

Marbury Ward - Parish Update - October/November 2025

Dear Parish Councillors,

As we move deeper into the autumn months and the nights draw in, we want to take this opportunity to thank all the Parish Councils in Marbury Ward - for the continued dedication, energy and commitment you bring to our communities. You are the beating heart of local democracy, and the work you do day in and day out supporting residents and keeping the character of our villages alive is deeply appreciated.



Over recent weeks, Lynn, Norman & I have continued to focus on the core issues affecting the day-to-day lives of residents: highways, planning matters, and, increasingly, flood risk management. As heavy rains become more frequent, and with the arrival of the winter season, we are prioritising interventions in known flood-prone locations. We're working closely with Cheshire West and Chester Council Officers to ensure gully-clearing schedules are up to date, drainage hotspots are being properly surveyed, and the most vulnerable areas are receiving the right level of attention. We continue to push for long-term investment in flood resilience infrastructure across rural parts of the ward, where small-scale action can still have a big impact. (A special mention to Whitley Parish where persistence has paid off - we finally had the much-needed repairs, drainage and resurfacing on Greenhill Lane completed last month – a real team effort!)



Planning remains another high-profile area, and I know many of you have ongoing concerns around development pressures, agricultural land use change, and enforcement issues. We continue to monitor applications closely and are working to ensure that the voice of each Parish is heard clearly in the process. The emerging Local Plan will no doubt be a key focus in the months ahead, and I would encourage all Parish Councils to stay engaged when the next consultation phase opens. There is real opportunity to shape what development looks like over the coming years.

Highways remain a persistent challenge - especially with ongoing budget constraints at Borough level - but we have made progress securing some much-needed resurfacing work and patching in key locations ahead of the winter. Your regular updates and photographic evidence are a critical part of helping us escalate issues through the system, and we appreciate every report you submit.

As we approach Remembrance Sunday, I know many of you will be preparing your own commemorative events in your Parishes. These moments of reflection remain some of the most important in our civic calendar. They remind us of the immense sacrifices made by those who served to protect our nation, and of our duty to those currently serving - at home and abroad. It is a privilege to join with you in acts of remembrance and thanks.



At Borough level, the financial pressures facing Cheshire West and Chester Council continue to dominate headlines, with the recently launched 'Fit for the Future' consultation asking residents how services should be prioritised. I would urge all Parishes to encourage participation where appropriate, as rural voices are too often underrepresented in these exercises.

Thank you again for your hard work and commitment. We look forward to working alongside you as we head into the winter season.

Warm regards,

Cllrs Lynn Gibbon, Phil Marshall & Norman Wright

[Report it | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

[Ward profiles | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

[Out of hours contact information | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

**A few attachments in the Appendices*

Key Updates

Planning

Planning & Enforcement - A complaint has been raised on behalf of all Parishes across Marbury regarding delays in planning enforcement. This was submitted to the Chief Exec in October, acknowledged and we are currently awaiting a response. Delays regarding a growing list of enforcements across the ward continue with residents becoming increasingly concerned as projects /developments continue without planning permission.

Winnington Lime Beds (Solar Development)

Following the approval, through Appeal, of the landfill and solar development in Winnington, we continue to liaise with resident groups and CWaC Officers to ensure that the 41 conditions, that need to be satisfied as part of the development, are addressed before each is discharged. More information has subsequently come forward regarding this site which may impact the development – we are in contact with officers to ensure that information is channeled to the appropriate teams for consideration.

Outside the conditions in place, we retain our concerns regarding the impact on roads and infrastructure in Marbury as a result of the significant HGV throughput expected. We will be monitoring this closely and raising any infringements/impact with Highways Officers for action.

See [news report](#) regarding this development.

Highways (see links)

Statutory undertaker works (i.e. gas, electric, B.T. and water) on the highway network are all on [Causeway one.network](#)

For all local information please use this link

- [Live roadworks | Cheshire West and Chester Council Highways | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)
- <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/live-roadworks>

Reminder: Swing Bridge Sutton Weaver

When is this happening Next?

15 to 22 February 2026 - Bridge work completion and testing will require a full road closure so works have been programmed during schools holidays in February 2026, to reduce disruption.

The Canal & River Trust will provide updated information through the different stages of this project. on their website: [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](#)

Consultations

All live CWAC consultations available [online](#).

As of November 2025, the following public consultations are live in Cheshire West and Chester. Each represents an opportunity for residents, businesses, and community stakeholders - especially in Marbury Ward - to help shape policy and services that affect daily life, local priorities, and the borough's future direction.

Consultation	Why Residents Should Engage
"Fit for the Future" - Council Budget Consultation	Have your say on how nearly £1bn is allocated to services like roads, adult social care, waste and neighbourhoods. Affects priorities in rural and urban areas, especially regarding infrastructure, local amenities, and economic resilience.
Drug and Alcohol Services Survey	Seeks views on how to improve access and outcomes for addiction support services. Particularly relevant to community safety, family support, and reducing anti-social behaviour.
Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2026-2031	A strategic document setting priorities for health, care, and community wellbeing over the next five years. Engagement helps shape services that promote independence, prevention, and healthy living.
2026-27 School Admission Arrangements	Consultation on how school places are allocated across the borough. Residents with children or planning families should contribute to ensure fair access and clarity around catchment areas.
Reshaping SEN Support in Mainstream Schools	Focuses on improving support for children with Special Educational Needs in mainstream settings. Parents, carers and education staff should respond to help tailor services inclusively and fairly.

