

HILLINGDON people

News from your council
March/April 2024

www.hillingdon.gov.uk

**Enhancing your
libraries**

**Budget agreed
for 2024/25**

**Reducing carbon
emissions**

**Providing vital
support for carers**



HILLINGDON
LONDON



ON LOAN



EVENTS



RE-REGISTER

Easter and Early May Bank Holiday 2024 WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

To minimise disruption to waste and recycling collections over Easter and the early May Bank Holiday, we will be working on Saturday 30 March and Saturday 11 May.

Easter		Early May Bank Holiday	
Normal collection day	Revised collection day	Normal collection day	Revised collection day
Friday 29 March (Good Friday)	Saturday 30 March	Monday 6 May (Bank Holiday)	Tuesday 7 May
Monday 1 April (Easter Monday)	Tuesday 2 April	Tuesday 7 May	Wednesday 8 May
Tuesday 2 April	Wednesday 3 April	Wednesday 8 May	Thursday 9 May
Wednesday 3 April	Thursday 4 April	Thursday 9 May	Friday 10 May
Thursday 4 April	Friday 5 April	Friday 10 May	Saturday 11 May
Friday 5 April	Saturday 6 April		

Please leave your waste and recycling out by 6am on the day of collection by your front gate but not on the pavement. Separate arrangements are in place for flats and business premises.



www.hillingdon.gov.uk/recycling

CHILDCARE SUPPORT FOR WORKING PARENTS

Find out if your two-year-old is eligible

www.hillingdon.gov.uk/funded-childcare





www.hillingdon.gov.uk

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COVER PHOTO: CARER GRAEME ARMSTRONG

We've aligned stories in this magazine to our Council Strategy to keep you updated on our progress. Below is a key to explain the graphics.



Advertising deadline for next edition: **Friday 12 April.**

Editorial and advertising enquiries

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Welcome



Last month, the council agreed its budget for 2024/25, which will once again deliver millions of pounds of investment in services for residents while setting council tax at one of the lowest levels in outer London.

The cornerstone of our approach to financial management is to seek to ensure residents don't shoulder excessive financial burdens. Our dynamic transformation programme continues at pace to review how the council works, reshaping services and doing things differently, maximising efficiency and delivering value for money for residents.

Budgets remain stretched, with government funding not meeting the additional cost pressures being experienced by local authorities, so our approach to transformation must be resolute, challenging what we do on a wider scale to deliver the same or improved outcomes more efficiently rather than making cuts to frontline services.

During the past few years, we have reduced senior management costs by more than £1 million, streamlined back-office and administrative functions, improved the efficiency of our waste collections, introduced new and more efficient digital systems, and made better use of buildings by collocating services, which also included the development of a new Youth Offer and the expansion of the Family Hub model boroughwide.

As part of our transformation programme, a review has been taking place across the council in recent months to collaboratively identify ways to reshape services and outcomes in line with budgets. The budget for 2024/25 includes further investment in digital technologies to enhance how we do things and promote increased self-service internally and externally. You can read about the budget for 2024/25 on page 10.

Transformation also features in this edition of *Hillingdon People*.

We're continuing with plans to collocate services, such as Uxbridge Library, to make better use of buildings to enhance the lives of residents and reduce environmental impacts and running costs (page 12).

We're also making some of our buildings more carbon efficient to meet our ambition for our operations to become net zero (page 18), as well as our services, with changes on the way for our automatic recycling bag subscription scheme to increase efficiency (page 14).

Following successful applications last year, the council is also proud to be supporting local clubs to take on long-term licences of the sites they play at and apply for outside funding to enhance facilities which will help them to grow and generate their own income ensuring their survival for the future (page 8).

**Cllr Ian Edwards
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

Art therapy project a success at Uxbridge Family Hub

Between September and January, the council's Achievement through Individual Mentoring Support (AIMS) programme ran a pilot art project for a group of children and young people who needed support to develop their confidence, self-esteem and overcome anxiety when engaging with others in a group setting.

Fourteen young people, aged 11 to 19, met weekly at Uxbridge Family Hub to create a piece of artwork exploring the topic of mental health, whilst gaining the support of specialist programme delivery workers to overcome challenges to their personal, academic and social progression.

The group worked together to discuss and choose the theme, and a local artist from Hillingdon Art Society visited to give them some practical help and techniques.

The targeted four-month initiative provided a safe space for young people to come together for group discussions around mental health and develop their communication and social skills, whilst engaging in an activity they enjoyed.



The final piece of art entitled 'What do you see?' was unveiled on Monday 15 January by the Mayor of Hillingdon, Cllr Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana and Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, Cllr Susan O'Brien (pictured above), and is now displayed on the wall in the hub's communal area.

Following the success of the scheme, another four-month programme will run from April.

The council's family hubs, located in Uxbridge and Hayes, provide a wealth of support for children aged 0 to 19 (up to 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities), including maternity services, healthy eating workshops for children, and mental health, mentoring and counselling support for young people. For more information, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/family-hubs.

Tenants asked to share views



If you're a tenant or leaseholder in Hillingdon we'd like to hear your thoughts on the services the council provides.

As part of our Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) we would like your feedback to see what we're doing well and any areas where you think we can improve.

We'd like your views on five main themes: keeping properties in good repair, maintaining safety in buildings, respectful and helpful engagement with the council, effective handling of complaints, and responsible neighbourhood management.

The survey is a statutory requirement for the council, and while the responses are confidential, they are important in influencing future decisions and shaping services. The results will be published so residents can see how the council is performing.

Have your say at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/star-survey.



Mayor of Hillingdon, Cllr Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana; Cllr Lavery; and Powerday staff present a cheque to hospice representatives

Waste weekends help to raise £50,000

Residents using the council's waste weekend re-use area have raised £50,000 for Harlington Hospice.

Since opening in 2020, the facility in West Drayton has given residents the opportunity to donate and take away household items in exchange for a charitable donation.

The funds raised support the hospice to provide invaluable care for people living with serious or terminal illness and their families.

Cllr Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Residents' Services, said: "This is a fantastic achievement by our residents and shows an ongoing commitment to reduce waste, recycle and re-use items.

"I'd like to thank them for their efforts – every single donation makes a huge difference to the lives of other residents in need of additional care and support."

To find out more about the site, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling-centres.

Mayor and London Assembly elections

The elections for the Mayor of London and 25 London Assembly members takes place across the capital on Thursday 2 May.

Residents registered to vote will start to receive their poll cards through the post from Wednesday 20 March. The cards include information on how to arrange a postal or proxy vote for those who cannot make it to their polling station on election day.

The deadline to register to vote is Tuesday 16 April. More information about how to register to vote is available at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/register-vote.

Following the introduction of new legislation last year, all residents voting in person must now remember to bring a form of photo ID with them when they vote at a polling station.

Accepted forms of ID include a current or expired UK passport or

photo driving licence, including a provisional one. Expired IDs are acceptable as long as the photo still bears a true resemblance. Only original documents are accepted; photos of your ID, copies or digital versions saved on phones and smart devices are not acceptable. Details of other forms of approved photo ID are available at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/voter-ID.

If you don't have any form of photo ID from the accepted list, or your ID no longer looks like you, you are eligible to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate. Applicants must already be registered to vote. The deadline for applications for the upcoming election is 5pm on Wednesday 24 April.

For more information about the election, visit www.londonelects.org.uk.



Cllr Bianco at the Bury Street crossing

Memorial Spitfire sent for repair

A replica Spitfire in Uxbridge that is a memorial to those who served in the Second World War is being repaired after it was damaged following heavy rainfall.

In autumn last year, one of the wings of the Mark IX Spitfire at the Battle of Britain Bunker Exhibition and Visitor Centre snapped after rain had got into its fibreglass structure, filling the wing with water until it broke under the weight. Lengthy discussions took place between the council and various parties to identify the best way to repair this treasured icon.

In January, the evocative fighter plane was shipped to GB Replicas in Norfolk – the specialists who originally built it, and it is hoped the fully repaired model will be back in its prominent location at the bunker in time for D-Day commemorations in June.

In 2010, the replica was refurbished by the council and repainted in the colours of 33 Squadron, which took part in the D-Day landings in 1944. It had originally stood as a 'gate guardian' at the entrance to RAF Uxbridge as a memorial to remind people of the significant role that station played in the Second World War, and to honour those pilots who flew for Fighter Command.



Following RAF Uxbridge's closure in 2010, the Spitfire was later moved to its present location, near the entrance to the Battle of Britain Bunker and 11 Group Operations Room.

Cllr Jonathan Bianco, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property, Highways and Transport, said: "Spitfires are an emotive aircraft for anyone who remembers the Second World War and one many in the borough hold dearly due to its association with the RAF bases in Uxbridge and Northolt, which is why this memorial's repair is extremely important to us.

