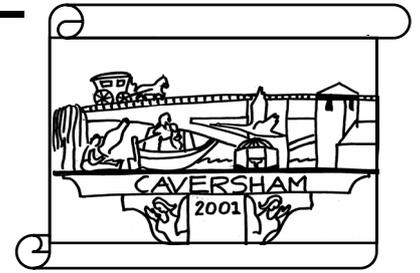


# CADRA news

Caversham And District Residents' Association

*The voice of Caversham for 40 years*



Volume 8, Issue 2, October 2008

[www.cadra.org.uk](http://www.cadra.org.uk)

## On the Buses!

Traffic congestion, air quality and latterly, bus services have come to the fore in the past months. Evidence to the Independent Transport Commission highlighted the growing levels of congestion, with traffic volume predicted to rise by 40% in the 25 years from 2000. The full report of the Commission, although long, makes interesting reading. Reading's Air Quality Action Plan recognises that the main source of air pollution in the town is traffic. Areas close to congested and busy roads, as can be expected, have higher levels of pollution in excess of the national air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide. Levels of pollution in these areas are remaining high, despite improvements such as cleaner fuel and more efficient vehicles.

A particular issue on which the Commission sought evidence was how to achieve a "modal shift" from car to other means of transport. A consultation exercise in 2005 gave improving bus services as the most important priority. Bus services have been the subject of considerable discussion in Caversham with the proposed changes to the number 9 bus route.

'...a realistic alternative for travel into and around Reading ....'

With these two issues, it seemed particularly opportune to invite James Freeman, Chief Executive Officer of Reading Buses to talk about the big issues for the future and how we might achieve a "reliable,

convenient and safe public transport system that will contribute to a cleaner environment by providing a realistic alternative for travel into and around Reading". It promises to be a very interesting evening.

The Transport Commission also highlighted issues of communication on transport raised by CADRA and others. Their report cites the need for "transparency of objectives" and the need for "a more open and direct approach to citizen engagement". CADRA is keen to play a part in that engagement.

After many years of requests from individuals and from CADRA, we were very pleased to see the installation of new bottle banks near the back of Marks and Spencer in Caversham centre. They are intended for use between 8am and 8pm to minimise disturbance to people living nearby. This provision is thanks, in part, to the new managing agents of the precinct, who have already made a number of improvements. We understand that more are in the pipeline.

It is good to see work underway at Caversham Court. You will find regular updates on the programme of restoration at [www.cadra.org.uk](http://www.cadra.org.uk). Read about the celebrated line in Pekinese breeding initiated by Mary de Pledge who lived there from 1921 to 1927.



**"Persuading People Out of their Cars"**

**A presentation by  
James Freeman,  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Reading Buses**

**Wednesday 12th November  
At the BAPTIST FREE CHURCH  
CENTRE,  
PROSPECT ST. at 7:45pm**

In July, the Transport Commission reported their findings, listing sixteen key recommendations. To the relief of most Caversham residents, this included abandoning the one-way IDR, although we await the Council's confirmation of this decision in September. Recommendations of interest include:

- Better liaison between the transport authorities in the area to tackle the problems jointly
- Abandon one-way IDR
- Third Thames bridge to be studied, with possible tolling,
- New park-and-rides
- More through bus routes and better bus ticketing
- Improved walking and cycling provision

## Reading Station Redevelopment and Cow Lane

The station proposals are out for consultation and public exhibitions were held - see [www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/5167.aspx](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/5167.aspx). CADRA will submit comments and hopes members will do so. The plans are very general with more detail apparently being a year away. The station will have more platforms and better pedestrian access to Vastern Road and Caversham. This could create additional traffic problems in the area, although those heading for the station should find improvements.

Cow Lane appears to have been given a reprieve, with the bridge to be widened and improved for all users. The impact of

additional traffic coming from Tilehurst onto Caversham Road is still not known. CADRA were previously told that the information would be available in August, but with the revised plans, it is unlikely to be available for some months.

## Cycling Strategy

Reading apparently produced a new draft Cycling Strategy in June replacing the earlier February version. Access difficulties to this on RBC's website mean no further information is available and so CADRA has not yet been able to comment.

## Caversham Park Village

There has been a consultation on changing the traffic calming chicanes and incorporating improved pedestrian crossing points. Consultation officially ended on 5<sup>th</sup> September - see [www.reading.gov.uk/transportandstreets/transportstrategy](http://www.reading.gov.uk/transportandstreets/transportstrategy)

## Caversham Centre

Suggestions have been circulating about a possible one-way system in Caversham centre. After the farce over the IDR these seem misguided. One-way systems may help some traffic to move better and faster, but can create worse conditions for cyclists and pedestrians and generate more rat-runs. CADRA would like to see Caversham centre as a successful and pleasant centre without unnecessary domination by traffic.

## Caversham Lock Island

Helen Lambert

The Borough Council and the Environment Agency invited bids for the development of the Kings Meadow pool and the Caversham Lock Island. A number of bids were received and reported on by English Heritage. RBC agreed that two of the offers received

(one for the pool only and the other for both the pool and Lock Island ) should be worked up in more detail. This is not yet complete but we expect further news very soon.

