

HYTHE TOWN COUNCIL

FIVE YEAR PLAN

2005 - 2010



FIVE YEAR PLAN 2005-2010

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1
HOUSING	2
EMPLOYMENT	3
SHOPPING	4
TOURISM	5 – 6
SPORTS, LEISURE & RECREATION	7 – 8
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	9
BUILT ENVIRONMENT	10
UTILITIES	11
SOCIAL & COMMUNITY & CIVIC FACILITIES	12 – 13
COUNTRYSIDE & OPEN SPACES	14
LOCAL AGENDA 21	15
ARCHIVES, MUSEUM & LOCAL HISTORY ROOM	16

**HYTHE TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY DOCUMENT
5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
2005-2010**

Introduction

Preamble

The purpose of this document is to set out Hythe Town Council's priorities to the year 2010 and to allocate resources including capital expenditure within this framework.

The document has been prepared to provide a focused direction for the Council over the next five years.

This current plan is the third update of the document which is based upon the findings both of the original Town Appraisal in 1997 and the Hythe Healthcheck and SEEDA Delivery Plan which was produced during the period 2002/2005. These documents should be read in concert with the Five Year Plan.

Hythe Town Council

Hythe is situated within the area of the Shepway District Council. Hythe Town Council is responsible for the administration of an area in excess of 3000 acres with a population of approximately 14,170 people (2001 Census of Population). Its powers are shown in Appendix 1 to this Plan.

Background

Originally, the sale of land in 1986 provided Hythe Town Council with a capital receipt of £261,774 which, along with the accumulating interest, was earmarked to provide a Community Centre. Following a number of attempts to find an acceptable site and a referendum in November 1995 at which 11% of the population voted against the need for a Community Centre (on a 15% turnout) Hythe Town Council was required by the District Auditor to review its capital holdings. In the absence of a long term plan Hythe Town Council embarked on a Town Appraisal to assess the needs and wishes of the Community. This document is an update of the two former Five Year Plans whilst recognising that future development of the area has to be balanced within the context of protecting the environment whilst enhancing tourism potential and economic growth. The remaining funds are earmarked for South Road Sports Development.

Hythe Demographic Structure

The Tables attached to this Introduction show the breakdown of population by age.

The Plan

Hythe Town Council's powers have been considerably increased over the past ten years. Its powers are appended to this plan. Its submissions to District and County Councils and other bodies/organisations can be influential. It is for this reason that matters and policies areas outside of Hythe Town Council's direct control are included within this document. In order that this document can be used in conjunction with the Shepway District Council Local Plan, a similar format has been adopted, using data from the Hythe Healthcheck and Delivery Plan and updated material, where available.

1. **Housing**

The Local Plan is due to be adopted as modified in August 2005 following its Final Review and the Town Council has been consulted on the document. However, as a result of centrally imposed government targets, Shepway DC is having to find housing land allocations for up to 1,500 dwellings, 500 of which have been identified for land in West Hythe up to the year 2011. After 2011 x200 additional dwellings are proposed for the Nickolls quarry site.

There is currently a Local Development Framework questionnaire under distribution. Following the completion of the survey a Consultation Statement of community involvement will be produced by Shepway DC.

The peripheral areas of West and East Hythe are the only available areas for major housing development, the northern and southern boundaries of the Town's being concomitant with the settlement borders with only limited opportunities for infill development within central Hythe. One such infill site that has been identified is the Green Lane Allotment Site which could be developed for low cost housing in concert with the District Council and with the commensurate development of the Longbridge Allotment Site.

Hythe Town Council will seek to ensure that the unique character of the Conservation Area is maintained, by opposing inappropriate development.

Housing Policy 1 * Hythe Town Council will seek to ensure that major housing development shall be confined to the Nickolls Quarry.

Hythe Town Council note the proposed development on the Imperial site and will monitor any proposals closely.

