



# CADRA News

Caversham & District Residents' Association

*The Voice of Caversham since 1967*



## The Planning System

The Planning System affects us all, whether we are hoping to get the best local decisions, keep up with what is changing around us, or maybe looking to make alterations to our homes. So, what is it and what is changing? Work classed as 'permitted' is now more extensive and details are emerging on the new planning bill.

CADRA has previously hosted speakers from Council Planning Officers. This time we are pleased to welcome two speakers from the private sector who advise clients across residential, education and commercial development on planning applications, appeals and the local plan process. Jon Sebbage, Associate Director at Savills Planning Division is based in Reading. He will be supported by Róisín Moyne, Planner, who joined Savills in October 2024, and Amy Allen, Graduate Planner. There will be good opportunities for individual questions after the presentation.

Their presentation will follow a brief AGM (the AGM papers can be found on page 4). Copies of the 2024 minutes, the Chair's report and the accounts will be issued by email ahead of the meeting.



### A new chapter

Before I pass on the role of Chair at the AGM in May, there are many people I would like to thank. First, the members of the CADRA Committee, and those behind the scenes, who over the past twenty years have worked hard to deliver more than 15 projects for our

local area ([www.cadra.org.uk/en/Special-Projects](http://www.cadra.org.uk/en/Special-Projects)). Meanwhile, they have followed local concerns, kept the community informed and striven to give a strong voice to the area north of the river. Second, the organisations locally and across Reading who have collaborated with us – we are so much stronger together. And third, the Councillors and Council Officers who have been willing to listen to concerns and endeavour to make things better.

Finally, we have been working tirelessly to give CADRA a strong base for the future and will make an announcement on the new arrangements at the AGM. We are delighted to welcome two new members to the Committee: with more people, we can do even more. This is a great time to get involved and help start the next chapter.

*Helen Lambert, Chair*

**Monday 13 May 2025, 7.30pm  
AGM & Open Meeting**

**New Testament Church, Caversham**

Following the brief formal business:

**The Planning System:  
How it works and what's changing**

Speakers:

**Jon Sebbage**, Associate Director

**Róisín Moyne**, Planner

**Savills Planning Division**

**ALL WELCOME –  
COME AND JOIN US**

## Planning

Every month you will find the latest planning list with links and details of local applications of wider interest at [www.cadra.org.uk/en/Planning](http://www.cadra.org.uk/en/Planning).

Applications have included proposals for four detached houses at **Atterbury Gardens** (PL/24/1659), conversion of **62 Prospect Street** (PL/24/1475) to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). Applications for five terraced houses at the **junction of George Street and Gosbrook Road** (PL/24/0900) and changes to flats at **18 Bridge Street** (PL/24/1627) were refused due to concerns including flood risk and open space impact. Plans for the **Great Brighams Mead** conversion to apartments are progressing. **The Persian Palace** (PL/24/0022) is appealing against the refusal of its riverside terrace and canopy. An enforcement notice was previously issued requiring its removal. **Chilis'** retrospective applications for signage and shopfront (Church Street) have been refused. The applications for the **Spice Oven** (PL/24/1531) have still to be approved and the delay remains a concern. The **Crowne Plaza Hotel** has been sold to Village Hotel Club, with extensive renovations planned.

Several tree works have been proposed, including a crown lift (removing some lower branches) for the **Holm Oak and tulip trees in Caversham Precinct** (PL/25/0141) and felling of **two yews in Kidmore Road**. Felling of a **silver birch in Surley Row Conservation Area** (PL/25/0107) was refused.

**Reading Golf Club** (P24/S4063/FUL) has applied to develop a training course and driving range, raising landscape and tree retention concerns in the Chilterns National Landscape.

### Local Plans & Policy

The Reading Local Plan update is expected to be submitted to the Secretary of State late April. Six small sites in Caversham and Emmer Green are shown for development (see section 8.3 in the most recent Local Plan draft, <https://bit.ly/LocalPlanPartUpdate2024>). The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Local Plan 2041 was submitted December 2024. Applications for Local Listing of Hemdean House School and 2 Mill Green are due for consideration by the Planning Applications Committee. Planning notification procedures have changed, with site notices replacing individual neighbour letters as a cost-saving measure.

## Chilterns AONB

A 12-week consultation on proposed boundary changes is currently being prepared and is expected to launch in late spring/early summer 2025. For further information and updates see [www.chilterns.org.uk/what-we-do/future-proofing-the-chilterns/chilterns-aonb-boundary-review](http://www.chilterns.org.uk/what-we-do/future-proofing-the-chilterns/chilterns-aonb-boundary-review).

