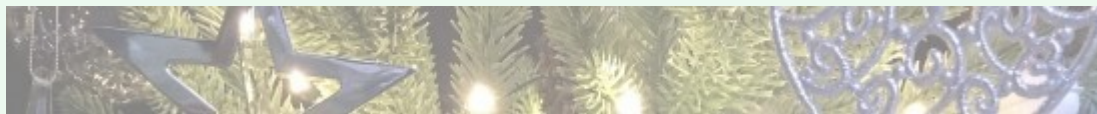




LRA's Loughton News

20 December 2024



In this issue, [we report on recent government proposals](#) on the structure and responsibilities for District and County Councils, and what they could mean locally.

Also [read about the Light Up a Life](#) on Kings Green in November.

With the festive break coming up, remember that [public transport](#) may have changes to normal schedules and please [remember to recycle!](#)

And, following tradition, [here's LRA's Christmas Quiz for 2024](#) for everyone to enjoy.

From all of us at LRA, thank you again for your support this year. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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

News Sections

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[Police, Fire and Crime](#)

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LRA News

Local Government Redesign Proposed

The government has proposed significant changes to the structure and responsibilities for District and County Councils. There are many aspects to what is

being proposed ([News article](#) and [the full report](#)), with a key change being creation of unitary authorities that cover about 500,000 people each to replace existing district councils.

How this will affect our local area remains to be seen. However LRA Cllr Chris Pond predicts that Epping Forest District Council will cease to exist and the area will be absorbed into a larger unitary authority, with an elected mayor for Essex from 2026. Given such changes, planned elections for the district and county in 2025 and 2026 may be set aside.

Chris is also concerned with the risk of a democratic deficit, so hopes that the role of parish and town councils will be enhanced to continue proper local representation.

LRA's Christmas Quiz

Following tradition, [here's LRA's Christmas quiz for 2024](#) for everyone to enjoy. This year it's how well you know some of the coastal towns and cities of Britain.



First correct entry out of the hat will receive fizz or a £20 book token. Answers please by 5th January to lesandsueharris@aol.com, or to 32 Upper Park, Loughton IG10 4EQ. Happy quizzing!

A very special thanks to Sue and Les Harris who have been providing the quiz questions and answers, along with the prizes, for 25 years.

Loughton Life - Latest Issue

The latest issue of Loughton Life has been delivered to LRA's member households in the town. Our thanks to the many people involved producing and distributing it. In case you missed it in your letterbox, [here it is](#) (PDF).



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, and to the LRA Plans Group – please have your say.

Davenant Foundation School

This application proposes demolishing the existing sixth form and library block and replace with new partial two storey sixth form including library and SEN classrooms.

Notwithstanding the proposed building is on green belt land, it will replace the existing storm water



damaged sixth form structure which will be demolished completely. LRAPG are delighted the school has come up with a solution that means the temporary classrooms which had to be erected after the storm damage will be replaced by a permanent solution.

Reference [EPF/2294/24](#). The formal consultation period ends 2 January.

Roads, Parking and Travel

Planned Road Closures

- Ladyfields - the road will be closed 13-28 January between Borders Lane and Ladyfields Close for antenna removal. [More](#)

[Check here for the latest updates](#), and for other planned roadworks including ones that involve only temporary traffic lights.



charges don't apply, they do!

Free Off-Street Parking

Weekend parking is free in District Council-run [off-street car parks](#) at the weekends until the end of December. [More](#)

When using on-street parking bays on Bank Holidays, remember that NEPP wardens now work on Bank Holidays. Unless the sign says that

Winter on the Roads

Essex Highways gritters have resumed [gritting the roads](#) to keep them safe. Motorists also need to be prepared for driving in colder and icy conditions so [here is some winter driving advice](#).



Loughton to Whipps Cross Bus

The W14 bus route replaced the 549 route in September. The new route is an improvement on the old one, with an increase in frequency and running on Sundays.

The route goes between Loughton Station and Whipps Cross hospital (via Buckhurst Hill, Woodford, South Woodford and Snaresbrook). [More](#)

Reporting Road Defects

Essex Highways have updated the ['Tell Us' service](#) for reporting road defects. This now includes different types of emergencies and if issues have worsened over time.

Issues logged via other platforms such as Fix My Street are often duplicates of existing reports, unrelated to Essex Highways-managed roads, or lack the required detail. For these reasons, users of these platforms will no longer be able to raise issues for Essex Highways from 1 January.

Public Transport over Christmas and New Year

There will be changes to public transport services over the Christmas and New Year period.

Transport for London

[Services by each day](#). There are no tube or bus services on Christmas Day.

