



Hertsmere Borough Council

# Corporate Plan 2009-2015



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# Hertsmere – working with you, for you, improving our communities, our places

Hertsmere Borough Council's community leadership role is focused on improving the quality of life for everyone in the borough, working with our public, private, voluntary and community sector partners. These partners come together in the Local Strategic Partnership, Hertsmere Together, to agree the Sustainable Community Strategy which sets out the wider vision, challenges and opportunities for Hertsmere.

This Corporate Plan sets out the specific contribution the council makes to achieve the Sustainable Community Strategy. Whilst working with our partners is at the forefront of what we do, it is still necessary to set out our individual role and direction. This Corporate Plan details the council's vision, values, and corporate priorities and builds on the achievements of the previous Corporate Plan (2006-2009). We will strive for excellence in meeting these commitments with, and for, our communities.



**Councillor Morris Bright**  
**Leader of the Council**



**Dr Donald Graham**  
**Chief Executive**



## Hertsmere – our communities and places

Hertsmere is situated north of London in the southwest of Hertfordshire and includes the communities of Bushey, Potters Bar, Radlett, Elstree and Borehamwood. There are several smaller settlements including Shenley, South Mimms, Ridge, Aldenham and Letchmore Heath. Eighty percent (80%) of Hertsmere is Green Belt land, much of which is in agricultural use.

Hertsmere's close proximity to London impacts on the local economy. Whilst it generates inward investment, it also places added pressure on our infrastructure. With three major roads (M1, M25, A1) and good rail links running through the borough, the population is very mobile and more than 60% of residents commute to work outside the area.

The population of the borough at mid-2008 was 98,700 (Office of National Statistics estimates), of which 48% were men and 52% women. There is a slightly higher population of pensioners than the national average with



15.8% of residents aged 65 years or more , and the largest population group being 40-45 years. After Watford, Hertsmere is the most diverse district in Hertfordshire with 12% of the population not from white British or Irish background. In Elstree, the most diverse ward in the borough, this figure rises to 20%. Hertsmere has the second highest proportion of children in Hertfordshire who are from ethnic minorities - 25.7% of school-going children in the district are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.

Hertsmere is also the centre of Hertfordshire's Jewish community – almost 60% live in the borough, making up 11.3% of the population; larger than that of all the London boroughs, except Barnet. Hertsmere has a large Indian population of almost 2,300 people who mainly follow the Hindu faith. Hertsmere is also home to the UK headquarters of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness at Bhaktivedanta Manor.

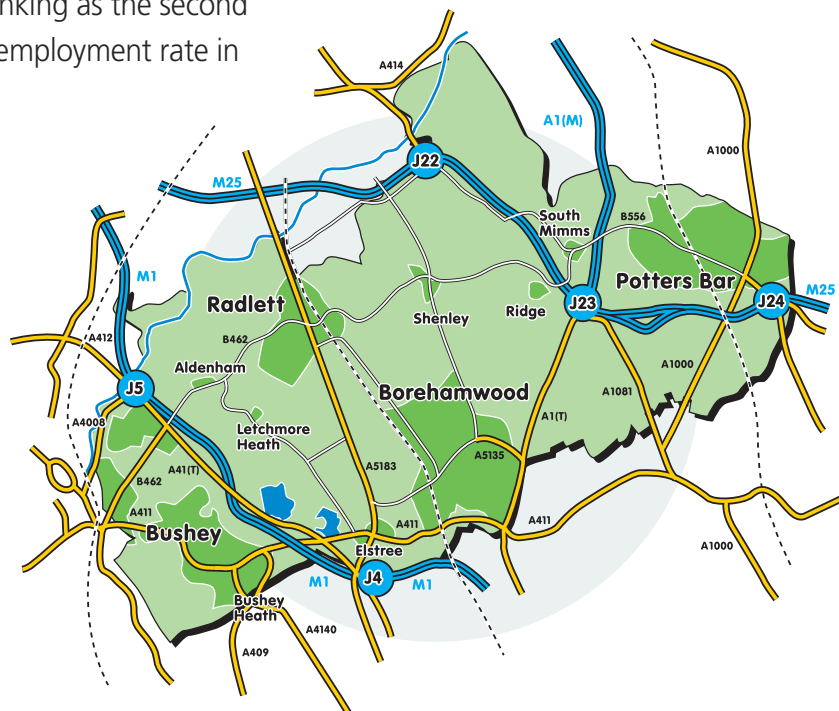




Hertsmere is a relatively affluent area with good levels of education and a low crime rate. One of the key contributors to the area's economy is the concentration of the creative film industry in the borough, including the BBC Studios and the internationally-renowned, council-owned Elstree Studios. Unemployment is low at 2.9% (claimant count rate June 2009) in line with county average of 2.9%. This conceals significant variations between areas, with Borehamwood ranking as the second highest area-based unemployment rate in the county at 4.4%.

The 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that part of Borehamwood Cowley Hill ward is in the top 25% of the most deprived areas in the country and in the top 3% most deprived areas in Hertfordshire. Other areas of deprivation also exist in parts of Bushey North, Potters Bar Oakmere and Borehamwood's Brookmeadow and Kenilworth wards. This deprivation contrasts sharply with the equally concentrated areas of affluence that characterise other areas of the borough, particularly Radlett and Aldenham.

Hertsmere has a wide variety of leisure facilities; this includes leisure centres, golf courses, sports grounds, recreation areas, the Bushey Rose Garden, and scenic country walks. There are three local nature reserves, and we have four parks that have been awarded Green Flags, and one park that has a Green Pennant Award. Our list of Locally Important Buildings includes almost 400 buildings and structures which are considered to be of particular local importance.



# Our vision and values

Hertsmere Borough Council is a public service organisation whose purpose is to deliver high quality, value for money services for our communities. Our vision, 'working with you, for you, improving our communities, our places', reflects our commitment to:

- **community engagement – “working with you”**
- **service – “for you”**
- **our communities – “improving our communities”**
- **our place shaping role – “our places”**

We recognise that there are many different communities within Hertsmere, from locality-based communities, faith communities, ethnic origin communities and business communities, to common-interest groups, and transient communities. We also recognise the key place shaping role that has been given to councils and councillors, and reflects the diverse places in our borough. Our towns, villages, neighbourhoods, buildings, parks and amenities all contribute to our unique sense of place.

Supporting the vision are our values. These are the behaviours that are important to us, and which together with our business principles and performance improvement, provide a framework for our actions to support the vision.



