



OUTLOOK

YOUR COUNCILLORS

OUTDOOR POOLS

EASING THE SQUEEZE

WHAT'S ON

A close-up photograph of a bumblebee on a red flower. The bee is the central focus, with its black and yellow body and fuzzy texture clearly visible. It is positioned on a red flower with many small, pointed petals. The background is a soft, out-of-focus pink and purple.

SUMMER IS BUZZING

IN NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

Find out more about organisations and initiatives helping to save the bees on pages 8 & 17

Congratulations to Stuart Wilkie from Hitchin who won our photo competition with this photo which he took in his garden.

FROM THE LEADER



Welcome to this summer's edition of Outlook! I want to start by saying thank you to everyone who engaged with this year's local elections, including our staff and volunteers. Local government is the government closest to you, and local elections give you real input on how essential everyday services are run. You'll find our updated councillors list on pages 9-12.

This last year we've delivered a great deal (and met ongoing evolving challenges) as we continue to support you through the pandemic. Councillors Ian Albert and Sam North have worked with our officers to deliver multiple COVID-19 support grants (see pg 19), and are now working on cost of living strategies, including our Easing the Squeeze campaign (see pg 3), and issuing

the energy council tax rebate to everyone who is eligible. To apply please visit www.north-herts.gov.uk/energyrebate or if you haven't received your rebate or need assistance, please call **01462 474000**.

Cllr Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg - Leader of the Council

This is my first Outlook column as Deputy Leader, and as a keen swimmer I'm very excited our outdoor pools in Hitchin and Letchworth are open for their summer seasons, and that we've been able to extend the season at Letchworth this year.

We've also been working to support families fleeing the war in Ukraine. North Herts has a proud tradition of supporting those fleeing violence and



Photo: Rebecca Stewart

persecution, having found homes for 50 Syrian refugees, and 10 Afghan refugees, with a commitment to resettle an additional 10 Syrian refugees. We're working with local partners and our neighbouring local authorities across Hertfordshire to ensure families and sponsors have the support in place they need. If you have any questions or want to offer support please contact ukrainesupport@hertfordshire.gov.uk or visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ukrainesupport

Cllr Ruth Brown - Deputy Leader

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CONTACTING NORTH HERTS COUNCIL

Most North Herts Council services can be accessed online. Find out the date of your next waste collection, apply for a licence, report an issue, register to vote or pay a bill, all through our website: www.north-herts.gov.uk



OTHER WAYS TO CONTACT US:

Phone: 01462 474000

www.facebook.com/northhertsDC

@NorthHertsDC

- North Herts Council is committed to equal opportunities and our aim is to make our services easy for all residents to use. If English is not your first language or you have difficulty reading this document please contact us to discuss how we may be able to assist you.

Please call: 01462 474000, or email service@north-herts.gov.uk
Textphone (for textphone users) on: 01462 474800



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“ MAKING NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE
A VIBRANT PLACE TO LIVE,
WORK AND PROSPER ”



Easing the squeeze

Following the rise in energy bills and other costs of living, the council has put together a one-stop source of advice and information to help you 'ease the squeeze'. Managing Director, Anthony Roche, said: "We know this is a trying time for many people, with ever increasing pressures on your budgets. We really hope our Easing the squeeze guide which gives useful advice, tips and information, will go some way to help you manage through these unprecedented times."

£150 council tax rebate



The council has now paid over £5m in the council tax energy rebate scheme, which means more than 34,000 households have received their £150 payment. Those living in a band A to D property and paying by Direct Debit (DD) should have automatically received it, and those not paying by DD were invited to apply for the payment online. If your home is in council tax bands E to H, there is a discretionary scheme for the energy rebate for those on a low income. We are writing to eligible households with further details.

Food provision



There are a number of food provision groups in North Herts, including food banks and those that primarily run to

reduce food waste. From Feed Up Warm Up Hitchin, providing a safe, welcoming space at the scout hut at Our Lady Immaculate Church, to Royston Foodbank at the Evangelical Church on York Way, and Best Before Café Letchworth, in Garden Square Shopping Centre.

Reduce your energy bills



You could save up to around £70 a year on your fuel bills just by using the Herts Energy Advice Tool (HEAT) app, an easy-to-use energy saving app free to download for Apple and Android devices. The app is designed to take you through your home, room by room, to answer questions to identify how you may be able to reduce your energy use, and in turn save money.

Looking to volunteer, train or seek employment?



The council has recently awarded £20,000 to Create Community, a local organisation working in partnership with Citizens Advice North Hertfordshire and North Herts Centre for Voluntary Service, to support unemployed and economically inactive people to enter further training or employment.

Look out for top tips on our social media channels and read the FULL guide on our website:

www.north-herts.gov.uk/easingthesqueeze



Are you ready for the summer weather?

As our climate changes, hot spells are expected to be more frequent and more intense. The heat-health alert system operates in England from 1 June to 15 September each year. During this period, the Met Office may forecast heatwaves, so thinking ahead and preparing for what the weather may bring this summer can make a real difference.