Residents are encouraged to engage in these consultations to ensure that Marbury Ward and the wider borough benefit from responsive, community-led decision making.

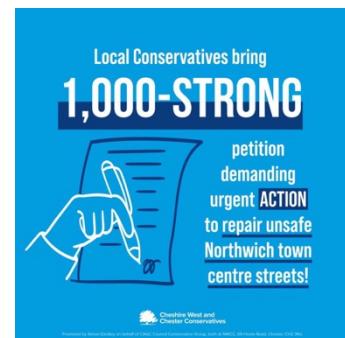
Devolution 2026 - Cheshire & Warrington

[Combined Authority](#) more detail on the link.

Concerns have been raised this week by our Group regarding the Governance of the combined authority between formation and the election of a Mayor for Cheshire & Warrington in May 2027. The board is currently made up of Leaders and Deputy Leaders of Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Chester and Warrington, so does not reflect the political make-up of each authority, with no representation of the *Opposition*. In our view this undermines democracy at this important time for the Region.

Parish & Ward Campaigns

- Green Belt protection campaign and local survey now [live](#)
- **Community-led Highways project.** All requests collated, we are still waiting for dates to be confirmed by officers for Marbury. More information to follow, once confirmed.
- **Petition: Witton Street (Northwich) resurfacing -** Petition presented to full council last month. This issue will now be referred to Scrutiny committee. Having received well over a thousand signatures from local residents, this issue has now been picked up by both the Northwich and Chester Press.
cheshirewestconservatives.org.uk/news



Policing

Marbury Policing - please see the [link](#)

Key [Contacts](#):

PCSO Diane Wiggins
Constable Dan Vinton

Updated Reporting Guide: [Reporting crime and ASB | Cheshire West and Chester Community Safety Partnership](#)

Events

Here is a summary of community and festive events taking place across Marbury Ward, Northwich, and nearby areas between now and Christmas 2025. These events provide opportunities for residents and families to come together, celebrate the season, and support local community activity.

Northwich Christmas Extravaganza

 Date: Saturday 29th November

 [Link](#):

 Description: Family-friendly celebration with festive lights, Santa, live music, lantern parade, and a funfair. Centred around Northwich town centre.

Christmas at the Magical Woodland - Blakemere Village

 Date: 29 November - 24 December 2025

 [Link](#):

 Description: Immersive woodland light trail with Santa, interactive displays and festive characters. A magical experience for families in a local woodland setting.

Christmas at Tatton Park

 Date: 15 November - 23 December 2025 (Winter Garden) & 22 November - 24 December (Santa at the Farm)

 [Link](#):

 Description: Glittering gardens, festive trails, Father Christmas, crafts and festive refreshments. Premium seasonal experience within easy reach of the ward.

Lanterns and Light at Chester Zoo

 Date: 13 November 2025 - 3 January 2026

 [Link](#):

 Description: Spectacular light trail through Chester Zoo. An iconic family outing during the festive period, slightly further afield but well attended by residents across the borough.

Winter Watch Parade - Chester

 Date: 4 December 2025, 7:00pm from Town Hall Square

 [Link](#):

📌 Description: Traditional Chester parade based on medieval watch customs. Seasonal civic and community ceremony with festive performances.

Nantwich Town Family Christmas Market

📅 Date: 7 December 2025, 10:30am - 3:30pm

🔗 [Link](#):

📌 Description: Craft market and Christmas shopping event with family activities and handmade local gifts. Suitable for residents from neighbouring rural parishes.

Members Budgets 2025-2026 / Space Hive

Community Funding

The [Member Budget Award Scheme](#) for 2025/26 allocates £5k to all Councillors to support local projects and initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life and wellbeing of their communities. Funding is provided to recipients as a discretionary award and is aimed at addressing local priorities for action. (With 3 Ward Councillors in Marbury we have a combined budget of £15k)

Member Budgets Applications are now open - budget allocations are generally agreed on a 'first come first served basis'...

*To Note: support for local events can be requested through Member Budgets.

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-and-committees/councillors-allowances/member-budgets>

Other Funding Opportunities:

Funding Opportunities: [Funding opportunities | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

National Lottery Awards for All England - Environment

This fund is available to community-led projects that improve the environment and help people connect with and enjoy nature where they live.

Funding from £300 up to £20,000 is available and the deadline for applications is 17 December 2025.

[National Lottery Awards for All England - Environment | The National Lottery Community Fund](#)

Branching Out - The Tree Council

The Branching Out small grants fund aims to support a new season of community tree planting.

