

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Members' Edition

*The newsletter of
Loughton Residents Association
June 2012*



Debden Day 2012

Election success for LRA

The recent elections to Epping Forest District Council and Loughton Town Council proved to be a tremendous success for LRA, with 24 out of 25 candidates successful. In Broadway Ward LRA beat Pat Richardson, the sitting BNP Cllr. With 12 Cllrs LRA remains the biggest group on the District Council other than the Conservatives (39 Cllrs) while the Lib Dems and Labour have four and one respectively. All 18 LRA candidates for the Town Council were successful.

Across the seven wards, LRA candidates received 16,297 votes. For the town council Caroline Pond was elected with over 77% of the St John's Ward votes, Leon Girling with 67% of the Broadway Ward votes and Imogen Lawrence got two thirds of the St Mary's Ward votes. For the district council Ken Angold-Stephens was elected with 63% of Roding Ward votes. The only LRA candidate who, unfortunately, failed to get elected to the District Council was Rose Brookes, who lost by a relatively narrow margin – see opposite.

A full list of LRA's current Cllrs is on the back page.

LRA would like to thank all of the people who supported it throughout the campaign, particularly those that canvassed and delivered leaflets, and especially to the voters themselves.

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 on back page, or email contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk).

And thanks to past stalwarts

Thanks go to long-serving member of Loughton Town Council, Suzanne Harper, who retired in May. She had been on the council as a member for Forest Ward since its inception in 1996. She served as Chairman 2001-02 and Mayor 2007 to 2008, and had been very involved in the building of the Murray Hall Community Centre.

The elections saw a disappointing result for Rose Brookes, in her home ward of Forest, having stood there instead of Alderton. Rose served 8 years on the Town Council, and 4 years on the District Council. She played a big part in turning the tide against the BNP in Loughton, patiently canvassing during several difficult years. Rose worked closely with the management of Loughton Pool to improve conditions and extend opening times. When the Conservatives at Epping proposed housing development on the green spaces in Debden, Rose spoke eloquently in Council to keep open spaces for the quality of environment and recreation in the area, earning applause from the public gallery. Her hard work, along with that of other LRA Cllrs, has earned a reprieve (at least for now) for these areas. We hope to see Rose back in action for residents before too long.

Also retiring and due thanks are LRA Cllrs Peter House, District Cllr for Forest 2002-04, 2006-08, and Town Cllr 2008 to 2012, Lucette Howe, Town Cllr for St Mary's 2008-12, Katie Nicholson, Town Cllr for Broadway 2009-12 and Chris Harper (former Essex County Cllr 1997-2001) who was co-opted for 2011-12 in St Mary's ward.

Enjoy July 1st

There's LRA's Farmers' Market in the High Road (9am-2pm) and 10am onwards there's cricket and entertainments at the cricket ground (bottom of Church Hill).

**Could you help further improve Loughton?
Contact us**

Planning & licensing matters

The LRA Plans Group looks at all planning and licensing applications in Loughton. It consults residents and supports, or objects to, individual applications as appropriate. Details of some current cases are on LRA's website.

Shops by Sainsbury's, Torrington Avenue: The District Council has approved the demolition of the shops and the number of car-parking spaces will increase from 26 to 44. LRA Cllr Jennie Hart has been in touch with Sainsbury's about making sure the spaces are used by shoppers and not by commuters.

22 Forest Road (used to be The Tool Shop): The District Council turned down an application to turn it into a restaurant, partly because of potential problems with waste and odours and partly because it has now been let to a retail business.

Morrisons, High Road: Application for extended hours for the sale of alcohol (6am – midnight) and removal of restrictions on Christmas Day and Good Friday. The LRA Plans Group has asked Morrisons whether they are prepared to amend the current application to cover the same hours as the current store opening hours (8am – 9pm, Sundays 11am – 5pm), but it appears they may be planning extended hours during the Olympics period (there are no planning restrictions on Morrisons opening hours).

