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LOUGHTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

LRA's Loughton News 18 January 2020

In this issue: Central Line timetable changes, what has been proposed for the Epping Forest College Middle Site, and Langston Road Retail Park traffic

LRA NEWS



Central Line - Service Reductions north of Loughton from Sunday 26 January

Central Line service reductions north of Loughton, and changes to the Central Line timetable take effect soon. Background on these changes on [our website](#).

TfL are now showing the revised times on their [Journey Planner](#), if you change your travel date to 26 January or

later.

When taking the tube on Monday to Friday going into London:

- Empty trains will start at **Debden** at 7:41am and 8:17am. The rest (about every 6 minutes) will come through from Epping, and these will of course go on to call at Loughton.

- Empty trains will start at **Loughton** at:
7:09am, 7:28am, 7:37am, 7:52am
8:07am, 8:15am, 8:28am, 8:37am, 8:46am, 8:55am
9:05am, 9:14am, 9:25am and then every 10 minutes



There has apparently been some problem with operating short test trains at Hainault, but this won't affect the Loughton service.

Epping Forest College [Middle Site](#), Borders Lane

Fairview Homes is [proposing](#) to provide 139 residential units in 3 buildings ranging from 3 to 5 storeys. The LRA Plans Group (LRAPG) wrote to residents near the site to let them know what is proposed and to invite them to comment to the District and Town Councils, and LRAPG. Among the concerns raised are the effect on neighbouring residents, the inadequate level of car-parking proposed, and the potential harm to the trees onsite and to the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation.

LRAPG and the Town Council have put in objections to the proposal and many residents have also objected.

(Application Number EPF/2905/19, comments closed)

We await proposals for buildings on [Lucton's Field](#) (opposite the College).

Langston Road Retail Park traffic problems

In the run-up to Christmas, the traffic problems in Chigwell Lane and Langston Road (A1168) became much worse than usual. LRA Cllr Chris Pond commented that the popularity of the retail park was probably due to the large increase in the footfall, and particularly the car usage, occasioned by the District Council letting units to two mass volume retailers, Home Bargains and Aldi. When they applied for planning permission, the Council had promised us a "fashion-led" mall with no high volume outlets, which would be mainly used at weekends (and not so much during the week). Part of the planning agreement was that the layout of Chigwell Lane and its traffic lights would be improved, but the changes made only allowed for a far lower volume of traffic.

In addition, the site has an absurdly constrained entrance/exit, and any capacity problems soon build up to the A1168. Customers only have an hourly bus as an alternative to car-use, and no bus stop and even this is due to end in March. LRA pointed out these defects to the Council at an early stage, but our comments were summarily rejected.

We think that the Council needs to revise the entry arrangements, and should subsidise a frequent bus service, perhaps every 15 minutes; this would accord with the Council's climate objectives. A reduction of the free 3 hours allowed in the car-park to 2 hours (or even to 150 minutes) might also increase the turnover of vehicles without impacting significantly on the shops' profits, and could be to shoppers' advantage too.

The District Council reports they will be carrying out a "study" into the car parking arrangements at the site. This is a welcome but very belated reaction to the problems that the Council's poor planning has caused since the site was opened for business.

Local Plan Progress Update

The District Council's progress report can be read [here](#). The report is Agenda Item 11 from page 55 onwards. A list of sites is in Appendices B, C and D from page 71 onwards. We share the City of London's concerns about the way in which the District Council is taking forward matters in relation to the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation – see [here](#) (item 17).

[Read more background on our website](#)



LRA's Farmers' Market Next Market: Sunday 9th February

Come along to LRA's Farmers' Market on Sunday 9th February, on Centric Parade, High Road. The market is held 9am - 3pm, opposite The Last Post. Residents have been delighted that this regular event gives them the opportunity to meet up.

There are two stalls available each month for local charities; if you're interested in booking, you can email ppiercejp@gmail.com to check availability.

Loughton Library, Traps Hill

We spotted a tweet from a resident about the reduction in the number of books held in the Library. LRA Cllr Chris Pond says that book stock throughout Essex Libraries is down by

about 40% over the last 10 years. The Council has plans for further reductions, and there is an [action group](#) of concerned residents.

There has been a particular cull of local history countywide lately. The library staff have been very good about this, and have steered material in the direction of good homes.



The County Council has also issued an [update](#) on plans for libraries (with almost no mention of books). They are looking to improve some of its larger Libraries, and is of course trying to close some of the smaller ones, or pass the responsibility of running them onto voluntary groups.

MORE LRA NEWS

Planning and Licensing

[Read more](#) about Planning and Licensing, the role of the LRA Plans Group (LRAPG), how to get more information with the Application and Reference Numbers below, and how to comment.

