

CADRA News

Caversham & District Residents' Association

The Voice of Caversham since 1967

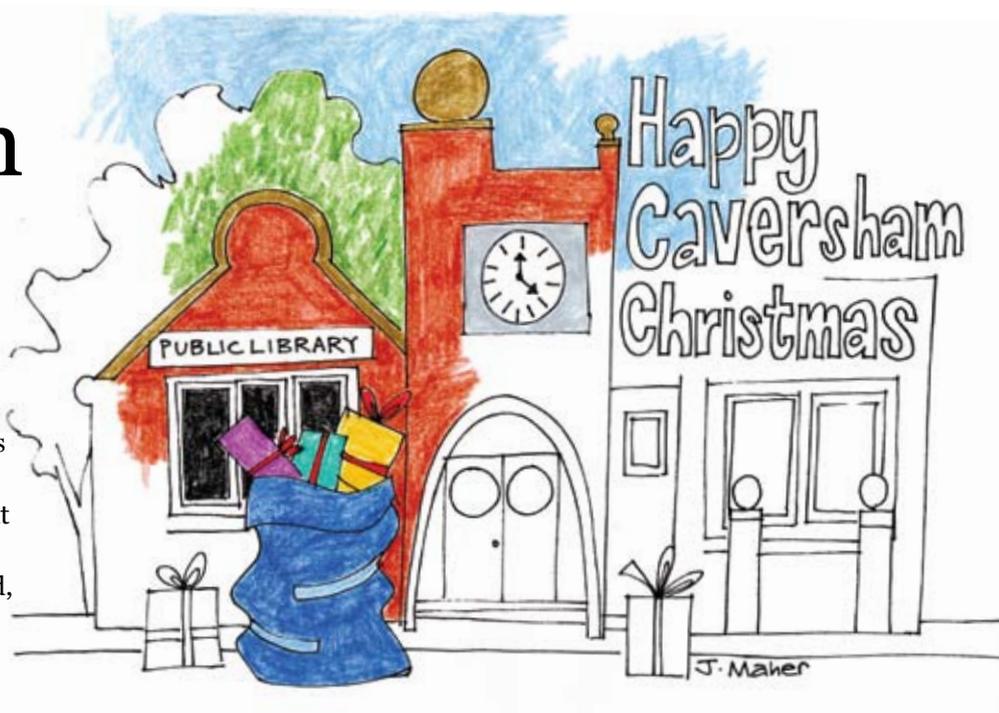


Happy Caversham Christmas

To add a little cheer in difficult times, CADRA has been working with two local artists who have produced six black and white drawings of Caversham landmarks with a Christmas theme. You will find these at www.cadra.org.uk/en/Christmas-2020, where they are free to download, print and colour in. Please share with any schools, groups or individuals who may be interested. Perhaps they could appear in windows to send out a message across Caversham?

Latest news

Sadly, there can be no open meeting this autumn, but there is plenty of news to share as we look back over the past months. Most members will have received an email every month summarising the main items addressed by the committee. CADRA has also been active on the CADRA Facebook page. This allows us to post information on fast-moving news and to reach out to a wider audience.



We continue to update the information on the Covid webpage as needs change through different stages of the pandemic. A listing of companies providing local grocery deliveries and collections can be found on p.4 of this issue of CADRA News.

AGM

The formal issues of the AGM were replaced by a series of votes online; thank you to all the members who participated. Reviewing the 2019/2020 accounts, the committee agreed to make donations to local organisations particularly affected by the pandemic. This included £1000 to support the Weller Centre in their excellent work to provide practical local help and £500 to Thames Valley Air Ambulance. Arts organisations continue to struggle so we were delighted that the Queens Award for Voluntary Services was made to Progress Theatre, Reading.

MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS

Work here has also been hampered but it is good to see progress towards completing work on the pavilion.

LIBRARY RE-OPENS

Caversham Library reopened in October on Tuesdays, Fridays & Saturdays 10am-1pm & Thursday 1pm-4pm for appointments booked at www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/libraries-reopening

FOOD WASTE COLLECTION

Food waste collection started in October for a few trial streets and the full service is due to start 1 February (though there could be delays due to Covid). Food waste collection will be weekly and will be processed to produce fertiliser and electricity from methane capture. Grey bins will be exchanged for a smaller bin, but collection will continue unchanged.

