

Report from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

have had a series of meetings with various community leaders over the last few months.

This includes a helpful meeting with MP Gagan Mohindra and Jon Bishop from the Three Rivers Joint Residents Association to discuss Three Rivers' approach to the Local Plan. We all agreed that the 13,300-figure proposed in the new Labour government National Planning Policy changes is unacceptable and the figure we have consulted on represents the best outcome for our area. However, we accept that the proposed changes are likely to make getting the lower figure through the government inspector impossible. Given this, briefings for group leaders and the TRJRA have been held and further ones planned prior to the next Local Plan subcommittee to consider the best way forward to protect our valuable green belt.

I have met and discussed policing issues with the Police and Crime Commissioner. I have offered the use of our social media to promote any anti-crime initiatives. We have also been able to host a police drop in at Three Rivers House.

The Chief Executive and I have met with the Leader of Herts County Council and the acting Chief Executive. I will soon be meeting with the new Herts County Council Chief Executive. Issues discussed and indeed ones I have had to follow up due to the low rate of progress include:

- Fire damage at Rickmansworth Library and our offer to accommodate the library at Three Rivers House.
- Constant delays in getting the licences and permits to ensure the Croxley Beryl Bike scheme should go ahead. Officers have been working on this since March!
- The lease arrangements for Oxhey Jets.
- Delays in highways permits for finalising the entrance work at Leavesden Country Park.
- The future use of the Breakspere school site in Abbots Langley once the school is relocated.

I am pleased officers have worked collaboratively with Oxhey Jets and I was pleased to meet with and discuss as well as provide assurances of our council's support direct to John Elliot.

I have met with the South Oxhey councillors and Watford Rural Parish Council clerk to discuss issues the Village Green Status at South Oxhey Playing Fields to ensure all parties are happy with HCC progressing this.

I have had meetings with other council leaders via the Herts Growth Board and those in the South West Herts to discuss our joint responses to the government's latest devolution offers. Whilst nothing has been ruled out, the clear view of all leaders was not in favour of a directly elected Mayor. Equally there was strong support for the current model of co-operation and engagement but much more detail and in particular what powers and financial support would come with any devolution deal. Much is unknown.

I have undertaken SKY TV News interviews regarding the proposed Data Centre in Abbots Langley that has been "called in" to be decided by the Deputy Prime Minister,

and also over our difficulty in allocating land for the high level of housing development proposed by the new government.

Peace and tolerance are something the whole world has been fighting for, for many decades, and while progress has been made, there is still some way to go.

Three Rivers may be a small district council but is a diverse and welcoming area that celebrates inclusivity where everyone, regardless of race, sexual orientation, or gender

identity, feels valued and respected. We are committed to ensuring that everyone, no matter who they are and where they are from, feels safe, respected and a valued member of the community. We support awareness months, organisations and events, such as Herts Pride, to celebrate diversity and remind people of the ongoing fight for equality.

As a sign of our respect and to show our unwavering support and ongoing commitment to diversity, inclusion and equality we often raise flags at Three Rivers House, the council's head office.

In September, it was an honour to join the Chair of Three Rivers in raising the Ukrainian flag to mark 33 years since Ukraine declared independence from the Soviet Union. Brave Ukrainians are fighting and dying to stand up for their rights against Putin's aggression, and we here at Three Rivers stand tall and strong with Ukraine. Slava Ukraini!

In November, we likewise will remember all those who have given their lives from the United Kingdom so we may have our freedom and democracy.

I am also thankful to our residents for saying no to hate. Last month, the country witnessed horrific violent incidents from thugs in the wake of the Southport stabbings. Although there were no riots in Three Rivers and Hertfordshire, we stood up to those who sought to disrupt our peace and safety. Love will conquer hate.

Hate Crime Awareness Week will soon be approaching, and the council will be putting messaging out on what a hate crime is and the devastating effects it can have on victims. I was pleased to be part of the video promoting this. Love not hate.

Cllr Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Leader, Three Rivers Council and Local Plan Lead

Liberal Democrat Councillor, Leavesden Ward (District and Abbots Parish)

Report from the Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Jonathon Solomons

Having recently become Lead member for Policies and Resources, I've worked with Director of Finance Alison Scott to better understand the responsibilities and state of play and am glad to be able to provide my first report.

There are main areas I would like to report on for you:

1) The budget management report shows overall the budget is expected to come in within the figure originally set at Council in February, highlighting just how good a job the TRDC team has done at managing and understating financial impacts.

The council continues to benefit from higher interest rates as it remains cash positive with interest rates expected to fall later in the year.

2) The Pay Award for 2024/2025 has not been agreed and negotiations are likely to continue into the Autumn. The latest employers offer of £1,290 or 2.5% was agreed by the GMB but rejected by Unison and Unite who are currently balloting members on strike action. A central contingency is held for the pay award, so your council is demonstrating correct financial governance for mitigating risk.

3) The Council has received an additional £2.2M of Local Authority Housing Fund money in round 3 to provide a minimum of 5 additional temporary accommodation units and 3 resettlement properties. This will be reflected in the next budget monitoring round.

4) The Chancellor will announce her budget on October 30 with a single year Spending Review also taking place in October. It is expected that this will lead to a single year local government finance settlement in November.

