

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Newsletter Members' Edition December 2023

*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 rubberstamped by the County Council

The proposal to demolish Loughton Library, and provide a 5-storey block containing a smaller new Library with 38 flats above it, was approved by the County Council's heavily-Conservative Development Committee at Chelmsford on Friday 27th October.



Local LRA Cllr Chris Pond and his predecessor David Linnell (for LRA Plans Group) spoke forcefully against the proposal but to no avail. No non-Tory voted for it.

Since the officers and committee ignored paragraph 152 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which mandates re-use of current buildings because of the huge carbon "bill" involved in demolition/rebuild, LRA will be writing direct to Michael Gove (Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities), who has recently personally decided to refuse the Marks and Spencer application to demolish and rebuild their Oxford Street shop, to invite him to do similarly with this.

Another block of flats proposed for 13 – 15A Alderton Hill

Members will recall that in February this year, the District Council refused permission for the demolition of houses at 13, 15 and 15a Alderton Hill, which were to be replaced by linked blocks of 89 elderly persons apartments in buildings up to 6 storeys high.



This result was achieved after at least 310 comments were made, of which 309 of these raised issues and one expressed support.

As expected, the developer has now lodged an appeal, and a Planning Inspector will be making the final decision. Thank you to all our members who responded to our news email special, and made comments to the Planning Inspector.

The Appeal will be heard in December, and we'll let you know the outcome.



Bright lights on The Broadway

This year the Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership will be organising another Christmas event for children on The Broadway. There will be a pop-up Santa's Grotto in an empty shop unit, the Thomas Willingale Primary School choir will sing, and there will be a children's fairground ride and refreshments. This will be followed by various entertainment by Bricklamps Path.

The event is on Wednesday 29th November, starting at 2pm. The Broadway will not be closed for the event. Special arrangements have been made for free parking in the Vere Road car park from 2pm.

Extra patrols on The Broadway

The police are working with the District Council's community resilience officers on Operation Dial to carry out extra patrols to combat anti-social behaviour (ASB) around Debden Broadway.



This initiative is part of a larger £1.1 million investment by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to tackle ASB in 11 hotspot areas across the county.

Officers will conduct regular patrols along The Broadway, engaging with the public to address concerns of anti-social behaviour, build relationships with local residents and businesses, and report any illegal activity.

Could you be an LRA Cllr?

Next year we would like some LRA members to join our team of experienced Cllrs on the Town and District Councils.

If you are interested, or would like an informal chat, please contact Michael Benbow on 020 8508 4457 or Chris Pond on 020 8508 2361 who can explain what is involved.

Our thanks to all the residents who support LRA

Bus route 542

Vectare have now replaced Galleon as operators of this route however the auguries are not good. There was no service on two days last month, and a broken-down 542 bus (16 years old), was stranded opposite Morrisons on the High Road for an hour on 14th October.

Tree felling prosecutions

On 8th August at Chelmsford Crown Court, two tree surgeons pleaded guilty to offences under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regarding felling of trees at the Debden Hall Estate. Both defendants were fined £20,000 and ordered to pay the Council's costs. A prosecution against the owner of the land continues.

Five Gold Certificates For our playing fields

The Town Council has received five gold certificates from this year's Best Kept Playing Field competition run by the Essex Playing Fields Association. Both Town Council recreation grounds, Roding Valley Recreation Ground and Willingale Road Playing Field received gold certificates in Class 1 (for playing fields serving communities of more than 2,500 residents). Three gold certificates were also gained in Class 3 (best kept children's playgrounds), for Traps Hill, Newmans Lane, and Westall Road Playgrounds respectively.



Willingale Road Nature Reserve

An asbestos water tank, unearthed by Epping Forest Countrycare, has been removed by a government-approved contractor.

Dangerous and anti-social driving

The police are aware of numerous car-meets in the Langston Road and Lenthall Road areas over the summer months involving dangerous driving and excessively loud noise. They have worked to tackle this, and they hope you have noticed a significant improvement.

They identified several drivers who will be prosecuted at court in due course, and to assist this they are gathering information on the effect it has had on local residents. They have written to every person they received a call from where their address was given, however numerous others called them without providing an address so they are aware there will be other residents who can also assist them.

Stolen cars seized

Acting on information received in the Epping Forest area, the police found several stolen vehicles that had been stolen from within Essex and several London areas, and that were in the process of having their identities changed.



River Way garages/brick wall

All asbestos around the proposed tree planting site has been removed by a government-approved contractor. Tree planting will now be arranged for the autumn.

