



A Welcome from CADRA in 2004

Volume 4, Issue 1, March 2004



CADRA news

Caversham And District Residents' Association

Rapid changes seem to be the order of the day! Not just in Reading or Caversham but within CADRA itself as earlier this year our chairman, Derek Bartlett, succumbed to the desirable prospect of continuing to enjoy retired life in Shropshire. We pay our tribute to the work that he has done both for CADRA and Caversham in a later page.

The recruitment drive, launched by Derek, continues and it is pleasing to report that our membership now tops the 500 household mark. We appreciate the support of all our members, both existing and newly joined since it is becoming increasingly necessary to have a strong organisation such as CADRA to present our views and concerns to the authorities. We shall continue to seek new members although we must stress that we have no wish to attract members from one residents' association simply to join another. In any event, on major issues, it is important that CADRA and other associations co-operate

to express as strongly as possible, the views of Caversham residents.

Planning constitutes the greater part of the work done by the CADRA Committee. We have made a full and considered response to 'Moving Forward in Partnership', the Draft Consultation Document of the Reading Community Strategy. We

...our membership now tops the 500 mark...

were pleased to be associated with the initial discussions concerning the future of the Kennet and Thames riversides. Linked with this is the possibility of siting the replacement of the Hexagon on Hills Meadow. Taken together, these are significant and exciting developments and we expect to make the voice of CADRA known in the future progress of these plans. We supported Warren and District Resident's in strongly objecting to the pro-

posed nursing home at Chazey Court Farm and we are still trying to have clarification about the acceptable density of housing on the redundant SEC site in Amer-sham Road. Infill development continues in many parts of Caversham and this matter is taken up in this edition of CADRA NEWS.

Our village sign continues to evoke favourable comment and we were pleased to be present at the unveiling of the beautifully carved Emmer Green village sign that stands proudly on the green near Emmer Green pond.

In order to have effective and productive discussions with the Council and other authorities it is essential that we have a strong membership and a well-informed Committee. To achieve the latter, it is vital that we seek the views of our members and we urge members to contact us, whenever a matter arises that they feel is important and that we should know about. The points raised in this way may relate

to a relatively minor matter or cover a widespread and significant area of concern. However, communication is a two-way process and we are looking for ways to meet up with members other than at a large open meeting. There is a busy time ahead with major public projects waiting in the wings. With the local authorities having to meet their statutory requirements for consultation on these projects it is clear that resident's organisations and related groups will have an important role to play. I am confident that we have an enthusiastic and dedicated committee who are well able to meet the demands made on them and I am grateful for their invaluable support.

Tom Chadwick

2004 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY 29th. MARCH

at the **BAPTIST FREE CHURCH CENTRE, PROSPECT STREET** at **8pm.**

After the business of the meeting,

Mr. Adrian Lawson (Reading Borough Council)

will speak about the development of the Kennet and Thames Watersides.

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New CADRA representative on Safer Caversham Forum (SCF)

Before sharing some of the issues discussed at the Safer Caversham Forum, I would remind members that the Council has recently limited their support of these Forums to 4 meetings per year, in contrast to the (almost) monthly meetings held previously.

Also, the SCF covers some 15 different organisations involving about 30 delegates.

Consequently, the SCF has become more of an occasional communication vehicle rather than 'a doing' group. The doing is left to sub-groups that meet to address particular activities or are the responsibility of the individual SCF members or the organisations they represent.

My initial experience, after only one meeting, is that the communication role is valuable enough in itself to justify the SCF. Much of the meeting is devoted to reports from various RBC officials, the Thames Valley Police, residents and housing associations and a representative from 'Churches

together in Caversham'. All have an opportunity to comment on the statistics, to suggest how plans might be improved and to indicate how their organisations might help further the proposals.

An example of the highs and the lows, discussed at this last meeting, can be given for Lower Caversham. There was much positive news, such as the re-opening of the updated Amersham Road Youth and Community Centre and the work radiating from there throughout Caversham of a committed and entrepreneurial youth work team. A multi-purpose trailer for youth training and counselling will soon help with this activity. Even as a newcomer to SCF meetings, I could feel the disappointment when the answer to a question about the continued out of service street lights in and around Amersham Road revealed a sea of red tape preventing RBC from placing a maintenance contract with SEB until the legalities about the ownership of some street furniture is

determined. Sadly, I feel that this item may still be unresolved when I retire from SCF.

