



# Maidenhead Civic Society NEWS



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Issue 4/18

November 2018

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*The town centre amphitheatre enjoyed from the Green Way  
streamside walk (see pages 17-18)*

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

# The Chairman's Page

There's an air of anticipation as people gather for the *Maidenhead and Me* prize giving in the Nicholson Centre. It's a tad more piquant than usual because of Brexit events in Brussels the night before and the news, just a week earlier, that Nicholsons had gone into receivership. So, although we've never publicised our hope that the Prime Minister as the Society's Patron will attend to present the prizes, the national Press Association news agency has read the runes and posted a reporter and photographer on the door.



In the event, all goes well. The PM, looking remarkably fresh under the circumstances, arrives with husband Philip. She views all the entries, hands out the prizes, chats and poses for pics with the winners and mingles with the 60-plus invited guests.

The theme for this year's competition was "People make it what it

is", something Theresa had said at last year's prize-giving. This seemed like a good idea at the time but it turned out to be a challenge too far for some, resulting in 40% fewer entries than last year. However, we know that around 600 entry forms were taken and that the issue of portraying people had stimulated a debate amongst would-be contestants which aligns well with the Society's objective of encouraging public interest. What's more, the quality of the art and photographs that we did receive was remarkably good and made a very attractive exhibition which is set to run for two weeks in the Nicholson Centre until November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Full details of the winning entries and a photo record of the day can be seen via the link on the Home Page of our website.

We first launched *Maidenhead and Me* in 2014. After each one we consider carefully the pros and cons before deciding whether to run another. The success of the competition and the associated exhibition relies on the cooperation of a lot of people – The *Advertiser*, Bovilles, the Camera Club, Enjoy Maidenhead (RBWM), the Louis Baylis Trust, Nicholsons and a team of volunteers. This year that debate will be even tougher.

*Bob Dulson*

# **58<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY**

**To be held on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018  
in The Bromley Room, Methodist Church, King Street, Maidenhead**

**At 8.00pm – a presentation by local architect Martin Knight, designer of  
the new footbridge at Boulters Lock**

**To be followed by refreshments, and the AGM at 9.15 pm**

## **AGENDA**

1. Introduction by the Chairman of the Committee
2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 57<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting
3. Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018
4. Chairman's Report for 2017/2018
5. To approve the election of Members of the Committee. *See note below.*
6. Election of the Officers  
To elect from the Committee Members a Chairman, an Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer
7. Any other Business.

### ***Election of Committee Members***

There currently are eleven Committee Members: Bob Dulson, Eileen Goford, Peter Child, Martin McNamee, Ann Darracott, Brian Darracott, Jodie Humphries, Joyce Delasalle, Roger Panton, Ian Rose, and Tina Sell. Under the terms of the Society's Constitution the Committee shall consist of eight to twelve Members. One third of the Committee Members must retire each year and shall be eligible for re-election and accordingly, Ann Darracott, Brian Darracott and Tina Sell will retire, all of whom offer themselves for re-election. There is also one additional vacancy.

The Membership is invited to make nominations for the position of Committee Members. 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 57<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY

**Held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 at St Luke's Community Hall**

Thirty three persons in attendance.

**1. Apologies for Absence:** Rod Bird, David Fuller, Renu Gujral, Stephan Helal, Philip Love, Tess Marsh, Martin McNamee, Bob and Jill Powell, David Snelgar, John Stewart.

**2. Approval of Minutes of 56<sup>th</sup> AGM:** The minutes were approved. Proposed by Michael Johnson, seconded by Martin Trepte.

**3. Accounts for the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017:** Details to be found pages 9 and 10 of the November 2017 Newsletter. Sad to say that this is Mike Emmerson's last appearance as our treasurer. He is moving to Devon. Mike took over from Trevor Farnfield in 2011, since when he has given us an extremely efficient and unruffled service. Vote of thanks was recorded to Mike Emmerson. Accounts accepted. Proposed by Brian Darracott and seconded by Ian Rose.

**4. Chairman's Report:** Our chairman Bob Dulson spoke of his sadness at the loss of John McIntosh in July. John was a former chairman and president of the Society: a charming, wise and gentle man.

After drawing our attention to his report in the newsletter, Bob highlighted two issues: our relationship with the Council and the number of active members in the Society. We regret the Council's lack of response to legitimate concerns, in particular about parking, and their lack of consultation about what to put in the so-called civic and cultural quarter. We regret that in their quest to supply more housing they are dramatically increasing density, over-riding restrictions on the location and height of tall buildings in the town centre, and reversing the rules to positively encourage back-garden infilling. We have to maintain and strengthen our links with the Council and its officers and keep drumming home the community message.

