



August edition

## Introduction

Welcome to the monthly LSP Newsletter; a quick and simple update of the latest news and events in and around the District from your Local Strategic Partnership members.

I hope you are able to take five minutes to update yourselves with all the latest LSP news and information, and to forward this newsletter to any colleagues who may also be interested.

## Contents

[Sustainable Community Strategy 2009](#)  
[New LSP website launched](#)  
[Recession Website launched](#)  
[Shaping our Community consultation](#)  
[Strengthening Local Democracy consultation](#)  
[Local Economy Report 2009](#)  
[Climate Change Strategy for Herts](#)  
[Pioneering luncheon club wins equality award](#)  
[Preparing for Swine Flu - Flu Friends](#)  
[Info Digest for the third sector](#)  
[Hardship Fund opens for applications](#)  
[St Albans Health Profile 2009](#)

## Key dates for your diary – Sept/Oct

### **‘Shaping our Community’ Consultation**

Help us take the right direction. What choices would you make to shape our future District?

Consultation ends 28<sup>th</sup> September 2009

<http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/>

### **Centre for Voluntary Service Conference**

#### **‘Sit comfortably with Trustee responsibilities’**

Get insight, inspiration and information to build a 21st Century Board

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2009

Venue to be confirmed

### **LSP Annual Community Conference**

#### **Aiming High: Caring for our future**

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009 10am to 4p.m

Rothamsted Conference Centre, Harpenden



## Sustainable Community Strategy 2009

The revised version of the community strategy 'Shaping our District together for 2021' has now been published. Thank you to all who helped with the refresh of the strategy over the last 7 months.

Both the full and summary versions of the strategy can be accessed through the LSP website

(<http://www.stalbanslsp.org.uk/strategy/default.aspx>), or hard copies can be requested from the LSP Coordinator.

The next stage of developing delivery plans is now underway with the aim of finalising those by October's community conference. Guidance on delivery planning and templates for use are being issued to all partnership chairs and project group leads by Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August.

For further information please contact Jane Pearce, LSP Coordinator, Policy & Partnerships. Direct Line 01727 819349  
Email [jane.pearce@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:jane.pearce@stalbans.gov.uk)



## New LSP website launched

Alongside the publication of the revised Community Strategy we have updated the look, feel and content of the LSP website. The site gives local stakeholders including residents, voluntary groups and businesses access to the LSP's revised Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) setting out priorities and ambitions for the district until 2021.

The new website has also been redesigned to help encourage individuals and organisations to participate in achieving the community

strategy which is now clearly set out online. There is a 'Getting Involved' page which explains how residents, voluntary organisations and businesses can get involved with the LSP and their local community by offering their views on key community issues or taking part in community projects.

The website also includes a 'Community Notice Board' where local community and voluntary organisations can post notices asking for volunteers, highlighting funding opportunities or advertising courses or events.

The news section will showcase projects that are being funded by the LSP and provide information about forthcoming events.

There are also links to other local partner sites and a search facility which searches all LSP partner sites including those of St Albans City and District Council and Herts County Council as well as all other LSP partners, giving residents better access to the broad range of services and information they may need.

<http://www.stalbanslsp.org.uk/>



## Recession Website launched

Residents affected by the recession now have a new website to turn to for help if they have been made redundant, fear their home may be repossessed or their business is experiencing cash flow problems.

The site has been built by St Albans City and District Council working with local partners, such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Centre for Voluntary Service for St Albans District. It operates as a portal, pointing residents in the direction of council services and other organisations, that can offer advice on a range of issues such as employment law, managing debt, availability of state benefits, dealing with stress and courses to help improve their employment skills.

The website is divided into seven key subject areas: employment and skills, housing, finances, benefits, business support, saving money and care, health and wellbeing.

Although St Albans City and District is relatively prosperous, it has still been affected by the recession. Unemployment for the year ending April 2009 increased by 150%, although from a low base. There has also been a 15% increase in the number of enquiries about debt that the Citizens Advice Bureau has received locally across the same period.

Cllr Melvyn Teare, portfolio holder for culture and heritage at St Albans City and District Council, said: "This website should prove to be an invaluable resource for residents and local businesses by providing them with links to organisations offering help and advice in this difficult time."

