

South Marston Community News

What's its Name?

by Barry Thunder



This rather unusual artefact is one of 4 large steel grids that are being re-purposed at the South Marston allotments. The grids were discovered during work we were doing to clear debris in the Brook close to St. Julian's as reported in our Open Space article on page 10.

They are in fact, a relic of South Marston's World War II heritage. The perforated steel matting was developed by the United States shortly before World War II and used for rapid construction of temporary runways and landing strips.

South Marston residents may know that Thornhill Industrial Estate was part of a centre, during the war, for constructing Vickers/Supermarine company aircraft, with the airfield and runways being on the ex-Honda land. Two runways still existed until the Honda factory closed, though not used for their original purpose, and they can be seen on most photographs and maps of the site up to the time Panattoni Park began its recent redevelopment.

The 4 grids still carry their trademark name which is actually an amazing coincidence. If you want to know what the name was, read our Open Space article.

Rapid Repairs to the Rec Football Pitch

by Sylvia Brown



Just over a month ago, the village experienced something extraordinary as a result of the developers' lack of awareness that South Marston is a living, working village, not just their building site.

Contractors were commissioned to do work required ahead of the new Village Centre planning application being assembled, but some of it required access to the existing Recreation Ground. Without making contact ahead of time with anyone at the Parish Council or South Marston Recreation Association, they brought heavy plant vehicles onto the field on the morning of March 30th to dig three deep test trenches to investigate drainage issues.

Once alerted to the damage caused to the football pitch, the Parish Council and SMRA swung into action. Within less than 24 hours, we had organised specialist repairs to be done under our control, but at the developers' cost.

We suspect that the developers' commissioning process went badly wrong and the contractors were not told in advance that it was an active football pitch on a public Recreation Ground. Unfortunately, they did not check once they were onsite, even when that must have been obvious to them. They had been asked to leave the site 'as found', which as many will testify, was simply not the case. With photographic evidence supplied, the developers had to apologise for both the pitch invasion and the state in which it was left, as well as offering reimbursement of all the repair costs.

Despite it being Easter weekend, the remedial work was completed in just over a week by Gareth Case's Lawn Doctor company aided by two of our volunteers. We will lose a few pitch hire bookings whilst the grass seed germinates and thrives in the warm spring weather, but SMRA will also be compensated for that.

The incident should never have happened as there was no permission in place to enter the Rec from the Bell Gardens' Field.

It is possible that access to the Rec for other work may be needed. We have since laid down requirements for any future permission to enter our land, including the notice required, the routes to be used, for appropriate Health and Safety equipment, and inspection by us before the contractors leave the site.



FREE BUS SERVICE TIMETABLE 2026

The fortnightly bus service is open to ALL residents of South Marston, provided by the F & E Harris Memorial Trust.

Please refer to the 2026 scheduled dates below for each destination.

ORBITAL CENTRE

The pick-up location in South Marston is next to the Carriers Arms pub, leaving at 9.45 am. The coach will depart Orbital at 12.15pm to return to South Marston.

14 May	11 June	9 July	6 August	3 September
1 October	29 October	26 November	24 December	

CIRENCESTER

The pick-up location in South Marston is next to the Carriers Arms pub, leaving at 10.45 am. The coach will depart Cirencester at 1.45 pm to return to South Marston.

28 May	25 June	23 July	20 August	17 September
15 October	12 November	10 December		

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A New Year for our Allotment Tenants

by Barry Thunder

Each April an invoice for the next 12 months is issued to all of our allotment tenants. We currently have 66 plots of varying sizes; the larger of which date back many years when very few residents wanted an allotment plot.

Today, we are regularly asked by young families for plots so that their children can learn how food grows and how nature works to help the process. Our rents are £58 per year to non village residents and £38 per year for those in South Marston.

Our site is a great place to get out into the fresh air throughout the year, and also to have some play time in the safe area of the Honda Memorial Garden. Amazingly, the site remains relatively quiet all week long!



We have few constraints on who can rent a plot; currently half of our tenants live outside of the village. Some have grown up in other countries, including the USA, Poland, Hungary, Sri Lanka and Switzerland. We all work well together, with support and help offered to all.

There are a growing number of fruit trees and many new varied plants for all to enjoy in our new landscaping at the car park, as shown left.

Finally, after many years and not a little difficulty in working with Thames Water, we can provide onsite water to improve growing conditions.

