



LRA's Loughton News

29 March 2025

In this issue, we report on the [Town Council's Annual Town Meeting](#) where Citizens of the Year were announced with local organisations present.

Around town, the [new Newmans Lane playground has opened](#) and [the Loughton Wombles have been out and about](#) again helping keep the town tidy. On 8 May is the 80th anniversary of VE day with [a beacon lighting on Hillyfields](#) and you can [apply to close your street for a street party](#).

In the Forest, [take care with the bluebells](#), [help protect the swans](#), [can you help monitor wildlife](#), and there is an [open day at the Field Studies Council Epping Forest centre](#) at High Beach on 5 April.

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

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LRA News

Alderton Hall Lane Water Smells

Residents in Alderton Hall Lane contacted LRA Cllr Mick Stubbings about a horrible smell and polluted water that was running down Alderton Hall Lane. The water started on the grass verge outside the nursery in the grounds of Alderton Junior

School, then crossed the path and went into the drain.

Mick investigated to find the problem. He then reported it to the District Council Environmental Health team who sent someone out the next day. It is no longer a problem for now but may need further work. Mick will continue to monitor the situation.

Local Government restructure and elections - have your say

With Essex now in the government's Priority Programme for devolution ([background on our website](#)), the Government's public consultation is underway. [More](#) and [have your say here](#). The consultation closes 13 April.

The District Council has said that this consultation is not about the Local Government reorganisation of the district and other district and borough councils into unitary authorities. That process will take place separately and subsequently.

Loughton Life

Thank you to the LRA members who delivered our most recent Loughton Life around town, and to those who responded to our calls for help to fill the delivery gaps.

If for whatever reason you didn't receive it, [you can read it here](#).



Remembering those from LRA

We have heard of the death of John Markham in Somerset. He was LRA District Cllr for St John's from 2002 to 2014. He was in his mid-late 80s.

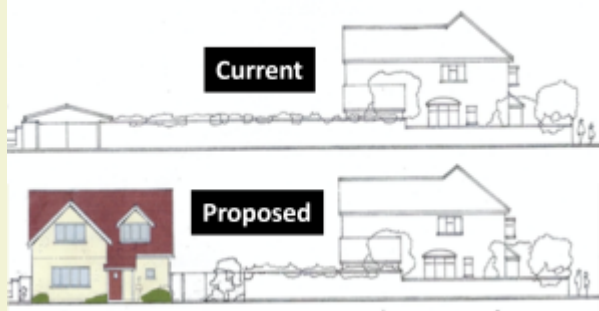
Planning and Licensing

[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.

2 The Uplands

This application proposes a new self-build dwelling (resubmission of [EPF/2928/20](#)).

LRAPG has objected to this garden-grabbing proposal. Whilst this is an improvement on the last application, which was for two dwellings, this is still garden-grabbing. The Uplands is characterised by medium-sized dwellings with substantial gardens. The application will harm the character of The Uplands. The building to the rear of 3 Church Hill is not a justification to permit it on The Uplands because that is a commercial property.



Reference [EPF/0064/25](#). The formal consultation period ended 17 March, but you can still comment to the Council.



4-4a Valley Hill

This application proposes demolition of the existing buildings and erection of 3 two-storey buildings, with a commercial (Class E) unit fronting Valley Hill with a two-bed flat above, 2 two-bed dwellings at the rear, and 2 two-bed dwellings fronting Malvern Gardens.

LRAPG has objected to this poorly conceived application. The zinc clad building on Malvern Gardens is wholly out of character with the remainder of the street. The zinc should be changed

for a more sympathetic material. Units 3 and 4, by reason of their bulk, height and proximity, represent unacceptable backland development; the rooms are boxed in, some with no outlook. They are deficient of a reasonable standard of amenity and both should be deleted from the scheme. These dwellings are uncomfortably too close to neighbours and will cause overlooking and noise.

Overall, this is an overdevelopment of the site and permission should be refused.

[EPF/0313/25](#) - The formal consultation period ended 19 March, but you can still comment to the Council.

