

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Newsletter

Townwide Autumn Edition

For all residents in IG10

*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.*

Redevelopment to the west side of the High Road?

In 2019 the District Council bought a row of shops on the west side of the High Road, from numbers 200 (previously M&Co) to 226 (now Phone Clinic) for £23.8 million.

The Council is now considering redevelopment of the properties to provide modern commercial space with residential units above.

As a first step, the Council has created a fund of £1.02 million to progress feasibility, viability and achieve planning permission for redevelopment of the properties, along with a similar proposal for Brooker Road in Waltham Abbey.

LRA Comment: LRA has generally supported removal of the very unattractive 1960s and 70s shops and storerooms, as well as the mess behind. But we need to ensure what goes there instead will be well-designed, user-friendly, and will not impact the amenity of residents living in the roads behind the High Road.

We understand leases have all been issued to expire next year, so managing the transition will be key.

Became an LRA member

Around eight hundred households are members of the LRA. Their annual subscriptions of £5 a year support the work we do to make Loughton an even better place to live. The LRA represents a wide range of ideas and concerns. We seek out the views of people in the community and ensure that their voices are heard. The LRA makes great efforts to provide a public arena for the residents who care about Loughton.

Help Look After Loughton. We are always looking for new members to support our work. Members receive additional news about Loughton in our regular members-only Loughton News emails, as well as extra members-only issues of Loughton Life.

For details of how to join, and past issues of our news bulletins, see www.loughtonresidents.org.uk

If you'd like to become a member but don't have access to the internet, please call 07968 174388 to speak to our membership secretary Laura Blake.

We never share our membership information.



The Broadway refurbishment

In our March news email to members, we reported that the District Council was planning a refurbishment of The Broadway. The tender process is now complete with the contract being awarded to Mulalley and Co.

The work is costed at £4.8 million and includes the blocks on both sides of the street. This will deliver external refurbishment and maintenance works to address issues of weathertightness and security, with full replacement of the roof in conjunction with other cyclical external building fabric repairs including window replacements, balcony and walkway repairs, and compliance work. An upgrade to the energy efficiency performance of The Broadway is included by increasing the insulation of the roof and fitting thermally efficient windows. A medium-term improvement plan will also be provided detailing future energy efficiency upgrades to make the building ready for net zero by 2050.

Work is expected to start in October or November, with the contract period being 12 months.

The Council has stated that residential and commercial leaseholders will be recharged a proportion of the cost in accordance with their respective leases. They recognise the bills will be significant and have said they will work with each leaseholder to agree payment terms that will lessen the immediate impact and enable leaseholders to pay sums owed over a period. Further details have not yet been announced, and the Council has said work will now start in earnest with making contact with individuals on the recharging details.

A dedicated website page will be set up for parties to be able to access information.

LRA Comment: At the District Council Cabinet meeting on 2nd September when the work was discussed, LRA Cllrs along with Independent Cllr Stephen Murray raised concerns especially around the costs to be recharged to leaseholders and when such payment will be due to ensure they are fair and appropriate. LRA Cllrs also highlighted that a sinking fund (regular money set aside to pay for future expenses) should have been in place in previous years to avoid significant costs being charged to leaseholders. The District Council acknowledged that this situation must not happen again and after the current work is completed such a fund should be in place.

LRA will try to ensure the viability of The Broadway remains unimpaired both during construction, and after the works are completed. However the present administration at the District Council may not be so concerned.

Our thanks to all the residents who support LRA

High Road Food Markets

A year ago we reported that the Town Council was advertising for a company to re-start running the markets in the High Road. We put them in touch with a company that was interested in taking this on, and discussions got underway. Markets in Loughton used to be licensed by the District Council. As this was a new responsibility for the Town Council, it took some months before they were happy to proceed, but earlier this year agreement had been reached.

To LRA's surprise, the District Council then decided to demand rent for the use of Centric Parade (they had never done so before). The District Council then dragged out the negotiations with the market company, but then finally realised that they couldn't charge rent because they don't own the land – it's a public highway.

Sadly this means another summer has gone by without the markets. However, LRA and the Town Council will continue to try to get them underway as soon as we can.

