



A Welcome from CADRA in 2005

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www.cadra.org.uk



CADRA news

Caversham And District Residents' Association

Transport is a subject dear to all our hearts as we stand waiting for a bus or edge our way down to join the line of traffic waiting to cross the bridge. Major changes are in the pipeline as we wait to hear the more detailed proposals for a one-way IDR and the report on public consultation from a traffic review north of the river. Caversham turned out in force and the library was buzzing with people poring over maps, exchanging concerns and asking questions. The final outcome for the IDR, the two bridges and the local traffic systems are critical to life in Caversham and we should all watch with care.

Close behind these two studies came a report on possible sites for a third Thames crossing. CADRA has recently been invited to join the Thames Crossing Councils Group. The latest

meeting received a report from consultants on alternative sitings for a new bridge. The initial study favours the central option between Thames Valley Business Park and Caversham lakes. This does not answer the vexed question of how to link traffic from

...local traffic systems are critical to life in Caversham

the new bridge to the A4074 and the conundrum remains of how to improve local journeys without increasing through traffic.

Consultation documents from the Borough Council did not end there. Our views were also sought on the most appropriate locations for high density development in future plans

for Reading and this is covered in more detail in a later page.

Government changes have come closer to home with applications flowing in for increased licensing hours. In April we welcomed two new members to our committee. This made it possible to have one person specialising in the licensing process and providing support to local residents in raising objections. We can claim a measure of success in this and it is notable that a number of people have decided to join the association to avail themselves of that help and support. Membership remains an important issue, in that growing numbers strengthen our voice on your behalf.

We are delighted to see the appointment of a dedicated Neighbourhood Police Inspector for Caversham

and do hope you will take the opportunity to meet him at our open meeting this autumn. Our aim is to invite participants in the field of traffic and road safety, to allow discussion towards the end of the meeting. This is particularly topical following the very alarming recent accident involving a hay lorry on Woodcote Road.

And finally, as a relative newcomer to CADRA if not to Caversham, I would like to pay tribute to your committee who work so hard for Caversham and in particular to Tom Chadwick, our chairman until this spring. His hard work and dedication is greatly missed.

Helen Lambert

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OPEN MEETING

Tuesday 1 November, 2005

At the BAPTIST FREE CHURCH CENTRE, PROSPECT ST. at 7:45pm

Community Policing for Caversham and related topics

Inspector Graham Dix, Thames Valley Police

The Caversham police team is now back to full strength, with a dedicated Inspector, Sergeant and three PCs. (see list on back page)

From 3 October, on the first Monday of the month, there will be Police Surgeries from 5pm to 8pm at Church House, next to Waitrose. These sessions are an opportunity for residents who would like to meet their Area Beat Officers, to highlight issues facing them and their communities, or listen to the points of view of others.

The police have had several initiatives to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour in Caversham, particularly in the Amersham Road estate and Hemdean Road. The dispersal order, which was in place in the summer months, was an attempt to break up the pattern of groups of youths either exhibiting threatening behaviour or contemplating more unruly activities. The police need residents to come forward with evidence, to help them deploy resources most effectively, and gather sufficient information to proceed to warnings,

ASBOs, prosecutions or exclusion orders.

If you have any information or concerns, do contact the police using the numbers shown on the back page.

Many of the agencies participating in the Safer Caversham Forum have experienced a large staffing turnover. This has resulted in a bit of a hiatus as staff familiarised themselves with the areas and sister bodies. Fortunately the youth worker team leader was able to plan a month of varied activities in the summer in Christchurch Meadows. The two new community wardens should be increasing in effectiveness.

At a recent presentation from the Witness Support Team, we learned that their remit includes supporting people involved in court cases including victims, witnesses and the accused. Their challenges can include dealing with the situation of the accused in a domestic dispute being found not guilty and taking steps to protect the safety of the other party!

Mapledurham Playing Fields

Stewart Bolton and John Roach

The latest news is that the Mapledurham Playing Fields Management Committee intend to conduct a wide consultation on up to four proposals late this autumn, probably in November.

Although the Committee has four proposals in mind, it has taken the view that it would be prudent to seek preliminary soundings from the Charities Commission and the Playing Fields Association. These bodies may have eliminated an option, which would make public discussion of that option fruitless. It would be unfortunate, if there was public support for a proposal, which was subsequently eliminated by either the Charities Commis-

sion or the Playing Fields Association. At the time of writing, one of these bodies is not inclined to offer a preliminary view! Even if these two bodies do offer views, the proposals and consultation plans will need to be endorsed by the Reading Borough Council Cabinet.