Here are some great top tips from the Met Office to make sure you're summer ready



Look out for those around you - when the temperature increases it can affect any of us, but in particular older people, those with underlying health conditions and people who are exposed to high levels of heat because of where they live or work.



Keep an eye on any four-legged friends too, particularly dogs, who are especially at risk of over-heating.



Take the worry out of summer storms - if a summer storm affected your power and mobile phone networks, what would you do? Keep key documents and information in a safe place, know where you can find a torch and consider getting a separate battery charger. Keep the power cut helpline number (105) accessible too.



Plan ahead for flooding and sign up for flood warning alerts at www.gov.uk

For more advice and guidance please visit www.metoffice.gov.uk



FREE Community wellbeing days from the North Herts Healthy Hub

INCLUDING FREE REFRESHMENTS

Hitchin

Westmill Community Centre

John Barker Place, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 2PG

4 July - Fun with food with the Creative Chefs
(for under 5's) - 10 OR 11.15am

4 July - Flower arranging taster session
for adults - 1.30pm

1 August - Soft, furry and friendly small
animal encounters for under 5's
- 9.30 OR 11am

5 September - Movement and music
for under 5's - 10am



Hitchin Town Hall

Brand St, Hitchin SG5 1JE

29 July - Fun with food with the Creative
Chefs (for under 5's) - 9.30am

29 July - Mind in mid Herts – Boosting
self-esteem for adults - 11am

19 August - Creative crafts with the
Creation Station (Suitable for children
aged 10 and under) - 9.30 OR 10.45am

23 September - Messy play for under 5's
with Messaround UK - 10am

21 October - Relaxing adult craft session
with the Art in Martins - 10am

Letchworth

Mrs Howard Memorial Hall

Norton Way South, Letchworth Garden City SG6 1NX

12 July - Pottery painting for adults - 9.30am

12 July - Beginners yoga taster session for adults
- 11.30am

26 July - Movement and music for
under 5's - 9.30 OR 10.30am

9 August - Fun with food with the
Creative Chefs (Suitable for children
aged 10 and under) - 9.30 OR 10.45am

23 August - Creative crafts with the
Creation Station (Suitable for children
aged 10 and under) - 9.30 OR 10.45am

6 September - Movement and
music for under 5's - 9.30am

6 September - Low impact
exercise class for adults
- 10.30am



Royston

Market Hill Rooms

Fish Hill, Royston SG8 9DW

6 July - Movement and music for under 5's - 10.15am

20 July - Beginners card making session with
the Art in Martins - 10am

3 August - Messy play (Suitable
for children aged 10 and under) with
Messaround UK - 10am OR 12pm

17 August - Fun craft session for
families with the Art in Martins
- 9.30 OR 11am

7 September - A wild session with
Safari Stu learning about exotic
animals (for under 5's)
- 10 OR 11am

21 September - Building
self esteem with Mind in
Mid Herts - 10am



Numbers are limited so must be **pre-booked** by emailing
healthyhub@north-herts.gov.uk or calling 01462 474111



Celebrating 40 years of supporting our community



It's official! Herts Careline, North Herts Council's award-winning community alarm and telecare service is celebrating 40 years of providing reassurance and freedom to Hertfordshire residents.

Herts Careline supports over 16,000 residents across the county, with support and advice available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, often taking 1,500 calls a day.

They provide assistive technology such as pendant alarms, fall detectors, door sensors, smoke detectors and epilepsy monitors which help those living with medical conditions, old age and vulnerabilities to live more independently in their own homes, in turn providing great reassurance to their families that they are being supported.

Help on hand at the touch of the button, 365 days of the year.

Across four decades, Herts Careline has grown from being a service for North Herts residents, to now changing lives across the whole of Hertfordshire since partnering with Hertfordshire County Council in 2014.

Jo Dufficy, Service Director at North Herts Council said: "We're over the moon to reach our 40th Anniversary. With over 30 call operators working around the clock to keep everyone safe and

supported and a dedicated team of managers, engineers and administration support, our Herts Careline team are proud to support people who want to live in their own homes for longer maintain their independence".

If you or someone you know needs help, please call **0300 999 2 999**; email **carelinesupport@north-herts.gov.uk** or visit **www.care-line.co.uk**

A SNAPSHOT OF 40 YEARS OF CARE

North Herts Council open a 24 hour a day helpline for 350 residents.



The service was for those in council accommodation who would pull a cord to receive help.



The Careline team are awarded "Best public/public partnership" in the National Association for Public Service Excellence Awards.



The Queen congratulates Careline on their 35th Anniversary.

Careline's "Home and Away" service



launches. An outdoor pendant which not only calls for help and but also gives a location.



1982

1999

2016

2016

2017

2020

2020

2021

2022

Careline moves and expands and is officially opened by Barry Norman, the British film critic best known for presenting the BBC's "Film" programme.



Careline is accredited by Which? as a Trusted Trader.



Lockdown begins but the Careline team continue to be available 24/7 as residents isolated to stay safe.



Careline becomes the sole provider for delivering assistive technology services across the whole of Hertfordshire.