5) The Local Government Sector continues to call for the certainty that multi year finance settlements can bring and it is hoped that the Government will return to rolling three year settlements following the next Spending Review which is expected to cover more than one year.

6) The Council is continuing to work with other Hertfordshire authorities and Local Government Futures on the potential for business rates pooling for 2025/26 following MHCLG's (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government) recent call for applications.

Finally, I would like to put on record my thanks to previous Lead Member Matthew Bedford who has done a great job in helping steer progress of this committee and its responsibilities.

TRDC is widely acknowledged as one of the better run councils and that is clearly down to Matthew's work, the committee councillors who hold the committee to account to be on the right path and Alison Scott and her team's huge amount of work to cover an amazing amount of data points so that we have a budget that works, maintains services, minimises cost to residents and provides contingency to mitigate risk.

Alison has been great at helping me get up to speed with this and it's clear to me that TRDC is in safe hands.

Report from the Lead Member for General Public Services, Councillor Sarah Nelmes

On parking matters updates are as follows:

Rickmansworth West – The final scheme has been agreed and works are on order. It is anticipated the scheme will be implemented by the end of the calendar year.

Chorleywood – the consultation responses on the detailed design have been sent to our Traffic Engineer consultant and a report is awaited to decide on the next steps.

Harefield Road, Rickmansworth – Following the last consultation it has been determined to progress a final scheme with minor amendments following objections from residents in Heron Closs and Moss Close. This is currently being prepared.

Primrose Hill, King Langley – The statutory ‘Notice of Proposals’ consultation for the Traffic Regulation Order will be advertised in November (subject to approval from HCC) with scheme implementation due later this year.

High Elms Lane, Garston – given ongoing concerns regarding traffic congestion and poor parking along High Elms Lane an informal consultation exercise commenced prior to the summer holidays. The responses from this consultation are being analysed.

Gosforth Lane, South Oxhey – following some junction improvements around Gosforth Lane Officers have been discussing further parking restrictions in the locality with Ward Councillors. A detailed design is awaited from the Traffic Engineer.

School Mead Verge Hardening, Abbots Langley - Following the granting of planning permission for application 24/0426/FUL on 23 May 2024, and with agreement from the landowner, works to improve parking arrangements at this important local shopping parade commenced on 23 September 2024 and will take approximately 8 weeks to complete. The works will be completed in stages to ensure that any disruption is kept to a minimum and to maintain availability of parking spaces during the construction period. These improvements are being delivered through the District Council’s Verge Hardening Programme to protect hardened verges that are being damaged by parked vehicles.

Excellent progress being made on EV charging projects and Beryl Bikes and work progresses on the W2CG link and step free access – more details in my colleague’s report

On waste services updates as follows:

The Christmas collection calendar is out and the easter proposal is in discussion, including proposal to work Saturday BEFORE Easter, as was the case last year. This gives the frontline staff the opportunity to have a proper break.

We continue to have issues with the Managing agents of some blocks where work continues to find resolution, more detail on some specific issues in response to questions.

Simpler Recycling proposal from the previous Government, especially, on Trade Food waste collection, continue to be worked through. There are undoubtedly resource issues where proposals will come forward shortly.

The Herts Waste Partnership is now in Final Draft and will come to Committee later this month.

On Grounds maintenance the last cut of the year has been made and the new season tasks have commenced, including:

- Hedge cutting
- Clearance of leaves
- Clearance of garage areas and alleyways
- Renovation of bowling greens

We have now got a mechanical composter – this will mix different green waste types and, over time will, result in a compost that can be used on bedding and council owned land.

Annual tree/bulb planting at Woodcock Hill cemetery planned for early November.

On Animal Inspection and Licencing, the new officer is proceeding well and her training in partnership with City of London continues.

Report from the Lead Member for Housing and Public Health, Councillor Steve Drury

Housing

Have had briefings with officers who keep me updated on households in temporary accommodation, and as of September 26th this figure was 74. Most of whom were housed within the district. We currently have 8 households located outside 3 Rivers, one of which is for reasons of safety.

We have 132 active homelessness applications, 41 of which the Council have accepted "duty of care"

With regard to staffing, there is 1 post being advertised internally but other than this, we have a full compliment, which is good to note.

The 11 new properties in S/Oxhey, which we have purchased, should have been signed off last week and then we can move forward and fill them.

We have had SIAS's audit review back and the Council should applaud officers who have been awarded the highest grade for homelessness service for our residents.

The Council have written to the two London Boroughs who have residents temporarily housed in Shannon House, in Abbots Langley, where we, and the police have some concerns, we have had replies from said Councils who are, with us, trying to improve the outlook for the temporary tenants. I have been asked to write to the lead members of the 2 Boroughs, to make sure that they are aware of our concerns at member level.

My thanks to Jason and Deborah and all the staff in the housing dept for all their hard work for our residents.

Health

Our Healthy hubs are seeing more people than earlier in the year which is a good thing, this has seen our A/Langley hub move in with the CAB which is more accessible for some, the Comms team are putting together a video for the hubs. We are working with HCC Carers to launch a carers café in January and there is to be a "taster" session in S/Oxhey healthy hub in December. £8000 has been allocated towards Health Inequalities from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which will go towards venue hire in Oxhey and funding for A/Langley hubs. £35000 has been given to TRDC by Public Health for place based health inequalities. There was an event arranged in partnership with W3RT and The Grove- Unity in the Community- where almost 400 tickets were booked for the free event.

