



Hertfordshire
Property
Partnership
Progress Report



Hertfordshire
Growth Board

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Foreword from Chair

Chair of Hertfordshire Property Partnership

I'm very proud of the successes Hertfordshire Property Partnership (HPP) has had over the previous year and how it continues to play a significant role in driving forward Hertfordshire's Growth Board vision for good sustainable growth as demonstrated throughout this progress report.

In 2024/25 the partnership again secured external investment, working with One Public Estate to secure Brownfield Land Release funding of £243,500 for Welwyn and Hatfield, enabling the provision of much needed modern temporary accommodation for families and individual households – just another example of the difference the partnership is making to the residents of Hertfordshire.

Working collaboratively, the partnership enables us to respond to the challenges we all face and the successful launch of our Estates Chartered Surveyor apprenticeship scheme demonstrates this. Attracting new talent to the challenging property sector in our County, sharing their newly acquired knowledge and skills across the public sector is truly making a tangible difference to all involved.

Working together is our strength. Over the next year we aim to build upon our achievements to date, encouraging and actively promoting the sharing of experiences to continuously progress and increase our funding successes to make a real difference to all those who live, work and visit Hertfordshire. I look forward with great enthusiasm.



Sajida Bijle

Chief Executive, Hertsmere
Borough Council

Executive Summary

Hertfordshire Property Partnership (HPP) is a countywide partnership between local government, Herts Living Ltd, Homes England, health, and the police. It sees Hertfordshire as one, sharing best practice, knowledge and attracting funding to the region.

HPP was established to address key growth challenges in a collaborative way, seeking funding opportunities for urban regeneration and major growth, taking advantage of integrating services to respond to our communities needs and the demand for housing.

Best practice and interest pieces are regularly shared between partners, encouraging discussion and aiding joined up working. Aligned with other partnerships, such as Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP), and Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP), this aids Hertfordshire's strategic view.

HPP's priorities and vision

The HPP has five key priorities; these support the wider priorities and mission of the Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB), predominately, but not limited to, the Right Homes, Right Places housing mission.

1. Driving Collaborative Projects for Growth, Regeneration, and Housing

- Initiate collaborative projects to lead to major growth, urban regeneration, integrated services, and increased housing availability.
- By stakeholders working together, create sustainable communities and address housing needs effectively.

2. Building Relationships with Key Strategic Groups

- Actively engage with county-wide strategic groups, such as the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP).
- Facilitate knowledge sharing across these partnerships, to produce joint planning and coordinated efforts for positive outcomes.

3. Strategic Oversight of Housing Delivery

- Provide strategic leadership and oversight for housing delivery across the county.
- Monitor progress to ensure alignment with objectives, adapting strategies as needed.

4. Promoting Efficiency through Collaboration

- Encourage joint initiatives and resource sharing to produce efficiency gains and streamline processes.
- Avoid duplication and optimising resources to enhance housing outcomes.

5. Actively Sourcing Funding for Partnership Benefits

- Proactively seek funding opportunities to support its vision.

