

# Hertfordshire Local Government Reorganisation:

Public Stakeholder Engagement  
September 2025



# Agenda

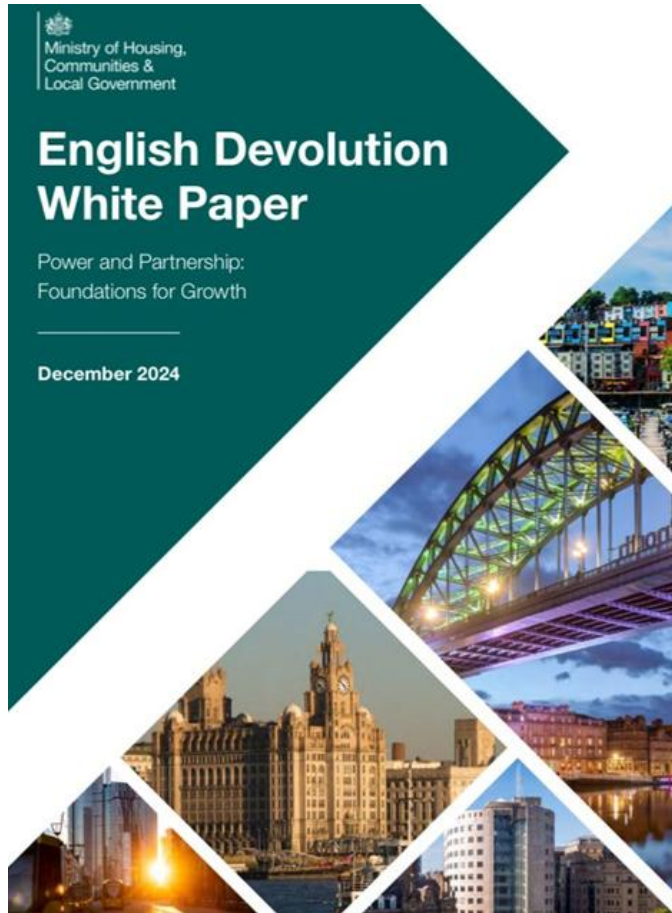
1. Local Government Reorganisation: Context
2. Our Vision
3. Where We Are and Path Forward
4. Options Being Considered
5. Questions and Feedback



# Local Government Reorganisation: Context



# What is Local Government Reorganisation?



- In late 2024, the Government set out plans to change how local councils operate. This means areas like Hertfordshire that operate a system with a County Council, and District & Borough Councils are being asked to **reorganise**.
- That's why the 11 council leaders in Hertfordshire are **working together** on a joint plan for how local government could be reshaped to better serve our communities.
- This plan will be sent to the Government in November 2025.



# What does this mean?

- One of the most significant changes to local government in past 50 years.
- Furthers the Government's ambition to decentralise power and drive local growth.
- Key provisions include:
  - Creation of **new Strategic Authorities**
  - **Greater local control** over major areas including transport, skills, housing, environment, public safety and health
  - **Reorganisation of local government**
- Primary legislation anticipated in 2026.



