



# Maidenhead Civic Society

Estd. 1960

# NEWS

---

Issue 4/25

Nov 2025

---



*Boundary Walkers of 1908. Not a hi-vis jacket in sight!  
See page 16 for a review of the 2025 Boundary Walk*

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

# Chairman's Piece

Dear Members,

Over the last couple of weeks, we have been trying to secure a guest speaker from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead planning department.

As you will be aware, at our last AGM we managed to secure Orla Gallagher, Chief Executive of Housing Solutions Ltd. It was a much appreciated presentation and those who attended learnt a lot about housing and the issues being faced locally.

We have tried on numerous occasions to engage Adrien Waite, Assistant Director of Planning at RBWM, to obtain a better understanding of what is happening locally, so that we can be informed from a community point of view how Maidenhead is being developed for the future.

Unfortunately, we have had no response to various email communications. Just before going to print we learnt that both he along with senior planning management were due to attend a public meeting with residents in connection with the Ascot High Street regeneration. This was a scrutiny panel to deal with 'Place' and both failed to turn-up to the meeting, which infuriated the residents, as they all had to go back home.

These are examples of the blatant disregard of the local communities that are served by the Royal Borough and is disrespectful to anyone who has to deal with them. It could have, and should have, been an opportunity for them to engage with local community groups.

I make no apologies for being so blunt. This is another example of the difficulties we now face in trying to engage and have a dialogue with the RBWM Planning Department.

Having said that, I am extremely delighted that both Ian Rose and Andrew Ingram are coming to present and explain the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan to our AGM. I do hope that as many of you as possible will attend our AGM, and I am sure it will be informative and beneficial to our members, as I know a great deal of work has been done in the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan.

Hope to see you at our AGM.

*Derek Wilson*

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

**To be held on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025  
at 7.45 for 8.00pm, in the Cox Green Community Centre**

The evening will start with a presentation by Andrew Ingram and Ian Rose about the **Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan – Where Are We Now?** The business meeting will follow after a break for tea/coffee and biscuits.

### AGENDA

1. Introduction by the Chairman of the Committee
2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 64<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting
3. Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025 (see pages 8 and 9)
4. Chairman's Report for 2024/2025
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. 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 eleven Committee Members: Bob Dulson, Eileen Goford, Peter Child, Martin McNamee, Ann Darracott, Brian Darracott, Joyce Delasalle, Lisa Curtin, Jane Wright, Tim Burt 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, Martin McNamee, Jane Wright and Tim Burt will retire, and all offer themselves for re-election; there will consequently be one vacancy.

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

**Held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024 in the Bromley Room,  
Methodist Church, High St, Maidenhead**

25 people attended the business part of the AGM which started at 9:20pm.

**Apologies** were received from 8 people: Brian Ball; Marylou and Richard Kellaway; Brian and Georgina Madge; Tess Marsh; Allister Miller and Jill Powell.

**1. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 63rd<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting:** Minutes were agreed as a true record.

**2. Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024 (see p.7 of November News):** 2024 has been a satisfactory year. A small surplus was made. We are in a healthy position. The Accounts were approved. Proposed by Martin McNamee, Seconded by John?

**3. Chairman's Report for 2023/2024 (see p. 5 of November News):** Thanks to the whole Executive Committee for their help and support. The Ockwells Manor book is still available and is a very worthwhile read. It will be available to purchase at Ann Darracott's talk at 7pm January 30 2025 at Cox Green library. We had trips out to the Heritage Centre, Burnham Abbey, Dorney Court. We had a Jazz Evening. Many thanks to Joyce for these social events. We gave a Design Award to the Waterside Quarter. We were recently involved with the 2024 Boundary Walk which went extremely well.

**4. Election of the Officers of the Executive Committee**

**Chair:** Derek Wilson Proposed by Brian Darracott Seconded by Bob Dulson

**Hon Secretary:** Eileen Goford Proposed by Derek Wilson Seconded by Tim Burt

**Hon Treasurer:** Peter Child Proposed by David Snelgar, Seconded by Ann Darracott

**Membership Secretary:** vacant. **We need one. Please consider.**

**5. Members of the Committee.** Under the terms of the constitution, the committee shall consist of eight to twelve members including officers. One third of the committee members who are not officers must retire each year and shall be eligible for re-election. Accordingly Ann Darracott, Brian Darracott and Ian Rose will retire. Ann and Brian offer themselves for re-election and there will consequently be one vacancy. Ian Rose is stepping back because of his involvement in Maidenhead Forum which is putting forward the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan. We thank Ian for his contribution over many years.

