

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Members' Edition

Loughton Residents Association newsletter
June 2014

Election success

We are delighted to report that all six LRA candidates standing at last month's district council elections were successful.

In Alderton ward Chris Roberts won with 58 per cent of the turnout, in Broadway Chris Pond got 41 per cent of the vote while in Fairmead Louise Mead was chosen by half of those who voted. In Forest Ward Sharon Weston secured 56 per cent while in St John's and St Mary's Bob Jennings and Howard Kauffman won an impressive 70 and 67 per cent of the vote respectively.

The Conservative party candidate finished second in all wards except Broadway and Fairmead, where the UKIP one did. Congratulations to all of the candidates and thanks to all those who voted and supported the campaign. LRA will continue to work hard at all Council levels to speak up for Loughton first.

Oakwood Hill estate

Residents, and LRA Cllrs, have become increasingly concerned about the condition of this former 1970s Greater London Council (GLC) Estate (133 houses, 144 flats and 136 maisonettes) between Oakwood Hill and the River Roding).

LRA is therefore delighted that, following discussions with LRA Cllrs Lance Leonard and Chris Pond and others, the District Council has agreed to a £400,000 Estate Enhancement Scheme, covering mainly improvements to the paths and roads and street lighting, funded by the Council and by Essex County Council. The Town Council will fund signage while the District Council will set up a taskforce including senior housing officers, local Cllrs and interested residents.

Public rights of way

Essex County Council has now updated its interactive map of public rights of way. You can now select footpaths, bridleways and byways separately. See www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-Roads/Getting-Around/Walking/Public-Rights-of-Way/Interactive-map.aspx

Loughton Arts Centre

Loughton Arts Centre at Lopping Hall on the High Road is looking for volunteers to help steward the centre. They work three hour shifts, 10 am - 1pm in the morning or 1 - 4pm in the afternoon, Monday - Saturday.

If you would like to help please contact Diane Rhodes (dianejrhodes@gmail.com).



Council Tax

LRA-led Loughton Town Council is not increasing its part of Council Tax this year.

Part of its financial strategy is to secure external grant funding to offset the costs of new projects. In 2013, the Council received £8,640 from the Aiming High for Disabled Children scheme towards new children's play equipment at the Colebrook Lane Play Area and £10,000 from Essex County Council's Community Initiatives Fund (CIF) for the new outdoor gym on the Willingale Road Playing Field. It also secured £20,000 from CIF towards the cost of a new accessible path on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground.

New government regulations put before Parliament will require councils to publish, as a matter of record, how each councillor votes on any budget decisions, including Council Tax changes. (Previously, individual voting records were not usually public with only the overall vote outcome published.)

Members' newsletters and local news by email
£5 for 2014

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.

Church Hill former car-park (next to The Plume of Feathers): A developer intends to submit a planning application for a block of six flats with a Sainsbury's Local on the ground floor. Many local residents and traders are concerned about this. The LRA Plans Group has sent out a letter inviting comments.

Taxis: From 2 June all taxis licensed by the District Council will be metered (this follows a public consultation last summer). Taxis can charge less than the metered rate, and can negotiate rates if going outside the district (e.g. to an airport).

48 Church Lane: There has been an appeal against the District Council's refusal to allow the building of four houses on this plot (so-called garden-grabbing). Local residents and the LRA Plans Group will be fighting the appeal.

Old Brown's garage, Station Road: Nando's is due to finally open on this site in the second week of July.

Luxe, High Road: The night club has been allowing customers to use its terrace late into the evenings, without planning permission. To support action on this the District Council requires evidence that residents have been disturbed. Please contact Mike Richardson on 01992 564422. In addition, the LRA Plans Group has objected to Luxe's retrospective planning application for change of use to a night club, because of the disturbances to nearby residents and because this use has created a dead daytime area at the heart of the High Road.

Molen's, 209D High Road: The District Council has approved an alcohol licence with conditions, including no licensed activities on the pavement tables (if planning permission is granted for these) and restricted hours from 11am – 10.30pm.

Burton Road site: Despite LRA opposition, the Conservative-led District Council is now proposing 56 properties (with inadequate parking) rather than the 31 initially suggested.

Langston Road retail development. The District Council and the developer have signed a S106 agreement and negotiations are now taking place on a joint corporate structure.

35 Forest Road: The LRA Plans Group is objecting strongly to proposals for extensions which it thinks would be wholly unsympathetic to the existing attractive balanced row of Victorian cottages.

