

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1



## Minutes of the High Wych Ordinary Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026 8pm in High Wych Memorial Hall

Cllr Tom Payne (TP) Chairman\*                      Cllr Jacqueline Jackson (JJ)\*  
Cllr John Andreotti (JA)\*                          Cllr Carrie Payne (CP)\*  
\* *Denotes present*

Present: Three members of the public

Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman opened the meeting at 8.05pm.

**ACTION**

**26.001 Apologies for absence**

1. Councillors: None (all present)
2. Others: County Cllr Eric Buckmaster, PC Shelly Marshall

**26.002 Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations**

1. **Interests declared:** Cllrs Tom and Carrie Payne non pecuniary re FP001 (26.010.2.1); Cllr Jacqueline Jackson non pecuniary re Community Fireworks (26010.3.2.1)
2. **Dispensation requests:** None.

**26.003 Approval of Minutes**

1. **RESOLVED: to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025.** The Chairman signed the Minutes.

**Clerk**

**At 8.10pm the meeting was suspended for public comments**

1. Two members of the public, members of a walkers/ramblers association, complained about the illegal closure of High Wych Footpath 001 that is a public right of way across a field. The landowner was alleged to have blocked the footpath by erecting a new fence together with a wooden access measure that is impossible to use without risk of injury. It was noted that a 'permissive path' notice identifying an alternative route around the perimeter of the field had been placed some metres away from the legal byway without a 'public path diversion order' being raised by HCC or EDHC.  
Cllr Carrie Payne identified herself as the new landowner and explained that she had engaged a professional fencing contractor to install the fence and construct a suitable 'stile'. She had therefore sought professional advice. A lengthy discussion ensued where both parties exchanged their points of view and concerns regarding the fence, the permissive footpath, and the 'stile'. Cllr Carrie Payne explained that to the best of her knowledge and understanding, she had sought to ensure safe access to the footpath and also provide a suitable alternative permissive path around the field. However, she undertook to liaise with the HCC Public Rights of Way Officer to get the correct specification for a gate that could then be installed in place of the current unacceptable 'stile' arrangement. Cllr Tom Payne clarified that the field was bought by his wife and that he had not been involved in any arrangements. The dispute was resolved amicably with suitable remedial action being agreed.
2. A parishioner raised concerns about fireworks being used without due regard to their neighbours (especially vulnerable individuals) and animals sensitivity to them, especially when let off unexpectedly and close to their property. The parishioner gave a distressing account of how this had personally affected them. The parishioner's survey of 245 local residents resulted in some residents expressing an interest in the concept of one organised licensed community fireworks event being held each year at an agreed location and time with proper notice given. This would allow those who enjoy fireworks to continue the

**CP**

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

tradition, while giving residents and animal owners the opportunity to prepare in advance. It could also reduce multiple unplanned private displays being spread over several days. The poll gave a picture of 64% being in favour of some sort of community event, whilst 36% thought that things should remain unchanged. The Parish Council was asked if it would support making fireworks a community matter and provide guidance to residents on safe, considerate, and community-minded use of fireworks.

During a lengthy discussion the Parish Council clarified that, whilst appreciating the parishioner's good intentions, it has no powers to impose any policy upon parishioners, nor could it police or enforce any code of practice. It was emphasised that the Parish Council would only be prepared to support general guidance for fireworks use that aligned with legislation and Government guidance. This was understood and the parishioner undertook to submit softer revised versions of their proposed Code of Practice and Guidance Notes for consideration at a later Parish Council Meeting.

Clerk

**At 9pm the meeting was restored to order**

**26.004 Casual Vacancy**

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

Clerk/  
All

**26.005 Chairman's announcements**

The Chairman made no announcements.

