

Lead Members Report 21/10/2025

Report from the Leader of the Council, Stephen Giles-Medhurst OBE – October 2025

Since the last Council meeting and over the summer a considerable amount of mine and officer time has been taken up with **Local Government Reorganisation**.

This has included:

- * Chaired (by the time of Full Council) eight meetings of the Herts Leaders Group.
- * Chaired and hosted a meeting on this with the business community, stakeholders and a separate meeting with our Parish Councils.
- * Presented the current proposals at five Special Areas Forums and a public meeting (Penn/ Mill End/ Maple Cross) seeking feedback.
- * Promoted the consultation with two videos.

I would like to pay a special tribute and thanks to Josh Sills on this, who put together the presentation packs and was also at all the public events we undertook- the most of any council in Herts! Overall, in excess of 350 people attended these.

The submission to government has to go in by the 28 November. It is intended, at the time of writing, that three options will be presented to government to consider along with all the supporting data, financial background and information the government wants. The options will be, as per the public engagement events for 2 Unitary, 3 Unitary or 4 Unitary Council. Each Council will be asked to express a preference for the option it supports.

I have tabled a motion for Full Council, which I will with leave of the Council, move up the agenda so that all councillors might express a view, if they so wish, on the 21 October. A decision on this will be made at Policy & Resources on 17 November 2025.

The government response to the overall submission is expected next year and it is anticipated to be followed by a final government led consultation and decision on what the government decides for our area in the summer of 2026.

Arising from the public event at the Mill End Community Centre there was a clear indicative view that residents in the unparished area of Maple Cross, Penn and Mill End would like to be consulted on the option of becoming a parished area in whole or part, joining another parish(s) or staying as they are. I have asked that this be added to the next Policy & Resources agenda so this can be progressed.

Other Activities include:

Chaired and hosted the **quarterly meeting with the Parish Councils**.

Undertook a visit to **Sarratt Parish Council** to discuss their issues' and with their outgoing Chair, undertook a video on the role of Parish Councils.

Met with the **Chief Constable** and hosted a meeting regarding anti-social behaviour concerns.

Attended and spoke at a special meeting of **Watford Rural Area Forum** having secured **Red Rose (buses)** attendance. I made a commitment to secure this at the last Full Council.

Wrote to our MP about the possible loss of Household Support Fund and to update him on the Local Plan and our latest Green Belt independent report.

Wrote to government to support a bid for Three Rivers to secure funding support in an application for a **Heat Network Feasibility**. Initial funding now secured.

Chaired meetings of the Policy & Resources Committee, Local Plan, Stakeholders and Commercial Venture Panel.

Had a further meeting with **Rickmansworth Traders** to discuss possible measures to assist.

Met with and kept the **Three Rivers Joint Residents' Association** representatives informed on our progress on the new Local Plan.

Local Plan

In January, the Council decided to delay submitting its new Local Plan to gather stronger evidence that Three Rivers was unlikely to be able to find enough sites to meet the government's housing number of 13,312. New planning rules allowed Three Rivers to gather evidence to show that releasing too much of its green belt would "**fundamentally undermine its purpose**".

The findings from the Stage 4 green belt review, conducted by specialist advisors, are now back. They have found that large sections of our green belt are not suitable or suitable for limited development only – not large-scale development as the government would like us to do as it indeed would undermine the purposes of the Green Belt.

This is particularly the case in Abbots Langley and between Abbots and Hemel Hempstead as well as between Rickmansworth and Chorleywood and to the east and south of Carpenders Park, would do just that and undermine the reason we have green belt. Whilst it does not 100% rule out all development, it does mean very large-scale developments that could see merging of community is a no-goer in green belt terms.

We have made multiple calls for site owners of previously developed land (brownfield sites), but, so far, about 600 homes can be provided on such sites. We are not like some of our neighbouring authorities where they have dense developments or have more brownfield sites compared to us.

This means the only way to meet the government's high figure is to take multiple sites out of the green belt. This is totally unacceptable and unsustainable for the

district as we simply don't have the infrastructure to support all these new housing and employment sites. It will also fundamentally undermine the function of the green belt - effectively preventing the merging of communities in our area. This new report is essential evidence in that regard.

In order to present a plan that government will accept, and provide some new homes for future generations, we will have to have to release some smaller less harmful sites, and some areas now classed as grey belt as we do need some new housing for future generations, but from the assessments on sites carried out it is clear it will be far less than the 13,312 homes the government said it wanted here.

