



Maidenhead Civic Society **NEWS**

Issue 4/09

November 2009



*For how much longer do we have to live with this and
other unfinished developments in the town centre?
See page 15 to find out what's happening*

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

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I make no apology for it. This is a no-holds-barred appeal. Not for money (well not directly), but to spread the word.

The Society is very well respected as a voice in the community. Over the years it has made remarkably positive contributions to the improvement of Maidenhead – and stepped in on several occasions to prevent some disasters. With its activities in amenity and environment issues, planning matters, projects and campaigns, talks, outings and social events it has never stood still – preserving the best and improving the rest, in the dual roles of initiator and watchdog.

But you said it yourselves. In last year's members' survey you told us we need to make a real effort to promote our own worth in the community. Too often one comes across people who have never heard of the Society. We really need to address that. In my report to the AGM I admit that we've been slothful in getting to grips with the issue of membership but we now have a campaign on the cards. We should at least be as well known as the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club or the Heritage Centre.

If the Society is to continue with the same verve and enthusiasm over the next 50 years as it has in the last, then we need to introduce new blood to help us to do it. There's no getting away from it – none of us is getting any younger.

There are many tools available and we shall be using the best of them. One of the most powerful is word of mouth. Personal recommendation has the benefit of being both valuable and befitting to the Society. So please if you haven't yet – or even if you have – we need you to introduce someone to the Society. It could be a neighbour or a friend; it will probably be someone who shares the same values as you. Like you, they will be passionate about Maidenhead and, ideally, they will be keen to make a difference. Just pass their details to any member of the executive committee and we'll take it from there.

As I've said before, we always have more ideas than people to carry them out. For every initiative we undertake, there are four or five we cannot. Usually this is due to a lack of human resources. Occasionally it's for reasons beyond our control. I leave you with this example. While really frustrating, it brought a wry smile. I had been looking forward to announcing a new Civic Society awards scheme for architecture at the AGM in November. Our idea was to invite public nominations for buildings completed in the last 12 months that were "worthy of recognition". (We would wait to see if this meant we had to create a category for the wooden spoon!) The Society did launch an awards scheme in the past but this was subsumed into one run biennially by the Royal Borough. Then a few years ago, that fell by the wayside. So we thought we'd revive ours. To be sure the ground was clear for our initiative, we checked with the town hall that their scheme was no longer running. It wasn't; and moreover they seemed to like our idea. So we were ready to go with our announcement. Imagine our surprise, therefore, when just a few days later we learned that the Borough would shortly be announcing the revival of its own Architectural Building Awards!

We are delighted that the Borough is bringing back its awards, but we were left wondering if plagiarism is really a form of flattery...!

49th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY

**To be held on Wednesday, 18th November 2009
at the Methodist Church Hall at 8.00 pm.**

AGENDA

1. Introduction by the Chairman
2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting
3. Accounts for the year ended 31st May 2009
4. Reports for 2008/2009
5. Election of the Board of Trustees
To approve the appointment of the new Board of Trustees. *See note below.*
6. Election of the Officers
To elect from the Trustees an Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer
7. Any other Business.

Election of Trustees

Under the terms of the Society's Constitution, one third of the twelve Trustees shall retire each year and shall be eligible for re-election. Accordingly, Brian Darracott, Ann Darracott and Martin McNamee will retire, and all three offer themselves for re-election. Together with the existing vacancy, there are thus four vacancies and three nominations.

The Membership is invited to make nominations for the position of Trustees. The nominations, in writing, should be accompanied by a seconder and the consent of the nominee, and be with the Hon. Secretary 14 days prior to the AGM.

MINUTES OF THE 48TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY

Held on Wednesday 19th November 2008.

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** Rt Hon Theresa May MP and Tina Sell
- 2. Approval of Minutes of 47th AGM:** The minutes of the 47th AGM were approved, proposed by Jill Powell and seconded by Brian Darracott.
- 3. President's Introductory Remarks:** John McIntosh welcomed all attending this, the 48th AGM of Maidenhead Civic Society.
As chair of the Board of Trustees, he gave a brief account of the two meetings held in the past 12 months as required by the constitution. Both carried out a review at the strategic level of the activities and outcomes of the Executive Committee and the Groups. Much had been achieved but what was highlighted was how much more could be done with a bigger and more active membership. The Board directed attention to this already well-known problem. At the second meeting the Board noted with satisfaction the publication of the report from the Partnership for the Rejuvenation of Maidenhead (PRoM) and particularly the seminal role played in this by the Society's Chairman Bob Dulson who is the Partnership's independent chair. The Board went on to identify a number of issues in the infrastructure underlying the PRoM strategy, which it suggested should be in the Executive Committee thinking in the next phase of its activities.
At this point the Chair was taken by **Bob Dulson** as **Chairman of the Executive Committee** and as set out in the Constitution.
- 4. Accounts for the Year Ending May 2008:** The Treasurer, Trevor Farnfield reported that the accounts were healthy. He went on to say that there was more cash available. This was because there had been less expense, halved compared with the previous year. However, the income had dropped compared with the preceding year due to the poor uptake of 'Outings'. He warned that this would feed through to next year's yield on Gift Aid. There are nonetheless funds available for the Society's purposes. Adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Michael Johnson and seconded by Lilia Baillie-Hamilton. Agreed nem. con.
- 5. Reports for the Year 2007/2008:** All the Group reports had been published in Newsletter edition 4/08. These were open for discussion and queries at the meeting. There being non, the item was closed.
- 6. Election of the Board of Trustees:** At this point the President took the Chair. In accordance with the constitution one third of the twelve Trustees retires each year.