# Our Vision



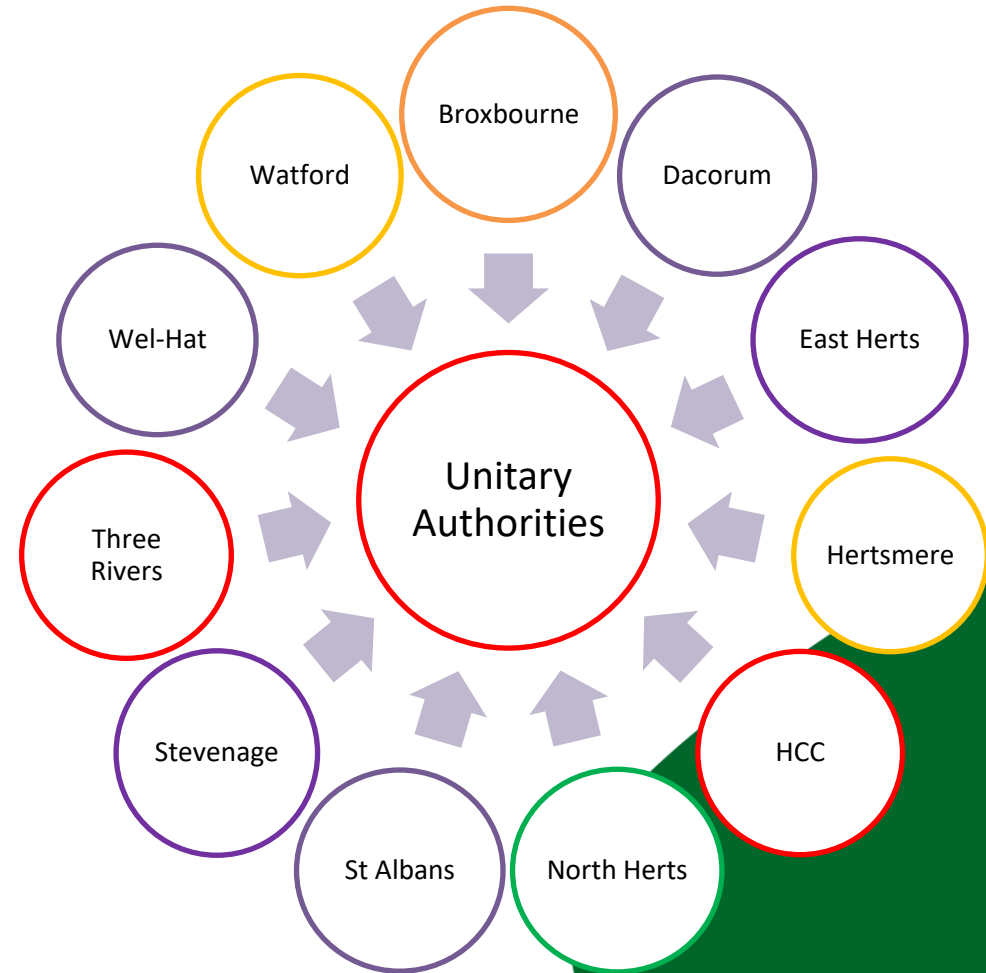
# Overview

- Hertfordshire is preparing for reorganisation. We want to build a system of local government informed by **your voice** that enables every resident and local business to flourish.
- We have a **once in a generation** opportunity to build a new model: rooted in local identity shaped by the collective voices of our communities.
- Our ambition is to preserve the distinctiveness of communities within Hertfordshire.



# What is the vision for Hertfordshire?

- **Vision:** replace two-tier systems (county and district councils) with Unitary Authorities; single councils responsible for all local services
- **Objectives:**
  - Enhance local accountability
  - Deliver better outcomes for residents
  - Generate efficiency savings that can be reinvested in public services
- All Hertfordshire authorities, plus the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), are working together to devise the best future arrangement for the county.





# What is the vision for Hertfordshire?

## VISION

**New model for public services.** We are seeking to:

- Unify services around people and places
- Improve governance
- Deliver better outcomes through strategic planning and collaboration

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Resident first
- Prevention led
- Inclusive and enabling
- Partnership led
- Powered by data and technology
- Culturally ambitious
- Strategic and place based



# Our ambition

- **People-centred services** designed around residents' lives, not organisational boundaries
- **Integrated and efficient services** which reduce duplication and improve accountability, with services which are digitally enabled, prevention-focused and financially sustainable
- **Place-based growth** unlocking economic potential by leveraging its strategic location and sector strengths e.g. life sciences, creative industries.
- **Community empowerment** will be central, with residents actively shaping services.



# How does Local Government work in Hertfordshire currently?

The current local government arrangement in Hertfordshire is referred to as a two-tier system:

## Hertfordshire County Council:

- Children's Services
- Adult Care Services
- Highways, roads and pavements
- Bus services
- Waste disposal and waste & recycling centres
- Public Health
- Fire and Rescue
- Trading Standards
- Libraries
- Births, deaths & marriages

*(Approximately 78% of local authority budgets are spent on county council services)*

## 10 District & Borough Councils

- Council Tax – registering, paying and payment enquiries
- Planning – new houses, extensions and shops
- Housing and homelessness
- Parking fines, permits and car parks
- Bin collections and replacements
- Leisure services – parks and open spaces, theatres
- Environmental health
- Pest control
- Licensing



