



Hertfordshire
Growth Board

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Growth Board

Annual Progress Report

2024/25



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Foreword

I am delighted to present Hertfordshire Growth Board's Annual Progress Report 2024/25.

In January 2024 the Board adopted a new Vision supported by six Missions. This provides an overarching framework in which to deliver joined up place leadership across our county. It also forms the basis for how we can measure progress and ensure that our actions are accountable to the communities we serve. These actions are not delivered by one organisation – the Growth Board brings together police, health, businesses, local government and Homes England. The strength of this partnership is reflected in the scale and breadth of our six Missions and the collective endeavour required to achieve them.

In this first year of delivery against our Missions, we have made some really significant progress. Not all Missions will progress at the same rate. This is to be expected given the complexities involved and this is reflected in this report. Key highlights over this past year have included the launch of Invest Hertfordshire, the countywide inward investment service; roll-out of superfast broadband to 13,000 premises; securing nearly a quarter of a million funding to provide temporary accommodation for homeless people in Welwyn Hatfield and being selected as a pilot area for accelerating the green skills needed to make our old and new homes more energy efficient. This report sets out in detail the activity that has been undertaken against each Mission. I would like to extend a huge thank you to the teams and individuals involved.

Hertfordshire Growth Board's convening powers means it is uniquely placed to provide a central voice on behalf of our residents, businesses and voluntary organisations. For a county with an economy of £46bn, larger than many city regions, with sectors driving UK growth, it is crucial that Hertfordshire has more of a say on national issues.

Earlier this year we held our first Parliamentary Reception with over 120 senior representatives showcasing how our county is an economic powerhouse - and how we can do even more with the right support. This Westminster event set out the scale of our ambitions and our determination to achieve them. I look forward to us achieving even more together over the next 12 months.

Cllr Jeremy Newmark



Leader of Hertsmere Borough Council

Chair of Hertfordshire Growth Board

Mayor Peter Taylor



Elected Leader of Watford

Vice Chair of Hertfordshire Growth

Cllr Richard Henry



Leader of Stevenage Borough Council

Vice Chair of Hertfordshire Growth Board

Advocacy and engagement

In order to deliver on its Vision, Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) provides a unified voice to engage with the development sector and government on key barriers to growth which require investment or policy changes at a national level.

Promoting Hertfordshire's development opportunities

Invest Hertfordshire, the new countywide investment service was launched at UKREiiF 2024 – bringing, for the first time, a pipeline of opportunity sites across the 10 districts to market. This countywide approach to managing inward investment enquiries has been strongly supported and endorsed by HGB members.

The [Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board](#) has over 100 members and meets 3-4 times per year to connect the 11 local authorities with the development sector. Key areas of focus over 2024 have included Hertfordshire's response to the new National Planning Policy Framework and how to remove barriers to growth.

Advocacy and engagement with Government

In February 2025, HGB hosted its first ever parliamentary event where leaders from both the public and business sector in Hertfordshire met with Members of Parliament to celebrate achievements in growing the local and regional economy, and to present the county's vision and plans for future growth.

The HGB has written two letters to Government welcoming the opportunity to meet and to trailblaze strategic planning:

[Letter to the Deputy Prime Minister](#), welcoming the opportunity to engage with the new government and highlighting the opportunities and benefits of working with Hertfordshire.

[Letter to Baroness Taylor of Stevenage](#), Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, welcoming an opportunity to meet with Ministers to discuss the potential for Hertfordshire to become a trailblazer for strategic planning.

The Growth Board also supported Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership's, [response](#) to the proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).



World Class Economy

The World Class Economy Mission is overseen by Hertfordshire Futures (formerly Hertfordshire LEP), a business-led public-private partnership focused on driving economic growth. Its Board is chaired by Adrian Hawkins OBE.

Highlights of the last year include:

- [Launch of new countywide inward investment service Invest Hertfordshire and targeted investment programme focusing on key opportunity sites and sectorial growth opportunities.
- [In developing a new Economic Strategy for the county, Hertfordshire Futures engaged widely with a diverse range of stakeholders locally and regionally from July to December. The draft is expected to go out for consultation this Spring.
- [Successfully secured circa £3.5m to deliver Wave 5 Skills Bootcamp programme to provide skills training in key sectors including in Film & TV and Clean Growth for those seeking to upskill and either enter or return to work.
- [Successful integration of Step2Skills into Hertfordshire Futures.
- [Continued to deliver its flagship Generation careers events in partnership with local employers and district/ borough councils. The events are aimed at young people aged 14-16 to find out about local career opportunities.. Over the past 12 months it has run nine Generation events, each one attracting hundreds of employers and students. Since 2020, over 13,715 young people and parents have attended a Generation event in their local area.

