

Lead member reports

08/07/2025

Leader's Report to Full Council, 8 July 2025

Upon being re-elected Leader of the Council, I thanked staff for their dedication and all the hard work they do for all our residents - from ensuring the weekly refuse collection continues, whatever the weather, to the dedication of our staff in ensuring we assist in finding accommodation for homeless families and everything else in between.

I was delighted to be at the Three Rivers and Watford Volunteer Network event on 3 June. It gave me an opportunity to thank everyone involved and indeed hear much about the sterling work all the selfless volunteers do in our local communities.

Owing to the rotation agreed amongst the 11 councils that form Hertfordshire, I have taken my place as the Chair of the Herts Leaders Group for the year and have already chaired two meetings. This group works together over the formulation of proposals for the future potential unitary authorities in Hertfordshire, amongst other matters. As you know we are required to submit our proposals to the government by the end of November. Having said that, the earliest any new authority is likely to be in place remains April 2028.

Although this is extra work for Council Leaders it is also extra work for all senior officers who have input into the work streams in formulation proposals that will meet the criteria set down by the UK government. This is both time-consuming and costly, and I doubt the government funding so far allocated will cover all the costs to councils, so I am pleased that we were able to allocate monies if required are in our own budget.

As you will have seen, all 11 councils and the Police and Crime Commissioner in Hertfordshire have ruled-out the option of a single unitary council.

The options that are now being looked at are two, three or four unitary councils above which we expect a Combined Authority Mayor to sit. Our collective aim is to get the right set-up, given government constraints, for our residents.

Our officers here in Three Rivers continue to secure extra government funding to support our residents - whether it be money for new social housing via the Local Authority Housing Fund, or to securing secure significant Lottery bids and other sources. And talking of which, I expect an announcement of another big "win" for this council very soon.

I have held a further successful meeting with the Chairs and Chief Officers of our Parish councils. This joint work and communication has been and remains very much welcomed on all sides.

In addition, I have met with a core group of Rickmansworth Traders to discuss how the district council, even with its limited High Street remit, might help with improvements in the area.

I have discussed with officers and asked them to progress the expansion of the highly successful Beryl Bike scheme to other parts of the district, most notable Rickmansworth,

Abbots Langley and South Oxhey. Having personally pushed for the original trial before I became leader, and I am so pleased that Croxley residents, and others, are using these new bikes with such enthusiasm. It's a sustainable and healthy way to travel.

Meanwhile, the project at Barton Way, on which I have worked with Croxley Green Parish Council, is reaching its next stage with a Public Exhibition of the plans for a new Parish Office, Community Space and 8 social rental housing units for local families above happening on 14 July. I am pleased to have brokered this "win, win" plan with the parish council.

After this report was due to be submitted, I, along with the Deputy Leader and Chief Executive, will attend the Local Government Annual Conference. (1- 3 July in Liverpool). I may wish to update you on anything new arising from that at the full council meeting on the 8 July.

I continue to work with the Police and Crime Commissioner, and our local police. At the recent Community Safety Board and Connecting Three Rivers meeting he said that we have the right people and partners round the table, and its "the best across county so far".

We have secured an increase in our Police Community Support Officers, three of which we fund, and extra governmental funds should enable an increase still further. For the first time Three Rivers will have its own permanent full-time Neighbourhood Policing Inspector.

Cllr Stephen Giles-Medhurst, 27 June 2025

Leader, Three Rivers District Council

Update from the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd

I would like to thank all the officers in the Leisure team for their professional, hard work and commitment on the projects and day to day work. They are a pleasure to work with.

I attended the Artistmeet celebration at Watersmeet on 7th May. I recorded a video to give thanks to Watersmeet volunteers on Friday 9th May as I was in Leeds for a marathon.

I am working with Watford to get a new parkrun started.

With Cllr Drury I visited Man on (Football sessions in partnership with WFC) at William Penn on Monday 9th June. Players must be referred to join the program. On Tuesday 10th June I visited Rickmansworth Running Sisters.

As part of the Watford and Three Rivers School Sports Partnership I attended the year 5 /6 girls football tournament at St. Joan of Arc School. I also attended the annual Watford and Three Rivers Sports Awards on Monday 16th June – it was wonderful to see so many young sporting achievements.

I continue to volunteer at Junior parkruns and parkruns. I am happy to walk a parkrun with anyone. Happy to visit sports clubs and friends' groups who volunteer on TRDC land. Please make suggestions to me before Full Council. I would like to challenge each of you to experience the Arts and a sporting activity within the District. I would like to thank also those who volunteer at Sports Clubs and Friends Groups.

