

EASTWICK AND GILSTON PARISH COUNCIL

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The Parish Council Business Meeting of Monday 10th November 2025. Village Hall, Pye Corner, Gilston
8.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr's Beazley, Bryant, Marx, Orson, Cllr Eric Buckmaster (CC), Cllr John Dunlop (DC), 1 member of the public. Christine Law (Clerk) in attendance.

Cllr Buckmaster and Cllr Dunlop's reports are attached to these minutes and can also be found on the web site.

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- a) No questions were raised.

47) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- a. None.

48) RECEIVE COUNCILLOR'S DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- a. None.

49) MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

- a. The minutes of 15th September 2025 meeting were proposed by Cllr Marx and seconded by Cllr Bryant.

Signed by Cllr Orson as a true record.

50) ACCOUNTS

- a. Clerks report to the Council of accounts summary (appendix 1).
- b. The proposed Parish Council Budget for 2026-2027 was discussed and agreed.

a-b proposed by Cllr Marx and seconded by Cllr Beazley.

51) PLANNING AND ASSOCIATED APPLICATIONS

- a. Grassland, Pye Corner, Gilston – 3/23/1110/FUL – Retrospective change of use of buildings A (Class e), B (class B8), c (Class B8), D (Class B8), E (Class B8) and F (Class E). Awaiting decision.
- b. X/25/0215/CND – Discharge condition 6 (Strategic Landscape Masterplan) attached to 3/19/1045/OUT – Land North of the Stort Valley and the A414 Gilston, Herts. Awaiting decision.
- c. The Old Rectory, Gilston Lane, Gilston – 3/25/1522/FUL – Conversion of and alterations to existing detached garage to form 1 x 2-bed maisonette to first floor with associated works including creation of residential curtilage and bin/cycle store (retrospective) Awaiting decision.
- d. 4 Vine Grove, Pye Corner, Gilston – 3/25/1508/HH – Part two storey and part single storey rear extension, insertion of a new first floor side window. Awaiting decision.

52) PARISH PATHS

Cllr Orson reported

- a. Nicholas Maddex our Access Project Officer for HCC Countryside and Rights of Way has provided the following updates:

Eastwick Footpath 16 - the new waymark post where the recently cleared path emerges from the spinney is still in place and clearly visible. However, the bench is still in its old location. Although it is accessible from the new route, It would be advisable if Knight Frank could arrange to have it moved as offered, to discourage walkers from straying from this route. [Requested via gilston@meeting-place.uk copy to Knight Frank]

Eastwick Footpath 22 and Bridleway 22 have been inspected, following complaints that they needed mowing again.

- i. Footpath 22 had regrown strongly, as my contractor had had difficulty in cutting it in the spring, due to the pylon works. I have therefore had it recut.
 - ii. Bridleway 2 has not regrown so badly, although there are a few nettles at the south end, so I have not ordered any more works yet. If the warm weather continues, I may need to reconsider this
- b. Maintenance of non-tenanted and uncultivated land. There is a general problem with uncultivated PFP land growing a good crop of thistles and generally left to deteriorate. Clouds of thistle down blown across Pye Corner / Gilston Lane (and no doubt other areas) from around early July to mid-August. Reported to gilston@meeting-place.uk copy to Knight Frank and progress chased. No response so far. We are told that this issue was on the agenda for a meeting with Knight Frank held on 5 November, however, Knight Frank work to their client's instructions and it will need PFP's agreement and funding to arrange maintenance of non-tenanted and uncultivated land.
- c. Footpath Map by Dairy Cottages, Gilston Lane needs some repair. Cllr Harvey knows someone that she will contact about its repair.

53) COMMUNITY FORUM/ NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

a. Cllr Bryant reported: **EHC Community Forum and Neighbourhood Development**

EHC Gilston Area Community Forum held 14th October 2025

Affinity Water gave an informative presentation explaining their Water Resources Management Plan, which sets out how they intend to maintain the balance between water supply and demand for a minimum 25 years– current plan up to 2075.

Places for People also gave a brief presentation, key points:

- Strategic Landscape Master Plan was submitted to EHDC earlier this year. Awaiting decision.
- Village 1 Masterplan about to be submitted
- Due to the need to create the Strategic Transport Corridor (STC) route from Village 1 to Village 7, masterplanning work on Villages 5 & 6 has begun – more information on this to follow.
- Central Stort Crossing enabling works started in March. Main contractor about to be appointed with works scheduled to start on site early in the new year.
- If anybody would like to get involved with the masterplanning process, please email gilston@meeting-place.uk and we will be in touch nearer the time with further details.

