



# LRA's Loughton News

14 April 2023

In this issue [we have an extra-long news item on road defects and potholes](#), that seem to have multiplied throughout the town over the winter.

Also we understand that [Royal Mail deliveries](#) are being delayed (again), and the High Road will soon see [Barclays Bank close](#).

Calling 999 is a lifesaver, but remember to [use it wisely](#) and consider other ways to contact the police. Also there are ways to [make a 'silent' 999 call](#).

Coming up in town is the [Town Mayor's Treasure Hunt](#), and in summer is the [Jessel Green fun day](#).

Lastly, if you have problems buying from abroad, there is [a little-known service that could help](#).

Thank you for supporting LRA, which is 100% run by volunteers locally. You can always [contact us by email](#) to raise an issue, give your views, or offer help.

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## LRA News

### Are Potholes and Road Defects Everywhere?

Residents will have noticed a lot of potholes and road defects around town, and many have suffered burst tyres or damage to their vehicles, no matter how carefully they drive.



Roads (excluding motorways and private

roads) are the responsibility of Essex Highways, a strategic partnership between the firm Ringway Jacobs and the County Council.

The underspending over decades for road renewal and maintenance across the county has led to the quality of road surfaces deteriorating. Defects and potholes are eventually patched and repaired but, as many residents will have observed, these do tend to fail, mostly after periods of wet and/or cold weather when defects are much more difficult to repair permanently.

This underspending is illustrated by the Council's budget for road maintenance this financial year. The budget set aside is £36.7m for road maintenance, but Essex Highways has said it needed £77.7m each year and has [stated that county roads are in managed decline](#).

The Government has announced [additional funding](#) to fix potholes across the country. From this the Council will receive over £5 million, however that is far from what is needed and it remains to be seen how much of that will be directed toward Loughton.

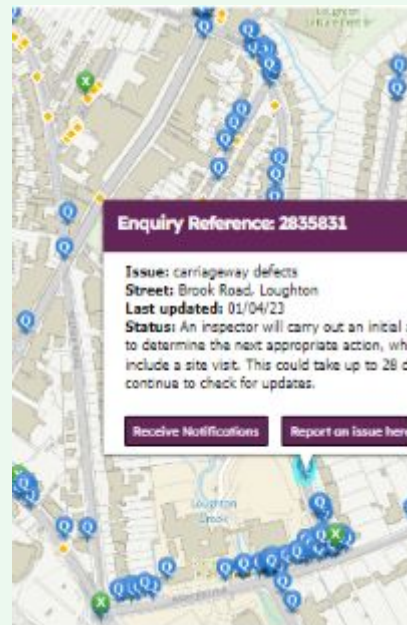
## What Can I Do?

If you see a road defect or pothole, [check if has been reported and, if not, report it](#).

If you think there's a risk to public safety call Essex Highways immediately on 0345 603 7631 (do not report it online).

**Reporting a problem is worth doing**, even if it is not fixed immediately. A temporary fix may be applied, or warning signs placed around it to warn other road users. [Report it online here](#).

- In the map that appears, zoom in to Loughton or use a postcode to search. (You need to zoom in a lot to see reported problems.)
- You can then either report an issue or view the current status of a known problem.



You can also report road defects and potholes at [FixMyStreet](#) (run by a non-profit group) which you may find easier to use, and problems reported do get passed on to Essex Highways.

In the past there has been a (limited) funding pot that has enabled County Cllrs to nominate defects to be fixed (but only those in carriageways, not footways, which is a disadvantage) which LRA Cllr Chris Pond has taken advantage of. If this continues into the current financial year, Chris will continue to do so.

If, after [reporting a road defect or pothole](#), nothing has happened after three weeks and it's in the Loughton Central Division ([map](#)) [email Chris](#). If it's outside of this area, you can try contacting the County Cllrs responsible that cover the areas in [south Loughton](#) and around [The Broadway](#).

For specific roads which have widespread problems (Brooklyn Avenue is such an example) where there are plans to resurface the road and fix the footways, Chris will chase up whenever appropriate for the Loughton Central area.

## Claiming Compensation for Vehicle Damage

You can claim compensation for damage, but the rules are very specific and 90% of claims to the Council are rejected. Your claim should be supported with photos of the road defect or pothole (with measurements), along with a written quote and/or invoice.

[The rules are here](#), along with how to make a claim. You need to also report the defect (as above) **before** you make any claim. Essex Highways will refute claims where they have had no opportunity to make it safe or it should be safe with careful driving. Their lawyers are very skilled at rejecting claims.

