

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Community Facilities Assessment

A Final Report

September 2009



Table of Contents

1	Introduction and Methodology	01
2	Quantitative Provision	06
3	Qualitative Provision	11
4	Accessibility	26
5	Developer Contributions	32
6	Summary and Conclusions	39

Table of Appendices

- A Blank Audit Form
- B Consultation Questionnaire
- C Consultation data summary
- D Quantitative needs by village against quality



Section 1

Introduction & Methodology

1 Introduction and Methodology

Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2009, Strategic Leisure was appointed by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) to undertake an audit of indoor community facilities, including village halls, community halls, church halls and other publicly accessible facilities, across the District.
- 1.2 The purpose of the audit is to provide part of the evidence base to inform a Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and provide an update to the Council in terms of the current quality of facilities in the District.

Background

- 1.3 SCDC wishes to produce an SPD which will provide clarity for developers on the contributions likely to be sought by the planning authority in the event of any potential development, particularly with regard to the negotiation of sums towards the delivery of services, facilities and infrastructure required to mitigate the impact of any such development.
- 1.4 The Council completed an Open Space Assessment in 2005, which included the assessment of children's play areas, outdoor sports facilities and informal open space. The Council has subsequently adopted standards for the provision of outdoor space and has a framework in place for developer contributions towards both capital and revenue costs. An Open Space SPD was introduced in January 2009.
- 1.5 The Council does not have a similar standard or formula for calculating any developer contributions towards indoor community spaces. The purpose of this study is to provide a robust evidence base on the quantity, quality and accessibility of the existing stock across the District to identify areas of need, and to identify priorities for investment and improvement. It follows on and can be considered with South Cambridgeshire District Council Policy DP/4 (Infrastructure and New Developments).
- 1.6 In many rural communities, such as South Cambs, these community facilities are crucial to maintaining a sense of local identity, as well as provide a base for a variety of different groups and activities, from pre-school groups; to indoor mat bowls; to yoga; for meetings or for coffee mornings.
- 1.7 The Council is keen to ensure that all residents have access to facilities which are appropriate and fit for purpose. It is important to note that while these facilities should have a function which may include sport and physical activity; this would not necessarily be the primary purpose.

Future growth

- 1.8 South Cambridgeshire is a district which has significant housing development planned for the period of 1999 to 2016, so additional development over the next 15 years is anticipated. The Core Strategy, particularly illustrated in Policy ST/2, states that provision will be made for 20,000 new homes. This growth is likely to take the form of both small 'infill-type' schemes and major housing developments of 100 units or more, particularly around Cambridge.
- 1.9 The largest scheme currently proposed is the new town of Northstowe. This town, which could feature 10,000 homes, is proposed to have 5,000 completed by 2016. Northstowe is the subject of a separate Area Action Plan.

Project scope and methodology

- 1.10 This document is a summary report compiling the findings of the study process and their implications in terms of setting standards for Quantity, Quality and Accessibility in line with Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) recommendations and the five step process identified in the PPG17 Companion Guide, shown below:
- **Step 1** – Identify Local Needs
 - **Step 2** – Audit Local Provision
 - **Step 3** – Set Provision Standards
 - **Step 4** – Apply Provision Standards
 - **Step 5** – Draft Policies.
- 1.11 The scope of this study is primarily from Steps 2 to 4. Our work has comprised a quantitative and qualitative assessment of existing community facilities and has been carried out in partnership with a small steering group of key Council officers to ensure that it meets the needs of the Council and to provide regular feedback and updates regarding the emerging findings and any key issues.
- 1.12 The data gathering process can be broadly split into two parts – an audit of all identified facilities and a questionnaire sent to Parish Councils and hall management groups.

The audit (Step 2)

- 1.13 The first element of the study process was an objective, visual inspection visit as part of a District-wide audit. These site assessments were undertaken by a small team (to ensure consistency) of Strategic Leisure consultants between March and June 2009.
- 1.14 While not a full technical assessment of the buildings, or a detailed quantity-surveyor costing of work required, these visits have been used to flag up key qualitative issues, with illustrative photographs as required, and take measurements of the spaces, to inform the overall analysis of qualitative and quantitative provision. A copy of a blank audit form is shown as Appendix A.
- 1.15 The original list of facilities to assess was provided by SCDC, and was augmented by additional research by the SL team. Facilities included village halls, community halls, some church halls and pavilion buildings. It should be noted that it did not include all church halls or pavilions, scout huts, primary schools, private facilities and other buildings which offer limited, but still valuable, community use.
- 1.16 The guiding principles when deciding on whether to include facilities in the audit was based on the level of community access, and whether there were any clear restrictions on the typical use we would expect of such a facility. There are nine village colleges in South Cambs all of which offer community use. Whilst this is largely round the dual use sports centres and a number of arts facilities, there are also limited community rooms, which are available for community education programmes and general hire. These facilities have not been included in the audit.
- 1.17 For example, some church halls were discounted from the study due to issues over whether other faith/belief groups could access the facilities, or if there were restrictions on use for parties or functions, or through licensing.
- 1.18 Our final list comprised 86 facilities across the District.

Hall management consultation (Step 1/2)

- 1.19 In order to identify further information which may have not been available during the initial site audit we have also undertaken a programme of consultation with Parish Councils and Village Hall representatives to gather more information about the ownership and management of the facilities, their running costs, level of usage (and type of users), as well as any other investment needs or latent demand that exists in their communities.
- 1.20 Informal consultation was conducted during the auditing process, which was supplemented by a dedicated questionnaire for the managers of facilities to complete. A web-based SNAP survey was used, which included both closed and open qualitative questions and was designed to take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.
- 1.21 The process was then managed and implemented by Strategic Leisure via our online server. For those who did not have an email address to receive the link a hard copy of the survey was posted out with a prepaid envelope enclosed and the results were inputted by Strategic Leisure.
- 1.22 A copy of the consultation questionnaire is shown as Appendix B. Responses were received on behalf of 28 facilities, representing a response rate of 32%. This is a slightly lower return than might have been initially anticipated, but feedback from some suggested a degree of 'consultation fatigue'. All consultees received follow up phone calls and emails to prompt them to complete the survey.
- 1.23 There was a cross section of respondents from halls of different sizes, conditions and ages. A summary of the research data is shown as Appendix C.

Evidence analysis (Step 3/4)

- 1.24 Following the gathering of data from both of these work strands, we were able to analyse the findings with a view to setting provision standards for quantity, quality and accessibility, in tandem with the Council's steering group.
- 1.25 Although South Cambridgeshire is a largely rural District, the villages range significantly in size. Some have a population of less than 100, whereas some communities number several thousand. The level of expectation in terms of community resources will therefore vary.

Hierarchical Approach

- 1.26 In line with the PPG17 Companion Guide, which advises that a 'settlement hierarchy' is often the best way to assess the need for provision in rural areas, it was decided that a hierarchical approach to assessment of provision was the most appropriate mode of assessment. It is reasonable to expect that the scale and quality of facilities should reflect the size of the community which they serve.
- 1.27 These communities have been assessed and considered, based on the four groups in which they have been placed in the Council's adopted Core Strategy as Rural Centres, Minor Rural Centres, Group Villages or Infill Villages. The four categories of settlements in the Core Strategy are shown below:
- **Rural Centres**
 - Cambourne
 - Fulbourn
 - Great Shelford and Stapleford
 - Histon and Impington
 - Sawston

South Cambridgeshire District Council Community Facilities Assessment

- **Minor Rural Centres**

- Bar Hill
- Cottenham
- Gamlingay
- Linton
- Melbourn
- Papworth Everard
- Waterbeach
- Willingham

- **Group Villages**

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| ➤ Balsham | ➤ Barrington | ➤ Barton |
| ➤ Bassinbourn | ➤ Bourn | ➤ Castle Camps |
| ➤ Comberton | ➤ Coton | ➤ Duxford |
| ➤ Elsworth | ➤ Eltisley | ➤ Fen Drayton |
| ➤ Fen Ditton | ➤ Fowlmere | ➤ Foxton |
| ➤ Great Abington | ➤ Great Wilbraham | ➤ Guilden Morden |
| ➤ Haslingfield | ➤ Hardwick | ➤ Hauxton |
| ➤ Highfields Caldecote | ➤ Longstanton | ➤ Little Abington |
| ➤ Meldreth | ➤ Milton | ➤ Oakington |
| ➤ Over | ➤ Orwell | ➤ Steeple Morden |
| ➤ Swavesey | ➤ Thriplow | ➤ Teversham |

- **Infill Villages**

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| ➤ Abington Pigotts | ➤ Arrington | ➤ Boxworth |
| ➤ Babraham | ➤ Bartlow | ➤ Croxton |
| ➤ Caxton | ➤ Carlton | ➤ Croydon |
| ➤ Childerley | ➤ Conington | ➤ East Hatley |
| ➤ Grantchester | ➤ Great Chishill | ➤ Harlton |
| ➤ Graveley | ➤ Great Eversden | ➤ Kneesworth |
| ➤ Heydon | ➤ Horseheath | ➤ Landbeach |
| ➤ Hildersham | ➤ Ickleton | ➤ Litlington |
| ➤ Hinxton | ➤ Kingston | ➤ Little Chishill |
| ➤ Horninsea | ➤ Knapwell | ➤ Little Wilbraham |
| ➤ Little Eversden | ➤ Little Shelford | ➤ Lolworth |
| ➤ Little Gransden | ➤ Shepreth | ➤ Stow-Cum-Quy |
| ➤ Newton | ➤ Shingay-cum-Wendy | ➤ Tadlow |
| ➤ Pampisford | ➤ Shudy Camps | ➤ Toft |
| ➤ Papworth St Agnes | ➤ Six Mile Bottom | ➤ Weston Colville |
| ➤ Rampton | ➤ West Wickham | ➤ Whaddon |
| ➤ Weston Green | ➤ West Wrating | ➤ Wimpole |

- 1.28 While these groups are not entirely based on population or size, the breakdown is useful. The implications for different village groups are most evident in the qualitative evaluation, where we have set recommended minimum ideal 'specifications' for facilities which are based on the size of the community, as smaller settlements will have less demand.
- 1.29 These identified settlements are also significant because they provide the basis for understanding where a population might have a quantitative shortfall. As we will explore, there has not been a travel threshold or catchment area set to reflect accessibility of facilities, so these settlements will form the basis of understanding any geographical accessibility deficiencies and surplus.
- 1.30 We have applied the draft standards to analyse the District, to see where there may be local issues with regard to quantity, quality or accessibility of facilities. In compliance with PPG17 guidance, all three elements have been analysed together, to put together an accurate picture of overall provision.