By October 2025:

- [Wave 6 Skills Bootcamp will be well underway.
- [The Hertfordshire Economy Strategy will be launched, and a programme of work identified to deliver against its agreed key objectives.
- [The local Get Britain Working steering board will be developing a plan for Hertfordshire.
- [Funding for delivery of countywide business support and skills programmes will have been secured.
- [Connect to Work Programme launched (Autumn 2025).

Progress so far in detail:

Strategic Goals	Action	Progress Made/Key Achievements
Ensure that all Hertfordshire residents are able to develop skills and improve job opportunities.	Refresh Hertfordshire Skills & Employment Strategy to meet needs of residents and businesses.	Work on refreshing the Skills and Employment Strategy will get underway in 2025/26 to ensure alignment with new Economic Strategy.
	Ensure residents and employers are aware of learning and employment opportunities via expansion of HOP and 'Generation' careers fairs.	Continued to promote the use of Hertfordshire Opportunities Portal (HOP) as a trusted resource for employment, skills, and technical education in the county. This resulted in over 275,000 views. Held nine Generation careers fairs, predominantly for disadvantaged young people, attracting an average of 800-1,000 students per event.
	Advocate for greater devolution of skills funding and pooling of unspent Apprenticeship Levy to support new training provision.	The English Devolution White Paper was published in December. This pledges to make skills and employment support provision more aligned with the local economy and jobs. Hertfordshire local authorities are now consulting on its impact and what it means for local government reform and potential devolution models.
	Deliver tailored programmes to support those furthest from the labour market (such as those with learning disabilities or in rural locations) into employment.	Step2Skills supports Hertfordshire adults facing complex barriers into employment. Although UK Shared Prosperity Funding for Step2Skills will end in March 2025, it has been contracted to deliver the Government's new Connect to Work programme targeting those with disabilities and other health conditions into work.
	Work to improve digital skills in workers of all ages.	An options appraisal of developing a shared Digital Inclusion Service with Essex County Council has been completed and approved (see Digital Mission update for further details).
	Bid for opportunities to enable employees and employers to upskill and non-employed to find work.	Hertfordshire Futures secured circa £3.5m to deliver the Wave 5 Skills Bootcamp programme. This provides flexible short courses aimed at both businesses and residents across a range of key sectors. Wave 6 is set to start in April.
	Put in place effective governance to maximise collaboration across skills and employment issues.	Hertfordshire Futures Board delegates authority to three strategic programme panels covering its core operations. This includes a Skills and Employment Panel, which meets at least twice a year. A new Terms of Reference has been developed.

Increase the number of businesses starting and growing in Hertfordshire.	Work with major employers to identify supply-chain opportunities and help businesses take advantage.	Two events held in Watford and St Albans to promote awareness of retrofit supply chain opportunities. Hertfordshire Futures is working with Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) over 2025/26 to deliver a countywide Retrofit Strategy.
	Work to encourage more SMEs in Hertfordshire to adopt digital solutions.	Workshop delivered to businesses via Hertfordshire Growth Hub. Helped with successful bid for Made Smarter programme. This UK programme is designed to help manufacturers use technology to streamline their processes.
	Identify firms with growth potential and develop specific support packages.	This is delivered via business support service Hertfordshire Growth Hub.
	Put in place effective governance to maximise collaboration on business and enterprise issues.	Hertfordshire Futures Board delegates authority to three strategic programme panels covering its core operations. A new Business Support & Enterprise panel has been established and Terms of Reference developed. The panel met once last year.
Accelerate business investment into Hertfordshire and maximise further growth of key current and future sectors.	Establish an Inward Investment service/ portal and advocate for Hertfordshire with key stakeholders.	The Invest Hertfordshire service launched at UK Real Estate and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiiF) in May 2024. A new website and inward investment prospectus have also been developed. The countywide service enables investment queries to be handled centrally.
	Work with Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board (HIDB) to develop new financial instruments to encourage investment into sectors/ places.	Growth Loan Fund options being appraised by Hertfordshire Futures board.
	Increase support/ visibility for the visitor economy via Visit Herts with a particular focus on skills.	A new five year Hertfordshire Destination Management Plan (2024-2029) sets out clear and measurable priority actions to drive accelerate visitor economy growth. The Visit Herts contract has been extended to March 2025 with procurement underway to secure a potential delivery partner from 25/26.
	Engage with businesses on the broader growth agenda and highlight the myriad roles they can play.	As part of the six month engagement period for the Economic Strategy, businesses, Hertfordshire Futures sought the views from a range of key sectors and SMEs.



