



LRA's Loughton News

31 October 2025

In this issue, we give [an update on last year's changes to local Planning Committees](#), and of [plans to elect a Mayor for Essex](#) next May.

The police give reports on [traffic stops](#), some local crime, and [pursuing a car](#) that failed to stop on Traps Hill.

The Town Council has been given [multiple awards from the Essex Playing Fields Association](#). The Council is also inviting local groups, organisations and charities to [apply for financial assistance](#), as well as asking for [nominations for the Citizenship Awards](#). Winter is coming, so the District Council gives some advice on [getting your home ready](#).

With Bonfire Night approaching, [please take care with fireworks and remember the impact on animals](#). And if you didn't know the rules about fireworks, [here they are](#).

On Sunday 9 November is Remembrance Day. [All residents are invited](#) to the traditional remembrance service at the War Memorial on Kings Green.

Thank you for supporting LRA which is 100% run by volunteers. 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

Planning Committees

Last October the District Council made changes to local planning committees following a review of the Council's development management function conducted by PAS (Planning Advisory Service, which is part of the Local Government Association). [More](#) and the [full report](#) (from p17). This resulted in two new committees ('[Committee A](#)' and '[Committee B](#)') with the previous Plans South committee no longer existing, and membership being pro rata reflecting the District Council Cllr makeup where the Conservatives had a majority.

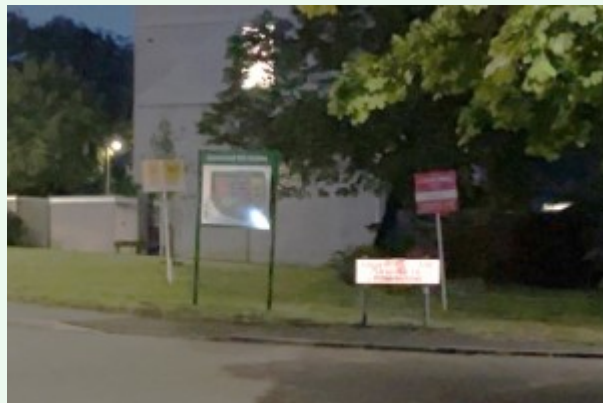
The new structure was to be reviewed after nine months. However [the District Council has now stated](#) that this review has been delayed due to the Government indicating its intent to make further changes on the National Reform of Planning Committees and the National Scheme of Delegation. [More](#) (p16-21)

[LRA Cllr Chris Pond expressed his concerns](#) (video) at a District Council meeting on 8 August 2024 and that the review should be a very wide ranging one and should include the option of going back to the old system, or something like it — and that the review takes place at the end of 2025 when everyone can be present to discuss such fundamental matters.

LRA Comment: *We remain concerned that decisions on planning are now being taken remotely from elected local representatives (and indications from the Government are that this will in the future by law be exacerbated).*

Estate Agent boards removed from public land on Oakwood Hill

During LRA Cllr Chidi Nweke's walkabout in his ward, he spoke to two concerned residents who expressed frustrations about the clutter created by numerous estate agents' advertising boards on Oakwood Hill. The presence of these boards not only made the area look unsightly but also violated regulations concerning advertising on public highways.



Recognising the negative impact this was having on the community's environment, he took immediate action and reported the situation to the District Council, urging them to take enforcement action. The Council responded promptly, requiring the estate agents to prove they had permission to display their boards on public land. Unable to provide this evidence, the estate agents were ordered to remove all their advertising boards.

Thanks to these efforts, Oakwood Hill has been cleared of clutter and has returned to its former charm. The removal of these boards has significantly improved the area, creating a more pleasant environment for residents and visitors alike.

Chidi says “*A proliferation of estate agent boards can clutter the landscape, detracting from the natural beauty of public spaces. This can affect the overall experience for visitors and residents who enjoy these areas for their scenic views.*”

The estate agents have been warned not to display their boards in this location again, and Chidi has requested regular monitoring to ensure the community remains clutter-free.

A battle to have lights restored on Great Eastern Path

LRA Cllrs Rose Brookes and David Wixley continue to try to get the lights working on Great Eastern Path after being contacted by several local residents.

