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# TOWER AND TOWN

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THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES



**SECOND-HAND STYLE**

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[www.towerandtown.org.uk](http://www.towerandtown.org.uk)



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June Edition Front Cover:

Prospect Hospice Window Display: Jo Payne

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# TOWER<sup>AND</sup>TOWN

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## Second-hand Style

Marlborough High Street has long been a hub for women's clothes shopping. Whenever a retail outlet became available, Facebook would be alight with speculation that a ladies clothing shop was moving in.

Whilst not entirely true, we have attracted several outlets in recent years including Jigsaw, Mint Velvet, Sea Salt, Curate, & Wolf Bridal, Dress Couture, Busby and Fox, Fenella, Blueberry, Landmark, White Stuff, Aspiga, Woolovers (was Mistral), White Stuff, Crew, Sassy & Boo, Willow & Wolf, Kim Vine and more recently, Something Chic (was Mystique in Hillier's Yard).

But we also have a thriving second-hand market bringing visitors (and shoppers) in. Ranging from CLM at the designer end of the agency market and with WORN (Hughenden Yard) representing the mid-range agency including private resales, we are also fortunate to have

many charity shops including those specialising in women's fashion.

There have been many incentives for charity shops to occupy empty retail stores – an 80% reduction on business rates from the council probably tops the list. It gives us an opportunity to recycle unwanted clothing whilst employing GiftAid as a tax break. Whatever the motive, or market, it is a fact that you can donate and buy all sorts of clothing, shoes, games and bric-a-brac locally, without resorting to the local Household Recycling Facility.

Many of us love to shop this way too - Helen, 61, likes the thrill of finding something surprising and relatively cheap. For Ellie, 31, it is a lifestyle choice to avoid the harmful effects of fast fashion. Whatever your motive, it seems that second-hand is a brand, and Marlborough can only benefit from that!

**Jo Payne - Editor**



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# Charity Shops

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Ever since retail guru Mary Portas showed Charity Shops how to up their game, the UK High Street has benefited from an increasingly professional second-hand shopping experience.

Nationwide, there has been a particular increase in the popularity of boutiques and superstores, as charities continue to diversify and innovate to meet the changing needs of customers. In Marlborough, where rents are high for independents and business rates are reduced for charities, the market is thriving and competitive.

Charity shops are now integral to our high streets, offering both advantages and challenges. With 80% mandatory business rate relief, when coupled with donated goods and volunteer staff, this significantly reduces operating costs compared to traditional retailers.

By reselling donated items, charity shops nationally divert significant amounts of waste from landfills. In 2022, they prevented 339,000 tonnes of textiles from being discarded, employed over 25,000 people and offered volunteering opportunities to around 233,000 people.

This fosters community involvement and skill development. It also raises challenges for private sector retailers around unfair competitive advantage and making our high streets a little too similar. Empty buildings or chic second hand clothing? It's an ongoing

debate. We must support our local shops – all of them.

But charities are also facing the same challenges that all employers face. A rise in the minimum wage and an increase in National Insurance contributions from April 2025 mean that more funds must be raised to foot the bill. There is a desperate need for good quality and high value donations, whilst the money which can be raised from 'rags' (clothing which is damaged, stained or soiled) is much less profitable than it once was. Whereas at one time charity shops could use unsaleable donations as an income stream, now it is an overhead on resources to sort through and discard, for very little return. Little wonder they don't want anything they can't sell.

Did you know?

- The average annual spend is around £980.50 per head on clothing (2023).
- In the UK, we consume 15.3 tonnes of materials per person per year, with only 7.5% reused.
- 30% of clothing sits in wardrobes unworn for at least a year (2012).
- We send around £140 million worth of clothing to landfill annually.

The average person in the UK buys more clothes than any other country in Europe, with estimates suggesting that UK consumers buy around 60 new clothing items per person every year. That's one billion items annually nationwide. Food for thought.

**Jo Payne**

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# Want to Donate? Do a Declutter

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There are a many, many useful books on decluttering, including the well-known 'Spark Joy' approach popularised by Marie Kondo, not to mention websites, blogs and articles.

So, it's easy to get advice, but much less easy to do the job. Set aside the time. Schedule it in the diary. Prepare yourself.

## THE BASICS

Sort by type. Only work on one section of your wardrobe at a time: jumpers, shirts, trousers, skirts, dresses, coats, shoes. Find every one of them you own, wherever it is kept in the house.

Sort into three or four categories – keep, donate, sell, discard – in piles on the bed, or in boxes.

Each item you **keep** should fit, flatter and feel good OR be extremely useful and you just love it. Ask yourself 'When did I last wear it?'

