

South Marston Community News

Get Ready to Party!

by Dave Webb and Kye Souter



So here we are again - it's that time of year to come together and have a great day out on the Rec, come rain or shine! Make a note of the date, Saturday the 25th of July, 2.30pm – late. Entry is free, though there will be a £2 charge to park a car. For the disabled car park with easy access, please ask a marshal for directions. Full toilet facilities will be available on site.

Most vendors will accept cash or card payments, although some of the smaller stalls may be cash only. There is a full First Aid team on site, so please get in touch with a marshal if the need arises.

Bluey and Bingo will once again be your hosts for the Fete in the arena. Guiseppi's ice cream van will be on site all day. This year we have a really packed schedule for you, which goes something like this, for the kids (big or small), the Scarrott family will be providing all the fun of the fair.

There will be several stalls provided by local organisations, including a raffle for the South Marston Recreation Association with proceeds going towards the village.

Continued overleaf

For animal lovers, Chloe's Animal Farm will be present again and the Dog Show returns under the guidance of our very own Liam Northeast from Paddy Paws. If you fancy your poochs' chances, bring them along. It will be fun and friendly with ten classes to enter, including Best Trick, Best Junior Handler and Best Puppy. Entry is £2 per class, with prizes and rosettes awarded for 1st–3rd places. The first class will begin at 3pm, with entries taken from 2.30pm.

For music lovers, there will be four different acts across the day: Jimmy Moore, K Collective, Danielle Murphy and finishing up with The Corsairs at the end of the evening. Our own DJ will fill in the gaps.

A classic car demonstration will be provided by a local car club and static displays from the Police and Fire Services, along with several dancing and fitness demonstrations in the arena.

Finally, for those seeking a restful afternoon out and then staying on to enjoy the evening entertainment, a licensed bar and food stalls will be available throughout.

A full arena timetable and a detailed plan will be available nearer the time. This year's event is sponsored by a number of businesses for which we are eternally grateful.



For more event information, visit Facebook and search for South Marston Summer Fete or type in this link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1109018187832816>. Please come along, have a great time, and know that the village will benefit.

Twelve Days of Christmas 2026 - Save the date!

Back by popular demand, join us for an illuminated walk around St Julian's Wood on Saturday 12th of December 2026. Come and enjoy Santa's Grotto plus other entertainment, with light refreshments on sale. More details to follow.

SMRA Update

by Jenny McEwen, Chair, South Marston Recreation Association

Another challenging heatwave hit the playing field. After the hot summers of 2022 and 2025, a cooler 2026 would have been good for our new trees, shrubs, and drainage channels on the Rec. However, after the second heat wave of the year, we were already having to fill in the cracks in the ground to be ready for Party in the Park on the 25th of July. It was too big a task for volunteers, including Adam Rudnik, who gamely offered to do it, so we have contracted Allbuild to do the job. Lee himself will be out of action for weeks following back surgery - we wish him a full recovery.

However, Ray Turner was 'volunteered' by Lionel and dragged away from the work on The Carriers Arms to make an emergency brickwork repair to the Village Hall gateway, as seen right. We very much appreciate his willingness to do this at such short notice, thanks also to Jumbo for the materials.

Sadly, no equivalent photo exists of Justin, the village lengthsman, dressed in his hazmat gear, as he removed the poisonous white bryony plant from the Village Hall boundary. The sap of this plant causes skin inflammation, resulting in a rash or ulcers, and if swallowed, it can cause vomiting in small doses or more serious consequences in larger doses. It seemed like a good idea to remove it!



The Have Your Say event on June 3rd was part of our canvassing opinion on the transfer of ownership of the Village Hall from SMRA back to the Parish Council. We thank those who took the time to respond to the consultation before and after the event, and very much appreciate their questions and comments. The result was overwhelmingly to approve the exploration of the transfer back to the Parish Council.