Roads, Parking and Travel

Planned road closures

- York Hill - the road will be closed 31 March to 4 April from its junction with Kings Green to its junction with York Crescent for pipe laying works by Cadent.
[More](#)

- [Church Lane](#) and [St Johns Road](#) - the roads will be closed 14 April to 7 May for works by Cadent.

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



Central Line future planned closures

You can use [TfL's status update web pages](#) to check for planned closures of the Central (and other) Lines.

There is also [a detailed list of closures for the next six months in this document](#) (PDF). There are some part closures of the Central Line during some weekends in every month during summer, so it may pay to check in advance if you are planning to attend any events in central London.

Tolls for the Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels from 7 April

With the Silvertown tunnel under the River Thames opening on 7 April, both the existing Blackwall and new Silvertown tunnels will be tolled from that date. Charges apply from 6am to 10pm 7 days a week and range from £1.50 to £10 per tunnel crossing, and you can pay online, auto pay on over the phone. [More](#)

Police, Fire and Crime

The police in February

Here is a snapshot showing some of the things Epping Forest District Officers have dealt with in January. They have:

- helped to find 18 people who were reported missing
- investigated 59 reports of antisocial behaviour.
- attended 61 road traffic collisions.
- investigated 165 reports of domestic violence incidents.
- solved 91 crimes.
- submitted 319 pieces of intelligence.



Shoplifter arrested

On 7 March police officers, conducting plain clothed patrols in the district to combat shoplifting, arrested a male shoplifter in Sainsbury's Debden. Following checks, he was banned from entering the store.

Shoplifter guilty

Following investigation by the police, a 50 year old man from Loughton was found guilty at Chelmsford Magistrates court on 9 counts of shoplifting which occurred in our district between October 2024 and December 2024. He has been banned for 18 months from Marks & Spencer in Epping and Loughton, ordered to pay £1600 in compensation and do 80 hours community service.

Jailed for theft, shoplifting and public order offences

A woman has been jailed for 12 weeks after she was charged with 7 offences, including theft, shoplifting and public order. The offences were committed between September 2024 and February 2025 in Debden, Epping, Harlow, Buckhurst Hill, and Loughton. Hertfordshire Police charged her with further offences from their area.

Ongoing patrols to combat flytipping

Police have completed more joint fly-tipping patrols with the District Council's Environment Officers and Epping Forest City of London Constables. 22 work vans were checked and 7 of them were reported for not having the correct waste carrying licences.

Police on the roads

In February, there were 9 lives lost and 54 serious casualties on Essex roads, with:

- 215 mobile phone offences
- 144 drink-drive arrests
- 115 drug-drive arrests
- 7464 road safety educational courses
- 644 community speed watch warning letters.

[More](#)



Over 4,300 uninsured vehicles taken off Essex roads last year

Essex Police officers seized over 4,300 uninsured vehicles in 2024. That's an average of 12 vehicles per day. Uninsured vehicles not only put other road users at

risk, but they can often be linked to other serious crimes, making their removal crucial for community safety. [More](#)

Securing your online accounts

2-step verification (2SV) will keep criminals out of your account – even if they know your password. Sometimes it's called 2-factor authentication (2FA) or multi-factor authentication (MFA). When you turn on 2SV, you will be asked to provide a 'second step', which is something that only you can access. This could be a code that's sent to you by text message, or created by an app.

For your most important accounts, such as email and social media accounts, 2SV is usually a free option. Security of your email is particularly important. If someone can take control of your email, this can also allow them to access other accounts that you have linked to your email address. [More and how to enable 2SV](#).

As extra security, your email and social media passwords should be strong and different to all of your other passwords.

