



CADRA News

Caversham & District Residents' Association
The Voice of Caversham since 1967



The changing face of Reading

As the Reading skyline continues to change, we are pleased to welcome two speakers with considerable local experience.

Richard Bennett has been active as Chair of the Reading Civic Society for over 20 years, and as Vice Chair of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee, which was formed in 2016. He takes a leading part in the practical promotion of heritage issues across Reading and was appointed as a Deputy Lieutenant for the Royal County of Berkshire in 2018. The Civic Society was founded in 1961 to fight the swathe of developments which were threatening to sweep away the historic heart of Reading, including the Town Hall. It is a member of Civic Voice, the national charity for the Civic Movement in England, and takes part in the Regional Forum, helping to shape overall strategy.

Developers in Reading are nothing new: development in the late 1700s and 1800s sets the context for Richard's talk about modern developments and Build to Rent. He will briefly cover some of the 23



Image from Hermes Investment Management

significant developments in the town centre, many of which will affect the views from Caversham, and local traffic.

Mark Worringham has been involved in Reading's planning policy for 15 years and heads the Council's planning policy team. He is ideally placed to talk about how Reading has evolved and where planning decisions may lead. The new Reading Local Plan is expected to be adopted in October. It encompasses broad policy as well as criteria for specific sites and sets the

context for decisions in the new Local Transport Plan, expected in 2020.

Helen Lambert

William Marshal

The order for the information panel has now been placed. A tailor-made frame is being manufactured to support the panel and avoid placing strain on the 100-year-old structure of the bridge. As a result, there are some additional costs, and donations would still be very welcome. The donation form can be found at www.cadra.org.uk. We are very grateful for the generous donations to date.

There are some last details to be finalised during the order period, but we fully expect the panel to be installed within the 2019 anniversary year.

Caversham sign

Stuart King has now completed the repairs and repainting of the sign, ready for it to be reattached to the post.

Open Meeting

Tuesday 12 November 2019, 7.45pm
Thameside School, Harley Road

The Changing Face of Reading

Speakers:

Richard Bennett, Chair of Reading Civic Society
Mark Worringham, Head of Planning Policy, RBC

Transport

As part of the preparation of the draft Local Transport Plan 2036, the Council undertook a public consultation and set up the Cleaner Air and Safer Transport Forum. CADRA is represented on this forum, which is intended to generate proposals for further investigation. There are significant issues for Caversham, and we are looking at how CADRA can best engage.

The implications on traffic from a potential third Thames crossing are not straightforward. In the context of the Climate Emergency, Oxfordshire County Council have asked that a new bridge should be restricted to public transport, cyclists and pedestrians. Failing that, they are seeking to include the associated road network within the scope of the project. We very much hope that the councils in Oxfordshire will still be willing to engage in finding an appropriate solution across council boundaries.

Licensing

The main items of interest have been the applications for large events in Council parks. These need to be carefully managed to avoid undue disturbance to residents and other park users, and to ensure that damage to the grass surface is repaired and new growth is allowed time to re-establish. Repair of the grass surface is outside the remit of licensing law and we urge the Council to put other controls in place. Some applications were made and later withdrawn, but we anticipate Oktoberfest will be taking place in Hills Meadow. Reading Festival will be reviewed in December in the usual way and we would welcome feedback – positive or negative – to inform the CADRA response.

Building height of proposed development

Image by Aviva Investors



Planning

Reading Local Plan

In June, a consultation opened on modifications to the draft plan, inviting comments to be considered by the Inspector. Modifications had been proposed regarding Reading Golf Club, Caversham Park and some important heritage issues. A substantial number of comments were submitted, including many on Reading Golf Club. All of these comments, including those from CADRA, can be found at www.reading.gov.uk/localplanexamination. The Local Plan is expected to be adopted in October 2019.

South Oxfordshire Local Plan

Councillors will be considering options regarding the progression of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan during October. There are some difficult issues relating to the Oxford–Cambridge Corridor and decisions by Oxford City Council. See www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2034 for more information.

Planning applications

As always, the CADRA committee has reviewed significant applications and shared details on www.cadra.org.uk/en/Planning. On the planning list, you will find links to the Council planning page to view documents.

Comments were made on the following applications: alterations to the entrance to the Grade II listed Caversham Baptist Church have been approved, including a ramp for easier access; and a scheme for new houses on green space of Blenheim Road was refused at Committee.

