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all your news from the community

Autumn 2026



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Niamh Miniham
Partner



The Bank of Mum and Dad: A guide to gifting money to loved ones

With house prices remaining high and the cost of living continuing to put pressure on families, many parents and grandparents are choosing to help loved ones financially. Whether it is contributing towards a first home, paying university fees or helping an adult child through a difficult period, gifting can make a real difference.

However, before transferring money, it is worth taking a step back to consider the legal and financial implications. A carefully planned gift can benefit both you and your family, while a rushed decision could create complications in the future.

Can you afford to make the gift?

The first question should always be whether you can comfortably afford to give the money away. While it is natural to want to support family members, your own financial security should remain a priority.

Consider your retirement plans, future care needs and any unexpected expenses that may arise. Once a gift has been made, it may not be possible to recover those funds if your circumstances change.

Understand the inheritance tax rules

Lifetime gifting can form part of an effective inheritance tax planning strategy, but it is important to understand the rules.

Many gifts are known as Potentially Exempt Transfers, meaning they may fall outside your estate for inheritance tax purposes if you live for at least seven years after making the gift. There are also a number of annual gifting exemptions that may apply, depending on your circumstances.

Keeping a clear record of when gifts were made and their value can make estate administration much easier for your executors in the future.

Think about fairness and keep clear records

Helping one child financially may be the right decision, but it can sometimes lead to misunderstandings if other family members feel they have been treated differently.

Before transferring any money, ask yourself one simple

question: is this a gift or a loan? While the distinction may seem obvious now, memories can fade and expectations can differ over time. Keeping a written record of any significant gifts or loans, including the amount, date and your intentions, can help avoid future uncertainty and ensure your wishes are clearly understood.

Fair does not always mean equal, but it is sensible to think about how lifetime gifts fit into your wider estate planning. If you intend a gift to be taken into account when your estate is eventually distributed, your Will may need updating to reflect your wishes.

Open conversations with family members can also help manage expectations and reduce the risk of disputes later on.

Make gifting part of your estate plan

Gifting should not be viewed in isolation. It should form part of a wider estate planning strategy that considers your Will, inheritance tax position and long-term financial security.

Taking advice before making substantial gifts can help ensure your generosity benefits your loved ones in the way you intended, while protecting your own interests and reducing the likelihood of complications for your family in the future.

If you are considering making a significant gift or would like advice on inheritance tax and estate planning, our Wills, Trusts and Probate team can help you make informed decisions that reflect your personal circumstances and wishes.

For further information or advice please contact Niamh Miniham, Partner in the Wills, Trusts and Probate team at Blaser Mills on 01628 962262 or email niamh.minihane@blasermills.co.uk.

Mayor's Message

Welcome to autumn

I am now three months into my term as Mayor, and I can report that it has already been a very busy but hugely enjoyable few months. It is a great honour to serve the people of Marlow in this role, and I am keen to encourage engagement with residents, local businesses and community organisations.

My year as Mayor began with the opening of Pub in the Park in Higginson Park on 14th May, alongside celebrity chef James Martin and drinks expert Andy Clarke. I was also officially "weighed in" as part of the ceremony for the Mayor of High Wycombe, Councillor Imran Hussain. This annual tradition dates back to 1678 and is repeated at the end of the Mayor's term to see whether the Mayor has been overindulging at the expense of the civic purse!



Being Mayor is certainly not a role to be carried out solely from behind a laptop. I have also been out meeting church and community leaders, as well as speaking with local hospitality and retail businesses. I am always listening, learning and looking for ways in which Marlow Town Council and I can support our local organisations and businesses, or effect introductions that can help them thrive.

I am also Chair of the Town Council and chair our public Town Council meetings, which take place six times a year. All residents are welcome to attend and ask questions or raise concerns, not just those relating to items on the published agenda. Residents are also welcome to contact me directly by email; you will find the email addresses for all councillors on the back page of this magazine or at marlow-tc.gov.uk/your-councillors.

Driving forward our new strategy to deliver tangible benefits for residents is a key priority for me. We currently have 15 projects underway across our four strategic themes: Care of Our Town, A Connected Community, Moving Around Marlow, and Optimising Assets & Investments. To find out more about these projects visit marlow-tc.gov.uk/our-vision. We provide progress updates at every Town Council meeting, alongside



verbal reports from our councillor colleagues at Buckinghamshire Council.

My chosen charity for this Mayoral year is Dementia Action Marlow (DAM), and we are close to announcing a full calendar of varied fundraising events. DAM is particularly close to my heart, as I cared for my father, who lived with dementia for 15 years. I therefore have first-hand experience of the challenges that this condition can bring to individuals and their families. Please do look out for details of our fundraising events, and bring along your friends and family to support this important local charity.

To donate visit marlow-tc.gov.uk/mayors-charity



I am very fortunate to work with a team of motivated and energetic councillors, and I would like to thank them, together with the Town Council office team, for their continued hard work and support.

Finally, while we are enjoying the sunshine, please remember that nature is struggling in the current drought. Please water trees where you can and check in on elderly or vulnerable neighbours. I look forward to meeting many more of you over the coming months and to making the most of this wonderful opportunity to serve Marlow.

Cllr Jennifer Simnett
Marlow Town Mayor

Town Council News

Autumn 2026

May Balfour Gardens has new gates

As the original gates at May Balfour were beyond economical repair, the Council commissioned a specialist contractor to create and install like-for-like replacements. The new gates are now in place, enhancing and protecting this beautiful little oasis in Marlow town centre.



