

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Newsletter Members' Edition February 2020

*Loughton Residents Association is independent
and focuses on looking after Loughton.
We have Cllrs on the County & District Councils, and
hold 20 out of the 22 Loughton Town Council seats.*

Local Plan

The District Council's progress report can be read at <https://tinyurl.com/EFDCReport181119>. 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 (item 17 <https://tinyurl.com/EFCCAagenda181119>).

Langston Road Retail Park

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. 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.



Mind the Gap (in service)!

Central Line service reductions north of Loughton, and changes to the Central Line timetable, were due to have taken effect on 26th January. You can find out more about the background to these changes on our website at <https://tinyurl.com/LRACentralLine>

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 will come (about every 6 minutes) 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 until later in the morning.

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

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

The (LRA-led) Council plans ahead carefully to try and get the most out of its budget. You can see what's planned at <https://tinyurl.com/LTCAagenda080120> (pages 2-4).

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).

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.

Our thanks to all the residents who support LRA

Our Farmers' Markets



Come along to LRA's Farmers' Market on Sunday 9th February, on Centric Parade, High Road. The market is held from 9am to 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.

Parking schemes approved

The North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) agreed the following schemes at their October meeting:

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

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.

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.

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...).

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.

CONTACTING LRA

D=District T=Town	Enquiries: contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk 8508 2361	
	Membership: Josephine Gilbert, 112 Jessel Drive, IG10 2EQ 07922 048758	
COUNCILLORS	FAIRMEAD WARD	ST MARY'S WARD
ALDERTON WARD	Carol Davies (T) Colebrook Gardens 07817 230372	Barbara Cohen (T) Traps Hill 07957 141197
Adam Omer (T) Station Road 07904 919701	David Wixley (D) Goldings Road 8418 9284	Howard Kauffman (D) Church Lane 8508 1098
Chris & Debra Roberts (D) Colson Road 8279 0053	Kevin Latchford (T) Colebrook Gardens 8502 4568	Judy Jennings (D&T) York Hill 8508 1861
Mick Stubbings (T) Greenfields 07766 480522	Louise Mead (D) 07746 875952	COUNTY: Loughton (Central)
Philip Abraham (T) Lancaster Drive 8502 2925	FOREST WARD	Chris Pond Staples Road 8508 2361
BROADWAY WARD	Amy Beales (D) Harwater Drive 07507 341956	COMMITTEE
Chris Pond (D) Staples Road 8508 2361	Jill Angold-Stephens (T) Lower Park Road 8281 0674	Anne Harriman 8502 1779
Jayna Jogia (T) The Drive 07983 713389	Roger Baldwin (D) Burney Drive 8281 5488	Chidi Nweke 07403 489455
John Mahoney (T) High Road 07909 517145	Tessa Cochrane (T) Shaftesbury 3643 7492	George Meltser 8502 3006
Michael Owen (D) Baldwins Hill 07767 004745	Trevor Downing (T) Smarts Lane 8508 8877	John Walker 07779338868
Stella Murphy (T) High View Close 8508 2794	RODING WARD	Judith Walker 07855 265835
ST JOHN'S WARD	David Wixley (T) Goldings Road 8418 9284	Juliet Pollard 8502 0552
Bob Jennings (D) York Hill 8508 1861	Mark Dalton (T) Highland Avenue 07719 736901	Lance Leonard 8502 0771
Caroline Pond (D&T) Staples Road 8508 2361	Rose Brookes (D&T) Lower Park Road 8502 5981	Mark Hickey 07774 682299
Chris Pond (T) Staples Road 8508 2361	LOUGHTON LIFE EDITOR Eva Blasco 8923 0065	Michael Benbow 8508 4457
SECRETARY Jill Angold-Stephens 8281 0674	MINUTES SECRETARY Susan Creevy	Steve Eaton 8923 0065
TREASURER Miriam Murphy 01992 815525		<i>*Dial 020 before numbers beginning with 8</i>

LRA councillors are Independent and non-political

Planning & licensing

The LRA Plans Group (LRAPG) looks at all planning and licensing applications in the town, and takes action where appropriate. It consults residents and supports, or objects to, individual applications as appropriate. It works entirely separately from LRA's Cllrs on Council planning committees. Read more about Planning and Licensing, the role of the LRA Plans Group (LRAPG), how to get more information using the application and licensing numbers provided, and how you can comment at <https://tinyurl.com/LRAPPlanning>

Where there are residents in flats above licensed premises, for example on the High Road, The Broadway or nearby, the LRAPG objects to late-night licensing applications because we think that 11pm is the latest closing time which should be permitted as many residents will be in bed by 11pm, and most by midnight.

New Lidl Store, 140 Church Hill

Lidl already has planning permission for its new store, with no deliveries or waste collections being made outside of the hours of 8am to 8pm Monday to Saturday, and no deliveries or waste collections being made on Sundays and Bank Holidays. Lidl, however, is concerned that these restrictions will affect the store operations especially with delivery vehicles arriving during store opening hours when the car park is in use, and worries that there will be a negative effect of waste not being collected for up to two days on weekends and bank holidays. They are therefore seeking to extend delivery hours to 7am to 9pm Monday to Saturday, and to have Sunday deliveries between 4.30pm and 6.30pm.

We have pointed out that these conditions were imposed to protect nearby residents and Lidl should have factored this in before acquiring the site, given the limited parking and tight turning circle for lorries.

We know that delivery lorries are likely to turn up early and wait outside until 7am, with their engines running and making a noise. A broadband reversing alarm still makes a noise even though it sounds like a strangled parrot, as does moving glass bottles; rattling together as they are moving is very disturbing for residents, especially in the summer when they have their windows open. There is also the issue of disturbance from the banging of doors and lorry roller shutters. One-off noises and bangs are more disturbing for residents than constant noise.

We have responded to Lidl as we think 7am is too early. We have suggested 7.30am as a compromise but, subject to any consent being temporary, so it can be reviewed, and also emphasising the adjoining residents should be fully consulted on such a change. Disappointingly Lidl have ignored our suggestions and proceeded to submit the planning application unchanged. We have therefore objected on behalf of local residents who have contacted us and are very concerned about the disturbance the earlier and later hours will generate.

(Application number EPF/3016/19, comments closed)

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, comments closed)

Landmark House, The Broadway

This application includes a new front façade to the existing shell for a public house with new front elevation signage and new air conditioning/ventilation system. It appears the work has already been carried out, which is also disappointing.



LRAPG is objecting to this application given the negative impacts on residents from the ventilation system. The extracts should discharge at roof level where smells and heat would not affect the residents in the building. Overall this is a badly planned scheme in the first instance where extract infrastructure should have been planned into the development right from the very start.

The signage should be at fascia level and not on the pillars between the windows, which is harmful to the building and streetscape. The council granted permission for this building partly because it would be a landmark building, so let's not deface it with inappropriate signage now. We have therefore requested that the council instigates discontinuance action.

(Application Number EPF/2668/19, comments closed)

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.

(Application Number EPF/2753/19, comments closed)

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.

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 a residents' action group https://twitter.com/SOLE_Essex

There has been a particular cull of local history countywide lately. The library staff have been very good about this, and has 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 the larger libraries, and are of course trying to close some of the smaller ones, or to pass the responsibility of running them onto voluntary groups

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".

Email LRA at contact@LoughtonResidents.co.uk

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

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 Squires at contact@loughton-tc.gov.uk or 020 8508 4200.

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.

LRA Christmas Quiz 2019

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 can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/LRAQuiz2019>, or ring 020 8508 2932.

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.



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.