

UNAPPROVED DRAFT1

Accounts Reconciliation as at 12th January 2023

	Current Account	Deposit Account	Total
Actual bank balances	£725.00	£18,500.00	£19,225.00
Balance as per books			£19,225.00
Difference			£0.00
Cash to pay in			£0.00
Cheques to pay in			£0.00
Scheduled payments	HMRC PAYE		£0.00
TOTAL			£0.00

Unanimously **RESOLVED: to approve the Treasurer's Accounts Report and Bank Reconciliation for 18th January 2023**

General Reserve is forecast to be £3,088.41

Forecast

The forecast has been reviewed to enable the Council to allocate as much funding as possible to the Playing Fields Upgrade including reducing the Playing Fields Maintenance amount from £1,000 to £500 and the Car Park Development amount from £2,500 to £500.

Playing Fields Development

Pending a decision from the PC on how to fund the Playing Fields Development, the accounts have been prepared on the basis of closing the funding gap by taking a 10 year loan of £25,000 from the PWLB.

2. Payments (gross) All expenditure made under The General Power of Competence

	Value	VAT incl
Philip Knott: grass cutting	215.00	
EHDC: Playing Field annual safety inspection	55.30	9.22
PWLB: Loan servicing	767.93	
Clerk: mileage etc	32.40	
Clerk: Telephone and home working allowance	11.00	
Clerk: salary November	304.00	
AGA: Hall hire	18.00	
AGA: Grant	1,000.00	
Color-Board: Litter picking November	96.00	16.00
HWMH: Hall hire	9.00	
HMRC: Income tax	90.80	
Clerk: salary December	250.80	
Color-Board: Litter picking December	96.00	16.00
HMRC: Income tax	62.60	
TEEC: Website hosting	151.19	25.20
Total (gross)	£3,160.02	
VAT included To be reclaimed under VAT Act 1994 (1), (3)		£ 57.20

Unanimously **RESOLVED: to approve all payments as per the Treasurer's report, including the Clerk's expenses of £21.80**

DS/Clerk

23.009 3. Budget and Precept 2023/24

Detailed budget proposals prepared by the Clerk were considered. The Section 106 money for the new play area was confirmed at being limited to £49,950. The new play area equipment will cost approximately £70,000, £5,000 of which will come from the development fund reserves. If the precept were to be £18,000 (20% increase), this would result in a receipts/payments balance deficit of approximately £26,200 at the 2023/24 year end with a bank balance deficit of approximately £13,250 at 31 March 2024. It was recognized that the Council's recommended bank balance should be approximately £11,000. Therefore a £25,000 PWLB loan was considered for the balance of the play area equipment cost. Having considered the options it was:

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- 1) **RESOLVED to set the precept at £18,000** Clerk
- 2) **RESOLVED to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £25,000 over the borrowing term of 10 years for the purpose of funding the balance of the Play Area equipment. The annual loan repayments will come to around £3,000.** Clerk

It was agreed to ask Cllr Dave Smith to prepare the application for the PWLB loan. Clerk/DS

It was agreed that in 2023/24 the Playing Field and Play Area could be merged on the cashbook and budget.

4. EHDC Precept form

The Chairman, the Clerk and two councillors signed the EHDC precept form. Clerk

Going forward, it was noted that if the Parish Council moves to Unity Trust Bank, the authorising signatories need to be agreed. Also, who will handle the payroll after Cllr Dave Smith has left. Clerk/all

It was also noted that UTB offer savings account options as well as a current account.

23.010

1. Highways

1. Overgrown hedges, MOG/Bakers Lane update: The Chairman said he had reported this on the Highways Fault line. TP

2. TRO21139 Bonnys Row road closure notification was noted

2. Footpaths and other Public Rights of Way (PROW)

1. Modification Order for footpath near Broadfields, recording the continuation of the Footpath to the Public Rights of Way map: Ongoing with Cllr Tom Payne: This continues to be a low priority for PROW. TP

2. Footpath Broadfields to High Wych Lane: Clarion ownership ongoing with Cllr Tom Payne. TP

3. Other Parish Matters

1. High Wych Memorial Hall and car park

No issues reported KJ

2. Bus shelter

1. No updates from EHDC regarding the replacement of the bin by the bus shelter.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk order a litter bin for location on the bus stop. Cllr Keith Jordan to provide specification. Clerk/KJ

Cllr Eric Buckmaster arrived at 9.04pm. His written report is included as Appendix B to the Minutes.

