



LRA's Loughton News

26 August 2023

In this issue, read about [grass verges and weeds](#) around town, and how many residents have observed them overgrown and untidy.

In September, dates to remember are the opening of [the new playground at the Roding Valley Recreation Ground](#) on the 1st, the [Loughton Horticultural Show](#) on the 2nd, [Loughton Day](#) on the 16th and the [Epping Forest Big Walk](#) on the 17th.

Also, the [Annual Canvass of electors](#) is happening with letters sent to households. Please check your details so you're all sorted for next year's District Council elections and any other elections that follow.

Lastly, could you help deliver Loughton Life? The Townwide edition comes out in late September and [there are a few roads where we need deliverers](#).

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

Grass Verges and Weed Spraying

Residents may have observed that grass verges around town have become overgrown, and weeds have appeared out of control in recent months.

At a District Council meeting on 25 July, [it was reported](#) (p31) that *"the wet weather experienced early in the season followed by a very warm spell produced some exceptional growth rates. This in turn, created some challenging mowing conditions.*



However, staff worked hard to counter this, and the difficulties experienced early on now appear to be easing".

If you see an areas that is overgrown and needs mowing, [report it to the District Council](#).

Weed spraying is a County Council Highways function which is contracted to the District Council. There are two spray treatments a year across built up areas (which was reduced from three treatments some years ago to cut costs), with the current spraying happening over August to October. [More](#). Report any issues on weed spraying to the [District Council](#) and the [County Council](#).

Given the unusual combination of wet and warm-ish weather in July, plants, may have grown faster than normal at this time of the year. However [we reported two years ago](#) that the same reason was given. It is especially concerning when overgrown weeds start to lift up parts of roads and footpaths, creating a safety risk and eventually needing costly repairs.

Of course, not all weeds (or their location) are bad. The [London Natural History Society have a video](#) which looks at the rare and interesting plants that pop up on London's verges (which no doubt happens in Loughton), with a plea for tolerance.



Loughton Library

The National Jazz Archive, which is based in Loughton Library on the first floor, has been offered use by the County Council of the ground floor area to the left of the entrance, which has been disused for the last five years.

LRA gathers we don't know how long this could be for, but do wonder if this means demolition plans are on hold (which explain the non-presentation of plans to the County Council's Development and Regulation Committee). [Background on our website](#).

Can you help deliver Loughton Life, please?

Very soon LRA's 100 or so volunteers will be delivering our Townwide Loughton Life newsletter to every household in Loughton – we're very grateful for their help.



We now need some more deliverers for:

- Chequers Road
- Bushfields, Lower Alderton Hall Lane including Oakfields
- Swanshope
- Droveaway
- Grasmere Close, St John's Road, The Heights

If you or someone you know can help in these areas, please [email Martine](#).

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.

Davenant Foundation School

This application is for demountable buildings for provision of classrooms/support area.



LRAPG has no objection to a temporary classroom because of the flooding experienced at the school but it considers three years is too long to allow for the repair or replacement of the existing damaged sixth form building. The school has only recently replaced four long-standing demountable buildings on site, so it is disappointing another set of temporary buildings is being sought. This is on Green Belt land and the buildings result in the loss of all-weather courts. The building will also impact on the openness of the Green Belt and therefore should be kept to a minimum period of time because of the harm caused.

LRAPG has therefore asked the council to give the school temporary consent for a maximum period of two years and seek assurances the works to the existing sixth form building will be carried out in this time.

Reference [EPF/1685/23](#). The formal consultation period ended 22 August but you can still comment to the Council.



112-120 Connaught House, High Road

This application proposes external alterations of the building including amendments to the fenestration and introduction of a central lightwell.

LRAPG previously objected to the prior approval application for 18 flats on parking grounds, lack of soundproofing and inadequate light to some of the flats. The Town Council also objected, however District Council officer report said they did not object. LRAPG has asked for an explanation as to why the Town Council objection was misreported in the officer report. They are also concerned none of their objections were covered in the officer report.

LRAPG has reminded the council planning officers it has a legal obligation to ensure officer reports are “accurate and should include the substance of any objections and other responses received to the consultation”. It is not a surprise the applicant has now applied for larger windows for the 18 flats that were approved by officers, seemingly without officers factoring in the lack of proper natural light.

