

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1



## Minutes of the High Wych Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026

8pm in Allen's Green Village Hall

Cllr Tom Payne (TP) Chairman\*

Cllr John Andreotti (JA)\*

Cllr Jacqueline Jackson (JJ)\*

Cllr Carrie Payne (CP)\*

Cllr Brian Sullivan (BS)\*

Cllr Natalie Higgins (NH)

**\* Denotes present**

Present: One member of the public, County Cllr Eric Buckmaster

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman opened the meeting at 8.08pm.

**ACTION**

### 26.051 Apologies for absence

1. Councillors: Natalie Higgins – family. **Approved**
2. Others: Cllr Eric Buckmaster; District Cllr Ian Devonshire; PC Shelly Marshall

### 26.052 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations

1. **Interests declared:** None
2. **Dispensation requests:** None.

### 26.053 Co-option

No co-option applications were received for the vacancy.

**Clerk**

### 26.054 Approval of Minutes

1. **RESOLVED: to approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.
2. **RESOLVED: to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

**Clerk**

***The meeting was not suspended for public comments***

### 26.055 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman apologised for missing the May meetings, having been stuck in Germany when his flight home was cancelled. Thanks were extended to Vice Chair John Andreotti for chairing the three May meetings.

### 26.056 East Herts Rural Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT).

#### 1. Crime report

The Chairman read the following report from PC Shelly Marshall:

Apologies for non-attendance, operational demand is particularly high at the moment, and the team are deployed on an operation for the World Cup tonight.

Crime remains low in High Wych, patrols are continuing and we are looking forward to some positive engagement over the Summer. There have not been any crime spikes in High Wych and we continue to work on long term problem solving with housing associations and partner agencies.

We hosted a community street meet in High Wych last night, many thanks to those who attended.

We have the following engagements planned over the summer.

- Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July – 19:00 hours - Crime prevention drop in, Pishiobury Park picnic area
- Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July – 19:00 hours – Walk and talk with local officers, Pishiobury Park
- Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> August – 14:00 hours - Crime prevention drop in, Pishiobury Park picnic area
- Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August – 14:00 hours - Walk and talk with local officers, Pishiobury Park

These will all be advertised on Herts Connected.

### 26.057 Reports by County and District Councillors

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

There was considerable discussion about the Stort Crossing/Gilston road works that are scheduled to badly disrupt traffic at the A414 roundabout and Eastwick Road for the next two and a half years. Discussions also included the practicality of the LCWIP (Local Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Plan).

District Cllr Ian Devonshire's written report was noted as submitted:

## **Report for High Wych Parish Council meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2026**

### **Hertford Theatre, BEAM**

Unfortunately, the Theatre has lost £970,000 within the financial year 2025/2026, the first full year of operation. This deficit is surprising and the Conservative group are going to be drilling down into why this has happened and why it wasn't picked up earlier in the year and flagged up as a problem. There could be many reasons for this deficit including audience numbers, food and beverage sales, lack of Community engagement. The Administration believe that they can turn it around and increase audience numbers (forward ticket sales are generally good) but we want a regular, (probably monthly) update to keep a watching brief and ensure that this does not continue.

### **Roadworks on the A414, near the Stort Crossing**

These works are the first stage of construction of the Central Stort Crossing (CSC). They are building construction access platforms to enable vehicles into the valley to construct the widened bridge foundations for the bridges over the river Stort, and to provide safe working platforms to for the diversion of the overhead power lines that cross the road and are to be located north of the Eastwick Road.

Also, the works are to create additional floodplain volume for not only the construction works but also to compensate the loss of floodplain as a result of the widened bridge foundations. Once the bridges have been complete all access roads into the valley will be removed. There will be an overall floodplain and ecological improvement in the valley immediately south of the A414 and Eastwick Road after construction is complete. They are doing the works now, in the driest months, to ensure that floodplain compensation is provided in advance of the winter months.

The CSC works in this phase are primarily to change the roundabout to a signalised junction, to create a new alignment of Eastwick Road, a new junction into Terlings Park (using the current Eastwick Road) and into Village 1 and to put the foundations in for the northern part of the bridge works.

