

Families First News sharing

Keeping in Touch

Karen Dorney
Head of Service

SUPPORTING FAMILIES | CHILDRENS SERVICES

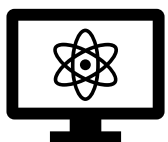
10th September 2026



**Families
First**

Early help, brighter futures

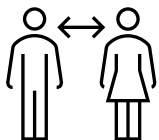
Other Workforce Development Opportunities



Join a Families First Induction Session - ideal for new starters

We host Families First online Induction days 3 times per year, where various early help services give a 20-minute whistle-stop tour of their service and are attended by new internal CS staff and external partners.

This is now covered in 2 sessions and our next dates are am on **Wednesday 8th July 2026** and pm on **Thursday 16 July** via Teams. If you have any new staff or would like to hear more about early help services, please email: familiesfirst.support@hertfordshire.gov.uk



Consider a Workforce Shadowing Opportunity

Workforce shadowing provides a great opportunity to find out more about other services, what they do and how they might be able to support you in your work. It also enhances communication across agencies and helps strengthen and develop professional relationships, building local networks. Visit [Workforce development](#) to make a request

Ofsted praises Hertfordshire's "relentless ambition" for children and families

Following its latest inspection of Hertfordshire County Council's Children's Social Care Services, Ofsted has published its inspection report which praises the county council's "relentless ambition" to help children thrive and achieve their potential. The inspection report recognises sustained progress since Hertfordshire's previous ILACS inspection, in January 2023, and Ofsted inspectors found that children in the council's care make very good progress, with most receiving the right support at the right time.

More information about the inspection findings can be found on the [county council's website](#) and you can find the [full inspection report on Ofsted's website](#).

Participation Team - Children and Young people Podcast

A brand-new podcast from the Participation Team is now live and features young people sharing their lived experiences and perspectives on labelling, stigma, and stereotypes. The podcast offers valuable insights from young people, encouraging reflection and greater understanding of the impact of labels and assumptions. Listen and share with colleagues and networks now.

[Hertfordshire Participation Team Podcast Labelling Stigma and Stereotypes](#)

More information on the team can be found:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/participationteam



Supporting people with insecure immigration status or no recourse to public funds

What services in Hertfordshire need to know

We are organising a series of webinars for mainstream services who are supporting asylum seekers, refugees, people with insecure immigration status or who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

The Webinars will cover:-

- Why status matters and what you need to check to ensure people get the right support
- What people may or may not be entitled to receive and where to find out more
- What specific issues certain people may present with
- What cultural considerations should be considered
- Tips for your service that might help
- What additional support is available for these groups, regardless of status

To ensure that this is accessible to as many people as possible, 2 dates are available. To secure your place, please book using the following links

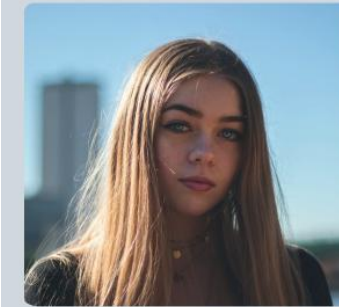
12.30pm – 1.30pm, **Wednesday 21st Oct:** [Hertfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Partnership conference - October 2026 | Hertfordshire County Council](#)
12.30pm – 1.30pm, **Wednesday 16th Dec:** [Hertfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Partnership conference - December 2026 | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

Launch of Mimram Gender Based Abuse Advocacy Service

The **Mimram Gender Based Support Service** launched on the 1st of July. The Service specialises in providing practical and emotional support, as part of a co-ordinated multi-agency response to meeting the needs of survivors of all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls, including domestic, sexual, technology-facilitated, economic abuse and so-called 'honour' based violence, as well as coercive control, modern slavery and human trafficking, working in the sex industry, forced marriage, stalking and female genital mutilation.

This service replaces the previous IDVA and Community Outreach Services.

More information can be found: [Mimram](https://www.mimramsupport.co.uk)



Have you experienced abuse? Do you feel threatened or at risk of violence or abuse?

The Mimram Gender-Based Abuse Support Service is here for you.