Our principles and values underpin our behaviour and approach to the work we do.

## Business principles

**Customer driven** – we engage with our customers to help shape services and put the needs of our communities at the heart of what we do.

**Value for money** – we ensure that we are doing the right thing, right first time, for the right cost, for the right outcomes.

**Local outcomes** – we work to make a positive difference to the quality of life for communities across Hertsmere.

**Partnership working** – we provide community leadership and work in partnership to deliver a shared vision for the local area through effective services and achieve greater capacity, expertise and economies of scale.

## Performance improvement

**Achieving results** – we turn local and national priorities into realistic actions to have positive outcomes in Hertsmere.

**Encouraging innovation** – we encourage and support innovation, creativity and risk-taking as part of our commitment to improvement.

**Ensuring accountability** – we are clear about, and accept responsibility for, the delivery of agreed actions.

**Good governance** – we ensure that we are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

## Values

**Being of service** – we ensure the delivery of accessible, high-quality services, putting our customers first.

**Ensuring equality in all we do** – we value and listen to each other and understand and acknowledge the contributions our differences make.

**Integrity and openness** – we are fair, ethical and transparent in our actions.

**Invest in employees** – we invest in our employees to ensure a flexible, skilled and committed workforce.

# Our council



The council is made up of 39 elected councillors (Members). In 2009 the controlling political group was Conservative with 31 councillors. The Mayor is the first citizen of the borough and is a non-political role whose duties are to represent the borough in its widest sense, both within Hertsmeare and outside.

We have adopted a cabinet system where cabinet members have specific responsibilities ('portfolios') and focus on the services or functions within their own portfolio area. The Leader of the Council chairs the seven-member cabinet, known as the Executive, made up of the controlling political group. Meeting regularly, the Executive deals with major issues and makes decisions. All councillors meet together at council meetings. The council sets the budget and policy framework and remains the ultimate decision-making body.

There are a number of other functions such as planning and licensing which are delegated by the council to other committees, boards and panels, or officers of the council. These are:

- Approval of Statement of Account Committee
- Audit Committee

- Constitutional and Meeting Arrangements Panel
- Hertsmeare Highways Partnership Joint Members Panel
- Licensing Committee
- Locality-based Planning Committees
- Member Planning Panel
- Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Personnel Committee
- Planning Referrals Committee
- Standards Committee

Hertsmeare has signed up to the Improvement and Development Agency Charter for Member Development. The overall aim of this programme is to ensure that all members have access to the training and development opportunities they need to fulfil their responsibilities to the local community and provide clear leadership and effective scrutiny of local council functions.





## Our services

Local Government in England is structured in different ways. In parts of England, a single tier 'all-purpose council' is responsible for all local authority functions. These are called unitary, Metropolitan, or London Borough councils/authorities. The remainder of England has a two-tier system, in which two separate councils divide responsibilities between them. These are district or borough councils and county councils.

In Hertfordshire, which is a two-tier area, the county council and district and borough councils, are supported by a third tier of town and parish councils. All tiers work closely together to provide the best services possible for people who live, work, or visit the borough. Hertsmere provides the following services:

- **Central services** – council tax collection and benefits, business rates collection, elections, democracy, land charges, community safety, asset management
- **Cultural services** – sports, leisure, cultural opportunities and open spaces
- **Environmental services** – refuse collection, street cleaning, recycling, animal warden, pest control, licensing, environmental health, fly-tipping removal, air quality and pollution control
- **Transport** – parking and parking enforcement, concessionary bus fares
- **Planning services** – development control, building control, planning appeals, planning enforcement, and local plans

- **Housing** – housing benefit, dealing with homelessness, housing standards, energy conservation and adaptation to homes for disabilities

Hertsmere's leisure services were established as a charitable trust, Hertsmere Leisure, in 2002. The council still owns and maintains the leisure centre buildings. Although the council transferred its housing stock to two Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in 1994, it retains responsibility for strategic housing matters. In addition to the two main RSLs in the Hertsmere, namely Affinity Sutton and Aldwyck Housing, there are a range of other providers.

A number of other public sector organisations provide services in Hertsmere. The borough is policed by Hertfordshire Constabulary. Hertsmere is covered by the West Hertfordshire Primary Care Trust.

We are committed to working with these and other partners to ensure the priorities of local services match those of the local community.



## Our drivers, challenges and opportunities

The council carries out regular consultation with local people, customers, stakeholders, service users and partners to establish current and future priorities and the needs of our community. The Place Survey is a compulsory biennial postal survey for all local authorities. The survey focuses on residents' views about the area and quality of life rather than on the local authority and customer satisfaction. Every three years we consult our residents through a face-to-face survey. The most recent Place and Residents' surveys were conducted in 2008.

Overall, 84% of people asked are satisfied with their area as a place to live. The reasons for making the area a good place to live, which are within the council's influence, are:

- Low crime rate and feelings of safety
- Affordable housing
- Clean streets
- Parks and open spaces



Our residents have told us that we need to focus on:

- Reducing crime
- Activities for young people
- Clean streets



We also collect and analyse information about our places and our communities to identify strategic challenges affecting the overall well-being of the community to enable us to be responsive to emerging issues such as the current economic climate.

**Land use** – There is a balance to be struck between the need for housing provision and the high percentage of the area that is Green Belt land. There is a strong desire to maintain Hertsmere's Green Belt, character and landscape.

**Population** – Our population is very diverse and constantly growing and needs housing and other key services. There is a slightly higher population of pensioners than the national average with 15.8% of residents aged over 65 years.

