

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Newsletter Members' Edition February 2023

*Loughton Residents Association is independent
and focuses on looking after Loughton.*

*We have Cllrs on the County & District Councils and
hold 21 out of the 22 Loughton Town Council seats.*

Loughton's Water Supply

Residents may have noticed some recent short interruptions to their water supply and held their breath hoping there wouldn't be a repeat of the incidents in late 2021. Thankfully, supply was only interrupted for a short time.

As a reminder, if you have water supply problems:

- Thames Water does provide website and Twitter updates, although the latter isn't always up to date.
- Please continue to report any issues to Thames Water online or call 0800 316 9800. If the situation becomes urgent, do tell them and request bottled water.
- If you are out walking, keep an eye out for any new mains water leaks and report them too, as the leak may be the start of yet another problem.

As a precaution:

- If you're on the point of junking your cold water tank and hot water cylinder, think twice! The water in your tank and cylinder can refill even if the water pressure is low.
- Keep a supply of bottled water in the house for either drinking or flushing toilets.

If you, or someone you know, need a little extra support perhaps because of their health, disability, age, or if they're going through a difficult time in their life, Thames Water has a free Priority Services Register. This provides additional support when the water is off and when leaving the house is not possible, including bottled water deliveries where possible, by prioritising those who are dependent on water for medical needs.

You can find out more about Thames Water's Priority Services Register at <https://tinyurl.com/ThamesWaterPriorityServices> or by calling them on 0800 9808800.

Please renew now

Your copy of *Loughton Life* should come with a letter either confirming that you've already paid for 2023 or asking you to renew your membership (only £5 a year). You can help us greatly by doing so now.

LRA is run by volunteers, and we keep our costs to the minimum. We depend upon volunteers and membership to produce these newsletters and run our campaigns.



District Council apology for missed bin collections

The District Council has apologised for the ongoing issues with domestic waste and recycling collections.

Poor performance by waste and recycling contractor Biffa over Christmas and the New Year has compounded problems due to the severe weather earlier in December. Whilst the pre-Christmas cold snap exacerbated the current difficulties, the recent problems are part of a longer-term trend.

There are many causes to the current situation. The District Council may now be questioning the wisdom of redeveloping the old refuse vehicle maintenance depot on Langston Road and getting Biffa to maintain depots instead, along with a fleet of new lorries which may all need replacing at once. LRA has pointed this out in the past.

If your collection is missed, check to see if the Council already knows first at <https://tinyurl.com/efdcmissedback>, and if they already know you should leave your bins out to be collected.

The Council has now decided to go to market and run a full procurement process for the Waste/Street Cleansing contract which expires in November 2024.

New charges for additional and larger bins

The District Council has decided that charges will be introduced when residents request an additional garden waste bin or a larger refuse bin above the standard size (although these are not currently available). In addition, if a bin is lost or a resident cannot produce it, residents will be charged for a replacement bin.

There would be discretion to consider any exceptions to this, as when collections are taking place bins can go missing when they do not go back outside the right property, or the rare occasion of when a person moves out of a property and takes the bins with them.

Where a bin can be repaired, the repair would continue to be free of charge to residents.

New District Local Plan

The consultation on changes to the Main Modifications of the Local Plan ended on 9th December.

LRA comment: LRA submitted further objections based on the inadequacy/illegality of the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) mitigation. The District Council Service Director for Planning Services, Nigel Richardson, has said the Inspector would consider these, probably during January.

Our thanks to all the residents who support LRA

LRA Farmers' Markets

The latest position is that we have a firm of market organisers which is interested in starting a weekly market in the High Road, but they have not been able to interest enough traders given recent economic uncertainty, price rises and problems hiring staff.

We will continue to work on starting a market in 2023.

Housing management services

As the District Council Cash Office on The Broadway has now closed, the District Council housing management team will be at the Oakwood Hill Community Hall on Longcroft Rise every Thursday from 9:30am to 12:30pm.

Support with the cost of living

Support is available to help with the cost of living. This includes income and disability benefits, bills and allowances, childcare, housing, travel and support for small businesses. Find out more at <https://tinyurl.com/efdccostofliving>

Community Warm Places

Community Warm Places provide a free, safe, warm and comfortable space throughout winter for those who need it. Many of the venues are offering refreshments (with some offering hot food), activities like board games, and Wi-Fi. Locations in Loughton include Debden and Loughton Libraries, St Mary's Church, St Michael's Church, and Loughton/Trinity Methodist Church. Check the details and opening times at <https://tinyurl.com/WarmPlaces> and please share them with anyone you know who may struggle to keep warm this winter.



