



LRA's Loughton News

4 August 2025

In this issue, we give the downbeat news that [the weekly food markets that were planned for the High Road have not been able to progress for now](#), but we have hope the idea can be successfully resurrected in future years.

The District Council has decided to press ahead with [plans to charge for collecting garden waste](#), and the County Council has now made clear their [preference for divising Essex into three unitary authorities](#).

[We share concerns over recent protest events](#) in Epping, as we do not condone any form of hate, racism, or intimidation. LRA remains committed to a society that is safe, inclusive, and respectful of all.

On events around town, [Jessel Green successfully hosted the Community Fun Day](#) (despite lightning and rain), and next month will be the [Horticultural Show](#) and [Loughton Day](#).

Finally, LRA Cllr Alan Fricker is keen to hear from residents about [what opportunities they might see for the Town Council to support our local environment](#) through the services and spaces it manages.

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.

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LRA News

Weekly markets

The Town Council had hoped to have weekly Food Markets on the High Road by now, and had applied for the necessary approvals from Essex Highways and the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) to reserve the parking spaces along Centric Parade for traders' vehicles on Saturday evenings/Sunday mornings to enable the markets to take place.

Since submitting the original application form to Essex Highways, the Council was passed from pillar to post with three different County Council departments disclaiming responsibility, before they were eventually passed to the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) and then submitting another NEPP application form.

NEPP has also now effectively blocked the way forward as they say parking suspensions are for temporary requirements and not for consistent weekly arrangements, and they subsequently quoted associated costs that made the market not cost effective.

The Town Council has tried to get both Essex Highways and NEPP to come up with a compromise and way forward, but to no avail, so the Council are no longer pursuing a weekly market.

The process of Local Government reform starting and the associated uncertainty has not helped the cause, and the Council will revisit this again in 2028 when hopefully new levels of authority are in place.

This is a most disappointing outcome and has been most frustrating for the Town Council and for LRA, which was the driving force behind the previous Farmers Markets and had helped to set the new arrangements in motion.

[Read The Town Clerk's full report here](#) (PDF, from p4)

Charging for garden waste collections

We reported in June that the District Council was considering charging £60 per year for fortnightly collection of garden waste. This would be in conjunction with separating food and garden waste into different bins for collection. Food waste would be collected weekly at no additional costs to residents.

The current cost of the District Council's waste collection service is £2.1m a year. The proposal would save £201,000 a year. When they have had the opportunity, most of the LRA, Independent and Lib Dem Cllr's voted against the green waste changes, but the Conservative majority has now approved them.

On 21 July, the District Council cabinet considered the proposal and agreed to proceed with developing a waste collection service that separates food and garden waste from April 2026, subject to the availability of food waste vehicles. Six LRA Cllrs have now formally called this decision in.

The actual charge for annual garden waste collection would be determined as part of 2026-27 budget setting process that would ensure the service was at least cost neutral.

However, the costs and benefits are not spread evenly. People with gardens who opt for the new garden waste collection service will have to pay what we assume will be £60 a year. This amount was arrived at by looking at what other councils charge for similar services. The Council argues that this is fairer to people without gardens, or who don't pay for a garden waste bin. However, for everyone else the collection service will be reduced or will be at an extra cost. There are concerns that it will encourage fly-tipping, or result in concealing green waste in residual black bins, both of which would increase the Council's costs.

In the next few years, the Council will be merged with other local councils (we don't yet know how this will work) – the change would bring the Council roughly into line with neighbouring councils, in preparation for the merger.

Talking Health and Wellbeing

In June, at a District Council meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee, the [Epping Forest Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) (PDF, from p4) 2022-26 was discussed. LRA Cllrs Chidi Nweke and Rose Brookes are LRA's representatives on this committee.

One topic that was discussed in some detail was the increase in male suicides and Chidi made a significant contribution to the debate. He stressed the importance of a Men's Shed and the benefit to mental health that establishing such a project locally would bring to the individuals that attend such projects. For a long time Chidi has

been trying to establish a project in Loughton.