I am pleased it looks like our delay and the evidence we gathered so far is set to pay off. We still have some more work to finish on transport and sustainability of sites likely to be developed to make sure they work for all. However, I am confident we will have a new plan by early next year that we can put to the government. It will be a plan that has the right infrastructure and meets our future housing and economic needs while also protecting our precious green belt – and that commitment is cast iron. We will push government to agree the plan once agreed by Council.

Report from the Lead Member for Resources, Regeneration and Economic Development, Councillor Louise Price – October 2025

Finance Updates

2024/25 Audit and Statement of Account

Audit committee approved an updated set of accounts for publication and the public inspection period is now underway. The accounts were updated to include the valuation figures that were not available at the time of publication of the draft accounts. The auditors are in and likely to be working with us throughout the period October to December to work on removing the accounts disclaimers (a process that is planned to take a number of years in line with other authorities in a similar position). Their initial focus will be on the balance sheet.

Budget Monitoring

The P6 Budget Monitoring Report will go to the next Policy and Resources Committee but the draft report shows little movement on the bottom line.

Local Government Reorganisation

A lot of work is going into producing the financial models for the options under consideration as part of Hertfordshire's Local Government Reorganisation; submission is due to be made to Government in November 2025.

Project and Property Updates

South Oxhey Phase 3

Following a recent meeting with South Oxhey Ward Councillors, Officers are about to commission a post-development parking study to repeat the pre-development study, with the aim of identifying local parking pressures and cost-effective remedial works or projects to alleviate such pressures.

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

The development of the garage site is in the pre-commencement phase. The main contractor has been appointed and various pre-commencement works and conditions are being discharged. The scheme will provide 16no. new build properties and during the construction phase Watford Community Housing are providing substitute properties. With respect to LAHF3, the Council has received funding to acquire 12no. market properties. A series of properties have been inspected, with building surveys commissioned for properties of interest. At the time of writing offers on 4no. properties have been made.

Barton Way Building, Croxley Green

Final plans for the former Red Cross site have been shared with the Parish Council to confirm the ground floor layout meets their needs. Architects are

completing the required documentation ahead of submitting the planning application later this month. Cost estimates from Watford Community Housing's contractor have been sent to valuers to determine a fair rent, forming the basis for lease negotiations with the Parish Council. A report will go to Full Council in December seeking approval to the grant of a lease, transfer of the asset into the Joint Venture, and the release s.106 funding to provide 8no. new affordable homes.

Sir James Altham & Oxhey Jets FC

Significant progress has been made by Oxhey Jets Football Club, following the award of CIL funding at the Altham Way ground. The works are a major upgrade to the tired premises, which will ensure the property is fit to continue supporting aspiring footballers within the community into the future.

Three Rivers Museum Trust – Basing House

Following approval at the previous Full Council, a draft lease has been shared with the Museum Trust for their comments and amendments. A letter of confirmation was also provided to the Museum, in order for them to submit an expression of interest for Arts Council accreditation. It is fair to say that the decision reached at Full Council has been greeted with great joy by the Museum Trust.

Three Rivers House – Ground Floor

The letting of the ground floor at Three Rivers House remains a key focus for both the Property & Legal Team and the incoming tenants, with the lease draft continuing to evolve. While progress is being made towards finalising the agreement, planning consent will still be required for certain proposed modifications, including a level, accessible entrance through the front courtyard. Upcoming discussions will centre on service installations and the planned changes to the building's existing layout, as preparations move into the next phase. Underlining the importance of this letting, Officers are meeting weekly with the Tenants to address all lease enquires and practical questions arising.

Bullsland Hall, Chorleywood – Subletting

Following the grant of planning permission which permits the use of the hall as a 'creche, day nursery or day centre; not including a residential use', draft terms have been agreed with the Parish Council to permit an under-letting. The base rental level has been agreed at £11,000 p.a. and TRDC have proposed a 25% share of income and that it will waive surveyors' fees, but not the Council's legal fees. This proposal is subject to agreement between the parties and formal sign-off, but in Officers' opinion is that it represents a good deal for both parties.

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

Report from Lead Member for Sustainability and Climate Change, Councillor Jon Tankard – October 2025

Smart Homes, Zero Bills: Harnessing Solar for a Brighter Future

There's been some discussion within the council about new sustainability requirements for housing — especially the goal for renewables to meet all of a home's energy needs. But this isn't as daunting as it sounds! Let's take a closer look at one powerful solution: solar energy.

The future of housing is smart, independent, and affordable. By integrating solar panels and home batteries into new builds, we're not just helping the planet — we're helping homeowners save money, improve comfort, and strengthen our local energy system.

