

From the Lookout Post October 07

Reading Festival

By the time you read this, the clear up from the festival should be well on the way to completion. Helped by the wonderful weather, the festival was particularly successful this year with both well known groups and some much newer names. Large numbers of Reading young, and not so young, people joined the capacity crowd of 80,000.

The ground water across the site had been significantly reduced through huge efforts by the festival organisers, Reading Borough Council and the Environment Agency. Despite this, not all of the planned camp sites were usable and last minute arrangements had to be made to reduce car parking on the main site in order to provide enough camping space. Although the main arena was reasonably dry, many of the camping areas were very muddy and so large numbers of festival goers were to be seen in wellingtons and shorts – a real contrast from the sea of black uniforms seen in years gone by. Unfortunately, the late change in car parking arrangements contributed to the problems with on street parking in the areas close to the festival.

As always, Caversham's shops cafes and restaurants drew many festival goers, particularly in the mornings before the music starts. Waitrose did good trade but had to contend with a sea of mud being walked through the store. A full 'English Breakfast' was available from a host of different nationalities and there were long orderly queues for the cash machines near Bridge Street.

The scheme to refund 10p on every paper cup substantially reduced the amount of litter in the main arena. Incentives to separate waste for recycling and camping equipment to be passed on to Global Hand, helped to reduce the clear up operation. The free draw for tickets to Glastonbury or Reading tickets in 2008 encouraged people to hand in their empty gas canisters but sadly this did not entirely prevent isolated problems on the final night when there were some reports of both tents and gas canisters being burned on camp fires. Following particular problems in 2005, this is always a concern and will be one of a number of issues for discussion when local residents' associations, Ward Councillors

and RBC Licensing staff meet with Mean Fiddler to review comments received and take stock to see what lessons can be learned for future years. What nobody can control is the wind direction during the festival. It may be that this year the wind took more of the sound towards Tilehurst and Calcot and slightly less up the hill to Caversham.

Government White Paper on Planning Process Changes

You may have seen articles and advertisements in the press concerning the Government White Paper on Planning, particularly in relation to Major Infra-structure Projects. Many organisations are concerned about the implications of this White Paper fearing that the government is removing community voices from the planning process for major developments.

The white paper covers a number of areas including:

- **Planning for a Sustainable Future (Major Infra-Structure Projects)** which looks at how proposed developments for new power plants, ports, railways, major roads and motorways, waste disposal plants, reservoirs and the like are implemented. The basis of it is to establish a set of policies through consultation and to then set up an independent commission to oversee and ultimately make the decision on all major infra-structure projects.
- **Changes to Permitted Development** which relates to householders having wind powered generators etc. and proposes that householders wanting to do small extensions or changes to their home do not need to apply for planning permission as long as their neighbours are amenable to the changes.
- **Improving the Appeal Process in the Planning System** to make it proportionate, customer focused, efficient and well resourced
- **Planning Fees in England**
- **Planning Performance Agreements** is a new way to manage large scale major planning applications

See www.CADRA.org.uk for more information on this subject and links to the white paper.

CADRA celebrates 40 years this month

A reminder that in celebration of its ruby anniversary, there will be a special Open Meeting, open to all on the theme of **CAVERSHAM: PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE**. It will be held on **WEDNESDAY 17 OCTOBER from 7.30 to 9.30pm** at **CAVERSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL**. Light refreshments will be available, kindly sponsored by the Caversham branch of Waitrose. The event is free to members and £1 to non members. As well as presenting some of the changes over 40 years, CADRA has built on its contacts with a wide range of organizations, both statutory and voluntary, to arrange slide shows and displays on many issues affecting Caversham. We hope you will come along and enquire, suggest, comment or reminisce with representatives from CADRA, the Council and many other organisations.

There is also a special anniversary issue of the CADRA newsletter in full colour, covering current issues as well as reflecting on 40 years of change in Caversham. This is being sent free to all members. It is also available for £1 from Wordplay and at the meeting on 17 October.