



CADRA News

Caversham & District Residents' Association
The Voice of Caversham since 1967



The Chilterns AONB

In 2017, we asked, 'What makes Caversham special?' We looked at our architectural heritage and the wonderful selection of local trees. Caversham also benefits from its border with the lovely countryside in South Oxfordshire – much of it within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The woodland, hills, views, chalk streams and history provide a huge recreational asset for all of us, as well as a rich and diverse habitat. But such a lovely area so close to London is under huge development pressure, not only from housing but from big infrastructure projects like HS2. The area stretches from here to beyond Luton and is one of only two such areas to have its own statutory Conservation Board.

We are pleased to welcome Chief Officer, Sue Holden to speak after a brief AGM at which everyone is welcome. Sue will describe the Board's work, alongside the Local Authorities, to help cope with the pressures and to manage the area's assets, as well as some of its exciting projects. These



Ridgeway, Pulpit Hill. Photograph by Colin Drake

include the revival of its unique chalk streams, the enhancement of its historic woodland and landscapes, an annual walking festival, and the plotting of all the Chilterns' ancient hill forts using the latest methods of aerial detection.

In the meantime, the Chilterns Conservation Board is seeking your views on the key issues in managing

the area, and you can give these on <http://chilternsaonb.org/news/304/19/Tell-us-your-views-on-the-Chilterns.html>, with the chance to win a £50 voucher for Chilterns produce.

Helen Lambert

CADRA website

We have re-designed our website with two objectives in mind: first, that it should be easy to navigate, find information and use whether you are using a PC, a tablet or a mobile phone; second, that the content is easy to update and maintain so that we can publish all we do quickly and clearly. We have split the main content pages into 'Latest updates' and general information on that topic, with each section indexed. In addition, we have added a search function to enable visitors to quickly find content. We hope you like the new look and very much welcome your views.

AGM & Open Meeting

7.30pm Tuesday 17 April 2018
Thameside School, Harley Road

The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Sue Holden, Chief Officer, Conservation Board

Transport

Caversham bus routes

On Monday 19 March new bus routes and timetables (www.reading-buses.co.uk/articles/timetable-changes-4/) were introduced: **routes 23 and 24** have been combined to become a circular route; **routes 27 and 29** have also changed to become circular (27 anti-clockwise, 29 clockwise); **route 22** has been reduced to an hourly service off peak, with some significant changes at peak times. The introduction of the new routes and timetables has been hampered by numerous vehicle breakdowns on the 22 route, where the reduced frequency is causing real problems for people of all ages. CADRA is in close touch with the campaign group (Concerned of Caversham) and changes are needed so we can then promote the service to improve financial viability and reduce car journeys.

Highmoor Road/Albert Road

Following discussions between the Council, CADRA and the Highmoor Albert Road Campaign (HARC), the November RBC Traffic Management Sub-Committee approved 'Give Way' markings and signs on both Albert Road approaches to the Highmoor Road junction. The work will be implemented at the earliest opportunity, although the illuminated signs may take up to 12 weeks to deliver. The existing two-way 'Stop' combined with a two-way 'Give Way' is innovative. We believe it has not been tried elsewhere and should therefore be video-monitored before and after introducing the new signs and markings.

Sharing Our Streets – Achieving the Vision

At the invitation of the Council, CADRA will be drawing up an extensive package of measures to reduce the dominance of motor traffic and improve the pedestrian experience in central Caversham. The suggestions will be developed and costed by RBC to prepare a community-wide consultation; the implementation, based on *Sharing Our Streets – Achieving the Vision* (CADRA/Caversham Traders Association, 2014), will be funded by contributions from the St Martin's development. It is hoped that some elements will take effect later in 2018.

Cow Lane Bridges – Highway works

Improvement to the road through the Cow Lane Bridges continues, with one-way traffic (north-eastbound only) towards Caversham Bridge expected to operate until July 2018. The resulting congestion causes delay to all traffic, especially buses. On completion of the works, two-way traffic will be reinstated.