Reference [EPF/1690/23](#). The formal consultation period ends 29 August.

Image: Google

2 The Uplands, Loughton

This was an application to demolish an existing garage structure and replace it with two semi-detached 2-bedroom (3-person) dwellings to rear of the existing house on the site.

The application was refused by the District Council in June 2022. The applicant then appealed the decision to the Planning Inspectorate, who has dismissed the appeal and upheld the original decision. [Read the Appeal Decision](#).

The Standard, 126 High Road

The Standard applied to change the conditions of their premises licence, which was granted. [The details are here](#) (WK/202323195), which includes music now being allowed with a noise limiter at a level agreed in consultation with an authorised Community Resilience Team Officer. The terraced area (roof garden) shall continue to have no use, until appropriate planning permission is in place.

Roads, Parking and Travel

Planned Road Closures

- Connaught Avenue - the road will be closed until 4 September for urgent sink hole and pipe repair by Essex Highways. [More](#)
- High Beech Road - the road will be closed until 2 October for water connection works by Thames Water. [More](#)

- Shaftesbury - the road will be closed from 14 to 16 September for an excavation to recover trunk mains valves and conduct repairs. [More](#). To maintain vehicle access, we assume that either stop/go boards will be used or the emergency gate on Staples Road will be opened.

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



On Street Parking on Bank Holidays

Remember that NEPP wardens now work on Bank Holidays. Unless the sign says that charges don't apply, they do!



ULEZ Expansion - Scrappage Scheme

The [Ultra Low Emission Zone](#) (ULEZ) is being expanded to cover all London boroughs from 29 August. [Here's a map](#) showing where it is being expanded to.

The ULEZ boundary does not cover the borough/county boundary exactly. For instance in Chingford, Station Road, Bury Road and Rangers Road are exempt and so are streets to the west of Station Road. But all streets to its east, and the station itself, will be in the zone. [Here's a detailed map](#).

The [scrappage scheme](#) has been expanded to allow all London residents to apply, whether they are in receipt of benefits or not, however those caught by ULEZ expansion living in Loughton who are unable to afford a new vehicle won't qualify.

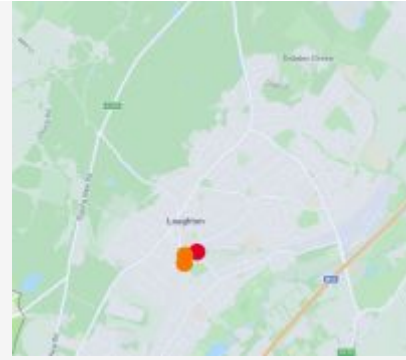
Tube and Rail Industrial Action

There is industrial action on the rail network on 26 August and 1-2 September. [The National Rail website has more details](#).

Police, Fire and Crime

Women's Safety in Public Spaces

Have your say about where you feel safe and unsafe, with a new online map that women and girls can highlight areas they feel safe or unsafe. The map is being rolled out across the county by Essex County Council, Essex Police and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex. The project is supported by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and researchers at Nottingham Trent University. [More](#) and [the map](#)



Quick Check - Is Your Car Locked?

If your vehicle has wing mirrors that fold in automatically when locked, always check they are folded in when locking your car. Electronic devices can be used to jam the electronic signal from your key fob.

It can also highlight to criminals when a vehicle has been left unlocked.

Fake Direct Debit Email

A recent scam was reported with an email received claiming to be from a high street bank saying a new direct debit had been set up. This was not the case. The message looked real but it was a phishing email with links that take you to a website that capture your personal and sensitive information, such as bank details.

If a message makes you suspicious, don't click on it, contact the organisation directly and [report it to Action Fraud](#). [More](#)

Violence and Vulnerability Unit Community Grants

The 2024-2025 V&V Community Grant round is for local 'not-for-profit' voluntary, or community clubs or organisations based in, and therefore delivering in, Essex, Southend and Thurrock only.

Groups can apply for up to £25,000 to deliver support and interventions for children, young people, young adults (aged 0-24 inclusive) and families (families, must include children, young people or young adults aged 0-24). Projects must demonstrate how they have a positive impact through protective factors on issues relating to serious violence.

The closing date for applications is 29 September. [More](#)

More from the Police

[Read more](#) from the police for our local area including other news and crime statistics. The data is updated to June 2023.