Anything you **donate** must be in good condition, clean and ready to go on a sale rail. Ask yourself 'Would I buy this in a shop?' Don't forget to do Gift Aid if you can; it adds 25% more value to your donations and reduces your tax bill a bit.

Are there items here which you could **sell** through a dress agency? Brand new with tags perhaps?

**Discard** anything damaged or stained. Hopefully you have used these items many times and they have served their purpose or need replacing.

There's lots of guidance if you are having trouble letting go. Some people use the 2-year rule. If you haven't worn it in two years, you don't need it. Others use the 90/90 rule. If you haven't worn it in 90 days and don't plan to use it in the next 90, it hasn't earned its place in the cupboard. That's seasonal of course. The exception here is occasion wear, holiday clothes or ski kit, which might not be needed year-round.

Once sorted, fold, hang and organise drawers or hangers immediately. Bag the donations and take them straight to the charity shop of your choice as soon as possible, during opening hours. Look at the discarded items and see if you can re-purpose any of them, maybe as dusters or cloths or for the fabric.

If you can do this job every season, it becomes easier each time, as you will know what you have and what you could usefully add or replace. The idea is to house less, need less, shop less.

**Jo Payne**

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# Why I Buy Second-Hand

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## HELEN (61)

A whole host of reasons! Obviously, it is a sustainable way to buy clothes, but I also like the experience of seeing the clothes and trying them on and I don't want to shop online and incur the delivery emissions. Often, I go on a site, and I just leave the items in the shopping basket and never action the purchase at all. Shopping seems like a waste of time, whereas walking into one of our many charity shops in Marlborough can just be added on to my time in town. It's a spur of the moment activity when I'm in the mood for it. As ever, there is rarely a real need. Although right now I do have to get a white flowing number for a white-themed 60th birthday party in the summer...

It's also a creative process. One can bring new life and style to an item but only spend £12 or so. Again, this figure is a bargain as I haven't driven miles, paid for parking and a tea out etc. then felt I had to buy something to justify the whole journey. If, after a couple of wears (or none) you return the item to be resold, that is fine too. Win, win always. And if any of you out there have a flowing white dress in a size 14 you don't wear any more, please donate it!

## ELLIE (31)

Three years ago I ordered some clothes online, and on their arrival I found myself absolutely annoyed by their low quality. I shouldn't have been surprised, given the prices. After all, all clothing on the planet is handmade - so if it is dirt cheap, it's because the workers are paid pennies. I was growing more aware of the pollution and water usage issues of fashion, of the pervasiveness of microplastics from synthetic fibres, of human rights abuses around these industries. Many companies will even just throw away clothes that are returned rather than bother reselling them.

Determined not to make the same mistake again, I decided to buy second-hand from then on. Obviously, some exceptions must exist (no one wants pre-worn socks) but through popular apps such as Depop, and a few visits to local charity shops, I've now been able to acquire several interesting and colourful pieces. More recently, I've put more effort into making basic repairs to beloved clothes that otherwise might have been recycled - darning, re-dyeing, or closing a burst seam. This has had mixed success (I suspect one pair of jeans has gone too far) but it does come with a sense of smug satisfaction that's hard to beat.



Credit: Jo Payne

Helen and Douglas House Charity Shop

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Available 24 hours a day all year round, for information, help and advice

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# WORN Interior Shop Display

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Credit: Jo Payne

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# Dress Agencies

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## WORN

Worn Preloved Marlborough opened in Hughenden Yard Feb 2024 with a mixture of designer, High Street and vintage clothes and accessories with a mixture of special occasion and everyday outfits.

Amber and Jo, the owners, source their clothes through a combination of their own buying and on behalf of private clients on a commission basis. This enables them to sell from luxury designers, contemporary brands and the best of the High Street, as well as some gorgeous vintage pieces. Prices start at around £10-15 and rarely exceed £100 for designer wear.

“Like us, many people are now seeing the benefits of shopping second hand. Ultimately, our goal and business ethos is to help reduce textile waste by giving clothes a new home piece by piece. There is enough clothing on the planet to clothe the next six generations, we just need to put it out there. As women we often feel the need to express ourselves with what we wear, and it can make a real difference to our confidence, and this is OK, we just need to do it in a way that doesn’t cost the earth.”

## CLM Styling

CLM Styling opened at 124 High Street in March 2024 as a second outlet for the Cirencester based business. Claire and Sally sell high quality designer brands including handbags and shoes, with the aim of helping customers find outfits for a special occasion, prepare for an interview or review and edit their wardrobe.

In addition to working on ‘sale or return’ basis for clients with a 60/40 split, CLM also offer a ‘donate’ arrangement where customers can donate their wear to benefit one of two charities supported by CLM Styling – the **Nelson Trust and Refuge**.

