

South Marston Community News

Planting Roots at the Allotments

by Gill McNab



As a South Marston resident, I'd driven past the allotments many times over the years. I had dabbled at attempting to grow my own veg in the garden without success. The ground was clay and did not get enough sun.

I spotted an article in Community News declaring that nine new allotments had been created, from two large plots that had been given up, encouraging residents to think about taking one up. I mentioned it to my partner, Martin, and we thought we might just give it a go and become allotmenters. This is how we got on...

Continued overleaf

STOP PRESS

Old Vicarage Lane will be fully closed from the 11th of November

Initially for 3-4 weeks but then disruption throughout 2026

See page 5 for more details or visit www.southmarston.org.uk

We met with Barry Thunder who offered to us one of these new plots of a manageable size, something to make our own. Martin cracked on with making it habitable. Next step was to Google easy-to-grow, confidence-building stuff.

By the end of spring, our planting was going well and I had become curious as to how other allotments, less novice looking, were doing. There were those where I could see that the knowledge, consistency of attendance and patience had clearly paid off. Allotments with beautiful flowers, sheds with guttering to water butts, raised vegetable beds, fruit cages and greenhouses. I was learning it wasn't just all carrots and spuds.

So, what have been the benefits? Our own low-cost organic fruit and veg at peak nutritional value, no packaging and no air miles have to be top of the list but also enjoying physical and mental wellbeing. There's running water in troughs dotted around the site, and wood chippings and manure readily available.

And there's our fellow allotmenters, retirees with grandchildren sometimes in tow, couples, singletons and quite a few families. We've been able to seek advice and guidance, offered tools and building materials, seeds, spare plants and fruit and veg when there's just too much. The allotments offer community spirit at its best. As we end our first season, with just autumn veg left to pull, we're giving up our open and sunny novice plot for someone else to take up. Martin has dug it, sectioned it out, and it's ready to go.

We now have a bigger space, with an inherited shed and greenhouse. Martin is building a fruit cage and we are looking forward to becoming more knowledgeable and adventurous in our planting. Barry has been a tremendous help and support. He readily assists on the practical side and ensures that the allotments are maintained. We are very glad we responded to his article in Community News article, and I know he would be delighted if you, too, are keen to try growing your own.

Allotment Plots Available!

There are two vacant plots at our Allotment site. One is a starter plot with a rent for the first year of £25 and the other plot is slightly larger at £32 p.a., if the tenant lives in the village (£52 p.a. for an out-of-village tenant).

Please contact Barry at

barry.thunder@southmarston.org.uk.


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South Marston CE Primary School Update

by Marie Hendry, School Head

It's been a fantastic start to the new school year, with children settling back into routines and embracing a wide variety of exciting topics. We recently celebrated our annual Harvest Festival, which was a truly lovely occasion. The church was packed with families, friends and members of our local community who joined us in giving thanks and enjoying the children's songs, readings and artwork. It was wonderful to see everyone come together to mark this special time of year, a reminder of our strong and supportive school community.

This term, we're particularly proud to introduce our new Pupil Leaders. At the start of the academic year, children who wished to take on leadership roles wrote letters of application and took part in class votes — a wonderful opportunity to put the British value of democracy into action. The result is a team of enthusiastic and dedicated young leaders who are already making a difference around the school — 'future leaders of tomorrow' you could say!

Our School and Worship Councillors have been supporting daily routines, including helping to run a new healthy tuck shop, while our Librarians have taken great pride in caring for and organising the school library. House Captains have been lending a hand during playtimes, lunchtimes and sporting events, fostering teamwork and friendship across the year groups. Meanwhile, our newly formed Eco Council is working hard to make our school a greener, more environmentally friendly place.

These pupils wear their leadership badges with pride and embody the school's values of confidence, teamwork, perseverance and responsibility by encouraging one another and building each other up. Their commitment and enthusiasm are a true credit to the school community — and a wonderful example of young people learning to make a real difference.

A few quotes from our young leaders on their roles...