Council News

New Childrens Playground Roding Valley Recreation Ground

Construction work has now been completed and the new playground is now open.

The official opening will be at 11am on Friday 1 September. The opening will be an occasion with bunting, balloons, HAGS (the contractor) goodies with soft drinks and biscuits for the children. LRA Cllr David Wixley (Chair of the Town Council Recreation Committee), and possibly HAGS, will say a few words. Town Mayor LRA Cllr Mick Stubbings will then add his own comments and cut the ribbon to officially declare the playground open.



The playground is near the tennis courts and cricket ground at the Recreation Ground ([map](#)). Limited parking is available at the end of Roding Road.



Loughton Horticultural Show

The fourth Loughton Horticultural Show will take place on Saturday 2 September, from 2pm to 4:30pm at the Murray Hall on Borders Lane.

Classes include vegetables, fruit, cut flowers and flower arrangements, jams, preserves, chutneys, and cakes. Children's classes include baking, decorating biscuits/cakes in a Coronation theme, creating the funniest cress head and decorating a plant pot and create an autumnal door wreath.

Entries are welcome from anyone who lives, works or goes to school or college in Loughton; allotmenters, keen gardeners, children and novices are all welcome to compete. [More](#). Here is are PDFs with a [Beginners Guide to the Show](#), [Rules and Regulations](#) and [Entry Forms](#). Forms may also be collected from the Town Council office or Loughton Library, or call 020 8508 4200. Entries must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday 1 September

Free admission and refreshments will be available. Awards will be presented at 4pm followed by the presentation of the Town Mayor's Best Allotment Awards 2023.

Loughton Day

Loughton Day will be on 16 September at the Loughton Cricket Ground. See what Loughton's community groups have to offer. Food, drink, entertainment and much more. Free Admission.

[More](#)

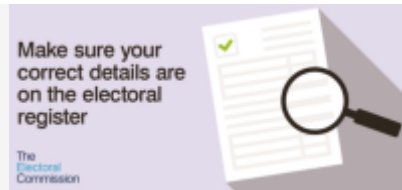


Annual Canvass of Electors

Please don't ignore the letter dropping through letterboxes that confirm those in your household eligible to vote. The next District Council elections are next May, so this

year it's particularly important to make sure your details are correct.

If there are no changes to report, no response is needed. However if you need to make changes, follow the instructions given. It is essential you are registered to vote as it can affect your ability to get a mortgage, loan or even a mobile phone contract.



District Council Tenants - Satisfaction Survey

The District Council is conducting a telephone survey of a sample of its tenants and lessees, and aims to reach over 1,000 tenants and lessees.

Acuity Research & Practice Ltd will be making calls on the Council's behalf, and will only call between 9am-8pm on weekdays and 10am-6pm on Saturdays. The number will display as 01273 093939.

Your response will help the District Council gauge your satisfaction with your home and its services. [More](#)

Electric Vehicle (EV) Chargers

Four new EV chargers have been installed in Ongar, which means there are currently 39 active chargers in Epping Forest District. The District Council has plans for at least another nine public chargers in 2023. [Here is a map](#) of all EV chargers in the UK.

Investing in Epping Forest District

The District Council has created a website to help promote the area to prospective businesses looking for commercial properties. This has general information about the district and opportunities for business support. [More](#)

Local Tourism

The District Council reports that the calendar of local events is back to its pre-pandemic scale, and [Visit Essex](#) reports that the 'staycation' effect continues to bring visitors from the north of the country, and marketing campaigns are targeting the Midlands, Yorkshire and Liverpool.

Areas of concern and opportunity have been identified including problems recruiting and retaining volunteers, interest in developing and promoting green tourism and catering for visitors with disabilities.



Youth Council celebrates 15-year anniversary

The Epping Forest Youth Council marked its 15th Anniversary at the Civic Offices on Thursday 20 July. Youth Cllrs invited their head teachers to attend along with The Red Balloon Foundation, Essex Police, Fire Service, NHS colleagues, and

was funded by the Jack Petchy Foundation which gave a £1,000 Leader Award Grant. [More](#)

Improving Energy Efficiency in Council Homes

The District Council has secured central Government funding to install external wall insulation free of charge to selected Council homes.