CADRA has been given the opportunity

to comment at each stage and has stressed the need for local people to be able to enjoy the area as well as the importance of maintaining the planning principles established for this area following public consultation.

## Number 9 Bus Consultation

Ruth Perkins

Reading Buses had proposed to stop the No. 9 Sunday service but such was the overwhelming reaction to it, Reading Council have stepped in to fund the shortfall in revenue to allow the Sunday service between Central Reading and Caversham Heights to continue as at present.

The other proposal was to change the No. 9 service to terminate at the station, calling at Friar Street on the way. This is expected to solve the problem of unreliability during peak times due to traffic. This led to a protest on the Woodcote Road and record numbers of comments from residents both to Reading Buses and to CADRA. Most people are against this change, but not all.

The main complaints are the lack of a direct service to the Royal Berks and to schools in the area and the extended time taken to get to the station. An alternative proposal is to have a loop that goes as far as the Royal Berks and then returns to town. Reading Buses feel that by making the service more reliable, more people will use it. We will have to wait a little longer for the outcome but again, they seem to be listening.

Reading Buses has announced that they will bring forward a new proposal at the end of October to deal with the current problems of unreliability on route 9. There will be further consultation prior to an anticipated introduction in March 2009.

## Environmental Issues

John Mullaney

Environmental issues and air quality are subjects which the committee will be pursuing and reporting on for the foreseeable future. We would welcome members' views so that we can bring

these to the various forums and discussion groups organised by Reading Borough Council.

Whatever your perspective on the debate over the environment, you may be

interested to see a web site recommended by RBC, [www.ukcip.org.uk](http://www.ukcip.org.uk). You will also find extensive information on air quality on [www.reading.gov.uk](http://www.reading.gov.uk).

# Planning

Helen Lambert

Appeals continue to be a regular issue. A useful development is the new access to the Planning Inspectorate on-line. It is now possible to track progress on-line and to submit comments. The system is not yet fully user friendly and so we have changed the monthly CADRA list on the website, to make it easier. Any appeal on the CADRA list now has a direct link to that particular appeal on the Inspectorate site.

Appeals are in process for applications at 161 Upper Woodcote Road, Star Road, Church Street (off Chester Street

Car Park), the old convent on South View Avenue and Gravel Hill Cottages. Some dates have been set and these can be found on-line.

The appeal for sheltered housing between Abbotsmead Place and School Lane was heard in May and was allowed. The land lies within the flood plain and the Planning Committee had refused the application on the advice of the Environment Agency. The appeal decision hinged on technical issues and the acceptability of a void under the building to offset the consequent

increased flood risk caused by the hard standing. It is disappointing to see a large development in the flood plain allowed against the advice of the Environment Agency.

In April, an application for the replacement of 182 Kidmore Road and the development of five additional houses on land to the rear was permitted, despite local concerns about the design of the houses. CADRA has raised concerns with the planners about the underlying issues in determining the appropriate design for a locality.

# Water consultation

Mike Gilbert & Clair Drever

Thames Water (T.W.) held a consultation process to gain customer feedback on their plans for future development of water supply, sewage disposal and their environmental impacts. T.W. is responsible for water supply, sewerage treatment, ensuring our rivers continue to run and flooding is controlled.

By 2015, T.W. estimate that the demand for drinking water will have increased by around 300,000 customers (+3.5%), however, climate change will significantly reduce the natural supply of water (-1.6%). In the future the management of our water supplies is critical as all of it comes from rivers, reservoirs and from underground. Against this backdrop of increasing demand and decreasing availability, T.W. intend to significantly increase investment to enable it to meet demand.

Our view is that T.W. needs to focus on:

- Reducing leakage. They have one of the poorest records in the UK
- Increasing the installation of water meters to reduce consumption
- Robustly challenging building on flood plains
- Sharing of water between water companies
- Sharing of expertise on water efficiencies.

T.W. is seeking to increase bills annually by around 3% to finance the improvements required. On average, this proposal would increase household bills by around £50 annually. More information can be obtained from the CADRA website.

# Policing

John Roach

The police team has some new faces (see the list on page 4). Insp. Dix has moved to an HQ position after achieving notable successes in Caversham. We welcome as the new Inspector, Penny MacKenzie, and welcome back Rob Pitman, who is now a Sergeant. Both are totally dedicated to Caversham bringing a policing complement of nine officers.

Neighbourhood Action Groups allow residents to identify the community's

priorities and cooperate in addressing these issues. Local people have charged the two Caversham groups with three problem areas: antisocial behaviour, burglary and traffic and parking issues.

Initially, both NAGs focused on measures to reduce antisocial behaviour, using the expertise and resources of the North Reading Youth Services to provide interesting activities in which young people can participate.

Success in this area, and the onset of winter allowed the NAGS to focus on the other two priorities. Deterrents to burglaries included targeting key suspects, improved surveillance and high visibility patrols.