We recently ran a tree pruning course for tenants and local residents who will be helping to keep the fruit trees pruned to encourage more easily accessible fruit growth and healthy trees. A second course will be held this June at the Village Hall.

Perhaps, as the village expands and our new village centre appears, we can look at selling surplus vegetables and fruit production as a healthy benefit to residents?

If you would like to join us or to have a look around the site, please let me know at barry.thunder@southmarston.org.uk.

South Marston Friendly Club

Why not join our members aged between 60 and 90 on the second Tuesday of every month in the Village Hall. Meet new friends and neighbours while enjoying the interesting talks, always followed with tea, coffee and biscuits.

We wish to thank the Coop Community Grant Fund for their donation, which we have used to subsidise our Coach trip for our members in June.

PROGRAMME

Tuesday 12th May at 2pm - 'Mini Concerts makes a return'
With songs made famous by Doris Day

Tuesday 2nd June at 9.15am - A coach trip to Moreton-in-Marsh and then on to Chipping Camden

Tuesday 9th June at 2pm - AGM followed by The Air Ambulance
Our History, what we do & why the service is so important

Tuesday 14th July at 2pm - Gareth Morris will explain about the work of
The Royal National Lifeboat Association

For those interested in more information please email: smfriendlyclub@gmail.com



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Parish Council News

by Colin McEwen

In the Thick of It

Development is now at its most intrusive for those living close by.

Old Vicarage Lane remains closed off in parts until mid-2027. We are approaching the time at which the secondary 'Northern Loop Road' needs to be delivered, which will provide access for the western housing parcels and the road link to the new Village Hall. This road will cross both Morses Lane and the Leaze bridleway.

As set out in the insert leaflet, the Leaze Bridleway and related footpaths may be subject to closure for the best part of 6 months. This would mean that pedestrians walking to Gablecross will have use village roads and Hoddinotts Corner which we consider highly unsatisfactory. South of the village, most off-road footpaths will be compromised by the Leaze closures, but this may, however, be intermittent. We have emphasised the importance of safe routes for walking and we are working at the moment to ensure alternative off-road routes are provided as soon as possible.

Arrangements have been worked through for those residents living on the Leaze bridleway and at South Marston Farm. Appropriate signage has been designed.

Looking forward, things will start to improve from the end of June, when there are 'unmissable' deadlines for the developers to deliver the new roads. Because Hammerman Way (the new Primary Street) will remain unadopted, the Borough says at the moment that it can't open for existing residents on foot or by car until the end of the year. The footway access through the hedge from the Thornhill Road roundabout to the Keypoint bridleway is, however, ready and waiting, as seen in the photo.



At the same time, the blockages on Old Vicarage Lane will gradually move further down Old Vicarage Lane towards the A420, but access to the Carpenter's Arms will remain blocked off until the improved A420 junction is finally completed in 2027.

The developers will be at the upcoming **Have Your Say event on June 3rd** to explain and discuss all of this in more detail.

We continue to have a strong working relationship with the development team. It's been interesting to see how short a time the developers can plan ahead as they try to coordinate with the Utility Companies and deal with the unexpected.

New Village Hall

The developers have finally conducted a full survey of the surface water coming off the existing housing into the Bell Gardens field. A full report is in preparation.

The expected March application for detailed planning permission for the Village Hall has now been put back until September.

Current Village Hall

The current Hall site is very restricted. An opportunity to purchase the piece of land adjoining the Hall has arisen and is being investigated.

You will see from the enclosed leaflet that the charity that owns the Hall has concluded that there are significant advantages to it passing back to the Parish Council.

Panattoni

Following our feedback early in the planning process, the warehouse units at the southern end will be built further from the village boundary than originally planned, with a public footpath connection through the intervening landscaping. Councillors are working with Panattoni on combining, into a single map, their internal footpath and cycle network with the new cycle networks to be provided by the developers across South Marston and Rowborough.

Election

Disappointingly, no new candidates came forward for the election. We now have 3 Councillor places vacant. If you are interested in being involved, please get in touch or talk to us at the Have Your Say event or in the Parish Council Meeting that follows.

After 20 years on the Council Tony Leathart has decided to call it a day. He has always been willing to offer an alternative view on matters that has kept us on our toes! We are all pleased that he will continue to play an active role in the village as described in his update on page 9.