Helen Lambert



Drawings by Janina Maher (above) and Liz Real (left)

Planning

Reading Golf Club

The application for 260 homes on the Reading Golf Club in Reading has attracted considerable local concern. The club proposes land for allotments, an area of country park and golfing facilities on the land within South Oxfordshire. As none of these have planning permission from South Oxfordshire, it is difficult to see how they could be a condition for the application in Reading. CADRA raised a series of concerns. http://bit.ly/CADRA_ReadingGolfClub

Around Caversham Road

Three large inter-related applications are still under consideration for the SSE site, the station retail park and the sorting office. The Bell Tower Association uncovered the history of the Drews building, which was part of a malthouse complex serving Simonds Brewery. It is the oldest surviving building between the railway and the Thames and was recently locally listed. This carries less protection than statutory listing but is an important consideration in determining planning decisions. Despite an officer recommendation to approve, the Planning Committee unanimously refused the application for a 7-storey building which would have set a precedent in that area. An appeal is expected.

Caversham centre

Caversham Traders worked hard on a successful reopening in challenging conditions, and they need our support. A new Post Office opened in March. The planning application for a cinema in the space occupied by Caversham Health & Fitness was withdrawn. Applications for a gym in the old New Directions centre temporarily occupied by RABBLE, and for a new use for the NatWest Bank building, have yet

to be decided. Approval has been given for new antennae and higher poles on the Telephone Exchange.

Baltimore Drive

CADRA objected to a proposed new house here: a striking new design, but inappropriate in the virtually intact inter-war character of this attractive road. The application was recommended for refusal but withdrawn before a decision.

SODC Local Plan

The examination of the Local Plan for South Oxfordshire was completed in September. Consultation continues to 2 November on the main modifications that the Inspector considers necessary to make the plan sound before it can move to the adoption stage. While the majority of homes are directed away from the Reading border, we have raised some concerns about relevant broad policy which might impact on land near our border. www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/forthcoming-planning-policies/our-forthcoming-local-plan

Planning White Paper

The Government has consulted on a radical change to the current planning system. CADRA gave considerable thought on how to respond. Though many aspects of the current planning system could undoubtedly be improved, we have significant concerns. The proposals are wide-ranging but would impact particularly on an area like ours, as they seek to move away from each application being determined on its individual merits toward a system where complying with pre-set criteria would bring approval. Opportunities for community input would also be more limited. You can view the 84-page consultation document and CADRA's response here: www.cadra.org.uk/en/Planning#block565

Transport

Transport Strategy

The draft strategy for Reading set out options to manage demand as well as schemes to benefit all road users. This included an orbital route around the northern edge of Reading linking the A4074 to the A4155, and three new Park & Ride facilities linked to Thames Valley Park which relate to the delivery of the proposed Third Thames Crossing. It is not surprising that this caused considerable concern in Oxfordshire. Very regrettably, the Oxfordshire strategy made no mention of Reading or Caversham, despite plans for new homes which will continue to increase traffic flows through Caversham, and CADRA made representations accordingly. Both consultations are now closed.

<https://consult.reading.gov.uk/dens/reading-transport-strategy-2036>

Cycle lanes and one-way system

Central government funding for the Active Travel Scheme advised Councils to implement improvements rapidly for cycling and walking. The one-way scheme on Gosbrook Road and Westfield Road formed part of that scheme but was removed after a few days: <http://news.reading.gov.uk/caversham-one-way-systems-to-be-removed>.

New crossing

A new tiger crossing with adjacent parallel crossings for pedestrians and cyclists is to be installed on Gosbrook Road near the path on to Christchurch Meadows. To create the necessary visibility for the crossing facility, a reduction of the existing parking bay and replacement with double-yellow-lines is required.

