



# Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033

## Topic Paper

July 2019

### Topic Paper 5: Community Facilities

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## 1 Introduction

The Local Development Plan (LDP) is first and foremost a land use plan that identifies site specific development opportunities in response to the needs of the community for more housing, jobs, services and facilities. It also seeks to preserve, protect and enhance where appropriate, those aspects of the built and natural environment which are important in defining the quality and sensitivity of the places we value, enjoy, move through, and live in. The ultimate aim of the LDP will be to deliver sustainable development.

The LDP is a vehicle for the Council to define its key growth and development priorities and will provide the ongoing framework of policies to guide decisions on planning applications.

## 2 Purpose of this Topic Paper

This is one of a series of 14 topic papers which have been put together to inform the production of the Conwy Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). Their aim is to interpret the relevant evidence and guidance in relation to the specific topic and identify the key issues that the Plan will need to address as well as possible policy approaches to be incorporated in the Plan. Each topic paper has been compiled from detailed evidence originating from LDP Background Papers (technical documents that form the evidence base for the RLDP). Topic papers are designed to cover key subject areas currently covered in the adopted LDP and summarise technical data contained within the Background Papers to make the presentation of data more accessible to readers. Topic papers establish a baseline position and identify the key issues facing the County Borough which the RLDP will need to address.

The Topic Papers are intended to provide an early opportunity for stakeholders and the public to have an input into the Plan. This topic paper covers key issues relating to community facilities.

## 3 Key Changes to Legislation and Policy (since LDP adoption)

There have been a number of significant changes to government policy and changes in the political environment since adoption of the LDP. This section examines briefly the key points that are pertinent to this particular topic paper.

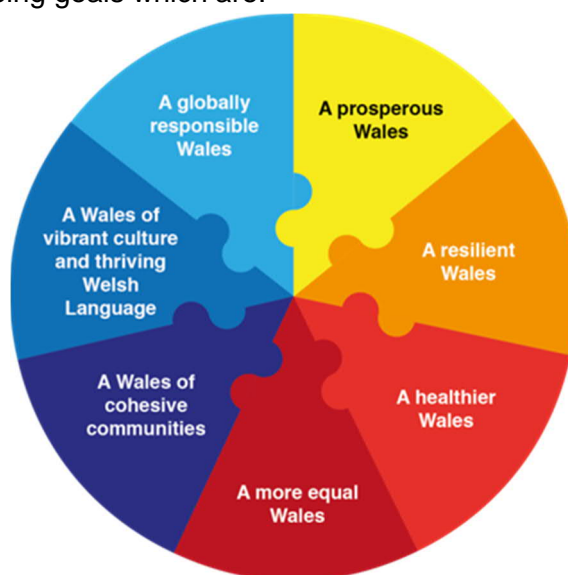
### 3.1 National

#### **Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)**

**The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act** is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

It will make public bodies such as Councils think more about the long-term, work better with other organisations and communities to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

The Act has seven well-being goals which are:



Each public body mentioned in the Well-being Act must carry out sustainable development.

“The action a public body takes in carrying out sustainable development must include:

- a. setting and publishing objectives (“well-being objectives”) that are designed to maximise its contribution to achieving each of the well-being goals, and
- b. taking all reasonable steps (in exercising its functions) to meet those objectives.”<sup>1</sup>

In the Act “sustainable development” means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.

The Act specifies five ways of working: long-term, integration, involvement, collaboration and prevention. Each of these will be incorporated into the RLDP process.