Annual Parish Meeting

This will take place at 7.30pm on June 3rd, just after the Have Your Say event in the Village Hall. All residents welcome. Please ask questions, raise any concerns or offer comments and ideas to help the Parish Council continue to work through the challenges we all have in these rapidly changing times.

A Message for All Village Dogs



Oh dear, I am sorry to say that there are some misbehaving humans out and about at the moment! Please remember that it is important that you keep your humans on their leads when walking in St Julian's and Oxleaze Woods, or on the Rec.

Sometimes the humans are so busy looking at their phones that they don't notice that they need to pick up after us, or notice that we are getting over excited and upsetting the humans who are walking nicely on their leads!

I know that they like to have a bit of freedom when out for a walk, so get them an extendable lead so they can have some independence without disturbing my friends, who are enjoying a nice relaxing stroll!



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MOLA Archaeological Dig

All those who attended the very successful talks given by Museum of London Archaeology project leader Rory Falconer last year will be interested to hear that their work in South Marston is now almost complete, although digging will still continue at Rowborough.

There are plans afoot to produce a 'layman's guide' covering all their work onsite over the past few years. Watch this space!

Your Turn Next to Serve South Marston?

by Tony Leathart



When I left the Royal Air Force after 30 years in 1993, I worked for British Standards Institution as Manager of a Test Laboratory before being head-hunted for a job in Shrivenham Hundred Business Park. I bought a cottage in the centre of South Marston and moved there in 1997.

After retirement in 2006, I joined an action group in the village to say 'NO' to the expansion plans. After 6 years, I realized that this was futile and it was better to be in a position to help make the plans as acceptable as possible to the existing residents. For this reason, I applied to be elected to the Parish Council in 2012 and was successful. I have enjoyed my time as a councillor in this and many other endeavours.

Now, with the new building underway and in full swing, the time is right for me to step back from the Council. I have played my part monitoring and influencing the building plans large and small, running Speed Watch for several years and watching over projects such as the 20mph zone and liaison with the Police as a member of the Local Advisory Group.

I will continue to manage the maintenance of the defibrillators, and continue as a village member of the Communications Working Group that produces this magazine. This will not be the last of my articles. My time as a Parish Councillor has been worthwhile to the benefit of the village as a whole and, as there are vacancies now on the Council, I recommend that you join in and take part in making the village a great place to live. I have found it both rewarding and not too onerous.

Open Space Activity in Spring

by Barry Thunder

Some of our behind the scenes activities over the past weeks included salvage work from South Marston Brook. During one of our regular checks in St. Julian's Wood, we noticed a blockage forming in the brook near the Gazebo on the bank.

Several long pieces of metal had come away from the bank where they had been used to control soil erosion many years ago. Just downstream from that point is an old bridge that provided access onto the ex-Honda site for maintenance by the then owner of the land, John Staniforth.



The tunnel under the bridge increased the water flow and had worked very well for many years. But nature had its way, and the posts holding the metal to the bank gave way. So how were we to release this tangle of metal, old branches and a long section of wood? Along came Kevin from the property next door, together with his waders.

More was required by way of a mechanical arm and we called on a suitable digger owned by Steve Case, who, together with his younger assistant and a metal hook and chain, lifted out all the tangled items. Whilst Steve was there, we also managed to drag out four fallen trees, leaving the brook to flow freely again.



As for the salvaged items, the metal plates are now in use at the allotment site, and recognized as part of South Marston's heritage as featured on Page 1. They still carry evidence of their trade name 'Marston Mats', but this Marston is in South Carolina where they were originally developed for their purpose of runway construction.

The four trees were logged and removed by Norm and family and a long section of wood was returned to Kevin after it was washed from his garden some weeks back after heavy rains.

So ended another exciting day for Open Spaces.

On a final note, we will be holding a tree pruning training session on the 12th of June at the Village Hall with a practical session on the Rec and in Orchard Meadow. Starting around 10am for 3 hours, it is free to attend but with expectations of some voluntary support with annual pruning of various village trees, later in the year. Along with annual pruning on our various village trees. If you are interested in attending, please contact me by email: barry.thunder@southmarston.org.uk

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Panattoni reaches a Milestone

by Sylvia Brown

A group of parish councillors were invited to view the very first completed warehouse - Unit 4, just inside the gate at Honda North roundabout.