Partner Claire McLellan explains that “We have a strong belief that all women regardless of their background and wealth are welcome into our shops, we have a vision to empower all women.” Customer service and presentation are key to the attractive location where many will know the signature wrought iron spiral staircase.

If you wish to sell with CLM Styling, pop in and make an appointment with one of the team members.

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# The '5 Rs'

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## REDUCE

Why? Because of the impact of the clothes industry using water, dyes, plastics, CO2, human rights of garment workers and the rise of low-cost, low-quality garments flooding the market.

Strategies:

- Adopt a capsule wardrobe.
- Resist fashion trends.
- Borrow or rent.
- Less is more.
- Quality over quantity.

## REUSE

Why? Keep the life span of clothes longer before they become landfill.

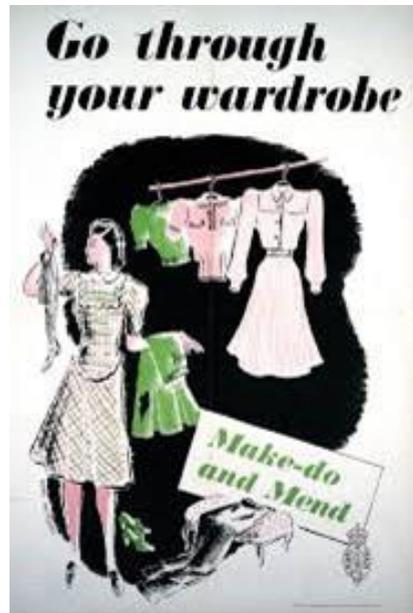
Suggestions:

- Buy second hand – charity, vintage.
- Clothes swap.
- Dress agencies.
- Apps – Vinted, Depop, Ebay, free or for sale sites.

## REPAIR

Why? Make good items last longer.

- Take good care of what you have.
- Resole (good quality) shoes (Timpsons).
- Mend with haberdashery locally (Fair Isle).
- Re-dye faded colour or change (Fair Isle, DIY Rainbows).
- Felt old woollen jumpers.



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# An Old Concept for a New Generation

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## RECYCLE

Why? Avoid landfill by repurposing.

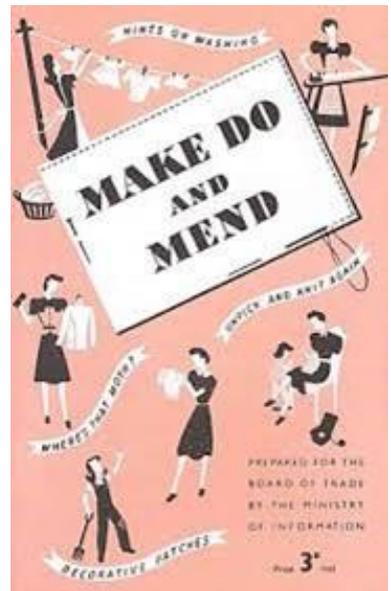
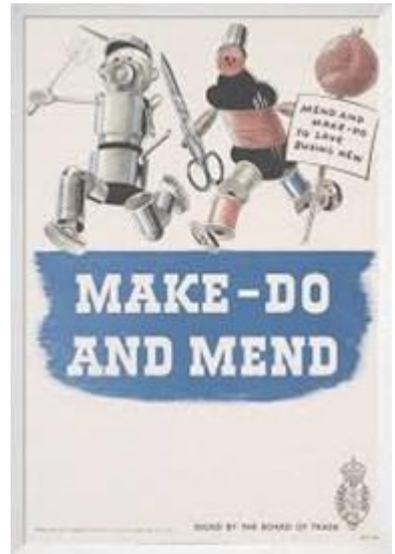
- Sweaters into yarn.
- Fabrics into reusable wrapping for presents.
- Make quilts, bunting, toys, cleaning rags, napkins.
- Crafts – rag mats, rugs, baskets etc .
- Use synthetic materials to make bags for laundry to prevent microplastics leaching into the water system.
- Towels, mattresses, pillows and duvets are hard to recycle, though some charities might accept them for use in animal shelters.

## ROT

It's a low priority in the big picture and a last resort.

100% Cotton, linen, wool items could be cut up and buried or composted – but beware of the dyes!

Jo Payne



Images from WWII UK Government Public Awareness Campaign

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# Marlborough's Charity Shops

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## **Prospect Hospice - Charity Shop**

Ladies'/children's clothes, bric-a-brac.

130a High St, Marlborough SN8 1AA

01672 516956

## **CLM Styling - Designer Agency**

124 High St, Marlborough SN8 1LZ

07852 637505

## **Blue Cross - Charity Shop**

Mostly clothes and some new items.

120 High Street, Marlborough SN8 1LZ

0300 777 1887

## **Helen and Douglas House - Charity Shop**

Clothes, jigsaws, bric-a-brac.

