

# Appendix to Rowlands Castle Parish Council's response to the Further Limited Draft Consultation on LGBCE's Review of East Hampshire District Council

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## Introduction

This appendix gives more details and evidence of the topics referred to in the response on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 by Rowlands Castle Parish Council.

## 1.0 Consultation on LGBCE's draft recommendations in 2017

A report on the responses to these recommendations is held at this URL:

<http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/hampshire/east-hampshire>

### 1.1 Residents

These responses show that there was no support from residents of either Rowlands Castle or Horndean to be in the same Ward. This was the issue which attracted the largest number of responses. The large majority of residents across the District favoured single-councillor wards. Here is an analysis of the responses by residents of EHDC:

Responses of EHDC residents to LGBCE Consultation on proposed changes to EHDC Ward boundaries - 83 residents responded			
	Support	Object	Proportion of total responses
Rowlands Castle and Horndean in same Ward	0	28	34%
More than one Councillor per ward	1	18	23%

### 1.2 Political Parties

The responses from the following political parties showed that they were all in favour of single Councillor Wards:

Conservative  
Greens  
Labour

The response from the Liberal Democratic Party considered only the Four Marks and Medstead Ward boundaries and did not comment on how many councillors there should be in a ward.

### 1.3 Councillors

Seven of the eight Councillors who responded indicated a preference for single-councillor wards. The three who commented on the proposed inclusion of Horndean and Rowlands Castle in the same ward, were opposed to this.

### 1.4 Parish and Town Councils

Of the 17 councils which responded, nine indicated a preference for single-councillor wards, and one for multi-councillor wards. Two of the Parish Councils (Rowlands Castle and Horndean) were opposed to their respective parishes being in the same ward.

### 1.5 Hampshire County Council

The Hampshire County Council response contained only the responses made by County Councillors for the following areas:

Petersfield  
Headley, Bramshott and Liphook

## **2.0 Rowlands Castle Vision**

The Parish Council has agreed that the Vision for its emerging Neighbourhood Plan (see below) is:

**“To conserve and enhance the Parish of Rowlands Castle as an attractive community, whilst maintaining its separate identity, character and distinctiveness”**

## **3.0 Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Plan**

In considering whether to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, Rowlands Castle Parish Council, with the assistance of senior officers from EHDC and the South Downs National Park Authority, held a Public Exhibition and consultation In March 2017. It was attended by 96 residents, of whom 95 stated that a Neighbourhood Plan should be developed, and 45 indicated they would assist with this. As a result of this overwhelming interest, the Parish Council decided to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan.

On 26 April 2017, East Hampshire District Council approved the formal designation of the Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Plan Area, which is the area covered only by the Parish. The South Downs National Park Authority designated the area on 24 April 2017.

The objectives of this emerging Neighbourhood Plan are:

1. To guide and influence the future of the Parish of Rowlands Castle, to preserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the natural and built environment, and improve it as a community where most residents are very satisfied to live.
2. To ensure that any new homes built within the plan period are of an appropriate design and scale; are in a location that will not harm the character of the Parish; and are of a type that meets local needs.
3. Identify where investment would be required in order to maintain and enhance community facilities and open areas within the Parish

The Neighbourhood Plan is being led by a Steering Group of ten residents of the parish, two of whom are Parish Councillors. This group is supported by four Working Groups consisting of parish residents.

## **4.0 Rowlands Castle Community Organisations**

### **4.1 Rowlands Castle Parish Council**

The Parish Council consists of eight elected members to represent the Rowlands Castle (Parish) ward, and one to represent the Finchdean ward. Elections are held every four years. They are all unpaid, volunteer councillors whose task it is to work together to serve the interests of the Parish, bring local issues to the attention of Council, and help it make decisions on behalf of the local community.

The administration of the Council is managed by the Clerk, who is the Council's Proper Officer and also its Responsible Financial Officer. The Clerk is a paid employee who is answerable to the Council as a whole. She provides advice and administrative support, and takes action to implement Council decisions. The Clerk is assisted in this task by the Administrative Assistant to the Council. Council also employs a Groundsman and Pavilion Cleaner, who work predominantly at the Recreation Ground.

The Parish Council is responsible for the Rowlands Castle Community Assets referred to in another section. Meetings of the full Parish Council are held once a month.

The Parish Council has a regularly updated web site at:

<http://www.rowlandscastlepc.org.uk/>. It also has the following social media sites:

Facebook: [facebook.com/RowlandsCastleParishCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/RowlandsCastleParishCouncil)

Twitter: [twitter.com/rcparishcouncil](https://twitter.com/rcparishcouncil)

## **4.2 Rowlands Castle Association**

The aim of the Association is to conserve the character of Rowlands Castle, to provide a channel of communication on matters of local interest and to enhance the life of the village.

