



# LRA's Loughton News

24 March 2023

In this issue we report on that the [Local Plan has now been adopted](#) by the District Council after a 7-year long tortuous process.

Also [boundaries to the district's electoral wards](#) are changing from next year, with changes to Roding Ward that LRA does not agree with.

Residents may have noticed street lights have been changed recently - [here's why](#). Also a [new town centre police team](#) has been formed.

For the Coronation in May, watch out for the [bunting in The Broadway and High Road](#) that the Town Council is arranging. And at the recent Annual Town Meeting, the [Citizenship Award](#) and [Building Design Awards](#) were presented.

Don't forget the clocks go forward by one hour this Sunday and, with Easter approaching, [remember to recycle](#) egg packaging, cards and flowers.

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

### New District Local Plan Adopted

The new Local Plan was considered at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council on 6 March as and the Plan was duly adopted. LRA Cllrs (as always) had a free vote. [Background on our website](#).

*LRA Comment: As we have said previously, LRA has concluded that the new plan, though far from ideal by not protecting the Forest from bad air via a definite mitigation strategy, now provides a way forward. By LRA and Town Council efforts (and money) and much effort at a public enquiry (especially by LRA Cllr Chris Pond and David*



Linnell), the imposition of 1021 new houses for Loughton in the original plan published in 2017 has been reduced to 455. Of these, over 300 are now in the course of being erected on Lucton's Field and the Middle Site, which were previously owned by Epping Forest College (which was the result of an aberrant decision of another Inspector).

LRA Plans Group will keep all this to the fore in considering planning applications post-adoption of the Local Plan.

## Ward Boundaries in Epping Forest

The Local Government Boundary Commission has published their final recommendations for changes to council wards in Epping Forest district. It says residents should be represented by 54 councillors. This is four fewer than the current arrangements.

There will be 18 wards represented by three councillors each. [More](#) and the [final report](#) (the relevant pages are p9-12). The boundary changes will take effect for the 2024 local elections.

Most of the existing Loughton wards will change, with the existing seven wards reduced to five. Here are maps of [the existing wards](#) and [the new wards](#), with [an interactive map on this page](#).

**LRA Comment:** Part of the existing Roding ward will be detached and become part of a new Buckhurst Hill East and Whitebridge ward, which goes against all the principles the Local Government Boundary Commission is supposed to follow. LRA much deprecate the addition of the part of Roding ward west of Roding Road to a Buckhurst Hill ward for District Council purposes, but our objection was ignored.

## The Broadway Building Repairs

At the District Council Cabinet meeting on 13 March, it was announced the cost of structural repairs to the blocks of flats and shops had risen from the previous estimate of £2.75m to nearly £6m. LRA Cllrs Rose Brookes and Chris Pond pointed out that this might mean a bill of £5000 each flat or shop, depending how the bill was divided up, and that leaseholders of either might find such a charge unpayable. Council tenants will not be charged. Portfolioholder Cllr Holly Whitbread said cases of hardship would be looked at sympathetically. Consultation was promised.



## Street Lights

Residents would have noticed many streetlights have recently been replaced with LEDs. The swap seems to be being done efficiently and quickly.

The County Council is investing a total of £26.8m across the County for the replacement programme but will save £2.2m a year in energy and maintenance costs

as LEDs use at least 60% less electricity and last up to 20 years. Studies show that our eyes adjust to the new light over a few weeks, so the Council has asked residents to wait for up to 8 weeks after installation before contacting them with any issues. The lights have also been designed to dim in stages from dusk, when they are turned on, to 1am, when they are turned off (in part-night lighting areas). [More](#)

The tall columns in the High Road south of Brooklyn Avenue have obsolete lanterns which cannot be fitted with LEDs. That is why so many are dead, despite LRA protests since December 2019.



### **Long Dead Street Lights in Greenfields**

LRA Cllr Chris Pond reported these on behalf an elderly resident. Although Essex Highways responded "they'll just have to wait for the LED replacement programme", Chris was able to quote the promise given by the County Maintenance Manager that where an old-style lamp fails, the opportunity will now be taken to replace the old lantern with an LED as soon as possible. They were replaced and upgraded the same day.

