

Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy

Technical Appendix 4

Property Assessment

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1 Purpose of the Technical Appendix

Introduction

- 1.1 This Technical Appendix sets out the current properties from which the East Sussex Library and Information Service delivers its functions and reviews the effectiveness of existing library buildings, in order to ascertain how the current buildings should be used to support delivery of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy and how these assets can best be used by the wider community.
- 1.2 This is one of a number of documents, Technical Appendices (TA), which form the evidence base that supports the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy. These documents are as follows:

Draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy						
Appendix 1 Rationale and Impact Assessment for the Proposed Needs Based Library Service						
Appendix 2 Summary of Technical Appendices						
Technical Appendix 1 National and Local Context	Technical Appendix 2 Needs Assessment	Technical Appendix 3 Service Description and Analysis	Technical Appendix 4 Property Assessment	Technical Appendix 5 Accessibility Analysis	Technical Appendix 6 Strategic Outcomes and Gap Analysis	Technical Appendix 7 Delivery Model Options Appraisal

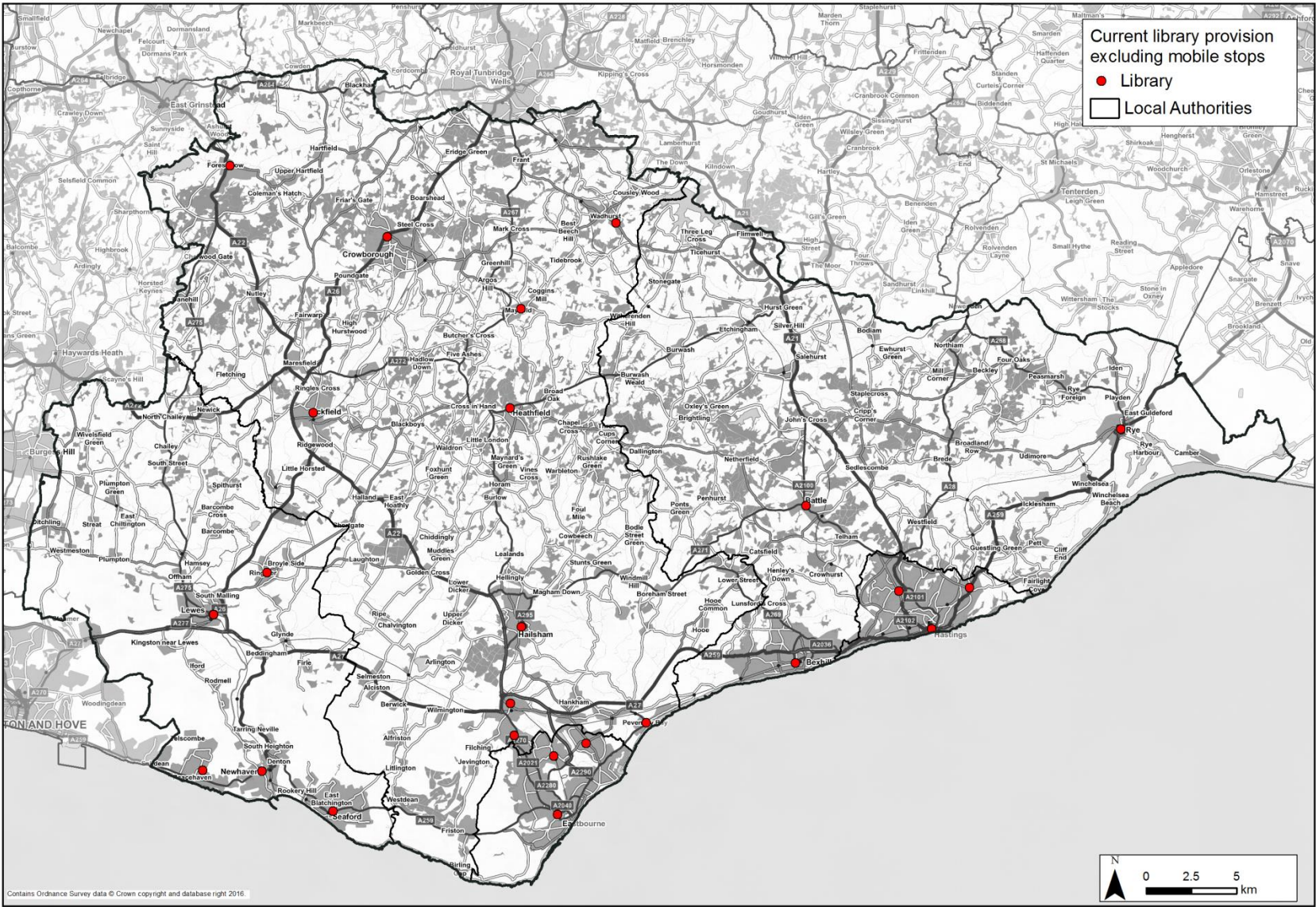
- 1.3 The purpose is to:
- provide an overview of the buildings from which the Library and Information Service operates
 - set out the running and upkeep costs of these buildings
 - review the efficiency of the current library estate and identify where there are opportunities to deliver the service in a more cost-effective way and/or deliver a better service in conjunction with other services.
 - identify whether there is scope to release space for joint working or for activities that could generate income for the Library and Information Service or to deliver services on behalf of someone else as a source of income generation.