Housing Policy 2 Hythe Town Council will seek to ensure that the settlement boundaries of 1997 are retained as the acceptable limits of development – to include Nickolls Quarry.

Housing Policy 3 Hythe Town Council will press for a percentage of any housing development being designated for low cost housing, subject to size, scale and location of the development — and call for Shepway DC to implement its policy vigorously.

2. Employment

Since the preparation of the last Five Year Plan there have been changes in unemployment rates within Hythe by ward.

There may well be significant changes in employment opportunities to the year 2010. The unemployment rate (May 2005) in Shepway at 2.7% is now marginally higher than the national GB average of 2.3%.

Apart from Hythe South, indications are that the unemployment rates in Hythe are lower than the national average. Within Hythe, there are significant variations in employment rates (January 2003) between individual Wards and between males & females, as the following statistics indicate:

Unemployment Rates	Males	Females	Total
<i>Hythe East</i>	<i>1.9%</i>	<i>1.6%</i>	<i>1.8 %</i>
<i>Hythe North</i>	<i>2.2 %</i>	<i>1.8 %</i>	<i>2.1 %</i>
<i>Hythe South</i>	<i>4.7 %</i>	<i>2.1 %</i>	<i>3.6 %</i>
<i>Hythe West</i>	<i>3.1 %</i>	<i>2.1 %</i>	<i>2.7 %</i>

Increased employment opportunities are most likely to be in tourism and service related industries if this demand is to be met. Tourism related projects that enhance employment opportunities should therefore be actively encouraged.

Notwithstanding the opportunities of tourism related employment it is essential that all initiatives to enhance employment in the area are encouraged, provided that they are suitably located. Light industrial/warehousing should be actively encouraged on the Pennypot Industrial site in preference to Range Road with its inherent access problem via residential areas. Nickolls Quarry is deemed to be suitable for multi-purpose land use development - to include employment opportunities.

Employment Policy 1 **Hythe Town Council will encourage all initiatives to enhance employment in the area, provided that they are suitably located.**

Employment Policy 2 **Hythe Town Council will actively encourage light industrial or warehousing on the Pennypot Industrial site.**

Employment Policy 3 **Hythe Town Council will seek to ensure that Nickolls Quarry is put to leisure purposes (particularly water sports) development, housing, light industrial and water-borne activity retained.**

Employment Policy 4 **Hythe Town Council will continue, through its membership of the Hythe Tourism and Public Relations Forum, seek to encourage tourism and leisure related projects.**

3. **Shopping**

Hythe Town Council considers the High Street essential to the commercial viability of the Town Centre and will press for District and County Council policies that will enhance town centre shopping and the High Street in particular.

Commercial respondents to the Town Appraisal and Hythe Healthcheck identified lack of parking close to the High Street along with the lack of seats and litter bins as being detrimental factors to the High Street environment. Hythe Town Council will continue to press the principal authorities to improve these aspects. Through the SEEDA Partnership the Town Council has increased litter bins, dog bins and seats within the CBD and surrounding areas during the last plan period.

Hythe Town Council, via its membership of the SEEDA Partnership, has supported the creation of a Farmers Market at the Light Railway Café Hall.

Shopping Policy 1 * Hythe Town Council will oppose those policies it considers detrimental to Hythe Town Centre's viability.

Shopping Policy 2 * Hythe Town Council will seek to encourage those retail and leisure ventures that will enhance the Town Centre and its environs.

4. Tourism

It is forecast that Tourism will continue to be a growth industry over the 5 year period of the Plan. The natural facilities and heritage of Hythe provide unique opportunities to improve the economic climate in the Town.

Hythe Town Council will press for County and District Councils to adopt policies for the improvement of tourism in Hythe. Unfortunately, Shepway DC no longer has a Tourism Department per se.

Hythe Town Council will seek to continue to improve its own facilities and provide suitable additional facilities where possible.