The committee also debated the reasons why children and young people are nearly five per cent less physically active outside any school PE lessons than they were five years ago. Rose drew attention to the fact that all primary school children are meant to leave in Year 6 able to swim at least 25 metres. However in reality the latest research by Swim England and Sport England shows that only 72 per cent of children achieve this benchmark. (The ability to swim is also affected by socioeconomic background and ethnicity.) Rose drew attention to the all round benefits of swimming as an exercise and that it gives children a huge boost in self esteem to be able to swim.



Helping Young Swimmers

Limes Farm Junior School recently approached LRA Cllr Rose Brookes for help after Fullwell Cross pool suddenly closed because of a RAAC problem. This meant a whole cohort of children received no swimming lessons for half a term.

At short notice Rose couldn't find pool time anywhere nearby for them. However, she found funding from a charity to pay for swimming lessons, and arranged for crash courses for several non-swimmers during the summer holiday at nearby Chigwell School with the help of District Council officers' help. Rose is grateful for the help of the school and Council.

Recent Protests in Epping

LRA is deeply concerned by the recent events in Epping during protests that descended into scenes of division, hostility, and intimidation.

While it is entirely right for people to express concern about alleged serious offences — particularly when public safety is involved — it is unacceptable for those concerns to be hijacked by far-right groups seeking to incite hatred and division, and also people coming in obviously well-organised with the contrary view.

As members of Loughton Residents Association (LRA), we want to make it absolutely clear: we do not condone any form of hate, racism, or intimidation. We remain committed to a society that is safe, inclusive, and respectful of all.

The alleged crimes currently under investigation must be treated with the seriousness and legal rigour they deserve. Justice must be pursued through proper process, not through threats, fear, or mob action.

We also believe it is entirely possible — and necessary — to be both safety-conscious and compassionate. People seeking asylum in the UK are often fleeing war, persecution, or unimaginable hardship. They deserve to be treated with dignity, even as we ensure public safety for all.

We recognise that the majority of local residents are fair-minded, decent people who care about their community. It is only a small minority who exploit fear and tragedy to push a divisive and dangerous narrative.

We also want to express concern over the decision to site an asylum accommodation facility at the former Bell Hotel — a historic building, located not far from Loughton and on the very edge of our neighbouring town of Epping. We believe this is an inappropriate location for such a facility, and we join those who have already called on the Home Office to reconsider its use and to close it.

We urge our community to stand united — against racism, against violence, and against hate. Let us show that Epping, and our wider district, is a place where decency, fairness, and mutual respect will always prevail.

Also read more from [the District Council](#) and [the Police](#). You can [watch the District Council meeting here](#), where Cllrs voted unanimously on a motion to call on the

Government to immediately and permanently close the Bell Hotel in Epping for the purposes of asylum processing. LRA Cllrs spoke during the meeting - Chidi Nweke (at 38:55), Chris Pond (at 51:30) and Sheree Rackham (at 55:10).

Local Government Restructure

The County Council have confirmed a preference for three unitary councils in Greater Essex.

- Central Essex Unitary: Epping Forest, Chelmsford, Brentwood, Harlow, Maldon
- South Essex Unitary: Southend, Rochford, Castle Point, Basildon, Thurrock
- North Essex Unitary: Colchester, Tendring, Braintree, Uttlesford



The new councils would mean the abolition of all the existing 15 councils in Greater Essex. [More, including a map of the proposed boundaries.](#)

The recommendation will now be included in a formal business case to go the government by 26 September, after which they will consider all proposals before deciding which business cases will go forward to public consultation. [Background on our website.](#)

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.

Gardeners Arms pub, York Hill

Notwithstanding regular complaints about anti-social behaviour outside the Gardeners Arms, District Council officers have allowed a variation to the licence which will make it harder to monitor and protect the amenity of nearby residents. Customers drinking outside previously had to be seated at the tables within the front terrace. The Council has now allowed standing as well.

