

# LOUGHTON LIFE



View from the top of York Hill.

Newsletter 208

## ESSEX POLICE UNDER FIRE

Essex Police are coming under growing criticism for their performance since they took over from the Met in policing Loughton. An increasing number of residents are voicing disquiet, particularly over the lack of success in dealing with gangs of youths who congregate in certain parts of the town centre and intimidate passers-by (or worse).

The replies to our questionnaire in September's Loughton Life are still coming in and have not yet been fully analysed, but an initial look indicates that so far about 20% of respondents specifically mention this issue.

An LRA councillor has been told by a cab driver based at Loughton station that there are repeated episodes of

violence and threatening behaviour at the station, but 999 and other calls to the police result in 15-30 minute delays before any officers arrive, despite the fact that Loughton Police Station is just up the road.

The problem seems to be an organisational one. All 999 calls are routed via Chelmsford, which involves long and frustrating descriptions of the location etc to operators who have little or no idea of Loughton and its roads.

If a 999 call is assessed by the operator as being non-urgent, the caller will be advised to ring their local police station. But no number is given for Loughton Police Station in the local phone book, although there are numbers for other police stations in the area. This

beggars belief. Apparently, all the non-urgent calls are routed through Harlow in any case, so why can't there be a central, well-publicised number which callers can ring and then ask to be transferred to their local Station?

Essex Police have repeatedly promised that things will improve, but this is simply not happening and matters are clearly getting beyond a joke. When Essex first took over from the Met in April 2000, local people had a large reservoir of goodwill towards them, but if these organisational shortcomings are not addressed, this goodwill could rapidly disappear.

Local police in Loughton are just as frustrated by the call-handling system, and increasing pressure has finally resulted in the Chief Constable taking notice. A Working Group was set up under the leadership of a Superintendent and should shortly be producing a report, which it is hoped will recommend appropriate improvements to the system. These issues will be put to the Chair of Essex Police Authority at LRA's AGM on 16th October. We'll keep you posted!

*Carol Murray*

## M&S LATEST

The District Council has now received a formal planning application from Marks & Spencer for a 'Neighbourhood Store' on the site of the Lambs Garage car park at the southern end of the High Road.

A number of LRA committee members have already met with M&S's planning consultants to discuss the plans in detail. The proposed store is of modern design, which is likely to please some residents but be disliked by others. LRA has suggested a number of changes to enhance the look of the building, and has looked closely both at the effects on traffic and at M&S's delivery proposals.

The Lambs Garage car park is well used during the day, and is used in the evenings by people attending events at Lopping Hall or going to local restaurants. We have protested strongly about M&S's proposal to reduce the number of parking spaces and only to open them for an additional half hour either side of store opening hours.

LRA will be continuing discussions with M&S as the plans go through the planning process, so if you have any views on the proposals, please send them to me (details on back page).

*David Linnell*

**STOP PRESS:** LRA Town Councillor Roger Pearce has been asked by the police to be the local public contact for the Working Group. If you have experienced any difficulty in contacting the police, either by 999 or through one of their local numbers, please let Roger know. (Details on back page, or by Email at [rodwin@talk21.com](mailto:rodwin@talk21.com), using the subject title 'Police Contact')

## Next Farmers Market Sunday 2 November

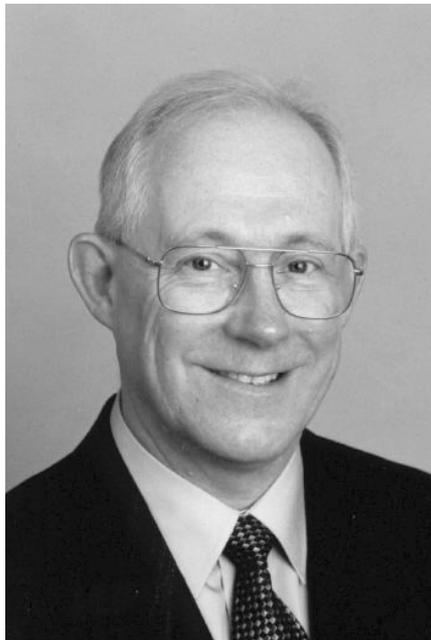
# A CHAIRMAN'S LOT!!

