

MAIDENHEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (2024-39)

What is in the Plan?

- Preservation of green spaces
- Climate-friendly newbuilds
- Promoting active travel
- Protecting heritage assets
- Design code for buildings
- More family-sized homes



1. Planning Policy context

Planning Policy determines how councils and government decide what developments are allowed in our villages, towns and cities. In simple terms “...what gets built where”.

Government sets the overarching National Planning Policy Framework. In the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM), we then have the adopted Borough Local Plan - one set of policies for the entire borough - and we now have the newly adopted Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) for the seven un-parished wards of Maidenhead (2021 Census pop. 53,000). The MNP cannot contradict policies at the other two levels, but fleshes them out and adds detail tailored specifically to Maidenhead, its issues and needs.

Contrary to some opinions, planning applications are not decided on the basis of popularity, but rather on how well they comply with adopted Planning policies, set at national, Borough and [now] Neighbourhood Plan level.

Development across the whole of RBWM is constrained by flood risk, Crown land and the Green Belt, resulting in the Borough Local Plan targeting the majority of growth on Maidenhead. Conflict between demanding government housing targets and Green Belt protection has led to taller and denser flatted developments being directed at Maidenhead town centre and the removal of the Golf Club from the Green Belt.

Without clear planning policy for the wider town, the danger was that flatted developments became the norm everywhere. The importance of the MNP in helping to shape the way Maidenhead develops cannot be overstated.

2. Development of the MNP

For years, Maidenhead was the only part of RBWM without a Neighbourhood Plan, either in place or in development. Now providing the majority of the Borough's housing growth, it was vital that locals had a voice in how Maidenhead develops.

The MNP was developed by the Maidenhead Neighbourhood Forum (MNF) – all volunteers – based on extensive community consultations, which began in early 2023 at meetings and online. These generated scores of suggestions. Several had to be excluded (e.g. litter removal, healthcare provision) because they don't come under Planning Policy. The rest were reviewed, filtered and collated into six Topic Groups.

The Topic Groups then drafted initial policies, which went through internal review and public consultation, with input from specialist consultants, before the final draft MNP was submitted to RBWM in September 2025.

Maidenhead today



Most areas, and most new developments, are low rise and relatively leafy



Recent high-rise blocks in the town centre have been widely criticised for their height



East-west transport connections have been improved further by the new Elizabeth Line



Cycling has historically not been prioritised or well funded in local transport planning



A relatively prosperous town on paper but with a struggling, under-used town centre



It is hoped that the regenerated parts of the centre will continue to boost local trade

3. The vision

The vision for Maidenhead is to create a vibrant, inclusive and sustainable town with strong character, good infrastructure, affordable homes, and quality green spaces. Regeneration of the town centre itself had already commenced with the waterway corridor and Waterside Quarter developments under an earlier Action Plan and after some delays the second phase (redeveloping the Nicholsons Centre) is also finally underway.

The MNP focuses on the wider town and prioritises design quality, climate resilience, housing choice, sustainable transport, and respect for heritage and biodiversity. Community priorities include reducing inequality, improving public open spaces and enhancing connectivity around the town, fully connected to a rejuvenated town centre that serves the needs of Maidenhead's growing population.

4. Design and Character

Design policies in the MNP aim to curb inappropriate height/mass, maintain human-scale streetscapes and preserve/restore a sense of place. Tall buildings are restricted to specific zones, with defined maximum heights. Character Areas are identified with guidelines from a new Design Code. New buildings must provide adequate internal and external space, be visually compatible with their setting, and retain mature trees wherever possible.

5. Housing Strategy

A pressing need for genuinely affordable homes led to policies which require 30–40% 'affordable housing' on qualifying developments. The MNP also promotes a better balanced housing mix, with emphasis on more 3- and 4-bed family homes, and policies to avoid oversupply of small flats. Community-led and key-worker housing are encouraged.

6. Getting around

Policies support a transition toward active travel and improved public transport access. New developments should connect to existing cycling and walking networks, incorporate safe access for all users and provide sufficient parking to meet their own needs. Interchange facilities (where people change transport modes, e.g. Maidenhead station) must include real-time information, step-free access, and weather-protected areas.

7. Climate and Sustainability

The plan supports the RBWM's 2050 Net Zero target through requirements to minimise operational and embedded carbon in all major developments. Developers must demonstrate energy performance using nationally recognised benchmarks. Renewable energy generation is encouraged onsite and developments must follow the principle of efficiency first, then clean generation, then offsetting.

Biodiversity strategies include identifying and protecting key green and blue corridors (e.g. the area along the recently restored waterways), requiring Biodiversity Net Gain to be delivered within the borough (not elsewhere) and mandating Sustainable Drainage Systems. Tree retention and urban greening are core to the environmental strategy.

8. Green spaces protection

The Plan identifies 23 green spaces in the town which are highly valued by local people, and specifies their character and value which should not be adversely affected by future developments, e.g. Oaken Grove Park below.

4 Oaken Grove Park	Area: 7.7 ha
	
	Historic significance: Contains Sir Nicholas Winton Memorial Garden, opened in 2017. Recreational value: Tennis Courts, Bowls club, Sports pitches, Games area, Children's play area, Outdoor Gym, dog walking, Café, parking. Tranquillity: A calm oasis with a degree of isolation from the surrounding busy roads and residential areas Richness of wildlife and biodiversity: Many mature Trees, although none have TPOs. Wildflower areas.

9. Built Heritage

The town already has several Conservation Areas and a number of nationally Listed Buildings which are protected. The MNP adds heritage policies to protect other locally significant buildings and streetscapes, as in the example below

Braywick Road, Stafferton Lodge SL6 1BN Oldfield Ward (M6/25)		Rarity - only structure of this scale in the area, imposing setting at entrance to Braywick Park Historic Interest - once known as Staverton Lodge after family who lived since Tudor era at Stroud Manor in Holyport. It has been used as a school and as private accommodation over the years, and since 2011 the building has been in use as a restaurant/carvery. Architectural interest - Neo-classical facade with pediment, brick built with stone window lintels and quoins on main frontal structure. Windows on southern extension are bricked over reflecting practice with much older buildings. Upper-storey windows to front are four over four panes and appear original Landmark status - clearly visible from Braywick Road main thoroughfare into town centre.
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10. Now that the Plan is adopted

The Neighbourhood Plan was inspected, endorsed in a public referendum and finally adopted by the Royal Borough in April 2026. The adopted MNP should allow the community to influence 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts (paid by developers) and their use for local infrastructure priorities. Delivery will require collaboration with RBWM, developers and civic groups.

11. Conclusion

The adopted Maidenhead Neighbourhood Plan provides a clear, community-led framework for shaping growth and regeneration in the town. It responds to local concerns with practical, enforceable policies that complement the borough-wide Local Plan. It promises Maidenhead a stronger voice and a more sustainable future.

The full Referendum Version of the Plan is [here](#)

Maidenhead Neighbourhood Forum (dissolved June 2026)