We've grown used to seeing warehouses around South Marston over the past 40 years but quite honestly, despite its size, there are few that are as attractive as this unit. The reason is simple - they are built speculatively, so just like a new-build house, it has to be marketed. All the landscaping was completed early so it matured as soon as possible. Even the walkway to the main glass-sided entrance to the office block end is bounded by garden areas (in bloom!) and with seating.

That's a very different experience to the local housebuilding, where the surrounding landscaping doesn't need to be completed until long after residents move in.

A few interesting facts we learned on our tour:

- The whole unit is heated by the air conditioning system run by two air source heat pumps not much bigger than a washing machine.
- Grey water is collected from rainfall and piped to be used in the toilets etc.
- The roof structure is strong enough to take solar panels, if needed.
- Panattoni employ their own bird-of-prey handler - pigeons and other birds are a regular hazard inside warehouses.
- The colour palette of the exterior walls is broken up to prevent mass concrete elevations - it makes it appear more human in scale.
- The outdoor street/cycle lights deliver red illumination as they're bat friendly.
- The internal site bus stops are already in position, as are the benches and picnic tables in the central park area.

Walking around this 5 storey building for a couple of hours was a peculiar experience - it's so clean and so quiet. Apart from the 6 humans involved, there was only one other sign of wildlife - very odd, but ladybirds seemed to be attracted to the carpeted stairs in the office block - we spotted 3 en route.





Have Your Say Event



Wednesday, June 3rd, 5.30 to 7.30pm
Village Hall

Drop in to see the displays, discuss matters of interest or concern and make your views known.

Featuring:

- Come and talk to the developers' construction team about the impact of impending footpath and road closures around the village.
- Consultation by South Marston Recreation Association on transferring ownership of the Village Hall to the Parish Council - make your views known.
- SMRA - what's been achieved; what more can be done?
- Help us celebrate how the Village Hall has played a part in the life of the community. Bring photos and memories to show and record.

Annual Parish Meeting

At 7.30 pm, the Parish Council will be holding its Annual Parish Meeting. All residents are welcome to attend and ask questions.

Want more information?

For more details on the scale of proposed footpath closures, and to look at the reasons behind the proposal to transfer ownership of the Village Hall to the Parish Council, please read the leaflets delivered with this Community News edition, or look out for their publication on the South Marston website next week.

Spring Arrives on the Rec

by Jenny McEwen, SMRA Chair

A lovely display of cherry blossom just inside the gate to the Rec, pictured right, is the result of the help from volunteers and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust during winter 2025. Apart from a few casualties (that have since been replaced), the new trees and hedging survived the long, hot summer of 2025.

The drought also took its toll on the foundations of the garage block by the changing rooms. Cracks in the floor and walls of the toilet block have now been repaired by Ray Turner and Lionel, for which we thank them. Ladies will now be able to use the loo on the field without wondering if there is anyone peering through from the other side!



As the grass starts to grow and the football season comes to an end, there is reseeding to be done. Moss will be cleaned away in the toddler area, paths cleared of weeds, and we hope for a summer of kinder weather for the grass and trees.

There is a separate article on the damage done to the main football pitch when diggers arrived without notice or permission and began digging trenches.

100 Club

The 100 Club village lottery began 50 years ago, with the draw being held weekly in the Carriers Arms. It was one of SMRA's few sources of income in our early days.

The handmade zinc number was drawn from the drum, with cheers for the winner. Eventually, this became monthly and drawn at the SMRA meeting. Four numbers were monthly winners, with an extra £30 prize every quarter and £100 at Christmas.

The zinc numbers were eventually replaced by the pink discs, as pictured. After not having them available at a few meetings, our regular method became using Ian Clark's phone to randomise the number draw. It seems rather less of a ceremony than pulling numbers out of a bag, but the pink discs will have to be consigned to the museum collection as we embrace modern technology.



The 100 Club still raises very useful income for works on the Rec and Village Hall. If anyone would like a number and a chance to win in the monthly draw, please contact Julie Hatherall at smrateam@gmail.com

SMRA AGM

The following remain as Trustees of SMRA and the Village Hall Charity.

