



HUNSDON PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING REPORT 16th May 2022 7.30pm



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1. Hunsdon Parish Council - Chairman's Report - Year 2021/22

Please bear with me whilst I preface this report with some personal reflections. At Christmas I was taken ill and hospitalised on and off through to the end of January. I wish to record my thanks to everyone for their kind thoughts and support which believe me do make a difference to recovery. I am well on the road now and pleased to be able to contribute to today's meetings. I particularly wish to thank Frank for stepping up and chairing the PC – it's not as if he didn't have enough on his plate! All being well I intend to remain on the Council for the coming year but will stand down after 10 years next May.

On the planning front matters have progressed slowly on the Gilston Area Project. East Herts Council Development Management Committee has considered and approved the detailed planning applications for the A414 Improvements. These are the Central Stort Crossing and the Eastern Stort Crossing. The outline applications from Places for People for Villages 1-6 and from Taylor Wimpey for Village 7 will probably now go to the DMC this autumn and will be considered together.

The Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan Group, which we jointly sponsor, has remained active throughout these procedures and you will hear more from Anthony Bickmore about this work and the approval and adoption of the GANP later. The Plan won three national awards. Our own Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan has progressed through to the examination stage and Frank's report to this meeting will have the details. On behalf of the PC, I thank Frank and Anthony and both NP Groups for their dedication and endeavours promoting the aspirations, views, and concerns of our communities to a statutory level in the planning hierarchy.

We are anticipating the publication of the County Minerals Plan this summer which is likely to still identify Olives Farm as a 'preferred area' for minerals extraction. I think our response will need to be in conjunction with Stanstead Abbots and others opposed in order to coordinate technical input and advice from professionals which will undoubtedly be required to fight this.

The following paragraphs are cut and pasted from my 2021 Annual Report: -

Construction work seems to have stalled on the development of the old crane yard which is regrettable as we need the affordable housing. As with last year's annual report, I have no news on when construction of the chapel will commence.

The work of the PC is made much lighter through the support of parishioners and I thank Jackie Carthy and her team for work on the playground facilities, Bud Carthy and Martyn Reid for their tireless efforts watching over our rights of way and Mike Newman working alongside Cllr Steve Burton for the installation of the new defibrillator at the Village Hall.

So how are things shaping up for the coming year?

The village will be marking the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations with a mega event centred on the recreation ground with support from the Crown and Village Hall. Our thanks are due to Cllr David Ottolangui and his team for getting all this together. There are other potential projects I would love to see progressed:



- *Setting up a Safe Drive team to monitor traffic speeds through the village centre because we remain plagued by inconsiderate and dangerous drivers.*
- *20 MPH in the village centre (in particular at the school)*
- *Improvement of surface water drainage systems in the village centre to reduce substantially the risk of flooding*
- *Wilding of the Dell – including wildflowers and picnic area*
- *MUGA on the tennis courts*

Stubborn old problems persist, in particular the nuisances caused by the waste recycling facility at Fillets Farm, the businesses on the airfield generating HGV's, drop-off parking at the school and the Rosella bends accident hot spot. The PC will keep these issues on its radar and continue to press both County Council and East Herts Council to intervene with positive actions.

The Parish Council continues to fulfil its routine obligations, litter picking, maintaining recreational facilities, overseeing the upkeep of our public footpath network, monitoring police operations and the state of our highways and listening to you and representing the community when things need attention.

Your rates, through us, also go on other commitments including the Neighbourhood Plans, the lower graveyard and exceptionally engaging professional advice when required.

My sincere thanks go to Eric Buckmaster as both County member and as our District Council member for his support and advice through the year which has been invaluable and particularly recently in the efforts to solve the flooding problems.

Also thank you to my colleagues on the Parish Council for their support and hard work and to Carole our Clerk for administration and managing the maintenance of our facilities. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank all of you who come along to our PC meetings and stay awake long enough to ask questions and bring our attention to concerns and problems at the close. Your contributions are most welcome and extremely valuable.

Bob Toll

Chair

11th May 2022

2. **Hunsdon Parish Rooms Trust (Registered Charity 2896)**



Hunsdon Parish Room Trust was founded in 1921. It was established in its present form with a Charity Commission scheme in 1984. Under the terms of this scheme the Trust's income should be applied "for any charitable purposes for the general benefit of the residents of Hunsdon." The Trust will consider applications for grants from any village organisation or society who wish to apply for a grant of a charitable nature.

The Trustees in 2021 were:-

Mr Tom Whyman (Chairman)
Mr David Gibbs
Mrs Esther Nicklin
Mrs Judy Walford
Mr Andrew Pummell (Secretary).

Due to the Covid pandemic the Trust's business has been dealt with by email during that time. Face to face meetings started again in October 2021.

The following grants totalling £1206.80 were made during the year ending 31st December 2021. £221.80 was paid to Hunsdon School to provide prizes for endeavour. £100 was also paid to the School to provide support for the summer trip. £385 was paid to the Parish Council on behalf of the Gardening Club to enable the Club to undertake work on the garden of the Village Hall. A further £500 was paid to the Parish Council in support of the Village Day in September.

The accounts for the year ending 31st December 2021 have been approved by the Trustees and can be inspected by reference to myself, Andrew Pummell, Trust Secretary.

The Trust held a total of £26307.41 in its NatWest account at the start of the year and ended the year with a total of £28116.61.

Andrew Pummell (Trust Secretary)



3. Report of the Parish Paths Wardens



Introduction. For those of you who were not at the meeting last year, or are new to the parish, we want to give you some background as to what the Parish Paths Partnership is all about.

Hunsdon Parish Council has been a member of the Partnership for some 20 years. It involves us

working with our partners, Groundwork Trust Hertfordshire, Hertfordshire County Council Rights of Way Team, and landowners to manage and promote the footpath network at a local level, at the same time funding and carrying out rights of way improvement schemes in the parish.

Our primary role as volunteer footpath wardens has been to monitor the condition of the public footpaths paths and carry out any small items of routine maintenance such as cutting back overhanging bushes across paths and replacing damaged waymark discs. HCC use contractors and volunteers to undertake a regular mowing and strimming programme where landowners do not have this responsibility. Numerous waymark posts have been replaced, at our request, by the HCC Rights of Way team. To help with this process a map numbering and showing the position of the posts in the parish has been produced and circulated, as necessary.

Footpaths. A continuing theme in the parish is the condition of the paths and the time it takes to re-establish footpaths which run over arable meadows and are cultivated each year. In a second year dominated by the Covid pandemic, we have seen the network heavily used by walkers taking legitimate exercise and the role of local farmers, particularly on the airfield is acknowledged. Similar to last year, It is also good to report that, the airfield owners, Places for People have funded the purchase and installation of 2 replacement benches, on the network. Additionally the parish council has also funded a replacement bench at Townsland wood, which provides an excellent resting point with a view over to Widford Church and the Ash Valley.

Broomlands. In our report five years ago, we outlined negotiations to create a circular walk by the diversion of footpaths in the Broomlands area of Fillets Farm. These plans are still with



Hertfordshire County Council for consultation with interested parties. Herts County Council, following advice from the wardens, have improved the path past the pond on the far side of Broomlands which reduces the likelihood of flooding in very wet weather.

Footpath Publications. Last year, with a £1000 grant from Herts County Council we updated and published a new edition of John Ashley's- booklet '**Walking around Hunsdon and Surrounding Parishes**' This booklet and a companion leaflet/map are available at no cost in local outlets and can be seen also on the Hunsdon Hub.

Thanks. In conclusion we would like to thank the council for their support in our endeavours and to Nicholas Maddex and the Team at Herts Council, who has helped to sort out many of the issues that we encountered. We would also like to acknowledge the support of Knight Frank, Land Agents for Places for People, concerning issues regarding the airfield footpaths. It is noteworthy that the condition of the paths in the parish compare very favourably with those of adjoining

Bud Carthy and Martyn Reid 10/05/22

4. Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan Report

The year has been a busy one for the HANP. The Neighbourhood Plan is sponsored by Hunsdon Parish Council but has been prepared by a group of volunteers who have supported the Council and done all the hard work.

We have successfully piloted the draft Neighbourhood Plan <https://hunsdonneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/> through the important stage of its main public consultation run by East Herts Council. We received good support from local residents to the draft plan together with a number of representations from local landowners who wanted to alter parts of the plan to accord with their ambitions for development in and around the Hunsdon area, e.g the Glebe land south of the village, Briggens House Estate, the River Stort and the proposed Village 7 owned by Taylor Wimpey.

The Plan now has gone into Public Examination. An independent Inspector will examine the draft plan and the many representations made about it and decide whether to pass it or to make modifications to it.

After that is completed, East Herts Council will put it to a Referendum of all the people who live in Hunsdon and are on the electoral roll so that local people have their say. If it is approved by them, it will be adopted by East Herts Council and be part of the Planning Policy controlling housing development in our Area. As you may know the larger Gilston Development is outside the HANP as it has its own Neighbourhood Plan which you voted on last year and have separate report on at this meeting.



