



# Maidenhead Civic Society NEWS



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Issue 2/13

May 2013

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*The wonderful display of daffodils alongside the Bath Road,  
approaching Maidenhead Bridge. The bulbs were originally planted by  
the Civic Society in 1991, and have since been supplemented by the  
RBWM*

*Visit our website: [www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk](http://www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk)*

# Chairman's Foreword

A few notes from the town centre and a chance to have your say on parking.

ING returned to the town hall on April 30<sup>th</sup> expecting approval for their amended outline plans for “King’s Triangle”. It’s been a bumpy ride as we note in Planning News. Something will surely emerge to fit the bill eventually but it’s doubtful it will have the ING name on it.

Elsewhere, things are progressing. The Point is showing its scale on Market Street; a Premier Inn looks likely to be built in West Street; a radical new design for Berkshire House as an apartment block has been revealed; and the refurbishment of the “black box” by the police station is at last under way. Meanwhile, the Waterways scheme is being vigorously pursued and the associated plans for redevelopment around Chapel Arches, once agreed, stand to become an important catalyst for town centre regeneration.

Additionally, following the *Transforming Maidenhead* marketing initiative in February there’s been interest from a number of big name players in the opportunities Maidenhead has to offer and discussions are taking place about possibilities in two of the opportunity areas.

Long-term plans, however, do little to change current perception. There are many who continue to say there’s nothing in Maidenhead that makes me want to go there.

In fact, Maidenhead is weathering the storm better than most. But it’s a vicious circle: shops, cafes and businesses will come to Maidenhead if there are people there that want them. Fewer people mean fewer businesses.

While PRoM addresses medium to long-term aims, Maidenhead Town Partnership (a consortium of council and businesses) focuses on more immediate initiatives – markets, Art on the Street, paving, signage, entertainment, etc. They are currently involved in a project looking at how parking arrangements can influence footfall. And we thought Civic Society members may like to contribute their thoughts.

The number of people visiting Maidenhead town centre last year fell by 7.2% compared with 2011. In contrast, 2013 started positively. While average national figures fell by a further 4.6%, locally there was an increase of 4.3%. Free Sunday parking and the introduction of regular entertainment and events are thought to have led to the turnaround.

So what ideas do you have to improve parking in the town centre and encourage more people to visit? Drop me a note, by letter (address on back cover) or e-mail: bob.dulson@btinternet.com. Here are a few statistics to get you thinking:

RBWM raises around £6.3m a year from parking – 60% of that in Maidenhead where there are 3,000 spaces. Short-term parkers tend to stay no longer than 2.25 hours and 80% stay for under an hour. The busiest times are between 10am and 2.30pm. Season tickets holders pay less than half the equivalent daily cost, saving over £1,600 pa in some cases. There was a 12% drop in usage from 2011 to 2012.

Pay-by-phone is being introduced in Maidenhead, allowing open-ended parking, turning pay & display into pay-on-exit. The number-plate Recognition System used on the Broadway car park is to be extended to Hines Meadow and Stafferton Way.

*Bob Dulson*

## Subscription Reminder

We would like to remind our members who pay by cheque that your subscriptions are due on June 1<sup>st</sup>. If you would like to change the way you pay to a Standing Order the details are: Lloyds Bank, Sort Code 30-95-36, Account Number 00277876. Subscriptions have not changed for the coming year but could you please check that your Standing Order is for the correct amount as listed below. Your prompt payment would be appreciated as this helps the Society carry out its good work on behalf of the members and to the benefit of Maidenhead.

Single membership	£12.00
Family Membership (2 members at one address)	£18.00
Life Membership – Single	£100.00
Life Membership – Family	£150.00

# Planning Matters

The routine review of potentially contentious planning applications continues at the normal rate – 40 applications reviewed and twelve commented on during the last three months.

The major scheme which has been considered is the renewal of planning permission for Kidwells Park House which has already been granted. The new scheme reflects the height of “The Point” which is the new nine-storey office building on the southwest segment of the Cookham Road roundabout. In addition to the proposed offices, a reconfigured Premier Inn is also proposed. We remain concerned at the continued development of the “West Street Opportunity Area” in particular, because of the problems associated with traffic flow in the currently congested cul-de-sac. We are in favour of creating through-traffic by creating new access/egress to West Street from the west-bound carriageway of the ring road (in the vicinity of the current West Street pay-and-display car park). Currently, planning decisions are being made in isolation of traffic management issues.



