



Maidenhead
Civic Society
Estd. 1960

NEWS

Issue 2/26

May 2026



*A fine view of Maidenhead Bridge – one of our important local heritage assets.
But are we looking after it properly? See page 8
(photo courtesy of James Camplin of Flight Surveys)*

Visit our website: www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk

Chairman's Piece

Recently, I had a conversation about the number of flats being built in Maidenhead. Councils all across the country are being pressured to build a certain quantum of housing, based on the perceived need of population growth. Developers see this as an opportunity for them to maximise their profits by going upwards and creating additional units on smaller available land space. However, planning officers can show the Government that, through these developments, they can count the number of units being provided towards their targeted figures. Has Maidenhead now reached its saturation point in the number of flats being provided in the Town Centre? Flatted development schemes are appropriate within a town centre environment, as they make the best use of available land and should enhance footfall. This should encourage new shops to open in Maidenhead, but following my previous communication about Nicholson's closing for redevelopment, I have reflected on the number of flats being built.

The release of land at Maidenhead Golf Club should provide more mixed development to young families or to those who wish to downsize from their current home. The type of accommodation that should be provided is terraced, semi-detached or detached dwellings to meet that demand in Maidenhead. However, I have heard that planners are still keen to have flats on the northern part of the site towards Maidenhead Railway Station, as this meets Government's goals of building accommodation close to rail networks.

When the Government Inspector ruled in favour of the Borough Local Plan, it was thought that the Golf Club would provide a more suburban style of living, as it is moving away from the town centre. The property being built would be low-rise, maximum 2.5 storeys (with accommodation in the roof space), and would not provide additional flatted accommodation.

Do you think we have now reached the saturation point with the number of flats being built in Maidenhead?

Do you think further flatted accommodation should be built on Maidenhead Golf Course?

Do you think Maidenhead Golf Club land, should provide low-level housing with a mix of tenures?

Let us know what you think.

Derek Wilson

Bob Dulson

It is with great sadness that we have to report, just as we go to press, that Bob Dulson passed away on May 4th after a short illness. This has been a shock to all. Bob was Chairman of our Society from 2008-2022 – 14 years of superb leadership. We will have a full appreciation of his service to the Society in the next edition of the Newsletter.

Planning Matters

RBWM has now agreed to move forward with the disposal of part of **Braywick Park** for use by **Maidenhead United FC**. We will comment in due course if and when a planning application is submitted for the relocated stadium. Access will be from Vicus Way.

Comments have been submitted regarding an application to demolish an existing pair of semi-detached houses (**33 and 35 Forlease Rd**) and replace them with a new two to three-storey residential building of 12 flats of 1, 2, and 3 bedrooms with limited parking. Several adverse issues have been identified, including a shortage of parking spaces, a lack of biodiversity, overdevelopment, and inadequate pavement width. It was suggested that a block of 8 units may be more appropriate. This application will be referred to the RBWM planning committee, and an extension of time to 15th May has been advised [as we go to press, it appears that this application has suddenly been withdrawn].



The application to turn a barbershop into a **hot food takeaway on Oldfield Road** has been refused. Several of the points raised by the planning group were cited as grounds for refusal.

The proposal to redevelop the **Sierra House** site, St Mary's Walk, has been agreed in principle, with the latest extension of time set at the end of April to resolve S106 issues. Work cannot commence until these are satisfactorily concluded. The work, which will take 2-3 years, requires demolition of the existing office block, leaving the residential properties facing the High Street intact. The construction works will

necessitate the narrowing of part of St Mary's Walk and, at times, restrictions in Providence Place.

A decision on the application to self-build a 4-bedroom house in the back garden of **51 Switchback Road** has been repeatedly deferred, and a revised date of 31st March 2026, which was proposed by RBWM planning, has not been achieved.

Comments have been submitted regarding the application for a change of use of a former public house known as the **Boundary Arms** in Pinkneys Green to a children's day nursery. It was felt that the site was totally unsuitable as a children's nursery, and our preference would be for the existing building to be retained, possibly as a residence. Revised plans to enhance security measures for children have recently been submitted in response to adverse comments, and a decision has yet to be made, despite the deadline of 1st April having passed.

