St John's VA C of E Primary School

NEWSLETTER

Finding the light in ourselves and each other (John 8:12)

23/10/26

Autumn Term 1
Value: Love

Welcome message from the Headteacher

What a brilliant first half term

I always get to half term and think about the past few weeks. What a busy period we have had, and I reflect on what I have witnessed in our school. Firstly, I want to say a huge thank you to the children and parents who have worked on handwriting. I cannot express how incredibly proud I am of how the handwriting scheme is developing our children's handwriting. I met with a governor last week and showed a few examples from a 4-week time difference. The change is incredible. We will be updating our display in the lobby to the office, please feel free to see the quality of handwriting.

I have been observing in classrooms and asking pupils about how they find their learning. We are focusing on oracy skills and really emphasising how we speak to one another and debate about things. Some hot topics in the past two weeks have been about if pineapple should be on pizza. We have two very strong views about this, but the conversation skills have been incredible to see.

I have also been fortunate enough to get into several classes to help with teaching and supporting. I love the level of energy our children have and how keen they are with learning new concepts. The children want to share their views and have been very confident when I have been in. I am very excited to seeing how our children are going to flourish over the next few months.

Children have done incredibly well during sporting events this half term. Miss Coleman (our PE lead) has been done an incredible job getting children to sporting events and organising letters and risk assessments. We have had some incredible outcomes from the children in Key Stage 2 in football, netball and cross country. It is great to hear and see our children thriving in all areas of the curriculum.

Next half term is the run up to Christmas. We have a lot of events that are coming up including fireworks, nativities and Christmas fates. We will be reaching out to parents, reps and The Friends to help work together with the school to ensure we create some fantastic events. Please keep an eye out on the newsletter.

Finally, I have been working with many companies regarding our school field as well as the Governors, The Friends and staffing team. I want to ensure that when I send out the information for this, I have as much information to share whilst informing you of decisions and how we can develop our school grounds together. I would appreciate if anyone has any suggestions or would like to help on the team to contact myself. The more help, the greater the project will be.

Have a great half term - Mr Worton-Geer

Pupil quote of the week- Eloise (Year 6): I like going to sports events because you can play against other schools and have fun playing sports.

Quote from the bible- John 15:12: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

Improvements to the school:

We have had several improvements so far:

- **We are continuing to develop our filtering and monitoring system at school using a system called SENSO.**
- **We are hoping our carpark lines will be done during half term.**
- **We have some electrical work that is being completed next week.**
- **We have been working on plans around the field project. We have decided to take a more careful look at a few things before rushing any decisions. I have created a team of people who are supporting this project and considering the bigger vision of the project.**
- **We have decluttered areas of the school that needed work.**
- **Mrs de la Croix after many years now has some cupboard storage for her files.**



© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2025.

Spanish WOW Day!



What a fantastic day we had celebrating all things Spanish! The children looked wonderful dressed in red and yellow, bringing a splash of Spanish colour to our school! 💛❤️
Throughout the day, children explored Spanish art and famous artists, discovered Spanish celebrations and traditions and developed their Spanish language skills.
We ended the day with a fantastic whole-school sharing assembly, where each class proudly showcased their learning and creativity. It was wonderful to see such enthusiasm for Spanish language and culture across the school. ¡Fantástico, everyone! ES 👏

Attendance:
Week commencing 12th October 2026

Year	Percent	Place
Nursery	99.3%	2nd
Year 1	98.3%	3rd
Year 2	96%	5th
Year 3	96.3%	4th
Year 4	99.7%	1st
Year 5	89.7%	8th
Year 6	95.4%	6th
Year R	94.7%	7th

Class Challenge: Build a Guy Fawkes for Bonfire Night!

Dear Parents and Carers,

As part of our Bonfire Night celebrations, we are inviting each class to work together to create their very own **Guy Fawkes**! This will be created in school a few days prior to our fireworks night on Saturday 7th November 2026.

This exciting project is a chance for children and families to get creative while collaborating with their classmates. Using recycled materials, old clothes, newspaper, cardboard, and other safe materials, each child can contribute a part towards creating a class, Guy Fawkes. This will be created in school. Please could you bring the resources into classes for Wednesday 4th November 2026.