If the road defect **has** been reported and **not** fixed before you suffered damage, your claim has a greater chance of success. **So always report it!**

*If this email has been forwarded to you, get it sent directly to your inbox by [supporting LRA for only £5 a year](#).*

## ***Planning and Licensing***

[Read more on our website](#) about Planning and Licensing, the role of the LRA Plans Group (LRAPG), how to get more information and how to comment to the Town Council and the District Council, and to the LRA Plans Group – please have your say.

### **16 Eleven Acre Rise**

This is a retrospective application to alter the ground levels and create a retaining wall to the rear of the new homes, which were granted under a previous application.

Planning permission was previously granted to erect two houses on this plot of land. However, when the houses were built, the rear garden was raised considerably without planning permission. LRAPG has objected to the application to retain the new levels because of overlooking into neighbours. The new sheer boundary needed to contain the new levels is oppressive and results in an unacceptable loss of amenity for adjoining residents. This has caused a lot of distress for the residents living adjacent to the site.

The applicant has argued the majority of garden remains at the same level but neighbours have provided photographs of the garden before the works took place.

LRAPG have asked the land be restored to its previous levels and the council should instigate enforcement action immediately.

Reference [EPF/0203/23](#). The formal consultation period ended 30 March but you can still comment to the Council.

## ***Roads, Parking and Travel***

### **Planned Road Closures**

- Malvern Gardens - the road will be closed on 25 April while sewer cover replacement works are undertaken by Thames Water. [More](#)

- St Nicholas Place - the road will be closed on 3 May while sewer cover replacement works are undertaken by Thames Water. [More](#)
- Burton Road - the road will be closed on 27 April while sewer cover replacement works are undertaken by Thames Water. [More](#)

Dates can change so [check here for the latest updates](#), and for other planned roadworks including ones that involve only temporary traffic lights.



### **Bus Route 542**

There have been continual complaints regarding this service and the Town Council are writing to the County Council to have this contract removed from the Galleon Travel (Central Connect) and be placed with an alternative contractor who can provide a good service.

## ***Police, Fire and Crime***



### **Police Constable Marc Arnold wins District Council Civic Award**

The District Council has awarded PC Marc Arnold a civic award for his police work locally, and has been a caring and responsive officer.

PC Marc Arnold joined Essex police as a special constable and has gone on to work in the Epping Forest district for the majority of his 20 years' service. PC Arnold investigates incidents relating to hate crime and anti-social behaviour and with knowledge of the area he quickly identifies offenders and deals with them and has dealt with high profile crimes and obtained convictions. [More](#) including details of other District Council Civic Award winners.

### **Calling 999**

Over the last few months there has been an increase in 999 calls to the police. However, on average only 20% of those calls were emergency related. Calling 999 must be a last resort and you should only use this service if you are reporting an emergency that requires an immediate and urgent police response.

The other ways to contact the police are:

- [Report online](#)
- Call 101
- Use the online [Live Chat service](#)

### **Making a silent 999 call**

If you are in a dangerous situation and feel you cannot speak freely to an operator:

***If calling from a mobile phone:***

When asked which service you would like, press 55 on the keypad. This will automatically get you transferred to the police. You might then be asked to indicate that you're still on the line by a call handlers, either by coughing, tapping your phone, or, where possible, speaking quietly.

This doesn't allow the police to track your location, but they will be able to listen in to what is going on around you and work out how to get help to you.

***If calling from a landline:***

If you replace the handset at any point, the landline may remain connected for 45 seconds in case you pick it up again.

Calling 999 from a landline automatically gives the police information about your location.

## **Selling Items on Online Marketplaces**

Police are investigating reports of fraudsters 'buying' electronic items such as mobile phones or laptops. They are arranging to buy your item and on collection will show you a banking app transferring the money to your account. In some cases, they even call their so called 'bank' to get them to confirm the transfer.

This is a fake banking app or phone number, and the payment will never make it to your account.

When selling items online check the buyer's review history and feedback from others and be careful of accounts that may have been set up very recently with lots of favourable feedback that sounds the same.

## **Sort Your Settings**

Do you know what a loot box is? Or how to restrict who can chat to your child when they are playing their favourite game online? Keeping your child safe online is not always an easy task. New technology, regular updates or upgrades can change how things work, sometimes making it difficult to keep up.



So, to help, the police have put together some simple things you can do to make your child's online devices safer. [More](#)

## **Fraud and Cybercrime Clinics for Businesses**

The Business Crime Team now offer free fraud and cybercrime clinics specifically for the business community.

These clinics are held either online or in person depending on business needs and are hosted by a Business Crime Team police officer and our specialist cyber protect officer. The sessions cover topical and real-life issues faced by businesses, and offer practical tips on how to keep businesses, staff and customers safe from fraud and cybercrime. [More](#)

## **Business crime prevention**

Crime against a business can take many forms: from shoplifting or non-paying diners to staff theft and burglary from premises. The police have advice on how to help safeguard your business. [More](#)

### More from the Police

[Read more](#) from the police for our local area including other news and crime statistics.

