



## LRA's Loughton News

3 November 2023

In this issue comes the news that plans for the demolition of Loughton Library and replacement with a smaller library with flats have been [approved by the County Council's heavily Conservative Development Committee](#)

The [Town Council's Playing Fields have received awards](#), and consultations are open for a [Public Spaces Protection Order for The Broadway](#), [Dog Control in public spaces](#) and [parking guidance for new developments](#)

Plans are afoot for [a Men's/Community Shed](#) with an open meeting to discuss it.

In the Forest, watch out for deer during the rutting season, and over this weekend with fireworks about, take care with both [humans and animals](#).

Of course, [Sunday 12 November is Remembrance Day](#), with Church Hill closed to traffic from 11:50am for the parade and a traditional service on Kings Green.

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.

### News Sections

[LRA News](#)

[Planning and Licensing](#)

[Roads, Parking and Travel](#)

[Police, Fire and Crime](#)

[Council News](#)

[Local News](#)

[Epping Forest](#)

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## LRA News



### Demolition of Loughton Library Approved by the County Council

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

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

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

[Background on our website](#) and [this news article](#).

### **Sometimes LRA Cllrs Can Unblock Procedural Mazes**

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

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

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

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

### **Essex County Council Consultation on Parking Provision Guidance**

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

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

[More](#), including the consultation documents, and you can [have your say here](#). The consultation is open until 4 December.

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

### **Black History Month Event with Essex Police**

LRA Cllr Chidi Nweke recently attended a Black History Month event organised by Essex Police. A growing number of officers identify as black and diversity and inclusion are a top priority, and Essex Police now has one of the lowest rates of stop

and search of black individuals compared to white individuals in the entire country.

During the event, Chief Constable BJ Harrington passionately expressed his dedication to working hard for diversity and equality in the county, and recalled the historical significance of the first black officer joining the police force in 1805. It is this rich history that he says propels Essex Police forward in their mission to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.



Chair of the Independent Advisory Group (IAG), Lisa Leonce, shed light on the racial barriers faced by black individuals in education. She observed how career advisors often limit options for black students, steering them away from their true aspirations.

Superintendent Stuart Weaver, the Area Commander for the North Local Policing Area, emphasized the importance of building strong relationships with the community. By actively listening to feedback from IAGs and through body-worn camera reviews, Essex Police say they are enhancing transparency and community confidence. Moreover, with 62 hate reporting centres set up across the county, the police have said they are determined to ensure that every individual feels safe and valued.

Chidi has commented that he felt this event truly showcased Essex Police's dedication to valuing differences and embracing diversity, and felt privileged to have witnessed their commitment first-hand, so continues to support their mission in creating a more inclusive society.



### Delivering Loughton Life

Our team of 100 or so deliverers continue to deliver *LRA's Loughton Life* 4-5 times each year. Some volunteers aren't able to continue due to ill health or moving away, so we're looking for more volunteers to help.

A usual round of deliveries can quite often be near you and only take a hour or so.

If you or someone you know can help in these areas, please [email Martine](#). Volunteers to just fill the occasional delivery gap that arises from time to time would also be welcome.

### Bright Lights on The Broadway

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



The event is on Wednesday 29 November, starting at 2pm. The Broadway will not be closed for the event so lots of stewards will be needed. Special arrangements have

been made for free parking in the Vere Road car park from 2pm. If you are able to help on the day, or donate or wrap presents, please [email LRA Cllr Rose Brookes](#).

## ***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.

### **More planning changes**

The Levelling Up Bill has now passed through Parliament and received Royal Assent and with it, a raft of planning changes. The main changes that will impact Epping Forest district include:

- The District Council will be required to have a design code in place covering the entire area. All new housing will be assessed against this design code so LRA Plans Group will be keen to input into whatever the officers draft.
- The current section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) regimes will be replaced with a new Infrastructure Levy.
- The biggest concern is the introduction of New National Development Management Policies which will trump the council's own planning policies. LRAPG is concerned nationally set policies (such as parking) will not factor in the unique local circumstances that exist in Loughton, particularly the Forest.
- The District Council will have the power to instigate auctions to take leases on vacant high street properties.

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

### **Planned Road Closures**

- Church Hill - the road will be closed on Sunday 12 November between 11:50am and 1pm for the Remembrance Parade.
- The Broadway - the road will be closed from 3 to 16 November between 8pm and 5am for carriageway resurfacing. [More](#)
- Smarts Lane - the road will be closed from 6 to 8 November for pot hole repairs by Essex Highways. [More](#)
- Traps Hill - the road will be closed from 15 to 17 November between 9:30am to 3pm for carriageway patching works by Essex Highways. [More](#)
- Warren Hill - the road will be closed from 20 to 24 November for CCTV and minor drainage repair works by the County Council. [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**

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

### **The Gritters Are Coming**

With the cold weather getting nearer, the County Council's winter service for gritting roads has resumed. [More](#) and [track the gritters here](#).