**26.006 East Herts Rural Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT).**

**1. Crime report**

The Chairman read the following report from PC Shelly Marshall:

**High Wych Parish Council meeting 14/01/2026**

*Thank you for the continued community support at our engagement events.*

*We have a further drop in event planned for **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March, 6pm** at the memorial hall car park.*

*PC Marshall and PCSO Collins have recently attended High Wych Primary School with colleagues from the children and young people team; an input was delivered to year 6 which was very well received by the school and the students.*

*We have just finished our most recent priority, which was to reduce reports of speeding in Spellbrook, this was a successful period for us with two road traffic operations conducted, over 40 vehicles stopped, road safety lessons at Spellbrook Primary School and numerous traffic offence reports issued. The new priority is due to be set in the coming days, which follows a survey that was sent out on Herts connected.*

*Crime remains low in High Wych, proactive police patrols continue.*

Cllr John Andreotti attended the December coffee shop meeting and shared information on the Herts Connected initiative, a free interactive messaging service from the police. Parishioners can sign up to the service by scanning a QR code.

JA

**2. Cross border update:** No report received.

**26.007 Reports by County and District Councillors**

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

District Cllr Ian Devonshire did not submit a report.

**26.008 Planning**

**1. New Applications:**

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

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

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

**26.009 Finance**

**1. Report of the Council's Accounts at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025**

Opening cashbook balance 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2025	25,294.69
Plus income to 31 <sup>st</sup> December	873.85
Minus expenditure to 31 <sup>st</sup> December	2,044.93
<b>Balance available to Council at 31<sup>st</sup> December (cashbook balance)</b>	<b>24,123.61</b>
Plus unrepresented payments	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Bank statement/cashbook balance 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025</b>	<b><u>24,123.61</u></b>

**RESOLVED: That the Accounts Statement to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 be approved.**

Clerk

**2. Accounts Reconciliation at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025**

Cashbook balance 31 <sup>st</sup> December	£24,123.61
Bank balance 31 <sup>st</sup> December	£24,123.61

Clerk

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

**3. Performance against 2025/26 budget at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025**

	Budget	Actual 31 <sup>st</sup> December
Income	22,036	22,709
PWLB Loan	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Income total</b>	<b><u>22,036</u></b>	<b><u>22,709</u></b>

	Budget	Actual 31 <sup>st</sup> December
Expenditure Net of VAT	24,445	16,720
PWLB Loan servicing	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Expenditure balance Net of VAT</b>	<b><u>24,445</u></b>	<b><u>16,720</u></b>

Budgetted deficit 2025/26	- 2,409
Actual net budget surplus 31 <sup>st</sup> December	5,989
Forecast deficit year-end 31 <sup>st</sup> March	-1,997

Clerk

Opening bank balance 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025	18,876
Bank balance 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2025	24,124
Forecast bank balance year-end 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2026	16,879

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

**4. Budget and Precept 2026/27**

The Council considered the budget and precept proposal for 2026/27 that was presented by the Clerk. This also contained a forecast for 2027/28 and 2028/29.

The 2026/27 budget income was agreed at £1,971.

The precept was set at £20,690, which is a 3% increase on the £20,085 for 2025/26. Therefore the total budget income is £22,661.

The 2026/27 budget expenditure was agreed at £25,652 net of reclaimable VAT

The forecast bank balance at year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 is £16,879

The forecast bank balance at year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027 is £13,888

The budget includes £600 financial audit costs; £5,180 various parish maintenance costs including litter bin emptying, playing field/village green grass cutting; £2,170 in grants to parish related causes; and £1,250 to High Wych Memorial Hall and Allen's Green Village Hall upgrades.

Itemised details of the budget may be viewed on the Parish Council website,

<https://highwychparishcouncil.gov.uk>

**RESOLVED: To approve the 2026/27 budget and precept as presented.** The Clerk, Chairman and two councillors signed the EHC precept form.

Clerk

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

**5. Payments for approval: All expenditure to be made under The General Power of Competence As at 14<sup>th</sup> January**

		Value	VAT incl
High Wych Mem Hall	Council meetings hall hire	45.00	
Clerk	Salary Dec	514.00	
HMRC	PAYE Dec	128.60	
HMRC	Employer's NIC	33.84	
Everflow Water	Water 14/01-13/02	48.58	
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service charge Dec	6.00	
Clerk reimburse	SLCC annual membership 1/3rd	84.33	
Clerk	Salary Jan	514.00	
HMRC	PAYE Jan	128.60	
HMRC	Employer's NIC	33.84	
TP Jones & Co LLP	Payroll services Oct-December	64.40	10.73
Clerk	Expenses December/January	21.80	
Everflow Water	Water 14/02-13/03	42.10	
Unity Trust Bank	Monthly service charge Jan	6.00	
<i>** Grass cutting KGV Field High Wych and Allen's Green village green</i>			
<b>VAT included To be reclaimed under VAT Act 1994 (1), (3)</b>			<b>10.73</b>