"I like to raise money to help those in need"

"I could help others in need"

"I like helping charities and giving food to those in need"

"I wanted to make the school a more green, friendly place".



Remembrance Day Services

St Mary Magdalene Church will be holding a Remembrance Service on Sunday, 9th of November, for the community to come together, reflect, and pay their respects.

The service will begin at 10am in the Church and continue at the War Memorial in the Village Garden for the 11am observance.

The recent professional cleaning of the War Memorial was completed in good time, ensuring it is looking its best for taking time to pause and remember the service and sacrifice of all those who have lost their lives as a result of conflict or terrorism.



South Marston Friendly Club

We would like to wish all our members a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

If you are over 50 years of age and live in the local community, we would be delighted to welcome you to our monthly meetings and activities in the village hall on the second Tuesday of every month.

PROGRAMME

Tuesday 11th Nov at 2pm

The History of Christmas & Wassailing. A talk by Robin Burton

Tuesday 9th Dec at 12 noon

Christmas Lunch at Wragg Barn Golf Club

Tuesday 13th Jan at 2pm

Social Afternoon with Bingo, Quiz & Mince Pies

For more information please contact
by email: smfriendlyclub@gmail.com or telephone: 828545.



by Colin McEwen

Road Closures

We were invited to an urgent meeting last week by the delivery team tasked with providing the infrastructure for the overall South Marston expansion.

We were dismayed to hear that, although they had expected to be able to install the utilities such as electricity and water without fully closing Old Vicarage Lane, this has not proved possible.



Work is planned to start on the 10/11th November on the stretch from the entrance to Magdalene Close down to the start of Manor Cottages, with the whole road width being excavated to considerable depth to carry the ducting necessary. The Breheny team anticipate the road will be fully closed for around 4 weeks.

It was rather alarming to hear that some significant aspects of this closure had either not been thought about or plans were not yet in place. We have asked for full details on how the impact is to be managed for those residents and services most affected at various stages of this work.

This is just the beginning. After Christmas, the road will be fully closed for possibly 5 months. First, excavation will move to the stretch down to Manor Cottages.

Following that, construction will move to the junction of OVL with the new road through the development site, Hammerman Way, just south of Rowborough Lane.

Finally, work switches to the new signalised junction with the A420 and is set to run into 2027. However, by late summer next year, it is anticipated that Hammerman Way will be open all traffic to provide an alternative route to enable all residents to reach the A420 without having to use Pound Corner and central village roads.

There is no doubt that delivering the provision of utilities to the new development is proving the most challenging of aspects for the developers in the build out of the expanded South Marston. We find it ironic that we first asked, without success, for a strategic plan for the utilities network as early as 2015.



The good news is that the Thornhill Road junction has been completed and the road reopened on time. The roundabout is designed to be big enough to slow down cars whilst HGVs going to the industrial estate can run over the block paved area.

20mph Zone

Swindon's Highway Dept. has indicated that the OVL 20mph zone will stretch to the northern end of Manor Cottages which will also be the extent of the street lighting. This is sensible as it will protect pedestrians crossing from the Taylor Wimpey parcels.

Local Plan

We have made extensive comments on the revisions to the Local Plan, which sets out the basis for Swindon's growth until 2042. See the South Marston website news item for more details. Our input aimed to continue and strengthen the current protections from which we have already benefited.

Dangerous trees

A tree survey we recently undertook has recommended immediate felling of trees on land by Ash Gardens adjacent to Thornhill Road. The cost will be around £3,000. If it were on PC-owned land, we would have no hesitation in doing so.

However, the land has no identifiable owner - it is 'orphan' land. Neither we nor the Borough have any legal responsibility for it or any damage that it may cause. Should we nonetheless use your money to remove the undoubted risk to vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians on Thornhill Road? Would this set an expensive precedent? It's up for decision at our November PC meeting.