# New arrangements in summary



## STRATEGIC AUTHORITY

Sets the strategy for the area e.g., the whole of Hertfordshire or possibly further afield

Led by an elected Mayor



## UNITARY AUTHORITY

Delivers local services

Covers a wide range of responsibilities previously held by county and district councils

We do not know yet how many unitary councils Hertfordshire will have



## TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

Will continue where they currently exist

Other arrangements being considered for areas without Town and Parish councils



# Why is it important?

**This is a once in a generation opportunity to shape the future of local government in Hertfordshire.**

We need **your** input. Our communities are in the best place to tell us what's important to them, your voice matters.

We want to build a responsive and resilient system of local government shaped by you - one that reflects local identity while unlocking long-term benefits for residents, businesses and communities.



# Where We Are and Path Forward



# What's happened so far?

- Hertfordshire's Interim Plan submitted on 20<sup>th</sup> March
- Councils and the Police and Crime Commissioner worked together to consider options and there are 3 options currently being considered:
  - A **two-unitary authority model**, aligned with existing economic/health partnerships
  - A **three-unitary authority model**
  - A **four-unitary authority model**

(A **single county-wide unitary** authority is no longer believed to be the right approach to represent residents)



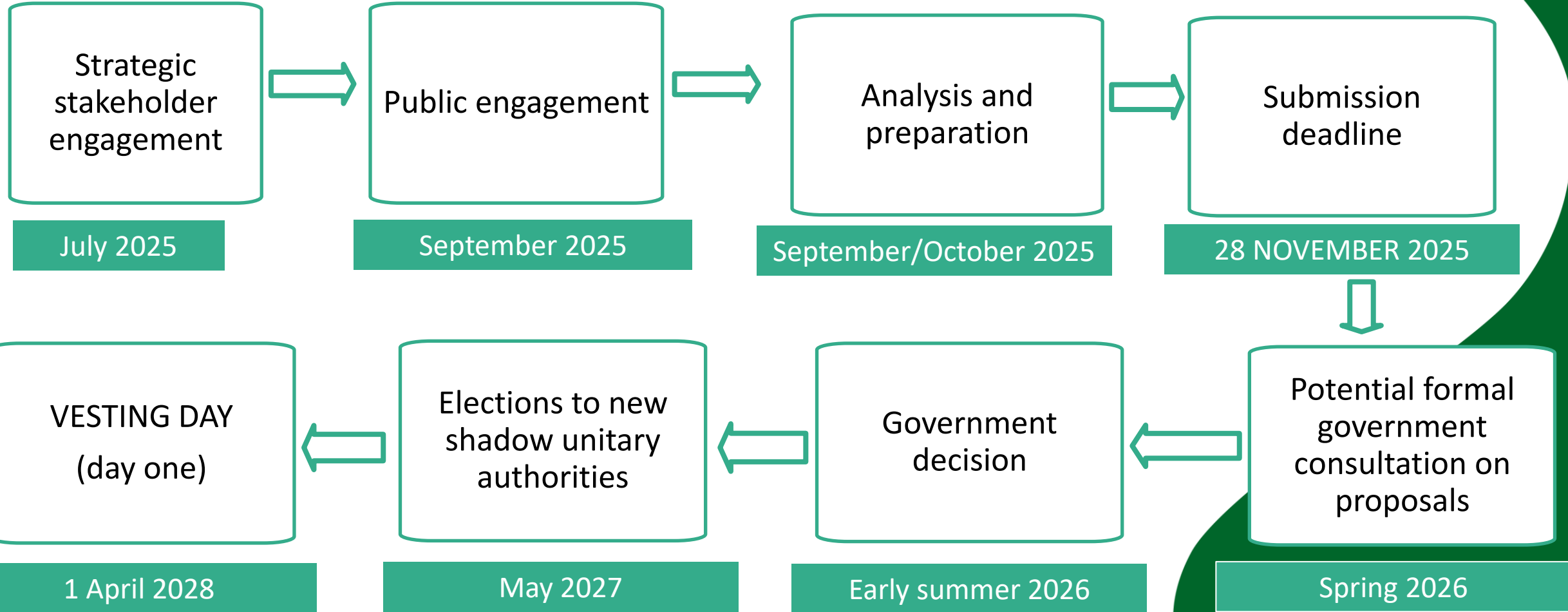
# What is the Government's Criteria for unitary council proposals?

