

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE

The newsletter of Loughton Residents Association

February 2010
Member's edition



LRA's Broadway triumph...

When the BNP called a Town Council by-election in Broadway ward for December 10th, at short notice, LRA decided to put up a candidate, for the first time ever for this ward. The BNP could pull in supporters from a wide area, whereas LRA only had a small number of dedicated local volunteers to rely on. However, we were very fortunate in having an excellent candidate, Katie Nicholson, who lives and works in the ward.

LRA produced a manifesto which was delivered to the 2,000 households in the ward, and did its best to talk to as many Broadway residents as possible, right up to and including on polling day itself. The results speak for themselves, and we are very grateful to those who worked so hard to create the victory, and to all those residents who supported us.

Katie said: "I want to sincerely thank everyone who voted for LRA on 10th December, enabling us to win the election. I am very much looking forward to working on your behalf as your Councillor."

LRA is now looking for help with the District Council elections in May, particularly for people who would be prepared to talk to residents on its behalf, in the run-up to the elections throughout Loughton. Please contact David Linnell (david.linnell@loughtonresidents.co.uk) or on 020 8508 2932.

... and another successful Broadway show

After the problems with The Broadway refurbishment which devastated many businesses while the work was going on LRA successfully campaigned to have the rents of the businesses reduced during the period of the refurbishment to help out the traders, many of whom experienced serious loss of trade. Although the Conservative-led District Council had initially refused to take any action, the LRA campaign was so successful the ruling group made an even more generous offer than we were hoping for and traders were given a 25% discount on their rents for the duration on the roadworks.

Church Hill car park

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Votes</i>
Katie Nicholson	LRA	257
Edward Long	BNP	234
Jill Bostock	Lab	204
Iqbal Kalkat	Con	75

Healthy consultation

The long-promised public consultation on the future of NHS services in NE London has now been launched, and LRA hopes that as many people as possible will respond. Please also send LRA your comments. The consultative document proposes the retention of Whipps Cross Accident and Emergency (A&E) department (crucial for Loughton residents) and the closure of A&E at King George, Goodmayes. Whipps Cross will also have £25m spent to upgrade its A&E. There are various other proposals. LRA Cllr Chris Pond, who has been representing the County Council in these discussions, has asked for, and has got agreement to, a public consultation meeting in Loughton (date and venue tbc). See www.healthforne1.nhs.uk/consultation/

Town Council prudence

Loughton Town Council's headline precept increase for a Band D property in 2010-11 is only 1.3%, an increase likely to be lower than that proposed by the County and District Councils. In real money, this is an increase of 46p per year or less than a penny a week. No programmes or proposed activities have been lost or cut in the 2010-11 budget, though some items thought unlikely to be completed in 2010-11 have been moved further along the rolling programme. LRA can be proud of its Councillors' management of the Town Council's financial resources. It has maintained a policy of prudent management of resources, making the smallest possible precept increase with our town's recession-hit families in mind, but still retaining an active programme of improvements and benefits to town life.

Stephen Pewsey

For more information about LRA or Loughton please visit
www.loughtonresidents.co.uk

Snow worries

The prolonged snowy and icy weather that occurred before and after Christmas was undoubtedly very pretty, but caused lots of problems for residents of Loughton. LRA and its Councillors had many calls and emails from people unable to get cars out, worried about the treacherous conditions of pavements, and when their rubbish would be collected.

Essex County Council's gritting policy means that side roads are not treated. As we have many hills in Loughton, a fact not appreciated by those in Chelmsford, we do suffer. County Councillor Chris Pond and David Linnell before him have both drawn the Council's attention to this, but to no effect. A Roads, B Roads, bus routes and major access routes are normally gritted. Many schools were closed. Chris requested in 2006 that the gritting policy should be changed to help schools. This was refused, but he tried again at the West Essex Forum on 12 January, when the cabinet member, Norman Hume, at last said he would review the policy. We look forward to this, as it makes no sense for one cabinet member (Stephen Castle) to exhort heads to open schools come what may when another (Hume) declines to grit the roads outside them.

The Town Council took action over the residential roads and hills problem some years ago, and have therefore supplied grit bins to areas badly affected. 25 have now been installed in Loughton. The County is responsible for keeping them filled, which on the whole they did well in the December-January period.