[Branching Out Fund - The Tree Council](#)

NEW Community Garden Grants - [Community Garden Grants - National Garden Scheme](#)

NEW Green Heat Network Fund - Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

The Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF) is a capital grant fund that supports: the commercialisation and construction of new low and zero carbon (LZC) heat networks (including the supply of cooling) the retrofitting and expansion of existing heat networks [Green Heat Network Fund \(GHNF\): guidance on how to apply - GOV.UK](#)

Million Hours Fund - This funding is for organisations to give extra support to young people in areas with higher rates of anti-social behaviour. They'll fund extra hours of youth work to give these young people more places to go and positive things to do. [Million Hours Fund | The National Lottery Community Fund](#)

Access without limits grants - DofE

This fund is open for applications until January 2026. Grant funding of up to £10,250 is available for eligible community and voluntary organisations to set up and deliver the DofE, as well as the enrolment costs for young people taking part.

DofE not only offer grant funding but support organisations every step of the way. This includes training for your staff and volunteers.

[Access Without Limits - Community - The Duke of Edinburgh's Award](#)

Energy Efficiency Funding [Energy Efficiency Sharematch | Crowdfunder.co.uk](#)

[The Stobart Sustainability Fund | Stobart \(eddiestobart.com\)](#)

Grants for Charities or CIO's - [What We Fund - Bernard Sunley Foundation](#)

[Grants for historic church interiors and churchyard structures | The Church of England](#)

[Small Grants | Trusthouse Charitable Foundation](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Community Chest 2025 is open! - Cheshire Community Action](#)

Following Cheshire West and Chester Council's announcement on the commencement of the 2025 Community Chest small grants scheme (up to £500), Cheshire Community Action is now inviting applications from local community groups and organisations.

Climate Action Fund: Our Shared Future (tnlcommunityfund.org.uk)

Aviva Community Fund [Aviva Community Fund](#)

Veolia Funding (veoliatrust.org)

Biffa Funding [Home Page - Biffa Award](#)

Blue Spark Foundation - grants for projects supporting children and young people [Home - Blue Spark Foundation](#)

Energy Resilience Fund - Power to Change

The Energy Resilience Fund is an initiative assisting community businesses in retrofitting their buildings with energy-saving measures. [Energy Resilience Fund - Power to Change](#)

Electricals Recycling Fund - Material Focus

The Electricals Recycling Fund aims to grow existing methods or test new creative and practical ones for recycling small household electricals. If you have a project that would make it easier for the public to repair, reuse or recycle their electricals, you can apply for funding. [Electricals Recycling Fund - Material Focus](#)

London Hearts - defibrillator funding <https://londonhearts.org/defib-scheme/>

END

Appendices



Friends of Anderton and Marbury (FoAM)

NEWSLETTER Summer 2025

Summer is a great season to explore the Woodlands

From the Chair

FoAM and the Rangers' Events Programme for the year is now well underway, with 10 events held to date.

On 10th May, Greg Baker ran Dawn Chorus Walks with participants joining at 4.00am or 5.00am.

Jo Cameron organised a Wildlife Day at Marbury Country Park, which took place on Sunday 18th May.

The following day, FoAM held its 26th AGM, followed by a Quiz and Supper. The event was again well attended with 55 members present. The Minutes of the Meeting, together with the signed Accounts have been posted on FoAM's website.

I would like to thank Joanne, Brenda, Frances and all the others who helped with the arrangements and Fran Johnson for checking the accounts.

On Saturday 7th June there was an opportunity to find out what small mammals ventured into the traps the night before. My thanks to Mel and Bev for making the event a success.

On Saturday 21st June, Steve Costa led a well - attended Wildflower Walk in Anderton Nature Park.

On Saturday 28th June, FoAM's Breakfast with Moths Event was combined with Butterfly Conservation Day.

The latter had a particular significance for FoAM. During its 20th Anniversary Year, FoAM undertook a project, supported by Butterfly Conservation, to plant an avenue of 20 disease-resistant elms alongside Marbury Lane.

This year, a White-letter Hairstreak butterfly pupa was found on a new tree and, since then, butterflies have been seen flying above the new trees. You can read more about this success story later in the newsletter.

Brenda Yates organised Folk in the Park, which took place on Friday 11th July and was blessed with nice weather.

Mel organised a Mindful Movements Event on 24th July and the first of the Summer Family Events, which took place on 28th July.

The second of the Events planned for 4th August, had to be postponed because of Storm Floris and will now take place on Saturday 30th August. Our apologies for any inconvenience and we hope that those planning to attend will be able to join us on the re-arranged day.

A big thank you to The Stanley Arms, Anderton, whose quiz players donated £500 to FoAM in aid of the replacement bridge in Hopyards. The pub is always supporting local charities and initiatives.



Whilst receiving the donation, I was pleased to report that progress continues to be made with the project to replace the bridge over Marbury Brook in Hopyards Wood.

The timescale for obtaining the necessary permits from the Environment Agency to carry out the installation is uncertain, so we are currently unable to firm up a date for the work.

Also, a big thank you to Bev Owen, who has grown the number of followers on our Facebook page by another 12% over the past year. This is proving to be a valuable way of getting information out quickly.