Causeway Flagpole

The Causeway flagpole has undergone a comprehensive deep clean, and the entire pulley and rope system has

been replaced. This work forms part of the Council's commitment to preserving and maintaining this important piece of Marlow's heritage for future generations.

New Environment and Community Committee

The Environment & Community Committee supports the Council's priorities for environmental protection and community wellbeing by coordinating and overseeing projects that deliver the strategic themes of Care of Our Town and A Connected Community. Its role is to translate these priorities into practical action through working groups focused on initiatives such as river water testing, climate resilience, waste and litter reduction, welcoming new residents, volunteering, and democracy in schools. The Committee monitors progress, gathers evidence and consultation feedback where appropriate, and makes recommendations to the Council. The meeting's timetable can be found on the Council's website.

Care Of Our Town

New litter and waste initiatives

One of the strategic projects under the umbrella of Care of Our Town is focused on litter and waste. It is being driven by Councillors Emma Hawkins, Jenny Simnett and Olwen Elliott. The aim is to improve our town for residents, visitors and businesses with some new litter and waste initiatives.

We are looking again at intelligent or 'smart' waste bins. These bins are often solar powered and automatically crush the rubbish so have greater capacity. We would welcome any local business or organisation who is interested in sponsoring a smart bin to get in touch to find out more. Contact us at office@marlow-tc.gov.uk

Plastic takeaway cutlery was officially banned in 2023 but still used by some Marlow vendors. We are encouraging them to switch to wooden cutlery and some vendors have already made this change.

We will soon be meeting with Bucks Council Litter Enforcement team to explore how other towns in Buckinghamshire are dealing with litter and waste. Our wish is to bring any best practice to Marlow where feasible.

Have you noticed the new bins in Marlow? We are getting new covered top bins from Bucks Council which will be a staged rollout. This one has made an appearance by The

Prince of Wales pub. Also coming soon will be a High Street initiative to create awareness and build civic pride. Watch this space!

Finally, a big thank you to our Marlow Wombles who do a grand job in litter picking every week in all weathers.

Marlow Wombles are a social group who meet regularly in town. They go out alternate Mondays and Wednesdays for an hour and enjoy a drink afterwards in the Ark cafe. Look out for them with their hi-vis jackets.

If you are interested in joining, see the details on the noticeboard in the Ark cafe.



Air Quality Milestone

Marlow is no longer a polluted zone as nitrogen dioxide levels halve



Marlow has passed a clean air milestone after Buckinghamshire Council revoked its status as a polluted zone. This follows confirmation that nitrogen dioxide, an air pollutant that harms human health, has been below a national objective level for five straight years. In total, nitrogen dioxide in central Marlow fell by 47% from 2014 to 2024.

Nitrogen dioxide pollution is mainly caused by emissions from petrol and especially diesel vehicles. Levels have been a problem in central Marlow due to high numbers of road vehicles, including lorries and buses, in narrow, poorly-ventilated, historic streets. Marlow was declared an official Air Quality Management Area in 2017 after monitoring showed average annual nitrogen dioxide levels at several town-centre monitoring stations were above a national objective of 40 micrograms per cubic metre. However, levels declined every year from 2015, and in 2020 plummeted below the national objective at every monitoring station. By 2024, the latest year yet reported, the highest monitoring station reported 30 micrograms, while the average across all monitoring stations was 20 micrograms, just half the annual objective.

Further improvement in nitrogen dioxide is desirable: the UK national objective came from the EU, but post-Brexit Europe halved its legal limit to 20 micrograms. The World Health Organisation recently recommended an even stricter target of 10 micrograms to fully protect human health.

Fully 99% of the global population lives with nitrogen dioxide above this level, and half of people in England and Wales, according to the Royal College of Physicians.

The good news is that continued removal of older, dirtier vehicles, plus the transition to zero-exhaust-pollution electric vehicles means that the declining trend in nitrogen dioxide in Marlow is set to continue. Moreover, levels in residential areas outside the town centre are already close to the ambitious World Health guideline: a monitoring station just outside Marlow town centre reported an annual average of just 12 micrograms in 2024.

This is positive news for Marlow and it's hoped that this positive trend can be maintained.

Cllr Gary Nuttall
Marlow Town Council



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Marlow Town Cemetery

Making the best use of the cemetery's remaining capacity



Marlow Town Cemetery in Wethered Road is an important part of our community, providing a place where families can remember and visit loved ones and where future generations can be laid to rest.

The Town Council has recently reviewed the available burial space within the cemetery and has identified an estimated 50 grave spaces where full burials may still be possible. This is an important resource for our community, and we are keen to ensure that the cemetery continues to provide burial opportunities for local residents for as long as possible.

There are also currently ashes plots available within the designated ashes section of the cemetery. Once this area is full, the Council has the ability to make use of other suitable areas around the cemetery for the interment of ashes. This means that there is greater flexibility for cremated remains than there is for full burials.

Burial and interment fees

The Council's burial and interment fees are structured to give priority to our local community. The fees for the interment of a Marlow Town Council resident are significantly lower than those payable for someone who does not live within the Marlow Town Council boundary.

Residents of neighbouring parishes of Little Marlow and Marlow Bottom benefit from a preferential rate, recognising the close links between our communities.

Anyone considering a burial or interment should therefore check the current fees and eligibility with Marlow Town Council before making arrangements.

Could an existing grave have space available?

As part of our work to make the best use of the cemetery's remaining capacity, we are also asking families to consider the ownership of existing graves.

