

South Marston Community News

Bye-Bye Wet Winter...Hello Sunny Spring!

by Barry Thunder



My main thoughts on working at the allotments and in our woodlands over the winter is one of rain and mud... but nevertheless it is also 'great to be outdoors'. Despite the rain, spring still has its magic when little shoots and early flowers appear. First with snowdrops and a little later the yellow of daffodils, they never fail to bring cheer (even amongst the mud).

Thanks to last year's funding from the 'Planting Trees for Climate Change' we are able to run 'some small tree pruning' courses. The first was on the 20th of February. Pictured above are the 12 villagers who were in attendance for an hour's theory and video presentation in the Village Hall, followed by a few hours of practical work on the apple and pear trees at the allotment site.

We are planning a similar course on a Friday or Saturday in June to look at pruning stoned fruit trees and our various deciduous parkland trees. It will be free to residents, along with a healthy cool drink and a biscuit or two. All we ask in return is that you help to support all our new trees, as we develop our new Village Centre and surrounding pathways and cycle tracks and other communal areas.

Continued overleaf

We also plan to run more volunteer activities in Oxleaze and St Julians Woods that will be planned as family activities for everyone to learn more about all that live in our woodlands.



We are welcoming three new allotment tenants to our ranks in February. Thanks to the great advert on Facebook made recently by our editor, Sharon. Currently, we do not have anyone on the waiting list, so if you're interested in joining us, please let me know!

Our allotments can also add some humour to our weeks. For example, when a meter inspector from Thames Water arrived on site asking to inspect our meter, because he was told it must be faulty as no readings had been recorded since the autumn, he was informed that we did not need to water over the autumn and winter months, so the supply had been turned off. Still puzzled by this, he wanted to turn it on again to check that it worked. He was accommodated with this request, though we swiftly ensured that it was turned off afterwards.

For those interested in any of the above, please contact me by email to barry.thunder@southmarston.org.uk.

Highworth and South Marston United Charities Funds

Having been in existence in various forms for over 150 years, they are still today able to support people of Highworth and South Marston who may find themselves in sudden financial difficulty. There are two funds available, outlined below.

The Relief of Need fund makes grants for items or services to assist residents who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress. The money available is limited and therefore any assistance given cannot be repeated later. Recently, this has helped a homeless couple with their rent deposit and contributed towards a new cooker when the old one was condemned.

The Educational Fund supports the education or training of residents who are under the age of 25 years, and with at least one parent resident in the area. The fund provides for special benefits not normally provided by the school or another institution. The money available is limited, and therefore any assistance given cannot be repeated later. Recently, a school received a grant towards educational materials not normally provided by the school, which contributed towards the cost of a school residential visit for one pupil and paid towards school uniform for another student.

If you or someone you know is in sudden distress, the Highworth and South Marston United Charities are here to help. Both charities share the same board of trustees and welcome enquiries all year round.

Application forms can be obtained from the Highworth Town Council office, or from the South Marston website at <https://southmarston.org.uk/information>. Alternatively, you can send a request to hucharity1944@gmail.com.

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!

Did You Have Your Say?

by Barry Thunder

With many developments and new activities in the village and surrounding areas, the 18th of February Have Your Say event was an opportunity to cover a wide range of residents' questions and concerns.

It also gave a first public airing of the proposals for the new Village Centre. These have been progressed by the developers during the last 6 months, together with interested residents, parish councillors, and other stakeholders.

Attendees had the chance to see the detailed plans of the proposed building and the surrounding Recreation Ground and high-grade football pitch, together with new access routes for cars, footpaths, cycleways and a bridleway. It all generated much interest and created many conversations and questions. We're now approaching the time when planning applications will be submitted, so look out for more opportunities to make your views known through the official channels.

There were also new images of the rain and storm water controls within the Panattoni site, together with views of the new footpath/cycleways and landscaping work along the banks of the streams and around the entire site.