LRAPG objected, citing it is crucial patrons are sat on the allocated seats and not be allowed to roam around the premises because it will be:

- More difficult to monitor and control people who are stood up.
- Count and assess whether the limit of 60 people has been breached.
- Result in patrons being able to stand closer to noise sensitive windows and impact the amenity of neighbours.

LRAPG considers standing drinkers tend to be noisier and more anti-social. The pub is surrounded by family homes. The swearing and anti-social behaviour is detrimental to children. LRAPG argued this application should not be treated as a minor variation of the licence, which under the rules, prevents neighbours from attending a hearing and making their case to elected members.

The District Council has been asked on multiple occasions to review the licence to no avail.

Roads, Parking and Travel

Planned road closures

- Colebrook Lane - the road will be closed 9:30am to 3pm weekdays until 5 August for work by Essex Highways. [More](#)

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.

Please remember if there is an urgent issue that requires a road closure or other traffic management to protect public safety, a permit does not need to be requested **before** the works are carried out. In the event of emergency utility works, such as a gas leak or burst water main, the utility company can inform Essex Highways as late as two hours after the work has started. A permit is still required, but **Essex Highways can't refuse it**.



Central Line planned weekend closure

On 9 and 10 August the Central Line will be closed between Loughton and Leytonstone. The service around the Hainault loop will also be affected. [More including all upcoming track closures](#) (PDF).

Police, Fire and Crime

Burglary and vehicle theft arrests

Two men are currently in custody having been arrested on suspicion of burglary and vehicle theft offences. The police had identified a vehicle parked up in Loughton linked to car thefts, and waited until the driver returned.

Money, tools, number plates, and a number of car keys were discovered inside the vehicle.

A 19 year-old man from Woodford Green and a 20 year-old man from Loughton were arrested on suspicion of burglary and theft of a motor vehicle. [More](#)



County Lines drug trade

The Serious Violence Unit (SVU) of Essex Police hosts the Operation Raptor and Orochi teams. They target the county lines gangs linked to serious violence and protect the vulnerable people they exploit. (County Lines is where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries, usually by children or vulnerable people who are coerced into it by gangs.)

So far this year the SVU has seen:

- 265 people arrested and 201 charged.
- 87 drug lines dismantled.
- More than 21kg of various drugs seized.
- 72 weapons seized.
- More than £272,000 in cash seized.

The SVU work has also seen 138 vulnerable or exploited people safeguarded this year alone.

Crime in Essex

Essex Police have published a performance update for the 3 months to 31 March, which also includes data going back to 2019. This covers 101 and 999 call wait times, incidents attended, solved crime numbers, and other data. [More](#)

Live facial recognition (LFR)

LFR compares a live camera feed (or multiple feeds) of faces against a watchlist to locate people of interest such as missing people or those with outstanding warrants. LFR is often used at large events or in busy areas, typically using mobile LFR vans. The vans have clear signs on the outside and there is also signage in the area to tell people it is being operated.

The police have no forthcoming planned deployments in our district, but you can [see the past and future plans 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 May 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)



Council News

Jessel Green Community Fun Day 2025

Thunder, lightning and a shower of rain didn't stop play. The Town Council thanks all supporters, volunteers and wonderful residents for making Jessel Green Family Fun Day 2025 so successful, and look forward to seeing you all again next year.

Photos are on the [Town Council's Facebook page](#).

Loughton Horticultural Show

The Show is on Saturday 6 September 2025 at the Murray Hall.

Here are the [rules and regulations](#), [a beginners guide to exhibiting](#), and [the entry form](#).

Doors open at 9am for exhibitors and 2pm for public viewing. Town Mayor's Best Allotment Awards are at 4pm.