### **Preparing for the Wetter Weather**

In anticipation of wetter weather over the autumn and winter, the highways team has been preparing for more calls and incidents relating to flooding. Essex Highways crews have been out on the network through the spring and summer clearing gullies. Teams have also been grass cutting and weed spraying to prevent overgrown vegetation from blocking the highway and causing flooding.

Many local floods are preventable if landowners keep on top of ditch and hedge maintenance, so Essex Highways is urging landowners to clear ditches and trim back hedges that are close or next to the county's network of roads and pavements.

Examples of works that should be carried out by landowners include:

- cutting back overhanging branches, which reduce the width of or block the view of the road
- cutting back overhanging branches that reduce the height or clearance of the road for tall vehicles such as double decker school buses
- removing or trimming a damaged or diseased tree that is in danger of falling onto the road or pavement
- trimming overgrown hedges obscuring road signs or streetlights
- clearing any ditches located on private land to avoid any flooding during periods of heavy rain

[More](#)

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

### **Recent Policing Locally**

In Epping Forest district in September, the police reported that they:

- helped to find 34 people who were reported missing and helped them to get the support they needed.
- responded to 28 mental-health related incidents and worked with local partners to help those concerned get the help and support they needed.
- investigated 100 reports of antisocial behaviour having listened to local communities about the things which were causing them concern.
- attended 44 road traffic collisions, helping to keep those involved safe and our roads moving.

- investigated 184 reports of domestic violence incidents and made sure victims were given help, support, and advice, putting them in contact with relevant organisations where appropriate.
- solved 86 crimes, ensuring those intent on committing crime are held accountable for their actions.
- submitted 288 pieces of intelligence which assists us in targeting criminal activity in our community.
- stopped and searched 44 people to make sure they weren't carrying anything which could cause harm to themselves or someone else.



### **WhatsApp Scam Targeting Community and Religious Groups**

The fraud often begins when a member of the group receives a WhatsApp audio call from the fraudster, pretending, or claiming, to be a member of the group. The scammer then proceeds to gain trust and eventually tricks you into gaining control over your WhatsApp account. The scammer will then impersonate you and message other members of the group, or your friends and family, asking them to transfer money urgently as they are in desperate need of help. [More](#)

Scammers are clever. Protect yourself and never share your account's two-factor authentication (2FA) code (that's the six digit code you receive via text message), and set up two-step verification to give an extra layer of protection to your account.

### **Fraudulent £30-a-month 'Savings' Sites**

People searching for loans online are unknowingly signing up for £30 a month subscriptions to websites they've never heard of. These websites claim to offer daily discount codes, exclusive deals, cashback, and assistance with rebuilding bad credit.

Commonly, those affected had previously been asked to approve a charge of 12p or 14p to 'verify' their bank account when using a loan broker website. Later, they've noticed a recurring payment coming out of their account. It is likely the fraud happens by opting in to a service (or failing to untick one) when searching for a loan. [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 August 2023.

## **Council News**

### **Five Gold Certificates for our Playing Fields**

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

### **Electric Vehicle Usage**

The District Council [report](#) (p7) that Electric Vehicle (EV) usage in the district continues to grow:

- At the end of March 2023, the district has the second largest number of plug-in cars (2,643 out of 71,500), including petrol/battery hybrids, in Essex, and the largest number of battery EVs in Essex (1,756).
- At end of June 2023, the number of rapid chargers (50 kWh+) in the district doubled to 22 compared with the last quarter of 2022, with 6 of these being Instavolt chargers in District Council car parks.

### **Have Your Say - The Broadway Public Spaces Protection Order**

The District Council is proposing to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), which will give Council officers more authority to deal with anti-social behaviour quickly and effectively.

[More](#), and you can [have your say here](#). The consultation is open until 20 November.

### **Have Your Say - Dog Control in Public Spaces**

The District Council proposing to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for dog control, making it an offence for a person in charge of a dog to:

- Fail to remove dog faeces deposited on any publicly accessible land within the district.
- Fail to put a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer, on any publicly accessible land within the district.
- Fail to limit the number of dogs which a person may take onto publicly accessible land within the district to four dogs.
- Fail to produce a receptacle (i.e. dog poo bags) for picking up dog faeces when requested to do so by an authorised officer, while walking any dog on any publicly accessible land within the district.
- Fail to exclude a dog from specified fenced areas within the district.

[More](#), and you can [have your say here](#). The consultation is open until 20 November.

### **What's On in Epping Forest?**

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 keeping active with walking football and Museum Movers. [More](#) (PDF)



## Roding Valley Recreation Ground Playground

With the children's playground now open, an issue was reported to the Town Council of a severely disabled child needing a harness for the roundabout to allow the child safe use of this equipment. It has been agreed that a harness would be purchased and made available for this family and an accompanying notice would be displayed advising anyone affected by this to contact the Town Council.

