

Community Facilities Study

For the East Hampshire District
Local Plan



October 2024

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Appendix A - Meeting Place Assessment

Appendix B - Directory

1. Value of community facilities

- 1.1 Community facilities and local services are integral to achieving and maintaining sustainable, well integrated and inclusive communities.
- 1.2 As the population grows, it puts increasing pressure on community facilities and local services. Existing facilities and services need to be able to adapt to increased demand and different types and patterns of use. Extension, expansion and in some cases new facilities and services may also need to be provided in the future, however, the focus is on ensuring existing facilities are resilient and fit for the future, rather than new provision.
- 1.3 This study provides information that informs the emerging Local Plan and the Infrastructure Plan. It forms part of the Local Plan evidence base and as such informs new planning policies (including site allocations). It is a point of reference for information for planning applications proposing the loss, gain or alteration of a community facility or for development site proposals that consider the inclusion of community facilities. It is also evidence for applications for [Community Infrastructure Levy](#) (CIL) and S106 funding. The Study is also a mechanism for Community Development Officers to record works needed to local facilities.

2. Important note to understand this study

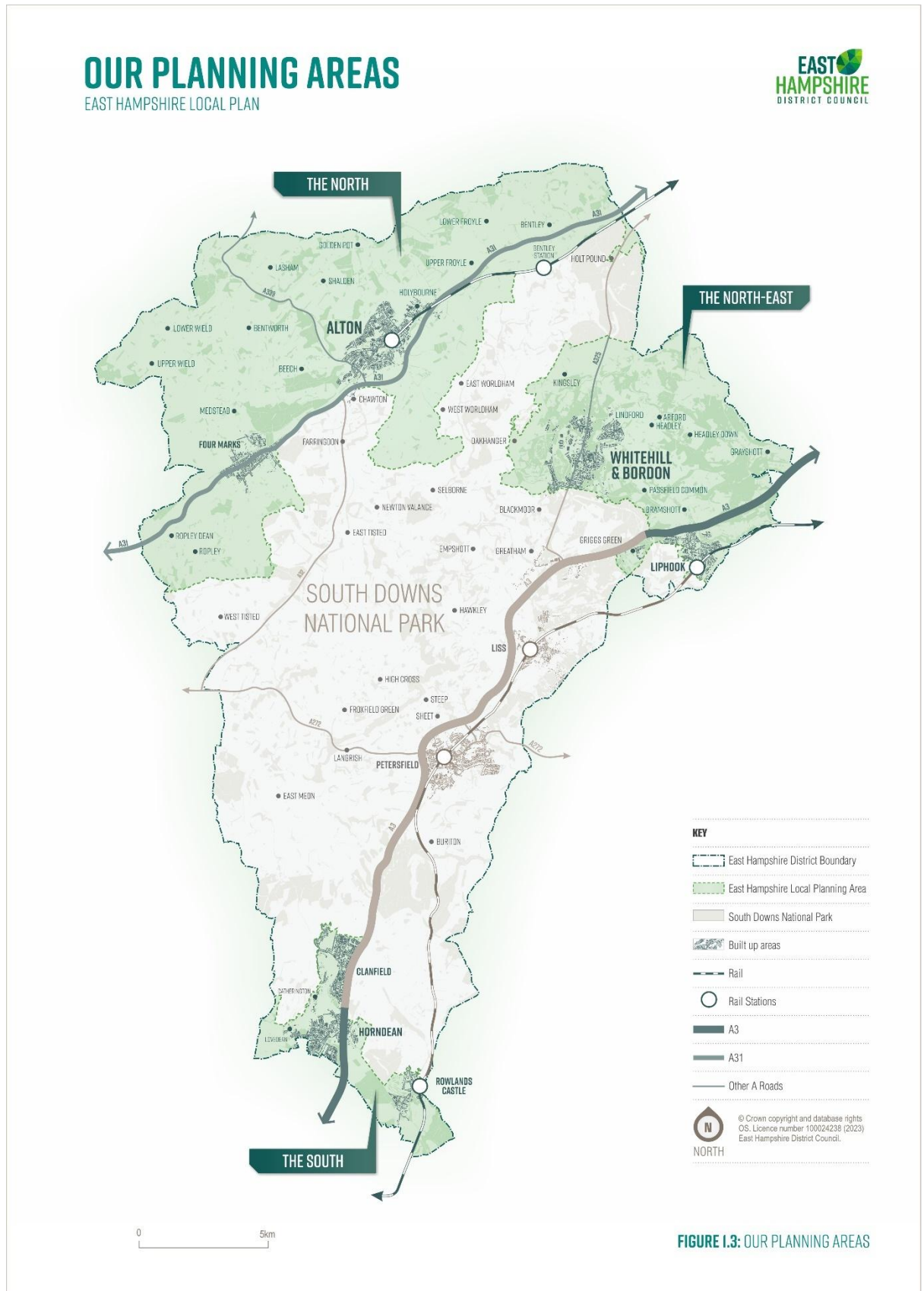
- 2.1 The study relates to facilities within East Hampshire District planning authority area. It does not include the South Downs National Park area within East Hampshire. Where relevant, there is discussion of facilities close to the district boundary. See Section 3, showing a map of 'our planning area'.
- 2.2 The information presented is base dated summer 2024 and is presented as understood to be the case at that point in time. This document was first published in 2021, and this version is the fourth iteration.
- 2.3 The information in this study should be used as a guide. Anyone preparing to submit a planning application is advised to carry out their own assessment in a proportionate manner, with regards to the extent to which this type of information is a material planning consideration.
- 2.4 The information presented with regards to individual facilities is based on information provided by a limited number of people/organisations. Whilst that includes Council officers and those with local knowledge (including in some cases those who manage the premises), there may be differing views on some of the information presented.
- 2.5 Some facilities have a primary use that is covered by other evidence base studies, such as sporting facilities that are considered in the Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study 2024-2040¹, which include a sports facilities strategy. The assessment of the facility in this study does not duplicate that work. Where a sports facility (e.g. a pavilion) or school hall is considered in this study, it is because it

¹ www.easthants.gov.uk/open-space-sports-and-recreation-study

operates a secondary use as a meeting place. As such, its assessment is based on that secondary use and does not override the outcomes from other evidence base studies. A facility may be assessed in this study as having low usage, but that is in terms of its secondary use, despite its high usage in its primary use.

- 2.6 Some facilities appear on two directories, e.g. a place of worship may also operate a meeting place available for community use. As such, it is listed on the directory for places of worship and meeting places.
- 2.7 There may be some cases where information is not available. In which case, a facility will simply appear in the list with no further information. If information does become available, this can be updated at the next annual study review.
- 2.8 The study does not guarantee it has identified every community facility in the district. As such, any planning application for which reference to community facilities is a material consideration should carry out their own research and use this study as guide/starting point.

3. Our Planning Areas



4. Previous work

- 4.1 An Interim Community Facilities Study was published in 2018, to accompany the consultation on the draft Local Plan (Regulation 18 stage, 2019). A small number of comments were received relating to this, during the consultation. The first full Community Facility Study was published in 2021, which has since been reviewed annually.
- 4.2 As noted above, as part of the Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study 2024-2040, a Sports Facilities Strategy was carried out on behalf of East Hampshire District Council, by Continuum Leisure, and published in 2024. This is also included in the Local Plan Evidence Base. Some community facilities that have been identified in this study also appear in the Sports Facilities Strategy.

5. Planning policy definition of community facilities

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023) does not offer a position in the glossary for community facilities. Instead, it makes a number of references in the main text, which are as follows:
 - “Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure)” (para. 20.c).
 - “Community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services.” (para. 97.a)
 - “Community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs).” (para. 193).
- 5.2 As such, the planning policy definition of community facilities includes the following;
 - Health infrastructure
 - Education infrastructure (including libraries)
 - Cultural infrastructure/buildings
 - Local shops (has a local link in terms of what it is selling, or a community enterprise)
 - Meeting places
 - Sports venues/clubs
 - Public houses (pubs)
 - Places of worship
 - Music venues

6. Relationship with the Local Plan and Infrastructure Plan

- 6.1 The Community Facilities Study has five key functions. To:
 - Inform policies (including site allocation policies) in the emerging Local Plan

- Be a point of reference for consultation responses to the settlement hierarchy for the emerging Local Plan
- Be a point of reference for planning applications that propose the loss, gain or alteration of a community facility
- Be a point of reference for planning applications for development sites that consider or propose inclusion of community facilities.
- Provide evidence for consideration of CIL and S106 applications.

6.2 There is a range of evidence base studies that carry out these functions, including the Open Space Strategy, Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Strategy 2024 – 2040, the Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study 2018² and update 2023, and the emerging Infrastructure Plan itself.

6.3 The table below lists the types of community facilities (as referenced by NPPF), and which Local Plan evidence base study considers them. Those shaded grey are considered in this study.

Table 1 Local Plan Evidence Base

Type of community facility	Relevant evidence base	Use class
Education infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Libraries • Pre-school/nursery 	Community Facilities Study	F1a F1d E(f)
Health infrastructure	Community Facilities Study	E(e)
Cultural infrastructure/buildings	Community Facilities Study	F1 (b & c)
Local shops	Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study	E(a)
Shops selling essential goods incl. food, where the premises is less than 280m2 and no such shop within 1km radius	Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study	F2(a)
Meeting places (for the principal use of the local community)	Community Facilities Study	F2(b)
Sports venues/clubs (indoor sport, recreation or fitness)	Open Space Strategy, Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Strategy 2024 – 2040	E(d)
Allotments	Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study	Agriculture
Public houses (pubs)	Community Facilities Study	Sui generis
Places of worship	Community Facilities Study	F1(f)
Theatres and music venues	Community Facilities Study	Sui generis

² www.easthants.gov.uk/economic-evidence-base-studies

- 6.4 The Open Space Strategy and the Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Strategy 2024 - 2040, includes provision for young people and children, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.

7. Methodology

7.1 Overview of approach to each type of Community Facility

Table 2 Overview of approach

Meeting places
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a directory of all existing • Map all existing to show distribution • Gather information on the condition of the facility and level of usage • Carry out a spatial distribution assessment for each Local Plan area³, to identify areas of potential deficit and surplus
Cultural infrastructure/buildings and music venues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a directory of all existing • Map all existing to show distribution • Gather information on the condition of the facility and level of usage • Carry out a spatial distribution assessment for each Local Plan area, to identify areas of potential deficit and surplus
Places of worship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a directory of all existing • Map all existing to show distribution • Gather information on the condition of the facility and level of usage • Carry out a spatial distribution assessment for each Local Plan area, to identify areas of potential deficit and surplus
Pubs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a directory of all existing • Map all existing to show distribution • Carry out a spatial distribution assessment for each Local Plan area, to identify areas of potential deficit and surplus
Health infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a directory of all existing • Map all existing to show distribution • Liaise with Integrated Care Board (ICB) and where possible, individual facilities, regarding the condition of the facility, level of usage and future aspirations • Carry out a spatial distribution assessment for each Local Plan area, to identify areas of potential deficit and surplus.

