



CADRA News

Caversham & District Residents' Association

The Voice of Caversham since 1967



Achieving the Vision

The 'Sharing our Streets' project has been moving forward since the joint meeting in November 2013 held by CADRA and the Caversham Traders Association (CTA). The Vision for Caversham –

'to enhance Caversham centre as a high-quality place for shopping, working, living and leisure and to promote an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable village centre for the twenty-first century'

– has received wide support and we should now look to achieving that vision. A follow-up joint meeting is planned for November.

The traditional traffic management techniques developed in the 1960s have moved on, and other centres have successfully made their through-roads more 'friendly' to non-motorised users. What is needed now is an agreed plan that is supported by local people, local traders and the Council so that, together, we are ready to



seize opportunities to secure funding. This will not be achieved overnight but we can change our village for the better. All are welcome at the meeting as we move forward to a more detailed proposal. With the planned development of St Martin's Centre, this work is timely and ever more important.

Possible ways to improve the centre of the village will be presented at the meeting. The challenge will be how to get Caversham residents and traders, Reading Borough Council officers and Elected Members to work together to agree an approach and obtain the necessary funding.

Helen Lambert

Joint Open Meeting with Caversham Traders Association

Wednesday 19 November 2014, 7.45pm
Caversham Baptist Centre, Prospect Street

Sharing our Streets: Achieving the Vision

Come and help move towards an agreed plan

St Martin's Centre

Since the planning application to redevelop the centre was submitted in June this year, concerns have been raised by local people and Council Officers. Revised plans to respond to some of those concerns have recently been made available and CADRA is considering how to respond. More details are shown on page 3 inside.

Transport

Gosbrook Road/Prospect Street Mini-roundabout

Reading Borough Council has now implemented the new double mini-roundabout layout at the bottom of Prospect Street. This road safety scheme has had a mixed reception from users who are not familiar with the new layout. No road junction can work well when roads are heavily congested but the road safety improvements, especially for pedestrians and cyclists, are welcomed.

Reading Station

Work at Reading Station and the railway through the town is due for completion in summer 2015. The new viaduct to the west of the station has been handed over for track laying but the widening of Cow Lane has been delayed by land ownership issues. If negotiations with landowners are not successful a public inquiry will be held, with a decision expected at the end of June 2015. If a positive decision is received and there are no other legal challenges, it is hoped that highway construction will start in late summer 2015. CADRA has been assured that there will be a proper footway on the east side of the completed over bridge. The new railway depot off Cow Lane/Richfield Avenue is fully operational and was opened by the Secretary of State for Transport. The northern transport interchange was completed in time for the formal opening of the station by the Queen on 17 July 2014. Full details are at www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk/Your-journey/Rail-improvements/Reading-station-improvements

Third Thames Bridge

Wokingham Borough Council is leading a traffic study into the possible third bridge. We await the results of the detailed traffic modelling of the projected traffic patterns and development of options. If carefully grafted into the local road network, a third bridge could have a positive effect on the centre of Caversham and 'Sharing Our Streets'.

Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge

Moving of the Christchurch Meadow Childrens Play Area and other preparatory work for the new cable stayed bridge is underway. The bridge is due for completion in 2015.

Highmoor/Albert Road Junction

As a result of a petition by residents in January 2014, RBC Traffic Management Sub-Committee agreed on 11 September 2014 to close the west side of Highmoor Road at the junction with Albert Road to general traffic.

The purpose is to remove the risk of a collision almost entirely, whilst allowing public transport, emergency and other public services to continue to use the junction. It will also improve the junction for pedestrians by removing some of the vehicle movements. Access into Highmoor Road west side is unaffected by this proposal.

The Council will consult with local residents and advertise the Traffic Regulation Orders. The results of statutory consultation process will be shared with the sub-committee at a future meeting and, if no objections are received to the proposal, the closure will be implemented.

Patrick Road Residents' Parking Scheme

Following requests from residents of Patrick Road, the RBC Traffic Management Sub-Committee agreed on 11 September 2014 to introduce a residents parking permit scheme to include properties 1-21 and 6-24. The rest of Patrick Road and Tamesis Place have off-street parking. The Council will advertise the Traffic Regulation Order for the scheme and, if no objections are received, implement it.

Reading Bus Fares

From 5 October 2014, the cost of an adult single ticket rises to £1.90. A smartcard for 10 trips reduces the cost per trip to £1.60 if bought on-line, or £1.70 from the Bus Shop in Broad Street Mall – see <http://tinyurl.com/no39gmp>.

The Heights Primary

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) purchased the Highridge site in Upper Warren Avenue to provide a permanent location for the school. This decision has caused grave concern and subsequently, the EFA agreed to consider an alternative, community-agreed location, subject to the usual conditions (<http://tinyurl.com/opdjtbj>).

Local groups have met to pursue alternatives and Rob Wilson MP held a meeting in July. We understand that the possibility of a school on Bugs Bottom, Mapledurham Playing Fields or Caversham Tennis Club is being re-examined and that the EFA has widened its research to include other potential sites. There has been no recent update.

The EFA has also agreed to postpone appointing architects and contractors for the Highridge site and has assured this would not result in a delay to a September 2016 opening for a permanent school. CADRA has committed to retain a neutral position on individual sites but to help where possible in reaching a community agreed location.

Planning

Whilst Caversham has been largely free of major planning proposals for some time, we have been very busy this summer with major issues that will impact on Caversham.

South Oxfordshire District Council ran a consultation in the summer on where to locate an extra 5900 houses by 2031. One option was to split the provision between the outskirts of Oxford and Caversham, even though the current approved local plan states clearly that traffic constraints militate against development on the Reading boundary.