On Finances we spent £4187 on consultant's fees and £398 expenses during the year to 31 March 2022. We received £875 from Central Government's Locality Fund for Neighbourhood Planning and the balance of £3710 was met by the Parish Council. We can report that we have received a further grant for this year of £1928 which should cover our costs to the end of the process.

My grateful thanks must go to the members of the Neighbourhood Planning Group who have been instrumental in preparing the draft plan on behalf of Hunsdon Parish Council, Bud and Jackie Carthy, John Felstead, Pauline Fitch, Mike Newman, Carole Page, Malcolm Slater, and Bob Toll.

Frank O'Shea
Chair HANPG
11.05.2022

5. Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group – annual Report to the Sponsor Councils



HEGNPG

Supporting our Community

1 Introduction

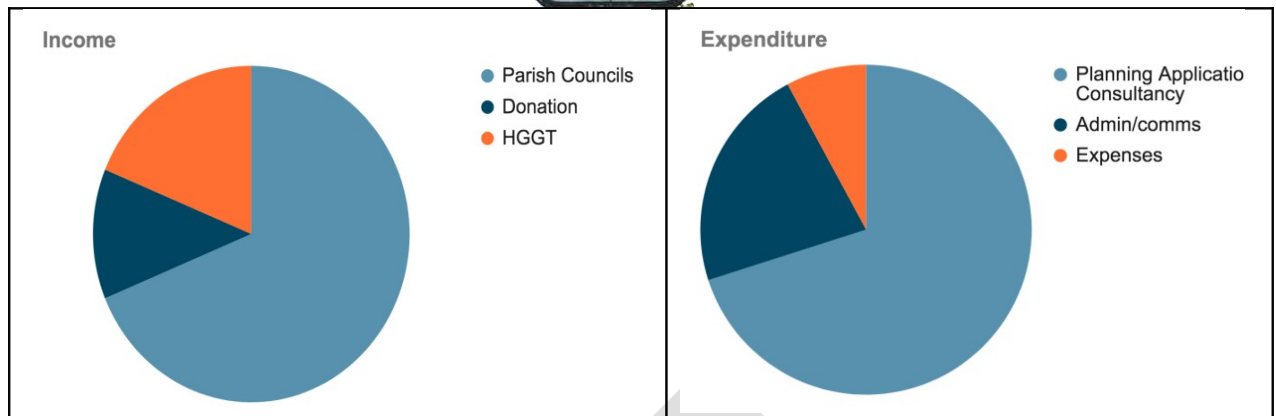
We are pleased to present our annual report and in doing so to thank you as our sponsors for your support for our work, especially your ongoing financial support.

The last year has been an exceptionally busy year and I am grateful for the staggering amounts of time committed by the members of the NPG, including many who also hold Parish Council or other posts in our community so are putting in lots of time to support residents

2 Financial

The NPG opened the financial year with a cash balance of **£32,811.80** and closed the year with a projected balance of: **£40,246.00**

Total income for the year was £16,000



£11,000 was received as annual contributions from sponsor Parish Councils (Hunsdon £3,500 and Eastwick & Gilston £7,500) £3,000.00 was given as financial support from the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. £2,000 was given as a kind donation by a local resident.

Total expenditure for the year was £8,565.80

£6,000.00 was spent on expert consultancy to assist the NPG with its responses to the ongoing planning applications for the Central and Eastern Crossings, and new homes and infrastructure. £1,892.50 was for administration and communications costs. £673.30 was for printing, postage, webspace and other similar expenses.



3 Key activities and progress over the last year

3.1 Neighbourhood Plan - Last year I reported on the progress in the preparation of a joint Neighbourhood Plan. East Herts Council adopted it after it passed its referendum in May last year with a 98% vote in favour, so it now forms a part of the Local Plan. Achieving this major piece of work was heavily reliant on the fantastic support from our planning advisors, Urban Silence, and the sheer hard work of the Group. Special mention should be made of two of our members who have committed vast amounts of time to the detailed negotiations and the public Examination process. The Plan has been recognised for its quality and approach with three national planning awards.

Having a Plan is one thing but ensuring that it is properly recognised is another. East Herts say they have considered its policies and “on balance” have set them aside when they did not fit in with the two detailed Highways applications, see below. We are pushing back on this treatment of what constitutes a formal part of the Local Plan.

3.2 Villages 1-6 & 7, Outline planning applications revisions - The two outline planning applications, (one for Villages 1-6 and one for Village 7) are still being worked on between the Developers and East Herts Planning Department. During the last half of the year the developers of villages 1-6 have raised viability concerns, in effect saying that they can no longer afford to stand by the promises made to the Planning Inspector at the time of the public Examination into the Gilston allocation and making the case for the Green Belt release . We have expressed our strong concerns on this, especially given that it was a part of the case made to release the Green Belt designation. We await the outcome of the Developers claims to see what impact this has on promised community infrastructure. East Herts Council, in the full knowledge of the viability concerns, have given consent to the Developers detailed Highway proposals in advance of understanding the financial implications for the main Housing Planning applications. We have recorded our strong objections to the principle of determining these applications out of sequence like this but the Development Management Committee approved the Planning Department’s keenness to promote the Highways applications, especially the Eastern Crossing which puts major new infrastructure through the Stort Valley and the remaining Green Belt , years before it will be needed by the scheme.

At the time of preparing this report we have not been given, but are continuing to press for, information on;-

- The status of the Viability assessment



- The expected date for reporting the Housing Applications to the Development Management Committee for approval
- The status of the critical S 106 packages covering many aspects critical to our communities
- The role of the community in shaping the future stewardship of the land to be set aside as Country Parks around Hunsdon Airfield, Eastwick Woods and Gilston Park.

3.3 Landscape Master planning - Sadly, despite the Developers' aspiration to start work on the Strategic Landscape Master Plan, this work started last autumn but then was put on hold by the Developers a couple of months later.

This is an important consultation as it will define the landscape buffers between the villages and open spaces which are supposed to be transferred to the Local Community. We hope that this consultation will recommence soon and include a proper dialogue with the community, just as East Herts Local Plan requires, , as well as having proper regard to our Neighbourhood Plan.

As a result of our representations, Places for People, the principal Developer, have undertaken some preliminary tree planting with the aim that the trees will mature and help to screen the new development better than if they are planted after the houses are built. The tree planting does not reflect the long-term planting, just the first stage of many landscape works reflecting the legal obligation of the Developers to obtain a 10% Biodiversity net gain. We continue to hold discussions with the Developers on such issues.

3.4. Master Planning for Village 1- Work on this started, with a great flourish last summer, and two meetings were held to seek community input but again the work has been put on hold! The Developers have however taken some proposals to the Quality Review Panel but without any prior community consultation. We have given feedback on this submission but after six months have no response to our observations.

We have argued that the boundaries for the Master Planning should consider the relationship of the proposed Village 1 in the context of its immediate neighbourhood and not be artificially restricted by the red lines set by the Developers. We will continue to ask for a comprehensive approach on the Communities' behalf.



3.5 Village 7 As many of you may know, Taylor Wimpey have bought the Village 7 site. They are keen to press on with building 1500 houses there despite the fact that it will be many years before it can link up with the rest of the development which Places for People are planning for the Gislton Area. We have objected in the strongest terms to this “standalone” development which will amount to a separate housing estate for many years, possibly decades. We are not alone in voicing these objections and seeking to put maximum pressure on EH Planning Department to refuse consent on this basis.

3.6 Stewardship - While we have also tried to engage on this incredibly important issue there has been no progress over the last year. Even more astoundingly, we keep being told that East Herts Planning Department I and the Developers are ‘engaged’ in discussions but that the Community are not allowed to engage, or comment, on this part of the Local Plan which will affect **all** residents' futures. The EHC Community Engagement Strategy says that we should be engaged but sadly EHC are ignoring their own policy.

We are constantly being told that we will be given information soon but the sad point is that it is not forthcoming and we fear will end up as a set of pre-agreed proposals in which the community has had no meaningful participation.

3.7 Roads Applications - After some legal challenges, these two detailed applications went to East Herts Council’s Development Management Committee (DMC) for consideration; one application for the existing ‘Central” Stort Crossing and the other for a new ‘Eastern Stort Crossing’ (ESC).

We made strong representations to the DMC to not approve these applications because:-

- The principles of the outline planning applications should be considered in the round, along with the Developer’s commitments to funding, and proper provision for public transport
- ESC is not needed by the development before 2030 so there was no need to make the decision in advance of the Outline application.
- The ESC, while providing much needed relief for the traffic conditions in Pye Corner, as proposed is over-sized and so causes unnecessary harm to the Green Belt.
- The alternative options had not been properly considered
- As a road scheme it will generate more traffic so not support the transport mode shift which is a key policy for East Herts Council
- The scheme is supported by taxpayer funding which may run out if not spent BUT that is not a reason for granting a consent.



Within the 3 hours of debate on **each** application , as your Parish Council representatives we were only allowed to speak for 8 minutes to get our views across on such a major application and concerned residents for only 2 minutes each. This was not a fair hearing or democratic. The applications were approved by EHC with only opposition parties voting against. The same result occurred when Harlow DC approved the applications on their side.