Why Solar and Batteries are a Win-Win

- **Financial Freedom:**
 - Imagine a home with no energy bills. Many providers already offer “zero-bill” packages — sometimes lasting up to 10 years — for homes built to high-efficiency solar standards. That's real, long-term savings for homeowners and one that some developers are keen to engage.
- **Energy Security & Independence:**
 - Our national grid is under pressure. With millions of new homes, plus the shift to electric cars and heat pumps, demand is rising fast. By generating and storing your own power, your home eases the strain on the grid — reducing the need for new pylons and delivering more reliable electricity for everyone.
- **Batteries Make the Difference:**
 - Solar panels produce the most energy during the day — when many people are out. A home battery stores that clean energy so you can use it in the evenings and on weekends, when you need it most. A smart system will also sell to the grid at beneficial times for the Local Area Energy Requirements, and buy back at financial beneficial times to the user.

Building Smarter, Not Harder

- **Quality Homes, Built Right:**
 - The solar requirement links directly to how efficient a house is. A well-insulated home needs fewer panels, which keeps construction costs down. This motivates developers to build better-quality, energy-efficient homes from the start.
- **Control in Your Hands:**
 - While we can't regulate every appliance, smart home systems can show you exactly how much energy your devices use — helping you make smart choices and save even more.
- **Learning and Improving:**
 - Anonymous energy-use data (known as Post-Occupancy Data) helps us understand how homes perform in real life. This feedback

means future houses will be even more efficient, and residents will get practical advice to make the most of their systems.

Addressing Global Challenges

- **Building Responsibly:**
 - Solar panels do have a carbon cost to make — but we're introducing Embodied Carbon rules to ensure developers use materials with the lowest environmental impact and can help promote local and UK based economies.
- **Quick Carbon Payback:**
 - Within about five years, the carbon saved by using solar power outweighs the carbon used to produce the panels — and this payback period keeps shrinking as manufacturing improves.
- **Smart Economics:**
 - Fossil fuels are volatile and finite. Local solar power provides energy security, economic stability, and keeps us aligned with global progress — countries like China are already leading the way and accelerating their solar innovation.

Integrating with Our Communities

- **Beautiful by Design:**
 - New solar homes won't look radically different. When solar panels are designed into the roof from the start, they're sleek, modern, and harmonious — a natural part of a well-designed home.
- **Environmental Layout:**
 - This is a return to historical best practices, where houses were orientated to maximize natural light and gain.
- **A Ripple of Positive Change:**
 - It starts with new builds, but better standards through transferred skills, will soon influence renovations and smaller projects too. This raises the overall quality, efficiency, and comfort of homes across the community — benefiting everyone.

The Takeaway

Solar-powered homes mean lower bills, better living, and a cleaner future. By embracing smart design and renewable energy today, we're not just building houses — we're building resilience, independence, and hope for generations to come.

What I'm also involved with.

- Attended UK 100 where likeminded progressive councils are looking at sustainable progression which not only brings sustainable outcomes, but also financial and independence to communities. We also visited the Castle Park Energy Centre in Bristol, to appreciating how they are embracing community heat networks.
- Working on the Nature Recovery strategy in Abbots Langley. Addressing residents concern regarding the sale of Longspring Wood and liaising

with Herts Middlesex Wildlife Trust and Parish and County concerned councillors to ensure its protected future.

- Attended the Community Energy Conference on 10th October, and keen to see the progression of our own heat networks within the district.
- Was thrilled to see the Retrofit Fast Followers presentation to HCCSP by Officer Nathan on the 9th September, the report was extremely well received and demonstrated the enthusiasm, diligence and continued progression that Three Rivers are demonstrating not only Cross County, but on a country wide basis.
- Visiting West Herts College to appreciate how the contractors of tomorrow are embracing the sustainable requirements that can future proof the current and proposed housing stock.

Sustainability, climate change and energy efficiency

Carbon Offsetting Principles for Hertfordshire:

Warm Homes Local Grant (2025-2028):

14 live applications from Three Rivers residents so far - these are being assessed for eligibility, and once eligibility evidenced, homes will be surveyed, and installers will provide quotes for the work. Social media posts and e-newsletter features to promote the grant have been running through September, and by mid-October we will review if any further marketing is required to spend our full FY1 allocation.

The first Three Rivers property has received an installation of loft insulation, solar PV and an Air Source Heat Pump, and the installers are currently completing the post-installation paperwork requirements for this. Additional Three Rivers properties who have been surveyed and quoted for will be submitted to DESNZ for approval to install soon.

