



LRA's Loughton News

23 January 2021

The Covid pandemic continues to affect our daily lives, and we know that residents will be very worried given the surge in cases and the higher risk of catching the virus over the winter. The [current local data is here](#) with [information on vaccinations](#) as they become more widely available.

Elections in May are still expected. **We urge all residents to [apply for a postal vote](#)** as nobody can foresee what Covid conditions will be at the time. Some in-person polling stations will have to be in different buildings, too.

Also the Town Council is looking to celebrate those special individuals in our town who go the extra mile for the [annual Citizenship Awards](#)

For those of you who took up the challenge of our Christmas Quiz, [here are the answers](#).

Thank you for being an LRA member. LRA operates only because of your support. As such [we will be very grateful for your 2021 subscriptions and are looking for more residents to join our experienced teams](#). Also we're seeking some [help with monitoring planning applications](#) and we're also looking for [someone competent with Microsoft Excel](#).

You can always contact us by email at contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk to raise an issue, to give your views, or to offer help.

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LRA News

Roding Valley Recreation ground playground

LRA Cllr Rose Brookes and Independent Cllr Stephen Murray continue to press for the playground to be given a new location when it is refurbished. The playground has been out of action many times because of flooding particularly in the last year. The Town Council plan to update the playground as soon as finances permit and a suitable new site is found.

Brooklyn Avenue

LRA Cllr Chris Pond has been notified of the road closing on May 13th for machine resurfacing, but we do not yet have details of how much of the road is involved. Brooklyn Avenue is one of the worst and most pothole-prone streets in Loughton, which hasn't been completely surfaced since before 1974, so it is to be hoped more of the road is involved rather than less.

Brooklyn Parade

Defects notified by LRA Cllr Chris Pond last summer have now been repaired.

Loughton Golf Club

Following an alert from LRA Cllrs, it is now known that the lease of the most recent occupiers of Loughton Golf Club was terminated by order of Edmonton County Court. It is understood the golf club ceased to operate some time ago. This is buffer land, owned by the Corporation of London.

LRA's Christmas Quiz

Thank you to all of you who took part in the quiz who sent in your entries for the quiz – and to the rest of you for having a go! The first all-correct entry out of the hat was from Michael and Anne Dore, who will (in these Covid times) get the monetary equivalent of a bottle of fizz or a £15 book token.



[Here are the answers!](#)

LRA depends on your subscriptions!

You receive these news bulletins because you're an LRA member.

At only £5 a year, we think it's a real bargain, especially as LRA is run 100% by volunteers in your town.

We'd be very grateful if you could pay your 2021 subscriptions now, preferably by bank transfer or standing order, or even with a cheque: [here's how](#).

And if you're not sure whether you've paid for 2020, you can check by emailing membercheck@loughtonresidents.co.uk and if appropriate combine the two, please.



Concern for our town and a Common Sense outlook....

LRA is a very diverse group of residents who look after our town and improve our area.

We need a few more, like minded, ordinary residents to join our experienced teams and to influence LRA's future aims and achievements.

Can you find a little time to help?

LRA works because it represents the views of many residents collectively - you may be surprised how important your opinion is to help protect and shape our future.

Please talk in confidence and without commitment by calling Michael on 020 8508 4457 or Chris on 020 8508 2361, or email contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk

Have your say on planning applications

If you'd like to help us monitor planning applications in Loughton, you can join the LRA Plans Group.

We will email you the weekly planning lists; there's no need to reply unless you'd like to give your views on a particular application. This helps us by giving us local reactions and information which we might otherwise miss.

To join, or to find out more about how it works, please contact david.linnell@LoughtonResidents.co.uk

Microsoft Excel competent - can you help us once a year?



LRA is successful because, as a diverse group of residents, we combine our skills and experience to help our town.

Two residents have used their Excel expertise to help LRA for years and are keen to handover to new volunteers.

Can you find time once a year to help?

Please talk in confidence and without commitment by calling Michael on 020 8508 4457 or Chris on 020 8508 2361, or email contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk

Coronavirus/Covid-19

National lockdown: stay at home

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is spreading fast.

Do not leave your home unless necessary.

1 in 3 people who have the virus have no symptoms, so you could be spreading it without knowing it.



Find out what the rules are

More from the government and advice from the NHS

How the virus is spreading locally

The infection rates in Epping Forest district have been extremely high, relative to the rest of the country. However in the past week, the rates have fallen locally. For instance, the rate for one part of Loughton has fallen from 1,704 to 428 per 100,000 residents.

