

Dear Member/Supporter,

Welcome to the December 2018 issue of *Flow*, the newsletter for *MW* members and supporters of the Maidenhead Waterways project. While progress on the ground has been limited this year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many active volunteers who continue to undertake key tasks for the group - often not in the public eye - and in particular our regular groundwater, flow measuring and channel clearance teams that go out in all weathers, to inform key design decisions and keep the stream flowing on which the town centre waterway depends.



AGM - A well-attended Annual General meeting on 6th November reviewed the last year and adopted MW's accounts for 2017/18. Co-opted Trustee Andrew Ingram stood down as scheduled and was re-elected as Trustee for a fresh three year term. David Snelgar announced at the meeting that he will stand down as Treasurer at the end of the financial year and thanks were expressed for his long and exemplary service since the group was formed in 2006.

Chapel Arches Phase 3 - After completing foundation piling, Shanly Homes has paused work on the northern site above Chapel Arches. They are expected to resume after Christmas, building the new channel walls that will create a second (smaller) water basin and link with the already completed up and downstream channels. Funding discussions to lower the hard invert continue but have yet to be concluded, risking a *permanent limitation* to navigation along York Stream and frustrating *MW's* strategy for larger (and hence more) craft to eventually be able to use the waterway.

Coppa Club - It is good to see Coppa Club now launched at Chapel Arches, on the east side of the water basin opposite the artisan café Bakedd, further adding to the life and trade in this new waterside location. We wish them well.

Weir tender - RBWM is about to select a contractor for the Green Lane weir, which we hope can finally start work in early 2019. A further Environment Agency permit is awaited, but site clearance needs to get underway by February, before the nesting season intervenes once more. If the current 'window' is missed, commencement could be delayed until the autumn, leaving water levels in the channel as they are until 2020. While most northern parts of the enlarged York Stream already look good, the shallow sections below Stafferton Way are unattractive and already becoming choked with weed and accumulating debris.



York Road - Implementation of Countryside's plans for York Road is expected to commence in February, following Panel approval in September. *MW's* concerns about the high path levels and lack of access to the water's edge were addressed in a joint workshop with Countryside's design team and revised (improved) proposals have now been shared with the JV Board.

Daffodils - We were delighted to join with volunteers from Maidenhead WI in November to plant 1,300 more daffodils alongside the waterway, near Lidl. Under the RBWM Community Bulb Planting programme **MW** planted thousands of bulbs streamside in the early years, but we had suspended planting until completion of the main channel works.



Borough Local Plan - Inspection of the new Borough Local Plan has been delayed while the flood assessment approach used for site allocations is revisited. It will be necessary to re-consult any changes to site allocations that emerge, making it unlikely that the inspection process can resume until after the May 2019 Council elections.



Parliamentary Visit – MW was pleased to be asked to join a recent All Party Parliamentary Group meeting on Waterways matters at the House of Lords. We were able to share MW’s experience to date, recall the complexities the project has faced and emphasise the economic, public amenity and environment benefits of waterways restoration to the MPs, Peers and other sector organisations represented in the Parliamentary Group.

Tree planting - We were delighted to host a second visit this year from Theresa May MP, PM, to plant a specimen rowan tree alongside the restored waterway at Town Moor. The event was part of the Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy project (led in the UK by the Woodland Trust who provided the tree) with participation from the legislatures of all 53 Commonwealth countries. Pictured with Theresa are some of the MW team and family members.



Volunteers - We always need more volunteers to join our regular channel clearances, which will continue through the winter months, and help with other tasks. If you can offer just *a few hours a month* to help with any aspect of the group it would be appreciated, we can usually match interests to needs. Please get in touch at **EMail:** contactus@maidenheadwaterways.org or via the **Web Site:** www.maidenheadwaterways.o

Our best wishes for a peaceful Christmas. We look forward to more progress for the project in 2019.

Richard Davenport
Chairman of the Trustees

December 2018