

CADRA News

Caversham & District Residents' Association
The Voice of Caversham since 1967



Keeping in touch during Covid-19

We update most of our members by email and this will continue, but in this time of rapid change, we will post the most useful and relevant updates and links on a new page on our website: www.cadra.org.uk/en/Covid-19-Local-Resources.

For our most longstanding members who do not use email, we are arranging telephone support, and important phone numbers are shown on the back page.

For more rapid changes, please see the information on the CADRA Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cavershamresidents. This is available to everyone without any need to register or use Facebook.




Scroll down to see the full list of posts.

These resources are designed to reach out across Caversham, and we encourage you to share them widely, along with the summary information on the back page of this newsletter.

Helen Lambert

COMMUNITY ACTION RESPONSE: COVID-19

5 things you can do to make a positive difference in your community

 <p>Think of others, consider your actions & be kind</p> <p>People in every community will face the challenges of Covid-19 in some way - from needing basic provisions to help while they are unwell.</p>	 <p>Connect and reach out to your neighbours</p> <p>As self-isolation increases, we need to find new ways to stay connected and check in on one another for our physical and mental wellbeing. Share phone numbers and stay in touch.</p>	 <p>Make the most of local online groups</p> <p>Keep up to date, share information and be a positive part of your local community conversations.</p>	 <p>Support vulnerable or isolated people</p> <p>Different groups in our communities are at increased risk and social isolation and loneliness are key concerns for all ages. There are things you can do like volunteering for local support services or donating to food banks to help.</p>	 <p>Share accurate information and advice</p> <p>Support anyone who may be anxious about Covid-19. Sign post them to the correct advice from Public Health England and encourage people to follow the correct hygiene practices.</p>
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AGM postponed

We are preparing this newsletter as government advice on the Coronavirus evolves. As a result, the AGM scheduled for May this year will not now take place, and the formal issues, including election of the committee

and adoption of the accounts, will need to be addressed later. We had planned to have speakers from the Environment Agency to talk about the proposed flood defences in Caversham; instead you will find an update in this newsletter.

Queen's Award for CADRA?

CADRA has been shortlisted for the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. This is the highest award given to local volunteer groups across the UK to recognise outstanding work done in their own communities. It was created in 2002 to celebrate the anniversary of The Queen's coronation - the MBE for volunteer groups. Winners of the 2020 award are expected to be announced later this year, but we feel honoured to have been put forward by the Lord Lieutenant and to have reached this stage.

In November last year, the panel on the life of William Marshal was installed on the viewing point of Caversham Bridge. This commemorates his death in Caversham in 1219. Stuart King, who made the Caversham village sign, restored and repainted the sign. Council staff repaired the post and reinstalled the sign last November.

The Sunday Times mentioned Caversham as one of the best places to live, with a great sense of community. We're all in this together!



Transport

Reading Transport Strategy 2036

Following the public consultation in autumn 2019, the draft strategy is due to be approved for consultation. The provisional closing date is Sunday 14 June 2020. The document outlines the high-level policy and strategy for transport to meet existing and future transport demand in the town to 2036. It sets out the many challenges that Reading faces, including climate change, air pollution, congestion and accessible travel.

Sections 1 to 5 set out the context and broad vision. Section 6, 'Schemes and Initiatives', sets out two main elements.

DEMAND MANAGEMENT might include a Clean Air Zone, Emissions-Based Charging, Road User Charging and a Workplace Parking Levy.

MULTI MODAL SCHEMES are intended to provide benefits to all road users, smoothing traffic flow and achieving more reliable journey times, improved air quality and productivity. These might include enhancements to traffic corridors and the IDR, and a range of improvements to Public Transport. A highly significant initiative is a new orbital route around the northern edge of Reading linking the A4074 to

the A4155 linking three new Park & Ride facilities to Thames Valley Park. It would include a Fast Track Public Transport route with walking and cycling facilities and limited highway capacity for general traffic to help alleviate congestion in Caversham and across the River Thames. This would allow reallocation of road space in Caversham and the existing river crossings, provide public transport priority as well as walking, cycling and public space improvements. It is linked to the delivery of the proposed Third Thames Crossing and will require joint work with Oxfordshire authorities.

www.cadra.org.uk/en/Traffic-and-Transport#block488

A high-level feasibility study for the third bridge, completed in October 2019, confirms construction in the proposed location would be feasible and outlines high-level costs. A proposal has been submitted for consideration through the Department of Transport's Large Local Major Schemes programme.

