



# Maidenhead Civic Society NEWS



Issue 4/12

Nov 2012



*The new development of Albany House, on the southwest side of the Cookham Road roundabout, starts to reveal how it will look.*

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

# **Maidenhead Civic Society**

## **A Personal Review by our President**

Recently I realised that I had been a member of the Civic Society for some twenty-six years which gave me pause for thought. There are members with even longer membership but I cast my mind back to what the Society had been doing since its inception fifty-one years ago. Equally it caused me to think of the present and the future.

The Society came into existence to compensate for there being no organisation that could represent to the Council the views of people living in the town, on planning issues, unlike other parts of the borough which had representation in the form of Parish Councils. Once formed the Society expanded the remit to cover wider fields all connected with improving the amenities of the town.

It is often forgotten that there is no way in which central and local government can cover all the areas of interest and importance to the community. It is here that charities such as the Civic Society come into play taking up all the issues and affairs which otherwise would fall between the cracks. It isn't a bolt on 'goodie', it is an integral part of the structure of society.

From the start the Society's primary concern was 'Planning' and so it continues to this day. Thanks to the long-term dealings with the Council on this subject, the Society has built up very good links with the Council and its Planning Department. The Society's planning group analyses a number of planning applications each month and makes its comments to the Council's planning department. These comments are taken into account in the Council's decision on an application. Matter such as conservation areas and listed buildings also fall within the Society's sphere of interest.

Early in its existence the Society took part in a number of activities to improve the local amenities. An early operation was to repair the bridge over the channel of the Thames to Guards Club Island. Then there was the creation of Guards Club Park itself. Daffodils were planted along the grass verge of Bridge Road where they still flower. Annually the rubbish was cleared out of the York Stream in the section in front of the Council offices. North Town Moor Pond was also cleared. Amongst other actions the Society started up the Heritage Centre later hived off into a separate organisation.

More recently the Millennium Walk has been created thanks to the vision and persistence of one member in particular, while other actions have concerned the Green Way (another initiative) and rerouting the footpath which crossed the A404M near Bisham to pass under the A404M. For many years there has also been the

history of alternating yearly visits with our twin town of Bad Godesberg. All this forms an impressive enough list of things done, but the question is: *what now?*

In its early days the Society's membership was comparatively young. With time the average age of the membership has risen. It is a fact that young people now have so many avenues for activity that organisations such as the Civic Society find it difficult to attract new, younger members unless they can find something that specifically appeals and still fits in with the Society's basic goal of improving amenities.

One new avenue for the Society has been the advent of the Localism Bill with its attendant Local Plan requirement. With Maidenhead a designated vanguard borough the Civic Society is already deeply involved. The scheme requires a number of subsidiary groups each requiring members of the public to make an input. This may help to stimulate interest in local amenities and present an opportunity for the Society to acquire new members.

Another potential source of new activities is the Crossrail project. This will have a powerful impact on the area near the station. At the moment it is unclear what exactly is intended. For example, is there to be a transport hub with car-parking and bus transport meeting up with the train services in a coherent purpose built centre? This could be an opportunity for the Society to make a contribution and could help with recruitment. There is also the future impact of the Area Action Plan for the regeneration of Maidenhead's centre. This is bound to raise questions about amenity. The Society has already had an indirect link through its chairman having been the chairman of the ProM committee.

Summing up, the Society has a long history of acting to see improvement in local amenities. It now faces the challenge of tackling newer problems of town infrastructure. A renewed drive on amenities as indicated can simultaneously be an opportunity for recruiting young new members and ensuring the Society's future.

*John McIntosh*

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

With Guest Speaker Simon Hurrell, RBWM's Head of Planning  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November, 8 pm

Following a lively and informative talk at our Society Lunch in May, the Royal Borough's head of planning & development Simon Hurrell returns as our guest speaker on the occasion of our Annual General Meeting.

This time Simon plans to focus on what's in store for the town centre - and there's a lot going on. Simon's presentation will be followed by a Q&A session.

Refreshments will follow, prior to the formal business of the AGM at 8.45 (approx).

## **52nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY**

**To be held on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012  
at the Methodist Church Hall at 8.00 pm.**

### **AGENDA**

1. Introduction by the President
2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting
3. Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012
4. Chairman's Report for 2011/2012
5. Election of the Board of Trustees  
To approve the appointment of members of the 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 must retire each year and shall be eligible for re-election. Accordingly, Bob Dulson, Ann Darracott and Brian Darracott will retire. All offer themselves for re-election. It is further proposed the Joyce Delasalle, who has recently assumed the role of Membership Secretary, be appointed a Trustee in place of the current vacancy.

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 prior to the AGM.

