



Maidenhead Civic Society NEWS

Issue 2/07

April 2007



Water flows in York Stream in April; what will it be like in the summer?

In this issue

A new Constitution for the Society

Cllr. Vicky Howes on Maidenhead Town Centre

Regular features on talks, outings, the Heritage Centre,
Projects and Planning

Visit our website! : www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

This quarter's message is somewhat different in content from the last one when I was commenting on the number of activities, successes and actions in which the Society had been involved in the previous few months or so. At first sight it looks as if we had moved into a fallow period. However, it is not that any of those involved in the earlier activities which led to our raft of headlines have taken their bats home or gone into hibernation. It is just that there is now a period of consolidation and development. After a military campaign one would say that there was a mopping up operation needed.

Thus the Society in the persons of Nigel Cockburn, Bob Dulson and myself have taken part in one forum with other stakeholders and the Council at a presentation by Louise Thomas, a professional in Town Planning, appointed by the Council. In this she set out essentially the areas in the town centre which should be redeveloped. Encouragingly for us much of it coincided with our own views. After this presentation of the areas, now defined in the Core Strategy document for redevelopment, we were invited to indicate our preferred form for redevelopments in the various areas.

A subsequent review meeting with the Council, Louise Thomas and other stakeholders was also attended at which we learnt that despite the Council's efforts to canvas public opinion via 20,000 leaflets, the web, an exhibition and two workshops there had only been a modest response, 397 in all. Most people are very busy with work, homes etc and simply do not have time in general to become involved in something like the creation of the strategic plan and aims that will set the pattern for Maidenhead's future development out to 20 years. It is thus all the more important for bodies like the Civic Society to make sure that they make a strong and deeply considered input to the process. To make our contribution more convincing we have gone to the length of employing our own planning architect to suggest a possible plan for the area of the town hall car park and beyond.

All this is fine as far as it goes but it has to be recognised that Maidenhead stands at a crossroads. It is a highly successful town commercially and its inhabitants have indicated strongly that they want to see it remain a modest sized, prosperous town enjoying to the full the benefits of its riverside setting. At the same time it has to be accepted that some neighbouring towns have already successfully put schemes in motion to substantially modernise themselves. Maidenhead is in danger of being left behind when it could all too easily slip into becoming a dormitory town with much of the centre given over to restricted small scale shopping facilities and to entertainment venues. This is a particular danger if the importance of easy transport into the centre is not dealt with. The need is for bold and imaginative thinking for redevelopment of the centre and the whole infrastructure - probably well beyond what is involved in the Core Strategy. It is easy to say these things; the difficult bit is converting them to action. To this end the Society is consulting with a variety of interested parties. Although the town may be a late starter in the redevelopment stakes it has the chance to profit from others experience and to overarch them all. This is what the Society should aim for. In conclusion I want to move to another matter which at first sight may seem unconnected with the preceding comments but isn't.

In the last Newsletter I gave a brief account of the Society's moves to adopt a revised constitution. You might think it all rather dusty stuff but the restructuring involved will play a vital part in the re-examination of the Society's aims, its operating structure and its ability to continue to make a real difference. There has been a comfortable equilibrium in our actions with members of the Executive and others carrying on the Society's various activities well, but perhaps too comfortably. The revised constitution and its consequent structure is seen as a way to prod us to review what we do and how we do it and to move us sensibly into more effective and perhaps new fields of endeavour. You will find with this Newsletter a copy of the revised constitution and also a note explaining its

main features in brief. Do please read them both and give the revised constitution your support at the Extraordinary General Meeting to be held on June 20th, in a brief session on the occasion of the next talk. If approved then it will enable the Executive Committee to move on to bigger and better things.

John McIntosh – Chairman

NOTICE OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that a Special General Meeting (SGM) of the Maidenhead Civic Society has been called for Wednesday 20th June 2007, at 7.45 pm, to be held at the Methodist Church Hall, Maidenhead. The purpose of the meeting is to receive and vote on the proposal to adopt a new constitution for the Society, as set out in the following pages.

The current constitution provides for amendments to be approved by a two-thirds majority at an AGM or SGM, after 28 days' notice. The quorum at an AGM or SGM is 20 members.

The Society's Executive Committee are in favour of the new constitution and it is hoped that the membership at large will now give its support and vote positively for the new structure. The formal business of this Special General Meeting should be concluded fairly quickly, and will be followed by the talk on Crossrail (see the Events section later in this Newsletter).

THE SOCIETY'S NEW CONSTITUTION

The proposed new constitution changes the name of the old Executive Committee to **Board of Trustees**. This follows guidance from the Charities Commission and the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO). It is to emphasise and remind ourselves that the Trustees are trustees in law and have certain legal responsibilities to ensure the good governance of the Society. It was always thus, but perhaps many members may have been unaware of this.