South Marston Rec continues to be a popular venue for football, with our regular teams still keen for it to be their home ground. The teams for the 2026-7 season will be Swindon Rovers on Saturday afternoons and their youth development team on Sunday mornings, with Walcot also on Sunday mornings. If groundworks for the new Village Centre start, all of them understand that they will have to manage using our smaller youth pitch. Good luck to all for next season!

Sadly, we have recently had an instance of vandalism on the Rec, with one of our new picnic tables being left in a dangerous condition. Always quick off the mark, Adam removed the wrecked seat for safekeeping, and he and Lionel will be ensuring it is repaired and reinstated.

Well Done Winners!

Congratulations to our MAY and JUNE winners from South Marston Recreation Association.

MAY

£10 No. 37 Mandy Hancock

£10 No. 114 Loraine Thomas

£10 No. 97 Richard Shovlar

£10 No. 92 Jo Rudnick

JUNE

£30 No. 105 Gareth Case

£10 No. 64 Lyn Flitton

£10 No. 121 Eileen Lester

£10 No. 75 Melanie Beckett

£10 No. 71 Lesley Jefferies

The 100 Club is an annual subscription of £12 with the chance of winning £10, £30 or £100. All profits 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.

If you are interested in obtaining a number for our prize draw, please contact Julie Hatherall on 07749211867 or Angela Newton on 07789068340.



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.

PROGRAMME

Tuesday 14th July at 2pm

Gareth Morris will explain the work of
The Royal National Lifeboat Association

Tuesday 11th August at 2pm

Afternoon Tea in the Village Hall

Tuesday 8th September at 2pm

Crimestoppers UK working with business
& government organisations to tackle crime

Tuesday 13th October at 2pm

Extreme Weather Events
A Presentation & talk by Chris Brooks

For those interested in more information please send an email to:

smfriendlyclub@gmail.com

Friendly Club Day Trip to the Cotswolds

by Sue Pope

We were all a little nervous as we set off on the 2nd of June, as the weather forecast was awful. Leaving with a coach full of optimistic travellers, we were rewarded with surprising sunshine on arrival at Moreton-in-Marsh for their large Tuesday market. Such a pretty town, too. It was really warm, and we busied ourselves making purchases and visiting the various eateries. The plant stall was a favourite with healthy plants at amazingly low prices.



Whilst we waited for the coach to take us on to Chipping Campden, clouds gathered and the heavens opened as we boarded. The driver dropped us off outside a funeral directors, so we enjoyed much witty banter, and the rain stopped. We all managed a stroll down the high street admiring the houses and their lovely architecture before we saw a flash of lightning! Everyone quickly found sanctuary from a torrential downpour. Some headed to tea shops, others to pubs and restaurants. We think the happiest were those at a bistro bar where they served very alcoholic coffees. Needless to say, lots of fun and laughter was had despite the weather.



DROVE
VETERINARY HOSPITAL

STRATTON FESTIVAL FUN DOG SHOW

SATURDAY 18TH JULY
REGISTRATIONS FROM 12PM

- 1.30PM - BOUNCIEST PUPPY
- 1.50PM - PRETTIEST GIRL
- 2.10PM - HANDSOMEST BOY
- 2.30PM - CHILD HANDLER
- 2.50PM - GOLDEN OLDIE
- 3.10PM - WAGGIEST TAIL



Grange Leisure Centre, Grange Drive, Swindon, SN3 4JY
Subject to weather conditions.

EACH ENTRY GETS A COMPETITORS ROSETTE
with prize bags for 1st, 2nd & 3rd place winners



Have Your Say Event

by Sylvia Brown

At the drop-in event on June 3rd, we had a real mix of displays for residents to get engaged with. Most attendees made full use of the opportunity! Progress with two of the topics covered are reported on in this article.

Footpaths and Bridleway in South Marston - 6-month blanket closure

Ward Williams had signalled this by their leaflet with the last edition of Community News. We had already anticipated that forcing pedestrians to use the dangerous Hoddinotts Corner would be viewed as unacceptable and cause walkers and cyclists some real difficulties. That proved to be the case!