3. Commemorative Village sign

It is proposed that the opening of the new sign will happen over the Coronation weekend in May and that it will be connected with the High Wych Memorial Hall centenary celebration. DS

4. QEII Platinum Jubilee "Queen's Green Canopy" (QGC) trees initiative

The Chairman said he had spoken with Dudley Simpson who was happy for a couple of trees to be planted with the existing ones on the playing field by the pavilion. TP

5. Sawbridgeworth Trust

The Clerk said there had been no response yet from the Trustees' Clerk, Diana Kitson. It was agreed to contact her again. Clerk

6. Dog bin request

Where a bin might be located is not obvious and needs to be clarified before considering further. The Chairman agreed to look for a suitable location. TP

7. Parish Council election, 4th May 2023

It was noted that everyone wishing to be a councillor for the next 4-year term must stand for election. EHC Democratic Services will issue a timetable and guidelines for candidates nearer the time. Clerk

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It was agreed that an election piece should be written for the magazine, although it was also acknowledged that its circulation is limited.

- 23.011** **1. Playing Fields and buildings**
- 1. Harlow Theatre Company:** pavilion update
 1. Finalisation of refurb work is ongoing.
 2. The question of installing an external water tap to the pavilion was considered. A provisional cost of £100 was agreed. For a tap and a water butt. Cllr John Andreotti agreed to speak to Barry Bowen about the cost of the water bill. JA
 - 2. Play area**
 1. Since the PWLB loan for the car park has now been completed, it was agreed that Cllr Dave Smith apply for a PWLB loan for £25,000 as resolved at 23.009.3 above. DS
- 2. Allotments report**
1. No report received. DS
- 23.012** **Correspondence:** The list of correspondence was noted as it appeared on the Agenda:
- Parishioner: Dog poo being left in bags; request for a bin by Broadfields FP (23.010.3.6)
 - HAPTC: Annual Parish Council meeting period, 2023 (23.014.2)
- 23.013** **Late items and items for future agendas**
1. Late items received: None, but it was noted that a quote for suitable glass for the notice boards refurbishment will be with Cllr John Andreotti by the end of the month. JA
 2. Items for future agendas: AGAR – May 2023 Clerk
Election matters – May 2023
- 23.014** **Date and venue of next Meetings**
1. 15th March, 8pm, Allen’s Green Memorial Hall Clerk
 2. Noted: Annual Parish Council Meeting period, 10-25 May 2023
 3. Agreed: Draft Calendar of Meetings for 2023

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.05pm.

Signed.....

APPENDIX A

23.008.2 **23.008.2 PLANNING DECISION NOTICES for information only as at 11th January**

3/22/0737/HH	Great Pennys Barn, High Wych: Erect cart lodge	GRANTED
3/22/1654/HH 3/22/1655/LBC	Vine Cottage, High Wych Ln: Demolish garage; erect extensions	REFUSED
3/22/1973/HH 3/22/1974/LBC	The Tallet, Slough Road: Single storey side link extension and alterations.	GRANTED
3/22/2301/PNHH	Templewood, High Wych Road: Single storey extension. <i>Presumed planning permission not needed.</i>	Permission not needed
3/22/2078/FUL	Greenleys, Slough Rd: Demolish barn and nissen huts; erect 1 new dwelling and 4 commercial units.	Awaited
3/22/2509/FUL	Tharbies Farm: Change of use, agriculture to equestrian	Awaited
3/22/1617/HH 3/22/1618/LBC	Four Lanterns, High Wych Lane: Internal alterations; replace existing outbuilding	Awaited
3/22/1183/FUL	Sayes Park Farm: Change of use grain silo to Class B1	Awaited
3/21/3035/FUL	Mountfitchet, High Wych Rd: APPEALED: Ref 22/00058/REFUSE	Awaited
3/21/0824/FUL	Land at Leaky Cauldron Corner: Erect 4 No. 4-bed dwellings	Unknown
3/20/0633/FUL	Crumps Farm APPEALED Ref 00/00008/REFUSE	Awaited

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APPENDIX B

Cllr E Buckmaster report for January 2023

November and December 16 Days of Activism in Hertfordshire to end Gender-Based Violence

The Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership called for people to stand up to violence against women and girls as part of the international [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#) campaign.

Running from 25 November to 10 December, the campaign called for an end to gender-based violence (also commonly known as 'violence against women and girls'). The international [White Ribbon Day](#) encouraged male allyship with women and girls, in addition to the UN UNiTE campaign to 'Orange the World' - symbolising a brighter future free of violence.