Residents should visit the Gilston Park Estate website for more information and a FAQ list [Gilston Park Estate - Central Stort Crossing North](https://www.gilstonparkestate.com/faqs/central-stort-crossing-north/) the long version is

<https://www.gilstonparkestate.com/faqs/central-stort-crossing-north/>

If residents have queries they can email [construction@gilston.info](mailto:construction@gilston.info) or phone 01279 805222

East Herts Officers are working with the contractors Natta, Places for People and communications teams across the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town partners to provide press releases and myth busting messages on social media. Places for People are in the process of updating the Gilston park Estate to include visuals to help inform residents.

The main thing most local residents are concerned about is that to carry out the utility works there needs to be a period of **full road closure** from the roundabout eastwards to the Terlings Park access. This is because there needs to be a deep trench dug alongside the road which needs to be kept open for a significant number of utilities to install cabling (including the current overhead power lines).

This was originally expected to be a seven week period in September-November. To minimise impacts, Places for People are trying to bring forward some of these works to the summer holiday period, but as this relies upon a good number of national utility companies to confirm they can do this, and not all of them have yet, it is very likely that there will be no more than **two weeks advance notice** of the closures. It may be that there is a need for two periods of full closure, one in the Summer and one in the Autumn. We have told the Hunsdon and Eastwick and Gilston Parish Councils this message already and we will be using multiple forms of communication to advise residents of programmes as soon as they are confirmed.

District Councillor Ian Devonshire, 1<sup>st</sup>. July 2026

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## 1. New Applications:

|      |  |
|------|--|
| NONE |  |
|------|--|

Clerk

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

## 26.059 Finance

### 1. Report of the Council's Accounts at year-end 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026

|                                                                               |                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Opening cashbook balance 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2026                           | 20,934.20               |
| Plus income to year-end 31 <sup>st</sup> May                                  | 10,405.00               |
| Minus expenditure to year-end 31 <sup>st</sup> May                            | <u>4,260.44</u>         |
| <b>Balance available to Council at 31<sup>st</sup> May (cashbook balance)</b> | <b>27,078.76</b>        |
| Plus unrepresented payments                                                   | <u>0.00</u>             |
| <b>Bank statement/cashbook balance year-end 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026</b>      | <b><u>27,078.76</u></b> |

**RESOLVED: That the Accounts Statement to year-end 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026 be approved.**

Clerk

### 2. Bank Reconciliation at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026

|                                       |            |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Cashbook balance 31 <sup>st</sup> May | £27,078.76 |
| Bank balance 31 <sup>st</sup> May     | £27,078.76 |

Clerk

**RESOLVED: To agree the bank reconciliation as presented.**

### 3. Performance against 2026/27 budget at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026

|                                | Budget | Actual 31 <sup>st</sup> May |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
| Income total                   | 20,690 | 10,345                      |
| Expenditure balance Net of VAT | 25,652 | 1,383                       |

Budgetted deficit 2026/27 - 2,991

Actual net budget surplus 31<sup>st</sup> May 8,962

Opening bank balance 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 16,879

Actual Bank balance 31<sup>st</sup> May 2026 27,079

**RESOLVED: To agree the performance against budget as presented.**

Clerk

### 4. Payments for approval: All expenditure to be made under The General Power of Competence

| As at 13 <sup>th</sup> May                                           |                                                   | Value    | VAT incl     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------|--------------|
| D Line Markings Ltd                                                  | Car park parking bays                             | 1,020.00 |              |
| Mokut Mower Services                                                 | Grass cut 13 & 27 May + Allen's Green             | 460.00   |              |
| High Wych Mem Hall                                                   | Hall hire 13 <sup>th</sup> May                    | 22.50    |              |
| Everflow Water                                                       | Water 14/7 – 13/8                                 | 64.14    |              |
| Clerk reimburse                                                      | Printer paper and stationery                      | 10.50    |              |
| Clerk                                                                | Expenses Junne/July                               | 26.60    |              |
| Clerk                                                                | Salary June                                       | 514.20   |              |
| HMRC                                                                 | PAAAYE June                                       | 128.40   |              |
| HMRC                                                                 | Employer's NIC June                               | 33.84    |              |
| Waste Managed Ltd                                                    | Bin service set up                                | 36.00    | 6.00         |
| Waste Managed Ltd                                                    | Bin service 23/6 – 22/7                           | 60.00    | 10.00        |
| Millsales Direct                                                     | Compactor sacks for litter collection             | 52.44    | 7.25         |
| Mokut Mower Services                                                 | Grass cut 9 <sup>th</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> June | 370.00   |              |
| Barrie Richardson                                                    | Allotments fence for damaged hedge                | 146.64   | 24.45        |
| Unity Trust Bank                                                     | Monthly service charge TBC                        | 7.00     |              |
| ** Grass cutting KGV Field High Wych and Allen's Green village green |                                                   |          |              |
| <b>VAT included To be reclaimed under VAT Act 1994 (1), (3)</b>      |                                                   |          | <b>47.70</b> |

Clerk

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

### 5. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/26

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Noted: that the 30-working day period for the Exercise of Public Rights is in place from 3rd June to 14th July.

