

From the Lookout Post – October 2013

Sharing our Streets

The Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA) and the Caversham Traders Association (CTA) will hold a joint open meeting at 7.45 pm, Tuesday 12 November at Thameside School Hall. Titled 'Sharing our Streets', the speaker will be Simon Beasley, Network Manager from Reading Borough Council Transport Department. The aim is to consider how Caversham Centre can meet the needs of those who drive through it, as well as those who live, shop, work and do business there.

The meeting is open to all. Please come and support the work of both CADRA and CTA.

Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge

Detailed plans for the proposed new bridge are nearing completion and a planning application has now been completed. Members of CADRA Committee were invited to meet the Deputy Head of Transport and the Senior Engineer on the design team to hear about plans to date and make comments. One of the concerns expressed was the potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists which is also a serious concern for the Reading Cycle Campaign. The ramp down to Christchurch Meadows will require a section of the children's playground to be re-sited as part of the project.

At the time of writing, the planning application was not available to view. However a reference number 121234/FUL has been issued and plans should be available by the time you read this. You can go to www.reading.gov.uk/, select 'View planning applications' and enter the reference. This provides a second and final opportunity to comment on the bridge.

Mini roundabout

The mini roundabout junction between Church Street, Prospect Street and Gosbrook Road has been the site of a number of accidents and has been identified for review. Sadly a further accident occurred there in August. Members of CADRA Committee and Caversham Traders Association met with the Network Manager and have been given the opportunity to comment on a revised layout. This is at the preliminary design stage and subject to a full safety audit before progress to the next stage. HGV signing around this area will also be reviewed to ensure lorries are being directed to the most appropriate route.

Reading Festival

In previous years there have been major traffic delays on Bank Holiday Monday as festival goers exit the camp site in Mapledurham Village and head towards Caversham down Woodcote Road. CADRA has been pressing for steps to be taken to reduce the problem and the Festival Organisers took considerable trouble this year to direct people away from Caversham on to other routes.

Comments are only just coming in but so far the indications are that this year's event was relatively free of problems. As is often the case, the sound travelled more to Tilehurst rather than Caversham and more festival goers are shopping round Oxford Road than in Caversham. The list of concerns raised will be reviewed by all the major services in November/December so it is not too late to lodge comments by emailing - licensing@reading.gov.uk.

Caversham House, Church Road

Caversham House has been standing partially demolished following the approval of a planning application for commercial units on the ground floor, residential units above and parking and a small garden behind. The design was for a gabled roof line but higher than the existing properties. The property then changed hands and a new application was submitted, with a modified design - reference 130609/FUL. This application was approved by the Planning Committee in September.

Policing and Crime

Regrettably various door step selling scams are still finding “rich pickings” in Caversham. We therefore reiterate that any work required should have a written quotation and invoice. Speculative contacts claiming that work is required, most commonly roofing repairs, should be resisted. The February Caversham Bridge lead article by Steve Hambridge, Reading Borough Council Senior Protection Officer, with specific responsibility for “Door Step Selling” gave advice on preventing becoming a victim. If you, or particularly a vulnerable neighbour or relative is approached, contact Mr Hambridge (937 2490), or the police or The Citizens Advice Bureau with any information that may be used to stamp out these scams.

The year on year crime statistics for the year ending on 8 August 2013 show a welcome decline in anti-social behaviour (ASB) of one third. ASB is by far the most frequently recorded incident with the number for all of ASB incidents in Caversham dropping from 493 in the previous year to 323 in the latest year. The other categories of reported crime had far smaller numbers of incidents and so a significant percentage increase in theft from vehicles and drug offences has to be viewed with caution. Most other categories of crime had a significant reduction.

A number of changes to the Caversham Policing Team are underway and these will be detailed in the next Lookout Post article when we hope to be able to announce the new staff appointments. Pleasingly, several of the officers are being promoted and we wish them well in their new posts.

Christmas presents and cards

If you are looking for gifts or cards with a local theme, these may fit the bill:

- Book of Caversham Heritage Exhibitions - £10, order from WordPlay, Prospect Street
- Heritage Guide to Caversham Court Gardens - £5, order from WordPlay info@wordplayshop.co.uk
- Pack of six note cards showing local sites and their history - £5, from www.fccg.org.uk or www.wadra.org.uk or Walton’s Jewellers, Caversham. All proceeds go to Caversham Court Gardens or Mapledurham Pavilion.
- Caversham Heritage Map Leaflet (A5) with a summary of local history and a walk round local sites of interest – 50p from Caversham Library

