

## **Topic Paper 5 - Community and Social Service Facilities**

**August 2004**

---

*This document is one of the supporting topic papers of West Berkshire Council's supplementary guidance series 'Delivering Investment from Growth – West Berkshire Council's approach to securing developer contributions towards local infrastructure, services and amenities'. It is intended as a guide for landowners, developers and residents and sets out how the Council will deal with planning applications where a contribution towards community and social service facilities will be sought.*

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Local Plan has made allowance for an additional 9000 new dwellings over the local plan period 1991 – 2006. There are a number of community facilities which are at or near capacity within West Berkshire. The Council considers that in many cases new residential development will place additional demands on services over and above existing provision. This applies equally to major new residential development and the cumulative effect of new single dwellings.
- 1.2 To ensure that the community has sufficient facilities over the coming years to keep pace with the overall level of new residential development within the district, the Council may seek contributions to community facilities from residential development .

### **2.0 Contributions**

- 2.1 In accordance with this SPG's Core Guidance paper contributions towards community and social facilities may be sought from residential schemes of one dwelling or more.

### **3.0 General Community facilities**

- 3.1 Facilities such as community centres, youth facilities and meeting rooms, play a vital part in community life. It is important that adequate facilities are provided with new development and that social and community facilities are accessible by all.
- 3.2 Provision or extension of community facilities including community centres, meeting halls, heritage facilities, youth centres, day centres and other similar social infrastructure, health facilities and places of worship will be sought in connection with new residential development.

*Community and Youth Centres*

- 3.3 Major housing developments (approximately 200 dwellings or more) may be expected to make on-site provision for community facilities in the form of community and youth centres, often as part of a neighbourhood centre. Developers may be required to undertake a community needs assessment to assess the scale and nature of facilities required.
- 3.4 Any facilities provided should be capable of use as a venue for voluntary groups, the Youth Service and where necessary social service uses. Where appropriate, these facilities shall be capable of dual use as community and youth centres. Community facilities should meet the appropriate registration standards in respect of space requirements and other physical facilities for playgroups or nursery provision.
- 3.5 For smaller developments improvements to existing community facilities will be expected so that they are able to serve the needs of the additional residents occupying the new development.

#### **4.0 Social Needs and Social Services**

- 4.1 Within major housing developments on-site facilities for use by social services and their partners, such as voluntary organisations, and those operating at the health/social care delivery interface, such as community health practitioners, may be required. Such facilities may also be needed for use by voluntary sector playgroups, other voluntary groups, a neighbourhood worker, intensive work with families, meals on wheels and as an office base for staff working in the area. These should be designed to meet registration standards for pre-school provision and appropriate food safety legislation for meal preparation. These facilities could be integrated into existing or proposed community centre/halls where appropriate.
- 4.2 The Council may also seek the provision of housing within major developments for people with mental and physical handicaps and mental health problems.
- 4.3 Major housing development will also generate pressure and demand on other existing social services and voluntary sector delivery resulting in a need for expanded or additional services, not necessarily on site. For example day care facilities for children, families, older people, people with mental health problems and people with learning and physical disabilities, and community homes for children, will require to be expanded and contributions will be expected to support any necessary expansion programmes.

#### **5.0 Contacts**

For more information please contact:

Planning Policy Team  
Planning and Transport Strategy  
West Berkshire Council  
Council Offices  
Market Street  
Newbury  
RG14 5LD

Tel: 01635 519111  
Fax: 01635 519408  
e-mail: [planning@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:planning@westberks.gov.uk)