**AOB :** The Chairman invited questions or comments from those present. Diana LeClerc from Older Persons Working Group raised the issue of lack of **parking in the town centre** and asked if we could have a view on parking issues in town. MNF has no input into parking. Judith Littlewood asked about **Tree Planting:** We need more trees. Could we have tree planting as a joint activity with another group? Did we attempt to join up young families who were on the Boundary Walk? **Social Media** is where young people communicate nowadays. **The Town Team** has projects we could get involved in. The Civic Society needs to get involved with other groups. Maidenhead Town Forum is hosted by the council every two months, and we should attend and state our views on town centre matters. Groups we could collaborate with include East Berks Ramblers; Rotary Bridge; Waterways and Make Space for Life.

**6. Retirement:** Martin McNamee served notice that he will retire in 1 year's time after 18 years of dedicated service.

Proposed by Peter Child Seconded by Sue Ross that proceedings be adopted.

Meeting closed at 10pm

## CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2024-25

Our AGM is a time to reflect over the past year, and I must first thank all our Committee and Group members whose efforts make sure all our activities and events go smoothly.

### Planning

The Planning Group's weekly scrutiny of Planning Applications has continued throughout the year. However, the threshold for considering applications has been reduced. We have concentrated on three main types of application: major development schemes, the construction of new dwellings – especially involving back garden infilling, and proposed development within Conservation Areas. We have also been vigilant in monitoring the living space standards of both new flats and office block conversions. Consequently, the number of applications upon which we have commented has reduced to around eighteen over the year.

We are operating in a planning climate driven by central government policies to deliver more housing. There is pressure on local planners and elected representatives to approve applications unless clear and demonstrable harm can be established. Nevertheless, there have been successes with several schemes over the year notably the continued refusal of the flats on the car lot at Stafferton Way (also dismissed on appeal), together with a care home at Lawnfield House on the Bath Road, and the residential development on amenity land at Ribstone Road (appeal pending). However, three multi-storey blocks of apartments have been approved on West Street, with a new residential block at Highways House on Norreys Drive and a major housing development permitted on land South of Kimbers Lane. And in the pending tray sits the Areli proposals for the largest town centre project of all – Nicholsons Quarter. With a scheme already approved in 2022, a decision on the latest resubmission has been deferred while some of the well documented concerns are addressed by the developer.

There has been a decline in the change of use from office to residential blocks, with Thames House on Marlow Road a notable application under prior approval for conversion to 40 flats. A similar application was permitted in 2021 and has now lapsed. The re-application has been refused because some units do not meet minimum space standards.

It should be noted that over the past year there has been much increased coverage in the *Maidenhead Advertiser* of the views of Maidenhead Civic Society on major development issues in the town.

We thank all members of the Planning Group for their continued vigilance. After 18 years Martin McNamee will be standing down as Chair at the AGM and we welcome Brian Davies as the incoming Chair of the Planning Group.

## **Projects**

**The Green Way:** Water leaks onto the path just north of the St Cloud Way/A4 Underpass, even though the pump is fixed; currently the path is closed off in case walkers slip on the wet section. Earlier in the year at the request of the Maidenhead Waterways Partnership Group we contacted VirginmediaO2, owner of the cable buried under the stream to find out whether the cable is live. The presence of a cable led to a brick wall being built here rather than continuing the flood wall. Water leaks through the brick wall and bubbles up through joints in the path as the cement used here was not waterproof. VMO2 couldn't investigate until the path was dry. We hope to find out whether its now dry enough.

**The Green Way Map:** The map needs updating due to changes in the town centre linked to the new waterway. In addition, there is a path diversion affecting Green Way East and possible changes to the permissive path near Spencer's Farm.

**Boundary Stones:** This year the Boundary Stone Seekers & Movers, comprising MCS and Rotary Bridge members, transferred a boundary stone from a step in a garden on Maidenhead Road to Butlers Gate where it will replace a broken one, currently residing in Maidenhead Heritage Centre.

**Millennium Walk:** Apart from replacing broken waymarks the main work this year has been trying to improve sight lines from the pedestrian exit of Battlemead Common. We have been in contact with the National Trust, and we hope shortly that their obstructing hedge will be trimmed back. We have yet again pointed out to the Royal Borough that there are no signs indicating a crossing. The Millennium Walk and the Boundary Walk both cross Battlemead Common. During the recent Boundary Walk event two thirds of walkers arriving at the Lower Cookham Road crossed over the common rather than returning to Boulders Lock by road. And yes, warning signs were put up for the event.

**North Town Moor:** We continued to support the work of the conservation group *Make Space for Life*. The pond, despite the presence of sticklebacks, has reasonable biodiversity, probably helped by adding the aquatic plant hornwort to increase oxygen levels. Since 2014 the pond has been monitored monthly. This will discontinue at the end of 2025.

**Ockwells Manor:** Of 150 copies printed of the book *Ockwells Manor - A history of the house and its occupants*, only 12 copies are still in hand. Due to connections with the history of the house, copies of the book are now also in Ireland, America, France, and New Zealand. Restoration of Ockwells is continuing and we hope to be able to see the restored house once its completed.

