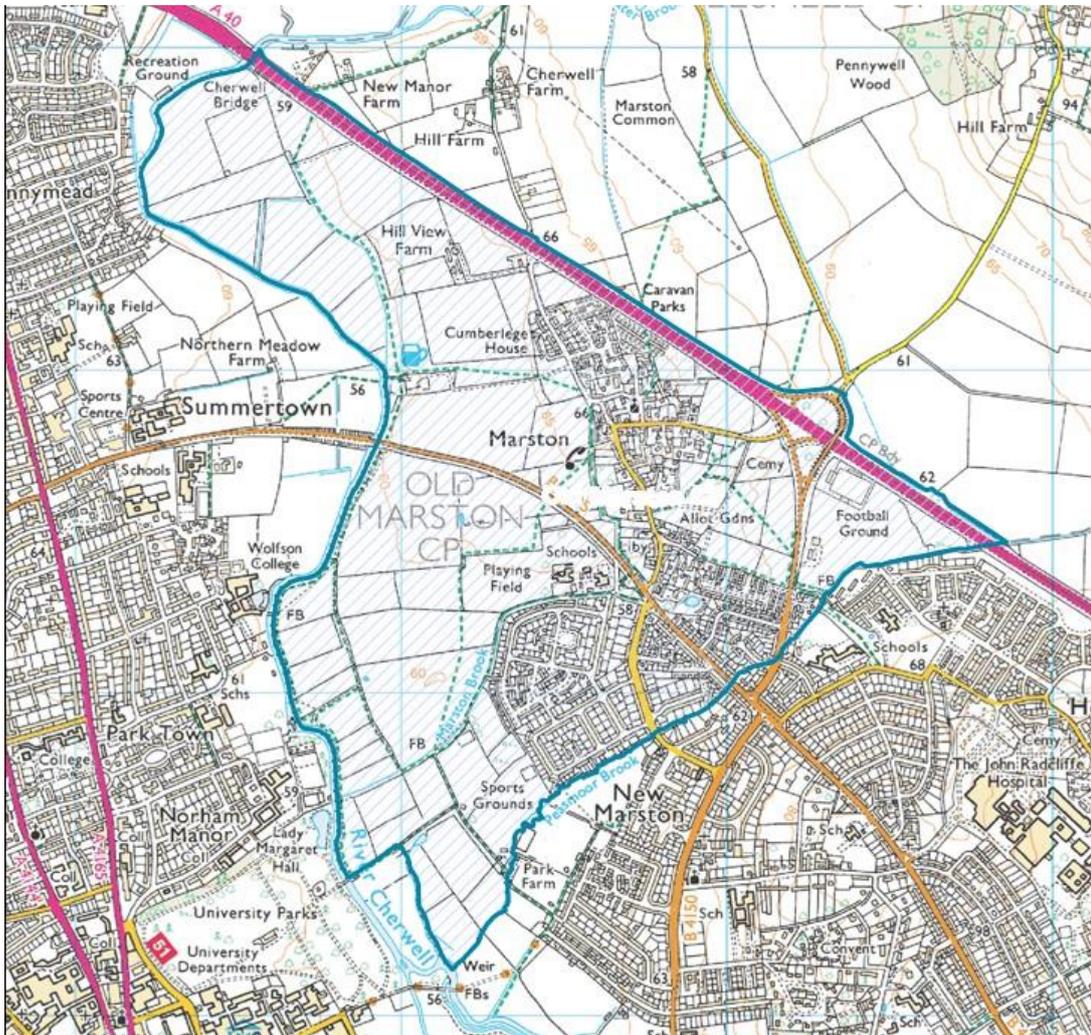


June 2021

# MARSTON



The Official Newsletter for Old Marston Parish Council.

Volume 2021 Issue 1

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## Introduction.

Firstly, I hope you are all well and keeping safe.

Below is a brief resume of what a parish council is – if you are unaware one existed!

A parish council is a local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in the parish. It is the level of government closest to the community, just below the district authority (Oxford City Council) in the hierarchy.

As it is the authority closest to the people, parish councils are invariably the first place people go with concerns or ideas. For this reason, it is a vital part of any community.

Parish councils make all kinds of decisions on issues that affect the local community. These include commenting on planning matters (it is a statutory consultee), managing open spaces, cemeteries, and campaigning for and delivering better services and facilities.

It is true to say that on their own, parish councils have limited powers to make decisions. However, it does have the ability to negotiate with, and the power to influence, those other organisations that do make the final decisions (such as the City and County Councils, health authorities, police etc).