GET EXCITED FOR SUMMER

Make memories at Hitchin and Letchworth outdoor pools this summer! Both centres offer 50 metre and toddler pools, splash cafes and picnic areas. Plus, take advantage of Hitchin's later Thursday evening sessions and Letchworth's longer season!

swimming
memberships
available



HITCHIN SWIMMING CENTRE

season
tickets
available



LETCHWORTH OUTDOOR POOL





Benefits of swimming that will make you want to dive in!

Swimming is great fun for the whole family, it also has a whole host of health benefits too. Swimming can help improve and maintain your fitness levels, boost your mental health and is a good distraction from day-to-day life.

Swimming offers an all-body workout, using all the muscles from head to toe. Whether you're training for an event or taking a leisurely swim you will feel the benefits. It's also great for brain health, as being in water increases the blood flow to the brain, which is important for keeping the brain healthy and protecting it from toxins.

While you are swimming you will find that you concentrate on your stroke and breathing technique, which can help clear your mind for a while, plus you will feel happier after a swim as it releases endorphins; natural feel-good hormones which improve your wellbeing.

Swimming doesn't have to be a solitary activity, it's a great way to meet other like-minded people or spend quality time together with the family, splashing around in the water having fun, getting fit and keeping active.

As the warm summer months are upon us, we're lucky in North Herts that we have the choice of two glorious outdoor pools to choose from.

Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL) operate Letchworth Outdoor Pool and Hitchin Outdoor pool, based at Hitchin Swimming Centre, under a contract with North Herts Council. Both outdoor pools are open seven days a week, with a late-night Thursday evening session at Hitchin between 6pm and 7pm and an extended season at Letchworth, which will be open until 30 September this year. What are you waiting for?

Green upgrades at our leisure centres



North Herts Council and SLL planned and implemented two projects to reduce energy consumption at two of our leisure centres. We have successfully installed LED lighting throughout North Herts Leisure Centre (NHLC), including the car park, and Hitchin Swimming Centre. We have also installed pool covers at NHLC and at Hitchin Swimming Centre which help prevent evaporation, leading to less water wastage. They will also help retain heat, cutting down on energy bills.

As a result of these projects, electricity consumption at NHLC has reduced by 49% for the period April-Dec 2021 compared to April-Dec 2017, with electricity consumption at Hitchin reducing by 43.6% for the same period.

As a direct impact of the pool cover project, NHLC's gas consumption has reduced by 8.3% for the period April-Dec 2021 compared to April-Dec 2017, and at Hitchin gas consumption has reduced by 21.9% for the period April-Dec 2021 compared to April-Dec 2017.

We are also exploring energy efficient options for the Royston Leisure Centre, including the installation of solar thermal technology to heat the pool, which is due to be fitted by the end of the financial year.

New boilers for Outdoor Pools

This season, both the Letchworth and Hitchin outdoor pools have had new energy-efficient boilers installed that will heat the water for outdoor pools. The boilers will help reduce energy consumption and help us operate with lower running costs and big reductions in CO2 emissions.



INTERACTIVE PLAY AT A PARK NEAR YOU

New interactive play equipment for children and young people has been installed in each of our four main towns:

- sound and dance arch at Bancroft, Hitchin
- multipurpose compact sports area at Jackmans Central, Letchworth
- interactive play pillars with arcade-like touch areas at Holroyd Crescent, Baldock
- large ball wall with 16 screens at Serby Avenue, Royston.

In the first month, the Bancroft arch was played a total of 207 hours –

that's over eight and a half days! The most popular games were 'Freeze', similar to musical statues, and 'Moon monster', an imagination game with an invisible monster hiding on the moon – you have to sneak (walk or crawl!) under the arch and run away when you hear the monster. Games are updated regularly.

Local user Matylda, aged 6, said: "It's so fun, it's very different to other play equipment. I love playing all the different games and dancing to the music, it's so cool."

Sarah Kingsley, Service Director for Place, said: "We regularly review our play provision in the district, to see how we can improve what

North Herts celebrated World Bee Day in May. Bees don't just provide honey, they are vital in pollinating most of our fruit and veg. We are lucky to have a number of local bee initiatives including BuzzWorks Hitchin (pictured) and North Herts Beekeeping Association.



we have and ensure it is well maintained. This new interactive equipment is some of the latest equipment on the market, we hope children of all ages enjoy using it throughout North Herts."



