



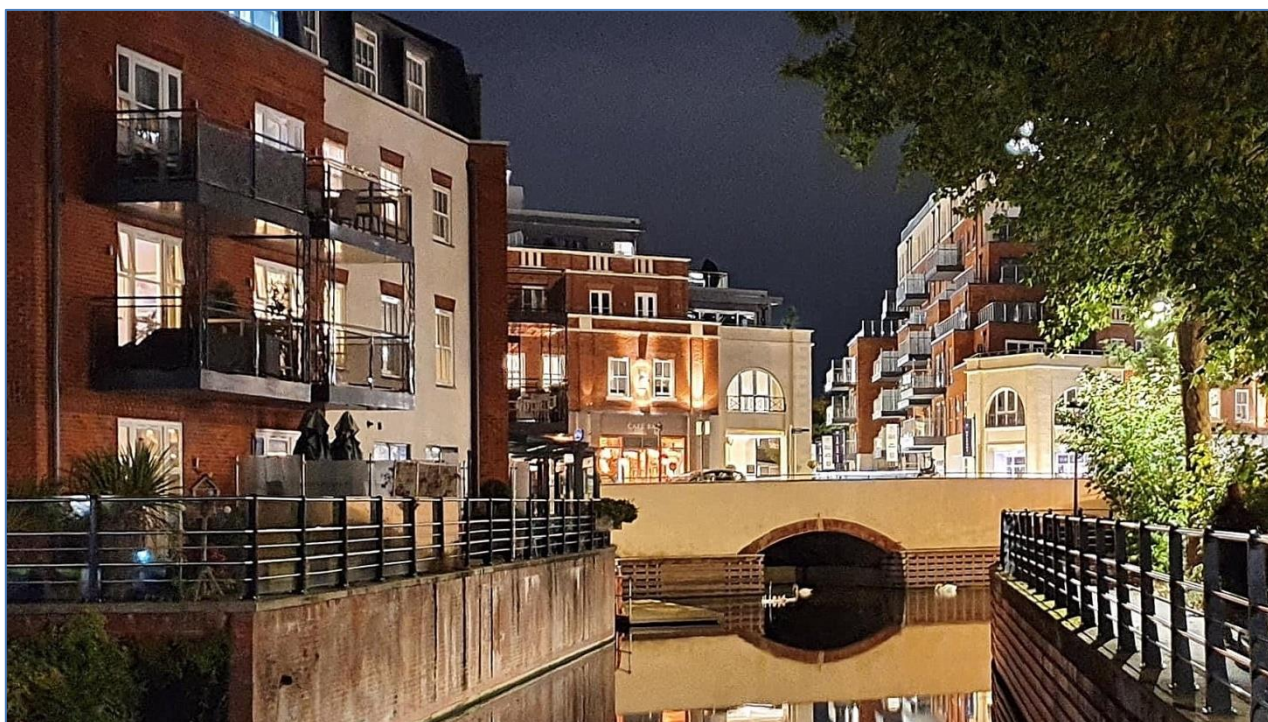
Maidenhead Civic Society

Estd. 1960

NEWS

Issue 4/22

November 2022



A night-time view of the Waterways scheme – something cheering amidst the current gloom and doom!

(photo courtesy of Society member Andrew Ingram)

Visit our website: www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk

The Chairman's Page

The recent RBWM consultation on tall buildings may have triggered thoughts of the stable door and bolted horse.

Having already approved 19-storey flats at The Landing, councillors during the pandemic first nodded through 10 storeys at Moorbridge Road and then 25 as part of the Nicholson's redevelopment before adding another 11 on the Magnet site at St Cloud Way. So the damage had been done.

And there might have been more if the government's planning inspector had not stepped in.

The current council's ambition appears to be homes, homes, homes at any cost. Thousands of new dwellings are being approved without a glimmer of an idea of how this will affect the future of our town.

Fortunately, as part of her approval of the Local Plan, the planning inspector insisted that the council should produce a tall building strategy as a supplementary planning document (SPD) for public consultation.

And, in fairness, it is really rather good and reflects the inspector's opinion that buildings of a scale more suited to major city centres, are simply not appropriate in Maidenhead. That's a view espoused by the Civic Society and shared by many who care about the future of our town.

However, the SPD was also bound to accommodate the previous high-rise approvals in a series of caveats because those decisions cannot be undone.

