

17/02/2016

Residents disappointed by Reading Council Response to Train Depot Nuisance

Residents in the Cardiff Road area of central Reading have expressed disappointment at Reading Borough Council's response to the nuisance being caused by Reading Train Care Depot.

The council's response at a meeting with residents and the Bell Tower Community Association on 17th February was to propose a week's noise monitoring later on in the year. The council had no new proposals on pollution monitoring, merely saying it would look into it after residents pressed them on it at the meeting. Residents told the meeting of nuisance from the smell of diesel and having to keep windows shut at night because of the fumes from the depot.

“Do they (Great Western) expect us to stop breathing for three years?” one resident asked, referring to the railway company's assertion that it can take no more measures to reduce noise and pollution until two thirds of the fleet at the depot is electric, expected to be March 2019.

Residents were not satisfied by the council's explanation of why it only carried out one night of noise testing in the early hours of 31st March 2015, the results of which were deemed unusable because of strong winds. It did not repeat the testing or release the results until forced to do so by a media campaign in January 2016. Council representatives said this was because they were waiting for a response from Great Western on the measures it would take to mitigate the nuisance from its operations. The final response from Great Western in January 2016 was that it could take no further measures until March 2019.

“Residents were understandably sceptical that the council's response will move things on. They feel they are back where they were a year ago. Their distrust of the council has not been dispelled by the lack of an explanation of why noise monitoring was not continued and of a plan by the council to carry out meaningful pollution measurements,” Bell Tower Community Association Chairman Jonathan Dart said.

“However, the council has said it will look into pollution monitoring and has committed to having a consultant carry out noise monitoring, and we hope its actions will result in a positive outcome for Cardiff Road residents,” he added.

Bell Tower has made a video of its own noise measurements in the early hours of the morning in Cardiff Road. To see the video go to <https://youtu.be/AxfVpeCdS00>

Follow the campaign on #rdgtrainnoise

For previous press releases on the depot issue go to:

<http://bell-tower.org.uk/press/release19.pdf>
<http://bell-tower.org.uk/press/release18.pdf>
<http://bell-tower.org.uk/press/release17.pdf>

To see full press coverage, including audio and video files go to:
<http://bell-tower.org.uk/press.htm>

About the Bell Tower Community Association

- The Association was founded in October 2005.
- It represents 600 homes and businesses in the area bounded by Caversham Road, Northfield Road, Barry Place, the residential end of Cardiff Road, Addison Road, Denbeigh Place and Randolph Road.
- It represents the local community, organises events, publishes a quarterly newsletter and operates a members' discount scheme with local businesses.
- It won a Pride of Reading Award in 2007 in the Environmental Projects category for its graffiti clean-up campaign and won third place in the 2010 Reading area of the South East Community Empowerment Awards.
- 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.

Further information on the Bell Tower Community Association can be found at
www.bell-tower.org.uk

For information the Bell Tower Community Association please contact Jonathan Dart: info@bell-tower.org.uk or 07982 130 360