



Hertsmere Borough Council

# Annual Review 2022/23



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# Contents

02

Annual Review  
2022/23

05

Position  
Statement 1

07

Position  
Statement 2

09

Position  
Statement 3

11

Position  
Statement 4

13

Position  
Statement 5

15

Position  
Statement 6

16

Operational  
Focus

17

Quality Service  
Indicator Outturns  
2022/23

# Annual Review 2022/23

This document acts as a retrospective look at our achievements over the last year against each of the six position statements set out in the Hertsmere Vision 2022-27.

## Hertsmere Vision 2022-27 – Driving Better Futures

The Hertsmere Vision document reflects a new approach to setting our strategic priorities. It sets out a high level set of aspirations for the Council, reflecting both challenges and opportunities for the borough in the widest sense, capturing our unique geographical, social and economic strengths and identifying areas for action and development.

The Vision is clearly structured with an overall Vision Statement, 6 Position Statements which describe key areas of focus for the council and then 30 Commitments which articulate how we deliver against these statements. The commitments set out how we will work, both in terms of specific delivery but also clearly reflect our organisational values.

- 6.1 Lead with purpose
- 6.2 Maintain relationships
- 6.3 Act with integrity
- 6.4 Communicate regularly and honestly
- 6.5 Embrace and champion change

- 5.1 Champion social justice
- 5.2 Keep residents safe
- 5.3 Improve mental and physical wellbeing
- 5.4 Support inclusive communities
- 5.5 Create affordable communities

- 4.1 Increase biodiversity and ecology
- 4.2 Green our infrastructure
- 4.3 Recycle our resources
- 4.4 Accelerate towards net zero
- 4.5 Seek a cleaner and greener construction industry