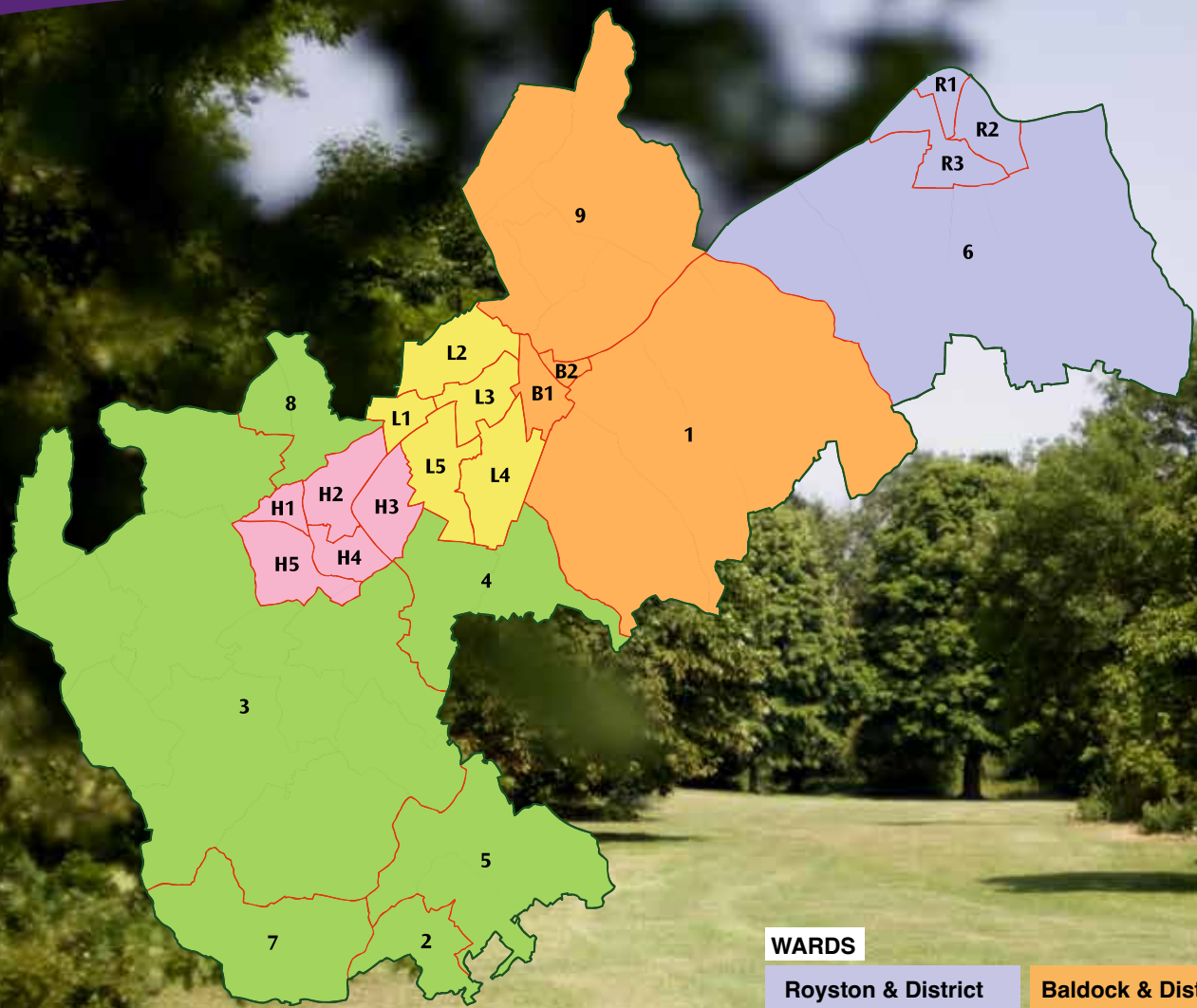
12 cherry trees have been planted at Bancroft in Hitchin, thanks to sponsorship from the Rotary Club of Hitchin Tilehouse. The avenue joins the many other tree initiatives across the district to help fight climate change.



Thanks to the Hitchin U3A gardening group who transformed a scruffy planter in Waitrose car park in partnership with the council, to help celebrate their 40th anniversary.



Your North Hertfordshire Councillors 2022 / 23



WARDS

Royston & District

6 Ermine
R1 Royston Palace
R2 Royston Meridian
R3 Royston Heath

Baldock & District

1 Weston & Sandon
9 Arbury
B1 Baldock Town
B2 Baldock East

Letchworth

L1 Letchworth Wilbury
L2 Letchworth Grange
L3 Letchworth East
L4 Letchworth South East
L5 Letchworth South West

Hitchin

H1 Hitchin Oughton
H2 Hitchin Bearton
H3 Hitchin Walsworth
H4 Hitchin Highbury
H5 Hitchin Priory

Southern Rural

2 Codicote
3 Hitchwood, Offa and Hoo
4 Chesfield
5 Knebworth
7 Kimpton
8 Cadwell

North Herts Council
comprises

Conservative

19

Labour and
Co-operative

17

Liberal Democrats

13

Councillor Elizabeth Dennis-Harburg is Leader of the Council

Councillor Sam North is Chair of the Council

Your North Hertfordshire Councillors

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LETCWORTH

HITCHIN

SOUTHERN RURAL

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Your Council

Councillors are elected by registered electors in the district to represent you in geographical areas known as wards.

Political composition

For the civic year 2022/23 the political composition of the council is 19 Conservative, 17 Labour and Cooperative and 13 Liberal Democrat councillors, and therefore the Labour and Cooperative and Liberal Democrat joint administration will continue meaning that the Cabinet is made up of eight members of those parties, including the Leader. The Cabinet develops policy within the framework set out by the council and has decision-making powers.