Permission has previously been granted to allow use of the **Bridge Clinic, Bridgewater Lodge**, 160 Bridge Road, for certain uses other than as a medical facility. This is a Grade II listed building in a conservation area with access from Guards Club Road. An application has been submitted to allow the use of the building as a large children's nursery, which was not permitted under the previous application. We are opposed to this use by such a large nursery, which would inconvenience residents, but we do wish to see the listed building kept in good condition. An extension of time was recently advised for 17th April. No decision was reached on this date, and the application will go to the Area Development Management Committee.

Various proposals have been submitted in recent years to extend **The Ark PH**, Ray St., by building 3 apartments and parking spaces above and to the rear of the property. The latest revised and improved scheme application places great store on the "tilted balance" approach, arguing that the benefits outweigh the disadvantages. We commented that if this approach is demonstrated to be sound and it can be shown that the public house is regarded as a community asset, we would have no objection to the current application, despite reservations on the provision of parking spaces. Further details were submitted on 17th April.

An application to develop **Lawnfield House, Westmorland Road**, as a care home was made in January 2024. We objected to the height, bulk, and mass of the proposed building, representing a severe overdevelopment of the site. RBWM refused planning permission, and this application subsequently went to appeal. In a detailed assessment, the inspector weighed the various merits and demerits of the proposal and came to the conclusion that, on balance, the development should be granted approval despite the many objections from residents and us.

Outline planning permission was granted for demolition of the rear part of an existing building and erection of a six-storey building fronting West Street to provide 29

apartments and associated car parking at **74-82 High St.** We commented on the height and traffic in West St. Certain conditions regarding the parking in West St were stipulated.

A planning application was submitted at the end of February to build a warehouse next to Moor Cut, an unnavigable leg of Maidenhead Waterway, in **Waldeck Road / Reform Road.** The site can only be used for industrial purposes (it is in flood zone 3a). There is nothing particularly contentious about the application, other than the possibility that deliveries by HGVs in unsocial hours might annoy those living in neighbouring residences. The purpose of the warehouse has not been defined. Richard Davenport has reviewed the application and is satisfied that it will not prejudice any future redevelopment of Moor Cut.



A similar application for outline planning permission was granted for the site at **106-114 High St.**, which involves the partial demolition of no. 106-108 High Street, behind a retained facade and demolition of the rear part of no. 110-114 High Street with alterations to the retained building and erection of a 7-storey building fronting West Street to provide 57 apartments and two commercial units fronting the High Street. Having been granted planning permission for a 7-storey building with 57 apartments, Sorbon Estates now claims that the development is no longer viable due to rising construction costs and new fire safety regulations, and that the conditions relating to the number of storeys and apartments be removed. The application claims that this “non-material amendment” approach has been agreed with RBWM planning officers and is “widely established”. We have commented on this proposal, which we believe should not vary significantly from the approved one.

Cala Homes has submitted the details required by various conditions relating to the outline planning application for the first phase of the **Golf Club development.** At first glance, the detailed design of the development makes the scheme appear quite attractive. Other details relating to various matters have been submitted to meet the conditions of the approved outline application. There do not appear to be any valid reasons to comment on these applications. One of our main points of concern relates to the lack of improvements to Harvest Hill Road, including the egress to Braywick Road and access to the M4. It appears that this is the remit of the RBWM highways department and is not part of Cala Homes submissions.

The developer of the **Haleon site in Norreys Drive**, Firethorn, has employed a communications company, Cascade, who have contacted us in case we might wish to object to the redevelopment proposals. We have rejected their overtures to meet the project team, as we can see no benefit in doing this for an industrial site that is not changing use. They have assured me that the proposals (which have yet to be submitted) comply with all appropriate legislation and local plans. We will review the proposals for warehouses and possibly other industrial uses when applications are submitted. It is sad to see the end of any significant industry in Maidenhead; this consumer health manufacturing is now being performed elsewhere in the EU.



