

UNAPPROVED DRAFT3



Minutes of the High Wych Ordinary Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 16th July 2025 8pm in Allen's Green Village Hall

Cllr Tom Payne (TP) Chairman*
Cllr John Andreotti (JA)*
Cllr Jacqueline Jackson*

Cllr Carrie Payne (CP)*
Cllr Liz Faulkner*
* *Denotes present*

Present: Two members of the public, District Cllr Ian Devonshire, County Cllr Eric Buckmaster

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman opened the meeting at 8pm.

ACTION

25.051 Apologies for absence

1. Councillors: None (all present)
2. Others: PC Shelly Marshall

25.052 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations

1. **Interests declared:** Cllr Liz Faulkner – company invoice payments for approval
2. **Dispensation requests:** None. Noted that Cllr Liz Faulkner has a dispensation on financial matters because her family has the litter and dog bin contract (except when the contract comes up for renewal).

25.053 Approval of Minutes

1. **RESOLVED: to approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 14th May 2025.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.
2. **RESOLVED: to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 14th May 2025.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

Clerk

At 8.05pm the meeting was suspended for public comments

A parishioner raised the problem caused by inconsiderate and dangerous parking in High Wych Lane by the playing field and by Mansfield. Vehicles are parked both sides of the road, not just at school times or when the café is open. Attendees of church events and HTC rehearsals exacerbate the problem. Cllr Eric Buckmaster said he could help fund deterrent measures, such as appropriate yellow lines, from his Locality Budget and asked the parishioner to email him some photos. Questions were raised as to why further measures were necessary if the Highway Code was being violated, for example by parking within the confines of a pedestrian crossing or close to a road junction. It was also pointed out that there is no point in putting restrictions in place unless they are enforced. Cllr Eric Buckmaster to follow up with suggestions.

At 8.20pm the meeting was restored to order

25.054 Casual Vacancy

Noted that no one has applied to be co-opted to fill the casual vacancies following the resignations of councillors Dave Smith and Keith Jordan.

**Clerk/
All**

25.055 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman had no announcements.

25.056 East Herts Rural Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)

1. Crime report

PC Shelly Marshall provided a written report as follows:

High Wych Report 16th July 2025

On Thursday 26th June, PC Marshall lead a joint operation with Essex Police the aim of which was to prevent and deter criminals using the main roads in and out of High Wych and Sawbridgeworth via our borders with Essex. The Op saw over twenty officers briefed

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and conducting proactive work around the area of High Wych at intervals throughout the evening.

The operation was supported by our Chief Inspector, Matt Barton who was present along with The Mayor of Sawbridgeworth. The operation was a great success as you will see if you follow our social media pages.

A quick round up of statistics from the operation is as follows:

- 1 x Arrest, failing to stop for police, driving otherwise than in accordance with licence, failing to provide specimen of breath and no insurance. Suspect charged with all offences.
- 8 x Stop searches, 1 Positive for Cannabis, Community resolution issued.
- 1 possession of cannabis
- 1 Possession with intent to supply Class B, investigation ongoing
- 4 Traffic offence reports
- 3 vehicles seized - no insurance
- 1 Fixed penalty notice
- 1 Fail to stop (Motorbike) enquiries in hand with Essex Police to ID rider.
- Numerous vehicles stopped
- 1 foot chase within Essex, all 3 males detained and searched.

We are working hard towards our current policing priority to reduce reports of anti-social behaviour in parks. We have an upcoming drop in at The Coffee Lounge on 14th August from 10am, details via Herts Connected.

The new priority will be set for September, please encourage the community to come along on 14th August and tell us what their concerns are in the local community.

It was agreed that at the 14th August drop-in, fly tipping would be raised as a priority.

LF

2. Cross border update

It was noted that First Responders volunteers will help administer and run the scheme.

LF/JJ

25.057 Reports by County and District Councillors

County Cllr Eric Buckmaster's written report is included in the Minutes as Appendix B.

District Cllr Ian Devonshire's written report is included in the Minutes as Appendix C.

