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## INTRODUCTION

This community audit has been undertaken for the parish church of St Catherine and St Paul in Hoddesdon, to enable the church to have a good, up to date picture of the assets and needs within the town, so that planning for future work can be based on strong information, and so that the church can partner well with other local groups and organisations.

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this audit has been threefold;

- To gather available information and statistics about Hoddesdon
- To meet with key leaders within Hoddesdon
- To undertake a community survey

The following summarises the information that has been obtained.

## HISTORY OF THE TOWN

The history of Hoddesdon began in Anglo-Saxon times. Hoddesdon began as a Saxon village. Its name was probably Hodda's dun, which means Hodda's hill. At the time of the Domesday Book in 1086, Hoddesdon was a large village, with a population of between 300 and 350. From an early date there were many **inns lining the streets** of Hoddesdon to serve the needs of travellers. It later grew into a market town. In 1253, a charter was granted to Robert Boxe, Lord of the Manor, giving permission for a market and an annual fair.

Hoddesdon suffered severely when the **Black Death** struck in 1348-49, but it soon recovered. In the 14th century the Hospital of St Laud and St Anthony, run by the church, was established in the south of Hoddesdon. The institution survived the dissolution of the monasteries, but had ceased to exist by the mid-16th century (although it is commemorated in the name of Spital Brook which divides Hoddesdon from Broxbourne).

The town was considerably **enlarged in the reign of Elizabeth I**, and a number of inns in the High Street date from this time. The monarch granted a royal charter in 1559/60, placing the town government under a bailiff, warden and eight assistants. The charter also established a free grammar school based on the site of the former hospital, and this was placed under the care of the corporation. Neither the borough nor the school flourished, however, and both had ceased to exist by the end of the century. In 1567 Sir William Cecil acquired the manor of Hoddesdonsbury and two years later Elizabeth granted him the neighbouring manor of Baas. From that date the Cecils maintained a connection with the town which is recorded by the naming of The Salisbury Arms; the title Marquess of Salisbury was granted to James Cecil in 1789.

The plague struck Hoddesdon in 1603, 1612, 1625 and 1666.

In 1622 Sir Marmaduke Rawdon built **Rawdon House**, a red-brick mansion which still survives. Rawdon also provided the town with its first public water supply, flowing from a statue known as the "Samaritan Woman" (which is now in the grounds of Lowewood Museum).

In 1683 there was an alleged Whig conspiracy to assassinate or mount an insurrection against Charles II of England because of his pro-Roman Catholic policies. This plot was known as the **Rye House Plot**, named from Rye House at Hoddesdon, near which ran a narrow road where it was planned to kill Charles as he travelled from a horse meeting at Newmarket. By chance, according to the official narrative, the king's unexpectedly early departure in March foiled the plot.

The subsequent history of Rye House has been less dramatic. In 1870 the owner, William Henry Teale, opened a pleasure garden, displaying the **Great Bed of Ware**, which he had recently acquired. It was such a popular destination for excursions from London that an extra station, **Rye House Station**, was built on the Liverpool Street to Hertford East line to serve it. By the early 20th century, however, the tourist trade had fallen off, and Rye House was demolished, apart from the Gatehouse; the Great Bed

was moved to the Victoria & Albert Museum. Rye House Gatehouse still stands today and is now a Grade 1 listed building.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Hoddesdon was a small, but busy stagecoach town. Many stagecoaches stopped in Hoddesdon on their way to or from London.

**Brewing** was first established in the town in about 1700. In 1803, William Christie established a brewery in the town, and it became a major employer and one of the largest breweries in England. The brewery continued in operation until 1928. Most of the brewery building was demolished in 1930, although part was converted into a cinema, itself since demolished. Some remnants of the establishment remain in Brewery Road.

At the time of the first census in 1801, Hoddesdon was still a very small town with a population of 1,227. However, it grew much larger during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1840 the railway reached Broxbourne. The coming of the railways meant the end of the stagecoaches that passed through Hoddesdon. **Malt** was being produced and transported to London via the River Lea. There were also several flour mills. Trade in Hoddesdon was centred on the **hops market each Thursday**. As time went on, more and more hops were carried on the river, rather than the roads and the **Wednesday meat market** took predominance. The Wednesday market has survived as a general market and a Friday market was added in the late 20th century.

Hoddesdon Clock Tower was built in 1836 on the site of the old Chapel of St. Katherine. It was funded by local businessmen and estate owners, including brewery owners Cathrow and Christie, who donated 50,000 bricks and G J Bosanquet of Broxbournebury, who gave 60,000 bricks. The tower was originally known as the Town Hall and the single storey buildings which were attached to the central tower were used for many purposes, including vestry meetings (a few selected parishioners meeting to decide local affairs). The surrounding buildings were also used to house the town's horse drawn fire engine, and between 1842 and 1883, it had two cells for the temporary imprisonment of suspected criminals before a new Police Station was built in Lord Street. The surrounding buildings were demolished in 1967. In 1836, members of the Vestry purchased a weather vane to crown the new tower. A mermaid weather vane was selected, although it is unknown why. A replica of the weather vane remains today, and the original can be seen on display at Lowewood Museum. A new clock for the tower was bought in 1870.

In 1851, a gold lace manufacturer called Charles Webb, rebuilt an old farmhouse near Lord Street called High Grounds, as a mansion within a large estate. In 1871, Robert Barclay, a successful Christian banker, took ownership of the estate and renamed it **High Leigh**. In 1880, Mr Barclay donated Lowfield to Hoddesdon Working Man's Club as a cricket field, which is still in use today, and in 1883 he donated the rest of Lowfield to be used as a football ground, then had the rest of the estate laid out to be used for the recreation of the townsfolk of Hoddesdon. In 1889, Mr Barclay organised for a lake to be dug in the park by local townsfolk, purely to give employment in a time of little work in the area.