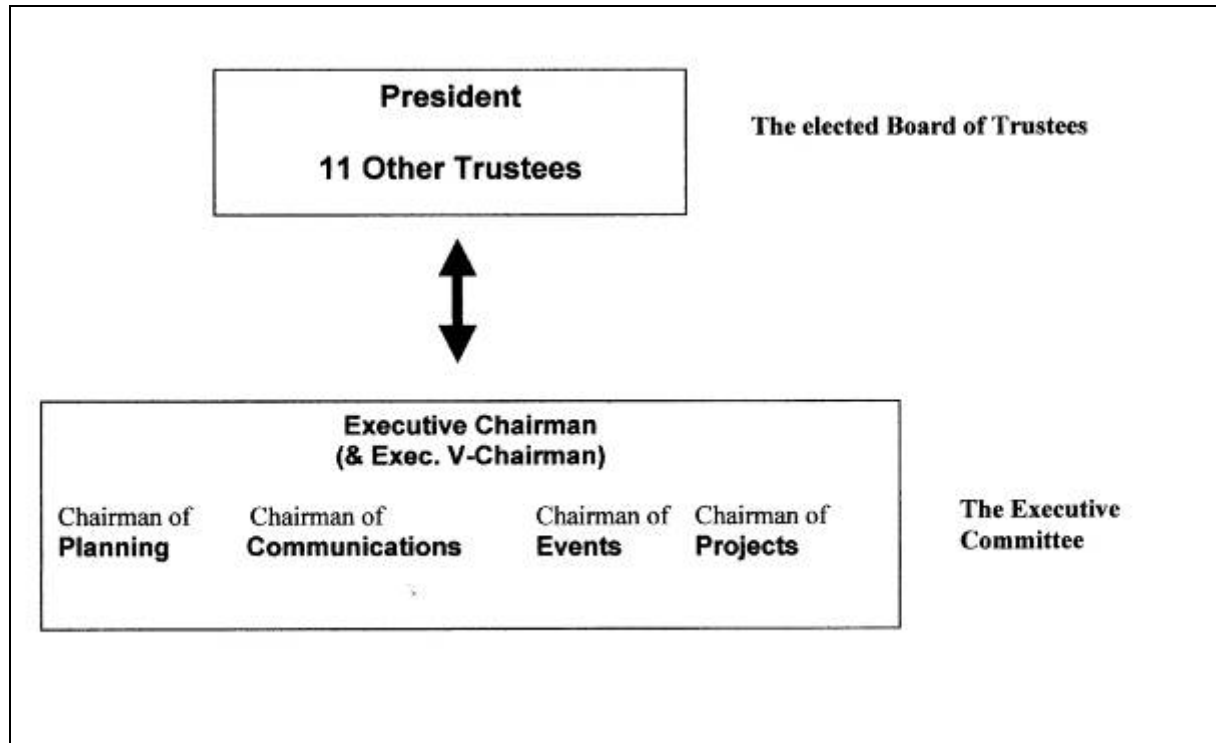
The Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing the essential purpose of the Society, and for guarding its ethos and values. Together, the Trustees develop the long-term strategy, and its meeting agenda should reflect the key points of the strategy to keep the Society on track. The Trustees must make sure that the Society's activities comply with the charitable objects, and that the Society fulfils accountability as required by law, and to donors, volunteers and the general public.

The Board of Trustees consists of the Hon Secretary, the Hon Treasurer, and 10 other Trustees. They will elect a chairman from amongst themselves, to be known as the President (this is to distinguish him/her from the Executive Chairman; see below).

The Board will meet at least twice a year, or more at its discretion according to the matters to be discussed. The duties of the Hon Sec will be similar to those at present, but with the difference that now there will be significantly fewer meetings – perhaps just the two. The duties of the Hon Treasurer would be the same.

In order to efficiently get on with the day to day business of the Society, the bulk of the work will be carried out via an **Executive Committee** consisting of the chairmen of a number of specialist

Groups, viz: Planning, Communications, Events and Projects at the moment. These Group Chairmen will also be Trustees, and will have been appointed from the Board of Trustees. The activities of the Executive Committee will be coordinated by an Executive Chairman – also a Trustee. There will also be a Vice-Chairman, in order to provide the opportunity for some succession planning to the Executive Chairman role. Such a position would allow somebody to be recruited who would work with the Chairman with a view to taking on the role in due course subject to the Trustees’ approval.



The Newsletter Editor, Outings Organiser, Webmaster, Membership Secretary etc would be members of a relevant Group and not necessarily Trustees unless they stood for election as such.

The Executive Committee would thus initially consist of six of the Trustees and should meet about 6 times a year, though a lot of business could be transacted by e-mail instead of a face-to-face meeting if desired.

The “old” honorific of President, and Vice-Presidents have been removed, as these appointments served no practical purpose.

The former three “Trustees” were not strictly trustees of the charity in the legal sense; they are there purely to “hold in trust” any freehold or leasehold property that the Society might one day have. They have never been called upon to exercise that role. To clarify their role, they have been re-named “Holding Trustees”, as advised by the Charities Commission.

If the new constitution is approved, it is proposed to continue on a transitional basis with the present structure and format until the Annual General Meeting in November, when candidates for the new positions will be proposed and elections held if necessary.

MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY CONSTITUTION

(As revised April 2007)

1. NAME

The name of the Society shall be the Maidenhead Civic Society.

2. OBJECTS

The Society – a registered charity – is established for the public benefit for the following purposes in the area comprising Maidenhead and district which area shall hereinafter be referred to as “the area of benefit”.

- (i) To stimulate public interest in the area of benefit.
- (ii) To promote high standards of planning and architecture in the area of benefit.
- (iii) To secure the preservation protection development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.