From 2024, local elections in North Herts will go 'all-out' and be conducted every four years, instead of the current regime of electing 'by thirds' – this means elections take place in three out of every four years, with one third of councillors being elected each time. The last time we will elect by thirds will be in May 2023.

All-out elections or whole council elections mean that all councillors are elected at the same time every four years, so after 2024 the next district election will be in 2028. The change is estimated to save around £40,000 a year and was made following a public consultation.

In England and Wales, elections take place on a 'first past the post' system, meaning the candidate with the highest number of votes is elected to represent the ward they are standing in.

High standards of conduct by councillors are promoted and maintained by the Standards Committee.

Other elections

The next scheduled Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections are due to take place in May 2024.

The next election for Hertfordshire County Councillors is due to take place in May 2025.

Area committees

As the district covers such a large area of land with different towns and villages, North Herts Council has five area committees: Baldock and District, Hitchin, Letchworth, Royston and District, and Southern Rural.

They are made up of councillors within each designated area and meet regularly throughout the year to discuss community issues and allocate community grants to local groups.

Meetings

The council also has a Planning Control Committee, which makes decisions on planning applications.

All Full Council, Cabinet, and Committee meetings are held in public and live streamed on our YouTube channel, usually taking place on a weekday evening at 7.30pm. If you would like further information on any of our committees or dates of meetings, please get in touch.



Find out more about your council and get in touch:

Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3JF

www.north-herts.gov.uk 01462 474000

 @northhertsdc  @NorthHertsDC

 @northhertsdc Search for us on [nextdoor](#)

 NorthHertsGovUk

THE STORY BEHIND YOUR COUNCIL TAX

Did you know that your council tax payment helps us:



Collect waste from over **58,000 households**



Clean over **400 miles of roads**



Maintain **100 hectares of parks and gardens**
(see pages 8 & 17 for more)



Provide housing benefit to over **4,700 residents**



Run Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston **leisure centres** (see page 6 for our green upgrades)



Send **57% of household waste** for re-use, recycling and composting (see page 14)



Maintain the **two outdoor pools and four splash parks** in the district (see pages 6 & 7 for swimming fun this summer)




Provide **support for the homeless** in our district



Run **active community events**, like our Healthy Hubs (see page 4 for details of events that are coming up)

This is just part of the story behind your council tax, for the full story, please go to <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/how-your-council-tax-spent>





HAVE YOUR SAY AS PART OF OUR ANNUAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME REVIEW


This summer, we're going to be carrying out a review of our Council Tax Reduction Scheme which was first introduced in 2013.

Council Tax Reduction replaced Council Tax Benefit and is designed to assist low income families in paying their Council Tax bills.


You can have your say on how you think it should be administered and how we can make the process easier in the future.

Keep an eye on our website (www.north-herts.gov.uk) and social media channels for more details and ensure you have your say.


How every £1 of council tax is spent in North Herts




9p
North Herts Museum & Hitchin Town Hall




3p
Grants to community organisations, including area committee grants




4p
Community safety & Environmental crime




23p
Looking after parks & green spaces



41p
Waste collection & street cleaning



11p
Environmental health: protecting your work, your health & your life



9p
Housing advice & homelessness support

WASTE & RECYCLING



Don't forget!

Bins in North Herts will be collected one day later than usual after the August bank holidays. Check your bin collection day on our website:

www.north-herts.gov.uk/binday



Compostable packaging: what you need to know

Compostable and biodegradable plastics are being used more and more to replace existing plastic products. However, most of these cannot be placed in your recycling bins.

The only exception are compostable bags with the seedling logo can go into your food waste caddy, as these will completely breakdown when they are sent to our composting facility.

If your caddy liners don't have the seedling logo, we can't accept them, even if the packaging states they can be recycled.

Products that say they're home compostable are fine for your home compost bin, but don't put them in your recycling or compost bins.

Biodegradable plastics, bioplastics, or biobased products

Sometimes they're labelled as recyclable, however currently they're not recyclable in Hertfordshire.

For more information visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk and search 'biodegradable plastic'.



Looking to clear out some clothes, shoes, or textiles?



Recycle



It is estimated that £140m worth of clothing is sent to landfill each year. This is such a waste - no unwanted clothes and shoes need to end up in the bin. North Herts Council provides a fortnightly textile collection. All clothes, shoes, towels and bed linen should be tied in non-reusable plastic bags to keep the material dry (no black sacks or charity donation bags please) and presented next to your grey bin on the day of your recycling collection.

Repair



A new button or simple stitch could help make your clothes feel good as new! Visit www.loveyourclothes.org.uk for tips on how to give your clothes a second chance.

Donate

Local charity shops are a great place to drop off your pre-loved items and help avoid unwanted clothes going to landfill. Charity shops are also a great source for updating your wardrobe for a fraction of the cost of buying new, with the added benefit of helping the charity and the environment too!



Sell

Did you know that the value of unused clothing in wardrobes across the UK has been estimated at around £30b. Why not be kind to your wallet and the environment by selling your unwanted clothes! It is now easier than ever to sell your clothes using websites such as Vinted, Facebook and eBay.