In this respect parish councils are extremely powerful. The organisations that make the final decisions know that a parish council gives the best reflection of how a community feels about something, and its views will be taken seriously.

The Clerk handles the day-to-day affairs of the Council and the first point of contact.

This newsletter has been in the pipeline for a few months, however, there always seemed to be something of a higher priority pushing it further back. For instance, the Hill View Farm planning application, Almond Farm potential development, Marston Paddock potential development in Butts Lane, to name a few.

## Planning

Old Marston Parish Council reviewed 52 planning applications in the 2020-21 period, compared to 29 the previous year.

**Hill View Farm:** This has now been approved by the Oxford City Council for 159 dwellings. Despite the Parish Council accepting that housing is needed, especially affordable housing, it had several concerns regarding this development. Mainly, the access through the 'S' bend in Mill Lane, the lack of accessibility for public transport on the actual site, the safety of cyclists on at times already busy roads and the impact of increased traffic, etc., such a large development will inevitably have on the environment and local people's lives.

**Back Lane:** There are also plans which will see Back Lane being resurfaced so that cyclists, etc., can use it. This is the bridleway which runs parallel with Oxford Road from Mill Lane to the Marston Ferry Road eventually linking up with the track that runs through to the University Parks, behind Arlington Drive. The Parish Council is not in favour of this as it will mean horse riders, cyclists, pedestrians and probably moped/scooters wanting to use the same space, which is potentially a dangerous combination.

**Almond Farm/Land West of Mill Lane:** The Oxford City Council are intending to develop the land next to Hill View Farm, wanting to develop 79 dwellings. No planning application has been submitted yet, but the Parish Council are aware that one will be submitted in due course.

**Marston Paddock:** This is a relatively smaller potential development off Butts Lane, compared to the Hill View Farm and Almond Farm, as it's a minimum of 39 dwellings. Again, no formal planning application has yet been submitted but a consultation will start soon.

**The Swan School** has been handed over by the contractors and pupils have already started attending. Meadowbrook College, formally Harlow School for us ex-pupils, is also virtually finished.

**Salford Road:** Construction work at the former Jack Russell pub is on-going.

**Mortimer Drive:** Construction work on the former garages behind the Mortimer Drive is also on-going.

**Cemetery:** Old Marston Parish Council have applied to extend the Elsfield Road Cemetery to ensure adequate burial provision for a few years to come.

**Noticeboards:** There are also plans to have an additional three noticeboards, one in Salford Road, one at the junction of Cherwell Drive and Oxford Road by the Orchard Triangle and one in the bus stop opposite the church in Elsfield Road.

## Financial

With the effects of the pandemic foremost in the Council's mind, in that many residents are furloughed, have been made redundant and/or are struggling financially, it was decided not to increase the Parish Council precept for the 2021-2022 financial year.

Old Marston Parish Council agreed to give financial assistance to 12 local organisations who provide services in the Community. There are usually more, however some organisations were forced to restrict their activities over the year, so they felt it not necessary to apply. Those groups assisted this year include 43<sup>rd</sup> Scout Group, Court Place Farm Allotments Association, Marston Community Gardening Group, Marston Saints FC, Mortimer Hall Pre-School, Mortimer Hall Village Hall, OXSRAD, St Nicholas Junior Choir, St Nicholas Messy Church, St Nicholas School Forestry School, St Nicholas School Breakfast & After School Club, St Nicholas School Nursery, and the St Nicholas Society of Bell Ringers.

The Parish Council has also paid for the installation of seven solar streetlights, three in the Boults Lane Recreation ground, two in the Mortimer Hall Play Area and two in School Lane. It also applied to Oxfordshire County Council, who are the Highways Authority, to have solar stud lights installed into the footpath along Elsfield Road to make it safer at night. Unfortunately, this was refused permission. The Parish Council is now looking to see if it can get permission to have solar-powered street lights installed instead.

The Orchard Triangle is a small area of land owned by the Parish Council but managed by the Marston Community Gardening Group. There are fruit trees, wildflowers and the grass cut less often to encourage insects and wildlife.

There is also a strip of land, around the perimeter of the Mortimer Hall Recreation Ground, which is being left uncut also for wildflowers and wildlife habitat to thrive. There are plans to also do the same in the Boults Lane Recreation Ground.

