



# RECREATION COMMITTEE

Members of the Recreation Committee

are summoned to attend a Meeting at **7.30pm** on

**Wednesday 28 May 2025**

at Loughton Town Council, Council Chamber,  
1 Buckingham Court, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 2QZ  
to transact the business shown in the agenda.

**Mark Squire**  
**Town Clerk**  
21 May 2025

**Membership:**  
**Councillor K Valentine (Chairman)**  
**Councillor S Murray (Vice Chairman)**

L House  
R Sylvan

Councillors  
N MacKinnon  
D Wixley

M Stubbings

Note to Councillors:  
If you are unable to attend the meeting,  
please phone your apologies to the office on 020 8508 4200

## **A G E N D A**

**1 Apologies**

To RECEIVE any apologies for absence.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

Councillors to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any items on the Agenda.

**3 Confirmation of Minutes**

To CONFIRM the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2025.

**4 Public Representations**

To hear any representations from members of the public who have registered a request to address the Committee in accordance with no 5, Appendix C, of the Standing Orders.

**5 Loughton Athletics Club (LAC) Presentation.**

This oral presentation from LAC follows a recent site meeting on 24 April 2025 with Tony Maycraft LAC Chair, Georgina Taylor, LAC Project Manager and Bob Milnes, LAC member, with the Town Clerk and Services Assistant Manager. Representatives of LAC will provide an oral update on their ambitions to embark on a project to renovate and upgrade the clubhouse on the Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG) to mutually benefit the LAC community and also the look and feel of the RVRG. The LAC will also update members on work carried out to date.

Members will have an opportunity to provide feedback as well as contributing to a short 'Question and Answer' session. One specific issue is that the lease between Loughton Town Council (LTC) and LAC expires on 1 May 2028. The relatively short duration of the remaining lease term may preclude LAC from obtaining funding from some external sources. A longer term lease would need to be put in place.

**6 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**

- The VE Day 80th Anniversary Beacon lighting event, held on 8 May 2025 was successful and very well attended by approximately 300 to 400 residents.
- British Sign Language (BSL) signs have now been installed at all Loughton Town Council's (LTC) children's playgrounds.
- Debbie Taylor, Assistant Manager, Community and Services has been appointed as the new Services Manager as from 14 July 2025.
- Huge gratitude is expressed to Paul Hoy, Services Manager who has opted to retire, following excellent and loyal long standing service to LTC.

### **Roding Valley Recreation Ground (RVRG)**

**7 Roding Valley Recreation Ground – Changing Rooms – Potential 'Men's Shed' Project – Min no RC92**

An independent visual structural survey was conducted on 20 March 2025 (copy available upon request) at a cost of £850. To review the report's findings, a meeting was held on 9 May 2025 between Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) District Councillor, Chidi Nweke, LTC Councillor David Wixley, the Town Clerk and Services Manager. A number of flaws were found which will need remedial work, before any major project work can take place. See summary report from Cllr Nweke attached, pages 6 – 7.

A further Building Surveyor survey was subsequently required and an EFDC surveyor visited the site on 20 May 2025, with the Services Manager in attendance, to assess the cost of immediate work required. The report's finding is awaited. A further oral update will be provided at the meeting.

Members to review.

**8 Roding Valley Cricket Club (RVCC) – Min no RC93**

RVCC have now paid the outstanding solicitor fees. The Licence to underlet is now in an agreed form with EFDC (the landlord) and now looking to proceed, subject to receiving engrossments for all parties to sign off.

To receive and note.

**9 Benches**

**9.1 New Bench – Min no RC94**

A new bench, incorporating a memorial plaque, requested by a local resident, was installed in the 'running track' field on 10 April 2025.

To receive and note.

**9.2 New Bench Request**

A local resident has requested a bench and memorial plaque, to be situated to the right of the Charlie Moulls Bridge. The Councils' application request for a memorial bench has been received, and the Committee are asked to consider this request.

To receive and note.

**10 Bin Installation by the Lake**

A new litter bin was installed between the River Roding and the lake on 10 April 2025. The previous litter bin at this location was badly damaged and considered beyond repair.

To receive and note.

**11 Erosion of Riverbank Adjacent to Footpath**

Several sections of the riverbank adjacent to the footpath in the narrow section between the football pitch field and the lake field, have been damaged by dogs accessing the river. This has resulted in bank erosion which has started to impact upon the footpath (see photos pages 8 – 9). The Services Manager and Community & Services Assistant Manager carried out temporary safety works on 1 May 2025, and the Committee is asked to consider the installation of a permanent fence identical to the fence installed by the undercut section of footpath close to Charlie Moulls bridge in 2023.

