



## Update from Hertfordshire's Director of Public Health

We improve  
Residents' lives

We work with  
Integrity

We act  
Sustainably

We champion  
Equality & Fairness



August 2025

### Welcome

Welcome to the August edition of my monthly newsletter, which aims to keep professionals who have an interest in Hertfordshire Public Health up to date with what's going on locally.



I was delighted to attend the **Hertfordshire Faith and Health Networking Board** this month. Hosted by One Vision, this network brings together the leaders of religious communities in Hertfordshire with representatives of health and care services. It aims to act as a bridge between statutory services and the community, ensuring that community voices are heard and that these insights shape our services. Faith leaders can be powerful agents of social change and I'm pleased to be working with this important forum.

**August spotlight: Hertfordshire's Director of Public Health annual report**



This month I'm delighted to share my **annual report**: [Hertfordshire's Director of Public Health Annual Report 2025](#).

Our living environments have a profound impact on our health and wellbeing throughout our lives, so it is imperative that we plan, design and build places that encourage physical activity, access to green spaces, healthy eating, social connectivity, and increased use of public transport. My report underscores the significance of healthy places and shares case studies to illustrate how we're making Hertfordshire a healthy place for people to live, work, grow-up and grow old in.

**Sarah Perman**  
**Director of Public Health, Hertfordshire County Council**

## Highlights

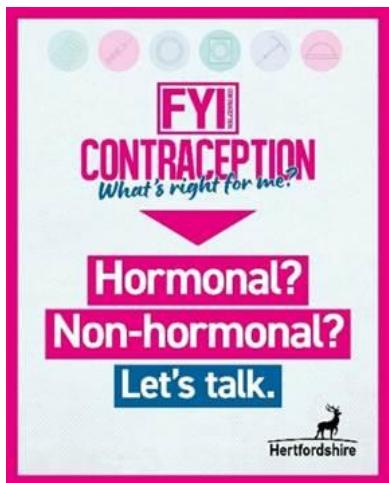


### Age-Friendly baseline report

As part of our commitment to **ageing well**, we recently funded Age UK Hertfordshire and North Herts and Stevenage CVS to gather the views of over 3000 residents aged 55+ on eight areas of everyday life.

I'm really pleased to see the results in the [Age Friendly Hertfordshire baseline report](#), which helps us understand what we're doing well and where we could do better to support people as they age.

It will inform a vision, strategy and action plan that will help us enable people to live well at every stage of life, stay independent for longer and remain connected with their communities.



## FYI Contraception campaign

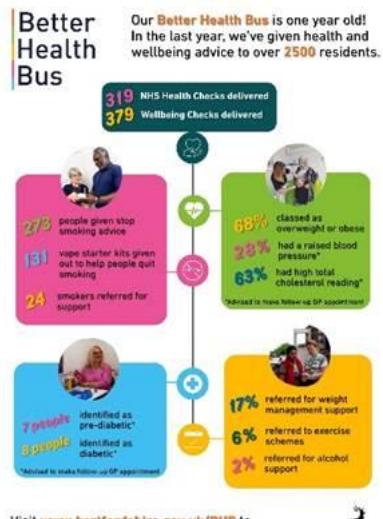
This month, we're launching a [FYI Contraception campaign](#) aimed at women aged 18-30.

Evidence shows that increasingly women are looking to social media for information on which contraception to use.

We want to ensure they have access to safe sources of information to help guide their choice.

The campaign will emphasise that there are many types of contraception to suit different lifestyles, health needs, and future plans, and signpost women to reliable sources of support and information to help them decide what is right for them.

Please look out for [our social media posts](#) and share to your own channels.



