
CONNECTING THREE RIVERS

(FORMERLY LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY SAFETY BOARD)

NOTICE AND AGENDA

For a meeting to be held on Wednesday, 16 September 2026 at 10.00 am at Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth.

Members of the Connecting Three Rivers (formerly Local Strategic Partnership and Community Safety Board):-

Councillors:

Louise Price (Chair)

Narinder Sian (Vice-Chair)

*Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
8 September 2026*

1. **WELCOME, INTRODUCTION & APOLOGIES**
2. **MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS
CONNECTING THREE RIVERS MEETING** (Pages 5 - 8)
3. **TERMS OF REFERENCE** (Pages 9 - 14)

Presentation by the Vice Chair.
4. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

Presentation by the Head of Strategy & Partnerships
5. **THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY STRATEGY** (Pages 15 - 32)

Presentation by the Partnerships & Inclusion Manager
 - i) Youth Guarantee
 - ii) Stable Economy report
 - iii) Connecting Three Rivers Spend report
6. **PLEDGE UNITED**

Presentation by Hannah Marsh
7. **SERIOUS VIOLENCE**

Presentation by Charlotte Rainer & Michael Clarke

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTION PLAN

Presentation by Michelle Wright, Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager

9. HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Update from Inspector Ben Harper

10. COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATES (Pages 33 - 36)

- i. County Community Safety Unit – update from Michael Nadasdy
- ii. Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner – update from Charlotte Rainer/Michael Clarke

11. AOB

12. NEXT MEETING DATES

10 December 2026
18 March 2027

General Enquiries: Please contact the Committee Team at
committeeteam@threerivers.gov.uk

CONNECTING THREE RIVERS (FORMERLY LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY SAFETY BOARD)

MINUTES

**Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on 18 June 2026
from 10.00am - 11.37am.**

Present: Councillors

Councillor Louise Price (Chair)

TRDC officers in attendance:

Shivani Dave, Partnerships & Inclusion Manager
Michelle Wright, Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager
Kimberley Grout, Associate Director – Corporate, Customer & Community
Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
Katie Stacey, Corporate Services Manager
Jason Hagland, Strategic Housing Manager
Freddy Chester, Partnerships Officer
Rachael Sheppard, Partnership Support Officer
Anita Hibbs, Committee Officer

External attendance:

Kips Green, SfYP Hertfordshire County Council
Rebecca Palmer, New Hope
Joe Meehan, New Hope
Saffron Johnson, Watford & Three Rivers Trust
Brad Hughes, South West Herts Secondary Schools
Councillor Tim Williams, Hertfordshire County Council
Ben Harper, Hertfordshire Constabulary
Paul Richmond, Chime Housing
Rob Smith, Watford FC Community Sports & Education Trust
Elizabeth Borg, Community Learning Partnership
Jane Woollard, Home Group
Amy Higham, TRDC Work Experience

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES

Attendees were welcomed to the meeting and introduced themselves.

Apologies for absence were received from Danielle Levy, Paraic McKenna and Eleanor Makoni.

2. VOTING OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Associate Director for Corporate, Customer & Community nominated Councillor Louise Price to be Chair of the board and Danielle Levy as Vice Chair of the board for the 2026/27 municipal year.

Councillor Tim Williams seconded the nominations.

There were no other nominations and Councillor Louise Price was declared Chair of the board and Danielle Levy as Vice Chair of the board for 2026/27.

3. MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS CONNECTING THREE RIVERS MEETING

Councillor Price expressed her thanks to former Councillor Sarah Nelmes for her many years of service as Councillor and Chair of the board.

The minutes of the Connecting Three Rivers meeting, held on 18 March 2026 were confirmed as a correct record.

The Partnerships & Inclusion Manager provided an update on the Crisis and Resilience Fund. Following the workshop at the last meeting, an application for funding was submitted to Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) which was successful. The funding will contribute towards the recruitment of a Community Resilience Officer who will be developing a new healthy hub and provide support to improve financial resilience.

4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION - DEVOLUTION

The Partnerships & Inclusion Manager delivered a brief recap on LGR and a presentation on devolution.

The Chief Executive of TRDC provided an update on the devolution, highlighting the commitment of all the Hertfordshire local authorities. The devolution process has slowed down, and further steps are needed to move forward with the plan.

5. TRDC'S COUNCIL PLAN

The Corporate Services Manager and the Strategic Housing Manager delivered a presentation.

In response to a question about services for the ageing population, the officer explained that housing provision should consider the types of properties being delivered across the district, particularly adaptable homes with features such as wet rooms, as well as properties designed from the outset to meet specific disability needs. The Partnerships Officer advised that the Partnerships team is working with Age UK on the countywide Age Friendly Communities initiative to identify locations for walking audits and encourage businesses to make space available for older people to sit and rest. Support is also available through in-person services at the Healthy Hub and by telephone for residents who are housebound. The Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager also referred to the delivery plan for a dementia-friendly community accreditation.

6. WATFORD & THREE RIVERS TRUST

Saffron Johnson from Watford & Three Rivers Trust delivered a detailed presentation.

Elizabeth Borg expressed her thanks to the trust for their continued support to Community Learning Partnership.



W3RT & Three Rivers
- 18 June 2026 Compi

7. OUTCOME FROM CONNECTING THREE RIVERS FUNDING AWARDED TO NEW HOPE TRUST

Rebecca Palmer from New Hope delivered a presentation outlining the holistic care provided to the community through the grant funding received through the Connecting Three Rivers Fund and discussed two case studies.



TRDC Presentation
New Hope show.ppsx

8. CONNECTING THREE RIVERS FUND

The Partnerships & Inclusion Manager provided an update on the projects and initiatives delivered through last year's funding. The officer also highlighted an upcoming fundraising event, a quiz night on 23 July at Sarratt Village Hall, and encouraged Board members to attend, volunteer and promote it.

9. HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Inspector Ben Harper provided an update on the positive crime detection outcomes achieved since last year's changes at the constabulary, as well as the priorities and plans for the year ahead. Key priorities include burglary, challenging retail crime, antisocial behaviour, civil injunctions, violence against women and girls, and hate crime.