Therefore in accordance with this mandate, and others, Hythe Town Council will:

- a Continue to take an active partnership working role with Kent County Council to open and maintain public rights of way for walking and rambling.
- b Continue progress with the Eaton Lands seeking funding to improve and develop public access to the site, with particular reference to the woodland area now that the remainder of the area has been successfully developed as an informal recreation area.
- c Press all appropriate bodies and organisations for continued development of the Royal Military Canal as a visitor attraction.
- d Seek to secure attractions on Princes Parade and Range Road – Fishermans Beach- sites.
- e Encourage all appropriate projects and initiatives that will improve tourism or bring related auxiliary benefits to the Town.
- f Seek to facilitate and improve the provision of holiday accommodation within the Town, pressing those responsible for the improvement of a computer based Tourist Information Service and accommodation service.
- g Support initiatives that enhance the beach/sea front facilities and improve its cleanliness and safety.
- h Seek to improve the profile of Hythe as a tourist attraction through advertising and other media.

FIVE YEAR PLAN 2005-2010

- Tourism Policy 1** Hythe Town Council will continue to take an active part in partnership with Kent County Council to open and maintain public rights of way.
- Tourism Policy 2** Hythe Town Council, as Trustees, will continue with an Eaton Lands Woodlands Management Plan to improve and develop public access to the site.
- Tourism Policy 3 *** Hythe Town Council will continue to press all appropriate bodies and organisations to proceed with a suitable development of the Royal Military Canal, Princes Parade as venues for visitor attractions.
- Tourism Policy 4** Hythe Town Council will encourage all appropriate projects and initiatives that will improve tourism or bring related auxiliary benefits to the Town.
- Tourism Policy 5 *** Hythe Town Council will seek to facilitate and improve the provision of holiday accommodation within the town, pressing those responsible to continue to develop a computer-based Tourist Information Service & Accommodation Service.
- Tourism Policy 6 *** Hythe Town Council will support and seek initiatives that enhance the beach / seafront facilities and improve cleanliness and safety, particularly with regard to Fishermans' Beach.
- Tourism Policy 7** Hythe Town Council will continue to improve the profile of Hythe, advertising and promoting it through its website and its links.
- Tourism Policy 8** Hythe Town Council will promote the Cinque Ports in conjunction with the Cinque Ports Confederation.
- Tourism Policy 9** Hythe Town Council will continue to investigate for assistance towards Tourism projects within Hythe.

CAPITAL BUDGET FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS – EATON LANDS R/R FUND - £5,402

5. Sports, Leisure and Recreation

Leisure and recreation facilities remain a major part of Hythe Town Council's responsibilities and were therefore a major part of the 1997 Town Appraisal and the Hythe Healthcheck and SEEDA Delivery Plan.

Sports Facilities & Proposed Hythe Sports Centre

The replacement of the existing Sports Pavilion at South Road is seen as an essential requirement to meet the needs of modern day sporting activities. With this in mind, Hythe Town Council has entered into a partnership with Shepway DC and has agreed to the development of a sports centre on South Road Recreation Ground which will incorporate a sports pavilion. The Town Council has agreed to contribute the land for the sports centre building and its car park, as well as £200,000 of funding towards the sports pavilion element of the scheme. The development is due to take place within the period of this current Five Year Plan. It is anticipated that £100,000 of the above amount will be contributed via SEEDA funding, subject to the works commencing during 2006/7.

The loss of public land through long term leases or sale can only be considered where such assets are considered permanently surplus to the Hythe Town Council's and therefore public requirements. To dispose of land or assets to private clubs would deny the general public the benefit of these facilities. In order to meet the joint needs of both the private clubs and general public further partnerships or 'shared use and costs' arrangements will maximise utilisation of public land and facilities. The private sports clubs will be invited to enter into appropriate agreements to meet their requirements in conjunction with the public needs.

