

STORTFORD FIELDS

COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT TRUST

Community Matters

Issue Five



Welcome

Welcome to Community Matters, the newsletter of the Stortford Fields Community Management Trust (SFCMT), which fosters community and will own, manage and protect community buildings and spaces for the benefit of residents at Stortford Fields and the wider community.

Stortford Fields Teddy Bears Picnic

Charity Status awarded

We are delighted to have received charity status under Charity Number: 1214771 in September 2025. As a 'not for profit' organisation with charitable status, this helps the Trust with applying for grant funding to support our projects.

Estate Management

As this newsletter reaches you, we are keen to share what the Stortford Fields Estate Management Company (SFEMC), is expecting to happen, subject to legal agreement, in relation to estate management services.

It is planned that the managing agent contract with Gateway will terminate on 31 December 2025 and a new managing agent, will start on 1 January 2026. BSNC (The Consortium) is contributing to the service charge accounts to settle the outstanding bills owed to Gateway. This ensures that the reserves and current cash balances in the service charge accounts remain intact.

Gateway as the current managing agent acting on behalf of SFEMC, invoiced on 1 December 2025, to collect the 2026 Consortium Management Charge, due for payment in January 2026. Gateway has also identified and is invoicing circa 10% of residents that have not paid any Consortium Management Charge from the point of purchase - payment plans will be put in place if necessary.

Residents can be assured that all funds collected by Gateway and in the service charge account on 31 December 2025, will be transferred to the new managing agent, along with other handover documentation.

Gateway also maintain some areas of Stortford Fields on behalf of individual developers, known as 'in-parcel'. This arrangement is contracted with the individual developers and will continue.

We are sorry that we have not been update you as much as we would have liked, due to the sensitive legal negotiations.

Since we last met we have:

- Received charity status (as noted)
- Invoiced to receive further funds in relation to Hoggates Park and Green Infrastructure via the Section 106 planning agreement for Stortford Fields
- Commissioned a grant funding strategy
- Progressed the legal land transfer of Hoggates Park and Woods to the Trust
- Appointed resident Mark Johnson as our Safeguarding Trustee
- Organised and run six community events/activities

An update from Elaine, Community Development Worker

It's been lovely to meet so many new people at the events we've held during the past few months:

August – Our Stortford Fields in Bloom competition. We had five fabulous winners who have now received their prizes of engraved trowels from the Trust and the super prizes that resident Charlotte Owers sourced. We were absolutely thrilled to see your lovely garden projects. Our HUGE thanks go to Charlotte who worked with us to pull this event together.

Since moving in 4 years ago I've taken pride in making my new build garden a little patch of country cottage style garden for my family, myself and the wildlife to enjoy. I have a passion for gardening and wildlife and feel passionately about how important gardening is for young children. Enjoy my pics.



Teddy Bears Picnic – hosted by Elm View Care Home. A lovely occasion seeing our youngest and oldest residents connect. Our thanks to Tesco Community Champions who provided the ice creams and lollies, and Daniel Robinson Funeral Directors for lending us their fabulous ice cream bike! It was one of the hottest days of the summer and we really appreciated the ices.

September – A networking evening attended by 12 local businesses kindly hosted at The Residence in Wickham Hall. We're looking to continue these meetings quarterly and develop our website for residents to share their business details.



October – Halloween is always such a busy event at Stortford Fields. Thanks to all of you who completed our Halloween trail and congratulations to Lucy Hayes who won the prize for Best Decorated House.

Parent/Toddler Group – we're delighted to have started this group which is held weekly on Tuesdays in a classroom at Avanti Brook Primary School. Herts Family Centre provided us with some start-up funding and their support has been invaluable. Lots of you donated toys – thank you. I completed my Safeguarding training and resident Mark Johnson is our Safeguarding Trustee on the Board. It's been wonderful to meet parents/carers and their children.



Resident Maggy said: "Our little one had such a fun time at the playgroup. If you haven't come along, please do! Such a calm and inviting space with fellow parents helping each other and children having fun."

December – Our Xmas event will have taken place just as this newsletter lands... This year SFCMT is supporting the 'Be A Santa' Charity, encouraging residents to donate a gift for an older adult who may be lonely or isolated in Bishops Stortford and surrounding areas. We had a live Nativity Farm, Children's Arts and Crafts, the Choir of St Joseph's & the English Martyrs Church, Digital Pocahontas and of course Santa! Thank you to everyone who gave their time for their community.

Three new community noticeboards have been commissioned and will be installed soon to help us share information and activities with you.

As always we're keen to hear your thoughts or suggestions of events you'd like to see happening in our community. We sadly had to cancel the fitness classes due to a lack of attendance – use it or lose it! Do drop me an email with your thoughts for other activities: Elaine@stortfordfieldsomt.org.uk

What's on when!

Pre-school Parent/Toddler Group

Every Tuesday from 09.30 to 11.00

Avanti Brook Primary School

Entrance by gate on left hand side of playground



SANTA FUN RUN

Sunday 21 December 2025 - 10.30am

Avanti Brook Primary School playing fields

Chase Santa round the field! Prizes for the Winner, Best Dressed Family, Most Enthusiastic Participant!

We will be supporting 'Space', a fabulous local charity that helps families of children and young people who are neurodivergent.

