

Updates from North Herts Council's Enterprise and Estate Teams

Churchgate Regeneration Project

The team are continuing to work on the next phase of the programme, since gaining approval from Full Council to move forward with a preferred option – that will focus on developing the shopping centre, market, Biggin Lane and both Portmill car parks.

The team are working with specialists in parking and market revitalisation to work out what is physically and financially possible on the site. All of this intelligence work is building up to a Procurement process that will see us appoint the most appropriate developer to take the project to the next level.

Churchgate Shopping Centre Management

The new managing agents, Praxis Property Management, are now actively onboard with the day-to-day management of the centre. They continue to build good relationships with the tenants with an improved presence at the centre, and ensuring compliance and day to day management aspects are actioned.

The cleaning of the walkway, repair and decoration of the canopies and hanging baskets and planters have made a significant improvement. We are looking at the potential to improve signage and benches in the walkway too.

Praxis are working closely with Visit Hitchin regarding events this year that we can collaborate on.

Riverside Walk

This remains within the Responsible Growth priority of the Council Plan with the aim of delivering the walkway between Bridge Street and Biggin Lane to increase footfall in this part of the town centre. An outline proposal has been prepared by consultant engineers. The riverbanks have been cleared, and this enables us to assess works needed to the retaining walls. Consultation is underway with the Environment Agency to enable the design of the proposed bridge to be finalised and with Herts County Council Highways for linking with existing footpaths. We hope to be able to share further details later this year. There are a number of stages to delivery of this project including outline and detailed design, consultation with key stakeholders, planning and conservation area consents, Highway and Environment Agency consents, tender for the works and delivery. The target is to begin work this financial year.

Charnwood House

The Council remain committed to delivering its ambition to revitalise Charnwood House for the benefit of Hitchin and the wider district. Officers continue to undertake a review of the work done to date and the reports on the building, and will be bringing forward options for Executive Members to confirm the next steps. Whilst Charnwood House is not formally on the market at present pending the outcome of this work, we are maintaining a list of organisations and groups who have expressed an interest and they will be informed of next steps.