



**Update from Hertfordshire's Director of Public Health**

We improve Residents' lives | We work with Integrity | We act Sustainably | We champion Equality & Fairness

We RISE to the challenge  
RISE  
as OneHCC

Hertfordshire

## Welcome

You may have seen reported in the news that **outbreaks of measles** are affecting many schools and nurseries in Enfield. Uptake of the MMR vaccine has waned over the last few years across the country and this, along with increased outbreaks of measles, has contributed to the UK's measles elimination status being removed recently by the World Health Organisation. In Hertfordshire we have worked hard with NHS colleagues to keep immunisation levels as high as possible but these recent cases in a neighbouring area highlight how easily measles spreads when vaccination uptake levels are less than 95%. In Hertfordshire one in ten children aged 5 are not fully vaccinated against measles.

Vaccinations are available from GP surgeries, and our Public Health team are working with Hertfordshire NHS Community Trust (HCT) to schedule additional pop-up clinics for the schools' Easter break to improve access to vaccine. For updates follow [Health in Herts](#). Please make sure you and your children are up to date with eligible vaccines. This will help protect you and people close to you from serious illness.

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

## Highlights

### No Limits 2026 - Hertfordshire's Year of Disability Sport & Physical Activity



No Limits 2026 is Hertfordshire's dedicated Year of Disability Sport and Physical Activity—a countywide campaign designed to remove barriers and create long-term, meaningful change in how disabled people access and experience sport. The initiative brings together partners, clubs, providers and communities to increase awareness of the challenges faced by disabled people and

to embed better, more inclusive practice across the sector. By offering insight-led guidance, training opportunities, and practical tools such as the Brand Partner Toolkit and Moving More Activity Finder, the campaign aims to empower organisations to create accessible, enjoyable and sustainable opportunities for everyone.

A key feature of the campaign is its Ambassador Programme, which highlights individuals in Hertfordshire whose lived experience of disability demonstrates the transformative impact of sport. Alongside this, No Limits 2026 connects with national efforts such as Inclusion 2028—a Youth Sport Trust and DfE-funded programme focused on improving PE and school sport for children with SEND. The campaign also provides funding support through small grants, bursaries and a free bid-writing service, helping clubs and groups deliver more inclusive sessions. With events, training, and community-led activities running throughout the year, No Limits 2026 champions a future where disabled people can be active without limits.

To find out more about our campaign please visit: [No Limits 2026 - Hertfordshire's Year of Disability Sport & Physical Activity](#)

### **Drugs and Alcohol Symposium - brief summary**

Improving early help for drug and alcohol use remains a key priority in Hertfordshire. The University of Hertfordshire hosted the annual Drugs and Alcohol Symposium on 10 February for people with lived experience, front line professionals, students and researchers to come together to discuss how to improve support for young people.

Hertfordshire County Council has developed a campaign to reduce stigma around substance use. This features a video of local people sharing their recovery journeys - [Ending Stigma - Hertfordshire's message of hope](#) plus a dedicated website [Let's break the stigma | Hertfordshire County Council](#). We have also developed new drug and alcohol animations <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/drugandalcoholtraining> and are rolling out a new professional signposting guide and toolkit [End stigma toolkit | Hertfordshire County Council](#).

You can find details of Public Health training below:

#### **Public Health training website**



The newly launched website hosts training courses offered by the Public Health team, all of which are free. It covers a range of courses on topics such as gambling awareness, dementia, spotting the signs (of suicide risk) and many more.

All course details and how to join can be found on [View the website](#)

### **Air Quality Strategy Consultation - open until 22 March**

Although air pollution from many sources has improved in recent years – for example, vehicles now emit far fewer pollutants than they once did – poor air quality remains the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. In England, long-term exposure to air pollution contributes to around 30,000 deaths every year.

Air quality affects everyone, but some groups are more vulnerable than others, including children, older adults, and people with underlying health conditions. The impacts can be immediate, such as triggering cardiac events during short-term spikes in pollution, or long-term, developing gradually after years of exposure to lower levels of pollutants.