Robert Barclay died in 1921, and in 1924 Lowfield was bought from the Barclay family by a trust formed from local inhabitants. Thanks to Robert Barclay the deeds state that the land can be used "only as a **sports and recreation ground** for the inhabitants of Hoddesdon". 14 years after his death, to celebrate the silver jubilee of King George V, the Barclay family by deed of gift donated 17.5 acres between the lake and Rosehill to the people of Hoddesdon to be managed by the local council. At that point the park was renamed **Barclay Park**.

After Robert Barclay's death, High Leigh was sold to First Conference Estate, of which he had been a director. First Conference Estate was founded in 1909 with the express purpose of providing affordable facilities for various missionary and other Christian societies. High Leigh has been run as a **Christian Conference Centre** ever since, and currently provides for about 25,000 guests a year.

Hoddesdon is the only small town in Britain with a sizeable **Italian community**. Italians emigrated to the Lea Valley in the 1950s and 60s to work in the nearby garden nurseries, and they and many of their descendants still live in the area. Since the 18th century the Lea Valley has had a reputation for fine produce from its **market gardens and green houses**. The owners and growers of most of the Lea Valley's cucumber farms come primarily from two villages in Sicily: Cianciana and Mussomeli. The Lea Valley Growers Association estimates that more than 70% of the 100 or so nurseries in the Lea Valley are now owned by Sicilian descendants, producing 75% of UK-grown cucumbers and 50% of its peppers in their glasshouses.

In 1921 a War Memorial was erected in Hoddesdon. A public library opened in 1937.

After the Second World War, Hoddesdon increasingly became a dormitory town, forming part of the London commuter belt. Much of the town centre was demolished in the 1960s and 1970s, with the construction of the **Tower Centre and Fawkon Walk** shopping centres. The opening of a bypass in 1974 changed the nature of the town, with through traffic curtailed. In 2013 the Tower Centre was redeveloped for a new Morrison's supermarket. In 2014 JD Wetherspoon's opened at the former Salisbury Arms on the High Street. The pub reverted to its 16th century name, The Star. During renovations, a series of 16th century wall paintings claimed to be of national importance were uncovered. The paintings depict half-figures and biblical verses. In 2015 a former Co-op store in the High Street was redeveloped to provide flats and retail/leisure facilities.

Hoddesdon was twinned with the Belgian city of Dinant in 1974.

In 2010 a **Charter Fair** was held in Hoddesdon, bringing in historical fairground rides and stalls, with entertainment for all the family. The Charter Fair was so named in recognition of the 1253 charter granting permission for an annual fair to be held in the town. Out of the success of this, in 2013, came the **Love Hoddesdon** Group, which was set up to provide events throughout the year within the town, to bring communities together. This was supported by both the Council and local businesses. In 2018 Hoddesdon became a **Business Improvement District**, with local businesses each paying a levy to enable activities and improvements to be implemented in Hoddesdon.

## **HISTORY OF HODDESDON PARISH CHURCH**

### **St Katherine's Chapel**

- Although an established community, Hoddesdon didn't officially become a parish until the 1840s. Until then, it was divided between the parishes of Broxbourne and Amwell, the boundary roughly following the line of Lord Street. (There is a boundary marker in the paving on the High Street outside the Poundstretcher store).

In 1336, a parishioner named William de la Marche obtained permission from the king to build a chapel, which stood where the Clock Tower is now. Since the permission specified building the chapel "anew", it can be assumed that it replaced an earlier building, but no record of this earlier chapel survives.

This building, dedicated to St Katherine, remained in use until the 18th century. It may have originally served as a place of worship for pilgrims heading for the shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham, but it was certainly later a chapel of ease for the people of Hoddesdon. When it was demolished in 1835, to be replaced by the Clock Tower, it was described as "misshapen by age".

### **A new Chapel**

In 1732, Robert Plomer, a prosperous local businessman who had inherited Rawdon House by marrying into the Rawdon Family, built a new chapel of ease. The reason for this is unclear, but it seems to have stemmed from a quarrel with Phineas Rothwell, vicar of Broxbourne. Plomer's building now forms the nave of the parish church. Plomer's chapel remained in private hands until 1820, when it was purchased by the Church and consecrated in 1823 by William Howley, Bishop of London. The first Priest in charge was Thomas Pickthall.

## **The Parish of Hoddesdon**

In 1843 it was agreed to create a parish of Hoddesdon. The first vicar was Richard Morice. The following year, the burial ground was consecrated, formally making Hoddesdon an ecclesiastical district. It officially became a parish in 1856. In 1881, Philip Holland became the vicar. He was a champion of inter-denominational links long before this became popular.

The seating capacity, however, was inadequate, and a parish meeting in 1860 decided to build a new church. However, sufficient subscriptions could not be raised to fund this, so instead the existing building was extended by adding a chancel and north and south aisles. The work was complete by 1865. A tower was added in 1887, and a peal of eight bells was donated by the Christie family in 1901. The interior was modernised in 1976, under the instigation of Rev Percy Gandon and further internal improvements were made in 2012.

At the ceremony to dedicate the peal of bells, the church was formally dedicated to St Paul, perhaps influenced by the already-existing Pauls Lane nearby. In 1976, it was rededicated to St Catherine and St Paul, and remains so today.

In 1979, a Passion Play was organised in the town, at the instigation of Rev Percy Gandon, and with the support of all the surrounding churches and local people.

