



HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

**Environmental Sustainability Strategy Action Plan
2025**

Theme	Objective	Target	No.	Action	Timeframe	Committee
1. Greener Communities	Use our Influence to push for more sustainable development and infrastructure decisions at County and District level.	All new developments meet high environmental and sustainability standards.	1.	Comment on planning applications according to our planning aspirations for the town, focusing on issues such as climate change, environmental quality and water policies in the East Herts Planning Policies and Guidance and the effect on biodiversity/nature corridors set out in the Nature Recovery Strategy.	Monthly at Meeting of Planning Sub Committee	D&L: Planning
		All new developments meet active travel goals.	2.	We will request that new developments provide safe and effective cycle paths that link to pre-existing routes where possible, as well as adequate pathways and walking routes to encourage active travel.	Monthly at Meeting of Planning Sub Committee	D&L: Planning
			3.	We will continue to contribute to consultations on the new District Plan, and other initiatives such as the Nature recovery Strategy for Hertfordshire and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.	Monthly at Meeting of Planning Sub Committee	D&L: Planning
	Provide advice on grants for projects that help deliver this	Support green projects/initiatives with the allocation of grants.	4.	Encourage more applications to the Hertford Town Council Community Fund for grants to fund green projects/initiatives to reduce organisations carbon footprint,	30 June 2025	FPA: Grants

	strategy, such as energy efficiency improvements to homes and businesses' potentially saving money for our residents and businesses.			increase biodiversity or help the community be greener e.g. EV charging schemes.		
			5.	Provide support for those who wish to apply for the Hertford Town Council Community Fund for green projects, as well as providing general support and signposting to those who wish to apply for external funding.	30 June 2025	FPA: Grants
			6.	We will work with other agencies such as the District Council to deliver Energy Hubs alongside the Home Energy Support Service, to share reliable advice on environmental grants to residents and businesses. This may include projects to reduce the energy consumption of their homes and buildings.	Ongoing	ECS
	Engage with the community about our strategy and provide advice to residents and businesses on how they can reduce their impact on the environment and be more sustainable.	Support homeowners to make energy efficiency improvements.	7.	Increase presence of the East Herts District Council's Energy Hub and Home Energy Support Service at Town Council events, with support from volunteers, to provide advice and support on home energy efficiency to residents.	Report Annually in December	ECS
		Engage the community.	8.	Run events throughout the year that provide information and education about sustainability, energy efficiency, and the environment. This may be in the form of the annual Eco Fest event, or through smaller activities throughout the year.	To be reviewed annually.	D&L / ECS
			9.	Run initiatives that encourage sustainable behaviours, such as clothes swaps and	To be reviewed annually.	D&L / ECS

				seed swaps, as well as supporting pre-existing initiatives like the Men in Sheds.		
			10.	Engage with young people through schools and youth groups on environment and sustainability, providing engagement opportunities and seeking youth input on how the strategy is implemented.	30 June 2025	D&L / ECS
			11.	Work with the local library and museum to create exhibitions highlighting contemporary issues within environment and sustainability, as well as what local groups and organisations are doing to tackle the climate crisis.	Dec 31 2026	D&L / ECS
		Support cleaner streets.	12.	We will work with East Herts District Council, Hertfordshire County Council, and the community to reduce litter, encourage recycling and reduce waste, e.g. by setting up a street cleaning project for the town.	Dec 31 2025	ECS
			13.	Promote Hertford Town Council's Adopt a Street scheme to increase regular participants and one-off litter picks by community groups.	Report Annually	D&L
			14.	To explore the feasibility of a programme that uses harvested rainwater to power wash pedestrian areas of the town centre.	30 June 2025	ECS
		Support recycling and reduction of food waste.	15.	Promote Hertfordshire County Council's Waste Aware scheme and implement strategies to prevent food waste	Quarterly newsletter	ECS
			16.	Support organisations that provide recycling/waste management facilities outside of standard at-home recycling, such	To be reviewed annually.	ECS

