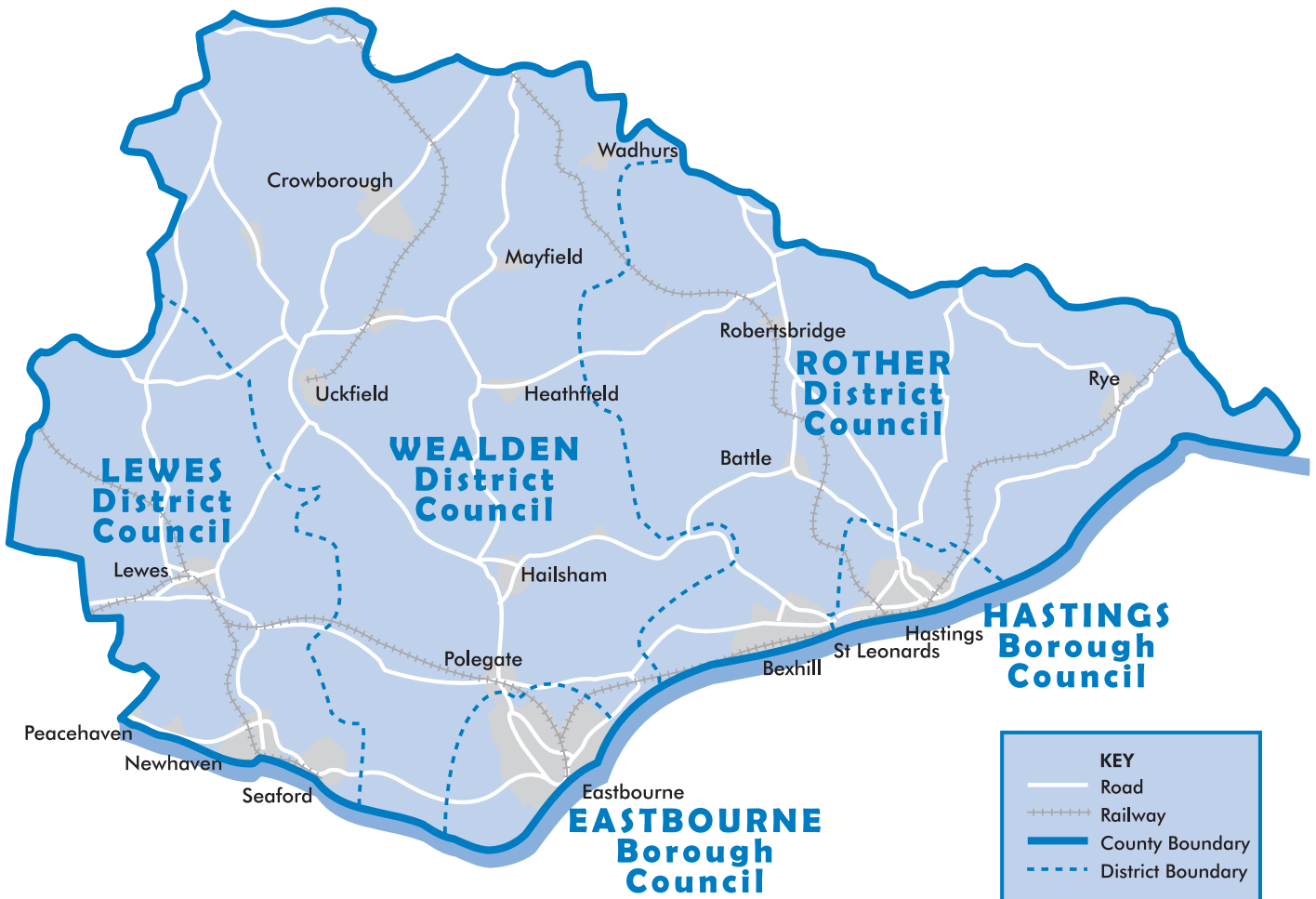


Part 3 – Local Stress Areas

This section summarises for each district in East Sussex, the main stresses in the current provision of County Council services, infrastructure and resources. Although it is not comprehensive, it does highlight potential requirements for development to make appropriate provision where, and to the extent that, it would aggravate such problems.

East Sussex District and Boroughs



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3.1 Eastbourne Borough local Stress Areas

Transport

3.1.1 Detailed guidance on the transport problems of the Eastbourne area and the County Council's (and other relevant agencies') strategy for addressing these (and relevant wider strategic problems) is contained in the "Eastbourne Urban Area Local Transport Plan". Further guidance is set out in the development plan and other relevant SPG, and may also be given in other strategies and/or studies prepared by relevant transport providers and government agencies.

Problems

3.1.2 The main problems suffered by Eastbourne are:

- inadequate and poorly integrated public transport services – including a lack of evening and weekend services, high fares, poor ticketing arrangements and delays to buses caused by illegal and inconsiderate parking. Rail problems include unsatisfactory rolling stock, slow journey times to London, poor facilities at stations, and a lack of fast services at peak times
- motor traffic problems – including problems of congestion, parking, environmental impacts, severance and safety. Pedestrian/car conflicts are particular problems in a range of locations, including at the pier, railway station and town centre. The 'school run' is also a source of traffic problems and heavy parking in residential areas impacts on amenity, safety and circulation. Existing road layouts and designs do not sometimes coincide with current priorities/requirements
- poor strategic links (including the constrained capacity of road network) and inadequate in town links
- inadequate facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people or others with mobility difficulties
- unrealised potential for rail freight.

Strategy

3.1.3 The strategy developed by the County Council to address these problems aims to:

- manage demand and restrain unnecessary private car trips
- improve alternatives to the car/lorry
- change travel behaviour
- meet the travel needs of disadvantaged people
- enhance the environment and improve safety and security
- provide for necessary infrastructure to adequately serve existing/new development
- improve the efficiency of the existing network
- promote suitable improvements to the strategic network serving the town.

Action Plan

3.1.4 The County Council's associated plan of action (set out primarily in the five-year Local Transport Plan's implementation plan) focuses on:

- harnessing the opportunities to improve sustainable access and environmental quality created by the opening of the Polegate A27 bypass and A22 New Route
- improvements to bus services and facilities – including the Eastbourne Area Quality Bus Partnership to facilitate a range of improvements across the network and along four Quality Bus Corridors – the existing A22 (including links to Hailsham), A2021 Kings Drive, A259 and A2104 Friday Street
- the implementation of a town centre parking strategy and the introduction of a decriminalised parking regime (Special Parking Area)
- promotion of improvements to rail, including rail freight
- development of necessary new road links to facilitate planned new development and economic regeneration, relieve traffic and environment problems and improve circulation. Schemes safeguarded in the Eastbourne Local Plan comprise the A22 New Route extension and the Upperton Farm and St Anthony's Links

- relocation of the town centre ring road out from Ashford Road/Susans Road to The Avenue/Cavendish Place and the development of an urban traffic control system to improve the efficiency of the wider road network
- improvements to facilities for disabled people and others with mobility difficulties
- improvements to pedestrian facilities, including further pedestrianisation of the town centre
- the development of (green) Travel Plans by major organisations/traffic generators and of Safe Routes to Schools
- the improvement of facilities for cyclists including development of the national cycle network
- environmental and traffic management schemes and improvements to the town centre and streetscape
- support for appropriate improvements to the strategic network.

Education

Nursery education

3.1.5 Assessments undertaken in 2003 by the Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership show a severe shortage of nursery education provision across the town, with less than 28 (3%) available places for 3 and 4 year olds and rising demand. The former Langney and Devonshire Wards are identified as falling within the 20% most deprived wards nationally and as such are priorities for nursery/childcare provision.

Primary, secondary, sixth form and special needs education

Background

3.1.6 The "School Organisation Plan" (SOP) is produced to help the County Council as the Local Education Authority (LEA), schools, promoters, parents and the local community to understand the need for school places, and establish future demand for places. The Plan is divided into 17 sections related to the community areas used for secondary school admission arrangements and includes information on the number of places available

in each area, the forecast of pupil numbers, and a commentary on any issues arising from this. The respective geographical areas are shown in Appendix 4. The commentaries for the relevant areas in the draft 2003/04 to 2007/08 Plan are as set out below. Note that all capacity assessments include temporary classroom accommodation.

Eastbourne, and the South Wealden area (Area 9, Appendix 4)

3.1.7 Eastbourne, and the South Wealden area bordering Eastbourne, are experiencing significant migration to the area. This is causing considerable difficulty with casual admissions, as many schools (both primary and secondary) are operating at or beyond capacity.

Primary schools

3.1.8 In the primary sector numbers are expected to remain relatively high. The main concerns are in the Langney/Stone Cross, Seaside and Old Town areas. In Langney/Stone Cross, there will be an ongoing need for Shinewater to admit in excess of two forms of entry. In Seaside, a scheme to increase Roselands to three forms of entry is due to commence in June 2003 with completion expected by February 2004. The knock on effect of this will be the need to provide additional accommodation at Stafford by September 2004, increasing it also to three forms of entry. In the short term this can be achieved by way of a mobile classroom but further consideration will need to be given to replacing the already large number of mobile classrooms at Stafford with permanent accommodation.