However there is a delay between infection rates rising/falling, subsequent hospital admissions and, sadly, deaths. Since our email news special on January 7th, another 47 people in Epping Forest District have died. [More local data](#). While the drop of infection rates is positive news, following the guidelines to keep infection rates down will remain important for some time to come to help control the spread of the virus.

For statistical purposes, Loughton is divided into four areas - you can see data for Loughton [North](#), [East](#), [West](#) and [South](#).

More details can be found on [this interactive map](#), [data for Essex is here](#) and the Office for National Statistics also publish [full national data](#).

Breaches of the regulations

Most people have been abiding by the rules. However, if you see an apparent breach of the coronavirus regulations, please [report it directly](#) (7am-11pm; select the 'Live Chat' button at the bottom of the page), or you can submit [an online report](#) or call 101 - lines are open 24 hours a day.

Essex Police have been continuing to Engage, Explain & Encourage people to observe guidelines that help save lives. Officers will use discretion & judgment, but will enforce regulations where there are flagrant or deliberate breaches. However, we understand that [new guidance](#) has been issued to all chief constables and that every police officer has been told to fine people £200 if they believe they are in breach of the rules and refuse to return home at the first time of asking.

On December 31st, Essex Police visited The Gardeners Arms (York Hill) and dispersed people outside. In this case it is not necessarily the licensee who is at fault, because there have been occasions when some youngsters have joined gatherings with alcohol bought elsewhere.

Any other alleged breaches of the Tier 4 regulations elsewhere over the Christmas and New Year period are being investigated.

Vaccinations

People are being invited for their vaccine through their GPs, according to set NHS procedures, which depend on age, vulnerability, etc. [Read more on the vaccine](#) including [how you will be invited](#), what will happen on the day of your appointment and [the nine priority groups](#).

People aged 70+ are now getting invitations to book a Covid vaccination. If you have received a letter inviting you to book a coronavirus vaccination, [you can book it](#). ***Please do not try to book a vaccination if you have not received a letter, text or other communication from the NHS.***



At the moment, Loughton people are going to Buckhurst Hill or St Margaret's Hospital in Epping. The Murray Hall will become a vaccination centre starting from a date yet to be announced by the NHS when vaccine supply is fuller.

The [advice from the local NHS group](#) is that if you receive a letter from the national NHS inviting you to book a vaccination at a large centre (for example, Robertson House in Stevenage or the Excel Centre in London) but you can't travel or you would rather wait for an appointment closer to home, you can choose to wait. Your local GP-led service will be in touch soon to offer an alternative.

There have been multiple reports of residents in Essex and Kent receiving fraudulent texts or emails offering the COVID-19 vaccine. *The vaccine is free and the NHS will never ask for your payment details.*

District Council Support

The District Council has [further information and guidance here](#), plus support for [residents](#) and [businesses](#), and [help for getting you back on your feet](#).

Loughton Covid-19 Mutual Aid Group

This Loughton group connects neighbours to offer practical help during the pandemic, through Facebook and WhatsApp groups. [More](#)

Planning and Licensing

[Read more on our website](#) about Planning and Licensing, the role of the LRA Plans Group (LRAPG), how to get more information and how to comment to the Town Council and the District Council.

The District Council takes the decisions on planning applications. The application will be decided upon by a Council Officer or by Cllrs in a District Council Planning Committee, and residents' comments on the proposals will be taken into account but not necessarily agreed with. This is a quasi-legal process, and decisions have to be taken **on planning grounds only**, based on the national planning legislation and the District Local Plan, whatever the views and feelings of the individual Cllrs involved.

If you wish to comment, don't delay. The process is time critical with several stages along the way. If you wish to make comments please try to submit them before the deadline set by the Council. Although submissions can be made and have to be considered up to the time a decision is made, once the statutory deadline has passed, the application might be determined before your comments are received.

The process for alcohol licensing applications is similar to the process for planning applications, except that objections must relate to one or more of [the four Licensing Objectives](#), and any comments received after the end of the formal consultation period won't be taken into account by the District Council.

Government climbs down on housing numbers

Shortly before Christmas, the Government dropped its plans to demand even more dwellings on top of the already excessive demands they are making on districts such as Epping Forest, but added a 35% uplift in numbers for 20 urban centres. [More](#).

LRA comment: the Government's whole concept is misconceived, as local authorities aren't responsible for the building of new houses and flats. Among with many others, we have repeatedly said that the Government should be putting direct pressure on developers to build more, particularly as we understand that the developers' land-bank of sites which already have planning permission would enable over a million more homes to be built.

Molens, 209D High Road

This is an application to erect canopies in the rear garden area for additional seating.

