

SECTION 10

Community Facilities

10.0. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

10.1. EDUCATION

10.1.1. Introduction

The purpose of this part of the Report is to identify the educational facilities within the Plan Area, any educational problems and to assess the potential of the existing educational facilities to accommodate the expected level of population growth.

10.1.2. Nursery Education

Reference is made to the four pre-school playgroups in the Local Plan area in paragraph 10.2.8, however, the Social Services Department who are responsible for this service, have referred to the need for the provision of 20 to 30 additional pre-school play group places each morning.

10.1.3. Primary Education

Within the Local Plan area there are the following primary school establishments catering for infants and juniors:-

- a) Ashfield Park Primary School (in two departments, primary in south of town, infants in north).
- b) St. Josephs Voluntary Aid R.C. Primary School.
- c) Bridstow C.E. Primary School.

10.1.4. Following discussions with the County Education Department, the Local Consultative Committee for Education considered that children from the proposed town development could be accommodated in the two departments of Ashfield Park Primary School without the need for extensive enlargement of the premises.

10.1.5. The rural development of some 250 houses proposed outside the Local Plan area is not likely to create accommodation problems, bearing in mind that individual areas are not likely to be of any significant size. There may be a need for some accommodation to be made available at Bridstow C.E. School (within the Plan area), but this will depend on a Secretary of State's decision on the future of Sellack C.E. School.

10.1.6. Secondary Education

There is one secondary school establishment in the Plan Area namely the John Kyrle High School which at present is on two sites, viz:-

- a) The John Kyrle Lower School, Off Ryefield Road.
- b) The John Kyrle Upper School at Overross.

10.1.7. As far as secondary education is concerned, the Education Committee are most anxious to concentrate the John Kyrle High School on the Overross site by 1987 and recognise the need for additional playing fields to be acquired in the area for the school's use. At the present moment a survey team from the Department of Education and Science are reviewing the school's needs having regard to reduced roles and the opportunities in such a scheme to provide for community use of the school premises.

- 10.1.8. Further statistical information is being prepared by the County Education Department in respect of primary and secondary education and will be forwarded to the District Council for information.
- 10.1.9. Further Education
- As mentioned in Recreation and Leisure (paragraph 6.5.3.) a fairly extensive range of non-vocational day and evening adult classes are held in the Local Plan area, whilst vocational classes are held at Herefordshire Technical College in Hereford.
- 10.2. HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
- 10.2.1. Introduction
- These services are administered by the Hereford and Worcester Social Services Department (Hereford Area Office) and as from 1st April, 1982, the Hereford Health District as successors to the former Hereford and Worcester Area Health Authority. There are also a number of voluntary and private organisations who provide services in the Local Plan area.
- 10.2.2. General range of services
- A full range of community health services is available in the Plan area. This includes the services of district nurses, health visitors and community midwives as well as family doctors, dentists, opticians and pharmacists.
- 10.2.3. The town of Ross, like the other market towns in the former County of Herefordshire, is regarded as a health service centre for both community and hospital services.
- 10.2.4. There are a number of general medical practices based in Ross - one of four doctors in group practice premises in Kent Avenue; one practice of three based at Chepstow House Health Centre and one practice of two based in Walford Road, Ross. These practices have attached to them respectively the one health visitor, three district nursing sisters plus one relief; one health visitor with district nursing cover provided by the staff attached to Chepstow House Health Centre.
- 10.2.5. In the town there are also six general dental practitioners practising from three separate premises, three pharmacies and four premises for opticians. Speech therapy, chiropody and cytology are provided at Chepstow House Health Centre as is the Authority's family planning clinic held three times per month. Out-patient physiotherapy is available in the department recently provided largely with voluntary support at Ross Cottage Hospital.
- 10.2.6. A number of hospital out-patient consultation sessions are held in Ross so that residents in the area do not have to travel unnecessarily to Hereford. There are ante-natal and post-natal clinics once every three weeks at Ross Cottage Hospital, fortnightly ophthalmology clinics at Chepstow House Health Centre and three psychiatric sessions per fortnight also held at the Health Centre. A minor casualty service is provided at Ross Cottage Hospital. More serious cases needing the full care of the main accident and emergency department have to use the facility provided for the whole Health District at Hereford General Hospital. An X-ray service is also provided at Ross Cottage Hospital for a range of basic examinations. More complicated examinations and other diagnostic services are available in Hereford. In addition to

to these facilities, Ross Cottage Hospital provides fourteen beds for use by the local general medical practitioners. The patients admitted include, as well as direct admissions from the community, patients transferred after operation or other treatment in the hospitals in Hereford.