Aquadrome

Ebury Play Area – contract discussions and programming of the removal of the Japanese Knotweed are underway.

Pedestrian Bridge

- Bridge now open and new Welcome sign installed and has been positively received by the public
- Decking area on Batchworth Lake has been programmed in and will be delivered by the same company who installed the fishing swims and bird viewing area.
- The new Beaver Bridges/ TRDC video was shown as a trial at Yorke Mead School recently during a visit by the Natural Infrastructure Officer. The children reacted very positively to the video. Once fully approved, the video will be shown to a wider group of schools and will be available on the website as part of our communication work.

Fishing Swims

- Following communication and confirmation from Uxbridge Rovers Angling and Conservation Society, the new signage has been printed to include logos, what.three.words, fishing swim nicknames and swimming terms. Grounds Maintenance have agreed to put these in place once delivered.
- The addition of a bird viewing area has been included on Batchworth Lake. This will have an interpretation sign explaining the local birds and appropriate feeding.
- 6 'Return to Nature' signs are in place around Batchworth Lake informing the public of the importance of those areas that were previously swims and why the fencing is in place to protect the habitat.

Leisure Assets

Open Spaces

Management Plans Croxley Common Moor and the Withey Beds management plans due to go to July committee and includes proposal to replace the viewing platform and a section of the boardwalk at a cost of approx. £60k, subject to external funding being secured.

Management Plans for 2025/2026

Prestwick Road Meadows – new management plan to be drafted

Stone's Orchard and The Green Management Plan –The writing of the management plan is in process.

Grazing – 2025

4-year grazing contract has been agreed. 2025 grazing is underway :

□

Location	Date grazing to end	Number and type of cattle grazed
CWHE	Week ending 14th September	24 cows (Angus Cross or Hereford Cross)
Croxley Common Moor	Week ending 30th November	30 cows (Sussex or Sussex Cross Aberdeen Angus)
Horses Field	Week ending 7th September	20 cows (Sussex native cattle)
The Withey Beds	Week ending 28th September	6/7 cows (Dexter)

Leisure Management Contract:

- Golf Pod has submitted a new planning application regarding lighting for the proposed golf pod driving range at Rickmansworth Golf Course. This is anticipated to be reviewed at the upcoming Planning Committee on Thursday 17th July. The resubmitted plans note that the lights will only be illuminating the bays and not external areas and will be off by 9pm. If planning application approved, Golf Pod anticipates a 6-week installation period.
- Upgrade works continue regarding the water pump house at Rickmansworth Golf Course to ensure the lawns can be watered following the recent dry weather.
- EV chargers have been installed at South Oxhey Leisure Centre Carpark. Contractors are currently undertaking works to connect the EV chargers to the grid so that they are operational.
- There has been the annual presentation from Everyone Active at the Climate Change and Leisure Committee.

Leisure Development

Artistsmeet

- Jul – Sept exhibition: Herts Open Studios - Sally Barr (event TBC in September for Open Studios Month)
- Oct – Dec exhibition: Mishi Rehal (event TBC)

Active Parks

This programme will run through the summer months (June – August) and includes a mix of adult, family and children's activities. There will be a programme offered by TRDC and we will also promote the work of external organisations running activities in our parks and open spaces (parkrun etc). The promotion will also include signposting to the many free tennis courts, skate parks, nature trails etc we have that are easily accessible for residents. For more information visit: [Active parks | Three Rivers District Council](#)

Programme will include the National Play Day in partnership with Otley Way family centre and the Skate Jam. Full details including date/time for all sessions are on the website <https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/leisure-parks-culture/active-parks>

Play Rangers

258 annual memberships sold for 2025/26. Bookings go live for summer on Friday 20 June. Play Rangers will deliver 60 sessions across the district from 28 July to 22 August. Locations include South Oxhey Playing Fields, Baldwins Lane, Scotsbridge, Aquadrome, Manor House Grounds, Stones Orchard,

Chorleywood House, Leavesden Country Park, Denham Way, and King George V Playing Fields.

Casual Leisure Support Worker

We have recruited 5 new Casual Leisure Support Workers (staff who work at playscheme and Play Rangers) to support with delivery over the summer. Training for all staff will include; Safeguarding, Paediatric First Aid, Basic life Support, Female Genital Mutilation, Prevent, Food Hygiene, Behaviour Management and Games training.

Playscheme

Playscheme bookings are live with 1,100 places offered on TRDC bookings. Over 800 (75%) are currently sold with 272 places remaining across the four weeks. Visitors to playscheme this summer include Herts Fire Service, Saracens Cheerleading, Crafty Lucy, Kaleidoscope, ABC Skate with more to be confirmed.