The developers' infrastructure team brought in 3 people for their stand at the HYS event. They aimed to both explain how this would be put into practice and explore what kind of difficulties the closures were causing. As the Parish Council has previously indicated, we were hoping to work with them and the on-site construction team on a strategy for opening routes up as and when that became a possibility.

We can now confirm that footpath/cycle routes from the village to Gablecross via Bridleway 4 (the track that runs through the centre of Manor Farm) are and will now remain open to pedestrian and cycle users.

In the event of emergency work again blocking the access on Old Vicarage Lane, the routes through Magdalene Close will continue to give access to the bridleway. If and when future construction work is required at the junction of the new Loop Road and the Leaze section of the bridleway, the Breheny construction team have agreed to provide a gravel pathway around that closure point so it stays in full use for walkers and cyclists. No future major work is planned for Morses Lane that would prevent use by either pedestrians or cyclists, but we would get fair warning, and signs would be erected if very short closures prove necessary, for instance, for resurfacing work.

For pedestrians wishing for a circular off-road walk, the modified footpaths 5 and 6 south of the Leaze to South Marston Farm and Footpath 15 to Morses Lane will be open - the contractors have promised the grass is cut on their land to enable this.

Having noted all those practical options, Footpath 3 from Thornhill Rd - the one that runs between Manor Park and Rawlings Close down to the Leaze bridleway - is more of a problem. There are utilities works, road construction and surface water measures to put in en route. As a temporary measure, the footpath entrance will be open for the time being, with a safe route along the back of Bell Gardens to the Rec being marked out by Heras fencing.

Finally, Robert (Ward Williams) and Harayshan (Breheny) deserve my thanks for tolerating the constant pressure I put them under to develop the above plan.



The Village Hall Memories Project

A second display at the Have Your Say event was to signal the start of a project to help preserve memories of the role of the existing Village Hall. When the new village hall and the expanded school facilities on the Recreation Ground finally become available for use, community groups and activities will inevitably be dispersed around different locations.

Rachel Case and I agreed we would think ahead to try and collate information about how the current Village Hall has, for nearly a century, been the centre of all community life in South Marston. The information we get from residents and other documents will help create a digital archive to celebrate its role.

To kick off the project, a display of old photographs of different activities was set up, and visitors were asked to tell us whether they recognised people or remembered being part of an activity that we hadn't yet got photos of.

We had one very good chat worth reporting on. Dot Bird has an amazing memory for names and faces and was able to say that the photo as seen right is South Marston WI (Women's Institute) early in the 1950s. Not only were a host of long-gone villagers named, but Dot was even able to spot a 'toddler' held by his Mum, who, over 70 years later, still lives in the village.



If you would like to participate in this project and have photos of any Village Hall activity, please contact Rachel or email me at sylvia.brown@southmarston.org.uk.

South Marston Gardening Club Update

by Angela Newton

Plant Sale Success Despite the Rain!

Monday the 1st of June saw wet weather force a last-minute move indoors for our Plant Sale. The Village Hall was soon filled with gardeners looking for bargains, with a wide variety of flowers, vegetables, herbs and shrubs soon finding new homes.



Being indoors provided a warm welcoming atmosphere, and it was lovely to see many people take the opportunity to chat, catch up with friends, and support our community event. The delicious selection of homemade cakes, kindly donated, proved extremely popular, which helped create a friendly, social atmosphere as well as raising additional funds. A huge thank you goes to everyone who donated plants and cakes, helped with the organisation and assisted on the day. Your efforts helped ensure the sale ran smoothly despite the challenging weather conditions.

Most importantly, thank you to everyone who came along and supported our Plant Sale. Your continued support is greatly appreciated, and we hope that all your purchases flourish over the coming months. Please note that next year's Plant Sale on Monday 7th of June 2027 will start an hour earlier at 6.30pm.

Saturday 22nd of August: Annual Flower and Produce Show

Our Annual Show returns to bring together the very best in gardening, baking, crafting and photography. With 73 classes, there are plenty of opportunities to enter, whether you're an experienced exhibitor or trying something new for the first time. The Show celebrates the talents of local people of all ages from South Marston and the surrounding communities.

