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Issue 76

Spring 2019
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Taking the lead to protect you against scams

Scams affect the lives of millions of people and can cause shame and social isolation but if you live in East Herts you have a big advantage – East Herts Council is the first district council in the country to train its staff to spot the signs under the national Friends against Scams initiative.

Helen Standen, the council's scambassador and deputy chief executive, said: "It's easy to underestimate the effect that a scam can have on someone. People can end up thousands of pounds out of pocket, shamed on social media and too embarrassed to seek help, let alone tell friends or family.

"We're delighted to be the first district council in the country to have signed up to this initiative. The fact that so many staff volunteered to take part shows our commitment to our residents' wellbeing."

Get involved in scrutiny

We want your suggestions

Scrutiny is the way your councillors check that policies and services are being delivered as expected and are:

- Fair and don't discriminate against people
- Up-to-date
- Achieving the desired outcome
- Lawful
- Do not cause unforeseen, negative impacts that the council might not be aware of.

If you think a council service isn't meeting one or more of these criteria, please email scrutiny@eastherts.gov.uk

Meetings of the overview and scrutiny committee are open to the public. For details of dates and topics visit www.eastherts.gov.uk

Chairman's news

"How time flies - it seems like only yesterday when I became chairman and now it's almost the end of my time in office!"

Reflecting on his year in office, chairman Keith Warnell said: "With another two months to go, I know I'll continue to be amazed and impressed by the commitment of our volunteers and the talent of our kids."

Highlights of his year include welcoming Princess Anne to Riding for the Disabled at Furneaux Pelham where she presented a plaque as patron and chatted with staff.

He took the High Sheriff, Suzy Harvey, on a tour of East Herts to visit several youth volunteering projects.

His quiz night in October raised almost £2,000 for Isabel Hospice, while a rock n roll night in Sawbridgeworth raised a further £2,000.

November saw the council's first interfaith and diversity event in Ware, organised at his initiative.

Keith, who has focused on diversity in East Herts during his year in office, said: "Lots of faith groups took part and we were treated to some amazing singing and dancing by a Tibetan Buddhist group from Bishop's Stortford."

With support from Hertford Theatre which provided 40 tickets for the opening night of Pinocchio, Keith invited, via Isabel Hospice, children who'd lost a parent. At a reception following the show, children were thrilled to meet the cast who signed programmes for them.

In January Keith spoke at the council's Holocaust Memorial Day. He said: "We heard some very moving stories, particularly by Robert Voss the Lord Lieutenant, who lost 60 relatives in the Holocaust. Very moving and thought-provoking. Never again."

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

DON'T LOSE IT

Get ready to vote

Polling cards are being posted towards the end of this month, ready for the East Herts Council elections on May 2.

Some polling stations have changed so check your card before you set off to vote.

If you haven't received your card by April 1, you may want to check that you're registered to vote, especially if your circumstances have changed since the last election.

Email electors@eastherts.gov.uk or call the council on 01279 655261.

Community lottery is just the ticket

There's an exciting new way to support your favourite local community, voluntary or sports group, and be in with the chance of winning up to £25,000 – through the East Herts Community Lottery.

Tickets cost just £1 each and 50p goes straight to a charity that you choose, while another 10p is added into a community pot for local groups. Of the rest, 20p goes towards prizes and 20p to the independent operator.

So a greater proportion of the ticket cost goes into good causes than the national lottery. Each ticket has a 1 in 50 chance to win and there's a draw every Saturday.

Kat Collis, head of fundraising at St Elizabeth's in Much Hadham said: "The lottery offers us a chance to engage with supporters across East Herts in a way we haven't before. It's a great way for us to not only raise vital funds for children and adults with severe epilepsy and other complex needs, but to also raise all-important awareness across the community."

We've been advertising both internally and externally across East Herts, and on our website, and we are amazed and so grateful for the amount of support we have received."

To buy tickets visit www.easthertslottery.co.uk

If your group would like to register, visit the website or call 01279 912777.

Elisabeth was one of the first to play the lottery winning an Amazon Echo to celebrate the launch – which plays music through your smartphone.

She said: "I live just outside East Herts but I noticed Much Hadham Village was one of the good causes so I decided to buy a few because some of my friends live in the village.

"I'm looking forward to my family setting up the Echo for me and I'll carry on buying tickets too as it's a good way to help local groups."

Polling stations – what do you think?

What do you think about your local polling station? Is the signposting clear? Is it accessible for people with a disability?

We're carrying out a review – a legal requirement - of polling districts and polling places and want to hear your views.

You can email your comments to electors@eastherts.gov.uk or write to the Electoral Services Manager, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ. Please include your contact details.

