

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – AUGUST 2025

As Huntingdonshire moves toward becoming part of a unitary authority, it's more important than ever to recognise the vital work your district council continues to deliver - often behind the scenes. From preventing homelessness and expanding health programmes to supporting local businesses and improving our environment, the council has quietly made a real difference.

This brief report outlines key achievements and ongoing priorities. I hope it gives you a clearer picture of how we're investing in our communities and planning for a resilient, inclusive future.

State of the District – Key Points (2025)

- **Community & Wellbeing:** Over £80,000 in grants awarded to local groups and businesses; major expansion of health and fitness programmes; strong focus on helping residents find work and stay healthy.
- **Prevention & Housing:** Improved early support for residents, with faster benefits processing and more help for families at risk; over 1,400 people prevented from becoming homeless and 1,423 affordable homes built since 2022.
- **Economy & Infrastructure:** 218 businesses supported; high street upgrades; broadband and 5G coverage vastly improved.
- **Environment:** Council's climate rating jumped from 0% to over 40%; new solar panels on public buildings; major biodiversity and flood defence projects funded.
- **Core Services:** Over 18 million bins collected with nationally low missed rates; licensing and planning services improved and backlogs cleared.
- **Sound Finances:** Budgets balanced annually and services maintained despite reduced national funding.

Outlook: Continued investment in housing, environment, and town centres, with an emphasis on partnership and delivering for all communities. A new Local Plan, food waste collections, and further improvements to parks and community grants are planned. The council remains focused on building a resilient, well-supported, and inclusive community for all residents.

New Fund to Support Community Health and Wellbeing

Huntingdonshire District Council has launched a **£50,000 pilot fund** to kick-start its new **Community Health and Wealth Building Strategy** - a long-term commitment to improving residents' wellbeing, economic resilience, and social connection.

Local voluntary and community organisations are invited to submit **Expressions of Interest by 31 August** for projects that:

- Improve physical or mental health
- Boost employment and skills
- Strengthen community ties

This pilot phase will help shape a wider **£750,000 Delivery Fund**, with shortlisted applicants invited to submit full proposals by 30 September.

Projects must benefit Huntingdonshire residents and show clear outcomes, with a focus on prevention and community-led impact.

🔗 For details and to apply, visit: <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/people-communities/huntingdonshire-community-health-and-wealth-building-strategy/>

Buckden Water Recycling Centre – Ongoing Concerns

Despite repeated requests, Anglian Water has failed to provide up-to-date data on the Buckden Sewage Treatment Centre to the Environment Agency. The infiltration plan submitted only covers 2021–2022, falling short of expectations for current operational insight.

The EA is now pursuing the necessary information through alternative channels and awaiting the imminent release of verified 2024 Event Duration Monitoring data. Investigations into site flows and catchment impacts are ongoing, and while the site is currently compliant with its Dry Weather Flow for 2024, the large number of discharges into Diddington Brook in the past and lack of timely data raises serious concerns.

To strengthen oversight, the EA is exploring options for enhanced local monitoring, including the potential installation of a sonde - subject to site suitability.

I understand that a sonde is a compact water quality monitoring device equipped with sensors that measure parameters such as temperature, pH, turbidity, conductivity, and dissolved oxygen. It enables continuous, time-stamped data collection to detect pollution events and track environmental changes with precision.

Buckden remains a top priority for compliance, but the delays - particularly from Anglian Water - are deeply frustrating and hinder transparency and accountability. I will keep residents informed when more information is provided to me by the Environment Agency.



Join the Buckden Walking Group!



**BUCKDEN
WALKING GROUP**

Our Buckden Walking Group is off to a fantastic start - with **34 members and several group walks already enjoyed together**, it's quickly becoming a great way to connect, stay active, and explore our local area.

Whether you're looking for gentle strolls, good company, or simply a reason to get outdoors, we'd love to welcome you. Scan the QR code to



visit our **Facebook page** and see what we're up to!



Prefer WhatsApp?

To join the WhatsApp group, please email me your **name and mobile number** this helps us stay GDPR-compliant and keep the group safe and inclusive.

Let's keep walking, talking, and building something special together!

Wishing you well,

Martin

Martin Hassall

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