Digital Access for All

The Digital Access for All Mission is overseen by the Towards Digital Growth Programme Advisory Board which recently reviewed its Terms of Reference and expanded membership to include district/ borough council representation. It is chaired by Mayor Peter Taylor, Leader of Watford Borough Council.

Highlights of the last year include:

- [Project Gigabit (targeting delivery of full fibre broadband to areas identified as harder to reach) has progressed with three contracts being awarded which will mean approximately 13,000 premises will have high speed connections.
- [The contract for the DfE gigabit programme (delivering gigabit connections to 30 schools lacking ultrafast broadband) has been awarded to BT. Delivery has commenced, with 12 Hertfordshire schools now being connected.
- [Mobile mapping has been procured which baselines Hertfordshire's coverage and capacity. This is being used to influence future plans with small cell and wireless technology.
- [An options appraisal on developing a digital inclusion shared service with Essex County Council has been completed and the option agreed. The new service will deliver a coordinated digital champions training programme, access to a digital triage tool and, with support from CVSs and Libraries, will support residents and businesses with identifying and understanding their digital skills needs and the support currently available. An appraisal will also assess the viability of implementing a device recycling and distribution initiative.

By October 2025:

- [Work will have begun on delivering high speed internet connection to North East Herts (2,000 properties) and West Herts (5,000 properties).
- [Work will have started on developing the Shared Digital Inclusion Service with Essex County Council.

Progress so far in detail:

Strategic Goals	Action	Progress
Ensure that Hertfordshire maintains and builds upon its current position of strength following the successful Superfast programme through delivery of future proofed broadband and mobile connectivity across the county.	Attract and encourage public and private investment to target 100% availability of high-quality connectivity (4G/5G and broadband) to all addresses in Hertfordshire.	<p>Project Gigabit (the roll out of full fibre broadband to areas identified as harder to reach) has been divided into three contracts, each of which have now been successfully awarded. These total around 13,000 premises.</p> <p>Lot 5 has been awarded to City Fibre with meetings taking place with HCC Highway Services. Planned works to connect 2000 properties in North Herts now scheduled to begin around April 2025.</p> <p>Lot 26 for the west of the County has been awarded to City Fibre. Surveying has started with delivery planned to start in Autumn 2025.</p> <p>As part of Lot 26, the provider agreed to deliver several social value activities across the counties in the contract. This has included creating a toolkit of KS1/2 materials that has been developed with Explorify and provided to primary schools focussing on STEM learning. The provider has also adopted a Care Leaver Friendly Employer Charter.</p> <p>Where existing infrastructure makes it feasible, Open Reach have already started to connect a number of premises as part of Lot 26C.</p> <p>DfE gigabit programme (delivering gigabit connections to schools lacking ultrafast broadband) have awarded their contract to Openreach. 12 Hertfordshire schools have now been connected, with a further 18 targeted by the end of 2025.</p>
	Define mobile coverage position and develop action plan.	Mobile mapping data has been procured and a tool is being built to demonstrate mobile coverage across the county with the intention of influencing future plans. Options appraisal on creating a public portal to facilitate public access will be undertaken.
Continue to attract substantial inward investment to support ambitions.	Attract and encourage public and private investment to target 100% availability of high-quality connectivity (4G/5G and broadband) to all addresses in Hertfordshire.	A scheduled plan of market engagement has been developed and is being delivered, ensuring existing and potential new suppliers are being actively approached and engaged. This will encourage the growth of the local commercial market in Hertfordshire and reduce the need for public funding.