114 High Street, Marlborough SN8 1LT

01672 733023

## **Prospect Hospice - Charity Shop**

Men's clothes, books.

110a High St, Marlborough SN8 1LT

01672 516157

## **SURVIVOR – Charity Shop**

Opens June 2025 in Hughendon Yard

## **AGE UK - Charity Shop**

34 High Street, Marlborough SN8 1LW

## **WORN - Dress Agency**

Sales and commission based clothing, shoes, bags.

3, Old Hughenden Yard, Marlborough SN8 1LT

## **Cancer Research - Charity Shop**

Clothing, predominantly ladies'.

Some new items and cards.

108a High Street, Marlborough SN8 1LT

01672 511592

## **RSPCA - Charity Shop**

Mixture of clothing, games, bric-a-brac etc.

41 High St, Marlborough SN8 1HQ

01672 514789

## **OXFAM - Charity Shop**

books/music/vinyl

29B High Street, Marlborough SN8 1LW

01672 515932

## **Dogs Trust - Charity Shop**

Clothing, assorted items, bric-a-brac

Unit A, Hillier's Yard, Marlborough SN8

01672 513914

# Plot your preloved trail...



White Horse Bookshop

The Merchant's House

Neates Yard

Old Lloyds Bank

Castle and Ball

Hughenden Yard

Library

Town Hall

Parade Cinema

The Parade

Waitrose

Hilliers Yard

Rick Stein

©Print Image, Marlborough 2025

Map courtesy of Print Image [www.print-image.co.uk](http://www.print-image.co.uk)

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# The National Garden Scheme

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Credit: Anna Marsden



Gardens open in Manton on Sunday 27th July as part of the National Garden Scheme:

Peacock Cottage (left).

The Old Post Office (below).

Credit: Anna Marsden



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# A National and Local Success

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One of the UK's great horticultural success stories, both national and local, must be the development of the National Garden Scheme (NGS) which began in 1927.

It is a charitable organisation covering England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and offers the general public access to some of the UK's finest and most interesting gardens. Each year the 'Yellow Book' is published and made available through local libraries, listing all the NGS gardens open. A countywide pamphlet is also issued giving details of opening times, entrance fees, refreshments, plants for sale and the accessibility of each garden.

But opening to the public is only one of the aims of the NGS. Most of the effort put into opening the gardens is made voluntarily and the proceeds from entry fees and sales generated each year are allocated to regional and national charities working in the health and horticultural sectors. In 2024 the National Garden Scheme gave out a record £3,501,227.

The impact of these donations (listed below) means that thousands of people who live with health conditions such as cancer or Parkinson's, or have poor mental health, or who struggle financially as unpaid carers, can receive funding for nurses, health professionals and care workers. Grants are also made

to charities working in the horticultural sector, to Community Gardens and traineeships.

## **Beneficiaries of NGS funding in 2024:**

The Queen's Nursing Institute £500,000  
Marie Curie £450,000  
Macmillan Cancer Support £450,000  
Hospice UK £450,000  
Carers Trust £350,000  
Parkinson's UK £350,000  
Plus £700,000 to gardens and health groups and support for individual gardeners.

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**Locally, on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2025, three gardens in Manton will be open under the National Garden Scheme**, namely Peacock Cottage, Talltrees and The Old Post Office demonstrating respectively ideas and planting schemes in a large, medium and small courtyard garden. In the NGS handbook these adjacent gardens are entered under the heading 'Preshute Lane Gardens'. There is a car park and teas and plants will be on sale.

We look forward to welcoming many Tower and Town readers and have our fingers crossed for a glorious day.

**Anna Marsden**

**Marlborough Gardening Association**

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# What's On in June

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## **The Arts Society – Pewsey Vale**

**3rd Tuesday, 2.30pm.**

Bouverie Hall, Pewsey.

'The Bird in Art From Pre-history to the Present Day'. From Aboriginal rock decorations to today, birds appear in many different guises. Speaker, Frank Woodgate, will show the huge variety of ways artists have painted, sculpted or depicted them over the years.

Non-members welcome.

£7 cash or card on the door.

More information from [taspv.org.uk](http://taspv.org.uk)

## **The White Horse Summer School**

**3rd June – 1st August**

A series of workshops and lectures.

For details see:

[www.whitehorsebooks.co.uk](http://www.whitehorsebooks.co.uk)

For tickets call 01672 512071

or pop into the book shop.

## **Marlborough Floral Club**

**5th Thursday, 2.00pm**

Mildenhall Village Hall.

'My Family and Other Animals' with Selena Denham.

£6 to attend, no pre booking necessary. Information from Micky

Graham 01672514301.