Happy Funding

We were successful with our HAPpy grant application for £12,000. This will enable us to offer an additional 400 spaces at playscheme to children in receipt of Free School Meals. Bookings open on Thursday 26 June. Codes are provided by schools to parents.

Sports Clubs

Provided funding advice and support to Rickmansworth Bowls Club (new mower – they have secured £500 towards the cost of this with further grant applications awaiting outcomes) and Bury Lake Young Mariners (new clubhouse).

Tennis Courts

In conversation with LTA colleagues to secure grant funding (of approx. £5-10k) for new access gates at Baldwins Lane and Scotsbridge Playing Fields tennis courts. These gates would be the same ones as installed at Denham Way and South Oxhey as part of their recent refurbishment. The gates would work alongside the Clubspark booking process and provide the council with valuable data about who and how often the courts are being utilised.

Croxley Skate Jam

This will be held on Saturday 16 August from 12pm-6pm. The event will be supported by ABC Skate. An invite will be sent to the TRDC Chair to present awards.

Natural Infrastructure and Projects

The Bury Grounds Biodiversity Project -

- The project has been received well and especially now that the path has been reopened
- Officers are working on the next steps for the wider project including signage to provide information on the different features.
- Grundon, one of the project funders through the Landfill Communities Fund has asked to visit the site, I will be there.

Scotsbridge River Chess – Education visits

- Earlier this month, the email was sent to all schools in Hertfordshire in addition to schools known to have previously visited the river Chess at Scotsbridge notifying them that we were unable to permit students access to the water and the reasoning behind this being the following:
 - “Your school’s insurance may be invalid unless you have the landowner’s permission
 - Three Rivers District Council do not own the riverbed, so therefore cannot grant access
 - The river is not maintained for public access
 - The condition of the riverbanks are significantly deteriorating due to erosion which is exacerbated by school groups visiting with large groups entering the water
 - The council is currently working on a project to reinforce and repair the banks with nature-based solutions that will need time to establish. During this establishment, the banks will be vulnerable, and a lot of this work could be undone through irresponsibility”
- We have since received emails from many schools who understand the reasoning but express the difficulty this causes them. Where possible we are referring them to other potential opportunities or allowing visits that do not require entering the water.
- Officers are exploring the opportunities to create datasets that schools could use to complete the coursework without causing significant damage to the river.

Play Area Capital Programme –

Eastbury Play Area:

The toddler swing seat and basket swing seat have been installed; bark mulch was added prior to the VE Day celebrations. Planting has been monitored and seems to be growing in line with expectations. 6-month defect inspection was carried out with no issues – the project is now completed.

2025/26 Capital Programme

Barton Way Play Area refurbishment – Consultation due to be underway for local residents, local schools, key stakeholders, Ward Cllrs and Parish Council for mid – end June. Croxley Green Parish Council Clerk very keen to be involved in the whole process following initial meeting. Initial plans are:

- Produce three design option ideas through July for community consultation online
- During July consult on community wants and needs for one month from mid-June at Playscheme, York Mead School and two consultation sessions in the play area
- Tender works during August and through to mid-September
- Submit planning application for permitted development with the aim of the October Planning committee meeting .
- Works to commence once approved, likely early 2026

Watersmeet for Full Council July 2025

Panto:

- Beauty and the Beast panto 2025 has 4934 reserved tickets and 569 sold tickets.
- Eddie the Eagle is confirmed as the is the panto star. He is playing Professor Crack Pot

Other Cast Include

Ash Stevenson as Count and Beast, Charlotte Rowney as Belle, Bunny Galore in her 3 time return as the Dame. Stevie Ritchie as Gaston, Natilie Law as Mauvais and finally Steve Best as Comic.

All cast have now been announced on social media.

- Panto civic night will be Friday 5 December after the 18.00 performance.

Box office/Marketing:

- The membership scheme has 118 members.

Capital works:

- The electrical works were rephased to this financial year due to limited market interest from prospective contractors.
 - Electrical works tender closes on the 7th July
 - Works will then commence in August and run through to October.
- Fire doors replacement tender closes on 7th July with works to take place in August. Replace 30 and repair 25 doors.

- Both Tenders are live on the council's procurement system.

My wife and I have been to 3 Tribute Bands – Elton John, Simon and Garfunkel and Fleetwood Mac. There were all excellent.

Tomorrow night we are going to Salt Path based on the book.

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

Finance

I can report to you that Three Rivers District Council spent £14.180 million in the financial year to 31st March 2025 compared to its original budget of £14.159 million. The Council's reserves, which are held against risks and unforeseen expenditure, stand at £6 million.