ASB and retail crime have increased slightly, while robbery and vehicle crime are trending down, although moped theft has risen in one part of the district. Violent offences have also increased locally, but a significant proportion are common assaults involving individuals who know each other. In response to a question about the 'Shop Safe' initiative, the Inspector explained that the force is exploring a neighbourhood watch-style approach for the high street, linking shops through radios and CCTV in Stevenage to enable rapid communication with the force control room. This would also allow pubs to alert one another about disruptive groups. Shop Safe also includes an app that enables retailers to record and share crime information with other businesses on the high street. The Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager added that the Community Safety team has an action plan based on these strategic priorities, with partner activity feeding into it. The officer suggested providing an update on the action plan at the next meeting. **Action - Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager**

10. COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATES

i. County Community Safety Unit – update:

Michael Nadasdy provided an update. The team is currently preparing the drugs market profile. The CSP survey has recently closed, and the data is now being analysed. The findings are expected to be available in six to eight weeks. The first meeting on home takeovers, formerly known as cuckooing, went well. In response to a question about sharing information on how to identify cuckooing, the speaker explained that the

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board task and finish project group produced best-practice guidance, and the Cuckooing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlighted the value of a lead group to coordinate this work. A key focus will be education and information for frontline professionals, alongside public awareness campaigns. An informative video, produced with Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust, explains how to recognise the signs of cuckooing and what action to take. The video is being finalised and will be shared with frontline professionals across the county. Further work is still needed to help the public identify cuckooing.



CCSU RAG Update -
June 2026.pdf

ii. Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner – Digital update

The officers was not present; the update will be circulated to board members.



OPCC RAG briefing
May 2026.pdf

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Kips Green from SfYP Hertfordshire County Council expressed his gratitude to Inspector Harper and his team for their quick response to the break-in at the West Hyde Young People Centre.

12. NEXT MEETING DATES

16 September 2026
10 December 2026
18 March 2027

General Enquiries: Please contact the Committee Team at
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Connecting Three Rivers

(LSP and RAG)

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of the Group

Connecting Three Rivers merges the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Responsible Authorities Group (RAG). The group works to improve the quality of life for the people of Three Rivers by working in partnership to create a district:

- ... that is inclusive and where people feel they are welcome and belong
- ... where local infrastructure supports healthy lifestyles and addresses health inequalities
- ... where our residents are supported and feel safe.
- ... that takes action to mitigate and adapt to the climate emergency
- ... where our local businesses are beneficial to and benefit from local people.

Connecting Three Rivers works in partnership to formulate and implement a vision for the district through the Community Strategy.

Connecting Three Rivers works in partnership to formulate and implement a Community Safety Action Plan on an annual basis.

Connecting Three Rivers encompasses the Community Safety Partnership, including the Community Safety Coordinating Group (Joint Action Group), Anti Social Behaviour Action Group (ASBAG), South West Herts Youth Action Panel (SWHYAP).

Additional sub-partnerships of Connecting Three Rivers includes Three Rivers Information Partnership (TRIP), Families First Partnership, Youth Strategy Partnership and pre-determined Task Groups.

2. Objectives

In order to achieve the above Connecting Three Rivers will:

- Be an inclusive body of organisations / groups, representative of all sectors which have a focus in Three Rivers.
- To have a statutory function in addressing community safety issues.
- Review information sharing protocols between partners.
- Provide sponsorship for CSP members recommending CCTV deployment.
- Hold meetings that invite partner organisations beyond the membership of the Board.
- Identify and agree outputs and outcomes that reflect local needs and service priorities and focus on those that require a partnership approach.
- Review the annual Strategic Assessment to determine Community Safety Priorities.
- Work in partnership to ensure local people are offered and able to access services.

Connecting Three Rivers Terms of Reference

V1.3

September 2026

- Provide leadership and act as a voice for the people and communities of Three Rivers.
- Consult and engage with communities in a meaningful and inclusive manner.
- Work with existing partnerships, to improve collaboration, add value and avoid duplication.
- Identify and secure resources to progress the priorities
- Respond collectively to new and emerging needs within the community
- Ensure compliance with national legislation and statutory requirements.
- Agree the Community Safety Plan annually, as proposed by the Community Safety Coordinating Group.
- Develop a Community Strategy every 5 years. The current strategy will expire in 2028.

3. Membership

There will be a maximum of 25 Board members, with an attempted balance in terms of partner representation between Private, Public and Voluntary sectors.

Members of Connecting Three Rivers are expected to attend meetings on a regular basis. Membership is set at Senior politician, Chair of Board, Director or Senior Officer level.

Only specific partners will be permitted to remain for and vote on issues relating to confidential community safety issues (Part II) in the meeting. These individuals are identified below (*).

All Part II members will be signed up to the Community Safety Partnership Information Sharing Agreement.

The following partners will be represented on the group.

Organisation	Role / job title
Hertfordshire County Council	Head of Corporate Performance & Business Insight
Hertfordshire County Council (*)	County Community Safety Unit Programme Manager
Central East Integrated Care Board	Senior Primary Care Manager for Transformation, Integration and Delivery – South West
South West Herts Health and Care Partnership (*)	Development Director
Chime Housing (*)	Executive Director of Operations
Homegroup (*)	Operations Manager
Three Rivers District Council (*)	Deputy Leader of Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers District Council (*)	Leader of the Green Party
Three Rivers District Council (*)	Head of Strategy and Partnerships

Watford and Three Rivers Trust	Chief Executive Officer
Citizens Advice Service Three Rivers (*)	Chief Executive Officer
DWP – Watford Job Centre Plus	Partnerships Manager
Herts Mind Network (*)	Chief Operating Officer
School Pastoral Lead (on behalf of all secondary schools)	Chair of Pastoral Leads
Hertfordshire Constabulary (*)	Three Rivers Neighbourhood Team Inspector
Herts Fire and Rescue Service (*)	Group Commander
One Vision	Chief Executive Officer
Watford FC Community Sports and Education Trust	Head of Health and Wellbeing
National Probation Service (*)	Operations Manager
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (*)	Policy Officer

4. Roles within Connecting Three Rivers

The Chair and Vice-Chair of Connecting Three Rivers will be voted in every 2 years, in the first meeting of that financial year.

Members of the Board must have the appropriate authority to speak for the organisations they represent; to sign up to the vision and outcomes agreed for district of Three Rivers; and more importantly, be able to commit resources in principle and according to the normal decision-making processes of their organisation, in order to achieve the outcomes and vision.

All members will have equal rights and representation. To ensure this, partners may send substitutes from their organisation. All decisions will be made by consensus. Substitutes must be fully briefed before meetings and Three Rivers Committee Services informed of their attendance.

Board members only are allowed to vote. Their substitutes may vote if they have provided notice in advance to Three Rivers Committee Section.