Jenny McEwen - Chair

Adam Rudnik - Vice chair

Ian Clark - Treasurer

Lionel Cave-Ayland - Health and Safety Officer

Dave Webb - Minutes Secretary

Sylvia Brown - Parish Council liaison

Andrew Liddiard

Angela Newton resigned, as she has moved away from South Marston, but we thank her very much for her years of dedication. Rachel Case remains as Caretaker and Bookings Clerk for the Village Hall. Julie Hatherall remains as Secretary and Bookkeeper.

Many thanks to everyone for everything that they have done for the Rec and Village Hall over the past 13 months.

The double charity structure that has evolved over the years has become unwieldy, and we are looking to transfer the Village Hall back to the Parish Council, to be held for the same charitable purposes as present. A leaflet giving more details is enclosed with this edition of Community News.

Well Done Winners!

Congratulations from South Marston Recreation Association to our March and April winners.



MARCH

£30 No. 44 Charlie Goodheart

£10 No. 67 Steve Hatherall

£10 No. 96 Sue Taylor

£10 No. 32 Ray Taylor

£10 No. 53 Mick Liddiard

APRIL

£10 No. 102 Gavin Naisby

£10 No. 73 Barbara Rudnik

£10 No. 96 Sue Taylor

£10 No. 54 Pam Jackson

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.

South Marston Gardening Club

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.

Monday 11th of May 7.30pm to 9.30pm – Ros Ford 'Beyond the Garden Gate'

We are delighted to welcome Ros Ford from the National Garden Scheme (NGS), which 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, Ros will explore how the NGS 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 an inspiring and informative evening - not just for gardening enthusiasts, but for anyone interested in beautiful gardens and supporting worthwhile causes.

Monday 1st of June Plant Sale - 7.30pm to 8.30pm, free entry

Whether you're brightening up your home, garden, or allotment, you'll find plenty of inspiration at our Plant Sale. Browse a fantastic selection of affordable plants and take home something special. All at a reasonable price.

- Annuals
- Herbs
- Perennials
- Shrubs
- Fruit plants
- House plants
- Potted flowerpots
- Vegetable plants

Make an evening of it! Enjoy delicious homemade cakes and a cuppa while chatting with our friendly Gardening Club members - always happy to share tips and advice.

Bring bags, boxes or even a wheelbarrow - you might need it! Please note: This is a cash-only event.

Spare or unwanted plants? Donations welcome!

If you've been dividing, digging up, or simply have plants you no longer need, we'd love to give them a new home. We're happy to collect and pot them up ready for the sale. We're also grateful for any unwanted gardening tools, books, or ornaments perfect for finding new owners on the day. Please contact Angela or if you're passing the village hall, leave them outside the door.

Save the date!

Saturday 22nd of August: Annual Flower and Produce Show

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

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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Dear Friends,

As we come into the month of May, Easter has come and gone, and the chocolate eggs are all eaten I expect! Yet the church year keeps moving on.

Pentecost is almost here...or should we call it Whitsunday? In truth, the name doesn't change the celebration - but each one invites us to reflect in a slightly different way.

Pentecost, taken from the Greek word for 'fifty', arrives fifty days after Easter and began as a Jewish festival, not unlike our own Harvest Festival. In the book of Acts in the Bible, the disciples - women and men together - were gathered to celebrate Pentecost when everything changed. The Holy Spirit came upon them like tongues of fire, a mighty wind filled the room, Peter preached with new courage, and thousands chose to follow Christ that day.

A small, frightened group of Jesus's followers became a bold, joyful community, speaking openly about Jesus's death and resurrection.

So why was it once called Whitsunday? Some say it comes from 'White Sunday', when people were baptised wearing white robes. Others suggest it means 'Wisdom Sunday', and I like this idea as it draws us back to the heart of the story. The fact that the Holy Spirit, God's own wisdom, poured out on ordinary people so they could live and speak with courage.

Whatever name we use, Pentecost is the Church's birthday - a moment to remember the God who gives wisdom and empowers us to serve the world around us.

My prayer this Pentecost is that we continue that beautiful tradition: caring for those who need it most and becoming, increasingly, a place where everyone finds a warm welcome and acceptance.