The SPD draughtsmen must have had their work cut out. And they earned my respect for the way some sound principles were woven around those earlier dodgy decisions. The upshot, however, is that while the SPD guidance should at least ensure the same mistakes are not made again, sadly it cannot undo the damaging permissions already granted.

Suffice it to say, the Tall Buildings SPD should have been produced long ago, alongside another for the town centre – which the inspector also made a requirement – but there's no sign of that yet.

It's all just another example, if one were needed, that planning should be above politics.

Bob Dulson

A Note about the AGM

Once again, it has been felt inappropriate for us to hold our AGM in a face-to-face meeting, and, as was the case last year, we will hold our meeting online via Zoom. Two weeks prior to the meeting, all those members for whom we have an email address will receive a “Keeping in Touch” email with details of how to join the meeting, the agenda and supporting papers. It is regrettable that some members will not be able to participate but we currently see no way around this. Please keep an eye out for the invitation, and then join us on the evening.

62nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY

**To be held on Wednesday, 16th November 2022
at 8.00pm, via Zoom**

AGENDA

1. Introduction by the Chairman of the Committee
2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 61st Annual General Meeting
3. Accounts for the year ended 31st May 2022 (see page 10)
4. Chairman’s Report for 2021/2022
5. Election of the Officers. To elect a Chairman, an Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, who shall be Committee Members
6. To approve the election of Members of the Committee. *See note below.*
7. Any other business.

Election of Officers

Officers are elected for a term of one year, but are eligible for re-election at the AGM. This year, Bob Dulson will not be seeking re-election as Chairman though will remain a Committee Member. Nominations for the role of Chairman should be accompanied by a seconder and the consent of the nominee, and be with the Hon. Secretary prior to the AGM.

Election of Committee Members

There currently are twelve Committee Members: Bob Dulson, Eileen Goford, Peter Child, Martin McNamee, Ann Darracott, Brian Darracott, Joyce Delasalle, Roger Panton, Ian Rose, Mac Kenny and Derek Wilson. Under the terms of the Society’s Constitution the Committee shall consist of eight to twelve Members including the Officers. One third of the Committee Members who are not Officers must retire each year and shall be eligible for re-election. Accordingly, Derek Wilson, Mac Kenny and Martin McNamee will retire. Derek Wilson and Martin McNamee offer themselves for re-election, and there will consequently be two vacancies.

The Membership is invited to make nominations for the position of Committee Members. The nominations, 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
61st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY**

Held on 17th November 2021 via Zoom

27 persons in attendance

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** None tendered.
- 2. Approval of Minutes of 60th AGM held 18 November 2020:** The minutes were taken as read and approved. Proposed by Brian Darracott, seconded by Joyce Delasalle.
- 3. Accounts for the year ending 31 May 2021:** 2021 has been a quiet year. There was only one social event and 4 newsletters. There was a 300 pound surplus this year compared to 800 pounds last year. We lost a few members and had fewer social events. We saved money on hire of rooms because all meetings were held on Zoom for which the annual subscription is 144 pounds. Accounts were approved. Proposed by Ann Darracott. Seconded by Martin McNamee.
- 4. Chairman's Report:** Taken as read. There were no questions.
- 5. Election of Members of the Committee:** Tina Sell, Ann and Brian Darracott stood down. Ann and Brian offered themselves for re-election. Regretfully Tina Sell did not. We thank her for her service over the years and will miss her. Proposed by Joyce Delasalle. Seconded by Peter Child.
- 6. Election of Officers:** Bob Dulson as Chair, Peter Child as Hon. Treasurer and Eileen Goford as Hon. Secretary were re-elected, Proposed by Judith Littlewood, Seconded by Jill Powell. The chair served notice that he is prepared to do only one more year. This should focus minds!
- 7. Zoom for Meetings:** The assembled company was asked if they had an objection to using Zoom for meetings. The proposal was put by Brian Darracott and seconded by Bob Dulson that members put their trust in the Committee to use the best means of meeting. It was passed unanimously. The suggestion was made that we could move the AGM to the summer where it would be possible to be socially distant by meeting outside.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT OF THE YEAR 2021-22

I had hoped not to be writing this report this year. However, our efforts to find someone to take on the job of Chairman of the Society have so far been unsuccessful.

As I step down after fourteen years in the role, the inability of the Society yet to find someone willing to take on the post of Chairman is a serious matter. The Society plays an important part, working to improve amenity in the town, helping to make it a better place to live in. Without someone to lead the Society and to represent it, its effectiveness is severely blunted.