The MillEnd/Maple Cross forum took place on 16th September and S/Oxhey, OxheyHall, Carpenders Park took place yesterday. New terms of reference have been produced for these forums.

I had a meeting ,arranged by Shivani Dave, with Sarah Perman, Director, Public Health HCC, early in September to go through what the County wish to achieve with regard to the health of the people of Hertfordshire and Three rivers in particular, it was very satisfying to learn that our staff are held in high regard by HCC for their innovation and hard work with regard to health. On 18th October I have been invited to a briefing by Integrated Health Board to be updated on various health and care organisations

available in Hertfordshire and West Essex, information about the healthcare needs of residents and an update, on the priorities for health improvement in our local area.

Report from the Lead Member for Infrastructure and Economic Development, Councillor Louise Price

I would like to thank Officers for their help in preparing this report.

Beryl Bikes – There have been considerable delays due to Hertfordshire County Council Highways licensing and contractual discussions. However, the contract between TRDC and Beryl has now been signed, enabling the scheme to launch in early October 2024. The highways licence has now also been finalised and signed by Beryl and Hertfordshire County Council. Line painting is due to take place on 27th September 2024 for four bays, and they will go live shortly after. Bikes will be delivered to the bays during the week commencing 30th September 2024. The fifth and final bay at Croxley Library will follow on later.

Local Cycling Walking and Infrastructure Plan – an update report on the progress of the LCWIP is due at the October General Public Services, Community Safety and Infrastructure Committee following the consideration of over 1500 comments submitted as part of the public consultation last year and we finally have the Hertfordshire County Council report, who have led on this. There was significant concern from residents over the proposals in Chorleywood and Officers have recently met with the Parish Council, the Chorleywood Residents' Association and Ward Councillors to discuss further. We are clear that those proposals in Chorleywood that do not have public support will not be progressed.

EV Charging project – TRDC has signed the contract with Blink (our chosen Charge Point Operator). The next step is to work with Blink's installation team to enable the work to be completed with the least disruption. Information on final implementation timescales is awaited from Blink, but implementation will commence later this calendar year. There are also ongoing discussions with Hertfordshire County Council regarding the spending of the LEVI fund on further EV charging infrastructure in TRDC.

Step-Free Access at underground stations - Officers met with representatives from Transport for London recently following the announcement that further stations are to be considered as part of the step-free access programme. It has been confirmed that Croxley station will undergo an assessment for step-free access feasibility. The report will be published early next year. We have also raised the need for step-free access at Rickmansworth.

Economic Development

Work has started on drafting a new economic development strategy for the Council. This will initially bring together all the work the Council is currently doing to support our business community through work on planning, sustainability and development and other key pieces of work.

Report from the Lead Member for Community Safety and Partnerships, Councillor Andrew Scarth

Community Partnerships & Health

Strategy and Partnerships Team held a Disability Confident Event, at “The Making of Harry Potter” studios, in partnership with the Chambers of Commerce, DWP, Hertfordshire County Council, Mission Employable and Sunnyside Rural Trust. The event had 57 attendees and received positive feedback.

The Connecting Three Rivers Fund is now open for applications, and this will close on 31 October. The LSP’s Advisory Board will review applications with decisions aiming to be made by the end of November. This Fund is linked to the donations platform which is now live.

The week commencing 23 September was National Inclusion week – a news story was shared on the TRDC website and promoted on social media to demonstrate the work undertaken by the council in relation to Inclusion.

The Household Support Fund will be extended to end of March. The Strategy and Partnerships Team is working on reviewing need with partner organisations to develop a proposal for expenditure of the September – March funding.

A new cost of living checklist is available on the council website, to encourage residents to explore all financial support available to them.

Tablets are being introduced to the Healthy hubs, to allow residents to access the council website and limited other health and wellbeing related sites to improve accessibility.

Frailty Task and Finish Group has had its initial meeting and will be exploring a whole systems approach to preventing the development of frailty.

Community Safety

The Youth Action Panel continues to support the No More Service in delivering support to young people at risk or involved in youth crime. TRDC has a designated worker and currently supports 22 young people.

Promotional work and awareness raising continues through educating residents on criminal exploitation and cuckooing. Youth education continues this year following the successful youth violence programme earlier in the year, this will see the ‘Crucial Crew’ deliver a programme for children around the dangers of Drugs.

“16 Days of Action” begins 25th November and will include:

White Ribbon Day - 25th November – White Ribbon flag will be raised, the Three Rivers White Ribbon video will be launched and a stand will be in the office for staff to learn more about domestic abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls.

'Orange The World' – 27th November – Watersmeet will be lit Orange to mark the day. We will also create a collage of all staff dressed in Orange to support the elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls.

Fund raising day – 4th December – A plan to raise money for Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline is being developed by staff

Domestic Abuse training – there will be 3 training sessions held over the 16 days. This will be open to all staff and cover topics such as what is domestic abuse and spotting the signs. All staff and councillors to be encouraged to attend.