"Restorations of this nature are often complex and can take time, and we're grateful that GB Replicas has fitted it into their busy schedule.

"We thank them for their help in this special restoration, as well as the contributions from the HS2 Community Fund and visitor donations, and look forward to seeing it back in pride of place very soon."

Crossings receive improvements to enhance visibility

The council has upgraded nine zebra crossings across the borough (seven at or near schools) to further improve road safety.

Beacons outside or close to Hermitage Primary School (Belmont Road, Uxbridge), Minet Infant and Junior schools (Coldharbour Lane, Hayes), St Catherine Catholic Primary School (The Green, West Drayton), Grange Park Infant and Junior schools (Lansbury Drive, Hayes), Haydon School (Joel Street outside Northwood Hills station) and Ruislip High Street (Eastcote Road and Bury Street) received new internally illuminated poles that light up at night.

While the illumination option was not viable at crossings outside Wood End Park Academy (Judge Heath Lane, Hayes) and St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Rockingham Road, Uxbridge), these were instead enhanced with new reflective tape.

Cllr Bianco said: "We are committed to making our roads safer for residents. These improvements will support schoolchildren and other pedestrians to make safer journeys to and from school by increasing their visibility to drivers, particularly in the dark."



Keeping healthy for Heart Month

To celebrate February's National Heart Month, the council organised an array of events at the borough's libraries to encourage residents to improve their health and wellbeing.

Storytimes were about healthy eating for a healthy heart, and heart-themed coffee mornings and dementia sessions were well attended.

During half-term, Oak Farm hosted an arts and crafts event for primary school-aged children to make heart-shaped candle holders.

Sow and Grow events were held at Charville and Ickenham, where families learnt how to grow their own healthy food by planting seeds to take home, decorated plant pots, and made heart-shaped wildflower seed bombs.

Bollywood dance fitness sessions took place at Oak Farm, Botwell Green, Uxbridge and Ruislip Manor to inspire people to have fun with exercise and learn something new, and GLL, the council's leisure centre provider, ran mini circuit fitness challenges at Ruislip Manor, Uxbridge and Oak Farm to encourage a healthy fitness regime.

Charville hosted weekly 'Zen Den' activities for adults, including colouring, jigsaw puzzles, and crochet, while free reflexology taster sessions were offered at Ickenham.

Cllr Jane Palmer, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care, said: "In February, our libraries hosted a range of free wellbeing activities for residents of all ages, as part of our commitment to create thriving, healthy households. The smallest change can lead to a healthier lifestyle, and we hope that by offering these sessions, we helped support residents' wellbeing through the winter months."

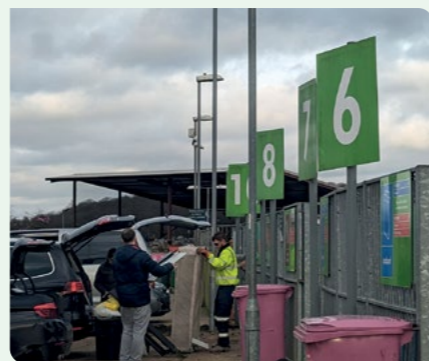
Staff campaign boosts recycling

Recycling rates at Harefield Civic Amenity Site have increased by 20 per cent to 50 per cent following an engagement campaign by staff at the facility.

Employees proactively intervened when they spotted residents attempting to dispose of items in the general household waste bay that could be recycled or re-used by placing them in an alternative, dedicated bay. The team also offered general advice to residents on what can be recycled from the items they brought.

Cllr Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Residents' Services, said: "We're committed to being a green and sustainable borough and this brilliant news shows we're working true to this aim."

"The upturn in recycling rates since 2022 is fantastic for the environment, as more and more of what households want to dispose of can now be diverted away from becoming



general waste. Thank you to our residents and staff for their efforts."

The site accepts most waste which can't be collected via the council's weekly household collection service, generally due to them being too large, and includes items such as scrap metal, mattresses, wooden furniture and fridges, all of which can be recycled, or sent for re-use.

For more information, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling-centres.



Families enjoy our Winter Playday event

The council's annual Winter Playday took place during half-term on Tuesday 13 February at the Pavilions shopping centre in Uxbridge.

More than 300 children and families enjoyed a range of free activities, including storytime with the library service, and indoor archery, tennis and fun activities with staff from Hillingdon's children's centres.

Almaas Hussain from Uxbridge said: "Having recently moved to the area it's great to have this kind of free opportunity on our doorstep and it's a great way to connect with the community and meet new people. The children can't wait to come again as they love the arts and crafts activities"

Saravanapriya from Hayes said: "I heard about the event from my local library (Botwell Green), my daughter loves the storytime sessions, so I knew she would enjoy them at the Playday. She's only two years old so it's a really good way for her to meet, play and interact with new children."

Cllr Susan O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, said: "These events are a great way to celebrate the importance of play for children of all ages while giving parents and carers the opportunity to speak to professionals from a range of health and leisure services and get advice on how to help keep their families healthy."

New measures introduced to combat Lido anti-social behaviour

The council has implemented improvements and enhanced enforcement measures at Ruislip Lido to tackle seasonal anti-social behaviour following feedback from residents.

The Lido is a popular attraction during summer, and while most visitors respect the award-winning green space, some carry out anti-social behaviour which has a detrimental impact on residents living nearby.

There will be increased patrols of the site conducted in late afternoon/early evening during spells of hot weather to enforce the borough's public spaces protection order, which bans nuisance in public spaces, such as alcohol and drug use, unauthorised barbecues, car meets and street racing, equipment amplifying music, and other offences such as littering. Those witnessed carrying out acts in contravention of the regulations will be fined.

Visitors will also be reminded by new signage that while they can access the sanded area, they should not go in the water as swimming isn't permitted.

Five additional litter bins have been installed along Breakspear Road and Bury Street, and two additional larger bins will be placed at the Reservoir Road Lido exit next to the outdoor



gym. During busy spells, litter picking hours in the area will also be varied to provide coverage later in the day.

The council introduced a seasonal parking management scheme in the area in 2022 to combat visitors parking in residential streets close to the Lido. Increased parking enforcement patrols will continue to be carried out on busy days and we will be trialling new technologies. Those found parking illegally will be fined and may even have their vehicles towed away.

While nearby Breakspear Crematorium is available as an overflow car park during times of exceptionally high parking demand, visitors are reminded that there is limited parking at the Lido and that it is also accessible by bus (H13). To provide other transportation options,

new cycle stands have also been installed in the Willow Lawn car park.

Cllr Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Residents' Services (pictured above), said: "Ruislip Lido is one of our treasured green spaces, offering first-class facilities for both residents and visitors."

"We want people to continue to visit this beautiful site but ensure they have respect for the green space and residents living nearby. We will not hesitate to fine those witnessed contravening regulations."

"We would also like to ensure visitors are aware of the limited parking on busy days and consider using alternative forms of transport or visiting one of our many other Green Flag award-winning sites during peak times."

Save the date for our new, free and fun summer picnic event

Following the success of last year's Picnic in the Park celebration, which was held for the Coronation of King Charles III, the council has decided to make this family event an annual feature.

Residents can now save the date for this year's free afternoon of fun, which will be held at Barra Hall Park, Hayes, on Saturday 29 June between midday and 4pm.

Attendees are invited to bring along picnics, something to sit on and enjoy the occasion.

A range of activities will be on offer, including face painting, live music and entertainment, with many more to be confirmed closer to the date.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Ian Edwards, said: "Last year's picnic at Fasnidge Park was a wonderful opportunity for hundreds of residents

of all ages to come together as a community to not only celebrate a historic event but enjoy a range of entertainment, including performances from local schools and dance groups.

"It created such a fantastic atmosphere that we have decided to

hold more events like these to bring communities together to have some fun and celebrate the wealth of artistic talent on offer across the borough."

More details will be available nearer the time at discover.hillingdon.gov.uk/picnic-in-the-park.



Family fun at Cranford Park

There's something on offer for everyone at Cranford Park this spring.

The heritage site is nearing the completion of a multi-million-pound restoration by the council, and to mark its next chapter a host of activities are planned.

A volunteer pruning session takes place on Sunday 24 March, from 10am to 2pm, open to anyone who wants to help the team with some post-winter maintenance. Simply book your place.

For youngsters, our popular Easter egg hunt returns on Saturday 30 March, running from 10am to 4pm for ages three and up. No booking is required.

On Monday 1 April, join the 'Fools of Cranford', where professional storytellers and improv artists will bring a touch of nonsense to the day. Take part in a guided nature trail where fact is utter fiction, or do some barmy art.