Blessings,

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)

10th May	9.30am Holy Communion
14th May	7pm Ascension Service at St Margaret's Church
17th May	10am Team Service at St Margaret's Church
7th June	10am All Age Worship
14th June	9.30am Holy Communion
21st June	10am Team Service at St Leonard's Church
5th July	10am All Age Worship

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

www.strattonteamministry.co.uk

South Marston Church Warden:

Diane Whitford ☎ 01793 824339

St Mary Magdalene Church 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
(including bacon butties and delicious cakes)

10-12

Every third Saturday in the
month

Next dates:

16th of May, 20th of June

**Enquiries or for table
reservations please call**

01793 824339

St Mary Magdalene Church Bells Update

by Diane Whitford, Church Warden

Progress is being made with our Church Bells, with some maintenance undertaken, fundraising and an excellent team of new ringers. The Quiz Night that we advertised in the last edition proved to be a very successful evening, although it was agreed that the questions were very hard, I would hope everyone learned something. The evening raised around £1,000. We plan to have another quiz in the autumn, but with easier questions! A clothes sale was also held recently, which raised £200. Our first aim for the bell fund is to raise £10,000 for the essential maintenance.

We have had three new additions to our bellringing team, and all are proving to be extremely good. The progress they are making can be heard on Tuesday evenings when they practice. We now have enough to ring our six bells, but if you would like to learn, do get in touch as more ringers will allow for holidays.



Please contact Rachel on 07545 923021 or Diane on 07964 460418.

Dates for your diaries

Sunday 7th of June, 11am - 1pm

The bell ringers will be helping our Church congregation with a Churchyard tidying session following our All Age Worship service. Do come along to see us and help. Refreshments will be served.

Sunday 28th of June

We will be raising funds for both the bells and the church building by serving tea and cakes in the church garden, or inside the church if it is wet weather. A static bell will be on display, along with one or two traction engines. Please join us and see the bells in action.

Saturday 25th of July

We will, of course, be serving teas and cakes at the Village Fete.

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South Marston School Update

by Marie Hendry, Head Teacher

The end of last term was a particularly significant and positive time for everyone at South Marston Primary, with a strong focus on our recent SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection and the recognition of our school's Christian distinctiveness.

SIAMS inspections are an important part of life for all church schools, focusing on key areas such as wellbeing, school values, collective worship and the personal development of both pupils and staff. They also explore how a school's Christian vision shapes everyday school life and supports the whole community to flourish.

As we have not had a SIAMS inspection since 2018, it was encouraging to welcome the inspector and to see so many positives and strengths highlighted in the report. As part of the inspection process, the inspector spent time across the school observing lessons, looking through children's Religious Education books, and speaking with staff, pupils and parents to gain a full picture of school life.

It was also a great opportunity for us, as a school team, to share the many ways our work aligns with the SIAMS framework. We were proud to highlight a wide range of areas, including the impact of staff training, our strong links with the village church and wider community, and the important role children play as leaders within the school. We also shared the breadth of opportunities available to pupils, from sporting events to being part of a supportive trust, as well as enrichment experiences such as festivals, competitions and educational trips.

We are delighted to share that it was an extremely positive experience, recognising the many ways our Christian vision is lived out across the school. The report highlights how our values underpin a nurturing and inclusive environment, where both pupils and adults are supported to grow with resilience and hope.

Among the many affirming comments, the inspector noted that 'dedicated leaders nurture pupils and adults, enabling them to flourish with resilience and hope,' and that 'adults craft an inclusive curriculum that offers pupils a variety of rich experiences.' It was also recognised that pupils benefit from learning about both religious and non-religious worldviews, and that collective worship provides meaningful opportunities for reflection and personal development.

Our strong partnerships with our local church was also praised, reinforcing the sense of community and providing valuable opportunities for families to come together.

In addition, the report highlighted the confidence and expertise of our staff, supported by effective training and a shared commitment to our vision.

We warmly encourage you to visit our website to find out more about our approach to collective worship and Christian distinctiveness at <https://smcea.org.uk/important-information/worship>, and to read the recent SIAMS report in full at <https://smcea.org.uk/important-information/ofsted>. We are incredibly proud of this report, which reflects the dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our pupils and the strength of our whole school community.

South Marston Summer Fete & Party in the Park

Saturday 25th July 2026. On the Rec.



Come along and join the fun, there's something for everyone!



- * Live Music
 - * Scarrott's Fun Fair
 - * Food and Licensed Bar
 - * Dog Show
 - * Local Stalls
 - * Vintage Car Show
 - * Various Dancing
 - * Bluey & Bingo
- and lots more...

For further information please contact Rachel Case on 07545 923021.

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).



**South Marston
Parish Council**



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