



Caversham GLOBE - Annual Report for January to December 2015

1. INTRODUCTION. Caversham GLOBE aims to improve and protect green spaces for the benefit of residents & wildlife by taking practical action on the ground and influencing policy & planning decisions. This report provides a summary of GLOBE supporters' work and the group's contributions during 2015 to a cleaner more pleasant locality. activities included:

- meeting with RBC officers and lobbying councillors over parks and open spaces issues
- researching and responding on planning applications and consultations about development proposals
- practical projects in parks & green spaces, planting and caring for trees, hedging and plant boxes
- clearing litter, removing graffiti, reporting infrastructure defects and issues affecting public areas.

GLOBE supporters meet monthly for formal business and other times on outdoor work parties and site meetings. Please read each section of this report. Further information is available.

2. TREES AND GREEN MATTERS.

Central Caversham - twenty RBC wooden Planters along Church Street and Church Road were planted with seasonal bedding plants then watered and maintained. Additional soil and some replacement shrubs were added during the year as required. The woodwork was sanded and oiled.

Tree/Hedge Planting and care:

Our request to RBC on behalf of some residents resulted in **20 new trees in Newlands Avenue, Berrylands Road and The Ridgeway** being planted by RBC. These required watering and after care by GLOBE and local residents.

Two RBC oaks on Peppard Road were suffering & needing regular watering, which we organised with residents.

Dead Whitebeam tree in private grounds at corner of Priory Avenue was removed by owners. GLOBE sought permission to replace. However, after an examination of the old stump and tarmac area planting was deferred.

Three trees that were part of the landscaping conditions when the Flambards flats were built on the corner of Star Rd/Lower Henley Rd had been removed. GLOBE contacted Southern Housing about replacement, which has been agreed for us to do in Autumn 2016, after completion of the building refurbishment.

Two RBC Trees – A young oak tree that was originally planted by RBC on private land in front of Emmer Green shops on Peppard Road had died. EGRA & GLOBE jointly replaced it with a new one. The **Crab Apple tree in the frontage of Caversham Library** had collapsed. It was agreed with the library that GLOBE could remove debris then fund a replacement, which we then planted.

Hedging shrubs Globe acquired 50 young natural species hedging whips for projects locally.

RBC Tree Strategy/Tree Wardens – GLOBE supports and participates in the Reading Tree Wardens group. During the summer GLOBE also helped water trees as required. There are a lot of trees and hedges planted by GLOBE over the past 20 years that continue to enhance various parks, public spaces and private land.

3. RBC PARKS AND OPEN SPACES. GLOBE liaised with RBC Councillors and Officers and worked with residents on landscaping, litter and other issues concerning: Balmore Walk, Beech Wood, Bugs Bottom, Christchurch Meadows, Dean's farm public land, Hill's Meadow, View Island, Thames Promenade, part of The Warren woodlands, Westfield Road Rec. See details below:

Christchurch Meadows – monitoring progress to ensure landscaping plans were fulfilled and re-instatement of the construction site for the new Christchurch Bridge. Raising concerns with RBC and EA over changes to the meadows that were suspected of not having formal EA approval in terms of flood alleviation. Pressed for reinstatement of some grassed areas where waterlogged ground persists. Site meetings with Councillor and RBC Officers about felling of unsafe trees behind the laundry building and the loss of most of the large champion white poplar at the back of the northern field. Worked with **Thames21**, cleaning and clearing detritus and branches obstructing **The Danall**,

investigating the cause of slow flow and reporting the silting under Wolsey Road bridge to RBC. Ad hoc litter picks undertaken. Consulted by CAMRA about their arrangements for using the meadows for their annual festival rather than Kings Meadow as in previous years.

View Island - Worked with **Thames21** clearing paths, preserving habitats & litter picking, also with **The Conservation Volunteers** on the dry channel near the weir clearing fallen trees & creating log pile habitats, clearing paths, litter picking.

Hill's Meadow – Litter picked twice during the year. Worked with **Thames21**, cleaning and clearing detritus and branches obstructing **The Danall**. Removed 32 sandbags in the watercourse under George Street bridge that had long been impeding the flow of the Danall, also clearing some overgrowing trees along its southern bank. Met with RBC Parks over concerns with trees and overdue conservation grass cutting.

Balmore Walk – Litter picking and reporting ineffective maintenance. **Beechwood** – litter picking. **Bugs Bottom** litter picking; discussed concerns about this designated wildlife site when it was considered as possible site of new school.

