

# Hertfordshire County Council Annual Report



Our Annual Report is a document that explains how Hertfordshire County Council is providing services to people who live in Hertfordshire.



The council aims to provide services which meet these four objectives.

- A cleaner and greener Hertfordshire
- Healthy and fulfilling lives for Hertfordshire residents
- Sustainable and responsible growth in Hertfordshire
- Excellent council services for all



Below is what the council is doing to achieve the four areas listed above. These are some key examples, but there are many more.

We spend one billion pounds every year to deliver over 500 county council services, which benefit every resident, business and community in Hertfordshire.

## **Planting of more trees in Hertfordshire.**



- The goal is to have planted over one million trees by 2030. In 2023, the council supported the planting of over 211,000 trees.



- In March 2023, we finished our work to bring together Hertfordshire's contribution to the Queen's Green Canopy national initiative. This initiative meant that more than 100,000 trees were planted in Hertfordshire by schools, councils, community groups and private landowners.



- We worked with district and borough councils to gain nearly £80,000 from the Local Authority Treescape Fund which has caused around 6,500 trees to be planted on council land across the county.

- In 2023 we began a new Environmental Improvement Grant to grant funding to small projects, including tree planting.

### **Our Step2skills service supports people living in Hertfordshire and with disabilities to access education and work.**



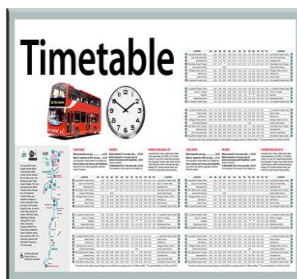
- The service allows adults to get involved in learning new skills and accessing work.

- It helps people with learning difficulties and disabilities to access job opportunities and education.



- They hold events to help match employers with people with learning disabilities. A recent event in Watford had 32 employers attending, over 600 visitors, and 46 job offers to people with disabilities.

## More money for the county's plan to improve bus services.



- In 2021, the government released a new plan aiming to improve bus services in England.
- In Hertfordshire, we have created a new plan for how we will improve our bus services in the county, and in 2022 we gained funding to have more money to do this.
- We will be focusing on increasing the number of people using buses in Hertfordshire after Covid.
- Some examples of how we have supported bus services in Hertfordshire already include a new route connecting Stevenage and Hertford.
- We have extended HertsLynx into a late-night service on Fridays and Saturdays, and a 15 percent reduction in the price of Explorer and Busnet tickets.
- We will also be focusing on improvements such as an updated mobile app which will provide the newest information to help people plan their journeys.
- More information and updates can be found on the [Intalink website](#).



## Preventing falls in the home through 'slipper swap' events in libraries.



- Our Libraries and Adult Care staff have been working together to arrange 'slipper swaps' events in Hertfordshire libraries.
- Old slippers can cause trips and falls, which can lead to the person needing to stay in hospital and losing confidence. The 'slipper swaps' help people to understand more about help available to them to support their health and how they feel, while also gaining a new pair of slippers.
- In 2022, these events meant that 395 pairs of slippers were given out to residents, and this also provides a warm space for people to spend time in during the winter.
- Health charities have also come to these events to give advice. We also gave out bags with blankets, woolly hats and socks, cuppa soups and other items from a local charity.



## Working to improve roads in Hertfordshire.

- We are spending £102 million this year from the county council's capital budget on the county's roads.
- This includes more than 1,000 maintenance and improvement schemes across Hertfordshire's 3,200 miles of roads and 3,500 miles of pavements and cycleways.



- Last winter was challenging for our road repairs services, who worked hard to repair the increased potholes across the county due to the cold and wet weather.



- Our winter self-help scheme launched in September 2022. We delivered 4,778 bags of salt to schools, residents' groups and local town, parish, district and borough councils.



- More money from the government's Pothole Fund will pay for up to 20,000 additional pothole repairs across the county, taking the total number of repairs to an expected 40,000 this year.

- Over the next year we plan to repair and maintain pavements, roads, bridges and traffic signals in Hertfordshire. We also aim to tackle any problems with road safety, reduce traffic congestion, and make walking and cycling easier.

## What will different council services be focusing on in the next year?



In the Annual Report, we also explained what the services in Hertfordshire County Council will be focusing on in the next year. This includes:

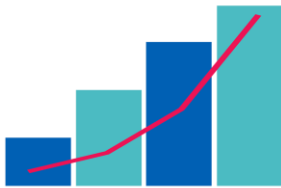
- **Adult Care Services** will work to make sure that care for residents in Hertfordshire is a high quality. We will work with organisations like the NHS, to make sure we provide support early on so that people can live as independently as possible.







- **Children's Services** will build on the positive Outstanding rating from the January 2023 Ofsted inspection. We will continue to work to support foster carers for children and young people. We will be giving £5 million ongoing funding to improve our support for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).



- **Growth and Environment** will be focused on delivering bus improvements across Hertfordshire, as well as improving walking and cycling routes, areas of local nature and roads.



- **Community Protection** will set out our Fire and Rescue Service's understanding of risk in the county and how we will manage it in the four years ahead.



- **Public Health** will continue to focus on improving the health and wellness of residents by offering local support for those most in need.



- **Resources** will continue to support the council to deliver its main aims, while also supporting people who work in the council and helping to deal with financial challenges. A new library for Ware is also due to open in early 2024.