³ The North, The North-East, The South

Education (including libraries)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a directory of all existing • Map all existing to show distribution • Liaise with Hampshire County Council regarding the condition of the facility, capacity/level of usage and future aspirations, considering areas of deficit and surplus

7.2 Assessment considerations

7.3 Each meeting place is assessed using the following criteria.

Table 3 Meeting Place assessment considerations

Improvement	Is the facility known to need improvement? (Y/N)
Type of improvement	Existing condition and what type of improvement is needed? (e.g. Refurbishment, Replacement, Extension, New site)
Further information	Provide brief amount of further information to expand on the type of improvement needed
Level of use	<p>What is the level of usage of the facility? (High, medium, low)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High is when the facility is in use for the majority of the time it operates a community use, and has limited availability during those times, or is indeed at capacity with no availability • Medium is when the facility is in use for roughly half of the time it operates a community use, and anyone wishing to book the facility would have some choice of slots • Low is when there is considerable availability most of the days it operates a community use, and anyone wishing to book the facility would have plenty of choice of slots. <p>Note: this is availability for community use. If a school hall is used by the school 5 days a week, but available at the weekend for community hire, it is those 2 days it is assessed on. If in that instance it is hardly ever booked at the weekend, that would be low usage, despite it being used 5 days a week by the school.</p>
Type of use	<p>What is the type of use (multi-use, single)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-use is when different groups use the facility, or there are different community events using the facility • Single use is when only one group uses the facility, or there is only one event using that facility

7.4 Making the assessment

7.5 The assessment is carried out by Council officers, considering the information provided by representatives, community leaders and organisations, and then making an informed judgement on each facility.

8. Meeting places

- 8.1 All known existing meeting places are listed in the directory (see Appendix B) and mapped to show distribution across the district (to be updated shortly).
- 8.2 The assessment of each meeting place is documented in Appendix A. Please note the points of clarification in Section 2.

The North

Alton

- 8.3 There is generally a good dispersal of meeting places across the North, and the main settlement, Alton, is well served.
- 8.4 Alton has many meeting places, which experience high usage and multi uses. Alton Town Council is also using retail units in the town centre to meet current demand. There are four key existing community facilities in Alton; Alton Community Centre, the Maltings, Edgar Hall and the Assembly Rooms.
- 8.5 Over [£1.5m of CIL funding](#) has been allocated to projects for meeting place facilities in Alton since 2021.

Alton Community Centre

- 8.6 Alton Community Centre opened in 1975. It has been enlarged to meet greater needs but reached full capacity. The Centre is owned by East Hampshire District Council. The Community Facilities Study 2022 identified the need for investment in the premises and a decision about the long-term future of the site. Whilst a large site, flood risk makes redevelopment a significant challenge and reduces the likelihood of a viable deliverable redevelopment scheme.
- 8.7 The Community Centre offers hot meals on site and is a centrally located highly valued community facility locally, for all ages. As such, CIL funding of £668,756 was allocated in 2023 to enhance the community centre and negate the need for a new build. The project will provide a 21st century entrance that is light and welcoming and shielded from the elements, upgrade existing provisions and enhance accessibility with the provision of a lift and two new rooms. It will provide 3 new toilets, 2 of which are disabled access. Work on this project has commenced.
- 8.8 The Centre is well used. The allocation of CIL funds secures the future of a well-used important community facility in Alton that is facilitating growth, making it fit for modern use, and concluding conversations about the site and its future.

Alton Maltings

- 8.9 The Maltings is owned and run by Harvest Church (charity – The Grain House Trust) as one of their community initiatives and provides an attractive well used meeting space. It comprises an auditorium with a capacity for up to 400 people together with 7 meeting rooms ranging in size from 6-150 people. Since 2020 the use of the venue

has significantly increased with there now being days when the building is running at full capacity. The building has also been undergoing a comprehensive refurbishment plan including the addition of many environmental measures to reduce energy consumption, improve user experience and other related issues.

- 8.10 At the North end of the Maltings there is some unconverted floor space that the owners have been considering how best to use for quite a long time. Considerable costs are associated with converting the space into community use, given the current state of it and its listed building status. There is a planning permission still live associated with the space for residential use, however, this is unlikely to be viable, particularly for affordable housing. The owners are keen to see a use of the space that provides community benefit and are prepared to make it available at a very low cost to the right user, on the basis that refurbishment costs are covered by external grant funding, or another means, but not Harvest Church resources.
- 8.11 The Maltings remains a key community facility, with potential for further community uses.

Edgar Hall

- 8.12 The building is owned by Alton Town Council. The site has planning permission for an extension, and £305,000 of CIL was allocated to this project in 2023, to enable shared use between Dementia Friendly and Alton's Men's Shed. However, Dementia Friendly has since moved to the Alton Assembly Rooms, and the CIL money has been reallocated to refurbish the Assembly Rooms. Edgar Hall is being used at capacity by Alton Men's Shed and Alton Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. The extension is not being pursued. The building is in a good state.

Alton Assembly Rooms

- 8.13 Whilst centrally located on the High Street, this building is limited in its potential by a lack of dedicated parking, and its listed building status. The building is owned by the Town Council. However, the reallocation of CIL funds (as referenced above) to refurbish it provides the opportunity to make improvements to this building which is now being leased to Dementia Friendly. The building has a performing arts history, given its sprung floor and stage.
- 8.14 Prior to a lease to Dementia Friendly and following changes to funded hours for early years provision, the site was scoped for pre-school use. However, the site is not considered suitable for that use. There is no drop off parking, and the outdoor space would be overlooked by flats above. The outdoor space is not free flow and accessible, and the sprung dance floor would not be able to have paint or glue on it.
- 8.15 The use by Dementia Friendly helps to maintain a listed building, which needs a viable use to ensure it does not fall into a state of disrepair.

Alton Community Hub

- 8.16 There is a requirement to deliver a new community hub as part of the redevelopment of the former Molson Coors brewery site. Discussions have taken place between the Town Council, East Hampshire District Council, Legal & General Affordable Homes and Cala Homes to deliver a multipurpose facility aimed at providing and hosting a range of community activities and publicly funded services, under one roof. To date the discussions have not reached agreement on a lease which would provide for acceptable occupation for the identified end users. This facility has been allocated a total of £620,301 CIL funding (2022 and 2023) towards its kit out.

Other

- 8.17 There are many other meeting places in Alton, such as church and school halls that are hired out.
- 8.18 In addition to these facilities, there is the Kings Arms Youth Centre. The Kings Arms operates from a building owned by the Town Council, purposely bought and rented back to the charity for their use, recognising the value of the community work done by this organisation. Since occupying the building, the Kings Arms has completely refurbished it. There remain aspirations to expand the number of sessions and the number of young people they support. The Kings Arms successfully applied to the Council for Supporting Communities Funding in 2023, for projects to improve energy efficiency, which are going ahead subject to planning permission. Internal alterations are also being planned to create a separate group meeting room upstairs and provide a bit more useful space.
- 8.19 Given the amount of meeting space in Alton, and the potential new space planned, there is currently no need for additional meeting space in Alton, unless needed by a specific valuable project to expand and needing to be in a particular location.
- 8.20 The priority for Alton now is the delivery of the projects that have gained CIL funding, concluding the discussions about the Alton Community Hub and maximising the use of existing facilities and building their resilience.

Four Marks

- 8.21 The main facility in Four Marks is the village hall. This facility is well used but is not a modern flexible space and may not be able to fully respond to the varying and growing needs of this community. The Village Hall does host a pre-school. In addition, there is community space at the Benians Sports Pavilion and the Scouts Hut.
- 8.22 In 2021, £1.25m of CIL funding was allocated to Four Marks Community Building and Recreational Hub. This project is being led by Four Marks Parish Council. A planning application was submitted in May 2023 for the new build (ref: 56171/003) but withdrawn in June 2024. The project as proposed may not be deliverable. The Parish Council is considering options in relation to community building provision in the parish which includes the Scout Hut, Benians Sports Pavilion and the Village Hall.

Medstead

- 8.23 Planning permission has been granted and CIL funding allocated (2022) to Medstead Sports Pavilion for alterations and additions to provide a new community meeting room and parish office. This project is close to completion.
- 8.24 The pavilion sits close to Medstead Village Hall, of which the Four Marks and Medstead Neighbourhood Plan says, “Medstead & Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan identified a need to expand the existing facilities at Medstead Village Hall”. This has not happened to date. However, Medstead Village Hall has an aspiration to be more climate resilient and has received S106 funding to help with this. It has also received Cllr Community Grant funding towards a screen and projector for ‘Medstead Movies’. The village hall is well used.

Other areas in the North

- 8.25 In Bentley, CIL funding was allocated (2022) for the upper floor refurbishment and enlargement of Bentley Memorial Hall, which has now been completed. The Parish Council is still considering options to either refurbish or replace the existing Bentley Pavilion.
- 8.26 At Beech Village Hall, the main hall and kitchen/café area is in good condition, having been recently refurbished. However, the second part to the hall which has a separate entrance needs refurbishment. It is old and damp and not a very useable space. It is a smaller space than the main hall. The intention is to be able to use it to rent out to smaller groups for craft activities, counselling sessions, etc.
- 8.27 The village of Froyle benefits from a relatively modern village hall, with parking, and a visual roadside presence. However, the low ceiling precludes most uses for sport and drama. There is an ambition to vault the hall. This would allow installation of theatrical lighting, small stage and a larger screen for film shows, and also to install an AV system.
- 8.28 In Ropley there are four facilities available for hire to the community; Ropley Parish Hall, The Coffee Room, Ropley Sports Pavilion and St Peters Church venue hire. The church having been entirely refurbished following fire is a venue for concerts and for hire (as well as retaining its use as a place of worship). With four facilities operating, it is considered that no further community space is needed that would be available for extensive community use, as there is capacity at present.
- 8.29 In Shalden, the village hall is used by a pre-school, and other community groups. It was built in the late 1930s and is not very energy efficient. It is heated by electricity as there is no gas in the village. The windows are not double glazed. The building would greatly benefit from improved insulation. In addition, the acoustics of the building are problematic, making the noise levels uncomfortable inside the building when in use. This is difficult for older people using the building struggling to hear each other when many people are gathered, and also for the children when the pre-school is in use (see further in education section). A grant of £700 has provided the opportunity to install acoustic panels and this work has been done over summer 2024.

The North-East

- 8.30 With the two main settlements in this area being Liphook and Whitehill & Bordon, it follows that there are well known meeting places in each place; the Millennium Centre in Liphook, and the Forest Community Centre and Whitehill Village Hall in Whitehill & Bordon. These provide venues for multiple community uses and are highly used. Supporting these are many other meeting places around the local area, and the North-East area overall, providing a range of facilities.

Bramshott and Liphook

- 8.31 The Millennium Centre in Liphook is well used by the community and local businesses for events including markets, fitness classes, meetings, community cinema and private parties. The adjoining village green is used for fun fairs and community events. The Millennium Centre is now some 25 years old and in need of refurbishment. Neighbourhood CIL and Parish Council precept are being used to fund much needed maintenance and repairs. Major works to the building now needed include: refurbishment of the disabled toilet, improvements to the car parking area, remodelling of the corridors and improvements to the foyer and public spaces, conversion of the unfinished upstairs rooms to office or rentable spaces, remodelling of the kitchens, replacements of stage curtains, replacement of the tiered seating. The building generally needs to be modernised and updated with redecoration needed in all areas.
- 8.32 Liphook Church Centre lets its hall out to many community groups and health organisations. Improvements were needed to this hall, particularly the roof and the toilets. This work has been funded by S106 and CIL. The roof is completed, and the upgrading of the toilets is being progressed. Further smaller improvements remain, including a new boiler, double glazing to the building and upgrading the foyer. Also see Section 15.
- 8.33 It is notable that whilst Bramshott and Liphook Parish has 8 meeting places, they are located in Liphook, leaving Bramshott residents needing to travel. Should the opportunity arise, provision of a small facility in Bramshott would help to reduce the need to travel and provide a more local meeting place. However, such a proposal should be considered in relation to sustainable links to Liphook and availability of space there. The overriding aim is to make existing facilities resilient, rather than create more. Liphook has some capacity in its existing facilities. If considerable development were to come forward in this area, looking carefully at existing capacity and needs of existing facilities should take place before assumptions of more floorspace.