## Events

We started our year in June with a very interesting and entertaining talk by Robert Seatter, Head of BBC History. In September we held a very successful Jazz Evening at The Maidenhead Rowing Club with Richard Kellaway and The Traditional Quintet. This was attended by 52 members and friends. At our AGM we had a very informative talk by Orla Gallagher, Chief Executive of Housing Solutions. In May we visited White Waltham Airfield for a talk on the history of the airfield and a tour of the hangers followed by refreshments.

Our next event was a dinner at Moor Hall in June this year and there should have been a talk from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission but due to ill health of their speaker, the talk had to be postponed at the last minute; fortunately Ann Darracott came to our rescue with a presentation on Ockwells Manor.

If you have any ideas for places you would like to visit please let me know as it is always possible that other members would be interested. Also if you have any friends or relatives that would be interested in joining or helping at any of our events please contact me, Joyce Delasalle: 07917 876145; joyce.delasalle@btinternet.com.

## Membership

Figures for the 2024/25 year-end were:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Total Membership	222	218	222	226	210	210
Hon Members	18	17	18	20	20	20
Life Members single	37	36	37	32	31	30
Life Members Family	42	38	42	36	34	32
Single Members	75	74	75	78	72	75
Family Members	138	140	138	152	136	136
Corporate Members	2	2	2	2	2	1
<b>Total Headcount</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>294</b>

This year we were pleased to welcome new members: Chris Bristow, Mr & Mrs Tregidgo and James Camplin. We have once again lost a few members but have also recruited a few and would like to recruit more this membership year. If you have any friends or relatives that would be interested please pass my details onto them.

## TREASURER'S REPORT 2024-25

The annual accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> May 2025 are attached. The main points are as follows:

There is a surplus of income over expenditure this year of £113 compared with last year's surplus of £171. By comparison with the last 2 years, this year has been a relatively quiet financial year with no major projects undertaken (previously the Ockwells book and then the Millenium Walk signage)

### Income

Income was £2,415 lower than last year, reflecting principally the absence of significant grants and donations (last year - £2,400) towards projects. Last year significant grants were received to finance the Millenium Walk signage. Furthermore, every year for many years the Society has received £500 or more from Shell but unfortunately this grant scheme has now ended. Subscriptions including gift aid declined by £161 after a small reduction in member numbers. However, a £125 surplus on all events (visits to Burnham Abbey and the White Waltham Airfield, together with the jazz evening and the annual lunch) was achieved and sales of the Ockwells Manor book realised a surplus of £115. As of today, there are now only 12 copies of the book remaining in stock. If you want a copy, act now! When they're gone, they're gone! In addition, interest income of £529 was received – another useful source of income

### Expenditure

Overall expenditure declined by £2,357 this year, since there was no significant project expenditure (last year – £2,247 on the Millenium Walk signage). The only small project undertaken in this financial year was the installation of a gate, costing £511, in Guards Club Park to deter the Canada Geese from fouling the area. Otherwise, expenditure on recurring items was mainly in line with last year. The society's zoom subscription is no longer required, a saving of £144 and slightly reduced pagination on the newsletter realised a saving of £94.

### Balance of Funds

The Society accounts show bank funds in hand of £13,357 compared to £12,260 in the previous year, an increase of £1,097. Apart from the small surplus of income over expenditure, the sale of books and the consequent reduction in book stocks has generated £930 cash. The current financial year has started satisfactorily.

*Peter Child*

**MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY - Charity No. 272102**  
**Annual Accounts for Year ended 31st May 2025**

<u>2023-2024</u>		<u>2024-2025</u>
	<b>INCOME</b>	
2,400	Donations/Grants/Bequests	75
109	Surplus on sales of Ockwells Manor book	115
114	Surplus on events	125
2,643	Subscriptions Received During Year	2,509
475	Interest On Charities Deposit Account	529
619	Tax Refunds On Gift Aid	592
<b>6,360</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,945</b>
	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
	<b>Administration</b>	
216	General Expenses, Printing, Postage, Etc.	238
485	Purchase of Blue Plaque Award	0
0	Guards Club gate	511
1,302	Newsletter	1,208
306	Hire of meeting rooms	162
144	Zoom subscription for online meetings	0
150	Donations	100
420	Subscriptions	430
414	Insurance	433
2,247	Millenium Walk signage	194
60	Ockwells Manor book - sundry expenses	76
145	Other Projects (Net Costs)	180
300	Website	300
<b>6,189</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,832</b>
<b>171</b>	<b>SURPLUS of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>113</b>
13,136	Balance Brought Forward	13,307
<b>13,307</b>	<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>	<b>13,420</b>
	<b>FUNDS</b>	
1,292	Bank (Lloyds TSB)	1,860
10,968	Charities Deposit General Fund (CCLA)	11,497
(1,132)	Moor Hall dinner (last year lunch) income received in advance	(680)
250	Subscription paid in advance	0
200	Deposits for future events	72
(112)	Burnham Abbey event income received in advance	0
433	Insurance for 2025/2026 paid in advance	446
(122)	Member subscriptions for 2025/2026 received in Advance	(375)
1,530	Stock of books of Ockwells Manor (note A below)	600
<b>13,307</b>	<b>BALANCE OF FUNDS</b>	<b>£13,420</b>
<b>Note on the book on Ockwells Manor</b>		
	150 books printed at £30 each	
Note A	As at 31 May 2025, 20 (2024: 51) Books in Stock at £30 each, cost £600	
<b>Peter Child - Hon. Treasurer - 16 October 2025</b>		

