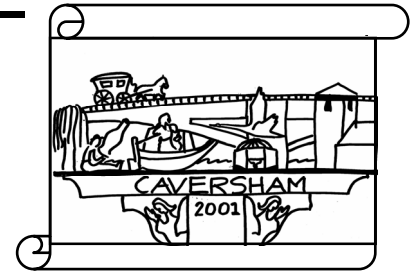


CADRA news

Caversham And District Residents' Association

The voice of Caversham for 40 years



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www.cadra.org.uk

School Places

In Reading and in Caversham, there are too many children, chasing too few school places. Since 2005, increasing numbers of Reading Borough Council Primary and Secondary schools have been oversubscribed and a growing number of parents have been unable to gain places for their children at the Primary and Secondary schools of their choice. A cross-party Board of Councillors, Head Teachers, Representatives of Faith Schools and an Independent Chair was established in 2008 to identify options for the future.

Demand for primary school places is expected to rise until 2012 when it will



Library photo

'...a thorough review of designated areas is considered necessary.'

level off. This will translate into increased demand for secondary schools places. Currently, 40% of Reading's secondary school age pupils attend schools outside the Borough. Availability will reduce following developments to the East, South and West of Reading.

More locally, 48 children living within the Highdown designated area were not offered a place in September 2008. For primary schooling, earlier estimates for the 2009 entry into reception classes in north Reading showed a deficit of between 29 and 45 places.

Across Reading, there is a need to provide five additional forms of entry in primary schools and five to six forms of entry in secondary schools, primarily in the south and east of the

town. As well creating places for primary and secondary school children, a thorough review of designated areas is considered necessary.

Options to increase places in Caversham, include the expansion of Highdown School by 40 places in Year 7 (a whole school expansion of 200 children) and the relocation or provision of a new primary school on the Highdown site. All proposals to expand schools will be subject to statutory consultation and the availability of capital funding.

Following the public consultation and public meetings, Cabinet will meet in November to consider recommendations on options to be taken forward. You can hear about the background and the next steps at the CADRA Open Meeting when two senior managers from the Education Department will give a presentation of interest to the wider community and to parents of both primary and secondary school age. We look forward to seeing you. Friends and neighbours are very welcome and can sign up as members on the night.

Open Meeting

**Tuesday November 10th 2009
at the BAPTIST FREE CHURCH, PROSPECT ST.
at 7.45pm**

Planning More School Places

by

**Maggie Buckley and Kevin McDaniel
Senior Education Managers RBC**

Reading Station

The recent exhibitions showed artists' impressions of the new proposals and representatives from Network Rail and Reading's traffic consultants answer were there to answer questions.

The station itself will include a new building at the front to the west, replacing the single story section and encroaching into the taxi rank area. Station access on the north side will be improved with a new entrance and full junction by the present Royal Mail entrance.

The road to the west will be lowered to subway level with access to platforms that way and escalators to higher levels.

Through traffic will be stopped, including buses, taxis, cycles and emergency services. Buses and other traffic will be re-routed via Friar Street and Station Road, which will become two-way. Bus stops will be relocated to the Station Road area and the north side of the station. Taxis will be relocated to three different areas: Station Road, Tudor Road and Vastern Road.

A longer term proposal is to remove the dual carriageway and build out the station/car park over part of Vastern Road.

CADRA welcomes the improvements but has concerns over:

- the impact on bus services and the loss of the main terminus
- taxi ranking in three separate areas
- drop-off and pick-up points
- limited provision for cyclists
- the potential impact on town centre congestion

Although the exhibitions were billed as a consultation exercise, it was disappointing that there was no feedback form or system and the representatives did not take notes.

The Planning Committee have agreed in principle that permission should be granted, subject to resolution of issues with English Heritage on the demolition of the listed building at the west of the original entrance. Permission for the Station Hill plan is subject to permission for the station entrance scheme.

Safer Caversham

Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAG's) aim to give local residents structured access to local police to discuss local issues and concerns on crime and anti-social behaviour. They are voluntary organisations made up of police, local councillors and local residents. There is strong support from the police and local councillors but organising and running the NAG is down to local residents. North of the river, the Lower Caversham NAG is well run with a secretary, chairman, treasurer, monthly meetings and documented minutes. Sadly, the Upper Caversham NAG has disbanded due to lack of support. The local police and councillors are keen to re-start the

Upper Caversham NAG and a survey has been circulated to canvas local views. Following the survey results, a public meeting will be held to discuss re-starting the NAG. These organisations are important but cannot work without the support of local residents.