The Board may invite other partners to be in attendance at the Board so that they can participate in the discussions of the board.

Board members will contribute to the work of the partnership and its development by participating in the decision-making process, contributing to debate and attending training / seminars etc which will help to develop the Partnership.

Board members will maintain knowledge of emerging policy and best practice in their area of responsibility, which has a bearing on the work of the LSP and share this with other members of the Board.

Board members will represent the Board at other meetings when required (district, county, and regional).

Board members will identify resources which can be granted from their respective organisations into the “Connecting Three Rivers” donations pot or to support specific projects, including deployment of CCTV cameras.

Board members will communicate and promote the work of the Board within their organisations and networks.

Part II specific Board members will provide sponsorship for applications of CCTV camera deployment from Community Safety Partnership members that they deem appropriate.

5. Meetings and minutes

Connecting Three Rivers will meet 4 times a year. Any matters arising in between the meeting dates will be brought to the attention of the chair and communicated via email.

The public meeting minutes and actions will be shared with the Board following a meeting, published on the Three Rivers District Council website and will be kept as records of development and progress that may inform future decisions.

Part II minutes will be circulated and not published online

Meetings of the Connecting Three Rivers are public but are not live streamed. Members of the public local organisations and businesses are able to attend Part I in order to observe.

6. Community Strategy

A Community Strategy will be developed and published every 5 years. This will be reviewed in 2027-28 for publication in 2028.

Board members will develop the subsequent action plan for the Strategy.

The Board will determine which Task and Finish groups require development in order to deliver the Community Strategy or identified need.

Board members will propose organisations to be involved with Taks and Finish Groups and ensure involvement from their organisation within these groups as required.

Task and Finish groups will have their own terms of reference.

Administrative support and Chairing of Task and Finish Groups will be provided by Three Rivers District Council.

The Three Rivers Information Partnership and the Community Safety Coordinating Group (JAG) are sub-partnerships of the Connecting Three Rivers. Both will have their own terms of reference.

7. Responsible Authorities Group

Community Safety legislation places a statutory duty on the responsible authorities (local authorities, police, fire and rescue service, probation and health) to work together to tackle issues of crime and disorder, Connecting Three Rivers will take responsibility to ensure these duties are fulfilled.

Statutory functions held by the Board include:

- Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR). The Board will confirm whether a DHR notification meets the DHR guidelines and will participate in appointing an appropriate DHR Chair. The Chair of the Board has several additional responsibilities:
 - o Signing letter to the victim's family.
 - o Attend introductory meeting with the DHR Chair ahead of the first panel.
 - o Point of contact for the DHR is signed by the Chair
- Set the Community Safety priorities, priority projects and targets in response to Community Safety Strategic Assessment.
- Agree the Community Safety Action Plan as proposed by the Community Safety Coordinating Group
- Review and monitor progress of the Action Plan as escalated by the Community Safety Coordinating Group

8. Financial Procedures

Three Rivers District Council is the accountable body for Connecting Three Rivers and its Community Safety Action Plan and Community Strategy.

Partner agencies represented on the Board will collaborate to co-ordinate the joint funding of initiatives to further the Community Strategy or Community Safety Action Plan. Three Rivers District Council's Finance Team will provide support to hold funding on behalf of the Board and account for its expenditure.

Joint grants made by partners of the Board, or secured by the Board, will be managed within Three Rivers Financial Standing Orders and Procedures. Any monies allocated will be done so in the form of a grant, and the recipient of the grant will need to meet stated reporting requirements as agreed by the Board as well as financial and other governance requirements in line with the Council's procedures.

Any assets purchased with any grant from the Board will be the property of the grant receiving body who will maintain liability and responsibility for their use and maintenance.

8a. Connecting Three Rivers

Watford and Three Rivers Trust will manage and be responsible for funds raised through the "Connecting Three Rivers" donation platform, and funds allocated to local organisation through the grants awarded from this platform.

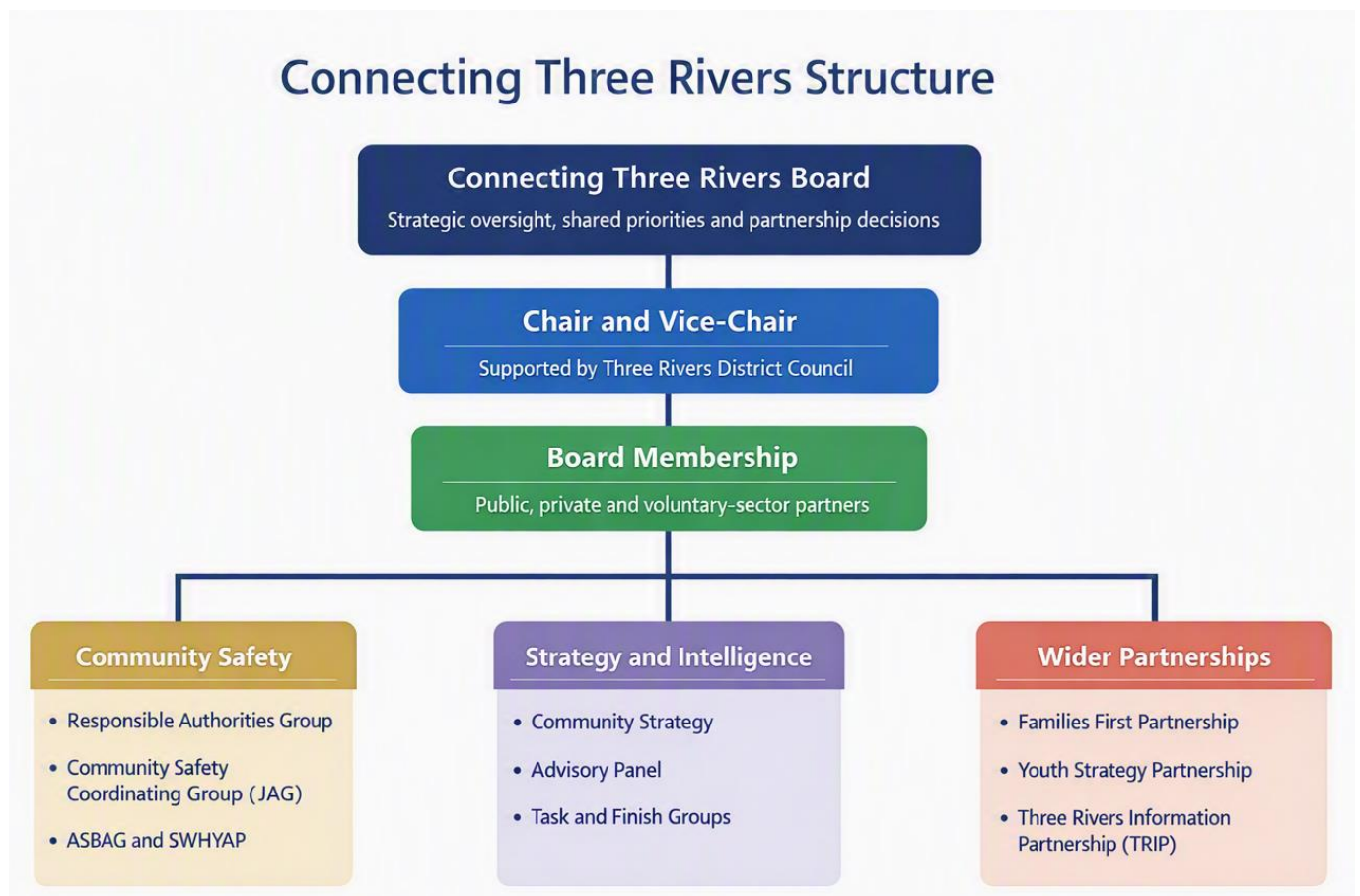
Grant monitoring will be the responsibility of Watford and Three Rivers Trust and this will be reported to the Board annually.