**MINUTES OF THE  
51<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF  
THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY**

**Held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** There are no apologies for absence
- 2. Approval of Minutes of 50<sup>th</sup> AGM:** The minutes were approved. Proposed by Jill Powell; seconded Ann Darracott.
- 3. Accounts for the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011:** The accounts and report for the past year past appear on pages 10 and 11 of the November 2011 Newsletter. It has been a neutral year but income has improved over the previous year thanks to two lots of Gift Aid compared to 2010. Generally expenses have been at the normal level. As ever, the biggest cost is the Newsletter which absorbs the bulk of the subscription income. It is for consideration that the Newsletter be published at longer intervals. There were some one-off costs for publicity and the Carnival. There was a deficit due to the cost of the distributors' lunch. Trevor Farnfield, the Treasurer, has announced his retirement after 13 years of service and thanks are due to him for this period of loyal and unstinting service.
- 4. President's Introductory Remarks:** It has been another good year for the Society in general and the scope is set out in the reports in the November issue of the Newsletter. At this point I hand over the Chairmanship of the meeting to Bob Dulson, Executive Chairman of the Society, who will conduct you through the Agenda which is also in the Newsletter. I would like to make clear the sterling job which Bob has done during the past and preceding years, with his tireless activity and input to the Society's activities.
- 5. Chairman's Report:** The Chairman's Report appears in the November issue of the Newsletter and the following remarks should be referred to that report.

It is regretted that we have stopped the Talks programme. Attendance was poor, basically we believe because there was so much competition from other organisations. Instead the Society's appeal has been broadened with luncheon talks and a Jazz evening. Talks could be resumed but any new ideas are welcome.

There was much talk last year of 'localism'. Now there is a Localism Bill awaiting signature and a now deferred Planning Bill. We have to be wary about the future of communities and the countryside. The new bill appears to undermine many features of sustainable development. There were good reasons to replace the previous planning system but there is also need to balance the short term with the long. Many

organisations are involved in seeking modifications to the bill e.g. National Trust. It has its good points. Thus authorities must maintain a local plan with resultant long term considerations. Also trans-boundary situations are included. However, among its defects are that its default position is 'develop'. The debate is set to continue. The Society's response is in the Newsletter (November, 2011.)

Under the new planning system, the Borough is divided into several sections viz. two towns (Maidenhead and Windsor,) and 5 areas. There will thus be seven separate plans. An overall borough plan will be adopted in 2013. It has to be noted that this will mean much extra work for the Borough Planning Department at a time when the position of Head of Department is vacant. There is need for the Society to monitor these changes. 'Localism' needs publicity and the Civic Society will be involved in the local planning.

Finally the Chairman expressed his thanks to all those named in the Report in the Newsletter.

In discussion, Brian Madge commented on the surprisingly poor attendance at evening meetings compared to the Windsor and Eton Society and the Archaeological Society both of whom have meetings on a regular day monthly. Cross promotion of events would be desirable. In reply, moves in this direction are taking place. Brian Darracott sought the meeting's opinion on how many issues of the Newsletter per year would be acceptable. It seemed the majority of those present favoured the current four issues a year.

**6. Election to Board of Trustees:** One third of the Board retire by rotation each year. This year those retiring are John McIntosh, Trevor Farnfield and June Jorge. John McIntosh offered himself for re-election and there were nominations for Mike Emmerson and Eileen Goford. They were proposed by Jean Johnson and seconded by Tina Sell. Agreed nem. con.

**7. Election of Officers.** There being vacancies for both posts pending, candidates were nominated as follows: Mike Emmerson was proposed as Hon. Treasurer and Eileen Goford as Hon. Secretary. Proposed Ann Darracott, Seconded by Jill Powell. Agreed nem.con.

**8. Any Other Business:** There being no other urgent business, the meeting closed at 9.41 pm.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT OF THE YEAR**

In pursuit of its motto “preserving the best, improving the rest”, often one of the biggest frustrations faced by the Society is achieving its objective of influencing decision makers.

Nevertheless, some tireless work by a dedicated few has seen a good number of positive results in the last year, particularly in the areas of planning and projects.

In March the Society welcomed Martin Trepte, editorial director of Baylis Media Ltd and editor of the Maidenhead Advertiser, as a Trustee of the Society. Few people are as passionate about getting the best for Maidenhead, and already he's made his mark. Martin replaced Dr Brian Smith who resigned from the Board because of other commitments but he continues to get on his bike to help with the distribution of our Newsletter for which we are very grateful.

A debate on the Society's strategy concluded that the priority continues to be attracting active members.

### **Planning**

This time last year we were struggling to come to terms with the “presumption in favour of development” at the heart of the government's proposals for a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Some of the more scary elements were toned down in the final version but then, even before the NPPF had time to be evaluated and implemented, another series of measures designed to kick-start the construction industry came along to leave us open-mouthed. The Society has made its position clear: coupled with the provisions of the NPPF, a relaxation of permitted development rights threatens to blight our neighbourhoods and open the door to a cumulative assault on Maidenhead's Green Belt. This will undo years of successful neighbourhood planning protection and result in potential conflicts between neighbours. How sustainable is that? (As we go to press, the Local Government Association has weighed in and it seems there may be a re-think at DCLG.)

