



NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2026 ISSUE #85

BELL-TOWER.ORG.UK

INFO@BELL-TOWER.ORG.UK

[BELLTOWERCOMMUNITY](https://www.facebook.com/BELLTOWERCOMMUNITY)

[@BELLTOWERRDG](https://twitter.com/BELLTOWERRDG)

Drumming up Party Spirit



Drumming to the same beat

The appearance of bunting, furniture in the middle of the street and gazebos in Newport Road on Saturday 18th July could only mean one thing: it was the annual Bell Tower street party.

In addition to the sights, DJ Buda Nova, covers band "Missing Tony", and new to the street party this year, Tankata Percussion from our neighbours at Readipop provided the sounds.

After the DJ's sounds created a party atmosphere, it was time for the covers band to provide live music. They played a range of songs to cover most people's tastes and were rewarded with pleas for one more number.

Tankata gave a performance of traditional West African drumming, after which audience participation took over in the shape of a workshop on djembe drums.

Participants were taken through the various techniques of playing together in a percussion group by Tankata leader Steve Southall.



Band 'Missing Tony' in full swing

Reading Central MP Matt Rodda and Thames Ward Councillor Ama Asare came along to present long-time Bell Tower Secretary David Neale and his wife, Mary with a leaving gift, a photo album documenting twenty years of service to the association. David and Mary are moving to Portugal, although David has said he might come to play in the band at next year's street party.



Left to right:
Mary & David Neale, Bob Murrant, MP Matt Rodda

Bell Tower would like to thank the residents of Newport Road for moving their cars and agreeing to be the venue, New Hope for the furniture and games as well as help with face painting, the Moderation for the free food, the band, our resident DJ and Tankata, who also helped with the sound engineering for the band, as well as everyone who helped with setting things up and taking them down.



Fun in the Sun for partygoers

The Bell Tower committee has in principle decided to hold the event next year after positive feedback is already mulling some ideas.. If you have any suggestions or would like to help out please contact us via info@bell-tower.org.uk.

Jonathan Dart

Diary Dates



12th September 'Meet the Neighbours' Coffee Morning, 10:30am-12:00pm, New Hope.

13th & 14th September Heritage Walk, meet at The Moderation 2:00 pm, tickets, available free, required, see below to book.

3rd October Weeding Day, meet 10:30 am at the corner of Ross and Swansea Roads.

24th October Macmillan Coffee Morning, 10:30 am-12:00pm, New Hope. We are looking for volunteer bakers to provide cakes for this event! If you would like to help, please email us at: info@bell-tower.org.uk

Join us for



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

Details and booking at www.heritageopendays.org.uk



Gardens' Colour, Variety Win Prizes



Kim's garden: Golden in Summer

Kim of Cardiff Road was the winner in our summer front-garden competition with Priya in Addison Road coming a very close second. Kim is to be congratulated on winning a £20 John Lewis gift voucher and Priya a £10 voucher.

Bell Tower Chairman Bob Murrant and Thames Ward Councillor Ama Asare judged the competition on Monday 3rd August. Their assessments were based on colour, variety and neatness. Only five points separated the winner from the fifth-placed competitor, with only one point between the winner and the runner-up.



Priya's Blooms: Close runner-up

The judges gave special commendation for Brian & Lee's garden in Northfield Road for its variety of flowers and vegetables.

Kim's winning garden was described as extremely neat and tidy, with a great deal of variety and colour, a truly small but beautiful oasis for pollinators. They added that Priya's garden in second place was a lovely, colourful garden with lots of variety.

Thanks are due to all those who took part, Ama for helping with the judging and our anonymous sponsor. One resident commented that the competition had motivated many to give their front gardens a makeover and enhance the area's appearance.

Bob Murrant

Clearing out Weeds



Unruly in June: community tackles the weeds

We shall be tackling the weeds in the gutters and on the pavements on Saturday 3rd October between 10:30am and around noon, with a meeting point of the junction of Ross and Swansea Roads.

If you are planning on coming please bring gloves and, if possible, tools. The council will provide bags and we have hi-vises. This follows on from our successful morning of weeding along Addison Road back in June when Bell Tower committee members were joined other local residents as well as by Thames Ward Councillors Dave Clarke and Ama Asare.

The committee also noted that that some residents who couldn't make the communal weeding had cleared the vegetation from in front of their houses.

While they gained kudos they did miss out on the excellent post-digging and scraping refreshments offered by The Moderation. Many thanks to all those who turned out on 27th June and to Bee at the Mod for the excellent spread which one committee member rated so highly they took a selfie of themselves with it.

We look forward to seeing volunteers in October!

Following a recent rise in doorstep parcel theft, some steps the community can take to reduce the risk include:

- Diverting parcels to the lockers near The Gorge Café, BP petrol station, the sub post office on Caversham Road, or the convenience store at 153 Caversham Road.
- Asking a neighbour to receive a delivery if you'll be away.
- Accepting others' unattended parcels and leaving a note saying you have it kept it safe.

State of Drows



Drows' site mid-construction

Drows' demolition has stagnated for over a year, sparking concern among local residents. Bell Tower took the matter up with our ward councillors. As a result, a Reading Borough Council planning officer, Jonathan Markwell, told Thames Ward Councillor Ama Asare in an email that in December 2025 the developer applied to vary some of its undertakings under the original planning permission.

He added that if residents see works going on which they do not think comply with the demolition restrictions they should take photographs and contact the council via its planning enforcement webpage.

Jonathan Dart

Community Garden



The New Hope Community Garden has distributed a small harvest of herbs, chard, spinach, rocket and lettuce to some local residents. Runner beans, tomatoes and dwarf beans have yet to produce although there are plenty of flowers.

New Hope has sponsored several raw materials for the project to continue. Many local residents have also assisted with planting, weeding and watering. Herb seeds provided by Abbas who lives nearby, have been instrumental in getting the garden going.



Miles & Daughters Funeral Directors



Miles & Daughters Funeral Directors are here to support and guide you. We offer a friendly, professional service to families. **Call us for immediate support, advice or to arrange a home visit. We are here to help 24 hours a day.**

Reading

0118 959 0022

Tamela House
157-161 Caversham Road
RG1 8BB

www.milesfunerals.com

- 24-hour service
- Bereavement advice
- Transparent pricing
- Private chapel of rest
- Floral tributes
- Memorial masonry
- Home visits
- Prepaid funeral plans