I have said before that organisations like ours are an essential part of the community. They are important building blocks in the structure of a civil society. It is vital that residents play a part in shaping the future of Maidenhead. And organisations like the Civic Society, the Chamber of Commerce and the Town Partnership play a vital role, bringing into view those issues which need attention; in our case, helping to shape the town's developments. These can never be fully covered by official bodies such as the Council and their officers. We are not a 'bolt-on goodie' but an integral part of the system. But without someone willing to be Chairman it is going to be harder and harder to keep the Society focussed and effective.

How do we persuade people, and in particular, those who are not yet members, to involve themselves in the work of the Society? This is a question which worries many voluntary societies today and not least ours. The Executive Committee is much in need of new and particularly younger blood. With older committee members dropping out and a dearth of new ones, too much of the effort is falling on too few shoulders. Moreover, new initiatives are becoming impossible to undertake. We could do with a minimum of six new Committee members. We also need someone, or preferably a small group, to take on the job of arranging social events, which have proved popular in the past, allowing members to meet and discuss topics of mutual interest in a pleasant and relaxed environment.

I have explained above that voluntary societies are integral to the system whereby society operates. So how do we get people to join in? There is nothing difficult about doing so. Don't be put off by the grand title of 'Executive Committee'. Apart from the necessary functions (Secretary, Treasurer etc.) it is a group of people who get together to cooperate and press on with whatever their particular line of interest is or to help achieve a common objective, all under the guidance and umbrella of the Civic Society. All the meetings are open to any member to attend and say their piece; and this is the easiest way to become involved. So give it a go and help the Society in its vital tasks. Just ring the Secretary, Eileen Goford (her number appears on the back of this Newsletter), and tell her you wish to come. She will make sure you know where and when, and you can be assured of a welcome.

Planning

With varying amounts of success, the Civic Society has continued objectively to reflect public opinion on planning and environmental issues, as we have for more than 60 years.

An ongoing major issue for us is the absence of a masterplan for Maidenhead town centre. In April last year, during the examination of the Borough Local Plan, we were encouraged to hear the government inspector endorse our call. A plan should be drawn up, she said, in conjunction with the community, to sit alongside the Borough Local Plan as a supplementary planning document (SPD). We have lobbied directly and via our associations with other groups for the SPD to be given priority. However, while we understand a Town Centre SPD is on the planners' agenda, there is still no date for when work might begin.

Meanwhile, our Planning Group under Martin McNamee's chairmanship has continued to review individual applications from the weekly list published by RBWM. In the past twelve months we have commented on an average of three applications per month - totalling almost forty in all. Some of these applications have been major - the proposals for up to 25 storeys in Nicholson's Quarter, and the redevelopment of the Magnet site on St Cloud Way with more than 400 flats in blocks up to 11 storeys high. There have been several schemes to convert office buildings to residential. Others are more modest involving demolition of existing houses to make way for more flats, or back garden infilling with small developments of new houses. The ongoing input from individual members of our Planning Group is much appreciated.

The Society responded to a number of consultations organised by the Royal Borough during the year, including the proposals for Spencers Farm, improvements to the A308, the South West Maidenhead (Golf Course) SPD, and most recently the Building Heights & Tall Buildings SPD. We have commented too on proposed housing developments at Manor Lane/Spring Hill, Woodlands Park and the De Beers site at Gringer Hill in discussions with their developers.

Planning issues are also the focus of our representation at regular meetings of the Chamber of Commerce, Maidenhead Town Partnership, the Regen Group and Maidenhead Neighbourhood Forum which have continued through the year.

We continue to support Maidenhead Neighbourhood Forum (MNF) in their attempt to be recognised and formally designated by RBWM. The Forum has around 60 members and many more followers on social media. There is an overlap in the mutual objectives of both our organisations and many MNF supporters are also members of Maidenhead Civic Society. With such an emphasis on planning issues in the seven unparished wards of Maidenhead it would be extremely helpful to have a Neighbourhood Plan for the area. We hope that there will be positive news on designation in the near future.

Battlemead Common

The Millennium Walk, a joint Civic Society/Ramblers initiative, is a cross-country footpath connecting Hurley and Maidenhead Riverside. One of the reasons the Council bought part of White Place farmland in 2018 with a view to creating Battlemead Common was to complete a missing link in the Millennium Walk which from Pinkneys Green follows Maidenhead's 1934 boundary. Happily this year there has been some progress. A new fenced path across the East Field on Battlemead is now open from April until after the annual Boundary Walk in October. In celebration, the Millennium Walk leaflet originally published in 2012 has been updated.