# Planning Matters

As you will be aware, in late September the Development Management Panel made the decision to defer the approval of the scheme to redevelop the town centre as **Nicholsons Quarter**. The proposals were covered at length in the last Newsletter, and you will be aware of the concerns. Although planning officers recommended approval of the scheme it is clearly deficient in certain aspects and councillors required more information on parking, the level of retail space and a fire evacuation plan. In addition a condition is proposed to require the provision of public toilets within the open space. The permission of the original scheme in 2021 has now lapsed with the project being deemed unviable. The current proposals, with a reduction in retail and office space and a significant increase in residential would appear to have a viable balance. However, the deficiencies in the scheme (especially parking) need to be addressed and it would be unacceptable if the application was permitted as it stands.

Other planning application activity has continued at a low level and there is little of significant interest other than an application for change of use from offices to residential at **55 to 57 Moorbridge Road**. This is the defunct detached building that used to house an insurance broker – opposite the entrance to Waitrose car park. Prior approval was sought to create 5 additional flats within the existing structure. We objected because of inadequate space standards. The application has been refused and in addition the planners have required external provision of cycle and bin storage in structures that will need formal planning permission.

In previous newsletters we have discussed the proposed installation of **BT Hubs** at various locations in the town. These illuminated advertising podiums are more than two metres in height. In addition to advertising, they can be used to provide visual public information messages and improved wi-fi reception. All previous applications were refused in early 2023. Applications for three locations were submitted at the start of 2025. Two locations in the High Street Conservation Area (HSCA) were refused, but a new proposed location in **Stafferton Way** was permitted. Subsequently, the applicant went to appeal on the two sites in the HSCA. It seems rather illogical, but one location was allowed on appeal, while the other was refused by the inspector. The proposed Hub in **Market Street** (near the side entrance to Boots) has been granted permission – although within the HSCA. However, the appeal against the RBWM refusal of a Hub to be located at the western end of the **High Street** has been dismissed. The inspector ruled that the setting of the heritage building that is the old Post Office would be adversely impacted by the proximity of the Hub. Market Street had no such features to protect. So it would appear that some locations within the same Conservation Area are less meritorious of protection than others.

On the subject of **Neighbourhood Plans** it should be noted that Cookham has had near unanimous support in a recent referendum. Cookham Neighbourhood Plan has subsequently been adopted by RBWM. Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan is in the final stages of consultation and it is to be hoped that the upcoming referendum will be equally well received when it takes place in the coming months.

Two more RBWM consultations that may be of interest to members are also in the pipeline. Both concern Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to the Local Plan. One is an SPD on Shopfronts which the Society has supported. It aims to improve the ambience of the town centre with detailed guidance for providing high-quality frontages that are attractive and sympathetic to their surroundings. This was due in the autumn but could slip to new year. The other is a long-overdue parking strategy. Unfortunately, however, rather than a much-needed holistic approach, this is likely to be a narrowly focussed document, only providing guidance on parking standards for new developments.

Residents on both sides of the River Thames will be relieved that **Taplow New Town** does not appear in the recently published proposals from central government for a New Town building programme. It is to be hoped that such an idea is transferred quickly from think tank to rubbish bin.

The annual **Authority Monitoring Report** for the year ending March 2024 was eventually published in late July. The key highlights of the Housing data are summarised below.

### **RBWM Authority Monitoring Report – Housing Highlights**

The recently published AMR covers the year ending March 2024. The highlights are as follows:

- The target for housing completions increased from 400 in 2023 to 1,400 in 2024. Against these targets there were 318 completions in 2023, increasing to 857 in 2024. This is a significant shortfall, so there continues to be a time lag in getting to the re-phased target levels.
- The target for 2025 and 2026 remains at 1,400 units, before dropping down to 775 in 2027 onwards.
- 1733 dwellings were under construction at March 2024 – so this should bode well for the 2025 target of 1,400 completions. 1,344 new dwellings were granted permission within a total of 2,376 dwellings not yet under construction.
- The completions to March 2024 of 857 dwellings was the highest achieved to date. The previous highest was 705 in 2019.
- As might be anticipated, there was a very high proportion of flats with 738 units delivered – a figure of 86%. The remaining balance of 14% resulted in only 121 houses being completed.
- The imbalance towards smaller-size dwelling units continued with 281 1-bed and 419 2-bed dwellings. This represented 33% and 49% of the total completed dwellings –

resulting in 82% of completions being 2-bed or smaller. Only 157 units were 3-bed or larger.

