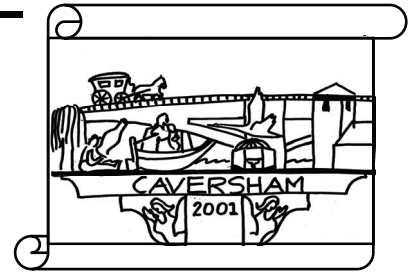


CADRA news

Caversham And District Residents' Association

The voice of Caversham for 40 years



Volume 8, Issue 1, March 2008

www.cadra.org.uk

News from across Caversham

CADRA has been following closely the emerging strategic plans for South Oxfordshire and the location of 1,400 new homes. One option is to locate a proportion adjacent to Reading.

Reading Borough Council is looking at the designation of sites for development or protection over the next 15 years. CADRA, EGRA, WADRA and Caversham Globe worked together to review the sites previously identified and submit proposals. There are important open spaces and landscape features in Caversham and around the Thames which need to be clearly designated under Council policy for the next 15 years. Viable proposals received by the Council will be included in consultation later this year.

These strategic plans will form the basis for deciding future applications. For parts of Caversham, advice from the Environment Agency is also critical to planning decisions and we look forward to hearing from their Planning Liaison Team after a short

AGM on 6 May 2008. We hope you will join us.

Caversham Lock Island and the Kings Meadow pool are currently being marketed for development within a tightly defined set of conditions. CADRA supported the need to sort out this run-down area and will be consulted on viable bids.

'...important open spaces and landscape features in Caversham '

At Caversham Court, a new Head Gardener starts on 1 April and restoration work is expected to start in the summer. Standard trees are being planted at Westfield Road, Kings Meadow and at Thames Prom, where black poplar whips are also being planted to be thinned later, leaving the best specimens.

The next Caversham Festival is to be held on Saturday, 13 September 2008 and we send our congratulations to

the newly appointed members of the team, headed by Evelyn Burt. Help will be needed on the day for short periods - let us know if you can help.

We were delighted that so many different local services and associations could join us in October, to mark CADRA's fortieth year, where we reviewed the past, present and future of life in Caversham.

Comments received from members that evening, included the need for more bottle banks and the state of the precinct - long overdue for significant improvement. The area has recently changed hands and we are waiting to hear more about plans being drawn up.

Traffic and consequent poor air quality on Caversham's busiest roads is an ever-growing problem. CADRA and EGRA have worked together to make sure that Caversham issues are well represented to the Transport Commissioners.

2008 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, 6th May 2008

**At the BAPTIST FREE CHURCH, PROSPECT ST.
at 7.45pm**

To be followed by a talk on

Planning in Flood Risk Areas

from the

Environment Agency

Martin Long, Leader of the Planning Liaison Team

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Following the two open police meetings in spring 2007 and street interviews of over 300 people, two Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAG) were established: Lower Caversham including the central business area, and Upper Caversham including Emmer Green and CPV. The NAG is composed of people interested in steering the police, and other resources, to deal with key issues. Both groups have focused on burglary and antisocial behaviour; incidents have been reduced following key arrests. Both NAGs will be holding public meetings to review the first year and plan future resource allocation.

Caversham enjoys a dedicated team of two P.C.s and four Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) with supervision from Sgt. Nigel Scarrat, a Caversham resident. PCSO Chloe Denny replaced Callum Bushell in Lower Caversham.

The six officers, augmented by other police staff, have given a highly visible presence to reduce burglary and antisocial behaviour. The PCSOs have a wide range of powers, including fixed penalty notices for dog fouling, littering, graffiti, fly posting and cycling on pavements. They have powers to deal with under-age drinking and smoking. In more serious incidents, PCSOs can detain people for other officers to deal with.

Extra police surgeries will be held on the 4th Thursday morning of the month in Caversham library, another to coincide with the Mapledurham Ward councillor surgery and also in Emmer Green/CPV.

Four street police briefings are being held every month to provide an informal opportunity for residents to share their concerns with the police, and for the police to explain the principles of

neighbourhood policing. Leaflets are put through resident's doors inviting them to meet police, who will be on site for about 30 minutes.