In furtherance of the said purposes but not otherwise the Society through its Board of Trustees shall have the following powers:-

- (1) To promote research into subjects directly connected with the Objects of the Society and to publish the results of any such research.
- (2) To act as a co-ordinating body and to cooperate with the local authority, planning committees, sanitary, drainage and all other local and statutory authorities, voluntary organizations, charities and persons having aims similar to those of the Society.
- (3) To promote or assist in promoting activities of a charitable nature throughout the area of benefit.
- (4) To publish papers, reports and other literature.
- (5) To make surveys and prepare maps and plans and collect information in relation to any place, erection or building of beauty or historic interest within the area of benefit.
- (6) To hold meetings, lectures and exhibitions.
- (7) To educate public opinion and to give advice and information.
- (8) To raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation and otherwise; provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its primary purpose.
- (9) To take and accept any gifts of property, whether subject to any special trusts or not.
- (10) To sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or funds of the Society as shall be necessary.
- (11) To borrow or raise money for the purposes of the Society on such terms and on such security as the Trustees shall think fit, but so that the liability of individual members of the Society shall in no case extend beyond the amount of their respective annual subscriptions.
- (12) To do all such other things as are necessary for the attainment of the said purposes.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to all who are interested in actively furthering the

purposes of the Society. No member shall have power to vote at any meeting of the Society if his subscription is in arrears at the time. The subscriptions of a member joining the Society in the three months preceding 31st May in any year shall be regarded as covering membership for the Society's year commencing on 1st June following the date of joining the Society.

4. THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall management of the Society and its role is one of oversight and guidance, fulfilling the Society's legal responsibilities and focussing clearly on long-term strategy and objectives.

The Board shall consist of not more than 12 Trustees (including the Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary and members of the Executive Committee) elected annually from the membership of the Society at the Annual General Meeting, and who shall normally be resident or work in the area of benefit. One third of the Trustees shall retire each year and shall be eligible for re-election. Any Trustee who has not attended any meetings of the Board during the twelve months prior to the Annual General Meeting shall not be eligible for re-election except with the special permission of the Board. Nominations for election to the Board of Trustees shall be made in writing at least fourteen days before the Annual General Meeting. They must be supported by a seconder and the consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained, together with a declaration of any financial or professional interest known or likely to be of concern to the Society; in the case of retiring Trustees who are willing to continue to serve no formal nomination shall be required. If the nominations exceed the number of vacancies, a ballot shall take place in such manner as shall be determined. The Board shall have power to co-opt additional members (who may be from outside the area of benefit and who shall, in any event, attend only in an advisory and non-voting capacity). The Board shall have the power to fill casual vacancies occurring among the Trustees.

The Trustees shall elect annually from amongst themselves a chairman, who shall be designated the President. The Trustees shall meet as required but not less than two times a year and the Honorary Secretary shall give all Trustees not less than fourteen days' notice of each meeting. The quorum shall, as near as may be, comprise one half of the Trustees. In the event of an equality in any votes cast, the President shall have a second or casting vote.

5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and GROUPS

In order to efficiently fulfil its objects the Board of Trustees shall establish from amongst the Trustees an Executive Committee which shall consist of an Executive Chairman, Executive Vice-Chairman, and the Chairmen of such Groups as it shall have been considered necessary to establish with specific remits focussing on a limited number of items and tasks. At the date hereof, the Groups so established are: Planning, Projects, Events and Communications. The chairmen of the Groups report to the Executive Chairman.

Any Trustee may be a member of any Group and membership of a Group shall be no bar to election as a Trustee. Groups shall be subordinate to and may be regulated or dissolved by the Board of Trustees. The Groups may co-opt individuals with particular insights or skills from outside the Society.

The Executive Committee shall meet six times a year at intervals to be agreed. If the Executive Chairman considers it inappropriate or unnecessary to hold a

meeting, he may issue a notice to the Executive Committee members and request that they consider any business by some other means, to include, but not be limited to, electronic mail.

The Executive Chairman shall give an account of the activities of the Groups to the Board of Trustees at the Board's meetings or otherwise as required.

6. MEETINGS

An Annual General Meeting shall be held in or about November of each year to receive the Board's report and annual accounts and to elect members of the Board of Trustees, the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, who shall also be Trustees *ex-officio*. A Patron may also be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, for a period to be decided at such a meeting. The Board of Trustees shall decide when ordinary meetings of the Society shall be held and shall give at least 14 days notice of such meetings to all members.

Special General Meetings of the Society shall be held at the instigation of the Board of Trustees or at the written request of members representing not less than 10 per cent of the existing membership of the Society and whose subscriptions are fully paid-up. 20 members personally present shall constitute a quorum for a Meeting of the Society.

7. SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscription shall be:

Single membership	£ 10.00
Family membership (two or more members at one address)	£ 15.00
Life membership (single)	£ 75.00
Life membership (family)	£120.00
Companies with 20 or more employees	£ 50.00
Companies with less than 20 employees	£ 25.00

or such other reasonable sum as the Board of Trustees shall determine from time to time, and it shall be payable on or before 1st June each year. Membership shall lapse if the subscription is unpaid six months after it is due.

8. AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS

Any organisation operating within the area of benefit with similar objects may become an affiliated organisation with the consent of the Board of Trustees and be entitled to nominate one person to attend Board meetings (but without power to vote). There shall be no affiliation fee.

9. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

It shall be the duty of every Trustee or member of a Group who is in any way directly or indirectly interested financially or professionally in any item discussed at any committee meeting at which he or she is present to declare such interest and he/she shall not vote thereon.