CADRA also raised concerns on applications which have still to be determined. These include the scheme to convert and extend the former care home on Kidmore Road; extensions to 106 Westfield Road; 658 flats on the old Royal Mail site, which we consider to be overdevelopment; and a revised application for a new hotel within the Crowne Plaza car park, which would have a serious impact on St Peters Conservation Area.

You can find a Council update on delivery of the permitted application for landscape works on Mapledurham Playing Fields at www.reading.gov.uk/article/7075/Mapledurham-Playing-Fields-and-Pavilion.

The St Martins application for a five-storey mixed use scheme encompassing Superdrug has still to be determined. It would comprise residential apartments, a cinema/leisure facility, and retail and restaurant units.

Expected applications

Discussions have been held with Reading Golf Club and their developer partner, as well as with Keep Emmer Green, and we will continue to monitor. CADRA continues to attend discussions on proposals to develop the SSE site between Vastern Road and the River Thames as the plans have progressed through several stages.

Public exhibitions were held at the end of September on emerging proposals for the Station Shopping Park on Vastern Road, which includes the land occupied by TGI Fridays, Mothercare, Aldi and The Range (see www.rssp.co.uk/docs/17127_RSP_Banners_A04.pdf). An outline application is expected early 2020, setting out the broad parameters for development which could include offices, 750–950 residential units and mixed use on the ground floor. Land ownership is separate from the application for the Royal Mail site alongside, and the relationship between this site, the old Royal Mail site and the SSE site will be very important, particularly for relative heights of buildings and for the pedestrian and cycle route to the station.

Flood alleviation

There are still many issues to resolve over the potential scheme to reduce flooding in North Reading and Lower Caversham which would have a profound effect on our riverside. The Environment Agency will make a report to the RBC Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee on 20 November 2019, and we will let you know the outcome. In preparation for this newsletter, we asked the EA a series of questions. Here are the key points from their reply.

'What stage is the project at?'

Changes to the scheme are being made to the design first shared with the public in November 2018. These are based on information from public feedback and site-based investigation. At this stage, the scheme is not fully funded and does not have all relevant permits and permissions.

'What are the changes in approach and plans for public engagement?'

The project programme was adjusted to allow additional time to engage with the community. Visualisations are being prepared to show what different locations could look like if the scheme were to go ahead. There will then be further engagement events.

'What is the relationship between new or existing trees and a potential flood barrier?'

The EA report that they are fully committed to doing everything possible to reduce the impact on the local environment including reducing potential impact to trees, and are looking at into innovative solutions and re-alignments.

The substantial loss of trees and the impact of the proposed very large channel across Christchurch Meadow remain a major concern. We will press for better advance information on events for public engagement.

Safer Caversham

Our Neighbourhood Policing Team is back to full strength with three PCSOs (Ian Chaston, Lauren Jerrom, Jessica Lee) and two Police Constables (Chris Davis and Mike Havers).

Public Space Protection Orders have been introduced across Reading aimed at dealing with specific nuisance. This might include a restriction on problems such as begging or street drinking (<http://news.reading.gov.uk/pspo>). The issue with homeless people in Caversham Centre is being handled in keeping with these PSPO guidelines. There is a continuing threat of traveller encampments in Clayfield Copse and a bund is to be built as a deterrent.

Community Speedwatch is run by the Neighbourhood Police team with community volunteers. It operates up to 40 mph. Warnings may be issued, and the area given priority for Police enforcement. If you would like to volunteer for your area, please email us at info@cadra.org.uk. A 20-mph speed limit in the Caversham Centre has still to be progressed.

Caversham has seen several recent burglaries and the Police are aware of gangs operating from outside the area. Please review your security and report any suspicious behaviour (see details on p.4). There have been grass fires in Bugs Bottom involving school pupils, and motorbike nuisance in parks and Thames path. PCSOs are going into Primary Schools to discuss 'knife crime'. Stop and Search for weapon possession is now part of a 12-month project across the Thames Valley. Mapledurham Playing Field has had vehicles parking up and playing loud music into the early hours. Late shift police patrols have been set up with supporting Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) warning signs.

The next Community Safety Survey is now due. It will seek your views on issues such as crime and disorder, litter, parking and ASB in order to establish the key priorities. The survey will be available online for about six weeks and the results reported back by Ward. This is the opportunity to 'have your say' and assist in prioritising local issues to be worked on in the next couple of years.

Conservation Areas

Following adoption of the first volunteer led Appraisal for St Peters, Caversham in 2018 (see www.cadra.org.uk/en/Conservation-Areas), it is anticipated that the second volunteer led appraisal for the very large Russell Street/Castle Hill Area will go before RBC in November for approval. Several CADRA members have contributed to the substantial volunteer effort in bringing this forward. We hope to start work on elements of the Action Plan in the St Peters Area over the coming year.

The Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) and Reading Civic Society have had some success in the last

six months, lobbying against the demolition of two non-listed but locally important historic buildings in Reading. Overlapping membership between the CAAC, Reading Civic Society and CADRA contributes to the effectiveness of all three organisations.

Most recently, Reading Borough Council has successfully bid for circa £800,000 of Heritage Action Zone funding for historic high streets in Conservation Areas to cover parts of the Russell Street/Castle Hill, St Mary's Butts/Castle Street and Market Place/London Street Conservation Areas. The CAAC and Reading Civic Society supported this bid.

About CADRA

Our aim is to *preserve and enhance the quality of life in Caversham and the surrounding District*, or, in other words, that Caversham should always be...

...a great place to live!

We work closely with Reading Councillors and Officers, other local groups, the Police, companies and individuals, always avoiding party political bias.

Together, we can make it better.

We issue two newsletters a year, hold two public meetings, write columns for the *Caversham Bridge* local newspaper and maintain a website with information on local issues and links to relevant official websites. The Facebook page (shown on the CADRA homepage) gives up-to-the-minute local news. You do *not* need to register with Facebook.

Contacting CADRA

Please write to the Secretary or better still, email us at info@cadra.org.uk. Please let us know if you change your email address.

Membership

Membership of CADRA is just £3 per year per household. Leaflets are available from Caversham Library or Waltons, Prospect Street, or from the Membership Secretary, Tel: 947 6984. Join and pay online at www.cadra.org.uk/application_form.php.

Useful info

Ward Councillors

Caversham: Adele Barnett-Ward, Richard Davies, Ayo Sokale

Mapledurham: Isobel Ballsdon

Peppard: Clare Grashoff, Simon Robinson, Jane Stanford-Beale

Thames: Paul Carnell, Jeanette Skeats, David Stevens

Individual contact details can be found at

www.reading.gov.uk/councillorsbyward

Reporting crime and nuisance

To report **non-emergency crime call 101**, or go to www.thamesvalley.police.uk or email MapledurhamandThamesNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or PeppardandCavershamNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk.

Call 999 in an emergency.

To report crime anonymously, call Crimestoppers on **0800 555111**.

Anti-social behaviour: Report ASB on **0118 937 2161** or email ASB.Team@reading.gov.uk with as much detail as possible.

The Committee

Chairman: Helen Lambert, 5 Derby Road, RG4 5HE, Tel: 947 3165

Treasurer: Colin Hall (co-opted), 2 Hornbeam Close, RG4 7DF, Tel: 946 3460

Secretary: Linda Watsham, 159 Kidmore Road, RG4 7NJ, Tel: 947 8744

Membership: Jacque Tomson, 121 Upper Woodcote Road, RG4 7LB, Tel: 9476984

Website: Lloyd Pople, Upper Woodcote Road

Planning: John Nicholls (co-opted), Sandcroft Road; Kim Pearce, The Mount; Malcolm Pemble, Shepherds Lane

Safer Caversham: Alan Wright, Upper Warren Avenue

COMMITTEE SUPPORT

Transport: Paul Matthews, Albert Road; John Lee, Hemdean Road

Project Support: Les Killick Upper Woodcote Road

Informal Links: Jo Munday, South View Avenue; Mo Prins, Haldane Road

General support: John Boucher, Highmoor Road; Les James, Wincroft Road; John Roach, St Peter's Avenue

Newsletter Editor: Helen Lambert

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The opinions expressed are those of the contributors.

Fly-tipping: Call RBC on **0118 937 3787**

Noise: For noise outside of acceptable and/or permitted hours, contact the RBC call centre on **0118 937 3787** and you will be put through to Environmental Health or the Anti-Social Behaviour team, depending on the problem.

Litter and dumped rubbish: Register online or download the free app at <https://loveclean.reading.gov.uk/reports/home> to report any environmental issues, including graffiti, dog mess, etc. (you can also send photos of the problem) or call RBC on **0118 937 3787**. Keep a note of the reference number.

Parking: For persistent parking on pavements call the Police on 101, with details of vehicle and location. Photos are helpful, but do not endanger yourself when taking them.

Other RBC services

Contact online via www.reading.gov.uk, see also links to specific services from www.cadra.org.uk, call **0118 937 3787**, or see www.reading.gov.uk/contactus for individual services.