Clerk

6. Noted: That the 2025/26 AGAR was submitted to the external auditor on 20<sup>th</sup> May

**Clerk**

**26.060 1. Highways**

1. Blounts Lane speeding issues: Not progressed any further.
2. A comment was received that the hedge along Sacombe's Ash Lane is overgrown and needs cutting back. Reported to Herts Highways but they appear to have no interest in taking any action. The Clerk commented that this reaction has been seen in other parishes. Reports should continue to be made via the Herts Highways Fault site together with supporting photos.

EB/TP

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

1. Concerns of overhanging branches and overgrown hedges impeding footways and footpaths should be reported on the Herts Highways Fault site together with supporting photos. This should be done before the Scarecrow Festival due the hazards they will cause for the anticipated large number of Festival visitors. Cllr Jacqueline Jackson to take photos and report.

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### 3. Other Parish Matters

### 1. High Wych Memorial Hall and car park

1. Update on matters raised at the November meeting:  
No update yet, but awaiting a response from the AGVH for a filing cabinet to be moved from HWMH to AGVH.

BS

## 2. Car park access road and maintenance responsibility

Clr Eric Buckmaster suggested writing to Wendy Ellis at EHDC with cc to Ian. Cllr John Andreotti said the deed clearly shows that although the car park is leased from EHDC and HWPC is responsible for its maintenance, the access road is equally clearly the responsibility of EHDC.

JA

### 3. Parking issues

A letter from the HWMH Trustees set out concerns about the use of the village car park which was specifically provided for use by the Memorial Hall and St James Church:

*On Saturday, 20th June 2026, High Wych School held their Summer Fete on the same morning as The Great Get-Together at the hall. The ensuing number of cars caused a degree of chaos and at least one person found themselves blocked in as a result. This is not the first time that cars driven by visitors to the school have blocked blocking other users. School sports days are an annual event that have, in the past, resulted in such problems.*

It would be of benefit to both the church and the hall if the Parish Council would bring this to the attention of the school. One proposal may be that the school provide marshals for such events when there are known clashes – maybe even tape off areas of the car park. The school does have sufficient grounds to provide temporary car parking for events that they host – with marshalling this would be a safe solution that would prevent the problems on Saturday recurring. At the very least, improved communication about forthcoming events between the school, the church and the hall would certainly help prevent overloading the car park.

*The Trustees asked that this item be added to the agenda for discussion at the next meeting of the Parish Council on July 1st 2026.*

The Parish Council considered the problem and the potential difficulties that solutions might cause. It was agreed that Chairman Tom Payne draft a letter in response.

TP

## 2. Other matters raised

1. A dead tree reported in High Wych Lane and saplings available for planting: Cllr John Andreotti said tree inspections are due this winter when the offer would be taken forward. The offer of saplings was appreciated.

