



Our County of Opportunity 2022-2025

Hertfordshire County Council



Hertfordshire



Hertfordshire has long been the county of opportunity, recognised as a great place to live, work, learn and do business.

I have immense pride in our county, not least witnessing first-hand how all of our communities across Hertfordshire came together to support each other through the pandemic, and how we, as a council, were able to adapt and continue to deliver our vital public services throughout the most challenging of times.

Since my election as Leader in May 2021, I have worked to set an agenda that will ensure our county's long-term success. This plan sets out our collective ambition – to create a cleaner, greener, healthier Hertfordshire – and how we intend to achieve this vision by putting the things that matter most at the heart of all we do.

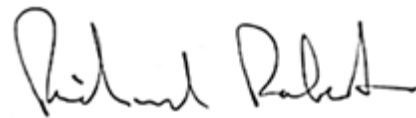
A portrait of a middle-aged man with glasses, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and pink tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the right. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees.

Introduction

To deliver this vision, our priorities are centred around four key areas: improving the health and wellbeing of our people, protecting and improving our environment, supporting the sustainable and responsible growth of our county, and providing excellent services that are accessible for all.

As an organisation we face many challenges in the years ahead, not least as we start to understand and address the long-term impact of Covid-19. Yet the pandemic has also revealed opportunities to allow us to re-evaluate and improve how the council operates and delivers services to our residents, communities and businesses.

We know we cannot achieve our vision alone – we must all work together to achieve this bright future for our county. By harnessing the resilience and strength of Hertfordshire’s people, places and businesses, and working closely with our local partners, together we can create a more inclusive and productive county, where everyone, regardless of their circumstances, has the opportunity to succeed.”



Richard Roberts
Leader, Hertfordshire County Council





Our promise






Hertfordshire will continue to be the county of opportunity for all, a place where our people thrive, our places prosper, and our planet is protected.

To achieve this, our vision is to create a cleaner, greener and healthier Hertfordshire.

Delivering our vision

This plan sets out our commitments on how we will work with our partners to deliver this vision.

Challenges and opportunities

-  Climate change
-  Sustainable growth
-  Levelling up
-  Health and care
-  Covid-19 pandemic



A cleaner and greener environment

- Environmental leadership
- Accessible and biodiverse green spaces
- Inspire a sustainable county
- Minimise waste

Healthy and fulfilling lives for our residents

- Opportunity to live life well
- Support to live independently
- Every child to have the best start in life
- Everyone kept safe from harm
- Inclusive and safe communities

Sustainable, responsible growth in our county

- Well-designed communities
- Strong economy
- Infrastructure that meets the needs of our communities
- Employment opportunities for all

Excellent council services for all

- Citizen focus
- Collaborative leadership
- Modern and innovative
- Embrace diversity
- Investing in our staff

Challenges and opportunities

Hertfordshire is a great place to live. Home to 1.2 million people and 58,000 businesses, we have some of the best schools in the country and low levels of crime.

We are vital to the UK, contributing over £41 billion a year to the national economy. Ideally located between London, Cambridge and Oxford, we are home to some of the country's leading businesses, including internationally renowned creative media and advanced manufacturing and life sciences industries.



Our future is bright, but we do face a number of issues in the coming years which will bring both challenges and opportunities:

Our environmental challenges and opportunities



Climate change

The effects of climate change are one of the biggest challenges of our times. In July 2019, we declared a Climate Emergency in Hertfordshire and committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030.

Our Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy outlines the steps and measures we are taking to tackle this crisis and embed sustainability in everything we do.



Sustainable growth

As with other parts of the country, Hertfordshire faces the challenge of supporting a growing and ageing population. Alongside our partners, we are preparing to sustainably accommodate over 100,000 new homes and jobs over the next 15 years.

We shall put in place the necessary infrastructure and other community resources to make these new developments great places to live whilst also enabling Hertfordshire's strong economy to continue to grow.



