



SWHERTS

Joint Strategic Plan

YOUR FUTURE

Statement of Community Involvement

June 2022



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

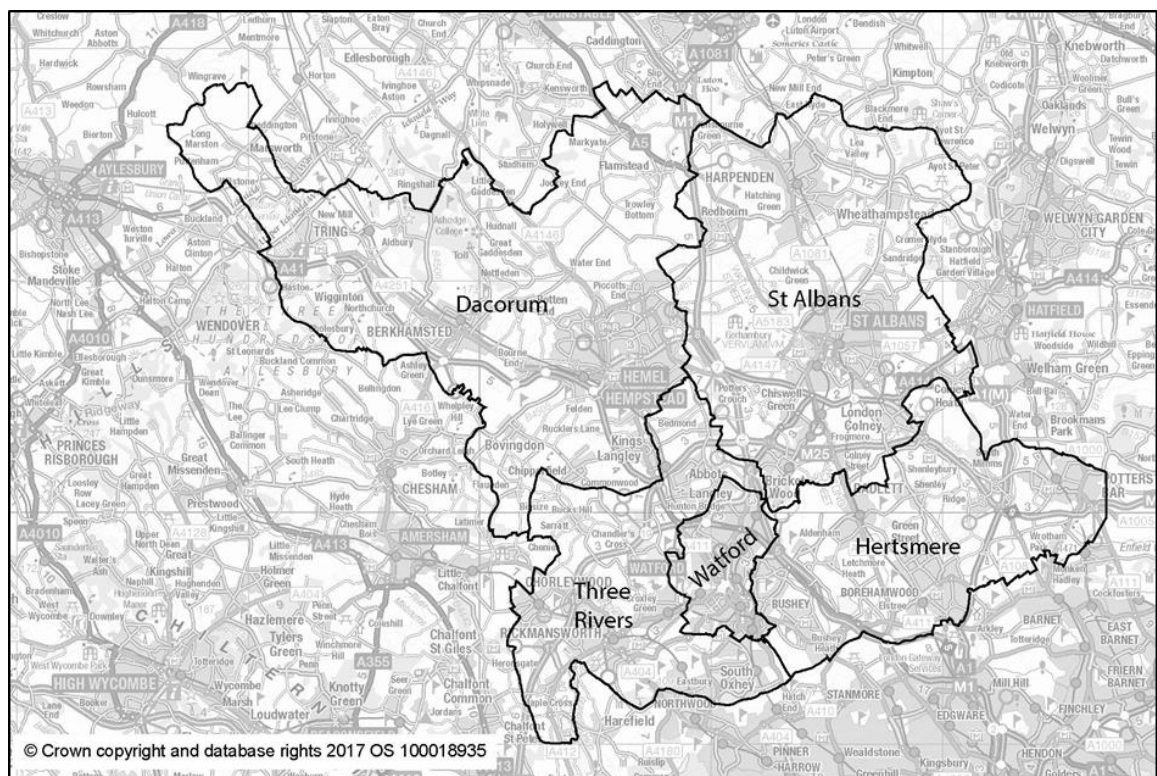
What is a Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City & District Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, Watford Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council and Hertfordshire County Council (referred to as 'the Councils'), will engage stakeholders and the public in preparation of the South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan (JSP).
- 1.2 The SCI describes how the Councils will ensure that the public, businesses, landowners, developers, adjoining local authorities, government agencies and any other individuals, groups and organisations within, and with an interest in, the local authority areas, can get involved in the creation of the JSP.
- 1.3 The production of an SCI is required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

What is the South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan?

- 1.4 The South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) will provide South West Hertfordshire with an integrated strategic planning framework and supporting evidence base to support sustainable growth to 2050. The area covered by the JSP is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Area covered by the JSP



- 1.5 The JSP will be a formal Development Plan Document (DPD), prepared under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) which enables two or more local planning authorities to agree to prepare a joint Plan. Hertfordshire County Council will support the plan preparation process.
- 1.6 The JSP will identify the overall quantum of housing and economic growth within South West Hertfordshire to be planned for to 2050 and its broad distribution across the area. The plan will identify strategic allocations and priorities, as well as the strategic infrastructure necessary to deliver the spatial strategy.
- 1.7 The JSP will build on the current suite of adopted and emerging Local Plans (that cover the periods up to between 2031 and 2038), the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan, and will also link to a new Local Industrial Strategy prepared by the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- 1.8 The JSP will be formally adopted by the individual LPAs and will provide a high-level framework for the review and roll-forward of the Local Plans and related Neighbourhood Plans. Figure 2 shows the relationship between the JSP and other relevant plans.

