



LRA's Loughton News

27 March 2026

In this issue is a further reminder that from next week there are [changes to food and garden waste collections](#).

We also report on the Town Council's [Annual Town Meeting](#) where Citizens of the Year were announced with local organisations present.

Residents may have noticed various road closures by Thames Water. [Here's why](#), with more details on how they are planned to go on for three years to improve our water supply.

Also there's an update on [the refurbishment of Central Line trains](#), [alternative ways to access face to face banking services](#), and [how to find opening times for pharmacies over Easter](#).

We are looking for more Loughton Life deliverers to replace some of our permanent volunteers who have retired or left the area. [Could you help?](#)

Thank you for being part of LRA. You can contact us by emailing contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk to raise an issue, give your views, or offer help.

News Sections

[LRA News](#)

[Planning and Licensing](#)

[Roads, Parking and Travel](#)

[Police, Fire and Crime](#)

[Council News](#)

[Local News](#)

[Health and Wellbeing](#)

[Epping Forest](#)

[And More](#)

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LRA News

Major works to improve flats above The Broadway shops nears completion with strong Cllr oversight

The significant programme of refurbishment to the flats above the shops on The Broadway has now entered its final phase, marking an important milestone for residents and local businesses.

These works, designed to fully repair long standing leaks and structural issues that have affected several flats and shop units below, are now nearing completion with only a small number of finishing elements remaining.



Ward councillors, LRA Cllrs Chidi Nweke and Sheree Rackham, together with Independent Cllr Stephen Murray, have played an active and ongoing role throughout

the project. From the outset, they worked to ensure clear and consistent communication between District Council officers, contractors, and residents, helping to guarantee that concerns were responded to promptly and constructively.

Your ward Cllrs also provided strong scrutiny of the project's progress and finances, ensuring that the works remained on track and did not exceed budget, which was a key priority given the impact the leaks had on both the homes above and the shops below. Their oversight is one of the reasons the project team formally expressed their thanks for the support, challenge, and direction provided by the local ward Cllrs.

With the majority of repairs now completed and final checks underway, the refurbished flats and resolved leak issues are expected to deliver long term improvements to living conditions for residents and the businesses operating on The Broadway.

LRA Cllr Chidi Nweke, said *"It is great to see these essential works to the flats above The Broadway shops are now nearing completion. Sheree, Stephen, and I have been working closely with officers and contractors from the start to ensure that residents and businesses were kept informed and that long standing issues, especially the leaks affecting local shops, were tackled properly. We've pushed for clear communication, timely action, and strong financial oversight throughout. I'm grateful to the project team for their collaboration and I'm pleased that these improvements will make a real difference for both residents living above the shops and the businesses operating below."*

Lettings Situation on Lucton Close

Recently LRA was made aware of a concerning situation on Lucton Close. Reports indicated that Sovereign Network Group (SNG) was planning to rent a vacant flat to a suspected illegal immigrant. Given the heightened tension these reports caused, a meeting was held with concerned residents to better understand their specific issues.

Following the discussion, concerns were escalated to senior management at the District Council, who then reached out to SNG Housing Association to investigate.

The investigation has clarified that the property was vacated in February 2025 and no resident, regardless of background or circumstances, had been considered for this address. The property is currently undergoing standard empty homes maintenance and will only be handed over to the District Council once these works are complete. SNG's Housing Management Team also confirmed that there are no records of any visits related to the claims made. This aligns with their policy, as discussions regarding allocations are solely handled by the District Council.

Persistent advocacy and resident support

LRA Cllr Chidi Nweke has shared a positive update on a long and complex housing case that has finally reached a successful conclusion.

After enduring months of uncertainty and significant challenges, the resident involved has been offered a safe and suitable new home, with an outcome that brings her genuine delight. This case was particularly complex, as the resident's circumstances were heightened by the traumatic incident in which her son was stabbed by a neighbour's son. While justice was served, the family did not feel safe continuing to live on the same estate.