Combating loneliness

Local churches, Reading Voluntary Action (RVA) and RBC are working to combat loneliness and increase the level of friendliness and kindness in our neighbourhood through a range of initiatives. A system of 'pledge cards' that encourages starting conversations, accompanying someone on outings, volunteering, speaking regularly with neighbours and relatives, and random acts of kindness has been introduced in the library and five local churches. In addition, a local 'Coffee Companions' project uses coasters to indicate if you're willing to be approached for a chat in a cafe. It is hoped these could soon be available in local cafes and pubs with a 'Coffee Companions' hour every day of the week. RVA has set up a 'Caversham Companions to End Loneliness' group that currently meets on the first afternoon of the month in the Baptist church in the centre of Caversham. To help support street parties, the Council are waiving road closure fees for three weekends in May and June 2018 (<http://www.reading.gov.uk/streetparties>).

Safer Caversham

Following restructuring at Thames Valley Police (TVP) owing to funding constraints, our area is overseen by PS Lee Leggett. A recruitment plan aims for a PCSO for each Ward north of the river, and it is hoped there will be a local police desk in the Weller Centre, Amersham Road, to replace the one in Church House.

An online Community Survey has shown initially that perceptions of Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) and Safety have worsened. The eventual findings will be published by individual Ward. Details of 'Have Your Say' public meetings in St Martins Precinct are available on www.thamesvalley.police.uk and local notice boards. Key issues include recreational drug use by young people and the local police are patrolling the main areas known to attract this activity.

A police operation is in place for the growing incidence of theft from cars. Devices can block the signal from key fob to car, preventing doors from locking, so please check physically that doors are locked. Reporting crime incidents helps TVP deploy their manpower: call 999 for a crime in progress or threatening life or property; call 101 for non-emergencies.

Our local Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) is now the Caversham Safer Neighbourhood Forum, with a constitution under development and increased emphasis on building a network with the Council, Police and other forums. Residents, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and members of other local agencies concerned with a safer Caversham are encouraged to attend meetings.

The next meeting dates are Thursday 26 April, 7-9pm, Emmer Green Children's Centre, St. Barnabas Road and Thursday 21 June, 7-9pm, Newbridge Nursery, Montague Street.

Review of St Peters Conservation Area

CADRA members continue their work for the review by the community-based Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC). The eventual aim is to review and update all of Reading Conservation Areas. The community consultation summer 2017 received over 160 responses showing overwhelming support of the proposals in the CAAC draft appraisal submit-

ted to RBC in December 2017: 98% were in agreement with extending the boundaries of the Conservation Area to include the Church St/ Bridge St junction, the whole of Bridge St, and Caversham Bridge itself (see www.cadra.org.uk/en/Conservation-Areas). The Caversham appraisal is acting as a pilot for other Reading appraisal currently underway. Meetings

and a walkabout with Planning Officers have indicated broad agreement. The next steps are for the CAAC to agree a final draft with Planning Officers for approval by the Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee in July. Following a statutory consultation period, it is hoped that the new Appraisal can be adopted by the Council by the end of 2018.

Planning

Coopers BMW site

After lengthy negotiations including provision of local housing, the 23-storey residential Swan Heights application was granted permission in November 2017. Following interest in providing office space on this site, a planning application was submitted for 'The Ark', described as a landmark 12-storey office building with a sky garden and rooftop restaurant with limited public access.

Bridge St/Church Rd corner site

The review of St Peters Conservation Area identified the site of the advertising hoardings on the corner of Bridge Street and Church Road as a site for redevelopment. A recent planning application from the adjacent dental surgery has been refused. It remains to be seen whether a revised plan can overcome the reasons for refusal.

St Martins

The completion of the upgrade of the Saint Martin's precinct is welcome, despite the decision by Iceland not to change their frontage. We await news of a start date for a new five-storey block adjacent to Marc Antoni Hairdresser. Hermes are also developing proposals to locate the cinema above and behind Superdrug, with access from the new Caversham Square off the car park. This could rise to five storeys, with

flats above the cinema accessed from Church Street. The building line and the detailed design of the Church Street frontage should be sympathetic and not over-dominant and the height and bulk of any new building must be carefully considered. A formal planning application is expected.

Gladman proposal, Peppard Rd

The planning application for a greenfield development of 245 houses on the northern boundary of Reading Borough went to the South Oxfordshire Planning Committee on 6 September 2017. Following spirited objections by CAGE (made up of CADRA, other residents' associations and South Oxfordshire parish councils), the Committee refused the application. Other objectors to the development included Matt Rodda MP (Reading East), John Howell MP (Henley) and Reading Borough Council.