*The former “Golden Harp” pub on the corner of  
Furze Platt Road and Courthouse Road*

Most of our members will be aware of the ongoing battle to prevent the conversion of the Golden Harp public house into a Tesco Express. Technically, Tesco do not require permission for change of use, but planning applications for associated works have all been refused. At the time of going to press, Tesco have re-applied for the various planning permissions previously refused. The Furze Platt Action Group has also been successful in getting the Golden Harp designated as a “Community Valued Asset”. If the Tesco proposals are unsuccessful, this will enable the action group to have the time and opportunity to purchase and make alternative proposals for the Golden Harp. It should be remembered that the public house is in the recently created Furze Platt Triangle conservation area. The Royal Borough appear reluctant to take the necessary legal action to force Tesco to apply for permission for change of use. In the meantime, the new applications for enabling associated works are the main opportunity to prevent the conversion to a Tesco Express.

A scaled-down application for eight apartments on the site of former Chef Peking restaurant on Ray Mead Road has been submitted to replace the refused proposals earlier in the year. There is also a proposal for re-development of Nos. 1-7 Ray Lea Road into a block of flats and a detached house which we believe is unsuitable for the site.

There continue to be interesting developments (of another kind) on the planning policy front. The NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) was introduced last year, to be superseded by a proposal to allow “Permitted Development” of extensions/conservatories (up to eight metres from the rear and not exceeding 50% of the site. This three-year moratorium will allow “beggar thy neighbour” developments, without any planning control. This is an attempt to stimulate the construction industry, but could create many issues – foreseen and unforeseen. We are delighted that the House of Lords voted against the proposals, which are now being modified by Eric Pickles MP. It is understood that in the event of an immediate neighbour raising objections, the “applicant” will then have to formally apply for planning permission. However, it is not clear how the immediate neighbours will be notified – especially if the “applicant” does not have to notify the planning authority. Worryingly, “stakeholders” such as the Civic Society would have no right to object.

Another potential policy development may arise if there is time for a Private Members’ Bill in Parliament. Whilst applicants/developers have always had the right to appeal to the Planning Directorate, there has been no such recourse for organisations such as ourselves. It is hoped that a “Community Right of Appeal” could become established at some stage in the future. This would enable aggrieved “stakeholders” to appeal against planning permission granted to a developer. It would only apply to organisations or action groups – and not to individuals. It has always seemed unfair that appeals could only be made one way. At some stage in the future it may be possible to see some equity established.



## BLUEPRINT FOR TAPLOW MILL & SKINDLES NEARS COMPLETION

The long-awaited blueprint setting the standards for the redevelopment of Mill Lane, Taplow is expected to be approved and adopted by South Bucks District Council in the summer, bringing the regeneration of Skindles and former Taplow Mill land a step closer to reality.

A current consultation on the sustainability of the plan is the last step before planners put finishing touches to the brief and present it to a policy advisory group in June and the full council the following month.



*The Taplow Paper Mill site from the air*

The Civic Society has kept a close eye on the emerging document, commenting on aspects of it at every stage. So it's appropriate that Jane Griffin, the principal planner responsible for its drafting has agreed to be the speaker at a Civic Society lunch in June to tell us the latest and take questions (see page 13 for more details).

Mill Lane is identified as an Opportunity Site in the South Bucks Core Strategy. The development brief will provide guidance for developers and illustrate what the council is looking for in its "conservation-led" approach and what is appropriate.

As well as the amount, scale and bulk of new development, the brief covers all the key issues – flood risk, a replacement for Skindles, heritage concerns and the question of access to, from and through the area are just a few.



*Skindles - will we see an end to this eyesore before too long?*

Most of the Society's preferred options are incorporated in the final version, including the proposed footbridge across the Thames to Boulters and improved pedestrian access to the site. We remain unconvinced, however, by the plan to stop up Mill Lane at the point where it crosses the Jubilee River and are disappointed by the absence of firm provision for improving river-related tourism and leisure facilities.