For non-urgent matters, you can now contact the Caversham team, on 947 4269 or use the answer machine when the office is unmanned. Use this number if you are interested in becoming a member of a NAG, or would like to nominate your road for a street briefing.

Two Neighbourhood Wardens, George Friel and Clint Payne, have been appointed to the northern Caversham area, initially working with the PCSOs to get to know the area and meet local people. They are particularly keen to help link younger people with the activities organised by various youth services programmes.

Air Quality

John Mullaney & Ruth Perkins

Its official: air quality in Caversham is poor. Almost the whole of Caversham centre exceeds pollution limits set by the government.

Traffic is the largest contributor to poor air quality and traffic volume is expected to rise by 40% in the 25 years from 2000.

However, although Reading Borough is responsible for producing 1 million tonnes of CO₂ (2005 figures), only 14% is from transport (56% from businesses, mainly through use of electricity, and 34% from domestic use). Additionally these figures are quite 'good' – an average of 6.9 tonnes per person per year, less than the average for the UK of 9.3.

Temperature trends show that summers like 2003 will be the norm by 2040 and the world has now agreed that it is more than 90% likely that the temperature increase is due to human activity. Of the 2000 additional UK people who died that summer, about 700 deaths were attributed to poor air quality.

So Reading faces a dilemma: how does it balance the need to reduce CO₂ for the good of the country and the planet versus the need to improve the air quality for the local people? Of course, the answer should be both. However finding the balance is not easy: spending money and/or implementing some sort of charging to really facilitate people leaving their cars at home, the short term against the long term and the local needs against the global. This is particularly hard as Reading is a rapidly expanding and developing town.

For Caversham, focussing on the air quality is clearly a priority and RBC is compelled to do something about it. A new air quality monitoring station by Caversham Bridge, measures the pollution each day.

CADRA participated recently in a consultation on this dilemma. The Council is due to report back in the coming months. Watch this space!

Can you help?

We would like to hear from you if you would be interested to:

- Join a small team sharing representation on one of the Neighbourhood Action Groups.
- Bring planning expertise or support planning work on the CADRA monthly committee.
- Help behind the scene with Lower Caversham issues.
- Help with the IT related work of the committee - you must be comfortable with different computer applications

Please contact Helen.Lambert@cadra.org.uk (or for the Neighbourhood Action Groups, John.Roach@cadra.org.uk) to explore options.

Reading Transport Commission

CADRA submitted views to the Transport Commission in January and was called to give clarification/evidence in early March. Three committee members presented CADRA's case and answered questions from the Commission. (The CADRA submission and the report of the hearing are on the CADRA website.) We were impressed by the apparent openness of the proceedings, particularly as there has been so much doubt about the process. The future of the one-way IDR appears to be dead, but time will tell.

Interesting submissions have been made by over 500 individuals, groups and businesses – available at www.reading.gov.uk. The Commission are certainly getting enough suggestions to accept, reject and ponder over. We await the findings of the Commission and (as CADRA requested) public consultation on any proposals.

Reading Station Redevelopment and Cow Lane

Proposals for the redevelopment of the station are being made public through the planning process. This apparently includes widening the Caversham Road rail-bridge (to accommodate more tracks but not wider footways) as well as blocking off Cow Lane. The implications are unclear with apparent benefits and some problems. Closure of the Cow Lane link is likely to remove many of the benefits for local

users, and could push more traffic our way. CADRA has been trying to obtain details of the anticipated traffic impact on Caversham centre and Caversham Road, but again facts (or predictions) are hard to come by, even with the Freedom of Information Act.

Other major developments at Station Hill and Chatham Street could substantially change the station area as well as having a major impact on traffic.

Cycling Strategy

CADRA responded to the Cycling Strategy consultation, encouraging the overdue need for a cycle strategy and programme of works to improve cycling conditions, highlighting the need for better Caversham cycling conditions and routes into and through Reading town centre.

Transport Users Group (TUG)

At the most recent meeting of the TUG forum at which CADRA is represented, two members of the Transport Commission attended, seeking further comments, especially from Readibus. The main focus was on the improvements to Reading Buses, the fact that all political parties now confirm that the bus company would remain in RBC hands and better facilities for cyclists. Improved security for parked bikes is to be investigated.