25.058 Planning

1. New Applications:

NONE	NONE
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2. Decision Notices. As detailed in Appendix A below – for information only

3. Other planning matters, including items received too late for the agenda: NONE

25.059 Finance

1. Report of the Council's Accounts at year-end 30th June 2025

Opening cashbook balance 1 st May 2025	24,456.10
Plus income to 30 th June	0.00
Minus expenditure to 30 th June	2,755.94
Balance available to Council at 30th June (cashbook balance)	21,700.16
Plus unrepresented payments	0.00
Reconciled Bank statement/cashbook balance 30th June 2025	<u>21,700.16</u>

RESOLVED: That the Accounts Statement to year-end 30th June 2025 be approved.

Clerk

2. Accounts Reconciliation at 30th June 2025

Cashbook balance 30 th June	£21,700.16
Bank balance 30 th June	£21,700.16

RESOLVED: To agree the bank reconciliation as presented.

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3. Performance against 2024/25 budget at year-end 30th June 2025

	Budget	Actual 30 th June
Income total	22,036	10,043
PWLB Loan	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Income total	<u>22,036</u>	<u>10,043</u>

	Budget	Actual 30 th June
Expenditure Net of VAT	24,445	7,037
PWLB Loan servicing	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Expenditure balance	<u>24,445</u>	<u>7,037</u>

Budgetted deficit 2025/26	-2,409
Actual surplus 30 th June	3,005
Opening bank balance 1 st April 2025	18,876
Bank balance 30 th June 2025	21,700

RESOLVED: To agree the performance against budget as presented.

4. Payments for approval: All expenditure to be made under The General Power of Competence As at 16th July

		Value	VAT incl
High Wych Mem Hall	Post Office subsidy Q3	87.50	
High Wych Mem Hall	Electricity: Car park lights	16.41	
TP Jones & Co LLP	Payroll April-June	64.40	10.73
Clerk	Expenses June-July	21.80	
Clerk	Salary July	498.04	
HMRC	PAYE July	124.40	
HMRC	Employer's NIC	30.82	
Wells Construction Ltd	HWMH Green Room ramp deposit	154.69	
TEEC	Domain and website change to .gov.uk	120.00	20.00
PKF Littlejohn	AGAR External Audit 2024/25	378.00	63.00
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service charge	6.00	
** Grass cutting KGV Field High Wych and Allen's Green village green			
VAT included To be reclaimed under VAT Act 1994 (1), (3)			93.73

RESOLVED: to approve all payments as per the Clerk's report

Clerk

5. Annual Governance and Accountability Return AGAR 2024-25

Awaiting report from external auditor PKF Littlejohn.

Clerk

6. East Herts Citizen's Advice Service grant request

The grant request was considered. **RESOLVED not to make a grant on this occasion.**

Clerk

25.060 1. Highways

- Speed and Volume study for Blounts Lane, Allen's Green: In hand with Cllr Eric Buckmaster.
- Noted: TRO27903 Temporary 40mph Speed Restrictions on A414 Eastwick Road, Stanstead Abbots.
- Other issues: Parishioner's complaint about impeded footway, High Wych Lane. The Chairman said he had reached out to the parishioner to explain that the problem should be reported on the Herts Highways Faults portal since it is not within the Parish Council's powers to resolve it.

EB/TP

TP

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2. Footpaths and other Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

1. No issues raised.

3. Other Parish Matters

1. High Wych Memorial Hall and car park

1. **RESOLVED: To ratify the appointment of Wells Construction Ltd to undertake building the access ramp and associated works for the Green Room for the quoted price of £1,856.33 incl VAT.** The 10% net deposit was approved for payment under 25.059.4 Finance. Clerk
2. The schedule of works was noted as being 7th to 13th August. JA/JJ
3. No other matters were raised.