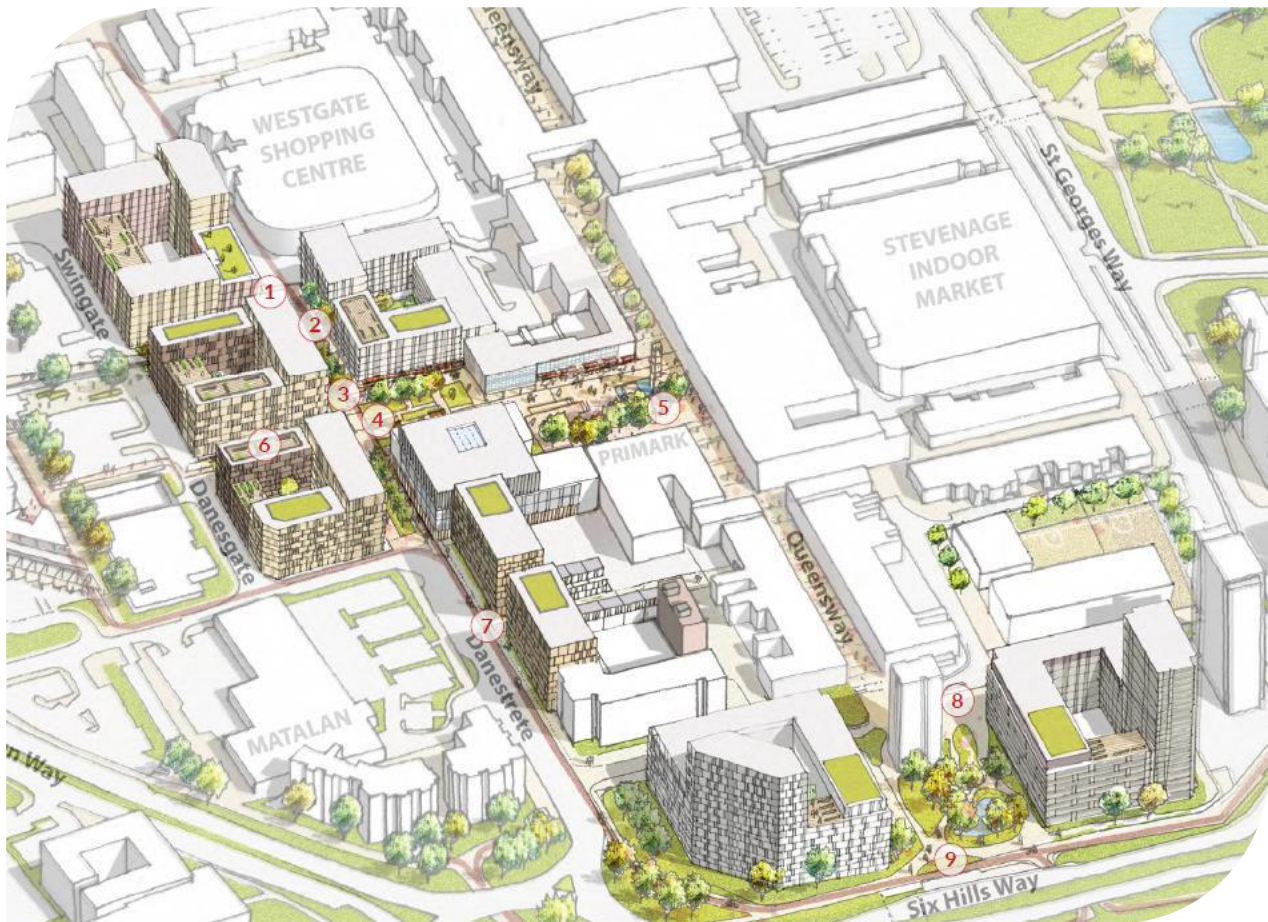


One Public Estate (OPE)

HPP works closely with One Public Estate (OPE), a collaboration between the Local Government Association and Office of Government Property (OGP) within the Cabinet Office. OPE also delivers the Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) which is a cross-government initiative between OPE and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

HPP seeks the most appropriate funding for the project in hand, working most closely with OPE. Sharing similar ambitions, OPE assist with releasing land ownership opportunities, with funding focused on unblocking projects and the transformation of public service delivery. Project benefits are released over longer periods, due to their size and nature. See our Case Studies for examples of current projects.

OPE's support has brought over £3 million of investment into Hertfordshire; this is continuing to grow, having recently secured further funding for our partners in central Hertfordshire.



SG1 Masterplan - photo credit Stevenage Borough Council and Mace

Introduction

Hertfordshire's population is continuing to grow and is predicted to rise by 43,000 by 2043. This growth is driven by factors such as natural population increases and migration from other areas. As the population expands, so does the need for housing.

Our current housing stock includes a mix of property types, ranging from single family homes to apartment complexes. However, the available housing stock is not sufficient to meet the growing demand. To address this, we need to explore innovative solutions, such as repurposing existing buildings and encouraging mixed-use developments.

Unlocking public sector assets is crucial for delivery major growth schemes. These assets include surplus land, vacant buildings and underutilised properties owned by government agencies, local councils, and public institutions. By repurposing these assets, we can create new housing developments, commercial spaces and community facilities.

To maximise value from the public sector, a co-ordinated approach is essential. Identifying surplus assets and assessing their potential for redevelopment, collaborating with private developers to create mixed use developments that benefit both the public and private sectors. By optimising the public sectors estate portfolio, we can generate revenue, improve services and enhance community well-being.

We need to foster greater collaboration, which includes sharing best practice, co-ordinated efforts to housing delivery, create a more sustainable, affordable and resilient housing landscape for our county, and facilitating co-location of public services. HPP supports the needs of the County, working with multiple partners to address the challenges we face.



Artistic impression of the SG1 Masterplan - photo credit Stevenage Borough Council and Mace.

Our story so far

HPP was established in 2017 and through One Public Estate funding has supported 18 projects across the County.

Enabling regeneration and growth

Since its inception in 2017, HPP has supported 18 projects across the county. Bringing prosperity to Hertfordshire, these projects will help to deliver the homes, jobs, services and living environment expected by our communities.

Since 2017, HPP has attracted over **£3.7 million of central government funding** for developments in Hertfordshire.

Projects are themed as either a Major Growth Scheme, Regeneration or Service Integration.