Loughton Day

Loughton Day is on Saturday 20 September at the Loughton Cricket Club. It is free admission to see what Loughton community groups have to offer, along with food, drink, entertainment, live music and more.

Madison Fox Estate Agents has kindly agreed to be the sponsor. To help advertise the event, can you have a promotional board outside your home, for two weeks before and removed the week after? There is absolutely no obligation beyond allowing a board to be temporarily placed outside your property.

If you or a family member (living in the IG10 area) are interested, please email Pippa at the Town Council at Pippa.Bryce@loughton-tc.gov.uk with your home address, confirmation of a suitable location (e.g. a fence, railing, or flowerbed where the board can be securely placed), and your name and contact number (used only if there's an issue with the board).

Improving Loughton's environment - Have your say

Did you know the Town Council has an Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change policy? [Read it here.](#)

The introductory paragraph gives a good picture of the intent:

"Loughton Town Council (LTC) is committed to promoting a sustainable community in Loughton. It recognises that environmentally friendly policies will bring benefits to the whole town, through greener business practices, improvements to the natural setting, more sustainable development and a healthier lifestyle for all. LTC is also committed to combating the adverse effects of climate change, which becomes a greater priority as the negative impact of climate becomes more evident and prevalent."

There has been steady progress with implementing the policy since it was last updated in November 2021. A full report on progress can be found in the Environment & Heritage Committee [agenda papers](#) (from p9) from 28 January 2025.

This has included concerns for what the Council buys, the wonderful [Wombles](#) and moving to the use of an electric vehicle. The Council engages with the planning process with particular care for the trees that are a key feature of our area and so important for biodiversity. A current area of investigation is the potential for solar generation on the roof at Murray Hall.

Recognising that the Town Council only has responsibility in certain areas (see this [handy one page guide](#) for whether something falls under Town, District or County Council) it is likely that some ideas will fall outside its remit. However, sharing these can help spark other ideas, and see them passed to our District and County Cllrs for consideration and potentially let them be picked up by other interested groups in the town.

LRA Cllr Alan Fricker is leading on bringing suggestions for updates to the policy and he is keen to hear from residents about what opportunities they might see for the Town Council to support our shared environment through the services and spaces it manages.

Part formed ideas are welcome. You can contact Alan by email at CllrAlanFricker@loughton-tc.gov.uk.

District Council yearly accounts

The District Council must tell local residents and taxpayers how their money is spent by publishing yearly accounts and details of their spending. Residents have the right

to inspect the accounting records (including detailed transactional documentation) and to question the auditor or make formal objections on a matter of public interest or to report to the auditor if they consider that any item of account is unlawful. [More and the accounts are here.](#)

Licensing policy - Have your say

The District Council is required to determine and publish a statement of licensing policy every 5 years. The current policy was approved in December 2020, and it must now be reviewed before being adopted for a further period.

The policy relates to licensing activities including the granting of premises licences, club premises certificates, temporary events and personal licences in the district in respect of the sale and supply of alcohol, the provision of regulated entertainment and late-night refreshment.

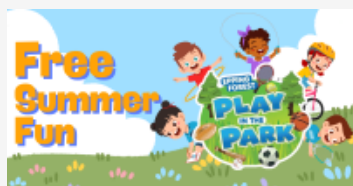
[More and have your say.](#) The consultation closes 18 August.

Annual canvass of electors

The District Council carries out an annual canvass every year for all households in the Epping Forest district. This is to check the information on the electoral register is correct and up to date.

This year, if they have your email address on file they will send an initial email to check who is eligible to be registered to vote. You can respond online, by phone or by text.

For all other households, a letter will be sent in August to check the information on the electoral register. Depending on the colour of the letter will depend on whether you will need to respond and how. [More](#)



Play in the Park

Play in the Park offers a fun, outdoor experience for children and their parents or carers. No booking needed, just drop in at any time. Children will need to be accompanied by an adult.

