

MAIDENHEAD WATERWAYS RESTORATION GROUP

(Registered Charity No: 1119150 and Company Limited by Guarantee No: 06166868)

This SUMMARY REPORT of the Group's activities to 31 March 2018 is provided for members' information at the 2018 A.G.M. A fuller report forms part of the Group's Financial Statements.

Review of the year's activities

In the year to March 2018 the activities of Maidenhead Waterways Restoration Group (MW) again were closely linked with the regeneration of Maidenhead town centre: many of the town's significant Area Action Plan (AAP) developments are related to the waterways project and will benefit from acquiring a waterside setting. As restoration has proceeded public recognition of the benefits the enhanced waterside environment will bring to the town has grown.

Implementation of this community project is in the hands of Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). This had been overseen by a joint MW/RBWM Project Board which continued to meet during the earlier part of the year. Greenford Ltd were appointed as contractors for the first stages of construction, which started in July 2015. During the first two years significant progress was made but delays occurred and costs escalated. Utility pipes and cables were found in locations not properly recorded, and consequent design modifications were not delivered in a timely manner. As a result, the construction programme was flexed, with work alternating between the northern and southern ends of York Stream. As each section was substantially completed it then was landscaped: almost immediately wildlife started to return to those areas.

Work adjoining the (c1825) iconic Chapel Arches bridge was paced by the rate of progress with Shanly Homes' adjoining Phase 1 and 2 commercial developments. Resolving conflicting expectations between the two schemes was at times challenging. After a design change to remove the central island Chapel Arches bridge needed be underpinned, the parapet was raised, and brickwork refaced, then limewashed. But there remains a short length of stream adjacent to Shanly Homes Phase 3 scheme to the north of Chapel Arches which will also determine when the York Stream arm of the waterway can be completed as this will provide the missing link between the near completed up- and down-stream channel sections.

In September 2017 RBWM's full council authorised an exceptional £1.5m mid-year budget addition to cover agreed scope changes, delay penalties and unexpected consultancy costs. This was intended to fund completion of the York Stream arm and of the weir which, once built, will permanently raise surface water levels in York Stream and the southern parts of the Moor Cut arm. In October a stylish new Library Footbridge was craned into place, giving much improved headroom over the restored channel. Completion of the first channel stages attracted a lot of positive comment from residents including on social media, and opening the new Library bridge and adjoining public paths was very well received.

Greenford Ltd's construction contract, other than snagging, effectively was completed in December 2017. In January 2018 they removed the temporary dam at Town Moor without much consideration having been given to the consequences of its removal. Whilst it was encouraging to see the flow restored to York Stream it was disappointing to note that Moor Cut became dry once again, and stranded fish had to be rescued. A little forethought might have been helpful. MW was not in the loop for this decision. Alongside Hines Meadow car park, where the scheme was to widen and flood-proof the Green Way public path by setting the channel and path under the A4 in a concrete trough, there was an oversight somewhere between Council and contractors. The flood-proofed protection wall under St Cloud Way was not fully completed and the pump designed to keep the trough dry was not installed before the flow was returned, leading to localised footpath flooding. Commissioning the drainage pump remains outstanding more than eight months later. By leaving the low York Road weir in place, water levels in the new Chapel Arches water basin are being held at interim level, sufficient to ensure water is visible in all three large arches, until the permanent Green Lane weir fully lifts water levels. Construction of the weir and fish/eel pass requires an impoundment licence and other consents from the Environment Agency (EA). MW provided supporting material for the application, submitted in October 2017, but EA were unable to meet their target timing to consider the application, and the licence has only now (September 2018) been granted. A condition of the licence granted requires a further consent for a separate extraction licence. Construction of the weir cannot proceed until all the necessary consents are in place.

