



# ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Members of the Environment and Heritage Committee

are summoned to attend a Meeting at **7.45pm** on

**Wednesday 28 January 2026**

to be held 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**  
22 January 2026

**Councillor C Pond (Chairman)**  
**Councillor A Fricker (Vice Chairman)**

**Councillors**

W Dodd  
C Ubah

S Harriman  
K Valentine

J Obaseki

Note to Councillors:  
If you are unable to attend the meeting,  
please email your apologies to the office [contact@loughton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:contact@loughton-tc.gov.uk)

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

- 1 Apologies**  
To RECEIVE any apologies for absence.
- 2 Declarations of Interest**  
For 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 19 November 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 Town Clerk's / Chairman's Report**  
To report (for discussion only) on any further significant information/matters (if any) that may be of interest to Committee members.
- 6 Bench on the corner of Church Lane / Church Hill - Min no EH145**  
It is envisaged that the Town Clerk and Services Manager will have conducted a site visit to the local resident concerned at Church Hill and that a further oral update will be available at the meeting.  
  
Members to review
- 7 Loughton Broadway Market – Min no EH146**  
Further input is awaited from The Broadway Town Centre Partnership (TBTCP)  
  
Members to receive and note.
- 8 Heritage plaques – Min no EH147**  
The plaque for Percy Thompson has been erected at the property in 'The Uplands'. The office is awaiting confirmation of a date for the dedication ceremony to take place.  
  
To receive and note.
- 9 Part night to all night street lighting – Min no EH149**  
The costs have now been established with Essex County Council (ECC) Essex Highways, Asset Management. 'The estimated costs for ECC streetlights which operate part night lighting (typically dusk to 1am then 5am to dawn) to be reprogrammed to operate all night (dusk to dawn) in Loughton is currently £10,089. A formal agreement which is a 4-year agreement via Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) etc. would be required'  
During recent discussions on the 2026/27 budget / precept request, it was felt that any such request would be deferred until the new restructuring measures under the devolution programme within the County are completed.  
  
Members to review

**10 Christmas Window Competition 2025 – Min No EH150**

Please see attached report pages 5-6.

To receive and note

**11 Allotments – Willingale Road Allotments**

See report page 7. In addition to this report please note that an onsite meeting is to be held on the evening of 24 February 2026, primarily to

- encourage a wider allotment volunteer group
- hear the views of allotment holders
- and to explain the financial position of the Town Council in relation to the allotments.

To receive and note.

**12 Loughton Wombles**

Please see attached report page 8.

To receive and note

**13 Cemetery Matters**

**13.1 ‘Dule /Dool tree at the Loughton Town Council Cemetery entrance – Min no EH153.2**

The interpretation board has now been delivered. The recent tree survey report (see agenda item 15 below) has highlighted that further work is needed on this tree. The Town Clerk will provide a further update.

Members to review

**14 Assets of Community Value – Min no EH156**

A decision as to whether or not to cite Debden House and Debden House campsite as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) is still awaited from EFDC.

To receive and note.

**15 Tree Survey**

The comprehensive tree survey (some 111 pages) has now been reviewed. Owing to the size of the report, a separate electronic copy will be forwarded to Committee members along with the agenda. In summary ‘the majority of trees were found to have good vitality with no visible major defects’. Only one tree in the Willingale Allotments area needs imminent urgent work. However there are a number of trees that require attention within 90 days.

The amount of tree work required in the Town Council Cemetery and Lady Whitakers Mead exceeds existing budget.

Recommend :-

- Some of any additional costs be sourced from General Reserves
- Should there be a significant increase in General Reserves at financial years end 31/3/25, then allocate some earmarked reserves (EMR) as Tree EMR.
- Allocate some funding from the £10k Closed Churchyard if necessary.
- There will be additional sources of funding from the 2026/27 budget

- Specific budget allocations should be made for tree work in the 2027/28 budget in the three principal areas, relevant to this committee. i.e. the Town Council Cemetery, Willingale Allotments and Lady Whitakers Mead.

It is also recommended that the office works through the list in priority, obtaining relevant quotes and informing the Committee at future meetings, in respect of work carried out and impact on tree budget allocations .

Members to review.

**16 Hanging Baskets**

The hanging baskets order will be sent out in due course to Windowflowers Limited. During the last two years of using this contractor, the service and quality of baskets has been exceptional. Later this month ECC will be contacted for their usual permission to hang the baskets on the lamp columns in The Broadway, High Road and Old Station Road. The budget for hanging baskets has been approved and as long as the quote is within this range, we will proceed with the order.