For details of current arrangements and to suggest an alternative venue go to at www.eastherts.gov.uk/elections

Deadline for comments is **Friday May 17**.

All comments received will be made public as part of the final report.

Proposals will be displayed in the council's receptions at Charringtons House, The Causeway, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 2ER and at Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ

Details of final arrangements for polling districts and polling places will be published by December 1.

ADVERTISEMENT

Hertford Foodbank

Carers in Herts

Granted! – better health and wellbeing

A ramp at Hertford Church has transformed the lives of Foodbank volunteers who have to move trolleys of supplies from the storeroom to the reception area.

Organiser Fran said: "The volunteers can't believe the transformation. It was such a struggle to get loads in and out of the storeroom and now there's the most gentle of slopes - you don't know it's there."

The foodbank, based at the United Reformed Church, received a grant of £6,000 to pay for the improvement.

Encouraging health and wellbeing across all ages and a range of different needs is the focus of East Herts Council's community grants pot.

Matching neighbours with isolated people or those with end-of-life conditions is the aim of a national project called **Compassionate Neighbours**, offering friendship and a listening ear, and helping people continue to do the things they enjoy. Isabel Hospice has recently started up the project in Bishop's Stortford, with the help of a £3,000 council grant.

Tess Thorpe, trusts and foundations officer, said the council donation "will have a real impact in providing companionship and support services to our patients in this area.

"This project fulfils our aim to care for more people earlier in their diagnosis, introducing the hospice to those who would benefit from the various sessions we offer, gently, so when the time comes, they are familiar with our services and comfortable to access the community nursing, hospice at home or the In-Patient Unit."

Already 11 neighbours have been trained and matched with people with similar interests, including a pair who both love fishing. Tess added: "It's all about friendship."

Parkinsons

Boxing for Fitness and other physical activities, supported by a council grant of £1,000 have been inspiring members of the Bishop's Stortford **Parkinson's support group**. The combination of mind, brain and body as you focus on different punches and drills has been shown to be optimal for symptom reduction. Chairman Patricia Moore said: "Our members really enjoyed Boxing for Fitness and are tuning into how movement is vital to wellbeing. So we hope this will lead to a more integrated approach to managing neurological conditions such as Parkinson's." The grant funded other activities for the group too.

Fears that a bowling taster might not appeal to young carers rolled away when the group took part in a session at Hertford Bowls Club as part of a programme organised by **Carers in Herts**.

Team leader Jackie Graham said: "The perception of bowls is that it's not for young people but everyone loved the day. It enabled young carers to get together and have a break from caring."

A council grant of £360 helped to pay for the equipment. Please visit www.ycih.org for information about support for young carers.

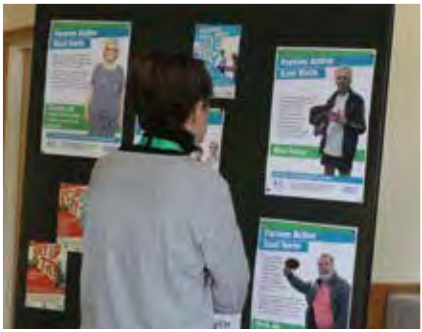
For **Courtyard Arts,** tutor Polly ran sessions in Sawbridgeworth. At the first one, she invited the group to create colourful images from their mind. She supplied paint and encouraged them to be free with the brush strokes and just paint whatever popped into their heads.

Centre director Kate Davies said one participant, Jim, texted Polly saying: "Excellent session, just pips cricket."

Jim was referring to sit-down cricket run by Herts Disability Cricket which he really enjoys, so to say the art session was even better is a huge compliment, noted Kate.

The deadline for the next grant round is April 29 with another funding round in the autumn. Find out more at www.eastherts.gov.uk/communitygrants or contact Claire on Claire.pullen@eastherts.gov.uk

Courtyard Arts



Fitter and happier

Gentle exercise classes across East Herts have inspired hundreds of over 50s to get off the sofa and make the right move. People have loved taking the first steps to getting a bit more active and equally they've enjoyed getting out of the house and meeting new people.

The success of the three-year Forever Active East Herts, funded by East Herts Council, Sport England and partners including Wodson Park and local GPs, was celebrated earlier this year with stories and photos from people who took part and benefitted.

Although that funding has now finished, lots of classes are still running in village halls and community centres across the district. Hall committees and coaches heard at the legacy event that the council will continue to offer some support.

Halls can still apply to the council's community grants pots.

Brian took up table tennis to improve his general fitness. In the past he'd had a heart attack, a stent and a triple heart bypass.