Planning

Recent appeal decisions have mainly upheld the decisions of the Borough Council. Refusal of planned developments on land east of Henley Road, leading down to the Berry Brook, have both been upheld by the Inspector – one for 14 new units and the other for a 60 bed care home and 60 new units. Part of this land lies within the flood plain.

On All Hallows Road, refusal for four houses to the rear of 50-52, adjacent to the cemetery was upheld. An alternative application for three houses is being considered. Half way down All Hallows

Road where work is in progress, Fishers applied to vary the condition imposed by the Inspector that the area of the tree roots should not be disturbed. The avenue of limes and the grass verges are an important feature of the route to the cemetery. We are very pleased that the Planning Committee overturned Fishers application. CADRA would like to see a clear policy to protect the trees and the verges.

On Kidmore Road, refusal of an application to build eight flats to the rear of number 182, was also upheld at

appeal. An alternative application for five new houses is being considered.

Other applications refused recently include plans for the previous Conservatree building in Chester Street Car Park and applications by the Gravel Hill Cottages down Blagrove Lane. These applications caused considerable concern as they are on a rural lane unsuitable for traffic and would have been visible from the open country spoiling the view of the existing period cottages.

Mapledurham Pavilion

It is over a year since Cabinet, on behalf of Reading Borough Council as Trustee of the Mapledurham Playing Fields Charity, resolved to pursue Option C of the consultation: to demolish the existing hall but re-provide changing rooms, with the sale of any land be pursued only to deliver this option.

The Mapledurham Users' Committee undertook further analysis of the responses to the consultation which highlighted significant opposition to any sale of land.

Surveys by structural engineers and the Council's Property Services recommend rebuilding rather than refurbishing the hall. It is believed that funding to demolish the hall and re-provide changing rooms is available but funding to replace the hall is currently very unlikely without the sale of land.

In February, Cabinet reaffirmed their decision with the caveat that the changing rooms be designed with the ability to build on a hall in the future, should funding become available without loss of land.

About CADRA

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

Voluntary Liaison: James Frost
12b Gurney Drive, RG4 7TJ

Footpaths & Traffic: John Lee
316 Hemdean Road, RG4 7QS

Planning: Jennifer Millest
40 Mill Green, RG4 8EX

Licensing & Transport: John Mullaney
29 Derby Road, RG4 5HE

Web-site & Link to Committee Support:
Ruth Perkins

61 Woodcote Road, RG4 7EX

Safer Caversham: John Roach
3 Courtlands, St. Peter's Ave, RG4 7DH

Committee Support

Membership: Mick Simmons

84 Kidmore Road, RG4 7NA

Newsletter Distribution: Jo Munday

46 South View Ave, RG4 5AJ

Planning Research: Liz Killick

153 Upper Woodcote Rd, RG4 7JR

Website Support: Linda Barlow

11 Shepherds Lane, RG4 7JJ

Contacting CADRA

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

Our aim is to:

"preserve and enhance the quality of life in Caversham and the surrounding District"

We follow planned changes relevant to Caversham and look for opportunities to improve or protect our shared environment. We avoid party political bias, working closely with Reading Councillors and Officers, other local groups, the Police, companies and individuals.

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 and current issues.

Membership

Membership of CADRA is just £2 per year per household.

Membership leaflets are available in Caversham Library, Wordplay and The Wendy House in Prospect St. or from the Membership Secretary, tel. 0118 9543537. The stronger our voice, the more impact we can have on local decisions. Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join!

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting
on **Tuesday May 6th at 7.45 pm.**
at the **Baptist Free Church Centre**
Prospect Street, Caversham.

Note: Only paid-up members of CADRA may vote at the AGM

AGENDA

1. Minutes of 2007 AGM
2. Chairman's Annual Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Re-appointment of Chairman
5. Election of Committee
6. Any Other Business (items advised in advance only)

Committee: Retiring and Co-opted Members

Under the rules of the Constitution, Stewart Bolton, John Lee and Ruth Perkins will retire at the AGM. They have each indicated their willingness to stand for re-election.

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.

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**.....