There are now strong links between all the local churches, and they work together on activities like the Foodbank, Street Pastors and town centre services, under the banner of Churches Together in Hoddesdon, Broxbourne and Wormley.

## **STATISTICS**

### **Population**

Hoddesdon is a growing town, with quite a stable core population.

The estimated population of Hoddesdon in 2016 was 21,800; 10,700 males and 11,100 females. 20% were under 16, 63% were aged 16 to 64 and 17% were over 65. Compared with national figures, Hoddesdon has a slightly higher proportion of both young people and of older people than the England average.

In 2011, 94.4% of residents in Hoddesdon had English as their main language. 1.4% of residents did not have English as a main language and could not speak English well. 0.2% of residents (39 people) could not speak English at all.

### **Health**

In general, the levels of health in Hoddesdon are good, compared to the national average. There are fewer people who die prematurely from heart disease, lung disease or cancers, and fewer people with limiting long-term illnesses. In the 2011 census, 3,180 people in Hoddesdon stated that they had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities to some extent. That was 14.8% of the resident population, much lower than the national average of 42%.

2,038 people stated that they provided unpaid care for relatives or friends. That was 9.5% of the resident population (the England average is 10.2%).

58.3% of adults in the Borough of Broxbourne were physically active (150+ minutes per week) in 2017 according to Sport England's Active Lives survey, published in March 2018. This is lower than the county average (64.7%) and the national average (61.8%). The inactivity rate (less than 30 minutes of

sport or physical activity per week) for Broxbourne was 27.9% compared to 23.1% in Hertfordshire and 25.7% nationally.

As in all areas, there are some Hoddesdon residents who struggle with alcohol addiction, and others who are addicted to drugs. Mental health problems are also an issue. The HABS Family Support Team say that a lot of their case-load is taken up with mental health problems and bereavement support.

In a 2016 survey sent out to secondary school students from Broxbourne schools asking them what were the issues which troubled them most, the most frequent response was Bullying (53%), followed by Body confidence and self-image (28%), then Mental health and general wellbeing (26%). Access to Youth Services came further down the list (18%) .

### Education

One current measure of GCSE results is ‘Attainment 8’ – an average measure of pupil achievement across up to 8 subjects, including English and Maths. The national average is 44.6. In 2016, the Attainment 8 scores for Hoddesdon secondary schools were:

- John Warner School: 45.5
- Robert Barclay Academy: 41.1
- Broxbourne School: 55.5

In 2011, 24.9% of people aged 16 and over in Hoddesdon had no qualifications. This compares to 25.5% of people in Broxbourne Borough, 18.2% in Hertfordshire and 23% in England and Wales overall.

### Employment

There are about 185 businesses in Hoddesdon town centre, which provide employment for local people. There is also an industrial estate on the edge of the town which provides local jobs. Many people also commute to local towns or to London for their work.

In 2015, 3.2% of the population of Broxbourne Borough were long-term unemployed. This compares with 2.6% in Hertfordshire and 4.6% in England as a whole.

### Those in need

While the overall statistics for Hoddesdon indicate that most people have adequate resources to live comfortably, this masks the fact that there are individuals and families who are struggling financially. There is a Foodbank in Hoddesdon, which is needed, and some families are struggling to find the resources to provide the basics for their children. The number of children in low-income families in Broxbourne Borough appears to be reducing. The figure for 2014 was 3,425, and for 2015 it was 2,845.

The proportion of people of working age in Broxbourne Borough receiving benefits is lower than the national average, but slightly higher than Hertfordshire:

BENEFIT	BROXBOURNE	HERTFORDSHIRE	ENGLAND
Jobseekers Allowance (only)	2.9%	2.1%	3.3%
Incapacity Benefits (IB or ESA)	2%	1.7%	2.4%
Any Benefit (includes in work benefits)	11.8%	9.4%	13.5%

Sources: Office for National Statistics & Department for Work & Pensions

According to the End Child Poverty coalition (January 2018), the percentage of children living in poverty in the Borough of Broxbourne was 22.6% (including housing costs). The rate for Broxbourne and Hoddesdon South ward was 11% and for Hoddesdon Town and Rye Park ward it was 22.6%. The UK rate was 27%.

## Housing

In 2011, 74.4% of household spaces in Hoddesdon were houses or bungalows and 25.4% of were flats, maisonettes or apartments.

- 73.8% of households lived in owner occupied accommodation,
- 24.7% of households lived in rented accommodation
- 0.6% of households lived in shared ownership accommodation.

(others lived in communal establishments such as hospitals, care homes, prisons, army barracks, hotels or other types of managed accommodation).

For England and Wales as a whole, the figures are 64% owner occupied, 33% rented and 1% shared ownership.

## Transport

### Buses

There is a good bus service from Hertford to Waltham Cross, going through Hoddesdon. Bus number 310 goes via Ware, Great Amwell, St Margaret's, Hoddesdon, Broxbourne, Wormley and Cheshunt, and runs about every 10 minutes.