For those interested in new cycling options, both within and around the village, there were plans on display of the many additional routes that will become available as the housing developments progress toward completion.



The contractors' representatives responsible for the roadworks along Old Vicarage Lane and for the new connector road that runs between OVL and Thornhill Road were all in great demand. They were able to answer the many questions and concerns raised. There are quite a few new issues for them to follow up on individual concerns.

Detailed plans were also on show for the planned 20 mph zones to be introduced onto village roads. Again, many of those attending were able to discuss the pros and cons of the proposals and ask questions on how these will be implemented.

In total, we counted some 69 attendees arriving between 4pm and 6.30pm, despite the rain. We thank you for your interest and questions.

The event was run in partnership with South Marston Recreation Association and South Marston Parish Council, with support from the Swindon Borough Council travel officer, and external developers, contractors and designers. Altogether a team of 15 people fronted displays on different topics and supported the event in different ways.

Thanks to all for taking the time and effort to make this event possible.

South Marston Friendly Club

If you are over 50 years of age and live in the local community, we would be delighted to welcome you to our meetings and activities in the Village Hall on the second Tuesday of every month. Meet new friends after with tea/coffee and biscuits.

PROGRAMME

Tuesday 10th Mar at 2pm

'Swindon Connections' by Graham Carter

A talk about well known and not so well known people

Tuesday 14th Apr at 2pm

'Fraud Squad/Cyber Crime'

What to look for to avoid being scammed or cheated

Tuesday 12th May at 2pm

'Mini Concerts' makes a return
with songs made famous by Doris Day

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



Parish Council News

by Colin McEwen

Making South Marston a Great Place to Live

The mission statement of the community's 2018 Neighbourhood Plan was a bold one, unrealistic to some. 8 years on and with parish and borough elections in May, how are we doing? You judge for yourselves, but it seems to me that whilst the developers' build phase is very difficult for us and a lot of residents, the overall prospects are good.

- A 20mph zone is finally a realistic prospect, paid for by the borough council.
- The new village hall will be much more than just a hall and will bring outreach medical services and a potential coffee shop, all providing a community focus for both present and new residents.
- The expanded Recreation Ground will have an FA standard pitch and changing rooms, with so much opportunity for other functions.
- The new housing is less dense than elsewhere in the New Eastern Villages, with properties commanding a premium valuation.
- Development work has reduced the risk of Old Vicarage Lane being flooded.
- We are surrounded by woodland and, with development, will come parkland walks along the brook and by the railway and a network of off-road cycleways.
- The Panattoni site will be opened for walking and cycling through to the A361, and there is a remarkable natural area around the former flood storage pond.
- The current Village Hall has been double-glazed and insulated, and is well used by local groups and provides a great place for children's parties.
- South Marston Recreation Association have provided a second-to-none children and toddlers play area.
- We now employ a lengthsman to supplement Lionel and the other volunteers who add extra to what can be achieved with maintenance contractors.
- Developer benefit money is being used to upgrade facilities and the F and E Harris Memorial Charity supports village initiatives and can give grants to local groups.
- Pubs. Hmm. Let's hope!

Commercial Break

We are currently 2 councillors short, and the forthcoming May election provides an opportunity for new blood to come forward. A nucleus of long-standing councillors carries out the donkey work associated with the development, but younger councillors to provide a fresh perspective and oversight would be very welcome. As Jenny and I found while working and raising a young family, time can be found to get involved. The reward is friendship and a sense of common purpose to shape our surroundings, enabling our community to become a great place to live. If you are interested, why not talk to a councillor or contact our clerk, Kevin Morgan: clerk@southmarston.org.uk.

What Do Councillors Do?

Monthly meetings, open to the public, to organise and finance support and improvement of village infrastructure. The role of councillors is both forward planning and to react to issues being raised in the parish. Flood risk may provide a good example, with individual councillors taking on different roles according to their availability and experience.