This situation demanded substantial persistence, meticulous oversight, and unwavering advocacy on her behalf. Chidi remained closely involved throughout the process, ensuring her concerns were heard, pushing for progress whenever delays arose, and collaborating with officers to secure a fair and timely resolution.

During a phone call about the outcome, the resident expressed heartfelt gratitude, saying, *"I don't think this would've happened if you didn't get involved — thank you."* Her words serve as a powerful reminder of the importance of strong advocacy.

This result highlights not only the resident's resilience but also the value of proactive and determined representation when navigating difficult systems. As her LRA ward Cllr, Chidi takes immense pride in the work put into this case and is even more gratified that it has led to a new home and a fresh start for her and her family.

Moments like these strengthen his commitment to standing up for individuals and families in need of support, ensuring that every resident receives the attention, fairness, and dignity they deserve.

Deepdene Road fly-tipping

During LRA Cllr Chidi Nweke's regular ward walk-arounds, he discovered a fly-tip in the alleyway off Deepdene Road and immediately reported it for investigation. District Council officers traced some of the waste back to a former tenant, but the details did not match the current occupants, and no forwarding address could be found. With no realistic way to identify a suspect, the case has now been closed.

Officers have confirmed that no further fly-tipping has occurred at the site, though the location unfortunately does not allow for "No Fly-Tipping" signage.

Chidi says *"Fly-tipping is harmful to our neighbourhood—it damages the environment, creates unnecessary costs, and lowers the quality of our shared spaces. We all have a role to play, so please stay vigilant and report any fly-tipping you come across. Together, we can help keep our ward clean and safe."*

Local Government Reorganisation

The Government has [announced](#) that Essex will have five unitary authorities from 2028. Epping Forest will be abolished and will be merged with Harlow and Uttlesford under a West Essex Council. As well as all the main services currently provided by the district councils, the new unitary authority will also deliver services currently provided by the County Council.



The authorities covering Essex will be:

- West Essex Council (current local government areas of Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford)
- North East Essex Council (current local government areas of Braintree, Colchester and Tendring)
- Mid Essex Council (current local government areas of Brentwood, Chelmsford and Maldon)
- South West Essex Council (current local government areas of Basildon and Thurrock)
- South East Essex Council (current local government areas of Castle Point, Rochford and Southend-on-Sea).

Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council had supported three larger authorities, and have published their responses to the decision [here](#) and [here](#). [A larger map is on this page \(scroll down\)](#).

LRA Comment: *Each of the five authorities will cover a larger population than the current district councils, so there is a risk of a democratic deficit with new authorities not being responsive to local needs, especially around approving local developments*

and planning applications. This risk would have been greater with only three authorities covering even larger populations.

Going for five unitary authorities may preserve local identity but it would also be financially less sensible in that Officer posts would need to be duplicated. Also the new authority might be at a financial disadvantage in relation to procuring children and social services, which are very expensive.

May local elections



On May 7 there will be local elections for Cllrs in the four District Council wards and two County Council wards that cover Loughton. We hope that you will continue to support your local candidates and will let you know who they are in April.

Can you help deliver Loughton Life, please?

LRA has 100 or so volunteers who deliver Loughton Life 5 times a year, through all the seasons.

We ask you sometimes to help when some deliverers are temporarily unavailable. However over time some of our permanent volunteers retire or leave, and we end up with long term gaps in our delivery coverage.



We are therefore looking for help to fill in the gaps where we no longer have permanent deliverers. They are:

- **Alderton ward** - Monksgrrove, Highwood Lane, Longcroft Rise, Marlescroft Way, Bushfields.
- **Broadway ward** – Barrington Close, Barrington Green, Barrington Road, Doubleday Road; Etheridge Green, Etheridge Road, Westall Road, Sandford Avenue, Kingsley Road, Lytton Close, Torrington Drive, Torrington Gardens.
- **Fairmead ward** – Swanshope, Englands Lane, Pyrles Lane, Pyrles Green, Honey Tree Court;, Appleton Road, Conyers Way, Etheridge Road, Prescott Green, Foxley Close, Westall Road.
- **St. John's ward** – Harwater Drive, Sedley Rise, Millsmead Way.
- **St. Mary's ward** – Clifton Road, Forest Road, Hatfields, Newmans Close, Newmans Lane, Newpiece.
- **Roding Ward** – Cranleigh Gardens, Drayton Avenue, Elmhurst Way, Malvern Gardens, Roydon Close, Roding Road, Valley Close, Valley Hill, Greensted Road, Sutton Close, Nevill Way.