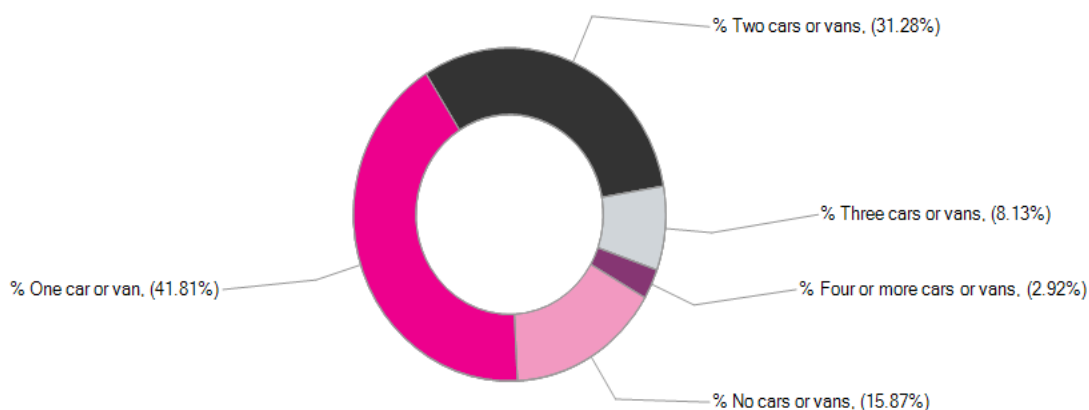
### Trains

There are three train stations accessible to Hoddesdon residents: Rye House, St Margaret's and Broxbourne, with easy routes to London and to Cambridge by train.

### Cars

Car ownership in Hoddesdon is quite high. In 2011, 16% of households in Hoddesdon had no car or van available for their use (compared with 25.4% in England as a whole). An average of 1.42 cars or vans were available per household.

Car or van availability in households in Hoddesdon at 2011 (%)



Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, Table KS404EW.



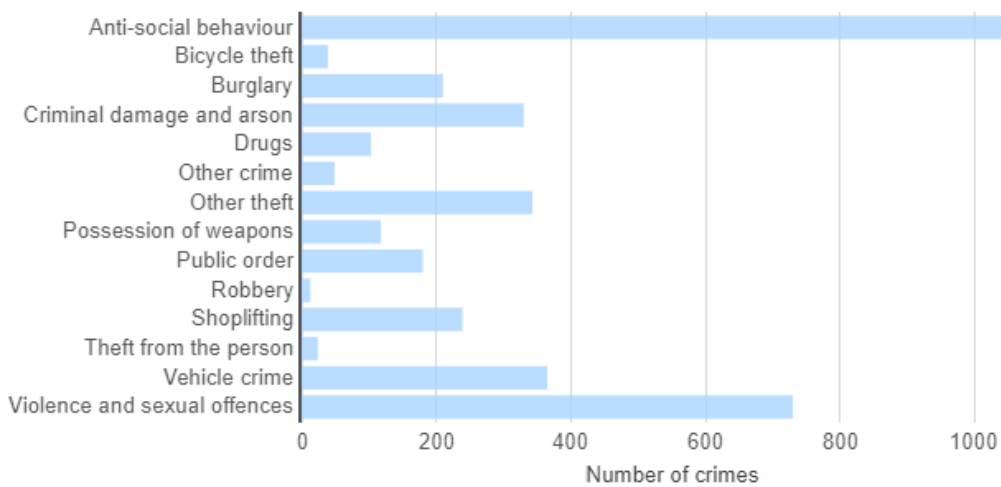
In 2011, of the residents of Hoddesdon aged 16 to 74 in employment:

- 4.2% worked mainly at or from home
- 65.8% drove to work by car (4.83% as a passenger in a car)
- 13.9% travelled by public transport (train, bus, coach or taxi)
- 9.9% cycled or walked to work

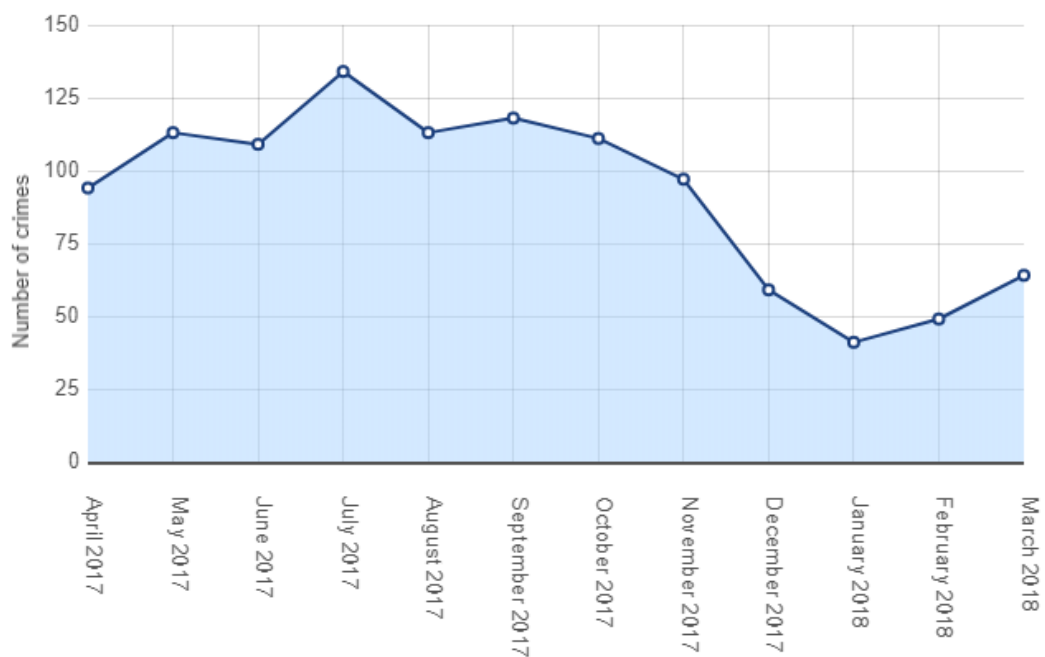
## Crime

The crime rate (77.4 crimes per 1000 population) is average compared with similar areas of the country. Anti-social behaviour is the most commonly reported crime:

Crimes in Hoddesdon April 2017 – March 2018:



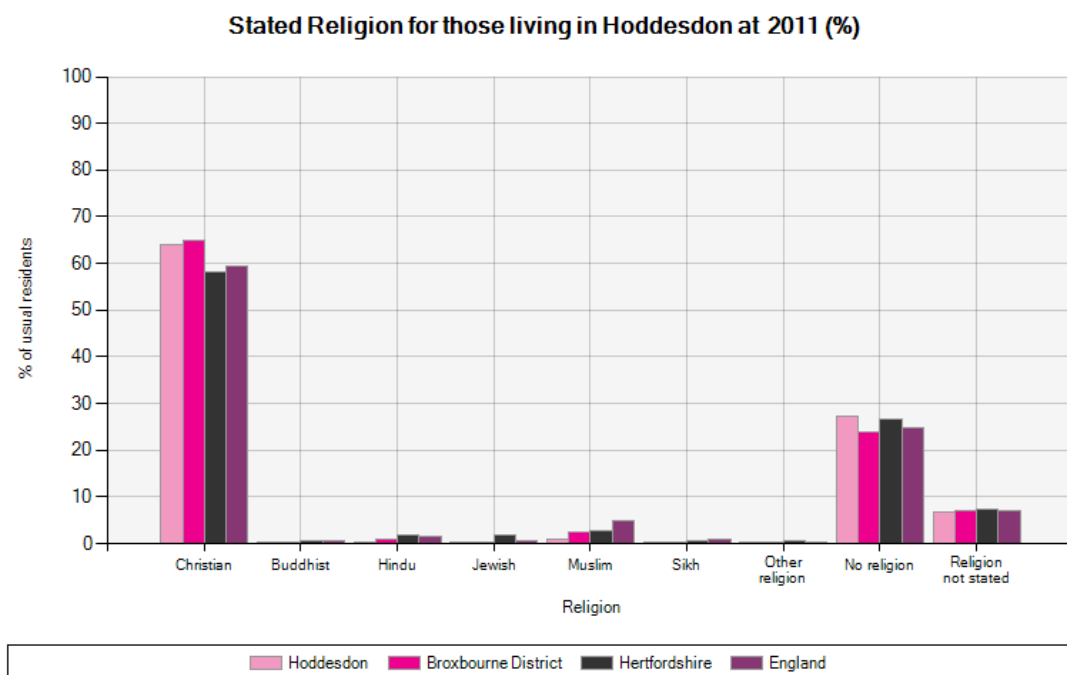
The peak of anti-social behaviour is in the summer months:



Source: Hertfordshire Constabulary

## Religion

At the time of the Census in 2011, 63% Hoddesdon residents identified as being Christian, which is higher than the national average. Just over 27% said they had no religion:



Source: Office for National Statistics 2011 Census, Table KS209EW

## ASSETS WITHIN THE TOWN

### Facilities

#### *Sport and Leisure*

There are a number of leisure facilities in the local area, including a gym in the town centre and the John Warner sports centre, a leisure centre on the outskirts of the town containing a swimming pool, gym, sports hall and children's soft play area. On Lowfield, there is a football pitch and a cricket pitch and there are tennis courts by Beech Walk. In nearby Rye Park, there is a large go-kart track, which was notoriously the initial training ground for motor racing champion Lewis Hamilton.

The New River (man-made) goes through Hoddesdon, and the River Lea is easy walking distance, taking people into the beautiful countryside of the Lee Valley. Fishing and sailing are popular activities for local people.

There are several parks and open spaces, including:

- Barclay Park, which has a multi-use games area
- Old Highway Recreation Ground, which has a multi-use games area
- Pound Close Open Space, which has a skate park and multi-use games area
- Broxbourne Recreation Ground
- Jubilee Gardens

At Rye House there is an RSPB wetlands nature reserve called Rye Meads, with many trails and hides. Also at Rye House, there is the Rye-Assic Adventure Park for children, with a dinosaur theme.

Just down the road in Broxbourne, there is the Paradise Wildlife Park, which now also includes animated dinosaurs for children to enjoy. Paradise Wildlife Park works closely with the Love Hoddesdon BID, to support their events, especially at Christmas.

The Spotlight Theatre (formerly Broxbourne Civic Hall) offers a theatre, cinema, conference space, and space for meetings and events.

There is a small museum in the town, Lowewood Museum, which features exhibits & educational programmes focused on local history & heritage.

### **Other facilities**

Other facilities within Hoddesdon include:

- Several Supermarkets – Morrisons, Sainsburys, Aldi, Asda, along with Iceland and Tesco Express.
- Street market on Wednesdays and Fridays
- About 13 restaurants
- About 14 takeaways
- About 7 coffee shops
- Nine pubs, several of which feature live bands at least two nights a week.
- A library which is open 6 days a week, and which houses the Post Office and Council One Stop Shop
- Several banks
- Three GP surgeries – The Limes, Amwell Street, Hailey View
- Hoddesdon Health Centre, which provides Contraception, Antenatal care, Baby clinics, Child and Adolescent Mental Health services, Podiatry, Blood tests
- Three dental surgeries
- Eight churches – St Catherine and St Paul, St Cuthbert's, St Augustine's RC, Hoddesdon Methodist, Hoddesdon Baptist, Life Church en11, Overcome Outreach, and a new church called Redeemed Church.
- Six Care Homes – St Catharine's, The Grange, Rosevale, The Chadwick, Belmont View, the Hollies
- Two Children's Centres – The Ark, Three Parks.
- Eight Primary Schools – St Catherine's, St Augustine's, St Cross, Roselands, Westfield, Cranbourne, Forres, Sheredes
- Two secondary schools – John Warner, Robert Barclay
- The nearest further educational centre is Hertford Regional College, with campuses in Broxbourne and Ware.
- Ambition Broxbourne Business Centre, a business community hub with flexible work space.
- The housing association which provides most of the social housing for Hoddesdon is B3 Living.