The Society also urged caution in response to two government consultations earlier in the year. One proposed to simplify the standard planning application form to “speed up the process” but it cut some dangerous corners, the other planned to make it easier to find alternative uses for redundant buildings, including agricultural barns.

Locally, the Society has given its support to the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan for Maidenhead (MNP). Maidenhead was the first town to be involved this new process, though Windsor is now on stream. We have concerns that the process may be too bureaucratic and open to abuse; so we are encouraging members to become involved. As an indication of the kind of improvements our members would like to see a copy

of our revised Strategic Review (2009) was submitted. We have also suggested that MNP provides the ideal mechanism for creating a heritage register of features – buildings, settings, landmarks, views – that are not formally protected as Listed Buildings or in Conservation Areas but which are important to the character of the town. The Society has two representatives on the MNP steering group as well as members on the sub-groups for community, leisure & countryside, housing & built environment and transport.

Following the departure of the Royal Borough's CEO Ian Trenholm and other changes, including the retirement of deputy CEO David Oram, it became apparent that there was no-one at the Town Hall with specific responsibility for the "priority" of town centre regeneration. To their credit, the council were swift to resolve the situation when pressed. The new head of planning Simon Hurrell is now responsible for regeneration and, in addition, three new appointments are being made in his department, including a regeneration surveyor.

We lobbied for the reintroduction of a Shop Fronts Policy in the town centre. The original policy was drawn up in the 1990s with the Society's input. This was deemed out of date and unenforceable but instead a new one is being devised to ensure that frontages are tasteful, in-keeping and properly maintained.

As your chairman, I still represent the Society on PRoM (the Partnership for the Rejuvenation of Maidenhead) and this year I was asked to resume the chair of that group. Other bodies on which the Society is represented in planning terms include the Regeneration Group and Maidenhead Town Partnership.

It is 12 months since the Town Centre Area Action Plan was approved and adopted. For various reasons, including personnel changes at the town hall, the regeneration programme had lost momentum but following the appointment of a new planning chief things picked up and there's been a lot going on behind the scenes. Some of it broke the surface, like the Waterways application, which received unanimous acclaim from councillors and public endorsement from the Society, albeit with a couple of provisos. We also gave our qualified support to the Shanly Group's plans for a "little Venice" at Chapel Arches which, if successful, could be a key contributor to regeneration.

The long-awaited ING Kings Triangle scheme we felt did not come up to expectations. In comments lodged last December we said it was introspective, lacked permeability and had inadequate parking. It would also compete with rather than compliment the High Street. The outline application comes before councillors this month and there's been little change.

Among other significant schemes considered by the Planning Group, we were delighted to be able to contribute to the creation of the Furze Platt Conservation Area, and to see our suggestions for improved access and alignment taken on board on the 116-unit housing development planned for the nearby former Polestar site.



Two pleasing refusals were the rejection of plans to festoon our town centre lampposts with fluttering advertisement banners and the over-development of the former Shoppenhangers Manor site with over 50 houses.

The debates still rages over the council's attitude to two schools on Green Belt land but we expressed our concern that Green Belt should not become a bargaining tool (or something even heavier!) in the new local planning regime.

A major disappointment was our unsuccessful objection to the redevelopment of the Bishop Centre in Taplow – a planning decision steeped in political intrigue. Against all the odds councillors decided on a casting vote to go ahead with a Tesco superstore and no amount of persuasion would get the Secretary of State to review it. There appears to be no political will either at RBWM for seeking judicial review as a last resort – despite the negative impact that the development will have on our own town centre.

Alongside the strategic issues, the Planning Group still regularly assesses dozens of commercial and residential planning applications at its monthly meeting. In the past year members considered more than 180 applications and submitted formal comments on 50 of them to the planning authority. Members were also pleased to persuade the Shanly Group that there must be a more appropriate name than St Mary's Village for their Badnells Pit development. "Boulters Meadow" is a vast improvement!

The Society thanks all members of the planning group and, in particular, their chairman, Martin McNamee.

## Projects

**Millennium Walk:** The completion of this project has been classified "high priority" by RBWM's Local Access Forum (LAF) and we were able to celebrate some marked progress earlier this year. The missing link from the top of Prospect Hill (overlooking Hurley) to Temple Golf Club was formally opened by Peter Thorn, chair of the Local Access Forum, at Temple Golf Club in May. Creating the link was a collaborative exercise involving Berkshire College of Agriculture who gave permission for a permitted path, the Royal Borough's Highways Department who put in works and signage to enable safe crossing of the A4130 and their Public Rights of Way team. Ann Darracott of the Civic Society and Margaret Bowdery from East Berks Ramblers received due acclaim for their part in the achievement.

To coincide with the opening of the link the two amenity societies also produced a leaflet about the Millennium Walk, published with the aid of a grant from the Kidwells Trust. Paper copies are available from Helen & Douglas House charity shop in Maidenhead. It can also be viewed on the Society website.