No one from **Taylor Wimpey** attended.

Past presentations available at the East Herts Gilston Area Community Forum webpage

<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-forums/gilston-area-community-forum>.

We urge residents to attend these forums and, if possible, submit questions, via email, at least 10 days before to community.forum@eastherts.gov.uk

You can also ask for specific topics you want to learn more about to be included in future meetings.

Neighbourhood Development

Judicial Review for the two Gilston outline applications is still on-going with a further appeal having been submitted.

Village 1 Places for People have submitted and had approved 3/25/1615/NMA

“Implementation Works” comprise the marking out of a section of the non-reserved access to the Gilston Park Estate site from the A414 at Village 1 including associated tree/vegetation removal, site clearance and remaining topsoil strip. The extent of the area to be marked out is shown on plan VD21466-VEC HGN-C1A-SK-CH-0159 P03 (the “Implementation Site”).

Expect to see some activity north of the Eastwick roundabout soon.

Villages 5 & 6 Masterplanning Places for People **anticipate community engagement** will start end 2025 / early 2026

Watch out for invitations to become involved.

The **Neighbourhood Planning Group** held a useful meeting with our excellent planning consultants, Urban Silence Ltd (Martina Juvara) and Changing Cities (Joanna Chambers) to review the group’s priorities for the coming year.

This has been set out in letter format, but has not yet been finalised.

Gilston Stakeholder Liaison Group

These meetings are between the parish councils of Eastwick & Gilston and Hunsdon, Places for People, PFP, and East Herts Council.

We finally have a meeting scheduled for late November. Agenda not available yet.

Estate Management – Reminder

Places for People’s **gilston.info** website demonstrated at the February Community Forum

The website has 3 headings:

Current Works – a map of current and planned works in the Gilston Area.

Report an Issue – a map where any issues, eg tree fallen across a RoW, fly tipping, etc., can be reported

News – construction works and developments for the Gilston Area.

Roadworks update.

Redricks Lane has been closed for sometime, due to additional / upgraded electrical supply for the development (Electricity Network Company Ltd).

For information on current and upcoming roadworks go to [Causeway one.network](https://one.network)

<https://one.network/uk/hertfordshire>

Places for People gilstonparkestate website NEWS page

<https://www.gilstonparkestate.com/news/enabling-works-for-gilston-underway/>

Nothing new on roads since 20th December 2024

Below is a reminder of what the Neighbourhood Planning Group is (hegnp.org.uk)

The Hunsdon, Eastwick, and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group (HEGNPG) plays a crucial role in shaping and overseeing the Gilston Area development, to ensure it aligns with community values and sustainable development principles. After successfully completing the award winning Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (GANP), the HEGNPG continues to jointly represent the two directly affected Parish Councils of Hunsdon and Eastwick & Gilston. It seeks to coordinate engagement with developers, Places for People and Taylor Wimpey, and local authorities, especially East Herts Council.

The HEGNPG is involved in reviewing planning applications and master plans for the proposed villages, ensuring they meet the expectations of Local Plan policy and the GANP. Our primary goals are to advocate for high standards in urban design, proper and timely infrastructure, environmental responsibility and community-focused planning.

We believe we have influenced the quality of green space and community land, promoted biodiversity and landscape integration, and continue to press for better interface with the existing communities, sustainable

transport solutions, and “village master planning” principles where each village within the development retains distinct features. Additionally, we will actively monitor the agreements related to infrastructure, affordable housing, and the long-term governance of community assets.

In summary, the HEGNPG acts as a voice for residents, holding developers accountable to promises for the delivery of a sustainable, high-quality development that respects both local heritage and environmental goals. Through this active oversight, we aim to be the voice of the two directly affected Parish Councils and so keep the development aligned with the community’s hopes and aspirations and ensure it remains adaptable to future needs.