- a. Seek to establish a **single tier of local government**.
- b. Proposed unitary councils must be the **right size to achieve efficiencies**, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. A population of 500,000 or more provides a guiding principle (rather than a target) and there is flexibility where this figure does not make sense for local areas.
- c. Unitary structures must **prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services** to citizens.
- d. Proposals should **show how councils in the area have sought to work together** in coming to a view and considered issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance.
- e. New unitary structures **should enable stronger community engagement** and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.





# When will LGR happen in Hertfordshire?



# What does this mean for Parish and Town Councils?

- The government has said that they want to promote Neighbourhood Area Committees (NACs) to provide a “simplified and standardised system of local area-working and governance”.
  - These could include existing parish and town councillors on their board, as well as representatives from other community organisations.
- The direction of parish and town councils may come down to decisions taken locally, with input from **you**. We are engaging extensively with parish and town Councils and will base decisions on the views of our community.



# What does this mean for residents?

This engagement process has laid the foundation for reorganisation. It positions us to deliver on our ambition: that every resident, in every part of Hertfordshire, can reach their full potential, and with no one left behind.

The most important changes for residents:

- Simpler, faster services
  - One council means a single point of contact, easier to navigate, with quicker decisions
- Stronger local voice
  - A larger council can speak with more authority on behalf of all residents



# Who is leading this approach?

This is a **joint cross-country effort** led by:

- All district and borough Councils in Hertfordshire
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Police and Crime Commissioner

These bodies are aligning their plans to both the Government's criteria and the needs of local communities. Discussions with neighbouring areas are also underway for cross-border alignment.

They are working together to determine the best models for future local government to:

- **Deliver high-quality public services**
- **Meet local needs**
- **Achieve efficiencies and ensure capacity**
- **Support devolution arrangements**

Multiple workstreams, including service design, finance, and community empowerment, have also been set up.



# Options Being Considered



# What options are being considered?

- When our final proposals are presented to the Government, each of the 11 Councils in Hertfordshire will indicate which of the 3 options they prefer.
- After considering a wide range of options for different numbers of new councils, we have selected three options for further detailed analysis and development, and are seeking the views of residents and stakeholders on these options:
  - **2 unitaries**
  - **3 unitaries**
  - **4 unitaries**