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Update from Your Local Borough Councillors

Councillor Matthew Vallender

Crown Timber Site: Working with South Marston Parish Council, I am very pleased to have secured a commitment from Hartwell (the applicant), to undertake the footpath works on Thornhill Road at the same time as the site access improvements are made. This means we will have the missing footpath link very early in the development, rather than having to wait until first occupation of the Crown Timber houses.



Rural Verge Cutting and Weed Spraying: After months of pushing for this, we finally have sign off and the rural verge cuts began last month. The numerous residents across the village, who contacted me with their concerns, should begin to see changes, shortly. I know this has been a safety issue and very frustrating, however SBC has finally agreed to appoint an external contractor to do this work and revert to the old system of sight line cuts earlier in the year and full cuts later in the year. I'm also pleased to share that, after two years without weed spraying, SBC has now agreed to restart the programme. From November, the pavements to the north of the A420 will be treated, and then the outlying village areas. This will complement the work of Parish Councils.

Allotments Motion in the Council Chamber: I spoke up to defend our allotments and their community benefits, sending a strong message to developers that these planning obligations are not something on which to compromise.

Autumn Litter Picks: Thank you to Nigel, Anne, and Mandie for organising the autumn litter picks in the village – I was pleased to join in and do my part to help keep the village and rural verges tidy and free from litter.

As always, if there is ever anything I can help out with locally, please do not hesitate to get in touch using the details overpage. I also hold my ward surgery on the third Saturday of the month, 10am-12pm at the Community Coffee Morning in South Marston Village Hall. There are also bacon butties, cakes, and tea and coffee available for purchase to help raise money for the church!

Councillor Tom Butcher

I wanted to let you know that I have recently left the Labour Party and joined the Green Party. This was not a decision I made lightly.

When you elected me in May 2023, it was on a promise of change, something I still believe in. However, I feel that my values and aspirations are now more in line with those of the Green Party.



I feel that the Greens message is clear - we must deliver the social, economic, and environmental change that the country and our town so clearly and desperately needs, championing what is right and just.

I remain committed to representing South Marston and working hard for the improvements our community deserves.

With borough-wide elections just six months away, calling a by-election now would be an unnecessary cost to taxpayers, so I plan to stand as a Green candidate in May and hope to earn your continued support.

Kind regards,

Cllr Tom Butcher

**If any residents wish to raise any local issues with us,
please contact us on the details below - we are always happy to help.**

Cllr Matthew Vallender (Conservative), 01793 295171, MVallender@swindon.gov.uk,
Facebook - [@cllrmatthewvallender](https://www.facebook.com/cllrmatthewvallender)

Cllr Tom Butcher (Green), 07795 070254, TButcher@swindon.gov.uk

Cllr Simon Shelley (Labour), 07584 042161, SShelley@swindon.gov.uk



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Keeping our Church Bells Ringing

by Diane Whitford, Churchwarden

An enthusiastic crowd recently gathered in the Church belfry. For some, it was their first bell-ringing lesson, while others came along to offer help and support. We had an excellent teacher from the Swindon Bellringers, who explained the technicalities of bell ringing and soon had us all ringing a bell! We plan to hold weekly lessons on Wednesdays at 6.30pm. If you would like to join us, please get in touch.

Meanwhile our bells continue to ring on Sundays when we have services. They will also be ringing on Remembrance Sunday, 9th of November, and up to Christmas, beginning with our Christingle Service at 4pm on Sunday, 7th of December.

We are awaiting a final quote for updating our bells, but have been advised that the cost will be around £35,000. We hope to secure a grant to help towards reaching this target and are planning fundraising activities, starting with a quiz in the Village Hall in the new year. Details to follow in the January edition of Community News, along with information about other upcoming events.

We have been asked how donations can be made towards our bell fund, please use the QR code right (scroll down to St Mary Magdalene Church) or make a transfer directly to our bank account: PCC of South Marston, Sort Code: 40-43-35 Account Number: 01377027 Reference: Bell fund. Queries: dianewhitford@btinternet.com or 07964 460418.