112 High Road: The LRA Plans Group has objected to the proposed change of use of existing hairdressing salon to an estate agent, as it considers the loss of a retail shop will reduce the vitality and viability of this part of the High Road. There are already 13 estate agents listed in the area.

Brown's Garage, High Road/Station Road: The service section at Oakwood Hill remains in business but the car showrooms in the High Road/Station Road have closed. In May 2009 the District Council gave planning permission for change of use of the High Road showroom to a retail unit, and the Station Road unit to a restaurant and two retail units. Brown's has applied to let the High Road unit to an estate agent, and the LRA Plans Group has objected to the loss of potential retail space.

Luxe, High Road: LRA was contacted by a resident who had seen ads on Twitter for Luxe opening: from June 1st, every Friday until 3am and from June 3rd, every Sunday until 2am. These hours are later than Luxe's permitted hours and although it has made an application to extend them, the next meeting of the District Council Licensing sub-committee is not until June 12th. LRA knows a number of local residents are very concerned about the disturbance any extension of hours would bring. After LRA contacted the District Council the manager of Luxe has agreed to stop the ads.

Late-night venues in Loughton: If you see anti-social behaviour please report it to the police at the time. If you think that the noise is unreasonable, please complain at the time to the 24-hour District Council online service (01992 564000).



Wheatsheaf, York Hill: Residents noticed that construction had begun on the forecourt. LRA Cllrs Caroline and Chris Pond immediately raised this with the District Council, which says the area isn't covered by Conservation Area (CA) rules. The pub has also now applied for planning permission to convert the garden into a car-park. Residents also say that the pub will be applying for later hours.

The garden is within the York Hill Conservation Area and is a noted and pleasant entry feature to the York Hill and Staples Road CAs. Since the pub last changed owners, LRA has noted a vast expansion of parking in the area, often obstructive, and so thinks that the existing forecourt parking should have been kept. There are also concerns about the trees on the site. LRA Plans Group has written to local residents, and has registered strong objections to the changes.

Policing Loughton

Essex Police has now reorganised so that based at Loughton there are neighbourhood teams, response teams - responding to 999 calls and starting off the investigation - and Area Investigation teams, which take over the investigations through to charging etc, leaving the response teams free to act on calls. This should mean that our neighbourhood constables (of which there are more) and PCSOs spend much less time being diverted away from local policing. The neighbourhood teams will continue to police Loughton through to the early mornings on Friday and Saturday nights. They will work closely with the British Transport Police and the Met.

Visit www.loughtonresidents.co.uk for
more information

Street Pastors: Every Friday evening from 10pm to 2.30am you will see a group of volunteer Street Pastors from local churches out in the Loughton High Road area. All of their work is done in conjunction with Essex Police. Their role is to build up trust and earn credibility by listening, caring and helping people on our streets in a practical, unconditional way. Street Pastors in Loughton have been funded by Epping Forest District Council, Loughton Town Council, Essex Police and Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership and there are over 21 volunteers from a collaboration of 6 churches in the area.

Highways action

LRA Cllr Ken Angold-Stephens has managed to persuade County Highways to pay for the clearance of dead elms along Great Eastern Path which had fallen over, probably due to Dutch elm disease. Technically the land up to the ditch belongs to the residents facing it on the estate, but Highways agreed in the end, as in practice residents would be unwilling or unable to deal with them. Ken has also persuaded NCP to repair the fencing around the Loughton Station car park and the graffiti over the lintel of the underpass has been removed. And after over five years of badgering by LRA and particularly Ken, the whole of Station Approach, including the “banjo” used by taxis, has been adopted as public highway. Previously it was a mix of Transport for London and local authority responsibility. This should mean an end to any buck-passing on repairs and cleaning for which Ken has persuaded the District Council to do the whole job.

Footpath from Borders Lane to Rectory Lane

This has been closed off by developers but LRA wants to get it re-opened. The best (permanent) way to do so would be to establish it as a public footpath. For that the Town Council will need evidence from residents who have used it. If you, your parents, or a friend or relative, have been using the footpath for at least the last 20 years please email LRA Cllr Lance Leonard (see back page).