If I had any illusions about how busy the Chairman's position on the Loughton Town Council (LTC) would be, I should have listened more carefully to our previous LRA Town Council Chairmen (Chris P, Judith and Suzanne)! My first four months have been extremely interesting, with six local public occasions in which I was requested to participate.

These included appearing on Debden Day on the Stagecoach in the Broadway as Cowboy "Chairman", opening Loughton's Millennium Grove in Rectory Lane, welcoming Alan Comfort the new Vicar of St. Mary's Church in the High Road and opening the Broadway's much extended Thursday Street Market. To these can be added a presence at the opening of our new Leisure Centre in Traps Hill and the Abbeyfield's 40th Birthday Party in the High Road.

On the business side, the last four months have seen several meetings with the Leader, Chief Executive and Cabinet members of Epping Forest District Council to discuss areas of particular concern to Loughton. Many subjects have been covered, including the release of Willingale Road allotments and the lifting of the restrictive covenant on the former United Reform Church site in Borders Lane, where LTC intends to build a Community and Youth Centre.

LTC's main thrust has been the inequality of cash spent on the fabric of Loughton in comparison with other



## PARK AT YOUR PERIL

When parking in a "disabled" space in one of the Council car parks, a local resident was horrified to find that he had been given a parking ticket. The offence - his car had not cleared the double yellow lines outside the space. The action taken seems excessive, and we have taken it up with the Council. The space in question was a disabled bay next to the toilet at Traps Hill, but the point is a more general one - we all need to be vigilant and ensure we are within the lines when we park.

*David Linnell*

## JOIN THE TEAM

Are you interested in helping us to look after Loughton? We are now planning the election campaign for next year's Town Council and District Council elections. We have a strong team, but need some new candidates (from all walks of life) across Loughton. Find out more, without any commitment, by ringing Chris Harper (8508 4770) or David Linnell (8508 2932).

## GARDEN WASTE BAGS AT FARMERS' MARKET

Although additional supplies of the official blue garden rubbish bags are available from the Council information office next to Loughton Library, not everyone finds it easy or convenient to fetch them from Traps Hill when their original supply runs out. LRA's Peter House was able to 'plug the gap', by obtaining 50 bags from the council for distribution at the Farmers' Market in the High Road on 7 September.

This was obviously a very popular move - the bags went like hot cakes and had all been snapped up by 10.30am, so we shall be trying to get a regular, larger supply for future Farmers' Markets.

*Carol Murray*

## COLEBROOK ROYALS FOOTBALL CLUB

Congratulations to Debden-based Colebrook Royals on being awarded Charter Standard status by the Football Association. In order to obtain the award, every level of their organisation was assessed, including administration, levels of coaching, child protection and finances.

Information regarding the club can be obtained from John Eagleton, 020 8418 9166

parts of the District. We were not impressed by the Chief Executive's rebuttal that we have a new Leisure Centre, and we reminded him that this is a facility for the whole District and not just for Loughton where it happens to be sited.

We reminded EFDC that not a penny of our council tax payers' money has been spent in recent years in upgrading the roads and pavements in either the High Road or the Broadway; the current work around the South end of the town being paid for by Sainsbury's as part of the essential work required in connection with their new store.

After we meet these key councillors and officers again in October, I will update you with the result of our further discussions.

*Cllr Roger Pearce*

## CAFÉ CULTURE

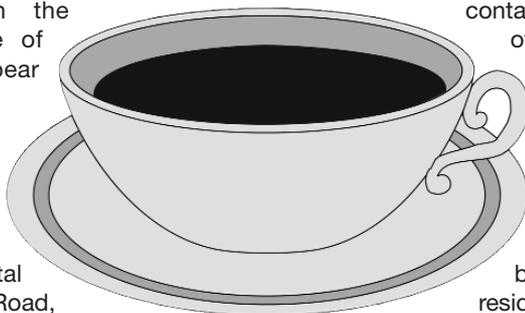
An article on property 'hot spots' a couple of years ago in the national press highlighted Loughton, and suggested that one of the town's desirable features was its café culture. It will be interesting to see if the results of our Questionnaire in the September issue of Loughton Life bear this out!

