



LRA's Loughton News

29 November 2024

In this issue, with the weather turning colder, we give [an update on the missing grit bins in town](#), remind you of [winter driving advice](#) and how to [prepare for power cuts](#).

Earlier in November was [Remembrance Sunday](#), and tomorrow is [Light Up a Life at Kings Green](#).

The Town Council is running their annual [Christmas Window competition](#) and [Building Design Awards](#). Also the [Loughton Wombles](#) have also been out and about recently.

Fraudsters latest scams involve [fake QR codes](#) at car parks and [impersonating those in authority](#), so watch out for those.

In the next news email there will be LRA's annual Christmas Quiz, which will also be in your Loughton Life members edition arriving soon in your letterbox (if it hasn't already).

Thank you for being part of LRA. You can contact us by emailing contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk to raise an issue, give your views, or offer help.

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LRA News

The Broadway Refurbishment

Work is to start in the New Year to avoid disruption during the Christmas period, with scaffolding to go up from 20 January. The contract hasn't been finalised so some details are not yet available.

The Project Manager for the works is attending the Loughton Broadway Town Centre

Partnership meetings. The next meeting is on 9 January at 6.15pm in the Barrington Community Hall, 7 Barrington Close should any interested party wish to attend.



Image: Google

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.



Debden Hall, England's Lane

This application proposes the erection of a dwellinghouse and associated works to provide access, parking, and landscaping. This also includes refurbishment and repair of Grade II listed gates and piers.

Whilst LRAPG are very disappointed planning permission was granted for a dwelling on this site within the protected Green Belt, the previous consent was for a passable copy of an 1820 house, putting back what was there and maintaining the heritage value. The current plans are for a larger dwelling that bears no resemblance to the historic past. The proposed design is too large and the top floor will be visible, particularly in the winter and evenings when the large glazed areas are illuminated. LRAPG consider the top “carbuncle” in particular devalues the design and this floor should be omitted.

Reference [EPF/0757/24](#). The formal consultation period ends 16 December.

Land and Garages on Avondale Close

This application proposes the erection of new flats on the north side of Avondale Close.

LRAPG consider this is an improvement on the previous scheme, but there still is an absence of any evidence about the use of the garages and the LRAPG object to their loss. These are/were an amenity for neighbours for storage. The applicant should provide details over who uses the garages and where they will go if their agreements are terminated. The dwellings are still too large and should match the bulk and height of those next door for continuity purposes and reduce the impact on the neighbours on Avondale Drive.



LRAPG have also asked the windows that overlook Avondale Drive should be conditioned to be obscure glazed and fixed shut and the permitted development rights for the two dwellings should be removed.

Reference [EPF/2294/24](#). The formal consultation period ends 10 December.

Roads, Parking and Travel

Planned Road Closures

- Roding Road - the road will be closed south of Oakwood Hill between 10am to 3pm for carriageway patching on 2 December. The work may be completed on the same day however could take up to 5 days. [More](#)

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



Grit for Your Road and Pavements

Over a year ago, the County Council removed salts bins without notification. Loughton is not a typical Essex town in terms of geography and has seven steep hills, which are treacherous during the inevitable cold snaps and big freezes during winter.

The Town Council has been vigorously lobbying the County Council to replace the salt bins without getting a response.

Unfortunately the Town Council do not have the equipment or staff resources to facilitate gritting for a town the size of Loughton, and is not responsible for pavements/highways. The County Council only grit [these roads](#).

The Town Council get a delivery of a limited amount of salt and grit from the County Council each year, and maintain an existing group of volunteers to help clear snow and spread salt/grit on the pavement and road outside their homes to keep access routes open, particularly in the hillier parts of Loughton. If you would like to help please contact Debbie at the Town Council at contact@loughton-tc.gov.uk or call 020 8508 4200. The existing group of volunteers will be contacted directly to arrange collection of their salt/grit supplies for the coming winter.

You can also purchase bags of grit at DIY stores or online for less than £20, which should last more than one winter.

Free Off-Street Parking

Weekend parking is free in District Council-run [off-street car parks](#) at the weekends throughout December. [More](#)

When using on-street parking bays on Bank Holidays, remember that NEPP wardens now work on Bank Holidays. Unless the sign says that charges don't apply, they do!



Winter on the Roads

Essex Highways gritters have started [gritting the roads](#) to keep them safe. Motorists also need to be prepared for driving in colder and icy conditions so [here is some winter driving advice](#).