Grand Union Community Energy contracts:

We are progressing contracts with Grand Union Community Energy from October 2025-October 2026 to:

- Continue the delivery of the Transition Streets programme which TRDC partnered with GUCE to trial using grant funding from Innovate UK between July 2023-June 2025.
- Deliver targeted community energy support and advisory services, including: running community energy cafe/clinic sessions offering residents free energy efficiency advice, identify and progress community-funded renewable energy projects on community buildings in Three Rivers, raise awareness and participation in local community energy initiatives, and run events to promote and educate residents on renewable energy technologies e.g. heat pumps, solar pv.

Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy

When & What is it: A countywide strategy to increase uptake of domestic retrofit across Hertfordshire. TRDC endorsed the Strategy, at HCCSP on 3rd July 2025.

What is being done: A priority action of the Retrofit Strategy is to seek to procure a countywide retrofit advice service for Hertfordshire residents.

New Funding Available: Innovate UK has made some additional funding available in a closed competition (for Local Authorities that participated in Fast Followers only) to enable the scaling and embedding of solutions to net-zero challenges.

TRDC applied for this funding with the National Energy Foundation to enable NEF to refine and scale their Retrofit One Stop Shop advice service on a county-wide or regional basis. We will know if we have been successful in this bid on 14th October. The HCCSP Manager was involved in the development of the bid and provided a letter of support for it.

If TRDC are successful we would receive approx. £12,000 of the grant funding for our time and resource overseeing NEF's project, and for our role as Grant Recipient and reporting to Innovate UK.

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:

- Evo Energy has been appointed as the Solar Canopy Designer, responsible for designing the solar canopies, providing detailed cost estimates, and producing 3D renderings. The canopy designs and costs estimates has been completed. The 3D renderings have been drafted, and the final polished versions will be completed in early-October.
- Grand Union Community Energy will use these 3D renderings to engage with residents and gather feedback on the concept of solar canopies in car parks. GUCE plan to host 3 pop-up sessions in the reception of Three Rivers House and the two leisure centres (1 per venue). Additionally, 3 presentations - one in the daytime, one in the evening and one online. Engagement sessions are booked at William Penn on Saturday 18th October 10am-12noon and South Oxhey Thursday 23rd October 11am-1pm. Further sessions for the Rose Garden are booked for mid-November because the events will need to be marketed to maximise engagement.
- Asteros Advisors has been commissioned as the Financial Consultant, tasked with evaluating the financial viability of the project and identifying potential funding sources. We envisage the Asteros evaluation to be completed in early-October and the business cases to be drafted by early-November.

SOLC Roof Top Solar:

When: . Target for installation March '26

What: What Are We Doing?

- Following approval at P&R we are finalising the supplier contract and have started the process of creating the Power Purchase Agreement for the sale of the electricity from TRDC to SOLC, and the contract variation to the Leisure contract with SLM.

- A Prior Approval notice for planning purposes has been registered and the determination date is 4/11/25

Three Rivers House Roof Top Solar

When: Target for installation March '26

What are we doing?: . Following approval at P&R we are finalising the supplier contract and A Prior Approval notice for planning purposes has been registered.

Energy Plan:

When: Currently and in the coming 6 months

What: Officers are developing an Energy Plan

What are we doing:

- Officers are continuing to engage with businesses on their current and future energy use and use of low carbon technology via the survey
- Presented to Connecting Three Rivers, asking that the organisations that have property complete the survey.

Environmental Forum

When Tuesday 18th November at Watford Rural Parish Council Hall

What are we doing? Working on a report for CMT at end of October to present the new Three Rivers Environmental Network and TOR. Currently developing an Agenda for the Winter meeting, this will be based around Energy, following on from the screening of Power to the People, and will include a presentation from Sarah Burgess from GUCE on solar canopies in car parks.

Film and Panel

When 14th October at Watersmeet Theatre

What Film screening of [Power to the People](#) - a short film on local renewable generation and home retrofit from an environmental charity in Cornwall. This will be followed by a panel discussion/Q&A similar to 2040 and 6 Inches of Soil. Panellists include representatives from GUCE, Octopus and NEF. Currently bookings are low – we are continuing to push the event, however, there may be a change in format in more bookings aren't made. Any support to push the event is appreciated.

Proposed Data Centre

When: Outcome of expression of interest application for a heat network feasibility funding is expected before 20/10/25.

What are we doing: Our application received letters of support from WBC, HCC, Watford Community Housing Trust, NHS England for Watford hospital and the developer

Greystoke. GUCE have secured community energy Funding to establish the benefits for the residents of Abbots Langley themselves, and Greystoke have also provided a letter of support for this.

Greystoke are in active discussion with potential developers are confident their timeline of construction to start with 2/ 3 years and to be operational in 5 years is on track.

Another developer Verne, who have experience of connecting to heat networks have offered members and officer of TRDC to visit one of their data centres in London to enable us to understand the operations better.