## **Palestinian Rally**

**6th Friday, 11.00am – 11.45am**

at The Bulge, Marlborough High Street.

## **The Paddington Trio**

**Thursday 19th at 7.30pm**

St Mary's Church, Great Bedwyn.

Shostakovich Trio No. 1, Schumann Trio

No.1, Schubert Trio No.1.

Tickets at the door £15.

## **Marlborough Open Gardens**

**22nd Sunday, 1.00pm – 5.00pm**

Take a stroll around beautiful gardens and hidden floral gems, all within reach of the High Street. Open Gardens is an important fundraising event in The Merchant's House calendar with all proceeds going to maintain the historic house.

Tickets: Adults £10 in advance (£12 on the day). More information:

<https://themerchantshouse.co.uk>

## **Marlborough College Concert Series.**

**Wayne Marshall – piano.**

**22nd Sunday, 7.30pm.**

Information and tickets <https://>

[Marlboroughconcertseries.org/](http://Marlboroughconcertseries.org/)

## **Prospect Hospice Starlight Walk.**

**28th Saturday.**

Celebrating 45 years of care. Walkers can chose between 10k or 15k routes starting and ending at The Deanery Academy in Swindon. Sign up at [www.prospect-hospice.net/starlight](http://www.prospect-hospice.net/starlight)

## **School Dates**

Please see school websites for any updated information.

Marlborough St Mary's Primary: TD Day Monday 16th.

Preshute Primary TD Day: Friday 27th.

Marlborough College Term ends:

12.00 noon, Friday 27th .

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## Coming up in July

### **The Rain or Shine Theatre Company present 'The Rivals'**

**3rd July at 7.30pm**

Maizey Lodge, Ogbourne Maizey,  
Marlborough SN8 1RY.

This brand new adaptation combines  
Richard Brinsley Sheridan's masterpiece  
with Rain or Shine's fast and furious  
comic flair. Recommended age 7+.

Approx running time 2.5 hours  
including 15 minute interval.

Gate open for picnics at 6.00pm. Bar,  
coffee, ice creams, WC, parking.

Bring your own chairs.

Tickets in advance only. Adults £16,  
children (under 16) £8, family £42 (2A  
+2C). Ring 01672 512125 or email  
maizey50@gmail.com

This year's charity performance is in aid  
of Marlborough AgeUK.

### **Marlborough Concert Orchestra's Summer Concert**

**Saturday 5th July 7.30pm**

St Mary's Church Marlborough.

Programme:

Bliss: Suite from 'Things to Come',

Walton: Two pieces from 'Henry V',

Williams: suite from the Star Wars Saga.

Tickets on sale at Sound Knowledge, at  
www.mco.org.uk and on the door (cash  
or card) Adults £15, Students £5, under  
18s free.

## Looking Ahead

### **Julia's House Children's Hospice Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge.**

**Friday 19th to Monday 22nd September.**

The charity is seeking 20 outdoor  
enthusiasts to take part. The circular  
walk encompasses the three peaks in the  
Yorkshire Dales; Pen-Y-Ghent, Whemside  
and Ingleborough. Hikers can choose to  
complete all three peaks in under 12  
hours or take the 24 mile route at a  
slower pace. Accommodation, transport,  
mountain guides and meals will be  
provided. Trip will include an extra day of  
adventure exploring the Ingleton  
Waterfalls Trail. Register interest at  
[www.juliashouse.org/Yorkshire](http://www.juliashouse.org/Yorkshire)

### **Marlborough LitFest**

**25th – 28th September**

**Susan Fletcher** (Big Town Read), poet

**Brian Bilston** and actor and author

**Rupert Everett** will join **John Suchet**,

**Poppy Okotacha**, **Clare Chambers** and

2025 Golding Speaker **Alan Hollinghurst**

at this year's event. Sign up to Friends of  
LitFest and get priority booking, receive a  
festival brochure in the post and be  
invited to LitFest celebrations and events  
throughout the year all for £30.

The full programme will be announced in  
late June with priority booking for  
Friends of LitFest from 30th June and  
general ticket sales from 11th July.

For more information and regular 2025  
festival programme updates see  
[www.marlboroughlitfest.org](http://www.marlboroughlitfest.org)

**See poster page 19.**

**Linda Illsley** - What's On Editor

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# A Good Read

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June is traditionally wedding season so I offer you Something Old and Something New and rather than Borrowed, or Blue (who do you think I am, Max Miller?) you can have Something Pretty and Something True.