Alan Redley

Northwich Woodlands Volunteers

Volunteer Training

Some of the volunteers undertook a two-day driving course on the shiny new red tractor that has recently arrived at the Park, and two, one-day courses on the old (but incredibly useful) Gator.

Both courses comprised classroom (barn) sessions and hands-on training with a written exam and a practical test assessed by a qualified examiner. There is now a group of excited people awaiting their certificates and looking forward to having a go for real on the tractor.



Ashton's Flash - The Bund:

Some weeks ago, the bench which overlooked Ashton's had to be removed as the legs had rotted through and it was becoming unsafe. Luckily, a member of the public offered to sponsor a replacement, so, once again, the workshop produced another of their fantastic benches.

When it came to putting the replacement in it was soon discovered that the old one had had its legs concreted in the ground. Not having access to any heavy and robust tools such as a pneumatic/hydraulic drill for the removal of such concrete, it was decided, after a short attempt to break up the concrete, that a far better (easier?) plan was to shift the location - just two metres to one side. An obvious advantage to any passer-by was that it improved the view and to the volunteers, it meant less digging: well...that was the theory.

The reality was that having dug down about 15cms through reasonably easy topsoil, the hard stuff appeared. So, it was either a lot of hard work with a steel bar, or... a hammer drill.



All started well... the new generator took to powering the drill with no problems... but it was still taking too long to get both holes dug and get the bench fitted in time. So, a quick dash back to the yard to get a second hammer drill (and a few different spades), then the team split into two, and dug two holes side-by-side... and the generator was still happy.

The bench was tested for height (Dave James was the 'test-dummy' this time): almost okay, but the spoil that had been dug out was a bit too powdery to ensure the bench would remain stable - so, another dash back to the yard for a couple of bags of postcrete and water and the bench was soon firmly entrenched in the bund.

During all this digging, etc., a couple of passers-by stopped to see what was going on (no, none of them offered to help with the digging), but they did express their gratitude that a replacement bench was being installed as it was their favourite place to stop on their meanderings around the Park and Flashes.



It's good to get feedback occasionally - especially if it's positive.



Removing Himalayan Balsam from Meadowweet Wildflower Patch



Lime Avenue Removing Epicormic Growth



Summer Pruning in the Orchard

Graham Walker and Volunteers

Rangers' Report Summer 2025

The weather has such an influence on our daily lives that we can't help talking about it. In the park it's not just our visitors that are affected but all the plants, animals and birds. The hot spring weather led to much of the vegetation showing stunted growth and the Marbury hay meadow has been disappointing. On the other hand, dry and warm suited the butterflies and moths and we've had a bumper season.

I'm typing this sitting inside at the beginning of August whilst it's wet and stormy outside. I should have been helping to run a family event at Marbury with lots of people making outdoor art. We decided to postpone due to the forecast of high winds and I'm glad we did as it's now blowing a hooley! We've rearranged for Saturday 30th August when hopefully it will be sunny, dry and not too windy!

The last couple of months have flown by with the usual cow related escapades, mysteries to solve (who is chopping the ivy in the woodland, for example), complaints and inquiries to respond to, events like SLACKFEST to help make happen, and seasonal works carried out by the regular volunteers alongside construction projects like the 2 new FoAM-funded BBQs.

The new 'little red tractor' has been out and about with the freshly trained drivers (me included) now able to make our meadow cutting, raking and clearing easier and supplement the grass cutting carried out by contractors. Volunteers have also had driving and maintenance instruction for our all-terrain vehicle to help ensure safety for everyone.



You might have noticed the new bike racks near the Marbury play area so that visitors don't have to struggle locking their bikes to railings or fences.

These have been donated to us and installed by the volunteers. We're keen to encourage visitors to cycle to visit us and enjoy largely vehicle-free paths. If you come by train to Northwich or live in the town centre,

Marbury is within easy reach by bike past the Household Waste site and down Marbury Lane.



We've also had to prepare for and go through both Green Flag and Britain in Bloom judging and I'm happy to say we did very well in both.

Having Cheshire West Council staff on site makes a huge difference (this is where I justify my job!). Dave and I can manage and plan as well as respond to problems, alongside enabling volunteers of all abilities to get involved, offering year-round hard work and dedication.

We both know that without the volunteers the parkland would not be in the award-winning condition it is now. Our volunteers take many guises both behind the scenes and more prominent. Our July BBQ volunteer picnic, held on a gorgeous sunny day, was an opportunity to say, 'thank you'.



As ever, please say 'hello' if you see us around the Park or pop into the cabin for a chat.

Mel B

Your Newsletter

Comments, ideas, photos and articles for inclusion in future issues of the Newsletter are most welcome. Email items to Joanne Redley at jarhillcliffe223@aol.com or leave them in the post box at the Rangers' Cabin marked for the attention of Joanne. Items deadline for Autumn Issue: Friday 3rd October.

Wildlife day at Marbury

Sunday 18th May saw a new event at Marbury Park - The Wildlife Day. The event was a relaxed drop in affair with various wildlife groups attending stalls in the main park area, near the Rangers' Cabin.

