

# Neighbourhood News

from the Bell Tower Community Association

Issue 69 - September 2022



[www.bell-tower.org.uk](http://www.bell-tower.org.uk)



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## The G-Team are back in action!



**UNDER ATTACK:** Recent graffiti on the former Drews building in Northfield Road, cleaned up by Bell Tower's G-Team.

You might have noticed that there has been a large increase in graffiti activity in Reading in the last couple of years – and that in our area the graffiti usually disappears quickly.

We find that cleaning graffiti promptly discourages taggers from coming back, and the Bell Tower Community Association's award-winning graffiti cleaning team has been quietly working away in the area for over 15 years.

It all started back in 2007, with a campaign to clean up the mass of graffiti that had built up in the area over the years. We approached the council, who gave us training in cleaning graffiti and a kit of chemicals to get us started.

From that emerged our 'G-Team' of graffiti cleaners. In 2007 we cleaned up or painted over more than 400 tags

in the area, with Ross Road, Randolph Road and Northfield Road needing the most work.

Our efforts led to a Pride of Reading award, for community environmental project of the year. The awards recognise communities and individuals that have made a significant contribution to making Reading a better place to live.

Since the heady days of 2007 we have been pleased to report that for most of the time the levels of graffiti appearing in our area have been low and easy to keep under control, although with the recent increase in activity we have had to work a lot harder to keep on top of it.

If you see any new graffiti please contact us at [info@bell-tower.org.uk](mailto:info@bell-tower.org.uk).

*David Neale*

## Graffiti busters get to grips with community clean-up



**ENOUGH IS ENOUGH**  
Let's beat the vandals together

READ up on graffiti and its impact on the town. "It's not just the mess it creates, but the damage it does to the town's appearance and the cost of cleaning it up." David Neale, campaigner, said. "The graffiti does up what we've built – we can't see the town through it." The G-Team has been working hard to clean up the graffiti in our area. They have been successful in cleaning up a lot of the graffiti, but there is still a lot more to do. The group plan to tackle Northfield Road and then Randolph Road – which are both areas with a lot of graffiti.

**It's made sense:** "Local people, businesses and the council need to work together to solve this kind of problem, and collaboration is what we need to make it all about."

**Reading Borough Council** provide free training and graffiti removal kits to community groups.

To get involved or report graffiti in your area, call the hotline on 0118 954 0205. We will also provide you with a kit of chemicals and what you need to clean up graffiti in your area. Call Len Neale on 0118 954 3077 or email [info@belltower.org.uk](mailto:info@belltower.org.uk).

All hands to the wall: Bell Tower Community Association David Neale, Mary O'Donnell, Teresa Collins, Phil Lee, Ian Collins and Catherine Davies (clockwise from top left)



**Working hard to keep town graffiti-free**  
Inspirational group nominated

**This year's categories**

- **Best of Change** – a group of people who have made a significant contribution to making Reading a better place to live.
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**Readers' Choice** – a group of people who have made a significant contribution to making Reading a better place to live.

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## Neighbours doing it for themselves



**WAY BACK WHEN:** Our graffiti cleaning efforts as reported in the local press in 2007.

## JOIN US NOW

for only £1 per person per year and support your community!

You can join by contacting Len & Andy at 89 Addison Road.



## News in brief


• After hearing about proposals for a bowling alley and games venue at the former Dawsons Music shop site in Caversham Road next to the gym we made an objection to the proposed licensing hours. We have since met the developer, who has amended the licensing application to 11pm on weekdays and midnight at weekends, and we have withdrawn the objection. Planning application 220661 has now been submitted for the site, and we believe the new leisure complex is likely to open around the end of the year.

• A local resident has been campaigning to extend the issue of visitor parking permits to all households in streets in the residents' parking zone. Mark Ralph, who has recently joined the Bell Tower committee, points out that the houses in Addison Road that have off-road parking have no provision for visitors.


• Bell Tower representatives attend an annual wash-up meeting with the council and Festival Republic, the organisers of the Reading Festival, every year in the autumn. If you have any feedback or comments on this year's festival please let us know so we can pass this on to the organisers.

• We have been getting enquiries about our Big Skip rubbish clearing event, which used to take place every year before the Covid pandemic. We would be delighted to bring the event back if we can get the sponsorship for it, but unfortunately are struggling to find a suitable venue. It used to be in the school playground before it was redeveloped, then in the car park at Sandbag Ltd in Milford Road, but the industrial estate is no longer practical for us as it is now too far to drive.

Do you have a suggestion for a venue for the Big Skip? Ideally it needs to be in a gated area where the skip can be left safely over a weekend. Please contact us at [info@bell-tower.org.uk](mailto:info@bell-tower.org.uk) if you have any ideas.

 [www.bell-tower.org.uk](http://www.bell-tower.org.uk)  
bringing local people together

# CEILIDH



Join us for an evening of music and dancing with local band

## LEFT FOOT FORWARD

Friday 14 October 7.30pm  
New Hope Centre

Fun for all the family

Tickets £5 (under 18s £2.50) from Jake at [jake-hanson@hotmail.com](mailto:jake-hanson@hotmail.com) or leave a note at 58 Cardiff Road.

Join us for



heritage open days

11 & 12 September 2022

A guided walk around the Caversham Road area, highlighting its hidden history and architectural features.

Details and booking at [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk)

*Heritage Open Days events are popular and tend to get booked up. If you are unable to get a place and want to join us please email [info@bell-tower.org.uk](mailto:info@bell-tower.org.uk) - we may offer a repeat of the event if there is enough demand.*

## Latest developments



**COMING SOON:** a simulation of the proposed Dreads site development as seen from Northfield Road, and the Printworks estate nearing completion.



A new planning application has been submitted for the former Dreads building on the corner of Caversham and Northfield Roads. As expected, 29 flats and a significant area of ground floor retail space are proposed, and the plans look the same as those that we saw back in May. Much of the facade of the main building will now be kept as well as the smaller building behind it. The application is available to view on the council's planning website – the number is 220922. The deadline for comments is 13 September.

The Printworks estate on the former Cox & Wyman site is now nearing completion, with most of the flats

occupied, along with nearly all the houses in Cardiff Road; at the time of writing it was just the townhouses at the centre of the estate that needed to be completed. Likewise, the new houses on the corner Swansea and Northfield Roads look complete externally now, with the builders working on internal fitting and landscaping the site.

At the moment we are not aware of any plans for the rest of the former Carters site including the old camping shop and car repair workshops behind it. We heard that the site was for sale at the end of 2021, but are not aware of whether the site has been sold.