There were several ways Hertfordshire's residents took a stand against all forms of violence and abuse:

1. **Making the White Ribbon Promise**, 'to never use, excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women' and wear your white ribbon proudly. By doing so, you're becoming part of a wider movement to end violence and promote a culture of equality and respect.
2. **Supporting 16 Days of Activism events and initiatives** Organisations across Hertfordshire have worked hard to create a range of fun, informative and thought-provoking events to raise awareness of violence against women and girls and how we can all work together to eliminate it.
3. **Be the best ally you can be** by learning how to appropriately intervene and challenge harmful or abusive behaviours via the [UK Government's 'Enough' campaign](#).
4. **Showing your support on social media** by re-sharing awareness-raising content from national and local organisations (or sharing your own message of allyship and support) with the hashtag #HertsUnitedAgainstAbuse.

Councils awarded grant to tackle sticky situation caused by chewing gum

East and North Herts councils have been awarded £60k from the [Chewing Gum Task Force](#) to tackle chewing gum pollution in our town centres.

The funding enables the councils to carry out more deep cleaning to remove chewing gum from pavements in our town centres, and to install new signage to encourage long-term behaviour change.

The Chewing Gum Task Force, established by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is run by environmental charity, Keep Britain Tidy. Chewing gum litter wastes millions of pounds of taxpayers' money every year; the annual clean-up cost across the UK is estimated at £7 million.

[Fixed penalty notices](#) can be issued for littering, which includes chewing gum, and we hope the increased signage will encourage people to change their habits and bin their gum, not drop it on the floor or stick it to other unsuitable locations.

The damage and staining from chewing gum costs councils in the UK millions each year. The Chewing Gum Task Force grant fund represents a commitment from the Government and major gum manufacturers to work together to find long-term solutions to this issue.

Stay Safe, Stay Warm – Hertfordshire residents urged to check electrical items

73% of electric blankets tested by Herts County Council Trading Standards fail safety checks.

With many households considering alternative heating methods this winter, residents are being encouraged to have their electrical goods tested for free at events organised by Hertfordshire County Council's Trading Standards Service, in partnership with Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Hertfordshire Libraries.

As part of the drive to improve safety in the home, a total of 48 electric blankets and 25 portable heaters were tested with 73% of electric blankets and 20% of portable heaters found to fail. A total of 40 items were deemed unsafe and were withdrawn from use.

In addition to testing equipment owned by residents, a selection of new electric blankets from both high street and online retailers were tested; one of which failed and is being investigated further.

Most electric blankets failed due to their age: the safety features built into them start to

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deteriorate over time and after 10 years may not operate properly or at all. Some residents had blankets that dated back to the early 1970s, whilst others had been subject to national recall due to failure to meet minimum safety standards. Electric blankets should be checked regularly for wear and tear and replaced at least every 10 years.

The council has dedicated advice and support for those who need it this winter. Get in touch with [HertsHelp](#) on 0300 123 4044 to find out what support is there for you. For more information, visit: hertfordshire.gov.uk/hereforyou.

Positive climate action takes root as thousands take part in tree giveaway

Over 4,000 people have taken up the offer of free trees as part of Hertfordshire's Your Tree Our Future scheme, which will see a minimum of 100,000 trees given away over the next four years.

On Saturday 3 December 46,000 trees were collected, as residents from across the county took up the offer of free trees. It is estimated that these trees could remove 77,000 tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere over their lifetime.

The giveaway has been delivered by a partnership of the county council and Hertfordshire's district and borough councils, as well as local charity Growing People. Herts FullStop provided its facilities, workforce and logistical expertise to help prepare and deliver the trees to the relevant pick-up points across the county.

The tree giveaway is just one of the ways the county council hopes to deliver on its Tree and Woodland Strategy, which outlines plans to establish 1.8m new trees in Hertfordshire by 2030.

Working with partners across the county will be key in delivering this ambitious figure. The council has recently successfully bid for £78,983 on behalf of district and borough councils from the Local Authority Treescape fund. This funding will allow for a further 6,688 trees to be planted across the county this winter.

In addition, further funding from the Government's Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund will allow the council to hire two new members of staff to provide support and work in partnership with others to deliver tree, hedgerow, and woodland planting between spring 2023 and 2025.