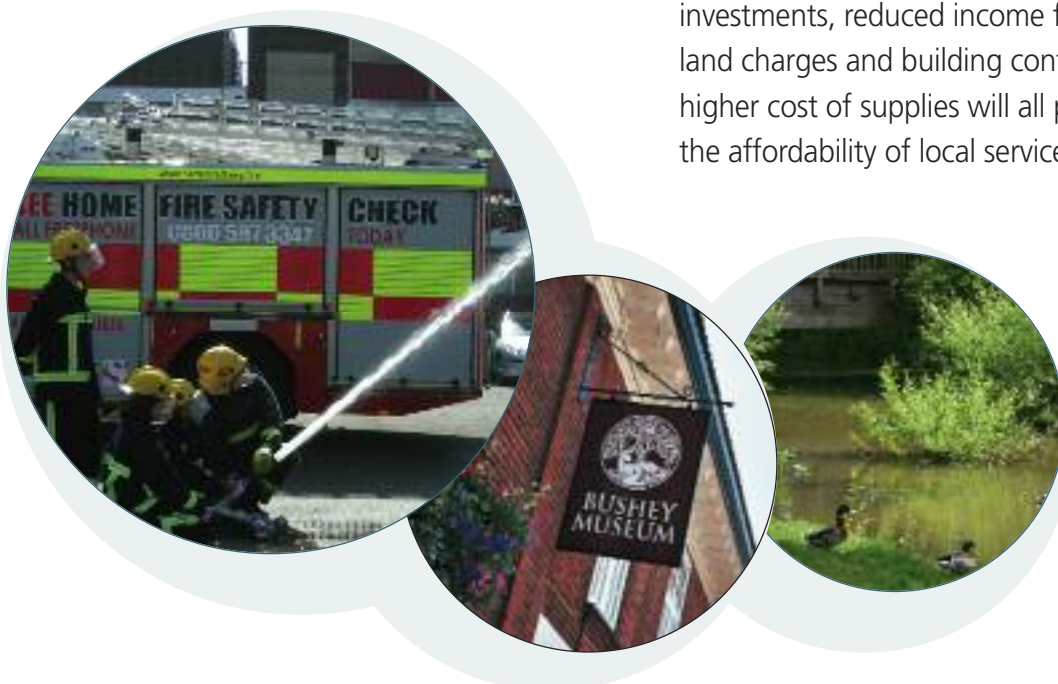
**Affluence and deprivation** – Hertsmere's relative affluence masks some pockets of significant deprivation. Some wards suffer from higher than national average unemployment rates, higher levels of poverty, poor health, poor educational skills level and higher than average rates of crime. Inequalities within the area are highlighted by a lack of affordable housing and by the fact that the average house price in Hertsmere is £316,712 compared with £160,973 nationally and £277,633 in the South East (end of December 2009).

**Community safety** – Hertsmere remains a low crime area and the last few years have seen significant reductions in crime. Despite this, domestic burglaries, vehicle crimes and community reassurance are areas of priority for our residents.

**Health** – Whilst health outcomes are generally good, there are specific pockets of health inequality and district-wide challenges related to obesity, road safety and smoking cessation.

**Environment** – In common with many parts of the UK, Hertsmere also faces the challenges of climate change, rising energy costs, flood risk, the future growth of the area, as well as issues relating to air quality and traffic congestion.

**Government support** – Our Revenue Support Grant (RSG) for 2009 is £15 per head of population, compared with a county average of £13. We received £7,868,240 RSG (including business rates grant) for 2009/10. The reduced Government grant, lower return from our investments, reduced income from planning, land charges and building control, and the higher cost of supplies will all put pressure on the affordability of local services in future years.



**Central Government** provides the legislative and policy framework for local government. This covers a wide range of guidance, regulation and legislation which sets the context within which we work.

**Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007** gives local people more influence and power and develops the roles of councils as place shapers.

**Comprehensive Spending Review** establishes the framework for local government finance settlements from central Government.

**Comprehensive Area Assessment** introduced in 2009, is the new area/community outcome-focused performance framework for local government, replacing the Comprehensive Performance Assessment of organisations.

**Hertfordshire Local Area Agreement (2008-11)** between the government and the local area (Hertfordshire) sets out the priority themes for action – children and young people, healthy communities and older people, safer and stronger communities, economic development and enterprise.

**Hertfordshire Pathfinder** is a Government sponsored initiative to create opportunities for the county and districts to share services and projects to provide better and more cost effective services for local communities.

**East of England Regional Spatial Strategy** establishes housing allocations for Hertsmere and the context for the development of our Local Development Framework.





# Our corporate priorities

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This plan is a key document which sets out how we will deliver our vision for Hertsmere. We want residents, partners and staff to know what we are going to do to achieve this. Our aim is to deliver local priorities to the people of Hertsmere using a combination of services; some of which we are obliged to deliver by law and others which we choose to provide in order to deliver our priorities. Our priorities are designed around our knowledge of our places and communities, the challenges and opportunities presented by wider national, regional and county agendas, and the feedback from local residents on issues that are important to them. Although each of the priorities are listed as individual areas, there is significant inter-relationship and inter-dependencies across all of them.

## Safer communities

Contribute to reducing crime levels, combat anti-social behaviour and improve people's feelings of safety.

## Quality environments

Protect and enhance both the natural and the built environments to ensure clean, green and sustainable places for our residents.

## Healthy, thriving communities

Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities through the promotion of healthy living initiatives and leisure, sport, and cultural opportunities for everyone.

## Economic wellbeing

Encourage and support activities and opportunities that strengthen the local economy and deliver economic well-being to our communities.

## Decent homes

Improve the quality of housing, promote a balanced housing market, and tackle homelessness.



# Safer communities

## Why is it a priority?

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Following the establishment of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership for Hertsmere in 2002, we have developed a successful track record of working together to address community safety issues across the borough. The partnership includes representatives from our key partners including Hertfordshire Police Authority, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Service, county and borough councils and the Primary Care Trust.

Crime levels in Hertsmere are relatively low and steadily falling whilst the number of crimes solved has increased. However, crime and disorder remains a priority issue for the people of Hertsmere. Although 2% of people are actual victims of crime, 44% of residents are worried that they may become a victim of crime (2008 figures).

In our last residents' survey (2008), 38% of respondents cited the low crime rate as the reason for the area being a good place to live. However the reduction of crime and the fear of crime remains the most important aim for the council to focus on for 40% of respondents. Community safety initiatives have been identified as the second most important service for residents of the borough.

Vandalism and graffiti, rubbish and litter are seen as problems that contribute to people not feeling safe. Perceptions of crime, anti-social behaviour and drug dealing are also higher than expected (2009 Place Survey); although the council and the police have scored well in relation to our understanding concerns of, and dealing with, anti-social behaviour. We also need to work with our partners to ensure a safe environment and to provide an effective response in civil emergencies.

### Our key objectives are to:

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1. Work in partnership with the police and other key agencies to address the concerns of our residents.
2. Create safer environments by tackling crime, anti-social behaviour, and alcohol related disorder.
3. Build community confidence and increase feelings of community safety.

## Objective 1

We will work in partnership with the police and other key agencies to address the concerns of our residents by...

### Providing community leadership

We will...