Personal safety campaign – to be launched as part of 16 days, colourful information booklet sharing all the digital and face to face services available in Three Rivers to support all residents who need it. Each service will be highlighted throughout 16 days.

Application for funds to purchase new cameras has been submitted, and if successful should be in place at the beginning of the new year. 2 cameras each for area South Oxhey, Abbots Langley and Rickmansworth and an additional two cameras to be deployed around the district as needed.

Police continue to work with high targeted premises – In the last qtr. there were 61 reported shoplifting incidents, 32 were at the Co-op at Delta Gain. Police are advising Co-op of security measures.

Three Rivers Community Safety team organised a District wide Prevent training event on 4th September, over 60 professionals from around the district attended and the feedback was incredibly positive.

Report from the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd

Watersmeet Report

Panto:

- 2024 pantomime of Jack and the Bean stalk is now on sale. We currently have 5205 reserved tickets which is the local schools who have been booking, and 1502 sold tickets. Panto VIP night to be Friday 13 December @ 6:30pm. I have bought my tickets.
- 2025 Pantomime title will be confirmed in late November/early December 2024.

Other

- Replacement of electrical infrastructure works were carried out in August.
- Christmas Market will be on Saturday 16 November.
- Membership Scheme - Currently we have 61 memberships sold. These are: 24 joint and 37 singles.
<https://www.watersmeet.co.uk/watersmeet.co.uk/membership>
- Link to the website - <https://www.watersmeet.co.uk/>
- 2025 will be the 50th anniversary of Watersmeet.
- The Watersmeet Annual Review 2023/24 presentation is coming to 16 October Climate Change Leisure and Housing Committee

Leisure Report

- Attended the Living Long Better event on 7th September at University of Hertfordshire
- Attended Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women Girls Conference in at the Fielder Centre in Hatfield on 17th September. One of the workshops had speakers from the English Football League.
- Will attend Friday 11th October - Hertfordshire Clubs Conference 2024 in Hatfield

- Parkrun
 - The High Sheriff has visited all the Parkruns and Junior Parkrun in Three Rivers as part of her plan to visit every Parkrun in Herts. I was there for 4 out of 5 of her visits.
 - 12th October – Parkrun at Leavesden to celebrate our 45th Wedding Anniversary. You welcome to volunteer , walk , jog or run.
 - [The benefits of parkrun | parkrun UK Blog](#)

Open Spaces - Management Plans

South Oxhey Playing Fields Management Plan is being updated for 2024 – 2029. And will be presented to the October CCLC Committee meeting.

Next financial year the management plans for Croxley Common Moor and the Withey Beds (off Tolpits Lane near entrance to Moor Park estate) will be reviewed and updated for the period 2025-30.

Stone's Orchard and The Green's Management Plan development is underway and initial consultation on the briefing document will begin in the coming months. Initial conversations with Croxley Green Parish Council has been positive and they will continue to be consulted through the process.

Solar Panels at William Penn

The tender for the solar panels on William Penn Leisure Centre has been awarded to a company called Drakes. Planning approval has been received; works will commence on 3rd October and are expected to take one month to complete.

Leavesden

YMCA Cafe –The cafe was opened to the public on 24 August. There has been no *official* opening ceremony.

Leavesden Hive signage – The new signage was installed on 27 August. This design should deter any further vandalism.

Leavesden Country Park – Entrance Widening – Works are progressing well with normal vehicle access remaining. Works have taken place to repair the wall and install new heritage railings. The new combined automatic gate has been installed. The vehicle access gate can now be controlled remotely, allowing better access for One YMCA deliveries - they remain updated on the works.

The planned closure works to tarmac the new entrance did not take place due to Highways work on College Road. Officers are awaiting additional permit approval from HCC Highways with a view for works to take place overnight. Further updates will be provided once the permit has been approved.

National Playday

The Play Ranger team supported the National Play Day event at Leavesden Country Park on Wednesday 7 August. Over 50 families attended the event organised by the Watford and Three Rivers Family Centre team which also included advice stands, face painting and more.

Summer 2024

Playscheme

We had another successful summer at the Ofsted registered Yorke Mead Playscheme. A total of **1,056** attendances from 215 children. This meant that **88%** of available spaces were taken up.

Visitors included the NHS Mental Health & Wellbeing Service, JD Ballers, Play

Rangers, Crafty Lucy and Keep a Beat. Parent and child feedback was taken across the summer. Below are some of the comments

- *Children “I love playscheme because we get to do lots of fun things and play outside”, “I made new friends and played fun games in the hall”, “the play leaders are kind and helpful”.*
- *Parent “I’m so grateful for playscheme, you’re all amazing and its so lovely to see all the children having such a great time.”*

The Leisure Service secured £9,000 in grant funding to provide spaces for children in receipt of Free School Meals. 39 children were referred and attended a total of **230** days. Daily hot meals were provided by Top Notch Catering. An audit was carried out by the funders, with very positive feedback:

“The playleaders were very engaged with the children and offer a wide range of activities for different interests, which the children were clearly enjoying. There was a nice bond between the play leaders which created a lot of energy and a great atmosphere. The camp was well organised, with a range of spaces to cater for different activities and they had all the appropriate health and safety measures in place.”