Loughton Wombles

Loughton Wombles successfully carried out their seventh group litter pick on Saturday 3rd December. The Town Council had a large response to their request to litter pick on this date, so they were split into three teams.



If you'd like to join in and help, please call 020 8508 4200.

70 Trees for 70 Years of Queen Elizabeth II's reign

His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, Ranger of Epping Forest, alongside civic leaders from the City of London Corporation, and the London Boroughs of Redbridge, Waltham Forest, and Newham, planted the final trees in a grove of 70 Silver Birch at Wanstead Flats in December.

They represent the 70 years of Queen Elizabeth II's reign and will be dedicated as part of The Queen's Green Canopy campaign. This is a tree planting initiative created to mark Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee last June. Following her passing in September, HM The King agreed to extend the scheme to allow people to plant trees in her memory.

Avian flu

As avian flu has been detected in the Forest, you can find out what precautions you can take with wild, sick or dead birds at <https://tinyurl.com/colavianflu>

You can report a dead wild bird by calling 0345 933 5577 and you can report sick or injured wild birds to the RSPCA by calling 0300 123 4999.

If you have bird feeders in your garden, the RSPB advises good hygiene is key. Clean bird feeders and feeding stations weekly and change bird drinking and bathing water regularly. It is normal this time of year to see fewer birds in your garden and this is not linked to avian flu.

Contacting LRA

Councillors key: D = District T = Town		Membership: membership@loughtonresidents.co.uk Laura Blake, 9 Woodbury Hill, Loughton IG10 1JB 07968 174388	Enquiries: contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk 020 8508 2361
Alderton Ward Chidi Nweke (D) Hillcroft 07403 489455 Ian Allgood (D) Greensted Road 020 8502 2393 Katie Valentine (T) Habgood Road 07477 012213 Mick Stubbings (T) Greenfields 07766 480522 Philip Abraham (T) Lancaster Drive 020 8502 2925	Fairmead Ward Carol Davies (T) Colebrook Gardens 07817 230372 David Wixley (D) Goldings Road 020 8418 9284 Louise Mead (D) 07746 875952 Sebastian Fontenelle (T) Etheridge Rd 07941365850 Will Kauffman (T) The Greens Close 07799 148740	St Mary's Ward Barbara Cohen (T) Church Lane 020 8502 3242 Graham Wiskin (T) Traps Hill 020 8925 2003 Howard Kauffman (D) Church Lane 02085081098 Judy Jennings (D&T) York Hill County: Loughton (Central) Chris Pond Staples Road 020 8508 2361	Broadway Ward Chris Pond (D) Staples Road 020 8508 2361 Kevin Rainbow (T) Audley Gardens 07921 662715 Les House (T) Avondale Drive 020 8508 3369 Michael Owen (D) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145 Philip Beales (T) Harwater Drive 020 8418 0459
St John's Ward Bob Jennings (D) York Hill Caroline Pond (D&T) Staples Road 020 8508 2361 Chris Pond (T) Staples Road 020 8508 2361 Michael Owen (T) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145	Forest Ward Jayna Jogia (D) The Drive 07983 713389 Jon Riley (T) Albion Park 020 8508 6604 Roger Baldwin (D) Burney Drive 020 8281 5488 Stella Murphy (T) High View Close 020 8508 2794 Trevor Downing (T) Smarts Lane 020 8508 8877	Committee Anne Harriman 020 8502 1779 John Walker 07779 338868 Judith Walker 07855 265835 Juliet Pollard 020 8502 0552 Lance Leonard 020 8502 0771 Mark Dalton 07719 736901 Michael Benbow 020 8508 4457 Steve Eaton 020 8923 0065 Tessa Cochrane 020 3643 7492	Roding Ward David Wixley (T) Goldings Road 020 8418 9284 Neil MacKinnon (T) Barncroft Close 07872 324028 Rose Brookes (D&T) Lower Park Rd 020 8502 5981
Secretary: Jill Angold-Stephens 020 8281 0674 Treasurer: Miriam Murphy 01992 815525	Loughton Life Editor: Eva Blasco 020 8923 0065 Minutes Secretary: Susan Creevy		

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 LRAPG, how to get more information using the application and reference 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.

