

Dear Member/Supporter,

Welcome to the August 2025 edition of Flow, the newsletter for FoMW members and supporters. There has been lots happening and encouraging progress on a few fronts.

David Snelgar - We are very sorry to report the passing of former trustee and Treasurer David Snelgar. He was my neighbour and one of the founding trustees in 2007, when FoMW became a charity, and played a key role as we secured the planning consent and then delivered the first implementation stages in conjunction with funding partners RBWM and Shanly.

Paddlefest - We were delighted to partner with Berkshire Scouts in June for our first ever 'Paddlefest'. Launching at Town Moor, canoeists took turns paddling down to Green Lane and back. Around 130 paddlers in canoes, kayaks and on paddle boards were on the water through the day. Taster sessions supervised by qualified coaches added to the occasion for new paddlers, while free boat rides were offered for the less adventurous. We are grateful to Devine Buskers and to Teddy's Music Club led by Claire Ross-Masson, who took over the refurbished Amphitheatre with a lively singalong session for youngsters.



Pipe bridge - Our Patron Baroness Theresa May and local MP Josh Reynolds have both joined our continuing campaign to persuade Thames Water (TW) to remove the low sewer pipe that crosses the channel just south of the GWR. The pipe has been redundant for 35 years, but was left in situ to rust away and now poses a serious safety hazard for canoeists using the waterway. TW has finally confirmed the pipe is redundant and can be removed, but at this stage is asking RBWM to fund the work, at a staggering £1.1m cost..!! Persuading them to fund removal of their own redundant equipment could be a long haul, given their financial and performance problems, but taking ownership of the issue might help their reputation locally.



Weedcutter - Weed growth in the waterway, the Thames and nationally has been an issue this year after a very warm/dry spring. River flows everywhere are also slowing, compounding the problem for boaters as excess weed clogs paddles and props. A professional Weedcutter boat has this week addressed the issue to ensure the waterway is clear for the peak boating season and for Fun Day celebrations on 13th September.

Barrian laid up - We are sorry to report that our 100 year old wooden boat Barrian has suffered accidental hull damage, was leaking badly and is currently laid up. A repair should be possible, but she is likely to be out of action for the rest of the season.



Canoe Club and Grant - We are pleased to announce the setting up of a new club promoting canoeing and kayaking, based on the newly restored waterway and led by Trustee Dominic Hurst. Maidenhead Canoe Club is a wholly owned part of FoMW and affiliated to PaddleUK, giving us access to discounted licencing, insurance and training. The club was made possible by a new **£7,000 grant** from Get Living, who own the One

Maidenhead development. The grant has allowed us to buy its first two-person open canoes, as well as some sit-on-top kayaks. Taster sessions for new paddlers will be offered at events, while members will undergo training by qualified coaches per PaddleUK's national programme. The club meets Monday evenings at Chapel Arches, with membership open for FoMW members only currently. Want to join(..?), please Email canoe@maidenheadwaterways.org.

Waterways Fun Day - Final preparations are under way for this year's Waterways Fun Day on **Saturday 13th September 10-3**, following agreement by RBWM to the necessary road closure. The High Street will be closed to traffic for the day, allowing stalls, an entertainment stage and displays on the road between The Bear Hotel and Coppa Club, inside Waterside Quarter and also by the Library and in the refurbished amphitheatre. There will be live music, displays and entertainment all day on and off the water, all kindly sponsored by Waterside Quarter, the Louis Baylis Trust and Maidenhead Thames Rotary.

Expect magic by Patrick Ashe, music from Alexander Devine Buskers, Elaine Skillen, The Courtlands Stories, Glen Stevenson, Charis Anne Luke and Waltham St Lawrence Silver Band, plus roaming artists. We are also delighted to welcome back Basil's Mobile Farm by the Library, Pedal Planes and a Flight Simulator from White Waltham, Berkshire Fire and Rescue with a tender plus their rescue boat, community stalls and more. Displays on the water will include the ever popular 'Crazy' Flamingo Chase, model boats and demonstrations by Berkshire Scouts and Claires Court. Our new Canoe Club will also be offering free canoe tryouts off the Library banks, while our work boat Yorkie will run free boat rides during the day.



Best regards,

Richard Davenport

Chair of the Trustees

August 2025