Categories include:

Vegetables & fruit

Flower arranging

Photography

Flowers & pot plants

Cakes, bakes and preserves

Crafts

For 2026, there are two more photography themes, giving entrants the choice of four categories: Winter Close up flower Ponds Bird visitors to your garden

Please note: Photos must be printed on photographic paper and within the size limit of 7" x 5" (17.78cm x 12.7cm).

The craft section offers a wide range of categories, including:

- Metal, wood, glass or ceramic items
- Knitting or crochet
- Cross-stitch or embroidery
- Artwork (acrylic, charcoal, watercolour, etc.)
- Fabric or material-based crafts
- Papercraft (decoupage, quilling, stenciling, etc.)
- Small upcycled item

Young exhibitors aged 16 and under are encouraged to take part, with classes split into the following age groups: Ages 5 and under, 6-8 years, 9-11 years, 12-16 years. Children can choose to enter one of the following:

Vegetable monster A decorated paper plate Handmade craft jewellery item

For a copy of the 2026 Show Schedule or further information, please contact Angela.

Show Timings

Friday 21st of August

6pm-7.30pm - Entry registration. Bring your completed entry forms and fees to the Village Hall, Old Vicarage Lane, South Marston, SN3 4SN.

Saturday 22nd of August

- 10am - 12 noon - Deliver and stage your exhibits
- 12 noon - 5pm - Judging takes place (closed to exhibitors and the public)
- 5pm - Doors open to the public - Free entry

The Show is open to residents of South Marston and the neighbouring area, so why not encourage friends, family and neighbours to get involved? Whether you enjoy growing, baking, crafting or photography, it's a great opportunity to showcase your skills and enjoy a fun community event. We look forward to seeing another wonderful display of local talent. If you're not entering, why not come along and enjoy browsing the exhibits and sampling the delicious homemade cakes.

Please bring cash for refreshments and for any exhibits offered for sale at the end of the Show.

Monday 7th of September 7.30pm - 9.30pm

'The Inspiring Life of Gertrude Jekyll' by David Usher

A fascinating illustrated talk exploring the life, work, and lasting influence of Gertrude Jekyll, one of Britain's most celebrated garden designers.

Former Head Gardener at Hestercombe Gardens for 18 years, David offers an engaging and informative presentation, revealing how Jekyll's innovative use of colour, planting schemes, and collaboration with architects helped shape modern garden design. David is a member of the Professional Gardeners' Guild and the Chartered Institute of Horticulture.

Why not join the Gardening Club? New members are always welcome 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 delicious homemade cake. All meetings are held at South Marston Village Hall, Old Vicarage Lane, SN3 4SN. For more information on any of the above, please contact Angela on 07789 068340 or email angelanewton01@gmail.com.

Allotments Update

by Barry Thunder

May and June's frosty nights and blazing hot spells have been challenging, yet I'm pleased to report that all plots are now occupied, and mostly flourishing with vegetables, flowers and fruit. We're pleased to welcome our new tenants, some of whom are taking on the task of restoring their plots to a well-cultivated state. If you'd like a plot in future, our waiting list is currently empty!

We have been working with Panattoni, who now have ownership of the allotments and the Honda Memorial Garden. Petersen Associates is their key contractor managing all site facilities. They recently had tree surgeons remove unsafe tree branches on both sites.



At the car park, our flowering border features new exhibits for year-round interest and, best of all, they require no weeding! Pictured above is a metal windmill leaf sculpture designed and made by Matt Sansum and recovered from his old allotment. Steve Case mounted it to stone taken from an internal wall at The Carriers Arms, likely originating from the Old Town quarry in the late 1800s. A big thank you to Jumbo, the pub's new owner, and to all involved. There are also three more Marston Plates, the temporary metal runway sheets from World War II, along with an old metal 'squeeze gate' salvaged from the village garden war memorial. If you know the origins of the 'squeeze gate' or when it was installed, please let the editor know.