2. **Website and email addresses** to be changed to .gov.uk: **RESOLVED: that the addresses be changed to comply with government requirements.** In hand with TEEC who will confirm the new addresses in due course. Clerk

25.061 1. Playing Fields and buildings

1. Harlow Theatre Company

1. No issues raised.

2. Play area

1. Issues raised: A swing seat cover is disintegrating. It was agreed this should still be under warranty. The Chairman to contact Sovereign Play to rectify. TP

3. Other parish matters raised

1. It was reported that the padlock to the KGV Field had been removed and the gate left open. A replacement lock had been provided by Dave Smith. A discussion ensued and concerns were expressed about the gate not closing when opened. It was agreed to get leave the gate unlocked and to get BB&C Fencing to fit a spring. JA/TP
2. A letter from an Allen's Green resident was considered complaining about the memorial sapling that had been planted on the Village Green, that it was an inappropriate copper beech that would hinder use of the Green and eventually block amenity views. The Parish Council noted that a request for permission to plant the tree was made on behalf of village residents and that the Parish Council had no objections to granting permission – although the Clerk pointed out that management of the Green is actually within the remit of the Village Green trustees rather than the Parish Council. Since the sapling appears to have died due to the drought, it was agreed to take no action.

2. Allotments report

1. The Clerk confirmed that an eviction notice had been sent to one tenant but that no acknowledgement had been received. Cllr Carrie Payne asked the Clerk to send a confirmatory letter by 1st Class mail requesting that all the tenant's belongings be removed from the plot. Clerk/CP
2. Water meter: The Clerk reported that he had spoken to Everflow Water in a effort to get the meter replaced. Everflow's response was that since the Council has not sent monthly meter readings, they have been obtained on 6-monthly site visits by the Everflow team. Their last reading was in January and the next one due in July. Since their team has not reported any difficulty in reading the meter, they will only fit a new one if the Parish Council pays for it – cost £165.50. It was agreed to do nothing and to let Everflow continue to take their own readings every 6 months.

25.062 Correspondence: The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the Agenda:

- Parishioner: Complaint about memorial tree planted on Allen's Green (25.061.3.2)
- Parishioner: complaint about hedge overhang the footway in High Wych Lane (25.060.1.3)
- EHC: Update on new household bin arrangements
- Citizens Advice Service: Request for a grant (25.059.6)
- Cllr Eric Buckmaster: Fibre roll out in Villages in East Herts
- Cllr Eric Buckmaster: TRO 27903 - The Hertfordshire (Temporary 40mph Speed Restrictions on A414 Eastwick Road, Stanstead Abbots) Order 2025 (25.060.2)

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- TEEC: Offer to move to .gov.uk email and website address (25.060.3.2)

25.063 Late items and items for future agendas

1. Late items: It was noted that a parishioner had raised the issue of there not being a lid on the bus shelter litter bin. The Chairman agreed to respond to the parishioner.
2. Items for future agendas and other matters:
 - The Clerk noted that he would be on holiday from 8th to 26th August. This was approved.

TP

Clerk

25.064 Date and venue of next Parish Council meeting

Noted: That High Wych Memorial Hall Committee Room is again available on Wednesdays and has therefore been booked for alternate meetings for the remainder of 2025

Ordinary Council Meeting, 8pm Wednesday 17th September at High Wych Memorial Hall

Clerk

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.50pm.

Signed.....

APPENDIX A

25.058.2 25.058.2 PLANNING DECISION NOTICES for information only as at 10th July

3/25/0713/HH	Leaky Cauldron Corner. Erection of detached one bay cartlodge and home gym with associated landscaping.	GRANTED
3/25/041/FUL	Surrounded, Coveys Lane. Retrospective change of use from grazing land to residential garden and installation of ground level solar panels.	REFUSED
3/25/0384/HH	Mountfitchet, High Wych Road. Remove conservatory and chimney. Roof extension and loft conversion; single storey rear extension, single storey side and front infill extension; front roof extension	GRANTED
3/25/0633/CLPO	2 Burstead Cottages, Spellbrook. Single storey rear extension	GRANTED
3/25/0803/ARPN	Greenleys, Slough Road: Change of use of agricultural building to C3 (residential) for single dwelling.	Awaited
3/25/0256/HH	Crumps Farm: Erect garden room and implement shed. RETROSPECTIVE	Awaited

APPENDIX B

E Buckmaster County Councillor Report June 2025

Regulation 19 Minerals and Waste Plan Consultation

This remains on hold pending the outcome of the Hatfield Ellenbrook appeal via the Planning Inspector and Secretary of State.