In what may seem like old news, the validation to redevelop the **Nicholson Centre** did not occur until 30th April. This approval constitutes full planning application for the demolition of all existing buildings on site, except Nicholsons House and Brock House, site preparation, construction of three buildings comprising 10 storeys, 13 storeys, and 20 storeys on a landscaped podium, construction of a 17 storey residential building, construction of a 4 storey office building, the provision of a new public open space, and landscaping and the erection of a multi-storey car park and flexible retail, financial and professional services, restaurant and cafes, drinking establishments, assembly and leisure uses. Outline planning was also granted for one building with a maximum height of 68.9m AOD (about 12-15 storeys tall). Section 106 conditions stipulate apartments for those requiring care (but not affordable housing), funding for highway improvements, and an allocation for Hines Meadow car park renovation work, amongst other requirements.

Maidenhead town centre will become a small group of shops within a large construction site for the next 3 or 4 years, with other development also taking place in the High Street/West Street, St Mary's Walk, and Queen Street. Take a hard hat and a high-vis jacket with you!

The referendum on the **Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan 2024 – 2039** approved this plan. The Plan will be given weight when planning decisions are made in the town, giving councillors stronger grounds to refuse schemes that are non-compliant. We will now need to take this plan into account when reviewing planning applications.



Brian Davies

...And Another Scheme Opens For Business



It wasn't long ago that this was a large hole in the ground. The first flats are now on sale in the redevelopment of the former Magnet Leisure Centre.

Maidenhead Bridge

This Grade I listed road bridge was built between 1772 and 1777 to the designs of Sir Robert Taylor. It has been described by historian Nikolaus Pevsner as “Georgian masonry at its best” and has been part of a vital artery to and from Maidenhead and the East ever since that time. Just imagine the impact if the bridge were closed for any significant time. Residents, businesses (including the Bishop Centre), and nursery schools in Taplow would be severely impacted. All traffic, including buses, would have to make an extensive detour via Windsor Road or the A308(M), which would quickly become choked. A trip by car or bus to Wexham Park Hospital might take over an hour.

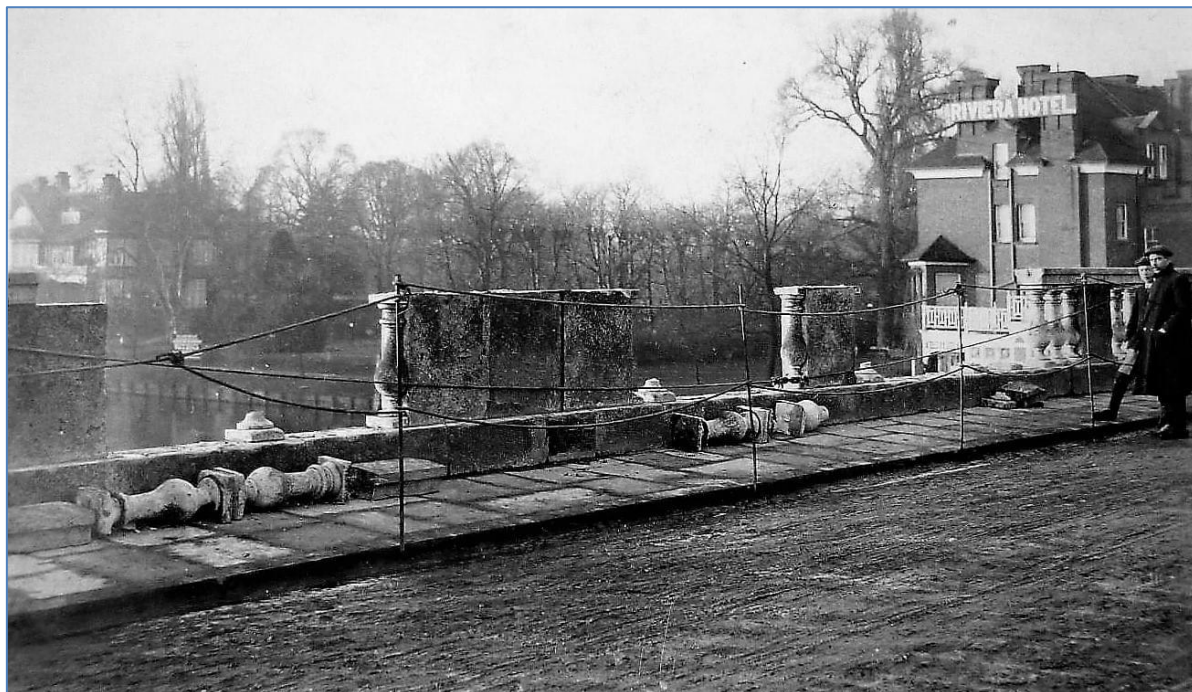
One might expect such an event to be high on the Council risk register – it has not been specifically identified. The bridge last had structural work undertaken in 2009, but, surprisingly, no planning permission for it was obtained, contrary to regulations, so no record is available to the public. Most stone bridges of this age have an 18-tonne or 7.5-tonne weight restriction (e.g., the Richmond Bridge, London), but Maidenhead Bridge is expected to accommodate HGVs of up to 44 tonnes. A fully loaded 8-wheel gravel lorry (tipper) typically weighs a maximum of 32 tonnes, carrying a payload of roughly 20 tonnes. 6-axle articulated lorries (articulated tractor + semi-trailer) can weigh up to 44 tonnes with a container.