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

### **Meet your Alderton Ward LRA Cllrs**

Alderton ward councillors hold their monthly drop-in surgery every 1st Saturday of the month from 2pm-4pm at Gullotti Cafe on Borders Lane IG10 3QX. The next one is on Saturday 1 April. Come by to discuss any ward issues. No registration or booking is needed. [More](#)

## ***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.

### **113 Church Hill - Damaged Hoarding and Rubbish**

LRAPG complained to the District Council about the poor condition of the hoarding and rubbish dumped on the site last December. Unfortunately, no action appears to have taken place and, as a consequence part of the hoarding has blown over



onto the public pavement. Unless the council takes swift action, someone is going to get hurt.

### 46 Pyrles Lane

This was Martin's Newsagents which has been changed to a hot food takeaway. They have applied to change the condition that restricted deliveries from the premises to say "No deliveries shall be taken to the site outside the hours of 10am to 6pm on Mondays to Fridays, 10am to 1pm on Saturdays, nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays".

This would mean they could do deliveries **from** the premises 24 hrs a day; the new condition would only control deliveries **to** the takeaway. LRAPG considers 24 hour takeaway deliveries are unacceptable because of the harm to amenity of residents who live nearby.

Reference [EPF/0385/23](#). The formal consultation period ended 21 March but you can still comment to the Council.



### 14 York Hill

This is an application for an illuminated digital advert screen.

LRAPG has objected to this advertisement, which can have moving images, on the grounds that it will be a visual distraction and (by reason of its size and location), will harm the setting of this part of the York Hill Conservation Area particularly in the evening when it is dark. There are no public benefits to outweigh the harm caused and as such advertisement consent should be refused.

Reference [EPF/2032/22](#). The formal consultation period ended 23 March but you can still comment to the Council.

Image: Google

### Lucton's Field Housing Development, Borders Lane

The developers had applied to use fencing around the site, rather than solid hoarding that had been agreed to in the Construction Management Plan.

This has been refused by the District Council due to the proximity to neighbouring properties. In addition they have told the developers that solid hoarding was supposed to be present from the start of the project and it is still not fully present around the site boundary. [More](#)

## **Roads, Parking and Travel**

### Planned Road Closures

- St Nicholas Place - the road will be closed on 4 April while sewer cover replacement works are undertaken by Thames Water. [More](#)

- Smarts Lane - the road will be closed 27 March to 11 April between 8am and 5pm for speed humps, new signs and post to be installed. [More](#)

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



### Loughton Cycle Route Bypass

This runs from Warren Hill to Goldings Hill via Nursery Road, Smarts Lane, Shaftesbury, Staples Road, York Hill and Baldwins Hill, and dates from 2011. The signage and infrastructure had been damaged, and a scheme to renew has been

completed (although some signs were initially wrong and LRA Cllr Chris Pond had to get them corrected). This includes a new cycle gate at the Staples Road-Shaftesbury junction.

### DaRT87 Bus Route Debden to/from Harlow

DaRT87 is a bookable bus service with routes from Debden to/from Harlow. You can book via the Flexiroute Passenger app which can be downloaded for [Apple](#) and [Android](#) devices. Once installed, select Epping Forest from the regions list. [More](#)



New travel app for DaRT87 bus service

Concessionary bus passes are accepted from 9:30am onwards. There is a flat-rate fare of £2 for a journey up to 7 miles and £5 thereafter. Under 5s travel free. The service must be prebooked at least 24 hours in advance either for one-off trips, or block bookings.

You can also book by calling 01992 579556 or [email](#).

### Temporary 'Make Safe' Road Repairs

The County Council are often asked why they carry out temporary 'make safe' repairs rather than permanently fixing the problem from the start. Here's what they say.

For the highest-risk potholes, there is a specific timescale in which the defect must be made safe by. Once an inspector has submitted a online report, the on-call crew will be notified. They aim to arrive on-site within two hours to carry out an urgent intervention. For unplanned works they are only allowed to close a road for 15 minutes in any one hour, and if a pothole is on a main road the crew have to be extremely careful with how they stop or control traffic to make the repair.