3.9 Stakeholder engagement –

With your respective Chairmen and Vice Chairmen we continue to represent to key stakeholders the views of the NPG alongside our request for additional funding for our work in recognition of the complexities of the issues and multiplicity of authorities involved, we have been given a modest grant from the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Board

3.10 Gilston Steering Group - We have been a part of this Group for a number of years; the Group is designed to ‘Steer’ the Gilston project and is led by East Herts Council. At the time of preparing this report we are asking for a reset of this Group's remit and operation as key information (for example, a programme of activities over a 3–5-year time frame) is either unavailable or being withheld but seems to us to be critical. Papers concerning Gilston are prepared but not communicated to the Group so it's hard to see what it is Steering. The concept of a strategic steering Group is a good one, we are trying to work with East Herts Council to make it an effective body

4 Looking forward

This report makes sad reading as the ambitions by East Herts for Community Engagement in their written strategy we feel have been ignored. Central Government, the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Board, Homes England, and Hertfordshire County Council all champion Community Engagement, as do both Developers. We are hoping that all of these bodies will clarify how they want to work with the Community and the alternatives if they do not.

There are many important issues in both parishes that need resolution and the Community's voice heard. We all know of the current infrastructure failings on transport, schools, health care, emergency services and social facilities . Our neighbourhood cannot take this vast number of new homes without new infrastructure and, unless we negotiate this through the planning system, residents may face the prospects of having to pick up costs through their Community Charge (rates) payments or suffer the consequences of failure to deliver.

The following key activities we anticipate will require our attention:- Issue	Comment	Likely timescale



Village 1 Masterplanning	Important work on setting the context for Village 1 to be done in the light of the Local and Neighbourhood Plans. Despite the two meetings we have had no proposals from the Developers	Outstanding/ started in June 21, put on hold in November - no date offered for restarting
Landscape Master Plan	Important strategy key to	Outstanding/

DRAFT



6. Report by Hunsdon JMI School Governors

It is no under-statement to say that the past two years have caused the greatest disruption for Hunsdon School, and probably most other schools, in living memory. And the fact we have experienced several waves of the pandemic means those two years coalesce and it's difficult to report on the past year as distinct from the year before - not helped by the fact I've lost any report I might have given to last year APM.

As I recall, however, the school has not had to close and resort to remote learning over the past year, other than one day at the end of the Autumn Term, but rather the challenge has been to recover the damage of the first year of the pandemic. When the Governors reviewed the situation at this time last year, we found the spread of pupil achievement was much wider than in a 'normal' year – which underlines the fact that some children responded better to remote home teaching than other. It also underlines that home learning can be very effective, but that depends hugely on the individual child and their family circumstances. So the focus of the past year has been very much on closing the gap by giving individual attention to those who need it.

Something I mentioned in my report from two years ago was the need to replace the old Portakabin (the original Ducklings pre-school) following a small fire in November 2019. Although insurance would have covered a like-for-like replacement we were aware of a substantial 'pot' of developer contributions from new developments in the village specifically for primary education. I have to say it wasn't easy to prise it from their grasp, but eventually the money was forthcoming and we managed to make the case for a new unit almost twice the size of the old. That was completed last summer and formally opened by Julie Marson MP and has been in daily use from the beginning of the current academic year in September. Which has a connection to a very significant point; Hunsdon JMI is riding a wave of success. You will know that we currently have an 'outstanding' rating from Ofsted and each year we are hugely over-subscribed by parents seeking first school placings. All this against a background of a significant drop in the numbers to be placed and many schools around us well below their nominal intake; I'm sure you will know that Wareside School will close at the end of the current term. But the school cannot take its success for granted and our emphasis on keeping class sizes down in the early years (which the new classroom has allowed) is, I'm sure, a factor in that – even though having a low pupil : teacher ratio is punishing on the extremely tight budget which HCC has allocated to us.

I must also record that in November we heard of the sudden and early death of a fellow governor, Daniel Munns. Dan was appointed as a Parent Governor in 2015 and continued to support the school as a Co-opted Governor after his son, Harrison, left Hunsdon. Over those six years, Dan made a huge contribution to the school in so many ways, both through his various roles within the Governing Body – taking particular responsibility for Health & Safety checks but also lending his expertise in IT matters – and also supporting Friends activities such as the annual Fireworks Night. Beyond that, however, Dan always brought enthusiasm and good humour to everything he did, and he will be sadly missed throughout the school.

This term has seen several of our parent governors reach the end of their term and, with a bit of shuffling around, we are currently in the throes of recruiting three new parent governors. Our principal avenue of persuasion is through school bags, but the fact you are here this evening



suggests you care for our community so – if you know of any like-minded parent who might be suitable – then please give them a hefty shove by stressing the importance of our village school.

Finally I must recognise and applaud the huge commitment the past year has demanded of the everyone associated with the school - school staff, volunteer helpers, governors and, although he may not want me to single him out, Jonathan Millward the headteacher.

7. County Councillor Report for Annual Meeting Some Highlights April 2021 to March 2022

Decarbonisation funding. £23.5m for Hertfordshire County Council to upgrade 182 council buildings, including 74 schools and 23 emergency service buildings. This will include the installation of heat pumps, battery storage and solar panels and improving the energy efficiency of the buildings through installing double glazing and cavity wall insulation. Hertfordshire County Council is progressing the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), (via Salix) funded works to decarbonise the schools and non-schools' estate. The £23.5 million in successful grant funding will be used to deliver works such as the installation of air source heat pumps and solar panels across 149 selected sites

Progress Update Feb 2022 Most of the programme has been completed, with the remaining sites currently on track to be delivered before the agreed deadlines with issuers of the grant fund. As of the 7th February 2022, £14,312,898.49 of grant funding has been committed to the installation programme, supporting the delivery of the following completed works programmes:

- 81 sites have received solar panels, delivering direct reductions in carbon emissions, and improving the council's portfolio of renewable energy sources. The panels have been installed across the council's schools and non-school's property portfolio
- 15 schools sites have received wall insulation and double-glazing works, improving energy efficiency and heat retention
- Work continues on the delivery of air source heat pumps across the council's schools and non-schools portfolio. Upon programme completion, two schools will have received air source heat pumps and accompanying heating upgrades and eight non schools sites, including Farnham and Robertson House. Once completed, these works are expected to deliver improved energy efficiency and significantly reduce carbon emissions across all sites

Low Carbon Skills Fund Hertfordshire County Council has been successful in receiving £254,270.41 in grant funding from the Low Carbon Skills Fund – Phase 2, managed by Salix Finance. This funding will be used to develop heat decarbonisation plans across the Council's school's portfolio, with the plans for 318 schools completed by March 2022. The heat decarbonisation plans will be used to provide an overview of the energy performance for each site, outlining recommended infrastructure upgrades to deliver carbon neutral buildings

Contracts complete for £171m investment in Harlow Gilston Garden Town. Contracts have now been signed and completed to release £171m of government funding for the Harlow and



Gilston Garden Town (GGT) project. The original bid was led by Hertfordshire County Council on behalf of local authority partners Essex County Council, East Herts, Epping Forest and Harlow District Councils, the Harlow Gilston Garden Town under the Harlow Gilston Garden Town Partnership, supported by leading affordable homes-led placemaker, Places for People.

Services for Young People (SfYP) YCH Services for Young People will now be known as Services for Young People (SfYP). The vision for SfYP is that the needs of young people who are challenged in education, their community or home life are met, to ensure a successful transition to adulthood.

The primary purpose of SfYP is “Enabling Young People to Succeed” through the delivery of targeted prevention and early intervention work to address emerging needs, improve life chances and reduce escalation to more expensive and intensive services.

Youth Workers, Personal Advisers and other practitioners work in schools, colleges, young people’s centres, access points, on the streets and in other local community venues delivering youth work, information, advice, guidance, and work-related learning.

Recycling Centres

Three of Hertfordshire's largest recycling centres now open seven days a week
As reported by In Your Area, Hertfordshire’s three largest household waste recycling centres - Ware, Stevenage and Waterdale (Garston) - are now open seven days a week as the county council responds to high use of the network.

Reuse Centres go from strength to strength. The newly refurbished Harpenden Reuse Centre, located next to the recycling centre, was open in the summer. This is the third centre where residents can buy good quality items, at a reasonable price, which would otherwise have been needlessly thrown away and destroyed.

High Street Recovery schemes

Hertfordshire County Council had kept residents and its communities safe by putting in place measures to support government guidance and social distancing. The changes were made to help businesses reopen and ensure everyone could access our busier towns and high streets across Hertfordshire. These changes included footway widening, road closures, reduced speed limits and increased cycle parking provision. As we continue to follow the roadmap for easing this current lockdown, Hertfordshire County Council is reviewing with local councils each of the locations where changes were made.

Hertfordshire’s Mass Rapid Transit

Working together for sustainable growth

So that we can achieve our ambitions for the MRT, we are working together with the countywide Growth Board for Hertfordshire which is made up of the County Council, 10 District and Borough Councils and Hertfordshire’s Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

The MRT would form a key part of Hertfordshire’s ambitious growth agenda to support a sustainable transport network. Working collaboratively to enable a coordinated response to tackling future pressures across the A414 – both in terms of sustainability, enabling economic growth and net zero carbon – while simultaneously making the design development process more transparent.

