

COMMUNITY NEWS FROM NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OUTLOOK



SPLASH PARKS

HERTS CARELINE

LOCAL PLAN

WHAT'S ON



SUMMER FUN HAS BEGUN

IN NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

SUMMER 2017

www.north-herts.gov.uk

FROM THE LEADER

“ As we head into summer we look forward to enjoying the outdoors. It is the time of year when our outdoor pools in Letchworth and Hitchin and the splash parks in all four of our towns are open. We are lucky to have these hugely popular facilities and I hope residents get the chance to enjoy them (page 3).

In this issue of Outlook you can read about the great work of our Park Ranger who runs sessions with school children giving them the chance to get back to nature by creating works of art from branches and leaves (page 13).

Also on a positive note is Herts Careline's latest Customer

Satisfaction Survey report. The award winning community alarm and telecare service is getting some excellent feedback from its users (page 11).

Unfortunately though, as mentioned in the last issue of Outlook, we will potentially have to save £7 million by 2020/21 and so will have to make changes to some of our services. An example of this is the way we collect dog waste. I am sure residents are now getting used to the new arrangement and will soon see the benefit of park litter bins being emptied more often (page 5).

We also have details of one of the popular events that took place

at Hitchin Town Hall. We recently had the wonderful Matisse prints national exhibition (page 16) and the new North Hertfordshire Museum will have lots to delight and interest the whole district in the near future.

I hope you enjoy what the district has on offer this Summer. ”

CLLR LYNDA NEEDHAM,
LEADER OF NORTH
HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



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CONTACTING NHDC

Most NHDC services can be accessed online. Find out the date of your next waste collection, apply for a licence, report an issue, register to vote or pay a bill, all through our website: www.north-herts.gov.uk



OTHER WAYS TO CONTACT US:

Phone: 01462 474000

 www.facebook.com/northhertsDC

 @NorthHertsDC

Our Customer Services Centre is currently based at Town Lodge, Gernon Road, Letchworth while our offices undergo refurbishment.

DIRECT LINES

Benefits 01462 474597

Careline Community Alarms
0300 999 2 999

Housing Advice 01462 474 682

Waste and Recycling Collection including:

- Missed bins
- Street cleaning
- Graffiti
- Litter
- General waste & recycling queries call: Veolia 0800 328 6023

OUT OF HOURS

Out of Hours in an Emergency: Homelessness, Environmental Health, Street Cleansing, Parks, Public Buildings and Car Parks: 0300 777 4125

LEISURE CENTRES

Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL) manages NHDC owned Leisure Centres. Email: enquiries@stevenage-leisure.co.uk

- Hitchin Swim Centre 01462 441 646
- Archers Fitness Centre, Hitchin 01462 437 111 hitchin@stevenage-leisure.co.uk

- North Herts Leisure Centre, Letchworth 01462 679 311 letchworth@stevenage-leisure.co.uk
- Royston Leisure Centre 01763 255 190 royston@stevenage-leisure.co.uk

OTHER CONTACTS:

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

To report issues with streetlights, potholes, traffic lights and other highways issues use the Herts Highways fault reporting system www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/faultreporting

For general enquiries contact 0300 123 4040

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE HOMES

Tel: 01462 704100 www.nhh.org.uk

HOWARD COTTAGE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Tel: 01462 683307 www.howard-cottage.co.uk



Apprenticeship scheme helps John O'Conner to flourish

Apprenticeships help businesses flourish and are a great way to help a young person get on the career ladder.

Just ask our grounds maintenance contractor, John O'Conner. The company launched its apprenticeship scheme in May 2011 and offers Level 2 Intermediate Apprentices and Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeships and recently launched a Mechanical Apprenticeship. To date it has employed 54 apprentices, 14 of which have gone on to become full-time employees of the company. The scheme has been recognised regionally and nationally and they have been recognised as a top 100 Employer.

John O'Conner has employed 10 apprenticeships during its contract with NHDC over the years, employing six, with four currently in progress.

Formerly unemployed and attracted by a love of the outdoors, Max Brown joined the programme in 2013. Keen to succeed, he completed his Intermediate Apprenticeship and an accelerated completion of his Level 3 and has been impressing managers with his motivation, featuring as 'One to Watch' in Pro Landscaper Magazine.

In addition to college, John O'Conner apprentices spend a varied week learning landscape and horticultural techniques including grass cutting, flower bed, hedge and shrub maintenance in parks, on highways, cemeteries and school sites. They also learn to operate and maintain a wide range of machinery and learn about soil science and benefit from Royal Parks/Royal Horticultural Society-hosted master-classes. In addition to learning new horticultural skills, apprentices also learn project planning and community engagement as they get involved in events such as wildflower meadow initiatives and designing horticultural features for local residents and schools.

NHDC are also supporters of apprenticeships and have employed 30 young people from the district in the last 4 years. Apprentices are employed on a 12 month fixed term contract where they develop many new skills on the job whilst also studying part-time for a NVQ qualification. Over half of our apprentices have been successfully appointed roles with the Council upon completion of the scheme.

North Hertfordshire's Splash Parks and Water Features turned on for Bank Holiday

On the Saturday before the May Day bank holiday, North Hertfordshire's interactive water splash parks officially sprang into action for summer.