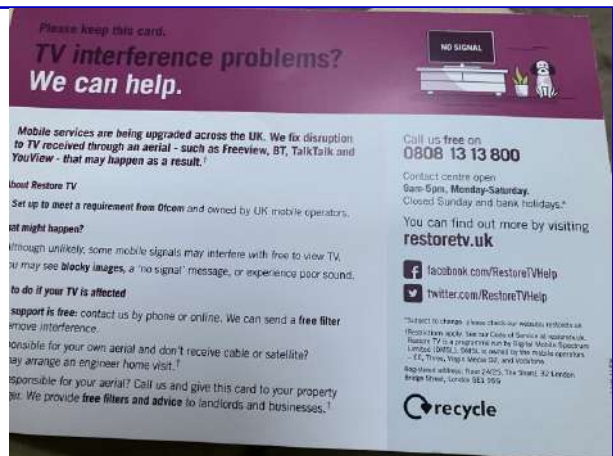
TV Signal Issues?

Have you received a postcard from Restore TV? If you've noticed new problems with TV channels received through an aerial like Freeview, BT, or YouView, it could be due to recent upgrades to mobile services in your area.

Help is available free of charge through Restore TV, an independent programme designed to make sure that everyone in the UK can continue watching free-to-view television or receive a suitable alternative if mobile signals are found to cause interference.

If you don't have satellite or cable TV and mobile signals are confirmed as the cause, Restore TV will ensure that your TV service is restored to its previous quality within 10 working days of you contacting them. Visit their website at <https://restoretv.uk>.

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Update from Your Local Borough Councillor

by Matthew Vallender



South Marston Election Results: Firstly, I want to say a massive thank you to everyone who took the time to go and vote on the 7th May. South Marston also had the highest turnout in all of Swindon, almost 60%! The results were far, far ahead of what I ever thought would happen in the village. I was incredibly shocked to see almost 80% of the votes cast for me. I'm really grateful for four more years as your councillor and will continue to do everything I can to represent you!

Swindon Elections Results: The results across the rest of Swindon were slightly less decisive, with 23 Conservatives, 19 Labour, 14 Reform and 1 Lib Dem elected. This means that no party had an overall majority - the first time since the 2002 election. At the Annual Council Meeting in May, Swindon Conservatives were able to form a minority administration as the largest group on the Council by offering other parties the Chair/Vice-Chairs of SBC's committees in a proportional split between the three largest parties. There was no coalition or deal with other parties beyond this offer. I am very pleased to have been appointed as the Cabinet Member for Culture, Planning and Regeneration, and I have been getting stuck into the role.

Panattoni: It has now been widely reported that the site has its first occupier - the Ministry of Defence will be taking Unit 4 next to the north roundabout entrance. Construction on Unit 1 (the biggest in the country) has finished, and Panattoni will shortly begin work on four additional units to be constructed this year/2027.

Carriers Arms: I have been working with Swindon Borough Council's licensing and the new owners to get the license transferred into their name - I hope by the time you're reading this article we will have a reopening date!

Party in the Park: I'm really looking forward to this at the end of July. I've been supporting Rachel with the fundraising for the day, and we have raised record amounts (over £5000 at the time of writing!). A massive thank you to Panattoni, the developers, South Marston Parish Council and local businesses that have contributed to what will be an excellent day!

20mph Zone: I have been liaising with officers on the final tweaks needed so we can get the zone implemented ASAP.

S6 Bus Stop: Thank you to the developers who have cut back the vegetation at the bus stop on the OVL/A420 junction, which is outside their remit. I hope this is the last summer with this one being an issue - the A420 junction works next year will move this bus stop slightly, and it will be a proper tarmacked bus stop.

Get in touch: 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, tea and coffee available for purchase to help raise money for the church!

01793 295171, MVallender@swindon.gov.uk, Facebook - [@cllrmattthewvallender](https://www.facebook.com/cllrmattthewvallender)

South Marston Parish Council congratulates Matt on his election win. Reports indicate he achieved the largest majority and turnout within the Swindon Borough Council area and quite possibly one of the highest in the country!