### **Clubs and Activities in Hoddesdon**

There are a lot of people with energy, drive and initiative in Hoddesdon, and this is demonstrated by the number of different groups and organisations which are running successfully. The following shows the diversity of activities taking place:

#### **Animal Groups**

South East Herts Beekeepers  
Lucky Horseshoes Donkey Sanctuary

#### **Arts and Crafts**

Broxbourne Arts Forum  
Burford Art Group  
Craft Group – Hoddesdon  
Hazlewood Art Group  
Knitting – Herts Stitch and Bitch  
Mannamead Art Group  
Pottery – Lowewood Pottery Club

#### **Associations, Clubs and Charities**

Broxbourne Foodbank  
Hoddesdon 41 Club  
The Rotary Club of Hoddesdon  
Third Tuesday

#### **Care, Counselling and Advice**

Alcoholics Anonymous  
Broxbourne Street Pastors  
Hoddesdon Carers and Ex-Carers  
Narcotics Anonymous  
Rethink Mental Illness

### **Cultural and Historical**

Friends of Lowewood Museum  
Hoddesdon Chinese Club  
Hoddesdon Society  
Reading Group – Hoddesdon Library

### **Dance and Drama**

The Badger Group for the Performing Arts  
Capricorn Majorettes of Hoddesdon  
Dance and Social Club  
East Herts Operatic Society  
Hoddesdon Players  
Mayhem Theatre Arts  
Morris Dancing – Hoddesdon Crownsmen  
Jason Theatre School

### **Environmental Groups**

Friends of the Hertfordshire Way  
Lea Valley Volunteer Litter Picking Association  
Friends of Barclay Park

### **Ex-Service Associations**

Royal British Legion – Hoddesdon and District Branch

### **Health Support**

Crest of a Wave (elderly and terminally ill)  
Hoddesdon Organisation for Local Disabled

### **Hobbies**

Badger Bridge Club  
Hoddesdon Camera Club  
Chess for the over 50s  
Hoddesdon Chess Club  
Hoddesdon Floral Art Society  
Hoddesdon Model Railway Club

### **Music and Choirs**

Hoddesdon Music Club

### **Neighbourhood and Residents' Associations**

Hanover Court Housing Association  
Orgardians  
Rye Park Residents' Association

### **Parents and Children**

Barnados Hoddesdon Children's Centres  
Cornerstones Pre-School  
Dollymixtures Pre-School  
Dots and Tots Toddler Groups  
Early Birds Baby and Toddler Groups  
HABS Family Support Team  
Home-Start East Herts  
Parents and Toddlers Hoddesdon Baptist

Rye Park Nursery School Centre  
Sheredes Pre-School  
St Augustine's Under 5s  
Westfield Pre-School

### **Religious Groups**

Churches Together in Hoddesdon, Broxbourne and Wormley  
Hoddesdon Baptist Church  
Hoddesdon Methodist Church  
Life Church en11  
St Augustine's RC Church  
St Catherine and St Paul's Church  
St Cuthbert's Church  
Overcomer Outreach  
RCCG Pavilion of Redemption  
Kingdom Hall, Jehovah's Witnesses  
Hoddesdon Spiritualists

### **Senior Citizens Clubs and Services**

Age UK 10 to 3 Club  
Hoddesdon and District Old People's Welfare Committee  
Over 60's Centre – Hoddesdon  
Tuesday Group – St Catherine & St Paul  
Luncheon Club – St Catherine & St Paul  
University of the Third Age U3A Broxbourne  
University of the Third Age U3A Lee Valley

### **Sports**

Affinity Gymnastics  
Hoddesdon and Rye Park Bowls Club  
Hoddesdon Bowls Club (Rosehill)  
Hoddesdon Cricket Club  
Hoddesdon Lawn Tennis Club  
Hoddesdon Owls Girls/Ladies Football Club  
Hoddesdon Town Football Club  
Hoddesdon Shotokan Karate Club  
KSTSK Hoddesdon Shotokan Karate  
Integral Yoga  
Friends Swimming Club – Robert Barclay  
Hoddesdon Swimming Club - John Warner  
Hoddesdon Tri Club (Triathlon)  
John Warner Jumpers (Trampoline)  
Parkrun at Barclay Park  
Rye Park Tennis Club  
Your Town Runners  
Your Town Walkers

### **Women's Groups**

Hoddesdon Women's Club  
Mother's Union – St Catherine & St Paul  
Mother's Union – St Cuthbert's

New River Women's Club  
Rye Park Women's Club

St John Ambulance – Hoddesdon Cadet  
Division

#### **Youth – Cadets, Scouts and Guides**

Army Cadet Force – Hoddesdon detachment  
Boys Brigade – 1<sup>st</sup> Hoddesdon Company  
Girlguiding – Hoddesdon District  
Scouts – 2<sup>nd</sup> Hoddesdon Scout group  
Scouts – 3<sup>rd</sup> Hoddesdon Scout Group

#### **Youth Clubs**

Friday night Sports Club at the John Warner  
Sports Centre  
Next Generation Youth Club  
Pound Close Youth and Community Centre  
Young Life – Hoddesdon  
Young People Zone (YPZ)

Apart from the activities above, there are now several well-organised events which take place through the year in Hoddesdon, under the banner of Love Hoddesdon.

