

# LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE

*The newsletter of Loughton Residents Association*

October 2011  
Townwide edition

## Langston Road retail park

A developer has submitted a planning application for a small retail park in Langston Road in Debden, to bring in some of the larger retailers we don't have locally at present. Key points are reducing traffic congestion in Chigwell Lane/ Rectory Lane; protecting the green spaces on Chigwell Lane/Rectory Lane; a direct route from the retail site towards The Broadway itself; and avoiding competition with the shops in The Broadway and the High Road (we are concerned that the clothing chain stores now envisaged may compete with High Road shops).

The planning application is still being considered by planning officers and may be considered by councillors at a District Development Committee meeting on October 19. Details should be available a week before on the District Council website.

If permission is granted, the LRA Plans Group has concerns over whether in the longer-term it will be possible in practice to prevent traders on the retail park competing with The Broadway traders, and whether it would be possible to prevent other sites in the industrial area successfully applying for changes to use to retail, in competition with The Broadway traders.

In a reply to a question from LRA Cllr Jennie Hart, the leader of the District Council has given an absolute undertaking that it will not allow a supermarket or food hall to be opened as part of the proposed development. When the Sainsbury's store by Loughton station was built, LRA negotiated a ten year guarantee (rather than the five years offered) preventing the closure of the Broadway Sainsbury's. Sainsbury's now appear anxious to stay on The Broadway, which needs a small "anchor" supermarket alongside the individual traders. The loss of the supermarket at the Broadway, or one too small, might increase the grounds for a large supermarket on the Langston Road site, because of what is called the "sequential test" for approving supermarket locations.

*David Linnell*

## Get more from LRA!

Join LRA now - £5 per household until the end of 2012! You will get extra newsletters and can opt to receive our weekly email local news bulletin. Members' support for our work is vital as subscriptions pay our costs such as printing newsletters and election expenses. To join, see back page. (Subscriptions for existing members are due each January).



## River concerns

The Roding has always been subject to occasional seasonal flooding. The Environment Agency (EA) has carried out upstream flood relief work for a number of years but it is impossible to eliminate all the risks and climate change is expected to exacerbate the problem. This may put properties built close to the flood plain at risk. EA have stated that this does not threaten any properties in the Loughton area but it does cause concern for a few properties elsewhere. However, the District Council also has some concerns about the lack of precision in the EA assessments and feels that they may have under-estimated the risk areas. Worryingly, the EA has also announced that it intends to divest itself of any responsibility to maintain the river and wishes to pass it onto the Council. They say they will continue to maintain Loughton Brook. This seems a clear case of one public body making its government savings by passing responsibility onto others without passing on the funding to go with it. The District Council, supported by the LRA, is taking up its concerns with EA.

## Broadway parking review

LRA has been pressing the District Council to provide a residents' parking scheme, and succeeded in getting it reinstated after the Conservative majority cancelled the scheme. However, we still cannot be sure that the scheme will go ahead although it has already been through an initial public consultation. The Council is finishing off schemes in Epping and Buckhurst Hill first and will only carry on with the Broadway scheme if there is any money left. Given the mismanagement so far by the District Council and the County Council, we are very concerned - and very angry - about the situation, which leaves Debden residents under tremendous parking pressure. Loughton also needs the same for streets off the High Rd - but that's another story!

## Could YOU make a difference?

We are looking for LRA supporters to stand as candidates in Loughton wards next May for the Town Council and the District Council. To find out what's involved, and how you could make a difference locally, contact Cllr Chris Pond or David Linnell (see back page for contact details). Training is provided, and you would be working as part of a strong and experienced group.

**Join Loughton Residents Association NOW! Details above**

## Planning & licensing matters

The LRA Plans Group looks at all planning and licensing applications in Loughton; we consult residents and/or support or object to individual applications as appropriate. Most of LRA's district councillors are on planning committees, as are some of our Town councillors. Because of the code of conduct they cannot express a view on specific applications in case they come to committee. However, they can give advice about speaking at the Town and District committees, consulting planning officers, Conservation Area rules, the Local Plan, or the appeal system. Objectors can send their Cllrs, for information, their reasons for objecting to applications or indeed applicants can send reasons for agreeing. Cllrs' details are on page 4.

Full details of all current cases are available on LRA's website. For example, it recently objected to an application to create a commuter car park on Green Belt land next to Theydon Bois station because the Central Line is already at or over capacity at peak times, and more commuters from the rest of Essex using the line from Theydon Bois would put further pressure on Loughton commuters. It is also monitoring the licensing position of the gun shop on Forest Road and Luxe (formerly Minx and Crystal Lounge) on the High Rd.

### Changes to the planning system

Over the summer the Government put out a lot of consultative documents about the planning system. LRA is very concerned about some of the proposals. It is not opposed to new housing or new businesses, but Loughton has very little unoccupied land, other than our treasured green spaces.