Once all of the entries have been created in school they will be displayed at our Fireworks Night, where everyone attending will have the opportunity to vote for their favourite creation.

The winning Guy Fawkes will earn the honour of being placed on top of the bonfire during the event!

Things to remember:

- Please use recycled or unwanted materials wherever possible.
- Ensure all items are safe and suitable for handling.
- Be as creative as you like!

We are looking forward to seeing the imagination, teamwork and creativity that each class brings to this challenge. Thank you for your support in helping make our Fireworks Night a memorable community event. These will be due by Wednesday 4th November 2026.

Football report :



St John's football team were back in action last week, playing two exciting fixtures!
Our first match against Homerswood was a real thriller, with St John's putting on a fantastic performance to secure a brilliant 4–0 victory! JJ and Jarrod both found the back of the net twice, with Vinny also getting his name on the scoresheet!
Our second match against Welwyn St Marys proved to be a tougher challenge, ending in a 5–0 defeat. Despite the result, the team showed great determination, resilience and teamwork, continuing to give their best until the final whistle.
A huge well done to all the pupils who represented St John's so brilliantly. We are incredibly proud of your effort, enthusiasm and sportsmanship. We look forward to more exciting fixtures ahead!

Child Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for everything that we have at this school and that when we are sad, the staff at our school help us out when we are down. Amen (Year 6 - George)

© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2026.

Calendar

Friday 23rd October	Glow Disco
Monday 26th – Friday 30th October	Half term week
Monday 2nd November	First day back at School
Tuesday 3rd November	Collective worship – bible Sunday – in school
Wednesday 4th November	Flu Vaccinations
Wednesday 4th November	Bring in your Guy Fawkes resources in deadline
Fridy 6TH NOVEMBER	Year 4 Forest School
Friday 6th November	Year 5 Cake Sale
Saturday 7th November	Fireworks Night
Sunday 8th November	Remembrance Sunday at the memorial – 12:30pm
Wednesday 11th November	Collective worship – Remembrance Day (school) 10:50am
Friday 13th November	Non-School uniform day – Children In Need
Friday 13th November	Year 3 Forest School
Monday 16th – Friday 20th November	Anti Bullying Week – Friendship chains made – Friends event
Monday 16th – Friday 20th November	Road Safety Week
Monday 16th November	Nursery/ Reception tours – 9am and 2pm
Tuesday 17th November	School Individual photos – please come in school uniform
Thursday 19th November	Be cool be seen non-uniform
Friday 20th November	Year 2 Forest School
Monday 23rd – Friday 27th November	Assessment week
Friday 27th November	Year 1 Forest School
Monday 30th November	Occasional day – no school



© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2026.

Academic Highlights

Here is some useful information that is happening in the school.

EYFS



Nursery have been loving reading the story 'Brown Bear, Brown Bear'. We have been looking at all of the different animals and practising re-telling the story. We used different materials to create pictures of the animals from the story.

KS1



Wow! What an incredibly busy and exciting first half term we've had in Year 1! From our colourful Spanish WOW Day and Monster Phonics Dress-Up Day to a whole day of geography, celebrating Black History Month, Forest School adventures, cooking and creating beautiful self-portraits inspired by Frida Kahlo – and so much more! 🎨🌳

Alongside all these wonderful experiences, the children have been making the big transition from Reception to the Year 1 National Curriculum and we couldn't be prouder of how they've embraced the challenge. They have shown such bravery, resilience, determination and enthusiasm, all whilst bringing plenty of fun, laughter and smiles into our classroom every single day!

They have worked their socks off, risen to every challenge and truly deserve a wonderful, restful half-term break. We couldn't be prouder of each and every one of them! Have a fantastic half term, Year 1 – you've earned it! ❤️🌟

Lower KS2



Year 4 have had a busy and fun few weeks. We have been very impressed with the children's perseverance and stamina during swimming lessons. They all did the school proud with their positive attitude and exemplary behaviour. In science, we have been investigating dental health and used disclosing tablets to show the plaque on our teeth. We practiced good tooth brushing to make sure our teeth were nice and clean before home time!



