

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Newsletter Members' Edition December 2022

*Loughton Residents Association is independent
and focuses on looking after Loughton.*

*We have Cllrs on the County & District Councils and
hold 21 out of the 22 Loughton Town Council seats.*

Demolition of Loughton Library

As we indicated previously, the County Council has now applied to itself for planning permission to demolish Loughton Library on Traps Hill, and replace it with a 5-storey block, now with a garage floor. You can read more at <https://tinyurl.com/LoughtonLibraryDemolition>, which includes LRA Plans Group's (LRAPG) letter of objection.



Although the consultation ended on 20th October, you can still send your comments by post to the Essex County Council Planning Dept, County Hall, Chelmsford CM1 1QH.

LRAPG acquired the confidential pre-application "Statement of Community Involvement" document relating to the redevelopment of the Library through a Freedom of Information request. The summary demonstrates the majority of residents oppose the development. Over half of the respondents opposed any additional housing, and in particular the size and massing, loss of library space, against the principle of the demolition, parking and impact of the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation were all registered as areas of objection. Notwithstanding this, only minor changes were made to the scheme before the application was submitted.

It is disappointing that a public authority is ignoring the views of the local community. LRAPG will continue to oppose the development.

LRA Cllr Chris Pond is also seeking to find out how library services will be maintained during the demolition and building period. The County Council to date has only said they "will seek to mitigate the impact of works on users of the building and ensure a continued library offer to the residents of Loughton" without any detail and whether this just means redirecting users to other libraries.

Kings Green War Memorial

The Memorial has undergone restoration recently with a comprehensive clean and repair. The majority of the work has been completed, with the Town Council being impressed by the standard of it. There is still some finishing work to be carried out.



New District Local Plan

The consultation on changes to the Main Modifications of the Local Plan has started, and will run until 9th December. The process has been long and tortuous. In summary, the Council produced a draft of the Local Plan in 2016, with a lot happening since then (read more on our website at <https://tinyurl.com/EFDCNewLocalPlan>). The current state of play is that changes to the draft Local Plan (known as Main Modifications) thought necessary by the new Planning Inspector (Mr Bore) have been proposed, and these are now open to review and comment from residents.

After this consultation period, further changes may be made to the Main Modifications, which will then be submitted to the Planning Inspector to determine whether the Local Plan is 'sound' and thus considered to be agreed and final.

LRA Comment: At first sight, LRA is still doubtful whether the new Main Modification on protecting the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) from air pollution from vehicles is strong enough to prevent further damage to the SAC from new housing and other developments nearby.

13, 15, & 15a Alderton Hill

There is a new planning application for demolition of houses at 13, 15 and 15a Alderton Hill, which will be replaced by linked blocks of 89 elderly person's apartments.

Although the consultation ended on 22nd September, you can still send your comments by email or post to the District Council (details on our website).

Have you paid your 2022 subscription?

Thank you to the vast majority of members who have paid their £5 LRA 2022 membership subscription.

If you've not paid for 2022 yet, you can find out how to do so at <https://tinyurl.com/MembershipLRA>

Not sure if you've paid? Email our Membership Secretary Laura Blake at membership@loughtonresidents.co.uk to check.

How to pay your 2023 subscription

An annual Standing Order paid on 2nd January each year is best. It helps lessen our costs and overheads, and you don't need to remember to pay each year. Find the form at <https://tinyurl.com/MembershipLRAForm> (you can cancel at any time).

You can set the Standing Order up now, so that it's ready to start next year.

We don't share our membership information.

Our thanks to all the residents who support LRA

LRA Farmers' Markets

The latest position is that we have a firm of market organisers which is interested in starting a weekly market in the High Road, but they have not been able to interest enough traders given recent economic uncertainty, price rises and problems hiring staff.

We will continue to work on starting a market in 2023.

Helping Essex be knife free

A knife bin has been placed outside the Police station on the High Road. The new knife bin joins the County's 14 other knife bins which are funded by Essex Police, the Vulnerable Victims Unit, and the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

Staying fire-safe in the winter

The Fire Service offers helpful advice for staying safe during the winter, including tips for cooking, use of candles, staying warm and winter driving. You can find out more at <https://tinyurl.com/FireStayingSafe>

It's also that time of the year to have your boiler serviced and gas appliances checked by a Gas Safe engineer to prevent gas leaks and carbon monoxide poisoning.

You can also contact your energy supplier and request a free gas safety check if you get a means-tested benefit and either:

- Live with a child under five years old
- Live alone or with others and have reached state pension age
- Live alone or with others and are disabled or chronically ill
- Live with others who have reached state pension age or are disabled, chronically ill or under 18 years old.

