

# **Caversham and District Residents' Association**

## **Chair's report 2024-25**

*This report is being circulated to members via email, ahead of the AGM on Tuesday 13 May.*

### **Looking ahead**

The past year has been a time to take stock, to seek feedback and look ahead. New publicity material has been displayed around the area, and our appeals have brought new members to the Committee. The appointment of a new CADRA Chair will be confirmed for the AGM and the meeting will hear an introduction from the new Chair. For those unable to attend the AGM, please look out for the next monthly email with more information.

Membership numbers have remained steady, with new members replacing those moving away and we appreciate your help in sharing bulletins and encouraging others to join.

### **Planning Applications and Policy**

Most local applications have been for small schemes, while major schemes move forward across the river. A decision on the Spice Oven is held up waiting for heritage details on the work proposed. The development on Caversham Park cannot be confirmed until a legal agreement is complete. An application for changes on the Caversham Heath golf course has raised concerns from The Chilterns Conservation Board. Fairfax have recently launched a virtual consultation on a proposal to build 70 homes on land in South Oxfordshire owned by Reading Golf Club. This is presented as an extension to the current development under construction off Kidmore End Road, with access through it. Any planning decisions would be for South Oxfordshire District Council. Members of the CADRA team will be meeting the Fairfax team to seek more information.

Councils are being required to increase their housing numbers, and we await the outcome of the new Joint Local Plan for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of the White Horse, as well as the update to the Reading Borough Council Local Plan. Both will require approval from the Secretary of State.

### **Local Heritage**

CADRA remains active on the Conservation Area Advisory Committee providing important links to Senior Planning Managers and the Conservation Officer. Following on from the centenary of Reading Bridge 2023, in June 2026 Caversham Bridge will mark 100 years since the opening by the Prince of Wales.

There are three recent additions to the Local List which will require more detailed planning control: Hemdean House School and Lodge, 2 Mill Green, Caversham Road Fire Station.

## **Kidmore Road Closure**

Thames Water has accepted responsibility for the sinkhole and will be paying for the remedial works. The outline programme of work to stabilise the ground is for an estimated 10-12 weeks, with a start on site in May. Then the road will be resurfaced and reopened around the third week of July. Dates are subject to the conditions in the ground. The works area will need to be increased. Councillor Ballsdon has asked for the current bus diversion to be reassessed, looking to increase the circuit to serve more of the local area.

## **Emmer Green**

CADRA has been working to make full use of the funds transferred by the Emmer Green Residents Association. The book *Emmer Green Past and Present* is on its second reprint. The Community Noticeboard was fully restored. The Village Sign has now been cleaned and repaired, including the logos on the post which represent local schools and organisations.

## **Caversham Centre**

Thanks to the work of the Caversham Traders Association, Caversham now features within the Reading website <https://www.visit-reading.com/>

## **Safer Neighbourhoods**

We are active members of both the North Reading Safer Neighbourhood Forum, and Reading wide forum, helping to share information and support problem solving.

## **Website and Facebook**

The CADRA website remains the most extensive local website. More up to date news is shared on both the CADRA Facebook Page and the Emmer Green Residents Page.

## **Caversham Bridge Newspaper**

We strongly recommend this monthly community paper which can be delivered to your door for just £7 a year, or you can view the paper online at [www.cavershambridge.org](http://www.cavershambridge.org)

## **Membership**

For many years fees and other income have allowed us to build up reserves. With increasing costs, that is no longer possible. To avoid normal running costs depleting reserves, the committee has approved new fees of £5 for one year or £12 for three years. This is the first increase for over 15 years.

## **And finally ....**

As this will be my last report to members there are so many people to thank. First of all, my successor - I know I leave the association in good hands. To all of the current team, without whom the association would not function. To the past members of the team over almost 60 years. To the many organisations we work with and to everyone who contributes to making Caversham and Emmer Green such a great place to live.

*Helen Lambert, CADRA Chair*

*April 2025*