BOROUGH OF  
BROXBOURNE  
www.broxbourne.gov.uk



# What options are being considered?

## 2 Unitary Councils

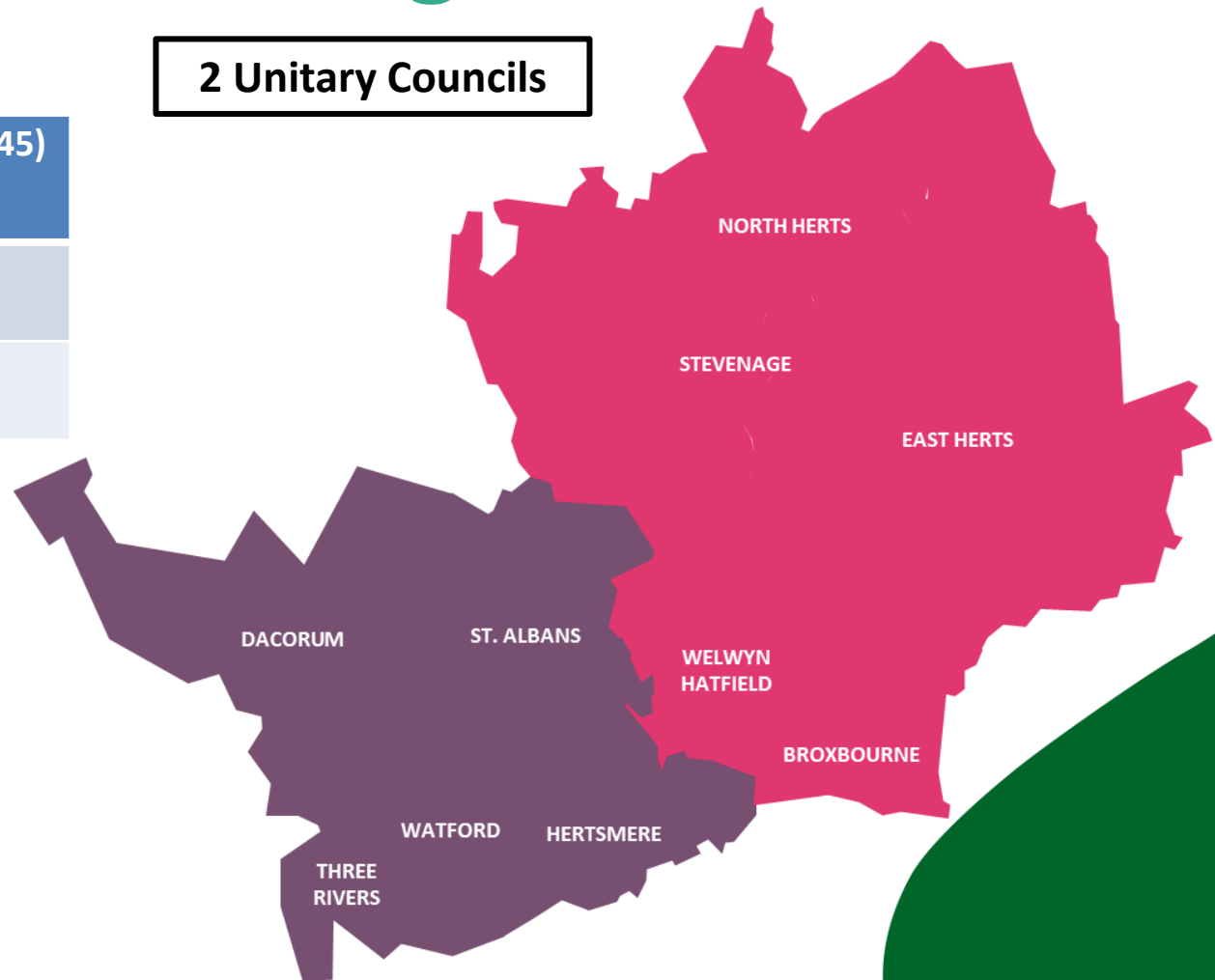
Local authority	Population (mid-2024)	Population (2045)
WEST	614,463	722,000
EAST	600,924	758,000

### West

Dacorum, Hertsmere, St Albans, Three Rivers, Watford

### East

Broxbourne, East Herts, North Herts, Stevenage, Welwyn Hatfield



# What options are being considered?

## 3 Unitary Councils

Local authority	Population (mid-2024)	Population (2045)
WEST	386,013	463,000
CENTRAL	350,199	414,000
EAST	479,175	603,000

### West

Dacorum, Three Rivers, Watford  
**PLUS** Bushey North & Bushey South County Electoral Divisions