	Create/ fund a 'Digital Inclusion Service/Resource' to connect digitally excluded residents to an essential device, data or digital skills.	An options appraisal of developing a shared Digital Inclusion Service with Essex County Council has been completed and approved. The purpose of this service would be to utilise Essex's existing Digital Inclusion resource, skills and knowledge to tackle exclusion in the county. Essex will be implementing a triage tool to help streamline training offers and identify skills gaps.
Deliver Digital Connectivity and Inclusion Strategy, and planning should place Digital Inclusion at its heart to ensure reliable high-speed access for all by 2030.	Carry out targeted market engagement to champion areas with lowest mobile coverage.	The redesign of the Digital Herts Webpage has been completed and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.
	Develop a detailed countywide Digital Connectivity and Inclusion Strategy.	A Digital Inclusion Strategy is in the process of being drafted. The strategy is being reviewed to ensure it aligns with the Hertfordshire Economic Strategy.
	Development of a DERI (Digital Exclusion Risk Index) to be hosted on Herts Insight.	The Digital Exclusion Risk Index (DERI) has been created and published - Report Builder for ArcGIS to help identify the areas of the county that require a more focused approach to digital inclusion.



Sustainable County

The Sustainable County Mission is overseen by the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) and is chaired by Cllr Simon Speller, Stevenage Borough Council.

Highlights of the last year include:

- [[Hertfordshire has been selected as Pilot Area for Local Area Retrofit Accelerator, achieving £50,000-worth of consultant support to deliver a Retrofit Strategy for Hertfordshire.](#) The Local Area Retrofit Accelerator ("LARA") programme is now complete with the Strategy to be launched April 2025.
- [Stakeholder engagement has been completed for the [Strategic Action Plan for Adaptation](#). All local authorities have completed a Climate Change Risk Assessment which will be used to inform the Action Plan for Adaptation. Training is now being developed based on the emerging Adaptation Reporting Power template from central government.
- [A countywide energy baseline and map for consumption is now [complete and online at Herts Insight](#).
- [Following a series of engagement events (with over 300 stakeholders engaged), the first draft of The Local Nature Recovery Plan has been produced.

By October 2025:

- [Hertfordshire's Retrofit Strategy (aimed at upgrading properties to higher efficiency levels) will be launched in April 2025 and its implementation started.
- [A strategic action plan for Adaptation (outlining how Hertfordshire will adjust to climate changes) will undergo public consultation during June and July 2025.

Progress so far in detail:

Strategic Goals	Action	Progress
Embed sustainability considerations in all Growth Board activities and decision making to be Business As Usual.	Sustainability outcomes/ performance of HGB activities to be tracked and reported.	<p>HCCSP Terms of Reference amended to reflect new Mission and governance arrangements. See HCCSP ToR for details.</p> <p>Monitoring and reporting arrangements agreed with HGB in July 2024. Details: July 2024 paper to HGB.</p> <p>Officers from each HGB mission are meeting on a regular basis to co-ordinate activity and align sustainability considerations.</p>
All strategic new development will be net zero carbon (NZC) by 2030, with measures in progress to retrofit existing buildings by 2040 to reduce fuel poverty and overheating.	Support HIPP and HIDB to develop NZC policy guidance for Local Planning Authorities and ensure guidance is available for the development industry in Herts noting the link to the Herts Development Quality Charter. Investigate allowing measures to reduce carbon emissions in existing stock as a contribution to net zero on new developments.	<p>Hertfordshire selected as Pilot Area for Local Area Retrofit Accelerator, achieving £50,000-worth of consultant support to deliver a Retrofit Strategy for Hertfordshire. Retrofit workshops to develop the strategy have been delivered. Domestic Retrofit Progress now has its own page on HCCSP website including Home Retrofit Guide. The draft Strategy will be completed in April 2025.</p> <p>Net Zero Development Planning training will also be delivered funded by HGB mission fund.</p>
	Work with Hertfordshire Futures and skills / training providers to develop an upskilled workforce that can help provide the necessary sustainable buildings, technologies and jobs.	Around 60-70 career schools' leaders attended 'Teacher Encounter' event on 17 Jan 2025 to find out more about career opportunities for school leavers in priority sectors including green skills/retrofit.
Support Hertfordshire businesses to improve their sustainability and competitiveness whilst reducing risks from the impacts of climate change.	By 2024, all key business sectors and groups will be represented on the (forthcoming) Sustainable Business Forum to enable supply chain support, mutual learning and to understand the strategic and sector investment needed in the county.	<p>Stakeholder engagement completed for Strategic Action Plan for Adaptation. All local authorities have completed a Climate Change Risk Assessment which has been used to inform Action Plan for Adaptation.</p> <p>Development of a county wide Climate Change Risk Assessment will depend on availability of funds.</p>