Some of the changes could mean a fundamental upheaval in the way the planning system operates, and could leave loopholes for developers to push through unwanted and very damaging developments. LRA has been poring over the details, and working with the National Organisation of Residents Associations (NORA) to put in objections - or praise - as appropriate. Such objections led the Government to change tack on a proposal to allow new schools to be set up in existing office or commercial buildings, without any account of their suitability or the impact the new school would have on surrounding residents (we are well aware of the traffic problems two of Loughton's schools cause for those living nearby) - luckily ministers saw sense and these applications will continue to go through the planning system.

*David Linnell*



## Recreational pursuits

The new outdoor gym, at the end of Roding Road, has been formally opened. LRA Cllr Suzanne Harper who chairs the Town Council's Recreation Committee, said: "The gym appeals to all age groups and those who would not normally go to an indoor gym. We see it as a great way to promote health and fitness for everyone, free". The outdoor gym forms part of the Town Council's plans to improve the facilities at the recreation ground. The tennis courts will soon be resurfaced, internal fencing provided, and a 5-a-side and basketball court added. The Council's next project, currently in the planning stages, is to improve the football changing rooms and car park area to provide a community café and toilet.

## How LRA Cllrs can help

I recently requested that an overgrown tree be cut back for an elderly resident in Goldings Rd as falling leaves were a slip hazard on steep steps to her property and also hard work to sweep them up. Following a complaint I got the District Council to repair a flight of ten steps between the pavement and road in Goldingham Ave which were hazardous, particularly for elderly residents who had actually fallen on them. I contacted County Highways about a manhole cover, apparently missing for about a year in on Colebrook Path, which has now been replaced. I also reported a missing street name sign in Sycamore Close to the District Council, which has now been replaced.

I reported three cases of fly tipping including asbestos sheeting to the District Council who subsequently removed them. I persuaded the District Council to replace missing/damaged litterbins in Valley Hill and Roding Road respectively. Following request from a local teenager I got Loughton Town Council to erect goalposts on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground for impromptu games of football over the summer when all goalposts are normally removed.

*Cllr David Wixley*

**For more information about LRA or Loughton please visit  
[www.loughtonresidents.co.uk](http://www.loughtonresidents.co.uk)**

## Policing issues

The Essex Police force currently has a budget of £269m pa but cuts to the government police grant and other financial pressures means it needs to find savings of c£41m (15%) by 2014/15.

This will mean widespread changes, including a proposal to limit the front counter service at Loughton Police Station from noon to 6pm, Monday to Saturday. The move is intended to cut costs and increase the number of neighbourhood policing officers available. In a survey, 94% of Essex residents said they would report a crime by phone, rather than going to a police station. The police aim to improve their phone system, and may provide a direct link from the outside of Loughton police station to their call service when the counter inside is closed.

Over the years LRA has fought hard to keep Loughton police station as a "charging" station, manned 24 hours a day, and the base for police activity in the area. Because of the cost of bringing the three cells up to current Home Office standards, they have been closed. Officers now have to take suspects to Harlow or even Brentwood. Neighbourhood policing teams will continue to operate 24 hours a day, based in Loughton, but the "response" teams are based in Chigwell. Further cuts will have to be made, and it may be that the reduction in front counter service is less objectionable than some of the possible alternatives.

### *The "riots"*

On Monday August 8 Essex Police sent around 100 officers to support the Met Police. Locally there was some minor disorder in Buckhurst Hill, and some minor damage to a police vehicle in Loughton (two male youths have been arrested). LRA thinks that the police's prompt action probably warned off troublemakers and is very grateful for their efforts.

### *Have your say*

There are regular monthly meetings where you can meet local PCs. Ask at the police station or visit [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk)

## Leisure centre

After pressure from Cllr Rose Brookes and others the Octagon at the leisure centre will have air conditioning installed very soon. Rose has also been working closely with SLM to improve the poolside showers and cleanliness of changing room.

## Street trees

Some years ago the flowering cherry trees that were such a feature of the island bed on Brooklyn Parade died. At the time, LRA hoped that changes could be made to the road layout to reduce the problems caused by the High Road traffic lights, but there now appears no chance of this happening soon. LRA Cllrs Chris Pond and Jennie Hart approached the District Council Parks department about getting them replaced and have been told that new trees will be planted this coming autumn/winter. If you know of a missing/ dead Loughton street tree, please let us know.



## LRA - 30 years old

LRA was formed in 1981 as the Central Loughton Residents' Association. Initially it was a single-issue organisation, protesting against the disruption that would be caused to the residents of The Drive and the Habgood Estate by a Presto supermarket. CLRA wanted the retention of the old Victorian Albion Granaries building and conversion into small shops. More generally, it was a protest against how Cllrs (all Conservative) took decisions as an anonymous committee, behind closed doors, apparently without consulting residents. The protest against Presto (later Safeway and Morrisons) was to no avail, as planning permission was given and the shop opened in late autumn 1982.

The "Central" was soon dropped as problems came in from all over town and the fledgling LRA put up a candidate for the Essex County Council elections in May 1981, Howard Kleyn, against the long-standing Tory county councillor, Arthur Welch. The promise of a fresh and more open style of local representation appealed greatly to Loughton voters and he came top of the poll. The next year LRA candidates were put up against sitting Cllrs on Epping Forest District Council and again won.