Can you help with one or more of these roads? If you or someone you know can help in these areas, please email Mark Dalton at dalton.m.k@btinternet.com

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.

You can [download the most recent week's applications here](#) or [search for planning applications here](#).

26 Station Road

This application seeks a Certificate of Lawful Development for two proposed ancillary garden buildings.

LRAPG is very concerned about the continuing breaches of planning control at this address. Several trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders have been removed without consent and District Council officers have so far failed to serve a tree replacement notice to force the owner to replace the trees. This is very disappointing because neighbours say they are affected by flooding since the trees were felled.



The unlawful removal of the trees have paved the way for several large sheds to be erected in the garden. The applicant claims the two most recent structures are permitted development because they are for garden storage and “entirely subservient” to the main dwelling house. This is not the test under the planning legislation. To be permitted development the applicant must demonstrate they are “incidental” to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse.



LRAPG considers the two structures by reason of their size and volume in relation to the house and in relation to the size of the garden cannot be considered “incidental” to the enjoyment of the dwelling house. As such they need planning permission and the council should refuse consent and take enforcement action immediately.

The property has quickly become a mess with gas canisters dumped in the garden; raising safety concerns for neighbours.

The Council needs to serve a section 215 notice under the Planning Act to enforce the clearing up of the garden. The council also needs to enforce the replacement tree planting immediately and ensure the industrial sized sheds are removed.

[EPF/0465/26](#). The formal deadline for comments is 30 March.

BMW Sytner Chigwell, Langston Road

This application proposes a static LED-illuminated lightbox at car deck level and internally illuminated rectangular sign fitted with a vinyl-faced display panel.

LRAPG has objected to this unnecessary sign on visual clutter grounds and the illumination of the advertisement which will make it stand out. The council has

insisted on signage facing the M11 motorway to be non-illuminated for the businesses at the Epping Forest Shopping Park and should do the same at BMW Sytner. There is no justification for it being illuminated.

[EPF/0461/26](#). The formal deadline for comments was 27 March, although you can still comment to the Council.



5 Hampton Mead

This application proposes the erection of single storey 2 bed custom build dwelling.

LRAPG considers this application has not overcome the reasons for refusal that were dismissed at an earlier planning appeal. The new dwelling, by reason of its detailed design including materials, is out of character with the area. The design does nothing to overcome the cramped appearance identified by the Planning Inspector and would still be at odds with the locally distinct uniform pattern of development in the area. It would also still have an unduly imposing presence on the garden areas and views from rear windows. Hampton Mead is wholly uniform and the proposal is completely alien to this.

[EPF/0364/26](#). The formal deadline for comments was 24 March, although you can still comment to the Council.

Roads, Parking and Travel

Planned road closures and notable road works

Dates and details can change so [check here for the latest updates](#), and for other planned roadworks including ones that involve only temporary traffic lights. Remember closures and road works can still happen without prior notice.

- Extensive works by Thames Water are affecting several roads for an extended period, including [Queens Road](#), [Sparelease Hill](#), [Hillyfields](#) and part of [The Croft](#). [Woodbury Hill](#) will also be closed from 21 April. [See our news item below for more details](#).
- St John's Road and part of Baldwins Hill - the roads will be closed between Church Hill and Ashfields from 13-14 April from 8am to 5pm for road resurfacing by the County Council. [More](#)
- Millsmead Way - the road will be partly closed from 7-10 April for carriageway works by the County Council. [More](#)
- Lower Road - the road will be closed on 1 April from 9am to 3:30pm while sewer cleaning works are undertaken by Thames Water. [More](#)



Central Line Upgrades Update

At a recent meeting, the District Council recently obtained an update on the Central Line from Transport for London (TfL) and answered questions from Cllrs.