Since 2009, a new design manual CS463 has been published: “Load testing for bridge assessment code”, together with CS454 “Assessment of highway bridges and structures” and also “Guidance on the assessment of masonry arch bridges” (CIRIA C800), instigated by the UK Bridges Board (UKBB). It is not known whether the bridge now meets these more rigorous requirements, which have led to weight restrictions on many more bridges.



The balustrade has a dozen or so substandard balusters, which have been eroded at the base to a significant extent, providing little resistance should they be impacted by

a vehicle. It may be only a matter of time before a vehicle has an accident on the bridge and penetrates the balustrade, which was designed in the horse and carriage era.



Actually this has happened in the past, as the photograph above (possibly taken in the 1920s) shows. If this sort of damage can be done by the relatively lightweight vehicles of the time, you can imagine what might happen today.

The question of a crash barrier on a historic bridge is a difficult one. While such barriers would normally be mandatory, an exception can be made for historic bridges, provided a risk assessment is undertaken and other measures are adopted. For example, the current balustrade might stop a car moving at 20mph once any defective stone balusters are replaced. It might not stop a car at 30mph and would have no effect at all on stopping an HGV at 30mph. One solution may be to install a Kassel kerb, as is sometimes used at bus stops, which would deflect tyres without causing any sidewall damage and would protect pedestrians. If a concrete barrier were installed inside the parapet, that would leave no room for a footpath. This could be another reason to ban vehicles over a certain weight from using the bridge or to restrict the speed to 20mph.

Although the boundary between RBWM and South Bucks is at the centre of the bridge, maintenance of the entire bridge, including the Taplow abutment, is the responsibility of RBWM. Ivy, which covers the Taplow side parapet, requires an agreed protocol before it can be removed. Similarly, any jet cleaning and graffiti removal must be carefully undertaken. Paint is flaking away from the streetlight posts, exposing rust. There are a few instances where stone needs replacing, or lime mortar requires repointing.

The 250th anniversary of this bridge, which has been instrumental to the development of Maidenhead, occurs in May next year. This is most definitely an event worth celebrating, and the Society together with MMAHS and the Heritage Centre will discuss how to frame such a celebration. It is hoped that funds and a willingness from the Council can be found to spruce up the bridge for this event. The government has just announced a £1bn structures fund enabling local authorities to apply for a grant to repair defective bridges. The Civic Society will ensure that its plaque is restored, which is now becoming difficult to read. There is also another plaque nearby commemorating the 1947 floods. Should anyone have any ideas as to fundraising and advancing the means of undertaking restoration work, we would like to hear from you.