Community Warm Places

Warm Places provide a free, safe, warm and comfortable space throughout winter for those who need it. Many of the venues are offering refreshments (with some offering hot food), activities like board games and Wi-Fi.

Locations in Loughton include Debden and Loughton Libraries, St Mary's Church, St Michael's Church, and Trinity Methodist Church. Check the details and opening times at <https://tinyurl.com/WarmPlaces> and please share them with anyone you know who may struggle to keep warm this winter.



What to do during a power cut

While the energy networks are more reliable than ever, power cuts can sometimes occur. If you have a power cut, and you still have internet connectivity, check for power cuts in the area at <https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/power-cut> and report it, or call 105 (a free call) or 0800 316 3105. What else should you do?

- Switch off all electrical appliances that shouldn't be left unattended, ready for when the power comes back on.
- Leave a low-power light on so you know when the power cut has been fixed.
- Check to see if your neighbours are safe and if they have a power cut too. If they have power, your trip switch may have activated.
- If it's cold, wrap up warm and close internal doors to keep the heat in.
- Contact UK Power Networks, the network operator, to report the power cut on the numbers above.

Gas and electricity bills help

There are several government schemes available to help with the rising cost of gas and electricity bills. Find out what's available, depending on your situation, at <https://tinyurl.com/GasElectricityBillsHelp> including:

- Cost of living support with the rising cost of energy bills
- Money back on your council tax
- Warm Home Discount Scheme
- Cold Weather Payment
- Winter Fuel Payment
- Boiler Upgrade Scheme.

Energy grant scams

Scammers are looking to entice people into sharing their personal details, by sending them phoney texts about government energy rebates.

Text messages are being received containing links to supposedly apply for the government's £400 Energy Bills Support Scheme. If you receive one of these texts, you can be sure it's a scam as all energy support payments will be sent automatically.

CONTACTING LRA

COUNCILLORS D=District, T=Town	Enquiries: contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk	8508 2361
	Membership: Laura Blake, 9 Woodbury Hill, Loughton IG10 1JB membership@loughtonresidents.co.uk	07968 174388
ALDERTON WARD Chidi Nweke (D) Hillcroft 07403 489455 Ian Allgood (D) Felstead Road 0208 502 2393 Katie Valentine (T) Habgood Road 07477 012213 Mick Stubbings (T) Greenfields 07766 480522 Philip Abraham (T) Lancaster Drive 8502 2925	FAIRMEAD WARD Carol Davies (T) Colebrook Gardens 07817 230372 David Wixley (D) Goldings Road 8418 9284 Louise Mead (D) 07746 875952 Sebastian Fontenelle (T) Etheridge Road 07941 365850 Will Kauffman (T) The Greens Close 07799 148740	ST MARY'S WARD Barbara Cohen (T) Church Lane 8502 3242 Graham Wiskin (T) Traps Hill 8925 2003 Howard Kauffman (D) Church Lane 8508 1098 Judy Jennings (D&T) York Hill
BROADWAY WARD Chris Pond (D) Staples Road 8508 2361 Kevin Rainbow (T) Audley Gardens 07921 662715 Les House (T) Avondale Drive 8508 3369 Michael Owen (D) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145 Philip Beales (T) Harwater Drive 8418 0459	FOREST WARD Jayna Jogia (D) The Drive 07983 713 389 Jon Riley (T) Albion Park 8508 6604 Roger Baldwin (D) Burney Drive 8281 5488 Stella Murphy (T) High View Close 8508 2794 Trevor Downing (T) Smarts Lane 8508 8877	COUNTY: Loughton (Central) Chris Pond Staples Road 8508 2361
ST JOHN'S WARD Bob Jennings (D) York Hill Caroline Pond (D&T) Staples Road 8508 2361 Chris Pond (T) Staples Road 8508 2361 Michael Owen (T) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145	RODING WARD David Wixley (T) Goldings Road 8418 9284 Neil MacKinnon (T) Barncroft Close 07872 324 028 Rose Brookes (D&T) Lower Park Road 8502 5981	COMMITTEE Anne Harriman 8502 1779 John Walker 07779338868 Judith Walker 07855 265835 Juliet Pollard 8502 0552 Lance Leonard 8502 0771 Mark Dalton 07719 736901 Michael Benbow 8508 4457 Steve Eaton 8923 0065 Tessa Cochrane 3643 7492
SECRETARY Jill Angold-Stephens 8281 0674 TREASURER Miriam Murphy 01992 815525	LOUGHTON LIFE EDITOR Eva Blasco 8923 0065 MINUTES SECRETARY Susan Creevy	<i>Dial 020 before numbers starting with 3 or 8</i>

