

## Introduction

- 10.1** This Chapter includes policies and, where appropriate, land allocations for the provision of new community services.
- 10.2** The West Kent Health Authority is responsible for overall health planning, policy and public consultation as well as allocating funds to the local Trusts and primary care groups and monitoring and enforcing the Government's health strategy. One of the Plan's aims is to facilitate the provision of a new District General Hospital.
- 10.3** Education is the statutory responsibility of Kent County Council and provision is supplemented by private education facilities, especially for early years and childcare.
- 10.4** Community buildings are an important focal point for neighbourhood centres and the Plan seeks to retain, improve or replace existing facilities to meet local needs.
- 10.5** This Chapter also encompasses places of worship, libraries, police, fire and ambulance services, cemeteries, waste disposal, public utilities and waste recycling.
- 10.6** Community Services often operate from within town, neighbourhood and village centres and this Chapter should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of Chapter 5.

## Health Services

- 10.7** National Health Service provision for the Plan area is the responsibility of the West Kent Health Authority, formed on 1 April 1994. The Authority is responsible for overall health planning, policy and public consultation as well as allocating funds to the local Trusts and primary care groups and monitoring and enforcing the Government's health strategy.

## Aims

1. To facilitate the provision of a new District General Hospital serving the Plan area and beyond, by allocation of a suitable site.
2. To provide guidance to both National Health Service providers and those offering healthcare in private practice on suitable locations for premises.

### ~~HOSPITAL PROVISION~~

- ~~**10.8** Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells National Health Service Trust, formed on 1 April 2000, is now the Trust responsible for the provision of hospital services covering the Plan area and beyond.~~
- ~~**10.9** The Invicta Community Care NHS Trust also provides elderly care provision at Highlands House, Royal Tunbridge Wells and runs the Hawkhurst Community Hospital, as well as priority care services such as those for the mentally ill, disabled and the elderly. There is an extant planning permission for an extension to the Hawkhurst Cottage Hospital buildings.~~

**Table 6: Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan Area – Existing Hospital Provision April 2001**

Kent and Sussex Hospital	Mount Ephraim, Royal Tunbridge Wells	Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust
Homeopathic Hospital	Church Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells	Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust
Pembury Hospital	Tonbridge Road, Pembury	Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust
Highlands House (Geriatric)	Galverley Park Gardens, Royal Tunbridge Wells	Invicta Community Care NHS Trust
Hawkhurst Cottage Hospital	Hawkhurst	Invicta Community Care NHS Trust

~~10.10~~ One of the first duties of the newly formed Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust has been to determine the nature and location of new hospital services at Royal Tunbridge Wells. Following an extensive public consultation exercise and feasibility studies during summer 2000, the requirement is for a District General Hospital, providing Accident and Emergency Services, acute medical and psychiatric services, women's and children's services, together with some other specialities which will be provided jointly with Maidstone Hospital. Some modern nurses' accommodation and crèche facilities will also be required at the site. The population served will include the Tunbridge Wells Borough area, but patients for some services may be drawn from Maidstone and parts of East and West Sussex.

~~10.11~~ In accordance with national planning policy guidance (PPG13), a sequential site search was undertaken for selection of a suitable site. A central location would be the preferred site for attracting large numbers of people on a daily basis. The only possible site meeting this description would be the existing Kent and Sussex Hospital site at the edge of the centre of Royal Tunbridge Wells. However, feasibility studies have indicated that this site would not be large enough to accommodate the new hospital without high rise accommodation and a design and layout which would be unacceptable in terms of local amenity and in operational terms. There are no other suitable sites available within the built up area of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough.

~~10.12~~ The existing Pembury Hospital site, although just outside the urban area of Royal Tunbridge Wells, is of sufficient size to accommodate the new hospital, (and could accommodate a phased redevelopment) whilst remaining operational. The site also has the advantages of:

- ~~• avoiding the need to take fresh land in the countryside;~~
- ~~• providing the opportunity to redevelop the Kent and Sussex Hospital site for mixed uses most appropriate for a centrally located site;~~
- ~~• providing an accessible location to serve most parts of the Plan area (particularly avoiding delays for emergency traffic accessing a town centre hospital) and to facilitate ease of access from those parts of the NHS Trust catchment area beyond the Plan area;~~
- ~~• avoiding current ambulance (and private) journeys between the Kent and Sussex and the Pembury Hospital sites and reducing the number of vehicular movements into Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre; and~~
- ~~• providing the opportunity of extending existing bus routes to the Pembury site and increasing the frequency of service to reflect changes in the catchment and function of the hospital.~~