Some graves may have been purchased many years ago and may still have space available for a further burial. In some cases, however, the person recorded as the owner of the grave has since died.

Where this has happened, the Exclusive Right of Burial needs to be formally transferred to a living person before the grave can normally be used for a further interment or certain memorial works.

It is important to understand that the Exclusive Right of Burial is not the same as owning the land itself. The Council remains responsible for the cemetery land; the registered owner holds the legal right relating to the particular grave, including the right to authorise further

We are keen to ensure that the cemetery continues to provide burial opportunities for local residents for as long as possible

burials where space remains and to update the memorial (for the duration of the original 99-year lease).

Transferring a grave to a living relative

If the registered grave owner is still alive, transferring the Exclusive Right of Burial is a relatively straightforward process. The current owner can complete the appropriate transfer or assignment documentation provided by the Town Council.

We are particularly encouraging families to consider doing this while the current grave owner is still living, where appropriate. Dealing with a transfer during the owner's lifetime can avoid some of the additional legal and administrative complications that can arise after their death.

What happens if the grave owner has died?

This is where the process can become more complicated.

An Exclusive Right of Burial forms part of the deceased owner's estate, so the Council cannot simply transfer the grave to another family member because they are a relative or because they have possession of the grave deed. The person requesting the transfer needs to demonstrate that they are legally entitled to the right.

The documentation required will depend on the circumstances. For example:

If there is a Will and Probate has been granted, the Council will need to see the relevant probate document with official seal and will then deal with the transfer through the Executor or Executors.

If there is no Will but Letters of Administration have been granted, the relevant Grant of Letters of Administration will be required with supporting documentation.

In some circumstances where Probate or Letters of Administration have not been obtained, it may be possible to establish entitlement through a statutory declaration and supporting evidence such as copies of birth, marriage and death certificates.

Marlow Town Cemetery continued «

The original grave deed is important and should be retained safely.

Where there are several people who could potentially have an entitlement, further documentation or agreement between those entitled may be necessary.

For this reason, transferring a grave where the registered owner has died can sometimes be a complex legal process, particularly where the death occurred many years ago, the original paperwork cannot be found, the estate was never formally administered, or there are several potential beneficiaries. In some cases, where legal entitlement can't be proved by supporting documentation, a transfer of ownership cannot be undertaken.

Don't leave it until a funeral is arranged

We would encourage anyone who believes that a family grave may have unused space to contact the Town Council and check the cemetery records.

If the registered owner is deceased, it is particularly helpful to begin establishing the legal ownership well before the grave is needed. This gives the family and the Council time to locate the necessary records and documentation and, where necessary, complete the appropriate legal process.

The Council is keen to help families understand what is required and to identify graves that may still have capacity for future burials. This will help us make responsible use of the limited burial space available while ensuring that the rights of grave owners and their families are properly respected.

If you believe that your family has an existing grave in the cemetery, or you would like to check whether a grave has remaining burial capacity, please contact Marlow Town Council. We can check our cemetery records and explain what information and documentation will be needed to establish or transfer ownership.

Planning ahead can make things considerably easier for families at what can otherwise be a difficult time.

Planning ahead can make things considerably easier for families at what can be a difficult time





We all enjoy living in a welcoming, safe and attractive community. One important way we can help is by keeping our property boundaries well maintained. Overgrown hedges, trees, or vegetation that protrude onto public footpaths can quickly become a hazard – particularly for:

- People who are visually impaired
- Those who use walking aids
- Parents and carers pushing prams or pushchairs
- Children walking to school
- Cyclists on shared paths

When pathways are blocked or narrowed, it can force pedestrians into the road or make passing difficult. This not only causes inconvenience but can also put people at risk.

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

1. Check your boundaries regularly, look for hedges, bushes or tree branches encroaching onto footpaths or public spaces.
2. Be mindful of nesting birds between March and September as this is the main nesting season in the UK. Thorough checks should be made prior to any work carried out during the nesting season to ensure there are no nests present at the time and the young have fledged.
3. Trim overgrowth promptly, cutting back vegetation ensures paths remain clear and safe. Avoid using power tools during nesting season.
4. Dispose of cuttings responsibly, use your garden waste bin, compost, or take to your local recycling facility.

WHY MAINTAINING CLEAR BOUNDARIES MATTERS

- Improves safety for all pedestrians
- Helps those with mobility challenges or visual impairments
- Keeps our neighbourhood looking tidy and cared for
- Shows consideration for your neighbours and the wider community.

HOW TO REPORT AN ISSUE

To report overgrown vegetation please go to [fixmystreet.com](https://www.fixmystreet.com) and raise a report. Please include the location and upload pictures of the issue if possible.

fixmystreet.com is managed by Buckinghamshire Council who will alert Marlow Town Council to local issues that fall outside of their remit.

If an issue is sited in a location that is covered by our devolved services contract, our team will be out to address it. If the issue is found to be on private property, Marlow Town Council will contact the property owner and request action be taken within two weeks. A follow up notice will be issued if the property does not take action within the permitted period.

Should the issue remain unresolved with no communication from the the property owner setting a date for a resolution or providing a reasonable explanation for the delay, the Council will take the necessary steps to clear the obstruction and the property owner will be liable for the costs.

Let's all do our part to keep our paths safe, welcoming, and accessible for everyone. Thank you for helping to make our community a place of which we can all be proud.