		Discussions underway with Hertfordshire Futures on most appropriate method of delivering the Sustainable Business Forum.
By 2025, seek to ensure that all new development is resilient to the impacts of climate change for the next 30 years. Support local authorities to improve place-based resilience to climate change through infrastructure and public realm improvements.	Support HIPP to provide advice and guidance to planners and developers. Assist in achieving investment in strategic infrastructure and retrofit funding streams.	Net Zero Development Planning training has been designed and to date has been delivered to over 140 planners from local authorities across the county.
Collaborate with HCCSP and HIPP in the formulation of the Hertfordshire Area Energy Plan (HAEP) to decarbonise supply, highlight investment opportunities, increase energy security and efficiency.	HGB to be the public face of the HAEP, lobbying government, power 'generators' and investors to help deliver the measures identified in the HAEP and the consequential benefits for the county.	County wide energy baseline and map <u>complete and online at Herts Insight</u> . Baseline presented to Hertfordshire Sustainability Officers Group (Nov 2024) and HCCSP (Dec 2024). Draft ToR for HAEP presented to HSOG (Jan 2025) and HCCSP (Feb 2025).
By 2030, all priority species identified in the Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Strategy (HNRP) will have an improved status.	From 2023, HGB will be an engaged stakeholder in the HNRP to ensure that good growth supports, and is supported by, a high quality and diverse natural environment.	Following a series of engagement events (with over 300 stakeholders engaged), the first draft of The Local Nature Recovery Plan Engagement has been workshopped with all Hertfordshire councils. Priority species and key measures have been identified and proposed sites are being refined. More than 300 sites have been submitted by stakeholders.



Transport for Hertfordshire

A new Transport for Hertfordshire Steering Group was established to oversee the delivery of this Mission. The Group is chaired by Cllr Phil Bibby for Hertfordshire County Council.

Highlights of the last year include:

- [The [Hertfordshire Place and Movement Planning Design Guide](#), adopted in March 2024, provides guidance to support a shift to more sustainable forms of transport.
- [An audit of all activities to support and deliver sustainable transport by local authority partners has been completed in order to deliver this Mission goals.
- [Baseline of transport-related emissions established to inform targets to improve air quality in partnership with Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership.
- [An audit of all transport-related air quality activities has been undertaken to support the development of the county council's air quality strategy (for which initial engagement has started, with adoption expected in 2025) and future district/ borough air quality strategies in line with revised national requirements.
- [Tender documents relating to the roll out of Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure have been prepared prior to market engagement commencing.

By October 2025:

- [The HERT (Hertfordshire Essex Rapid Transit) prospectus will have been published which will include the priorities for the scheme and potential routes.
- [Roll out of the EV charging infrastructure will have begun. This will result in approximately 1,800 - 2,000 charging points being installed around the county.
- [New consultation/engagement techniques will be piloted, and a toolkit/training devised for partners in order to increase effectiveness of consultation and behavioural change projects.
- [The initial phase of ZEBRA (Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas) will be complete which will replace 27 diesel buses with electric buses on the current UNO bus services by March 2026.

Progress so far in detail:

Strategic Goals	Action	Progress
Create an integrated, connected and inclusive transport system meeting the needs of communities and businesses in Hertfordshire.	Create a transport body to lead on the integration of transport services across the county, unlock investment and lobby for Hertfordshire.	Steering group and programme working group established. Delivery Plan developed with identified actions and timescales. Deep Dive presented to HGB in October to obtain strategy steer for Mission delivery. A prioritisation framework is being developed in consultation with District and Borough partners to ensure better co-ordination of schemes.
	Develop clear policies to align all new development with sustainable and active travel in future Local Plans and Joint Strategic Plans.	The Hertfordshire Place and Movement Planning Design Guide was adopted by HCC's Cabinet on 18 March 2024, and has subsequently been published on the county council's website Highways Development Management Hertfordshire County Council . This is the design guide for all road construction and includes guidance to developers for new built roads, but also applies to works carried out on the existing network. The focus of the guidance is on ensuring priority for walking, cycling and buses, and therefore will have a major long-term impact on encouraging a shift to sustainable transport.
Provide greater choice and opportunity for people to travel safely, sustainably and healthily, harnessing new technology and innovation to access key services, employment and leisure.	Develop a list of transport infrastructure priorities to support sustainable growth in the county. Secure investment to deliver the HERT network, providing connections to local and regional bus and rail networks to address east-west passenger transport challenges and connect the county.	An audit of all activities to support and deliver sustainable transport by the local authority partners has been undertaken and is being used to identify opportunities for collaboration. Behaviour change study commissioned in Stevenage and learning from this pilot will be used across the county.

