

# Marlborough Town Council

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10<sup>th</sup> June 2026

To: Councillors serving on the Town Promotion & Culture Committee – Town Mayor, Councillor Mark Lusson, Councillors, Kym-Marie Cleasby, Nicholas Fogg (Vice Chair), Kim Wakeham & Caroline Wrench (Chair)

Dear Councillor

## Town Promotion & Culture Committee

You are **summoned** to attend the next meeting of the **Town Promotion & Culture Committee**, which will be held on **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 5.30pm** in the **Council Chamber, Marlborough Town Hall**.

Yours sincerely

*Williams*

Clare Williams

**Deputy Town Clerk**

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If members of the public wish to attend they should notify the Deputy Town Clerk of this by noon on the Friday before the meeting. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Organisations and interest groups are asked to send one delegate. Some members of the public may not be allowed to attend if all the allocated seats are taken.

If members of the public wish to attend and ask a question they should also notify the Deputy Town Clerk of this prior to the meeting and provide their question in writing at the same time.

If members of the public wish to ask a question, but not attend, they can provide the question in writing to the Deputy Town Clerk by noon on the day of the meeting, and a written response will be provided.

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## PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with Standing Order 3(f), members of the public may ask questions of the Town Promotion & Culture Committee. The time allocated for this should not exceed 10 minutes and be limited to one question per person unless directed otherwise by the Chair. A full response may not be possible without further research, and the Chair may direct that a written or oral response be given.

## AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations of interest or requests for dispensation.
- 3. Chair's Announcements**
- 4. Minutes**  
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.
- 5. Action Log**  
To receive an update on the action log.
- 6. Budget Report Month 2**  
To note and consider a Town Promotion & Culture budget report for Month 2.
- 7. Town Centre CCTV System**  
To note and consider an update report on progress.
- 8. Christmas Lighting**  
To note and consider an update report on progress with the infrastructure upgrade and further consider the proposal for a new Christmas lighting scheme going forward.
- 9. Tourism**  
To note and consider a report on existing partnerships and memberships with VisitWiltshire and Great West Way.
- 10. Marlborough Festivals & Community Events**  
To consider a proposal for a networking event/forum for the organisers of large-scale community events and festivals in Marlborough.
- 11. Gigabit Broadband Voucher System (GBVS)**  
To note and consider communication received from Wiltshire Council Digital Connectivity Team.

## Marlborough Town Council



### Town Promotion & Culture Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Promotion & Culture Committee  
held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 in the  
Council Chamber, Marlborough Town Hall at 5.15pm

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<b>PRESENT</b>	Councillor Emily Trow	Town Mayor/Vice Chair
	Councillor Mervyn Hall	
	Councillor Nicholas Fogg	
	Councillor Caroline Wrench	Chair
	Councillor Kim Wakeham	
	Clare Williams	Deputy Town Clerk

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#### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions.

**470/25 APOLOGIES**  
There were no apologies for absence.

**471/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
**Councillor Wrench** declared an interest as a freelance contractor for The Parade Cinema. **Councillor Hall** declared an interest as a Trustee of The Merchants House and **Councillor Wakeham** declared an interest as she is writing a Conservation Management Plan for The Merchants House.

**472/25 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
There were no announcements.

**473/25 MINUTES**  
**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the inaugural meeting of this committee, held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair

**474/25 ACTION LOG**  
The actions were noted and as they all relate to Christmas lighting, they will be discussed in more detail at Agenda Item 8.

#### **475/25 BUDGET REPORT MONTH 11**

Members noted the budget report.

#### **476/25 TOWN CENTRE CCTV SYSTEM**

Members noted the update report. Discussions points included:

- The Town Mayor had a recent conversation with a member of our local community policing team who are very keen to see the new system up and running as quickly as possible.
- Whether Wiltshire Police have been able to resolve internal procedural issues to enable them to be able to login into the new system remotely as this would improve efficiency and enable greater access.
- Whether, when the new system is up and running, we can promote it locally to residents and businesses alike, raising awareness of enhanced community safety and alerting businesses to the improved scope and quality of the new cameras.

