

Reading depot train nuisance forces local resident to move home

- Six years of noise and pollution take toll on health
- Great Western 'train noise curfews' only intermittent
- Preparations for court case still ongoing

A resident of Cardiff Road in Central Reading has been forced to move home because of the noise and pollution from the Reading Train Care Depot built by Network Rail and operated since its opening in July 2013 by Great Western.

Georgina Day told the Bell Tower Community Association and council officers that the noise situation had not improved over the past few months and that the diesel fumes in her garden had become “unbearable”. The lack of improvement in the noise levels comes despite Great Western saying it would impose an overnight curfew on diesel trains on the tracks behind residential properties in Cardiff Road. The latest curfew runs from 2300 to 0700 except under “exceptional circumstances”. Some residents report exceptional circumstances seem to be happening several times a week, with trains starting up to work the day's services before 0700.

Great Western has also said it intends to introduce “trimodal” trains to reduce noise and pollution at the depot but has been very vague about a timeline. The trimodal trains can run on both overhead cable and third-rail power supply as well as having diesel engines for non-electrified routes.

In November 2017, Reading Borough Council served both Network Rail and Great Western a statutory notice to abate the noise nuisance. In January 2018, the rail companies appealed. Since then both sides have been preparing for the court case. Mediation to try and avoid litigation failed in January 2019.

“Georgina's decision that 'enough is enough' is a stark reminder of how moving the train care depot to behind residential properties as part of the Reading station upgrade scheme has blighted people's lives. The rail companies' resort to litigation as well as their constant dragging out of the process without remedying the underlying cause has and will inevitably result in more such cases,” Bell Tower Community Association Chairman Jonathan Dart said.

NOTE: Georgina can be contacted via Bell Tower for direct media interviews.

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

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

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