3.1.9 In Old Town, the increase in the intake at Pashley Down to 105 in September 2002 will impact on Ocklynge Junior School from September 2005. There are to be discussions with the school in Autumn 2003 on how this short term need can be met in a school which is already very large. The second phase of a scheme to rationalise the accommodation at Pevensey & Westham and increase the school to two forms of entry is underway with completion due in May 2004. A project appears in the draft 2004/05 capital programme to provide an additional 90 primary places in Eastbourne by September 2005. A decision will be taken during 2003/04, in consultation with schools, about where best to provide the additional places.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.1.10 In the secondary sector, current building projects at Bishop Bell and The Causeway are due to complete in May 2003 which will enable these schools to admit 180 pupils and 189 pupils respectively. A scheme to provide an additional 150 places at Ratton School will complete in time for September 2003 and a scheme to replace a significant amount of temporary accommodation at Willingdon is due for completion in January 2004. A project to provide a further 140 places at Bishop Bell by September 2005 appears in the capital programme from 2003/04. The result of all of these schemes will be to increase the total number of places available to around 6,000 which should be sufficient for the foreseeable future, but the situation will need to be kept under review because of the effect of casual admissions, and the likely continuation of housing growth.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.1.11 The "Revised Deposit draft Eastbourne Borough Plan" provides for an additional 4000+ homes to be allocated in the period 2002 - 2011. The Local Plan recognises the possible need for two new primary schools in the area, if housing developments occur to the extent envisaged. The need for additional secondary school places is also identified in the Borough Plan but this needs to take into account any new housing developments in South Wealden. The "First Deposit draft Wealden Local Plan" published in January 2003, identifies up to 950 new homes for Polegate/Willingdon by 2011. This will be supported by a new primary school in Polegate and additional secondary places at Willingdon. Forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of new housing identified in the Local Plans. However, the County Council has drawn up in consultation with local secondary headteachers a ten year plan which estimates the additional pupil numbers which may be expected in the period up to 2011 as a result of the Local Plan proposals, and indicates how these needs may be met through further extending existing schools. Proposals for development within the five year period of the School Organisation Plan form part of that longer term plan.

Libraries

Hampden Park

3.1.12 The library is currently operating at or very close to its limit, and further significant development in its catchment area may overstretch the facility.

Langney

3.1.13 The existing library within Langney Shopping Centre is inadequate to meet growing demands and requires relocating (possibly to elsewhere within the shopping centre) to provide the necessary additional floorspace.

Sovereign Harbour

3.1.14 This major development area is inadequately served, with the nearest existing libraries being at Langney Shopping Centre and the Eastbourne Central Library.

Waste management

Roselands Depot household waste recycling site

3.1.15 This comprises a mixture of 9m³ skips and 30m³ containers, with some tipping on the ground. It is operating at full "Estimated Current Capacity", with its environmental and physical on-site capacity already reached. The facility provides for up to 24,000 users per month during peak times and this can cause significant difficulties for the road network. The site cannot cope with more than 30 users at any one time and so acts as a bottleneck to those queuing to deposit their waste. A new site is needed as the facility is bounded on four sides by residential properties.

Social Services

3.1.16 All of the District is a potential Stress Area in respect of personal social services.

Environment, countryside management and rights of way

Rights of way

3.1.17 The rights of way network in Eastbourne is concentrated on the Downland area that is mainly managed by the Sussex Downs Conservation Board and Eastbourne Borough Council.

3.1.18 In parts, the local and wider network is incomplete, disjointed, inconvenient or difficult to use, and/or in poor repair. Access to the countryside is also largely reliant on the car and suitable provision for cyclists, horse riders or the less mobile is particularly deficient in some areas.

3.1.19 Depending on its location within the town, new development could also have an adverse effect on neighbouring parishes in Wealden, including East Dean & Friston, Pevensey, Westham and Willingdon and Jevington. Due to their proximity to areas outside the borough, development in the Langney, Hampden Park and Willingdon areas is most likely to increase pressure on relatively underfunded parts of the rights of way network, as well as to the southern extension of the Cuckoo Trail from Polegate (in Wealden) to Hampden Park. Extra pressure could also occur on other promoted routes in the area such as the Wealdway, the 1066 Country Walk and the South Downs Way.

Economic development

3.1.20 Eastbourne lies within the “Sussex Coast and Towns Priority Area for Economic Regeneration” identified within Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) in recognition of the town’s economic problems and the pressing need for regeneration. The town also contains two locations identified in the adopted Structure Plan for high quality business parks – at Sovereign Harbour and Eastbourne Park.

Archaeology

3.1.21 Archaeologically Sensitive Areas (ASA) include the Willingdon Level where significant Bronze Age remains were discovered in 1995. Environmental conditions have ensured excellent states of preservation of remains. Land west of the town on the Downs is also included in the ASA lists because of the proliferation of prehistoric remains. The discovery of parts of a Roman villa during the building of the promenade have led to an ASA in this area.

3.2 Hastings Borough local Stress Areas

Transport

3.2.1 Detailed guidance on the transport problems of the Hastings area and the County Council's (and other relevant agencies') strategy for addressing these (and relevant wider strategic problems) is contained in the "Hastings and Bexhill Urban Area Local Transport Plan". Further guidance is set out in the development plan and other relevant SPG, and may also be given in other strategies and/or studies prepared by relevant transport providers and government agencies.

Problems

3.2.2 The main problems suffered by the town are:

- poor strategic links, including insufficient capacity
- poor integration between bus and rail services and between rail and road freight
- poor quality of environment caused by traffic and road design/layout, particularly along the A259 corridor (declaration of Local Air Quality Management Area proposed by Hastings BC, close to Glyne Gap)
- poor accessibility – including problems of costly, low quality and slow public transport services and severance caused by busy main roads
- poor facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people and others with mobility difficulties.

Strategy

3.2.3 The County Council's strategy developed to address these problems aims to:

- manage demand and restrain unnecessary private car trips
- improve alternatives to the car
- change travel behaviour
- meet the travel needs of disadvantaged people
- enhance the environment and improve safety and security
- provide for necessary infrastructure to adequately serve existing/planned new

development

- improve the efficiency of the existing network
- promote suitable improvements to the strategic network serving the town.

Action Plan

3.2.4 The County Council's associated plan of action (set out primarily in the five-year Local Transport Plan's implementation plan) focuses on:

- improvements to public transport services and facilities. Quality Bus Corridors are proposed along, The Ridge (linking A2100 and A259 at Ore) and the A259 (linking Little Common and Ore), though progression of this is likely to depend on the implementation of those parts of the SoCoMMS strategy, supported by the Government. Battle Road Quality Bus Corridor (linking A2100/A21 with the St. Leonards and Hastings town centres) has been completed. Low floor buses to improve accessibility to services are being introduced on a number of selected routes. The introduction of a new high quality, metro rail service is also being investigated which would link Hastings with Ore and Bexhill and possibly provide new stations at Glyne Gap and West Marina (St. Leonards)
- improvements to the cycle network, including the South Coast Cycle Route
- environmental and traffic management schemes aimed at reallocating road space to pedestrians (including disabled people/people with mobility difficulties), cyclists and buses, calming traffic and improving safety and security. A SCOOT traffic control system which minimises delays to buses at junctions is also being introduced
- implementation of the Town Centre Parking Strategy and decriminalised parking regime (Special Parking Area)
- the development of (green) Travel Plans by major organisations/traffic generators and Safe Routes to Schools
- development of necessary new road links to facilitate planned new development and economic regeneration, relieve traffic and environment problems and improve

circulation. Although proposals for a Hastings and Bexhill A259 bypass have been dismissed by the Secretary of State, he has recently lent support for the development of a new Bexhill-Hastings Link road by the County Council, subject to satisfactory impacts and design, and for the investigation by the Highways Agency of potential links from this to the A21. Allied proposals by the Highways Agency for improvements to the A21 are the subject of consultation. The adopted Hastings Local Plan also safeguards the Hastings Spur Road (phase 2).

3.2.5 Transport improvements to remedy strategic and local access problems feature strongly in the comprehensive regeneration plans being developed by South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) working closely with the County Council, Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council and other agencies.

Education

Nursery education

3.2.6 Assessments undertaken in 2003 by the Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership show a severe shortage of nursery education provision across the district, with 94% of all places subscribed. No provision at all exists in many parts including Castle, Maze Hill and Broomgrove wards. Demand is rising. The former Braybrook, Broomgrove, Castle, Central St Leonards, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Mount Pleasant, Old Hastings, Ore and Wishing wards are identified as falling within the 20% most deprived wards nationally and, as such, are priorities for nursery/childcare provision.