Members to review and agree.

**17 UK Town of Culture – Loughton is where I live**

Following an e-mail from a resident to Cllr David Wixley, Cllr Wixley has requested that this committee consider whether Loughton should be entered as a town of culture. See link below

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/first-ever-uk-town-of-culture-competition-to-restore-pride-in-communities>

Members to review

**18 ECC – Love your Bus – grant scheme**

Please see details attached page 9 and link below

<https://www.travelessex.co.uk/love-your-bus>

Cllr Pond wishes to pursue this grant scheme in relation to achieving enhancements to 'route 397 not existing after 7pm, despite the huge amount of housing recently erected along Borders Lane'. There is a tight deadline of 31 January 2026. The Chairman will provide further input.

Members to review

**19 Recycling Briefing**

A Zoom briefing was held by EFDC on 21 January 2026 – 'The next step in recycling: Food and garden waste collections explained'.

See summary page 10. The presentation slides from this meeting will be circulated separately to Town Councillors.

Members to receive and note

**20 Loughton Town Council - Introducing Treasure Trails, EFDC Initiative**

Town Council agenda 10 December 2025, agenda item 10 (and report) and Town Council minute No 142 refers.

You may recall that EFDC is working with Treasure Trails, (TT) the UK's leading provider of self-guided adventure walks, to create three bespoke trails across key towns in our district. These trails aim to:

- Increase footfall in high streets and town centres
- Encourage dwell time and spend in local businesses
- Promote healthy lifestyles through family-friendly walking
- Showcase local heritage, architecture, and green spaces

Since the initial approach there has been a long dialogue with both TT and EFDC, see pages 11-17.

The Town clerk will provide a further oral update

Members to review and agree a way forward.

## **21 Financial Position**

### **Current Financial Position**

The current financial position as of 31 December 2025 is attached together with current details of the funds available from earmarked reserves. N.B Service re-charge for 2025/26 is £132,000 and will be deducted at the end of March 2026. See pages 18 – 19.

Please note the financial report is now taken directly from the RBS Omega system.

Members to review.

## **22 Environmental Issues**

This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Committee to discuss concerns and improve the ambience and environment of Loughton by tackling adverse factors and promoting positive ones.

The methodology agreed is as follows:

Councillors should send to the Town Clerk at least 14 days before the meeting a statement of what the eyesore is, its exact location, its ownership, if known, and the desired course of action. Members would discuss the matter, come to a conclusion, and then the Clerk would write to the responsible body outlining what the Town Council would like to see done. If no action were taken, the matter could be publicised and revisited at a subsequent meeting.

## **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.

**Mark Squire**  
**TOWN CLERK**  
22 January 2026

## E&H Agenda item 10 Christmas Window Competition 2025

All Loughton businesses that decorated their windows gained automatic entry into the Christmas-themed shop window competition, as part of the Town's festive celebrations.

Businesses are split into four classes of entry – local/independent businesses, multiples/chain stores, charity shops and eateries (cafes, pubs and restaurants). There were three new competition judges this year, Town Mayor, David Wixley, assisted by Councillors Wendy Dodd and Stephen Harriman. This year's results were as follows:

Class	Winning businesses	£75 donation made to nominated charity by the Town Council
<b>LOCAL/INDEPENDENT</b>		
<b>Winner</b>	<b>Forest Casual and Schoolwear 144 Loughton High Road, IG10 4BE</b>	<b>Chigwell Riding Trust, Grange Farm Lane, Chigwell, IG7 6FB</b>
Runner-up	Elliott James, 165 High Road, IG10 4LF	
Highly commended	Geraldines, 76 The Broadway, IG10 3ST Tony's, 61 The Broadway, IG10 3SP	
<b>MULTIPLE/CHAIN STORE</b>		
<b>Winner</b>	<b>David Clulow Opticians 297 High Road, IG10 1AH</b>	<b>St Clare Hospice, Hastingwood Road Hastingwood, CM17 9JX</b>
Runners-up	Chigwell Window Centre, 305-307 High Road, IG10 1AH	
Highly commended	Blade Craft, 39 The Broadway, IG10 3SP	
<b>CHARITY SHOPS</b>		
<b>Winner</b>	<b>Haven House Children's Hospice, 188 High Road, IG10 1DN</b>	<b>Haven House Children's Hospice, The White House, High Road, Woodford Green, IG8 9LB</b>
Runner-up	The Children's Society, 20 The Broadway, Debden, IG10 3ST	
Highly commended	St. Francis Hospice, 239 High Road, IG10 1AD	
<b>EATERIES (Cafes, Pubs &amp; Restaurants)</b>		

