



HUNSDON PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING REPORT 15th May 2023 8.30pm



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1. Hunsdon Parish Council - Chairman's Report - Year 2022/23 (Cllr. Bob Toll - Chair)

Last September our beloved Queen passed away and here in Hunsdon we observed the established protocols during the period of mourning, setting up a book of condolence and lowering flags. My thanks to all who helped organise these arrangements.

Many of the old issues affecting our Parish persist but I am pleased to report on some very encouraging developments over the last few months.

Under the leadership of David Ottolangui, an Events Committee has organised hugely successful Summer and Christmas events and also run sponsored lunches and brunches for the community to enjoy free of charge. What a great way to meet fellow residents and make new friends. Although the traditional summer fete fell victim to covid we are now back on track with these community get togethers. Many thanks to Dave and his team for all their hard work.

In response to flooding in the High Street our County Council member, Eric Buckmaster has been extremely active in driving forward maintenance works on the surface water drains. Recent storms have not caused serious problems but we need to anticipate future threats through climate change. Survey works and investigations are in hand to model the drainage network and assess what measures will need to be taken.

Eric was also instrumental in arranging for traffic speed surveys past the school which have met the criteria for a school time 20mph limit. Electrical network surveys are being undertaken to identify locations for the necessary signage.

Frank O'Shea has reported on the Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan which is now formally adopted and nests with the District Plan. The PC has launched a drive to progress the Task List in our Plan, a schedule of projects which the community identified to enhance the appearance of our village centre and to alleviate the problems we have with speeding traffic and heavy lorries. A number of ideas have been progressed and we are looking to EHC for grants to make a start in this coming year.

On the planning front we are threatened by the proposal for a quarry on Briggens Estate – Olives Farm. The Draft County Minerals and Waste Plan, published for consultation last July, designates the Briggens Estate as a minerals allocation site. The Parish Council submitted substantial objections to the Plan on the grounds that neither the need for the minerals or the site location can be justified. We are working with our MP, EHC, Stop the Quarry and Stanstead Abbots PC to bring pressure on the County to rethink the minerals strategy. Anthony Bickmore, Chair of the joint NPG with Eastwick and Gilston, has produced his annual report which gives full details of a very busy and eventful year which ended in a mad scramble by the developers and EHC to get the outline applications approved before the local elections. Anthony points out the shortcomings of the whole process and outlines the next steps. 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. Here in Hunsdon we not only continue to face the challenges and opportunities presented by the Gilson Area but now the threat from the quarry proposals. I have no doubt that these issues are the most important ever faced by the village and top priorities for action. I will continue to work on the PC to achieve the best possible outcome for us.

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 went on other commitments including supporting events, the



Neighbourhood Plans, the lower graveyard and exceptionally engaging professional advice when required.

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 and Bud Carthy and Martyn Reid for their tireless efforts watching over our rights of way.

My sincere thanks go to Eric Buckmaster for his support and advice through the year which has been invaluable: securing work on the flooding problem, getting potholes filled and organising traffic surveys. Eric has stepped down as our District Councillor and I also thank him for his support at the Development Management Committee meetings into the Gilston outline applications. Eric will remain working with the PC as our CC member.

Also thank you to my colleagues on the Parish Council (Frank O'Shea, Stella Oliver, Dave McDonald, Dave Ottolangui) for their support and hard work and to Carole our Clerk for council administration and managing the maintenance of our facilities. I wish to record my thanks for her advice, patience and support she has given me. Thanks also to Cllr. Steve Burton who left us at the end of March. We will miss his contributions, especially advice on financial matters. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank all of you who come along to our PC meetings and draw our attention to concerns and problems. Your contributions are most welcome and extremely valuable.

2. Hunsdon Parish Rooms Trust (Registered Charity 2896) Andrew Pummell (Trust Secretary)

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 the 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 organization or society who wish to apply for a grant of a charitable nature. The Trustees in 2022 were:

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

The following grants totalling £2310.12 were made during the year ending 31st December 2022. £215.12 was paid to Hunsdon School to provide prizes for endeavour. £250.00 was also paid to the School to fund the school's gardening club. This money was used to purchase automatic watering equipment for plants during the summer holidays and also for general gardening equipment. £500 was paid to the Scouts for the cost of a new tent. £750 was paid to the Parish Council as a contribution towards the cost of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations. £120 was paid to the Village Hall to fund the Coffee Morning. £225 was also paid to the Village Hall to pay for the treatment of the grass areas of the Hall. The Trust paid £250 as a contribution towards the cost of the Christmas Fayre.

The accounts for the year ending 31st December 2022 have been approved by the Trustees and can be inspected by reference to myself, Andrew Pummell, Trust Secretary.

The Trust held a total of £28116.61 in its NatWest account at the start of the year and ended the year with a total of £28822.49



3. Report of the Parish Paths Wardens - Bud Carthy and Martyn Reid 10/05/2023

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 further year influenced d 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 again acknowledged.

Benches. Places for People had 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. This year the family of a local resident funded a new bench in memory of a family member at their favourite spot south of Townsland wood. With time this may replace a bench close to this spot.

Broomlands. In our report six 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.

Fly tipping A worrying occurrence occurred over Christmas with the illegal tipping of asbestos sheet at the entrance to the airfield. Knight Frank are to be thanked for the removal of this hazard and are encouraged to address such issues with alacrity.

Footpath Publications. Two years ago, 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 parishes.



4. Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan Report

The year has been a successful one for the HANP, sponsored by Hunsdon Parish Council.

We have successfully piloted the Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan <https://hunsdonneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/> through its process and it now forms part of the development Plan. As such any planning applications within the Hunsdon Neighbourhood Area will be assessed using HANP alongside the East Herts District Plan (2018), the mineral and waste plans and all other material considerations.

The Plan was submitted to Public Examination in May 2022. The independent Inspector examined the draft plan and the many representations made about it and decided to pass it with a few modifications, kindly saying,

"I commend all those involved in the preparation of the NP. Its high-quality means that this Report can be much more concise than would otherwise be the case."

The next step was for East Herts Council to put it to a Referendum of all the people of Hunsdon on the electoral roll. The Plan received a massive endorsement from local residents on September 15th, with a good turnout (32.66%) and **over 95% vote in favour**. It was formally adopted by East Herts Council in November 2022 and became part of the Planning Policy controlling housing development in our Area.

On **Finances from 1st April 2022**, we spent £1428 (net of VAT) on consultant's fees and £482.23 expenses for printing and publicity. This was all covered by the £1929 we received from Central Government's Locality Fund for Neighbourhood Planning. On the overall cost my best estimation of the total cost is:

- Consultants' fees net of vat	£16990
- Printing and publicity materials net	<u>£ 3319</u>
	£20309
- Less received from central government grants	<u>£13904</u>
- Balance paid by the Parish Council	<u>£6405</u>

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

5. Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group – annual Report to the Sponsor Councils (**Anthony Bickmore, Chairman, HEGNPG**)

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. Since the successful adoption of



the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan in 2021, the group has been focused on responding to planning applications from developers Places for People and Taylor Wimpey, commissioning necessary professional support, and working with all stakeholders – including local authorities and the media – to best represent and protect the interests of the local communities. The group is working to ensure that proper regard is given to the Neighbourhood Plan at all key phases of development, including the creation of a strategic landscape master plan and village master planning, and the creation of bodies and processes of the stewardship of the Gilston Area. The last year has been an exceptionally busy one 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 volunteer time to support local residents.

Financial

The NPG opened the financial year with a cash balance of **£40,246.00** and closed the year with a balance of **£53,041.01**

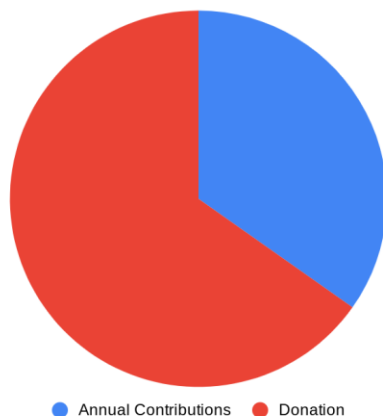
Total income for the year was £23,000

£8,000 was received as annual contributions from sponsor Parish Councils. £15,000 was raised privately

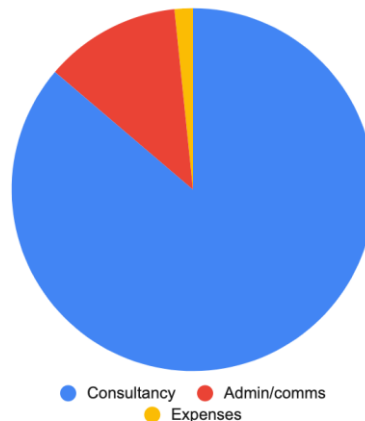
Total expenditure for the year was £10,204.99

£8,800 was spent on expert consultancy to assist the NPG with its responses to the ongoing planning applications and approvals for the new homes and infrastructure of Villages 1-7. £1,237.50 was for administration and communications costs. £167.49 was for printing, postage, webspace and other similar expenses.

Income



Expenditure



There will be several significant areas requiring top-level consultancy work in the 2023-24 calendar year: namely input on any “Call-in” inquiry by the Secretary of State, or alternatively work on the Villages 1 & 7 Masterplan and the Strategic Landscape Masterplan, and the development of an appropriate Stewardship structure for shared community spaces under the terms of the existing Planning Approvals.

Key activities and progress over the last year

- Neighbourhood Plan

Having an award-winning Neighbourhood Plan is one thing but ensuring that it is properly recognised is another. We were disappointed that East Herts said they considered its policies but “on balance” set them aside when considering the two detailed Highways Applications in March 2022 and the outline planning permissions granted earlier this year for the 7 villages. In meetings, communications, and in conversations with the media and our local MP, we have been



firmly pushing back on this blatant disregard for a key document that is a formal part of the Local Plan.

- **Villages 1-6 & 7, Outline planning applications**

The two outline planning applications, (one for Villages 1-6 and one for Village 7) have been worked on between the Developers and East Herts over the last year. The developer of villages 1-6 raised viability concerns in the spring of 2022, in effect saying that they can no longer stand by their promises made to the Planning Inspector at the time of the public inquiry into the Gilston allocation. This Inquiry accepted the case the Council and Developers put forward for the release of the Green Belt.

The Developers of Villages 1-6 have obtained consents for very expensive roads asked for by the Council to essentially create a Harlow bypass. The cost of these roads has been a significant factor in making the development of the Gilston green field site unviable. The developers have undertaken a viability study which has concluded that, while the site was released on the basis that 40% of the homes would be affordable the Council have agreed, in the light of the Developers Viability study to a reduced level of 'Affordable Housing' at 23%. We have expressed our strong concerns on this reduction, especially given that the need for affordable housing was an important part of the case made before the Inspector which led to release of the Green Belt designation.

The developer of Village 7 confirmed last spring that their scheme was viable and so could provide 40% Affordable Housing. However have changed their minds and they too have succeeded in getting East Herts Council to accept their scheme is not viable and so have been in given consent for a similar reduction in the Affordable Housing provision. The consequence is that local families in need of Affordable Housing, for example to help get on the housing ladder, will find there to be a shortfall of some 1700 affordable homes directly as a result of the Council's changed approach. The Council have declined to explain how they will provide these missing affordable homes which were at the heart of their case for the release of the Green Belt. We also made formal representations on a number of other strategic failings in the applications however the Planning Committee approved both applications. It is impossible to change the site allocation for 10,000 homes in the area, but the group is continuing to explore every possible legal and political avenue to ensure a decent development with timely infrastructure for existing as well as new residents, in the face of attempts by both East Herts Council and the developers to backtrack on these promises.

- **Our request to the Secretary of State for the applications to be "Called In"**

The approach of the Developers and the Council and their refusal to give proper regard to the Neighbourhood Plan challenges the whole purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is an important policy question, not least since the Secretary of State commended us for producing our Plan, which has also won three national awards. At the time of preparing this report we are waiting for the Secretary of State's decision on whether to 'Call in' the applications for his decision after a full public inquiry re-examines the basis upon which planning permission should be granted and the type of development that should take place

- **Landscape Master Planning**

Despite the policy position requiring the developers to create a Strategic Landscape Masterplan no more work has been done on this over the last year. On a more positive note and as a result of our representations, Places for People have undertaken some preliminary tree planting over the last year. The objective is that as the trees grow, they will 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



obligations on the Developers to deliver a 10% Biodiversity net gain. We continue to hold discussions with the Developers on such issues.

- **Master Planning for Village 1** – No further work on this was done over the last year.
- **Stewardship**
After a long period of declining to talk to us the Developers and Council started to engage us in discussions over the critically important issues of how the significant amounts of open space both within the new villages and the land which will not be developed will be managed and funded. The Policy position is that the land will be transferred to the local community trust to be managed. This body will be a crucial component in the success or otherwise of the development and the integration of the new communities. In many ways its role will also include aspects which used to be assumed by local councils and there will be pressure in the next 3-5 years to look at a possible re-organisation of the local parish councils which will be an important matter for the existing Parish Councils to take on board and take an active part in with the full help of the NPG.
- **Gilston Steering Group (now Gilston Development Forum)**
We have been a part of this Group for a number of years; the Group is designed to ‘Steer’ the Gilston project led by East Herts Council and requires the developers to share information and timetables with us. Last year we asked for a reset of this Group’s remit and operation. The result is a more efficient body, the “Gilston Development Forum” with a much more collaborative approach to setting the agenda and following through actions.
- **Stakeholder engagement**
With your respective Chairmen and Vice Chairmen we continue to represent to key stakeholders the views of the NPG.
- **Looking forward**
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, roads, cemetery space and litter etc. 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.