RECYCLING PAPER THE RIGHT WAY

Please separate your paper from the rest of your recycling. Clean, dry and separated paper can be recycled into better quality paper.

Although paper included in your grey bin will still get recycled, its value is significantly less than when it is kept as a single material, which is why it's important you ensure paper is presented in your paper box.

A study of waste collected in January 2021 revealed that over 10% of waste in the purple bins was recyclable paper. Ensuring paper is presented in your paper box will not only divert it from costly landfill and help keep the cost of running services down.



North Herts Youth Council

Are you or is someone you know 11 - 17 years old and keen to make a difference in the local area? Nobody knows about the issues affecting young people more than young people themselves, so come along and have your say in creating a better North Herts for everyone!



Supported by Hertfordshire County Council's Services for Young People, North Herts Youth Council is looking for new members who want to learn the skills needed to tackle issues such as improving facilities in their area and raising awareness of current concerns such as climate change, personal safety or equality for all!

North Herts Youth Council meet 6pm-8pm every Tuesday during term time at Letchworth Young People's Centre inside Letchworth Town Hall. Sessions involve Youth Workers supporting the group in exploring issues important to young people, including developing

the skills needed for consultation of their peers and engaging key decision makers to address the issues facing young people and the wider community. Letchworth Young People's Centre is fully wheelchair accessible and where attending the sessions in-person presents a challenge, the Youth Council invite members to join online.

Youth Councillors learn how to represent themselves and others whilst developing skills in leadership, research, negotiation, teamwork and debate. These skills are developed focussing on subjects like 'should we still wear masks when not required

to by law?' and 'how has COVID-19 affected young people's body image and what support is available to help with this locally'.

Not only is the Youth Council a fantastic place to meet new friends and have fun whilst making a difference, it's also an engaging introduction to responsibility, democracy and will look great on applications for further education and employment, personal statements and your CV.

Here are just a few examples of what our Youth Councillors have to say about the Youth Council:

"I've found that the Youth Council has helped me with my social life. It's also helped me with my individuality in a way that has helped me get on better with my friends. Everyone in the Youth Council has made me feel welcome". (S, 13)

"I really enjoy being part of the Youth Council as I know our voice gets heard and we have the chance to bring about change" (C, 15)

"I enjoyed being able to be a part... it is a great idea for our voices as young people need to be heard!" (L, 13)

"I really like the debates in Youth Council, they really open my eyes to different views and opinions" (L, 14)

Everyone is welcome, whatever their background or experience. For more information about Youth Council and the other projects, services and opportunities on offer from Services for Young People (SfYP) - visit www.servicesforyoungpeople.org.

To join the Youth Council or any other SfYP Project, click on the 'MAKE A REFERRAL' button at the top of the web page and complete the online form. Once the form has been received a member of the team will be in touch with further details.

Keep up-to-date with the team and projects by joining them on **Twitter (@NorthHertsTeam)** and **Instagram (@HCCSFYP)**.





Could you be our next apprentice?

An apprenticeship is a nationally recognised programme, combining work with learning and training, both on and off the job.

Our apprenticeship scheme has been running successfully since 2012, offering young people from the district exciting opportunities in various areas across the council including customer services, communications, digital marketing, HR, IT and legal services. Most of our apprentices study a level 3 qualification alongside a full-time job, on an 18-month fixed-term contract, with a starting salary of £18,528.

The minimum entry requirement is Maths and English GCSE grade 4 or equivalent, and you can join the scheme as part of your post-16 or post-18 career path, or following college, university or time spent in employment.

Here's what some of our apprentices have to say about working at North Herts Council:



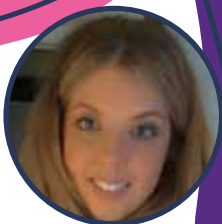
“ It was the best decision I ever made! I was out of my comfort zone when I joined as I had no HR experience, but I have learnt so much. ”

“ It's a great place to work! There's a great work-life balance and lots of support. ”



“ There's a good focus on helping you achieve your personal and professional development goals. ”

“ Everyone is so friendly and helpful I feel like I have been part of the team for years. I cannot recommend an apprenticeship at NHC enough! ”



For more information on our apprentice scheme please visit our website and search for 'jobs'. You can also register your interest in future vacancies by emailing: **Apprenticeships@north-herts.gov.uk**

Does your group need help with fundraising?



Are you part of a community group or association that needs money? Do you have children in a school or club that could use some fundraising, or perhaps you know of a local charity in need?

We're looking for more good causes to sign up to the North Herts Community Lottery – we currently have 32 organisations, some of which are on target to raise over £1,000 this year just by selling tickets to their supporters. You'll receive 50p in every £1 spent by players who choose to support your cause, helping to fund your work in North Herts. It's free, quick and easy to sign up as a good cause, and you'll get help to sell tickets with your own lottery website as well as marketing resources.

Players of the North Herts Community Lottery have a one in 50 chance of winning a prize, with a jackpot of £25,000. The draw takes place every Saturday and so far two people have won £250, 10 have won £25 and over 100 people have won three extra tickets!