Rose contacted County Cllr Marshall Vance, and then the Cabinet Member for Highways, Cllr Tom Cunningham, to try to speed up the repair of five critical lamp posts from the subway at Loughton station to Roding Gardens. Rose made a formal complaint to UK Power Networks and David enlisted the help of Dr Neil Hudson, our local MP, who also took up the cause on behalf of local residents.

UK Power Networks have said Essex Highways have not supplied the correct information to them. Rose has written again to Cllr Cunningham to ask him to use his influence to speed up this very unsatisfactory situation.

Heritage Lamp Column

LRA Cllr Chris Pond noticed that a lamp column in the Staples Road Conservation Area had been replaced by the County Council but it was the wrong height and out of keeping with the other columns. Chris contacted the Council who subsequently cut the column down to the correct height.

This is a small success that helps ensure our valued Conservation Areas are maintained properly.

Green Grey Belt review

The District Council has commissioned a Green Grey Belt review with Arup with funding provided by the Government. The review has a provisional completion date of the end of March 2026. [More](#) (p3)

LRA comment: *this will need careful watching in case there are any inappropriate attempts to re-zone valuable Green Belt land for developments such as housing.*

'Grey Belt' has a technical definition ([more on assessing Green Belt to identify grey belt land](#)) but could include land within the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and any other parcels and/or areas that make a limited contribution to the aim of the Green Belt, but excludes areas or assets of particular importance.



District Council no longer under Conservative control

As we reported in our last news email, the District Council is no longer controlled by the Conservatives. A motion of no confidence has not been put down.

The Leader of the LRA Group, LRA Cllr Chris Pond, was invited for the first time to the Executive (i.e. Cabinet]) briefing on 27 October. This appears to be an attempt by the administration of the District Council to involve LRA without a formal coalition and he thinks is an attempt to also make sure that things they do are not unacceptable to LRA. Chris will see how this progresses.

A Mayor for Essex

If reorganisation of local government in Essex proceeds, in May next year there will be elections for a Mayor heading a new Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA). The MCCA would be responsible for such areas as transport and local infrastructure, skills and employment support, housing and strategic planning, economic development and regeneration, environment and climate change, health, wellbeing and public service reform and public safety.

The MCCA would also become the fire authority for Greater Essex and the Mayor of Greater Essex would become the police and crime commissioner for Essex Police from April 2027. [Read more here in this County Council report.](#)

Although there are in theory elections to the District and County Councils next year we expect that owing to the government reorganisation plans, these will be postponed.

Explaining Local Government Reorganisation

On Tuesday this week LRA Cllr Rose Brookes gave a talk to a local community group on Local Government Reorganisation and devolution at the Buckhurst Hill Cricket Club. They were interested in what the Mayor for Greater Essex's role would be after the election next year. They also thought that three layers of local government is confusing and two might be a little more straightforward.

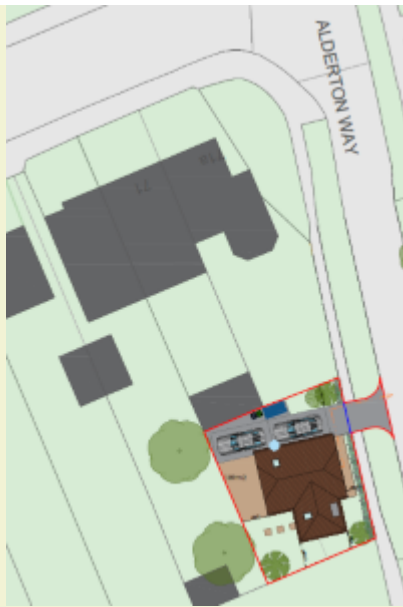
They were concerned over which other District Councils that Epping Forest would be combined with in the new Unitary authority.

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](#).

Land to the rear of 71 Stonards Hill



This application proposes a new self-build house at the rear of 71 Stonards Hill, with driveway access from Alderton Way.

LRAPG has objected to this application on the grounds that this is unacceptable backland development and garden grabbing to the detriment to the character of Stonards Hill and Alderton Way. It will involve a significant reduction in the garden area of 71 Stonards Hill. Stonards Hill is marked by long gardens and this should be preserved.

The fact this application is being made under self-build is not a justification to grant this application.

Reference [EPF/1593/25](#) The formal consultation period ended 29 October, but you can still comment to the Council.