Looking forward to Spring

South Marston and Stratton folks were blessed with blue skies and sunshine on a recent Saturday morning as they planted Spring bulbs in and around the Churchyard at St Mary Magdalene Church. We look forward to seeing the fruits of our labours next Spring.



Dear Friends,

Wow that was quick, it seems like only yesterday my children began their summer break from school: Yet in other ways it had lasted forever, especially perhaps for those with children just embarking on their school journey, the half days go on forever. There have been personal challenges that many of us have faced and world challenges that affect many of us. At the time of writing, a cease-fire has been agreed over Gaza and the living hostages returned. There is unrest around the issue of immigration and asylum seekers, protests have taken place outside of hotels and arrests made. I will be praying for peace, for it to continue for the people of Palestine, and for Ukraine, that peace will be found.



However quick or slow we experience time, one thing is sure, it passes. No one has ever achieved the means to stop time. For me, having lost my father in August, time has both stretched and shrank in equal measures! There have been new experiences, firsts, and some things that have stayed the same. I am mindful that in the last months so many will have been experiencing their firsts: first day at school, first day in a new class, a new school and that's just teachers! I mean the children of our communities as well. (Though of course we should remember our teachers, as I consider their job to be as much a calling as my own).

Time passes and although the future is the unknown we must continue to step into it no matter how daunting or scary it may be. If we hang onto the past we will not grow and learn, in fact if we keep holding on to the past then it can have a negative effect on us. Lot's wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt! I'm not expecting to see many salt statues in the high street, but how we accept change is something that's good for us all to be aware of. Good memories are important and revisiting them is beneficial for our emotional health, but the danger is, that we stop creating new ones.

This is especially poignant for me during this time of grief. While I mourn the loss of my father and look back over treasured memories it is easy to get stuck there and fail to go about creating any new memories.

The beauty is that our treasure box of memories never gets full as there is always room for more. When we look back, we can see how far we've come, we can see the new things that we took that tentative step into, and say 'I did it!' We may not yet be where we want to be, but we don't have to be where we were. Bring on November!

Blessings

Rev Elveen

Stratton Team Ministry

Seeking, Sharing and Serving God Together

Stratton Team Ministry will be conducting Sunday Morning services at South Marston St Mary Magdalene Church (unless otherwise stated)

9th of November	10am Remembrance Service	11am at the War Memorial
23rd of November	11am Holy Communion at <i>Coleview Community Centre</i>	
7th of December	4pm Christingle Service	
14th of December	9.30am Holy Communion	
19th of December	7pm Carols by Candlelight	
21st of December	11am Team Carol Service at <i>Coleview Community Centre</i>	
24th of December, Christmas Eve	5pm Crib Service	9pm Christmas Holy Communion
25th of December, Christmas Day	10am Holy Communion at <i>St Margaret's Church</i>	

Getting in touch

We are very happy to hear from you with any questions about the church, our timetable of services and events, or if you need support.

Church Office:

☎ 01793 826505

💻 stmchurchoffice020@gmail.com

www.strattonteamministry.co.uk

South Marston Churchwarden:

Diane Whitford ☎ 01793 824339

St Mary Magdalene is open daily and we welcome you to visit our pretty church.

St Mary Magdalene Church South Marston

Community Coffee Morning



Come and join us in the Village Hall for refreshments
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10-12

Every third Saturday in the month

Next dates:

15th of November

20th of December,

17th of January 2026

**Enquiries or for
table reservations
please call 01793 824339**



South Marston in Lights Event (SMILE)

by Hazel Andrews

As the festive season approaches, one of the highlights that truly brings our village, to life is the annual South Marston in Lights event.

Residents in the village are encouraged to decorate their homes with festive lights, creating a display that can be enjoyed by all of us! As in previous years, independent judges will hit the streets a week or two before Christmas for judging.

To ensure that every display is considered, for those of you living on quieter or less visible parts of the village please let me know if you have a display planned. I want to make sure that your creativity is seen by the judges.