**E&H Agenda item 10**  
**Christmas Window Competition 2025 / continued**

<b>Winner</b>	<b>The Aviary Bar &amp; Brasserie, 3 Centric Parade, 200 High Road, IG10 1DN</b>	<b>St Clare Hospice, Hastingwood Road Hastingwood, CM17 9JX</b>
Runner-up	Fable Stores, 202 High Road, IG10 1ET	
Highly commended	Zest Salad Bar, 194 High Road, IG10 1DN	

Each of the category winners received a laminated certificate, along with an engraved cup (to keep for 11 months). The winners were all absolutely delighted with the recognition shown for their efforts. Runners-up and highly commended entrants received laminated certificates.

The judges commented on the winning entrants:

The winners chosen were Forest Casual & Schoolwear, in the local/independents, *“two members of the team, Katie and Claire had created a festive display cleverly incorporating the stores products”*; David Clulow, Opticians in the Multiples, who achieved *“a striking visual impact with their design”*; Haven House Children’s Hospice Shop, in the Charities *“for its abundance of Christmas cheer”*; and The Aviary for the Eateries, who had *“produced a most impressive illuminated display”*.

The Town Mayor this year also awarded two Certificates of Merit to Loughton Fire Station, who had *“inventively decorated its tower with a snowman, and any child spotting it could be highly delighted”*, plus, Haslers Chartered Accountants, who had created *“an impressive display, best seen at night including two twinkling Christmas trees either side of the entrance with an attractively decorated tree and garland visible in the foyer”*.

Report by Debra Paris  
 Planning Committee Clerk & Admin Officer  
 07/01/26

**Agenda item 11**  
**Willingale Road Allotments Report**

**Current Situation**

All tenancy agreements have now been signed and all payments received. One plot remains vacant; it requires some work before it can be re-let, and there are currently eight people on the waiting list.

An inspection of the allotment site was carried out on Tuesday 25 November 2025. Following the inspection, the relevant tenants were contacted and asked to tidy their plots, remove any waste, and prepare for winter. These plot holders are being monitored and will be followed up where necessary.

**Cesspit**

The cesspit is continuing to be monitored.

**Request for anti-climb paint**

We would like to apply anti-climb paint to the tops of the allotment gates to help deter intruders from climbing over. Appropriate warning signs would be installed, and the painted areas would be positioned at least two metres above ground level, ensuring they do not affect passers-by, fully complying with all relevant rules and regulations.

Members to review and agree.

**Request for the covering of water troughs at Willingale Road Allotment**

Ensuring safe and hygienic water storage is essential for allotment sites. Uncovered troughs pose risks to health, safety, and regulatory compliance. Guidance from multiple sources emphasise the need for water containers to remain covered when not in use.

The Local Government Association warns that uncovered water butts can endanger both children and wildlife, recommending the use of secure covers. Practical experience also shows that uncovered barrels deteriorate quickly, developing algae, attracting mosquitoes, and collecting debris, making lids vital for maintaining water quality.

Training materials from the Essex Association of Local Council's allotment course reinforce this, noting that covered water storage reduces contamination and supports water conservation.

I also consulted Ray How, a representative of the National Allotment Society, whose extensive experience makes his advice particularly valuable. He strongly endorsed covering water troughs and demonstrated how this is successfully implemented at his Southend allotment site, confirming the practicality of adopting the same approach at our site.

In summary, covering water troughs is good practice and an important measure for safety, hygiene, and compliance. It protects children and wildlife, prevents contamination and mosquito issues, meet regulatory expectations, and promotes sustainable water use.

Loughton Town Council's maintenance person has estimated a cost of £300 to produce the 13 covers.

Members to review and agree.

O Drew- Office Administrator 19 January 2026



## **Agenda Item 12**

### **Loughton Wombles**

Further Loughton Wombles group litter picks took place on:

**22 November 2025:** Two groups covered the area from the Lidl supermarket, up Goldings Hill, finishing at Baldwin's Hill. Also, the full stretch of Torrington Drive, the Debden station approach, and the footpath running alongside Casis Court.

**6 December 2025:** Group 1 focused on the Mannock Drive area, to Rookwood Avenue, Rookwood Gardens, finishing along the Brook. Meanwhile, Group 2 concentrated on Chigwell Lane, covering the stretch between Borders Lane and the railway bridge. Their efforts continued along Borders Lane, up to Lucton's Path, the vicinity of the New City College Wellness Centre, and Ladyfields Close.