He didn't want to join a table-tennis club where people had been playing for a long time so when he saw an advert for a class at Sele in Hertford, he felt it was just what he was looking for. "I feel that I and everyone else has improved. I've had an absolute blast and it's been a massive breakthrough for at least six of our players who were quite lonely - doctors can't prescribe a pill for loneliness."

John O'Callaghan, Herts Sports Partnership chief executive, said: "This has been one of the most successful schemes in Hertfordshire and it's inspired other programmes. It's created opportunities particularly for older people. It's made your communities better places.

"We are living longer and so we have to live healthier too."

He added: "Although you might not realise it, you've also had an impact on younger people because grandparents are role models and they become advocates for the power of physical activity."

To find out more visit www.eastherts.gov.uk/ForeverActive

Let's be social

Many of us experience loneliness and isolation. People in East Herts with high anxiety or depression and who've been referred via their GP or health professional can benefit from the East Herts Social Prescribing Service. It works with other organisations to provide support for people who can be helped by non-clinical services.

Our social prescribing co-ordinator (SPC) makes contact with referred residents to discuss and jointly agree options. Since the service started last January, we've hit a milestone of supporting more than 200 referrals.

A niece living in East Herts was concerned about her aunt. She said: "My aunt's GP recommended for her to be referred as she was experiencing isolation and loneliness.

"My aunt was very depressed and anxious, and one small problem would expand into a big one. She phoned me at least once a day with minor issues. She contacted the GP and Ambulance Service regularly with issues such as headaches and migraines and was always phoning neighbours who'd offered support.

"Her lack of confidence in leaving her home, and poor transport options in her village, limited her ability to attend social groups, so with the help of the SPC, we agreed a plan to provide her with support from a variety of agencies.

"Since meeting the SPC, my aunt's gained confidence going out on her own, and gets a taxi to her hairdresser rather than relying on a home appointment.

"She's got a penfriend arranged by a charity recommended by the SPC and even received a Christmas hamper from them.

"In a good way, I now rarely receive a call from her and I'm so pleased that she's stopped phoning her surgery, or calling her GP and ambulance service for minor issues.

"I'd definitely recommend the East Herts Social Prescribing Service."

New life for Castle Park

Plans to combine two green spaces in Bishop's Stortford into one beautiful park have taken another huge step forward thanks to National Lottery funding.

The grant of £1,939,700, awarded jointly by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund, will enable East Herts Council and its partner, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, to forge ahead with their plans. A planning application for the works was approved by the council's Development Management committee last month.

Castle Gardens, owned by East Herts Council and Sworders Field, owned by the town council, are located on either side of the River Stort.

The improvements include:

- Making Waytemore Castle - a Grade I listed building and scheduled monument - and the war memorial, into focal points. This includes crucial work to conserve the castle remains on top of the mound
- A new crossing along the River Stort, providing greater access to the river. Attractive planting and river restoration to improve visibility and attract rare wildlife
- A new network of paths. Children's play area and splash pool to be better connected by a new bridge
- A space especially designed for teens, with exciting features such as a skate park extension
- Changes to the existing buildings to create a community space with a café and easy access toilets. The old toilet block fronting the Causeway to get a new lease of life.

The Friends Group will help to develop and look after the park and engage local community groups, with training provided. Community events, such as guided walks, will be arranged from April.

The project is being delivered with the support of Hertfordshire County Council's Countryside Management Service.

Council Tax **2019-20**

Total due from Council Tax Payers		
2018/19 £000		2019/20 £000
9,780	EHC Council Tax Requirement	10,267
3,980	Parish / Town Councils	4,182
9,775	Police & Crime Commissioner	11,416
78,703	Hertfordshire County Council	82,578
102,238	Total due from Tax Payers	108,443