				as soft plastic and battery recycling in supermarkets and medication disposal / blister pack recycling at pharmacies. Support can include (but is not limited to) increased communications.		
			17.	Explore the feasibility of offering the Against Breast Cancer bra recycling scheme at the Town and Tourist Information Centre, or increasing communications about the same scheme currently implemented at Hertford Regional College.	30 April 2025	ECS
	Enable members of the community to be greener by supporting initiatives and partnerships that help deliver this strategy.	Reduce single use plastic waste from water bottles.	18.	Increase town centre business membership to the water bottle Refill scheme year on year so that 50% businesses (approximately 130) have joined by 1 January 2030.	Report Annually 1 January 2030.	D&L
		Support businesses to reduce their carbon footprint and to adopt more circular business models.	19.	Explore setting up an “Eco Forum” or similar forum to bring together local groups, businesses and individuals with an environmental interest and share ideas, expertise, resources and publicity across groups.	31 May 2025	ECS
			20.	Encourage local companies to engage in conservation work, e.g. as part of their corporate social responsibility policies.	31 March 2026	D&L
			21.	Ensure that Greener Hertford updates are included in every meeting of the Business Breakfasts.	Quarterly	D&L
			22.	To investigate possibility of promoting the East Herts District Council Solar Together scheme or facilitating other group buying schemes for businesses and/or residents.	31 October 2025	ECS

			23.	Explore creating a directory of Fair-Trade suppliers.	30 April 2025	D&L / ECS
			24.	Explore becoming a Fair-Trade town and bring findings to Environmental Sustainability Working Party.	30 April 2025	ECS
		Explore replicating or introducing the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust Wilder Communities initiative in Hertford.	25.	Working with Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, as well as local community led groups, to introduce/implement the Wilder Communities initiative within Hertford.	31 October 2025	ECS
	Support the development of the Castle Plus Neighbourhood Plan to improve the sustainability of new development in the town and to protect and enhance green space and biodiversity.	A Neighbourhood Plan will support development and protect and sustainable new enhance green space and biodiversity.	26.	Support the development of a new Neighbourhood Plan for the Hertford Castle plus area to consider the views of the community on environmental and sustainable standards for new development as well as enhancements to biodiversity and green spaces.	Target completion date January 2027	D&L: Planning
		All new developments to make a positive contribution to biodiversity and wildlife.	27.	Use our position as a statutory consultee on planning applications in Hertford to ensure that proposals for all new development are assessed with thorough consideration of the natural environment policies in the East Herts Planning Policies and Guidance and the Nature Recovery Strategy. This includes ensuring that proposals follow the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy and make a net positive contribution to biodiversity and wildlife above the 10% statutory minimum wherever possible.	Monthly at Meeting of Planning Sub Committee	D&L: Planning

				Update our planning aspirations to take account of Nature Recovery Strategy and Biodiversity Net gain requirements		
			28.	Set up a meeting with local wildlife organisations, Hertfordshire Natural History Society and Herts Environmental Record Centre to find out more about how they are mapping local wildlife species as a first step in supporting local wildlife organisations and volunteer conservation groups to identify and map local wildlife species and habitats to ensure new developments do not have a detrimental effect on these.	30 June 2025	ECS
2. Walking, Wheeling and Cycling	Encourage and support initiatives to encourage active travel – for environmental benefit as well as improved health and wellbeing.	Incentivise and facilitate more active travel.	29.	Contribute to East Herts District Council's development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).	2024- 2029	D&L
			30.	Contribute to a project to improve wayfinding in the Town, so that pedestrian and cycle routes are clearly signposted. This may be in line with the Hertford Castle Greenspace Renewal interpretation strategy pending a funding decision of the National Lottery Heritage Fund.	31 March 2026	D&L