Report Structure

- 1.31 This report is structured to reflect the combined consideration of the three key attributes of facility provision as identified in the PPG17 Companion Guide: Quantity, Quality, Accessibility. It is important that all three are considered together to identify the areas of greatest overall deficiency or surplus.
- 1.32 The rest of the report is laid out as follows:
- **Section 2** – Quantitative Provision – outline of results of analysis of quantitative assessment (particularly to understand demand), identification of key issues relating to quantity of provision, setting of quantitative standard, application of standard and identification of areas of deficiency.
 - **Section 3** – Qualitative Provision – outline of qualitative findings (site visits, self declarations from facility representatives), identification of any key issues relating to facility stock quality, setting of qualitative vision, consideration of how sites meet this vision and identification of areas with poor quality facilities.
 - **Section 4** – Accessibility (catchment) – assessment of issues relating to facility access and consideration of how local communities are served by facilities, whether the facilities are in themselves accessible to the public. (Note that this does not refer to site accessibility in terms of disability access, which is considered as part of the facility's overall Quality)
 - **Section 5** – Developer Contributions – consideration of potential methodologies for calculating S106 developer contributions with worked example
 - **Section 6** – Conclusions and summary – review of key points regarding overall provision, with the identification of primary areas for consideration and focus.



Section 2

Quantitative Provision

2 Quantitative Provision

Introduction

- 2.1 In this section, we identify the key issues relating to the quantity of indoor community facilities, both on a District-wide and localised level.
- 2.2 This section includes:
- An assessment of the current level of provision
 - Key issues to emerge from the consultation with regard to the quantity of provision
 - Consideration of recommended quantity standard
 - Application of quantity standard with analysis

Current provision

- 2.3 Our audit of facilities entailed the examination of 86 facilities across 82 different villages and settlements in South Cambridgeshire. There are 102 villages in the District, which equates to a level of provision of just under one facility per village, although, as has been identified in an earlier section, a number of facilities have been disregarded from the study due to limits on their wider use.
- 2.4 As part of the auditing process, the internal floor area of all facilities was measured. These measurements were taken from the primary hall, and any additional space (meeting rooms, committee rooms, second halls etc) on the site.
- 2.5 The total area of the facilities audited (primary and secondary space combined) is approximately **13,054m²**. Assuming the population of South Cambs to be 140,500 (source ONS, 2007) this is equivalent to 0.09m² per capita, or **92.2m² per 1,000 population**.
- 2.6 These figures make no allowance for kitchen space, storage, toilets, changing rooms or other ancillary facilities. We have assumed, on the basis of previous experience and taking account of design good practice, that a general allowance of an additional 20% for these areas (2,611m²), taking the total area to **15,665m²**. This is equivalent to 0.11m² per capita, or **111m² per 1,000 population**.
- 2.7 The largest facilities in South Cambs in terms of total hall/meeting space area, are the Milton Community Centre (which has a total of 531m²) and the Foxton Community Centre (420m²). The smallest facility was Croxton Village Hall (approximately 30m²). The average main hall space size is 152m².
- 2.8 It is much harder to calculate statistical supply and demand for indoor facilities than it is for some other kinds of community assets covered by PPG17, for example playing pitches, where there is a recognised methodology based on numerical evaluation which can show clearly whether there is an over or undersupply. In this instance, our understanding of supply and demand has been built upon evidence and feedback from the community and managers of facilities.

Consultation key issues

- 2.9 In general terms, the views gathered from the community with regard to the quantity of facilities tended to reflect the opinion that in most cases, the quantity of provision was mainly adequate. It should be noted however, that because we have not consulted with residents from villages without facilities, any quantitative shortfalls in these communities might not be immediately evident.
- 2.10 It should also be noted that public consultation, which would typically be used to explore latent demand among the general population, has not been undertaken in this instance.

South Cambridgeshire District Council Community Facilities Assessment

- 2.11 Consultees were asked to discuss any issues they believed existed with regard to the size and scale of facilities on offer, and whether there was any additional demand for more facilities. In most instances, particularly the smaller villages, it was noted that the demand as a whole was not especially notable, although regular comments were received with regard to improving the amount of space within existing facilities – extensions for storage space for example.
- 2.12 In the main, where village hall committees indicated their desire to develop facilities, this was more due to improving their quality, rather than the need for additional capacity. While there are several villages which are either considering or working through plans for new development, in most cases, the proposals do not represent a significant increase in scale.
- 2.13 There are several communities which are actively seeking the development of new community facilities. Teversham Parish Council has previously put forward plans for a new village hall, on the recreation ground, but progress has currently stalled due to a degree of apathy within the community.
- 2.14 Histon & Impington Parish Council is also keen to progress development of new facilities. The view expressed by parish councillors is that with a population of 8,500, the number and type of current facilities are inadequate to meet the need.
- 2.15 There is a plan in Sawston for a new facility to be delivered, which involves the purchase and redevelopment of a redundant primary school in the village. At present, church halls are providing the main community spaces in Sawston.
- 2.16 Coton is also pursuing the development of a new village hall, on the site of the current WI hall. The fund raising has been ongoing for the past five/six years, although there has been some difficulty securing large grants to help meet the estimated £450,000 costs. This facility is likely to be of a similar total size, but offer improved quality of facilities, better site accessibility and reduce overheads.

Setting a quantity standard

- 2.17 A summary benchmarking exercise has been undertaken by the Council in the process of developing a draft standard for the Northstowe development. This involved assessing other local authorities which have set quantitative standards for the provision of community facilities. The results are summarised below in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Quantitative provision benchmarking

Local Authority	Standard in m ² per 1,000 population
Milton Keynes	61m ²
Mid Suffolk	150m ²
Horsham	100m ²
North Cornwall	37m ²
Aylesbury Vale	125m ²
Peterborough	69m ²
South Somerset	400m ²
Broxbourne	298m ²
West Dorset	347m ²
Cardiff	310m ²
Average	190m²

- 2.18 The table shows there is a significant amount of variation across the country. It is also not entirely clear whether in certain local authorities, indoor sports facilities, such as sports halls, have been grouped together as part of this standard. Early planning work on the Northstowe development has been based on achieving a level of 150m²/1,000.
- 2.19 This is due to the fact that new town developments such as Northstowe will not have a backup of having “other” community spaces such as scout halls and church halls. As discussed at 1.15, these have not been included in this audit and hence the proposed standard which applies comfortably to established communities would not provide sufficient space in new communities.
- 2.20 One of the primary reasons for the significant variation in the figures shown above is the discrepancy in methodology across the various local authorities. In this case, as discussed above, we have included facilities regardless of ownership, provided they offer a significant level of valuable community access.
- 2.21 Given the feedback from consultation, discussion with officers and our evaluation of the current level of provision (**111 m²/1,000**) and what is realistic and sustainable, we have set a draft recommended standard which is the same as the current level of provision - **111m²/1,000 population**.
- 2.22 The recommended standard is in line with the current level of provision, inclusive of an additional 20% which we have allowed for the provision of storage, toilets, circulation areas and kitchen space. This quantity standard represents the bare minimum in terms of the core facilities which are typically offered by even the most modest small village hall.
- 2.23 We believe that this standard is viable and achievable. It does not require any additional provision on a District-wide basis to meet the needs of the current population, but additional facilities will be required to meet the projected growth in population.
- 2.24 It is recognised that in many cases, the scale of future development, particularly in the smaller villages, may not create enough additional demand to justify new facilities, in which case, we recommend that contributions be made towards improving the quality of current halls, to increase their capacity and suitability for a variety of uses. We have set the standard with this likely scenario foremost in mind.
- 2.25 Maintaining the current amount of facilities will enable the Council and other key partners to focus more on improving the quality of the current stock – this position is well supported by providers of facilities in the District.

Applying the quantity standard

- 2.26 In order to gain a better understanding of where any potential shortfalls may lie, we have calculated where each village/community sits in terms of current audited provision against the population. This is calculated by dividing the total space by the population.
- 2.27 Summarised below in Figure 2.2 and 2.3 are the results from the application of this standard, highlighting those parishes which have either particularly good, or particularly poor, levels of provision. All the settlements shown do have some provision however. Those with no audited provision are shown in Figure 2.4. The complete list of all parishes and the level of quantitative provision they would need, against the standard, is shown as Appendix D.
- 2.28 The population figures which have used are on a parish level, from ONS figures 2007. We have also shown the population change from 2001-2007. This is significant because it shows the trends in the community, and may help to illustrate areas which might find their community infrastructure coming under more, or less, strain.

Figure 2.2 Parish assessment against proposed quantity standard (surplus)

Parish	Population (ONS 2007)	Population Change %	Total Space (m ²)	As m ² /1,000	Application of standard (111m ² /1,000) against pop.	Surplus against Standard
Little Gransden	290	11.5	241	831	32m	210m
Ickleton	680	3.0	240	353	75m	165m
Rampton	450	2.3	186	413	50m	137m
Wimpole	240	4.3	140	583	26m	114m
Madingley	210	0	110	524	23m	87m
Arrington	430	10.3	130	302	47m	83m
Hatley	230	9.5	98	426	25m	73m

Figure 2.3 Parish assessment against proposed quantity standard (shortfall)

Parish	Population	Population Change %	Total Audited Space	m ² /1,000	Application of standard (111m ² /1,000)	Shortfall against Standard
Histon & Impington	8,540	N/A	469	55	939m	470m
Melbourn	4,570	3.2	124	27	503m	379m
Cottenham	6,100	7.6	294	48	671m	377m
Girton	4,020	6.9	80	20	442m	362m
Fulbourn	4,500	-4.7	237	53	495m	258m
Great Shelford	3,980	0.5	192	48	438m	246m
Stapleford	1,770	1.7	58	33	195m	137m

Provision trends

- 2.29 The tables show the significant variation in provision across the District, but also the general trend that provision (per 1,000) is better in the smaller settlements. All of the settlements with the best level of provision are under 700 people in size.
- 2.30 The best level, statistically, is shown to be Little Gransden (831m²/1,000), which when compared with the proposed standard, is found to be 210m² above the standard mark, although it is notable that the population has increased by nearly 12% in the 2001-2007 period. Wimpole and Madingley are also above 500m²/1,000, although it is Ickleton which shows the second greatest 'oversupply' equivalent to 165m².
- 2.31 Conversely, the parishes with less space per capita are mainly larger – with populations of 1,500 or more, and categorised as either Minor Rural Centres, or Rural Centres. However, it is not necessarily accurate to assume that all these communities are necessarily deficient. The picture in the larger communities is significantly more complex, with other facilities, such as the community colleges, dedicated sports halls, and other halls, meeting some of the demand for indoor multi-purpose space.

- 2.32 The lowest level of provision in statistical terms, is Girton. With a population of over 4,000 and just 80m² of audited space, this equates to 20m² per 1,000. The additional considerations of the poor quality of this facility (WI Hall), and its comparatively poor level of general access, will be considered later in this report.
- 2.33 Cottenham also has a comparatively low level of provision (24m² per 1,000) with a population of 6,100. As with Girton, this facility is in poor condition, and there is an issue over the combination of low quantitative provision with poor quality.
- 2.34 The greatest total shortfall in m² is in Histon & Impington. The application of the standard to the population shows that 939m² should be provided. However, with only 469m² of space audited, this results in a shortfall of 470m². Melbourn and Cottenham also have significant shortfalls shown – of 379m² and 377m² respectively.