## **KING'S TRIANGLE - UPDATE**

ING returned to the town hall on April 30<sup>th</sup> looking for approval for their amended "King's Triangle" plan. However, it does seem that the proposed modifications are inadequate, and we will be making further comments. There was a lot of opposition when the outline plans came before the council in December. They were seen as "inward looking" and insular, bulky and dense, with poor traffic systems and insufficient parking. Councillors told them to go away and improve it.

The scheme they came back with included a number of improvements but the Civic Society, along with the Chamber of Commerce and others, believed they were nothing like enough to meet the aspirations of residents for a high quality, appealing development at a key site in the town. It seems very unlikely now that this scheme will ever get off the ground. Time to go back to the drawing board?

*Martin McNamee and Bob Dulson*



# Bisham, Hurley and North Wales

What links North Wales with Bisham Abbey; All Saints Church, Bisham; and the Olde Bell in Hurley?

I said in the last newsletter that I would explain why a group from the Flintshire Historical Society will be visiting this area in July. They are coming because of historic links with North Wales dating from the C14th and the C19th. For the C14th link, you have to know a bit of background history:

The Mortimer family were one of the Marcher lords, who held land near to Wales and were usually prominent in fighting the Welsh. On occasion they also fought the English king. In the C14th, two Roger Mortimers, uncle and nephew, ended up in the Tower for rebelling against Edward II. The nephew escaped whilst his uncle died in the Tower (the armorial coat of Hugh Mortimer, a descendent of the uncle, Roger Mortimer of Chirk, occurs at Ockwells). Roger Mortimer, the nephew, teamed up with Isabella, the wife of Edward II and invaded England in 1326. Edward II was murdered and his son crowned as Edward III, though Mortimer pulled the strings. Only in 1330 did Edward III truly rule, when a group led by William Montacute captured Mortimer at Nottingham Castle who was subsequently executed. A grateful king awarded some of Mortimer's vast estates to Montacute. This included lands in North Wales. In 1337 Montacute was made Steward of Hawarden & Chester when he was named as Earl of Salisbury and Lord of Denbigh. It's thought the Stewardship included the lordship of Mold.



*The magnificent parish church of St Mary the Virgin, Mold, rebuilt by Margaret Beaufort and her husband Thomas Stanley at the end of C15th to celebrate her son, Henry Tudor's victory over Richard III. Only the tower remains of the earlier church*



In 1386 the earl's son, William Montacute, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Salisbury, obtained a licence to alienate the advowson of Mold, Flintshire and other churches to the prior and convent of Bisham - rights confirmed by Pope Boniface in May 1401. There was evidently a tussle for control as by 1404 Pope Innocent VII directed the Bishop of St Asaph to summon the prior of Bisham for unduly detaining possession of the parish church of Mold.

So, one of the reasons for the Flintshire Group visit is to see Bisham Abbey, learn a bit about William Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, who founded the priory there in 1337, and to look at what remains of the building he did there.



*The remaining side of the quadrangle built by William Montacute onto the end of the Knights Templars hall*



*Armorial glass for William Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, and his wife Katherine Grandison in the former Council Chamber (now the Elizabethan Room)*

The second reason for their visit is because of the Williams family. Readers of *The Times* among you may have read about one Thomas Williams (*The Times* 19 April 2013,p26) who owned a copper mine in Anglesey and made copper coins. His business was very successful as there was a shortage of such coins. He teamed up with Pascoe Grenfell (ancestor of William Henry Grenfell, Lord Desborough) who was also into copper, becoming the “Copper Kings” - both ending up in this area as MPs for Marlow. Thomas Williams built Temple House on the banks of the Thames between Bisham and Hurley. The house was demolished shortly after its sale in 1931, though its perimeter fence, made of Welsh slate, survives (just!).

The Flintshire Group will visit All Saints Church, Bisham where, in 1878, a later member of the family - Col. (later Gen.) Owen Williams - added the north aisle in memory of his parents and first wife who are buried in the vault beneath (see below). They will see the many memorials to the Williams family, together with the wonderful memorials to the Hoby family who lived at the Abbey.