Better Buses Report

[London Travelwatch](#) has published an in-depth report into London's buses, including a range of recommendations to improve services. [More](#)

Christmas and New Year Travel Updates

Train operators are starting to publish details of closures and engineering works over the festive season. Updates are currently published by [Transport for London](#), [National Rail](#) and [London Travelwatch](#).

Police, Fire and Crime



Intelligence and the Criminal Behaviour Order

Sergeant Jamie Shepherd of the police's Town Centre Team gives an insight into the way the police use intelligence and Criminal Behaviour Order in [Dispatch](#). "As per the national retail crime plan, theft and retail-based offending has increased in the past year. To tackle this my team have been putting in extra work to identify and bring to justice the offenders. To identify more

suspects, we have been working with retailers who use a system called Auroa. This is a database that allows businesses to report thefts and upload pictures nationally and link offending between stores. Police can review these images and use them to search our facial recognition system and we often can identify prolific offenders who commit thefts on a regional level. Building the intelligence picture is key in tackling this type of offending as suspects often cross policing borders to commit crimes.

Second to this is the use of the Criminal Behaviour Order. You may have heard of an ASBO however this is now known as the Criminal Behaviour Order. The power comes from Part 11, Chapter 1 of the Sentencing Act 2020. Criminal behaviour orders are civil orders that police apply for on behalf of victims. The purpose is to impose conditions on offenders to reduce harassment, alarm, and distress on victims. This is used in context of retail crime to prevent offenders from attending certain locations prolifically used by them to steal. Criminal behaviour orders can be imposed for a maximum of 5 years. Breaching the order is a separate offence and therefore allows for tougher sentences."

Fake QR Codes at Car Parks

Fraudsters have been adding fake QR codes to car parking signs. When these are scanned by your phone, you are directed to a fake website which will ask for your details and can fraudulently take your money.

QR codes on car park signs can be convenient however if you are uncertain, pay by cash (if available), card or via an official app downloaded from your smartphone's app store.

School Speedwatch Pupils Stop 19 Speeding Drivers

Thanks to the pupils from Alderton Junior School, Roads Policing Unit officers stopped 19 drivers who were speeding in the vicinity of their school.

The year 6 pupils identified speeding motorists at their Oakwood Hill site and alerted the Roads Policing officers, who stopped speeding motorists taking part in the morning school run and workers on their commute. [More](#)

Police and Crime Plan, and Fire and Rescue Plan

Reducing crime by a further 40 per cent over the next four years and more prevention work to reduce fires and road deaths are challenges contained for Essex's [Police and Crime Plan](#) and [Fire and Rescue Plan](#) (PDF) for 2024-2028. [More](#)

Impersonation Scams

Fraudsters are impersonating employees of banks, the police or other official organisations. This could be a fake ad on social media, someone pretending to be from your bank on the telephone, or even scammers talking to you via live video platforms. Key signs to watch out for:

- You're asked to move money from an ISA or savings account, 'for your security or safety' or to help the bank look into an 'internal matter'.
- You're told that someone would like to visit your property to collect your debit/credit card.

- You feel pressured into making a quick decision, for example if the caller states the offer is 'only available right now' or 'don't miss out'.
- The company wants to do everything for you, particularly around cryptocurrency.
- You're approached by phone, email, text message or by someone calling at your house out of the blue.
- The 'company' contacting you won't allow you to call back.
- The only contact you're given is a mobile phone number or a PO box address.
- You're asked to buy gold or goods online, for someone to collect and 'keep safe'.

If you have any doubts, don't volunteer any personal information or make a quick decision. Contact the relevant organisations directly using a trusted phone number to confirm what you have been told.

Anyone can become a victim of an impersonation scam, so stay vigilant and remember that ***it's ok to question who you're speaking with.***

Aggressive or Out of Control Animals

Some owners of animals, particularly dogs, train them to be aggressive and threaten other people. This could either be while they are walking the animal or by leaving it tied up somewhere public. If a vulnerable person or animal strayed into its reach or the animal got loose, this could represent a serious danger to people.

Some animals are bred and trained to take part in illegal activities such as dog fights, hare coursing and badger baiting. Not only can this harm the animal in question, it often leads to other animals being persecuted, abused, injured and killed for sport. Like all forms of violence, if left unchecked this situation could get worse. More people would buy and raise aggressive animals so as not to be intimidated by other people's. Not only would this make for more intimidating and less safe communities it would mean a huge increase in the numbers of abused and tormented animals.