No audited provision

- 2.35 In addition to those settlements shown above, there were a number of large settlements in which no audited provision was recorded. The largest villages without audited provision are shown below as Figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4 Parishes with no audited provision

Parish	Population	Population Change %	Application of standard (111m ² /1,000)/shortfall
Waterbeach	4,800	8.1	528m
Bassingbourn	3,870	-3.7	426m
Hardwick	2,700	2.3	297m
Teversham	2,680	0.4	295m
Duxford	1,920	4.3	211m

- 2.36 The table shows that particularly in Waterbeach, there is shown to be a significant undersupply of indoor community space. While there may be some facilities in each of these villages (Village Colleges for example) which at least partially meet the demand, these, and the villages identified in Figure 2.3 should be considered the higher priorities in terms of addressing the quantitative need.

Future demand

- 2.37 As we have previously highlighted, the significant growth planned across South Cambridgeshire will have significant implications for the current community facility infrastructure. The Core Strategy states that from 1999 to 2016, 20,000 new dwellings will be built. Around 7,000 have already been built, leaving 12-13,000. Of these, a significant proportion (circa 2,500) could be at Northstowe.
- 2.38 The Council is proposing separate standards for the Northstowe development to reflect the aspiration for this to be a national example of good practice in sustainable design, encouraging healthy lifestyles and providing opportunities for participation in diverse activities. It should also be noted that there will be a high level of affordable housing in the Northstowe scheme.
- 2.39 Assuming that the remaining 10,000 homes are subject to the proposed quantity standard we have proposed above (111m²/1,000), and based on the assumption of 2.5 individuals per dwelling (total 25,000 population) this translates to a need for 2,775m² of additional community space. This is a sizable amount which will require significant planning with strategic consideration. This also assumes that the current level of provision across the District will continue to be regarded as sufficient in the future.



Section 3

Qualitative Provision

3 Qualitative Provision

Introduction

- 3.1 In this section we identify the key issues relating to the quality of the existing stock of indoor community facilities on a District-wide and localised level.
- 3.2 This section includes:
- An assessment of the current level of provision
 - Key issues to emerge from the consultation with regard to the quality of provision
 - Consideration of recommended quality standards
 - Application of quality standard with analysis and illustration of good examples.
- 3.3 Our assessment of the quality of facilities in South Cambridgeshire has been primarily informed by non-technical visual site assessment visits undertaken to sites between March and June 2009.
- 3.4 The consideration of 'quality' has been based on two areas. Firstly, the inherent standard of facilities – their design, layout, specification etc. Secondly, we have considered the physical condition of each individual element. The key criteria we have assessed (as shown in Appendix A) include:
- Quality/condition of all main spaces, including hall, meeting spaces, kitchen, toilets etc
 - Flooring
 - Heating
 - Electrical
 - Storage space
 - Exterior/structural condition including car parks, roof, guttering etc.
- 3.5 All criteria were given a score – Very Poor; Poor; Average; Good; Excellent.
- 3.6 An Excellent rating has been given if a particular feature was of a very high specification, if a feature is of notable quality, has been recently installed, updated or refurbished, or has been particularly well maintained or presented. A Good rating has been given to elements of a good quality which do not quite meet this level – often relatively recently finished or of a marginally lower standard or condition.
- 3.7 At the other end of the scale, a Very Poor score has been given where criteria have fallen substantially below expected standards. Criteria scoring Very Poor might demonstrate serious structural problems, the urgent need for maintenance, refurbishment or replacement, a concern in health and safety terms, or being generally unfit for purpose.
- 3.8 Those sites scoring Very Poor overall should be considered the highest priority sites for investment, although it is recognised that on occasion, the cost of repairing or putting right the problems may not offer value for money, and in some instances, demolition and replacement may offer the best option.

Current provision

- 3.9 Our site assessments found that overall most of the facilities across the District are of a good quality. Several new halls have been built in the past 10 years, funded through the Millennium Commission, from developer money, and other sources, including South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 3.10 While there are some facilities of a poorer standard and condition, there are also some (of various sizes, scales and types) which could be regarded as examples of excellent practice in terms of design, layout and management, which provide a high quality service to their community.

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Community Facilities Assessment

- 3.11 As would be expected, the offer of facilities varied greatly, from multi-purpose community centres providing conferencing, meeting spaces, a sports hall, changing rooms, outdoor pitches, to the smallest hallroom.
- 3.12 It is important to note that there is no set list of specifications we have used to evaluate the variety of facilities across the District. Every hall is unique, and while there are some general standards which can be applied – for example disability access compliance, the provision of disabled toilets, or kitchen facilities – we have assessed facilities on their own merits.

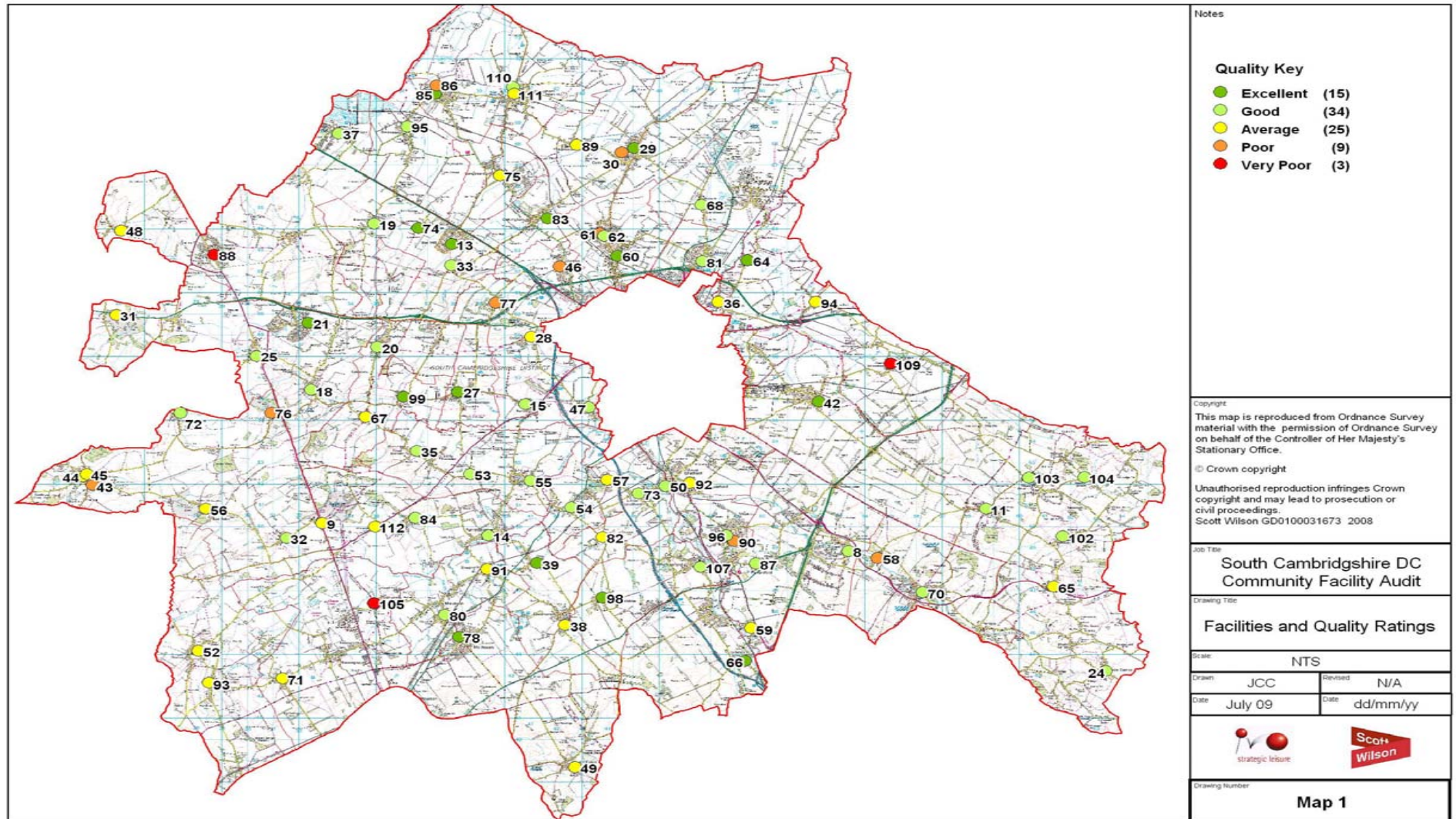
South Cambridgeshire District Council Community Facilities Assessment

3.13 We have amalgamated the individual elements to give an overall site score and plotted all the audited facilities, using a simple colour-coding system to show facility quality. Very Poor sites are shown as red, Poor as orange; Average is yellow; while Good or Excellent are shown as shades of green. The map of facilities is shown below as Figure 3.1. For detailed information on individual sites, please refer to the supporting information. The site ID numbers refer to sites as follows:

8	Abington Institute	38	Fowlmere Village Hall	62	Histon Methodist Church Hall	87	Pampisford Village Hall
9	Arrington Assembly Rooms	39	Foxton Pav. Community Centre	64	Horningsea Village Hall	88	Papworth Village Hall
11	Balsham Church Institute Committee	42	Fulbourn Townley Memorial Hall	65	Horseheath Village Hall	89	Rampton Village Hall
13	Bar Hill Village Hall	43	Gamlingay Comm Centre	66	Ickleton Village Hall	90	Sawston Church Hall
14	Barrington Village Hall	44	Gamlingay Methodist Chapel Hall	67	Kingston Village Hall		Sawston Free Church
15	Barton Village Hall	45	Gamlingay Wi Hall	68	Landbeach Village Hall	91	Shepreth Village Hall
18	Bourn Village Hall	46	Girton Womens Institute	70	Linton Village Hall	92	Stapleford Johnson Memorial Hall
19	Boxworth Village Hall	47	Grantchester Village Hall	71	Litlington Village Hall	93	Steeple Morden Village Hall
20	Caldecote Village Institute	48	Graveley Village Hall	72	Little Gransden Village Hall	94	Stow-Cum-Quy Village Hall
21	Cambourne Community Centre	49	Great Chishill Village Hall	73	Little Shelford Memorial Hall	95	Swavesey Memorial Hall
24	Castle Camps Village Hall	50	Great Shelford Memorial Hall	74	Lolworth Robinson Hall	98	Thriplow Village Hall
25	Caxton Village Hall	52	Guilden Morden Village Hall	75	Longstanton Village Institute	99	Toft Village Hall
27	Comberton Village Hall	53	Harlton Village Hall	76	Longstowe Village Hall	102	West Wickham Village Hall
28	Coton Village Hall	54	Harston Village Hall	77	Madingley Village Hall	103	West Wrating Village Hall
29	Cottenham Salvation Army Hall	55	Haslingfield Village Hall	78	Melbourn All Saints Hall	104	Weston Colville Reading Room
30	Cottenham Village Hall	56	Hatley Village Hall	80	Meldreth Village Hall	105	Whaddon Village Hall
31	Croxton Village Hall	57	Hauxton Village Hall	81	Milton Comm. Centre	107	Whittlesford Memorial Hall
32	Croydon Reading Room Trustees	58	Hildersham Village Hall	82	Newton Village Hall	109	Wilbraham Memorial Hall
33	Dry Drayton Village Hall	59	Hinxton Village Hall	83	Oakington Pavilion	110	Willingham Ploughman Hall
35	Eversden Village Hall	60	H&I Rec Ground Pav.	84	Orwell Village Hall	111	Willingham Public Hall
36	Fen Ditton Village Hall	61	St Andrew's Church Hall	85	Over Community Centre	112	Wimpole Village Hall
37	Fen Drayton Village Hall			86	Over Town Hall		

