



# Marlborough Dark Skies Festival

## October 25th – 31st 2021

### Evaluation Report

The aim of the Dark Skies Festival was to **'Inspire, amaze, and engage** new audiences about the night sky'.

The focus was on Arts, Education, Fun and Families. *Inspiring people about the night sky* is the first step to conserving dark skies and reducing light pollution.

By making dark skies, star gazing, science, and astronomy attractive and relevant to as many people as possible, we hoped to set people on a journey of discovery and future action to preserve dark skies.

The festival combined art and science in a celebration of the beautiful dark skies in the North Wessex Downs. Through variety, participation and keeping most activities free, we hoped to reach a wider audience, families and young people and help people develop a deeper emotional engagement with the night sky.



Museum of the Moon (by artist Luke Jerram) hanging in Marlborough College – photo Susie Price

### Covid-19 Delay

The festival was due to take place in October 2020 and was postponed due to Covid-19 until October 2021. In 2020 it would have been on a full-moon weekend. The 2021 festival fell on dates with dark skies and school half-term.

### Partnership

The Festival was initially the idea of Marlborough Town Council, partnered at early stage of development by the North Wessex Downs AONB and later Marlborough College.

The partners set out with the purpose of:

- Inspiring people about the night sky and its beauty in this wonderful, protected landscape
- Increase pride for the area, keeping Marlborough vibrant and supporting the local economy
- Working with arts partners to increase the experience of both organisations; helping us be more inclusive and reach out to new audiences
- Through the festival, we can build trust, rapport and working relationships for potential future joint projects incorporating the arts, and sharing best practice

Marlborough College joined with two objectives: 1) To promote an interest in, and understanding of, the night/dark skies and 2) To contribute to their partner school programme of supporting children and young people to take part in STEM studies.

## Festival Headlines

- ★ Over 3000 people got to see the incredible seven-metre inflated Museum of the Moon by UK artist Luke Jerram hanging in the stunning location of Marlborough College. For 7 days members of the public had access to it and for 7 days school groups and the college had access.
- ★ An additional 34 arts & science events took place during the main festival weekend in and around Marlborough, attended by at least 1500 people.
- ★ Most events were free or very low cost.
- ★ 51% of bookings included someone under the age of 19.
- ★ Over 230 school children and 1000 Marlborough College students got involved.
- ★ More than 65 people volunteered a total of more than 800 hours.
- ★ 100% of volunteers surveyed said they enjoyed being involved in the festival 'a lot'.
- ★ Many of those delivering activities gave their time for free or expenses only.
- ★ 100% of contributors surveyed said they would get involved again.

## Inspire, Amaze, Engage & Educate

Using postcard feedback, attendees told us:

- ★ I enjoyed the fact that such a fantastic exhibit was here at Marlborough College and the town. Joyful to say the least. (Museum of the Moon)
- ★ What a moon! Make sure you put it back in the sky at the end!
- ★ It's been amazing! Stunning backdrop to a jaw-dropping sculpture. Seeing all sides of the moon. Unforgettable.
- ★ **We loved the moon. We took a disabled young person who really enjoyed the sensory experience**
- ★ Very very good lecture by Chris Lintott, very successful Moon installation and very helpful stallholders at the Town Hall exhibition



Museum of the Moon – photo Susie Price



Blast Off! with Space Detectives – photo Jacky Akam

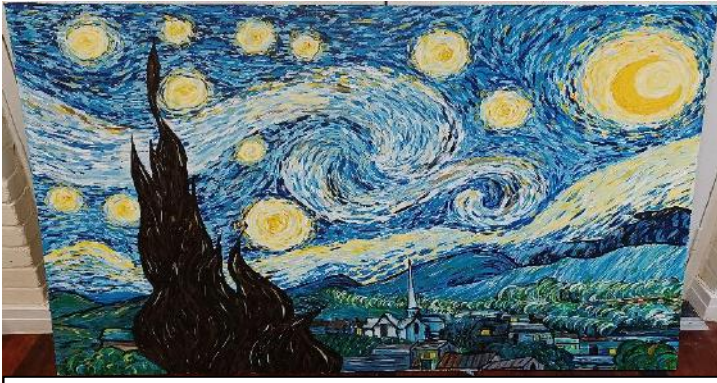
- ★ We are a family of 5 and there was such a diverse programme available that we all found something to spark our interest. My older child and I enjoyed the lectures, while the younger children loved the hands-on experiences and art. It's been exceptionally well organised and informative.
- ★ Loved the sketching workshop - very inspiring and very helpful teacher

- ★ Really great event. Thank you! Really liked the 'make me an astronaut' workshop.
- ★ Great festival especially with so many free events for families
- ★ **Thank you so much. I'm a teacher and it's ignited so much in me to pass on**
- ★ Really good timing - not only for stargazing but re climate change conference! As many issues re problems with light pollution were highlighted. Very informative. We learnt a lot!



Astro sketching-photo Jacky Akam



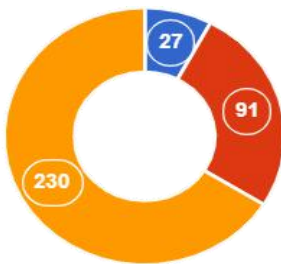


Starry Night - Community painting led by No Added Sugar

- ★ Excellent programme of events and well organised and managed. Especially enjoyed Space Dust talk and moths talk. (Plus, a lovely night of stars on the Common)
- ★ **So important to preserve our dark skies. Will certainly look up more now in wonder....**
- ★ The painting in the Youth Centre was really great fun for all the family.