Because the MW/RBWM Project Board was not convened after November 2017, MW's Trustees asked to meet RBWM's leadership in March 2018 to clarify RBWM's commitment to completing the York Stream arm of the waterway; its willingness to fund further stages of the consented waterway 'Ring' plan; and its longer-term strategy for the waterway in the context of an emerging Borough Local Plan (BLP) that is set to run to 2033. MW was informed no further funding has been allocated in the 2018/19 budget. RBWM's leadership was unable to reassure Trustees on any of the key concerns raised but was considering appointing consultants to review the navigation options for Moor Cut, for possible implementation in a few years' time in conjunction with plans for development at Reform Road.

Countryside Properties was appointed the Royal Borough's Joint Venture (JV) partner for four Council-owned development sites in the town centre, three of which adjoin the York Stream or Moor Cut arms of the consented waterway plans. MW pressed for an early dialogue with the new partners to converge visions for the waterside areas, subsequently meeting them in September 2017 to introduce them to the constraints and opportunities for the waterway in the context of Maidenhead's regeneration.

MW submitted comments and concerns on the emerging draft Borough Local Plan, which it considered woefully inadequate in terms of policy support for the waterway. Nor did it address the existing deficit of public open space in the town centre or the role the waterway should play to help resolve this. In parallel and following MW objections to omission of the waterway from the Royal Borough's Infrastructure Plan, after an internal review RWBM changed its position and the consultants brief was to be amended to consider this and other softer linking infrastructure requirements.

Early in 2018 clearance of the Shanley Homes Chapel Arches north (Phase 3) site began, culminating in demolition of the Colonnade. After groundwater has been pumped out, piles sunk for the new buildings and (two-storey deep) underground park, the missing length of the York Stream arm of the waterway is due to be completed there, funded and constructed by Shanly Homes as part of its development. For many months MW had stressed the importance of lowering the hard invert below Chapel Arches bridge at the same time as Shanly Homes' contractors are excavating there. Failure to do so risks leaving a permanent limitation to craft size able to use the waterway. To avoid delays MW Trustees submitted a planning application and secured consent to lower the hard invert, but funding for implementation remains unresolved.

The Rotary-led Friends of Maidenhead shop reopened in June and July 2017 with an estimated 2,500 visitors to inspect town centre development plans. MW featured as a prominent exhibitor and provided significant volunteer help.

In July 2017 Claires Court School planned a two-day community programme of waterways clearance for Year 10. Over 90 eager pupils and teachers took part over the two days. In May we welcomed a team from Taylor Woodrow who assisted in channel clearance, followed by an enthusiastic group of 24 from SUEZ UK's HR team in July and another from LexisNexis Risk Solutions in September. These have usefully supplemented the regular, fortnightly clearance parties of MW volunteers under the leadership of Ian Caird.

There was no recurrence of the invasive floating weed Azolla which MW tackled at Widbrook Common in 2016.

MW's initial maintenance funding agreement with RWBM expired in March 2017, largely unused because of project delays. After repeated chasing, a fresh letter of reassurance was eventually issued by RBWM in August 2017, but the first request to draw on this to fund contractor work in the feeder channels to improve flow was rejected by an officer insufficiently briefed. The seasonal window of opportunity was lost. It was however possible to use those funds to hire equipment to support the Waterways Recovery Group (part of Inland Waterways Association) who visited Maidenhead for a productive volunteer working weekend in Bray Cut in February 2018, once again managed by Ian Caird.

MW's technical group, led by John Morgan, continued to review implementation progress, assess long-term objectives and options for the waterway project. In parallel MW have encouraged South East Water to improve water flows in the northern feeder channels to compensate for the impact of their ground-water extraction. The latter has been found to be lowering the ground water table, reducing surface water flows in the channel and hence the water supply to the town centre waterway 'Ring'.

A series of mitigation improvements have been agreed and await final Environment Agency approval prior to implementation in 2019/20.

With MW guidance Furze Platt Scouts assembled six bat boxes, which were subsequently installed alongside the restored waterway channels, whilst two dozen 13th Maidenhead Cubs walked the route in September 2017. In October 2017 some 29 canoeists took part in a cavalcade, reviewing the overgrown state of the stream from Green Lane to the Thames, and in November the Group's 10th annual general meeting was held.