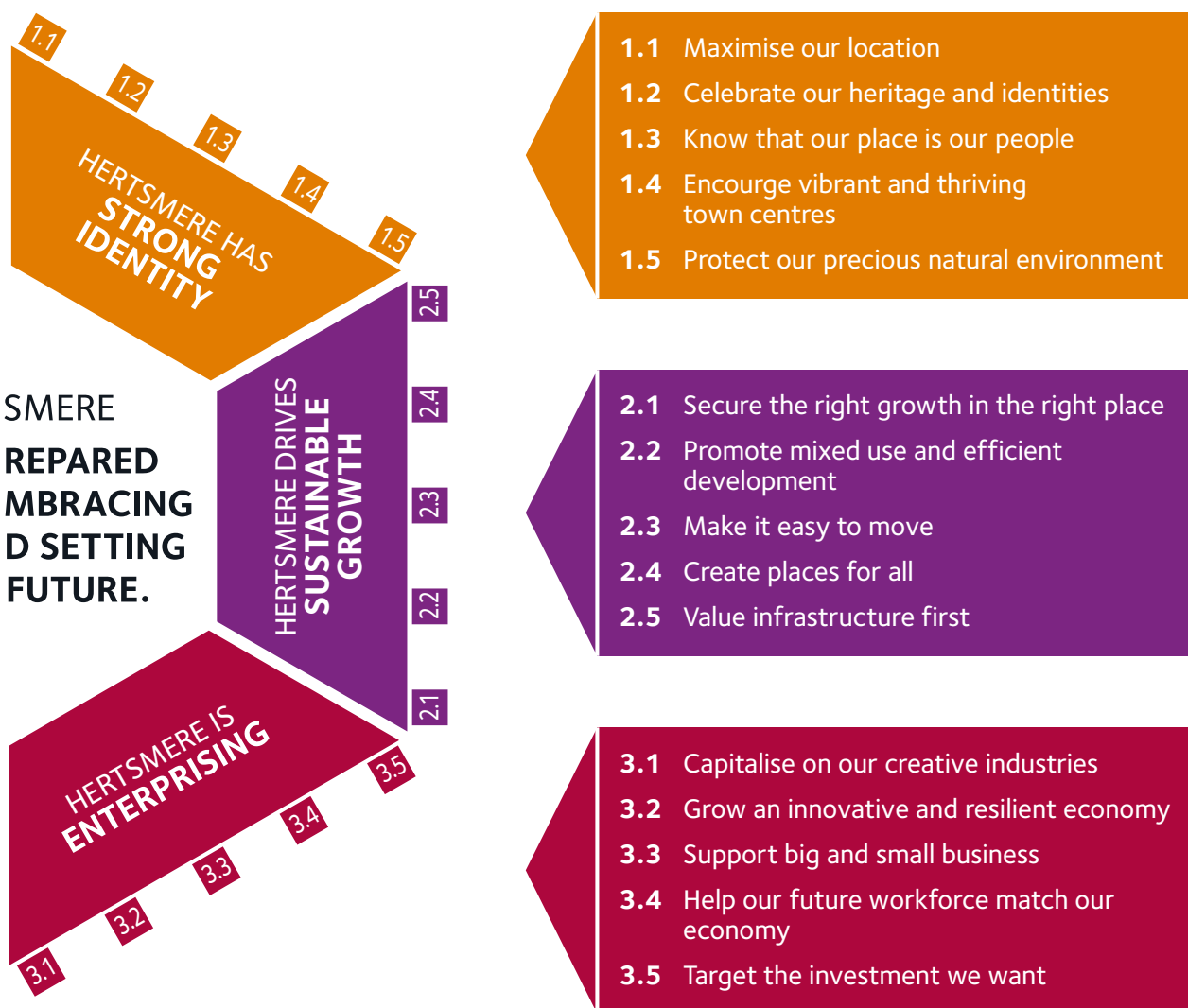
## Corporate Plan

Each year, the Council's Corporate Plan sets out how we will deliver against the vision in the year ahead, linking actions and success directly to the six position statements from the Vision. The Corporate Plan for 2023/24 was agreed at our Executive in March of this year.

## Annual Review 2022-23

This document aims to highlight some of the work that we've done over the last year to achieve against the Vision. In line with the Corporate Plan 2022/23 to which it directly relates, this document is organised by position statement linking our actions directly to our ambitions.

We have also provided information on our Quality Service Indicator set which is regularly monitored by Senior Officers, the Member led Performance Panel and our Executive in order to maintain high quality service delivery.







## POSITION STATEMENT 1

# Hertsmere has a strong identity

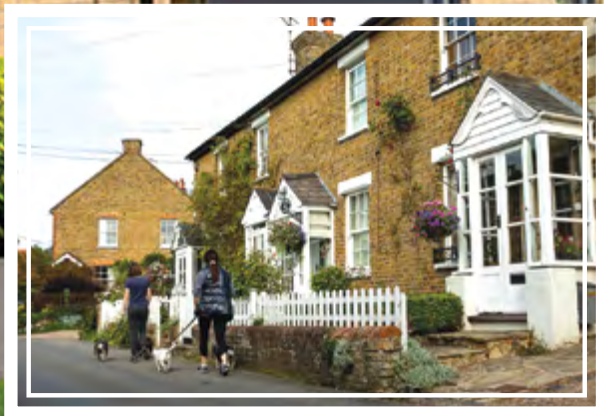
“We are a place where the diverse and distinctive nature of our people, towns and countryside are celebrated. We ensure our unique assets provide maximum benefit.”

### Achievements 2022/23

- Held a number of events throughout the year celebrate our diverse community including Herts Pride and Black History Month, bringing councillors and staff together in celebration of the contribution minority groups make to the borough;
- We also awarded almost £30,000 in community grants with particular focus on inclusion and diversity. Projects included a week of events run by Learning through the Arts and the Elstree and Borehamwood Unity Network’s annual Festival. This is alongside the £311k in partnership funding allocated to key local organisations including Hertsmere Citizens Advice;
- To Celebrate Her Majesty the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, we planted trees across the borough as part of the Queen’s Green Canopy initiative;
- Grants of up to £500 were awarded to 35 neighbourhood, charity and voluntary organisations to a value of £18,500 to support community events over the Jubilee bank holiday weekend in June.
- Continued with our programme of capital improvements to our parks, including the launch of the new Splash Zone in Meadow Park, Borehamwood with 23 in-ground jets, a Hula Spray and Hydro Blasts. We also successfully retained the national Green Flag accreditation for seven of our local parks;
- Continued to support and work closely with the borough’s voluntary run museums and this year supported Potters Bar and Bushey Museums towards achieving Charitable Incorporated Organisation status;
- Supported our friends in Ukraine, agreeing a cross party motion to support Ukrainian people who have been displaced into the borough’s communities. We have offered a range of practical support for hosts and guests, and have undertaken a significant number of suitability checks on offers of accommodation. In addition we have provided support to those temporarily housed in the borough in asylum contingency and Afghan bridging hotel accommodation.