LRA councillors are Independent and non-political

Planning & licensing

The LRA Plans Group (LRAPG) looks at all planning and licensing applications in the town and takes action where appropriate. It consults residents and supports, or objects to, individual applications as appropriate. It works entirely separately from LRA's CILrs on Council planning committees. Read more about Planning and Licensing, the role of the LRAPG, how to get more information using the application and reference numbers provided, and how you can comment at <https://tinyurl.com/LRAPPlanning>

Where there are residents in flats above licensed premises, for example on the High Road, The Broadway or nearby, the LRAPG objects to late-night licensing applications.

Noise from live music in licensed premises

The Government has removed the conditions imposed on alcohol premises licences regarding the provision of live music between 8am and 11pm.

If a noise nuisance is being caused, residents will have to ask the District Council for a review of the premises' licence; the Council can then impose restrictions if thought appropriate. Other noise legislation, for example in the Environmental Protection Act 1990, will continue to apply (the Live Music Act does not allow licensed premises to cause a noise nuisance).

LRA Comment: this is a retrograde step. It means that if residents are disturbed by noise from licensed premises, they will have to fight for a licence review, with the resulting delays in action, rather than asking the Council to take action immediately to apply existing restrictions. If you are disturbed by noise from licensed premises, the Council will need good evidence before it sets up a review. Please tell the District Council (online or call 01992 564608 during office hours or 01992 564000 at all other times) about the problems, keep a diary of the problems, and ask any neighbours who are also affected to do the same. We have no experience of the other anti-noise provisions, but we suspect they will be equally time-consuming and difficult to apply.

Street parties

Following recent experience, the District Council has made the following changes to its requirements for street parties:

- There will no longer be a £194 fee for community/charitable events.
- Organisers can now apply for approval up to four weeks before the event. Organisers are advised to apply earlier if possible as, if the Council receives any objections, four weeks may not allow sufficient time for the Council to make a decision and they may just have to refuse the application outright.
- The Council will consult Essex Highways. The applicant is responsible for notifying neighbours, businesses, the Town (or Parish) Council and anyone who will be affected by the road closure
- The Council won't ask for risk assessments for events for 500 people or less; it will be up to the organisers to consider the risks involved and document these.
- The Council won't require the organisers to take out public liability insurance (but organisers should consider doing so, for their own protection).

LRA Comment: these changes are pragmatic and very welcome.

16 Station Road

It was very disappointing to see the original Rex Foster house demolished on Station Road, which we considered to be a local building of merit. Being situated outside a conservation area, the District Council could not prevent this from happening. The loss of this asset, however, should not mean the applicant should get away with the significantly larger dwelling which is now proposed.

LRAPG has objected to the excessive bulk of the proposed replacement dwelling, which will sit uncomfortably on its plot and be out of character with this part of Station Road.

Reference EPF/1478/22. The formal consultation period ended 7th October, but you can still comment to the Council.

7a Forest Road

This is an application for two storeys of office accommodation over this terrace of single storey commercial units.

LRAPG has objected to this overpowering development on the grounds the height, bulk and massing will stick out on this part of Forest Road to the visual detriment of Forest Road and this part of Loughton. In townscape terms, the building forms part of a bigger unit with the adjacent shop; it would look ridiculous to extend only half of the site.

LRAPG is also concerned about the poor standard of drawings that are being accepted by the District Council. The plans submitted with this application are wholly inadequate to assess the quality of the design.

Reference EPF/1661/22. The formal consultation period ended 30th August, but you can still comment to the Council.

BT's Proposed Inundation of Loughton and Debden with Street Totems with Large Advertising Panels

A string of planning and advertisement applications have been submitted to the council for enormous street totems in the High Road and The Broadway.

LRA Plans Group (LRAPG) has objected to all the applications. The totems are primarily enormous advertisements with broadband and 5G thrown in to try to justify them. They are a distraction to motorists and, although thinner than a standard telephone kiosk, are longer in width, considerably higher and block up more of the pavement. They are very tall (almost 10ft) and add to the street clutter. There is very little demand for public phones if any and there are better ways to provide broadband and 5G than sticking them on large advertising pillars. BT has offered some free advertising to the Council and community info in an attempt to sweeten the deal. Some of the sites do not have phone kiosks to replace. Some of these have now been consented.



District Council Cash Office on The Broadway to close

The office will close on 29th November, including the cash desk and the services for housing management.

The Council is offering an AllPay card which allows for cash payments at the Post Office and PayPoints, for residents who prefer to pay in cash. Residents who use the Council's housing management services already have these cards, and Council Tax and business rates customers who have made a payment at the Debden office since it reopened in April 2021 will automatically receive a payment card by post before the office shuts.

Get our news as it arrives on Twitter (@LoughtonRA)
and at www.facebook.com/LoughtonResidents

Cllr Pond's potholes progress

As a result of LRA's Chris Pond nominating potholes to repair, the following potholes are amongst those scheduled for repair (which may have already been fixed):

- Castell Road - 7 patches
 - Shelley Grove - outside No. 15
 - Forest Road - outside No. 53 and No. 184
 - High Road - outside the Methodist Church
 - Oakwood Hill - outside No. 45 and No. 50, and near the entrance to the Industrial Estate
 - Sparelease Hill - multiple ones (6)
 - Traps Hill - outside the Leisure Centre, opposite the Library and near Eleven Acre Rise
 - Tycehurst Hill - outside No. 14, No. 68, No. 88 and No. 97.
- Chris can only report potholes in Loughton Central county division.

District Council Budget

In a report to the District Council Cabinet, there is a prediction of a £1 million overspend in the current financial year, due to reductions in income and higher cost pressures.

In a separate report, for the next financial year the Council is projecting a £4 million deficit. With forecasted expenditure of £19 million and funding of £15 million, this is a significant gap. The Council has been reported as saying that 'services which the council has a statutory requirement to provide would be prioritised, although they would be reviewed to try to make them more cost-efficient'.

The budget situation for all three councils (Town, District and County) is going to be very difficult this year.

Can you help manage our rota of newsletter deliverers?



We generally produce five printed editions of Loughton Life each year. We need someone to maintain the lists of the volunteers who deliver them across the town (other people receive the copies, split them up into individual delivery rounds and distribute them).

To find out more, please contact David at david.linnell@LoughtonResidents.co.uk or 07958 984278 for a no-obligation chat.

York Hill benches

For those making the climb up York Hill to take in the vista from the top of the hill, you can rest again on the benches.

They have been replaced after mutual agreement by the Town Council, City of London and District Council

Resilience Team. This, however, is subject to a further periodic review of any further anti-social behaviour and residents in nearby houses are not happy.



LRA Christmas Quiz 2022

Following tradition, here's our Christmas quiz for everyone to enjoy. The theme is based on Essex or former Essex Towns and Villages. Answers by 6th January to Les and Sue Harris, 32 Upper Park, IG10 4EQ or email to lesandsueharris@aol.com with bottles of fizz or a £15 book token to the first correct answer drawn out. So atlases ready!

1. Atop the cathedral? (9)
2. Ice for a lord? (5,5)
3. Entrance for a water bird (9)
4. Nice festival (4,6)
5. How you may like your egg and chips (6)
6. Sounds as if nun arrived on horseback (6,6)
7. Making a bid (8)
8. Bird in a candle? (7)
9. Buried? (7)
10. Corresponding colour? (8,5)
11. Quite mad! (7)
12. Dark and darker (9)
13. A flower pot man moves swiftly (8)
14. Car gets sick (6)
15. Eat little and often (5)
16. Expanse of water, either side the Channel (6)
17. Sound your horn as you go up (4,4)
18. Two parts of a ship (10)
19. Prince gets blown around (10)
20. Inter a judo expert (7)
21. Somewhere the boating is enjoyable (5, 6)
22. Footwear interred by a headland (12)
23. Motorbike is chilly (4,6)
24. Bird of prey drinks here? (8)
25. Knocks the bear down (7)
26. Fawltly in higher education (8)
27. Sun on the meadow (8)
28. Prickly forest (9)
29. Hangout for a Sloane Ranger (6)
30. Place of worship for Little Boy Blue? (10)

Santa Claus is Coming to Town on The Broadway

This Christmas there will be a grotto with Santa on The Broadway for local children on 2nd December from 3pm to 5:30pm. This is organised by the Broadway Town Centre Partnership (BTCP), of whom LRA Cllr Rose Brookes is Interim Chair.

Funds are very limited but the aim is to provide a free new book to every child.

Could you be an elf at a wrapping party before the day, or a steward on the day? If you can help, please email Rose at vietrose02@aol.com

Loughton Day

The Town Council postponed Loughton Day during the official period of national mourning, and tried to reschedule for October, but unfortunately this did not work out. They are extremely disappointed as so much preparation work had gone into the organising of this inaugural 'Loughton Day'. They are now planning to relaunch the event next year.