2 Building information

Introduction

- 2.1 The East Sussex Library and Information Service currently has a network of 24 public library buildings. Each year around 1.48 million visits take place in these buildings. In addition to the services provided by the Library and Information Service some of our libraries offer services delivered by, or in partnership with, other organisations. The location of the 24 libraries can be seen in Figure 1.
- 2.2 The County Council owns 15 of the 24 libraries freehold. The remaining 9 libraries are leased, either from public, private or voluntary and community sector landlords. A list of the East Sussex libraries, with their freehold/leasehold status is provided in Annex 1 to this Technical Appendix.
- 2.3 The Library and Information Service also leases Ropemaker Park, a modern warehouse unit located in Hailsham, which is the central storage and distribution point for library stock and base for the Mobile Library, as well as being the base for some library service staff, including librarians, Bibliographic Services and the Schools Library and Museum Service. Ropemaker Park is also the County Council's records centre and provides office space to some other County Council services.
- 2.4 The Mobile Library is not covered in this Technical Appendix, which provides an appraisal of library service buildings only. An assessment of the Mobile Library service is included in Technical Appendix 3, Service Description and Analysis.

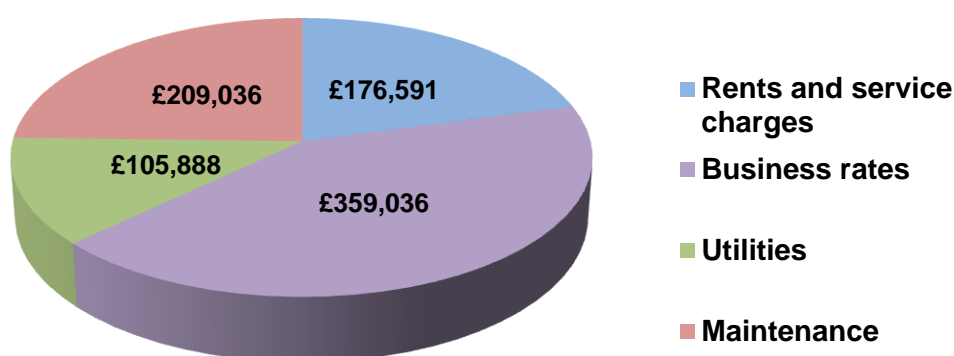
Figure 1: Map of East Sussex library service buildings



