

Community NEWS



SPRING 2022



Have Your Say In May

All 56 seats on St Albans City and District Council will be up for election on Thursday 5 May.

Normally, around a third of seats are contested in three out of every four years.

However, a Local Government Boundary Commission review has resulted in changes to some ward names and areas as well as polling station locations while the number of Councillors has been reduced by two.

Among the new wards are Sandridge and Wheathampstead, Hill End and Harpenden North and Rural.

Voters will be asked to vote for three candidates on their ballot paper in some wards and one or two in others. Elected candidates will serve a maximum of four years and a minimum of one.

The usual cycle of a third of seats being contested in three out of every four years will resume in 2023.

The District Council has responsibility for a wide range of public services including social housing, planning, parks, museums and recycling.

To have your say in May, make sure you are registered to vote, especially if you have recently changed address.

You can do so online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote or call our elections team on **01727 819294** for a paper application form.

Voters are advised to check their poll cards, which will be sent out towards the end of March, as their polling station may have changed.

Information about the new ward boundaries, polling stations and how to apply for a postal or proxy vote can be found at: www.stalbans.gov.uk/voting-and-elections.

Council Tax

All you need to know about your 2022/23 payments.

[Pages 4-5](#)

What's On At The Museums

[Page 7](#)



Recycling Champions

We are top of a national league table. [Page 8](#)



Community News is published by **St Albans City & District Council**

www.stalbans.gov.uk





Playing Out

Make your street a place where children can play out in safety while their parents meet up with their neighbours.

We are backing a national scheme that allows residential roads to be closed off for a few hours for small community gatherings.

Dozens of streets across the District have already held Playing Out sessions which have been supported by the environment charity Sustainable St Albans.

To take advantage of this free scheme, you will need to consult with residents, enlist volunteer stewards and make an application.

Free online information sessions are taking place in April and June to help people do this. You can find out more at www.sustainablestalbens.org/playingout or by emailing playingout@sustainablestalbens.org.



Community Lottery Launched

A lottery to raise much-needed funds for voluntary and community groups in St Albans District has been launched.

Lottery tickets, which cost £1 each, are on sale from Tuesday 22 March with the first of the weekly draws held on Saturday 23 April.

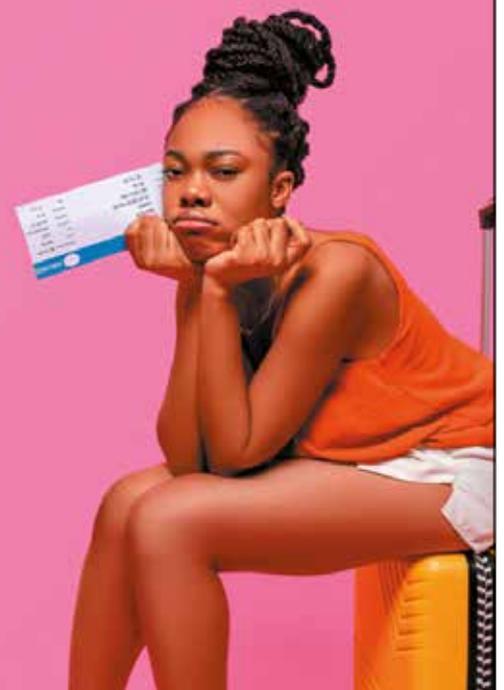
We set up the lottery with operator Gatherwell for the benefit of local people.

Good causes within the District will receive an estimated £80,000 to £134,000 a year, 50% of the proceeds.

To buy tickets, choose which charity you would like to support and see the results of the draws, go to: www.stalbandsdistrictlottery.co.uk.



GET YOUR COVID JAB



Eco Issues

Greener Homes

We have gained funding of £1.4 million from the Government's Sustainable Warmth initiative to improve the energy efficiency of homes around the District.

People who own or rent homes with an Energy Performance Certificate of E, F, G and, in some cases, D, and are on a low income, are eligible to apply for an improvement grant.

The scheme will launch in the District in April and be managed by Warmworks. You can find out how to apply by calling them on **0808 196 8255**.