## Annual Report

An Annual Report is published each year, usually around September/October, which gives all the activities of the Parish Council, who the Councillors are, what Committees they serve on, the accounts details, what grants have been given, etc. A copy is on the website or available from the Clerk on request.

If you would like to know more about Old Marston Parish Council then visit the website [www.oldmarston-pc.gov.uk](http://www.oldmarston-pc.gov.uk) , Facebook site (facebook.com/OldMarstonPC/) or Twitter site (twitter.com/oldmarstonpc), view the noticeboard or contact The Clerk on 01865 203 139 or email [clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk)

## Meet the Councillor.



**Duncan Hatfield** - I have been part of Marston for over twenty-five years. I am originally from Wallingford. I went to Liverpool Polytechnic to study Geography. I moved to Oxford in 1991 to work as a care worker for the health service. After a number of years I moved onto retail work and administration. I currently work in administration. I joined the parish council in 2006 and became Vice-Chairman in 2010 and Chairman in January 2018. I am responsible for organising the annual OxClean litterpick in Old Marston and manage the website, Facebook, Twitter sites and the on-line profile of the council. I am currently the Chairman of the Old Marston Charities Trust, and a member of St Nicholas Parochial Church Council and Mortimer Hall Management Committee.

**Pat Hall** - I was born in Oxford and attended St Andrew's Primary School and Milham Ford School. I worked in Local Government and then the NHS as the Manager of the Oxford Cancer Intelligence Unit. I moved to Cherwell Drive with my late husband when our three children were small. I now have six wonderful grandchildren three of whom attended At Nicholas Primary and Cherwell School. They all have degrees which has to be a great testament to our local schools!



I retired in 2010. I am a member of the National Trust, take upholstery classes, love reading and gardening and I lunch a lot with friends! I was co-opted onto the Parish Council in 2010 and am now the Vice-Chair. I really enjoy living in the parish of Old Marston. Let's all work to ensuring it remains a great place to live.



**Peter Cox** - Born in Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset, I moved to Oxford in 1952 when my late father Wing Commander John Cox, was posted to Kidlington Airfield. I was educated at Salesian College Grammar School in Cowley and on leaving I took up an editorial position with Pergamon Press in Headington. In 1974 I had a change of direction and joined W. Lucy, an electrical engineering firm in Jericho, here I had two spells of employment ending in 1996. Settling in the village of Old Marston in 1980 has been the best ever move for me. I was accepted onto the Parish Council in 2003 and, if allowed to, I would like to carry on a good while longer.

**Peter Williams** - I have been a resident of Old Marston for over thirty years and a parish councillor since 2011. I was a local GP and so know the area well and its health and social needs. Now I chair a national, not-for-profit, mutual company in London



representing the interests of doctors, dentists and other health workers throughout the UK. Though I live in the conservation area of the village, I seek to represent the interests of everyone living in the parish.

**Mick Cadd** - I was born in Bristol; in 1939 and moved to Oxford in 1954 when I started a five year apprenticeship with British Leyland Motor Corporation (BLMC) garage in Oxford. I achieved my City and Guilds Certificate in Motor Mechanics and remained with the firm for eighteen months. I then moved to Morris Motors where I stayed for three years. I then started in the garage trade and remained for 30 years. In 1984 I bought The Three Horseshoes Public house in Old Marston with my late wife Jean. I still live in the village. I joined the Parish Council in 2006



**Louise Milford** - I have been a resident of Old Marston since 1991 and my three children have grown up here. I trained as a nurse in London in the late 1970's. I nursed for a number of years and since 1990 ran a private medical practice. I retired at the end of 2020. I very much enjoy living in Old Marston. I volunteer at the library once a month and have recently taken on an allotment. I was co-opted onto the Parish Council in January 2019. I am interested in local issues and am pleased to give my time to the Parish Council.

**Mary James** - I was born in Oxford and educated at Oxford High School. I went to university in London and worked there for ten years, firstly as a transport planner for the (then) Greater London Council and subsequently as a teacher of Economics and Geography. I moved back to Oxford when my two daughters were young and have lived in Old Marston for fifteen years in total. Since my retirement I have enjoyed looking after my garden, my allotment and my grandchildren but I very much wanted to contribute to the needs of the community. Hopefully having become a member of the Parish Council in the recent election I now will.