Beware of car thieves

We are aware of reports of attempted car thefts locally. If you have a keyless car, thieves only need to be within a few metres of your car key to capture its signal. Your car could be stolen within 10 seconds.

The police advises:

- When at home, keep your car key (and the spare) well away from the car.
- Put the keys in a screened or signal-blocking pouch, such as a Faraday Bag, and check if the bag or pouch is still working every few months.
- Re-programme your keys if you buy a second hand car.
- If possible, turn off wireless signals on your fob when it's not being used (refer to your car's instruction manual).
- If you have CCTV and observe people trying to open car doors, report it to the police online or call 101. If the suspects are still on the scene, call 999.

Thief arrested

PC Farrow from the Town Team was reviewing incidents from her beat to see if there was anything of note that she could assist with. She identified a theft from a motor vehicle that had occurred overnight in Loughton, where the victim had indicated they had clear CCTV footage of the offender.

PC Farrow knows her beat well and quickly located and arrested the male, who was found hiding in the back seat of a car. He was charged and remanded on 2 for offences of theft from motor vehicle and fraud.

Burglar arrested

A man arrested after officers responded within five minutes to reports of a break-in at a home in Loughton has pleaded guilty to burglary. It is alleged that property to the value of around £25,000 had been taken.

New waste and recycling collection service

The District Council is transferring responsibility of waste collection from Biffa to a council-owned waste collection company called Terra Verde Services from November. At this stage the Council has yet to announce any changes to the service. We will let you know via our social media channels of any changes that happen and will keep watch for any messages from the District Council on the subject.

Station Road parking charges

Parking charges now apply on Station Road Monday to Saturday between 9:30am and 5pm. Disabled Blue Badge holders can park in the paid-for bays free and without time limit but may not stop on the red lines.

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 or call 020 8508 2361	
Loughton Fairmead District Area LRA Cllrs Louise Mead (D) Goldings Road 07746 875952 Arash Ardakani (D) Shelley Grove 020 8257 0230 Will Kauffman (D) The Greens Close 07799 148740 Carol Davies (T) Colebrook Gardens 07817 230372 Neil MacKinnon (T) Barncroft Close 07872 324028 Ceejay Ubah (T) Barrington Road 07983 535992 Ruth Sylvan (T) Englands Lane 07958 813014 Sebastian Fontenelle (T) Etheridge Rd 07898906371		County: Loughton (Central) Chris Pond Staples Road 020 8508 2361 Loughton St John's District Area LRA Cllrs Chris Pond (D&T) Staples Road 020 8508 2361 Howard Kauffman (D) Church Lane 020 8508 1098 Graham Wiskin (D) Traps Hill 020 8925 2003 Stephen Harriman (T) High Road 07740 409374 Michael Owen (T) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145 Ian Allgood (T) Greensted Road 020 8502 2393 Joyce Obaseki (T) Whitehills Road 020 3004 7286	
Loughton Forest District Area LRA Cllrs Ian Allgood (D) Greensted Road 020 8502 2393 Michael Owen (D) Baldwins Hill 07467 430145 Roger Baldwin (D) Burney Drive 020 8281 5488 Jon Riley (T) Albion Park 020 8508 6604 Kin-Wan Lee (T) Meadow Road 07940 807483 Stella Murphy (T) High View Close 020 8508 2794 Raj Minhas (T) Alderton Hall Lane 07889 121518 Wendy Dodd (T) Deepdene Road 07871 964682		Loughton Roding District Area LRA Cllrs Chidi Nweke (D) Hillcroft 07403 489455 Sheree Rackham (D) Hillcroft 07722 511107 Katie Valentine (T) Habgood Road 07477 012213 Les House (T) Avondale Drive 020 8508 3369 Alan Fricker (T) Stonards Hill 07508 332342 Mick Stubbings (T) Greenfields 07766 480522	
Secretary: Vacancy - Please apply 020 8508 4457 Treasurer: Miriam Murphy 07966 177961		Loughton Whitebridge & IG9 East Area LRA Cllrs Barbara Cohen (D) Church Lane 020 8502 3242 Rose Brookes (D&T) Lower Park Rd 07391 879412 David Wixley (T) The Meadway 020 8418 9284 Committee Anne Harriman 020 8502 1779 Chris Kent 07825 249777 John Walker 07779 338868 Judith Walker 07855 265835 Juliet Pollard 020 8502 0552 Kevin Rainbow 07921 662715 Mark Dalton 07719 736901 Martine Groman-Marks Michael Benbow 020 8508 4457 Philip Abraham 020 8502 2925 Steve Eaton 020 8923 0065 Tessa Cochrane 020 3643 7492 Trevor Downing 020 8508 8877	
		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.