In attendance were Mid Cheshire Beekeepers; Northwich Hedgehogs; Barn Owls, Little Owls and Raptors; and the Woodland Trust. The weather was lovely, so there were lots of people in the Park and attendance was good.

The Beekeepers were a big hit bringing along live bees, lots of info and knowledge, and homemade honey.



Northwich Hedgehogs brought Victor Von Hedgehog and their merchandise stall, and both the Owls and Woodland Trust came with lots of information.

Feedback on the event was excellent from both the public and the stall holders.



Jo Cameron

Butterfly Conservation Day and Breakfast with Moths

This year was a combined event starting with our moth expert David Bedford opening the moth trap to show the moths which had been trapped overnight and followed by a butterfly walk led by Rupert Adams of Butterfly Conservation.

Another great morning, with a very keen audience for the opening of the trap and some fascinating moths in the trap.



Elephant Hawk Moth



Buff Tip

A large number of people joined Rupert on the Butterfly Walk down Marbury Lane to the area where the 'New Horizon' elm trees had been planted, and some were rewarded with glimpses of White-letter Hairstreak butterflies.

FoAM's 20th Anniversary Elm Tree Project A Success Story for White-letter Hairstreak Butterflies!

Listening to a radio programme from the Chelsea Flower Show in 2019, with Judi Dench talking about *Ulmus New Horizon* disease resistant elm trees, inspired Joanne Redley to initiate a project for FoAM to plant 20 elm trees to mark its 20th Anniversary.

The White-letter Hairstreak butterfly breeds on mature elm trees and the population of the butterfly in Northwich Woodlands is threatened by the loss of mature elms to Dutch Elm Disease.

Since the 1970's, the population of White-letter Hairstreak butterflies in England and Wales has declined by 93% and Butterfly Conservation has given it a high priority conservation status.

Ulmus 'New Horizon' is a variety of elm completely resistant to Dutch Elm Disease and breeding White-letter Hairstreaks have been monitored by Butterfly Conservation on a stand of the trees in Vauxhall Spring Gardens, London.

Rupert Adams, Chairman of The Cheshire and Wirral Branch of Butterfly Conservation, who is also a FoAM member, supported the project. A suitable site alongside Marbury Lane was identified - opposite established elms showing signs of Dutch Elm Disease.

Pledges of £2,000 towards the total project cost of £2,400 were obtained from Butterfly Conservation, Northwich Soroptimists, Inovyn and several individual families, and an order for the trees was placed with Hillier Nurseries.

Much work was needed by volunteers to clear the space selected for the avenue of trees which was completed in time for delivery of the 20 *Ulmus 'New Horizon'* elm trees on 20th November 2019.

Several volunteer days were also needed for the planting, as the trees arrived in substantial pots and required significantly wider and deeper holes than if the trees were bare rooted.



By May 2024, the newly planted trees were coming along nicely.



Ulmus 'New Horizon' Elms – May 2024

The White-letter Hairstreak butterfly is difficult to spot as it flies around the tree-tops, occasionally coming down to ground level to feed on nectar from flowers.



White-letter Hairstreak butterfly

The uppersides are dark brown and the undersides are a lighter brown with a thin white line called the 'hairstreak', which gives this group of butterflies its name. On the hindwing of the White-letter Hairstreak, this streak zigzags to form a letter 'W' or 'M', from which this hairstreak butterfly gets its name.

Earlier this year, Chris Reiki found a White-letter Hairstreak pupa on one of the new trees and in June, Rupert Adams found evidence of significant larval damage on several of the new trees. He also saw several spiralling males fighting for territory above the new trees.



Chris Reiki photographed this White-letter Hairstreak butterfly on one of the new elm trees, which marked a very successful outcome to this project.

Alan Redley

Wildlife

Greg Baker's Dawn Chorus Walk on 10th May again attracted keen participants at both the 4 am and 5 am start times. As the darkness faded and the sun began to break through over the Mere the sound and sight of the early birds was very rewarding.



But the best sighting of the morning, I suspect for everyone, was the Tawny Owl spotted in Big Wood.



Young life

At this time of the year, it is exciting to observe how quickly the young ones are growing up and affirming their places in the Woodlands. Here are just a few.

Some months ago, an owl box which was becoming unsafe was due to be replaced. Before the old one was taken down, a check was made to see if it had any residents – and it did! A beautiful Barn Owl flew out and off towards the woods. There was some concern at the time that this might upset any possible breeding that may have taken place this year. But never fear – the adults were back and have reared two fine youngsters. So, in July, a return visit was made to check and ring the youngsters.



Rarely will a walk from Witton Mill car park not provide something interesting, and a late afternoon in July at Pod's Hide and at Neumanns' Flash provided an opportunity for these photos.



A Reminder of Smaller Wonders of the Natural World



Red Malachite Beetle



Pudding Gall Midge on bracken



Roesel's Bush Cricket



Caterpillar of Elephant Hawkmoth

A selection from Chris Reiki's wonderful photos, contrasting beauty and the beast! My favourite has to be the hawkmoth caterpillar, spotted by Chris's grandson. Amazing that this turns into the most beautiful moth.