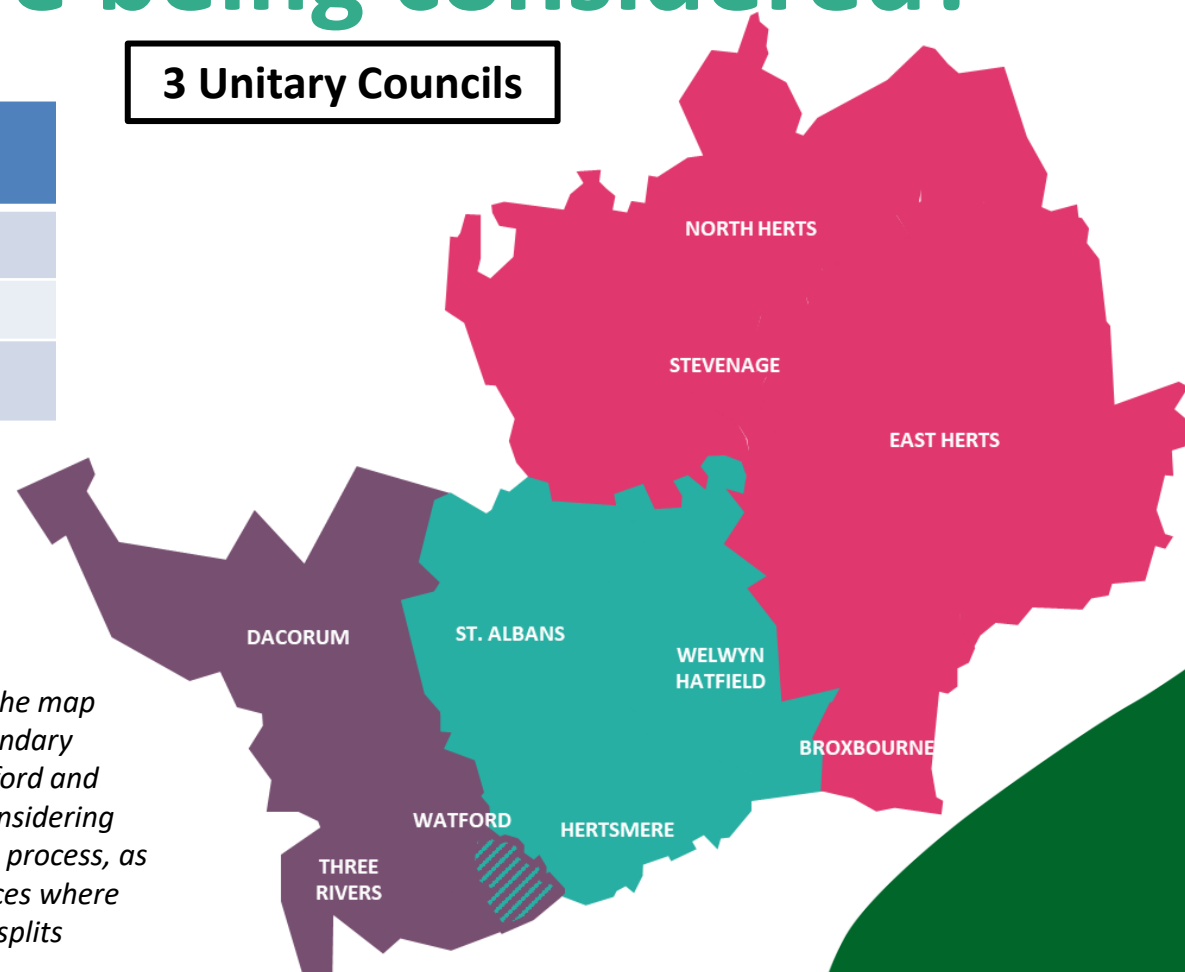
### Central

Hertsmere, St Albans, Welwyn Hatfield  
**MINUS** Bushey North & Bushey South County Electoral Divisions

### East

Broxbourne, East Herts, North Herts, Stevenage

*\*The striped area on the map shows a potential boundary change between Watford and Hertsmere. We are considering this as part of the LGR process, as it could improve services where the current boundary splits communities.*