Everyone's needs are unique. At the Mimram Service, we are here to support you with a personalised safety plan and empower you with options to rebuild your life free from abuse.

Call us to speak to a specialist IGVA:
0300 790 6772

Mondays and Wednesdays: 9am to 5pm
Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays: 9am to 8pm

Access virtual support through our website with live chat options including a 24-hour chatbot and SMS options:

www.mimramsupport.co.uk

If you are a professional and would like to make a referral, please either call us or complete the contact form on our website to receive a referral link.

For other support visit www.refuge.org.uk or call the 24 Hour Freephone National Domestic Abuse Helpline:

0808 2000 247 In an emergency call: **999**

Who is the Mimram Service for?

The Mimram Service welcomes all survivors regardless of background, identity or gender. We provide specialist support to adults, children and young people across Hertfordshire who have experienced:

- Domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
- Stalking and harassment
- Harmful practices including:
 - Forced marriage
 - So-called 'honour'-based abuse
 - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

How can we support you?

The Mimram Service is a partnership between four specialist organisations, led by Refuge, the UK's largest domestic abuse charity. This allows us to provide support that's tailored to you, and accessible both online and offline. We offer:

- A dedicated Children and Young People's Team
- Independent Gender Violence Advocates (IGVAs) for 1:1 support
- Culturally-specific support for harmful practices
- Community one-stop-shop locations
- Virtual support and online contact options
- Support at other locations including both Lister Hospital and Watford General Hospital

We have IGVAs with many different specialisms. Your assigned IGVA will empower you to access support based on your individual needs and the specific type of gender-based violence or abuse you have experienced.

The Big Future:

Summer survey of all children in England

The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, promotes and protects the rights of children, and ensures voices are heard by those who make decisions about their lives. Her latest survey – The Big Future – gives children a real say in the changes that are needed to ensure that childhood is a time of flourishing and growth.

The Big Future takes about five minutes and is open until 23 October for children to complete themselves, with help from an adult, or for adults to complete on a child's behalf. It asks children about childhood today – what worries them, what they love, how they have fun and the changes they want for a better future.

[Complete the Survey here](#)



Healthy Homes for Healthier Lives Training

The Public Health team at Hertfordshire County Council, in partnership with district and borough council Environmental Health and Housing departments, have developed a free training session to support professionals working with individuals whose health may be affected by poor-quality housing.

This session aims to increase participants' knowledge, understanding, and awareness of what makes a home healthy and why this is essential for both physical and mental wellbeing.

There are currently four sessions available to book:

- Tuesday 6th October, 2.00pm to 3.30pm
- Wednesday 4th November, 10.00am to 11.30am
- Tuesday 8th December, 3.00pm to 4.30pm



Please share this opportunity with your colleagues and networks. Anyone interested can book a place via the [Public Health Training webpage](#)

Have you visited Herts Insight recently?

What is [Herts Insight](#)? Herts Insight is the home of easy to understand, self-serve data about our residents. It provides statistical data across all topics covered by Hertfordshire services, not just population or deprivation.

It is used by decision makers for funding bids and strategic planning, as well as residents and people in the community who want to understand the statistical makeup of their neighbourhood.

Could it help you to better understand the community in which you live or serve? To view the range of topics available, go to the Herts Insight [website](#). If you're interested in data about your local neighbourhood, try pointing to your address on the [Which geography am I in?](#) map. You'll see that the data isn't just at the largest geographical levels, but right down to neighbourhood (LSOA) level.

For a quick overview of Hertfordshire or a Hertfordshire District, visit the About Hertfordshire [profile](#).



PARTNERSHIP FOR EQUALITY IN HEALTH RESEARCH

FAITH-BASED COMMUNITIES' THOUGHTS ON RESEARCH

Help shape more inclusive and relevant
health research for our communities.



YOUR VOICE
Share your
perspective



BETTER RESEARCH
Help make research
more inclusive



STRONGER TRUST
Building trust between
researchers and
faith communities



**BETTER HEALTH
FOR ALL**
Working together for
healthier communities



SHARE YOUR VIEWS
TAKE OUR SHORT SURVEY TODAY

Complete the survey online:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/faith-research-survey>



Scan
me!