To commemorate the 70-year reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Society installed a bench on the Thames Towpath, near the entrance to Battlemead Common, which we hope will be enjoyed by future generations. The Queen's subsequent death added an extra poignancy to this gift.

Green Way

The work of the Green Way Working Group, and Make Space for Life, on which the Society is represented by Ann Darracott, continued. Paths were improved by volunteers using hoggin given by Summerleaze. Some had become a quagmire during the pandemic, the result of all the new walkers!

North Town Moor pond was desilted by the Royal Borough this year but faunal diversity was reduced by a very hot summer and the unexplained presence of predatory small fish.

Changes to the Green Way route in the town centre will be finalised early next year when the Waterside Basin is completed. At that point the Green Way leaflet, first published by the Society in 1985, will need to be updated.

Maidenhead Waterways

Following a bacterial treatment to control blanket weed, Maidenhead Waterways asked Ann Darracott to carry out a survey of the waterway in September. This found that Green Lane Pool next to the Boat Lift had the greatest diversity and that the newly opened Waterside basin at Chapel Arches is slowly being naturalised.

A *Bugs & Beasties* children's activity was also repeated at the Boat Lift site in September this year, with equipment kindly loaned by Braywick Nature Centre.

Ockwells Manor

Our major project, the book about the history of Ockwells Manor House and its occupants, is nearing completion. Grants obtained from the Prince Philip and the Louis Baylis Trusts provided some initial funding for printing. Talks given on Ockwells to the Marlow Society and Oxford University Heraldry Society have also

generated funds. And some extra cash, payment in advance for 10 copies, has come from the Duke of Norfolk, Edward Fitzalan Howard. His ancestor, Sir John Howard, who eighteen generations previously lived at Ockwells Manor, was made the 1st Duke of Norfolk by Richard III.

Membership

Our offer of free membership last year brought good results and I am pleased to report that of 30 new members recruited two thirds have renewed as paying memberships. In light of this, we are extending the offer again and members should continue to “talk up” the Society and encourage friends and relatives to join us. Our membership secretary, Joyce Delasalle, would be delighted to hear from you, or them, on 01628 637342 or via email at joyce@delasalle.me.uk

Figures for the 2021/22 year-end were:

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Memberships (Family, Honorary, Life, etc)	232	227	223	219	208	235
No. of Members (Exclu Corp)	340	329	322	306	294	332
Life members (Headcount)	91	86	82	78	74	70
Honorary Members	18	17	14	18	17	18
Corporate	1	1	2	2	2	2

This year we were pleased to welcome: Mr & Mrs S Miller, Mr & Mrs Hill, Mr & Mrs M Melbourne, Mr T Denney & Mr J Pocock, Mr T Burt & J Danyshchuk, Mr & Mrs R Sambrook, Mr & Mrs J Reekie, V McArdle & O Lewis, Mr & Mrs P Bradley, Mr & Mrs P Sergeant, Dr C Franceskides & Mrs F Televantou, Mr & Mrs S Pitman, Mr & Mrs R Curry, Mr & Mrs P Brass, Mr R McWilliams & Miss V Parkin, Mr Ed Piekut, Mrs H Craik, Mr M Crawford, Mr B Davies, Mrs J Dacombe, Mr S Stokes, Mrs M Elms, Mr J Matrves, Mr R Davenport, C. Revoy, Mrs J Gibbs, Mr R Worthington, Mr M Buston, Mr D Coppinger, Mr & Mrs A Evans and Mr & Mrs K McCabe.

We attended The Cox Green May Fayre, a lively Maidenhead Festival in July and the postponed Town Show in October. In the absence of any other social calendar currently, these events provide an important opportunity to meet with new and existing members and to promote the Civic Society.

Looking Ahead

I trust the Society will continue to stimulate and inform debate on planning and environmental issues, as it has done for the past 62 years, and strive to represent an objective, considered position on these and other matters on behalf of the community.

Thank you to the many who have helped me during my time in office. It has been a huge privilege and, much of the time, enjoyable. But it would give me even greater joy to see another generation coming forward, ensuring a contemporary approach to what I believe is an essential function.

In conclusion, I'd like formally to acknowledge the efforts of each of our officers, committee members, distributors and volunteers, as well as the support of our members themselves. We are all looking to make a difference.