Anyone who wishes to get involved, please contact us or go to the hegnp.org.uk contact page

Useful websites:

Village 1 and Strategic Landscape Master Plan

<https://www.gilstonparkestate.com/get-involved/>

Section 106 docs Villages 1 - 6

<https://publicaccess.eastherts.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PRSRKCGL00V00>

Village 7

<https://www.village7.co.uk>

Section 106 docs Villages 7

<https://publicaccess.eastherts.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PZKRYCGL05I00>

East Herts Community Forums

<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-forums/gilston-area-community-forum>

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54) HIGHWAYS

a. Cllr Harvey reported:

1. The roads through and by our villages have been adversely affected by the works to Harlow roads for some time. Congestion routinely occurs approaching the roundabout from the A414 on all sides of the roundabout. It has been said that these will complete by the end of Autumn. Work to maintain the road bridge on the A414 was completed smoothly and with little interruption to the flow of traffic.
2. Access through Redricks Lane is blocked probably until the end of November whilst pylon works are pursued as part of preparation for the new development.
3. Further works around the approach to Harlow are likely in the new year.
4. Currently major works on the Eastwick Hall Lane from Eastwick to the farm are being undertaken. Some improvements to drainage are being made.
5. It remains important for locals to report potholes and road problems via the Herts County Council Website – www.hertfordshire.gov.uk

Their website states:

Timescales for road repairs.

Emergency road repair dealt within 2-4 hours.

Permanent pothole repair – within 1-4 weeks if the pothole meets intervention levels.

Street lighting defects – repaired within 4 weeks if the fault is not on an A, B, or C road.

None-emergency works – logged and assessed to be included in regular maintenance works, if possible. We try to group these together to be efficient as possible.

If there is severe weather there may be a delay in these time scales.

6. There is now an East Herts App which makes finding appropriate departments easier.

- b. New Gilston Lane Sign (Village entry sign). Cllr Bryant is having problems with the application as planning are not happy with aspects of the application.
- c. Trees in central reservation -Roseley Cottages, Eastwick. The Clerk informed the meeting that she has been in contact with Clarion Housing and they have instructed their Arborist to carry out maintenance work on some of the trees, which has been done. Clerk to write and thank them for their help in this matter and also ask them when are the drains going to be looked at.

55) NEW HOMES BONUS/ INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

- a. Web site – Cllr Orson reported that updating of the new web site is progressing and that a Zoom meeting will be scheduled for Councillors to review content before it is launched to residents.
- b. Daffodil Bulbs – Cllr Bryant requested sponsorship for the supply of spring bulbs for planting by volunteers within our villages. A budget of £1,000.00 was proposed by Cllr Bryant and seconded by Cllr Beazley.

56) VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- a. The hall has benefited by several events this last period.
 - 1 The projector has been adjusted, and it is now available for use.
 2. The Hive has been set to work- though only recently. This at least means it will not be a cold winter and hopefully once the programs are set up there will be a reduction in electricity costs.
 - 3 . At our last meeting we were fortunate enough to gain two new committee members and hope in the future to fill some of the administrative posts.
 4. We have a new handyman volunteer, Blair Roxburgh, from Eastwick, has begun to bring a new freshness to the paint work and ceiling tiles and who has constructed our new reserved parking signs for residents. He has also installed a new key box which makes opening the hall a little easier and secure. Anyone who has a key does not need to use it. He will continue to make improvements through the winter- in the first instance repainting the lobby. We are most grateful for his help.
 5. We have bookings through to Christmas and hope to restart Chair Pilates soon.
 6. The hall using the East Herts Arts Grant was able to provide an evening of an “Introduction to Jewellery making. We are most grateful to Claire and Erin Reilly for running this event which was very well attended.
 - 7 . Erin has the position of village hall manager for a 6-month trial period and will continue to manage Hall bookings.
 - 8 . Hall bookings will become much easier for everyone once the new website for the parish council has been established. Instructions are clear and available on the site. Erin will have access to the bank account and can more easily manage payments.
 - 9 The hall - Gilston and Eastwick has a Facebook page and its following has increased.

57) CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Cllr Eric Buckmaster report is attached to these minutes.
- b. Cllr John Dunlop report is attached to these minutes

These reports are not published in the Parish Magazine but can be found with the minutes on the Parish web site.

- c. Protect Our Pubs – an email has been received from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) with concern for the future of our local Hertfordshire pubs, many of which are facing an unprecedented onslaught of well-documented economic and social pressures, sometimes leading to closure.