10.2.7. Services for children

In addition to services described above which may be used by children, or, as in the case of speech therapy, are particularly used by them, there are certain special services available for children. These include a child health clinic, held weekly at Chepstow House Health Centre. The health visitors carry out developmental assessment of children in the home. Where problems are detected, the child concerned is referred for further examination to a medical officer and, if necessary, to the Hearing and Speech Centre or to the Child Development Centre, both in Hereford. The vaccination and immunisation programme for children, which includes protection against diphtheria, polio, tetanus, whooping cough and measles, is available to children either from child health clinics or from the family doctor. The school health service now operates on a basis of selective medical examinations. Children are seen at age five on entry to school and thereafter on a selective basis either at the request of the school teacher, school nurse, parent or medical officer. Routine hearing and sight tests and dental inspections are carried out and are followed up by the offer of treatment. A chiropodist also visits schools to inspect the feet of pupils and where necessary treatment is provided in the school. While at secondary school, children are offered BCG vaccination and tetanus/polio boosters and girls are offered rubella immunisation. There is also a pilot scheme for the screening of secondary schoolchildren in their first and second year for curvature of the spine currently being provided.

- 10.2.8. Children needing hospital admission are admitted to one of Hereford's hospitals either to the children's wards at the County Hospital or to children's rooms at Victoria Eye Hospital, or Hereford General Hospital (for ENT).

In respect of pre-school playgroups, there are four registered within the Local Plan area providing places for up to 112 children most mornings of the week.

10.2.9. Services for the Elderly

The elderly have particular needs for health care. In the primary care field this is reflected in the higher fee paid to GPs for patients on their lists who are over 65 and by the high proportion the elderly form on the workload of home nurses and chiropodists. The elderly also occupy the majority of hospital beds and nationally much of the increased workload in hospitals in the last ten years has been in treating elderly people. This affects not only services specifically for elderly people but also the general acute services available for those of all ages.

- 10.2.10. The general problem of extra demand for the elderly on health services is compounded in Herefordshire by the age structure of the population. Also, many of the elderly lack the normal family networks either because their children have left the district or they vice versa have left their family behind in moving to the Shire. One of the consequences is that they tend to place higher burdens on the health service. A further complication is that there are relatively fewer people in the 45-65 age group where those who care professionally for the elderly are most usually found.

- 10.2.11. The aim locally, as nationally, is to strengthen primary and community care services to enable elderly people to live at home. For the health service this means more home nurses and greater provision of services such as domiciliary physiotherapy and occupational therapy, chiropody and home laundry. These services can, however, only be effective when the full range of relevant Social Services is also available. Any imbalance in the one service has important implications for the other. The provision of domiciliary services is however, often made difficult by the fact that the elderly live generally in the poorest accommodation, many live alone, a number live remote from centres of population, and generally incomes tend to be low.
- 10.2.12. Where the elderly need hospital care, this is available at the hospitals in Hereford or for cases admitted directly under the care of their GP. at Ross Cottage Hospital. Those requiring hospital care under one of the District's Geriatricians are admitted for assessment to the General Hospital in Hereford. Where long-term care is appropriate this is provided at Dean Hill Hospital.
- 10.2.13. Ellerslie, Ryefield Road and Rochester House, Ashfield Crescent are both private homes for the elderly registered by the County Council and provide 16 places and 10 places respectively for men and women.
- 10.2.14. With regard to County Council provision for the elderly, it is hoped to open the nine bedded home at Woodside at soon as revenue budgets permit.
- 10.2.15. Services for the Physically Handicapped
- There are many definitions of physical handicap and it is, therefore, difficult to assess numbers. Generally, however, it is considered that in most places at least 10% and possibly 15% of any given population needs special care or help because of disablement. The County Council is currently revising its handicap register to give a more accurate indication of the number of handicapped people there are in the County.
- 10.2.16. Because of the different types of handicap needs vary considerably, e.g. the blind have different needs from the deaf who have different needs from the physically handicapped. One important requirement of the latter group, however, is that mobility should be encouraged through parking for the disabled and adequate toilet accommodation.
- 10.2.17. The Social Services Department have identified a need for more suitable provision for existing voluntary day centres within the town. For example, one of the day centres which currently meets in the rooms adjoining the W.R.V.S. kitchen, would function far better and provide a much needed service if they were in more suitable premises for handicapped people and were centrally situated.
- 10.2.18. Services for the Mentally Ill and Mentally Handicapped
- Most cases of mental illness are dealt with quite satisfactorily by the GP. Those who are referred to the hospital and specialist service attend on an out-patient basis in Ross or in Hereford, a day patient basis in Hereford, or are admitted to St. Mary's Hospital, Burghill, Hereford. Specialist community psychiatric nurses and specialist psychiatric community nurses for the elderly, based in the hospitals, work closely with those living in the community to help them maintain their independence.