JA

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|        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                   |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
|        | 2. New domain and email addresses: Ongoing with two councillors yet to successfully set up their dedicated email.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | CP/JJ<br>Clerk    |
|        | 3. Perimeter bollards on village greens: Cllr Brian Sullivan presented quotes for installing bollards on Allen's Green Village Green:<br>Supplying 30 wooden bollards £1,527 ex VAT<br>Installing the bollards £2,000 ex VAT<br>There should be a warranty on the life expectancy of the bollards, and formal agreement with the Allen's Green Association.<br>The Clerk advised that funding could be covered from the General Reserves and that he would need to raise an official order with the supplier.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | BS<br>Clerk       |
|        | 4. 1. Litter/Dog bin servicing contractor appointment<br>(i) An unexpected quote from EHDC for dog bin servicing was considered.<br><b>RESOLVED: That the two dog bins be discontinued and removed.</b><br>(ii) Alan Felstead's quote for servicing five litter bins was considered.<br><b>RESOLVED: to accept Alan Felstead's quote of £120 per month to service five litter bins. HWPC to provide the litter sacks and large bin at HWMH.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Clerk<br>Clerk/JJ |
|        | 2. Litter sacks for bin servicing contractor<br><b>RESOLVED: To approve the purchase of 100 litter sacks to be delivered to Alan Felstead.</b> The Clerk confirmed this had already been arranged due the urgency of getting the bins emptied.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Clerk             |
|        | 3. Provision and location of "Biffa type" bin<br>The Clerk reported that he a Cllr Jacqueline Jackson had arranged for Waste Management Ltd to provide and service a bin for £50 per month ex VAT with a £30 ex VAT set up charge, to be located at HWMH. <b>RESOLVED: To approve the provision and charges for the bin.</b> The Clerk confirmed that the waste licence has already been signed and the bin delivered.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Clerk/JJ          |
|        | 5. <b>RESOLVED: To approve the Clerk's annual leave from 10<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> August.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                   |
|        | 3. Other updates<br>(i) Removal of flower / plant holder at the corner of the play area: Alan Felsted has agreed to remove it.<br>(ii) Yellow lines to car park to identify accessible parking: Work completed and paid.<br>(iii) Cars left in Car Park: Cllr Tom Payne to follow with EHDC the Jaguar that has no tax or MOT.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | TP<br>TP          |
| 26.061 | 1. Playing Fields and buildings<br>1. Harlow Theatre Company<br>1. No issues raised.<br>2. Play area<br>1. Disintegrating swing seat cover: Sovereign Play should rectify under warranty. Cllr Tom Payne to chase since these are still under warranty.<br>The Annual RPII report is awaited.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | TP                |
|        | Other issues raised<br>Permission for vehicle parking on the playing field by Scarecrow Festival contributors was raised again.<br>The Clerk pointed out that this is being considered as a non-agenda matter and is therefore something on which it cannot vote. Furthermore, it is not a Parish Council matter, but is rather to be resolved by the Playing Field Management Trustees. The Clerk repeated his previous advice that the Parish Council is only the Custodian Trustee and as such has no management or oversight responsibility for the use of the Field<br>The Scarecrow organisers are responsible for all safety aspects of the event. However, there seemed to be agreement that there should not be parking overnight, irrespective of whatever other arrangements are agreed by the Trustees and Festival Committee. | TP/JA             |

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## 2. Allotments

1. No issues reported
2. Allotment hedge repair following fire: The agreed fence has been purchased and will be installed shortly. In the meantime the fire-damaged hedge is amazingly regenerating.  
RESOLVED: To approve Alan Felstead's quotes of £180 to cut the allotments hedge before the Scarecrow Festival, and £160 to cut the Playing Field hedge.

CP

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

- HW Memorial Hall access road ownership/maintenance responsibility (26.060.3.1.2)
- HWMH Trustees: Car park issues (26.060.3.1.3)
- HCC: High Wych Lane closure 14-16 June
- Parishioner: report of dead tree in High Wych Lane and offer of saplings for planting (26.060.3.2.1)

**26.063 Late items and items for future agendas**

1. Late items raised: None
2. Order Christmas tree for Broadfields (September agenda)
3. Other items raised for future agendas: None

Clerk

**26.064 Date and venue of next Parish Council meeting**

**16<sup>th</sup> September** High Wych Memorial Hall; **11<sup>th</sup> November** Allen's Green Village Hall (Note: changed from previous date of 18<sup>th</sup> November); **20<sup>th</sup> January 2027** High Wych Memorial Hall

Clerk

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.20pm.

Signed.....Dated .....

## APPENDIX A

**26.058.2 26.058.2 PLANNING DECISION NOTICES** for information only as at 25<sup>th</sup> June

|                |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |         |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 3/26/0228/HH   | Templewood, High Wych Road: Two storey front porch extension, raising of ridge height and adding 3 dormers to front elevation and fenestration alterations.                                        | REFUSED |
| 3/26/0710/ARPN | 4 Pole Hole Farm: Prior approval application (Part 3, Class Q) for change of use and conversion of existing agricultural barn to create 1 x 3-bed dwelling and associated operational development. | Awaited |
| 3/26/0531/HH   | Bonnys Row: Two storey side extension and part single/part two storey rear extension; relocation of front door and storm porch; alterations to fenestration.                                       | REFUSED |
| 3/26/0247/HH   | 1 Stepped Gable Mews, High Wych Lane: Replacement windows and doors.                                                                                                                               | Awaited |
| 3/25/1578/FUL  | Little Toad Hall, 3 Trimm's Green: Demolish sheds; site a mobile holiday home and new boundary fence.                                                                                              | Awaited |