To help, a number of Hertfordshire Parish and Town Councils have already achieved Asset of Community Value (ACV) status for their pubs – almost 40 awards are currently in place. The status requires the current pub owner to inform the District/Borough Council should they decide to sell the pub and they, in turn, are required to notify the ACV applicants – triggering a moratorium period during which the community might signal an attempt to raise funds to finance a purchase. We have two pubs within our villages that have been closed The Lion in Eastwick and The Dusty Miller in Gilston that both belong to McMullen Brewery Cllr Beazley said that he would contact them to see when they may be reopening.

58) ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

- a. None.

59) ITEMS COUNCILLORS WOULD LIKE TO BE ADDED TO THE NEXT AGENDA.

- a. None.

60) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Meeting for 2026

- a. 12th January 2026 – Council Meeting
- 9th March – Annual Parish Meeting – Followed by the Parish Council Business Meeting
- 11th May – Annual Meeting of the Council – Followed by the Parish Council Business Meeting
- 13th July – Parish Council Business Meeting
- 14th September – Parish Council Business Meeting
- 9th November – Parish Council Business Meeting

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

E Buckmaster County Councillor Report Nov 2025

Decision process underway for Hertfordshire's Local Government Reorganisation

Over the course of the next few weeks, councils across Hertfordshire will make decisions on which unitary authority model they support.

Following the Government's invitation to councils in two-tier authority areas to submit plans for local government reorganisation, the county council, all ten district councils, and the Police and Crime Commissioner have been working collaboratively to develop and review options.

Councils agreed to detailed modelling of three different options, with two, three or four new councils being created with varying geography, population and approach to services. This evidence-based approach was agreed by all 11 councils and the potential options will now be considered democratically by councillors in each council. This process also takes into account feedback from the public engagement that took place across Hertfordshire in September.

Each council will provide the opportunity for councillors to debate the merits of each option before deciding which of the three options they believe will offer the best opportunities for local residents and partners.

The joint submission will be made to Government by 28 November and will include evidence to support the three unitary model options. The document can be viewed at: www.hertfordshire-lgr.co.uk. A decision is expected from the Government in summer 2026.

Annual Survey of Hertfordshire's Parish, Town and Community Councils now open until Sunday 23 November 2025

We have invited all Parish and Town Councillors and Clerks to take part in the Annual Survey of Hertfordshire's Parish, Town and Community Councils – a key opportunity to help strengthen the relationship between Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and Local Councils. The survey remains open until Sunday 23 November 2025.

We've also included a few questions about the Annual Meeting held on Friday 12 September for feedback to help us shape future events. Last year's survey highlighted areas of success, but also room for improvement. With the work that's been underway, we're looking to see progress reflected in this year's responses.

You can view the survey at this link here: [2025 Annual Survey of Hertfordshire's Parish, Town and Community Councils \(collectively known as Local Councils\)](#) Results will be available early December 2025.

Lead Local Flood Authority update

Cappell Lane, Stanstead Abbotts:

- Detailed design of the leaky dams was completed in July 2025.

- An ecological survey has been conducted on an area of the watercourse and has determined that there are active badger setts.
- We have applied for a licence to work within the vicinity of these setts and are waiting to hear the outcome of the application.
- We hope to start construction of the leaky barriers in December, dependent on the licence being approved.

Hunsdon Alleviation Scheme:

- The team have found a product we believe could be provided as part of the flood kit to act as a barrier in front of driveways. This product is not currently on the market, but we are working with the providers to ensure we can secure it as soon as possible. We hope this will be within the next couple of months.
- Clearance works will be carried out on the watercourse in December. This is dependent on permits being granted.
- Following this, works are planned to bring the culvert to a maintainable condition. This will include any identified civil work that is needed on the ordinary watercourse.
- Finally, it is hoped that work to re-line sections of the watercourse where it is a brick culvert will be carried out next financial year. However, this is dependent on all other works being carried out.

Pilot Flood Kits in Communities

Stanstead Abbots & Hunsdon

- All community flood kits have been delivered.
- Please see our good news story on this project here: [Hertfordshire County Council is expanding its Flood Kit pilot scheme](#) | Hertfordshire County Council
- We are now opening up a second phase of the scheme where communities can register here: [Hertfordshire Flood Kit Application form](#)

Flood Investigations in Sawbridgeworth:

Site visits have taken place in Bullfields and Hoestock Road and meetings with residents affected by surface water flooding arising from heavy rainfall. This is with a view to undertake joint investigations by both HCC and Thames Water to examine the drainage systems, look for blockages and, if required, to design solutions to help protect from future incidents.

