

# LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Newsletter Members' Edition

*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.*

## An Epping Forest Clean Air Zone?

Members will recall that in late 2020 the District Council announced a decision to introduce an Interim Air Pollution Strategy, including a Clean Air Zone (CAZ) in 2025 for essentially the main Forest south of Epping. This proposal formed part of the Council's approach to get the Local Plan agreed, by arguing a CAZ would mitigate the effect on the Forest of increased pollution from more housing and associated activities (e.g. traffic and gas boilers). LRA Cllrs argued consistently that the Council should carry out the mitigation measures before any more new housing was built, however this was not agreed to during the adoption of the Local Plan.

At the time, the Council planned to set up an advisory panel to look at the mitigation strategies needed to avoid a CAZ, however they then dropped this idea. They appear to have postponed action on a CAZ while waiting for further measurements of pollution in the Forest, but although these results should have been available last spring, nothing more has been heard.

LRA Comment: With 2025 approaching, it is self-evident that the Council has no intention of introducing a CAZ next year. In the meantime, the Council is approving the development of new buildings near to the Forest whose residents will generate more pollution in the Forest, and it is extracting significant sums from the developers to pay for anti-pollution measures which may never be carried out. Nobody seemed to be in favour of a CAZ, and the City of London have recently upbraided the District Council for inaction on this.

## The Broadway refurbishment

Work will start in November with scaffolding to be erected in January 2025 to avoid any potential disruption to the commercial tenants during the Christmas trading period. The District Council has been informing commercial or residential leaseholders of the costs they will need to pay for the refurbishment.

LRA fears that some traders will not be able to pay and will leave, with shops closing as a result, and residents who own their own flats will struggle to pay.



Image: Town Council

## Loughton Day

Once again, the sun shone, and large numbers of residents and visitors attended Loughton Day in September which had numerous community group stalls, local organisations, and businesses.

There was something for everyone, with a great variety of community and charity stalls. The Scouts cooked up a tasty BBQ, Churches Together provided a scrumptious tea tent and both the pizza and Caribbean food stalls proved very popular. Town Cllrs ran a second-hand book stall with all money going to the Town Mayor's chosen charity, Loughton Voluntary Care. Loughton Wombles were out in force keeping the cricket field litter free, and Thames Water provided a drinking station to keep all visitors hydrated. Daniel Robinson provided a generous donation and sponsorship of the event, and the Loughton Cricket Club hosted. The Town Council is grateful to them all. The whole concept and ethos of the event was successfully achieved; to bring the Loughton community together and for local groups to advertise exactly 'what they do' and promote interest and increase memberships for the respective organisations they represent and work so hard for to make Loughton a better and more inclusive place to live.

## Local planning committees changed

As we reported previously, the District Council cabinet agreed to recommendations made following a recent review of the Council's development management function conducted by PAS (Planning Advisory Service, which is part of the Local Government Association).

The new structure for local planning committees started on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. There will be two committees ('Committee A' and 'Committee B') with the previous Plans South committee no longer existing. Membership will be pro rata reflecting the District Council Cllr makeup where the Conservatives have a majority - so LRA does badly. Ward Cllrs will not be allowed to speak on applications in their own ward.

LRA Comment: The voice of residents will be much diluted. So much for local democracy.

**Our thanks to all the residents who support LRA**

## A genuine police officer?

There have been occasions when fraudsters have posed as police officers, both in person and on the phone, to trick people into giving them personal information and to defraud them of money. If you're unsure about whether the person you're dealing with is a genuine police officer – stop – and call 101 to check their identity.

If you've been on the phone to someone who called you but have doubts about them, hang up and wait five minutes before calling the police. There have been cases of fraudsters keeping the line open after a victim has hung up. Leaving several minutes between calls will make sure that the call has closed.

## Central Line trains

In November last year, we reported that the first refurbished trains from Transport for London's (TfL) Central Line Improvement Programme (CLIP) would start to enter service, with all trains to be refurbished by 2029. Since then TfL has managed to have one refurbished train enter service. It's clear that the refurbishment work is more difficult than anticipated, with the problems with motor failures earlier in the year exacerbating the situation. CLIP will replace the existing DC motors with AC motors. TfL is reported to expect a 2<sup>nd</sup> refurbished train to be in service within weeks, and more trains coming into service in 2025.