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

Clerk

**26.010 1. Highways**

1. Blounts Lane speeding issues: Ongoing possible resolution with Cllr Eric Buckmaster.

EB/TP

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

1. Reported blocking of High Wych Footpath 001: Discussed with parishioners/walking club members during public comments earlier in the meeting (qv).
2. Other issues: None raised.

**3. Other Parish Matters**

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

1. Update on matters raised at the November meeting:
  - iii) Moving PC records from HWMH to HALS (County Archive): Theo van de Bilt is reviewing.
2. The CCTV notice inside the Green Room was noted and it was confirmed that there is no audio connected to the CCTV.

**2. Other parish matters**

1. Fireworks concerns: Concerns about the use of fireworks raised during parishioners' comments were considered, although the Parish Council has no powers to control an individual's right to use fireworks in a responsible manner. It was believed that responsible behaviour and community consideration is something that could be encouraged through social media etc. As agreed during Parishioners Comments, the Council will look at any revised proposals.
2. New domain and email addresses: Ongoing with councillors.
3. Retention of Minutes: The Clerk confirmed that the retention of Parish Council Minutes is not covered by legislation, but they should be retained for as long as practicable.

ALL

**26.011 1. Playing Fields and buildings**

**1. Harlow Theatre Company**

1. No issues raised.

**2. Play area**

1. Disintegrating swing seat cover: Sovereign Play should rectify under warranty. Cllr Tom Payne to follow up.
2. Gate lock: Cllr Tom Payne will purchase and fit a lock.

TP

TP

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

### 3. Other parish matters raised

1. Post Office opening issues: There have been some issues recently following a key member of staff breaking their arm and having problems with the recovery. Sadly the staff member had to eventually resign. Although the unfortunate repercussions continued for six months or so, the problems seem to have been overcome and the Post Office is now open twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays.
2. Memorial tree planted on Allen's Green: update. No update was reported.

Clerk

TP

### 2. Allotments

1. Nothing to report.

- 26.012 Correspondence:** The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the Agenda:
- Parishioner: Request for Council to consider community concerns and possible approaches to fireworks use (26.010.3.2.1)
  - Parishioner: complaint re the illegal blocking of High Wych footpath 001 (26.010.2.1)
  - Parishioner: An email was received too late for the agenda complaining about Police Mobile Speed Units in High Wych Road being ineffective in deterring speeding offenders.

**26.013 Late items and items for future agendas**

1. No items raised

Clerk

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

Ordinary Council Meeting, 8pm Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March at Allen's Green Village Hall.  
 20<sup>th</sup> May High Wych Memorial Hall; 15<sup>th</sup> July Allen's Green Village Hall;  
 16<sup>th</sup> September High Wych Memorial Hall; 18<sup>th</sup> November Allen's Green Village Hall;  
 20<sup>th</sup> January 2027 High Wych Memorial Hall

Clerk

Clerk

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10pm.

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

## APPENDIX A

**26.008.2 26.008.2 PLANNING DECISION NOTICES** for information only as at 14<sup>th</sup> January

3/25/1324/FUL	<b>Land adjoining 13 Parsonage Lane, Sawbridgeworth:</b> Erect one dwelling with access, parking and garden space.	<b>REFUSED</b>
3/25/1872/PNHH	<b>Elms, Slough Road:</b> Single storey extension.	<b>PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED</b>
3/25/1577/HH	<b>Lares, Slough Road:</b> Demolish conservatory, erect single storey rear extension with three rooflight windows, erect front porch, replace front door; alterations to external materials and fenestration.	<b>GRANTED</b>
3/25/1744/HH	<b>Vine Cottage High Wych Lane:</b> Erect single storey side extension with glazed link and roof lights. Replace windows to existing rear.	Awaited
3/25/1578/FUL	<b>Little Toad Hall, 3 Trimms Green:</b> Demolish sheds; site a mobile holiday home and new boundary fence.	Awaited
3/25/0401/FUL	<b>Surrounded, Coveys Lane:</b> Change of use grazing land to residential garden. <b>APPEALED to the Planning Inspectorate</b>	<b>APPEAL</b> awaited