The 'Fools of Cranford' event on Monday 1 April

Throughout the Easter holidays, outdoor traditional games will be on offer for free for families to play in the park's stable courtyard between 10am and 4pm.

Cllr Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Residents' Services, said: "We're looking forward to a bumper year

at the newly restored Cranford Park. From guided walks to yoga sessions and special tours there's something throughout the year to suit all tastes."

For a full list of events visit discover.hillingdon.gov.uk/events. For more information, or to book your place, email archives@hillingdon.gov.uk.

Youth football clubs to make sites their permanent home

The council is working with Wealdstone and Ickenham Youth Football Clubs to help them to take on long-term leases of their playing grounds thanks to support from Middlesex FA, the Premier League, The FA and the government's Football Foundation.

Wealdstone provides football for 49 youth teams of mixed abilities aged between four and 18 at New Pond Playing Fields, Ruislip, and Ickenham offers football for more than 500 young people (13 age groups) aged between four and 18 at Hillingdon House Farm, Uxbridge.

Following successful applications last year by the council, both clubs have been accepted onto the Football Foundation's Home Advantage Programme, which aims to support grassroots clubs and organisations across the country to take on long-term leases or licences of the sites they play at.

Both clubs will have access to guidance and support from the Foundation and The FA as part of the programme, as well as legal advice to help make the transfer process as easy as possible. They can also apply for up to £250,000 funding from the Foundation to improve facilities at the sites.

Having a permanent home will enable the organisations to not only further cement their place in the community, but also support them to grow and generate their own income.

Cllr Lavery said: "We are delighted to have been successful in these two bids and I'm especially proud of the fact that Hillingdon was the only successful London borough for the first phase of this exciting programme. I'm now looking forward to seeing how these sites are improved."

"This national scheme supports our commitments of creating a thriving local economy and healthy households, and will allow these clubs to take more ownership of the places they call home and create more sustainable assets for the local community."

To find out more about the programme, visit footballfoundation.org.uk/grant/home-advantage-programme. For more information about the clubs, visit wealdstoneyouthfc.co.uk and www.ickenhamyouthfc.com.



Wealdstone Youth FC

Borrow a monitor

A new blood pressure monitor loan scheme was launched by the council in February.

Delivered in partnership with NHS West London and the Confederation Hillingdon, monitors are available to borrow free of charge from Botwell Green, Ruislip Manor and Uxbridge libraries. Each library also has a fixed blood pressure monitor installed to help residents determine if they would benefit from using the loan scheme.

The blood pressure monitor loan scheme is open to adults who are:

- over 18 years old
- Hillingdon library members
- Hillingdon registered patients (excluding those registered with Church Road Surgery or West London Medical Centre).

Eligible residents can borrow the loan kits for two weeks to carry out regular blood pressure checks at home.

Once readings have been recorded for seven consecutive days, they can take a copy of the results to their local surgery or to one of the libraries participating in the scheme, so the data can be uploaded to their records and reviewed by a doctor or nurse.

It is estimated that more than 43,000 adults in Hillingdon suffer from



Cllr Lavery and Cllr Palmer with a fixed blood pressure monitor at Ruislip Manor Library

undiagnosed hypertension, also known as high blood pressure. In many cases, there are no symptoms, but it can lead to more serious health problems.

Cllr Jane Palmer, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care (pictured right), said: "We're delighted to be working with our health partners to offer this free loan scheme to help residents live healthier lives."

"High blood pressure is a major cause of diseases such as heart attacks and strokes, so it's crucial to identify the signs early. Early intervention means residents can start making healthy lifestyle changes or get the required medical advice from a doctor."

For more information, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/blood-pressure-kits.



Could you be a volunteer Community Panel Member?

The council's Youth Justice Service is recruiting volunteer Community Panel Members to help them support children, parents/carers and victims of crime.

Volunteers work with the council's youth justice officers to devise contracts which address children's offending behaviour, future goals, victim awareness and consequential thinking.

When children aged between 10 to 17 commit a crime and plead guilty, they may receive a Referral Order from the court. Referral Order panel meetings are led by two trained Community Panel Members, and the child, parents/carers, youth justice officers and the victim/s attend. They are an opportunity to discuss the offence that took place and create a tailor-made contract to support the child to repair the harm they caused and reduce the likelihood of them reoffending.

The Referral Order process is underpinned by restorative

justice. Restorative justice brings together those harmed by crime and those responsible for the harm. Victim/s are supported to engage in the Referral Order process, whether that's through a letter of apology, face-to-face meeting or by attending panel meetings. If the victim wishes, they can share the impact of the crime with the child that caused the harm to help them

Community Panel Members positively impact lives by supporting children to decrease their involvement in offending or anti-social behaviour, increasing positive relationships with their parents/carers and supporting victims of crime to be heard.

Jonathan Gardiner said "I have been a Panel Member for 20 years now and got involved as I wanted to give something back to the community. I still get a huge reward from watching children grow and flourish under the guidance of Hillingdon's Youth Justice Service."

Loraine Grainger said: "I have been involved with children most of my life through Scouting and a local charity. After working with a group of children that had previously committed crime on a canal, I was asked to join as a volunteer about 15 years ago. Children are the future; therefore, we owe it to all of them to help them get the best out of their lives and understand that everything they do has consequences for themselves and other people."

"It is very rewarding to meet the children at the beginning of their court order, then with the help and support of their youth justice officer and others, watch them understand, develop and grow more confident, hopefully staying away from crime in the future."

Volunteers should be 18 and above, are subject to an enhanced DBS check, and will receive specific training.

To find out more and apply, contact Sarah Abdulhadi by emailing sabduhadi@hillingdon.gov.uk.

Delivering value for money services

The council approved its annual budget on Thursday 22 February, putting residents first by further investing in services and setting council tax at one of the lowest levels in outer London.

Despite continuing pressures on local government finance, Hillingdon remains on a sound financial footing, with the council confirming a budget for 2024/25 that continues to invest in the delivery of services and transform the way the authority works to maximise efficiency and value for money for residents.

Investing in services

The council has built and maintained a substantial capital programme, which will see further investment in free weekly waste and recycling collections, enhanced parks and leisure facilities, resurfaced roads and pavements, additional and improved housing and more school places.

Highlights of the five-year programme include:

- £42 million investment in roads and pavements
- £23.3 million for the proposed new Water Sports and Outdoor Activity Centre
- £18.5 million on carrying out school building condition works
- £16.7 million for the Platinum Jubilee Leisure Centre in West Drayton
- £14.8 million investment in digital technologies
- £11.7 million towards the creation of more school places and classrooms for children with special educational needs
- £10.7 million to carry out adaptations to residents' homes
- £10.5 million to invest in care home capacity
- £7.5 million on the Chrysalis scheme, including a park enhancement programme
- £6.5 million for the modernisation of the Civic Centre
- £4.7 million on initiatives to reduce the council's carbon footprint.

Transforming and reshaping services

To minimise the funding requirement from residents, the council's transformation programme continues to deliver annual savings which totalled £20.8 million last year, with a further £15.8 million projected for 2024/25.

Rather than cutting services as has occurred in some authorities, the council believes in changing them to deliver value for money for residents by seeking different ways of providing them with the same or improved outcomes.

This includes joining services, investing in digital technologies to create efficiencies, relocating services to make better use of buildings monetarily and environmentally, and commissioning specialist providers to run services on the council's behalf.

Cllr Martin Goddard, Cabinet Member for Finance, said: "Our effective savings programme continues to deliver value for money and ensure that residents don't pay as much as other boroughs, and that the council can continue to maintain and invest in its services. "While Hillingdon continues to face the same acute budgetary pressures as other local authorities, what sets this council apart from others, who have declared, or are on the verge of bankruptcy, is our record of sound financial management and putting residents first."



Budget in numbers

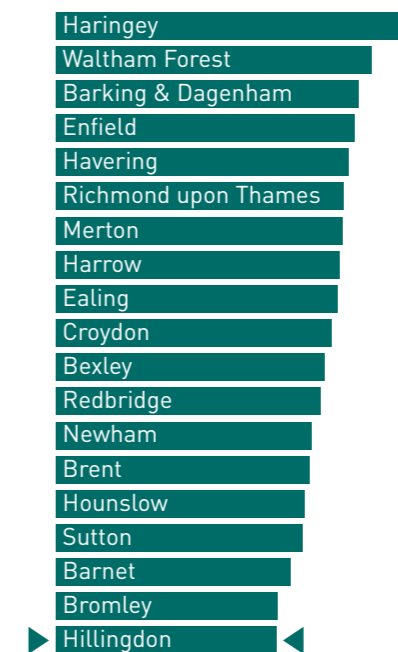
Like all local authorities, the council is seeing the burdens of increased demand for social care and supported housing and homelessness services, which are outweighed by the marginal growth in government funding (see below). This means the money the council has for other services is substantially squeezed.