If you wish to comment, **don't delay**. The process is time critical with several stages along the way.



Loughton Cricket Club, High Road

They have proposed the construction of an enclosure over the existing bowling lanes to allow for year-round use. The enclosure would be large and highly visible from the High Road and it would stand out against the background. Even with regular maintenance, the material is PVC which will deteriorate over time, particularly when exposed to the sun.

If the District Council intends to approve the application as it stands, the LRAPG has asked for a condition to be applied that it is removed within 7 years after installation, given it will be detrimental to the area if permitted for longer.

Application Number EPF/2893/19. The date for comments has passed.

New Mobile Phone Mast, Corner of High Road & Warren Hill

This application included a 22.5 metre monopole supporting 9 antennas, 6 equipment cabinets in a fenced compound and ancillary works. LRAPG put in an objection and the application was subsequently refused. The applicants have a right to appeal and we will support the Council's refusal if they do.

Pyrles Lane Nursery

The site is currently under offer to be sold to Durkan Developments. Planning permission has expired and Durkan say they will make a new one.

LRA's 2019 Christmas Quiz

Well done to all who entered! Most got everything correct, and others had just one or two errant answers. First out of the hat and this year's winners are The Cahills, who will be receiving a £15 book token. So congratulations to them, and a Happy New Year to you all.

The answers are on [our website](#).

LOCAL NEWS

LOCAL LEISURE ORGANISATIONS ARE [HERE](#)



District Council buys west side of High Road

The District Council has bought the shops, offices and flats between M&Co and the travel agency for £23,820,950; this price may reduce because of VAT registration, Stamp Duty reliefs and minor reductions in other charges. The gross annual revenue yield is put at £1,425,602, and the net (after fees) annual revenue yield at £717,823 (which just meet the benchmarks set by the Council for such investments).

The Council notes that “future capital growth is a possibility with additional expansion and improvement to the flat units, but no developments are planned at this stage”. [More](#)

Loughton Wombles

The District Council teams, and the Town Council on the areas they look after, do their best to control the litter problem but the issue is endemic and they have limited resources. There are a number of public spirited individuals who already pick up litter on behalf of their local areas and community.

The Town Council would like to encourage and engage volunteer litter pickers to become ‘Loughton Wombles’ to unite and take on this problem. The vision is for groups of volunteers to coordinate and operate on a regular basis. The Council will provide basic materials such as litter pickers and 'Hi Viz' jackets.

Please indicate your interest in helping by contacting Mark Squire at contact@loughton-tc.gov.uk or 020 8508 4200.

Are the main roads being gritted?

To find out, look at or follow Essex County Highways' Twitter account [@essexhighways](https://twitter.com/essexhighways) for their daily decisions.

Sometimes they only grit in certain areas, according to local specialist weather forecasts. [More](#).

You can also [see where the gritters are](#) and get [tips for driving in the winter](#).



Environmental Protection and Land Drainage

The work of the District Council's team is vital in the winter months, as they work to protect the district from flooding. In wet weather, the team investigates and works to resolve a peak in minor surface water flooding issues, and makes referrals to Essex Highways who is responsible for water affecting roads. The team is on call 24 hours a day and the out-of-hours flood response service continues to monitor water levels on sites and uses telemetry in Council-managed Flood Storage Areas to reduce the risk of flooding. The team also provides advice to residents.

Late last year, the Council undertook a successful prosecution against a landowner for

land drainage and other offenses that could have increased localised flood risk; the flood risk has now been mitigated.

Hillyfields Open Space Flood Alleviation Scheme

Contractors working on behalf of Essex County Council returned to the site on Thursday 12th December 2019 to increase the height of the new bund.

Staples Road Flooding prior to Christmas

The road became flooded during the heavy rains, with water overflowing into Staples Road school which was sandbagged.

The County Council has since investigated the drainage in the area, and found a buried chamber within the forest and have surveyed under the road. Images reveal that there is a collapse where the original pipe was extended on the north side. There are plans to further investigate shortly and to ensure that the drainage works properly.



Something Useful: Is there risk of a flood?

This [useful website](#) shows the current level of the River Roding at Loughton. You can also see past river levels and [how high the river reached during December's heavy rain](#).

The Environment Agency also provides flood alerts on [their website](#) and what to do before, after and during a flood.



More police good news stories

Much of what the police does never gets reported widely, so here is some news from around the town on how the police have done lately.

7 December: a call from a member of the public led police to a suspicious BMW in Loughton. It was on false plates, and a chassis number check confirmed that it was stolen from Billericay a few days earlier. It was seized for forensics and returned to a happy owner!