The Safer Caversham Forum (SCF) meets quarterly on broader issues for Caversham's safety and its environment. It has administrative support from RBC.

Burglaries have increased across Caversham, often via unlocked or open gates, doors and ground floor windows. Many involve garages or sheds with valuable items and tools taken to get

into the house. Try not to be the soft target in your neighbourhood!

RBC Streetcare and Thames Valley Police have a programme of Environmental Visual Audits across Caversham which local residents are welcome to join to raise concerns and give local knowledge. A dedicated Environmental Liaison Officer is now in post for all areas north of the river. Meeting times and dates will be agreed with the NAG groups.

The Environmental Agency is holding a drop in session on 'Flood Planning' Monday 19 October 5-9pm at Amersham Road Community Centre.

Mapledurham Pavilion

Unfortunately all of the current options being considered by the Management Committee to rebuild/refurbish the Pavilion are unaffordable within the current budget. Therefore, the Cabinet of Reading Borough Council, who are the Trustees for the playing fields and pavilion, have been advised that further

consideration of the matter has been suspended for twelve months at which time the situation can be reassessed. CADRA continues to work with interested parties to try and find an acceptable solution to the problem.

Reading Festival

Festival Republic applied for a variation in the license and were granted an increase in permitted sound levels off-site, increased 'early bird' tickets permitting access on Wednesday ahead of the main entry and an increase of 10,000 tickets phased over three years. CADRA and WADRA worked closely with the organisers and Council Licensing Officers and achieved useful concessions to mitigate the impact on local people.

Complaints and comments received are an important for planning for subsequent festivals - contact Licensing (rbclicensing@yahoo.co.uk). CADRA and WADRA meet the festival organisers and Licensing Team in early December and would welcome comments.

You may have seen signs for free plums at Cross Lanes Farm. This followed discussion on how to overcome the loss of trade during the festival in previous

years. Thanks are due to Festival Republic for a successful initiative.

Reading University are undertaking a study on the economic impact of the festival. If you know of traders whose business has been either improved or disadvantaged by the Festival, please refer them to details at www.cadra.org.uk

Open Spaces and Environment



On Friday 7 August, about four and a half thousand people enjoyed the re-opening of Caversham Court gardens under wonderful blue skies. The newly

restored gazebo is topped by the replica wind vane, commissioned in memory of Molly Casey. The refreshment kiosk will remain open until the end of October, serving tea and cakes from Thursday to Sunday from 1.30pm to about 4pm. There have been a range of talks and tours, particularly over the Heritage Days when again the sun shone and the garden was full of

people. The Friends of Caversham Court have worked hard to make these events a success. You can join them by contacting Philip Darlow, tel: 0118

9472205 or via FriendsofCavershamCourt@googlemail.com

The row of pleached lime trees will be planted this winter between the gazebo and the canoe club. One of the trees has been sponsored by CADRA.

Have your say on Open Spaces in Reading at www.greenstat.org.uk/. Comments will be accepted to the end of October.

At the Green City and Open Spaces Forum on 'Towards a Low Carbon Reading' different speakers outlined a dual strategy to reduce the carbon footprint in the Council's own premises and at the same time work in partnership with both public and private organisations to make progress across Reading.

Caversham Lock Area

On 28 September 2009 the Council's Cabinet again considered the two competing proposals. The commercial bid for a hotel and bars had additional terms which were not acceptable to the Council including a 250 year lease. CADRA opposed this as it may have prejudiced the long term future of this sensitive area.

The Cabinet agreed to offer a period of two years exclusivity to

the Kings Meadow Campaign, during which time they will need to submit a planning application and ensure a firm financial footing. No public funds will be available to them.

The Cabinet thanked CADRA for their detailed work and balanced perspective. We now await the actions of the Environment Agency to dispose of the Lock Island.

Planning

South Oxfordshire District Council is finalising its housing strategy to 2026. The list of development sites submitted to them will go to consultation this autumn. Some are on or near the Caversham border. CADRA is now routinely receiving details of planning applications in South Oxfordshire and will review those near Caversham.

External proposals for another twelve

Reading sites have been received and will shortly go to consultation. These include part of Reading Golf Club and Caversham Telephone Exchange. See details on CADRA website. Full proposals on Site Allocations will be put to the full Council in January, followed by a 6 week consultation before submission to the Secretary of State.