### Planning policy

National planning policy for retail can be found in Planning Policy Wales (10th edition, December 2018). It has been revised to deliver the Well-being of Future Generations Act and is based around four distinct themes that collectively contribute to placemaking and bring the requirements of the Act into context for planning policy. They show the inter-linkages between planning policies:

- Strategic and spatial choices
  - Creating sustainable places
  - Good design
  - Promoting healthier places
  - The Welsh language
  - Sustainable management of natural resources
  - Strategic planning
  - Placemaking in rural areas
  - Managing settlement form
- Active and social places
  - Housing

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<sup>1</sup> Part 2 ‘Improving Well-being section 3 ‘well-being duty on public bodies’ paragraphs (1) and (2)

- Retail and commercial centres
- Community facilities
- Recreational spaces
- Transport
- Productive and enterprising places
  - Economic development
  - Tourism
  - The rural economy
  - Transportation infrastructure
  - Telecommunications
  - Energy
  - Minerals
  - Waste
- Distinctive and natural places
  - Landscape
  - Coastal areas
  - Historic environment
  - Green infrastructure
  - Biodiversity
  - Water, air, soundscape and light
  - Flooding
  - De-risking

Community facilities falls under the Active and Social Places theme and can include schools, cultural facilities, health services, libraries, allotments and places of worship. They cover a broad range of activities and services and can be delivered by the public, private or third sector. They contribute towards a sense of place, which is important for health, well-being and amenity of local communities. They are a key element of viable and sustainable communities.

Local planning authorities should develop a strategic and long-term approach to the provision of community facilities in their development plans. For development proposals, the needs of the community should be considered and community facilities should continue to meet the requirements of local residents.

Allotments should be retained and protected, particularly where they are an important part of the green infrastructure or have community value. Statutory allotments have legal protection. Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide land for allotments to meet locally identified demand. Development plans should include allocations for any additional allotments and community growing spaces required.

Placemaking now forms the core of PPW and must be embraced in both plan making and development management decisions to achieve the creation of sustainable places in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act objectives. Placemaking is a multi-dimensional approach to planning, designing and managing an areas protection and enhancement. It is about responding to the surroundings by understanding the history and development of a place, its function and most importantly its residents and their relationship with the locality. It is then about delivering change that works towards meeting its environmental, economic and social goals. It uses a local community's assets and needs as inspiration for creating good, functional places that promote people's health, happiness and well-being.

**Technical Advice Note 16** (2009) provides advice on open spaces. Allotments are included as a typology in the definitions. They are considered an important green space and can contribute towards sustainability, provide opportunities for leisure, exercise, healthy food, improve biodiversity and encourage interaction between members of the community. Statutory allotments (those with an area not exceeding 1,000sq m) should be protected, promoted and managed appropriately and should meet the local demand for allotments. All sites should include an element of wildlife habitat.

No standards of provision are set in PPW or TAN16, as it should be locally defined to meet identified need. The TAN makes reference to Fields in Trust (FIT) recommended standards for other open space types. FIT updated their benchmark standards in 2015, and have found that the median level of provision for allotments, community gardens and urban farms was 0.3 hectares per 1,000 population.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a voluntary mechanism that allows local authorities in England and Wales to levy a standard charge on most types of new development, to fund the infrastructure needed to support development in their area. CIL has been designed to replace the current system of planning obligations. The Council is progressing with implementing CIL. Once adopted, it will affect how planning obligations for community facilities are sought.

The LDP Manual was last updated in 2015, which was after the Conwy LDP was adopted. It provides guidance and advice on LDP production. It suggests a list of relevant information for LDP evidence base. Relevant to this topic area are capacity of physical and social infrastructure; ability to fund infrastructure and links between S106 and CIL; environmental, ecological, landscape and heritage constraints and opportunities and development viability. No indicators are suggested for community facilities.

The **National Development Framework** (NDF) will be a 20 year national spatial plan for Wales setting out high-level strategic issues including a vision for next 40 years and objectives focusing on the strongest market areas, communities across all of Wales, decarbonisation and natural resources. The NDF issues and options paper has recently been out to consultation and Welsh Government are currently collating responses. The current timetable is for an NDF to be in place by September 2020.

21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools is the long-term strategic investment building programme for schools in Wales. It is a collaboration between Welsh Government, the Welsh Local Government Association, local authorities, colleges and dioceses. Band B, the second wave of investment, has been agreed and commenced in April 2019.