- ~~10.13 The Pombury site is entirely within the Green Belt and has been identified as a Major Developed Site under POLICY MGB2 with a defined boundary on the Proposals Map. POLICY MGB2 (based on provisions of PPG2) allows for the redevelopment of such sites subject to certain considerations. The footprint of the existing built area should not be exceeded. In the case of the Pombury Hospital site, the existing footprint of 25,000 square metres should be sufficient to accommodate the proposed new District General Hospital. The height of buildings forming the new hospital should not exceed the maximum height of any of the existing buildings on the site. The whole redevelopment scheme would be judged against the overall visual impact it would have on the openness of the Green Belt.~~
- ~~10.14 The Pombury site is sensitively located as it abuts the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Kent High Weald Special Landscape Area, woodland of SSSI standard and an SSSI site. Careful design and layout of the site will be essential, preferably with a masterplan for the entire project, showing phased redevelopment, layout, scale, bulk, massing, and height of buildings. Consideration should be given to the introduction of public art into this development.~~
- ~~10.15 A Transport Assessment should be submitted with proposals for the development of this site in accordance with POLICY TP1.~~

#### ~~POLICY CS1~~

~~Within the Pombury Hospital Major Developed Site, as defined on the Proposals Map, proposals for the redevelopment of existing buildings to provide a new District General Hospital will be permitted.~~

- 10.16 This provision is supplemented by various private healthcare facilities. Hospice provision for the Plan area is met by the Hospice in the Weald facility at Downingbury, Pombury, which is funded by a charitable Trust.

#### **DOCTORS, DENTISTS AND COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH PRACTITIONER SURGERIES**

- 10.17 There are some 19 doctors' surgeries and 20 dental surgeries in Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough, although provision tends to be concentrated with least provision in the north eastern and south eastern parts of the town. Over three quarters of these are located either within the main town centre access zones or in the neighbourhood centres. All Parishes (with the exception of Bidborough and Capel) are served by at least one doctors' surgery. Paddock Wood, Cranbrook, Hawkhurst, Pombury and Speldhurst also have at least one dental surgery within the Parish. Increasingly, complementary therapies such as osteopathy and homeopathy, are being made widely available in addition to NHS services. In some cases these are available at NHS doctors' surgeries and there are also considerable numbers of independent practitioners in the Borough. It is proposed for the purpose of planning policy to treat them in a similar way to doctors' and dentist surgeries, since similar locational considerations will apply.
- 10.18 There may be some demand for new surgeries and/or development associated with qualitative improvement to existing services. It is important that new surgeries are developed within existing built up areas and close to the population which they are to serve. Surgeries form one of the essential community services within Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough neighbourhood centres and within villages. For these reasons, this Plan seeks to concentrate new provision into existing defined town, neighbourhood or village centres (POLICIES CR1 to CR3) and to retain surgeries within neighbourhood centres or villages (POLICY CR13). Residential amenity may be affected by the greater

intensity of activity associated with such a development and this will require certain safeguards (see POLICY EN1). Where a change of use of a residential dwelling is proposed, the retention of self-contained residential accommodation is important in continuing to provide housing accommodation and in retaining the residential character of an area (see POLICY H1).

### Education

**10.19** Education is the statutory responsibility of Kent County Council. This provision is supplemented by private education facilities.

### Aims

1. To allow for a satisfactory level of primary and secondary school provision in accordance with proposed housing development and the projected numbers of school and pre-school age children.
2. To allow for the development and growth in early years and childcare facilities in appropriate locations.
3. To encourage the dual use of school facilities.
4. To protect open space attached to schools where it provides, or could provide, a valuable contribution to recreation provision or where it contributes to the character and amenity of the locality.
5. To encourage the provision of safe routes to school to encourage walking to school.

