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HITCHIN, LETCHWORTH & BALDOCK

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Shelter saved as Haven steps in

BY MICHAEL HAVIS
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A HITCHIN homeless shelter will now be run by a similar local scheme, after the national charity which currently operates the project pulled out.

North Herts Sanctuary in Nightingale Road was left with an uncertain future after homeless charity St Mungo's said it would no longer run the shelter.

The decision, which also put a stop to building development plans, ended a two-year working partnership with the Sanctuary.

It followed strike action at the shelter – the first faced in the charity's history – by workers dissatisfied with pay and conditions.

Now, the shelter will be overtaken by Stevenage Haven, a charity which provides accommodation for homeless people in Ditchmore Lane, Stevenage.

Management of North Herts Sanctuary will transfer to Stevenage Haven on July 1.

North Herts Sanctuary charity will continue to own the building, raise funds to assist local homeless individuals, and manage the force of volunteers.

Wendy Wheeler, trustee for the charity, said: "During the last two years the hard working staff have managed to maintain a very high 'move on' rate for our clients, and establish a new 'open all hours' policy.



"We have every confidence that our new partnership with Stevenage Haven will be successful and continue the success of North Herts Sanctuary.

"Both charities are fully committed to improve the service and revive the project to rebuild the sanctuary site."

Nicola Dierickx, finance and communications manager at Stevenage Haven, said: "We are delighted to have the opportunity of working with North Herts Sanctuary in this new and exciting partnership.

"We are committed to ensuring that all of our clients are provided with the help and support they need, in order to successfully

rebuild their lives and move on to secure and settled lifestyles within the community.

"This new partnership will allow us to extend Stevenage Haven services further to support many more local people who are in need, within the respective local authority areas."

North Herts Sanctuary – a registered charity – has acted as a hostel for single homeless people since 1992.

The shelter is open seven nights a week and provides accommodation and targeted support for people in need to help them gain the skills and resources to achieve independent living.

Help wanted to transform garden city

WOULD you like to help restore the world's first Garden City to its place as a unique and to restore and sustain the economic strength and vitality of the Leitchworth Garden City Town Centre?

The Leitchworth Garden City Business Improvement District (BID) is looking for two community representatives, one a resident of and one a student studying in Leitchworth Garden City, to act as observers on the council board.

These voluntary, non-voting roles will allow you to share your unique perspective on the town and will help the council create, coordinate and deliver an action plan to grow our town's offer, increase footfall and transform the town centre through positive and sustainable growth.

For more information about the Leitchworth Garden City BID, go to www.lgcbid.com.

If you feel you could help make a difference, email chair@loveleitchworth.com with 300 words as to why you feel you are the right person for the role, including which role you are interested in (resident or student) and your full contact details.

Drink-drive accused

A LETCHWORTH woman is to appear in court today charged with drink-driving following a crash on the A602 in April.

Victoria Marie Webb, of David Evans Court, will appear at Stevenage Magistrates' Court charged with driving a black BMW X5 in Watton-at-Stone while above the legal alcohol limit.

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News around the clock



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