Council Leaders rule out single county unitary authority proposal for Hertfordshire

The Leaders of Hertfordshire's 11 councils have agreed to rule out the option of a single unitary authority for the county as part of ongoing discussions on local government reform proposals. In response to the Government's invitation to councils in all two-tier areas to submit an interim plan for moving to a single tier of unitary councils providing all services, Hertfordshire's interim submission outlined a number of options for further consideration ranging from one to four unitary councils.

Following the election of a new County Council administration in May, there will be no further work to develop the business case for one unitary council covering the whole of Hertfordshire. This reflects a shared view that a single unitary council covering Hertfordshire's 1.2m residents would be too remote from the county's diverse communities.

Leaders' shared priorities remain ensuring any changes benefit residents and businesses, excellent local government services are maintained, residents are kept safe, and strong democratic accountability is available to communities across the county. They will continue to

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explore the evidence and refine the options to be considered ahead of submitting final proposals to the Government by 28 November for Ministers to consider.

Councils will also continue to prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to people and communities during this period of transformation.

A team of officers drawn from the County Council and all 10 District & Borough Councils has been established to develop the options and make recommendations for Leaders to consider. Key considerations will include ensuring value for money in any new structures; the need to understand the impact of any changes to key services like social care and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); how proposals support future devolution; and making sure communities continue to have a strong say in local decisions. The Government will provide £378,077 funding to support this project.

The views of residents, businesses, local government partners, colleagues, and other stakeholders across the public and private sectors will be essential as proposals develop and significant engagement will take place over the coming months.

‘Your Tree Our Future’, back by popular demand (now fully allocated)

Hertfordshire is set to become a whole lot greener as the ‘Your Tree Our Future’ scheme returns for 2025. Residents are encouraged to [sign up to apply for their tree](#) free of charge today, 9 June, as the scheme opens with even more trees available this year than last year.

This year, over 60,000 trees will be made available free of charge to residents, enabling them to plant at home and improve their area. Since the launch, 191,000 trees have been given away for free to residents by the county council in partnership with local district and borough councils through the scheme.

Following on from high demand from residents last year, the project has been expanded and aims to provide habitat for wildlife, improve air quality, and help the county reduce its overall carbon footprint.

Latest transport funding announcement from Government leaves Hertfordshire disappointed

Following the announcement of £15bn of central government funding to boost regional transport links outside London, Councillors in Hertfordshire have expressed dismay that the county has received nothing in this latest round.

Hertfordshire has hundreds of miles of roads along with critical public transport links to the capital, Cambridge and the Midlands and urgently needs additional funding to boost all forms of sustainable transport.

Instead, the £15bn of funding will be distributed to regions with a directly elected Mayor and which already have strong existing public transport infrastructure, such as Manchester.

Greater Anglia, which serves the lines to Bishop’s Stortford and Hertford East, will be the first Hertfordshire train operator to be nationalised under the current process. On 12 October it will be taken over by Department for Transport Operations Ltd in a step towards the creation of Great British Railways.

The provisional transfer dates for the other operators serving Hertfordshire are 20 September 2026 for West Midlands Trains, 18 October 2026 for Avanti West Coast, and 1 April 2028 for Govia Thameslink Railway. LNER has been under Department for Transport control since 2018, and London Overground services will remain with Transport for London. The ‘Open Access Operators’ such as Lumo and Hull Trains, as well as freight companies, will stay in the private sector.

The Bill to create Great British Railways is expected to be presented to Parliament later this year, with the new body being formally established by early 2027. The timetable for the completion of the nationalisation of train operators is June 2028.

Age-Friendly Communities in Hertfordshire

By 2043, it’s estimated that 1 in 4 Hertfordshire residents will be over 65 years old. As our population ages, it is vital that we ensure older people in Hertfordshire are valued, and able to live well throughout later life.