Conservation Area for Baldwins Hill: Proposals are likely to be put for approval to the District Council Cabinet within a month or so.



New town mayor

At a recent meeting of the Town Council, LRA Cllr Jill Angold-Stephens handed over the mayoral chain to LRA Cllr Sharon Weston. It was reported that Jill had attended over seventy official engagements during the year, had raised over £1,000 for the Chigwell Riding Trust, and had done much to promote the town and the work of the Council.

Crime update

Another new local police chief

Essex Police seems to operate a revolving door policy locally, but at least the new Epping Forest Chief Inspector Denis Morrissey has worked here before and so knows the area. LRA will be suggesting to her that, as well as burglaries, local officers need to focus on the continuing problems of anti-social behaviour.

Car damage in the Jessel Green area

CCTV has been installed following a spate of incidents. If you see anything like this going on, please report it to the police on 999 emergencies; 101 otherwise.

Fifteen, York Hill

LRA has had a report of recent problems when customers leave the premises. We will follow this up, but if this affects you please report it to the police (999 for emergencies and 101 otherwise, and get an incident number) and to the District Council's licensing department, as both need evidence in order to take any action.

Smarts Lane

LRA has had reports from residents of damage to cars, and cars driving the wrong way, in the small hours. Please report all incidents to the police (999 for emergencies, 101 otherwise) and get an incident number. LRA wants to encourage them to spend more time on these cases.

Visit www.loughtonresidents.org.uk
for more information

Councillor action

The Broadway

LRA Cllr Ken-Angold Stephens has followed-up residents' complaints about problems with groups of youths (12-16 year olds) prowling the area, particularly near the arch in the central area, causing a nuisance and daubing graffiti on the walls, early evening (6 – 8pm) and later. The police are now targeting nuisance youths and anti-social behaviour, using regular patrols. They have sent letters to the parents of three children about their children's behaviour. Please reports incidents on 999 or 101 and get an incident number.

Before she stepped down at the recent election LRA Cllr Jennie Hart had been chasing the District Council about the poor state of the entrances, hallways and corridors of the flats above the shops (this is a difficult problem to solve because parts are the responsibility of owners of flats bought under the Government's purchase scheme). She continued her campaign to get the area under the archway cleared up and the graffiti should now have been removed. The culprit was caught on CCTV and the District Council will be claiming back the cost of cleaning off the graffiti. Jennie had also been pursuing the state of the grass on Brickclamps Path surrounding the area where (as a result of her efforts) there's now a rose border. The Council promised to improve the mowing regime. Jennie also managed to get a separate area for the big bins on Brickclamps Path, although more space is still needed here.

Places for children starting school in September

Following the problems which resulted from too many children applying for local places, Staples Road School has decided to bring some of its planned September 2015 expansion forward to this September. As a result the County Council has sent out offers of places to the next 15 children on the waiting list. The Council will also try to find space in a Loughton school for the three children allocated to schools in Nazeing or Waltham Abbey. LRA Cllrs Chris Pond and Ken Angold-Stephens have been working with the school and County Officers to bring this about.

Get an allotment

The Loughton Potato Ground allotments are a wonderful place - south facing slope, good soil and growing conditions and the best view in Loughton. Friendly plot holders willing to give advice to novice growers. If you are interested in growing your own fruit and veg, call Eileen on 0208 502 4121.

There are also allotments available at Roding Road and Willingale Road. For more information contact the Town Council (www.loughton-tc.gov.uk/).



Highways and parking

Alderton Hill drain

LRA has made a formal complaint to the County Council about its lack of effective action to resolve a drainage problem over the last four years, despite repeated complaints. The drain is right by the narrow footpath at the side of Roding Valley High School, Alderton Hill and has repeatedly blocked up, so that residents and children get drenched by passing traffic when it rains. The drain empties into the nearby brook, and it is the exit into the brook which gets blocked – a permanent solution is needed.

Algers Mead and Algers Close

Following an enquiry from a resident, LRA Cllr Ken Angold-Stephens has checked that these roads are on the (long) Local Highways panel list for consideration of a residents' parking scheme (no. 27 of about 200 items). He has asked for double-yellows on the corners for safety reasons as these can be obtained more easily – and less slowly – than a residents' parking scheme.

Ken also recently replied to a local resident who had enquired about what could be done about the problems on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground with dog mess.