Priorities for grant applications will be voted on by an "Advisory Panel".

An “Advisory Panel” will be developed to review and discuss applications. The panel will be made up of 5 members, from the following organisations:

- Watford and Three Rivers Trust
- Connecting Three Rivers Chair
- Three Rivers District Council (Officer)
- Citizens Advice Service Three Rivers
- Hertfordshire County Council

9. Structure Chart



10. Review

The Terms of Reference and Board membership will be reviewed every two years.

Next review in November 2026.

Three Rivers Community Strategy

“Stable Economy” Report

1. Summary

1.1 Discussions were held to gain insight into the issues facing residents around economic stability. Stable Economy is one of four themes of the Three Rivers Community Strategy. The strategic objectives for Stable Economy are:

- Support our residents through the cost of living crisis
- Work with local businesses to upskill the workforce
- Promote local employment and volunteering opportunities

1.2 This report summarises feedback gathered from partners through engagement sessions held with organisations that support residents across Three Rivers and presents recommendations for next steps.

1.3 Discussions were held at the:

- Three Rivers Information Partnership
- Youth Strategy Partnership
- South Oxhey Community Network Forum.

1.4 Further discussions were held with; Services for Young People; the Watford Job Centre (DWP); Watford and Three Rivers Trust; and Citizens Advice Service Three Rivers.

1.5 Discussions focused on four key areas:

- Emerging themes with clients
- Employment and skill building initiatives that have worked well.
- Opportunities for greater collaboration.
- Whether sufficient information is available to residents and partner organisations.

2. Emerging Themes

2.1 Partner feedback was highly consistent across engagement sessions, identifying recurring themes relating to employment barriers for residents.

The most frequently raised themes were:

Theme	Mentioned in
Employment/work barriers	6/6 discussions

Theme	Mentioned in
Information/communication	6/6 discussions
Signposting between organisations	6/6 discussions
Digital exclusion	4/6 discussions
Cost of living/financial hardship	4/6 discussions
Skills/training	4/6 discussions
Housing	2/6 discussions

2.2 Employment / Work Barriers

Partners reported that employment remains a significant challenge to residents. Whilst many residents are in work, wages are often insufficient to meet rising living costs and insecure employment, such as zero hour contracts or part time work continues to negatively affect financial stability.

Young people are also facing barriers to get into work, such as the limited availability of work experience, reduced motivation and confidence and a lack of soft skills such as communication and time management.

There was also recognition that many residents are seeking volunteering or upskilling opportunities rather than immediate and full-time employment, particularly older residents and those approaching retirement, highlighting a desire as well as a need for accessible learning opportunities in the community.

2.3 Information and Communication

Access to clear and accessible information and effective communication was identified as a consistent issue. Residents can experience difficulties understanding household bills, benefit changes and information provided by services.

Language barriers, low confidence and difficulties navigating online systems can make communication for residents with services more challenging. Partners also reported that residents can delay seeking support, even when services are available, because they are unsure where to go, lack confidence in asking for help or find services difficult to engage with.

2.4 Signposting Between Organisations

The discussions highlighted the importance of effective signposting between organisations to ensure residents can access the right support at the right time. Difficulties navigating services or uncertainty about where to seek help can result in residents delaying support until they are in crisis, especially financial crisis.

Effective communication and stronger links and promotion between organisations were therefore identified as important in supporting residents to access appropriate financial, employment, housing and wider support with minimal delay.

2.5 Digital Exclusion

Digital exclusion continues to affect residents of all ages and can restrict access to employment opportunities and essential services. Barriers include the affordability of devices and internet access, lack of digital skills, language barriers when using technology - especially free technology such as library computers as these are often programmed in English and can impact confidence in using online systems if English is not someone's first language.

Increasing digitalisation of public services can prevent residents from accessing digital support independently, resulting in greater demand for in person one-to-one assistance. However, the DWP stated that having a video appointment trial group improved their customer engagement.

2.6 Cost of Living and Financial Hardship

The impact of the high cost of living continues to be evident across all client groups and themes. Organisations reported increasing demand for hardship support, food vouchers and financial assistance. Clients frequently struggle with budgeting, understanding household bills and managing benefit changes, with many becoming overwhelmed before seeking support. The cost of living was also identified as a factor contributing to employment and housing pressures, with households increasingly struggling to meet essential costs despite being in work.

2.7 Skills and Training

The discussions highlighted the importance of accessible skills development, training, volunteering and upskilling opportunities. For some residents, particularly young people, a lack of work experience and soft skills around confidence, timekeeping etc, can act as a barrier to employment and networking.

For older residents and those approaching retirement, opportunities to learn, develop skills and remain active and employed in the community were also identified as important. Partners also highlighted that what skill development and training is available is not varied enough to positively impact a larger number of residents. For example, free courses are often focused on entry level skills and CV building and therefore aren't as beneficial to other residents who are in more advanced types of employment who may wish to retrain or upskill to a higher level.