### SCHOOL PROVISION

#### Pre-School Education

~~**10.20** Kent County Council aims to provide places for 4-year olds in Local Education Authority schools. Most early years and childcare provision for younger children is likely to be in the private sector during the Plan period, on both Local Education Authority and private sites. The Borough Council will support the provision of early years and childcare facilities in appropriate locations, within the defined Limits to Built Development. Future provision will be judged against POLICIES CS3, EN1, CR2 and other relevant policies in the Plan.~~

#### Primary Schools

~~**10.21** The Kent Education Authority provides 33 primary schools within the Plan area of which 16 are located in Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough. There is at least one primary school serving each of the Parishes in the Plan area with three in Cranbrook Parish (at Cranbrook, Sissinghurst and Colliers Green), and two in Speldhurst Parish (at Speldhurst and Langton Green).~~

~~**10.22** Kent County Council will continue to meet future demands for primary school education principally within the existing established sites in the Plan area. Some new site provision will be required to cope with rationalisation plans and those schools requiring extension or relocation to overcome the problems of inadequate premises, or to cope with additional pupils resulting from changes in the population or new housing development.~~

~~**10.23** New schools provision is dependent on the availability of funds. However, it is prudent to safeguard land which may otherwise be used during the Plan period for alternative development under other policies contained in this Plan.~~

- ~~10.24~~ The compact, built up areas, with potential environmental constraints, means that sites suitable for new primary schools to serve local communities can only be found at the edge of some of these settlements. For this reason, as an exception to planning policy, the Borough Council considers that primary schools, which are required to be sited close to the population which they serve, are acceptable in locations which adjoin the built up area. In all cases, sites have been chosen which are well located to serve the local catchment area by pedestrian access and on sites which match the relevant space standards for the school's requirement. Any such development permitted must be sympathetic to the character and landscape of the countryside, particularly the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- ~~10.25~~ Exceptionally, within Southborough, there is an opportunity to situate a new primary school close to the town centre where a range of other community uses are located.
- ~~10.26~~ New sites are allocated for the following schools on the basis that their existing sites or buildings are sub-standard or need to be rationalised onto one site, and to meet a growth in demand for primary school places which cannot be met through existing school provision:
- ~~•~~ Southborough (new school required to meet existing and future demand as existing schools within the area are at or above capacity). Land for the school is reserved as part of POLICY CR6, which deals with the centre of Southborough;
  - ~~•~~ Paddock Wood (extension to the existing school required to alleviate overcrowding and to meet expected demand from existing under-fives currently resident in the town. No further major residential development is expected in Paddock Wood for the Plan period, so expansion of the school to four form entry within the existing site is deemed feasible by the education authority);
  - ~~•~~ Cranbrook Church of England Primary School (extension of existing school field site); and
  - ~~•~~ Sissinghurst Church of England Primary School (relocation onto a new site to provide more space, a better standard of accommodation and a playing field).
- ~~10.27~~ All the allocated sites are situated within either a defined town, neighbourhood or village centre, (i.e. within 400m of a village boundary) as defined for the purposes of this Plan.

#### **POLICY CS2**

**The Local Planning Authority allocates land for primary school provision at the following locations and will refuse proposals for development which would compromise the implementation of the school proposal:**

- 1 Land off Carriers Road, Cranbrook for Cranbrook Primary School (extension of existing school field site); and**
- 2 Land off Common Road, Sissinghurst for Sissinghurst Church of England Primary School.**

### **Secondary Schools**

~~10.28~~ There are currently nine secondary schools within the Plan area, six of which are located within Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough, one in Paddeock Wood and two at Cranbrook.

~~10.29~~ In some cases, the schools are located outside the built up area of the settlement. However, outside the Green Belt, as an exception to other planning policies, the Borough Council considers that public institutional uses of this nature, which are required to be close to the areas of population which they serve, are acceptable in locations which adjoin the built up area provided the development complies with other relevant policies in this Plan.

### **Special Schools**

~~10.30~~ Special educational facilities supplement the above primary and secondary schools. Two Local Education Authority special schools are located within the Plan area. No change is expected in this provision during the Plan period.

### **Independent Schools**

~~10.31~~ State school provision in the Plan area is supplemented by independent schools catering for all age boarders or day pupils. There are 15 independent schools in the Plan area (five in Royal Tunbridge Wells). Independent schools generally serve a wide catchment and for this reason have not been severely constrained in terms of location. The preferred location for all school development is within the defined Limits to Built Development, as defined on the Proposals Map. The Borough Council will generally support the establishment and development of independent schools in appropriate locations within the Plan area in accordance with POLICY CS3.