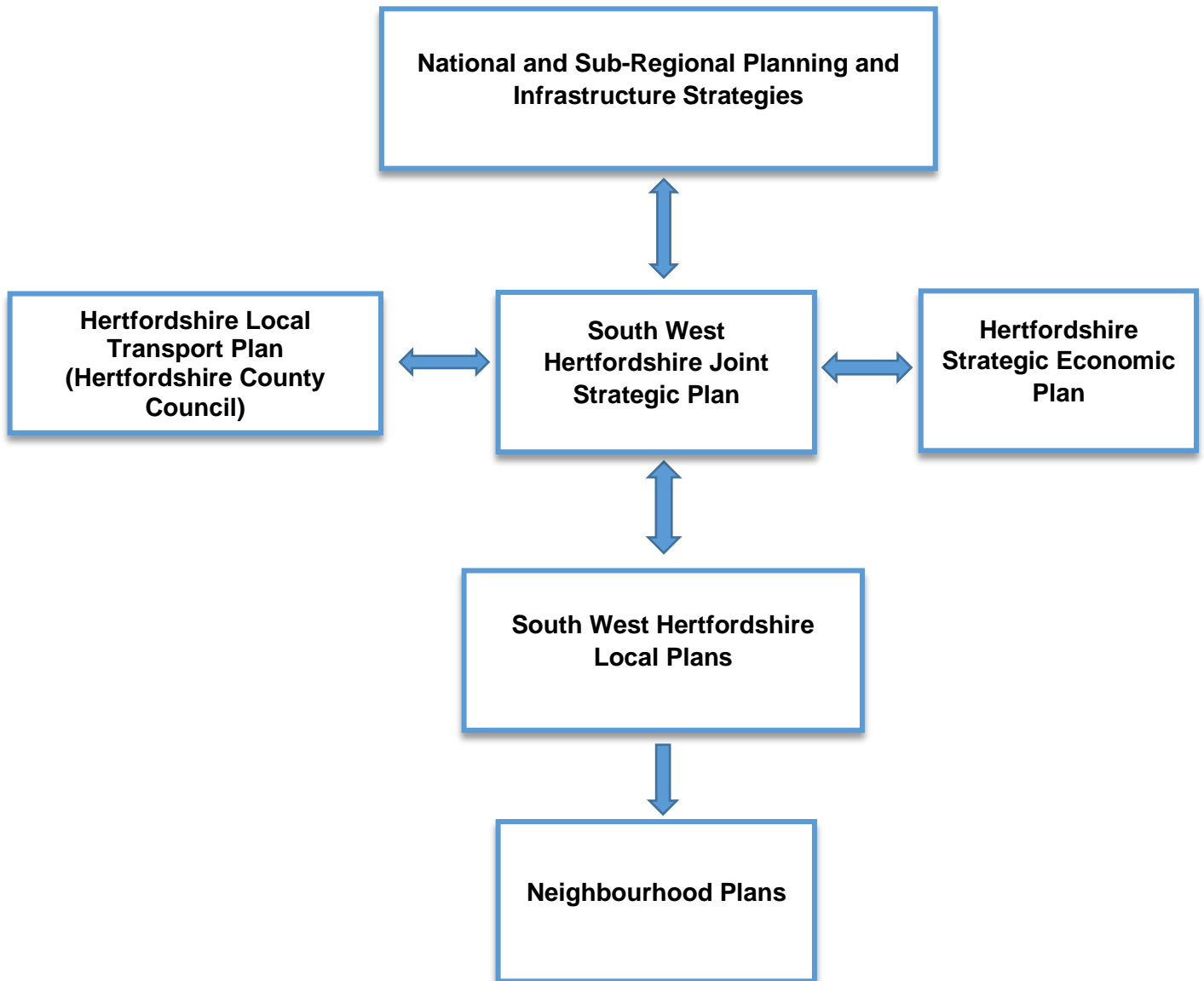
Why is a Statement of Community Involvement being prepared?