Primary, secondary, sixth form and special needs education

Background

3.2.7 The School Organisation Plan (SOP) is produced to help the County Council as the Local Education Authority (LEA), schools, promoters, parents and the local community to understand the need for school places, and establish future demand for places. The Plan is divided into 17 sections related to the community areas used for secondary school admission arrangements and includes information on the number of places available

in each area, the forecast of pupil numbers, and a commentary on any issues arising from this. The respective geographical areas are shown in Appendix 4. The commentary for Hastings in the draft 2003/04 to 2007/08 Plan is set out below. Note that all capacity assessments include temporary classroom accommodation.

Hastings area (Area 2, Appendix 4)

Primary schools

3.2.8 Generally, numbers in primary schools will fall over the next five years although some schools will remain fairly full. Three schools (Churchwood, Elphinstone and Sandown) are expected to have more than 25% surplus places over the plan period. The situation will be reviewed to see how the number of places can be reduced or if alternative uses can be found for some of their space. Steps are being taken to formally reduce the intake at Churchwood to 30 places.

Secondary schools

3.2.9 The number of pupils transferring to secondary education is expected to decline by over 8% over the next five years.

Sixth forms

3.2.10 A review of post 16 provision in schools and colleges in Hastings and Rother is being undertaken jointly by the LEA and the Learning and Skills Council. Any changes arising from this review are likely to be the subject of statutory proposals in Autumn 2003, and if approved these changes will be implemented over the following three years.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.2.11 The "Revised Deposit Draft Hastings Local Plan" identifies in excess of 3000 new homes to be provided between 2001 and 2011. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the proposed new housing. However, due to the declining roll in both the primary and secondary sectors, it is not anticipated that this new housing will have a significant impact on education provision, although it will be necessary to provide some additional primary places in the west/northwest of the town. The County Council is working with Hastings Borough Council to secure contributions from housing developments to provide these

additional places.

Libraries

Hastings library

3.2.12 The layout and location of this building are unsuited to the delivery of modern and accessible library services. A more central location would improve the profile and accessibility of the service.

Hastings children's library

3.2.13 These premises are unsatisfactory, situated in a back street at the rear of a pub and a relocation is sought.

Ore library

3.2.14 Conditions are cramped, parking space is minimal, and access for disabled people is very difficult.

Waste management

Hastings household waste site

3.2.15 This site only has one tipping bay. It is at full "Estimated Current Capacity", suffering from heavy demand at weekends with very long queues forming along the access road. During peak periods, the site can have up to 20,000 users per month. Physical extension is potentially possible but is not considered economically viable and would also further aggravate traffic and environmental problems. A larger and relocated site is therefore needed.

Social Services

3.2.16 All of the District is a potential Stress Area in respect of personal social services.

Environment, countryside management and rights of way

The rights of way network

3.2.17 The rights of way network in Hastings is mainly managed by Hastings Borough Council.

3.2.18 The network has been greatly affected by past development and, in parts, is incomplete, disjointed, inconvenient or difficult to use and/or in poor repair. Access to the countryside is, in some cases, reliant on the car and suitable provision for cyclists, horse riders or the less mobile is particularly deficient in many areas.

3.2.19 Depending on its particular location, further development in Hastings is likely to increase pressure on the rights of way network in neighbouring parishes in Rother District Council's area. Battle, Bexhill, Crowhurst, Fairlight, Guestling and Westfield are most likely to be so affected. Extra pressure may also occur on promoted routes in the area such as the 1066 Country Walk, the Saxon Shore Way and the Maritime Heritage Trail.

Economic development

3.2.20 Hastings lies within the "Sussex Coast and Towns Priority Area for Economic Regeneration" identified within RPG9 in recognition of the town's severe economic problems and the need for regeneration. Because the borough is one of the most deprived local authority areas in the country, some parts qualify for Neighbourhood Renewal funding. A large part of the town has also been designated as an "Objective 2' Area" by the EU and the whole town has been designated an "Enterprise Grant Area" by Government. A special Task Force headed by SEEDA has been established to develop and drive comprehensive regeneration plans for the town.

Archaeology

3.2.21 In addition to Hastings Old Town, Archaeologically Sensitive Areas (ASAs) include the Country Park, with its Iron Age and Roman remains and the site of a medieval monastery near the Priory Meadow shopping centre. Sites such as Ore old church show how post-railway development have overlain more ancient sites.

3.3 - Lewes District local Stress Areas

Transport

3.3.1 General guidance on transport problems in the Lewes area and the County Council's (and other relevant agencies') strategy for addressing these (and relevant wider strategic problems) is contained in the Local Transport Plan. Further guidance is set out in the development plan and other relevant SPG, and may also be given in other strategies and/or studies prepared by relevant transport providers and government agencies.

Lewes Town and Ringmer

3.3.2 A Local Transport Plan sub-area strategy is under preparation for the Lewes town area, in consultation with relevant bodies, including the District Council and initial elements being implemented. This will inform the reviews of both the Local Transport Plan and the district-wide Local Plan.

Problems

3.3.3 Assessments identify the following main transport problems:

- the pivotal position of Lewes town as an intersection between major transport routes and a historic road pattern/design that is unsuited to modern priorities
- intrusive traffic crossing the town centre in the absence of a ring road or traffic restraint around the centre
- traffic congestion and parking problems
- a reduction in the environment quality of the historic town caused by such traffic problems
- constrained access by buses, pedestrians and cyclists
- limited access to the A27 bypass from parts of southern Lewes and no direct rail access to Uckfield and Tunbridge Wells/Kent areas
- unfulfilled potential for Lewes rail station and environs, including poor access to rail station and unsatisfactory public transport interchange
- unsatisfactory facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties
- unsatisfactory transport links between Ringmer and Lewes

- severance and other problems caused by traffic running through Ringmer on B2192.

Strategy

3.3.4 A strategy will be developed to address these and other identified problems, where it is practical. Priorities include:

- demand management schemes, including the introduction of controlled parking within the town centre area and the development of (green) Travel Plans by major organisations/traffic generators
- traffic management measures to control, in particular, cross town traffic and also to manage the network more effectively e.g. Phoenix Causeway Gateway improved links to the strategic road network (particularly from the southern part of the town)
- improved bus access, including bus priority measures where practical
- investigation of scope to regenerate the rail station area and to reinstate the Lewes/Uckfield/Tunbridge Wells rail link and to improve southern links to the A27 bypass
- improved access and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties
- measures to improve links between Ringmer and Lewes, including the development of cycle links and a reliable, high-frequency bus service.

Newhaven, Peacehaven, Seaford and Telscombe

3.3.5 A Local Transport Plan sub-area strategy is under preparation for Newhaven Peacehaven, Seaford and Telscombe. This will inform the reviews of both the Local Transport Plan and the district-wide Local Plan.

Problems

3.3.6 Provisional assessments identify the following main transport problems:

- heavy congestion on parts of the A259 between Newhaven and Brighton, in part due to high levels of out-commuting from the above coastal towns into Brighton
- unsatisfactory quality of environment caused by heavy and intrusive traffic

- restricted capacity on A259 and limited opportunities to increase overall capacity
- poor quality bus links, particularly between Seaford and Brighton
- unattractive rail service for commuters between coastal towns and the Gatwick area
- restricted access to strategic development sites in Newhaven
- unfulfilled potential at Newhaven for rail and road freight and rail connections to the Newhaven/Dieppe passenger ferry
- the design of the ring road system contributing to the isolation of Newhaven town centre
- unsatisfactory facilities for pedestrians, cyclist, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties.

Strategy

3.3.7 A strategy is being developed to address these and other identified problems, where it is practical. In Newhaven, some initial measures are being implemented. Emerging priorities include:

- continued restrictions on development within the A259 corridor between Newhaven and Brighton until appropriate access improvements are in place
- improved bus services, priorities and facilities, particularly along the A259 corridor between Seaford and Brighton where initial measures are already being introduced
- established approved and committed proposals to provide new road links to unlock the potential of key development sites at Newhaven
- traffic management measures, including measures already underway to improve access to Newhaven town centre
- demand management schemes
- improved port facilities and links, including rail freight to serve Newhaven
- improved access and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties
- improved rail links, including maximising the potential of any suitable emerging proposal

for the reinstatement of the Lewes/Uckfield/Tunbridge Wells rail link.

Rural areas

Problems

3.3.8 The Local Transport Plan incorporates sub-strategies for both the South Downs and Rural and Leisure. Key problems identified include:

- lack of convenient access to key facilities
- poor public transport services
- busy main roads running through villages
- constrained capacity on strategic links
- intrusive traffic and parking (including problems caused by coaches) and unsuitable roads
- heavy reliance on the car, including to access tourist facilities/areas
- unsatisfactory facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties.