- As reflected in the BLP, unparished wards of Maidenhead are the focus for the vast majority of new housing development within the Borough. 579 of the 857 completions were in Maidenhead.
- Change of use from Offices to Residential was down on earlier years in percentage terms with only 3.7%, 32 units being delivered. The previous year (2023) had only 15 units – but a percentage of 4.7%. The peak year for office conversion was 2019 with 216 units – 30.6% of that year’s completions.
- Affordable housing had a total of 50 new dwellings completed in 2024 – 6% of the total. In 2023 there were 27 units – 9%. The best year for affordable homes was 2021 when 85 homes were completed – 28% of the total. It should be noted that 45 out of 50 affordable dwellings in 2024 were Shared Ownership. Only 5 units were for rental.
- Over the plan period under review a total of 529 affordable dwellings have been delivered – only 11%. With only 6% achieved in 2024 the trend is not improving.

### **Conclusions:**

Whilst the total number of dwellings completed in 2024 is an all-time high, the number is well short of the adjusted target. The total number of dwellings under construction in March 2024 exceeds the target for the 24/25 year, so it can be anticipated that the total target for 24/25 will be achieved. Of course, that period has already closed in March this year, but we will not know the outcome until mid-2026. It is to be hoped that the target for 25/26 will also be achieved with so many permissions in the pipeline.

However, within the analysis of total completions a worrying trend continues. The mix of property types and size of dwellings is skewed towards one- and two-bedroom flats. There is an under-provision of family homes of three bedrooms or more, and these should preferably be houses with amenity space. Because there is no analysis of the thousands of permitted applications in the pipeline it is not clear if and/or when any correction may be achieved. A Housing Needs Analysis was undertaken by an external consultant to support the pending Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan. There is clear evidence that positive planning intervention in favour of family homes may be necessary to address the imbalanced housing stock which will become evident down the line. Because of the time lapse in reporting housing data at the end of each planning year, more current information is invaluable. For more than five years we have requested in vain for an analysis of the pipeline of permissions granted to be provided by RBWM within the Authority Monitoring Report.

The Borough has adopted a Supplementary Planning Document for Affordable Housing. We continue to struggle to make significant progress in delivering affordable homes – especially for social rent. Practical constraints and evident lack of viability have enabled developers to avoid provision of affordable housing. In addition, social housing operators such as Housing Solutions, appear to have a shortage of funding to expand their housing stock. Again, a more pro-active and

positive policy is required to make social housing for key workers a priority at every opportunity.

Even if the total number of dwelling completions starts to achieve target in the next few years there will continue to be an under-provision of family homes and affordable dwellings for social rent.

*Martin McNamee*

### **Pavement obstructions and the Parking SPD**

Parking on the pavement can dramatically impact how wheelchair users, parents with prams, blind people, and other individuals with reduced mobility use the roads and pavements. It can force these pedestrians out onto the road to get past parked vans and cars, putting them at risk of an accident. There are also costly effects from parking on the pavement, as pavements and kerbs are not designed to withstand the weight of vans and cars. This can lead to a surface depression, putting pedestrians and users of mobility devices at risk of an accident or damage to the tyres of mobility vehicles.



There are two reasons why motorists park on pavements (i.e., footpaths). Access along a street needs to be maintained for lorries, fire engines, and dustcarts, and the only way to enable this, particularly when parking occurs on both sides of a road, is to pavement park. The other reason is that car owners may be worried that their vehicle will be scraped by passing vehicles, and we know just how much even a minor dent or scratch will cost to repair. Cars are becoming wider – compare the old Austin Mini with the BMW version! SUVs are now quite commonplace. Many modern cars are too long and wide to fit into marked parking bays and standard-size garages, which are no longer used to park vehicles. Driveways can often only take one car, although many households have more than one, and have to use the adjacent road to park.

Outside London and Scotland, it is not illegal to park on the pavement, provided that an obstruction is not caused. Local authorities can enforce pavement parking restrictions through Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) if a Traffic Regulation Order

(TRO) is in place. There is no TRO in Maidenhead, but the government is considering a more consistent approach for parking in England. Police can issue fines for obstruction or dangerous parking. In practice, this rarely happens, and it is left to the local council, which can issue fines of £100 for pavement parking, reduced to £50 if paid within 14 days. However, RBWM states that unless the parking is illegal, they will not take action, and one should call the police on 101. The police advise that the complainant should contact the Council's Traffic Management Team. This is known as “going round in circles”.