The website can be accessed either via this quick link [www.stalbans.gov.uk/recession](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/recession) or the home page of St Albans City and District Council's own website [www.stalbans.gov.uk](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk) where 'Recession Advice' is one of the 'In Focus' topics.

The website is just one of a number of projects that the council's Recession Response Board is working on. It is transferring additional resource to the Citizens Advice Bureau and has launched a campaign reminding residents of their rights to benefits, such as Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. It is also working to ensure that creating a sustainable local economy is a key theme running through the council's long-term planning strategy for the district which is being launched this month.



## Shaping our Community consultation

Crucial issues affecting St Albans city and district, including protecting the Green Belt

while balancing the need to provide new housing, jobs and leisure opportunities are to be debated as part of a major community consultation exercise on the future planning strategy for the area.

People living and working in the district are being invited to have their say on key issues that affect long term planning strategy. As well as protecting the Green Belt, views are being sought on, for example, whether St Albans city centre needs a new supermarket, the proposed locations for schools and youth clubs and new transport measures aimed at reducing traffic congestion and carbon emissions. The consultation will feed into work to produce the Local Development Framework – a set of planning documents which set the direction of planning policy until 2026. The context for the document is set by the Sustainable Community Strategy for the District, which has just been revised and is being published at the same time. The priorities of the Local Development Framework are taken from the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The consultation runs from July until 28 September 2009 with opportunities for residents, business and community groups to air their views in a variety of ways, including a touring exhibition, online survey and the offer of public meetings in local wards on request.

Cllr Robert Donald, leader of St Albans City and District Council, commented: "Nine out of ten St Albans residents rate our district as a good place to live. This consultation is an important opportunity to help ensure the district continues to develop and flourish, maintaining its unique mix of city, towns and villages, its urban and rural environment and its diverse heritage, while providing new opportunities to support the local economy and community.

"The council attaches great importance to protecting the Green Belt and will continue strongly to resist any government requirement to encroach upon it. It was for this reason that we successfully legally challenged some of the housing numbers in the East of England Regional Plan earlier this year.

"But residents need to be aware that despite this resistance, we have to prepare for the

possibility that the government will require an increase in the number of new houses that have to be built in the district and if this happens we may need to consider building in the Green Belt. So this strategy also invites views about some of the difficult choices which – if required to – we might need to make in future.”

The key issues the community will be asked to comment on include:

Green Belt – protecting and improving the Green Belt is an over-riding priority which runs throughout the core strategy. We want to introduce a more pro-active Green Belt management strategy while also balancing the need for future provision of homes, jobs and recreation.

New jobs and homes – existing and new areas of employment have been identified for growth in line with the council’s commitment to attract new, well paid jobs into the district to encourage economic self containment. Possible new sites for homes that have been agreed and for additional ones beyond 7200 which may eventually be imposed on us centrally are indicated and density issues are also covered.

Shopping provision – two prospective city centre sites are indicated for a new supermarket market for St Albans. While new retail growth is earmarked for St Albans city and Harpenden town centre.

New recreational opportunities – new leisure centres at Westminster Lodge and London Colney are proposed together with easier access and leisure opportunities in the Green Belt and open spaces.

Schools and youth facilities – locations for junior and senior schools are proposed to ensure all children have the opportunity to attend their neighbourhood school. A new site for a youth club has been identified in St Albans and re-provision of Harpenden Youth Centre.

Reducing the District’s carbon footprint and reducing traffic congestion - more emphasis on buses, cycling and walking combined with a mini park-and-ride scheme are proposed to help ease congestion. A new western orbital road is also in the draft proposals.

Green living – to meet the challenge of climate change the core strategy looks at how local communities can become more self sufficient by using eco renewable energy and sustainable building design.

Portfolio holder for planning and conservation, Cllr Chris Brazier says: "We want to hear residents’ views on the important issues raised in the Shaping Our Community consultation. There are lots of opportunities for everyone to take part so please come along to the exhibition or visit our website.”

Following the feedback, the council will revise the document and produce the final Core Strategy. The aim is to submit the document formally to the Government in July 2010 and to adopt it, following approval, in June 2011.