- 1.9 There is a legal requirement on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to undertake public consultation on local plans. In addition, one of the aims of the planning system is to encourage effective and meaningful community and stakeholder involvement throughout all of the stages of the plan making process. Effective community involvement will give people the opportunity to say what sort of place they want South West Herts to be and explain how their views can make a difference.
- 1.10 This SCI sets the steps that will be taken to ensure that the JSP will be shaped by early, proportionate and meaningful engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and statutory consultees.
- 1.11 The outcomes of the consultation processes set out in this SCI will be an important element of the considerations of the LPA's in developing the JSP. However, they are one element of a wider range of material considerations such as the evidence base and the Sustainability Appraisal. Consultees and those engaged should therefore recognise the multi-faceted considerations that will go towards informing the content of the JSP that is submitted for Examination.
- 1.12 The South West Hertfordshire authorities are committed to a continuous review of the SCI to ensure that it continues to reflect current advice and best practice guidance.

What does this Statement of Community Involvement cover?

- 1.13 This SCI is specific to the production of the JSP. The Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) will also have their own individual SCIs concerned with the production of their Local Plans and any Neighbourhood Plans in their areas. These district-level SCIs also set out how each authority will deal with planning applications arising as a result of site allocations.
- 1.14 This SCI will therefore sit alongside the existing SCIs; it will not replace them.

Figure 2: Relationship between JSP and Other Plans



JSP Governance

- 1.15 A JSP Strategic Planning Member Group (SPMG) was established in November 2019 to guide the preparation of the JSP. The SPMG will monitor progress on the JSP, approve its budget and review the milestones as part of an annual review. Minutes from the SPMG meetings can be found on each of the partner authority’s websites.
- 1.16 This SCI has been endorsed by the Strategic Planning Members Group (SPMG) and formally considered through the governance arrangements of the respective South West Hertfordshire Local Planning Authorities.

Duty to Cooperate

- 1.17 The Localism Act 2011 places a 'duty to cooperate' on local planning authorities, county councils, neighbouring authorities and other public bodies for any strategic cross boundary issues.
- 1.18 The duty to cooperate prescribed bodies are defined in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) and listed in Appendix 1.
- 1.19 The way the South West Hertfordshire local authorities are working together under the Duty to Cooperate to complete the JSP is set out in a South West Hertfordshire-wide Statement of Common Ground, available at <https://www.swhertsplan.com/governance-and-papers>. The preparation of additional Statements of Common Ground covering the relationship of the JSP with other adjoining authorities will be considered as the plan-making process progresses.

2.0 WHEN AND HOW WILL THE COUNCILS CONSULT ON THE JSP?

Background

- 2.1 A public-sector Equality Duty came into force on 5 April 2011. This means that public bodies must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It also requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination
 - advance equality of opportunity
 - foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
- 2.2 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) identifies certain prescribed bodies that must be consulted when preparing Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents. These bodies must be consulted where the proposed subject matter will be of interest to them. These groups are listed in Appendix 1.

How and when will we involve Stakeholders?

- 2.3 Government regulations set out the formal stages in the preparation process of the JSP i.e. when we must formally publish the documents for comment and for how long. This SCI reflects how these requirements will be met.
- 2.4 The South West Hertfordshire Councils intend that all people should have the opportunity to have their say in how South West Herts is planned, irrespective of their differences; including by way of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. Research may be commissioned to understand public attitudes on relevant topics. Documents will be written in plain English. To achieve value for money and to ensure that consultation is proportionate to the issues being considered, the translation of documents into other languages will be balanced against the cost, time constraints and the available resources.
- 2.5 The early stage of plan preparation (under Regulation 18) will involve engagement with stakeholders, prescribed bodies, partners and consultees to inform the identification of issues and options. Notwithstanding this, engagement with key stakeholders will be undertaken on a continuous basis to ensure options are thoroughly tested and policy preparation is robust. Panels or reference groups may be used as part of this engagement as well as additional research such as opinion polls.
- 2.6 A JSP consultation database will be maintained in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. This will include contact information for the prescribed bodies listed in Appendix 1, together with any other groups or organisations who have asked to be kept notified. When an individual or organisation makes a representation on the JSP, or its supporting documentation, we will add their details to this consultation database.
- 2.7 There will also be opportunities to comment on the draft JSP when it is formally published (Regulation 19 stage) and to be involved during its examination by an independent Inspector (Regulations 23-24).