We are fond of bridges: the footbridge at Boulter's, the bridge over The Cut at Braywick (which will enhance another of our creations: the Green Way) and the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the restoration by Civic Society volunteers of Guards Club footbridge.

He appealed for new blood to enable us to undertake more activities and continue to make informed, fair and constructive comment in the press and on social media.

**5. Election to Board of Trustees:** Joyce Delasalle, Mike Emmerson and Eileen Goford retired en bloc but were re-elected. Proposed by Ann Darracott and seconded by Rudi Sheldon.

**6. Election of Officers:** Eileen Goford as Honorary Secretary and Mike Emmerson as Treasurer were re-elected. Proposed by Adi Sheldon and seconded by Joyce Delasalle.

**7. Any Other Business:** Thanks to the *Advertiser*. Thanks to Brian Darracott, the Newsletter editor, for advertising Maidenhead Archaeological and Historical Society events. Meeting concluded at 10:05 pm.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT OF THE YEAR

While the majority of our members believe the Society performs well and chooses the right issues on which to campaign, an increasing number feel that the Society is less important and relevant than it was. Then there is the average age of the membership. In 2006, 68% were aged 65 or over. Today, that figure is 92%, with corresponding falls in younger age groups.

I think we already knew but, amid the bustle of ongoing business, these results from our survey of members in June provided a wake-up call: The need to raise our profile and attract new members clearly had to be an objective. An extraordinary meeting of the executive committee in August determined that we had to reinvent ourselves in some way to appeal to a new audience. It was not a question of the message, more the way we deliver it and engage.

Some changes are under way, like the introduction of our new website and an increase in the use of social media but much more has to be done if the Society is to fulfil its obligations as well in the future as it has in the past.

**Planning:** It's been a very busy year. In addition to the usual tranche of planning applications, we have been drawn to consider and comment on the emerging Borough Local Plan (BLP), which came under scrutiny in the first phase of public examination by the Planning Inspector, and a host of proposals from the Council and its new joint venture partner. In summary:

- The emerging BLP is under potential challenge, notably on questions of inadequate community engagement and Green Belt. Several major issues were driven by the BLP, which itself is driven by the desire to achieve housing targets.
- Though the Council declared an intention to protect it, the Green Belt is being eroded by the decision to develop the Golf Club and Braywick Park. The establishment of the JV between Countryside and RBWM will maximise the number of units in and around the town centre, raising questions about heights, densities and character.
- Parking capacity remains a major concern, although the Council has promised to maintain the current number of spaces during the transitional period before the new Nicholsons Car Park comes on line. The new commuter car park under construction at Vicus Way/Stafferton Way is one of a number of measures that will deliver an increase of 600 more spaces by the end of the process.
- Other major infrastructure demands generated by the BLP have been identified – but other than schooling do not appear to have been addressed.
- Building heights in the town centre look like stabilising at eight storeys, with the exception of the Landing's three blocks of 19 storeys and the West St. tower at the same height.



- The trend to ever smaller dwellings continues. This is especially of concern in office conversions to residential flats; and we discover the Council has no policy currently to prevent it.

Elsewhere, the demolition of substantial homes for redevelopment as apartment blocks continues. And, although it's refused at this stage, the risk of losing such leisure assets as the Thames Riviera Hotel to residential development is severe. However, it is positive news that our call for a leisure strategy for Riverside appears to have been heeded.

The Maidenhead and Cox Green Neighbourhood Plan is making slow progress and continues to test Society members Martin McNamee, Roger Panton, Ian Rose and Mike Copeland who chair four of its five working groups. It does, however, address many issues of concern in the BLP – notably parking, the mix of housing types and the reduced size of dwellings and lack of amenity space.

Finally, it appears that communication and interface between the Planning Authority and stakeholders, such as the Civic Society, is deteriorating in favour of cursory consultation. We hope this will change but, meanwhile, it seems that after 10 years PRoM, as we knew it, has had its last meeting.

The Society records its thanks again to Martin McNamee for all his work as Planning Group chairman and to his group colleagues Renu Gujral, Roger Panton, Peter O'Hara, Ian Rose and Rudi Sheldon.

## **Projects**

**Green Way:** Many changes have occurred in the town centre section of the Green Way with a new bridge near the library and an improved path alongside the stream. Most importantly there is now disabled access from the High Street to the Green Way path, something the Society and the East Berks Ramblers had campaigned for over many years. These changes will be continuing to happen as the section between the now demolished Colonnade and Crown Lane steps is redeveloped.