If you've witnessed an aggressive or out of control animal, an owner using an animal to intimidate people, or you know someone who is using animals in illegal activities such as dog fighting, report anti-social behaviour to the police [online](#) or call 101. As always, if anyone seriously injured or is there immediate danger to someone call 999.



More from the Police

[Read more](#) from the police for our local area including other news and crime statistics. The data is updated to September 2024.

Some items we report on come from the Dispatch Newsletter from Essex Police. You can [subscribe here for free](#) (choose the Epping Forest edition)

Council News

Light Up a Life



For many people, Christmas begins with the annual “Light up a Life” ceremony at Kings Green, just off the High Road. The Town Council, in partnership with St Clare Hospice, invites local residents to come together with their friends and family to remember and celebrate the life of someone close and dedicate a symbolic light in their memory.

The annual Light up a Life service takes place on Saturday 30 November. Meet at the Methodist Church on the High Road from 4:30pm for the torch lit procession to Kings Green followed by the switching on of the lights. [More](#)

This Light up a Life event gives people a very special opportunity to reflect and share fond memories of loved ones at this poignant time of year. There will be an opportunity to sing some favourite carols and, following the short service, hot drinks and mince pies will be served back at the Methodist Church.

Everyone is welcome to attend, all faiths and none, whether you have experienced St Clare’s care or not, and no matter how long ago your loss was.

Remembrance Sunday

Hundreds of local residents joined the annual parade, leaving the Royal British Legion Headquarters (Loughton Branch) at Church Hill. The procession included representatives from The Royal British Legion, Churches Together in Loughton, the Air Cadets, Scouts, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows together with ex-service men and councillors. [More \(with photos\)](#).



10 NOVEMBER 2024

"We will remember them"



Christmas Window Competition

The Town Council has invited all Loughton businesses to decorate their shop windows in a Christmas themed design for automatic entry to this special Christmas competition. Window decorations must be completed for when the judging commences on 2 December. [More \(PDF\)](#)

Christmas Giving Campaign

The campaign aims to ensure that no child, living in the district, goes without receiving a Christmas present. Gifts will be provided for identified children living in care, temporary accommodation and in personal circumstances or conditions that might deny them the kindness that other children experience this time of year. [More and how to donate](#).



The Wombles Go Around Loughton

The Loughton Wombles teamed up on 27 October with two teams; the first one led by Town Clerk Mark Squire met outside Staples Road school and tackled the litter in the surrounding roads near to the forest; the second group led by Independent Cllr Stephen Murray cleared the housing greens around Rectory Lane Health Centre and



Westall Road. [More](#)

Waste and Recycling Collections

Waste and Recycling collections, along with street cleaning, are now provided by a Council-owned company called Terra Verde Services (TVS). Provision and maintenance of a new fleet of waste and recycling vehicles is provided by Specialist Fleet Services Ltd (SFS), who has responsibility for the maintenance of the fleet which takes place at the Council's new environmental operations hub at North Weald Airfield.

TVS took over the service from Biffa in early November. We are not aware of any disruptions to the service, and the Council has reported that there were practically no technical glitches, any significant missed collections or additional calls to the Council's Customer Services Contact Centre. [More](#)

High Street Shopping

The District Council has published research data on visitors to local high streets since 2019. The data shows that almost five years since the start of the pandemic, research shows average visitor numbers to high streets across the district have recovered and are now above the 2019 figures. [More](#)

This is positive news, although such numbers need to be considered in context alongside other metrics, such as shop sales income and costs. A high street has many shops and not all would benefit from increased footfall. The closure of several shops on The Broadway demonstrate the difficulties local retailers face. The dip in visitor numbers on the High Road in 2023 may be reflective of The Last Post closing, and various Council-owned premises remaining vacant for extended periods.

Building Design Awards

The Town Council's is asking for nominations for this year's annual awards to celebrate good design and give public recognition to recent local building projects in Loughton that make a positive contribution to the local environment. The Town Council continually seeks to protect and enhance our town and reward those individual examples of good design and construction and/or sympathetic restoration.

The closing date for nominations is Friday 31 January 2025. [More](#) (PDF) and [Nomination Forms](#).