9 December: In Buckhurst Hill, a vehicle failed to stop for police and collided with a member of the public shortly before 3pm. There were no injuries and the vehicle occupants decamped. Three people were arrested for burglary, drug offences and failing to stop for police.

15 December: research identified a potential cloned Range Rover active in the Epping Forest district. Patrols located and safely stopped the vehicle which was then confirmed as stolen from Herts and on false plates. The driver was arrested and the

vehicle was seized.

17 December: the police Town Centre Team employed by the District Council tweeted: *"Normally we ask you to say hello when you see us about. Plain clothed deployments tonight meant nobody saw us. A shoplifter in Debden certainly didn't and is now off to custody!"*

18 December: following a proactive stop, a prolific offender was arrested for theft offences from several different stores in Loughton. Following interview of the suspect, he was charged and remanded for court the next morning.

19 December: following a burglary in Loughton where a vehicle was stolen, enquiries

conducted by the team led to locating the vehicle in Chingford after only 5 hours. It was recovered for forensics in the hope of identifying a suspect.

21 December: a stolen vehicle was identified in Loughton. The dog section was quickly behind the vehicle and, with the support of Epping Forest Community Policing Team, the vehicle was safely stopped and a person was arrested.

28 December: a Mercedes car stolen from Scotland was found on false plates in Debden. This was recovered and will be returned to Scotland.

30 December: the police Town Centre Team spotted and arrested a prolific offender wanted for theft.



Additional £1.1 million to help tackle violent crime in Essex

Essex has received an additional £1.1 million to help fund the county's multi-agency approach to understanding and tackling the causes of violent crime. The money will be given to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex and will be used to continue running the Essex Violence Reduction Unit.

Oakwood Hill estate refuse facilities

To improve refuse facilities at the Oakwood Hill Estate, the District Council is proposing to:

- close the chute rooms in the taller blocks. Under the proposal, residents will be required to take their household rubbish to the bin room located on the ground floor. These bin rooms will be fitted with a key-pad for convenience and security
- build additional refuse/recycling areas where required
- utilise some under-used laundry-drying areas for recycling.

There are a couple of blocks which are proving problematic in terms of finding a suitable location for recycling and therefore would not benefit from the option of recycling straight away.

These improvements will help to reduce fire risk, increase recycling and prevent fly-tipping, and improved waste management should mean a cleaner and safer living environment for residents. The Council will send a consultation letter to all residents of the Oakwood Hill estate explaining the proposal and giving them the opportunity to comment and express any views, and have held a drop in for residents at the Oakwood Hill Residents Hall.

Please also let us have your views at contact@LoughtonResidents.co.uk



Bus Route 87

Arriva have just now given Essex County Council notice they will discontinue bus route 87 after March 2020, date unspecified. Essex County Council say they will put out to tender the route from the Broadway via Oakwood Hill, Roding Road, Loughton Station, High Road, Traps Hill, Bushfields and Colson Road back to the Broadway.

District Council house-building

The District Council has reported that since the programme began a total of 91 new homes for affordable rent have been completed. Sixteen units are still in progress from phases 1-3. A further 72 units are expected to be delivered under phase 4. The Council has accepted tenders to build the next phase of council houses, including sites in Chequers Road, Chester Road and Bushfields, and there are more sites in the pipeline.

Rogue Private Sector Landlords in Loughton

The District Council's Private Sector Housing team investigated two cases of unlicensed Houses in Multiple occupation (HMO) in Loughton. The owners of the properties were invited in for a formal interview conducted under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) and they admitted the offences of operating an unlicensed HMO and for HMO management regulation failures, which may put tenants safety at risk. The local authority has the option to prosecute the landlord or issue a civil penalty notice. In both cases it was considered the most appropriate course of action to issue the civil penalties.

One landlord was given the maximum penalty of £30,000 for failure to licence and £9,300 for management regulation offences. The other landlord received civil penalty notices for £24,000 for failure to licence and £18,000 for the failure to comply with HMO management regulations. If the penalties are paid within 28 days, a 50% discount is applied.

Trees by Loughton Library, Traps Hill

Earlier this month, a resident alerted us to work done on one of the trees near the Town Council offices in the Library which appeared to have been heavily and rather clumsily pollarded. LRA Cllrs Chris and Caroline Pond contacted the District Council, who we think owns the land the tree (and others) stands on, to ask what was planned. As the tree seemed healthy, Chris asked the Council to consider putting Tree Protection Orders on this and the other trees to the side and front of the Library, as they are of very high public amenity value.