The Association also organizes the village firework display, and publishes a village magazine three times a year which volunteers deliver to all 1,200 dwellings in the Rowlands Castle parish (including Finchdean and Idsworth). It contributes funding to organisations and projects within the village. For example, it recently donated a blood pressure testing device for the village surgery. <http://rowlandscastle.com/RCA/RCAssoc.htm>

## **4.3 Rowlands Castle Heritage Centre**

The Centre (overseen by 7 local trustees) is conceived initially as an online reference and archive centre for the Parish of Rowlands Castle (including Finchdean & Idsworth) with the ambition in time to house a local museum in the under-used station buildings at Rowlands Castle. Reference to the evolving website will show the rich and distinct history of this community dating back to pre-Roman times with the influence of key landed families through many generations and distinct businesses (for example agricultural machinery in the case of Finchdean and brickworks in Rowlands Castle) still exercising their influence today.

The Centre recently organised the purchase of a model railway depicting the Green and Station at Rowlands Castle in 1944 during the D Day landing preparations. This is a nationally renowned layout currently displayed at the local Stansted House. This centre is registered as a charity (number 277352). <http://www.rowlandscastleheritagecentre.org.uk/>

## **4.4 Rowlands Castle Village Grapevine**

Grapevine is an email list intended for sending messages to residents in the Village, such as dates of public meetings and events or other matters of general interest. It has over 400 subscribers (which represents about 30% of the households in the village), and so it is an important and effective community communication aid.

<http://www.rowlandscastle.com/OtherActsDir/grapevine.htm>

## **4.5 Rowlands Castle Flood Action Group**

A seasonal river runs through old Idsworth, Finchdean and Rowlands Castle and causes periodic flooding. This is mitigated by an effective Flood Action Group which is formed by residents of these three areas who have a shared interest. For example, this group regularly liaises with public authorities overseeing flood prevention measures such as the Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council and East Hampshire District Council, monitors the water table, ensures land-owners keep ditches clear and, if necessary, arranges for sand bags to prevent properties from being flooded. Co-location within the same District ward would assist in co-ordinating any response.

## **4.6 Rowlands Castle Luncheon Club**

Members of the Royal Voluntary Service who live in Rowlands Castle hold a Luncheon Club which meets weekly in the Parish Hall. It provides lunch at a very moderate cost for about 30 village residents who are retired or disabled. The lunch is a freshly cooked meal using local food and vegetables and is a focal point to get together and socialise. Transport is also provided.

#### **4.7 Rowlands Castle Good Neighbours**

This organisation of volunteers, aims to assist residents of the village in any way it can, but it mainly provides car transport for residents who are unable to drive themselves, because of age, infirmity or other reasons. For example, volunteers drive residents to doctor, hospital and dental appointments. The organisation is led by a committee of six, and has a group of co-ordinators who receive requests for assistance and arrange for other volunteers to provide that assistance.

#### **4.8 Rowlands Castle Historical Society**

The Society was formed over 20 years ago with regular bi-monthly meetings being attended typically by over 50 people, demonstrating a strong interest in the immediate local community and its history. Local publications publicised by the Society include “Rowlands Castle Past and Present” and “Rowlands Castle and District in old picture postcards”. The Society has its own archivist with reference material available for viewing at The Spring in Havant.”

#### **4.9 Rowlands Castle U3A**

Formed in 2013, The Rowlands Castle ‘University of the third age’ has over 125 Members and 25 wide ranging interest Groups. <https://u3asites.org.uk/rowlands-castle/home>

#### **4.10 Rowlands Castle Village Fair Committee**

This annual event has been going for many years and is one of the most important dates in Rowlands Castle’s calendar. The event is designed to bring the whole community together and raise funds for community projects such as outdoor gym equipment, public-access defibrillators etc. It is always held on the first Saturday in July and takes up the whole of Rowlands Castle Green and the surrounding area. It is attended by many hundreds, possibly even thousands, of people. It starts at 11am and continues throughout the day with stalls (local organisations and retailers), dog shows, fairground rides and fancy-dress, and a paying bar and organised BBQ. A large marquee is erected on part of The Green to house some stalls and the Flower, Produce Arts and Craft Competition. In the evening, the marquee is converted to stage a live music and disco which everyone is encouraged to attend.

#### **4.11 Blue Moon Café**

This is held every Monday morning in the St. John’s Church Centre primarily for parents and carers of pre-school children. It is organized by members of the Church and is usually attended by about 20 adults and their children. Toys and games are provided for the children, and the adults have an opportunity to meet and socialise.

### **5.0 Parish Hall**

1. This is a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (number 116349), and it is managed by a Committee of which two parish councillors are required to be members.
2. Organisations regularly using the hall include: Badminton Clubs, Camera Club, Gardening Club, Montessori Nursery (meets every weekday morning, and on several afternoons), Painting Society, Pilates, Short Mat bowls, WI, Zumba

### **6.0 Recreation Ground**

1. This is also a registered charity, and it is managed by a Committee of which two parish councillors are required to be members. Other members are representatives of the clubs which use the ground.
2. The pavilion has recently been extended and now includes: two referee changing rooms, kitchen, public toilets, and three general function rooms.

## **7.0 St. John's CEC Primary School**

1. A 'Jigsaw' nursery school is also provided on the premises of this school.
2. There are strong links between this school and St. John's Parish Church. The Vicar of the Church is chair of Governors and two of the other ten governors who are not members of the school staff, are 'Foundation' governors, appointed by the Church. Other members of the Church lead the school assembly every other week. The Church provided the funding for a 'Peace Garden' in the grounds of the school.