LRAPG considers the timber framed canopy to be an unacceptable intrusion into the garden and reduces the openness and gap between the buildings on the High Road and Priory Road, which would affect nearby residents' peaceful enjoyment of their gardens.

LRA has stated that the creeping erosion of new development between the High Road and residences on Priory Road must stop.

Application [EPF/2794/20](#). The formal consultation period has ended.

The Hive, 38b Chigwell Lane

The Hive obtained permission for their café in this location to serve the industrial estate during working hours. At the time they stated that they would not wish to compete with the food outlets on The Broadway. They have gradually pushed their opening hours allowed by their planning permission later, till 9pm in the week and 6pm on Sundays ([EPF/1164/20](#), granted), although they failed to get to 10pm ([EPF/0457/18](#)), which was refused on the grounds that the noise and activity in vicinity of the site would cause excessive harm to the living conditions of nearby residents, particularly during the summer months when bedroom windows are normally open.

Against LRAPG objections, the District Council have now approved the cafe's alcohol licence for sales until 11pm all week and midnight on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. However, the planning and licensing systems operate separately, so unless they apply for and get a change in their planning permission, their hours are still restricted as above. (Reference [WK/202040954](#))

Café Caribbean, 262 High Road

The District Council has granted Cafe Caribbean an alcohol licence with conditions that the outdoor seating area will close at 9pm, there will be no music played outside and the external doors will also be closed at 9pm. The café will be closed on Mondays and will close at 10pm except on Fridays and Saturdays (11pm).

The application originally proposed opening hours up to 11:30pm on Monday to Thursday and Sundays, and until 12:30am on Fridays and Saturday. LRAPG objected on the grounds of the disturbance this would inevitably cause to residents nearby and it was subsequently revised. (Reference [WK/202037100](#))

God's Own Pizza, 155 High Road

The District Council has granted an alcohol licence for 11am-midnight every day, with longer hours at Christmas and New Year. (Reference [WK/202042716](#))

Mooros, Woolston Hall, Abridge Road, Chigwell

The District Council has granted an alcohol licence for Tuesday and Wednesday 11am-11pm; Thursday 11am-midnight; Friday and Saturday 11am-1am; Sunday 11am-midnight (these are also the opening times). (Reference [WK/202041547](#))

The Standard, 126 High Road

The Standard's licensing hours are Sunday to Thursday 10am-11pm; Friday and Saturday 10am-midnight. Opening hours are an hour earlier in the mornings and half an hour later in the evenings. Off sales are allowed between mid-day and 9pm only. Special hours apply at Christmas and New Year.

Appeal decision on a bungalow conversion

One of the policies in the draft Local Plan requires the avoidance of the loss of bungalows, because they can support the needs of people with accessibility needs (particularly the elderly). In a recent appeal against the District Council's refusal of an application to convert a bungalow to a two-storey house, the arguments on the accessibility point were fairly finely balanced. However, the independent Inspector dismissed the appeal because the Council policy also supports maintaining mixed and balanced communities, of which bungalows form a part.

Roads, Parking and Travel



Rolls Park corner roadworks

From time to time the permanent traffic lights at the Abridge Road/Chigwell Lane/High Road junction will be replaced by temporary lights while drainage improvements on this section of Abridge Road are carried out. The work should finish before the end of February unless delayed by bad weather. [More](#).

Roadworks in October & November

In Epping Forest District, County Highways repaired 185 potholes (including many in Loughton Central identified by LRA Cllr Chris Pond), cleared 4,118 drains and fixed 381 streetlights.

Requiring the highway authority to act on obstructed paths

What can you do if a path you use becomes obstructed, you report it to the highway authority and no action is taken? There's now a [new fact sheet](#) with details about what you, as a member of the public, can do.

Images: [Open Spaces Society](#)



Police and Crime

Arrest on The Broadway

Shortly before Christmas, officers from the Local Policing Team were called to the BP garage on The Broadway about the theft of approximately £50-worth of tinned biscuits and chocolate. After a short struggle with officers on muddy ground, a male was arrested; he turned out to be also wanted for a previous offence in Epping, and also to be wanted by police in another area.

Loughton Beat Officer

The Community Policing Team have recently welcomed a new Loughton Beat Officer, PC Jack Moore.

Police target drugs and violence

Last month, Officers made more than 70 arrests during [a fortnight of targeted action](#) aimed at disrupting criminals involved in drugs and violence. Our community policing teams, operational support group, road crime unit and Operation Raptor officers carried out additional intelligence-led patrols in West Essex, including the Epping Forest District. They executed 34 warrants and used automatic number plate technology and stop and search powers as appropriate to identify and search for suspects. They made at least 71 arrests for offences including robbery, drugs supply, failing to appear at court, drink and drug-driving, and handling stolen goods.