#### Has the festival sparked your interest in the Night Sky?

Total Responses: 348



a little (7.76% / 27 votes)



somewhat (26.15% / 91 votes)

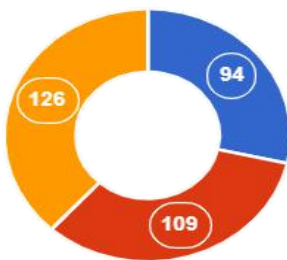


a lot (66.09% / 230 votes)

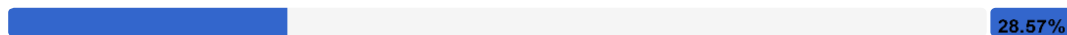


#### Have you learned anything new about the Night Sky?

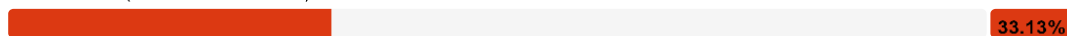
Total Responses: 329



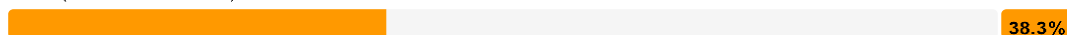
a little (28.57% / 94 votes)



somewhat (33.13% / 109 votes)



a lot (38.3% / 126 votes)



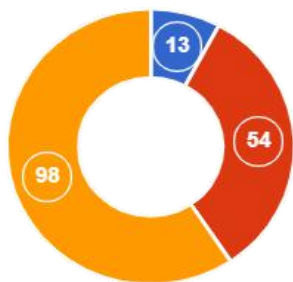
## Taking Action

Interest in the Night Sky and an awareness of the importance of dark skies was reflected in the feedback. One parent said because of the festival their son 'has a telescope on his Christmas present list, and I'm sure we will all enjoy stargazing in the dark'. Another said, 'My daughter has subsequently chosen to do a school project on Tim Peake'. One Mother told us her son who is sitting his exams next year hopes to be able to achieve results so that he can go on to be an Astrophysicist.

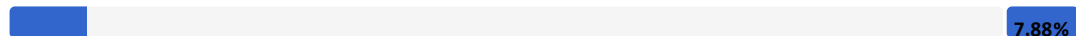
Attendees gave these responses to questions about caring for dark skies and taking action to minimise light pollution:

Q10 - Do you care more about protecting dark skies after attending the festival?

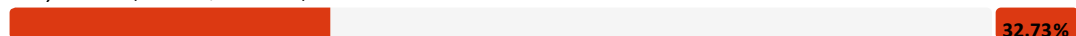
Total Responses: 165



No (7.88% / 13 votes)



Yes, a little (32.73% / 54 votes)



Yes, a lot (59.39% / 98 votes)

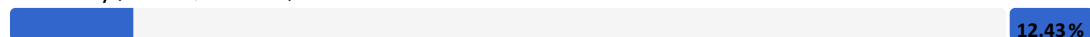


Q11 - Are you likely to take any action to minimise light pollution due to attending the festival?

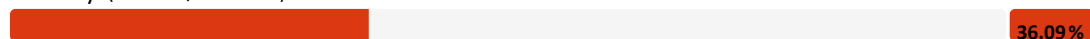
Total Responses: 169



Not likely (12.43% / 21 votes)



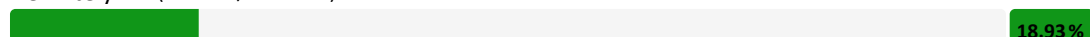
Possibly (36.09% / 61 votes)



Very likely (32.54% / 55 votes)



Definitely will (18.93% / 32 votes)



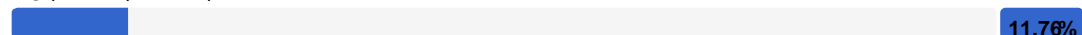
Volunteers gave these responses:

Has helping at the festival meant that you now care more about protecting dark skies?

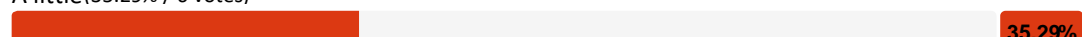
Total Responses: 17



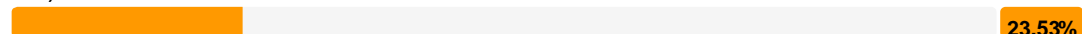
No (11.76% / 2 votes)



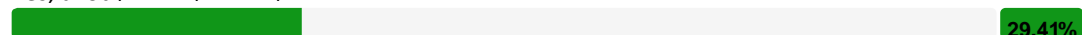
A little (35.29% / 6 votes)



Yes, some (23.53% / 4 votes)



Yes, a lot (29.41% / 5 votes)

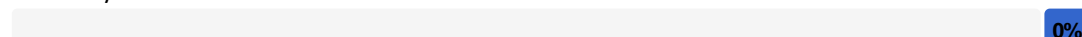


How likely are you to take action to minimise light pollution after helping at the festival?

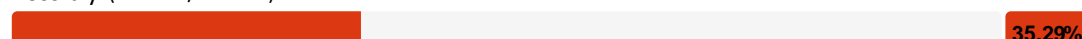
Total Responses: 17



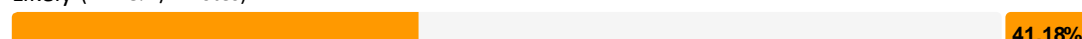
Not likely (0% / 0 votes)



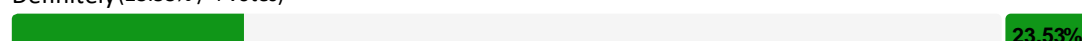
Possibly (35.29% / 6 votes)



Likely (41.18% / 7 votes)



Definitely (23.53% / 4 votes)



## New audiences, enjoyment and learning

In addition to the 329 postcards giving feedback, we sent a more detailed online survey to attendees. 166 attendees (22%) completed the survey.