My thanks go to Society member Diana le Clercq, who has brought the forthcoming anniversary and the need for a conservation plan to the attention of both the Council and me. It would appear that the RBWM Principal Conservation Officer, the Highways Team, and the relevant Council members may need a little persuasion to take the conservation of Maidenhead Bridge more seriously. General Inspections (GI) are meant to occur visually every two years, while detailed Principal Inspections (PI) should be conducted every six years. The results of a 2025 inspection found the structure to be in 'good to fair' condition. Standard CG302 requires that detailed maintenance records be kept, but these are not readily available to the public.

Brian Davies

Projects

THE MILLENNIUM WALK HERITAGE TRAIL

Long-standing members may remember the inauguration of the Millennium Walk in 2000 led by our then MP, Theresa, now Baroness, May (and still our Patron). They may also recall the 20th anniversary walk in 2020 from Pinkneys Green during the pandemic when we all had to be socially isolated. Our patron again led the walk and set a cracking pace as she had to get back to speak in the House.

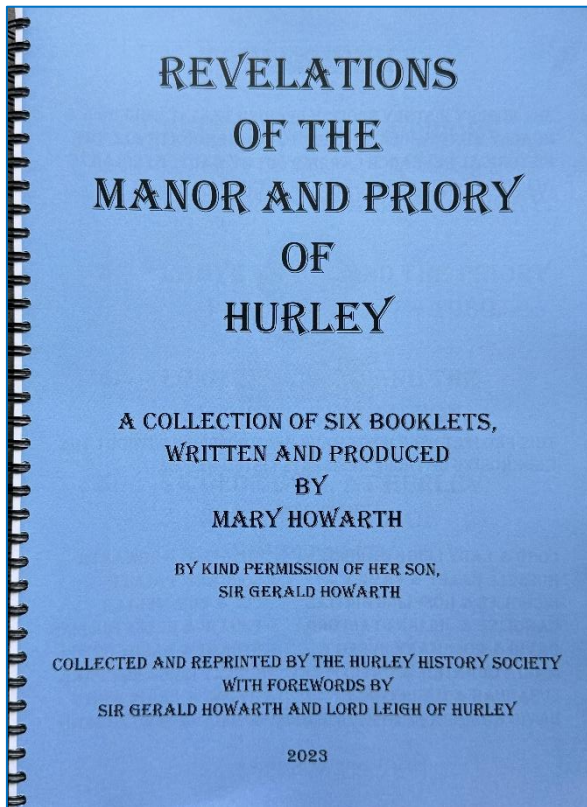


*Hurley – the start of the Millennium Walk.
The present Ladye Place is the building on the left*

This project, in conjunction with East Berks Ramblers, created a walking route from Hurley to Maidenhead, connecting at each end with the Thames Path National Trail.

If you look closely at the Millennium Walk leaflet you will see the occasional snippet of heritage information. The previous edition of the Newsletter described how we have been working on a digital version of “The Kings Heritage Trail” for use on a mobile phone and we are now in the early stages of creating something similar for the Millennium Walk.

We are still collecting information about heritage sites along the route and have been enormously helped by a publication of the Hurley History Society.



They have collated and reprinted six booklets written by Mary Howarth, a local historian (available from the shop cost £30).

Our leaflet notes the founding of the Benedictine Priory at Hurley in 1086 by the Norman lord, Geoffrey de Mandeville, but Mary Howarth points out that the Normans refurbished and then added on to a Saxon church (still surviving). A lot of the Norman work on the church was demolished during the Reformation.