Improve air quality by reducing transport-related emissions.	Monitor air quality across the county to inform plans and programmes of work.	<p>Baseline of transport-related emissions established. This will be supplemented by implementing new techniques to assess air pollution from vehicles in Hertfordshire using ANPR data to understand emission rates by journey and geographical area.</p> <p>An audit of all transport-related air quality activities has been undertaken. The process for filling gaps will be undertaken through the development of the county council's air quality strategy (for which initial engagement has started, with adoption expected in 2025) and future district/ borough air quality strategies in line with revised national requirements.</p> <p>Rollout of EV Charging infrastructure has been delayed by awaiting feedback from Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles on our tender documents. Tender documents are now being finalised and a collaboration document is being drawn up with Districts and Boroughs setting out roles and responsibilities. Installation planned over next three years.</p>
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Right Homes, Right Places

A new Right Homes, Right Places Steering Group was established to oversee the delivery of this Mission. The Group is chaired by Anthony Roche, Managing Director of North Hertfordshire Council.

Highlights of the last year include:

- [Governance arrangements for the Mission have been established with a steering group formed and roles appointed to. A problems-and-solutions statement has been prepared and 24/25 work plan completed.
- [Data analysis has been undertaken to research and establish an evidence base for understanding the county's housing need.
- [Hertfordshire Property Partnership secured £243,000 in One Public Estate funding for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to provide temporary accommodation for local individuals and families who are homeless.
- [Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership responded to the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and New Towns Taskforce.

By October 2025:

- [Hertfordshire's Infrastructure and Funding Prospectus (2018-2031) (outlining the development and infrastructure requirements to support growth) will have been reviewed and started to be refreshed.
- [Hertfordshire's Quality Development Charter (which sets the standards for quality and sustainable homes) will be reviewed with the option of converting pledges into policy.
- [The use of an AI planning app will be agreed with pilot districts by Spring 2025. This is designed to speed up the validation stages of the planning process.

- [A project pipeline of regeneration and new site projects on private and public land across Hertfordshire will have been developed and shared with stakeholders.

Progress so far in detail:

Strategic Goals	Action	Progress
Seek to increase the provision of housing for: - Social/ affordable tenures; - Specialist homes for young adults and older people; - Homeless and temporary accommodation; - People experiencing other housing vulnerabilities.	Herts Planning Group and Herts Property Partnership to progress pipeline of shovel-ready and more complex sites for housing and wider socio-economic regeneration.	Workshop held with partners in September 2024 to identify key housing challenges and potential solutions. 2024/25 action plan developed. Data analysis has been undertaken with Intelligence team to research and establish evidence base.
	Herts Growth Board to work with Government and Homes England to help fund and deliver social/affordable and specialist housing.	Hertfordshire Property Partnership secured £243,000 in One Public Estate funding for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to provide temporary accommodation for local individuals and families who are homeless.
Create a pipeline of development sites.	Herts Planning Group and Herts Property Partnership to progress pipeline of shovel-ready and more complex sites for housing and wider socio-economic regeneration.	This pipeline will have the added benefit of identifying common barriers to development and help to develop solutions.
All new homes to achieve high quality design, sustainability and healthy places principles.	Encourage councils and developers to sign the Herts Development Quality Charter or set their own policy aspirations.	Nine local authorities now signed up to the Development Charter. Review of Development Charter and its approach to be undertaken by Autumn 2025.



Healthy and Safe Places for All

A new Healthy Places for all Steering Group was established to oversee the delivery of this Mission. The Group is chaired by Rt Hon. Prof. Paul Burstow, Chair of NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board.