The first LRA Cllrs on the District Council were regarded as dangerous "activists" by the party politicians, but these stalwarts were known for not fearing to speak their minds, consulting residents wherever possible. They opposed the centralisation of offices at Epping from the previous HQ in Loughton as a costly, unnecessary, exercise. They worked tirelessly on planning committees to try to prevent the sort of aberrations in previous decades making the centre of the town such an architectural mess. An early gain was the first Council tree officer. LRA argued passionately for the formation of a local town council in Loughton. It was resisted at first, but became reality in 1995, with first elections in 1996. LRA has always made it easy to contact councillors. Before 1981 it was difficult to even find their addresses.

Subsequently LRA has taken control of the Town Council and LRA Cllrs at the Town, District and County Councils have worked hard to retain, maintain and improve local facilities. LRA's valued volunteers have continued to deliver two newsletters a year to all the households in the town, with more going to members. More recently LRA has set up a website and emails local news to nearly 500 LRA member households each week.

**For more information about LRA & Loughton please visit  
[www.loughtonresidents.co.uk](http://www.loughtonresidents.co.uk)**

## £5 if you value Loughton

LRA depends upon members. Please support us by joining.  
I enclose £5 till end-2012 .....£5.....  
I enclose a donation for LRA's work.....£.....  
Name.....  
Address.....  
Postcode IG10..... Phone.....  
email (if any).....

I would like LRA's weekly email local news bulletin

Please complete & send to LRA Membership Secretary,  
14 The Hawthorns, Loughton, IG10 3QT. All membership  
information is held by LRA for its own purposes and is not  
made available to any other body.

To check if you've paid, or to pay direct from a bank  
account, or by Standing Order, ring 020 8508 2932 or  
email [contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk](mailto:contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk).

## LRA who's who

### ALL ENQUIRIES:

[contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk](mailto:contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk)

8508 2932

PRESS OFFICER	Michael Benbow	8508 4457
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Juliet Pollard	
14 The Hawthorns IG10 3QT		8502 0552
INFORMATION CO-ORDINATOR	Ian Allsop	8532 0053
SECRETARY	Stephen Pewsey	8508 5582
MINUTES SEC.	Imogen Lawrence	8532 0050
TREASURER	Miriam Murphy	01992 530221

### COMMITTEE

Jack Benjamin	8508 4765
Rebecca Fricker	8508 8369
Leon Girling	8418 0076
Barry Johnston	8508 0843
Kevin Latchford	8502 4568
Tasha Lattimore	07949 826891
David Linnell	8508 2932
Ann Obeney	8502 3604
Bela Yorke	8508 4729

### LRA COUNCILLORS

(D = District Council; T = Town Council)

#### COUNTY: Loughton (Central)

Chris Pond 7 Staples Rd	8508 2361
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#### ALDERTON WARD

Rose Brookes (D&T) 3 Lower Park Road	8502 5981
Lance Leonard (D) 25 The Lindens	8502 0771

## Want to help?

If you would like to help LRA by becoming a local  
councillor, getting involved in what we do, or by spending  
an hour occasionally delivering newsletters near where you  
live, please contact David Linnell or Chris Pond (phone  
numbers below or email [contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk](mailto:contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk)).

## Matthew Brown RIP

We were very sorry to hear of the death of Matthew Brown (of  
Browns Garage). There is an obituary on our website.

## London 2012

We want to see Loughton enjoying the period of the Games,  
with lots of local events and fun. Now's the time to start  
planning. Loughton Town Council would welcome your  
ideas. Many activities require official permissions, such as  
licences or planning applications, so check in good time.

## Monthly farmers' market

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

### BROADWAY WARD

Jennie Hart (D) 74 Queens Road	8508 3661
Katie Nicholson (T)	07904 069998

### FAIRMEAD WARD

Tessa Cochrane (D) 16 Shaftesbury	8508 4148
Carol Davies (T) 13 Colebrook Gardens	8508 4234
David Wixley (D) 2 Copper Beech Court Goldings Rd	8418 9284

### FOREST WARD

Jill Angold-Stephens (T) 89 Lower Park Road	8281 0674
Colin Finn (D) 16 Church Close	8508 5577
Suzanne Harper (T) 23 Algers Road	8508 4770
Peter House (T) 52 Baldwins Hill	8532 1275

### RODING WARD

Ken Angold-Stephens (D&T) 89 Lower Park Road	8281 0674
Margaret Chalk (T) 49 Southview Road	8508 2226
David Wixley (T) 2 Copper Beech Court Goldings Rd	8418 9284

### ST JOHN'S WARD

John Markham (D) 77 Queens Road	8508 1945
Stephen Pewsey (T) 59 Wroths Path	8508 5582
Caroline Pond (D&T) 7 Staples Road	8508 2361
Chris Pond (T) 7 Staples Road	8508 2361

### ST MARY'S WARD

Richard Cohen (D) 61 Traps Hill	8502 3242
Chris Harper (T) 23 Algers Road	8508 4770
Lucette Howe (T) 19 Sparelease Hill	8508 3719
Tracey Thomas (T) 110 Grosvenor Drive	07508 193187

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**LRA's Farmers' Markets, High Rd, first Sunday each month**