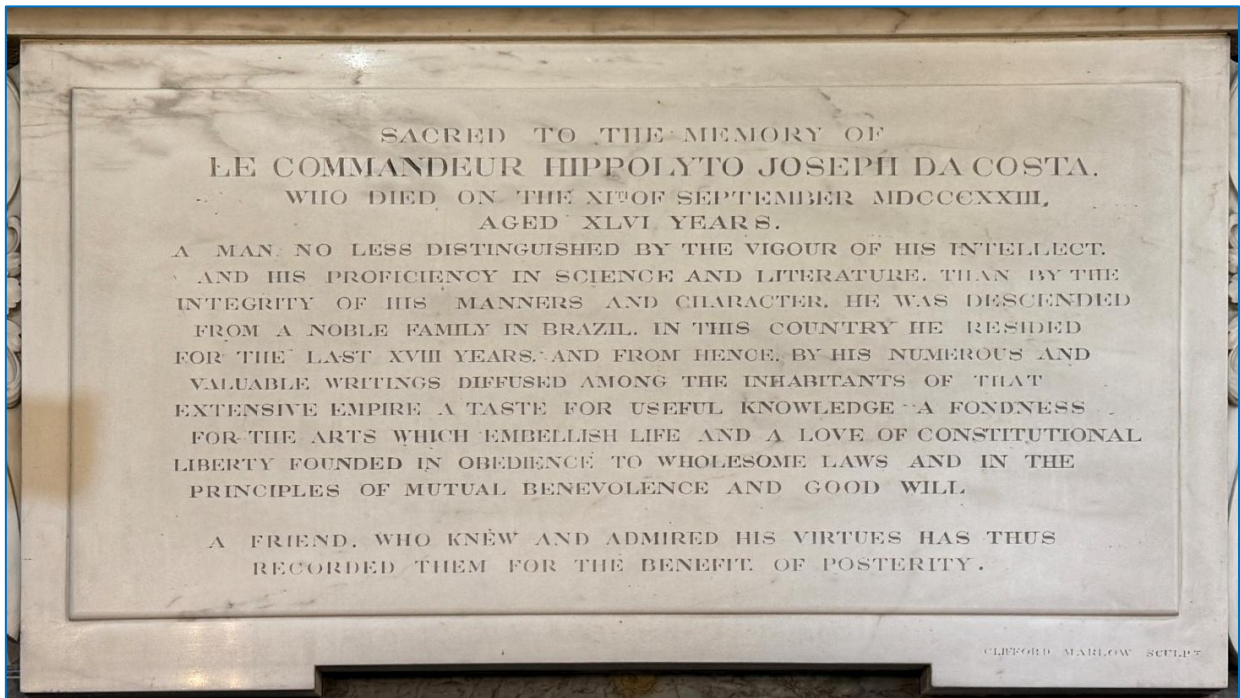
Did you know that the original Ladye Place building (south east of the church) was built over the monks burial crypt using stone from the priory church and that in this crypt the Glorious Revolution that saw James II replaced by William

and Mary in 1689 was planned? This Ladye Place was pulled down in 1838 but the crypt remains. The present Ladye Place (see photo on previous page) is thought to have been the farmhouse of the original building.



The burial crypt of the monks

The role of one of Hurley's past residents – Hippolyto Joseph Da Costa – in helping Brazil obtain its freedom from Portugal, and the village's involvement in clandestine operations by the OSS during World War II are also described in Mary's book.



The memorial to Hippolyto Joseph Da Costa in Hurley Church

So, a lot of history and this is only the start of the trail, so wish us luck!

Ann Darracott

Other Heritage Societies

Members may be interested in these events hosted by our “sister” heritage groups:

MAIDENHEAD & MARLOW ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY SOCIETY

The next event is our monthly talk, on Wednesday 27th May, 8:00 pm at the URC. This will be Jennifer James on “The Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital”.

See more here: [MMAHS Events](#)

MAIDNEHEAD HERITAGE CENTRE

Maidenhead Heritage Centre has a special exhibition running within the Nicholson Shopping Centre with displays telling the story of this part of Maidenhead Town Centre over a 300-year sweep from the Coaching era; through the nineteenth and early-to-mid twentieth centuries with Nicholsons Brewery and the terraced streets such as Moffat Street surrounding it; the age of the bulldozer, and redevelopment as today’s shopping centre gradually took place. It is open from 11.00am – 4pm, Tuesdays to Sundays and is free!