- ★ 55% of respondents had **not** attended festivals or events in Marlborough before
- ★ People felt the festival increased their interest 'a lot' in:
  - The Arts – 19%
  - Astronomy – 45%
  - The Sciences – 24%
- ★ 90% had enjoyed the festival 'a lot'
- ★ 58% felt they had learned 'a lot'
- ★ 60% said they cared 'a lot' more about protecting dark skies after attending the festival
- ★ 52% said they are 'very likely to' or 'definitely will' take action to minimise light pollution due to attending the festival

In the comments, many people said they only reason they hadn't answered 'a lot' was because they already had a keen interest and/or knew a lot and/or take action to minimise light pollution.

Some emails from attendees:

Please can you give my thanks to Jonathan, Charlie and Gavin for the observatory tour this evening. Myself, my husband and my kids learned so much, the tips and tricks we learned were really practical and at nearly 50 I didn't know you could see Jupiter and Saturn with the naked eye.  
Absolutely amazing.

Thank you, Jo

I just wanted to say what a fantastic time my partner and I had yesterday! We went to the excellent photography exhibition in St Peter's Church, followed by Charles Barclay's very informative Q&A session (always so nice to feel like no question is silly!), and then the talk about life on the ISS - it was so fascinating

The highlight was what good luck we had with the weather last night at the Blakett Observatory - it was just magical. And we learnt so much and will see the night sky with new eyes as a result. Thank you ALL so much, I know the kind of work that goes into an event like this - it was wonderfully organised with so much for everyone.

I SO hope it won't be the last Marlborough Dark Skies Fest!

With very best wishes, Beth

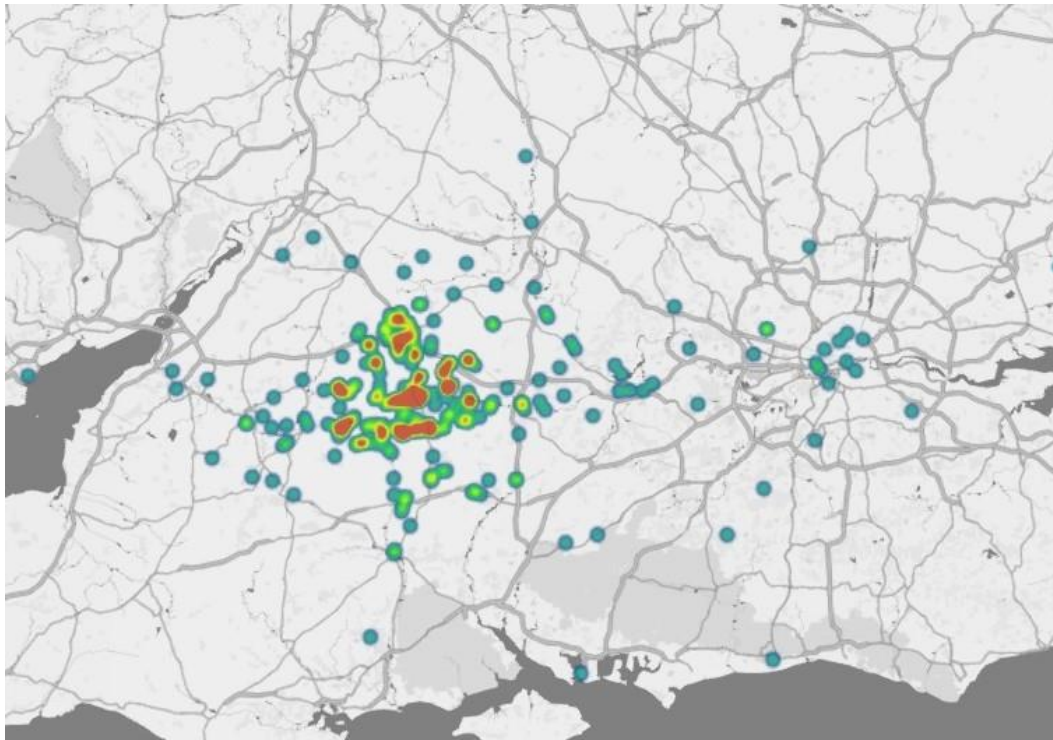
I found it a most stimulating event and was impressed with the quality of the speakers. The three that I attended were by Simon Holbeche, Mary McIntyre and Robert Harvey. It was a fabulous day and well worth coming to Marlborough to attend.

It was also extremely well organised. When you repeat the event, as surely you must, please, do extend the publicity, as I only found out about it by accident and know of others who knew nothing of it.

Well done, Marlborough.

Kind regards, Clare

## Where people came from



Most people who came to the festival live in or close to Marlborough. 68%

But some came as far as London, Cardiff, and Southampton for the festival!

### Q4 - Travelling

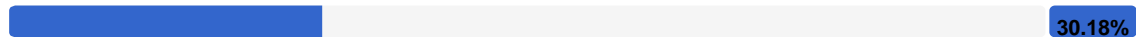
Total Responses: 169

We're interested in how far people travelled to attend.