The Council and Police representatives hope to launch a scheme that would focus on 'hot spot burglary areas'. Based on the distribution of a brochure, it would advise occupiers on measures they could adopt to reduce their chance of becoming another burglary victim. The residents associations offered to help the Police in delivering these leaflets.

CADRA News 2003 explained that Terms of Reference had been imposed on the SCF but in my view, the range of participants at my first meeting, bringing with them a corresponding range of interests and skills, gave me optimism that the SCF will still consider any area relevant to addressing crime, the fear of crime and community safety.

John Roach

Infill Development

We find that an increasing number of CADRA members are contacting us to express their concern about infill development near to their homes. It is common to find developers buying a house (or houses) with large rear gardens or similar areas of land that could by itself or in conjunction with neighbouring plots be used for more extensive development. Very often, access to the site is gained by demolishing the purchased property. Planning permission is not required for the demolition of a building (but the removal of a tree which is under a preservation order can carry a fine of up

to £20,000) and the site made available in this way is normally classed as a *Brownfield Site*. Below we outline (with the permission of Reading Borough Council) reasons why an appeal against a planning application may or may not be upheld.

A planning application **could** be refused, for example, because of:

- excessive traffic
- size or impact of a new building
- conflict with Council planning policies
- loss of daylight or privacy.

The Council **could not** refuse an application:

- due to impact of construction works
- on moral grounds
- because of the sort of people who might live in the building
- to protect a person's view
- to maintain property values.

Further information can be obtained by telephoning 0800 626540 or by visiting Planning Reception on the ground floor of the Civic Centre.

Recruitment Drive Continues

In June 2004 CADRA embarked on a determined attempt to increase its membership. There has been some success and now our membership exceeds 500 as Tom says in his editorial. We are still working on delivering a leaflet to every non-member household

in the district. Hopefully we haven't delivered any to existing Association members but if we have, please excuse us. If you, as a member, can sign up a friend or neighbour before we rattle his or her letterbox, our task will be considerably eased. The only qualifications

for membership are residence within the Borough north of the Thames and payment of the annual subscription of £2. A call to **Marian Fallowfield** on 9546899 will secure an Application Form.

Au Revoir Derek

To your Committee's real regret, Derek Bartlett broke the news at the end of last year that he and Susan would be leaving Reading to take up residence in Shropshire and, in consequence, he would be stepping down from the Chairmanship of CADRA. Throughout the many changes that have taken place during his period of office, Derek has worked unceasingly to further the aim of CADRA to rank as a highly respected organisation having a powerful voice for Caversham. On joining the Committee he became increasingly involved with planning applications and he would, with characteristic thoroughness, visit sites (often on foot) and sift through the plans obtained from the Council with an eagle eye. As Chairman, he realised that as a number of large public projects were in

the offing, CADRA needed to build up its membership base in order to give strong backing to views and comments presented to the authorities. Consequently, he launched a major recruiting drive that produced over 50 new membership households in the first few months. He also launched a large scale canvassing campaign during which over 500 residents living in or near Kidmore Road were asked for their opinions on traffic speeds and which later resulted in improvements in traffic calming measures in the area. Derek was for a number of years, the Chairman of the *Safer Caversham Forum*, an organisation outside CADRA but strongly linked to it. This organisation, which brought together the Council, resident's associations, schools, youth workers, traders and the police

did a tremendous amount of good work in tackling the problems arising in various areas of Caversham. Also, Derek was an active member of the North Area Consultative Committee and he was very unhappy when the work of both these bodies was scaled down.

CADRA in particular and Caversham as a whole will miss his vision, drive, thoroughness and above all, his genuine desire to ensure that Caversham is a good place to live in. Thank you Derek and we hope that both you and Susan will enjoy many happy years in a lovely part of the country.

The CADRA Committee

Recycling

We have learned from the Council that virtually every dwelling in Reading now has a Red Box or Wheelie Bin for the collection of waste paper, tin cans and selected plastic containers for recycling. The item of waste not collected is glass bottles which have to be deposited in the large bins sited at a variety of locations in the

district. When the Abbotsmead development began, the collecting bins were lost from the Waitrose car park and, although we were close to having a glass collecting facility reinstated there some time ago, it fell through at the last moment. For people who are without their own transport or are infirm, it is very difficult to

get bottles to a collecting site. We are still unable to find a suitable site close to the centre of Caversham where a bottle bank could be established but we would be grateful for any suggestions you may have in order to help solve this problem. (Refuse Collection & Wheelie Bin Helpline 0800 834 035).