Another major improvement, via a planning gain from the Loftings development, has been a new bridge, Margaret's Bridge, which crosses the Cut just north of Oldfield Primary School. This bridge, in memory of Margaret Bowdery MBE, was again a long cherished objective to improve access to the Green Way from the Bray Road (see more on page 15).

The Society continues its membership of the Green Way Working Group (GWWG), chaired by the Royal Borough, which considers planning applications affecting the Green Way and monitors its condition. The GWWG have been offered a site visit by Summerleaze in November to look at the new gravel workings near Green Way East, which have been screened off by an unattractive fence. In the long term these workings will result in additional lakes north of Maidenhead.

**Millennium Walk:** We have continued to campaign for a path from the Lower Cookham Road to the Thames, a missing link in the Millennium Walk. We are

hopeful that this will eventually be achieved. Leaflets are available in Maidenhead Library.

**Ockwells:** We also continue to campaign for the preservation of the setting of Ockwells Manor house, an iconic C15th manor house with famous armorial glass in the great hall. Most of Thrift Wood Farm, land to the south of the house, was purchased in 2017 by the Royal Borough and is being developed, to improve its ecological diversity, as an extension to Ockwells Park.

Thrift Wood Farm's old farm buildings, next to Ockwells Road, are in separate ownership and several planning applications have sought to build houses on the site. This site, including a former barn and kennels from when greyhounds were trained there, are subject to covenants by the National Trust. No-one saw fit to inform the National Trust until the third application came along for seven units, at which point we became aware of the situation and contacted their Covenants Officer. This application was refused on appeal but another has been submitted. We wait to see what happens.

The builder of Ockwells Manor, John Norreys Esq, is celebrated in stained glass in Durham Cathedral. Armorial glass for Norreys and for Margaret of Anjou, queen of Henry VI, can be seen in a west window of the Galilee Chapel in the Cathedral. During the year a report on the Durham glass, prepared in 2000, was updated and copies sent to the Chapter Librarian of the Cathedral and to the Archaeological Services of the Durham University. This report is not currently on our website, though there are downloadable articles about Ockwells, Bisham Abbey and St John the Baptist Church, Shottesbrooke. The Society remains, as ever, extremely grateful to Ann Darracott for her tireless enthusiasm on the Project front.

## **Events**

A presentation by Sevenoaks Civic Society on their successful Heritage Assets Listing project was inspirational for a number of those who attended our AGM last year and a similar project here in Maidenhead remains an objective for our Society. Conservation was on the menu at our Annual Dinner at Moor Hall, Cookham in January. 55 members and guests enjoyed an evening with guest speaker Joan Humble, the Chair of Civic Voice, who spoke about raising awareness of conservation areas and how to bring communities together to preserve the amenities that matter to us.

As mentioned under Projects, last year the Royal Borough bought 86 acres of Thrift Wood Farm to extend Ockwells Park. In April Ann Darracott organised a visit, guided by Countryside Ranger, Jason Mills, to explore the site, admire the extent of what had been achieved and learn about the future plans for the area. A lovely morning was rounded off with tea and cakes in the local café.

To show our appreciation to those members who deliver the Society's Newsletter each quarter, we invited them to a buffet lunch at Holy Trinity Parish Centre in April.

Not only was this an opportunity to say ‘Thank you’, it was also a very useful and successful social occasion.



*Saying “Thank you” to our unsung heroes who deliver the Newsletters*

‘The Guardians of the Green Way’ – the striking wooden sculptures that line the path from North Town to Braywick – were featured in the August Newsletter and on 30 September there was an opportunity to view these works of art closely and learn a bit more about this local linear walk, together with an update on the work of the Waterways. Thanks to Ann Darracott and Richard Davenport for leading the walk.

As in other years, Society volunteers attended a number of local events with a view to raising the profile of the Society. These included a rather wet Cox Green Fair in May, Maidenhead Festival in July and Gin in the Park. We returned to Guards Club Park again in August for our own Picnic in the Park, a very pleasant event marking the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society’s restoration of the footbridge.

Our fifth ‘Maidenhead and Me’ Art Competition was held in October this year, a little later than usual.

The Events Group tries to develop an attractive forward programme of events. But, despite their efforts, as we reported last year, the take-up of places for outings in recent years has been repeatedly weak and this year a planned visit to Didcot Railway Centre and GWR Steam Museum had to be cancelled for lack of interest. The Group is exploring other options, e.g. sharing with other societies, but it seems likely that outings will disappear from our events programme unless members demand them. Considerable thought goes into what kind of events we should offer and comments or suggestions from members would be welcome. Our thanks to Group Chair, Tina



Sell, and Group members Bridget Morris, Mike Copeland, Joyce Delasalle and Angela Dulson.