- Work with key partners as an effective member of the Hertsmerre Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP).
- Take an effective lead on the priority area of building community confidence and increase feelings of community safety.

### Sharing information

We will...

- Carry out an annual strategic assessment as the means of reviewing our community safety priorities.
- Engage with wider community partners to inform actions and initiatives to jointly address issues such as anti-social behaviour.
- Develop an evidence based understanding of crime and disorder within the borough through sharing information between partners.

### Providing partnership coordination

We will...

- Co-ordinate the annual programme of meetings and work of the Responsible Authorities Group (RAG), Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), Performance Management Group (PMG) and Area Crime Reduction Groups (CRGs).



### Did you know...

Crime is the most important concern for our residents.

Community safety initiatives are a priority for our residents.

## Objective 2

We will create safer communities by tackling crime, anti-social behaviour and alcohol-related disorder by...

### Working with our partners to reduce crime and disorder

We will...

- Deliver a range of targeted campaigns and activities to increase potential victims' awareness of crime prevention to reduce opportunities for crime to take place. For example, crime prevention advice (Christmas Menu) and number plate security (PL8SAF3).
- Work with police and key partners to reduce serious acquisitive crime (burglary, robbery, theft of and theft from motor vehicles) by 13% over the period 2009-2011.

### Promoting safer communities

We will...

- Work to design out crime through our planning processes in liaison with our Police Architectural Liaison Officer and the local communities.
- Work in partnership to address issues such as noise nuisance, to enable our communities to have quiet enjoyment of their neighbourhoods.
- Co-ordinate at least six multi-agency Environmental Action Days a year, working together to tidy up neighbourhoods.

### Reducing anti-social behaviour and alcohol-related disorder

We will...

- Work through the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group to deliver initiatives in response to anti-social behaviour and criminal damage hot spots.
- Make effective use of licensing and enforcement activities.
- Ensure that the members of our licensing committees are fully trained to carry out their responsibilities.



### Did you know...

Crime is falling – there were 197 fewer crimes last year (down 2.5%).



**PL8 SAF3**



## Objective 3

We will build community confidence and increase feelings of community safety by...

### Ensuring a visible presence

We will...

- Continue to fund Police Community Support Officers who will spend at least 80% of their time out in the community.
- Expand the effective use of CCTV services to contribute to detecting and reducing crime, and prosecuting offenders.
- Increase the number of community safety accredited officers as part of the extended police family, with authority to tackle issues such as nuisance behaviour and underage possession of alcohol and tobacco.
- Respond promptly and effectively to any civil emergencies that may occur.

### Communicating effectively

We will...

- Publicise the activities and achievements of the CDRP on a quarterly basis.
- Actively promote community safety messages through different means such as Hertsmere News and the Online Watch Link (OWL) system.
- Co-ordinate a reassurance campaign delivered through the local media.
- Raise awareness of civil protection arrangements through the county-wide partnership for emergency planning.

### Engaging and empowering our communities

We will...

- Expand the Neighbourhood Watch in areas with least coverage.
- Develop and expand the 'Watch' approach to other schemes such as Dog Watch, Pub Watch and Shop Watch.
- Host five locality based Crime Reduction Groups which will meet at least once a quarter to consider issues of local importance.



**Did you know...**

We have Neighbourhood Watch schemes in 56% of our streets. Is yours covered?

# Quality environments

## Why is it a priority?

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Climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing us in the next fifty years. There are many different aspects to the issues, including energy sources, use and costs; sustainable materials; carbon emissions; and water management. Everyone has a role to play to address these issues, and local authorities in particular.

A clean and healthy environment contributes to the quality of all our lives. Problems such as litter, dumped rubbish and pollution can damage the environment in which we live, our health, how safe we feel in our communities, and how willing businesses are to invest in creating the jobs we need for the future. Hertsmere has achieved great success in this area.

The most commonly used council services are doorstep green waste collection service (76%), recycling facilities (64%) and open spaces (54%). Our residents have told us that clean streets, and good parks and open spaces are some of the reasons for the area being a good place to live. Our latest residents' survey shows that minimising waste and increasing recycling is one of the top three aims that the council should focus on. Waste collection and recycling are one of the main drivers for satisfaction with the council.

Good design and quality neighbourhoods have an impact on people's health and wellbeing as well as a feeling of belonging within the community. We are therefore committed to ensuring the quality of the built environment. We want buildings that will stand the test of time to enable people to stay in their homes for as long as possible, reduce the ongoing costs of heating to avoid the issues of fuel poverty, and ensure that the materials used are sustainable. We have to provide homes in the right locations for future generations whilst maintaining a balance between the growth of our existing settlements and how we manage the green belt.

### **Our key objectives are to:**

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1. Protect and enhance our street scene, including improving waste minimisation.
2. Protect and enhance our natural environment.
3. Protect and enhance our built environment.



## Objective 1

We will protect and enhance our street scene, including reducing waste by...

### Enhancing the management of waste

We will...

- Introduce recycling facilities to flats and hard to access properties in liaison with Registered Social Landlords.
- Increase the 'recycling on the go' facilities in the borough.
- Increase the amount of waste recycled or composted to 54% by 2012.
- Review current collection methods.
- Increase the types of materials that can be recycled from the kerbside.
- Encourage people to reduce and reuse as well as recycle.

### Working in partnership

We will...

- Work in partnership with other councils in Hertfordshire to implement alternative methods of treatment for residual waste.
- Participate fully in a joint awareness campaign, keeping a specific Hertsmere programme.

### Implementing street scene enforcement

We will...

- Work in partnership with Hertfordshire Constabulary to introduce the issuing of fix penalty notices for street littering offences through our 'Pride in Hertsmere' programme.
- Develop further enforcement activities related to the environment.

### Engaging

We will...

- Continue with our community involvement and engagement programme to include events and roadshows.
- Develop and maintain our forums and friends groups.
- Introduce a quarterly street scene newsletter to include a user satisfaction survey.



### Did you know...

We collect 38,910 tonnes of waste each year and we recycle or compost 15,475 tonnes of this.

## Objective 2

We will protect and enhance our natural environment by...

### Improving our parks and open spaces

We will...

- Maintain and extend the number of green flag parks, and aspire to the same standards in all our parks.
- Restore the Bushey Rose Garden (Heritage Lottery Funding project).
- Enable the number of green pennants to be maintained and extended.
- Install adult fitness equipment in parks.
- Work to secure funding through the planning process to improve and build upon our parks and open spaces for the benefit of our communities.