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

## APPENDIX B

### E Buckmaster County Councillor Report January 2026

Update on Gilston Schools Planning

20 forms of entry needed

Aim is for development to provide all of its education needs

Education review Panel meets and plans are shared with the Design Review Panel

Expected first primary to be ready for first occupation in village one using HIG money and design work was undertaken. This was assuming Village 1 would be ahead of village 7.

However, Village 1 first occupation currently projected early 2030, while Taylor Wimpey believe they can have first occupations by early 2028, which may be optimistic. However Education Planners need to be flexible and provide whichever comes first so from February requests for capital funding will be going through the relevant panels and cabinet to draw down the S106 funding when required

All of the villages when built will have 3 forms of entry except V5 which will have 2

First Secondary to be as reception reach year 7 so 8 years after opening of first primary

In the interim they have had discussions with John Warner secondary school about taking students as they arrive through the development until the Gilston secondaries start to come through.

Eastwick Hall Lane

The programmed works have all been completed. If any resident has issues with the condition of the Highway, it now has to be fault reported through the Fault Reporting system, and then it will be triaged by Ringway as per the normal procedures.

Speed Management Strategy consultation.

Please see a link to a survey regarding views on Hertfordshire County Council updating our Speed Management Strategy (SMS) (2020), which provides a consistent approach to setting speed limits in the county.

[Speed Management Strategy | Let's Talk Transport for Hertfordshire](#)

The SMS provides the benchmark against which Hertfordshire County Council decide on how new speed limits are set as well as whether physical road calming measures are required and which would be appropriate.

We receive several hundred requests each year from residents and stakeholders to reduce speed limits. Each request is assessed against the SMS to determine whether a reduction is appropriate. It is therefore important to hear from our partners and stakeholders about their views on current speed limits in the county as well as understanding and developing the processes the County Council should follow for setting new speed limits.

This survey is intended for key stakeholders, and we would be grateful if you could help share it with relevant contacts, such as residents' groups or local businesses.

By completing this survey, you will help shape how Hertfordshire County Council sets future speed limits across the county.

Hertfordshire launches first Local Nature Recovery Strategy following record-breaking public engagement

Hertfordshire's first Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been published marking a landmark step in our commitment to restoring and enhancing nature across Hertfordshire and playing our part in the restoration of nature across England. A 'nature summit' will be held in January to formally launch the strategy and share plans for the delivery for the strategy.

Priorities include improving habitats for species like swift and water vole to increase biodiversity and create a more resilient natural environment for future generations. It will guide projects that benefit both people and wildlife, while supporting efforts to tackle climate change.

Developed over two years by the Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Partnership (HNRP), chaired by Hertfordshire County Council, the strategy sets out a shared vision and identifies priority areas for investment and action, including protecting our ancient chalk streams. The partnership brings together organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors, working closely with land managers, citizen scientists and local communities.

Everyone can play a part in supporting nature's recovery whether they manage acres of land or a small garden, so public engagement has been at the heart of this process. Hertfordshire had over 70 sites put forward by local landowners for inclusion in the LNRS and achieved the highest number of LNRS consultation survey responses nationally with 751 survey responses from residents, organisations and community groups.

Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2026/27-2028/29

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

## Issue

- On 17 December 2025, the Government published the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27 – 2028/29.
- This sets out allocations for local authorities across England for the next three years and incorporates an updated distribution of resources following the conclusion of the Fair Funding Review 2.0.