10.2.19. Mentally handicapped people and their families are supported at home through the community mental handicap team, comprising psychiatrist, psychologist, health visitor and community nurse and Social Services staff. A property has recently been acquired in Ross close to Dean Hill Hospital to provide hostel facilities for mentally handicapped adults and it is hoped that over time the residents will become more independent and need less support from health service staff. Dean Hill Hospital, Ross-on-Wye provides the District's only hospital facilities for adult mentally handicapped people in need of hospital care. Children needing this type of care are currently admitted to Lea Castle Hospital, Kidderminster, although it is hoped shortly to open a purpose-built unit in Hereford to provide facilities for this particular group.

10.2.20. Social Workers

The Hereford and Worcester Social Services Department are hoping to locate the Social Work team which covers the Ross-on-Wye area in the old Magistrates Court in due course.

10.2.21. Problems

- a) As throughout the rest of the Hereford Health District resource problems mean that the service available, particularly in terms of the number of home nurses and health visitor and frequency of chiropody treatments, is limited.
- b) The age structure of the population, together with generally unfavourable socio-economic factors increase the demand for health care but are not fully reflected in the allocation of resources.
- c) Although considerable sums of money have recently been spent on Dean Hill Hospital trying to improve facilities for patients there, the facilities for the mentally handicapped and the elderly remain congested and unsuitable. Ideally, the present facilities would be totally replaced in smaller community units based closer to the homes of those needing hospital treatment. With the provision of alternative facilities such as group homes and hostels, the number is likely to be smaller than the current number needing this sort of care. The facilities provided for the elderly are also inadequate, partly because of their first floor location. Ideally these also would be replaced.

10.2.22. Probation and After Care Service

At present the work of the Probation Service in Ross-on-Wye is undertaken by officers based in Hereford. The work in the town is undertaken by two officers who, for this purpose, are able to make use of facilities within the Court building. The service that is provided relates to:-

- (i) Supervision in the community of adults and juveniles subject to orders of the Courts.
- (ii) Assistance to people at times of Court hearings.
- (iii) Support and assistance to prisoners and their families during and after sentence.
- (iv) Welfare service to the Divorce Court.
- (v) Preparation of reports for criminal and civil Courts.

- (vi) Voluntary marital counselling and conciliation.
- (vii) Community Service schemes.
- (viii) Recruitment and support for volunteers who assist the Probation Service in the above tasks.

10.2.23. The work of the Probation Service has grown steadily in recent years and consideration is now being given to establishing a sub-office at Ross-on-Wye. It is probable that this would accommodate two officers and appropriate clerical staff. The work of the Service in respect of community service schemes is an area of work that the County Council wish to see extended. Were an office to be established it would of course serve not only the area covered by the Local Plan but would serve the whole of the Ross Petty Sessions area and might, in addition, be extended further towards Ledbury.

10.2.24. Environmental Health

The District Council is responsible for a wide range of public health and private housing functions. The public health aspects include:-

- a) Food and food hygiene (including investigating complaints).
- b) Monitoring work places and safety practices.
- c) Controlling camping and caravan sites.
- d) Pest control.
- e) Investigation of infectious diseases.
- f) Minimising noise and other pollution problems.
- g) Water supplies, drainage and sewerage (as agents to the Welsh Water Authority).
- h) Refuse collection.
- i) Licensing of animal establishments and pleasure boats.
- j) Public conveniences.
- k) Health education and home/water safety.

The private housing aspect includes:-

- i) Renovation grants to improve the standard of housing.
- ii) Home insulation grants.
- iii) Slum clearance and control over unfit housing.
- iv) Housing repairs.

10.2.25. The Environmental Health Department is also responsible for all Council owned amenities including the Ross Market, open spaces and the swimming pool.

10.2.26. Future Health and Social Services

The policy of the Hereford Health District Management Team, which is responsible for providing community and institutional services in the study area and throughout the Health District, is:-

- i) To increase the number of community staff - in particular district nurses and health visitors.
- ii) To develop on the Ross Cottage Hospital site a community hospital providing out-patient facilities, minor accident department, physiotherapy department and in-patient facilities for patients admitted under the care of a Geriatrician.
- iii) To expand the provision in Ross, other than in hospital, for the mentally handicapped.
- iv) In the long-term to replace Dean Hill Hospital with smaller community units.

10.2.27. Future Social Service needs in the Local Plan have been estimated as follows:-

Provision of 20-30 Pre-school playgroup places each morning.