Splash parks at Priory Memorial Gardens in Royston, Bancroft Recreation Ground in Hitchin, and Avenue Park in Baldock were turned on, along with the biggest water feature at Howard Park and Gardens in Letchworth.

NHDC's four themed water parks, fountains and bucket drops together will provide hours of free fun and entertainment for families and children from a wide range of age groups.



Outdoor Pools

Keen swimmers were also delighted to see the return of Hitchin and Letchworth's outdoor swimming pools which opened on 27 May in time for the late bank holiday and half term school holiday.

Both outdoor pools are heated and benefit from having smaller heated pools for toddlers and younger children, grassed areas for sunbathing and cafés that provide refreshments and snacks. Each has a range of concessions available for families, multi swim tickets and swim memberships. Both pools can be hired for private functions and pool parties.

Check our website for opening times.



North Hertfordshire Minority Ethnic Forum

The North Hertfordshire Minority Ethnic Forum (NHMEF) provides a useful service within our community, catering for the 12.5% of our residents who have cultural and linguistic differences.

We've come a long way from the days when NHMEF was first established when diversity was less embedded in our society. North Hertfordshire prides itself on its multi-cultural integration, embracing many different cultures and religions and making the district a diverse and welcoming community to live.

NHMEF is supported by NHDC and continues the work of adding value to community groups who may still struggle to integrate and operate within the wider community by offering a number of services.

One of the largest barriers to accessing local services and being an active member of the community is language. NHMEF provide English speaking classes for residents and have a number of interpreters speaking a total of nine languages including Arabic, Bengali, French, German, Hindi, Italian and Polish. Interpreters also provide help with paperwork, financial advice and accessing services within the community. Consultations are free of charge with no appointment necessary.

The charity is also able to cater for cultural differences ensuring that different groups are able to participate in courses, social groups and skill-development opportunities. Along with the English speaking courses (ESOL) available, they also provide English speaking clubs and IT courses. They provide job-search support, including assistance with CVs, job applications and interviews, and also run health courses, workshops and activities for its members which help to increase knowledge,

health, confidence and tackle the expanding issue of isolation.

NHMEF also run activities for children, including language schools for those who want to learn Polish, Italian and French. There are clubs and activities for children during the school holidays, homework clubs and support with education, confidence development workshops, information talks and awareness sessions.

NHDC helps to support the charity through its Area Committees and last summer funded educational day trips for children and a boot camp programme. More recently it helped fund an Addiction Recovery for Ethnic Minorities Project which provides adults with the signposting, support and treatment they need to overcome drugs and alcohol abuse, or behavioural addictions such as eating disorders, obsessive compulsive behaviours, self-harm or gambling.

“NHMEF also run activities for children, including language schools for those who want to learn Polish, Italian and French.”

NHDC has agreed to help core fund the NHMEF £31,500 in total over the next three years, thus helping them to achieve greater self reliance and a sustainable base for the future, as further support beyond 2020 may not be possible.

The staff at NHMEF go out of their way to help anyone that knocks on their door and their services are not confined to the services listed. If there is a language barrier, the Council and Citizen's Advice will often refer individuals to the centre to benefit from their multilingual team. NHMEF are funded, not only by NHDC, but by The Big Lottery Fund and Hertfordshire Community Foundation, and will continue to need funding to provide the great services they offer to our community in the future.

If you feel you or someone you know could benefit from the services of North Hertfordshire Minority Ethnic Forum, please do give them a call on 01462 440224, email at nhethnic@btconnect.com or visit their website at www.nhmeff.org.uk.





IS YOUR DOG MICROCHIPPED?



Bag It, Bin it

In April the Council launched a campaign encouraging dog owners to bag and dispose of dog waste in park litter bins, or take it home and dispose of it in their purple bins.

The campaign 'Bag it, Bin it' aims to raise awareness of how to best dispose of dog waste and reinforces the Council's work to increase responsible dog ownership.

An additional eighty litter bins have been installed in key locations in local parks as part of the move to help ease the increased volume that the litter bins will be accommodating as all litter bins should be used for dog waste.

As park litter bins are emptied daily there is less chance of them overflowing and using litter bins to dispose of dog waste also eliminates the need for dog owners to find and use specific dog waste only bins. We are sure residents are now getting used to the new arrangement and will soon see the benefit from park bins being emptied more often.

We continue to urge dog owners to bag and dispose of waste in general litter bins, or take it home and dispose of it in their purple bins. We hope that dog owners everywhere will get behind us and support the campaign.



We have a duty to deal with stray dogs found in the district. Efforts are made to reunite microchipped dogs with their owners, before being taken to the kennels and where this is possible the owner is not charged for the service.

Since April 2016 all owners must get their dogs microchipped and ensure their details are up to date. However, since this time the Council has found that only a third of the stray dogs collected have been fitted with a microchip.

From 1 July the Council is proposing to change the fee owners pay to collect stray dogs and will offer an incentive for them to have their pet microchipped.

Further details on our fees can be found on our website by searching 'lost dogs'. If you think your dog may have been collected by the Dog Warden service, visit www.lostdogsuk.co.uk



'Make Nothing Happen' ACT campaign

The national campaign 'Make Nothing Happen' launched this Spring. It focusses on the critical role the public can play in defeating terrorism and calls for people to act on their instincts and report suspicious activity to the police to help keep their communities safe.