## POSITION STATEMENT 2

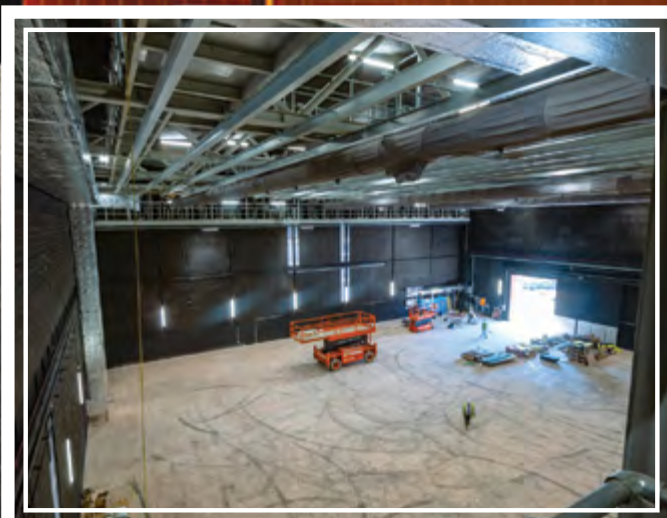
# Hertsmere drives sustainable growth

“We are a place actively planning for a better and more resilient future. Growth is carefully considered to provide places where residents are in close proximity of jobs, daily amenities and recreation opportunities.”

### Achievements 2022/23

- Begun work on a new version of Hertsmere’s new Local Plan following the decision to set the previous plan aside following a consultation exercise in early 2022 which had 18,000 responses;
- Played a key role on the Joint Strategic Partnership consultation for the South West Hertfordshire 2050 – Realising our Potential document which took place from September – November 2022. More than 3,000 people took part and a consultation report is being prepared;
- Worked closely with our partners to help develop the refreshed priorities, work programme and actions for the Hertfordshire Growth Board until 2025. By engaging closely in this process we can ensure that the needs of Hertsmere residents are central to any future priorities for the county as a whole;
- Produced Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) following public consultation which look to address sustainability, mitigating for climate change and increasing biodiversity. Specifically the Sustainable Transport and Parking SPD includes changes to off-street parking requirements for new developments, together with approaches to sustainable transport. The biodiversity net gain SPD delivers improvements by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development and aims to leave the natural environment in a better state than before the development took place. The Carbon Offsetting SPD details how our Carbon Offset Fund will collect payments arising from planning applications in order to meet targets for net zero development. These funds will be used for Carbon reduction projects such as tree planting or renewable energy schemes as near to the site as possible;
- Working both directly and through our subsidiary Hertsmere Developments Limited we have built a number of affordable homes as part of a pipeline of projects to provide accommodation of varying housing tenures to meet local need. The first site at Fairfield Close offers seven homes for social rent, comprising of three one-bedroom and four two-bedroom flats.







## POSITION STATEMENT 3

# Hertsmere is Enterprising

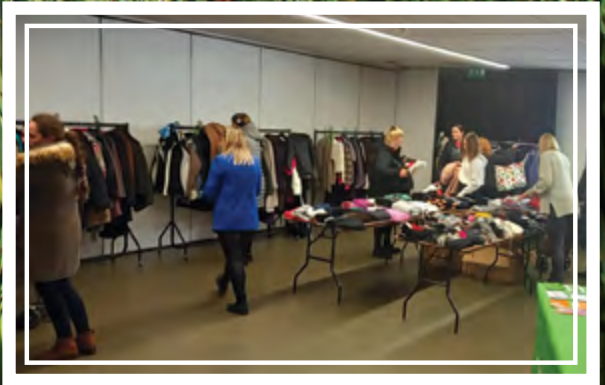
“We are a place increasing prosperity by being creative, innovative and investable. We support our people to access new opportunities.”