Ten golden rules to prevent fraud

The police suggests these ten golden rules to help you prevent fraud and beat the scammers:

- Be suspicious of all 'too good to be true' offers and deals. There are no guaranteed get-rich-quick schemes.
- Don't agree to offers or deals immediately. Insist on time to get independent or legal advice before making a decision.
- Don't hand over money or sign anything until you've checked someone's credentials and their company's.
- Never send money to anyone you don't know or trust, whether in the UK or abroad, or use methods of payment you're not comfortable with.
- Never give banking or personal details to anyone you don't know or trust. This information is valuable so make sure you protect it.
- Always log on to a website directly rather than clicking on links in an email.
- Don't just rely on glowing testimonials. Find solid, independent evidence of a company's success.
- Always get independent or legal advice if an offer involves money, time or commitment.
- If you spot a scam or have been scammed, report it and get help.
- Don't be embarrassed about reporting a scam. Because the scammers are cunning and clever there's no shame in being deceived. By reporting it, you'll make it more difficult for them to deceive others.

More from the Police

[Read more](#) from the police for our local area including other news and crime statistics. The data is updated to January 2025.

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



Annual Town Meeting



Frankie Gibney was declared Young Citizen of the Year, in recognition of his charitable endeavours and dedication to raise awareness and much needed funds. Katie commented on “the incredible contribution Frankie had made to the people of Loughton. He was a real inspiration”.

A Certificate of Recognition was also presented by Katie to the daughter of Barbara Andrews, who was unable to attend. This celebrated her exceptional work going 'above and beyond' as a teacher for over 30 years at Hereward Primary School, helping the children of Loughton reach their potential.

Local groups, organisations and charities that were successful with their grant applications were present with displays.

Representatives from local groups, organisations and charities that were successful in their grant applications received certificates to mark their achievement, and had displays up for residents to browse. In total the Town Council presented £35,671.93 to community groups in Loughton. [More, with photos.](#)

Image: Town Council

The Town Council has opened the new Newmans Lane Playground, adjacent to Rectory Lane, with Town Mayor, LRA Cllr Katie Valentine, cutting the ribbon to declare the new facilities open.



The old playground, although functional, had been looking rather shabby, tired and lacked a number of accessible features that a modern playground should be providing.

On a very tight budget the Town Council was able to spend £95,000 on the playground revamp, and are very grateful to the District Council for providing £30,000 of this funding via the UK

Government's 'United Kingdom Prosperity Fund'.

The Newmans Lane playground is now the most inclusive play area in Loughton, with new and innovative play equipment. The new apparatus includes a 3 tower & slides play unit, a wheelchair accessible roundabout and an inclusive jeep. The new zip wire is also proving a popular attraction. The playground has been open for a few weeks now and has been very well received, with a significant increase in visitors (compared to the old playground). [More, with photos.](#)

On a sour note it was reported that a small section of safety surfacing underneath the multi-play unit had been damaged by arson. This would be repaired in due course. Unfortunately, there had also been incidents of graffiti at this early stage.

Image: Town Council

Loughton Wombles

The team of eleven Wombles were out on the morning of 15 February working hard to clear Lady Mary's Path, linking Borders Lane and Rectory Lane. In addition they cleared the Rectory Lane slip road running from E15 Acting School down past St Nicholas church towards Borders Lane.

[More](#)

Image: Town Council



VE Day

Thursday 8 May marks 80 years since VE (Victory in Europe) Day when the Second World War came to an end in Europe.

The 80th anniversary of VE Day is a time for a nation to come together to learn about the stories of those that served and the VE Day generation, from the servicemen who fought, to children who were evacuated, and women on the home front. [More](#)

If you are planning a street party to celebrate VE Day the District Council will waive the fee normally associated with road closure applications for non-commercial events. [More](#)

There will a lighting of a beacon to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day at Hillyfields on 8 May at 9pm which all residents are invited to attend.

Weekly Markets

As reported previously, the Town Council has been working towards establishing weekly food markets on the High Road.

The land to be used is a Public Highway and so is the responsibility of Essex County Council Highways. The Town Clerk is now applying for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to enable the markets to take place, with a projected June starting date.

Roding Valley Recreation Ground dog waste bins

The Town Council will fix notices to all dog waste bins at the Recreation Ground advising dog owners to deposit dog waste into general litter bins if the dog waste bins are full.

Roding Valley Recreation Ground tree planting

Tree whips will be planted at the Recreation Ground over coming weeks when resources and time allow, with any excess being used at Lady Whitakers Mead.

