

## Chapter 9: Other Community Facilities

### Introduction

- 9.1 This section covers the 'other social infrastructure' items from the DSIS Social Infrastructure report such as community buildings, libraries and cemeteries and adult care services.

### Community Buildings

- 9.2 The DSIS identified a deficit in community space only within the settlement of Berkhamsted with a general over supply of community space Borough wide against a standard of 61sq.m per 1000. This still appears to be the case, with a lack of community buildings having been developed since the findings of the DSIS.
- 9.3 There is a clear desire amongst community groups within the town of Berkhamsted to increase the provision of community space and buildings within the town. This view is strongly articulated by B-Hive (a group of local community organisations and residents) through their report of their recent consultation on the future of community assets within the town of Berkhamsted. Their report (available at <http://bhiveberko.org.uk/b-hive-report/>) was prepared in advance of the sale of the police station site and focused on the opportunities for the redevelopment of town centre sites for community uses.
- 9.4 The provision of additional community buildings between now and 2031 is likely to be limited to those secured alongside larger development proposals within the Borough and as set out in the Core Strategy.

## **Libraries**

- 9.5 Hertfordshire County Council published its 'Inspired Libraries' strategy on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2014. This sets out its vision and direction for libraries over the next ten years till 2024. This can be viewed under the following link:

<https://beta.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/libraries-learning-and-local-history/other-library-services/future-of-the-library-service/inspiring-libraries-strategy-future-of-the-library-service.aspx>

The objective is to provide libraries which are vibrant community assets; that not only provide access to reading, information and well-being but also provide a more diverse range of income generating and supporting services including increase digital services, meeting space and business services. A separate 'Delivering Inspiring Libraries' paper sets out how these library services will be met by re-providing libraries in shared buildings with other services and through the improvement of priority sites. One such opportunity is Hemel Hempstead library, who have relocated to within the existing Civic Centre site.

- 9.6 The library service is going digital in some cases in line with modern usage. The County Council has secured opportunities to improve library services within the towns of Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted through the development of key sites within these towns.
- 9.7 Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of Hemel Hempstead library and the construction of a new Civic Centre ('The Forum') (4/03355/14/MFA) and the current building has already been vacated to allow for its demolition. The library is operating from its temporary home within the Civic Centre whilst the work is undertaken and does not anticipate occupying the Forum until 2017

- 9.8 Planning permission has also been granted for the demolition of Berkhamsted police station and library and the construction of a new extended library and retirement houses (4/03286/14/MFA). This development will take place in two phases to ensure continuous use of the library facilities. Works have commenced on the construction of the building following the clearance of the site in early 2016. The development is expected to be completed in early 2017
- 9.9 The 'Delivering Inspiring Libraries' proposals are expected to save £2.5m per annum from the Library Service. These savings will be made by reductions in revenue expenditure through the re-profiling of staffing and library stock, by increasing library income and by seeking revenue savings through capital investment. These savings are predicated on capital investment up to £2m per year over three years and will be supplemented by a combination of CIL and Section 106 funding.

### **Cemeteries**

- 9.10 The Council has undertaken long term planning beyond the Core Strategy period (2031) for the provision of additional cemetery space. Although the Council, as set out in the DSIS, requires only 12 acres of additional space to ensure an adequate burial space within the plan period, the opportunity has arisen for the Council to secure 30 acres of burial space ensuring sufficient capacity for approximately 50 years. Such longer term planning is preferred by the bereavement services manager at DBC who suggests that it is more appropriate to identify a larger site given the issues surrounding Rights of Burials and associated management issues.
- 9.11 The Council has acquiring land at Bunkers Farm from the HCA to provide cemetery facilities with complimentary land uses being undertaken in the short-medium term. The cost of preparing a new cemetery (including the cost of purchasing the site) is estimated to be in the region of £1.8m. This is expected to be delivered in the short-medium term.