Gilston Neighbourhood Plan wins two Awards

The HEGNP Group have won a Plan Making Award and in addition to that the Editors Award of the best overall entry. The Editor commented that Planners have 'got to work with the community to deliver development.'



The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Group said “We are clearly delighted as this recognises the vast amount of time our community put into this as well as the professionalism of our advisors, Urban Silence, who helped us so much on the way”.

The task is now to use the Plan to help shape the development to be what was promised as a being development of exceptional quality.

Adopt an Area litter campaign launches in East Herts Litter-conscious residents in East Herts will now get extra support to help keep their streets and parks free of litter by signing up to our Adopt An Area scheme. East Herts District Council (EHDC) alongside North Herts District Council have launched the campaign to support both existing volunteers who have already been litter picking in the district, as well as to appeal for new volunteers to adopt an area and make a real community effort to reduce litter. Volunteers will be asked to let the council know the area they wish to adopt and will be provided with safety information and dedicated bags. Anyone who adopts an area will be able to have their litter picked waste collected alongside their normal scheduled waste and recycling collections.

Hertfordshire hits record high number of officers

Hertfordshire Constabulary now has more officers than at any time in its history. The latest intake of 18 new recruits means there are now 2,212 officers in the county, the previous high was 2,202 in 2007. To mark the milestone Police and Crime Commissioner David Lloyd and Chief Constable Charlie Hall welcomed the latest student officers at Police Headquarters in Stanborough, Welwyn Garden City.

The final target at the end of the uplift is planned to be even higher with 2,314 officers in post by April 2023.

Hertfordshire’s Healthy Hubs, a free local service where people can get health and wellbeing support and advice, are re-opening their doors again.

The Healthy Hubs initially launched in early 2020 but Covid-19 restrictions meant they had to move online. With a number of venues beginning to re-open, the Covid-safe hubs are now able to welcome face-to-face visitors once again. Whether you need help to reach a healthy weight or want to stop smoking, become more active, get mental health support, or even cut down on your drinking - your Healthy Hub can help you. To find your local hub, simply visit [Healthy Hub East Herts | East Herts District Council](#) on line.

Hertfordshire County Council is unveiling plans for a new waste and recycling transfer Station, near Ware,

which will reduce lorry miles and meet the urgent need to manage waste collected from residents and business in the east of Hertfordshire. The plans, for an enclosed facility with sound and odour controls, where collection vehicles can take kerbside waste to be stored before being sent on to recovery and disposal facilities, was unveiled at a consultation event on 9 and 10 August. The transfer station will primarily accept household and business waste but will also be able to accept recyclable materials.



Broxbourne Studio Announcement. Blackstone and Hudson Pacific Properties announce that they intend to invest in building a new film, TV, and digital studio in Broxbourne for the first expansion of the Sunset Studios platform outside of the US. This is wonderful news for local people and our ongoing commitment to ensuring high quality local employment opportunities, with more than 4,500 permanent jobs to be created in Broxbourne which will be vital to delivering sustainable growth. This announcement is fantastic news for Hertfordshire and, together with the new Sky Studios development currently being built at Elstree, is another clear sign of our county's continued attractiveness and status as home to the UK's world-class creative media industry.

Hertfordshire secured over £1bn investment in its world-leading cell and gene therapy and film and TV industries. The Prime Minister visited Stevenage to open Airbus' new £35m UK space and defence headquarters. With £400m for a new life sciences campus on the GSK site and Broxbourne chosen as the location for Hollywood's £700m Sunset Studios, investor confidence in our county has never been higher. Investments like these have a major impact on the local economy, invigorating supply chains and creating a spiral effect that continues to encourage so many major multinationals to come to Hertfordshire.

Hertfordshire County Council is asking residents, businesses, community groups, and other interested parties to join them in planting a tree for the jubilee. The Queen's Green Canopy is a national initiative which will celebrate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee by sustainably planting trees, improving the environment, and leaving a legacy for future generations. Residents who want to get involved by planting trees will be given advice and guidance on the correct types of trees to plant, as well as tips on aftercare to ensure they grow into healthy adult trees. Residents or businesses who are unable to plant trees on their own land can pledge funds to help facilitate planting schemes elsewhere in the county. The county council will be playing its part by creating statement planting sites at County Hall in Hertford, and Aldenham Country Park near Elstree, where large numbers of trees will be planted in eye-catching arrangements, improving the natural beauty of these locations while also tackling carbon emissions and improving air quality.

In addition to this tree and hedge planting will take place at schools and academies across the county and along the sides of highways. District and borough councils have also committed to plant trees on their own land over the next two years, as part of the project.

Hertfordshire County Council has successfully bid for £313,000 from the Department of Transport's (DfT) Local Authority Capability Fund. The funding, which is part of the Government's Active Travel programme, will help the council to plan, design, consult and develop more county-wide cycle and walking infrastructure schemes. The council will also work with the pedestrian charity Living Streets to support and encourage school children and parents to walk to school more often.

Several initiatives will be supported through the funding, including:

- An increase in the number of British Cycling participation schemes, offering adult and child cycle training and led rides, including free loan bikes for those who don't have one.
- Cycle maintenance and storage facilities, for schools, cycle hubs and proposed Sustainable Travel Towns
- Working with Living Streets to employ local coordinators to support a new initiative; The School Walk, encouraging sustainable travel to and from school
- Planning, design and consultation of a trial Low Traffic Neighbourhood in St Albans and the ongoing design of extensions to a proposed cycle route along North Road in Stevenage.



New on-demand bus service launched in Hertfordshire A new on-demand bus service, HertsLynx, is launching in Hertfordshire from 19 September, as part of Hertfordshire County Council's plans to improve transport in the county.

Residents in the east and north of Hertfordshire are able to use a new app to order a bus pick up and drop off from virtual bus stops along routes where normal bus services are infrequent.

The HertsLynx service is designed to improve connections between rural villages and larger town centres, making it easier for people to get to work or school, go shopping, or travel to appointments, without needing to use a car or taxi.

Hertfordshire unveils Blueprint to 'Build Back Better' after COVID-19

Cleaner, greener, and healthier priorities will be at the heart of a roadmap to lead the county out of the pandemic and make it fit for the future. From helping pupils catch-up to enabling residents to be fit and healthy to supporting workers and businesses to get back on their feet, the Covid-19 recovery Strategy has something for everyone in Hertfordshire to 'build back better'.

It is in-part under-pinned by a £9.7 million dedicated Covid-19 Recovery Fund to help drive local recovery and an ambition to be innovative in making services the best they can be for residents. **The Covid-19 Recovery Strategy brings together a series of projects designed to support health and wellbeing and economic recovery over the next two years** with the new funds being split across three key priority areas: Health and wellbeing, the environment and sustainable growth. Some of these projects are already up and running and have been embedded into team practice while others are new initiatives that use the Recovery Fund.

Highlights under each of the priorities include:

Health and wellbeing. Adult Care Services projects receiving £3m, including money dedicated to fighting homelessness, alcohol, mental health, and domestic abuse. £285,000 will support over 700 adults with disabilities in finding education, work and volunteering opportunities that has been more challenging through the pandemic.

Carer projects, as part of Adult Care Services, will be receiving £258,000 to counter the loneliness, digital exclusion and mental health effects heightened through the pandemic.

Expanding community protection with £60,000, enabling an increase in Safe and Well visits, targeted at the most vulnerable and disadvantaged Hertfordshire residents. There has been an increase in vulnerability, social isolation, and domestic abuse during the covid pandemic. The money allocated will enable more of these 'one stop shop' visits to people's homes, keeping them safer and signposting them to further support such as advice on fuel poverty, stopping smoking, weight loss and mental health.

Supporting families in or at risk of falling into poverty with joint programmes between Children Services, Public Health, and Adult Care Services. One is the 'Good start in Life' project, receiving £228k over the next two years to develop services for vulnerable families who have become pregnant or have young children during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Helping residents stay active and maintain a healthy weight, including a new pilot linking physical activity with good mental health. The Never Too Late campaign aims to increase physical activity for those aged 55 and over, and four-hour activity sessions for young people who receive free school meals. There will also be a pilot with the NHS to explore the role hot food takeaways play in obesity.

Schools 'coming back stronger' and mental health support enabling additional educational psychologists' and Speech and Language capacity to support children and young people and



additional investment in counselling schemes to help address the mental health impact of Covid-19 on children and families. £1.2m will be dedicated to these projects.

Addressing inequalities across the county by offering advice on home adaptation, fuel tariffs and managing utilities. There will also be new food welfare initiatives, and work with partner organisations to increase finance/benefits advice to those leaving care of families with disabled children.

The Environment Cutting food waste disposal by raising awareness of the financial and environmental costs. Food waste disposal costs Hertfordshire's taxpayers around £7.1 million each year. The Hertfordshire Food Waste Initiative has been allocated £65,000 as part of a campaign to promote food waste prevention measures to residents.

