



## **LRA's Loughton News**

7 March 2025

In this issue, we report on a [public consultation on the changes to local government](#), and [increases in housing targets](#) set centrally that will affect our Local Plan.

Police activity around town includes [a burglar banned from shops](#), [convictions for drug flights](#), [charges in a burglary investigation](#), and [an arrest in Kingsley Road](#), alongside [the regular police work that happens](#).

The Town Council will be holding the annual [Town Meeting](#) on 19 March - all are welcome - here are [some dates for the diary](#) and [the Council's Think Loughton magazine is out](#). There's also [an update the work](#) to enhance the environment, safety, and health and wellbeing of residents in the Oakwood Hill estate.

All households in Loughton should be receiving their Townwide copies of Loughton Life at the moment. We have a few gaps though - [can you help?](#)

You can contact us by emailing [contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk](mailto:contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk) to raise an issue, give your views, or offer help.

### **News Sections**

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## **LRA News**

### **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 has launched a public consultation on the changes.

It includes questions on the proposed geography and how the Combined County Authority will make decisions, together with questions on the effects of working

across this geography through a Mayoral Combined County Authority, and specifically asks about:

- The proposed geography
- Governance arrangements
- Supporting the economy
- Improving social outcomes
- Improving local government services
- Improving the local natural environment
- Supporting the interests and needs of local communities and reflect local identities

[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.

### **Government housing targets increased**

With the Government's planning reforms being progressed, changes to the National Planning Policy Framework show an increase the housing targets across the country.

In Epping Forest district the target is being raised from the existing 725 to 1,299 a year. This will affect the Local Plan that was adopted in 2023, and the District Council has confirmed that a planned review of the Local Plan before March 2028 would take into account the Government's new housing targets.

The Epping Forest Heritage Trust has [a summary of the proposals](#) and their view.

***LRA Comment:*** *The District Council has not been meeting its previous housing target, let alone the increased version. This leaves the Council open to speculative development in unwanted areas that are likely to be nodded through at appeal. The Council needs to identify sites that bridge the gap, without harming the Forest, as soon as possible.*

## Can you help deliver Loughton Life, please?

Thank you to all everyone who responded to our call last week for help delivering Loughton Life. We're very grateful for your help.



We have a few remaining gaps where we need deliverers:

- Doubleday Road
- Kingsley Road
- Lawton Road, Lawton Green, Harvey Gardens
- Appleton Road, Conyers Way, Foxley Close, Prescott Green and parts of Etheridge Road and Westall Road.
- Harwater Drive, Sedley Rise, Millsmead Way
- Roding Road
- Greenstead Road and Sutton Close

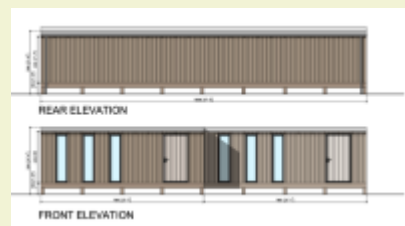
If you or someone you know can help in these areas, please email Martine by email [martine@loughtonresidents.co.uk](mailto:martine@loughtonresidents.co.uk) or phone on 0777 1867 256.

## 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.

### 26 Station Road

This application proposes construction of an ancillary garden structure, serving as a home office. Construction had commenced, but is now paused until the application is determined



LRAPG has objected to this application. The proposed building by reason of its location, bulk and excessive height will be detrimental to neighbours. A substantial number of trees have been felled without the consent of the District Council and neighbours have complained about flooding since they were removed. Some of the trees are protected via Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and the LRAPG have asked the Council to immediately issue TPOs on all the trees to the rear of this property in order to give them full protection. Overall, the structure represents an unacceptable form of backland development.

LRAPG has asked that the planning application be refused and enforcement action taken immediately including the prosecution for carrying out unauthorised works to the roots of trees protected by TPOs.

Reference [EPF/0012/25](#). The formal consultation period ended 3 March, but you can still comment to the Council.

### **Gardeners Arms Pub, York Hill**

LRAPG has been made aware that the disturbance to neighbours from unsocial behaviour by some patrons of the pub is continuing and appears to be getting worse, and has asked the Council to review the license and make any necessary changes to resolve the problem once and for all.

LRAPG has consistently asked for the numbers of external seating to be reduced to previous levels when any problems were controllable.