Our other challenges and opportunities



Levelling up

Hertfordshire is a generally prosperous and successful county. Nonetheless, we must not forget there is a significant divide between the varying levels of affluence and standards of living in Hertfordshire, which affect individuals' life chances. It is vital that these issues are addressed and levelled up to ensure we are providing opportunities for all.



Health and care

A high proportion of Hertfordshire residents are in good health with life expectancy for both men and women higher than the national average. However, levels of preventable disease are too high in some areas and there is increasing demand for mental health provision and care services. We will actively be working with partners as part of the new integrated care systems to respond to these challenges.



Covid-19 pandemic

The pandemic has tested us all in every way imaginable, but we are proud of how everyone in Hertfordshire has collectively risen to meet the challenge. It is clear that the pandemic has had a significant effect on our population, often exacerbating the inequalities that exist in our communities.

The longer-term effects of this continue to emerge, but as an organisation we are already experiencing increased demand for council services. We must build upon all of the resilience and excellent work we have seen to ensure we can all recover and thrive following the pandemic.





01

A cleaner and greener environment

To achieve a cleaner and greener environment, there are a number of key areas that our vision will address.



Protecting and improving our environment is integral to Hertfordshire's long-term prosperity.

Taking care of our environment



Environmental leadership

We will make our operations carbon neutral by 2030. We will use renewable energy in our buildings, support our staff to travel sustainably and use emission-free fuel in the vehicles we use to deliver our services. We will also ensure our services are ready and resilient in the face of extreme weather.



Accessible and biodiverse green spaces

We will work with our partners to improve and protect nature in the county, including on our own land and waterways. By supporting wildlife, conserving biodiverse habitats and supporting environmental schemes, we will ensure everyone can enjoy our precious green spaces.



01 A cleaner and greener environment



Inspire a sustainable county

By showing how a large organisation can take action, we will inspire others in the county to do the same. Using our influence, we will work with others to encourage and enable the local action necessary to deliver clean air for all, build resilience to a changing climate and achieve a net zero greenhouse gas Hertfordshire before 2050.



Minimise waste

We will support our residents to reduce what they throw away and increase recycling and reuse. Through our waste contracts, we will develop more sustainable solutions for dealing with the waste that is produced, minimising what is sent to landfill.







02

Healthy and fulfilling lives for our residents

It's critical that we work to ensure the health and wellbeing of Hertfordshire residents, putting everything in place to help them thrive. To do this, we have five aims.



By ensuring healthy and fulfilling lives for our residents, Hertfordshire will continue to prosper.

Looking after our residents



Opportunity to live life well

We will aim to deliver the best health outcomes for the people of Hertfordshire. We will seek to reduce preventable disease by creating healthy places and addressing underlying causes of poor health. We will inspire and empower residents to live healthy lifestyles and enable everyone who needs it to have access to physical and mental health support.



Support to live independently

We will help those who need support to live independently and with respect in their own homes wherever possible: supporting them to access employment, appropriate housing, community support, personalised care and assistive technology where needed. We will also support carers, recognising the vital role they play in supporting so many people across the county.





02 Healthy and fulfilling lives for our residents



Every child to have the best possible start in life

We want every child in Hertfordshire to be able to achieve their full potential. Working with families, we will provide access to early years education and childcare, a place at a good school and appropriate support to those who have additional needs.



Everyone kept safe from harm

We will work with partners to protect our residents, including children and young people, from abuse, domestic violence, neglect and exploitation. By intervening at an early stage, we will support individuals before they reach crisis point.



Inclusive and safe communities

We will make Hertfordshire safer for everyone, rejecting hatred and violence of all kinds. By celebrating and valuing the diversity of cultures and experiences in our communities, we will work to ensure everyone feels welcome and has a voice that is heard.





Tilbury Douglas

03

Sustainable, responsible growth in our county

When it comes to sustainable and responsible growth, we will be both community and economy focused, implementing long-term solutions that will benefit our county for years to come.