Applications on Upper Warren Avenue,

South View Avenue and St Peter's Avenue bordering on Mapledurham Playing Fields have produced concerted local action with support from CADRA.

The Station Hill plans have been approved subject to permission for the Station Entrance scheme, design codes and a Section 106 agreement.

Reading Buses

As a result of serious financial difficulties, there have sadly been a number of reductions in service - particularly the school services which have not covered their operating costs. The excellent 922 service connecting children in Caversham with schools in the area around the hospital, has now been replaced with the 981 which leaves earlier in the morning and will depart from the schools before some schools finish for the day. Frequencies on the 22 service have also been reduced.

There are various ways of reducing the cost of bus travel. Smart Cards reducing the cost per ticket, can be bought from Broad St Mall or Great Knolly's Street and will soon be available on-line. Cards can be topped up on the bus or at a "Paypoint"

retailer. In Caversham, these include the Corner Store Gosbrook Road, and General Stores Nire Rd.

If you are travelling in a group of up to four, with any combination of adults or children, you can buy a group 'busabout' for £6.50, giving unlimited travel on that day. This is a saving even for two adults. A North Zone 7 day travel card from Caversham to Reading Centre costs £10 or £17 for all Reading zones.

If the bus service is not sufficient for you to manage without a car, you may be interested in the possibility of a car club in your area. Contact 'Commonwheels' at www.commonwheels.org.uk.

How you can help

Many thanks to those members who have renewed their subscription by standing order or regular electronic transfer. This does make a real difference to the internal organisation so that we can use your subscriptions to support Caversham rather than issue reminders.

We often get email rejections either

because email addresses have changed or because our email is treated as spam by your email systems. Could you please try to keep us informed of any changes and set your spam filters to accept email from CADRA.

We are looking for someone to take on the role of membership secretary, keeping a simple database up to date,

checking payments received and sending reminders when needed. Mail merge and similar technologies make this less onerous. This could be as a full member of the committee or as a 'behind the scenes' role perhaps attending once or twice a year to maintain contact.

If you would like to know more please contact Ruth.Perkins@Cadra.org.uk.

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,
Gurney Drive
Footpaths & Traffic: John Lee,
Hemdean Road
Planning: Jennifer Millest, Mill Green
**Licensing & Neighbourhood Action
Groups:** Mike Gilbert, Notley Place
Link to Committee Support & Newsletter:
Ruth Perkins, Woodcote Road
Safer Caversham: John Roach,
St. Peter's Ave
Website: Clair Drever, Rotherfield Way
Local Correspondent: John Mullaney,
Derby Road

Committee Support

Membership: Mick Simmons,
84 Kidmore Road, RG4 7NA Tel: 954 3537
Informal Links: Jo Munday
South View Avenue
Planning Research: Liz Killick
Upper Woodcote Rd
Website Support: Linda Barlow
Shepherds Lane

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 £3 per year per household. Membership leaflets are available in Caversham Library, Wordplay 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!

Useful Information

Ward Councillors

Contact via: 0118 939 0287
Mapledurham
Fred Pugh

Caversham

Andrew Cumpsty
David Lockett
Tom Stanway

Peppard

Jamie Chowdhary
Mark Ralph
Richard Willis

Thames

Isobel Ballsdon
Jeanette Skeats
David Stevens

Caversham Neighbourhood Police

Inspector Penny Mackenzie and Sergeant Rob Pitman
PC Debbie Smith and PC Michelle Clements
PCSOs Layla Potter, Karen Vaughan, Chloe Denny and John Hendy

To report crime, suspicious incidents or contact individual officers: 0845 8 505 505 or email: police@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk
Caversham Police Office in Church House: 0118 9474269 - use answer phone.

Anti-Social Behaviour Hotline: 0845 605 2222
Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, Liz Herbert: 0118 953 6250
Crime Reduction, John McNicholas: 07800 702204

In an emergency or if a crime is being committed call 999
www.thamesvalley.police.uk

Reading Borough Council

Switchboard 0118 939 0900

Call Centre for Refuse Collection,
Graffiti Removal, 0800 834 035

Call Centre for Planning Permission
& Enquiries, Licensing, Road Safety,
Noise Nuisance, Environmental
Health, 0800 626 540

www.reading.gov.uk, gives information on a wide range of issues including planning applications.

Links to specific parts of the Council web-site can be found on the CADRA website: www.cadra.org.uk.