The last event of 2018 will be the AGM which takes place on 21<sup>st</sup> November, with guest speaker Martin Knight, the designer of the new footbridge at Boulsters.

## **Communications**

The members' survey in May underlined the need to raise public awareness of what we do. The Society's activities over the last year in Planning, Projects and Events have attracted reasonable coverage in the local press, though there's still more we could do in this respect. Since the survey, we have attempted to make better use of social media, with some satisfying results, but more effort is needed in the face of other local competition.

We launched our new website in May, thanks to the efforts of Brian Darracott and Roger Panton. It is much easier to use and update, sets out our stall in a simple but attractive way, includes an archive of all our past Newsletters and allows members of the public to contact us directly. While the website, in time, could become the preferred channel of communication with members, the quarterly Civic Society News continues to be the main, and much appreciated vehicle for communicating with members and we're indebted for that to editor Brian Darracott and Sue Ross and the team who distribute it.

In the past, we have sent out occasional Keeping in Touch (KiT) bulletins by email with news and events for members although, for technical reasons, there have been none of these in the last 12 months. The new website, we're told, has the ability to assist us in reviving KiT, so we hope to resume these soon (once your chairman has come to terms with the technology!)

## **Membership**

In the year to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018 we were pleased to welcome the following new members:- John Harper, Alfi Ariff, Gerard Tekerian, Mr & Mrs Gareth Hughes, Mr & Mrs Nigel Harding, Mr & Mrs Clive Lattimer, Joanna Wheatley, Mr & Mrs L Moffitt, Peter O'Hara and David Knowles-Leak .

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Total Members (Excl. Corporate)	334	345	344	340	329
No. of Memberships:					
(Family, Honorary, Life, etc)	232	236	233	232	227
Life Members	101	99	94	91	86
Honorary Members	19	18	19	18	17
Corporate Members	1	1	1	1	1

In the current year (2018-19) we already have 7 new memberships comprising 10 members and although we have lost a few, mainly as a result of mortality, we are

managing to maintain our numbers. Our sincere thanks to Joyce Delasalle for her diligence and energy in the role of Membership Secretary.

We bade farewell to Mike Emmerson at last year's AGM. Mike's replacement as Treasurer is Peter Child, a long standing member of the Society, who has injected some fresh thinking, introduced the Society to on-line banking and managed our accounts, for which we are very grateful.

Finally, I'd like to offer my thanks to you, our members, for your loyal support for the Society, and to our Executive Committee and volunteers for everything they do in its name.

Looking ahead, I believe the Society faces challenges that would be better met with new energy, ideas and enthusiasm at the helm. So I have informed the Executive Committee that I intend to stand down as chairman by this time next year and asked them to seek a successor.

*Bob Dulson*

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Annual accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> May 2018 are enclosed with this report.

The main points from these accounts are as follows:

Overall there was a deficit for the year of Expenditure over Income of £783 in 2017/18, compared to a surplus of Income over expenditure of £462 in 2016/17.

### Income

Total income declined by £393. Subscription income (which includes top-up donations) increased by £115. However, gift aid has declined by £296 because there was a catch-up for earlier years in 2016/17. There were no outings this year and so no income as opposed to £226 in 2016/17.

### Expenditure

Expenditure overall has increased by £852 on the previous year. The main reasons are:

- (a) There has been a one-off cost of £178 on requirements for GDPR (the legislation governing the way in which organisations hold personal data).
- (b) The principal swing from last year to this of £482 has been on the *Maidenhead and Me* competition. Last year there was a surplus of £185 while this year there was a deficit of £297. This swing has been caused mainly by the significant increase in prize money.
- (c) The Newsletter has cost £198 more this year. There has been a slightly higher number of pages printed and the printer (still good value) has increased costs.

### Balance of Funds

The Society accounts show bank funds in hand of £11,458 compared to £12,292 in the previous year.