## Summary

- The 2026/27 provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is the first multi-year settlement in a decade. It states that £78 billion will be made available for council services in 2026/27 with council's 'core spending power' due to rise to more than £84 billion by 2028-29.
- Council tax rises will continue to be capped at 3% per year with an extra 2% allowed for adult social care.
- Further plans on how the Government intends to manage SEND deficits will be set out in the final settlement, expected in early 2026.
- Implications for Hertfordshire are currently being analysed and we will update Members as soon as possible. Previous modelling had indicated that the Government's new methodology could result in a headline cumulative reduction in our grant of around £50m a year.
- In their response to the provisional Settlement, the County Councils Network recognises that some of its Member councils will receive an increase in government grant funding but others will see a reduction. It also notes that at least 90% of county and unitary councils' increase in 'core spending power' will be derived from the presumption of annual maximum (5%) council tax increases.

Hertfordshire County Council has published its draft budget for the next financial year which outlines how the council will spend £1.2 billion on services Hertfordshire's residents, businesses and visitors rely on every day.

Highlights from the proposed 2026/27 budget includes additional funding for key services including:

- £21 million to provide high quality residential and home care to our older and more vulnerable residents, helping to meet the rising demand and costs of care workers' pay (increasing to £42 million and then £62 million by the third year).
- £23 million to meet the needs of the growing number of older people and adults with disabilities who need our support (increasing to £45 million and then £67 million by the third year). This will help to recruit and retain people into the adult care workforce and pay for hundreds of thousands of hours of care and support that residents rely on day in and day out.
- £16 million to support the children in our care and children with disabilities through adversity by creating stable homes for them to live in and enabling them to build relationships which equip them to thrive into adulthood and achieve their aspirations.
- £1.4 million increase in fostering allowances so children in our care can live in safe, caring homes close to people they know.
- £6.3 million to improve opportunities and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) by recruiting more Educational Psychologists and staff in teams reviewing children's needs, enabling stronger collaboration with families.
- £1.5 million over two years to make roads safer by rolling out new 20 mph zones in our communities where residents tell us they want them. Together with a new more efficient use of existing resources, this will enable the delivery of nearly 200 new 20 mph zones.

We are among the worst affected by the Government's new funding formula for councils which cuts our funding and takes away over £40 million in grant funding a year by 2028/29.

A further £55m in savings on top of the £42 million delivered this financial year and grow our income by £12 million

Current proposals put forward by the council present a headline budget that requires the use of £5m of reserves in addition to having to raise Council Tax by 2.99 per cent plus 2 per cent to support Adult Social Care in April.

## Your Tree Our Future scheme

Thousands of Hertfordshire residents collected free trees as part of the 'Your Tree Our Future' scheme, helping to make the county greener and more sustainable. This year's scheme saw 94,000 trees claimed across Hertfordshire 25,000 more than last year. The overwhelming response shows just how committed our county is to create a healthier environment for future generations.

County council rolls out award-winning assistive technology

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

Hertfordshire County Council is rolling out its award-winning assistive technology for Hertfordshire residents to use at home.

The technology, called Data Inspired Living, has been used by the county council's social care teams since 2024, and won an Innovative Social Care Solution Award last year at the LGC Awards. Now the system is being made available for residents with a presenting need but not known to social care, and their carers to use at home, thanks to a collaboration with Herts Careline.

The cutting-edge assistive technology pulls together data from a range of smart sensors like smart plugs and motion sensors around the home into a dashboard that family or carers can access. If something unusual happens, like missed medication or reduced movement, the smart system promptly alerts family or carers of any changes so action can be taken.

Data Inspired Living is a discreet system that does not record sound or video and is designed to help residents aged 18+ maintain their independence at home whilst providing peace of mind for those who care for them.

The technology costs just £10.50 a week thanks to a subsidy from the county council and includes access to the Herts Careline Telecare Service. The council will assess the presenting needs of the person to decide which aspects of the offer is suitable for installation and agree with them and their carers what will be monitored. The agreed sensors are then installed in the home, and a dashboard is set up to help monitor their routine.

Hertfordshire unitary proposals consultation set for February

The Government is set to consult on plans to replace Hertfordshire's existing councils with a smaller number of unitary authorities, with the seven-week consultation starting in February.

As a reminder the preferences expressed for the number of unitaries across Hertfordshire was: two voted for 2 unitaris, three for 3 unitaries, six for 4 unitaries.

Traffic Management problems caused by untily works

I wrote to the Cabinet member Hertfordshire Highways as follows....

