

## **LOOKOUT OCTOBER 2008**

### **Reading Festival**

Another Reading Festival has happened successfully without too much disruption. For the first time a pedestrian bridge was erected to link the camp site at Mapledurham to the main site. This went up and came down with minimal impact on the river traffic. The erection of the solid fence around the site seems to have not only improved the security of the site but also protected the Warren from the sight of the campers and rubbish and served to reduce the noise level.

The controlled access to The Warren seems to have worked well but as in the previous year, there were problems with on street parking on other roads and several cars had to be towed away as they were causing an obstruction.

The main complaints were about fires, particularly on the Sunday night and Monday morning and including a worrying incident at Mapledurham where fire spread through the long grass and several vehicles were burned. Noise levels do not appear to have caused particular concern to local people this year.

Traffic delays were a particular problem on the Monday and the original aim of directing festival goers from the north does not appear to be successful. However, overall the festival was relatively trouble free for residents. For festival goers, the conditions queuing for tickets just before the start of the festival were alarming and the last night was made difficult in some areas by a minority setting fire to tents, toilets and flags.

### **Mapledurham Playing Fields**

Following problems with late night 'wheelies' in the car park, strategically placed rows of railway sleepers will be fixed to the ground with steel pins and painted white for high visibility. This should not reduce the number of car parking spaces.

We are told that design options and costings for the replacement changing rooms and transitional arrangements are currently being worked on, with input from the current users, but no date has yet been given for the demolition of the pavilion.

### **Bus Services**

As a result of concerns about the reliability of the number 9 bus route, due to traffic congestion, Reading Buses launched a formal consultation on proposals to split the route. The number 9 leaving Caversham would reach the station via Friar Street and terminate there. The other half of the route would become route number 8 and would also terminate at the station. Reading Buses believe this would provide a more reliable service less susceptible to delays in heavy traffic.

At the same time, it was proposed to cease the Sunday service to Caversham, introduced on a trial basis. The two proposed changes caused a great outcry, a protest on the Woodcote Road and a record number of comments from residents both to Reading Buses and to CADRA.

For Caversham residents travelling across town to the Royal Berkshire Hospital or to the many secondary schools in that area, it would be necessary to change routes. This has raised particular concerns for school children and for the elderly and families with young children travelling to the hospital. A request was made that the number 9 should loop round the hospital rather than terminating at the station.

As a result of the level of concern, the Sunday service is to continue with extra funding from Reading Borough Council and the period of consultation was extended to the end of

September. Alternative proposals are expected in October, with further opportunity to comment. The aim is to introduce any changes to the route in March 2009. The common aim must be to have high quality services and many more people using them. There are many issues for the future as to how the bus services can develop with the aim of reducing the potential number of car journeys. The Caversham and District Residents' Association ( CADRA ) invited **James Freeman, Chief Executive Officer of Reading Buses** to speak at an open meeting. He has kindly agreed and will speak on the subject:  
**"Persuading People out of their Cars"**  
**at 7.45 on Wednesday 12 November 2008**  
**at The Baptist Centre, Prospect Street**

Non members are very welcome to attend and will have the opportunity to join the association at the meeting.

### **Caversham Policing News**

Further to the comprehensive police staff update in the August Lookout Post, PC John Finnerty wishes to extend his appreciation to Caversham residents and business for their support in his two tours of duty in Caversham. John said that "Caversham will always hold fond memories for me. I have had some great times here and I will miss both the people and the place."

John's assessment is that that the Caversham Police team headed by Inspector Graham Dix and Sgt Nigel Scarrat, have helped improve the quality of life across all of Caversham. He has every confidence that the new Caversham Police team, including the four PCSOs, will continue to make strides in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour. He stressed that achieving these objectives is a partnership with the local community.

John urged residents to take prudent steps to protect their property and to become involved through the Police surgery sessions and the two Neighbourhood Action Groups. We wish PC Finnerty well as he takes up his Tutor Constable role at Reading Police Station, passing on his skills and experience to new recruits.