

Wednesday Walkers decided some time before the start of Covid to voluntarily contribute £1 a walk each which would be used to buy a gate to replace a stile on one of our popular walks. Some stiles are really ropey and we're not as agile as we once were! Despite not being able to meet to walk for so much of last year, we soon collected enough money for our first gate with money left over for more gates.

On 24th November we "inaugurated" our first gate near Lower Woodend below Marlow Common. We chose to dedicate this gate to Brenda Smith who had been our Convenor since the group first got together when u3a started in Marlow (more than 15 years!) and stood down in 2021. We managed to keep the dedication a secret from her!!

To mark this momentous occasion, the group stopped for mulled wine, bubbles and nibbles at the gate! Fortunately we didn't have to explain what we were doing to any passers by. Unfortunately Brenda was not able to join us on that walk but she has been to see it since and approves!

The photos show the dedication of the gate and the group celebrating its installation!

We already have enough money for two more gates. One is going to be installed near Danesfield School and we have yet to choose our third location - watch this space!

Jane Statham, our Convenor, liaised with the Chiltern Society to arrange this gate and they were very helpful.

The Society was established in 1965 with the aim of maintaining and improving the Chilterns for the benefit of both residents and visitors. The Society's area covers 650 square miles, including the whole of the Chilterns area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB). It stretches from Goring and Caversham in Oxfordshire in the South-West to Luton and Hitchin in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire in the North-East. They campaign against threats to our Green Belt and our rich biodiversity, reviewing planning applications, maintaining thousands of miles of footpaths and bridleways, creating new footpaths and cycleways, and managing 12 conservation sites. One such site is Marlow Common (North), close to our gate, a 27-acre site consisting mainly of woodland and glades criss-crossed by footpaths and a bridleway. A number of Marlow U3A members are part of the regular group of CS volunteers who meet for 3 hours at a weekend once a month to look after and improve the site for the benefit and enjoyment of others.