Upper KS2



Year 5 and 6 have been working hard carrying out Science experiments.
Year 6 have been learning about circuits and using the circuit kits to create a game. Year 5 have been learning about solubility and dissolving, testing different materials to see if they will dissolve. They are also waiting to see if salt water is reversible!

© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2026.

Parish News

Here is some useful information that is happening in the Parish.

Donations:

If you wish to contribute to a donation, please see the new link:

https://givealittle.co/c/ba0580ac-0010-48cd-be88-35d9d2fdcd98



Here is the collective worship list for school visits on Tuesday's:

Nov
3 Bibles Fr Rob
11 Remembrance Selina
19 Fr Rob (Value -Hope)
24 Lee - governor (Feast of Christ the King)

Dec
1 Advent Eucharist Fr Rob
10 Selina Advent

Save the Date
Sunday Nov 1
10.30am Memorial Service for the departed.
We will be remembering our loved ones once again during All Souls and All Saints. Do join us and note the time.

Don't forget there is always a warm welcome at either of the Parish Cafes.
Coffee Pot
Fridays
9:00-12 noon
St John's Church, Monks Rise

The Hub Cafe
Saturdays
10:00-12:30pm
CtKHub, Haldens

TEA, TOAST and TODDLERS
Time: 9:00-10:30 am
Toys, craft activity, messy play and plenty of toast!
When:First and Third Thursday of the Month
Where: The Hub at Christ the King, Haldens
We are looking for volunteers to help once a month with refreshments, setting up the toys, helping with the craft activity and welcoming all who come along.
Please email us at info@digswellparish.org.uk for more information.



© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2026.

The Friends News

Here is some useful information that is happening with the Friends.



The Friends:

The Friends, Mrs Scott, the Governors and I are working collectively together this year to raise money for the school. We are eager to ensure that we work in collaboration for the benefit of all our children at our school. We have come up with an annual calendar of what needs to be completed to help run events well. We will need everyone to help. From Reps to sharing out communications to parents volunteering, we are going to be working collectively to help raise money for our school.

We have increased our communication methods, we have updated our calendars including the school website calendar for you to see all of the great events that will be appearing at the school. Together we can raise money for our school project to develop our school to be the best in the nearby area. We want your voice, your views and your help at these events. Please ensure to invite everyone to come so that we can raise money together to develop the school further.

Preloved uniform:

I just wanted to let you know that we raised £50 at the preloved uniform sale on Friday.
We sold jumpers, fleeces, trousers, shorts, skirts, dresses as well as wellies, coats & shoes.

How good is this for the environment?
Saving 50 T-shirts from being newly manufactured prevents approximately 215 to 912 kilograms (kg) of CO_2e (carbon dioxide equivalent) from entering the atmosphere. Real-World Equivalent: Saving around 500 kg of carbon is roughly equivalent to driving a standard petrol car for about 1,200 to 1,300 miles. By my rough estimation, this has saved the equivalent of 900 baths of water.
There is a small team who've been brilliant and we are very grateful for their help. We are also really grateful to all the parents who've bought and donated clothes.

Reps for each class		
Vacancy	Nursery	Vacancy
Roshni Bharij	Reception	Vacancy
Natalie Burnett	Year 1	Nicola Pattison
Fiona Hetherington	Year 2	Sara Box-Hashem
Claire Dixon	Year 3	Chantelle Newman
Kelly Butler	Year 4	Lauren Bowman
Jo Jamieson	Year 5	Lisa Robson
Lee Pocha	Year 6	Natalie Burnett



Total so far:£0

- **Friday 9th July 2027** — Summer Fair
- **Friday 2nd July 2027** — Sports Day
- **Wednesday 30th June 2027** — Hop-a-thon
- **Friday 18th June 2027** — Special Men's Day
- **Friday 21st May 2027** — Disco
- **Friday 23rd April 2027** — Duck Race
- **Thursday 25th March 2027** — Easter Chocolate Tombola
- **Friday 5th March 2027** — Special Ladies Day
- **Thursday 4th March** — World Book Day
- **Friday 26th February 2026** — Quiz night
- **Friday 29th January 2026** — Bingo Night
- **Friday 4th December 2026** — Christmas Fair
- **Thursday 19th November** — Be cool be seen
- **Week of the 16th November** — Friendship chains
- **Saturday 7th November 2026** — Fireworks
- **Friday 23rd October 2026** — Glow disco

© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2026.



© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2026.

CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

The Chairman of Welwyn Parish Council is seeking a beautifully festive Christmas card design to serve as the official Parish Council card for 2026.

The competition is open to all Reception/KS1 and KS2 children in the Parish (Digswell, Oaklands, Mardley Heath and Welwyn).

The design should be created on A4 paper, with any Christmas-related theme, and must lay flat (no glitter or 3D stickers).

Entries will be divided in to two categories: Reception/KS1 (age 4-7) and KS2 (age 8-11)

Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each category and the overall winner will have their design printed as real Christmas cards with some to take home too!

We will also invite the winner to help switch on Welwyn village Christmas lights on Friday 27th November 2026.

Please submit your entries to the Parish Offices, Lockleys Drive, Welwyn by 3pm on **16th November 2026**. Be sure to include your name, age, and a parent or carer's phone number so we can reach out to the winners.





Hertfordshire County Council wants to hear your views on where 20mph speed limits may be appropriate in Welwyn Garden City.

Lower traffic speeds can make streets feel more comfortable for a wider range of users. They can help people cross roads more easily, support independent journeys to schools and local facilities, and encourage more people to consider walking, cycling or using public transport for shorter journeys. It can make it easier to pull out of driveways and side roads in their cars.

We are not considering 20mph limits on key distributor routes such as Stanborough Road, Bessemer Road, Broadwater Road, Black Fan Road and Chequers.

Our Right Place, Right Pace approach recognises that different roads serve different purposes. Some roads are places where people live, walk, wheel, cycle, shop, access schools and spend time, while others play an important role in helping people travel between communities.

We are asking residents, businesses, schools and local communities to help shape how a future 20mph scheme could look in their area by telling us if, and where they believe lower speed limits are most appropriate. We also recognise that views differ on where 20mph limits should be used and that not every road will be suitable.

By completing the survey, your feedback will help us understand local priorities and inform the potential development of a 20mph areas for Welwyn Garden City **click here** **Take survey**

© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2026.


Christmas
MARKET 2026
Saturday 28 November
10.00 am - 1.00 pm
St, John's Church, Monks Rise
Grand Raffle Draw at 12.30 pm
Admission: Adults £1 • Children: Free
Cafe • Tombola • Breakfast BBQ • Craft Stalls
Homemade Cakes • Entertainment
from The House on the Rock
www.digswellparish.org.uk
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Parish of Digswell
St John's Parish
• Church
• Christ the
• King Hub
Fun for the whole family!


The Friends of
St John's School, Digswell
ANTI-BULLYING WEEK
16TH – 20TH NOVEMBER
KINDNESS CHAINS
£1 PER CHAIN
BUY A LINK, SPREAD KINDNESS AND BE IN WITH A CHANCE TO WIN A PRIZE!
Be kind
Include everyone
You matter
Choose kindness
Our Kindness Chains will be on sale all week.
Add your link to our whole school chain to help us create a colourful display of kindness.
On FRIDAY 20TH NOVEMBER we will cut one lucky link from our Kindness Chain and the winner will receive a PRIZE!
Let's make a chain of kindness that reaches across our school!
ROAD SAFETY WEEK
16TH – 20TH NOVEMBER
BE COOL BE SEEN
NON-UNIFORM DAY
THURSDAY 19TH NOVEMBER
£1
WEAR SOMETHING BRIGHT, NEON OR REFLECTIVE!
Help us raise awareness about keeping safe on our roads while supporting our school.
All donations go to the Friends of St John's School.


The Friends of
St John's School, Digswell
CHRISTMAS FAIR
FRIDAY 4TH DECEMBER
1PM – 3PM
ST JOHN'S SCHOOL, DIGSWELL
COME AND SEE FATHER CHRISTMAS
(EXTRA CHARGE WILL APPLY)
STALLS
RAFFLE
TOMBOLA
BAR
AND MORE!
FESTIVE FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY!