10. EXPENSES OF ADMINISTRATION AND APPLICATION OF FUNDS

The Board of Trustees shall, out of the funds of the Society, pay all proper expenses of administration and management of the Society. After the payment of the administration and management expenses and the setting aside to reserve of such sums as may be deemed expedient, the remaining funds of the Society shall be applied by the Board in furtherance of the purposes of the Society.

11. INVESTMENT

All monies at any time belonging to the Society and not required for immediate application for its purposes shall be invested by the Board in or upon such investments securities or property as it may think fit, subject nevertheless to such authority, approval or consent whether by the Charity Commissioners or the Secretary of State for Education and Science as may for the time being be required by law or by the special trusts affecting any property in the hands of the Board.

12. HOLDING TRUSTEES

Any freehold and leasehold property acquired by the Society shall, and if the Board so directs any other property belonging to the Society may, be vested in Holding Trustees who shall deal with such property as the Board may from time to time direct. Any Holding Trustees shall be at least three in number or a trust corporation. The power of appointment of new Holding Trustees shall be vested in the Board. A Holding Trustee need not be a member of the Society but no person whose membership lapses by virtue of Paragraph 7 hereof shall thereafter be qualified to act as a Holding Trustee unless and until reappointed as such by the Board. The Honorary Secretary shall from time to time notify the Holding Trustees in writing of any amendment hereto and the Holding Trustees shall not be bound by any such amendments in their duties as holding trustees unless such notice has been given. The Society shall be bound to indemnify the Holding Trustees in their duties (including the proper charge of a trustee being a trust corporation) and liability under such indemnity shall be a proper administrative expense.

13. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members present at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Society, provided that 28 days' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to all members, and provided that nothing herein contained shall authorise any amendment the effect of which would be to cause the Society at any time to cease to be a charity in law.

14. NOTICES

Any notice required to be given by this Constitution shall be deemed to be duly given if left or sent by prepaid post addressed to the address of that member last notified to the Secretary.

15. WINDING UP

The Society may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority of members voting at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting of the Society confirmed by a simple majority of members voting at a further Special General Meeting held not less than 14 days after the previous Meeting. If a motion for the dissolution of the Society is to be proposed at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting this motion shall be referred to specifically when notice of the Meeting is given. In the event of the dissolution of the Society the available funds of the Society shall be transferred to such one or more charitable institutions having objects similar or reasonably similar to those herein before declared as shall be chosen by the Board and approved by the Meeting of the Society at which the decision to dissolve the Society is confirmed. On dissolution the minute books and other records of the Society shall be deposited with the Civic Trust.

MAIDENHEAD TOWN CENTRE

In the previous newsletter I wrote about the enthusiastic welcome the Maidenhead Plan for Partnership Action received at the first workshop. I am delighted that subsequent workshops with residents and landowners were equally lively and positive.

The consultation responses have now been analysed and I am confident that there is support for the general direction of travel. On this basis a progress report was approved by Cabinet in March and very soon the council will be creating a Forum to oversee further work. This is an exciting proposal and I look forward to working with the Civic Society and other partners to make real and timely improvements to our town.

In March the new Sainsburys store opened. Shoppers missed the old store so that its vastly bigger and brighter replacement has been warmly welcomed. However, the exterior has had mixed reviews and I thought it may be useful to read an extract from the architects' design statement which was submitted with the planning application (provided by Sainsbury's public affairs representatives and summarised from the Architects' Statement):

"The scheme is designed to read as a series of buildings rather than a single dominating monolithic structure. This reflects the design concept of a series of uses sharing a common access point in the form of the new public piazza. The buildings around the new piazza are specifically positioned to form gateways in and out of the area and are designed to accentuate links, routes and circulation throughout the scheme. All these buildings have largely transparent frontages at lower levels, highlighting the activities of shopping, working, relaxing and playing which take place around the new public open space.

The vertical cores of the rotunda buildings and the stairways to the residential properties are articulated with materials, which emphasise light, colour and transparency. This serves to highlight circulation and movement throughout the complex of buildings at the same time as blurring the division between private and public space.

Residential units on the main building are arranged to mask the high-level car parking and varying patterns of fenestration achieve visual diversity and small-scale detail. Along St Cloud Way this is accentuated by the Winter Garden balconies which add a 3D element to what would have been a flat frontage, creating a busy and attractive elevation to replace the former harsh wall of brickwork and car parking.

In keeping with the theme of circulation, the main entrance to the supermarket, which is highly visible via a three storey glazed atrium, allows views into the store and highlights the movement of the lifts and travelators.

Overall the design of the buildings creates a vibrant new quarter and public space in the heart of the town while raising the profile of the area by improving links through the development to the town centre."

Does the building match the architects' vision? Perhaps we should wait until the project is totally completed before making a final judgement. Then, love it or hate it, I have little doubt that like the 'thoroughly modern', now Listed, library building it will provide us with a source of debate for years to come.

Vicky Howes

PLANNING MATTERS

The Council has completed its consultation on the Town Centre and we wait with interest to see what is proposed after the Council elections. A stakeholder forum on the Town Centre has been announced by the Council to include the Society. We have asked what form it will take and how it will be constituted. What is essential is that any Council plan for the town must have cross party support.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

During the last three months the Planning group reviewed 34 applications in detail and commented to the Council on 13 of them.