Details of other energy efficient grants are available on the Council's website at www.stalbans.gov.uk/energy-efficiency.



Tree Planting

We are planting 3,000 new trees across the District this year as part of our commitment to improve the environment.

Trees are generally planted during the winter and early spring when conditions are best suited to ensuring they become established.

This season, we will plant 57 standard trees which are usually around two to three metres high and monitor them to see they take root.

Some 3,000 smaller trees, known as whips, are also being planted at various locations around the District.

All the plantings will take place this year on Council-owned land with some of the funding coming from a successful bid to the Local Authority Treescapes Fund.



Wilder Actions Map

Residents, schools and community groups across the District can plot actions they have taken to support wildlife and biodiversity.

This could be creating a hedgehog highway through a fence, building a pond or planting a hedgerow. The map has already received over 100 entries, each helping to make our District that little bit wilder.

When you submit an entry, you will be sent a wooden plaque to display. You can view the Wilder Actions Map at www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/wilderstalbans/wilderactions.

If you would like to get involved in making your District a wilder place, contact Heidi Carruthers, Wilder St Albans Project Officer, at heidi.carruthers@hmwt.org.



Housing Initiative

Two new social-rent homes have been built with eco-friendly air source heat pumps to cut carbon emissions.

This is the first time the Council has equipped new properties with the pumps rather than with gas boilers.

We are committed to tackling climate change and reducing emissions across the District to net zero by 2030.

The energy-efficient, two-bedroom properties were built on an unused garage site in the Sopwell area.

Car Club

A car club has been launched in St Albans District - giving residents a relatively inexpensive way of accessing a vehicle when it is needed.

The scheme is supported by the Council and is managed by Enterprise Car Club, the UK's largest car club operator.

They will soon be providing Nissan Leaf electric vehicles that can travel up to 168 miles on a single charge.

You can sign up at www.enterpriseclub.co.uk/STALBANS, entering the promotion code **STALBANS** to get an introductory discount.



Your Council Tax explained

Your total bill includes Council Tax for:

- Herts County Council • St Albans City and District Council
- Herts Police and Crime Commissioner • Town and Parish Councils

For every £1 you pay in Council Tax

Hertfordshire County Council will get **76p Total £96.9m**

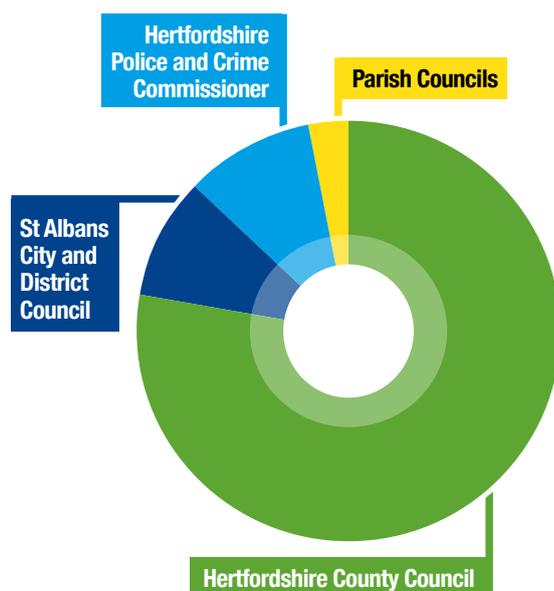
St Albans City and District Council will get **10p Total £12.1m**

Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner will get **11p Total £14.1m**

Parish Councils will get **3p Total £3.3m**

On average, you will pay just £3.66 a week for all the services provided by your District Council including:

- Parks, play areas, sports activities
- Street cleaning
- Markets
- Tackling crime and nuisances like fly-tipping, noise and dog mess
- Special events and festivals
- Refuse and various recycling services
- Museums
- Elections
- Planning and enforcement
- Parking control
- Housing and benefit advice
- Sustainability initiatives
- Food, health and safety inspectors



Our work is focused on achieving four key results for the District:

- A thriving community
- A great place to live and work
- A vibrant economy
- A cost effective council

For details of our five year work plan, including our priority projects for the coming year, see our Corporate Plan at www.stalbans.gov.uk/corporateplan.