Pyrles Lane former nursery site

This application proposes redevelopment of the site to provide 30 flats and 18 houses. In 2015 the site was granted outline planning permission for 36 flats and houses, however this expired. The District Council then failed to find a commercial developer prepared to buy the site so sold it to Qualis (which is a group of companies set up as Council subsidiaries in order to develop, own and maintain properties). This new application proposes an even more intensive plan for the site.

LRAPG is objecting to this application with the key concerns being:

- Only 8% of dwellings are affordable.
- The impact on the Epping Forest SAC from more traffic and pollution from exhaust fumes.
- Four storeys being too high - the area is mainly two/three storey houses.
- The loss of trees and open green space.
- No provisions for supporting infrastructure such as doctor's surgeries and education provision.
- Consultation on an application for a previous, and now abandoned, scheme, opposed a less dense development.

Because this land is owned by the District Council, the application will be considered by the District-wide committee, where local knowledge is much less prevalent than in the usual area committee. Most of those Cllrs will know little about Loughton, Debden and the local area. You need to bear this in mind when commenting.

Reference EPF/2913/22. The formal consultation period ends 10 February.

Rear of 230-232 High Road (Corner of The Drive)

The application proposes adding eight flats to the rear of the existing building.

LRAPG has objected to this poorly designed development. The lack of car parking will lead to pressure on adjacent streets which are already congested. The architecture is very poor; the rendered elements are clumsy and out of character with the area. The white rendered base will get dirty very quickly - good designers would not render the base of a building in white in a location like this. The air conditioning units for the shops at the rear will be lost and no consideration has been given to how they will be replaced. LRAPG has asked that the retail tenants on the High Road be asked to comment on this aspect of the development in order to ensure they are aware. The additional dwellings will also impact on the air quality to the Epping Forest SAC.

Reference EPF/2869/22. The formal consultation period ended on 19 January but you can still comment to the Council.

7 Forest Road

The application proposes adding two stories of office accommodation over existing retail shops.

LRAPG has objected to the proposed extension by reason of its height, bulk and massing, which will stick out on this part of Forest Road to the visual detriment of Forest Road and this part of Loughton. LRAPG is also very concerned that the quality of the drawings are so poor, it is impossible to assess the quality of the design. The application should have been made invalid.

Reference EPF/2757/22. The formal consultation period ended on 16 January but you can still comment to the Council.

113 Church Hill - Damaged Hoarding and Rubbish

A resident contacted us to report that the building site at 113 Church Hill was in a poor state with rubbish on the site and the hoarding in a poor state.

John Walker of LRAPG inspected the site and has asked the District Council Planning Enforcement Team to contact the owners to ask them to re-do the hoarding and clear the rubbish. If the owners don't respond he has asked the team to issue a Section 215 notice under the Planning Act which will make the owners do it.

Street lighting

On some estates and former estates, the County Council does not own or service all the street lighting, but the District Council often does. The main place where this applies is Oakwood Hill Estate. This however also happens in, for example, parts of The Seymours, Trevelyan Close and part of Englands Lane.

As a tip, if the lamp has a white "witch's hat" atop or next to it, then it's a County Council light. If not, it's a District Council or private lamp. The Town Council owns no street lamps.

LRA Cllrs have noticed longer time gaps in getting lamps repaired and wonder, especially with old yellow 250-watt lamps, if this is designed to save money. In the County Council's defence, there has been a great shortage of spares (especially for older units) and if the electrical supply fails the contractor is under no obligation to act fast.

Loughton Leisure Centre

Several parents have complained to LRA Cllr Rose Brookes about swimming lessons at Loughton Leisure Centre being cancelled or classes being merged. She raised this at a Leisure Contract meeting, along with increasing the cost of lessons again by another £2 to £32 a month. The Contract Manager responded by emphasising there was a national shortage of teachers as many instructors had left during the Pandemic when pools were closed. The company is subsidising the cost of training several teachers and they expected things to improve in January when they were qualified to teach. A new coordinator of swimming lessons was appointed in Loughton at the beginning of October, and she is improving communication. Eagle-eyed LRA Cllr David Wixley asked Rose to also report to Places Leisure that many gutters at Loughton Leisure Centre were blocked. Following his alert, the gutters were cleared out.