Business Solar and Battery Grant

When: October 15th 2025

What: We propose to launch a grant for SME's to encourage the installation of solar and batteries.

The grant will be up to £3,000 and will require at least 75% match funding from the recipient. We will be targeting the industrial estates, and applicants will be required to complete our business energy survey to help contribute to the Three Rivers Energy Plan. Due diligence will be in place to prevent fraud.

Tree and Woodlands (inc Tree Protection)

Tree Protection

- A new Tree Preservation Order (TPO 934) was served in July at 156 The Drive, Rickmansworth. The TPO was served in response to concerns from local residents regarding protection of trees at the location, and to update an existing TPO covering the site. One objection to the TPO has been received, so confirmation (making permanent) of the TPO will be referred to planning committee. A legal challenge to the TPO has also been made by the owner, officers and legal have responded to this and the intention is still to Confirm the TPO.

TRDC Tree management

- Ash Die Back – The annual inspection of high priority areas commenced during July 2025. Recent reports from the Forestry Commission indicate that a proportion of germinating Ash seedlings may have resistance to ADB, so in time the Ash population may recover through natural selection. However, many existing mature trees continue to be infected, our annual inspections aim to assess the health of trees in higher risk areas, with a view to undertaking works when trees reach around 75 to 100% defoliation. Inspections are currently ongoing.
- Oak Processionary Moth – No new reports of OPM have been received and the season for caterpillars have now passed for this year.

- Tree safety inspection of higher risk areas (for inspection on an 18-month cycle) – A local consultancy, Maydencroft, have been appointed to carry out these inspections, due for completion by Feb 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.
- Tree Watering – Due to the exceptionally dry spring and summer months, many trees planted in the last two or three years have struggled this growing season, and it is likely that a significant number will die. This is despite increased watering by Grounds Maintenance over the last couple of months. Officers will be looking at what else can be done to increase survival rates. This may include additional mulching; the addition of compost, biochar, or other soil improvers when planting; and/or employing seasonal staff dedicated to tree watering.
- Pond Wood, South Oxhey – CMS, working in partnership with TRDC are developing a management plan for Pond Wood in South Oxhey. The public engagement session on-site on the 16th September had very little engagement but was generally supportive. CMS will now produce a draft plan for the site.
- Woodland management works – Officers are currently planning woodland management works for the winter. Projects include Sycamore thinning and hedge laying works at Leavesden Country Park; hedge laying and hedge restoration works at Carpenters Wood; Conifer thinning works at Oxhey Woods.

Grazing

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

- * The cattle would not have a significant impact on ground nesting birds. The timing and quantity of cattle on site is continually monitored and adjusted where necessary to ensure the site is not over-grazed.

River Restoration and Management

Hydrological Study :

When: We have received the EA flood model and JBA are working on completing the Hydrological Study which we expect to be complete by the end of the year - following that RSK will take over to undertake detailed design of the viable options which we expect to be complete by August 2026 in line with the timelines of the Lottery funding

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.

What we're doing about it: Officers are working with external consultants to progress this work now that the EA have released their modelling

Scotsbridge – River Chess: Bank Habitat Improvements

When: Spring-Summer 2025

Where: River Chess alongside Scotsbridge

What it is: The perched riverbank, increased flow and localised erosion due to people and dogs have severely deteriorated of the riverbanks resulting in water escaping the channel.

What it's doing: Awaiting the longer term bypass project a habitat improvement project has been delivered to support the river banks and increase habitat.

What we're doing about it: The works are now complete along the river with the introduction of flow deflectors, berms and areas of gravel. Water voles have been spotted enjoying the habitat and a new interpretation board will be installed soon.

Draft Management Plan for The Green & Stones Orchard

When: Consultation period has now completed. It will be discussed at JLT on 11th November 2025 before being presented to Climate Change & Leisure Committee on 14th January 2026.

Where: The Green & Stones Orchard, Croxley Green

What it is: New management plan for the Green & Stones Orchard, to guide how the site is managed over the next 5 years

What it's doing: Sets out how the sites will be managed over the coming 5 years with support from the Parish Council.

What we're doing about it: Officers are reviewing, amending and summarising the feedback received through the consultation process into a Consultation report to accompany the other documents. A site visit is being held for Ward and parish councillors

The Glade Bridge

When: In progress, aiming for work to take place within the next 18 months.

Where: The Glade, off Riverside Drive, Rickmansworth

What it is: Project to replace a dilapidated pedestrian wooden bridge

What it's doing: The bridge crosses the river facilitating access to and from the canal tow path.