Trustees were delighted to accept the gift of a service boat, donated by a member of MW, which we hope will eventually be moored in one of the closed Chapel Arches. At that location Bakedd, an artisan bakery opened its streamside location where it seems popular. A restaurant is due to open shortly on the opposite eastern bank.

Although national affairs prevented Theresa May MP from re-visiting the project during 2017/18, she generously provided content for a new video setting out the project's history and progress to date and subsequently visited the waterway in June 2018.

By their periodic reviews of the activities and progress of the charity Trustees continued to take account of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The charity maintains an ongoing relationship with relevant authorities and keeps in touch with local environmental and community groups to maximise the benefits for the residents of Maidenhead and the surrounding areas.

Post Year End Events

During the summer break MW asked the RBWM leadership to reset the Member (Councillor) and Officer arrangements for the waterway project, to provide more joined up and consistent end to end management of the project. The RBWM leader has now taken personal ownership of Maidenhead regeneration and has appointed a Lead Member (Waterways 'Champion') with overall responsibility for the continuing build and operation of the waterway. A new officer post has also been announced that will mirror the lead member role, responsible for the current construction phase, maintenance and operation of the completed sections, planning for the next stage of implementation and also the long-term strategy for the waterway. MW welcomes this initiative and is looking forward to resuming effective partnership working.

The strategic plan to lower the hard invert under Chapel Arches in conjunction with construction of Shanly Homes' Phase 3 now appears unlikely to proceed unless a funding solution can be agreed between RBWM and Shanly Homes. If not resolved the high channel bed left under Chapel Arches risks creating a permanent limitation to larger craft using the entire 'Ring'. Planned mechanical clearance in the feeder channels, to improve water supply, using contractors has slipped until at least end 2018 due to slow responses by RBWM, and the need for prior EA consents.

Funding to complete the Moor Cut arm now seems unlikely for some years, as RBWM has decided to prioritise infrastructure spend elsewhere. In the meantime, MW is pressing for completion of the York Stream arm in 2018/19, constructing the weir and removing obstacles, to allow through navigation and early use of the waterway by small boats. With MW's planning consent for the waterway due to expire - partly implemented - in July 2020, a fundamental review of the strategy and design for the Moor Cut arm will be required, potentially in conjunction with the Countryside JV plans for the council-owned Reform Road site. However, this is not scheduled for redevelopment until 2021-2.

Trustee Alasdair Pettigrew reluctantly stood down because of work pressures. He has made valuable contributions to the Group and has kindly agreed to remain as a Special Adviser. MW Trustees have appointed Andrew Ingram in his place, the appointment to be ratified at the upcoming AGM

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

To enhance public benefit the Charity aims:

- To plan and build a navigable Waterway that passes through Maidenhead Town Centre, and to secure funding allowing the project to be implemented in Stages
- To construct a weir to raise water levels, adding a lock when it is timely.
- To establish a maintenance programme for the restored areas of the 'Ring' and to ensure adequate flow into the 'Ring' from feeder channels
- To improve accessibility along the Waterway, protecting and extending public foot and, where feasible, cycle paths.
- As part of the council's overall AAP, to increase the number of 'pocket parks' beside the restored Waterway, for use by the general public.
- To protect and enhance the environment for wildlife along the Waterway
- To develop sponsorship and a sense of ownership of sections of the Waterway by local businesses and land-owners.
- To ensure the waterway design and its associated facilities benefit the widest possible range of potential users of the restored waterway.

MW and its partners are tackling the project in stages as funding allows, but the priority is to restore York Stream and Moor Cut to create a waterway 'ring' for small boats to operate around the town centre. To the south we will open up the Bray Cut channel to allow small and eventually larger craft to enter from the Thames.

With the consented works already part completed, MW's technical group is developing a detailed strategy for the long-term evolution of the restored navigation.

Trustees continue to be aware of the need to identify other funding sources. Encouragement will be given for developers of property adjoining the waterway to contribute directly towards the project.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The major source of funding in the period again was from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead which funded the detailed design under a novated contract with Golder Associates and also construction under a direct contract with the contractors, Greenford Ltd. The Charity's remaining direct contracts still are funded by RBWM under an agreed Protocol.