**12 Request for 9v9 Football Pitch Next Season**

A request has been received from Redbridge FC, to use a 9v9 pitch for the forthcoming 2025/26 season. At the Recreation Committee meeting of 13 September 2024, it was AGREED, 'to permit the use of one full size football pitch for the forthcoming 2024/25 season only', effectively ending football matches on the RVRG.

Members to consider whether it is cost and resource effective to create one football pitch in isolation or to confirm cessation of organised football on the RVRG for the foreseeable future.

**13 South Loughton Cricket Club (SLCC)**

An issue has been raised by SLCC in respect of the Qualis grass cutting schedule on the cricket grounds. The Town Clerk and Services Manager will explain in further detail.

Members to review.

**Other Agenda Items**

**14 Newmans Lane Playground Project – Min no RC95**

The completion of the new children's playground at Newmans Lane has already been well documented. The opening ceremony was conducted by the Town Mayor on 14 March 2025, when we were pleased to see staff and pupils from Oakview School in attendance. Feedback has been very positive, and it is noticeable that the footfall to the playground has increased significantly since the new play equipment has been installed.

To receive and note.

**15 Jessel Green**

**15.1 Jessel Green Fun Day**

See attached report page 10.

To receive and note.

**15.2 Fields in Trust status**

The Town Clerk is currently liaising with Mr Neil Bartlett (former Save Jessel Green campaigner) as to the best way to approach local residents for the Town Council consultation. Initial suggestions are for:-

- a leaflet drop/late pick up from local residents
- a public meeting at the Cottage Loaf
- publicity drive at Jessel Green Day

The Town Clerk is working on the format of the leaflet, to be distributed to local residents, which must be informative but concise at the same time.

Members to discuss.

**16 Town Council Community Halls**

**16.1 Murray Hall**

The Town Clerk will update members if there are any new developments of note.

**16.2 Kingsley Hall**

The office has been approached by a number of potential children's nursery providers (four to date), in lieu of the current nursery closing on 22 July 2025. Recommended further action:-

- June 2025 – publicity drive to attract new users and to conduct due diligence on applicants
- June 2025 – serve notice on existing hirer to clear fittings and equipment etc

- July 2025 – assess potential candidates in liaison with Recreation Projects Working Group\*, in the absence of a further Recreation Committee meeting until September 2025
- Late July 2025 – will need to spend c£2,000 to refresh premises, painting walls etc, ready for the new hirer
- August/September new hirer in premises.

Members to review.

N.B The existing hirer has been in place there for over 40 years (longer than the formation of LTC) It would therefore be a nice gesture to purchase a token gift of appreciation.

\*An opportune time to review the membership/title of this group.

**17 Tree Whips – Min no RC97**

Members to report on the recent planting of the tree whips.

**18 Loughton Cricket Club Boundary – Min no RC98**

The Town Clerk and Services Manager have agreed the site boundary measurements with Thornton Rones but are awaiting confirmation in writing.

A further oral update will be made at the meeting.

**19 Davenant Playing Fields – Min no RC63**

The Town Clerk has chased a written confirmation from the school regarding clarification of their responsibilities regarding the school perimeter fencing, adjacent to Willingale Playing Field and Lady Whitakers Mead. A response is still awaited.

To receive and note.

**20 Memorial Garden**

**20.1 Memorial Garden Bench**

The bench and commemorative plaque for former Town Councillor Ken Angold-Stephens was installed on 10 April 2025. The commemorative plaque that had been retrieved from the previously damaged bench was affixed to the new bench prior to its installation.

To receive and note.

**20.2 Memorial Garden Maintenance**

A request has been made for more extensive work to be carried out on the garden, which is difficult, given the existing budget / maintenance schedules. Cllr Wixley has recommended a site visit to the garden along with the Town Clerk, Services Manager and gardener.

The Town Clerk and Services Manager will provide further background information.

Members to review.

**21 Willingale Road Playing Field – Request for Football Pitches**

Loughton Town FC, the youth football club who previously hired both mini and 5-a-side pitches on this playing field, have asked if they could be allowed to return for the forthcoming 2025/26 season following a break of two seasons.

Members to consider the request.

**22 Financial Position**

The current financial position as of January 2025 is attached together with details of the funds available from earmarked reserves. See pages 11 – 12.

To receive and note.

**23 Future Work of the Committee**

The opportunity for members to suggest topics to be considered by the Committee at a future meeting, subject to the Committee's agreement.

Note: No substantive discussion may take place under this item as the required statutory notice of the topics will not have been given.