## Licensing

Licensing applications for the Alto Lounge expanding into the adjacent shop with extended hours until midnight, and for the new Spill Bar were approved. There is always a balance between the enjoyment of local facilities and the need to minimise the impact on those living nearby. Henley Road BP Fuel Station applied for 24-hour alcohol and food sales, expanding beyond the current 6 AM–11 PM license.

### Reading Festival

The procurement phase for the 2025 Reading Festival (22–24 August) is underway. We are in contact with the organisers to pick up on issues raised last year and hope that early engagement will help to anticipate and mitigate sound and light impacts on some residents. The recent report from Festival Republic (agenda item 7) can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/FestivalRepublicReportMarch2025>. The sound issues should be mitigated in 2025 by containing the Chevron Stage in a tent, and there was extensive discussion on the drive to reduce the number of tents and the amount of other materials left behind on the festival site.

## Climate strategy

You may be aware that Reading has a climate strategy! The idea is to involve the whole community in helping Reading achieve Net Zero carbon emissions, enhance our natural environment and make our town more resilient to extreme weather. The strategy looks at Energy, Transport, Resources, Water, Green Spaces, Food, and other issues (see <https://readingcan.org.uk/priorities>). If you would like to learn more about the climate, how the weather works, or how to teach these subjects in schools, why not sign up to one or more of Reading University's range of free short online courses: [www.reading.ac.uk/planet/climate-resources/short-online-courses](http://www.reading.ac.uk/planet/climate-resources/short-online-courses).

There's already lots happening on the climate in Reading. One great idea for reducing our impact on the environment is the Circular Economy – repairing, re-using and sharing resources rather than buying new. Find out about such initiatives in Reading, including Reading Repair Cafe and Reading Library of Things (based in Marsack Street, Caversham, where you can borrow a wide range of tools) at <https://readingcan.org.uk/readings-circular-economy-resources>. The cost of solar panels has come down significantly, and if you are interested in having solar panels fitted to your home, the Council's Solar Together scheme makes it easy to choose an approved supplier – take a look at <https://media.reading.gov.uk/news/residents-offered-chance-to-save-money-through-solar-panel-initiative>. There are also lots of energy-saving tips on the ReadingCAN website at <https://readingcan.org.uk>, as well as news on grants available.



## Emmer Green

An application to build 9 homes on a plot behind **Lyfield Court and the Conifers**, a retirement development off Kidmore End Road which has a number of very elderly residents, was refused on multiple grounds by the Council's Planning Applications Committee in September.

The parking restrictions on **Kidmore End Road** have at last been removed, nearly a year after Reading Borough Council instructed Vistry, developers of the former Reading Golf Club site, to carry out the work. During this period CADRA has intervened frequently on behalf of Kidmore End Road residents with both Vistry and Reading Borough Council.

Thames Water's application for the construction and operation of an additional **service water reservoir at Foxhill Lane**, Emmer Green (SODC P23/S3410/FUL) has still not been decided. CADRA expressed concerns about the proposed traffic routes for construction traffic.

Reading Borough Council launched a consultation on the design of a new **Emmer Green playground** to replace the old one on Kidmore End Road (<https://emmergreenplayground.commonplace.is>). The consultation concluded in mid-January and the winning tender was submitted by Wicksteed Leisure Ltd. Following some minor adjustments to the design RBC are aiming to have the new play area installed and open for the summer holidays.

The **Emmer Green Village Sign** was commissioned by the then Emmer Green Residents Association (EGRA), constructed by the Berkshire Wood Carvers Association and erected in 2003. Over the last 20 years, the sign has shown signs of weathering and pollution to the extent the Emmer Green wording on each side and the pictures were quite blackened and hard to read and see. The base of the support post was beginning to show signs of rot. Cleaning has now completed by a professional company; Reading Men's Shed who repaired the Emmer Green noticeboard have replaced the missing logos and constructed a plinth to protect the base; and the costs have been shared between CADRA and Keep Emmer Green. We plan to mark the completion with a small celebration including the Emmer Green organisations represented by all the logos on the post of the sign. We hope the sign will remain in good shape for a number of years and continue to be a well-known landmark in Emmer Green ([www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg\\_editor/files/Newsletters/Newsletter-Docs/Emmer-Green-Sign-2025.pdf](http://www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg_editor/files/Newsletters/Newsletter-Docs/Emmer-Green-Sign-2025.pdf)).

In 2006, to mark the Queen's 80th birthday, a Turner Oak was planted in the **Emmer Green Recreation Ground**. Sadly, the tree did not survive as the ground is too wet. We are grateful to the Tree Wardens who have now planted an Alder, funded by CADRA, which is more suited to the conditions. The wooden cage made in 2006 has also been repaired.