Consultation details can be found at <http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/policy/ShapingOurCommunityConsultation.aspx>



## Strengthening Local Democracy consultation

This consultation explores whether local government has the powers it needs to meet today's challenges, as part of the Government's drive to renew Britain's democracy and build trust in the political system at all levels. It sets out a range of proposals to promote democratic renewal and strengthen the power and responsibility of local government by:

giving councils more scope to scrutinise the spending and decisions of local service providers;

exploring whether there are barriers to using existing powers and whether there are other powers which councils should have;

ensuring councils have the powers and responsibilities they need to tackle climate change;

exploring how the powers and responsibilities of sub-regional structures should be matched by clear and accountable leadership; and

exploring how to articulate, develop and support the relationship between central and local government so that respective functions are clear and transparent to citizens.

This consultation applies to England only. It runs from 21 July 2009 to 2 October 2009.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/localdemocracyconsultation>

St Albans City & District Council will be making a formal response to the consultation so please feel free to forward your comments to the LSP Coordinator for inclusion.

Jane Pearce, LSP Coordinator, Policy & Partnerships. Direct Line 01727 819349  
Email [jane.pearce@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:jane.pearce@stalbans.gov.uk)



## Local Economy Report 2009

The Tourism and Regeneration Unit has produced the latest update of the District's Local Economy Report and it is now available on the Council's website <http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/business/>

This document includes economic data for the District in terms of employment, key employment sectors, and the skill level of the local population. Due to the source of this employment data which is from Office of National Statistics (ONS) the latest data relates to businesses for 2007. However the data still gives a good indication of trends in the District's local economy.



## Climate Change Strategic Framework for Herts

In January 2008, Hertfordshire Forward agreed to the development of a Climate Change Strategy for Hertfordshire. It was considered that this would be best developed through a stakeholder-led partnership approach.

The Hertfordshire Climate Change Partnership, chaired by the University of Hertfordshire, was established in July 2008. Since then, significant work has been undertaken with members of the Partnership to develop a Climate Change Strategy that is accessible, contemporary and relevant to Hertfordshire.

*Meeting Tomorrow's Challenge Today – a Climate Change Strategic Framework for Hertfordshire* is now available as a final draft for consultation with Hertfordshire Forward. The document is available for download at <http://www.hertslink.org/hertfordshireforward/15communitystrategy/14039426/14130525/>

The Hertfordshire Climate Change Strategic Framework aims to:

- Illustrate the key climate change challenges for Hertfordshire;
- Set out a range of objectives and action statements;
- Avoid prescribed target setting;
- Avoid replacing existing Climate Change Strategies across the county;
- Outline key considerations for decision-making, policy and action planning within partner organisations; and
- Place an emphasis on a strategic, enabling approach.

The consultation on the Hertfordshire Climate Change Strategic Framework will be open from Monday 6 July and closes Friday 2 October 2009. A series of questions are incorporated into the consultation process,

which will guide respondents. These are also available for download with the Framework document. Responses to the consultation should be submitted to [climate.change@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:climate.change@hertscc.gov.uk).

The Hertfordshire Climate Change Partnership is keen to encourage as wide a consultation as possible, and would ask all partners to take this document through their own local processes. It is envisaged that a number of consultation workshops will be held in September for key groups. Further information on this will follow shortly.

Following the consultation, it is anticipated that the Hertfordshire Climate Change Strategic Framework will be launched towards the end of 2009. Any enquiries should be emailed to [climate.change@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:climate.change@hertscc.gov.uk) using 'Herts CC Strategic Framework' as the subject header.



## Pioneering luncheon club wins equality award

A St Albans luncheon club set up to help elder women from black, asian and other ethnic minority groups acquire new life skills has been presented with a prestigious local government equality award.

The Tiffin Club has brought elder women from these communities out of their homes where they risk becoming isolated and into a different social environment through which they can learn new skills to cope with daily life, for example, communicating with their GP and opening a bank account.

Initiated by St Albans City and District Council's housing services department, the Tiffin Club is one of two joint winners of the Regional Council for Local Government Services' Regional Equality Award 2009.

Although other luncheon clubs exist in the district, this pioneering project was set up after

it was identified that there was a need for a women-only club that serves the needs of black, asian and other ethnic minority groups.