Information by Parish

Herts County £1,359.94 Herts Police £188 East Herts £169.09

Parish	Parish Band D 2018/19	Parish Band D 2019/20	Total Band D 2019/20	Parish	Parish Band D 2018/19	Parish Band D 2019/20	Total Band D 2019/20
Albury	24.47	28.51	1,745.54	High Wych	25.33	36.87	1,753.90
Anstey	29.01	29.09	1,746.12	Hormead	62.25	72.00	1,789.03
Ardeley	28.67	28.71	1,745.74	Hunsdon	45.82	30.63	1,747.66
Aspenden	24.72	23.93	1,740.96	Little Berkhamsted	34.63	36.26	1,753.29
Aston	30.41	31.30	1,748.33	Little Hadham	25.82	26.11	1,743.14
Bayford	19.71	21.16	1,738.19	Little Munden	22.65	22.93	1,739.96
Bengeo	31.10	31.59	1,748.62	Much Hadham	41.49	40.02	1,757.05
Benington	43.18	43.21	1,760.24	Sacombe	0.00	0.00	1,717.03
Bishop's Stortford	68.69	68.69	1,785.72	Sawbridgeworth	78.73	84.27	1,801.30
Bramfield	18.28	18.39	1,735.42	Standon	44.38	43.34	1,760.37
Braughing	65.61	63.88	1,780.91	Stanstead Abbotts	54.97	55.44	1,772.47
Brent Pelham/Meesden	17.57	17.20	1,734.23	Stanstead St Margarets	12.26	23.21	1,740.24
Brickendon Liberty	40.16	47.57	1,764.60	Stapleford	19.64	23.32	1,740.35
Buckland	34.15	49.21	1,766.24	Stocking Pelham	24.94	24.07	1,741.10
Buntingford	98.55	98.21	1,815.24	Tewin	34.84	35.03	1,752.06
Cottered	19.69	28.81	1,745.84	Thorley	8.86	20.50	1,737.53
Datchworth	36.90	37.45	1,754.48	Thundridge	46.55	46.86	1,763.89
Eastwick & Gilston	11.53	29.29	1,746.32	Walkern	46.61	46.38	1,763.41
Furneux Pelham	13.34	15.33	1,732.36	Ware	82.35	84.96	1,801.99
Great Amwell	14.43	19.81	1,736.84	Wareside	19.78	21.40	1,738.43
Great Munden	34.50	32.34	1,749.37	Watton at Stone	33.52	33.93	1,750.96
Hertford	96.08	98.95	1,815.98	Westmill	31.66	31.99	1,749.02
Hertford Heath	30.44	30.58	1,747.61	Widford	49.27	50.46	1,767.49
Hertingfordbury	46.95	47.77	1,764.80	Wyddial	0.00	0.00	1,717.03

What we did in 2

Here's a flavour of our achievements in the past 12 months, based around our three priorities:

- Improving the health and wellbeing of our communities
- Enhancing the quality of people's lives
- Enabling a flourishing economy.

Received £1.9m from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund, enabling East Herts Council and Bishop's Stortford Town Council to forge ahead with plans to transform two green spaces into one beautiful Castle Park.

Provided £70,000 in business-rate discounts for small businesses looking to expand or move into East Herts.

Celebrated the first birthday of Launchpad – our modern, professional and affordable co-working space in Bishop's Stortford for freelancers, start-ups and home workers.

Allocated £138,000 in grants to 50 community groups for programmes to help people's health and wellbeing, with a focus on Armistice Day and WWI centenary events.

Completed three-year Forever Active East Herts programme of 60 gentle activity classes for the over 50s in 28 village halls and community centres, part funded by Sport England.

Took steps to improve air quality by introducing emissions standards for East Herts licensed taxis, following a public consultation. Installed two high-speed charging units for electric vehicles at Gascoyne Way multi-storey car park, Hertford.

Held open workshops for people and organisations to contribute towards the vision for Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, providing high quality places for people to live and work.

Received a £6m grant and a £3.6m interest-free loan from the Local Enterprise Partnership for Old River Lane, Bishop's Stortford.

018/19

Retained the prestigious Green Flags for Southern Country Park in Bishop's Stortford and The Ridgeway in Hertford for their great places to play, walk and fish, and for providing plenty of homes for wildlife.

Delivered 162 affordable homes in nine months against a target of 116 for the year. Organised our first housing fair to help people find out about shared ownership properties in East Herts.

Worked in partnership with Network Homes to develop affordable properties prioritised for older people to downsize.

Prevented 221 households from becoming homeless by providing the right advice and assistance.

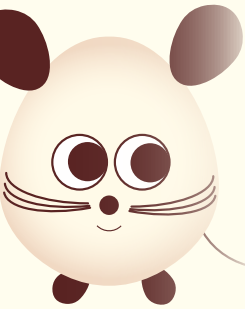
Identified 439 households from the Housing Register and referred them to more suitable rented housing association homes.

Adopted the District Plan in October, setting out how the district will develop over the next 15 years, providing new homes, jobs, schools and more.

Launched the East Herts Community Lottery, raising money for local good causes and giving people a chance to win prizes.

Removed single-use plastic drinking cups in council buildings.

Grab a mouse



and go online to manage your account, including:

- Paying council tax
- Setting up direct debit
- Setting up your own payment arrangement
- Managing/ updating your details

Go to www.eastherts.gov.uk/ehrevsbensonline

Testers wanted for new website

Our revamped website is coming soon and we're looking for people to help test it. You don't need to be a digital whizz or have any website experience.