Strategy

3.3.9 The strategy to address these problems is being implemented and focuses on:

- the improvement of accessibility to key facilities
- improvements to public transport, including support for rural bus services and, where appropriate, rail services
- improved access and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties, including paths, off-road routes, and Quiet Lanes
- encouragement for sustainable tourism/ access to tourist and leisure facilities
- traffic calming schemes
- demand management measures, particularly in relation to tourism in the South Downs sub-strategy area, but coupled with a recognition of the continuing importance of the car for many of these and other journeys
- the outcome of the Government's SoCoMMS study¹.

¹ The Secretary of State has recently rejected SoCoMMS proposals for bypasses at Selmeaton and Wilmington but has asked the Highways Agency to work with relevant bodies to identify less damaging options which reduce the need for major road construction, whilst recognising the importance of finding solutions which are capable of delivering planned housing and economic growth. The Highways Agency has also been asked by the Secretary of State to develop for his further consideration, proposals to improve safety at the Beddingham rail level crossing of the A27 (T).

Education

Nursery education

3.3.10 Assessments undertaken in 2003 by the Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership show a severe shortage of nursery education provision across the district, with 93% of places subscribed. Almost all available places in Lewes town, Peacehaven, Seaford and Telscombe Cliffs are subscribed and demand is close to physical capacity and beyond desirable levels to offer adequate parental choice at Newhaven (89%) Wivelsfield (92%) and Kingston (95%). No provision exists in the other settlements. Demand is rising. The former Peacehaven East ward is identified as falling within the 20% most deprived wards nationally and, as such, is a priority for nursery/childcare provision.

Primary, secondary, sixth form and special needs education

Background

3.3.11 The School Organisation Plan (SOP) is produced to help the County Council as the Local Education Authority (LEA), schools, promoters, parents and the local community to understand the need for school places, and establish future demand for places. The Plan is divided into 17 sections related to the community areas used for secondary school admission arrangements and includes information on the number of places available in each area, the forecast of pupil numbers, and a commentary on any issues arising from this. The respective geographical areas are shown in Appendix 4. The commentaries for the relevant areas in the draft 2003/04 to 2007/08 Plan are set out below. Note that all capacity assessments include temporary classroom accommodation.

Ringmer Area (Area 12, Appendix 4) – See also Area 8: Hailsham (Wealden) and Area 13: Seaford

Primary schools

3.3.12 Admissions to primary schools are expected to fluctuate but overall numbers will continue to fall. The number of surplus places at Ringmer Primary School already exceeds 25%. The situation in Ringmer area will be reviewed during 2003/04 to look at ways of reducing the number of surplus places.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.3.13 Most primary age children in the area transfer to Ringmer Community College as do a significant proportion of the pupils from South Malling CE Primary School. The school is able to accommodate all the pupils from its community area and the remaining places are available to out of area children. The college will remain at capacity.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.3.14 The “Lewes District Local Plan”, adopted in March 2003, identifies 115 new homes for Ringmer by 2006. The forecasts in this School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the new housing. Whilst the new housing will not significantly affect primary education in the area, it is likely to impact on secondary education and the County Council is working with Lewes District Council to secure developer contributions towards additional places where required.

3.3.15 The “First Deposit Draft Wealden Local Plan”, published in January 2003, proposes 65 new homes in East Hoathly by 2011. Again, the forecasts do not take account of this new housing. The County Council is working with Wealden District Council to ensure education provision in the village is supported as a result of any new housing.

Seaford Area (Area 13, Appendix 4) - See also Area 12: Ringmer

Primary schools

3.3.16 Primary school numbers in Seaford are likely to remain fairly steady over the next five years but overall numbers will begin to decline gradually. At Alfriston School an additional classroom was added in 2002 and it is proposed to provide a new hall by September 2004. This will give the school sufficient accommodation for the foreseeable future.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.3.17 Seaford Head Community College operates on two sites and the imbalance of accommodation between the two sites causes operational difficulties. Numbers overall are now expected to remain fairly steady and be within capacity during the plan period. It is proposed to carry out a feasibility study during 2003/04 to look at ways of making more efficient use of the accommodation in the future.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.3.18 The "Lewes District Local Plan", adopted in March 2003, identifies 183 new homes for Seaford by 2006. This level of additional housing would normally produce around 46 additional primary age pupils and around 32 additional secondary age students (11-16). As Seaford Head Community College is an 11-18 college, there would also be some growth in sixth form numbers. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the new housing. The County Council has already secured £87,000 towards education provision in Seaford and is continuing to work with Lewes District Council to secure further contributions where required.

Chailey Area (Area 14, Appendix 4) – See also Area 10: Crowborough (Wealden)

Primary schools

3.3.19 Admissions to primary schools are expected to remain fairly steady during the plan period. However, there are already a significant number of surplus places in the area, and while some schools will continue to be full, others will develop surplus places in excess of 25% (Fletching, Forest Row, Hamsey, Plumpton and St Peter's). A review of the situation across the area will be carried out during 2003/04 to identify possible ways of reducing the number of surplus places to a more acceptable level. Proposals exist to relocate Wivelsfield Primary School, dependent upon sufficient resources being identified.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.3.20 The number of children seeking places at Chailey School is likely to remain high. Proposals exist to provide a double mobile classroom in summer 2003 which should provide the school with sufficient accommodation for the foreseeable future, but it is likely that the school will be less able to admit students from outside its community area than has been possible recently.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.3.21 The "Lewes District Local Plan", adopted in March 2003, identifies 40 new homes for Chailey by 2006. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the new housing. The County Council is working with Lewes District Council to ensure education provision in Chailey is supported where necessary.

Lewes Area (Area 15, Appendix 4) – See also Area 12: Ringmer

Primary schools

3.3.22 The number of children requiring admission to primary schools in the area is expected to remain fairly steady during the plan period. A scheme to increase Western Road to one form of entry will complete by September 2003. A project to increase Wallands to two forms of entry from September 2004 appears in the capital programme from 2003/04. Numbers in the village primary schools are expected to remain close to capacity.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.3.23 Most pupils living in the area (except Ditchling and South Malling) transfer to Priory School and the remaining places are then available for out of area children. There will be sufficient accommodation at the school for the foreseeable future.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.3.24 The "Lewes District Local Plan", adopted in March 2003, identifies 70 new homes for Lewes by 2006. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the new housing. The County Council is working with Lewes District Council to secure developer contributions towards the additional primary school places being provided in the town.

Newhaven Area (Area 16, Appendix 4)

Primary schools

3.3.25 The number of children being admitted to primary schools in the area is expected to remain broadly at current levels over the next five years.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.3.26 Numbers at Tideway Community School will continue to decline sharply as the new school in Peacehaven becomes established. A development plan for the rationalisation of accommodation at the school is being discussed and following the publication of statutory notices in February 2002 the County Council has determined to close the Sixth Form from summer 2003.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.3.27 The “Lewes District Local Plan”, adopted in March 2003, identifies 450 new homes for Newhaven by 2006. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the new housing. As a result of the available surplus places, it is not anticipated that new school places will be required as a result of this new housing. However, if further housing is proposed for Newhaven beyond 2006 the situation will need to be reviewed.

Peacehaven Area (Area 17, Appendix 4)

Primary schools

3.3.28 The number of pupils coming forward for admission to the primary schools in future years is expected to be fairly steady. Overall numbers in the primary schools are expected to decline but no changes are proposed to the current accommodation being provided through the current Private Finance Initiative contract.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.3.29 Peacehaven Community School is expected to continue admitting 180 pupils each year during the plan period. There will be a need to provide additional accommodation at the school by September 2004 and the County Council is exploring how the capacity can be increased to 900 places within the terms of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.3.30 The “Lewes District Local Plan”, adopted in March 2003, identifies 185 new homes for Peacehaven by 2006. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which might occur as a result of the new housing. The County Council is working with Lewes District Council to ensure education provision in Peacehaven is supported as a result of new housing developments.

Libraries

Lewes library

3.3.31 This is currently housed in an inadequate converted and extended building. . Funding has been secured for a new library due to open mid summer 2005. The new building is designed to enable extensions to be built when additional funding becomes available.

Newhaven library

3.3.32 The building, which is in the pedestrianised precinct is small and cramped and prone to vandalism. Improved security measures are required and opportunities to relocate are sought.

Ringmer library

3.3.33 This is housed in the village hall but space and services are limited. Further housing development may justify an upgrade and relocation.

Seaford library

3.3.34 The current premises are too small and unsuitable for the delivery of a modern library service. Opportunities to relocate are being sought.

Waste management

Seaford household recycling waste site

3.3.35 This site was extended in 1996 and is serviced by 9m³ skips. It is at full “Estimated Current Capacity”. Whilst the frequency of collection has been increased, the existing facilities and their arrangement cannot physically cope with current demand and the site has had to be closed early to cope with the situation. However, the site’s physical capacity could be increased by a redesign and upgrading to 30m³ containers.

Social Services

3.3.36 All of the District is a potential Stress Area in respect of personal social services.

Environment, countryside management and rights of way

Rights of way network

3.3.37 In parts, the network is incomplete, disjointed, inconvenient or difficult to use and/or in poor repair. Access to the countryside is, in some cases, reliant on the car and suitable provision for cyclists, horse riders and the less mobile is particularly deficient in many areas.