What makes this competition special is its emphasis on community spirit. So there are no set categories. The judges will select the best four or five displays, with one standout winner receiving the title of 'Best display in the village'. Last years' winner pictured above right.

I am particularly grateful to the F & E Harris Memorial Trust for their generosity in providing a prizes fund for the winners' Christmas goodie bags.

After five joyful years of running this event, it will my last. I feel that it's time for someone new to take on the reins to keep the spirit of SMILE going.

If you're keen to take over the organisation of this event, please contact me at andrewshazel@yahoo.com, it would be so sad to see it go. Here's to another wonderful year of lights, laughter, and festive cheer in and around South Marston!



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Christmas Hamper Collection

For villagers who have registered for a hamper, collections will be on the 4th of December 2025 from 2-4 pm at The Carriers Arms, when Amanda will be serving hot drinks.

If you are unable to collect your hamper please let Robbie know before 5th of December to enable alternative arrangements. Tel: 01793 823757 or email robina.taylor@btinternet.com.

Any hamper not collected by Friday 27th of February 2026 will be returned to The F and E Harris Memorial Trust Funds.

Tots & Toddlers

We love welcoming new faces! Tots and Toddlers meets on Wednesdays during term time from 9am to 11am at South Marston Village Hall.

There's a small charge of £2.50 for up to two children (just 50p for each additional child), and we provide drinks and snacks. We can't wait to see you!



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Open Spaces in South Marston

by Barry Thunder

The final weeks of summer and the dry days of early autumn have allowed us to catch up on many of the tasks we had to complete.

With Justin, our Lengthsman, recently returning from his training courses with chain saw and weed spraying qualifications, he has been eager to operate his new skills.

From our village-wide tree report of Parish Council owned trees and those managed under a lease from other organisations, we have completed all the recommended felling of trees in high use public areas such as the recreation field and the Village Memorial Garden, and also removed branches overhanging roads and paths. More minor tasks included cutting outsections of ivy, where the continued growth would lead to long term damage to the tree from overweight branches.

We also maintain a watching brief on St Julian's Woodland, owned by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) and Oxleaze Wood, owned by Swindon Borough Council (SBC). In both of these woods, we cut the grass as well as manage overhanging branches and fell any damaged or diseased trees, but only up to a certain trunk width. Any bigger than this, and we call for help from WWT or SBC who have the additional skills for cutting the larger trees.

One of the more demanding tasks this summer was the removal of the two very large patches of brambles running along the end of the recreation field beside Magdalene Close. Justin tackled one with our brush cutter, and lots of patience, whilst the other larger section was removed by one of our Community Payback groups using hedge cutters, strimmers and several pairs of hands!



Well done to both. By the way, Justin will be spraying the new growth once it appears, to try and remove them from the area.

During Autumn, we are planning a joint working group activity in Oxleaze Wood with village volunteers and the construction company who are building the extension to the Bodleian Bookstore nearby on the Keypoint estate.

For anyone interested in more details on the above, please send an email to me at barry.thunder@southmarston.org.uk.

Smartening Up South Marston

by Jenny McEwen, Chair, SMRA

The new bus service took everyone by surprise, including South Marston Recreation Association (SMRA). Within days, comments were received with requests to have some seating put back in the bus shelter at the Village Hall.

We were able to respond immediately with 4 green chairs that usually only appear at the Summer Fete. Lionel Cave-Ayland has now fixed these in position in case anyone thought that throwing them into the road was a good idea, and we hope that this holds for the time being. He also removed ivy and cobwebs as well as giving the shelter a thorough brush out, so well done and thank you. It is now a warm and dry place to wait for our new and unexpected bus service.

The flower borders in the Rec adjacent to the paths around the play area suffered from the long, hot and dry summer, and not all of the plants survived the scorching weather. Newly planted trees also suffered, and even with frequent watering, we have had some casualties.