Cllr Eric Buckmaster, Executive Member for the Environment at Herts County Council said:

"Tree planting remains one of the most effective tools for delivering our Sustainable Hertfordshire ambitions. Planting trees in the right place helps to improve nature, tackle air pollution and reduces the amount of carbon in our atmosphere, as well as having positive impacts on physical and mental wellbeing"

"We are thrilled that the Your Tree Our Future project has enabled and inspired so many of our residents to contribute to our fight against climate change through tree planting, and we are looking forward to the next giveaway window in Autumn 2023."

Anyone looking to take part in the Your Tree Our Future scheme can sign up to receive an email when the window re-opens in 2023 at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/yourtree

Pressure on the council's budget

In September, the council announced a projected shortfall in budget of £23.5 million in the current financial year. We've managed to balance the budget for the remainder of 2022/23, but we are facing very significant challenges in terms of the budgetary gap and pressures ahead, both next year and beyond. Councillors are likely to have to make some very difficult and unpopular decisions.

As an organisation, we have been awaiting clarity on future spending plans for key public services, including local government. We were pleased that the Government announced that they will provide extra funding for adult social care and schools. The Chancellor also announced that council tax 'flexibilities' will form part of their plan, but this won't be decided in Hertfordshire until February; we do know that council tax alone will not be the complete solution to the pressures we face.

The leader of the council has lobbied for the county via the Local Government Association, County Council's Network, working with MPs and directly to Government to make it plain that an enhanced financial settlement is essential in order to keep the vital services running for the people of Hertfordshire.

A [public budget consultation for Hertfordshire](#) is open until Sunday 18 December 2022 to canvass

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opinions from as many people as possible. We will consider the results of the public consultation and the government settlement when it is confirmed alongside the flexibility government has offered in terms of increasing council tax when setting the budget for next year at February 2023 Full Council.

The leader of the council said: “We will bring the strength of our partners and great working relationships with the NHS through the Integrated Care System, our District and Borough colleagues, and the voluntary sector to ensure that our council remains strong, vibrant, and confident to deliver for the people of Hertfordshire”.

The rising cost of living

We are working with partners on a campaign to ensure the provision of accessible information, advice, and guidance to those most in need to help every resident navigate the rising cost of living and to stay well as we continue to adjust to life with Covid.

The winter health and wellbeing booklet landed on doorsteps across the county from 24 October. Aimed at helping residents stay safe and well during the colder months, particularly those without digital access, the guide shines a light on the services the council delivers, and those it funds other organisations to deliver.

International migration The Hertfordshire Strategic Migration Steering Group, a group initially stood up in response to the increased migration to Hertfordshire from Hong Kong residents, continues to lead on Hertfordshire’s coordinated partnership response to the arrival of and support for refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan and Ukraine. Partners are working together to respond to and support the implementation of the national migration schemes locally and manage impact across the county. The numbers of people seeking asylum in the UK continues to increase and Hertfordshire has seen 3 further temporary accommodation sites open. There are currently 9 sites in Hertfordshire supporting around 1100 asylum seekers. Hertfordshire County Council is now urgently seeking new sponsors to host individuals and families from Ukraine who wish to remain in Hertfordshire.

Carers Strategy for Hertfordshire 2022-25

A new **Carers Strategy for Hertfordshire** has been published. This strategy aims to support carers’ wellbeing to help them to balance caring with their own needs. For the first time a single Strategy for Adult Carers and Young Carers has been developed with carers. The Strategy reaffirms partnership working between carers, health and social care providers and other agencies. There are four objectives, based on carers’ own priorities, which are: Be informed; Life beyond caring; Maintaining health and wellbeing; and Receiving consistent, joined up services. View the Carers Strategy at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carersstrategy

Warm Spaces

Hertfordshire County Council is working with district and borough councils to create a new online directory of public spaces and buildings which people can use as warm, welcoming spaces are temperatures drop.

The directory will help people find libraries, family centres and community spaces near them where they can stay safe and warm. Many will also be running additional activities to provide Hertfordshire’s residents with the opportunity to meet others and take part in events such as slipper swaps for older people in libraries and stay and play events in family centres for families with young children.

To support this initiative, the council is working in partnership to make £100,000 worth of funding available to local community groups, with grants of up to £2,000 to help them provide welcoming indoor spaces this winter. The funding can be used to cover energy bills, staff time, venue hire as well as other relevant costs such as transport to the venue. The grant scheme is being run by Hertfordshire Community Foundation.