North Lewes

3.3.38 The northern half of Lewes District is mainly low Weald clay and is poorly drained. The County Council is currently aware of ten major schemes that are required in this area. Although not as intensively used as the paths on the Downs, there are nonetheless some very popular areas, such as Barcombe Mills, Ditchling Common and Chailey Common. The networks in the vicinity of the larger villages such as Ditchling, Newick, Plumpton and Ringmer are also very well used. There is also considerable pressure on parishes like Ditchling and Wivelsfield that arises from the development of towns in West Sussex such as Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath.

South Lewes

3.3.39 The southern part of the district is dominated by the South Downs. This is a generally well-maintained, popular recreational area which is proposed to form part of a new National Park. Whilst the County Council's maintenance responsibilities in this area are fairly low, the towns of Lewes, Peacehaven/Telscombe Cliffs, Newhaven, Seaford, Saltdean and the city of Brighton & Hove place considerable pressure on their surrounding areas. Further development on the fringes of these urban areas will inevitably increase demands on this part of the rights of way network.

Network integrity and access

3.3.40 A number of schemes are also being developed to improve network integrity and improve access for all the community to the countryside.

Country parks and nature reserves

3.3.41 The County Council owns Ditchling Common Country Park which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Bentley Wildlife and Motor Museum; it also manages Chailey Common (SSSI) and Markstakes Common at South Chailey. Development in their vicinity will place additional pressure on these sensitive resources.

Economic development

3.3.42 The coastal towns from Peacehaven/Telscombe Cliffs through to Seaford lie within the "Sussex Coast and Towns Priority Area for Economic Regeneration" identified within RPG9 in recognition of the towns' economic problems and the need for regeneration. Newhaven and parts of Telscombe and Peacehaven are also designated as an "Assisted Area" and an "Enterprise Grant Area" by the Government for the same reasons. Newhaven is identified in the adopted Structure Plan as a location for a major high quality business development.

Archaeology

3.3.43 Archaeologically Sensitive Areas include defensive sites associated with Newhaven Fort on Castle Hill, Palaeolithic sites south-west of the town, the Lewes battlefield and numerous Bronze Age burial mounds on the Downs, as well as Roman sites in the vale of Sussex. The village of Bishopstone, which has seen continuous occupation from Prehistoric times is included.

3.4 Rother District Local Stress Areas

Transport

3.4.1 General guidance on transport problems in the Rother area and the County Council's (and other relevant agencies') strategy for addressing these (and relevant wider strategic problems) is contained in the Local Transport Plan. Further guidance is set out in the development plan and other relevant SPG, and may also be given in other strategies and/or studies prepared by relevant transport providers and government agencies.

Bexhill

Problems

3.4.2 The main problems suffered by Bexhill are:

- poor strategic links, including insufficient capacity
- poor integration between bus and rail services and between rail and road freight
- poor quality of environment caused by traffic and road design/layout, particularly along the A259 corridor
- poor accessibility – including problems of costly, low quality and slow public transport services and severance caused by busy main roads
- poor facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, disabled people and others with mobility difficulties.

Strategy

3.4.3 The County Council's strategy developed to address these problems aims to:

- manage demand and restrain unnecessary private car trips
- improve alternatives to the car/lorry
- change travel behaviour
- meet the travel needs of disadvantaged people
- enhance the environment and improve safety and security
- provide for necessary infrastructure to adequately serve existing/planned new development

- improve the efficiency of the existing network
- improve strategic links.

Action Plan

3.4.4 The County Council's associated plan of action (set out primarily in the five-year Local Transport Plan's implementation plan) focuses on:

- improvements to public transport services and facilities. The introduction of a new high quality metro rail service is being investigated to improve links between Bexhill and Hastings and possibly provide a new station at Glyne Gap. Improvements to the environment of Bexhill station are also planned
- environmental and traffic management schemes and improvements to the town centre and streetscape
- improvements to the cycle network, including the South Coast Cycle Route, and improvements to facilities for cyclists
- development of necessary new road links to facilitate planned new development and economic regeneration, relieve traffic and environment problems and improve circulation. Although proposals for a Bexhill and Hastings A259 bypass have been shelved by the Secretary of State, he has recently lent support for the development of a new Bexhill-Hastings Link road by the County Council, subject to satisfactory impacts and design and for investigation by the Highways Agency of potential links from this to the A21
- improvements to pedestrian facilities and facilities for disabled people and others with mobility difficulties. Other improvements to the town centre are also under investigation
- the development of (green) Travel Plans by major organisations/traffic generators and Safe Routes to Schools.

Rye

3.4.5 A Local Transport Plan sub-strategy for Rye has recently been published and the first tranche of schemes is being developed.

Problems

3.4.6 Identified problems include:

- traffic congestion, parking problems (including by coaches) and intrusive traffic
- traffic, particularly lorries, damaging the environment quality of this historic town
- the town's peripheral location and poor strategic road and rail links
- unsatisfactory facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties.

Strategy

3.4.7 The strategy focuses on:

- the enhancement of pedestrian and cycle routes and construction of crossings
- improvement of Rye Hill/Military Road Junction and Deadman's Lane
- the development of coach parking and drop-off point
- improved bus stops and interchange
- school travel plans
- a review of parking management
- junction improvements and traffic management measures
- improvements to Rye Harbour Road and its junction with A259 to improve links between Rye town centre and the industrial estate in Rye Harbour
- the rationalisation of signage to reduce the dominance of vehicular traffic.

Battle

3.4.8 A Local Transport Plan's sub-area strategy for Battle will begin preparation in 2004.

Problems

3.4.9 Emerging key problems may include:

- traffic congestion, parking problems (including by coaches) and intrusive traffic
- traffic damaging the environment quality of this historic town
- the town's peripheral location and poor strategic road links
- the rather remote rail station at Battle
- unsatisfactory facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties.

Strategy

3.4.10 A strategy will be developed to address these and other identified problems, where practical. This may focus on:

- demand management schemes
- traffic and parking management measures
- improved public transport services
- improved access and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties.

Rural areas

3.4.11 The Local Transport Plan incorporates a Rural and Leisure sub-strategy within its overall strategy.

Problems

3.4.12 Key problems identified include:

- lack of convenient access to key facilities
- poor public transport services in some areas
- busy main roads running through villages
- constrained capacity on strategic links
- intrusive traffic and parking and unsuitable trunk and other roads
- heavy reliance on the car, including to access tourist facilities/areas
- unsatisfactory facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties
- unrealised potential for rail freight.

Strategy

3.4.13 The strategy to address these problems focuses on:

- the improvement of accessibility to key facilities in nearby larger towns
- improvements to public transport, including support for rural bus services and, where appropriate, rail services
- improved access and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties, including paths, off-road routes and Quiet Lanes
- encouragement for sustainable tourism and access to tourist and leisure facilities
- traffic calming
- improved rail freight services
- demand management measures, particularly in relation to tourism, but coupled with a recognition of the continuing importance of the car for many journeys
- the results of the Highways Agency's A21 study which include proposals for improvements at Lamberhurst Green and Kippings Cross (Kent).

Education

Nursery education

3.4.14 Assessments undertaken in 2003 by the Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership show a severe shortage of nursery education provision across the district, with 93% of places subscribed. All available places in Catsfield, Crowhurst, Sidley, Sedlescombe and Whatling are taken, with only 2 places available in Rye. No provision exists in the other settlements. Demand is rising. The former Central Bexhill, Rye and Sidley wards are identified as falling within the 20% most deprived wards nationally and, as such, are a priorities for nursery/childcare provision.

Primary, secondary, sixth form and special needs education

Background

3.4.15 The School Organisation Plan (SOP) is produced to help the County Council as the Local Education Authority (LEA), schools, promoters, parents and the local community to understand the need for school places, and establish future demand for places. The Plan is divided into 17 sections related to the community areas used for secondary school admission arrangements and includes information on the number of places available in each area, the forecast of pupil numbers, and a commentary on any issues arising from this. The respective geographical areas are shown in Appendix 4. The commentaries for the relevant areas in the draft 2003/04 to 2007/08 Plan are set out below (see also Heathfield area and Wadhurst area (Wealden). Note that all capacity assessments include temporary classroom accommodation.

Rye Area (Area 1, Appendix 4) – See also Area 3: Robertsbridge

Primary schools

3.4.16 Primary numbers in Rye itself will continue to decline over the next five years and surplus places will increase to about 35%. This figure is high and will be the subject of a review during 2003/04.

3.4.17 Numbers in the surrounding village primary schools are also expected to decline over the coming years. However, some schools in the area already have numbers on roll (NOR) at or close to capacity, and in some cases are teaching large classes in under-sized classrooms. A project to provide an additional 30 places at St Thomas' Winchelsea is due for completion September 2003. A project to replace the temporary accommodation and provide a hall at Peasmarsh appears in the draft capital programme from 2004/05.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.4.18 The number of pupils transferring from primary schools in the area to Thomas Peacocke Community College is likely to fluctuate during the plan period but overall numbers will continue to decline.