County watch

Although 20mph limits near schools are common in Greater London, Essex has not yet actioned this widely. A County Speed Management Strategy is to be adopted.

Cllr Chris Pond has also recently raised the following highway problems:

- Highway defects on Shaftesbury (on which residents have seen ducks swimming)
- Delay on installing bus shelters at Torrington Drive outside the Wimpy Bar
- Non-removal of contractor junk on Habgood Road
- Resurfacing York Hill below Queens Road
- Surface water run-off on York Hill
- Debden Library (lack of) signs on the outside of the building
- The new cycle path alongside Chigwell Lane (works "to commence January")
- Obstructive parking in Colson Road
- Lack of progress on yellow lines on Traps Hill
- Flooding in the alley-way from Clifton Road



Crime scene

Anti-social behaviour

Please keep reporting incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and ask for an incident number. This enables the police – and LRA – to identify where the problems are, and call for action, particularly if there are insufficient officers to respond to some of the calls. If you feel that calls are not being properly dealt with contact Sgt Jacqui Mileham, district anti-social behaviour coordinator at Epping Police Station on 0300 333 4444, and let LRA know too: contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk

Caught cold

Cold calling tricksters are a problem in Debden, generally going for trusting elderly people. PCSOs are now calling on all properties where it is obvious an elderly person is living and giving out advice.

Shopping thieves

The Broadway Townlink, which enables shops to alert each other of shoplifters is now up and running and more shops are signing up to it, even Sainsbury's which resisted until now.

Broadway parking review

LRA is waiting to find out the results of the consultation, and what changes will be made to the original proposals. We will try to keep residents informed as soon as we hear more. In the meantime, we know that there has been some doubt and confusion about how the proposals will actually work, particularly if you buy a resident's permit. The proposal is that there should be sufficient bays for permit holders to use at any time. In the restricted hours (for example, from midday to 2pm) only permit-holders may park in the residents' bays. There are also stretches of single-yellow-line restrictions with 2-hour parking bans (for example, from 10am-midday). In the restricted hours nobody (except disabled badge holders) may park on the single yellow lines. So if you have a permit and you put your car in the bay at 12 midnight it can stay there throughout the day. If, however, you park it on a single yellow line it will be ticketed during the 2-hour window, even if you have a permit.

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Council depot in Langston Rd

The Council depot in Langston Road is used for a number of purposes. Many people will know it if they take their cars there for a MOT. The depot is also used for Council vehicle maintenance, the SITA waste disposal freighter vehicle park, the Council's own waste management staff, the Council's parks department and the base for the WRVS meals on wheels service. This has led to concerns about health and safety with so many vehicle movements and a decision has been made to close the site if alternative sites can be found for all but the meal-on-wheels service (which is a County Council responsibility). The District Council has now given the WRVS notice that its lease will not be renewed after 2011 and are not offering any alternative location for its 20 plus vehicles. It is most unlikely an alternative location can be found in the district and this could lead to closure of this vital service. LRA has urged the District Council to re-double its efforts to engage the WRVS and the County Council in seeking a new location for this important service.

Ken Angold-Stephens

Green spaces

Although LRA was successful in blocking the development of any housing on green spaces in Debden nearly two years ago we warned that the issue had not gone away for all time. It has re-appeared in the Council 5-year Plan and LRA has already registered its concern. A LRA-organised petition by residents was most effective last time and we may need to repeat the exercise in the future if any new threats appear. The Town Council is still trying to register some of them as village greens. Watch this space.

Events

Essex Book Festival

The box office is now open

<http://askchris.essexcc.gov.uk/ebf/>.

Loughton Festival

The 2010 Loughton Festival will start on March 20th. There is over a month's worth of events on the theme of creativity and Epping Forest. See www.loughtonfestival.org.uk for details.

Oakview Special School

The Original Pearly Kings & Queens Association has been asked to help Oakview Special School, Whitehills Road, Loughton, raise £75,000 for a hydro pool. They have organised a Cockney Night on 27th February. The costs for the night will be paid for by the Association but they need auction and raffle prizes or donations. For more details and tickets contact 8508 6467, k.watts3@sky.com or visit www.thepearlies.com

Monthly farmers' market

LRA organises the farmers' markets on the first Sunday of each month (9am – 2pm) on Centric Parade, Loughton High Rd. Come along and meet your local councillors and LRA activists.



