



## Caversham GLOBE - Annual Report 2013

*Caversham GLOBE aims to improve and protect green spaces for the benefit of local residents and wildlife by taking practical action on the ground, as well as influencing policy and planning decisions. Our activities in 2013 involved maintenance and improvement projects, where local people have been planting and caring for trees, clearing litter and removing graffiti. We have also done a lot of other important work, such as liaising with RBC officers and councillors over parks and open spaces issues, having formal and site meetings with RBC Officers, researching and responding on planning applications and consultations. The following report provides a summary of our work during 2013. Further information is available on request.*

***(This report covers our activities in the calendar year up to 31 December 2013)***

**Central Caversham Planters** With the support of Caversham Traders Association, RBC and Greenshoots (parts of Ways & Means Trust) we took on responsibility for planting up and maintaining the 22 RBC-owned wooden planters in Central Caversham. All of the boxes were sanded and re-stained with material funded through a small RBC grant and a donation by Drews. During the year new bedding plants, shrubs and a tree were added and the planters were regularly watered and weeded. This involved an enormous ongoing effort on the part of GLOBE volunteers and additional support would be welcome. Thanks are also due to RBC Parks and to Greenshoots who provided new shrubs and volunteers to help completely refresh several of the planters in the autumn. In late 2013 we had site meetings with RBC about a new **RBC cycle hire scheme** which would have some impact on the planters outside the BT exchange.

### **Tree/Hedge Planting:**

**Buckingham Drive/Evesham Rd** - Six new trees were planted by Globe volunteers and RBC tree wardens in March 2013.

**Charles Evans Way** Two new trees were planted by Globe in winter 2013 to replace previous specimens which had died. These are being watered as necessary.

**Beech Wood Scouts HQ** Globe planted a hedgerow around the new railings in March 2013.

**St Martins Precinct** Following pressure from Globe and RBC, two large specimen dawn redwoods were planted by Hermes contractors to replace TPO trees which had been felled.

**RBC Tree Strategy / Tree Wardens** - Globe supports and participates in the Reading Tree Wardens group. During the summer Globe also helps water trees as required.

**Concerns** were raised with RBC over the felling of three 200 year old oak trees in Grove Road in November 2013.

**RESCUE** (Rivers & Environmental Spaces Clean-up) We took part in the March 2013 RESCUE event covering areas including the Thames Promenade, Richfield Avenue, the Thames path down to Caversham lock and parts of central Caversham. The collection included 38 orange sacks, 10 clear sacks of recyclables, 35 black sacks of fly-tipped material, a Lidl shopping trolley, various scrap metal, plastic pipe, electrical cable, 2 sets of Christmas tree lights, 2 dead Christmas trees, a car sun roof, 3 traffic road signs, plastic milk bottle crate, crushed compost bin, 7 pairs wellington boots, 4 sleeping bags, remains of 2 tents, 3 carpets, and a litter picker in a black plastic sack!!

**During the year Ad Hoc cleanups** were carried out in several areas including Abbotsmead Place & School Lane, Central & Lower Caversham footpaths, Balmore Walk, Beech Wood, Henley Rd footpath, Christchurch Meadows, Westfield Rd Rec, Hemdean Rd, Hill's Meadow, View Island.

**RBC Ward Councillors** Local ward councillors attended several of our meetings and took up a wide variety of issues which were raised.

**RBC Streetcare** GLOBE participates in the council's monthly **Environment Visual Audits** and members report issues such as flytipping, graffiti, abandoned shopping trollies, potholes, defective street lights etc either direct to RBC or through the **Love Clean Reading** app. On occasions GLOBE members may also take direct action in cleaning or painting over graffiti & clearing litter.

**RBC Parks Department** During 2013 GLOBE liaised with RBC Parks staff over landscaping and other issues concerning: Balmore Walk, Beech Wood (including the Scouts site), Caversham Centre planters; Christchurch Meadows, Hill's Meadow, Picton Way, Thames Promenade, View Island, The Withies. We also made a detailed submission on **RBCs Woodland Management Consultation**

**Thames 21** GLOBE supporters have been assisting Thames 21 in their ongoing project to keep the Danall (Gos Brook) clean and clear of obstructions through Christchurch and Hill's Meadow. Several practical sessions have been held, usually on a Sunday. Work has also taken place on View Island.

**Proposed new cycle & footbridge over the Thames.** GLOBE members attended an RBC drop-in session and subsequently attended a pre-planning meeting at the Civic Centre with RBC's head of highways and staff from Peter Brett Associates. Various concerns were raised.

**Proposed Leisure Developments in Christchurch Meadows** The June Globe meeting hosted a presentation by RBC on proposals for a high ropes and adventure golf centre plus residential moorings in the Mill Stream. Globe members, along with many local residents, actively campaigned against these proposals which it was felt would have a hugely detrimental affect on the meadow, wildlife and local residents. Following extensive flooding of the meadow in winter 2013-14 the scheme's prospective developers pulled out; RBC has also now dropped plans for any moorings in the Mill Stream.

**Liaison with other local community organisations:**

Caversham & District Residents Association (CADRA),  
Emmer Green Residents' Association (EGRA),  
Friends of Caversham Court Gardens (FCCG)  
Eye & Dunsden parish

Caversham Park Village Association.  
Caversham Traders Association  
Kings Meadow Campaign  
Warren & Dist. Residents Assn. (WADRA)

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

**Planning Applications** GLOBE monitors planning applications, including applications for work on protected trees. Comments are submitted as time permits, particularly with regard to environmental issues. During 2013 representations were made about the **Shell garage** (George Street); Trees in **St Martin's Precinct**, trees on the frontage of the **Crown Plaza Hotel** at Caversham Bridge.

**South Oxon** We continue to monitor applications from developers for building in rural areas adjacent to the Caversham boundary.

**Battery Recycling scheme** Since 2009 GLOBE has been collecting batteries for recycling from four shops around Caversham and Emmer Green. As battery recycling collections are now provided by RBC and facilities are widespread at many local retailers, our collection boxes have now been withdrawn.

**Finances** We received a Community Grant of £500 from Reading Borough Council to cover our meeting room hire and public liability insurance. Donations were also received from Caversham Traders to help towards new shrubs for the wooden planters in Central Caversham.

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

Our **web site** is regularly updated with news and events  
[www.cavershamglobe.org.uk](http://www.cavershamglobe.org.uk)