We had a speedy reply to say the pollarded tree is actually dead, and that there are no threats to the neighbouring trees. Past experience on trees suggests it's better to be safe (by querying what's happening) than sorry (once it's gone...).

What are the Town Council's priorities for 2020/21?

The (LRA-led) Council plans ahead carefully to try and get the most of their budget – you can see what's planned [here](#) (pages 2-4).

Loughton Cricket Club

In November 2019, the Town Council's solicitors confirmed that the Land Registry had completed registration of the transfer of the freehold title of the Cricket Club land to the Council. The Council has now applied to [Fields in Trust](#), an independent charity which protects parks and green spaces, to increase the protection of the Club's ground. We'll keep you posted on progress.

Former Town Councillor Monty Juniper

In memory of former Town Cllr Monty Juniper the Council planted a tree in the rear garden of Murray Hall last month. The cost of the tree was met by a donation from the Juniper family, who also provided a memorial plaque.

Roding Valley Recreation Ground

Late last year the District Council Grounds team were pleased to receive a note of thanks from Loughton Town Council for its contribution in helping them achieve the Certificate of Merit Class 1 award presented by the Essex Playing Fields Association for maintaining the Recreation Ground "to the highest standards". This award has been won by the Town Council for the third year running and is a real credit to the hard work and commitment of the staff at both Councils in managing and maintaining this prestigious site to such a high standard.

Parking schemes agreed by NEPP

The North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) agreed the following schemes at their October meeting (the minutes only became available recently)

- Roding Garden/Hanbury Park Estate: waiting restriction(s)
- Fairmeads: waiting restriction(s)
- High Gables: resident permit area(s)
- West View: resident permit area(s)
- Staples Road (part): resident permit area(s).

New City College, Borders Lane

Following discussion with the College, the District Council has helped to progress the establishment of a local advisory board for the Epping Forest Campus, and Council officers are supporting the City College in the recruitment of key local businesses to participate in its work.

Christmas Window Competition winners

Our congratulations to all who took part in this year's Loughton Town Council Competition, and particularly to the winners in their categories: Elliott James, Magnet, Haven House and The Olive Tree (all in the High Road). [More](#)

Photos: Loughton Town Council



GENERAL

The City of London's Epping Forest magazine - Forest Focus [Winter Edition](#)

Stories about the Forest, Winter events, where to go in the snow and more.



Lightning tree strike

When lightning strikes a tree it instantly turns the water in the tree to steam and the tree's bark explodes – often leaving a tell-tale scar running from top to bottom. As you can see here, the tree can survive and recover!



Essex County Fire and Rescue Service performance

An [independent report](#) has found that the service needed improvements across the three main pillars of the inspection – Effectiveness, Efficiency and People.

However, the Service was rated is good at responding to emergencies.

Collisions with deer

The City of London report that in October-November last year there were 11 Deer Vehicle

Collisions; two of the 11 deer were killed on Piercing Hill near Theydon Bois Golf Course. Drivers are asked to keep to the 40mph speed limit in the Forest, and to be careful, particularly in the hours of darkness.

The Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP)

The purpose of SERP is to reduce death and serious injury on Essex roads to zero, an ambitious vision and one which we cannot tackle alone: each road user plays a part.

Their website provides more information on how to be safer on our roads, and produce the publication [Driving Vision Zero](#), which this month focuses on [motorcycling and reducing accidents](#).

CQC report on Whipps Cross Hospital

CQC last inspected the maternity service at Whipps Cross Hospital in July 2016. They carried out an unannounced inspection between 15 and 17 October 2019. Their rating of this service stayed the same. They rated it as good. They noted that the service had taken steps to address the areas of improvement from the previous inspection. During this inspection, the service had dealt with or shown improvement for most of the previously reported areas of improvement. [More](#)



Do you want to see if you can save money on your gas and electricity?

Join the thousands of Essex residents who have saved an average of £250 on their household energy bills. [Register](#) for the Essex Energy Switch from the County Council.

Get more from LRA and keep up with what's happening between issues of Loughton News



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NOTES

1. We expect to send out the next news bulletin on Saturday 15 February 2020, although this could change.
2. In the process of drafting these items and sending them by email, some links to websites or email addresses can be broken; you can get round this by right-clicking on the link and then clicking "open" or, if this does not work, by cutting and pasting the address into an email or browser as appropriate.
3. If a web address doesn't work, or anything else is wrong, please let us know at

loughtonnews@LoughtonResidents.co.uk

4. LRA gives no warranty about, and will take no responsibility for, items or services offered – purchasers/users should make their own enquiries, and will be acting at their own risk.

5. EFNW = Epping Forest Neighbourhood Watch.

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