If you can, please share the information about Warm Spaces and the grants available with residents, in newsletters or on your social media channels. Attached is a folder full of social media materials, and we also have videos to share:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgtazLRY5Zd9gMQaEc19C1ipVn42hNz2s>

The warm spaces directory is just one of the ways Herts County Council is helping people to manage the cost of living and remain safe and well this winter. Other support available for residents is highlighted through the council’s Here for You this winter campaign which is shining a

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light on the services the council delivers, and those it funds other organisations to deliver.

Hertfordshire County Council says “thank you” to hosts of Ukrainian refugees

- Since the start of the war in Ukraine, hundreds of families across the county have opened their homes to Ukrainian refugees
- To date, over 1,700 Ukrainian refugees have settled across the county

Hertfordshire County Council announced that it will step in and pay an additional, one-off thank you payment of £500 to Hertfordshire residents who have signed up for the Homes for Ukraine scheme and welcomed guests to the county.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched in February 2022 following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, with households asked to commit to hosting a Ukrainian refugee, or family for at least six months in exchange for thank you payments of £350 per month from government.

As many host arrangements come to the end of their initial six-month period, the county council has recognised the increased costs being borne by hosts, particularly given the surge in energy prices and inflation since the start of the year.

The additional financial support will sit alongside the range of practical support for hosts already put in place by the county council from regular webinars, advice on how to support guests and cultural differences as well as mental health advice such as the Flourish programme.

Many Ukrainian guests have settled well into the county, gaining employment, and children have started new schools, but the lack of social and affordable housing means that when hosts can no longer continue with their arrangements families are forced to relocate outside of the county.

The county is therefore urging sponsors and guests to maintain their arrangements for as long as possible while calling on those who wish to come forward now to offer their homes, to do so.

Anyone who is interested in becoming a sponsor of a Ukrainian or family can contact the council for a no-obligation discussion by emailing H4Ukraine@hertfordshire.gov.uk

East Herts Parking charges .Changes to be implemented on Monday 9 January 2023

At a meeting of the Executive on Tuesday, 25 October 2022, the following changes were agreed for implementation on Monday 9 January 2023:

- Free parking periods not removed, but implementation deferred for two years and reviewed as part of the council’s budget setting process.
- Chargeable hours extended from 6:30pm to 8:00pm in Bishop’s Stortford, Hertford and Ware.
- Charges introduced for Sunday parking in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Ware at a fixed all-day rate of £1.50 to encourage longer stays, support the local economy, deter short stays and encourage more sustainable methods of transport.
- Charges introduced for bank holidays and public holidays parking in all towns at a fixed all-day rate of £1.50 (parking will be free on Christmas Day).
- 20% uplift in tariff applied in Buntingford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware.

None of the above changes are applicable to Jackson Square in Bishop's Stortford.

Bell Street

- No increase in chargeable hours
- Free parking sessions remain, to be reviewed as part of council budget setting process, no later than June 2024
- 20% uplift in tariff

Mon - Fri (7.30am - 6.30pm)	Old tariff	New tariff
Up to 30 mins (Free)	£0.00	£0.00
Up to 1 hour	£0.30	£0.40
Up to 2 hours	£0.60	£0.70
Up to 3 hours	£1.10	£1.30
Up to 4 hours	£1.50	£1.80
Up to 5 hours	£2.20	£2.60
Up to 11 hours (All Day)	£3.80	£4.60

CLlr Eric Buckmaster, January 2023

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COUNCILLOR ACTIONS ARISING

Cllr David Smith

- Make payments as approved
- HTC and HWMH ongoing liaison
- Village sign post
- Change allotments water supplier from Castle Water to Everflow
- PWLB loan application

Cllr Tom Payne*

- Liaise with Sam Clark on Modification order for footpath and adoption of FP from Broadfields to High Wych being adopted by HCC
- Footpath from Broadfields to High Wych Lane: confirm ownership with Clarion
- New play equipment Working Group
- Allotments

Cllr John Andreotti*

- Continue to monitor Highways parking issues
- Car park matters
- New play equipment Working Group
- Notice boards refurbishment

Cllr Stacey Butcher*

- New play equipment Working Group

Cllr Keith Jordan*

- New Play Equipment Working Group

*Cllrs Tom Payne, John Andreotti, Stacey Butcher, Keith Jordan under delegated powers granted to the Clerk: Taking forward the new play area proposals.

Clerk

- Order new litter bin for bus stop
- Send precept to EHC
- Financial matters post May 2023 election
- May 4th election information
- Sawbridgeworth Trustee appointment