Civic Society Says “No” To Bridge Avenue Office Plan

Plans to replace four detached dwellings with a five-storey office block in **Bridge Avenue** have been criticised in a press release by Maidenhead Civic Society as “totally inappropriate”. Its proximity to the High Street provides a natural opportunity to meet the borough’s objective of more town centre residential accommodation. The application, from Silverstone, is to demolish the four former homes, now used as offices, and replace them with 2,660 sq ft of office space in what is effectively a five-storey glass box.

Commenting on the application, the Society said that “this side of Bridge Avenue has the appearance of a residential street and is in the perfect location near the centre of the town for residential development. It would be preferable for this site to revert to residential especially as other recent developments along this side of the road have been residential. This is an area of the town that needs a development brief to govern its regeneration and determine the type of redevelopment that is appropriate. The building does not take account of the street scene and the elevations of the building are out of character with this side of the street which does not contain any four storey office blocks. Its design should be sympathetic with other buildings nearby and not those on the other side of the road. The building is too high and will be overbearing on its neighbours including the houses behind in Forlease Road. It is also in the floodplain”.

The Society is also calling for the east side of Bridge Avenue and Forlease Road to be earmarked for residential development in the new Town Centre plan – and for a development brief to govern its regeneration. The Council recently suggested that its proposals for revitalising the centre of Maidenhead should include Town Centre Briefs which is welcome news, though long overdue. The current application is the latest in a series stretching back almost 20 years. If a development brief were in place, inappropriate speculative applications like this would be turned away at the door, avoiding unnecessary worry for local residents and saving council time and money.

Comments on some of the other more significant applications were as follows:

Mallards Reach, Bridge Avenue (Extension of existing office building by 2,011 sq m with associated car parking and landscaping works)

We consider it inappropriate to reduce the number of car parking spaces on this site when the number of people working in the buildings will increase. We note that the land includes the banks of the York Stream and a number of paths both along the stream and between the stream and Bridge Avenue. We trust these public rights of way will be maintained. Furthermore provision should be made by the landowner for the proper maintenance and landscaping of their section of the York Stream including an adequate supply of water throughout the year.

9-9A North Town Road (Erection of 12 flats in two buildings with associated parking and landscaping)

We welcome the residential nature of this development and the tidying up of this site. We are pleased to see that the developers are following local brick finishes and trust that the quality of materials will be high. However, the density of the development is far too high in what is already a crowded area. The surrounding streets are narrow and the provision of off street parking is inadequate for the number of dwellings

26-28 Forelease Road (Demolition of two detached dwellings and construction of 6 one bedroom and 4 two bedroom flats with associated parking and access)

The value of residential development in the town centre is recognised. However, there is a severe lack of amenity space being provided for the residents which indicates an over development of the site. We believe both sides of the area between Bridge Avenue and Forelease Road should be two-storey residential. Three storeys on this site is too high and over bearing. The Flood Risk assessment provided confirms that the site is in the 100-year flood zone but does not address the Borough's policy F1 on flooding. The argument that it is an exception to government policy PPS 25 because it is not the Green Belt and will provide additional dwellings is also flawed.

Land at rear of 90-98 Alwyn Road (Erection of 5 two bedroom houses and 3 three bedroom houses)

We object to this in-fill development which will result in a loss of green space and a wildlife corridor. It will also place additional pressure on local services and infrastructure which are not sustainable. There is a concern about the additional traffic and access to the site onto the narrow and busy Alwyn Road which is heavily parked. We do not like the high pitch of the roofs and two storeys in the 3-bedroom houses would give a better height compared to the surrounding properties.

51 Lower Cookham Road (Two storey block of flats with rooms in the roof- two 3-bed and two 4-bed)

The site is in the floodplain and therefore the development of four dwellings in place of a bungalow should not be permitted as it will put more households at risk from flooding. A flood risk assessment ought to have been provided with the planning application as requested by the planning officer. There are no blocks of flats at this end of Lower Cookham Road which is characterised by houses on spacious plots down a tree lined avenue behind fences and walls. The roof is too high and the rooms in the roof area create a third storey which is not compatible with the surrounding two storey houses. This application is part of a creepage of flats into an area that is unsuitable as they are inappropriate and will harm the character of the area. Such a development would create an unnecessary precedent along this part of the Lower Cookham Road.

Access for vehicles to the site is on the busy Lower Cookham Road. It would be safer if access was from the Avenue on the other side.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

On the Local Development Framework the Inspector has held his pre-examination meeting on the Core Strategy prior to his public hearing in June. The amount of paperwork is huge and growing and since all that has to be decided is whether the Council's strategy is sound it remains to be seen whether the whole exercise is worth the enormous amount of effort and resources that have been put into it.

Nigel Cockburn

EVENTS

The Events Group has been busy putting together a programme for the year and for the next few months we have:

TALKS

CROSSRAIL AND ITS IMPACT ON MAIDENHEAD - Wednesday 20th June 2007 by Simon Bennett and Mark Houghton

As the Committee Stage of the Crossrail Bill is drawing to a close and the final amendments have been drawn up, it would seem timely to meet again with the Crossrail representatives in order to clarify their response to ours and others petitions with respect to Maidenhead and the impact the project will have on the town. It is expected that all petitions will have been heard by the end of May and the wording of the Bill will be able to be finalised for its reading in the House of Lords in the this coming Autumn. The presentation which will illustrate the background to this major, rail-transport project and will explain the overall plan and how this will affect Maidenhead as the western terminal.