~~10.32~~ Provision for new schools will not be permitted in the countryside unless, exceptionally, it is in accordance with allocations in POLICY CS2 serving a specific local community need for which no alternative appropriate sites are available. Extensions to sites or built facilities of existing schools will only be permitted if the school use is well established having satisfactorily occupied the site for a period of several years and provided there would be no detrimental impact on the character and amenities of the surrounding area. Within the Green Belt, opportunity is given for the infilling or redevelopment at Holmewood House School at Langton Green and Kent College at Pembury through POLICY MGB2, as these are defined as Major Developed Sites within the Green Belt. Development proposals at all other schools situated within the Green Belt are subject to POLICY MGB1. All proposals will be in accordance with POLICIES EN1, EN25, EN26 and EN27 and satisfactory footpath links and green travel plans would be provided to the main residential areas served by the school in accordance with POLICY TP4.

### **POLICY CS3**

~~Proposals for school provision will only be permitted if proposals are located within the Limits to Built Development, as defined on the Proposals Map, unless they are allocated in accordance with POLICY CS2 or represent an extension to an established school development.~~

**DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY SCHOOL PROVISION**

- 10.33** The Kent Education Authority have advised that most of the schools in the Borough are well subscribed and many are at, or near, the capacity of their existing facilities. Some are capable of expanding capacity within their existing sites. Clearly, additional housing development, ~~whether on sites allocated in this Local Plan (POLICIES H6 and H7), or~~ coming forward as unidentified sites through the enabling policy (POLICY H5) of the Plan could result in additional strain on the existing facilities. This could result in children having to travel long distances to school if places are not available in the locality. This is unsatisfactory for the pupils concerned and is likely to lead to more and longer trips by car.
- 10.34** The Education Authority is not in a position to fund all the necessary infrastructure required as a direct consequence of new development. Government advice, including Circular 05/2005, seeks to ensure that new development makes appropriate contributions towards service provision.
- 10.35** Consequently, the Local Planning Authority will seek a developer contribution towards school provision where there is a demonstrable shortage of capacity in the locality. If a residential development proposal will result in a shortage of school places within a two mile radius in the case of primary schools and within a three mile radius in the case of secondary schools, then a developer contribution will be sought. The number of pupils assumed to arise from new residential development is based on research carried out for the Local Education Authority, Kent County Council. The cumulative effect of a number of small developments on school provision could be significant, particularly within the Borough where the housing land supply includes a large number of small-scale developments. The Borough Council considers that the cumulative effects of developments of 10 bedspaces or more are likely to have a sufficiently significant impact on the demand for school places to merit contributions towards the provision of school places. The Local Education Authority advises that a development of 10 bedspaces would be likely to generate the need for at least one primary and one secondary school place. Bedspaces are calculated in accordance with the table included in the note to POLICY H2. A threshold of 10 bedspaces would capture some 75% of new dwellings (based on trends from the past five years), to a large extent overcoming the cumulative impact of small-scale developments. For these reasons, school provision will normally be required for developments providing a total of 10 bedspaces or more, although each development will be assessed on its own merits. Residential development of a type which is not likely to produce a demand for school facilities (for example, specialist accommodation for the elderly, and one-bedroom units) will be excluded. Where there are demonstrable exceptional and unforeseen costs involved in preparing and developing sites, the level of contribution towards education provision on any given site will be subject to negotiation at the time of a planning application so that the issue of viability can be considered.
- 10.36** A planning obligation will be required to secure contributions required under this Policy, which will be calculated on the basis of information provided by the Local Education Authority. The planning obligation should indicate when any contribution should be made and the broad location where the contribution will be used.
- 10.37** The Local Planning Authority has produced Supplementary Planning Guidance in parallel with this Local Plan to allow the detailed implementation of POLICY CS4 and to update and monitor the availability of school places within the Borough.
- 10.38** In accordance with the housing land strategy set out in Chapter 6 of this Local Plan and the principles in PPG3 (2000), no market housing sites have been allocated outside the defined Limits to Built Development of villages. All of the village schools within the Plan area are well subscribed and none are under threat of closure or are likely to be during the Plan period as a result of insufficient pupil numbers. Consequently, although some

are in need of new sites, there is no justification within the Plan area for this to be cross-subsidised by market housing outside the defined Limits to Built Development.