## Council News



### How Well Do You Know Loughton?

Test your local knowledge in the Town Mayor's Treasure Hunt and help raise funds for Lopping Hall to install an air conditioning unit. This walking quiz will take place around the High Road on Sunday 23 April, with teams having two hours to answer and find clues hidden around the town. [More](#). To register, [email the Town Council](#) or call 020 8508 4200.



### Bunting in Loughton

Bunting will go up to enhance the Broadway and High Road for the Coronation Bank Holiday weekend. This will be put up during week commencing 17 April and removed towards the end of May.

Essex Highways have prohibited the hanging of bunting across the roads from one side to the other, meaning that the new bunting will therefore be placed on lamp columns and will sit parallel to the roads.

The Town Mayor will take an official tour of the Town and photographs will be taken of the best dressed businesses, houses, properties and streets. [More](#)

Some roads will also be closed around town for neighbourhood street parties. [More about the Coronation weekend](#).

### Jessel Green Fun Day

The Fun Day will take place on Sunday 25 June and local sponsors are being sought to reduce costs to the Town Council. It has been agreed a tombola stall would be run on the day.

### **Loughton Library Toddler Toy Time**

There's a Toddler Toy Time every week at Loughton and Debden Libraries on Wednesdays and Fridays respectively. This is a chance to meet other parents and carers and let the kids loose on the toys - or share a book or two. [More](#)

### **Summer Reading Challenge Volunteering**

Are you age 14 or over? Are you looking for something to do during the summer holidays? Why not become a Summer Reading Challenge Volunteer for Essex Libraries.

They are looking for a minimum commitment of 18 hours, but if you're able to do more that would be great. Returning volunteers are welcome but will need to apply again as your personal information has not been retained. The Summer Reading Challenge will run from 15 July – 2 September. [More](#)

### **Town Council Van**

The Town Council have recently replaced the Council van which was 10 years old and had suffered engine corrosion, and expensive repairs would not guarantee a sound working van. A new plug-in electric van has now been delivered and the Town Council are looking into the possibility of installing a commercial charging point at Murray Hall which is hoped will bring additional income to the Council.

### **Local Authority Housing Fun**

The Government has given funding for Local Authority Housing, allowing the District Council to refurbish existing empty Council properties which could be used to re-house Ukrainian families who are homeless. Six homes will go through the scheme.

### **District Council Economic Development Programme**

The District Council has launched an [Invest Epping Forest website](#) to support their Economic Development Programme, which is aimed to assist businesses of all types and sizes aiming to start up in the area. As well as listing the district's major business and industrial parks, the website includes a [business property search](#) showcasing units and sites currently available.

### **Solar Together Essex Registration Deadline Extended**

Over 6,600 Essex residents have so far signed up for Solar Together Essex, a group buying scheme for solar panels and battery storage. By using the buying power of the group, residents can expect a competitive price compared to the open market. This year's applicants will receive an average discount of 32% based on an installation of 12 panels.

Owing to the popularity of this year's scheme, the closing date will be extended until 21 April. [More](#)

### **Energy Bills Support**

If your household was not eligible for the Government's £400 automatic reduction from energy bills because you paid for energy by other methods (e.g. if you are in a park home or care home), you can apply for the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding. [More](#), including how to check your eligibility. The scheme closes on 31 May.

If your household is using alternative fuels, such as heating oil, biomass or Liquefied Petroleum Gas, an Alternative Fuel Payments of £200 is available. Most households will automatically get this but, if not, [you can apply here](#).

## Local News

### Royal Mail deliveries

There are reports that once again mail deliveries are being delayed locally. It is not known exactly why, however be aware of possible delays if you are waiting for urgent mail.



### Barclays Bank Loughton Branch is Closing

Barclays is closing its branch on the High Road on 22 June. This follows the closure of the HSBC branch in 2021.

Barclay's customers should have been advised of the closure directly, and have also issued [this document with their reasons for closure and other ways to bank](#).

### RideLondon-Essex

RideLondon is a bicycle event which returns to Essex and London on Sunday 28 May with riders that are pre-registered riding one of three routes that start in London with two of the routes extending into Essex.

- More on the Essex 60 route that goes out to Epping and Ongar ([detailed map](#))
- More on the Essex 100 route that goes out to Great Dunmow and Braintree ([detailed map](#))

These routes do not pass through Loughton but do go via the Epping New Road which will be closed to traffic. Access in and out of Loughton and surrounding areas will therefore be restricted. Some crossing points will be in place for traffic. More on [road closures](#) and [crossing points](#).