43 Alderton Hill

This application to demolish the existing house to erect a new building has been approved.

LRA Cllr Howard Kauffman has commented "I personally do not see that Alderton Hill should become Loughton's equivalent of Bishop's Avenue in wherever that is in Finchley where you get oversized buildings, mansion blocks that stick out - they're just not in keeping with their street scene."

Howard added about the 50-foot-long side extension planned that "I've never seen an extension of that size, I don't understand it. Why should there be a brick wall halfway down a garden like that?" He also said "I understand a new house will come, but it's got to be of a superlative design. And with respect, I don't believe it is a superlative design. There are other new builds in Alderton Hill which are of superlative design. This is a pastiche mansion of dated design. It doesn't achieve what it should do in my opinion."

The plans were also objected to by the Town Council with concerns including that the "mansion-style design was detrimental to the visual amenity of the area" and said it "it is not sustainable to knock down existing buildings and replace them with completely new builds".

LRAPG also objected to the development on the grounds it was oversized and to the principle of knocking down an existing house that is in good condition and not unattractive. Reference EPF/0754/24

Ancillary use of Existing Outbuildings as Residential Annexes

LRAPG are seeing more and more applications for separate self-contained units in the gardens of houses which are claimed to be ancillary. However it has also been noticed recent applications have been granted to certify the accommodation is no longer ancillary by reason of the 4 year rule (now 10 years). It is impossible for the District Council to monitor whether they are being used ancillary or let out to someone else. LRAPG has therefore asked for a legal agreement on these types of applications to ensure the accommodation remains ancillary, for which a planning condition is too easy to overcome.



13 Stanmore Way

This application proposes demolition of the existing house to erect a new building with a basement and second floor. This is a resubmission of refused application EPF/0577/24.

LRAPG are concerned their objections to the previous application, on embedded carbon grounds, were not addressed by officers. Officers have been asked to address the objections properly with this revised scheme which is on the grounds of:

- The loss of embedded carbon by permitting the existing building to be lost.
- Allowing the existing building to be scrapped with no reference to the circular economy – this means reusing as much of the existing fabric as possible elsewhere – that includes the existing brickwork to the door handles to the carpets. Other councils insist on this so why not Epping Forest?
- There is no justification to demolish the existing house bar the owner wants to knock it down and build a bigger one. There is no public benefit to justify the loss of one private dwelling for another one.

Overall, the existing dwelling appears to be in good condition and is not unattractive. No justification has been provided for its demolition or about the recycling of the existing materials in the building. There are no public benefits associated with the redevelopment and therefore permission should be refused. Reference EPF/1312/24

230 High Road (previously Boots)

This application proposes demolishing the existing single-story extension to the rear of the existing ground floor shop, and replacing it with a new extension on the same area.

The premises are planned to be used by a veterinary practice. Although the change of use does not need planning permission, the District Council can impose conditions on the new addition to the rear where dogs are going to be kept overnight. LRAPG has asked for the extension to be soundproofed to protect the amenity of adjoining neighbours. Reference EPF/1381/24

Out of control dogs

It is an offence to let a dog be dangerously out of control whether that's in public or private. A dog is considered to be out of control if:

- It injures someone
 - It makes someone worried that it might injure them.
- A court could also decide that your dog is dangerously out of control if:
- It attacks someone's animal
 - The owner of an animal thinks they could be injured if they tried to stop your dog attacking their animal.

If you see a banned dog loose, or it seems to be out of control, please report it to the police or call 101. It is against the law to own certain types of dogs. Whether a dog is a banned type depends on what it looks like, rather than its breed or name. It's a criminal offence to own or possess an XL Bully dog in England and Wales unless you have a valid Certificate of Exemption.

