

## Press Release



# Bell Tower Community Association Goes from Strength to Strength

Date: 16 March 2007

Status: For immediate use

It's been a successful first year for the Bell Tower Community Association.

Founded in October 2005 to generate some community spirit in a small corner of Reading, the Association covers the area between Caversham and Reading town centre. It's named after the Bell Tower of E P Collier Primary School, a local landmark. There are over 550 households and businesses in the area, and currently has around 80 members.

Chairman of the Association Barbara Kendall said, "It's been a great first year for Bell Tower. I've lived in the area for many years and I'm very proud of what we've done in our first year. There's a small group of people that put a lot of effort into organising events, and we really feel we're making a difference."

Teresa Colliass, one of the volunteers who runs the Community Association, said, "I think the biggest thing we've achieved for the area is the Community Tidy-Up Day last August, when we hired a giant skip and asked local people to throw out their rubbish. We reckon we cleared 10 tonnes of rubbish from the community, and you could certainly see the difference afterwards. Mean Fiddler who organise the Reading Festival were kind enough to pay for the skip and we hope that, with their help, we'll be able to make it into an annual event."

David Neale, who runs the Bell Tower website, has recently been on a Reading Borough Council training course in graffiti removal. He said, "Unfortunately graffiti is a blight on every neighbourhood. The most effective way to get rid of it is for the community to get involved - so with help from the Council and local sponsorship we're taking the initiative to clean it up and keep it under control."

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The Bell Tower Community Association publishes a regular newsletter called Neighbourhood News, which is distributed free to all houses and businesses in the area. It also operates a members' discount scheme with local businesses and organises community events. Successes of the Association in the last year include:

- Organising a petition to improve the safety of pedestrian crossings on Caversham Road, which led to improvements being made by Reading Borough Council.
- Persuading the Council to install a gate to improve security on the alleyway between Addison Road and York Road, and fencing around the play area on Denbeigh Place.
- Running two successful quiz evenings and a social visit to the Mayor's Parlour.

Bell Tower will be having its first AGM on 21 March, where local residents will decide on an action plan for the coming year. The Association plans to work with the Council and its top priorities are two things that will really make a difference to how the neighbourhood looks:

- Graffiti removal.
- Reading in Bloom – encouraging people to put out hanging baskets.

## Notes to Editors

### **Bell Tower Community Association**

- The Association represents the area bounded by Caversham Road, Northfield Road, Barry Place, the residential end of Cardiff Road, Addison Road, Denbeigh Place and Randolph Road.
- The neighbourhood has no historic name so the association took on the name of a local landmark, the bell tower on E P Collier Primary School in Swansea Road. The tower can be seen from all over the area.

### **Information**

For more information please contact:

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**Ends.**