CARE
Supporting
people and
families



CONNECT
Bringing
communities
together



HEALTH
Promoting
wellbeing and
better health



RESPECT
Valuing every
person and
every faith

Members of the community are invited to support an important piece of work led by One Vision Charity in partnership with the University of Oxford's Centre for Research Equity.

The project, "Faith-based communities' thoughts on research," aims to better understand the role that faith plays in how people view, trust and participate in health research.

Whether Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, Hare Krishna or another faith tradition, they want to hear directly from people about their experiences and perspectives.

The purpose is not to compare one faith with another, but to listen and understand how faith, culture and community can help researchers build stronger relationships, improve trust and make health research more inclusive and representative.

Link to the survey

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=G96VzPWXk0-0uv5ouFLPkG671VXUfdAjQcjzQ3B7yZUMIBHNkVWM1RQVDFMT1I0TVpJMjJRRUdHVy4u&route=shorturl>

King's Trust Team Programme

Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service is currently recruiting for the next King's Trust Team Programme in Hemel Hempstead, Stevenage/North Herts and Watford, starting 14 September and we're looking for your help to spread the word.

The programme supports 16-25 year olds who are not currently in education, employment or training, or who may lack confidence about their next steps..

If you know a young person, family member, neighbour, friend, or community contact who could benefit from this opportunity, please encourage them to get in touch.

- ✓ Build confidence
- ✓ Gain new skills and qualifications
- ✓ Meet new people
- ✓ Improve employability
- ✓ Take on exciting challenges and community projects

More info here: [Children and young people | Hertfordshire County Council](#) and email contacts below to apply or via [Apply for the King's Trust Team Programme | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

Please help us reach more young people by sharing this post within your networks. For further information or to refer someone, contact:

Hemel Team: Amber Molloy - amber.molloy@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Stevenage Team: **Ben Parker-Bratt** - ben.parker-bratt@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Watford Team: Pamela Gagliardi - pamela.gagliardi@hertfordshire.gov.uk



Aged 16-25?

UNCOVER HIDDEN TALENT

on our 12-week personal development Team programme

In partnership with The King's Trust



Introduction to the SEND Local Offer website

The Local Offer website lets parents, young people and professionals know what special educational needs and disabilities services are available in Hertfordshire, and who can access them. There is so much more than that, too.

A friendly face from the Local Offer team will take you through what's on the website and how you can use it to find the right services and support.
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer

(For professionals) Monday 28 September at 2pm – 3pm [Introduction to the Local Offer | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)

(For professionals AND parent carers) Wednesday 30 September 8pm – 8.45pm [Introduction to the Local Offer | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)

(For professionals) Thursday 8 October 11am – 12pm [Introduction to the Local Offer | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)



DBS and Barred List Checks

Regulated Activity

From 1 September 2026, all volunteers/unpaid helpers who fit criteria will be considered in regulated activity with children and will require an enhanced DBS with barred list check. Currently those volunteers/unpaid helpers do not need those checks because they are considered supervised by someone else in regulated activity, which has been recognised as a weak safeguarding arrangement. They will now automatically be in regulated activity themselves and subject to a barred list check which can prevent them working from children (if relevant) even though they have a clear basic or enhanced DBS.

Criteria is a person undertaking activities such as teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, even if under supervision of another person

- on more than 3 days in a 30-day period (volunteering hours in different roles are considered to be one amount so 2 roles of 1.5 days each in a month is regulated activity)
- overnight (only needs to happen once)

All agencies will need to start reviewing their existing volunteers and ensure plans are put in place to trigger enhanced DBS and barred list checks from the 1 September 2026. They will need to ask volunteers if they have activities in other agencies which may be accumulative to 3 days + in a 30-day period. Any new onboarding of volunteers needs to include these new checks from this date.

Although the government guidance specifically mentions schools and colleges, this is because they are likely to have a large workforce impacted by this.

However, the changes apply to all organisations providing services to children.