The appeal comes as new figures reveal information from the public has assisted counter terrorism police in a third of their most 'high-risk' investigations, helping keep communities safe.

The campaign is encouraging people to report suspicious

activity or behaviour - anything that seems out of place, unusual, or just doesn't seem to fit with everyday life.

More information on what to look out for and how to contact the police can be found by visiting www.act.campaign.gov.uk or by calling police confidentially on 0800 789321.

North Hertfordshire is one of the safest places to live in the country with low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. With your help let's all work together to keep it that way.



WASTE & RECYCLING

Numbering your bins



Recycling food in the warmer months

The summer months generally bring us warmer weather, and on occasion this can cause problems with smelly bins and maggots. If you follow these simple steps it will help reduce the likelihood of problems occurring.

- Leftover food should be covered as soon as possible and placed in a kitchen caddy or directly into your brown bin.
- Emptying your caddy regularly, every 2-3 days, even if it's not full, will reduce condensation build up inside the caddy.
- Your caddy can be washed out with disinfectant or placed in a dishwasher to thoroughly clean and avoid smells and dirt from building up.
- You can purchase compostable liners from local retailers to contain your food waste, check the liners have the seedling logo on them to ensure they can be composted.
- If you have pets, cover up uneaten pet food or place directly in your brown bin to avoid attracting flies.
- Keep your brown bin lid closed and try to store it out of direct sunlight.
- If you find flies in your bin you can use fly spray or a few drops of citrus oil on the lid to deter them.
- Keep your brown bin clean to help reduce odours and flies. You can clean the bin yourself or search for a local bin cleaning company who will charge you for the service.



We would like to remind residents of the benefits of numbering your bins and boxes. The crew can identify which bin belongs to which property so they can be returned to the correct place. It can deter passers-by from using your bin as a litter bin as well as help identify bins not out for collection and those which contain incorrect items. Bin numbers can be purchased quite cheaply from various high street shops and online or you can paint your number on. Please consider numbering your bin if you have not already done so.

WEEE event tonnes of success

Our recent Electrical Recycling Event, which took place in Hitchin on Saturday 25 March was very successful, collecting a total of 6.6 tonnes. All items brought to the event will now



be broken down into component materials and sent for recycling into something new.

Electrical items should not be placed in any of your kerbside bins so if you weren't able to attend the event or have more items; these can be taken to a local Household Waste Recycling Centre.

For larger electrical items such as white goods, consider booking a bulky waste collection via our website or check the take back schemes offered by retailers on purchasing a new item.



RECYCLING ON THE GO



Recycling at home is now very common but it can be more difficult when we're out and about in the district. Recycling 'on the go' bins are available in both Letchworth and Hitchin town centres. They offer visitors the opportunity

to recycle items such as plastic bottles, cans and newspapers which would otherwise go to landfill unless you take them home with you.

It is just as important to put the right thing in the right litter bin when you're out and about, so we're asking people to check carefully which bin you use on the street in Hitchin and Letchworth. Help us increase our recycling by using the on-street recycling bins correctly.

We are currently looking into adding on-street recycling bins in Royston. You can share your thoughts about this with us via social media using #recycleonthego

Moving house?



When having a clear out before moving house remember that broken electrical items, old toys and hard plastics such as coat hangers and washing up bowls should be taken to the local HWRC. Unwanted textiles can be bagged, tied at the top and placed out next to your grey recycling bin for kerbside collection. Unwanted books, DVDs, good quality clothing, bags and shoes can all be taken to charity shops. If there are any bigger items of furniture you don't want to take with you, consider donating them to a charity such as Furniture Link or British Heart Foundation (many collect for free). You can also request a bulky waste collection through the Council's website.

Please do not take your bins with you to your new property, if your new property requires bins these can be ordered by phoning

0800 3286023. Please also leave the bins as you would hope to find them in your new home, it is not very nice to have to sort through someone else's rubbish.

It might not be top of your list but it's worth checking the waste collections for your new property. You can download your waste collection calendar from our website and also check which bin to put different items in.

Once you've started unpacking boxes, cardboard can be flattened to save space and placed into your grey recycling bin. Alternatively, offer your packing boxes on a local free recycle website. You can also place additional recycling out for collection using one of the cardboard boxes; or it can be taken to the HWRC although it's worth saving up for a big trip.

Paper recycling

All white and coloured paper can be recycled in your blue box; this includes envelopes, magazines, junk mail and shredded paper. If you have shredded paper to recycle, you can wrap it in sheets of newspaper to prevent the paper from blowing down the street when the crew empty it into the vehicle for collection. Please put brown paper in your grey bin.



Cleaning litter from high speed roads

141 tonnes of rubbish and detritus were cleaned from the roadsides and verges of the district's high speed roads in a month long operation earlier this year.

Each year tonnes of litter is collected from along high speed roads in North Hertfordshire, the majority of which has been thrown from passing cars. This has serious effects on the environment and Council tax payers are left to foot the bill. Please act responsibly and take litter with you.



YOUNG PEOPLE GET A TASTE OF PRISON LIFE

Twenty teenagers who attend a youth club at Westmill Community Centre in Hitchin had the opportunity to experience what being in a prison cell is like thanks to an initiative called 'Prison! Me! No-way!'

The young people aged between 13 and 15 years had the chance to get into a replica prison cell which had been specially adapted to fit inside a van. The cell educated them about the living conditions of inmates, and its effects.



