



# CADRA News

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



## Reading Abbey and Reading Gaol

After a year with no open meetings or talks, we are delighted to welcome John Painter to illustrate and explain the overlapping histories of Reading Abbey and Reading Gaol. Important sections of the Abbey lie beneath the Gaol, and the development of the Gaol was in turn influenced by the Abbey. And of course, we all wait with interest to know more about the future of the Gaol.

Although we can anticipate some easing of restrictions, the talk will be held online. Register for free through Eventbrite at <https://tinyurl.com/c4xjusb2> to be sent an access link.

The formal business of the AGM is being managed separately, as in 2020, and all members have been contacted by email or letter.

After 36 years working at Reading Borough Council, John Painter was keen to support the council's efforts to consolidate the Abbey Ruins and get them re-opened to the public access. He has been active with Friends of Reading Abbey for ten years. In this time, he has given a range of talks and co-authored *Reading Abbey and the Abbey Quarter*, published by Two Rivers Press. He is also involved with Reading Male Voice Choir, who will celebrate 50 years with a concert on 2 July.

In 2016, Reading Gaol was open to visitors through the Artangel project 'Inside: Artists and Writers in Reading Prison'. The wonderful photographs taken during this time by Matt Emmett (Forgotten Heritage) will feature in John Painter's presentation.

The 900th anniversary of the foundation of the Abbey on 18 June 2021 is especially important for Reading, and there is a growing list of events. The flagship celebration will be Water Fest on Saturday 19 June. Tickets are free but you must book your entry time in advance at <https://whatsonreading.com/waterfest900>. You will find a range of other links at the Friends' website [www.readingabbey.org.uk](http://www.readingabbey.org.uk).

Helen Lambert



Photograph: Matt Emmett, Forgotten Heritage, [www.forgottenheritage.co.uk](http://www.forgottenheritage.co.uk)

### Banking – Nationwide

Sadly, the last banking facility in Caversham closed on 22 April. CADRA was in correspondence with Senior Managers at Nationwide and attended a meeting convened by Matt Rodda, MP who is now exploring other options for some form of local service.

We have compiled a list of local ATMs you may find helpful: [www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg\\_editor/files/news/ATM%20list.pdf](http://www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg_editor/files/news/ATM%20list.pdf).

The results of a number of current Community Access to Cash Pilots elsewhere may yield viable solutions, including 'Bank Hubs', that could, in time, be implemented locally: <https://communityaccesstocashpilots.org>.

Tuesday 22 June 2021, 7.30pm

## Reading Abbey and Reading Gaol

Speaker: John Painter, Friends of Reading Abbey

Online event – register at Eventbrite: [tinyurl.com/c4xjusb2](https://tinyurl.com/c4xjusb2)

## Transport

### Reading Transport Strategy 2036

Consultation on the draft Reading Transport Strategy 2036 closed last August. Consultation on Oxfordshire's draft transport blueprint closed March 2021. There are significant gaps between the two plans which have still to be addressed. Far more joint working is needed if the problems which beset Caversham, Henley and the South Oxfordshire villages are to be properly addressed.

Last November the Council secured £1.179m from the Department for Transport from the national Active Travel Fund. This would allow some key missing links in cycle lanes to be created. The Council sought views on which of four schemes to progress and more details will be available later this year. Discussion took place within the Cleaner Air and Safer Transport Forum which CADRA attends.

## Safer Caversham

CADRA attends the Safer Neighbourhood Forum for North Reading and the Safer Reading Forum – an umbrella group to address common issues with senior representatives from Thames Valley Police. Police resources and staff turnover are a major constraint.

Following two tragic events involving knife crime, extra resources were brought in during Operation Sceptre and 25 arrests made. There is a continuing emphasis on education in schools about knife crime dangers.

Theft of bicycles has been a regular problem, particularly from sheds and garages.

Begging in the centre of Caversham remains a concern. One individual is in prison and, on release, will be issued with a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) that prohibits entering the Caversham area. PCSOs are looking at breaches of the Public Safety Protection Order issued for (for example) aggressive begging, which would warrant the issue of a CBO

and prohibition from the local area. Incidents should be reported to 101 or [Nikki.drury@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Nikki.drury@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk).

Community Speedwatch is currently in abeyance. The aim is to put the emphasis back into the community, releasing officers back to the front line. Training will in due course be provided for all volunteers.

Caversham often sees problems with rogue traders offering repair services to scam elderly residents, so it is excellent news that Trading Standards have recently made a successful prosecution. Motorbike nuisance and the arrival of Travellers have caused problems on open spaces. Providing a transit site for Travellers would increase the powers available to the Council and Police.

