

Neighbourhood News

from the Bell Tower Community Association

Issue 16 - June 2009



The big skip's back!

Our skip was back in the school playground again - this time for our Big Spring Clean on Saturday 25 April. The event, sponsored by Reading Festival promoters Festival Republic, attracted more than 100 residents and filled the skip within four hours.

Members of the association also took the opportunity to help many residents in the area clear their front gardens, as well as removing all the rubbish from alleyways behind Addison Road, Newport Road and York Road.

Items left by local residents included furniture, mattresses and broken garden machinery - and among the more unusual items were a life-sized statue of a heron and a giant rubber duck. A recycling service was provided for unwanted items in good condition, and new homes were found for several bikes and



CLEANING UP: Association members with yet another full skip

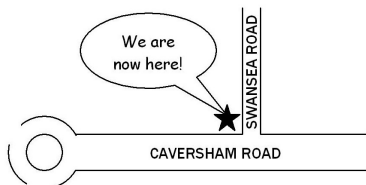
pieces of furniture, along with a working rowing machine. One couple who had just moved into the area were delighted to find plenty of useful furniture for their empty house.

David Neale from the Bell Tower Community Association said, 'The tidy-up day is so successful that we have made it into a regular event. It's a great opportunity for local people to work together and we've been able to put plenty of unwanted items to good use.'

We hope to hold another tidy-up day next year.

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LEGAL EVENING

Tuesday 16 June 7.30pm
New Hope Centre



An opportunity to hear about and discuss legal matters such as:

- ♦ Inheritance tax planning
- ♦ Wills and probate
- ♦ New rules on lasting powers of attorney
- ♦ Resolving family disputes
- ♦ General family law (common law, civil partnerships, fathers and parental responsibility)
- ♦ Debt planning

This will be much more than a presentation - we will have local solicitors there who will also endeavour to answer your questions. We look forward to seeing you there!

Visit www.bell-tower.org.uk or email us at info@bell-tower.org.uk

All change again?

The station area redevelopment plans have changed since we last looked at them. Neighbourhood News examines the latest proposals.

Since we last looked at the proposed Reading station development in 2007, the original proposals have been revised. For us the main change to the layout is that there will no longer be a rail underpass at Cow Lane, which would have forced the

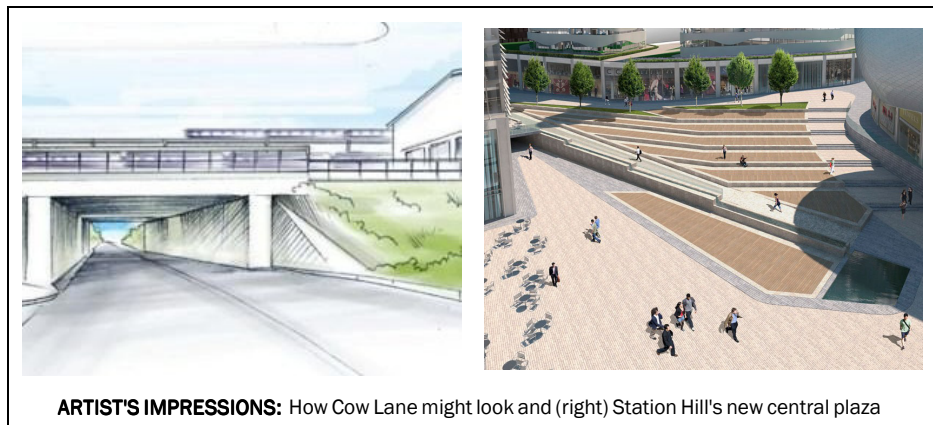
alternative to the original proposal for a link road to Scours Lane and should indeed provide us with a better link from our area to West Reading. It is likely that Cow Lane will still replace Oxford Road as the major thoroughfare from West Reading to the IDR and Caversham, so traffic levels may rise in the area. Construction is expected to be complete by 2015.

The first proposal for the Station Hill redevelopment from Sackville Developments, the company chaired by Sir John Madejski, was called in by national government last year, raising the prospect of a full public

moved to west of the Three Guineas pub and four new platforms will be built to the north of the current station. In addition, there will be an extra platform for the Waterloo line and platform 4b will be lengthened.

Plans still include a new entrance to the station from Caversham Road. The old subway is to be reopened, with skylights to improve its atmosphere, to provide better north-south access through the site. The first phase should open in 2012.

- We hope to have a public meeting about the station development in the autumn.



ARTIST'S IMPRESSIONS: How Cow Lane might look and (right) Station Hill's new central plaza

closure of both bridges. A flyover for the main line is proposed, which will start around halfway along Cardiff Road and end near Scours Lane.

Cow Lane will now remain open, with new wider bridges that will allow for two-way traffic (including buses), a pavement and a cycle lane. This is seen as a more popular

inquiry. Since then a revised proposal has been put forward covering a greater area than before – now including a corridor through to Friar Street and centred on a plaza near the site of the current Garrard Street car park. The development would include up to 900 residential units, 80,000 square metres of office space, an arts centre and a ten-pin bowling and health complex.

The formal planning application for 'Station Hill 2' will be submitted later this year. If approval is given Sackville Developments hopes to start work in 2011 and finish the first phase of the development in 2014.

The current Royal Mail building in Caversham Road will be demolished early to provide the base for the building site - it is well known that there are plans to relocate the sorting office to Swindon. Royal Mail has also submitted a planning application for change of use of some industrial premises in Whitley, so it seems likely that the parcel depot will be moved there.

The station development itself is largely unchanged from the 2007 plans. The main entrance will be

News in brief

- What an eventful quiz evening! From a start without electricity and having to move from upstairs in New Hope to the ground floor, and cooking by evening light getting darker and darker, we had an entertaining and challenging evening. Our thanks to quizmaster Phil for exercising not only our brains but also our ability to recognise famous people, and to Sarah for helping us to cook by moonlight!

- The Bell Tower Community Association's AGM was in March. Officers elected for the next year are Barbara (Chair), David (Vice-Chair), Rod (Secretary) and Sandie (Treasurer). The speaker was Abbey Ward councillor Tony Page, who gave a fascinating insight into the detailed plans for the station redevelopment. There is an article outlining the changes from the original proposals in this edition of *Neighbourhood News*.

- On Tuesday 7 July there will be a public meeting for the Oxford Road Neighbourhood Action Group, starting at 7.30pm. The meeting will be held at Oxford Road Community School on the corner of George Street. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss and identify three top crime priorities for both Oxford Road North and South. Members of the Neighbourhood Policing Team will be explaining how your input and the Neighbourhood Action Group will benefit you and your community.

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Neighbourhood News is kindly sponsored by RFTRA, the Reading Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Associations.