## APPENDIX B

### E Buckmaster County Councillor Report June 2026

**the Age Friendly: Live Better (AF:LB)** countywide programme which is working to make Hertfordshire the best county to age in; supporting residents to age well, stay connected, live independently for longer and remain active within their communities. Funded by HCC Public Health and delivered by Age UK Hertfordshire, Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership and North Herts & Stevenage CVS, the programme builds on existing age-friendly work to drive both system-wide change and local community action.

We will provide regular updates as to the work the team does via our [Age Friendly Hertfordshire professionals newsletter](#) (bimonthly) and our [Live Longer Better in Hertfordshire newsletter](#)

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(monthly), you can use the hyperlinks to sign up for the newsletters.

## **Supporting individual residents**

If you meet a resident who is experiencing loneliness, isolation, or looking for activities and support, the primary route for individual support is [HertsHelp](#) (0300 123 4044).

HertsHelp is Hertfordshire's commissioned single front door and can connect people to appropriate local services, activities and specialist support. While locality leads are not able to manage individual referrals at scale, they work closely with HertsHelp and other commissioned services to ensure learning from lived experience feeds into wider improvements.

How to get in touch with us – [agefriendly@ageukherts.org.uk](mailto:agefriendly@ageukherts.org.uk)

## **Hertfordshire urgent call for more local foster carers**

The HELP campaign is Hertfordshire County Council's latest community-focused drive to recruit more foster carers.

The launch in Hoddesdon Market kick-started recruitment efforts in East Hertfordshire, encouraging local residents and business to help spread the word about the importance of fostering, and reach more people who hadn't previously considered this rewarding role.

**More than 1,000 children are currently in care in Hertfordshire** and, despite recent recruitment successes, the council urgently needs more local foster carers so children can stay close to their schools, friends and communities.

Standout year for Hertfordshire's screen sector as Film Office drives collaboration and growth

**Hertfordshire's screen sector has delivered its strongest year on record, with film and television productions generating an estimated £29.1 million in local economic spend during 2025/26<sup>[1]</sup> – more than double the previous year's total.**

This exponential growth has been driven by an increase in productions as well as improved reporting, with **Hertfordshire Film Office (HFO) playing a strategic role in attracting filming to the county**, strengthening local partnerships, and coordinating activity across locations and businesses.

Part of the Hertfordshire Futures family of services, HFO helps raise the county's profile nationally and internationally, supporting inward investment and the growth of the creative economy. **By linking productions with local suppliers and services, HFO helps ensure that spending is retained within Hertfordshire**, benefitting businesses and residents.

Recent productions filmed locally include **Project Hail Mary** in Hemel Hempstead, **Wonka** in St Albans, **Bridgerton** at Hatfield House, and **Trigger Point** and **Code of Silence** at locations across the county.

Hertfordshire Film Office provides **free, end-to-end support** to productions of all sizes. With hands-on expertise, commercial understanding, and strong local relationships, the team removes barriers and streamlines processes through:

- Location sourcing across Hertfordshire's towns, countryside, heritage sites, and urban settings
- Securing filming permissions and coordinating with local authorities and landowners
- Logistics support, including access, parking, and unit bases
- Introductions to trusted local suppliers, crew, studios, and specialist services

## **Hertfordshire's winter service keeps the county moving through coldest conditions**

Between October and the end of April, the council's winter service completed 34 gritting runs, spreading just under 10,000 tonnes of salt to help keep roads as safe as possible. Crews also refilled the county's nearly 1,400 salt bins twice over, once ahead of winter and again following a severe cold snap and snowfall in early January, totalling around 2,800 refills across the season.

Winter arrived in full force in early January, with temperatures dropping to -8.4°C on 6 January and widespread snowfall across the county in the same week. Thanks to careful planning and rapid response, teams were able to react quickly and keep vital routes open.