- 2.8 A Sustainability Appraisal is an integral part of the plan preparation process and is required for Development Plan Documents (DPDs) such as the JSP. It looks at the environmental, social and economic effects of a plan to make sure that the plan promotes sustainable development and takes the most appropriate approach given reasonable alternatives. At each stage of the JSP preparation there will be a corresponding stage of the Sustainability Appraisal which will be made available for comment during public consultation.
- 2.9 Groups we will engage with during the JSP preparation process will include:
- the community and members of the public;
 - statutory consultees as set out in the relevant regulations, including neighbouring councils;
 - local service providers and other consultation bodies who may have an interest in the JSP; and
 - other interested groups, businesses, developers, landowners, agents, Town Councils and Parishes, and residents who register on our consultation database.
- 2.10 Different levels and methods of community involvement will be appropriate as the JSP progresses through the plan-making process, but in summary, we will follow the following approach:
- We will contact appropriate organisations and individuals directly (i.e. those listed in Appendix 1 and on the wider JSP consultation database).
 - We will publicise consultations by a combination of methods, as appropriate, such as: website, press release, displays, social media, and community events.
 - We will make consultation documents available at council offices and public libraries where appropriate (see list in Appendix 2).
 - Consultation documents will be made available for download via the JSP website, which will be signposted from each Council's own website.
 - Where appropriate we will organise consultation events such as public exhibitions and stakeholder workshops.
 - We will publish comments received or a summary as soon as feasible. We will explain how these comments have been taken into account when decisions are made.
- 2.11 Table 1 sets out the key consultation stages and milestone dates in the preparation of the JSP, together with the different groups we will involve in the plan-making process and how we propose to involve them and keep them updated on progress of the plan.

Table 1
Stages and methods of consultation and communications

Plan stage	What will we be consulting or communicating on?	How will we consult / communicate?
Issues and Options <i>(Regulation 18)</i>	This stage can comprise one or more public consultations. These can relate to broad issues and options, draft policies and/or potential sites. To include consultation on associated sustainability appraisal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inviting representations through the JSP and signposted from individual council's websites. • Advertising through social media, press releases and electronic alerts. • Written / email consultation with key consultees / organisations as required by the regulations. • Consultation documents available to view at specified deposit points (listed in Appendix 2) • Public consultation events such as targeted workshops and/or exhibitions, if appropriate to the nature of the consultation.
Pre-submission publication <i>(Regulation 19)</i>	This stage comprises consultation on the plan that the authorities wish to take forward to adoption. To include consultation on associated sustainability appraisal. <i>Note: All representations must be received within the specific consultation period.</i>	
Submission <i>(Regulation 22)</i>	This is the stage when the plan is formally passed to the Planning Inspectorate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on JSP website and signposted from individual council's websites. • Written / email notification of consultees / organisations as required by the regulations. • Advertising through social media, press releases and electronic alerts. • Publication of documents listed in the Regulations.
Examination <i>(Regulations 23-24)</i>	This stage comprises the formal Examination of the Plan by an independent Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice on JSP website and signposted from individual council's websites. • Written / email notification of consultees / organisations as required by the regulations (via Programme Officer)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising through social media, press releases and electronic alerts.
Consultation on Inspectors main modifications to the draft plan <i>(if any)</i>	This stage comprises consultation on any changes to the plan required by the Inspector to ensure the plan is 'sound.' To include consultation on any associated sustainability appraisal update required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inviting representations through the JSP and signposted from individual council's websites. Advertising through social media, press releases and electronic alerts. Written / email notification of consultees/ organisations as required by the regulations. Consultation documents available to view at specified deposit points (listed in Appendix 2).
Publication of Inspector's Report <i>(Regulation 25)</i>	Notification of people/ organisations of the outcome of the examination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice on JSP website and signposted from individual council's websites. Written / email notification to groups / organisations as required by the regulations.
Adoption <i>(Regulation 26)</i>	Notification of final adoption of the JSP.	