The coming year will be crucial. In one scenario we could be looking at a major public inquiry which will give us the opportunity to argue for amended outline applications addressing the shortcomings in the current proposals. Alternatively the threat of a possible call in may lead to improved engagement and recognition of our concerns. The third – most disappointing – scenario will see EHC and the developers progressing as they have planned but, in this situation, it is absolutely vital that we still have a seat at the table and the necessary resources to have a real influence on the Master planning stages to secure the best possible quality development. The following key activities we anticipate will require our attention:

Issue	Comment	Likely Timescale
Call in Process	If the Secretary of State(SoS) ‘Calls In’ the scheme then an inspector will be appointed to hold a public Inquiry into the scheme. The Inspector will report to the SoS who will	There could be an Inquiry in the latter half of 2023 assuming the SoS agrees to our Call-in request



	make a decision	
Strategic Landscape Master Plan	Important strategy key to maintaining the original Developers' promises of 7 villages separated by landscape buffers and how the open areas to the Northwest comprising Hunsdon airfield and Eastwick Woods are managed	Outstanding/started in June 21, put on hold in November – no date offered for restarting now subject to Call in
Village Master planning	Important work on setting the context for both Village 1 and 7 to be done in the light of the Local and Neighbourhood Plans.	Outstanding/ V1 started in June 21, put on hold in November – no date offered for restarting now subject to Call in
Stewardship	To develop a structure for the long-term management of the areas not being developed which are due to be passed to the Community as well as the stewardship of community assets within the village areas	We need to develop this further in collaboration but at present is on hold pending Call in at wish of Developers
Section 106 Planning obligations	To comment on the proposed formal obligations by the developers on the provision of infrastructure and the trigger points by which needed infrastructure must be delivered.	EHC delegated to Officers all of this important detail which they are determined to carry out in secret. Latest suggestions indicate that the work will not be completed much before 2024. NPG will continue to press for engagement, Call in maybe quoted as reason for delay
Funding	To continue to seek a broad range of funding to continue the Group's work. We have received a generous donation this year.	Ongoing
Building and resourcing the NPG team	Reviewing our effectiveness and encouraging residents to participate	Ongoing

27th April 2023



6. Report by Hunsdon JMI School Governors - Mike Newman Chair of Governors

The role of a Governing Body is twofold – to provide day-to-day support and oversight for the headteacher and staff but also to take ‘the long view;’ to look at everything that is happening around and about and consider how that might impact on the school’s future. And in that respect, there are dark clouds on the horizon - not that those clouds are in any way of the school’s own making but rather because it is being put under ever greater pressures from central and local government influences. Those influences have particular impact on small schools and Hunsdon – along with every other small school – is facing something of a ‘double whammy.’

We are all too acutely aware of the current squeeze on government finances due to a number of factors (some completely outside of government controls, others somewhat self-imposed) which ripples down into local government and then into school budgets. Since small schools are less able to benefit from ‘economies of scale’ then the smaller the school, the greater the financial pressure; we are told that all schools in Hertfordshire with less than 60 pupils are already in absolute deficit or expect to be by end of next year and 80% of schools with 61 - 70 pupils expect to be in similar position by the end of next year. Hunsdon is in nothing like as dire a position as that, but the economic outlook is hugely uncertain – not least because of the unresolved increase in teachers’ salaries which, at whatever level will eventually be agreed, will not be reflected in the grant to individual schools. The key factor which defines whether the outlook for a school is bad or absolutely disastrous is keeping it full – keeping the pupil : staff ratio at its optimum. Hunsdon has been full for many years and, given the number of children approaching school age in the village or with siblings already in school, we can be assured it will remain full into the foreseeable future. All that against a cyclic trend downwards in the numbers of primary and secondary pupils which means we are one of the very few schools locally that is full. But that is no accident; we have a well-deserved ‘outstanding’ Ofsted rating and are the school of choice way beyond the village itself.

However, Ofsted’s ‘Education Inspection Framework’ has changed since our last inspection in a way which – intentionally or otherwise - disadvantages small schools:

- • Small primaries are currently five times more likely to be graded ‘inadequate’ than large ones
- • No small school (less than 144 pupils) was rated ‘outstanding’ under the new EIF between Sept 21 to June 22
- • All 16 of the previously top-rated smallest primaries that underwent an inspection between September 2021 and June 2022 lost their ‘outstanding’ grade.

When the odds are stacked against you like that it must be hugely dispiriting for Mr Millward and the staff, and the Governing Body is only too conscious – especially mindful of the tragic death of the headteacher at Caversham School – of the huge pressures under which they work. **I hope this APM will recognise that and might wish to formally record the appreciation of the Parish Council on behalf of parishioners for the extraordinary contribution the school and its staff makes to the community.**

On a somewhat brighter note, at last year’s APM I noted that we had a number of vacancies on the Governing Body as members came to the end of their term; this year I’m delighted to say that five new governors have stepped up to the mark – each of them bringing a wealth of skills, experience and enthusiasm to the role. Similarly the Friends of Hunsdon School has had an injection of new blood and provides much-appreciated financial and volunteer support. But if ever there was a time when the school needed support from the community, then it is now against the backdrop of those dark clouds.

I



7. County Councillor Report (Cllr Eric Buckmaster)

Hertfordshire has become one of the first regions in the UK to partner with Energy Saving Trust to provide an energy efficiency app to residents and help them make energy savings. A big focus is on how to reduce energy bills at home.

Bus services are set to be improved throughout Hertfordshire thanks to a funding boost of just over £35m. This week, it was announced that Hertfordshire County Council has been successful with its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) submission to the Department of Transport and received an indicative £29.7m to deliver new transport schemes and initiatives county-wide.

May

From Watford to Ware, compassion thrives in Hertfordshire residents set to welcome Ukrainian arrivals. The Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 sparked the largest refugee crisis since the Second World War and in response, the UK Government put in place two schemes to help those fleeing their homeland. **Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service donates fire engine and equipment to Ukraine.**

Hertfordshire residents invited to share their memories of Her Majesty the Queen for Platinum Jubilee exhibition and archive Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS) are inviting residents to share their photographs of jubilee street parties or royal visits for an exhibition chronicling Her Majesty's impact on the county and its residents

June

Hertfordshire County Council has reinforced its commitment to ensuring that pupils with SEND receive the specialist support they need to get an excellent education. Members of Cabinet agreed plans to consult on proposals to create nine primary specialist resource provisions (SRPs) for children and young people with social communication difficulties, including autism, in addition to children with severe speech disorders and developmental language disorder, spread around the county.