Conservation

Chazey Barn

The Grade I-listed barn at the end of The Warren remains on the Heritage at Risk register and has serious structural cracking. The Council and Historic England secured urgent work to prevent further decay. This included work to the significant cracks, stopping water ingress to the roof by temporary covers, removal of rubbish inside the barn and security measures. Any final programme of full restoration will depend on confirmation of what planning permission is in place and the potential use of the barn.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/list-entry/49143>

Over the river

The historic lamps on both Reading and Caversham Bridges are to be upgraded and converted to LED. We are working with Councillors and Officers to achieve the high standard deserved by these bridges as they both approach their centenary. Interestingly, the current globes and attachments on Reading Bridge date from the 1960s.

Amendments to the Russell St Conservation Area have been adopted by the Council. Among other changes, the area is extended further along Oxford Road. The proposals were prepared by Reading's Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC), which includes CADRA, and we played a very active part.

The CAAC is also encouraging RBC to consider designating 'Local Areas of Special Character'. These unofficial designations for areas where local character is important would not carry the legal weight of a Conservation Area, but would nevertheless alert both planners and applicants that special care is needed when making changes. A possible first candidate is the Bell Tower area across the river, but there are several parts of Caversham where this could also be useful.

Some excellent news: conservation work in Reading, which has for so long been under-resourced, has been boosted by the appointment of a full-time Conservation and Urban Design Officer. This is a real improvement, long sought by the CAAC, and we look forward to working with the new appointee.

Reading Gaol

The future of Reading Gaol has still to be decided but it is encouraging that Historic England has stated, 'Any reuse of the site should embrace the prison's historic and cultural significance', and has backed Reading Borough Council having control of the site. The Chair of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee has written to the Minister of State at the Ministry of Justice in support of the heritage significance and how the gaol might be preserved for the benefit of the Reading community.

Safer Caversham

There is evidence that crime has increased during the pandemic: there have been incidences of burglary, bicycle thefts, and items taken from sheds, garages and cars. Arrests have been made, but please do check your security. The three Caversham PCSOs have been conducting patrols in the area and policing Covid guidelines where possible.

An eviction process is underway for the travellers encamped in Hills Meadow car park. As autumn fades it is timely to check that our hedges do not overhang the pavements, causing obstruction and inconvenience to pedestrians, particularly to people with a disability. Incidences can be reported at www.loveclean.reading.gov.uk/reports

There have been continuing concerns about begging, aggressive begging and drug use in the centre of Caversham. A Multi Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) group has been set up by the Police Area Commander bringing agencies together to tackle long term issues and to implement a strategy to address these problems. The police ask the public to report begging and not to give money to beggars but donate to a charity such as Launchpad or St. Mungo's.

The police team have been dealing with several cases of rogue traders pressurising elderly and vulnerable residents in Caversham to have unnecessary work done on their properties for an inflated charge, and sometimes using the opportunity to steal money or valuables.

The Community Speedwatch campaign has been suspended during the pandemic but Neighbourhood Policing team "Have Your Say" meetings continue. Reports from the community are essential to police work, and you will find useful information at www.cadra.org.uk/en/Safer-Caversham.