For these most urgent repairs, there is not time to book a permit to close the road, order traffic management and get together all the equipment and hot asphalt, so they must make the defect safe with temporary fixes. For example, for a pothole cold

asphalt material is used to quickly fill in the defect and tamp it down to make it safe for a temporary period. With other problems, all they can do on the spot is put cones, barriers and signs on site to warn drivers and other road users – for instance if there is a missing gulley or manhole cover.

Once a “make-safe” repair or guarding activity has been undertaken, staff continue to monitor the condition of the intervention. This applies to pavement, pedestrian guard rail, drain covers and other issues too.

Depending on the nature and size of the risk and where budgets permit, a more permanent repair will be planned and scheduled for a future date once all the necessary permits, materials and equipment and specialist crew(s) are available. Due to limited resources, they must prioritise our work and fix the higher-risk issues first.

[More from Essex Highways Highlights](#) and [report potholes here](#).

### **Naming the Gritters**

Did you enter the competition to name the gritters? The 15 gritters have received their new names:

- Billericay Grittie
- Colchester Gritty
- Dermot Snow Cleary
- Grit Dunsnow
- Gritter Thunberg
- Jennifer
- Maldon salt
- PLOWIE
- Rupert Grit
- Weeley Salty
- Monster Meltdown
- Grit Expectations
- Spready Mercury
- Grit Gatsby
- Slush Puppy

### **Electric Vehicle (EV) Usage**

Epping Forest District has the highest number of full electric vehicles on the roads of any Essex council area. While the Council is working on installing more electric vehicle chargers, the number of chargers is only half the national rate which is around 50 for every 100,000 vehicles.

The two Instavolt ultra-rapid chargers at the Oakwood Hill East Car Park have been very heavily used since March 2022 and resulted in an estimated 50% increase in parking revenues compared to the pre-pandemic period.

### **Roadworks in January**

In Epping Forest District, County Highways made 117 repairs to roads, fixed 42 pavement defects, fixed 108 streetlights and didn't clear any drains.

### **Tubes and Trains - Industrial Action**

The latest updates on industrial action on the tube network are on the [TfL website](#) plus [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Updates from the rail network are on the [National Rail website](#), plus [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).



### **Fares Increase**

Fares across the TfL network increased by an overall average of 5.9% on 5 March. A adult single bus fare is now £1.75 and an adult single peak-time tube journey from Zones 6 to 1 (e.g. Loughton to central London) is £5.60 (it's £2 less on weekdays after 9:30am) using Oyster or a contactless method. [More](#)

### **Left Behind Londoners**

According to a new report by [London TravelWatch](#), more than 1.5 million Londoners left behind by the digital-first approach to transport. 1 in 6 people say they are unable to buy a ticket as they can't use or don't have access to a smartphone or internet connection, and a further 1 in 5 Londoners said that they have paid more for travel because they are not able to buy tickets online or by using mobile apps.

London TravelWatch are calling for transport operators to step up by pledging to keep prices the same across all platforms and for staff to be more visible and available at stations to help those who need assistance, along with other recommendations. [More](#) and [the full report](#).

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

### **New Town Centre Police Team**

A new team has been formed to police the centres of Epping, Loughton, Waltham Abbey and Brentwood. The police say the Town Centre Team will provide a visible presence along the high streets and surrounding areas and will combat anti-social behaviour, deter crime and work to make sure everyone feels safe as they shop or socialise.

They will also place an emphasis on engaging with local people and acting on their concerns. People can expect to see the same officers patrolling, popping into the shops and talking to business owners who may have ongoing issues. [More](#)

### **Police Report**

The District Commander for Epping Forest and Brentwood met Cllrs recently. She was asked whether there is any evidence of a gang culture developing in the Loughton area or other parts of our district, but said that there was currently no evidence of this happening.

Cllrs also asked whether the Great Eastern Path walk through to Loughton station could continue to receive community policing due to the obvious drug taking, and the fear of using it by females and school pupils. The police said that the area would still receive foot patrols and further night-time events would be arranged. CCTV has also

been installed in the area.