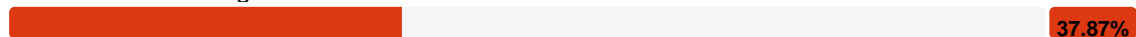
Please tick the closest option:



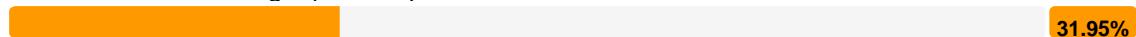
I live in Marlborough (30.18% / 51 votes )



I live near Marlborough (37.87% / 64 votes )



I travelled to Marlborough specifically for the festival (31.95% / 54 votes )





## Schools' work

In the weeks leading up to the Festival some work took place with children in Years 1 to 5 at St Mary's School in Marlborough. 135 children enjoyed starry stories with Storyteller Roger Day and learned about space, astronauts & rockets with Space Detectives.



"Roger captivated the Year 2 class and they sat engrossed in his stories.

By the end of his session they were bursting with questions about what he had shared and this led to us exploring google earth to find out where they had come from.

It was a great introduction to the festival for the children and something they will remember for a long time."

Jenny Swankie, Marlborough St Mary's

"I really enjoyed the astronomer talk as we got to learn about so many different things!" - year 5 pupil

"The storyteller did lots of different voices which made it really interesting, and he did a really loud bird squawk which made us all jump!" - year 5 pupil.

**"I really enjoyed learning about space and the astronomer was able to answer lots of questions!" – Year 5 pupil.**

"I enjoyed finding out from the storyteller why the moon is here." – Year 3 pupil.

During the festival No Added Sugar Arts enabled attendees to create two community paintings. One was given to St Mary's School after the festival. Carol Hitchen (Resource Base Manager) said:

"Thank you so much for the 'Starry Night' painting. We have been learning about space and the solar system in Oak Class (complex needs resource base in KS2) at Marlborough St Mary's."

St Mary's School children later got an opportunity to visit the Museum of the Moon along with children from other schools. Over 230 children visited the Museum of the Moon in its 2<sup>nd</sup> week:

- ★ St Mary's, Marlborough - Years 3 and 4
- ★ Holy Cross, Swindon - Years 5 and 6
- ★ Swindon Academy- Years 7 and 8
- ★ St Katherine's, Savernake – Years 5 and 6
- ★ Chilton Foliat School + Shalbourne -Years 5 and 6
- ★ Shalbourne – Years 5 and 6
- ★ Preshute - Years 5 and 6

'Nearly all the children brought along were 'Pupil Premium' children and as such get very few experiences in life - this was rectified yesterday!' The Head Teacher at Holy Cross in Swindon

Approximately 50% of the children who came from the Swindon Academy Years 6 & 7 were pupil premium children.



From Charles Barclay, Marlborough College:

“Children have been the most vociferous that we should not defile the Moon by mining... The most asked question was to show the Apollo 11 landing site. One six-year-old was concerned that the police will be after me for pinching the Moon.”

Over 1000 students, Years 9 to 13, at Marlborough college got to see the Museum of the Moon. Pupil's parents, college staff and their families also had a chance to visit the Museum of the Moon in the College Chapel.

## Volunteers

49% responded to the online survey.

As well as 100% of those responding saying they enjoyed being involved in the festival:

- ★ **94% of volunteers felt supported and valued** whilst helping at the festival. A few gave comments about improving parking and signage.
- ★ 88% they would volunteer again
- ★ 59% were able to attend other events at the festival as well as helping

Today was amazing! I so enjoyed my shift and stayed till 12 listening to Charley and watching everyone. The visitors flowed beautifully and the extra families filed in seamlessly and were VERY appreciative.

🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟 Cheers. Sue 👍

## Contributors

68% responded to the online survey

- ★ 82% said they enjoyed being involved with the festival 'a lot'
- ★ 95% felt the benefit of being involved outweighed the effort
- ★ 76% said they made useful new contacts
- ★ 50% had time to attend other events, 50% were too busy delivering their own
- ★ 70% felt the festival planning and administration was excellent
- ★ 35% felt the marketing was excellent, and 35% only adequate. 82% helped promote the festival.
- ★ **100% would get involved again!**

Feedback from one group was they would offer one night of stargazing instead of two as it was a big commitment. Also, that the exhibition was quiet on Sunday and attending one day would have been better.

Comments from Contributors:

Great space to work in with good facilities. Everyone reported that they really enjoyed the activities and we worked with all ages. Participants told us that they phoned friends and neighbors to come along and take part because they enjoyed it so much. There were times when families had to wait, however they took this time to look at the work already produced and we gave the little children biscuits to keep them happy. Participants made 179 squares. From No Added Sugar

Met new people. Some have become volunteers with us...

I just want to say A BIG thanks for inviting us to Marlborough Dark Skies Fest, we had a great time, especially stargazing on the Common. Robin Wilkey, Swindon Stargazers

I thoroughly enjoyed the whole Dark Skies Festival. Thank you for all the hard work that you and Clare (and all your teams) put in to get Marlborough looking up and thinking astronomy! It was excellent and I look forward to the next event. Though you do realise that the clear skies we enjoyed were a total freak occurrence and we will never be so lucky again! Gavin James

**Mary McIntyre FRAS @Spicey\_Spiny** · 30 Oct

Had a fantastic day at the #MarlboroughDarkSkiesFestival doing my Women in Astronomy talk + #lunarsketching workshop. These collages show all the sketches created today by children and adults. Aren't they amazing?! @MTCwilts #astronomysketching



gh Dark Skies Festival 2021 Lunar Sketching



On board the ISS with Jo Richardson – photo Susie Price

Several organisations reported an increase in people joining them either in the lead-up to the festival or afterwards. This includes Action for River Kennet (ARK) and the Friends of the Blackett Observatory. One reported an increase in followers on Facebook. The North Wessex Downs AONB had 135 new people sign-up to receive their e-newsletter.

## Other Partners and Venues

The Green Dragon got behind the festival by creating a range of Dark Skies cocktails!