I understand you are in discussion with utility companies regarding the way traffic management is undertaken and issues arising. The problem is particularly prevalent in Sawbridgeworth which sits in between Harlow and Bishops Stortford on the A1184. The traffic management companies employed by the Utilities are frequently thoughtless over the timing and positioning of signage and barriers, and often causing confusion to drivers and congestion in the wider network. An example is where Road Ahead Closed signs are placed in locations giving a misleading perspective of which road is actually closed. This can cause town centre businesses to have appointments cancelled and therefore a loss of trade. I know you are familiar with the wider problem of traffic management remaining in place far longer than is required to cure the reinstatement of the surface.

These matters are increasingly visible on social media which serves to multiply the feeling of frustration.

I have a really good working relationship with the Network Management East team. They are always so helpful and responsive, but their job is made so much harder by the inefficiencies of the Utility companies and their contractors. Our local press are picking up on this.....

Flooding and Drainage updates

Stanstead Abbots Slowing the Flow at Cappell Lane Nine new leaky dams have been constructed by our contractors Ground Control at Cappell Lane, Stanstead Abbots. The dams are located in an ordinary watercourse upstream of Cappell Lane, and have been built mostly using material from the surrounding woodlands to reduce the environmental impact of the project.

Leaky dams are structures that can be installed across watercourses to help store more water upstream and 'slow the flow' of water during a heavy rainfall event. Unlike traditional dams, leaky dams are designed to still allow some water through. However, the flow of water is slowed down to help reduce the likelihood of flooding downstream. As well as helping to hold back floodwater, leaky dams also provide new habitats for wildlife.

This project has been led by the FRM team over the past 1.5 years, so we are delighted to see it come to completion. Whilst this particular ordinary watercourse is dry for a lot of the year, it has contributed to property flooding in the past. We are hopeful that this natural flood management scheme will help to reduce the impacts of flooding during future rainfall events.

As part of this project, we will also be monitoring data from the leaky dams to learn more about rainfall in this area, see how rainfall might be impacted by climate change, and assess the performance of the leaky dams. We hope that this information can further our understanding of flooding and be used to support similar projects.

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

## Hunsdon Alleviation Scheme

The team have found a product we believe could be provided as part of the flood kit to act as a barrier in front of driveways. This product is not currently on the market, but we are working with the providers to ensure we can secure it as soon as possible. We hope that this will be within the next couple of months. waiting on an update from our Highways team on these works.

- Following this, works are planned to bring the culvert to a maintainable condition. This will include any identified civil work that is needed on the ordinary watercourse.
- Finally, it is hoped that work to re-line sections of the watercourse where it is a brick culvert will be carried out next financial year. However, this is dependent on all other works being carried out.
- Clearance works were carried out on the watercourse in December.

Flood Kits in Communities Hertfordshire County Council is expanding its Flood Kit pilot scheme Hertfordshire County Council . The second phase of the scheme is still open for communities to sign up. You can register for the scheme here: Hertfordshire Flood Kit Application form [Hertfordshire Flood Kit Application form](#)

## Bullfields Sawbridgeworth

Near the Funeral Director there were planned Gully and Vactor Works for 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> January. There will be traffic management signals 09:30 to 15:00, ie outside of school drop off and pick up. This will involve CCTV. I have also seen that Ringway are publishing a further closure which may be for any follow up work. In addition Outside 52 Bullfield Thames Water have:

- Replaced collapsed sewer
- Repaired defects
- Rebuilt a manhole chamber

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service trials body-worn cameras amid rising reports of abuse. Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service have launched a trial of body-worn cameras to enhance safety and operational effectiveness, following a concerning rise in reports of abuse towards staff. Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, the Service recorded 22 reports of violent incidents, including verbal and physical abuse directed at firefighters and support staff. This represents a sharp increase from the previous year, when 12 incidents were reported, a rise of 83%.

As part of the trial, body-worn cameras have been issued to crews at Hemel Hempstead and Stevenage Fire Stations, along with Prevention Officers across the county and the Business Fire Safety Team. The Service plans to introduce body-worn cameras across all Hertfordshire fire stations by early 2026.