**Green Way:** The area around North Town Moor has improved dramatically as a result of the activities of the Make Space for Life Group with whom we work. The restoration of the pond, last cleaned out in 1986/7 by the Society, is a current project.

Town Moor is to be the subject of a new public consultation by RBWM which hopefully will lead to further improvements. However we are concerned about the stream; the effect of herbicide spraying appears to have resulted in only temporary improvement, at least on Town Moor. The Environment Agency have now said that any further work on the stream will depend on them obtaining funding for the system as a whole. Planning applications that affect the Green Way including the Waterways Project have been commented on.

**Ockwells Manor:** The threat to the setting of Ockwells Manor receded this year when the High Court rejected the attempt to lift the covenants held by the National Trust that protect the field opposite the manor house. A public petition organised by Cox Green Councillors aimed at protecting the setting undoubtedly helped and the aim is that the field be re-designated green belt via the Local Plan/Neighbourhood Plan. The information which the Society helped to compile for the National Trust and which proved that the field was once part of Ockwells Farm will be made available.

**Bisham Abbey:** So far we have been unable to persuade Serco, who now manage Bisham Abbey for Sport England, to allow access to the ancient building. We will keep trying. A new project on Shottesbrooke Church was begun (see Aug 2012 Newsletter).

Sincere thanks to Ann Darracott for driving all this activity.

## Events

Our Treasurer concludes his report with the recommendation that we should consider putting resources into raising the Society's profile. Our best advertisements are the things we do – and that includes our events. It would undoubtedly benefit the Society to have someone dedicated to managing our events programme as part of that. This post has been vacant since Tina Sell relinquished it more than a year ago. A replacement is urgently required.

However, even without a formal Organiser, we managed a number of attractive events during the year which were well received by those who participated, including our annual dinner at Moor Hall, a lunch with the Borough's Head of Planning at Boulsters, a visit to Shottesbrooke Church and Manor and the formal opening of the Millennium Walk missing link at Temple Golf Club. Unfortunately a couple of planned outings had to be cancelled for lack of support but we will be looking for renewed interest in the new year.

## Membership

Our performance in attracting new members claimed only qualified success again this year. We were pleased to welcome 13 new members (in 9 memberships) but, even so, total numbers declined slightly year on year. The reduction can be largely attributed to a recent thorough appraisal of our records and a more rigorous approach to non-payers, but it underlines the need for continued effort if we are to maintain our current level of activity and influence and a number of incentives have been

discussed. The Society, of course, is not alone among voluntary organisations in the recruitment struggle. New members, particularly active ones, are always welcome and all existing members are urged to contribute to the campaign.

	<i>2012</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2009</i>
Total Membership entities (incl. Family, Honorary, etc)	257	261	264	296
No. of Members (excl. Corporate)	349	357	353	385
Life Members	96	97	98	68
Honorary	20	20	26	26
Corporate	2	3	3	7

Huge thanks to Shashi Dare who, after giving such a stalwart service as our Membership Secretary so willingly over the last decade, has decided to give up the role. Shashi formally handed over the reins in October to Joyce Delasalle who joined the Society last year. Joyce is no stranger to voluntary work; she is also an enthusiastic member of the Cookham Festival committee.

## Communications

**Newsletter:** There had been some debate at the beginning of the year about the cost of producing the quarterly Civic Society News, the main vehicle for communicating with members, which was putting its future in doubt. Various options were considered, including reducing the number of editions to three a year. In the event, doing away with inserts had achieved considerable savings, as outlined in the Treasurer's report. Costs were further reduced by rationalising the distribution list, cutting a number of postal deliveries. Thanks to Shashi Dare, Brian Darracott, Sue Ross and the distribution team.

**Events:** The shortage of events on the Society's calendar had led the Executive to consider cross-promotion of events with other like-minded societies. We'd be prepared to publicise their talks, visits, etc to our members, if they would promote ours. This has happened on a couple of occasions – on a trip to Hurley some of our members enjoyed exclusive access to buildings not open to public view – but is not yet formalised.

**Website:** The website now carries a comprehensive back catalogue of Society Newsletters. We also receive a fair number of enquiries via the "contact us" page.

**Publicity:** The Society has achieved pretty good coverage for planning and project activities during the year with stories and letters in the press. An article and advertisement were also placed in Braxtons magazine. There is a need for more publicity effort, however. The absence of a designated publicity officer puts the Society at a distinct disadvantage. Volunteers or nominations would be welcomed.

**E-bulletin:** *Keeping In Touch*, our occasional news update by email, is popular with those who receive it. There were six editions issued in the last 12 months. An exercise to discover or update members' email addresses resulted in a circulation list of more than 130. Thanks to Shashi Dare, Brian Darracott, Angela Dulson & Mike Copeland

*Bob Dulson*

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

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

Overall there was a surplus of Income over Expenditure for the year 2011/12 of £1,456 (compared to a deficit of -£1,120 in 2010/11).

