



Caversham GLOBE –Annual Report on activities in 2020

INTRODUCTION. This report provides a summary of GLOBE supporters' work and the group's contributions during 2020 to a cleaner more pleasant locality. Caversham GLOBE group is now more than 20 years old. The group, originally set up by RBC with funding and support but now completely independent of the council, aims to improve the local environment for the benefit of residents & wildlife by taking practical action on the ground and influencing policy & planning decisions.

GLOBE's activities were much reduced during the period of lockdown, with various restrictions in place throughout the period covered by this report (April 2020-March 2021). Volunteering was exempt from some of the restrictions, so supporters were able to continue with a few activities in line with guidelines on social distancing and restrictions in place at the time.

GLOBE MEETINGS Our monthly meetings at Church House were suspended from the start of restrictions in March 2020. However we subsequently resumed meetings online in June and managed to hold seven online meetings during the year using the GoToMeeting platform.

CHURCH STREET PLANTERS The 20 RBC wooden planter boxes along Church Street and Church Road continue to be maintained by GLOBE volunteers. They are planted with shrubs and seasonal bedding plants as well as watered and weeded as required. However the structural framework is deteriorating. Some repairs have been carried out recently but more work will be needed to stop them deteriorating further, and we are now investigating possible replacements for the planters in the long term.

CLEANER CAVERSHAM. A cleanup of the Hill's Meadow area was held on 8 March in conjunction with Plastic Free Caversham; over 40 bags of rubbish were collected. No further group clean-ups were organised due to the lockdown restrictions, but several Globe supporters continued to carry out litter picking in their local areas, as part of their daily exercise. We also continue to support Reading Borough Councils RAYS (Reading Adopt Your Street) scheme

Graffiti cleaning - we have purchased a supply of graffiti cleaning wipes which are proving very effective at cleaning graffiti from green telecom cabinets, street furniture etc

Thanks to all supporters who invest their time to make Caversham a lot cleaner.

PARKS & OPEN SPACES GLOBE supporters keep a close eye on local parks and open spaces. Concerns were raised over pollution in the Dannel (Christchurch Ditch) running through Christchurch Meadows & Hill's Meadow. Issues around grass & vegetation cutting at Balmore Walk and Hills Meadow were also raised with RBC.

TREES – we liaise with Reading Tree Wardens and RBC over tree issues and raised a number of issues, notably about tree replacements in Church Rd conservation area.

PLANNING MATTERS GLOBE monitors RBC and South Oxfordshire planning applications close to the Reading boundary , including applications for work on protected trees. During 2020 major planning matters that occupied GLOBE's time and attention included:

Reading Golf Course – We objected to applications to construct 260 houses on the Golf Course. GLOBE supports KEG (Keep Emmer Green) which campaigns to protect the Golf Club and other open spaces in Emmer Green from development.

Caversham Lakes – we raised concerns over vegetation clearance and construction of structures for an aqua park without planning permission around the North Lake, which is supposed to be a nature reserve. We continue to monitor developments here and to liaise with Eye & Dunsden Parish ; we have also attended a site meeting with the operators.

Queen Anne's School Henley Rd – we expressed concerns over plans for floodlighting and expanded sports facilities which would impact on wildlife and biodiversity.

Rivermead – we commented on plans for a new leisure centre; as a result the landscaping plans were amended to protect a number of existing trees which would otherwise have been removed.

AIR QUALITY IN CENTRAL CAVERSHAM. We continue to press RBC and local councillors to take action to improve air quality although there has been very little progress to date. GLOBE supporters attend RBCs Cleaner Air & Safer Transport Forum.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY CAVERSHAM & READING FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

GLOBE remains concerned over the potential impact on trees, hedges and biodiversity from the proposed flood scheme. We will monitor any proposals and liaise with the EA and RBC.

LIAISON WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS

GLOBE liaises with many other local groups including CADRA, EGRA, Friends of Caversham Court Gardens, Caversham Traders Association, Econet, Reading Tree Wardens, Caversham RAYS. We also participate in North Reading Safer Neighbourhood Forum.

FINANCES Our public liability insurance fees were partly covered thanks again to the Berkshire office of The Conservation Volunteers (TCV). We also benefited from donations from a number of local businesses whose names are displayed on our website. A separate financial report for 2020 is available.

Local publicity GLOBE has a website and Facebook pages where events are publicised and details of meetings are available. 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. More participants are always welcome to initiate, lead or help with projects. There is no financial subscription or formality to joining in our activities, which are covered by public liability insurance. The group holds evening meetings monthly on the 4th Tuesday.