There's no doubt that the number of cafés is increasing and that they add a colourful continental feel to the High Road, especially on sunny days - a definite 'plus' when compared with the rather drab aspect ten or so years ago. But the downside is that café tables can

sometimes encroach too far onto the pavement, making life difficult for pedestrians, especially those with prams, pushchairs or wheelchairs.

This a potentially divisive issue, and LRA Cllr Peter House is in contact with council officers in order to establish the legal situation. He has the unenviable task of trying to walk a tightrope between residents who have complained about 'table creep' and those who welcome Loughton's café culture.

*Carol Murray*



## LOUGHTON HEALTH CENTRE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

Loughton Health Centre, which is the town's largest GP practice, is encouraging the setting up of a Patient Participation Group (PPG). Development is at an early stage, but a Steering Committee has already been set up and has met with doctors in the practice. The following aims are proposed:

- To provide an avenue of communication between the Practice and its patients;
- To make suggestions to the Practice regarding provision of services and quality of care which are perceived to be of benefit to the patients;
- To help implement decisions agreed at joint Practice and PPG meetings;
- To hold the partnership accountable in areas of legitimate patient concern.

The activities of the Group can be as far reaching as it chooses, depending on the energies of those involved, information received from patients and ideas gleaned from elsewhere.

Leaflets will be available in the patients' waiting area of the Health Centre, asking for a response to the idea of a PPG and for the names of patients of the Practice who would be interested in participating in this new venture. If you would like to know more, please complete one of the leaflets or write to the Practice Manager, Loughton Health Centre, The Drive, Loughton, marking your envelope PPG. No telephone calls please.

*Cllr John Markham*

## BE A VOICE FOR HEALTH

A separate development is the establishment nationally of new Patient and Public Forums for each NHS Trust – Hospital, Primary Care (PCT) and Ambulance trusts – in December this year. A call is going out for residents from every walk of life who have an interest in health to become members of a forum for one of their local NHS Trusts – to be a 'Voice for Health' in their community.

For more information or an application pack, contact the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement on 0845 1207115 or visit [www.maketimeforhealth.org](http://www.maketimeforhealth.org).

*Cllr Dorothy Paddon*



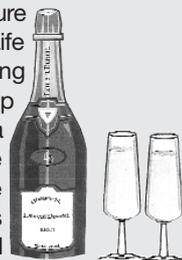
## A TREASURE UNDER THREAT

The jewel in Loughton's crown is the presence of Epping Forest on its doorstep. In its 12 mile extent the Forest encompasses a wide variety of landscapes rich in wildlife and in signs of changing human activity over the centuries.

This year is the 125th anniversary of the 1878 Epping Forest Act, which saved the Forest from enclosure by the local lords of the manor and other landowners. Without this Act of Parliament the Forest would probably by now be one enormous built-up area.

## CALLING ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS!

LRA needs your help in gathering photos of Loughton, both current and historic, to use in future issues of Loughton Life and our forthcoming website. To keep things interesting, a bottle of champagne will be awarded to the winning entry, as judged by the editorial committee. Please submit any entries or enquiries via e-mail to [Loughton.photos@btinternet.com](mailto:Loughton.photos@btinternet.com) or to Di Rhodes (details on back page).



## FEEDBACK PLEASE

The Loughton Life Editorial Group would like to be more interactive! So if you have ideas for articles, suggestions for improving the newsletter or simply want to let off steam about something that you think would also interest other LRA members, do please get in touch with one of us – Carol Murray, Di Rhodes or John Woods (contact details on back page).

The Forest is run by the Corporation of London, through a group of "Conservators".

The Forest today extends over 6,000 acres, but it has become more and more surrounded by residential and commercial development. The principal threat is that it will become an isolated 'green island' in a sea of urbanisation. This threat was recognised over 30 years ago, when the Corporation first adopted its continuing policy of purchasing farmland surrounding the boundaries of the forest, to act as a 'buffer' against further development. This 'buffer' land includes 70 acres of land at North Farm, which separates Loughton from Buckhurst Hill.