**Alistair Morris** - I have lived in Oxfordshire for most of my adult life and in Marston since 2006. I have two adult children who were born at the JR Hospital and went to local schools. I am a co-founder of Marston Community Gardening Group, a member of St Nicholas Church Environment and Social Justice Committee and vice Chair of Court Place Farm allotments. I am particularly concerned with environmental issues such as climate change, local nature and the environment. I am keen to support local initiatives on public transport, car sharing schemes, use of

renewable energy, tree planting, growing and sharing our own food and encouraging energy efficiency in local homes. I am opposed to excessive traffic, congestion and pollution and the building of new homes on Green Belt, Flood Plain, biodiverse land, that are neither genuinely affordable or carbon neutral.

**Mick Bates** - I am originally from Rose Hill but have lived in Old Marston since 2015. I am a mechanic by trade. I am keen to help in the local community and joined the Parish Council to help serve the community.



**Charlotte Vinnicombe** - I

volunteered to become a Parish Councillor to help the Parish Council look after our community.

I have lived and worked in Oxford since 1995 and have lived in Old Marston since 2008. I live with my partner David, and my two children, who were born just up the road in the John Radcliffe Hospital. I have worked for Oxford University for

nearly 24 years; my current role is Head of Administration and Finance in the Faculty of Law.

Through my job, I'm very experienced at committee work, and understand the democratic decision-making process that is fundamental to the Parish Council. I have previously chaired the Oxford Conservation Volunteers, helping to organise volunteers and raise funds to support practical nature conservation in the Oxford area. I am currently the chair of the Elsfeld Road and Oxford Road Residents' Association, so I have a very good understanding of some local concerns (particularly relating to through-traffic and parking) and have experience of representing the views of residents in the parish. I am also aware, though, that the role of a Parish Councillor is to represent the whole parish, not just my own immediate area.

I have been a 'Marston Village liaison volunteer' for the Oxford Half marathon for the past two years, and I enjoy helping with litter picking and sign cleaning in the village. As a Parish Councillor, I have also been co-opted onto the Environment Committee – a sub-committee of the Parish Council. I am interested to explore what we can do at a parish level to care for the environment and help prevent climate change.



**Alan Spence** - My name is Alan Spence. My family and I have lived in Old Marston since 1983. I am married with three grown up Children, all attended St Nicks and Cherwell School. I served for 30 years in the Thames Valley Police and was the Community Police Officer here in Marston in 1994/95. I retired in 2003 and then worked in insurance investigating Fraud. I retired from that in 2016. I have always been involved in the community and most recently I was chairman at Marston Saints. I left the Club in August this year. I remain involved in supporting the local community and have been on the Parish Council since 2018.

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## Report from Oxford City Councillor Mary Clarkson



There are three major planning applications which are likely to have a massive impact on Old Marston, particularly in terms of traffic. The first and largest scheme, for 159 houses at Hill View Farm, was approved by the City Council's Planning Committee on 25th May. I voted against this on the basis of the traffic impact. The second two which are awaiting decisions are for 79 houses at Almonds Farm, right next to the Hill View Farm site and the third is for 39 homes on Marston Paddock in Butts Lane. I am keen to work closely with Old Marston Parish Council and County

Councillor, Mark Lygo, to make sure that as much as possible is done to restrict traffic through the village, to improve the bus service and improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

Now that the Residents' Parking Scheme (CPZ) has been introduced, I am working with the County Council to make sure that any elements which do not work well for residents can be changed. The parking pressures are different in every road and the scheme needs to be adjusted to reflect this.

### Old Marston Library

Old Marston Library is attached to the Mortimer Hall in Oxford Road Old Marston Library has been running for nearly 60 years. Due to the small size of the room, there is currently only a click and collect service available.



### OXCLEAN



This is where the Parish Council organises volunteers to meet up and go round clearing the area of any litter. The Council provide the litter pickers and bags and all the rubbish is put in designated collection points. The City Council then come round and collect all the bags. Its exercise while chatting with friends and making a difference to your area. This year's event was on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June. Thank you to all who came and helped.

### COURT PLACE FARM ALLOTMENTS

One of Oxford City's very largest allotment sites, the 16 acres of Court Place Farm are right here, with entrances from Boults Lane and Oxford Road.

There are well over 150 plots, with more likely to become available in the future as once-abandoned areas are cleared.



Right now, there is a short waiting list and if you hope for a plot, **put your name down** as there is turnover.

There are whole plots (in modern money, approximately 250 square metres), half plots, and raised beds for those who want to try out growing or just have a few crops or flowers. Annual rents are £30 for a whole plot, £20 for a half, £10 for a raised bed.