### **POLICY CS4**

**Where a residential development proposal would generate a demand for primary school places which could not be met within a two-mile radius of the development, or for secondary school places which could not be met within a three-mile radius of the development, the Local Planning Authority will seek a development contribution towards school provision.**

### **THE DUAL USE OF SCHOOLS**

- 10.39** The dual use of school facilities can provide necessary recreational provision and enhance the role of the school as a focal point for the community. In land use terms, three types of school facilities can be made available to the public out of school hours; buildings, hard surface areas (including car parking) and sports pitches.
- 10.40** Most of the secondary schools, but only a limited number of primary schools, make their buildings available for meetings and indoor sports such as badminton and gymnastics. There is great potential for further dual use provision (where physical constraints allow this) in order to supplement existing community facilities, especially in the new purpose-built primary schools proposed. The adaptation and extension of existing educational facilities should be carried out with a view to allowing use by the general public. The Borough Council will encourage the providers of education facilities to make provision for the dual use of facilities in the designs for new schools and will encourage the dual use of educational facilities for recreational and other purposes, where these are well placed to serve local needs.

### **REDUNDANT SCHOOLS**

- ~~**10.41** The rationalisation and upgrading of schools within the Plan area will release school buildings and sites for alternative uses. Schools proposed to be closed on their present sites in the Plan period include Lamborhurst and Sissinghurst Primary Schools (for which alternative locations have been identified in POLICY CS2).~~
- ~~**10.42** Schools which are located within defined neighbourhood centres would generally be well located to serve their catchment community and loss of such a community facility would generally be resisted (POLICY CR13) unless there are clear operational reasons for moving or closing the school.~~
- ~~**10.43** In some cases the potentially redundant schools are situated in sensitive locations such as in conservation areas or within a residential area. Some are listed buildings and others are constrained in terms of access and car parking. The individual characteristics, layout and context of the buildings will limit the types of alternative uses which are appropriate.~~
- ~~**10.44** The Local Plan indicates the type of alternative use which would be acceptable for these sites. Proposals for alternative uses will be expected to be in compliance with other relevant Plan policies.~~



**POLICY CS5**

~~The Borough Council will permit the following alternative uses for school sites which have been declared redundant or which are likely to become redundant during the Plan period and will seek the removal of inappropriate temporary structures:~~

- ~~1 Lamberhurst Primary School: Conversion of the building to residential or business use (Class B1); and~~
- ~~2 Sissinghurst Primary School: Conversion of the building to residential or business use (Class B1).~~

## Community Buildings

- 10.45** For the purposes of this Plan, a community building is defined as a building, or part of a building, which is available for use by the local community for community activities. Such activities include scouts/cubs, guides/brownies, youth, religious and social activities and sports/dance/exercise.
- 10.46** The size of the building will vary from a small meeting room to a large hall capable of accommodating a large event of 100 or more people seated. Sometimes large or small halls are provided in the same building. In other instances, provision may be through a range of separate buildings dispersed throughout a local area. It is assumed that most residential areas should be able to have reasonable access (defined as being within approximately 800 metres radius) to:
- A large hall which would be capable of accommodating a large event of approximately 100 people seated, or a single badminton court. (There should also be access to a kitchen and toilets);
  - A small meeting room (with access to kitchen and toilets).
- 10.47** Although some schools can offer facilities for hire, not all can offer kitchen facilities and term time availability may be limited. Nevertheless many are adding to the facilities available for community activities, in accordance with Local Education Authority policy to promote schools as a focus for community activities. This has been taken into account in the overall assessment of provision for neighbourhoods.

## Aims

1. To encourage a satisfactory distribution of community building facilities.
2. To seek the retention, improvement or replacement of existing community building facilities to meet local needs.

### PROVISION OF COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

- 10.48** The Tunbridge Wells Borough Community Hall Study (2000) has indicated that there is a reasonable level of provision of community buildings throughout the Borough, although data on accessibility and extent to which supply matches demand was not comprehensive. However, in considering the location of a new community building or the expansion of existing facilities, the impact of its use on the amenities of the immediate neighbourhood is an important consideration. In particular, increased pedestrian and vehicular movement and noise are key factors in judging their impact.

- 10.49** Community halls are often an important focal point for neighbourhood centres within Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough or village centres in other settlements. Proposals will be judged against relevant policies contained in this Plan, notably POLICY EN1 and POLICIES CR1-CR3.