## Disposing of something

If you've got something you no longer need or want, find the best way to get rid of it. Whether it's finding something a new home, the nearest place to recycle, or checking if something's accepted in your bin, enter the item and your postcode at <https://tinyurl.com/wastedisposalsearch>

## Printing at Loughton Library

Library members can now use wifi printing at the Library, which allows you to send documents from devices such as a phone, tablet, or laptop from anywhere and collect prints upon arrival. A fee applies, which can be paid online or at the library.

## Arrests on The Broadway

Police officers were called to The Broadway Debden on 24<sup>th</sup> September following reports of a group of boys holding weapons and wearing balaclavas.

Officers, supported by CCTV operators from the District Council, located the suspects, and two 17-year-old boys were arrested at the scene shortly before 3pm. A 17-year-old boy from Basildon was charged with possession of a bladed article in a public place. He was remanded into custody and appeared at Chelmsford Magistrates Court on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> September. Following that Court appearance, he was sentenced to six months in prison and fined a total of £239. A 17-year-old boy from Leyton was charged with possession of a bladed article in a public place.

## Shoplifter charged

Whilst on patrol in Debden, PCSO Harrison from Epping Forest Town Team noticed unusual behaviour from a male cycling away from the Epping Forest Shopping Park on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Enquiries revealed that the male fitted the description of a suspect who had just stolen £254 worth of goods from a shop. PCSO Harrison circulated his description and direction of travel to their colleagues. Officers arrested the male after finding him a short while later, hiding in another shop with the stolen property still on him. A 51-year-old male from Loughton was charged with theft.

## ASB on The Broadway

Epping Forest College is mindful that some students can cause Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) on The Broadway and the College has excluded students for this where appropriate. They work with the District Council and the police where students are loitering in areas where they should not be or causing problems. They also have their own Anti-Social Behaviour officers that spend time on The Broadway.

## Contacting LRA

Councillors key: D = District T = Town		<b>Membership:</b> <a href="mailto:membership@loughtonresidents.co.uk">membership@loughtonresidents.co.uk</a> Laura Blake, 9 Woodbury Hill, Loughton IG10 1JB 07968 174388
		<b>Enquiries:</b> <a href="mailto:contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk">contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk</a> or call 020 8508 2361
<b>Loughton Fairmead District Area LRA Cllrs</b> Louise Mead (D) Goldings Road 07746 875952 Arash Ardakani (D) Shelley Grove 020 8257 0230 Will Kauffman (D) The Greens Close 07799 148740 Carol Davies (T) Colebrook Gardens 07817 230372 Neil MacKinnon (T) Barncroft Close 07872 324028 Ceejay Ubah (T) Barrington Road 07983 535992 Ruth Sylvan (T) Englands Lane 07958 813014 Sebastian Fontenelle (T) Etheridge Rd 07898906371	<b>County: Loughton (Central)</b> Chris Pond Staples Road 020 8508 2361 <b>Loughton St John's District Area LRA Cllrs</b> Chris Pond (D&T) Staples Road 020 8508 2361 Howard Kauffman (D) Church Lane 020 8508 1098 Graham Wiskin (D) Traps Hill 020 8925 2003 Stephen Harriman (T) High Road 07740 409374 Michael Owen (T) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145 Ian Allgood (T) Greensted Road 020 8502 2393 Joyce Obaseki (T) Whitehills Road 020 3004 7286	<b>Loughton Whitebridge &amp; IG9 East Area LRA Cllrs</b> Barbara Cohen (D) Church Lane 020 8502 3242 Rose Brookes (D&T) Lower Park Rd 07391 879412 David Wixley (T) The Meadway 020 8418 9284
<b>Loughton Forest District Area LRA Cllrs</b> Ian Allgood (D) Greensted Road 020 8502 2393 Michael Owen (D) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145 Roger Baldwin (D) Burney Drive 020 8281 5488 Jon Riley (T) Albion Park 020 8508 6604 Kin-Wan Lee (T) Meadow Road 07940 807483 Stella Murphy (T) High View Close 020 8508 2794 Raj Minhas (T) Alderton Hall Lane 07889 121518 Wendy Dodd (T) Deepdene Road 07871 964682	<b>Loughton Roding District Area LRA Cllrs</b> Chidi Nweke (D) Hillcroft 07403 489455 Sheree Rackham (D) Hillcroft 07722 511107 Katie Valentine (T) Habgood Road 07477 012213 Les House (T) Avondale Drive 020 8508 3369 Alan Fricker (T) Stonards Hill 07508 332342 Mick Stubbings (T) Greenfields 07766 480522	<b>Committee</b> Anne Harriman 020 8502 1779 Chris Kent 07825 249777 John Walker 07779 338868 Judith Walker 07855 265835 Juliet Pollard 020 8502 0552 Kevin Rainbow 07921 662715 Mark Dalton 07719 736901 Martine Groman-Marks Michael Benbow 020 8508 4457 Philip Abraham 020 8502 2925 Steve Eaton 020 8923 0065 Tessa Cochrane 020 3643 7492 Trevor Downing 020 8508 8877
<b>Secretary:</b> Vacancy - Please apply 020 8508 4457 <b>Treasurer:</b> Miriam Murphy 07966 177961		<b>Loughton Life Editor:</b> Eva Blasco 020 8923 0065 <b>Minutes Secretary:</b> 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 Cllrs 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.

