

Neighbourhood News



from the Bell Tower Community Association

Issue 64 - June 2021

www.bell-tower.org.uk



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Roadblocks now in place

The long-awaited closure of the route through the industrial estate has arrived.

Closures have been put in place in Meadow Road and Milford Road to stop through traffic between Caversham Road and Richfield Avenue. The width restriction in Addison Road has also been removed to allow access to the area for wide vehicles. The Bell Tower Community Association had asked the council if the Ross Road width restriction could be removed instead but there was concern that this would have created more traffic around the school.

Reading Borough Council organised consultations on closing the roads in 2018-19 and approved the proposals

in June 2019. We understand that the closures had to be delayed until demolition of the Manrose factory in Meadow Road was complete and construction of the Bellway Homes Printworks estate was far enough advanced.

The Milford Road closure is currently to the south of the new entrance to the Printworks development to allow access for construction traffic, but we expect it to be moved to the other side of the estate entrance when construction is complete.

We hope that the roadblocks will make way for more residents' parking in Meadow Road and around the corner with Addison Road and will be lobbying the council for this.

News in brief

- New ward boundaries and councillor allocations in Reading have now been finalised, and will start with an all-out council election next year. Our area will be in the new Thames ward; most of this ward will be the area between the main railway line and the Thames, with part of Lower Caversham and the area around Kenavon Drive.
- Residents of the Great Knollys Street area on the other side of the railway are in the process of forming a new association, and Bell Tower has been helping them to get started. They are campaigning for improvements to their local recreation ground.
- If Covid restrictions allow we would like to hold a street party in late summer, perhaps in early September. We have asked councillors whether we can apply for a road closure and are awaiting feedback.
- Finally, now that at least some aspects of our lives are returning to normal, we are looking for your suggestions for future events and activities that we could help organise. Do you have any ideas? If so please contact Jonathan on 07982 130360 or email info@bell-tower.org.uk.



RIPPING IT UP: council workers removing the planter and traffic island in Addison Road (photo: Jonathan Dart).

These local businesses support Bell Tower and are currently open - please give them your support if you can:

0118 375 0767
THE Moderation
Pub and Kitchen

CROWNE PLAZA
HOTELS & RESORTS

STANDARD TANDOORI
0118 959 0093

READING DRIVE - IN
0118 957 3649

Richfields DELI & GRILL
- BREAKFAST - BRUNCH - STREET FOOD -

211 Caversham Road
0118 939 1144



TREASURE HUNT

Explore our area
 Free entry
 No prizes - it's just for fun!
 Family-friendly or harder
 - you choose
 Duration 1-1.5 hours
 Starts 3pm (please arrive
 a few minutes early)

& food bank collection
 for Readifood 2-3pm

SATURDAY 26 JUNE, OUTSIDE NEW HOPE

We hope to go ahead regardless, but depending on the Covid-19 situation may need to maintain social distancing

Drews developer's appeal fails

Good news for our area's heritage, with the announcement that the planning appeal for the Drews site has been dismissed.



HISTORIC: the former malthouse that was occupied by Drews

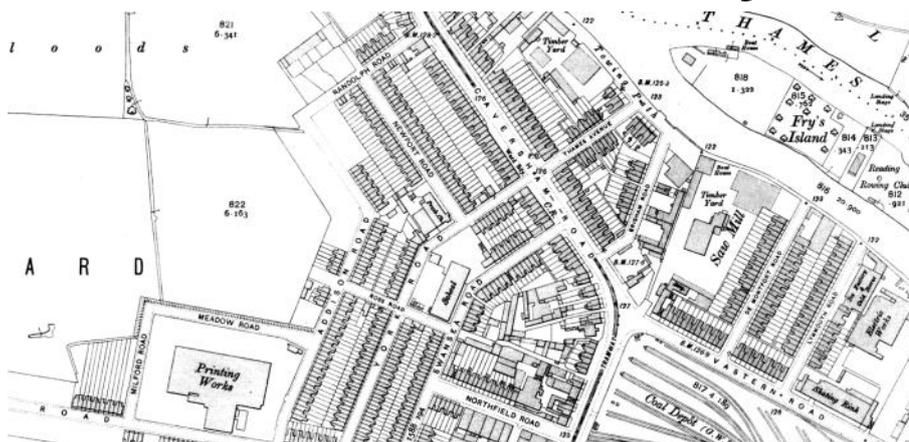
The government planning inspector's report was published on 14 May, stating that "[the] benefits do not outweigh the significant harm the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the area and the significance of a non-designated heritage asset". At the appeal meeting on 24 March, Mary Neale, on behalf of Bell Tower, pointed out that the proposed development would be out of keeping with the existing buildings in Caversham Road and stressed the former malthouse's long and varied history and contribution to the area's character. Bell Tower's representation was also strongly supported at the meeting by our local councillors and the council's conservation officer.

Developer S2 Caversham was proposing to demolish the main building and build a seven-storey block of flats. The council's planning committee initially refused the application in October 2020 after receiving a petition with more than 1200 signatures in favour of keeping the former malthouse, which the Bell Tower Community Association had succeeded in getting locally listed earlier in the year.

The developer will now almost certainly have to look at how the building might be adapted and produce a new design that is more harmonious with the former malthouse and the area's character.

David Neale

Do you have a long memory? We'd love to hear from you!



After the popular local history documentary we made last year for Heritage Open Days we are starting to make another one.

This time we are hoping to make a history of the area as told by you! We are looking for residents that have lived in the area for a long time and would like to participate in a short interview, to record their memories for posterity.

Do you remember what the streets were like many years ago? Perhaps you have memories of attending EP Collier School or St Paul's church, or going to some of the shops that are no longer there.

Or did you or someone you know work for a local business such as Drews or Cox & Wyman?

And if you have any old photos that you can share with us we would be particularly pleased to see them!

We hope to interview residents on camera in their gardens (with appropriate social distancing as necessary) during the summer months when the weather is warm enough to sit outside in comfort. If you prefer not to be filmed we could make an audio recording instead.

Can you help us? If you are interested please contact David at david@bell-tower.org.uk or on 07890 118167.

Our documentary is still available to watch at www.bell-tower.org.uk/caversham-road-documentary.