What we're doing about it: Officers have been working to develop plans to replace the wooden bridge with a like-for-like replacement (with exception of a material change to composite plastic and removal of the steps on either approach). Due to the nature of the project this is a complex timeline, a FRAP (Flood Risk Activity Permit) was submitted to the EA in July 25 (anticipated that this may take 6-9 months for approval). A planning application was submitted on 30.09.2025. Officers have been in communication with the Canal and Rivers Trust for their approval as the bridge goes onto their towpath. As discussed at JLT this will be flagged as a budget pressure via budget monitoring though external funds will be sought were possible. It is anticipated that the bridge replacement will be an 18-month project with anticipated project costs in the region of £125k. Due to the nature of these works BNG will also be required so initial surveys have been undertaken.

Biodiversity Duty Reporting

When: Must be published before 26th March 2026

Where: District Wide, the report will be discussed at P&R and then Full Council

What it is: Legislative obligation of the Environment Act to ensure local authorities have due regard for biodiversity.

What it's doing: This will include an updated Biodiversity Policy (originally adopted Summer 2024); acknowledgement of the Herts Local Nature Recovery Strategy; reporting on BNG within the District and how the council is considering biodiversity within several strategies/policies.

What we're doing about it: Officers have commenced work on the report, in anticipation for the end of the reporting period 31.12.2025. The Development Management team are assisting with collating BNG data. The report will be discussed in a draft form at JLT on 6th January 2026 ahead of P&R on 26th January 2026.

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.

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.

Report from the Lead Member for Leisure, Councillor Chris Lloyd – October 2025

Watersmeet

Panto

- Beauty and the Beast
- 2804 reserved and 4474 tickets sold.
- Panto civic night is Friday 5 December @ 6pm. Invitations have been sent to councillors. My wife and I are taking our grandson.
- The Panto is on from 5th – 31st December.

Membership Scheme

- The membership scheme has 131 members.

Capital Works

- Electrical Works Contractor has been appointed – Govier Electrical with works taking place around events.
- Door contractor has been appointed – Global HSE - replace 29 doors & repair 26 doors

Watersmeet Annual Review

- Watersmeet annual review 2024-25 will be presented to October Climate Change and Leisure committee.

Power to the People (Film)

- Tuesday 14th October – 7 – 9pm
- FREE SCREENING AND PANEL DISCUSSION FROM THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL
- Come join us for an evening of thought-provoking cinema and engaging conversation at the Watersmeet Theatre. The event will feature a screening of the powerful documentary 'Power to the People' followed by a panel discussion with local and industry experts, discussing how you can be part of a greener, more reliable energy system.
- Power to the People explores the exciting opportunities and huge challenges facing us as we wean ourselves off fossil fuels – from a farmer who's found a novel way to combine food production with solar panels, opportunities to use our historic heritage to power the future, and projects to harness the amazing untapped heat 5km down in the Earth's crust.

Events

- Thursday 5th September – spoke at Living Longer Better Event at the University of Hertfordshire (Organised by Herts Sports Partnership in partnership with Hertfordshire Council)
- Tuesday September 16th – Attended Hertfordshire Community Foundation Event. In 2026 I will be running the London Marathon for them.

- Saturday September 28th – tail walked at South Oxhey Parkrun (my 100th Parkrun @ South Oxhey)
- Friday 10th October – Will attend Hertfordshire Sports Club Conference
- Tuesday 14th October – Will attend site visit for Croxley Green District Cllrs and Parish Council
- Tuesday 15th October – Will attend Aquadrome Stakeholder Event
- Visited Croxley Football Club , Rickmansworth Cricket Club. Happy to visit any club in your area.

Thank you

- Thank you to all of you who have sponsored me for 3 marathons that I am doing during October for Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre. I can send the link to anyone else who like to support this important local charity.

Management Plans for 2025/2026

- Prestwick Road Meadows – new management plan to be drafted
- Stone's Orchard and The Green Management Plan – Public consultation completed 30th September 2025. It will be discussed at CCL on 14th January 2026.

Grazing – 2025

- 4-year grazing contract has been agreed.
- Croxley Common Moor until week ending 30th November 30 cows (Sussex or Sussex Cross Aberdeen Angus)
- The Horses' Field Came off week ending 7th September 20 cows (Sussex native cattle)
- The Withey Beds Came off week ending 28th September 6/7 cows (Dexter)
- Chorleywood House Estate – came off early due to the hot weather.

The Glade Bridge @ The Aquadrome

- Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP) has been submitted July 2025 (anticipated that this may take @ 6-9 months to come through).
- Planning application has been submitted, including arboriculture and ecology surveying.
- Awaiting response from Canal and Rivers Trust for their approval as the bridge goes onto their towpath.
- External funds will be sought where possible.
- Estimated as an 18-month project with estimated project costs in the region of £125k.