### Achievements 2022/23

- Delivered The Platinum Stages at council-owned Elstree Studios. The two new sound stages and ancillary workshops have been designed to international space standards, use innovative sustainability technology and are expected to create more than 800 jobs locally;
- Commissioned the development of a Creative Strategy for Hertsmere which will provide a cohesive approach for the Creative Sector in the borough and help direct spend of the £100k Creative Fund released from the Platinum Stage Development;
- Established Hertsmere Living Limited, a joint venture with Watford Community Housing which enables us to access additional funding to build new affordable homes;
- Delivered against the priorities set out in our new Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 with a range of initiatives including:
  - Working with our partners including Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Department for Work and Pensions to deliver a range of careers events tailored to specific groups including young people and the over 55s. The Generation Hertsmere event in November 2022 gave more than 500 young people from Hertsmere schools the chance to chat with representatives from nearly 50 business including Sky Studios Elstree, Canada Life, Computacenter, InspireAll the NHS alongside local entrepreneurs and start-ups and local education providers;
  - Hosting a range of networking events to bring businesses together to share expertise in a range of areas such as making the most of local grants and funding and publicised opportunities for training and development offered by our partners on topics such as Zero Carbon, attracting outside investment and workplace wellbeing;
  - Working to understand the needs and experiences of local businesses through the cost of living crisis. The results of the survey carried out during February 2023 will be used to inform the prioritisation of the implementation of the ED Strategy;
  - Signing up over 150 businesses to our online business directory Hertsmere Works which helps customers and local retailers to connect. The directory is free to use for consumers and free for businesses to register;
  - Supporting the wider work of the Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce and the Local Enterprise Partnership to understand the skills needs of local businesses and deliver the county's Local Skills Improvement Plan;
  - Offering 50 businesses the benefit of a year's free membership to the Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce giving them access to a larger audience for their businesses as well as free training and support;
- Supported 432 unemployed local people through our Recruitment Pathway Programme, providing a range of training opportunities and ultimately securing 195 job offers. This project aims to help unemployed and economically inactive people in collaboration with Job Centre Plus and Clarion Housing Association. The programme provided training opportunities for existing and potential employees and volunteers to increase skills and protect their future employability all whilst safeguarding jobs and creating new opportunities for local people.









## POSITION STATEMENT 4

# Hertsmere Takes Climate Action

“We are a place acting on our pledge to face the climate emergency. Everything we do is focussed on delivering a greener, sustainable and more resilient future.”

### Achievements 2022/23

- Launched a sustainable Beryl Bike cycle scheme in Borehamwood in October 2022. Since then 400 people have used one of the 45 brand new bikes and 25 e-bikes which are available to hire from the 24 Beryl Bays situated around the town. Riders have made over 2,500 journeys covering almost 5,500 km;
- Given away more than 6,000 trees as part of the ‘Your Tree Our Future’ campaign in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council. Residents could choose one of more trees from eight different species or purchase a hedgerow pack containing 30 trees;
- Supported the countywide Solar Together programme providing homeowners with the opportunity to benefit from a group-buying scheme when purchasing solar panels. The scheme saw 731 registrations and 91 acceptances;
- Supported the delivery of £920k through Green Homes Grants across the borough. The Sustainable Warmth Scheme funded energy efficiency upgrades and aimed to support those households most impacted by rising energy bills. The scheme supports homeowners, private tenants and people in social rented accommodation and can fund improvements up to £10k for homeowners and £5k for landlords;
- Continued to keep our residents informed about local arrangements for waste and recycling and carried out a range of community events including clothes swaps, a compost giveaway and opportunities for bicycle recycling;
- Worked to enhance local diversity through a range of projects including tree and hedge planting, the creation of five new wildflower meadows comprising over 7,000 square meters of wildlife habitat and river restoration including volunteering days at the Hilfield Park Reservoir and the River Colne;
- Continued a programme of environmental enhancements to the Council’s property portfolio including Air Sourced Heat pumps and a secure bicycle shed at the borough offices along with a wider review of a number of Council owned properties for renewable or low carbon energy generation.