Wild Marlow

Nobody is asking you to love insects

The natural world is held together by small things. This is about those things, writes
Natasha Somers

I have loved insects for as long as I can remember. The hoverfly hanging in the air. The iridescent armour of a ground beetle. A patterned hawk-moth. For me, the insect world is epic, endlessly various, quietly heroic, and almost entirely overlooked.

I know that is not everyone's experience, that's ok. But here is the thing. Almost everyone loves birds. Birds depend almost entirely on insects. No insects, no birds.

Maybe you would rather not think about insects - that is understandable. However it is worth knowing that these creatures are also the ones holding the natural world together. And they are disappearing.

Insect populations across the UK have declined dramatically. Insects pollinate our food, fertilise soil and feed birds. They are connective tissue of the living world, and we have spent the last century clearing them out of existence.

How are you feeling?

Nobody is asking you to love insects. Disliking insects is not a character flaw or a sign of ignorance. Research suggests that negative feelings toward them are mostly rooted as part of a biological system designed to protect us from infectious disease. Our ancestors who avoided them, survived. This fear, passed down through the generations, left a residual unease that flares up when something skitters across the kitchen floor or flies too close to our face.

If this is you, you are not being irrational. You are being human.

A lifetime of messaging

For generations we have been told that insects are pests. Walk down any garden centre aisle or supermarket cleaning section and the message is everywhere. It's big business.

Television and social media serve us the perfect garden as a weed-free, clipped, controlled space, keeping nature firmly on the other side of the fence. We have been quietly trained, for generations, to eliminate insects.



Photo: Annual Honesty (Lunaria annua) Quietway Boxes, Marlow – the orange-topped butterfly larvae eat this plant. Credit: Natasha Somers

Just pause

Next time you lift a pot and something scuttles. Just pause and be a little curious. What was that? Where is it going? What was it doing? You do not have to like what you are looking at. That moment of genuine attention to something small and unfamiliar, is where something quietly shifts.

The bird-insect connection

Everyone loves a robin and, like most of our native birds, they depend on insects.

Photo: Robin at work. Credit: Graham Parkinson, All Saints' Church



A typical robin brood will need feeding every twenty minutes from dawn to dusk - soft-bodied insects, small worms, beetle larvae. This continues for several weeks. Every one of those insects has to exist, so do the plants those insects live on. A garden of hard surfaces and treated soil provides no food for a robin, so it cannot live or breed.

Our urge to tidy is not a character flaw

The impulse to control our green spaces goes back a long way. Researchers have shown that humans carry an evolved preference for open, managed-looking landscapes. Environments where we can see threats, find food, and feel safe. The tidied garden triggers something deep in us that reads as order, care, control. We see an overgrown patch and our brain whispers "neglect".

It kept our ancestors alive, but now these practices are making green spaces into ecological deserts. The very instinct that once helped us survive is now, quietly and at enormous scale, making it harder for everything else to do the same.

Garden shaping, not clearing

The good news is that you do not have to choose between beauty and biodiversity, choose a different kind of beauty. Landscape ecologists confirm something gardeners have been discovering for themselves. People accept wildness, even appreciate it, when it is clearly intentional. A mown edge beside a patch of long grass or nettles surrounded by a low border, signals choice. Frame wildness, and people see it as a garden.

Habitats for insect populations can be in the most unexpected places. Move a plant pot and a whole small world scatters, you are looking at a functioning ecosystem. Insects and invertebrates do not need much.



Photo: The hazel fence helps us understand that this wildflower patch is an intentional action. One of three Living Circles added to Seymour Recreation Group, Marlow, by charity Pocket Wilding with the assistance of local groups and schools. Credit: Jo Budden.

They need edges, gaps, layers, a bit of shelter, a bit of darkness, something decomposing. These are the richest insect rooms.

A community challenge

Can we recognise, honestly and humbly, that we have been nudged towards neatness that the living world cannot afford?

Notice where you feel the pull to intervene - that patch of dandelions you reach to pull up, the long grass you feel compelled to cut, the seedheads you deadhead.

Just notice. You do not have to stop, but pause first and ask who benefits from the tidying. If the answer is only you, the cost is borne by the hoverflies, beetles and bees, then the robins, blue tits and the swifts bear that cost too.

Insects build the soils we farm, pollinate the plants we eat, and feed the birds we love. They do not need our enthusiasm. They need for us to get out of the way — not completely, but just enough.



Photo: Quietway Boxes, Marlow - By leaving the boxes till spring, insects like this beautiful lady bird can overwinter successfully. Credit: Natasha Somers

A messy corner, a standing seedhead, an unmoved strip: these are not signs of a neglected garden. They are, if you look closely enough, signs of a garden that is genuinely, improbably, magnificently alive. And somewhere above it, if you are lucky, a swift.

Swan Upping

The Deputy Mayor of Marlow joins the Swan Uppers on the River Thames

In the Mayor's absence, the Deputy Mayor of Marlow, Cllr Olwen Elliott was delighted to join the Royal Swan Marker, David Barber, and the Swan Uppers on Tuesday, 14th July, as they completed the Cookham to Marlow stage of the annual five-day Swan Upping census on the River Thames.

Taking part in one of the country's oldest continuing ceremonial events, the Deputy Mayor travelled on two superb traditional boats in the flotilla: from Cookham to Marlow Lock on White Wing, one of the Dunkirk Little Ships, and then to The Compleat Angler on Delphi.

Speaking after the event, the Deputy Mayor said: "It was a privilege to be part of such a fascinating tradition. Swan Upping is not only a wonderful spectacle but also an important opportunity to monitor our mute swan population, highlight the challenges they face and explain how we can help."