**Appointment with Venus** by Jerrard Tickell was published in 1951. Venus is a pedigree cow, the pride of a fictitious Channel Island. Set just as the Nazi Occupation begins the novel depicts an idealised feudal society, populated with loyal peasantry. The cast also includes upright chaps, picturesque drunks, plucky gels and an at-odds-with-convention artist. You may well deduce that it's very much a period piece, to modern readers probably faintly ridiculous and sentimental. Yes, but there's a subtle thread of real darkness running through it, an acknowledgement of the necessity sometimes for callous expediency, and for genuine self-sacrifice.

Willy Vlautin's **The Horse** is a symbolic as much as an actual animal. The story takes place on an abandoned mining claim in the Nevada desert, where Al Ward lives, physically and emotionally isolated. A former touring musician, he is bleakly living out his days, drinking and writing songs. He fills notebooks with lyrics, names, places and memories, compulsively turning life into music no-one is now likely to hear. Then one day

he encounters a blind and helpless horse – a chance at redemption? It sounds grim, and it is, but the spare, evocative writing about loneliness, resilience and creativity is strangely satisfying.

**Liliana the Strong** is my pretty offering, by Quentin Blake with generous, exuberant illustrations by Emma Chichester Clark. Liliana, sniffly and miserable in bed is encouraged to remember all her feats of iron-bar-bending, beached-whale-chucking strength. Sweet and funny.

**My Family and Other Spies** (Gerald Durrell missed a trick not patenting 'My Family' didn't he?) by Alistair Wood is the true story of his extraordinary parents. As a child the author lived with his mother in an MI6 training camp, as you do. His mother had operated behind the lines in divided Berlin, and her former husband was J B Wood, a mysterious, even dubious figure, whose Service record remains classified. It's a story of espionage from before WW2 to the fall of the Berlin Wall, and a son's literally world-wide journey to uncover secrets. Alistair Wood claims to be the only member of his family not to have been employed by the Secret Service (there's also a great-aunt in the mix), instead working in the UK and USA, Korea and various S E Asian countries 'in advertising'. Yeah, right. A likely story.

Debby Guest

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# Nature Notes

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With the lighter evenings now upon us there is nothing better than taking a stroll out just before dusk when the birds are singing their final chorus of the day.

A song thrush is singing a complex series of musical phrases. A male blackbird is sat high on the roof top crafting his whimsical tones, each phrase unique, a vocal signature marking his territory. As I venture further along past the water meadow, I can also hear a continuous insect-like reeling, the high pitched and sustaining song of a grasshopper warbler.

I continue my walk when, out of the corner of my eye, I catch a flicker of movement near an old, long-abandoned badger sett. For as long as I can remember, it's shown no signs of life. But now, as I glance towards one of the

larger holes, I spot a tiny black-and-white striped head cautiously peeking out from the darkness. After a while, as I stand quietly and watch, a tiny badger cub emerges and starts exploring.

The light is fading fast now so it will be nearly time to head back. Suddenly, I hear a familiar sound that stops me in my tracks and makes me smile. I follow the distinctive raspy "tseep" and soon, nestled on a low-hanging branch, I spot them - three downy tawny owlets huddled close together. Two fly off, their wings barely making a sound but the smallest remains, unaware of my presence, its voice still rising into the quiet evening air, calling persistently for the adults to return with food.

June is a month of new beginnings, and with the lighter evenings, it's the perfect time to get outside.

**Helen Llewelyn**



Credit: Helen Llewelyn



25 - 28 SEPTEMBER 2025



We're excited to announce more names for this year's LitFest, including poet **Brian Bilston**, actor and author **Rupert Everett**, as well as this year's **Big Town Read** by prizewinning author **Susan Fletcher**. They will join **John Suchet**, **Poppy Okotcha**,

**Clare Chambers** and **2025 Golding Speaker Alan Hollinghurst** at this year's festival.

The full programme will be announced at the end of June; general tickets go on sale on 11 July, with priority booking for **Friends from Monday 30 June**.

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## Marlborough Church Contacts

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# Creativity at its Best

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This year Marlborough Open Studios (MOS) celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary! In 1995 fifteen artists took part, all located in the town and surrounding villages.

Today the voluntary committee manages a major event featuring over sixty artists with workshops and studios stretching across an area covering Marlborough, Devizes and Pewsey towns and villages. One of those studios, Witcha Cottage near Ramsbury, features Susan Kirkman and Arran Miles, two of the founding artists who have the remarkable record of having taken part every MOS event! This year they will be joined by Amanda Ralph and their shared space includes print making, painting and drawing in an equally wide range of styles and mediums.

All visitors, whether buyers or not, will be warmly welcome. Artists are always happy to talk about their work and explain how it's done. Some run classes and take on bespoke commissions. You never know – many self-taught amateur artists have found a new creative hobby from an idea sparked by a serendipitous meeting. A visit to the 'right' studio might spark your creativity too.