The Prison! Me! No-way! charity project aimed to raise awareness about the causes, consequences and penalties of committing a crime and was organised by NHDC's Community Safety team in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and Youth Connexions.

The young people were also given a presentation by a Prison Officer and a talk by a motivational speaker, Anthony Powell who had previously served a custodial sentence and has since completely changed his life around. He now works as the Youth Engagement Manager with Prison! Me! No Way! so he can engage with young people and explain the consequences of committing crime.

Street collectors – fine or fake?

Charities do great work supporting a variety of causes and to do this, they need to raise funds. Street collections are a popular way of doing this but there may be collectors who don't have permission, and they aren't too hard to spot when you know what to look out for.

Every collector must have a permit from the Council. This will show the date of collection, charity and conditions that the street collector must follow and it will be formal proof that they are a legitimate collector. Many will also carry official documents from their charity.

You can ask where the money is being donated and information about why they are collecting. If they do not give a satisfactory answer be cautious and don't give them any of your details as they may not be legitimate collectors.

Another sign to look out for is the container the street collector is using. By law, it must be sealed and is normally provided by the charity, with the logo printed on the front. If it is not sealed or looks fake, then it most likely will be.

What do you do if you think there is someone collecting money illegally?

You can get in touch with the Council to check whether or not a permit has been issued for the charity on the day in question.

You could also contact the local police on the non-emergency number 101 or their national anti-fraud department on 0300 123 2040 or by email actionfraud@police.uk.

The Charity Commission website lists all charities within England and Wales or speak to them on 0845 300 0281.

It's a Crime not To Care



Fly-tipped waste was the main attraction at a Community Safety Event in Hitchin Town Centre at the end of March.

The rubbish, which had been removed from a rural area after being dumped illegally, was brought to the Market Place to demonstrate the importance of using a licensed waste carrier.

The event was part of a North Herts Community Safety partnership initiative held in association with Keep Britain Tidy and their 'Crime not to Care' campaign.

NHDC who organised the event, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, North Hertfordshire Homes and Hertfordshire County Council's Trading Standards joined forces to inform people on how to help prevent fly-tipping and reduce the risk of arson. There was also the chance to chat with Community Horse Patrol Riders and meet Reqs the fire dog who demonstrated the arson risks associated with fly-tipping waste including dangerous chemicals.

NHDC's Community Safety and Waste teams were able to provide advice and information on disposing refuse lawfully by not using carriers who don't have a licence. They also promoted the bulky waste removal service.

Search 'bulky waste items' on our website.



Support for community groups to take on play areas

NHDC is offering advice to local "Friends of" groups, Residents Associations or other local interest groups, who want to apply to take ownership of a number of small children's play areas across North Hertfordshire.

In January this year the Council's Cabinet discussed the future of green space and adopted a four year Green Space Management Strategy to ensure its protection. At a time when local authorities are facing increasing financial pressures, this strategy sets out how to ensure that green spaces, nature reserves and parks are looked after for communities to enjoy, both now and in the future.

The current level of capital investment (around £85,000 per annum) is not enough to maintain all the play areas in North Hertfordshire.

After undertaking quantitative and qualitative research, the play areas were categorised according to their usage, size and strategic relevance.

NHDC is able to commit to providing full investment for fourteen play areas across the district and limited investment to a further twenty. However, it can no longer commit to continue funding thirteen lower usage, small play areas which serve a relatively small catchment.

These play areas include Dacre Road, Rosehill and Symonds Road play areas in Hitchin; Jackmans Recreation Ground, Linnet Close and Oaktree Close play areas in Letchworth; Ivel Road play area in Baldock; Betjeman Road & Farrier Court play areas in Royston; and Chilterns, Cleveland Way, Fairfield Crescent and Merrick Close play areas in Great Ashby.



The Council is now inviting interested parties to put forward viable proposals that would fund both the maintenance and, as required, the replacement of equipment in these small play areas.

If you are part of a community group and would like to get involved, you have until 1 March 2018 to put forward viable proposals that would enable your play area to be maintained and operate safely.

Please visit our website and search: 'Managing a play area' for more information.



'Sponsor your local Park'

The Parks service of NHDC runs a sponsorship scheme, designed to offer local businesses the opportunity to advertise in popular destinations around the district.

Roadside bedding displays, play areas, water splash parks and skate parks in North Hertfordshire are available to sponsor with all the proceeds being used to improve the surrounding park areas.

Some of the sites on offer include the main town gateway locations such as those entering Letchworth; the large floral beds in the Green Flag award winning Priory Memorial

Gardens in Royston; and the extremely popular and recently improved larger play areas in our towns, as well as the four popular interactive water splash parks, including the large water pool at Howard Park in Letchworth. The newly constructed skate park at Norton Common in Letchworth is also available for sponsorship.

More information, including details of all the sites available for sponsorship is available on our website by searching 'Park Sponsorship Scheme'.

The summer starts here!