The Friends of
St John's School, Digswell
CAKE SALES
ALL CAKES 50p
IN THE PLAYGROUND AFTER SCHOOL
Homemade or shop bought cakes welcome!
YEAR 6 FRIDAY 16TH OCTOBER
YEAR 5 FRIDAY 6TH NOVEMBER
YEAR 4 FRIDAY 15TH JANUARY
YEAR 3 FRIDAY 12TH FEBRUARY
YEAR 2 FRIDAY 19TH MARCH
YEAR 1 FRIDAY 16TH APRIL
RECEPTION FRIDAY 7TH MAY
NURSERY FRIDAY 28TH MAY
Raise funds for our school with some yummy treats!
Come along, grab a cake and support our school!
Everyone welcome!

Fifty Thrifty October Half Term 2026

We've put together another list of fifty cost-effective activities for families this October half-term

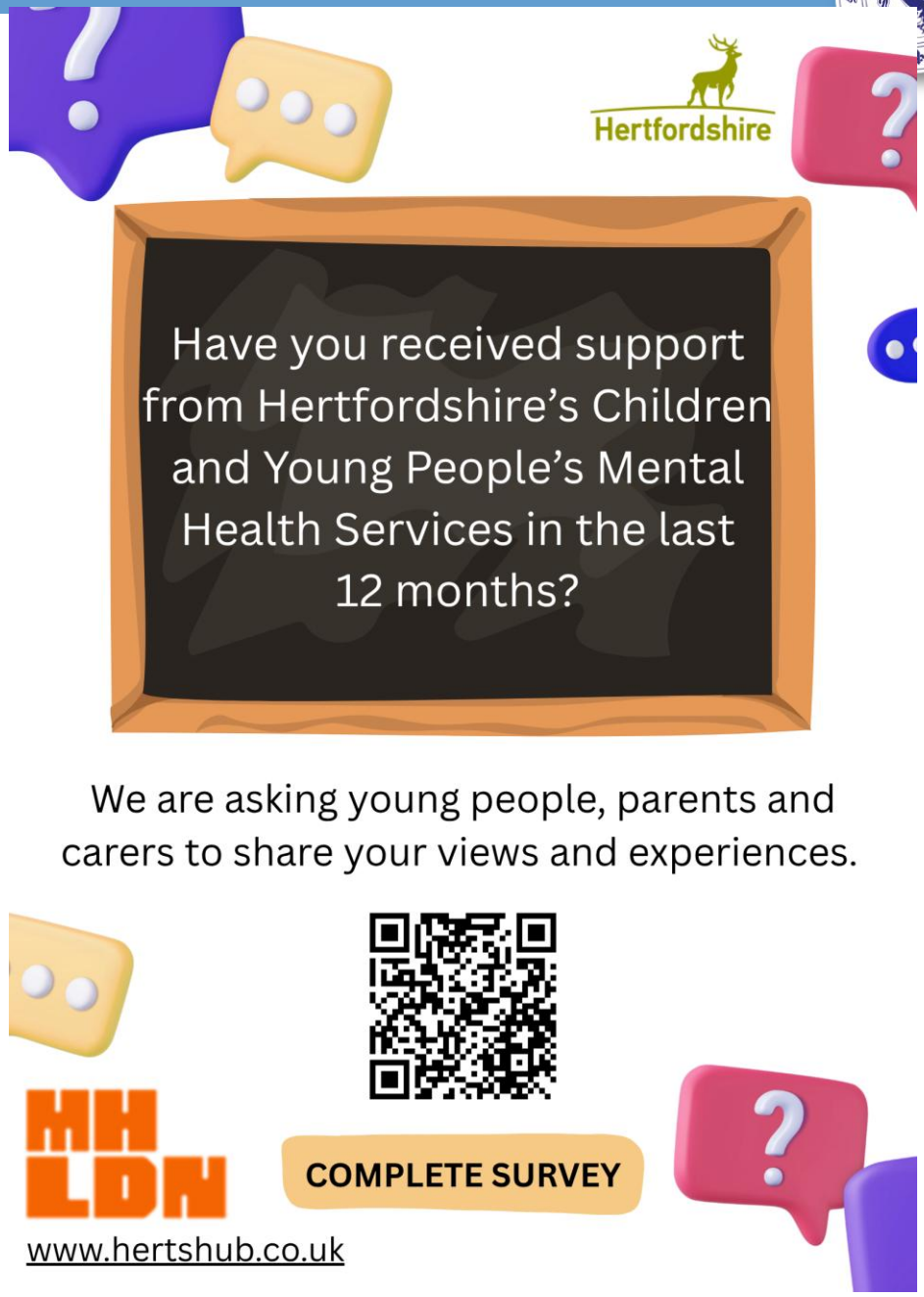
We've updated our list of fifty 'no cost' or 'low cost' activities to do in Hertfordshire for autumn, providing a whole world of wonder for you and your family. We understand that we all need to make the most of every penny at the moment and, if you're finding times particularly tough financially, there is support on hand on our Help to manage the cost of living webpage.