This winter also marked positive progress in making essential services more sustainable. The council operated one electric gritter during the season, saving an estimated 15 tonnes of carbon compared to a traditional diesel vehicle. Building on this success, the council continues to explore opportunities to expand the use of cleaner, greener vehicles across the fleet.

The winter service was further strengthened by a new highways contract, which saw 41 new gritters introduced for the 2025/26 season, meaning around two-thirds of the fleet was made up of new vehicles. The upgraded fleet proved to be reliable and highly effective throughout the winter.

Around 150 staff from the Highways teams were on standby 24 hours a day, seven days a week for more than seven months, often responding during the night, at weekends and in challenging

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conditions. While some colleagues will remain on call over the summer, others can finally enjoy a break from the threat of a late-night phone.

## **Battery fires increasing**

Fire brigades were called to 1,760 fires linked to lithium-ion batteries in 2025, equating to 4.8 fires a day, an increase of 147 per year over the past three years. Fire chiefs have warned that lithium ion battery fires linked to e bikes and similar devices are increasing in the UK, highlighting that these incidents can be more intense and harder to extinguish than typical fires and pose growing risks to homes and communities. It is reported there is rising concern among firefighters about inadequate regulation and safety standards for batteries and devices, particularly those bought online or modified, with calls for stronger product controls and greater public awareness.

## **Hertfordshire Rights of Way Map Reaches Five Million Views**

The Google map of public rights of way in Hertfordshire, published by Hertfordshire County Council, has now been viewed more than five million times.

The interactive map can be easily loaded onto your smartphone, making it simple to follow your location as you walk and explore. It's a great way to discover routes close to home and enjoy more than 3,000km of public rights of way across the county.

Hertfordshire's rights of way network is a valuable asset, offering plenty of opportunities for residents and visitors to get active and enjoy the countryside. [Rights of way - definitive map | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

## **Young Carers Offer - now delivered by Hertfordshire County Council**

From 1 April 2026, Hertfordshire County Council is proud to be delivering young carers support in-house, bringing this vital service fully within council provision as the contract with Carers in Hertfordshire came to an end.

This change strengthens our commitment to young carers by embedding support directly into council services, helping us work even more closely with children, families and partners across Hertfordshire.

Support for adult carers will continue to be delivered by Carers in Hertfordshire, with no change to that service.

A new [Young Carers webpage](#) has been developed in collaboration with young carers and their families and includes information about the support available, team contact details, and 'a Day in the Life of' form to register a young carer online so that they can get the support they need.

All registered young carers have been contacted directly to be welcomed, provide updated contact information, details on how to access support, and a link to the new webpage.

## **Changes approved to home to school travel policy**

Hertfordshire County Council's cabinet approved an amendment to the county council's Post 16 Transport to Education and Training Policy. The amendment will see the introduction of Personal Travel Budgets (PTBs) becoming the standard offer of support for the majority of young people travelling to school or college.

The policy amendment is proposed for the academic year 2026-27 and will be implemented from September 2026. Pupils aged 16-18 currently using contracted transport would keep their current arrangements until they turn 19 or move home or education provider.

While there is a statutory duty to provide transport for pupils aged 5-16, there is no legal entitlement to Post-16 transport. Despite this, the council has continued to provide support through discretionary contracted transport arrangements for many young people aged 16-18, mostly those with EHCPs.

## **Residents urged to help shape Hertfordshire's new Road Safety Strategy**

Hertfordshire residents are being invited to shape the future of road safety across the county by sharing their real-life experiences of travelling on local roads and streets.

A new public consultation has launched on Hertfordshire's Road Safety Strategy, seeking views not just on where crashes happen, but on how roads and streets feel in everyday life, including the places where people feel unsafe, uncomfortable or lack confidence when travelling.

The consultation, led by Hertfordshire's Road Safety Partnership, recognises that road safety goes beyond statistics alone. It is about understanding how people experience streets and public spaces when walking, cycling, wheeling, driving or using public transport, and using that insight to help shape priorities and determine how safety improvements are delivered in practice.

Residents, community groups and organisations are being encouraged to share their experiences and perspectives, helping ensure the strategy reflects the reality of daily journeys across Hertfordshire, from busy town centres and rural roads to school routes and neighbourhood streets. Residents urged

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to help shape Hertfordshire's new Road Safety Strategy.

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Residents, community groups and organisations are being encouraged to share their experiences and perspectives, helping ensure the strategy reflects the reality of daily journeys across Hertfordshire, from busy town centres and rural roads to school routes and neighbourhood streets.