If you'd like to get involved in the testing this summer, and have a sneak peek before it goes live, please visit https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/newsite

Council Tax information relating to precepting authorities

	2018/19 Estimate Exp £000	Income £000	Net Exp (Income) £000	(Excluding Hertfordshire County Council)	2019/20 Estimate Exp £000	Income £000	Net Exp (Income) £000
Bishop's Stortford Town Council	1,206	362	844	Cultural Environ & Planning Services	1,253	379	874
	18	0	18	Childrens & Educational Services	18	0	18
	144	12	132	Corporate & Democratic Core	147	13	134
	20	0	20	Central Services to Public	52	0	52
	9	0	9	Highways & Transport Services	9	0	9
	0	0	0	Other Services	0	0	0
	1,397	**374**	**1,023**	**Net Expenditure**	**1,479**	**392**	**1,087**
	15	0	15	Contingency	15	0	15
	5	0	5	Contribution from Balances	0	18	(18)
	0	0	0	Grants	0	0	0
	1,417	**374**	**1,043**	**Total Precept**	**1,494**	**410**	**1,084**
Hertford Town Council	743	118	625	Cultural Environ & Planning Services	663	121	542
	23	0	23	Corporate & Democratic Core	17	0	17
	5	0	5	Central Services to Public	5	0	5
	831	245	586	Other Services	887	250	637
	1,602	**363**	**1,239**	**Net Expenditure**	**1,572**	**371**	**1,201**
	0	100	(100)	Contributions to / from Balances	0	14	(14)
	0	0	0	Grants	0	0	0
	1,602	**463**	**1,139**	**Total Precept**	**1,572**	**385**	**1,187**
Ware Town Council	780	421	359	Cultural Environ & Planning Services	834	434	400
	312	67	245	Other Services	295	60	235
	1,092	**488**	**604**	**Net Expenditure**	**1,129**	**494**	**635**
	0	0	0	Contributions to / from Balances	0	0	0
	0	0	0	Grants	0	0	0
	1,092	**488**	**604**	**Total Precept**	**1,129**	**494**	**635**
Buntingford Town Council	81	0	81	Cultural Environ & Planning Services	98	0	98
	8	0	8	Central Services to Public	8	0	8
	178	61	117	Other Services	183	61	122
	267	**61**	**206**	**Net Expenditure**	**289**	**61**	**228**
	1	0	1	Contingency	1	0	1
	51	0	51	Contribution to Balances	50	0	50
	0	0	0	Grants	0	0	0
	319	**61**	**258**	**Total Precept**	**340**	**61**	**279**
Sawbridgeworth Town Council	46	44	2	Cultural Environ & Planning Services	49	65	(16)
	9	0	9	Central Services to Public	8	0	8
	0	0	0	Highways & Transport Services	57	57	0
	295	22	273	Other Services	345	15	330
	350	**66**	**284**	**Net Expenditure**	**459**	**137**	**322**
	2	0	2	Contingency	2	0	2
	9	0	9	Contributions to / from Balances	0	6	(6)
	0	0	0	Grants	0	0	0
	361	**66**	**295**	**Total Precept**	**461**	**143**	**318**

Analysis by services

East Herts Council

2018/19 Estimate Exp £000	Income £000	Net Exp (Income) £000		2019/20 Estimate Exp £000	Income £000	Net Exp (Income) £000
1,140	1,140	0	Chief Executive, PA's & Directors	1,074	1,074	0
2,031	1,801	230	Communications, Strategy & Policy	2,059	1,847	212
766	766	0	HR & Organisation Development	748	748	0
4,323	4,421	(98)	Strategic Finance & Property Services	4,869	5,192	(323)
3,848	1,574	2,274	Democratic & Legal Services	3,978	1,593	2,385
8,342	3,983	4,359	Housing & Health Services	7,918	3,899	4,019
6,391	4,413	1,978	Planning & Building Control	8,999	4,342	4,657
17,582	11,319	6,263	Operations	17,443	11,223	6,220
41,834	39,563	2,271	Shared Revenues & Benefits Service	42,253	39,775	2,478
1,789	1,789	0	Shared Business & Technology Services	1,744	1,744	0
662	1,090	(428)	Interest Transactions	669	990	(321)
1,010	3,339	(2,329)	Finance and Other Transactions	984	5,550	(4,566)
89,718	**75,198**	**14,520**	**Total**	**92,738**	**77,977**	**14,761**
0	800	(800)	Use of Reserves	0	470	(470)
89,718	**75,998**	**13,720**	**EHC Budget Requirement**	**92,738**	**78,447**	**14,291**
15,250	16,162	(912)	Business Rates Retention Scheme	13,315	15,990	(2,675)
1,322	4,350	(3,028)	Government / General Revenue Grants	1,308	2,657	(1,349)
106,290	**96,510**	**9,780**	**Total**	**107,361**	**97,094**	**10,267**

East Herts council tax

East Herts Council has decided to put up its share of the council tax by £5 so we can continue providing quality front-line services while facing ongoing budget pressures.