The White Horse Bookshop hosted a series of talks in their beautiful room, stocked relevant books and created a window display

### Dark Skies Fest

The Green Dragon in Marlborough presents three new cocktails developed in-house for the Dark Skies event.

<p><b>Nebula</b></p> <p>Dry Vermouth Gordon's gin Blue Curacao Grenadine Elderflower tonic</p>	<p><b>Nebula Night Sky</b></p>
<p><b>Meteor Impact</b></p> <p>Aperol Cointreau Angostura bitters Grenadine Aromatic tonic</p>	<p><b>Meteor Martini</b></p>
<p><b>Dark Matter Superfluid</b></p> <p>Dark rum/Kraken Light rum/Bacardi Pineapple juice Lime juice</p>	<p><b>Dark Matter</b></p>



Photo Dawn Whitehall



The National Trust at Avebury put on Lantern Making & Night Walk at the incredible World Heritage site

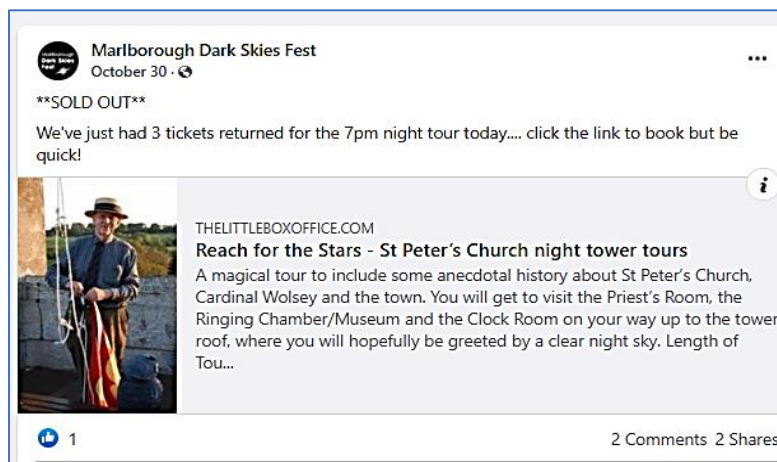
**“Just a quick line to thank you for inviting us to be a part of your festival. We had a lovely event here at Avebury albeit a chilly one under a crisp night sky.”**

Janinka

St Peter's Church, Marlborough hosted an exhibition of Astrophotography by Robert Harvey, and took people on night tours of the tower



Action for River Kennet took 14 people on a magical Nocturnal walk to see, listen and learn about the night wildlife at Stonebridge Meadow.



## Publicity

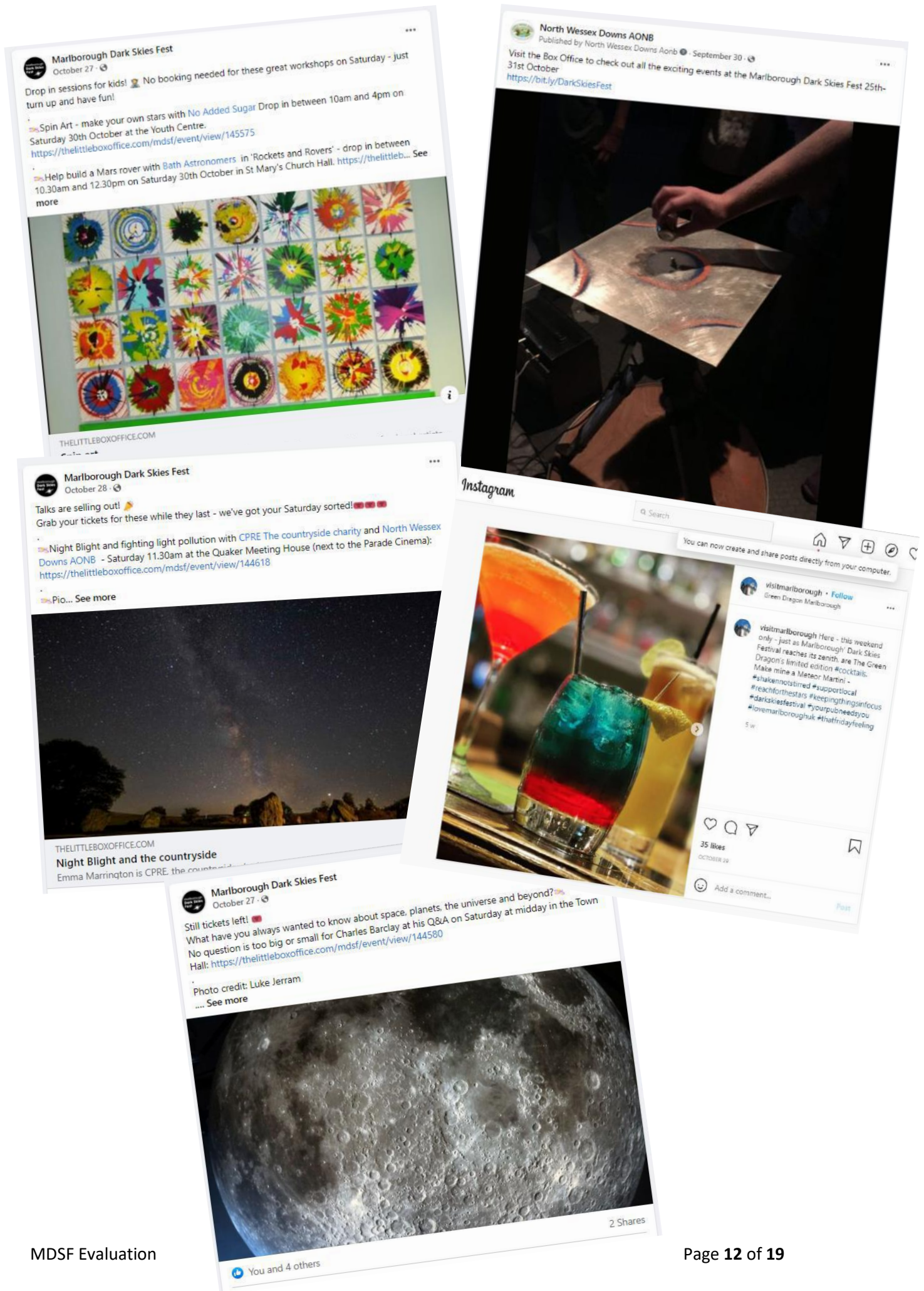
The focus of printed publicity was primarily Marlborough, with social media having a wider reach. We received several comments in the feedback about publicising further afield.