A great deal of work is already taking place as part of Age-Friendly Communities Hertfordshire, there is a fantastic summary of some of this work available here: [Age-friendly work in Herts](#).

Our recently announced [Prevention Investment Programme](#) has identified ‘ageing well’ as one of the key priorities, ensuring that we develop programmes and activities to promote ways to age well, reduce ageism, and prevent frailty and social isolation.

Age UK’s [Take Five to Age Well](#) campaign kicked off in May, encouraging people to make small daily changes over 30 consecutive days for better ageing.

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Building on the success of the annual *Live Longer Better in Hertfordshire Celebration Day*, Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership (HSP) ran their first ever Live Longer Better with Dementia Celebration Day on Friday 6 June from 10am-3pm at Wodson Park Leisure Centre. Funded by Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts Council, and delivered in partnership with the new Memory Support service, it promised to be a day of fun and accessible taster sessions, to help those living with dementia to stay active, independent and socially connected. Age UK Hertfordshire has launched the Herts Ageing and Amazing campaign, to challenge negative stereotypes and celebrate the many ways people continue to contribute, thrive, and stay independent as they age. Residents aged 55+ have been submitting photos and videos, to shine a light on the real stories, energy and experiences of ageing, which will be shared on Age Without Limits Day on 11 June 2025.

Finally, there's a great Age-friendly communities handbook of principles now available from the LGA and the Centre for Ageing Better to help guide local policy and action.

Hertfordshire's emergency services tested in freezing temperature exercise

Hemel Hempstead's Snow Centre was the scene for a multi-agency training exercise on Monday 19 May, when responders from Hertfordshire's fire and rescue, ambulance and police services, supported by partners, carried out a rescue simulating a real-life incident.

A five-car collision during a snowstorm at night tested the plans of emergency services working together to assist casualties and make the area safe in extreme weather conditions, as cold as minus six degrees, on the Snow Centre slope.

Recognition for Hertfordshire service who have supported the Aid for Ukraine project

A service within Hertfordshire County Council has received official recognition from the International Charitable Foundation SOTA, for the humanitarian assistance they have provided. Hertfordshire Equipment Service (HES) have been donating equipment for the last 12 months to help those impacted by the conflict in Ukraine. Items have included beds, mattresses, hoists, walking and toileting equipment.

Hertfordshire Music Service,

The Hertfordshire Schools Gala, which takes place every two years, offers a unique opportunity for our young people to showcase their creativity and talent on a truly grand stage. This year, 117 schools came together to perform at the prestigious Royal Albert Hall, an experience that will live long in the memories of all involved. For some, this event may mark the beginning of a journey into the creative industries; for many, it will remain a powerful and uplifting moment that affirms the life-enhancing value of music and dance.

As we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Gala, we remain committed to ensuring that every child in Hertfordshire, regardless of background or circumstance, can access the joy and transformative power of music. We have been able to reach more schools and communities, providing inclusive and inspiring musical opportunities that are essential to a well-rounded education.

This year's theme, *For the Record*, was developed with direct input from young people through a youth focus group, ensuring their voices were at the heart of the performance. With the support of creative professionals and our dedicated team, the Gala has once again become a platform where our children can express themselves freely, confidently, and authentically.

District

East Herts Executive agrees to recommend to Council to adopt Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy

The Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy, published in 2022, provides a strategic framework for the delivery of green infrastructure in the county, that can usefully inform local planning policies and strategy in East Herts. Local planning authorities are required to complete a review of their local plans at least once every 5 years from the adoption date to ensure that plans remain relevant. The 30-month period of formal plan-making will commence in early 2026.

The Hertfordshire GI Strategy presents an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of Hertfordshire's current green infrastructure network. It also identifies priorities, mechanisms and an overarching vision to provide green infrastructure enhancements, with the aim of delivering a more resilient and healthier Hertfordshire.