Leisure Management Contract

- Golf Pod arrangements are currently with TRDC and Everyone Active (EAc) legal team as an agreement is needed for EAc to sublet.

Artistsmeet

- Jul – Sept exhibition: Herts Open Studios - Sally Barr (event 11th September for Open Studios Month)
- Oct – Dec exhibition: Mishi Rehal (event TBC)

Active Parks (June to August)

- Events included:
 - Yoga in the Park
 - Tai Chi in the Park
 - Pilates in the Park
 - Adult and Family Tennis
 - Moving Mums
 - Nordic Walking
 - Family Rounders
 - Summer Walking Trails
 - Promoting partner programmes and initiatives taking place across the district.
- We had over 700 attendances on TRDC programmes, (an increase of approx 100 attendances on last year).
- Yoga proving very popular once more.
- Family Tennis sessions were well attended as well.
- Lots of positive feedback from participants.

National Play Day in partnership with Otley Way family centre.

- TRDC Leisure Development officer arranged a free event promoting All activities for families including team & wild play games, baby and toddler activities, Face painting, Adult focused Zumba, Skateboarding and much more were all free to access.
- Partners such as Otley Way Family Centre/ Families First offered games like guess how many sweets in the jar & Guess the name of the teddy while Home Start were offering clothing for a small donation.
- The event was extremely successful with around 120 children & families having attended.

Summer Walking Trails – The Animal Games QR Code

- Rickmansworth Aquadrome = 334 devices (1336 players)
- Leavesden Country Park = 205 devices (820 players)
- Oxhey Woods = 183 devices (732 players)
- Total approx. 2,900 players

Play Rangers

- Play Rangers delivered 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.
- We had over 1,000 attendances across the summer.
- Baldwins Lane, Scotsbridge, Stones Orchard and Leavesden Country Park being the most popular sites.

- **Playscheme**

A total of 1,263 playscheme attendees visited Yorke Mead playscheme this summer including 269 happy attendees and 62 ACE attendees.

- Children enjoyed a huge range of sport, art, and craft activities
- Visitors from Herts Fire Service, Saracens Cheerleading, Crafty Lucy, Kaleidoscope and ABC Skateboarding.
- **OFSTED** - On Friday 1 August, the playscheme was inspected by Ofsted. Feedback on the day was incredibly positive about the staff, the site and the management of the scheme. Particular attention was given in the inspection to Safeguarding procedures and delivery of activities for Early Years Children. Some of the comments made by the inspector were:
 - “Children clearly enjoy their time at playscheme”
 - “Parents were very complimentary about both staff and the playscheme”
 - “Activities are organised and highly engaging”
 - “All staff support the safety of children”
 - “The ethos of teamwork is great”
 - “Early years children are well supported in their emotional well-being”
 - “You are keen to reflect on feedback and use it to improve”

The report has now been published and can be found at: [Yorke Mead School Playscheme - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted](#)

Tennis Courts

- In conversation with LTA colleagues to secure grant funding (of approx. £5-10k) for new access gates (as installed at Denham Way and South Oxhey) at Baldwins Lane and Scotsbridge Playing Fields tennis courts.
- The gates would work alongside the Clubspark booking process.

Croxley Skate Jam

- Over 150 attended the event
- Scoot, skate and BMX competition and best trick
- Meal deal provided by The Corner Plaiice
- Croxley Green Parish Council sponsored the prizes (£1,000)
- Council Chairman Stephen King attended to support the event and hand out some awards
- Croxley local Reece Dabreo, fresh off finishing in third place at the 2025 Lloyds BMX Freestyle National Championship, gave a demonstration to the crowd
- Competitions were managed by local skate company ABC Skate (Alex, Clarissa and Jack)

- We had a 'skateboard surf' inflatable and pop-up football dartboard as well for people to enjoy

Aquadrome Programme

Aquadrome Steering Group – the next meeting has been arranged for 10.30am Wednesday 15 October at Rickmansworth Golf Course. Focus will be on the successful National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) development phase award.

NLHF main application- WWW bid

- Development Phase bid for £787,315.40 was successful and scheduled to complete on 31 August 2026
- This next period of the Programme will focus on generating the site wide plans and detailed designs, stakeholder engagement, and the next stage of the Hydrology study. EA Flood Modelling has been received.
- The tender for the Landscape & Environmental Design brief for the development phase has been awarded.
- The Project Support Officers post and Aquadrome Community Engagement Officer (funded as part of the National Lottery bid) has been successfully recruited.
- Officers aim to submit the Delivery Phase bid in November 2026 for @£4m. If successful, this funding will be confirmed for a start date of approximately March 2027.

