

Hastings Local Plan Community Facilities Report

December 2012

www.hastings.gov.uk/localplan

Follow Shaping Hastings on Facebook & Twitter

Tel: 01424 451098 Email: fplanning@hastings.gov.uk



Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Methodology.....	5
3	Findings	5
4	Conclusion	7
	Appendix A.....	8
	Appendix B.....	10

Community Facilities

1 Introduction

- 1.1 For the purposes of this report, a community facility includes any building available to local people for community purposes. This can include community centres, meeting rooms, youth centres and church halls. It does not include establishments solely providing education, healthcare or leisure services. We have taken this definition from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and adapted it to reflect the local situation of Hastings Borough.
- 1.2 Community facilities can also include shops, pubs, libraries and other services, and we have other evidence collected for the Local Plan, that has details about these. This report concentrates on facilities, as outlined in the definition above, that people and organisations can use, or hire, for events and meetings.
- 1.3 This report details how the owners (or managers) of facilities were contacted and surveyed. There is analysis the geographical spread, availability and accessibility of those facilities and the report is concluded by an assessment of that analysis. This report will be used to support the policies of the Hastings Local Plan documents.

Legislative background

- 1.4 Much national and local guidance emphasises the value of community facilities. Community facilities in National guidance:

NPPF: *“Achieving sustainable development”*

Paragraph 7: There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- **a social role** – *supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being...*

1 of 12 Core planning principles:

- *take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.*

Paragraph 70: To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- *plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;*
- *guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;*
- *ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community; and*
- *ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.*

1.5 Community facilities in the submitted Planning Strategy (2012):

**Objective 5:
Supporting sustainable communities**

This will be achieved by:

5a) working with partners to improve the quality of life in the town - particularly in most deprived neighbourhoods

5b) supporting the hierarchy, vitality and viability of the Town, District and Local centres, with an emphasis on maintaining access to local shops and services

5c) providing an adequate and accessible network of health facilities to improve health, emotional wellbeing and life expectancy

5d) co-locating services and community facilities to maximise access and efficiencies

5e) enabling an increased take-up of sports, leisure and cultural activities by residents and visitors through the provision of accessible and affordable facilities and programmes

5f) ensuring developers provide or contribute to the infrastructure needs arising from new development e.g. access, education, open space, play areas

5g) reducing crime and the fear of crime through a design led approach

5h) promoting access to a healthy natural environment that contributes positively to our physical and mental health and education

Chapter 6 (Sustainable Communities) and Chapter 10 (Community Infrastructure) both support integrated and well provided for communities cross the borough of Hastings. To achieve these aims, the protection and management of facilities is important, and is given more detail in the drafted Development Management Plan.

- 1.6 For the Proposed Submission Version of the Development Management Plan there is a draft policy (HC3):

Policy HC3 – Community Facilities

Proposals for the provision of community facilities will be granted planning permission, provided that the development is acceptable in terms of location, design, access and impact on the locality, and is in general conformity with other policies of this plan, in particular DM1 and DM3.

Planning applications involving the loss of a community facility will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the existing community use is no longer required, not viable, or proposals for its replacement are included in the application.

2 Methodology

- 2.1 During December 2012, research into local community facilities was undertaken. A variety of facilities such as church halls and community centres were contacted and asked a pre-defined set of questions in order to ascertain the nature of the facilities, accessibility and general availability.
- 2.2 Facilities meeting the definition of community facility (see above) were then plotted on a map so that a visual appraisal of the distribution could be made. (Appendix A).
- 2.3 All of the facilities whose owners or managers were contacted are listed in Appendix B.
- 2.4 It should be noted there are many buildings in the town that are not available to the public on an ad hoc or regular basis but serve as a location for community activities on a membership basis. These buildings have not been counted as a community facility for the purposes of this report, but they have been recorded in Appendix B.

3 Findings

- 3.1 The details of all the facilities surveyed can be found in Appendix B. It shows the all facilities that were contacted, and the nature of the information gathered.
- 3.2 There is a total of 79 community facilities in the Borough of Hastings. The 2011 census shows that the population of Hastings is 90,300, living in 43,013 households. On a town-wide basis there are 1,143 residents and 544 households per community facility.
- 3.3 The table below shows the distribution of community facilities across Planning Focus areas. Every inhabited area contains at least three community facilities with higher concentrations in the town centres and tertiary shopping

centres. The map in Appendix A shows the spread of community facilities across the Borough.

Planning Focus Area		Number of community facilities available for hire
1	Little Ridge & Ashdown	6
2	Greater Hollington	9
3	Filsham & Bulverhythe	3
4	St Helen's	5
5	Silverhill & Alexandra Park	8
6	Maze Hill & Burtons' St Leonards	6
7	Central St Leonards & Bohemia	11
8	Hastings Town Centre	15
9	Old Town	5
10	West Hill	4
11	Hillcrest & Ore Valley	3
12	Clive Vale & Ore Village	4
13	Hastings Country Park	0
	Total	79

- 3.4 Community facilities in Hastings are easy for residents to get to. 91% of community facilities either have their own parking facilities, nearby car parks or on-street parking. Those with no access to nearby parking are located in shopping areas. All are close to a bus stop or other public transport. So even in those Focus Areas where there are fewer facilities than others, local people can easily get to facilities in neighbouring areas or particularly in the town centres.
- 3.5 81% of our community facilities are located in buildings that are fully accessible for disabled access. 77% have accessible toilets. Some also offer the use of hearing loops and whilst this is not a widespread phenomenon, it is understood that the level of provision is rising.
- 3.6 Most community facilities place few time restrictions on their availability to the community. 78% are available throughout the day and into the evening. A small number of facilities, such as schools, are only available outside the operating hours of the core business of the establishment.
- 3.7 There is wide variety in the type of activities than can take place with the town's community facilities. 84% offer catering services, some are equipped for meetings with whiteboard, projectors and other IT equipment etc, other simply offer a room with chairs and tables and access to hot beverages.
- 3.8 Hastings is a town rich in community activity. In addition to traditional activities such as Scouting and Guiding, keep fit classes and playgroups, our community facilities offer a home to a plethora of societies, groups and forums with interests in subjects as varied as horticulture and nature, literature and writing, local and community matters, and overseas liaison.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 Community facilities enable a variety of activities and make an important contribution to residents' experience of life in Hastings. The analysis shows that there is a good geographic spread of facilities and a useful variety of accessible building and services that can be used by the public. We therefore consider that the number and distribution of community facilities in Hastings is adequate to meet community needs. There is no need to allocate any sites or places for new facilities, however, the support of those that already exist is both locally and nationally recognised.
- 4.2 In accordance with policy HC3, of the Development Management Plan, the council will support proposals for the provision of new community facilities; if the proposals satisfy other council policies and regulations.
- 4.3 The council will seek to avoid the loss of existing facilities where it considers that the loss would bring significant detriment to the community.

Appendix A

- A map displaying the geographical spread of those facilities that meet the definition used for this report.

Appendix B

- The full surveyed details of the community facilities in Hastings Borough.