I have frequently seen pedestrians walk along my local estate roads rather than attempt to use the obstructed footpaths at the side of the road, particularly if they have buggies or are walking a dog. A new issue is on the horizon, one that is only going to exacerbate the situation. It is, of course, the need to provide charging points for electric vehicles.

The sale of new petrol and diesel cars will be banned from 2030, with plug-in hybrids allowed until 2035. By 2030, 80% of new cars and 70% of new vans are required to be zero-emission. Many car owners will prefer to have their own charging point, rather than relying on finding a suitable, unoccupied public one in a side street, car park, or forecourt, and having to wait until the battery is charged before immediately vacating the charge point bay.



Charge points situated near a kerb on a pavement may prevent pavement parking, but at the same time, they will reduce the amount of street parking available. One-third of homes don't have access to a private driveway. Vehicle owners may be tempted to run cables across or under pavements and roads to charge their car, possibly using a cable protector, or cutting a channel, neither of which is permitted by RBWM. A surface cable presents an additional hazard to walkers and buggies, especially at night.

RBWM has provided some public kerb charging points (2 no. on each road with two sockets) on a trial basis. These are on College Road, Cromwell Road (pictured below), and Lower Boyndon Road. Other charge points are in car parks, which require a driver to pay for an hour's parking. The council is falling short of its target to provide 75 new charge point sockets each year from April 2023 on streets and in council car parks (perhaps 100 of these should be in Maidenhead by now). 588 public on-street points for the entire borough are forecast by 2035. RBWM is preparing a new Parking SPD (Supplementary Planning Document), **reducing** the

requirements for parking spaces to be provided by developers, to “encourage people to walk or cycle more for shorter journeys rather than using their cars”. It will shortly be issued for public consultation. If you have an opinion on the subject, this will be your chance to comment.

The Council feels that many people living near the town centre (and sometimes further out) can manage without a car. By restricting parking spaces, it is assumed that many residents in new developments will forego car ownership. This is indeed the case in urban conurbations, such as London, which have widespread, frequent public transport serving most areas, but this is not the case in less densely populated towns. Suppose Maidenhead residents commute to work using public transport or a bicycle and own a car with no provision for off-street parking. In that case, it will likely be parked on the roadside all day, exacerbating the street parking situation. An example is the development called *The Loftings*, recently completed in 2020, located just behind Vicus



Way car park and a 5-minute walk to the railway station and bus stops. A check on a Saturday revealed 22 cars and vans parked with two tyres on the footpath around the development, and another dozen so parked in areas not intended for parking. A petition was arranged by the residents when the management company tried to restrict parking to allocated spaces. MCS regularly points out that insufficient parking has been provided in a planning application, only to find that such an objection is ignored.

The Parking SPD is expected to reflect the “brave new world” where half of us walk or cycle to the station or place of work or to have a coffee in the town centre and rarely need a car. We can take a taxi or wait for one of the hourly bus services, provided our destination is served and there is a local bus stop. We don’t need to regularly visit friends, clubs, the leisure centre, events, or go on holiday in the UK, and if on a rare occasion we do, we can take a taxi or use public transport and then walk miles – those former pleasures reached by car were for a bygone age. Remember the idiom, “get on your bike”. It is being taken literally by the Council, so better get in training for those predicted baking-hot summers and winters with torrential downpours. We can, of course, shop online, so no need to use a car to go to the shops. Ah, I see my delivery van has just arrived – damn it, there is nowhere for it to park to drop off my supplies! I will have to order a drone delivery.

*Brian Davies*

# Projects

## **BOUNDARY WALK 2025**

The Boundary Walk comprises a 13-mile walking path around the historic boundary of the Borough of Maidenhead. Each year there is a sponsored walk organised by Maidenhead Rotary around this raising money for charity, including a shorter family-friendly option of 2.5 miles. This year's walk took place on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

As in previous years the Civic Society was involved again in supporting the Boundary Walk both in terms of providing stewards and in assisting in the signage for the family-friendly walk.

This was another successful event with 531 walkers doing the full walk and a further 87 the shorter route. Over £22,500 is expected to have been raised for this year's charities which include Thames Valley Hospice and Age UK Berkshire.

Many thanks to all our members who volunteered and helped make this year's event such a success.



*Local dignitaries including Joshua Reynolds MP, Mayor Mandy Brar, Town Crier Chris Brown and representatives of the groups supporting this year's event (photo: Martin Trepte of Rotary in Maidenhead)*



*Walkers en route from Boulter's Lock towards Maidenhead Bridge  
(photo: Martin Trepte of Rotary Maidenhead)*



*Volunteers at the crossing from Widbrook Common to Battlemead: Joyce Delasalle,  
Jayne Danyshchuk, Tim Burt and Christine Jones*



*Volunteers near the Sounding Arch: Jayne Danyshchuk and Viviane Holland*



*Volunteers at Maidenhead Bridge, Neil Savin and Chris Bristow*

*Tim Burt*

## WHERE DID THIS PLAQUE COME FROM?

A few weeks ago I was contacted by Jason Gratton who runs the new café in Kidwells Park – next to the play area. He had recently opened the café and was now setting about clearing the attached storage area from all the accumulated junk that he had inherited. At the back of room he'd found a large stone plaque that looked "sort of official." After consulting a friend it was suggested that the Civic Society would know what it is and maybe could find a suitable home for it.