**17 January 2026:** Group 1 group focused on the Pyrles Lane shopping area, Hillyfields Green, and the full length of Hillyfields. Meanwhile, Group 2 covered Chester Road, litter picking the stretch between Pyrles Lane and Davenant School in Willingale Road, including the communal grass areas along the route.

Forthcoming litter picks

Saturday 14 February 2026- suggest the 'Community Orchard' next to Willingale Allotments  
Saturday 21 March 2026

.....

Loughton Wombles has recently celebrated its **4<sup>th</sup> year anniversary**. We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has taken part in the litter picks. As a token of appreciation, laminated certificates (showing the appreciation of Loughton Town Council to the Wombles dedication) have been presented to Wombles that have been there from the outset and other regular litter pickers who have subsequently joined.

During this period there have been 34 group meets and membership has remained stable.

MS 20.1.26.

**Agenda Item 18**  
**ECC – Love your Bus – grant scheme**

**From:** Charlie Poulter <[charlie.poulter@transportmadesimple.co.uk](mailto:charlie.poulter@transportmadesimple.co.uk)>

**Sent:** 20 January 2026 16:58

**To:** Contact Info <[contact@loughton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:contact@loughton-tc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** FINAL CALL: Essex County Council Love Your Bus Grants

Dear parish/town clerk,

I am contacting you on behalf of the Transport Made Simple group, we operate Central Connect and Konectbuses bus services across Essex, if you are receiving this email it is because your parish/town council lies within a ward that is served by one of our bus routes, if you are already in touch with me about a bid please feel free to ignore this message.

Essex County Council is offering grants of up to £50k for parish councils in Essex to enhance or promote their bus services, as an operator we are keen to see as many of you apply as possible to help us improve our services and get more people on our buses, more details and guidance about this scheme can be found at the link at the end of this email. The deadline for applications is coming up soon on the 31st of January, as such I would be more than happy to support you in the process of writing up an application to ensure it can be submitted on time.

These funds can be used for any operational or marketing funding of services, unfortunately this does NOT include funding for capital expenditure such as new bus shelters. If you have any ideas or proposals for changes/enhancements to a service in your parish I would be able to look into it with our network team and create a bid if it is operationally feasible within the up to £50k available. I have also prepared some template bids for marketing such as leaflet drops, we have an in-house graphic design and marketing team with extensive experience focussing on promoting bus services who would be able to prepare and possibly distribute such materials minimising any work you would otherwise have to do finding a marketing agency, we would be happy to work with you to design a tailored and targeted promotional campaign for your local bus service through this grant. Similarly, the scheme can cover promotional fares such as discounts, loyalty incentive schemes, free travel for under 22s, etc, I have also prepared a number of template bids for this type of promotion.

If your parish/town council has any interest in seeing their local bus provision improved or promoted to get more people on board then please reach out to me by email and we can arrange a time to meet or call to work out details so I can prepare a bid for you to submit.

I'm looking forward to working with you,

Kind regards,

Charlie.

Charlie Poulter  
Stakeholder Engagement Lead

**Agenda item 19**  
**Recycling Briefing**

“Next step in Recycling Food & Garden waste collections briefing”

- As of 31 March 2026, food and garden waste will be collected separately by different vehicles.
- Garden Waste Service – Residents will have to sign up on-line and pay £60 per year subscription fee and then they will receive a permit for fortnightly collections, residents will continue to use the current green lidded bin.
- Food Waste Collections – properties will receive a kitchen caddy and a kerbside caddy. Which will be collected weekly at no extra cost.
- This change will improve recycling and reduce costs and align with other councils in Essex. It will keep Council Tax fair and low and give residents choice. Residents should be encouraged to do the right thing, 25% of food waste is still in black bins and this ends up at the Energy for Waste site or landfill, but if it is recycled it can be made into fertiliser for farming.