The police were also asked whether Loughton Police Station would reopen again as a fully functioning police station? The answer is that Loughton is still a fully functioning police station and although the front desk has been closed, there is a yellow phone outside the building which provided a direct line to the police.

### **Threats to the Jewish and Israeli community**

The government has stated that surveillance on the Jewish and Israeli community using non-traditional sources, such as organised crime gangs, was taking place on behalf of the Iranian regime. If you become aware of any local concerns, [contact LRA Cllr Chidi Nweke](#) or the police. [More](#)

### **Crime prevention advice**

As we head towards spring think about updating your home security systems to match the change in day light hours:

- Use timer devices on lights and radios, making sure the times on them match your usual routine.
- Check the locks on shed or garages haven't been damaged by the winter weather.
- Check your windows from outside and remove anything that someone could climb on to gain access.
- Make sure downstairs windows are locked and the key is removed. If you have uPVC windows remember to lift the handle first.

[More](#) crime prevention tips and advice.

### **Criminals seek to capitalise on the cost of living crisis**

The police report a rise in consumers being targeted by phishing emails and fake ads on social media pretending to be from utility companies claiming to provide savings on energy bills, as well as offering fuel vouchers, phone bill discounts and supermarket offers. These emails are becoming increasingly sophisticated and are designed to harvest personal and financial information.

In recent months, a number of people have reported receiving suspicious phone calls from scammers claiming to be from their phone provider. The scammer states that the phone owner is eligible for a discount on their phone bill due to cost of living hardships and then asks a series of questions designed to steal their personal information.

If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Always check the brand's official website or social media channels to verify whether an offer is authentic.

[More advice on fraud](#)

### **More from the Police**

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



## Council News



### Deck Loughton with Bunting

The Town Council has bought and has organised for bunting to be put up in both The Broadway, and Loughton High Road and encourage all residents and businesses to also bedeck their premises with bunting, flags and balloons to celebrate the Coronation of The King and The Queen Consort.

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](#)

If you're planning a street party and want your road closed, you will need to apply for a temporary road closure. There are no costs for road closure applications, and we encourage residents to apply by 31 March. [More](#)

You can find out more about the [national celebrations](#) on the royal website, and to find out what's going on across the nation please check out the [official website](#).

### Think Loughton Magazine

The Spring Edition which is the 100th issue is being delivered to Loughton households. You can also [read it online here](#).

### Citizenship Award Presented

At the Annual Town Meeting on 15 March, the Town Council presented Heidi Chow with the Citizenship Award for 2023 in recognition of her dedication and voluntary work within the community and especially for the GROW Community Garden. Town Mayor LRA Cllr Barbara Cohen said that Heidi has been volunteering for GROW Community Garden at Pyrles Lane for over 6 years, in more recent years taking a lead role. The Community Garden project brings many benefits to a variety of local residents and brings people together, combating social isolation and provides an outdoor activity promoting health and wellbeing. [More](#) and [pictures](#)

### Building Design Awards

Also at the Annual Town Meeting, the Town Council chose 49 Church Lane, as the winner. This is a recently restored 1920s Wrenaissance house for C F Clark by the renowned firm of Wallis Gilbert and Partners. A fine job has been done with the detailing, particularly the bold extension of the modillion cornice. Everything is right, it all looks in keeping and makes a worthy addition to the varied streetscapes of Church Lane and adds interest to the scene at the crossroads. The builders have managed to make it look entirely as if it belongs. Atelier73, the architects have made a good job, and thoroughly deserve the award. [More](#)



A Certificate of Merit was awarded to the owner of 57 Newmans Lane for renovations

made to their property. The judges commented on this project “this is in an ex-local authority house, part of the original Debden Estate. The property is one of the post war permanent prefabricated British Iron and Steel Federation Houses. Since it had become quite dilapidated over time, it has been given a complete yet sensitive makeover.

### **Anti Social Behaviour**

There was concern regarding local anti-social behaviour last year at Halloween and Guy Fawkes. Also during the snowy weather prior to Christmas, youngsters climbed onto the roof of Centric Parade to abuse the public. The District Council (as the Centric Parade landlord), could help by securing places such as this but also leaseholders had a responsibility.