The Conservators want to protect and preserve the Forest's fabric, habitats and wildlife, while at the same time providing for sustainable public access, and they are now increasingly engaging with the public and with organisations which have a shared interest in the Forest, in order to plan its future management. Unfortunately, the aims of preservation and access can sometimes be in direct conflict.

A major cause of concern is the damage done by increased traffic on roads through the Forest. This affects not only the peace and quiet which people value there, but also, to a serious extent, the health of trees and wildlife over a wide area.

One of the benefits we were promised when the M11 was built was that the Epping New Road (A104) would be downgraded and that a degree of peace would return to the Forest, but in fact this road and Rangers Road are now busier than they ever were. There are plans afoot to prepare safety schemes for inclusion in Essex County Council's capital programme, and LRA County Councillor David Linnell is keeping a close eye on this. Currently under consideration are speed reduction schemes in Rangers Road and the Epping New Road, south of the Wake Arms roundabout.

Hopefully the changes will make these roads much safer for all the users of the Forest – motorists, walkers, horse-riders and cyclists alike – and the local wildlife. David will be keeping in close touch with progress and LRA will be giving updates in Loughton Life.

*Carol Murray*

## AROUND THE COUNCILS

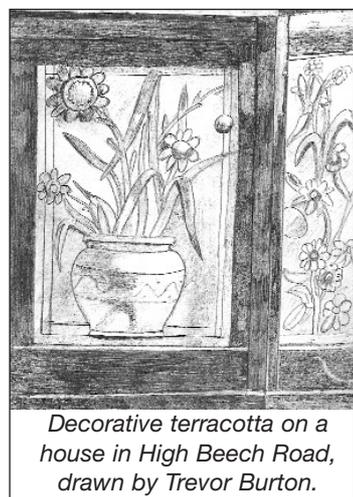
An application to replace the hotel and adjoining house on the corner of Lower Park Road and the High Road by a block of 14 flats was deferred by the District Council's Area Plans A Committee. The developer is required to reduce the height of the block and bring it into scale with the buildings in Lower Park Road. Cllr Peter House spoke at the meeting on behalf of 63 residents who had objected to the scheme.

LRA Town and District Councillors have worked with District Council officers and Finance Portfolio Holder Cllr John Knapman to reach a resolution on the transfer of responsibility for the Willingale Road allotments from the District to the Town Council. Once the legalities have been cleared the land will be handed over, with some 60% remaining as allotments and 40% being used as public open space.

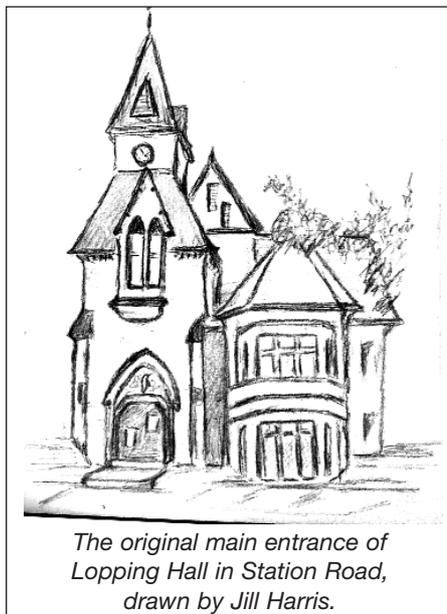
Town and District Councillors Chris and Caroline Pond are considering options for the boundaries of the proposed Debden Green Conservation Area on which they consulted residents last year. Most Conservation Areas include only buildings, but the Debden Green area also includes three historic landscapes – the Debden Hall garden, now overgrown but including a mysterious mound at the rear of Grosvenor Gardens; the Loughton (or Debden) parks, a medieval park-like enclosure, almost unaltered for 500 years which now forms the grounds of Debden House; and Ripley Grange, a 1930's creation. Chris and Caroline would be pleased to hear residents' views, which can then be incorporated into a formal submission if the District Council takes up the Conservation Area suggestion in its revision of the Local Plan next year.

Outline planning permission has been granted for the development of industrial, office and car sales premises on the Langston Road lorry park. Loughton Town Council and Ward Councillors will be consulted regarding roads which could provide limited lorry parking space for local drivers, and those roads which will require overnight or weight restrictions.