In addition, the playscheme had 112 ACE bookings. ACE is ‘Accessible childcare for everyone’ (previously the Holiday Referral Scheme). Three Rivers ACE helps families with the cost of holiday play provisions within the Three Rivers area, either via a self-referral (meeting specific criteria) or a professional referral. In addition to the Three Rivers playscheme, families were also able to attend the following provisions across the district for a discounted price via the ACE scheme

- Let Me Play at William Penn Leisure Centre
- JAG at South Oxhey Leisure Centre
- Dynamic Ducks at Rickmansworth Park Primary School
- Junior Playmakers at Warren Dell Primary School
- Get Set 4 Tennis at Denham Way Playing Fields

Play Rangers

Two new sites were included this summer, Baldwins Lane Playing Fields and Chorleywood House Grounds. In total, the play rangers delivered 70 sessions across 10 different sites with **1,277** attendances across the summer. We now have 418 subscribers to the Play Ranger annual membership. (£5 / year).

Arts and Culture

Cultural Strategy

Work continues on the Cultural Asset Mapping with plans underway to engage with key Stakeholder groups locally. An online Public Consultation is scheduled to commence in October.

Artistmeet

Croxley Green artist Valeria Michael will have the final exhibition of the year, from 3rd October – 31st December. There will be no formal Open Reception, but Valeria will be attending the Watersmeet Christmas Market on 15th November to talk about her work.

Aquadrome inspired art and wellbeing events

Bespoke workshops/activities took place this summer, hosted by the Leisure Services Team for the Aquadrome NHN Project. 100 spaces were available, 93 of the 100 available spaces were booked with 84 adults and children attending.

- **Mindful Mosaic workshop**
Participants has the opportunity to relax and unwind with the art of mosaicking! People could create a nature themed mosaic to take away and display in their gardens or outdoor space.
- **Poster and Storyboard workshop**
Children and young people worked with Children's Book Illustrator Leanne Coehlo, to create posters and storyboards about the Aquadrome. The artworks were created to help raise awareness of this special nature reserve and to encourage us all to protect it for future generations.
- **Guided Tree and Photography Walk**
Participants were able to learn more about the fascinating tree species that can be found at the Aquadrome, their characteristics and how they have grown to adapt living within the site whilst learning more about how to effectively photograph these natural wonders.
- **Expressive Writing**
Enjoying time for contemplation at the Aquadrome, participants were encouraged to use their senses and appreciate the natural environment, before heading inside to read and create their own forms of poetry and written word, inspired by their memories and time on site.
- **Nature in Clay workshops**
Families enjoyed exploring texture and pattern together, using clay and basic, natural materials you might find on a walk in nature. People created mobiles and decorations they could hang in their home or garden.
- **Summer Photography Display**
A selection of photographs taken by local residents on our spring Photography Walks could be enjoyed by the community in this temporary display. Landscapes, familiar viewpoints, flora and fauna and animals in their natural habitats have all featured and captured the interest of visitors of all ages.

Sports Development

Active Parks

A wide range of outdoor activities took place to celebrate our parks and open spaces over the end of June, July and August. Classes included; Tai Chi, Yoga, Pilates and Strength & Conditioning (using the new equipment) with almost 600 attendances across the 10 weeks of delivery and positive feedback received

SK8 Jam

Over **100** young people entered the annual skate jam at Croxley Green Skate Park. The event featured competitions for boys and girls. £1,000 was secured from Croxley Green Parish Council to support the event with the competition element managed by Alex Barton of ABC Skateboarding. Council Chairman Raj Khiroya attended to hand out some of the prizes.

Aquadrome Programme

Pedestrian Bridge

The first of the bridge closures took place on Monday 23 September to allow for essential tree works in preparation for the bridge. Due to adverse weather conditions, these works have experienced some delays but are due to conclude by the end of September.

The contract for bridge build has been awarded to Beaver Bridges Ltd. with works scheduled to start November 2024. A full Communications plan is in place and being implemented.

The Ebury Way play area consultation completed, and final design agreed.

Recovery and Resilience funding NHN (National Lottery)

- **Activity programme** –The summer programme has been a resounding success both in terms of activities and attendances
- **Hydrological Study**- The study is underway across the site and will submit an interim report in October. A further delay in the release of the Environment Agency (EA) upper Colne model has delayed the survey completion which is now expected in 2025.
- **Ecological Studies** – The majority of the survey work has now been completed and draft reports are expected in October. An event is being planned for mid-October to inform interested people on the data and what we can learn from this.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**- the project will draw to a close by the 31 October 2024 and work is underway to prepare the final evaluation report, which is a mandatory part of accepting Lottery funding. This evaluation report will also inform the next stage of the Aquadrome Project.

Steering Group

The Steering Group meeting of key professionals and partner organisations will meet on 2 October at Rickmansworth Golf Club. Beaver Bridges will attend to present the new bridge design.

Fishing Swims

Fishing Swims (allocated areas for fishing) around Batchworth Lake are in varying conditions so will need to be specified individually. The specifications will be completed by the end of October and are being developed in partnership with Uxbridge Rovers Angling and Conservation Society.