Planning and licensing

Minx Bar, High Road The police have asked for a review of the Minx's licence, citing a large volume of incidents relating to crime and disorder, and failure to adhere to a number of conditions, agreed voluntarily.

The District Council has turned down applications for 299 High Road (change of use from retail to financial & professional) and Tola, 169 High Road (change of use from retail to take-away). LRA Plans Group objected to these applications as the Local Plan specifies not more than 30% non-retail frontage in the "Key Retail Frontage" and on the latest figures the proportion is already over 31%.

Loughton Sports Centre, Rectory Lane The applicant has withdrawn an application (possibly only temporarily) to demolish the building and build an 85-bed care home (nearby Loughton Hall already has planning permission for conversion into a care home).

Former Woolworths, High Road It is believed that a branch of Robert Dyas will open here in Spring 2010.

Church Hill car park The District Council has not yet sold the land due to market conditions.

39 The Lindens The District Council refused permission for various changes consolidating and adding to two previous approved applications.

Dryads Hall LRA has asked the District Council's Planning Enforcement team about this property on Woodbury Hill, where the neighbours have complained many times that during extensive work the planning conditions on hours of work, and parking of delivery lorries, are being broken. The District Council has now issued an enforcement notice.

15 The Crescent Conservative Cllr Hart has put out a leaflet claiming sole responsibility for the referral of the planning application to the District Council Plans South Committee (it would have gone to the Committee anyway, given the objections received from residents and LRA Plans Group), and for its refusal. We are happy to acknowledge that Cllr Hart played his part in the refusal, but so did many other Councillors, residents and LRA Plans Group.

Christmas quiz answers

Quite a hard quiz this time, according to several of the entrants. And indeed, only two entries were all-correct so both have been a prize. Vouchers to Helen Rogers, and to Peter and Joy Gordon. Apologies for the incorrect number of letters given for the final answer (almost everyone spotted this, and nobody was penalised for it).

1. A fruity daughter (10) Clementine
 2. Sounds as if the matador got dressed up (5) Capon
 3. This drink can knock you out (5) Punch
 4. Half of West Ham strip for this wine (6) Claret
 5. A dessert or a veg dish? It's the latter (5-7) Pease pudding
 6. Flies along a section of the mountain? (9) Partridge
 7. Father's wee dram? (7) Parsnip
 8. Sounds like Kenny's hat (10) Loganberry
 9. An insignificant dessert (6) Trifle
 10. A steak from the pub (11) Porterhouse
 11. Is this US state hot or cold? (5, 6) Baked Alaska
 12. Little branches (8) Twiglets
 13. County's warm dish (10, 6) Lancashire hotpot
 14. Gain for Mr Flynn (11) Profiterole
 15. Belgian offshoots (7, 7) Brussel sprouts
 16. Cows to the power of three (5, 4) Stock cube
 17. Wine you can pawn (4) Hock
 18. In need of cash (10) Shortbread
 19. Salad veg with a sore throat gets cheeky (11, 5) Horseradish sauce
 20. Humped animal takes a river for this sweet (7) Caramel
 21. A German citizen fond of pork? (9) Hamburger
 22. Off the old blocks? (5) Chips
 23. For a seaside picnic? (8) Sandwich
 24. Country gets the seasonal bird (6) Turkey
 25. Often a feature of boxers' ears (11) Cauliflower
 26. Gather a flower? (10) Piccalilli
 27. How this dish should be cooked? (8, 4) Bakewell tart
 28. Rubbish! (5) Tripe
 29. Cash for father (8) Lollipop
 30. A glorious complaint (6) Grouse
- Les and Sue Harris*

2010 subscriptions

If things go according to plan, you should receive a letter with this copy of Loughton Life, asking you to renew your subscriptions (or, for those who have already paid for 2010, confirming that you have done so). You can also pay your subscriptions on the first Sunday on the month at our Farmers' Market stall on the High Road. It is a great help if you renew now. We are very grateful for our members' support.

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