How Council Tax is calculated

The Council's funding comes from a number of sources including Council Tax. The Council's gross expenditure of £37.9m is the main determinant of the level of Council Tax after allowing for expected income.

Expenditure and Income Summary	2021-2022		2022-2023	
	£m	Council Tax Band (D) £	£m	Council Tax Band (D) £
St Albans City and District Council budget expenditure	£32.6m	£528.95	£38.0m	£598.91
LESS contribution from reserves	-£0.9m	-£14.51	-£0.1m	-£1.29
Total Gross Expenditure for Council Activities	£31.7m	£514.44	£37.9m	£597.62
LESS income from fees, charges, sales, rent, grants	-£15.7m	-£254.45	-£20.3m	-£321.01
St Albans City & District Council net budget	£16m	£259.99	£17.6m	£276.61
LESS funding from elsewhere				
Central Government and Business Rates	-£4.6m	-£74.58	-£5.3m	-£83.45
Balance transferred from Collection Fund			-£0.2m	-£2.75
Total funding from elsewhere	-£4.6m	-£74.58	-£5.5m	-£86.20
Council Tax – St Albans City & District Council	£11.4m	£185.41	£12.1m	£190.41
PLUS				
Parish Precepts	£3m	£49.28	£3.3m	£51.34
Hertfordshire County Council Precept	£90.6m	£1,470.63	£96.9m	£1,529.31
Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Precept	£13.1m	£213.00	£14.1m	£223.00
Total Council Tax	£118.1	£1,918.32	£126.4	£1,994.06*

*This is the average rate of Council Tax across the District. The actual charge will vary between areas. See box on page 5.

What you pay

PARISH	BAND	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
St Albans City		£1,307.31	£1,525.19	£1,743.06	£1,960.96	£2,396.73	£2,832.50	£3,268.27	£3,921.92
Colney Heath		£1,338.61	£1,561.70	£1,784.80	£2,007.91	£2,454.12	£2,900.31	£3,346.52	£4,015.82
Harpenden Rural		£1,299.44	£1,516.00	£1,732.57	£1,949.15	£2,382.30	£2,815.44	£3,248.59	£3,898.30
Harpenden Town		£1,345.42	£1,569.64	£1,793.88	£2,018.12	£2,466.60	£2,915.06	£3,363.54	£4,036.24
London Colney		£1,344.07	£1,568.08	£1,792.08	£2,016.11	£2,464.14	£2,912.16	£3,360.18	£4,032.22
Redbourn		£1,359.19	£1,585.72	£1,812.23	£2,038.78	£2,491.84	£2,944.91	£3,397.97	£4,077.56
St Michael		£1,294.45	£1,510.18	£1,725.92	£1,941.67	£2,373.16	£2,804.63	£3,236.12	£3,883.34
St Stephen		£1,348.55	£1,573.30	£1,798.05	£2,022.82	£2,472.34	£2,921.85	£3,371.37	£4,045.64
Sandridge		£1,332.18	£1,554.21	£1,776.22	£1,998.27	£2,442.33	£2,886.39	£3,330.45	£3,996.54
Wheathampstead		£1,352.78	£1,578.24	£1,803.69	£2,029.17	£2,480.10	£2,931.02	£3,381.95	£4,058.34