South Cambridgeshire District Council Community Facilities Assessment

Figure 3.1 Site quality scores



South Cambridgeshire District Council Community Facilities Assessment

- 3.14 The map shows that in general terms there are no geographical areas which immediately emerge as being particularly deficient in qualitative terms, although the south west corner of the District does have a number of sites which are Average, Poor or Very Poor.
- 3.15 The site qualities in geographical terms are generally variable, with good sites spread across the district, but there is a particular concentration of Excellent and Good sites to the north of Cambridge.
- 3.16 The breakdown of sites is shown below as Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 Quality of sites summary

Quality	Number of sites	Highlighted Examples
Excellent	15	Bar Hill Village Hall, Foxton Village Hall, Fulbourn Townley Memorial Hall, Thriplow Village Hall
Good	34	Great Shelford Village Hall, Haslingfield Village Hall, Milton Community Centre
Average	25	Gamlingay WI Hall, Shepreth Village Hall, Stapleford Johnson Memorial Hall
Poor	9	Gamlingay Community Centre, Wilbraham Memorial Hall, Cottenham Village Hall
Very Poor	3	Hildersham Village Hall, Whaddon Village Hall, Papworth Village Hall

- 3.17 The table shows that there are 49 sites which can be classified overall as either Excellent or Good, with 12 sites which have been scored as Poor or Very Poor. The detailed results from the audit have been made available as a separate database supplied digitally to the Council.

Key issues

- 3.18 The site assessment process highlighted some recurrent issues in terms of the quality and condition of community facilities in the District. It should be noted that in general terms, the quality of facilities was fairly good. In those instances where investment was most needed, several management committees were already in the process of fundraising, or plans had already been drawn up.
- 3.19 The financial cost of improving the stock across the District is extremely difficult to estimate. While some sites require small alterations – for example improvements in energy efficiency, draft proofing, etc – some require substantial investment.

Flooring

- 3.20 Many facilities were in need of investment in the flooring (primarily main hall, but also other areas). In many cases, this investment is made only once every 15-20 years due to general wear and tear. As would be expected, with some of the aging sites, this was overdue, however many consultees recognised the importance of investment in this area.

Toilets

- 3.21 Many sites were in need of improvements to their toilets, although it was noted that many have also made such upgrades in recent years. In many instances, these projects have been at least partially funded by South Cambridgeshire DC, particularly where improvements enabled accessible toilets to be delivered. In some facilities, there was a noticeable gap between the quality of the rest of the facility and the washrooms – for example Orwell; Little Shelford; Hinxton and Steeple Morden.

Kitchen

- 3.22 Nearly every site audited had a usable kitchen or a food/drink preparation area. While the age and quality of these facilities was variable, in the main there were few which were in very poor condition and completely unfit for purpose. A number of halls had clearly invested in their kitchens in recent years, with others having shown particularly careful management, with low levels of wear and tear. This is considered to be an integral part of even the smallest village hall.

Site accessibility/disability compliance

- 3.23 The majority of sites were fairly accessible to users with mobility problems. There are also some which, by the nature and age of the building, will always present sizable and occasionally insurmountable issues with regard to access.

Efficiency/building infrastructure

- 3.24 This was an area where many sites, except those built in the past 10 years, did not rate highly. Again, while for many sites, the age and construction of the building makes it very difficult to fundamentally improve efficiency, there are some facilities which could be improved. A more detailed energy efficiency study could highlight where substantial savings might be made.
- 3.25 While many facilities have double glazing, and even energy saving bulbs, often some of the more subtle measures were sometimes lacking, such as light sensors/timers; self closing doors; draught proofing or having push taps. Insulation was noted as a particular issue, but due to the design of many halls (high ceilings) this is not an easy issue to resolve in many instances.
- 3.26 Generally there were few problems immediately evident with the heating and electrics, although the assessments did not include a full technical evaluation. As the halls are required to pass regular inspections on these criteria, there were few sites which were having significant issues. However, there was a range of different heating solutions across the District – from conventional radiators, to convection heaters and infrared heaters.
- 3.27 Heating and electricity are still mostly provided by ‘conventional’ means – namely gas and oil. There was no evidence of use of sustainable energy – solar, wind, or alternative fuel sources. This might be an area for development in the future.

Storage

- 3.28 One of the primary issues at most sites was that of storage space. It is a recurring theme in community facilities generally that storage is rarely sufficient, as many user groups often have their own equipment, as well as any communal furniture. This was commonly found to be the case during the audit. In the case of conversions or older buildings, this is often an unavoidable situation. However, it should be ensured that any new facilities built in the District are designed with sufficient storage space.

Exterior

- 3.29 On the whole, the majority of facilities were not demonstrating significant structural problems. In part this is probably because many of the halls are ex-school buildings or church buildings built at the end of the 19th or beginning of the 20th century and are extremely solid. Ironically, the sites with more pressing problems have almost all been built within the last 30-40 years, and most of these have not been built with longevity in mind (for example being built largely from, or clad in, wood).

Consultation

- 3.30 Issues regarding the quality of facilities were the most commonly voiced, both through face to face consultation and the formal questionnaire sent to hall committees and management groups. A significant number responded that they were in need of, or were planning, improvements to their facilities.
- 3.31 The most common areas identified as priorities for investment included:
- New kitchen
 - New roof
 - Storage
 - Double glazing
 - Lighting
 - Improving access (particularly for mobility impaired i.e. doors, entrances)
 - Toilet refurbishment (including disability compliance)
 - General maintenance and replacement of fittings etc.
- 3.32 In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to identify the age of their facilities. While there was a range of answers, many were built 30 or more years ago. There are therefore some problems with buildings, fixtures and fittings, reaching the end of their natural lifespans.
- 3.33 The revenue costs of keeping buildings running are increasing. This has not been helped by increasing prices of utilities. This was noted as a significant issue by a number of hall representatives, many of whom said that given the option, they would prioritise making their heating and lighting more efficient.
- 3.34 Respondents highlighted the challenge of sourcing funding particularly in the current climate. While SCDC has been a recognised investor in recent years, as has WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd) which has also been used to deliver conversions, extensions and kitchens at several sites, the general trend is that capital and revenue grants are hard to source to keep facilities up to scratch.

Setting a Quality Standard

- 3.35 As outlined in Section 1, it was decided in discussion with the Council project team that establishing a vision for the quality of community facilities in South Cambridgeshire should entail some recognition of the differences in these communities across the District.
- 3.36 While it is important that all residents have access to high quality facilities and services, it is also important that these are sustainable facilities which reflect the needs of their community, and are not a drain on the resources of any individual Parish, Trust or committee.
- 3.37 The quality standard is important as it will establish a framework for ensuring that all future facilities are built to a high specification and can be regarded as genuine community assets. The construction of sub-standard or poorly-conceived facilities is counter-productive and should be resisted at all times.
- 3.38 We have therefore set out four visions for the quality of facilities in the villages, broadly according to their classification in the Core Strategy – Rural Centres, Minor Rural Centres, Group Villages or Infill Villages.
- 3.39 It should be noted that our standards are only a guideline – they are not comprehensive, prescriptive or absolute. As we have discussed above, there is no single answer for what a facility should offer, and it is assumed that particularly in the case of any new-build facilities, these would be undertaken with full community engagement and consultation, to understand the demand and how this could best be met.
- 3.40 Some villages may be in a certain group, but may have particular needs which are such that a different facility specification should be met. This should be at the discretion of the Planning Authority.

Rural Centres

The proposed standard for Rural Centres is as follows:

- **Rural Centres should feature at least one large facility which offers extended access to all community groups at competitive rates.**
- **The centre should have at least one high quality main hall space suitable for a variety of uses, potentially including club sport and physical activity; theatrical rehearsals/performances and social functions, ideally in a central and accessible location in the community. The facility should also offer smaller, separate meeting spaces and significant storage.**
- **All facilities, including toilets, should be fully accessible, or retro-fitted to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation wherever possible. Additional facilities, for example changing rooms, should be fit for purpose and compliant with design best practice (for example Sport England).**
- **Facilities should include a sizable kitchen/catering area (potentially professionally equipped) for the preparation of food and drink. It is desirable that the hall be licensed, with a personal licence holder, to permit a larger number of events. The facility may also require employed staff.**
- **All new-build facilities should be designed with significant energy-efficiency measures in place. This includes energy efficient lighting (including timers and automatic sensors); double/triple glazing; draught proofing; insulation; appropriate central heating etc. Additional measures, such as the capture and use of grey water, photovoltaic cells, Combined Heat and Power (CHP), should also be explored.**
- **All current facilities should be upgraded where appropriate and feasible to ensure that management/revenue costs are kept to a minimum.**

Minor Rural Centres

The proposed standard for Minor Rural Centres is as follows:

- **Rural Centres should have at least one good sized facility which offers access to community groups at competitive rates.**
- **The centre should feature one main hall space suitable for various uses, including casual sport and physical activity; theatrical rehearsals/performances and social functions. The facility should also offer at least one meeting room.**
- **All facilities, including toilets, should be fully accessible, or retro-fitted to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation wherever possible.**
- **Facilities should include a kitchen/catering area for the preparation of food and drink. The venue should have the capacity for Temporary Events for functions which serve alcohol.**
- **Where practical and achievable, new build facilities should be delivered with appropriate energy-efficiency measures in place, although this should be undertaken with the balance of expenditure/saving in mind, given the likely hours of usage.**
- **Facilities should be designed to offer ease of management, as volunteers are likely to be primarily responsible for day to day upkeep.**

Group Villages

The proposed standard for Group Villages is as follows:

- **Group Villages should offer a facility of reasonable size which offers access to community groups at competitive rates.**
- **The facility should feature a main hall space which can be used for casual sport and physical activity; theatrical rehearsals/performances and social functions, however, it is recognised that one use may be favoured depending upon demand.**
- **All new facilities, including toilets, should be fully accessible, or retro-fitted if viable to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation wherever possible.**
- **Facilities should include an appropriately equipped kitchen/catering area for the preparation of food and drink. The venue should have the capacity for Temporary Events for functions which serve alcohol.**
- **Where practical and achievable, new build facilities should be delivered with appropriate energy-efficiency measures in place, although this should be undertaken with the balance of expenditure/saving in mind, given the likely hours of usage. Likely measures include light sensors/timers, Cisternisers, improved insulation etc.**
- **Facilities should be functional spaces, designed to offer ease of management, as volunteers are likely to be primarily responsible for day to day upkeep.**

Infill Villages

The proposed standard for Infill Villages is as follows:

- **Infill Villages should feature at least one facility which offers some access to community groups.**
- **The centre should feature one main space ideally suitable for a variety of uses, including casual sport and physical activity; theatrical rehearsals/performances and social functions. If possible, the facility should also offer a smaller meeting space.**
- **All facilities, including toilets, should be fully accessible, or retro-fitted to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation wherever possible and feasible.**
- **Facilities should include a kitchen/catering area for the preparation of food and drink. If appropriate, the venue should have the capacity to hold Temporary Events where alcohol can be served.**
- **Where practical and achievable, new build facilities should be delivered with appropriate energy-efficiency measures in place, although this should be undertaken with the balance of expenditure/saving in mind, given the likely level of usage. Measures include light sensors/timers, Cisternisers, improved insulation etc.**
- **Facilities should be functional spaces, designed to offer ease of management, as volunteers are likely to be primarily responsible for day to day upkeep.**

Good Practice Examples

- 3.41 As introduced above, there are a number of very good facilities across the District. While not always perfect, these halls demonstrate some elements of best practice and can be used as potential examples of how to approach provision. We have selected three case studies to illustrate particular elements which have been successful.

Lolworth Robinson Hall



- 3.42 Despite this facility being one of the smallest in the audit – the main space is less than 40m² – and little more than a meeting room, the presentation and ongoing attention puts this facility in a very high bracket. It has undergone significant investment, with an extension added to the side with new toilets, including disabled toilet. This has been undertaken with sensitivity and attention to detail to ensure a good finish.
- 3.43 There is still work to be carried out on this site – the kitchen is not to the standard of the main space, there is a lack of storage, and there are other areas, including an upstairs area, which are still to be renovated and updated, and could present problems in terms of full disability access, but the committee is keen to continue to improve the site.
- 3.44 It is a good example of how a small space can be well appointed, and given that the population of the village is only 170, this facility can meet their needs.

Thriplow Village Hall



- 3.45 Built in 2000 and partially funded through Millennium Commission Lottery money, Thriplow is a good example of a small village hall which offers flexibility and suitability for a variety of users.
- 3.46 While large enough to accommodate carpet mat bowls, yoga, pilates, dancing or other group exercise classes, the hall has also been equipped to cater for musical and dramatic performances, with lighting and sound systems and a portable stage.



- 3.47 The facility features an adjoining meeting room, which is separated by a retractable screen, offering good flexibility. The hall has been well designed and features good disability access and many efficiency measures to reduce running costs.

Melbourn All Saints Community Hall



- 3.48 Recently finished (2008), this community hall adjoins the church and is compact, attractive, well designed, well lit (natural and artificial light) and well built.
- 3.49 The facility is equipped with equipment and management tools to improve efficiency and security, including CCTV and computerised controls of light and heating. With a level car park and full disability access, it is a very good example of a small hall which is well suited to hosting meetings and group sessions.
- 3.50 Its limitations are mainly due to its size – it is not best suited to physical activity, however, this was not a planned primary function.

Foxton Community Centre



- 3.51 Foxton Community Centre is a very good example of a facility which has a variety of roles and can provide a range of services and opportunities for the local population through shrewd design and management.
- 3.52 Delivered in part by a Millennium Commission grant of £330,000, this facility was many years in the planning and was aided by residential development in Foxton which secured S106 contributions towards the centre.
- 3.53 Foxton has several hireable spaces – the main hall, which is 150m² and particularly suitable for sport and recreation, as well as parties and functions. In addition, there is a separate lounge and a meeting room with partition.
- 3.54 The building features changing rooms and functions as the pavilion building for the adjoining football and cricket pitches. On the other side of the building is Foxton Primary School. This intelligent design and layout means that during the day, school children can utilise the main hall, but during the evenings and weekends, it can be easily hired out.
- 3.55 While the building certainly has some snags – the sharing and prioritisation of the main hall with the school can present some challenges, it is a good example of how facilities can be effectively co-located to improve usage and efficiency.



Section 4

Accessibility

4 Accessibility

Introduction

- 4.1 In this section the key issues relating to the accessibility (catchment) of indoor community facilities are identified on a District-wide and localised level.
- 4.2 The section includes:
- An assessment of the current level of provision
 - Key issues to emerge from the consultation with regard to the accessibility of provision
 - Identification of areas without access to facilities.
- 4.3 The consideration of accessibility is a vital element of the overall balance of supply and demand of any facilities. The term refers to two key areas; firstly, the physical location of facilities in relation to the population (travel distance); and secondly, the actual level of access which is provided to the population at large. **(Note - this does not refer to site access or disability compliance, which has already been considered in the Quality assessment)**
- 4.4 It is an important consideration because facilities which cannot be accessed – no matter how large, or how good in qualitative terms – are of little overall value. In short, if it can't be used, it can't be counted.
- 4.5 As identified in Section 1, the broad approach to the assessment of provision has been through establishing a 'Settlement Hierarchy' – developing a pyramid approach which marries together larger settlements with larger and more comprehensive facilities.

Current provision

- 4.6 In the process of undertaking this study, the Project Team, including the Council Steering Group, has been cognisant of the need to evaluate accessibility and has understood the impact that poor access has in terms of creating the impression of a quantitative shortfall.
- 4.7 As has been highlighted earlier in this report, the shortlist of facilities which we have audited and reviewed is not a comprehensive record of every space in the District.

Accessibility and management

- 4.8 In drawing up this list, facilities have been included which are generally known to have a considerable level of community access, whether through hiring to the public, to a number of local groups or clubs, or where the activity of the management group is open to a broad range of people.
- 4.9 As has been previously identified, some sites have not been audited due to the fact that the management/owner/occupier has clear and extensive restrictions and limitations on the use of facilities for certain purposes, for example restrictions on alcohol, or social events in church halls.
- 4.10 It is important that all members of the community have unconditional access to facilities, which is not based on being a member of a faith or social group. Availability of facilities during key hours (for example many facilities are booked by pre-school) and the cost of using facilities is also a consideration.
- 4.11 We have made comments regarding areas which may be affected by these management/accessibility issues, where we are aware of them, below.

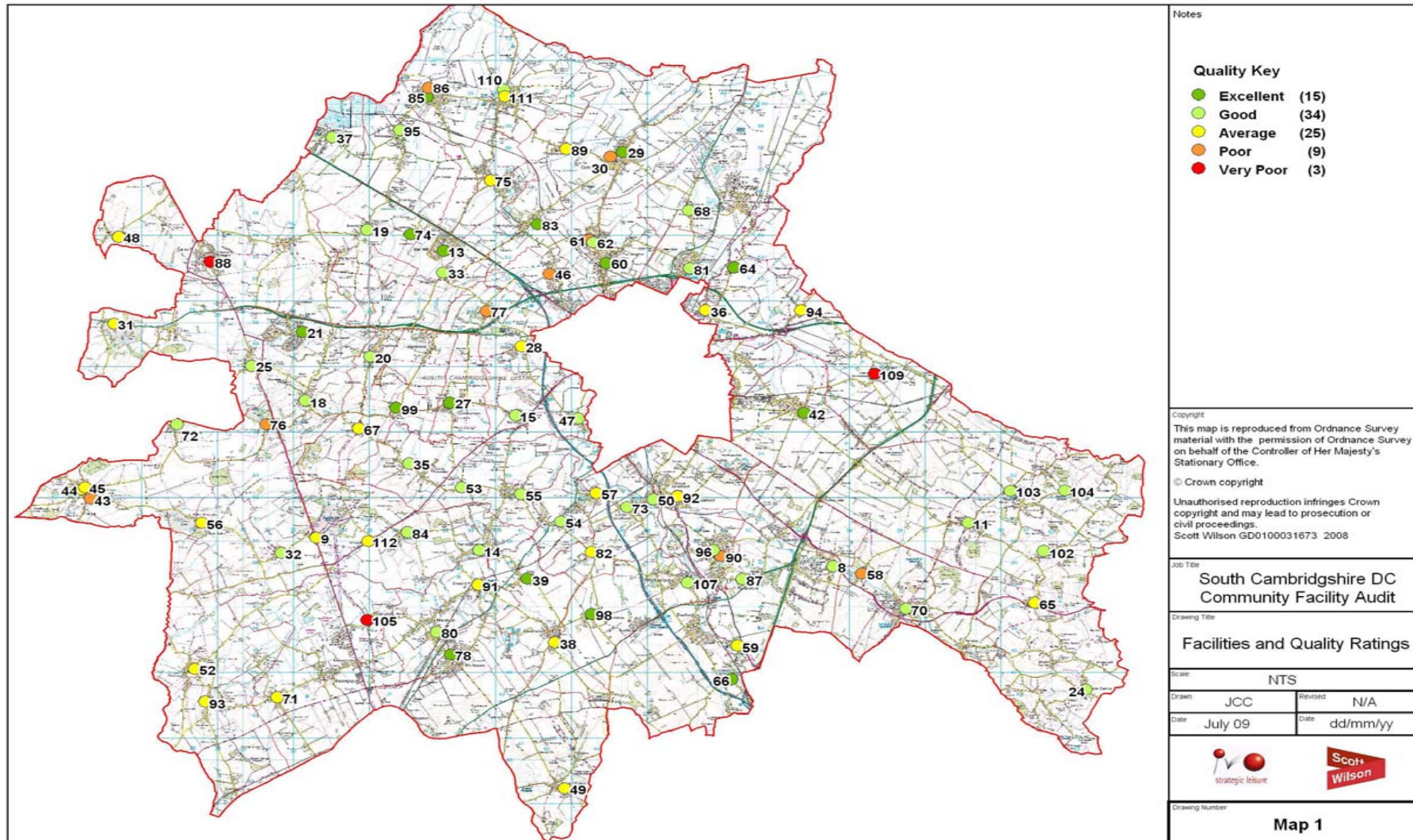
Accessibility and physical location

4.12 The location of facilities in relation to the centres of population is the second key element of consideration of accessibility. Facilities must be in the right place in order to make the greatest contribution to the community. As highlighted above and illustrated below, the approach to this study has placed less emphasis on mapping geographical shortfalls, however. The map of facilities (with quality scores) is shown as Figure 4.1. As before, the sites are labelled as follows:

8	Abington Institute	38	Fowlmere Village Hall	62	Histon Methodist Church Hall	87	Pampisford Village Hall
9	Arrington Assembly Rooms	39	Foxton Pav. Community Centre	64	Horningsea Village Hall	88	Papworth Village Hall
11	Balsham Church Institute Committee	42	Fulbourn Townley Memorial Hall	65	Horseheath Village Hall	89	Rampton Village Hall
13	Bar Hill Village Hall	43	Gamlingay Comm Centre	66	Ickleton Village Hall	90	Sawston Church Hall
14	Barrington Village Hall	44	Gamlingay Methodist Chapel Hall	67	Kingston Village Hall	96	Sawston Free Church
15	Barton Village Hall	45	Gamlingay Wi Hall	68	Landbeach Village Hall	91	Shepreth Village Hall
18	Bourn Village Hall	46	Girton Womens Institute	70	Linton Village Hall	92	Stapleford Johnson Memorial Hall
19	Boxworth Village Hall	47	Grantchester Village Hall	71	Litlington Village Hall	93	Steeple Morden Village Hall
20	Caldecote Village Institute	48	Graveley Village Hall	72	Little Gransden Village Hall	94	Stow-Cum-Quy Village Hall
21	Cambourne Community Centre	49	Great Chishill Village Hall	73	Little Shelford Memorial Hall	95	Swavesey Memorial Hall
24	Castle Camps Village Hall	50	Great Shelford Memorial Hall	74	Lolworth Robinson Hall	98	Thriplow Village Hall
25	Caxton Village Hall	52	Guilden Morden Village Hall	75	Longstanton Village Institute	99	Toft Village Hall
27	Comberton Village Hall	53	Harlton Village Hall	76	Longstowe Village Hall	102	West Wickham Village Hall
28	Coton Village Hall	54	Harston Village Hall	77	Madingley Village Hall	103	West Wrattling Village Hall
29	Cottenham Salvation Army Hall	55	Haslingfield Village Hall	78	Melbourn All Saints Hall	104	Weston Colville Reading Room
30	Cottenham Village Hall	56	Hatley Village Hall	80	Meldreth Village Hall	105	Whaddon Village Hall
31	Croxton Village Hall	57	Hauxton Village Hall	81	Milton Comm. Centre	107	Whittlesford Memorial Hall
32	Croydon Reading Room Trustees	58	Hildersham Village Hall	82	Newton Village Hall	109	Wilbraham Memorial Hall
33	Dry Drayton Village Hall	59	Hinxton Village Hall	83	Oakington Pavilion	110	Willingham Ploughman Hall
35	Eversden Village Hall	60	H&I Rec Ground Pav.	84	Orwell Village Hall	111	Willingham Public Hall
36	Fen Ditton Village Hall	61	St Andrew's Church Hall	85	Over Community Centre	112	Wimpole Village Hall
37	Fen Drayton Village Hall			86	Over Town Hall		

South Cambridgeshire District Council Community Facilities Assessment

Figure 4.1 Site locations



Setting an Accessibility Standard

- 4.13 As outlined in Section 1, it was decided in discussion with the Council project team that establishing and applying an accessibility catchment zone or distance threshold was not a sufficiently robust and appropriate way of measuring accessibility.
- 4.14 When a 10-minute drive time to all facilities was calculated (see Figure 4.1 above), it showed complete coverage of practically the entire District, with the exception of the particularly rural area to the east of the District, showing that in theory, there are no accessibility issues.
- 4.15 There are some key issues highlighted by the PPG17 Companion Guide, which stresses the need for localised provision, however, it is also recognised that those living in rural areas will not always be able to access (particularly by walking) the same array of facilities as those in urban areas.

“Residents in rural areas cannot realistically expect to have the same level of access to the full range of different types of open spaces and sport and recreation facilities normally available in more densely populated urban areas. This means that residents of rural areas usually have to travel further than most urban residents to some forms of provision.

Nonetheless, residents of many quite small villages expect to have basic facilities, such as a village green or recreation ground and village hall, either within or immediately adjacent to their village.”

- 4.16 In line with this observation, and as shown in the previous section on quality, we have set standards for the larger settlements which are more stringent. This is the framework of a ‘shopping list’ which can be applied to communities as appropriate.
- 4.17 In terms of physical accessibility, the vast majority of villages in South Cambridgeshire have facilities. As shown Section 2, there are few large villages which do not have any audited provision, and the remainder are the smallest communities, which are likely to have difficulty sustaining additional facilities and services.
- 4.18 In the light of these issues, and the difficulty of applying a hard and fast statistical ‘standard’ the recommended statement and target for the accessibility of community facilities in South Cambridgeshire is as follows:

Recommended Accessibility Statement

Villages and parishes should provide, or have significant and immediate access to, indoor community facilities commensurate with the size and scope of the settlement (as set out in the Core Strategy) and in line with the quality standard.

In villages with a population of more than 500, it is expected that facilities be provided within the settlement, ideally within walking distance of most of the population. In smaller communities, some ‘sharing’ of resources may be allowed, particularly where there are pre-existing or traditional arrangements.

Facilities should be managed so as to provide access to all, at appropriate hours, at suitable rates, with no significant restrictions on appropriate activities, such as social gatherings/parties, meetings, sport and physical activity and other classes. It is recognised that in smaller communities, some compromise on accessibility may be necessary.

- 4.19 As with the recommended quality standard, this accessibility standard is a guideline and is not comprehensive, prescriptive or absolute. Consideration of accessibility will depend upon specific local circumstances. There may be exemptions, or the Planning Authority may decide to re-categorise or clarify the classification of villages as Rural Centres, Minor Rural Centres, Group Villages and Infill Villages. All decisions on this area should be at the discretion of the Planning Authority.

- 4.20 It is expected that the Council will apply the quality and quantity standards across all villages, however, in very small villages (potentially of fewer than 500 residents) and where there is no aspiration for community spaces, and villagers use facilities in a neighbouring village, we would anticipate that developer contributions be made towards these facilities.
- 4.21 It is recognised that in the case of the smallest villages there will not always be the option regarding existing spaces and their management arrangements, which may have certain restrictions or limitations which impact upon accessibility. In many cases, the church hall functions or ‘doubles’ as a village hall.
- 4.22 However, as we have identified through our quality standards, in the case of the larger settlements, there is a case for facilities which are socially and religiously neutral in terms of management and ownership, and which can be used for the fullest possible extent of activities.

Applying the accessibility statement

- 4.23 Although a mapping-based or distance threshold exercise has not been undertaken, it is still possible to apply the principles set out in the accessibility statement to identify areas where access might be poor.
- 4.24 Clearly, as the approach taken is based on a principle of settlement hierarchy, the accessibility of facilities will be closely related to the quantity of facilities in any given area. Subsequently, according to the record of audited facilities, Waterbeach, Bassingbourn, Hardwick, Teversham and Duxford can all be considered to be not meeting the accessibility standard, or the quantity standard.
- 4.25 In addition, there are a number of examples where it would seem that the criteria set out above have not been met. While these may be specific instances, in some cases the issues at hand are more widely applicable across the District, and worthy of broader consideration. They are shown below:

Girton

- 4.26 The only audited facility in Girton is the Women’s Institute Hall. As has been identified in Sections 2 and 3, this is an extremely modest facility, both in terms of overall size and quality. Notwithstanding these issues, the management of this facility also raises points with regard to accessibility to the community.
- 4.27 The management of the hall is such that there are limited opportunities for other groups to access this facility. While the hall is used by some groups, including a dance class, it cannot be hired, and use is at the WI’s discretion, and only if not required for WI activity.

Histon & Impington

- 4.28 As was outlined in Section 2, the combined Histon & Impington parishes form one of the largest settlements in the District, and has a comparatively modest amount of audited space – a total of 469m². However, of this space nearly 75% is controlled by St Andrew’s or Histon Methodist Church.
- 4.29 This has clear implications in terms of access, as these two organisations have guidelines as well as their own priorities and agendas which they would naturally want to be reflected by the groups using their facilities.
- 4.30 Consultation with the Parish Councils has shown them to be interested in developing facilities which could be more widely accessible, and might encourage more diverse use.

Over Community Centre

- 4.31 While the Over Community Centre is undoubtedly a high quality facility which is a significant asset to the local (and a wider) population, there are some issues which can be highlighted with regard to its accessibility and availability.

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Community Facilities Assessment

- 4.32 Although the centre is run by a charitable trust, due to its size and scale, it has to recoup significant costs to upkeep the facilities to a high standard. Subsequently it is managed to maximise profit, while balancing its community objectives.
- 4.33 One of the centre's primary income streams is conferencing. While this is undoubtedly a valuable resource for the business community in Over, and further afield, there are some timetabling issues, and in a situation where there are booking clashes, the bigger events will tend to take precedence. This is a simple reality of running facilities of this scale and nature, but it highlights the challenge of balancing the needs of individuals or small informal groups with other users.



Section 5

Developer Contributions

5 Developer Contributions

Introduction

- 5.1 One of the key objectives of this study is to inform the creation of a robust and straightforward process and formula for the Council to calculate and negotiate with private developers for Section 106 contributions. This should be capable of being applied as a tariff, or in site-specific circumstances.
- 5.2 SCDC wishes to produce an SPD which will provide clarity for developers on the contributions likely to be sought by the planning authority in the event of any potential development, particularly with regard to the negotiation of sums towards the delivery of services, facilities and infrastructure required to mitigate the impact of any such development.
- 5.3 In this section is a summary of the quantitative and qualitative findings, by village; an illustration of the proposed methodology for calculating any potential contribution; how the standards set could be applied; and some worked examples to show how the area formula could be used by the Council. It is intended that these processes be followed along with the Council's existing policies on S106 contributions for open spaces. There is also some consideration of dealing with commuted maintenance and establishment sums.
- 5.4 With regard to the use of planning obligations, paragraph 33 of PPG17 states:

“Planning obligations should be used as a means to remedy local deficiencies in the quantity or quality of open space, sports and recreation provision. Local Authorities will be justified in seeking planning obligations where the quantity or quality of provision is inadequate or under threat, or where new development increases local needs. It is essential that local authorities have undertaken detailed assessments of needs and audits of existing facilities, and set appropriate local standards in order to justify planning obligations.”

The Process

Key assumptions

- 5.5 The process can be split into a number of stages. However, there are some key considerations and assumptions which have to be made regarding the likely scenarios in South Cambridgeshire as a planning authority.
- 5.6 Firstly, it should be noted that in the vast majority of cases, any residential development (unless it consists of many units) is unlikely to create the demand for one new facility, or require 'on site' provision.
- 5.7 It is therefore assumed that in nearly all cases, any S106 contribution to indoor community facilities will therefore be 'off site' – normally in the form of a financial contribution to an existing facility, to extend, improve services or capacity.
- 5.8 Secondly, and probably more applicable to open spaces, many local authorities have found there to be a need for only certain types of dwelling to contribute to certain types of provision. In this instance, we have assumed that all dwellings (flats, apartments, houses, affordable homes) would be required to contribute to indoor facilities.
- 5.9 In maintenance terms, many local authorities are now seeking commuted maintenance sums, either on an annual basis, or as a lump sum, to assist with the upkeep of facilities. Maintenance sums are an important element of community facility provision, but it is not considered reasonable to expect maintenance in perpetuity.