The Budget Outturn Report was presented and discussed at the councils Policy and Resources Committee on 9th June 2025.

These are excellent results and show that sensible investments and sound financial management have cushioned Three Rivers District Council against significant economic pressures. We will continue to deliver for our residents and ensure that every penny of our taxpayers' money is well spent on services that our residents and business rightly expect and deserve.

We are waiting for the Government to produce exemplifications about Fair Funding and the Business Rate reset. However, we have taken a prudent view of the impact this is likely to have on our future finance.

Our Director of Finance recently represented Three Rivers in a workshop at the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) annual conference. Three Rivers is working with CIPFA and the Health Foundation on a project to identify ways local government can contribute to early disease prevention. This is a national project, and we are one of only three local authorities involved. It highlighted the excellent work our community partnerships team does in shaping our residents' future health and well-being.

Projects and Property Update

South Oxhey Phase 3

Now that the development of Phase 3 at South Oxhey is concluded, Officers are about to commission a post-development parking review to determine the potential additional measures required to address any localised parking pressures.

Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) – Rounds 1–3

Progress continues on three garage sites. The lease of the sites at The Queens Drive and Pollards has recently been completed and works are due to begin on site imminently. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has allocated funding for four additional units under LAHF3, bringing the total to £3.24M for 12 properties; a report will be discussed at Full Council on 8th July 2025.

Barton Way Building, Croxley Green

Heads of Terms with Croxley Green Parish Council are nearing completion. A planning pre-application was recently submitted, and feedback has been very positive. The Council will be hosting a joint public engagement event with Croxley Green Parish Council at the Library in Croxley Green on 14th July 2025 between 3 – 6pm. This will be the first opportunity for the public to review the proposed scheme, prior to a full planning application being submitted.

Sir James Altham and Oxhey Jets FC (OJFC)

TRDC's lease has now expired, and the site has been returned to Hertfordshire County Council. Oxhey Jets FC have now signed their new lease with HCC, and this marks the last pre-condition required to be satisfied before CIL funding can be released. Officers continue to support the OJFC's upgrade plans and will review the works over the coming weeks.

Three Rivers Museum Trust – Basing House

A report will be discussed at Full Council on 8th July 2025 regarding the proposed grant of a new lease to the Three Rivers Museum Trust. The lease proposes to support the Museum's application for the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme which will provide a benchmark in recognition of the standards required by the Arts Council. The new lease recognises the request for concessionary terms, reflecting the Museum's important role in the District and the limited income-producing nature of its operation.

Three Rivers House – Ground Floor

Draft heads of terms have been agreed with an NHS provider to occupy the vacant Ground Floor at Three Rivers House. The proposed lease will secure the space for the long term and provide access to residents with health services provided within the District. There is still some way to go in the process, but Officers are optimistic that the letting will be completed.

Finally, my thanks go to Officers for their assistance in compiling this report.

Lead Members Report – General Public Services July 2025 Sarah Nelmes

Waste Services

TRDC Officers are working with colleagues across the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership to assess options on the future provision of the sale of our dry recycling material once our current contract comes to an end in 2027. A possible scenario being investigated alongside full tender is that we extend our current contract up to 2030 – taking us through the LGR process without disruption.

Fleet and Fleet Maintenance

The councils current Fleet Maintenance provider has indicated that they do not want to continue to provide vehicle maintenance to the Councils fleet past July 2026. Market engagement has taken place with 5 Expressions of Interest, 3 of which are being pursued to the next stage of procurement.

A new RCV (Refuse Collection Vehicle) for food waste was due for delivery in April however delivery has been delayed until end of June. This has not affected the introduction of the new service collection requirement nor the implementation of commercial food waste collections

Grounds Maintenance

Officers had temporarily postponed grass cutting due to the heat to protect machines. Operators are instead focusing their work on watering trying to keep plant / trees / bowling greens alive in this heat. Normal service has now been resumed. Officers are working closely with our contractors and independent specialist advisors to plan and implement a remediation plan for the Japanese Knot Weed that was unfortunately introduced at the Ebury Playground site (it having not previously been present at this location). Treatment of JKW at other preexisting locations continues to be treated under normal regimes .

Environment Protection, Animal Inspection and Licensing

Following a training programme to support new and redeployed staff, the team have increased capacity for work on Abandoned vehicles and the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices. A report, as has been requested by members, on FPNs is drafted and will come through the next committee cycle.

Bereavement Services

The team are working with the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure team to produce an interpretation board for the woodland area at Woodcock Hill

Our Public Health Funeral Policy and Cemetery Rules and Regulations are being reviewed and will come to a future committee for discussion, hopefully in the next Committee cycle.