Despite this, residents are fortunate enough to once again pay amongst the lowest levels of council tax and fees and charges in outer London (see right).

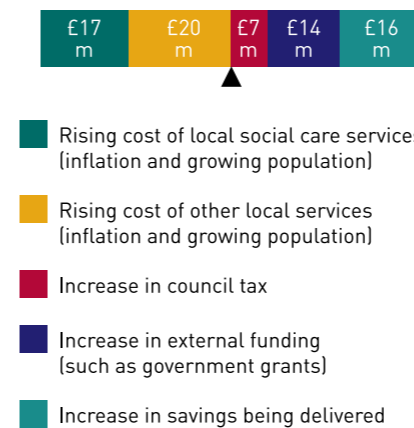
Core council tax will increase by 2.99 per cent and a levy of 2

per cent to fund residents' adult social care will also be charged. In practice, this equates to a total of 4.99 per cent which is £1.27 a week for a Band D property.

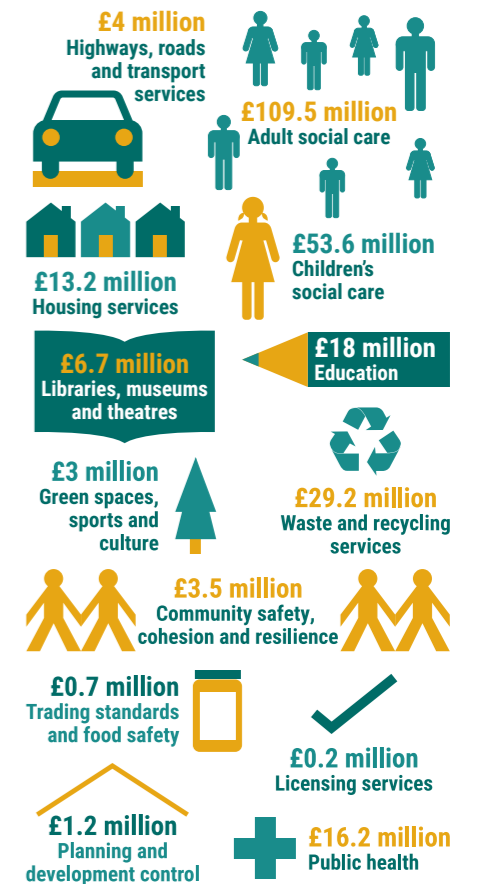
Estimated council tax, fees and charges per Band D property for 2022/23 for outer London



Balancing additional expenditure with funding 2023/24



In 2024/25 your council tax will fund...



For details on council tax and how to pay, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/counciltax

A digital-enabled, modern, well-run council

Sign up for paperless bills

You can help to protect the environment by signing up to manage your council tax information online at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/council-tax-account.

Enhancing your library service

Find out more about the council's proposals to transform and relocate Uxbridge Library, and how the borough's Library Strategy is being delivered.

The council has a strong record of library investment, and while many local authorities have closed their facilities, Hillingdon is committed to retaining its 16 across the borough, further investing in buildings and facilities to ensure they are of the highest quality, maximum efficiency

and continue to meet residents' requirements now and into the future. In autumn, the council developed proposals for Uxbridge Library to be enhanced and relocated to the Civic Centre, and in February, the council's Cabinet agreed the plans subject to planning approval.



How would the library be transformed and why is this happening?

To provide enhanced facilities

The new library would remain the borough's largest library and include facilities not currently provided in its existing building, such as:

- study booths
- dedicated laptop/device charging bars
- hireable meeting room space
- dedicated space for the popular Tovertafel (interactive tabletop projections).

There would also be:

- an exhibition and event space
- a learning centre
- a dedicated children's library (enclosed to improve safety and reduce noise)
- a large book collection.

The relocation also offers use of the wider Civic Centre space for events and activities.



To create a community hub and reinvigorate the high street

Work is already underway to renovate the Civic Centre as part of emerging plans to revitalise the town centre and the southern end of the High Street.

The new facility would be within easy reach of other council

services, such as Learn Hillingdon, our adult education service, and Uxbridge Family Hub, as well as the range of other services available on-site, ensuring all the services that matter most to residents are easily accessible in one building.



To provide access for all

The new library would be more accessible with one-floor, step-free access, and the Civic Centre is only 300 metres away from the existing site, with a bus stop opposite making it convenient to get to by public transport.

The current library is spaced across six floors and because there are no fire evacuation lifts it can be particularly difficult for people with disabilities to safely evacuate. It is also challenging for older people, people with dementia and those with special educational needs to navigate.

To deliver carbon efficiencies and savings

The relocation would help to deliver the council's climate change pledge of its operations being net zero by 2030 as the new library would save 165 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions a year.

The relocated library is also expected to save the council £412,000 per year from business rates, utilities, cleaning and staffing costs, delivering better value for money to residents.



Cllr Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Residents' Services, said: "We're committed to creating safe and strong communities, thriving healthy households and a green and sustainable borough while continuing to ensure maximum efficiency in the use of council buildings and resources, delivering the very best value when using taxpayers' money. "The new library will deliver a more modern, enhanced, accessible library, with a reduced environmental impact and running cost, housed alongside a wealth of other services to help us further build on our ambition to deliver more joined up public services to meet our residents' needs."

The proposals can be viewed at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/uxbridge-library-relocation

Library Strategy progress

The council's Library Strategy 2023-27 focuses on five aims/ambitions that retain and enhance initiatives. Here are some of its early successes:

Reading, Literacy and Culture

- Monthly Coffee and Crime author talks introduced at Manor Farm Library.
- Author events held, including bestselling writers.
- Online author visit organised for 600 primary schoolchildren.

Health and Wellbeing

- Strength and balance sessions and falls prevention workshops held.
- Alive and Kicking ball library expanded, allowing children to borrow footballs, basketballs and netballs.
- Summer Reading Challenge one-day event held themed on sport and physical activity.
- Combatting loneliness and social isolation with free activities, including Gujarati Coffee Mornings at Northwood Hills Library.

Digital Services and Inclusion

- Participating in the National Databank Initiative, distributing data sims to low-income households.
- Pilot of sensory storytimes for pre-school children with autism or other sensory needs held.
- Groups for visually impaired people to engage with literature and library services expanded.

Information and Learning

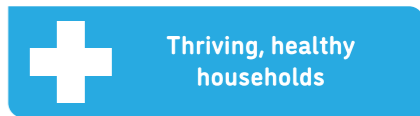
- Partnering with Project SEARCH to create work experience placements for young adults with special educational needs.
- Introducing LEGO Spike sessions for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) skills development.



Sustainable Service Delivery

- Introducing small electrical item recycling at libraries.
- Working with children's services to share facilities and resources.
- The proposed relocation of Uxbridge to reduce its carbon footprint.

Find out more about our libraries at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/libraries



Help to create a greener future

In April, the council will be relaunching its automatic recycling bag delivery scheme for recycling. Also, discover the benefits of recycling food waste and how you can get involved.

The council introduced automatic deliveries for dry, mixed recycling bags and food waste bags (caddy liners) more than 10 years ago, and since then participation in recycling has evolved. The subscription scheme makes it easier for residents to get their free bags without having to remember to reorder them each time they run out or visit their local library to collect rolls. All they have to do is sign up on the council's website and bags are automatically delivered to their home. As part of the council's transformation programme, we have reviewed how the scheme works and are improving it to make it even more efficient.

What you need to do

1. From Tuesday 2 April, residents are encouraged to re-register for the scheme (or sign up if they haven't already) at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/automatic-bag-deliveries.
2. The sign-up process is quick and easy. We will ask you a few questions about how much recycling on average your household generates a week and the number of residents living at the property which will allow us to personalise your subscription and ensure that households receive the number of bags they need.
3. Following submission, you will be automatically advised on screen and by email how many bags you will receive and when your delivery will take place (the borough will be split into zones and deliveries scheduled by address).
4. You will receive your bags in one delivery for 12 months.

The first deliveries will begin this June. To ensure you receive your delivery, re-register or sign up at least one month ahead of your scheduled delivery month – you can check this at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/automatic-bag-deliveries.

5. You will be contacted annually by email to review your subscription, and if circumstances have changed, your subscription will be adjusted accordingly.

Please note: While the new process is rolled out, there may be several months before your first scheduled delivery.

If you need bags before your first delivery is due, you can request an ad-hoc delivery either online or collect a roll of bags from your library to tide you over.

If you run out of bags throughout the year, you can still request an ad-hoc delivery or visit your nearest library.