### **Royal Tunbridge Wells**

- 10.50** There are a large number of buildings and halls available for community use within the town. These are quite well distributed across the area and many are situated within the town or neighbourhood centres. The Tunbridge Wells Borough Community Hall Study (2000) indicates, however, that there may be areas within the town where improved provision or better management of existing facilities are needed. This does not necessarily require land allocation.
- 10.51** At Rusthall, although some of the local churches provide the focus for some basic community activities, the community lacks a central focus point. The feasibility of linking a community facility to the existing library could be investigated along with extending community use of St Paul's Junior School.
- 10.52** Within the Sherwood area, there is a good level of provision, through the Sherwood Community Centre, the YMCA (which both have spare capacity at the present time) and further provision becoming available in the near future with the completion of the dual use sports facility at Tunbridge Wells High School. The Sherwood Community Centre and YMCA buildings will be the subject of a feasibility study for rationalisation and improvement to better suit local needs. Apart from improving access to the facilities within the Sherwood area itself, there should be an opportunity to use the proposed redevelopment at Sandhurst Gasworks to achieve better pedestrian and cycleway links between the Oak Road area and the neighbourhood facilities which are available in the High Brooms and eastern parts of St John's Ward.

### **Southborough**

- 10.53** At Southborough a need has been identified for a community building which would be capable of fulfilling a number of functions to meet community and recreation activities. Examples of such need include play sessions for toddlers, school holiday activities, keep fit and functions for older residents, the library and the Citizens Advice Bureau. ~~The facility is most likely to be achieved through a refurbishment and extension of the Royal Victoria Hall at the centre of Southborough and/or potential dual use of the new primary school which is allocated at the Ridgeway site immediately adjacent to the Royal Victoria Hall. Proposals for these important community buildings at the centre of Southborough are included within POLICY CR6.~~
- ~~**10.54** At the eastern end of Southborough, space has been reserved for a community facility within an existing building at ground floor level in Hornbeam Avenue. Local consultation exercises revealed a strong preference for a local shop and the premises have recently been marketed as such. There has been no commercial interest in such a venture to date and there will need to be further consultation with the High Weald Housing Association (the owners) and local residents as to what the space should be adapted for.~~

### **Paddock Wood**

- 10.55** Paddock Wood has experienced considerable residential development in recent years and the need for community hall facilities has increased accordingly. The Putlands Sports Centre offers hall facilities for sport and community use, has good access and is well located to serve much of the residential development to the south of the railway line. However, the town lacks a multi-purpose community building to act as a focal point for the community at or near the town centre, which may offer a base for the Paddock Wood Town Council, enhanced library facilities, adult education, and hall provision for

small-scale concerts and community groups. ~~A site has been identified in POLICY CR8 as suitable for a range of town centre uses, including space for a community hall.~~

### **Cranbrook**

- 10.56** A Community Centre Trust Fund for an additional hall has been established (supported by the Parish Council and other organisations) which would cater for the needs of a number of community groups, particularly elderly and youth groups. A central location is needed and sufficient space for access by vehicles accommodating the disabled or elderly. Subject to a feasibility study and the continued provision of library services, the site of the current library in Carriers Road would offer the opportunity for a central location and the use of existing town centre car parking.

### **Hawkhurst**

- 10.57** Hawkhurst Parish Council operates three halls in the village and feasibility work into an alternative site and specification for a village community centre is ongoing.

### **Villages**

- 10.58** Community hall provision across the remainder of the Borough is good with at least one hall in each parish. Some needs for refurbishment and additional provision have been identified.
- 10.59** An extension to the existing village hall at Benenden has been completed.
- 10.60** Capel village hall is in need of major refurbishment, but the building is not owned by the Parish Council.
- 10.61** Pembury village hall has recently been re-built on the existing site and an extant outline permission for further hall accommodation at Woodsgate Corner has recently been renewed. There is therefore no need to show this site as an allocation.
- 10.62** There is an outstanding planning permission for a new village hall at Ringle Green, Sandhurst, which is to be renewed, pending the outcome of funding bids. Consequently no allocation is made in this Local Plan.
- 10.63** At Langton Green, planning permission has been granted for a new hall at Langton Recreation Ground.
- 10.64** Community buildings continue to make an important contribution to community life and the current distribution generally serves the local population well. The retention of such facilities is desirable. POLICY CR13 aims to protect community buildings, along with other community facilities where they are clustered together in defined neighbourhood centres or villages.
- 10.65** More generally, it is often difficult to replace existing community buildings in new locations where issues including the scale of building and residential amenity must be carefully considered. Consequently, outside the defined neighbourhood centres and villages, where individual proposals come forward to redevelop or change the use of a community building, this would be acceptable only if it can be demonstrated that there is only very limited demand for the facility within the locality or that alternative, satisfactory provision is made elsewhere.