- Surface water collection and disposal are always fully explored and critiqued in our responses to any planning applications and design proposals submitted to Swindon Borough Council planning by developers, before and during their buildout.
- On-site monitoring of flood risk areas in the village after heavy rain.
- Emergency engagement with onsite contractors when contacted by a resident.
- Initiating contact with developers/organising specific meetings on site to discuss major problems arising.

Development, Construction

Vehicles and Mud

Both we and Matt Vallender have built a working relationship with the various developers and the large range of different onsite contractors. This hasn't solved the problems associated with groundworks taking place around many existing dwellings, in particular during the wet weather. Issues arising from our own monitoring or raised with us by individual residents are continually being investigated and addressed on a daily basis, but timetables change at short notice, and the situation is very far from satisfactory.



We continue to respond to the developers' planning applications, which now extend into Rowborough. They are currently timetabling last occupation there by end 2032.

Parish Precept Increase for 2026-27

Every year, a very small portion of the council tax paid by residents goes to the Parish Council as a precept to support its work, which includes maintaining village facilities and managing the upkeep of the village surroundings.

A parish precept increase of 6% was agreed for the coming year, equivalent to just £10 a year for a typical Band D household in South Marston.

The Parish Council will continue to run a deficit budget from April in the expectation of the increased precept coming in from the new development in a couple of years' time, but we must be careful, as the timing for this isn't guaranteed.

All parishes in Swindon have published their parish precepts, with a range from minimal increase to over 25%. Most of the rural parishes are requesting increases that are higher than the average because they are disproportionately affected by the withdrawal of borough council maintenance services such as cutting hedges and verges and road sweeping and clearance. In our case, we plan to fund the additional work, but how we do it is equally important.

Some of our regular volunteers, Lionel, for instance, are stepping back from volunteer work, and the visits from the Probation Service Team, which used to be a source of labour, are less frequent.

To counter this, we now employ a part-time lengthsman, Justin, to do various jobs around the village and to take on some of our maintenance contractors' work at a significant saving. The photo below is of Lionel and Justin pollarding trees at the Recreation Ground.



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South Marston Recreation Association

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 10th March in the Village Hall at 7pm

So much change is happening. What would you like to see on the Rec and in the Hall?

All residents are SMRA members and will be warmly welcomed at the AGM.

Come and hear what we've been doing, ask questions and offer ideas on plans and priorities for the coming years.

Ward and Parish Elections

by Kevin Morgan, Parish Clerk

It's all change on May 6th this year.

Swindon Borough is moving to 'all out' Borough Councillor elections held just once every 4 years instead of electing 1/3rd of Councillors every year. South Marston will no longer be part of large Stratton St Margaret Ward, but will become a separate Borough ward, electing just one councillor.

South Marston Parish Councillors will also be up for election on May 6th.

How to Vote

You must be on the Swindon electoral register.

You can vote in three different ways – in person, by post, or by proxy.

- **For those voting in person**, you will need to have with you photo ID information, for instance, passport, driving licence or blue badge, bus pass. Check the Swindon website for a full list.
- **Postal voting** – your right to a postal vote now only lasts 3 years, so make sure it is up to date. Apply for a postal vote online at the GOV.UK website or use the downloadable form and send/deliver it to Swindon Borough Council.
- **Proxy voting** – complete an application form available from Electoral Services at Swindon Borough.

If you wish to stand in either Parish or Borough elections, nomination papers have to be submitted between 23rd March and 9th April 2026. Contact electoral services in Swindon Borough Council for more details.

If you'd like more general information about being a Parish Councillor contact Kevin, the Parish Clerk at clerk@southmarston.org.uk.



South Marston Recreation Association

*by Jenny McEwen,
Chair SMRA*

The very wet winter has played havoc with the football matches, but a lovely spring morning gave the opportunity to do some work on the Rec.