How these changes will make it more efficient

Bags are supplied according to a household's recycling needs, which reduces any oversupply. The council will also reduce its carbon footprint by introducing zoned deliveries once a year. This

change will decrease the number of delivery journeys by more than 150,000 a year, significantly reducing vehicle emissions and contributing to the council's target of its operations being carbon neutral by 2030.

Are you recycling your food waste?

Food waste recycling has a range of environmental benefits. Since the council started to collect food waste separately from garden waste in May 2021, your recycling has helped us to achieve a fantastic 15 per cent increase in food waste recycling.

However, about 43 per cent of the weight of general waste in Hillingdon

is still made up of food waste. This is bad for the environment and contributes to global warming due to harmful gases like methane and carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere. Disposing of food waste with general waste is also much more expensive than when it is recycled separately.

Hillingdon's food waste recycling journey

1. Put your food leftovers into your lined kitchen caddy.
2. Once full, tie your caddy liner and place into your external food storage bin.
3. Put your storage bin out on collection day.
4. Hillingdon's food waste is transported to south London for recycling via a process called anaerobic digestion.
5. The bio-methane gases produced are used to generate electricity for homes and businesses.
6. The leftover material is used as a high-quality fertiliser for agricultural land.



How you can get involved

If you're not already signed up to our free, weekly, easy-to-use collections why not consider registering?

If you live in a house and are not already using this service, all you need to do is sign up on the council's website at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/food-waste. You will receive a free five-litre kitchen caddy, compostable caddy liners and an outdoor food storage bin (which is lockable and reduces vermin splitting open waste sacks).

Last summer, the council started to expand its food waste recycling service to council-owned flats. Since then, 137 food waste recycling collection units have been installed for more than 2,000 council-owned flats to use, resulting in the collection of more than 50 tonnes of food waste. This programme is ongoing, with residents receiving direct communications on how to take part when the facility is in place on their estate.

Cllr Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Residents' Services,

said: "It's important that the council continues to review services to reshape and improve them, and I encourage residents to re-register, or sign up if they haven't already, to our automatic recycling bag delivery subscription scheme – it only takes a couple of minutes.

"Additionally, for those who haven't yet signed up to our food waste recycling service, why not request your free caddies today and give it a go?"

"By making small changes to the way we dispose of waste and recycle, we can all play a part in making a real difference environmentally, creating a greener and more sustainable borough and getting more out of each taxpayer pound."

What food items can you recycle?

YES PLEASE ✓	
	Raw and cooked fish and meat, including skin and bones
	All food leftovers and plate scrapings
	Dairy and eggshells
	Teabags and coffee grounds
	Fruit, vegetables and peelings
	Bread, cakes and pastries
	Cereals, rice, pasta and pulses
	Pet food
NO THANKS ✗	
	Packaging of any kind
	Liquids and oils

Plan ahead and reuse

Recycling food waste is a positive step in protecting the environment, but you can go one step further by committing to waste less food.

You can:

- ✓ Plan what food you're buying
- ✓ Look at what you already have stored before purchasing food
- ✓ Before throwing out leftovers, why not consider creating a new dish or freezing them?

For more information about waste and recycling, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/rubbishandrecycling



“The support available is invaluable and can make a huge difference to your life”

Caring for a loved one? *Hillingdon People* highlights how being a carer can be both rewarding and challenging, and how sometimes those who give their time to support others also need some help and assistance.

A carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help due to illness, disability, mental ill health or a substance misuse problem. This could be helping with medication, housework, benefits or accompanying them to appointments. It could also be personal care, such as washing and dressing.

More than 22,000 people in Hillingdon identified themselves as carers in the 2021 Census. In 2022/23, 4,625 young and adult carers received support either directly through the council or the Hillingdon Carers Partnership.



Graeme's story

Hillingdon People met **76-year-old Northwood resident, Graeme Armstrong** to understand more about the life of an unpaid carer.

Graeme has been supporting and caring for his wife Trina, 77, for more than 10 years. Trina was diagnosed in 2012 with Posterior Cortical Atrophy (PCA), a rare variant of Alzheimer's disease that initially affects vision.

He said: "Due to the complexities of Trina's condition it took some time to obtain the correct diagnosis, so for many years it was difficult to come to terms with changes in her as a person and her abilities, such as driving or writing. I feel lucky that during this time we were able to retire and make a couple of overseas trips to visit relatives."

"However, the nature of Trina's disease meant that over time her condition got progressively worse, and we needed more support, but most importantly the support we needed changed frequently."



"We were referred to the Carers Trust Hillingdon and since then the team have been pillars of strength to me and my wife. They are always readily available, reassuring, and their expert knowledge provides real guidance and light during some of your own darkest days."

"They helped us access support from a range of different charities or to utilise the local day centres and respite breaks. On top of this the Carers' Cafés, hosted regularly, gave me a space to share my experiences with others and discuss coping strategies. It's a welcoming group that helped me to adapt to Trina's changing condition and needs over the years."

"I'd encourage anyone that finds themselves in a position where they need to care for a loved one to contact the council and the Carers Trust, the support available is invaluable and can make a huge difference to your life."

If you are in a similar situation to Graeme and regularly looking after a relative, friend or neighbour, you may be a carer and we can help to support you. Take the carers assessment at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/carers-assessment-form.

Working together to provide specialist support to carers

The council and Hillingdon Carers Partnership work closely to support unpaid carers in the borough. Hillingdon Carers Partnership is funded by the council and led by the Carers Trust Hillingdon which helps signpost local people to the specialist support that is available from local and national charities, as well as the council's social services team, other council departments and appropriate health services.



- The support includes:
- providing information on the benefits and financial help available
 - access to training that's specific to the person's care needs
 - details of the respite care on offer
 - information and activities to help carers look after their own health and wellbeing.

Carers' Cafés

Carers Trust Hillingdon holds regular Carers' Cafés around the borough where carers can meet other carers in a relaxed environment. Carers are welcome to bring the person they care for too.

- First Monday of every month, 10am to midday, at Christ Church, Redford Way, Uxbridge
- Third Monday of every month, 2pm to 3.30pm, at Ruislip Manor Methodist Church, Torrington Road
- Second Tuesday of every month, 2pm to 3.30pm, at Emmanuel Church, High Street, Northwood
- Last Thursday of every month, 11am to 1pm, at Hayes and Harlington Community Centre, Albert Road, Hayes

For more information on the cafés and other opportunities to socialise and improve your wellbeing, visit www.carerstrusthillingdon.org/health-and-wellbeing.

Cllr Jane Palmer, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care, said:

"Unpaid carers who look after family members or friends play an invaluable role within our community."

"Their selfless devotion to others means that vulnerable people in our borough can enjoy a better quality of life."

"By working closely with our partners, we can ensure residents have access to joined-up services that provide the right assistance, support and care they need, while continuing to lead independent lives."

"Our Carers' Forum sessions are a chance for all carers to ensure they are aware of their rights, find out more about what help is on offer but most importantly to connect with others with similar experiences."

Find out how our Carers' Forum can support you

Perhaps you or someone you know recently became a carer to a family member or close friend? If so, a wide range of services are available to help you find the right help to support you in your caring role.

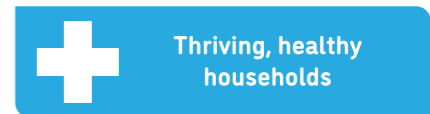
The council's next Carers' Forum will take place on Tuesday 30 April, from 9.30am until midday in the

Council Chamber at the Civic Centre in Uxbridge. It's an opportunity to find out about, and influence, the services the council and its partners provide to support carers in Hillingdon to keep caring.

Find out more and book your place at discover.hillingdon.gov.uk/carers-forum or by calling 01895 277038.

For more information, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/carers.

For more information about Carers Trust Hillingdon, visit www.carerstrusthillingdon.org or call 01895 811206



Developing a sustainable borough

Find out about the work underway at the council's Civic Centre to reduce carbon emissions, our new flood management strategy, and how we're tackling engine idling and fly-tipping.

In January, a new decarbonisation programme got underway at the Civic Centre, Uxbridge with the arrival of 10 air source heat pumps, as the council continues to make strides towards its target for its operations to be carbon neutral by 2030.

The Civic Centre is the first of four buildings earmarked for a carbon-reduction makeover, with the air source heat pumps and a high-capacity heat recovery cylinder delivered as part of an initiative that will see 12 more heat pumps installed on the roof of the building's main plant room, a further 12 in the goods yard, and four more at the rear of the site's Middlesex Suite.

The scheme is part of wider renovation work to bring the council's most recognised building in line with the latest standards in carbon efficiency. It is estimated the annual savings from the new

pumps will be around a 2,000 tonne reduction in carbon emissions, as well as reduced energy costs.