**Mark Squire**  
**TOWN CLERK**  
**21 May 2025**

## Agenda item 7

### Roding Valley Recreation Ground - Changing Rooms – Potential ‘Men’s Shed’ Project

#### Summary of Structural Survey Report - Loughton Community Shed

##### Overview

This report details a visual structural inspection conducted by Mike Miller (reviewed by James Peacock) in March 2025 for two similar detached two-story buildings at Roding Recreation Grounds, Loughton. These buildings were originally used as changing facilities dating from the late 1950s/early 1960s and are currently unoccupied.

##### Building Construction

- Two-story structures with asphalt flat roofs
- Load-bearing masonry walls with cavity external walls
- Concrete first floor and roof (combination of precast and cast-in-situ)
- External recessed concrete staircases with balconies
- Possibly raft foundations
- Originally had windows (now replaced with masonry panels)

##### Key Concerns Identified

###### Structural Issues

1. **Deteriorating parapet walls** - Serious weathering damage with potentially unstable coping stones
2. **Concrete degradation** - Window heads, sills, and exposed concrete showing breakage and spalling due to rebar corrosion
3. **Balcony deterioration** - Cracked and spalling concrete on balconies and roof edges
4. **Retaining wall failure** - Mass concrete freestanding retaining wall showing structural movement and decay
5. **Water damage** - Particularly severe in the northern building with standing water present during inspection
6. **Non-compliance with current regulations** - Buildings were not designed for disproportionate collapse per current Building Regulations

##### Environmental Factors

1. **Soil conditions** - Site likely underlain by shrinkable clay, which can cause subsidence and heave
2. **Vegetation impact** - Trees and bushes near the structures could affect foundations as they grow
3. **Water ingress** - Blocked roof drains have caused internal flooding and water damage

##### Required Structural Work

1. **Immediate actions:**
  - Replace coping stones ASAP to avoid falling hazards in public areas
2. **During refurbishment:**
  - Remove parapet walls
  - Perform concrete repairs to all exposed roof slab surfaces
  - Replace all exposed concrete features (windowsills and heads)
  - Replace the freestanding retaining wall with one designed by a Structural Engineer
  - Address water ingress issues before they cause further deterioration

##### Additional Considerations for Refurbishment

If proceeding with changing the use of the buildings, these items need consideration:

1. **Foundation assessment** - Evaluate adequacy in shrinkable clay conditions
2. **Structural ties** - Install to comply with disproportionate collapse requirements
3. **Balcony handrails** - Replace to meet current standards

4. **Load testing** - Test concrete floors and roof structures for compliance with intended loading
5. **Drainage** - Undertake CCTV survey and upgrade/replace the system
6. **Soil investigation** - Commission a geotechnical engineer to assess vegetation impact and foundation adequacy

#### **Other Recommendations**

1. **Further assessments needed:**
  - Building survey for non-structural elements (waterproofing, damp-proofing, insulation, ventilation)
  - CCTV drainage survey
  - Geotechnical soil investigation
2. **Limitations noted:**
  - No intrusive investigations were performed
  - Hidden structural issues may exist
  - No testing for deleterious materials was conducted

#### **Conclusion**

While the buildings appear reasonably level and plumb without signs of settlement or subsidence, they require significant structural repairs and upgrades to be suitable for reuse. The combination of age, lack of maintenance, vandalism, water damage, and potential soil issues presents multiple challenges that would need to be addressed before the buildings could be safely repurposed as a men's shed.

#### **Discussion Points for Upcoming Meetings**

##### **Meeting with Building Owners (Who Plan to Demolish)**

##### **Understand Their Position**

1. **Timeline for demolition** - When do they plan to proceed with demolition?
2. **Reasons beyond structural issues** - Are there other factors driving the demolition decision?
3. **Potential for negotiation** - Would they consider a lease agreement if you took responsibility for repairs?

##### **Explore Alternatives to Demolition**

1. **Partial retention** - Could one building be saved while demolishing the other (given the northern building has more water damage)?
2. **Cost sharing** - Is there potential for a shared investment model where they contribute demolition costs toward renovation instead?
3. **Phased approach** - Could you start with limited use of part of the facility while gradually renovating?