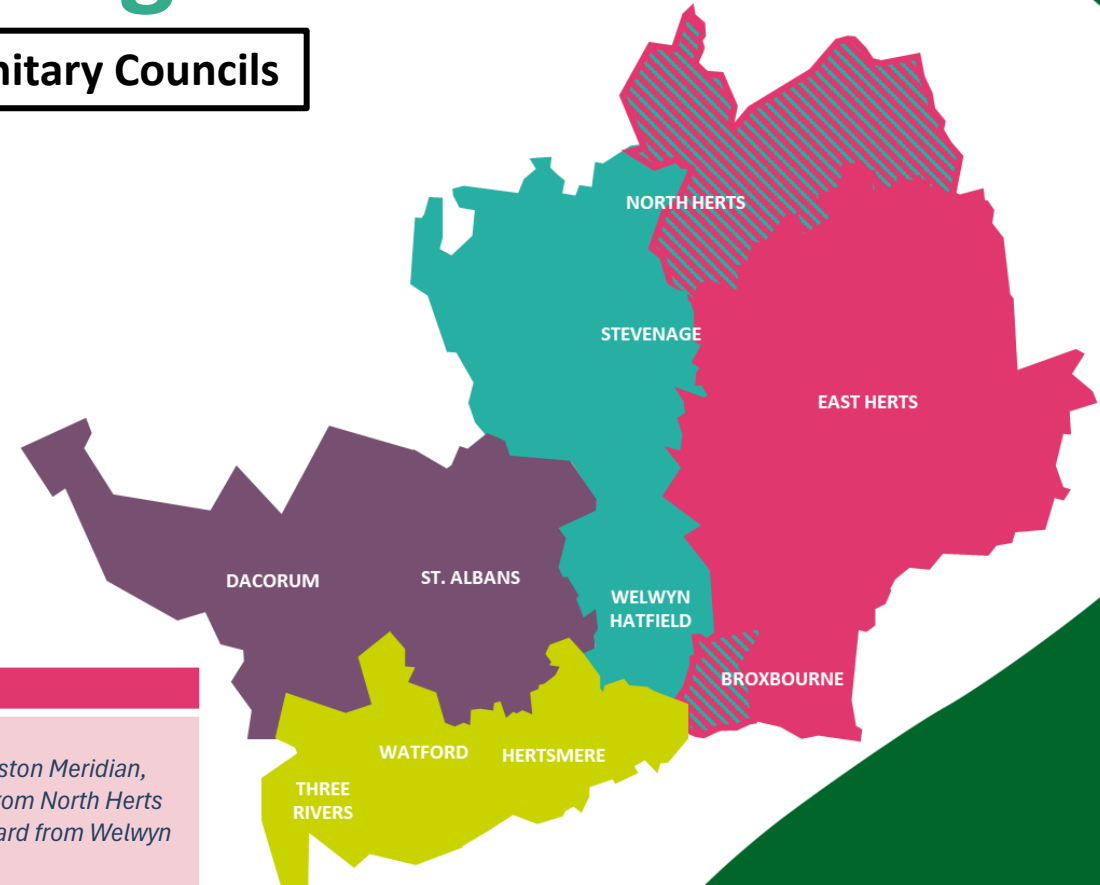




# What options are being considered?

## 4 Unitary Councils

Local authority	Population (mid-2024)	Population (2045)
WEST	306,582	351,000
SOUTH-WEST	307,881	371,000
CENTRAL	316,013	391,000
EAST	284,893	366,000



### West

Dacorum, St Albans

### South West

Hertsmere, Three Rivers, Watford

### Central

North Herts, Stevenage, Welwyn Hatfield

**MINUS** Royston Heath, Royston Palace, Royston Meridian, Ermine, Weston & Sandon, Arbury wards from North Herts District Council AND Northaw & Cuffley Ward from Welwyn Hatfield District Council.

### East

Broxbourne, East Herts

**PLUS** Royston Heath, Royston Palace, Royston Meridian, Ermine, Weston & Sandon, Arbury wards from North Herts District Council **AND** Northaw & Cuffley Ward from Welwyn Hatfield District Council.

*\*The striped areas on the map show potential boundary changes. We are considering these as part of the LGR process, as they could better reflect existing communities and economies.*



# How many councillors will there be?

- There are **currently 517 county and district councillors across Hertfordshire** including **78 Hertfordshire County Council Councillors** and **39 Three Rivers District Council Councillors**.
- The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) have issued guidance that while there are no set limits, ideally **councils should have between 30-100 councillors**.
- There are several ways to work out how many councillors there will be, and work is ongoing to determine the best approach. For example:
  - The 2 and 3 unitary options could use County Council Divisions
  - The 4 unitary option could use District Council Wards
- It is likely that the total number of councillors currently across district and county councils will reduce.

*(County Council Divisions & District Council Wards are the geographical areas that elect one or more councillors to represent the residents within that area)*



# Questions & Feedback



# Providing Feedback

- We are united in wanting to hear from as many people, businesses and organisations in our local communities as possible.
- Please visit Hertfordshire's dedicated LGR website [www.hertfordshire-lgr.co.uk](http://www.hertfordshire-lgr.co.uk) for full information.
- Once you have explored the website, complete the engagement survey here:



You can also share your views directly with us at **[hertfordshirelgr@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:hertfordshirelgr@connectpa.co.uk)**



# Thank You