The Deputy Mayor joined the Swan Uppers at The Compleat Angler the following morning, where local school children heard about the history of Swan Upping and the conservation work that now underpins the annual event.

Each year, the Royal Swan Marker and the Swan Uppers travel from Sunbury to Abingdon in traditional rowing skiffs, wearing their distinctive scarlet ceremonial uniforms. Their role is to allocate cygnets either to the King or to the Vintners' or Dyers' Livery Companies, ring the young birds so they can be identified in future, and carry out a detailed census of the breeding success of



Photo credit: Jon Perry, Marlow Camera Club

the local mute swan population. Cygnets are counted, weighed and health-checked, while the condition of adult swans is also assessed. Any injured birds are treated by members of Swan Support who accompany the Swan Uppers on the river. Swan Support is a charity based in Bray, who will help any swan in difficulty, 24/7. They rely entirely on donations to do their valuable work - see www.swansupport.org.uk.

Marlow Town Council would like to extend their sincere thanks to the team at The Two Brewers pub for kindly hosting the reception for the Swan Uppers and councillors. Their warm hospitality, superb refreshments, and welcoming atmosphere were greatly appreciated by all in attendance.

Events

Swan Upping continued «



All photos on this page credit: Jason Clark



Photo: Jason Clark



All Saints' Church

Come along to hear David Hill's organ recital

We look forward to an organ concert at All Saints' Church Marlow on Friday, 16th October 2026 at 7.30pm by David Hill, who is one of the foremost concert organists and conductors of our day. David has a distinguished career, having been organ scholar at St John's College Cambridge, later Director of Music at Westminster Cathedral, Director at Winchester Cathedral, and also Director at his alma mater St John's College Cambridge. He has been Musical Director of the Bach Choir since 1988, and has been associated with many other choirs and orchestras throughout the world. His concert encompasses music by the principal composers for organ including Bach, Franck and Vierne, and also Florence Price, an unjustly neglected American composer. We are privileged to welcome David to Marlow.

In our instrument at All Saints' Church, we are fortunate in having one of the finest organs in Buckinghamshire. Built in 1876 by the renowned builder "Father" Henry Willis, probably reusing pipes from an older instrument, it has

survived with only a few minor modifications. Significant overhauls were undertaken in 1966 and 1996-97, and another may soon be necessary. It has three manuals, or keyboards, and a pedal-board played by the player's feet, with a wonderful range of tone colours, enabling it to play virtually the whole repertoire. In addition to what might be termed "organ tone", it has a range of stops (i.e. sets of pipes) which imitate orchestral instruments such as flute, clarinet, oboe and trumpet. It has about 1,000 pipes, ranging in size from just over 16 feet, capable of producing deep bass notes (organ pipes are in imperial lengths!) to a few inches for the very highest notes.



David Hill's recital will put the organ well and truly through its paces, exploring a wide range of styles. Please do come to hear him. Tickets (at £20 each) will be available from www.ticketsource.com, by calling **03336 663366**, and also at the door itself. Proceeds are to be divided between All Saints' Church and the All Saints' Church Music Trust, which has arranged the concert.



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Santa's Fun Run 2026

Event website now open to entrants. Book early and save money

The Rotary Clubs of Marlow are pleased to announce that the 2026 Marlow Santa's Fun Run celebrates 22 consecutive years on December 6th, and that the website is now open. The event takes place at 9.20am on Sunday, 6th of December - with entrants congregating at Higginson Park, Marlow, from 8am on the day. The organisers wish to remind potential entrants that:

- Entries booked BEFORE November 18th will be charged £22 for each adult and £11 for each young person (5-17 years - no charge for under 5 years). After this date the entry price increases to £30 per adult and £15.00 for each young person.
- The "Charity Pool" is set again at £15,000 (Any team entering and raising money for a favourite charity and raising £50 can secure an additional £50 for their charity. If a team raises over £500 the chosen charity will qualify for a further share of the "Charity Pool" (rules apply).
- Entrants can organise teams to raise money for their own favourite charities - or raise money for Rotary selected charities.

The £15,000 "Charity Pool" has been made possible because of the fantastic generosity of a number of local organisations - specifically The Shanly Foundation (lead sponsor), Softcat (core sponsor) and the Clare Foundation. A wide range of other sponsors, advertisers and other supporters also support the event.

All is explained on the website www.santasfunrun.org - and the event is ideal for families, friends, companies, clubs, schools, PTAs, Guide and Scout Groups, CASCs etc. Businesses in particular may choose to use the event to raise funds for their own in-house charity.

John Prout - Chair of the Marlow Santa's Fun Run organising committee - says "We are really excited about



the 2026 event. The Charity Pool was introduced in 2021 to incentivise teams to raise money for their own favourite charities - and with the help of key local organisations is set at £15,000 this year. 100% of this money goes to charities and CASCs chosen by entrants, and we encourage all local charities to think about entering a team. Whilst rules do apply we quite simply want to give this money away!"

He added: "Last year we sold out well before the event date and the 3,000 entrants collectively enabled over £106,000 to go to mainly local charities - we think we can go past £100,000 again this year."

Enter and find out more at www.santasfunrun.org

This year the two lead charities are Thames Hopsice and Bucks Mind. Both charities do some fantastic things to help people going through very difficult times. But as always, a host of other charities - mainly local - will also benefit from the proceeds of the run. As always Rotary distributes every single penny of the money raised from the Santa's Fun Run.