Residents whose homes potentially qualify for the scheme will receive a letter from the Council, with homes assessed to see if they qualify for energy efficient improvements to help reduce energy bills and carbon emissions.

The Council will work with E.ON to arrange an internal and external survey of the property. All E.ON and District Council employees will carry identification. Residents should ask to see it before allowing anyone into their home. [More](#)

Local News

Crucial Crew 2023

Crucial Crew is an interactive personal safety and health and wellbeing initiative based around key life skills for Year 6 pupils to prepare them for secondary school, addressing challenges and risks they may encounter in everyday life

Year 6 pupils from six junior schools (including Thomas Willingale and Alderton Junior) attended the pilot day where healthy relationships, road safety, physical activity, positive mental health, online safety and the dangers of nitrous oxide were all discussed. Feedback from pupils was very positive.

Water Leaks on Traps Hill

There have been recurring problems with water leaks on Traps Hill requiring road works.

Following a resident complaint to Thames Water, they advised that recurring problems on Traps Hill are not caused by leaks from their equipment but by the underground flows of water, which undermine their equipment and the road surface and can create potholes. It acknowledged that this was a continuing problem and said that they were trying to work out how to prevent it in future. Given the past history of problems with Thames Water locally, it was unusual to get an informed response.

However their repair has now resulted in a sunken area in the middle of the roadway which vehicles need to avoid, and water is trickling from it down the hill. This has been reported.

Health and Wellbeing



Free Low Impact and Fun Exercises

Social Active Strong is a free 12-week programme of activity to help you build strength, improve your mobility and balance, and help you sustain day-to-day activity levels.

The service is run by Epping Forest District Council, working in conjunction with the West Essex NHS Integrated Care Board, Essex County Council and Active Essex with the same scheme also being offered by Harlow and Uttlesford councils. [More and how to register.](#)

Hidden voices of prisoners and ex-offenders

[Healthwatch Essex](#) has published a new report looking at the experiences of prisoners, prison leavers and ex-offenders. The report explores the specific health, care and wellbeing needs of prison leavers and ex-offenders, including the additional barriers that they face in meeting these needs, the support currently available to them and what improvements are needed to achieve the necessary outcomes, which will in turn produce better long-term outcomes for individuals in this cohort group. [More](#) and [the report](#) (PDF).

Epping Forest

Forest Fire Warning

Please do not start fires in the Forest. If you see smoke or fire out of control, call 999. If you see people using a barbecue or have any concerns about fire in the Forest, call 020 8532 1010, but please always call 999 if an emergency response is required.

Epping Forest Big Walk

The Epping Forest Big Walk will return on 17 September. Last year, over 200 walkers attended. Previously known as the 'Centenary Walk', the route offers a chance to walk the whole length of Epping Forest (14.1 miles, 22.7km) in one day. The Walk starts at Manor Park in East London and finishes at Bell Common near Epping. [More](#)



Habitat Works

Habitat works will be undertaken by contractors until early September in the following areas:

- High Beach, close to General's Ride

- Rushey Plain
- Hill Wood
- Fairmead
- Bury Wood between Fairmead Road and Grimston's Oak Ride.



There will be large machinery at work. The work will be located away from the shared-use trails but the machinery will be moving along the trails intermittently. There may be some work at weekends. For safety reasons, there may be brief, temporary closure of shared-use trails near the work sites.

Rushey Plain car park will be closed for one to two days whilst work is undertaken nearby. You can use Pillow Mounds or Rushey Plain Turnaround car parks.

Artwork inspired by Epping Forest

An art exhibition in the upstairs gallery at the Visitor Centre in Chingford is taking place with wide range of artwork by talented local artists is on display inspired by the theme of Forest Views.

It is open 10am to 5pm Tuesday to Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday, until 3 September.



Forest Focus - August 2023

Some items here come from Forest Focus. The [latest edition](#) has lots more interesting articles. You can [subscribe here for free](#).

Thank you for supporting LRA. Our next Loughton News email is due to be issued Friday 15 September, 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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2. LRA gives no warranty about, and will take no responsibility for, items or services offered – purchasers/users should make their own enquiries, and will be acting at their own risk.

We can be contacted at contact@LoughtonResidents.co.uk

To update your membership details, email membership@LoughtonResidents.co.uk

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