Green Infrastructure (GI) is the network of green and blue spaces and routes, landscapes, biodiversity, water bodies and heritage, which provide a range of benefits for people, nature and the climate. Essential for creating high-quality, sustainable places, it is an important planning policy consideration. The NPPF requires strategic local plan policies to conserve and enhance

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green infrastructure. Therefore, policies and site allocations in the new District Plan will need to promote the protection, provision and enhancement of green infrastructure in East Herts, at various scales. GI can serve multiple functions, so will be relevant to a range of topic areas, including nature recovery, biodiversity net gain, sport and recreation, flood risk management, design, active travel, climate change mitigation and adaptation and improvements to air and water quality.

Membership of the District Plan Executive Panel To assist with the progression of the new District Plan, the District Plan Executive Panel (DPEP) is proposed to be reconvened. This paper discusses the purpose of the Panel and proposes the format and membership arrangements.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE to recommend to Council that:

- a) The District Plan Executive Panel is reconvened as a sub group of Executive for the specific purposes of advancing the new District Plan;
- b) Three Members are drawn from the Executive to sit on the DPEP, namely Cllrs Vicky Glover-Ward (Chair), Ben Crystall and Joseph Dumont, with Cllr Tim Hoskin nominated as a substitute for Green Party members and Cllr Chris Wilson for Cllr Joseph Dumont, and
- c) The Council's website is updated to reflect the formation and purpose of the Panel and forms the primary source of information pertaining to the Panel.

The County Councils Network (CCN) had warned that county and unitary councils faced a £2.2bn funding black hole next year. The Spending Review says that local authorities will receive a 2.6% increase in spending power each year. However, CCN has estimated that three-quarters of this spending power increase is based on the assumption that councils will raise council tax by the maximum they are allowed to each year.

Hertfordshire County Council announced an alternative approach to pothole repair on residential streets will be trialled in the county between 23 June and 4 July. The new approach will involve highways crews identifying and fixing the worst potholes, looking for other issues in the same section of road that could cause potholes in the future and fixing them too, that same day. It's anticipated that this way of working could reduce costs, provide a better service for residents with less disruption, keep our roads in a better and safer condition for longer and prevent potholes forming in the first place. The two-week trial will take place in residential areas in Abbots Langley, Leavesden, Garston and part of North Watford with the potential for it to be rolled out in other areas if evaluation of the trial shows it to be effective and cost efficient.

The crews will use the Roadmender machine on the trial, which uses asphalt to fix potholes and other damage to roads and then seals the area, rather like a plaster.

County Hall to be marketed for sale with funds to be reinvested in vital services

Hertfordshire County Council has confirmed plans to market the entire County Hall site in Hertford for alternative uses following a meeting of the Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel, subject to final Cabinet approval on Monday 23 June. The decision supports the new administration's efforts outlined in their first 100-day plan to make the council more effective and reduce costs through better use of its existing assets.

County Hall has been marketed for employment use since September 2023, following the council's decision to move most of its services from the Hertford site to its Stevenage Campus. To date there has been limited interest in securing the site for employment use, with most interested parties looking to rent small parts of the building. The council is now able to, as part of the planning process, market County Hall for alternative uses, including residential or commercial use.

The previous cabinet decision to market County Hall for employment use included an ambition to retain the front part of the building, including the Council Chamber, for political meetings. The new administration has decided that the whole building will now be included in the marketing. Work has now commenced to create new spaces to allow for democratic meetings to take place at the council's Stevenage campus, bringing councillors closer to the officers responsible for delivering council services.

Gritting response from HCC officer

"We are currently in various discussions with Ringway (who have been confirmed as the provider of the new Highways Maintenance Contract from October 2025 onwards). Part of these discussions is focused around gritting routes and the vehicle fleet; trying to solve some of the longstanding difficult locations that we've spoken about previously.

In addition to this I have made some initial enquiries internally as to how parking restrictions

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could be proposed at a location such as this, although I believe that may come with some resistance from residents/businesses of course.”