Whitehill & Bordon

- 8.34 Whitehill & Bordon is well served by existing and new facilities. The Forest Community Centre and Whitehill Village Hall are well used. The Forest Community Centre received £178,000 of S106 money in 2023 for a refurbishment, which is being progressed. The area also benefits from the Phoenix Theatre (in receipt of S106) and Arts Centre (primarily a cultural venue, but with space for hire as well, including by a church, as referenced), and other smaller venues. The new facilities will also take on important roles, particularly the BOSC Cricket Club pavilion as a good quality space for hire, and space at Oakmoor School.

- 8.35 There is however existing unmet demand for community space to meet accommodation needs of community service organisations, with more permanent space needed. Of note is Whitehill & Bordon Northern Gateway site, which is a key gateway site situated on the corner of Camp Road (C114) and Station Road. The Council (EHDC) has declared the Northern Gateway Site in Whitehill & Bordon surplus to its operational requirements. An Expression of Interest (Eoi) exercise was undertaken between February and April 2024 to ascertain the nature of interest in the site and existing buildings and to understand how interested parties would propose to use the site in the future. It has been agreed by EHDC that interested parties from the Eoi exercise will be given a 12 week period to work up a bid to acquire the freehold or a leasehold interest in the whole of the site. This process closed on 30 September 2024.
- 8.36 The location remains an area of growth, with new housing continuing to be delivered. Consolidating existing facilities, maximising use and ensuring buildings are adaptable, resilient and modern could help facilitate meeting additional pressures on meeting places in this area.

Other areas of the North-East

- 8.37 Woodlands Hall in Headley is owned by East Hampshire District Council. The Council has indicated its intention to transfer this important community facility to a local organisation or operator to ensure its long-term protection and to continue to provide valued services to the local community. The hall and open space have been available for community organisations to submit proposals to operate. The hall and open space can be taken as a whole or the assets can be transferred as separate entities. The outdoor space and play area were allocated CIL funding in 2023 (£221,190.60).
- 8.38 In Grayshott, the Jubilee Hut is well used, accommodating the Scouts, the PK Pre-School and other uses. The building is leased from Hampshire County Council. The Scouts and PK are responsible for the maintenance of the building, which is a wood building, recent work has repaired/replaced elements of the timber frame that had become damaged, replaced old metal windows, and repaired the floor in PK and children's toilets. In addition, work may be needed soon to replace the felt roof. The Scouts group (which welcomes boys and girls) is thriving with membership now higher than before the pandemic supported by a strong team of adult volunteer leaders. PK Pre-School is the only such facility in the village and is at capacity supporting over thirty local families. Both the Scout Group and the PK Pre-School are considered by the community essential parts of the village.

The South

Clanfield

- 8.39 Clanfield is well served by meeting places with 6 in total. The two main meeting place facilities are the Memorial Hall and Clanfield Centre. Clanfield Centre is a modern purpose-built facility, well used, with a website that is informative and visual. It is open and used 7 days a week. There is consideration of a fitness gym. It is located to the north of the village, supported by playing fields, outdoor sports facilities and a playground. However, there are some issues which are impacting on the viability of the operation. The Council is supporting the Parish Council to resolve these.

8.40 Only a mile away, is Clanfield Memorial Hall. This is also a good sized, high usage facility, sitting within a reasonably sized site, providing parking. Whilst well looked after and in good working order, the Memorial Hall would benefit from some refurbishment. Particularly the lighting in the car park outside to enable easier access back to vehicles once dark.

8.41 Both these facilities serve the local community well, providing for a good range of activities.

Rowlands Castle

8.42 Rowlands Castle also has a variety of meeting places, with a total of four, with the Parish Hall being the most well used.

8.43 Work has been carried out to Rowlands Castle Parish Hall, and nearly £6,000 of S106 funding was allocated to the hall for refurbishment in 2023.

Horndean

8.44 As the largest settlement in the South, Horndean (including Catherington) hosts the most meeting places in the South, mostly in good condition. Napier and Jubilee Hall are well used by a range of community groups including support to young children and families, and health. Of note is; Home Start Butser runs a 'Little Steps' group that support young families, Southern Health holds meetings for the NHS Clinical and Management support teams within Hampshire and Educational Support Group which is a referrals group which needs to be off site. Horndean Baptist Church uses Napier Hall. Both halls are highly used, with multi use. Some upgrade work is needed to both halls, as documented in Appendix A.

8.45 Merchistoun Hall is run by Horndean Community Association. It hosts a variety of events, and has rooms for hire, and off road parking available. A new nursery has opened from September 2024, 'Muddy Boots' using the hall. Merchistoun Hall is a listed building.

8.46 Horndean Scout hut is very well used but in need of considerable work – Councillor grant funding was awarded in previous years to improve the driveway.

8.47 Blendworth Church Centre in Horndean is used as a hall for hire. The church is located on a separate site. The Centre is located next to public toilets and the fire station. The building is relatively well used and in need of some updates. A new community clothes bank has opened at Blendworth Church Centre transforming a storeroom into the new clothes bank.

8.48 Catherington is served by a village hall, which is located alongside Catherington C of E School, and nursery. No further information is available about any potential work needed to the hall, but note it is the main facility in Catherington.

8.49 A further meeting place is proposed at the large development site 'Land East of Horndean', which will add to the available facilities, and specifically serve the new residents of this development.

Close to the district boundary

- 8.50 Of note are five facilities very close to the district boundary with the SDNPA and Waverley borough; Chawton Village Hall, Rowledge Village Hall, Blackmoor Village Hall, East Worldham Village Hall and Oakhanger Village Hall. (Oakhanger Village Hall is within East Hampshire outside of the SDNP, and therefore considered in this study). The others are just outside of the study area, within the SDNP or Waverley Borough. Any reader considering local provision close to the SDNPA area or Waverley Borough should consider what facilities there are close to, but not within the study area, and cross reference any information with that provided in support of the SDNPA Local Plan, and CIL.

Worldham Village Hall

- 8.51 There is a need to repair and replace the floor and substructure due to substantial underfloor rot at Worldham Village Hall, together with associated painting and redecoration. A CIL application for this work in 2024 was not successful but Supporting Communities Funding was allocated in 2024 for urgent restoration of the floor (£10,500).

Rowledge Village Hall

- 8.52 The village of Rowledge lies across the Hampshire/Surrey border, 3 miles outside Farnham town. Planning permission has been granted for a new village hall on a new site, to replace the old village hall. The new site is on the boundary between Waverley and East Hampshire. The new build part of the site is within Waverley borough. The project has been allocated £650,000 CIL funding from Waverley Borough Council and £60,000 of CIL from East Hampshire District Council (2024). The overall project cost is considered to be over £3m.

9. Cultural infrastructure/buildings and Music Venues

- 9.1 There are 8 cultural infrastructure/buildings in the district (outside the SDNP). 3 are in the Alton area, one in Lasham, two in Bordon and an independent cinema in Liphook (see directory – Appendix B, and discussion below). The eighth; the Mid Hants Railway, runs for 10 miles between Alton and Ropley, with stations within the East Hampshire District area.
- 9.2 Alton College has good performing arts facilities. In Liphook, the Living Room cinema provides local access to cinema, and a meeting place that can be hired. In addition, the Millennium Centre provides a base for Liphook Heritage Centre, and hosts cinema events, being able to accommodate 180 people and large screen and retractable tiered seating.
- 9.3 Alton cinema, which opened in 1912 closed in 2022 and has planning permission for residential development.

Allen Gallery, Alton

- 9.4 Situated in central Alton, the Allen Gallery is a valued community asset in the heart of East Hampshire, showcasing a national and internationally important ceramics collection. It is supported by a committed and passionate volunteer workforce and has the potential to become a central community hub, bringing heritage and art to the forefront of local provision.
- 9.5 The gallery is run by Hampshire Cultural Trust. Poor use of space currently means the venue is not able to meet current needs. The gallery is seeking to transform the venue into a vibrant visitor attraction and a cultural hub for East Hampshire's rural community, making the most of these outstanding collections. The gallery is well used but has the potential to accommodate more and meet greater demands, if transformed.
- 9.6 A fit-for-purpose venue in Alton will enable Hampshire Cultural Trust to develop new audiences who might otherwise experience barriers to cultural engagement, as well as those who are consumers of culture but are not being served by Alton's current offer. The project will help to inspire local pride by creating a of range opportunities for the whole community to participate in culture and heritage and through working closely with the local community to interpret and engage with its local venue and collections.
- 9.7 These interventions will enable community programmes, improve access and create a strong visitor offer that appeals to a wide audience, realising the Allen Gallery's potential to become a cultural hub at the heart of the town and significantly increasing visitor figures to 22,000 per annum by 2025.
- 9.8 £1,789,571 has been awarded from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The project was also allocated £450,000 of CIL funding in 2023 and £85,000 of CIL funding in 2024. It has also been allocated £15,000 of Neighbourhood CIL from Alton Town Council. Planning permission and listed building consent has been granted. Redevelopment of the Allen Gallery will begin in Autumn 2024.

Curtis Museum, Alton

- 9.9 The Curtis Museum in Alton is home to one of the finest local history collections in Hampshire. It houses local historical collections, and also provides educational activities. It is also run by the Hampshire Cultural Trust. In January 2024, Hampshire Cultural Trust confirmed that four of the venues it operates on behalf of Hampshire County Council, including the Curtis Museum in Alton, could be at risk of closure due to a proposed reduction in the Trust's central funding from the County Council under its current budget review to meet a £132m shortfall in 2025/26. The County Council's public consultation on the proposed savings options took place earlier in the year and the feedback will be considered when the County Council's Cabinet makes decisions on whether or not to proceed with the proposed options for savings, in autumn 2024.

Holybourne Theatre, Alton

- 9.10 Holybourne Theatre is a registered charity and not for profit amateur dramatics group. An extension was completed, which has added floorspace to accommodate for the growth of the youth theatre, for productions from 2021.

The Phoenix Theatre and Arts Centre, Bordon

- 9.11 The Phoenix Theatre is the only Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) in the district. The theatre hosts over 100 shows a year and is well used. It also runs after school clubs and holiday activities for children and young people and works with a number of local schools providing drama activities to compliment the core curriculum. In 2023, the Phoenix theatre was allocated nearly £500,000 of S106 money for significant enhancements including vital refurbishments, improving accessibility and inclusiveness (including new frontage and ramp). This work is underway.
- 9.12 The Phoenix Theatre works in partnership with Whitehill & Bordon Regeneration Company on The Cube, a 70-seat performance space accommodated in The Shed in the town centre. Further to this is the intention to deliver leisure uses, including a theatre offer, at the Mess Hall.

Mid Hants Railway, Watercress Line (Alton to Ropley)

- 9.13 This is a heritage line, and not a commuter railway. There are 4 stations along the line at Alton, Medstead and Four Marks, Alresford and Ropley (3 of which are within the East Hampshire area outside the SDNP). The railway is operated by The Mid Hants Railway Ltd, a not-for-profit organisation with shareholders. The profit generated from visitors and operations is re-invested to ensure the future of this part of Britain's railway heritage. The railway is well used.