			31.	Work with organisations and businesses in the town to promote and encourage cycling in the town, as well as with Ware Town Council to promote pre-existing cycling link. Meet with interested parties 4 times a year to explore projects to increase cycling participation and provide updates to relevant Committee.	Annually – 4 times year	D&L
			32.	Work with local cycling groups to map all cycle parking bays throughout the town centre and identify gaps that would benefit from cycle parking.	31 Aug 2025	D&L
			33.	Highlight the benefits of active travel, such as walking and cycling, through the Council communications, including benefits for the environment and people's health and wellbeing.	30 June 2025	D&L
	Encourage and support projects to improve air quality by reducing traffic and congestion.	Reduce emissions from vehicles and reduce traffic and congestion.	34.	Work with partners to seek the installation of Car Park Variable Message Signs (VMS) to assist drivers to find car parking spaces and reduce time spent driving around looking for spaces.	31 March 2026	D&L
			35.	Promote campaigns and initiatives such as: - <i>Drive more smoothly and slowly</i> - <i>Turn off engine outside schools and supermarkets.</i> - <i>Car Clubs and Car share scheme</i>	31 March 2026	ECS
			36.	Work with East Herts District Council to implement their Air Quality Action Plan Measures.	31 Dec 2027	ECS/ D&L
			37.	Engage with locally operating bus and train companies and provide clear information about available bus/train services on event days, as well as making bus/train timetables	30 June 2025	ECS / D&L

				easy to access via the Hertford Town Council website.		
	Encourage and support initiatives to make public spaces safe, accessible and inclusive.	Improve accessibility for walking and wheeling.	38.	Highlight areas for improvement to the accessibility and inclusivity of public spaces in the town for those using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, prams/buggies and walking aides when problems have been identified. Work with the County Council highways authority to cut back vegetation, widen pavements, implement dropped kerbs, and improve surfaces.	30 June 2026	D&L
			39.	Complete construction of pedestrian access improvements to All Saints churchyard.	31 Dec 2027	
			40.	Identify locations where benches could be installed to provide resting points for those with less mobility. Explore working alongside the Town and Tourism strategy to map walking routes and highlight resting points on those routes.	31 Dec 2025	D&L
			41.	Explore how we could create more areas of the town that are segregated from vehicles and better suited to walking and wheeling. Work with the District and County Councils to achieve this.	31 Jan 2027	D&L
3. Nature and Biodiversity	Protect and enhance our green spaces.	Sensitively manage HTC maintained green spaces.	42.	Continue to implement the Green Space action plans for the Cemetery and Churchyards and to explore opportunities to protect and enhance our green spaces for the benefit of both nature and people. Review plans after 5 years.	Annually Review in 2027	ECS

			43.	Work with local communities to protect and enhance existing green spaces through the identification and designation of local green space in Castle Plus Neighbourhood Plan.	31 Jan 2027	ECS
			44.	Set up meeting work with local wildlife organisations to identify and map local protected species, as well as supporting work currently ongoing such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, to ensure that biodiversity protection and enhancement is considered in planning decisions.	30 June 2025	ECS
			45.	Support the work the Hertford Castle Greenspace Renewal project aims to deliver, such as an annual BioBlitz (an event that invites the public to identify every species of plant, animal, and fungi found in Hertford Castle's grounds).	30 June 2025	FULL
			46.	Adopt a Biodiversity policy and implement associated action plan.	31 March 2025	FP&A
			47.	Identify and highlight nature corridors to allow the movement of wild species as set out in the Hertfordshire County Council Nature Recovery Strategy.	31 March 2026	ECS
	Enhance biodiversity in the town, including in Council managed greenspaces like Church grounds and allotments,	Sensitively manage all green spaces and planting under our direct control to enhance biodiversity.	48.	Undertake sustainable gardening workshops at Allotment sites on an annual basis.	Annually	ECS
			49.	Phase out use of pesticides and herbicides on allotments by April of 2025, and on all other council managed greenspaces by May 2025, with exception to cases of invasive species management (e.g. Japanese Knotweed).	1 May 2025	ECS