Restarting Environmental volunteering programmes encouraging residents to get involved to make their county a better place to live and expanding the Hertfordshire Health Walks across the county. It is anticipated this will include wood wardens, health walks and conservation volunteers.

Sustainable Growth. Supporting pupils and schools catch up after the pandemic are a number of initiatives, including £120,000 into a schools mentoring pilot and targeted work with children most at risk of exclusion.

Focussing on residents' wellbeing when considering planning and delivery of growth projects. The initiative involves working closely with the health sector to ensure new developments are places that enhance residents' lives.

The Government Household Support Fund (HSF)

Hertfordshire County Council will use part of The Government Household Support Fund (HSF) grant to offer families who qualify for free school meal vouchers through the holidays in Hertfordshire this winter

Announced last week, this new grant will run from 06 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 and totals £6,172,064.84 for Hertfordshire. At least 50% of the total funding must be spent on families with children. In terms of type of support, the expectation is that the Household Support Fund should primarily be used to support households in the most need with food, energy, and water bills. It can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs.

Since June 2021, the county council has provided:

- £240,000 to local food banks and food poverty organisation

- £550,000 to families using our early years and family intervention services

- allocated £464,850 into crisis support and targeted and specialist support for vulnerable families

- £1.3m spent on vouchers over the summer for eligible families.

Construction work has officially started at the new site for The Bishop's Stortford High School in Whittington Way, ahead of the school's move from its current London Road site in Spring 2023. Representatives from the school, Hertfordshire County Council, and local councillors gathered at the site to celebrate the start of construction works, which are being carried out by the county council's contractor, ISG.

The move will see the secondary school relocate to a new, expanded site where it can offer additional places in a modern environment, with further potential to expand in the future to support the proposed scale of new housing growth within the area.

Review of the Library Service Cabinet agreed to commence the development of new Library Service Strategy in 2022/23, to ensure the Service is best placed to thrive and support Hertfordshire residents and communities over the next ten years.



The county council will start developing a new 10-year Library Service Strategy next year. This will build on the current Inspiring Library Strategy 2014-2024, that went on to see over £6m of capital invested in buildings and an estimated £500,000 in technology projects across the county.

Libraries and Lateral Flow test collection. Nine libraries across Hertfordshire offered assistance to Hertfordshire's Public Health team, by becoming collection points for Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) in their local communities. The libraries which acted as collection points are Baldock, Bishop's Stortford, Hatfield, Hemel Hempstead, Hoddesdon, Oxhey, Rickmansworth, Stevenage, and Watford. They will help ensure as many residents as possible have access to these home test kits and can stay safe and well this winter.

Electric and zero emission equipment to carry out resurfacing and repairs.

In collaboration with infrastructure partner Ringway, the county council is using an electric mini-excavator, a breaker, and a disc cutter, together with a zero-emission staff welfare unit, on sites in Stevenage (The Willows) and Letchworth (Rookes Close).

The sites will help create a healthier environment for both residents and staff, with significant reductions in carbon emissions, improvements in air quality and lower levels of noise pollution. The trial will enable the county council to establish the cost and practicality of using electric equipment and is part of its overall commitment to the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy and Action Plan, specifically to be net zero in its operations by 2030 and a net zero county by 2050.

UK Community Renewal Fund,

All five Hertfordshire bids for Community Renewal Fund successful

Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership have issued this joint statement.

This £3.26m funding will deliver a raft of measures to support people and communities most in need by piloting programmes and new approaches to drive innovation and productivity, champion local business and create employment opportunities within our key sectors.

Hertfordshire's successful bids are:

- Building Back Better: Inclusive business support delivery for SME business support £612,993
- Community Wealth Building Together £715,673
- Driving creative innovation and culture-led regeneration through the film industry £844,795
- Hertfordshire Opportunity Generator £524,233
- STEM City £565,175

Hertfordshire County Council has set out an ambitious vision to improve bus services across the county .In response to the National Bus strategy, the county council has published its own Bus Service Improvement Plan.

The plan outlines the county council's vision and what needs to happen to achieve this and forms a key element of the authority's bid for a huge £84 million of additional funding.

A county-wide review and passenger survey conducted over the summer of 2021 identified a number of key areas for improvement, such as greater bus frequencies, simpler fares and ticketing, more real time information, and transport that gets you to place you need to go.

Further work will be conducted over the coming months to develop ideas in key areas, such as rail/bus integration, decarbonising the bus fleet and improving accessibility across the bus network.



Sustainable Hertfordshire Central Fund

The purpose of the Sustainable Hertfordshire fund is to provide support to the delivery of the Action Plan and the nine central ambitions of the Strategy. The central fund was confirmed as £10 million from April 2021 to deliver capital programmes. An additional £2 million was allocated for revenue expenditure to support in the delivery of the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy. Available from April 2021, this fund will be available for a two-year period or until it has been fully spent.

The project bids that have been approved are:

- 1) Net Zero Carbon Schools – MACE Consultancy - Commissioning of the consultancy to support the delivery of a feasibility study, establishing the strategic approach and implementation programme to deliver carbon neutral primary schools by 2030.
- 2) HCC Property Waste Audit - Conduct an audit on the provision of waste management services at approximately 200 County Council properties. The results of the audit will provide the opportunity to improve the environmental sustainability of the current waste operations.
- 3) Queen's Green Canopy Funding to help Hertfordshire County Council lead, enable and inspire tree planting for the national Queens Green Canopy Project. This funding will deliver planting on HCC office sites, highways land and schools. Funding is also being allocated to deliver planting on other land – via District/Borough Councils, Town, and Parish Councils, nonHCC schools and community groups.
- 4) Air Quality Monitoring Software - Funding to procure mapping software services to help map, monitor and therefore predict the air quality across the county. This data will help target and inform specific campaigns.
- 5) Waste Disposal Authority Carbon Baseline - Commissioning of a consultancy service to develop the Carbon Baseline for the WDA and present options and opportunities for reducing the carbon emissions from this service.
- 6) Countywide Biodiversity Baseline - Commissioning of a consultancy service to develop the baseline of the countywide biodiversity level and provide insights into how to increase this. This project is being delivered via the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership.
- 7) Highways Hedgerow Replacement - Funding to increase planting on Highways land and deliver hedgerow replacement over a three-year period.
- 8) Hertfordshire Sustainable Periods - Co-Funded project with WasteAware, Herts Waste Partnership and Public Health to provide 180 Sustainable Period Ambassadors with training and sample packs for re-usable period products in schools across Hertfordshire.
- 9) Rural Estates Strategic Review - Funding to deliver the full review of the Rural Estates Improvement Plan aimed at identifying locations which can help with the successful delivery of the nine strategic ambitions.



- 10) COP26 - Funding to deliver a series of events across Hertfordshire to link in with the UN Climate Conference (COP26) event happening in Glasgow. Events will include an Eco Fair in November, a Youth COP in January 2022 and further engagement in Spring 2022.
- 11) Expansion of the Schools Energy project Funding to deliver low-cost, energy saving measures and LED lighting upgrades to all schools across Hertfordshire over the next two years.
- 12) Sustainable Hertfordshire Crowdfund Platform Funding to run a pilot project via the existing Crowdfund platform. This funding will be available to external groups and is aimed at getting local communities engaged in the successful delivery of the 'enable and inspire' strategic ambitions. Projects will be assessed as suitable by HCC staff and initial funds will need to be raised by the external group before HCC commits any financial support.
- 13) Climate Change Risk Assessment - Funding to support the commissioning of consultancy services to provide an updated climate change risk assessment for the organisation.
- 14) HCC Carbon Baseline Review and Reduction Trajectory, HCC Carbon Budget Setting and Countywide Carbon Emissions reduction strategy - Funding to support the ongoing consultancy service to provide a detailed trajectory for HCC to identify carbon reduction measures and set a carbon budget. Expansion of the HCC work to include countywide emissions, engagement with HCCSP, businesses and residents and to identify reduction measures – including comms campaigns.
- 15) Zebra Scheme, Zero Emission Bus Scheme for Stevenage, £499,287 capital funding This is to support a bid where Department of Transport could fund around 75pc of the difference between diesel and electric buses and if successful we'll fund the charging infrastructure. The ZEBRA scheme funding would see a total of 27 of Stevenage's ageing diesel bus fleet replaced with new electric ones, which should be in service by 2024. A press release was made by Phil Bibby

£5000 in funding available for sustainable projects across Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire County Council has teamed up with Crowdfunder to create the Sustainable Hertfordshire Fund, providing up to £5,000 in funding for local projects that will contribute to tackling climate change.

Through the fund, the county council wishes to enable and inspire projects to be delivered that assist with one or more of its Sustainable Hertfordshire ambitions.