## ***Roads, Parking and Travel***

### **Planned road closures**

- Algers Road - the road will be closed 17 - 21 March while new connection works are undertaken by Thames Water. [More](#)
- [Borders Lane](#) (side road in front of shops), [Colson Path](#), [Cherston Road](#), [Colson Gardens](#), [Honeycroft](#), [Ladyfields](#) - the roads will be closed 24 - 28 March during the day for road resurfacing by Essex Highways. Times vary (see individual links above), and a door drop with relevant information should be made to local residents beforehand.



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

### **Central Line disruption**

[London Travelwatch has published their view](#) on the problems with the Central Line over the past year. [Background on our website](#).

### **Bacteria helping highways**

Essex Highways is using microbiology to clean up fuel spills as one of the first authorities to deploy microorganisms on a road network.

Traditional methods of clearing fuel spills rely on sand and other absorbent materials. This can require road closures for up to three to six hours, depending on the size, as well as costly clean-ups. The Fuel Spill Digester is an eco-friendly alternative which uses natural bacteria and enzymes to quickly 'eat' fuel, oils and solvents spilled on roads.

As soon as the microorganism is sprayed onto a spill, the enzymes break down the fuel's harmful components while bacteria digest them. [More](#)

### **Tolls for the Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels coming soon**

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 January**

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

- helped to find 33 people who were reported missing.
- investigated 61 reports of antisocial behaviour.
- attended 53 road traffic collisions.
- investigated 182 reports of domestic violence incidents.
- solved 103 crimes.
- submitted 333 pieces of intelligence.



### **Loughton Police Station Open Day**

There will be an open day at Loughton Police Station on 28 May from 11am to 3pm. During the day the police will have firearms officers, police dogs and their handlers, a forensic officer, Rural Engagement Team, police motorcycles, the District Council's Community Safety Partnership, the Independent Advisory Group and Neighbourhood Watch along with the Fire Service and Safer Essex Roads.

### **Burglar banned**

A burglar has been banned from certain shops in Essex after officers secured a court order aimed at protecting businesses from further harm.

Between 19 June and 20 October last year, the BP garage at Debden reported 10 separate incidents where food, cigarettes and other items, valued at around £40,000, were stolen.

The police's Town Centre Team officers arrested the suspect when they were patrolling. A subsequent search of his home found more clothing and a rucksack, which linked him to burglaries. Faced with clear evidence of his offending he pleaded guilty when he appeared at court and he was sentenced, and also given a four-year Criminal Behaviour Order, that includes a ban on him from entering BP garage at Debden. [More](#)

### **Convictions for drug flights**

Members of a criminal network which used a small aircraft to drop cocaine packages in the Dorset countryside have been convicted of drugs offences, including two people from Loughton. In addition police raided the Colson Road home of two of those charged and uncovered 54kg of cocaine in two holdalls stored in the loft, along with evidence the house had been used as a cannabis factory. [More](#)

### **Charges in burglary investigation**

Four men have been charged with conspiring to commit burglary reports of suspicious activity outside two addresses.

Police were called around 7.30pm on 14 February to reports a man had been spotted on the grounds of a property in Theydon Bois, and a subsequent report he was disturbed by an alarm and fled before he could attempt to break in.

Minutes later, police received a report of three men using a tool to attempt to force entry to a property in Broadstrood in Loughton.

Police detained a man in a car nearby, then, using a police helicopter, spotted three further suspects in a nearby wooded area. Officers, with the help of the dog unit soon found all three suspects hiding in waste bins. Four men in total were arrested and taken into custody. [More](#)

### **Arrest in Kingsley Road**

After reports of drug dealing and anti-social behaviour in Kingsley Road, police conducted patrols in the area, resulting in stop and search of a 20 year old male from Loughton. He was found to be in possession of a considerable quantity of cannabis and was arrested for possession with intent to supply. He has been interviewed and released while enquiries are ongoing.

### **Keep your number plate secure**

Did you know stolen number plates are often used to hide vehicles involved in crimes or to avoid paying tolls and parking fees? The police suggest keeping your vehicle's number plate safe by using one-way clutch head screws to secure your plates and deter thieves. These are available at many hardware stores and online.

### **What to do when someone goes missing**

If the missing person is in immediate danger, is a young child or vulnerable to harm, call 999.