If you want to do some **shared gardening**, no strings attached, visit the Marston Community Gardening (MCG) plots (details below). If you just want a walk to see other projects on site, take the public footpath to visit the **Forest Garden** plots, the **Coop Co-Op** (20 chickens living in a large run, well protected from foxes) or the new **Community Orchard**. As the trees need to root well before fruiting, no fruit from the new trees for the next couple of years, but there should be fruit to share after that – meanwhile, you can enjoy the blossom. You can also see the lavender bank and wild flower, mini-meadow being developed by MCG at the Boults Lane entrance.

Community eggs laid by the chickens are often available to buy, especially on Sundays, £1 for 4.

Also on Sundays: **The Supplies Shed**, for seeds, composts, fertilisers and other gardening needs, staffed by knowledgeable volunteers: normally 8.30-11 am.

Contact details: [membership@cpf-allotments.org.uk](mailto:membership@cpf-allotments.org.uk)

## [Marston Community Garden Group](#)



We would love for everyone to get involved – you don't have to be a gardener.... Please do just get stuck in!

### **Court Place Farm Allotments:**

**Watering** - We need help with watering, come along to plots 6,7 & 8 and grab a watering can.

**Fruit trees** - Newly planted orchard has space for a few more fruit trees, someone can plant their own (or ask us for help)

**Compost** – We can collect grass clippings for our composts if you have it spare. We can supply bags too.

**Eggs** - Community chickens continue to lay eggs. Keep an eye out on the table outside the hen coop for fresh eggs for sale.

### **Giving Garage: (at the Vicarage)**

**Tools** – there are various tools that need repairing. If anyone fancies having a go, we can supply anything that is needed.

**Jam** – If anyone is making a batch of jam, please think about donating a jar to the gazebo/stall by the Giving Garage. Rhubarb and ginger/orange is popular at the time of writing!

**Refills** – continue to be successful. Pay-as-you-feel system in place.

Keep gardening, healthy and helping.

Email: [hello@marstoncommunitygardening.org.uk](mailto:hello@marstoncommunitygardening.org.uk)

Thank you, Alistair Morris (Mob: 07804847285) & Kate Robinson

### Marston Saints Football Club



Our club has been serving the local community since 1967. Since then it has expanded to both youth and men's teams. We use the Parish land at Boult's Lane Recreation Ground and we are the leaseholders of the field next to Horseman Close. We are also fortunate enough to have the use of the Roy Garner Pavilion.

We currently have the following competing sides. U9's mixed, u10's mixed, u12's mixed, u14's, u16's, and Men's First and Reserve team.

We have training for u6's ready to start playing in the Oxford League in September and 4 and 5 year enjoying training. Both of these take place on a Monday afternoon 4-5pm.

We are hoping to restart a Marston Angels team. We have coaches ready but just need the girls!

If you are interested in your child playing or even, you're wanting to get involved in coaching please contact us on [secretarymarstonsaintsfc@gmail.com](mailto:secretarymarstonsaintsfc@gmail.com).

If you see any of us working at the clubhouse, please pop by and say hello.

### **Old Marston Mill Lane Allotment Association (OMMLAA)**

The Mill Lane Allotment site still has a small number of half plots available for lease. A half plot costs £12.50 per year. As well as growing annual fruit and veg, we keep bees and chickens and there is a small communal orchard. For enquiries, please contact the secretary Chris Mitchell on 07789991051 or email [chrisaw.mitchell@yahoo.com](mailto:chrisaw.mitchell@yahoo.com)

## OXSRAD



We are an integrated sports and leisure centre off Marsh Lane. We have various facilities including a gym, Spa Bath, Sensory Room, Sports Hall, Studio as well as the community café. There are several classes and activities running from the centre including Spinning, Mini Boot Camp, Strength & Conditioning, Circuits, SAQ/Core, Body HIIT, Boccia, Yoga, Pilates as well as more specialist equipment such as Eye Gaze & Magic Carpet.

It is the base for Oxford Tri, Headington Road Runners, Afreaka Aerials, Owl Centre as well as having therapies available such as physiotherapy, acupuncture.

Monday Circuits 6pm, Spinning 7pm

Tuesday Spinning 6pm, Spinning 7pm

Wednesday Spinning 10am, Body HIIT 12 (Noon), SAQ/CORE 6pm, Spinning 7pm.

Thursday Circuits 6pm, Spinning 7pm

Friday Spinning 10am

Saturday Strength & Conditioning 9am

Sunday Mini Bootcamp 9am, Spinning 10am.