Parking

LRA Cllr Jennie Hart has been trying to get new parking signs on The Broadway to let drivers know about the car-parks in the roads either side. These have appeared, but one is in the wrong place, so Jennie will be chasing County Highways to correct.

LRA Cllr Chris Pond took up residents’ concerns about the new signs at the clinic on Rectory Lane. The wrong notice was put up but should be changed as soon as possible making it clear that people with business at the clinic may still park there and only commuter long-stayers will be penalised.

LRA Cllr Lance Leonard has been dealing with a query about the problem verge between 126 and 150 Borders Lane. It is hard to strike the right balance between the need for residents’ parking and keeping the verges attractive. Small bushes were planted to prevent parking but were soon crushed as cars still parked there. Lance has persuaded the District Council to supply fresh plants.

Danger spots

LRA Cllr Chris Pond has been following up residents’ concerns about the state of Burney Drive, used by 14 buses an hour, in the hope of getting it reconstructed. Chris, as well as LRA Cllrs Caroline Pond and Stephen Pewsey, is also supporting moves to introduce a 20mph limit from Ripley View to the Theydon Bois side of the Davenant School entrance on Debden Lane, provided the 40 limit north of Ripley Grange is also reduced to 30. This would reduce confusion and also safeguard the very dangerous bend, where there have been several accidents.

In the parking zone

LRA fully appreciates the difficulties people living in streets near the High Road suffer from commuter parking, and have been trying to resolve the issue for more than a decade. LRA managed to get work on a parking scheme started some ten years ago, but it was abandoned by the Conservatives when they took over as the majority party on the District Council. LRA believes that the best way to proceed, subject to resident consultation, would be to institute resident parking zones (RPZs) in all areas within c500 yards of the High Road plus limited metered short-term visitor parking in marked bays, or visitor permits).

Parking has recently been taken over by a new body, the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP), based in Colchester, and set up by the County Council. District Cllrs no longer have significant input into parking policy matters. Following numerous requests from residents, LRA County Cllr Chris Pond has asked the NEPP to research the introduction of RPZs in the area bounded by Forest Road, Staples Road, York Hill, and the High Road. Subject to residents’ views, Chris will be happy to press for a scheme for this area, and LRA will work with anyone else who shares our concerns for the situation in which residents find themselves. The area south of Forest Road is in the Loughton South & Buckhurst Hill division, represented by Conservative Cllr Valerie Metcalfe.

There are also parking problems in many other Loughton areas, particularly around The Broadway and Debden station, where there is a proposed (watered-down) scheme due to be implemented after similar schemes in Epping and Buckhurst Hill are completed. LRA will be pressing for this to be completed, and will also continue to looking for ways of reducing the problems elsewhere in Loughton.

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Langston Rd Retail Park

As expected this major planning application has been approved by the District Development Committee of the District Council. The LRA voted against approval because of worries over creating a precedent affecting the rest of the Langston Rd Industrial estate, the adverse effect on the High Road and The Broadway, poor transport links and walking access, and the proposed highway changes to Rectory Lane/Chigwell Lane. LRA will continue to work to get as suitable an outcome as possible. With Westfield open there must also be doubts about the viability of this scheme.

Broadway surgery

Broadway District Cllr Jennie Hart now holds a surgery in the Restore Community shop on The Broadway on the first Thursday in the month from 10-11am, although there will be no surgery in July and August.

Contacting the LRA

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Philip Abraham (T) 1 Lancaster Drive	8502 2925
Lance Leonard (D) 25 The Lindens	8502 0771
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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 local Cllrs and LRA helpers. LRA has two stands at all markets available free for charities and other local voluntary organisations. Spaces are available from January 2013 onwards.

£5 if you value Loughton

We are very grateful to all members who have already paid their 2012 subscriptions. If you haven't done so yet, please send a cheque for £5, payable to LRA, to LRA Membership Secretary, 14 The Hawthorns, Loughton IG10 3QT. To check if you've paid, or to pay direct from a bank account, or by Standing Order, email contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk or ring 020 8508 2932.

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