The Road Safety Strategy is built around a shared responsibility approach, recognising that creating safer travel environments is not something the county council can achieve alone. Instead, it relies on partnership working between local authorities, emergency services, health partners, schools, communities and road users themselves.

Full details of the Road Safety Strategy consultation, including how to take part and the consultation closing date, will be available online at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/RoadSafetyStrategy>  
consultation closing date: Monday 22 June

## **Hertfordshire launches first partnership Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and calls on media to sign new charter**

Hertfordshire has taken a major step forward in tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG) with the launch of its first-ever partnership strategy, accompanied by a new Communications Charter co-created with survivors. Alongside the partnership strategy, Hertfordshire Constabulary has also launched its latest Police VAWG Strategy, further strengthening the coordinated response across agencies.

The Hertfordshire VAWG Partnership Strategy 2026-2029, which supersedes the Domestic Abuse Strategy, aligns with the UK Government's national VAWG strategy and sets out a clear vision reinforcing Hertfordshire's commitment to working collaboratively to prevent abuse, protect victims and survivors, hold perpetrators to account and drive long-term change.

## **Pupils breathe healthier air thanks to Hertfordshire schools ventilation investment**

A growing number of pupils and staff members are benefitting from cleaner, healthier air in their classrooms following the installation of air purification units as part of the Hertfordshire Schools Ventilation Project.

The project, funded through the Sustainable Hertfordshire Central Fund, is helping to reduce children's exposure to air pollution by installing HEPA air purifiers in classrooms. Priority has been given to schools in areas with poorer air quality and higher levels of deprivation, where the health impacts of pollution are often felt most.

A local primary school from East Hertfordshire is among 39 primary and SEND schools to receive air purifiers as part of the latest phase of the programme. To date, the project has positively impacted 12,510 children, with pupils now benefitting from improved air quality every school day.

By the end of this phase of delivery, more than 30,000 children across Hertfordshire will have access to healthier classroom air, supporting better learning environments and long-term health outcomes.

## **Hertfordshire County Council Residents' Survey**

At Hertfordshire County Council we want to create a county where every resident thrives and achieves their aspirations. Where economic growth, innovation and industry are supported, and our environment is protected for future generations. We'd like to hear your thoughts about our services, your local area, and the ways you want to be kept informed. [Take part in the survey, open until 12 July.](#)

## **Excerpt from letter to Minister of State for Policing and Crime by Leader of the Council.**

### **This was as a result of a motion at Full Council introduced by the Conservative Group**

.....I am writing regarding the current independent review of police force structures, and the possibility may result in the merger of Hertfordshire Constabulary with neighbouring forces.

I recognise there may be merit in making changes to how policing is delivered in England. In particular I can see how changes to the national tier of policing, bringing together existing national bodies, including the National Police Chiefs'

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Council, the College of Policing, the National Crime Agency and Counter Terrorism Policing into a single organisation, could enable the most complex and serious crimes to be tackled more effectively and efficiently. I also recognise there is a potential case for consolidating some smaller police forces. However, reforms should not come at the expense of the effective, locally responsive local policing currently being delivered by forces such as Hertfordshire Constabulary. The creation of larger forces risks diluting community relations, as well as reducing the visibility and local accountability of senior officers.....

## **Annual Survey of Hertfordshire's Parish, Town and Community Councils**

Hertfordshire County Council, working with the Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils (HAPTC), is taking steps to strengthen relationships with Parish & Town Councils, particularly around communication and engagement. A key part of this work is the annual survey, relaunched in 2023 to help identify areas for improvement.

County Councillors are invited to view the 2025 Annual Survey results. While the response rate was low, findings suggest declining engagement with Hertfordshire County Council and highlight the need to improve communication and consultation, particularly transparency, feedback, and clarity of responsibilities. Parish & Town Councils also expressed a desire for more structured engagement and practical guidance. They felt they had to rely on County Councillors for updates rather than structured communication, especially around local government reorganisation.

The Stakeholder Bulletin from Hertfordshire County Council sent to all Clerks was seen as helpful. However, it was felt it could be more impactful. In response, the Corporate Strategy and Policy team has introduced a new monthly bulletin for Parish and Town Councils, aimed at both Councillors and Clerks, with more tailored and relevant content to support engagement. This will be sent to all Clerks, with a request that it is promoted to all Parish and Town Councillors.