## North Reading Safer Neighbourhood Forum

The North Reading Safer Neighbourhood Forum (NRSNF) will restart in its new format in May, provisionally on 15th May at 6:45pm at The Weller Centre. The Forum provides a link between residents, Thames Valley Police and Reading Borough Council. It is open to all residents who live in North Reading and is supported by like-minded organisations like CADRA, other resident associations, sports clubs, 'Friends Of' groups and the Caversham Traders Association.

Its aim is to help improve safety and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in North Reading. The North Reading Forum is one of eight or nine similar forums across Reading, each focusing on issues raised in the annual resident surveys. For North Reading the survey highlighted the following as key issues; aggressive begging, perception of a rise in crime committed by young people, drug misuse, speeding, worries for females running at night, lack of police presence. Please let the CADRA committee know if you would like to attend the NRSNF, or if there are issues that you would like CADRA to raise on your behalf.

## River Thames

High rainfall led to the river breaking out of its banks in November 2024.

During the floods in January 2024, there was a boat caught against Caversham Weir, and weir gate no. 6 could not be opened. The Caversham Reach is one of the few stretches on the river with a flow rate meter. This allowed us to perform a simple analysis of the difference in heights of the river between January 2024 and November 2024 to see if there might have been an impact of these restrictions at the weir. More details can be found in the flood report at [www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg\\_editor/files/Newsletters/Newsletter-Docs/Flood-Report-2024.pdf](http://www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg_editor/files/Newsletters/Newsletter-Docs/Flood-Report-2024.pdf).

An RBC update report on the January 2024 floods was issued in March 2025 (see sections 3.9 and 3.13 for actions in Lower Caversham): <https://bit.ly/RBCFloodUpdateMarch2025>.

There are visible signs of progress with the RBC Water Safety Partnership created in 2024. Along the river you can find new locked emergency boxes with throw lines for use in emergency if someone has fallen into the river and needs assistance. The instructions for use are on the boards. The code is given once you call 999 and ask for the Fire Service. Throwline training courses are available for anyone who is interested. Please contact CADRA for more details.

## 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: [www.facebook.com/cavershamresidents](http://www.facebook.com/cavershamresidents) and [www.facebook.com/CADRAforEmmerGreen](http://www.facebook.com/CADRAforEmmerGreen).

### Contacting CADRA

Please write to the Secretary or better still, email us at [info@cadra.org.uk](mailto:info@cadra.org.uk).

### Membership

Join or renew and pay online at [www.cadra.org.uk/en/Application-Form](http://www.cadra.org.uk/en/Application-Form). Leaflets are available from Caversham Library, Waltons or Fourbears, Prospect Street, or from the Membership Secretary, Tel: 0789 415 0023. **Please let us know if you change your email address.**

## The Committee

**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:** Malcolm Pemble, Shepherds Lane; Suresh Sukul (co-opted), Clonmel Close; for Emmer Green: Neil Parker, Kidmore End Road

**Safer Neighbourhood:** Jill Dibben, Winterberry Way; Nick Haskins; for Emmer Green: Nick Haskins; Neil Tayler, Highdown Avenue

**Wider engagement:** Sarah Stuffins, Washington Road

#### COMMITTEE SUPPORT

**Transport:** Paul Matthews, Albert Road

**Planning:** John Nicholls, Sandcroft Road; 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

Newsletter Editor: Helen Lambert. Design by Anke Ueberberg. Printed by Herald Printing Services Ltd. The opinions expressed are those of the contributors.

## The Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 13 May 2025, 7.30pm • New Testament Church, Caversham

#### Note

Only paid-up members of CADRA may vote at the AGM. One household subscription carries one vote.

#### AGENDA

1. Minutes of 2024 AGM
2. Chair's Annual Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Election of Committee
5. Introduction from new Chair
6. Appointment of President
7. Any Other Business (items advised in advance only)

#### Committee: Retiring and Co-opted Members

Under the rules of the Constitution, Jill Dibben and Malcolm Pemble will retire at the AGM and are willing to stand for re-election. Nick Haskins, currently co-opted member, is willing to stand for election. The Committee seeks confirmation of the recent co-option of Suresh Sukul. Please let us know if you are interested to join the committee or give support behind the scenes.

#### 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 have a proposer and seconder who are both members.

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

Please email ahead of the 14 days if you would like to discuss this.

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

**Name** .....

**Signature & Date** .....

**Proposed by** .....

**Seconded by** .....