### Income

Social Events produced a surplus of £395 (compared to a loss of £279 in 2010/11). The Shanly dinner and the Jazz evening were the main reasons for this surplus. The tax refund on Gift Aid of £1,341 related to tax years 2010/11 & 2011/12. We also received a donation of £150 from Waitrose. Interest on deposits remains low at £71 due to the prevailing low rate environment.

### Expenditure

Expenditure for the Year was down significantly by £2,144.

General Expenses etc were lower by £1,237 compared to the previous year. The main reason was a substantial reduction in the printing costs for our newsletter due to not including separate event booking forms.

Publicity expenditure is down £524 on the previous year. The previous year's expenditure related to the displays and equipment bought for future use.

The Millennium Walk costs are net after receiving a grant of £500 from RBWM towards the printing costs of the leaflets.

Social Events showed a profit of £395 (see above) compared to a loss of £279 in 2010/11.

Website costs were also lower by £299 as a result of now being able to make the necessary edits ourselves.

Subscriptions include £264 to Civic Voice.

The Society accounts are healthy with substantial funds in hand. The Committee should perhaps look to use more of the funds in promoting membership and raising the profile of the Society through our website.

*Mike Emmerson*

# MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY - Charity No. 272102

## Annual Accounts for Year ended 31st May 2012

2010/2011

2011/2012

### INCOME

0	Donations/Grants/Bequests	150
2,771	Subscriptions Received During Year	2,909
47	Interest On Bank And Other Deposits	71
128	Surplus On Outings	0
0	Surplus On Social Events	395
1488	Tax Refunds On Gift Aid	1,341
<b>£4,434</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,866</b>

### EXPENDITURE

<b>Administration</b>		
2891	General Expenses, Printing, Postage, Etc.	1,654
392	Hire Of Rooms, Speakers And Meeting Expenses	471
380	Subscriptions	313
796	Publicity	272
250	Insurance	245
<b>Donations</b>		
0	Various	0
0		0
0	<b>Other Expenses</b>	0
135	Ockwells And Associated Projects (Net Costs)	206
22	Millennium Walk. (Net Costs)	193
38	Various Other Small Projects	-24
279	Deficit On Social Events	0
0	Deficit On Outings	9
0	Presentations/Memorials	0
371	Website	72
<b>£5,554</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,410</b>

**-1,120      EXCESS/(DEFICIT) OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE      1,456**

11,490      Balance Brought Forward      10,370

**£10,370      Balance Carried Forward      11,826**

### FUNDS

1,334	Bank (Lloyds TSB) and Cash	2,204
9,301	Charities Deposit General Fund (COIF)	9,372
245	Debtor/Insurance Payments In Advance	1,996
-510	Creditors/Commitments	-1,746
<b>£10,370</b>	<b>BALANCE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>11,826</b>

Mike Emmerson - Hon. Treasurer

# Planning & Development

The Planning Group has continued with monthly review meetings of planning applications which are potentially of interest to the wider community. More than forty proposals have been reviewed in detail and comments passed to the RBWM on eight applications during the past three months. In addition, we have passed further comments to the Planning Inspectorate on two schemes which have gone to appeal following refusal by the Borough. These developments have been discussed in previous editions of the Newsletter - and we await with interest the outcome of the appeals for the schemes at 10 Linden Avenue and 2 Castle Hill Terrace.

We are pleased to report that the proposal for 56 homes on the site of the mock Shoppenhangers Manor has been refused. It did represent over-development, potential encroachment on the Green Belt, increased vehicle movements with an un-neighbourly impact on existing properties on Manor Lane. The Civic Society was consulted on a major new development on the old Taylowes/Polestar industrial site which is accessed from St Peters Road and Malvern Road in Furze Platt. During consultation we made a number of observations which were reflected in the submitted application. Although the 116-home development will generate additional residential traffic, we believe the proposal is good use of a redundant brownfield site which will genuinely fulfil demand for mid range residential properties. The decision from the planners is awaited, but we are broadly supportive of the scheme.

There have been two recent applications which have come up for renewal, having been previously refused but then permitted on appeal. Unit 5 Oldfield Road has again been refused by the Borough and frankly is more suited to residential development like the Polestar site referred to above. The renewal is for 19 commercial units of two/three and four storeys, which are out of keeping with adjacent residential properties. The renewal has been refused, and it remains to be seen whether the developers go to appeal (again) or seek alternative use for the site.



*The site of the proposed commercial units on the corner of Oldfield Road and Oldacres*

No.7 Braywick Road sits on the south east quadrant of the roundabout with Stafferton Way. Because of the location access is proposed through Greenfields to a development of 14 flats. Permission was granted on appeal and has lapsed, although the new application is being delayed for technical reasons. In both cases we objected to the earlier applications, and did likewise this time around. At least there is some consistency over the years.