Vectare

Bus Routes 17 and 18. No information yet published; check the [Vectare/Central Connect website](#) for updates.

Arriva

[Bus Route 66](#) (Click on Essex)

Mainline Rail Services

[National Rail](#) and [TravelWatch](#) information

Police, Fire and Crime

"Chop Shop" leads to two arrests

Essex Police located a "chop shop" (an illegal operation where stolen vehicles are dismantled or given false identities) near Stansted Airport with stolen vehicles and car parts valued at £400k. This was a result of the police receiving information from colleagues in the Metropolitan Police of a recently stolen vehicle being tracked to the Uttlesford area. Two men were arrested. [More](#)

If you think your car has been stolen, [here's what to do and how to report it](#).

Crime Prevention Over Christmas

The crime prevention tips from the police:

- Deter burglars by installing lighting and a smart doorbell or CCTV camera outside your home.
- Beware of distraction burglars. If you're not sure, don't open the door.
- Don't tempt burglars into your home by leaving valuables or Christmas presents on show.
- Christmas shopping? Make sure your vehicle is locked and no valuables or shopping bags are on display.
- Deter burglars by making sure you keep your doors and windows locked at all times.

- Away over Christmas? Plan ahead to make sure burglars don't break in. Cancel any deliveries and arrange for a trusted neighbour to park on the driveway. On social media don't advertise that you are going away.
- Give the impression your house is occupied by leaving a light on when going out at night and using light timer switches when going away.
- Prevent your car from being stolen this winter by keeping it locked with keys out of sight and if keyless, in a Faraday pouch. Extra security features such as pedal and steering locks are also useful.

Sort Your Settings

The electronic, online world changes so quickly, so don't get left behind. 'Sort Your Settings' for your children to ensure games console and smart phones are set up safely and securely. Top tips are:

- Protect your identity. Do not share personal information.
- Think before you post. Once posted its no longer yours.
- Check your privacy settings.
- Games and Apps have age ratings for a reason.
- Make use of the parental controls.

[More](#) on the Essex Police website which includes up-to-date information about new and popular online games and social media platforms. There's advice on all aspects of online safety, including how to access parental controls as well as information about social media age restrictions, game age ratings, chat settings and more.



More from the Police

[Read more](#) from the police for our local area including other news and crime statistics. The data is updated to October 2024.

Some items we report on come from the Dispatch Newsletter from Essex Police. You can [subscribe here for free](#) (choose the Epping Forest edition)

Council News

Light Up a Life

LRA Cllr and Town Mayor Katie Valentine welcomed residents and visitors to the 22nd annual Light Up a Life event in conjunction with St Clare Hospice, which took place on Saturday 30 November.

The candle light procession from Loughton Methodist Church gathered on Kings Green for carols, and a small service of reflection.

The Town Council thanks Epping Forest Singers, together with Revd Sue Creighton, Minister at Loughton Methodist Church and Sushma Dhami, Patient and Family Support Services at St Clare Hospice for their meaningful and fitting words remembering loved ones and to reflect on the care and work of our local hospice. They also thank Morrisons for their kind donation of mince pies and refreshments which were enjoyed by all back at the Methodist Church.



The Lights on the Kings Green tree will now remain lit during the Christmas period. [More](#) including photos.

Image: Town Council

Christmas Window Competition

The Town Council thanks all the town's businesses that decorated their windows, bringing some festive cheer to the town. All Christmas-themed shop windows were automatically eligible for the competition which was split into four classes of entry. The judges this year were Town Mayor, LRA Cllr Katie Valentine, along with LRA Cllrs Carol Davies and Ian Allgood. The winners were:

- David Smith Financial Services – local/independent businesses.
- David Clulow Opticians - multiples/chain stores
- Haven House Children's Hospice - charity shops
- The Aviary Bar & Brasserie - eateries (cafes, pubs and restaurants).



[More](#) (PDF), including the runners-up.

Asking For Cleaning Up

The Town Council is contacting Transport for London regarding the rubbish and rat infestation in the area adjacent to the pathway from Loughton Station towards Station Road. The Council will also ask the Highway Rangers to deal with the growth of vegetation surrounding the sign at the bottom of Lower Road and Englands Lane.

Willingale Road Allotments

- The Town Council has been told that after a water leak means that the cesspit at the allotments may need to be replaced which may require funding and the involvement of Thames Water.
- With the [new rules for poultry and captive bird keepers](#), future allotment agreements will have additional wording included.
- For allotment volunteers, long service awards for more than 5 years service are to be introduced in the form of 50% discount off allotment fees and a laminated certificate of appreciation given to recognise their valuable work.