Joanne Redley

Wildflower Walk in Anderton Nature Park

An enthusiastic group, with quite a few newcomers, joined Steve Costa for the wildflower walk. Even as we set off there was an amazing variety of flowers in grass verges at the edge of the car park.



Steve's extensive knowledge of the wildflowers was evident throughout the walk. We only saw a few early orchids but did get great views of a Scarlet Tiger Moth.



Forthcoming Events

Summer Family Events

Rescheduled Date

Saturday 30th August – Outdoor Land Art

11.00 am – 3.00 pm. Drop in, stay as long as you like, bring a picnic and stay all day! Suitable for all, children need to be accompanied by an adult.

For more details contact:

melanie.bradley@cheshirewest.gov.uk

Thursday, 11th September

Bat Talk and Walk

Come and hear about the different bats that live in Marbury Country Park and join the very popular guided walk led by Mike Freeman and members of the Cheshire Bat Group.

Venue: Meet 8.00 pm at the Rangers' Cabin.

Booking Essential

For information and booking contact: Joanne Redley email: jarhillcliffe223@aol.com



Saturday, 20th September

A woodland walk with Fungal Punk Dave

Join the inimitable and knowledgeable Fungal Punk Dave for an amble in the park, where countless wonders of nature are just waiting for us to discover them.

Venue: Meet under Marbury Lodge (the oak shelter near the Rangers' Cabin)

Time: 10.00 am - 12.00 pm; 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm

Booking Essential

Contact: Brenda Yates 07941 710791

Sunday, 28th September

Marbury through the Centuries

A guided, leisurely afternoon walk of approximately 2½ hours, discovering evidence of the lives of those who lived and worked at Marbury from medieval times to the modern day.

Venue: Meet under Marbury Lodge (the oak shelter near the Rangers' Cabin). In the event of poor weather there will be an indoor presentation.

Time: 1.30 pm

Booking Essential

Contact: Brenda Yates 07941 710791

Green Flag and Britain in Bloom Awards

Mel and I met with the Green Flag Judges on 13 May this year to show them the work being undertaken by volunteers working with the Council's Rangers.

On 16th July it was announced that Northwich Woodlands has continued its tradition and has been awarded a Green Flag Award in 2025/26.

The Council's Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Pride and Community Safety, Councillor Stuart Bingham said:

"Our beautiful parks are vital green spaces for the community in west Cheshire, bringing people together and providing opportunities to lead healthy lifestyles.

Staff, friends of groups and volunteers do so much to ensure that we maintain the high standards of the Green Flag Award and everyone involved should feel extremely proud of this achievement"

On 10th July, Mel, Dave and I met with judges from Britain in Bloom. We felt their visit went well and are hopeful that Northwich Woodlands will receive a Gold Award in the Large Parks Category for the fifth year running.

These awards reflect the successful partnership between FoAM and the Rangers, and the outstanding contribution made by volunteers in the Northwich Woodlands.

Alan Redley



Dog & Puppy classes are held at Marbury Park on Saturdays - you can attend on a drop-in basis, or book online if you prefer. Mike is also available for 121 training & behaviour advice. The WHDC is an accredited provider of the Kennel Club GCDTS. Check out thedogclub.co.uk.

Hi Mike

Unfortunately, we won't be able to come to training classes for a while, Jessie has ruptured her cruciate. As you know she's such a lively, high-spirited dog that I'm worried she'll go stir-crazy being confined to crate rest and strictly limited exercise for 6 weeks after her operation. Do you have any ideas of how I can keep her mentally stimulated and happy?

A. I'm really sorry to hear about Jessie's injury. It can be difficult to keep any dog mentally stimulated in those circumstances but so long as you can set aside several 15-minute sessions each day then you should be able to keep her happy. Some dogs will settle well in a crate, but others might need to feel a little less restrained and therefore using a puppy pen attached to the crate can work as a good solution. Also, the plastic cone can be stressful for a dog to wear, and I find that a soft Kuoser Cone is far more comfortable.

Whenever one of my dogs has had an injury requiring a long recuperation, I've found it's a great opportunity to teach them some 'thinking' exercises. Here's a few that I've used:

1. Pick a Hand. First, get some small, tasty treats. Fish crunchies, dried meat, or cheese usually works better than kibble because the scent is stronger. The idea is to teach a dog that the treat's location varies and can only be found by scenting it out. Once they get the hang of it, you can even add a friend's two fists into the mix to make it more challenging!

* Step 1: Put one treat in your palm and make a loose, palm-down fist.

* Step 2: With Jessie sitting in front of you, offer your fist and let her sniff it while saying "Show me!"

* Step 3: Once she's sniffed, open your hand, offer the treat and say, "Good, Show me!" Repeat a few times.

* Step 4: Now, add your other empty fist. Make sure Jessie doesn't see which hand you place the treat into.

* Step 5: Move your closed hands back and forth, then offer both to her, saying "Show me!"

* Step 6: When she sniffs the hand with the treat, say, "Good, Show me!" open your hand and give her the treat.