Accordingly, Bob Dulson, Tina Sell and Nigel Cockburn stand down. Of these the first two offer themselves for re-election. Bob Dulson and Tina Sell were proposed by Michael Johnson and seconded by Martin McNamee. This was agreed nem.con.

At this point the Chairman resumed the Chair.

Dr. Brian Smith was nominated as a new Trustee to fill one of the two vacancies. He was proposed by Brian Darracott and seconded by Alex Ballie-Hamilton. This was agreed nem.con.

7. Election of Officers: It was proposed that June Jorge be appointed Hon Secretary and Trevor Farnfield as Hon. Treasurer. Proposed by Jill Powell and seconded by Joyce Pearson. This was agreed nem.con.

8. Any Other Business: There being no other business the chairman closed the meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The past 12 months have been a curate's egg. The Group work continues to produce good results but the Society's profile and appeal needs addressing. Undoubtedly the highlights have been the website and our events programme. The weaknesses, where identified, all point to a need to attract more members. We have been slothful in getting to grips with this but a campaign is now on the cards.

Communications

The success of the year has been our website. We now have an impressive web presence that speaks well for the society and will become even more useful over time as the data banks are built up. The remodelling meant many hours of tedious work for **Brian Darracott** but we now have a site of which he and the Society can be proud. We should also remember the contribution made over the years by our previous webmaster, Tim Goldingham, who sadly died on 7th August this year following an illness (see page 26 of the Newsletter).

Meanwhile, the planned Newsletter re-vamp is on hold until there are the funds to pay for it, though we are experimenting with a larger typeface. The Newsletter remains the preferred communications choice for members and we're grateful to Brian, as editor, and to **Carol Innes** and her loyal team of distributors.

The society's Media coverage is good when we get it but we need to find more opportunities to capitalise on that goodwill to attract more active support.

Events

We've managed an excellent programme of talks, outings and social events, despite a couple of disappointments. Everyone who attends speaks highly of them; they deserve more support.

A particular highlight was the Speaker's Luncheon with Maidenhead police chief, Supt Tim de Meyer and we plan another of these in the Spring. Our outings took us to two world famous sporting venues - Ascot and Lords - for a look behind the scene as well as a variety of other impressive venues.

All our events are aimed primarily at members but guests of course are welcome. The turnout for our visit to the War Graves Commission was such that a second visit had to be arranged and we had a good crowd at a delightfully genteel "spicy cream tea" garden party, complete with string quartet, organised by **Shashi Dare** at her home. Our thanks are due to **Tina Sell** (Events Coordinator), **Mike Copeland** (Outings Secretary) and members of the Events Group, and those who helped in any way with the events programme.

Projects

The Project Group, frankly, is something of a misnomer. Almost without exception, what happens is down to **Ann Darracott** – and what she gets through is amazing. This year in addition to her other work she led a call to extend the Green Belt to 22 acres of land adjacent to Ockwells Manor to help protect this landmark building from urban blight.

Planning

The perception that the new streamlined planning process had led to a drop in diligence, particularly on flood-related issues, was pursued by **Martin McNamee** (Planning chair) and members of the group. The concern is that the rules that govern Permitted Development override the Borough's own local flood policy. However, the dilemma in raising this issue is that you alert more people to the freedom they currently have to build in the flood plain. This may be something to take up at a national level.

Over the year the Group has scrutinised an average of 180 planning applications. These are selected each month for consideration by **Rudi Sheldon** and **Bronwen Renwick** and our thanks go to them. We thank other members of the group too, particularly **Michael Johnson** for acting as the Society's liaison with the Waterways Group. Michael however is looking to relinquish this role and a replacement is sought. Also, following Nigel Cockburn's departure to Bath, there are two vacancies on the Planning Group itself.

Concern has been expressed that by involving local pressure groups (Chamber, Society, etc) in PRoM the Council has effectively silenced them. That is definitely an overstatement but we need to guard against the perception. On a positive note, council leader David Burbage in a recent interview stated emphatically that the existence of PRoM meant that the regeneration of Maidenhead town centre was above party politics. Having campaigned for that, the Society can claim success.

Accounts

Our Treasurer's report tells a sobering story. We're not in crisis; but our current income only just covers the cost printing the Newsletter; so anything else we do eats into our reserves. Our traditional money-maker – the outings – have not been turning the profit we've been used to and over the last few years our reserves have been

comfortable; now they're reasonable. So, looking ahead, any capital expenditure must bring a pay-back. Thanks to **Trevor Farnfield** for his diligence and pragmatism in watching the figures and to **June Jorge** (Hon Secretary) for keeping the papers – and us – in order.

Membership

At every turn, the message about membership comes through – even in our own survey of members (in Nov last year) the need to increase numbers was recognised. Several members said we needed to work harder at improving our PR, raising awareness. The loss of members is due mainly to mortality and, thankfully, not dramatic and there have been a few new joiners this year to balance the losses. However, there is a real need for members prepared to take a more active part. The numbers are:

- Total entities (Individuals, households, honorary, corporate) 296
- Total headcount of 385
- 68 Life Members, 26 Honorary, 197 Annual and 7 Corporate

Objectives

- Stop the decline and increase overall membership numbers
- Increase the number of members actively involved

Bob Dulson

PLANNING GROUP REVIEW

At its monthly meetings over the past year, the Planning Group has reviewed an average of fifteen applications, usually submitting comments on three or four.