Outside of the district

- 9.14 There are no specific music venues in the district. Small live music events are generally held in pubs. The nearest live music venues are at Southampton, Portsmouth, Chichester and Guildford.
- 9.15 Petersfield Festival Hall is a major cultural and music venue that serves many East Hampshire District residents. Plans are progressing for the renovation (including partial demolition) and extension of Petersfield Festival Hall and Town Hall building (pending planning application consideration). The Chichester Festival Hall is an important national venue, as is G Live in Guildford and the Haymarket Theatre in Basingstoke. There are also theatres in Camberley and Woking and more locally, the Spring Arts Centre in Havant and the Studio Performing Arts at the Petersfield School.
- 9.16 Also of note are Jane Austen's House and Chawton House, in the village of Chawton. These cultural facilities are within the SDNP but are very close to the boundary with East Hampshire District.

Summary

- 9.17 There is a reasonable amount and distribution of cultural infrastructure/buildings in the district. Whilst there is an absence in the South, there is provision nearby. Over £1m of developer contributions money has recently been allocated to projects at cultural venues (Allen Gallery and Phoenix Theatre).


- 9.18 There are larger facilities nearby that meet needs that aren't directly catered for within the district.
- 9.19 There are no music venues in the district, and this is generally catered for by live music events in pubs and larger venues outside of the district.

10. Places of worship

- 10.1 A directory of existing operational places of worship in East Hampshire District (outside of the SDNP) is available in Appendix B. Attempts have been made to contact all facilities where information is available to do so.
- 10.2 For clarity, a place of worship is a community facility. It does not have to be offering halls for hire, or doing any other further community work, to be classified as such. However, many places of worship are providing facilities for a multitude of community uses and running community outreach and services themselves or in partnership with other organisations. Particularly when co-located, they are often heavily involved in other uses, such as education (for example, Church of England schools, and pre-schools).
- 10.3 Below reflects the latest known position.

Table 4 Places of Worship identifying needs and proposals

St Marks Church, Bordon	<p>Located next to the Forest Community Centre and retail uses, the church is well located to be accessible to the community, operating as a place of worship alongside many community uses it offers. The church has a main worship area, a separate room for hire and a coffee bar area which is also hireable.</p> <p>Proposals: The kitchen space particularly needs work. The aim is to be able to expand the community work done by 'Kettle's On' project and the youth drop in cafe being run in partnership with the Social Prescribers. The entrance to the building would benefit from being relocated.</p>
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	<p>The building needs an update and modernisation. The church aims to have the building open daily and to continue their work with organisations such as Mind and NHS.</p> 
St Andrews Church, Medstead	<p>In 2020, it was reported that the Church is too small to safely manage larger congregations, such as school use or larger funerals.</p> <p>Proposals: Reordering some of the interior, replacing the heating system, re-carpeting, new lighting, less cluttered space for concerts and remove trip hazards.</p>
St James Church, Rowledge	<p>In 2020, it was reported that the Church can seat approx. 125 people. The local school regularly uses the church. The Church cannot seat all those who wish to attend large funerals and weddings, school events, festivals and events such as Remembrance, Easter and Christmas services.</p> <p>Proposals: Exploring options to extend the building.</p>
Harvest Church, Alton	<p>Harvest Church owns and runs Alton Maltings not only as a Sunday and mid-week venue for church activities but also as a community facility for Alton and the surrounding district. The building currently meets the needs of approx. 200 attendees to Sunday worship, and approx. 3-4000 non church users a month.</p> <p>Proposals: In 2021, the church announced they wanted to start working towards developing new church communities (congregations), with these being smaller and more localised both in Alton but also the surrounding villages, whilst keeping one based in the Alton Maltings. Progress towards being one church in many communities has been slower than expected but they are now hoping to launch one in Autumn 2025 probably to the North of Alton and in due course will be looking for appropriate premises, ideally where they could eventually create another community hub.</p>

Headley Down Community Church, Headley Down	<p>In 2020, it was reported that the church and hall are extensively used for community uses, including an extensive foodbank service, its success based on engagement and strong community relations. There were aspirations to provide a more extensive service and be more community based.</p> <p>Proposals: Demolish the church building and rebuild it with a community focus aligned with current local projects and initiatives.</p> <p>In 2024, whilst still very much minded towards this, no further progress has been made. There are some specific on-site constraints. The foodbank remains in a wooden cabin on site.</p>
St Johns Church Rowlands Castle	General updates that were needed have been funded through S106.
St Marys Church, Bentworth	In June 2023, planning permission was granted to extend the church building to provide a toilet, kitchenette and storage. See Section 15 for further information.
All Saints Church, Catherington	In 2024, it is reported that a refurbishment of the kitchen and servery is required. An application for Supporting Communities Funding in 2024 was not successful.
Liphook Church Centre	The use of the building and a community meeting place are intertwined. Work to the roof and toilets have been funded, with the roof completed. Further improvements needed to the foyer and windows. See Section 15 for further information.

- 10.4 Of the many places of worship that did not respond in, no assumptions are made.
- 10.5 The former Alton Baptist Church site is currently for sale.
- 10.6 Aspirations for an Islamic Community Centre, Alton
- 10.7 In 2024, Alton Islamic Centre applied for CIL funding to facilitate the acquisition of a building (Bell House Chapel) for use as to establish an Islamic community centre for Alton and the surrounding area. The proposed project is to provide religious and educational services to the Muslim population and the community as a whole, contributing to the social, cultural and educational development of the town. The CIL application was not successful. In May 2024 planning permission was granted for the change of use from a commercial dance studio to Class F1 (place of worship) (ref: 51658/004). Alton Islamic Centre continues to fund raise for this project.
- 10.8 A planning application has been submitted for a new place of worship in Ropley to accommodate the Plymouth Brethren (ref: 57683/003). The site is previously developed land in the settlement.

Spatial distribution assessment

- 10.9 In the North, most places of worship are in Alton. However, most villages have at least one facility. Some lower tier settlements do have a place of worship, and it is only lower tier settlements that do not have one in the village.
- 10.10 In the North-East, there is a reasonable distribution of places of worship, with the majority being located towards Liphook and Bordon.
- 10.11 There is an equally similar distribution in the South.

Places of worship without permanent facilities

- 10.12 In Whitehill Parish, there are three churches that are using separate community buildings to meet. The Beacon Church meets at the Phoenix Theatre and Arts Centre, the Jubilee Church meets at the Forest Community Centre, and the New Testament Church of God at Whitehill Village Hall. The Beacon Church is understood to also potentially be considering using facilities like BOSC Cricket Club Pavilion and Café Hogmoor and Beehive Education Room. Further dialogue with these groups may consider whether there is a need for further provision, or whether current provision is satisfactory.
- 10.13 It is not an uncommon model for churches to meet in community halls/theatres at weekends, particularly when less well used on a Sunday. Horndean Baptist church meets at Napier Hall. On a much larger scale this is seen in London, major cities and across the Country by for example, Hillsong Church, using central London Theatres, and running on a Sunday at G Live Theatre in Guildford. It is not a given that each place of worship needs or wants its own building, and it may be that there is suitable accommodation already available. However, it is noteworthy that there are 3 churches operating this way in Whitehill. Also, the Harvest Church in Alton has aspirations to start up in other nearby villages, and maybe looking at a similar model. If anything, this highlights the need for any new or existing community venues to be adaptable to different uses and be modern and versatile, to accommodate groups needing to use modern technology, sound systems, parking and provide refreshments.
- 10.14 There is an annual event held in Worldham, called the Jalsa Salana. This large gathering is a temporary use held in the countryside and does not have permanent buildings used as a place of worship. The land is in the SDNP, close to the boundary with East Hampshire District Council.
- 10.15 Spatial distribution assessment
- 10.16 There is a reasonable distribution of places of worship across the district, with the majority located in the most populous areas, such as Alton. A small number of projects and plans have been identified, and no assumptions are made about any other places of worship that have not provided information.

11. Pubs

- 11.1 A directory of existing operational pubs in East Hampshire District (outside of the SDNP) is available in Appendix B.
- 11.2 There are 37 pubs across the district – 18 in the North, 11 in the North-East area and 8 in the South.
- 11.3 In the North, most pubs are in Alton, but some other villages have one pub. The noticeable absence is of any pub in Four Marks. In the last 2 years, three pubs in the North have been lost/closed; the Kings Head in Alton, the Queens Head in Alton and the Royal Oak in Lasham. The Kings Head in Alton has planning permission for flats and a listed building consent pending (ref: 27542/008). The Queens Head in Alton is a brownfield site being considered in the Land Availability Assessment for future development.
- 11.4 In the North-East, there is a reasonable distribution of pubs, with most centred around Liphook and Bordon. However, given the growth experienced in Whitehill & Bordon, it is notable that the Woodlark is the only pub in Bordon itself, and with the Royal Oak in Hollywater area having closed.
- 11.5 In the South, the pubs are focussed around Horndean, Catherington and Rowlands Castle. Rowlands Castle has three pubs – it used to have four but the Fountain Inn closed. The South is served by 8 pubs, with an additional pub in the northern part of Clanfield within the SDNP.
- 11.6 There are currently 3 pubs on the Council's Assets of Community Value register (within East Hampshire outside of the SDNP), of which one has closed.
- 11.7 Seemingly, there is a notable loss each year of one or two pubs.

12. Libraries

- 12.1 There are 3 Hampshire County Council libraries in East Hampshire District (outside of the SDNP). These are in Alton, Bordon and Liphook. Horndean library closed in December 2020. This decision was taken by Hampshire County Council in July 2020, following a Library Service Consultation (Jan-March 2020). It is that Library Service consultation document that identifies the tier categories for the libraries, as set out below.

Table 5 Libraries

Library	Tier	Tier information
Alton Library	2	Tier Two libraries are found in medium sized towns and are open on four or five days each week. They have a catchment of 30,000 to 55,000 people.
Bordon Library	2	

Liphook Library	3	Tier Three libraries are located in smaller towns and villages and are open fewer days each week. Typically, they are small spaces (when compared to Tier One or Tier Two libraries) sometimes co located in community buildings. Tier Three libraries have a catchment population of 10,000 – 25,000 people.
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- 12.2 The consultation document did not identify any specific pressures on services at the remaining libraries, and liaison with Hampshire County Council has not identified any projects that would be needed to support additional growth in these areas.
- 12.3 Despite the loss of Horndean, Hampshire County Council considers there to be adequate service in East Hampshire District.
- 12.4 Whilst there are 3 purpose-built libraries operated by Hampshire County Council in the district, there are also community libraries in Grayshott and Horndean. Since 2021, the garden room at Merchistoun Hall in Horndean has used as a library space.
- 12.5 The Bordon Men's Shed meet once a month in Bordon Library. The Bordon Men's Shed is moving to a new site behind the Phoenix theatre.

Re-use of redundant Horndean Library building

- 12.6 The community use on this site ceased in 2020, and the building has remained empty since. Hampshire County Council owns the site which is for sale (offers over £300,000). The site is use class F1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) and is a community use. Planning policy in the Development Plan seeks to retain community uses, whether currently in use or their last use being a community facility. The Kings Arms is actively seeking premises in the Horndean area for youth services and has identified this site as meeting its criteria. The Kings Arms is highly regarded for its youth work in Alton and Petersfield. There is a need for youth services in the Southern Parishes, and this site is considered a possible location to meet this need.