Printed materials included banners on railings, flyers, leaflets, fact sheet, display, and programmes:





Social media reached almost 50,000 people with 2,500 engaging in some way.





How people heard about the festival:

Social media/online news	33%
Word of mouth	28%
Organisers/contributors correspondence	13%
Local printed news	11%
Schools	6%
MDSF printed materials	4%
other	5%

Several local organisations ran articles after the festival:



## Marlborough Dark Skies Fest a starry success

1 November 2021 // by Sue Round



Ziggy and River Shama-McAuslan with dad Arun enjoying the rocket workshop in the Town Hall

Marlborough's first Dark Skies Fest has been a huge success with thousands enjoying the galaxy of talks, exhibitions and outdoor events on offer – most of them free. Cllr Don Heath, who was Chair of the organising committee, said, "We have been overwhelmed by the response – many events sold out online as soon as the bookings went live."

The sell-out events included the spectacular Museum of the Moon, a seven metre inflated Moon/art installation hanging in Marlborough College Chapel, and keynote speaker, Professor Chris Lintott (BBC Sky at Night, University of Oxford).

## Gazette & Herald

News Sport Lifestyle Business Announcements Awards

### NEWS

3rd November

## Reaching to the skies!

By Geoff Baker  
Senior Reporter



Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Messenger 0 comment

Marlborough's Dark Skies Festival proved such a success that organisers are calling for an encore – with an even bigger show spreading to possibly include events in Hungerford and Calne.

Around 3,000 people flocked to the talks and displays as the magic of the skies enchanted the whole town.

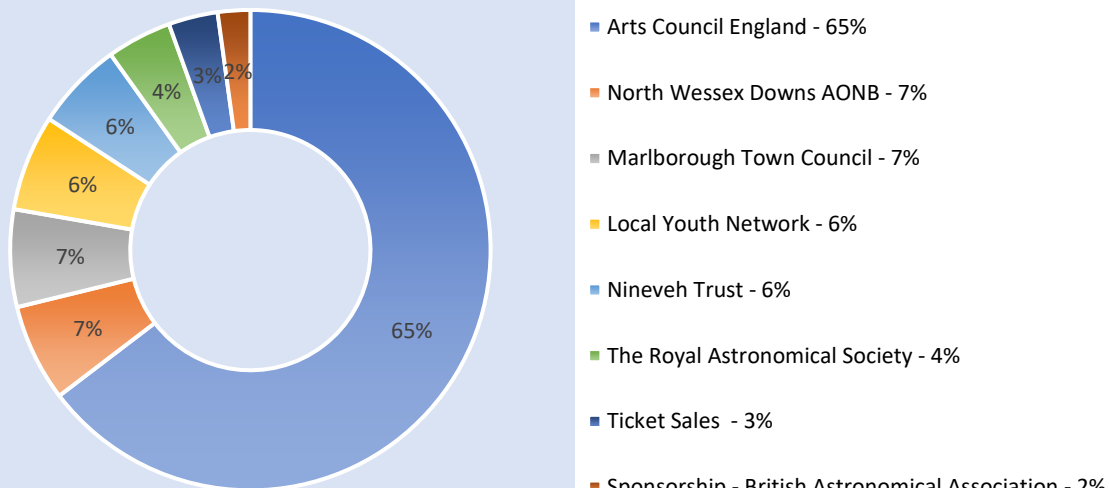
"It was extremely well-attended and I would like to see it done again," said Cllr Don Heath, who chaired the event's working group.

"Tickets sold out very quickly and we could have sold more. When we planned the festival we were in the middle of the Covid restrictions and we had to limit numbers because we expected that Covid restrictions could have still been in place."

## Finances and Funding

The budget we set for the festival was £27,300. The final cost was less, due to; one artist not being able to attend, reduced venue costs, cost effective marketing, not requiring any equipment hire, and not spending contingency we had allowed for Covid-19 adjustments. The final cost was just over £21,000.

Funding/Income sources for the Festival



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

**Wiltshire Council**

Local Youth Network



**Royal  
Astronomical  
Society**



## Festival Planning/Running

The feedback about the event organisation from attendees, contributors and volunteers was mostly very positive.

### What worked well

From the organisers' point of view:

- ★ The partnership worked well - the mix of partners meant the marketing reach was excellent.
- ★ Contributors and volunteers were amazing; passionate, positive, generous, self-sufficient, and very flexible.
- ★ All the hosting partners; the College, the bookshop, National trust, St Peter's Church and ARK were excellent and great to work with.
- ★ The promotion, marketing materials and branding, including feedback postcards were very professional and seemed to work.
- ★ Timing of the promotion was about right to create a buzz around the festival
- ★ It was very good having half-term as part of the festival timing
- ★ Plans around Covid, numbers and ticketing worked.
- ★ Having experts at the Museum of the Moon made a huge difference to people's experience.
- ★ Relations and contacts amongst those interested in preserving dark skies is strong following the festival.
- ★ We made good contacts with arts organisations we could work with in the future.
- ★ Funders were very positive, some promoting the festival. The Arts Council was flexible about the year's delay in spending.
- ★ The College Chapel was the perfect location for the Museum of the Moon.
- ★ Very fortunate with the weather Saturday evening, lovely clear skies and even a meteorite.