*Peter Child*

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

**Annual Accounts for Year ended 31st May 2018**

**2016/2017**

**2017/2018**

**INCOME**

25	Donations/Grants/Bequests	55
2,531	Subscriptions Received During Year	2,646
37	Interest On Bank And Other Deposits	23
228	Surplus On Outings	-
819	Tax Refunds On Gift Aid	523
<b>3,640</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,247</b>

**EXPENDITURE**

**Administration**

200	General Expenses, Printing, Postage, Etc.	244
1,421	Newsletter	1,619
493	Hire Of Rooms, Speakers And Meeting Expenses	474
432	Subscriptions	388
282	Insurance	287
100	Donations	-
115	Ockwells And Associated Projects (Net Costs)	189
(185)	Maidenhead & Me	297
-	Various Other Small Projects	0
156	Deficit On Social Events	93
0	GDPR expenses (this year one off)	178
164	Website	261
<b>3,178</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,030</b>

**(DEFICIT) of Expenditure over Income (SURPLUS in  
2016/17)**

<b>462</b>		<b>(783)</b>
11,900	Balance Brought Forward	12,362
<b>12,362</b>	<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>	<b>11,579</b>

**FUNDS**

2,680	Bank (Lloyds TSB)	1,823
9,612	Charities Deposit General Fund (COIF)	9,635
633	Subscriptions & Insurance Payments In Advance	600
(563)	Member subscriptions in advance and expenses paid in June	(479)
<b>12,362</b>	<b>BALANCE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>£11,579</b>

# Planning Matters

Since our last Newsletter the application for the Joint Venture project between Countryside and RBWM to redevelop the **York Road Opportunity Area** has been permitted by the Development and Control (D & C) Panel. As previously reported, we have issues with some elements of the proposals, but it was never likely that the RBWM would not agree to such a key element of the Town Centre regeneration project. It is ironic that the Shanly proposals for the redevelopment of the Bowling Club site on York Road have been refused and are going to appeal. The scheme has 154 flats with 176 parking spaces and a maximum height of eight storeys. It is certainly a more attractive proposition than the JV proposals - especially in terms of parking provision. In the wake of this pending appeal there is a new application for **23 to 33 York Road** - widely referred to as “Death Row”. This row of terraced houses together with the Anchor pub on the corner is to be demolished to make way for the construction of a block of 55 apartments, but with a parking capacity of only 17 spaces. Although another Shanly development, the height and mass of the building, together with the reduced parking provision is a reflection of what has been permitted in the YROA joint venture scheme. The perimeter of the site is utilised to the maximum, with little amenity space and no drop off / unloading space. Delivery vehicles and removals vans will have to use the main entrance which is on the corner of Park Street and York Road.

Also at the September D & C Panel there were two schemes of interest that were refused permission. **L'leno** in Market Street was a proposed development of six flats above the cafe occupying the ground floor of the site. Architecturally they were very intrusive, and not integrated into the design of the building as a whole. Furthermore, this location is within the High Street Conservation Area, and the scheme is visually detrimental to the locality. The **Thames Riviera Hotel** application for part demolition and conversion/refurbishment into residential blocks totalling 28 dwellings was also refused. These proposals were first mooted in 2016, and we have been resolutely opposed to the scheme ever since. As a matter of planning policy it is important that existing access to the River Thames is not restricted or privatised by such residential schemes. Furthermore, such a high profile site at the river gateway to Maidenhead, should be of a design and character that reflects its location within a Conservation Area. Thames Riviera Hotel is owned by Galleon Hotels – part of the Arena Leisure Group. Arena also own Windsor Racecourse, where a very large hotel complex is in the pipeline. The company should be investigating ways of improving the trading performance and viability of an asset such as The Thames Riviera, rather than making an opportunistic quick buck by converting the site to residential use. At the very least, the ground floor of the property should be retained as a restaurant/bar permitting continued riverside access to clients. The excitement and level of bookings generated by Roux at Skindles on the opposite bank illustrates the potential of such a prime location. It is to be hoped that Arena Leisure reflect on the true value of this landmark site, rather than going straight to planning appeal, which regrettably is the most likely outcome.

Since the last edition of the Newsletter about fifty applications have been reviewed at our monthly Planning Group meetings. Comments have been submitted on about fifteen of those proposals. In addition to those already mentioned, noteworthy cases include **The Crooked Billet** – a disused pub on Westborough Road (below). Following demolition it is proposed to squeeze two terraces totalling seven 4-bed houses on to the site. The development is too cramped and should have parking provision for 21 cars – three per dwelling. However, only two spaces per dwelling are provided, and to compound the problem each house has two spaces in tandem. This arrangement will require much reversing into the road and other vehicle movements. The entire site has too many dwellings and too many bedrooms.



There are three substantial office blocks where permitted development change of use to residential is being sought. An application for the site of the already demolished **Clivemont House** in Clivemont Road has been resubmitted for development of 93 apartments. A previous application for a larger number of units was refused in 2017. Although the number of units has been reduced, there is no affordable housing in the scheme, the car park provision, although underground, is inadequate and there is little landscaping or amenity space.