The rise works out at just over 41p per month.

The pressures include a fall in the Revenue Support Grant from Government – a key funding source - from £2.8m in 2014/15 to zero by the end of this financial year. In addition the government has advised local authorities to be more financially self-sufficient.

Hertfordshire County Council is increasing its annual share of council tax by 2.99% or £39.48 to help meet the challenges of a growing and ageing population and increasing demand, particularly for children's services and adult social care.

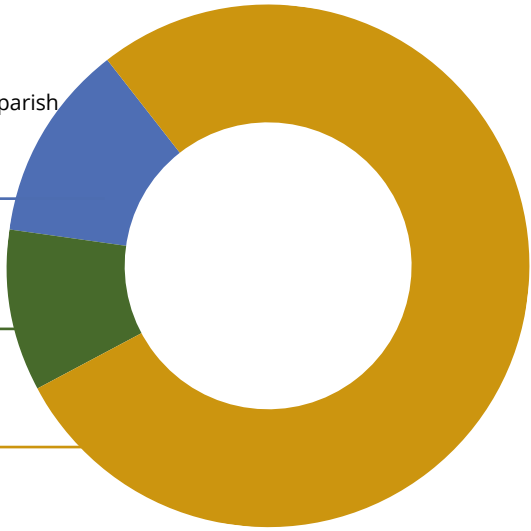
The Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is increasing its share by £24.

A spokesperson said there was strong public support for a rise if it resulted in a greater police presence. "The increase will be used to deploy 75 more frontline officers in Hertfordshire."

So the annual bill for a Band D payer breaks down like this:

- £1,359.94 goes to Hertfordshire County Council
- £169.09 goes to East Herts Council
- £188 goes to the PCC
- An amount goes to your town or parish council – this varies depending on where you live.

How a Band D council tax is calculated



4% on average
goes to your town or parish council - see page 11

11%
goes to Police and Crime Commissioner

9%
goes to East Herts Council

76%
goes to Hertfordshire County Council

Where East Herts Council's money comes from

Specific Government Grants - **£35m**

Redistributed Business Rates - **£16m**

Fees & Charges - **£21.6m**

Council Tax - **£14.5m**

Government/General Revenue Grants - **£2.6m**

Interest (net) **£1m**

Use of balances - **£0.5m**

What the council's money is spent on

- Revenues & benefits - **£42.2m**
- Planning services - **£6.3m**
- Refuse & recycling - **£6m**
- Legal & democratic services - **£4m**
- Health & housing - **£7.3m**
- Car parking - **£3.9m**
- Other - **£17m**
- Strategic finance & property services - **£4.5m**

If you pay your council tax by direct debit you don't need to do anything – the amount is updated automatically and your payments will roll on.

Garden town vision is blooming

Harlow and Gilston Garden Town will have well-designed homes that will complement the natural environment, embrace new technology and enable people to travel by foot, bicycle and public transport in and around Harlow on high quality routes.

The new development, which will help meet the challenging level of housing needed in East Herts, will make the most of high-quality employment coming to the Science Park, Enterprise Zone and Public Health England headquarters.

The aspirations for this exciting project have been set out in two Vision and Design Guide documents. They detail the expectations and requirements that need to be met by developers to ensure good quality villages and neighbourhoods, homes, jobs and infrastructure.

These guides will be used as a material planning consideration when considering planning applications/proposals and masterplans, and will provide assurances to communities and businesses about what they should expect.

They'll form part of the basis for considering all development proposals in the Garden Town.

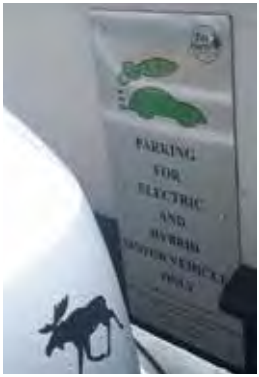
East Herts, Epping Forest and Harlow district councils, along with Essex and Hertfordshire county councils and wider stakeholders, are working closely together to create something really special.

See the documents at www.eastherts.gov.uk/gilston

For updates and news from East Herts Council delivered direct to your inbox, sign up to our weekly enewsletter – Network

Go to www.eastherts.gov.uk/network and join the network.

Faster charging for electric vehicles in Hertford multi-storey



Drivers of electric vehicles can be on their way faster with the installation of two speedier chargers by East Herts Council on the ground floor of Gascoyne Way multi-storey car park.