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL



Hitchin Outdoor Pool



- 50 metre pool
- Toddler pool
- Pool parties
- Season tickets
- Grassed picnic area
- Splash Cafe
- Private hire available

**NOW
OPEN**

Letchworth Outdoor Pool



HITCHIN
Swimming
CENTRE

01462 441 646

Fishponds Road, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1HA

Mon - Fri: 8.00am - 6.30pm
Weekends: 8.00am - 6.00pm

LETCHWORTH
OUTDOOR
POOL

01462 684 673

Norton Common, Icknield Way, Letchworth, Herts SG6 4UF

Mon, Wed, Fri: 7.00am - 6.30pm
Tues, Thurs: 8.00am - 6.30pm
Weekends: 8.30am - 6.00pm

www.sll.co.uk

SLL

Examination of our Local Plan



In May 2017 the district's new Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

The plan helps to shape the future of North Herts until 2031, and sets out how the Council proposes 14,000 new homes in the district alongside jobs and infrastructure to meet local needs. It also accounts for an additional 1,950 homes to be provided to meet needs arising from the wider Luton housing market area.

The final public consultation on the Local Plan at the end of last year received over 2,500 responses. Those representations have been forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration along with the Full Plan.

There will now be a series of public examination hearings which anyone can attend to listen to the debate, but only those invited by the Inspector can participate. Dates and a venue for the examination will be confirmed after an Inspector has been appointed and will be published on the Council's website in due course.

The Inspector's report, when complete, will contain recommendations to either accept the plan as it is, accept the plan and make some changes, or fail the plan. The Inspector's report will be available to view once the examination is complete.

The papers are available by searching 'Local Plan' on our website.

Top levels of customer satisfaction reported by county-wide telecare provider



Herts Careline's award winning community alarm and telecare service has released its latest Customer Satisfaction Survey report, and the results stand out from the crowd.

- 99.2% of those that use the service would recommend Herts Careline to a friend or relative
- 98.5% found the help and advice from the Control Room was 'excellent' or 'good'
- 98.3% of users' relatives and friends felt they have more peace of mind now that they have the assistive technology service at home
- 96.6% felt more reassured and 94.6% felt more independent having their assistive technology service

Customers in the survey remarked about the "fast answering of calls"; "friendly and polite operators" and the sense of "feeling safe in their own home".

Technology is part of everyday life, and for older and vulnerable people in the community it can be a real lifeline of help. Assistive technology such as community alarms and telecare can help manage risks, improve quality of life and support people to stay independent in their own home.

Herts Careline is run by NHDC, and works in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, and Hertfordshire Independent Living Service (HILS) to provide a range of 24/7 assistive technology support to help older people, those living alone, and residents with long-term health conditions. The service currently provides support for around 20,000 people in Hertfordshire and the surrounding area, taking 1,000 calls a day - at least a third of which are life critical emergencies.

For more information about assistive technology in Hertfordshire visit www.care-line.co.uk or call 0300 999 2 999.

Getting help with carrying out repairs to your home



Maintaining your home can be a costly exercise, especially when urgent repairs are required such as replacing a broken down boiler. The Council offers small grants to help in these situations. These are primarily aimed at helping owner occupiers but private tenants and park home residents are also eligible. Home Repair

Assistance grants provide cash assistance up to £5,000 for minor works including essential repairs addressing any building hazards and improving security within any three-year period. Those applying must be in receipt of an income related benefit to qualify.

For more information, search 'housing grants' on our website.

NATIONAL CLEAN AIR DAY

Air quality in North Hertfordshire is generally good and there is recent evidence that levels of nitrogen dioxide pollution are slowly declining.

This evidence is collected from monitoring across the district, with the focus on locations where we think there may be an air pollution problem, which means alongside busy roads where houses are near to the road.

Despite the generally good air quality there are two areas in Hitchin, at Stevenage Road and at the Payne's Park Roundabout, where nitrogen dioxide pollution is above the level that is set by Government to be protective of public health.

NHDC is currently preparing a new Air Quality Action Plan to identify

measures that can be taken to help to reduce air pollution, particularly at these Hitchin sites. It is expected that this will be consulted on later this summer and it will look to build on previous work.

Examples of work completed previously include the provision of electric vehicle charging points in NHDC public car parks and working with the planning department to ensure that local air quality is recognised within the Local Plan and accounted for within new planning applications.

NHDC is also supporting the Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts District Council led anti-idling campaign for

National Clean Air Day on 15 June 2017. The campaign focuses on schools but is relevant to everyone who drives a car. 'Turn your key Be idle Free' campaign can be found here: www.cleanairday.org.uk

For information search 'air quality' on our website and for information on air quality in Hertfordshire visit www.airqualityengland.co.uk

“NHDC is currently preparing a new Air Quality Action Plan to identify measures that can be taken”



Quirky byelaws to be scrapped

A number of archaic byelaws look set to be axed in the district. The regulations, which date back as far as 1874, cover a wide range of issues from the use of the public swimming baths in Hitchin to licenses for horse drawn wagons.

A byelaw from 1905 prohibits people from spitting in public places across the district. If a person was found to be in breach they could face a fine of up to £5.

In Ashwell a byelaw regulating the use of its open spaces bans the beating of carpets and residents

must not 'burden' the land with sheep and goats. Ball games are also currently banned on the cricket pitch for six months of the year, with a £5 fine for each offence.

Similarly in Hitchin, a byelaw from 1938 says that people cannot beat, shake, sweep or brush a carpet on the village green.

The most recent byelaw, which regulates the cleanliness of tattoo parlours which was introduced in 2007, will remain in place.

What may seem quirky today would probably have been appropriate

and welcomed by residents when introduced to improve safety and deal with the problems of the time.