### Promoting environmental health

We will...

- Work in partnership to deter fly-tipping within Hertsmere.
- Continue to work with local food businesses to provide information to customers regarding food safety through the 'Scores on the Doors.'
- Explore opportunities to improve on the availability and cost of public conveniences.
- Reduce work-related road traffic injuries through focused Health and Safety inspections of warehouses etc.

### Protecting our Green Belt

We will...

- Use brownfield (previously developed) sites for development to minimise incursion into the Green Belt.
- Protect the Green Belt as a natural health and leisure resource for our communities.
- Manage our urban development to prevent merging of settlements to maintain community identities.



### Did you know...

With five awards, Hertsmere has the highest number of Green Flags in Hertfordshire for the quality of our parks and open spaces.

124 food premises were issued with Scores on the Doors certificates in 2008/09.



## Objective 3

We will protect and enhance the built environment by...

### Managing development

We will...

- Use our planning policies to inform focused developments to meet local needs – economic need; housing need; and health and wellbeing need – and to resist inappropriate development.
- Work in partnership across the county, and through our planning process, to ensure that there is adequate infrastructure provided for those who live, work and study in Hertsmere.
- Proactively manage development activities in the borough encouraging appropriate developments and opportunities to create places that people want to live and work in.
- Protect and enhance the historic heritage and the character and identity of towns and settlements.

### Supporting sustainable environments

We will...

- Continue to support the Nottingham Declaration to address the causes of climate change through the planning process and green travel plan solutions.
- Consider more environmentally friendly fuel sources for our services.
- Promote environmental quality and high-quality design in new developments, encouraging development in appropriate locations and where sustainability is integral to the building design.
- Support lifetime homes through the planning process and Disabled Facilities Grants to enable people to stay in their homes for as long as possible.
- Work with partners such as the Environment Agency to ensure development is in appropriate locations, not putting properties in flood plains.
- Take appropriate action to ensure that homeowners maintain their environment around their homes.

### Parking management

We will...

- Use our Controlled Parking Zone powers to improve the quality of residential environments whilst not stifling local businesses and commerce.
- Manage road traffic to improve the quality of the environment, including air quality.



### Did you know...

We processed over  
1,200 planning  
applications for  
2008/09.



# Healthy, thriving communities

## Why is it a priority?

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Participation in sport and recreation has long been recognised as a positive activity for a range of reasons, creating a sense of enjoyment and camaraderie, keeping fit and healthy, and allowing participants to set and achieve personal challenges. Increasingly the wider benefits of participation are being recognised in government policy. Sport and recreation can be a cost-effective driver for social change on many levels and makes an important contribution to health, education attainment, social inclusion, community cohesion, crime and disorder reduction, personal development and even economic prosperity.

Heritage encompasses elements of the physical, cultural and social environment which have been or may be left behind and which can be experienced to provide a sense of community and identity. It also includes elements that diverse communities may now wish to preserve and pass on to future generations. Heritage can create a shared sense of belonging and, through celebration of the diversity of communities, lead to a wealth of cultural opportunities.

Local communities are not passive receivers of services. They want to shape services that affect them at a level of engagement that suits them. It is important that the council not only supports and encourages the involvement of local people, but also builds capacity and empowers people to become engaged. Our councillors have a good understanding of the local area that they represent, and they have an important community leadership role. There are also other community leaders who, although not democratically-elected, have a responsibility to the groups and people they lead. They too have an important role to play.

### Our key objectives are to:

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1. Improve the health of local people through the provision of, and improved access to, services which support healthier lifestyles and reduce health inequalities.
2. Maintain and develop our cultural heritage.
3. Empower local communities and community leaders.

## Objective 1

We will improve the health of residents through the provision of, and improved access to, services which support healthier lifestyles and reduce health inequalities by...

### Providing strategic leadership

We will...

- Continue to play a leading role in the District Children's Trust Partnership to work towards ensuring children and young people are healthy, safe, achieving economic wellbeing, enjoying and achieving, and making a positive contribution.
- Work with strategic partners to identify need and service gaps; provide support, coordination and challenge; and play a leading role in coordinating services that work towards reducing health inequalities.

### Providing facilities and activities

We will...

- Coordinate, promote and monitor the delivery of programmes for children and young people.
- Increase opportunities for free, open access play, in parks and open spaces.
- Continue to oversee the effective contract management of our leisure centres.
- Support activities that encourage a more active lifestyle for mid-life and older residents.
- Deliver a range of activities to encourage and support people in stopping smoking.

### Engaging and empowering

We will...

- Increase and improve the formal means for dialogue with young people and opportunities for young people to influence and determine service delivery.
- Support the voluntary sports sector through coordinating the borough's community sports network.

### Ensuring equality of access

We will...

- Develop concessionary pricing scheme(s) through the borough's leisure facilities to provide greater opportunity of access to specific target groups, including offering free swimming at dedicated times in our leisure centres for people aged 16 years and under and 60 years and over.
- Continue to support Concessionary Bus Fares to enable people aged 60 and over to have good access to healthcare facilities e.g. to local hospitals outside the borough.
- Deliver a range of activities that address inequalities in levels of participation in sport and active recreation including age, gender and disability.



**Did you know...**

Hertsmere has three high quality leisure centres across the borough.



## Objective 2

We will maintain and develop our cultural heritage by...

### Promoting facilities

We will...

- Support the development of 96 Shenley Road in Borehamwood, as a multi-purpose community venue with the provision of museum and heritage services within it.
- Sustain and celebrate buildings and sites of historic interest including the Bushey Rose Garden.
- Support the three local museums (Bushey, Potters Bar, and Borehamwood) to continue to provide access for everyone to their collections and achieve nationally recognised accreditation standards.
- Support The Ark Community Theatre.

### Delivering activities

We will...

- Deliver a minimum of 60 community events each year throughout the borough's parks and open spaces.
- Continue to support the borough's museums and partner heritage organisations in the development of educational exhibitions and programmes.
- Deliver activities that celebrate the film and television heritage of Hertsmere.
- Deliver a programme of weekly cultural and recreation classes for older people across the borough.
- Celebrate and promote the heritage of diverse communities through identifying and supporting culturally specific arts-based organisations.

### Engaging and empowering

We will...

- Work with our heritage partner organisations through the Heritage Forum.
- Support and sustain partnerships and resources that support heritage – looking at sustainable future for heritage assets.