Other measures being carried out to help make the building, and in turn the pumps, more efficient, include the fitting of new secondary double-glazing for the windows and enhanced building insulation. Additional solar panels will also be added to bolster its supply of renewable energy.

Work is also underway at the other buildings lined up for a carbon-friendly transformation, which includes the Winston Churchill Theatre, Ruislip; Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Complex, Uxbridge; and Highgrove Pool and Fitness Centre, also in Ruislip.

The council received £13.75 million from the government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund last year to fund the programme.

What is an air source heat pump?

Air source heat pumps are a low carbon way of heating indoor spaces, generating renewable heat that can help reduce long-term energy costs and carbon footprint.

They use a refrigeration cycle to move heat from the air outside and transfer it as useable heat indoors. A refrigerant liquid absorbs heat from the outside air, even in cold temperatures, and then compresses it to increase its temperature. The resulting heat can then be transferred into heating, ventilation and hot water systems.

As an alternative to traditional boilers, air source heat pumps deliver lower temperatures than a gas or oil boiler, so need to be run for longer periods to heat to equivalent temperatures and need to be carefully installed into well-insulated buildings to ensure optimum efficiency.

Cllr Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Residents' Services, said:

"The arrival of these air source heat pumps will support us in transforming some of our carbon inefficient assets to bring them in line with modern standards and future-proof them for decades to come.

"We're committed to reducing the environmental impact of our operations and some of the measures we take – like installation of these heat pumps – might not be a change that's immediately visible to residents but their impact environmentally will ultimately help safeguard future generations in the borough as well as providing financial benefits."



Two of the air source heat pumps in the factory



Volunteers planting in the flood alleviation scheme in Elephant Park

Your views on flooding received

Between January and March, the council carried out a consultation with residents on its draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS).

The borough has a comparatively rich diversity of habitats and environments, benefiting from having many rivers, streams and brooks along with extensive open space making it one of the greenest London boroughs. This extensive network of watercourses is also a source of flood risk.

Combined with our urban areas and struggling drainage network, as well as the impact of climate change, the risk of flooding is increasing and requires more innovative solutions.

The council's flood risk strategy sets out the approach to managing this growing threat, setting out how the council will work with its communities, businesses and other responsible authorities to ensure that collectively we are best prepared to tackle flood risk.

The LFRMS sets out the collaborative approach the council will take with other responsible

authorities to ensure that flood and water management within Hillingdon is captured in a single document.

The strategy needs to be kept up to date to reflect changes to legislation and to ensure consistencies with other national and regional plans. Many thanks to those who took part in the consultation and shared their views on this important issue. To read the strategy, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/flood-strategy-consultation.

Proactive flood resilience work the council has completed in the last couple of years includes the creation of two rain gardens on the housing estates at Wilkins Gardens and Gurney House in Hayes, special flood mitigation measures for Yeading Brook in Court Park and Elephant Park as well creation of a 'swale' to reduce flood damage to Bessingby Park, Ruislip. Forthcoming work includes a river enhancement scheme on the Cannon Brook in Ruislip, near Wallington Close, and a flood alleviation scheme for the River Pinn near Brook Drive, also in Ruislip.



Planting in Elephant Park



The pond in Hillingdon Court Park

Tackling vehicle idling

The council continues to clamp down on vehicle engine idling – a key source of localised air pollution.

Proactive patrols from the council's enforcement team visit areas which are known hotspots, such as the smaller roads around Heathrow Airport, as well as targeting areas where idling most impacts air quality and the health of residents, such as close to schools.

During the past year, the enforcement team has spoken with numerous drivers and issued 2,335 £50 fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for idling offences.

In Hillingdon, it is an offence to idle your engine unnecessarily when stationary. Drivers who leave their engines running risk being fined up to £100.

Larger fines for those who fly-tip or litter

From 1 April, the council will be adopting the government's new upper limits for the amount it can charge for a fixed penalty notice (FPN) for littering or fly-tipping.

As part of its continued drive to maintain a green and pleasant borough, the council has taken the decision to use upper levels of the available fines to maximise the disincentive for people who dump their waste in our streets and open spaces.

The maximum amount those caught fly-tipping could be fined will increase from £400 to £1,000.

The maximum amount those who litter could be fined will increase from £150 to £400.

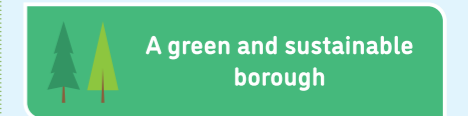


Littering is largely deemed as smaller, individual items such as cigarette butts, crisp packets or cans. Fly-tipping in Hillingdon is larger items, usually the minimum being a single black bag of waste, extending to large household items, like mattresses or white goods.

If you're paying someone to remove waste from your home or property, the duty of care to ensure that they have a valid waste transfer permit lies with the resident and could also result in an increased fine of £450.

Don't risk a hefty fine. Please remember to use the bins in the borough, our weekly waste and recycling collection service, and for larger items, you can use our waste and recycling centres or organise a bulky waste collection.

For more information on our waste and recycling centres, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling-centres and to book a bulky waste collection, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/bulkywaste.





Prepare for the digital switchover

A digital switchover is underway nationwide, find out more and what you may need to do.

Between now and 2025, telecoms companies such as BT, Openreach and Virgin will be replacing old analogue telephone lines with a newer faster digital network to make phone calls, which is safer, offers improved call quality and better protection from scam calls.

As part of the national digital upgrade, services which rely on the old landline systems, such as home phones, alarms and healthcare support devices will need to be switched over too.

For most people, the change will be easy. Phone companies will contact customers and arrange for an engineer to install the new system. If you already have the internet, you might just need to plug your phone into your broadband router.

The switchover is free, and your service provider should not charge you. It is important to be careful of scams – your provider would never ask for money or personal information. If you are not sure, always hang up the call.

Do you, or someone you know, depend on a landline or use a TeleCareLine device connected to a phone line, such as a fall monitor, lifeline or personal alarm?

If yes, then you will need to inform your communications provider when they contact you as any support devices linked to your phone line,

including TeleCareLine alarms and sensors, should be tested by them to make sure they work with their new system. If you have already been switched over, it is recommended that you perform a test call once a month to ensure your device is working as expected.

If you rely on your landline and don't have a mobile phone, are unable to use a mobile phone or don't have mobile signal inside your home – your provider must make sure you are able to contact the emergency services during a power cut. This could be in the form of battery back-up so your landline will continue to work, or by giving you a basic mobile phone to use in this situation.

If you have a TeleCareLine system supplied by the council that is no longer required, you can return it at one of our many libraries or drop it into the Civic Centre in Uxbridge.



Cllr Douglas Mills, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, said: "The safety of our residents is our top priority and whilst this is being led by UK telecoms providers, we're keen to ensure residents, particularly those who use the TeleCareLine system, have the information they need about the switchover.

"The new network is set to provide a more reliable and dependable service, but we need to make sure no one is left behind and that our services remain fully operational.

"I would also urge anyone using, or if anyone knows of someone using, TeleCare services to ensure they check their devices regularly."

For more information about the digital switchover, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/digital-switchover and to find out more about TeleCareLine and how it can help support you to live independently in your own home, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/telecareline

A digital-enabled, modern, well-run council

Enhancing education facilities and creating more school places

The council is committed to its school improvement programme ensuring all children in the borough have access to high quality facilities, and continues to invest in a multi-million-pound project to create more school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

On Friday 23 February, the council celebrated the completion of improvement works at Hillside Infant School in Northwood and held an event to mark the steel frame being installed as part of school expansion works at Meadow High School in Uxbridge.

New roofs for Hillside Infant School

The council has invested £800,000 into the installation of new flat roofs and skylights at Hillside Infant School.

Reviews indicated that the previous roofs were at the end of their life, with widespread leaks and poor levels of insulation. The replacement of all the school's flat roofs began in summer 2023, which also included the replacement or removal of all existing rooflights which were also at the end of their serviceable life. In addition, guttering and high-level windows were refurbished and external cladding replaced with improved insulation.

The new roofs will significantly reduce heat loss and deliver long-term energy savings, and the new rooflights will allow more natural light into the building.

In 2019, Hillside Infant and Junior schools were given their own premises as part of the council's school improvement programme after previously residing in the same building. A brand new three-storey building was constructed for the junior school, with the existing building reconfigured and refurbished for the infant school and nursery.

Headteacher, Rebecca Fennell, said: "We're delighted to be part of the school improvement programme to ensure our children have a happy and healthy environment to learn in. It was important to us to ensure leaks in the roof are prevented to reduce disruption to the children's education



Cllr O'Brien and Cllr Bianco with Rebecca Fennell, Headteacher of Hillside Infant School, on the new roof

and this work will make an immense difference to the children, providing them with classrooms that are safe and warm throughout the year."