The Bury Grounds Biodiversity Project -

The following is a proposed phasing of the project:

Phase 1

- River Restoration Works - Collaboration agreement signed between Affinity Water and the council facilitating the funding of £108,000.00 and a specialist contractor has been secured. The contractor will design, achieve relevant permitting and then deliver the works. The works will be complete by the end of this financial year.
- Habitat Improvement Works – Through the Landfill Communities Fund Grondon have contributed £14,000.00 to the project for habitat improvements, this will include tree works, tree planting and scrub maintenance. These works to be complete by the end of this financial year.

Phase 2

- The following works are subject to external funding and hence allocated to phase 2, this phase will commence towards Spring 2025 when capacity allows following the (near) completion of phase 1 and will begin with and be dependent on funding applications.
- Heritage Works – works relating to protecting the heritage of this site and would therefore be a suitable application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Access Improvement Works – the proposed works are supported by Batchworth Community Council who have “ear-marked” £27,000.00 for the path surfacing and interpretation. These proposed works are also suitable to be included in a National Lottery Heritage Fund bid.

Phase 3

- Delivery of any elements where funding has been secured in phase 2.

Play Area Capital Programme

Eastbury and Ebury Play Areas: Plans submitted for Certificate of Lawful Development as a permitted development. Works to Ebury Play Area will take place as part of the Rickmansworth Aquadrome Bridge project. Ebury play area is programmed to be completed early 2025. Works to Eastbury Play area are programmed to take place over Winter.

Report from the Lead Member for Sustainability and Climate Change, Councillor Jon Tankard

Green spaces within development are good for our social health and can save us money!

Social Value Toolkit:

The Social Value Toolkit is a practical guide to help organizations measure and optimize their projects' broader societal benefits. By focusing on social, environmental, and economic outcomes, it encourages a more sustainable and equitable approach to development and investment, helping ensure that projects create meaningful benefits for communities.

Social Value is defined through the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 (Act) which came into force in January 2013 and requires all public sector organisations (and their suppliers) to look beyond the financial cost of a contract and consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of an area.

Often Architecture is seen as the object, the element, the form. But that is structure, Architecture is the space, volume or void, within or around the solid. Therefore, to look at urban form, one must not only consider the solid, but more importantly the void around. The void between houses, the void between streets, the void between neighbourhoods and the voids between villages and towns, all have an importance in the state of place and character.

Therefore, it is not necessarily the number of houses that we should be counting when considering a design issue, it's how we treat the voids around them.

Landscape can be hard, or it can be soft. In the case of Penal Correction, landscapes are often deliberately hard with Victorian exercise yards being extremely harsh, to remind prisoners of their loss of pleasantries. Whilst rehabilitation areas are generally soft, with natural vegetation, smells and noise. A place for mental healing, a place for pause, a place for reflection and mental repair.

So why, therefore in our allocation of sites, do we not put greater emphasis on the landscape, the spaces and the boundaries of our Urban Spaces, when they are as important as the structures? The Social Value Toolkit aims to do just this with specific Social Value Metrics which can be extrapolated into monetary value. For example typical social value benefits include:

- **Well-being improvements** (e.g., better mental health, physical health).
- **Job creation and economic inclusion.**
- **Reduced social isolation or enhanced social cohesion.**

- **Environmental benefits**, such as carbon reduction or biodiversity enhancement.

Monetization of Social Value: Some toolkits aim to assign a financial value to social benefits to make it easier to integrate them into cost-benefit analyses. For example, health improvements might be valued based on reduced healthcare costs or increased productivity.

The below is an example of the 'monetary Values' the Social Value Toolkit suggests can be achieved through some of these metrics:

Measure & description	Proxy Value	Offer	Total value by measure
No. of new local jobs created	£28,213.00	2	£56,426
No. of apprenticeships (weeks)	£168.00	24	£4,032
No. of volunteering hours	£14.43	50	£722
Carbon dioxide saved	£64.66	50	£3,233
Total Social Value			£64,413

*https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/District%20Councils%20Social%20Value%20Toolkit%20Final_0.pdf

Outcome		HACT Social Value Bank financial proxy 2019	Deadweight
Positive Emotions	I feel in control of my life	£15,894	0.27
Connecting	I talk to neighbours regularly	£4,511	0.19
Positive Emotions	I feel a sense of belonging in my neighbourhood	£3,753	0.19
Positive Emotions	I am able to take frequent mild exercise	£3,537	0.19
Participation	I am active in a tenants group	£8,116	0.19
Positive Emotions	I feel relief from depression/anxiety	£36,766	0.27