Another developer is seeking to convert two office blocks on Moorbridge Road into flats – **Moorbridge Court** and **Liberty House**. The latter is for 30 flats on Moorbridge Road facing the exit from Waitrose car park, and the former for 41 units is also accessed from Moorbridge Road, 50 metres west. Both blocks have the majority of proposed flats (especially one bedroom) significantly below the Nationally Described Minimum Space Standard. These undersized dwellings are substandard and are being added to Maidenhead's housing stock in the drive by developers to maximise the number of dwelling units and resultant profits. It is regrettable that in spite of our efforts over the past three years our RBWM planning department has not introduced minimum sizes for dwelling units, especially when office conversions are becoming more commonplace. Furthermore, these undersized dwelling units do not have amenity/leisure space. However, because of their previous use they do have adequate parking provision.





*Liberty House, opposite the entrance to the Waitrose carpark (left) and Moorbridge Court (right) near the “Waitrose” roundabout*

At the time of going to press the application for Liberty House, which used to be occupied by ARM Holdings, has not been allowed under permitted development and requires full planning permission because of transport and highways impact, contamination risk and flood risks. It is to be hoped that it will go before a D & C Panel and the matter of undersized flats might at least be considered. Hopefully, the same will apply to Moorbridge Court which is adjacent to Liberty House. In spite of the limited living spaces of many flats there is no provision of “affordable” housing which might help to justify such small units. If such developments do not include affordable housing, there is no chance that the Borough will achieve a target of 30% of new developments.

You will be aware that the appeal hearing regarding the refusal of an application for a community centre on land to the rear of **Boulters Lock Car Park** took place in early September. We have always opposed any development on that site. The proposal was detrimental to the setting of the Riverside Conservation Area, the outlook and enjoyment of neighbouring residential properties and would create more parking pressure in the locality. The site was landlocked and required access through the car park. However, the key issue was the proximity of amphibian life (especially Greater Crested Newts) in the garden ponds of adjacent properties located on Lock Avenue. On a site visit, the keys provided by RBWM did not open the gates! At great risk to Her Majesty’s Inspector, residents provided step ladders to get over the chain link gate. Whatever the merits of the arguments, it was the newts that did it – Greater or Lesser, who cares! The site should never have been considered for such a scheme, and it is to be hoped that the appellants find a more suitable site in the near future. We welcome the Borough’s decision to proceed with an application for the restoration of the site to provide additional Riverside car parking.

*Martin McNamee*

# Projects

## GREEN WAY DEVELOPMENTS

### Margaret's Bridge

Some of you may know of my long cooperation with Margaret Bowdery MBE who co-founded East Berks Ramblers with Peter Nevell. It was Peter's idea of a linear park that connected Cookham, Maidenhead and Bray which he brought to the Civic Society for help and which led to us publishing the first map of the park, now called The Green Way, in 1985. This was designed to be as far as possible a streamside path. When York Stream dried out in the town centre in 1988 Margaret and I became members of what was eventually to be called the Green Way Working Group (GWWG) which still meets twice a year and which Margaret was a member of until ill health forced her retirement a few years before her death in 2016.

In recognition of her contribution to the Green Way and other major footpath schemes such as the Thames Path and the Millennium Walk, the Royal Borough has named a new bridge over the Cut, south of Maidenhead, "Margaret's Bridge". Such a bridge was a long standing objective to improve access between the Bray Road and Braywick Park that has now been achieved.



Margaret would be pleased that it is made of recycled materials though would undoubtedly have been amazed at its size – apparently necessary for disabled access and not because of the waterways scheme. According to Sam Eagling Fernandez,



Regional Manager of Maydencroft Limited, who built the bridge, “the material is a recycled plastic product that is created by melting down waste plastic. This melted liquid is then dyed certain colours and then injection moulded to form various shapes such as walk boards and hand rails. We have made several boardwalks out of this material and one of the key benefits is that it doesn’t rot like wood. In theory it will last forever!”

Margaret’s Bridge was formally opened on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September by the Prime Minister, Theresa May, with additional speeches by the Mayor, Paul Lions, and Kate Ashbrook of the Open Spaces Society with whom Margaret worked on many footpath projects and. The event was attended by representatives of the Society and Margaret’s husband Bernard and son Giles.



*New sculpture featuring a fish and a heron at the Bray Road approach to the bridge.  
Created by Nick Garnett from a sweet chestnut tree felled in Braywick Park*



## **Guardians Walk, Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September**

We were able to see all eight Guardians, one of the Green Way plaques and also the new sculpture approaching Margaret's Bridge (see above). The Walk was well attended and well publicised by the *Advertiser*; it even got "likes" on the Maidenhead Past & Present Facebook site afterwards! Many thanks to Richard Davenport of the Waterways group and Cllr Derek Wilson for coming along and providing valuable insight into future development of both waterway and town, and to Braywick Nature Centre for allowing us to use it for refreshments.