### **Advance Booking Required to Use Recycling Centres**

You now need to book in advance to use a County Council recycling centre including the one at Luxborough Lane in Chigwell. There is no charge to book, but a booking will be needed for each visit and the latest you can book is the day before. [More](#)

### **North Weald Airfield Aviation Development**

The District Council is looking at developing some of the North Weald Airfield. As part of the North Weald Airfield development plan the council asked consultants to look at the feasibility of increasing the capability of the airfield so that it could move to full commercial use as a regional airport (if only to rule out the possibility). The consultant’s report shows though that it would be extremely expensive to bring the airfield up to the right standards and even then may not succeed commercially as it would have to compete with Luton and especially Stansted. [More](#) (p17-29)

### **Trial of Recycling Bins**

The District Council has been running a trial in Theydon Bois of recycling bins in place of the clear sacks. This is to assess different criteria for success and could become part of the new waste contract. The Council spent hundreds of thousands of pounds on clear recycling sacks every year and they were often used by people for things other than recycling. On the other hand, a third bin would give rise to storage problems in small houses.

### **Energy Bills Support**

Most households get a £400 discount on their energy bills automatically. In some cases, you do not get the discount automatically if you:

- pay for energy through a landlord, housing manager or site owner
- live in a park home, houseboat or off the electricity grid
- are in a care home or assisted living facility and you pay for some or all of your care.

If you are in this position you can apply for the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding. [More](#)

## Local News

### The Essex Food Waste Pledge

The average household in Essex wastes £720 each year by throwing away food that could have been eaten. Not only is food waste costing us all money, it harms the environment and feeds climate change.

Across 2023, take part in monthly challenges from [Love Essex](#) to be in with a chance of winning £60 worth of supermarket vouchers. [More](#)

## Health and Wellbeing

### Covid Vaccine

A Covid sprint booster dose will be offered to:

- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in a care home for older adults
- individuals aged 5 years and over who are immunosuppressed.

[More](#)

## Epping Forest

### Please Don't Trample the Bluebells

The Conservators of Epping Forest have observed the increasing popularity of posting pictures of the bluebells on social media, which has led to more visitors picking and walking on the wildflowers. When the plants are trampled on, it can take them four to seven years to re-establish and grow again. Bluebells are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Epping Forest byelaws, which prohibit removing the plants from the Forest. [More](#)

### Can You Help with Guided Walks?

[Epping Forest Heritage Trust](#) are looking for volunteers to support walk leaders on their regular guided walk programmes. Different roles might involve helping marshal a walk, checking people's registration, providing first aid support if needed, and ensuring that the walk is safe and enjoyable for all. [Apply here](#).

### Things you can do or not do in Epping Forest

Epping Forest has a set of byelaws – laws that apply in the Forest on top of normal UK laws – designed to both protect the Forest and its visitors. If you are not sure what you can or cannot do in the Forest the [Epping Forest Byelaws](#) is the place to look.

For instance you cannot use a metal detector without consent or fly a drone in the

Forest without a specific permit.

Here are some [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on what you can do or not do in the Forest



### Forest Focus - March 2023

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

## And More

### Easter Recycling

Here are top tips from [Love Essex](#) on recycling at Easter; over 80 million Easter eggs are sold in the UK each year, with the cardboard, foil and Easter cards generating an estimated 8,000 tonnes of waste.

- Choose your eggs wisely and check the packaging for recycling information.
- Try and avoid cardboard boxes with plastic windows. Flatten the boxes to save space in your kerbside collection.
- Clean foil can be recycled at the kerbside with your cans. Remember to scrunch it into a ball - the bigger the better
- Choose glitter-free cards and recycle in your kerbside collection.
- If you're gifted flowers, make sure you compost them once they're dead, or pop them in your garden waste bin.

[More on reducing waste at Easter](#)

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*Thank you for supporting LRA. Our next Loughton News email is due to be issued Friday 14 April although that date could change.*

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

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