Let's Get Marlow Reading

How Great Marlow School's Reading Lead is championing the National Year of Reading in Marlow



This year marks the National Year of Reading, a nationwide celebration designed to reignite a love of books in young people and adults alike. At Great Marlow School (GMS), reading has always been at the heart of our culture – but this year, we've taken that commitment further than ever.

A school where reading thrives

As the school's Reading Lead and Library Manager, I see every day how reading transforms students' confidence, curiosity, and wellbeing. The research is clear: regular reading strengthens vocabulary, improves academic performance across all subjects, boosts empathy, and supports positive mental health. In a world where screens compete for attention, books offer something uniquely powerful – space to think, imagine, and connect.

GMS already has a strong reading identity. Every week, students enjoy dedicated class reader sessions in form time, giving them the chance to experience stories together and build shared cultural knowledge. Our book clubs for Key Stage 3 and Sixth Form continue to grow, offering lively discussion and a place for students to explore new genres.

To mark National Year of Reading, we've launched several new projects aimed at deepening our reading culture and strengthening connections across the school. One of the most exciting is our new Sixth Form Reading Ambassador programme, where Year 12 students buddy up with Key Stage 3 pupils to read together every week.

In a world where screens compete for attention, books offer something uniquely powerful – space to think, imagine, and connect.

Bringing reading to the wider Marlow community

Reading shouldn't stop at the school gates. That's why I'm passionate about getting the whole town involved. We already offer a community book club for staff, parents, and carers, creating a space for adults to connect through reading just as our students do.

I've also started up Let's Get Marlow Reading, a new Facebook group designed to share recommendations, celebrate local reading events, and bring book lovers together.

On Saturday, 27th June, I organised a community Book Swap event at All Saints Church Hall, where Marlow residents were invited to choose free books to kick start their summer reading, as well as bringing their own books to swap. It was a simple idea with a big impact – removing barriers to reading and giving stories a second life in new homes. A great selection of books from many different genres were available for children, teens and adults.



The National Year of Reading is more than a campaign; it's a reminder of the joy, comfort, and inspiration that books bring to our lives. And this is just the beginning. With the support of our students, families, and the wider Marlow community, we're turning 2026 into a year where stories truly bring us together.

Contributed by *Lisa Ben Haj Ali*

Library Manager & School Reading Lead, Great Marlow School

Marlow Society

Marlow's plaques tell the story of an extraordinary town



A stroll through Marlow's historic streets reveals more than attractive buildings and picturesque views – it uncovers the stories of the remarkable people who have helped shape the town's rich heritage.

Over the years, a series of commemorative plaques has been installed to celebrate the lives and achievements of individuals with maternal recognition and strong connections to Marlow. The plaques commemorate people from many different walks of life. Authors such as Mary Shelley, author of *Frankenstein* and poets, such as Nobel Laureate TS Eliot, are celebrated alongside



war heroes such as Basil Horsfall who was awarded the Victoria Cross in WW1. More than a dozen Marlovians are currently commemorated with a plaque in the town after providing a lasting or exceptional contribution to society.

Marlow Society has been instrumental in organising the latest addition which honours Jim Capaldi, the celebrated lyricist, drummer and co-founder of the rock band Traffic, who lived for many years at The Old Parsonage in Marlow. The plaque was unveiled on 2nd August by his wife, Aninha Capaldi, on what would have been his birthday and to mark the 21st anniversary of his death. Family, friends and distinguished guests, including Marlow Mayor Cllr Jenny Simnett, who delivered a short tribute to Jim and Steve Winwood, Jim's longtime friend and fellow Traffic founding member, gathered to celebrate his life and musical legacy.

The Marlow Society continues to research and celebrate the town's heritage, ensuring that these remarkable lives are remembered for future generations. I encourage everyone to spot the plaques around the town, pause for a moment, look a little closer, and appreciate the rich history hidden in plain sight.

Marlow WI

Come and join us. All ladies are welcome

In 1967 Marlow Common WI hosted their first monthly meeting at Bovingdon Green Village Hall where they thrived until 2009 when they moved to Liston Hall Marlow. Numbers were growing and it was becoming difficult to house all members comfortably and car parking was limited. The WI meets at 7.30pm on the third Thursday of each month at Liston Hall, Marlow, except August. Members can enjoy a guest speaker followed by refreshments in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere.



There are opportunities to participate in sub groups; for example, two Book Clubs, Science Group, Garden Visits, Writing



Group, Cinema Club, Theatre Visits, Games Afternoons. Every month a SOLO club enjoy Sunday lunch together at different venues in and outside of Marlow.

Come and join us – all ladies are welcome.

For further information, please email mcwipresident@gmail.com

Marlow Art & Crafts Society

Exhibition showcasing paintings and crafts by members



A recent study suggests that taking time to appreciate beautiful art can encourage abstract thinking and provide a welcome escape from the stresses of everyday life. We hope that everyone who visited our exhibition at the end of May experienced some of that feeling.

Held at Liston Hall, the exhibition brought together paintings and crafts created by our members, alongside work from guest exhibitors. With many visitors passing through the doors, the event was a great success. The friendly and supportive atmosphere of the exhibition reflected the spirit of our society, where artists of all abilities are encouraged to develop their creativity.

The exhibition also highlighted the continuing importance of local arts societies in encouraging creativity and bringing people together. Founded more than 65 years ago, our society continues to thrive, with over 100 members from the Marlow area. People join to explore their interest in art, learn new skills, share ideas and meet new friends.