	with nature-friendly green space and new wildlife habitats.		50.	Encourage sensible use of synthetic fertilisers on Council land.	31 July 2025	ECS
			51.	Explore the feasibility of exclusively purchasing plants that have been grown without the use of pesticides and herbicides.	30 June 2025	ECS
			52.	Increase the number of nature-friendly plant species in green spaces, hanging baskets and planters. Ensure that, when planting for pollinators, plants and compost bought for use in greenspaces, planters and hanging baskets are produced without the use of pesticides or herbicides wherever possible.	30 June 2025 and review annually	ECS
	Create habitat that improves biodiversity within council managed greenspaces.		53.	Identify green spaces in Hertford where mini rewilding areas could be created and work with landowners to achieve this (e.g. land by the pedestrian subway in on Castle Street).	Area identification by 31 Dec 2025	ECS
			54.	Ensure all HTC managed green spaces have areas left as a wildlife margin / buffer zones and are managed to promote biodiversity in these areas.	31 Dec 2025	ECS
			55.	Create log piles for natural bug homes in all HTC managed greenspaces.	30 Sept 2025	ECS
			56.	Identify suitable locations for tree planting across council managed greenspaces. Carry out tree planting.	Area identification by 31 Dec 2025	ECS

		Engage with residents on how to manage allotments and privately owned greenspaces in a wildlife friendly way.	57.	Develop information/ education programme for allotment holders and private garden owners on how to manage their green space to enhance biodiversity and create new wildlife habitats and nature corridors. This may be delivered through allotment newsletter, Town Council communications, and in person/digital workshops.	31 Dec 2025	ECS
			58.	Identify suitable locations for increased tree planting and support landowners through providing resources and information on how to apply for free trees.	Area identification by 31 Dec 2025	ECS
	Take action where we can, to improve the quality of our water bodies and increase water efficiency.	Explore ways that we can restore the quality of our water bodies to good ecological health.	59.	Sign the River Action UK Charter for Rivers.	28 Feb 2025	FULL
			60.	Work with local wildlife organisations and volunteer conservation groups to develop ways to clean up the local water environment and create safer habitats for wildlife. Have meeting to explore possibilities with groups such as Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Canal and Rivers Trust, and the Middle Lea Catchment Partnership.	30 June 2025	ECS
			61.	Support campaigns that 'only rain goes down the drain' and promote responsible disposal of harmful products.	31 Dec 2025	ECS
		Promote understanding about why clean rivers and streams are an important natural resource.	62.	Elevate importance of Hertford rivers and chalk streams and general links with biodiversity by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising awareness of Hertford rivers as a valuable local amenity through liaising with local walk leaders for possible public Talks and Walks. 	31 Aug 2025	ECS

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging more volunteers to engage with local rivers organisations and their work, to build understanding of the link between water as a shared resource for biodiversity and people. 		
		Reduce water use and improve water efficiency in new and existing buildings.	63.	Ensure that planning applications for new developments are thoroughly assessed against water policies in East Herts Planning Policies and Guidance. Provide comments to help raise awareness and information to help applicants: When making changes to driveways, paths and patios and garden water storage. To include water saving measures such as water storage tanks, water harvesting, and grey water use.	Monthly at Meeting of Planning Sub Committee	D&L: Planning
		Understanding that domestic water supplies are a precious resource.	64.	Engage with Affinity Water to promote water awareness at Town Council events including providing information on the need to conserve water and practical demonstrations.	31 May 2025	ECS
			65.	Share successful methods for reduction of home water usage: <i>-Posts on HTC website or Facebook page 'watersavinghacks' etc.</i> <i>-Reader tips included in TTIC newsletter.</i> <i>-Setting targets for reduced water use.</i>	30 June 2025	ECS / D&L
1. A Greener Council	Make our buildings and operations more sustainable.	Reduce emissions from Council-owned buildings to reach	66.	Complete the recommended actions in Eco Audit.	31 March 2026	ECS
			67.	Complete the project at the Castle to draft proof all external doors and windows and	31 Dec 2025	ECS