The Council has a statutory duty to provide allotments under the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908. No set standard is recommended, however, the 1969 Thorpe Report of 15 plots per 1,000 households is widely used. Due to the loss of allotments, the National Allotment Society recommends a minimum standard of 20 plots per 1,000 households. There is no set size for an allotment. The average plot is 250m<sup>2</sup>. This would give a standard of 0.5 ha per 1,000 population, which is higher than the average found in Wales by FIT (See above) of 0.3ha per 1,000 population. The RLDP standard should reflect local demand.

The Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 is the relevant law for burial grounds. Individual burial grounds may be subject to private Acts of Parliament too. Forecasting the demand for grave space and identifying additional lands for burials are relevant matters for the RLDP.

The 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act places a statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service. To monitor compliance with this, the Welsh Government set the

Welsh Public Library Standards, and the Council is required to submit an Annual Return detailing compliance.

### **3.2 Regional**

The Planning Act 2015, sets out that a region can consider preparing a Strategic Development Plan (SDP). For North Wales, this is the regional A55 Corridor Strategic Plan. It will allow topic areas including housing demand, search areas for strategic employment sites and supporting transport infrastructure to be planned for in an integrated and comprehensive way.

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) is responsible for providing a full range of primary, community, mental health and acute hospital services across North Wales. There are 17 GP surgeries operating in Conwy County Borough. The impact of RLDP allocations on GP surgeries will be assessed and new land allocated where required. Close working with relevant staff at BCUHB will be required for this.

### **3.3 Local**

The purpose of the Corporate Plan is to present Conwy County Borough Council's Priorities for the five years from 2017 to 2022. The priorities are the areas that the Council want to focus special attention on in order to support the achievement of the citizen outcomes.

The outcomes are as follows:

- People are educated & skilled
- People are safe and feel safe
- People have access to affordable, appropriate, good quality accommodation that enhances the quality of their lives.
- People are healthy & active
- People live in a county that has a prosperous economy
- People value and look after the environment
- People live in a county where heritage, culture and the Welsh language thrive
- People in Conwy contribute to their community. They are informed, included and listened to.

Across all areas of work the Council is committed to ensuring that the needs of the present are met without compromising future generations, endeavouring to make the best decisions in light of financial restraints. In addition the Corporate Plan gives a commitment to consider the impact of policies on rural communities, those protected under Equalities legislation and people living in poverty. The Council will also promote the Welsh language, and build confidence to be progressive. Harnessing the potential of technology to improve performance, business processes and efficiencies is a strategic priority up until 2022.

Revised population projections have been released from Welsh Government (WG) which will influence the RLDP strategy, including community facilities. The current LDP was based on the latest available data at the time, which are different to those more recently released. The RLDP will use the same methodology and source data as the WG projections, but will be specific to Conwy and the RLDP. Please see Background Paper 1 and 2 for more details.

The Abergele Placemaking Plan (APP) is currently being prepared. It will be owned and delivered by the local community and once finalised will set out the issues which need tackling in Abergele



with an Implementation and Monitoring plan produced to address those issues. It will be the local reference document to achieving an improved and more sustainable community.

In May 2019, CCBCs Cabinet approved a programme of work in the County Borough as part of Welsh Government's 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools programme: Deganwy, Capelulo, Gogarth, Pupil Referral Unit, Abergele, Llanfairfechan, Towyn/Kinmel Bay, Llandrillo yn Rhos and Llanddulas. Some of these areas will require new land to deliver new schools. Depending on timescales, this can be allocated through the RLDP, or determined via current LDP policies if needed sooner. The impact of any allocated RLDP sites on school capacity will be taken into consideration. Welsh Government has given approval and awarded £43.1m in principle to deliver the programme. The final decision on what investment to make in each area will be determined individually by CCBC members. Band C of the programme is also a consideration for the RLDP, and sites may need to be allocated. Close working CCBC Social Care & Education Services is required.

