

# Rother District Council Annual Report & Performance Plan 2012





# Map Of Rother Area

Rother District Council  
Town Hall  
Bexhill On Sea  
TN39 3JX  
[www.rother.gov.uk](http://www.rother.gov.uk)  
01424 787000  
email:  
[policy.performance@rother.gov.uk](mailto:policy.performance@rother.gov.uk)

Ticehurst and  
Etchingham

Salehurst

Ewhurst and  
Sedlescombe

Rother Levels

Darwell

Rye

Eastern  
Rother

Brede Valley

Crowhurst

Battle Town

Marsham

Bexhill  
*see right*

## Bexhill Wards

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1 Central     | 6 Sidley      |
| 2 Collington  | 7 St Michaels |
| 3 St Marks    | 8 Old Town    |
| 4 Kewhurst    | 9 Sackville   |
| 5 St Stephens |               |

3

6

7

5

8

4

2

1

9

# Rother District Council

“Working with the community to improve  
the overall well-being of the District”

## Annual Performance Plan 2012

### Index

Map of the Rother Area	opposite
Contact Information: Members of the Council	4
Contact Information: Officers	7
Senior Officers Structure	8
Financial Information for 2011 and 2012	9
Our Staff	11
Reducing our Carbon Footprint	12
Key to Tables	13
Putting Customers First	14
Delivering Value for Money	19
Building Stronger, Safer Communities	24
Working in Partnership	29
Key Plans & Strategies	35





## Elected Members of the Council

Cllr Lord Amphill \_\_\_\_\_  
**Rye**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01797 227106



Cllr Mrs Mary Barnes \_\_\_\_\_  
**Ticehurst & Etchingham**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01580 819142



Cllr Roger Bird \_\_\_\_\_  
**Marsham**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01424 813636



Cllr Graham Browne \_\_\_\_\_  
**Salehurst**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01580 860118



Cllr Jim Carroll \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill Sidley**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01424 892658



Cllr Richard Carroll \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill Central**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01424 225911



Cllr Charles Clark \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill St Michaels**  
 Independent  
 Tel. 01424 221603



Cllr Angharad Davies \_\_\_\_\_  
**Crowhurst**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01580 831969



Cllr Kevin Dixon \_\_\_\_\_  
**Battle Town**  
 Liberal Democrat,  
 Tel. 01424 774435



Cllr Patrick Douart \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill Sackville**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01424 733254



Cllr Stuart Earl \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill St Marks**  
 Independent, Tel. 01424 225386



Cllr Simon Elford \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill St Michaels**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01424 736425



Cllr Robert Elliston \_\_\_\_\_  
**Ticehurst and Etchingham**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01580 200609



Cllr Kathryn Field \_\_\_\_\_  
**Battle Town**  
 Liberal Democrat,  
 Tel. 01424 772132



Cllr Mrs Joanne Gadd \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill St Marks**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01424 844228



Cllr Tony Ganly \_\_\_\_\_  
**Ewhurst & Sedlescombe**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01580 830704



Cllr Mrs Bridget George \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill St Stephens**  
 Conservative, Tel. 01424 848212



Did you know...

**65,000**

contacts regularly  
 updated in 2011  
 on what to see  
 and do in 1066  
 Country.





**Cllr Mrs Joy Hughes** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill Central**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 221469



**Cllr Ian Jenkins** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Rother Levels**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 883475



**Cllr Jonathan Johnson** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Brede Valley**  
Conservative, Tel. 07850 360177



**Cllr Brian Kentfield** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill Kewhurst**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 842966



**Cllr Martin Kenward** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill Kewhurst**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 223602



**Cllr John Lee** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill Collington**  
Independent, Tel. 01424 219977



**Cllr Paul Lendon** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill St Stephens**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 225430



**Cllr Tony Mansi** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill Collington**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 845715



**Cllr Carl Maynard** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Brede Valley**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 756586  
Leader of the Council



**Cllr Martin Mooney** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Rother Levels**  
Conservative, Tel. 01797 253223



**Cllr Paul Osborne** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Eastern Rother**  
Conservative, Tel. 01797 222415



**Cllr Robin Patten** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Marsham**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 812479  
Deputy Leader of the Council



**Cllr Mrs Susan Prochak** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Salehurst**  
Liberal Democrat,  
Tel. 01580 881309



**Cllr Nick Ramus** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Eastern Rother**  
Conservative, Tel. 01797 223088



**Cllr Sam Souster** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Rye**  
Labour, Tel. 01797 224305



**Cllr David Vereker** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Darwell**  
Conservative, Tel. 01435 882621



**Cllr Maurice Watson** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Bexhill Sidley**  
Labour, Tel. 01424 210563



**Cllr Bob White** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Darwell**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 774284



Did you know...

**265,000**

visits to the 1066  
Country website  
in 2011.





**Cllr Mrs Deirdre Williams** —  
**Bexhill Sackville**  
Conservative, Tel. 01424 225386



**Cllr Mrs Frances Winterborn** —  
**Bexhill Old Town**  
Liberal Democrat,  
Tel. 01424 819033



**Cllr Stuart Wood** —  
**Bexhill Old Town**  
Liberal Democrat,  
Tel. 01424 222969



Plus 4 Co-opted Members of the Council  
that are Members of the Standards  
Committee

You can write to all Councillors:

c/o The Town Hall,  
Bexhill,  
TN31 3JX  
or [chiefexec@rother.gov.uk](mailto:chiefexec@rother.gov.uk)

All councillors can be contacted by email  
using a standard format –

[cllr.firstname.lastname@rother.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.firstname.lastname@rother.gov.uk)

Did you know...

**1,058**

licences issued  
in 2011 for taxis,  
events, gambling  
& street trading.





## Officers

Rother District Council  
Town Hall  
Bexhill on Sea  
TN39 3JX

**Telephone 01424 787000**

**Fax 01424 787879**

### Chief Executive: Derek Stevens

Tel. 01424 787801  
Fax 01424 787879  
Email: [chiefexec@rother.gov.uk](mailto:chiefexec@rother.gov.uk)

### Head of Policy & Partnerships:

#### Brenda Mason

Tel. 01424 787860  
Fax 01424 787807  
Email: [policy.performance@rother.gov.uk](mailto:policy.performance@rother.gov.uk)

Communication, community planning, community safety, consultation/research & citizens panel, emergency planning/civil contingency, equality and diversity, performance management framework.

### Director of Services: Anthony Leonard

Tel. 01424 787510 Fax 01424 787520  
Email: [directorofservices@rother.gov.uk](mailto:directorofservices@rother.gov.uk)

### Head of Amenities: Kim Ross

Tel. 01424 787500 Fax 01424 787520  
Email: [amenities@rother.gov.uk](mailto:amenities@rother.gov.uk)

Abandoned vehicles, allotments, arts development, beach & seafront, building maintenance, car parks, engineering works, museums, parks & open spaces, public conveniences, sport & recreation facilities, sports development, recycling, street cleaning, waste collection.

### Head of Environmental Health:

#### Richard Parker-Harding

Tel. 01424 787550 Fax 01424 787547  
Email: [envhealth@rother.gov.uk](mailto:envhealth@rother.gov.uk)

Air quality reviews, alcohol licensing, animal welfare, anti-social behaviour, contaminated land, dog control, entertainment licensing, environmental permits, food safety, gambling licensing, gypsies and travellers, health & safety at work, health improvement and protection, infectious disease control, noise, pest control, private water supplies, public health, pollution, safety at public events, street trading, taxis.

### Head of Planning: Tim Hickling

Tel. 01424 787600 Fax 01424 787627  
Email: [planning@rother.gov.uk](mailto:planning@rother.gov.uk)

Advertisements, building control, conservation, development management, environmental policy, environmental enforcement, land charges & searches, listed buildings, planning applications and enforcement, Rother Development Framework (including Local Plan), tree preservation.

### Head of Regeneration & Estates:

#### Graham Burgess

Tel. 01424 787833 Fax 01424 787879  
Email: [economic@rother.gov.uk](mailto:economic@rother.gov.uk)

Estates and asset management, regeneration and economic development, tourism.

### Did you know...

**316,263**  
visits in 2011 to  
our website  
[www.rother.gov.uk](http://www.rother.gov.uk)



### Director of Resources: Malcolm Johnston

Tel. 01424 787703 Fax 01424 787710  
Email: [directorofresources@rother.gov.uk](mailto:directorofresources@rother.gov.uk)

### Head of Corporate Services:

#### Suzanne Collins

Tel. 01424 787716 Fax 01424 787879  
Email: [customerservices@rother.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@rother.gov.uk)

Councillors & committees, complaints, customer service, customer help points at Bexhill, Battle & Rye, Contact Centre, elections, internal audit services, legal services, facilities management.

### Head of Finance: Robin Vennard

Tel. 01424 787711 Fax 01424 787710  
Email: [finance@rother.gov.uk](mailto:finance@rother.gov.uk)

Council tax, housing & council tax benefits, insurance, financial services, NNDR (business rates), payments, payroll, procurement, treasury services.

### Head of Housing: Anne Fennessy

Tel. 01424 787596 Fax 01424 787520  
Email: [housing@rother.gov.uk](mailto:housing@rother.gov.uk)

Abandoned & derelict empty homes, affordable housing development, disabled facilities grants, fire safety & safe means of escape, HMO licensing, housing register, nominations, options, advice and homelessness prevention, housing strategy & policy, joint working as part of East Sussex Housing Officers Group, landlord link scheme, mortgage rescue, private sector housing standards, private sector tenant complaints, Strategic Forum commissioning for Supporting People with ESCC.

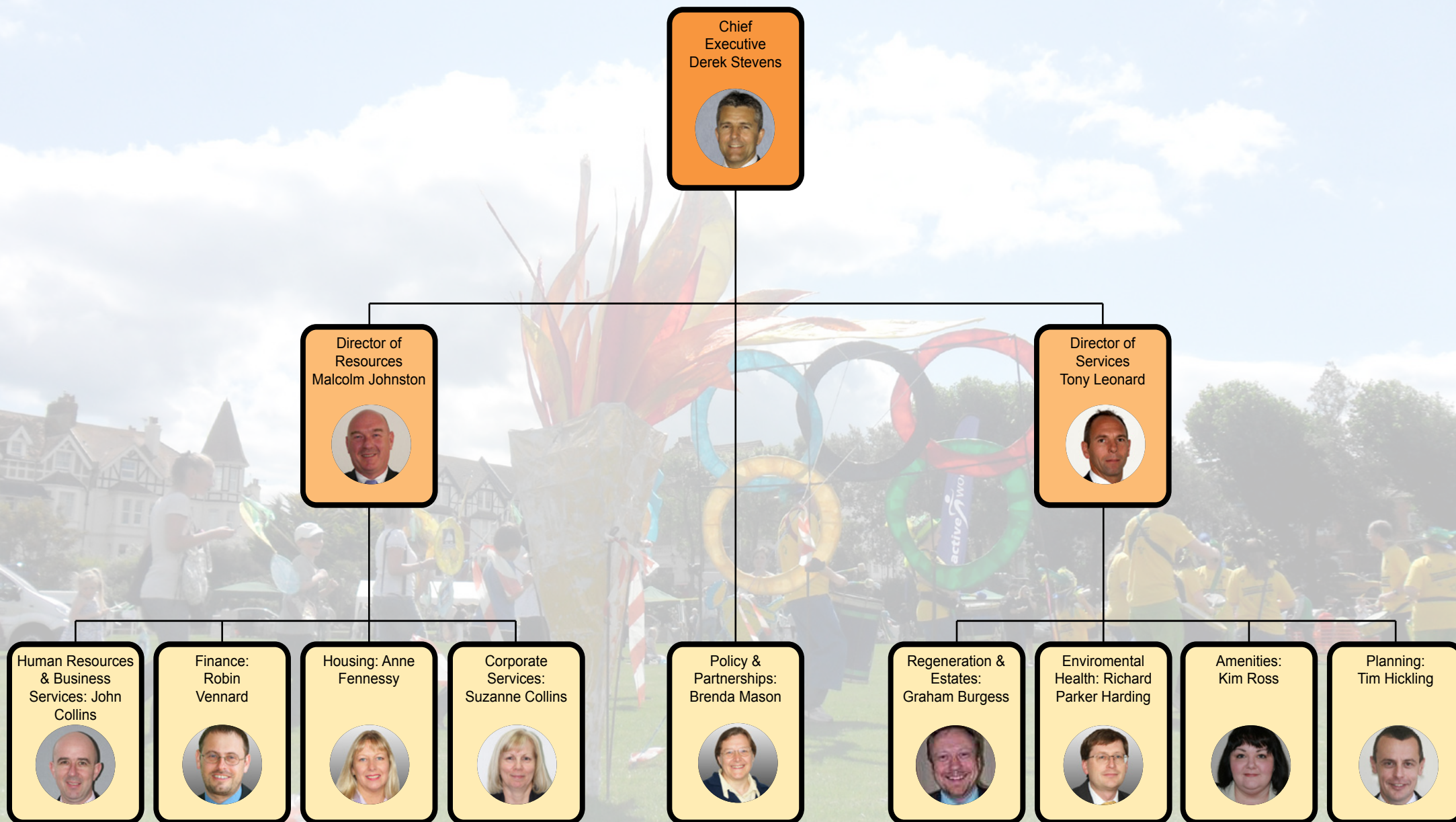
### Head of Human Resources & Business Services: John Collins

Tel. 01424 787704 Fax 01424 787710  
Email: [hr@rother.gov.uk](mailto:hr@rother.gov.uk), [technology@rother.gov.uk](mailto:technology@rother.gov.uk)  
Internal health & safety, information technology, printing & reprographics, recruitment, training, workforce planning.

## Annual Report and Performance Plan 2012



# Senior Officer Structure 2012



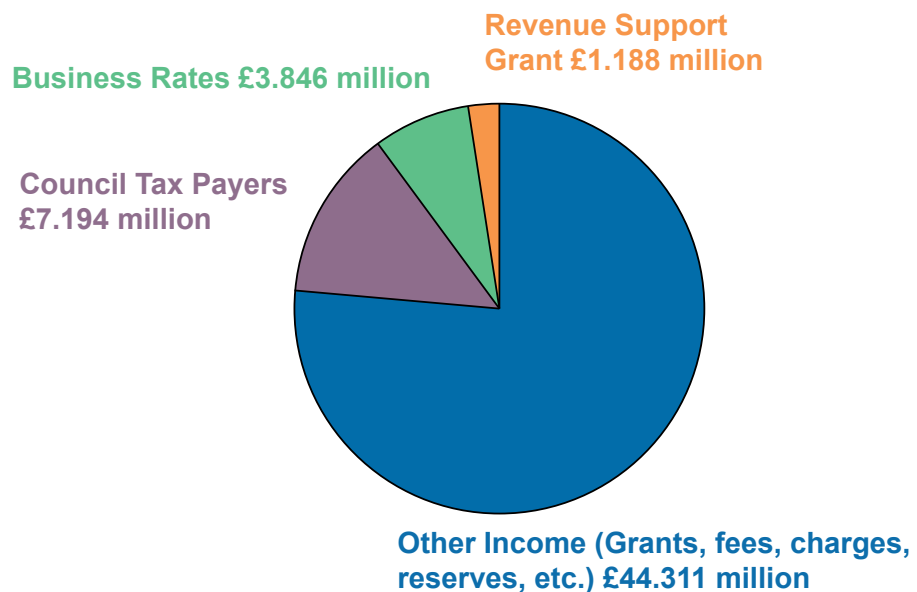


## Who funds us?

Rother's portion of the total Council Tax for 2012 for a Band D Property is £161.19 - £16.12 a month. The Council Tax has been frozen for the last two years and is at the same rate as in 2010.



## Gross Income



Improved boating lake, Egerton Park, Bexhill



## Spending on Services

### Net Revenue Budget Summary

	2011/12	2012/13		
<b>Service</b>	<b>Net Original Budget £</b>	<b>Gross Expenditure £</b>	<b>Income £</b>	<b>Net Operational Expenditure £</b>
<b>Central Services to the Public:</b> council tax collection & benefits, elections, emergency planning, support grants, etc.	608,580	9,591,000	9,178,950	412,050
<b>Corporate and Democratic Core:</b> committee services, community help points, contact centre, policy & partnerships.	2,798,550	2,721,730	314,670	2,407,060
<b>Cultural and Related Services:</b> arts, sports, museums, allotments, beaches, leisure centres, parks & open spaces, tourism.	2,828,590	3,027,340	168,860	2,858,480
<b>Environmental Services:</b> cemeteries, coast protection, environmental health services, public conveniences, community safety, street cleansing, refuse collection.	4,690,350	6,031,680	1,341,990	4,689,690
<b>Planning and Development:</b> planning & regeneration services	1,379,690	2,683,920	1,333,180	1,350,740
<b>Highways and Transportation:</b> car parks	(615,670)	502,370	1,225,320	(722,950)
<b>Housing:</b> housing service & housing benefits	502,610	31,600,130	31,068,300	531,830
<b>Other Operating Income and Expenditure:</b> land and buildings	(3,229,840)	282,760	2,801,820	(2,519,060)
<b>Support Services:</b> legal, finance, human resources, corporate resources, etc.	3,264,880	3,157,730	96,770	3,060,960
Add: Council Tax Freeze Grant Contingency Items New Homes Bonus (net)	<b>12,227,740</b>	<b>59,598,660</b>	<b>47,529,860</b>	<b>12,068,800</b>
		26,000	178,000 66,050 328,010	(178,000) (40,050) (328,010)
<b>Net Revenue Budget</b>	<b>12,227,740</b>	<b>59,624,660</b>	<b>48,101,920</b>	<b>11,522,740</b>

## Our Staff

Rother District Council had 238 full time equivalent employees at the end of March 2012, providing over 50 different services. This is a ratio of 2.6 staff for every 1000 residents. Compared to other councils this is very low number of employees.

- 60% employees are female and 40% are male.
- 68% work full time and 32% work part time.
- The average age of staff is 44 years.
- 3% of employees are disabled or have a limiting long term illness, compared to the 11% of the working age population of Rother that has a disability (source: 2001 Census, ONS).
- 1.1% employees are from black and ethnic minority groups compared to the 1% of the working age population of Rother who are from an ethnic minority (source: 2001 Census, ONS).

Rother District Council has Investors in People status, which was renewed during 2011. The Investors in People standard is an improvement tool designed to advance an organisation's performance through its people. The Council is committed to having well trained and developed staff because they are more able to deliver good quality services.

Every year in February we get together with all staff to talk about the achievements of the past year, our future direction and any new challenges for the coming year. We have an internal staff magazine that is distributed electronically. Well informed and motivated staff are better able to deliver the Council's objectives.





# Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

## Recycling from our Offices



All of these types of recycling are collected by staff at our offices.

## Environment Champions

In 2009 we set up an officer group to take a lead on environmental matters, researching new ways to reduce the Council's carbon emissions. Reducing our carbon emissions means we're using less energy and reducing our costs. This helps the environment and gives tax payers better value for money. The Council's Environment Policy (adopted April 2010) assigned the group with a number of actions to improve the Council's performance. The Environment Champions support a range of projects that reduce the Council's footprint with either project delivery, advice, support or communication and education programmes.

## 2011 Achievements

- Education campaigns to encourage staff to reduce energy use.
- Installation of a new lighting scheme and lowered ceilings throughout the main offices in order to reduce the cost of lighting and heating.
- Re-wiring to increase energy efficiency.
- Removing kettles from individual offices and kitchen areas and replacing them with hot water boilers at dispensing points, which reduces electricity and water use.
- 2 more energy efficient heating systems in attic offices, including replacing a set of storage heaters with a boiler and radiators.

- Providing an informal recycling twin-bin system to help staff to recycle more materials from offices and kitchen areas.
- Reducing the number of litter bins in offices to encourage recycling.
- Staff took part in the Cycling to Work project, with lower costs to buy a bike, with the added improvement for their health.

## 2012 Plans

During 2012 the Environment Champions will support the following projects to reduce carbon emissions, cut energy usage and save money.

- Re-roofing the town hall, installing better insulation and reducing the costs of leaks and loss of heating.
- Server virtualisation and optimisation (making better use of our computer servers) to reduce electricity use and costs for both servers and the air conditioning they need to operate efficiently.
- Continuing education campaigns with staff, including supporting them to re-use or recycle more materials.
- Write an internal energy savings strategy.

## Did you know...

**9,500**  
tonnes of  
compostable  
green waste  
collected in 2011.



## Key to Corporate Priority Programme Projects:

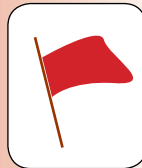
*Achieved* = an achieved output, already delivered.

*Under Way* = an output where work has started but is not completed.

### Status of the Project at 31 March 2012

#### Red flag

status of the project is at risk of not delivering against plan



#### Amber flag

slightly at risk of not delivering against plan



#### Green flag

on target for delivery



Did you know...

**20,289**

new and existing benefit claims processed in 2011.



Did you know...

**1,483**

statutory environmental health inspections completed in 2011





# Putting Customers First

Our Council is committed to making Rother a better place to live, to work in and to visit. Within our available resources we, as a Council, aim to provide all of our customers the best possible service, in line with our Customers First commitment.

## ***Some Achievements in 2011***

### **Making sure local people have their say**

#### **Consulting Young People and Their Parents on Play Equipment**

Children were asked what they think of new play equipment selected for Egerton Park, Bexhill through an online survey. The park's play area is due to undergo a major makeover during 2012. Rother District Council consulted with local children about the kind of equipment they would like to see included.

Equipment was chosen based on the types of play experiences that local children said they would like, including a zip-wire, basket swing and climbing equipment. Then the Council consulted a second time with children and their parents to help finalise the choices. The park is due to open August 2012.

#### **Consulting Local Residents on the Budget and Council Tax for 2012**

The Council consulted local residents on the options it faced regarding the Council Tax and whether or not to take a Government grant and freeze Council Tax or to put up the Council Tax by a small amount in 2012. Consultation was carried out with a combination of media releases, online discussions and focus groups with residents held in Bexhill and Rye.

#### **Bexhill Town Centre Consultations**

We carried out a wide range of consultation with local residents on the future of Bexhill's town centre. This included sending all

colonnade, Bexhill, after refurbishment



Rother residents a survey through our residents' magazine Rother Views, interviewing 200 young people aged 16-20 who use the town centre, holding two meetings with local teenagers from Bexhill High School, holding workshops, meetings with local businesses and traders in the town centre and more. All of the responses informed the work of the Bexhill Town Centre Working Group and contributed to writing a strategy for the town centre's future.

### High level of customer satisfaction with the Housing Service

When surveyed, 93% of our Housing Service customers are satisfied with the service that they received from our staff.

### Consulting on the spatial plan for Rother

Local residents, business and organisations were extensively consulted on the Core Strategy for the Local Development Framework. This plan sets out the future developments in Rother. It includes plans for putting in new homes, areas for business and similar developments. This enabled the Council to publish a revised Strategy.

### Better access to our services

#### Paperless Direct Debit

We introduced paperless direct debit for customers so that they can set up paying their Council Tax bills and business rates over the telephone.

### Actions for 2012

#### Making sure local people have their say:

- The Council's Bexhill Town Centre Steering Group will continue to look at how Bexhill town centre can meet its challenges in the years ahead. Following research and consultation with residents, visitors, customers and businesses the group will prepare and consult on a long-term strategy.

- Consulting local people on the budget and Council Tax for 2013.
- Talking to customers who use our services.

#### Better access to services:

- **Online applications and other self-service measures** for the Housing Register, giving staff more time to help the most vulnerable customers and provide a faster service for everyone.
- **Introduction of pre-application planning advice** as a paid-for service to new improved standards of service that could combine advice and guidance from across the range of relevant Council services, with the long term aim to develop better quality applications and sites.
- **On-line planning enforcement** complaints facility that gives more access for district and parish councillors with the intention of reducing duplication of effort and keeping them better informed to help their residents.
- **More payments on-line** for our services, including car park fines, bulky waste, planning applications and so on.
- **We will develop texting as an alternative access** channel to our services so that our customers can contact us and use our services in the way they are most comfortable.

#### Did you know...

**24,879**

visitors to our  
Customer Help  
Points in Battle,  
Bexhill & Rye,  
in 2011.





- **Online benefit applications will start in 2012**, providing more access for our customers and releasing resources to help vulnerable customers.

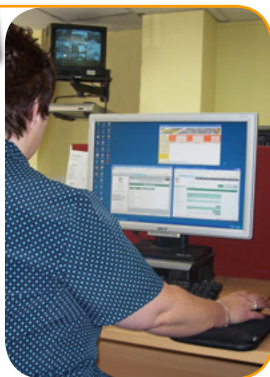
#### Making sure our customers get the services that they need:

- **Older People Benefits Take Up project:** working with multiple agencies to make sure vulnerable older people get the benefits they need.
- **Working with small businesses** to increase take-up on the reliefs they can claim on their business rates (non-domestic rates).
- **A new service for private sector landlords**, on a scale of charges, to support them taking on client families that are at risk of homelessness, including rent and repairs protection.
- **Police and Crime Commissioner election** on 15 November 2012.

Did you know...

**88,271**

telephone calls answered by our Contact Centre in 2011.



- **A three-year contract with Tourism South East** to run the district's Tourist Information Centres started 1st April 2012. It includes new information points in businesses in Battle and Bexhill and the existing TIC in Rye. 10 information points will be created in villages. The aim is to help visitors find details of local attractions, events and accommodation, which aims to encourage them to stay longer and spend more in the district.
- **We will prepare a master-plan document for Camber** setting out guidelines for future development and investment in this unique village. Camber enjoys a unique combination of outstanding beach and dunes, surrounded by the special natural environment of the Romney Marsh, Rye Harbour and close to the historic town of Rye.

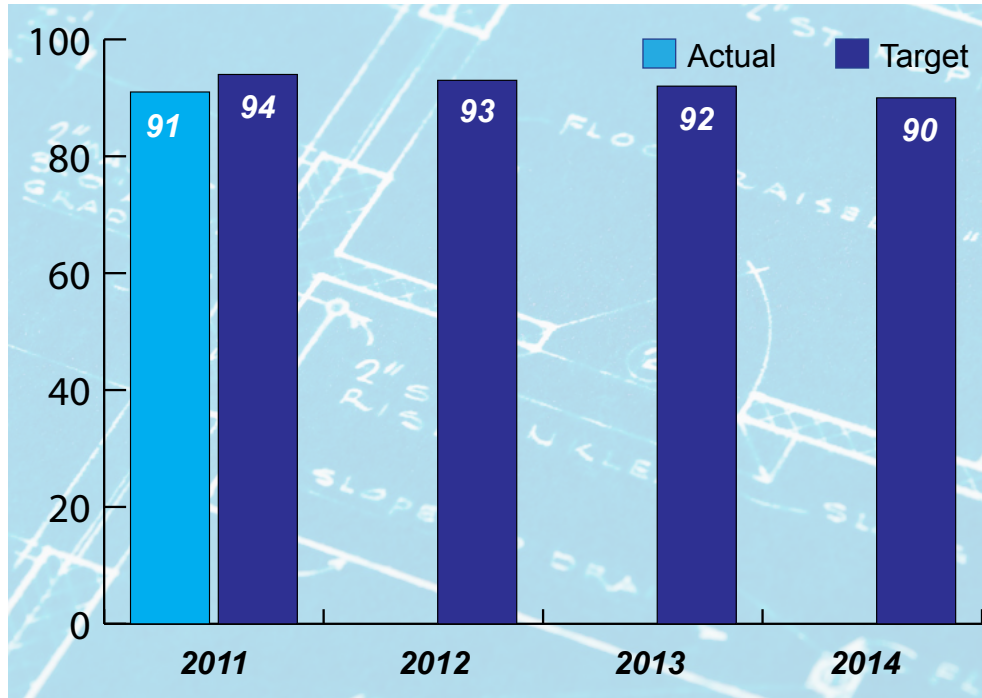
sand dunes, Camber

## How we measure our success

### Days to process planning applications for major developments.

It is the Council's aim to reduce the number of days it takes to process planning applications. The result for 2011 was an average processing time of 91 calendar days. The target for 2012 is to process major development planning applications on average in 93 days or less.

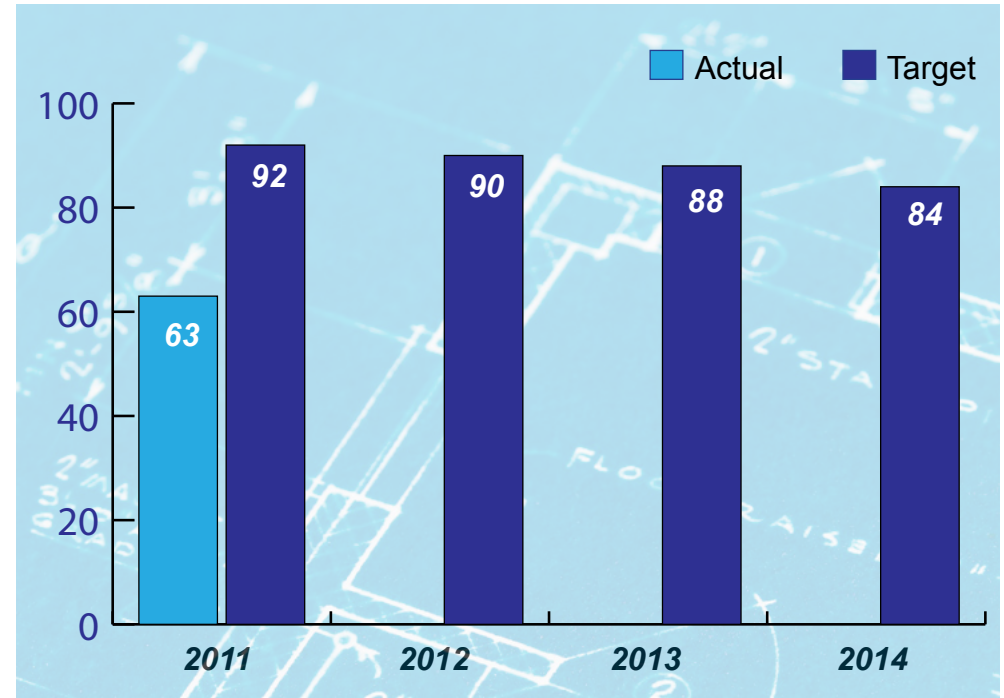
*Major applications: average days to process*



### Days to process planning applications for minor developments.

It is the Council's aim to reduce the number of days it takes to process planning applications. The result for 2011 was an average processing time of 63 calendar days. The target for 2012 is to process minor development planning applications on average by 90 days or less.

*Minor applications: average days to process*

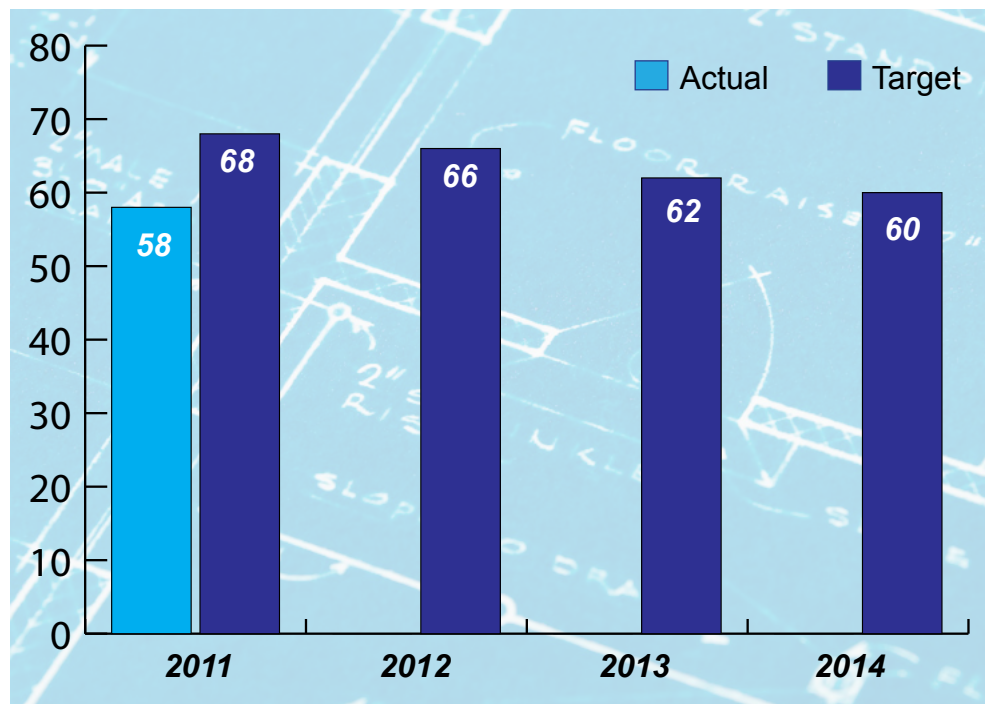




### Days to process all other planning applications.

It is the Council's aim to reduce the number of days it takes to process planning applications. In 2011 the average processing time was 58 days. In 2012 the target is to process all other planning applications on average in 66 days or less.

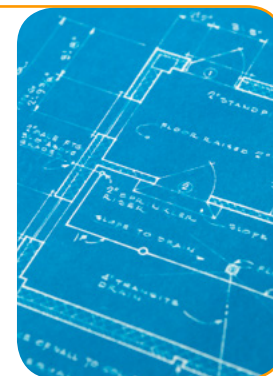
Other applications: average days to process



### Did you know...

# 1510

planning permission applications considered in 2011.



### Did you know...

# 74

formal committee meetings open to the public in 2011.



# Delivering Value for Money

Rother District Council has long been committed to providing excellent value for money to its taxpayers, residents and partners. The Council defines value for money as getting the best and most appropriate outcomes for the community from the range of resources available to us. It is about obtaining the best balance of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. We measure value for money in the broad context of the resident's or user's perspective as well as taking a balanced view across a range of outcomes.

## ***Some Achievements in 2011***

### **Shared Services:**

- Rother District Council and Wealden District Council developed a shared service and shared manager for the internal audit service to improve resilience for both authorities.
- Rother District Council and Hastings Borough Council created a new Building Control partnership. The new partnership will be managed by Rother District Council but the work of the team will continue to cover both districts.

### **Devolved Services:**

- Battle allotments were devolved to Battle Town Council. The intention is to devolve the rest of the allotments in Rother to community groups so that they can be run at a more local level.

### **More efficient services and saving money:**

- In 2011 the Housing Service, handled 20% more homelessness and more grants with the same number of staff.
- The Housing Service, working with local landlords, found new accommodation and put more housing placements into





**Did you know...**

**211**

families we helped prevent becoming homeless in 2011.



**Did you know...**

**326**

premises treated for rats in 2011.



private sector homes. The benefit was saving money on temporary accommodation costs and a faster route into new homes for households at risk of being homeless.

- We merged our planning enforcement and environmental enforcement teams together into one team with one manager. This meant the new, larger team could cover a wider remit with more resources.
- We reduced 17% of our staffing and moved more staff to 'agile' working. This released one of our three office buildings. We leased out that building, which reduced our costs and brought in income. Agile working is where staff can work at shared or 'hot' desks, at home or in other locations around the district. This new way of working for some of our staff was launched with briefings, discussions, demonstrations, open office events and videos.

***More effective services***

**Film Licensing**

The Council receives income from film and TV production companies wanting to carry out filming on the Council's land. Much of this comes from Camber Sands, which is a popular location for both filming and photo shoots. In order to reduce duplication and increase revenue we are working in collaboration with Hastings Borough Council to promote Rother as a filming location, in particular in areas other than Camber; both to provide income but also because this helps support the local economy.

**Stopping Benefit Cheats**

The following benefit cheats were taken to court by the Council's Benefit Fraud Squad

- A woman was overpaid almost £3,000 after making a false statement about her employment status
- A benefit cheat, who was overpaid £13,000 by failing to mention he had married and his wife was living with him. He was

caught thanks to an anonymous tip-off. There were seven separate opportunities for him to tell the Council that his circumstances had changed.

### Reducing Claims for Council Tax Reductions

Councils across East Sussex joined forces to review how many people may be wrongly claiming a discount on their Council Tax. This will help keep Council Tax as low as possible for all Council Tax payers. The partnership review will examine who is claiming the Single Person Discount (SPD), which entitles claimants to a 25% reduction in their Council Tax, and alert those who are not entitled to it. Similar reviews carried out elsewhere in the UK have generated a 5% reduction in the number of ineligible SPD claims. In all of East Sussex this could lead to an additional £1.6m in Council Tax payments. The partnership is made up of East Sussex County Council, Lewes District Council, Wealden District Council, Rother District Council, Hastings Borough Council and Eastbourne Borough Council. For an average Band D property, those claiming the Single Person Discount pay around £400 less a year.

### Developing the Skills of Our Councillors

Rother is one of only two district Councils in the South East to be granted an award for its efforts in developing the skills of councillors. The authority was re-accredited with the South East Employer's (SEE) Charter for Elected Member Development. The charter provides a framework to ensure that the Council enhances and enables member development.

### *Actions for 2012*

#### Reducing costs, shared and devolved services

- Finalise the move to a shared Legal Service with Wealden District Council.
- Develop a shared Environmental Health service with Wealden District Council.

- Move to a new, joint waste collection contract with most of the other East Sussex local authorities

#### More efficient services:

- **Asset Management Plan Review:** Over 2012 we review our Asset Management Plan, which sets out how the Council will use its land and property assets to deliver our corporate objectives. This will include looking at managing, letting, acquiring and disposing of land and property as well as looking for opportunities to work with partners.
- **Reducing postage and stationary** used in our Revenues service through the virtual mailroom project.
- **Developing our local Council Tax reduction scheme**, as a replacement to Council Tax benefit.
- **Increase and change use of planning software** that will free up staff to do pre-application advice and processing work.
- **Joint working between Housing and Amicus Horizon staff**, a local housing association, including sharing work spaces, in order to align their work and be more effective.
- **Invest in the knowledge, skills and ability of our staff** by introducing the use of the Learning Pool. This on-line training facility makes efficient use of time taken for training, helps create new training courses and shares best practice from other organisations in the Pool.

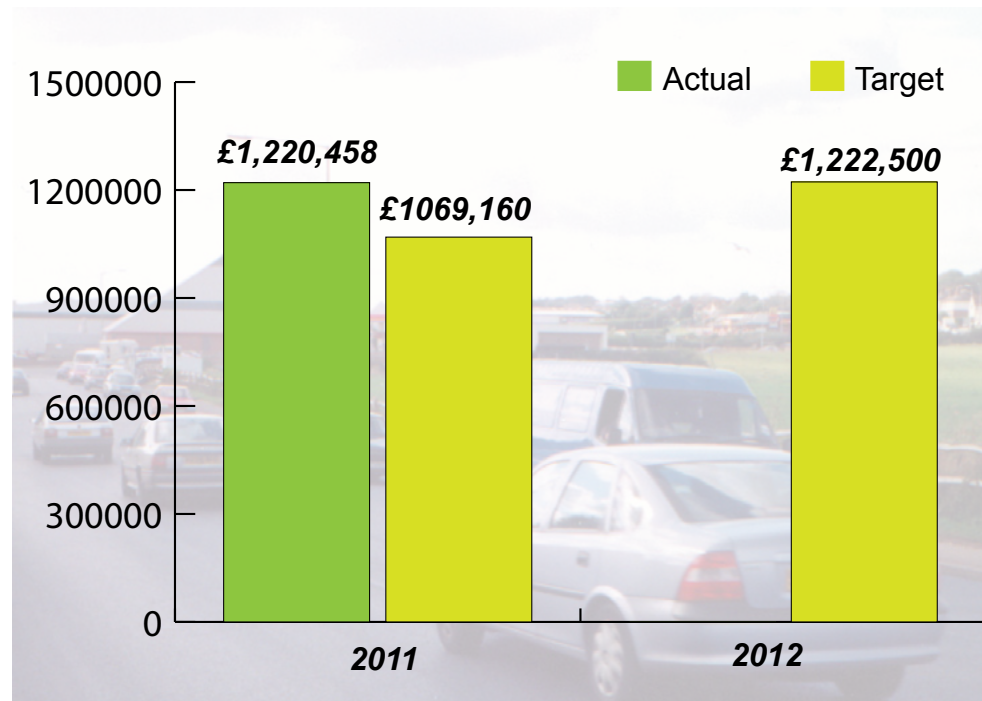


## How we measure our success:

### How much income do we get from car parking?

Car parking income is an important source of income to the Council, contributing to the funding of both providing car parks and other services that the Council provides. The Council aims to increase its income in 2012 by 14% of the 2011 target budget. The income in 2011 was £1,220,458, which is an increase on the anticipated budget. The target for 2012 is £1,222,500.

*Car parking income*



### Did you know...

7

legal actions  
were taken for  
noise complaints  
in 2011.



### Did you know...

43,898

Council Tax  
bills issued  
in 2011.



# Building Stronger Safer Communities

As community leaders we place considerable importance on our part in creating stronger, safer communities in the District.

The Council has recognised the importance of the provision of quality, affordable housing in all tenures and the role this plays in creating sustainable, thriving communities. We aim to address town centre vitality, rural isolation, improve public spaces and foster an environment that will grow businesses, especially in high technology and tourism.

We wish to improve the capacity of local communities to help themselves. We wish to maintain the overall attractiveness of the area; carefully manage our environmental resources and the distinctive and diverse local characteristics. We are committed to working with local communities to reduce crime, increase reassurance and to tackle the underlying causes of crime. We wish to ensure Rother continues to be a sustainable place to live, work and visit with the best possible quality of life.

## ***Some Achievements in 2011***

### ***'Next Wave' Regeneration of Bexhill's Seafront***

All the main changes to the seafront were completed by March 2012. The innovative promenade planting scheme had its own guide produced for visitors after the Council was inundated by requests from amateur horticulturists. The grade II listed King George V Colonnade now has a central inside area for a large restaurant and in its wings has seven retail kiosks.

The Colonnade opened its doors for the first time in over a year, following its restoration and extension as part of the project. In December a winter 'pop up' fair and café in the refurbished Colonnade attracted around 4,000 customers and many more visitors. Permanent shops in the kiosks will open in 2012. The new restaurant business will move in during 2012 to commence the fit out.



playground improvements



## Environmental Health Taking Action

These are some of the successful prosecutions that helped to keep Rother clean and green in 2011

- A man was fined £100 and paid legal costs, after pleading guilty to paying two people to dump his rubbish in Rother. Rubble and other rubbish given to passing men in a van were fly-tipped near Hurst Green.
- A complaint about a bad sandwich sparked an investigation that led to a catering company being fined almost £2,000.
- A care home was issued nearly £30,000 in fines because of a rat infestation.
- The former owner of a restaurant was fined over £5,000 after pleading guilty to a rat infestation in the kitchen.
- A restaurant owner was fined almost £30,000 for hygiene offences that included a warm fridge and storing vegetables in a filing cabinet.
- A pub manager, who failed to carry out work to prevent a rodent infestation and meet hygiene standards, was fined over £2,000.
- A shop was closed by the courts after a rat infestation was discovered.
- A garage was fined for nuisance parking following complaints by residents about cars for sale on the public highway causing parking problems and restricting the width of the road.

## Reducing Crime and Anti-social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour was reduced at a Bexhill bus stop, thanks to the installation of a new shelter. The original shelter, on London Road, was subject to regular graffiti and vandal attacks. A Rother District Council funded the replacement, which led to a reduction in incidents.

The Council made full use of the 'Community Payback Scheme' and the result was a cleaner, better-looking district. Community Payback is an unpaid work order by the Courts as a punishment and a way offenders can make amends to the community. Council staff worked with probation service staff to improve the street scene across the district and work included clearing an alley of household rubbish, removing graffiti, removing litter, street cleaning and cutting down weeds.

## Cultural Events in Rother

Over 3,000 revellers enjoyed Bexhill's Party in the Park. The event, organised by Rother District Council's arts development team and supported by the Friends of Egerton Park and Amicus Horizon, formed part of the Cultural Olympiad - a celebration of arts and culture in the build-up to the 2012 London Games. (See front cover).

A project to uncover forgotten stories in the east of Rother 'Not Everyone Rises' uncovered personal tales from the area through oral history workshops. Some of these stories were retold in audio-visual form in public spaces. The project was organised through Rother District Council's arts development team, with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

## Award Winning Building Control

Building control officers bagged an award for their work on a luxury apartment development. Rother's task was to ensure developers creating the flats, opposite the Metropole Lawn on Bexhill's seafront, met the highest standards of safety, sustainability and accessibility. The council officers were winners in the Best Large Housing Development section at the annual LABC South East Building Excellence Awards, for their efforts on 'The Landmark', in Sackville Road, Bexhill. The Awards recognise the importance of building control in creating a high quality, sustainable built environment in England and Wales.

## TV Stars

Our very own environmental crime officers starred in the BBC One documentary 'Filthy, Rotten Scoundrels'. They featured in three programmes during the latest series. It focused on the work the officers did.

## Anti-Hate Crime Training

The Council's Housing Service played a pivotal role in setting up and rolling out training for local public service agencies, including Sussex Police, in identifying and combating hate crimes.

## Bexhill – Hastings Link Road

The Link Road has long been a corporate priority for the Council and we have supported the County Council in lobbying the Government to approve this project. The Council were delighted when the Government confirmed in March 2012 that funding would be available to enable the link road to go ahead. It will open up land for much-needed new housing, employment space and infrastructure.

### Actions for 2012

- **A new Play-zone** and a new refreshment kiosk will be built at Egerton Park, Bexhill. This is the latest project in a number of improvements in play areas throughout the district.
- **Diamond Jubilee:** We will support a range of activities to celebrate Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee from road closures to beacon lighting. We will also offer Diamond Jubilee small grants to help local community groups to celebrate in their own way. The Council put aside £20,000 to help the Rother Community.
- **The Olympic torch** will go through Rother, mainly in Bexhill and Rye. Our staff will be extensively involved in planning for public safety. We will also be supporting a number of events in the Cultural Olympiad.
- **The initial planning work on the North East Bexhill developments** will start as the Bexhill-Hastings link road is constructed at the end of 2012.

- **Work in partnership with parish and town councils** to find more rural exception sites in villages with the aim to put in new affordable housing for local people. This project will reduce the number of local rural families living in unsuitable housing and often at risk of leaving their community.

## Corporate Priority Programme

Projects in the Corporate Priority Programme are designed to deliver the vision, aims and objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

### Rural Exception Site Development (EP14)



#### Objective

To improve the process for identifying rural housing development opportunities.

#### Outputs

1. Systems for identification of exception sites (an exception site is land located outside a permitted development boundary in rural towns and villages). *Achieved*
2. Delivery of average five new homes a year on exception sites in rural villages in order to reduce the number of rural households living in housing need. *Under way*

#### Achievements in 2011

Staplecross (Ewhurst Parish) exception site successfully negotiated and builders are on site.

#### Milestones for 2012

At least one negotiated exception site.



## Bexhill Seafront Improvements (Next Wave) (EP43)



### Objective

To make improvements to the seafront to encourage more use by visitors and residents.

### Outputs

1. West Parade designs, Colonnade and Marina Arcade feasibility studies. *Achieved*
2. Improved hard and soft landscaping at Bexhill seafront. *Achieved*
3. Improved or enhanced public art.
4. Refurbishment or re-development of the Colonnade. *Achieved*
5. Re-design and upgrade of the Marina Arcade public realm.
6. Potential refurbishment and development of Marina Arcade area.

### Achievements in 2011

- Completion of the Colonnade, lawns, water feature.
- Pop up fair in the Colonnade over the Christmas period.

### Milestones for 2012

- Snagging completed and project signed off.

## Egerton Park Innovation and Conservation (EPIC) EP42



### Objective

To revitalise and renovate Egerton Park, Bexhill.

### Outputs

1. Further report to Cabinet. *Achieved*
2. Bid for partnership funding from Heritage Lottery Fund (Stage 1 and 2) and other grant funders. *Achieved*

3. A revitalised and renovated park creating a key public facility in Bexhill. *Under way*

### Achievements in 2011

- Finalised design for new refreshment kiosk.
- Obtained planning permission for new refreshment kiosk.
- Awarded contract for construction of refreshment kiosk, construction started at the end of February 2012.
- Play-zone design was finalised, after public consultation.
- Contract was awarded for the implementation of the Play-zone.
- Phase 2 of the enhancement of the surrounds to the boating lake are underway.

### Milestones for 2012

- Play-zone built and open to the public.
- Refreshment kiosk constructed.
- Selected a kiosk operator and the kiosk is open for sales.
- Completion of the Play-zone's soft landscaping.

### Did you know...

# 184,775

visitor enquiries  
in Rother's Tourist  
Information  
Centres in 2011.



## How we measure our success

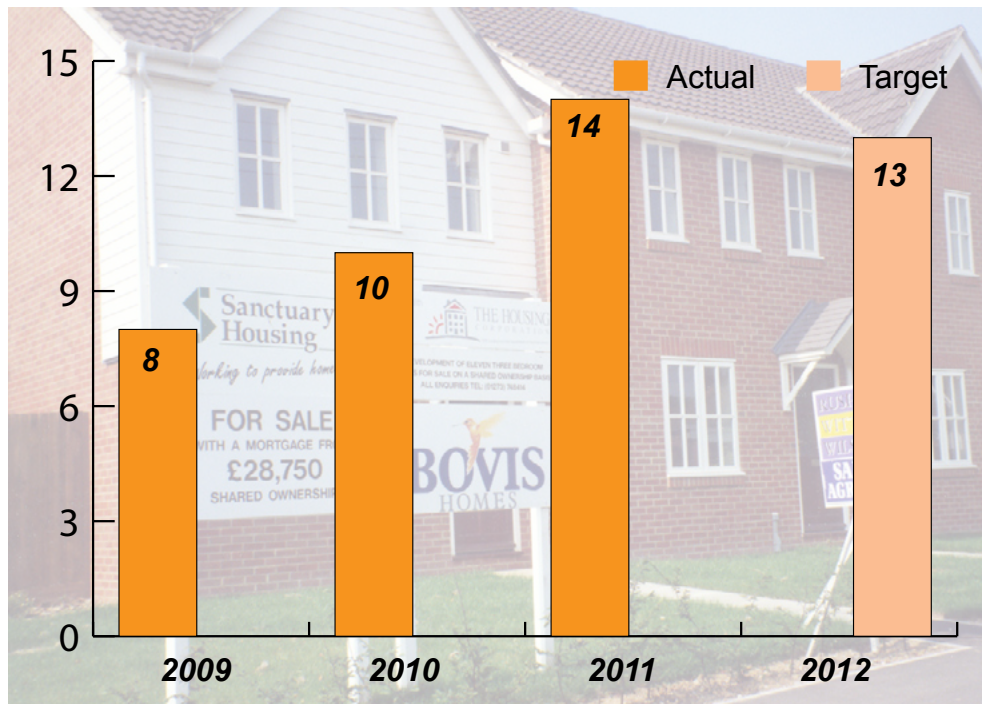
### Homeless households in temporary accommodation

We are monitoring this indicator to make sure we have enough temporary accommodation, to show the trends in increased homelessness caseload and to discover if our projects provide more affordable housing in all sectors and whether they are having any impact on homelessness.

On average, we had 14 homes in temporary accommodation at the end of each month during 2011. This measure continues to rise year on year.

The target in 2012 is 13.

*Households in temporary accommodation*



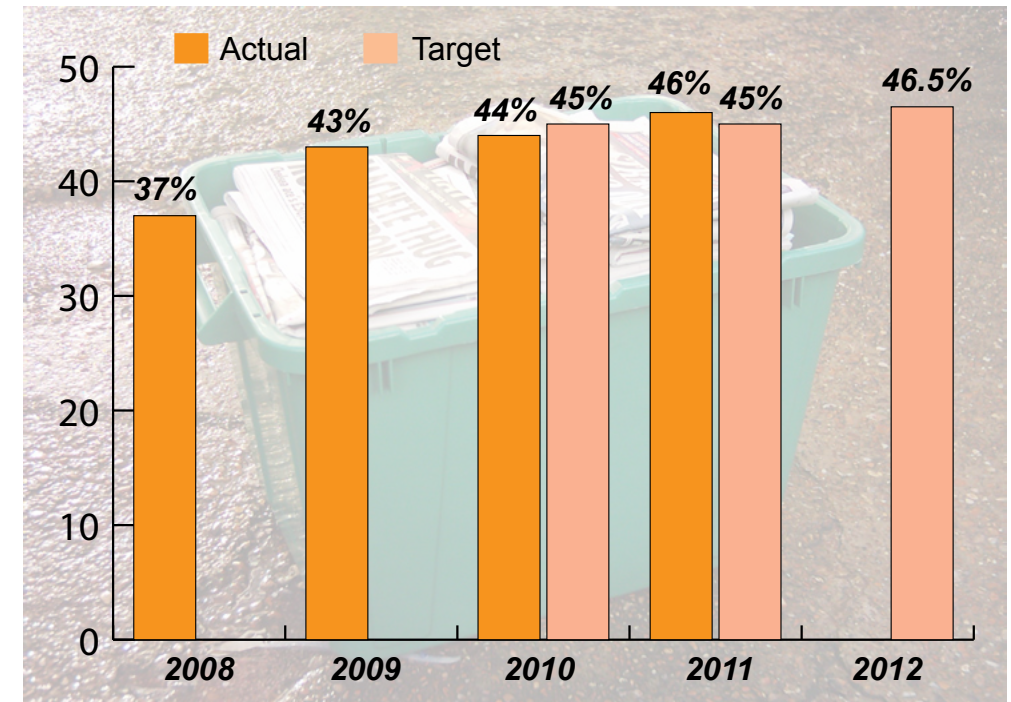
### Household waste sent for re-use or recycling or composting

The Council's goal is to get to 50% of collected rubbish going to re-use, recycling or composting instead of other disposal methods. The target for 2011 was 45% and the result was 46%.

Collecting cardboard was added in January 2011 and waste electrical and electric equipment collection points were added around Rother. This was a factor in better collection rates.

The target for 2012 is 46.5%.

*Recycled / composted waste*





# Working in Partnership

We know that achieving our organisational goals will depend on working in partnership with an appropriate, well-defined range of organisations. The Council wishes to be a well-respected, contributing partner working in effective partnerships that help deliver our aims and objectives.

## **Some Achievements in 2011**

### **Bexhill Town Centre Moving Forward in Partnership**

As part of our work in Bexhill town centre we held a series of workshops with retailers to share the findings of our research and to see how we can work together to bring about positive change. Following this engagement, some of the businesses decided to form a Bexhill Traders' Group to promote the town and its businesses. With our continued support, the group successfully ran a series of events to promote the town over Christmas and have submitted a bid for funding through the Government's 'Portas Pilots' scheme.

### **Partner's Forum on the Future of Rother**

What should Rother look like in ten years' time? That was the question posed to the audience at a 'Partners Forum' held at Bexhill High School. It was a discussion designed to influence decisions behind Rother District Council's long-term strategy. The Council's 10 year corporate plan is being reviewed and the authority used the evening to discuss with its partners how future policies should be developed and to agree the key challenges facing the district.

### **Sea Angling**

Sea angling could become an even bigger tourism draw in Rother after local anglers and the Council are working on a new fishing festival and a voluntary code of conduct for angling.



partnership tour of Camber

Rother District Council talked to local anglers and businesses and decided on a new code to ensure all beach users could enjoy the sea all-year round, rather than amend byelaws. This spirit of cooperation led to the two organisations agreeing to create the first Bexhill Sea Fishing Festival in September 2012.

### Promoting the Localism Agenda

New freedoms and flexibilities for local communities were discussed at a series of 'Localism workshops' where over 100 people, representing towns and parishes and community organisations, joined Rother Voluntary Action and Rother District Council to discuss the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. Local organisations could raise with the Council their suggestions for new ways of working and delivering public services.

### Under Occupation of Homes Project

Our Housing Service is working with Amicus Horizon to help private owners, usually older, move into smaller accommodation and release their larger property for a family.

### Battle Multi-use Games Area

Rother District Council worked in partnership with Battle Town Council to provide new leisure facilities at the playgrounds in Battle. Rother District Council paid 50% of costs that provided an area for five a side football, basketball and other activities. The games area added to a new play park and car parking area, recently built in the same recreation ground, which were also supported by this Council.

### Actions for 2012

- **The Council is supporting** a partnership of local businesses, clubs and supporters for the first ever Sea Angling Festival in Bexhill in September 2012.
- **Heart of Sidley Big Local:** we will work with other public agencies to support local Sidley residents to set up a new local partnership that will lead the neighbourhood in benefiting from £1

million of Big lottery funding over the next 10 years.

- **Prepare a draft strategy for Bexhill Town Centre** and carry out a public consultation with local businesses, organisations, residents and visitors on the proposals to help inform the final version.

### Corporate Priority Programme

Projects in the Corporate Priority Programme are designed to deliver the vision, aims and objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

### Camber Visitor Management Initiative (EP46)



#### Objective

To secure economic improvements in central Camber.

#### Outputs

Improved facilities at Camber Central Car Park, as a significant contribution to the visitor management initiative.

### Achievements in 2011

- **The Council, working in partnership with the City of Ostend,** has secured funding from the EU programme INTERREG to develop a master-plan to guide future investment in Camber and to help develop walking routes in and around the village. This is part of the '21st Century Parks' project which includes projects in Ostend as well as at Egerton Park in Bexhill. It is a requirement of the funding for cross channel partners to work together and share experience, and this has included a 2 day visit from a delegation from Ostend to share best practice. The visit included a tour of Camber with colleagues from Natural England, Green Space, the Environment Agency, the parish council and the county council.
- **A master-plan** is now being prepared and a public meeting was held in the village hall at the end of March to share the research



findings to date and invite ideas and suggestions from local residents.

- **Demolition of old buildings** to increase car parking spaces in Camber's main car park.

### Actions Planned for 2012

- **The Camber Master-plan** will be published for formal consultation and adopted as a formal planning document.
- **21st Century Parks:** To mark the closure of the 21st Century Parks Project, we will publish a Best Practice Guide and holding an international conference to share the work that has been carried out here in Rother and in Ostend, and to highlight other examples of best practice in integrating the natural and built environment.

### Bexhill Town Centre Redevelopment EP27



#### Objective

To ensure the re-development and expansion of key sites and to provide more off-street parking and improve linkage over the railway.

#### Outputs

1. Bexhill Town Centre Development Brief produced.
2. New food store of approx. 4,000 sq m.
3. New town centre car park.
4. Link over railway to Devonshire Square or Western Road.
5. Provision/safeguarding of jobs.

### Achievements in 2011

**We have undertaken consultation and research** to inform the development of a strategy for Bexhill town centre. This included surveys of residents, customers, young people and people from outside of Bexhill. We also held a series of workshops with local

retailers to explore their perceptions of the town and to see how we might work together to improve it.

### Milestones for 2012

**Prepare a draft Town Centre strategy** for public consultation:

**Support and facilitate the Olympic Torch Relay** which will run through Bexhill on 17th July, and the new Sea Angling Festival that will take place in September.

**A review of our Asset Management Plan** will identify the opportunities to provide for more employment close to the town centre, providing additional footfall and customers for the businesses there.

### Marley Lane Development, Battle EP29



#### Objective

To secure the redevelopment of Marley Lane commercial sites.

#### Outputs

1. Agreed road improvement scheme with statutory bodies. *Achieved*
2. Enabling role in Area Improvement Framework partnership. *Achieved*
3. Funding bids. *Achieved*
4. Road junction improved (A21/Marley Lane). *Achieved*
5. 8100 square metres of commercial space developed.
6. 290 jobs created.

### Achievements in 2011

- **Marley Lane Business Park was sold** with the benefit of the road junction improvement which will allow for the development of further employment space on the site.

## Milestones for 2012

- **Final sign-off of works** by the Highways Agency

## Combe Valley Countryside Park formerly Pebsham Countryside Park (EP40)



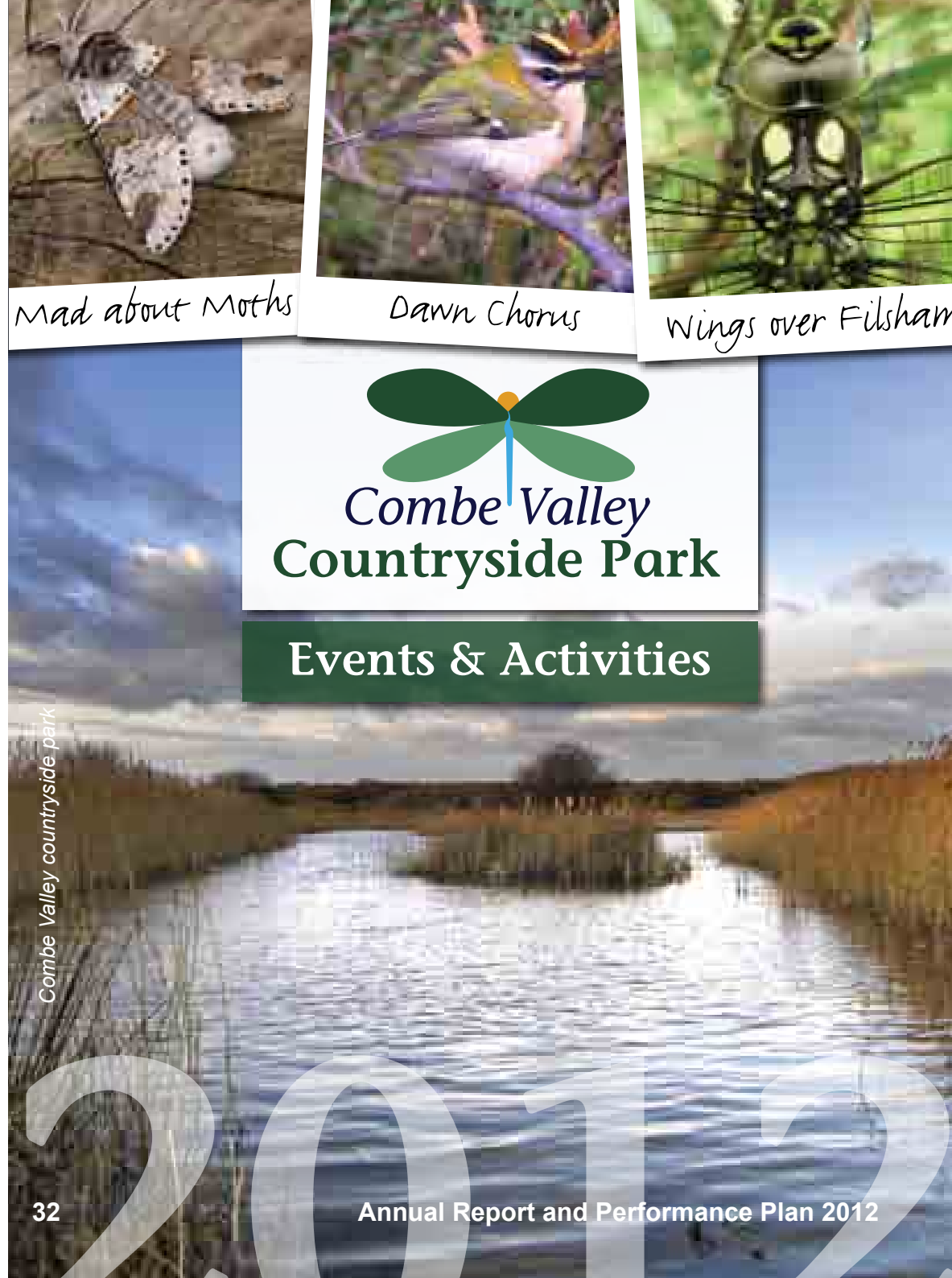
Objective: to create a public open space at Pebsham with nature conservation and recreational areas.

## Outputs

1. Business Plan. *Achieved*
2. Public open space. *Achieved*
3. Amenity open space. *Achieved*
4. Public footpath improvement. *Achieved in part*
5. Nature conservation areas. *Under way*
6. Recreational facilities. *Under way*

## Achievements in 2011

- **Change of name** from Pebsham Countryside Park to Combe Valley Countryside Park with a new logo and website.
- **Original development strategy** and implementation plan from 2008 were revised and a new plan adopted by the Management Board along with the name change.
- **An annual report** on progress published in April 2012 on the website [www.combevalleycountrysidepark.com](http://www.combevalleycountrysidepark.com)
- **A business and landholders stakeholders group** was created and held their first meetings.
- **An extensive events programme** was developed for 2012 by the Community Development Officer and the park was promoted to community groups, youth groups, faith groups, schools and so on to encourage their use.
- **An events programme** was held for 2011.





## Milestones for 2012

- Review projects in Implementation Plan by February 2013
- Review 2012 events programme by November 2012.
- Review of north east Bexhill and Bexhill to Hastings Link road projects for linkage with development in relation to the northern area of the park.

### Did you know...

**70**

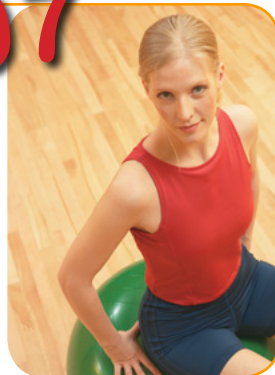
new affordable homes for local residents built in 2011.



### Did you know...

**466,507**

visits to our leisure centres in 2011.

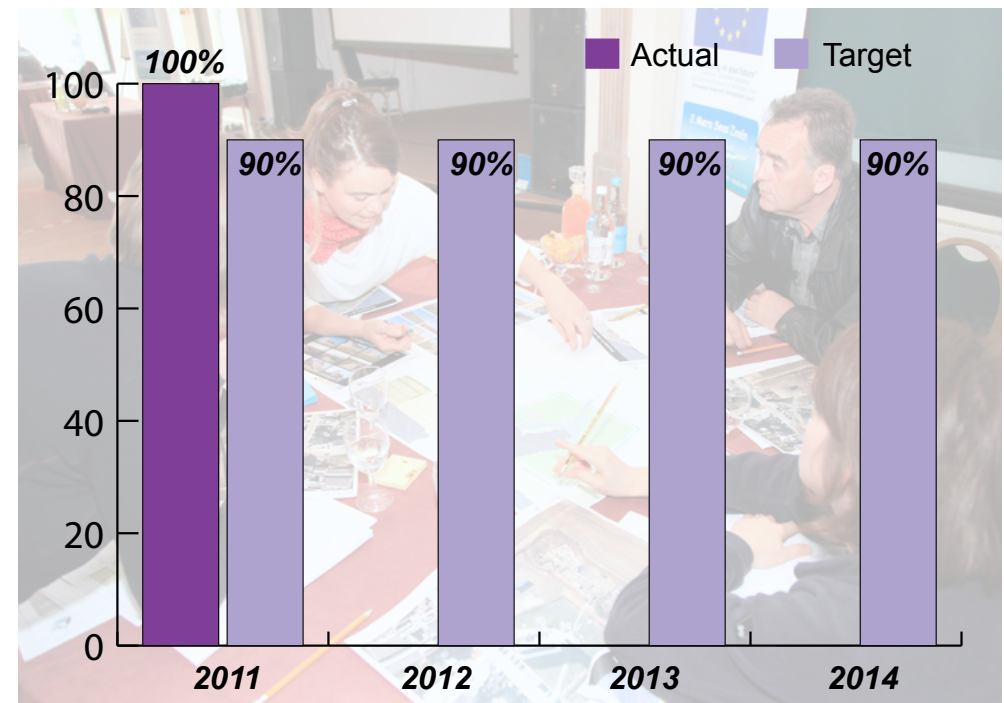


## How We Measure Our Success

### What proportion of our community and voluntary sector agreements are on track?

We have a wide range of service level agreements with the local voluntary sector including organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Rother Voluntary Action and so on. Our agreements set standards and actions and are monitored by designated staff to ensure the Council not only gets value for money but that the required service is provided at the right level for local residents and businesses. The result in 2011 was 100% of agreements on track and the target for 2012 is 90%.

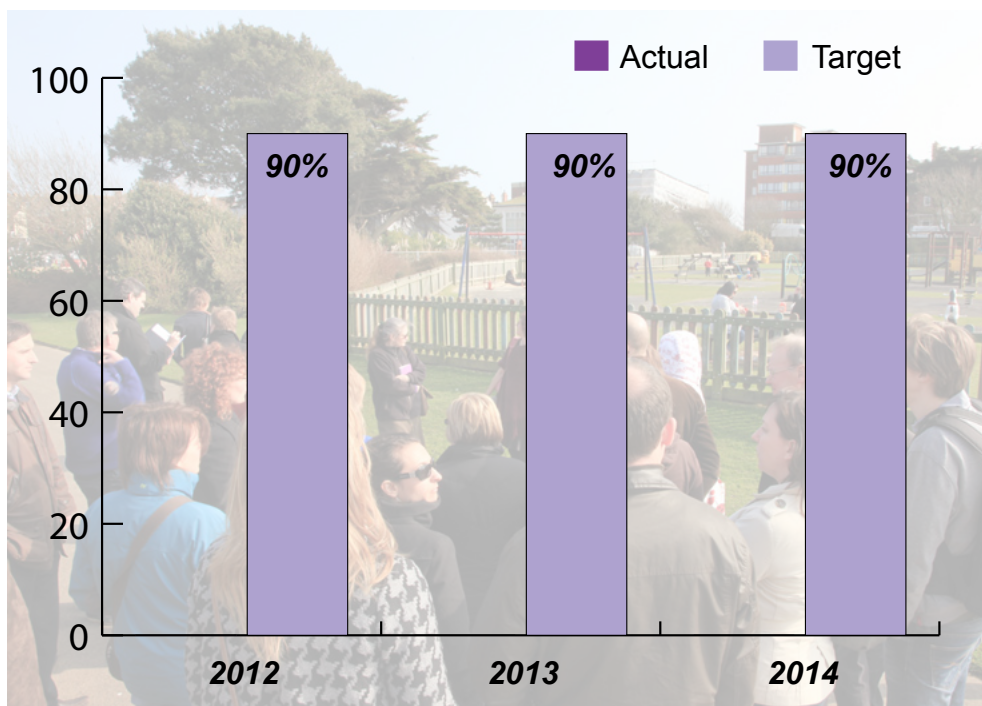
### Agreements on track



## How many of our shared services provided with our partners are on track and achieving their objectives?

We have a number of shared services either in place or starting during 2012. The Council needs to ensure that it continues to get value for money, the customers get a quality service and the service meets the needs and priorities of the organisation and the district. The list of services includes: internal audit, building control, emergency planning, filming licences, benefits fraud, equalities and in 2012 the additions will be legal services and environmental health, waste and recycling and grounds maintenance. The target for 2012 is 90% of services on track.

*Services on track*



### Did you know...

# 39

legal actions  
against premises  
for food hygiene  
violations in 2011.



### Did you know...

# 21

potentially  
contaminated  
land sites  
inspected in 2011.





## Key Plans & Strategies

### Putting Customers First

- Rother District Council Consultation Charter
- Rother Corporate Plan
- Rother District Local Plan and Local Development Framework
- Communications Strategy
- Marketing Plan

### Delivering Value for Money

- Rother Corporate Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- Capital Programme
- Rother's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2010-2015
- Rother Local Plan & Local Development Framework
- Rother District Council's Equality Scheme
- Investors in People Action Plan
- Member Development Charter
- Workforce Plan (under review)
- Business Improvement Strategy

### Building Stronger, Safer Communities

- Rother District Council Housing Strategy
- Homelessness Strategy
- Empty Homes Strategy
- Affordable Warmth Strategy
- Rother Community Plan
- Rother Economic Regeneration Strategy
- East Sussex Economic Development Statement
- Rother District Local Plan and Local Development Framework





- North Bexhill Master Plan
- Blackfriars Master Plan
- East Sussex Safer Communities Plan
- Bexhill and Rother Health Improvement Plan
- Food Safety Enforcement Plan
- Health and Safety Enforcement Plan
- Environmental Health Enforcement Strategy
- East Sussex, Brighton & Hove Waste Plan
- Rother District Council: Towards a Zero Waste Strategy
- Joint Waste Strategy (for all East Sussex collection and disposal authorities)
- Annual Air Quality Review
- Rother District Council's Equality Scheme

### Working in Partnership

- 'Your Culture and Leisure' Strategy
- Rother Tourism Strategy
- Playing Pitch Strategy

In order to obtain a copy of these documents please look on our website: [www.rother.gov.uk](http://www.rother.gov.uk)  
or telephone **01424 787000**  
or email [customerservices@rother.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@rother.gov.uk)



seafrost planting, Bexhill



# Rother District Council Annual Report and Performance Plan 2012

This information can be made available in large print, braille, audio/CD or in another language upon request.

For all enquiries please contact 01424 787000  
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