The MOS brochure will be available later this month. Look out for a free copy in Waitrose as well as other shops and venues such as pubs and cafes around the town. Browsing through this, readers can plan studio visits taking in an enormously wide range of art from jewellery to woodwork, stone and ceramic to glass and photography. In some the appeal will be in the beauty a piece brings to your home or garden, other work has a practical use as well.

One of the more unusual practices is that of Nettie Bascomb Brown. Nettie works with live plants and uses plaster clay and cement to create casts that capture the finest details as shown in this cast of medicinal wildflowers.

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Full details are also available at [www.marlboroughopenstudios.co.uk](http://www.marlboroughopenstudios.co.uk)

Take time out and plan your route for weekends throughout July, maybe taking in a break at a pub or café along the way for a most enjoyable day out.

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**Lesley Andrews**  
Marlborough Open Studios

## **Marlborough Open Studios Preview Show**

**7 to 10 June, at The Mount House Gallery, Bath Road, from 10am to 5pm.**

Many different genres of artistic expression such as landscape painting, jewellery, print-making, photography, sculpture, drawing, ceramics, glass, textiles, mixed media will be represented. All the Open Studios artists will exhibit at least one piece.



'Medicinal Wildflowers' by Nettie Bascomb Brown

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## Family News

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**Margaret Smith**, a long-time resident of Marlborough and Tower and Town subscriber, died very peacefully on 30<sup>th</sup> April aged 93. Her life was celebrated in St Mary's where she had been married to David on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1954, two days after her 23<sup>rd</sup> Birthday; David predeceased her in 2017. She leaves behind a daughter and son-in-law, a son and daughter-in-law and three

grandchildren. Wherever Margaret lived, she made friends and found fellowship. A true community champion of Marlborough, she will be missed by many.

**Naomi Painter**  
Family News Editor

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# Clergy Letter

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Dear Friend,

On 8<sup>th</sup> May, eighty years ago, in a farmhouse in Cornwall, someone took down the blackout material, neatly folded it up, wrapped it in brown paper and put it in the attic.

Fifty years later, someone found it and used some of it to make a beautiful banner as a leaving present for me from their chapel. In the middle of the banner are three empty crosses, as a symbol of the great sacrifice and love of our Lord Jesus. The crosses are surrounded by Christian symbols of Alpha and Omega, (Jesus is the beginning and the end), the crown of thorns, an anchor, a fish and a burning candle. Blackout material, used during a time of darkness, war, violence and evil, has become a wonderful symbol of hope and light.

Eighty years ago the bells rang out and, after nearly six years of darkness, the lights came back on and could be seen in the streets of villages, towns and cities. The world of darkness was once more bathed in light.

It is right that today we remember that everyone made sacrifices during those long dark years. Many went overseas and served on the frontline in the armed forces. Everyone at home also made sacrifices fighting fires, serving in the Home Guard, working on the land and coping in so many different ways. Everyone endured the hardship caused by war.

As we commemorate and celebrate Victory in Europe eighty years ago, we

are conscious that the war was still going on in other parts of the world and life would still be hard as people came to terms with post-war life. However, VE80 is a time of celebration and giving thanks to God, as we remember not only the military victory, but also the victory of hope over despair, light over darkness, love over hate, and peace over war.

The three crosses remind us of the ultimate sacrifice of so many during the war years, but also the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus to bring us freedom with forgiveness for our sins and freedom from fear of dying as Jesus died and rose again to give us eternal life. Nothing, not even times of war, violence and suffering, can separate us from the love of God, seen so clearly in Jesus.

Eighty years on from VE Day, little seems to have been learnt, as so many people across the world are still affected by war and violence. However, as Christians, we continue to trust in God, who is our help, our refuge and strength today and tomorrow, as in ages past. Jesus is the light of the world and will always be with us, enabling us to overcome the darkness. Hatred and evil will always be conquered by love and goodness. Good Friday will always be followed by Easter Day.

May God bless you and give you peace at this time and always,

*Stephen*

**Rev. Stephen Skinner**  
Christchurch Methodist Fellowship

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# Marlborough Churches Together

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## Usual Sunday Services Times

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### **Society of Friends, Friends Meeting House, The Parade**

10.30am Meeting for worship

### **St George's Preshute (Anglican)**

8.00am Holy Communion (1st & 3rd Sundays)

10.30am Worship

### **St Mary's with Christchurch Methodist Fellowship (behind the Town Hall)**

8.00am Holy Communion (2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays)

10.30am Worship

5.00pm Informal Worship

4:30pm (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month) All-age worship with Children's tea

### **St John the Baptist, Minal (Anglican)**

9.00 am Worship

### **St Thomas More, George Lane (Roman Catholic)**

11.00 am Mass

### **Emmanuel, New Road (Free Evangelical)**

4.00pm Worship (every Sunday)

### **Marlborough College Services are shown at the college chapel**

For more information and updates please check the individual church websites.