Debbie Taylor – Services Manager 21 January 2026

## Agenda item 20

### Loughton Town Council - Introducing Treasure Trails, EFDC Initiative

Town Clerk (TC) to TT 18.12.25,

*Comments made by our Town Councillors at our last meeting were as follows:-*

*Members agreed this in principle, but they were disappointed that there was no mention of a treasure trail for the Debden side of Loughton.*

- Thoughts were that the 'treasure trail' can be amended, such that it can start by going directly along Station Road, several items of interest including the course of the old railway between the first station, on the site of the Lopping Hall, and Sainsbury's roundabout, thus avoiding Alderton Hill and Brook Rd.*
- On the return leg I think it should progress direct down and return to point two. I think this would shorten the route by about half a mile.*
- The points made about the route not including Debden are understandable but to include Debden would make the walk far too long.*
- Another short walk around Debden might start at Debden Station and take in St Nicholas Church, Loughton Hall and the E15 acting school with its Sussex barn and Hatfields house. It should then return along Rectory Lane to the Broadway and from the station could progress over the footpath footbridge to Langston Rd and the Bank of England works. One of our Town Councillors can draw a map and provide information if needed.*
- For the old Loughton leg, the Loughton District Historical Society publication 'Walk round Loughton 1995' is still largely relevant.*

*p.s. The author Chris Pond is a local historian and very knowledgeable of Loughton history and geography. He is also a Loughton Town Councillor.*

*• Other ideas included visiting Loughton Conservation area (around York Hill), Loughton Leisure Centre, Lopping Hall and Loughton Cricket Club.*

*I don't think we will have any problem filling the itinerary.*

*Regarding a Teams meeting, I can do etc.....*

.....  
From TT 5.1.26

*Many thanks for sharing the Town Councillors' comments – we really appreciate the time taken to review the draft and to feedback local perspectives.*

*It may be helpful to briefly clarify scope and process, so we're all aligned as the project moves forward.*

*This Trail has been commissioned by Epping Forest District Council as a single, self-contained walking Trail for Loughton, designed to fit within a defined distance, duration and experience framework that works for a broad audience. Within that brief, our role is to create a coherent and engaging route, rather than attempting to represent every area or interest within one product.*

*With that in mind:*

- Debden  
The desire to see Debden represented is completely understandable, and we agree with the view expressed that incorporating it into this Trail would make the route too long and change the nature of the experience. Realistically, Debden would need to be developed as a separate Trail with its own start point and focus. That could certainly be considered as a future opportunity, but it sits outside the scope of the current commission.*
- Route refinements (Station Road, Alderton Hill, Brook Road, Smart's Lane, return leg)  
These are the kinds of refinements that are best assessed during the site visit, once items of interest, pedestrian flow and overall route balance can be properly evaluated. Our general approach is to avoid overly linear or repetitive sections where possible, and to include quieter or lesser-known areas when they add interest and character.*

**Agenda item 20**

**Loughton Town Council - Introducing Treasure Trails, EFDC Initiative ... continued/**

*We're very happy to review these sections on site before finalising the route.*

Additional points of interest

Many of the locations mentioned are already passed by, or naturally sit close to, the

proposed route. We'll ensure these are considered appropriately, but without forcing inclusions that don't meaningfully enhance the overall Trail experience.

*Overall, while we genuinely welcome consultation and local insight, it's important that the Trail design remains focused and manageable. As discussed previously, too many parallel inputs at the design stage can make it difficult to deliver a clear, high-quality end product, so we're keen to maintain a clear and consistent design process.*

*Our next step remains the site visit, after which the route will be finalised in line with the agreed brief.*

.....  
TC to TT 6.1.26

Would it be useful for me to attend the site visit?

.....  
TT to TC 12.1.26

*Thank you very much for the offer to attend the site visit – we really appreciate it. In practice, we tend to find it works best for us to navigate the route and get into the “trail-writing mindset” without external input on the day itself.*

*That said, if you would be happy to answer any questions that Neil may have following his visit, that would be extremely helpful and very much appreciated.*

.....  
TC to TT 12.1.26

*We would though wish to see the draft plan before anything is set in motion.*

.....  
TT to TC & EFDC 12.1.26

*Myself and ..... will be writing and putting the Loughton Trail together.*

*We'd be more than happy to meet up for a coffee on the day to chat through things and look over a few details. As Aaron mentioned, when it comes to actually walking and writing the Trail, we'll need to be in a particular mindset and fairly focussed on the writing process during that stage.*

*We just need to get a few other things in place before we can confirm when the site visit will be, but I'll let you know as soon as we have a plan in place.*

.....  
TT to TC & EFDC 16.1.26

*I've now put together a few ideas for back stories relating to the Loughton Treasure Trail (please see attached). Waltham Abbey chose their back story at the end of last year and picked a Treasure Hunt theme, so I'm looking to do a Spy Mission and Detective Mystery for the other two Trails (Loughton and Ongar).*

*Please have a look through the rough ideas and see if there's one that takes your fancy, or if there's another area that you think we should be focusing upon. You'll see there are a couple of ideas that won't actually be passed on the Trail (such as Loughton Camp), so they might not be ideal but I think they could still work.*