From the attendee online feedback 85% of people said they had no difficulties accessing information, using the box office, contacting us or at festival venues or activities.

### What could be improved

For attendees that did have difficulties, the comments were mostly about:

- Venue directions/signage
- Events booking up quickly
- Navigating the booking office website
- No easy way to cancel tickets not wanted.
- No reminder of bookings
- More information needed about length of sessions & distance between venues.

There were quite a lot of comments about increasing and widening the marketing as lots of people didn't know about it. However, the events filled up quickly and were 88% full before the weekend.

Unfortunately, the artist due to deliver 'hertz' had to reluctantly cancel due to last-minute unavailability of her support team. All attendees were refunded after the festival.



Simon Holbeche bath Astronomers with his Robot – photo Sue Round

Due to the risk of Covid, we were unable to have a planetarium, in its place there was a Space Odyssey. All ticket holders were informed of the change before attending.

### Attendance during the festival

Due to Covid-19, most venues were restricted to 50% or less of usual capacity. For this reason, most events were ticketed. By the time of the main festival weekend, 88% of all tickets were sold. For some

events up to 50% of those booked did not attend. However, with people turning up on the off chance of getting in, overall events were 80% full. In the feedback survey, 15% of people said they were unable to attend some or all the events they booked for. The overriding reason people gave was illness or having to isolate. There was a storm Saturday night/Sunday morning, and a few people had travel problems.

### Lessons learnt for another time

A discussion between the event organisers highlighted the following as areas for improvement or consideration another time.

#### Planning

- Have a dedicated event organiser/manager.
- More consideration for risk assessments and first aid
- Involvement of councillors was disappointing
- Try to spread the work to reduce pressure
- Recruit volunteers sooner
- Could we consider a similar event across the AONB?

#### Promotion

- Get more businesses involved. Consider timing – following the two Mop Fairs and the Lit Fest might have affected their interest
- Get more pubs & hotels involved. Maybe effects of Covid affected their interest
- Ensure all marketing materials are completely accurate/correct
- Info on box office could have been clearer.
- Improve signage
- Have a physical box office
- Go harder with advertising

#### Tickets

- Automate sending email reminders for events
- Have a system where people can cancel their own tickets & preferably have a waiting list too
- If Covid allows, have more drop-in events, less ticketed.
- Without Covid, capacity could be increased.



Swindon Stargazers- Malcolm Woods

#### Programme

- The activities were very popular, but talks were slow to fill up, consider having less
- Have less happening at the same time to reduce stewarding needs
- Arts were popular and consider having more
- Better map in the programme.  
More stargazing.

## Meeting the Festival Purposes

### Inspiring people about the night sky and its beauty in this wonderful, protected landscape

This purpose was important to all partners. There is no doubt from the feedback that people were inspired about the night sky and the importance of keeping dark skies dark. For the North Wessex Downs AONB conserving dark skies and reducing light pollution in the protected landscape is the main priority.

Feedback indicated that the Festival met this purpose, probably more so than we expected. It is hard to measure the increase in awareness of the protected landscape in general, but 135 people signed up to the AONB e-newsletter and many AONB leaflets were taken by attendees.



- ★ I really enjoyed the talk on the importance of dark skies!
- ★ Would like the opportunity to do the dark skies events more than once a year.

Well done for a fantastic Dark Skies festival last week. I have heard nothing but rave reviews from local Marlborough residents and it was a great way to raise the NWD AONB profile. We need to do more of that!

Kind regards, Sarah Nicholls, Chair of the North Wessex Downs AONB Partnership

### Increase pride for the area, keeping Marlborough vibrant and supporting the local economy

This was the main purpose for Marlborough Town Council along with preserving dark skies. Many of the feedback comments were about how wonderful it was to have this festival in Marlborough, both from residents and those visiting. In a town with a population of 8000, an event of this size had an impact.

50% of the attendees said they had not been to Marlborough before.

- ★ Very exciting to have such an educational and enjoyable event in Marlborough
- ★ We lunched and shopped in Marlborough. Estimated spend including car parking approx. £50.
- ★ Fabulous exhibit- proud to have had this displayed locally.
- ★ We made a day of it in Marlborough, and it's inspired us to visit again in a couple of weeks. Thank you

There was a general feeling of hustle and bustle in the town across the week and into the weekend, with a steady stream of visitors walking between the High St and the College Chapel to visit the Museum of the Moon. The many teashops, cafes and eateries were thriving also, with families grabbing a quick bite to eat and drink before heading to another talk or workshop. There was a lot of new interest in the local area, and several community groups reported new members signing up to get involved in local initiatives. Action for the River Kennet (ARK) in particular, attracted new members to its group following their talk and walk down by the riverside.

Clare Harris, Assistant Town Clerk, Marlborough Town Council

### Working with arts partners to increase the experience of both organisations; helping us be more inclusive and reach out to new audiences



Spin Art - No Added Sugar – photo Don Heath

We worked with more arts partners than came to fruition; we would need more capacity to involve any more. Those that did attend were a crucial part of the festival, blending and balancing the sciences. Judging from the feedback, the arts were very popular and helped us reach the younger audiences, and families. The collaborative art and astro-sketching were very well received. The Museum of the Moon was a particular draw, attracting a very wide range of ages and people, especially those who hadn't booked but came along as they heard about it.