East Herts District Council's Community Forum

A copy of the presentation from the Forum on 19 November 2025 is available at: <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-forums/stortford-fields-community-forum>
Questions can be emailed to: community.forum@eastherts.gov.uk

East Herts District Council's Community Forums for 2026

Weds 6 May, 7pm
Weds 4 November, 7pm

Bishops Stortford Rugby Club
Silver Leys, Hadham Rd
Bishop's Stortford CM23 2QE

Bringing forward Hoggates Park Pavilion and Pitch

The Trust is due to receive circa £1.7 million funding from BSNC (The Consortium of Developers) in the New Year, through the Section 106 planning agreement as part of the delivery of the Pavilion and Pitch. While this funding will not cover the full construction of the pavilion and pitch, the Trust as a 'not for profit' organisation with charity status will apply for grant funding. East Herts District Council (EHDC) is also looking at other off-site funds.

We continue to work with Swifts Football Club who would like to take the long-term lease. Updated plans are due to be submitted to EHDC before the end of this year. Once these plans are approved Swifts FC will liaise with organisations such as the Football Foundation for support with funding for the 3G pitch.

Project Managers Academy Consulting issued prequalification questionnaires as part of the tender process for the construction contract and received 12 expressions of interest.

EHDC, BSNC, SFCMT and Swifts FC continue to regularly meet and are working together to deliver this facility.

Progress Update

The Consortium of developers at Stortford Fields (BSNC) – Taylor Wimpey, Vistry, Persimmon and Tilia continue to work closely with the Trust and we update as follows:

Western Neighbourhood

A footpath and cycleway is due to be installed from the end of Thurgood Drive across Hoggates Wood to connect the Eastern Neighbourhood footpath network. This work has been instructed and BSNC's contractor will start in the New Year.

Play Area and Multi-Use Games Area, off Newland Avenue



We know residents are very keen to see this area opened and we are all doing our best to make this happen. The play equipment has passed its ROSPA safety inspection, the mounds of spoil have been removed and the site levelled. We also needed to ensure all the landscaping had fully established, particularly the grass which had to seed and have its first cut. You may have seen the trees going in over the last few weeks which complete this landscaping work. Lawyers for BSNC and the Trust are finalising the transfer of this land to the Trust and this area will open when the land transfer is finalised.

Ash Grove Allotments

A condition imposed when planning permission for the allotments was granted relating to archaeological monitoring has taken some time to work through and caused a delay to the start on site. This condition has now been discharged by EHDC and BSNC's contractor will be starting on site soon. Fees for the archaeological monitoring will come from the £150,000 (index linked) Section 106 capped funding for the allotments. Any remaining balance will then help to deliver the basic layout. Funding for planters and other equipment will be sourced elsewhere.



If there are no significant archaeological finds, and weather conditions permit the work as scheduled, the allotments should be ready for Spring/Summer 2026.

You can join the Stortford Fields Allotment Group on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1834608160648652/?ref=share>

If you'd like to be added to the database for an allotment plot or to be involved in the community garden, please email info@stortfordfieldscmt.org.uk.

Frontier land adjacent to Elm View Care Home

- EHDC facilitated a meeting between landowner Frontier and the NHS to discuss the status of the site and review the constraints to delivery.
- Local Centre - Frontier advised that they have had some positive discussions with retailers and are in the process of drawing up a revised scheme for review.
- Doctors Surgery - Frontier has provided information which supports that this is not financially viable due to the build cost comparative to the rent. EHDC will continue further discussions to progress this matter.
- A new planning permission is likely required for this area now the previously consented scheme is being divided into two separate elements – the local centre and the doctors surgery. This will then enable the local centre to come forward as soon as possible, with the surgery later.
- EHDC has asked Frontier to consider whether any meanwhile uses or the provision of a new public open space are viable. This would improve the condition of the site and potentially provide some temporary scope for a use which could be used by residents.
- Frontier has advised that they are working on the proposal for a retail scheme on the local centre and are committed to delivering the surgery.

Eastern Neighbourhood

Rye Street – an emergency access has been set up. This access route will only be opened for the public when it is safe to do so.

A120 – a planning application, ref 3/25/0794/FUL, has been submitted to amend the previously approved emergency access to a fourth arm, also providing a small parking area for school minibuses. This is a separate application which has no bearing on the delivery of the A120 roundabout itself. BSNC and Herts County Council Highways are working on the technical detail to progress to delivery.

Foxdells Farm

The Heritage Strategy explaining how the Grade II listed buildings will be brought up to standard, has been submitted to East Herts District Council for their consideration.

Resident Survey

Working with Neighbourhood Lab, we conducted our first resident survey this year. There were 109 responses and we would really like to see this increase if we run this activity again in the future.

We were very interested to note the following feedback which will help inform our activities.

Congratulations to resident Victoria Wilkes who won a Tesco voucher worth £100 for completing the survey.

Question: We have two community buildings coming to Stortford Fields. What classes of activities would you like to see offered?

Activity	Answers	Percentage
A community café	74	67.90%
Activities for young children	53	48.60%
More fitness classes	53	48.60%
Health and wellbeing sessions	45	41.30%
Arts and crafts	40	36.70%
More for older children / teenagers	38	34.90%
Activities to get to know my neighbours	35	32.10%
Business networking opportunities	15	13.80%

Useful Contacts:

Gateway Property Management's Customer Services Dept

Call: 01702 443555 | Office hrs: Mon to Fri – 0830-1730

Email: customerservices@gatewayplc.co.uk

Contact online: gatewayplc.co.uk/contact-us

Taylor Wimpey

Call: 01494 509090

Email: cnthames@taylorwimpey.com

Tilia

Call: 01234 417838

Email: eastern.customerservice@tiliahomes.co.uk

Vistry

Call: 01279 972641

Email: CustomerService.CentralHomeCounties@vistry.co.uk

Persimmon

Call: 01376 518811

Email: esse.custcare@persimmonhomes.com

East Herts District Council

Call: 01279 655261

Information on Stortford Fields issued is available at:

<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/about-east-herts-0/improvement-projects-east-herts/bishops-stortford-north-stortford-fields>