Leisure Centre boiler upgrade

Loughton Leisure Centre has undergone a significant upgrade with replacing its boilers, ensuring improved energy efficiency and sustainability. The District Council was awarded £300,000 by Sport England last year through the swimming pool support fund to support vital energy-saving improvements.



This funding has enabled the installation of new energy-efficient boilers, helping to reduce the centre's carbon footprint while maintaining a comfortable environment for users. [More](#)

District Council Civic Awards

The awards recognise and celebrate people from across Epping Forest district who work tirelessly to support their communities. [More](#)



Upgrades to Ticket Machines

The pay and display machines in the District Council off-street car parks are being upgraded in early April. The new machines will offer more payment options and will accept card and contactless payments, to improve accessibility for all users. [More](#)

Play in the Park

Play in the Park offers a fun and an outdoor experience for children and their parents/carers. No booking needed, just drop in at any time. All ages are welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



The District Council team will provide a variety of sports equipment, bikes, and arts & crafts resources for everyone to enjoy together, and Dr. Bike will be available for free bike health checks.

- 8 April, 10am to 12pm - Roding Valley Recreation Ground (near Tennis Courts)
- 15 April, 10am to 12pm- Jessel Green Playground, Colebrook Lane

[More](#)



Council homes energy upgrades

The District Council will be improving the energy efficiency of nearly 2,400 council homes between April 2025 and 2030. This initiative aims to help families reduce energy costs while enhancing the comfort and sustainability of their homes.

A range of improvements, including loft insulation top-ups, upgraded windows and doors, and solar panels, will boost the energy efficiency ratings of these properties to meet and exceed established standards. [More](#)

Climate Action - Have your say

The County Council has a [Climate Action Plan](#) to become a net-zero county council by 2050 and help make communities more resilient to the effects of climate change. This requires the support of everyone who lives, works and studies in the county to help reach these goals.

There is a [short survey](#) to let the Council know how they can further support residents to take action on climate. Views will be used to help develop a county wide programme of climate action support for residents.

Local News

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:

- 29 March - Mother's Day Card Making. [More](#)
- 1 April - Dementia Support Drop In. [More](#)
- 4 and 11 April - Seated Exercise - sessions to boost strength, flexibility, and mobility, empowering older people to stay active, independent while having fun and making new friends while exercising. Sessions are free but booking required [More](#).
- 16 April - Fraud Awareness Drop in Session. [More](#)



Home fire safety visits for those who are deaf or have hearing loss

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service provides free home fire safety visits and specialist alarm installations to those who are deaf or have hearing loss to help keep

them safe in their homes.

There are alarms designed specifically for people with hearing loss. These alarms, which include vibrating pads and flashing lights, provide valuable time to escape from a house fire - time that could save lives. [More](#)

Allotments Available

The [Loughton Potato Ground](#) was established in 1813 and is the oldest in Essex. It is located between Baldwins Hill and Church Hill ([map](#)) and may be the only one in the country in continual existence for all that time.

They now have plots available. Would you like to try planting your own vegetables? [Visit the website](#) for more information and to [contact them](#).



Health and Wellbeing

Prescriptions warning

Residents are being advised to check prescriptions administered for any non-surgical cosmetic or aesthetic procedure, like botulinum toxin commonly known as Botox.

Any prescription should be given by someone who can legally prescribe the treatments in a face-to-face consultation with whoever the prescription is for. Ask to see the bottles/vials of liquid before treatment goes ahead. Any labels should have your name on it, like any other prescription. Your medication is for you and only you. [More](#)

Disposing of unused antibiotics

If you bin or flush old antibiotics, they could get into our water supplies and contribute to antibiotic resistance. Please take any unused medication to a pharmacy for free and safe disposal. [More](#)

Epping Forest

Government Policy Changes and the Forest

The Government's recent initiatives to increase the number of houses being built in England and, in particular, affect the protection given to the Green Belt. These changes are in to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which details the Government's policies that determine how housing and other developments are

controlled and implemented.

[The Epping Forest Heritage Trust \(EFHT\) explains the implications, EFHT's comments and concerns](#), and its on-going work to review and respond to planning proposals.