See: [Regulated activity: removal of the supervision exemption \(comes into force 1 September 2026\) - GOV.UK](#)

Hertfordshire Parenting and Relationship Support Summer newsletter

You can view the [Summer 2026 Parenting and Relationship Support Offer Newsletter](#) which will provide you with information and details on Parenting Courses and Relationship Support offer.

Please can you ensure you cascade to your teams. If you have any questions please email CSStrategic.Partnerships@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

View the latest copy here:-

[hertfordshire_parenting_and_relationship_newsletter_sum26.pdf](#)

Children, Young People & Families Crisis Support Fund

The Children, Young People & Families Crisis Support Fund is open for applications from 29 June. It forms part of Hertfordshire's wider Crisis Resilience Fund and provides short-term emergency support to help stabilise families at a point of crisis and prevent escalation.

This fund should be used alongside longer-term support options available via Cost of Living Support: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/col

The fund can provide essential items, food vouchers, and support with essential travel where there is an immediate need.

For full eligibility, guidance, and application processes, refer to the [Children, Young People and Families Crisis Support Fund Criteria | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

Webinar: Understanding the Children, Young People & Families Crisis Support Fund – Application Process

The sessions will:

- Explain the eligibility criteria
- Clarify what the fund can be used for
- Provide a step-by-step guide to the application process

Webinar dates and registration links:

9th July 12:15 – 13:00 [register here](#)

9th July 15:45 – 16:30 [register here](#)

14th July 9:30 – 10:15 [register here](#)

16th July 15:45 – 16:30 [register here](#)

Please select one session only, as content will be the same across all dates.

My Teen Brain Training

Strategic Partnerships Commissioning are pleased to announce the next My Teen Brain Online Training courses that are due to be delivered on:

Wednesday 7th October

This FREE 1-day CPD course, from 10am – 3pm is for Hertfordshire practitioners working with parents of teenagers and/or working with teenagers or young people in Hertfordshire.

If you are interested in booking on to the course, please ensure that you **ONLY** reserve your place if you have the capacity to attend the training on your preferred day and for the entire duration of the session, from **10am – 3pm**.

Wednesday 7th October - [My Teen Brain Online Training - 7 October | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

If you would like further information about the course or alternative dates, please email CSStrategic.Partnerships@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Supporting people with insecure immigration status or no recourse to public funds

What services in Hertfordshire need to know

We are organising a series of webinars for mainstream services who are supporting asylum seekers, refugees, people with insecure immigration status or who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

What do services need to consider when working with someone who arrived as a refugee or asylum seeker, through a visa scheme, or who currently has insecure immigration or No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) status?

This webinar will run through what all Hertfordshire based services need to know. It will cover:

- Why status matters and what you need to check to ensure people get the right support
- What people may or may not be entitled to receive and where to find out more
- What specific issues certain people may present with
- What cultural considerations should be considered
- Tips for your service that might help
- What additional support is available for these groups, regardless of status



To ensure that this is accessible to as many people as possible, 2 more dates are available. To secure your place, please book using the following links

12.30pm – 1.30pm, **Wednesday 21st Oct:** [Webinar - Supporting people with insecure immigration status or no recourse to public funds – what services in Hertfordshire need to know](#)

12.30pm – 1.30pm, **Wednesday 16th Dec:** [Webinar - Supporting people with insecure immigration status or no recourse to public funds – what services in Hertfordshire need to know](#)

The Bridge

The Bridge is a support group designed for parents, carers and young people in school years 6,7 and 8 who are struggling with school attendance. This includes those who are not attending school at all or on a significantly reduced timetable.

Sessions will run for 12 weeks starting on Wednesday 4th November 2026- 10th February 2027 (Not including School Holidays)

Time: 12:30pm – 2:30 pm

Where: Welwyn Garden City Cricket Club, 288 Knightsfield, WGC, AL8 7NQ

Please contact Alison or Karina with any questions:

Alison.cowie@hertfordshire.gov.uk or

karina.saunders@hertfordshire.gov.uk



What is The Bridge?

The Bridge is a support group designed for parents, carers and young people in school years 6,7 and 8 who are struggling with school attendance. This includes those who are not attending school at all or on a significantly reduced timetable.

Purpose of The Bridge?