#### **477/25 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING**

Members noted the update report and the need for officers to re-visit those shops/businesses that had not yet responded. Discussions points included:

- Members passed on their thanks to the Youth Council for taking the time to discuss and propose their preferred Christmas lighting scheme/colours/designs etc. Their suggestions will be taken on board when the new scheme is being considered.
- The Chair suggested talking to the Youth Council to see if they would consider running a Christmas themed treasure hunt on the High Street, similar to the Easter Egg Hunt organised by The Parade Cinema.
- Whether the shops and businesses could be approached to see if they were happy to contribute to the new lighting scheme.
- Whether to expand the new High St lighting scheme into the lanes and alleys that come off the High St – so that they feel part of the main scheme, to include:
  - Hughenden Yard/Little Hughenden
  - Hilliers Yard
  - The Parade (in the centre of the car park and along to the junction with London Rd)
  - Further up Kingsbury St (to take in the new shops)
- Whether our existing Christmas lighting budget would stretch to include an expansion (as above) and cover the costs for install/removal and storage with our existing contractors.
- If we were able to fund a new scheme and an expansion within the current budget, whether we could ask shops and businesses to play their part by dressing/lighting up their frontages, or even installing their own mini Christmas trees as Andrew's Butchers do, which look brilliant each year. It was noted that some shops already do this, but it would be good to encourage more to take part.

- Whether we invite shops and businesses along to a consultation event, when the time comes to consider the new lighting scheme, to share ideas and seek buy in.
- Whether a lease agreement for the new lighting scheme would allow for more flexibility in terms of being able to change style/designs at the end of each agreed term (potentially every 4 years).

**RESOLVED:** That indicative costs are obtained for a new lighting scheme based on the current set up/parameters, but with expansion into the lanes and alleys as discussed.

**RESOLVED:** that costs are obtained from our current electrical contractor for the installation, removal and storage of a new scheme (to include the expansion).

## 478/25 TOURISM

Members noted the report, which detailed existing memberships with Great West Way (GWW) and VisitWiltshire, the costs for both and the benefits they bring, and the amount of in-house tourism & promotion carried out by officers. Discussion points included:

- Whether we get value for money with our current memberships
- Whether we are maximising on the potential benefits on offer and if not seek to address this (resource permitting)
- Members were reminded that we no longer have a dedicated Tourism Officer, whose role was, in part, to work with these partners to maximise our exposure
- It was noted that we are entering the 3rd year of a 3-year agreement with GWW as Gateway Ambassadors
- Should this committee wish to upgrade our GWW membership, this would have significant budgetary implications and as such would have to be recommended to Finance & Policy in the first instance, for consideration in the 27/28 budget round
- There are potentially some meetings that could be attended by councillors. Cllrs Wrench and Wakeham could be available to attend ad-hoc meetings if officers were not able
- Which businesses/tourist attractions in Marlborough are signed up to these partnerships?
- Which other Town Councils are signed up to either or both partnerships?
- What is the reach within the travel trade?
- Marlborough used to be a regular stop off for coach trips, but these seem to be fewer of late, despite us having Coach Friendly Status
- It was noted that we have just recruited a new Information Officer Apprentice, who starts on 20<sup>th</sup> April and part of her role will be to positively promote the town and what it has to offer
- It was suggested that we could enhance our existing walking trails, by creating in-house, a history trail around the town, taking in some of our beautiful old buildings and alleys, along with historical facts and details. This could form part of the apprenticeship role, as a course-based project. Cllr Wakeham would be happy to support this project by helping with the narrative

- It was suggested that we should re-communicate our support to our local tourist attractions reminding them that we are here to support and help promote them, alerting them to this new committee, its role & remit

**RESOLVED:** that the Deputy Town Clerk does some research in to local memberships of the GWW and VisitWiltshire partnerships to include town councils signed up to either or both schemes.

**RESOLVED:** that the Deputy Town Clerk carries out a review of the benefits currently being utilised by the town council for both the GWW and VisitWiltshire.