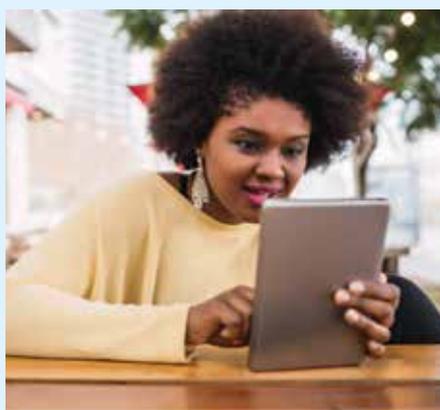
% Change from last year

PARISH	St Albans City & District Council	Special Expenses (see box at bottom of page)	Hertfordshire County Council*	Hertfordshire Police & Crime Commissioner	Town & Parish Councils
St Albans City	3.44%	0.00%	1.99% +2%	4.69%	-
Colney Heath	3.44%	-	1.99% +2%	4.69%	2.50%
Harpenden Rural	3.44%	-	1.99% +2%	4.69%	18.13%
Harpenden Town	3.44%	2.50%	1.99% +2%	4.69%	7.01%
London Colney	3.44%	-31.80%	1.99% +2%	4.69%	2.03%
Redbourn	3.44%	-2.20%	1.99% +2%	4.69%	1.30%
St Michael	3.44%	-	1.99% +2%	4.69%	-1.39%
St Stephen	3.44%	-31.80%	1.99% +2%	4.69%	4.00%
Sandridge	3.44%	-17.00%	1.99% +2%	4.69%	-1.52%
Wheathampstead	3.44%	2.70%	1.99% +2%	4.69%	2.41%

The County Council precept includes a levy on behalf of Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and the Environment Agency. Details of the levy are available on their website www.hertfordshire.gov.uk.

* For adult social care authorities, council tax bills show two percentage changes: one for the part of the overall change attributable to the adult social care precept (2.00%), and one for the part attributable to general expenditure (1.99%). The percentage change is applied to the full 2022/23 council tax for the County Council (General expenditure + Adult Social Care precept). Information about spending by the County Council is available at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/counciltax; email contact@hertfordshire.gov.uk; telephone 0300 123 4040 or by writing to Hertfordshire County Council, PO Box 153, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 2GH.

Further information about Council Tax and how it is calculated is available at www.stalbans.gov.uk/council-tax



Charges, and why they vary between areas

St Albans City and District Council also collects Council Tax on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner and the Town and Parish Councils in the District.

The actual charge for each band varies from area to area. This is because certain services are provided by the District Council in some areas, but by the Town or Parish Council in others.

District, Town and Parish Councils all make different charges (known as special expenses or precepts). The amount you pay depends on where you live.

For more information, please see:

www.stalbans.gov.uk/where-your-council-tax-goes.



Sign Language

Residents are encouraged to learn sign language to help others by taking part in a low cost course.

The Signs4Life scheme allows people to communicate and engage with some of the nine million children and adults who are registered as hard of hearing.

You can sign up for one of the six week courses and obtain more details about them at: <https://signs4life.org/in-the-community/>.





You can receive instant police alerts about local crime, scams and crime prevention advice in the St Albans District on the new OWL app.

No registration is needed. To get the app, go to Google Play for 'OWL crime alerts' or use the links further below:



Google Play



Residents will receive alerts based on their postcode or current location.

Users will also be able to see contact details for their local policing team, join other watches and contact police online or via the web chat facility.



Residents can also sign up to receive OWL messages by email via the website owl.co.uk/herts

White Ribbon Status

The Council has gained White Ribbon status – an accreditation to show it is working to end male violence against women.



Among the actions we will take is encouraging all staff to make the White Ribbon Promise to never commit, excuse or remain silent about such behaviour.

We will hold at least one awareness raising event or activity each year and will ensure that women who experience violence know where to get help.

To find out more about the White Ribbon charity and how your organisation can gain accreditation, go to: <https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/>.

- The Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline is a confidential service for anyone affected by domestic abuse: 08 088 088 088; Mon-Fri, 9am – 9pm; Sat-Sun, 9am-4pm.

Closure Orders

Our Community Protection team acting with Herts Police has secured closure orders on several properties to stop drug dealing and antisocial behaviour.



These orders often bring a swift end to crimes linked to a specific address as well as protection for victims.

One closure order was recently put on a property in Sleepshyde Lane, Smallford.

WHAT'S ON at the museums

St Albans Museum + Gallery, St Peter's Street, St Albans, AL1 3DH
Verulamium Museum, St Michael's Street, St Albans, AL3 4SW

For detailed information about the events programme, go to: www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk.
Make sure you visit regularly to catch all these must-see exhibitions.