Following vandalism at Carpenders Park Cemetery, officers visited the Woodcock Hill Cemetery with the police to assess it for safety. With CCTV and

an officer resident on site, it was deemed that no extra security is required on that site but this will be kept under review.

Staffing

We are allowing all staff to start a little earlier and providing additional resource to ensure that all crews complete as close to midday as possible given the recent high temperatures and are ensuring that suitable PPE is issued and worn and sun cream and iced water is available to front line staff. .

Parking

The TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) Consultations are now live on the Chorleywood, High Elms Lane and School Mead schemes. These will conclude in July, and the council will review responses before deciding on implementing the TRO.

The Gosforth Lane Traffic Regulation Order is being reviewed by Traffic Engineers before launching this as our next consultation.

Ferry Car Park in Chorleywood was consulted on earlier in the year and subject to an agreement on implementing the TRO, we expect this to come into effect in Autumn 2025.

A report for a new parking app is currently progressing through the Committee Cycle.

Primrose Hill was consulted on earlier in the year and subject to an agreement on implementing the TRO, we expect this to come into effect by the end of the year.

New schemes have begun initial investigations including Community Way, Rickmansworth review and a Various schemes project including the Silk Mill Road petition.

Transport

The LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan) is currently progressing through the Committee Cycle for adoption by the district council before it is adopted by Hertfordshire County Council.

Our EV charging points are installed and are in the process of being connected to the grid, some of those connections may take longer than others, but we will advertise when they are made.

We are in discussion with Beryl with a view to looking to expand the current network of Beryl Bikes – watch this space!

Report from Lead Member for Licensing

There has not been a meeting of the Licensing Committee since the last Full council Meeting. There has been one meeting of the Regulatory Services Committee that

Reviewed the Hackney Carriage and Prive Hire Policy 2022. The Officers were authorised to commence public consultation on proposed changes to this policy, and following the expiry of the consultation the policy will be brought back to the Regulatory Services Committee for agreement before adoption at full Council.

Lead Member for Climate Change and Sustainability.- July Council Report

Stop Whining (as stated by Mr Schwarzenegger, “Wingeing,” as we Northerners say!)

Yes, the UK Parliament declared a **climate and ecological emergency** back in May 2019. While not a separate declaration for a “nature emergency,” it did recognise the inextricable link between climate breakdown and ecological decline.

Here in Hertfordshire, we’re not standing still. The **Hertfordshire County Council** is progressing its **Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)**, coordinated by the **Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Partnership (HNRP)**. That said, real implementation won’t begin until **Autumn 2025**—a familiar story of slow policy rollouts.

Tempting as it may be to throw our hands up and say, “*What’s the point?*”—we didn’t.

Several years ago, councillors **Lloyd, Michaels, Williams** and I were reflecting on the stark decline in biodiversity. One memory that stuck with us was the **absence of insects splattered on windscreens**—a once-common sight during our 1970s childhood summers. It was a vivid indicator of what we were losing. And with little visible action two years on from the government’s emergency declaration, we knew we had to act.

So, **four years ago**, we introduced a policy to **reduce grass cutting in selected areas across Three Rivers** to support biodiversity. We encouraged local partners responsible for land management to follow suit.

Now, the **results are beginning to show—and we’ve captured them:**



1. **Top-left photo:** An adult bird returning to a nest built within a birdbox set within the roof of my house, caterpillar in beak—evidence of active foraging and feeding.
2. **Top-right:** Insects once again accumulating on a locally driven car—small, messy proof that nature is stirring.
3. **Bottom-right:** A burst of wildflower colour in a managed meadow, alive with pollinators.
4. **Bottom-left:** A peaceful coexistence of people and wildlife in a Leavesden housing estate—nature woven into the everyday.

These images offer more than nice visuals. They **demonstrate success**—real, local recovery in motion. **Insects are the foundation of biodiversity**, feeding birds, bats, and many other species. And by stepping back—**cutting less, interfering less, and letting nature breathe**—we're not starting from scratch. We're simply giving dormant ecosystems the space to reawaken.

This is a **real-time example of action**, not delay. Of **doing**, not “wingeing.” And it's a message we should be sharing with **every resident, every group, every partner**:

The emergency is real. But **individual action matters**—and when we make space for nature, it returns.

The **next step** must be about **homes**—not just for people, but for wildlife too. The bird box built into the extension of my own home, is a simple example. It shows how we can **design nature back in**—restoring the nooks and crannies modern construction has sealed off over the years. These missing features have quietly displaced many native species.