New Waste collection arrangements and flats

I was asked to get some answers for residents in High Gate Grove in Sawbridgeworth. The reason is that the standard letter sent to residents doesn't inform them about their particular set of circumstances. There are 7 blocks of 4 flats each a single bedroom. See photo attached. Currently each block of 4 has a large communal bin and two recycling bins between them. They have just had two of the new residual waste bins delivered and just two sets of food waste container and caddy between the 4 apartments. They are concerned this won't be enough. They need to know what their new frequency of collection will be in order to assess how many of each type of container they need. Is everything remain weekly as now, or will the residual waste collections and recycling revert to a different cycle. It is extremely urgent to get this right to avoid things going seriously wrong and resulting in waste spilling into the street. Please confirm the arrangements asap so that I can let the residents know, and which in turn may inform your approach.

Fibre Rollout in Villages in my Division

Following an enquiry from the Chairman of Widford I received the following response from County...

Dear Cllr Buckmaster,

I'm now leading the Towards Digital Growth programme which was originally the Connected Counties programme back in the days of Superfast.

From what I've been able to investigate, the majority of these areas are already covered by full fibre through a few different providers but there are certainly still addresses without. We are currently supporting governments Project Gigabit fibre delivery programme. Under this programme there were multiple Lot's awarded within Hertfordshire, one of which covers your area and was won by Openreach.

Please note, the following information is indicative and subject to change, with the contract being between Openreach and BDUK and therefore predominantly outside of Hertfordshire County Councils control. The main areas currently being targeted are around High Wych and Spellbrook with a few premises in Widford, Wareside, Babbs Green and Stanstead Abbots. Delivery has begun on the contract in Dane End and is building out from there. At this stage we expect delivery to the east of the county to take place more in 2026 and 2027.

Netomnia also have a good presence in the east of the county. They have most recently built within Stanstead Abbots and are making good residential progress. They are likely to move onto MDU and commercial coverage in the area once the majority of residential is covered. We would strongly recommend residents and businesses register with commercial suppliers if currently without full fibre, as this does often inform their future coverage, particularly with Netomnia.

I hope you find this information helpful but please let me know if you have any questions. We will be looking to share further news with impacted Members as the contracts progress.

Eric Buckmaster June 2025

APPENDIX C

Ian Devonshire District Councillor Report

High Wych Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 16th July 2025.

Headline Stats for East Herts for 2024/25 :-

- 1779 households given homelessness advice and assistance
- 3139 planning requests dealt with
- 248 planning enforcement cases
- 1840 people through receptions, 48,888 phone calls
- 439 affordable homes delivered
- £250k given out in grants to business
- £700k given out in grants to towns, villages and voluntary organisations

Beam Theatre for 2024/25 :-

Since Opening in September 2024 to March 2025 :-

Live Performances 171

Film Screenings over 2,400

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Ian Devonshire, District Councillor

COUNCILLOR ACTIONS ARISING

Cllr Tom Payne

- Allotments (with Cllr Carrie Payne)
- Gilston development
- HWMH – liaise on ramp to Green Room
- Blounts Lane S&V study – liaise with Cllr Eric Buckmaster
- Contact Sovereign Play re warranty on disintegrating swing seat
- Arrange BCC to fit gate spring (with Cllr John Andreotti)
- Bus shelter litter bin lid

Cllr John Andreotti

- HTC liaison
- Car park liaison
- Liaise with HWMH on ramp to Green Room
- Arrange BCC to fit gate spring (with Cllr Tom Payne)

Cllr Carrie Payne

- Monitor Highways issues, including parking
- Allotments (with Cllr Tom Payne)

Cllr Jacqueline Jackson

- Footpaths, Public Rights of Way and accessibility matters
- Liaise with HWMH on ramp to Green Room
- Attend the next Police Cross Border meeting and report back to Council
- Follow up co-option prospects

Cllr Liz Faulkner

- Liaise with police on parish event meetings
- Cross border police meetings

Clerk

- Set up agreed bank payments
- Planning comments
- Hall booking for next meeting
- AGAR External audit finalisation
- Website and email changes to .gov.uk
- Send eviction notice by 1st class mail to allotment tenant