



CADRA News

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



Saving Lives

The pressure on emergency services continues to grow: 999 calls have seen a steady year-on-year increase and there is a national shortage of paramedics. We are delighted to welcome two experienced senior managers working on the front line: Paul Jefferies, Assistant Director of Operations at South Central Ambulance Service (NHS Foundation) Trust, and Richard Company, Critical Care Paramedic at Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

South Central Ambulance Service (<https://www.scas.nhs.uk>) operates across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire and Oxfordshire, serving a population of over 6 million people. Their paramedic practitioners deliver a range of services to the community: supplying medication for a range of minor illnesses, providing advanced care for long term conditions, and managing a range of minor injuries at home. SCAS also responds to urgent calls from GPs and other health care professionals and works in close partnership with other emergency services. **Paul Jefferies** has previously worked at Royal Berkshire Hospital and as a paramedic. He will explain some of the challenges of delivering the service round the clock, 365 days a year.

The **Thames Valley Ambulance Service** (<https://www.tvairambulance.org.uk>) is an independent charity bringing hospital-grade expertise, equipment and treatment to the most critically ill and injured patients across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. Their helicopter and critical care response vehicles carry a doctor as well as paramedics. Working with the

**Wednesday
13 November 2024
7.30 pm**

**Caversham Baptist Church
1 Prospect Street
Reading RG4 8JB**

**Open Meeting
& Talk**

Saving Lives

Speakers: **Paul Jefferies**
Assistant Director of Operations,
South Central Ambulance Service
(NHS Foundation) Trust

Richard Company
Critical Care Paramedic,
Thames Valley Air Ambulance

other emergency services, they can perform critical medical procedures before getting the patient to hospital, relieving pain, straightening broken limbs and delivering emergency anaesthesia.

Richard Company has a wealth of experience with the service. Richard will give an overview of clinical services provided by TVA

in the region. He plans to bring a defibrillator to explain and demonstrate cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Congratulations to the many people who have worked to provide more defibrillators around Caversham and Emmer Green. Find your nearest at <https://www.defibfinder.uk>.

Helen Lambert

Christmas

Reading Family Aid (RFA) has for many years asked for **donations of toys and gifts for children** who would otherwise receive no Christmas presents. This is just as real for older children aged 10-16, so please think of them too and check what is needed at www.readingfamilyaid.org/toys--teens-appeal.html. Donations cannot be accepted after **Saturday, 7 December**.

Caversham Traders are preparing for the annual **Christmas late-night shopping** event with entertainment, market stalls and much more, to be held on **Friday 6 December**.

The Concerts in Caversham **Christmas concert** will be on **Saturday 7 December** in St Andrews Church.

On **Monday 16 December**, Caversham Court Gardens will be floodlit and open from 6.15pm for mince pies and mulled wine ahead of the annual **Carol Evening**, starting at 7.30pm (in St Peter's Church if wet).

Planning

Policy changes

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is expected to see significant changes and we wait to see the agreed method of confirming housing targets and whether the previous 35% urban uplift on housing numbers is to be scrapped. Further studies include the survey on retrofitting buildings and a paper on brownfield sites: <https://bit.ly/planning-reform-brownfield>. These may all impact Local Plans. The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041 has just been published for representations for a six-week period ending 12 November, before submission to the Secretary of State. <https://theconversation.southandvale.gov.uk/jlp>

Major Developments

The Secretary of State granted outline permission for 1000-unit mixed-use development at **Vastern Court** (TGI Fridays to The Range), overturning previous rejections. A detailed application will be required. Permission for **Caversham Park** was approved subject to a legal agreement and detailed conditions still to be confirmed. Plans include the conversion of the main house, a new care home, retirement homes, affordable housing and public access to the park dawn to dusk. A proposal to demolish **Napier Court** and construct 11 and 12-storey buildings for 576 build-to-rent homes is being considered. CADRA has submitted comments. Work on the former **SSE Site**, Vastern Road is expected to start soon. CADRA suggested creative hoarding designs for the site. The proposed two-storey roof (third and fourth floor) extension to **Great Brigham Mead** on Vastern Road, to accommodate 100 apart-hotel rooms was rejected at Committee.