Roads, Parking and Travel

Planned road closures

- Borders Lane - the road will be closed on 8 November and again on 24 November between The Hawthorns and the rear entrance of Oak View School for pole replacement works by o2. [More](#)
- Debden Lane - the road will be closed on 27 November, from near the junction with Ripley View for a distance of approximately 40m in a north easterly direction, for sewer cover replacement works by Thames Water. [More](#)



Dates and details can change so [check here or the latest updates](#), and for other planned roadworks including ones that involve only temporary traffic lights. However unplanned closures can still happen.

Police, Fire and Crime

Police checks on the High Road

Police recently conducted stop checks on Loughton High Road. The operation was conducted after complaints were received from the public about anti-social driving. Fifteen vehicles were stop checked, with warnings given to those found driving anti-socially.

Driver's documents were also checked to ensure they had the correct licence and insurance in place.



Man arrested after failure to stop on Traps Hill

After a vehicle failed to stop on Traps Hill just before midnight on 14 October, police went in pursuit through roads in Loughton and into Abridge. Specially trained officers followed the van whilst other units were able to get ahead of it to lay stinger devices on its route.



The vehicle came to a safe stop in Abridge Road after hitting the stinger and subsequently being boxed in. A 24-year-old man from Harlow was arrested on suspicion of failing to stop, dangerous driving, failing to provide a specimen for analysis and assaulting an emergency worker.

Local crime

- A 25-year old male was given a community resolution for possession of cannabis after members of the public called Police about suspicious activity in Highwood Lane.
- A 20-year old female was arrested for assault following an incident in Torrington Gardens. She has been bailed whilst the investigation is ongoing.

Police make 328 arrests for drink and drug driving

In September in Essex, the police made:

- 85 arrests for drink driving
- 169 for drug driving
- 21 for failing to provide a breath test
- 53 for driving while unfit through drink or drugs

This is the highest number of drug driving arrests Essex Police has seen in a single month since before the pandemic. Officers from across the force worked together to keep dangerous drivers off our roads. [More](#)

Romance Fraudsters

Romance fraudsters don't dive in immediately asking for cash. They build trust over many months and hundreds of hours of calls, finding out background information

about you and building a bond. They may create a backstory that tugs on your heartstrings, like claiming to be widowed, a single parent or the victims of misfortune in their personal or work lives.

Fraudsters have been known to use dating sites. They lower your defences by building a relationship, before asking for money. [More](#)

Identity theft and steps you can take to avoid becoming a victim

Stealing an individual's identity details does not, on its own, constitute identity fraud. But using that identity to open a bank account does.

The first you know of it may be when you receive bills or invoices for things you haven't ordered, or when you receive letters from debt collectors for debts that aren't yours. Once you realise that identity fraud has occurred you should sign up to a credit referencing agency, check and report any activity that you do not recognise. The [government has put together this checklist](#) (PDF) to help on the steps to take to repair your identity and prevent re-victimisation.

Calling back a missed call number

If you receive a call from a mobile number you are not familiar with, be cautious as it might not be from a genuine caller. There are reports of multiple calls from multiple mobile numbers that are unknown, often in quick succession and without leaving voicemails. When answered, the unknown caller immediately hangs up. Calling these numbers back may incur extra charges.

Funding for Essex Police and Essex Fire and Rescue Service - Have Your Say

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) is asking residents for their views on investing in both Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service through the council tax precept for the next financial year. The precept is the amount paid as part of your council tax for local policing and fire and rescue services.

[More](#) and [have your say here](#). The consultation closes 17 November.

Crime: Numbers, Narratives and Nuance

With many news stories reporting that crime is soaring, shoplifting is on the rise and police are struggling to keep up, do the statistics back that up, or has crime actually been falling? It sounds a simple question, but the answer is complex.

[This podcast](#) explores what the statistics tell us, and what they can't — and why the gap between perception and reality is so persistent. [More](#) and [listen here](#).

More from the police

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



Town Council Citizenship Awards

Do you know someone worthy of recognition for their community work or bravery? The Town Council is asking for nominations for the 2026 Loughton Citizenship Awards.