Inspiring art has happened – the Marlborough College resident artist has done an exhibition.

Not arts, but general inclusivity - A good number of people mentioned that as things were free or low-cost, they were very accessible. Almost all the venues were accessible to anyone in a wheelchair, and we did get several people booking disabled parking spaces where needed.

We don't have a lot of information about the demographics of those attending. But given the stated increase in interest in the arts, astronomy, and science in general, along with 50% being new to Marlborough, and 51% of bookings included someone under the age of 19, it is reasonable to conclude we reached new audiences. In addition, more than 1360 children & young people came via schools and college.

Through the festival, we can build trust, rapport and working relationships for potential future joint projects incorporating the arts, and sharing best practice

Both the North Wessex Downs AONB and Marlborough Town Council felt they learnt a lot and would not hesitate to include more arts in future activities, both dark skies and other events. We made some good contacts and the AONB was especially appreciative of the support given by Activate Arts in guiding us in the early stages to artists, contacts and making an Arts Council England application.

We now have a strong partnership between the three organisations, the venues, and the contributors. Especially with future dark skies work for the AONB.



Mary Macintyre's exhibition stall

1) To promote an interest in, and understanding of, the night/dark skies and 2) To contribute to the partner school programme of supporting children and young people to take part in STEM studies. Marlborough College joined the partnership with the above two objectives.

Promoting an interest and understanding of the night/dark skies was achieved by hosting the Moon, the keynote speaker and the various talks and tours in the Observatory given by Charlie and his team over the festival week. We judge success by the number of people who attended and the percentage of booking capacity. The Moon in particular was a real boost to the numbers of people who engaged in the festival and we were delighted that we were able to have it in our Chapel which set it off brilliantly and also added to the draw.

Jackie Jordan, Director of Marketing and Communications Marlborough College

The second objective was to help deliver a broader objective of helping to support children and young people to take part in STEM studies which is a key part of Marlborough College partner school programme

To this end, in the week after the festival, the college provided access to the Museum of the Moon for partner schools

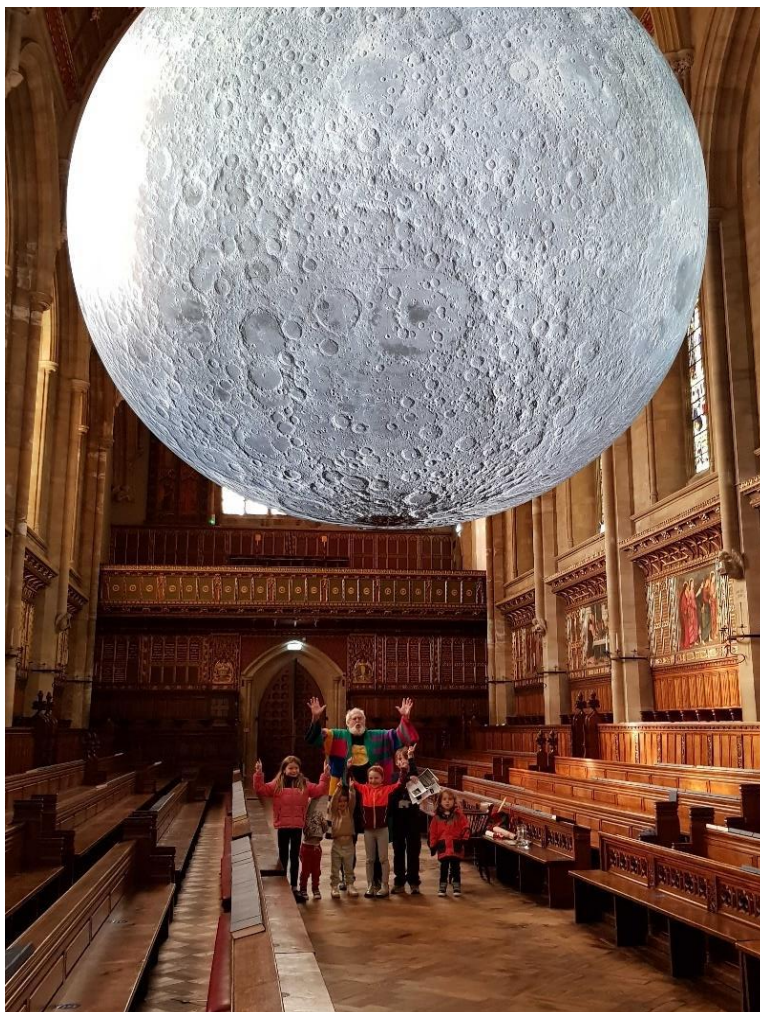
We were delighted to be able to host 6 schools in that second week.

The Moon also provided a rich addition to the curriculum for our pupils and classes on topics as varied as Art, Humanities and Chinese (as well as of course Astronomy) utilising the Museum of the Moon in the Chapel during that second week.

Jackie Jordan, Director of Marketing and Communications Marlborough College

There were many comments about the setting of the chapel, here are just a few

- ★ The changing light in the Moon, the setting, nice chapel
- ★ Moon looks great and nice to get into the chapel
- ★ The museum of the moon in the gorgeous chapel
- ★ Enjoyed seeing the Chapel. The Moon is beautiful
- ★ It has been special seeing it in the chapel - gives a sense of awe Great setting - most dramatic that it is in such a beautiful chapel
- ★ The chapel is utterly outstanding stunning



Holding up the Moon – photo Jacky Akam



**Marlborough Town Council**