Oakwood Hill Estate Community Safety Day of Action

On 23 October, local residents took part in a Community Safety Day of Action, which is a vital initiative designed to promote safety awareness and facilitate engagement



with local blue light services. The event saw a range of activities and support for residents, including:

- A crime prevention stall, where 12 community members received direct advice and materials
- Proactive police patrols, which led to the interception of a moped that fled the scene; authorities are currently working to recover the stolen bike
- Environmental enforcement patrols where officers spoke with 11 members of the public throughout the estate
- Investigations into 3 instances of fly-tipping on Highwood Lane
- Educational outreach to 9 groups of dog walkers about the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)
- The reinstatement of Crime Stoppers zone signs throughout the area
- Comprehensive graffiti removal across the estate
- Cleaning and maintenance of signage to enhance community aesthetics
- Door-to-door engagement with over 80 properties, where residents received advice and informational leaflets

[More](#)

Oakwood Hill Estate Community Work

The District Council has recently been facilitating community work at the Oakwood Hill Estate, with the appointment of Community Champion Claire Silver. Recent activity has included:

- An after-school club
- Funding for six people to gain child minding qualifications
- A residents' Facebook page, yoga sessions and a Christmas meal and summer barbecue planned
- Female Entrepreneurship programme
- Foodbank collection point in conjunction with Restore
- Ladies Dance and Dine programme for fifteen residents
- Let's Get Together social group
- Mindful Arts Space for mental health support and advice
- Movement of the Mind in January 2025 for six mental health service users
- Funding for Safer Street aimed at both primary and secondary school age groups
- Creative Youth Club including music, art, podcasting etc with mentorship from Students at New City College.

Think Loughton - Latest Edition

[The latest edition from the Town Council is online,](#) in case you missed it arriving in your letterbox.





What's On

The District Council has published details of all activities, events, exhibitions and workshops from the Community Development and Wellbeing team. There's something for everyone, from meeting new people and learning a new skill at Let's Get Together to keeping active with walking

football. [More](#) (PDF)

County Council Budget - Have Your Say

The County Council want to know what residents think should be prioritised in their 2025/26 budget and they want to hear views on:

the big issues they face and the challenges that lie ahead for Essex.
the things that concern you and your family; and
where they should focus resources as they work to improve lives across our county.

Next year, the County Council will spend over £2bn. This will include funding for essential services and investment in our county's infrastructure for future growth. They have to make choices about where we spend, and where to make savings.

[More](#). The consultation closes 9 December.

Local News

Local Library Events

[You can see upcoming events at Loughton and Debden libraries here.](#) These include Toddler Toy times, sensory stay and play for babies, and:

- 30 November and 7, 14 and 21 December - drop in to make some Christmas crafts. [More](#)
- 18 December - dementia information drop-in sessions to find out more about dementia in an informal setting. [More](#)



More about the libraries at [Loughton](#) and [Debden](#).



Coffee with Cllrs

Local residents had chance to meet LRA Cllrs Rose Brookes and Barbara Cohen at the IG9 Cafe in Lower Queens Road in November. LRA Cllrs David Wixley and Ian Allgood were also on hand during these surgeries.



Warm Places

Warm places started in 2022 to provide a free, safe, warm and comfortable space for those who need it throughout winter. Their success continued to offer a welcoming space throughout the spring and summer months for residents to meet old friends and make new ones, play games and get access to different services.

Local Warm Places are at Debden and Loughton libraries, Epping Forest College Campus, Oakwood Hill Community Hub and St Mary's Church. [More](#)



Leisure Centre News

LRA Cllr Rose Brookes represents LRA on Loughton Leisure Centre's Partnership Board and reports that members of the Board were given the chance to see the new Epping Leisure Centre. Air source heat pumps will be used to heat the Epping pool and building. It is hoped that some families will transfer to swimming lessons in Epping thus reducing cars travelling through the Forest to Loughton or Waltham Abbey.

Loughton Leisure Centre's new boilers will be fitted in January.

Movies Back on the High Road

The [Hobo Club](#) at 191 High Road (was HSBC) is a private members club but the cinema shows movies and is open to both members and non-members over the age of 18. [More](#)

Health and Wellbeing

Illness Symptoms and What to Do

At this time of year, there is an increase in illness. The [Healthier Together website](#) advises on common symptoms for a number of childhood conditions and what steps you should take to treat them at home, and when to seek further help.

Whipps Cross Hospital Development



With the Government reviewing the national New Hospital Programme, it is not yet certain how or when the redevelopment of Whipps Cross hospital will take place.