Bob Dulson

TREASURER'S REPORT 2021-22

The annual accounts for the year ended 31st May 2022 are set out below. The main points are as follows:

There was a deficit of expenditure over income this year of £799 compared with a surplus of income over expenditure last year of £291. The main reasons for this reduction in funds have been a £500 donation to support Norden Farm and a £220 increase in costs for the membership drive.

Income

Total income has declined by £86. Subscription income and gift aid are barely changed from year to year. Sadly, there were no social events for the second year running.

Expenditure

Overall expenditure has increased by £1,004 over the previous year. The Norden Farm donation, a £100 donation for regular voluntary work at North Town Moor and the expenditure on the membership drive account for almost all this amount. Other areas of expenditure remain very similar to last year. The Newsletter cost slightly less with a slightly smaller pagination; insurance was slightly more because of the cessation of the Civic Voice umbrella insurance scheme. General expenses are £232 higher this year, including £90 expense on new double-sided flyers.

Balance of Funds

The Society accounts show bank funds in hand of £12,158 compared to £11,966 in the previous year. It should be noted that £402 expenditure on the Platinum Jubilee Bench is being carried forward into the financial year 2022/2023 and will be expensed during the financial year 2022/23 (being its year of installation). It should

also be noted that donations received this year towards the Ockwells project of £1,350 are being carried forward to cover specific expenditure in the coming months. Total costs on this project are not yet finalised and donations towards it will be very welcome.

Peter Child

MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY - Charity No. 272102			
<u>Annual Accounts for Year ended 31st May 2022</u>			
<u>2020-2021</u>			<u>2021-2022</u>
INCOME			
364	Donations/Grants/Bequests	350	
2,580	Subscriptions Received During Year	2,560	
12	Interest On Charities Deposit Account	4	
594	Tax Refunds On Gift Aid	550	
3,550	Total	3,464	
EXPENDITURE			
Administration			
138	General Expenses, Printing, Postage, Etc.	370	
1,358	Newsletter	1,261	
144	Zoom subscription for online meetings	144	
0	Donations	600	
431	Subscriptions	429	
285	Insurance	319	
283	Ockwells And Associated Projects (Net Costs)	366	
320	Printing costs for membership drive	450	
300	Website	324	
3,259	Total	4,263	
291	DEFICIT (Surplus last year) of Expenditure over Income	(799)	
12,098	Balance Brought Forward	12,389	
12,389	Balance Carried Forward	11,590	
FUNDS			
2,214	Bank (Lloyds TSB)	2,402	
9,752	Charities Deposit General Fund (COIF)	9,756	
597	Subscriptions & Insurance Payments In Advance	597	
(174)	Member subscriptions for 22/23 received in Advance	(217)	
0	Donations carried forward against the Ockwells project	(1,350)	
0	Part payment of Platinum Jubilee bench carried forward	402	
12,389	BALANCE OF FUNDS	£11,590	
Peter Child - Hon. Treasurer - 2 October 2022			

Planning Matters

Planning applications have been relatively subdued over the last three months. In the last Newsletter we referred to the refusal of an application to demolish a bungalow and garden house to the rear at 53 Lower Cookham Road – a property known as **Culpeppers**. The proposal for a terrace of 4 x 4-bed town houses fronting Lower Cookham Road, plus a similar dwelling to the rear (accessed from The Avenue) had been refused. The development was judged to be overbearing and bulky and out of character with the area (Riverside). Parking was inadequate for the size of each property, there were flood plain issues (Flood Zone 3) and no sustainability assessment or bat report. Rather disappointingly, there has been a resubmission of an almost identical application.

There is a further application in the Riverside area to demolish three bungalows at **66 to 70 Sheephouse Road**. These properties lie to the south of the recently completed flatted development known as Green Trees (on the corner of Widbrook Road). They are perfectly sound dwellings, probably constructed in the early 1970s. The proposal is to replace them with a development of eight detached 4-bed houses. Four dwellings will face the Sheephouse Road frontage, with a cul-de-sac being constructed between sites 2 and 3 to provide access to a further four houses to the rear. The whole development is very cramped, and although three parking spaces are provided for each house, some appear undersized with difficult access. Because of the cramped nature of the development there is a considerable degree of overlooking within the site, and Plot 8 in particular overlooks the rear of No 64 Sheephouse Road – the adjacent existing property to the south. This is an example of proposed “back garden infilling” which adversely impacts the prevailing character of the neighbourhood and is against planning policy.