*All Saints church, Bisham - view of the east end, the aisle on the right added by the Col. Owen Williams in 1878*





*The Williams family vault*



*Remnants of the welsh slate fence at the site of the former Temple House*

### **BOAT TRIP - OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN THE FLINTSHIRE GROUP**

The group will be having a 2-hour boat trip along the Thames on the afternoon of 10<sup>th</sup> July, leaving from Maidenhead at 3pm and visiting Cookham and Bray. If you would like to go along please contact David Rowe (email: [david@daverowe.co.uk](mailto:david@daverowe.co.uk)). The cost is £10/person, payable on the boat.

*Ann Darracott*



# A Return Visit to Shottesbrooke

The return visit to Shottesbrooke Church took place in glorious sunshine – very welcome as the church inside is quite cool. Keith Hasted was again our guide, pointing out the features of this wonderful example of the “Decorated” style of architecture of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.



Jeff Griffiths, formerly a volunteer with the Landmark Trust whose offices are on the site, told the group about the Trust, and a new history trail for the church was tried out by volunteers in preparation for opening Shottesbrooke Church on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September as part of Heritage Open Days (HODS).



Many thanks to all the volunteers, especially the ladies who made and served the teas and coffees from the medieval Garden Cottage next to the church (see photo at left).

*Ann Darracott*

# Future Events

## **CIVIC SOCIETY LUNCHEON - A VIEW OF THE FUTURE FOR SKINDLES Friday 14 June 2013**

In the next couple of months South Bucks District Council (SBDC) are expected to determine the way forward for the land formerly owned by Taplow Paper Mill, including Skindles, by approving detailed guidelines for the regeneration of the 45-acre site.

So what does the future hold for Mill Lane, Taplow? Well, you can hear first-hand what the council is planning at our next Civic Society Lunch on **Friday 14 June** when our guest speaker is Jane Griffin, Principal Planner in SBDC's planning policy team.

Our venue is the Boulders Riverside Brasserie, the smart ground floor restaurant at Boulders Lock, with its splendid views of the river – and the Mill land itself. It's the perfect location and makes this an occasion not to be missed.

As Principal Planner, Jane Griffin has responsibility for the drafting of the Development Brief, which sets out the guiding principles for the redevelopment of the Mill Lane Opportunity Site. Jane will outline what the council expects to see as a result of the regeneration and she has agreed to take questions after her talk.

Boulders' chef is putting together a delightful three-course meal, with chicken as the main (there'll be a vegetarian option), and the price includes a glass of bubbly on arrival; £30 pp for members, £32 for non-members. Please reserve your place by returning the booking form at the end of this Newsletter.

## **JAZZ BY THE RIVERSIDE Saturday 14 September 2013**

Don't forget – We're planning another evening of traditional jazz with Cookham's *Fabulous Shirtlifters* at Maidenhead Rowing Club on Saturday 14 September.

Last time it was a sell-out and this year we're holding it about a month earlier to take advantage of the lighter nights. As before, you are invited to bring your own food to enjoy a picnic-style meal using the tables and chairs provided and there will be a pay bar.

As promised, we're pegging the price at £12 – the same as 2011. Make a note of the date, ring your friends and look out for the booking form in the August Newsletter.

## News from the Heritage Centre

Maidenhead Heritage Centre became 20 years old in April. Started as a cooperative project between Maidenhead Civic Society and Maidenhead Archaeological and Historical Society, it was a six-month experiment that worked. Not that the road to Park Street has been easy: after 18 months in that first home in Bridge Street, we were homeless for several months before moving to an empty unit in the Nicholson Centre. There were two more moves within the Nicholson Centre before the removal vans took us to the former Green Dragon pub in Moorbridge Road, then to King Street, and finally to Park Street in 2008 – so we are celebrating a 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary as well as a 20<sup>th</sup>. Our purchase of the former Cricketers Arms would not have been possible without an extremely generous legacy from Ted Sammes, one of the original founders and donations from the Advertiser Trust and dozens of other donors.