More suitable provision for voluntary day centres for handicapped people.

Opening of 'Woodside' nine bed home for the elderly.

Location of Social Work team in the Old Magistrates Court.

10.2.28. The Probation Service consider that there may be a need for a local office to be established in Ross-on-Wye.

10.3. POLICE

10.3.1. Police services are the responsibility of the West Mercia Constabulary. The former County of Herefordshire has a Divisional Headquarters in Hereford whilst the Police Station in Old Maids Walk, Ross-on-Wye is the Sub-Divisional Headquarters for this area. The Ross-on-Wye Section provides a twenty four hour supervisory and town cover. Although outside the area of the Plan, police services are supplemented by four detached stations at Whitchurch, Upton Bishop, St. Weonards and Weston-under-Penyard.

10.4. COURTS

10.4.1. There is a Magistrates Court covering the Local Plan area with the Court House situated in Copse Cross Street. Magistrates Courts, as criminal courts, deal with petty crime, certain more serious crimes if prosecution and defence agree, and all serious cases for 'examination' to decide whether they should be committed to Crown Court. The nearest Crown Court for the Plan Area is located at the Shirehall in Hereford.

10.5. FIRE

- 10.5.1. Fire cover for the area is maintained from Ross Fire Station situated at Hildersley on the A.40 Ross to Gloucester Road which operates on a retained basis with an establishment of two Sub-Officers, four Leading Firemen and twelve Firemen who are normally on call 24 hours every day.
- 10.5.2. Due to the difficulty in recruiting sufficient men to cover the day period, it has been necessary to station one wholetime Sub-Officer and three wholetime firemen to ensure that a crew is always available. These men provide cover during the day period, and undertake retained duties when they are off the station. In the event of a call, both the wholetime, when they are on standby duties and the retained personnel, are summoned to the Fire Station by a radio paging device and usually turn out in less than five minutes of being alerted.
- 10.5.3. Ross-on-Wye Fire Station is a modern three bay station built in 1969. Two pumping appliances, a water carrier and a light four wheel drive vehicle are housed at the station.
- 10.5.4. Fire Prevention in the Ross-on-Wye area is carried out by a Station Officer who is based at Ross-on-Wye. This Officer is conditioned to the residential duty system and provides operational and supervisory cover for the South Herefordshire area. A Sub-Officer on day duties is also based at Ross-on-Wye and engaged on Fire Prevention duties.
- 10.5.5. Home Office recommended standards of fire cover class Ross-on-Wye as a 'C' risk area which requires the Fire Brigade to have one appliance at the scene of any fire within ten minutes of the receipt of a call. However, when property is involved, two appliances are always sent. There are, of course, standing arrangements to have additional appliances into the area from other stations in the County should the need arise.
- 10.5.6. Construction of the Ross-on-Wye Relief Road is programmed to commence early in 1984 and the close proximity of the proposed southern junction on the Gloucester Road should improve attendance times by the Brigade on incidents in the rural area to the north of the town.
- 10.5.7. The only problem identified by the Chief Fire Officer relates to a deficiency in retained personnel.

10.6. AMBULANCE

- 10.6.1. The Ambulance Service in the Ross-on-Wye area is provided by the staff and three ambulances based at the station in Edde Cross Street. The service, which is available over a 24 hour period, covers the area normally up to a 6 mile radius of Ross-on-Wye. The transport of non-urgent walking patients in certain situations is also provided by the Hospital Car Service which is under the direct control of the Ambulance Authority.
- 10.6.2. All requests for ambulance transport are routed to the Central Ambulance Control where routine journeys are co-ordinated and then passed to the appropriate ambulance or hospital car.
- 10.6.3. Emergency calls are passed to the nearest ambulance to the incident by GPO telephone lines or radio telephone from the Ambulance Control. In the event of additional support being required, ambulances can be despatched from adjacent stations or Authorities.

10.6.4. The main flow of ambulance journeys conveying patients for acute and specialised treatment and consultation is towards Hereford or on the southern extremes, to Gloucester. The Ambulance Service, during the working week, conveys patients into the local based services including Day Units and Chiropody Clinics. This essential need absorbs the limited amount of ambulance resources.

10.6.5. Future Ambulance Services

The longterm planning of the service, subject to the availability of monies, including the provision of a new 6 bay station within the Local Plan Area to replace the inadequate present staff and vehicle accommodation in Edde Cross Street. A site has been reserved on the District Council owned land at Woodside (adjoining the Fire Station) for this proposal and the service road to serve this site together with further development on adjoining land, has recently been completed.