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 Working Group Update

by Barry Thunder

Whilst we are in the midst of the bird nesting season, we are always working to ensure that hedges alongside roadside footpaths are kept clear to ensure safe access for families walking to and from school. A light summer cut is carried out in mid-June.

Work for our Lengthsman, Justin, is particularly challenging at this time of year. Woodland grass cutting is pleasant in the shade of the trees, but heavy winds and rain can cause branches to fall. If you spot damaged or fallen branches, please report them by email to Kevin, our Parish Clerk, clerk@southmarston.org.uk or myself at barry.thunder@southmarston.org.uk, rather than posting on Facebook, as emails are seen quickly and allow us to alert Justin to make paths safe. Thank you to those who already do this.

We recently held our second pruning training session with Alan from Twigs in Swindon. The sessions gave volunteers practical experience caring for young trees, which they will continue to do to support those in the Rec and at Orchard Meadow. Funding came from our long-term 'Trees for Climate Change' planting plan. Well done to all our attendees.



Attention all walkers, particularly those with dogs. Please take note of the red coloured flag markers placed in the grass alongside the St. Julian's Wood footpaths, as shown right. These mark the locations of dog poo, carelessly left behind by some dog owners. Whilst 'out of sight, out of mind' might work for them, these piles of poo get into the wheels of our mowers and onto the legs and feet of Justin! A health hazard! Owners are asked to keep dogs on leads



and clear up after them, putting the poo in the dog waste bins. Should the current carelessness continue, we may have to cease the grass cutting beside the path in St. Julian's Wood!

On a positive note, we toured the new footways and cycle tracks on the Panattoni site with Kate from Petersen Associates, who are managing these grounds. The paths are neatly maintained, with wildflowers, shrubs and new trees planted throughout. Once construction progresses, these routes will be open to the public and offer easy walking and cycling access from three village entrances, the first near Oak Tree Corner opposite Quarrybrook on the opposite side of the Highworth Road.

Finally, a village history question...

We were recently told a story about regular football games played by the local children, around 1967. The goal was the front wall of the Carriers Arms, and the pitch was the Highworth Road with 'Tubby Thompson' as the goalie. There was also a large Alsatian dog who slept in the road, causing the few cars of the time to have to drive around it.

If you remember this or know the dog's name, please let the editor know at editor@southmarston.org.uk. Any photographs would be wonderful to publish in a future edition of Community News.

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South Marston School Update

by Marie Hendry, Head Teacher

As we approach the end of the academic year, we reflect on another successful year at South Marston School, and we have so much to celebrate. We would particularly like to shine a spotlight on the wealth of extra-curricular, enrichment and cultural capital opportunities that we provide for our children. As a small village school, we are incredibly proud of how we maximise our extensive grounds, supportive community and dedicated staff team to go above and beyond in creating memorable and enriching experiences for every child.

Term 6 is traditionally packed with exciting opportunities. This year, pupils from Year 6 have attended the Junior Good Citizen Event, while children from Year 1 and 2 enjoyed a visit to Bourton-on-the-Water. Year 5 and 6 pupils travelled to Bristol to watch Matilda the Musical, and our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children will be welcoming a mobile zoo farm to school. Meanwhile, Years 3 and 4 are looking forward to an adventurous outdoor learning experience at Oxenwood.

Our enthusiastic Eco Council, supported by Mrs Rawlins, has been working hard to enhance our school environment by planting seeds, developing a vegetable patch and creating attractive planters around the site. At the same time, our School Council, alongside Mrs Hamilton - Gill, has been busy organising an end of year talent show, giving pupils the opportunity to showcase their many talents.

Looking back across the academic year, there have been many achievements to celebrate. Following our positive Statutory Inspection of Anglican Methodist Schools Church School inspection, we have welcomed several new families to our school community through in-year transfers and families moving into the area.