Also, don’t miss the annual boat trip – Thursday 3rd September. See more here:

[MHC River Cruise](#)

Events

CIVIC SOCIETY LUNCH

Thursday 16th July 2026, 12.30 for 1pm

Talk: Heathrow Under the Radar

Our annual summer lunch will be held at Moor Hall, Cookham, SL6 9QH, on 16th July 12.30 for 1pm start. Our guest speaker is our own Brian Davies.

Brian spent the final 20 years of his working life planning major construction projects at Heathrow Airport. Using information gleaned from his time working for BAA/Heathrow Airport Limited and with further research, he reveals fascinating stories. He also uncovers surprising facts about the

origins, development, and future plans for the airport. As Heathrow turns 80, eight decades of remarkable but little-known moments and facts are revealed. Topics will include:

- A curcus, two cannon, Three Pigeons and a Fairey.
- A new Austrian method causes a disaster.
- Tales from the Riverbank.
- Three alliances, a superjumbo and a big headache.
- Where's my baggage! A moving experience.
- Gold and fish.
- Great Expectations for an island named "Boris".
- Predicting the future - all bets are off.

[Note: This presentation has not been endorsed or authorised by Heathrow Airport Ltd. Any views expressed are those of the speaker alone.]

The price for the lunch is £36.00 per person. As we are now online could you please email me with your menu choices joyce.delasalle@btinternet.com and pay either by bank transfer to our account at Lloyds Bank, Sort Code: 30-95-36; A/c: 00277876, **quoting ref "Moor Hall"** or send a cheque to Joyce Delasalle, 7 Laxton Green, Cox Green, Maidenhead, SL6 3HW, payable to Maidenhead Civic Society. **The deadline for bookings is 30th June.**



The Menu:

Starters

- A) Tomato Tartare, Goat's Cheese Mousse, Caramelised Beetroot
- B) Avocado & Prawn Cocktail, Honey & Chilli Spice Mayo, Pomegranate & Soused Apple
- C) Crispy Crusted Halloumi Bites, Soused Vegetables, Chilli & Pomegranate Dressing

Mains

- D) Charred Stuffed Supreme of Chicken with Mushrooms and Spinach, Sarladaise Potato, Roast Vegetable, Forestiere Sauce
- E) Grilled Salmon, Potato, Leek, Cockle & Mussel Risotto, Glazed Vegetable
- F) Cheese & Spinach Tortellini, Split White Wine Cream with Dill Oil, Sweet Potato & Vegetable Brunoise

Dessert

- G) Glazed Lemon Tart Meringue, Chilli Fruit Salsa
- H) Coffee Caramel Panna Cotta
- I) Fresh Fruit Salad

Membership Subscriptions

We would like to remind our members who pay by cheque that your subscriptions are due on June 1st. 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. If you have any queries please contact me on joyce@delasalle.me.uk or telephone: 07917 876145.

If your preferred way to pay is by cheque please make it payable to Maidenhead Civic Society and send to: Joyce Delasalle, 7 Laxton Green, Maidenhead, SL6 3HW.

Single membership:	£15.00
Family Membership (2 members at one address):	£20.00

Dates for your Diary

Thursday 16th July 2026
Lunch with Speaker

Civic Society Lunch
Moor Hall, Cookham, 12.30 for 1pm

CIVIC SOCIETY – KEY CONTACTS

Chairman	Derek Wilson
Hon. Secretary	Eileen Goford
Hon. Treasurer	Peter Child
Planning Group	Brian Davies
Projects	Ann Darracott
Newsletter & Website	Brian Darracott
Events & Membership	Joyce Delasalle

Enquiries to the Society: info@maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2026

All Committee meetings are now at the Cox Green Community Centre, 6.30pm until further notice.

13th January, 10th February, 10th March, 14th April, 12th May, 9th June, 14th July, 8th September, 13th October, 10th November, 8th December

The 66th AGM will be held on a date in September 2026, to be advised.

**The closing date for copy for the next issue
of the Newsletter is 24th Jul 2026**

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