For more information, tickets and to sign up as a good cause, visit: **www.northhertscommunitylottery.co.uk**



NEW ON-DEMAND BUS SERVICE

HertsLynx, a flexible minibus service, is for anyone travelling in the area shown on the map.

After decades of decline in rural bus services, nearly every village in the service area has a convenient, affordable bus service. People use it to go out shopping or socially, get to medical appointments, and commute to work, school and college.

So far since starting in September 2021, the service has carried over 10,000 passengers and has a high customer satisfaction rate – 85% gave the service five stars.

You can book from 30 days to 3 minutes in advance, but the further ahead you book, the more likely you'll get to travel when you want. From September there will be even more availability for same-day bookings, as two new buses, including one all-electric, will join the fleet.

Download the HertsLynx app, call **01992 555513** or visit: **intalink.org.uk/hertslynx**



Going wild with busy bees

Did you know, bees don't just provide honey, they are vital in pollinating most of our fruit and veg?

Humans simply wouldn't survive without our busy bees, so it's important we encourage them as they face many threats, from climate change due to increasing habitat loss and the use of toxic pesticides.

North Herts celebrated World Bee Day in May – we are lucky to have a number of local bee initiatives including BuzzWorks Hitchin and North Herts Beekeeping Association.

The district also went wild in June with The Wildlife Trusts' 30 Days Wild campaign, which encourages people to do something wild every day throughout the month. Simply watching and appreciating wildlife in your garden or local greenspace, to making wildflower bombs and building bee and bug hotels – even helping our endangered hedgehogs by leaving out food and water. Don't worry if you didn't take part in June, you can actually go wild throughout the year!

Encouraging bees and wildlife helps improve our local biodiversity which goes some way to remove carbon from the atmosphere and helps fight climate change, and of course spending time in nature is good for your health and wellbeing!

The council has a number of wilding projects including transforming 30 hectares of wild land.

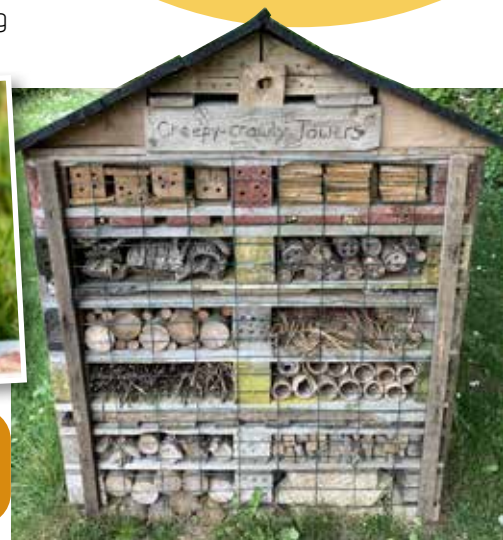


Find out more: <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/going-wild-june>



Top tips for welcoming bees & wildlife to your garden:

- Plant flowers, shrubs & trees, even pots on patios & hanging baskets help
- Don't use pesticides
- Use peat-free compost
- Let your grass grow to give bees & other insects shelter (and a nice place to roam!)
- Build or buy a bee or insect hotel



NORTH HERTS HEROES

Congratulations to the winners of this year's Chair's Community Recognition Awards.



Left to right: Cllr Val Bryant with Nick aka Spidey, Mia, Karen, Bekah and Anni

The awards, sponsored by Willmott Dixon and The Comet, celebrate people in the district who have gone above and beyond and made a real difference in their local community. Cllr Val Bryant, Chair of the Council, said: "These Awards are a fantastic way for us to celebrate some of the special people in the district who are going out of their way to make a difference. We know people don't do it for the glory, but it's important to give thanks and we hope it will inspire others to think about how they may help the wider community."

This year's winners:

Caring Award

Karen Stephens from Baldock, for setting up a local menopause support group, organising Christmas hampers for less fortunate people and being a specially trained Butterfly volunteer at Lister hospital, supporting terminally ill patients and their relatives.



Dedication Award

Bekah Nicolas for going above and beyond at Hitchin Library where she worked for over 10 years.



Green Award

Anni Sander for championing the environment in various ways including running Plastic Free Hitchin and co-organising the first two Hitchin Repair Café events.



Health Award

Nick Jemetta aka Fancy Dress Dad from Hitchin, for championing mental health and raising over £10,000 for local charities.



Young Star Award

Mia Jaszewska from Letchworth, a true inspiration raising awareness and supporting young people facing grief.



£1,000 FOR CHAIR'S CHARITIES

Garden House Hospice and Tilehouse Counselling will each get around £500 as the council's Chair, Cllr Val Bryant, came to the end of her civic year. She said: "I have really enjoyed my year as Chair and thrilled to have raised so much for my chosen charities."

The Chair of North Herts Council is similar to a ceremonial mayor. The Chair for the civic year 2022/23 is Cllr Sam North and his charities are Herts Welcomes Refugees and Together for Short Lives.