How long we will consult for

- 2.12 Where a formal consultation is carried out (as set out in Table 1), this will be for a minimum of six weeks. Where part of the consultation falls over a holiday period, where possible, the consultation period will be extended to accommodate members of the public who may be away at these times, usually up to a maximum of 8 weeks. Timescales for informal consultation that is targeted at specific groups will be depend on the nature of that engagement.

How to comment on the JSP

- 2.13 Table 1 sets out the methods we will use to engage with stakeholders and residents on the development of the JSP. We will encourage electronic engagement as the primary portal for consultation and will encourage people to make use of the JSP consultation portal, accessed through the JSP website as this will set out the information we are seeking at each consultation stage, together with clear instructions on how to register comments. This will offer an easy method for response and in turn will help speed up the analysis of the comments received.
- 2.14 A comments form will also be produced for each consultation stage that can be submitted by email or post. Verbal comments will not be recorded because it is important that all comments are accurately logged and reported.

- 2.15 Comments will be made publicly available. The Councils will comply with the obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations, and the principles of the Data Protection Act, in how they manage any personal data collected through consultation processes.
- 2.17 All comments made during the consultation periods will be carefully considered and will be reported to the relevant committee. A report summarising the consultation activities and the comments made and how these have informed the next stage of plan making will be prepared for each stage. This report will be made available.

3.0 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.1 SPDs cannot be progressed by the JSP programme until there are adopted, or well progressed policies, for them to relate to. Due to the limited size and resources of the JSP team, the work programme does not envisage production of any JSP-sponsored SPDs until the JSP itself is adopted. Any joint SPDs in the meantime will be prepared by the districts and relate to policies within their adopted Local Plans. They will therefore need to comply with the requirements set out in their individual SCIs. More detailed reference to engagement on SPDs will be set out when this SCI is next reviewed.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 3.2 Neighbourhood planning is led by Town and Parish Councils or designated Neighbourhood Forums. The main aspects of neighbourhood planning are:
- *Neighbourhood Development Plan* – a local framework for guiding future development, regeneration and conservation of an area;
 - *Neighbourhood Development Order* – a way for town and parish councils or designated Neighbourhood Forums to grant planning permission for certain kinds of development within a specified area; and
 - *Community Right to Build Orders* – a special kind of Neighbourhood Development Order, which grant planning permission for certain development schemes.
- 3.3 It is the role of the district councils to support neighbourhood planning, and associated consultation, as per the Neighbourhood Planning regulations. However, before they can come into effect, all neighbourhood planning documents need demonstrate general conformity with the JSP (once adopted), as well as with the relevant Local Plans covering their area.
- 3.4 Whilst advice on conformity will usually be provided by the relevant district council, the JSP team can also be contacted directly for advice via SWHJSP@dacorum.gov.uk.

4.0 REVIEW OF THE SCI

4.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017, state that LPAs in England must review their SCI every five years to ensure it is kept up to date and reflects current legislation and best practice.

4.2 Notwithstanding this, the SCI will be updated if a review is required due to changes to:

- Legislation / national policy
- Local decisions
- Consultation methods
- Technology
- The development of any Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) related to the Joint Strategic Plan

Consultation Groups

The following consultation bodies are prescribed by the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

Specific consultation bodies

Defined as:

- Coal Authority
- Environment Agency
- Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as English Heritage)
- Marine Management Organisation
- Natural England
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited
- National Highways
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Adjoining local authorities
- Town and Parish Councils and Neighborhood Forums within and adjoin SW Herts
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Relevant Telecommunications Companies
- Clinical Commissioning Group
- National health Service Commissioning Board
- Relevant Electricity Undertakers
- Relevant Gas Companies
- Relevant Sewerage Undertakers
- Relevant Water Undertakers
- Homes England

General consultation bodies

Defined as:

- voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the local planning authorities' areas;
- bodies which represent the interest of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the local planning authorities' areas;
- bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the local planning authorities' areas;
- bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the local planning authority's area; and
- bodies which represent the interests of person's carrying on business in the local planning authorities' areas.