Contacting LRA

Councillors key: D = District T = Town		Membership: membership@loughtonresidents.co.uk Laura Blake, 9 Woodbury Hill, Loughton IG10 1JB 07968 174388	Enquiries: contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk 020 8508 2361
Alderton Ward Chidi Nweke (D) Hillcroft 07403 489455 Ian Allgood (D) Greensted Road 020 8502 2393 Katie Valentine (T) Habgood Road 07477 012213 Mick Stubbings (T) Greenfields 07766 480522 Philip Abraham (T) Lancaster Drive 020 8502 2925	Fairmead Ward Carol Davies (T) Colebrook Gardens 07817 230372 David Wixley (D) Goldings Road 020 8418 9284 Louise Mead (D) 07746 875952 Sebastian Fontenelle (T) Etheridge Rd 07898 906371 Will Kauffman (T) The Greens Close 07799 148740	St Mary's Ward Barbara Cohen (T) Church Lane 07957 141197 Graham Wiskin (T) Traps Hill 020 8925 2003 Howard Kauffman (D) Church Lane 020 8508 1098 Judy Jennings (D&T)	County: Loughton (Central) Chris Pond Staples Road 020 8508 2361
Broadway Ward Chris Pond (D) Staples Road 020 8508 2361 Kevin Rainbow (T) Audley Gardens 07921 662715 Les House (T) Avondale Drive 020 8508 3369 Michael Owen (D) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145 Philip Beales (T) Harwater Drive 020 8418 0459	Forest Ward Jayna Jogia (D) The Drive 07983 713389 Jon Riley (T) Albion Park 020 8508 6604 Roger Baldwin (D) Burney Drive 020 8281 5488 Stella Murphy (T) High View Close 020 8508 2794 Trevor Downing (T) Smarts Lane 020 8508 8877	Committee Anne Harriman 020 8502 1779 John Walker 07779 338868 Judith Walker 07855 265835 Juliet Pollard 020 8502 0552 Lance Leonard 020 8502 0771 Mark Dalton 07719 736901 Michael Benbow 020 8508 4457 Steve Eaton 020 8923 0065 Tessa Cochrane 020 3643 7492	
St John's Ward Bob Jennings (D) Caroline Pond (D&T) Staples Road 020 8508 2361 Chris Pond (T) Staples Road 020 8508 2361 Michael Owen (T) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145	Roding Ward David Wixley (T) Goldings Road 020 8418 9284 Neil MacKinnon (T) Barncroft Close 07872 324028 Rose Brookes (D&T) Lower Park Rd 07391 879412		
Secretary: Jill Angold-Stephens 020 8281 0674 Treasurer: Miriam Murphy 07966 177961	Loughton Life Editor: Eva Blasco 020 8923 0065 Minutes Secretary: Susan Creevy		

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.

Land at Chequers Road

This application is for developing the land with a relocated substation and landscaping.

LRAPG has objected to the principle of filling in these spaces which are a characteristic of the area.

LRAPG also objects to placing the substation and crossover in the middle of the site. By placing the crossover and substation more than halfway across this green area, it will be far more conspicuous than it need be, particularly with the removal of part of the green for the crossover. It would be far less obtrusive if placed at the west edge of the plot. Substations also hum and the Council has been asked for an acoustic report, evidence for the need for the substation and where the existing substation is. If needed, the substation should have been incorporated into the development of the garages opposite to protect this green space.

Flat asphalted roofs do not last long; the substation should have a pitched roof with good quality clay tiles.

Reference EPF/1772/23.

The formal consultation period ended 14th September.



Aura Grill and Bar, 179-181 High Road

In April 2022 the District Council issued Aura Grill and Bar an enforcement notice to demolish a steel framed extension at the rear of the property, and a second notice to remove an extraction system. The owners appealed against the notices to the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol. The LRA Plans Group supported the enforcement notices and asked for the appeals to be dismissed.

The Planning Inspector dismissed both appeals and have upheld the Council's requirement for the extension to be demolished and the extraction system to be removed. The inspector agreed the structures were harmful to the area and adjoining residents and should be removed within one month which has now expired.

LRA Comment: We call on the District Council to ensure the enforcement notices are complied with and the structures removed immediately.

Gardeners Arms Pub, York Hill

This is an application for installation of an external fire escape stairwell and internal secondary glazing to all windows and doors, along with mechanical supply and extraction of air including air conditioning.



There has been a lot of anti-social behaviour around the Gardeners Arms pub over the last few years culminating in a licence review where stricter controls were imposed. These extra measures don't seem to have resolved the matter, with complaints still being made about the running of the pub.

LRAPG considers the works proposed in this application may lead to an intensification of the use and further disturbance to local residents. The fire escape is considered to be unacceptable intervention to this Grade 2 listed building. The applicant says it is required under building regulations, but no evidence has been provided and, in any event, there are better solutions that are less harmful to the special character of the listed building.

Because of the ongoing anti-social behaviour, the LRAPG has asked that a condition is imposed to prevent the access from being used by patrons or for servicing the function room or any other part of the premises; restricting the access for means of escape only. There are concerns the new means of escape is also likely to lead to an intensification of the use of the function room. Local residents are already disturbed on a regular basis therefore a request has been made to establish the existing capacity and impose a condition restricting numbers to the same capacity should the means of escape be allowed. The air conditioning extracts are also considered to be harmful to the fabric of the listed building.