If you don't think they are in immediate danger you can call 101 or [report online](#). Your report will be dealt with by the police in exactly the same way whether you report it online or call 101.

People with dementia can sometimes start to wander. Carers, family or friends of a vulnerable person, or the person themselves, can fill in [a Herbert Protocol form](#) in advance, containing information to help the police if the person goes missing. Keeping a completed form means you don't have to try to remember the information when you are under stress if someone goes missing. And it saves time, so the search can start sooner. If you contact the police, say that you have a Herbert Protocol profile available. [More](#)

It is not illegal to go missing. A missing person will not be in trouble or be arrested for going missing, and it is not wasting police time to report someone missing. You won't be in trouble for reporting someone missing.

### **Protect your property**

Immobilise is the UK's National Property register available to the public free of charge for registration of property and personal possessions before loss or theft. Item records can then be easily updated to indicate they are lost or stolen alerting police and helping prevent unauthorised trade.





The details recorded by the public are available for real-time searches by police via the NMPR enabling quick, easy and accurate identification of property. [More and how to register your property.](#)



### More from the Police

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

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

## Council News

### Town Meeting

The Town Council's annual Town Meeting is on 19 March from 8pm in the Murray Hall.

All residents are welcome. The meeting will include refreshments and give an opportunity for members of the public to speak informally with their Cllrs.

### Think Loughton - Latest Edition

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



### Oakwood Hill Estate update

The year-long project aiming to enhance the environment, safety, and health and wellbeing of residents in the Oakwood Hill estate continues with recent work being:

- Four new cameras were installed in December around Marlescroft Way, Highwood Lane and Lower Alderton Hall Lane. Phase 2 of the CCTV project will include the installation of cameras at the road entrance points and by the community hall. Phase 2 is due to be completed by March 2025.
- A comprehensive assessment of locations requiring new or enhanced lighting took place in the autumn. Repairs and additional lighting will be completed by

the summer.

- Additional bins for rubbish and dog waste, have been installed throughout the estate.
- The old way finder signs have had an upgrade and new and improved signs have been installed to help visitors navigate the estate.

There is also an Oakwood Hill Community Safety Event with the police near the Community Hall on 12 March from 10am to 12pm.

## Let's Get Together

The weekly sessions, run by the District Council, provide a welcoming environment for local residents to connect with neighbours, explore new skills, enjoy games or simply unwind with a cup of tea and a conversation.

Each session offers a variety of engaging activities including arts and crafts, knitting, embroidery, colouring, painting, quizzes, word searches, dominoes, cards, and more. Attendees are encouraged to bring along any hobbies they have to share their passion with the group.

The sessions for Loughton are held at the Oakwood Hill Community Hub every Wednesday 12.30pm to 2.30pm. No need to book, just turn up.



## Your unwanted devices wanted

If you have a smartphone, tablet or laptop that you no longer need, why not donate it to help local families get access to digital services?

The District Council has teamed up with Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF) to launch this hardware donation scheme, and part of the [Power Up Epping programme](#). All donated items will be securely wiped and refurbished before being redistributed to residents in the district. Any items that cannot be reused will be recycled. [More](#)

## West Essex Inclusion project events

The West Essex Inclusion Project offers short breaks sessions and activities in Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford to children up to 14 with a learning disability, autism and a physical or sensory impairment.

There are [once a week multi-sports sessions](#) for those aged 8-14 years at the New City Fitness Centre on Borders Lane and [once a month stay and play sessions](#) at the Monkey Kingdom in Langston Road. Booking required. [More](#)

From November 2024 to January 2025 204 children have engaged with activities.

## Council Tax

**County Council:** The Council has agreed a 3.75% increase (an extra £57.06 per year for a band D property), which includes the adult social care precept as set out by the Government. Under Treasury rules the maximum the increase could be without a referendum is 5%. [More](#)

**Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service:** Increases have been agreed that will result in band D Council Taxpayers paying an extra £13.95 per year for policing and an extra £4.95 a year for fire and rescue services (a 5.66% and



5.99% increase respectively). There's no maximum which requires a referendum. [More](#)

**District Council:** The Council has agreed a 2.99% increase (an extra £4.99 per year for a band D property). This is the maximum that could be imposed without a referendum. [More](#)

**Town Council:** The Council has agreed a 6.75% increase (an extra £4.13 for a band D property). The Town Council does not receive funding from central Government, so the tax increase must reflect inflation that the Council must bear. There's no maximum which requires a referendum. [More](#) (p3-4 PDF).