## POSITION STATEMENT 5

# Hertsmere is Inclusive and Equitable

“We are a place where communities are proud to say where they are from. Our communities feel safe, secure, healthy and happy.”

### Achievements 2022/23

- Supported our residents with a number of initiatives focusing on the increased cost of living, including:
  - Publishing our Worrying About Money leaflet in conjunction with the Hertsmere Food Poverty Alliance. The leaflet contains a range of advice and information for anyone struggling to make ends meet. The alliance is made up of a range of charitable and public sector organisations, including Citizens Advice, Borehamwood Food Bank, Potters Bar Foodbank and The Red Trust Bushey Foodbank;
  - Providing more than 6,000 free hot, vegetarian meals to families and individuals across the borough over the summer via a community driven initiative made possible with funding from the GMSP Foundation, The Childhood Trust and with support from the Akshaya Patra foundation, the Hertsmere Food Poverty Alliance and InspireAll;
  - Coordinating a network of Warm Spaces across the borough, offering a space for people to gather which is safe and welcoming;
- Helped 180 individuals and families remain in their home or access alternative accommodation before they became homeless, this follows an increase in cases over the last year linked to rising inflation and the difficult economic climate;
- Continued to roll out government grants linked to Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis to both residents and local businesses to a total of £6,756,858;
- Worked closely with local rough sleepers to help support them into temporary accommodation, Shenwood Court or private rented accommodation. For a period over Christmas and New Year 2022, there were no known rough sleepers in the borough for the first time since the pandemic. In total through our work with other agencies we helped 13 individuals off the street during 2022;
- Supported, organised and commissioned a range of community events and face to face services to make our residents feel safer and get healthier. These included Community Health Fairs, the OPALS events for older people, the Safer Streets project, We Move She Moves the exercise programme for women and girls, the Healthy Hubs - our one stop shops for everything physical and mental health and our innovative Hertsmere Against Cancer project which alongside an awareness raising campaign has used contact tracing to encourage 360 women to take up cancer screening appointments.







## POSITION STATEMENT 6

# Hertsmere is Open and Collaborative

“We are a place that values partnerships and relationships. We recognise that things work better when we share ambitions and work together to overcome challenges.”

### Achievements 2022/23

- Continued our multi-agency work across a range of local, sub-county and countywide partnerships which included securing our position regarding future development of the county through our ongoing involvement in the South West Herts Joint Strategic Plan and the Hertfordshire Growth Board;
- Developed a new Community Strategy for the borough, focusing on delivery of our priorities through Hertsmere Together, the Local Strategic Partnership for Hertsmere. The strategy has ‘working in Partnership to empower our communities’ at its heart and aims to keep our communities healthy and well, keep our communities safe and build a resilient community;
- Continued to support the distribution of public health information, to both residents and local businesses particularly around the national vaccination effort and how businesses can keep customers safe, working closely with our partners in the NHS, Hertfordshire County Council Public Health and venues across the borough;
- Continued to webcast Council meetings, ensuring they remain as open and accessible as possible;
- Carried out a range of consultation exercises including our Community Safety Partnership Plan which saw over 300 residents respond and 95% of these agree to focus on creating safer environments through tackling crime and antisocial behaviour, to protect and safeguard vulnerable people and build community confidence and wellbeing to increase feelings of safety;
- Ran a comprehensive public awareness campaign including posters, videos, social media and face to face communication via our local Community Engagement Officers to ensure residents are aware of the need for photographic ID when voting at a polling station during the 2023 local elections;
- Continued to work with partners from the health sector to deliver the roll out of covid vaccination programme through the use of pop up vaccination centres and vaccination tracing. We supported over 1,500 vaccinations as part of the spring booster programme and made contact with 3830 unvaccinated people through contact tracing of whom 24% committed to booking a vaccine. We also continued to facilitate the delivery of financial support from central government to both residents and businesses.