As well as acting as a deterrent to abusive behaviour, the devices will capture valuable footage which can be used for:

- post-incident reviews
- providing evidence for investigations
- capturing decision-making during critical incidents
- learning and development across the organisation.

## Hertfordshire County Council powers ahead with new EV Chargepoint rollout

Thousands of new electric vehicle (EV) chargepoints will soon be installed across Hertfordshire after the county council appointed three leading chargepoint operators to deliver a major infrastructure programme backed by over £6 million in secured grant funding.

The rollout marks a major step in delivering on Hertfordshire County Council's Corporate Plan commitment to growing a greener Hertfordshire, making EV charging easier, fairer and more reliable for residents and businesses.

Working in close partnership with district and borough councils, the council has already identified priority areas across the county where residents lack off-street parking.

This year's report, along with new dynamic features built on web powered by ESRI's ArcGIS StoryMaps, makes it easier than ever to provide a deep dive into the latest travel trends and patterns.

8.5% of households owned a fully electric vehicle in 2025

This is one of many insights in the newly published 2025 Traffic and Transport Data Report (TTDR). In addition to the conventional PDF version, you can now also discover the interactive web version of the full report at:

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/TTDR>

## East Herts District Matters

Next steps for setting the council budget for 2026/7 East Herts Council has begun the process of scrutinising and agreeing proposals to set a balanced budget for the year ahead.

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

At a meeting of the Executive on 13 January, councillors considered an initial draft of the budget proposals, which sets out plans for a gross spend of £45 million to deliver vital local services in 2026/27.

To balance the books, the council has had to find savings or generate additional income to close a £890,000 budget gap.

Old River Lane Planning Application Available To View Online, Public Comments Encouraged  
Plans submitted by developer Cityheart for the regeneration of Old River Lane in Bishop's Stortford are now available to view online, with comments from the public being encouraged.

The planning application outlines an ambitious redevelopment project that will see the Old River Lane area transformed into a multi-use, town-centre destination. The Old River Lane scheme proposes to provide hundreds of new homes as well as enhanced public spaces and new community facilities in the historic town centre.

The planning application has been submitted following a public consultation that took place in June 2025, which saw local residents and businesses contribute to the outlined masterplan.

Please click the button below to view and comment on the planning application for Old River Lane.

[View and Comment On Old River Lane Plans](#)

How to borrow a thermal imaging camera for free Borrow a Thermal Imaging Camera for Free This Winter

East Herts District Council, in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, has launched a new Thermal Imaging Camera Loan Scheme in Winter 2025. The initiative will enable residents to borrow a thermal imaging camera free of charge from their local library. The scheme is designed to help households identify where heat may be escaping from their homes, highlighting insulation gaps, draughts and other areas where energy efficiency improvements could be made.

A reminder to never bin your batteries Never Bin Batteries

After Christmas, many of us are clearing away decorations with flat batteries or opening new toys and gadgets. It's important to remember that batteries should never go in household bins.

Loose batteries or batteries hidden inside small electrical items such as vapes, can be crushed in bin lorries, causing sparks and serious fires. Lithium batteries are especially dangerous because they release their own oxygen, making fires harder to extinguish.

Please remember:

Never bin batteries, vapes or small electricals

Always recycle batteries separately from household waste and recycling

Find your nearest battery recycling point by visiting Recycle Your Electricals and using their online locator.

Eric Buckmaster January 2026

## **COUNCILLOR ACTIONS ARISING**

Cllr Tom Payne

- HWMH. Discuss with HWMH Chairman: management requirements; ongoing storage of PC documents;
- 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
- Arrange to fit lock to playing field gate
- Monitor play area risk items in RPII report (with Cllr John Andreotti)
- Consider calling Allen's Green public meeting to discuss memorial tree

Cllr John Andreotti

- HTC liaison
- Car park liaison
- Monitor play area risk items in RPII report (with Cllr Tom Payne)
- Attend Police community engagement

Cllr Carrie Payne

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

# UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

## 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

## Clerk

- Set up agreed bank payments
- Planning comments
- Hall booking for next meeting
- Website updating and email changes to .gov.uk
- AGAR 2025/26 Assertion 10 compliance

## ALL

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

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