As the insects return, **so must the habitats**. And we must look at biodiversity not as separate from our housing crisis—but as **part of the solution**.

Let's build homes for people *and* nature—because **we can only grow if we grow together**.

What have we also been doing this month?

- Actively took part in the Earth watch Water Blitz by taking samples of the river Colne at the Withy Beds, samples were extremely high in Nitrates and high in phosphates, not great results. Following up with the Earth Watch team I found that in Hertfordshire volunteers took 121 samples and 93% were found to be unacceptably high. I am looking for further information to ascertain the exact locations of testing.

The next test roll out will be the 19-22nd September, look to the Earth watch web site to get a testing kit and help increase the test data, this year over 8,000 tests were carried out increasing on the circa 4,000 in 2024.

- Attended the Oceans film screening in Watersmeet to a packed house.
- Met with the Friends of Withy Beds to talk thru the proposed walkway amendments and management of the park.
- Ongoing discussions with GUCE regarding a number of potential solutions for Community Heating.
- Been passing thru a number of the managed lands within Three Rivers to note the changing seasons and the Biodiversity improvements.
- Progressing the Sustainability element to benefit future generations with lower impact construction and positive biodiversity implementations.
- Resumed the 'in place' Environmental Forum to discuss how the group could progress.
- Attended Friends of the earth pollinator sessions and met a host of passionate volunteers all making a positive difference to the landscape around us.

WHAT THE TEAM HAS BEEN DOING

Biodiversity Duty Reporting & Updating of the Biodiversity Policy

When: The reporting window for the first Bio Duty report is Jan 2026 – 26th March 2026

Where: National requirement - National Government Legislation and our Biodiversity Duty.

What is it: The Environment Act requires Local Planning Authorities to undertake strengthened biodiversity duty. In Dec 2023 TRDC completed its "First Consideration" shortly followed by the new Biodiversity Policy (adopted at Full Council July 2024). This report would be a review of our Biodiversity Policy with inclusion of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (led by HCC) which should be published this Autumn/Winter.

What it's doing: Meets obligations of the Environment Act as agreed in the adopted TRDC Biodiversity Policy

Next Steps::

- Multi-disciplinary approach between Planning Policy, Development Management and Leisure & Natural Infrastructure to write the report between now and January.
- Early drafts of the report to go to JLT in December 2025
- January, officers add the detail in relation to BNG ahead of report being discussed at P&R 26th January 2026
- Adoption at Full Council 24th February 2026

- Publication early March (ahead of 26th March 2026 deadline).

Stones Orchard/The Green Management Plan

When: Engagement due to commence soon on the draft management plan.

Where: The Green & Stones Orchard, The Green

What is it: Creation of a new greenspace management plan, including an action plan

What it's doing: It will set out the maintenance and management of the two sites for the coming years; including which organisation is responsible for various tasks.

What we're doing about it: Engagement will be to the following in this order:

1. Cllr Lloyd, Cllr Giles-Medhurst and Cllr Tankard
2. Croxley Green Ward District Councillors
3. Croxley Green Parish Council Officers
4. Wider Public

Sustainability, climate change and energy efficiency

Carbon Offsetting Principles for Hertfordshire:

When and Where?

HSOG have approved the draft principles, went to HCCSP (Councillors) approved on the 3rd July 2025.

Why?

This emerged as a need both due to the lack of government-issued guidance for local authorities, and the looming net-zero targets for many local authorities which is making them consider how they can best reduce their emissions and offset any hard-to-treat emissions. If Herts LAs choose to unanimously adopt these principles, it would also align us well in preparation for Local Government Reorganisation.

What? Background paper and Offsetting Principles Framework shared between interested

parties

- HSOG (including TRDC officers) developed at instruction of HCCSP a draft set of principles

- TRDC officers are happy with the principles which are quite generic principles e.g. ensuring additionality, transparency of reporting, and the longevity of the offset, which are seen as best practise in the industry.
- Adoption is optional with no expectation that Councils adopting them must offset any of their emissions, they simply provide a common framework of understanding of how we will approach offsetting (the ethics of our approach, rather than the detailed mechanisms) if we find ourselves wanting to offset.

Next Steps:

- Councillor Tankard and Mitchell voted to approve the Carbon Offsetting principles on behalf of TRDC at HCCSP on 3rd July.
- Officers would use these as a foundation for a TRDC approach to offsetting but add locally specific information in a report that would be taken in due course through CMT, JLT, and the Climate Change and Leisure Committee.
- HSOG/HCCSP will be attempting to create a methodology for calculating the carbon offset value of green assets owned by Herts councils in Autumn/Winter 2025. This is a separate piece of work, that will be undertaken in consultation with Hertfordshire's Local Authority Leisure and Biodiversity officers.