All classes have participated in swimming lessons, and we have continued to support trainee teachers through mentoring and placement opportunities. Pupils have



enjoyed a range of themed learning experiences, including European Day of Languages and our popular Wow and Wonder Day.

We are also proud to have maintained attendance rates above both local and national averages. Children across the school have successfully completed key assessments, including the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check and the Year 6 SATs (Standard Assessment Tests), all achieving positive outcomes.

As we look ahead, we are excited to welcome our new Reception families in September, alongside a growing number of pupils joining us in other year groups. Our leadership team has certainly been busy showing prospective families around the school and sharing all that makes South Marston such a special place to learn and flourish!

As always, we encourage you to visit our website and follow our Facebook page for the latest news, updates and a glimpse into the wonderful experiences our children enjoy throughout the year.

Thank you for your continued support, and we wish all our families and members of the community a happy and enjoyable summer.

Acupuncture

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Parish Council News

by Colin McEwen

Old Vicarage Lane

The timetable is to reopen Old Vicarage Lane from the village to Rowborough Lane by the end of August. OVL works from the new junction with Rowborough Lane/ Hammerman Way to the railway bridge will be under construction until early 2027, so we won't be drinking in the Carpenters Arms anytime soon! The signalised A420 junction upgrade will follow this, with completion expected in 2028.

New Residents

After frustrating delays, the utilities companies have connected gas, electricity and water to the first Vistry and Taylor Wimpey sites and the new residents are expected to start moving in during July. Access will initially be via the temporary haul road onto OVL. Later this year, when construction is complete, Hammerman Way will be opened from the Thornhill Road end as an access route to the new houses. Full opening of the principal street (Hammerman Way) as a through road is not expected until the end of the year/early 2027 when the new OVL junction is completed.

Morses Lane



If you walk through to Keypoint, you will notice the destruction of vegetation along on Morses Lane. Part of this was necessary to construct Hammerman Way, as seen on the left in the photo above, and the secondary Loop Road, seen on the far right. However, the destruction went far further than was originally anticipated. The whole area is now wide open instead of the once sunken lane being bounded by banks with tall hedges and tree cover. The current landscaping plans submitted to Swindon Borough Council are for grass verges and little else, giving a depressingly urban landscape, visible across a wide area and dominated by tarmac and street lighting.

Over the past 6 months, we have been protesting to Swindon and to the developers that they have destroyed the character of a rural lane that was described as a 'heritage asset' in our Neighbourhood Plan. One problem is that the levelled stretch is split between multiple different planning applications, each submitted separately.

We have won one battle so far - one section of the stretch of Morses Lane is required to have reinstatement of the bank and hedging, but with no details yet of how that is to be done. There will be two further developer submissions covering the remainder, and we are pressing for an integrated plan to restore the 'enclosed' character of the lane as far as is possible and ensure any landscaping provides a more rural aspect when viewed from the public rights of way that run close to the site.

Keypoint Walk Reopens

Sylvia Brown's persistence has paid off, and we will now be able to walk and cycle all the way from the village to Keypoint and on to Sainsbury's. Our thanks to Harayshan of the groundwork contractor, Breheny, for plans to put in a temporary diversion around the work on part of the Leaze to permit this. It makes for an interesting walk!

Rowborough

Bit by bit, the plans for the new village are coming forward. The original farmhouse and 3 acres or so of equestrian yard and outbuildings remain unoccupied and without any planned future. We have urged the developers to come up with a proposal that would preserve the farmhouse and have been promised a response shortly.

Village Hall

Following the SMRA request and positive feedback to the consultation, the Parish Council has agreed in principle to receive back the existing Village Hall. This still requires Charity Commission approval and will have no practical effect on the running or future of the Hall.

Lengthsman

Justin has successfully completed an initial period as the village lengthsman and his job list has been revised in the light of his experience. His major frustration is the dog poo left in the monthly-cut grass alongside footpaths that makes the monthly strim a most unpleasant experience! If you have a dog, please clean up after it!