If you think someone has or is breeding dogs, report it online at <https://tinyurl.com/essexreportacrime>

One house, four blue plaques

A new blue plaque has been unveiled at 19 York Hill in recognition of Mexicanist Diana Kennedy (née Southwood). She was born at 19 York Hill in 1923 and was known as the authority on all things Mexican especially cuisine. She received numerous awards for her work, including the Order of the Aztec Eagle from the Mexican government, and received an OBE.

There are now four blue plaques on the building with the others being for Arthur Bacot (Medical Entomologist), Christopher Cutchey (Loughton's first photographer) and Edward Cummings (Clerk of the Works at St Paul's Cathedral), the latter two which of were paid for by the home owners as the Town Council did not have sufficient funds. LRA Cllr Chris Pond, speaking at the unveiling commented "We think four blue plaques on a house is a bit of a record and I believe Joanne and Mike Burns (the owners) are going to contact the Guinness Book of Records to see if it is. We know there are 19 houses in the country with two blue plaques."

Oakwood Hill Estate

The District Council, as part of the Safer Streets project, has a one-year project to focus on:

- Increasing CCTV in the area
- Improving lighting
- Creating a safer environment for residents
- Promoting health and wellbeing within the community.

Community action days are being organised to deliver key safety messages and engage with residents to understand their concerns.

Leisure centre boiler replacement

LRA Cllr Rose Brookes represents LRA on Loughton Leisure Centre's Partnership Board and reports that £300,000 has been awarded from the Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund to replace the Leisure Centre's boilers, which are now over twenty years old. The District Council had to bid for the money from the Fund, which also provided funding for 325 pools across the country.

The new eco-friendly boiler system will reduce energy consumption and carbon output.

Places Leisure again offered free swimming during the summer holidays this year for children on free school meals, with letters were sent to all local primary schools to distribute to the relevant parents.

In Epping, work on the new Leisure Centre is on track and it is expected to open in late Autumn 2025.

Jessel Green

The Town Council is advocating the adoption of Fields in Trust status for Jessel Green and other eligible 'housing' greens in Debden. The Town Clerk will be progressing this to the District Council. In 2021 the Loughton Cricket Club ground was similarly protected as a green space in perpetuity.

Demolition of Loughton Library

The County Council has not provided any update for Loughton Library, but they have announced plans for Colchester Library where they plan to close the library for one year for refurbishment, with nearby libraries opening for longer hours to compensate.

This might be a comparable situation to Loughton Library, so Debden and Buckhurst Hill libraries might open a couple of extra hours a week during the construction work.

Local road repairs

Pavement repairs have been underway in The Drive, Marjorams Avenue and the High Road. This is part of the County Council's Members' Highways Initiative (MHI) that has enabled LRA Cllr Chris Pond to highlight these specific repairs.

The MHI is funded by £8 million of the £12 million announced for highways repairs in February across the County. The funding has been allocated across different areas of work, including additional highway crews for each borough, city and district to prioritise repairs raised by local Cllrs and residents.

Buckhurst Hill East and Whitebridge

As members will be aware, this year LRA Cllrs Rose Brookes and Barbara Cohen were elected as a Cllrs for Buckhurst Hill East and Whitebridge.

Rose has been attending Buckhurst Hill Parish Council meetings to give updates on her work in the ward. In addition to many individual requests for help, Rose and Barbara have been doing estate inspections with a housing officer. They have reported fly tipping in Buckhurst Hill and chased Qualis for work they have not completed. Rose visited Buckhurst Court (a District Council run block of flats for senior citizens) and has been exploring cycle storage for resident's bikes and helping with other issues. Barbara has been busy making reports of potholes for the County Council. Recently a very high proportion of casework has come from Buckhurst Hill.

New children's playground

The Town Council is aiming to upgrade the play area at the Newmans Lane playground, adjacent to Rectory Lane. Using the existing area, they are looking to dismantle the current play area and build a new inclusive playground (for ages 4-14 years).

Roding Road memorial garden

In mid-March, a major incident involving a stolen vehicle resulted in extensive damage to the garden with a section of railings damaged, paving stones broken and the wooden bench destroyed.

Repair work has now been completed. The memorial bench was not insured however the Town Council received an offer from a former Town Cllr to pay for a replacement bench which will also include the commemorative plaque retrieved from the previous bench.