		net zero carbon by 2030.		replace heaters with low carbon options such as IR heaters.		
			68.	Complete the project at the Seed Warehouse to improve insulation and switch to low carbon options such as heat pump or IR heaters.	31 March 2027	ECS
			69.	Research the feasibility for installing solar PV panels on council buildings and land.	31 Dec 2025	ECS
			70.	Research the feasibility of becoming Dark Skies friendly for council owned/managed sites like Hertford Castle.	31 Dec 2025	ECS
			71.	Ensure all energy supplied to Hertford Town Council buildings is provided by renewable sources or green tariffs.	31 Dec 2025	FP&A
			72.	Research the feasibility of using renewable energy sources for Hertford Town Council events.	31 Dec 2025	FP&A
			73.	Upskill our facilities management staff on energy efficient building management practices by providing training.	31 Aug 2025	FP&A
			74.	Explore the feasibility of achieving environmental accreditation with the goal of utilising accreditation as an evaluation tool.	31 Dec 2027	ECS
		Reduce emissions from transport including all Council owned vehicles and staff travel to reach net zero carbon by 2030.	75.	Explore the feasibility of replacing the Council-owned van with electric.	31 Dec 2025	ECS
			76.	Encourage staff and visitors to have car free days, walk/cycle, car share or use public transport to attend Council premises.	31 May 2025	ECS
			77.	Provide cycle storage facilities and EV charging facilities in the Castle car park or supporting the Hertford Castle Greenspace Renewal project in doing so.	30 April 2027	ECS

		Divest from fossil fuels.	78.	Switch the Councils bank account to a provider that considers environmental and social impacts.	31 Dec 2025	FP&A
			79.	Write to Hertfordshire County Council encouraging them to divest the public sector pension fund from fossil fuels investments.	30 June 2025	FP&A
			80.	Develop an ethical investment policy for all council investments.	31 Oct 2025	FP&A
		Measure and report annually on progress.	81.	Undertake annual reporting to measure and monitor progress against environmental and sustainability goals.	Commence by 31 March 2025	ECS
		Reduce waste generated by Council operations.	82.	Carry out a quarterly audit of waste generated by Town Council Operations with suggestions on reducing, re-using or recycling.	Commence by 30 April 2025	ECS
			83.	Ensure food waste from the Castle is composted (either through food waste collection service or own compost facility).	31 Aug 2025	ECS
			84.	Instil a culture amongst councillors and council staff that has sustainability in mind (with regards to food and water waste, electricity waste, etc.) by providing training, workshops, and robust internal communications for all councillors and staff.	31 Dec 2025	ECS
		Net zero carbon by 2030.	85.	Measure and offset locally any residual carbon emissions in order to reach net zero carbon by 2030.	Report Annually	ECS
	Implement high sustainability standards for anything we procure, including recycled and	Reduce emissions from Procurement.	86.	Develop a Sustainable Procurement Policy that ensures any products or services we purchase are sustainably and responsibly sourced.	30 June 2025	FP&A / ECS
			87.	Require any new suppliers to detail how their approach aligns with our Sustainable Procurement Policy and embed this in contracts.	31 July 2025	FP&A

	locally sourced products.		88.	Engage with existing suppliers to help them develop more sustainable practices, such as adopting reusable packaging.	31 Dec 2025	FP&A
	Set an example through our events and communications, by, for example, offering plant-based food and drink options at HTC events.	Council events offer plant based and sustainable food options.	89.	Encourage food traders at Council-run events to include plant-based, organic and/or sustainable food and drink options, in particular through our event supplier terms and conditions. Include this information in promotional material.	Review Annually in December	D&L
		Increase Council communications on sustainability.	90.	Develop a communications plan that engages residents and local businesses, as well as council staff, stakeholders, and partners, on the Councils sustainability initiatives. It will also set out how these groups can find advice and support on how to be more sustainable, influencing behaviour and leading to positive behavioural changes. The plan will also look at how to increase engagement for other campaigns under the Greener Hertford umbrella.	30 June 2025	FP&A