Expansion underway at Meadow High School

A significant school expansion at Meadow High School will be delivered in two phases, providing 98 new school places for children with SEND.

Works are underway (see below) to replace the previous temporary modular classrooms with a new two-storey building. The block will house new classrooms and specialist teaching spaces, including science, music, food technology, fitness, sensory, hygiene, therapy, medical and quiet study rooms. These will efficiently connect with the existing school building via an internal corridor and externally by new walkways and a covered canopy area which can



also be used for teaching and social activities. This work will deliver eight new places and reprovide 82.

The new building is due to be completed by December 2024.

The second phase of the expansion project, due to commence in spring, is the creation of a new teaching building and satellite school at Northwood Road in Harefield, which will replace an existing unused residential block.

The new build will deliver 90 additional places, with completion expected by summer 2025.

Cllr Susan O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, said: "We are committed to providing children in Hillingdon with a fully inclusive education for all, and this includes a multi-million-pound investment into creating more school places for children with SEND.

"The two-phased expansion project for Meadow High School will not only deliver more school places on-site and at the satellite school, but a range of high-quality facilities to support the children who attend to receive the very best education."

Thriving, healthy households

Gain skills for life with an apprenticeship

The council offers residents a range of apprenticeship opportunities to develop their skills and achieve a fulfilling well-paid career.



Every year, National Apprenticeship Week (5 to 11 February), shines a spotlight on the fantastic range of apprenticeships available locally and celebrates the achievements of current apprentices.

This year's theme, 'Skills for Life' highlights that no matter your age, apprenticeships can equip you with lifelong skills and the on-the-job experience you need to unlock a rewarding career.

The council's apprenticeship scheme gives residents an opportunity to earn a salary while developing skills, training and gaining work experience, creating happier, healthy households with improved job prospects.

There are currently **112** apprentices employed by the council



39 new recruits **67** existing staff wishing to develop their careers

We have created **57** new apprenticeship opportunities within the council and a further **15** in our maintained schools since the start of 2023.

Since the launch of the apprenticeship levy in 2017, we have funded **£4,143,459** of apprenticeships across the council and maintained schools.

Many apprentices progress onto the next qualification level or into full-time jobs, including management positions, within the council or employers in other sectors.

The scheme is open to people who live, or have studied, in Hillingdon within the last three years and meet the eligibility criteria.

If you are interested in applying, search our current vacancies at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/jobs selecting 'Apprenticeships' within 'job type'. You can also sign up for job alerts.

Meet some of our apprentices

Sarah-Jane Bartlett, aged 33, is a Housing Grants and Adaptations Manager, studying for a Level 7 Digital and Technology Solutions Specialist qualification. With a love for data and identifying trends, Sarah-Jane wanted to expand her knowledge and skills by undertaking a degree-level apprenticeship course.



She said: "As a mother of two children, finding time to study can be a challenge, but one of the rewarding benefits of apprenticeships is letting you take in the knowledge and practice it in the workplace. It allows you to reflect on ways you can improve your service and then apply it".

In her current role, Sarah-Jane is using these new skills to oversee approximately 350 major adaptation projects a year, which includes stairlifts, level access showers or ramps to help residents live safely and independently in their homes.

Thomas Partington, aged 28, is a Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery Officer, studying for a Level 3 Housing Property Management qualification. Thomas joined the council last year with the desire to seek a new career. He said: "I wanted a career that would be challenging for me, and a friend recommended joining the council".

In his role he manages the collection of rent from tenants, which includes producing affordable payment plans in collaboration with tenants or help to provide access to extra support. He

added: "I would highly recommend an apprenticeship; the experience has grown my confidence in the workplace, and I have had fantastic support from my manager and colleagues throughout to help me develop. If you think an apprenticeship might be for you, don't forget to research the role or career you're interested in and ensure you pick the right course that will boost your skills."



Rhian Thomas, aged 24, is a Planning Officer, studying for a Level 7 Chartered Town Planner qualification.

She joined the council three years ago after finding it difficult to find the right job to fit her skills during the pandemic.

She said: "The course has given me the theoretical knowledge and understanding of the planning world whilst my job allows me to put into

practice my learning. I have found that combining both learning and on-the-job experience has allowed me to progress at a much faster pace than if I had just done one or the other."

Recent research from the Royal Town Planning Institute shows that a quarter of planners left the public sector between 2013 and 2020. Meanwhile, the private sector experienced an 80 per cent increase in the number of employed planners. Apprenticeships play an important role in training and retaining planners in public sector roles.



Rebecca Reid, aged 24, is a Democratic Services Apprentice, studying for a Level 3 Business Administration qualification. The Brunel University graduate joined the council last year with the aim of improving her employability skills while also gaining an industry-recognised qualification.

Her role includes supporting the democratic functions of the council, processing petitions from residents who wish to raise local issues and liaising with elected councillors.

She said:

"Apprenticeship programmes are not only a great resource for learning new skills but also pivotal for talent development and career progression. My advice to someone considering an apprenticeship would be to just go for it and embrace the challenge – there will always be the right support to guide your career journey."



Why choose Hillingdon?

The benefits of an apprenticeship with the council:

- A nationally recognised qualification
- Job specific skills for your chosen career
- A salary with paid holidays
- Workplace-based training and (where appropriate) off-site and online training
- Experience of working alongside colleagues in a team environment
- The opportunity to gain qualifications in English, maths and ICT while completing your apprenticeship.

Cllr Douglas Mills, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, said:

"Our apprentices are a real asset to the council, bringing enthusiasm and a willingness to learn while delivering great services for residents. It's fantastic to see the apprenticeship programme grow each year, with new roles being added right across the organisation.

"Every single apprentice at the council has the opportunity to grow and unlock their career with Hillingdon, which is all part of our commitment to creating a thriving economy, equipping residents and local people with the skills and qualifications to find secure well-paid jobs."

Find out more about apprenticeships at the council at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/apprenticeships



A thriving economy



A community garden centre with a difference...

The council's Rural Activities Garden Centre (RAGC) not only offers a wide range of seasonal plants, fruit and vegetables to purchase, but also supports adults with learning difficulties and young people to gain workplace skills.

Hillingdon People visited the centre, located on West Drayton Road to meet volunteers and visitors to find out more.

Supporting young people with low self-esteem

Brandon Rosier and Jack Jones (pictured right), former and current secondary school students from Barnhill Community High School in Hayes, completed placements at the RAGC to help with issues around confidence, independence and wellbeing, and to gain valuable work experience for the future.

Brandon, now aged 17, was struggling with his GCSEs and needed some practical work to help with confidence and self-esteem.

Amanda Martincevic, Assistant Special Educational Needs Coordinator at the school, said: "Brandon started work experience at the RAGC in December 2021 and he fitted in quickly. His placement became a weekly feature in his schooling, helping him with his self-worth and communication skills, and giving him a feeling of purpose.



"Although he was accompanied by his higher-level teaching assistant, Matthew Gardener, volunteering helped Brandon become more independent and he was always really proud to come back to school and tell us what he had been doing. The highlight was when he was taken out and about around Hillingdon to plant plants and make deliveries.

"The garden centre was an incredibly important stepping stone for Brandon to help grow his

confidence, and to learn to set goals and know that he can achieve them. The experience enabled him to independently start a construction training course in Hayes once he left school in summer 2023."

The students get involved with all aspects of gardening at the centre, including weeding, clearing, planting, learning about the equipment and painting fences. Jack, aged 15, started work experience in March 2023 following concerns that his anxiety was affecting his attendance and wellbeing in school.

Amanda said: "Jack loved going to the garden centre, and as a result of working there, both his attendance and wellbeing improved. He is now back in school on a full timetable."

John Jones, Headteacher, said: "Taking the step up to the world of work can be a real obstacle for young people, which is why work experience is such an invaluable part of a modern education.

"We are so proud of both Brandon and Jack for doing so well, and their time at the garden centre was instrumental in making them independent by providing work experience and giving them some much needed self-esteem."

Teaching vital workplace skills to vulnerable adults

The centre runs a volunteering scheme for vulnerable adults with learning difficulties, providing practical knowledge and skills for future employment opportunities.

Volunteer, Brenda Gardner, aged 80, from Eastcote, helps staff to train adults with learning difficulties who are affectionately known as 'Gardeneers'. She said: "My son's got a learning difficulty and I used to run a day centre for disabled people in Hillingdon, so I know how to work with vulnerable adults. I've been volunteering for 31 years now, and I work together with the Gardeneers to plant the seeds, prick out seedlings and cuttings, and then pot them up.