It is of great concern that if the above applications were permitted, then potential further overdevelopment of similar large plots would threaten the wider Riverside area.

There have been a number of recent applications to create more flats. **2 to 4a Boyn Valley Road** consists of three current dwellings which it is proposed to replace with a block of 10 x 2-bed flats. All the apartments meet the minimum standards in terms of living space, but only one parking space per flat is provided, compared with a planning policy requirement of two spaces. Amenity space is also limited. Likewise, **59 Norden Road** is an existing 3-bed detached house, proposed for demolition to create a block of 5 x 2-bed flats. Living spaces are all above minimum standard, but there is only one parking space per dwelling and inadequate amenity space. The proposals for **Furze Platt Local** have already been recently refused. It was intended to construct a two-storey side extension to create 2 x 2-bed flats, and enlarge an existing flat above the convenience store from 3 to 4 beds. Because of the constraints

of the site parking arrangements were completely inadequate and there was very limited amenity space.

All three of the above proposals fail to meet minimum Parking Policy requirements and will result in overflow/displaced on street parking nearby.

There is an application of interest where a flatted development *is* providing adequate parking. **Highclere** is one of the remaining private detached homes on Shoppenhangers Road. It is intended to replace the existing dwelling with a block of 8 x 2-bed apartments, each with two parking spaces and communal garden amenity space. Some years ago permission was refused because an additional terrace of three dwellings was proposed in the back garden. However, the current application has removed the additional houses to the rear and is likely to be permitted. This scheme is part of the inevitable flatted redevelopment of the few remaining detached homes on Shoppenhangers

Four years ago our Newsletter featured an application for the redevelopment of **Statesman House** and **Braywick Gate** on the NE quadrant of Braywick Road/Stafferton Road roundabout. This is a mixed office and residential scheme up to 8 storeys high with significant parking provision. It features in the Tall Buildings Strategy as the Southern Gateway. However, in spite of the unexplained time delay the application was decided at the recent Development Panel held on 19th October as per officer's recommendation, though only after considerable debate about whether the architecture was befitting of a town gateway. Of course, in the ensuing four years since the original application we have been seduced into accepting eight storeys as absolutely acceptable.



Statesman House on the corner of the Stafferton Way roundabout

On 21st October formal permission was also granted for the Areli development of the Nicholson's Quarter. There are 37 conditions – many of which are of a technical nature. This probably accounts for the length of time before formal permission was

granted. One of the issues was the requirement to provide an element of affordable housing. It is not clear yet whether that has been resolved. With the current underlying fundamentals the scheme may never be built. Areli have just pulled out of a similar project in Orpington, south London. Local opposition to the height of the proposals was so strong that they decided the alternative lower/reduced scheme was not viable. Why did we allow 25 storeys, you may well ask!

As we go to print there has been an application to extend and refurbish the Thames Hotel on Ray Mead Road. Although some previous permissions for the hotel have not been implemented, we generally welcome proposed investment in leisure facilities on the Riverside. We will report on the new application in the next Newsletter, once it has been formally reviewed

Finally, the gentrification of Taplow riverside continues apace. Work is well underway on the gastropub and the replacement of the old half-timbered boathouses. There is now also an application with the Borough and Bucks planners to replace and upgrade the moorings with a new bridge, pontoons and associated infrastructure. The plans also incorporate the additional use of Type M350 boats to provide office space and community uses, further enhancing the vitality and viability of the area.



*An example of the Bluefield M350 house/office boat.
Something else to look at when strolling along the riverside*

Martin McNamee and Bob Dulson

Projects

Battlemead Common and Rotary's Boundary Walk 2022

Rotary Bridge again asked for our help marshalling on this popular charity walk. We were at the Widbrook Common-Battlemead Common junction where walkers have the choice of crossing Battlemead to the Thames Path or returning via the Lower Cookham Road to Boulters Lock. Of the total we recorded (148) more than half took the more attractive route (78).



*Left: Society members
Christine Jones and Joyce
Delasalle – marshals at the
Widbrook-Battlemead crossing*

*Below: Richard Poad (past
chairman of the Society) and
his grandson on the causeway
path part of the Millennium
Walk and the Boundary Walk.*



Bugs & Beasties Children's Activity 2022

We were again asked by Maidenhead Waterways to organise this activity as part of a Waterways Funday on 17th September. Most of the Funday was cancelled as a mark of respect because of the death of the Queen on 8th September. However, it was decided to go ahead with the children's activity. This time we had 12 children who were very engaged as were their "responsible adults". Thanks to Braywick Nature Centre for the loan of some of the equipment used.