Trees inside the Thornhill Road gate have been pollarded by Justin and Zak, and some of the pruning was used by Lionel to fill in gaps in the hedge.

It took well over a year, and much blood, sweat and tears to get the toddler roundabout working again. Lionel and Lee deserve a medal for determination in not being beaten, and the roundabout should now last for another 20 years!

The Village Hall front door, now over 100 years old, is more filler than wood. Lionel and others are hatching a plan to nurse it through the next year or so until the new Community Centre is completed. The wet weather has made the door very difficult to lock and unlock, and none of us will miss the frequent wrangling with the mechanism.

Plans are already in place for this summer's Party in the Park, to be held on Saturday July 25th.

We were delighted that Andrew Liddiard joined the SMRA committee during 2025, and we would be very pleased to welcome others who are interested in helping to look after the Rec and Village Hall.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday March 10th at 7pm in the Village Hall. Please come and ask any questions or offer any ideas for what you would like to see at the Rec or Hall.



Revamps at Roves Farm

by Keeley Lally

There have been some exciting developments recently here at Roves Farm, with more expansion planned throughout this year. The first of several planned improvements were completed in November last year, when our Farm Shop & Butchery was doubled in size. This has enabled us to stock even more locally sourced, artisan produce. We can now offer even more Roves meat products to keep up with demand for our home-raised meats and handmade pies, deli items and ready meals.

Alongside the farm shop changes, we have also completed an extension to create our new seating barn area, 'The Shepherd's Rest', pictured right. Here you can enjoy a barista drink and bite to eat, away from the hubbub of the main barn, as it's open to over 16's only. With relaxed seating and lots of comfy chairs and tables, it's proving a popular spot with our farm shop and café customers. Canine companions are welcome too!

The next project now underway is 'Puddle Duck Barn', a purpose-built barn that will be home to an amazing indoor play space, featuring a huge water pillow, electric ride-on tractors with an interactive track to drive around, pedal tractors and more to be revealed.

The original barn, which was the heart of the visitor centre at the time, burnt down in an electrical fire in 2012. So, it's taken a while to get to a position where we can rebuild bigger and better than before.

We can't wait to share this new addition to Roves with our visitors later this year.



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South Marston Gardening Club

by Angela Newton

Why not join the Gardening Club? We're always keen to welcome new members to help grow our community and bring people together. Membership is just £15 per year, or £5 on the night for a one-off event. You'll be assured of a warm welcome, plus tea or coffee and a delicious slice of homemade cake. For more information, come along to one of our events or call Angela on 07789068340.

We're always grateful for donations of small (first-size) pots, as well as spare plants. If you're rearranging your garden or dividing perennials, we would love to bring them on and give them a new home. Please contact Angela or leave them outside the door at the Village Hall if you're passing.

Monday 13th of April 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Rachel Golding Barrett - 'A Flower Farmer's Year'. Rachel will also be bringing dahlia plants for sale.

In this informative and relaxed talk, Rachel will take you through a year on a working flower farm, from the first sowings of spring to the abundance of summer and autumn and the winter clear up. Along the way she will share practical growing tips, site and bed preparation and seasonal insights, as well as a glimpse behind the scenes of preparing plants and displays for Royal Horticultural Society shows such as RHS Malvern and RHS Chelsea. Throughout, she will offer plenty of encouragement for anyone interested in growing cut flowers at home.

Rachel Golding Barrett runs The Tetbury Flower Company, a flower farm in the South Cotswolds growing British seasonal cut flowers. Energised by unprecedented demand for British flowers, the business has grown into a busy flower farm producing spring tulips, summer cut flowers and thousands of dahlias each year for cutting, plant sales, events and RHS shows. Rachel is an RHS medal winner, and alongside growing and propagating dahlia plants on her nursery, she hosts 'Cut Your Own' days and flower workshops, and writes a weekly publication, the Dahlia Diaries, which has now attracted a global readership. She is passionate about sharing practical, down-to-earth growing advice and encouraging others to grow cut flowers at home, whether they have a large garden or just a few pots.