### 227 High Road (previously The Last Post)

This application proposes a change of use from a pub to a shared space comprising retail, a café, meeting space, health and wellbeing services, and office accommodation



LRAPG has objected to this application.

The Last Post is locally listed and is a very good example of neo-geo architecture. LRAPG consider the proposed second floor addition, by reason of its height and detailed design, will significantly impact on the setting of The Last Post.

The use of green tiles is an inappropriate material that will distract from the main building. Instead, the extensions need to be finished in matching brickwork. The view from the High Road is clumsy with an unaligned lower corner poking out into the delivery area. Whereas the stone parapet is intended to align with the heritage front of the building, the fenestration of the rear portion clashes horribly with the front portion and is much more noticeable than the parapet. The clash results from the shape and size of the rear section windows, and the lower level of the rear section windows when compared with the front.

The present telephone exchange presents a bland background, which is set back far enough not to be noticed when passing by the Last Post, whereas the new block will stand out like a sore thumb.

The applicant has provided no details of what the proposed health and wellbeing services are or who will run them. There is no detail over what percentage of the floor will be cafe or meeting/community space. If genuine community space is being provided, the amount and type of community space needs to be detailed and secured by condition to ensure it is actually provided. Nor is there any justification provided for the other health uses.

Overall the extensions relate poorly to The Last Post and are harmful to its setting. As such, the scheme needs a significant redesign or should be refused.

Reference EPF/1693/24.

### 43 Alderton Hill, Corner Garth, corner of Nursery Road and Highview Close

LRAPG has reported another breach of planning control at this property. Previously the developer has erected unsafe Heras fencing around the site and were made to put up a safe hoarding. Now the entire



house has been demolished without planning permission. LRAPG has reported the breach to the District Council. LRAPG has consistently asked the Council to verify the exact amount of demolition on planning applications by asking for demolition drawings - many schemes for extensions suggest the whole dwelling may be lost but officers continue to ignore the request. The unnecessary loss of embedded carbon is a material consideration; Epping Forest is way behind other councils who have circular economy policies that ensure any demolition has to be justified and any material to be removed is reused and does not go to landfill sites.

### Princess of Wales, Westall Road

As we reported last month, The District Council bought the pub in recent years with the intention to redevelop the site for housing and has recently issued a demolition notice. LRAPG has told the Council that planning consent is however required before demolition, as legislation from 2017 removed all permitted development rights for pubs, including demolition, meaning that planning consent is required in all cases in England before a pub can be demolished.

The pub backs onto residents so it is important permission is sought and neighbours consulted, to ensure the demolition is carried out sensitively and the site is properly secured and not left looking a mess given it could be several years before the Council does anything with the premises.

## Oakwood Hill Estate

As part of the Safer Streets project, the District Council has reported that improvements are underway with weeds being removed to refresh the pathways, and three additional waste bins will be placed throughout the estate to support cleanliness. Crimestoppers Zones have been established throughout the estate with signage installed to encourage reporting of suspicious activities, complemented by outreach efforts such as distribution of leaflets and speaking face to face with residents.

Future improvements include new CCTV cameras, improved lighting, regular weed management, removing graffiti around the estate, cleaning road signs and ensuring regular maintenance and community upkeep.

## Weed clearing

Following the successful clearing of weeds in Witham Close at the Loughton end of Buckhurst Hill East and Whitebridge ward, LRA Cllr Rose Brookes asked if Rous Road in Buckhurst Hill could also be cleared. A team from Biffa tackled the vegetation, although they were not able to clear weeds where the pavement might be damaged.