SEE 2025 ADDENDUM

~~13. Health~~

~~Medical – Primary care services~~

- ~~13.1 Primary care (General Medical Services) is delivered across East Hampshire by four Primary Care Networks (PCN's) (East Hampshire; Swan; A31 and Winchester Rural North & East) which work together to deliver services to a wider community which would not be possible at a smaller scale. It is widely reported that there is a shortage of General Practitioner's (GP's) across the UK, and this is reflected across the East Hampshire geography.~~
- ~~13.2 The Government has invested heavily in the creation of multi-disciplinary teams in primary care services (through the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS)) enabling specialist first contact practitioners to be available at practices and reducing the need for all patients to see a GP. Whilst this improved access to~~

~~services it does not reduce the need for primary care accommodation.~~

- ~~13.3 There are GP Surgeries/Medical Practices distributed across the district, with no clear area lacking provision. Bentley GP Practice closed in 2022, with patients redistributed to other practices nearby.~~
- ~~13.4 Two GP Practices in Alton were allocated CIL funding (2022) to reconfigure to provide more usable floorspace (Chawton Park Surgery and the Wilson Practice). The project at the Wilson Practice is complete. Chawton Park Surgery retains the allocation of funds but is also looking at a larger extension project to accommodate growing needs.~~
- ~~13.5 £330,000 of CIL was allocated in 2023 to a project to expand Boundaries Surgery in Four Marks. This is considered essential infrastructure, and the Council is working closely with the surgery and the Integrated Care Board to deliver this priority project. A planning application for this project has been approved, Sept 2024 (ref: 56860/001).~~
- ~~13.6 £234,474.70 of CIL was allocated in 2024 to a project to expand Watercress medical in Medstead. The next step is to submit a planning application for this work.~~
- ~~13.7 Pinehill surgery in Bordon applied for CIL funding in 2023 and 2024 but was not successful. The practice is relooking at what is needed and working closely with the ICB, with a view to submitting a further more detailed CIL application in the future. The intention is to expand the practice to increase capacity of consulting/treatment rooms.~~
- ~~13.8 Grayshott Surgery sits outside of the district but serves East Hampshire residents.~~
- ~~13.9 Clanfield Surgery gained planning permission in 2019 for conversion of roof space to provide additional consulting rooms and staff coffee room, two enclosed entrance porches and new roof light windows (ref: 58536). The project was not implemented, and the permission has expired. The specific project isn't considered deliverable due to the need to vacate the premises to complete the work. The practice is still looking at ways to increase capacity within the current site, to maintain access to services. The practice is oversubscribed and heavily constrained on the existing site. This is becoming a critical infrastructure issue. A solution is being considered on a nearby potential development site ([Draft Local Plan Site CFD2](#)), to provide a new expanded facility. This may serve a wider catchment than the immediate vicinity of Clanfield. This would need to be part funded by CIL, S106 contributions and the development of site CFD2.~~
- ~~13.10 Horndean Surgery is currently undergoing a phased series of works that is driven by recent increases in patient list size. The phased works will include the addition of three new consulting rooms and an extra treatment room to improve patient throughput. A second and third part of the phased work will include creating multi-purpose workspace for the local Primary Care Network to use. This could free up administration rooms to convert to clinic space in the future.~~
- ~~13.11 Swan Medical Group provide primary care services to residents of East Hampshire and have two surgeries in Liss, two surgeries in Liphook and the Swan Surgery in~~

~~Petersfield. The practice is reviewing its future accommodation needs in light of recent mergers and had been planning to extend its Liphook and Liss sites. The practice has asserted that they require additional space and have the ambition to extend; reconfigure or repurpose accommodation across all the surgery sites.~~

- ~~13.12 A new health hub is planned at Whitehill and Bordon. The Council is working in partnership with the NHS (ICB), the Whitehill & Bordon Regeneration Company (WBRC) and the landowners the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), to bring a modern medical facility to the town centre. The Health Hub will bring together primary care, pharmacy and community health services under one roof in a modern fit for purpose, flexible building in the new town centre. A reserved matters planning application was approved in September 2024 (ref: 55587/211).~~

~~Healthcare – Community and Secondary Care services~~

- ~~13.13 Acute hospital provision sits outside of the district, with users visiting a range of different hospitals including at Portsmouth, Guildford, Frimley, Basingstoke and North Hampshire, and Winchester. East Hampshire's percentage of households with access to hospital within 15 minutes by car is 0%. There is no A&E provision in East Hampshire. However, in 2021, Petersfield Minor Injuries Unit changed to an Urgent Treatment Centre and is open 8am-8pm every day.~~
- ~~13.14 There are plans underway to build a new hospital for Basingstoke. It was announced in 2020 that Basingstoke would get a new hospital as part of a £3.7 billion government package, as part of the new hospitals programme. The new hospital would either replace the current Basingstoke one or be built off Junction 7 of the M3. Regardless of the location, Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital will be closed, as the maintenance of the old buildings is no longer financially sustainable. The concept being that the new hospital would care for more than 600,000 Hampshire residents, providing acute care and centralising niche services provided in Basingstoke, Winchester and Andover. There remains some uncertainty over funding and timescales. A consultation ran in 2023 on proposals on new hospital investment in Hampshire.~~
- ~~13.15 Community Services across East Hampshire are provided largely by Southern Health Foundation Trust, from a variety of locations across the whole geography. The trust also owns and operates the community hospitals in Alton and Petersfield providing community (step-up/ step-down and rehabilitation) beds.~~

~~Dental~~

- ~~13.16 Whilst there is provision overall in the district, the vast majority operate privately. There is NHS provision in Alton (2 practices), Whitehill and Bordon, and nearby in Hindhead and Petersfield. Notably there appears to be no NHS provision in Bramshott and Liphook, or Four Marks and Medstead.~~
- ~~13.17 Alton Dental on Anstey Road has planning permission to extend (ref: 28218007) into the adjoining property. Alton Dental is also a training practice, which means it trains new NHS dentists. In 2024, this expansion project was allocated CIL funding of £189,163.50 and £20,000 from Alton Town Council Neighbourhood CIL.~~

~~13.18 Of note, is the absence of dentists in the South. There is one dentist in Clanfield which is private, but that is all. It is understood that residents of the South generally use dentists in other areas of East Hampshire including Bordon, and out of district in Waterlooville and Cowplain.~~

Opticians

~~13.19 Optician services are delivered on a commercial basis but are able to offer NHS Services. There is generally a reasonable distribution across the district, but a notable absence of optician provision in Bordon. The nearest is in Kingsley.~~

~~13.20 Alton has 5 opticians, four of which are located on the High Street.~~

Pharmacies

~~13.21 There is coverage of pharmacies in the main towns in the district, including in Four Marks, Clanfield, Liphook, Horndean and Rowlands Castle.~~

14. Education

Early years education

~~14.1 The Government's Budget in March 2023 announced [a significant increase in funded hours for preschool/nursery children](#), from the age of 9 months. This is being fulfilled by the new Government and now being put into place, over a staggered timetable, as below;~~

- ~~• Currently, eligible working parents of 3 and 4 year olds can access [30 hours of childcare](#) support.~~
- ~~• Eligible working parents of 2 year olds are also now able to access 15 hours [childcare](#) support.~~
- ~~• From **September 2024**, 15 hours childcare support will be extended to eligible working parents with a child from 9 months-old.~~
- ~~• From **September 2025**, support will reach 30 hours for eligible working parents with a child from 9 months-old up to school age.~~

~~14.2 This is a significant change, with children from 9 months old being able to access funded hours.~~

~~14.3 This is placing considerable pressure on existing early years infrastructure, to ensure sufficient places are available, and creating demand for new provision.~~

~~14.4 Acknowledging the importance and need for early years provision, the Government's proposed changes to the NPPE (July 2024) say,~~

~~"It is important that a sufficient choice of early years, school and post-16 places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They~~

should: give *great weight* to the need to create, expand or alter early years, schools and post 16 facilities through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications". (para 97, emphasis added). And "Significant weight should be placed on the importance of new, expanded or upgraded public service infrastructure when considering proposals for development." (para 98).

- 14.5 — Not only is early years provision hugely important to the economy to enable parents to go back to work, the social benefits have also been highlighted by evidence, with a very public [campaign](#) fronted by the Princess of Wales. (Neil Leitch, chief executive of the Early Years Alliance, welcomed Catherine's engagement with this issue. "For far too long, the early years has been deprioritised, disregarded and ignored when it comes to sector funding, despite a wealth of research showing that the first five years of a child's life are absolutely critical in shaping their long-term learning and development," he said.)
- 14.6 — Early years provision is an education facility, whether in the form of full-time nurseries or preschools who offer term-time only provision. Some facilities are stand-alone, others are located alongside schools on school sites, or within/ adjoining other community uses. Many early years providers operate from scout halls, community centres and village halls. Some early years providers are looking to increase capacity where possible. Early years education offer is also in part met by child minders, who are often in rural areas the main option for families.
- 14.7 — In addition to capacity, many providers are seeking to make updates to facilities, to improve outside garden areas, and more allotment/forest based style activities. Gardens, and outdoor space are increasingly important, alongside ensuring accessibility for disabilities. Ensuring quiet nurturing spaces are available, particularly post covid, for reassurance and forming relationships, is as equally important for early years as later years. Any early year's provider providing baby rooms must meet specific requirements for separate sleep areas and areas for play. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory guidance for all early year's providers. This sets out clear requirements for safeguarding for all children, in terms of safer environments, outdoors, baby changing facilities and toilets.
- 14.8 — There is a reasonable distribution of provision across the area, with the largest settlements having the greatest provision. The issue often is the disparity between term-time only, and full-time providers. It can be more challenging to find local full-time day care provision in rural areas, but equally challenging to hold a sustainable model of full-time day care provision for the provider, particularly in rural areas. This is often where the offer of child minders plays an important role.
- 14.9 — The closure of Alton School in 2024 also results in the closure of the onsite nursery. The nursery was open 8am-6pm for 50 weeks a year. The closure of Alton School nursery and the need for additional childcare places will place a demand for more full-time day care childcare places for families in Alton wards.
- 14.10 — Two early years settings were allocated CIL funding in 2023 (the Ark Pre-school at Liphook and Dimensions Childcare in Horndean) — of which both projects have been completed. £66,780 CIL funding was allocated to First Friends Day Nursery in partnership with Wootey Infant School Alton in 2024, to increase capacity. This project has planning permission and is expected to deliver now funded.