It's still a great time of the year to be out and about, seeing colours change and wildlife get used to the new season. It's also lots of fun to be out exploring on foot, by cycling or scooting. If you need a second-hand bike, the Reuse Shops have a selection of both adult and children's bikes available.

Halloween is just around the corner, and we have some great ideas to help with pumpkin carving and costume making to make sure you stand out from the ghostly crowd. There's lots of things going on inside too, so if the weather takes a turn this half term, why not check out what activities are happening in your local library? Or stay closer to home with any of our ideas for indoor crafting using seasonal objects such as leaves, cones and conkers!

Our Fifty Thrifty list can be downloaded, and we've also shared the list below, complete with links and locations.

https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/news/news-archive/fifty-thrifty-october-2026?dm_i=5ESZ%2C1HD50%2C6NSP8R%2C647DA%2C1%2C0%2C0%2C



© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2026.

Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

FREE

MHFA England

1 day Champion course designed specifically for Hertfordshire Parent/Carers of 8 to 18 year olds.

You will learn:

- An understanding of common mental health issues and how they can affect young people
- The ability to spot the signs of mental ill health in young people, and guide them to a place of support
- Knowledge and confidence to advocate for mental health awareness
- Skills to support positive wellbeing

Friday 13 Nov 2026 9.30am to 4pm	Peartree Spring Primary School, Stevenage, SG2 9GG	Parents/Carers	Parking available on roads near venue
Friday 12 Mar 2027 9.30am to 4pm	Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 8ER	Parents/Carers	Parking available on site

To book your place please email schoolsmh@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Places are limited to two representatives per education setting



© St. John's CofE VA Primary School. All rights reserved. 2026.

Visiting Angels
QUALITY AT HOME CARE

CHRISTMAS CARD APPEAL

We're inviting our local community to help make Christmas extra special for our clients by sending a Christmas card with a heartfelt message.

For some of our clients, Christmas can be a lonely time, and a thoughtful card could bring a smile to their face and remind them that someone is thinking of them.

Want to get involved?

Simply write a Christmas card with a warm message or festive wishes. There's no need to address it to anyone in particular. We'll make sure your cards reach our clients in time for their Christmas party!
Please send or drop off your cards to:

Drop-Off Point
Visiting Angels South Hertfordshire
First Floor, Rear of 60, Bridge End East
Welwyn Garden City AL7 1JU

Send By : 3rd December 2026



Neurodiversity Support Hub

For Parents, Carers and Professionals across Hertfordshire

01727 833 963

supporthub@add-vance.org

Whether you need practical advice, emotional support or simply a listening ear, we're here for you.

Helpline hours:

Term Time: Mon, Wed & Fri: 9am - 1pm
Tues & Thurs: 9am - 3pm
Wed evenings (by appointment): 7pm - 9pm

School Holidays: Mon - Fri: 9am -1pm

All our helpline team are parents/carers of neurodivergent children.

No diagnosis required



SEND 0-25 years Hertfordshire's Local Offer

HH LDN Herts Mental Health, Learning Disability and Neurodiversity Health and Care Partnership

Hertfordshire

Herts Parent Carer Involvement www.hertsparentcarers.org.uk

NHS