However, Lionel has been busy removing dead plants and generally tidying up. We are grateful to villagers who have donated plants and shrubs. Only a few years ago, these areas were a sea of nettles and brambles that caught the legs of anyone who passed by. As the cooler weather of autumn arrives, this new planting makes a lovely sight for those who come in from the Thornhill Road gate to walk the Rec paths.

The other area of planting in the village that is being improved is inside the allotments on the Highworth Road. Barry and Alison Thunder have put in many months of work this year. They have begged, maybe borrowed, and hopefully not actually stolen, plants for the long bank just inside the gate. This is set to make a colourful welcome for allotment holders and visitors alike.

Thank you again to all our volunteers, villagers and the Gardening Club for the donated plants. SMRA really appreciates the efforts in keeping our village looking good.



Well Done Winners!

Congratulations to our August, September and October winners from South Marston Recreation Association.



AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

£10. No. 1 Reg Kilfoyle
£10. No. 70 Mary Woodwards
£10. No. 15 Rosemary New
£10. No. 67 Stephen Hatherall
£30. No. 101 Vicki James
£10. No. 113 Carol Brickell
£10. No. 104 Adam Rudnick
£10. No. 84 Jodie Woolhouse
£10 No. 114 Lorraine Thomas

OCTOBER

£10 No. 92 Adam Rudnick
£10. No. 97 Richard Shovlar
£10. No. 109 Janet Cave-Ayland
£10 No. 62 Julian Allen

The 100 Club is an annual subscription of £12 with the chance of winning £10, £30 or £100. All profits are used to support the maintenance of the Recreation Ground and the Village Hall.

The SMRA would like to thank all the participants and Club collectors for their continued support especially in these difficult times.

If you are interested in supporting the SMRA, please contact Julie Hatherall on 07749211867 or Angela Newton on 07789068340 to obtain a number and participate in the monthly draw.

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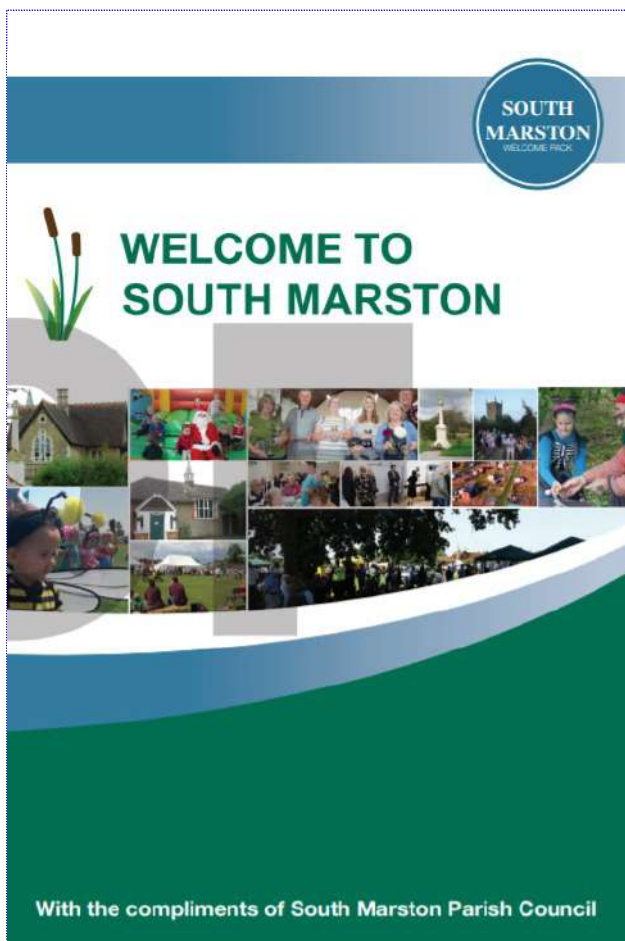
by Anne Featherstone and Harry Hudswell

You're invited to a guided cycle ride to Moredon's Sporting Hub on Saturday 15th of November leaving at 10am from the Rec car park. We expect to return approximately 1.30pm after enjoying the facilities there, including a pump track (photograph attached), coffee shop and more. The route there and back is mainly flat and on cycle ways.

