



# CAVERSHAM & DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## The 1997 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Will be held on Monday 24th March  
at the Baptist Free Church Centre  
(corner of Prospect St/Gosbrook Rd)  
commencing at 8.00pm.

### AGENDA

Minutes of last AGM  
Matters Arising therefrom  
Annual Report  
Statement Of Accounts  
Election of Committee  
Any Other Business

After the business of the AGM, we shall have a talk  
"Rescuing Swans" by 'Swan Life'  
expert Alan Dickinson.

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**NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE.** Since the last AGM there have been some changes in the formation of the Committee. If you were at the 1996 AGM you will recall that Molly Casey stepped down as Honorary Secretary, after many hard working years in the post. She was unanimously elected as our President. She continues to serve us as Press Officer.

We continue to need an Honorary Secretary and we would welcome a few new recruits onto the Committee, to inject some new ideas and energy. It is not too onerous; meetings are held on the third Monday of every month, from 8.00 to 10.00pm. Please speak to one of us if you would like to become involved.

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### ANNUAL REPORT/NEWSLETTER, MARCH 1997.

The Association is conscious of the impact of recent developments on traffic, shopping, school and residential amenities. Much time and effort has been spent attempting to ensure that proposed changes are as positive as possible.

**TRAFFIC.** No one can have failed to notice that Traffic has increased throughout Caversham, with long queues building up during rush hour periods. The problems seem insoluble in an area with an ever increasing rate of car ownership, so the Association has continued to respond to nearly all planning applications by reminding the Council of the likely impact on traffic flows. Sometimes the needs of the pedestrian appear to have been overlooked, so the Association has continued to highlight the problems associated with traffic lights, particularly at the junction of Church Street and Church Road. Meanwhile the 'new' traffic lights installed by the Library have proved confusing for pedestrians, and less than helpful for motorists.

The Association continues to write to Planning Officers reflecting residents' experience of all changes and proposed changes in traffic management, and the Committee always welcomes contributions from our Members. Sometimes a plan that looks good on paper causes unforeseen problems on the ground.

**SHOPS.** Much attention this year has been focussed on the former 'Elliotts' site on Gosbrook Road at the junction with Westfield Road. Although the

Borough Council had refused to designate this piece of land for retail purposes, Safeway were attempting to reverse that decision by forcing a Public Enquiry. CADRA were firmly opposed to a Superstore being built on this site. It would obviously generate more traffic and most people in Caversham seem to value the small shops in the area which could not compete with another Supermarket. The Association, together with six other local residents' groups, were preparing to oppose Safeway at a Public Enquiry in February, but has learned that Safeway are no longer interested in this site. No doubt they were influenced by the strength of local opinion revealed by the thousands of signatures on the Petition drawn up by our vigilant Planning Secretary, Doris Thomas.

**SCHOOLS and Other Community Amenities.** A number of housing developments are continuing. The biggest are in Bugs Bottom, well over 300 houses, and off Amersham Road, with permission for 190 houses. There are smaller residential developments off Henley Road and more proposed flats by the river at Abbotsmead in the centre of Caversham. Extra housing puts pressure on local services and resources. For example, Caversham Primary School continues to be over-subscribed, and at the other end of Caversham there is no primary school conveniently close for the families in the Amersham Road area.

Now that the Elliotts' site will be used for housing rather than retail use, the Association is pressing for some land to be set aside for a playing field for Thameside School. We consider it is an important part of CADRA's role to ensure that local Councillors get the best possible deal for the community when they agree terms with commercial developers. At present this Association is supporting the Amersham Road Community Residents' Association in pressing for housing developments in that area to include provision for shops, a community centre, and regular buses into Caversham and Reading centres.

**LIAISON WITH OTHER GROUPS.** A new departure for this Association during 1996 has been the closer links we have formed with other Residents' Organisations in Caversham. We have met with representatives from Amersham Road Community Residents' Association, Caversham Park Village Association, Caversham Triangle Action Group, Emmer Green Residents' Association, Heron Island Residents' Association, Lower Caversham Community Association and the Warren Residents' Association. We have shared news of members' concerns, planned action to influence Council decisions and obtained news coverage in the local press. Our ongoing concern is the threat of over-development, and its impact on the people who live locally, in terms of traffic pollution and scarcity of amenities.

**RECRUITMENT.** Arising from these discussions, a recruitment campaign was carried out during the late summer. CADRA financed the production of a leaflet which was delivered to 12,000 homes within the Caversham area. As a result over 300 new members have joined, most joining CADRA, but others choosing to join one of the other local groups. It is clear that people care a great deal about the area in which they live, and welcome the opportunity to make their voice heard through an active organisation such as this one. The more members we have, the more importance will be attached to our views by local Councillors, or at any future Public Enquiry.

If you know of any persons who may not have received our leaflet, or who may have recently moved into the Caversham area, please let them know of our existence and encourage them to join. Our Membership Secretary, Marian Fallowfield on 0118 947 1647 will always be pleased to enrol new members.

**PLEASE CHECK WITH HER THAT YOU HAVE RENEWED YOUR SUBSCRIPTION**