*An artist's impression of a
Crossrail Train. But how
will this scheme affect
Maidenhead?*



Mark Houghton is the Petition Negotiator for the western part of the Crossrail scheme. His role requires him to negotiate with petitioners against the Crossrail Bill, coordinating responses from Crossrail, the Department for Transport and Transport for London. Mark aims to ensure that negotiations with petitioners are successful, undertakings and other commitments given are acceptable to all parties and proceedings are properly recorded.

Simon Bennett is a railway civil engineer and planner and since November 2001 has been seconded from TfL into the post of Consultation and Petitions Manager in Cross London Rail Links. In that post he established stakeholder management procedures and a successful team to deliver consultation with stakeholders at all levels. His team's role expanded in 2005 following the submission of the Crossrail Bill and has spent the last 18 months responding to and negotiating with petitioners and briefing Counsel appearing for the project before the House of Commons Select Committee.

Tina Sell

OUTINGS

Over 50 people will be coming on our next outing to Mapledurham by boat, and I will report on the outcome in the next Newsletter.

Our next trip is to Kent on July 1st, and we will be visiting the Biddenden Vineyards and Cider Works where we will have lunch, wine tasting and a tour of the vineyards. We will then go to New Romney where we will board the famous miniature railway which will take us to Hythe. From here we will return by coach to Maidenhead. So do come enjoy a day in the Garden of England!



One of the one-third sized locomotives on the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway

Mike Copeland

THERESA CHEERS US ON!

A good crowd gathered at Hall Place for the cheese and wine reception held on March 23rd – and heard our local MP speak supportively of the Society.

Rt Hon Theresa May applauded the Society's work, in particular its campaign over the future of the town centre and the Great Debate. She said: "What is important about the Society's work is that it not only preserves our heritage and works to improve Maidenhead today but also looks forward with vision to the future to ensure that Maidenhead remains a great place to live."

Encouraging those guests who were not already members to join the Society, she added: "What you stand for is much appreciated and what you do has an impact."

Welcoming Theresa May and guests, chairman John McIntosh said that over its 46 years the Society had been involved in many diverse activities. It had re-built footbridges, petitioned Parliament, litter-picked, carved & created footpaths. It had pored over planning applications and planned a plethora of talks and outings.



Theresa May MP speaking to the guests

"And currently," said John, "we're half way up the north face of the Local Development Framework which is meant

to give us a vision for Maidenhead to 2026. The view can be quite encouraging - depending on who you're roped to!"

However, there was one major project, the Strategic Review of Amenity, which John said the Society would like to accelerate. It had already sparked a lot of action: it informed attitudes to the LDF, it inspired The Great Debate and it led, in no small part, to the latest proposals for the regeneration of the town centre. It had also strengthened our interactions with the Council.



Members and guests listen attentively to the words of Chairman John McIntosh and MP Theresa May

"But there is so much more in it that we want to tackle," he said. "Pinpointing the areas identified in the Council's Core Strategy document for revitalisation in the town centre offer a great opportunity to us to play our part in introducing and developing imaginative thinking into these schemes."

Bob Dulson

RECYCLING IN THE ROYAL BOROUGH

In February we had a very informative talk from Ankit Rao, Waste Awareness Officer, on the Royal Borough's management of rubbish. We learnt that there are 60,000 properties in RBWM, each household being entitled to a black and purple box for recycling; paper and cardboard going into the black box and glass, plastic bottles and tin cans into the purple box.

Purple waste lorries collect refuse from the grey wheelie bin and the white lorry collects recyclable materials. The white lorry is split, so that items from the black box go into one side of the lorry, items from the purple box go into the other side. The surprising thing to some of us was that only plastic bottles can be put into the purple box, the lids having been removed; no other type of plastics should be put in, because there is no end markets for them.

We were shown some samples of recycled goods which even included fleecy hats!!

The emphasis of the presentation was that if we do not recycle we *will* be sending more waste to landfill. This is not desirable because of a lack of space, pollution and increasing landfill costs. Ankit did put out a plea for mothers to go back to the “good old days” of using washable nappies, as the problem of disposables is becoming insurmountable, though I don’t think in these days of the throwaway society this could ever be a popular move. However, it does highlight the enormous changes in lifestyle over the last forty years.

One solution touched on was the use of incineration, wildly unpopular in this country as illustrated by protests recently in Essex, but used successfully in other parts of Europe. Could this be a suitable alternative?

The variety of ways that recycling is carried out in different boroughs throughout the country highlights the problems of cost and availability. Although the Royal Borough is working hard towards dealing with waste responsibly, one wonders if it should be more of a national concern and the Government should be making provision for waste disposal so that the service you get does not depend on where you live.

Should it be left to private enterprise to find solutions?

Tina Sell

SOME OTHER LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

Windsor Castle Before 1348: A talk by Tim Tatton-Brown.

This talk is on Wednesday 10th October 2007, at 7.00 pm, St George’s Chapel, Windsor Castle. Admission is free, but by named ticket only. Applications for tickets to The Chapter Office, Windsor Castle, Windsor, Berks, SL4 1NJ, with s.a.e. by 3rd October.