17,000 trees to be planted at Panshanger Park for Queen's Green Canopy celebrations for Platinum Jubilee

As reported by [Welwyn and Hatfield Times](#), 17,000 trees are to be planted at Panshanger Park for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Hertfordshire County Council has been awarded a further £2.6m from the Department for Transport to provide additional walking and cycling projects across the county.

The recent funding is in addition to the £6.4m the council received in November 2020 to enable residents to live healthier lifestyles by making it easier and safer to walk and cycle. Mainly focussed on the larger towns of Welwyn Garden City, Hemel Hempstead, St. Albans, Stevenage and Watford.

County Show. Residents help to save more than four tonnes of furniture from disposal

More than 500 items – weighing over four tonnes - of second-hand furniture were sold at Hertfordshire County Council's County Show Pop-up Reuse Shop - all items that would have otherwise been broken down and recycled or disposed of. The Pop-Up Reuse Shop welcomed more than 4,000 people through its doors, with high sales resulting in almost £5,000 being raised for charity and proving the council isn't the only one focused on making Hertfordshire a cleaner, greener and healthier place for all.



Hertfordshire's trailblazing Family Safeguarding model highlighted in Government National Review to be extended .Family is at the heart of a three-year pilot scheme which has been approved by Hertfordshire County Council to reunite children in care with their families, where this would be safe, secure and in their best interests.

The £5.4m targeted programme will extend the county council's successful Family Safeguarding model,

East Herts Support during a Crisis. Help to manage the cost of living With the cost of living on the rise, we have put together a one-stop source of information for local people – from checking what support is available, to finding your cheapest deals - get the help you need to manage the cost of living. If financial stress or other worries are getting on top of you, speak to [HertsHelp](#) or [visit our HealthyHub](#). They can offer advice or put you in touch with the right people.

July

Minerals and Waste Plan Regulation 18 Consultation. The plan allocates 3 sites for minerals extraction, Briggens, Hatfield Aerodrome, the land adjoining coopers Lane.

Hertfordshire County Council is brightening up Welham Green, Hatfield with a wind and solar street lighting trial. The trial, which is the first of its kind on the public highway in the county, will see two LED lighting units installed on the remote footpath in Corner View, Welham Green, Hatfield,

New contracts to end landfill for Hertfordshire's waste Hertfordshire County Council plans to stop sending waste to landfill sites by 2025 after signing new long-term contracts for disposal of the county's residual waste. Waste that cannot be reused, recycled or composted will be sent to energy recovery facilities where it will be used to generate electricity as a cleaner alternative to fossil fuels.

Meet air pollution targets by 2030, says Hertfordshire Council. As reported by Air Quality News, the English local authority has revealed calls for minimum air quality standards to be met by 2030, a decade ahead of Downing Street's aims. Following the release of a new report by the National Audit Office that the British government is failing to deliver on its air quality standards, Hertfordshire Council wants to meet limits ten years ahead of Westminster's target. This relates specifically to particulates, PM2.5, target of 10ug/m3 to 2030 in line with the WHO's interim guideline

Funding for domestic abuse support services Two vital support services is now available for Hertfordshire residents experiencing 'high-risk' domestic abuse, thanks to funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership.

Services for Young People leads the way in LGBT+ young people's inclusion

Services for Young People's work with LGBT+ young people has been instrumental in Hertfordshire County Council and Herts for Learning being awarded the Stonewall Children and Young People's Services Gold Champion Award.

July/Aug

Heatwave In truly testing circumstances, crews responded to multiple, and at times, an unrelenting stream of large-scale incidents including road traffic collisions, fires close to the M25 and crop and field fires. Due to the quick response and actions of our teams, thankfully no-one was injured, and



larger incidents did not escalate into disasters, despite some fires rapidly approaching residential properties

Sunset Studios decision is “superb” for Hertfordshire residents. The prospect of Hertfordshire adding another world-class film, tv and digital production facility to its portfolio moved a step closer last week when Broxbourne Borough Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee granted outline planning permission for Sunset Waltham Cross Studios.

Free holiday fun keeps kids in Hertfordshire HAPpy this summer Hertfordshire County Council-funded free summer holiday camps are proving so popular that they are almost fully booked. More than 3,600 children who, on average, were booked to enjoy 10 days of free activities.

The HAF programme free holiday activity clubs, known locally as HAPpy Camps, started running across Hertfordshire at the start of the holidays. There were over 180 camps funded by Hertfordshire County Council, coordinated by Herts Sports Partnership and the Hertfordshire Community Foundation, and run by over 80 different providers

Hertfordshire residents have helped raise over £55,000 for the Fire Fighters Charity just by donating unwanted clothes, shoes and other textiles. Items can be donated at any one of twenty textile banks located at Hertfordshire Fire Stations. The scheme is supported by Hertfordshire Waste Partnership, made up of county, district and borough councils working together to reduce, reuse and recycle Hertfordshire waste.

Young people from Hertfordshire make lifelong memories on National Citizen Service summer programme Over 200 young people aged 16-17 gained vital life skills and lifelong memories this summer by taking part in the National Citizen Service (NCS) programmes run by Hertfordshire County Council Services for Young People (SfYP).

Hertfordshire County Council – A Financial Update

Like all organisations across the country, the ongoing impact of increasing inflation has added significantly to the pressures on Hertfordshire County Council's budget. The latest forecast of council finances estimates a shortfall of £23.5 million for 2022/23 and ongoing pressures for future years – despite having set a balanced budget for the next two years as recently as February.

It's costing a lot more to simply provide our services at current levels. For example, the bill to keep streetlights on has increased by 60%, that's an extra £2.3 million a year just to keep the lights on after dark. Through making savings and judicious use of reserves the shortfall was reduced and the councils balanced budget was restored

October

100,000 free trees for residents I announced, over 4 yrs.

Hertfordshire's Family Centre Service receives prestigious UNICEF reaccreditation for best practice in their Baby Friendly Initiative Hertfordshire's Family Support Service have recently been assessed by UNICEF and reaccredited for the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI), as continuing to deliver high standards of care to pregnant women and new mothers

Gritters on standby as winter approaches From Saturday 1 October Hertfordshire County Council's fleet of over 58 gritters are on standby, ready to spring into action and salt the county's roads when freezing weather approaches. Gritter crews and decision makers from our highways team will be ready around the clock to cover nearly half of Hertfordshire's entire road network – that's more than 1,500 miles (2,500km), or the



equivalent of salting from Hertford to Berlin and back. We send out our gritters when road surface temperatures are forecast to be 0.5°C, or below.

Nov/Dec

Hertfordshire's New Business Waste Service is Now Open Hertfordshire County Council has recently opened its first Business Waste Service. Located at Ware Recycling Centre, the service is designed to allow SME's the opportunity to dispose of waste generated from their trade activities in a transparent and compliant way. Waste including wood, hardcore, green garden and plasterboard, can be disposed of at competitive prices.

Your Tree Our Future' scheme empowers Hertfordshire residents to grow a more sustainable county through tree planting.