*I've also attached a document outlining how the back stories work for each of the three themes that we do at Treasure Trails and their answer mechanisms.*

**Agenda item 20**

**Loughton Town Council - Introducing Treasure Trails, EFDC Initiative ... continued/**

*We're now looking to do our site visits at the end of January/ early February (still have a few things to iron out), so feel free to show the options to others and have more of a think about them.*

.....  
TC to TT & EFDC 20.1.26

*We have a Town Council committee meeting next week on Wednesday 28 January and I can put these concepts forward to our Town Councillors.*

*Will residents be charged for using this trail?*

EFDC to TC & TT 20.1.26

*Our package with Treasure Trails includes either 1,000 printed copies or 1,500 digital copies of the three trails we have commissioned.*

*Our current plan is to proceed with the digital option, which would give Loughton approximately 500 digital copies. We believe the most effective way to get these into the hands of residents is through schools (in time for the Easter break), although the specific schools and year groups are still to be confirmed.*

*In addition to this, the trails will also be available for the public to purchase directly from the Treasure Trails website at £9.99.*

*We also have the option to purchase the trails from Treasure Trails at cost price and stock them at locations such as the Waltham Abbey Museum or Epping Forest Visitor Centre, allowing those venues to generate some revenue themselves. I'm all ears for suitable locations in Loughton who may consider this opportunity.*

*I hope this answers your question, but please let me know if you have any further queries.*

**Agenda item 20**

**Loughton Town Council - Introducing Treasure Trails, EFDC Initiative ... continued/**

**Loughton Back Story Ideas (Detective Mystery & Spy Mission)**

**Loughton Camp & Dick Turpin**

- **Detective Mystery:**  
Fresh rumours suggest Dick Turpin may have been *less* dashing outlaw and *more* dodgy deposit-hider, with something valuable still linked to Loughton Camp. When a modern-day history buff goes missing from the paperwork trail, detectives must work out who's stirring up the legend — and who wants it quietly buried again.
  - **Spy Mission:**  
HQ believes the Turpin tales are being deliberately exaggerated to distract from something far less glamorous but far more important at Loughton Camp. Agents must separate myth from reality before folklore completely runs away with the facts.
- 

**Epping Forest**

- **Detective Mystery:**  
Boundary markers around the forest edge are turning up in the wrong places, sparking confusion, complaints and the odd raised eyebrow. Is this clumsiness, cheekiness, or a calculated attempt to move the forest one sneaky step at a time?
  - **Spy Mission:**  
Long ago, subtle forest features were used as reference points in quiet agreements. Agents are sent in to check whether those markers are still telling the truth — or if someone's been quietly nudging history off course.
- 

**York Hill Conservation Area**

- **Detective Mystery:**  
A review of historic buildings uncovers curious inconsistencies in dates, designs and old approvals. Someone appears to have been playing fast and loose with the past — and detectives must spot what doesn't quite add up.
  - **Spy Mission:**  
York Hill's architectural quirks were once used as low-key verification markers. When one no longer matches the records, agents must decide whether this is innocent restoration... or something a little more deliberate.
-

## Agenda item 20

### Loughton Town Council - Introducing Treasure Trails, EFDC Initiative ... continued/

#### Lopping Hall

- **Detective Mystery:**  
A document linked to a key moment in Loughton's development has gone walkabout. With plenty of suspects and no shortage of opinions, detectives must work out who borrowed it — and who never planned to give it back.
  - **Spy Mission:**  
Lopping Hall once hosted discreet meetings that were meant to stay discreet. Agents are tasked with confirming whether an old agreement was followed to the letter... or quietly "reinterpreted".
- 

#### National Jazz Archive

- **Detective Mystery:**  
A rare item in the archive appears to be incomplete, altered or oddly annotated. Was it a mistake, a prank, or someone trying to rewrite musical history with a creative flourish?
  - **Spy Mission:**  
HQ suspects certain markings within jazz memorabilia were once used as subtle authentication codes. When one item fails the test, agents must retrace the trail and find out what's been changed — and by whom.
- 

#### The Great Lopping Dispute

- **Detective Mystery:**  
New information threatens to reopen old arguments from the Great Lopping Dispute — an episode best described as "spirited". Detectives must identify who's dug it up again, and whether it's truth, misunderstanding, or mischief.
  - **Spy Mission:**  
A long-forgotten group set up to protect the outcome of the dispute may have quietly reactivated. Agents are sent to check whether they're still defending history — or bending it to suit themselves.
- 

#### Shaftesbury Retreat

- **Detective Mystery:**  
Records suggest something once left at the Retreat for safekeeping never quite made it where it was supposed to go. Detectives must untangle whether this was forgetfulness, foresight, or a very polite form of theft.
- **Spy Mission:**  
The Retreat was once used to quietly protect sensitive material. Agents must follow understated clues to determine whether an item was hidden for the right reasons — or quietly redirected.