### **POLICY CS6**

**Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of a community building to alternative uses located outside defined neighbourhood and village centres will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists or that suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere.**

### **Places of Worship**

- 10.66** Each Parish contains at least one church building, whilst some Parishes accommodate a number of denominations. Places of worship are often local landmark buildings (and many are protected as listed buildings or, by virtue of their location, within conservation areas) and may also represent an important community resource. POLICY CR13 seeks to protect places of worship, along with other community facilities, where they are clustered together in defined neighbourhood centres and villages. Should a place of worship be made redundant during the Plan period, proposals for alternative uses will be considered in accordance with relevant Plan policies. Any proposals for new places of worship will be considered in accordance with all relevant Plan policies.

### **Libraries**

- 10.67** Library services are provided in the Plan area by four libraries in Royal Tunbridge Wells (Tunbridge Wells Central, Sherwood Estate, Showfields Estate and Rusthall located at St Paul's School) and smaller branch libraries are located at Southborough, Paddock Wood, Cranbrook, Hawkhurst, Horsmonden, Pembury and Speldhurst. These are complemented by mobile libraries which visit the remaining Parishes.
- 10.68** Kent County Council are of the opinion that the number and distribution of libraries are likely to be maintained at the current level during the Plan period. This has been reinforced through the protection of POLICY CR13. However, there is a growing trend towards multi-purpose buildings where the library function is combined in a single building with other community functions or services. In this way services could be moved to new premises and improved. The libraries at Paddock Wood and Southborough may be relocated in this way and combined with a general purpose community building. New multi-purpose community buildings should be located within defined town, neighbourhood or village centres in accordance with POLICIES CR1-CR3.

### **Police, Fire and Ambulance Services**

- 10.69** Kent County Constabulary, Kent Fire Brigade and Kent Ambulance Service have no intentions to expand or relocate their services within the Plan area to 2011.

### **Cemeteries**

- 10.70** Adequate land capacity exists within the municipal cemetery and crematorium facilities at Royal Tunbridge Wells for the period to 2011. No requests for further provision have arisen from the church authorities for the Parishes.

### **Waste Disposal**

- 10.71** The Borough Council's responsibilities for waste disposal extend only as far as domestic refuse collection.

- 10.72** Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 a Waste Management Plan is required from the Waste Regulation Authority to assess how much and what types of waste are produced in Kent and how and where the waste should be disposed of. The Waste Management Plan was the responsibility of the Kent County Council but in April 1996 this duty was transferred to the Environment Agency.
- 10.73** Under the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, Kent County Council are required to produce a Waste Local Plan which must contain detailed proposals and policies on the location and type of development associated with the depositing of refuse or waste material. It must have regard to the findings of the Waste Management Plan. Kent County Council adopted their first Waste Local Plan in March 1998. The only implications of the Waste Local Plan for the Borough are a continuation and improvement of the waste transfer station at North Farm, Royal Tunbridge Wells (for non-toxic industrial wastes and household waste) and the possibility of use of land also at North Farm for the sorting, recycling and transfer of demolition rubble from local building projects.

### Utilities

- 10.74** The main utilities companies serving the Plan area have not indicated any major problems with supplies or services for the period to 2011. However, there may be a need for off-site works which developers may be required to provide, to enable new development sites to be served adequately and, where relevant, these are mentioned in the appropriate allocation policies.

### Waste Recycling

- 10.75** Recycling facilities have been provided at a number of key points within or near town, neighbourhood and village centres throughout the Borough. They are an important element in creating a more sustainable society and reducing the amount of waste material to be disposed of to landfill or incineration. Their retention is sought within neighbourhood and village centres by POLICY CR13.

### Implementation

**10.76**

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Implementing Agency</b>
<del>CS1</del>	<del>Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, Private Sector</del>
CS2	Kent County Council

- 10.77** Other policies and paragraphs in this Chapter will be applied by the Local Planning Authority to retain and guide development consistent with the sustainable objectives of this Plan.