Dean's Farm: public land on the Lower Caversham eastern border with south Oxfordshire. Reported concerns to RBC that the Lafarge security patrols were resident/sleeping in vans on public land at this site, where wrongly erected notice boards implied prosecution of residents entering the public land.

The Warren: land at the Caversham western border with south Oxfordshire. Corresponded with ward Councillor about resolving the persistent litter and fly-tipping nuisance, suggesting that bins and/or CCTV should be installed, however RBC declined to do either. **Westfield Road Rec** – litter picking, reporting overgrown hedges on footpath.

4. PLANNING MATTERS GLOBE monitors planning applications, including applications for work on protected trees. Site meetings and consultations are attended, comments and objections are submitted, as time permits, particularly with regard to environmental issues. During 2015 representations were made about:

Retail and residential developments of St Martin's Precinct. Comments submitted.

Proposed installation near View Island of two Archimedean Screw Turbines with a hut covering the generators, gearboxes and the control system; also the construction of a natural fish pass. Commented.

Hand Car Wash Hill's Meadow. Objections submitted

Dovedale Close. Comments resulted in revised landscaping plans

The Hill Primary School Caused changes made to the construction plans for vehicle access.

Swan Heights Planning Application Kings Meadow Road Objections submitted; plans rejected.

Comments were also submitted on various various residential housing proposals.

South Oxon We monitor applications from developers for building in rural areas adjacent to local boundaries.

5. CLEANER CAVERSHAM

During 2015 GLOBE supporters collected from public spaces the following: more than **93 sacks of rubbish (including 29 sacks of cans and plastic bottles for recycling), more than 210 glass bottles for recycling, 4 vehicle tyres, 2 wheels, a car battery, a TV, a radio, 5 shopping trolleys, various wood, metal and plastic items.** GLOBE supporters achieved this by taking part in the RBC spring and autumn **RESCUE 2015** (Rivers & Environmental Spaces Clean-up Events) and periodic litter picks of green verges, pavements and footpaths to make Caversham cleaner. As well as the parks that we litter picked, mentioned in section 3 of this report, we cleared around Church Road, Church Street, Gosbrook Road, Hemdean Road, Henley Road, Warren escarpment; Thames Side Promenade car park, Richfield Avenue, Wolsey Road, Abbotsmead Place, School Lane, some central & lower Caversham areas and riverside during and after the Reading Festival. Helped clear part of River Kennet by boat prior to Waterfest and along the Thames after the Reading rock music festival (courtesy of the Thames Rescue boat). There is a shameful and persistent littering problem in our locality. **Thanks to those people who invested their time to make Caversham a lot cleaner.**

GLOBE participates in the RBC Neighbourhood monthly **Environment Visual Audits** and reports issues such as fly tipping, graffiti, abandoned shopping trolleys, potholes, defective street lights etc either direct to RBC or through the **Love Clean Reading** IT app. GLOBE members also take personal direct action to clean or paint over graffiti & clear litter & fly tipping.

6. OTHER MATTERS

Finances We received a Community Grant of £500 from Reading Borough Council to cover our meeting room hire and public liability insurance (£293). From the defunct Bugs Bottom Action Group, set up in the 1980s to campaign against the major housing development, GLOBE received a donation from the residual campaign funds. This will be ring fenced for future green planting and necessary equipment. We purchased a refurbished laptop for £120. A separate financial report for 2015 is available.

Some RBC local Ward Councillors attended some of our meetings and took up a variety of issues raised.

Liaison with other local community organisations:

Caversham & District Residents Association (CADRA),	Caversham Park Village Association.
Emmer Green Residents' Association (EGRA),	Caversham Traders Association
Friends of Caversham Court Gardens (FCCG)	Kings Meadow Campaign
Eye & Dunsden parish	Warren & Dist. Residents Assn. (WADRA)

GLOBE supporters attend meetings of **Econet**, the **Reading Globe Alliance (Trega)**, and local **Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG)**. We are also part of **GREN**, the Greater Reading Environmental Network and are members of the **Reading Neighbourhood Network**

Local publicity GLOBE has a website and Facebook pages where events are publicised and details of meetings are available. We were also heard on Radio Berkshire and mentioned in local news media. Our **web site** and **Facebook** pages are kept updated www.cavershamglobe.org.uk and <https://www.facebook.com/cavershamglobe>

Volunteers: The GLOBE group relies on the active support, time and expertise of a dedicated group of supporters and residents. New people are always welcome, there is no financial subscription or formality to joining in our activities, which are covered by public liability insurance.