## **8.0 Churches**

- Rowlands Castle has its own Parish Church (St. John the Baptist). The ecclesiastical parish boundaries lie within the boundaries of the Rowlands Castle civil parish boundaries. Other churches in the parish are:
- Church on The Green
- St. Hubert's Church - Idsworth
- Finchdean Chapel

## **9.0 Boundaries of Rowlands Castle**

### **9.1 Separation from Horndean**

1. The distance between the settled area of the Rowlands Castle Parish closest to its boundary with Horndean, is about 2km and it is in Castle Road. The settled area of Horndean closest to that point is a further 0.5km away. This area of separation includes the Rowlands Castle golf course, and The Holt forest (a Site of Important Nature Conservation, which is within the South Downs National Park).
2. The hamlet of Finchdean is the closest significantly settled area of the Rowlands Castle Parish to the settled area of Blendworth – a distance of 3km as the crow flies. The intervening land is within the South Downs National Park and consists of open countryside and woodland designated as a Site of Important Nature Conservation
3. Other open undeveloped areas which separate the settled areas of Rowlands Castle from the Horndean parish boundary, include:

In the south western area of Rowlands Castle:

- Blendworth Common
- Havant Thicket (a Site of Important Nature Conservation)
- The land south of Havant Thicket on which Portsmouth Water intends to construct a reservoir

In the north western area of Rowlands Castle:

- Open countryside within the South Downs National Park

### **9.2 Separation from other settlements**

1. The eastern boundary of Rowlands Castle is with West Sussex and the South Downs National Park, and there are no significant settlements in the proximity of Rowlands Castle. Part of this area includes Stansted Estate and Southleigh forest.
2. To the south, the settled area of Rowlands Castle (excluding the hospital and crematorium) is about 1km from the settled area of Havant. This area of separation includes allotments and grazing and agricultural land, defined as a 'Gap', in the EHDC Local Plan.
3. To the west, the settled area of Rowlands Castle is between 1km and 4km from Waterloville and Cowplain. This area of separation includes Staunton Country Park, Havant Thicket, and Bells Copse.

## 10.0 Transport Links

### 10.1 Links with Horndean

The only transport links between the settled areas of Rowlands Castle and Horndean are via the Havant Road (B2149) and the Rowlands Castle Road. Neither of these roads has a pavement for pedestrians and there is no bus service on these roads.

### 10.2 Links with other settlements

1. There are bus services between Rowlands Castle and Havant.
2. Rowlands Castle has a railway station on the main line between Portsmouth and London (Waterloo).
3. Two roads connect Rowlands Castle with Havant Borough to the south. These are: Durrants Road (B2149) and Whichers Gate Road (B2148). Only the former road has a pedestrian footpath that extends from the settled areas of Rowlands Castle, to the settled area of Havant.

## 11.0 East Hants District Council's Categorisation of Rowlands Castle and Horndean

The EHDC document 'Background paper for Settlement Hierarchy' (Spring 2008 and updated in May 2012) which was evidence for the current EHDC Local Plan, shows on pages 7, 8 and 9 that EHDC categorises Rowlands Castle and Horndean very differently, and clearly demonstrates their separate identities.

In the document **Rowlands Castle** is categorized as a '**Small Local Service Centre**' according to the following criteria:

- a population of 2,000
- a convenience store, post office and other shops
- a primary school
- some local employment
- playing field/children's play area
- a pub
- a community hall
- a GP surgery

The EHDC document states: '**Rowlands Castle is a well defined large settlement with an attractive village centre. It has a good range of local services and facilities including a mainline railway station.**'

In contrast, the report categorises **Horndean** as a '**Large Local Service Centre**' according to the following criteria:

- parish population of more than 5,000
- a good range of shops including a supermarket
- significant local employment
- a secondary school
- public open space/playing fields
- community facilities
- a medical centre

The EHDC document states: '**Horndean has a population putting it in the market town category, but it lacks a country town character being a significant urban area on the District boundary adjoining Waterlooville. The retail centre is separated from a large part of the residential area by the A3(M) and it has no mainline railway station, although bus services to Portsmouth and Havant are good.**'

This document can be downloaded from the following URL:

<http://www.easthants.gov.uk/housing-evidence-base>

## **12.0 Developer Contributions**

The following sources of funding are allocated to specific parishes, and key decisions about how the funds are to be used, rest with the District Councillor for that parish.

- Developer Contributions (Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy):
  - Community Facilities
  - Transport
  - Open Spaces
- District Councillor Grants

## **13.0 East Hants District Council's Spatial Planning**

For planning purposes, Rowlands Castle and Horndean are regarded as very distinct settlements with very different housing targets and policies. This is exemplified in the following EHDC documents:

- EHDC Local Plan Part 1 (Joint Core Strategy) (adopted in April 2014)
- EHDC Local Plan Part 2 (Housing and Employment Allocations) (adopted in April 2016)
- EHDC 'Background paper for Settlement Hierarchy' (August 2008).
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the East Hampshire District Joint Core Strategy (August 2013).