The developer, Gladman, on behalf of Phillimore Estates, has lodged an appeal. The Planning Inquiry will take place at 10.00am between 1 and 4 May 2018 at Henley Rugby Club, Dry Leas, Marlow Road, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2JA. CAGE intends to object at the Inquiry and is appealing for funds to support this at <https://tinyurl.com/helpemmergreen>. See CADRA's objection to the Gladman development at www.cadra.org.uk/en/Planning and further information at www.cagedunsden.org.

Air quality

There has long been concern about the poor air quality in central Caversham. A nitrogen dioxide test tube installed by Caversham GLOBE at the Church Road/St Anne's Road junction for two weeks in December 2017 registered 56.2 µg/m³ of nitrogen dioxide, which exceeds the legal limit annual mean limit of 40µg/m³. CADRA is funding four more test tubes to be installed at busy junctions in central Caversham in March. The nearest Council testing apparatus is near the roundabout on the south side of Caversham bridge (www.reading.gov.uk/airquality).

Caversham Library

As part of a package of cost saving measures in 2017, opening hours at Caversham Library were reduced, and the library is now closed all day Monday. A consultation for further cost savings closed on 21 March 2018. This proposed a further cut in opening hours from 35 to 27 hours per week, along with increased use of volunteers to run activities. After Central Library, Caversham is the most actively used library and serves the largest catchment population as well as the greatest number of residents aged 65+. It needs our support.

About CADRA

Our aim is to *preserve and enhance the quality of life in Caversham and the surrounding District*, or, in other words, that Caversham should always be...

...a great place to live!

We work closely with Reading Councillors and Officers, other local groups, the Police, companies and individuals, always avoiding party political bias.

Together, we can make it better.

We issue two newsletters a year, hold two public meetings, write columns for the *Caversham Bridge* local newspaper and maintain a website with information on local issues and links to relevant official websites. The Facebook page (shown on the CADRA homepage) gives up-to-the-minute local news. You do *not* need to register with Facebook.

Contacting CADRA

Please write to the Secretary or better still, email us at info@cadra.org.uk. Please let us know if you change your email address.

Membership

Membership of CADRA is just £3 per year per household. New leaflets are available from Caversham Library or Waltons in Prospect Street, or from the Membership Secretary, Tel: 947 6984. You can join and pay online at www.cadra.org.uk/application_form.php.

The Committee

Chairman: Helen Lambert, 5 Derby Road, RG4 5HE,
Tel: 947 3165

Treasurer: Stewart Bolton, 11 Graveney Drive, RG4 7EG,
Tel: 948 2687

Secretary: Linda Watsham, 159 Kidmore Road, RG4 7NJ,
Tel: 947 8744

Membership: Jacque Tomson, 121 Upper Woodcote Road,
RG4 7LB, Tel: 9476984

Website: Lloyd Pople, Upper Woodcote Road

Planning: Liz Killick, Upper Woodcote Road; John Nicholls (co-opted), Sandcroft Road; Kim Pearce, The Mount; Malcolm Pemble, Shepherds Lane

Safer Caversham: Alan Wright (co-opted),
Upper Warren Avenue

COMMITTEE SUPPORT

Transport: Paul Matthews, Albert Road; John Lee,
Hemdean Road

Planning support: Ray Emmett, Westdene Crescent

Informal Links: Jo Munday, South View Avenue;
Mo Prins, Haldane Road

General support: John Boucher, Highmoor Road;
Les James, Wincroft Road; John Roach, St Peter's Avenue

Newsletter Editor: Helen Lambert

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The opinions expressed are those of the contributors.

The Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 17 April 2018, 7.30pm
Thameside Primary School, Harley Road

Note: Only paid-up members of CADRA may vote at the AGM. One household subscription carries one vote.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of 2017 AGM
2. Chairman's Annual Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Election of Committee
5. Any Other Business (items advised in advance only)

COMMITTEE: RETIRING AND CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Under the rules of the Constitution, Liz Killick, Kim Pearce and Lloyd Pople will retire at the AGM and are willing to stand for re-election. There is a further vacancy, and Alan Wright, currently co-opted member, is willing to stand for election. New co-opted members and support to the committee are always welcome.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE

Any member may be nominated for election to the Committee at the AGM, subject to the conditions in the Constitution. The Nominee must have a proposer and seconder who are both members. Please use the form below and return the completed nomination to the Secretary no less than 14 days before the AGM.

NOMINEE: I am willing to serve on the Committee of CADRA, carry out duties as agreed and act at all times in the best interests of CADRA and its members.

Name

Signature & Date

Proposed by

Seconded by