On a wider front there is much concern about the potential threat to the Green Belt, which has been recently well covered by the Maidenhead Advertiser. This is largely a result of the new planning framework adopted by the Government. However, the framework has been over-ridden by the latest “initiative” to streamline the planning process by short circuiting many existing planning controls and in particular permitting extensions (of up to eight metres!) to be constructed without planning permission. These initiatives are intended to stimulate the building sector - yet it is apparent that the demand for housing is driven by finance availability and affordability. There are 400,000 dwellings with planning permission which are awaiting a change in the economic climate.

## **A Changing Skyline**

Not everyone can – or does – get and about, so here are recent views showing some of the development projects that Society has commented on, and how they’re changing Maidenhead’s skyline.



*New and refurbished flats at Kidwell Close*





*The former East Berkshire College – soon it'll be just a memory*



*Above, the new entrance to Boulter's Meadow (the former Badnells Pit) in Blackamoor Lane; and below, the development takes shape within*



*Martin McNamee and Bob Dulson*



# Why There's Still Room At the Top

It's six months since the Royal Borough's CEO, Ian Trenholm, left the town hall. Two months ago his deputy, David Oram, was allowed to retire. But neither post has yet been advertised.

On Trenholm's departure, council leader David Burbage thanked him for helping the council deliver "more for less". He said: "Ian has been a key player in delivering our ambitious plans to make the Royal Borough a vanguard authority."

David Oram, a well-respected veteran servant of the council, is being granted the Freedom of the Royal Borough. He becomes only the 15<sup>th</sup> person to receive this honour, in recognition of a "career devoted to making positive difference to the community". Cllr Richard Kellaway said: "David helped us demonstrate that this council is indeed world class."



*Ian Trenholm*



*David Oram*

After 35 years at the Borough,

Oram was himself a class act and a tough one to follow. Politicians, officers and the public spoke highly of his wisdom, tact and diplomacy. He taught many much about local government – though there was always much more he didn't tell!

At his farewell people remarked how his objectivity, impartiality and knowledge had been invaluable and on occasions had saved them and the Borough from certain embarrassment.

So why are these two vital posts still vacant? Surely, it's only a question of time. Isn't it?

*Bob Dulson*

# PROJECTS

## MILLENNIUM WALK

### Boundary Walk - Lower Cookham Road to Thames Path Link

One of the missing links, from the Lower Cookham Road to the Thames Path, was walked this year for the seventh time during the Rotary Club's annual Boundary Walk. However, its formal inclusion in the route is still on hold. We are hopeful that the new *Paths in Communities* scheme, operated by Natural England, may provide funding if an agreement can be reached with the Edwards family. We are grateful to them for again allowing access.

Many thanks to all who helped clear the path and to Shashi Dare who helped marshal on the day itself.



*This year's working party – still fresh before starting to clear the path!*



*As in previous years most walkers chose to use our path rather than walk along the road to Boulton's Lock.*



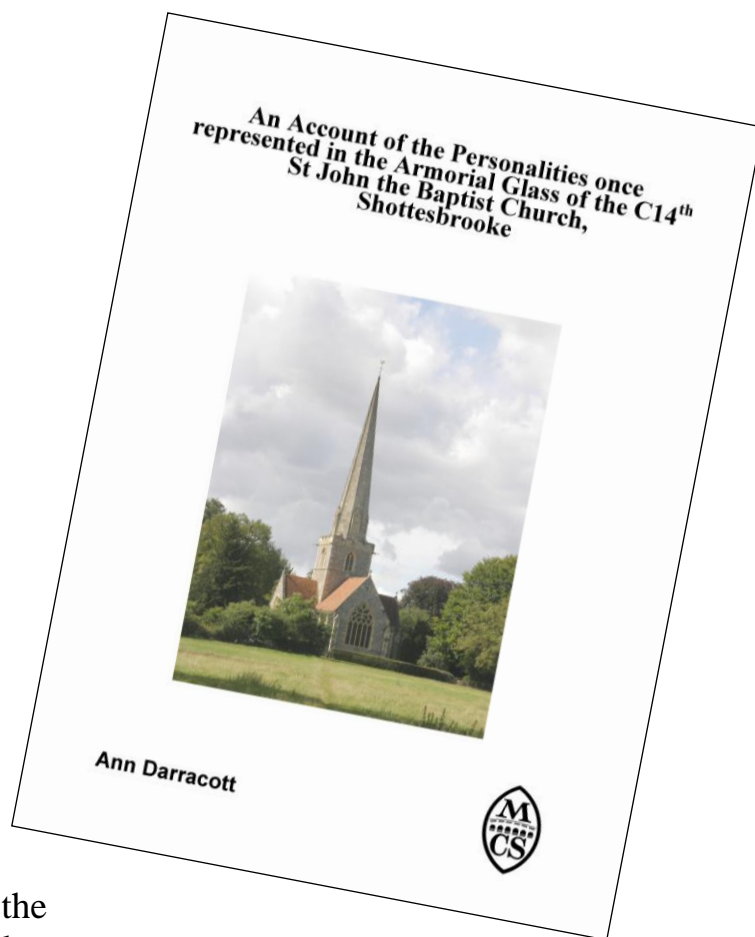
## BISHAM ABBEY AND SHOTTESBROOKE CHURCH

In May this year, we visited Shottesbrooke Church – regarded as the finest C14th church in Berkshire. It is exactly contemporaneous with Bisham Priory church which was demolished during the time of Henry VIII (both founded in 1337).