The timing of a November consultation is not ideal. However, if the time slippage experience is anything to go by, this will be delayed until into 2006. Whenever, the consultation occurs, CADRA is committed to giving these critical matters as broad and intensive a debate as possible. Watch this space.

Bon Voyage Tom

The Committee

Ten years on any committee is no mean feat but to hold three key positions in that time, shows considerable skill as well as real dedication.

Tom Chadwick was our efficient and friendly secretary and correspondence secretary, always keeping CADRA right on the ball with what was going on in Caversham. After spearheading a successful recruitment campaign, he became Chairman and conducted our monthly committee meetings with equally friendly efficiency and with a ready sense of humour which made committee meetings socially pleasing as well as business like. Tom's quiet but persistent charm would gently be brought to bear on all manner of issues and he achieved a great deal for CADRA and for Caversham.

Tom and Dorothy are planning to spend time with their family in New Zealand and we wish them all every happiness.

Everyone reading this will be aware of the controversy surrounding this legislation. The government's intention was to lessen unruly drunken behaviour, by lifting restrictions on opening times. Now, Police Associations and many High Court judges, not to mention residents' groups, view the Act with increasing dismay.

So what has been our experience in Reading? There has been uncertainty as to whether our ward councillors, are allowed to come out in opposition to a licensing application, even whether they can speak at a committee hearing. Surely one of their main functions is to represent their constituents on important issues? And surely a pub's request to open well into the night is such an issue?

The Act clearly encourages very liberal opening hours. This seems to run counter to Reading Council's directive that "in general, public houses located in and catering for

residential areas wishing to open beyond 11pm will need to demonstrate clearly that public nuisance will not result from later operation."

It has been noticeable that the publicans and breweries have been very keen to enter into dialogue with residents. They say they want to be 'good neighbours'. I am sure this is true. The new Act does give much greater powers to the residents when it comes to policing the Act. Previously, to lose a license, the pub had to be the subject of serious complaint brought before the Magistrates usually by the police. Now it will be sufficient for the Council to hear that there have been breaches in the license conditions for its revocation. This gives a clear incentive for the pub to maintain good relations with its neighbours, the residents.

CADRA needs to be made aware of any such issues, so please do keep in touch.

Planning Issues

Jennifer Millest and Helen Lambert

There have been fewer major planning applications north of the river recently and residents increasingly appear to be geared up to responding locally: CADRA is always willing to assist in this.

There are, however, two notable ongoing sagas. A third unsuitable application for the laundry site on George Street was recommended for refusal and withdrawn in August. We hope that the developer will take account of the concerns of local residents and residents' associations and perhaps even consult them before making a further submission.

In July, the Planning Applications Committee resolved to take enforce-

ment action with regard to Pipers Island if a satisfactory retrospective application was not made by 29 July. A submission made on 3 August was put to the September meeting with copious conditions to be met and was deferred to allow for further reports. CADRA will continue to emphasise the importance of this site as a gateway to both Reading and Caversham.

Taking a longer view of planning, the Borough Council is required by government to draw up a Local Development Framework which will be an important criteria for decisions on planning applications.

The first stage, a paper called 'Issues

and Options' was issued for consultation over the summer. There was a series of public workshops, including one in Caversham which sadly was not well attended.

Perhaps the most important issue arising is the proposal that high density development should be focused on the centre of Reading but with some higher density also in local centres and in areas of 'relatively high levels of accessibility'. The implication is that Caversham centre, the Woodcote Road and Henley Road could be suitable for higher density development. CADRA has written to challenge this.

Email and the Web-site

Ruth Perkins & Helen Lambert

We have been looking at the opportunities that email brings for better and more frequent communication with our membership. We are very concerned not to disadvantage our members without access to a computer. As many people know, two regular columns in the Caversham Bridge are (under a thin veil!) written by individuals on the CADRA committee. This gives us a chance to share information with the wider community in between our two newsletters each year. Thanks to excellent support from Sylvia Chumbley, a CADRA web-site was launched about three years ago: www.cadra.org.uk and we are planning to gradually develop the range of information on it.