There are 12 Council owned allotment sites in Conwy County Borough. There is currently a waiting list for allotments. The LDP allocated some allotment sites. One came forward in Dwygyfylchi and is in the process of being let to a community group. Planning obligations have been sought from viable residential applications. Adoption of CIL will affect how this will be secured in future. The demand for allotments evidence base and LDP allocations will be reviewed for the RLDP, and sites allocated accordingly. The current LDP established a standard for allotments, based on current demand in the County Borough. This will also need to be reviewed and updated.

The Council provides for a range of burials at its 11 cemeteries. The LDP allocated sites for burial grounds. The demand for burial grounds evidence base and LDP allocations will be reviewed for the RLDP, and sites allocated accordingly.

The strategy for modernising libraries in Conwy County Borough was agreed in 2011, and aims to provide an equitable and sustainable library service. Conwy is currently (2017/18) meeting all 12 core entitlements and 15 of the 16 quality indicators. A new Culture Centre has been granted permission in Conwy, which will replace libraries in Conwy, Deganwy and Llandudno Junction. This has been funded in part from planning obligations sought via LDP policies. Planning obligations have been sought from viable residential applications. Adoption of CIL will affect how this will be secured in future. The impact of any allocated RLDP sites on library standards will be taken into consideration.

## **4 LDP Policy – Current position**

The LDP was adopted in October 2013 and has to date been through the Annual Monitoring process four times. The next section of this topic paper addresses the key findings that have arisen from the Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). There are six policies on community facilities in the current LDP policies. These can be found at Appendix 1 for reference.

## **5 LDP AMR findings and Review Report Conclusions**

One LDP objective is relevant to community facilities:

- SO13 To protect and improve accessibility to essential services and facilities, including open space, allotments, health, education and leisure.

AMR findings show that the community facilities policies are operating effectively and delivering this objective. Access to these services has been protected. Applications for new schools and the

Culture Centre have been approved in accordance with LDP policies and a small community allotment has been provided for in Dwygyfylchi.

The LDP Review Report concluded that the following action was required for community facility policies:

Policy	Comment
CFS/1 – Community Facilities and Services	Review to incorporate latest evidence base, including any new allocations that are required and reflect change in national policy. Revise to remove sites that have been delivered.
CFS/9 – Safeguarding Allotments	Functioning effectively – minor amendments may be required.
CFS/10 – New Allotments	Revise to remove sites that have been delivered. Review to incorporate latest evidence base including allocating new sites if required.
CFS/14 – New Burial Ground Allocations	Review to incorporate latest evidence base including any new allocations that are required.
CFS/15 – Education Facilities	Review to incorporate latest evidence base including any new allocations that are required.

Following a subsequent review of evidence base, Section 8 of this paper addresses the above table again and makes recommendations as to how each policy should be changed to reflect updated evidence base to be taken forward in the RLDP.

## 6 Updated LDP Evidence Base

The following background paper will inform community facilities policies in the RLDP:

### 6.1 Background Paper 30: Allotment Site Demand and Supply Report

This background paper is complete and shows the following need for allotments in each area. Land has been allocated on the Strategic Sites at Llanfairfechan, Llanrhos, Llanrwst and Old Colwyn to meet this need.

Settlement	Number on list	Settlement	Number on list
<b>Creuddyn</b>		<b>West</b>	
Conwy	32	Llanfairfechan	11
Deganwy	5	Penmaenmawr	27
Llandudno Junction	11	Dwygyfylchi	-
Llandudno	27	<b>East</b>	
Penrhyn Bay	6	Abergele	26
<b>Central</b>		Towyn	2

Rhos on Sea	30	<b>Rural</b>	
Colwyn Bay	25	Llanrwst	7
Old Colwyn	15	Trefriw	20
Mochdre	-	Other rural	17

## 6.2 Background Paper 31: Burial Grounds Site Demand and Supply Report

This background paper is to follow. Work is underway on assessing need and officers are working in collaboration with CCBC ERF to establish demand.