These ambitions include:

To become a net zero greenhouse gas county before 2050

To ensure communities are ready for future climates

To improve wildlife across the county by 20 per cent by 2050

To provide access to clean air for all by 2030



To qualify for funding, projects must be local to Hertfordshire and benefit people who live or work in the county. To apply for funding and see further eligibility criteria visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/sustainablefund

Sustainable Hertfordshire Eco-Fair a ‘storming’ success

Hertfordshire County Council’s first ever Sustainable Hertfordshire Eco-Fair proved to be a triumph as residents flocked to the event in their hundreds despite the wind and rain caused by Storm Arwen.

Over 350 residents came to the event at County Hall, Hertford, where they were treated to an inspirational day of climate action thanks to over 50 exhibitors made up of county council services, local businesses, and climate organisations leading a mixture of talks, workshops, and activities.

The feedback from residents and exhibitors has been overwhelmingly positive, as people came away from the event better equipped with the knowledge and tools needed in the fight against climate change.

A recent report from the Department for Transport (DfT) into road conditions in England for the years ending March 2020 and 2021, has shown that roads in Hertfordshire are better than or equal to the national average.

The DfT statistical release, which has been produced annually since 2007/8, categorises roads into three categories, green (good condition), amber (work may be needed) and red (roads that should be considered for maintenance). It then considers the class of road, ‘A,’ ‘B,’ ‘C’ and unclassified.

The DfT statistics show the roads that should be considered for maintenance and so a lower percentage is better. In 2020 and 2021, the number of roads in England classified as red was 4% of ‘A’ roads, 6% of ‘B’ and ‘C’ roads and 17% of unclassified roads. In Hertfordshire, 3% of ‘A’ roads were classified as red, 6% of ‘B’ and ‘C’ roads and 12% of unclassified roads.

Hertfordshire’s Queen’s Green Canopy takes root with 36,000 trees to be planted in the next year

The first of over 36,000 trees have been planted as part of Hertfordshire County Council’s efforts in the Queen’s Green Canopy, a project which encourages people to ‘Plant a Tree for the Jubilee’.

Currently just over 850 trees have been planted, including 100 trees at 43 Hertfordshire schools, as well as on highways verges across the county. The remaining 36,000 trees will be planted across a number of sites in Hertfordshire over the next 18 months.

This year’s planting includes a ‘statement’ site at County Hall, Hertford, where 27 trees were planted followed by a small ceremony during the Sustainable Hertfordshire Eco-Fair on Saturday 27 November.

In addition, an avenue of 30 lime trees at Aldenham Country Park make up the second ‘statement’ planting site, with 350 more trees planned for Aldenham next year as part of the park’s 100 Aker Wood.



Positive change for people the priority as innovation scheme in Hertfordshire gathers pace

With significant progress being made on the ground-breaking Hertfordshire Living Lab project, our county is showing clear signs of securing a more sustainable future.

Work on Hertfordshire County Council's pioneering Living Lab initiative, for which it received a Local Growth Fund grant of £748,000 from Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), started in 2020 – the scheme is leading the way in ultimately creating 'smart' towns and cities across the UK. As well as Hertfordshire LEP, the County Council's other partners on the scheme include Ocado Group, BT, and the University of Hertfordshire.

In simple terms, the project has seen Hatfield Business Park become a 'test-bed' for 'smart' living, with a variety of innovations being developed there as viable solutions to tasks and issues we all face in our everyday lives.

The Living Lab has and will continue to provide experimental services to residents, local workers, and students such as the driverless delivery of goods, while people will have the opportunity to help to shape these innovative concepts through a dedicated digital engagement platform.

This cutting-edge innovation, which includes the use of drones and robots, is being developed to test the way in which technology can seamlessly interact to make life better for everyone. The Hatfield Business Park is a perfect location for these trials - being home to a range of private businesses, the university, and residential properties.

Cole Green Way Geared Up for Cycling and Walking

A small group of members from Hertfordshire County Council gathered outside on Friday 17 December to celebrate the completion of a project to improve a popular local traffic-free route.

The Cole Green Way – once the railway line between Welwyn Garden City and Hertford – has had a major makeover, thanks to funding from Sustrans and the county council.

Walking and cycling charity Sustrans are custodians of The National Cycle Network which is a critical part of the UK's active travel infrastructure. At almost four miles long, the Cole Green Way forms part of the network and provides a valued connection between Welwyn Garden City and Hertford. Sustrans were able to support the project as part of their 'Paths for Everyone' review and a funding package from the Department for Transport to improve the network.

Strategy to establish 1.8 million new trees in Hertfordshire recommended by councillors

Hertfordshire County Councillors today (Thursday 3 February) recommended the adoption of the county council's first Tree and Woodland Strategy. The strategy sets out the council's approach to improve tree and woodland management in Hertfordshire, as well as outlining ambitions to establish 1.8 million new trees in the county by 2030. (Approved by cabinet March 2022)

The establishment of 1.8m new trees will support the council's target to improve nature across the county by 20% by 2050 as outlined in its Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy. In addition, the 1.8m new trees will also play a role in improving air quality and reducing carbon in the atmosphere.

The strategy also outlines ways the county council will improve the management of existing trees and woodlands in Hertfordshire to ensure that they remain as healthy as possible while providing maximum benefits to landowners, wildlife, and residents.



The strategy also includes plans to allow residents and businesses to play their part in establishing and enhancing trees and woodlands in their local communities through grant schemes and volunteering opportunities.

Planning at East Herts On 22nd February East Herts Council Development Management Committee met to determine the Central and Eastern River Crossing plans connected with the proposed Harlow and Gilston Garden Town developments. The Neighbourhood Plan Group, residents and I made verbal representations. Members unanimously agreed the Central crossing. Three members voted against the Eastern crossing but the majority were in favour. The meeting commenced at 5:30pm and concluded at 12:15am. This was following a full day at County Council including agreeing the budget and precept for 2022/3

The Harlow DMC met on 23rd Feb to determine the same applications, and which were also agreed.

Hertfordshire County Council has recently submitted its bid for government funding to support the introduction of over 20 electric buses in Stevenage.

The Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme is a central government initiative to help local transport authorities introduce zero emission buses, together with the infrastructure needed to support them. The county council, in partnership with bus operator Arriva, were successful with their initial proposal and have now submitted their final business plan. A decision on whether the plan has been successful should be known by March 2022.

The ZEBRA scheme funding would see a total of 27 of Stevenage's ageing diesel bus fleet replaced with new electric ones, which should be in service by 2024.

Public consultation opens for Brookfield Riverside and Garden Village in Cheshunt

Development Partners, Borough of Broxbourne, Hertfordshire County Council and Sovereign Peveril Brookfield Limited are developing the masterplan for the new town centre and 1,500-home scheme at Brookfield.

The public consultation has launched and will close on 21 March. Three separate planning applications for the overall site will be submitted later in 2022.

Information and a feedback form are available online. A series of five events is also taking place for the local community to find out more and ask any questions they may have before giving their views. The three planning applications will comprise:

**County Budget 2022/23
Environment Portfolio**

Waste and recycling: there are significant investment.

Making seven day opening at our larger recycling centres permanent

We are working hard to ensure as little as possible of the waste we manage goes to landfill. It's why we are investing £440,000 per year to ensure residents are able to help us recycle as much waste as possible.

A £34.6 million new Capital investment in waste management infrastructure will allow us to manage our waste efficiently and effectively.

We are investing in our waste services to ensure we can meet the needs of our growing communities.



Sustainability:

£5m for decarbonisation match funding, to drive forward delivery of the Sustainable Hertfordshire strategy and enable the council to seek external funding by providing matched funding where needed.

Remember we have already been successful in attracting over £23m of Salix funding towards decarbonisation of public buildings and schools. And we'll continue to proactively seek external funding as it becomes available.

We are investing £600,000 in additional resources to support the delivery of the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy. This will provide additional staff to manage more projects and initiatives, in addition to using the balance of the Sustainable Hertfordshire Revenue and capital money to either directly fund or in seeking external match-funding. To protect our environment for generations to come, we are implementing various initiatives through the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy aimed at making Hertfordshire a net zero carbon county by 2050. We'll also be undertaking a review of the Strategy over the coming months as agreed recently in panel, and in addition to the appointment of an Executive Director for Environment and Growth and Director of Environment we'll be able to give great momentum to our sustainability objectives.

Fire service

To help tackle climate change, HFRS has switched from diesel to Gas-To-Liquid (GTL), which converts natural gas – the cleanest-burning fossil fuel – into high-quality liquid fuel that would otherwise be made from crude oil. The move reduces carbon emissions from our vehicles by up to 90% compared to diesel fuel.

East Herts Projects in my Portfolio

New Grange Paddocks now open On 23rd October we formally attended the opening of the new Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre in Bishops Stortford along with Olympic Medalist and presenter Colin Jackson. The centre includes 25mtr pool, 20mtr training pool and confidence pool along with fitness suites and studios, spacious changing areas, and separate changing for outdoor sports, plus café. Next stages this month will be the demolition of the old centre. A planning application will be presented for a 3G pitch to go on the site. The upgrade of Hartham Leisure Centre in Hertford is ongoing.

Hartham Leisure Centre Work continues on the refurbishment of the pool and is anticipated to open in the Spring. A temporary Gym has been set up and demolition and construction of the new extension should commence by the end of March.

