

Caversham and District Residents' Association Annual General Meeting Tuesday 26 April 2016

Chairman's report 2015/2016

Planning

As is often the case, Planning has been the dominant issue this year. Reading Borough Council has started the process of creating a new **Local Plan** and CADRA will continue to follow this through the different stages. Although South Oxfordshire District Council rejected the option of meeting part of their housing need on the Reading border, individual schemes come forward from time to time and we keep these under review, particularly for transport implications.

Since the withdrawal of the Waitrose extension, plans for **St Martin's Centre** have been in abeyance. However, CADRA was recently invited to meet with the owners Hermes and their consultants about their plans to take this forward and we hope to be able to say more at the AGM.

Although CADRA strongly supports the provision of new **Extra Care Housing** on Albert Road, we have expressed concerns about the height and massing of the proposed design and its impact on views from Caversham Bridge. Following a meeting with CADRA, A2dominion committed to revise their plans but there is still no further news.

CADRA has played an active role in a working group considering how Reading's **Conservation Areas** could be better cared for. A new community led Conservation Area Advisory Committee will shortly take shape. St Peter's Conservation Area will be reappraised and a study of river views is being considered. We would be very pleased to hear from anyone with an interest in conservation. A community consultation will form part of the process.

We are grateful to Mo Prins, Liz Killick and Kim Pearce for the different skills they bring. A monthly summary of local applications and links to the plans and documents, is posted on the CADRA website each month.

Transport

Campaigns for Caversham Centre have been active in the past months and we have been keen to persuade officers and politicians that any changes must be part of a cohesive approach. The 'Sharing our Streets' project, run jointly with the Caversham Traders Association, could provide that approach. The Council committed to working up proposals for local consultation, which could be funded by the Transport contribution from the St Martin's scheme and we will be following this closely as plans for St Martin's become clearer.

CADRA continues to be represented at the Borough's Transport Users Forum/Traffic Management Sub-Committee by Paul Matthews with support from John Lee.

Caversham Centre

We continue to work closely with Caversham Traders Association which has been very successful with the Caversham Rewards scheme and other local improvements.

http://www.choosecaversham.co.uk/caversham_rewards.php

Caversham Library

As part of managing substantial budget cuts, the Council has undertaken two consultations on Library Services. The second consultation setting out a reduction of opening hours for Caversham Library (50.5 to 35) is open until 16 May 2016. You can respond on line at www.reading.gov.uk/libraryreview or on paper at the library.

Neighbourhood Action Groups

The Neighbourhood Action Group for all of Caversham and Emmer Green has met at different locations across Caversham. These are attended by Michael Howes or Paul Matthews which is a valuable link as so many of the safety concerns relate to Transport.

Licensing

New applications in Caversham are infrequent but there are occasional applications for later opening. Recent permission was given for later hours at the new Bodrum Grill on Prospect Street. Very tight conditions were imposed and it is important that the Licensing Officers are made aware of any breaches in these conditions.

The Heights Primary School and Mapledurham Pavilion

The decision on a permanent site the Heights Primary School remains divisive for Caversham. CADRA has continued to remain neutral on individual sites. The Education Funding Agency provided some initial information on the proposed location of a two storey school building on the Mapledurham Playing Fields and invited responses on community provision and potential improvements. These responses will help the EFA prepare a formal proposal to the Trustees of the Playing Fields. The pavilion remains closed due to structural problems. Stewart Bolton, CADRA Treasurer, continues to attend the Management Committee.

Caversham Bridge Newspaper

Members of the committee write the column 'From the Lookout Post' which appears on alternate months. Copies are available from the Parish Office in Church House or you can subscribe for just £3.00 p.a. Call 947 1370 or email cemoloney@yahoo.co.uk.

CADRA website and Facebook Page

We are grateful to Lloyd Pople for the management of the website and to Edge Impact for their support. On the Home page, you will see a link to the Facebook page with up to date news and links. Anyone can access this page.

The way forward

In 2017, CADRA will celebrate 50 years. Every organisation needs to move forward to meet the needs of its members and its community and 50 years is a good point at which to take stock. Around 2000, a review was completed, including adoption of a new constitution. Since then, the newsletters have developed, a website and Facebook page have been established and the informal network, locally and across Reading, has continued to develop. As we approach 2017, we will be taking stock and thinking how to mark 50 years. We would love to hear your ideas.

Membership

A substantial membership keeps CADRA strong, so new members are always welcome. Subscriptions and renewals can be paid on line by Paypal or credit card, as well by bank transfer or standing order, though we still accept cheques - where possible to cover three years membership. Membership forms are available from the library, Waltons or Delicious. We are very grateful to Jacque Tomson for looking after membership arrangements as well as sending and receiving emails on behalf of CADRA.

Email is the main method of communication with members. **Please let us know if you change your email address and look out for CADRA messages going to Spam.** Members not on email receive copies of newsletters by post.

CADRA committee

I am extremely grateful to all members of the committee and the committee support team for all their work through the year. Every organisation needs new blood and we would be delighted to hear from anyone who could offer support in some way so that Caversham can always be *a Great Place to Live!*