?

### Did you know...

There were 192 days of filming across locations in Hertsmere in 2008/09.

## Objective 3

We will empower local communities and community leaders by...

### Supporting our members

We will...

- Continue to develop opportunities for members to contribute to the improvement of their local areas, for example, the Ward Improvement Initiative Scheme (WIIS).
- Ensure our members have the skills and development to fulfil their roles as demonstrated through our commitment to the Member Development Charter.
- Continue to support the nomination of members onto external bodies.

### Engaging and empowering

We will...

- Support key community and voluntary sector (CVS) organisations such as Community Action Hertsmere to build capacity and social capital and support CVS groups in delivering activities that contribute to the corporate goals through the Community Grants Programme.
- Champion opportunities for local people to become active citizens and build community capacity to shape and deliver local services.
- Use a variety of methods to engage with local people and encourage people to participate in democratic processes.

### Promoting a cohesive community

We will...

- Support organisations such as the Interfaith Forum, which actively promote wider tolerance and understanding.
- Celebrate our diverse communities through our support for activities and events such as Interfaith Week, Holocaust Memorial Day.
- Work with representative groups to improve access to services for all.

### Working in partnership

We will...

- Take an active leadership role in: enabling the Local Strategic Partnership to achieve the aspirations of the Sustainable Community Strategy; partnership projects to maximise the benefits for local communities for example, 96 Shenley Road project.
- Make the most of partnership arrangements to deliver improvements for our communities.



#### Did you know...

84% of residents surveyed are satisfied with Hertsmere as a place to live.

# Economic wellbeing

## Why is it a priority?

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Economic wellbeing is vital for Hertsmere to ensure sustainable employment for local people. This can only be achieved by working in close partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, the private sector and the community and voluntary sector.

The workforce in Hertsmere is generally highly-skilled and on average well-paid. However, this picture masks a number of challenges that need to be addressed. Despite the general affluence, there are pockets of high unemployment and the generally high level of skills amongst our workforce mask significant numbers of the population without formal qualifications. London also attracts many highly skilled people to higher wages and different employment opportunities, so commuting levels are high. (Approximately 27,000 people commute out of Hertsmere, while almost 25,500 commute into the borough, according to the 2001 Census.)

The recent recession has led to a slowdown in the local economy with increasing unemployment. More challenging conditions lay ahead for our economy if we are to sustain our relative prosperity and address our areas of deprivation. These factors include the global economy, our proximity to London, infrastructure needs, and growth pressures emanating from the East of England plan.

As part of our commitment to addressing the economic wellbeing of the borough, we are an active participant in the Hertfordshire-wide Economic Partnership Board, chairing the Recession Task Force sub-group. In addition, we are the lead on the Recession Pledge to 'improve publicity on how to improve insulation and reduce energy use.'

### Our key objectives are to:

---

1. Support a thriving local economy.
2. Facilitate opportunities for our communities to prosper.
3. Make the most of the potential of our assets.

## Objective 1

We will support a thriving local economy by...

### Promoting and improving places

We will...

- Simplify the planning process in certain areas by the use of Local Development Orders (LDOs) to promote speed of regeneration which will lead to the potential for more employment as well as physical improvement to the environment.
- Work in partnership with land owners, Primary Care Trust (PCT), housing associations, social entrepreneurs and communities and others to co-ordinate, encourage and support the physical and social regeneration of neighbourhoods such as Cowley Hill, to support health and economic wellbeing.
- Realise opportunities from brownfield (previously developed) sites to support the protection of the green belt, physical and social regeneration of areas, and economic development.
- Work in partnership to promote and develop vibrant town centres.

### Promoting inward investment

We will...

- Work with partnership agencies and landowners to achieve the redevelopment of the Elstree Way Corridor to provide inward investment opportunities and jobs, an attractive gateway to the town and housing opportunities, both affordable and open market housing.
- Support inward investment across the borough through partnership working with the Economic Partnership Board (Herts Works) of the Hertfordshire Local Strategic Partnership, identifying and encouraging opportunities for investment.

### Supporting local enterprise

We will...

- Encourage the growth and retention of local businesses, and their supply chains.
- Work with partners such as Herts Chamber of Commerce to engage with local businesses.
- Work with and support local social enterprises, such as Working Herts, to support people who are not in employment, education or training, to improve access to employment.



### Did you know...

In 2008/09, nearly 90% of all new homes built in Hertsmere were built on previously developed land (brownfield sites).

## Objective 2

We will facilitate opportunities for our communities to prosper by...

### Tackling deprivation

We will...

- Support key community and voluntary sector organisations such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau and Community Action Hertsmere.
- Continue to support measures and activities to reduce fuel poverty amongst our most vulnerable residents.

### Community leadership

We will...

- Continue in our commitment and leadership role in chairing the county-wide recession task force.
- Actively participate in the economic sub-group of Local Strategic Partnership.

### Partnership working

We will...

- Work with partners such as Hertsmere Leisure Trust (HLT) to improve childcare provision, creating job opportunities and supporting people back into employment.
- Work with partners to enable our communities to access information relating to jobs, skills, and support.



### Did you know...

We provide £781k support to the community and voluntary sector.



citizens  
advice  
bureau





## Objective 3

We will make the most of the potential of our assets by...

### Effective resource management

We will...

- Act as a responsible landlord of our commercial properties to stimulate the local economy.
- Identify opportunities to develop our property portfolio.
- Optimise the return on our commercial properties responsibly.

### Encouraging the growth and retention of local businesses

We will...

- Encourage local businesses to participate in the procurement process for goods and services to support local jobs.
- Maintain our ongoing commitment to Elstree Studios and Bushey Golf and Country Club which generate an income, enabling us to keep Council Tax as low as possible.



### Did you know...

£70 million of turnover is generated through Elstree Studios.

Over 1,000 people are employed at Elstree Studios with a further 1,500 casual jobs created through studio events.



# Decent homes

## Why is it a priority?

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A decent, affordable home is a basic human right. The impact of poor housing on people's lives and the inter-relationship between housing and other public services is enormous. Bad or overcrowded housing has a serious impact on health, leads to shorter life expectancy and causes under-achievement in education and employment. Clear links have been established between poor housing and poor health, with various conditions caused by cold and damp homes, and homes in disrepair contributing to trips and falls, fires, electrical and gas safety issues. Good-quality adaptations in the home, energy efficiency improvements and repairs can make all the difference to elderly people who might otherwise need residential care.