3.4.19 A review of post 16 provision in colleges and schools in Hastings and Rother is being undertaken jointly by the LEA and the Learning and Skills Council. Any changes arising from this review are likely to be the subject of statutory proposals in Autumn 2003, and if approved these changes will be implemented over the following three years.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.4.20 The "Rother District Draft Planning Strategy", produced in January 2003, proposes 141 new homes in Rye and Rye Harbour before 2011, 16 in Fairlight, 30 in Northiam and 10 in Peasmarsch. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the proposed new housing. However, because of the current availability of places it is not anticipated that the new housing will have a significant impact on education provision in the area.

Robertsbridge Area (Area 3, Appendix 4) – See also Area 7: Heathfield (Wealden) and Area 1: Rye)

Primary schools

3.4.21 Admissions to primary schools in the area will remain fairly steady over the next five years, with some schools continuing to operate at or close to capacity.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.4.22 The number of pupils transferring from primary schools in the area to Robertsbridge Community College is likely to remain steady and the College will continue to be fully subscribed.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.4.23 The "Rother District Draft Planning Strategy", produced in January 2003, proposes 55 new dwellings in Robertsbridge before 2011, 17 in Burwash, 8 in Etchingam and 23 in Hurst Green. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the proposed new housing. The County Council is currently working with Rother District Council to secure contributions from housing developments towards education provision where required.

Battle Area (Area 4, Appendix 4)

Primary schools

3.4.24 The number of pupils admitted to primary schools has peaked. Although intakes in the future will remain steady, total numbers are expected to decline. However some schools will continue to operate at or close to capacity. The high number on roll at Sedlescombe is a concern and the LEA will be discussing with the school how to overcome this problem in the short term until numbers stabilise.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.4.25 Although the number of pupils transferring to Claverham Community College from local primary schools is expected to gradually decline over the next five years, the College is usually significantly oversubscribed as a result of out of area applicants. The College also faces considerable pressure as a result of children moving into the area and having to be found places in year groups which are already full. As a result, it is possible that numbers at Claverham will exceed the forecast numbers. In order to address current pressure on places at the college, a double mobile classroom was installed in 2002 and a new science lab is to be provided by Easter 2004.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.4.26 The "Rother District Draft Planning Strategy", produced in January 2003, proposes 202 new dwellings in Battle before 2011, 16 in Sedlescombe and 62 in Westfield. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the proposed new housing. The County Council is currently working with Rother District Council to secure contributions from housing developments towards education provision where required.

3.4.27 The situation in Battle itself is complex. In 2002, Rother District Council approached the LEA about the potential need for a second primary school in the town to serve the proposed new housing developments. However, 202 new dwellings will not on their own justify a new school and unless there is a significant level of new housing planned for the town post 2011, consideration will need to be given to providing additional accommodation at Battle & Langton CE Primary School. This in itself is likely to raise significant planning and highway issues as well operational concerns. The situation will be kept under review and further discussions with Rother District Council will be necessary before the Local Plan is finalised in 2004.

Bexhill Area (Area 5, Appendix 4)

Primary schools

3.4.28 Numbers in the primary sector are expected to decline over the next five years. There are sufficient places in the town for the plan period, and reducing numbers may make it possible to adjust some admission limits to reflect more even intakes to each year group.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.4.29 Secondary school numbers continue to grow and will exceed capacity by 200+ by the end of the Plan period. This will place considerable pressure on the current infrastructure of the two schools, an issue which is made more complex by the fact that Bexhill High School is on two sites. It remains the intention of the Authority to relocate the whole school to the Lower Site (Gunter's Lane) in the long term but achieving this objective will require a major investment of resources. A study is commencing in 2003/04 looking at the options for providing sufficient additional secondary places in Bexhill both in the short and longer term. Both schools will be fully involved in this study.

Implications of Local Plan allocations²

3.4.30 The "Rother District Draft Planning Strategy", produced in January 2003, proposes 1,128 new dwellings in Bexhill before 2011. This level of new housing, if realised, would normally produce around 280 additional primary age children and around 200 additional secondary age students (aged 11-16). The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the proposed new housing. However, these factors are being taken into account in further planning for school places and possible relocation of Bexhill High School, and the outcomes of this work will be reported in the next revision of the School Organisation Plan in 2004. The County Council has already agreed developer contributions in excess of £389,000 towards education provision in the town and is continuing to work with Rother District Council to secure further contributions where required.

Libraries

Battle library

3.4.31 This suffers from insufficient working areas and a lack of storage space.

Bexhill library

3.4.32 Funding is being sought from various agencies, partners and other sources to either extend the current library or rebuild on the existing site to improve the quality and capacity of the facility.

North Bexhill

3.4.33 The proposed development of a new community at Worsham Farm, North Bexhill requires the provision of a new library to serve the both the new development and the north Bexhill area.

Rye library

3.4.34 The current facility is unsatisfactory. A replacement new library, sited in the lower town, will open in September 2004. This has been made possible through working with Rye Town Partnership, Rother District Council and Hastings College of Art and Technology.

Villages

3.4.35 A number of villages in the High Weald are more than 3 kms from a static library, and some are not served by the mobile library.

Waste management

Mountfield household waste recycling site

3.4.36 This site contains a mixture of 9m³ skips and 30m³ containers. It is approaching full "Estimated Current Capacity". Whilst problems of early closing to cope with demand have been addressed by the use of additional containers at peak periods, there remains the constraint imposed by its short access off the busy and fast A2100. There is scope to increase on-site capacity further by upgrading to 30m³ containers and, potentially, room for expansion as the site is adjacent to a closed landfill site owned by the County Council. However, any significant increase in use would require improved road access.

² Proposals for a new community at North Bexhill set out in the Rother District Draft Planning Strategy will require the provision of a new primary school with allowance for further expansion as necessary, together with an expansion in secondary school place provision in the local area.

Social Services

3.4.37 All of the District is a potential Stress Area in respect of personal social services.

Environment, countryside management and rights of way

Rights of way network

3.4.38 In parts, the network is incomplete, disjointed, inconvenient or difficult to use and/or in poor repair. Access to the countryside is, in some cases, reliant on the car and suitable provision for cyclists, horse riders or the less mobile is particularly deficient in many areas.

3.4.39 The rights of way network in the vicinity of towns such as Battle, Bexhill and Rye is very popular, as is the area around Hastings. Further development in these areas will inevitably increase the pressure on the local path network.

3.4.40 Rother is rich in historic attractions and tourist areas. The popularity of places such as Battle, Bodiam, Camber, Fairlight, Rye and Winchelsea, and the Bewl Water area at Ticehurst, create a high demand on the rights of network in the district. However, rural Rother is largely characterised by small villages and the demand on paths around these villages can be high as there are relatively few countryside facilities in the area. Even small scale development can cause extra pressure on these paths.

3.4.41 Network conditions in Rother can also be difficult as the ground is mainly typical Wealden clay. High demand pressures combined with such poor ground conditions result in a high maintenance liability and there are currently 24 major schemes required in Rother. Promoted routes in the area are the 1066 Country Walk, the Saxon Shore Way, the High Weald Landscape Trail, the Maritime Heritage Trail and the Sussex Border Path.

3.4.42 A number of schemes are also being developed to improve network integrity and improve access for all the community to the countryside. These include a proposed circular walk at Battle.

Country parks and nature reserves

3.4.43 The County Council owns parts of Camber Sands and Broomhill Sands and also plays a lead role in the management of international nature sites at Rye Bay. Development in the vicinity of these will place additional pressure on these sensitive resources.

3.4.44 Bexhill is considered to be poorly served by country parks and a new park to serve the area is being proposed by the County and District Councils at Pebsham.

Economic development

3.4.45 Bexhill lies within the "Sussex Coast and Towns Priority Area for Economic Regeneration" identified within RPG9 in recognition of the town's economic problems and the need for regeneration. Outside of Bexhill, the rural parts of the district form a "Rural Priority Area" and have also been designated an "Enterprise Grant Area" by Government for similar reasons. The Structure Plan identifies the need for new high quality business development to serve Bexhill and Hastings. It also earmarks north Bexhill as one location for such major high quality business development. The SEEDA-led Hastings and Rother Task Force is also developing comprehensive regeneration proposals for Bexhill (and Hastings).

Archaeology

3.4.46 Iron working is a significant archaeological feature in this District, including major Roman activity. In addition the low-lying areas include significant peat deposits that include Prehistoric remains. The key Cinque Ports of Rye and Winchelsea include excellent remains, both built and buried, of their medieval, mercantile past. Military remains, including Camber Castle have an important role in the defence of the coast.