The friendly and supportive atmosphere of the exhibition reflected the spirit of our society, where artists of all abilities are encouraged to develop their creativity.

It is also important to remember our history and our records provide a fascinating glimpse into the past. The minutes tell us that the first committee meeting was held on 13th January 1960 at The Chequers pub.

In 1962, following the AGM at The Fitzroy Club, the society's constitution was created. The Fitzroy Club had its own history, having once been a pub called The Fisherman's Retreat. Although the pub has since been demolished, its name lives on in the residential development now occupying the site.

From those early meetings to today's thriving membership and successful exhibitions, our society continues to bring people together through a shared love of art.



Our current activities have evolved considerably since those experienced at Bovingdon Green Village Hall. Today, Bovingdon Green Village Hall hosts five workshops each year, covering different subjects and artistic mediums, all at a very reasonable cost.

The society has certainly grown. In the early days, there were challenges attracting members and generating interest in the 'Monday Class'. Today, there is a waiting list for our two-hour tutored Monday sessions, with members bringing their own materials and paying a small tuition fee.

We also enjoy learning beyond our regular meetings. In April, a MACS-organised coach trip took us to London to visit The Courtauld Gallery, providing inspiration from the masters.

During summer, we paint en plein air, visiting different venues each week. There is no tuition — just creativity, conversation and fun.

Bringing like-minded people together makes for a happy and welcoming society, with plenty to enjoy in art and craft.

To find out more, visit us on Facebook

www.facebook.com/MarlowArtandCrafts

Or for membership enquiries via the contact form on our website: www.draftmacsnew.co.uk

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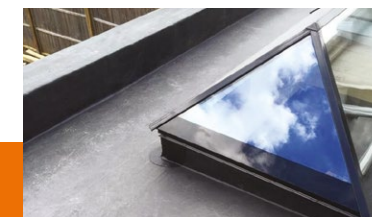
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Four Seasons Club

Meet new friends and socialise

The Friendly Four Seasons Club offers a warm welcome to local residents, providing an opportunity to meet new friends and socialise. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month (excluding January) from 9:30am onwards. Each month, we have a raffle, refreshments, a guest speaker, and a bring-and-buy book and puzzle table. The club prides itself on a varied programme of guest speakers. Recent guests for 2026 have included Nick Winton; his talk on his father, Sir



Cameo Club

Guests were treated to a summer tea party

On Wednesday, 29th July, Marlow's Cameo Club treated some 60 guests and members to a sumptuous summer tea party. This was the first event of its kind since Cameo's Christmas party on 17th December. During a heatwave, a well-ventilated Liston Hall, chilled white wine and other cold drinks, as well as music by pianist Greg Phillips, greeted the guests on arrival. With the guests happily settled, the club's hostesses served the food and drink. The event concluded with songs by the Cameo Singers.

"Cameo" is an acronym for "come and meet each other", and for more than 50 years, members of the club have been providing monthly lunches for elderly, housebound and lonely Marlow residents to enjoy - and to "meet each other".

Club Chair Mary Webster told the Marlovian "Our thanks are due to long-standing Marlow resident Mr Howden Ganley for his generous donation that covered the cost of this event. I should also commend our members who are cooks, hostesses, drivers and other helpers. Thanks to their efforts, we are now able to add afternoon teas to our annual lunch programme. We are planning to

Nicholas Winton, who helped to rescue children from Nazi Germany during the Second World War, was enthralling and moving. Ray Isted gave a very interesting talk on Cliveden House in June, the RNLi was August's topic, and we welcome back Tom Hartwell in October with his wonderful wildlife photography, just to name a few.

For several months of the year, members enjoy coach trips. This year's destinations have included Cambridge, St Albans, Tetbury and Chavenage House (where we had afternoon tea), Romsey, and Longacres Garden Centre. Future trips are planned for September, October, and November.

Holidays are enjoyed twice a year: members had a great time in May on the Isle of Wight, and a Turkey and Tinsel holiday to Harrogate is booked for November.

The Four Seasons is a popular and friendly group for both men and women. New members are always welcome to come along and join us at Liston Hall for a trial morning. For more information, please call **01628 485632**.



Aid for Ukraine

Donations can be made at Christ Church URC in Marlow

Since the start of the conflict in Ukraine in February 2022, Christ Church URC in Marlow, in partnership with Maidenhead URC, has been sending aid to Ukraine. To date, the group has organised and sent 19 lorries, packed with food, medical supplies, toiletries, clothing, power banks, lamps, Christmas gifts, and toys. The next lorry is being organised for September 2026. Aid is still very much needed, especially in the war-torn eastern regions. Working with Ewa, the group's partner in Poland, who drives the donations into Ukraine the group knows that their aid is going directly to where it is needed. Ewa lets the group know what is required, therefore only what is needed is sent. Donations are taken to a variety of

locations, mainly around Kherson, where soup kitchens run and where residents receive food parcels. Ewa has worked tirelessly in taking aid into Ukraine, often putting herself at risk in difficult situations when visiting hospitals, care homes, remote villages and shelters.

Marlow residents have been extremely generous with their donations – both goods and money. Whether it is a donation of two cans of beans, two packs of paracetamol or a cheque for £1,000, it all makes a difference to someone's life in Ukraine. Christ Church URC, Oxford Road, Marlow is open to receive donations on Fridays 10am-11am and on Sundays 4pm-5pm. A current list for donations is on the church's website.