Buses

Ian Brown

We wish to draw our members attention to the slight time table revisions which were introduced from 16th February to improve timekeeping. From casual observation, so far, the Number 9 route in Caversham seems to be working satisfactorily. The lack of a Sunday route 9 service has been raised before, but under the current legislation, Reading Buses is not allowed to subsidise non-profitable services. The usage of the buses when they did operate was so poor that there was no alternative to their withdrawal. The Nighttrack services are supported by Reading Borough Council. CADRA will continue to observe the situation and is pleased to receive comments on this and other transport matters.

Members' Letters

I understand that the Caversham Festival may not go ahead this year due to lack of sponsorship. I and my family would regret this as for the past two years it has been a happy and successful occasion. We have met up with a number of 'long lost' friends at the Festival and we have enjoyed wandering round the various stalls and exhibits neatly assembled in such a compact space. Above all, the event has shown that Caversham is a place with its own special identity. I cannot believe that the Festival will not take place this year.

Can somebody come to its rescue please? JH

I feel that by allowing traffic coming up Prospect Street to form two lanes on the approach to the traffic lights, a potentially dangerous situation is produced. To allow traffic to creep along the nearside lane, vehicles in the outside lane move towards and even over the centre of this somewhat narrow road. The result is that buses and large vehicles coming down Peppard Road have difficulty in swinging round almost on to the footpath and close to the houses. The gain to set against this difficulty is that two or three cars in the nearside lane have a slightly shorter time to wait at the lights. Is it worth it? DC

Caversham And District Residents' Association

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The Purpose of CADRA

CADRA has been in continuous existence for over 36 years and it is widely respected as a voice for Caversham.

We resolutely avoid party political bias. Our aim, quoted in the Constitution, is "to preserve and enhance the quality of life in Caversham and the surrounding district." In Much of our work inevitably relates to planning and issues affecting the environment which involves working with Reading Councillors and Officers, other local groups, the Police, companies and individuals. To be effective, we have to be able to receive members' opinions and represent their views. These Newsletters are an indication of our commitment to this process, but our effectiveness will greatly increase with more members.

At just **two pounds per year per household**, membership of CADRA represents excellent value.

Please pass this on to anyone you know who might like to join CADRA
Membership application forms can be obtained from Marian Fallowfield, tel 0118 954 6899

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 CADRA2001@aol.com
 Letters for publication can be sent the Chairman.

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

USEFUL NUMBERS

Graffiti, Litter & Environment Helpline (Free) 0800 626 540
 RBC Call Centre 0800 626 540
 RBC Planning 0118 939 0587
 RBC After School Clubs 0118 939 0636

Police Sector Acting Inspector Dave Griffiths 0118 953 6351
 Police Sector Beat Office: 948 1290 for:
 PC Peter Stratton, Caversham Heights
 PC Chris Manetta, Emmer Green & Caversham Park Village

CADRA AGM Notice

The Annual General Meeting
 will take place at
8 pm.
 on **Monday 29th March 2004**
 at the Baptist Free Church Centre
 South Street, Caversham.

AGENDA

1. Opening and Welcome
2. Minutes of 2003 AGM
3. Chairman's Annual Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Committee
6. Any Other Business (items advised in advance only)

Note: Only paid-up members of CADRA may vote at the AGM

After the AGM, Mr. Adrian Lawson (Reading Borough Council) will speak about the development of the Kennet and Thames watersides.

Committee: Retiring Members

Under the rules of the Constitution, Committee Members Helen Lambert, John Roach and Linda Watsham retire at the Annual General Meeting. They are eligible and are willing to stand for re-election.

Nominations for the Committee

Any member may be nominated for election to the Committee at the AGM, subject to the conditions in the Constitution. The nominee must give a signed declaration of his/her willingness to serve and be proposed and seconded by two other members of the Association.

Please use the form below and return the completed nomination slip to the Secretary no less than 14 days before the AGM.

Nominee: I am willing to serve on the Committee of CADRA, carry out duties as agreed and to act at all times in the best interests of CADRA and its members.

Proposed by

.....

Nominee's Name

Signature & Date

Seconded by

.....