**RESOLVED:** that the Deputy Town Clerk discusses with the staff team the possibility of creating an in-house history trail as part of the Information Officer apprenticeship work programme/course.

**479/25**

### **SEASONAL CHARITY POP-UP SHOP FOR CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES**

Members noted the request for help in identifying a suitable location for the relocation of a seasonal pop-up shop for 'Card for Good Causes'. Discussion points included:

- Vacant shops could be an option however this will be subject to re-letting and so a little unreliable.
- The Merchant's House shop unit which is currently unoccupied is a potential option but subject to re-letting, so again unreliable especially as the space would not be required until October. Suggest making an approach a little near the time.
- Whether they could occupy a market stall on the Weds and/or Sat markets.
- The Town Hall was suggested but discounted on the grounds that it would limit bookings from paid hirers, so this would not be financially viable.
- There are limited options in terms of spaces big enough to accommodate a pop-up shop.

**RESOLVED:** that the Deputy Town Clerk responds to the request, with a suggestion that an approach is made to the Merchant's House (and or other empty retail units on the High St) a little later in the year should they still be unoccupied.

**480/25**

### **MARLBOROUGH FESTIVALS & COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Members considered what support could be provided by the Town Council to the organisers of large-scale community events and festivals. Discussions points included:

- To include Elcot Fest in the list of events
- The need to differentiate between community and commercial ventures
- How best to recognise and support those in the town to deliver these events for the benefit of all
- The Town Council currently supports organisers in a number of ways as follows:
  - Awarding small grants

- Helping to publicise and promote events in all manner of ways
- Sharing equipment (i.e. road closure signage/barriers/bollards etc.)
- Guidance and support with applications to Wiltshire Council for various permissions
- Councillor support in terms of volunteering at events etc.
- Offering up the town hall railings for publicity banners etc.
- It was noted that all of the events listed in the report are well-established, well-organised events who reach out if required but are generally self-sustaining.
- Whether we should offer up an opportunity for all these groups to get together, share experiences, ask questions, flag issues, share equipment/resources/volunteers etc. and what that forum might look like.
- Whether it was too late to organise something in the spring, as most/many will be well into the planning stages already. Some are already planning for 2027.
- Whether as an alternative we host a networking event at the end of the event season, around October time maybe, to give everyone an opportunity to come together, share feedback from their events etc.

**RESOLVED:** that the Deputy Town Clerk, in liaison with the Town Clerk, works up a proposed format for a networking event/forum later in the year and brings this back to the next meeting.

**The meeting closed at 6.30pm.**

## ITEM 5

## ACTION LOG

To note and review outstanding actions.

Ref	Min. No	Action	Date of Mtg/ Owner	Notes
356	477/25	Obtain costs for a new lighting scheme based on the current set up/parameters, but with expansion into the lanes and alleys as discussed.	31.3.26 Deputy Town Clerk	Costs received 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2026 – see report at Agenda item 8
357	477/25	Obtain costs from our current electrical contractor for the installation and removal and storage of a new scheme (to include the expansion)	31.3.26 Deputy Town Clerk	Costs received 26 <sup>th</sup> May 2026 – see report at Agenda item 8
358	478/25	research into local memberships of the GWW and VisitWiltshire	31.3.26 Deputy Town Clerk	See update at Agenda item 9

		partnerships to include town councils signed up to either or both schemes		
359	478/25	review the benefits currently being utilised by the town council for both the GWW and VisitWiltshire	31.3.26 Deputy Town Clerk	See report at Agenda item 9
360	478/25	To discuss the possibility of creating an in-house history trail as part of the Information Officer Apprenticeship work programme/course	31.3.26 Deputy Town Clerk	Suggestion raised with Town Clerk & Corporate Services Officer 1.4.26. This will be considered as a project and discussed with the apprentice when she starts in late April. <b>ONGOING</b>
362	480/25	Work up a proposed format for a networking event/forum later in the year and brings this back to the next meeting	31.3.26 Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk	See update at Agenda item 10

## ITEM 6 BUDGET REPORT – MONTH 2

To note and consider the Town Promotion & Culture Committee budget report for Month 2.