##### **Men's Shed Requirements**

1. **Present your vision** - How the buildings could serve the community as a Men's Shed
2. **Space needs** - Whether these buildings, even with issues, could meet your spatial requirements
3. **Budget reality** - What funding you have available for potential repairs/renovation

##### **Legal and Administrative Matters**

1. **Liability considerations** - Who would bear responsibility during any transition period?
2. **Planning permission** - Whether change of use would be permitted regardless of who develops the site
3. **Temporary arrangements** - Possibility of temporary occupation during decision-making process

Cllr Nweke

**Agenda item 11**  
**Erosion of riverbank adjacent to footpath**



**Agenda item 11 cont/...**



**Agenda item 15**  
**Jessel Green Fun Day**

Loughton Town Council is once again organising the not-for-profit annual Jessel Green Fun Day, which will take place this year on Sunday, 6 July 2025.

Event preparations are well underway. A press release has been distributed, and attendees can look forward to the usual attractions: inflatables, funfair rides, food stalls, and community and charity stalls. There will also be a free soft play area and bouncy castle for under-5s.

Entertainment will include a dance performance from Straight Up Dance UK and the ever-popular Mr Happy. A TENS licence has been issued by Epping Forest District Council at a cost of £21.00.

TfL has been contacted regarding the necessary bus diversion, and we are awaiting a response.

Security, First Aid, and portable toilets have all been booked. We have also contacted Essex Kites and are awaiting their response.

Loughton Town Council will this year manage the sale of wristbands for all inflatables and funfair rides. The cost remains at last year's price of £12, which provides unlimited access to these attractions. Wristbands will be available in advance from Loughton Town Council's offices starting Monday, 23 June, and from 11:30am on the day of the event. Volunteers will be offered free wristbands for their children. A rota for councillors to assist with wristband sales on the day will be circulated separately. Proceeds from wristband sales go towards the cost of hiring the inflatables and funfair rides. We will also offer single tickets for one ride at 50p per ride.

Epping Forest and Restore Community Churches will be running the *Café on the Green*. The marquee for this has been booked and paid for by Loughton Town Council. Thames Water will be asked if they can provide a water standpipe to assist with the Café's tea urns, as they have at previous events.

Sponsorship is being sourced from local businesses. We are extremely grateful to John Walsh of the Cottage Loaf pub for his generous donation. John and his team will also be providing live music from 4pm into the evening.

Pippa Bryce  
14 May 2025

**Agenda item 22**  
**Financial Position**

**Loughton Town Council**  
**Summary Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading as of 30 April 2025**

**Month End no 1**

**Recreation Committee Report**

		Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Funds Available	% of Budget
<b>Recreation</b>							
Kingsley Hall	Expenditure	19,373	1,038	22,520	21,482	21,482	4.6%
	Income	32,002	10,378	33,990	23,612		30.5%
The Murray Hall	Expenditure	161,085	6,736	182,270	175,534	175,534	3.7%
	Income	112,934	29,682	123,700	94,018		24.0%
Other Services (Rec) (1)	Income	7,469	0	7,000	7,000		0.0%
	Expenditure	14,445	9,436	15,520	6,084	6,084	60.8%
Roding Valley Recreation Ground (2)	Expenditure	190,854	14,744	193,370	178,626	178,626	7.6%
	Income	3,649	2,250	3,000	750		75.0%
Open Spaces	Expenditure	20,236	1,066	25,041	23,975	23,975	4.3%
	Income	125	125	175	50		71.4%
Playgrounds (3)(4)	Expenditure	137,153	(3,674)	38,248	41,922	41,922	9.6%
Will. Rd. Playing Field	Expenditure	14,602	609	22,225	21,616	21,616	2.7%
	Income						

**INCOME – EXPENDITURE TOTALS**

Recreation Expenditure	768,748	29,954	499,194	469,240	469,240	6.0%
Income	156,180	42,434	167,865	125,431		25.3%
Net Expenditure over Income	<b>612,568</b>	<b>12,480</b>	<b>331,329</b>	<b>343,809</b>		

**Notes:**

- 1) Other services budget includes the preparation for Jessel Green Day (e.g., marquee, toilet facilities and rides / inflatables etc). Income from the event offsets some of the expenses.
- 2) The annual service recharge is £213,000 allocated at year end March 2026.
- 3) Playgrounds – actual last year expenditure, includes £95,000 taken from earmarked reserves (new Newmans Lane playground).
- 4) Year-to-date actual includes the reversal of the £5,000 retainer for the Newmans Lane Playground (invoice pending).

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**Agenda item 22**  
**Financial Position - continued****Earmarked Reserves:**

A summary of the Committee's reserves showing the amounts available from reserves as of 30 April 2025, is provided below.

<b>Schedule of Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>30.04.25</b>
<b>Recreation Committee</b>	<b>£</b>
Hillyfields Maintenance	7,600
Kingsley Hall Floor	10,000
RVRG Changing Rooms	10,000
Speed Indicator	2,000
Fencing	5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,600</b>