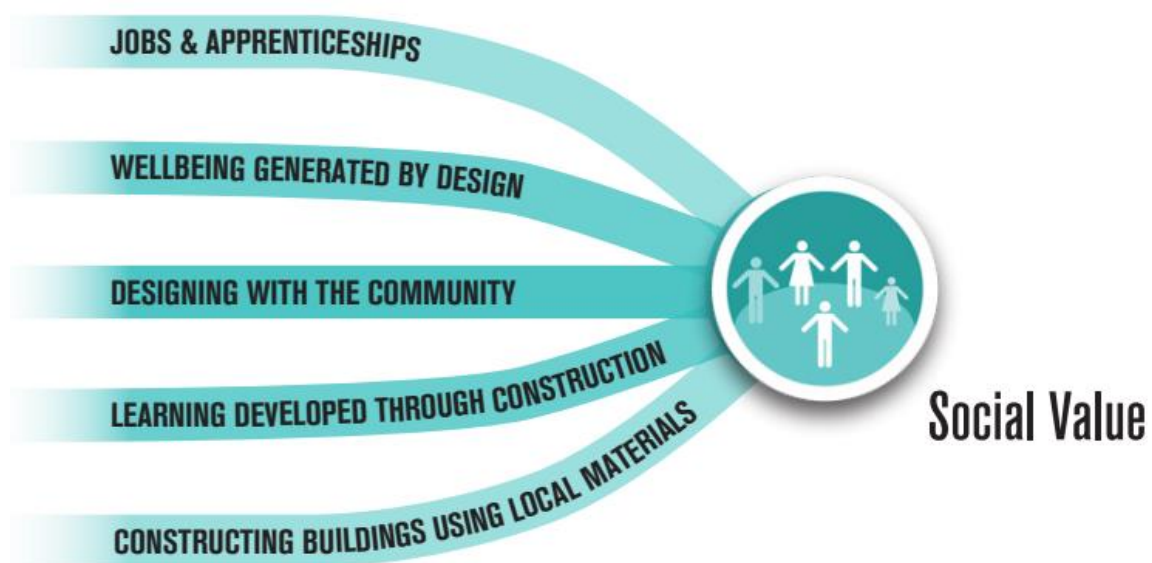
When considering the impact of design in the light of this, we can begin to appreciate the cost of failing to direct and dictate the ongoing and future urban development of Three Rivers, the cost to future generations health, wealth and social wellbeing is directly controlled by the decisions we make today.

Why can't the addition of housing estates onto the residential landscape provide positive contributions by providing green routes through previously impassable obstacles to get to say a train station, school or shops? Enabling residents the physical mobility to move around the landscape unhindered with the benefit of easy access to green space. With approx. 25% of 19 to 21 year olds are suffering some form of mental health conditions promoting such access to green space, known to positively improve mental health, can only be beneficial and ultimately money saving in terms of healthcare.

Why can't these networks also provide the basis of biodiverse corridors, tree canopies, summer vegetation, wildlife habitats which in turn support summer cooling,

absorption zones for rainwater run off to reduce flooding and green routes to link infrastructure without the need for a car journey.

This 'open' space of the site will come at a cost to the developer, but given that their profit will incur costs onto the local infrastructure, and given the SVT can demonstrate examples of how to reduce that burden, surely it's a cost which should be recognised as a real cause and effect' in the design generation of our future landscape in ensuring we deliver a housing landscape, that positively contributes to society in wellbeing, biodiversity. Because as we have seen in the past, potentially the real cost to society, will be ignoring the inclusion of wellbeing, into the design.

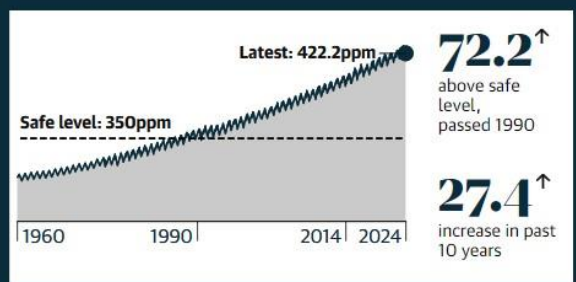


The most important number of the climate crisis:

422.2

atmospheric CO2 in parts per million, 21 September 2024

Source: NOAA. Chart baseline is 280ppm - the preindustrial average. Safe level a stabilisation scenario set out by IPCC. Daily average CO2 value at Mauna Loa.



Sustainability, climate change and energy efficiency

SHDF (Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund) Wave 2: As of 24th September : 29 properties in progress (scaffolded, enabled, and boarding in progress) 4 physically complete, and another 11 due to complete in coming week. Poor weather may hinder progress.

GBIS scheme with E.ON (fully funded cavity wall insulation): marketing of scheme will start from October once E.ON produces finalised social media assets. Exploring personalised offers to blocks of flats with unfilled cavities in Rickmansworth, though mixed tenures in apartment blocks makes these difficult to treat.

Community Energy Fund (CEF): Solar Canopy Feasibility study on 7 council-owned car parks has commenced. Grand Union Community Energy leading this project with support from TRDC. Community engagement events on the theme of “your vision for the future of energy in Three Rivers” have been organised by GUCE throughout September.

Fast Followers project(s):

Transition Streets: Now focusing on recruiting more streets to try the programme. Two new streets are due to start in October (one in Moor Park, and one in Chorleywood). GUCE continuing to attend community events to promote Transition Streets

The Retrofit One Stop Shop: Remainder of project focus on overcoming barriers to retrofit for “able to pay” demographic and planning to scale the service beyond Fast Followers.

Roundtable event for TRDC’s Planning (Development Management) team to provide information and a forum for discussion on retrofitting historic, Listed, and Conservation Area homes with experts from the Sustainable and Traditional Buildings Alliance and/or Historic England, held at Three Rivers House on 19th September. Feedback being gathered from this currently.