~~14.11 With regards to some information about specific nurseries;~~

~~Enchanted Nursery, Alton~~

~~14.12 In terms of specific projects and needs, there is a need for increased full time provision in Alton.~~

~~14.13 Enchanted Nursery in Alton is one of the largest providers and is seeking to increase capacity with a small scale first floor balcony extension. An application for CIL was submitted in 2023, but unsuccessful at this time. There are constraints to development, which it needs to be shown can be suitably overcome.~~

~~14.14 There has been a long-standing need for a pedestrian crossing at Anstey Road linking the parking at Anstey Park to the nursery. The nursery is concerned about pedestrian safety for children being dropped off and picked up. Following dialogue with Hampshire County Council, a CIL application was made by HCC in 2024 for funding for the crossing, using some already held developer contributions by HCC as well. The application was successful, and the project is now fully funded. This is a priority project, with HCC aiming to deliver it as soon as possible in 2024/25.~~

~~14.15 Enchanted Nursery is providing much needed full time early years provision to Alton.~~

~~The Ark Pre-school, Liphook~~

~~14.16 The Ark Preschool is positioned within a central and accessible part of the town for families to access their early years education funding. The Ark currently has an outstanding Ofsted grade received in November 2019. The Ark Pre-School Nursery registered in 2017. The pre-school provides funded early years education. It opens Monday to Friday during term time, from 8.15am to 3.45pm. There are seven staff employed, six of whom hold appropriate qualifications, including three who hold qualified teacher status.~~

~~14.17 The Ark was allocated CIL and S106 funding in 2023 (totalling £6,528) for improvements to the outside area, which has been completed. The Ark is located at the Liphook Church Centre. Further work to the reception and church office could increase early years capacity. See Section 15.~~

~~Clanfield Community Pre School~~

~~14.18 Clanfield Community Pre-School is in the grounds of Petersgate Infant School in the heart of the of Clanfield. It is a charity, and a committee run pre-school. The building is rented from Hampshire County Council. Children attend from 2 years old. Whilst the preschool is in the grounds of the school, everything within the fence of the pre-school is the pre-school's responsibility.~~

~~14.19 As the building is of a prefab nature, solar panels are needed to help control temperature. Also need sunshade, an outside woodwork area, and roofing.~~

~~14.20 Any future potential to increase capacity would need to be done in collaboration with the school, as extension is not possible at present, as would lose the much needed outside area.~~

First Friends Day Nursery in partnership with Wootey Infant School

~~14.21 A project at Wootey Infant School to increase the number of children under the age of five that can be cared for at First Friends Nursery was allocated CIL funding in 2024. The proposal will increase the number of early years education spaces available on the Wootey site from 39 to 53. The additional 14 spaces will be for the under twos, specifically babies 9-18 months. There is an evidenced need for more early years provision in Alton, particularly for under 2s (HCC Childcare Development Officer, Community Facilities Study 2023, and the emerging Infrastructure Plan). General need is especially apparent given the news of the closure of Alton School, which includes nursery provision. Planning permission has been granted for this project (ref: 52482/002).~~

~~14.22 This project will increase capacity and will provide important education infrastructure. It is fully funded with the CIL allocation.~~

14.23 Muddy Boots, Horndean

~~14.24 This is a new nursery that opened in September 2024, using Merchistoun Hall in Horndean. This is a small 20 place nursery. There are a few projects that would support this new provision including; works to the fire escape, a banister at child height on the stairs and an outside toilet as it is outdoor focused provision.~~

The Beehive Montessori, Shalden

~~14.25 The Beehive Montessori uses Shalden Village Hall. The acoustics of the building have been problematic but acoustic panels have been installed over summer 2024 and are an improvement. This will particularly assist children with special needs. The floor is cold in winter, which could be improved with insulation. This project is being looked into as it would benefit young children who crawl and help with energy saving.~~

~~14.26 There is a wider project to increase energy efficiency which is currently not viable due to the high costs of the work.~~

PK Pre-school, Grayshott

~~14.27 This is the only early years setting in Grayshott. It uses the Jubilee Hall, which also accommodates the Scouts. It is highly valued, and at capacity supporting over 30 local families. The Scouts and PK are responsible for the maintenance of the building, which is a wood building, recent work has repaired/replaced elements of the timber frame, replaced old metal windows, repaired the floor in PK, replaced the children's toilets and installed new energy efficient LED lighting throughout the building. In addition, work may be needed soon to replace the felt roof.~~

Medstead Pre School

~~14.28 Medstead Pre school and Nursery is a committee run setting and has been operating since September 1989 when it started in Medstead Village Hall as Medstead Playgroup. The pre-school building is owned by the pre-school, which is located on the Medstead Primary School site. The windows in the building are old and need replacing. The pre-school runs the breakfast club for Medstead Primary School, with future options to also run after school provision. There are also future considerations with regards to the Government funding now available for provision for younger children (from 9 months) and scope to increase capacity to accommodate younger children.~~

Ropley

~~14.29 There used to be Ropley Pre-School that ran from the Parish hall but it closed. There is no alternative provision in Ropley. The nearest preschools are Busy Bees in Bishops Sutton, provision in Four Marks and in Bramdean. Children attending Ropley Primary School come from various nurseries and pre-schools across the area.~~

Specialist Education

~~14.30 In Hampshire, 5.1% of school age pupils had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), that equates to over 10,000 pupils. Of those with an EHCP, approximately 40% will require a specialist place either in a special school or a resourced provision in a mainstream school. More specialist places are required to educate the growing number of children with EHCPs and preferably in their local area as appropriate to their needs.~~

~~14.31 Pupils who have additional needs and have an EHCP are either catered for within mainstream primary and secondary provision or in specialist provisions such as special schools or a resourced provision unit at a mainstream school.~~

~~14.32 In East Hampshire, Hollywater School in Bordon caters for c140 pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties (SLD), aged 4-19. Pupils requiring other specialist provision will travel outside of the District to the nearest appropriate school or may be placed in independent provision. Independent provision is available at the Green Room in Kingsley and Treloar College and School in Alton, each catering for specific designations. Early years specialist education is provided at Bushy Leaze nursery in Alton although all nurseries are inclusive. Alton College also has a 40-place independence hub for post-16 pupils with SLD. Whilst outside our area, in Hindhead, Undershaw (independent) provides specialist provision for some East Hampshire residents. In addition, sometimes other schools outside of East Hampshire provide places for students from East Hampshire, including More House School in Frensham, The Waterloo School, Riverside Community Special School, Rachel Maddocks School and Prospect School – all in Havant.~~

~~14.33 Treloar College provides for pupils with significant complex needs and is one of the biggest employers in East Hampshire. Pupils are placed by Hampshire County Council and other neighbouring counties. Some pupils attending Treloars are from East Hampshire district, but many are from other areas. Improvements were made to the swimming pool following allocation of £190,000 of CIL in 2022. CIL has also been~~

~~allocated to a new minibus, this is not yet fully funded. In 2024, £25,000 of Supporting Communities Funding was allocated to Building an Interactive Learning Zone for students.~~

~~14.34 The Green Room in Kingsley (GRK) is an independent special school in East Hampshire, providing education for children specifically with EHCPs. GRK was allocated CIL funding to refurbish its bushcraft area in 2023, and this work has been completed. Further CIL funding was allocated to a multi-purpose pod in 2024, which is now the subject of a pending planning application (ref: 58208/002). CIL funding has also been allocated from the SDNPA towards this project.~~

~~14.35 Hollywater School is currently improving its facilities including a new medical suite, immersive room, new soft play therapy room and external play areas. Plans are also being drawn up for a new forest school and learning area however funding has not yet been identified for this. Hampshire County Council and Hollywater School are also looking at a potential expansion to the school due to high demand on places from the local areas. The school was successful in applying for the Council's Supporting Communities Funding towards an accessible minibus in 2023 (£10k).~~

Mainstream education

~~14.36 CIL funding was allocated in 2023 to a few schools for small scale improvements, generally low cost high value projects, particularly supporting students post covid with more outside learning and nurture/reflective spaces. In addition, available S106 money held by HCC was also spent on such like projects. Whilst not increasing pupil capacity, they do enhance the learning environment and expand the offering, picking up on the increasing additional needs that schools are catering for, and dealing with challenges students face post covid. Many schools need improvements such as these, and in some cases changing facilities to support pupils who, due to their additional needs, are not fully toilet trained and require adult support. It is recognised that some low costs projects in schools can be highly valuable to the school and students, making a real difference day to day. Ropley Primary School quickly completed the two projects it was allocated CIL funding towards.~~

~~14.37 HCC held S106 is being used towards the Safer Routes to School Project in Four Marks. There is also S106 money held by HCC to expand Four Marks primary school.~~

~~14.38 Liphook Junior School is installing a new dance/drama space, commenced this year.~~

~~14.39 CIL funding was allocated in 2024 to Liphook Infant School to install a new drainage system for the playground, and £100k towards an extension at Selbourne Primary School. Whilst Selbourne Primary School is within the South Downs National Park, children attend from within East Hampshire CIL area. This project has also been allocated £100k from South Downs National Park CIL 2024.~~

~~14.40 A project remains at Clanfield Junior School, where there is a disused swimming pool. The proposal is to convert the old swimming pool changing rooms into toilets and storage which will be used by both the school and Clanfield Football Club. There remains scope to consider options for best use of the swimming pool site and look strategically across the school and the village to see how best to use this land.~~

Discussions are ongoing between the Council, HCC and the school to finalise the details of the project.

- 14.41 There are further aspirations as Anstey Junior School in Alton for sensory garden and allotments, and at the Holme Primary School in Headley for an additional standalone Special Educational Needs Building. An application for this project was made for CIL in 2024 but was unsuccessful. The project scored reasonably well and could be considered for funding in the future.
- 14.42 Ropley Primary School has delivered two projects that it received CIL funding towards (outside canopies, and a wildlife garden). There are further projects being considered, including a forest school particularly focussed on early years, but also wider, responding to demand and general needs for more outdoor learning. Of note, the school has an outdoor swimming pool, which is run and funded by the PTA through fundraising. It's open for the second half of the summer term and two weeks into the summer holidays. All the children have a formal swim lesson every summer so by the time they leave in year 6 they can swim 25m.
- 14.43 Andrews' Endowed CE Primary School in Holybourne, Alton has been allocated £5,000 of Supporting Communities Funding (2024) to improve its special educational needs provision.
- 14.44 Wrap around care remains important for working parents and carers. Hampshire county has been selected as one of 16 councils to work with the Government to develop further wrap around care – [First councils picked to trial wraparound childcare – BBC News](#). There may be specific needs from this, as for example, not all schools have emergency lighting, which would be needed for later use. There is a Wraparound Childcare Grant available through Hampshire County Council that had two application rounds, April/May 2024 and then September 2024, where organisations including schools and community providers could apply for funding for both revenue and capital expenditure to increase the availability of wraparound care. Those applications are assessed by a panel and agreed grants will receive their funding to be able to deliver the expanded wraparound care offer.
- 14.45 A new primary school is planned as part of the new development at Hazelton Farm, known as Land East of Horndean. This will be funded by CIL and S106 contributions. Current expected build out rates suggest the school will be needed for September 2029.
- 14.46 Oakmoor School is a new, state of the art secondary school in Bordon, on the edge of the South Downs National Park. The school was delivered as part of the redevelopment of Whitehill & Bordon. Hampshire County Council is currently undertaking a £9,250,000 extension to Oakmoor School, enabling a further 300 children to attend the school from September 2025. The extension to the school will meet the anticipated ongoing demand for secondary school places arising from the redevelopment of Whitehill & Bordon. Oakmoor School is run by the University of Chichester Academy Trust (UNICAT) and currently provides education for up to 900 children aged between 11 and 16 years old. The extension will increase the school's capacity to 1,200 places. The works being undertaken are the development of a two-storey extension to the school's northern teaching block, allowing the creation of 16 new classrooms, offices and toilets. The plans also include internal remodelling of the

~~existing accommodation to provide additional suited ICT, science and art classrooms. The school site is in use during the construction period, starting in June 2024 and due for completion Summer 2025, ready for the increased intake in September 2025.~~

- ~~14.47 Bordon Infant and Junior Schools are undergoing an expansion from 2-form entry schools to 3-form entry schools. The project increases teaching space, Learning Resource Centre space and expands some non-teaching spaces. An enlarged staff car park and relocated pedestrian access is also to be provided. The development is being paid for by S106 contributions and will be completed by the Summer 2025~~
- ~~14.48 A new primary is also planned at Whitehill & Bordon, population and housing data indicates this will need to be open for September 2028.~~
- ~~14.49 Closure of education facilities – this year has seen the closure of Alton School (fee paying catholic independent day school), and Bordon Future Skills Centre. Alton School site was understood to be processing through a sale at the time of writing. There are many community facilities on the site including nursery, education and sports. Work continues with HCC to consider the future use of Bordon Future Skills Centre, after Basingstoke College of Technology (BCoT) relocated their construction courses from Bordon due to a drop in student enrolment and rising costs.~~

15. Benefits of Co-location (including case studies)

- 15.1 Whilst these are increasingly stretched financial times, there are also increased social needs across all ages. Alongside this is the climate emergency, encouraging less travel by car, and meeting needs locally. Community facilities are vital to all aspects of this, particularly where they are co-located. Not only can co-location help reduce journeys, but the organisations on site can also work closer together to improve resilience. It is vital that community facilities are fit for the future, resilient and efficient. Where possible, co-location in sustainable locations with walking and cycling options is of considerable benefit, and highly beneficial for helping to achieve vibrant and healthy communities, and partnership working.
- 15.2 Where facilities are stand alone, at a distance from communities or other community uses, and particularly if they are constrained in planning terms by being a listed building for example, they can become increasingly challenging to keep attractive, fit for modern use, and financially efficient. In the future, consolidation of uses, focussing on those that can modernise and best meet needs effectively, may be required.