Looking For Litter

The Town Council has given Special Presentation Certificates to two pupils of Alderton Junior School in recognition of their litter picking on their way to school.

Oakwood Hill Estate Stakeholder Event

The Oakwood Hill Community Centre hosted its first annual stakeholder event on 15 November to explore the community priorities for the area and how they can be addressed.

Residents had the opportunity to engage with numerous service providers and partner organisations working together to embed their services in the community, ensuring residents can easily access crucial support. [More](#)



What's On

The District Council has published details of all activities, events, exhibitions and workshops from the Community Development and Wellbeing team. There's something for everyone, from meeting new people and learning a new skill at Let's Get Together to keeping active with walking

football. [More](#) (PDF)

Local News

Local Library Events

[You can see upcoming events at Loughton and Debden libraries here.](#) These include:

- 14 January - free dementia information drop-in sessions. [More](#)
- 17 January - the police will be conducting a fraud awareness session. Drop in and get some advice on how to avoid being scammed or if you need to talk about any community concerns you may have. [More](#)



More about the libraries at [Loughton](#) and [Debden](#).

Warm Places

Warm places offer a welcoming space throughout winter for residents to meet old friends and make new ones, play games and get access to different services. Local Warm Places are at Debden and Loughton libraries, Epping Forest College Campus, Oakwood Hill Community Hub and St Mary's Church. [More](#)

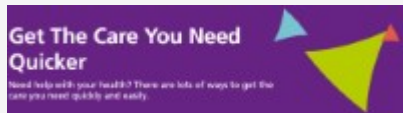
Threat to Debden Centre and Campsite

[Debden Centre and Campsite](#) is a long-established touring and camping site. It is just off Debden Lane and part of Epping Forest with approximately 50 acres of green belt land and a 19th century Grade II listed building currently used as a conference centre. It attracts visitors from the UK and from all over the world. As such it forms a major tourist attraction for the area.

The property was bought by the London Borough of East Ham in 1949 and is now owned by its successor Newham Council. The Council [have recently agreed in principle to sell it](#) with the intention to put on the market in next spring, with the hope of a concluding a sale towards the end of the summer.

This is a potential threat to a nearby part of the Forest, and [a petition has been set up](#) to save the campsite.

Health and Wellbeing



Help Your Health

If you're not sure how to get help with your health, [this guide from the NHS](#) could help. It includes information on how to access some health services

without needing a GP, pharmacy services, and local services that can support their health and wellbeing.

Epping Forest

Forest Focus - December 2024

Some items here come from Forest Focus. The edition for [December](#) has lots more interesting articles. You can [subscribe here for free](#).



Hands-on Conservation Volunteering

Join the Epping Forest Heritage Trust for a day in the Forest to carry out hands-on work to help improve its biodiversity. Led by a Conservation Officer, tasks may include coppicing young trees/dense holly to allow more light onto the Forest floor, opening up precious grassland, and creating habitat piles for small animals and reptiles. Tools and training will be provided on the day. [New dates are available](#) in 2025. Booking required.

Local Ponds and Streams Guided Walk

The Epping Forest Heritage Trust has organised a guided walk on 15 March to visit the ponds and streams in the Forest near Loughton to discover the origins of this landscape and the issues it faces today. The walk is mainly on established paths but occasionally follow narrow tracks. This would be a moderate walk. [More](#) and [other guided walks](#). Booking required.

Epping Forest - A Year in Review

The City of London has produced [a review of the past year in the Forest](#) (PDF), which includes commentary from some of the key people who help manage the Forest and what's been happening this year. [More](#) (PDF)

And More

Remember to Recycle

Over the festive period, around [30% more waste](#) is produced. Food makes up a large portion of this, so please remember to use your green bin for as much food waste as possible.

Real Christmas trees can be left in your green-lidded food and garden bin for collection (please don't dispose of them in Epping Forest).

[Waste collection will vary a little](#) over the festive season. Collections return to normal on 7 January.

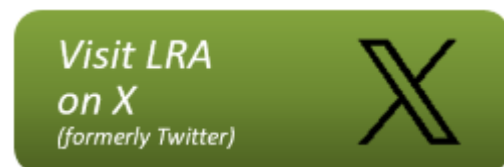
Thank you for supporting LRA.

These regular news emails are issued every 3-4 weeks, with some news special emails issued from time to time. The next news email is planned to be issued on Friday 17 January.

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



All our past issues of Loughton News emails, Loughton Life, and more



The latest news and items of interest. You don't need to be registered for either

1. If you find any links not working or anything else is wrong let us know at loughtonnews@LoughtonResidents.co.uk. Links to other websites are beyond our control and may not work over time.
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.

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