The District Council's Community Health & Wellbeing team will provide a variety of sports equipment, bikes, and arts & crafts resources for everyone to enjoy together. No booking required.

- Roding Valley Recreation Ground (near Tennis Courts) - 6, 7, 20 and 21 August
- Jessel Green Playground - 12 and 26 August
- The Green, Marlescroft Way - 4, 11 and 18 August
- Hornbeam Road Recreation Ground - 13 and 27 August

At certain sessions, Dr. Bike will be available for free bike health checks - [book these here.](#)

What's On

The District Council has published details of all activities, events, exhibitions and workshops from the Community Development and Wellbeing team for May to October. There's something for everyone, from wellness walks to our new upbeat dance session strictly dancing and dining for ladies and the full Play in the Park summer programme. [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 1-3pm - Children's Board Game Club. No booking required. [More](#)
- 8 August - Make a colourful caterpillar bookmark. No booking required. [More](#)
- 12 August - Home Instead Dementia Advice. No booking required. [More](#)
- 15 August - Storytime followed by Rock Decorating. 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. Join in fun board games or play a game of ping pong with your friends (weather permitting). No booking required. [More](#)

Community Grants

Applications are being accepted for grants from two funds to support young people and community safety projects across Southend, Essex or Thurrock.

The Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit (VVU) Community Grant (for work in 2026/27) is designed to support community organisations across Essex work directly with young people, in local settings, with targeted, community specific interventions which have a positive impact on issues relating to serious violence.

The Community Safety Development Fund (CSDF) 2025/26, is designed to support the local voluntary and community safety sector in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour across the county, building safer and stronger communities.

Grant applications must be received by 10 September. [More](#)

Health and Wellbeing

Care in the summertime

Whilst most of us welcome the sunshine and warmer weather, it is important to remember the various health problems summer can bring that might affect you or your family. [Advice on avoiding health problems is in this guide to summer health](#), which includes heatwave information, being safe when swimming in open waters, sun safety, keeping hydrated, hay fever, bugs and bites, and sprains and strains.



Local health and wellbeing service

Frontline helps frontline workers and the public to find details on local health and wellbeing services and to contact services through call back and

referral options. [More](#)

Helping with falls

The NHS offers a 12-week programme of activity to support people aged 65 and older who are at risk of falling. It is also for people aged 50 and older who have had any falls in the last 12 months due to a condition that affects their balance e.g. stroke or Parkinson's disease etc.

Exercise sessions are provided at community venues or, where required, in your home, depending on individual needs and availability. [More](#)

Epping Forest

High fire risk in Epping Forest

Notwithstanding the recent wet weather, neither fires nor barbecues are permitted in Epping Forest at any time.

Please also remember that litter and discarded cigarettes can increase the risk of wildfires starting and spreading. So please always take your litter home with you to dispose of it responsibly there.

If you spot anyone lighting a fire or barbecue in Epping Forest, please phone 020 8532 1010 (24hrs). In an emergency, please phone 999 first and then report it on the 020 8532 1010 number (24hrs).

Epping Forest Big Walk 2025

The annual Epping Forest Big Walk will return this year on Sunday 14th September on a 14-mile route from Manor Park in east London to Bell Common in Epping in one day. There will be refreshment breaks along the way, as well as a variety of talks about the Forest. [More and register here.](#)

Can you help out at the High Beach Visitor Centre?

The Epping Forest Visitor Centre at High Beach is operated by Epping Forest Heritage Trust volunteers on behalf of the City of London Corporation, who own and manage the Forest. EFHT is looking for new volunteers that are available 1-2 days a month on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays. Training will be provided, and you will be working with people who love the Forest and are keen to share it with others. [Register your interest here.](#)



Conservation volunteering

There are many dates available where you can carry out hands-on work to help improve its biodiversity and resilience to climate change. [More](#)

Forest Focus - July 2025

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



*Thank you for supporting LRA. The next regular news email is planned for Friday 29 August.
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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