

From the Lookout Post - April 2012

CADRA AGM

The CADRA AGM will be at Thameside School Hall, Harley Road (off Wolsey Road) on Tuesday 15 May at 7.30pm. The brief formal business will be followed by a talk from local GP Dr Rod Smith on the subject, "Is the NHS safe in the hands of local clinicians?" As well as being a GP in Caversham for many years, Rod Smith chairs the Commissioning Group for North West Reading. He is also Chair of the West Berkshire Federation of Clinical Commissioning Groups. He has been closely involved for many years with local and national initiatives to integrate community and hospital services. This makes him particularly well placed to give an insight into how clinicians in hospitals and local surgeries have been able to shape the ways in which patient services are provided. It promises to be an interesting evening.

Non-members are very welcome and will be able to join at the meeting for just £3.00 per annum for the household. If you have not yet been able to buy a copy of the 'Caversham 100 Years On' exhibition booklet, these will be on sale that evening.

New Parking Restrictions in Caversham

A consultation is expected in March or April for a series of new parking restrictions. In Caversham, these include sections of Henley Road, Wolsey Road, Hemdean Road, Albert Road and Elliots Way.

Local events for the Diamond Jubilee and Olympics

It will be a busy time in Caversham over the next few months. On 26 May a Diamond Jubilee Fete will be held on The Mapledurham Playing Fields. On 4 June, there will be a Diamond Jubilee Picnic in the Park at Emmer Green Recreation Ground and on 16 June a Charity Dinner Dance at Caversham Heath Golf Club with all proceeds going towards the regeneration of the Mapledurham Playing Fields Pavilion and Community Hall.

There will also be a SMART 2012 free one day family event on Saturday 4th August to fit with the Olympic Games Super Saturday. The event will run from 11am - 6pm with, with an evening event at Rivermead including the Battle of the School Bands from schools in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire.

A ferry service is planned to link the Thameside Prom and Caversham Court. Leading up to the event there will be a number of arts and music led activities in schools. The site will include a Sporting Village, Community Groups, Creative Village, Acoustic Stage and Workshop Area, Open Air Arena, Demonstrations, Main Stage and Funfair.

Planning

The development behind New Directions Caversham Centre is now underway with construction access via Wolsey Road and Abbotsmead Place. This will provide sheltered housing units with a non-resident warden. A large void is being constructed under the building to hold water in the event of a flood. Following objections from CADRA, an application for large illuminated signs with flags above was refused.

A new application is being considered for demolition of the old bakehouse on the corner of Hemdean Road and Rectory Road to provide seven one bedroom apartments. The proposal is that this would 'wrap round' Wellington House with the Physiotherapy practice. The scheme does not provide parking which is causing local concern and part of it projects forward from the building line on Rectory Road.

South Oxfordshire plans

The South Oxfordshire Core Strategy was reviewed recently by the Secretary of State. The previous intention to provide 1060 homes on unallocated sites was refused and more specific plans have been required on where these homes might be built. The intention is that these would be provided in Thame, Wallingford and the 'Larger Villages' which could include Woodcote and Sonning Common. The policy continues to state that it does not provide for 'urban extensions to Reading'.

Lafarge submitted an application to extract a further 1.86 million tonnes of sand and gravel from land east of Spring Lane which is currently under consideration. This is estimated to last over a period of 12 years with the land being progressively restored to agriculture and nature conservation uses. A new, direct northern access from Henley Road (A4155) would be provided to import inert restoration materials into the site. There is much concern about the impact of more lorry traffic through Caversham and the potential impact on the floodplain.

Station Hill

A consultation took place at the end of February for the Station Hill development and detailed planning applications are expected this summer. Friars Walk, the Western Tower and Thames Tower will be demolished. Plans include offices, apartments, shops, restaurants, cafes, leisure facilities and the remodelling of the existing Garrard Street NCP car park.

Work to replace Thames Tower will be a separate scheme with the intention of creating a new landmark and Reading's tallest building. This will provide space for shops and cafes at street level on the new station plaza and Station Road. Upper floors will include modern office development. For more details see:

www.stationhill-reading.co.uk/our-emerging-proposal and www.thamestower.com