You may prefer to meet us there and hire a bicycle. These are available, with a helmet, for £5, or you can meet us there with a scooter, tricycle, skateboard, etc.

Whatever your age and whatever the wheels you have, Moredon Sporting Hub, Cheney Manor, Swindon SN2 2QJ is a great place to ride safely.

Booking is required: Under 16s need to be accompanied by a responsible adult. An account needs to be set-up by the adult on letsride.co.uk; there's no need to join the Lets Ride Swindon group to book. Just log onto this ride then add the adult and child/ren. See poster on the next page for the QR code to book.



Village Welcome Pack

By Barry Thunder

Have you moved into South Marston Village within the last 6 weeks and not yet received a Welcome Pack?

Please send a request with your residential address by email to barry.thunder@southmarston.org.uk, and a copy will be delivered to your door.

The Welcome Pack, pictured left, provides a variety of information about what is available locally.

It also contains a local map showing places of interest and footpath routes, together with contact details for village clubs and local services.

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15 NOVEMBER

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SCAN ME

Season's Greetings

The Communications Working Group wishes all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We'll be back in 2026 with the January edition.

South Marston Gardening Club

Join us on Monday 1st of December, from 7.30pm to 9.30pm, in the Village Hall for our final meeting of the year. Come along for a fun, relaxed social evening filled with potluck food and a light-hearted quiz! It's a perfect opportunity to unwind, share a meal, and put your trivia skills to the test.

Everyone's welcome, whether you're a regular, or new to the group. Bring a team of six or come solo and we'll help you form a team on the night. A prize awaits the winning team, so get your thinking caps on!

- Buffet Supper - please bring a plate of food to share, sweet or savoury, and we'll create a delicious communal spread
- Drinks - first drink is included as well as tea and coffee, but feel free to bring your own tipples!
- Special Christmas Offer - Just £3 per person
- Optional raffle

2026 GARDENING CLUB MEETING DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 2nd of March 7.30pm to 9.30pm - AGM, followed by members only workshop, 'Potting up a small tub'

Monday 13th of April 7.30pm to 9.30pm - Talk by Rachel Golding Barrett 'A Flower Farmer's Year', with rooted Dahlia cuttings available to purchase

Monday 11th of May 7.30pm to 9.30pm - Talk by Ros Ford on the 'National Garden Scheme'

Monday 1st of June 7.30pm to 8.30pm Plant Sale

Monday 6th of July 7.30pm to 9.30pm - Talk by William Case on 'Lawn Care'

Friday 21st of August: 6pm to 7.30pm. Set up and Registration for the Annual Flower and Produce Show

Saturday 22nd of August: Annual Flower and Produce Show

Monday 7th of September 7.30pm to 9.30pm – Talk by David Usher on 'The Inspiring Life of Gertrude Jekyll'

Monday 5th of October 7.30pm to 9.30pm - Talk by Timothy Walker on 'In the Not so Bleak Midwinter – Making Your Garden Interesting in the Winter'

Monday 2nd of November: 7.30pm to 9.30pm – Members only Christmas wreath workshop

Monday 7th of December: 7.30pm to 9.30pm - Social Evening (with food and a quiz)

All our events are held in South Marston Village Hall, Old Vicarage Lane. Refreshments included – Optional raffle.

Annual Membership is only £15 or as a Visitor for £5 on the door. Please contact Angela on 07789068340 for more information on any of the above.



If anyone is digging up or dividing unwanted plants, the Gardening Club would be more than happy to come and collect them. We're always thinking ahead to next year's plant sale! We're also always on the lookout for small pots (first-size) to pot up our seedlings.

A Big Reveal

by Mandie, Nigel, Anne

The Autumn Litter Pick went ahead as planned on the 22nd of October. Seven volunteers cleared all the litter from Highworth Road and removed the Fly Tips that had landed there. This action coincided with the cutting of the grass verges. Litter free, grass cut, sun shining and a dazzling, autumnal, countryside scene was revealed.