Hertfordshire Schools Shine as Finalists in National Music and Drama Education Awards

Hertfordshire is proud to be known as the county of opportunity—and once again, Hertfordshire Music Service (HMS) has been named a finalist in the prestigious Music & Drama Education Awards 2026.

These national awards celebrate the outstanding contributions of schools, educators, and organisations that enrich lives through music and drama. At a time when both performing arts and education have faced unprecedented challenges, HMS has continued to deliver exceptional work and support thousands of learners of all ages. These nominations are a chance to recognise and celebrate that commitment.

This marks the third consecutive year HMS has been recognised for its inclusive and innovative approach to music education. This year's nomination recognises a collaboration with Hertfordshire's Virtual School, which works to ensure high-quality educational outcomes for children and young people in care.

The nomination is for the Rocksteady Award for Progressive and Inclusive Music Education, highlighting the 'HertsArts' programme. This initiative empowers young people through music and demonstrates the life-changing impact it has on some of Hertfordshire's most vulnerable children and young people.

Applying for primary, junior and middle schools in 2026

The process for applying to primary, junior and middle schools in Hertfordshire opened on 3 November 2025.

If your child is due to start primary school or move on to a junior or middle school next year, make sure you apply for a place in good time.

The easiest way to apply for a school place for September 2026 is to visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions and complete the online application form.

Online applications can be amended at any time before the closing date, and you can access your school offer before allocation letters are received and accept your school allocation online.

Last year, 99 per cent of parents applied this way and found the system quick, easy and secure.

The public engagement is running on the first stages of developing the new Local Transport Plan for Hertfordshire. This is an engagement on the proposed draft vision and objectives and an opportunity to understand residents' priorities.

The link to the engagement is letstalktransport.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localtransportplan

The engagement will run from Friday 7 November for six weeks until midnight on Friday 19 December 2025.

In conjunction with the public engagement, key stakeholders including the districts and borough councils will be engaged with to ensure that they have the opportunity to comment.

Have your say on Hertfordshire's new SEND strategy

- Local provision for children and young people: Children will get the help they need in their local school, and those with more complex needs will have specialist support available and more options for college or training as they approach adulthood.
- Aspiration for all: We want every child to feel welcome, supported and able to learn in a place that works for them.
- Preparing for the future: Children are supported to plan for the future with help to understand the options available to them and services will plan for children's next steps.
- Strong foundations: A skilled, trained and supported workforce to communicate with families in an accurate, compassionate and timely manner. Leaders will continuously explore new technologies and seek innovative solutions to make processes more efficient and increase time staff can spend supporting children and families.

The consultation is due to start on Friday 14 November and will run until 6 February. Children and young people, parents and carers, and professionals in schools, health, and social care are invited to share their views to help refine the strategy and identify priorities for action.

- Read Hertfordshire's draft SEND strategy and find out how to take part in the consultation: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/SENDstrategy

Council runs 'Stop Means Stop' campaign to raise awareness of school crossing patrols

As reported by BBC Look East, BBC London, BBC Three Counties Radio, Yahoo! UK and Southend Echo motorists across Hertfordshire are being reminded to stop whenever they are asked to do so by school crossing patrols, as part of the latest Hertfordshire County Council countywide 'Stop Means Stop' campaign. Across the county there is a network of 150 school crossing patrols on hand to help children and their parents cross busy roads before and after school. By law, motorists are required to stop whenever the distinctive 'lollipop' sign – which is clearly marked 'Stop' – is raised.

Body camera footage that showed drivers failing to stop when children were on a zebra crossing has prompted a council to try and raise safety awareness. Hertfordshire County Council has equipped school crossing patrol staff with body cameras to help identify drivers who ignored crossing rules.

UK Youth Parliament

SfYP is currently exploring building on its existing 'voice of young people' opportunities by enabling young people in Hertfordshire to participate in the UK Youth Parliament. This would provide Hertfordshire's young people with a national platform to influence change, complementing and enhancing the existing Hertfordshire-wide SfYP youth councils. Young people aged 11-18 can express their interest now.

- [See full details and find out how young people can get involved](#)

Hertfordshire is a Breastfeeding Friendly county!

Another one joins the Breastfeeding Friendly movement! And this time, our new Breastfeeding Friendly company is also a Best Foods Gold Award recipient. Herts Responsible Food Award celebrates businesses that offer healthier food choices and adopt sustainable practices – a perfect partner scheme with the Breastfeeding Friendly scheme. They both aim to build trust with customers and be recognised for doing the right thing.

2026/27 Budget Survey

as in previous years -there is a survey which will allow the public to have their say and help shape our budget for 2026/27 has been launched.

[The survey appears on our website and will be open until Sunday 7th December.](#) There is also [an “easy read” version.](#)

A [press release](#) gives more information. The survey is also being promoted directly to members of our Citizen’s Panel, “Have Your Say” and other groups as well as social media.

Eric Buckmaster November 2025

Eastwick & Gilston Parish Council - District Councillor report November 25

Cllr. John Dunlop

1. Gilston Park Estate

The JR High Court case on the 18th September was won by EHDC and costs awarded. The appellant has now appealed and we await the Appeal Courts timescales.

Meanwhile TW continue to submit various applications out of sequence and at their own risk as EHDC insist on the agreed sequencing of application approvals.

A Community Forum meeting was held at Manor of Groves on the 14th October with presentations from Affinity Water, PfP and EHDC. The presentations will be available at this link in due course -

<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-forums/gilston-area-community-forum>

The next Community Forum will be in February.

2. Local Government Reform (LGR) update

Public Consultations at the stage completed. Consultants are now working on modelling 2/3/4 unitary models. Just as a reminder of the devolution timetable:

- September 25 Consultations
- 13th November - Extraordinary Council meeting
- 18th November - EHDC Executive decision
- 28 Nov 2025 Submit full Local Government Reorganisation Proposal
- Proposed May 2027 Elections (Shadow authorities)
- Proposed Apr 2028 Vesting day for new unitary councils

3. Waste Container Deliveries

The new system is fully rolled out in terms of bins being distributed. If you don't have the right bins please email me directly @ john.dunnlop@live.co.uk

4. Arts in East Herts

Arts in East Herts continues with a packed programme of arts and culture taster sessions across the district. There are still lots of events up to the end of October.

From painting and candle-making to theatre, blacksmithing, and even a planetarium experience, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

We'd really appreciate your help spreading the word in your communities so more people can get involved. You can view the full programme [here](#).

5. £1,000 Sustainability Fund

Open until the end of their contract with us. This year's fund is now open to applications from not-for-profit organisations, community groups, and individuals. applications

Our new waste management partner, Veolia, has £15,000 of sustainability and community funding available, each year,

Up to **£1,000 in funding is available per project** and applicants can also request in-kind resources or volunteers to help them deliver their project.

One standout project will receive a bumper grant of up to £5,000. This additional award will recognise a project that demonstrates remarkable, long-term community impact. Simply opt in during the standard application process to be considered.

Environmental projects will need to meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Enhances biodiversity
- Promotes sustainable waste behaviours
- Protects the environment by using recycled, reused or reclaimed materials
- Projects that strengthen the local community, including but not limited to employment support programmes, rehabilitation projects, and youth development initiatives, are also welcomed

Applications should be made via Veolia's website at veolia.co.uk/Sustainability-Fund. The fund will be open for applications until **Tuesday 30 September**.

6. Open Possibilities: New Skills Campaign for East Herts

The screenshot shows the 'Residents' Hub' website. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'About', 'Courses', 'Books', 'Support', and a search icon. The left sidebar has sections for 'Events' (See today's events, See tomorrows events), 'View By' (Pathways, Programmes, Courses, Certified, On Demand, New), and 'Categories' (Business Essentials, Mental Wellness, Communication Skills, Microlearning, Workplace Readiness, Customer Service Excellence). The main content area features three microlearning course cards. Each card has a 'MICROLEARNING' tag, a title, a brief description, and a 'Next Event' section with a date and time. The first card is 'MENTAL WELLNESS - MICRO' titled 'Workload Stress and having the Confidence to Discuss with Your Manager' on Nov 10, 2025 at 2:00 PM. The second is 'MENTAL WELLNESS - MICRO' titled 'Overcoming Social Anxiety' on Nov 10, 2025 at 2:30 PM. The third is 'BUSINESS ESSENTIALS - MICRO' titled 'Procurement - The Fundamentals' on Nov 11, 2025 at 9:30 AM.

This is a small example of the types of courses which are free.