Key points made were:

- Four refurbished trains were currently in service with a fifth refurbished train planned to enter service by the end of the financial year.
- Trains were refurbished sequentially. One is taken out of service, fully stripped down and rebuilt, then replaced with the next.
- A range of challenges were acknowledged, and major delays had been caused by widespread bespoke motor failures, requiring each motor to be individually rebuilt. Depot space was repurposed for emergency motor repairs. This had impacted on refurbishment for over a year.
- The full programme was expected to be completed by 2029, subject to funding and resource stability.
- There were ongoing noise issues between Stratford and Leyton, and Leyton and Wanstead, and there had been multiple unsuccessful trials with track sleepers and engineering adjustments. There was an expectation that refurbished trains may reduce noise levels.
- Long-term financial constraints had delayed upgrades and compounded signalling failures; multiyear funding settlement should stabilise project planning and result in improvements.
- Old seating would not be repaired before the refurbishment of trains.



TfL advised that in relation to service reliability, capacity and timetabling that the current timetable was under review, and a new timetable was expected in August, which would be based on demand data.

[More from the meeting is here.](#)

Travel in London - Have your say

Travelwatch, London's independent transport watchdog, is asking for your views on the issues and problems which matter the most to you when you're travelling in London. Your views will help us shape the areas they focus on in the future.

[More on Travelwatch](#), and [complete the survey here](#).

Transport for London support for neurodivergent customers

There are various ways to help neurodivergent customers feel they can be supported while travelling on the Transport for London (TfL) network, including:

- The [TfL Go app](#) helps plan your journey, which can also let you know of quieter times to travel to avoid crowds and provides real time service information.
- [Google Map's](#) Street View can be used through and around 36 TfL and Network Rail stations. It can help you get a better sense of the layout of stations before you travel and identify key facilities such as lifts, toilets, benches and help points.
- [This tube map showing tunnels](#) (PDF) identifies all the stations which are underground. This can be a useful resource if you want to avoid or minimise time spent in tunnels during your journey.

- If you struggle to stand while using public transport, wearing TfL's free 'please offer me a seat' badge to alert fellow customers that you need a seat. [Learn more and apply for your welcome pack.](#)
- If you want to feel more confident in using our services, [the free travel mentoring service](#) can support you by giving advice by telephone and email, provide a mentor to accompany you on your first few practice journeys, or assist you virtually.

[More on improving accessibility for everyone from TfL.](#)

Bus Route 397

The County Council has announced that they have secured a £50,000 government grant to extend Route 397 timetable to 9:15pm to support students, shift workers and new housing developments. A date for a starting the extended hours is to be confirmed but will be between April 2026 and December 2027. [More](#) (scroll down).

This was an initiative that LRA Cllr Pond and the Town Council progressed given the service does not operate after 7pm, despite the huge amount of housing recently erected along Borders Lane.

The request for additional funding item was put forward by Chris when the planning application for the Borders Lane development was sent to appeal, but the Planning Inspector declined to take it up. He then put it forward again when funding for enhancing local bus services from the County Council was announced. Detailed negotiations with the operator and Transport for London, to whom the route is contracted to, will now take place.



On Street Parking on Bank Holidays

Remember that NEPP wardens now work on Bank Holidays. Unless the sign says that charges don't apply, they do.

Police, Fire and Crime

The police in our district

In February, some of the things police dealt with in our district include that they:

- helped to find 39 people who were reported missing and helped them to get the support they needed.
- investigated 60 reports of antisocial behaviour having listened to local communities about the things which were causing them concern.
- attended 57 road traffic collisions, helping to keep those involved safe and our roads moving.
- investigated 191 reports of domestic violence incidents and made sure victims were given help, support, and advice, putting them in contact with relevant organisations where appropriate.
- solved 90 crimes, ensuring those intent on committing crime are held accountable for their actions.
- have submitted 494 pieces of intelligence which assists in targeting criminal activity in our community.



Essex Police patrols at night

Project Vigilant is an Essex Police operation to help keep women and girls safe on nights out. Specially trained officers patrol busy town and city centres, mainly at weekends.

Plain-clothes officers look out for worrying behaviour and quickly alert uniformed colleagues, who step in to prevent harm and support anyone at risk. Roads policing officers also help by stopping vehicles linked to people known for violent or sexual offences. [More](#)

29 arrests following road traffic checks

Police recently carried out two nights of targeted activity in Epping, Harlow, Loughton, Colchester and Tendring, stopping 170 vehicles and making 29 arrests for offences including drug supply, weapons possession, assault and drug driving. They also issued 64 traffic offence tickets and made 29 seizures. [More](#)

Seventeen arrests after cross-border operation

Seventeen people were arrested and 15 vehicles were seized after a recent joint operation between the police forces of Essex and Hertfordshire, the Metropolitan police and the National Police Air Service (NPAS). They tracked down vehicles believed to be involved in crime using hits from automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras. Activity in Essex was focused on the districts of Epping Forest and Harlow, areas that are easily accessible from the M25 and M11. [More](#)

New card scam text

A recent scam involves a text from a random mobile number that tells you that someone else's card has been registered on your Google Play account, Apple Pay account or Apple Wallet. It then gives you a number to call if you didn't do this. Calling this number will lead to a scammer asking you questions to try and gather personal and financial information.

These scam texts can be reported by forwarding them to 7726. [More on reporting scam texts.](#)

Secure sliding and patio doors

Sliding and patio doors can sometimes be lifted off their tracks, especially older models. An anti-lift device or additional locking bar prevents this and adds more resistance against forced entry. These devices are inexpensive, quick to install and offer valuable extra protection for one of the home's more vulnerable access points

Reporting crimes to the police

Please keep reporting:

- any witnessed or suspected drug-dealing [here](#).
- anti-social behaviour hate crimes [here](#)
- if you have CCTV and are willing to share footage with the police, you can [register your camera\(s\) here](#). The police will only contact you if they believe you may have recorded the incident or suspects.

More from the police

- More from the police for [Loughton](#) and [Buckhurst Hill](#) including other news and crime statistics. The data is updated to January.
- Some items we report on come from the Dispatch Newsletter from Essex Police. You can [subscribe here for free](#) (choose the Epping Forest edition).
- There are regular events in [Loughton](#) and [Buckhurst Hill](#) with the police locally. Just drop in, no booking required. [All future events are listed here.](#)



Council News

Annual Town Meeting

Residents were invited to the Annual Town Meeting in The Murray Hall on 18 April. Local groups, organisations and charities that were successful with their grant applications were present with displays, and Town Mayor LRA Cllr David Wixley presented the awards to the Citizens of the Year.



Ian Thomas was named Citizen of the Year recognising his dedication and voluntary work for the community. The Town Mayor highlighted *"Ian's enormous contribution to the Air Ambulance Service, and volunteering with Loughton Voluntary Care, he always goes that extra mile to deliver a wonderful service to all the voluntary organisations he is involved with"*.

Elizabeth Knapman was announced as Young Citizen of the Year, in recognition of her voluntary work as a sports coach at Davenant School and Loughton Athletics Club and playing a key role delivering community youth activities with Loughton Methodist Church Holiday Club and Youth Club. Lizzie is an excellent role model and encourages young people to get involved; she has a natural ability to make everyone feel included and valued. Lizzie inspires other young people to volunteer too.

Special Certificates of Recognition was also presented to Barry Rudderford and Jamie Hardy, employees of Terra Verde Services, for their dedication and friendly manner while carrying out street-cleaning duties in Loughton. [More](#)

Image: Town Council

Waste collections changing on 31 March

From Tuesday 31 March, your food and garden waste will be collected separately.



The new brown kerbside caddy (along with a caddy for the kitchen) is for food waste, which will be collected **weekly for free**. Your caddy should have been delivered by now. [More](#)

Your existing green-lidded bin will be for **garden waste only, collected fortnightly** for a charge of £60 per year. **If you want to continue to have your garden waste collected, you need to pay the charge.** [More and how to pay.](#)

We understand that some residents who have paid for a second green-lidded bin have received bins without lids. The District Council have said that this is due to supply from manufacturers being affected due to high demand for new wheeled bins and food caddies. Councils across the country are introducing new or adaptations to their collection services, in preparation for new government rules from April to simplify recycling and waste collection services. Lids will be delivered in a few weeks, and the new bins can be used in the meantime.

Tree fall at the Recreation Ground

A large tree fell down at the end of February, which was on the border of the Recreation Ground and the back fence line of a neighbouring property. The tree fell through the fence panel knocking the concrete post out and fell across an adjoining fence into an adjoining garden. The Town Clerk instructed contractors to remove the tree.

Roding Road Memorial Garden

The work has now been completed on the Memorial Garden with the planting of bare root roses and new bedding work (euonymus green spire). The total cost including labour amounted to £2,300 which will be covered by a Locality Fund grant.

Image: Town Council



Treasure Trails

The District Council has launched three self-guided Treasure Trails in Loughton, Waltham Abbey and Ongar. These explore the local area, crack clues, and uncover hidden stories on a two hour walking adventure. Whether you're discovering hidden gems, exploring local history, or enjoying time outdoors with friends and family, these trails celebrate the amazing places in our district. [More](#)



You can [get the Loughton map here](#).

The process to get the map is somewhat convoluted, as your scribe can attest. Choose 'Instant Download', add it to the cart and use the voucher code of *Loughton2026* to make the order free. Once you get your confirmation email, click on 'Access my account'. On the 'Your Account' page that shows your order, look for 'Trail Downloads' at the top of the page. Click on that and you should then see options to download A4 or A5 PDF versions.



Free Easter family fun

The District Council are running free family fun Play in the Park sessions this Easter. Children of all ages are welcome! There's no need to book, just drop by anytime and enjoy quality time with friends and family.

Our local session is on 31 March at from 1:30pm to 3.30pm at the Roding Valley Recreation Ground near the tennis courts.

Help choose the district's favourite trees

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the District Council's Countrycare, the Council is compiling a list of the 50 favourite trees of the district.

The top suggestions will become the new 50 Favourite Trees of Epping Forest District and be part of an exhibition at the District Museum in Waltham Abbey during November. This will be an update of the first edition of the same book published in 2007.

[More](#) and [nominate a tree here](#). Entries close in May.

Help with rising heating oil costs

Help is available for off-grid households that rely on domestic heating oil as prices surge due to the conflict in the Middle East. The impact is particularly severe for

vulnerable groups, including older people and those with health conditions, both financially and emotionally.

The County Council has funds available to help and encourage residents to apply as soon as possible. To apply and find out more call 0300 790 0124 or email ElfForEssex@southend.gov.uk. [More](#)



Free support for High Street businesses

The District Council is offering dedicated support to high street businesses from 1 April to attract new customers, boost sales and create growth. This support could cover:

- Attracting more customers and increasing footfall
- Marketing and social media
- Pricing and improving profit margins
- Customer experience and repeat business
- Using digital tools to save time and grow
- Building a more resilient, sustainable business

[More](#), To get involved, [complete this survey](#).

Epping Leisure Centre

On 18 March James Guy, triple Olympic gold medal-winning swimmer, came to officially open the new Epping Sports Centre in Bakers Lane. He met swimmers from Epping Forest District Swimming Club who asked him lots of questions including about his training regime and diet.

The Centre has been in use since 12 January with 55,000 visits since the doors opened, and 700 children are now receiving swimming lessons there. The old Epping Leisure Centre previously had 1400 members and there are now 2,200 members at the new Centre.

LRA Cllr Rose Brookes has been asking for some months for Places Leisure to subsidise swimming lessons for local children in temporary accommodation. In common with many other councils we have extremely high numbers of homeless families. There is insufficient room in Norway House in North Weald so some have to be housed outside the district. The Director of Pellikaan Construction, who built the centre, announced that they would donate £2,500 towards swimming lessons and several other contractors who worked on the centre have donated a further £6,000. Council officers will target this support towards children who would like to learn to swim and are currently in temporary accommodation. [More](#)

Climate Plan

The County Council's [Climate Action Plan](#) (PDF) sets out all of the Council's achievements in delivering climate action since 2021 and sets out future commitments out to 2028. There are also Climate Action reports for the past four years. [More](#)

Essex Safe Speeds Strategy - Have your say

The County Council's Safe Speeds Strategy has been developed in partnership with the [Safer Essex Roads Partnership](#) to help transform our county's towns and

villages from places which can sometimes feel dangerous and intimidating into safer, greener and healthier local communities. The new strategy will help establish a coordinated and effective approach to managing speeds which recognises the changing ways people travel.

[More](#). [Have your say here](#). The consultation ends 26 April.

Local News



Extensive Thames Water roadworks over the next three years

As we've reported in earlier news emails, Thames Water have permission to close various roads around town for extended periods. The aim is to replace old water mains and reduce the number of significant leaks that cause unpredictable

disruption. The result should be fewer leaks and greater ability to control the flow of water when there are issues.

The work will last three years and affect many roads at various times. Sections of the road will be closed at a time with a trench required to fit new pipes. Currently [Queens Road](#), [Spareleaze Hill](#), [Hillyfields](#) and part of [The Croft](#) have road closures, with further roads affected from April 2026 onwards.

Works will generally take place Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm, and on Saturdays 8am to 6pm if required. Access will be maintained for residents, businesses and emergency services throughout the works.

Each road affected will receive advance notification letters confirming start dates, traffic management arrangements and key information before works begin. Bin collections may be affected by these works, so arrangements will be made for bins to be collected and transferred to a designated collection point, and returned later in the day. Keep an eye out for the letter from Thames Water for more details.

[Thames Water provide more information on roads that will be affected and how traffic will be managed here](#). If you have any questions, you can call Thames Water on 0800 316 9800 (select option 2 and quote BB01434794). Alternatively, you can speak to the manager on site.

Local library events

[You can see upcoming events at Loughton and Debden libraries here](#). More about the libraries at [Loughton](#) and [Debden](#). At Loughton Library there is:

- 31 March - Specialist Employment Support - Come and chat to Employ-Ability, a specialist employment support charity working with people experiencing mental ill health. No booking required. [More](#)
- 1, 8, 15, 22 April - Citizens Advice - Visit for advice, information, and signposting to the appropriate Citizens Advice services to guide you in the right direction. No booking required. [More](#)
- 2 April - Enjoying making some Easter themed crafts. No booking required. [More](#)



- 7 April - Home Instead Dementia Support - advice about dementia in an informal setting. No booking required. [More](#)
- 10 April - Spring Crafts - enjoying making some Spring themed craft. No booking required. [More](#)
- 10, 17, 24 April - Seated Exercise - this exercise boosts strength, flexibility, and mobility, empowering our community to stay active, independent while having fun and making new friends while exercising. No booking required. [More](#)
- 10, 17, 24 April - Community Tea and Chat - Enjoy a free tea, coffee and biscuits and chat with people in your local community or simply relax in a friendly environment. No booking required. [More](#)
- 10, 17, 24 April - Digital Support Session - book a session with a Computer Support Volunteer for help with your own device such as laptop, tablet or phone, or log onto one of the library computers. Booking required. [More](#)

Make your metals matter

In Essex, thousands of tonnes of recyclable metal packaging is wasted every year. For some districts, it makes up more than 3% of what goes into general rubbish bins. This is a waste of metal that can be recycled infinitely, more harmful to the environment than recycling, and costly for the council to dispose of. [More](#)

You can place food tins, drink cans, aluminium foil, foil containers and aerosol cans in your blue-lidded recycling bin. [More about how metals are recycled.](#)

Fly-tips increasing

In the 2024/25 financial year there were 3542 fly-tipping incidents in our district. There were 2118 household incidents and 519 commercial incidents. There were 475 enforcement actions as a result.

The District Council is now considering increasing the maximum Fixed Penalty Notice fine from £400 to £1,000.

Nationally there were 1.26 million fly-tipping incidents, a 9% increase on the previous year, with £19 million spent clearing fly-tips. Nearly two thirds of fly-tips involve household waste, and enforcement actions increased by 8% to 572,000,

Events in the countryside

The District Council's Countryside service is running two upcoming events:

- Easter scavenger hunt on 1 April
- A bat walk on 8 May

[More](#). Booking required.

Bank branch closures

The next bank branch that will close is Natwest on the High Road on 18 May ([More](#), PDF). That leaves very few bank branches locally.

Although web, app and phone banking remain, sometimes it is necessary to access bank services face to face.

- Post Office - they provide cash withdrawals and deposits into most High Street banks. This service is available in our four local Post Offices. [More](#)

- Banking Hubs - these are owned by Cash Access UK and operated by the Post Office. They provide cash withdrawals and deposits into most High Street banks. You can also talk to a community banker from your bank on the day your bank is in the hub. The nearest one is at Chingford. [More](#)
- Barclays are at Loughton Library on Tuesdays and Friday, but with no counter or cash services. No appointment is needed but if it's busy you might need to queue. Please book an appointment if you'd like to set a time and date. [More](#)

Health and Wellbeing

Meningitis – what you need to know

Meningitis is an infection of the protective membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord. It can affect anyone but is most common in babies, young children, teenagers and young adults. It can be very serious if not treated quickly and can cause life-threatening sepsis. A number of vaccinations are available that offer some protection against meningitis.

The overall risk of Meningitis B (MenB) to people outside the Kent area where there has been an outbreak remains low. If you have symptoms of meningitis, call 999 or go to A&E straight away.

[More from the NHS](#) on meningitis, the symptoms, and when to get medical help

Pharmacies' opening times for Easter

Some pharmacies may vary their opening times over Easter. You can [check on the NHS website](#) what each pharmacy's opening time is. (Click on 'View pharmacy details', then 'Contact details and opening times' to see temporary and Bank holiday opening hours.)



New Community Diagnostic Centre at St Margaret's Hospital now open

The new Community Diagnostic Centre welcomed its first patients this month. The new centre is part of the Princess Alexandra Hospital Trust's plans to provide quicker and more local access to diagnostic tests and treatment closer to patients' homes.

There will be extended opening times and more equipment to support the current additional capacity being provided for MRI scans, X-rays and non-obstetric (non-pregnancy) ultrasounds. [More](#)

Support for carers of family members or friends

Action for Family Carers (AFFC), commissioned by the County Council, can provide support if you look after a family member or friend who couldn't manage without you. This includes advice, practical solutions to address specific challenges, support for your emotional wellbeing, free counselling and small grants to enable you to take a break from the pressures of caring.

[More](#). You can also call 0300 303 9988 to discuss your caring role and receive

information, advice and guidance.

Young Carers are children who look after a friend or family member, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction. They often take on responsibilities normally expected of an adult. They can struggle to balance caring with going to school, doing homework, and making time for themselves and their friends. AFFC offer specific support for Young Carers.

[More](#). You can [ask for a referral here](#), call 0300 770 8090 or email yc@affc.org.uk

Epping Forest

Upcoming events in the Forest

Events include [a circular walk through woodland and meadows to enjoy the new season](#), [Little Saplings: storytime and craft activities](#), [a youth Forest photography workshop](#), and [a guided tour of Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge](#).

Most events are free, with some requiring booking.

Forest Focus - February

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



And More

Repair instead of replacing?

Repair cafés are community-run spaces where volunteers use their skills to repair items brought in by locals. There are several repair cafés across the county, most of which are free to attend. [More](#)

The nearest location is the Theydon Repair café. [More](#)

*Thank you for supporting LRA. The next regular news email is planned for Friday 24 April.
Regular news emails are issued every 3-4 weeks and special news emails occasionally.*

To contact us, email contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk

To update your membership details, email membership@loughtonresidents.co.uk

More from LRA at:

LRA's Website
www.loughtonresidents.org.uk

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

LRA on Facebook



LRA on X



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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