Warm Homes Local Grant (2025-2028):

When: Scheme is officially open to applications now.

What are we doing: 17 applications from Three Rivers residents so far, without any concerted marketing. Focusing on processing the leads already in the pipeline before publicising wider, to ensure a smooth customer journey to minimise delays and complaints.

Fast Followers project(s):

When: Fast Followers project officially ends 30th June 2025 when the funding ceases.

What is being done:

- Transition Streets: Moor Park and Dove Park group completed, finalising the pilot project.
- A staff "Sustainable Living" workshop series modelled on Transition Streets is being trialled, with three out of seven sessions complete. This entails a group of 5-7 officers meeting for one hour during lunch break every 3-4 weeks.
- Community Energy: Maple Cross School potentially viable for community-funded solar; GUCE have finalised modelling and calculations and officers have discussed the proposal for the school with HCC as a test case for community-funded solar panels for schools as they (HCC) are hesitant. HCC have agreed to take reports to relevant committees internally to gain formal approval of the county council's

position on community-funded solar panels for schools. This is expected to take up to 4 months. Update meeting with HCC booked for 25th June.

- The Retrofit One Stop Shop (ROSS): NEF (delivery partner) presented their proposed service model to HCCSP and TRDC officers in May – next steps to be determined at meeting later in July.
- Involve "Community Conversations": feedback from the community conversations will inform revisions of the Climate Action Plan update which will come to October's Climate Change and Leisure Committee. The "vision" created by the residents as part of the initiative has been fed into the officers leading development of the new/updated Corporate Framework.

Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA)

What is it: The Commitment document and Retrofit Strategy for Hertfordshire which was approved at HCCSP on 27/03/25 with TRDC abstaining from voting (due to needing to go through required governance processes). CMT and JLT approval now obtained.

Next Steps: Climate Change and Leisure Committee on 2nd July for formal endorsement.

If approved 8th July public launch of strategy - TRDC press release.

Investment Readiness Service (IRS) Grant – Business Case Creation for the Solar Car Park Canopies

When: In March 2025 the council were awarded a £75k grant from the Greater South East Net Zero Hub as part of their Investment Readiness Service. The project will complete in March 2026

What are we doing:

- The grant will be used to create detailed business cases for solar canopy installation at William Penn, South Oxhey and Rose Garden car parks.
- The grant will no longer be used to create a business case for installing a ground source heat pump and solar canopy at William Penn Leisure Centre because this was reliant on Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding which has been withdrawn indefinitely by Salix following the government's budget announcements.

SOLC Roof Top Solar:

When: The business case for rooftop solar PV at South Oxhey Leisure Centre is going to CCLC on 2nd July.

Energy Strategy (aka Local Area Energy Plan - LAEP):

When: currently and in the coming 6 months

What: Officers are developing an Energy Strategy with associated Action Plan (previously references as a LAEP). The change in name will make it easier for lay people to understand, be more action focused and will only include information relevant to TRDC rather than following a more prescriptive 'LAEP' format.

What are we doing:

- Climate Officers have met with UK Power networks and the TRDC Local Plan team. When sites are released to the public they will be shared with UKPN to inform their infrastructure investment plans and assess capacity.
- Officers have met with Warner Brothers to discuss their future energy requirements, and meeting are being arranged with other large businesses (eg Skanska/ASOS).
- Officers, supported by REGEN and The Carbon Trust, are developing a communication and engagement plan for SMEs in the district to obtain a picture of the current and future electrical demand, and to establish a network of businesses who may want to be part of a network in driving district to net zero. This will include an energy survey for SMEs in the Industrial Clusters and include opportunities for networking and collaboration.
- Officers are sharing learnings and information on this work with Watford, St.Albans and HCC.

Proposed Data Centre

Officers have been undertaking extensive research to establish the opportunities for waste heat from the Abbots Langley data centre that recently had its appeal approved by the Planning Inspectorate.

A 90MW data centre has the potential to power 70,000 homes. It is in the interest of the data centre operator to use their waste heat, to reduce their cooling costs. The ideal solution is to create a Heat Network Zone surrounding the plant. It would need stable "anchor loads" from high end users to build the network around. Warner Brothers and Woodside Leisure Centre in Watford have potential to serve as anchor loads.

We are aiming to position the council to apply for Heat Network Feasibility Funding in the Autumn. Our partners, GUCE, have been given provisional approval for a £40,000 Community Energy Fund award to undertake an initial feasibility study.

Environmental Forum - 18th June.