Road repairs

A three-year resurfacing programme is due to be agreed for major roads, minor roads and pavements. www.cadra.org.uk/en/Traffic-and-Transport#block489

Safer Caversham

Our Neighbourhood Policing Team includes PCSOs Ian Chaston, Lauren Jerrom and Jessica Lee, dedicated PC Mike Havers and three other PCs shared with Reading East.

Community Speedwatch has carried out fortnightly checks on nominated roads, supported by volunteers. Local burglaries have increased; Police stress the need to keep both ground *and* upper floor windows secure. There has been a recent spate of motorcycles being taken. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) is still in evidence at Mapledurham Playing Fields, particularly drug use.

The biennial Community Safety Survey gave top three concerns in North Reading as Burglaries, Speeding and Begging. In Caversham and Peppard Wards, the three major ASB concerns were drugs, rubbish and litter and teenagers hanging around. Police priorities are continually under review at this time so that they can continue to protect the most vulnerable and respond where they are needed.

Coronavirus-related scams are on the rise. Neighbourhood Watch provides guidance on what to look out for: https://bit.ly/covid_scams

Changes to ward boundaries

The independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England is asking people across Reading to comment on its draft proposals for new council ward boundaries. Due to population increases, Reading will have two additional Councillors. The existing one-councillor ward in Mapledurham would cease as 16 three-councillor wards are introduced. To ensure electoral equality, each ward should have a similar population, which leads to significant changes for Caversham's ward boundaries.

The proposed ward boundary lines (see map at <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/18202>) would mean that the revised Thames Ward spans the River Thames. The remaining area north of the river would be divided between three wards called Caversham, The Heights and Emmer Green.

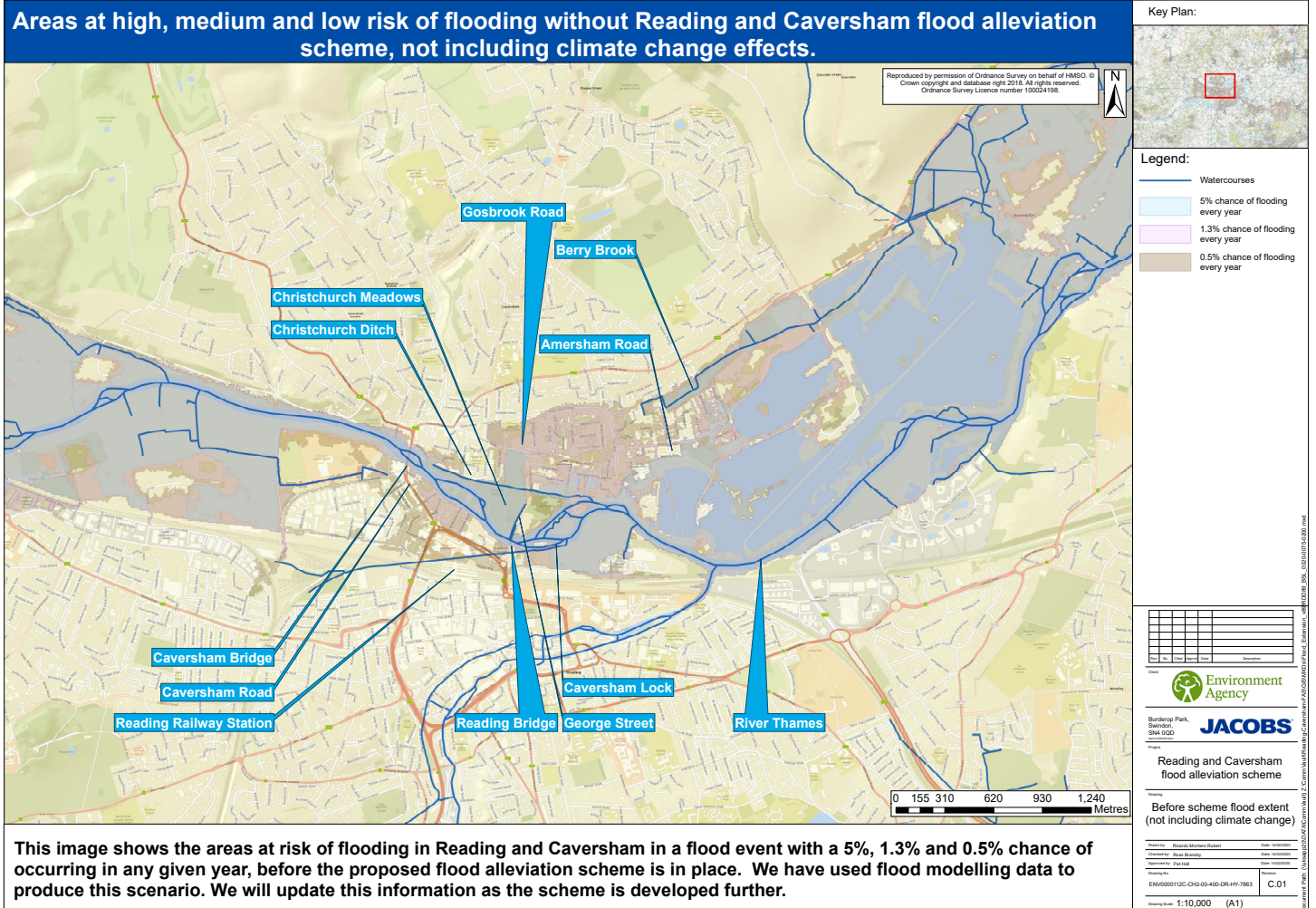
The ward boundaries proposed are different to the natural boundaries of Caversham Heights and Emmer Green, and the boundary between Caversham Ward and Thames Ward runs down Church Road and Church Street. CADRA is proposing some minor changes so that Caversham Centre, St Peters Conservation Area and Caversham Court all lie within Caversham Ward.

The Commission is asking whether proposed wards reflect local communities, whether the proposals can be improved and whether the names are right. Comments should be received **by 13 April 2020**. The [consultation link](#) gives details for email or online response. The postal address is: The Review Officer (Reading), Local Government Boundary Commission for England, 1st Floor, Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0TL.

Proposed flood defence scheme

The Environment Agency (EA) held meetings with local groups and drop-in events during February and March. The display boards from those events are available at http://bit.ly/EA_flood2020. In anticipation of their

presentation at the CADRA AGM, the EA sent us an update on their proposals for a major flood relief scheme for Caversham (see www.cadra.org.uk/en/Local-Environment#block490).



Maps and images © Environment Agency, reproduced from <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/thames/reducing-flooding-in-reading-and-caversham-infroma>

The EA explains that Reading was fortunate to have avoided flooding this year. They state that seven hundred properties are at risk of flooding in north Reading and Lower Caversham, with wider impacts such as loss of power and other utilities and transport disruption. Their aim is to reduce this risk of flooding before it happens. The latest plans include a combination of flood walls, embankments, temporary barriers and a new channel.

Landscape plans and 'before and after' pictures are intended to show what the scheme could look like: walls would be set back from the river and are likely to be a similar height to existing fences and walls. Where this is



▲ Mill Green Centre, before (top) and after (bottom)

not possible, they will aim to soften the appearance.

They have identified technical solutions to reduce the number of

trees which need to be removed. Trees lost would be replaced, following discussion on the location and species of replacements.

They conclude:

‘We ... will not build a scheme that transfers risk from one place to another. ... It is important to remember that the scheme is still in the early stages of development and it does not have the necessary permissions or funding.’

Concerns remain to be resolved and CADRA will continue to provide updates.