## 6.3 Background Paper 44: Population Increase, Housing and Health-Primary Care Impact

This background paper is to follow. Work is underway on assessing the impact. CCBC officers are collaborating with relevant Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board staff to ensure that impact on primary health care sites is assessed and mitigated for where required as part of the RLDP.

## 6.4 Background Paper 45: Population Increase, Housing and Education Impact

This background paper is complete and is part of the Preferred Strategy consultation. Land for new schools have been included in the Strategic Site allocations at Llanfairfechan, Llanrhos and Abergele. Further land is likely to be required to be allocated at Deposit stage to deliver all of the improvements proposed in the Band B programme. The impact of new residential development has been taken into account when looking at school capacity in that area to ensure that existing or proposed new schools can accommodate the growth.

# 7 Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA)

Work on the SA/SEA has commenced. The policies for community facilities in the RLDP will have regard to it and will be progressed jointly.

The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report outlines the proposed approach to the RLDP's Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), to ensure that it meets social, economic and environmental objectives. The SA/SEA is an important process in identifying areas of change and mitigation measures to ensure the RLDP is sustainable and in compliance with the Planning (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

In relation to community facilities the relevant proposed SA objectives are:

- Health and Wellbeing: Improve the health and wellbeing of the population, including with respect to physical and mental health, social wellbeing and community safety.
- Equality and Social Inclusion: Reduce poverty and inequality, tackle social exclusion and promote community cohesion, including through enhancing access to community facilities.
- Cultural Heritage: Conserve, protect and enhance the historic environment and cultural assets, including the use of the Welsh language.

## 8 Potential Land Use Policies and Proposals

The RLDP will apply national policy at a local level. Community facilities will be protected. Sites will be allocated where appropriate to meet current and future needs.

It is suggested that the following policies will need amending as part of the LDP Review.

Policy	Comment
CFS/1 – Community Facilities and Services	Reference to open spaces and retail will need removing as these are now separate topic areas. Revise to remove sites that have been delivered. Review to incorporate latest evidence base, including any new allocations that are required and reflect change in national policy.
CFS/9 – Safeguarding Allotments	Minimal change is required to this policy.
CFS/10 – New Allotments	Revise to remove sites that have been delivered. Review to incorporate latest evidence base including allocating new sites where required.
CFS/14 – New Burial Ground Allocations	This will be reviewed once the need for new burial grounds has been established and new sites identified.
CFS/15 – Education Facilities	This will be reviewed to incorporate any additional land requirements to deliver the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century schools programme and provide for additional school facilities required as a result of the RLDP.

In addition, new policies may be required to cover the following issues:

Theme	Justification
Policy to allocate new health facilities	New, or extensions to existing primary or secondary healthcare sites may be required to meet the needs of the growing and ageing population.

## 9 Further Evidence base needed

An update to the following evidence base is considered necessary:

- Update the Allotment Site Demand and Supply Report
- Review and update the Burial Grounds Site Demand and Supply Report
- Produce the Population Increase, Housing and Health-Primary Care Impact
- Update the Population Increase, Housing and Education Impact to include all allocated residential sites that will be included in the RLDP

## 10 Conclusion

Community facilities policies have, on the whole, delivered the LDP Vision and objective they set out to. Applications for new schools and the new Culture Centre have been approved and a small community allotment site has been provided in Dwygyfylchi. Financial contributions have been successfully sought for allotments, schools and libraries. Should CIL be adopted, it will impact how contributions from developers will be sought in future.

Officers will need to ensure that any need for new community facilities is met during the RLDP process. This will be informed through updated evidence base and close working with the relevant Council services and the NHS.