The pressure group Action4Whipps, consisting of patients, local residents, staff and other NHS personnel in the area, has set up a petition to the two area Labour MPs to ask them ensure sufficient funding is secured for bed numbers, the Margaret Centre and other facilities. [More](#)

Epping Forest

Forest Focus - November 2024

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



Bell Heather is Back

It's been over 50 years since bell heather (*erica cinerea*) last brightened the Forest heathland. Thanks to a joint effort by the City of London Corporation and Essex Wildlife Trust, this rare plant is finally making a comeback.

Bell heather, with its vibrant purple flowers, thrives in dry, sandy soils that are scarce in Essex and London. Tiptree Heath, a small nature reserve, is the only place in Essex where all three species of heather survived. Now, seven carefully nurtured plants have been reintroduced to Epping Forest. If successful they may take root allowing other heathland habitats in the Forest to once more benefit from their early flowering. More in [Forest Focus](#).

Lifting Your Mood in the Forest

Research shows that time spent in natural environments promotes generosity and cooperation. These benefits arise from nature's ability to reduce stress and evoke positive emotions, creating a sense of connection and well-being. [A study published in the Journal of Environmental Psychology](#), found that simply spending time in green spaces makes people more likely to show kindness and community-mindedness. With its ancient trees and serene landscapes, Epping Forest provides the perfect backdrop for this psychological boost.



Voices of Epping Forest

Many people in the UK struggle to access nature. *Voices of Epping Forest* is a podcast that doesn't shy away from the visible and invisible barriers many people face when getting into the outdoors. The podcast also celebrates the diversity of those who visit the Forest.

Community voices are at the heart of this podcast—these are the people broadening nature access for everyone. [More](#)

Hands-on Conservation Volunteering: Upcoming Dates

Carry out hands-on work to help improve the Forest's biodiversity. You will be led by a Conservation Officers and tasks may include coppicing young trees/dense holly to allow more light onto the Forest floor, opening up precious grassland, and creating habitat piles for small animals and reptiles. Tools and training will be provided on the day. There are 5 upcoming dates in December. [More](#)

Epping Forest Calendars

Calendars for 2025 featuring photos from local photographers are now on sale for £25. Profits will be donated to charities including Epping Forest Heritage Trust, The Swan Sanctuary, and Epping Forest. They can be purchased from the Visitor Centres at Chingford and High Beach.

At the Visitor Centre at Chingford on 8 and 21 December between 2-4pm, there will be festive cheer with music from The Epping Forest Singers & the Rose and Crown Singers.

And More

Prepare for Power Cuts

Power cuts can happen occasionally for a variety of reasons, including severe weather. UK Power Networks' job is to maintain a safe and reliable supply of electricity in London, the South-East and East of England. This means they keep the lights on in your area, regardless of who you pay your electricity bills to.

[Power cuts are reported here](#), and you can [register to receive alerts](#) for future power cuts in the area, along with advice on what to do in a power cut. [Here's some advice from Citizens Advice](#) on how to prepare for a power cut.

During power cuts, extra support is provided by being on the Priority Services Register, which is available to those in vulnerable circumstances including for medical reasons, those aged over 65, or if you have children aged under five in the household. This extra support includes a priority phone number to call, and tailored support if needed such as home visits, hot meals, advice and keeping your friends and relatives updated. [More](#)

If you are already on the Priority Services Register but your details have changed, [update your details here](#).

Product Safety and Recalls

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) now provides comprehensive data for current safety alerts and recalls. You can search on product category and risk level. [More](#)

Help the Hedgehogs

The National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme needs help identifying animals which have been caught in camera images, as part of surveys carried out to understand how to better help hedgehogs. [More about getting spotting](#)

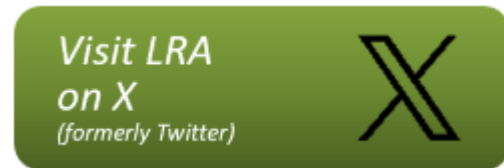
Thank you for supporting LRA.

These regular news emails are issued every 3-4 weeks, with some news special emails issued from time to time. The next news email is planned to be issued on Friday 20 December.

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



All our past issues of Loughton News emails, Loughton Life, and more



The latest news and items of interest. You don't need to be registered for either

1. If you find any links not working or anything else is wrong let us know at loughtonnews@LoughtonResidents.co.uk. Links to other websites are beyond our control and may not work over time.
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.

To contact us, email contact@LoughtonResidents.co.uk

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

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