Monday 11th of May 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Ros Ford 'Beyond the Garden Gate'

We are delighted to welcome Ros Ford from the National Garden Scheme. The NGS is renowned for opening some of the country's most beautiful private gardens, raising millions of pounds each year for nursing and health charities.



In her talk, 'Beyond the Garden Gate', Ros will explore how the National Garden Scheme began, how it operates today, and how the money raised through garden openings is used. She will also highlight some of the wonderful Wiltshire gardens that open in support of the charity.

Ros is the County Organiser for Wiltshire, supporting the gardens that participate in the scheme across the county. An experienced and passionate gardener, she has created a two-acre garden at Tristenagh House, Potterne, over the past 25 years. Her garden opens for the NGS by appointment during the year.

Join us for what promises to be an inspiring and informative evening - not just for gardening enthusiasts, but for anyone interested in beautiful gardens and supporting worthwhile causes.

Save the Dates

- **Monday 1st of June**
Plant Sale
- **Saturday 22nd of August**
Annual Flower and Produce Show

All meetings are held at South Marston Village Hall, Old Vicarage Lane, SN3 4SN.

Acupuncture

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Friday 13th at Panattoni

by Nigel Hole

This was a site visit to check on how the water management system is working in practice. Colin McEwen, Matt Vallender and I got to meet the two engineers who had to come up with a water management design when commissioned by Panattoni. The first point of interest was that they started by looking at the lie of the land before the airfield was even there. Because nature and water being what it is, it will always try to get back to where it was so their design has tried to build that original flow back in.

Going west to east across the site, the land carries water from Kingsdown Brook down a beautifully landscaped waterway with £m's spent on planting, picnic benches and wildlife accommodations eventually it joins up with South Marston Brook and comes down through the village.



It may look like attractive parkland, but it has a job to do, and that's to manage the flow of water while it's on the site and balance its controlled exit into our brook. It starts with the collection of rainwater off the warehouse roof and into an underground storage pond for each building. This gets slowly released into the main system. The landscaped water channel across the site is actually a reservoir in its own right, and in the photos you can see the two structures built in at each end to limit the flow coming on to site and then before it leaves the site.

The old Honda site was designed to cope with 72cm³ of rainfall; the revised standard will rise to 90cm². This plan had to be built to laid-down specs from the LLFA (Local Lead Flood Authority) and the EA (Environment Agency) who approved the design as capable of coping with a one in a hundred-year flood event.

It took rejection, extensive fine-tuning and revision to finally get approval from those authorities which held up the project in the interim for over a year.



So far so good.

However, these systems all rely on an appropriate inspection and maintenance regime.

As yet, Panattoni do not seem to have one.

Consequently, the slit in the retaining wall of the northern lagoon serving the Panattoni site has become jammed with debris and is not releasing water as it should.

This means that the lagoon is not emptying fully and has reduced capacity for the next rain event. See the photo on the right,

We are taking this up with the site manager!



Update from Your Local Borough Councillor

by Matthew Vallender



Reporting Back from January's Full Council Meeting: I spoke in support of the motion on school place planning - I am particularly concerned by the Government's cancellation of the Free Schools Programme and the impacts this has for the New Eastern Villages. I also spoke in favour of the motion on socially necessary bus routes, highlighting the work I have done in South Marston to bring back a bus service for the first time in 10 years and how important it is to find a way of preserving bus routes in rural communities. Also I spoke on the fly-tipping crackdown motion and my work as a local councillor to raise fly-tipping incidents and press for Swindon Borough Council to take stronger enforcement action. I was pleased to vote in favour of the motion calling for daily direct trains between Swindon and Oxford and I proudly supported Swindon Conservatives' plans for a second hospital in Swindon, and begin the evidence gathering exercise. Finally, I tabled questions to cabinet members on Borough/Parish joint working, and the Decarbonisation Framework.