In addition, our local officers made more than 280 drink and drug driving related arrests between December 1st and 6am on January 2nd. They made 139 drug driving arrests, 118 drink driving arrests, and 26 failing to provide a specimen arrests. [More.](#)

Council News

May Elections - Are you ready to vote?

There are important local elections planned for this May for the Town, District and County Council. **Please make sure you are [registered to vote](#).** You only need to register once but you must register again if you've changed address, name or nationality.

We don't know what the Covid situation will be at that time, however **we urge all**

residents to [apply for a postal vote](#) as nobody can foresee what Covid conditions will be at the time. Some in-person polling stations will have to be in different buildings, too. **You can make your application now.**

Pedestrianising The Broadway at weekends?

Just before Christmas, the District Council's intention to pedestrianise The Broadway at weekends was mentioned in passing in Cabinet agenda papers, as Council consultants had attended a Broadway Town Centre Partnership meeting where local retailers had raised significant concerns about this. The traders' initial thoughts were that this was unnecessary and contrary to their views and the views of the public who benefit from being able to 'stop and shop' by parking in the Broadway itself. It was also suggested that the funding potentially required for this could be better used.

LRA comment: the Council had previously failed to involve the local cllrs (LRA's Chris Pond and Michael Owen) or failed to produce any effective proposals for repairing or replacing The Broadway's dilapidated central reservation (although it was reported to the Local Highway Panel that a further appraisal should be received shortly).

Highway Rangers Service

The service is now run by the District Council and funded by the Council and the County Council. Their work must be achievable by 2 people and a van, with a small selection of hand tools. Recent tasks are shown [here](#).

Rough sleepers

One side-effect of the Covid crisis has been a welcome focus on helping rough sleepers to re-build their lives, in which the District Council has played a major (and largely unappreciated) role. Between April 1st and December 23rd 2020, it dealt with 27 rough sleepers – find out what happened [here](#).

Council house building

Work has started on one of the Chequers Rd sites and on the Bushfields and Chester Road sites.

Town Council Heritage Plaques

The Town Council has agreed to proceed with a heritage plaque for Millican Dalton, 'Professor of Adventure', (1867-1947) in Stony Path.

In addition, the committee are investigating the possibility of installing heritage plaques for the following people:

- Arthur Bacot (1866-1922), entomologist, who lived at 19 York Hill.
- Sir Leonard Erskine Hill (1866-1952), physiologist and Sir Austin Bradford Hill (1897-1991), epidemiologist (who jointly established the link between smoking and cancer, who lived on the site that became Nafferton Rise.

Town Council Alley-way naming

The Council will install signs on Dragons Path, which links Nursery Road and Forest View Road, and will add to the information signage on Staples Hill Path in Staples Road.

Town Council Citizenship Awards

Do you know someone worthy of recognition for their community work or bravery?

The Town Council are looking to celebrate those special individuals in our town who go the extra mile for their fellow citizens. This may be through long service for a voluntary organisation or local charity, good neighbourliness, running a campaign to improve community facilities or cohesion, or by an act of courage or bravery.

Any Loughton resident or a Loughton employer, educational institution, group or society may submit a nomination but please do not let the nominee know at this stage.

The closing date for nominations is 19 February 2021. [More](#)

Local News

Postal deliveries

The Loughton sorting office has had over two in five staff absent recently because of covid or the need to self-isolate. As a result, they are struggling to sort and deliver the backlog of mail, and can't staff the office to let residents collect the mail themselves. It's obviously too late for existing mail, but please avoid ordering or sending anything important by Royal Mail until the backlog has been cleared (other delivery firms, without Royal Mail's statutory obligations, can be used to send mail).

See also [this news article](#). (Loughton is included under Debden, because that's where the local sorting office is.)

It would seem there is very little LRA or local residents can do given the scale and extent of the problem with Royal Mail, and the difficult situation they and the posties are in. We are aware of [news reports](#) that Royal Mail are prioritising the collection and delivery of Covid testing kits, PPE deliveries and vaccine invitations, but the delivery of all other mail remains unpredictable.



Track the Gritting

The County Highways gritting team are already on stand-by, and their vehicles have been out and about in frost as drivers refresh their knowledge of the routes they grit (Highways England, not Essex Highways, grit the A12, A120, M11 and M25 in Essex).

[More](#), including gritting

routes, Essex Highways [Twitter feed on where the gritters are](#) and [track the gritters on a map here](#).