2.8 Housing

Housing affordability remains a growing concern to the economic stability of residents. Partners highlighted rising private and social rents, limited housing availability and increasing housing insecurity as major destabilising factors. This affects both those in employment and those who are unemployed, with partners highlighting that many households, including dual-income households, simply cannot cover the rising cost of rent and utilities.

Whilst anticipated legislative changes may provide greater protection for renters, affordability remains a significant barrier for many households.

3. Initiatives that have worked well

3.1 Partners identified a number of successful initiatives and approaches.

Examples included:

- Step2Skills, ESOL provision and other adult learning programmes to upskill residents and provide them beneficial qualifications and experience.
- Healthy Hubs and community-based engagement projects to support residents wellbeing.
- Youth hubs and client-led support models to support younger residents.
- Community supermarkets and hardship funding to support residents in economic crisis.
- Digital inclusion projects and practical IT support to encourage learning and empower residents.
- Financial inclusion initiatives, including budgeting support and hardship advice.
- Healthy food sessions (when attended), low-cost and upcycling courses.
- Partnership working between voluntary organisations, schools and community groups.

- Centralising the list of jobs available within the Jobcentre has reduced many barriers to application and has given an advantage to customers who don't have to compete with external applicants

3.2 Partners consistently highlighted that initiatives are most successful where they are delivered locally, are relationship-based and provide personalised support rather than relying solely on online information.

4. Opportunities for collaboration

4.1 A strong theme throughout the engagement was the need to strengthen collaboration between organisations.

Partners identified opportunities to:

- Develop a shared directory of services and referral pathways.
- Increase networking opportunities for frontline practitioners.
- Improve awareness of partner organisations and the support they provide.
- Create more opportunities for joint outreach at community venues, Healthy Hubs and local events.
- Share employment, volunteering and apprenticeship opportunities more effectively.
- Strengthen employer engagement, particularly for young people and care leavers.
- Improve communication between strategic partnerships and frontline delivery organisations to reduce duplication, a direct contact to relevant partners would be key in large organisations.

5. Overall observations

5.1 Across all engagement sessions there was a high degree of consistency in the issues identified by partners. Employment, accessible information and signposting and digital exclusion continue to be the most significant challenges affecting residents.

5.2 Partners demonstrated a strong willingness to collaborate more closely and identified improved communication, information sharing and coordinated outreach as key priorities. There is an opportunity to build on existing partnership networks to improve access to services, reduce duplication and ensure residents are able to access the right support at the right time.

Partners also generally felt that the required information exists but does not consistently reach those who need it.

5.3 Feedback highlighted that:

- Residents often only seek information when they reach crisis point.
- Many organisations are unaware of the full range of support available locally.
- Existing directories are not always well known or regularly used.
- Younger audiences increasingly receive information through short-form social media content, whereas older residents often rely on community groups, WhatsApp networks and face-to-face engagement.
- Traditional noticeboards and printed information have limited reach.
- More proactive communication and targeted outreach is required to improve awareness.

Overall, partners suggested that improving communication between organisations is likely to improve communication with residents, reducing duplication whilst increasing awareness of available support. Most partners also expressed they would be happy to cascade information to their network if they received it.

6. Recommendations

Proposed areas for partnership focus include:

6.1 Improving communication and access to support across Three Rivers.

Consider how information shared could be made clearer and more consistent amongst partners.

6.2 Identify local employment support

How can we bridge the gap and make the most of services available?

6.3 Young people

How can services establish and promote existing opportunities for young people to gain meaningful experiences?

6.4 Learning Opportunities

How can we support organisations providing learning opportunities and encourage residents to engage?

7. Next Steps for Connecting Three Rivers Board

7.1 Agree priorities

7.2 Establish a task group to focus on the agreed priorities

7.3 Connecting Three Rivers Board to identify additional partners for involvement in the task group

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Connecting Three Rivers Fund – Grant Agreement Report 2026

1. Introduction

The Connecting Three Rivers Fund supports a variety of projects that make a positive, lasting difference to the residents of Three Rivers. Through partnership and collaboration, the Fund invests in initiatives, outlined below, that help create safer, healthier, more inclusive and connected communities. The funding priorities for 2025 were Health Inequalities or Health Promotion, Adult Skills and Training and Cost of Living.

2. Funding Allocation

In Q3 of 2025-26, the below organisations were successful in their application to the Connecting Three Rivers Fund. Initial meetings to structure Grant agreements were scheduled towards the end of 2025 and funds were then awarded respectively in early 2026.

Organisation	Funds Awarded	Project status
3. Grand Union Community Energy	£841.55	Project ongoing
4. Inflammatory Arthritis	£1500	Project ongoing
5. Mission EmployAble	£2500	Project ongoing
6. New Hope	£1500	Project completed and presentation delivered at C3R board meeting
7. Rennie Grove Peace Hospice	£2500	Project ongoing
8. Say It With A Smile	£2500	Project ongoing
9. Three Rivers District Council	£2500	Project ongoing
10. Watford and Three Rivers Trust	£2500	Project completed, awaiting presentation delivery at C3R board meeting.
Total	£16,341.55	

3. Grand Union Community Energy

3.1 – Introduction to project – The funding awarded will support Grand Union Community Energy (GUCE) to provide energy starter kits and practical advice to households and organisations in Three Rivers, helping residents improve energy efficiency, reduce costs, and build confidence in managing energy use.

3.2 – Successes of project – The project has already succeeded in achieving its goal of providing 60 energy packs to residents, with 79 being handed out to date. GUCE have also achieved their goal of attending 4 events – within Three Rivers - where they are a

key attendee, either speaking or holding a prominent space as a stakeholder. This includes holding an energy related talk to a ladies group in Carpenders Park, holding pop-ups at the Community Learning Partnership and attending Big Green Week at Croxley Green Fair. Lastly the goal to achieve 18 sessions at the Healthy Hubs in the district is on track to be achieved by October 2026 with 13 accomplished to date, way ahead of the project completion date in January 2027.

3.3 – Challenges and resolutions of project – The project to date has been a success, however challenges have arisen. Without external storage, the project lead's home is being used to store all resources including energy packs and literature, meaning events and pop ups by other people under GUCE have had to be carefully organised around this. At the moment, external space isn't needed, but GUCE is looking with Watford and Three Rivers Trust at having a central base in the future and is in discussions with the Library of Requirements regarding future collaborations which will also provide additional space / collection points.

Finding volunteers has also been a challenge for GUCE and as a result resource and time has been stretched covering scheduled events and drop-ins. Summer is also a slower time for GUCE as the weather is typically warmer and therefore residents are less concerned about utility costs so uptake in services is reduced.

