Green Party Councillors' Report of **October 2024**, for Marden & Yalding Ward Parishes –

After a busy September at the Borough Council, there has been a bit of a 'pause' in activity, with no Council meeting and the Cabinet meeting taking place on 30th October. Having published the new Council's forward Strategic Plan in outline form last month, we are awaiting the results of the Residents' Survey before finalising details for further confirmation. At Cabinet, proposals about a new system for Garden Waste subscriptions from next year were passed, along with the six-monthly update to the Council's Biodiversity & Climate Change Action Plan (which I lead on), and a motion on Palestine/Gaza. There were no Questions from local residents and only one other Councillor query.

There has been a lot of work on Planning and related forward-looking matters going on behind the scenes, with Stakeholder Governance Groups for the two 'garden communities' proposed at Lidsing and Lenham Heath being formulated and a DPD (Development Plan Document) for Gypsy & Travellers being put out for consultation on 31st October, with a mid-December return date.

My main focus, after I had a 10-day holiday mid-month, has been on the third annual Eco-Hub in town, in the Mall (lower level, next to ex-Wilco), which was opened last weekend and runs until 9th November. Already, it has proven a great success with lots of families turning up this week and stands being manned by South East Water, local businesses and Bearsted Climate Action Network, alongside volunteers from the Parishes Environment Network and MBC waste/biodiversity staff.

In November, there are less town events going on after Halloween but, in the run-up to December, there are the Xmas Lights switch-on (21st), an 80's disco at the Museum (23rd) and 'Art in the (Mote) Park' on 30th. There are Christmas events at the Museum coming up, see www.OneMaidstone.com.

A couple of local Primary schools have requested some 'No Idling' posters/banners that the Borough had apparently got in stock, but not publicised widely. If other Ward schools want them, please ask.

Parish Matters –

Yalding. Grace attended a meeting with Golding Homes residents in Laddingford on 30th, alongside the Community Warden and our local beat Police officer, Chad. Mike attended the coffee morning at the Chequers on 22nd, meeting around 25 local residents and heard some reminiscences/stories.

Nettlestead – Further liaison with residents over issues in Nettlestead Green; meetings to come.

Collier Street & **Hunton –** Little to report this month, although I enjoyed the 'Green Hop' weekend at Hunton Club, along with Sausage week at the Chequers, and Marden Club's annual beer festival…

Marden – Attended two Parish meetings and assisted the residents' "plastic free Marden" initiative.

Mike Summersgill – 1st November 2024

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