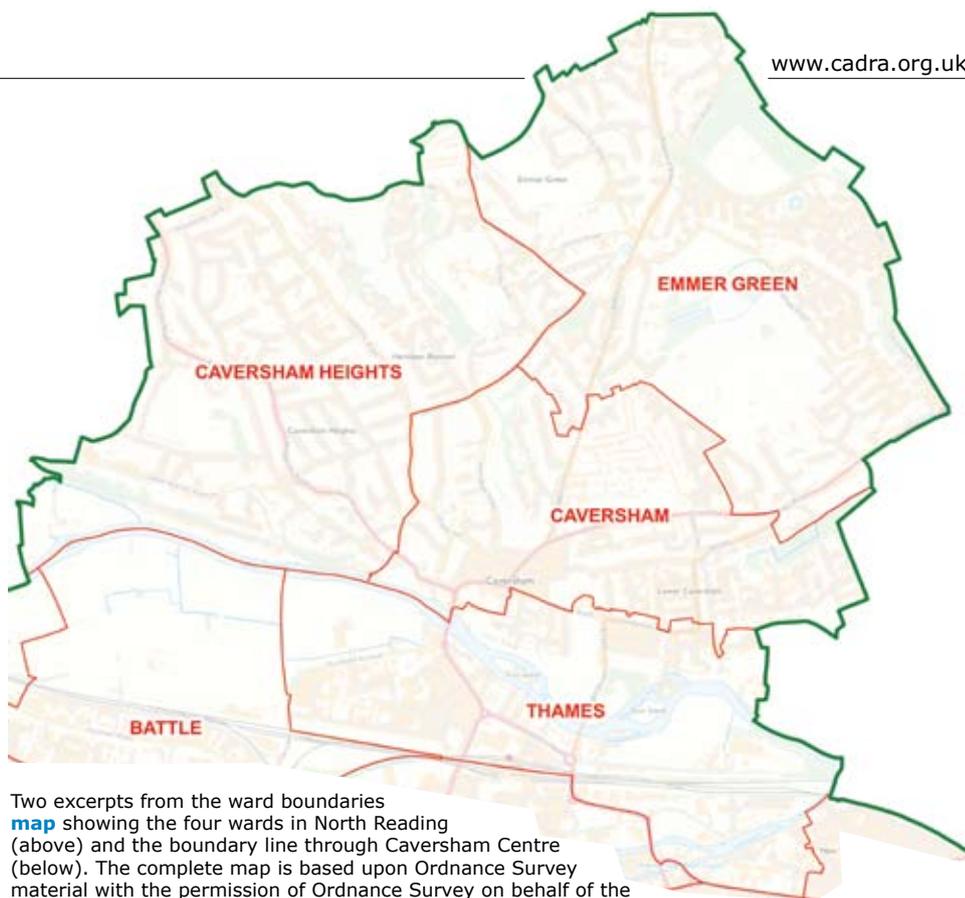
Flood alleviation

The Environment Agency explained to us that they are currently updating the scheme costs based on the outline designs shared with the community earlier this year. The updated costs and the latest assessment of how many properties may benefit will be used to re-calculate the amount of central government Grant in Aid funding the scheme could receive, and how much funding will therefore be needed from other sources. In the meantime, further design work is on hold. Once updated costs and benefits are available, there will be further community updates and discussion of potential next steps. The scheme is still in the early stages and will need to secure funding and other approvals before it can progress to the next phase.

Ward Boundaries

The last electoral review took place in 2001/02. At that time, a new Mapledurham Ward was created. With a lower population than the other wards, it had just one councillor, and so a third of the number of elections held in all other wards. Reading Council is elected 'by thirds'.

The population of Reading Borough grew from 135,000 in 1981, to 163,000 in 2019. It is projected to increase 12.5% (to 181,900) by 2039. Last year, the Local Government Boundary Commission agreed an increase of two councillors which would maintain the ratio of 1 councillor per 2,400–2,500 electors. An increase from 46 to 48 councillors would allow all wards to have three councillors and the same pattern of elections. The Commission undertook a first consultation from August to November 2019 on the principle of 16 wards with a similar number of electors, each with three councillors, which would mean substantial changes to ward boundaries.