<b>TOWN PROMOTION &amp; CULTURE COMMITTEE</b>				
<b>Income &amp; Expenditure Month 2</b>				
	Actual Year	Annual budget	% Spent	Notes
	To Date			
<b>INCOME</b>				
MARKET INCOME	£ -	£ 2,000.00	0%	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
TOURISM	£ 95.00	£ 1,000.00	9.50%	Marlborough Living Advert
CCTV	£ -	£ 5,592.00		
EVENTS	£ 95.00	£ 4,000.00	2.40%	Event Signage & refreshments
SWITCH ON EVENT	£ -	£ 6,180.00	0%	
WEBSITE/BROADBAND (renamed LAPTOPS)	£ -	£ 2,000.00	0%	
HERITAGE PROJECT	£ -	£ 1,000.00	0%	
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS	£ -	£ 15,000.00	0%	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£ -</b>			
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£ 190.00</b>			

## Purpose

To note progress with the CCTV upgrade.

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## Current Status

- We submitted a pre-app to Wiltshire Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026 in relation to the proposal to change the brackets for the High Street cameras. On 8<sup>th</sup> June we finally received notification from the Senior Conservation Officer to confirm that the change in the design and projection of the new brackets cannot be dealt with under the existing consents and permissions and as such we need to apply for new listed building consents going forward. The process of preparing these applications has begun in house but may require advice and support from a planning consultant. Timeline yet unknown.
- Despite the ongoing delay with the High Street cameras, work commenced on site on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026 with the following work being carried out:
  - The network video recorder (NVR), viewing PC and cabinet have been installed in the dedicated CCTV room, complete with all the necessary cabling required to link to the Town Hall.
  - The internal Town Hall and Town Council office cameras have been installed.
  - The new MCYC and workshop cameras have been installed and are recording.
  - The new Cooper's Corner camera has been installed and is recording.
  - Access/permissions are currently being arranged for designated MTC users of the system and training on the new system will be arranged for these members of staff.

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## Proposal

Members are requested to note the updates and await further updates as the project progresses.

**Clare Williams – Deputy Town Clerk**  
9<sup>th</sup> June 2026

## Purpose

To note progress with the infrastructure upgrade and further consider the proposal for a new Christmas lighting scheme going forward.

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## Current Status

### Infrastructure Work

- Since the last meeting, officers have managed to secure permissions from all bar one premises on the High Street in relation to support for the infrastructure upgrade for the Christmas lighting. Conversations suggest that permission will be given and the manager of the shop is liaising with our contractors and the landlord to obtain this.

- Once we have all the permissions in place, we will draft an agreement which will be signed by both MTC and the property owners.
- Our contractors have confirmed that when we have confirmation from all the premises, work can begin and this will include the installation of new boxes, the removal of unnecessary cabling and the installation of electric meters to ensure that going forward, building owners will be remunerated for the electrical supply used for the lighting over the festive period.
- Our contractors have availability to carry out this work in late summer all being well.

## **New Lighting Scheme**

- Costs have been obtained for the supply of a new lighting scheme based on the existing.
- Costs have also been obtained for a scheme which extends into some of the lanes and yards (as discussed at the last meeting).
- Christmas lighting costs are based on a 4-year lease agreement which is the most affordable option.
- Costs have been obtained for the installation and removal costs for a scheme based on the existing.
- Costs have also been obtained for the installation and removal of lights for the extended scheme.
- Costs for both the supply of the lights and the installation/removal work have increased on last year.

All costs are ex VAT and are subject to change	<b><u>OPTION A</u></b> REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING SCHEME	ADDITIONAL COST TO EXTEND EXISTING SCHEME	<b><u>OPTION B</u></b> EXISTING SCHEME + EXTENTION
Supply of new Christmas lighting scheme on a 4-year lease agreement (to include delivery, collection & storage)	£7,376 p/a	£4,887 p/a	£12,263 p/a
Installation and Removal	£12,350 p/a	£1,600 p/a	£13,950 p/a
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL COST</b>	<b>£19,726 p/a</b>	<b>£6,487 p/a</b>	<b>£26,213 p/a</b>

## **Considerations**

- Should we decide to expand our existing scheme, we will need to obtain permissions for the power supplies from existing businesses and new premises as required (as we are doing on the High Street). This is a separate piece of work and costs are yet unknown.
- Our contractors have confirmed that they will need a period of time to familiarise themselves with any new lighting scheme and this will bring an additional cost, again currently unknown.
- Lighting scheme costs received this year have increased on last years quote, which was based on the supply of pre-loved lights. This may be an option for this year's but will be based on stocks available at the time of ordering. There could therefore be a potential saving, albeit yet unknown.
- The current annual Christmas lighting budget is £15K.
- The Christmas lighting infrastructure EMR is £25K.

- Projected cost for the infrastructure work is around £20K which would give a potential saving of £5K, if it comes in under budget, which could go towards the new lighting scheme costs.
- Based on the above calculations, there is scope to fund a new lighting scheme to include installation and removal, based on our existing scheme, for the first year only.
- Consideration will need to be given to the Christmas lighting budget going forward as it is currently not sufficient as it stands.
- A proposal for additional budget for 27/28 and beyond will need to be recommended to Finance & Policy Committee for Full Council approval in December 2026.
- As time is of the essence, if the committee wish to progress on a new lighting scheme for this year, a budget decision will need to be made at this meeting.
- The recommended design/style of any new lighting scheme will need to be approved by Full Council (as per the terms of reference of this committee).

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## Proposal

Members are requested to discuss and consider the above and instruct the Deputy Town Clerk accordingly.

**Clare Williams – Deputy Town Clerk**  
**9<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

## ITEM 9

## TOURISM

### Purpose

To note and consider a report on our partnerships and memberships with VisitWiltshire and Great West Way.

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### Current Status

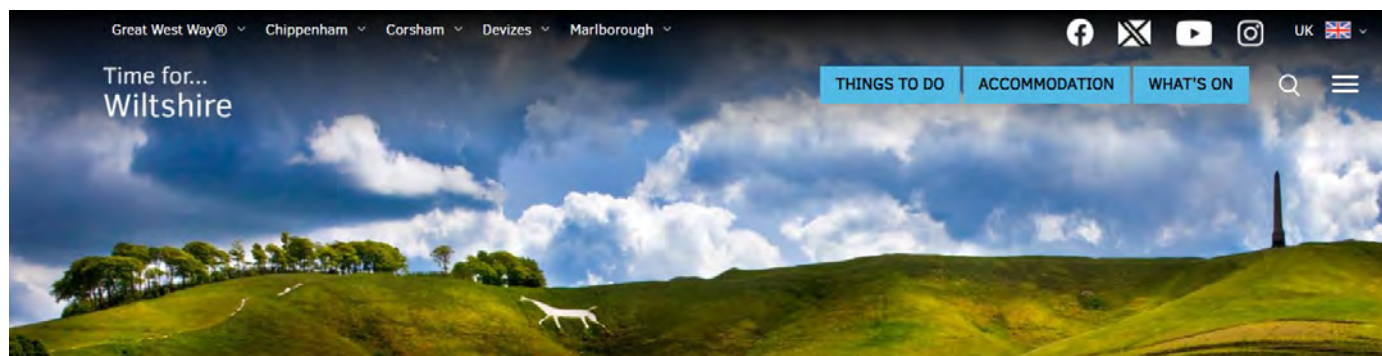
At the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> March an action was to research into local memberships of both partnerships to include Wiltshire towns signed up to either or both schemes.

There is only one level of partnership for VisitWiltshire and the following towns & villages are signed up:

Amesbury	Bradford on Avon	Calne
Castle Combe	Chippenham	Corsham
Cricklade	Devizes	Downton
Lacock	Ludgershall	Malmesbury
Marlborough	Royal Wootton Bassett	Trowbridge
Salisbury	Vale of Pewsey	Warminster

Most of these towns, I am told, also invest in additional marketing activity such as Travel trade, and PR. Marlborough are signed up as a Trade partner and also pay for additional digital marketing. Please [click here](#) to see the latest full page feature on Marlborough in the travel magazine.

Four towns (including Marlborough) also have a ‘town tab’ at the top of the VisitWiltshire website which when clicked will take the user direct to the Town Council website. *See screenshot below.* The annual stats for this are 2,594 clicks.



The annual cost for this additional feature is £750 + VAT. This is currently up for review and confirmation has been requested as to whether we wish to continue with this going forward. As a comparison, and to help members make an informed decision, we have pulled together some statistics from our VisitMarlborough Instagram page and our Town Council website. **Please see Appendix 1.**

The following Wiltshire towns/villages/areas are **Great West Way Gateway Ambassadors**:

Marlborough	Vale of Pewsey	Box
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*The fees are dependent on the number of employees and town population, which for Marlborough would be £379 per annum for three years.*

The following Wiltshire towns are **Great West Way Designated Destination Ambassadors**:

Bradford on Avon	Calne	Chippenham	Corsham
Devizes	Malmesbury	Trowbridge	

*The fees are again based on number of employees and town population, which for Marlborough would be £2,120 per annum for three years.*

Details for both levels of membership can be found [here](#).

## Proposal

Members are requested to note and consider the contents of these reports and agree whether to continue with the additional website feature at a cost of £750 + VAT per annum, as detailed above.

**Clare Williams – Deputy Town Clerk**  
**1<sup>st</sup> June 2026**

## Purpose

To note and consider proposals for a networking event/forum for the organisers of large-scale community events and festivals and agree a format for the evening:

- **Proposed date** (based on Town Hall and officer availability) – Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2026
- **Time** - 6pm – 7pm
- **Venue** – Town Hall
- Refreshments
- Facilitated meeting with an agenda, chaired by MTC or an informal gathering/sharing of ideas and experiences? To be agreed.
- Invite organisers to share experience of their recent events or just informal networking? To be agreed.
- Other ideas and suggestions

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## Proposal

Members are requested to note and consider the proposal above, agree a format and instruct the Deputy Town Clerk accordingly.

**Clare Williams – Deputy Town Clerk**

**1<sup>st</sup> June 2026**

The Committee is asked to note and consider the communication stated below received from WC Digital Connectivity Team on the 2 April 2026:

*Dear Marlborough Parish Council*

*We are pleased to let you know that the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme (GBVS) is now open for applications, with the window running until August 2026.*

*This scheme presents a valuable opportunity for your parish to help residents and local businesses access fast, reliable full fibre broadband. Importantly, this is a parish led initiative: your local leadership, engagement, and coordination are what will enable projects to progress. Wiltshire Council's role is simply to pass on the information and tools you need.*

*Please refer to the attached Parish Engagement Instructions (**See Appendix 2**), which outline the process for checking eligibility, engaging your community, and connecting with suppliers. These steps give you everything needed to guide your parish through the scheme. To focus your attention, we have attached the 169 affected premises that Building Digital UK (BDUK) have informed us are out of scope and potentially viable for the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme.*

*While we will do our best to answer any clarification questions, our involvement is limited. Delivery of these GBVS projects rest with the parish and the registered suppliers responsible for delivering the scheme through Building Digital UK (BDUK). Due to the volume of out-of-scope premises recently notified to us we are unlikely to respond quickly to enquiries, therefore please utilise all resources provided to you in the attached guidance. While we fully appreciate the time constraints involved, Wiltshire Council has no influence over any extension of these deadlines.*