## Our Better Health Bus has just celebrated its first birthday!

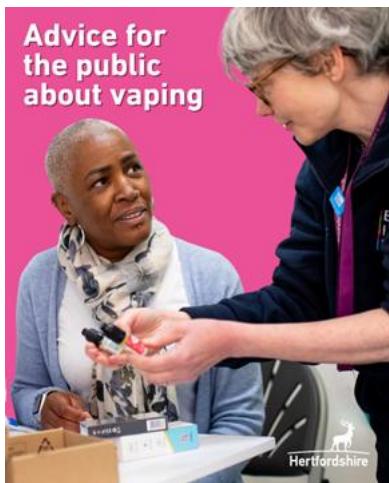
In the last year, **the Better Health Bus** has toured Hertfordshire helping hundreds of people identify health concerns such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes/pre-diabetes.

We've provided stop smoking advice and referred people for lifestyle support like weight management and exercise schemes, which will help prevent long-term ill-health in the future.

We've also partnered with local charity Hearts for Herts to add a defibrillator and bleed control kit to the bus (staff training is in the pipeline) to provide critical support in emergency situations.

Please do promote the bus when it's in your local area. You can either share [our social media posts](#) or download content from our [communications toolkit](#).

Find the full schedule on our [Better Health Bus](#) website.



### E-cigarettes and vaping

We recognise that there is a lot of information in the public domain about **e-cigarettes and vaping**, and some of the messaging is confusing and possibly contradictory.

It's important that our residents have access to the right information so that they can make informed decisions about smoking and vaping.

[Evidence](#) shows that vaping is an effective tool for helping adults to give up smoking and that they are more likely to quit smoking if they use e-cigarettes with nicotine compared with standard Nicotine Replacement Therapy.

However, vaping is not risk-free, and people who have never smoked shouldn't take up vaping.

We're concerned about the number of young people who vape. We're launching a vaping campaign in the new school year to raise awareness of the impact of addiction to nicotine vapes and signpost young people to sources of support.

If you'd like more information on this complex subject, [please read the blog we have recently posted on our website](#).



### Defibrillators and bleed control kits for Hertfordshire fire stations

We've teamed up with local charity Hearts for Herts to ensure that **publicly accessible defibrillators and bleed control kits** are available at fire stations across the county.

Just four weeks after it was installed, the unit at Hatfield station was activated, demonstrating the value of this initiative.

This equipment is crucial in emergencies, significantly improving survival rates from out of hospital cardiac arrests and managing severe bleeding until emergency services arrive.

The initiative is part of a wider community defibrillator and bleed kit project, reinforcing our commitment to equipping residents with the tools and knowledge to respond confidently and effectively in emergency situations.

[Read more here](#) and [watch this great video about the initiative here.](#)



### School ventilation project

As part of our work to deliver our Sustainable Hertfordshire ambitions, we're installing **classroom-based air purifiers**, along with monitors that measure air quality, in areas of high deprivation or where outdoor air pollution levels are high.

This is one of the first projects of its kind to install air purifiers at this scale and actually measure the difference they make, with early results indicating a 29% reduction in harmful fine particles called PM2.5s (the air pollutant considered to have the largest impact on health).

The purifiers also filter air-borne viruses like Covid and measles, bacteria, mould spores and other allergens, so this will improve the health of pupils, reduce the spread of respiratory infections and reduce illness-related absences.

The project [recently covered in The Guardian](#), offers great educational opportunities, as pupils and teachers can view the data and use it in curriculum-linked activities and experiments.



### **Making Every Contact Count – avatar training**

We're excited to launch a [Making Every Contact Count \(MECC\) interactive avatar virtual training platform](#), designed specifically to help frontline practitioners support children and young people.

The avatar training enables people to practice their motivational interviewing and brief intervention skills for when they are talking to young people about stopping smoking, drugs and alcohol, mental health, sexual health and relationships, physical activity and healthy weight.

## **A forward look**



### **Herts Pride**

We're very proud to be supporting Herts Pride 2025, which takes place on Saturday 30 August at Cassiobury Park in Watford 12noon to 10pm and promises to be a fun-filled day.

We have once again sponsored the Health and Wellbeing marquee, which will host a range of wellbeing services including [Hertfordshire Health Walks](#), which are free, fun, guided walks for all abilities that take place across the county every week.