The need for affordable housing continues to outstrip supply. In 2009 there were 1,800 households registered on our waiting list and the total continues to grow. It is a significant challenge for the council to encourage new building during the recession, and to get at least 35% of new homes to be made available for sale or rent at a price which is affordable for the less well off. Households approaching the council for assistance with homelessness continue to grow in 2009/2010.

Homes must be made greener as well, both new and existing, to achieve national and international targets for reducing carbon emissions and make our communities more sustainable. We are working to support the community's housing needs by encouraging the provision of the right housing, in the right place through our strategic housing role.

### **Our key objectives are to:**

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1. Meet the housing needs of vulnerable people.
2. Improve private sector housing standards.
3. Increase affordable housing.

## Objective 1

We will strive to meet the housing needs of vulnerable people by...

### Preventing homelessness

We will...

- In partnership with local schools, provide information for young people to help them avoid homelessness.
- Provide more options for potentially homeless people through Choice Based Lettings and the private sector.
- Work closely with partners such as Registered Social Landlords, Citizens Advice Bureau, and Domestic Violence Forum to provide information and advice to reduce the likelihood, and therefore instances, of homelessness.
- Work to reduce the number of homeless families in temporary accommodation through earlier intervention with families and landlords.

### Working in partnership

We will...

- Work with the county council, Registered Social Landlords and other agencies to address the needs of gypsies and travellers, older people, young people and people with special needs.
- Make better use of existing housing, for example, under-used sheltered schemes coming into general use.
- Work with Registered Social Landlords on common policies and procedures to make it easier for people to access housing.

### Helping those in need

We will...

- Meet the demand for home adaptations by improving the efficiency of grant-aided work.
- Actively encourage new home developments that meet the lifetime homes standard thereby enabling people to remain in their homes as they become older or disabled, and a proportion of new housing will be wheelchair accessible.
- Work with partners to meet the needs of people with learning difficulties and mental health challenges, to act as broker between Registered Social Landlords, Homes and Community Agency, county council, to secure the development of suitable new housing, for example Girtin Road, Bushey.



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### Did you know...

162 households have been housed through the Choice Based Letting (CBL) scheme since it started in December 2008.

## Objective 2

We will improve private sector housing standards by...

### Accessing financial support

We will...

- Publicise grants and loans and subsidised schemes to encourage take-up by those in need.
- Actively work to lever in new funding sources at a county-wide, regional and national level.

### Targeted enforcement

We will...

- Advise owners / occupiers of higher risk housing, for example Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs), and take enforcement action where necessary.
- Respond promptly to complaints by tenants regarding the quality of their housing, including tenants in private rented sector and housing association accommodation.

### Partnership working

We will...

- Work with landlords to encourage higher standards in the private rented sector on par with the Decent Homes Standard.
- Work with homeowners to promote and encourage energy efficiency by providing subsidies and advice.



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### Did you know...

We brought 148 empty homes back into use in 2008/09.

## Objective 3

We will increase affordable housing by...

### Optimising existing supply

We will...

- Work with Registered Social Landlords to use under-used homes while redevelopment is being considered.
- Work with Registered Social Landlords to bring empty homes back into use.
- Work with the private sector to make private sector homes available to homeseekers.

### Reducing empty homes

We will...

- Work with private sector home owners to reduce long term empty homes.
- Encourage the reporting of empty homes to enable us to work with owners to work towards re-use.
- Advise and encourage homeowners by offering them options and taking enforcement action if necessary.

### Building new homes

We will...

- Through planning agreements, require developments over a certain size to reserve a proportion of the development for affordable housing, including the provision of family sized homes.
- Encourage local Registered Social Landlords to use their land and invest in our borough.
- Engage with the Homes and Communities to maximise public investment in Hertsmere.
- Identify opportunities to use our property portfolio to provide land for new homes.



### Did you know...

We helped secure £4 million from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for the Girtin Road development in Bushey.



# Managing performance

Managing performance is about delivering the best possible outcomes for our service users and customers. We seek to manage performance not as an end in itself, but as a way of achieving our objectives.

We are committed to improvement and achievement through the performance management framework that uses service planning, appraisals and competencies, financial management, risk management, consultation and benchmarking.

Our performance management strategy sets out the council's approach to performance management. For Hertsmere, performance management is checking that the right things are being done and that things are being done right.

Our performance management model is: PLAN, DO, REVIEW, REVISE. Our performance management activities cascade up and down the organisation.

We recognise the importance of reliable information to support our performance management arrangements. Accurate, high quality, timely and relevant information is vital to support good decision making and improved services. In order to ensure that we can trust our data we have a Data Quality Policy.

Our performance management arrangements allow us to examine our performance, look for trends over time, compare our performance with other local authorities and produce meaningful reports which can be used as a

guide for improvements. We are also able to monitor targets to ensure they are achievable and challenging.

A dedicated software system facilitates this through the use of a simple traffic light system – green for good performance, amber for fair performance, and red for performance below expectations.

Like other local authorities, we have an obligation to report on National Indicators (NIs). We have also developed local performance indicators to reflect our local priorities which are used for internal reporting.

Performance outcomes are reported at various levels, involving elected members, officers and local strategic partners. All performance data is monitored on a quarterly basis by the Performance Management Panel which has cross-party representation and the Portfolio Holder and includes the Chair of the Overview and Performance Committee. Formal performance reports are presented to the Executive and Overview and Performance Committee on a quarterly basis. Where performance is not on target, actions are developed and implemented to redress the position.



## Managing finances

Like all public sector organisations, we face the challenges of delivering high-quality services with limited financial resources. We maintain an integrated financial planning process that incorporates the council's corporate goals, individual service plans, risk management, asset management and management of the council's investments.

Our robust financial planning process means that we can react swiftly to changes in the economy as well as residents' priorities in order to deliver a sustainable short and medium term Financial Strategy in a timely and efficient manner. Our medium term Financial Strategy plays a crucial role in ensuring that the council remains financially sound, and that we manage our resources properly in order to respond to ever increasing demands on our services.

Our medium term Financial Strategy sets out the budget framework and identifies key spending priorities and allocates resources accordingly. The Financial Strategy also looks carefully at future revenue streams and cost drivers, identifies risks associated with them and highlights additional resources as required as part of the reserves and balances policy.

We collect the council tax charge on behalf of Government, for Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Hertfordshire Constabulary, all the local town and parish councils, and for us as the borough council.