Progress over the last year includes:

- [Stocktake exercise to establish current baseline for health in planning across Hertfordshire complete. This included the status of Local Plans, Infrastructure Delivery Plans, Air Quality Action Plans and involved consultation engagement with HCC Public Health, NHS ICB and system partners.
- [Comprehensive Literature Review of existing international, national and local schemes to provide a reference point and recommendations for local good practice standards complete. This review sets out the key requirements around health, well-being and safety for new developments and for any interventions for existing communities.
- [Review of the revised National Planning Policy Framework, published in December 2024 to identify how changes in the Framework can amplify local efforts to promote health and safe communities, including new provisions around hot food takeaways.

By October 2025:

- [An external provider will be commissioned to develop the Healthy Place-Making Framework. This will include communication and engagement activities with key stakeholders to understand local need and views.
- [A Members' Reference Group will be established to provide elected members from councils across Hertfordshire with an opportunity to be sighted on progress of the Healthy and Safe Places Mission.
- [The NHS ICS Estates Infrastructure Strategy will be published in early March 2025.

Progress so far in detail:

Strategic Goals	Action	Progress
Improve and regenerate existing places, and design and deliver new housing developments to enable residents to lead healthier lifestyles, have good physical and mental health, and feel safe in public places.	HGB to agree that all local plans seek to have an overarching 'Healthy Place-Making' Framework which sets out the principles for designing and building healthier environments in Hertfordshire, drawing on the evaluation findings set out above.	Baseline exercise of current activity, principles and policies which already influence local plans has been undertaken. Extensive literature review identifying best practice and stocktake of local position complete. Tendering documents to procure external support to develop a Healthy Place-Making Framework are being prepared.
Target health inequalities faced by particular groups and communities through local plan policy and local health initiatives.	HGB members seek to work collaboratively through local plans and health policies to address health inequalities faced by particular communities, and to support implementation of the delivery plan for the Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Strategy .	Healthy Places team have developed a technical appendix to set out Public Health expectations for emerging local plans. This will link into HCC's local and strategic planning documents.
Ensure the health and care services needed to support existing and new communities are identified and built into local plans.	HGB to promote close working, collaboration and peer learning between the local ICB, NHS providers and LPAs for matters in Hertfordshire and on its borders that relate to emerging local plans, infrastructure delivery plans, strategic planning application consultations and health financial contributions.	Steering Group established for the Mission with effective representation from across the broad range of stakeholders including VCFSE and Age UK Work is underway to understand priorities and link up governance groups across the three Health Care Partnerships (NE Herts, SW Herts, West Essex).
Ensure the health and care services needed to support existing and new communities are identified and built into local plans.	HGB members to work with the local ICB on a county-wide strategy for provision of primary, community, and secondary health services that is aligned with anticipated population increases and planned housing growth.	NHS Estates Infrastructure Strategy has been drafted. Initial feedback received from NHS England with further clarification being sought. Appropriate actions to be considered for the 2025-26 Mission Workplan.

	HGB members to support the One Public Estate (OPE) programme to repurpose surplus public estate for public services, housing and regeneration, and explore opportunities within this programme to maximise economic and commercial redevelopment.	Hertfordshire Property Partnership/OPE have provided oversight of OPE programme to Healthy Places Steering group. Case study examples from Hemel Garden Communities and the proposed Hemel Hempstead Health Campus, using existing and newly created estate to be explored.
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Next Steps

The last year has seen significant progress in delivering our six missions and demonstrating the role the Board plays in influencing central government decision-making to secure the investment needed to remove barriers to growth.

Over the next year, we will:

- [Launch of the new Hertfordshire Economy Strategy which will build on previous successes in securing and attracting investment and plan ahead for the next decade of growth.
- [Deliver high-speed internet connection to connect over 7,000 Hertfordshire properties in areas previously poorly served in northeast and west of the county.
- [Set out how we will deliver the green skills needed to make Hertfordshire's existing housing and other property stock more energy efficient.
- [Roll out of EV charging with which will result in approximately 1800 -2000 charging points being installed across the county.
- [Review the Hertfordshire's Infrastructure and Funding Prospectus to ensure the correct infrastructure is in place for any new developments required to meet our growth requirements.
- [Develop a new Healthy Place-Making Framework which will be used as a tool by planners to help create healthier and safer places for our residents.
- [Continue to advocate on behalf of our residents, businesses and voluntary sectors to secure the additional investment required to unlock further growth and influence national policy and decision making affecting our communities.

 www.HertfordshireGrowthBoard.com

 @hertsgrowth

 Hertfordshire County Council, Farnham House, Stevenage