We are looking to celebrate those special individuals in our town who go the extra mile for their fellow citizens. This may be through long service for a voluntary organisation or local charity, good neighbourliness, running a campaign to improve community facilities or cohesion, or by an act of courage or bravery.

Any Loughton resident or a Loughton employer, educational institution, group or society may submit a nomination but please do not let the nominee know at this stage.



[More](#). The closing date is 31 January 2026.



Think Loughton - Latest Edition

The latest edition from the Town Council is being distributed. [You can read it online here](#).

Parking on Social Housing land

The District Council have a new policy for parking on any land owned by the Council for social housing. The aim is to provide opportunities for District Council tenants and homeowners to access safe parking close to their homes, including recharging bays for electric vehicles. [The full policy is here.](#)

Key features of the policy cover:

- Parking restrictions - the capability and processes to introduce parking restrictions on roads, and formal permit schemes for residents, visitors, and contractors using designated parking areas.
- Obstruction of driveways
- Parking on grass verges
- Bollards and other obstructions
- Pavement parking
- Enforcement measures: Use of signage, patrols, and potential penalties to deter unauthorised parking.

Where residents, working with officers, want to change parking arrangements, this will be done via consultation and new arrangements only agreed where a majority of affected residents agree.

Blue-lidded recycling bins update

The Council has published [this update report](#) on the rollout of blue-lidded recycling bins.

There have been many residents requesting larger or additional bins. You can [request a new or replacement bin, or repair to a bin here](#). There is currently no stock of larger blue recycling bins.

If you have large boxes to recycle, please flatten them and place them by your recycling bin for collection.

In March, the Council will issue free kerbside caddies for food waste in preparation for the separation of food from your green lidded garden waste bin. Until then you can continue to use your green lidded bin for your food waste.

Get your home ready for winter

The District Council has reminded Council tenants to [check five things in preparation for winter](#) - these checks apply equally to everyone else.

- **Check your boiler** – Check your boiler pressure gauge before things turn cold. It'll run best at around 1 to 1.5 bar. You can check this via the gauge on the front of your boiler unit. Get it done now when the weather's warmer and avoid the hassle of no hot water or heating when it's cold outside.
- **Turn on the heating** – If your radiators are cold at the top and hot at the bottom, your radiators will need bleeding. This will increase their heat efficiency and could save you money on your heating bills. It's quick and easy to do, do it now while the weather's still mild.
- **Test your extractor fans** – If you have extractor fans in your kitchen and bathroom, test them using the tissue test. Simply turn on the extractor fan and hold a piece of tissue paper flat against the vent. If the tissue sticks, the fan is pulling air effectively. If it falls or barely moves, there may be an issue with airflow.
- **Check and test alarms** – Are your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors working correctly? Test them regularly, at least once a month, they could save your life.

- **Know your stopcock** – Your stopcock is the main water shut-off valve so you can turn off the water in an emergency. Make sure you know where it is. The stop cock is usually in the kitchen under the sink, or in a riser cupboard – it looks like a tap.

Highways Winter Service

Essex Highways winter service has now begun. During the season, they treat over 2000 miles of roads, which is about 40% of the road network. These are the most important routes to keep moving. They operate 51 routes supported by 55 salt spreading vehicles with snow ploughs plus 2 mini-spreaders with around 104 drivers who are deployed based on weather conditions. [More on the service, routes and tracking the gritters.](#)

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

The District Council is running a tenant satisfaction survey, with calls to selected tenants. Acuity Research & Practice Ltd will be making calls on the Council's behalf and will only call between 9am-8pm on weekdays and 10am-6pm on Saturdays, the number will display as 01992 905307. Your response will help the District Council gauge your satisfaction with your home and its services. [More](#)

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:



- Every Saturday - board games event - drop in and play with family or make new friends. No booking required. [More](#)
- 7, 14, 21, 28 November - digital support assistance with using the library computers or your own devices. [More](#)
- 8 November - a special retelling of the popular children's favourite "The Highway Rat" by Julia Donaldson. [More](#)
- 11 November - dementia information drop-in sessions. No booking required. [More](#)
- 19 November - Fraud Awareness - The police will be there to discuss fraud awareness and give advice. No booking required. [More](#)
- 25 November - Employ-Ability is a specialist employment support charity working with people experiencing mental ill health. The purpose is to support people with mental ill health to secure and retain employment. No booking required. [More](#)

At Debden Library there is:

- Every Saturday 10am to 11:30am - Games Morning - board games inside and ping pong outdoors (bring your own ping pong bat and balls) self-supervised. No booking required. [More](#)

Remembrance Sunday 9 November

There will be a traditional remembrance service at the War Memorial on Kings Green. A two minute silence will be held at 11am.