Town Cllr Suzanne Harper has tracked down the reason why the gate between Sainsbury's car park and the station car park has been closed, resulting in a long detour for pedestrians from Algers, Lower Park and Meadow Roads. It is a temporary closure on safety grounds while contractors are on site, due to a minor accident to a pedestrian. The gate will be reopened when the contractors leave.



*Decorative terracotta on a house in High Beech Road, drawn by Trevor Burton.*



*The original main entrance of Lopping Hall in Station Road, drawn by Jill Harris.*

LRA District Councillors are seeking to ensure that funds allocated up to 2006 for the improvement of local shopping parades will be protected. The programme for 2003/04 includes Borders Lane, and that for 2004/5 includes Loughton Way – the programme for 2005/06 has not yet been finalised.

The success of local takeaways is causing litter problems in The Uplands, as drivers who meet there discard their rubbish. Cllr Peter House has asked that this area be swept more frequently.

### LOUGHTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

<b>Chairman</b>	
Chris Harper	23 Algers Road IG10 4NG 020 8508 4770
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	
Diane Rhodes	9 Ashley Grove IG10 1HS 020 8508 3284
<b>Hon Secretary</b>	
Carol Murray	20 Queens Road IG10 1RS 020 8508 4892
<b>Treasurer</b>	
Tony Paddon	12 Forest View Road IG10 4DX 020 8508 2238
<b>Press Officer</b>	
Michael Benbow	28 Brook Road IG10 1BP 020 8508 4457
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	
Juliet Pollard	14 The Hawthorns IG10 3QT 020 8502 0552
<b>Committee</b>	
Ken Angold-Stephens	89 Lower Park Road, IG10 4NE 020 8281 0674
Jack Benjamin	23 Newnham Close IG10 4JG 020 8508 4765
Barbara Gillings	37 Hillyfields IG10 2PT 020 8508 6891
Ron Heath	46 Ollards Grove IG10 4DW 020 8508 3458
Jan Kinrade,	28 Hillyfields, IG10 2JS 020 8532 0488
Michael Kushner	97 High Road IG10 4JD 020 8508 8618
Brian Moore	6 Forest View Road IG10 4DX 020 8508 7112
Sheila Shillitto	11 Eleven Acre Rise IG10 1AN 020 8508 2900
John Woods	1a Woodland Road IG10 1HQ 020 8508 1764
Bela Yorke	8 The Greens Close IG10 1QE 020 8508 4729

### LRA COUNCILLORS (County, District & Town)

#### County Councillor St Mary's Division

David Linnell	20 Eleven Acre Rise IG10 1AN 020 8508 2932
<b>Roding Ward</b>	
Larry Ford (T)	47 Stonards Hill IG10 3EH 020 8508 4344
<b>St John's Ward</b>	
Kay Ellis (T)	31 Algers Road IG10 4NG 020 8508 6018
John Markham (D)	77 Queen's Road IG10 1RR 020 8508 1945
Roger Pearce (T)	32 Millsmead Way IG10 1LR 020 8281 1386
Caroline Pond (D)	7 Staples Road IG10 1HP 020 8508 2361
Chris Pond (T)	7 Staples Road IG10 1HP 020 8508 2361
Bob Wilmot (T)	50 Baldwins Hill IG10 1SF 020 8508 1987
<b>St Mary's Ward</b>	
Tony Lee (D&T)	33 Priory Road IG10 1AF 020 8508 7649
Pam Meadows (T)	98 Roding Road IG10 3EJ 020 8508 4136
Dorothy Paddon (D)	12 Forest View Road IG10 4DX 020 8508 2238
Mike Wardle (T)	61 The Drive IG10 1HG 020 8508 2771
<b>Forest Ward</b>	
Ken Faulkner (D)	'Briar Patch', Park Hill IG10 4ES 020 8508 1215
Suzanne Harper (T)	23 Algers Road IG10 4NG 020 8508 4770
Les Harris (T)	32 Upper Park IG10 4EQ 020 8508 1333
Peter House (D)	10 Connaught Avenue IG10 4DP 020 8532 1275
Judith Woodman (T)	164 Forest Road IG10 1EG 020 8502 0785

October 2003

© Loughton Residents Association 2003