Recently we sent an email to all of our members for

whom we have an email address asking if they would be willing to receive newsletters and other communication by email. We have had an overwhelmingly positive response. If you would like to receive your newsletter and other emails from us and have not recently confirmed this to us, please could you please send your email address to: CADRARG4@Yahoo.co.uk

We envisage that we might use email to make our members aware of an important public consultation or perhaps to seek a response from members on a particular issue. We have agreed that whenever we do this we would post the communication on our web-site so that members without email could, if they wish, view it at the library or through friends and family.

Bugs Bottom (Hemdean valley) has been steadily recovering from the home building of the 1990s. Trees and shrubs have now grown to a height that screens most of the housing, so making it a pleasure again to walk in the valley. Wildlife also is changing with more species returning, including at least one deer.

A spring clear-up of rubbish and redundant fencing was carried out by Reading Borough Council with assistance from some local residents. It is hoped that there will be an annual clear-up in conjunction with many other Reading open spaces.

Improvements to the bridle-path have recently been made by Reading Borough Council to remove the areas that became puddled. Other works are proposed including some solid bench seats that will be sited at some of the viewing points. Dog walkers should also have noted the doggie-poo bin at the southern end. These and further proposed changes including better access

and signing to the open space are proposed, following a meeting in the spring between Reading Council and Bugs Bottom Action Group Representatives. Suggestions have also been made to improve conditions to the Beech Woods off Grove Hill and also to Balmore Walk, particularly the Rotherfield Way end where muddy paths and undergrowth restrict usage.

Bugs Bottom Action Group are proposing to reconstitute themselves as a 'friends' group to assist with the protection and environmental improvement of Bugs Bottom. Anyone interested in assisting on the group, or with ideas for improvements and actions is asked to contact John Lee, the convener, on Tel 0118 9483509, or jlee@constructionplus.net. Any improvements that will benefit children and teenagers will be particularly welcome, so long as they do not threaten the character and environment of the valley.

About CADRA

The Committee

CADRA Honorary President:

Molly Casey, 14 Albert Road,
RG4 7PE Tel: 947 2300

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: Marian Fallowfield
40 Matlock Road, RG4 7BS

Voluntary Liaison: James Frost
3 Grass Hill, RG4 7TJ

Footpaths: John Lee
316 Hemdean Road, RG4 7QS

Planning: Jennifer Millest
40 Mill Green, RG4 8EX

Licensing: John Mullaney (co-opted)
29 Derby Road, RG4 5HE

IT: Ruth Perkins
61 Woodcote Road, RG4 7EX

Safer Caversham: John Roach
3 Courtlands, St. Peter's Avenue, RG4 7DH

The Purpose of CADRA

The organization was established almost 40 years ago and has become a widely respected voice for the community north of the river. Our aim is to: *"preserve and enhance the quality of life in Caversham and the surrounding District."*

In essence this means trying to keep the good parts, improve the undesirable parts and prevent detrimental change. We resolutely avoid party political bias and work closely with Reading Councillors and Officers, other local groups, the Police, companies and individuals.

To be effective, we have to be able to hear our members' opinions and reflect their views. In addition to a range of informal links, we issue two newsletters a year and hold two public meetings.

CADRA Membership

At just £2 per year per household, membership of CADRA is a bargain! Membership leaflets are available in Caversham Library, Wordplay and Bangles or from the Membership Secretary, tel 0118 954 6899. Please do encourage your friends and neighbours to join.

Contacting CADRA

We prefer you to contact us in writing, so that we can give proper attention to your comments and make a considered response. Please write to the Secretary, or better still, use e-mail. **Our e-mail address is CADRARG4@yahoo.co.uk**
Letters for publication can be sent to the Chairman.

For urgent matters only, Officers' telephone numbers are given on the left, but please use them with consideration.

Caversham Neighbourhood Police

Inspector Graham Dix and Sgt Warren McKeown
PC John Finnerty - Caversham Heights
PC Chris Manneta - Emmer Green & Caversham Park Village
PC Stuart Murdoch - Lower Caversham

Web-site www.thamesvalley.police.uk

Police 'Surgeries' at Church House, 1st Monday of the month 5pm - 8pm.

To report crime, suspicious incidents and to contact individual officers call 0845 8 505 5050 or email police@thamesvalley.pnnn.police.uk

In an emergency or if a crime is being committed call 999

Reading Borough Council

Switchboard 0118 939 0900

Call Centre including Refuse Collection, Graffiti Removal 0800 834 035

Planning permission & enquiries, Licensing, Road Safety 0800 626 540

www.reading.gov.uk, gives information on a wide range of issues including planning applications.