## 11 Appendix 1: Existing LDP Policies

### STRATEGIC POLICY CFS/1 – COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance community facilities and services by:

- a) Protecting and enhancing the vitality, attractiveness and viability of the retail centres in the Plan Area by locating appropriate retail developments in line with Policy CFS/2 – ‘Retail Hierarchy’;
- b) Applying a sequential approach in determining proposals for new retail development in the Plan Area in terms of site selection and the availability of suitable alternative sites in line with Policy DP/6 – ‘National Planning Policy and Guidance’;
- c) Protecting the retail offer in Llandudno, and the town centres, by designating primary shopping areas and/or shopping zones in line with Policies CFS/3 – ‘Primary Shopping Areas’ and CFS/4 – ‘Shopping Zones’;
- d) Protecting the retail centre of Llandudno by designating Parc Llandudno and Mostyn Champneys as retail parks where large format retailing will be concentrated and safeguarded in line with Policy CFS/5 – ‘Retail Parks’;
- e) Safeguarding essential community facilities outside Llandudno, Colwyn Bay and the District Centres in line with Policy CFS/6 – ‘Safeguarding of Community Facilities outside the Sub-Regional Centre and Town Centres’;
- f) Protecting and enhancing the attractiveness of shopping centres by only permitting appropriate shop fronts and appropriate shop front security measures in line with Policies CFS/7 – ‘Shop Front Design’ and CFS/8 – ‘Shopping Street Frontage Security’;
- g) Meeting the community’s need for allotments by safeguarding existing allotments in line with Policy CFS/9 – ‘Safeguarding Allotments’ and allocating land for new allotments in Abergele, Llandudno Junction, Llanrwst and Dwygyfylchi in line with Policy CFS/10 – ‘New Allotments’;
- h) Ensuring that new housing development makes adequate provision for the open space needs of its residents and safeguarding existing areas of open space in line with Policies CFS/11 – ‘Development and Open Space’ and CFS/12 – ‘Safeguarding Existing Open Space’;
- i) Allocating replacement playing fields and new areas of land for open space at Abergele and Glan Conwy in line with Policy CFS/13 – ‘New Open Space Allocations’;
- j) Allocating land for an extension to the cemeteries at Llanrwst and Penmaenmawr in line with Policy CFS/14 – ‘New Burial Ground Allocations’;
- k) Supporting development proposals for new education facilities in line with Policy CFS/15 – ‘Education Facilities’.

### **POLICY CFS/6 – SAFEGUARDING OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES OUTSIDE THE SUB-REGIONAL CENTRE AND THE TOWN CENTRES**

Where no similar facilities exist outside Llandudno, Colwyn Bay, Abergele, Conwy, Llandudno Junction, Llanfairfechan, Llanrwst and Penmaenmawr development which would lead to the loss of the following community facilities will only be permitted where it has been clearly demonstrated that the building is no longer viable for its existing use and that there is no continuing community need for those facilities:

- a) Shops selling convenience goods
- b) Post Offices
- c) Petrol stations
- d) Village/church halls
- e) Public houses

### **POLICY CFS/9 – SAFEGUARDING ALLOTMENTS**

Planning Permission will not be granted for development which results in the loss of land used for allotments, except:

- a) Where suitable, alternative provision is made that is at least equivalent in size and quality to that which will be lost, or;
- b) Where it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a community need for the allotments.

### **POLICY CFS/10 – NEW ALLOTMENTS**

1. Land is allocated to meet the demand for new allotments at the following locations:
  - a) Off Rhuddlan Road, Abergele
  - b) Esgyryn, Llandudno Junction
  - c) North of Llanrwst
  - d) North of Groesffordd, Dwygyfylchi
  - e) West of Gwrych Lodge, Abergele
2. Additional land may be identified during the Plan period in accordance with the Development Principles.

### **POLICY CFS/14 – NEW BURIAL GROUND ALLOCATIONS**

Land is allocated to meet the need for additional burial grounds in Llanrwst and in Penmaenmawr, adjacent to the existing cemeteries. Additional land may be identified during the Plan period in accordance with the Development Principles.

## **POLICY CFS/15 – EDUCATION FACILITIES**

Development Proposals for new schools during the Plan period will be supported providing they are in accordance with the Development Principles.