▲ Christchurch Meadows play area ('Sandy Park') before (top) and after, with channel in place (bottom)

Key

- Existing tree retained (or trees within working areas to be protected in accordance with BS5837)
- Tree retained with protection measures
- Existing tree removed
- Potential location for new tree (final positions to be agreed)
- New areas of shrub planting
- Proposed ornamental planting
- Proposed marginal planting
- New or reinstated areas of amenity grass
- Areas of proposed meadow
- Areas of new or reinstated paving
- Potential locations for sculptural features
- Visualisation viewpoints



Client: **Environment Agency**

JACOBS

Reading and Caversham Flood Alleviation Scheme

Project: **Reading Bridge Bypass Landscape Plan**

Checked by: Daniel Mowbray Date: 15/02/2020

Checked by: Sally Carter Date: 15/02/2020

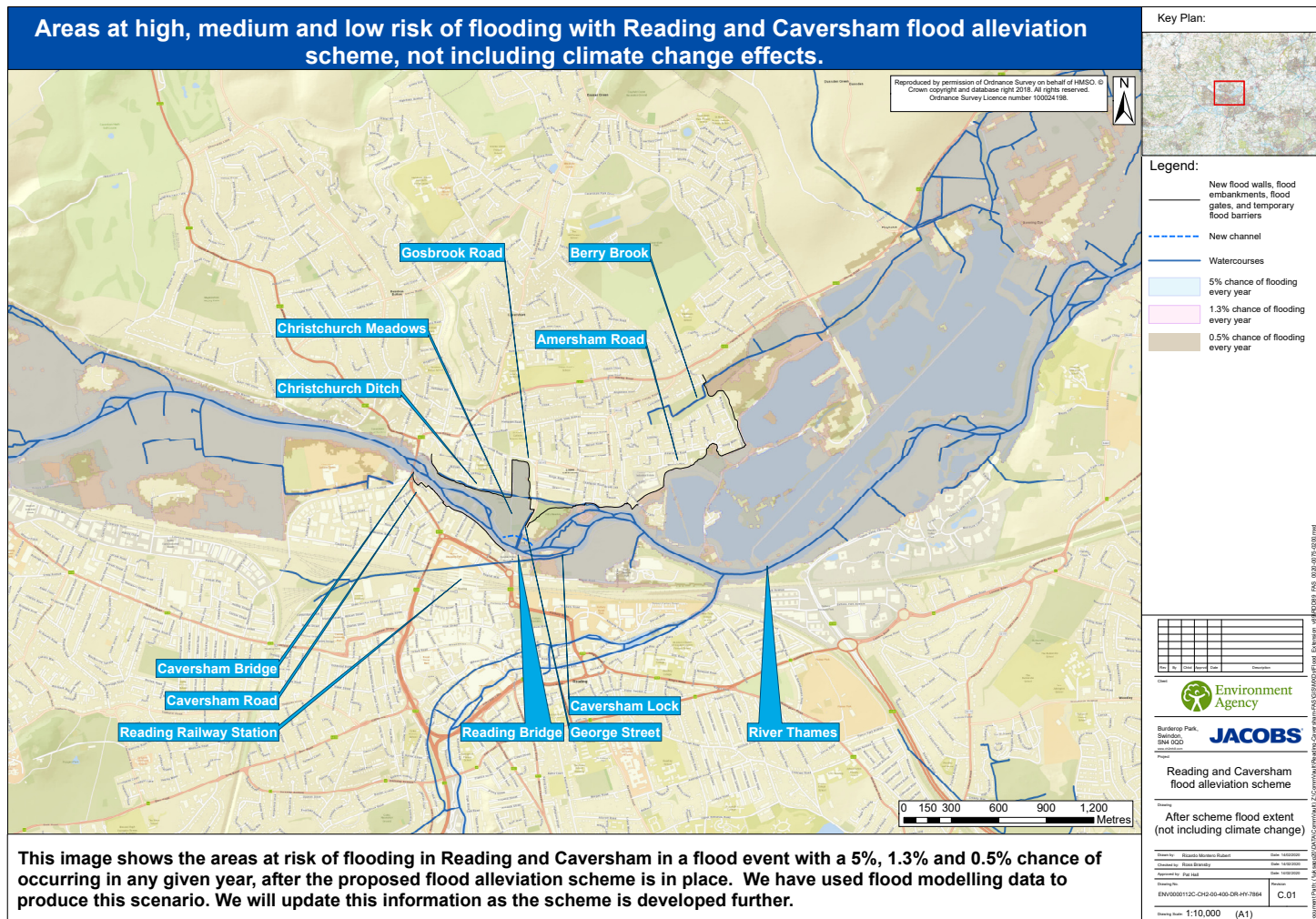
Approved by: Paul Hill Date: 15/02/2020

ENR0000112C-CH3-00-450-DR-47-7854 P03

◀ Detail of Reading Bridge Bypass Landscape Plan

Download the full plan from http://bit.ly/EA_Rdg_Bridge_Plan
© Environment Agency

Maps and images © Environment Agency, reproduced from <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/thames/reducing-flooding-in-reading-and-caversham-infroma>



This image shows the areas at risk of flooding in Reading and Caversham in a flood event with a 5%, 1.3% and 0.5% chance of occurring in any given year, after the proposed flood alleviation scheme is in place. We have used flood modelling data to produce this scenario. We will update this information as the scheme is developed further.

Planning

It has been another busy six months with many major new schemes either being submitted or in pre application consultation - particularly across the Thames. In that time CADRA reviewed 26 applications, commenting on twelve and attended several meetings with developers. You will find updates and links on the topics below at www.cadra.org.uk/en/Planning. As usual, the "Latest Planning Summary" lists applications with a link to the Council page and to comments sent by CADRA.

Local Plans

The Reading Local Plan was formally adopted in November 2019. Following an instruction from the Minister of Housing, the South Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan is now being progressed.

Caversham and Emmer Green

Reading Golf Club has submitted plans for 250 homes, across the land in Reading and a country park on the land in South Oxfordshire. This is in excess of Reading Local Plan which provides for around 100 homes on a part of the land within Reading. It will take time for the application to be validated and available on the Council website. But limited information is available at www.rgcfuture.com.