Liphook

- 15.3 Central Liphook benefits from many facilities, or which many are closely located. Along London Road there is the recreational play area, the tennis club, the methodist church (which includes a nursery - Three Frogs), the library and just round the corner the living room cinema. A variety of community uses, near each other. Of note is the play area, nursery and library closely located, and likely to be visited by families within one trip. Whilst these are closely located, it is not known at present of any

close working relationship. The Millennium Hall is very centrally located in Liphook, between these facilities and the Liphook Church Centre below.

- 15.4 An example of partnership working on a shared site is the Ark Pre-school and Liphook Church Centre. A considerably sized site, with garden and parking; there is a church, meeting hall, and pre-school, all working together to deliver community service and facilities. The church and pre-school have collectively engaged with the opportunities available from developer contribution funding – receiving S106 for works to the roof of the church and CIL funding in 2023 for a project at the Pre-school (both of which have been completed). CIL was allocated in 2024 to refurbish the main toilets. It was clear that the condition of the toilets was greatly hindering the health and community uses at this site – once completed it is expected that frequency of use and range of uses will significantly increase. Smaller projects remain such as improvements to the foyer, and windows.
- 15.5 There is further aspiration here to expand the pre-school and further widen the community use, bringing in more health, wellbeing and family support. Building on the improvements planned, there is real scope to deliver a much-improved modern facility providing support for young families through the pre-school and church and widening the community use.



Liphook Church Centre

Bentworth

- 15.6 At the heart of Bentworth is the CE Primary School, St Mary's Church, and Jubilee Hall. A popular school for those seeking a rural setting and local children, there is ambition to further deepen the working relationship between the church and school, sharing uses for key events and strengthening links into the community. The church has planning permission for a small extension to provide a toilet, kitchenette, and storage, and is keen to host more community focused events, working together with the school. Jubilee hall is a good facility on site, owned and used by the school during school hours including for wrap around care, and available for hire out of hours. The school was allocated CIL funding in 2023 for redevelopment of the pond and allotment area to provide greater access and ability to do learning outside and works to playground – this work is now completed.



CIL funded project completed at St Mary's CE Primary School Bentworth.

- 15.7 This is a strong example of close working between facilities, which will help progress future projects. One such aspiration is to develop a pre-school on site, to bring community together and to help reduce travel. Many families drop off at school having dropped off at preschool in Alton, Four Marks or Medstead. There is further work such as addressing parking issues to enable more appropriate entrance for funeral corteges into church and bringing more floorspace into use in the main school building through reconfiguration. There is a real aspiration for a community hub on this site, where all ages can support each other, and helping to reduce the need to travel.

Alton

- 15.8 In Alton, there are two noticeable collections of health uses. At Anstey Road (close to Waitrose and the station), there is Alton Dental, Alton Health Centre (The Wilson Practice) and Anstey Road Pharmacy. A pedestrian crossing is available linking the dentist, to the health centre and pharmacy across the road. Ample parking is available to serve these uses, as Alton Health Centre sits within a large site with parking to the rear. Alton Dental has been discussed in the health section, with planning permission to extend to enable it to provide for more NHS patients and CIL funding allocated. Alton Health Centre was allocated CIL funding in 2023 and completed the project. There is no known working relationship between the dentist and medical uses, but its location so close to each other is worthy of note in terms of creating hubs of community uses.
- 15.9 The second is on the southwest side of Alton, where there is Alton Community Hospital, Chawton Park GP Surgery and pharmacy, alongside each other. Alton Community Hospital is a small hospital which has two wards, Anstey ward that focuses on rehabilitation/palliative care and Inwood ward, that specialises in rehabilitation and recovery. A number of community services and teams are also based here including podiatry, tissue viability services and catheter clinics. Chawton Park GP surgery is a good-sized surgery meeting the medical needs of many residents of Alton and surrounds. It took on patients when Bentley surgery closed. It has capacity to extend, which is needed to meet future needs of Alton's growing and ageing population. It was allocated a small amount of CIL funding in 2023 (£50k) but applied in 2023 for £900,000 for an extension. Whilst not successful in 2023, this remains a priority project for essential infrastructure in the town. The pharmacy on

site further supports these medical uses with provision of the Pharmacy first model, helping to meet needs all in one place and reduce travel.

Whitehill & Bordon

- 15.10 The Forest Community Centre is at the heart of a collection of community uses in Whitehill & Bordon. The Community Centre accommodates citizens advice and a pre-school. Across the road is St Mark's Church, increasingly more active in the community and seeking to do work to its building to help it do so. Just round the corner are two more nurseries, and Pinehill surgery, with retail uses close by. Many community needs are met in this location. The Forest Community Centre has received S106 funding for refurbishment, and St Mark's Church and Pinehill Surgery have identified projects that could help develop its community work/service. Whilst a working relationship between these uses is not known of specifically, there is scope to develop this, particularly in relation to community work, and between the nurseries, the community space/church and the nearby library. Many nurseries seek the use of churches or meeting places for graduations, harvests, Christmas songs etc.
- 15.11 Note – there will be more such examples of working practices and location of facilities within the area.

16. CIL funding for community facilities

- 16.1 Each year, [the Council allocates funds collected from the Community Infrastructure Levy](#) (CIL) to infrastructure projects that support growth in the district. Some of the projects that have been allocated funding to date relate to this study. Those marked in grey are completed projects.

Project	Parish	Allocation of CIL funds
A new Community Building and Recreational Hub	Four Marks	£1.25m
Boundaries surgery extension	Four Marks	£330,000
Bentley Memorial Hall Upper floor refurb and enlargement	Bentley	£12,500
Medstead Sports Pavilion, provision of new community meeting room and parish office	Medstead	£150,000
The Wilson GP Practice Same Day Access to Services project	Alton	£29,830.36
Chawton Park GP Practice	Alton	£50,000
Kit out of Alton Community Hub	Alton	£467,278 and £153,023.81
Redevelopment of Allen Gallery and garden	Alton	£450,000 and £85,000

Refurbishment of Alton Assembly Rooms	Alton	£305,000
Treloars School and College, swimming pool refurb	Alton	£190,000,
Treloars School and College – electric minibus	Alton	£50,000 and £10,000
Anstey Junior School Nurture Group Facility	Alton	£35,483
Alton Community Centre Upgrade	Alton	£668,756
Bentworth Primary School Landscape plan	Bentley	£60,000
Ropley C of E Primary School Outside canopies to provide additional teaching space	Ropley	£25,000
Ropley C of E Primary School Wildlife / Spiritual Garden	Ropley	£32,548.85
The Ark Nursery, Liphook	Liphook	£5,430
Green Room School, Kingsley	Kingsley	£14,465.88
Dimensions Childcare outdoor play area, Horndean	Horndean	£10,000
Refurbishment of the Cabin to provide inclusive facilities (8 th Alton Scout Group)	Alton	£80,000
Additional Early Years Childcare Capacity at Wootey Infant School	Alton	£66,780
Alton Dental – extension	Alton	£189,163.50
Extension to Watercress Medical	Medstead	£234,474.70
Liphook Church Centre refurb toilets	Bramshott & Liphook	£54,315.30
Liphook Infant School drainage project	Bramshott & Liphook	£30,000
The Green Room School multi purpose pod	Kingsley	£75,000
Selborne Primary School single storey extension	SDNP	£100,000

Rowledge Village Hall Rebuild of village hall on new site	Waverley borough	£60,000
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- 16.2 Many other projects have been funded including for sports, transport and footpaths. List available [here](#).
- 16.3 Projects identified in this study are encouraged to consider applying for [CIL funding](#) and speaking to the Council about other sources of funding. It is advised that the guidance and spending protocol are carefully read before making a CIL application. Projects must have other sources of funding and must be able to demonstrate how they facilitate growth in the district.
- 16.4 Projects should be mindful that EHDC's [Spending Guidance](#) for CIL funding outlines expectations on what projects can be funded by CIL. Maintenance of a piece of infrastructure rather than capital works would be an inappropriate use of CIL unless there is clear evidence that in delivering the maintenance would support development, through increasing capacity or usage and scale of any proposed maintenance.
- 16.5 There are also other funding opportunities for organisations available – visit our [website](#) to find out more.

17. Theory

17.1 The modern approach to Community Facilities

- 17.2 In a rural district such as East Hampshire, with limited public transport, the importance of local community facilities cannot be underestimated. These places provide an essential service offering opportunities for local people to meet, socialise, access pop up local services, but perhaps most importantly they can form the centre of a community, giving it an identity and acting as a hub for all local activity.
- 17.3 In East Hampshire we are fortunate to have a good network of community facilities, as is set out in this study. However, for many of these facilities continued operation is becoming more challenging as costs increase and in some circumstances usage levels drop. To ensure the district is served by a network of community facilities we need to ensure that facilities can provide a flexible multi-use space that can accommodate a range of users, with an ability to respond and adapt to changing needs of the community.
- 17.4 The siting of such community facilities is also important to consider. Facilities need to be in accessible locations where communities can access the facility through active travel routes reducing the need for private car use, or where that is not possible using public transport. Good connectivity with public transport is also key to aid access from a wider area, along helping to provide opportunities for sustainable travel modes, where necessary and feasible facilities should also be supported by

appropriate parking provision⁴ to support the functionality of the facility. Surrounding land should provide space for the development of outdoor facilities, such as sport, recreation and play, and also to be safeguarded for potential building extensions in the future which would ensure longevity and sustainability of the facility going forward.