As Maidenhead Waterways had again been using Byofix (a bacterial treatment) to control blanket weed in the waterway, to assess the state of the aquatic life I had carried out a survey of the waterway shortly before the children's event. The survey covered four sites (waterside basin, library bridge, railway bridge and the boat lift). The basin has a concrete bottom but is slowly being naturalised as silt covers it, so has some life. The boat lift site is the most diverse. As

was found last year, the children's activity recorded a greater number of species at the boat lift site than the survey due to more nets in the water over a longer period.



Looking at bugs with the help of an Early Learning Centre microscope

The Green Way

Members with long memories will remember that a few years after we published the first Green Way leaflet in 1985 the stream, alongside of which it ran, dried out in the town centre and has done so a few times since. Therefore we have always taken an interest in stream flow, especially now we have the new waterway.

Apart from reeds, fallen trees etc obstructing flow in the stream, extraction of groundwater from the aquifers for public water supply has also been blamed. As Maidenhead is almost completely supplied from this source, South East Water (SEW) have been attempting to decide since 2018 what to do about ensuring flow. Happily, the idea of diverting the White Brook away from its connection with Strandwater and attaching it to Maidenhead Ditch, south of the flood control gate in the North Maidenhead Flood Bund has been binned.

Recently Ian Rose and I attended a workshop at the SEW works in Bray where water from the Thames has been processed since 1995. The works has recently been expanded to deal with more river water. We took part in a site visit to trace the stream system and a workshop to discuss what should be done. Currently the flow is dependent on regular clearance of vegetation by Maidenhead Waterways volunteers.



Inspecting the inflow pipe for the ditch dug in 1994 to get more water into the stream system



Ian and Ann at the work shop at the SEW processing site at Bray

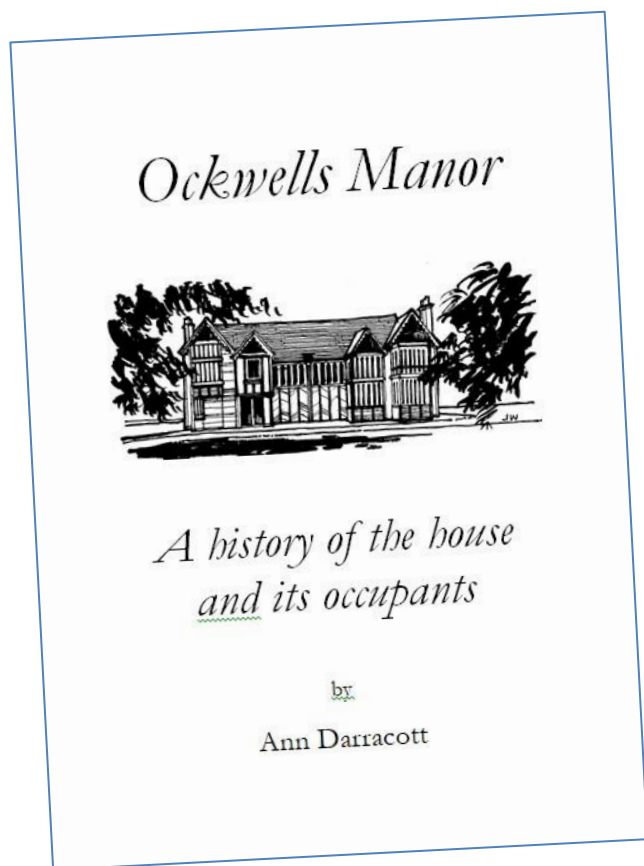


Our guide explains how the water from the Thames is processed.

We are concerned about where the water supply will come from to service all the new flats planned for Maidenhead. To find out more we hope to arrange a tour of the Bray works in 2023 as well as a talk from SEW with the answer to this question.

Ockwells Manor – a history of the house and its occupants

We hope to publish the book (of 375 pages!) early next year. Long-standing members will recognise the drawing by Jack Widgery on the cover.



Apart from putting on record many years of research on the history of the house, it concentrates on the armorial glass and the Victorian restoration of the house when it was nearly lost due to neglect. Some re-identification of the personalities represented in the glass has uncovered the scheme in the great hall that John Norreys Esquire originally put up in the mid C15th.