The Town Council has said that it has been another difficult year, albeit with gradual lowering of interest rates and more stable energy costs. The Council has taken on board the increased National Insurance contributions and worked diligently within a tight budget to maintain service standards for the areas that they are responsible for. The precept increase has been kept to a minimum, whilst keeping reserves at an adequate and statutory level.

## Local News

### Dates for the Diary

8 May - VE Day 80th Anniversary, Hillyfields  
28 May - Loughton Police Station Open Day  
6 July - Jessel Green Community Funday  
20 September - Loughton Day

### 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:

- 14 March - Dementia Support Drop In. [More](#)
- 12 and 19 March - Fraud Awareness Drop in session. [More](#).

No bookings required.



### 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](#).



### Interested in solar panels and/or electricity storage?

Essex homeowners, and those who have permission from their landlord to install a solar PV system, can register now for Solar Together. The scheme makes buying high-quality solar panels easier and offers lower prices than the open market. [More](#)

## Health and Wellbeing

### Children's Dental Experiences - Have Your Say

Healthwatch Essex have launched a project focusing on children's oral health. As part of this, there is a survey to find out about children's experiences of using local NHS dental services, including:

- experiences of visiting a dentist with your child
- what could be done to improve these services
- what ideas and suggestions people have.

[More](#). The survey closes 21 March.

## Epping Forest



### Golden Jubilee Royals and Rangers Exhibition.

This exhibition at the Visitor Centre at Chingford looks at royal links with the Forest since 1878 and highlights the contribution of the Rangers, most notably Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester.

The exhibition is free and open 10am to 4pm, Tuesday to Sunday until 30 March. [More](#)

### Improvements to Forest paths and car parks

Experiments have been conducted recently on ways to improve some of the ride and car park surfaces. A path rake has been tried with positive results.



As this work is carried out, you may notice some maintenance activity on the surfaced paths and car parks. Looking ahead, new surfaced paths are planned in key areas to improve accessibility and protect the Forest from erosion.

### Woodland drummer

The sound of drumming woodpeckers resounding through the Forest on a dark winter's day can be one of the most uplifting sounds and a sure sign that spring is not far away.

The unmistakable bursts of rapid, persistent tapping, echoing through the trees is the work of a woodpecker on a mission to establish his territory. Each volley of beats, sending a message to all the other woodpeckers that this part of Epping Forest, is his.

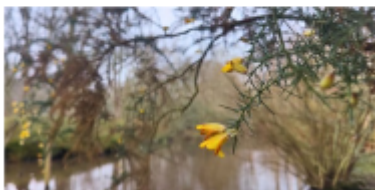


### Forest Focus - February 2025

Some items here come from Forest Focus. The edition for [February](#) 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

### Beware of fake power chargers

[Electrical Safety First](#), a charity, has warned that producers of counterfeit power adaptors are developing new and dangerous tactics to dupe consumers into thinking their product is genuine.

Their independent testing of 56 UK and 60 EU counterfeit and look-a-like Apple power adaptors revealed metal weights had been inserted into several of the fakes to

compensate for the missing weight from genuine components.

These weights also pose a significant safety risk, as users may come in contact with a harmful level of voltage. [More](#) and [the full report](#) (from p19-21 are some tips to help spot counterfeit products).

### How to recycle bubble wrap

To recycle bubble wrap, check out big supermarket chains like Tesco, Sainsbury's, and Morrison's. They often have bins for plastic bags and bubble wrap.

While bubble wrap is useful for its protective ability, if not disposed of correctly, it can linger in landfills for over 500 years, adding to our waste problem.

Before you drop off bubble wrap for recycling, take off any tape and make sure it's clean. Recycling places can deal with a bit of tape, but not too much. Knowing this helps everyone get better at recycling and helps the environment. [More about what items to recycle and where](#).

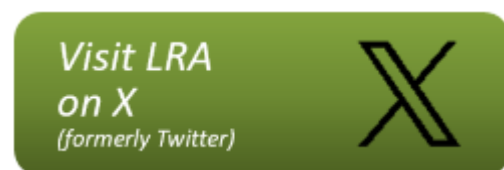
*Thank you for supporting LRA.*

*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 28 March.*

**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*

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