The uniformed parade will leave the Royal British Legion on Church Hill at 11:50am to march down to Kings Green with the service starting at 12:15pm. [More](#)

All residents are invited to attend.



Light Up a Life

The annual Light up a Life service takes place on Saturday 29 November at 4:30pm. This is an annual celebration of everything that St Clare Hospice stands for – joining together with families from across our community in honour of their loved ones. Candles are lit as we remember, with every shining light representing the life and memories of a loved one. [More](#)

Everyone is welcome to attend, whether you or not have experienced St Clare's care, and no matter how long ago your loss was.

Health and Wellbeing

Stokes - every minute counts

Stroke is a medical emergency. If you experience any of the symptoms below, you should call 999 immediately. Think FAST if you think you, or a loved one, is having a stroke:

- **F**ace weakness: Can the person smile? Has their mouth or eye drooped?
- **A**rm weakness: Can the person raise both arms?
- **S**peech problems: Can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?
- **T**ime to call 999: if you see any of these signs.

Always call 999 straight away. [More](#)

The NHS say please do not travel to The Princess Alexandra Hospital for stroke emergencies as there is no specialist stroke unit at the hospital and you will need to be moved to another hospital that has a stroke unit.

Epping Forest



Epping Forest
A Year in Pictures | 2026



Epping Forest 2026 calendar

The Epping Forest calendar for 2026 is available to purchase from the Visitor Centre at Chingford. The price is £10 for the A4 size and £12 for the A3 size. It's the Christmas gift that keeps on giving, and supports Epping Forest charities.

Forest Focus - October 2025

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

This month, [read about how this year is a 'mast](#)



[year'](#), which is a natural phenomenon where trees like oak, beech and hornbeam produce exceptionally large quantities of seeds and nuts (scroll down)

And More

Please be careful with fireworks

Many people enjoy bonfires and fireworks but it's important to take extra caution to avoid any accidents or injuries when having a bonfire or using fireworks at home.

Keep fireworks in a closed non-flammable box, follow the instructions on each firework, light them at arm's length, and stand well back. Never go near a firework that has been lit. Even if it hasn't gone off, it could still explode. [More from Essex Fire and Rescue.](#)

Animals such as dogs and horses can suffer from tinnitus, hearing loss and long-term hearing damage caused by fireworks, and all animals can experience stress and fear – which may lead to injury and even death. Similarly, livestock and other outdoor animals often try to escape the bangs out of fear, sometimes injuring themselves in the process. [Here's advice from the RSPCA on how to help your pets amidst the noise.](#)

What are the rules relating to fireworks?

It is an offence to:

- possess adult fireworks (all fireworks except category 1 fireworks - party poppers, sparklers, throwdowns etc) in a public place by anyone under the age of 18
- possess category 4 fireworks (professional display fireworks) by anyone other than a fireworks professional
- it is illegal to supply adult fireworks to those under 18
- throw or cast or fire any firework in or into any highway, street, thoroughfare or public space (this would include throwing or firing from a private place into a public place, street, highway etc)
- to light any fire or discharge any firearm or firework (without lawful authority or excuse) within 50 feet of the centre of a highway which consists of or comprises a carriageway, and as a consequence, the highway is damaged.

There is a curfew on the use of adult fireworks between 11 pm and 7 am, except on:

- Bonfire Night (when the curfew is between 12 midnight and 7 am)
- New Year's Eve (when the curfew is between 1 am and 7 am)
- Chinese New Year (when the curfew is between 1 am and 7 am)
- Diwali Night (when the curfew is between 1 am and 7 am).

The penalties for using fireworks outside the above curfew hours are imprisonment (maximum 6 months) and a substantial fine. Please note, you could also commit offences if they were being used to cause a nuisance.

*Thank you for supporting LRA. The next regular news email is planned for Friday 28 November.
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

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