The group aims to provide a safe and supportive environment where families can:

- Share experiences
- Receive emotional and practical support
- Build confidence and resilience

Topics Covered

- Anxiety and worries related to school.
- Friendships and social dynamics
- Health and wellbeing
- Neurodiversity
- The Future

Who is running the group?

The sessions are facilitated by Alison and Karina from the Intensive Family Support Team, working alongside a range of specialist professionals who offer tailored insights and support.

Session Details

Sessions will run for 12 weeks starting on Wednesday 4th November 2026- 10th February 2027 (Not including School Holidays)

Time: 12:30pm – 2:30 pm

Where: Welwyn Garden City Cricket Club, 288 Knightsfield, WGC, AL8 7NQ

Please contact Alison or Karina with any questions:

Alison.cowie@hertfordshire.gov.uk or karina.saunders@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Lumi Nova – for children aged 7-12: Build confidence, learn lifelong skills and manage worries through an online adventure game



Lumi Nova is available for **free to families in Hertfordshire** in partnership with Herts Mind Network's withYOUth service. Lumi Nova supports children and young people to build confidence and learn lifelong skills to manage their worries through an intergalactic adventure game. It is designed for 7-12 year olds and offers positive screen time with built-in time limits and ethical rewards.

Signpost Families

Families can access Lumi Nova instantly without a referral by visiting luminova.app/hertfordshire

Join a Lumi Nova Discovery Session (45 minute webinar) to learn more

Multiple dates are available: [Lumi Nova Discovery Registration](#)



Fully Funded Courses



Kick Off In Business are running **fully funded, live and interactive, business start-up, self-employment, and digital courses every week**. The short online courses, delivery by business owners, provide uncomplicated, useful information and guidance for anyone who is in the process of setting up a business or simply exploring the idea.

Referrals: send them through by [clicking here](#) or emailing referrals@kickoffinbusiness.co.uk with the person's name and contact number. Adults can also self-register at www.kickoffinbusiness.co.uk.

Courses include

- 2 weeks – Business start-up
- 1 week – digital promotion
- 1 week – money and finance
- 1 week – sustainability and innovation



The Butterfly Art Project

The **Butterfly Arts Project**, a 12-week after-school programme for girls aged 5–11 at Wormley Community Centre, EN10 6DX.

Families can join the programme at any point during the 12 weeks, subject to spaces being available.

We use arts and crafts to help girls build confidence, develop new skills, make friends and enjoy a positive space in which to express themselves. Across the 12-week programme, activities include painting, T-shirt upcycling, jewellery making, keyrings, mosaics, embroidery, sewing and yarn crafts.

We are particularly keen to reach **young carers, their siblings and other girls who may benefit from additional confidence-building and social support.**

Sessions take place on **Mondays from 3.30pm–5.00pm at Wormley Community Centre.**

Families can register directly using the QR code on the flyer. **Professionals can also make a referral on behalf of a child using this link.**

BUTTERFLY ARTS PROJECT
AFTER SCHOOL WORKSHOPS
WORMLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE. ● MONDAYS: 3.30PM - 5.00PM ●
Creative confidence-building workshops for girls aged 5-11
We welcome referrals for young carers, their siblings and others in need of support
✿ Please refer families who may benefit or share this flyer with them. ✿

PART 1 07 SEP Week 01 PAINT, SPLASH & CREATE	14 SEP Week 02 DESIGN IT YOUR WAY	05 OCT Week 03 WORDS THAT MAKE ME SMILE	12 OCT Week 04 REMIX YOUR T-SHIRT
PART 2 19 OCT Week 05 BEADS & BRACELETS	02 NOV Week 06 CHARMS & KEYRINGS	09 NOV Week 07 MOSAIC MAGIC	16 NOV Week 08 MY MINI MASTERPIECE
PART 3 23 NOV Week 09 PATCHES, MOTIFS & FABRIC ART	30 NOV Week 10 PUNCH EMBROIDERY	07 DEC Week 11 STITCH YOUR OWN DESIGN	14 DEC Week 12 YARN CREATIONS