Roding Lane bridge works

The County Council say that they expected these to have finished by the end of April but more work is needed and there may be occasional lane closures at off-peak times, with temporary traffic lights.

Dave Stannard

We are very sorry to have to report the death of Dave Stannard. Dave had been active in the community for at least 40 years, organising events, serving as a councillor and supporting campaigns and events such as the annual Debden Day.

**Not getting LRA's local news bulletins by email?
Email contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk**

Stay in touch

Our website address is now www.loughtonresidents.org.uk (although www.loughtonresidents.co.uk will still work).

For technical reasons, our LRA email addresses will still end in “.co.uk”. Members can get our email bulletins of local news (email contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk if you aren't on the list and would like these). We will also be putting out occasional topical messages on Facebook and Twitter – please follow us at www.facebook.com/LoughtonResidents and @LoughtonRA.



Farmers' markets

The LRA organises farmers' markets on the first Sunday of each month (9am–2pm) on Centric Parade, Loughton High Road - come and meet LRA Cllrs and representatives. LRA makes two stands available free for charities and other local voluntary organisations (to find out about free dates please contact contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk).

New mini-roundabout

For years, LRA has been asking for safety measures at the junction of Traps Hill, Borders Lane and Alderton Hill. Finally, pressure from LRA Cllrs Chris Pond and Lance Leonard, and others, has led to the roundabout appearing. Please drive carefully while drivers get used to it.

CONTACTING LRA

ALL ENQUIRIES:

contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk	8508 2932
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY Juliet Pollard	8502 0552
ELECTIONS OFFICER Michael Benbow	8508 4457
14 The Hawthorns IG10 3QT	8502 0552
LOUGHTON LIFE EDITOR Ian Allsop	8532 0053
SECRETARY Stephen Pewsey	
MINUTES SEC. Susan Creevy	
TREASURER Miriam Murphy	01992 815525

COMMITTEE

Eva Blasco	8923 0065	Peter House	8532 1275
Rose Brookes	8502 5981	Barry Johnston	8508 0843
Tessa Cochrane	8508 4148	Kevin Latchford	8502 4568
Steve Eaton	8923 0065	Lance Leonard	8502 0771
Rebecca Fricker	8508 8369	David Linnell	8508 2932
Suzanne Harper	8508 4770	George Meltser	8502 3006
Jennie Hart	8508 3661	Bela Yorke	8508 4729

LRA COUNCILLORS

(D = District Council; T = Town Council)

COUNTY: Loughton (Central)

Chris Pond 7 Staples Rd 8508 2361

ALDERTON WARD

Philip Abraham (T) 1 Lancaster Drive 8502 2925
Chris Roberts (D) 107 Colson Road 07952 753 081
Tracey Thomas (D&T) 110 Grosvenor Drive 07930 418615

BROADWAY WARD

Leon Girling (D&T) 95 Willingale Road 8418 0076
John Mahoney (T) 149 Colebrook Lane 8502 3192
Chris Pond (D) 7 Staples Rd 8508 2361

FAIRMEAD WARD

Carol Davies (T) 13 Colebrook Gardens 8508 4234
Judy Jennings (T) 94 York Hill 8508 1861
Louise Mead (D) 22 Lower Road 07547 264561
David Wixley (D) 2 Copper Beech Court, Goldings Road 8418 9284

FOREST WARD

Jill Angold-Stephens (T) 89 Lower Park Road 8281 0674
Trevor Downing (T) 207 Smarts Lane 8508 8877
Sharon Weston (D&T) 58 York Hill 8502 0713

RODING WARD

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

ST JOHN'S WARD

Bob Jennings (D) 94 York Hill 8508 1861
Stephen Pewsey (T) 30 Wroths Path
Caroline Pond (D&T) 7 Staples Road 8508 2361
Chris Pond (T) 7 Staples Road 8508 2361

ST MARY'S WARD

Philip Beales (T) 65 Harwater Drive 8418 0459
Howard Kauffman (D) 42 Church Lane 8508 1098
Imogen Lawrence (T) 1 Longfield 8502 1159
Harvey Mann (D&T) 20 The Heights 07584 125211

Issue 266 © LRA 2014 Newsletter compilers: Ian Allsop, David Linnell, Gerarda Cashman.
noted by and on behalf of Independent Loughton Residents Association of 20 Eleven Acre Rise Loughton IG10 1AN.
Printed by F.A. May Stationery, 31 New Road, Chingford, London E4 9EU.

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