20mph Zone Consultation: I'm really pleased to see the plans in the village have progressed to the legal consultation stage, which is the final stage (now closed) before it gets installed. There is now a two-year deadline on installing the zone and confirming everything, so we are looking at March 2028 at the latest. I'm also glad to see that Swindon Borough Council Highways has taken my suggestion and residents' feedback on board and extended the zone slightly to include all the housing on Thornhill Road and Highworth Road up to the allotments, to make better use of existing signage and chicanes. I appreciate the concerns about The Bends not being included at this time, and I will campaign for this extension once the zone is in place.

Panattoni Visit: Following the heavy rainfall we saw in mid-November, which led to Highworth Road flooding, myself and South Marston Parish Council have now met with Panattoni to discuss the issues upstream of the village. We'll be able to share further updates in the coming months as we work through everything.

Update on Basin A Concerns (opposite The Carpenters Arms): We wrote to the developers to raise residents' concerns on Basin A and the water levels. Their response is that while Basin A was built last year, the downstream drainage connection, including the pipe under Old Vicarage Lane, has not yet been constructed, so runoff currently enters Basin A with no permanent outlet. In the meantime, they are treating silty water and pumping it into the existing OVL ditch at a reduced rate (below the designed max flow) and using tankers daily to manage high water levels during wet weather, while avoiding surcharging the ditch and flooding the road. They plan to build the rest of the OVL drainage later this year.

South Marston Primary School Visit: I had a lovely afternoon visit to Silver Birch class for a Q&A session on local issues after their persuasive letter writing campaign in December to save the old oak tree on the Rec. Thank you to Mrs Jones for organising and everyone in Silver Birch class for their excellent questions and caring about our village so much!

Volunteer Opportunities at Swindon Supermarine FC: SSFC are looking for volunteers to help our local community club on first team matchdays (car park attendants, pitch maintenance, and general stewarding). You'll get free entry to every home game in return. Please email footballsecretary@supermarinefc.com if interested.

As always, if there is ever anything I can help out with locally, please do not hesitate to get in touch using the details below. 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!

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 Party), 07795 070254, TButcher@swindon.gov.uk

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

Well Done Winners!

Congratulations from South Marston Recreation Association to our JANUARY and FEBRUARY winners.



JANUARY

£10 No. 18 Kirsty Maundy
£10 No. 35 Derek Oxby
£10 No. 41 Peter Withers
£10 No. 58 Richard Sansum

FEBRUARY

£10 No. 17 David Bickley
£10 No. 46 Louise Field
£10 No. 83 Mary Case
£10 No. 64 Lyn Flitton

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.

Dear Friends,

'An unexamined life is not worth living' is a statement attributed to Socrates. To turn this around into a more positive saying, we can benefit from taking time to examine our lives and ourselves.

Whatever we believe, Lent can be a time when we take stock, take a look at ourselves, and review how we are living – just as we review our income & outgoings, and make adjustments to balance the budget; or when spring is in the air, we do some spring cleaning. New Year's resolutions made on January 1st famously don't last long in many cases – springtime with its signs of new life – and even a little sunshine! – seems to me a better time to think about new starts.

As a Christian, I believe that God longs for each of us to become more fully ourselves, to grow more and more into the people God created us to be. And so, we need to spend time doing things that feed our souls.

What are the practices that lift your spirits? That make you feel really alive? Maybe you love walking, or gardening – when it's not raining! Maybe you love listening to music, or reading poetry, or listening to a podcast. Maybe you love being creative. Or perhaps having a good natter with an old friend is what makes you feel complete.

Are you making time for these things? If your life situation makes it hard to do one thing you love, could you explore some other activity?