Major Growth Schemes

1. Baldock Urban Extension
2. Brookfield Garden Village & Brookfield Riverside



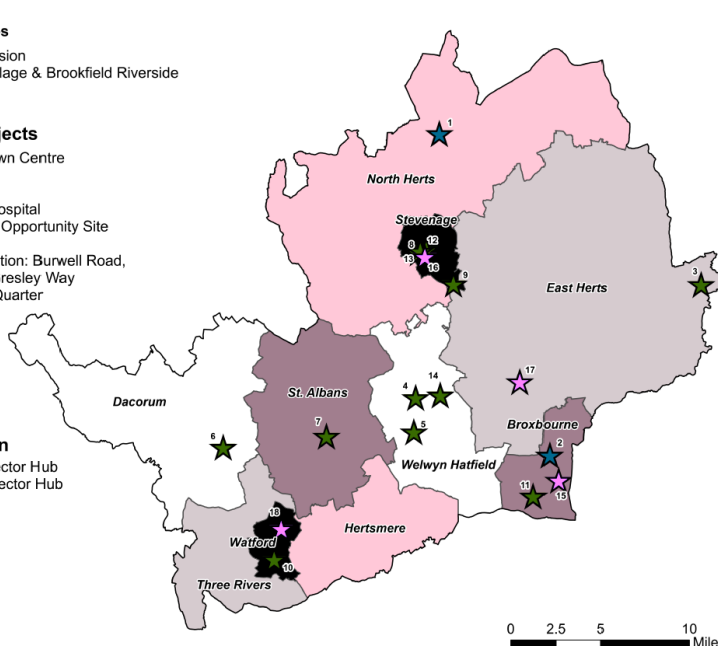
Regeneration Projects

3. Bishop's Stortford Town Centre
4. Gosling Sports Park
5. Hatfield Town Centre
6. Hemel Hempstead Hospital
7. St Albans City Centre Opportunity Site
8. Stevenage Central
9. Stevenage Regeneration: Burwell Road, Kenilworth Close & Gresley Way
10. Watford Town Hall Quarter
11. Hope Nursery
12. Brent Court
13. Swingate Car Park
14. Howlands House



Service Integration

15. Brookfield Public Sector Hub
16. Stevenage Public Sector Hub
17. Wallfields, Hertford
18. Watford Dome



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Major Growth Schemes encompass large residential, community and/or commercial development on sites of 0.5 hectares or more. While Regeneration projects are focused on making changes to the already built up area, such as specific town or city areas, to address the needs of the local communities. Service Integration is bringing together public and community services into one co-location.

Supported projects range from major growth schemes to town centre regeneration and multi-party service integration. Evenly distributed across the whole county, providing a balance of growth, modernisation and improving service delivery for local communities, we are making the most out of public owned assets.

Case study - Regeneration:

St Albans City Centre Opportunity Site

The story



St Albans City and District Council identified an opportunity to transform an unattractive and poorly functioning townscape into a vibrant new quarter. Adding significant value to the City Centre, with the delivery of inspirational and high-quality regeneration, informed by historic surroundings and providing a range of commercial and community mixed uses, including residential and leisure.

The challenge

It became apparent there were potential additional obstacles to the project. OPE support was a critical success factor in bringing the project to fruition. Following a competitive OPE funding process, a sum of £75,000 was awarded to St Albans City and District Council to support a Project Management resource and cover the cost of abnormal technical investigations of the Phase 1 North Car Park sub-project.

A comprehensive City Centre place making initiative, achieved through public sector partnership working:

- Improved public realm quality experience in the City Centre; NHS and Police have moved into the Civic Centre.
- Provision of 93 quality residential apartments, 33 social housing and 60 shared ownership housing.
- Circa 55,000 sqft of flexible, grade A commercial space.

OPE funding assisted with unlocking up to £64 million of investment into the area.



Case study - Service integration:

Stevenage Public Sector Hub



The story

Introducing a new modern Public Sector Hub located in the heart of the town centre. It aims to deliver a better located and integrated service provision to local residents, visitors, businesses, with place making ethos to drive footfall into the town centre.

This sub-project is the continuation of the wider SG1 regeneration project, which represents investment and redevelopment across the wider town centre.

Public Sector Hub Vision



The challenge

Following an OPE competitive process, Stevenage Borough Council successfully secured funding of £200,000. Funding from OPE has been instrumental to the feasibility stages and obtaining approval from the scheme within the SG1 programme.

The benefits

- Unlocks over 3,500 housing units, directly enabling creation of 1,400 homes.
- Created 400 jobs by the development of the new Public Sector Hub.
- Public Sector services conveniently located in one building.
- Improved facilities for all visitors.
- Efficient office space, with improved, modern ways of working.
- Use of modern technologies to improve customers experience and community facilities.
- Visitors/residents increased dwell time.
- Driver for next phase of the town centre regeneration.