Fishing Swims

- New signage is in place indicating the fishing swim name, peg number and what3words.

Comms

- MyNews – October copy covers a new nature activity booklet, the Autumn Nature Challenge for the Aquadrome and refers to the play area closure.
- New signage will be in place imminently for the Bird Viewing platform. This interpretation sign explains the local birds and appropriate feeding.

Activities

- The Autumn Nature Challenge booklet will be published as we approach October half term and is an exciting child focused self-guided activity booklet for the site.

Barton Way Play Area refurbishment

Timetable for next steps are:

- Procurement exercise has been completed and tender awarded to SRC.
- Pre-start meeting has taken place, with planning documentation due to be submitted imminently.
- Croxley Green Parish Council has agreed to provide funding towards the project.

- Works to commence once all permissions received with an expected start date of early 2026

**Report from the Lead Member for General Public Services, Sarah Nemes –
October 2025
Waste Services**

Officers are currently looking at the future provision of our bulk transfer and sale of recycling material; Market engagement has resulted in 5 expressions of interest from providers which are now under consideration. A report will come to the relevant Committee in the coming months with recommendations.

The consortium for the collection of textiles wish to extend the existing contract until 2028

A health and safety audit is being undertaken as part of the regular schedule of audits

The Christmas/New Year collection calendars are being drafted and checked and will be issued in November to the usual places/channels

A new Partnership Manager and new Partnership and Policy officer have been appointed at Herts Waste Partnership

Work is continuing on the procurement of a new Vehicle Maintenance Contract

Animal Inspection and Licensing are looking for potential new kennels arrangements as the current arrangements are coming to an end

A review is being undertaken of the processes and policies related to Bereavement Services. A report will come to the relevant Committee later this year

Parking

The various current parking schemes are continuing and the review of the Rickmansworth West scheme will begin, as promised, with the first meeting in early November

New Ferry Car Park scheme should be in place for 3 November

EV

EV charging is now on site in 5 of our car parks, 2 more are to follow. These are slightly delayed due to some connection issues but they should be delivered by the end of the year

Beryl Bikes

Officers have made progress on work to potentially extend the scheme following the successful trial.

Report from the Lead Member for Community Engagement, Public Safety and Housing, Councillor Steve Drury – October 2025

Housing

Figures correct as of October 13 2025, with regard to Housing numbers, we have 53 households in temporary accommodation, all in the district. One outside of the district

112 homeless applications, 9 in assessment, as they are new applicants

83 households owed prevention/relief duty of care

20 households owed full housing duty

Also, we have 1045 live applications on the housing register.

16th Sept saw the funding consultation for the Disabled Facilities Grant funding, which officers have responded to MHCLG.

There have been issues raised by residents about a license for a HMO, which is now under consideration by officers.

We have issued an enforcement notice of improvement, under section 12 of the Housing Act, for a house in the Oxhey Hall ward.

Residents in temporary accommodation were invited to a cooking and wellbeing morning at Watford Rural Parish Council, where, whilst cooking and eating, information was given on budgeting ideas, batch cooking and other useful ideas, this was run in conjunction with Maximus UK and all participants were given a voucher to help them get started with their new skills.

More recently, I, along with officers, attended a housing conference put together by the MP for Watford where all types of funding were discussed, it was attended by around 100 officers and councilors from across Hertfordshire.

Partnerships

Earlier this month there was an opportunity to meet the new CEO for W3RT, Saffron Johnson who has been appointed after interviews undertaken, she will be starting her new role while the current CEO, Bob Jones, is in place so there will hopefully be a seamless handover. I'm sure we would all like to thank Bob for his tireless efforts for the trust over his years of service there.

Attended the opening of the new Sensory room at the Otley Way family Centre in S/ Oxhey which was well attended by staff, officers and the young people whose ideas were used to decorate the new room.

Back in August, I was introduced to the new Chief inspector who updated us on the new strategy and structures across Three Rivers and Watford. Later in the

month we had a briefing on issues regarding Shannon House, in Abbots Langley. I have a further briefing next week with both the police, fire and Community Safety team here at TRDC.

The partnerships team here have kept us all informed about the second “Unity in the Community” event set for 28th Sept at the Grove, after last year’s successful event, which was bigger and better this year.

I’ve also been in discussion with officers on the funding for Capital grants, and between us, have decided to refund Roundabout bus service to the tune of £7,500, made possible due to savings from securing from alternative funding for Domestic abuse support.