* Step 7: Repeat, alternating the hand you place the treat in. As you continue, wait until you see her nose really "alert" on the treat hand before opening it.

2. Puzzle Toys. Nina Ottosson is a Swedish toy designer and she makes a wonderful range of puzzle toys for dogs.

They range from easy-to-difficult and both my dogs love playing them still. You can see the range on her website and order directly, nina-ottosson.com, some local pet shops carry a limited range, or if you prefer simply order online.

3. DIY Games. Puzzle toys are great, but they don't keep the dog entertained for long unless you're around to reload them. All dogs have a prey drive so Jessie will love to have something to focus on and work at, for example hiding food in knotted fabric... Get an old towel, leave a decent hem on one end and then cut the towel into strips lengthways. You'll be able to tie 2 or 3 knots in each length and the top hem will ensure that she only eats the treats within the knots and not the length of fabric! Most dogs love untying knots and once she's done about a dozen, she'll be tired and ready for a sleep.

4. Teach your dog colours. Take a muffin baking tray and a selection of different colour tennis balls. Dogs can easily distinguish between yellow, blue and red. So, place a treat in the baking tray hollow under a few yellow balls and release her to find them. Next add a few other balls into the mix to confuse her a little but again only place the treat under the yellow balls. Say "Yellow" and release her. Once she realises the treats are only under yellow then she'll ignore the others. Next do the same process with blue balls and so on.

5. Lick Mats and Snuffle Mats. Plus, stuffed and frozen Kongs can work well to keep a dog calm and relaxed.

6. During Lockdown. I made several short training videos which I've posted on Instagram@whdogclub. They're well worth watching and will give you lots of other ideas.

ALSO...

7. Outings. Even though Jessie can't go out for walks, she can still go for a drive. I like to take my dogs out to a different place each day just to watch things. E.g. Horses being loaded into boxes, workmen on a building site, the car park at Marbury Park, school collection time. We'd both sit on the boot sill and share a little picnic together - her big treat was being lifted out so she could have a wee!

I hope Jessie makes a full recovery but don't be tempted to do too much too soon. And let me know if you need any more help or ideas.

If you've got a question that you'd like me to cover, email: mike@thedogclub.co.uk

Mike Flannery



Cheshire
West

Citizens Advice Cheshire West Energy Team Toolkit

Contact the Energy Team

- To arrange a pop up, consumer talk, front line worker workshop or for any queries Email us at: energy-advice@citizensadvicecw.org.uk
- Webpages and self referral form to request an appointment:
[Energy advice service | Citizens Advice Cheshire West](#)

Wider Citizens Advice service

Residents living in Cheshire West

- Local AdviceLine: **0808 2787 806** (Mon to Fri, 9am - 4pm)
- Email enquiry service: citizensadvicecw.org.uk/advice-by-email
- Locations for in-person advice, online advice and debt assessment please visit citizensadvicecw.org.uk

National

- Contact an adviser through our national phone service. This connects you to a local Citizens Advice AdviceLine (England): **0800 144 8848** (Mon to Fri, 9am - 5pm, local times may vary)
- For online advice and other ways to contact us visit our website: citizensadvice.org.uk

Winter benefits: eligibility and payments

- **Warm Home Discount scheme:** gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme, or call the **Warm Home Discount helpline** on **0800 030 9322**
- **Park Homes Warm Home Discount scheme:** www.charisgrants.com/partners/park-homes or call **01733 797543**
- **Cold Weather Payment:** gov.uk/cold-weather-payment
- **Winter Fuel Payment:** gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment, or call the **Winter Fuel Payment helpline** on **0800 731 0160**

National grants and assistance

- Contact your energy supplier to ask about grants to help customers pay off their debt
- Charitable trust grants: turn2us.org.uk/get-support
- Energy grants for your home:
www.gov.uk/find-energy-grants-for-you-home-help-to-heat

Local grants and assistance

- Citizens Advice Cheshire West Heating Bank:
citizensadvicecw.org.uk/heatingbank
- Citizens Advice Manchester Energy Team: call **0808 164 4406**, or by WhatsApp on **07360 546 111**
- Household Support Fund and HELP scheme:
cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/cost-of-living
- Energy grants for your home: cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/home-energy
- Cadent Services Beyond the Meter: cadentgas.com/services-beyond-the-meter
- Priority Services Register: www.thepsr.co.uk

Energy Savers campaign resources

Partner resources including a social media pack, energy leaflets, translated materials and links to advice pages at: citizensadvice.org.uk/Energy-Savers-Campaign.

We've teamed up with the Energy Saving Trust for **Energy Savers Week 2025**: Checklist of home heating tips and videos available at: energysavingtrust.org.uk/energysaversweek.

Scams advice

If you've been scammed:

- Talk to your bank or card company immediately if you've handed over any financial and sensitive information or made a payment
- Report the scam to Action Fraud on 0300 123 204 or going to actionfraud.police.uk

You can also contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service for help with what to do next by calling on **0800 223 1133** (Mon - Fri, 9am to 5pm).