Following the review of playgrounds provision in during the last period of the Plan covering 2001/6. Hythe Town Council identified deficiencies for teenagers in Hythe and for younger children on the Palmarsh Estate, Horn Street, Oaklands and The Green. Hythe Town Council allocated resources to the following projects:

Improvements to the existing children's facilities at Oaklands, The Green and Burmarsh Road Recreation Ground. – all of which have been accomplished.

The Town Council has identified the following priorities in the next tranche of play area improvements

Provision of new facilities for:

- a. Older children at Horn Street
- b. Teenagers on The Green

West Hythe

In view of the significant housing development proposed within West Hythe, it is anticipated that there will be adequate play area provision made within the development as part of the integrated planning of the area – via local planning policies and conditions and S106 agreements.

In the absence of any available land in the ownership of Hythe Town Council in the east of Hythe it will be necessary for other authorities or organisations to provide suitable playground facilities for children under the age of 11 years.

Sports, Leisure & Recreation Policy 1

Hythe Town Council will seek to combat the current deficiency in indoor sports facilities in Hythe. In pursuit of this objective, the Council will positively pursue funding for a new sports pavilion at South Road as a free-standing replacement, together with associated recreational activities for both public users & private sports clubs.

Sport, Leisure & Recreation Policy 2

Hythe Town Council will continue to improve recreation facilities at Oaklands, Horn Street and The Green and will maintain these facilities to the recommended safety standards.

Sports, Leisure & Recreation Policy 3

Hythe Town Council will press Kent County Council and Shepway District Council to provide additional leisure facilities in Hythe.

Sports, Leisure & Recreation Policy 4

Hythe Town Council will continue to provide and to maintain facilities and enhance the following R & R Funds: Play Area Upgrade, Skatepark, The Green, Sports Pavilion.

CAPITAL BUDGET FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS – PLAYGROUND R&R FUND - £25,773, SKATEPARK- £1,390, THE GREEN - £5,355, SPORTS PAVILION - £18,000 PLUS UNCOMMITTED CAPITAL RESERVE AND FUTURE YEARS REVENUE BUDGET PROVISION IF SEEDA FUNDING NOT CAPABLE OF BEING UTILISED*

***present anticipated shortfall of £21,609 – see attached draft capital budget statement**

6. Youth Development

Hythe Town Council recognises the special needs of the 11 to 18 year age group, especially those requirements that allow and encourage their development into the responsible citizens of the future.

The 1997 Town Appraisal and the Hythe Healthcheck and SEEDA Delivery Plan clearly highlighted inadequacies in the social and leisure facilities available for the 11 to 18's. Other research has shown that in addition to the structured organisations (eg Scouts, Guides, sports and youth clubs and similar organisations) there is a demand for informal, unstructured facilities such as discos, youth cafe and 'pop concerts'.

During the course of the last Five Year Plan period, the Town Council responded to the special needs of this age group by providing a multi-purpose skating facility at South Road. A capital Repair & Renewal Fund has been established, from which an annual revenue amount is apportioned to it.

Hythe Town Council recognises that inadequate youth facilities can have an adverse effect on other sections of society through the failure to provide a channel for teenage energies and interests. In an attempt to remedy this inadequacy it has established a Youth Fund from which projects devised at enhancing youth activities can draw financial assistance.

Youth Development Policy 1

Hythe Town Council will continue to support and encourage all youth organisations committed to youth development in the town, to include financial support for appropriate projects.

7. **Built Environment**

Many areas of Hythe have unique special characteristics, as demonstrated by the Conservation Area boundaries of the Town Centre and the Royal Military Canal as a scheduled ancient monument. Hythe Town Council will continue to oppose planning applications and developments out of keeping or detrimental to the special nature of these and other sites within the Town's boundaries.

Hythe Town Council will support schemes seeking to maintain, increase or enhance the retail premises in the Town Centre. Schemes out of keeping or detrimental to the existing environment will be opposed. Hythe Town Council will seek to ensure the existing Conservation Area and Listed Buildings are maintained and that additional stock is added to the schedule as appropriate.