It is hoped the book will raise awareness of both the aesthetic and historic significance of Ockwells which has been on the market since 2019. In an ideal world either the National Trust or English Heritage would take the house on. However, the Trust now only takes houses with large endowments, while English

Heritage only takes on ruinous ones, so we have to hope for an owner willing to allow more public access.

Details of how to obtain a copy of the book will be available in due course via our website.

Ann Darracott

Events

St Luke's Christmas Tree Festival

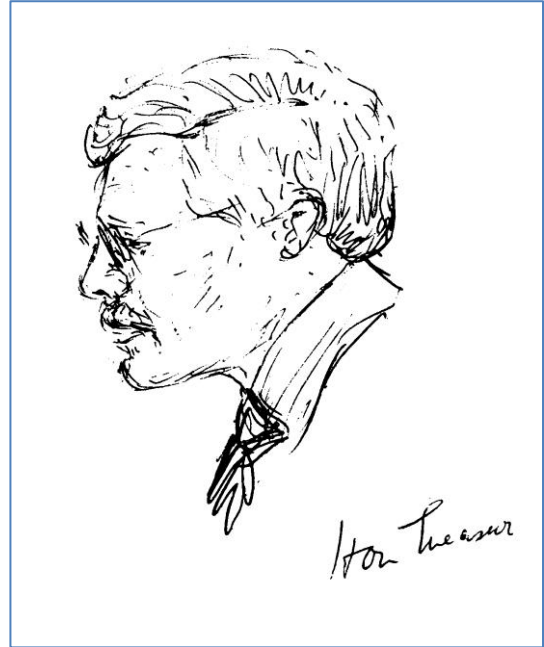
The Society is again sponsoring a Christmas tree at this event. The chosen charity this year is the Alexander Devine Hospice. Apart from lots of trees to admire, there will be a raffle and refreshments. Do come along and bring your friends, especially if they aren't members. The church, on Norfolk Road, will be open on Friday 9th, and Saturday 10th December from 10am to 7pm, and on Sunday 11th from 12 midday to 6pm followed by the Christmas Tree Service.

Brian Little

It was sadness that we recently learnt that Brian Little died on 23 August, aged 83 after a short illness. He was the Society's Hon Treasurer from 1977 to 1984.

Civic Society members who lived in Maidenhead during the late 1970s will remember the Society's Silver Jubilee Project – the restoration of Guards Club Park. Brian was among those members taking part in the restoration and played a key role, not only in providing much needed muscle power but also stewardship of the project's finances.

Brian qualified as a Chartered Accountant, and worked initially for Unigate Dairies before moving into private practice. He and his wife Eileen –who survives him – lived in Manor Lane for a number of years, then Cox Green, before they moved to Ashford, Kent when Brian joined Girobank. They later moved to Horsham when he took a general management post with Private Patients Plan. Horsham remained their base although they spent several winters in Spain before returning to West Sussex.



Brian as sketched by the late Michael Bailey during one of the Society's Committee meetings



Brian was an active member of Rotary and Probus and his passions included travel, good food, and the perfectly prepared G&T!

Brian and Eileen kept in touch with many of their Society friends and we were pleased that they managed to attend the Society's 50th Jubilee lunch at Monkey Island Hotel in 2010 (*left*).

Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 16th November 2022
AGM

Civic Society AGM

A virtual meeting via Zoom. 7.45 for 8.00pm.

Friday 9th December to Sunday 11th December 2022
Event

St Luke's Christmas Tree Festival

Fri 10am to 7pm; Sat 10am to 7pm; Sun 12 to 6pm

CIVIC SOCIETY – KEY CONTACTS

Executive Chairman	Bob Dulson	01628 627130
Hon. Secretary	Eileen Goford	01628 638238
Hon. Treasurer	Peter Child	01628 632300
Planning Group	Martin McNamee	01628 623203
Projects	Ann Darracott	01628 620280
Newsletter & Website	Brian Darracott	01628 620280
Events		
Membership Sec.	Joyce Delasalle	01628 637342
Newsletter Distribution	Sue Ross	01628 626849

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2023

All meetings are online via Zoom until further notice

10th January, 14th February, 14th March, 11th April, 9th May, 13th June, 11th July, 8th August, 12th September, 10th October, 14th November, 12th December

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at 8.00 pm.

**The closing date for copy for the next issue
of the Newsletter is 20th January 2023**

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