Each authority sets its own charge that contributes to the total. In 2009/10 the total average charge for all these authorities at

Band D is £1,441.83. Our part of the charges, including town and parish councils, is £157.36.

All budgets are the responsibility of the relevant Head of Service, and are managed on that basis. Comprehensive financial monitoring information is provided to the Senior Management Team, Executive Members, Financial Monitors and Heads of Service. The Financial Monitors panel monitors financial performance by identifying any areas of significant financial concern. Where variations are identified through the monitoring process, review and actions are put in place to address this to ensure that the financial plan targets are met.

We are also required to set out our Treasury Strategy which sets out our policies for managing our investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. The Treasury Management Strategy is approved by council each year as part of the budget process.



## Managing the business

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The council has a responsibility as a public service organisation to ensure that it has good governance arrangements to deliver services that provide value for money and deliver better outcomes for local people. We have systems of internal control to safeguard the public purse, as well as information such as performance data, to provide assurance to auditors, members, and local residents, that the council is managing the business of delivering public services as effectively as possible.

The council's constitution sets out how the council operates, how decisions are made, and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

The role of our members is set out in the section Our council, on page eight of this document. The chief officers are the Chief Executive, Director of Environment and Director of Resources, and the Chief Executive has overall corporate management and operational responsibility, and determines the overall departmental structure of the council. The senior management team is responsible to the chief officers for the operation of their departments.

Our activities are scrutinised by:

- Members, through the Overview and Scrutiny function, the cross-party Performance Management Panel, the cross-party Financial Monitors Panel, and the Audit Committee. The Financial Monitors Panel meets monthly to consider the management accounts. The panel contributes to the budget setting process.

The Performance Management Panel meets quarterly to consider the performance of our services and drive forward service improvements.

- The council's Standards Committee is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct; it is the body which assesses and reviews complaints about our councillors.
- Internal Audit, whose role it is to ensure that the organisation and individuals are compliant with the necessary policies and procedures. Along with other matters of corporate governance, an established risk management strategy, policy and procedures as risk management features as a consideration in the formal decision making process of the council on a regular basis.
- The Monitoring and Section 151 officers have statutory responsibilities concerning financial probity and the legality of the council's actions.
- External auditors, including the Audit Commission, which are independent watchdogs for driving economy, efficiency and effectiveness in local public services.



# Managing other resources

## Natural resources

We are committed to improving our environmental performance and reducing the environmental impact of our work. We recognise the impact that climate change has on both the environment and the local communities and are working to prevent and mitigate adverse effects.

## Assets

Property forms the council's biggest resource and cost after its staff. It is therefore vital that such an important asset is properly managed and resourced. We recognise that the effective management of those assets plays a major role in delivering better outcomes for citizens, creating a sense of place and generating efficiency aims. The Asset Management Plan therefore sets out the roles and responsibilities for key members and staff as well as every service group in relation to good management of the council's property. It also sets out a corporate strategy for property and terms of reference for the Asset Management Panel.

## Human resources

Over half of our workforce are residents in the borough, and we recognise that our staff are a significant asset. Both our members and officers are integral to achieving our vision and priorities, through working together in an open, honest and co-operative way.

The council's Workforce Strategy 2009-2014 provides the strategic framework for planning, organising and developing the workforce to support the achievement of its strategic priorities. The Workforce Strategy sets out our approach to resourcing issues, capacity building, organisational change management, and the integration of equality and diversity issues into good people management practices. This is supported by a Workforce Plan which focuses on the priorities for action in the year ahead.

## Equality and diversity

We will continue to promote equality of opportunity, prevent discrimination and achieve improved outcomes for our citizens through our role as employer, service provider and community leader. We have achieved Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. We aim to ensure that all our services are delivered without discrimination and take into account the needs of our local communities.







Working with you, for you, improving our communities, our places.



## Our Contact Details

We want to ensure that the information we provide is useful and meets your needs. Please give us your comments on the Corporate Plan or any other aspect of our service. We will use your comments to improve our services.

**Post:** Civic Offices, Elstree Way, Borehamwood, WD6 1WA

**Email:** [corporate.plan@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:corporate.plan@hertsmere.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** 020 8207 2277

The following internet site gives further information about council services:  
Hertsmere Borough Council: [www.hertsmere.gov.uk](http://www.hertsmere.gov.uk)

## Large print and languages

Hertsmere Borough Council aims to provide information in alternative formats where possible.

If you would like a document in a different language or format please call 020 8207 7445 or email [customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk) and we will do our best to help.

Please allow sufficient time for any document to be translated.

تهدف بلدية منطقة هرتسمير (Hertsmere Borough Council) إلى توفير المعلومات بصيغ بديلة إذا كان ذلك ممكناً.

إذا اردت أي وثيقة بلغة أو بصيغة أخرى يرجى الاتصال برقم الهاتف 020 8207 7445 أو إرسال بريد إلكتروني إلى [customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk) وسنعمل قصارى جهدنا لمساعدتك. يرجى منحنا وقتاً كافياً لترجمة أي وثيقة مطروحة.

Hertsmere 在伦敦区政府旨在可能的情况下提供信息的其它格式版本。

如果你需得到以简体中文或其它格式制作的版本，请致电 020 8207 7445，或发送邮件至 [customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk)，我们将尽力提供帮助，请耐心等待足够的时间，以便让我们完成有关文件的翻译。

Rada miejska Hertsmere Borough Council zamierza dostarczać wszelkie informacje, tam gdzie jest to możliwe, w różnych formatach.

Jeżeli ktoś chciałby otrzymać dokument w innym języku lub formie proszony jest zadzwonić na numer 020 8207 7445 lub przesłać e-mail do [customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk) a my zrobimy wszystko by pomóc. Prosimy uwzględnić czas na przetłumaczenie każdego dokumentu.

गवर्णमंडल हर्ट्समिर बोरोड का उद्देश्य है, जहाँ तक संभव हो सके, सूचनाओं को अलग-अलग रूपों में उपलब्ध कराना है।

यदि आपको किसी सूचना को अलग-अलग रूप में चाहिए है, तो कृपया हमें 020 8207 7445 पर कॉल करें, या हमें [customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk) पर ईमेल भेजें। हम आपको मदद करने के लिए पूरी कोशिश करेंगे। कृपया सूचनाओं को अनुवादित करने के लिए पर्याप्त समय देना सुनिश्चित करें।

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