

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

SPG 15

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



## **Bridgend County Borough Council**

BRIDGEND  
RECREATION  
CENTRE

## **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is to expand upon the Council's existing planning policy on the provision of appropriate direct infrastructural requirements (in this instance relating to community facilities and residential development) contained within the adopted Unitary Development Plan. It will outline what the Council will expect in terms of contributions to community facilities to be delivered as part of new residential developments within the County Borough of Bridgend.

It was adopted by Bridgend County Borough Council's Planning and Development Committee on 29th May 2008.

This SPG will be a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications for residential developments including applications for renewal of consents.



**David Llewellyn**  
**Group Manager - Development**  
**Communities Directorate**  
**02 June 2008**

## 1 INTRODUCTION

**1.1** This guidance supplements strategic (Part 1) Policies 13 and 22, and detailed (Part 2) Policies SC1 and RC14 of the adopted Bridgend Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2001-2016). Its purpose is to provide advice to developers on the circumstances in which the Council may seek contributions towards the provision of community facilities for new residential developments.

**1.2** It will enable developers to be aware, at an early stage in the development process, what community facilities are needed and what financial contribution may be sought towards their provision.

**1.3** Community facilities are important for meeting a wide range of social needs. Providing these facilities at a local level, in convenient locations, increases their accessibility for users and reduces the need to travel.

**1.4** The demand for housing in the County Borough is increasing, and a large number of homes are being constructed to serve this demand. As a result, there is a need to ensure there are adequate local facilities to serve local communities to meet current and future demands. The planning system should operate in the public interest and should ensure that provision is made for community facilities to ensure the wellbeing of local communities.

**1.5** If residential development occurs without consideration being given to the adequacy of existing local community facilities, then strain can be placed on the existing facilities, to the detriment of the local community.

## 2 NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

**2.1** National planning policy as contained in *Planning Policy Wales 2002* states that:

*“Recognising the strengths of urban communities, which are home to the majority of the population of Wales, the Assembly Government’s priorities for urban areas are, through integrated approaches, to:*

- *secure environmentally-sound and socially inclusive regeneration in those urban areas which require it, so that they become more desirable places in which to live and work; and*
- *foster sustainable change, in particular making it possible to live with less noise, congestion and traffic pollution, and improving the quality of life.*

*Development can help to arrest the decline in community facilities and deliver environmentally-sound modernisation, re-use or replacement of urban infrastructure.* (Council’s emphasis)

### 3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

**3.1** The Council recognises that new built development, mainly, but not exclusively, for residential purposes, should be accompanied by the development of an appropriate level of social and community facilities. Otherwise, unnecessary strains would be placed on existing infrastructure and services, with resultant adverse impacts in social and environmental terms, deprivation in services, and under-provision of those facilities. Part 1 Policies 13 and 22 of the adopted UDP, therefore, provide for:

#### PART 1 - POLICY 13

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO, AND/OR PROTECT SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES WILL BE ENCOURAGED.**

#### PART 1 - POLICY 22

**APPLICATIONS FOR BUILT DEVELOPMENT SHOULD INCLUDE MATERIAL PROPOSALS WHICH DEAL WITH THE FAIR AND REASONABLE DIRECT AND INDIRECT INFRASTRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT, AND WHICH ALSO ENSURE THAT THERE IS NOT A CONSEQUENTIAL AND SIGNIFICANT PLANNING LOSS TO THE EXISTING COMMUNITY. WHERE APPROPRIATE, SUCH PROPOSALS WILL BE SECURED BY MEANS OF PLANNING AGREEMENTS / OBLIGATIONS.**

**3.2** Part 2 Policies SC1 and RC14 deal with the more specific future provision of Social & Community Facilities, and state that:



## PART 2 - POLICY SC1

PROPOSALS TO DEVELOP SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS WILL BE PERMITTED, PROVIDED THAT:-

1. THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT PREJUDICE AN EXISTING REGENERATION STRATEGY;
2. IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT SUCH A LOCATION IS APPROPRIATE TO THE PROPOSAL;
3. THE PROPOSAL IS WELL LOCATED TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT, THE NEEDS OF THE NON-CAR TRAVELLER AND THE MAIN ROAD NETWORK;
4. THE HIGHWAY NETWORK IS CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING THE TRAFFIC GENERATED BY THE PROPOSAL WITHOUT AN UNACCEPTABLE EFFECT ON TRAFFIC FLOWS AND PATTERNS, SAFETY, ENERGY USE OR OTHER EMISSIONS;
5. IT WILL HAVE SATISFACTORY CAR PARKING;
6. THE DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT, NOR VISUALLY IMPINGE UPON, THE FOLLOWING AREAS AND THEIR SETTINGS:-
  - A) THE GLAMORGAN HERITAGE COAST;
  - B) THE KENFIG cSAC;
  - C) THE STRATEGIC COALFIELD PLATEAU AND ASSOCIATED VALLEY SIDES;
  - D) SSSI's AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS: AND
7. THE DEVELOPMENT CAN BE SYMPATHETICALLY ASSIMILATED INTO THE ENVIRONMENT IN TERMS OF SITING, SCALE, DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING.