"Now I'm retired, I enjoy coming here a few days a week to help teach the Gardeneers practical skills, although some of them have been here longer than me! I don't do as much as I used to due to my age, but because I've been here so long, I know what equipment we use and what we grow at different times of the year.

"Volunteering here gives you the knowledge to grow plants and vegetables like marrows and

cucumbers, so you can work in your own garden too. It keeps you fit mentally and physically, and you get to meet new people every day – which is far better than sitting at home alone watching the telly."

George Wrexford, 27, from Hayes,

is a Gardeneer alongside a paid role at Primark in Uxbridge. He said: "I've been Gardeneering here quite a long time. I like it. I do a lot of fixing things. I've learnt new skills – I've done some strimming and grass cutting. I've made new friends. It helps me get out more. I'm more confident talking to people now. I'd recommend it."



Brian Stainer, 67, from West Drayton,

has been a Gardeneer at the RAGC since 1981, when it first opened. He said: "I used to pick plants from here to be sold at Harlington Road Depot. I enjoy doing all sorts of things here. I like keeping things tidy and I like to help watering the plants."

A visitor attraction for all ages

The centre attracts visitors of all ages, and young families particularly enjoy exploring numerous green spaces and meeting the selection of animals living on-site.



Anna Muoio and her daughter Poppy, aged two, from Ruislip,

visit the centre regularly. Anna said: "We come here at least once a month to have a look round. There's so much for Poppy to learn in comparison to other garden centres, she's fascinated by the animals and she enjoys feeding them and watching them all.

"There's so much for children to explore whilst parents shop around and there's no set time limit like you often find with family activities. There's no pressure or expectations, I can walk around whilst Poppy can

roam around freely in nature. She learns so much by just being here, so it's a nice morning out for both of us."

In addition to animals, bug hotels and beehives for the younger generations, the centre offers visitors an excellent range of plants, homegrown fruit and vegetables, seasonal gifts and daily fresh eggs from the resident chickens.

Sadika Al-Sarraf, 82, from Ealing,

travels a 40-minute journey most days to purchase free range eggs. She said: "I come to the RAGC almost every day to buy my eggs, usually half a dozen, and if they don't have any – I come again the next day! I like it here and I come for the friendly experience. The staff are all very, very nice and I'd rather make a longer journey than go to the supermarket."



Happier Outdoors festival events

The RAGC will host various events as part of Natural England's Happier Outdoors festival between Monday 18 and Wednesday 27 March.

Design and build a bug hotel

Come and help with the design, collection of materials and construction of a new bug hotel, which will become a permanent feature at the site. Suitable for all ages. Booking is essential and one-hour sessions will run daily between Mondays and Fridays at 9.30am and 2pm.

Daily tours

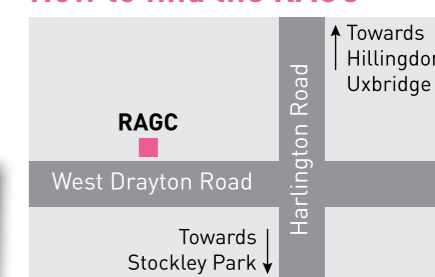
Staff at the RAGC are hosting tours of the centre for anyone interested in volunteering and work experience opportunities, including schools and local companies interested in corporate volunteering days. Tours will be available Monday to Friday during the festival at 11am and 2pm. Booking is essential.

To book, visit happieroutdoors.london.

Easter produce

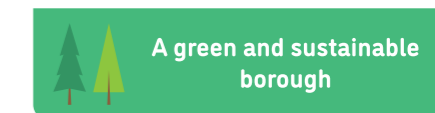
Don't forget to visit the centre to purchase your Easter planters and gifts, including a variety of spring bedding plants, shrubs and roses. Friendly staff are always on hand to offer advice and help you choose the right plants for your garden or outdoor space. There will also be fresh eggs from the chickens and locally sourced jams and preserves on offer, subject to availability.

How to find the RAGC



Rural Activities Garden Centre, West Drayton Road, Hillingdon, UB8 3JZ

For more information about the RAGC, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/ragc





Weddings at the Great Barn

Planning a wedding or celebration for 2024/25?

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www.hillingdon.gov.uk/great-barn-weddings



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Update from the Detective Superintendent

On 20 November 2023, I became the dedicated Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Detective Superintendent for Hillingdon, replacing Superintendent Anthony Bennett. I am excited by this new challenge and in the last three months I have met a great number of people, including local authority partners, members of the community and local faith leaders, who all share my aim of making Hillingdon a safe place to live and work.

A New Met for London

On Thursday 7 December 2023 we held our second 'A New Met for London' event at the Claretian Oasis in Hayes which was ably facilitated by David Brough (Chair – Hayes Town Partnership). At this event, I was able to introduce myself to the audience and with Chief Superintendent Sean Wilson and Chief Inspector Ben Wright we explained how the new plan is taking shape following the three priorities for reform – community crime fighting, culture change and fixing our foundations.

Having a Detective background I am keen to lead on crime fighting and it is pleasing to see the refreshed approach to local policing that involves a greater emphasis on local issues, including the management of known offenders in the area, having a high presence

in intelligence identified hotspots, and combatting violence against women and girls and safeguarding children. Delivering this will take the co-operation of our partners and the consent of our communities, and I have already worked closely with the council in redrafting strategies of how we can improve safety and work collaboratively to do so.

Improved Supervision

As part of the new plan, the number of Inspectors and Sergeants will increase, and this higher level of supervision will focus the work of the local ward officers in the best way for the community. With the number of Inspectors increasing from two to four, I have been able to give each a geographical area within Hillingdon that they will be responsible for helping raise standards further and improve knowledge on local issues. Each Sergeant will now have responsibility for two wards rather than three, again giving that increased local focus and supervision.

I am very much aware of the numerous stories of police officers who have behaved inappropriately and this isn't good enough. However, I am also aware of the excellent work that the majority of officers do every day and I am proud to be in a position to lead

my team and hope that the people of Hillingdon can also be proud of their local policing team.

To find out more about the 'New Met for London' plan, visit www.met.police.uk.



Detective Superintendent Pete Thackray

Join Neighbourhood Watch today

Hillingdon Neighbourhood Watch (HNW) is a community-based initiative, run by its members, where residents, police and the council work in partnership to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

Sign up to HNW's crime and community safety app OWL (Online Watch Link) and receive information on local crimes, crime prevention and community events.

To join HNW visit www.owl.co.uk or download it to your smartphone (search the App Store or Google Play for 'owl crime alerts').

Find out more about HNW at www.hillingdonnhw.co.uk.

Pharmacy First: NHS advice, diagnosis and treatment on your local high street

Pharmacies across north west London can now provide treatment for common health conditions, with no GP appointment or prescription needed.

Highly trained pharmacists can assess and treat patients for seven common health conditions: sinusitis; sore throat; earache; infected insect bite; impetigo; shingles; and uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women, without the need for a GP appointment or prescription.

This major expansion of pharmacy services gives residents more choice when it comes to where and how they access care, while

also freeing up millions of GP appointments each year. Almost all pharmacies in Hillingdon will offer these additional services.

Community pharmacies already play a vital role in keeping local communities healthy, helping with minor health concerns such as coughs, colds and infections, offering blood pressure checks, providing support with medication management and administering certain vaccinations.

Seema Buckley, Chief Pharmacist and Director of Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy at NHS NW London, said: "Expanding these services



provided by the high street pharmacy is a vital step in making health services more accessible for our communities, giving people more choice of when and where they get the help they need.

"Community pharmacists play a major role in frontline healthcare, and this expansion will alleviate the pressure at your doctor's surgery and reduce waiting times for patients."

You can find your local pharmacy at www.nhs.uk/find-a-pharmacy.

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www.hillingdon.gov.uk/business

Benefits
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Births, deaths and ceremonies
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/births-deaths-ceremonies

Businesses and licensing
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/business

Councillors, meetings and consultations
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/council

Council tax
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/counciltax

Families' Information Service, fostering and adoption
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/families

Fraud Hotline
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/report-fraud
0800 389 8313

Health and wellbeing
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/health

Housing Services
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/housing
01895 556666

Hillingdon Social Care Direct (adults) (including TeleCareLine and Meals Service)
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/socialcare
01895 556633

Leisure (including parks, leisure centres, theatres and events)
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/leisure

Libraries
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/libraries

Planning and Building Control
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/planning

School admissions
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/schooladmissions

Stronger Families Hub
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/stronger-families

Transport, roads and parking
www.hillingdon.gov.uk/transport

Mental health support

Hillingdon Mind
01895 271559

Samaritans
116 123 (freephone)

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RM Partners
West London Cancer Alliance
Hosted by The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust

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