*Ann Darracott explains the background to the Guardians and what to expect en route*

The Guardians, according to the sculptor, Nick Garnett, are all of oak except the one located between the railway bridge and the Stafferton Way link road which is of cedar. The timber was obtained from the Parks Department. They were mostly created in the open air in Braywick Park where the artist said he often had conversations with passers-by that helped in the creative process.





*Walkers take in the view across the newly enhance York Stream*



*The group inspects the cedar Guardian near Stafferton Way*

*Ann Darracott*



# Society Picnic in Guards Club Park

On the warm Sunday afternoon of August 19<sup>th</sup> nearly sixty members and their families and friends came to Guards Club Park to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of Guards Club Bridge (the completion of the Park and its gazebo came a little later!)



*Brian Darracott (a junior member of the original Park working gang) gives a potted history of the project*



*Michael Johnson greets Richard Poad the project leader (left) and Harold James (the engineer-in-charge, or the “Gaffer”, centre)*





# Forthcoming Events

**AGM – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018, 7.45pm for 8.00pm  
Presentation by Martin Knight: “Boulton Lock Footbridge”**

Guest Speaker, local architect **Martin Knight**, will give a presentation about his career and design philosophy. Readers will remember that we featured Martin and the new bridge in our February edition of the Newsletter. Well, with the opening of the new footbridge not far off we thought it timely to hear more about this new facility from the man himself.



*The graceful new bridge seen from river level (above) and from the island (below)*



The presentation will be followed by refreshments and the Society’s AGM.

## ST LUKE'S SEVENTH CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

The Society is again sponsoring a Christmas tree at this event at St Luke's Church, Norfolk Road, Maidenhead. The event raises money for local charities. This is an opportunity for us to let local people know what we do, so our tree, decked out in the Society's blue and white colours, has baubles that detail our current activities; Newsletters (and application forms!) will also be available. Apart from lots of trees to admire there will be stalls selling home-made produce and crafts, plus refreshments. Do come along and bring your friends, especially if they aren't members. The church will be open on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> December from 10am to 7pm, and on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> from 2pm to 6pm.

(n.b. Undecorated trees are available after the festival from the church for a minimum donation of £10).

## THE CIVIC SOCIETY DINNER

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019, 7.30 for 8.00 pm**

The Civic Society Dinner is a relaxed and fairly informal occasion with good food and wine. Moor Hall in Cookham is the venue and for £39 there's a choice of menu, a welcome drink and wine with the meal.

We're expecting a "big-name" speaker as our principal guest. As we go to press, we are still finalising the arrangements and we'll let you know a little later by separate message what we've planned.

The dinner is open to members and their guests, although numbers are limited. Do join us for what promises to be a fascinating evening by completing the form at the end, noting your menu preferences **and also whether you have any special dietary requirements.**

### The Menu

#### Starters

- A) Charred Plum Tomato Soup with Parmesan crisp, basil crème fraiche and garlic oil
- B) Home Cured Lemon Pepper Salmon with soused vegetables, caper dressing and dill weed
- C) Oriental Duck Salad with tamari, garlic and sweet ginger, iced crisp vegetables

#### Mains

- D) Pan Roasted Tenderloin of English Pork with honey glazed pressed belly, dauphine potatoes, charred root vegetables, sherry pan jus
- E) Grilled Loin of Atlantic Cod with buttered mash puree, pea and broad beans, roasted winter tomatoes, chorizo oil glazed chicory, beurre blanc
- F) Herb Crushed Aubergine Steak with mixed bean and spinach ragout, oyster mushrooms and French fried onions

#### Dessert

- G) Chocolate, Hazelnut and praline opera with black cherry and kirsch ice cream
- H) Glazed Lemon Tart with torched crème brûlée cream
- I) Fresh fruit salad

## Other Events

Society members may be interested in the following talks organised by local history and archaeology groups:

### **Maidenhead Archaeological & Historical Society (MAHS)**

(Talks held the Maidenhead Community centre (formerly RVS Centre), 42 York Road, Maidenhead SL6 1SH; 7.30 for 8pm; visitors £3; contact 01628 630924 for talks, and 01628 629614 for outings)

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November: Talk by David Tinker “British Piers – an Illustrious History of the Seaside”

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December: Talk by Dr Keith Lucas “How Plants Solve Crime”

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> January: Talk by Hugh Grainger “Wild, wild women – the role of dramatic women in history!”