Another way to help the Aid for Ukraine project is to come along to one of the fundraising concerts held in the church. The next one, by the Ukulele Mondays, is on Saturday, 10th October. Many thanks to Roy May and his band for their continued commitment to the project and for raising so much money to help the people of Ukraine.

Contributed by *Anne O'Hagan*

Aid for Ukraine team, Christ Church URC, Marlow



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Marlow Medical Group

Autumn update

There has been a great deal happening at Marlow Medical Group since our last update. Alongside improving our existing services, we are strengthening how we listen to patients, expanding the range of healthcare professionals available locally, investing in technology and making our services more accessible and inclusive.

Strengthening the patient voice

One of our most important developments has been the re-establishment of our Patient Voice Group (PVG).

The principle is simple: local healthcare should be shaped by the people who use it. The PVG provides an opportunity for patients to share their experiences, identify what matters to our communities and contribute to practical improvements in the way services are designed and delivered.

We want this to be a constructive, task-focused group that helps ensure the wider needs of our population are heard and reflected in our plans. We will also be engaging the PVG about building out a team of local volunteers to support with winter pressure vaccine clinics and help with different initiatives that will enhance the health of the population we serve.

Find out more: marlowdoctors.co.uk/about-us/patient-voice-group

A new primary care network for our communities

From the 1st September 2026, Marlow Medical Group, as the largest primary care provider in Buckinghamshire, will become a primary care network (PCN) contract holder, following approval by Thames Valley ICB.

This is an important development for our patients and local communities. Primary Care Networks bring together a wider range of health and care professionals, giving patients access to GPs, specialist nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, paramedics, social prescribing teams, health and wellbeing coaches, digital support and other services closer to home.

The principle is simple: the right support, from the right professional, at the right time.

As neighbourhood healthcare develops across the NHS, the focus is increasingly on keeping people well, identifying needs earlier and providing more joined-up support. This includes prevention, long-term condition management, medicines support, earlier cancer detection and enhanced care for people living in care homes.

For Marlow and our surrounding communities, becoming

a PCN creates an opportunity to broaden the range of services available locally, strengthen our healthcare workforce and develop more coordinated care around the needs of the people we serve.

Find out more: www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/neighbourhood-health-guidelines-2025-26

Using technology to improve patient care

Digital transformation is another important part of our improvement programme.

Our digital roadmap is focused on introducing technology where it can make a practical difference to patients and staff. Our next system will support the management of blood test requests, results and the follow-up care that may be required. Before implementation, the system is undergoing the necessary clinical safety and assurance processes.

We are also preparing for the introduction of digital care navigation. We recognise from patient feedback that the experience of contacting the practice, particularly by telephone, is not consistently at the standard we want to provide. Improving how patients access and navigate our services is therefore a priority.

Find out more: gp-patient.co.uk/patientexperience/results?code=K82023

Technology will not replace personal care; our objective is to use it to make access simpler, processes safer and our teams more responsive.

Making our practices more inclusive (SEND inspection)

Marlow Medical Group is also participating in a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) inspection with Buckinghamshire Council, becoming only the second GP practice in Buckinghamshire to do so.

This work is helping us look at our services and buildings through a different lens: how easy are they to understand, access and navigate for people with additional needs?

Changes under way include improvements to waiting-room layouts, quieter spaces, colour-zoned areas, artwork, signage, lighting and navigation around our buildings.

Further improvements will include clearer digital information in waiting rooms, a dedicated SEND section on our website and simpler, more accessible patient communications.

We are also exploring a filmed 360-degree guide to the

surgery, allowing people to familiarise themselves with the building before visiting.

These may appear to be small changes individually, but together they can make accessing healthcare less stressful and more inclusive.

Improving how we communicate

Our digital communications are also changing.

From September 2026, our current website will be replaced by our new Marlow Medical Group website:

www.marlowmedicalgroup.uk

The new site will support clearer information about our services and how to access them.

We are also currently recruiting to a number of roles as we continue to develop our workforce and services.

Marlow Medical Group has some career vacancies at present, please visit our website for more information on the roles available. www.marlowdoctors.co.uk/about-us/vacancies

We continue to run Apprenticeship schemes to develop those seeking professional qualifications once they leave school. This is through Inspiro Learning.

If local young people are interested, they should reach out to the apprenticeship recruitment advisor at www.inspirolearning.co.uk and quote the preferred place of Marlow Medical Group.



Marlow Medical Group continued

Supporting the next generation

Finally, we are delighted to be developing links with Great Marlow School during 2026/27.

We plan to provide healthcare-focused group sessions for sixth-form students, particularly those considering careers in health and care.

We will then look to develop structured work-experience opportunities for Year 10 students.

This is about more than introducing young people to healthcare careers. We want to help them understand the breadth and complexity of modern healthcare, the importance of making healthy choices and how to navigate health services confidently.

The students of today are the patients, professionals and community leaders of tomorrow. Investing time in their understanding of health is an investment in the future of our community.

Across all of these developments, our direction remains consistent: to listen more closely to our patients, improve access, broaden the care available locally and build services that respond to the changing needs of the communities we serve.

Contributed by *Joanna Fox MSc* (Group Director) and *Dr Avi Biswas* (Executive Partner)



Your Councillors



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Cllr Muryel Boulay

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Cllr Olwen Elliott

Deputy Mayor 2026-27

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Cllr Gary Nuttall

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Cllr Liz Riches

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Cllr Jennifer Simnett

Town Mayor 2026-27

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Cllr Jocelyn Towns

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