Duty to Co-operate bodies

(Note: there is some duplication with the lists above)

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Defined as:

- Neighboring authorities
- Environment Agency
- Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as English Heritage),
- Natural England
- Mayor of London
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes England
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- National Health Service Commissioning Board
- Office and Rail and Road
- Transport for London
- Relevant Integrated Transport Authorities
- Highway Authority
- Marine Management Organisation
- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Local Nature Partnership

Document inspection points

Main Council Offices

Hertsmere Borough Council,
Civic Offices, Elstree Way, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, WD6 1WA

Watford Borough Council
Town Hall, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD17 3EX

Dacorum Borough Council
The Forum, Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP11DN

Three Rivers District Council
Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 1RL

St Albans City and District Council
Civic Centre, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3JE

Local libraries

Borehamwood Library

96 Shenley Road
Borehamwood
WD6 1EB

WD24 7RW

Watford Library
Hempstead Road
Watford
WD17 3EU

Potters Bar Library

The Elms
High Street
Potters Bar
EN6 5BZ

Abbots Langley Library
High Street
Abbots Langley
WD5 0AP

Bushey Library

Sparrows Herne
Bushey
WD23 1FA

Chorleywood Library
Lower Road
Chorleywood
WD3 5LB

Radlett Library

Radlett Centre
1 Aldenham Avenue
Radlett
WD7 8HL

Croxley Green Library
Barton Way
Croxley Green,
WD3 3HB

North Watford Library

St Albans Road
Watford

Rickmansworth Library
High Street
Rickmansworth
WD3 1EH

South Oxhey Library

Bridlington Road
South Oxhey
WD19 7AG

Adeyfield Library

1A Queens Square
Hemel Hempstead
HP2 4EW

Berkhamsted Library

185 High Street
Berkhamsted
HP4 3HB

Bovingdon Library

High Street
Bovingdon
HP3 0HJ

Hemel Hempstead Library

The Forum
Marlowes
Hemel Hempstead
HP1 1DN

Kings Langley Library

The Nap
Kings Langley
WD4 8ET

Leverstock Green Library

Village Centre
Leverstock Green Way
Hemel Hempstead
HP3 8QG

Tring Library

High Street
Tring
HP23 4AF

Harpenden Library

27 High Street
Harpenden
AL5 2RU

London Colney Library

Community Centre
Caledon Road
London Colney
AL2 1PU

Redbourn Community Library

Redbourn Fire Station and Community
Library
Dunstable Road
Redbourn
AL3 7BE

St Albans Library

Level 2, The Maltings
St Albans
AL1 3JQ

Wheathampstead Library

Fire Station and Library
Marford Road
Wheathampstead
AL4 8AY

Glossary of acronyms

CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group	The arm of the National Health Service responsible for commissioning primary healthcare services.
DPD	Development Plan Document	A formal planning strategy document, such as a Local Plan or Joint Strategic Plan
GLA	Greater London Authority	The office of the Mayor of London
LPA	Local Planning Authority	The local council responsible for planning services in a particular area
LDS	Local Development Scheme	The project plan setting out when Local Plans and Joint Strategic Plans will be prepared and when they will be issued for consultation
JSP	Joint Strategic Plan	A high level planning policy document being prepared by a number of councils on a joint basis.
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	The document which sets out the Government's planning policies and approach to key issues, which must be taken into account by councils when preparing their own planning documents
PINS	Planning Inspectorate	The organisation to be appointed by the Secretary of State to carry out independent public examinations of plans
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	The document which sets out how consultation on planning matters will be carried out by local councils.
SPMG	Strategic Plan Members Group	The group of elected representatives (one for each council) who will oversee production of the Joint Strategic.