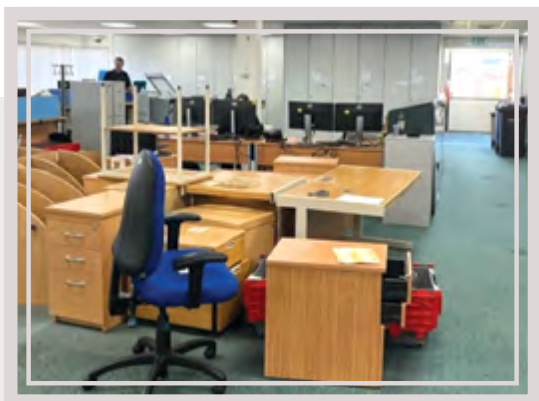


# Operational Focus

This section reflects those projects which have been focused on internal changes to our systems, processes, facilities and assets which have helped us to deliver high quality services whilst achieving our ambitions.


















## Achievements 2022/23

- Consolidated our approach to hybrid working by releasing space at the Civic Offices to Hertfordshire Constabulary and beginning the implementation of the refurbishment and re-planning of the building. The project provides an improved working environment for council staff whilst allowing us to raise additional income through the release of office space. New technology will support our officers to remain accessible and help to achieve sustainability aims;
- Approved a 'sound and prudent budget' for 2022/23 to ensure the continued delivery of services to our residents which saw an increase of £5 on our share of council tax;
- Worked to address issues around recruitment and retention through the implementation of a range of initiatives including a Refer a Friend Scheme and a training and retention payment scheme with a specific focus on HGV Drivers, a hard to recruit position integral to the delivery of our Waste Service.





# Quality Service Indicator Outturns 2022/23

PI Code & Short Name	Value	Target	Status	Latest Notes
CSP15 Number of community safety related partnership initiatives.	32	32		
E192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting - Hertsmere Estimate.	44%	48%		Service focus remains on maintaining core collections and responding to recruitment and retention issues.
FIN7 BV9 % of Council Tax collected.	96.6%	98%		The pandemic and the associated pause in collection has impacted on collection rates.
FIN8 BV10 Percentage of Non-domestic Rates Collected.	96.5%	98%		The inclusion of a new property into the the rating alongside the cost of living crisis has impacted on collection rates.
NI 156 Number of households living in temporary accommodation.	112	150		
NI 181 The average time taken in calendar days to process all new claims and change events in Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.	13	13		
ORG4 Working Days Lost Due to Short Term Sickness Absence per employee - Rolling Year.	6.4	3.5		The rise in sickness absence over the past year can be mainly attributed to an extreme rise in Covid19 cases in summer 2022.
P&CE9 Participation rates at Hertsmere Leisure owned leisure facilities.	1,121,918	964,476		
PLA33a Percentage of 'Major' planning applications determined within 13 weeks for the period shown.	94.0%	90%		
PLA33b Percentage of 'minor' planning applications determined within 8 weeks for the period shown.	91.0%	90%		
PLA33c Percentage of 'Other' applications determined within 8 weeks for the period shown.	93%	93%		
SPA5a Number of green flag award sites.	7	7		
SPA6 Percentage of parks and amenities graded acceptable or above.	99	75		
SPA10b(ii) Number of missed collections per 100,000 collections.	47.5	60		
HOU26 Percentage of homelessness cases closed in the period shown due to successful prevention.	48%	30%		
HOU27 No of cases prevented, relieved or discharged via a proactive offer in private rented sector via Let with Hertsmere.	35	60		This figure includes those where the household accepted the property as well as those who refused the suitable offer and we discharged our homeless duty. There is an increase from last quarter as the team have proactively reviewed incentive packages offered but still remains below our target. Sourcing affordable, suitable properties is very challenging at present competing against market rents and other councils such as London Boroughs.
HOU28 Number of rough sleepers accommodated during the period.	42	50		This includes individuals who, at the end of the quarter, were accommodated in Shenwood Court and in overflow temporary accommodation awaiting space at Shenwood Court or who are not suitable for this scheme.