Hertford Theatre additional funding from New Homes Bonus Reserve agreed to offset inflationary pressure of £4m since Covid.

The tragic situation in Afghanistan has resulted in the British government offering formal routes for certain individuals to access the United Kingdom for their own safety. A number of these individuals and families have arrived in Hertfordshire and are being housed in three hotels in the county whilst they await permanent housing across the UK.

The British Red Cross are providing initial 'crisis' support with the help of the local voluntary sector. Hertfordshire County Council is working to co-ordinate the efforts to meet the longer term needs of



those arriving in the county. This has involved establishing a formal process for the receipt of donations and support, planning the direct provision of education, supporting the local NHS to arrange immediate healthcare provision, and working alongside District and Borough councils who are reviewing available housing and supporting the hotels in their areas.

The emerging and tragic situation in Ukraine. Strategic migration steering group is managing Hertfordshire's response. Been in existence for some years, born out of Syrian Crisis, then Hong Kong, Afghan, and now Ukraine. County, Districts, health, LGA, and voluntary organisations involved. We have over 600 Afghans in Hertfordshire, Also the factor of small boat arrivals, 4 hotels already established but 4 more coming on track. Highest population of Ukrainians in St Albans area. That may put pressure on schools and health etc. Ukrainian embassy can provide translators Family scheme launched on 4th March, some already received but not directly known to HCC. Homes for Ukraine scheme launched on 18th March.

There will need to be DBS checks for matches, to include all family members over 18 and needs to be in place for safeguarding, Background checks need to be taken, and up to local authority to do DBS checks, but people with visas should not be turned away.

There will need to be:

- Accommodation checks

- Data sharing

- Administer £200 interim payment to help people as they arrive

- Education

- Health care, some of it specialist and there will be trauma

- Job centre plus, and being able to apply for benefits, maybe bus passes if needed.

- NHS can support initially, but we need to train more trauma specialists

- Govt is providing £10,500 per individual to support families. Support Agencies will be able to claim reimbursement against their costs from these sums.

As at March 2022 we are still waiting for more government guidance. We are encouraging monetary donations more than items, but that may change as people's needs are known. Meetings with voluntary sector organisations are taking place to help tailor support. There is a Ukrainian Association of Great Britain in Waltham Cross. CVS organisations across County will help support local organisations to coordinate action.

The point of contact for any queries is Ukrainesupport@Hertfordshire.gov.uk

Triaging happens every day the forwarding to relevant body



Grants awarded from my Locality Grant Budget 2021/22

Applicant organisation	Date applied	Purpose	£15,000.00 agreed
Red Kite Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Service	26/05/2021	helpline for Recovery from Sexual Abuse	£300.00
Hunsdon Parish Council	26/05/2021	Community Event	
CHIPS	17/06/2020	vouchers for young volunteers	£400.00
BSBreathe Easy Group	01/06/2021	Breathe Easy Group activities, residents with COPD	£250.00
Hunsdon Scouts	03/06/2021	replacement mess tent	£500.00
Citizens Advice	09/06/2021	resident advice	£300.00
Hunsdon CCTV Camera to stream PC and Public Meetings	21/06/2021	community involvement and engagement	£150.00
Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline	11/07/2021	helpline	£300.00
YC Services for Young People	11/07/2021	Youth Activities at Bullfields Centre	£750.00
Headway	21/07/2021	rehabilitation of people with acquired brain injury	£250.00
Home Start Hertfordshire	16/08/2021	support for families	£300.00
Stort Valley Pride	19/08/2021	Stort Valley Pride event	£300.00
BSfirst Responders	21/09/2021	equipment	£300.00
BSChild Contact Centre	24/09/2021	funding contact centre	£300.00
Wiggley Willow	01/10/2021	adults with learning difficulties.	£300.00
BEEE Creative Admin <>	01/10/2021	dance for over 55s	£300.00
Grove Cottage	11/10/2021	to support shortfall in income arising from Covid	£300.00
Sawbridgeworth Local History Society	27/10/2021	Supply and fix 9 QR code boards in for local heritage	£300.00
East Herts Community Wellbeing Platform, Frontline	03/12/2021	contribution to running costs in EH	£750.00
Keech Hospice Care	09/12/2022	children's hospice for Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and	£500.00
Ware Cricket Club Widford	19/12/2021	Bowling machine	£300.00
St Margarets Parish Council	06/01/2022	skip hire for volunteers to clear footpath	£225.00
Hunsdon JMI The Barney & Echo Mindfulness Project	14/01/2022	internet safety for Key Stage 2 pupils	£180.00
Widford JMI The Barney & Echo Mindfulness Project	14/01/2022	internet safety for Key Stage 2 pupils	£210.00
Reedings Junior school The Barney & Echo Mindfulness Project	14/01/2022	internet safety for Key Stage 2 pupils	£360.00
Mandeville Primary The Barney & Echo Mindfulness Project	14/01/2022	internet safety for Key Stage 2 pupils	£192.00
High Wych Primary The Barney & Echo Mindfulness Project	14/01/2022	internet safety for Key Stage 2 pupils	£180.00
Spellbrook COE school The Barney & Echo Mindfulness Project	26/01/2022	internet safety for Key Stage 2 pupils	£180.00
Wareside Parish	07/02/2022	Folded map showing best walks and bike rides in W	£500.00
Centre for Wellbeing project for 5 schools	08/02/2022	Yellow book for students, Art & mental wellbeing	£4,500.00
Spellbrook school	08/02/2022	Yellow book for students, Art & mental wellbeing	£0.00
Fawbert & Barnard School	08/02/2022	Yellow book for students, Art & mental wellbeing	£0.00
Reedings School	08/02/2022	Yellow book for students, Art & mental wellbeing	£0.00
Mandeville School	08/02/2022	Yellow book for students, Art & mental wellbeing	£0.00
High Wych School	08/02/2022	Yellow book for students, Art & mental wellbeing	£0.00
Hailey Centre and St Claire Hospice	28/02/2022	Breavement Café	£323.00
Eastwick and Gilston Parish	18/02/2022	Contribution towards replacing 2 parish footpath sign boards	£1,000.00
		Running Total	£15,000.00

Councillor Eric Buckmaster

March/April 2022

8. Report on Hunsdon Recreation Area

Playground



The updated playground continues to be well used by the community and as expected, the zip wire is proving to be the star of the show.

Because of Covid-19 restrictions an opening party for the refurbished playground was unable to be held in 2020 but was incorporated in the Village Celebration in September 2021.

The popularity of the playground led to some very muddy areas during the winter, so we have improved some of the surfacing in the areas with the most wear. We've added some grass matting under the zip wire and put some hard surface under the pedestrian gate between the playground and the zip wire. Of course, since then it hasn't rained.

The climbing frame has been repainted and additional treads have been added to the zip wire ramp. These were both actions from the 2021 playground inspection.

Multi-Use Games Area

In January, a 21-year lease on the tennis courts was signed by the Parish Council and Bidwells, the agents for the Diocese of St Albans. So applications for funding for the MUGA have begun. We will need to raise around £100,000. So far, we have £16,900 in Section 106 money and profits from the September Village Celebration.


Applying for funding will be a long and difficult process. Many grants are currently linked to Covid-19 related projects and others are temporarily closed. Some funders also require us to start a CrowdFunding process to show that the community is behind a MUGA. This process will be started in the next few weeks. And an initial bid to the National Lottery Community Asset Fund will be submitted. In the meantime, have a look at the new Hunsdon Multi-Use Games Area Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/HunsdonActive/>

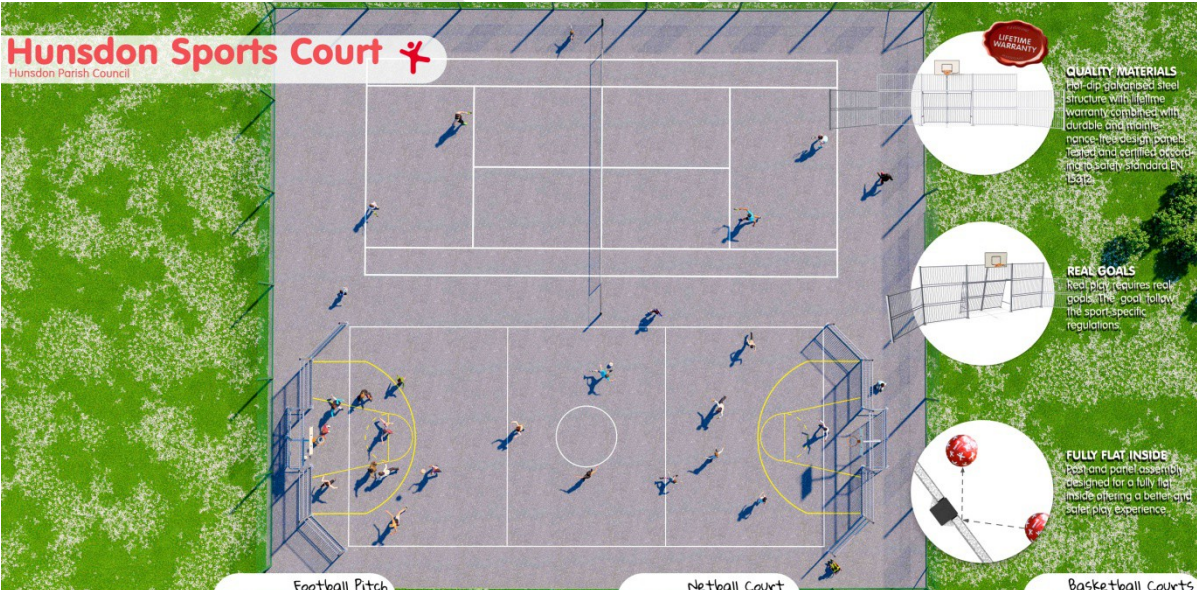


New treads and matting for the zip wire



Hunsdon Playground during the 2021 Village Celebration

Hunsdon Sports Court 
Hunsdon Parish Council



QUALITY MATERIALS
Hot-dip galvanized steel structure with lifetime warranty combined with durable and maintenance-free design panels. Tested and certified according to safety standard EN 13312.