'Have Your Say' meetings are restarting. Please do use these and other reporting mechanisms shown at [www.cadra.org.uk/en/Safer-Caversham](http://www.cadra.org.uk/en/Safer-Caversham). Community reports are critical to combat crime and nuisance.

## Waste and recycling

Following the introduction of the food waste collection, Reading has now exceeded the 50% national target for recycling.

You can find details of what to recycle where at <https://re3.fccenvironment.co.uk/recylo> and also download the App which includes ways to report any bins missed.

Flytipping is a regular issue, though reports have not increased. The enforcement team continues to identify offenders and welcomes reports at <https://loveclean.reading.gov.uk/reports/home>.

## Conservation

Four members of CADRA contribute to the work of Reading's Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC). As well as commenting on planning applications in Conservation Areas, the CAAC has just completed a draft appraisal for the London Street/Market Place Conservation Area with proposed expanded boundaries. Along with reappraisal of the St Mary's Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area, it is intended that most of the town centre with historic buildings will be within a Conservation Area and have appropriate enhanced protection.

These two central Conservation Areas together with the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area are receiving funding from Historic England and High Street Heritage Action Zone

status. This heritage-led regeneration, with £800,000 match-funded by RBC over four years, is intended to:

- enhance the understanding of Reading's heritage and give the community a sense of ownership
- improve the physical condition of buildings and the viability of the high streets
- develop a comprehensive strategy to improve the public realm
- support local businesses, the local community and cultural initiatives.

These measures, along with the appointment of Reading's first Conservation and Urban Design Officer, are significant steps towards a better understanding and appreciation of Conservation Areas across Reading.

# Planning

The committee reviews applications every month via the monthly list available on the CADRA website. This gives links to the application details and to CADRA comments.

## North of the river

The application for Reading Golf Club is expected to be heard in Planning Committee in June, and CADRA is in contact with other local groups. Other applications on which CADRA commented include proposed conversions in Prospect Street and Bridge Street, extensions in Balmore Drive, new buildings on the riverbank and a new application on Gosbrook Road to demolish and rebuild next to the listed farmhouse. The enforcement notice appeal relating to the HMO on St Johns Road is due this month.

## Around Caversham Road

Belltower Association, the CAAC and the RBC Conservation Officer all presented to the appeal at the appeal hearing against refusal to demolish the Drews building. A decision is still to be announced.

The application by Berkeley Homes for 209 flats on part of the SSE site, south of Christchurch Bridge and between the River Thames and the Station, was unanimously rejected by the March Planning Committee. CADRA had raised concerns about the height of the building adjacent to the river and the alignment, coherence and legibility of the new pedestrian and cycle route between the station

and the river, and these were two of the principal reasons for refusal. For some years, CADRA has consistently highlighted the need for a co-ordinated design to apply not only to this site but also to the adjoining Aviva and Hermes sites, which make up the proposed new route. The views through from the station, and soft and hard landscaping, will be important to a new link from Christchurch Bridge to the town centre.

## South Oxfordshire

The SODC Local Plan was adopted December 2020, and two legal challenges have failed. The retrospective planning application for Caversham Lakes has yet to be decided, and there are major conflicts between the wildlife site and the recreational facilities now open.

Approval had been given for a single dwelling at 'The Piggery' off Gravel Lane. A new application for 6 dwellings would be far more intrusive.