As a matter of policy we always comment on large-scale commercial developments such as office blocks and hotels. The largest office building is under construction beside Sainsbury's on the Cookham Road roundabout. As feared, this appears to be a poorly designed edifice, built too close to the street frontage. Two hotels have been approved - 116 bedrooms in Bridge Avenue (outline permission) and a 96 bedroom Travelodge on the corner of King Street and Bell Street. Unlike the Bridge Avenue site, the Travelodge has no parking or drop-off facility. The design of both hotels is uninspiring and we remain concerned that there appears to be little or no architectural guidance or input from the Royal Borough. On landmark sites there should be much more emphasis on innovative and creative architecture.

To encourage improved architectural design we are planning to reintroduce an awards scheme sponsored by the Civic Society. The intention would be to encourage, recognise, and publicise buildings of architectural innovation and merit. Renu Gujral of the Planning Group has agreed to take on the implementation of the awards. There has been a previous scheme (operated in conjunction with the Royal Borough) and we need to establish what has happened to such awards in the last few years before going ahead. Meanwhile, Renu will be drawing up the details of the scheme in the near future.

On the smaller domestic planning front our main concerns relate to the introduction of “permitted development” which is intended to fast-track applications for extensions. There is an increasing failure of the planning process to acknowledge the established policies relating to flood risk. The newly adopted planning application form APP1 makes no reference to flood plain issues and indeed “permitted development” can go ahead on the flood plain in excess of the previous restriction of 30 square metres established by flood policy F1. This will become an increasing problem in flood prone areas as more members of the public become aware of the permitted development loophole.

This new policy is resulting in a significant increase in applications for a “certificate of lawfulness” where householders seek to regularise planning issues relating to already built extensions /outbuildings. Planning authorities covering areas of flood risk should be highlighting to the Government the long-term risk associated with this policy, and we continue to voice our concerns to the Royal Borough.

Martin McNamee

COMMUNICATIONS GROUP REVIEW

Newsletter

The Newsletter continues to be produced quarterly in an A5-sized booklet form. During the year some considerable thought has been given to assessing ways of changing the format and introducing some colour. However, at the end of the day, none has been found to be affordable in view of the Society’s likely future regular income.

In response to some readership feedback, the font size in the Newsletter has been slightly increased. For the same amount of editorial copy this entails an increase in the number of pages. We shall try to standardise on 20 pages per issue, subject to input.

I always need interesting copy for the various editions and I would like to be able to get away from the current rather formulaic content each issue.

Website

The new website has now been running successfully since late 2008. Updates are made monthly – some by me as Editor, and some by the web designer for those items that require more knowledge of website editing. The website includes a “Contact Us” page via which viewers can send a message to the Society. I get several messages a month, which are passed on to the appropriate Executive Committee member to deal with. One or two have been purely to congratulate us on the pleasing design of the new site!

The website also contains the facility for an online photo gallery. At the moment this contains just a few test pictures, but it is my hope to progress this as we build up an

attractive archive of digital photos. Some tweaks to the way the gallery operates will be needed and this will involve the web designer.

Brian Darracott

PROJECTS GROUP REVIEW

Millennium Walk

Work has concentrated on two of the missing links:

Prospect Hill to Temple Golf Club. Despite many meetings this has not progressed. A traffic survey by the Highways department showed that motorists are exceeding the speed limit in the area where we wish to cross. Enquiries by the Society and by the Local Access Forum (LAF) to find out if the department plans any traffic calming methods, have fallen on deaf ears. This is despite an existing safety problem for motorists negotiating the entrance to the golf club. If traffic kept to the speed limit of 40mph, a crossing complying with government guidelines is possible. Similarly attempts to find out why the Department feels the Smallwood's design for our crossing is undesirable have been unsuccessful. A site visit to this link for LAF members and the officers involved is being organised for November. Maybe there will be a breakthrough!!

Lower Cookham Road to towpath

There has been more progress with this missing link. Royal London Asset Management, who wish to redevelop Whitebrook Park, have offered £25,000 to create our path. Their first application was thrown out in April but is now apparently under discussion again. My guess is that when and if their application is successful they will take back the EA land which will be sold with our path in place.

For the 5th year running our path was cleared with the help of East Berks Ramblers and Rotaract and then used during the Boundary Walk on 4th October. During the afternoon of the Walk, a site visit took place involving members of LAF, ward councillors, the cabinet member responsible for leisure and two rights of way officers. We hope this will facilitate the creation of our path.

Green Way

The Green Way Working Group meets twice a year and discusses the condition report of the Green Way plus any related matters.

Due to the success of the "Windows" Project that sprayed herbicide on reeds and weeds last year, "Windows 2" was implemented in September with funding from the Environment Agency. This included repeat spraying of last year's areas together with sections of York Stream on Maidenhead (Town) Moor and also the stream north of the flood control gate, these two areas being sprayed for the first time. There are now more areas of open water visible in the stream system than previously. We hope this can be repeated again next year. Less obstruction by reeds plus the removal by the EA of fallen trees in the watercourse has resulted in reasonable water flow to Maidenhead this summer.

Comments were made on the redevelopment of Maidenhead (Town) Moor, especially in connection with poplars.