Built Environment Policy 1 * **Hythe Town Council will oppose planning applications and developments out of keeping or detrimental to the special nature of the Town, Royal Military Canal and other sites within the Town's boundaries.**

8. Utilities

Flooding

The issues attached to flooding by both marine and fluvial invasion have been largely addressed during the period of the last Five Year Plan, with the construction of the sea defences along West and Marine Parades. And the construction of a new drainage system in the Orchard Valley.

General

Hythe Town Council will continue to press Kent County Council for pavement repairs and improvements in these areas.

Continuing financial pressures on Kent County Council and Shepway District Council have reduced the level of winter servicing of roads and footways across the Town. Hythe Town Council will press for the re-instatement of these services.

Utilities Policy 1 **Hythe Town Council will press the appropriate authorities for improvements in beach cleanliness in order to obtain Blue Flag status.**

Utilities Policy 2 **Hythe Town Council will adopt energy conservation policies in the management of its assets and properties.**

Utilities Policy 3 **Hythe Town Council will seek to ensure an integrated approach is adopted by all responsible agencies for the continued policy for the alleviation of flooding and related problems throughout the Hythe area.**

9. Social, Community & Civic Facilities

Library

Hythe Town Council has been successful in securing a long term commitment for the future presence of a branch Library in Hythe and the enhancement of its service provisions.

Community Centre

Although there are many smaller halls and meeting places within Hythe, Hythe Town Council recognises a need for a larger centre that will serve the community.

Allotments

Hythe Town Council is responsible for four sites - Longbridge, Twiss Road, Eaton Lands and Horn Street. Of these, only Longbridge is a statutory allotment site.

Strenuous efforts during the last Five Year Plan period have led to an increased uptake of allotment plots on all the above sites, other than Longbridge, to the extent that there are now waiting lists on all sites but Longbridge.

Closed Circuit Television

Hythe Town Council is supportive of, and committed to, the operation of CCTV in the Town Centre and is currently responsible for the operation of eleven cameras. Hythe Town Council, will, via its annual revenue budget, continue to allow for the operational costs and also allocate an appropriate sum, based upon depreciation, to a 'Repairs and Renewals Fund' to meet the long term costs of CCTV maintenance and replacement.

Hythe Town Council recognises the value of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and the support the Neighbourhood Watch has committed to the CCTV system. Hythe Town Council will support the expansion of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme throughout the Council's area.

Civic Sartorial Items

The Town Council has resolved to establish a fund for the acquisition of robes and sundry associated items. It is recommended that this is achieved by way of an annual revenue virement to a capital sinking fund.

Social and Community Policy 1

Hythe Town Council shall seek to make further improvements to its allotment sites and ensure that both its liabilities and those of its tenants are fully met by the enforcement of the allotment tenancy agreement.

Social and Community Policy 2

Hythe Town Council will continue to provide, in its annual revenue budget, allowance for the operational costs of Town Centre CCTV and also allocate an appropriate sum, based upon depreciation, to a 'Repairs and Renewals Fund' to meet the long term maintenance and replacement of the system.

Social and Community Policy 3

Hythe Town Council will continue to provide a direct transmission link to Shepway DC's CCTV Control Room for the purpose of achieving 24 hour per day manned and operational coverage of the Town's CCTV system.

Social and Community Policy 4

Co-operation with Kent County Constabulary will continue to be encouraged, through the Town Council's Crime Reduction Committee, its CCTV Committee and other Partnership working.

CAPITAL BUDGET FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS – CCTV R&R FUND - £85,000

10. Countryside and Open Spaces

Hythe Town Council recognises the need to conserve the countryside and open spaces and will therefore take all appropriate measures to:

1. Conserve and enhance the quality, use and character of the countryside within the authority's area.
2. Restrict uses of the countryside and open spaces to purposes compatible with the environment whilst maximising the recreation, leisure and tourism potential.

Hythe Town Council, as Charity Trustees, will continue to develop recreational facilities at Eaton Lands, restricting its use to that defined by its charitable purpose – for recreation.