*Elias Ashmole, by an unknown artist ca. 1688; after John Riley*

In the hope that a study of the armorial glass once at Shottesbrooke would indicate what might have been at Bisham, we obtained from the Bodleian Library in Oxford a set of the drawings made by Elias Ashmole when he toured Berkshire in 1664-66. This includes drawings of 42 coats of arms from the windows at Shottesbrooke. At the time he was Windsor Herald at the College of Arms. The results of this study have recently been published by the Society in the form of a 48-page colour booklet.



Sir William Trussell, who founded the collegiate church at Shottesbrooke, probably put up the coats to commemorate the men and women who were his donors, allowing him to build the church. These include William Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, who founded the priory at Bisham, and Edward III and his queen, Philippa of Hainault. The armorial glass was probably put up after 1340, when Edward III started quartering the coat of England with that of France and before 1344 when Montacute died.

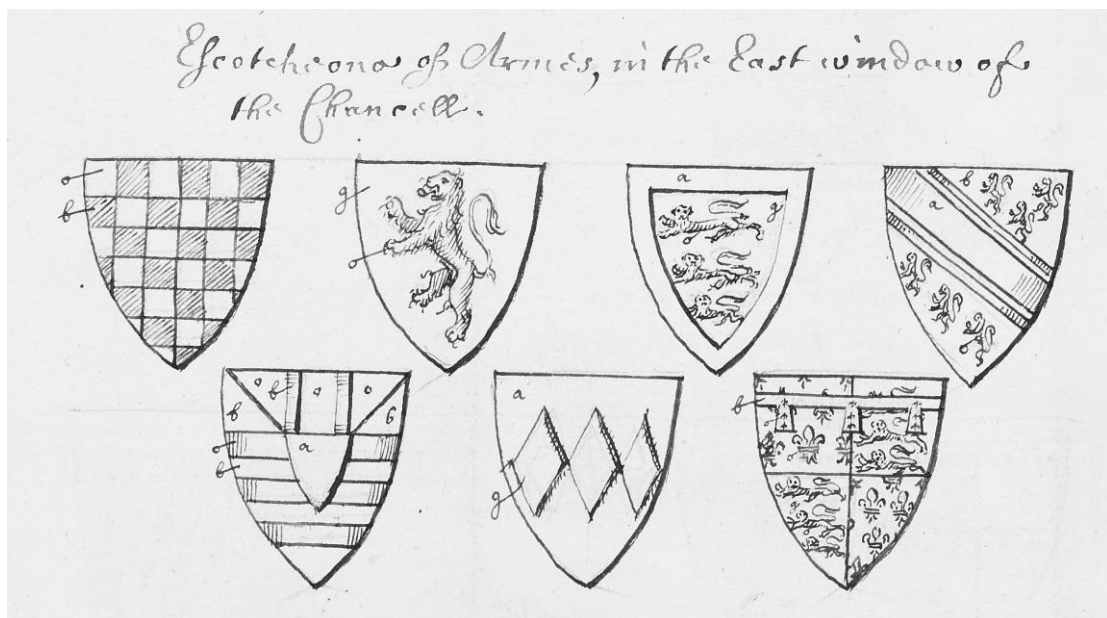


*Royal Coat, Edward III*



*Philippa of Hainault*

In the east window at Shottesbrooke in the mid C17th there were coats for Montacute and people linked to him including his ward, Roger Mortimer who married Philippa, one of Montacute's daughters, and Joan, Fair Maid of Kent, who from the winter of 1340/41 to 1349 was married to Montacute's son William. In 1349 this marriage was annulled to allow her to return to her first husband, Thomas, Lord Holland whom she had apparently married secretly. From 1344, when William succeeded as 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Salisbury on his father's death, Holland had been the steward of the young couple!! He was only able to retrieve his bride when he received ransom money from the king, presumably allowing him to pay for an annulment.



*Ashmole's drawing of the arms in the East Window at Shottesbrooke  
(Ashmole 850 f290 Bodleian Library, Oxford)*

Top, L-R:                      Warrenne : Arundel : Woodstock, (Earl of Kent) : Bohun  
Bottom, L-R:                Mortimer : Montacute : Royal Coat with 3 point label azure  
   bearing fleur de lis or

After Montacute's death in 1344, Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, also represented in the east window, promptly had his marriage to Isabel Despencer annulled despite the existence of offspring. His son by Isabel, Edmund Fitzalan, was thereby bastardised – especially unfortunate as he had been betrothed to another of Montacute's daughters, Sybil, since 1331. Montacute's death has been described as *timely* as he would undoubtedly have resisted the annulment that affected his daughter.