Ockwells Manor

The Society tabled an agenda item for the Maidenhead Town Forum meeting of 2nd June; specifically - *Implications of Government Housing Targets on the Character of Maidenhead and the Green Belt*. We have suggested the 22 acres of land opposite Ockwells manor be re-designated as green belt, a suggestion already made by the National Trust with whom we are in contact. They have suggested we cooperate in future in matters concerning Ockwells. A new talk, a *Virtual Tour of Ockwells Manor* was given to the White Waltham Village Association during the year.

Bisham Abbey Priory

John Allen of the Chiltern Heraldry Group is writing a paper on the Vansittart heraldry at Bisham Abbey. Brian and I visited Bisham in September to obtain the necessary photos.

Pevsner's *Buildings of England*

In the past we have assisted Prof Geoffrey Tyack of Oxford University, with his revision of the Ockwells and Bisham Abbey entries in Nicolas Pevsner's book on Berkshire (in the *Buildings of England* series). The volume is soon to be published.

Library Square - Broken Oar Plaque

Despite obtaining a grant of £500 for this from the Kidwells Park Trust, this did not go ahead basically because of fears that people could slip on it.

Blue Plaque Scheme

We have obtained from the Royal Borough details of their existing and planned blue plaques.

Civic Trust Initiative

I attended the meeting at High Wycombe on 25th July organised to plan the future of the Civic Society movement. The next twelve months will be critical for any national voice for the movement.

Save Jesus Almshouse

The Fishmongers Guild, a member of which founded this almshouse in Bray in the 17th century, wishes to divest itself of the responsibility. The excuse is that this is allowed because of changes to charity law. We helped publicise the "Save Jesus Almshouse" campaign via the Newsletter and have offered the organisers what help we can give. They are hoping to find some local body able to take over the running of the almshouse and allow elderly people to remain there. If this doesn't happen it will be transferred to Bristol Charities who will move the remaining elderly out and sell the property.

Ann Darracott

EVENTS GROUP REVIEW

Over the year the Events group has continued to meet on a monthly basis.

Social

There was a disappointing response to the first of our planned social occasions for members - a Reception and Social Evening at Maidenhead Golf Club, which meant the event had to be cancelled.

Shashi and Geoff Dare were the generous hosts to a Cream Tea with a difference. As well as the usual cucumber sandwiches, cakes, scones, clotted cream and jam we enjoyed spicy samosas on the lawn, throughout a very sunny afternoon in September. Everybody participated in a flowery Quiz and the bright sparks amongst us went home with a small prize, plus free membership to the Society for a friend.



It was an afternoon of fun and was accompanied by soothing tunes from a string quartet led by Ian Fairbairn. Thanks to all who supported the event in any way.

Talks

The January talk was given by the recently appointed head of planning at RBWM, Tim Slaney. He talked about his vision for the future of the town centre and the difficulties that lie therein.

In February, Gordon Anderson JP gave a very enlightening presentation about the working of the courts and the massive changes which are taking place.

In March, we held our second Civic Society Speaker's Luncheon with guest speaker Superintendent Tim De Meyer, LPA Commander for Maidenhead. Although the attendance was less than we'd hoped, the occasion was a big success. Tim gave an excellent presentation, setting out his objectives in the field of law and order in a very convincing way. He talked about his previous experiences and showed how well equipped he is for the job he is doing. Unfortunately, because of a busy schedule, he was unable to stay for the lunch and left immediately after the Q&A session.

Our May guest had travelled a great distance to come and speak to us. Stephen Carr, MBE, gave a fascinating talk on his life as an agriculturalist and missionary living in Malawi. He and his wife Ann have spent 50 years sharing their expertise in methods of farming and Stephen has held posts in Senior Government as well as with the Africa Region of the World Bank. He was a real raconteur and demonstrated a great devotion to his job and the people of Africa.

Although, we hoped to organise a Luncheon in September, it was decided to postpone until March 2010, partly because of the speaker's availability.

Outings and Visits

In January we paid a second visit to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which was very successful and well attended. Our next proposed visit to Greenwich in May unfortunately had to be cancelled due to lack of support. In July, however, a visit to Lords cricket ground and Kenwood House was fascinating and much enjoyed by everyone. Another success was the "behind the scenes" visit to Ascot Racecourse which attracted a good crowd of people. A blustery day did nothing to quell the enthusiasm of the 50 or so who attended.

Tina Sell

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Annual Accounts are enclosed with this report and I would like to highlight or explain a few points.

- Reduced profits were again made from the outings. This was due to the relatively poor take up of coach seats. As a consequence, Gift Aid contributions to the Society's funds will be even lower in the current year.
- Tax refunds were down due to the reduced income from outings.
- No specific donations or grants were received.
- Subscription income has dropped considerably. This is partly due to a relatively high take up of Life Membership last year.
- Interest received on deposited money has dropped due to prevailing interest rates.
- A donation of £500 received from a member during previous financial years, which was intended for use in some way associated with the River Thames, has yet to be expended.
- The most significant regular expenditure, as always, relates to printing of the newsletter. In fact, membership income in the last year only just covered the newsletter printing and distribution costs.
- The net cost of meetings is reduced due to charges made to attend talks and profits from teas.
- A one-off cost has been taken for redesign of the website. This item accounts for the increase in expenditure compared to the previous year.

The Society accounts are in reasonable health and, whilst I encourage the Committee to consider further ways of using some of the available funds to further raise the profile of the Society, a proactive membership drive is called for. We should also seek opportunities to apply for grants from various local bodies.