In 2018, these will include:

- The May Fair and Heritage Day – 12<sup>th</sup> May
- Music Festival – St Catherine's School – 23<sup>rd</sup> June
- Vintage and Classic Car Day – 14<sup>th</sup> July
- Give your Town the Run-around – 23<sup>rd</sup> September
- Charter Fair – Community Day and Showtime Stage – 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October
- Hoddesdon Loves Christmas – 24<sup>th</sup> November
- Festival of Carols – 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> December
- New Year's Fair - 28<sup>th</sup> December to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019

#### **AVAILABLE INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL GROUPS, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS**

- The Borough of Broxbourne produces a Local Organisations Directory, which is a comprehensive list of all the local clubs, societies and voluntary groups. This is updated annually. It is available in hard copy from Hoddesdon Library.
- Also available from Hoddesdon Library are leaflets/booklets on:
  - The Love Hoddesdon Events
  - The Spotlight Theatre Events
  - Exhibitions and events at Lowewood Museum
  - The Guide - Activities for Young People aged 11-18 in Broxbourne
  - Hoddesdon Music Club
  - Broxbourne Arts Forum Programme
  - LitFest 18 – events by Hertfordshire Libraries
  - Walking for Health in Broxbourne Borough
  - Be Active brochure detailing activities and services for older people in Broxbourne

#### **ASSETS WITHIN ST CATHERINE AND ST PAUL'S CHURCH**

##### **Facilities**

St Catherine and St Paul's Church has a large nave, which is a flexible space, with moveable pews. The north and south transepts also have seating space.

Within the building is also a creche/meeting room, a smaller meeting room, kitchen, toilets and vestry.

There are two church halls, the Barclay Hall and the Hunt Room, together with several smaller meeting rooms eg the Ark room, which can be used for church activities, and can also be hired out for community use.

## **Activities**

The church has two services on a Sunday morning, one formal and one more informal. There is Sunday school available for children. A midweek Communion service is held on Wednesday mornings. Special all-age services are conducted for Mothering Sunday, Easter, and Harvest, and at Christmas the services include Christingle, Carol Service and Midnight Mass. The church also conducts infant baptism, adult baptism, confirmation, wedding services and funeral services. Home communion is taken to those unable to attend church who wish to have communion.

Other activities run by the church include:

- Early Birds for pre-school children
- Children's Holiday Club for primary school children
- Young People's Zone for 8-11-year-olds
- Mother's Union
- Luncheon Club once a month
- Tuesday Group with a speaker
- Holiday at Home for older people
- Bell-ringing, for the church services, and key events in the town

Community activities run in the church halls include:

- U3A Line Dancing
- U3A Jazz Ark Room
- Ntertainers
- Hoddesdon Women's Group
- Herts Showtime
- Tumble Tots
- Herts n Soles
- Singing Down Memory Lane
- St John's Ambulance
- Supersport
- Pilates
- Brownies
- Rainbows
- Diabetes Prevention
- Slimming World
- Overcomer Church
- Family Parties

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

### **Introduction**

A community survey was conducted during March and April 2018. This survey was delivered in several different ways:

- Street interviews were conducted on Hoddesdon High street on Market days on 4 different mornings in March/April.
- Survey forms were handed out after the Sunday church services, after Wednesday Communion and during Mother's Union at St Catherine and St Paul's Church
- All the groups which meet at the Hunt Room and the Barclay Hall were asked if they would like to take part in the survey and were given forms accordingly. Responses were received

from Singing Down Memory Lane, Brownies, Hoddesdon Women's Club, YPZ, Early Birds, and Cocaine Anonymous.

- Survey forms were sent to High Leigh Conference Centre, for staff to complete
- Forms were hand-delivered and collected from about 50% of the businesses in Hoddesdon High Street
- An email link to Survey Monkey was sent to all the primary and secondary schools, to go out to parents, for them to complete. A link was also sent out to pupils from the secondary schools via the Youth Mayor.
- A focus group was conducted with 7 women from the Monday Walking Group that meets at Your Town

In total, 279 responses were received.

### Summary of responses

#### 1. *What do you like about Hoddesdon?*

*'I enjoy the Love Hoddesdon events, and they bring the community together'*

*'There is a strong backbone of people who work hard to deliver for the town'*

*'There seems a willingness to participate in all events that are put on in Hoddesdon. I think people are generally encouraging the town to excel'*

The most frequent response to this question was: **The Love Hoddesdon events.**

Many people also really appreciate the charity runs, which are under the banner of Give your Town the Run Around.

Other aspects of Hoddesdon that people like include:

- It is a good small town
- The Markets, including the French market
- The range of supermarkets
- The convenience of local shops
- The banks
- The library
- The restaurants and coffee shops
- The historic buildings
- The Museum
- The Gym
- The facilities at John Warner Leisure Centre
- Free parking as provided by the supermarkets
- Good bus service
- Convenient for use of a disability scooter
- A nice town centre that can be used for gatherings
- Pre-school activities, including the Ark, Early Birds, Rhyme Time (Library)
- U3A activities
- The variety of activities provided by the Borough/Spotlight Theatre

- The Churches, and Churches Together
- Easy access to London
- Barclay Park
- Countryside nearby
- Safe walking
- Something to do for all ages
- Paradise Wildlife Park
- Good schools
- Not much crime
- Improvements in the town centre over recent years
- Retailers have a strong bond and camaraderie

## **2. What do you think is one of the strengths of the people of Hoddesdon?**

By far the commonest response to this question was that the people are **friendly**. Other common responses were that there is a **good community spirit**, and that people are **willing to help when necessary**. Several people also said that people come together for town centre events and charitable activities. They also rally as a community when needed and can speak up and vote with their feet. The example of the march against the Incinerator was quoted several times.