## A potential third wheelie bin

The District Council has been running a trial in Theydon Bois with a blue-lidded bin for recycling. The bin replaces recycling sacks and the blue glass box, with all recycling placed into the bin separately including glass bottles and jars. The Council will soon consider whether to roll out the third wheelie bin across the district. At the Council's Cabinet meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> September LRA Cllr Chris Pond told the meeting of his concerns of another wheelie bin being imposed on householders where space to store the bins is limited. Chris said "I do not think the imposition of an extra wheelie bin, whether it has a blue lid or some other decorative feature on the top, is a good idea particularly if you are the owner of a flat or a very narrow cottage without much ground."

## Pension Credit and Winter Fuel Payments

Pensioners are being urged to check if they are eligible for pension credit to become eligible for the winter fuel payment. The Pension Credit is worth, on average, £3,900 per year for those who are over the state pension age (66+ years) and on a low income.

Receiving Pension Credit also unlocks additional support including:

- Help with rent and Council Tax
- Help with NHS services costs (NHS dental treatment, glasses and transport costs for hospital appointments).
- Free TV licence for those over 75 years.

## Loughton Wombles

Earlier this year the Wombles were seen picking on Deepdene Road and Bushfields. Later in year, two groups were out, one on Rectory Lane towards Pyrles Lane, the other going down Hillyfields and around into Pyrles Lane. The Wombles also did a fantastic job keeping Loughton Cricket Ground litter free for Loughton Day in September.

## Habitat restoration grant

A further grant totalling £2.35m from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs through their Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) has been awarded for habitat restoration across a 10-year period at sites throughout the Forest. This grant is on top of another grant of £2.02m which was secured in 2020. Together, these grants cover habitat restoration over a 10-year period at sites throughout the Forest. The latest grant will:

- Manage and restore 139 hectares of wood pasture
- Conserve 481 veteran trees
- Manage 60 hectares of grassland
- Care for two scheduled monuments - Ambresbury Banks and sections of the Purlieu Bank
- Manage 12 hectares of heathland
- Support the Forest's conservation grazing programme
- Provide funding to allow the Field Studies Council to run more engagement sessions to inform young people about our conservation work with grazing.

## LRA Christmas Quiz 2024 -

### Coastal towns & cities of Britain

Time to get cryptic quizzing again, and this year it's how well you know some of the coastal towns and cities of Britain. First correct entry out of the hat will receive fizz or a £20 book token. Answers please by 5<sup>th</sup> January to [lesandsueharris@aol.com](mailto:lesandsueharris@aol.com), or to 32 Upper Park, Loughton IG10 4EQ. Happy quizzing, and a very Merry Christmas.

1. Drink a royal cordial (4,5)
2. Where to go for a quick lunch? (8)
3. Restful retreat (10)
4. Proceed with the decorating (8)
5. A wooden town? (4)
6. Sounds more like a rusty old car (6)
7. Trade in the briny (6)
8. His business is metal plating (6)
9. At your convenience (4)
10. Recut Yale? (7)
11. Resort with wide steps (11)
12. Take a trip around the dockside (7)
13. Not a place for Henry Ford's holiday? (6)
14. Stately bird in the main? (7)
15. Set this place alight! (4)
16. Speedy forest (9)
17. Amphibious Cortina (7)
18. Just a simple tune (3)
19. The pub is finished (6)
20. Prepare strawberries here? (4)
21. Boss of the colliery? (8)
22. Make a mark on the town? (11)
23. Place for a gently stroll (5)
24. Hercule's sidekick (8)
25. Looks after the catch (9)
26. Dark water (9)
27. Season the outer garments (9)
28. One for its patron saint (2, 7)
29. Entrance for the sheep? (8)
30. Loose box for Pentecost? (10)

A very special thanks to Sue and Les Harris who have been providing the quiz questions and answers, along with the prizes, for 25 years.

## Local safer streets funding

£1.5m funding for community safety projects from across Essex has been announced by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex. The money has been granted to 19 community projects across Essex which aim to help communities make streets and public spaces safer.

In our district, £167,500 has been allocated for CCTV installation, lighting improvements, diversionary activities and community projects in the Oakwood Hill Estate which will be supported by match funding from local partners of £141,000.

## Thank you from LRA

Thank you to all of our members and volunteers who have supported us over the last year.