Trevor Farnfield

**MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY - Charity No.
272102**

Annual Accounts for Year ended 31st May 2009

2007/2008

2008/2009

INCOME

350	Donations/Grants	0
2,746	Subscriptions Received During Year	2,252
697	Interest On Bank And Other Deposits	466
338	Surplus On Outings	242
0	Surplus On Social Events	40
937	Tax Refunds On Deeds Of Covenants / Gift Aid	770
£5,068	Total	£3,770

EXPENDITURE

Administration		
2,301	General Expenses, Printing, Postage, Etc.	2,512
765	Hire Of Rooms, Speakers And Meeting Expenses	255
248	Subscriptions	194
190	Insurance	240
Donations		
0	Various	0
Other Expenses		
94	Ockwells And Associated Projects (Net Costs)	154
80	Millennium Walk. (Net Costs)	45
0	Various Other Small Projects	34
219	Deficit On Social Events	0
80	Presentations/Memorials	0
0	Website Redesign	2475
£3,977	Total	£5,909

1,091	EXCESS/DEFICIT OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	-2,139
12,689	Balance Brought Forward	13,780
£13,780	Balance Carried Forward	£11,641

FUNDS

1,457	Bank (Lloyds TSB) and Cash	1,661
12,225	Charities Deposit General Fund (COIF)	9,690
966	Debtor/Insurance Payments In Advance	290
-868	Creditors/Commitments	0
£13 780	BALANCE OF FUNDS	£11 641

Trevor Farnfield - Hon. Treasurer

22-Sep-09

PLANNING MATTERS

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

We continue to review about fifteen planning applications every month, and since the last Newsletter we have commented on ten proposals. Two major developments have been reviewed – a Travelodge at 99 King Street (opposite the railway station) and Kidwells Estate.

TRAVELODGE HOTEL SITE

The Travelodge will have 96 bedrooms and will occupy the corner of King Street and Bell Street. The ground floor will be a separate unit to be independently operated as a restaurant. The building will have a total of six floors, with the main reception and public areas on the first floor. Whilst we believe that the location is ideal for a budget hotel, we were not happy with two aspects of the proposal. Parking is non-existent with only five spaces – all dedicated to disabled use. Furthermore, there is no facility to pull in or drop off passengers from vehicles. This is a very busy location with double yellow lines, and it is not reasonable to expect all visitors to arrive on foot – in spite of the proximity of the station. Secondly, we are underwhelmed by the utilitarian box design of the architecture. The elevations are of brick, aluminium, glass and render, but have no design features that should enhance such a prominent landmark site. It is a very disappointing cube! Nevertheless, planning permission has been granted and the Travelodge bedrooms will join the 116 bedrooms of the Bridge Avenue Hotel, which was reported on in the last Newsletter.

KIDWELLS ESTATE

Kidwells Estate has not been approved at the time of writing. The current 84 dwellings will be augmented by a further 120 properties. Existing residents will be relocated within the estate as building progresses. The current seven blocks will be increased in height to five storeys, but adequate car parking and landscaping will be provided. The location is alongside Kidwells Park and this is a good opportunity to increase density and improve housing stock close to the town centre. There will be an increase in the number of vehicle movements and our main concern is the single exit from the estate onto Cookham Road.

Earlier this year the enlargement and re-development of the Stiefel Laboratories building at Whitebrook Park on Lower Cookham Road was refused because of increased vehicle movements, and overdevelopment. There has been a consultation meeting to address these issues and a further application is expected before Christmas. This will be reported on at a later date.

Because of the economic situation there is a stagnation of development sites across the town. Bridge Avenue is particularly badly hit with the Old Cinema Site, and Nos. 12 both flattened and Nos. 3-6 becoming increasingly derelict and overgrown as they await development as a hotel. Many members must be wondering what is happening.....

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO.....?

There are many locations in and around the town that are often the subject of enquiry relating to the progress (or lack of it!) of planning and/or re-building. This is an update on the “Top Ten”.

Old Cinema Site, Bridge Avenue. This has been demolished as required by the Royal Borough. It now sits surrounded by an eight feet high hoarding on the Bridge Avenue and High Street frontages. Planning permission has been granted for offices and the owners are marketing “One Bridge Avenue” but any construction work is unlikely until a tenant has been found. The fence along the river frontage is the subject of an Enforcement Notice requiring its removal.



1 High Street: Planning permission has been granted for a restaurant with mixed-use accommodation above. This site sits alongside York Stream, and work has been delayed whilst further planning permission is sought for temporary access over the pavement. Work is expected to re-commence soon.



114 High Street (over Post Office): Permission has been granted for change of use from offices to living accommodation. The façade which forms part of a conservation area will be retained.





Old Jewson's Site, Queen Street/Cullern's Passage: Planning has already been given for a large residential development. However, this site represents a key element of the wider re-development of the Queen Street/King Street/Broadway triangle. Consequently, permission has been granted for use as a temporary parking facility until the wider planning issue is resolved.



"Death Row", York Road: This is the derelict terrace alongside the Anchor public house. Permission has already been granted for demolition and re-development. It is understood that this project will start during 2010.



12 Bridge Avenue (corner York Road): This site was flattened more than a year ago. Permission has been granted for re-development into offices, but there is no indication as to when this might occur.