McFarlane Telfer, a local business which has supported channel clearance initiatives also made a generous £400 donation in the year towards the group's funds. MW was delighted to be selected as Charity of the Month by Waitrose, receiving £500. Membership subscriptions contributed to the costs of routine administration.

Expenditure by the Charity is focused on promoting the Waterway restoration project, on progressing channel design, and on monitoring and improving water supply into the Maidenhead 'Ring'. In 2018-19 MW will be engaged in similar activities, and in longer term planning for an extended waterway.

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018
(incorporating income and expenditure account)

		2017-18 Unrestricted Funds £	2017-18 Restricted Funds £	2017-18 Total Funds £	Prior Year 2016-17 Total Funds £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Donations, grants, sponsorship and legacies		3,169	0	3,169	4,108
RBWM S106 Grant	10	0	45,273	45,273	63,079
Other income		52	0	52	0
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		3,221	45,273	48,494	67,187
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Cost of Generating Funds					
Costs of generating Voluntary income		231	0	231	552
		231	0	231	552
Charitable Activities					
Development, promotion and maintenance of waterway					
– S 106-Funded Projects	6, 10	0	45,273	45,273	63,079
– other project expenditure	6	2,259	0	2,259	1,189
		2,259	45,273	47,532	64,268
Governance Costs	6	1,045	0	1,045	877
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		3,535	45,273	48,808	65,697
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR	7	(314)	0	(314)	1,490
BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD AT 1 APRIL		27,669	145	27,814	26,324
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 MARCH		27,355	145	27,500	27,814

There are no recognised gains or losses other than those passing through the statement of financial activities.

The statement of financial activities has been prepared on the basis that all operations are continuing operations.

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BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2018

		2017-18		Prior Year 2016-17	
Notes:	£	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		0		0	
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	8	9,902		14,530	
Cash at bank and in hand		27,501		27,814	
		37,403		42,344	
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	9	(9,902)		(14,530)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS		27,501		27,814	
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		27,501		27,814	
INCOME FUNDS					
Restricted funds		145		145	
Unrestricted funds		27,356		27,669	
		27,501		27,814	
		27,501		27,814	

For the year ending 31 March 2018 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- the members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,
- the directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts,

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Board on 26 September 2018	Richard Davenport))) Trustees) David Snelgar)
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Richard Curry, an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, completed his independent examination of the Group's Financial Statements on 26 September 2018

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018 (con't)

6. ANALYSIS OF TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	2017-18	Prior Year
Includes the following	£	£
Cost of Generating Funds:		
Cost of generating voluntary income	231	552
	<u>231</u>	<u>552</u>
Charitable Activities:		
Channel Design & Project Management (S 106 funded)	45,273	63,079
Sundry project costs	2,259	1,189
	<u>47,532</u>	<u>64,268</u>
Governance Costs:		
Sundry office costs	205	232
Insurance	546	454
Website costs	133	72
Other	<u>161</u>	<u>119</u>
	<u>1,045</u>	<u>877</u>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	<u>48,808</u>	<u>65,697</u>

CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS

At the year-end the Trustees had authorised further expenditure of approx. £8,000 which was contracted to Portmead Ltd for project management.

Funding for all such contracts had been agreed in advance by RBWM and they are being funded via S106 developer contributions held by RBWM for that purpose under our financial protocol.

Section 106 GRANTS Grants were received from The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) under a financial protocol set up for that purpose between MW and RBWM. To access those funds MW applies to RBWM with a schedule of expenditure to be approved. Only when funding is confirmed does MW enter into contracts with suppliers, usually via a process of competitive tendering. RBWM reimburses MW following sight of the supplier's invoice.

Where RBWM is directly contracting and paying for design and implementation costs, MW does not report such sums either as Resources Expended, nor as Grants received.

A fuller report forms part of the Group's Financial Statements.

Please contact the Group if you wish to receive the full 2018 Financial Statements.