For more information, visit:

 [SEEDL Residents Hub](#)

 [SEEDL Business Hub](#)

We've recently launched a new training and skills campaign, Open Possibilities, to support residents, pupils, and local businesses in accessing training and boosting employment opportunities.

The initiative gives residents and businesses free access to a wide range of online training via the SEEDL platform. Courses cover areas such as IT, customer service, professional development, and sector-specific training, and are available both live and on-demand.

Local businesses will also be supported through the Hertfordshire Opportunities Portal (HOP), which provides tailored advice and action plans to help organisations address skills needs and connect with training opportunities.

The campaign also includes the return of HOP's Generation Hertford and Stortford Careers Fairs, giving young people and the wider community the chance to meet employers and explore career pathways.

7. Community Alliance Funding Fair

Join this vibrant, in-person event, designed as a one-stop shop for local funding opportunities for community groups, charities of all sizes and social enterprises. More than 15 funders and support organisations will be present, offering advice on applying for community grants, crowdfunding and hyper-local funding. Attendees are welcome to drop in at any time, with the chance to network with other organisations, meet local champions and access support agencies. Free parking is available.



As part of the Funding Fair, community groups and VCFSE organisations can also attend free bite-sized learning sessions to improve their funding bids and applications.

For more details and to register, visit: [Community Alliance Funding Fair 2025: "Help & Funding – all in one place" Tickets, Wed 12 Nov 2025 at 14:00 | Eventbrite](#)

8. Binny McBinFace and Trash Gorden have arrived!

These are just two of the names selected by the public as part of a vehicle naming competition launched in July 2025.



We received 746 suggested names, from which a final selection was made by Cllr Amy Allen and Cllr Tim Hoskin in conjunction with the contractor. The names have started to appear on vehicles this week, so they'll soon be spotted out and about in the district. Please check and see "who" collects from you!

We will soon be releasing further press coverage, as well as some professional pictures commissioned by Veolia. These will also include shots of other new additions to the fleet. Cllrs Allen and Hoskin also got to try the new e-trikes Veolia has provided for this contract.

We are excited that residents and visitors to our towns will start to see our new initiative e-trike in town centres in the coming weeks. These are small electric powered trikes, powered by batteries to assist the street cleansing operatives in moving around our towns efficiently, loading up the bagged waste from litter bins and other street cleaning activities.

There are 11 electric vehicles on this contract, and we're pleased to share that they've also been named!

HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil)

We now have HVO (a renewable diesel alternative made from waste materials like used cooking oil and animal fats) at both depots, with our Letchworth depot tank installed this week. HVO has already started being used in East Herts, reducing diesel consumption.

We'll be sharing this positive change with residents via a press release and social media, highlighting the key advantages:

- It can be used in existing diesel engines without any modifications.
- It helps cut carbon emissions by up to 90%, making it a greener choice.
- It's ideal for fleets because it performs well even in cold weather and stores like regular diesel.

Contamination Management Plan – Service Update

As we approach the end of the sixth week following the service changes, and while crews and residents continue to adjust to the new collection schedules, the team is now preparing to reinstate contamination management.

This plan has been revised in partnership with Veolia and sets out a clear, supportive approach to managing contamination across all bin types. While we've always had policies in place, the move to three-weekly residual waste collections makes it even more important that we have consistent and effective processes to help residents use the service correctly and avoid costly issues.

We anticipate that most contamination will be unintentional. In such cases, a sticker will be applied to the bin as an initial friendly warning.

However, a formal three-step process will be introduced for each bin type:

First instance – A sticker will be applied to the bin.

Second instance – A hanger will be attached, and a helpful guidance letter will be sent to the household.

Third instance – If contamination persists or appears deliberate (e.g. misuse of bins to conceal waste), a further letter will be sent outlining the risks contamination presents and warning of further action.

As a reminder, contaminated bins will not be emptied. Significant contamination in a collection vehicle can result in the entire load being rejected, incurring substantial costs. Historically, we have managed contamination well, maintaining an average contamination rate below 5%.

This process will also apply to communal properties, where identifying the source of contamination is more challenging. We will work closely with managing agents to address issues, offering guidance and support where needed. Signage at communal sites is currently being updated, and bin configurations are being reviewed and adjusted as necessary.

The transition to the new service has had a greater impact on communal properties than anticipated, due to some data discrepancies during the rerouting process. This has led to incorrect collection information being assigned to some sites. We are actively resolving these issues and gradually restoring the expected collection frequencies.