### **Marlow Archaeology (MAS)**

(Talks held at the Liston Hall, Marlow, SL7 1DD; £4 non-members; contact 01628 523896)

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November, 8pm: *Buckinghamshire’s Saxon prince – the burial at Taplow*, Talk by Leslie Webster (joint talk with AiM)

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019, 8pm: *The founding of Reading Abbey*, Talk by John and Lindsay Mullaney

### **Archaeology in Marlow (AiM)**

(Talks held at the Liston Hall, Marlow, SL7 1DD; £4 non-members; contact 01628 485961)

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November, 8pm: *Buckinghamshire’s Saxon prince – the burial at Taplow*, Talk by Leslie Webster (joint talk with MAS)

## News from the Heritage Centre

### **EXHIBITION: “LEST WE FORGET”**

**October 19<sup>th</sup> to November 17<sup>th</sup> 2018**

Exhibition to mark the centenary of the 1918 armistice.

### **EXHIBITION: “TOYS OF YESTERYEAR”**

**November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2018 to 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019**

Toy exhibition to cover the run-up to Christmas – and post-Christmas. If you have any childhood toys you would be willing to lend, we would be pleased to hear from you.

### **LUNCHTIME TALK**

**Wednesday November 14<sup>th</sup> at 12.45pm (provisional date)**

“Homes for Heroes” – a talk by John McGuinness for the season of remembrance.

Lunchtime mini-lectures lasting 35-40 minutes are held at the museum on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of most months. There is a small charge of £2. Advance booking is not required.

As always, full news and information about the Heritage Centre is available on our website [www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk](http://www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk)

## Booking Form & Menu Choice

### **CIVIC SOCIETY DINNER at MOOR HALL**

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019, 7.30 for 8.00pm

Please detach and send this completed form, together with your cheque,  
payable to "MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY", to reach  
Mike Copeland, 14 Laburnham Road, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 4DB

**no later than 4<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

.....POSTCODE .....

PHONE: .....EMAIL: .....

Please reserve \_\_\_\_ place(s) @ £39.00 each. I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_

My party's names and menu choices are (continue on a separate sheet, if necessary):

<b>Name(s)</b> <small>USE BLOCK CAPITALS</small>	<b>Starter</b> <small>A - C</small>	<b>Main</b> <small>D - F</small>	<b>Dessert</b> <small>G - I</small>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

*Please indicate if you have any special dietary requirements*

**Please treat any profit on this event as a Gift Aid Donation to the Society (tick) ☐**

*(You must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax equal to the tax we reclaim on your donation)*

**If you have any problems, or for last minute cancellations, please contact  
Mike Copeland without delay on 01628 634181 or mobile 07770 421221.**



# Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018

**Civic Society AGM**, preceded by a talk by local architect Martin Knight.  
Maidenhead Methodist Church, High Street. 7.45 for 8.00pm.

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Christmas Tree Festival, St Luke's Church, Norfolk Road  
Friday & Saturday 10am-7pm; Sunday 2-6pm

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019

**Dinner & Talk**

**The Civic Society Dinner**  
including a talk by a keynote speaker (TBC)  
Moor Hall, Cookham, 7.30 for 8.00 pm

## CIVIC SOCIETY – KEY CONTACTS

Executive Chairman	Bob Dulson, Bryher, Islet Road, SL6 8HT	627130
Hon. Secretary	Eileen Goford, 6 Laxton Green, SL6 3HW	638238
Hon. Treasurer	Peter Child, 34 College Road, SL6 6AT	632300
Planning Group	Martin McNamee, 14 Lower Cookham Road, SL6 8JT	623203
Projects	Ann Darracott, 6 Medallion Place, SL6 1TF	620280
Communications	Brian Darracott, 6 Medallion Place, SL6 1TF	620280
Events	Tina Sell, Marlborough, River Road, Taplow, SL6 0BB	628675
Outings Organiser	Mike Copeland, 14 Laburnham Road, SL6 4DB	634181
Membership Sec.	Joyce Delasalle, 7 Laxton Green, SL6 3HW	637342
Newsletter Distribution	Sue Ross, 3 The Chantry, 21 Boyn Hill Avenue, SL6 4EY	626849

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2018

Venues to be confirmed nearer the dates

9<sup>th</sup> January, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 8<sup>th</sup> May, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 9<sup>th</sup> October,  
13<sup>th</sup> November, 11<sup>th</sup> December

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018 at 8.00 pm, in the Bromley Room, Maidenhead Methodist Church, King Street, Maidenhead.

**The closing date for copy for the next issue  
of the Newsletter is 18<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

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