When: 18th June 2025

What happened: Around 20 people attended. It was a very successful and engaging evening with a talk on Air Quality followed by discussions on where the Forum should go next to ensure officers and attendees find it of value and it helps progress the district towards our climate targets.

Next steps:

- Officers will prepare a course of action to share with you.
- Informal notes of the meeting will be circulated to the attendees.
- Cllr Lloyd has requested a change to the November Forum date as he is away.

Tree and Woodlands (inc Tree Protection)

TRDC Tree management

- Ash Die Back – The annual inspection of high priority areas will take place during July 2025.
- Oak Processionary Moth – Officers are starting to receive reports of OPM nests on trees. These will be inspected and assessed, as to whether they are in a high-risk area and require removal.
- Tree safety inspection of higher risk areas (for inspection on an 18-month cycle) – The tenders received are currently being assessed. Inspections by consultants will commence from July, for completion by February 2026.
- Tree Officers will also be starting the inspection of trees for safety, on lower risk areas of TRDC land (inspected on 36-month cycle) this financial year. A third of areas will be inspected each year to complete the cycle.

Withey Beds

- Management plan going to CCL committee on 2 July for adoption
- A meeting was held with the Friends of the Withey Beds – 24.6.25 – it was agreed that flexibility would be considered with the boardwalk creation, so that the length of the boardwalk would be at the length funding allows.

Grazing

Location	Date grazing to start	Date grazing to end	Number and type of cattle to be grazed
CWHE	Started on 6 th May	Week ending 14th September	24 cows (Angus Cross and Hereford Cross)
Croxley Common Moor	27 th May (Starting with 26 cows)	Week ending 30th November	30 cows (Sussex or Sussex Cross Aberdeen Angus)
Horses Field	17 th /18 th May (starting with 10 cows)	Week ending 7th September	20 cows (Sussex native cattle)
The Withey Beds	W/C TBC (fence to be fixed first)	Week ending 28th September	6/7 cows (Dexter)

River Restoration and Management

Hydrological Survey:

When: Modelling data for the River Colne is now estimated date for release by the EA in August.

Where: For Rickmansworth Aquadrome.

What it is: The hydrological study helps us understand the movement of water in, across and out of the site. It is dependent on the release of the EA modelling of the lower Colne. The study will feed into the detailed design and next steps of the Aquadrome project, ensuring the right action is taken.

What it's doing: The EA provided an update with "confidence" that the modelling would be available in August. Until then TRDC work is on hold.

What we're doing about it: Officers continue to request updates from the EA and liaise with our specialist contractor who will use the data upon release to complete the study.

Chorleywood House Estate – River Chess:

When: This summer and ongoing

Where: Along the river Chess within Chorleywood House Estate

What it is: A potential river restoration project, in partnership with the Chilterns Society. This would constitute a very early-stage engagement opportunity.

What it's doing: Approximately 15 years ago, previous attempts to restore a small section of the river Chess here failed due to vandalism. A new plan is being put together.

What we're doing about it: Officers will be leading an engagement exercise over the coming months with site users and stakeholders to begin putting ideas together for the best steps to take. It will be reiterated that these plans will be subject to consultation, permissions and funding.

Scotsbridge – River Chess:

When: Commenced May and will continue long term.

Where: River Chess alongside Scotsbridge

What it is: Officers contacted all schools within Hertfordshire, local organisations and schools we are aware who previously visited the site to notify them that the council are unable to grant permission for students to enter the water due to a number of reasons including: landownership; health and safety, the deteriorating condition of the river banks and the vulnerability of the works recently completed.

What it's doing: Approximately 10 schools have contacted us, with varying levels of concern – most have been understanding of the reasoning and have been asking if we can recommend elsewhere, others have been more upset about this.

What we're doing about it: Officers have met with a geography lead from one of the school trusts to gain greater understanding. Officers are now putting a plan in place to safely collect the raw data that the students need to complete their course work with hope that the schools can still visit the area without going into the water.

Air pollution and noise pollution

Noise Pollution – no update

Residential Environmental Health continue to see a significant amount of noise and smoke nuisance complaints made by residents to the council. Whilst Officers will always consider the use of formal enforcement powers, in the first instance, Officers will attempt to work with the parties involved to achieve an informal resolution.

The team has also recently received two applications for licensed HMO's within the district that are currently being reviewed by Officers.

Officers continue to plan for the introduction of the Renters Rights Bill (expected late 2025) that will see a significant change in the statutory obligations on the council in the private rented sector. The bill is currently at the review stage within the House of Lords and once it is returned to the Commons and received Royal Assent, a briefing paper will be presented to JLT outlining the key changes and expected implementation dates.