For Christians, Lent is a time for reflection: for preparing for the celebration of Easter, for reviewing our relationship with God – including how we pray. If that's something you wish to explore, many resources exist, including the free 'Everyday Faith' app from the Church of England – it's available here: www.churchofengland.org/fait-life/what-we-believe/lent-holy-week-and-easter/sign-draw-near-god-lent-reflections.

Rev Charlotte

Curate, Stratton Team Ministry



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)

8th March	9.30am Holy Communion
15th March	10am Team Service at St Mary Magdalene Church
29th March	10am Team Service at St Margaret's Church
5th April	8am Easter Morning Holy Communion
12th April	10am All Age Worship "In case you missed it"
19th April	10am Team Service at St Leonard's Church
26th April	10:30am Team Service at Stratton Methodist Church
4th May	10am All Age Worship "In my father's house..."
11th May	9:30am Holy Communion

Getting in touch

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

Church Office:

☎ 01793 826505

💻 stmchurchoffice020@gmail.com

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



10-12

Every third Saturday in the month

Next dates:

21st of March, 18th of April

**Enquiries or for table
reservations please call**

01793 824339

Come and join us in the Village Hall for refreshments
(including bacon butties and delicious cakes)

We have received some generous donations towards our bell fund which are very much appreciated. We also have a new bell ringer this month and our class that began last November has progressed to playing with far more experienced ringers. You will hear them ringing for our 8am Holy communion Service on Easter Sunday.



★ ★ QUIZ NIGHT

Raising Funds for South Marston
Church Bells

Quiz with a Ploughman's Supper

A fund raising quiz with a ploughman's supper
of bread, cheese, pate, celery, tomatoes,
pickles, chutney and butter

Saturday 28th March 2026
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SN3 4SH

7pm doors open for 7:30pm
start

6 players per
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The F and E Harris Memorial Trust

Annual Summer Trip to Stratford-upon-Avon

Wednesday 1st of July

Attractions include:

- Cruises and boat tours
- Ghost and vampire tours
- Walking tours
- Hop on hop off tours
- Tudor world museum
- Shakespeare's schoolroom

The coach will depart from outside The Carriers Arms at 9am, and leave Stratford-upon-Avon at 4.30pm. Free for senior citizens of South Marston aged 60 or over.

If you would like to go on this trip please contact Robbie, and if you need to be accompanied by a carer, or take a wheelchair, please let her know. Telephone 01793 823757 or email robina.taylor@btinternet.com.

BARNES COACHES

Easter day trips, by coach!



 Weald & Downland Museum (Home of The Repair Shop) Mon 30th March 2026 Adult: £50* Child: £25*	 Black Country Living Museum Tue 31st March 2026 Adult: £56* Child: £30*	 Weymouth Tue 31st March 2026 Adult: £32 Child: £15	 The Tank Museum Wed 1st April 2026 Adult: £30 Child: £15 coach only	 Portsmouth OR Southsea Wed 1st April 2026 Adult: £32 Child: £15	 Bletchley Park: Home of The Codebreakers Thu 2nd April 2026 Adult: £55* Child: £34*
 Kensington Palace Thu 2nd April 2026 Adult: £56* Child: £27*	 London Eye & Thames Cruise Tue 7th April 2026 Adult: £71* Child: £48*	 Longleat Safari Park Wed 8th April 2026 Adult: £71* Child: £48*	 Legoland Windsor Thu 9th April 2026 Adult: £65* Child: £51*	 Hampton Court Palace Sun 12th April 2026 Adult: £58* Child: £30*	 Warwick Castle Sat 18th April 2026 Adult: £54* Child: £39*

01793 821303
barnescoaches.co.uk

**TOURS MARKED WITH AN *
INCLUDE ADMISSION TICKETS!**

View more trips on our website!



Useful Contacts

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

Local Borough Councillors:

Matthew 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

Via Stratton Team Ministry 826505, **Church Warden** Diane Whitford 824339.

Parochial Church Council (PPC): 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).



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