The council wants to help people switch to electric vehicles, so at the moment, drivers don't pay to use the chargers, apart from paying the normal parking charges of course.

Air quality is a problem around Gascoyne Way in the centre of Hertford and it's been declared an Air Quality Management Area so as to co-ordinate everyone's efforts in tackling the issue.

Encouraging people to replace petrol and diesel cars with electric vehicles will mean better air quality - and that's good for everyone's health.

Northgate End is the beginning

Revised plans for a multi-storey car park and residential and commercial units at Northgate End in Bishop's Stortford have been approved by the council.

This is the first step in the council's plans to redevelop the Old River Lane site in the centre of the town. Proposals include a brand new arts and entertainment centre, retail, housing, improved public spaces and better access to Castle Park.

Following the decision, the council has started work to appoint a developer and begin masterplanning the rest of the site.

Steve is shaping up

Fast-food junkie shapes up

Takeaways, curries and fish and chips helped Steve to pile on the pounds but the former fast-food junkie has ditched the chips and toned up with the support of Shape Up Stortford for men only.

"I saw the class advertised on Facebook", he said. "I'd been wanting to do something for a while and I liked the idea of working with other people rather than on your own."

The 12-week course for men with a BMI of 30+ was organised by Watford Football Sports and Education Community Trust and funded by East Herts Council. It was held in Bishop's Stortford and Ware.

Steve said: "The first session started with 45 minutes in the classroom and 15 to 20 minutes of exercise. We went through every aspect of diet and nutrition, I found it a real education. As we went on, the classroom bit got shorter and the exercise section longer.

"We did circuit training, press ups and five a side football. Some people did boxing with pads. We had a weekly weigh-in which got me into good habits.

"Everyone was at a similar fitness level, either never trained before or not recently.

"I've kept up what I learnt – I've changed my eating habits completely and my wife lost weight without even doing the course.

"Now we eat wholemeal pasta, rice, slimline versions of takeaways and I've cut down on alcohol."

He prepares healthy lunches in advance, something he couldn't have imagined doing before.

"I can't recommend the course enough, both the classroom learning and the exercise. I've lost weight and I feel so much better."

Time to go up market

Since February the allocation of market stalls at Hertford and Ware markets is administered under the council's street trading legislation.

Traders will be in the same place and the markets will have the same look and feel. However it will be cheaper to trade and traders are invited to come on board.

All traders wishing to work in Hertford's Saturday market, Hertford farmers' market or Ware's Tuesday market must obtain a monthly or annual 'Street Trading Consent'.

The key changes are:

- Casual traders must book their stall in advance
- Applications must be submitted at least 28 days before intending to trade
- The minimum period to trade is one month at a time
- Becoming a regular trader is the most cost-effective option.

For street trading consent application forms, fee information and details of how to apply visit eastherts.gov.uk/streettrading

Ware Market
Every Tuesday 8.30am-4pm

Hertford market
Every Saturday 8.30am-4pm

Hertford farmers market - monthly
Every second Saturday in the month 8.30am-1pm

Street food markets – monthly (April to October)
Hertford - Every last Thursday, from 4pm in Salisbury Square

Ware – Every second Thursday, from 4pm in Tudor Square

Bishop's Stortford farmers and craft market
First Saturday of each month (except August) in North Street, 9.30am-1.30pm. Local pickles, jams and honey, handmade jewellery, teas, cheeses, breads, handmade soaps and shower/bath gifts, wild game meat and local sausages

Stortford market
Every Thursday and Saturday, 8.30am-4.30pm

Staging great performances

David Baddiel's ANiMALCOLM the Musical

A vibrant, energetic and gloriously funny musical. Combines physical theatre, puppetry and the company's outstanding storytelling style to bring David Baddiel's magical and wonderfully comic story to the stage.

Saturday April 6, 2pm & 7pm
Sunday April 7, 11am & 3pm

Tickets £15, £56 family ticket (four people, including at least one child) Suitable for ages 5+

Vienna Festival Ballet: Coppélia

A lively production infused with old world charm, Coppélia appeals to all ages with its captivating story of an eccentric toymaker and his beloved doll.

Saturday April 20, 5pm

Tickets £22, £20 concessions, £79 family ticket (four people, including at least one child). Suitable for ages 5+, but please consider if your child can sit through a full-length ballet.

Pam Ayres

Pam Ayres has been making the nation laugh for over 40 years.

Funny and warm, her charming understated manner belies a rare comic precision.

Wednesday May 8, 7.30pm

Tickets £26, suitable for an adult audience.

Looking forward to the autumn season

Horrible Histories – Terrible Tudors and Awful Egyptians

We all want to meet people from history. The trouble is everyone is dead! So it's time to prepare yourselves for two amazing shows with Horrible Histories live on stage.

