

Neighbourhood News

from the Bell Tower Community Association

Issue 7 - March 2007



ACTION AT LAST!

Crossing campaign gets real results

A petition which over 100 people signed to stop cars jumping red lights on Caversham Road will result in some action.

Simon Reynolds and Barbara Kendall of the Bell Tower Community Association presented the case to the Road Traffic Advisory Panel at the Reading Borough Council Civic Suite.

The panel agreed to assess the problem for themselves, so commissioned some studies to take place during November and December 2006. The results that came back from that study indicated that visibility was the main issue and not speed, and this has led the council to take the following actions:

- ◆ Road markings at both crossings will be repainted

"Open all hours" off licence and convenience store has moved to

FIVE STAR WINES

133 Caversham Road



- ★National Lottery (Lotto) ★Pay point
- ★Meter keys & tokens ★Bill payments
- ★Gas cards ★Bus tickets
- ★Phone top-up ★TV licensing
- ★Wines, beers and spirits
- ★Sandwiches, snacks & groceries
- ★Newspapers & magazines



WILL THIS BECOME SAFER? Campaigner Simon Reynolds with son Nathan at the crossing

- ◆ Both road crossings will have a new anti-skid surface which will highlight the approach to them
- ◆ Both crossings will have improved lighting
- ◆ The crossing opposite the 'Moderation' public house will have the overhead lights moved so that they are more visible to traffic approaching from the Caversham Bridge direction.

The Bell Tower Community Association has also asked if the time allowed for crossing could be increased, but this has not yet been confirmed. These steps will be put in place very soon and we wait to see if these have had any effect. It will then be up to us all to see if this works. If not, please contact Simon or Christine at 2 Newport Road or speak to any committee member, and we will talk with the traffic panel again!

The Association would like to thank Simon and Barbara for presenting the case, councillor Tony Page for his continued support, and not forgetting Christine Reynolds without whom this action would not be taking place.

Bell Tower Community Association announces its

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

and Reading in Bloom launch

Wednesday 21 March 2007

7.30pm - E P Collier School

All welcome!

Please note that only members who have joined by 14 March are entitled to vote at the AGM and stand for committee posts.

JOIN US NOW

for only £1 per person per year. We already have over 70 members - and hope to see you at our events! Don't forget members can claim some great discounts from local businesses!

You can join by contacting Simon Bolton at 4 New Hope Terrace.

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

Meet the new vicar



We welcome Catharine Morris, who has been in charge at New Hope since last November. *Neighbourhood News* met her recently.

Where were you before? My last parish was on the edge of Newport, in South Wales, with beautiful hills around it. Although now part of the city, it was originally a village and is still a very well-defined community.

What drew you to Reading? I've lived in Reading before, and I felt God's calling to come back. I was also attracted to leading a church like New Hope and the kind of work it does, with the support of Greyfriars behind it.

Is this parish very different from what you're used to? In some ways it's surprisingly similar; in particular, the school in my last parish was small, like E P Collier. The main differences are that this area is much more multicultural and people come and go more frequently.

What are the challenges working in an urban parish like this one? People's disparate lives, long commutes and lack of time make it difficult to get together and establish a real sense of community.

What part do you see New Hope playing in the community in this area? I would like New Hope to be at the heart of the community, providing things not usually found - a place people feel they can come to, full of life, and a place of relationship.

Fanny's
ANTIQUES

A wide range of Antiques,
curios and collectables at
very reasonable prices.

Why not come and
see for yourself!

You can find us behind Reading station at
1-5 Lymouth Road
off the Vastern Road
Caversham

0118 950 8261

HOUSE CLEARANCES UNDERTAKEN

OPEN EVERYDAY
10.30 - 4.00
SUNDAY
12.00 - 4.00

Help us clean up the graffiti!

You will have probably noticed that the amount of graffiti in our area has increased dramatically in the last few months. We are not alone - this reflects the state of affairs across Reading and indeed across many areas of the country. It just seems that graffiti is in fashion at present, with young people even posting videos of their efforts on the internet and having competitions to see who can get their 'art' into the most inaccessible places.

The Bell Tower Community Association has started a campaign to eradicate the graffiti in our area. We have been endeavouring to track down all the owners of property affected by graffiti and now that spring is approaching we have an opportunity to start cleaning it up. We will attempt to control graffiti in several ways:

- The council is committed to removing graffiti on public property such as road signs free of charge
- Where the graffiti is on painted surfaces such as garage doors it is much easier to paint over the graffiti. We are happy to help with repainting if the property owner gives us permission and provides the paint.
- We now have a do-it-yourself graffiti cleaning kit, which is suitable for small areas up to about 2 square feet. Apparently this works best in warm weather, so we hope to be out cleaning up small graffiti in the spring when the weather permits.
- Virgin Media (formerly NTL) have supplied us with green paint for their cabinets.
- Large areas of graffiti on walls are still a problem. The council can remove these but at present this service is chargeable for private properties. We are still discussing this with the council.

Drew's Ironmongers in Caversham Road have kindly agreed to sponsor us by providing materials.

So all we need now is a few volunteers! You can help us by volunteering to clean graffiti using the DIY kit or paint over it if it is on a painted surface. Unless the graffiti is on your own property please don't, of course, attempt to clean it yourself without contacting us. In many cases we are already talking to the property owner about removal.

If you would like to help please contact David on 07890 118167 or david@bell-tower.org.uk.

Bell Tower blooms!

We invite you to participate in this annual competition for houses, and to cheer up our front gardens - the judging will take place in July.

We have arranged for a speaker on plant troughs and hanging baskets to come to our AGM on Wednesday 21 March at 7.30 pm at E P Collier School. Come and hear more details about obtaining free plants, troughs and hanging baskets. We will also be giving details of a workshop we will be holding on a Saturday in May to help you get started!

News in brief

- On January 10 Viola Hola came to inspect E P Collier Primary School on behalf of Ofsted. The leadership and management of the school were judged to be 'good', as was the personal development, care, guidance and support given to the children. Overall the school received 17 good and 10 satisfactory grades. The visit was exhausting for everyone in school, but Mrs Hola left with a smile on her face and a very large envelope of questionnaires containing many positive comments from the parents.
- The Association's second fun quiz evening was well attended and raised £95 for the Association and E P Collier School. Participants enjoyed a fun evening, and the winners won a bottle of wine each.
- The new Yellow Pages have recently been delivered. This year please tear off the FRONT COVER from your old Yellow Pages and take it to E P Collier School to help them raise funds. Alternatively you can put the cover through Barbara's letter box at 77 Addison Road. The rest of your old book can be recycled.
- Reading Borough Council has received an application for outline planning approval on the Station Hill site to include houses, offices, restaurants, health and fitness, community space, etc. Plans can be seen on the Reading Borough Council web site at www.reading.gov.uk.



Neighbourhood News is kindly sponsored by grants from the Berkshire Community Foundation and Reading Borough Council.