Moorbridge Road – Old Custom House/Mini Centre:

These are two old buildings near one another. It is understood that the Mini Centre has planning permission for change of use to a dental surgery, with residential accommodation above. The Old Custom House, which is a listed building, has permission to be developed to the rear and converted into a restaurant. The frontage will be preserved.



Symantec: This building has become an eyesore, sitting on the Forlease Road/Bridge Road roundabout by the police station. Planning permission has been granted for a larger office block, which has been put on hold. Only the shell remains – by gutting the building the owners avoid the payment of business rates levied on “unoccupied” offices. Because of the lack of progress, a Section 215 order has been made to enforce demolition. It is understood that this is currently being challenged by the owner of the site.



Badnell's Pit: This major development was given the go-ahead on appeal in January. Initial work on the preparation of the site for decontamination is expected to take place before Christmas and remediation of the site will begin in March 2010 and be completed by November 2011. It will only be at this



stage that residential construction can commence. In the meantime there will be 102 lorry movements per day.



Skindles/Taplow Paper Mill: After months of consideration this landmark site reached the planning stage earlier this year. Unfortunately the owners of the site were overtaken by events and having invested more than £30 million at the height of the market went into administration before planning permission was finalised. This site will now continue to deteriorate until a new investor is found, which in the current climate could take years.

Martin McNamee

MAKE RIVERSIDE MORE WELCOMING, SAYS CIVIC SOCIETY

Maidenhead Civic Society has thrown its weight behind a campaign to make the Riverside more welcoming to visitors. The Society wants to see a concerted effort made to realise the area's potential, with better facilities particularly for pedestrians and walkers.

Our list includes:

- the creation of safe pedestrian crossing points
- the completion of the missing link in the Thames Path to Bridge Gardens
- the reinstatement of a bandstand and summer events

We were pleased to see the turf laying along the river side and we are delighted that, in principle, the idea of a pedestrian bridge from Boulters to the S. Bucks bank has been welcomed but there is a need for a holistic approach to leisure use in Riverside. The shortcomings had been highlighted this summer by a greater number of visitors, the re-opening of Boulters restaurant and the accident near Riverside Gardens in which a man was knocked down by a car. The Society's suggestions, which also include properly managed public moorings and the occasional pedestrianisation of parts of Ray Mead Road, will feature in its revised strategic review of amenity ***Making Maidenhead A Better Place*** due to be published later this month.

AUTUMN & WINTER EVENTS

FORTHCOMING TALKS

The talks take place in the Methodist Church Hall, King Street, Maidenhead. And commence at 8.00pm, with a break for light refreshments.

Medical Leadership - the ultimate challenge Wednesday 18th November 2009 8.00pm By Jonathon Jones BSc FRCS

Jonathon Jones is a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon at Heatherwood & Wexham Park Hospital Trust and will be giving his personal view of a long career working in the NHS.

Jonathon's Medical School training at University College Hospital, London included a year spent undertaking a BSc in Pharmacology. Surgery had always been the planned career path, and the nuts and bolts of orthopaedic surgery immediately appealed! Senior Registrar training was at Charing Cross, with time spent at Kingston, Northwick Park, St Mary's, RNOH Stanmore and a year completing a fellowship in Adelaide South Australia. Jonathan was appointed as Consultant in Trauma & Orthopaedic surgery to Heatherwood & Wexham Park Hospitals in 1990. As one of 4 consultants initially, surgery encompassed all aspects of both fracture and elective surgery. 19 years on, the department now has 10 consultants and Jonathan concentrates exclusively on lower limb joint replacement, and lumbar spine surgery.

Jonathan has been involved in medical management since 1993, when he was appointed as Lead Clinician for Orthopaedics. Clinical Director for the combined Orthopaedics and General Surgery directorate followed, and in 1999 he became Associate Medical Director. Appointment as Medical Director in April 2005 on a part-time basis represented a major career change. The post provided a huge range of medical leadership challenges. Responsibility for patient safety and specifically for Infection Prevention and Control was probably the most challenging aspect of the role. Other remits ranged from dealing with individual doctors in difficulty, Trust-wide issues as well as contributing towards the structure and provision of Health Care in East Berkshire, and across the Thames Valley as a whole. Jonathan resigned as Medical Director at the end of July 2009.

There will be no charge for this talk but non-members will be asked for a contribution of £4.00 inclusive of refreshments.

This talk will be followed by the AGM at 9.00pm.

The Royal Borough and the Olympics
Wednesday 20th January 2010
By Julia White, Visitor Manager RBWM

If you read recently a report in the Maidenhead Advertiser urging Maidenhead not to miss “the Olympic Boat”, it may have aroused your interest in how Maidenhead may benefit from this major event in 2012. According to the report, local councillors are concerned that Maidenhead is being squeezed out and that Windsor is being promoted as the nearest town to Dorney Lake. Cllr Norma Herdson (Lib Dem, Boyn Hill) feels now is the time for making plans.

Visitor Manager Julia White pointed out that the website Windsor.gov.uk, despite its name, covers the entire borough and Maidenhead is included in sections such as accommodation and events. Her team’s remit is to promote the entire borough.

If you would like to learn more about the historical links with past Olympics and also how Maidenhead is going to benefit from the 2012 Olympics you will want to attend the talk given by Julia in January 2010.

Guests are most welcome. There will be a small charge to members of £3.00, and non-members, £4.00 includes refreshments.