4. Inflammatory Arthritis

4.1 – Introduction to project - Inflammatory! Is a podcast run by Inflammatory Arthritis UK (IAUK) and seeks to broaden knowledge, understanding and community for those affected by inflammatory arthritis. The funding supplied will help Inflammatory Arthritis UK maintain and improve the success of their podcast with relevant equipment and guest speakers and complement NHS care by covering topics such as medication, exercise, mental health, and family life. By reaching people from all backgrounds, particularly those in deprived communities where support is often limited, the podcast also helps reduce isolation, improve confidence, and empower individuals to better manage their condition.

4.2 – Successes of project - The project has generated a number of positive outcomes and has helped to raise awareness of inflammatory arthritis (IA) across professional, community and national networks. As of 6 July 2026, there have been 62 episodes with 599 listeners, one live podcast completed with another scheduled and 1000 followers on Instagram.

Another key success has been collaborating with the British Society of Rheumatology. This has included potential sponsorship from a private company outside of the

pharmaceutical sector, as well as invitations to deliver short presentations at local and national multidisciplinary team (MDT) meetings. An invitation to speak at the National Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre, Stanford Hall, also provided an important opportunity to raise awareness of IA and share the project's work with a wider professional audience.

The project has strengthened collaboration with other charities supporting people living with IA and associated comorbidities, including organisations focusing on hypermobility, fibromyalgia and PMR-GCA. These relationships have helped broaden the reach of the project and support a more holistic approach to the needs of people living with IA.

Further successes include interest in collaborating with developing further podcast series. Attending an international conference has led to opportunities to expand the podcast network, with plans to feature more medical professionals, researchers and people with lived experience from across the globe.

Attending local events, including the Three Rivers Discovery and Connect Event and Community Connect, has strengthened relationships and raised awareness of the project.

Comment made by listener: "I've just been diagnosed with RA (rheumatoid arthritis) at the age of 45. I knew very little about the disease and even less about what life could look like with it. Whenever anyone hears arthritis, we all get the image of an old person with wear and tear, but this is nothing like that. Katy and Debbie helped me to put everything in perspective and stopped me imagining the worst. Their humour and warmth really make a difference. Thank you. Just the information I needed at exactly the right time".

4.3 – Challenges and resolutions of project - A key challenge has been developing effective partnerships and ensuring that people involved in supporting physical activity understand the needs of people living with inflammatory arthritis. This has been addressed through collaboration with local and national charities, including Home-Start Three Rivers, and by engaging with professionals such as personal trainers (PTs) to improve their awareness and confidence in supporting people with inflammatory arthritis.

Ongoing discussions with Active Together are exploring potential funding opportunities to support this work. We are also benefiting from the expertise of a trustee who is a physiotherapist, is undertaking a PhD in this area, and has lived experience of psoriatic arthritis, providing valuable insight into both the clinical and personal aspects of the project.

The project has contributed to discussions around changes to the national audit, helping to ensure that the experiences and needs of people with inflammatory arthritis are reflected. IAUK have worked to raise awareness of opportunities for movement and physical activity, including Pilates in the Park, and to promote relevant local events and support available through community organisations such as Herts Directory.

To further understand the project's impact and identify areas for improvement, an Impact Survey will be circulated in September 2026. The findings will help inform future activity and ensure that the project continues to respond effectively to the needs of the community.

5. Mission EmployAble

5.1 – Introduction to project - The Woodoaks Farm Project delivered by Mission EmployAble supports young adults with learning disability to get paid employment. As part of their supported internship programme, interns learn about regenerative agriculture and land management at Woodoaks Farm on a weekly basis. The aim is to increase employment opportunities in the horticultural and land management area as well as improving both physical health and mental wellbeing. The interns work in teams of around 5 with a ranger to learn new skills including hedge cutting, tree planting and tree care and cultivation

5.2 – Successes of project – All 14 interns graduated on 3 July 2026. Completion of project will be in January 2027 when the longevity and sectors of employment will be recordable.

5.3 – Challenges and resolutions of project - At the start of the academic year, recruiting interns proved challenging, with limited opportunities available. There is a shortage of agricultural placements and training opportunities, prompting continued efforts to identify a wider range of work experience opportunities for graduate interns, including roles in retail and office administration.

Looking ahead, there are ongoing concerns about the availability of suitable employment opportunities to support interns as they progress into the workforce. To address this, opportunities to increase the number of employment offers for interns were explored, including the use of promotional materials and promoting opportunities through newsletters and social media channels.

It was agreed that joint efforts with partners over community engagement would be made to support identifying suitable employment opportunities and promote the 2026/27 internship programme, with enrolment taking place in September 2026.

Further networking opportunities will also be explored with partners to introduce Mission EmployAble to local businesses and raise awareness of the internship programme. One potential opportunity is through Communities Connect, which is a networking event between the voluntary, community and business sectors, which is held bi-monthly.

6. New Hope

6.1 – Introduction to project - New Hope's Tenancy Sustainment Team have utilised the funds received in this project to support residents to successfully maintain and thrive in their tenancies. Clients supported by the project will have experiences of homelessness, whether rough sleeping, sofa-surfing or living in unsuitable and insecure accommodation. The majority of clients supported were in poverty, in receipt of benefits or in-work poverty.

6.2 – Successes of project - The project ended April 2026. Funding from the Connecting Three Rivers Fund supported New Hope's Tenancy Sustainment Team in giving people the information and tools they need to be secure and to thrive in their own homes as they move on from temporary accommodation services.

9 residents remain supported, who with the help of the Tenancy Sustainment Team have overcome multiple disadvantages, including homelessness, addiction, physical health difficulties or learning disabilities, alongside diagnosed mental health challenges. Additionally, 16 families received support in temporary accommodation services, mostly situated in South Oxhey.

This funding allowed for expenditure on salaries and other core costs that are extremely valuable to New Hope. Due to the complexity and challenges faced by those supported, having specialist trained employees is fundamental to New Hope's success. The further benefit to having paid staff undertake these roles is that they have a more consistent presence in client's life which improves rapport and trust in their professional relationships with clients.

6.3 – Challenges and resolutions of project – Concerns were raised about the affordability of shopping / groceries for service users; arrangements were then made for New Hope to visit the Community Supermarket located at The Holywell Community Centre to see the variety of products and understand the membership requirements for their clients. New Hope created a flyer to lay out what the service provided and promote this to their clients.