Using actors and ground-breaking 3D special effects, historical figures and events will come alive on stage and hover at your fingertips.

Please note these are two separate shows, so visit www.hertfordtheatre.com for details

October 17-20, suitable for ages 6+

Ticket prices vary – see website or contact the box office for details

Celebrate 10 years of Christmas-magic-making at Hertford Theatre with The Snow Queen.

The story that inspired the smash-hit film Frozen is brought to life in an all-singing, all-dancing, all-snowing Christmas spectacular! Full of frosty frolics, chilly chuckles and nippy nonsense, this brand-new family Christmas show will warm the cockles of the coldest heart.

Join Gerda on the arctic adventure of a lifetime as she searches for her missing friend, Kai. But who is that little girl in the red hoodie? Who makes a house out of gingerbread? And how on earth does someone live in a shoe? But the biggest question of them all: as they come face to frosty face, can the warmth in Gerda's heart thaw the icy clutches of The Snow Queen?

Brought to you by the same team that created last year's smash-hit production of The Astonishing Adventures of Pinocchio, The Snow Queen will be kicking up a stunning snow-storm this winter. Packed full of heart-racing songs, foot-stomping dances and an avalanche of fun; you'll have snow problem keeping cosy this winter at Hertford Theatre.

Book now to avoid the winter chills

Saturday November 30-Wednesday January 1

Tickets from £15 are on sale now.

Does Hertford Theatre sell gift vouchers?

Yes! Hoorah! Gift vouchers can be purchased via the box office on 01992 531500.

Italian Food Market

Saturday May 18

A taste of Italy in North Street, Bishop's Stortford, 9am-3pm.

Fresh parmesan, olives stuffed with garlic, extra virgin olive oils.

Bishop's Stortford carnival parade and fun day

Saturday June 15

Themed on "Around the World"

Parade starts from Rhodes Arts Centre, South Road, at 12.30 with floats, walking groups, marching bands and dance troupes.

Fun Day on Sworders Field CM23 2EL from 12noon. Fun fair, stalls, live music, theatrical performances, dance, entertainment for children and adults.

Hertford Castle Open Air Cinema

Hertford Castle hosts two open air screenings with the castle as its backdrop. Bring picnic chairs and snacks. Refreshments available. Last year was sold out so tickets must be purchased in advance.

Mamma Mia! Here we go again Friday August 23

Grease - Saturday August 24

Tickets £7/film. Gates open at 7pm, film starts 8.30pm

Buntingford Classic car show

Saturday September 7, 11am-4pm

Classic cars, trucks, tractors and bikes of all ages along the high street

Free admission, barbecues, hog roast, live musicians on every street corner.

Breeze Rides

For women who are new to cycling or want to get back into cycling. FREE monthly ride of no more than six miles, Tuesdays at 11.15am.

For more information and to book visit www.activeeastherts.org.uk or email kirsty.feasey@activeeastherts.org.uk

Yoga4Health

Aimed at people with depression, anxiety, Type2 diabetes or heart problems. £3 per session every Thursday at Grange Paddocks, Bishop's Stortford.

For booking see above.

Moved to tears

Heart breaking stories of refugees and beautifully rendered songs moved people to tears at the council's Holocaust Memorial Day event.

Readings were based around this year's theme of Torn From Home. Also taking part were the Zemel choir, who recently sang at Westminster Abbey, performing songs of Jewish significance.

Holocaust Memorial Day on January 27 is the day for everyone to remember the millions of people murdered in the Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution and in the subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

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Rhodes Bishop's Stortford

The Tiger who came to Tea

April 10, 1.30pm, 4pm
April 11, 11am, 2pm

Direct from the West End, the Olivier Award nominated smash hit show returns on tour. Join the tea-guzzling tiger in this delightful family show; packed with oodles of magic, sing-a-long songs and clumsy chaos. **Tickets £14, family £54**

Dr Dolittle

April 18, 2pm

The story of Dr John Dolittle MD whose parrot, Polynesia, teaches him how to speak to animals, enabling him to become a first-class animal doctor.

Some animals are played by puppets and others by actors. You'll meet Princess Bumpo, some swarthy pirates and a short sighted horse!

Featuring new songs, sing-a-long favourites, humour and lots of joining in. Ideal for all the family, particularly children aged 5-10

Tickets £13.50, £11.50, family £46

Pinocchio

May 6, 2.30pm

A new, larger-than-life musical adaptation of the much-loved classic. Packed with comedy, audience interaction, and a host of new songs. **Tickets £13.50, £11.50, family £46**

Rhodes booking details

www.rhodesartscomplex.co.uk or 01279 710200.

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