Contributing to the Hertfordshire Growth Board

Supporting projects and programmes initiated by HGB, HPP have provided additional resources contributing to the successful Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP) bid, ensuring an additional 23 accommodation units will be available to homeless 18–25-year-olds in the region over the coming year. For further detail, please visit the HGB annual report [HGB Progress Report April 2022 to December 2023](#)

As part of the six recently established HGB missions, HPP representatives sit on the Right Homes, Right Places housing mission group, providing a key link between Hertfordshire's strategic housing goals and outcomes and a key delivery partnership.

Further reading on the six [HGB vision and missions](#) is available on the Hertfordshire Growth Board website.



Keeping members informed and sharing best practice

While HPP facilitates access to OPE funding for our public partners across Hertfordshire, it's more than this.

Fostering collaborative working, sharing information and best practice, key speakers attend our quarterly HPP meetings to increase knowledge and encourage Hertfordshire wide discussion. Partners disseminate this within their own organisations, sharing and linking in to existing collaborative groups.

Emphasising our link to HGB's Sustainable County mission, informative sessions are regularly provided by a guest speaker from the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP). Providing valuable insight into Hertfordshire's climate data, HCCSP's current activities, future landscape and funding, this is another way in which our partners can learn and contribute to a wider discussion.

Guest experts across Hertfordshire are regularly welcomed to our meetings. Sharing and discussing legislative pieces such as the Bio-Diversity Net Gain (BNG) changes and proposed National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) changes, but also sharing more personal success stories such as Hertsmere Borough Council winning a Local Authority Housing Social Fund bid to support their housing commitment to Ukrainian and Afghan families on the Government's resettlement and relocation schemes.



Making a difference and delivering for our partners

But the Partnership is also about 'doing'; as with many public sector roles, partners expressed concern over the retention of staff in Property roles, and an ageing workforce. Hertfordshire County Council, working with partners and the University of Estate Management, have developed a commercial real estate Chartered Surveyor Apprentice Scheme, launched in 2023.

Apprentices are exposed to working within districts and boroughs across Hertfordshire, with a view to gaining a BSc degree and RICS accreditation at the end of their programme. Fostering a county wide relationship, it is hoped the apprentices will build an affinity with Hertfordshire and pursue their career within the area.

"To provide myself with a better quality of life, I knew I needed to improve my education. This apprenticeship has enabled me to continue full-time employment whilst working towards a degree and gaining invaluable experience in an industry I am passionate about. I have been fully supported by HCC through this life changing opportunity and I am excited for what the future holds."

- Claire Brook Apprentice Surveyor



Next Steps

Building on the work to date, the Hertfordshire Property Partnership has developed a Work Programme to support the growth of the partnership and to align it further to the Hertfordshire Growth Board vision and missions, and Government administration.

With a clear focus on strategic priorities, our key objectives are to:

- **Increase communications** across Hertfordshire and nationally, showcasing our achievements and raising our county's profile to nationally increase interest within our area to help fuel growth and regeneration.
- Working closely with HPP and the HGB, to identify a **pipeline of sites** across the County that are in a ready state to attract external funding at pace.
- Expand our best practice and knowledge sharing, **to increase our funding opportunities and potential success**, and **measure our influence against a backdrop of national and local priorities and issues**.

Glossary

BLRF	Brownfield Land Release Fund
CCG	Client Commissioning Group (transitioned to ICB)
HCCSP	Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership
HCT	Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust
HGB	Hertfordshire Growth Board
HIPP	Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership
HPFT	Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust
HPP	Hertfordshire Property Partnership
ICB	Integrated Care Board
LRF	Land Release Fund
ODF	Opportunity Development Fund
OPE	One Public Estate
RICS	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors



Appendix 1

Overall total OPE Project funding

OPE project funding	Funding received from OPE £	Project Title	
Total OPE project funding received	1,055,000	Baldock	South Oxhey Community Health Hub
		Bishops Stortford Town Centre	St Albans City Centre Opportunity Site
		Brookfield	Stevenage Central
		Brookfield Public Sector Hub	Stevenage Public Sector Hub
		Gosling Sports Park & adjoining land	Wallfields, Hertford
		Hatfield Town Centre	Watford Dome
		Hemel Hempstead Hospital	Watford Town Hall Cultural Quarter
Total BLRF/LRF project funding received	2,653,205	Hope Nursery	Brent Court
		Kenilworth Close	Swingate Car Park
		Burwell Road	Gresley way
		Howlands House	
Total project funding	3,708,205		

Appendix 2

Key OPE project benefits

OPE funding	Total BLRF/LRF funding received	Total OPE funding received
	£2,653,205	£1,055,000
Benefits <i>(forecast as of October 2024)</i>	Total number of housing units	
	898 delivered + 3,368 forecast	
	Total number of jobs created	
	959 delivered + 3,077 forecast	
Public Sector Partnerships	Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire District & Borough Councils, NHS, Blue Light services, Citizens Advice Bureau	



 www.hertfordshiregrowthboard.com

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