## Planning policy changes

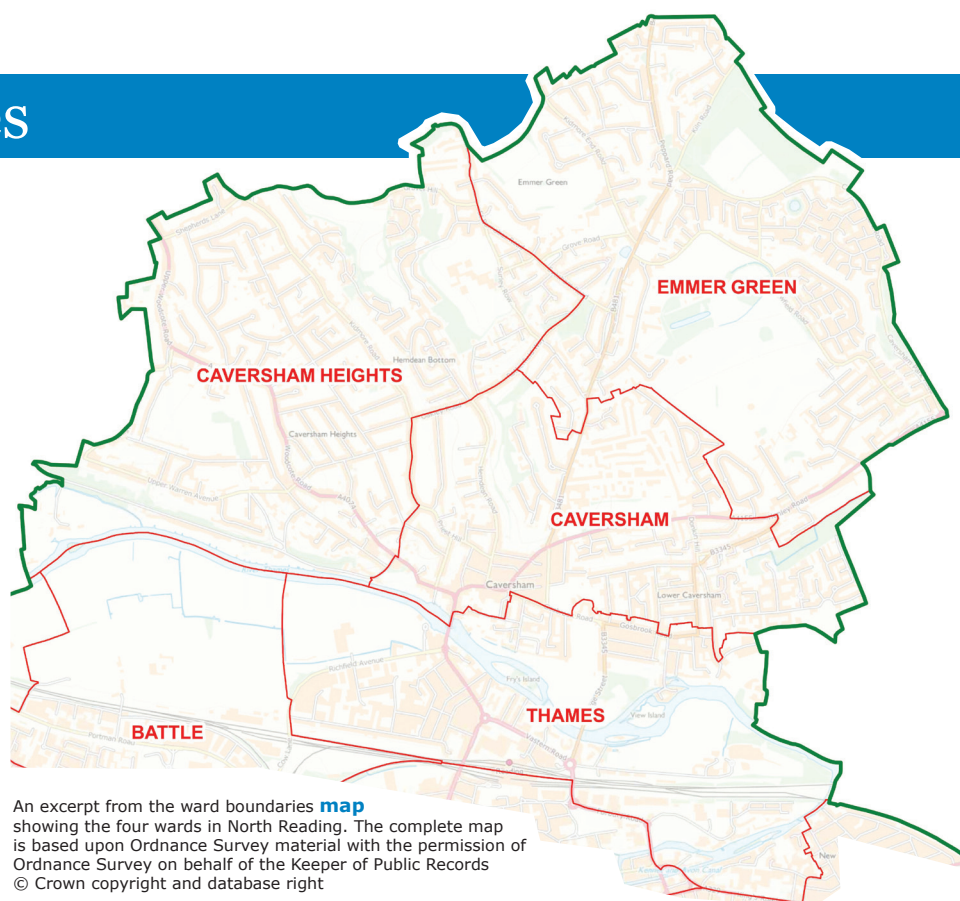
Following the issue of the White Paper in August 2020, there was a further consultation in December for new Permitted Development Rights. This is well explained at <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8981>. Major changes are expected in a new Planning Bill.

# Ward boundaries

Following the elections on 6 May 2021, we are showing the up-to-date list of local councillors on the back page.

At the next elections in 2022, ward boundaries and ward names will look very different. The recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission have now come into law. Next year, we will see three new wards, each with three councillors, as well as a new ward spanning the River Thames. The background to the electoral review is set out at [www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg\\_editor/files/Conservation%20Areas/Ward%20Boundaries%202022.pdf](http://www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg_editor/files/Conservation%20Areas/Ward%20Boundaries%202022.pdf).

The Boundary Commission's interactive map for Reading at <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk> will allow you to find your new ward.



An excerpt from the ward boundaries map showing the four wards in North Reading. 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

# 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

Email us at [info@cadra.org.uk](mailto:info@cadra.org.uk).

## Membership

Membership of CADRA is just £3 per year per household. Join and pay online at [www.cadra.org.uk/application\\_form.php](http://www.cadra.org.uk/application_form.php). Check your details at <https://membermojo.co.uk/cadra/signin>. Leaflets are available from Caversham Library or Waltons, Prospect Street, or from the Membership Secretary, Tel: 947 6984.

## The Committee

**Chair:** 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 (co-opted), The Mount; Malcolm Pemble,  
Shepherds Lane

**Safer Caversham:** Alan Wright, Upper Warren Avenue

**Footpaths:** Aidan Costelloe (co-opted), The Warren

### COMMITTEE SUPPORT

**Transport:** Paul Matthews, Albert Road

**Project Support:** Les Killick, Upper Woodcote Road

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

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

**Newsletter Editor:** Helen Lambert

Design by Anke Ueberberg. Printed by Herald Graphics, Tel: 931 1488.  
The opinions expressed are those of the contributors.

# Covid-19 Useful Information

## Ward Councillors

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

**Mapledurham:** Isobel Ballsdon

**Peppard:** Clarence Mitchell, Simon Robinson,  
Jane Stanford-Beale

**Thames:** Paul Carnell, Jeanette Skeats, David Stevens

## Websites

**NHS ADVICE** for everyone:

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19)

**CADRA PAGE** – offer help, get help and keep life going:

[www.cadra.org.uk/en/Covid-19-Local-Resources](http://www.cadra.org.uk/en/Covid-19-Local-Resources)

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](http://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](http://www.reading.gov.uk/coronavirussupport)

Latest news from **HEALTHWATCH READING:**

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

New links as they appear:

[www.facebook.com/cavershamresidents](https://www.facebook.com/cavershamresidents)

## 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

9am to 1pm Saturday and Sunday

For urgent issues related to **READING BOROUGH**

**COUNCIL SERVICES:** 0118 937 3787