- 9.12 There is sufficient burial space in the rest of the borough for the foreseeable future with the exception of Tring, where it is projected to run out before 2040. The Local Allocation at Icknield Way (LA5) in the Core Strategy is directly adjacent to Tring Cemetery, and it would be prudent to reserve part of the site for future expansion of the cemetery as part of this development. It has been assumed that the Borough Council will purchase this land to deliver an expansion to Tring cemetery. The bereavement services manager has suggested that a total of 4 acres are secured for the purposes of expanding the cemetery at Tring.

### **Health and Community Services**

- 9.13 Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Community Services section is responsible for adult social care services for people who are older, have a physical disability, a learning disability or mental health problems.
- 9.14 Together with partners, HCS commission and in some cases directly provide support services in the community. HCS aim to keep people safe from harm and to help people to improve their health, wellbeing and independence and prevent them from getting to a point of crisis. HCS work closely with the National Health Service and District Councils through the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 9.15 The Health & Wellbeing Board brings together the NHS, public health, adult social care and children's services, including elected representatives and Hertfordshire Healthwatch, to plan how best to meet the needs of Hertfordshire's population and tackle local inequalities in health. The Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy 2013-2016 includes a vision for 'A healthier and happier Hertfordshire' together with nine key health priorities and a commitment for the agencies responsible for health and wellbeing in Hertfordshire to work together.

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/docs/pdf/h/hwbstrategy.pdf>

9.16 The Care Act 2014 was brought into effect from April 2015. The Act required HCS to have Market Position Statements (MPS) in place by April 2015. MPS are intended to provide information to existing and potential providers of health and social care about services for adults across all care groups and to communicate our commissioning intentions for the future. In Hertfordshire five Market Position Statements have been prepared:

- Older People
- Mental Health
- Learning disability
- Carers
- Physical disabilities and sensory Impairments

These are available from:

<http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/your-council/hcc/healthcomservices/hscic/suporcarehe1/>

9.17 HCS strategy aims to reduce the proportion of older people who are supported in residential care. This will require an increase in Flexicare and other community services such as domiciliary care, short break care, equipment, telecare etc as well as integrated working with CCGs. However due to population growth there will still be an increase in the number of residential beds needed in across Hertfordshire.

9.18 Across the County older people in residential care and nursing are showing higher levels of need and long term conditions, this will mean more nursing beds are needed in the future and providers are to be encouraged to provide nursing rather than residential care, or being dual registered.

9.19 It is desirable for Care Homes in the future to be integral parts of the community providing services for the local community such as cafes, shops and venues that can be hired by community groups. Providers should also

look at opportunities to provide domiciliary care to surrounding neighbourhoods.

- 9.20 Flexicare housing, sometimes called extra care housing, provides more support than sheltered housing and more independence than a residential care home. People live in their own flat with the privacy of their own front door, but have care available 24 hours a day if they need it.
- 9.21 The MPS for Older People identifies a significant demand for new elderly care spaces between now and 2030. HCC is committed to significantly increasing the level of Flexicare provision across the county over the next five years. This will involve working with providers to identify new build schemes and supporting bids for capital funding. It will involve working with providers to identify existing sheltered housing schemes that are suitable for conversion to Flexicare.

### **Day Care**

- 9.22 The need for day services for older people, people with learning disabilities, mental health problems or sensory needs should also be considered. This need can be met in existing community centres or in purpose built facilities. These premises would need to be accessible 52 weeks per year and comprise the following: 1 or 2 large multi-purpose rooms for 15-20 people and contain the following facilities:
- Kitchen
  - Secure Storage
  - Accessible bathroom and changing facilities (with overhead hoist)
  - Mini-bus drop off spaces and car parking.

Day Centres for older people are being reviewed during 2015 to ensure that there is a range of high quality, cost effective activities available, during the day, that provide choice and control and allow individuals to lead fulfilling lives.

9.23 It seems likely that any community building arising from the significant residential developments within the town such as those at West Hemel Hempstead and Spencer's Park should consider the need to provide facilities for all members of the community including those of older people, people with learning disabilities, mental health problems or sensory needs.