3.5 Wealden District local Stress Areas

Transport

3.5.1 General guidance on transport problems in the Wealden area and the County Council's (and other relevant agencies') strategy for addressing these (and relevant wider strategic problems) is contained in the Local Transport Plan. Further guidance is set out in the development plan and other relevant SPG, and may also be given in other strategies and/or studies prepared by relevant transport providers and government agencies.

3.5.2 Local Transport packages covering Polegate (as part of the Eastbourne Urban Area sub-area strategy), Crowborough, Uckfield and Ashdown Forest are already in place. Further local transport strategies are being developed for Hailsham, and Heathfield and should be completed by 2006.

Primary route network

3.5.3 Studies with Wealden District Council are underway to identify the potential impact on the transport network of prospective large-scale new developments around a number of the Low Weald towns and to assess the need for corresponding improvements and other measures. The outcome of these studies (and the South Coast Multi-Modal Study³) will be taken forward through the Wealden Local Plan Review but there are concerns over the ability of the primary route network (including the A27(T), A22 and a number of other County Council A roads) to cope with the traffic likely to be generated by such large developments in and around the Low Weald towns. Ultimately, the impact on the network and its capacity will depend on both the scale/pattern of development agreed and the level/nature of the complementary transport package that will be needed to minimise traffic generation and mitigate its impacts.

Crowborough, Hailsham, Heathfield and Uckfield

3.5.4 Strategies for Uckfield and Crowborough have been produced and are being implemented. A Strategy for Heathfield is under preparation. Preparation of a strategy for Hailsham is planned to begin shortly.

Problems

3.5.5 Identified and emerging key problems include:

- traffic congestion, parking problems and intrusive traffic, including severance impacts of the A26 in Crowborough
- traffic causing a reduction in environment quality
- the absence of rail stations at Hailsham and Heathfield and unsatisfactory bus links to stations at Eastbourne and Polegate and at Uckfield, respectively and to outlying villages
- the unrealised potential of the Crowborough/Uckfield rail line and the absence of direct rail links from these towns to Lewes and Tunbridge Wells
- unsatisfactory facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties, particularly in the town centres
- unsatisfactory bus facilities
- the limited capacity of the supporting road network.

Strategies

3.5.6 The adopted strategies will aim to address identified problems and, where appropriate, focus on:

- traffic management schemes and improvements to the pedestrian environment in town centres
- improved public transport services and, in particular, improved bus links to Polegate and Eastbourne

³ The Secretary of State has recently rejected SoCoMMS proposals for bypasses at Selmeaton and Wilmington but has asked the Highways Agency to work with relevant bodies to identify less damaging options which reduce the need for major road construction, whilst recognising the importance of finding solutions which are capable of delivering planned housing and economic growth. The Highways Agency has also been asked by the Secretary of State to develop for his further consideration proposals to improve safety at the Beddingham rail level crossing of the A27(T).

- improvement of the Crowborough/Uckfield rail line and further investigation of the potential in this Central Rail Corridor for reinstating links to Lewes and Tunbridge Wells
- demand and parking management measures, including school travel plans
- relocation of taxi rank from Uckfield town centre to the bus station
- traffic calming in residential areas and environmental improvements
- localised measures to improve the efficiency of the road network and, where necessary, to increase capacity
- the enhancement of extensions to the Cuckoo Trail as a cycling/walking link.

Polegate/Willingdon, Pevensey Bay and Westham

3.5.7 Key problems associated with the A27 running through Polegate should have been relieved by the recent opening of the new bypass. The Council is working with the Highways Agency and consulting with the local communities on how the liberated road space within these settlements may be re-allocated to the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists, buses and the environment generally. A local transport package covering Polegate/Willingdon, Pevensey Bay and Westham is in place as part of the Eastbourne Urban Area Local Transport Plan.

Rural areas

3.5.8 The Local Transport Plan incorporates a Rural and Leisure sub-strategy within its overall strategy.

Problems

3.5.9 Key problems identified include:

- lack of convenient access to key facilities
- poor public transport services in some areas
- intrusive traffic and parking
- busy main roads running through villages
- constrained capacity on strategic links
- heavy reliance on the car, including to access tourist facilities/areas
- unsatisfactory facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties.

Strategy

3.5.10 The strategy to address these problems focuses on:

- the improvement of accessibility to key facilities in nearby larger towns
- improvements to public transport, including support for rural bus services and, where appropriate, rail services
- improved access and facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and others with mobility difficulties, including paths, off-road routes and Quiet Lanes
- encouragement for sustainable tourism and improved access to tourist and leisure facilities
- traffic calming
- demand management measures, particularly in relation to tourism but coupled with a recognition of the continuing importance of the car for many of these and other journeys
- promotion of suitable improvements to strategic links.

Education

Nursery education

3.5.11 Assessments undertaken in 2003 by the Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership show a severe shortage of nursery education provision across the district, with 94% of places subscribed. All available places in Buxted, Chiddingly, East Hoathly, Danehill, Polegate North and Willingdon and 95% of places in Crowborough are subscribed. No provision exists in the other settlements. Demand is rising. The former Hailsham East ward is identified as falling within the 20% most deprived wards nationally and, as such, is a priority for nursery/childcare provision.

Primary, secondary, sixth form and special needs education

Background

3.5.12 The School Organisation Plan (SOP) is produced to help the County Council as the Local Education Authority (LEA), schools, promoters, parents and the local community to understand the need for school places, and establish future demand for places. The Plan is divided into 17 sections related to the community areas used for secondary school

admission arrangements and includes information on the number of places available in each area, the forecast of pupil numbers, and a commentary on any issues arising from this. The respective geographical areas are shown in Appendix 4. The commentaries for the relevant areas in the draft 2003/04 to 2007/08 Plan are set out below (see also Eastbourne section which includes the South Wealden area; Chailey, Seaford and Ringmer areas (Lewes) and Bexhill area (Rother). Note that all capacity assessments include temporary classroom accommodation.

Crowborough Area (Area 10, Appendix 4) – See also Area 14: Chailey

Primary schools

3.5.13 Primary school numbers in Crowborough and the surrounding villages are expected to remain fairly steady during the course of the plan.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.5.14 Beacon Community College operates on two sites and the imbalance of accommodation between the sites causes operational difficulties. The Authority is working with the college to move towards a more efficient building stock, involving the proposed relocation onto the Beeches site of the Grove Park 11-19 unit. As part of this process a new admission number of 300 for the college has been adopted and took effect from September 2002. The number on roll at the college is expected to remain fairly steady except in 2003/04 when a larger intake will be necessary.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.5.15 The "First Deposit Draft Wealden Local Plan", published in January, identifies the need for up to 400 new homes in Crowborough by 2011. This amount of additional housing would normally produce around 100 additional primary pupils and around 70 additional secondary age students. As Beacon Community College is an 11-18 college, there would also be some growth in sixth form numbers. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the proposed new housing. The County Council is working with Wealden District Council to secure developer contributions where required.

Wadhurst Area (Area 6, Appendix 4) – See also Area 3: Robertsbridge (Rother) and Area 7, Heathfield

Primary schools

3.5.16 Admissions to primary schools are expected to remain fairly steady over the next five years. Numbers at Frant will continue to grow and the County Council is in discussion with the Diocese about the possible relocation of the school onto a more suitable site. A replacement school for Ticehurst is to be completed in 2004.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.5.17 There are sufficient places available at Uplands Community Technology College to admit pupils transferring from the partner primary schools. However, the College is consistently oversubscribed mainly as the result of applications from Kent. The high demand for places has resulted in the College operating above its capacity and the first phase of development, providing an additional 100 places, was completed in December 2002. Phase 2, providing a further 120 places, will be completed by September 2004 giving the college sufficient accommodation for the foreseeable future.

Heathfield Area (Area 7, Appendix 4) – See also Area 3: Robertsbridge (Rother), Area 6: Wadhurst, Area 11: Uckfield and Area 8: Hailsham

Primary schools

3.5.18 Numbers in the primary sector are expected to decline over the coming years although some schools will be close to capacity. The forecast intake at Mayfield is a concern and the LEA is in discussion with the school about how this can be managed in the short term until numbers stabilise.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.5.19 The number of pupils transferring to secondary school is expected to remain high for at least the next four years and the roll at Heathfield Community College will continue to grow until 2007. Additional places were provided in September 2002 but it may be necessary to consider providing further accommodation to ensure there are sufficient places for the future.

Hailsham Area (Area 8, Appendix 4) – See also Area 12: Ringmer (Lewes) and Area 7: Heathfield

Primary schools

3.5.20 Primary school numbers in Hailsham are expected to decline during the SOP plan period, although some schools will remain fairly full.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.5.21 The number of pupils transferring to secondary education is also expected to decline gradually, although initially the number on roll will be above capacity as larger year groups move through the college. Proposals exist to provide an additional 100 places by September 2004 in conjunction with the development of a sports hall.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.5.22 The “First Deposit Draft Wealden Local Plan”, published in January 2003, includes proposals for between 1,250 and 1,320 new homes in the town by 2011. Additional housing of this order would normally produce around 310 additional primary age pupils and around 220 additional secondary age students (11-16). As Hailsham Community College is an 11-18 college there would be some growth in sixth form numbers to accommodate also. The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of this proposed new housing. The majority of the new housing (1,000 units) is expected to be in north Hailsham and/or Hellingly Hospital. The County Council is currently working with Wealden District Council to ensure education provision in the town is fully supported as a result of the new housing. This will include the provision of a new primary school to serve the new community in north Hailsham and a separate site for an increase in the size of Hailsham Community College.