- 17.5 In East Hampshire the majority of community centres, village halls and other community facilities are operated by town and parish councils or charitable community organisations. This is a sustainable model which works, using a blend of paid staff and local volunteers to ensure facilities are financially viable and respond to local demand. Facilities tend to be run successfully if they have good operational and financial management, the District Council can provide advice and support to organisations to ensure appropriate governance and financial management is in place for sustainable operation⁵. For the small number of community buildings in the district which are owned or owned and operated by the District Council, the Council will be seeking to devolve these assets to local community organisations. This model of local ownership or management is proven to work for local communities, and with sound governance and financial management is more sustainable than facilities centrally controlled by the District Council. The Council will work with all community groups and organisations to devolve assets (not just EHDC owned assets) to local organisations that are best placed to own or operate these vital community facilities.
- 17.6 For a community facility to be financially stable and well used by the community, the following elements need to be considered:
- Providing a multi-functional space that is flexible and can accommodate a number of different uses and adapt to changing trends and needs of the community.
 - Understanding the demographic profile of the local area in terms of age, economic wealth, accessibility and health to determine what facilities and services the local community will need.
 - Understanding what facilities already exist in the local area, or within the wider area accessible by sustainable travel options.
 - Having robust business plans and effective governance that can maximise opportunities and commercial ventures.
 - Operating with a combination of paid staff and high-level volunteers to manage staffing costs.
 - Ensuring charging schedules for facilities and services is appropriate for the local area and can generate a level of income that can be used for a sinking fund.
 - Recruiting staff or volunteers that are experienced in marketing and/or fund raising to increase opportunities for income.
 - Recruiting and retaining trustees that have experience in business and/or finance.
 - Recognising opportunities to deliver income generating activities, for example providing flexible office space for increased working from home.

⁴ Parking Standards are set out in the Council's Vehicle Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/adopted-supplementary-planning-documents>

⁵ See [Community buildings - Action Hampshire](#) for more information.

- Consider sustainable energy generation, utilising modern insulation and other energy saving techniques to improve energy performance, which will help to reduce energy costs.
- Consider a mix-used model approach where a number of different functions are co-located in the same building which could include café provision serving food and drink, shared workspace as part of a business hub or partnership agreement, non-clinical outreach community health services, along with commissioned/funded services which contribute to premise running costs and overheads.

17.7 The NPPF (2023) outlines that planning policies should ensure that developments optimise the opportunities for an appropriate amount of mixed use on sites. Such mixed use would allow for different types of housing and alongside other forms of development, such as green or other public space, or built facilities such as community buildings. This mix helps to support the health, social and cultural wellbeing of the local community as part of a well-designed built environment. The framework also notes that mix-use developments, where the uses are suitable as neighbours, promote social interaction that would not necessarily take place if there was not an integration of shared space and residential development on the same site.

17.8 Sites for housing development need to optimise the use of land. Where new housing development is close to existing community facilities, consideration should be given to whether it would be more beneficial to invest in existing facilities to create more sustainable facilities fit for the future, rather than provision of new facilities. That said, in some cases on large development sites, there may be a specific need and scope to consider additional community facilities, subject to local evidence of need. The assumption should not always be the provision of new facilities when investment in existing facilities may be a more efficient and sustainable solution to meeting local demand.

17.9 Calculating the size of a Community Facility

17.10 Sport England has produced a design guide for community and village halls which outlines the best approach to the size, layout and accommodation to meet a range of different needs⁶. The guidance advises that each community facility will have individual needs, but the core accommodation should include:

- Main activity and assembly space
- Entrance foyer
- Equipment and furniture store
- Kitchen
- Toilets, including facilities for disabled people
- Changing provision
- Cleaners store

⁶ Sport England Design Guidance <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/sports-halls>

- Boiler or plant room.

17.11 The core accommodation can be expanded to include:

- Changing or dressing rooms and showers to meet different needs
- More or larger activity space
- Licensed bar
- Flexible stage
- Meeting or club rooms.

17.12 If community facilities are proposed to co-locate different services then consideration could also be given to them accommodating wider community functions such as a community shop, post office, non-clinical outreach community health services or changing rooms that would support external sports pitches co-located with the facility.

17.13 There are different configurations for community facilities depending on the size and functions the building is to provide.

17.14 The management and ownership of Community Facilities

17.15 There is an existing provision of community facilities across East Hampshire area, of varying sizes and configurations, all serving the needs of our local communities. How these and future facilities are owned and managed is key to ensure that such facilities have an ability to continually meet the needs of the local population.

17.16 It is vital that community facilities are sustainable to ensure longevity. This can be achieved through good operational and financial management, as well as providing community benefits for residents. Identifying the end user is crucial for both existing facilities, and also proposed new facilities where this should be done from the outset to enable full consultation and engagement. This will then help to inform the design of buildings so that required services can be accommodated as part of a functional building that is easier to run and manage as the space is fit for purpose.

17.17 There are different models that can be considered when looking at the ownership and ongoing management of community facilities. The appropriate model to use would need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis taking account of the size of the building, the surrounding location, the local demographic, the local operational organisations and potential opportunities in the area.

17.18 The following are some of the potential models that could be considered in regards to managing community facilities:

Community Development Trust

17.19 Community Development Trusts (CDT) are community based organisations that take on a mixture of environmental, economic and social initiatives to enable sustainability in their area. This could include running a local post office, setting up training programmes or managing a housing development. Trusts will operate independently

on a not for private profit basis and are very much committed to working with the local community, stakeholders and organisations in the private and voluntary sector.

- 17.20 There is no set legal structure for the operation of CDT, many do register as charities, however they could alternatively register as a company limited by guarantee, a community interest company, or an industrial and provident society. A CDT will have a number of funding avenues available to them, including grants, loans, Community Infrastructure Levy, assets, income generation and charitable status.
- 17.21 The key element of a CDT is that they are set up and run by local people with the aim of addressing local issues. A successful CDT will be able to forge strong partnership working in the local community, are income-generating and able to secure funding, and in addition can maximise any assets that the trust may own. Through new development sites there is also the potential to lever in a charge on each household that can be used to financially support the CDT.
- 17.22 It can take time to establish a CDT and it is vital to have the right people and skills sets involved, including good representation from the community.
- 17.23 The ethos of a CDT would very much lend itself to the management of a community facility as it is crucial that such facilities can effectively respond to local need and can be operated in a way that will secure future sustainability.

Management Company

- 17.24 A Management Company is set up by a developer to take on future ownership and maintenance of any shared spaces such as footpaths, landscaping, maintenance of grass and open space, drainage and roads that are not adopted by the Highway Authority. They can also take on the management of structures such as community buildings. Residents on the site will be required to pay an annual service charge which the Management Company is responsible for managing appropriately with this required to cover ongoing maintenance, a reserve (sinking) fund for renewals such as road surfacing or drains, employment of Management Agents, insurance premiums and administration of the Management Company.
- 17.25 A Management Company's driver will be profit, and so community/social value may not be considered as equally, therefore ensuring that the community facility is meeting local community need may not be achieved, unless there is a strong resident representation involved in the operation of the Management Company.
- 17.26 Management Companies tend to be favoured by developers bringing forward sites as they will often be taking on the ongoing management of other many other public space elements. The lack of a local presence can cause issues with being able to provide the required resource to keep a building operational and from a day-to-day running perspective.

Town or Parish Councils

- 17.27 In some areas Town and Parish Councils can be well placed to take on the management of community facilities if they have the desire to do so. Town and Parish Councils have close ties to the community they serve, are locally based so

fully understand the needs of the area and can supplement revenue costs with increases in their precept. In terms of new facilities to be implemented, if close working can be established between the Local Planning Authority and the Town or Parish Council then it can be ensured that the community facilities are designed and constructed to the appropriate standards which would provide reassurances for the future ownership and maintenance to be taken on by Town and Parish Councils.

17.28 Town and Parish councils may face some challenges in terms of being able to access external funding sources as there will be less available to them. There may be a limit to the in-house resource they can commit to managing the day-to-day operational elements and may prefer to have some initial support when taking on such assets.

17.29 However, Town and Parish Councils are often very well placed to take on and manage community facilities as a local asset and will often have the expertise to do so in a sustainable manner.

Conclusion

17.30 The most appropriate ownership and management approach to be taken with community facilities will vary and often needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, in most cases a locally based organisation/body is often best placed to manage such community assets as these local organisations/body will already have a good understanding of the local area, population and demographics and can therefore provide services that meet local need. Local organisations can also be more dynamic in responding to changing behaviours or local demands, being able to react quickly to changes makes for more viable community facilities. Having a clear understanding of the local area and therefore who the potential end users will be will help to inform planning, design, implementation and ongoing operational management of facilities. The District Council can support the community, voluntary and social enterprise sector, to ensure effective governance and sound financial practices to create sustainable business models for community facilities. Local groups are better able to recruit local volunteers and create more sustainable operation. Working together we can support a network of vibrant community facilities that support local communities, tackle social isolation, provide services close to residents, and provide the focal point for our thriving communities.

18. Summary and conclusions

18.1 The district is generally well supported by the community facilities considered in this study. The operations described by those responding to the officer enquiries demonstrate a local demand for meeting places and other types of community facilities, with villages and towns having a strong sense of place and community togetherness. Some areas are particularly well served in terms of the quantum of facilities, but the focus going forward is adapting those facilities and modernising them to be fit for the future and changing needs and demands. Spaces need to be flexible, versatile, modern and attractive. They need to be run using modern technology as more people expect to be able to book/hire and use spaces in this way. They also need to be managed in such a way (using technology where

appropriate) that enables them to be efficient and cost effective, whilst meeting local needs of all members of the community. There are noticeable benefits of facilities locating close together and working together, for efficiency, strength and helping reduce the need to travel.

- 18.2 This study has identified some specific areas that need further focus and key projects. Alton, as the largest town, is well served by facilities and has received considerable amounts of CIL funding for projects, particularly for meeting places. There now needs to be time for those projects to happen, and the results of that to be considered. There remain specific projects in Alton such as Chawton GP practice extension, and Alton Dental extension (now funded), both which have the potential to bring about considerable health benefits in the town. In addition, the community space which will be created by the provision of a community hub will help to meet existing demand for community space and an outcome for the hub is expected soon.
- 18.3 Four Marks Community Building received £1.25m of CIL funding. This project holds considerable CIL funds. Project considerations are ongoing by the Parish Council. A new community meeting place is planned in Horndean. Going forwards, prior to considering any facility, consideration should be given to existing provision and how that can be improved. It is not a given that existing can always be improved, as noted in this study, some facilities are not in the best location, or may be constrained by being listed buildings etc, but the starting point should be to assess what is existing in terms of capacity and improvements, prior to assuming additional.
- 18.4 Cultural facilities are not as available as other uses, however, nearly £1m of developer contributions money has recently been allocated to projects at cultural venues (Allen Gallery and Phoenix Theatre). The Allen Gallery has planning permission and work is scheduled to commence this autumn.
- 18.5 There is a good distribution of places of worship across the district, with some places of worship using community spaces rather than individually owned buildings. Many places of worship are carrying out increasing community work, and sharing and using other spaces, which is aided by close location of buildings.
- 18.6 Pubs are well distributed, although note the continuous loss each year which reflects a national trend.
- 18.7 Health facilities are well distributed, except for dentists. There is a significant lack of dentists in the South, and many areas of the district lacking NHS provision. Alton is fortunate to have two NHS dentists, one of which is a training facility.
- 18.8 Any reader should consider that the use of community facilities crosses parish and district boundaries. Consideration should therefore be given to any facilities in other areas.
- 18.9 Any proposed extensions, changes, or new provision of a community facility is encouraged to have conversations with the Council's Communities team. Spaces that are financially viable need to be modern, flexible, attractive, adaptable and make full use of all operating methods to ensure efficiency.

19. Review

- 19.1 The information in this study may date quickly, as projects and plans move forward. Decisions about reviews will take place in relation to the progression of the Local Plan, and the extent to which it is considered that the information in the study has dated. Contact the Council's Planning Policy Team for an update on the Local Plan or visit the Council's website at <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/draft-local-plan>.