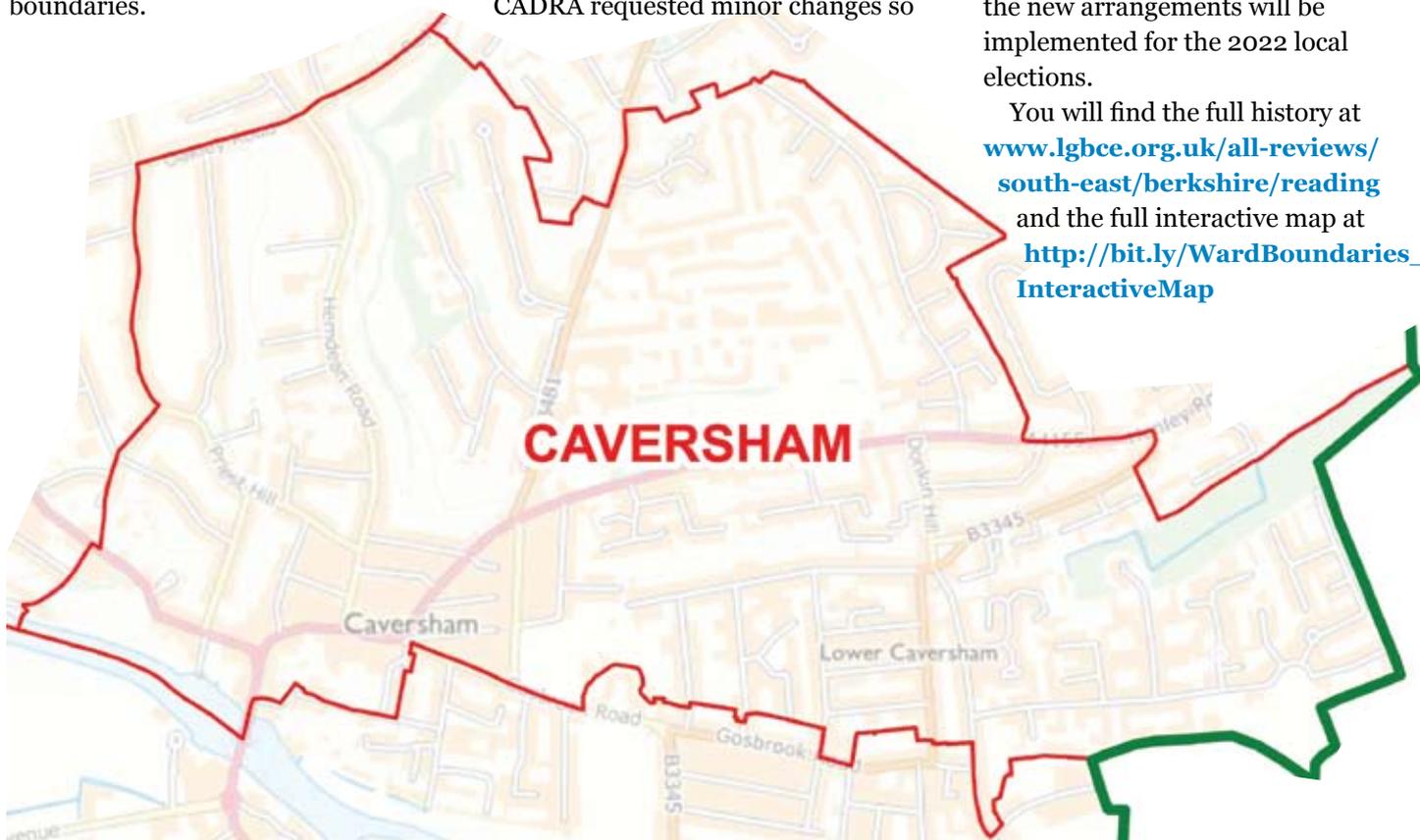
Two excerpts from the ward boundaries map showing the four wards in North Reading (above) and the boundary line through Caversham Centre (below). The complete map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Keeper of Public Records © Crown copyright and database right

A second consultation from February to April 2020 included a map with draft proposals showing four wards for North Reading: Caversham Heights, Emmer Green, Caversham and Thames, which spans the river, taking in part of Lower Caversham and extending to parts of New Town. CADRA requested minor changes so

that Caversham Centre, St Peters Conservation Area and Caversham Court all lie within Caversham Ward. This was accepted by the Commission and changes made.

Their final report has now been issued, with an interactive map. Subject to parliamentary approval, the new arrangements will be implemented for the 2022 local elections.

You will find the full history at www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/berkshire/reading and the full interactive map at <http://bit.ly/WardBoundariesInteractiveMap>



Local food deliveries and collections

This list of small, mainly local, suppliers offering delivery services was updated just before the announcement of the November lockdown and may be subject to change.

Most suppliers prefer online orders where possible.

The Caversham Butcher

www.thecavershambutcher.co.uk

Supplying for large numbers of people and home deliveries. Free delivery for orders over £25. Tel. 0118 947 5939.

Dudmans of Berkshire

<http://dudmansofberkshire.co.uk>

59a Grove Road, Emmer Green. Fruit and vegetable boxes. Pre-order your box on info@dudmans.co.uk or call Tel. 0118 947 1471. Store is open for collection 9.30 -12.30, with phones manned from early morning. Facebook [dudmansberks](#)

RG Bread <https://rgbread.com/product/vegetable-salad-boxes>

Above the Geo Cafe on 10 Prospect Street. Vegetable and salad box to which you can add bakery, dairy, charcuterie and other items. Free local delivery over £25. Tel. 0118 947 7411

Vegivores www.wearevegivores.com

St Martins Precinct. Order with Deliveroo. Minimum order £20 for delivery within 5 miles, Thursday to Sunday. Tel. 0118 947 2181

Warings Bakery Caversham

www.waringsbakery.co.uk

Place online orders at <https://waringsbakerydelivers.co.uk>. Tel. 0118 9464749 for 'call and collect'.