Local Developments

Conversion has been approved for the former **Barclays Bank** on Church Street for two retail units with residential accommodation above. Construction methods are under review due to the busy location. The **telecom mast** on Woodcote Road was erected in April without planning

Flood Scheme

The Thames Valley Flood Scheme has been investigating creating flood storage on tributaries of the River Thames. As part of evaluating the costs and benefits, they are seeking community input on 17 potential locations before concluding which, if any, they will continue to investigate. At that stage more detailed maps and specifics will be available. The project still needs further funding and approval to go ahead. You can find out more in the newsletter (<https://bit.ly/August-2024-TVFS-newsletter>) on the Thames Valley Flood Scheme website: <https://bit.ly/EA-Thames-Valley>

permission. Although initially confirmed as 'not permitted development', we are now informed that planning considerations have concluded and that, after much debate, all provisions of legislation were checked and satisfactory met. On **Bridge Street**, the Persian Palace retrospective for an extension over the river by the Persian Palace was refused. At 10B, a 7-room HMO was withdrawn in July and resubmitted for 5-rooms and a studio. At 18, a change of use with flats above has been applied for, and also new signage on the old Lloyds Bank building. The Spice Oven on **Church Street** is looking sadly neglected and we are expecting a decision on the planning application which would include restoring the important frontage. The Winter Wonderland application on **Hills Meadow** was approved at Committee with a list of conditions (<https://bit.ly/Hills-Meadow-Winter-Wonderland>). **St Martins Precinct**, including Waitrose and other businesses, is for sale, with planning permissions still in place for parts of an earlier application. There is a license application to open a bar in the **old House of Cards unit** and we are informed that strict conditions for noise will apply.

Emmer Green

Plans to build nine houses at **Brindles** with access through Lyefield Court raised multiple concerns for older residents, who were supported by CADRA. It was refused by the Planning Applications Committee in September. The Temporary Traffic Restriction Order (TTRO) on **Kidmore End Road** was lifted in May. CADRA has finally heard back from **Vistry** on progress to restore road markings and signage and we are expecting confirmation of the timescale.

CADRA Planning List

Following the changes to the RBC Planning Portal, we have made some changes to the CADRA planning list (<https://www.cadra.org.uk/en/Planning#block419>). Most notably, new applications are now shown first. We are looking at further changes to make the list easier to navigate from a mobile phone or tablet.

Recycle & reuse

Caversham is fortunate to have local facilities to help us reuse and recycle. Both the Library of Things (<https://lotreading.myturn.com/library>) and Greenways (<https://green-ways.org.uk>) are based in Lower Caversham.

Re3 (<https://re3.fccenvironment.co.uk>), which is responsible for the disposal of household waste collected across Bracknell Forest, Reading and Wokingham, runs a Reuse Pop Up Shop from time to time. They have been shortlisted for three categories in the National Recycling Awards 2024.

Transport & Traffic

Reading Borough Council's Transport Strategy 2040 was adopted in June. It aims to make **sustainable transport** a viable alternative to private cars in Reading which supports both the town's 2050 Vision and its Climate Emergency Strategy. Cycle tracks along major routes have been expanded, and the reopened station underpass includes a cycle route.

Reading Buses have won Government funding to introduce **24 electric buses on routes 17 and 21**. The EV Strategy has led to £866k funding, delivering around 2,700 on-street chargers, more chargers in council car parks, and up to 150 cross-pavement gully connections for homes with no off-street parking.

CADRA is represented on the Council's Cleaner Air and Safer Transport Forum (CAST), where the Council reported that across the town **air pollution levels** continue to decrease. While some locations are of concern, all remain below UK guidance. The DEFRA-funded Clean Air Living Matters (CALM) Project, now halfway through its two-year run, educates schools and college students on air quality.

Check out **new local bus routes** at <https://www.cadra.org.uk/en/Traffic-and-Transport>.

Safer Neighbourhoods

The Safer Neighbourhood Forum for North Reading has been an important way to focus on local issues, with Police, Councillors and local people working together. Following some changes in the structure of the Police service and RBC services, we are waiting to hear how the work of the forum can be carried forward.

Recent issues include the Water Safety Partnership in Reading. More people have received throwline training, and more throwlines provided along the Thames. Shoplifting remains a problem and reporting systems between traders and the Police are being developed further.

Antisocial behaviour has been a concern in some areas. Look out for 'Have Your Say Days' which are a good opportunity to raise local concerns with the police team. Thames Valley Police recently reported seizures of e-scooters and e-bikes (<https://bit.ly/escooters-and-ebikes-seized>).

We have seen a lot of warnings about scams, including:

- Fake texts about a Penalty Charge Notice
- False QR codes on some town centre on-street parking machines
- A total loss of £17.7 million in 2023 to pension fraudsters
- Rental scams on social media sites
- Scams targeting fresher students (www.actionfraud.police.uk/studentsafety)

Emmer Green

Plans for the remedial works and cleaning of the Emmer Green **village sign** are still being finalised. CADRA is grateful to Keep Emmer Green for their financial contribution towards the cost of the works.

CADRA was pleased to be involved in discussion over potential works to **Emmer Green Pond** which is now severely overgrown. Clearing the pond would be a complex and costly project and we are keen to support progress.