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## FROM THE REGISTERS

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### **Departed** - We pray for the families of:

15/04/25 William 'Michael' Dain (97), Bergamot Close, Manton  
St George's, Preshute

15/04/25 Michael 'Mickey' Dobie (82), Lansdowne Place, Marlborough  
St Mary's, Marlborough

30/04/25 Margaret Smith (93), Savernake View Care Home, Marlborough  
St Mary's, Marlborough

07/05/25 Revd Dr David Maurice (74), Isbury House, Marlborough  
St Mary's, Marlborough

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# News from the Churches

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**Pentecost Prayer and Praise**  
**Thursday 5th June, 7.30pm at St Mary's**  
Marlborough Anglican team with Christchurch Methodist Fellowship are very much looking forward to hosting a 'café church' style gathering for Pentecost, with refreshments to begin with and refreshing worship and teaching to go on with! With a relaxed approach, there will be opportunities for prayer and being prayed for as we open ourselves to the Spirit of God. We look forward to welcoming you.

**Parenting Children Course**  
**From 6th June for 6 weeks.**  
**Church Cottage, Silverless Street**  
St Mary's Marlborough with Christchurch Methodist Fellowship are delighted to be able to offer this course. It is designed to help parents, carers,

and parents-to-be to strengthen their family relationships by providing them with practical teaching and support. Over the six weekly sessions on Friday mornings, the course will seek to help you to build strong family foundations and meet your children's needs while setting clear boundaries. There will be a staffed crèche available. For more information, do get in touch with the Church Office:  
marlb.anglicanteam@tiscali.co.uk

## **St George's Choral Evensong: Sunday 8th June 7pm**

St George's, Preshute is holding a service of Choral Evensong on Sunday 8th June at 7pm, sung by guest choir Opus 2 from Kintbury. All are warmly invited to this restful and refreshing service in the beautiful setting of St George's.

## **Emmanuel Church**

All are welcome to join us every Sunday at 4 pm for our weekly church service on New Road. This includes crèche and Sunday School groups, followed by refreshments (for adults) and a sandwich tea for the children.

In addition to our Sunday service, we offer various activities throughout the week for children: **Sparklers, Little Friends Toddler Group, Explorers and Friday Nights.**



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# News from the Churches

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We also hold **Home Groups in Marlborough, Pewsey and Ogbourne St George**, as well as **Ladies' Bible Study** and **Hope Explored** - a 3-session short introduction to Christianity, from Luke's Gospel. All are welcome to come and ask any questions or just listen!

For more information and updates on our events, please visit our website at [emmanuelmarlborough.org](http://emmanuelmarlborough.org).

## Marlborough Anglican Team with Christchurch Methodist Fellowship

### St Mary's 5pm Informal Worship

If you're new to the area or thinking about the faith, please consider joining us at 5pm on Sunday at St Mary's. We are a friendly, informal and open to God's Spirit. On the third Sunday of the month, we break bread together.

### All age worship: 8th June, 5pm (Children's tea 4.30pm)

We would be delighted to welcome you. Please join us for a children's tea beforehand then for our service with songs, prayer and craft.

Energize, our young people's group: 1st, 3rd and 4th Sunday of the month.

### The Ark Parent/Carer and Toddler Group - Mondays in term time, 9:30am to 11am in the Church Hall, Silverless St

Please contact Caroline Philps for more information: [cphilps2@gmail.com](mailto:cphilps2@gmail.com)

### Welcome Wednesdays

A reflection, coffee and doughnuts every Wednesday, 10.30 am in St Mary's.

### St Mary's Women's Group

Thursdays, 10am to 11am, Upstairs in Church Cottage.

### New Staff and Roles:

#### Helen Slater

PA to Rev Chris Smith  
01672 514357

[teamrectorpa@gmail.com](mailto:teamrectorpa@gmail.com)

Mon-Thurs 9:30am to 12pm

#### Karolina Bull

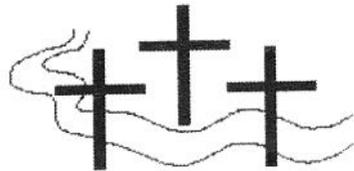
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Mon-Fri 9am to 1pm

#### Penny Reader

St Mary's Children and Families Worker  
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### Looking Ahead:



**Marlborough Churches Together**

**Fraternal: Tuesday July 1st**

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# Tower and Town Staff

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**Contributions and comments** from readers are welcome.

Please send articles and letters to the monthly editor or the chairman,  
other notices or announcements to the compiler.

All items for the July issue by Tuesday 10th June please.

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