Reference EPF/1431/23 and EPF/1432/23. The formal consultation periods ended 6th September.

Roding Valley High School RAAC and New Temporary Buildings

Unfortunately, Roding Valley High School (RVHS) is one of the schools that has reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) inside one of its buildings. A recent survey confirmed RAAC panels were used in the construction of the roof of a building that houses 18 classrooms and the canteen/kitchen for the school. The Department for Education instructed RVHS to close the building immediately.

The school has quickly sourced 18 modular classrooms and a toilet block which have had to be installed along Brook Road without obtaining the necessary planning consents. LRAPG understands the need to do this but hopes a retrospective planning application will be submitted shortly so a timetable can be agreed for the replacement of the RAAC in the existing building, and the removal of the temporary structures as soon as practically possible.



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and at www.facebook.com/LoughtonResidents**

Sometimes LRA Cllrs can unblock procedural mazes

A resident of Jessel Drive contacted LRA's Broadway ward Cllrs in September about a leaky roof. Qualis do all the maintenance for District Council council houses, so the Cllrs contacted them.

Qualis sent an inspector, but they needed District Council formal approval to start expensive works. Meanwhile, the upper rooms had decorations ruined by Storm Babet and other rainfall. In the last week of October, LRA Cllr Chris Pond was getting angry that the District Council's formal approval had been so delayed, so he personally contacted the Portfolio Holder for housing and the three most senior officers of the District Council.

The logjam was unblocked within the day, with scaffolding due to be erected the following Monday.

Essex County Council consultation on parking provision guidance

The County Council lays down guidance for developers and other councils on the standards to be applied for new developments on how much parking should be provided for developments of all sorts and sizes, from a single building to new estates. It is now consulting interested parties, including residents, about some changes to the guidance.

For the first time, the draft guidance spells out requirements for minimum numbers of parking spaces for Electric Vehicles (EVs) as part of the total required for vehicles, as well as dealing with the provision required for bicycles and powered two-wheelers and how in each case the spaces should be laid out and equipped.

LRA Comment: We think that for larger developments the new guidance fails to deal with the inevitable conflicts that will arise if, as is often the case, parking spaces aren't specifically allocated to specific residents, particularly if there are fewer parking spaces than households. The guidance recommends leaving this to the landowner – we don't think that this would work.

Cleaning the Streets

A resident who had recently moved to Roding ward contacted LRA Cllr Rose Brookes and Independent Cllr Stephen Murray about the state of his street, particularly drawing attention to the excessive detritus in the gutters. They met the new constituent and spent an hour walking round nearby streets.

Rose and Stephen then organised the cleaning of his road. Subsequently they met the District Council's waste contract manager and the officer responsible for Loughton, to look at other roads in Roding ward. Biffa have since cleaned another road.

Roads are no longer inspected regularly in the way they used to be in previous waste contracts. If your street is not cleaned to your satisfaction, report it to the District Council.

LRA Christmas Quiz 2023 'Christmas Shopping'

This year's cryptic quiz is based around shops, both old and new. Answers by 5th January, please, either by email to lesandsueharris@aol.com, or to 32 Upper Park, Loughton IG10 4EQ. A book token or bottle of fizz for the first correct answer out of the hat. We hope you enjoy the quiz, and wish you a very Happy Christmas.

1. Secure road (7)
2. Trumpets (6)
3. Natural environment (7)
4. Makes better? (5)
5. Spicy Porcine (6,3)
6. Trades in only cooling equipment? (10)
7. Lots of jokers here (5,6)
8. Richard's or Amanda's (7)
9. Sounds like meat on the fields (7)
10. Top-class tablet (9)
11. Go boxing here? (4)
12. Firm for last testament? (5)
13. Gospel writer and miner (4,7)
14. Shop for Princess Anne's daughter (4)
15. Very quick for groceries (6)
16. Lichen fraternity (4,4)
17. Fleece's values (10)
18. Useful at harvest time (9)
19. 3rd and 1st (1,3,1)
20. Because abbreviated (3)
21. Made for walking (5)
22. Freedom (7)
23. Parliamentary tippie (11,4)
24. Stop for a flower (8)
25. Wet some pebbles (11)
26. Do they sell Indian food? (6)
27. In a royal manner (8)
28. Bill's cards (8)
29. NW national park? (8)
30. Spice or parliamentary regalia (4)

A104 Epping New Road proposed road safety scheme

The government is funding £1.36m for safety improvements on the road. Plans have been developed by Essex Highways and are now under consideration.

The proposed plans include:

- Average speed cameras to enforce the existing 30mph and 40mph speed limits.
- A northwards extension to the existing 30mph speed limit in Buckhurst Hill to cover the Rangers Road junction which also includes average speed cameras.
- A series of traffic islands along the length including crossing points at the key forest crossing points, working with conservators to provide an integrated approach with the car park access improvements.

Thank you from LRA

As we reach the end of another year of Loughton Life, we want to thank you, our members, for your continued support.