Our office team handles responses to every planning application, keeps residents informed about road changes and consultations, and makes sure councillors have what they need to make the strongest possible case to Buckinghamshire Council.*

The projects

Before we can fix it, we need to map it.

- **Building the evidence for better active travel infrastructure** - Cllr Skoyles, Cllr Elliott & Cllr Whelan

We want to enable residents to circulate within the Marlow town boundaries easily and safely. We're developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to map where routes are missing, dangerous or disconnected — a proper evidence base that gives us the best chance of influencing real investment in Marlow's streets. This will be the foundation for future projects— from pushing for new crossings, and arguing for better bus connections, to applying for infrastructure funding.

→ **Have a route in mind that needs capturing? Tell us at office@marlow-tc.gov.uk**

Shared Mobility

- **Develop alternatives to private, single occupancy car use – investigating service improvements to meet residents' needs** – Cllr Elliott & Cllr Schoofs

We are collaborating with Buckinghamshire Council and other stakeholders to make improvements to the service currently provided by the town bus. The aim is to develop a service which better suits residents' needs and is more cost efficient. We will also investigate options for lift-share and car-share (car clubs) with proposals being brought forward if an attractive solution is found.

We will establish how the highway space is used in Marlow, make proposals for changes, and work with BC to trial them where possible, capturing information before and after, and consulting with residents and businesses to decide whether to press for permanent adoption.

This could include:

- Parking initiatives (considering the needs of residents, workers, and visitors) e.g. public on-street and off-street parking and Park & Ride /Park & Stride
- Use of the town centre public space, prioritising pedestrian safety, and comfort.
- Propose modification of current highway systems such as speed limits and traffic routes within the town to improve traffic flow, ease congestion, reduce air pollution and decrease risk for vulnerable road users

3. A connected community

Marlow's greatest asset isn't its High Street or its river. It's its people.

From the volunteers who run food collections, to the young people making a difference, to the organisations keeping residents connected, Marlow works because people care. Our job is to support that, amplify it, and make sure nobody gets left behind. We celebrate it through our events and grants.

Behind the scenes: *Our office team administers the Community Grant Scheme, organises the Community Forum, coordinates the events, such as the Remembrance Service, the Christmas Lights Switch and Carols on the Causeway, and is the first point of contact for the dozens of community organisations who rely on the Council for support and signposting.*

The projects

Welcoming our new residents

- **Marlow Welcome Pack** - Cllr Schoofs

We want to welcome new residents to our town and point them to all the relevant resources, to make them feel at home.

→ **Are you an estate agent or do you know new residents? Please get in touch to help us distribute the information.**

- **Volunteering Hub** – Cllr Schoofs

Bringing organisations and good will together. We want to support every community organisation in the town to access the overwhelming good will that characterise our residents. We have started engaging with all charities and other local initiatives through the community organisations forum. The output of the volunteering forum will help us shape a proposal to be reviewed with all.

→ **Chairs and trustees – do reach out to the office with feedback/comments**

The voters of tomorrow are in our schools today.

- **Democracy in Schools** - Cllr Riches, Cllr Towns & Cllr Boulay

We want every child in Marlow to understand how democracy works, why their vote matters, and what a town council actually does. Working with Marlow's school heads, we'll revive an age-appropriate programme that brings local democracy to life in the classroom.

→ **Teachers and heads: we'd love to hear from you** : office@marlow-tc.gov.uk

4. Making the most of what we own

The Council owns buildings, land and assets that belong to Marlow. We're determined to make them work harder — for residents, and for the town's finances.

From an Edwardian chapel to a strip of unused land, from repurposed phone boxes to our allotment sites — Marlow Town Council has a few assets that are underused. Every project in this theme is expected to cover its own costs and deliver real benefit. We'll keep residents informed and involved as each one develops.

Behind the scenes: *Our office team manages the Council's full asset register, supports the legal and planning processes around property, handles bookings and lettings, and ensures every financial decision meets the Council's compliance obligations.*

The projects

An Edwardian chapel that has barely been used — could it become a community space?

- **Cemetery Chapel refurbishment** - Cllr Simnett, Cllr Towns, Cllr Nuttall, Cllr Elliott & Cllr Schoofs

We're exploring the restoration of the cemetery chapel into a practical, welcoming space — available for funeral services, wakes, and community events that suit the setting. The crypt will provide much-needed Council storage. The aim is for the chapel to cover its own costs and generate a small surplus.

→ **Watch out for more information coming in soon on the Council website:**

<https://www.marlow-tc.gov.uk/>

A piece of land that's been sitting empty for years. What should we do with it?

- **Strip of land near the Doctor's Surgery** - Cllr Simnett, Cllr Towns, Cllr Nuttall, Cllr Elliott & Cllr Schoofs

This unused MTC-owned land has been empty for years. A local organisation has expressed interest in buying it for parking. But we want residents to have a say first — a consultation will set out the options with their pros and cons before any decision is made.

→ **Watch out for the resident consultation — your view matters.**

Our phone boxes: Just getting started.

- **Telephone Boxes** - Cllr Simnett, Cllr Towns, Cllr Schoofs & Cllr Nuttall

You may have already spotted the first community art display in our repurposed High Street phone boxes — a pop-up gallery by local artists. That’s just the beginning. We have renovated all boxes and are opening the two located on the High Street to community organisations, charities, and local businesses as changing display spaces.

→ **Want to use a phone box for your organisation? Contact the office.**

Want to know more?

All our Council meetings are open to the public — come along and have your say. Progress on every project will be reported in future editions of The Marlovian and on our website. And if you have a question, an idea, or just want to get involved, we’d love to hear from you.

→ **office@marlow-tc.gov.uk · 01628 484024 · www.marlow-tc.gov.uk**