Visit our advice pages for more support: citizensadvice.org.uk/scamsadvice.

OUR EXPERT HEAT ADVISORS ARE HERE TO HELP YOU WITH ANY HOME ENERGY QUESTIONS YOU HAVE.

Speak to us about how to:

 CONTROL YOUR HOUSEHOLD ENERGY USAGE

 TAKE METER READINGS TO MONITOR YOUR COSTS

 SWITCH ENERGY SUPPLIER AND TARIFF

 APPLY FOR SUPPORT SUCH AS WARM HOME DISCOUNT AND SUPPLIER PRIORITY SERVICES

 ACCESS ELIGIBLE HARSHIP FUNDING

 ACCESS SUPPORT FOR ANY ENERGY-RELATED ISSUE YOU HAVE

 0800 092 9002

 THEWISEGROUP.CO.UK
 HEAT@THEWISEGROUP.CO.UK

HEAT TOP TIPS TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR ENERGY BILLS

Here's some small changes that you can make at home that will lower your energy use and save you money.



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2 DOING THE WASHING

- ✓ Most clothes don't need washed after every wear - try airing them instead
- ✓ Spin clothes on the machine's highest spin cycle to reduce time needed in the tumble dryer
- ✓ Washing clothes on Eco or 30°C rather than higher temperatures when you can could save £15 a year
- ✓ Wait until you have a full load before putting on a wash

4 IN THE BATHROOM

- ✓ Have a quick shower - it uses less energy than a bath
- ✓ Consider a shower timer to monitor how much time you spend in the shower - shorter showers use less energy
- ✓ Turn off taps while you brush your teeth, shave or wash your face.
- ✓ If you have a hot water tank, set your programme to the times of day when you use hot water - this will avoid heating water when you don't need it



1 IN THE KITCHEN

- ✓ Use the right-sized pot or pan for the job - pots with lids are best
- ✓ Use the right-sized hob ring
- ✓ Pre-boil water in a kettle before adding to your pot
- ✓ Keep the oven door shut as much as possible when cooking
- ✓ Make sure the glass door is clean so you can see what's going on without opening the door
- ✓ Let warm food cool down before putting it in the fridge



3 YOUR DOORS

- ✓ Fit draught excluders around the front door and over the letterbox - you can make one out of an old pair of joggers!
- ✓ Visit our YouTube channel for an upcycling tutorial
- ✓ Put a curtain over your front door to help keep draughts out
- ✓ Close all internal doors to help build up heat quicker



5 RADIATORS AND HEATERS

Your radiator valves allow you to heat up the full house or room by room:

- ✓ 5 is the maximum heat setting (for cold days)
- ✓ 1 is the minimum heat setting (for hot days)
- ✓ * is a frost free setting
- ✓ 2, 3 and 4 can also be used depending on your needs



6 WINDOWS

- ✓ Use heavy (or lined) curtains to help reduce losing up to a third of energy through the window
- ✓ In the winter, close your curtains at dusk to help keep the heat in
- ✓ Likewise, in the summer, close curtains in rooms you aren't using to help keep them cool



7 LIGHTS

- ✓ Replace all of your bulbs with LED equivalents to save around 50% of your annual lighting costs - around £65 a year
- ✓ Turn them off when you're not using them
- ✓ Use automatic timers to turn your lights on as it gets dark outside and to turn off at the same time you go to bed
- ✓ Place lamps in the corners of your rooms to allow light to bounce off of two wall surfaces so you don't need many



8 PLUGS AND APPLIANCES

- ✓ Avoid leaving your TV, games consoles and kitchen appliances like toasters and kettles, plugged in and switched on when you're not using them
- ✓ Don't leave your phone plugged into charge all night long - It should only take a few hours to fully charge
- ✓ Check the wattage of an electrical appliance - the higher the wattage, the more it will cost to run
- ✓ Avoiding standby and turning appliances off when you're not using them could save up to £60 a year



9 BOILERS AND TIMERS

- ✓ Check the pressure gauge on combi boilers is settling between 1 and 2 - If not, the pressure is either low or high so the boiler has to use more energy than it needs to
- ✓ Don't switch a combi boiler off at the wall - always leave it on standby
- ✓ Use your programmer (or timer) for your heating and hot water, so it's ready for you as and when needed, rather than using the 'boost' function
- ✓ During the winter, set the heating to switch off a short while before going to bed so it won't stay on too long after going to bed
- ✓ Set the heating to come on just a little while before you wake up in the morning

10 BILLS AND TARIFFS

- ✓ If you have a billing cycle and a non-smart meter, try to provide your supplier with meter readings at least once a month to ensure accurate bills
- ✓ A 'Fixed Rate' or 'Fixed Price' tariff means that the unit prices for gas and electricity are fixed - not the direct debit or your bill amount
- ✓ Compare available tariffs to make sure you're getting the best deal for your energy
- ✓ Not sure where to start? That's something we can help with



Heating Bank

We can help low-income households with their energy costs

Funds are limited for each application window and applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis

To apply scan the QR code or visit
www.citizensadvicecw.org.uk/heatingbank



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