## Agenda item 20

### Loughton Town Council - Introducing Treasure Trails, EFDC Initiative ... continued/



## Treasure Trails – Back Stories & Answer Pages

### Detective Mystery, Treasure Hunt or Spy Mission?

Every Treasure Trail we create begins with a fictional backstory that sets the scene for the entire Trail and establishes the narrative tone used throughout. These stories are usually inspired by the history, background or legends associated with the location itself. While rooted in real events or local facts, we then weave in gentle humour and imaginative embellishment to make the experience engaging and accessible for all ages.

As Trail-goers solve the clues along the route, each answer contributes towards unravelling the central mystery behind the Trail's theme. Depending on the format, participants may eliminate suspects and pieces of evidence to uncover whodunnit, cross off locations on a treasure map to reveal where the treasure was buried, or record answers in a Mission Answer Grid to crack The Solution Code and stop the enemy agents in their tracks.

Below are three example backstories, along with their corresponding answer pages, taken from a series of Trails recently commissioned by Rochford District Council in Essex.

### Detective Mystery - Rochford Church, Town & Reservoir

#### Confidential Case Files

##### Ruffs, Riddles and Royal Rubies in Rochford!

Rochford Hall has always shimmered with Tudor secrets - but one mystery is about to cause a proper crown-tastrophe! Rumour has it Anne Boleyn once hid a priceless gem, along with a scandalous letter that could've rocked the royal court (and popped a few pearls). But now, this letter has disappeared... and someone clearly wants the past to stay locked in the jewellery box. Enter Detective Chief Inspector Gemma Stone - a master of sparkle, subtlety, and sniffing out scandals! DCI Stone suspects foul play... and needs your help to unearth the truth. With clues scattered like rubies across Rochford, you'll need a keen eye and sharper wit to follow the glittering trail. But beware... some of the suspects are polished pros: the bragging historian, the slippery antique dealer, the shifty groundskeeper, and a tourist who's way too nosy. Can you crack this case, restore the sparkle, and stop a full-blown Tudor crown-flic?

This story is inspired by the history of Rochford Hall, formerly the home of Thomas Boleyn, father to Anne and Mary Boleyn. It also leans into the enduring rumour that Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII used hidden tunnels in the area to conduct their secret meetings.

#### Evidence Gallery

#### Suspect Gallery


## Agenda item 20

### Loughton Town Council - Introducing Treasure Trails, EFDC Initiative ... continued/

#### Treasure Hunt - The Roach & Crouch Rivers Scenic Drive



#### Secret Explorer Quest Notes

##### Mud, Marshes and a Misguided Naturalist!

Centuries ago, the somewhat less-famous naturalist Chuck Darlose set sail not on HMS Beagle but on its curlier cousin, HMS Poodle. His mission? Officially, to study the mud, mussels, and marshland wildlife. Unofficially? To sniff out glittering treasure hidden between the Rivers Crouch and Roach. Legend says Darlose stumbled upon crates of gold coins, trinkets and lots of other good stuff. Some believe he then buried it all deep on Wallasea Island; others claim it sank beneath the muds, closely guarded by squabbling gulls and the odd suspicious oyster. Many treasure seekers have followed his trail ever since, but Darlose's riddles were so knotty, even an eel would get tangled. But that's where you lot come in! Armed with wit, wheels and a good sense of direction, follow the clues, outsmart the marshes, and keep an eye out for that elusive Poodle prize. Will you succeed where others have floundered... or just make a dog's dinner of it?

This story is inspired by the history of the estuary, where the remains of Charles Darwin's HMS Beagle rest along its banks. It also draws on the more recent transformation of Wallasea Island, whose marshes and lagoons were created using soil excavated during the construction of London's Crossrail.