7. Rennie Grove Peace Hospice

7.1 – Introduction of project - Rennie Grove Peace Hospice run a series of welcoming CompassionArt Cafes which are drop-in sessions held across the district that offer a safe,

supportive space for people to express themselves through art. The sessions are designed for anyone who has experienced bereavement or feels isolated due to illness to connect with others facing similar challenges, build friendships, unleash creativity, and receive compassionate support from Rennie Grove Peace Hospice.

We are awaiting further updates on the progress on the CompassionArt Café project.

8. Say It With A Smile

8.1 – Introduction to project - The Memory Steps Course, run by Say it With A Smile supports people living with dementia and their carers by providing practical knowledge, information, and coping strategies to help them better understand and manage the condition, while improving confidence in accessing the support available.

8.2 – Successes of project – With the funding, Say It With A Smile have delivered 2 rounds of courses in the district, with another planned for September. Each course consists of 4 sessions that highlight a different topic, ensuring that the information and support provided is varied and comprehensive. The courses are held in Leavesden Country Park and are highly praised, attended and to date have an average of 41 attendees per session. There are also a wide variety of partners that are invited to support residents at the sessions, including Herts Help, Alzheimer's UK, Rennie Grove Peace Hospice, HILS (Hertfordshire Independent Living Services) and Healthy Hubs to name a few. The project is due to have its final course in September; therefore, full attendance figures and feedback will be available in due course.

Testimonials:

“The course has allowed us to finally accept my Dad’s diagnosis and helped us learn coping techniques. Thank you everyone.”

“The course was excellent – exactly what I have been searching for.”

8.3 – Challenges and resolutions of project – The availability of hall hire and how this impacts attendance was a concern facing the project early on, this was addressed by trialing the proposed time and location for one course and monitoring attendance, and if it proved to negatively impact then the following course times could be amended. Ultimately attendance was positive and no change needed to be implemented.

Some practical concerns include the suitability of projector screens, as the one included in the venue was too small and inappropriate for people with vision impairment. The usability of microphones was also raised as these can often work unpredictably and

some speakers need guidance when first using them. These issues were tested similarly to the above location concern and were ultimately found to not need further addressing.

9. Three Rivers District Council

9.1 - Introduction to project - Project Haven delivers a range of health events across the district to raise awareness of health conditions, improve access to support, engage underrepresented communities, strengthen partnerships with local organisations, and expand our reach into areas of the district where we have had limited previous engagement.

9.2 - Successes of project - Project Haven has successfully delivered 5 health events across South Oxhey, Chorleywood, Abbots Langley and Rickmansworth, covering topics such as hypertension, diabetes support for people fasting during Ramadan, carers' support, SEND support, flu and vaccinations, and LGBTQ+ support. Building on this success, upcoming events aim to focus on dementia, sepsis, and support for African and Caribbean, Hindu, and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, alongside an online podcast due to be released soon.

Project Haven has engaged 69 residents through its health events, with more than 22 partner organisations involved in delivering and promoting support. Between January and July 2026, the dedicated project webpage has received 573 views from 314 unique visitors. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with all respondents rating the events as moderately to extremely beneficial.

9.3 - Challenges and resolutions of project - Community engagement has been the main challenge in this project, with lower than expected attendance despite extensive promotion, resulting in one event being cancelled. However, partner engagement has remained strong and future events will focus on linking with existing community activities to increase participation and reach more residents.

10. Watford and Three Rivers Trust

10.1 – Introduction to project – MindSpace was held in collaboration with local partners including Batchworth Community Council, MIND and the Ollie Foundation. Mindspace was a full day, in person community event focused on mental health awareness, stigma reduction, and practical wellbeing support for secondary school aged children, who were nominated by their schools to benefit from learning more about mental health and wellbeing. Sessions were held at an accessible venue and included Life is Loud by Herts Mind Network, Zentangle by the Ollie Foundation and Power of Music by Herts Inclusive Theatre.

10.2 – Successes of project - MindSpace brought together 59 young people from four local schools (St Joan of Arc, Croxley Danes, Rickmansworth and The Reach Free School) for a dedicated wellbeing day focused on mental health awareness, reducing stigma and developing practical strategies to support emotional wellbeing.

The event provided a safe, welcoming and supportive environment where young people could openly explore topics relating to mental health and wellbeing. Through the sessions, participants were encouraged to recognise the importance of looking after their mental health, identify some of the factors that can affect their wellbeing, and consider positive ways of managing stress and difficult emotions.

A key focus of the day was reducing the stigma associated with talking about mental health. Young people were encouraged to see conversations about mental health as a normal and important part of looking after themselves and others. The sessions also provided practical coping strategies and simple tools that participants could use in their everyday lives, helping them to feel more confident in managing stress and seeking support when needed.

Feedback from participants was very positive. Young people described the event as welcoming, useful and calming, with many reporting that they felt more comfortable talking about mental health following the sessions. Participants also identified practical techniques that they could use to manage stress and support their own wellbeing.

10.3 – Challenges and resolutions of project - Although feedback from the MindSpace wellbeing day was overwhelmingly positive, participants identified a small number of practical and content-related improvements that could strengthen future delivery.

One of the main areas identified was organisation and navigation during the event. A small number of participants felt that clearer information about the day's schedule and where to go for each activity would have been helpful. Some participants suggested that certain workshops would benefit from additional time, while others expressed an interest in more music, greater variety in activities, and more opportunities to explore wider issues affecting young people's wellbeing, such as school-related stress and everyday pressures.

In response to this feedback, future events will include clearer timetables, more visible signage and improved workshop navigation, helping participants understand the programme and move between activities more easily. The balance and structure of workshop content will be reviewed to ensure there is sufficient time to address both anxiety-specific support and broader issues relating to everyday stress and emotional wellbeing.

Participants' feedback will directly inform future programme development and topic planning. Areas being considered for future sessions include exam and school pressure, sleep and wellbeing, friendships and relationships, confidence building, social media and self-esteem, and mindfulness-based activities.

These improvements demonstrate the project's commitment to listening to young people and using their feedback to shape future delivery. Learning from this event will be incorporated into future planning to ensure that MindSpace continues to provide relevant, engaging and accessible wellbeing support that reflects the needs and interests of young people.

11. Conclusion

The projects featured in this report demonstrate the success, importance and positive impact that the Connecting Three Rivers Fund has on a range of themes across the district. While most projects are still underway, their success is still apparent and wide reaching. For the ongoing projects, further information on their progress, outcomes and impact will be available at the end of the financial year in a concluding report.