Uckfield Area (Area 11, Appendix 4) – See also Area 12: Ringmer (Lewes)

Primary schools

3.5.23 The number of pupils coming forward for admission to the Uckfield primary schools is expected to remain fairly steady although numbers overall will continue to fall. There is likely to be an increasing number of surplus places, most notably at Holy Cross where governors have indicated they wish to operate

at one and a half forms of entry. However, forecasts suggest the school will be operating nearer one form of entry by the end of the plan period. There remain difficulties over geographical distribution as an increasing number of pupils are from the south of Uckfield and the spare capacity is in the centre of the town. In the surrounding villages the overall numbers are also expected to decline with some schools exceeding 25% of surplus places. This will be kept under review and, if necessary, the matter will be discussed with the schools concerned.

Secondary schools and sixth forms

3.5.24 It is anticipated that admissions to Uckfield Community Technology College will remain high although the actual intake will fluctuate. The overall roll of the College is expected to continue growing before peaking in 2005/06. A project to provide a further 160 places at the college by September 2004 appears in the capital programme from 2003/04.

Implications of Local Plan allocations

3.5.25 The “First Deposit Draft Wealden Local Plan”, published in January 2003, proposes 500 new homes in Uckfield by 2011, 90 in Buxted, 45 in Isfield, 80 in Maresfield and 15 in Five Ash Down. This level of additional housing would normally produce around 180 additional primary age pupils and around 130 additional secondary age students (11-16). As Uckfield Community Technology College is an 11-18 college there would also be some growth in sixth form numbers.

3.5.26 The forecasts in the School Organisation Plan do not, at this stage, take into account growth which is likely to occur as a result of the proposed new housing. The County Council is working with Wealden District Council to secure developer contributions towards the provision of additional primary and secondary places in the area, most notably in Uckfield itself.

Libraries

Crowborough library

3.5.27 This is somewhat remote from the town centre and is inadequate to cope with demand.

Hailsham library

3.5.28 This is too small for the present population of Hailsham and is poorly sited.

Heathfield library

3.5.29 This suffers from an unsatisfactory design in terms of access and function.

Pevensey Bay library

3.5.30 This is not easily accessible by many potential users.

Polegate library

3.5.31 This is sufficient to accommodate the scale of development proposed in the adopted (1998) "Wealden District Local Plan". However, should further substantial development occur in the Polegate area, this might produce a significant shift in the population centre which could require the relocation of the existing library to a more central point.

Stone Cross

3.5.32 Langney Library (Eastbourne) currently serves this catchment area. It is in a busy, small unit in the shopping centre. Whilst it is currently adequate, any substantial increase in demand resulting from new development would necessitate its expansion and relocation to more suitable premises.

Willingdon library

3.5.33 This may also need to expand as a result of further residential development in the Langney and Polegate areas.

Wealden villages

3.5.34 The library service provision to the Wealden villages is via mobile libraries and community libraries at Forest Row, Mayfield and Wadhurst (and Rotherfield Village Centre). Most Wealden villages are served by the mobile library but any significant population growth may require some adjustments to this service.

Waste management

Household waste recycling sites

Crowborough

3.5.35 There is no current permanent facility in the town. A new facility is planned to open in 2004.

Forest Row

3.5.36 The site provides 9m³ skips. It is at full "Estimated Current Capacity". Excess demand has resulted in early closing and increasing the frequency of collection. With no room for

extension, on-site redevelopment (to level the site/demolish existing buildings to provide a suitably sized and shaped site to accommodate 30m³ containers) is the only practical option for increasing capacity to meet further increases in demand.

Hailsham

3.5.37 The site is located in a small industrial estate and has 30m³ containers. It is at full "Estimated Current Capacity". There is virtually no scope for increasing its physical capacity. Potential opportunities to upgrade on-site capacity by increased servicing are constrained by the fact that peak demand is at weekends when landfill services are only available to 11am. Likewise, there is no scope for extension and, realistically, increased demand can only be met by relocation to a larger, more suitable site.

Uckfield

3.5.38 The site is a heavily used, mobile, Sunday morning only service in the District Council's car park. It is at full "Estimated Current Capacity". The opportunity to increase capacity is severely constrained by the size and layout of the car park. A suitable permanent site is required.

Wadhurst

3.5.39 This is a small site serviced by 9m³ skips. It is at full "Estimated Current Capacity" and under heavy demand pressures. As a result, it has been necessary to introduce early closing and increased frequency of collections in the effort to cope. Physical capacity could be increased by conversion to 30m³ containers and the full use of the site but this is subject to licensing from the Environment Agency.

Social Services

3.5.40 All the District is a potential Stress Area in respect of personal social services.

Environment, countryside management and rights of way

Rights of way network

3.5.41 In parts, the network is incomplete, disjointed, inconvenient or difficult to use and/or in poor repair. Access to the countryside is, in some cases, reliant on the car and suitable provision for cyclists, horse riders and the less mobile is particularly deficient in many areas.

North Wealden

3.5.42 This area is dominated by the towns of Crowborough and Uckfield and the path network around these towns is very popular. The nearby towns of Tunbridge Wells and East Grinstead also put pressure on routes in parishes such as Forest Row, Frant, Hartfield and Withyham. Attractive areas such as Ashdown Forest and Bewl Water are also extremely popular places for public recreation and tourism.

3.5.43 The high demands on the path network combined with unfavourable ground conditions mean that there are known to be 27 major schemes that are currently required in this area. A number of promoted routes also cross North Wealden – these are the Wealdway, the Vanguard Way, the Sussex Border Path, the High Weald Landscape Trail, the Tunbridge Wells Circular Walk and the Forest Way.

South Wealden

3.5.44 This has a varied landscape in four distinct areas:

- The Downland is a well-maintained area and extremely popular. However, its very popularity can place particularly high demands on rights of way resources.
- The Pevensey Levels have a sparse rights of way network but the wet ground conditions and its proximity to towns like Eastbourne, Hailsham and Bexhill means that where paths do exist the demand on resources is high.
- The Low Weald has a rich network of paths but the poor ground leads to maintenance problems on a number of paths. Hailsham dominates this area and the path use in parishes bordering the town is heavy, especially in Arlington, Hellingly, Herstmonceux and Long Man. In addition to this, paths in the Abbott's Wood area near Arlington and around Herstmonceux Castle are also very popular attractions.
- The High Weald area surrounding Heathfield is characterised by similar problems to the Low Weald. The ground is poor and there are areas where the quality of the network has deteriorated or fallen into disrepair. Whilst the South Wealden area has received a great deal of attention in recent years, there are still 11 major schemes that are known to be required in this area. There are several promoted routes in South Wealden – the South Downs Way, the Wealdway, the Vanguard Way, the 1066 Country Walk and the Cuckoo Trail.

3.5.45 Development on the fringe of Eastbourne could also impact on neighbouring Wealden parishes such as East Dean and Friston, Jevington, Pevensey, Westham and Willingdon. It could also increase pressure on relatively underfunded parts of the Wealden rights of way network, as well as on the southern extension of the Cuckoo Trail from Polegate. Extra pressure could, additionally, occur on promoted routes in the area such as the Wealdway, the 1066 Country Walk and the South Downs Way.

Network integrity and access

3.5.46 A number of schemes are also being developed to improve network integrity and improve access for all the community to the countryside. These include proposals to link west Hailsham with the network east of the A22 and for a new circular walk at Forest Row.

Country parks and nature reserves

3.5.47 The County Council owns Seven Sisters Country Park (a Site of Special Scientific Interest, or SSSI), a large part of Ashdown Forest (also a SSSI) and the Cuckoo Trail. It also manages Park Wood (Hellingly) and parts of the Wier Wood Reservoir Local Nature Reserve and West Park (Uckfield). Development in their vicinity will place additional pressure on these sensitive resources.

Economic development

3.5.48 A large part of the eastern rural area of Wealden is designated a "Rural Priority Area" and "Enterprise Grant Area" in recognition of the need to revitalise village communities and the rural economy. The Structure Plan identifies Maresfield and Polegate as proposed locations for major high quality business development.

Archaeology

3.5.49 In addition to Prehistoric remains on the Downs, the most numerous Archaeologically Sensitive Areas (ASAs) in the District are formed around iron-working remains, including bloomeries and water-powered forges and furnaces, this designation often includes the associated hammer ponds. The area is also rich in medieval settlement remains including moated sites such as Moat Wood, East Hoathly, or Michelham Priory.