### Visit Epping Forest

The [website for Visit Epping Forest](#) has been relaunched and contains lots of information about the district, for local residents and visitors alike, from [things to do](#), [what's on](#), and more.



## **Test of Emergency Alert on Sunday April 23**

At 3pm a test emergency alert will be sent to phones and tablets in the UK. This will be accompanied by a loud siren-like sound (even if your device is on silent). The siren will stop automatically after ten seconds. A welcome message will stay on screen until you acknowledge it, just like a 'low battery' warning.

[More on emergency alerts](#), [how they work](#), and [frequently asked questions](#).

## ***Health and Wellbeing***

### **Covid Vaccine**

The NHS is encouraging anyone who hasn't had a first or second dose of the Covid vaccine to come forward for them. Book now to make sure you get both jabs before the offer ends for many people on 30 June. [More](#)

### **Assessing Benefits and Risks of Vaccinations in Young People**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has conducted an analysis on vaccine safety in the context of young people for the Covid vaccine for those aged 12-29. [More](#)

### **Accessing Healthcare with a Learning Disability**

Research is being conducted with adults with learning disabilities and their family members/carers/support workers to gather lived experience of how they access primary healthcare (GPs, opticians, dentists etc). The NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board has asked Healthwatch Essex (which is an independent charity) to conduct this research.

[More](#) and [how to contact them](#) to take part.

### **Supporting children and young people managing stress**

Occasionally feeling stressed is completely normal, however feeling stressed all the time isn't and can be harmful to our mental and physical health. Children and young people encounter lots of situations in their lives that may cause them to feel stressed. Supporting your child to develop positive coping mechanisms when they feel like this can help them to manage stress before it escalates.

If you notice your child seems stressed, talk to them and try to come up with ways of managing together. [Find advice, ideas and tips from young people about managing stressful situations](#).

## ***Epping Forest***

### **Waymarked Trails**

Epping Forest has over 284km of paths and untold numbers of other trails across its 8000 acres, along with plenty to see and do. The Forest can be explored following waymarked trails which have signposts, are circular so you can start and end them

anywhere along the trail and start and end conveniently close to public transport, where possible.

The ones near Loughton are [Beech Trail](#) starting/ending at High Beach, or [Golden Hill Trail](#), starting/ending on Goldings Hill.

Venturing further, [here are the other trails](#).



### **Double Your Donation to the Epping Forest Heritage Trust**

Working with volunteers, the [Epping Forest Heritage Trust](#) (EFHT) will carry out hands-on conservation sessions to release at least 50 ancient trees from shade and compacted soil - creating a "Halo" around them. This will increase the tree's lifespan enabling increased biodiversity and protecting and preserving the Forest.

The EFHT Halo project is part of this year's [Big Give Green Match Fund](#). The Big Give will donate £2,500 in match funding if they raise £2,500 to meet their overall goal of £5,000 from 20-27 April. [Donate here](#) (next week).

### **Green Team**

The Epping Forest Green Team is a group of conservation volunteers undertaking practical habitat management work in Epping Forest every Thursday, usually in the Loughton/Woodford/Chingford area.

They welcome new volunteers. [More](#)

## ***And More***

### **Buying Something from Aboard?**

Sometimes consumers can face problems when goods or services have been purchased from outside of the UK as they will not be subject to UK consumer legislation. You can still get assistance from the [UK International Consumer Centre](#) (UKICC) who provide free advice and support to UK consumers who have a problem with a business based in another country.

They can let you know your rights, help determine the best course of action and, possibly, intervene on your behalf – all for free (they never charge fees or commission - and don't sell any products or services).

Contact them by calling 01268 886690 or [online](#). [More](#)

The UKICC is an independent, non-profit organisation - operated by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI), with funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

### **Energy Prepayment Meters - Your Experience**

[Ofgem](#), the energy regulator, are investigating reports of poor supplier practice with installation of pre-payment meters (PPM) and are also reviewing the licence and guidance to consider whether these should be changed to further protect consumers, particularly vulnerable consumers.

If you use a PPM they want to hear about your experience and will use feedback for a review to help them make sure energy suppliers are following the rules, and to take action when this isn't happening. [More](#) and [share your experience here](#) or call 0800 464 3374.

*Thank you for supporting LRA. Our next Loughton News email is due to be issued Friday 5 May although that date could change.*

## **Get more from LRA and keep up with what's happening between issues of Loughton News**

**For all our Tweets, past issues of Loughton News and Loughton Life, and more**



**For the latest news and items of interest:**



*You don't need to be registered for either*

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To update your membership details, email [membership@LoughtonResidents.co.uk](mailto:membership@LoughtonResidents.co.uk)

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