Hythe Town Council will support the District Planning Authority in establishing the Royal Military Canal as a Local Nature Reserve and will seek to establish the Eaton Lands - Quarry Area as a further Local Nature Reserve.

Open Space Policy 1 **Hythe Town Council will seek to conserve and enhance the quality, use and character of the countryside within the authority's area, with particular reference to Eaton Lands.**

Open Space Policy 2 **Hythe Town Council will support the establishment of the Royal Military Canal as a Local Nature Reserve, and promote Eaton Lands as a future Nature Reserve.**

Open Space Policy 3 **Hythe Town Council will encourage access to the open countryside and rural environs of the Town Council and will support the continued improvements for the Royal Military Canal.**

12. Local Agenda 21

The main principle of *Local Agenda - 21 (LA-21)* came from the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Over 150 countries signed up to a major document called *Agenda 21 - A Global Plan of Action for the 21st Century* covering environmental, economic and social issues.

The concepts are that environmental protection, economic growth, social and cultural needs have to become better balanced and better inter-linked in order that future development is sustainable as far as practicable. This includes the needs to reduce the use of energy and raw material, protect fragile eco-systems and to work with local communities to achieve these goals (through consensus building/participation).

Sustainable development may be defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Broadly, sustainable development should ensure:

- (a) Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone, ensuring no-one is excluded. Everyone should be able to afford basic services and be protected from harm to health caused by poverty, poor housing, unemployment and pollution.
- (b) Effective protection of the environment by acting to limit threats such as climate change, poor air quality, harm to wildlife and their habitats, etc.
- (c) Prudent use of natural resources by ensuring non-renewable resources such as oil and gas are used efficiently and alternatives are developed to replace them in the future. Renewable resources, such as water, should be used in ways that do not cause serious damage or pollution.

Local Agenda 21 Policy 1

Hythe Town Council has, in the development of this document, taken LA21 issues into consideration and will continue to do so in the development of future policies.

Local Agenda 21 Policy 2

Hythe Town Council will endeavour to manage its assets and properties in accordance with the principles of LA 21.

13. Archives, Museum and Local History Room

Museum and Local History Room

Hythe Town Council, with the support of Kent County Council, will seek to continue to maintain and operate the Local History Room and Museum at Oaklands as a registered Museum.

The maintaining of Registered Museum Status is currently in the balance because of the planned withdrawal of Kent County Council's support of the Museum element of its Local History Room support.

Hythe Town Council will seek to continue the operation of the Museum.

The Local History Room and Museum is now somewhat dated and outmoded and there is a need to review the layout, content and accessibility to the area. With the receipt of the Davis Oaklands capital receipt and the existing Museum Capital R & R Fund there is the opportunity for the Charities Committee to assess requirements and to review the area's layout and contents.

Archives

Hythe Town Council recognises the importance of the Archives and other documents held in Oaklands and the responsibility to maintain them in a good condition. On advice from the County Archives Service, Hythe Town Council has transferred, on loan, identified archives to the Whitfield depository for safe and proper storage, providing better quality public access.

Museum Policy 1 **Hythe Town Council, acting as Davis Oaklands Charity Trustees will maintain and operate the Local History Room and Museum at Oaklands as a Museum.**

Museum Policy 2 **Hythe Town Council, acting as Davis Oaklands Charity Trustees will continue to work closely with Kent County Council for the operation of the Museum.**

Museum Policy 3 **Hythe Town Council acting as the Davis Oaklands Charity Trustees will seek to review the layout, contents, and accessibility to the Local History Room and Museum.**

Archive Policy 1 **Hythe Town Council will transfer any further documents received on loan to the Whitfield depository for safe and proper storage and improved public access.**

CAPITAL BUDGET FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS – MUSEUM R & R FUND - £5,000 PLUS DAVIS OAKLANDS CAPITAL RECEIPT FUND