The significance of 1348 is that this is when Edward III founded the Order of the Garter at Windsor and to provide a chapel for the Order set about altering his father, Henry III’s chapel to provide a home for his new Order. Before 1348 he had already attempted in 1344 to establish an order of chivalry based on that of King Arthur and had begun to build in the upper ward of the castle a structure to house the Round Table. This structure was never finished but recent excavations led by Tim Tatton-Brown (shown on TV in the *Time Team* series) may have found the foundations of it. It is said that this 1344 Arthurian Order came to nothing because at the tournament to launch it, William Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, who lived at Bisham, was wounded and subsequently died. No doubt the talk will feature both the Round Table discovery but also details of other building done before 1348, the most famous remnant of which is the former West Doorway of Henry III’s chapel built in 1240, now incorporated into the present St George’s Chapel built in the 15th Century by Edward IV. In another link, Henry III’s 13th Century doorway is contemporary with the porch and doorway put up by the Knights Templar at Bisham. Both doors still exist, the Templars’ door being notably simpler than that of Henry’s.

All Saints Church, Boyn Hill

Tours of G E Street’s great masterpiece, now listed Grade I: All Saints celebrates its 150th Anniversary this year, and the newly devised tours will take place every Sunday afternoon, giving fresh insight into Maidenhead’s most important historic building. Contact the church for confirmation of timings.

PROJECTS

GREEN WAY/YORK STREAM

New Green Way leaflet

The Society has helped fund a new edition of the Green Way leaflet which was available just in time for our reception held at Hall Place March 23rd. The new leaflet (the 4th version) is available in the Town Hall and the library.

Those of you with long memories may remember that the Society published the original leaflet in 1985 with help from East Berks Ramblers and the local branch of the RSPB. To fund printing we obtained grants from the Countryside Commission and the RBWM Lottery Committee (sadly no longer in existence). The original idea of the walk, initially called a “linear park”, was Peter Nevell’s, then chairman of East Berks Ramblers, and it was defined as a streamside walk from Cookham through Maidenhead to Bray and he renamed it the Green Way. In 1985 the stream system north of Maidenhead had only recently been cleared so there was a good flow of water in the stream making a streamside walk viable. Sadly, a few years later the stream started to dry out. One of the ongoing purposes of the Green Way Working Group set up in 1989 is to address the problem of stream flow (see below for the latest position).



York Stream

I am optimistic that the problem of flow has now been resolved, at least as long as regular dredging upstream occurs (though the Environment Agency (EA) still won't clear Maidenhead Ditch). Basically, beginning in 2003 and every year since, the EA have dredged part of the White Brook which runs from the Thames at Islet Park to the junction with Strand Water (which brings water down from the Cookham ponds). They hope to dredge again in 2007. The resulting increased abundance of water in the town centre is clearly reflected in the presence of aquatic plants which also means there should be a greater range of aquatic wildlife. The year-round availability of water has allowed these plants to establish themselves including watercress that only survives in clean water. To find out what aquatic wildlife was in the stream, we recently, with help from East Berks Ramblers, carried out a survey next to the library. A good number of different species were recorded including several found only in unpolluted, well-oxygenated water, such as damsel and mayfly nymphs and freshwater shrimp. If the EA cleared the Ditch even more water would reach Maidenhead.

This is not to say all the problems are over. Litter is an ongoing problem but hopefully a more attractive looking stream may encourage a more responsible attitude among the locals. Also we

will have to find out what the Sainsbury's contractors are going to do about the failed barriers on the Green Way path under the A4. As of mid-April the path is still flooded though it probably will dry out around June which is when they are supposed to be creating a meandering stream in the bed of the stream (by pushing to the side all the hardcore dumped when the Hinds Meadow car park was built) and repairing the failed barrier seals that allowed the path to flood. This work is being funded with S106 money.



DRY!

York Stream next to Hinds Meadow car park, October 2001.



WET!

The same view taken in April 2007. The Stream now has aquatic flora & fauna.

MILLENNIUM WALK – missing links

I hope to report some progress on the missing links of this Walk in the next newsletter. Unfortunately, our negotiations re the missing link across White Place farm (which we walked last year as part of the Boundary Walk) have fallen foul of a planning application by CEMEX, who still own some of the listed buildings there, to redevelop them as housing. Mr John Edwards who owns White Place farm, wants to delay further discussion re our path until the outcome of this application is known, which won't be before the end of May.

Ann Darracott

LIBRARY SQUARE

Some of you may have noticed the renovation of the Maudsley Memorial Gardens next to the library. The paving and steps down to York Stream have been steadily deteriorating and basically are being replaced. Additional features are three picnic tables situated in the green areas below the Gardens and a ramp from York Stream to the tables.



*The Maudsley Memorial
Gardens, 18th April 2007*

Some years ago (1999/2000) the Society had discussions with the Council about Library Square. Harold James even drew up a plan that included a ramp from the library down to the stream; this plan was unknown to the officer dealing with the current renovation. Apparently, because the work was regarded as a repair it was not deemed necessary to put it out to public consultation so we were unable to comment. However, Anthony Hurst, chairman of the Green Way Working Group, suggested a ramp rather than steps but was told that such a structure (with resting places!) would take up too much of the green space.

This is a lost opportunity to get a ramp to the Green Way and makes it imperative that if and when the old cinema site is redeveloped (hopefully in this century) it includes a ramp from Chapel Arches to the Green Way path.

Ann Darracott

CALLING ALL ARTISTS!

Do you have a talent for drawing, painting or photography?

We know there is much creativity among our membership and we would like to draw on your skills (excuse the pun!). We are planning to publish some Christmas Cards this year, more to raise our profile but hopefully to raise funds also. If you have a piece of Art, which you have created and think would make a suitable image for a Seasonal Card, we would like to see it. The subject should be festive, have something to do with Maidenhead, relay our message and be very marketable. We hope we will be able to make a selection and produce some cards from the submissions.

