



CADRA Monthly Roundup: July 2020

Your committee met via the web this month and this update summarises what is going on. Please share it with anyone you feel might be interested.

CADRA's Committee

We are delighted to welcome James Tyson to the committee, not only because he brings enthusiasm and a specialist knowledge of social media, but also because he lowers our average age by several notches! We're looking forward to his contribution.

Our Virtual AGM

Many thanks to all who took the trouble to vote in these unusual times. All the motions were carried overwhelmingly.

Reading's Transport Plan to 2036

This important plan is currently out to consultation and we have been thinking hard about what response CADRA should make.

For many years, central Caversham has been dominated by traffic congestion, bringing poor air quality, disruption and ugliness. In effect, Caversham provides the bottleneck which shields southern Oxfordshire from through traffic. Yet, while much of the congestion is created by traffic from that area, the Oxfordshire authorities have consistently avoided or even opposed any efforts to mitigate this problem. Any worthwhile transport plan for Reading must tackle this.

The current draft plan proposes a north orbital route around Caversham, linking the three incoming main roads with a new Thames bridge to the east, serving three new Park and Ride sites on Caversham's fringe, and incorporating a rapid public transport corridor. As yet, this is only a broad concept with no proposal on the route or how traffic would be managed.

If existing extraneous traffic could reliably be diverted on to this route, confining our two bridges to local transport and buses, this could have huge advantages for Caversham. But on the other hand, those parts of Caversham and Emmer Green lying close to this route could be badly impacted, as could the adjacent Chilterns.

Further examination needs to demonstrate that a detailed scheme would in practice enable:

- Existing traffic flows to be diverted away from Caversham Centre
- South Oxfordshire to avoid increased traffic through rural areas
- The chosen route to avoid damage to important landscape and the creation of large sites for development

It is by no means clear this could be achieved. A scheme of this magnitude would take many years, even without the political controversy. It cannot be seen as the only solution to the problems in Caversham. The proposed CADRA response will aim to set out these issues and we welcome comments from members.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

We reported in an earlier roundup that CADRA had been nominated for this prestigious award. Though we have now heard that CADRA is not one of the very small number who will receive it, it is an encouraging recognition of CADRA's long service to our community to have got that far, and our congratulations go to the two Berkshire groups who have received the award, Reading's Progress Theatre and the Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Volunteers.

Overhanging Branches and Hedges

As we come into August and the end of the main nesting season, it is a timely reminder to check that our hedges do not overhang the pavement. Last month a member raised with us the problem of overhanging branches on footways, which are a particular problem for both social distancing and for people with a disability. As the Council no longer undertake routine inspections, we urge you to report examples. This can be done via [Report My Streets](#) or [Love Clean Reading](#). You can also contact your Ward Councillor. We have been in touch with Cllr Paul Carnell who has kindly offered to assist where necessary.

Kidmore Road Telephone Box

BT has agreed to let the [Community Heartbeat Trust](#) adopt this classic-design phone box. The next steps are local fund-raising, restoration and a community defibrillator. Congratulations to the residents who have worked hard to reach this stage with support from Councillors.

The Reading Fringe

Finally, cultural and entertainment opportunities have been in short supply during lockdown, so members might be interested in the on-line mix of theatre, dance, music and exhibitions which is the [Reading Fringe Festival](#), between 17 and 26 July.