Exhibition: Fibre & Form

Now until Sunday 17 April, Weston Gallery,
Museum + Gallery, Free

UH Arts + Culture and the Museum present the first major exhibition of sculptural textile work by Anna Ray. The focus is on large-scale pieces created over the past 20 years at her Hertfordshire studio. Anna's works are full of joy and life with bright and varied colours as well as rich and tactile surfaces. See our website for accompanying workshops for adults and families.

Local History Drop-in

Every Wednesday, 11.30am - 1pm,
Museum + Gallery, Free

Have you ever wondered how to find out more about the history of St Albans? Join historians from St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society to discover more about local history and current research.



Crime Scene Investigation at the Museum

Saturday 2 April, 7pm to 10pm,
Museum + Gallery, £35 per adult

Immerse yourself in the world of forensic science with crime scene investigator, Hayley Scott, as the Museum + Gallery becomes a murder scene. With the historic backdrop of the old courthouse and cells, you can find out what it takes to be a forensic scientist, working in teams to search for clues, dust for fingerprints and catch the killer. Forensic suit provided and bar available all night. Please book online.

Exhibition: Arriving and Belonging

Now until Sunday 15
May, Keeper's Galleries,
Museum + Gallery, Free

Members of the District's Jewish community with roots around the world welcome people into their lives, telling their life stories through personal objects and family photographs. Connect with the experiences of Jewish people in Britain and see how they became part of St Albans. See our website for accompanying workshop and talks.



Museum Minis

The 2nd Monday of every
month, 1pm - 2pm and 2pm -
3pm, Learning Studio,
Museum + Gallery, £5

Tots Tales

The last Friday of every month,
10.15am - 11.15am and 11.15am -
12.15pm, Verulamium Museum, £5

Join us for a story, craft activity
and a museum hunt inspired by
our collections and exhibitions.
Suitable for children aged 2 - 4
years, accompanied by an adult.



Top For Recycling

St Albans City and District Council has been crowned the best recycling local authority in England.

The household waste recycling rate achieved by our residents in 2020/21 was 64.2%, the highest in the country.

The figures confirmed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs put St Albans District at the top of a league table of 338 local authorities.

The national average was 42.3%, down from the previous year's 43.8% with the decrease being blamed on the impact of the pandemic.

It is the eighth year in a row that the District's rate has increased and it is well up on the previous year's 63.0%.

We have moved from 189th place in 2012/13 in the national recycling league table to 5th last year and now to first position.

Cycle Hub

A new bike hub is opening soon as part of the Cottonmill Community and Cycle Centre in St Albans.

Among the services that will be available are learner courses, bike and equipment hire, sales of reconditioned bikes and repairs and maintenance.

Everyone will be welcome whatever their age or ability and there will also be outdoor cycling facilities including some fun tracks.



Charter Market Plans

St Albans' historic Charter Market is set to become a mix of traditional market stalls and gazebos – all in the City's famous blue and yellow colours.

The Council, which manages the market, will provide the equipment as well as hire a contractor to set up and dismantle the structures.

On the market's fringes, traders will be allowed to set up their own gazebos or use trailers for takeaway food and other produce.

The implications of outsourcing the market operation to a charity or private operator are to be examined.

The proposals were approved after an examination of the twice-weekly market's future.

Final decisions are subject to an appraisal of the costs and feedback from traders and other interested parties.



St Albans
City & District Council

Have your say... we welcome anything you want to say about our services.

We hope you enjoy reading Community News. If you can spare a moment, please email communications@stalbands.gov.uk and let us know your views on this edition.

St Albans City & District Council,
Civic Centre, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3LD

Website: www.stalbans.gov.uk

For latest service information, updates and general enquiries please go to the Council's website.

Telephone: 01727 866100.

Alternative formats: If you want to receive this newsletter in an alternative format, such as Braille, please call 01727 819572. See www.accessable.co.uk for information about access to local facilities.

 **Twitter:** @StAlbansCouncil.

 **Facebook:** St Albans Council.

 **Instagram:** @sadccomms.