

From the Lookout Post
August 07

Reading Festival

One of the concerns raised at the festival last year was that many people were not aware of the hotline telephone number to raise immediate concerns during the set up and the festival. This number will be issued nearer the time of the festival and it will be found on the Borough Council's website. If you wish to raise concerns which do not require an immediate response, these can be forwarded to licensing@reading.gov.uk or by post to the Licensing Department at the Civic Centre. The license granted in 2006 and the detailed operational procedures will continue to apply.

Laundry site, George Street

It is some time since the Planning Inspector heard the appeal by Bewley Homes against refusal of planning permission for a 76 unit residential development. However, this is such an important site, at the gateway to Caversham, that it may be worth sharing some information on the Inspector's findings. Representations were made to the Inspector by Ward Councillors of both parties as well as Emmer Green Residents Association and Caversham and District Residents Association.

The Inspector heard all representations and with many of those concerned, looked at the site from all sides. He concluded that the proposed plans paid insufficient attention to the surrounding context of the existing low rise development with open space and trees, that the scale would be discordant, particularly when the trees are not in leaf, and would diminish the visual quality of the open space. Overall, he concluded that the plans would detract from the character and appearance of the locality and dismissed the appeal.

It was clear on this occasion that planning officers, councillors from different parties and local people were all speaking with one voice. Having said that, the site is deteriorating and does need some solution for its future. Let us hope that a solution can be found which will fit well with the locality and be attractive both from George Street and from Christchurch Meadows.

Memorial to Molly Casey

Sadly the dedication of the replica wind vane for Caversham Court gazebo, could not be held in the gardens. However, despite the rain the gathering in St Peter's Church was a very happy occasion, bringing together many people who knew Molly or had contributed to the project. Molly's daughter, Hester was impressed with the appropriateness of the memorial which would "look up and down the river, surveying Caversham and watching the winds of change blow over Caversham"

It was a pleasure to hear the fulsome praise for Molly's years of campaigning from those whose predecessors may have found Molly to be a real thorn in the flesh!

Local Policing

We welcome to the Caversham police team, Sergeant Nigel Scarratt. It is helpful that Sgt Scarratt is a Caversham resident having local knowledge and interest. We wish Sergeant McKeown well as he takes up his West Reading duties after three years of service to Caversham.

The four new Police Community Support Officers have been giving a much more visible police presence in Caversham. They operate without the usual administrative burden because, as cases develop, they hand them over to P.C.s to complete the paperwork.. This enables them to be out in the community. They welcome being engaged in conversation to introduce themselves and to deal with matters that concern residents and local businesses.

Inaugural meetings of the two Caversham Neighbourhood Action Groups have taken place. Further meetings will focus on measures to deal with the three priority areas identified in a survey of over 300 Caversham people. The priority areas for the next year are antisocial behaviour, burglaries and traffic issues. If you wish to either provide views to this group or participate in it, please contact the local police on 0845 8505 505

Central Caversham

In spite of activity by CADRA there is little progress to make the St Martin's Precinct area more attractive. This is in stark contrast to the large flower boxes on the pavement along Church Street, which this year are filled with more traditional, but nevertheless very colourful summer bedding flowers. Full marks too for the various businesses that have made an effort to enhance their street frontage with horticultural displays. The central Caversham pubs have put on a good show with their flower boxes, in spite of the more than occasional vandalism. Even those businesses that only place standard bushes in pots outside their doors do uplift the street scene. Wouldn't it be great if in 2008 Caversham could have a co-ordinated floral theme?

Rector Richard Kingsbury

CADRA echo the sentiments in the full tribute given on pg X to Richard upon his retirement from St Peter's and St Margaret's. Richard's readily given support of those who were not frequent churchgoers, in their time of need or major life juncture, will be a lasting legacy to his 24 years in Caversham. His wife Angela also served on a number of groups, quietly providing support to those who were vulnerable. We wish them both well.

Caversham: Past, Present and Future

To celebrate its fortieth anniversary this year, CADRA invites you to an evening on the past, present and future of Caversham on **Wednesday 17 October 2007** from 7.30 to 9.30pm at Caversham Primary School. Representatives from the Borough Council's strategic planning and transport planning will present displays and be available to answer questions. There will be slide shows and displays of historical aspects of Caversham and a wide range of organisations, both statutory and voluntary will contribute displays on current issues in Caversham.

There has been a very positive response from everyone who has been approached. If you are interested to contribute, please contact info@cadra.org.uk. We would be interested to hear from any organisation which has an impact on life in Caversham and particularly from any local traders.

The meeting is open to all. Light refreshments will be served and there will be a charge of £1 for non-members. Please note the date in your diary.