*Wiltshire Council Digital Connectivity Team*

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## **Proposal**

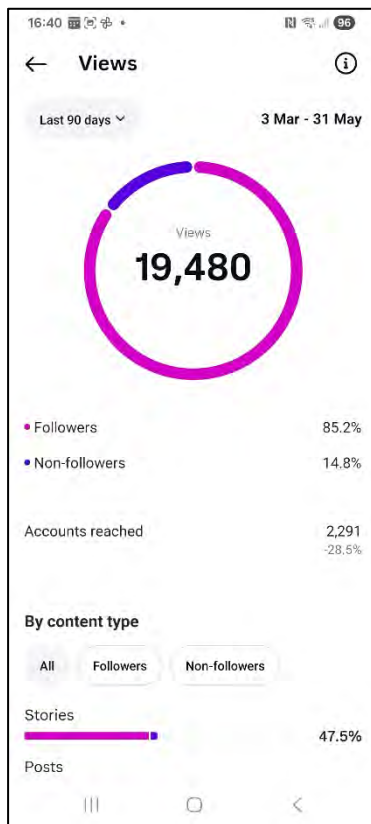
Members are requested to note and consider the email received from Wiltshire Council's Digital Connectivity Team and instruct the Deputy Town Clerk accordingly.

**Clare Williams – Deputy Town Clerk**

**1<sup>st</sup> June 2026**

## VisitMarlborough Instagram Page Statistics

**March – May 2026**

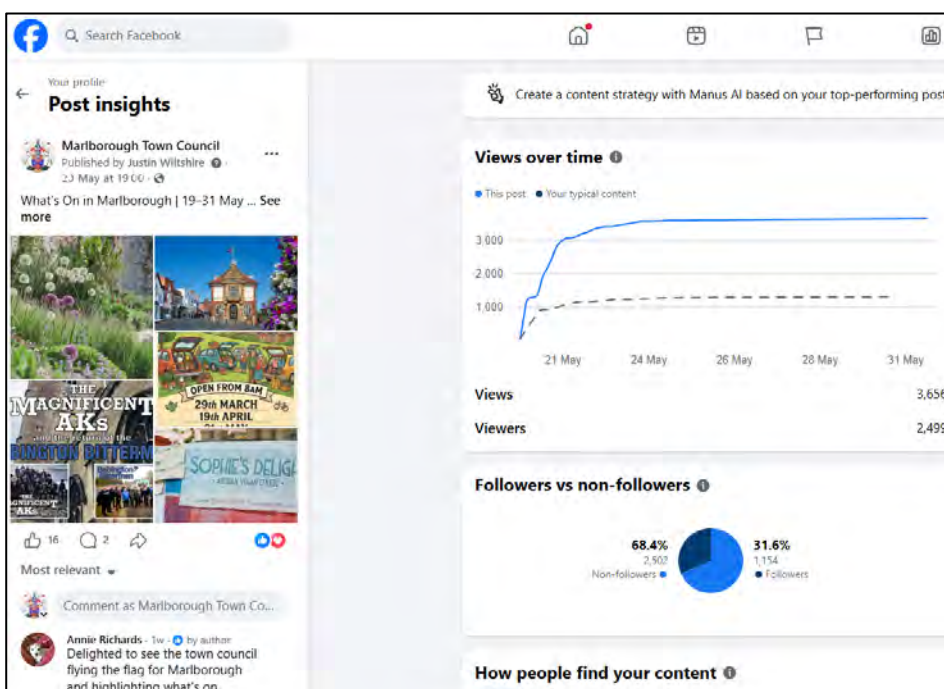


**May 2026**



## Marlborough Town Council Website Statistics (since set up in 2019)

NB - our website does not have the facility to enable us to print off more detailed/ month by month statistic reports.



[Visit Marlborough](#) main tourism landing page – 118,723 hits

[Events](#) page – 100,402 hits - but you can more than double that because the events themselves also appear on the MTC home page which has received 1,163,369 hits

We do a “what’s on” post more or less every week.

Here is an example of the stats and reach (3,656 views by 2,499 people) for just this one post.

## APPENDIX 2

### **Parish Councillors' Quick Guide: Leading Your Community Through the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme (GBVS)**

The [Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme \(GBVS\)](#) helps rural homes and businesses upgrade to fast, reliable full fibre broadband with up to £4,500 per eligible property. The application window closes in August 2026, and projects must include a minimum of two premises.