**Get our news as it arrives on Twitter (@LoughtonRA)
and at www.facebook.com/LoughtonResidents**

Cllr Pond's potholes progress

As a result of LRA Cllr Chris Pond nominating potholes to repair, the following potholes are amongst those scheduled for repair (which may have already been fixed):

- Old Station Road - in the bus stop heading towards the station.
 - Alderton Hill - four outside No. 48, 52 and 54.
 - In front of Loughton Station near the bus stops.
- Chris can only report potholes in Loughton Central County Division.

Meet your Alderton Ward LRA Cllrs

Alderton ward councillors hold their monthly drop-in surgery every 1st Saturday of the month from 2pm-4pm at Guilloti Cafe on Borders Lane. Come by to discuss any ward issues. No registration or booking is needed.

Heathland restoration

Walking in the Forest, you may come across bare scrapes in the ground. These are part of conservation work being undertaken to help restore the Forest's heathlands. Competitive grasses and bracken have spread across the heathlands, crowding out other heathland species such as heather, mosses and lichens. These scrapes are being made to remove the competitive plants, to reveal the soil and to allow seeds of other heathland plants to germinate.

High Road noise complaints

We are aware of residents' complaints of noise recently from a restaurant on the High Road.

If you are suffering from noise, you can complain to the District Council at <https://tinyurl.com/efdcnoise> or you can call 01992 564608 during office hours or 01992 564000 at all other times. For complaints about noise from licensed premises, the District Council needs residents to report them. This is used as evidence in any investigation and to support a potential review of the premises licence.

Removal of speed humps on Smarts Lane

It was reported at the Local Highways Panel on 9th January that road humps in Smarts Lane will be removed north-west of Royal Oak Close and retained south-west thereof. It was also reported that Smarts Lane is not scheduled for resurfacing, contrary to what had been hoped, despite its condition.

Christmas Card Competition Winners

Judging of the competition was undertaken by the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, as in previous years. The winners were:

- Infant School category - Florence Tufton (Alderton Infant School)
- Junior School category - Scarlett Roberts-Rhodes (Hereward School), Runner Up was Elsie Fourie
- Secondary School category - Victoria Yozova (Roding Valley High School).

Christmas Window Competition Winners

The Town Council has thanked all the Loughton businesses that decorated their windows and joined in the town's festive celebrations in last year's Christmas Window Competition. The winners were:

- Local Independent category - Emily Grace, Florist, 51 The Broadway
- Multiple/Chain Store category - Chigwell Window Centre, 305-307 High Road
- Charity Shops category - St Clare Hospice, 72 The Broadway
- Eateries - Aura, 179-181 High Road

The national charities chosen by the category winners will each receive a £75 donation from the Town Council. This year they are the National Autistic Society, Haven House Children's Hospice and St Clare Hospice.

LRA Christmas Quiz 2022

Thank you to all of you who sent in your entry for the Christmas quiz, and to the many other families who had a go (and didn't hesitate to tell us which questions caused problems!).

The winner is Mary Marshall, who receives a £15 book token. If you'd like to see the answers, you can find them on our website www.LoughtonResidents.org.uk

Santa Claus Came to Town

On Friday 2nd December many local children queued for a free visit to see Santa at the District Council's former housing office on the Broadway. This event was organised by



Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership (BTCP).

LRA Town Cllr Carol Davies visited New City College to see the student's designs for a Pop-Up Santa's Grotto. The college also produced a poster for the event and provided a First Aider, and many college students joined local volunteers to steward on the street. Helpers included parents with children at Thomas Willingale School, local residents, and many Town Cllrs. Independent Councillor Stephen Murray enjoyed being in charge of the queue!

On the opposite side of the road in St John the Baptist Church's premises a children's entertainer kept children and parents busy.

LRA Cllr Rose Brookes, the interim chair of the Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership, would like to say a big thank you to the many LRA members who donated books or money towards this project at The Bookshop on the High Road. The Debden Traders also gave a substantial contribution to Santa's sack. She commented "After an absence of any special Christmas activity for children on the Broadway for several years, many of us felt it was important to organise something. This really was an excellent example of partnership working, with lots of agencies and individuals making a contribution. The BTCP exists thanks to the financial grant from the District Council."