I popped round a couple of days later and had a look. It was immediately obvious *what* it was, but why was it there and *where* was it originally?



The inscription reads:

*This Park  
Was Presented To The Town Of Maidenhead  
By  
James Daniel Morland Pearce J.P.  
Five Times Mayor Of The Borough*

The plaque measured about 150 x 40 x 7 cm and would have weighed about 100 kg or so. I contacted the Heritage Centre thinking that would be a good place to start, but in the absence of a response, I then suggest Jason ought to contact RBWM. He did this and was told that they had no interest in it and to do what he wanted with it. He then got back to me and said that one way or another it had to be gone by the weekend!

I wasn't happy with this situation and almost in desperation I posted a message on the *Maidenhead History* Facebook Group. Almost immediately, Emma Barnett, the admin who runs that group, made contact and suggested that the plaque might have originally have been part of the Pearce Memorial that was once in Kidwells Park, and

that it should certainly be preserved. Without mucking about, she arranged for it to be collected (by “a husband, a son and a VW Golf”!) and is holding it in safe storage in her garden. Emma reckons the former memorial might now be in pieces somewhere in council storage.

J D M Pearce (1820-1898) seems to have been an interesting character. He was the mayor in 1856, 1857, 1862, 1889 and 1890. He bought the Kidwells estate in the 1870s and in July 1890 presented Kidwells Park to the town by deed of gift, with a stipulation that a large majority of the trustees be total-abstainers (reflecting his temperance views)! He was a generous benefactor of Maidenhead and also among his gifts to the town were the Pearce Hall, where the Commonwealth War Graves Commission now stands. He also built a common lodging house in Bridge Street, later used as the British Legion Club.



Kidwells Park, a municipal park of 3 hectares bordering Bad Godesberg Way (A4) in the centre of Maidenhead, is named after Nevill Kidwell who was a burgess of Maidenhead during the reign of Charles II and warden (equivalent of mayor) in 1674. Kidwells House stood at the corner of Marlow Road and West Street; it was also known as the Manor House.

The Kidwells estate originally extended further south to what is today West Street. A big chunk was taken 1970 for the construction of the bypass and it is likely that the Pearce

Memorial was removed from that area at that time and then disposed of in some way. How the plaque came to be Jason’s cafe storage area is a mystery. And if any reader has any memory of the original memorial fountain do please get in contact with us.

There is now a Blue Plaque, in the park near the bypass road, to commemorate Pearce and his gift to the town. The photo above was taken by Society member Chris Bristow who has more about the present park on his photoblog *Maidenhead in Pictures* at: <https://maidenheadinpictures.com/2018/03/22/kidwells-park/>. If you’re interested you can read more about the early history of the park on the Berkshire Gardens Trust website here: <https://www.berkshiregardentrust.org/kidwells-park>.

*Editor*

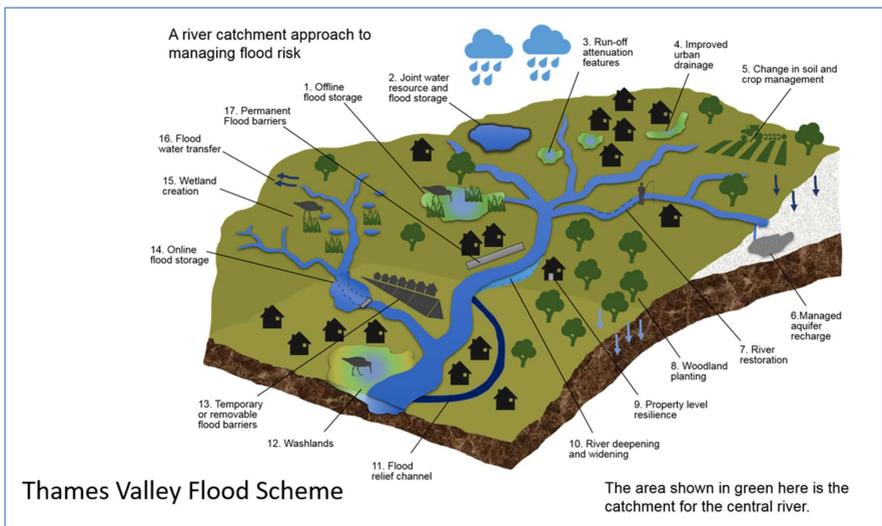
# Events

## MANAGING FLOOD RISK IN A TIME OF CLIMATE CHANGE



*Society patron Baroness May introducing our speaker Prof. Robert van de Noort,*

At the Society lecture held on 11<sup>th</sup> September, Professor de Noort outlined the evidence of global warming that has led to climate change and the achievements and eventual failure of The Thames Valley Flood Scheme.