Pielicious

Washington Road, Caversham, will deliver locally if you can't get out, or you can collect. Message them on Facebook [pielicious.ltd](#) Tel. 07787 158227

The Flowing Spring Pub

<http://theflowingspringpub.co.uk>

Henley Road, beyond Playhatch. Hot meals and drinks, for collection and possibly delivery. Email info@theflowingspringpub.co.uk Tel. 0118 969 9878

Lockey Farm at Arborfield www.lockeyfarm.co.uk

has a list you can select from – meat, veg, fruit, dairy and bread. Free delivery within 7 miles for minimum spend of £20.

Loddon Brewery <https://loddonbrewery.com>

Online orders only for delivery. Free within 10 miles, minimum spend £20.

Red White & Cru www.redwhiteandcru.wine

Wine importer based in Caversham, now set up for local deliveries. Cases or individual bottles at good range of prices. Minimum order 6 bottles. Free delivery within 10 miles, enter FreeCav at checkout.

C A Belcher & Sons www.cabelcher.co.uk

Wholesaler offering fruit and veg, bread, milk and eggs. Minimum order £25 + £3 delivery. Tel. 0118 975 2466

FruitDelivered <https://fruitdeliveredhome.co.uk>

Based in Lower Basildon offering fruit, veg, dairy, eggs, sauces. Free delivery for orders over £25. Accepting online or telephone orders. Tel. 01189 079207

UCS Fresh <https://ucsfresh.com>

Fresh fruit & veg, meat, groceries and garden plant deliveries

Brakes Food Shop www.brakesfoodshop.co.uk

Sell a range of chef-recommended products, as well as everyday essentials and well-known brands. Minimum order £75, online only.

Home Pantry <https://homepantry.co.uk>

Delivering 'experience boxes' to homes & organisations nationwide. £5.95 delivery. Tel. 0117 287 2487

With the lockdown restrictions in place from 5 November, many local restaurants may offer takeaways. Check the directory on the [Caversham Traders](#) website http://bit.ly/CavershamTraders_Directory

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 or renew and pay online at www.cadra.org.uk/en/Application-Form.

The Committee

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

Treasurer: Jill Dibben (co-opted), 31 Winterberry Close, RG4 7XA, Tel: 948 3736

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

Social Media: James Tyson, Westfield 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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Covid-19 useful info

Websites

With pressure on all services, we are all asked to seek information online wherever possible.

NHS ADVICE for everyone:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

CADRA PAGE with links on how to find up-to-date information, offer help, get help and keep life going:

www.cadra.org.uk/en/Covid-19-Local-Resources

An updated list of **LOCAL FOOD DELIVERY** services can also be found there: www.cadra.org.uk/en/Covid-19-Local-Resources#block513

BERKSHIRE PUBLIC HEALTH DATA on Covid-19: www.berkshirepublichealth.co.uk/covid-19-dashboard

A wider range of links from **READING VOLUNTARY ACTION:** <http://rva.org.uk/coronavirus-community-action>

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES during this period: www.reading.gov.uk/coronavirus

ONE READING COMMUNITY HUB to offer or seek help if no local or family support is available:

www.reading.gov.uk/coronavirussupport

ONE READING COMMUNITY HUB contact:

https://bit.ly/Hub_contact

Latest news from **HEALTHWATCH READING:**

<https://healthwatchreading.co.uk/news-and-reports>

Phone Numbers

If you do not have internet, these are the important phone numbers:

HEALTH ADVICE (NHS 111): 111

ONE READING COMMUNITY HUB to seek help if no local or family support is available:

0808 1894325 (freephone)
9am to 5pm Monday to Friday

For urgent issues related to **READING BOROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES:** 0118 937 3787