Decarbonisation of Core Council Buildings

Cavity Fill

Quotes have been received to fill the cavities on TRH (£28,000) and Watersmeet. (£37,000)

A blended approach to funding is pursued including a bid to the Theatre Improvement Fund

William Penn Solar Panel funded by the Swimming Pool Support Fund

A planning application has been approved for the solar array with works due to commence on 43rd October. The design consists of 500 440W solar PV panels and 3 invertors and the structural survey has confirmed this amount can be installed. The quoted cost is £149,996 and can therefore be fully covered by the grant received from the government’s Swimming Pool Support Fund. The solar PV system, as designed, will generate 192,236 kWh and save between 34- 80 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. The solar PV system is forecasted to offset ~30% of the electricity bill and generate a year 1 saving of £29,355 and £1.2m over 25-years which represents a payback period of 4.34 years.

Business Energy Efficiency Grants

The Business Energy Efficiency Grant was launched in July utilising the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to help SMEs organisations implement energy-saving measures that will improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions. This will be achieved through the installation of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies to their buildings. Grants of up to £10,000 are available for eligible SMEs to install eligible energy efficiency measures, with further support for energy assessment funding where required. The Expression of Interest (EOI) stage is now closed, with 33 applications received. Further to the EOIs review successful applicants are asked to submit a detailed technical proposal with quotes which will be scored again. The initial deadline for technical proposals is 30th of September 2024.

Woodlands and Tree Protection

TRDC Tree management

- New management plans for Carpenters Wood, and Pheasants and Solomans Wood have been completed and the final versions will be presented to the Climate Change, Leisure and Housing Committee on 16th October.
- Works to fell trees due to subsidence issues have been completed on Prestwick Road in Oxhey Woods. Works are scheduled to take place at Bowring Green, Oxhey Woods in early September.
- Ash Die Back – Inspection of high-risk areas of Ash Die Back have been completed. Many areas appear reasonably healthy, however priority locations for works include Chorleywood House estate, The Aquadrome and Pheasants and Soloman's Wood. There is a £25,000 annual budget for works, which Officers are targeting towards areas of highest risk.
- Oak processionary moth – A small number of reports of OPM have been received this year. Officers are targeting removal works to areas where OPM is present at low level in tree canopy. HCC have developed a brief to produce OPM guidance for Councils in Hertfordshire and aim to appoint a consultant to produce the guidance later this year.
- Contractor appointed to undertake tree works around the pedestrian bridge in the Aquadrome. Works scheduled to start on 23rd Sept.
- Contractor has been appointed to undertake tree works at Cassiobridge Play Area and The Bury to support improvement projects at these locations.
- High priority safety works at Chorleywood House Estate / A404 are currently being completed.

Biodiversity

Chorleywood House Estate – River Chess: Options appraisal is still scheduled to take place when possible. Delay resulting from damage due to flooding upstream earlier in the year taking priority. NB. The council are a stakeholder/landowner in the project, not leading it.

The Bury Grounds Biodiversity Project –

- An informal engagement event for adjacent residents was held for Tuesday 24th September from 6pm to 7:30pm meeting within the Bury Grounds. A small but enthusiastic group attended and feedback was positive.
- A river restoration specialist contractor has been commissioned to assist with the design, permitting and construction of the river improvements.

Biodiversity Policy & BNG update -

- Officers are preparing the specification for the required ecological surveying at the proposed sites for the Maple Lodge S106 BNG money approved to be spent on council owned land at Full Council. The habitat composition and condition surveys will take place spring/summer 2025 to ensure they take place during the optimal survey window.

Aquadrome Programme Pedestrian Bridge

- CIL funding has been approved and Contract has been awarded to Beaver Bridges Ltd. Works scheduled to start November 2024. Full project team in place including the contractor AHR (Employers agents) and TRDC. Regular meetings to discuss progress both on and off site
- Ebury Way play area consultation completed, and final design agreed.
- Bridge in the design stage.
- Scrub in Water Ski Compound cleared
- Comms in place for the closure of the bridge and play area including on site notices, social media and press releases.

AMP funding

- Funding received for £510,000 and detailed programme planning for delivery is being developed. This funding needs to be spent within the next three years. This is a biodiversity enhancement project focused along the wet woodland/pinetum area between Bury Lake and the River Colne. It includes a boardwalk in this area through the pinetum, interpretation board, new benches, removal of dilapidated swims, path works and biodiversity enhancements.

Recovery and Resilience funding NHN (National Lottery)

- **Hydrological Study**- The study is underway across the site and will submit and interim report. A further delay in the release of the EA upper Colne model has resulted in a further delay to the survey completion now expected in 2025.
- **Ecological Studies** – Work for these studies is commencing on site, with full results expected this Autumn.

NLHF main application- WWW bid

- The new Expression of Interest (EOI) will be submitted in February 2025 reflecting the preliminary findings from the hydrological survey. If successful, the development phase bid will be submitted in May 2025.

Fishing Swims

- Asbestos Surveys have been completed. Full report and recommendations collated.
- Costings for groundworks and pegs being collated with “Beaching” options being reviewed.
- Working with URACS identified the swims that can be removed and to agree design principles for the swims that TRDC will maintain.

Air pollution and noise pollution

Noise Pollution

Residential Environmental Health are seeing an increase in noise and smoke nuisance complaints made by residents to the Council. This is common for this time of year. Whilst Officers will always consider the use of formal enforcement powers, in the first instance, Officers will attempt to work with the parties involved in an effort to achieve an informal resolution.