The application for development in St Martins Precinct, positioning the proposed new cinema in a new block above Superdrug, has been withdrawn. The earlier application made in 2014, which was granted permission after amendments, remains extant and a new application inserting the proposed cinema into the existing space occupied by offices and the gym with a new entrance on Church Street has just been made. It is indicated that the gym could be located elsewhere in the centre. CADRA considers this would be a good solution but has commented on some details.

A revised application for the Spice Oven, which would renovate and restore the important listed frontage buildings and provide four flats to the rear has yet to be decided. This new application follows the refusal of a similar scheme that had five flats to the rear. We very much hope that an acceptable solution for the back land can be found so that the restoration of the listed buildings can proceed.

The appeal regarding the development of land behind Blenheim Road has been dismissed. An application for extensive new sports facilities, which might facilitate relocation of Caversham Lawn Tennis Club, has been submitted by Queen Anne's School.

On St Johns Road, the developer created facilities in excess of the approved planning permission. RBC required a retrospective application to be submitted. Following concerns from residents and CADRA, this was refused by the Planning Applications committee. We are pleased an Enforcement Notice has been issued, though this is complicated by the appeal which has now been submitted.

Across the Thames

An application to build a hotel within the Crowne Plaza car park was refused. An application has been submitted to demolish the Drews building and build 44 apartments at six storeys. Since then, the building has received Local Listing (defined on page 40 of the Reading Local Plan). It was built in the 1870s as a row of malshouses to supply Simonds brewery. The developer will now have to demonstrate that the benefit of the new development outweighs the significance of the building.

Between Reading Station and the River Thames, three separate large schemes are coming forward. An outline application has been submitted by Hermes for the old sorting office site. It includes 658 apartments and offices, retail, community centre, health centre, ranging from 2 to 25 storeys. The adjoining Aviva site, for land from TGI Fridays to the Range, is for mixed residential and commercial use with up to 950 apartments, rising to 23 storeys. An outline application has just been submitted. See also www.rssp.co.uk/more-information. Across Vastern Road, Berkeley Homes have been consulting for some time over plans to develop part of the SSE site. The application has now been submitted. Additional information is available at www.vasternroad.co.uk.