## River Way Garages/Brick Wall

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

## Willingale Road Nature Reserve

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

## Fraudsters Prosecuted

An investigation led by Essex Trading Standards into the mis-selling of energy saving products to vulnerable victims has resulted in seven convictions.

The victims were persuaded to buy supposed energy saving products and devices through four companies by mis-selling techniques. None of the companies traded for very long with the period over which the mis-selling occurred being just 19 and a half months. [More](#)

## Tree Felling Prosecutions

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



## Essex Explorer

The County Council produced Essex Explorer magazine, with the best of Essex's parks, historical places, and what's on each season. [The Autumn edition is out now.](#)



## Local News

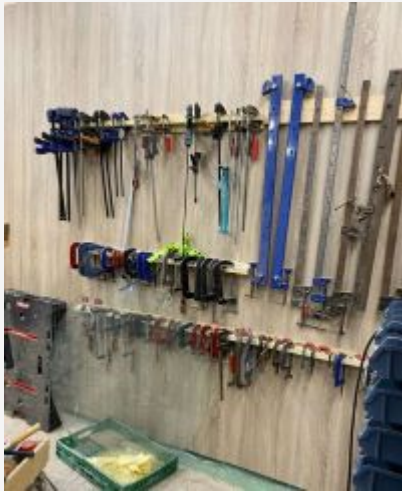
Remembrance  
Sunday  
12th November 2023



### Remembrance Sunday

There will be a traditional remembrance service at the War Memorial on Kings Green on 12 November.

The uniformed parade will leave the Royal British Legion on Church Hill at 11:50am to march down to Kings Green with the service at 12:15pm. [More](#)



### Loughton Men's/Community Shed - Open Day

Planning is underway to open a Men's or Community Shed locally.

What exactly is a Men's/Community Shed, you may wonder? This is a place where men/women and all members of our town from all walks of life can come together to socialize, learn new skills, and support one another. It's a hub for fostering friendship, sharing knowledge, and creating a positive impact within our community.

To start things off, a special community open day is being held to gather support and seek valuable input from residents. During the open day, a comprehensive overview of the Men's/Community Shed initiative and its potential benefits for Loughton will be provided. Your voice matters, and this is your opportunity to share your ideas, insights, and suggestions, helping shape the direction of the project.

This will be held at the Oakwood Hill Community Hall, IG0 3NB ([map](#)) on Wednesday 15 November from 4pm to 6pm. Tea or coffee and biscuits are provided.

Whether you are a resident who may benefit directly from such a space, or just someone passionate about creating a strong, supportive community, your attendance will be very welcome.

If you have any questions or would like more information prior to the open day phone LRA Cllrs Chidi Nweke on 07403 489455 or Ian Allgood on 07971 184182.

## Epping Forest

### Deer Fallow Rut

In the autumn fallow does come into season. From late September through to early November the bucks move into traditional rutting 'stands' where they make muddy wallows by scraping the ground and urinating on it. They then roll in their wallows to gain the distinctive and powerful odour of a rutting buck in its prime, which, together with their loud belching groans, serve to attract does and overawe younger males. Challenges for the rutting stands are met in a battle of clashing antlers.

There is increased movement of deer during the rut as bucks that are unable to maintain and defend a rutting stand move around seeking out receptive does. They become bolder, losing some of their usual shyness which can make them more vulnerable when crossing roads.

During the deer rut, please be extra vigilant driving on roads around the Forest as there will be increased movement of deer, particularly early morning or early evening. Please be reminded that our roads dissect the deer's woodland home, so it is our responsibility to drive appropriately for the safety of both the deer and ourselves.

[From Forest Focus](#)

### **Radical Landscapes - Exhibition**

This exhibition explores - through 200 years of popular prints and images - the shifting balance of power and control over the land now known as Epping Forest. From royal hunting ground to quiet paradise of green space for recreation and wildlife, the survival of its ancient pollarded trees appears to confirm continuity. But what's a Forest for? And who determines who has access to its resources? Such questions have inspired lawyers and artists, protestors and philanthropists and prompted new and radical thinking about what is to be valued in a shared landscape.

The exhibition is on at the Epping Forest Visitor Centre in Chingford until 31 March 2024. Entry is free.

### **Forest Focus - October 2023**

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



## ***And More***

### **Know your labels and make your food last longer**

Food labels can be confusing and lead to worry about food safety. To avoid the risk of throwing away good food make sure you check the label:

- **Best Before** labels refer to food quality. Your food will be at its best before the date given, but it will still be safe to eat after the date has passed.
- **Use By** labels refer to food safety. You must not eat food after this date has passed, even if it looks and smells fine.

[More](#)

### **Care with Fireworks**

With November 5th approaching, fireworks can be great fun for families, but many people get injured and many animals find fireworks scary.

Here are some [helpful tips for humans](#), and [helpful tips for animals](#). Going to an organised event will be safer for both humans and animals.

Thank you for supporting LRA. Our next Loughton News email is due to be issued Friday 24 November, 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



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