Council meetings

Please check our website for details of upcoming council meetings:
<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/meetings>



Money for local community groups

Around £40,000 has been awarded to a number of groups across the district in the 2021/22 financial year, thanks to our community grants scheme.



Small grants are available to independent and not-for-profit organisations working for the benefit of local communities. These are administered by our five Area Committees: Baldock and District, Hitchin, Letchworth, Royston and District, and Southern Rural.

Some of the recent grants awarded include:

- **£1,000 to Nova Wellness** towards running group wellbeing therapy events for 20 carers based in Baldock.
- **£1,100 to Strathmore Fun Club in Hitchin** to buy equipment and materials for a programme of activities for

local children, to help keep fees low and make the club accessible for all working parents.

- **£2,000 to Khalsa Youth Football Academy in Letchworth** towards an additional Futsal project focusing on developing young leaders from different cultures and backgrounds (futsal is similar to five-a-side football and played on a hard court, usually indoors).
- **£500 to Barley Town House in Royston**, towards essential repairs to the 500-year-old building, to ensure the building remains fit for purpose.



Nearly £50m paid to businesses during Covid

Nearly 10,000 grants have been made to businesses in North Herts since the start of the pandemic, to help them cope, recover and move forward.

Businesses including shops, pubs and restaurants, travel agents, hair and beauty providers and personal trainers, have all benefitted from grants totalling around £49,000,000.

Businesses all over the UK have borne the brunt of national lockdowns and different local levels and tiers of restrictions over the past two years, but these grants have made a real difference to our high streets and have helped protect local jobs.

- **£750 to Pirton JoyCare** towards a tea party for over 60s to help celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The next deadline for applications is 22 July ahead of meetings in September. Please visit www.north-herts.gov.uk/community-grants or call **01462 474000** for more information and to apply.

WHAT'S ON this Summer

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE MUSEUM

9 July - 2 October Botanical Invasion

Crazy plants of gigantic proportions are taking over North Hertfordshire Museum! The invaders include a huge cacti tunnel and exotic inflatable flowers created by visual artists Spacecadets - inventors and designers of the unexpected. Bring the kids and come and explore their work through touch, imaginative play and interaction.

Visit www.northhertsmuseum.org/events for all the details.

HITCHIN TOWN HALL

23 July, 7.30pm - 1am Ibiza Dance Classics

Hitchin Town Hall is bringing Ibiza to Hitchin this summer. Tickets are only £9 so you can enjoy the classics without breaking the bank. Book the best ticket in town today at www.wegotickets.com

HITCHIN

1 - 31 July Hitchin Festival

A month-long celebration of all that's great about arts and culture in Hitchin with talks, walks, shows, concerts and events across July.

Visit www.hitchinfestival.co.uk for the full programme and to book tickets.

2 - 29 August Hitchin Beach

Beach, music, buckets & spades and deckchairs will be turning the Market Place into the seaside for 4 weeks.

3 and 4 September Hitchin Food Fest

One of the most popular events on the North Herts foodie calendar. Featuring local eateries and best in street food and drink.

LETCHWORTH

Standalone Farm, Wilbury Road, SG6 4JN

25 - 29 July

Dino Babies Dr. Fossil Show

1 - 5 August Creepy Critters

8 - 12 August Birds of Prey

22 - 26 August Pottery Workshop

24 - 28 October Pumpkin Carving

Go to www.standalonefarm.com/whats-on for all the details

Broadway Cinema & Theatre, Eastcheap, SG6 3DD

21 July, 7pm National Theatre Live, Prima Facie

Jodie Comer makes her West End debut in the UK premiere of Suzie Miller's award-winning play. Prima Facie takes us to the heart of where emotion and experience collide with the rules of the game. Book tickets at:

www.broadway-lechworth.com/cinema/whats-on/prima-facie

BALDOCK

4 September 5K Baldock Rat Run

Run and raise funds for Garden House Hospice Care at the same time. Book your spot www.baldock5K.com

9 - 11 September Balstock

Everyone's favourite local music festival is back. www.balstock.co.uk for all the details.

Fancy trying walking netball?

We run sessions in Hitchin and Baldock.

Go to www.englandnetball.co.uk/session-finder to find out more.



18 September Baldock Cycle Challenge

Join over 100 cyclists for a 50-mile cycle through the North Herts district. Book your place at www.baldockeventsforum.org.uk/cycle-challenge

ROYSTON

Royston Museum has reopened! Visit www.roystonmuseum.org.uk for events and opening hours.

Royston Cave - open every weekend until 25 September. Book online at www.roystoncave.co.uk.

7 August, 10.30am - 4.30pm
Royston Kite Festival & Historic vehicle show
www.roystonrotary.com

23 - 25 September Royston Arts Festival

This year's theme is "Circle of Life". Visit www.creativeroyston.org for more details.

Just some of the Botanical Invaders coming to North Herts Museum on the 2 July



The first Tuesday of every month, Granello Lounge, 21 Brand Street, Hitchin, SG5 1JE



Pride Monthly Meet 5 - 7pm



follow us on twitter @NorthHertsDC