## **HertsLynx celebrates 250,000 passenger journeys across Hertfordshire**

Hertfordshire County Council's on-demand transport service, HertsLynx, is celebrating a major milestone after completing its 250,000th passenger journey.

Since launching in North and East Hertfordshire in September 2021 and expanding into Dacorum in December 2023, HertsLynx has become an important part of the county's transport network, helping people connect with work, education, healthcare, shopping, and leisure opportunities.

The service currently operates 12 accessible minibuses across two service areas. Unlike traditional bus services, HertsLynx allows passengers to book journeys through a mobile app, website, or telephone, providing flexible transport when and where it is needed.

Passenger feedback continues to demonstrate the service's popularity, with an average customer satisfaction rating of 96% five-star reviews between January and May 2026. During this period, passengers submitted more than 12,000 five-star ratings.

The service is particularly popular with concessionary pass holders and students travelling to schools and colleges. One regular passenger has completed an impressive 1,975 journeys using HertsLynx. The milestone comes as the council continues to explore opportunities to expand the service. In a recent public survey asking residents where they would most like to see new HertsLynx pick-up points, more than 300 responses were received. Hertford was the most requested location in the North and East service area, while Hemel Hempstead Hospital was the most requested destination in Dacorum.

Passengers regularly praise the convenience of the service and the professionalism of drivers.

## **LCWIP going through approvals at East Herts and County**

The raw details of the routes will be added to a countywide, shareable and accessible webmap to make it easy for Development Management, Highways Locality Budget and other colleagues to use, as well as a reference for members.

## **Priority Areas include**

| Route/Area                                                | Town               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Bishop's Stortford (Bishop's Stortford to Sawbridgeworth) | Bishop's Stortford |
| Sawbridgeworth 1 (Footpath 017/Cambridge Road)            | Sawbridgeworth     |

**Summary** The East Herts District LCWIP has been developed in partnership with East Herts District Council and with input from the local community and key stakeholders at key stages. While the East Herts LCWIP identifies key walking and cycling networks across the whole district, infrastructure improvements have focused on the larger settlements of Hertford, Ware, Bishop's Stortford, Sawbridgeworth and Buntingford, along with the larger villages (known as Group 1 villages) and key links between them. These are the areas considered to have the greatest potential for higher levels

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

of cycling and walking and therefore where targeted infrastructure improvements in the short-medium term are likely to have the greatest positive impact.

By adopting the East Herts LCWIP, we will be able to support the progress of developing and bringing forward the walking and cycling improvements proposed within the Plan, bid for additional funding towards implementation including, the negotiation of planning contributions towards the schemes from developers as part of the planning application process.

The link to the report is [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Environment, Transport & Growth Cabinet Panel, 11/06/2026 10:00](#) Starting on page 15

E Buckmaster County Councillor June 2026

## COUNCILLOR ACTIONS ARISING

### Cllr Tom Payne

- Allotments (with Cllr Carrie Payne)
- Gilston development
- Blounts Lane S&V study – liaise with Cllr Eric Buckmaster and parishioner and contact Police & Crime Commissioner to see if grant funding is available
- Contact Sovereign Play re warranty on disintegrating swing seat
- Monitor play area risk items in RPII report (with Cllr Natalie Higgins)
- Removal of abandoned cars in car park

### Cllr John Andreotti

- HTC liaison
- Car park liaison
- Monitor playing field and open spaces issues
- Attend Police community engagement

### Cllr Carrie Payne

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

### Cllr Jacqueline Jackson

- Footpaths, Public Rights of Way and accessibility matters
- Attend the next Police Cross Border meeting and report back to Council
- Follow up co-option prospects

### Cllr Brian Sullivan

- Check with AGVH whether a filing cabinet of PC papers can be stored in the VH
- Details for installing bollards along the verge of Allen's Green Village Green
- Liaise with police on Police Locality issues

### Cllr Natalie Higgins

- Monitor play area risk items raised in RPII report (when received)

### Clerk

- Set up agreed bank payments
- Planning comments
- Hall booking for next meeting
- Website: upload papers; updating and email changes to .gov.uk
- Add Fireworks Code and policy to website

### ALL

- Seek to find co-optees to fill vacancies
- Set up and use councillor .gov.uk email addresses

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