Many of the men represented at Shottesbrooke appear to have been involved in fighting the Scots and the French as the 100 Years War began. Several, including Trussell, were at the battle of Halidon Hill and the siege of Berwick in 1333. Montacute was a leader of the siege and its success is recorded in what was once the foundation brass of Bisham Priory Church, re-used as a palimpsest in the C16th for the Hyde family. It is now located in St James the Great Church, Denchworth.



*The foundation brass of Bisham Priory. The inscription is in Norman French and translates as:*

*“Edward king of England who carried on the siege before the city of Berwick and conquered in battle there the said City on the eve of St Margaret’s in the year of grace 1333, laid this stone at the request of Sir William de Mountagu, founder of this house”*

Details of these battle and sieges, together with further background about the families that link Shottesbrooke and Bisham – a link which continued over the centuries – can be found in the new booklet. We will be selling copies of the report for £5 plus £1.50 postage & packing, so if you would like a copy please contact us on 01628 620280.

*Ann Darracott*



# Announcements

## Could you run our events calendar?

The Civic Society is looking for an

### **EVENTS COORDINATOR**

As a member of the Executive Committee, you would chair the Events & Membership Group, responsible for organising a programme of events, including outings, socials & lunches, and bring ideas to the table.

If you are interested in volunteering for this position please contact our chairman, Bob Dulson.

## Happy Birthday, Michael!



Michael Bailey, the Society's longest serving member, celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday at home on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> October. Several members of the Society were privileged to join him alongside his family and many other friends he's made over the years. Michael is – as far as we know – the only original member of the Civic Society; he attended the inaugural meeting when it was formed in May 1960. He was as concerned about planning issues then as he is now: "We face the same challenges today as we did then – things haven't changed a lot!" he quipped. We hope he'll be around for a few years yet to contribute to the Society's efforts in improving Maidenhead.

## News from the Heritage Centre

The only Maidenhead calendar for 2013 is now available from Maidenhead Heritage Centre in Park Street, together with Maidenhead Christmas cards and a wide selection of local books, prints and other gifts.

Civic Society members who enjoyed a visit to White Waltham airfield will be interested in a 7-week series of talks called “Maidenhead’s Aviation History”, on Tuesday evenings starting on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013. The six evening talks by Richard Poad cover over 100 years of fascinating aviation history, starting a long time before White Waltham opened in 1935. In the seventh week, a daytime visit is made to visit the hangars to look at the huge variety of aircraft which ‘live’ at White Waltham, the oldest dating from the 1930s. Full details on [www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk](http://www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk).

Next year there are 3 important anniversaries to be marked, the most important of which is the Heritage Centre’s 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, which falls in April. It is also 100 years since the first motor car, a GWK, was built in Maidenhead in what later became a jam factory, and 175 years since Brunel’s Sounding Arch railway bridge was completed. Expect exhibitions about both of these; if any readers are railway or vintage car enthusiasts and would like to be involved, please contact the Heritage Centre on 01628 780555.

Spring 2013 will also see the completion of a new, permanent exhibition covering the whole history of Maidenhead from before the Romans to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, in which so many local athletes won medals and the Borough was a ‘host Borough’. The new exhibition will be part funded by Section 106 Developer Contributions.

The Trustees of the Heritage Centre will be interested to see which developer and what ideas the council prefers for the redevelopment of the Town Hall and Grove Road car parks, and for the office buildings on the east side of St Ives Road; it is understood that a developer will be chosen by the end of the year. The Heritage Centre wishes to be involved in any ongoing discussions in order to protect its own interests. After all, it has taken 19 years, 6 temporary homes and over £900,000 to get where we are now. The Centre is unlikely to consider any change unless it improves dramatically the facilities and services which can be offered.

*Richard Poad*  
*Chairman, Maidenhead Heritage Centre*

# Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012  
**Talk** by Simon Hurrell  
followed by the **AGM**

“What’s in Store for the Town Centre”  
Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00pm

## CIVIC SOCIETY OFFICERS

President of the Trustees	John McIntosh, 26 Harvest Hill Road, SL6 2QQ	633259
Hon. Secretary	Eileen Goford, 6 Laxton Green, SL6 3HW	638238
Hon. Treasurer	Mike Emmerson, 15 Twynham Road, SL6 5AT	628006
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Communications Group	Brian Darracott, 6 Medallion Place, SL6 1TF	620280
Events Group	Vacant	
Outings Sec.	Mike Copeland, 14 Laburnham Road, SL6 4DB	634181
Membership Sec.	Joyce Delasalle, 7 Laxton Green, SL6 3HW	637342
Newsletter Distribution	Sue Ross, Castle Hill Lodge, St Marks Road, SL6 6DG	626849

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2012

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

10<sup>th</sup> January, 14<sup>th</sup> February, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> May, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 10<sup>th</sup> July, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 13<sup>th</sup> November, 11<sup>th</sup> December

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS FOR 2012

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

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

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012 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 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013.**

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