The theme of this year's event is #connections, and our Health Walks epitomise that ethos – offering people the opportunity to meet others socially and chat about what's on their mind, whilst getting fitter and enjoying Hertfordshire's countryside in the process.

Please [look out for our social media posts](#) and share to your own channels.



## Live Longer Better in Hertfordshire

The next Live Longer Better in Hertfordshire community event takes place on Thursday 4 September 2025 from 9am-3.30pm at the University of Hertfordshire, and this year Angela Rippon is joining in the fun!

There are only a few tickets left, so please encourage the older people you work with to [sign up via the Eventbrite website](#) or call 01707 281 201.

This event hosted by Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership aims to help over 55s embrace longer, healthier and more active lives.

## Opportunities

- **Small grants opportunity** - Hertfordshire County Council is offering voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations who are working in the community to support people with dementia and mild cognitive impairment the opportunity to apply for small grants between £500 and £5,000. Please contact [community.wellbeing@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:community.wellbeing@hertfordshire.gov.uk) for a proposal form and further details. The deadline to apply is **11.59pm 15 August 2025**.
- **Have your say about health checks** - We're currently reviewing the NHS Health Checks service we deliver, so we're inviting Hertfordshire residents to give us their views, even if they have never had an NHS Health Check. Please [promote this survey](#) and encourage people to complete it before **Sunday 31 August**.
- **Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)** - Our residents need access to green spaces to support their wellbeing. Hertfordshire County Council has launched a public consultation on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) — and everyone's voice matters. Help shape a healthier Hertfordshire for your

community by encouraging residents to [take the survey](#) (closing date 8 September) or join a webinar on **Tuesday 19 August from 12noon - 1:30pm or 6pm-7:30pm**.

## And finally...



UK Health Security Agency NHS

Here are some things you can do to prevent UTIs

- Stay hydrated**  
Drink enough fluids regularly
- Don't hold it**  
Avoid holding your pee and visit the toilet
- Prioritise personal hygiene**  
especially if you suffer from incontinence

Icons: glass of water, toilet, shower head with arrow.

### Urinary tract infections

New [data from UKHSA](#) has revealed that treating **urinary tract infections (UTIs)** cost NHS hospitals in England an estimated £604 million in 2023-24.

With half of the 200,000 hospital admissions aged over 70, there is a clear need to raise awareness of UTI prevention, symptom recognition and treatment in older adults.

Please do use the content in the [UKHSA communications toolkit](#) to share this important information, especially if you work with older people.



**ILLEGAL**  
Imported sweets and drinks warning!

### Illegal import of sweets and fizzy drinks

Our Trading Standards team has issued an urgent safety warning about the illegal import of sweets and fizzy drinks that contain ingredients banned in the UK. The banned ingredients include brominated vegetable oil (BVO), E127 erythrosine (shown on US products as Red 3), mineral oil and bleached flour. Additives that should carry a warning about possible side effects include sunset yellow FCF (E110), quinoline yellow (E104), carmoisine (E122), allura red (E129), tartrazine (E102) andponceau 4R (E124). If you see a product with one of the banned ingredients, please contact [tradingstandards@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**Please follow the [Health in Herts Facebook page](#) for all the latest Public Health updates, campaign content and wellbeing advice.**

*Please share this newsletter widely through your professional networks. If you have received this from a colleague and would like to subscribe to the mailing list, [drop us a line](#).*

### **eNewsletters**

[Suicide prevention newsletter August 2025](#)

[Children and young people's mental health news – July/August 2025](#)

[Drug and alcohol eNews – June/July 2025](#)

[Sexual health newsletter – special edition for those who fit long acting reversible contraception \(LARC\) August 2025](#)

### **Update from Hertfordshire's Director of Public Health – past issues**

[January 2025](#)

[February 2025](#)

[March 2025](#)

[April 2025](#)

[May 2025](#)

[June 2025](#)

[July 2025](#)