See website for details and prices. [www.oxsrad.org](http://www.oxsrad.org)

## Old Marston Charities Trust

Old Marston Charities Trust is a small charity based in Old Marston for the benefit of those suffering severe hardship within the parish. It started during the English Civil War and gets most of its funds from renting out a field it owns. All enquiries to Tim Cann. Telephone 01865 203 139 or email [clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk)

## St Nicholas Church Choirs

We are really pleased that we have been able to start our music practices in church again. Our adult choir meets on Thursday evenings from 6.30pm and our Junior & Youth choirs on Friday evening from 6pm. We are looking for new members and so if you would like any information or would like to join a practice to see what it is like please contact: Neil Barker: [director@stnicholasmarston.co.uk](mailto:director@stnicholasmarston.co.uk)

## [Report from Kay Wood, Headteacher, The Swan School.](#)

As I write this, it is almost exactly two years to the day that I moved back to Oxford and started work on The Swan School - Oxford's first brand-new secondary school for over 50 years. At that time, sitting on my own in the offices of the River Learning Trust with just a piece of paper to start planning, it was hard to imagine what the school would be like when it finally opened. Indeed, I think it is fair to say that I would have had to have supernatural powers in order to predict quite how everything has

unfolded for the school over the intervening months and years! Yet, despite the challenges, The Swan has made such a strong start and I am so grateful for the hard work that all of our staff, students, and families have put into making our school a success that all of our community can be proud of.

There has been so much to celebrate since September 2019 when our first group of 'cynets' first walked through the gates of our temporary site. Right from the start, student attitudes to learning were exemplary and they demonstrated their determination to achieve 'more than they ever believed possible'. Everyone in our school community got involved in choosing the names of our four houses - Yousefzai, Berners-Lee, Bannister, and Hawking - named in honour of individuals with a connection to our city who have embodied our school values. We enjoyed getting to know each other more informally through our 'elective' programme of enrichment activities and educational visits, celebrating student success as part of inter-house (and inter-school) competitions and our first Christmas Carol Concert (held at Trinity College chapel).

Then, just as we were getting into the swing of things, the first national lockdown was announced and, having been open for only just over half an academic year, The Swan was forced to close its doors to the majority of our students. Since then, it has been a year like no other as we have successfully got to grips with teaching remotely, welcoming children back safely during a global pandemic, and setting up a Covid mass-testing system. Amidst all of this, we have also moved into our new home in Marston and kept calm while operating a school on a building site due to inevitable virus-related delays! We have even managed to launch our fantastic new sixth form, despite not being allowed to have any visitors onto site!

Despite all of these difficulties, however, we remain resolutely optimistic. Now, as we look forward to lockdown restrictions starting to ease over the coming months, we are excited about the opportunity to embed our school at the heart of our community. As soon as we can, we will invite our neighbours into our new buildings to showcase both the new facilities our young people are already enjoying and the parts of the site that are available for community use, ranging from the excellent sports facilities to the drama studio and beyond. We are also looking forward to our students getting out into the community to help make it better in whatever way they can. We hope this will include working with Marston Community Gardening group, joining litter picks, forging links with the elderly in our community and working with local businesses. If you have other suggestions for community action, we would love to hear from you. We are immensely proud of what we have managed to achieve so far and hope to become a school that the whole community can be proud of.

## Old Marston Parish Council Contacts

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### **COMMITTEES**

#### **Staffing & Standards**

Chair – Peter Williams  
Peter Cox  
Pat Hall  
Duncan Hatfield

#### **Finance**

Chair – Pat Hall  
Michal Cadd  
Peter Cox  
Mary James  
Louise Milford

#### **Planning**

Chair – Michael Cadd  
Michael Bates  
Mary James  
Peter Williams

#### **Environment**

Chair – Peter Williams  
Mary James  
Louise Milford

#### **Pavilion, Recreation Grounds & Cemetery**

Chair – Peter Cox  
Pat Hall  
Michael Bates

Alistair Morris

Michael Cadd

Charlotte Vinnicombe

Alistair Morris

Alan Spence

**Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer**

Tim Cann

[clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk)

Telephone 01865 203 139

8 Nicholas Avenue, Old Marston, Oxford OX3 0RN

**Oxford City Councillors**

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Michael Haines

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**Oxfordshire County Councillor**

Mark Lygo

[marklygo@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:marklygo@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

If you would like to contribute to the next issue, please email the [clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk).

Old Marston Parish Council is not responsible for any external contributions.