Hertfordshire County Council is pleased to reaffirm its commitment to healthier air through our new Air Quality Strategy. We are seeking feedback on our draft new strategy. This will help shape our priorities and ensure our work reflects the needs of everyone who lives or works in Hertfordshire. [Have your say by 22 March](#).

### **Healthy and Safe Places Framework**

The healthy and safe places framework has been developed as a countywide, evidence-based approach to embedding health, wellbeing and safety at the heart of spatial planning. The priority for the next phase is to embed the framework into all relevant planning and strategic processes. Find out more: [Herts Healthy and Safe Places Framework](#)

### **Local food businesses recognised for supporting local health and protecting the environment**

Food businesses across Hertfordshire have received accreditation from Hertfordshire County Council, in recognition of their efforts to offer healthier food options and adopt sustainable practices. Find award winners offering healthier and sustainable food choices in your area at: [Hertfordshire County Council | Local food businesses recognised for supporting local health and protecting the environment](#)

## **News from our partners**

### **Report Reveals Older People Reject ‘Frail’ Label and Call for Better Support**

The Healthwatch Hertfordshire report highlights that many older people do not see themselves as “frail”, finding the term stigmatising. Older residents expressed a desire for clearer information, more compassionate communication and greater support to live well now. In response, Healthwatch has made recommendations to the NHS around improving access, adapting language, raising awareness of available support and strengthening community-based services to help older people remain independent and well. [For more information, visit Healthwatch Hertfordshire's page.](#)

### **Have your say on proposals to relocate Mount Vernon Cancer Centre to a new world class facility at Watford General Hospital**

The Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care System is seeking public feedback on proposals to relocate the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre to a new, purpose-built facility beside Watford General Hospital. The move would place cancer services closer to essential acute care, expand research space and include a new haematology unit. Plans also outline increased chemotherapy at home, more local diagnostic services, enhanced units at Hillingdon and Northwick Park, and an additional radiotherapy site in Stevenage or Luton to cut travel times.

The consultation follows a review showing the current site can no longer meet modern care needs and forms part of the wider redevelopment of Watford General

Hospital. The consultation runs until 29 March 2026, with online and in-person ways to take part. [For more information visit Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care System website.](#)

### **Herts Sunflower Domestic Abuse J9 Champion Training workshops**

The next online session will take place on Wednesday, 4 March from 10am until 1pm, and the theme is 'Taking a strategic approach to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in Hertfordshire'. [Book your place here.](#)

The next J9 Champions Network Meeting will take place online on Wednesday, 18 March, from 10am until 12pm. [Book your place here.](#) Safer Places will introduce the newly launched National Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy, followed by the Hertfordshire VAWG Partnership presenting the new Hertfordshire VAWG strategy. Together, we will explore what these developments mean for victims and survivors of domestic abuse in Hertfordshire. The meeting will also spotlight how the strategy prioritises reducing harm by engaging with those responsible for causing it. Guest speaker Kira Day, Operations Manager at The Chrysalis Centre, will share how we can better identify perpetrators, hold them to account, and support behaviour-change interventions. Attendees will then be able to discuss the strategy with fellow champions.

[If you would like to know more about Herts Sunflower Champions network, make an application here.](#)

## **Opportunities**

### **Gambling addiction training**

Our gambling-related harms project continues to strengthen its work across Hertfordshire, raising awareness of support services available and the rollout of our gambling awareness training. This short video shares the experiences of people affected by gambling: [Gambling Harm UK: Full Video - YouTube](#)  
Our training helps equip staff with knowledge and skills required

### **Free training: Gambling awareness**

Two free courses for anyone in a public-facing role or anyone wanting to learn more about gambling-related harm:

- **1.5-hour Bet You Can Help MS Teams workshop** to increase understanding of gambling harm and available support.  
Course dates: 24 March 1-2.30pm
- **Full-day Bet You Can Help (Level 2) in-person training**  
Date: 10 March 10:00am-4.00pm

To book, please visit: [Public Health Training | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

For information about support services, please visit: [Gambling | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

## And finally...

Follow the [Health in Herts Facebook page](#) for all the latest Public Health updates, campaign content and wellbeing advice and share the posts through your own channels.

Please share this newsletter 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](#)