Hertfordshire County Council is offered residents the chance to claim free trees as part of its 'Your Tree Our Future' scheme which will see 100,000 trees given away over the next four years. The scheme will help the council to deliver on several of its Sustainable Hertfordshire ambitions as planting trees has a positive impact on air quality, helps reduce the carbon in our atmosphere, supports biodiversity and can help communities adapt to the impacts of climate change. In addition, access to natural features has been linked with benefits to physical and mental health.

Construction begins on Hertfordshire's first full net-zero carbon school

The Buntingford First School, which is being funded by Hertfordshire County Council and built by Morgan Sindall Construction, will open for September 2023 and will be operated by the Scholars Education Trust.

This is the first school in the county to be built and operate at net zero carbon, in line with the Hertfordshire County Council's sustainability strategy and ambition to be carbon neutral in its own operations by 2030. It will utilise a Passivhaus design which will improve the school's air quality, reduce carbon emissions and lower its energy running costs.

New 'Warm Spaces' directory launched in Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire County Council, and the county's ten district and borough councils, have today, Thursday 27 October, launched a new directory of public spaces and buildings which people can use as warm, welcoming spaces as temperatures drop.

This online directory will let people find libraries, family centres and community spaces near them where they can stay safe and warm. Many will also be running additional activities to provide people with the opportunity to meet others and take part in events such as slipper swaps for older people in libraries and stay and play events in family centres for families with young children.

Hertfordshire County Council launches new campaign to support residents this winter

We want residents to be aware of the help and support that's on offer locally to help them this winter. Our public reassurance campaign - 'here for you this winter' is about sharing our story with them. The campaign is shining a light on services which will help residents to stay safe and well as temperatures drop, in addition to providing information around services and support to help them manage the rising cost of living.

Carers Strategy for Hertfordshire 2022-25 A new Carers Strategy for Hertfordshire has been published. This strategy aims to support carers' wellbeing to help them to balance caring with their own needs. For the first time a single Strategy for Adult Carers and Young Carers has been developed with carers. The Strategy reaffirms partnership working between carers, health and social care providers and other agencies. There are four objectives, based on carers' own priorities, which are: Be informed; Life beyond caring; Maintaining health and wellbeing; and Receiving consistent, joined up services. View the Carers Strategy at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carersstrategy



Jan/Feb 2023

New report details Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service's improved performance

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service is pleased with its improved performance as detailed in a report published this week by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

HMICFRS visited Hertfordshire early in 2022 to inspect the work of the service under three pillars: Effectiveness, Efficiency, and People. Since the last report in 2018, the service has moved from 'Requires Improvement' in all three pillars to a 'Good' rating in two out of the three areas of inspection.

Hertfordshire County Council is encouraging residents to apply now for street parties to celebrate the King's coronation.

Anyone wanting to close a road for a street party will need to apply to the county council at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/streetparties by 26 March 2023.

Hertfordshire County Council expresses concern over looming ULEZ charges

Hertfordshire County Council has written to the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan advising him to 'go back to the drawing board' with his plans to expand his Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) due to the detrimental financial impact on the county's residents and businesses who cross the border into Greater London.

As a county with many centres, villages and towns, there are often challenges to travelling by public transport in Hertfordshire creating reliance on private car journeys. With so many Hertfordshire residents living on the border with London, travel into the proposed ULEZ by car is for many the only realistic available option for some journeys like visiting to provide care and support for loved ones. The introduction of a £12.50 charge to enter London, particularly at a time when households are struggling and fines of up to £180 for non-compliance are seen as a regressive tax on motorists.

County Budget Proposals Hertfordshire County Council proposes budget to protect vital services. In order to deliver a balanced budget, the county council will be making savings of £27.4m in 2023/24 – the highest level of savings since 2017. And only a small proportion of these savings (£2.9m) will impact on service provision or partners. These savings are in addition to those already made in the autumn to ensure a balanced budget for the remainder of the current financial year.

However these savings alone will not be enough to balance the budget, so in order to protect frontline services, Hertfordshire County Council is also proposing to raise council tax by 4.99% (including 2% specifically for social care). This means a typical Band D household will be paying £1,605.63, an increase of £1.47 per week.

- £38m to ensure adult care providers can continue to support residents – including a 9.68% wage increase for care staff to help recruitment and retention, matching the increase in the national living wage and continuing to ensure that Hertfordshire care wages are well above both the national and real living wages (supported by the social care precept)
- £15m is expected from the extension of the Household Support Fund to support our most vulnerable residents with the cost of living
- An extra £19m for Children's Services, including an extra £5.2m to support the children in our care
- £10m for home-to-school transport for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities to ensure they can get to school easily
- £6.4m to support waste disposal services, alongside new contracts that will mean that no waste in the county will go to landfill from 2024.



- £4.6m of extra funding into highways revenue budgets to cover inflation and ensure we can continue repairs and maintenance work on our roads.
- £36.4m to continue our work to improve recycling centres and make our waste infrastructure fit for the future
- Funding to continue moving forward the Brookfield Riverside and Garden Village developments in Broxbourne
- Continuing to invest in our website to enable more people to carry out transactions online.

The county council is also investing in projects that will ensure future savings. This investment will go into a number of projects that will help residents remain independent for longer, keep families together through early intervention schemes and save taxpayers money by transforming partnership working.

HCC accounts for 75pc of the council tax bill, 60 pc of which goes to adult and children's services. Out of the remainder goes to services such as Highways, Fire Service, Waste disposal and recycling, Public Health, and Planning, and libraries

EHDC is the Council Tax Collection Authority and pays out benefits. Also responsible for Waste Collection, Parks and Open Spaces. Leisure Centres, Theatre, Cultural services, Environmental health social prescribing, Planning, parking and on street and off-street enforcement, licencing, housing options, homelessness support, community engagement, Business support and more.

Gilston Villages 1-6 Outline Application approved and Village 7

This was considered by the committee on 28th February. The Hunsdon Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group were giving 12 minutes to address the committee as was I. Residents and other groups had a lesser amount of time. We had a number of concerns around affordable homes, delays in delivering infrastructure that would protect Pye Corner, cumulative impact of traffic, flood risk, air quality, health provision, education and more. Officers responded to all points but it seemed to me that whatever the concerns are that they will be addressed later. It was approved by majority, with two against and one abstention. I still have some strong concerns over the impact of around 25,000 houses across the sub region of Harlow, Gilston, Ware and Hertford and how it will be managed, monitored and enforced. Village 7 Outline was heard on 23rd March and also approved

Strategic migration

The Hertfordshire Strategic Migration Steering Group continues to lead on Hertfordshire's coordinated partnership response to the arrival of and support for refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan and Ukraine. Currently there are 1277 [Ukrainians in Hertfordshire](#) on the Homes for Ukraine scheme and work to increase the number of hosts families has been successful in finding a further 58 hosts. A new support package to assist refugees who wish to stay in Hertfordshire to move into the private rental sector is planned. People continue to seek asylum in the UK and there are currently 12 hotels in Hertfordshire being used as temporary accommodation for them. The County Council observed the national minute's silence at 11am on Friday 24 February to mark the one-year anniversary of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Recycling Centres, Residents Only. The first is the decision to go for residents only at our recycling Centres. Many of our neighbouring authorities have already gone down this route, the most recent Essex effective from this month. Some of our Recycling Centres are close to our borders and where a substantial proportion of the users are from outside of Hertfordshire. There are of course locations where the reverse is true but the result is a net import of around 20pc of recycling centre waste. Royston, Bishops Stortford, Rickmansworth being the locations where non-resident usage is around 50pc or more. Estimates of potential cost saving are a conservative £450,000.