Annual Parish Meeting and Accounts

At this year's Annual Meeting held on the 3rd of June, I gave a report on the Council's activities during the last year and the draft annual accounts were presented for inspection. If you missed the meeting, these are now on the website and, should you have any questions, please email them to our clerk, Kevin Morgan, at clerk@southmarston.org.uk.

Church Afternoon Tea, with Bells and Steam

by Diane Whitford



Once again, we were blessed with a delightful afternoon of sunshine to have tea and cakes in the churchyard on Sunday the 28th of June. This year, the added attraction was a static bell set sited on the Glebe, with a group of ringers demonstrating how bell ringing works. They offered the chance for people to try bell ringing on a smaller scale. The bell ringers rang our beautiful church bells as people ate cake, drank tea and chatted with new and old village friends. Along with the bells came two small steam engines which had chugged their way along from Highworth.

It was a very successful and enjoyable afternoon for everyone. Grateful thanks go to those who worked behind the scenes and the cake makers, whose standard was extremely high. Particular thanks go to the bell ringers and to Rusty for organising the steam engines to join us, and a huge thanks to Tony Crabtree from St Andrew's Church at Shrivenham for bringing the static bell set, which proved to be such a delight. Thank you all for coming.

£540 was raised to be shared between the bell fund and church maintenance which will one day include the addition of a toilet for the church, which is very much needed!

Dear Friends,

This time of year for the church is often considered a quiet time. The seasons of the church year revolve around Christmas and Easter with Bible readings that concentrate on Jesus's birth and death. The season we are in now is called ordinary time, though I think this season is anything but ordinary.

The readings that we have in church during ordinary time focus on the ministry and teachings of Jesus, which are vital for us to understand how to live a Christian life. Jesus said, 'love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.' He also said 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. Jesus tells us that there is no other commandment greater than these two, the foundation from which the 10 commandments come.

Who is my neighbour is a well-known question that Jesus was asked. The answer was everyone.

How do we want to be treated? Well, I want to be treated with kindness and respect. If that is what I would want then that is how I should treat others. Being kind and respecting others, whether it is someone serving me in a shop, or holding a door for someone or helping someone pick something up they've dropped, I hope is second nature to me, and that my behaviour is always kind to others. It's the mark of our Christian faith to love our neighbours as ourselves. So if you hear someone who purports to be a Christian whose actions or words don't match this simple commandment, then know that is not the faith that I follow. If it is not loving, not kind or respectful, then it's not in line with what Jesus taught.

He even told us to love our enemies, which I admit is a bit harder to do. So, as we look at these turbulent times, I hope you will find those who speak for peace, love and respect. I hope you will be suspicious of those who do not.

Blessings,

Elveen



Stratton Team Ministry

Seeking, Sharing and Serving God Together

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

12th July	9.30am Holy Communion
19th July	10am Team Service
26th July	11am Holy Communion at Coleview Community Centre
2nd August	10am All Age Worship – Hymns of Praise
9th August	9.30am Holy Communion
16th August	10am Team Service at St Margaret's Church
30th August	10am Team Service
1st September	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 Churchwarden:

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



10-12

Every third Saturday in the month

Next dates:

18th of July, 19th of September,
No meeting in August.

**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)

Useful Contacts

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

Local Borough Councillor: Matthew Vallender MVallender@swindon.gov.uk
295171, Facebook - [@cllrmatthewvallender](https://www.facebook.com/cllrmatthewvallender)

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**






SUMMER OF FUN ON THE FARM

23rd July - 31st August




Enjoy meeting a variety of animals, hand feeding, animal racing, wash the tractor, brush the animals, guinea pig fishing, walk-in animal paddocks, activity trail & lots more!



FAMILY CAMPING WEEKEND

21st - 23rd August



All inclusive weekend access, BBQ, mini-disco, entertainment, animal encounters, daily activities, indoor & outdoor play & more! Details on our website.



MEET THE PAW PATROL

12th & 13th September
Meet your favourite PAW Patrol pups for one weekend only!



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