REAL GOALS
Real play requires real goals! The goal follows the sport-specific regulations.

FULLY FLAT INSIDE
Fast and panel assembly designed for a fully flat inside offering a better and safer play experience.

Football Pitch Netball Court Basketball Courts

KOMPAN
Let's play

Plans for a Multi-Use Games Area on the tennis courts (as envisaged by Kompan)



Jackie Carthy 10th May 2022

9. Scouts and Cubs

With face to face meetings permitted, and nights away events restrictions lifted from the beginning of September, we were able to start the autumn term with a camp primarily for Cubs but with Beavers along for activities as day visitors, and the Scouts have also been out camping in spring. We are about to run a big event for Beavers and Cubs combined, with a wide range of activities including climbing, abseiling, kayaking, 3D cave maze, pedal cars, cresta run (like a sledge on a wooden track), and water zorbing. Our own leader team will be running activities to teach shelter building, fire skills, pioneering and outdoor cooking. Our camps offer something for everyone; a mix of adventure and traditional skills.

In the January 2022 annual Scout census our group reported a total membership of 40, a very low return for us. Today that figure stands at 58, not as strong as our pre-Covid total of 70, but the numbers are growing and signs of recovery are excellent. Following our recruitment campaign we have seen an increase in demand for places in our Beavers section (a whopping rise from 11 to 22 in less than 3 months), with enquiries coming from families outside Hunsdon eg Roydon where there is no Scout group, and Terlings Park. We now have members from Harlow and Bishops Stortford where waiting lists are over 12 months! In terms of adults on the team, we have also recently recruited 2 new leaders which has, importantly, enabled us to return to weekly meetings for Beavers.

Having missed out on district events for 2 years the group enjoyed taking part in the Carol Service with Ware and District Brownies and Rainbows, Remembrance Parade, and St George's Parade in Ware, and the youth activities such as the annual fun fun, sleepovers, night hike and competition camps are all back on the calendar. At the recent Cubs go carting competition, with our young fresh team who haven't seen this event before, we put on a great show and won the runner up trophy!

Looking ahead we have planned a trip to ESSA for water activities, another camp for Scouts, and we'll be running activities during the Jubilee Celebration event.

A big thank you to all our supporters during the difficult last couple of years. Our door is always open to new volunteers if anyone is interesting in helping out.

10. Parish Clerk's Report – 2021/22

The precept for 2020/21 was £21,000. The precept for 2022/2023 will increase to £21,400, to ensure the precept covers the day to day running of the village. A detailed breakdown of the accounts is shown over the page and the Council's books will be available for inspection later this year.

The Council has its own website, <http://www.hunsdon.org.uk>, on which Council minutes, agendas, statutory documents, and audit documents [when available later this month] are available.

Our litter pickers continue to do a good job. East Herts funds our litter pickers – £1,942 pa. Despite their hard work, it is not possible for them to clear every part of the parish on a regular



basis, due to Health and Safety they are unable to clear beyond the village boundary. I would like to see parishioners taking care of the areas around their homes by clearing some of the litter left by the thoughtless and uncaring, keeping to the pavements though and not stepping into the roads. The Council would very much like to thank those who already voluntarily clear litter. This year has seen a new initiative for litter picking. We have taken the organising of this in house, with the pickers reporting directly to a Parish Councillor and the clerk. This will save a sum of £400 per annum. The bin is now stored at the Fox Public House.

The Council's thanks go to the Gardening club who keeps our flower planters looking beautiful throughout the year.

In September 2021, the Parish Council set up a committee to organise a village event to enable everyone to come together to celebrate the ending of Covid restrictions. Funding was provided by:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| - Hunsdon Parish Council | £1,000 |
| - Steve Salih (Crown owner) | £1,000 |
| - Village Hall | £500 |
| - Principal Trees | £500 |
| - History Society | £100 |
| - Parish Rooms Trust | £500 |

Although this was not a fund-raising event, a total of £2,334 was raised and donated to the MUGA fund.

clerk@hunsdonparishcouncil.org



Financial position for the year 2021 to 2022

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**Hunsdon Parish Council
Revenue Expenditure**

Credit

	Budget	To date	Remaining period	Year	Variance
B/F General	£17,901.06	£19,267.28		£19,267.28	£1,366.22
Precept	£21,000.00	£21,000.00	£0.00	£21,000.00	£0.00
Litter Picker	£1,942.00	£1,942.12	£0.00	£1,942.12	£0.12
Allotment rents	£489.00	£483.00	£0.00	£483.00	£-6.00
VAT refund rev		£1,339.07	£0.00	£1,339.07	£1,339.07
Grant Neighbourhood Plan		£2,000.00	£0.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00
Playing Field		£218.75	£0.00	£218.75	£218.75
Totals	£41,332.06	£46,250.22	£0.00	£46,250.22	£4,918.16

Debit

Administration	£2,400.85	£2,548.98	£0.00	£2,548.98	£148.13
Litter pickers	£1,600.00	£1,560.00	£0.00	£1,560.00	£-40.00
Salary	£5,762.12	£5,697.97	£0.00	£5,697.97	£-64.15
General Power of Competence	£720.00	£550.00	£0.00	£550.00	£-170.00
Allotments	£617.61	£205.99	£0.00	£205.99	£-411.62
Playing Field	£700.63	£765.98	£0.00	£765.98	£65.35
Rest of village	£1,557.34	£1,214.03	£0.00	£1,214.03	£-343.31
Grounds Maintenance	£5,025.00	£10,236.23	£0.00	£10,236.23	£5,211.23
Neighbourhood Plan	£5,500.00	£9,318.82	£0.00	£9,318.82	£3,818.82
Churchyard donation	£500.00	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	£500.00
Village Event donation	£0.00	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00
S111 consultants	£2,000.00	£939.00	£0.00	£939.00	£-1,061.00
NP Communicator Co-ordinator	£2,000.00	£755.00	£0.00	£755.00	£-1,245.00
Defibrillator funding	£365.00	£1,246.74	£0.00	£1,246.74	£881.74
Capital Projects	£12,000.00	£3,156.00	£0.00	£3,156.00	£-8,844.00
Totals	£40,748.55	£40,194.74	£0.00	£40,194.74	£-553.81

Surplus	£583.51	£6,055.48	£0.00	£6,055.48	£5,471.97
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Totals

Capital Expenditure

Credit

	Budget	To date	Remaining period	Year	Variance
B/F Special Projects	£30,285.28	£30,567.06		£30,567.06	£281.78
s 106		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
East Herts Community Grant		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Parish Room Trust		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
VAT refund Cap		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
New Homes Bonus		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
s 137		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Business rates grant		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Village Event		£4,480.21	£0.00	£4,480.21	£4,480.21
Totals	£30,285.28	£35,047.27	£0.00	£35,047.27	£4,761.99

Playground Equipment	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Inspection for Equipment	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Tennis Court Legal Fees	£4,000.00	£3,909.00	£0.00	£3,909.00	£-91.00
MUGA allocation	£14,500.00	£0.00	£16,928.91	£16,928.91	£2,428.91
Village Event	£0.00	£2,146.18	£0.00	£2,146.18	£2,146.18
Totals	£18,500.00	£6,055.18	£16,928.91	£22,984.09	£4,484.09

Surplus	£11,785.28	£28,992.09	£-16,928.91	£12,063.18	£277.90
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Bank Reconciliation			
31st March 2022			
			£2,088.05
Santander bank			£36,291.30
Litter picker money			£23.00
Total			£38,402.35
Payments agreed but not cleared bank			
Andrew Manning Clean, sand and repaint the climbing frame Grounds Maintenance £650.00			
Kompan Supply and install single layer grass mat to zipwire Grounds Maintenance £1,886.18			
AS Handyman Services Install new PC noticeboard and dog waste bin Grounds Maintenance £283.60			
Payments to be agreed			
P.A. Knott Grass cutting for March 2022 Grounds Maintenance £505.00			
M Nissim March PC NP Communicator Co- £30.00			
			<u>£3,354.78</u>
Balance at Bank			£35,047.57



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