Proposed Implementation Following a communication plan to widely advertise the policy change, users will be asked to bring proof of address when visiting the RCs. In addition to clear 'advanced warning' signage leading up to any centre, staff will greet cars near the entrance and, if proof of address is not available, can access a simple postcode 'council checker' to ascertain if residents pay their Council Tax to a Hertfordshire authority. It is proposed that additional temporary staff are deployed across the network. This will be prioritised according to the RCs with the highest non-resident usage. Pending a 6 monthly review, permanent staffing levels may be amended and/or checking proof of address handed over to RC site operatives to perform ad-hoc spot checks. This will be informed by data collection at the entrance to each RC.

Neighbouring Local Authorities have been sent a letter informing them of the decision. Our decision leaves the way open for us to discuss reciprocal arrangements with neighbouring Authorities so long as they are cost neutral. An example could be with Essex for Bishops Stortford and Harlow, where each has a substantial usage from across the respective borders.

ILACS INSPECTION (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services) – OUTSTANDING Following a two-week inspection in January the much-anticipated **OFSTED** report was published on 10/03/23. **Hertfordshire County Council Children's Services has been rated OUTSTANDING**, placing it amongst the best in the UK. (As of 31 March 2022, only 13% of Local Authorities were judged outstanding).

The new judgement, an improvement on the council's previous Good rating, is wonderful for Hertfordshire's children and families and CS staff, and is the result of much hard work carried out in CS since 2018, including innovation, investment and a drive for continuous improvement; and reflects the excellent leadership of Jo Fisher (EXEC Director Children's Services), and her senior leadership team – El Mayhew, Miranda Gittos, Hero Slinn and Simon Newland.

OFSTED focused on four areas of inspection:

- The Impact of leaders on Social work Practice for Children and Families – **OUTSTANDING**
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection – **GOOD**
- The experiences and progress of children in care – **OUTSTANDING**
- The experiences and progress of care leavers - **GOOD**

Some info on Highways

- Hertfordshire has 5,100 km of busy roads and 5,600km of footways and cycleways.
- We spend approx. £90m on maintaining the highways infrastructure, including additional investment in drainage and vegetation cut-back.
- Our approach to maintenance is well regarded nationally, ensuring we receive optimal grant funding from Government.
- Hertfordshire is in the top quartile of Authorities in being successful in bidding for funding for such things as Active Travel schemes.
- The condition of our carriageways continues to compare very well to national averages, i.e. A roads, 2% require maintenance against national 4%, B & Cs 4% against 6%, and Us 7% against 15%, the latter as a result of a specific investment of £29m.
- Two of our recent major projects, namely the New River Bridge in Hoddesdon and the A120 Little Hadham Bypass and Flood Alleviation scheme have been delivered, with the A602 upgrade due to complete by late summer, costing well in excess of £100m in total, and residents are now benefitting from the improvements.

My Locality Grants awarded



Applicant organisation	Purpose	amount agreed
HILS (meals on wheels)	Nutrition & Wellbeing Service for older people	£300.00
Allens Green Village hall	towards fence repairs at hall	£400.00
Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust Amwell Nature Reserve	towards replacing a boardwalk	£500.00
<u>Aspects</u>	Crucial Crew work with schools	£300.00
<u>Sawbridgeworth School Travel Challenge</u>	character costume to promote Active Travel in the schools	£899.00
Sawbridgeworth Town Twinning Association	language support for Ukrainian refugees	£350.00
Sawbridgeworth Town Twinning Association	cost of DBS checks for volunteers offering language skills for Ukrainian refugees	£250.00
St James Church	towards High Wych Community Scarecrow Festival	£300.00
Wareside School	Towards school uniform following announced closure Wareside School	£1,800.00
Reedings School	Sustainable gardening project for children	£300.00
citizens advice East Herts	recruitment & training costs of volunteers	£500.00
Bobtails play group Stanstead Abbots	equipment for Kitchen	£450.00
Hailey Centre		£250.00
<u>Bishops Wellbeing</u>	equipment for new centre in Sawbridgeworth	£350.00
Educational Diversity CIC	Providing Extra Curriculum support in teaching black and diverse history to schools.	£250.00
sustainable Sawbridgeworth	heat sensor for residents to detect heat loss in homes	£635.00
Fawbert & Barnard School	Maypole restoration	£450.00
Herts and Ware Schools Music Association	music festival for schools	£300.00
Mandeville School	early years equipment	£300.00
Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club	nets	£300.00
isabel Hospice	towards community care support	£300.00
Sawbridgeworth Young Peoples Recreational Centre	towards energy costs	£516.00

East Herts District Council Portfolio

Sports and Leisure. New Grange Paddocks attendances now higher than pre covid. New 3G pitch completed. Hartham Leisure upgrade due to be completed by late summer. Sawbridgeworth Leventhorpe shower refresh to take place.

Arts and Culture. Hertford Theatre expansion well under way with ambition to have a phased opening starting from Summer 2024. Cultural Strategy. Strategic Group and Delivery Group established. Awarded around £260,000 from the UK shared prosperity fund to provide grants for groups wishing to expand accessibility for arts and culture. Specifically includes support for LGBT.



Parks and open spaces. Pishiobury Park was eventually awarded Local Nature Reserve status and currently undergoing a refresh of the Greenspace Action Plan. Also a new GAP for Southern Country Park. Work currently underway via lottery funding to upgrade facilities in Castle Park Bishops Stortford.

Health and Wellbeing. Healthy Hubs Social prescribing is growing the number of people it refers to organisations and partner agencies that can help in a wide variety of health and personal issues. Updated Health and Wellbeing Strategy is being drafted to include reference and linking to all of the community services as described above that contribute to physical and mental wellbeing.

8. **Report on Hunsdon Recreation Area** (Jackie Carthy)

Playground

The updated playground continues to be well used by the community. The annual inspection in June 2022 revealed a few very low risk issues. We were unhappy that issues had arisen in equipment and fencing that was, at the time, less than 2 years old, so made a complaint with the installing company, Kompan. The company made a site visit, but blamed the issues on the weather and were not prepared to take the issue any further.