 FOR REFERRALS AND ENQUIRIES:
info@thegifted.org.uk
www.thegifted.org.uk



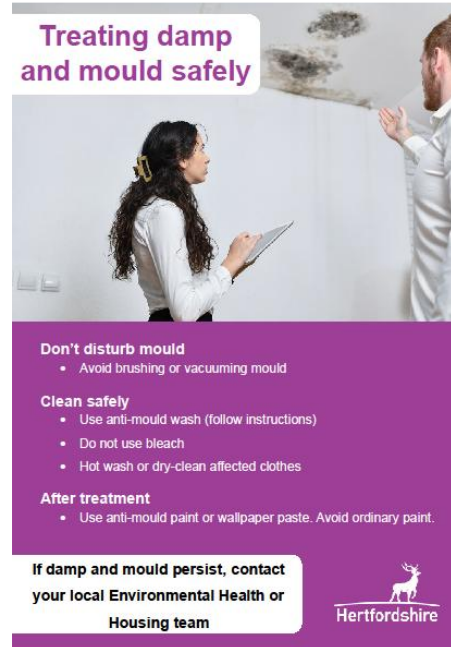
REGISTER HERE

Healthy Homes – Damp and Mould Flyers available

There is now a range of Healthy Homes flyers on damp and mould, which may be useful to share with residents, particularly as we head into the autumn and winter months.

The attached flyers cover:

- Could Damp and Mould Be Affecting Your Health?
- Preventing Damp and Mould at Home
- Treating Damp and Mould Safely



If you would like any printed copies, please contact **Lauren Cleghorn**, letting her know how many of each flyer you require and the address they should be sent to.

Lauren's email address is Lauren.cleghorn@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Relationship Support



When working with families do you think about the quality of parental relationships?

Do you feel confident to ask questions about relationship quality?

Do you know where to signpost for relationship support?

We understand that healthy relationships support good outcomes for children, so it is essential that we support parents to have the skills to manage stress and communicate well.

Arguing is **NORMAL** it is our behaviours and how we resolve conflict that determine relationship quality and stability.

HCC provides a range of FREE resources and training to help professionals confidently support families experiencing interparental conflict.

- A dedicated [professionals webpage](#) with guides, videos and toolkits.
- Recognising and Supporting Parents in Parental Conflict eLearning Module. This course explores what parental conflict is and how it differs from domestic abuse, how to identify conflict and what support is available for parents and carers in conflict. You can access the training via i-learn [HSAB and HSCP training and resources | Hertfordshire County Council](#)
- Attend the Families First Induction Sessions for an overview presentation.
- The OnePlusOne Getting on Better e-learning is a self-guided course designed to build practitioners' confidence in supporting parents to improve their relationships. Across four modules, it covers the impact of parental conflict, recognising domestic abuse, using the resources, and applying learning in practice. You can access the training by completing the [OnePlusOne Getting on Better e-learning training request form](#)

We have developed a **webpage** full of resources and courses to support parents in conflict [Relationship support for parents | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

We have commissioned 3 **online courses** for parents through the charity OnePlusOne [Me, You and Baby Too](#)
[Arguing Better](#)
[Getting It Right for Children](#)

We have practitioners trained across the Family Centre Service and Local School Partnerships that can support parents and carers through the digital resources or parents can be signposted to complete the resources independently by creating a [free account](#)

We have trained practitioners and commissioned providers delivering **group interventions** for parents
[Parenting When Separated](#)
[Parenting When Separated for parents of children with SEND](#)
[Restoring Parent Connection in Difficult Times](#)

If you would like to know more about the training, resources and courses available to support parental relationships please contact CSStrategic.Partnerships@hertfordshire.gov.uk

**Hand over to Jo Burgess
from the Family Centre to
talk about Incredible years**

Key Families First Links



Keep up-to-date by reading o
latest **Families First:**
[Families First News](#)



Link to support for families:-
[Families First Website](#)



Professionals area:-[Early Help – information for professionals and partners](#)



For Families First partnership
groups, news sharing and
general info email:-

familiesfirst.support@hertfordshire.gov.uk



Ensure your service is listed on the
Hertfordshire Directory:- [Register to add a listing | Hertfordshire Directory](#)