High Beach Tea Hut Closing

It has been reported that the Tea Hut next to the High Beach car park is closing in April. The City of London has however advertised for new operators for a licence to start 1 May. [More](#) (PDF)



Field Centre Open Day

The [Field Studies Council Epping Forest](#) centre at High Beach is having an open day on 5 April. Activities on the day will include:

- Pond dipping, Minibeast hunting and Crafting
- Identification Walk – Focusing on plant and bird species, our tutor will lead you on a walk through the forest looking at species identification (Suitable for primary-aged children and above)
- Nature art – There will be a session on making art out of nature using Andy Goldsworthy as inspiration (suitable for all ages)
- Deadwood citizen science – Is the deadwood in your wood dead good? A citizen science investigation.
- Signs of Springs – Citizen science survey of signs of spring
- Free photography sessions – These will take place at midday and 2pm with local photographer John Price. Get a taster of John's seasonal photography courses.

The open day runs from 10am to 3pm. No booking required. [More](#). There is another open day on 25 July.

Help protect the Forest's swans

Please give swans a wide berth and ensure that your dog does not disturb them. This is important advice all year round but especially so in spring, Swans become highly protective of their nest sites and territories, with the males becoming particularly aggressive in spring with the large cobs defending their waters against dogs.



The nesting season is a vulnerable and tense time for all nesting birds, the more they can be left alone, the more likely they are to successfully raise a family. Please never be tempted to get close to take a photo. If you do take photos, use a zoom and ensure that you do not take images with identifiable locations and never share any nest locations.

Volunteers needed to monitor wildlife

Epping Forest is home to a vast array of species, from rare insects to breeding birds, butterflies, reptiles, and small mammals. If you're passionate about wildlife and enjoy spending time outdoors, you could become a vital part of our species surveying

efforts beginning this spring.

Volunteering opportunities include:

- Breeding bird surveys – recording bird populations to track species health.
- Butterfly transects – walking set routes to monitor butterfly numbers and trends.
- Grassland habitat assessments – evaluating plant diversity.
- Reptile transects – searching for slow worms, lizards, and grass snakes.
- Small mammal surveys – monitoring populations of voles, mice, and shrews.

[More](#)



Careful with the bluebells

The bluebells are beginning to make their appearance in Epping Forest.

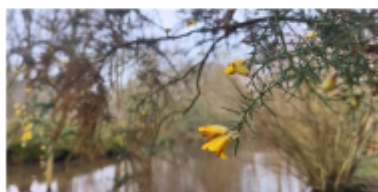
To enjoy the annual spectacle of the woodland floor carpeted in blue, it is really important not to trample these delicate plants, which means keeping to the paths, not stepping on the bluebells and not picking the flowers. This benefits these beautiful native wildflowers so that they can continue to be enjoyed by visitors and wildlife alike, this year and beyond.

Forest Focus - March 2025

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



Welcome to our February Update



Get news from the Epping Forest Heritage Trust (EFHT)

[EFHT](#), a local Loughton charity, works to protect and preserve Epping Forest. It produces a monthly newsletter with updates about the Forest, events, activities and planning proposals. [You can join their monthly email list by subscribing here](#) (scroll down the page).

And More

Essex Youth Map

The Essex Youth Map shows young people the activities and clubs available to them across Essex. The activities can then be searched according to interest, be this uniformed groups, physical activity, open access youth group and special interest / support groups. [More](#)



[More](#)

Start Composting in the Spring

Spring is the perfect time to start composting by collecting your garden waste. Rake up old leaves, dead plants, and other debris from your garden beds to create a good mix of brown and green materials for your compost.

LoveEssex has ideas, such as how to save money on a compost bin, how to get a free online course, benefits of composting and how to get started.

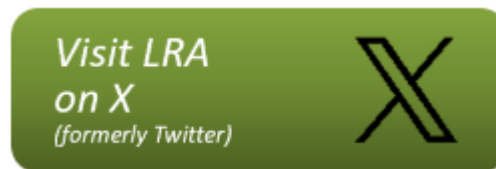
Thank you for supporting LRA.

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 April.

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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