The Village Centre and the Recreation Ground received similar attention and altogether we clocked up 9 hours of work and 12 bags of rubbish.

Between our Spring Litter Pick in March and this recent clean-up, we can reveal that 25 hours have been spent litter picking and 17 black bags filled.

We would like to thank everyone who gets involved in keeping South Marston tidy. A special mention to our Duke of Edinburgh youth volunteers.



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Pride of Swindon Awards

These awards celebrate individuals and teams who have made a positive and lasting impact on people, communities, and neighbourhoods across the Borough of Swindon. They were launched in 2008 by Swindon 105.5, Voluntary Action Swindon (VAS), and Swindon Borough Council (SBC). 2026 marks a return after 2022, with nominations now open, which close at 5pm on Friday 15th of December 2025.

Shirley Ludford, Station Manager of Swindon 105.5 and a founder of the awards, said: *"Each nomination tells a story and there are so many great stories to be shared and people to be recognised for their contribution to our community. Over the years there have been so many heartfelt and deserved nominations. I am delighted we are able to bring the Pride of Swindon Awards back."*

Pam Webb, Trustee of VAS, added: *"VAS is very proud to continue to support these awards, our objective is to help strengthen the Swindon Community and without all the amazing individuals and teams recognised through these awards it would be a much harder job!"*

Councillor Jim Robbins, Leader of SBC said: *"These awards are a true celebration of the incredible people who go above and beyond to make Swindon a better place for everyone."*

Plaques celebrating previous award winners are in Swindon Central Library. For more information and how to nominate please go to the page on the Swindon Borough Council website at www.swindon.gov.uk/prideofswindon.

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Useful Contacts

South Marston Parish Council: clerk@southmarston.org.uk 686150

Local Borough Councillors:

Matt Vallender 01793 295171, MVallender@swindon.gov.uk,

Tom Butcher 07795 070254, TButcher@swindon.gov.uk,

Simon Shelley, 07584 042161, SShelley@swindon.gov.uk

Wiltshire Police Community Support: PCSO Victoria Townsend, 101,
swindonnortheastruralnpt@wiltshire.police.uk

Neighbourhood Watch: martinhoffen@smsinternet.co.uk 823513

South Marston Church:

via Stratton Team Ministry 826505. **Church Warden:** Diane Whitford 824339.

Parochial Church Council (PCC): William Hiscocks, Michelle Giles

South Marston Church of England Primary School: 823379

SMRA: Julie Hatherall smrateam@gmail.com, Jenny McEwen 07770633362

Village Hall hire: Rachel Case on village.hall@smrateam.org.uk, 07545 923021

Tots and Toddlers: bethfairchildmartin@rocketmail.com

F&E Harris Memorial Trust: Robbie Taylor 823757

Gardening Club: Angela 07789068340, angelanewton01@gmail.com, Mike 827807

Friendly Club: smfriendlyclub@gmail.com Sheila on 828545

Facebook page (South Marston): Sharon editor@southmarston.org.uk

Swindon Dial a Ride: 521123

Swindon Streetsmart 445501 or streetsmart@swindon.gov.uk

Regular Village Events

- **Community Coffee Morning** - Every 3rd Saturday of the month at the Village Hall
- **Parish Council Meeting** - Every 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Village Hall
- **The Gardening Club** - From March to December every 1st Monday (2nd Monday if a Bank Holiday falls that month) in the Village Hall from 7.30-9.30pm
- **The Friendly Club** - 2nd Tuesday of every month in the Village Hall
- **Tots and Toddlers** - on Wednesdays during term time, 9-11am in the Village Hall

About Community News

South Marston Community News is produced by the Communications Working Group of South Marston Parish Council. Although funded by the Parish Council, the Editorial Board of Community News operates independently and aims to produce an impartial, community focused magazine of interest to all residents.

Produced in partnership with our printers, Orchard Press (www.Orchard-Press.co.uk).



**South Marston
Parish Council**



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