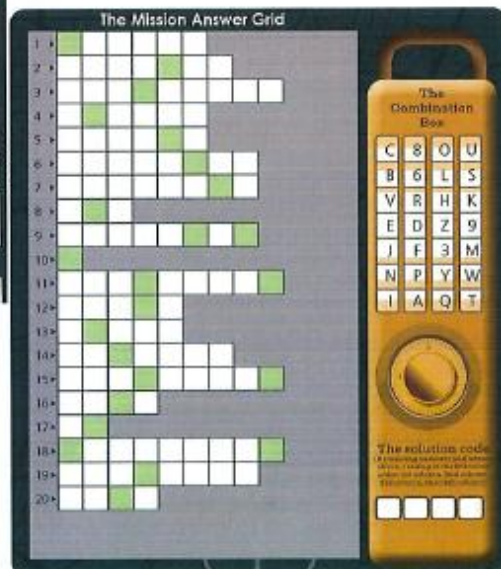
#### Spy Mission - Hockley & Hawkwell Woods & Villages

#### Shhhh.... Top Secret Spy Information

##### If You Go Down To Hockley Woods Today...

...you might be in for a big surprise! Deep in the woods, the teddy bears are laying out a bear-lliant spread for their annual tea party - honey sandwiches, jam tarts and acorn cakes waiting beneath the ancient oaks. But not far away, trouble is brewing. The Badger Network, led by the cunning General Stripes, has built a clanking contraption: a monstrous tea-making machine hidden in the undergrowth. Once switched on, it will pour out their dreadful brew (Badger Grey) until every cuppa in Essex tastes like muddy mayhem. To stir up this devious scheme, Spy HQ needs some sharp-eyed agents (YOU!) to root out a secret code, scattered around the tree hollows, mossy logs and along the lanes that circle the woods. Only by cracking the cuppa-code can you shut down the badgers' infernal machine and save the feast before the teddy bears' party is well and truly toast! Can you stop General Stripes before he makes tea time un-bear-able?

This story is inspired by Hockley Woods, which form a central part of the Trail, and the way many local streets and houses are named after badgers. It also draws on the history of Hockley's former tea gardens, which were popular with day-trippers in the early 20th century.



**Agenda item 21**  
**Current Financial Position**

19/01/2026

Loughton Town Council Current Year

Page 1

16:24

Summary Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/12/25

Month No: 9

Committee Report

		Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
<b>Environment and Heritage</b>							
203 Christmas Best Dressed Window	Expenditure	340	0	360	360		360
305 Cemetery (Church Lane)	Income	18,351	14,158	13,178	(980)		
	Expenditure	61,428	55,894	74,650	18,756		18,756
	Net Income over Expenditure	(43,077)	(41,736)	(61,472)	(19,736)		
	plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0	0		
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(43,077)	(41,736)	(61,472)	(19,736)		
315 Street Furniture	Income	5	0	0	0		
	Expenditure	27,022	29,530	34,819	5,289		5,289
	Net Income over Expenditure	(27,017)	(29,530)	(34,819)	(5,289)		
	plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0	0		
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(27,017)	(29,530)	(34,819)	(5,289)		
316 Allotments	Income	4,457	4,332	4,205	(127)		
	Expenditure	6,627	3,436	6,810	3,374		3,374
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(2,171)	896				
319 Cemetery (Debden Lane)	Expenditure	2,170	840	1,000	160		160
328 Other services (EH)	Income	1,728	1,985	1,750	(235)		
	Expenditure	4,769	4,823	4,480	(343)		(343)
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(3,041)	(2,838)				
330 Service Re-charge (EH)	Expenditure	132,000	0	0	0		0
	Environment and Heritage Income	24,541	20,475	19,133	(1,342)		
	Expenditure	234,357	94,523	122,119	27,596	0	27,596
	Net Income over Expenditure	(209,816)	(74,048)	(102,986)	(28,938)		
	plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0	0		
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(209,816)	(74,048)	(102,986)	(28,938)		
<b>Grand Totals:-</b>							
	Income	24,541	20,475	19,133	(1,342)		
	Expenditure	234,357	94,523	122,119	27,596	0	27,596
	Net Income over Expenditure	(209,816)	(74,048)	(102,986)	(28,938)		
	plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0	0		
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(209,816)	(74,048)	(102,986)	(28,938)		

**Agenda item 21****Current Financial Position – Earmarked Funds****Earmarked Reserves**

A summary of the Committee's reserves showing the amounts available from reserves as at 31/12/2025 is provided below:

<b>Environment &amp; Heritage Committee</b>	<b>31/12/2025</b>
Christmas lights	350
Cemetery	17,292
Cemetery – Closed Churchyard	10,000
Cemetery plot maintenance endowment (restricted fund)	8,262
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,904</b>