To make this work, local leadership is essential. Each parish plays a key role in coordinating interest, championing the project, and helping residents move smoothly through each step. The parish council's role isn't just supportive; you are the local organisers who make the scheme viable.

To help focus your efforts, Building Digital UK has identified the out of scope premises attached to this guidance. These properties are your primary audience and should be the starting point for your engagement.

While we fully appreciate the time constraints involved, Wiltshire Council has no influence over any extension of these deadlines.

#### **1. Understand the Scheme**

##### **What the scheme does?**

GBVS provides government-funded vouchers that suppliers can combine to help cover the cost of building new full fibre networks in rural areas that won't get gigabit broadband commercially.

This is for properties that receive under 100 Mbps, are not included in a commercial gigabit rollout, and are not covered by any other government funded upgrade programmes. You can check Openreach's Fibre Checker [here](#) to see if your property qualifies.

#### **2. Check If an Address Is Eligible**

Residents should complete two checks to confirm whether an address is eligible. First, use the [Gigabit Voucher Eligibility Checker](#) and entering the postcode to verify eligibility. Second, check current broadband availability using tools such as the [Ofcom Broadband Checker](#) and the [Openreach Fibre Checker](#) which provide details on existing coverage and planned upgrades.

#### **3. Build Local Interest (Your Parish's Key Leadership Role)**

Projects can only progress when enough nearby homes or businesses commit, which is why parish leadership plays a crucial role in building local interest. As community champions, councillors should talk with residents and local businesses, use parish newsletters, websites and social media to raise awareness, encourage people to check their eligibility, and consider forming a small working group or appointing a coordinator within the parish. It is especially important to focus outreach on the Building Digital UK identified out of scope premises. Suppliers such as Openreach often require a community "pledge target" before agreeing to a build, and effective parish led engagement is what helps make that achievable.

#### **4. Contact an Approved Supplier**

Once there is enough local interest, an approved supplier will review the feasibility of the build, prepare a cost estimate, and set up a pledge portal for residents to register their commitment. Councillors can support this stage by keeping residents updated on progress and, if helpful, hosting information sessions to explain the process and encourage participation.

## 5. Residents Pledge Their Voucher

Residents pledge their voucher by visiting the supplier's pledge portal, entering their address details, confirming their intention to use the voucher, and agreeing to the required terms, such as ordering a fibre service within twelve months of the network going live. If the pledge target is not met, the project cannot proceed, which is another reason why strong parish leadership and community engagement are essential.

## 6. Voucher Validation

Once enough pledges have been submitted, the Department for Science, Innovation & Technology will email residents asking them to validate their voucher. Residents must complete this validation within twenty-eight days; if they do not, the voucher may be cancelled, though this comes with no penalties.

## 7. Network Build

If the project is approved, the supplier will schedule the build, which typically takes around eight to ten months to complete, with work carried out either overhead or underground depending on the local infrastructure. Parish councils can support this stage by sharing updates with residents and helping to answer general community questions.

## 8. Order a Gigabit-Capable Service

Once the network goes live, residents can order full fibre service from any provider using the new infrastructure. The service must at minimum either double their previous speeds if they were below 50 Mbps or deliver at least 100 Mbps if they were already above 50 Mbps, and all orders require a minimum twelve-month contract.

### Useful Links

Purpose	Tool	Link
Check GBVS eligibility	Gigabit Voucher Checker	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-your-gigabit-broadband-availability">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-your-gigabit-broadband-availability</a>
View broadband coverage	Ofcom Broadband Checker	<a href="https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/broadband-coverage">https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/broadband-coverage</a>
Check Openreach fibre plans	Openreach Fibre Checker	<a href="https://www.openreach.com/fibre-checker">https://www.openreach.com/fibre-checker</a>
Community partnership info	Openreach "Connect My Community"	<a href="https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/fibre-community-partnership/connect-my-community">https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/fibre-community-partnership/connect-my-community</a>