The main inspection issues were with the double gate into the playground, which was not renewed when the new equipment was installed. The issues are that the gate closes too quickly, rebounds too much, is rusty and has moved on its hinges. These are all low risk but do need action. We have a quote of £3,504.33 to replace the gate, which includes £1367.00 for installation. We are currently looking for a cheaper installer.

We have also decided to change the company doing the inspection.

Multi-Use Games Area

We have just over £19,000 towards the MUGA. I originally had 3 quotations, all around £100,000. Given the current economic climate, I have now asked for these quotes to be updated. I have only had 1 reply – showing a 44% increase. Depressing, but not unexpected. I am still trying to clarify the position regarding obtaining planning permission.

Applying for funding continues to be a long and difficult process. Many grants are still linked to Covid-19 related projects and others are temporarily closed. A bid to the National Lottery Community Asset Fund for £80,000 was ultimately unsuccessful. An initial application to Cadent has not been replied to, and Sport England at present is only offering match funding grants up to £10,000.

In the next few months we will be looking at how we can adjust our MUGA expectations to meet current funding limitations.



9. Hunsdon Scout Group Annual Report – Karen Osterley (Group Scout Leader)

Annual Scouting Census:

Following the pandemic we were very concerned about low numbers in the group. In the January 2022 census we recorded just 28 youth members, so we mounted an imaginative recruitment campaign. Our endeavours have paid off. By January 2023, the figure had risen to 47, and today it stands at a whopping 74, with a waiting list of additional young people who are keen to join. In fact we have so many waiting for a place that we could open a second Beaver Colony, and a second Cub Pack if only we had more leaders.

Squirrels:

Our big news is the opening of a Squirrel Drey for 4- and 5-year-olds embarking in Scouting, the second drey to open in the whole of Ware and District. We have recruited a fantastic leader team of 4 plus a young person who will be volunteering for a year as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award. Our Drey opens in June to offer 5 sessions in the Summer term for 12 little red squirrels.

District Events

We've welcomed the return of district events after they were put on hold for a couple of years, including Oxley Shield Camping Competition (3rd place), Go Karting (2nd place), the muddiest Green Beret, Cooking Competitions, Hikes, Sleepovers and Swimming Galas.

Community:

We had a very successful day at the Village Hall open day which was a great opportunity for us to recruit new members. We also supported the event on the field by running a rope-making activity which was very popular, and we're looking forward to helping at the Festival on the Field and Village Panto again this year.

Plans for the future:

Always keen to be outdoors, we have some great camps happening in 2023 including the Beaver Sleepover at Skreens Park Lodge, a massive camp with the rest of Ware and District, where some 500 local scouts will come together for an action-packed weekend, and our own favourite trip to Thriftwood Activity Centre for the Cubs and Beavers. It's time we organised a special sleepover too, so we will be looking to book a return trip to HMS Belfast.

Grants and Support:

Understandably our trailer gets a lot of wear and tear and we recently had to give it a significant makeover and a new wrap. We're really grateful for the financial support from Ramblers Charitable Trust, and Hunsdon Parish Room Trust.

Thank you

My personal thanks to everyone who helps our group, the young people and families, members of the community, and our Executive Team. Most importantly thank you to the great team of leaders and young leaders for giving their time and energy for Scouting in Hunsdon. Their commitment and enthusiasm are brilliant.



10. Parish Clerk's Report – 2021/22

The precept for 2022/23 was £21,400. The precept for 2023/2024 will increase to £26,690, to ensure the precept covers the day to day running of the village. With the cessation of the grant from East Herts Council of £2,220 it was necessary to increase the precept to cover this loss. 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.

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

There has been significant damage to some of the trees in the Playing Field due to storms in February 2022, which resulted in an amount of tree clearing and pruning.

I have registered to be one of the two Flood Wardens in the village reporting into the Environmental Health department at East Herts/

I also belong to the Police Community Liaison group, which meets quarterly to discuss which areas of police crime prevention we, in the villages need.



Bank Reconciliation			
			£1,556.65
31st March 2023			
Santander bank			£38,429.29
Litter picker money			
		Total	£39,985.94
Payments agreed but not cleared bank			
Payments to be agreed			
C Page	Salary for March 2023	Salary	£384.18
C Sanderson	Salary for March 2023	Litter Pickers	£130.00
HMRC Cumerbaud	PAYE for Clerk	Salary	£96.00
M Nissim	February hours for PC	NP Communicator	£20.00
C Page	Printing paper	Administration	£6.50
Go cardless	Direct debit for defib	Defibrillator	£464.28
G Atkins	Inv 415	Grounds	£336.00
G Atkins	Inv 414	Grounds	£312.00
G Atkins	Inv 401	Grounds	£696.00
M Nissim	March hours for PC	NP Communicator	£50.00
P A Knott	March grasscutting	Grounds	£280.00
			£ 2,774.96
		Balance at Bank	£37,210.98

clerk@hunsdonparishcouncil.org



Financial position for the year 2022 to 2023

Hunsdon Parish Council Revenue Expenditure

Credit

	Budget	To date	Remaining period	Year	Variance
B/F General	£6,695.52	£6,726.08		£6,726.08	£30.56
Precept	£21,400.00	£21,400.00	£0.00	£21,400.00	£0.00
Litter Picker	£1,942.12	£2,220.26	£0.00	£2,220.26	£278.14
Allotment rents	£489.00	£488.00	£0.00	£488.00	£-1.00
VAT refund rev	£3,017.83	£2,904.70	£0.00	£2,904.70	£-113.13
Grant Neighbourhood Plan	£0.00	£1,929.00	£0.00	£1,929.00	£1,929.00
Santander Interest	£0.00	£108.29	£0.00	£108.29	£108.29
	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Totals	£33,544.47	£35,776.33	£0.00	£35,776.33	£2,231.86

Debit

Administration	£2,325.56	£1,997.30	£0.00	£1,997.30	£-328.26
Litter pickers	£1,600.00	£1,560.00	£0.00	£1,560.00	£-40.00
Salary	£5,762.12	£5,762.16	£0.00	£5,762.16	£0.04
General Power of Competence	£720.00	£576.00	£0.00	£576.00	£-144.00
Allotments	£340.00	£375.46	£0.00	£375.46	£35.46
Playing Field	£700.63	£834.08	£0.00	£834.08	£133.45
Rest of village	£1,300.00	£671.09	£0.00	£671.09	£-628.91
Grounds Maintenance	£5,002.00	£6,684.66	£0.00	£6,684.66	£1,682.66
Neighbourhood Plan	£5,000.00	£6,820.83	£0.00	£6,820.83	£1,820.83
NP Communicator Co-ordinator	£1,000.00	£340.00	£0.00	£340.00	£-660.00
Churchyard donation	£500.00	£1,000.00	£500.00	£1,500.00	£1,000.00
Ukraine donation	£0.00	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00	£500.00
S111 consultants	£1,000.00	£375.00	£0.00	£375.00	£-625.00
Defibrillator funding	£365.00	£464.28	£438.00	£902.28	£537.28
Village Event Funding	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	£0.00
Totals	£26,615.31	£28,960.86	£938.00	£29,898.86	£3,283.55