**Monthly Lunchtime Talks** - Thursdays at 12.45pm 9<sup>th</sup> May – Lyn Perkins on “Isambard Kingdom Brunel & the GWR”

**Special Fundraising Lecture**, May 15<sup>th</sup> at 8pm at WRVS Centre, York Road, Maidenhead – “617 Squadron – The Dambusters”. Pilots of Air Transport Auxiliary, including Lettice Curtis, delivered Lancasters to 617 Squadron in May 1943. On the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the famous raids, ex-Red Arrow pilot Mike Whitehouse will give a special fundraising lecture in aid of Heritage Centre funds. Tickets available now from the Heritage Centre; £5 each.

### 2013 Exhibitions

In addition to the permanent “Grandma Flew Spitfires” and “Story of Maidenhead” exhibitions, the following temporary exhibitions will take place in the Sammes Gallery.

9<sup>th</sup> April – 18<sup>th</sup> May: **Maidenhead Heritage Centre** – the first 20 years

22<sup>nd</sup> May – 13<sup>th</sup> July: **Celebrating Cookham** – objects from our Cookham collection on display together for the first time

16<sup>th</sup> July – 21<sup>st</sup> September: **Maidenhead and the Motor Industry** – all-new exhibition celebrating the cars made in Maidenhead since the first GWK was built 100 years ago.

25<sup>th</sup> September – 30<sup>th</sup> November: **Maidenhead’s Listed Buildings** – over 70 of them. Who says there is no heritage left in Maidenhead?!

4<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> December: **An Edwardian Christmas**



# Announcements

## MAIDENHEAD FESTIVAL

This event – previously called the Carnival – will be held over the weekend 26-27<sup>th</sup> July. The details are yet to be firmed up, but so far we understand that the Friday will be a ‘schools out’ theme as the school break up that day, and then Saturday will be a whole day of music on the main stage, an acoustic tent and stages set up in the High Street and Nicholson’s Centre. It is also hoped that some of the night-time venues will put on events and live music to draw in the rest of the town. As has become our tradition, the Society intends to have a presence – though we’re yet not sure quite what form it will take!

## COOKHAM FESTIVAL

And here’s a little plug for this year’s Cookham Festival, which formally runs from 8 May to 19 May, though one or two events start earlier. Full details of the programme of events and exhibitions can be found on the festival website at [www.cookhamfestival.org.uk](http://www.cookhamfestival.org.uk).

## Booking Form

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### ***Civic Society Luncheon***

Please reserve for me .....places at £30 *and / or* ..... places at £32 for the ***Civic Society Luncheon*** on **Friday 14 June 2013** at Boulters Restaurant. I enclose a cheque for £..... payable to Maidenhead Civic Society.

NAME..... (PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS)

ADDRESS.....

POSTCODE.....TELEPHONE No.....

EMAIL.....

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Please send your completed form to Mike Copeland, 14 Laburnham Road, Maidenhead, SL6 4DB to arrive no later than 1<sup>st</sup> June.

Phone: 01628 634181; email: [mike@mjcconsulting.demon.co.uk](mailto:mike@mjcconsulting.demon.co.uk)

# Dates for your Diary

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2013

## Social Event

The Civic Society Luncheon

“Plans for the Taplow Paper Mill site – incl Skindles”

Talk by Jane Griffin, SBDC

Boulter’s Restaurant, 12.30pm

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2013

## Outing

Boat trip from Maidenhead to Cookham & Bray

3-5pm; organised by Flintshire Historical Society

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2013

## Heritage Open Day

Shottesbrooke Church

10am-4pm; guided tours and teas

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2013

## Social Event

“Jazz by the Riverside” with the *Fabulous Shirtlifters*

Maidenhead Rowing Club, 7.30pm

## CIVIC SOCIETY OFFICERS

President of the Trustees	John McIntosh, 26 Harvest Hill Road, SL6 2QQ	633259
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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2013

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

8<sup>th</sup> January, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 10<sup>th</sup> September, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 10<sup>th</sup> December

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS FOR 2013

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

9<sup>th</sup> April, 8<sup>th</sup> October

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013 in the Wesley Hall at the Methodist Church at 8.00 pm.

**The closing date for copy for the next issue  
of the Newsletter is 12 July 2013**

**News Editor**     **Brian Darracott**  
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