Crudely, this scheme advocated encouraging certain riverside areas to flood thus protecting neighbouring towns. The scheme was apparently discontinued due to cost, local opposition and an inability to predict how many would be protected. His talk included a slide showing the confusing picture of responsibilities for flooding control.

## Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM)

Agency	Responsibility
Dept for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Policy and Grant in Aid budget</li> </ul>
Cabinet Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Civil contingencies</li> </ul>
Environment Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National strategy and FCRM Management</li> <li>Coastal erosion</li> <li>Coastal and main rivers floods</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (n=12)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Regional co-ordination and partnership working</b></li> <li><b>Consenting of national FCRM programmes</b></li> </ul>
Water Companies (n=9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sewage and wastewater flooding</li> </ul>
Lead Local Flood Authorities (n=c. 400)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surface water flooding</li> <li>Groundwater flooding</li> </ul>
Internal Drainage Boards (n=112)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance of ordinary water courses (selected areas only)</li> </ul>
'Riparian Owners' (n=000,000s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance of ordinary watercourses on their land</li> </ul>

Local problems with flooding (for photos see the August Newsletter) illustrated his excellent and thought-provoking talk. This ended with a discussion to which, Cookham borough councillors, members of the Cookham Parish Council, the Cookham Society, Maidenhead Waterways, the Middle Thames Society and others contributed.

We organised this talk because, though Maidenhead is protected by the flood alleviation scheme (i.e. the Jubilee River and North Maidenhead Flood Bund), projects such as the Green Way and Millennium Walk are affected by flooding. In addition, Thrift Wood Park also floods, exacerbated by runoff from the motorways, thus threatening the foundations of Ockwells Manor house, another project.

There does not appear to be any overall scheme to control flooding in the Thames Valley. At present flood risk is being assessed by the Flood Liaison Group (FLG) that seeks to reduce the impact of flooding in the Borough and to promote the implementation of permanent and sustainable solutions to mitigate or alleviate flooding. In addition, the group also seeks to improve communication between the Flood Risk Management Authorities and representatives from flood-affected communities.

In the summer, the Royal Berkshire Archive mounted an exhibition *Our River Thames – an exhibition exploring our history and interaction with the River Thames*. This noted that originally the Thames was a much broader and shallower channel

surrounded by marshland and liable to flood all the surrounding land. During the Middle Ages the river started to be used as a means of transporting people and goods. The shape of the river changed with marshes drained to provide farmland, and the course of the river deepened and narrowed so that larger boats could navigate its length, with weirs built to control the flow of water.

The discontinued Thames Valley Scheme could be viewed as an attempt to turn back the clock in terms of control of the Thames. As the scheme is now discontinued what will replace it?



*Discussions continued over coffee*

### **St Luke's Christmas Tree Festival**

The Society is again sponsoring a Christmas tree at this event. The chosen local charity this year is Alzheimer Dementia Support. Apart from lots of trees to admire, there will be a raffle and refreshments, and a produce stall selling lots of delicious jams and chutneys. Do come along and bring your friends, especially if they aren't members. The church, on Norfolk Road, will be open on Friday 5<sup>th</sup>, and Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December from 10am to 7pm, and on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> from 12 midday to 6pm followed by the Christmas Tree Service.

# Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025  
**AGM and Speaker**

Civic Society AGM  
Cox Green Community Centre, 7.45 for 8pm

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December to Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2025  
**Event**

**St Luke's Christmas Tree Festival**  
Fri & Sat 10am to 7pm; Sun 12 to 6pm

## CIVIC SOCIETY – KEY CONTACTS

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

Enquiries to the Society: [info@maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk](mailto:info@maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2025

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

14<sup>th</sup> January, 11<sup>th</sup> February, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> April, 13<sup>th</sup> May, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 8<sup>th</sup> July, (12<sup>th</sup> August), 9<sup>th</sup> September, 14<sup>th</sup> October, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 9<sup>th</sup> December

The 65<sup>th</sup> AGM will be held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025, at 7.45 for 8.00 pm.

**The closing date for copy for the next issue  
of the Newsletter is 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026**

---

**News Editor**     **Brian Darracott**  
**6 Medallion Place, Maidenhead, SL6 1TF**  
**[editor@maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk](mailto:editor@maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk)**

**Printed by:**     **Denwal Press, Unit 1, Maidenhead Trade Park, Prior's Way, Maidenhead, SL6 2GQ**  
**[www.denwalpress.co.uk](http://www.denwalpress.co.uk)**