Epping Forest Museum Events

Events at the museum had to be changed or postponed and [a full events list is here](#) which includes an online webinar on January 28th on the wildlife of Copped Hall and the area (booking required). [More](#)

The Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition has now been postponed to 2022. [More](#)



Epping Forest Festival of Culture

This year there will be the first ever Epping Forest District Council Festival of Culture. This will provide a platform for online activities hosted by cultural organisations from across the district. Epping Forest District Council's Community, Culture &

Wellbeing team, who have made this all possible, will also be running a variety of activities as part of the Festival. [More](#)

Loughton's RNLI branch

The Loughton and Woodford branch of the RNLI raised £4,950.63 last year, despite being unable to undertake any of its regular fundraising activities after February. The total includes a generous donation from a supporter. The branch has a [JustGiving page](#).

More security around your home?

Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF) can install key safes and other safety and security devices, e.g. grab rails, door chains, door viewers, window locks, etc.

This service is available to all private property owners in the Epping Forest District. There is currently a Loughton Town Council subsidy in place for residents that means the service costs £25 for the first hour, then £12 per hour thereafter. (Pricing will revert to £35 for the first hour and £6 per quarter hour thereafter, when the subsidy runs out). Costs for materials are extra. The work will be carried out by our police-checked community handyman. Call 01992 910701, option 4 or email admin@vaef.org.uk.

Council tenants are serviced by Qualis, but some jobs are sub-contracted to VAEF.

Other services are available - [more](#), call 01992 910701 or email admin@vaef.org.uk.

Health and Wellbeing

When to call 999

Although the NHS is under stress due to the pandemic, A&E and the 999 service still operate. Remember:

- Call 999 in a medical emergency. This is when someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk. [More](#)
- Call 999 immediately if you or someone else is having a [heart attack](#) or [stroke](#). Every second counts with these conditions.
- Also call 999 if you think someone has had a major trauma, such as after a serious road traffic accident, a stabbing, a shooting, a fall from height, or a serious [head injury](#).

If you're not sure what to do

NHS 111 can help if you need urgent medical help or you're not sure what to do. They will ask questions about your symptoms so you get the help you need. If you need to go to A&E, NHS 111 will book an arrival time. This might mean you spend less time in A&E. This also helps with social distancing.

You can get help from 111.nhs.uk or call 111. It's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Princess Alexandra Hospital

Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust (Harlow) [has been awarded £2m](#) to tackle critical maintenance work, and will put the money towards much-needed upgrades to infrastructure, including the theatre roof, static mammography, fire safety, colposcopy refurbishment, ward refurbishment and a mortuary upgrade. The work is expected to be completed by March 2021.



The hospital are now consulting this coming month on their intended move to a site (in Epping Forest district) at Sheering.

Visit [the new hospital microsite](#) and take part in their latest poll about how you'd like to be contacted.

New app to help parents

Essex healthcare professionals have launched [a new app](#) to help parents with their children's healthcare. NHS Essex Child Health provides practical health advice and support and is suitable for anyone caring for children up to the age of 11. Download via [Apple](#) or [Google Play](#).

Epping Forest

Visiting Epping Forest

Current guidelines for visiting Epping Forest are [here](#). Many locations are closed included the Visitor Centres at Chingford and High Beach and Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge so [check before you go](#).

And More

Census 2021

It is Census day on 21 March 2021. Every 10 years the census gives us a complete picture of the nation. Census 2021 will be mainly online. Billions of pounds are allocated to local authorities in England and Wales every year using census

information, and so it's important that there is a high number of completed census questionnaires across the District so the census estimates are accurate.

There will be a full range of support services available, including comprehensive guidance and support in many languages and formats, and the option to request paper questionnaires. [More](#)

Image: District Council



Loughton and District Historical Society (LDHS)

Because of the sudden death of LDHS membership secretary (and LRA supporter) Ian Strugnell, access to the society's membership lists has been lost. If you are an LDHS member and haven't heard from them recently, call 0208 508 2361.

Big Garden Bird Watch

The [Big Garden Bird Watch](#) takes place on January 29th to 31st. [You can sign up](#) for all you need to take part, including your free guide, help with identifying what you see and expert advice on feeding the birds. New this year is "Big Garden Birdwatch Live!", where experts from across the UK will be bringing you photos, footage and facts about the birds they see, as well as answering any questions you may have, plus live quizzes.

Image: RSPB



Thank you for being an LRA member. Our next Loughton News email is due to be issued Saturday February 20th although that date could change.

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



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and Loughton Life, and more*

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2. 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.

We can be contacted at contact@LoughtonResidents.co.uk

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