Maidenhead Waterways Restoration Group - progress of the scheme
Wednesday 17th February 2010
By Richard Davenport, Chairman of Trustees

The Maidenhead Waterways Restoration Group have recently held their AGM, with some interesting reports so it would seem a good time to ask Richard to come and update us on the present state of play and their plans for the future.

One of the important developments is that the waterways have now been incorporated into the town’s generation plans. This protects the route from conflicting developments and ensures that new buildings along the route contribute towards turning the project into reality. A fully supported planning application is expected to be submitted by mid 2010.

If you would like to know more, please come along to the talk on 17th February 2010. All are welcome. There will be a small charge to members of £3.00, and non-members, £4.00 includes refreshments.

3rd Society Luncheon

We are pleased to announce that the third Civic Society Luncheon will be held on Friday 19th March 2010. The speaker will be Martin Trepte, Editor of the Maidenhead Advertiser, and details of the venue will be in the next Newsletter issue.

Tina Sell

OUTINGS AND VISITS

On the 11th October we visited two National Trust properties. Firstly we went to Tyntsfild just south of Bristol. This is a major restoration project for the Trust as they acquired it in 2002 in a very dilapidated condition. We were able to see the house during the restoration period with a new roof and wiring being installed along with new plumbing. The work is due for completion in 2012 and the quality of the work impressed us all and when finished it will be a most imposing property.

We then travelled to Dyrham Park, which is north of Bath. This is a magnificent house, which has been fully restored and sits in a beautiful deer park with magnificent views. We were given an introductory talk before walking around the house and gardens. Interestingly the furniture and paintings were all the original articles as the house had been given to the Trust in a complete condition albeit rather run down.

The visit to White Waltham Airfield on 4th November was heavily oversubscribed and we have arranged a second visit for Thursday 22nd April 2010. Details will be in the next issue of the Newsletter.

As most properties close for the winter period, we will resume our visits in the spring. Details will be in the next newsletter.

Mike Copeland

PROJECTS

Lower Cookham Road to Thames Path Missing Link used for the Boundary Walk

We are hopeful that the missing link from the Lower Cookham Road to the Thames Path may be created with funding from the Whitebrook Park redevelopment, if and when that is approved. In the meantime the link was again cleared and walked during Maidenhead Rotary Club's annual Boundary Walk on 4th October, making this the fifth year the path has been made available to walkers. Of the 313, counted by our marshals, 233 chose to use our path compared to 80 who walked on the road back to Boulter's Lock. Apparently some of the runners, who arrived before the marshals, chose to use our route as well. This is a cooperative exercise involving the Rotary Club, Rotaract, East Berks Ramblers and the Society; many thanks to all concerned.

During the Boundary Walk members of the Local Access Forum together with ward councillors and Rights of Way officers, walked the route. We hope that sooner rather than later, this long-standing local objective (since the Cookham District Plan of 1973!!!) will be achieved.



Chairman Bob Dulson marshalling on the Lower Cookham Road

Bronwen Renwick and Tina Sell replacing the fence(!) after the Boundary Walk finished



Members of the Local Access Forum, Ward Councillors and Rights of Way staff inspect the route during the Boundary Walk

DONNINGTON HOSPITAL TRUST

The Friends of Jesus Hospital, in Bray, are hoping that, with the assistance of the Donnington Hospital Trust, they will be able to secure the future of the almshouse as a place elderly people can live in. There are some interesting connections between Donnington Hospital (founded in the 14th century) and the 15th century Ockwells Manor – the subject of one of the Society’s historical projects.

Donnington Hospital was founded in 1393 by letters patent of Richard II granted to Sir Richard Abberbury and re-established in 1601 by letters patent of Queen Elizabeth, granted to Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, under the title of “The Hospital of Queen Elizabeth in Donnington”.



Donnington Hospital, near Newbury, west Berkshire

The patrons of Donnington Hospital, in the 15th century, were William de la Pole (successively Earl, Marquess and latterly Duke of Suffolk) and his wife Alice Chaucer, granddaughter of the poet Geoffrey Chaucer. In 1437 William and Alice founded their own almshouse and a school at Ewelme, both still functioning as such.



Ewelme Almshouse founded in 1437 by William de la Pole, then Earl of Suffolk, and his wife Alice Chaucer

A few years later, in 1441, William de la Pole and John Norreys of Ockwells Manor were amongst the founders of the Guild of the Holy Cross at Abingdon that in 1446 also built a home for the elderly poor - the Long Alley Almshouse. This is also still in use for that purpose and run by Christ's Hospital.



Long Alley Almshouse, Abingdon, erected in 1446 by the Guild of the Holy Cross, members of which included William de la Pole, then Earl of Suffolk, and John Norreys Esq. of Ockwells Manor

Another connection is visible in the Great Hall of Ockwells Manor, built by Norreys. The famous stained glass of ca. 1450 includes a panel representing the armorial achievement of William de la Pole and Alice, his wife.



Armorial achievement of William de la Pole, by then Duke of Suffolk, and his wife Alice Chaucer, in the Great Hall of Ockwells Manor

Donnington Castle, and with it the Hospital, became a royal possession in the 16th century when Edmund de la Pole, grandson of William, rebelled against the Tudors and was beheaded for his pains in the Tower in 1513.

Ann Darracott

Tim Goldingham

Members will be saddened to learn that Tim Goldingham died on 7 August this year. We featured Tim's sterling work on the Society's website over the years in the last issue of the Newsletter. His family has kindly allowed us to reproduce here details of his life, as printed in the service sheet at his memorial service.