Our ambition is to ensure that our growth benefits all of our residents.

How we'll grow



Well-designed communities

Recognising there is a need for more housing in the county, we will work with partners to create vibrant communities that are well connected and environmentally sustainable. These will be places with a good balance of jobs, homes, services, and amenities where everyone can thrive.

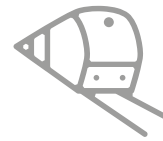


Strong economy

We will work to ensure that Hertfordshire continues to be recognised as a great place to do business. We will be a county which nurtures local businesses whilst also attracting investment from world-class, global businesses in order to drive economic growth of the county.



03 Sustainable, responsible growth in our county



Infrastructure that meets the needs of our communities

We will deliver and maintain appropriate sustainable transport, highways, digital and community infrastructure to support our growing county. This includes seeking the necessary investment to develop a new Hertfordshire Essex Rapid Transit System (HERT) that would provide a new east-west link in our county.



Employment opportunities for all

We will support businesses to recover and grow, working with our schools, colleges and university to increase skill levels to meet current and future employer staffing requirements. Across the county we will promote lifelong learning and retraining that provides everyone with job opportunities as we strive for full employment.







04

Excellent council services for all

The previous sections have set out our priorities for delivering our vision of a cleaner, greener and healthier Hertfordshire. In delivering on the commitments we have made, we will adopt and demonstrate certain principles and approaches.



These are the ways we will deliver our vision.

Our principles and approaches



Collaborative leadership

As Hertfordshire's strategic authority, we will provide strong place leadership. Recognising that we can achieve far more by working together than we can do by acting alone, we will work with valued partners across the county's public services, business sectors and voluntary and community groups, to achieve the best possible outcomes for our communities.



Citizen focus

We will continue our unwavering focus on delivering high quality and valued services to our residents, shaped by a clear understanding of our communities' needs, identified through effective consultation, engagement and participation.





04 Excellent council services for all

Investing in our staff

We cannot deliver excellent services without excellent staff. In partnership with those we contract with to deliver services on our behalf, we will recruit and retain high quality employees by caring about their wellbeing and supporting their development.



Modern and innovative

Through our 'Beyond Today' transformation programme, we will implement ambitious organisational change projects to perform as a modern and agile organisation focused on continuous improvement. We will make best use of our resources, embrace best practices, and improve how we work to ensure we are ready to meet the challenges of the future.



Embrace diversity

Diversity and inclusion is part of our DNA, and we will demonstrate it in everything we do. We will engage with all communities to help make our policies and practices inclusive, and ensure our services are accessible to all. We will celebrate the differences inherent in our workforce and aim to reflect the diverse makeup of the county's population at all levels of our organisation.





About this plan

This plan sets out our key priorities in delivering our vision for Hertfordshire. These priorities will be reflected in other key strategic and service plans produced by the council. These include:

[Equality and Diversity](#)

[Fire Cover Review](#)

[Sustainable and responsible growth](#)

[Hertfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

[Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan](#)

[Hertfordshire's Plan for Children and Young People](#)

[Hertfordshire's Public Health Strategy](#)

[Integrated Risk Management Plan](#)

[Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy](#)

Each year, an annual report outlining our progress against our key priorities will be published on our website.

Your County Councillors

Hertfordshire County Council has 78 County Councillors in Hertfordshire, each elected to represent the interests and views of a different part of the county.

To find your local councillor's details, please visit the council website and search '[councillors](#)'.

Councillors are given locality budgets to spend on projects in their areas. For more information, please visit the council website and search '[locality budgets](#)'.

Contact us

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Access our services online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk

Email contact@hertfordshire.gov.uk or call 0300 123 4040

For deaf customers or those with hearing loss:

Contact us using **SignVideo**, our live BSL video interpreting service, text 07507 306911, or Textphone/Minicom 01992 555506.

Write to us.

Our address is: Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DQ.

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Creating a cleaner, greener,
healthier Hertfordshire

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