Other strengths which were mentioned included:

- It is diverse, with a strong, friendly Italian community
- People speak to you
- They are resilient and strong
- They are hard-working
- They organise events in the town
- People live here long-term
- A lot of people know each other and come together when times are hard
- They are kind and look out for each other
- Compassionate and caring nature
- Loyalty
- Family orientated
- Everyone mixes well together

## **3. What are your ideas about things local people could do to help improve quality of life in Hoddesdon further?**

There were 3 common responses to this question:

- The commonest response was: **Clean up the litter**/use the bins/take litter home. There was a big concern to keep Hoddesdon clean and tidy.
- The second concern was to provide **more activities for young people/teenagers**, especially in the evenings and during the school holidays. It is felt that while there is good provision for younger children and older people, there is not enough to meet the needs of teenagers.
- Thirdly, people were suggesting more **family and community events** in Barclay Park/other green spaces

Other responses included the following:



- Be more thoughtful to one another
- Get more involved in community events
- Keep looking out for others
- Be more helpful to elderly neighbours
- Visit the elderly. Ring them in bad weather
- More activities for older people
- Use the parks more
- Support local businesses/Shop in local stores
- Give more to the poor eg soup kitchen
- Facilities for the homeless
- Drop in centre for young mums and older people. Could use the Quaker Hall.
- Become involved in local groups and activities
- Church to have more events in the town
- Make more of Christmas and Easter at Churches
- More music festivals
- Self-help groups
- Better advertising of events
- Information about local organisations and facilities
- Create a social group online
- Donate more to charity
- Smile

#### **4. Do you have any good memories linked with church?**

For most people, good memories linked with church are associated with big family events like **weddings, christenings or funerals**. Many people also mentioned that services at Christmas such as **Christingle services, carol services and Midnight Mass** have been special for them.

Some have good memories of Sunday School, or of attending church with Brownies or Scouts. Some enjoyed going to church with St Catherine's or Westfield School. Other good memories include:

- The Passion Play on a Good Friday when all the churches joined together.
- Handel's Messiah at Rye Park
- An 'It's a Knockout' event put on by a church in Broxbourne
- The Big Lunch at St Cuthbert's last year
- The Churches Together Easter service in the town centre
- The Town Centre Remembrance Day Service
- Being involved with singing with a church choir

*'Many years ago we attended the funeral of a friend/neighbour at St Pauls. It was packed with people from a whole range of backgrounds, ethnicities, classes etc, everyone joining together to celebrate his life.'*

*'A year ago I had to have a funeral service for my brother who passed away unexpectedly. The vicar of the church in St Cuthberts was most helpful and understanding. He guided me through the complete process – and his words spoken in the church on the day were lovely and caring, although he never knew my brother or had never met him. I received lovely comments from family/friends regarding the service'*

Some who did not go to church expressed the opinion that they were glad the church was there: *'It provides a sense of community spirit.'*

#### **PLANS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE TOWN**

The biggest development, which is starting this year, is **High Leigh Garden Village**, to the west of Hoddesdon, and north of High Leigh Conference Centre. Within this development will be the following:

- Up to 523 new homes
- 2-form entry primary school – relocation and enlargement of Westfield School
- A local shop
- Up to 60-bed hotel including a gym
- A Restaurant or an alternative B1 commercial use
- Commercial space
- 19 hectares of Green Space
- Two Neighbourhood Equipped Play Areas
- A Multi Use Games Area
- Allotments
- Formal sports pitches including a pavilion
- Informal open space
- Landscaping
- Up to 80 bed Residential Care Home

This new development is within the parish of St Catherine and St Paul, and plans will need to be made to provide for the spiritual needs of the people who come to live in these new homes.

The **Love Hoddesdon Business Improvement District** Strategic objectives over its five-year plan are as follows:

- **Managing the town:** Employing a dedicated town centre manager chiefly tasked with ensuring the business plan is implemented. Providing a face of the town to both consumers and BID members –liaising with the Council, the Police and other bodies to lobby for the town.
- **Investing in the town:** Direct investment in schemes such as a town radio link system to help tackle issues like shoplifting, a 'free' town-wide WiFi system and improved signage of the town and its facilities on key routes to encourage increased visitors
- **Promoting the town:** To promote and raise awareness of Hoddesdon throughout the local area and wider region, by enabling a series of town centre events and promotions, improved festive lighting and 21st century marketing to target existing communities and new opportunities as they arise.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Hoddesdon is a historic small town which has quite a stable core community and the population is growing. The people pride themselves on being active, caring and supportive of one another. They feel safe, and there is the perception of low crime rates. They love local events which bring the community together. They appreciate the parks, the rivers and the beautiful countryside around in the Lee Valley. There is a concern for the local environment, as demonstrated in their strong negative response to the proposed incinerator in the area, and in their desire to combat litter.

People really appreciate the community events which take place in the town, and the fact that businesses, the council and the local community work well together to make these events happen.

Many people have had good experiences of church, and there is in general the feeling that people are glad the church is there, and that they appreciate the special services (eg at Christmas) which are conducted there. The churches in the area work well together, forming a strong Churches Together group.

Many felt that there need to be more activities available for young people, in the evenings and in school holidays. Young people themselves are concerned about bullying, self-image and mental health and wellbeing.

There are some families who are struggling, either financially or with health or relationship problems. Some people, especially in the older age-groups, are lonely and need more support.

The new development of High Leigh Garden Village will change some of the dynamics in the town and in the parish of St Catherine and St Paul.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The church should consider the following:

- Whether there are ways it can support people in the community in their concern for the environment
- Expanding its work with young people
- Whether it can support struggling families more.
- Whether it can provide more support for lonely older people in the community
- If there are ways the church can link its activities more with the town centre events
- Planning for meeting the spiritual needs of the people who come to live in High Leigh Garden Village

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