NHDC has not pursued any prosecutions under its byelaws recently as many of them are out of date, but undertaking this review ensures that any byelaws in operation are fit for purpose.

At a Council meeting earlier this year, Councillors voted in favour of revoking the 52 byelaws. There will now be a public consultation, after which a report will go back to Council.

Forest schools take children's learning outdoors

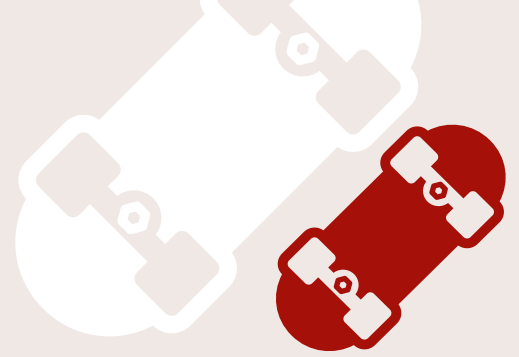
Hundreds of children in North Hertfordshire have been getting back to nature by joining 'Forest School' run by NHDC's Park Ranger, Tanya Dickson.

Earlier this year children from Hillshott Infant and Nursery School in Letchworth took part in sessions with Tanya where they created works of art from natural materials like branches and leaves from the school site. They also made an array of clever clay faces which were used to decorate trees in the school grounds.

The Forest School enabled the pupils aged four to seven years old to learn a range of different skills by using tools and materials found in a woodland environment. Taking part in these activities can help to build self-esteem and confidence, equipping young people with vital skills for adulthood.



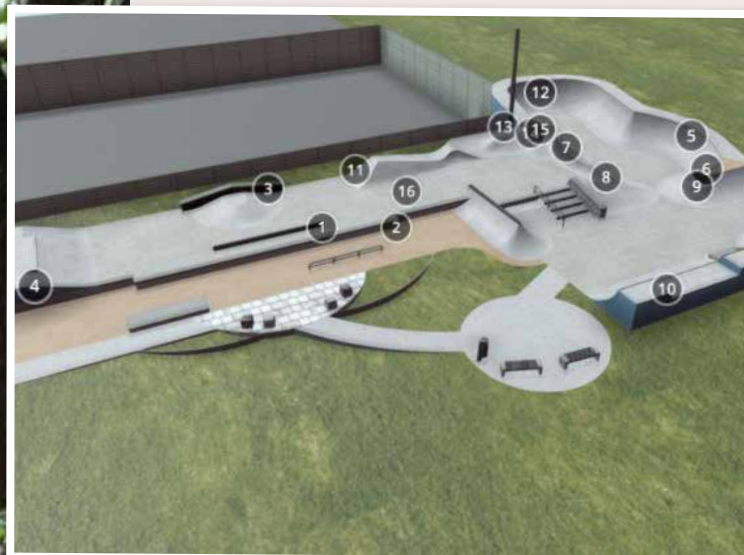
NHDC is also supporting the 'Down The Woods' Forest School, which focuses on improving the physical and mental health and well-being of children and adults by getting them outdoors. A grant was awarded to fund the building of an outdoor classroom in the form of a yurt, to be used in the garden on an estate with crops and animals. The yurt will provide the Forest School with its very own special outdoor class room which will enable the school to run a wider range of activities such as felt-making and woodland crafts, without the risk of cancelling due to bad weather.



Revamping Norton Common skate park

The £140,000 project to revamp the existing skate park at Norton Common, Letchworth is currently underway, and it is expected the new facility will be open in August.

Community charity Groundwork Hertfordshire, which is carrying out the work on behalf of NHDC, the owners of the park, held a series of consultation events with both local skaters and BMX riders who use the park, giving them the chance to have a direct input into the design. As a result, when the work is complete, the skate park will be suitable for a mixture of abilities and wheeled sports users.



WHAT'S ON

this Summer

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

British Schools Museum

41/42 Queen Street,
Hitchin, SG4 9T 01462 420144
www.britishschoolsmuseum.org.uk

Please check our website before visiting for the latest news and special events

Fridays 10am-4pm, Saturdays 10am-1pm, Sundays 2-5pm

Last entry time for the museum is 30 minutes before closing, but the shop and cafe (free entry) will be open until the published closing times.

2 July Victorian Lesson

21 July New exhibition opens - Watch this space!

29 July Literary Festival

6 August Victorian Lesson

Royston & District Museum & Art Gallery

5 Lower King Street, Royston,
SG8 5AL 01763 242587
www.roystonmuseum.org.uk,
assistant@roystonmuseum.org.uk

One Tuesday a month, 10am-12:30pm or 2-4pm.

Lino Printing Sessions

Liz Beardwell printing workshop using the original 1855 Crow printing press to produce your own unique lino cut prints. £5 per person. Booking essential.

One Tuesday a month, 10:30-11:30am.

Drawing Workshops

Led by local artist Susan Sanders, Improve your drawing skills with expert tips and guidance. Draw wonderful objects from the Museum's collections. £5 per person. Booking essential.

Join us monthly on a Tuesday morning, 10:30am-12:30pm Royston Reminiscence/Enquiry drop-in service

Reminiscence about life in Royston in times gone by. Prompted by photographs and objects from the museum's collections come and reminisce about Royston's past. A chance to share your memories or research a local history topic. Why not bring a photo or something else to share that brings back memories. Tea, coffee and biscuits provided. To book please email curator@roystonmuseum.org.uk or call (01763) 242587.

ROYSTON EVENTS

Royston Information Centre

01763 878242
infocentre@roystontown.uk
www.roystontown.uk

Pick up a brochure, map or use our interactive screen to find out about the Cave, Museum and more.

Royston Cave

Open every Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday from 17 April to 1 October with tours at 2:00, 2:40, 3:20 and 4:00pm. Tickets on the door. £5 per adult and £4 for Seniors. Accompanied children £1.

HITCHIN EVENTS

For event details visit www.hitchinherts.com/events
All events are on the Market Place unless otherwise stated.

Hitchin Town Hall

Brand Street, SG5 1JE
01462 474554
Search 'Hitchin Town Hall' on our website or Facebook page for information on upcoming events.

First Saturday of each month 10.30am - Noon

Councillor's Surgery

Last Saturday of each month From 8.30am

Local Produce and Craft Market
Riverside and Churchyard

TOWN & VILLAGE EVENTS

10 June

Rotary Health & Wellbeing Day

Rotary clubs of Hitchin join together to provide a platform for community health advice and fitness providers.

16 June

Hitchin Festival Box Office Opens

25 June

Hitchin Hard Half Marathon

The Rotary Club of Hitchin Tilehouse hold this popular event which starts at Hitchin Priory.

6 July, 27 July, 3 August, 7 September

Street food Monthly

Taking place each week as part of Hitchin Festival, come and sample the best of Hitchin's street food with music on the Market Place from 4pm - 9pm. Hosted by The Victoria and Cantina Caritas.

1 July

Hitchin Festival begins

1 July

National Scouts Day

A festival of scouting activities in Hitchin on the Market Place.

1 July

Skate Jam

Hitchin's Skate Jam brings a taste of Venice Beach to the Riverside.

8 July

Independents Day

Hitchin's independent businesses are such a big part of our retail offer and are pleased to participate in this National celebration.

8 July

Hitchin Markets Duck Race

Riverside fun with our not-so-feathered friends.

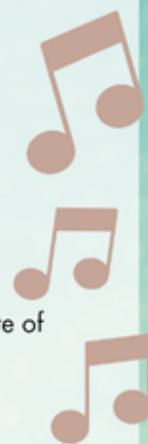
15, 16, 17 July French Market

Brittany Traders return for three days on the Market Place.

22 July

Busker's Day

Talented vocalists and musicians liven up the town throughout the day at key busking points until 4pm.



22 July

Bucklersbury Day

The businesses of Bucklersbury throw open their doors for an afternoon of fun, bargains and entertainment from noon until early evening. Organised by the Humanitas charity shop at no.31.

29 July

FitFest Hitchin

For all things energetic on Hitchin Market Place! Demos, stalls and activities.

2 & 3 September

Hitchin Food & Drink Festival

Including Creative Kitchen, this is not just the regular tempting stalls but a positive cornucopia of gastronomic goodies with chefs on hand to demonstrate their culinary skills.

BALDOCK EVENTS

Baldock Arts & Heritage Centre

For scheduled events visit www.bahc.co.uk

23 July

Baldock Cycle Challenge

LETCWORTH EVENTS

For event details visit

www.lovelethworth.com or

www.shoplethworth.com

10 June - 25 June

Letchworth Festival

The 2 week celebration of life in Letchworth returns with over 100 events at various venues. Opening with a 'Community Day' market and closing with one day music event 'Proms in the Park'. The programme includes a variety of Sports, Arts, Social and Community activities. For more details visit: www.lethworthfestival.org.

ASHWELL

National Heritage Open Days

8 September, 2pm-4:00pm

9 September, 10am -4:00pm,

walks: 11:00am and 2:30pm

10 September, 11am -5:00pm,

walks: 11.30am and 2:30pm

Ashwell is commemorating 1100 years since its foundation in 917 with a series of events throughout the year. As part of

this, the museum is celebrating Ashwell's Built Environment by opening free for the National Heritage Open days. There will be guided walks to discover more of Ashwell's architectural and historical gems.

KNEBWORTH

18-20 May, 8pm

KATS (Knebworth Amateur

Theatrical Society) present The Thrill of Love by Amanda Whittington

At Knebworth Village Hall, Park Lane, Knebworth, SG3 6PD. Amanda Whittington's gripping, funny and moving drama looks at the story of Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hanged in England in 1955, largely through the eyes of Ruth and the other women involved. Tickets £8 (concessions £7) Email: tickets@katsdrama.info 01438 814166 07952 199183 or visit Village News, Station Road.

ICKLEFORD

25 June, 12 noon - 5pm

Ickleford Open Village

Several beautiful gardens will be open to enjoy, and teas will be held at various venues throughout the village. Hitchin Lavender will be open and donating the proceeds from entry to the fields, and the Ickleford Equestrian Centre will be offering pony rides and a dog show, as well as cream teas. There will be Pims on the Lawn at Jennings Funeral Directors.

24 and 25 June

Exhibition

The church is holding an exhibition on The Witter Family and the Arts and Crafts Industry in Ickleford. Lunches will be served in the Village Hall. There will also be a grand draw. Admission to the gardens is £4.00 per person (accompanied U14s free). Proceeds are in aid of St. Katharine's New Building Fund and Room for All.

There will be a limousine service around the village, running from Westmill Lane to Hitchin Lavender.

PIRTON

8 July, 12:45pm to 7:00pm

Pirton Summer Fair

Pirton Summer Fair, a fun day for all the family including flying display, free children's activities, dog show and village games. £ 2 adults, Children free.

10 August, from 4pm

RNLI Vintage and Classic Car Rally

Free admission.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

COMMITTEES - 5 JUNE 2017 TO 13 SEPTEMBER 2017 (7.30PM UNLESS STATED)

An audio recording is taken at all Council meetings (excluding confidential parts). The press and public also have a right to film and record at Council meetings and a protocol on this can be found here: www.north-herts.gov.uk/recordingmeetings

DATE	COMMITTEE	VENUE
Tuesday, 6 June	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Foundation House, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Monday, 12 June	Finance, Audit & Risk Committee	Lower Hall, Icknield Centre, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Tuesday, 13 June	Cabinet	Lower Hall, Icknield Centre, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Tuesday, 27 June	Hitchin Committee	Westmill Community Centre
Wednesday, 28 June	Royston & District Committee	Royston Town Hall
Wednesday, 28 June	Joint Staff Consultative Committee (3.00pm)	Town Lodge Meeting Room 1, Gernon Road, Letchworth
Thursday, 29 June	Planning Control Committee	Spirella Ballroom, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Monday, 3 July	Baldock & District Committee	Baldock Community Centre, Simpson Drive, Baldock
Wednesday, 5 July	Letchworth Committee	Foundation House, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Thursday, 6 July	Southern Rural Committee	Foundation House, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Tuesday, 18 July	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Foundation House, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Wednesday, 19 July	Council	Spirella Ballroom, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Thursday, 20 July	Planning Control Committee	Spirella Ballroom, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Tuesday, 25 July	Cabinet	Foundation House, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Thursday, 17 August	Planning Control Committee	Spirella Ballroom, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Thursday, 31 August	Council	Spirella Ballroom, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Monday, 4 September	Baldock & District Committee	Baldock Community Centre, Simpson Drive, Baldock
Tuesday, 5 September	Hitchin Committee	Benslow Music Trust, Benslow Lane, Hitchin
Wednesday, 6 September	Letchworth Committee	Foundation House, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Thursday, 7 September	Southern Rural Committee	Foundation House, Icknield Way, Letchworth
Wednesday, 13 September	Royston & District Committee	Royston Town Hall, Melbourn Street, Royston

Matisse's 'Drawing with Scissors' exhibition comes to Hitchin Town Hall



Hundreds of people came along to see Henri Matisse's posthumous prints of his famous cut-outs at Hitchin Town Hall in the first four days of its opening in the Spring.

The Hayward Touring Exhibition - Matisse: Drawing with Scissors - Late Works 1950-1954 featured 35 of the famous cut-outs that he produced in the last four years of his life, when confined to his bed. It included many of his iconic images, such as The Snail and the Blue Nudes.

Matisse revealed that his paper cut-outs allowed him to draw in the colour instead of drawing the outline and putting the colour inside it.

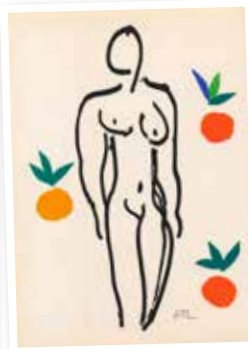
During April Hitchin Town Hall also ran some events in collaboration with the exhibition. Families flocked to take advantage of the 'Make a Matisse Badge' events and the evening adult workshop to 'Make a Matisse' was a big hit.

In May the Matisse Drawing with Scissors talk by Antonia Shaw, Curator of the Hayward Gallery was fully booked with people eager to hear about painter, sculptor and designer, who was one of the 20th century's most influential artists.

Matisse's vibrant works are celebrated for their extraordinary richness and luminosity of colour and his spectacular paper cut-outs were his final triumph. Look out for more exhibitions later in the year.

A video walk-round of the exhibition is available on the Council's website by searching 'Matisse'.

The exhibition ran from 1 April to the 6 May but the fun didn't stop there.



WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT OUR ONLINE SERVICES

Gemma Pearson
"I use the website to pay for my allotment - it is really easy to do."



Jennifer Haverson
"I use the website to look up various updates and local news for the area. I also keep up to date with what is going on by using the 'What's On' calendar."



Accessing services online

Don't forget, you can check our website at www.north-herts.gov.uk for information on North Hertfordshire services like leisure centres, parks, bin collections and planning applications.



For information on services in Hertfordshire such as school admissions, libraries, adult social care and highways you need to contact Hertfordshire County Council. They have recently relaunched their website with a fresh new look. The new site is designed to be simpler, clearer and faster to use, with revamped sections

You can take a look for yourself by visiting: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk.

NHDC is committed to equal opportunities and our aim is to make our services easy for all residents to use. If English is not your first language or you have difficulty reading this document please contact us to discuss how we may be able to assist you.

Please call: 01462 474000, or email service@north-herts.gov.uk Textphone (for textphone users) on: 01462 474800



OUTLOOK is published by the Communications Team, North Hertfordshire District Council, Town Lodge, Gernon Road, Letchworth, SG6 3HN

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“ MAKING NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE A VIBRANT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PROSPER ”