It is managed by Hertfordshire Asian Women's Association and funded by Hertfordshire County Council's Adult Care Services, Community Action Dacorum and the St Albans District Health, Housing & Social Care Partnership, supported by St Albans City and District Council.

Launched in October 2008, the Tiffin Club is held once a week and offers English literacy and numeracy classes, fitness sessions and advice on health eating and preventative healthcare. It gets its name from the metal lunch box containers commonly used in Asia and in keeping with this theme offers members the opportunity to socialise over lunch.

Cllr Robert Donald, leader of the St Albans City and District Council, said: "I am delighted that this special luncheon club for black, asian and ethnic minority women has been recognised in this way. Practical help to enable greater integration in the community and development of English language skills, especially for this group of women who can be isolated at home, is really important."



## Preparing for Swine Flu - Flu Friends

A leaflet about **preparing for swine flu**, and the **need to identify your 'Flu Friends' well in advance**, can be found by clicking on the following link :-

- [NHS Swine Flu - Be Prepared Leaflet \(PDF - 701 kb\)](#)

There have been a steady stream of people that are saying they have no-one to collect on their behalf. This has meant that a 'volunteer' has had to deliver on their behalf. As a result the 'volunteer' commitment is rising. Research suggests that people are not planning their 'Flu Friends' until they are

unwell. It is intended to try to ensure that, as far as possible, people plan to have a network of 'friends' who can collect for them before they become unwell thereby reducing the demand on the 'volunteer' delivery system.

Accordingly the SADC website has been updated with this information and we would ask you to forward the attached leaflet to any networks that you may have to spread the message that it is necessary to plan for 'flu friends' before becoming unwell.



## Info Digest for the third sector

The August Info Digest is now available – a monthly news round up of strategic information and policy development affecting the third sector.

The Info Digest is managed by St Albans CVS on behalf of the Herts CVS group, a network of nine CVS agencies covering all districts in Hertfordshire. The information in this digest helps CVS keep up to date more easily and increases our capacity to support local organisations. The digest has been well received and significantly enhances our service. The digest is funded by the HCC strategic leadership contract

We hope that the Info Digest will, similarly, help you to keep up to date with changes and inform your partnership working with the third sector in St Albans.

For the August edition please use the following link:-  
[http://www.cvsstalbans.org.uk/cvsstalbans/documents/Info\\_Digest\\_August\\_2009.pdf](http://www.cvsstalbans.org.uk/cvsstalbans/documents/Info_Digest_August_2009.pdf)

For more information about your local third sector contact us or visit  
[www.cvsstalbans.org.uk](http://www.cvsstalbans.org.uk) or  
[www.hertscvs.org.uk](http://www.hertscvs.org.uk)



## Hardship Fund opens for applications

The Hardship Fund is now open for applications – just three months after it was first announced by the Chancellor in his Budget in April 2009.

Building on the £42.5 million of measures in the Government's Real Help for Communities Action Plan, the Hardship Fund offers grants between £50,000 and £250,000 to provide support to third sector organisations in England delivering front line services to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in society.

The Hardship Fund is available for third sector organisations that are suffering financial hardship that is impacting on their ability to deliver services in health and social care, housing support, education and training, and advice, information and guidance. To apply, organisations must have an income of £200,000 a year or more.

The Hardship Fund will be administered by the Community Development Foundation (CDF). More information about how to apply, including guidance notes for applicants and an application form, can be found on the CDF website via <http://www.cdf.org.uk/web/guest/hardship-fund> or by emailing [hardshipfund@cdf.org.uk](mailto:hardshipfund@cdf.org.uk) or calling 0113 246 1561.



## St Albans Health Profile 2009

The latest profile for St Albans gives a snapshot of health for the area. It is designed to help local government and primary care trusts tackle health inequalities and improve people's health.

Health profiles are produced annually by the Association of Public Health Observatories and are available using the following link:-

<http://www.apho.org.uk/default.aspx?RID=49802>

\* \* \*

To find out more about the information within this document, to give us feedback or to send information for the next issue, please contact:

**Jane Pearce**

LSP Co-ordinator,  
Policy & Partnerships

Tel: 01727 819349

Email: [j.pearce@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:j.pearce@stalbans.gov.uk)



ST ALBANS  
& DISTRICT  
LOCAL STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIP