



Rother District Council

Local Development Framework

Rye and Rye Harbour Study



Part 1 - Main Report

August 2011

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Issues &
Options

Strategy
Directions

Pre - Submission

Adoption

Examination



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Section 1: Introduction

Context and Aim

- 1.1 This paper is to be used as a background paper and will be part of the evidence base to inform Rother District Council's Core Strategy Development Plan Document.
- 1.2 The paper will focus on Rye and contribute towards refining the 'place-shaping' framework for one of Rother's most distinctive settlements. The study will appraise the current policy framework nationally and locally. It will also examine existing evidence collated by Rother District Council will contribute to shaping the policies in the LDF Core Strategy.

Methodology and Rye Working Group

- 1.3 It was decided from the start to involve local representation in the process. An inception meeting was held between Rother District Council (RDC) and Rye Town Council on the 25th August 2010 to discuss further engagement in the planning process. The purpose of the meeting was to:
 1. Review the timetable for the Core Strategy. An opportunity presents itself to engage with the Town Council. It is the intention of RDC to produce a background paper to support the Rye chapter in the Core Strategy.
 2. Review where we are in the process and to make progress with the Core Strategy
 3. Refine the Core Strategy Vision for Rye and reach a consensus on key planning issues.
 4. How can planning influence outcomes? What effective policies can we deliver to help meet aspirations for the communities?
 5. Establish a Rye Town Council working group.
- 1.4 In attendance at the Inception meeting was two planning officers from Rother District Council and a number of Councillors from Rye Town Council. In attendance: Cllrs Frank Palmer (Planning Comm Chairman), John Breeds (Mayor), Lorna Hall (Dep Mayor), Paul Osborne (also Cabinet Member at RDC with LDF portfolio), Jo Kirkham, David Russell (RDC Vice Chair) and Richard Farhall (Town Clerk). From RDC in attendance were: David Marlow (Principal Officer) and Norman Kwan (Planning Strategy Officer).
- 1.5 As a result of the Inception meeting Rye Town Council accepted the invite to engage in the process.

- 1.6 The membership of the Working Group included: Cllrs Frank Palmer (Planning Committee Chairman), John Breeds (Mayor), Lorna Hall (Dep Mayor), Paul Osborne (also Cabinet Member at RDC with LDF portfolio), Richard Farhall (Town Clerk) and Norman Kwan (Planning Strategy officer - RDC). During the series of Workshops the Working Group invited Councillors from adjacent parishes when it was appropriate.

Documents Reviewed

- 1.7 In identifying and appraising the strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour, the following documents have been reviewed:

1. Rother District Local Plan	2. Core Strategy Consultation on Strategy Directions
3. Market Towns and Villages Landscape Assessment August 2009	4. Representations Received on the Core Strategy
5. Rye Conservation Area Character Appraisal	6. Rye Town Council Local Action Plan
7. Hastings and Rother Leisure facilities Strategy 2008	8. Rye Local Area Transport Strategy (LATS)
9. Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study	10. East Sussex Local Transport Plan 3 Jan 2011
11. Rother District Wide Retail Assessment	12. East Sussex Local Transport Plan 2 March 2006
13. Affordable Housing Viability Assessment	14. Hastings and Rother Employment Strategy Review
15. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	16. Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)
17. Urban Options Background Paper	18. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

Structure of the Rye and Rye Harbour Study

- 1.8 Section 1 is the introduction outlining what the study is about. The structure of the study is also explained
- 1.9 Section 2 comprises of a profile of Rye and Rye Harbour.
- 1.10 Section 3 is a Review of Literature and the Evidence Base including County and District wide strategies, representations to the Core Strategy Strategy

Rye and Rye Harbour Study

Directions, the Local Plan and the Local Development Framework evidence base. A SWOT analysis was carried out with the Working Group and looks at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Rye and Rye Harbour in consultation with Rye Working Group. It examines in more detail some of the key issues facing the town following the Workshops.

- 1.11 Section 4 is a summary of the Workshops and the key issues coming out of the session.
- 1.12 Section 5 examines the current evidence for traffic management in the town.
- 1.13 Section 6 looks at the issues surrounding local employment and the economy. Rye is a predominantly tourist town but there are some pockets of social inequalities in the town.
- 1.14 Section 7 reviews the issues brought up from the third workshop and involved examining the impact of tourism on the historic environment. The importance of the landscape to the character and setting of the town is discussed.
- 1.15 Section 7 looks at the built and natural environment.
- 1.16 Section 8 examines future development growth in Rye and Rye Harbour.
- 1.17 Section 9 draws on conclusions from the Study and the implications for the Strategy for Rye.

Section 2: Town Profile

Rye and its Hinterland

- 2.1 Rother is a predominantly rural district with Bexhill as the largest settlement supplemented by the market towns of Battle and Rye.
- 2.2 Rye is an ancient citadel town of national historic importance and high architectural value. The town is situated on the eastern end of Sussex and near the Kent border. The town's geographical location was considered to be highly defensible but was readily accessible to the sea. During the 11th century Rye became a full member of the Confederation of Cinque Ports, a network of settlements given the responsibility of defending the south coast from raids and attacks from foreign invaders. Rye is positioned on a rocky sandstone outcrop and dominates the locality. Ancient defences are very much evident today namely the old town wall and Ypres Tower. Rye Harbour is a satellite village to Rye and is located to the southeast of the town and is separated by open countryside. However residents of Rye Harbour use the services found in Rye and both settlements have close historical links.
- 2.3 During the Middle Ages Rye enjoyed a period of significant growth directly as a result of its success as a maritime trading port. Its success was later tempered by changing physical conditions as human intervention resulted in the gradual silting and drainage of the surrounding areas and the town retreated from the coastline.
- 2.4 Today Rye is sited 3 miles inland and sits at the confluence of 3 rivers, the Rother, Brede and Tillingham. The town is popular with tourists and visitors, with the character of the town often cited as being one of the main reasons for a visit. Rye possesses a rich architectural heritage and a townscape of strong visual character and quality. The compact town centre reflects the medieval street pattern. Within the town there are over 300 listed buildings and buildings of historic significance. The core is designated a Conservation Area.
- 2.5 Rye's influence is significant in the eastern half of the District and justifies its role as a Service Centre. The town's Hinterland is made up of several Parish Councils that abuts Rye and Rye Harbour. To the north, east and west of Rye are Rye Foreign, Peasmarch, East Guldeford, Udimore and Playden. To the south is Camber and Rye Harbour falls within Icklesham Parish. See Map 1 Political and Geographical Boundaries for Parish Boundaries, Ward Boundaries and Super Output Area Boundaries.

Population Profile

- 2.6 The population of Rye Parish is recorded as being 4,281 in 2010. Some parts of Rye's built up areas encroach into other adjacent parishes (Rye Foreign, Playden and Icklesham) and the population figures rises to over 5,000. Rye Harbour has a further 500 residents. Within Rye Parish the dominant age

group is the 45-64 year olds (28.7%) which is almost twice as many in the age group 30-44 (14.7%). This is generally in line with the District but within Rye Parish there is a higher proportion of 15-29 year olds (18%) than the District figure of 13%.



Figure.1: Rye's historic core attracts large numbers of visitors during the summer season

- 2.7 The total number of households in Rye Parish in 2010 was recorded at 2,019 with median income of £22,002 pa which is below the district median of £26,678. Rye has a far greater population density than Rother as a whole (Appendix 5). Life expectancy in Rye averages at 80 years and is above the national and County average of 78 and 79 respectively.
- 2.8 The population profile of East Sussex indicates a greater proportion of people in older age groups than the national average. In Rye just over 13% of the population is between 65-74 and almost 6% are aged 75-84; nationally, the figure for 65-75 is 8.7% (Please refer to Appendix 1). Figure 2 shows the spread of older people over 75 across East Sussex.
- 2.9 Young people (between the ages of 16 and 24) can have particularly high limitations on opportunities, education requirements and financial constraints, and 15.2% of the population of East Sussex is age between 15 and 29 years old. Figure 3 shows the proportion of the population across the county between 16 and 24. Rye has a slightly higher percentage (18.1%) of young people age 15-29 (Appendix 2). The areas with above average proportions of younger people are typically the towns and immediate surrounding areas.
- 2.10 Appendix 3 shows that Rye has experienced growth in all age groups with the exception of one group. Since 2001 Rye has seen a 12.5% fall of 30-44 year olds but this trend is reflected across the County and the South East.

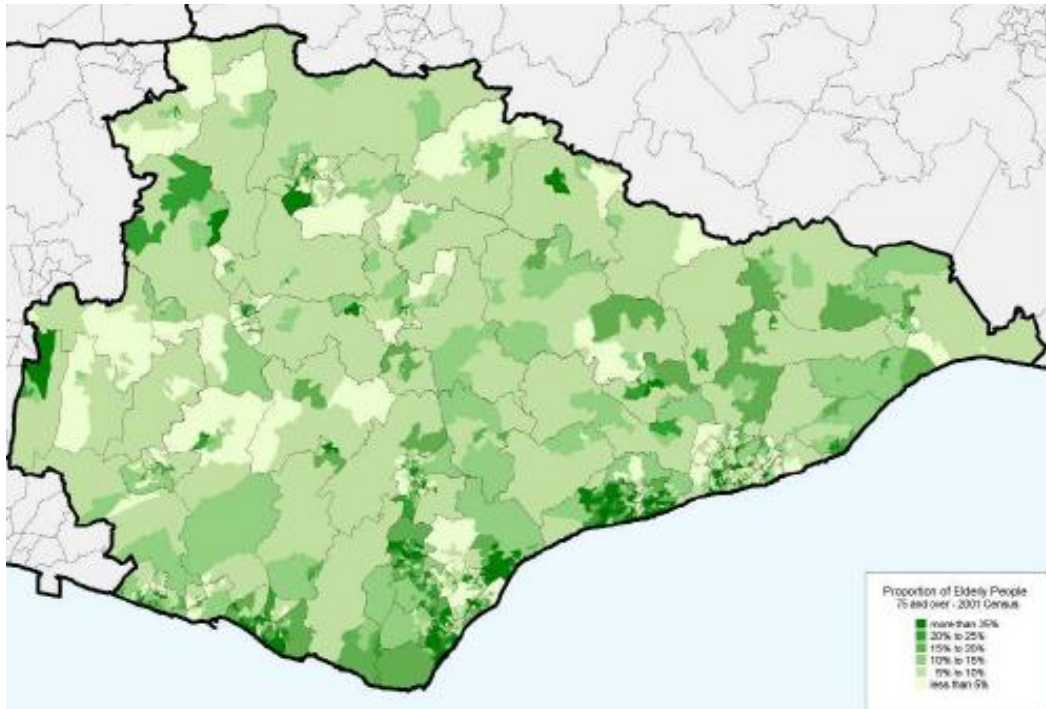


Figure.2: Elderly Population (75+)

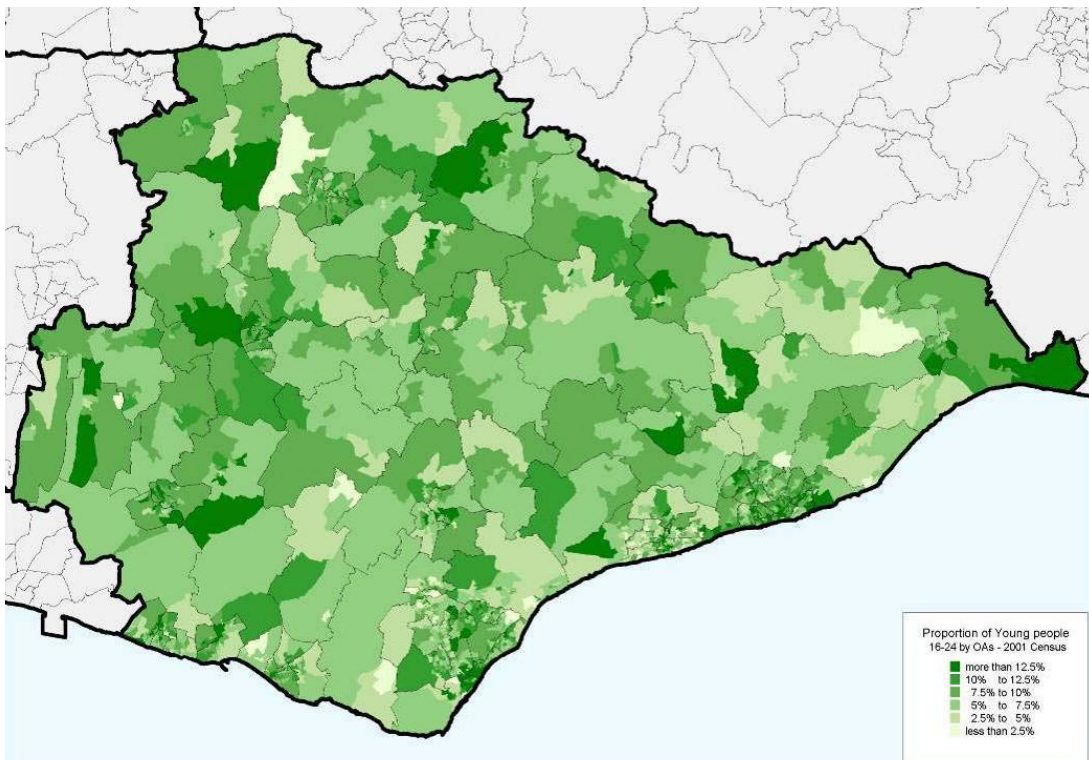


Figure 3: Young People across East Sussex

- 2.11 Figure 4 graphically presents the proportion of households with low incomes across the County. The coastal settlements have a greater proportion of households with lower incomes. Contrast with the northern half of the County and away from the coastal towns and you found greater number of households with larger incomes.

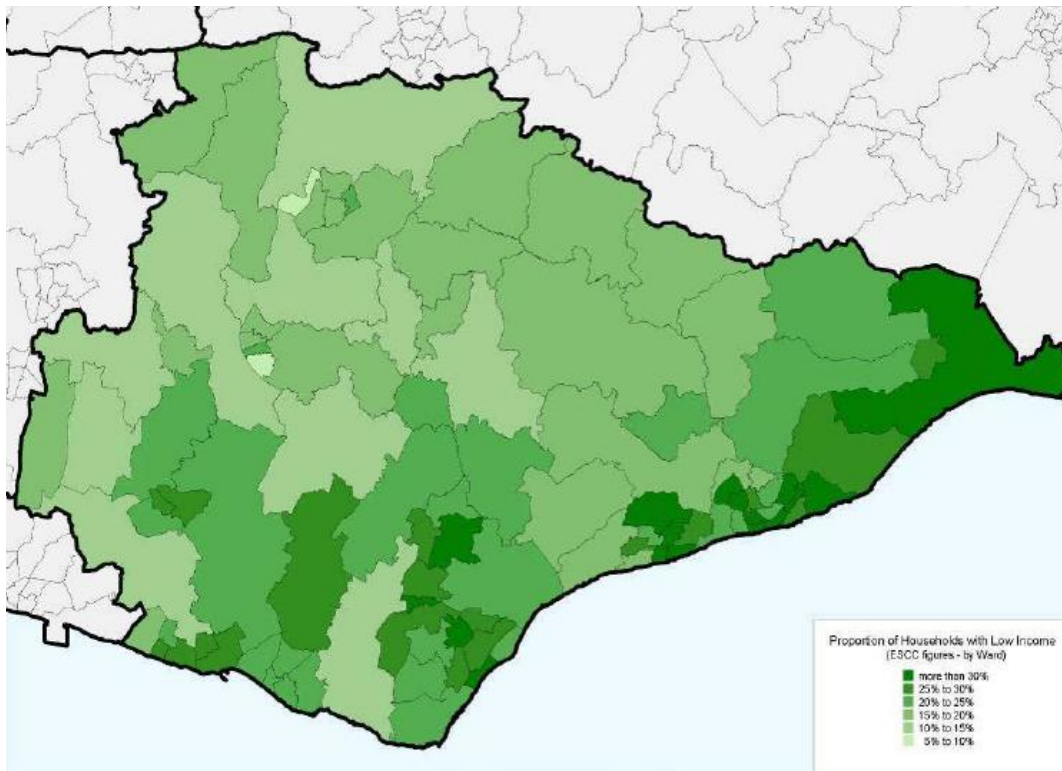


Figure 4: Proportions of Households with Low Income

Transport and Infrastructure Profile

Road Network

- 2.12 Rye is situated at the eastern end of the district making it an important crossroads for transport routes. The principal transport link is the A259 trunk road and carries the majority of medium and longer distance east-west traffic. The trunk road is considered to be deficient and at certain sections can experience heavy congestion. Delays can be frequent and journey times can be lengthy. This is often cited as a constraint for economic development of the locality. During summer months traffic volumes can significantly increase as over 20,000 visitors use the local road network to get to tourist attractions such as Camber and Winchelsea Beach. The Port of Rye lies to the south east of the town and is an active port. Traffic generated from the commercial activity from the port travels through Rye in order to access the wider locality. Please refer to Map 4 Roads.

Rail Service

- 2.13 The East Coastway Marshlink is the main service that supports Rye. It is an important east west artery for residents of Rye connecting Rye with Hastings in the west and Ashford to the east.
- 2.14 The indirect service and lengthy journey times are often cited as constraining economic development and regeneration and is part of a wider issue of connectivity in the district.

Local Bus Services

- 2.15 There are a number of bus operators that run services locally in Rye. The town is generally well provided for but a number of routes do require financial support from East Sussex County Council. Please refer to Map 5. Important service routes include the Conquest Hospital and Hastings/Bexhill Colleges. Station Approach is the key junction for all bus services in Rye and it is also where the majority of coach parties stop off in the summer as visitors to Rye increase significantly over the summer season. Community transport also plays a significant part in meeting gaps in a service that commercial operators cannot fulfill. Please refer to Appendix 38.

Cycle Routes

- 2.16 The town is served by number of local and national cycle paths. The national cycle route approaches Rye from the east and the west. Please refer to Appendix 39 and 40 for cycling routes in and around Rye and Rye Harbour.

Economic Profile

- 2.17 A significant proportion of the local economy of Rye and the surrounding areas are geared towards local tourism. In the summer season the residential population in Rye and the surrounding areas can increase by 20,000 people. Camber and Winchelsea Beach are popular locations for summer tourists and road congestion is a significant problem during peak season. Local tourism is supplemented by a significant light industrial sector with the greatest concentration of industrial accommodation sited at Rye Harbour Road. There is some potential to develop opportunities on undeveloped and unused land but there are wider strategic issues to consider such as transport connectivity. In addition, there are ground condition/contamination issues to address in many cases. Please refer to Map 3.
- 2.18 Rye has the only opportunity, at least in Rother, to develop industries that need access by water. This should strengthen the role of the Port of Rye. Therefore, some flexibility may be appropriate to take account of this particular potential.
- 2.19 Rye's economy is characterised by low employment growth and relatively high unemployment. The working age population in the town has remained fairly static over the last decade, in line with the trend in total population change. In 2001, there were 2,245 people of working age living in Rye of which 1,692 (75%) were economically active.
- 2.20 The occupational structure of Rye residents shows an under-representation of managers and workers occupying senior roles and a higher proportion of manual and low skilled workers. This is examined in closer detail in Section 4. The proportion of people working as managers, or in professional or technical occupations is 34% in Rye.

- 2.21 Rye's economy is centred on the distribution, hotels and restaurants sector and the public administration, education and health sector. Together these sectors provide over two thirds of the jobs in the town:
1. Distribution, hotels and restaurants: this sector, which includes retail, is a major employer in the town. This is to be expected, as this sector encompasses a large proportion of tourist employment. This is a stronger sector in Rye than elsewhere: in the South East there are 26% of jobs in this category.
 2. Public administration, education and health: in terms of absolute employment, the public sector is the second largest employer in Rye
 3. Banking, finance and insurance: this is the third largest sector in the Rye economy, and the fifth largest in Rye's Hinterland.
- 2.22 More than 10% of jobs in Rye's Hinterland are in the transport and communications sectors. This compares to only 6% for the South East and 4% for Rother and East Sussex. The agriculture and fishing industry accounts for 4% of employment in Rye's Hinterland, whereas less than 1% of jobs in Rother, East Sussex and the South East are in this sector. Please refer to Appendix 7.

Community Infrastructure and Local Services

- 2.23 Rye is a service centre for the eastern half of the district and is well provided by a range of services which caters for the local community. Please refer to Map 2 for the main services in Rye. Of significance is Rye Community College, Sports Centre, the two GP surgeries and the new Rye library in the High Street.

Environmental Profile

- 2.24 The setting of the historic core of Rye, the levels and the rivers importantly aid the perception that the core is a citadel, vertically separated from the surrounding plain. From viewpoints within the town the setting provides fine quality views out to the distant landscape and coast. The tidal rivers and estuary are a key component of Rye's maritime character. To the south-east the open landscape provides a gap between the town and industrial units sited along Rye Harbour Road and Rye Harbour Village.
- 2.25 The countryside surrounding Rye is subject to a number of environmental designations, signifying its landscape character and conservation importance. There are a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. In addition, much of the surrounding area to the North and West is classed as the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and there are a number of Ancient Woodlands.

- 2.26 To the south of the town is a large area comprising of a diverse coastal landscape with a number of protected habitats. The area is also home to Rye Harbour Nature Reserve. The area is important for breeding and wintering waterbirds, birds of prey, passage warblers and breeding seabirds.

Housing Profile

- 2.27 A preferred distribution of housing numbers for the Plan period 2006-2026 was contained in the Core Strategy 'Consultation on Strategy Directions'. The District wide requirement of 5,600-5,850 was essentially a 'top-down' target derived from the South-East Plan. The emerging Core Strategy demonstrated the how this District wide-target would be achieved, by apportioning it between smaller geographical components within Rother District.

Policy Framework

- 2.28 For Rye the Core Strategy - Strategy Directions document identifies 450 dwellings requirement for Rye from 2011 to 2026. A significant proportion of the strategic housing requirement has been taken up with current permissions (179) and completions (72) with current strategic allocations equating to 170 dwellings. Furthermore the development at Udimore Road has yielded an increase in dwelling numbers (135 units), following recommendations from the Planning Inspector to increase upon the minimum requirement stipulated in the adopted Local Plan. Subsequently the residual requirement is modest to 2028.
- 2.29 The national Government's position was partly set out in July 2010, when DCLG Chief Planner Steve Quartermain outlined the Government position following the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategies confirming that local planning authorities would still need to "collect and use reliable information to justify their housing supply policies and defend them during the LDF examination process. This applies whether LPAs decide to retain their existing housing targets that were set out in the revoked Regional Strategy; replace Regional Strategy targets with "option 1 numbers"¹ or something else because "any target selected may be tested during the examination process especially if challenged and authorities will need to be ready to defend them". He added that although the RSS has been revoked, the evidence base underlying it remains valid and can be used by local planning authorities along with more up to date material.
- 2.30 In moving forward the presumption is that each local authority has three choices:
- To revert to the so-called 'option 1' numbers (also 280 per annum in Rother's case)

¹ 'Option 1' housing figures were those that individual local authorities own projections of the number of houses they believe will be necessary by 2026 to meet local needs. They were derived from analysis of trends, opportunities and outstanding permissions. In many cases, central government interposed to impose significantly higher targets within regional spatial strategies. However, Rother DC's option 1 housing figure was accepted and adopted in regional policy.

- To continue using the South East Plan housing figures (280 per annum in Rother's case)
- 'Something else' that is robust enough that local authorities can defend the figures to the Planning Inspectorate at Examination.

2.31 In Rother, the SE Plan figure (and the option 1 figure it derived from) were both based on the assumption that the Hastings-Bexhill Link Road would go ahead. The continuing uncertainty over the Link Road funding may ultimately mean that the District's housing figure needs to be re-considered, as significant amounts of new housing is dependent on the road's completion. However this does not directly affect Rye. The logical assumption must therefore be that the option 1 housing figure was appropriate, unless overwhelming recent and locally specific evidence shows otherwise.

Population Forecasts

2.32 Rother's population is projected to rise from 87,800 in 2006, to 95,415 in 2026. Most of this accounted for by a rise in numbers of older persons (aged 65+). Please refer to Figure 6 and Figure 7. Conversely, there is a projected fall in numbers aged 30-44 but a raise in the population of older people. It is important to note that these are 'policy-based' projections. These policy based projections are forecasted according to future levels of fertility, mortality and migration and reflecting the level of housing being planned across the District.

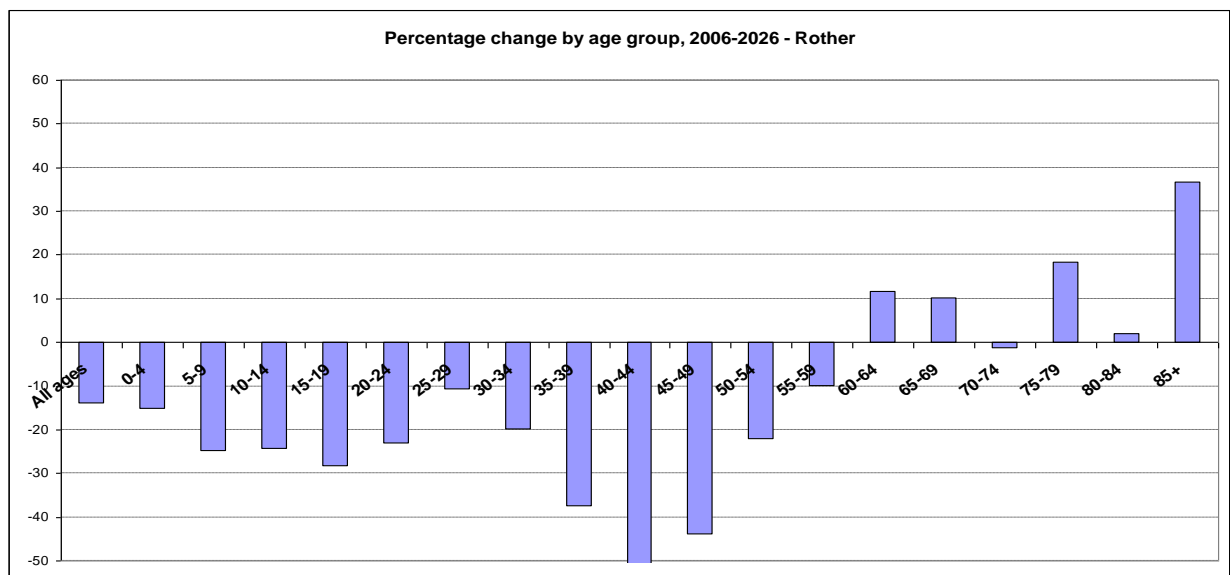


Figure 5: Population Projections between 2006 – 2026 with zero net migration

2.33 Research shows in-migration is an important factor in Rother's demographic make up. Forecasts based on zero net migration demonstrate that by 2026 (see Figure 5) Rother's demographic make up would be dominated by older population with little or no working population leading potentially to a collapse in the viability and vitality of many of the towns and villages in the District. Local services would not be sustainable leading to many settlements to becoming a dormant village or worse in terminal decline.

Rye and Rye Harbour Study

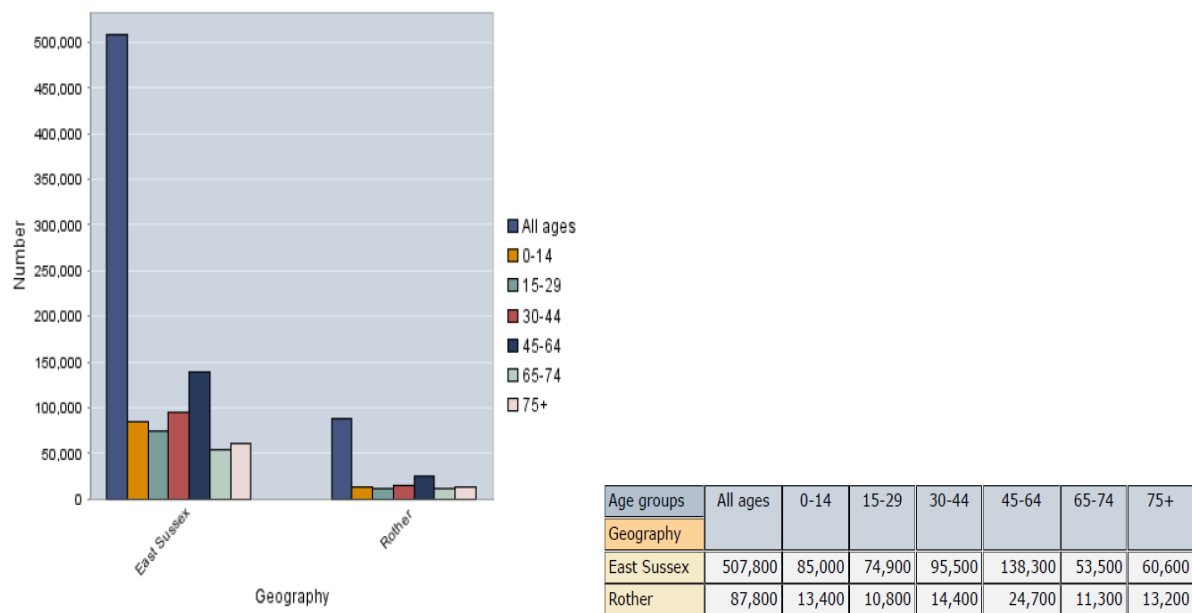


Figure 6: Population Projections Policy-Based 2006

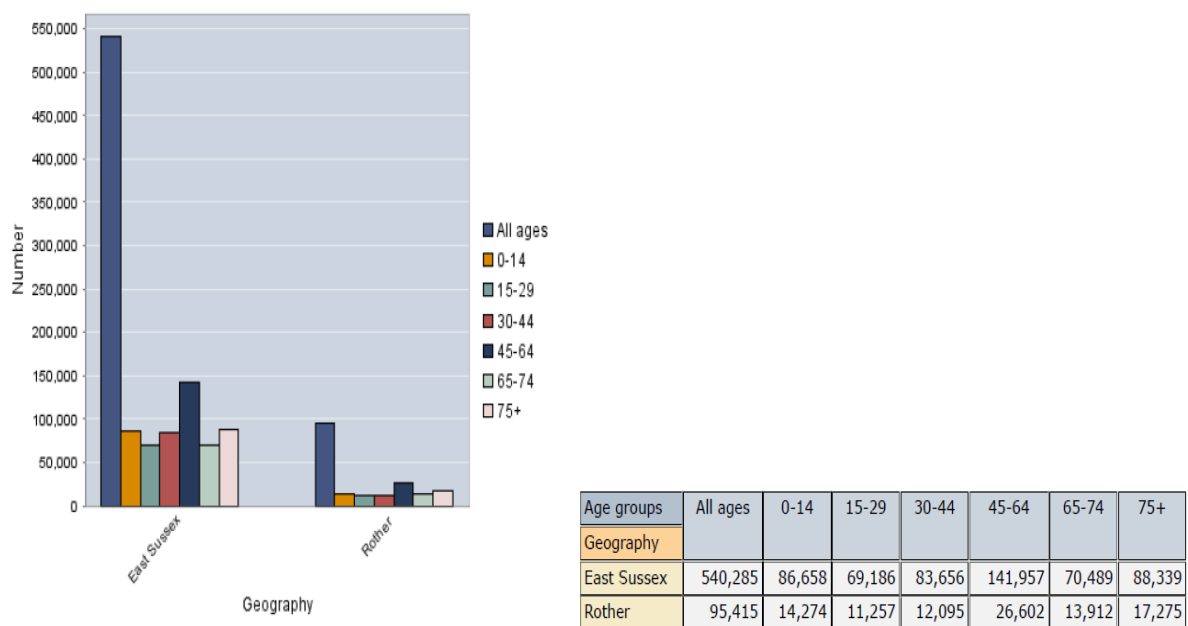


Figure 7: Population Projections Policy-Based 2026

- 2.34 Research showing migration led population projections demonstrate a growth in the 20-35 year old age groups as highlighted in Figure 8. The graphic broadly mirrors population projections demonstrated in Figure 6 & 7 with an increase in Rother's older population 65+ and growth in the age groups 15-29.

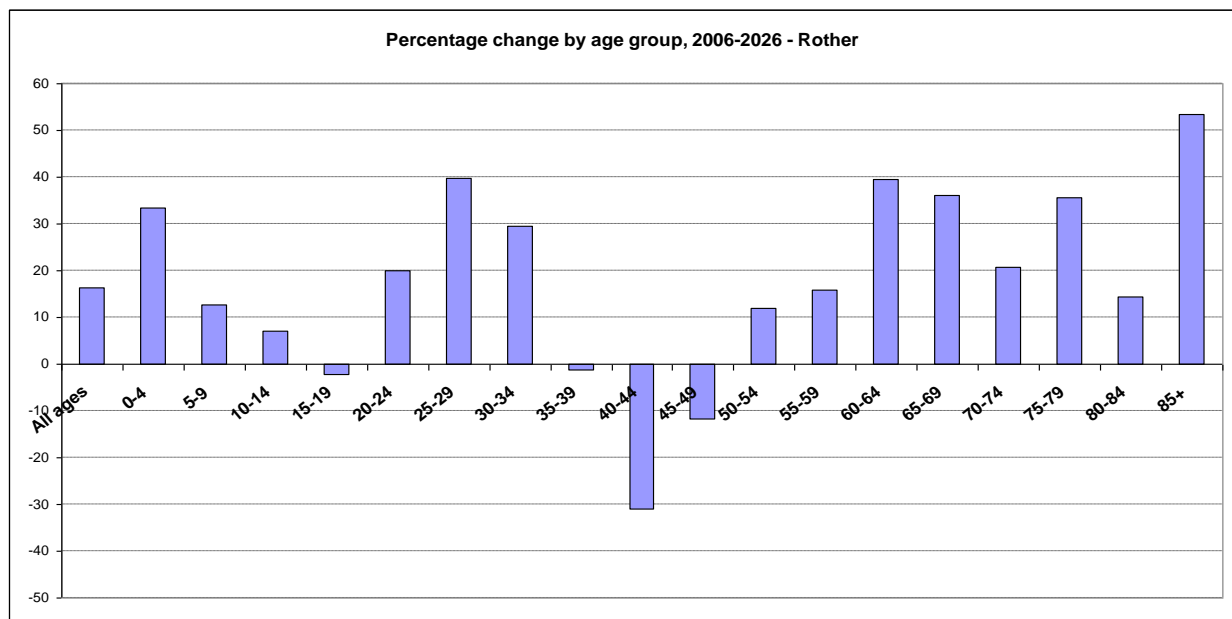


Figure 8: Migration-led Population Projections between 2006-2026

Housing Affordability

- 2.35 Affordability and getting on the housing ladder is a national problem but particularly acute in Rother. Young people on low incomes are likely to be excluded from the property market. In Rother the affordability ratio for the people on low incomes is 10.4 in 2009. This means that the average house price is 10-11 times the average income in Rother.
- 2.36 Further evidence contained in the 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment suggested that on the basis of existing household incomes in Rother only about 30% of households are able to buy. A further 30% may be able to rent privately, but the remaining 40% are unable to rent or buy in the market. These figures are income based. Households may have access to equity from savings or property. In recent years the difficulty for many households in gaining credit from financial institutions has increased because of the financial climate. It is a further barrier for young people to gain a foothold on the property ladder.

Housing Need in Rye

- 2.37 Rye and the surrounding hinterland is not immune from the issues of affordability that impact on many people in the County especially as household incomes are relatively low in the eastern half of the District. There is difficulty for many young people to get on the housing ladder. The Housing Register indicates there are 414 households on Rother's Housing Register seeking accommodation in Rye. However 171 of those are already living in Rye equating to 8.4% of all households in Rye (2,019 Households in the Rye Parish in 2010), whilst this proportion is typical for East Sussex, it is high compared to the rest of Rother District where the equivalent proportion averages 4.1%. This suggests there is more locally derived need unmet in Rye than there is elsewhere in Rother.

- 2.38 The need for new housing both nationally and locally within Rother is hard to dispute. However in recent years development at Udimore Road has added to the existing housing stock in Rye but the potential for growth in the town is limited as the town is extremely constrained. Bringing forward strategic allocations like Rock Channel and Rye Harbour Road should be a priority for the Core Strategy and development on those sites within the urban area should be maximized in order to address housing need in the area with appropriate levels of affordable housing. This issue is discussed in further detail in Section 7.
- 2.39 Figure 9 shows that Rye has a higher level of social housing than Rother as a whole and is slightly above that of the national level. Almost 20% of the existing housing stock in Rye is social.

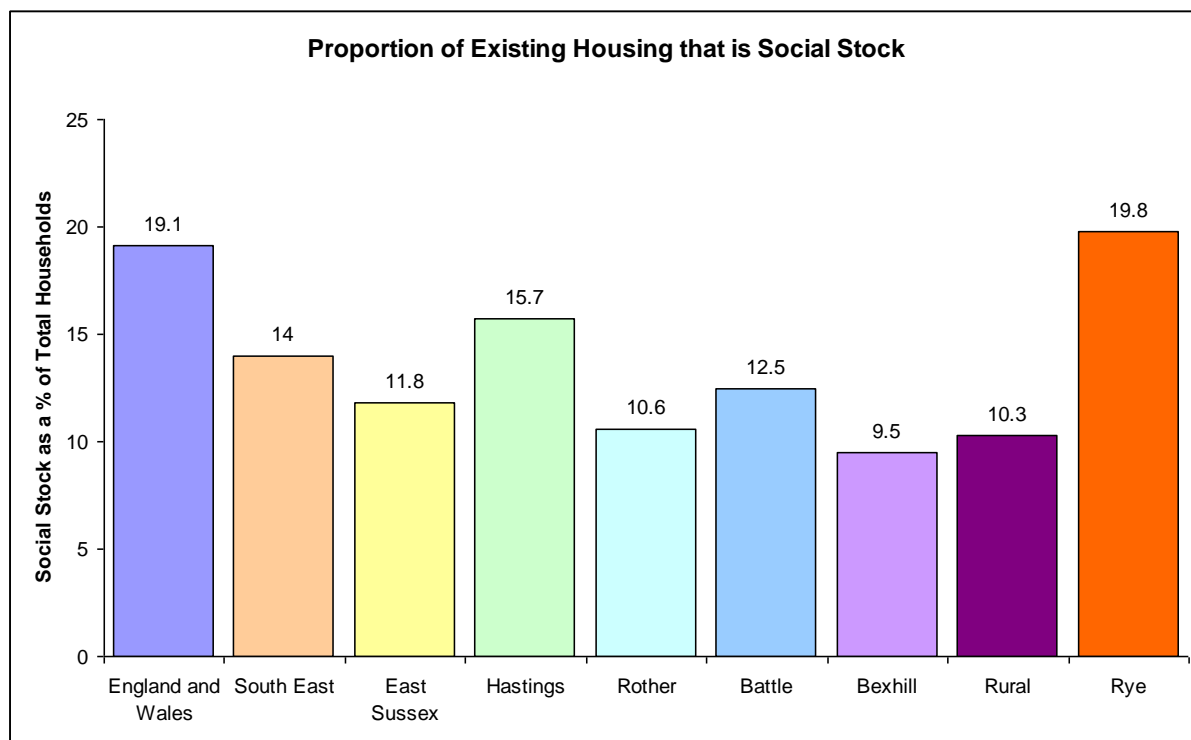


Figure 9: Proportion of Existing Housing that is Social Stock

Section 3: Review of Literature and Evidence Base

Rother District Adopted Local Plan 2006

- 3.1 The 2006 adopted Local Plan identifies a broad planning strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour. Further development in Rye should respect the close relationship between high quality landscape and the many historical assets to be found in the town.

Planning Strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour (Policy RY1)

- 3.2 Proposals for development and change in Rye should be compatible with and where practicable contribute positively to the following objectives:
- To maintain the small market town residential and employment functions together with its character;
 - To protect the unique historic Citadel and its landscape setting, particularly the levels surrounding the Citadel;
 - To maintain and enhance navigation on the River Rother and the viability of the Port of Rye as a harbour;
 - To enhance the commercial and tourism attractiveness of the Citadel and the wider area as far as is compatible with preserving their character and environment;
 - To promote economic regeneration, including further job opportunities at the Harbour Road employment area;
 - To maintain a strategic gap between Rock Channel and the industrial development at Harbour Road.
- 3.3 There are a number of strategic housing allocations identified in Rye in the adopted Local Plan. They include:

Land adjacent to Rock Channel (Policy RY3)

- 3.4 Land between South Undercliff and Rock Channel, Rye is allocated for a mixed use comprehensive scheme. The proposal will include open market housing, commercial uses (A1 and B1 use classes), open space, improved linkages to the town centre and 40% affordable housing. In the event of their relocation, the applicant will be expected to be involved in this process.

Former Thomas Peacocke School and adjacent land (Policy RY4)

- 3.5 The 0.8 hectares former school site is surplus to the requirement of the local educational authority and is allocated for housing development (at least 32 dwellings of which 40 % are for affordable housing). The development should also provide for a new vehicular, cycle and pedestrian link between Ferry Road to the Community College, Sports Centre and swimming pool.

Land North of Udimore Road (Policy RY5)

- 3.6 The adopted Local Plan has identified some 3.8 hectares of land north of Udimore Road suitable for housing development. It is the only significant Greenfield in Rye not subject to environmental designations but within the flood risk area. The site is suitable for at least 114 dwellings of which 40% are to be affordable. Contributions will also be made to improve pedestrian facilities into the town centre and improvements to the Udimore Road junction to accommodate the new development.
- 3.7 Since 2008 work has started on Udimore Road for approximately 135 units with the development of new road junction, associated landscaping and the creation of new play space.

Land adjacent Stonework Cottages, Harbour Road, Rye Harbour

- 3.8 The 0.52 hectare site is considered suitable to accommodate at least 16 dwellings of which 40% will be affordable. Contributions will be sought towards improvements of the Harbour Road/A259 junction and the provision of a footway/cycleway along Harbour Road.
- 3.9 Addition to the housing allocations the Local Plan consolidates Rye Harbour Road as being a long established concentration of employment for the locality. The area accommodates a broad spectrum of employment but a significant proportion of employment activity in the area is still related to the river through the shipping of aggregates in from the continent with exports like cereals and wools shipped to European markets.
- 3.10 Further improvement is sought to upgrade the quality of the local road network in order to bring further competitive advantage for local employers. There is scope for further uptake on available employment sites within Rye Harbour Road.

Rother Core Strategy – Consultation on Strategy Directions November 2008

- 3.11 The emerging Core Strategy has already gone through two stages of the consultation process. The CS Strategy Directions (2008) follows the Strategy Options document (2006) and outlines the appropriate strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour. The Strategy aims to improve the economic and social well-being of Rye, including in relation to its market town role and the Port of Rye

whilst fully respecting and sensitively managing its historic character, vulnerability to flooding and ecologically important setting.

The Vision for Rye

- 3.12 In developing the strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour it is important to ensure that the correct level of growth is planned for, given the sensitive nature of Rye's important environmental assets and tackle underlying weaknesses in Rye's economic and social profile acknowledged as a lack of affordable housing for local people, overdependence on seasonal and low income jobs associated with the tourism industry, untapping the potential in green industries and green tourism; support for investment in the local road, rail and sustainable transport infrastructure.
- 3.13 In summary, the high quality built and natural environment in and around Rye fuels a strong local tourist industry, with both consequential economic benefits and pressures on infrastructure and the environment. For its size, Rye is well provided with a wide range of shops, services and community facilities boosted by high numbers of visitors. Nonetheless the recent Retail Assessment has shown there is a high volume of out - commuting for convenience shopping. There is not only a significant amount of employment in Rye itself, but also at Harbour Road between Rye and Rye Harbour. The generally prosperous feel of the town is contrasted with some comparatively high deprivation levels in parts of the town. Flood risk at Rye is very complex; parts are susceptible to tidal flooding, parts to fluvial flooding, parts to surface water flooding and parts to all three types.

Key Issues

- Need to improve access to services by sustainable modes of transport and reduce traffic congestion, through better pedestrian and cycle links within and around Rye, provision of additional services to meet the needs of residents without causing the need to travel by private car.
- Need to improve affordability of housing through the provision of some additional affordable housing and improving employment choice.
- Need to improve housing choice for the elderly through providing the appropriate mix of dwellings on development sites.
- Need to improve educational attainment through improved educational, community and leisure facilities.
- Need to address child poverty and high unemployment rates –indicators of multiple deprivation, through improved access to employment, community and leisure facilities
- Constrained by flooding issues - need to ensure the location of new development is appropriate to the level of flood risk identified through the SFRA and that no increase in flood risk occurs elsewhere as a result of development in areas of lower flood risk.

- Need to ensure the nationally important, high quality built environment and the setting of Rye is retained and where possible enhanced through development opportunities.
- Need to ensure the important national and European designated conservation sites are not adversely affected and where practicable are improved through the implementation of development opportunities.
- Need development to support the Port of Rye and its commercial viability which is tested by the River generally only being navigable at best for at least 2 hours before HW to 3 hours after HW (variations occur with changing tides and larger vessels will have a smaller window of opportunity).

3.14 The aims and objectives below are regarded as an appropriate framework to guide the strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour. They have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal to ensure they are in accordance with sustainability principles.

Aim and Objectives in the Core Strategy

3.15 To improve the economic and social well-being of Rye, including in relation to its market town role, tourism and the Port of Rye, whilst fully respecting and sensitively managing its historic character, vulnerability to flooding and ecologically important setting.

Objectives:

- To provide high quality education, employment and housing;
- To enhance sustainable tourism and leisure;
- To improve the availability of day to day goods and services;
- To secure investment in community facilities and in new and/or improved pedestrian and cycle routes linking residents to their facilities;
- To conserve and enhance the unique character and quality of the Citadel and its distinctive landscape setting;
- To protect and sensitively manage the high quality ecological and landscape resources;
- To continue to manage, and protect the community from the risk of flooding;
- To enhance the character and amenities (including visitor amenities) of Rye Harbour.

The Urban Options Background Paper

3.16 This background paper was completed in 2008 and the purpose of the paper was to consolidate existing information and reference documents in preparing the urban spatial strategies for each of the towns in the District.

3.17 In view of its sensitive landscape setting, historic core and accessibility limitations as well as the proximity of nationally and internationally important wildlife habitats and flooding considerations, it is not anticipated that the Core Strategy should propose that Rye be a focus for high levels of future growth.

3.18 The options, developed in view of the policy context are presented below:

Option 1: Strengthen the market town role of Rye and the commercial role of Rye Harbour and the Port of Rye (medium growth)

Option 2: Strengthen the social functions of Rye and Rye Harbour and make the most of the important environmental circumstances (limited/low growth)

3.19 Option 1 has a strong economic and regeneration focus with less attention to environmental assets and constraints and social functions. Option 2 picks up on the social and environmental issues but is less strong concerning the economy and the Port of Rye. Consideration of these options against Sustainability Objectives has shown:

Central theme	Growth	Main areas of change	Strategy emphases	Strengths/ weaknesses
Strengthen market town and commercial role of Rye and Rye Harbour and Port of Rye	Medium	Extension to development boundary north of Rye. Extension to employment area west of Rastrum site. Regeneration of parts of town, town centre.	Service centre role, employment and economy housing choice.	<u>Strengths:</u> Regeneration Significant affordable housing. Opportunity to deliver increased housing choice Enhance service centre role <u>Weaknesses:</u> Unrealistic land requirements significant amount Greenfield land.
Strengthen social functions of Rye and Rye Harbour make the most of the environment	Limited/ Low	Within development boundary and Employment Area - focus on infill redevelopment Regeneration of parts of town, town centre	Social functions: accessibility; community facilities: housing choice: environmental assets.	<u>Strengths:</u> Safeguarding against further deterioration of the setting of Rye; views to and from the AONB; Regeneration; Better connectivity <u>Weaknesses:</u> More limited scope for affordable housing and improving housing choice.

- 3.20 **Option 1** advocates Rye enhancing its service centre role and sustain economic growth, provide enough affordable accommodation and choice of accommodation to meet the growing number of households and raise its educational attainment as well as facilitating engagement in cultural and leisure activities. Due to Rye's significant national historic importance, rich archaeology, ecology and location on the edge of the AONB, this level of growth is likely to lead to adverse impacts on Rye's environmental assets.
- 3.21 **Option 2** has less scope to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in an affordable home and this is particularly important in light of the Housing Needs Assessment identifying a significant need for affordable housing in Rye. This option is generally more positive than option 1 for environmental matters and presents marginally less opportunity for enhancing and addressing social functions and issues.
- 3.23 The options have also been considered against the strategic spatial Core Strategy objectives for Rye:
- **Option 1** should facilitate the economic and social aspirations of the Plan through recognised regeneration opportunities and the identification of additional land for employment and residential uses. It is less clear how this option would be able to meet the objective in terms of respecting and sensitively managing the high quality setting and surrounding ecological resources, given the amount of land that will be required for this level of growth. Rye is not only a rich historic, architectural town, surrounded by important archaeological, ecological and landscape designations, it is also an area with significant flood risk issues. This results in limited opportunities for outward growth.
 - **Option 2** has a much stronger environmental focus and aims to recognize the important environmental assets and their value to Rye and its economy. The levels of growth associated with this option would not necessarily present the same opportunities for delivering improved economic growth as option 1, but should help to sustain the economy through a more innovative approach to green tourism and making the most of its waterside location. In considering improving the social well-being of Rye this option should deliver improvements in line with recognised inadequacies such as linking the public rights of way network and regeneration of parts of the town, however there will be less opportunity to deliver housing choice and affordability to all in need.
- 3.24 Given the sensitive nature of Rye's important assets; its architectural and archaeological heritage, its landscape setting, internationally recognized ecological assets and vulnerability to flooding; alongside the social and economic issues associated with Rye; unemployment, child poverty and limited access to a choice of affordable housing; neither option would necessarily deliver a satisfactory strategy in all aspects.

- 3.25 Therefore the paper concluded that an amalgam of the two options might present the best opportunities for the area.
- 3.26 The location of development should respect the close relationship to landform and landscape setting. Much of the land that surrounds Rye is within a flood risk area and also, if developed, would severely detract from the setting of Rye. These factors constrain further growth and any extension of the ribbon development and other development on the levels needs to be resisted. The capacity of the town to take significant additional traffic is also limited in environmental as well as physical terms.
- 3.27 The development strategy already provides for over 300 dwellings and taking into account completions since 2006 and current permissions this accounts for planned development of 430 dwellings. There is only a small requirement for additional allocations to meet the requirement of the Overall Spatial Development Strategy.
- 3.28 In terms of any future strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour it is important to consider the implications for the town's role in the locality. More detail is required in order to pursue a strategy especially when considering the impact on landscape, infrastructure and local traffic movements.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

- 3.29 The SHLAA was published in March 2010. The SHLAA is required by Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' and the Assessment will form a key part of the evidence base for the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). In particular it is relevant to the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) and any future Site Allocations DPD. **It should be emphasised that the SHLAA is an evidence-based document which does not allocate land for housing nor pre-empt or prejudice any future Council decisions about particular sites. It is an aid to plan making and not a statement of Council policy.**
- 3.30 Consideration was given to the suitability and deliverability of many sites undertaking extensive on-site surveys assessed against environmental and planning factors, financial viability and access to local services. The study identifies up to 55 units that could potentially be accommodated from SHLAA developable sites around the Rye and Rye Harbour locality.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

- 3.31 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was completed to inform housing and planning policies. The Assessment was commissioned by both Rother District Council and Hastings Borough Council to update the original 2006 SHMA and consider the effects of the current housing market downturn. The Assessment is an important consideration in terms of mix and tenure of housing sites.

Affordable Housing Viability Assessment

3.32 Rother District Council carried out a viability assessment of its affordable housing policies. The work was undertaken to inform the development of planning policy and was completed in 2010. Given that it will not always be possible to secure affordable housing on all development sites within Bexhill, Battle and Rye or in rural areas. The Assessment recommends an appropriate threshold for affordable housing in Rye would continue to be 40%. Rother District Council will adopt a process within the emerging LDF for resolving what the contributions should be. Constraints to viability of development sites could include:

- Deteriorating market conditions
- Abnormal build costs associated with topography and contamination
- Abnormal or unforeseen costs associated with access arrangements
- Lack of Affordable Housing grant or the availability of funding from HAs
- Strategic infrastructure requirements
- Ecological or wildlife considerations

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

3.33 Under the provision of Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk, Rother District Council is required to undertake an SFRA. A Level 1 SFRA presents sufficient information to enable Rother DC to apply the PPS25 Sequential Test to potential strategic development areas within their boundary and, where there are no more reasonably available sites to assist in identifying if the application of the PPS25 Exception Test will be necessary. Rye and the surrounding locality are vulnerable to both fluvial and tidal flooding. Flood defences have been improved in recent years but maintenance and upkeep of defences are a priority for the Town Council.

Rother District-Wide Retail Assessment (2008)

- 3.34 Rother District Council commissioned GL Hearn to undertake a District-wide retail assessment in June 2008. Rye town centre offers a high proportion of comparison goods floorspace within Rye but a significant element of this is orientated towards tourist and visitor markets offering gift, craft and specialist shops. Convenience shopping in Rye is dominated by Jempson/Budgens store in the town centre and has an existing permission for an extension.
- 3.35 The limited convenience retail offer within the town centre means that Rye functions primarily as a top-up destination for local shoppers, with residents travelling to larger main food stores in Hastings, Peasmarsh or Tenterton for

their main weekly bulk shop. To address the trade leakage to other centres the Retail Assessment advocates additional convenience goods floorspace in Rye of an additional 1650sqm (net) between 2011-2016. Consideration of additional convenience shopping in Rye should be well integrated with the existing town centre to maximize the benefit to the Rye through greater footfall and linked trips.

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (November 2007)

- 3.36 Rother District Council undertook a local open space sport and recreation study across the District. The study includes an audit of all open space provision providing a clear vision, priorities for future open space, recreation and sport provision and a direction for the allocation of future resources. The study puts forward a number of recommendations that impact on the town of Rye:

Recommendation CYP8

The study recommends improvements to existing play areas for younger people in Rye over provision in new locations.

Recommendation CY13

Older children/teenager facilities in Rye are generally well covered with the only exception being south of Rye along Winchelsea Road. The study recommends a new facility as part of new developments ideally to the south of the town, in addition to expanding and broadening the range of facilities at current sites.

Recommendation NSN3

The definition of Natural and semi-natural open space include woodland, urban forestry, grassland, wetlands and Rother is well provided for with over 80% of the District officially designated ANOB. The study recommends qualitative improvements on existing sites over new provision in Rye.

Recommendation AGS4

Amenity green space is most commonly found in housing areas and includes informal recreation spaces and green spaces in and around housing. The study recommends existing amenity space spaces in Rye should be improved on.

Hastings and Rother Leisure Facilities Strategy 2009

- 3.38 In 2008, Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council, ESCC and Sport England commissioned a Leisure Facilities Strategy. The strategy identified supply and demand of facilities to assess gaps in provision and opportunities to improve overall quality of facilities. The strategy considered the future needs of the communities of both Hastings and Rother.
- 3.39 Rye is the main centre of population for eastern Rother and while the town's population is well provided for, it is recognised that rural areas in eastern Rother face significant challenges given issues of accessibility and

geographical spread of settlements. There is a shortfall of a number of key sport facilities in eastern Rother and they are:

- Undersupply of 8-19 health and fitness stations²
- sports hall courts (badminton)

3.40 A synthetic turf training facility was recently implemented at Rye College and addresses a shortfall in Eastern Rother.

Hastings and Rother Employment Strategy and Land Review (2008)

3.41 Hastings BC and Rother DC jointly prepared a review of employment strategy reflecting the close economic and employment links between the two areas. Some of the main characteristics found in the review are as follows:

- 54,695 people live and work in Hastings/Rother, which represents 79% of the 69,545 residents in employment.
- The two districts “lose” 9,384 working people (net) each day in net outcommuting, equivalent to 13.5% of their employed workforce.
- The ward to ward movements show that the majority of the travel to work within the sub-region is focused upon Hastings, although the flows between Hastings and Rother as a whole are in balance.
- Hastings and Rother can therefore be seen to possess a fairly self-contained labour market, although with some well defined linkages with surrounding labour markets.
- The main employment centres that “draw” labour out of Hastings and Rother are Tunbridge Wells, Inner/Central London, Wealden and Eastbourne (approx. 2,000 people each).
- Hastings and Rother draw workers in mainly from Wealden, Eastbourne and, to a lesser degree, Tunbridge Wells.
- More localised labour markets are also evident in Rother. Rye is an employment focus in the east, as is Battle Town for the surrounding rural central area.

3.42 The greatest concentration of industrial accommodation is at Rye Harbour Road. Rye is also the only opportunity, at least in Rother, to develop industries that need access by water. This should strengthen the role of the Port of Rye. Therefore, some flexibility may be appropriate to take account of this particular potential. The Review concluded that at least 10,000m² of business floorspace should be built by 2026.

² Stand alone health and fitness facilities of this scale are uneconomical and these would need to be added on to existing provision, where possible.

East Sussex Local Transport Plan 3

- 3.43 Local Transport Plan 3 is the statutory transport document covering the years 2011-2026. The document provides the framework for East Sussex County Council and its partners to deliver the LTP vision across East Sussex.

Rye Local Area Transport Strategy (LATS)

- 3.44 LATS considers all modes of transport within a geographically defined area and identify the role of each mode in respect of the others, to produce a balanced package of measures to tackle localised issues. In the case of Rye the local LATS was produced in conjunction with ESCC, RDC, Rye Town Council and adjacent parishes (Icklesham, Playden and Rye Foreign) in April 2003. Its purpose is to identify transport improvements in Rye, which complement local planning policies, support future development in the locality and promote sustainable transport. The timeframe for the current Rye LATS is 2012. Representations have been made to ESCC to review the existing Rye LATS and update its contents.

Rye Local Action Plan

- 3.45 The Rye Action Plan was initiated by the Town Council in March 2007 with a community open day to help identify the needs and issues of the people living and working in Rye, and to understand and highlight how their daily lives may be affected by things happening around the town. A series of public consultation events were organized to ensure a wide spectrum of opinions were gathered including information gathering sessions at Rye Medical Centre, Rye College, Rye Boys Club and local libraries (approximately 750 people took part). 2,093 questionnaires were also sent out to households with over 500 were returned. Overall over 1200 people got involved with the consultation. Some of the main issues to come from the exercise are:
- The residents of Rye and especially Tilling Green have identified a need for a community centre;
 - There is a requirement to consolidate the provision of youth recreation facilities and spaces in Rye for young people
 - Support the regeneration of Station Approach
 - Encourage the provision of appropriate affordable housing
 - Secure rail and sustainable transport infrastructure improvements
 - Attract extra provision in the town particular for food, clothing and other everyday goods

- 3.46 The Rye Action Plan is updated every 5 years to ensure it addresses the prevailing economic, social, cultural and environmental issues that concern the town and its people; and to ensure that the actions within it are reasonable, feasible and achievable. The Plan will also guide Town Council business.

Rye Conservation Area Character Appraisal

- 3.47 Rye Conservation Area was first designated in 1968 and over the years this area has expanded (1974). A Conservation Area character appraisal is an assessment of the special interest, character and appearance of a particular Conservation Area. The document should identify the wider qualities of distinctiveness of place by defining and protecting those physical elements that contribute to the special character. The Rye Conservation Area Character Appraisal was adopted in July 2006 and is used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Market Towns and Villages Landscape Assessment August 2009

- 3.48 The Landscape Group of East Sussex County Council was commissioned in April 2009 by Rother District Council to carry out a landscape assessment around the market towns of Battle and Rye together with a range of villages in Rother District. The aims and objectives of the study are to define the relative capacity of the landscape around existing settlements to accommodate housing and business development, where this would be compatible with a residential environment.

Representations Received on the Core Strategy: Rye and Rye Harbour Chapter

- 3.49 Statutory consultees and local organisations have responded along with individual representations on the Core Strategy - Strategy Directions Consultation on Rye and Rye Harbour with 154 representations. A breakdown of the representations can be found in the table below:

Rye and Rye Harbour Chapter	Support	Object	Comment	Representations
Rye and Rye Harbour	2	29	35	66
Box 15 - Preferred Strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour	8	27	53	88

- 3.50 The Core Strategy Consultation Strategy Direction Consultation period ran for 12 weeks from the 7th November 2008 to the 30th January 2009. Below is a list of the statutory consultees and organizations who made representations:

Aroncorp Ltd.
Campaign for a Democratic Rye
East Sussex County Council
Environment Agency
Fletcher Theatre (of Rye) Group
Highways Agency
Jempson's Superstore
Kember Loudon Williams Ltd.
Musgrave Budgens Londis
National Trust
Playden Parish Council
Rastrum Ltd.
Romney Holdings Ltd.
Rother Environmental Group
RSPB
Rye Allotments Association
Rye Art Gallery
Rye Chamber of Commerce
Rye Conservation Society
Rye Town Council
Seaspace
Seeda
Sussex Wildlife Trust
T. Bourne & Son Ltd.
Tesco Stores Ltd.
Tilling Valley Neighbourhood Group
Individual representations

- 3.51 The main issues to come from representations can be summarised below:

- The addition of another supermarket to Rye would have implications for the Rye's High Street. A new supermarket would also add to the congestion on the town's roads.
- The constraints surrounding Rye prohibit further growth on the periphery of the town.
- Support and consolidate the Port of Rye and firms on Rye Harbour Road.
- The character and integrity of the historic core of Rye Town centre should be retained
- Further growth of the town would be detrimental to the town's infrastructure and services.
- Traffic Management should be a priority for the town as congestion is a major issue for the town.
- The development of strategic sites like Rock Channel should be accompanied by a development brief.
- Rye has complex flood risk issues. There should be consideration of Flood mitigation when strategic sites are brought forward and regard to Flood Management issues.
- Rye is a significant service centre in the eastern half of the District. The cultural and social well-being of the town should be supported.

Section 4: Workshop Analysis of Key Issues

Workshop Analysis and Identification of Key Issues

- 4.1 The 2006 adopted Local Plan identifies a broad planning strategy for Rye and post literature review of current guidance and studies, it was important to establish a series of key considerations. The Rye Working Group also contributed to this process with a series of co-ordinated workshops and briefings to facilitate the development of a strategy. Below is a summary of the main points from the Working Group meetings:

Inception Meeting 28th August 2010

- 4.2 Two officers from Rother District Council attended a meeting with Rye Town Council for an inception meeting. At the meeting it was put forward that the District Council would like to:
- Open a dialogue with the Town Council to move forward the Core Strategy programme.
 - Discuss how best to collaborate with the Town Council on refining the strategy for Rye.
- 4.3 The objective was to reach a consensus on key areas with elected members of the community and where it was appropriate invite stakeholders into the process.

The Vision for Rye and Rye Harbour 28th September 2010

- 4.4 The Working Group was established and met with an officer from RDC on the 28th September 2010. The main issue under discussion was the Preferred Strategy put forward by the Core Strategy – Strategy Directions.
- 4.5 Those present at the meeting reviewed the **Vision for Rye** ‘Aims and Objectives’ to debate if the vision was appropriate for Rye and ensure none had been omitted. It was agreed that the following issues required further discussion.
- traffic management – including tackling traffic congestion
 - adequate parking for cars and coaches
 - improving access for those with mobility difficulties
 - retaining convenience shopping within the town
 - dualing the rail track

- 4.6 Members then considered the **priority** key issues for Rye & Rye Harbour
- 4.7 It was agreed unanimously (including the Parish Council representatives present) that the **Number One Priority** should be addressing the area's transport/access to services/traffic management needs
- 4.8 **The Second Priority** should be to provide 'higher value' employment opportunities and access to appropriate training/upskilling opportunities. It was considered that this would help to address the high incidence of child poverty, unemployment and low wage employment.
- 4.9 **The Third Priority** should be to maintain, protect – and improve – Rye's built environment which is considered to be its principal asset.
- 4.10 Following discussion with the Rye Working Group there was general support for the Aims and Objectives as set out in the emerging Core Strategy – Strategy Directions and the Preferred Strategy. However there were three areas where it was necessary to explore the issues further and consolidate the overall strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour. It was appropriate to hold further workshops on the three priority areas the Working Group identified in the session.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

- 4.11 A 'SWOT' analysis table exercise was undertaken with the Working Group on the 28th September. Initial work on the table had been taken by officers at Rother District Council but Members were asked to elaborate on the issues raised as further strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were discussed and included in the final SWOT analysis. The exercise was a useful tool in engaging with Members and additional issues have come out of the debate. Local knowledge is an important consideration to the Background Paper and prompted further investigation into issues initially brought up either by representations or through the consultation process.

Rye Working Group - SWOT Analysis

<p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <p>High quality historic built environment High quality landscape setting Important archaeology Access to high quality countryside Internationally important conservation sites Rye Harbour Nature Reserve Rye Harbour Cinque ports status Thriving and established fishing industry Good independent shops Good range of eateries Established tourism economy Strong civic tradition Active community transport service Farmers market (Wednesday) General market (Thursday) Active town council and strong community participation Strong arts promotion Adequate train links to Ashford Excellent local accommodation including self catering and serviced facilities. 70% of the Guest Houses and Bed and Breakfasts located in Rye have been awarded a 4 star or higher rating, with 25% of these providers achieving the highest possible rating of 5 star GOLD.</p>	<p><u>Weaknesses:</u></p> <p>Demographic imbalance within the community; Low % professional occupations; Lack of suitable affordable housing for local young people and older people.; More than 20% households have no car ; Parts of Rye suffer from deprivation; Low household income – Low wage employment; High unemployment Traffic congestion from HGVs and especially on market days from day trippers on coaches ; Adequate sustainable transport choice Access to local services by those with mobility difficulties; Flooding / emergency planning issues Rye Harbour: difficulty attracting cargoes Low retention of food shopping trips Strategic gaps in the national cycleway network A lack of a purpose built community centre for the whole town. Increasing amount of the local housing stock are second homes. Loss of key comparison goods shops such as Woolworths Prominent derelict sites around Rye Lack of accessibility to Simmons Quay Lack of a community amenities like a cinema Lack of adequate car parking facilities/ costs?</p>
<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <p>Support for cultural amenities and facilities Promote new high quality accommodation Retention of the strategic gap between Rye and Rye Harbour Improve transport choice such as rail and buses. Improve the choice of family oriented attractions Underused car parks like Gibbets Marsh. Improve public accessibility to Simmons Quay Development of a strong green tourism industry Strengthen public footpath work around Rye Fill in strategic gaps in the local cycle network Comprehensive redevelopment of Rock Channel Development of a community centre Development of prominent derelict sites Strengthen green infrastructure in the town like the rail corridor, fishing quay and the canal.</p>	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <p>Economic downturn threatens local jobs especially in the tourism economy Transport network overloaded. Demographic imbalance and income disparities continues to be exacerbated Cost of suitable housing for young people and older people Threats to the historic character of the town Threat to the viability of Port of Rye Loss of local independent shops and local services like the corner shop or local Post Office.</p>

Transport - Access to Services - Traffic Management **26th October 2010**

- 4.12 The session concentrated on transport issues, access to services and traffic management. Rye's popularity as a destination for tourists causes significant congestion on the local road network during peak season. Coach parties are popular visitors to Rye but can cause disruption to the local network and the coaches often do not utilize the overspill facility. The A259 is also frequently used by freight traffic connecting Rye Harbour Road employment area to the wider locality. Heavy goods vehicles can also cause great disruption on the network.
- 4.13 In the summer there are high volumes of people on footways particularly in the historic core. The tight urban grain especially in the centre of Rye can lead to pedestrian choke points at some of the narrow side streets. Inevitably the inadequate historic infrastructure can cause conflicts with other users such as cyclists.
- 4.14 Members reported that public transport is generally good locally with bus services good for shoppers and day visitors, but not so convenient for commuters and college students. Young people find the lack of early morning and evening services restricts journeys to college and leisure activities. A community transport service is provided for by the Rye and District Community Transport.
- 4.15 Members acknowledge rail infrastructure investment is required to improve the service. The Marshlink is a diesel operated single track which is inefficient and can lead to lengthy journey times. Members also report at peak times there is heavily congestion on the service especially as you travel beyond Hastings towards Eastbourne and Brighton.
- 4.16 In summary the main issues from the traffic management workshop are:
- Members felt strategic infrastructure like road and rail could be improved to reduce journey times to other major centres;
 - Rye suffers from traffic congestion especially during high season when the town has a high number of visitors to the area;
 - Local accessibility for Rye residents to key institutions like the Conquest Hospital and Hastings College could be improved;
 - There are gaps to link the local cycling network to the national cycling network;
 - Pedestrians with mobility impairments have difficulty accessing local services

Employment and the Economy

22nd November 2010

- 4.17 The session concentrated on Rye's economy and identifying the weaknesses while building on the strengths like its natural assets such as the high quality urban and rural environment. At present the local economy is centred on the distribution, hotels and restaurants sector and the public administration, education and health sector.
- Distribution, hotels and restaurants: this sector, which includes retail, is a major employer in the town.
 - Public administration, education and health: in terms of absolute employment, the public sector is the second largest employer.
 - Banking, finance and insurance: this is the third largest sector in the Rye economy.
- 4.18 As is expected given the market and tourism role of Rye, employment is centred on the tourism, retail and service industries, and these sectors are particularly strong in the local economy. In Rye town these tend to be linked to the retail, service and tourism sectors whereas in the rural areas there is a wider range of specialist industries, from the provision of tourist lodgings to cattle farming.
- 4.19 Skills levels are lower than average, with a low proportion of highly skilled workers and people at senior managerial role. There are also pockets of deprivation in the town and unemployment rises during the winter months.
- 4.20 Discussions also focused on accessing services especially for young people with some Members citing problems for young people travelling to further education colleges (Bexhill and Hastings College respectively) in the morning.
- 4.21 Members commented that the growth in the employment base in Rye is restricted by accessibility or connectivity. The A259 trunk road is of poor standard and unlikely to be improved in the near future. The single track Hastings - Ashford railway is relatively constrained and is also unlikely to be upgraded in the short to medium term. There is a lack of provision for pedestrians and cyclists as cited in the previous session on Transport Management.
- 4.22 The Working Group agreed to explore the possibility of diversifying the local economy beyond existing parameters by examining green tourism. Rye is fortunate to be surrounded by high quality historic and natural environments which attracts a wide cross-section of visitors especially in the summer. The countryside surrounding Rye offers potential to promote green tourism in the area.
- 4.23 Members acknowledge a significant amount of local expenditure is taken out of the local economy as a result of lack of choice for convenience shopping in

the town. Residents fortunate to have access to a car are travelling to Hastings, Ashford and Peasmarsh to do their weekly bulk shop. At the moment the only significant food retailer in Rye is the Jempsons/Budgens store on Station Approach. However the store is closed on Sundays.

4.24 In summary the main issues from the Employment and Economy workshop are:

- Building on the strong tourism sector. Develop green tourism;
- Diversifying the local economic base to tackle seasonal peaks and troughs in the employment market;
- Improving employment opportunities to tackle social deprivation in the town;
- Clawing back local shopping trade through the development of convenience food shopping.

Protecting Rye's Environment

9th November 2010

4.25 The third meeting of the Working Group centered on the environment. The majority of attendees were members of the Town Council but in addition we had Parish Councillors representation from adjacent parishes in order to put forward the views of their communities. Protecting the urban and rural environment is identified as being a significant issue for local residents.

4.26 Members are proud of the historic legacy of the town and see it as a significant asset to the community. The historic core falls under Conservation Area Status and is afforded the appropriate protection. The local economy is driven by the tourism and many visitors come to Rye to visit its landmarks. The large number of visitors during peak season does impact on the tourist attractions with upkeep of historical assets identified by Members as becoming increasingly becoming expensive and difficult to maintain.

4.27 Rye is surrounded by a high quality landscape environment. Much of the surrounding countryside is protected by national and international environmental designations. The importance of the setting of the town within the landscape was brought across in the Workshop sessions. Retaining the character of the town is a key priority for Members. The setting of the historic core of Rye, the levels and the rivers importantly aid the perception that the core is a citadel, vertically separated from the surrounding plain. From viewpoints within the town the setting provides fine quality views out to the distant landscape and coast. The tidal rivers and estuary are a key component of Rye's maritime character. To the south-east the open landscape provides a local gap between the town and Rye Harbour Village. Members were keen to retain this gap and this came across strongly in the workshops. Opportunities for development at Rye Harbour and along Rye Harbour Road should be limited to the southern end at Rye Harbour Village.

The industrial character of the Harbour Road area should be maintained and not mixed with housing development as Members of the Working Group thought this was inappropriate. Rye Harbour Village has a distinctive historic character.

4.28 Rye has a complex relationship with flood risk. The town is at risk from both fluvial and tidal flooding. Significant investment has gone into flood defence. Please refer to Map 8 Flood Risk.

4.29 In summary the main issues from the Environment workshop are:

- That character of the historic Citadel and its distinctive landscape setting are preserved for future generations.
- There is significant congestion from vehicles in the historic core
- The retention of a Strategic Gap between Rye and Rye Harbour Road

Key Issues

4.30 Through the workshops and meetings with Members of the Working Group the consensus was that the Vision and the Preferred Strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour has generally been accepted. However it was clear from the workshops Members thought it was important to give greater consideration to a number of issues and due prominence in the submission version of the Core Strategy.

4.31 Although all the areas in the preferred strategy will be covered in the submission draft of the strategy there are three issues that should be given greater consideration and they are: Traffic Management, Employment and Economy and finally the Environment.

Section 5 Transport and Traffic Management

Transport and Traffic Management

- 5.1 The local economy is dominated by tourism and visitors generally come to Rye to either on a coach or private car. During peak summer Rye town centre can be heavily congested around the tight medieval grain causing noise and air pollution. In addition the pollutants emitted from cars and coaches can be detrimental to some historical buildings in the town.
- 5.2 To understand and develop a strategy for Rye it is important to understand travel pattern currently in operation in Rye.

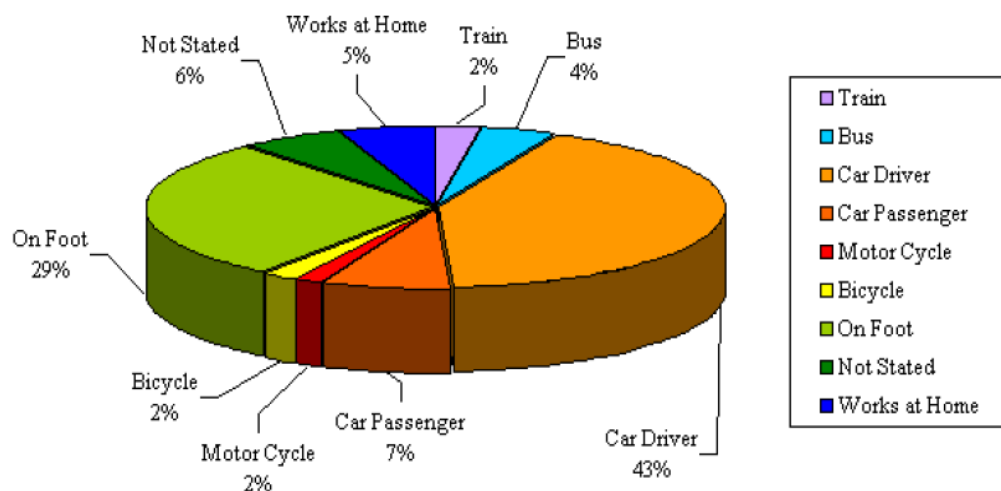


Figure 10: The Travel Modes of the workforce of Rye, both residents and commuters from elsewhere to Rye (1991 Census)

- 5.3 The above graphic highlights the travel to work patterns of Rye's workforce (1991 census) including Residents and commuters. Travel to Work patterns are dominated by people travelling to work by car. A significant amount of people also travelled to work by foot which suggests the local population who worked in Rye made short trips while people who tended to work further afield make the trip by car. The graphic Figure 11 highlights in 2001 over half of all people aged 16-74 in employment made their trip to work by private motor car. This was followed by walking or cycling, and people who work mainly from home. The use of public transport as a mode of transport to get to work was relatively weak which may suggest the frequency, connectivity, price competitiveness and convenience was impacting on the use of public transport.

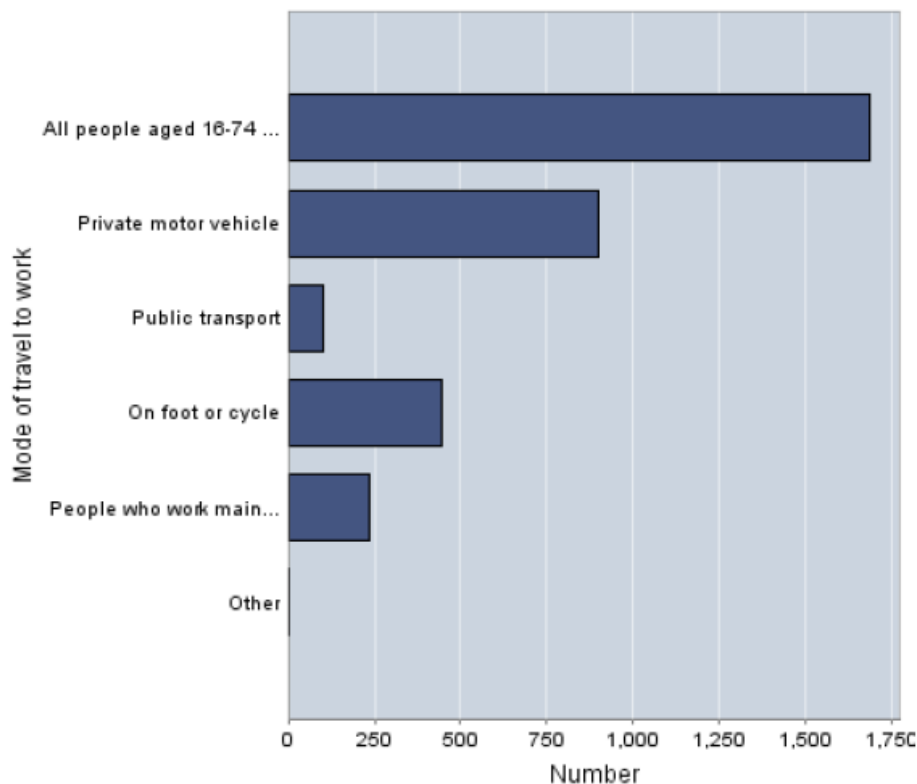


Figure 11: Mode of Travel to Work in Rye in 2001 (ESIF)

- 5.4 Data on car ownership from ESCC indicate 48% of households within Rye Parish have access to one car while 30% of households within Rye do not have access to a car. Households without a car tend to be reliant on public transport to access employment, services and recreation. This is presented graphically in Figure 12 showing Car Ownership in Rye and the Surrounding Parishes.
- 5.5 Appendix 21 shows of all households with no car in the Rye Ward 62% are classified as pensioner households. Older people especially those with mobility issues can often be dependent on public transport and community transport to access shops and local services.

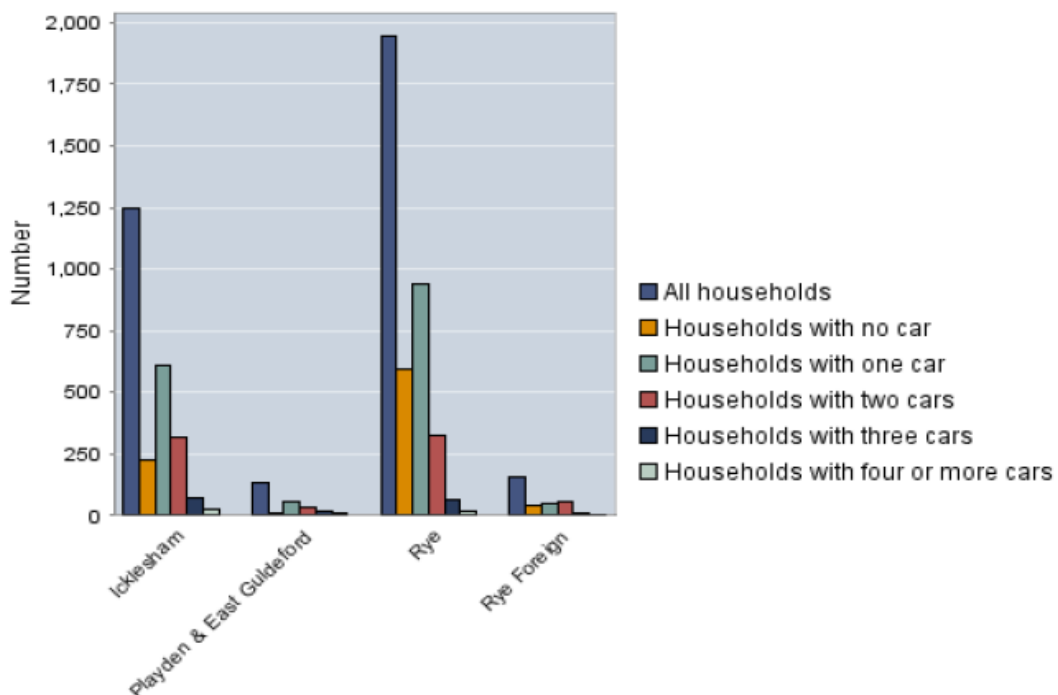


Figure 12: Car Ownership in Rye and Surrounding Parishes (2001) ESIF

Education and the Journey to School

- 5.6 Rye College (formerly called Thomas Peacocke Community College, and before that Thomas Peacocke School) is Rye's secondary school. The two primary schools, Tilling Green Infant School and Freda Gardham Community School, were replaced by a new school, Rye Primary, adjacent to the secondary institution, in September 2008. The original Rye Primary School was situated just off Ferry Road near the railway crossing. Please refer to Figure 13. Local pupils tend to walk to Rye College whilst pupils from Rye's hinterland tend to travel in private car or dedicated school buses.

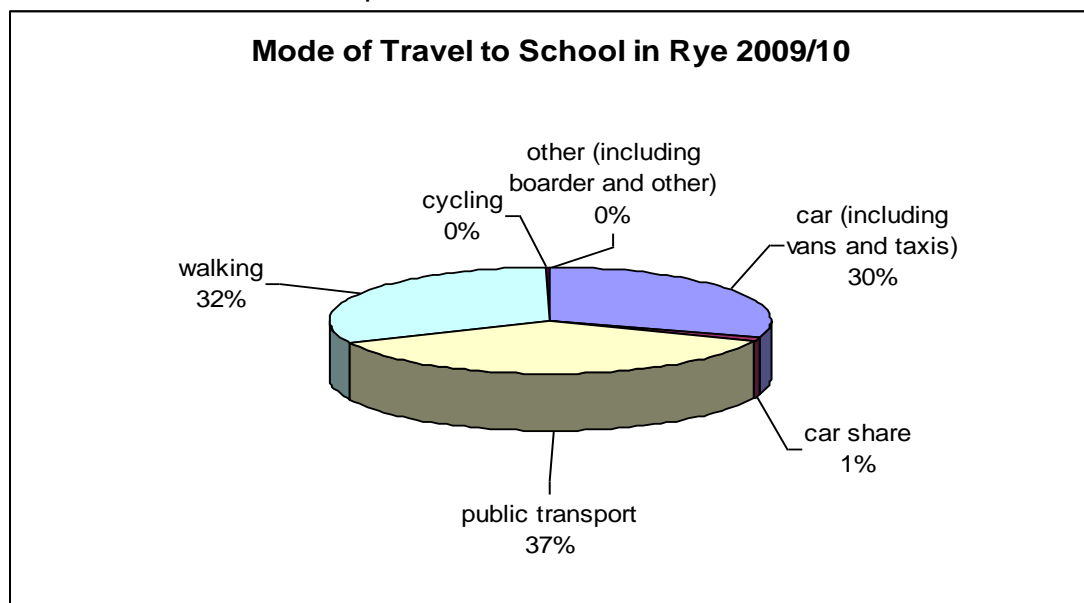


Figure 13: Mode of Travel to School in Rye 09/10

Traffic Flows along Key Junctions

- 5.7 Figure 14 presents traffic flows in Rye in 2001 at various key junctions. The data highlights several points in the current road network where there are problems. The table highlights several points along the A259 where the trunk road experiences heavy traffic flows on daily basis. Traffic along Wish Street is also a significant point where there is poor visibility at many junctions for both drivers and pedestrians. Heavy congestion especially in the summer season adds to air pollution and dominates the town. The A259 trunk road is the most significant road in the eastern half of the district. It passes through Rye carrying local and through traffic. The trunk road is also vital to local commerce and can often be congested at peak times with HGV traffic having to navigate the tight bends and steep hills near Winchelsea or at Monkbretton Bridge where it is narrow permitting one HGV or two cars to cross at a time.
- 5.8 259 trunk road: the main south coast route runs through Rye. Key destinations include Hastings, Folkestone, the Channel Tunnel, Dover, and indirectly, London. Parking at South Undercliff contributes to traffic congestion, and crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists are inadequate and difficult. Sharp bends to the east and the steep hill and hairpin bend at Winchelsea to the west are among the local inadequacies of the A259 as a trunk road.
- 5.9 Appendix 35-37 highlights traffic counts at selected points in Rye and is graphically represented by flow diagrams highlighting East Sussex County Council's 12 hour manual traffic counts undertaken on a two year cycle across the county as part of ESCC's routine base monitoring programme. Key points in interpreting these diagrams are as follows;
- 1) The thickness of the lines represents the volume of traffic.
 - 2) The different colours represent the different flows from particular arms of the junction. For example Diagram 1 the Green line represents traffic going north on the A259 and Red represents traffic joining the A259 from the Camber Road
 - 3) The numbers represent the directional flow so, for example, on Appendix 35 Diagram 1 the bold highlighted figures are interpreted as follows:

A259 Northbound

4317 (247) 361

This shows the total traffic flow heading northwards on the A259, the number of heavy goods vehicles (the number in brackets) and other goods vehicles

A259 Southbound

7403 (356) 518

This is the total traffic southbound on the A259; the second figure is the number of heavy goods vehicles (the number in brackets) and the third figure is the number of other goods vehicles.

Camber Road **3710 (133) 203**

This shows the total traffic, HGV and other goods vehicles turning from the A259 onto the Camber Road.

- 5.10 The 12 hour traffic count flow undertaken over a period in 2009 highlights a relatively small window of activity however it does show the largest volume of traffic is travelling along the A259 through the town. Further evidence of this is demonstrated in Figures.14 & 15 below where the majority of traffic volumes are dominated by movement along the trunk road.

Plan Ref.	Road (See Figure 9)	AADT for all traffic *	All Vehicles 7 am-7pm	HGV 7am – 7pm (1)	AM Peak 8.00-9.00	PM Peak 17.00-18.00
1	A259	10565	9137	324 (3.5%)	787	865
2	C98	3835	3317	233 (7%)	294	302
3	A259	12351	10682	451 (4%)	925	977
4	A259	12202	10611	452 (4.5%)	920	1055
5	A259	10807	9398	515 (5.5%)	765	884
6	Wish Street	8090	7035	195 (3%)	647	705
7	Wish Street	6934	6859	203 (3%)	551	434
8	Cinque Ports St	4333	3727	94 (2.5%)	275	422
9	Station Approach	7073	6084	136 (2%)	612	555
10	B2089	6715	5776	145 (2.5%)	502	560
11	A259	9460	8275	536 (6.5%)	742	801
12	A259	8596	7520	505 (7%)	741	738
13	A268	6308	5518	146 (2.5%)	512	527
14	Bedford Place	6277	5464	143 (2.5%)	516	568
15	Landgate	3884	3381	19 (0.5%)	312	365
16	A268	7503	6531	138 (2%)	573	682
17	A259	7962	7046	454 (6.5%)	556	724
18	C24	4008	3485	152 (4.5%)	270	361
19	A259	4652	4117	304 (7.5%)	322	431
20	A268	6008	5345	126 (2.5%)	436	551
21	B2082	1831	1629	40 (2.5%)	153	176
22	A268	4454	3963	95 (2.5%)	306	405

* AADT, for all vehicles including Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and bicycles.

(1): HGVs as a percentage of 'All Vehicles 7am to 7pm'

Figure 14: Traffic Flows in Rye 2001 (Rye LATS 2003)

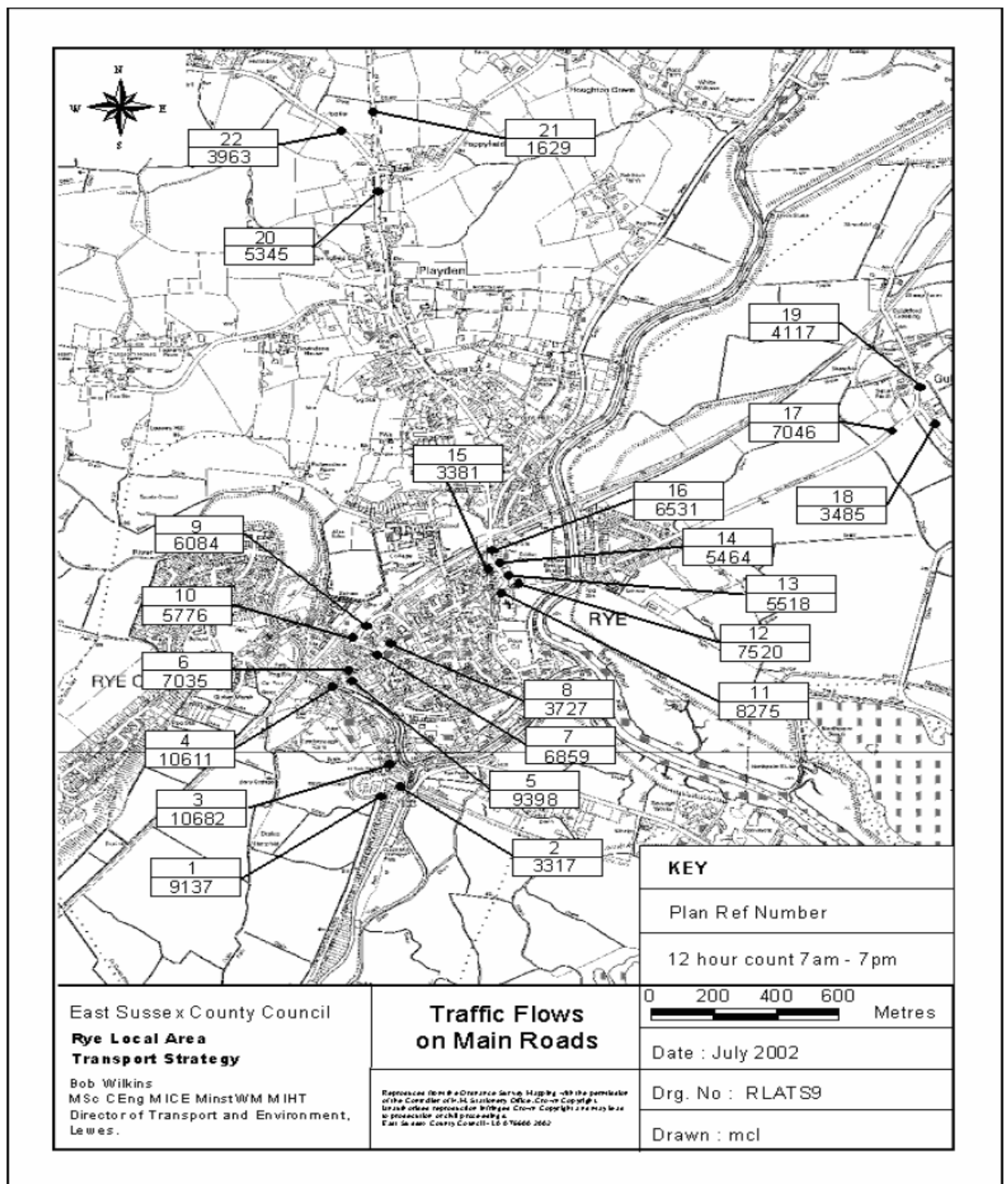


Figure 15: Traffic Flow on Main Roads 2001 (Rye LATs, 2003)

5.11 The following are key junctions in Rye and Rye Harbour the surrounding areas:

- **A268:** carries traffic to Playden, Rye Foreign, Four Oaks and Beckley, and links to the A21 to Tunbridge Wells and the M25. Traffic speeds are reported to be high.

- **B2089:** carries traffic to Udimore and Battle, and is used as an alternative route by traffic to avoid the hairpin bend and steep hill at Winchelsea. This traffic adds to that using Station Approach and unsuitable town centre roads. Parking on the road in residential areas contributes to poor traffic flow.
- **Deadman's Lane:** is only wide enough for one car, and is used as a route to and from the town centre, mainly by local traffic. It is a pedestrian route to Rye College but has no footway or lighting.
- **High Street:** is used by local and visitor traffic, and heavily used by tourists and shoppers on foot. Delivery vehicles block the road at times and some cars park all day, inhibiting pedestrian movement, (as do narrow footways).
- **Rye Harbour Road** is a no-through road leading to Rye Harbour Village and Nature Reserve through industrial areas, and is used by commercial, residential and tourist traffic. There is a sharp bend and narrow bridge, no footway or lighting for much of its length, and no cycle facilities.

Traffic and Tourism in Rye

- 5.12 Visitors have a significant impact on the transport network. Figure 16 is taken from a 1066 and Hastings Visitor Study undertaken in 2009 and shows the majority of respondents visited Rye as part of a day trip and the distribution of nights stayed at Rye is similar to the whole region. The graphic (Figure 17) also shows the majority travelled to Rye by car (more than 80% of visitors and more than the region average) and less people travelled to Rye by train. Visitors chose to drive to the town in a car. The other significant modes of transport to get to Rye is either by rail or coach. The majority of visitors to Rye visit the many attractions the town has to offer such as Heritage Centre, Town Model, museums, art galleries, the local Nature Reserve. Many people also eat at the many restaurants or have a drink in the local pubs. The local market held every Thursday is also very popular attracting people from the surrounding locality.
- 5.13 Local festivals held in Rye are also very popular and can bring in significant numbers to the town. The Coach parties to Rye are popular and Members during the Workshop sessions report that up to 40 per day in peak season arrive in the town. Coach drivers stop in inappropriate places to drop off or pick up causing congestion and conflicts with other road users. Coaches have been observed to reverse out onto Station Approach and there are little facilities for coach drivers. Members cite parking for coaches is a significant issue for Town Members where the price of parking some Members have mentioned has led to inappropriate parking away from designated coach parking areas.
- 5.14 In general Members in the workshops welcomed visitors by coaches but are keen to discourage illegal parking by coach operators and adding to the congestion on the local road network.

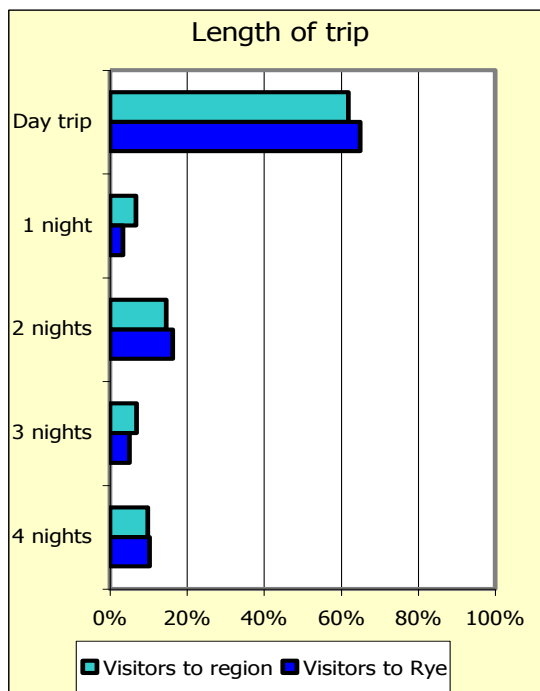


Figure 16: Length of Trip for Visitors to Rye: 1066 & Hastings Visitors Study 2009

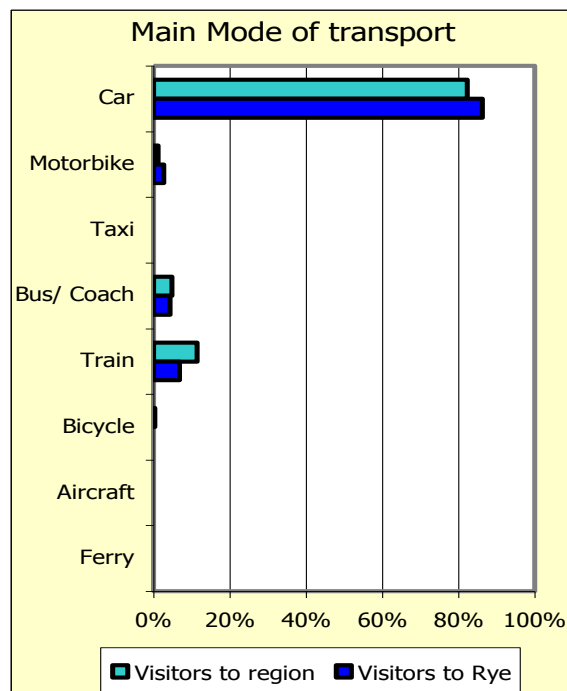


Figure 17: Main mode of Transport for Visitors to Rye: 1066 & Hastings Visitors Study

- 5.15 Rye is also a popular stopping point for many visitors on their way to Camber holiday parks. The popularity of Camber during the summer season can cause the local road network to become congested.

Cycling

- 5.16 The National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 2 approaches Rye from the east and west as shown on Appendix 39 and 40. However the network is incomplete with Members reporting the NCN is unsuitable in places for cyclists with difficult gradients or conflicts with other road users. There is a lack of secure parking at key visitor attractions. The A259 is particularly difficult to cross at certain points where there is poor visibility and heavy traffic (Rye LATs 2003).

Car Parking

- 5.17 The large amount of visitors to Rye during the peak season creates a large demand for car parking facilities within the town. Car parking was cited as a significant issue in the workshops. There is approx. 2000 main car parking spaces either administrated by RDC or are private operators. In addition this is supplemented by on-street car parking provision. Figure 18 shows the main car parks and associated charges in Rye.

Rye and Rye Harbour Study

- 5.18 Gibbet Marsh is a long stay car park but is underused by visitors and local residents with many citing poor lighting, uncompetitive pricing structure for short stay and the location of the car park is considered to be on the periphery of the town centre.

Car Park	Managed By	Number of Spaces	Charges			
			Up to 1hr	Up to 2hrs	Up to 4hrs	All day
Gibbet Marsh	RDC	300	-	1.30	-	3.50
Bedford Place	RDC	60	1.00	2.00	4.40	6.60
Lucknow Place	RDC	70	1.00	2.00	4.40	6.60
Cinque Port Street	RDC	32	1.00	2.00	4.40	6.60
Rye Swimming Pool Car Park	RDC	50	2.20	3.30	6.60	11.00
Gungarden	RDC	9	Annual Permit @ 900.00			
Strand Quay	RDC	24	1.00	2.00	4.40	6.60
Strand car park dedicated bays 1-10	RDC	24	Annual Permit @ 529.00			
Station Car Park	Rail Operator	70	-	-	-	2.40
Budgens	Private	80	Free parking for 2 hours for customers			
Cattle Market	Private	150	-	-	-	1.50
Wish Market	Private	90	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Corrals Yard	Private	60	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Rye Harbour	RDC	180	Free 24hrs			

Figure 18: Car Parking Charges in Rye (charges to come in 1st April 2011/12)

- 5.19 Quite often visitors circulate around the town 'looking' for parking which causes greater congestion on the local road system. Inappropriate parking and lack of enforcement in places means cars can be parked all day despite restrictions in place. Car parking for visitors is examined in further detail in Section 6.

Rail Services

- 5.20 Rye is served by the East Coastway service which connects Ashford International and Hastings. Members during the workshop cited the diesel-operated single track operation was a strategic weakness for residents and local businesses. Rye is situated within Network Rail's designated Kent Rail Utilisation Strategy (RUS). The RUS is a strategic document meant to inform investment decisions by the rail authorities. The single track operation limits the number of trains per hour that can operate on the track between Hastings and Rye. It should be noted that there is overcrowding that occurs further to the west along the East Coastway (Hastings to Brighton). The Local Authorities have consistently sought electrification and further re-dualling of the track, as well as service improvements. The inclusion of an additional passing place, would give more flexibility to the provision of services.
- 5.21 A serious failure of the Kent RUS is that it appears to rely on recommendations based on current demand. Consideration must take into account the South East Plan's housing growth and economic regeneration policies. The RUS appears to be demand-led rather than solution-led. This is an important issue if the Government's model shift policies are to be successful. Better railway services are required to achieve less reliance on the private motor car. There is nothing to encourage this in the Kent RUS and neither is there anything to improve integration and co-ordination with bus services.

Access to Services

- 5.22 Accessibility is an opportunity to get to important services – either by the service being available where it is required, or by transport being available to get to the service. Having poor accessibility can restrict an individual's quality of life, affecting the job or training opportunities available and the ability to access essential health services. Good accessibility is especially important for disadvantaged groups such as those with specific support needs (older people, young people and people with mobility impairment) or those without access to a car.
- 5.23 Rye is generally well served by services. Rye Town Centre is considered the main service centre in the eastern half of the District, with most of the population in the town enjoying journey times of less than 30 minutes to main employment and services centres. The modes of transport considered for employment centres were public transport, walking and cycling. This supports Rye's role as a significant service centre for the eastern half of the district.
- 5.24 A GP surgery is currently located in Rye Hill. Rye has particularly poor **direct** accessibility to hospital facilities. Conquest Hospital, in the north suburbs of Hastings, is the closest facility. Households without a car are disadvantaged when they are required to make appointments at the Conquest or merely visiting relatives or friends.

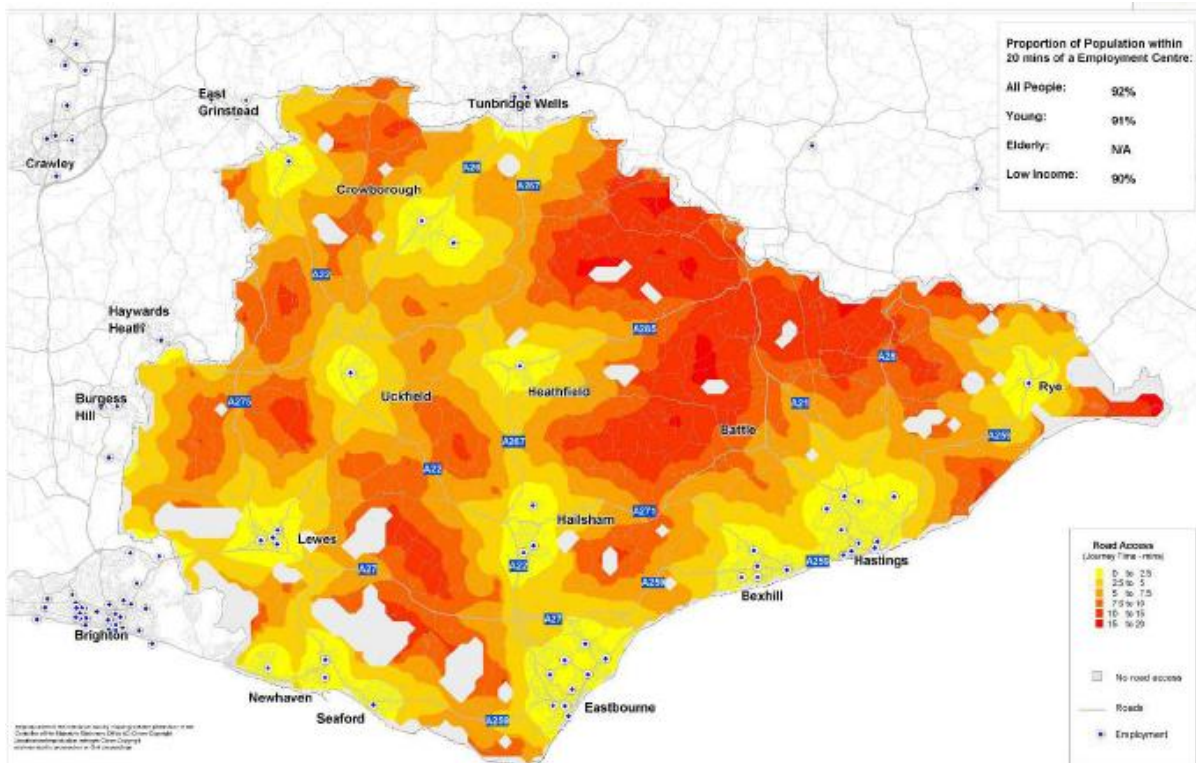


Figure 19: Road Access to Employment Source: Local Transport Plan Appendix A March '06 ESCC

- 2.25 Poor transport links and inadequate public transport have been reported by local stakeholders and Members of the Working Group to inhibit employment opportunities. Figure 19 shows journey time contours of access to employment centres. East Sussex has a relatively high unemployment rate for a County in the south east. The combination of low bus usage and a high proportion of people employed locally could be attributed to lack of access by bus to other employment centres and limits the employment opportunities of people living in Rye and the surrounding hinterland. Figure 20 lists the main employment centres located in the eastern half of the District.

Location	Type of Employment
Rye Centre	Retail, tourism, accommodation, catering, and education (main employment in the study area)
Rye Harbour Industrial Estates	Light industrial, chemical, furniture manufacture
Camber Centre	Tourism
Hastings Centre	Retail, education, tourism government
Hastings Industrial Estates	Light industrial (major employers outside Hastings Centre)
Conquest Hospital	Hospital as an employment centre

Figure 20: Main Employment Areas for Residents of Rye and the surrounding hinterland

- 5.26 Access by bus to the GP surgeries in the centre of Rye is good. There are direct bus services from all parts of the town and most of the population is accessible in less than 30 minutes. Only Pett, in the southwest has a bus service to a GP surgery which requires a change in Guestling. Please refer to Figure 21.

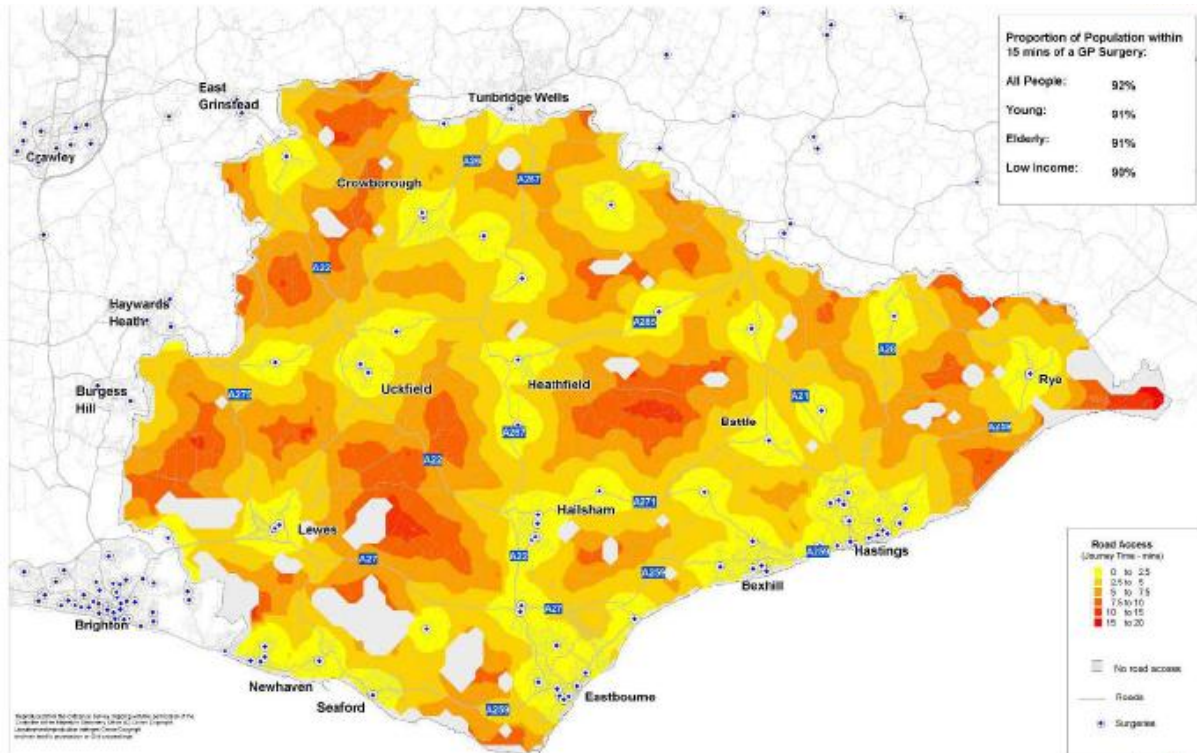


Figure 21: Road Access to Surgeries – Source: Local Transport Plan Appendix A. March '06 ESCC

- 5.27 Young people's access to Further Education institutions such as Bexhill College and Hastings College is graphically represented in Figure 22 and highlights the fact that residents living in Rye are relatively disadvantage in accessing further education opportunities with journey times greater than 30 minutes. Residents from Rye are required to changes modes of transport to access Further Education institutions and there is limited provision for direct access. High transport costs could also potentially be a deterrent for young people to take up further education but there is no current data for this.

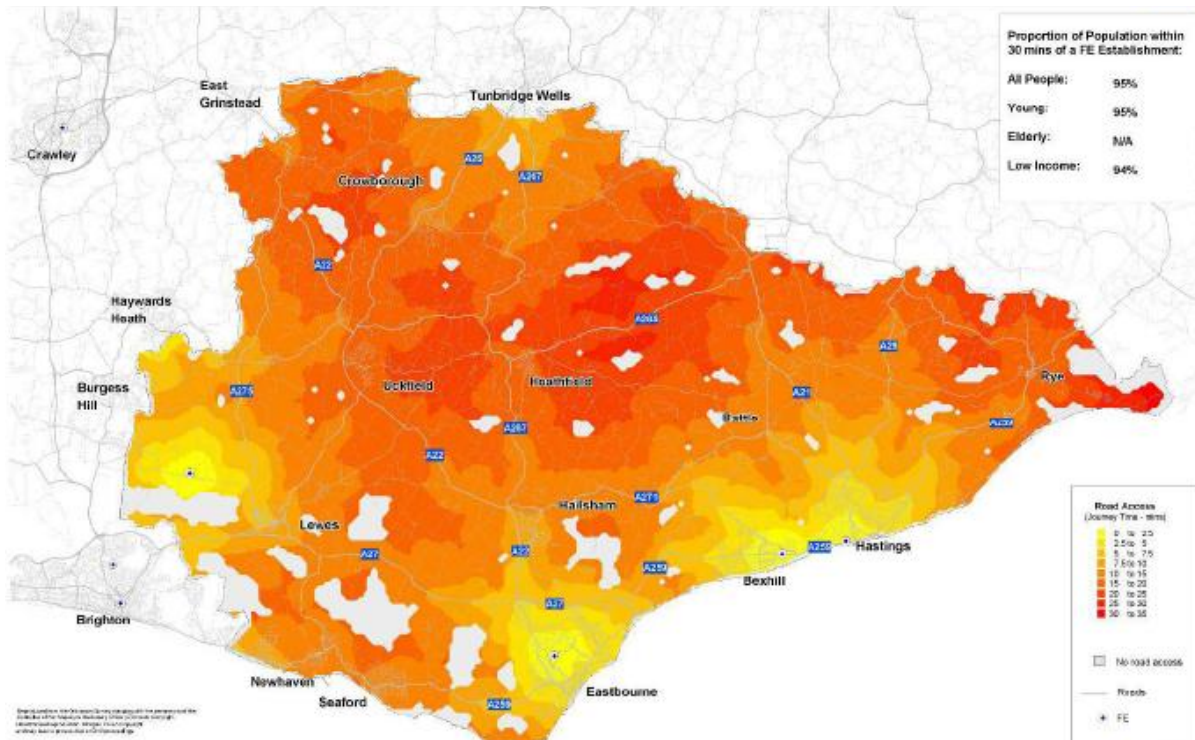


Figure 22: Road Access to Further Education Source: Local Transport Plan Appendix A March '06 ESCC

- 5.28 The majority of residents in Rye and its surrounding areas travel to Hastings Conquest Hospital to access hospital services. Residents without access to a car and rely on public transport are dependent on direct services to the Conquest. Quite often the journey would involve an interchange.

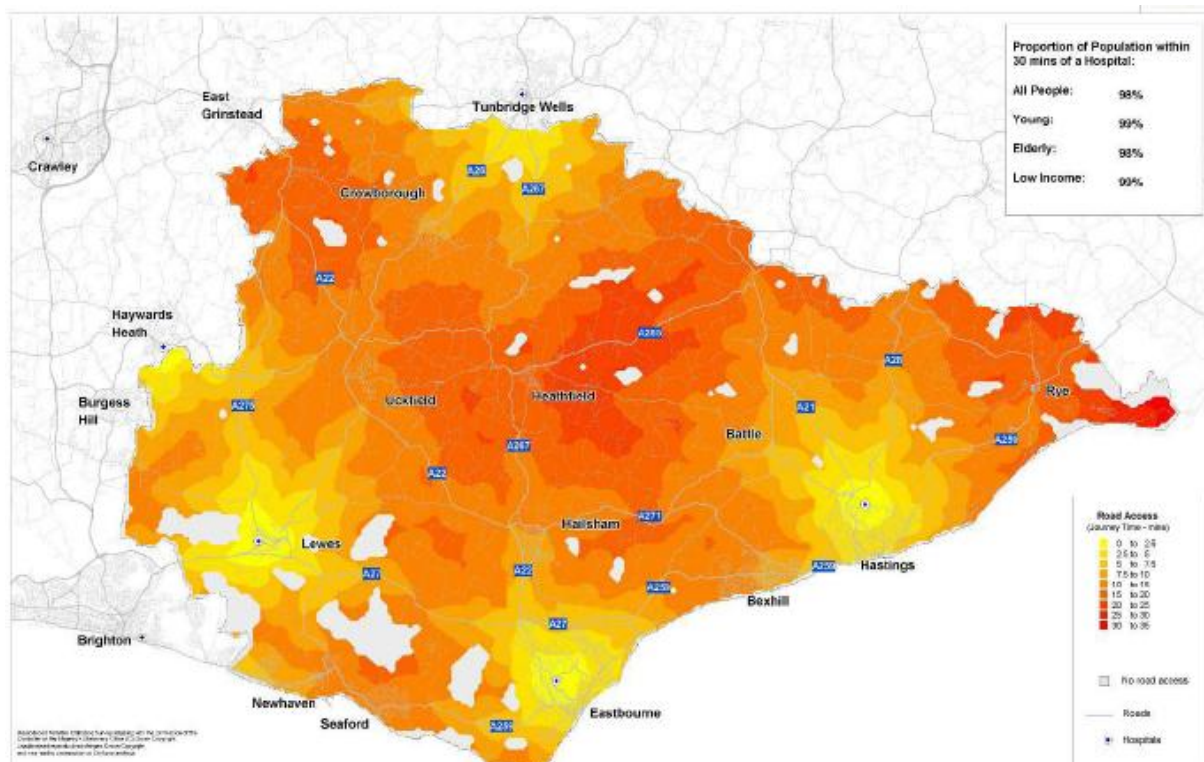


Figure 23: Road Access to Hospitals Source: Local Transport Plan Appendix A March '06 ESCC

- 5.29 Overall, access to hospitals, further education and major centres (Eastbourne, Hastings, and Brighton) by public transport/walking is worse than to other facilities in the county. Less than half the total population is able to access these facilities by public transport/walking (less than 30 minutes). In general, the areas of worst accessibility are the more rural areas of the county. Access by car is good to all facilities. Households without access to a car are disproportionately at a disadvantage. Groups relying on public transport such as young people and the elderly are affected the most.
- 5.30 In summary there are many issues concerning traffic management in the town. The evidence shows the following:
- Rye is relatively self-contained in terms of employment and services;
 - Connectivity to key services such as higher education and the Conquest Hospital can be improved;
 - The majority of visitors come to Rye in private motor car. Parking and traffic management in the centre of Rye is an issue.
 - Rye's local road network is heavily congested and the A259 carries significant volumes of traffic;
 - Short trips (access to schools and local employment centres) tend to be made by foot or cycling;
 - 30% of households in Rye do not have access to a car and therefore they have difficulty in accessing education, health facilities and local services.

Section 6: Employment and Economy

Employment and Economy

- 6.1 Rye has a strong tourist role, with employment centred on the retail, service and tourism sectors. Rye lags behind the rest of the South East in many economic indicators - it has a low economy activity rate and low employment growth. Furthermore, much employment relating to the tourist industry is seasonal, and unemployment can be high in winter³. Figure 24 shows Unemployment in 2001⁴.

Unemployment category	All economically active people aged 16-74	Percent unemployed aged 16-74	Percent unemployed aged 16-24	Percent unemployed aged 50 and over	Percent long-term unemployed	Percent never worked
Geography						
England and Wales	25,022,204	5.0	1.3	0.9	1.5	0.5
South East	4,037,629	3.3	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.2
East Sussex	220,737	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1
Rother	34,804	3.8	0.7	1.2	1.3	0.2
Rye	1,797	5.5	0.7	2.4	1.8	0.0

Source: 2001 Census

Figure 24: Unemployment in 2001 (ESIF)

Occupations	All people aged 16 - 74 in employment	Percent managers and senior officials	Percent professional	Percent associate professional and technical	Percent administrative and secretarial	Percent skilled trades
Geography						
England and Wales	23,627,754	15.1	11.2	13.8	13.3	11.6
South East	3,888,756	17.4	12.1	14.6	13.8	11.0
East Sussex	211,242	16.4	10.5	13.9	13.1	13.2
Rother	33,398	17.1	10.2	13.8	12.8	14.1
Rye	1,698	16.3	8.4	10.5	9.4	17.8

Figure 25: Occupations in 2001 (ESIF)

- 6.2 Figure 26 illustrates that Rye has a greater proportion of people aged 16-74 with no qualifications than the national figure. The occupational structure of Rye residents shows an under-representation of managers and senior officials and a higher proportion of skilled and low skilled workers compared to Rother and the South East. The proportion of people gaining the highest

³ Please refer to Appendix 12 shows the rates of JSA claims in Rye rises during winter months but between June and Sept unemployment falls and remains stable.

⁴ Please refer to Appendix 13 - Unemployment Estimates 2004 -10. In June 2010 unemployment in Rother is approx 6%, slightly below the South East rate and well below the East Sussex rate of 6.5% - 7% .

qualifications is relatively weak in Rye as highlighted by Figure 25 when measured against the District and the County. Please refer to Appendix 8.

Qualifications	All people aged 16 - 74	Percent with no qualifications	Percent highest qualification attained level 1	Percent highest qualification attained level 2	Percent highest qualification attained level 3
Geography					
England and Wales	37,607,438	29.1	16.6	19.4	8.3
South East	5,766,307	23.9	17.1	21.2	9.2
East Sussex	340,022	27.2	17.6	21.3	8.1
Rother	57,671	28.6	16.7	21.0	7.6
Rye	2,902	34.1	17.9	18.4	7.2

Figure 26: Qualifications Breakdown in 2001 (ESIF)

- 6.3 The relatively strong dominance of the sectors: distribution, hotels and restaurants, public administration, education and health of these sectors in the Rye economy exemplifies the importance of tourism in the area, and the role of Rye as a market town servicing its rural hinterland. Figure 27 shows a breakdown of the local economy in Rye. Please refer to Appendix 7 which shows the largest category of employment for Rye is Distribution, hotels and restaurants with 30.6%. Appendix 9 shows the majority of the working population is in full time employment (84.3%) while the remaining 15.7% is in part-time employment. Part-time employment in Rye is above the District and South East average.

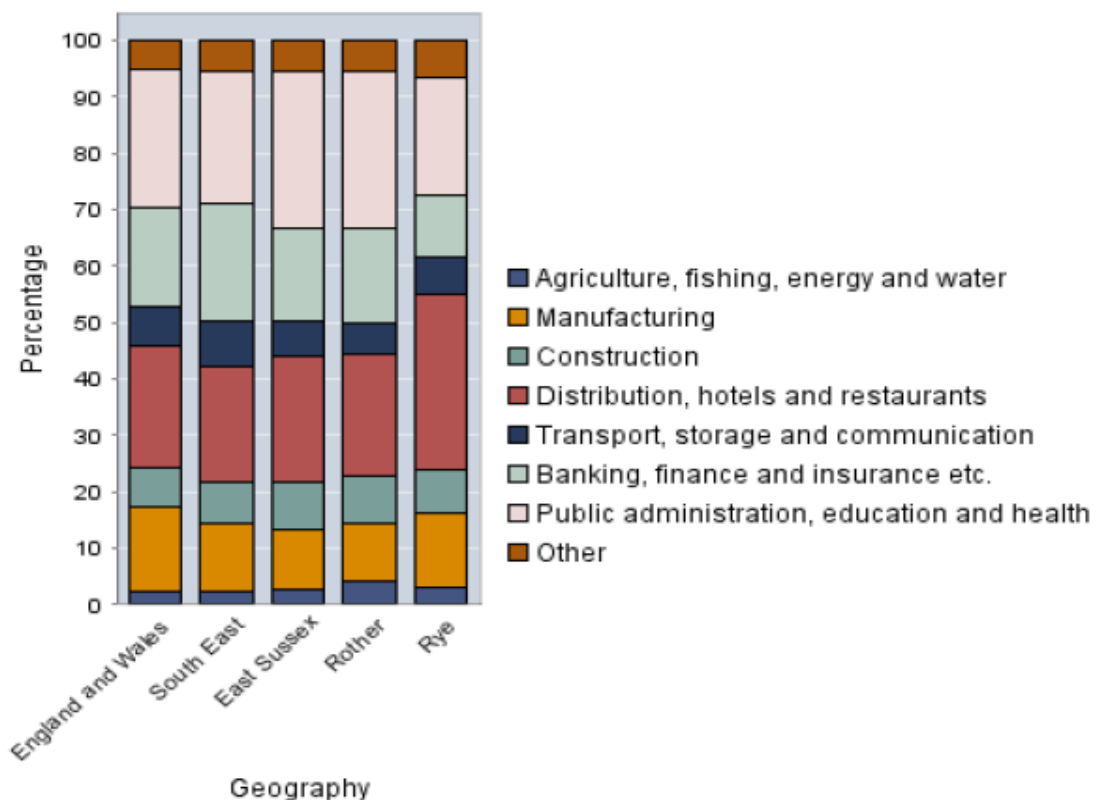


Figure 27: Industry of Employment 2001 (ESIF)

Average	Mean income £	Median income £
Geography		
Great Britain	35,299	28,445
South East	40,239	33,232
East Sussex	34,569	28,164
Rother	32,768	26,678
Rye	26,924	22,002

Figure 28: Average Household Income 2001 – ESIF

6.4 In Rye both the Mean and Median income are below the Rother average and well below the average for the South East as shown in Figure 28.

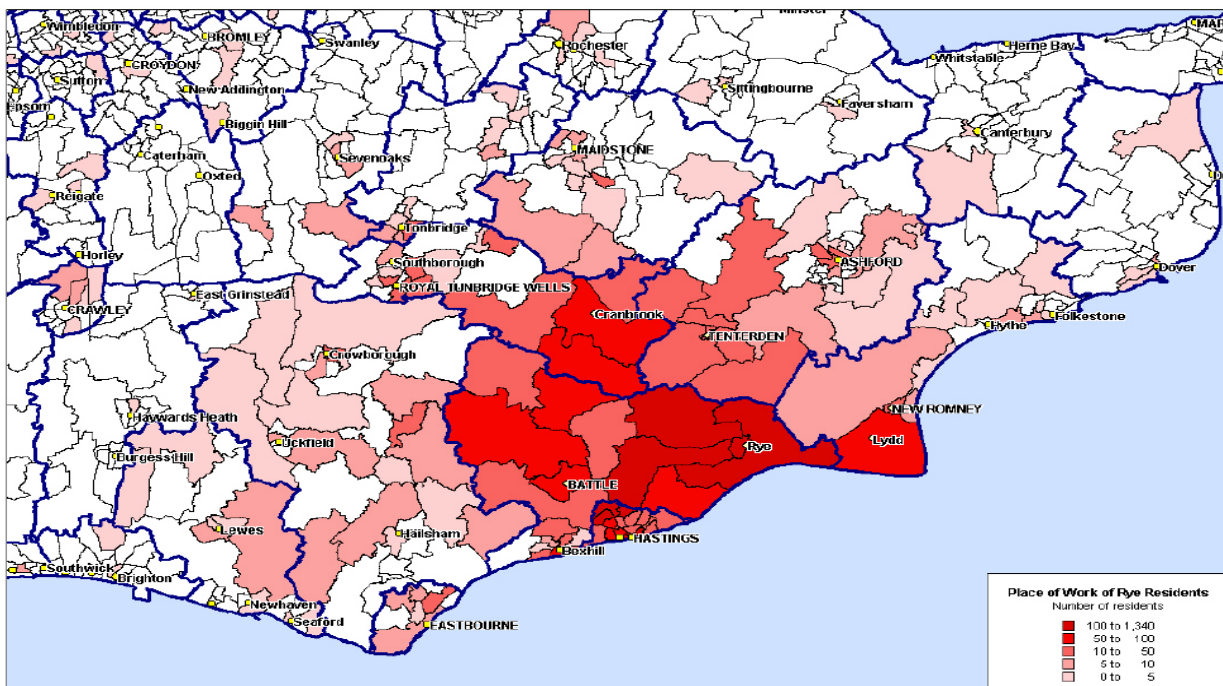


Figure 29: The Place of Work of Rye Residents – Rye Economic Appraisal (Roger Tyms & Partners 2004)

6.5 The main destinations outside the Rye area for Rye residents to work are Hastings, London, Battle, Lydd and other parts of Rother, Tunbridge Wells and Ashford Districts. However, very few people living in Rye commute to Ashford town. The workplaces of the remaining residents are distributed across the South East and beyond. The place of work of Rye residents is illustrated in Figure 29. The commuting profile of Rye shows there is a relatively high self containment rate.

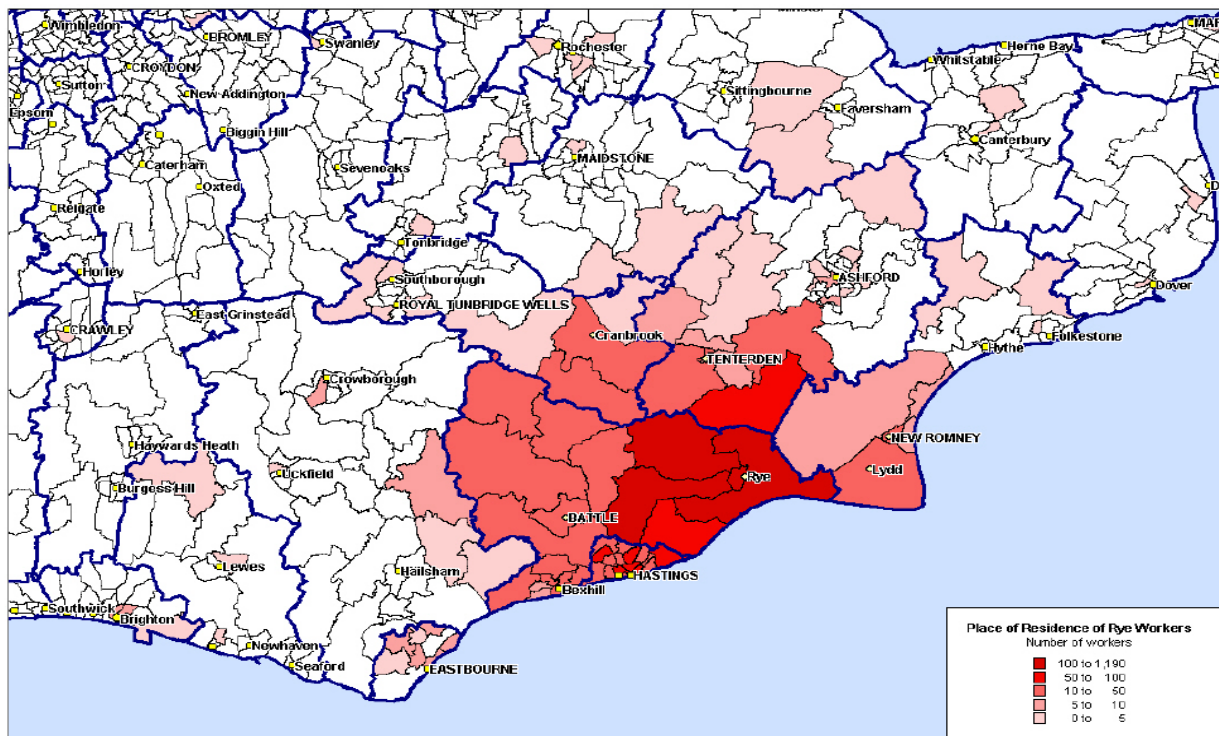


Figure 30: The Place of Residence of Rye Residents – Rye Economic Appraisal (Roger Tyms & Partners 2004)

- 6.6 The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a measure of multiple deprivation at the small area level, and includes seven domain indicators of deprivation. It is based at Super Output Area (SOA) level, with each SOA created from a number of Census Output Areas. Please refer to Appendix 15 which is a graphical representation of Index of Multiple Deprivation Scores with SOA 004E scoring relatively poorly in a number of indices.

Variable	Number of households below 60% of GB median	Percentage of households below 60% GB median	Total number of households
Geography			
Great Britain	6,925,818	26	26,144,498
South East	744,118	21	3,599,636
East Sussex	61,826	27	233,237
Rother	11,769	29	41,175
Rye	740	37	2,019

Source: CACI, 2009

Figure 31: Households in Poverty in 2009 (ESIF)

- 6.7 Compared to the rest of England, analysis of deprivation in the Rye area shows a mixed picture. The level of deprivation experienced in the Rye area is often greater than that of the hinterland, but in the domains which are influenced by accessibility, the reverse is true and the rural areas experience

high levels of deprivation. In several cases, higher deprivation is experienced in the northern parts of Rye.

- 6.8 **Income Deprivation:** this shows the proportion of the population experiencing income deprivation in an area. In the Rye area, the majority of SOAs show average or below average levels of income deprivation. There are pockets of higher deprivation, namely the northern part of Rye and the Rye Harbour SOA. Please refer to Appendix 29 and 30 showing Income Deprivation affecting Children and Older People in SOAs. Both indicate SOA 004E is among the 10% most deprived areas in England.
- 6.9 Appendix 18 shows the Rye area has a higher percentage of Children living in Poverty than the National, Regional and County percentage rate with a significant concentration located in SOA 004E.
- 6.10 **Health Deprivation and Disability:** this shows areas with high rates of people who die prematurely, who are disabled, or whose quality of life is impaired by poor health. The majority of the Rye area experiences below average levels of health deprivation, the only exception being the northern Rye area which is above average.
- 6.11 **Education, Skills and Training Deprivation:** this captures a lack of attainment amongst children and young people, as well a lack of qualifications in terms of skills. Rye and Rye Harbour experience fairly high levels of deprivation, with several areas falling within the most deprived 20% of SOAs nationally. This is supported by Appendix 26 which demonstrates children in Rye with 5 or more passes at GCSE is significantly below the District and County average.
- 6.12 **Barriers to Housing and Services:** this represents the geographical barriers to housing and key local services, as well issues relating to access to housing such as affordability. This domain shows the converse of many of those listed above, with a low level of deprivation in Rye town, and a large portion of the surrounding rural area experiencing very high levels of deprivation. Three of the SOAs in Rye's Hinterland fall within the most deprived 5% of SOAs in England.
- 6.13 Much of Rye's Hinterland experiences above average levels of deprivation in this domain, with Rye Harbour experiencing particularly high deprivation levels. Conversely, Rye itself shows average or below average deprivation.
- 6.14 **Crime:** this measures the rate of recorded crime for burglary, theft, criminal damage and violence. Rye town and the area to the east of Rye experience above average levels of crime, but the remainder of the hinterland experiences low level of crime.

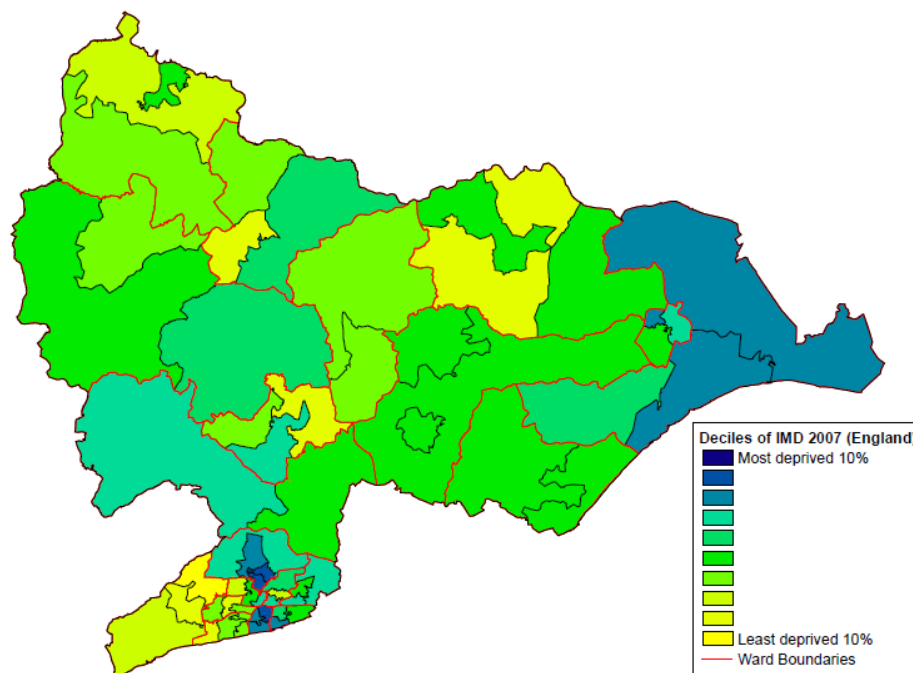


Figure 32: Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2007 – Rother super output areas (ESIF 2007)

- 6.15 Figure 32 shows some parts of the eastern half of the district is among the bottom quarter of indices for deprivation. The Strategy for Rye must address these problems by investing in employment opportunities, tackling inequalities and improving social mobility.

Development of Green Tourism Sector

- 6.16 The medieval town of Rye itself is a cultural and historic tourist attraction, and there are many attractions such as art galleries, museums, castles and gardens based in Rye town and the surrounding villages. However it is the countryside surrounding Rye that offers the most in terms of green tourism.
- 6.17 The countryside surrounding Rye is subject to a number of environmental designations, signifying its landscape character and conservation importance. There are a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. In addition, much of the surrounding area is classed as the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and there are a number of Ancient Woodlands. Please refer to Map 6.

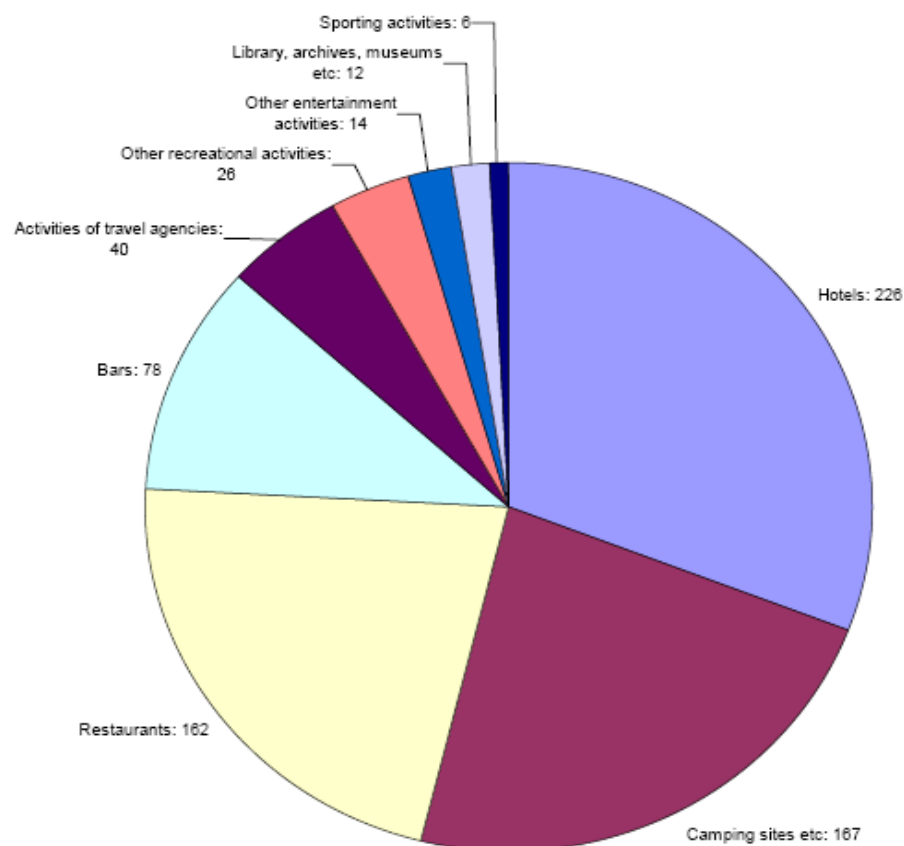


Figure 33: Employment in the Tourism Sector in Rye and its Hinterland 2002 (Roger Tyms and Partners, 2004)

- 6.18 Figure 33 is a breakdown of employment in the tourism sector in Rye. As the graphic demonstrates much of the employment in tourism is linked with camping sites, hotels and restaurants. However Members cite unemployment during the off season generally rises and would like to see more equal distribution of activity across the year.
- 6.19 The Local Nature Reserve, situated at Rye Harbour, presents an opportunity to develop the green tourism sector in Rye. The nature reserve, which lies almost entirely within the Rye Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), contained in excess of 3,000 plant, bird and other animal species in 1999. There is a network of footpaths, bird watching hides and circular walks across the nature reserve.
- 6.20 Rye Harbour Nature Reserve is found in the east of the Rother District in the County of East Sussex (Figure 34). It lies on the coast to the south of the Cinque Port of Rye and to the west of the River Rother. Access by road can be gained from the village of Rye Harbour which lies at the end of Harbour Road, a minor road that joins the A259 just south of Rye.

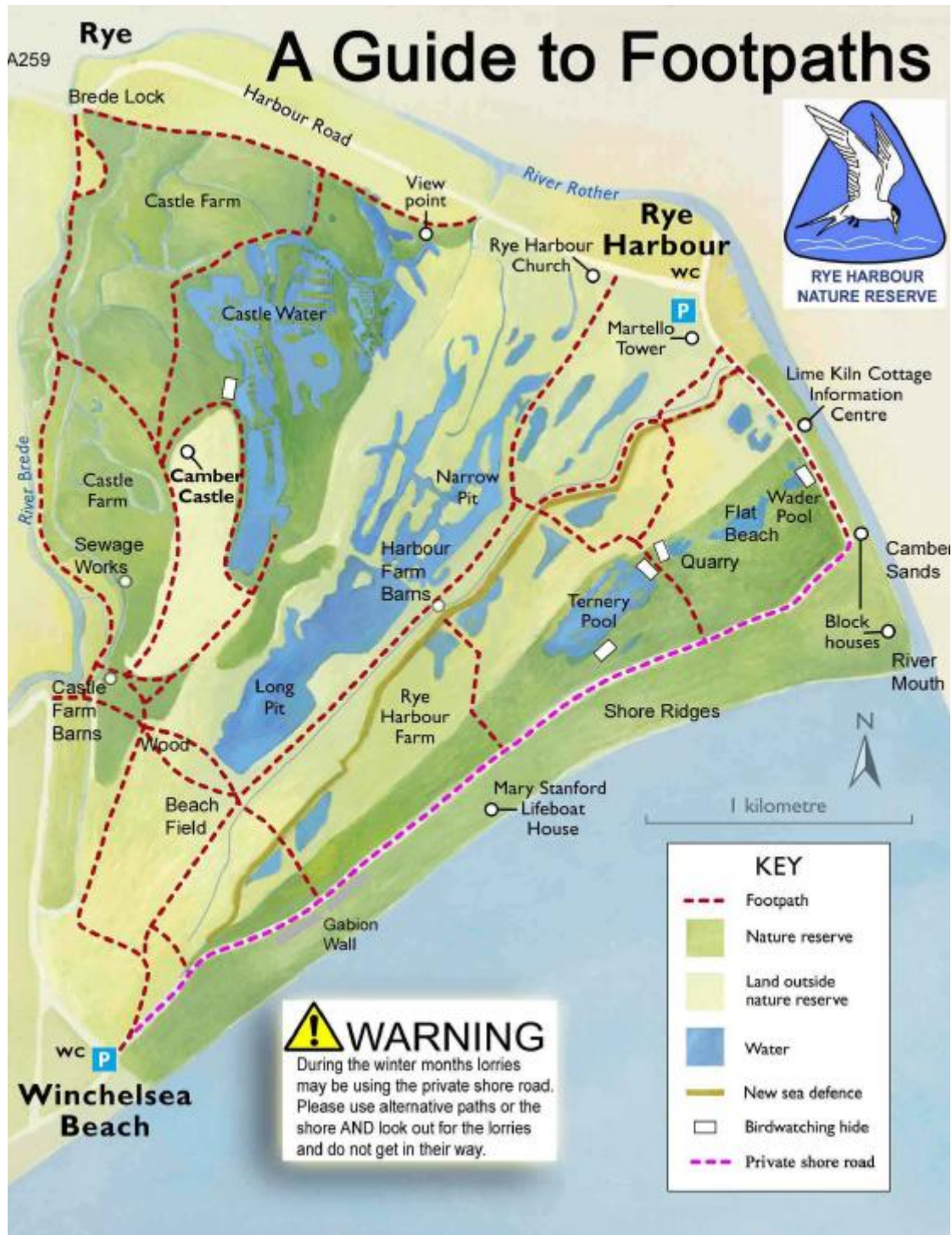


Figure 34: Map of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

6.21 The area surrounding Rye Bay and Romney Marsh is the subject of numerous nationally important environmental and biodiversity designations:

1. High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
2. Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
3. Special Areas of Conservation.
4. Special Protection Areas.

5. Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.
 6. Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
- 6.22 Natural England are proposing the extension (and some minor deletions) of the existing Dungeness to Pett Level Special Protection Area (SPA) and the designation of part of the Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest as a Ramsar site. The proposed SPA and Ramsar sites are already within the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay, and the Hastings to Pett Beach Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which cover 9,090ha and 293ha of land in Kent and East Sussex respectively. The current SSSIs already contain land designations of international importance, the existing SPA (the Dungeness to Pett Level SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 6.23 Natural England has recommended to DEFRA that:
- The existing SPA (almost 1,500 ha designated in 1999) be extended to cover a much larger area (over 4,000 ha) of the SSSI; (but not the entire SSSI)
 - An area be designated for listing under the Ramsar Convention which would cover 6,416ha of the SSSI, and
 - Eight new bird species and an assemblage of over 20,000 water birds are added to the qualifying interests
- 6.24 Natural England's consultation ended on the 13th December 2010. On closure of the consultation NE will report the views gathered to the Government, as represented by Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), and will make final recommendations on the proposals. Government is expected to issue a decision on the designations during spring 2011 before submitting to the EU. The consequence of approval by Government is that the habitats and species present in these areas will receive greater protection.
- 6.25 Green tourism provides an opportunity for Rye. There is a wealth of attractive coast and countryside in the South East of England with the potential for green tourism initiatives. Initiatives such as guided walks, cycle rides and conservation projects could be developed around Rye and promoted as green tourism.
- 6.26 The relative success of tourism in the Rye area can be determined by analyzing its strengths. The strengths are as follows:
- The existing natural and historic landscape around Rye already attracts a wide cross-section of visitors.
 - There is the potential to link the cultural, historic and natural tourism products in Rye.

Rye and Rye Harbour Study

- There is already a strong tourism industry in Rye on which to build the green tourism image.
- Rye enjoys an abundance of high quality hotels and guest houses located within the town itself. Approximately 70% of the Guest Houses and Bed and Breakfasts located in Rye have been awarded a 4 star or higher rating, with 25% of these providers achieving the highest possible rating of 5-star GOLD.
- The value of the natural environment can be recognised by the level of environmental designations.
- There are excellent educational opportunities associated with both the cultural, historic and natural tourism features.
- Potential problems with the sector include the lack of sustainable transport options in the area and the seasonality of employment associated with the tourism industry. There is also a need for marketing and promotion of the town all year round.

6.27 Both Figure 35 and Figure 36 demonstrate the potential in linking visitors coming to Rye initially for the historical attraction and then extending their visits to include exploring the surrounding countryside.

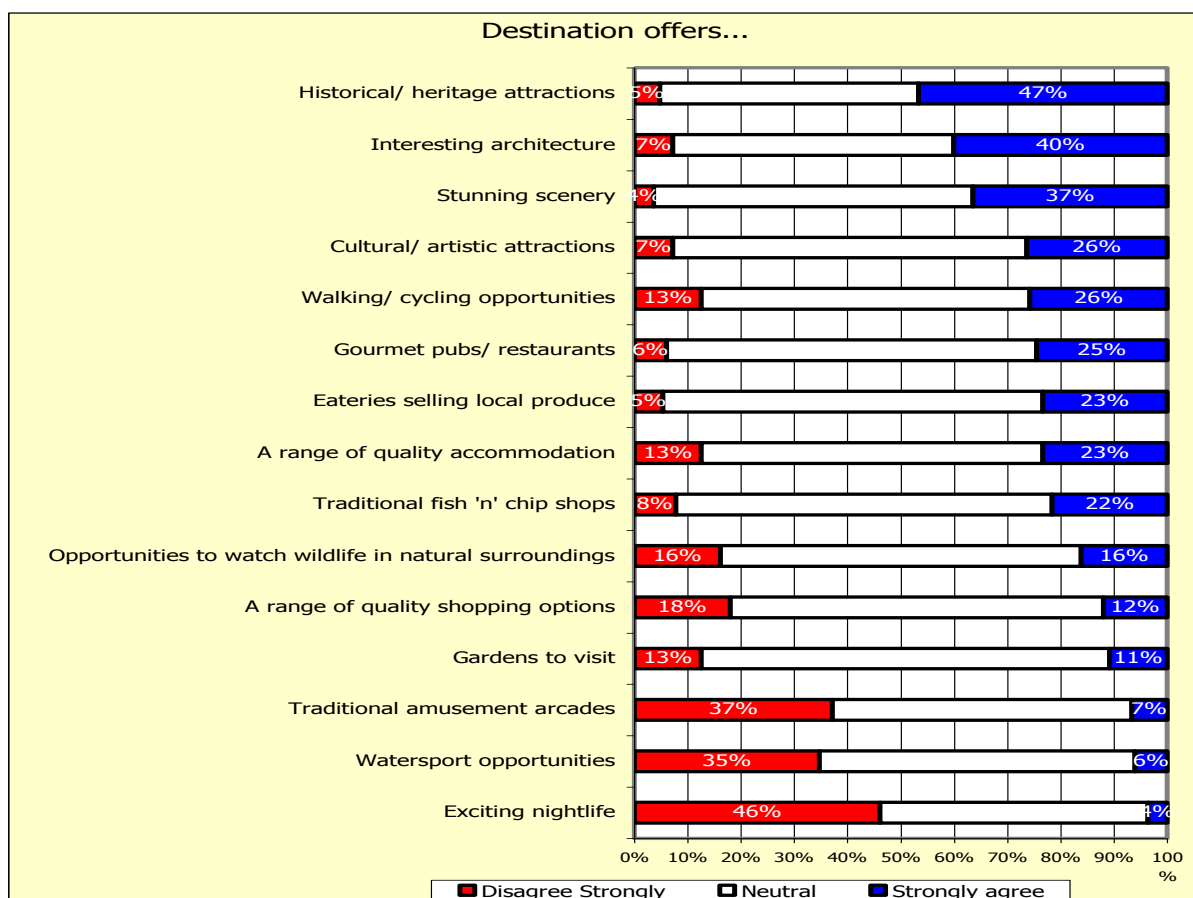


Figure 35: Visitors were asked what Rye offers - Hastings and 1066 Visitors Study 2009

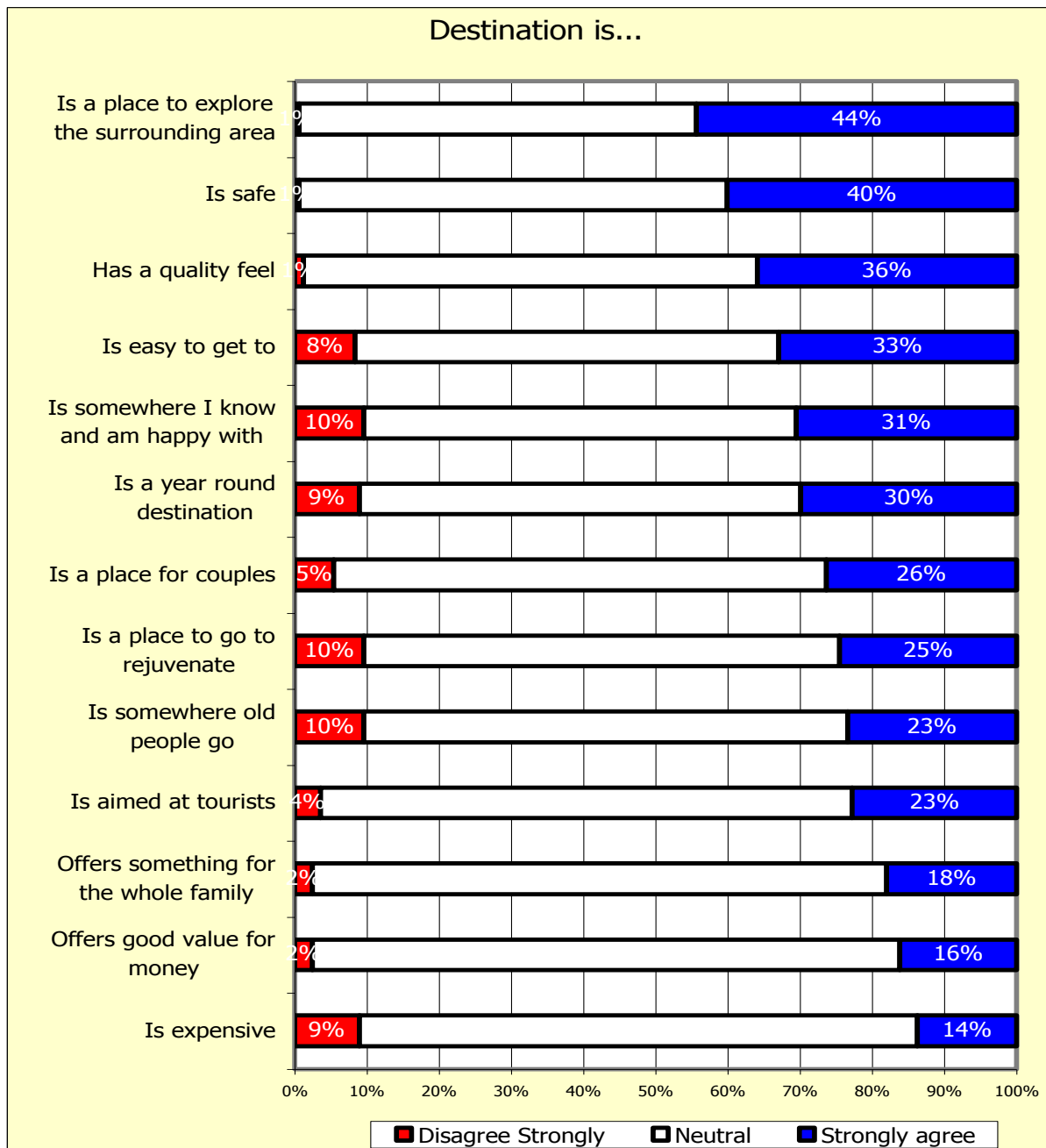


Figure 36: Visitors were asked what Rye is - Hastings and 1066 Visitors Study 2009

- 6.28 There are approximately 200,000 visitors per year to the Rye Harbour Nature Reserve. The Nature Reserve attracts a high number of visitors with particular environmental interests, such as birdwatchers and botanists, as well as general visitors.
- 6.29 There is potential in the promotion of Rye Bay and Romney Marsh. Rother would like to work with external agencies and organizations to promote the area for environmental tourism with possible following mechanisms for doing this:
- Support conservation management
 - Gather together interested parties and encourage them to work together;
 - Try to interest landowners and stakeholders.
 - Create a Green Tourism brand for Rye Bay and Romney Marsh
- 6.30 The development of green tourism in an area can often revolve around simple measures, such as providing better information to visitors, developing walking and cycling trails, and promoting the natural environment as a visitor destination. Bringing all the individual green tourism initiatives together under a unified 'green tourism banner', and possibly creating and marketing a green tourism brand for the area will increase visitor numbers to the wider countryside area surrounding Rye. A 10% increase in visitor numbers to the Rye Harbour Nature Reserve would equate to an extra 20,000 visitors per year. In the whole of Rother, an increase in visitors to the countryside of between 3% and 10% would equate to between 70,000 and 230,000 extra day visitors per year. Although their primary purpose is ecological, Ramsars are also intended to be recognised for their economic, cultural, scientific, and recreational value. There is the possibility of enhancing the areas such as the proposed Ramsar site with signage and interpretation boards to encourage a greater number of visitors to Rye extending their stay in the area.
- 6.31 It is acknowledged that there is a requirement for the sensitive management of tourism (from local sources and those further afield) in the Dungeness complex of internationally important wildlife sites. To retain their conservation status and preserve their integrity there will be requirement for effective management measures to be implemented and agreed with the relevant stakeholders and agencies in parallel with the promotion of future tourism and recreational activity in the area around the Dungeness international sites.

Development of Rye Harbour Road

- 6.32 The Adopted Local Plan identifies Rye Harbour Road as the principal employment area in the east of the District.
- 6.33 Commercial activity in Rye Harbour Road currently comprises three main types:
- Speculatively built industrial units, such as Rye Industrial Park.
 - Purpose built industrial units, often accompanied by substantial hardstanding.
 - Residential and retail units converted for office use.
- 6.34 Rye Harbour Road can be described as being an elongated employment area. Because of the relative isolation of Rye, demand tends to be local. Firms from Hastings do not wish to relocate to Rye because of the difficulties of access for their staff. Demand for units is limited at Rye Industrial Park is currently relatively occupied with a wide range of businesses. [East Sussex Economic Partnership](#) shows the current rate of vacancies along Rye Harbour Road.
- 6.37 Former uses for chemical manufacture and current recycling activities have resulted in contamination of several sites. Industrial sites on Rye Harbour Road do not have surface water drainage systems. Contamination from sites can run into local watercourses and seep into groundwater. This is of particular concern given that the area is adjacent to an SSSI, a Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation.
- 6.38 Rye Harbour Road sites are on silt or shingle: exact conditions vary from site to site. All development requires designed foundations. Most buildings have piled foundations or are on rafts. Larger buildings tend to be piled, smaller ones rafted. Piling goes down 12 to 15 metres. Below ground costs of development are considerably higher than those of sites with good ground conditions.
- 6.39 During the workshop the Member in attendance from Icklesham Parish Council cited the junction of the A259 and Rye Harbour Road as being sub-standard and preventing further development. However In recent years the uptake of units along Rye Harbour Road Industrial Estate has continued to happen but the viability of the junction to accommodate additional traffic will need to be closely monitored. Rother District Council would welcome working with The Highways Agency to assess the capacity of the junction to carry more traffic related to further uptake of units on Rye Harbour Road Industrial estate.

- 6.40 At present Rye Harbour Road has neither lighting; a footpath; cycleway; nor sufficient drainage. The adopted Rother District Local Plan includes contributions towards a footway and cycleway along Rye Harbour Road among the criteria for approving development there. If the tourism potential of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve is to be exploited, some degree of improvement of Rye Harbour Road would be desirable.
- 6.41 The A259 has been described as a constraint on economic development in Rye. Given the existing range of business activity at Rye Harbour Road, especially among businesses that must trade outside the area, it is not clear how much of an additional constraint on development the A259 but the wider issue of strategic access.
- 6.42 Possible options include encouraging further industrial development at Rye Harbour Road. The second is to deal with the constraints and remediate and develop a site to encourage new businesses and inward investment. In the current financial climate this is a difficult option to pursue with no guaranteed return on investment in infrastructure. The third is to actively encourage some run-down of industry in favour of housing and compatible uses, if the higher land values generated will create sufficient income to deal with the constraints. However Rye Harbour Road is considered as the main employment area for the eastern half of the district and it would be difficult to gain significant local support for housing in this area.
- 6.43 As outlined in previous paragraphs Rye Harbour Road industrial estate has constraints on development. They are created by the conditions of the sites themselves: ground conditions, contamination and the wider issue of relative isolation of Rye from other major centres.
- 6.44 Commercial activity on Rye Harbour Road supports around 10% of the total jobs in Rye and the surrounding areas. Lack of investment is no immediate threat to firms operating there, but in the long-term to safeguard those jobs and provide opportunity for further employment will necessitate some form of investment in the infrastructure local and strategic improving connectivity may attract firms from outside the areas into Rye. There must a co-ordinated strategy from various agencies and stakeholders to promote commerce and industrial development in the area.

Supporting the fishing industry

- 6.45 The fishing industry in Rye includes fishing as well as associated wholesale and processing sectors based on landings made by the Rye fleet. Closer inspection of this sector came from the Workshop discussions. Members are generally supportive of this local and historic industry.
- 6.46 The Rye fishing fleet consists of 31 full time with 7 part time with a landing value of 2.5m. The smaller vessels are generally multi-purpose in design, allowing them to target different species according to their availability. In total 54 species are caught locally including Sole, Cod, Turbot, Plaice, Scallops and

Lemon Sole. The value of the fishing industry to the local economy has been estimated by ARUP to be 10m.⁵

- 6.47 The primary value of the local fishing industry is found in its contribution to the local economy. Direct and indirect employment tends to centre on wholesale, processing, retail and associated employment.
- 6.48 The outlook for Rye's fishing sector appears to be reasonable in terms of resource (size, quality of fishing grounds), value of the catch and size of the fleet.
- 6.49 Failure to maintain the harbour and existing facilities could be disastrous for the local fishermen and industry. Whereas it has been suggested that some fishermen could relocate to, say, Newhaven or Folkestone, in reality the number of available berths for fishing boats at alternate ports are limited and also are not within an economic sailing distance. In this situation therefore it would be particularly hard for local fishermen to continue to operate and may increase the probability of their looking at decommissioning as an option.
- 6.50 Constraints affecting the local fishing industry that can be summarised by the main limiting factors are:
- Fishing is not a growth industry.
 - The number of young people entering the industry, especially in this part of southern England is limited and new entrants are more likely to be the result of family tradition rather than career attraction.
 - The current condition of the fishing quay constrains the industry in that the failure to meet certain HSE and food hygiene standards inhibits or even prevents some buyers (such as those buying on behalf of the supermarket multiples) from coming to Rye.
- 6.51 However the local fishing industry is still an important part of the local economy generating in the order of £10m for the local area. As well as an important economic contributor in employment and revenue, fishing is also an important part of the historic fabric of the local community.

⁵ Presentation made to RDC by Rye Harbour Master November 2010.

Supporting the Port of Rye and Rye Harbour

- 6.52 Rye Harbour is a Cinque Port situated between Newhaven and Folkestone. The Harbour comprises the tidal reaches of the Rivers Rother, Brede and Tillingham. At present the Environment Agency manage the activities generated by the Harbour of Rye. The Agency has produced a 5 year Management Plan. At present only Rye Wharf is open to commercial vessels and is constrained on the size of vessels it can accommodate owing to the depth of the channel. The berth is NAABSA19 rated where vessels can safely take the ground during low water. A further commercial facility, also owned by Rastrum Ltd exists at Rye Marine Wharf (otherwise known as ARC Wharf).
- 6.53 A number of private boatyards are located in the vicinity of the town along the Rock Channel and round to the town bank of the Fish Market Channel. Figure 37 shows the physical facilities at Rye Harbour.

	Distance from harbour entrance (km)	Owner	Length (m)	Max Depth (Springs/neaps)	Use/Comment
Strand Quay	4.2	EA	30	4.0/2.5m	Leisure boats – approx. 44 berths
Fishing Quay	3.5	EA		5.0/3.5m	Fishing (subject to £4.7m refurbishment project)
Rye Marine Wharf (or ARC Wharf)	2.6	Rastrum Ltd		2.0/0m (silted)	Inoperative (formerly aggregates)
Rye Wharf	1.6	Rastrum Ltd	182	5.6/4.1m	Commercial (Primarily aggregates) Constructed 1990.
Admiralty Jetty	1.2	EA		6.2/4.7m	Leisure boats, visitors mooring – approx. 12 berths
Moorings	various	EA/ Various private		various	Over 450 moorings 50 for visitors.

Figure 37: Rye Harbour Physical Facilities

- 6.54 The Harbour supports three categories of activity: fishing, commercial and leisure. There is no doubt that Rye has difficulty in attracting cargoes. In 1982 230 vessels used the facilities Rye Harbour this had fallen to 54 vessels in 2009. This is due to a number of factors including its location in an area with a small agricultural hinterland and limited manufacturing base and the proximity of much larger regional ports at Dover, and Shoreham and the major south coast ports of Southampton and Portsmouth. Marine factors such as restrictive depth in the channel, neap tide restrictions, limited tidal window and NAABSA berths are all also limiting factors. In order to thrive, ports of this size need to be able to serve a particular niche market or customer that is particularly well suited to the location; for example a small processing facility that requires regular small shipments of raw material. At present this is not the case at Rye – its operation is limited to two main activities: the import of aggregates (or crushed stone) and exports of milled wheat, while the port also handles occasional shipments of other low value bulk or breakbulk commodities such as salt, talcum powder (in bags) and timber.

- 6.55 Commercial freight activity in Rye Harbour was probably at its height in the early 1980s when a variety of imports (mainly stone) and exports (mainly grain) were handled. This has now been reduced to the operation of a single wharf, operated by Rye Wharf Ltd, a subsidiary of the site owner, Rastrum Ltd. The operation is more or less dedicated to the import of crushed rock and stone on behalf of two main customers, RMC Aggregates and Tarmac Topblock.

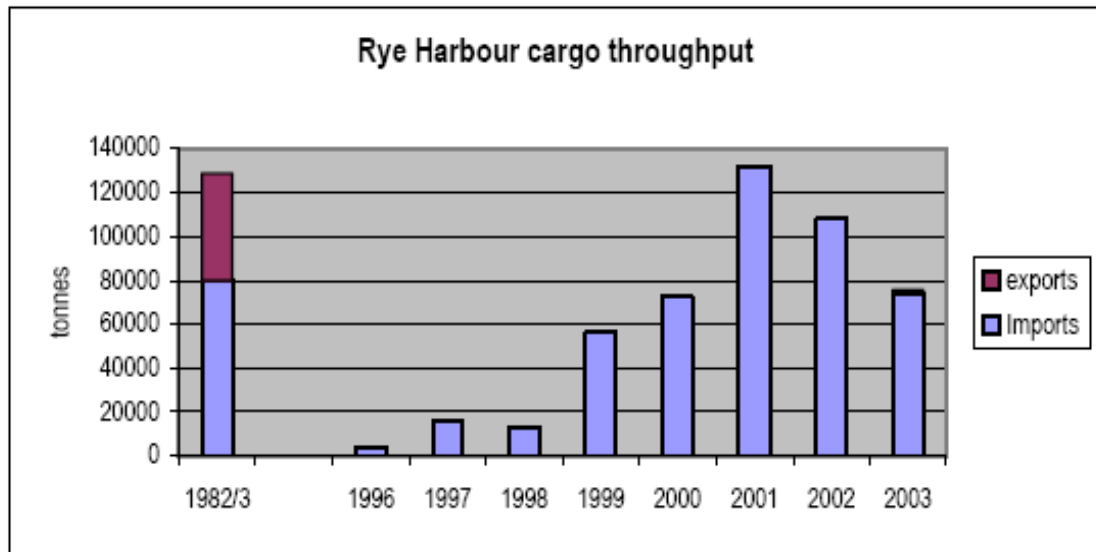


Figure 38: Rye Harbour Cargo Throughput –
Source: Roger Tyms & Partners 2004

- 6.56 The activity in the harbour is important to the local economy of Rye. It is estimated its socio-economic value to the local economy exceed £10m per annum and employs approximately 153 full time jobs⁶. Over half of Rye Harbour's income is generated by the rents (Figure 38). Over 70% of expenditure goes towards capital spending and this includes dredging of channels, refurbishment of jetties and replacement of commercial shipping beacons.

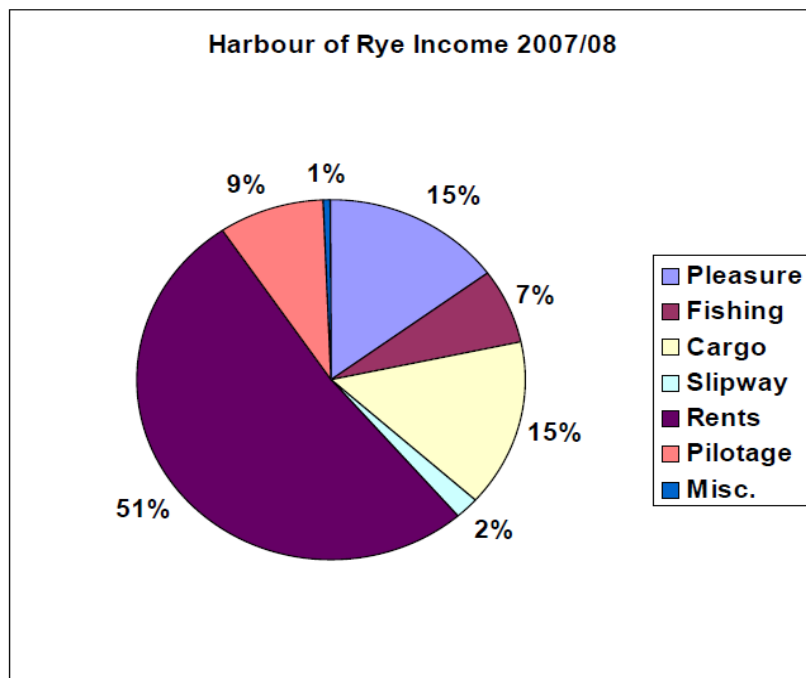


Figure 39: Harbour of Rye - Income –
Source: Harbour of Rye Management Plan 08-2012

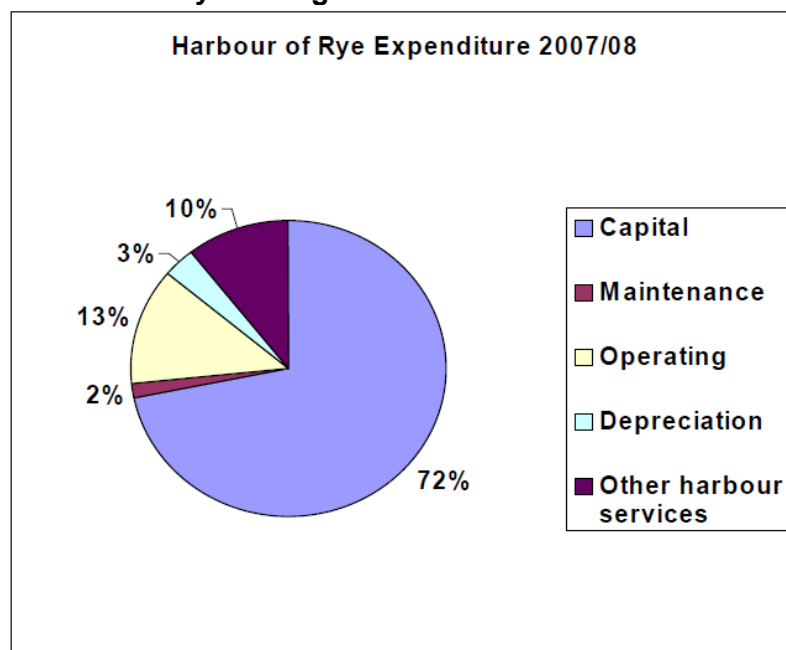


Figure 40: Harbour of Rye - Expenditure –
Source: Harbour of Rye Management Plan 08-2012

⁶ Presentation made to RDC officers by Rye Harbour Master - November 2010

6.57 The future of the commercial operation of the Port relies heavily on the development of already existing markets. Constraints on the development of commercial traffic are:

- Marine access – vessels limited to 2-2,500 tonnes
- NAABSA berths – not suitable to all types of vessel
- Only one operational wharf
- Limited wharf frontage and cargo working area
- Environmental designations constrain expansion of existing wharf
- Small port hinterland
- Lack of rail freight potential
- Majority of cargoes handled will be low value high volume bulk commodities, with little potential for value-added activity
- Region served by larger competing ports

6.58 The close proximity of the Port of Rye to the Dungeness SAC, Dungeness to Pett Level SPA and proposed extension to SPA and proposed Ramsar site requires that potential future expansion of port related activities and business expansion on Rye Harbour Road should give due consideration to Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010. Schemes and proposals that would lead to an adverse effect on the integrity of Dungeness internationally designated sites must be fully mitigated and/or adequate compensatory provision would need to be made to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network was maintained.

Rye Harbour and Leisure Opportunities

6.59 Rye Harbour offers about 450 moorings. Visiting vessels can be accommodated at Strand Quay (15 berths up to a maximum length of 15m) and Admiralty Jetty (max of 24 berths up to 25m). However visitor numbers to the Harbour have been declining steadily since 2000, when the number of visitor boats was over 160 a year. There are a number of potential factors that may have contributed to this decline. These include:

- Lack of promotion – there needs to be more/better marketing both locally and on the Continent.
- Restricted facilities
- Competing facilities elsewhere and fairly local – for example, Eastbourne and Brighton Marina.
- Availability of facilities not 24/7 or concurrent with tidal access.

6.60 The viability of increasing boating visitors to Rye has been examined in recent years. Roger Tyms & Partners were commissioned in December 2004 to

examine the economic case for increasing boating visitors to Rye. Constraints on the development of the moorings sector are summarised below:

- Navigation for leisure boats is restricted and sometimes hazardous;
- Low demand for dry moorings;
- Tide restricts visiting market;
- Limited moorings for visiting yachtsmen;
- Harbour is less attractive than other coastal marinas (e.g. Sovereign, Dover) for non-resident boat owners and visitors and
- Scope to substantially increase harbour income through mooring fees is limited.

6.61 The Environment Agency has over half of its mooring space unoccupied (100 moorings). Private moorings fare better with 96% occupant space (212 moorings over 13 sites)⁷. Leisure activities account for 15% of the income of Rye Harbour. There is an opportunity to improve visitor numbers by linking with the overall green tourism agenda, visiting the surrounding countryside and the historic town. To increase demand there will be a requirement to dredge the waterways to ease of sailing in and out of the channels and a promotional campaign to promote Rye town as the ultimate destination for visiting boats.

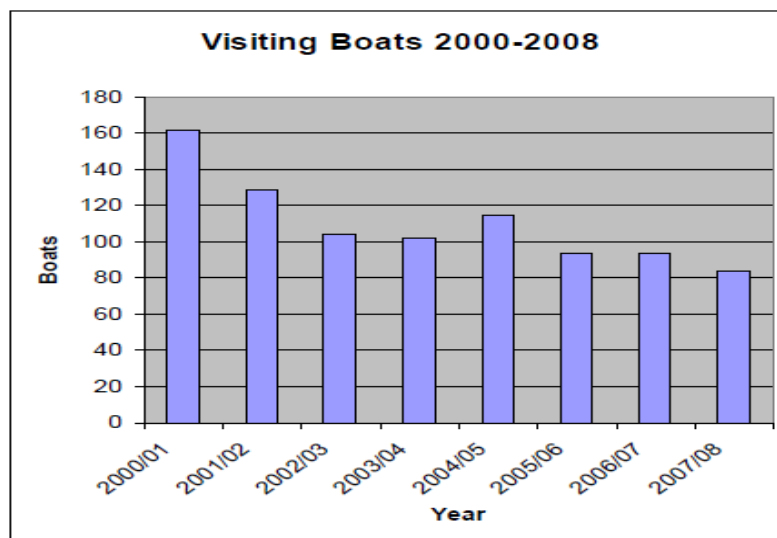


Figure 41: The number of visiting boats have been in decline since 2000 – Source Rye Harbour Management Plan 2008 - 2010

⁷ Presentation made to RDC officers by Rye Harbour Master - November 2010

6.62 In summary the main issues for the local economy and employment are:

- Rye has a strong tourist industry but employment is cyclical with unemployment in the town tending to rise during the winter months/off season;
- Average household income is lower in Rye compared to East Sussex and the South East;
- Rye's has pockets of poverty mainly to the north and north east of the town. There are high rates of child poverty in the town
- Rye has a significant young population (aged 15-29). A Place Survey – Priority for Improvements carried out in Rye in 2006 lists facilities for young children as a priority (25%)
- Rye's employment is relatively contained within the area.
- Green Tourism has potential to become a significant contributor to the local economy.
- Careful management is required when promoting green tourism initiatives, including areas such as Rye Harbour Nature Reserve. Protecting the integrity, and where possible enhancing the Dungeness International sites should be a priority concern.
- Rye Harbour Road is the main employment centre for much of the Eastern half of the District.
- The Port of Rye and Rye Harbour are important elements in the local economy but future expansion of activity must have particular regard to protecting the integrity of internationally designated habitats
- Greater access to services such as the Conquest Hospital and local colleges would give young people opportunity to access employment and education.

Section 7: The Environment

- 7.1 In the third and final session of the Workshops the discussion centred on what Members considered to be the principal asset for the town namely the built and natural environment.

The Built Environment

- 7.2 As discussed in previous sections Rye is a historic town with significant architectural heritage. Please refer to Map 7 Historic Environment.
- 7.3 Visitors to Rye are attracted to the town because of its historical qualities. The Rye Visitor Survey completed in 2009 by Tourism South East indicated the following results:
- Day visitors accounted for 88% of all visitors, comprising of day visitors from home (48%) and day visitors from holiday bases outside Rye (40%). The remaining 12% of visitors were staying overnight in commercial or non-commercial accommodation within Rye.
 - The highest proportion of domestic visitors from home came from locations within Kent (31%) and East Sussex (9%). A further 8% were residents of Surrey and 8% from West Sussex.
 - The largest proportion of visitors described their visit to Rye as a holiday or leisure based visit (92%)
 - Eighty-one percent of visitors had travelled to Rye by private car, whilst 9% had used public transport.
 - Fifty-eight percent of visitors who had travelled to Rye by private vehicle used car parks located in the town centre.
 - Thirty-four percent of all visitors recalled seeing adverts, leaflets or promotions for Rye. Visitors were most likely to have seen material promoting Rye on various websites (37%). Fourteen percent had heard about Rye through word of mouth / recommendation and 9% mentioned other leaflets / brochures.
 - Scenic environment and historic sites were the two most influential factors on visitors' decision to visit Rye.

- 7.4 Tourism is important to the District. Total visitor spend in Rother was £221.26 million in 2009, and total expenditure related to tourism was estimated to be £262,542,000 million⁸ worth of income for local businesses through direct, indirect and induced effects 2009, up by 9.9% compared to 2008. The Tourist Information Centre has estimated that the number of visitors to Rye is approximately 800,000 per annum. The TIC receives approximately 200,000 visitors per annum and it is estimated from street surveys that around a quarter of visitors to Rye use the Tourist Information Centre.
- 7.5 Significant number of visitors to Rye puts additional pressure on local infrastructure. It was clear from the workshops Members of the Working Group cited traffic congestion as the principal threat to the integrity of the historical core of the town.
- 7.6 In a town possessing the important historical and architectural qualities of Rye the overriding policy should be to preserve and enhance those qualities. During the workshop Members of the Working Group often referred to the heavy traffic in the centre of Rye as being incompatible with the tight historical grain of the town. Members felt on-street car parking was in conflict with pedestrians especially those with mobility issues who had problems crossing the street when cars are obstructing crossing points. The High Street is the location for many small businesses each requiring service space for vans to unload or load goods but this can also cause unnecessary obstruction for other road users and pedestrians.
- 7.7 Members report visitors are failing to find a space but continuing to circulate around the local road network contributing to congestion. It may be visitors to the town do not have local knowledge about the availability of car parking spaces but Members of the Working Group brought up the issue of Gibbets Marsh car park located outside the town centre which was felt to be underused as a facility.
- 7.8 In 2009 Tourism South East completed an extensive survey on visitors to Rye. Figure 41 shows visitors to Rye tended to be day visitors. Tourists tended to visit to Rye as part of an overall holiday programme and stayed elsewhere in the area.

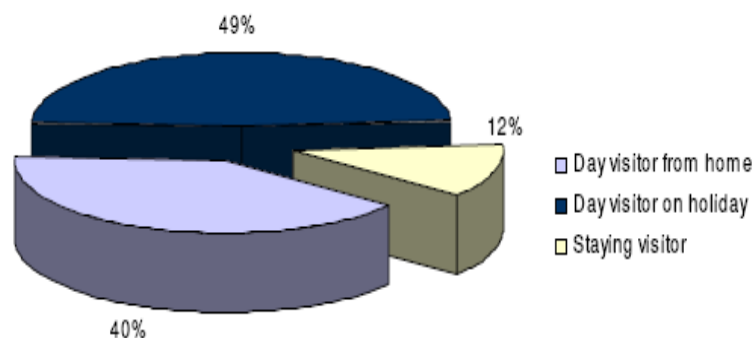


Figure 42: Rye had significantly more day and fewer staying visitors.

⁸ The Economic Impact on Tourism on Rother in 2009 – Tourism South East

	BASE		VISITOR TYPE		
	All visitors		Day visitors from home	Dayvisitors on holiday	Staying visitors
Kent	54 (31%)		60%	6%	14%
East Sussex	16 (9%)		18%	3%	-
Surrey	13 (8%)		6%	7%	14%
West Sussex	13 (8%)		8%	10%	-
G. London	10 (6%)		4%	7%	10%
Essex	8 (5%)		3%	7%	5%
Cheshire	6 (4%)		-	6%	10%
Hampshire	5 (3%)		1%	4%	5%
Hertfordshire	5 (3%)		1%	4%	5%
Merseyside	5 (3%)		-	4%	10%
Scotland	5 (3%)		-	3%	14%
Bedfordshire	3 (2%)		-	3%	5%
Cambridgeshire	3 (2%)		-	4%	-
Nottinghamshire	3 (2%)		-	4%	-
Derbyshire	2 (1%)		-	3%	-
Leicestershire	2 (1%)		-	3%	-
Lincolnshire	2 (1%)		-	3%	-
Oxfordshire	2 (1%)		-	3%	-
Staffordshire	2 (1%)		-	3%	-
Suffolk	2 (1%)		-	1%	5%
Wales – South	2 (1%)		-	3%	-
Berkshire	1 (1%)		-	1%	-
Devon	1 (1%)		-	1%	-
Gloucestershire	1 (1%)		-	1%	-
Lancashire	1 (1%)		-	1%	-
Wales – North	1 (1%)		-	1%	-
Warwickshire	1 (1%)		-	1%	-
Wiltshire	1 (1%)		-	1%	-
Worcestershire	1 (1%)		-	-	5%
Yorkshire – North	1 (1%)		-	1%	-
Yorkshire – South	1 (1%)		-	1%	-
Total domestic visitors	173 (88%)		79 (100%)	73 (100%)	21 (100%)

Figure 43: Origin of domestic visitors - Source: Tourism South East 2009

- 7.9 The majority of visitors came from the South East region and London. Thirty-one percent of domestic visitors were visiting from Kent, 9% from East Sussex, 8% from Surrey and 8% reside in West Sussex (Figure 43). Visitors staying outside Rye and visiting the town for the day (Figure 44) was surveyed on the location of holiday accommodation with Hastings was frequently mentioned (13%) and Eastbourne (8%) as the places visitors were staying. Thirty-six percent mentioned other locations around East Sussex and 30% were staying in locations within Kent.

LOCATION OF HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION	
Hastings	13 (13%)
Bexhill	2 (2%)
Battle	3 (3%)
Eastbourne	8 (8%)
Other places in East Sussex	35 (36%)
Ashford	4 (4%)
Other places in Kent	25 (26%)
Other places not listed on the list	7 (7%)
Total	97 (100%)

Figure 44: Location of Holiday Accommodation – Source: Tourism South East.

- 7.10 The proportion of visitors who travelled to Rye by private vehicle was a lot higher in 2009 compared with 2005 (up 24% from 67%). A similar number of visitors used public transport in 2009 compared with 2005. A higher proportion of visitors travelled by train in 2009 (up 1%) but a slightly lower number of visitors used the bus / coach service (1% lower). In 2005 a higher proportion of visitors came on a coach tour (22%). Please refer to Figure 45.

	RYE 2009	RYE 2005	ALL MARKET TOWNS
Private vehicle (car/ van/ motorcycle etc.)	81%	67%	84%
Coach tour	9%	22%	2%
Train	5%	4%	2%
Bus/coach service	4%	5%	5%
Bicycle	-	1%	1%
Walked	1%	1%	5%
Other	1%	-	2%

Figure 45: Main Form of Transport Visitors Used to Get to Rye – Tourism South East 2009

- 7.11 A higher proportion of staying visitors used a private vehicle to travel to Rye than both day visitors on holiday and day visitors from home. Over half of visitors travelling as part of a coach tour were day visitors on holiday and 12% used public transport, which was the highest proportion out the three visitor categories.

	ALL VISITORS 2009	DAY VISITORS FROM HOME	DAY VISITORS ON HOLIDAY	STAYING VISITORS
Private vehicle (car/ van/ motorcycle etc.)	81%	85%	76%	91%
Coach tour	9%	9%	11%	-
Train	5%	4%	6%	-
Bus/coach service	4%	3%	6%	-
Bicycle	-	-	-	-
Walked	1%	-	-	4%
Other	1%	-	-	4%
Total	199 (100%)	79 (100%)	97 (100%)	23 (100%)

Figure 46: Mode of Transport split by visitor type – Tourism South East 2009

- 7.12 Visitors who travelled to Rye by private motor vehicle were asked in the survey if they used local car parks, 58% had used local car parks and spaces in the surrounding streets. The most frequently used car park was The Strand (19%) and 12% had parked at the Cattle Market (Figure 46).

	ALL VISITORS 2009	DAY VISITORS FROM HOME	DAY VISITORS ON HOLIDAY	STAYING VISITORS	ALL VISITORS 2006
The Strand	29 (19%)	15 (22%)	13 (18%)	1 (6%)	12%
Cattle Market	19 (12%)	8 (12%)	7 (10%)	4 (24%)	21%
Gibbet Marsh	17 (11%)	7 (10%)	9 (12%)	1 (6%)	9%
Parked on the street	13 (8%)	7 (10%)	5 (7%)	1 (6%)	-
Bedford Place / Lucknow Place	9 (6%)	4 (6%)	4 (6%)	1 (6%)	9%
Cinque Port Streets	6 (4%)	2 (3%)	4 (6%)	-	7%
None of the above / did not park	6 (4%)	2 (3%)	2 (3%)	2 (12%)	32%
Other	58 (37%)	22 (33%)	29 (40%)	7 (41%)	10%
Total	157 (100%)	67 (100%)	73 (100%)	17 (100%)	100%

Figure 47: Use of car parks by visitors – Tourism South East 2009

- 7.13 Visitors who used town centre car parks in Rye were invited to comment on the ease and cost of parking in the city. As shown in Figure 47, below, visitors rated the cost of parking low compared 'all market towns'. Ease of parking was on par with 'all market towns' in the District.

	RYE 2009	RYE 2005	ALL MARKET TOWNS
Base	147	111	182
Mean	4.25	3.77	4.25
Very easy	57%	38%	51 % (Max 83%)
Easy	26%	28%	33%
Neither/nor	9%	15%	7%
Quite difficult	8%	11%	6%
Very difficult	3%	8%	2% (Max 9%)

Figure 48: Visitor opinions on ease of car parking in Rye – Tourism South East 2009



Figure 49: The High Street in Rye

- 7.14 In summary day visitors chose overwhelmingly coming to Rye in a private motor car. The majority of day visitors coming from South East and London. It is clear that visiting Rye using other modes of transport is not favourable.



Figure 50: Cinque Port Street can often be heavily congested with traffic

- 7.15 In tackling congestion in Rye there is a requirement to work with agencies and local stakeholders to encourage visitors to visit Rye using alternative modes of transport like rail transport or through coach parties for visitors on holiday. Marketing can be effective tool to encourage visitors to park in underused car parks like Gibbets Marsh. Over 35% of visitors surveyed recalled they heard about Rye through websites. The internet could be an effective tool to encourage visitors to travel to the town via train or organized coach parties and subsequently reduce car numbers on the local network. Improving signage and traffic calming can also be effective in improving traffic circulation on the local network.



Figure 51: Lion Street in Rye Town Centre

- 7.16 The over-arching responsibility for works to the highways and public realm lies with the County Council. The improvement of traffic management in the town will require an integrated approach with the relevant authorities such as the County Council, the Town Council and local stakeholders working together to improve traffic management. Rother District Council would welcome working with ESCC to continuously improve traffic management in the area. Rye LATs is the strategy to guide transport planning in the area. An update on the Rye Local Transport Strategy Programme of Works can be located in Appendix 41.



Figure 52: The medieval grain of the town attracts significant numbers of visitors in the summer months

- 7.17 Opportunities for development in the historic core are limited but in recent years there have been a number of sites which have come forward for redevelopment including the Woolworths site (High Street), The Former Garage site, 50 Cinque Port Street and the Old Library and Adult Education Centre, Lion Street. The Woolworth site has been converted into a library with associated community facilities. The Old Library and Adult Education Centre in Lion Street and the Former Garage site remains vacant but potential users have come forward and expressed an interest. The Council would encourage interested parties to come forward to discuss opportunities with officers and seek guidance and advice. Nevertheless development in the centre of Rye must ensure the preservation or enhancement of the character of the Conservation Area is retained.

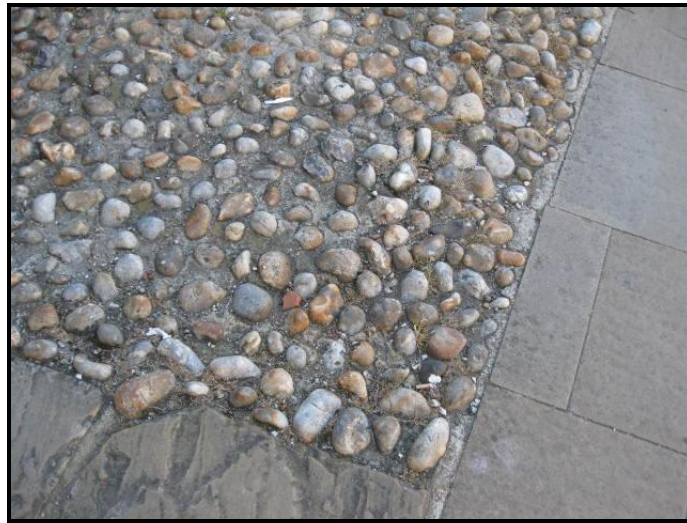


Figure 53: Fine architectural details provide Rye with a strong sense of place and character

- 7.18 The existing adopted Local Plan contains Policy GD1, section (viii) of which relates to development affecting Conservation Areas. Planning policies would generally seeks to protect the historic buildings, parks and gardens, from development or change that would damage them, as well as highlighting the importance of protection of the setting of historic sites, conservation areas and historic towns. There is significant legislation in place at a national level which relates specifically to development affecting sites and features of historical or archaeological importance, including Conservation Areas.
- 7.19 In addition there is a further policy in the adopted Local Plan under RY1 which is a general policy specific to Rye and provides further guidance to general development in Rye and development within the Conservation Area.



Figure 54: Views out to the Town Salts and the River Rother



Figure 55: Strong civic principles and appropriate use of signage play an important part of the aesthetic quality of the town

The Natural Environment – Landscape Setting of the Town

- 7.20 The setting of the historic core of Rye, the levels and the rivers importantly aid the perception that the core is a citadel, vertically separated from the surrounding plain. From viewpoints within the town the setting provides fine quality views out to the distant landscape and coast. The tidal rivers and estuary are a key component of Rye's maritime character. To the south-east the open landscape provides a Local Strategic Gap between the town and Rye Harbour Village.
- 7.21 The landscape setting of the town is a constraint to development on any part of the levels which surround the Citadel. There may be very limited opportunities for small scale development in parts of the Playden area. This area is outside the AONB but is sensitive as much of the historic character of field patterns is intact.
- 7.22 The landscape which is adjacent to, but outside the AONB is not of similar quality or character to the wider AONB landscape and the character is influenced by the hard edge of urban development. A strong landscape framework would be required to prevent unacceptable impact on the surrounding AONB landscape and open countryside. This would be in the form of wooded tree belts and shaws to strengthen the existing field boundaries and redefine the interface between the built up area and the countryside.
- 7.23 The opportunity for any large scale development in and around Rye is very limited. The numbers suggested in the emerging Core Strategy would appear to be achievable if key allocations are deliverable.
- 7.24 Opportunities for residential development at Rye Harbour and along Rye Harbour Road would be limited to the southern end at Rye Harbour Village. The industrial character of the Harbour Road should be maintained and not

mixed with housing development. Rye Harbour Village has a distinctive historic character which has been sensitively reflected in recent housing development. There may be small areas where infill housing development could be accommodated in association with the existing residential area. This would need to be well designed and of high quality to compliment the existing developments.

7.25 In summary the main issues for the built and natural environment are:

- Overwhelmingly visitors to Rye often travel to Rye in a private transport. Effective marketing should be supported to encourage travel via sustainable modes of transport. RDC would work with agencies and local stakeholders to improve traffic circulation and management.
- The Core Strategy will continue to support Rye as an area of special architectural and historical significance. Development of infill sites within the Conservation Area should be sensitive to the character and architectural heritage of the town and conforms to national and local policy.
- The character and integrity of the landscape that surrounds the town of Rye will be retained as much as possible.

Section 8: Further Development in Rye and Rye Harbour

Development in Rye and Rye Harbour

- 8.1 Rye in recent years has taken significant development. The Core Strategy Strategic Directions identifies 450 dwellings requirement for Rye from 2006 to 2026. A significant proportion of the strategic housing requirement has been taken up with current permissions (179) and completions (72) with strategic allocations equating to 170⁹. Furthermore the development at Udimore Road has yielded an increase in dwelling numbers (135 units), following recommendations from the Planning Inspector to increase upon the minimum requirement stipulated in the adopted Local Plan. This allows for some flexibility in the housing requirement. Subsequently the residual requirement is modest to 2028 (approx 29 units).
- 8.2 Further analysis would place greater imperative on strategic allocations like Rock Channel and the Former Thomas Peacock school site to come forward in order to meet the housing requirement in Rye. The AMR (2010/11) stipulates Rother is compliant with the requirements of PPS3 for a 5 year housing supply. However beyond the current 5 year housing supply the housing trajectory projection show a slow down in housing supply and is reflective of the difficult economic climate across the country. The delay of the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road will also increase pressure on housing supply.
- 8.3 The recently published SHLAA identified a number of 'green' sites in Rye which could potentially accommodate 55 dwellings. However it must be noted identified sites in the SHLAA are not allocations and must undergo the rigours of being assessed against other considerations before being formally allocated. Further assessment of SHLAA sites will take place in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. Please refer to Map 9.
- 8.4 The requirement for housing in Rye is modest over the next Plan period. There is some flexibility in the housing requirement in Rye as now it is for the District Council to determine housing requirement via the emerging Core Strategy. Strategic allocations like Rock Channel and Rye Harbour Road remain important designations and RDC remain committed to bringing them forward.
- 8.5 Rock Channel is an important strategic allocation in Rye. The adopted Local Plan also identifies Rock Channel as a development site to the south and east of South Undercliff. Outside of, but adjacent to the boundary of the Conservation Area, the site is important in the historic and visual legibility of the town; it forms a key part of the setting of the Citadel, and is particularly prominent in the distinctive long views to and on approach from the south and east. Any new development here must accord to the statutory requirement of preserving or enhancing the character of the setting of the Conservation Area. Key to the success of this site is the formulation of a coherent plan and design framework, within which the future development can take place in a structured

⁹ Rock Channel 115/Harbour Rd 18/Thomas Peacock School 37

and co-ordinated manner, to ensure the character of the historic setting of Rye is preserved. However to deliver Rock Channel key issues like land ownership and flood risk must be addressed.



Figure 56: Rock Channel

- 8.6 A Development Brief is being prepared for Rock Channel has not been finalized but continues to evolve. The emerging Core Strategy will continue to support and drive the process of delivering Rock Channel as a mixed use comprehensive development.
- 8.7 To allow flexibility it is appropriate to put forward a range for housing in Rye and Rye Harbour during the plan period instead of a prescribed figure. As the study has highlighted Rye is heavily constrained and with the uncertainty surrounding the deliverability of key sites a quantum of between 250 to 350 dwellings (includes commitments and permissions) up to 2028 would be appropriate.

Section 9: Conclusion and Implications for the Strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour

- 9.1 Section 8 is a summary of the evidence discussed in earlier sections of the Rye and Rye Harbour Study, with the implications for policy formulation for the Core Strategy. The key points are as follows:

Overall: Rye and Rye Harbour

1. Rye is the main service centre for the eastern half of the district. The town is fairly self-contained in terms of employment and services.
2. Rye is heavily constrained with a number of environmental and physical barriers to growth. The west of the town through the Udimore Road development has seen recent housing development. The priority for growth of the town remains the development of strategic sites and infill within the built area.
3. There are significant pockets of deprivation in the town that can be found to the north east and north of the town. Core Strategy policies will promote access to employment, education and health as key measures to tackle long-term deprivation in the town.
4. The population profile of Rye is getting older but there is significant growth in the age group 15-29. Opportunities for young people to access education, services, leisure and employment locally and beyond should be a priority.
5. There remains a requirement for additional retail convenience floorspace (1650sqm) in the town to address trade leakage. Development of sites to accommodate additional floorspace should be sequentially assessed and adhere to national planning policy guidance. Further consideration of appropriate locations will be given in the Site Allocations DPD.

Traffic Management

6. Traffic congestion is a significant problem in Rye. The role of the A259 as the main trunk road in the eastern half of the District also contributes heavily to local congestion.
7. Many local journeys in Rye are made either by foot or cycle to access employment and services. Local cycle networks are inadequate and should be promoted as part of overall sustainable transport strategy for the town.

8. Some car parks are underused while car parking within the historic core is limited. A refinement of the car parking strategy is required to promote greater patronage of car parks that are currently underused.
9. The Rye Local Area Transport Strategy 2003 remains relevant as potential solutions to the congestion and the overall transport strategy for the town. RDC welcome working with ESCC to refine and prioritise the strategy to relieve congestion and improve connectivity at a strategic and local level.

Employment and Economy

1. Tourism is the dominant employment sector for the town. The majority of visitors are day visitors traveling to the town in a private car. However this brings its own problems with traffic congestion especially in the historic core which is inadequate to cope with significant volumes of traffic.
2. The main employment area in the area is Rye Harbour Road. Local employment is relative self-contained. The Port of Rye is still an important contributor to the local economy. Employment land review identifies 10,000sqm – 15,000sqm would be an appropriate quantum for the area. It is appropriate to accommodate this quantum at Rye Harbour Road.
3. Employment in the tourism sector is seasonal with unemployment rates in winter months tending to rise. There is potential to enhance green tourism in the area to create employment opportunities throughout the year either better marketing and management. Policies will support managed growth in this sector. Consideration will be given to retaining integrity of many important national and international wetland and landscape that surround the area.
4. The Port of Rye and Rye Harbour Road industrial estate remain significant contributors to the local economy. To support local commerce and improve strategic connectivity to local markets, the Core Strategy as a priority will work with agencies and stakeholders to support and promote greater efficiencies and management of the strategic transport network.

The Built and Natural Environment

1. The character, local distinctiveness and the historic core of Rye remains the principal asset for the town. The value to the local economy is very important. Rye's historical and architectural qualities will be protected and where possible enhanced.
2. The surrounding landscape around the town is integral to the setting of the town and provides Rye with a local distinctiveness and character.

- 9.2 The overarching strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour which had evolved from the background evidence and consultation with Rye Town Council has been summarised in the previous paragraphs.
- 9.3 In the Urban Options Paper completed in 2008 two strategy options was considered to be appropriate with one focusing on enhancing the service centre and commercial role of Rye and the other option concentrating on low growth and focusing on improving social amenity and minimal impact on the environment. The paper concluded after assessing the options against sustainability and plan objectives an amalgamation of the two options would be the most appropriate way forward. The Rye and Rye Harbour study concur with this approach as the most sustainable form of strategy of growth for the town after extensive analysis.
- 9.4 The aim and objectives presented in the Consultation on Strategy Direction (box 14) are regarded as an appropriate framework to guide the strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour. They emphasise the market town service centre role alongside the rich cultural and ecological assets of the Citadel and surrounding landscape. From the series of workshops held with the Working Group, Members generally agreed with the broad strategy advocated by the Strategy Directions. The addition objectives (VIII and IX) have been added to the extensive list as a result of the Workshop and the Rye and Rye Harbour Study. This reflects Members concerns about the improving traffic management and tackling the relative isolation of the town through improving strategic and local transport.

Aim:

To improve the economic and social well-being of Rye, including in relation to its market town role, tourism and the Port of Rye, whilst fully respecting and sensitively managing its historic character, vulnerability to flooding and ecologically important setting.

Objectives:

- 3 To improve access to high quality education, employment and housing;
- 4 To enhance sustainable tourism and leisure;
- 5 To improve the availability of day to day goods and services;
- 6 To secure investment in community facilities and in new and/or improved pedestrian and cycle routes linking residents to their facilities;
- 7 To conserve and enhance the unique built character and quality of the Citadel and its distinctive landscape setting;
- 8 To protect and sensitively manage the high quality ecological and landscape resources;
- 9 To continue to manage, and protect the community from, the risk of flooding;
- 10 To work with stakeholders to improve traffic management, tackle congestion and promote sustainable transport measures
- 11 To work with agencies to support and promote strategic transport links from Rye to the wider locality