CADRA objected strongly to this option. We are particularly concerned that housing on this scale on the edge of Caversham would place a great burden on local services, whilst doing nothing to meet Reading's own housing needs. We await the results of the consultation, and the Council's response to those results, with interest and some concern www.cadra.org.uk/pdf/S-Oxon-2031-Local-Plan-Consultation.pdf

There is now a presumption in favour of development that is sustainable – a difficult concept to challenge. Housing targets for each local authority area are prepared by the government. If it can not be shown that the local authority has identified sufficient sites, then proposals for speculative development will be given permission.

It is therefore vital that Statutory Plans are in place which allocate sufficient land for future housing need. With the current national housing crisis, it is inevitable that some difficult decisions will have to be made.

St Martin's Centre

In May, representatives from Hermes and the design team at Barton Willmore organised a series of presentations on outline plans to regenerate the centre. In June, a formal planning application was submitted and the plans shown at www.stmartinscentre-caversham.co.uk. This coincided with many of the community events around Caversham and CADRA was able to display details and talk to several hundred local people.

Drawing from comments received and our own examination, we prepared an initial response on a wide range of issues, supported by professional expertise from some CADRA members. The primary concern was that the Church Street frontage must be appropriate to local character and a rare opportunity taken to achieve a better balance between old and new. Many of our comments were taken on board by Planning Officers, along with concerns from other Council Officers.

Revised plans have now been submitted. Links are shown at www.cadra.org.uk/planning.php. There are some welcome changes, including some use of red brick and some stone to relate to Caversham Library opposite. It is a large and complex scheme and we are working on a detailed response. We would welcome comments from members and you can comment direct up to the date of the Planning Committee, which may be 12 November 2014.

Safer Caversham

We welcome Inspector Beverley Pearse who brings considerable experience in Neighbourhood Policing to the Caversham team. Working with the Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs), the team continue to target problems with the local priorities of traffic, burglary, litter and fly-tipping.

Speeding operations have been carried in Lower Henley Road, Caversham Park Road, Shepherds Lane and Peppard Road and tickets issued. Rotherfield Way has been a common concern and we await information on plans to install a pedestrian refuge. In September, a combined operation was held on Henley Road. In addition to numerous warnings, this resulted in action for driving without insurance,

driving license or road tax, as well as tickets, prohibition orders or fixed penalties for speeding, no seatbelt, mobile phone and driving over limited hours.

Burglary has dramatically reduced since the beginning of 2014, but the team would like to remind you that 25% of break-ins take place through insecure windows and doors and that sheds are seen as 'easy pickings'. For a free Home Security Assessment of your property, please contact the team – details on page 4.

Fly-tipping has increased recently. Please report incidents as advised on www.reading.gov.uk/residents/streetcare-and-environmental-cleansing/fly-tipping/.

Local networks

CADRA has always worked to develop informal local networks. We congratulate the residents of the Amersham Road area for developing a wide range of local initiatives, including their new community paper, *Caversham Compass*.

The Reading Neighbourhood Network (<http://rgneighbours.net/>) works to link and support community groups. The Network is chaired in rotation by trustees from different groups and the current chair is Helen Lambert, CADRA, who would be glad to hear from any local community groups.

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 a wide range of information on local issues and links to relevant detail on official websites.

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 for the household. Leaflets are available in Caversham Library and Delicious or Wordplay in Prospect Street, or from the Membership Secretary, Tel: 947 6984.

You can also register your details online at www.cadra.org.uk/application_form.php.

The Committee

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

Treasurer: Stewart Bolton, 11 Graveney Drive, RG4 7EG, Tel: 948 2687

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

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

Vice Chairman, Licensing & NAGs: Mike Gilbert, 4 Notley Place, RG4 8PW, Tel: 947 4437

Website: Lloyd Pople, Upper Woodcote Road

Transport: Paul Matthews, Albert Road

Planning: Mo Prins, Haldane Road, and Liz Killick, Upper Woodcote Road (co-opted)

Safer Caversham: John Roach, St. Peter's Avenue

COMMITTEE SUPPORT

Transport and footpaths: John Lee, Hemdean Road

Planning support: Ray Emmett, Westdene Crescent

Informal Links: Jo Munday, South View Avenue

General support: Les James, Wincroft Road; John Boucher, Highmoor Road

Newsletter Editor: Helen Lambert

Design by Anke Ueberberg

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The opinions expressed are those of the contributors.

Useful info

Ward Councillors

MAPLEDURHAM

Isobel Ballsdon

CAVERSHAM

Rachael Chrisp, Richard Davies, Tom Stanway

PEPPARD

Simon Robinson, Jane Stanford-Beale, Richard Willis

THAMES

Ed Hopper, Jeanette Skeats, David Stevens

Individual contact details at www.reading.gov.uk/council/councillors-and-committees/councillors/poster-reading-s-councillors/

Caversham Neighbourhood Police

Inspector Beverley Pearse
Sergeant Nigel Scarratt

Call 101 to report non-emergency crime or suspicious incidents or to contact the local team.

Call 999 in an emergency or if a crime is being committed.

For non-urgent issues email MapledurhamandthamesNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or PeppardandcavershamNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk but not to report a crime.

For neighbourhood information go to www.thamesvalley.police.uk and enter your post code.

Reading Borough Council

www.reading.gov.uk

See links to specific services from www.cadra.org.uk

Switchboard and out-of-hours emergencies: 937 3737

Enquiries (including Environmental Health, Highways and Street Cleaning, Pest Control, Planning, Refuse): 947 3787

Electoral Registration: 937 3717

Council Tax and Business Rates: 937 3727

Adult Social Care: 937 3747

Parking: 937 3767

School Admissions: 937 3777

Licensing: 937 2678

Building Control: 937 2449

More details at www.reading.gov.uk/council/contact-council