Surplus	£6,929.16	£6,815.47	£-938.00	£5,877.47	£-1,051.69
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Totals

Revenue Surplus	£6,929.16	£6,815.47	£-938.00	£5,877.47	£-1,051.69
Capital Surplus	£12,743.57	£30,395.51	£0.00	£30,395.51	£17,917.70
Total Surplus	£19,672.73	£37,210.98	£-938.00	£36,272.98	£16,866.01

Capital Expenditure

Credit

	Budget	To date	Remaining period	Year	Variance
B/F Special Projects	£28,756.72	£28,992.09		£28,992.09	£235.37
VAT refund Cap	£650.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£-650.00
Village Event	£0.00	£4,587.00	£0.00	£4,587.00	£4,587.00
	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Totals	£29,672.48	£33,579.09	£0.00	£33,579.09	£4,172.37

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
MUGA allocation	£16,928.91	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£-16,928.91
Village Event	£0.00	£3,183.58	£0.00	£3,183.58	£3,183.58
	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Totals	£16,928.91	£3,183.58	£0.00	£3,183.58	£-13,745.33

Surplus	£12,743.57	£30,395.51	£0.00	£30,395.51	£17,917.70
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Receipts Check	TRUE
Payments Check	TRUE
Reconciliation Check	TRUE



11. Village Hall Report (Cllr O'Shea)

Object of our charity

The provision and maintenance of the **village hall** for use by the inhabitants of Hunsdon and neighbourhood to include, meetings, lectures, classes, other recreation & leisure time occupation – with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants.

The village hall is a listed building in the centre of the community. It comprises the hall, the stage, kitchen and meeting rooms and 2 adjoining cottages. The charity will be 100 years old in 2027 and the building is much older. It requires constant renovation, repair and improvement to keep it fit for its purpose for present and future generations.

Trustees

As always, we welcome new trustees to help run the charity and manage the village hall. There are:

- 5 elected officers
- up to 10 appointed by regular users of the Hall
- 1 by the Parish Council
- and 2 can be co-opted.

With our own AGM coming up on 10 July all trustees are subject to re-election/appointment and it's a good chance to join us. We meet about 4 times a year. If you are interested, please contact Diane Dangell on treasurer@hunsdonvillagehall.org or 07966 131834

Use of the Hall

The hall hirings were back to normal this year – with the exception of 3 weeks' closure for the redecoration of the rear annexe, sanding the hall floor and laying the new forecourt.

We ran 2 events to promote the hall during the national Village Halls week. These were well attended with several clubs benefiting from new members, and a new club for board games will be starting on Monday 22nd May 2-4 pm.

We continue to advertise on our website www.hunsdonvillagehall.org/, Hunsdon Hub and elsewhere. Both the hall and the meeting room are open for hire for all resident activities and groups with preferential rates for regular users. They are also available for private functions and classes. More daytime classes would be welcomed as there is capacity but space for new evening activities is limited due to their popularity. It is a key part of our role to keep the premises clean, safe and attractive to prospective users and hirers.

Premises

During the 3-week closure we refurbished the hall floor & badminton court (with the aid of a grant), redecorated the annex and re-laid the front forecourt - many thanks to John Felstead for overseeing all these works.

We manage the premises carefully with ongoing reviews of health & safety, maintenance and development needs. In particular, we focus on local community needs and good management of the premises. We maintain an ongoing log of tasks & projects and implement them dependant on priority and fund availability.

The Gardening Club continues to provide voluntary ongoing maintenance and improvement to the garden including the grass, plant tubs, hanging baskets and most recently the back verge. This is greatly appreciated and keeps the hall looking well.



Finance

For the year 2022/23 we ran an operating loss as the hire charges do not cover the annual running costs of the hall which are greatly subsidised by its rental incomes. Property improvements are met out of remaining income and reserves which have been quite healthy in recent years, with lockdown grants etc. With the large increase in energy bills and insurance for the current year we face a more difficult task in meeting running costs and essential maintenance. As a result, the trustees with great reluctance decided that hire charges would have to increase, and that organisations, namely the Parish Council, the Church and Community Events which had previously had free use of the hall would have to pay appropriate hire fees. Continuing to keep the hall at a high standard is essential to ensure future bookings and to ensure the hall is looked after to hand down to future generations.

Our project list for the 2023/2024 budget includes for a new boiler system and radiators, secondary glazing for the windows and improvements to the back gate and the Wi-Fi system.

Thanks go to the Tin Hut Fund via the Gardening Club for funding the maintenance of the lawn and the paved areas and to our volunteers who run our local clubs and classes for the benefit of the local community and the hall. Last but by no means least to our management committee and business team without which the hall would not function.

May 2023 Village Hall Executive Committee

12. Hunsdon Community Events

These events are organised and run FREE to attend events for the whole community.

Following the success of the Village Jubilee Celebrations a new independent social events committee has been set up for the village (Hunsdon Community Events). We are a non-profit making committee and not affiliated to any other village organisation, and are that made up of village residents and representatives from village organisations (e.g. Parish Council, Ducklings, Hunsdon School, VH, Scouts etc.)

Our events will always be FREE to attend.

Through the Christmas Fayre and Summer "Festival On The Field" our events provide a free of charge platform for other village organisations to run their own fundraising stalls and activities (e.g. Scouts craft and activity stalls).

Our events also allow local businesses from the village and surrounding areas to promote their businesses and sell their products and services.

To date we have been funded through financial donations from The Parish and Church councils and the Parish Room Trust as well as from voluntary donations. We have also obtained grants from East Herts Council, The Co-op and Asda. From 2024 we expect to be financially self-sufficient from 2023 event revenues. Our long-term aim is to add further FREE to attend events for the village and to improve and expand existing events.

For 2023 we will organise and run the following

- **Coronation Tea – Sunday 7th May 15:00 – 17:00**
- **Summer Festival – Saturday 24th June 13:00 – 22:00**
- **Christmas Fayre – Saturday 2nd December 13:00 – 17:00**
- **Bimonthly Community Lunches/Brunches**
 - **Lunch – Tuesday February 23rd 12:00 – 14:00**
 - **Brunch – Sunday 16th April 10:30 – 12:30**





- Brunch – Sunday 10th September 10:30 – 12:30 (TBC)
- Lunch – Thursday 19th October 13:00 – 15:00 (TBC)
- Christmas Brunch - Sunday 10th December 10:30 – 12:30 (TBC)



For more information or to get involved please contact David Ottolangui

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