South Cambridgeshire District Council Community Facilities Assessment

- 5.10 The timeframes over which these maintenance sums are sought varies significantly – typically from 5 years, but sometimes up to 20 years, and some authorities also make allowance for inflationary increases over this period.

Key steps

- 5.11 In broad terms, when an application is received, it will be necessary to determine whether after the proposed development, there will be sufficient quantity of facilities within the catchment of the development, including any on-site provision, to meet the needs of new and existing residents, according to the local standards. Does the quality of existing facilities also meet the standard?
- 5.12 As an initial guide for planning officers, and to help the proposal assessment process, we have produced a summary table (Figure 5.1 below) which shows the broad quantitative demand which is created by the population of each village/parish (the application of the quantity standard), alongside a colour coded representation of the quality of the current facilities as shown by our auditing process. The table can assist with an ‘at a glance’ evaluation of prospective development applications.

Figure 5.1 Summary of quantitative need and existing quality

Parish	ONS 2007 Population	Space required (application of 111m/1,000)	Quality of Existing Audited Space	Site 2	Site 3
Abington Pigotts	150	17			
Arrington	430	47			
Babraham (*)	250	28			
Balsham	1,620	178			
Bar Hill	4,100	451			
Barrington (*)	920	101			
Bartlow (*)	100	11			
Barton (*)	800	88			
Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth (AF)	3,870	426			
Bourn *	920	101			
Boxworth	240	26			
Caldecote	1,640	180			
Cambourne *	5,650	622			
Carlton	160	18			
Castle Camps (*)	670	74			
Caxton *	510	56			
Childerley	20	2			
Comberton	2,360	260			
Conington (S)	140	15			
Coton (*)	760	84			
Cottenham	6,100	671			
Croxton	160	18			
Croydon	230	25			
Dry Drayton	610	67			
Duxford	1,920	211			
Elsworth	660	73			
Eltisley	450	50			
Fen Ditton (*)	760	84			
Fen Drayton	900	99			

South Cambridgeshire District Council
Community Facilities Assessment

Parish	ONS 2007 Population	Space required (application of 111m/1,000)	Quality of Existing Audited Space	Site 2	Site 3
Fowlmere (*)	1,200	132			
Foxton	1,260	139			
Fulbourn	4,500	495			
Gamlingay	3,620	398			
Girton	4,020	442			
Grantchester (*)	590	65			
Graveley	220	24			
Great Abington	860	95			
Great Eversden	230	25			
Great Shelford (*)	3,980	438			
Great Wilbraham	650	72			
Great & Little Chishill	590	65			
Guilden Morden	1,000	110			
Hardwick	2,700	297			
Harlton	300	33			
Harston	1,680	185			
Haslingfield (*)	1,630	179			
Hatley	230	25			
Hauxton	690	76			
Heydon (*)	240	26			
Hildersham (*)	200	22			
Hinxton (*)	310	34			
Histon	4,400	484			
Horningsea	350	39			
Horseheath	460	51			
Ickleton	680	75			
Impington	4,140	455			
Kingston	230	25			
Knapwell	90	10			
Landbeach (*)	830	91			
Linton (*)	4,400	484			
Litlington	860	95			
Little Abington	500	55			
Little Eversden	580	64			
Little Gransden	290	32			
Little Shelford (*)	810	89			
Little Wilbraham	420	46			
Lolworth	170	19			
Longstanton (AF)	2,310	254			
Longstowe	230	25			
Madingley (*)	210	23			
Melbourn (*)	4,570	503			
Meldreth (*)	1,700	187			
Milton (*)	4,340	477			
Newton	390	43			

South Cambridgeshire District Council
Community Facilities Assessment

Parish	ONS 2007 Population	Space required (application of 111m/1,000)	Quality of Existing Audited Space	Site 2	Site 3
Oakington & Westwick	1,390	153			
Orwell (*)~	1,080	119			
Over	2,780	306			
Pampisford (*)	340	37			
Papworth Everard	2,530	278			
Papworth St Agnes	60	7			
Rampton	450	50			
Sawston (*)	7,140	785			
Shepreth	830	91			
Shingay-cum-Wendy	110	12			
Shudy Camps	310	34			
Stapleford (*)	1,770	195			
Steeple Morden	1,030	113			
Stow-cum-Quy (*)	450	50			
Swavesey	2,590	285			
Tadlow	180	20			
Teversham	2,680	295			
Thriplow (*)	1,010	111			
Toft #	590	65			
Waterbeach (AF)	4,800	528			
West Wickham	470	52			
West Wrating	470	52			
Weston Colville	430	47			
Whaddon (AF)	480	53			
Whittlesford	1,580	174			
Willingham	3,900	429			
Wimpole~	240	26			

5.13 The main action points for the planning evaluation process overall are likely to be as follows:

Evaluate the impact

- Estimate the number of residents living in the proposed development (being explicit about assumed occupation rates)
- Calculate the existing amount and quality of indoor community space within the settlement (using summary table if required)

Ascertain the demand

- Estimate the existing population within the relevant accessibility threshold (settlement) and combine this with the estimated population of the new development
- Compare the existing amount of provision and the total population with the quantity standards to decide if after the development there will be sufficient quantity within recommended distances of the development site to meet local needs
- We would anticipate consultation with Parish Councils at this stage

Consider supply

- If, when assessed, there is a sufficient amount of indoor space in the local area to meet the needs of the total population, it is still expected that the Council will require developer contributions to enhance and maintain the quality of indoor spaces within that community

Determine solution

- Where it has been decided that a contribution is required to improve provision locally, reference should be made to the quality standards for each typology and assessment against these standards. Contributions should only be considered necessary where the quality of local provision is considered below the quality vision as outlined in this assessment (broadly summarised above in Table 5.1)
- It would normally be appropriate to consider whether provision should be made on or off-site. With outdoor space types, it is common that thresholds be applied to developments to determine this. As highlighted above, in most cases, off site will be the most appropriate course of action

Calculate the contribution

- The level of developer contributions for off-site provision will depend on a variety of factors. Standard costs towards the enhancement of existing provision should be clearly identified and revised annually.
- Some costs can be difficult to determine based on what elements of provision to include within the costing, for example, whether the cost of a facility should include site preparation, e.g. levelling, drainage, special surfaces, level of equipment and land costs etc
- Where off site provision already exists, the developer and Council is likely to specify how this provision should be improved to maximise the impact of investment.

Worked example – capital contribution and commuted sums

- 5.14 A housing development for 70 dwellings has been submitted to the Council. The development consists of 30 four-bed dwellings, 30 three-bed dwellings and 10 two-bed dwellings. This will result in an estimated 200 residents living in the village.
- 5.15 The development is within a medium size village (Group Village). There is currently 100m² of provision in a pre-existing village hall, which is in an average condition, and has an estimated 20 years of useful life remaining.
- 5.16 The estimated population of the village is 900 people. Combined with the estimated population (200) this gives a total population of 1,100.
- 5.17 The quantity standard for is 111m² per 1,000 population. Multiplied by the total population (1,100) this produces a requirement for 122m² of indoor community space. The existing amount of space within the village is 100m².
- 5.18 As the current provision is below the quantitative standard, the developer will therefore be required to provide further provision.
- 5.19 The size requirement can be calculated by multiplying the quantity standard per person by the population of the new development. This is $111\text{m}^2/1,000 = 0.111$ per person. This is multiplied by the 200 population to create a total figure of 22.2m².

Calculating capital sums – off site provision

- 5.20 As highlighted above, the challenge with funding built facilities is that the extent of the new demand is not enough to warrant a new facility or on-site provision, so off site provision would instead be required.

South Cambridgeshire District Council Community Facilities Assessment

- 5.21 This would take the form of an equivalent financial contribution using up to date figures based on the cost/m² of building new facilities. Our benchmarking (which has been agreed with SCDC in consultation with a local quantity surveyor) suggests that in the current market, a figure of approximately £1,500/m² could be assumed as a ballpark figure for the construction of a community hall.
- 5.22 The calculation to ascertain this would therefore be as follows:
- 200 people (new population from development)**
- X 0.111 (requirement in m² per person) = 22.2m²**
- X £1,500 (cost of provision/m²) = £33,300**
- 5.23 This sum from the developer would either be used to invest in the facilities already in the village to increase their quality, carrying capacity, appeal, or size; or it could be pooled and put towards a future development of community facilities, if these do not already exist.
- 5.24 This formula should be used to calculate on a per capita basis, so will also work for much smaller developments. The Council may wish to consider a size threshold for a minimum development size, although it is noted that current open space standards are applied to every new home. If a threshold is used, it should be kept at a low level, particularly in villages where only infill is expected. Some examples are shown below in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 Examples of S106 contribution per capita

Number of new residents	Financial Equivalent
5	£833
10	£1,665
25	£4,163
100	£16,650
250	£41,625
500	£83,250

Calculating maintenance sums (running costs) – on site provision

- 5.25 Commuted maintenance sums are normally paid when land or facilities which have been developed are handed over to a local authority or third party.
- 5.26 The PPG17 Companion Guide quotes the DoE Circular 1/97 on the topic of maintenance sums for off site provision. It quotes the circular:
- “The costs of subsequent maintenance and other recurrent expenditure should normally be borne by the body or authority in which the asset is to be vested, except in the case of small areas of open space, recreation facilities, children’s play space, woodland, or landscaping principally of benefit to the development itself rather than the wider public.”***
- 5.27 The calculation is more straightforward in the case where an entirely new facility is built to meet the needs of a new population created by a development. This situation is rather more complex where facilities already exist, and where a S106 contribution is being invested to improve the current facility stock. We have shown working of a potential way of calculating this below.

5.28 As an example that as part of a major residential development, a small new indoor facility has been built. The estimated running cost of this facility is £5,000 per year (our survey during this study has shown that 40% of smaller halls cost between £5,000 and £10,000 to maintain). For major growth sites, more substantial facilities would be necessary and should be negotiated on a case by case basis.

Calculating maintenance sums – off site provision

5.29 It is possible to put some figures to a potential maintenance for an existing facility whereby the new population associated with a development makes up only part of the user base (although this does not include a sinking fund for renewals and replacement).

5.30 Returning to the worked scenario above (5.13-5.18), if we assume that the annual running and maintenance of the existing village hall is £5,000pa, this can be divided by the total population of the village to give an annual cost per head, when this is multiplied by the population of the development, this would give a proportionate sum.