Traffic issues appear most acute around the primary school run. Information leaflets are being distributed to parents, there is greater enforcement of parking restrictions and at one primary school, a lollipop person will be employed.

# Mapledurham Pavilion

Stewart Bolton

Reading Borough Council, as Trustees have funded the Charity each year to date. In their view there is no evidence to establish a legal obligation on the Council to replace or restore the pavilion. Thus the Cabinet decision to demolish the hall and re-provide changing rooms, designed with the ability to build on a hall in the future should funding become available, without the loss of any land, remains unchanged.

Design options and costings for the replacement changing

rooms and transitional arrangements are currently being worked on with input from the current users being considered. No date has yet been given for the demolition of the pavilion.

Recent night time problems in the car park from individuals doing 'wheelies' should be solved by traffic calming measures. 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 parking spaces available.

Another Reading Festival passed successfully without too much disruption. The new pedestrian bridge caused few problems. The solid fence around the site improved security and screened the view from the Warren, reducing noise. The controlled access to The Warren went well, although cars parked in other areas caused obstruction and had to be towed away. The main complaints were about fires, particularly on the Sunday night and Monday morning and some disruption from noise and smells as the site was being cleared. Traffic was very slow on the Monday and many users of the White Car Park at Mapledurham seemed to be heading towards Caversham, not the North as was intended.

From an attendee's perspective, in addition to ticket problems, the sound quality from the main stage was not good and there was disturbance from a minority that set fire to tents, toilets, flags etc and spoiled the last night's revelry. But overall, little to complain about.

## About CADRA

### The Committee

**Chairman:** Helen Lambert\*  
**Treasurer:** Stewart Bolton\*  
**Secretary:** Linda Watsham\*  
**Voluntary Liaison:** James Frost  
**Footpaths & Traffic:** John Lee\*  
**Planning:** Jennifer Millett  
**Licensing & Transport:** John Mullaney\*  
**Comm Sup't & Newsletter:** Ruth Perkins\*  
**Safer Caversham:** John Roach\*  
**Website & Email:** Clair Drever\*  
**Topical Issues:** Mike Gilbert\*

### Committee Support

**Membership:** Mick Simmons\*  
**Newsletter Distribution:** Jo Munday\*  
**Planning Research:** Liz Killick\*  
**Website Support:** Linda Barlow\*

To contact the committee, please email:  
[info@CADRA.org.uk](mailto:info@CADRA.org.uk)

\* If you want to email individual committee members marked with an \*, their email address can be constructed as their 1stname.2ndname@cadra.org.uk

Alternatively, write to: The CADRA Secretary, 159

### Contacting CADRA

Please write to the Secretary or better still, email us at:  
[info@cadra.org.uk](mailto:info@cadra.org.uk)

### Our aim is to:

*"preserve and enhance the quality of life in Caversham and the surrounding District"*

We follow planned changes relevant to Caversham and look for opportunities to improve or protect our shared environment. We avoid party political bias, working closely with Reading Councillors and Officers, other local groups, the Police, companies and individuals.

We issue two newsletters a year, hold two public meetings, write columns for the Caversham Bridge local newspaper and maintain a website with a wide range of information on local and current issues.

### Membership

Membership of CADRA is just £2 per year per household. Membership leaflets are available in Caversham Library and Wordplay in Prospect St. or from the Membership Secretary, tel. 0118 9543537. The stronger our voice, the more impact we can have on local decisions. Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join!

## Useful Information

### Ward Councillors

Contact via: 0118 939 0287  
**Mapledurham**  
 Fred Pugh

### Caversham

Andrew Cumpsty  
 David Lockett  
 Tom Stanway

### Peppard

Jamie Chowdhary  
 Mark Ralph  
 Richard Willis

### Thames

Isobel Ballsdon  
 Jeanette Skeats  
 David Stevens

### Caversham Neighbourhood Police

Inspector Penny Mackenzie and Sergeant Rob Pitman  
 PCs: Debbie Smith, Stuart Murdoch and John Finnerty  
 PCSOs: John Hendy, Emily Heath, Chloe Denny, Layla Canning.

To report crime, suspicious incidents or contact individual officers: 0845 8 505 505 or email: [police@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:police@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)  
 Caversham Police Office in Church House: 0118 9474269 - use answer phone.  
 Police 'Surgeries' at Church House, 1st Monday of the month 5pm - 8pm.

Anti-Social Behaviour Hotline: 0845 605 2222  
 Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, Liz Herbert: 0118 953 6250  
 Crime Reduction, John McNicholas: 07800 702204

**In an emergency or if a crime is being committed call 999**  
[www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk)

### Reading Borough Council

Switchboard 0118 939 0900

Call Centre for Refuse Collection, Graffiti Removal, 0800 834 035

Call Centre for Planning Permission & Enquiries, Licensing, Road Safety, Noise Nuisance, Environmental Health, 0800 626 540

[www.reading.gov.uk](http://www.reading.gov.uk), gives information on a wide range of issues including planning applications.  
 Links to specific parts of the Council web-site can be found on the CADRA website: [www.cadra.org.uk](http://www.cadra.org.uk).