These three major developments would have a profound impact on the area. There are major issues to consider and the three must be considered together in respect of the massing, heights, density, green space principles and the route from the station to the river. CADRA has made representations to the Council and received some limited assurances.

Are you concerned with Planning?

Several of the CADRA Committee are involved with planning issues. With so many developments coming forward, we would welcome another member to join the team. If you have relevant background or would like to develop an interest, we would very much like to hear from you. The next few months could be a good time to learn.

About CADRA

Our aim is to *preserve and enhance the quality of life in Caversham and the surrounding District*, or, in other words, that Caversham should always be...

...a great place to live!

We work closely with Reading Councillors and Officers, other local groups, the Police, companies and individuals, always avoiding party political bias.

Together, we can make it better.

We issue two newsletters a year, hold two public meetings, write columns for the *Caversham Bridge* local newspaper and maintain a website with information on local issues and links to relevant official websites. The Facebook page (shown on the CADRA homepage) gives up-to-the-minute local news. You do *not* need to register with Facebook.

Contacting CADRA

Please write to the Secretary or better still, email us at info@cadra.org.uk. Please let us know if you change your email address.

Membership

Membership of CADRA is just £3 per year per household. Leaflets are available from Caversham Library or Waltons, Prospect Street, or from the Membership Secretary, Tel: 947 6984. Join and pay online at www.cadra.org.uk/application_form.php.

The Committee

Chairman: Helen Lambert, 5 Derby Road, RG4 5HE, Tel: 947 3165

Treasurer: Colin Hall (co-opted), 2 Hornbeam Close, RG4 7DF, Tel: 946 3460

Secretary: Linda Watsham, 159 Kidmore Road, RG4 7NJ, Tel: 947 8744

Membership: Jacque Tomson, 121 Upper Woodcote Road, RG4 7LB, Tel: 9476984

Website: Lloyd Pople, Upper Woodcote Road

Planning: John Nicholls (co-opted), Sandcroft Road; Kim Pearce, The Mount; Malcolm Pemble, Shepherds Lane

Safer Caversham: Alan Wright, Upper Warren Avenue

COMMITTEE SUPPORT

Transport: Paul Matthews, Albert Road; John Lee, Hemdean Road

Project Support: Les Killick Upper Woodcote Road

Informal Links: Jo Munday, South View Avenue; Mo Prins, Haldane Road

General support: John Boucher, Highmoor Road; Les James, Wincroft Road; John Roach, St Peter's Avenue

Newsletter Editor: Helen Lambert

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The opinions expressed are those of the contributors.

Covid-19 Useful Information

Websites

With pressure on all services, we are all asked to seek information online wherever possible.

NHS ADVICE for everyone:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

CADRA PAGE with links on how to offer help, get help and keep life going:

www.cadra.org.uk/en/Covid-19-Local-Resources

This includes a list of **LOCAL FOOD DELIVERY** services:

www.cadra.org.uk/en/Covid-19-Local-Resources#block517

A wider range of links from **READING VOLUNTARY ACTION:**

<http://rva.org.uk/coronavirus-community-action>

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES during this period:

www.reading.gov.uk/coronavirus

ONE READING COMMUNITY HUB to offer or seek help if no local or family support is available:

www.reading.gov.uk/coronavirussupport

ONE READING COMMUNITY HUB contact:

https://bit.ly/Hub_contact

Latest news from **HEALTHWATCH READING:**

<https://healthwatchreading.co.uk/news-and-reports>

New links as they appear:

www.facebook.com/cavershamresidents

Phone Numbers

If you do not have internet, these are the important phone numbers:

HEALTH ADVICE (NHS 111): 111

ONE READING COMMUNITY HUB to seek help if no local or family support is available:

0808 1894325 (freephone)

9am to 5pm Monday to Friday

9am to 1pm Saturday and Sunday

For urgent issues related to **READING BOROUGH**

COUNCIL SERVICES: 0118 937 3787