Fundraising for 2026/27 application is ongoing, with events being coordinated by Watford and Three Rivers Trust.

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CCSU Monthly RAG Update

	August 2026
Community Safety & ASB	<u>Scams and fraud</u> The CCSU are developing a Scams and Fraud joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA). The JSNA will have a primary focus on the impact that scams and fraud have on victims and how victims can be more effectively supported in Hertfordshire. The JSNA will be developed through a small working group and will incorporate some academic research undertaken by Herts Trading Standards. If you would like to know more about this or be involved, please contact vicki.doyle@hertfordshire.gov.uk <u>Community safety and health intelligence products</u> The CCSU work regularly with Public Health to produce joint intelligence products where crossovers between community safety and health exist (for example, mental health and substance misuse are key risk factors for criminality and exploitation). Information and updates on newly published and upcoming JSNA products can be seen in the latest bi-monthly JSNA newsletter link below: JSNA newsletter (June edition) Completed JSNA products are usually published on the Hertfordshire Public Health JSNA website. If you would like any additional information on these, please email vicki.doyle@hertfordshire.gov.uk <u>Substance Use in Children and Young People</u> The CCSU and Public Health are currently producing a JSNA briefing on substance use in children and young people. The briefing explores local data on the scale of substance use among children and young people in Hertfordshire, including risk factors and effective interventions. The recommendations from the briefing will be used to support delivery of Aim 3 of the Drug and Alcohol Strategy. If you have any questions, please contact Bronwyn.Edwards@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Drugs, Alcohol and Criminal Justice	<i>All detainees that are arrested (or charged) for a trigger offence for the second time in a 12-month period or are otherwise targeted through authorisation by the duty inspector, will be required to undertake an oral swab test for Class A drugs such as heroin and/or crack cocaine. Following a positive test, the offender is legally required to attend an initial required assessment (RA) & follow up assessment (FA).</i> If you have any queries, please contact Michael Nadasdy michael.nadasdy@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Since October 2020 the following number of tests have been carried out across Stevenage & Hatfield Custody suites:

CSP	Positive	Negative	Refused	Total
Broxbourne	241	258	1	500
Dacorum	622	518	2	1142
East Hertfordshire	247	240	0	487
Hertsmere	259	344	0	603
North Hertfordshire	233	248	0	481
St Albans	361	336	1	698
Stevenage	534	337	4	875
Three Rivers	191	189	3	383
Watford	550	384	4	938
Welwyn Hatfield	497	492	7	996
No fixed abode	253	105	22	380
Out of County	2201	3347	19	5567
Total	6275	6915	63	13253

Drugs, Alcohol
and Criminal
Justice

Continued

Drug and Alcohol-Related Deaths

The latest [Drug and Alcohol Deaths Audit](#) has now been published, which covers all deaths concluded to be drug and/or alcohol-related in 2025. This report was shared with CSMs and presented to the Drug and Alcohol Strategic Board in August. The CCSU and Public Health have also recently published a [Drug-Related Deaths JSNA Briefing](#), which includes research and findings from multiple data sources including the Coroner's Audit, ONS data and hospital admissions.

As a result of the latest audit and the briefing, it has been highlighted that there have been recent increases in drug-related deaths in Hertfordshire, which are mainly being driven by deaths involving nitazenes and fentanyl. Discussions are ongoing between police, HCC and partners to monitor this trend, In the meantime, the CCSU are actively encouraging partners across Hertfordshire to ensure that any incidents involving substances that are contaminated, adulterated, highly potent or have adverse health effects are reported through the Local Drug Information System using the online [drug alert notification form](#).

As part of this wider work around drug-related deaths data, the CCSU are developing a partnership surveillance system with input from police, CGL and HPFT to improve monitoring of drug-related deaths and 'near misses' in Hertfordshire. The aim is for this data to feed into a partnership dashboard on drug-related deaths which will also link in with the Coroners Audit, Local Drug Information System (LDIS), ambulance data and hospital admissions data, and improve opportunities for intervention.

	<u>Home Takeover/Cuckooing</u> The CCSU recently published a Cuckooing Briefing, which included a number of partnership recommendations for tackling cuckooing in Hertfordshire. A cuckooing steering group has been established to help standardise the cuckooing response countywide. An initial piece of work that CCSU will initially take the lead on is the production of a video to raise awareness of the problem of home takeover amongst frontline professionals including advice and guidance around spotting the signs and what action to take. This is being produced in partnership with the police, HSAB, HPFT and the CSPs. CCSU will organise a countywide event for awareness of the topic. If you would like any more information, please contact: Michael.nadasdy@hertfordshire.gov.uk <u>Access to drug and alcohol treatment</u> The CCSU have recently published a refresh of the previous Access to Treatment Briefing, which provides an overview of structured drug and alcohol treatment in Hertfordshire and identify areas and populations where engagement in treatment can be improved. The recommendations included in the briefing will be used to support strategic action under Aim 2 of the Drug and Alcohol Strategy. If you have any questions, please email vicki.doyle@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Hate Crime	The Hate Crime Partnership Board (HCPB) has planned an away day for 15th June 2026 and all current members have been invited to attend. Partners are working together to produce some communications, for both professionals and the public, in light of the recent awful incidents of antisemitism. Planning is also underway for Hate Crime awareness week, and an event will be held on the 13th October 2026. Anyone who would like to be part of this working group please contact kate.moore@hertfordshire.gov.uk The JSNA can be found here: Hate Crime JSNA
Serious Violence	The Serious violence action group held an away day at the end of February to review the previous 5 year strategy and plan for the new strategy using the Joint Strategic needs assessment as its basis. Colleagues from the Youth Endowment Fund attended and held a session to discuss the opportunities for Herts for the next 2 years. The away day was very well attended, and next steps will be to produce a refreshed strategy which will be shared with colleagues. The organisation Crest has been working with colleagues in Hertfordshire to best understand what data is held amongst partners relating to serious youth violence. At the end of the arranged workshops, recommendations on how to improve our data sharing will be made and implemented via the Serious Action Group. A serious violence board will hold its initial meeting on Friday 12th June to discuss the serious violence duty funding, and what projects may be funded for Hertfordshire.

	Following a recommendation from the Crest Advisory, the CCSU will now be aiming to refresh the data within the Serious Violence JSNA on an annual basis. The next refresh will begin in the Autumn.
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	The most recent JSNA can be found here: Serious Violence JSNA
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