Further information has become available regarding Thames Water's application for the construction and operation of an **additional service water reservoir** at Foxhill Lane, Emmer Green. P23/S3410/FUL. This includes proposed traffic routes for construction traffic. CADRA raised concerns with both South Oxfordshire DC and RBC and we are advised that the two are now in contact.

Communication with **Vistry** has been disappointing over the summer. After our intervention, the email RGC@vistry.co.uk should now provide a response. As mentioned under Planning, we have been promised a timescale to reinstate the parking signs and lines on Kidmore End Road following the agreement to cancel the Temporary Traffic Restriction Order (TTRO).

Chilterns AONB

The technical evaluation for the boundary review of the AONB produced no objections to areas suggested by Natural England's consultants for possible inclusion, but also suggested some additional areas. These then required evaluation, which has pushed the statutory and public consultation stages back to the coming winter and an eventual 'variation order' to winter 2025. More detail can be found at <https://www.chilterns.org.uk/what-we-do/future-proofing-the-chilterns/chilterns-aonb-boundary-review>.

Henley Road allotments

About one in five residents choose burial, but a report in 2021 identified that space for burials is expected to run out by 2030. A search for suitable new sites was unsuccessful; the cost of land eligible for housing is prohibitive, and the owners of Caversham Park were unwilling to discuss a potential sale.

A report in September this year identified that the preferred option to continue providing burial in Reading was to extend the Henley Road cemetery using the reserve cemetery land at Henley Road. This would mean the loss of the allotments from around 2026, which would be keenly felt. The consultation is open until 6 December: <https://media.reading.gov.uk/news/consultation-begins-on-tackling-burial-ground-shortage-in-reading>.

About CADRA

Our aim is to *preserve and enhance the quality of life in Caversham Emmer Green and the community around North Reading*, or, in other words, that Caversham and Emmer Green 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 for the *Caversham Bridge* newspaper and maintain a website with information on local issues and links to relevant official websites. We maintain two Facebook pages, one shown on the CADRA homepage, and the other www.facebook.com/CADRAforEmmerGreen.

Contacting CADRA

Please write to the Secretary or better still, email us at info@cadra.org.uk.

Membership

Membership of CADRA is just £3 per year per household. Leaflets are available from Caversham Library and Waltons or Fourbears, Prospect Street, or from the Membership Secretary, Tel: 0789 415 0023. Join or renew and pay online at www.cadra.org.uk/en/Application-Form.

Please let us know if you change your email address.

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

Treasurer: Jill Dibben, 31 Winterberry Way, RG4 7XA,
Tel: 948 3736

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

Membership: Adrian Goddon, Nire Road,
Tel: 0789 415 0023

Planning: John Nicholls (co-opted), Sandcroft Road;
Malcolm Pemble, Shepherds Lane; for Emmer Green, Neil
Parker, Kidmore End Road

Safer Caversham: Jill Dibben, Winterberry Way;
for Emmer Green, Neil Tayler, Highdown Avenue

Wider engagement: Sarah Stuffins, Washington Road

COMMITTEE SUPPORT

Transport: Paul Matthews, Albert Road

Planning: for Emmer Green, Harvey Smith,
Kidmore End Road

Website: Lloyd Pople, Upper Woodcote Road

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

General support: John Roach, St Peter's Avenue

Emmer Green Noticeboard: Sue Drayton

Climate Change: John Murdoch, Fernbrook Road

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Useful contacts

HEALTH

NHS Health Advice: <https://111.nhs.uk> and Tel. 111

NHS App: <https://www.nhsapp.service.nhs.uk/login>

Healthwatch Reading:

<https://www.healthwatchreading.co.uk>

Tel. 0118 214 5579 (Monday to Friday)

GP practices:

www.balmoreparksurgery.co.uk

www.emmergreensurgery.co.uk

Public Health data for Reading and Berkshire:

<https://berkshireobservatory.co.uk>

OTHER

Citizens Advice Reading: www.citizensadvicereading.org

Tel. 0808 278 8719 (freephone)

Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 9.30am – 2pm

Police and antisocial behaviour: Find all the information on reporting at www.cadra.org.uk/en/Safer-Neighbourhood

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Switchboard: Tel. 0118 937 3787

Planning: www.reading.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control (see also www.cadra.org.uk/en/Planning for links, advice and the latest planning summary)

Councillors and Council papers: www.reading.gov.uk/the-council-and-democracy (papers to committees are attached to the meeting agenda 7 days ahead)

Reading Services Guide: <https://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/home.page> (find Caversham in the A to Z)

School admissions: <https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/for-parents-carers/schools/admissions>