5.31 The calculation to ascertain this would therefore be as follows:

Running cost of facility (benchmark or specific) £5,000

Divided by 1,100 (total population) = cost per head, per year = £4.55

Multiplied by new population (200) = **£909 in first year**

5.32 As before, if we assume that the Council requires that a 10-year timeframe to be applied, at a rate of inflation of 2.5%. The implications, on a year-on-year basis, are shown below as Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3 Commuted maintenance for existing off site provision

Year	Sum	Year	Sum
1	£909	6	£1,028
2	£932	7	£1,054
3	£955	8	£1,081
4	£979	9	£1,108
5	£1003	10	£1,135

5.33 The table shows the incremental increases, in line with inflation. Over the 10-year period, this totals £10,184 in maintenance payments.



Section 6

Summary and Conclusions

6 Summary and Conclusions

Introduction

- 6.1 The audit process undertaken in this study has entailed an evaluation of the quantity, quality and accessibility of indoor community facilities across South Cambridgeshire.
- 6.2 Additional consultation, both formal and informal, has been undertaken with representatives from Parish Councils, trusts and community groups who are responsible for the management of these facilities.
- 6.3 In line with PPG17 guidance, this evidence base has been used to develop draft standards which can be used to illustrate any areas of quantitative, qualitative or access deficiency to guide strategic planning and inform negotiations with private developers.
- 6.4 The key issues and standards for the quantity, quality and accessibility of indoor community space within South Cambridgeshire are set out below.

Quantity

- 6.5 The audit of facilities (87 facilities) has shown there to be approximately 111m² of indoor community space for every 1,000 people in South Cambridgeshire. While it is difficult to benchmark against other authorities due to inconsistencies in what has been counted, and the difference between rural and urban authorities, this would appear to be somewhere in the middle on which data was gathered.
- 6.6 In general terms, the views collated from the community with regard to the quantity of facilities tended to reflect the opinion that in most cases, the quantity of provision was mainly adequate. It should be noted however, that because we have not consulted with residents from villages without facilities, any quantitative shortfalls in these communities might not be immediately evident.
- 6.7 It should also be noted that public consultation, which would typically be used to explore latent demand among the general population, has not been undertaken in this instance.
- 6.8 Consultees were asked to discuss any issues they believed existed with regard to the size and scale of facilities on offer, and whether there was any additional demand for more facilities. In most instances, particularly the smaller villages, it was noted that the demand as a whole was not especially notable, although regular comments were received with regard to improving the amount of space within existing facilities – extensions for storage space for example.
- 6.9 We have therefore recommended that a standard of **111m² per 1,000 population** is adopted across the District. The reasons for remaining at the current level include the inherent difficulty of providing more indoor space, and that not aiming to deliver significantly more space will allow the authority to focus on improving the quality and accessibility of existing spaces.
- 6.10 The application of the standard to the proposed future population (accounting for the significant increases projected in South Cambridgeshire) shows that on the assumption of increase in population of 25,000 (not including Northstowe development), this translates to a need for **2,775m² of additional community space**. This is a sizable amount which will require significant planning with strategic consideration. This also assumes that the current level of provision across the District will continue to be regarded as sufficient in the future.

Quality

- 6.11 Our assessment of the quality of facilities in South Cambridgeshire has been primarily informed by non-technical visual site assessment visits undertaken to sites between March and July 2009.

- 6.12 The consideration of 'quality' has been based on two areas. Firstly, the inherent standard of facilities – their design, layout, specification etc. Secondly, we have considered the physical condition of each individual element. The key criteria we have assessed (as shown in Appendix A) include:
- Quality/condition of all main spaces, including hall, meeting spaces, kitchen, toilets etc
 - Flooring
 - Heating
 - Electrical
 - Storage space
 - Exterior/structural condition including car parks, roof, guttering etc.
- 6.13 Overall, the quality of facilities across the District is good. Of the 86 facilities audited, 49 can be classified overall as Good or Excellent. 25 were Average, with 9 Poor and 3 Very Poor.
- 6.14 Issues regarding the quality of facilities were the most commonly voiced, both through face to face consultation and the formal questionnaire sent to hall committees and management groups. A significant number responded that they were in need of, or were planning, improvements to their facilities.
- 6.15 As discussed with the Council steering group, it was decided that different quality standards and aspirations should apply to settlements of different sizes on a settlement hierarchy structure, based on the category of the village in the Core Strategy.
- 6.16 It is not considered realistic that the residents of a small village with only two or three hundred residents have the same facilities as those in a village with two or three thousand.
- 6.17 The following recommended quality standards have been presented:

Rural Centres

Rural Centres should feature at least one large facility which offers extended access to all community groups at competitive rates.

The centre should have at least one high quality main hall space suitable for a variety of uses, potentially including club sport and physical activity; theatrical rehearsals/performances and social functions, ideally in a central and accessible location in the community. The facility should also offer smaller, separate meeting spaces and significant storage.

All facilities, including toilets, should be fully accessible, or retro-fitted to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation wherever possible. Additional facilities, for example changing rooms, should be fit for purpose and compliant with design best practice (for example Sport England).

Facilities should include a sizable kitchen/catering area (potentially professionally equipped) for the preparation of food and drink. It is desirable that the hall be licensed, with a personal licence holder, to permit a larger number of events. The facility may also require employed staff.

All new-build facilities should be designed with significant energy-efficiency measures in place. This includes energy efficient lighting (including timers and automatic sensors); double/triple glazing; draught proofing; insulation; appropriate central heating etc. Additional measures, such as the capture and use of grey water, photovoltaic cells, Combined Heat and Power (CHP), should also be explored.

All current facilities should be upgraded where appropriate and feasible to ensure that management/revenue costs are kept to a minimum.

Minor Rural Centres

Minor Rural Centres should have at least one good sized facility which offers access to community groups at competitive rates.

The centre should feature one main hall space suitable for various uses, including casual sport and physical activity; theatrical rehearsals/performances and social functions. The facility should also offer at least one meeting room.

All facilities, including toilets, should be fully accessible, or retro-fitted to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation wherever possible.

Facilities should include a kitchen/catering area for the preparation of food and drink. The venue should have the capacity for Temporary Events for functions which serve alcohol.

Where practical and achievable, new build facilities should be delivered with appropriate energy-efficiency measures in place, although this should be undertaken with the balance of expenditure/saving in mind, given the likely hours of usage.

Facilities should be designed to offer ease of management, as volunteers are likely to be primarily responsible for day to day upkeep.

Group Villages

Group Villages should offer a facility of reasonable size which offers access to community groups at competitive rates.

The facility should feature a main hall space which can be used for casual sport and physical activity; theatrical rehearsals/performances and social functions, however, it is recognised that one use may be favoured depending upon demand.

All new facilities, including toilets, should be fully accessible, or retro-fitted if viable to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation wherever possible.

Facilities should include an appropriately equipped kitchen/catering area for the preparation of food and drink. The venue should have the capacity for Temporary Events for functions which serve alcohol.

Where practical and achievable, new build facilities should be delivered with appropriate energy-efficiency measures in place, although this should be undertaken with the balance of expenditure/saving in mind, given the likely hours of usage. Likely measures include light sensors/timers, Cisternisers, improved insulation etc.

Facilities should be functional spaces, designed to offer ease of management, as volunteers are likely to be primarily responsible for day to day upkeep.

Infill Villages

Infill Villages should feature at least one facility which offers some access to community groups.

The centre should feature one main space ideally suitable for a variety of uses, including casual sport and physical activity; theatrical rehearsals/performances and social functions. If possible, the facility should also offer a smaller meeting space.

All facilities, including toilets, should be fully accessible, or retro-fitted to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act legislation wherever possible and feasible.

Facilities should include a kitchen/catering area for the preparation of food and drink. If appropriate, the venue should have the capacity to hold Temporary Events where alcohol can be served.

Where practical and achievable, new build facilities should be delivered with appropriate energy-efficiency measures in place, although this should be undertaken with the balance of expenditure/saving in mind, given the likely level of usage. Measures include light sensors/timers, Cisternisers, improved insulation etc.

Facilities should be functional spaces, designed to offer ease of management, as volunteers are likely to be primarily responsible for day to day upkeep.

- 6.18 While the standards set have not been 'applied' in the strictest sense to facilities across South Cambridgeshire to show explicit shortfalls, they have been drawn up as a result of the audit process, and represent a vision for all facilities to meet high standards, and are reflective of the best facilities in the District.

Accessibility

- 6.19 Our assessment has entailed the consideration of accessibility as a vital element of the overall balance of supply and demand of facilities. The term refers to two key areas; firstly, the physical location of facilities in relation to the population; and secondly, the actual level of access which is provided to the population at large.
- 6.20 As detailed above, the broad approach to the assessment of provision has been through establishing a 'Settlement Hierarchy' – developing a pyramid approach which marries together larger settlements with larger and more comprehensive facilities.
- 6.21 In terms of physical accessibility, the vast majority of villages in South Cambridgeshire have facilities. There are few large villages, namely Waterbeach; Bassingbourn; Hardwick; Teversham and Duxford; which do not have any audited provision. The remainder are the smallest communities, which are likely to have difficulty sustaining additional facilities and services.
- 6.22 We have also highlighted specific examples where there are specific management issues which might be considered to impinge upon general accessibility to the public.

6.23 The following accessibility standard has been presented:

Villages and parishes should provide, or have significant and immediate access to, indoor community facilities commensurate with the size and scope of the settlement (as set out in the Core Strategy) and in line with the quality standard.

In villages with a population of more than 500, it is expected that facilities be provided within the settlement, ideally within walking distance of most of the population. In smaller communities, some 'sharing' of resources may be allowed, particularly where there are pre-existing or traditional arrangements.

Facilities should be managed so as to provide access to all, at appropriate hours, at suitable rates, with no significant restrictions on appropriate activities, such as social gatherings/parties, meetings, sport and physical activity and other classes. It is recognised that in smaller communities, some compromise on accessibility may be necessary.

6.24 As with the recommended quality standards, this accessibility standard is a guideline and is not comprehensive, prescriptive or absolute. Consideration of accessibility will depend upon specific local circumstances. There may be exemptions, or the Planning Authority may decide to re-categorise or clarify the classification of villages as Rural Centres, Minor Rural Centres, Group Villages and Infill Villages. All decisions should be at the discretion of the Planning Authority.

Developer Contributions

6.25 A proposed system and formula for calculating any S106 contributions has been put forward and some working examples shown to illustrate how this might work, and the scale of return which could theoretically be achieved. As specified by the Council, this has entailed both capital and revenue funds.



Making your visiona reality



Strategic Leisure
3rd Floor
Rutherford House
Warrington Road
Birchwood Science Park
Warrington
WA3 6ZH

Tel: 01925 855 550
Fax: 01928 585 769

E-mail: www.strategicleisure.co.uk
Web: www.strategicleisure.co.uk