Timothy Philip Goldingham was born in Somerset in 1929, the youngest of Phyllis and Reginald's three children. Following his birth his mother became ill and Tim spent time with his grandfather in Cirencester vicarage and with aunts and an uncle in Milton-under-Wychwood. His grandfather left money to provide for his education and, after preparatory school, Tim won scholarships to St Edward's, Oxford and later to Christ Church College.

Tim did his National Service in the RAF between school and Oxford. After graduating he joined the British Tabulating Machine Company, maker of Hollerith punched card machines - the forerunner of today's computers. He is member No. 2114 of the British Computer Society, of which he is now a Fellow. He trained at Moor Hall, Cookham which in 1953 was a training centre for BTM. As newly-weds, he and his wife Gill lived in a converted railway carriage on the camping site at Hurley (which looked rather different then).

He worked for some years in Bristol; then in Birmingham (Solihull or Shirley depending on whether you were buying or selling). In 1969 he was promoted to Head Office on Putney Bridge, moved to Furze Platt, and joined Maidenhead Tennis Club.

In 1970 he had the opportunity to become Director of the Joint Universities Computer Centre, Hong Kong. He moved there with his wife and four children, and spent three eventful years establishing this new facility for the two Universities, returning by sea from Sydney to Genoa. He returned to ICL, now at Bracknell, and continued to work there until 1989, when he took redundancy and set up as a free-lance consultant, working mainly on Quality Assurance.

He attended Stubbings Church and became a sidesman and regularly read the lesson. He used to enjoy the evening service.

He kept his hand in by working part-time as IT Technician at the Piggott School, Wargrave, until finally retiring in March 2008. Tim became Secretary of the Bray Society; he maintained the website of the Civic Society and joined the National Trust Association and Probus.

HERITAGE CENTRE NEWS

The first Maidenhead Calendar for several years has been published by the Heritage Centre and is available only from the Centre in Park Street. And for January the picture is the footbridge at Guards Club Park, which was restored by the Civic Society in 1978.

November 7th - December 19th 2009

"When the Railway came to Maidenhead", featuring a 12ft long scale model of Brunel's Sounding Arch. The engineering and railway enthusiasts will be fascinated, but so will anybody with an interest in how Maidenhead developed. It was the railway, after all, which spurred a huge expansion during Victoria's reign and the exhibition shows the effect the railway had on the town.

January 9th - March 14th 2010

"The Magpies Story", telling the story of Maidenhead United Football Club, whose York Road has been in continuous use by the same club for longer than any other ground in the world.

March 20th - April 20th 2010

Maidenhead Painting Club Spring Exhibition

Paintings by members of this very active club on display and for sale.

Grandma Flew Spitfires!

A Heritage Lottery Fund application for £50,000 will be submitted within the next 3 months, to go towards the country's first dedicated Air Transport Auxiliary Exhibition and Study Centre. As members who visited White Waltham will know, ATA was the civilian organisation that used men and women pilots of 28 different nations to ferry warplanes between factories, maintenance units and front line squadrons. Its HQ was at White Waltham from February 1940 until November 1945. Maidenhead Heritage Centre holds a large collection of ATA memorabilia, which is of national importance. The permanent exhibition and study centre is expected to attract a large number of additional visitors to the Heritage Centre, and will open in autumn 2010.

For more information about Maidenhead Heritage Centre or the Grandma Flew Spitfires! project, call in to Park Street or visit:

www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 18th November 2009
Talk by Dr Jonathon Jones, followed by **AGM**

“Medical Leadership – The Ultimate Challenge”
 Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00 pm

Wednesday 20th January 2010
Talk by Julia White

“The Olympics and Maidenhead”
 Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00 pm

Wednesday 17th February 2010
Talk by Richard Davenport

“The Maidenhead Waterways Group”
 Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00 pm

Friday 19 March 2010
Event & Talk by Martin Trepte

The Civic Society Luncheon.
 Venue to be announced in next Newsletter.

CIVIC SOCIETY OFFICERS

President of the Trustees	John McIntosh, 26 Harvest Hill Road, SL6 2QQ	633259
Hon. Secretary	June Jorge, 134 Beverley Gardens, SL6 6ST	626616
Hon. Treasurer	Trevor Farnfield, Ditton Meads, Winter Hill Road, SL6 6NS	638142
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Planning Group	Martin McNamee, 14 Lower Cookham Road, SL6 8JT	623203
Projects Group	Ann Darracott, 6 Medallion Place, SL6 1TF	620280
Communications Group	Brian Darracott, 6 Medallion Place, SL6 1TF	620280
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Outings Sec.	Mike Copeland, 14 Laburnham Road, SL6 4DB	634181
Membership Sec.	Shashi Dare, Silvretta, Islet Road, SL6 8LD	629976
Newsletter Distribution	Carol Innes, Contour, Briar Glen, Cookham Rise, SL6 9JP	532418

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2010

Parish Centre in St. Luke's Church, at 7.45 pm.
 12th January, 9th February, 9th March, 11th May, 8th June, 13th July, 14th September, 9th November, 14th December

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS FOR 2010

Parish Centre in St. Luke's Church, at 7.45 p.m.
 13th April, 12th October

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 17th November 2010 in the Wesley Hall at the Methodist Church at 7.45 pm.

**The closing date for copy for the next issue
 of the Newsletter is 15th January 2010.**

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