Please email your works of art to Tina Sell at: tinasell@sl60bb.fsnet.co.uk or call Tina on 01628 628675

HERITAGE CENTRE NEWS

Work is beginning on the former Cricketers Arms in Park Street, with an autumn target date for the opening of Maidenhead's permanent Heritage Centre and Museum. It has been discovered that the older part of the building dates from 1868, older than previously thought. To make it comply with modern building and safety regulations will take a great deal of work. As a result the Heritage Centre has launched a Phase 2 Appeal, hoping to raise around £65,000 to complete the conversion work. Now that the project has progressed from a 'paper' project 11 months ago to a real bricks and mortar project, it is hoped that it will not be too difficult to raise the additional funds. Civic Society members who would like to make a donation are invited to phone the Heritage Centre on 01628 780555. To see Architect's perspectives of the interior of the converted building, visit www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk

In the meantime, the Heritage Centre will remain in King Street until at least August, with a series of short exhibitions to maintain public interest and a wider range of prints, postcards and souvenirs available in the Heritage Centre shop - including a short history of Maidenhead in German, French or Italian.

Vanwall Wins for Britain: 26th June to 28th July 2007

A special exhibition to mark the 50th Anniversary of Stirling Moss winning the 1957 British Grand Prix at Aintree - the first win of the British Grand Prix by a British driver at the wheel of a British car. Moss actually started the race in one car and finished it in another. Find out the full story in this exhibition which features original photographs from the Heritage Centre collection.

River Thames Historical Cruise: 5th September 2007

A number of seats are still available on the last of this year's three cruises, which will be on 5th September. Leaving Maidenhead at 10.00 am, we cruise upstream past Cookham and Marlow to Temple Lock, then turn and go downstream to Bray, before returning to Maidenhead at 3 pm. A live commentary will tell you all about the natural life of the river, navigation, boats, buildings, people and gossip. For details please contact the Heritage Centre.

Maidenhead Heritage Centre is open from 10 am to 4 pm, Tuesdays to Saturdays

3 Kingsway, King Street, Maidenhead SL6 1EE, ☎01628 780555.

Website: www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk; email: info@maidenheadheritage.org.uk.

Daphne Line

It is with great sadness that we have to report that Executive Committee member Daphne Line died on April 11th following a massive stroke whilst visiting her home in Australia. Her funeral was held on April 17th in Sydney.

Daphne was a willing and cheerful helper in delivering Newsletters, and will be fondly remembered for her dry humour – Carol Innes much enjoyed being called “Boss”!

We now urgently require someone to deliver bundles of Newsletters (of any number from 3 to 14) to twelve addresses on the east side of Maidenhead, between St Mark's Road and Boulter's Lock. As you will know, deliveries take place four times a year, towards the end of January, April, July and October. We are also looking for someone to deliver the Newsletter to about a dozen households in the Farthingales/Guards Club Park area. If you can help, please contact Carol Innes on 01628 532418.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 29 th April 2007 Outing	Mapledurham House & Watermill by Boat
Wednesday 20 th June 2007 Special General Meeting and Talk	“Crossrail And Its Impact On Maidenhead” Methodist Church Hall, 7.45 p.m.
Sunday 1 st July 2007 Outing	Biddenden Vineyards and Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway
September 2007 Outing	Darwin’s House and Lullingstone Castle/Roman Villa
Wednesday 19 th September 2007 Talk by Peter Bennett	“Crime Prevention” Methodist Church Hall, 8 p.m.
Wednesday 17 th October 2007 Visit and Talk by David Lunn	“Civic Matters” Town Hall, 8 p.m.
Wednesday 21st November 2007 AGM and Talk	47th Annual General Meeting Methodist Church Hall, 8 p.m.

CIVIC SOCIETY OFFICERS

President	Richard Poad, Hollyhocks, The Common, Cookham Dean, SL6 9NZ	484298
Chairman	John McIntosh, 26 Harvest Hill Road, SL6 2QQ	633259
Vice-Chairman	Vacancy	
Secretary	June Jorge, 134 Beverley Gardens, SL6 6ST	626616
Asst. Secretary	Gillian Moore, 10 Langdale Close, SL6 1SY	630130
Treasurer	Trevor Farnfield, Ditton Meads, Winter Hill Road, SL6 6NS	638142
Membership Sec.	Shashi Dare, Silvretta, Islet Road, SL6 8LD	629976
Planning Group	Nigel Cockburn, Willow House, Fishery Road, SL6 1UN	621084
Outings Sec.	Mike Copeland, 14 Laburnham Road, SL6 4DB	681955
Publicity	Bob Dulson, Bryher, Islet Road, SL6 8HT	627130
Co-ordinator		
Newsletter		
Distributor	Carol Innes, Contour, Briar Glen, Cookham Rise, SL6 9JP	532418

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2007

Parish Centre in St. Luke’s Church, at 7.45 p.m.

10th January, 14th February, 14th March, 11th April, 9th May, 13th June, 11th July, 12th September, 10th October, 14th November, 12th December.

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 21st November 2007 in the Wesley Hall at the Methodist Church at 8.00pm.

**The closing date for copy for the next issue
of the Newsletter is 14th July 2007.**

News Editor **Brian Darracott**
6 Medallion Place, Maidenhead, SL6 1TF (01628 620280)