## PART 2 - POLICY RC14

THE PROVISION OF ALLOTMENTS ON SUITABLE SITES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY BOROUGH WILL BE FAVOURED WHEREVER A PROVEN NEED FOR SUCH FACILITIES IS DEMONSTRATED.



## 4 DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY FACILITY

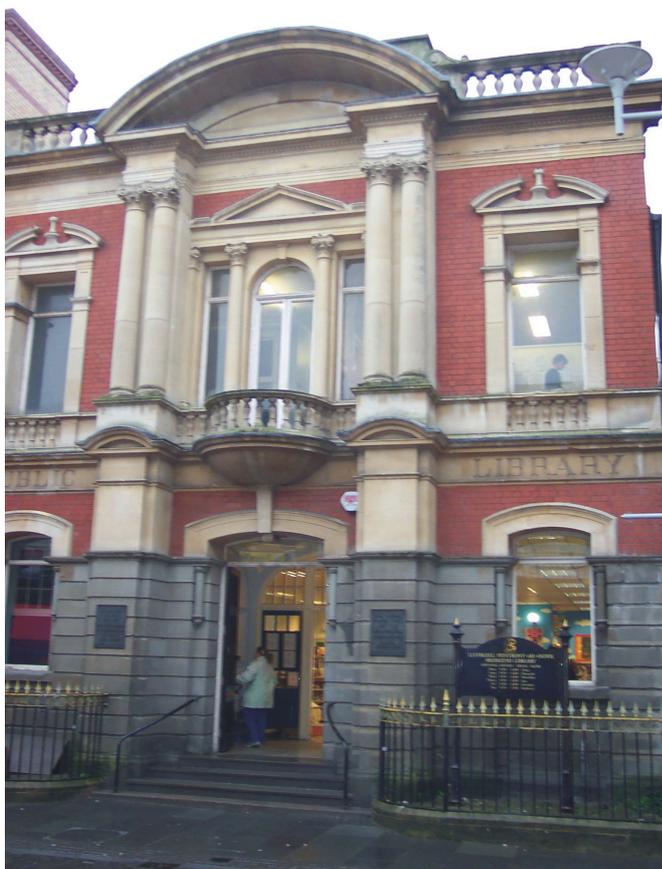
**4.1** The adopted Bridgend Unitary Development Plan defines social and community facilities as: “shops, arts/culture/entertainment, education, health, recreation, religious meeting places, health and social services, post office services, library facilities, burial grounds and fire and police services.” (Paragraph 10.2.1. refers)

**4.2** However the provision of some of these services (such as education and public open space) will be considered and negotiated separately in the event of a residential proposal being submitted. Therefore for the purposes of this SPG, ‘community facilities’ are defined as facilities used by local communities for social, leisure and recreational purposes, including community centres and meeting places, community halls, community learning, libraries, life centres, leisure centres and allotments.

**4.3** Community facilities include facilities that are non commercial and not for profit. Facilities run by voluntary organisations or Bridgend County Borough Council are included, however privately run facilities and ‘member’s only’ clubs are excluded.

**4.4** While faith buildings are not included in the definition, facilities attached to faith buildings which are used by the wider community are included.

**4.5** The provision of health facilities, such as GP surgeries will not normally be included within the definition of a Community Facility for the purposes of this SPG. The provision of health facilities in association with new developments will be negotiated on a separate basis where a need for such facilities is proven.



## 5 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

**5.1** The Council will seek a financial contribution for improvements to existing community facilities or the provision of additional community facilities on all significant developments because the increased population will result in increased demand for local community facilities.

### NOTE 1

**A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS NEW OR IMPROVED COMMUNITY FACILITIES WILL BE SOUGHT FROM ALL NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS CONTAINING 25 UNITS OR MORE.**

**IN ADDITION, ON RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF 200 OR MORE UNITS A COMMUNITY FACILITY SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY THE DEVELOPER AS PART OF THE OVERALL SCHEME.**

**5.2** All developer contributions will be secured using legal agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (or its successor). Welsh Office Circular 13/97 states the five tests to apply to legal agreements when assessing their appropriateness. They should be:

- necessary;
- relevant to planning;
- directly related to the planned development;
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development;
- and reasonable in all respects.

The Council will ensure these tests are carried when negotiating legal agreements with developers.

**5.3** The Council is also mindful that legal agreements cannot be used to alleviate existing problems in the networks of Community Facilities across the County Borough. They can, however, avoid a situation whereby increased residential development in the vicinity of the facility could cause the situation to be exacerbated.

**5.4** In assessing the requirement for a developer contribution, the Council will provide the required evidence of need for the contribution on a case-by-case basis using relevant information appropriate to the local area.

**5.5** Contributions will be sought from proposed residential developments containing 25 or more new units. It is considered that a development of this size would increase the demand on local community facilities beyond their existing for planned capacity and / or where existing facilities are of an unsatisfactory standard and would require further investment to make suitable for use. This requirement includes mixed use and building conversion developments where there is a net increase in the number of dwelling units to 25 or more.

**5.6** For larger residential developments over 200 dwellings or more, there will be a requirement to provide a site for, and construct, a community facility in addition to providing financial contributions. The type of facility provided will be subject to negotiation with the Council's Regeneration and Development and Healthy Living departments.

## NOTE 2

**THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS COMMUNITY FACILITIES WILL BE £988.50 PER DWELLING OR £415.34 PER PERSON**

**5.7** The level of financial contributions should have regard to the following issues:

- existing community facility provision;
- the size of the residential development;
- current average build costs;
- the provision of floor space per dwelling;
- the projected population of the proposed development.

**5.8** The current average build costs of community facilities of £1,318 per sq.m. of floor space as specified by the BCIS classification C1/SfB 532. This figure will be regularly reviewed to reflect changes in capital costs of providing community buildings in line with the BCIS classification C1/SfB 532. The most up-to-date data will be used at the time of application; the figures quoted in this SPG are therefore subject to change.

**5.9** The provision standard for community buildings is based on a provision of 0.75sq.m. floorspace per dwelling. This is in line with recommended standards for the provision of community facilities applied by other local authorities.

**5.10** The calculation for community facility contributions per dwelling is based on the following formula:

Build costs per sq m of floor space x standard community floor space provision per dwelling = **£1,318.00 x 0.75 = £988.50 per dwelling**

**5.11** Where the resultant population of the development is known, the 2001 Census indicates that the average number of persons per household in Bridgend County Borough was 2.38 persons. It is therefore possible to calculate the financial contribution per person as:

Contribution per dwelling / average household size  
= **£988.50 ÷ 2.38 = £415.34 per person**

## NOTE 3

**ONLY IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WILL THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY ACCEPT A REDUCED CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY FACILITIES ON SITES MEETING THE THRESHOLDS IN NOTE 1**

**5.12** The Local Planning Authority appreciates that the expected contribution to community facilities can affect the land values for residential development at a given location. However, it will expect developers to have taken account of this guidance before entering in to land and property negotiations. Pre-application discussions are advised with the Council's Regeneration and Development and Healthy Living departments to determine the likely community facility provision that will be expected for a proposal.

**5.13** The onus will be on the developers to satisfy the Council that it is not economically viable for the expected provision to be made before any relaxation of the contribution will be considered. In order for this to occur, a written reasoned justification should be submitted to the Council in order that an assessment can be made. If the information requested is not submitted, in light of any other evidence to the contrary, the Council will refuse the planning application on the basis that it does not meet the policy requirements of the UDP or that insufficient information to properly determine the proposal has been submitted.

## 6 USE OF DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

**6.1** Any payments will be subject to legal agreements whereby money will be spent locally on improvements to meet the needs of the development from which the payments were sought (Welsh Office Circular 13/97). This will either be by the provision of new facilities or the upgrading of existing facilities to meet the needs of the new residents which the development will create.

**6.2** Financial contributions from developments will be used within the community from which the contribution is generated and no greater than 5km from the development site.

**6.3** It is usual practice to require any monies received from legal agreements to be spent within five years of receipt. After this time it will be returned to the applicant by the Council.



# APPENDIX A

## Useful Contact Details

### Local Planning Authority

Bridgend County Borough Council  
Regeneration and Development  
Communities Directorate  
Civic Offices  
Angel Street  
BRIDGEND  
CF31 4WB

Tel. (Development Control): 01656 643155  
Tel. (Development Planning): 01656 643165  
Email: [planning@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:planning@bridgend.gov.uk)

### Healthy Living

Wellbeing Directorate  
Bridgend County Borough Council,  
Sunnyside Offices,  
Sunnyside,  
BRIDGEND  
CF31 4AR  
Tel. 01656 642613

