

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Townwide Edition

*Loughton Residents Association newsletter
for all residents in IG10
April 2014*

Lighting the way

Ever since the street lights were turned off by Conservative County Cllr Rodney Bass in January, to save money, there have been protests about the midnight – 5am switch-off, in particular by people returning on foot from stations after evening activities, or working in London. As long ago as 2010, LRA County Cllr Chris Pond had asked for pedestrian routes to and from stations to be kept on all night. In December, Chris persuaded Mr Bass to leave the lights on till 1am at bus stops with late and early services - one of the very few changes across the County that he accepted. The switched-off hours are now to be changed "experimentally" to 1am – 6am from an unspecified date. Of course, this won't help winter early risers....

LRA accepts the need to make savings when sensible, but street lights should be on when they are needed for public safety. In Loughton, that's certainly 20 minutes after the last train and 20 minutes before the first one, so the switch-off should be for no longer than 1.30am – 5am. And many more streets should be left on all night, especially isolated places like Great Eastern Path and streets bordering the Roding fields and Forest. Whether two recent serious accidents (see page 2) in unlit parts of the High Rd at 4am are due to the switch off is unclear, but even Mr Bass must recognise there's a potential problem.

Chris is now chairing a committee at Chelmsford looking into how Cllr Bass made his initial decision; in particular, why the Town Council and residents had to comment without knowing which lights were actually to be turned off.

A step along the way

After LRA pressure and long discussions, Essex County Council has finally admitted responsibility for maintaining the High Road pavements outside the shops to the north of the traffic lights, on the west side. LRA Cllr Chris Pond is now trying to ensure they actually carry out repairs on areas which have been trip hazards and puddle-creators for far too long.

**8pm THURSDAY 3 APRIL 2014
PUBLIC MEETING & AGM**

Chris Pond will give an illustrated talk on the history of the Lopping Hall, followed by refreshments and LRA's AGM, including proposed changes to the LRA Constitution (see back page).
Doors open 7.45pm for 8pm start at Loughton Cricket Clubhouse. Entrance is in The Uplands (off Church Hill), where the road bends sharply.
Parking onsite and nearby.



On the right path

The Town Council has announced that its application for the dedication of the footpath from Borders Lane to Rectory Lane as a public right of way has been successful. This path, used by generations of local residents, was first blocked in March 2012 by a fence installed by the builders of a new care home on the site of the old Loughton Sports Centre.

The dedication is largely due to the strenuous efforts by LRA Cllr Lance Leonard, who has spent many hours researching the background (there has been a path there for 100 years, far longer than the 20 years needed to make it registrable), identifying, chasing up and talking to the developer, and organising the residents' responses. This formed the basis for the LRA-led Town Council to submit the case to the County Council, who have now confirmed that the evidence is sufficient to show that a public footpath subsists along the route under section 31 of the Highways Act 1980.

The completion of the nursing home is expected shortly, after which the Town Council will inspect the path. There are still lots of formalities but it is hoped residents will soon be able to resume using this route, which is particularly useful to access the Health Centre and the E15 Acting School.

**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.

Sir Winston Churchill development: this planning application for a seven-storey development on a site owned by the Council was approved despite objections from the LRA Plans Group and lots of residents, and opposition by all Loughton Cllrs on the Committee which approved it. We checked whether any form of legal action was possible, but have reluctantly abandoned the idea.

Licensing applications: holding District Council premises licensing meetings in the evenings turned out to be an expensive flop, and has been dropped. It was started against the recommendation of the licensing committee, including the chairman, LRA Cllr Ken Angold-Stephens.

Oakwood Hill depot: a revised planning application has now been submitted to erect a new MOT workshop, grounds maintenance workshop with office facilities, glasshouses and associated parking, storage areas and fencing.

Pyrls Lane District Council nursery site: thanks to strong opposition from residents, the LRA Plans Group and LRA Cllrs, the District Council has turned down proposals for a housing development on this Council-owned site. A revised application is expected in due course.

Church Hill former car park: the Council is in the process of selling the site, we expect for flats.

48 Church Lane: the LRA Plans Group has helped a group of residents with objections to a garden-grabbing application for four houses on this site.

117 High Road: after discussions with a concerned resident and the LRA Plans Group about a proposed NHS doctors' surgery at 72 Alderton Hill, the applicants withdrew the application and have now applied to convert this house instead.

Majestic Wine Warehouses Ltd has obtained permission for bulk alcohol sales at Unit 2, 2 Station Road (was Brown's Garage). The other units are expected to house *Nando's* and *Topps Tiles*.

20 Ollards Grove: the District Council has turned down an application to add a new "semi" to number 20 because of its cramped nature and appearance.

4 Connaught Hill: the District Council has turned down an application for various extensions because of the risk of damage to the large TPO'd oak tree in the rear garden.

Conservation Area character reviews

The District Council hopes to publish the York Hill and Staples Road Conservation Area character appraisals in early 2014, with Baldwins Hill following shortly afterwards.

Councillor action

Broadway flats: LRA Cllr Jennie Hart approached District Council Housing about plans to install inappropriate replacements for the mullioned windows in the Broadway flats, As a result, a contractor will try to put in suitable glass blocks.

Skip in The Drive: LRA Cllr Harvey Mann has managed to track down the firm which months ago left the skip in the Council car-park, and it has been removed. Harvey has also contacted the District Council about the general state of mess in the area.

Trinity Church and hall in Mannock Drive: This is owned by the Methodist Church but shared with the Anglican church for services. Both would like to also have a church and community centre near to The Broadway and so talks between them and the District Council have taken place. The Council apparently suggested a land swap whereby a new church would have been built in Burton Road with the Mannock Drive site being redeveloped for housing but this proposal wasn't acceptable. LRA Cllr David Wixley has enquired whether any further negotiations are likely and has been told that they are not, and the Burton Road proposal was solely dependent on the land swap taking place.

Burton Road new council housing development: At a recent Council Cabinet meeting, LRA Cllr Ken Angold-Stephens, strongly supported by independent Cllr Stephen Murray, expressed concern that revised proposals might lead to over-intensifying the development. It is important to provide sufficient play and amenity space for children, and there are already considerable parking stresses in the area.

Accidents, High Road & Upper Park/Lower Park Rd: A number of concerned residents have contacted LRA about these accidents. LRA Cllr Jill Angold-Stephens is investigating what can be done to prevent further accidents, and will keep these residents informed. For a start, she has identified deficiencies in the road markings at this junction and has compiled and sent a full report the County Cllr in charge of Highways, with a copy to the local County Cllr. STOP PRESS The white lines have just been renewed!

Empty homes

In 2013 the District Council brought 115 empty properties back to use. Please report any empty homes you see by ringing 01992 564706.

Elections – 22 May 2014

The local elections will be a few weeks late this year, to coincide with the European elections, and LRA candidates will be standing. We expect there will be much national and European political controversy aired in the media, but for the local elections, please put this aside, and vote for LRA's truly LOCAL candidates. Their concern is Loughton and its well-being, not national or international political posturing.

Visit www.loughtonresidents.org.uk
for more information



Highways and parking

On at least six occasions recently, Eastern European articulated lorries have become stuck in York Hill, which is a narrow lane and a conservation area. Outside no 15 there's an advisory "Unsuitable for HGV" sign. However, the drivers have little English and so ignore this sign. When an artic enters York Hill, it cannot easily reverse or turn. One incident before Christmas resulted in four cars damaged, one wall demolished, and one car written off. LRA Cllr Chris Pond is trying to get County Highways to provide signs that will be understood by foreign drivers.

The pedestrian crossing at the entrance to the car-parks at Loughton station is the responsibility of NCP. LRA Cllr Ken Angold-Stephens has been chasing them about re-painting the white lines and the work has at last been done.

After much perseverance, LRA Cllr Jill Angold-Stephens has succeeded in getting two new signs installed at the junction of the cul-de-sac part of The Crescent and The Avenue (earlier, the Council had ordered two signs, but then installed them at the wrong junction).

Tour de France road closures, July 7th: This should be great fun, but will cause traffic chaos. Representatives from the District Council, various town and parish councils and emergency services, have agreed that the closure of the race route in Epping Forest (on the B181 between North Weald & Epping, the B1393 through Epping and the A104 towards Woodford Green south of the A414) will be put back from 8am to 9am.

New M11 junction?: Essex County Council is planning to create a junction 7a from the M11 to ease daily congestion. LRA will let members know when we have more details.

Council parking schemes: The District Council is to carry out detailed feasibility studies for off-road parking on Housing land in Ladyfields Close and Paley Gardens. Sites with no Council houses in the road have been removed from the list - disappointingly, this particularly affects Chester Path, where LRA Cllr Jennie Hart has been working with residents to try to find a solution to their parking problems. Pyrles Lane is among the sites added as a result.

A makeover for Sainsbury's

Sainsbury's in Torrington Drive is a vital store for Debden people and for some time its future was uncertain. A few problems, including access for deliveries, have now been overcome and the shop is currently undergoing an enlargement and refurbishment to create better facilities. The exterior will be re-glazed and timber clad to enhance the character and appearance of the building and there will be a new entrance lobby. The interior is to have a completely new layout

A further major improvement has been the demolition of the small empty shops in front of the building to make space for forty nine parking places. LRA Cllr Jennie Hart has got an undertaking from Sainsbury's that it will make sure that the enlarged car park will be available for shoppers and won't be used by commuters

Epping Forest prosecutions

The Conservators have undertaken prosecutions for dogs not under effective control, fly tipping, riding a quad bike, riding a horse in a restricted area, not displaying a current licence and for taking a vehicle more than 45m from the highway. They have sent warning letters for various acts of misuse of the forest, including taking firewood beyond that permitted, feeding wildfowl, dogs not under effective control, metal-detecting and obstructing an officer.

More news about Loughton!

Join LRA now for £5 per household until the end of 2014! You will get extra newsletters and can receive our regular email local news bulletin. Members' support is vital as subscriptions pay costs such as printing newsletters and election expenses. Subscriptions for existing members are due in January. To check if you've paid, or to pay direct from a bank account/standing order, ring 020 8508 2932 or email contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk

I enclose £5 till end-2014 £5
 I enclose a donation for LRA's work £
 Name
 Address
 Post code IG10 Phone.....
 Email (if any)
 I would like LRA's email local news bulletins Y/N

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

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

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

LRA constitution changes

At the AGM this year we propose to tidy up the wording of the LRA Constitution to bring it into line with how we actually do things, by removing the requirement for an Autumn General Meeting, deleting the post of Chairman and recognising how we now run LRA, and changing the numbers of elected and co-opted places on the Executive Committee. The full set of proposals will be published on the website before the AGM, and are available from David Linnell at contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk or 020 8508 2932.

Memorial Garden, Roding Road

The recently renovated memorial garden on Roding Road will be formally opened by Epping Forest MP Eleanor Laing on 27 April at 11.30am.

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).



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