10.7. LIBRARY SERVICES

10.7.1. Introduction

The following information is an extract from a report of the County Librarian:-

"Ross Library serves Ross-on-Wye and a large catchment area extending from Monmouth (Gwent) to Newent (Glos) and from Hereford to Longhope (Glos) and it also serves as the base for a Mobile Library operating in the rural area up to a radius of approximately 15 miles. The Branch and the Mobile Library operate an integrated service with interchangeable book stocks."

10.7.2. The needs

"Ross-on-Wye is a busy market town and a tourist centre of some importance. Its demands for adequate library provision, which are considerable and increasing, need to be met. The County Libraries Department has a statutory duty to provide a "comrehensive and efficient" service and this is interpreted to mean premises, accessible to handicapped (in the widest sense) readers, bookstocks sufficient to meet the needs of the users and suitable qualified staff to exploit the stock and administer the services. These services will include a lending library of cultural, educational and recreational matters for adults and children; such reference (including Local History, very important in a tourist centre like Ross) provision as is necessary to meet local needs and this includes much quick reference material like time-tables and telephone directories which are heavily used; scope for such other activities as legitimately impinge on the work of the library (e.g. exhibition spaces) or will lead to the acquisition of the reading habits and more meaningful use of the library (display space and meeting rooms, particularly for children's activities). It is also important that staff accommodation, both workroom and rest-room, and provision for a garage for the mobile library and base for the Assistant Librarian (Mobile Library duties) should be adequate and up to an acceptable standard and that the first-line reserve stock should be housed on the premises."

10.7.3. The present situation

"The library has since 1953 been housed in the Market House which is leased from the District Council; although a Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument, it is not suitable for library purposes for a number of reasons. It is inaccessible to many potential users since it stands on an island site with traffic flowing on all sides, and the library is approached by a flight of 22 stairs. There is not

sufficient accommodation for a full range of services to be offered on an adequate scale; the Children's Section and the Reference (including Local History) Section are particularly cramped, there is no scope for providing tourist information and other information services are limited; garaging, or parking facilities are not available so that the Mobile Library has to be based on a separate site in Cantilupe Road and garaged at yet a third place which makes for inefficient use of staff time; deliveries of requests and new books are similarly hampered."

10.7.4. Housebound readers

"A service to Housebound Readers was inaugurated in 1978 but this is operating to capacity and there is a waiting list of applicants. Criteria for admission to the Housebound Readers Service have had to be relaxed in Ross because of the additional difficulties in the way of handicapped readers by the access and the stairs. Ground floor access would open up the library to more readers and release the pressure on the Housebound Readers' Service which, because of the lack of resources, relies on voluntary help."

10.7.5. Future Requirements

"Ownership of the site of the former County Primary School in Cantilupe Road passed to Herefordshire County Library and Records Committee about 1970 and plans for a new library were drawn up in the early 1970's the development being approved by the Department of the Environment in 1973; the project was halted in that year in the run up to Local Government Re-organisation. Since 1974 successive committees with responsibility for library provisions have re-affirmed their intention to build a library on the Cantilupe Road site and this project has been and still is their top priority."

10.8.- CHURCHES, CHURCH HALLS AND OTHER COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

10.8.1. Churches

There are seven churches and other places of Worship in the Local Plan area. Most denominations are provided for including Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists and Jehovahs Witnesses. At the time of preparing this Study Report, there were no known requirements for new churches or ancillary buildings.

10.8.2. Church Halls

The majority of places of worship have some form of church hall or meeting facility, some of which are available for hire for other public and private functions.

10.8.3. Other Community Buildings

In addition to Church Halls, there are other assembly buildings used by Scouts and Guides and other organisations.

There is also a proposal to construct a new community hall on the land adjoining the existing Edde Cross Street car park.

10.9. SUMMARY

10.9.1. Education

- a) Nursery - Need for provision of 20-30 pre-school places per morning.
- b) Secondary - Possible identification of additional land for use as school playing field for John Kyrle High School.

10.9.2. Health and Social Services

- i) Strengthen community care services to encourage elderly to live at home.
- ii) Develop community hospital on site of Ross Cottage Hospital.
- iii) Expand provision for mentally handicapped other than in hospital.
- iv) Longterm - replace Dean Hill Hospital with smaller community units.
- v) Provide 20 to 30 pre-school playgroup places per morning.
- vi) Improve provision of voluntary day centre especially for mentally handicapped.
- vii) Woodside nine bed home to be opened (when funds permit).
- viii) Social work team to be located in Old Magistrates Court.
- ix) Need for local probation office.

10.9.3. Public Protection Services

New ambulance station required at Woodside.

10.9.4. Library Services

New library to be constructed in Cantilupe Road when funds permit.