Running costs of Library and Information Services buildings

- 2.5 The total running cost of our buildings, including Ropemaker Park, is approximately £850,000 per year. This excludes staffing costs, any income which each library generates from fees and fines, and the costs of refurbishment, new furniture etc., which is detailed separately in the next section. A breakdown of the buildings costs for the Library and Information Service as a whole can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Annual running costs of East Sussex Libraries buildings



Capital expenditure on libraries

- 2.6 With 1.48 million visitors annually, wear and tear on library buildings, furniture and fittings is inevitable, and can cost a considerable amount of money over a number of years. Worn and damaged items can quickly pose a risk to the health and safety of customers and staff or become damaged beyond economic repair.
- 2.7 Of the £850,000 annual running costs of the Library and Information Service's buildings, around £210,000 is spent on maintenance. This covers both small repairs such as fixing leaks to much larger scale repairs such as re-roofing or replacing old windows.
- 2.8 On top of this annual maintenance expenditure, the County Council has spent approximately £16.5 million over the last decade on improvements to and major refurbishment of East Sussex library buildings. Once the refurbishment of Hastings library is complete in the spring of 2018, this sum will have risen

to £20.4 million. This investment in library buildings, as opposed to the paying for the annual running costs, is known as 'capital expenditure'.

- 2.9 The reduction in funding for local councils from Central Government and increasing demand for some local council services mean that it is unlikely the County Council will be able to afford an investment programme for library buildings on this scale for the foreseeable future. However, we will still need to keep our buildings, furniture and fittings safe and in a good state of repair, so that they are fit to provide the services they need to deliver. It is estimated that for the 24 library buildings the service currently operates from will cost around £2.6 million over the next five years or approximately £523,000 per year. This is in addition to the annual maintenance costs of around £210,000.
- 2.10 Table 1 provides a breakdown of the estimated funding needed for each library over the next five years. The estimates are based on items associated with general building maintenance and items frequently replaced during a building's lifetime. This includes:
- Repair and replacement of CCTV, security and personal safety items as they fail or become obsolete and beyond economic repair.
 - Replacement of worn and damaged floor coverings and furniture including desks, trolleys, map cabinets etc.
 - Changes to signage, both internal and external to reflect changes in service delivery and opening times.
 - Dilapidations and lease responsibilities arising from the 9 library buildings currently leased or rented.
 - Repair and replacement of equipment specific to the library service such as self-service kiosks and security gates
 - Repair and replacement of furniture needed to respond to statutory requirements for public and staff, such as Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant desks, chairs and adapted technology.

Table 1: Estimated upkeep costs for East Sussex libraries, 2017 to 2022

Library	Estimated cost
Battle	£184,924
Bexhill	£463,543
Crowborough	£269,535
Eastbourne	£339,460
Forest Row	£22,035
Hailsham	£92,561
Hampden Park	£90,957
Hastings	£96,425
Heathfield	£109,839
Hollington	£28,323
Langney	£66,289
Lewes	£96,711
Mayfield	£37,868
Newhaven	£51,393
Ore	£27,073
Peacehaven	£152,411
Pevensey Bay	£8,322
Polegate	£132,976
Ringmer	£11,445
Rye	£50,766
Seaford	£65,665
Uckfield	£99,949
Wadhurst	£29,572
Willingdon	£32,740
Total	£2,560,781
Annual average	£512,156

Note: Ropemaker Park is not included

3 Review of library properties

Opportunities for partnership working or delivering commissioned services

- 3.1 Library buildings are spaces from which a range of different services are provided to the public, in addition to the core Library and Information Service functions. The range of ways in which the Library and Information Service currently works with partners is described in more detail in Technical Appendix 3, Service Description and Analysis. This section of the Technical Appendix looks at the different ways in which better use could be made of library properties in order to meet local needs, looking particularly at the cost effectiveness of the current buildings and opportunities to increase income or share the costs of running them.

Making better use of libraries when they are closed

- 3.2 All of the libraries in East Sussex are closed for periods of time, for example on one or more mornings, afternoons or whole days per week. Many libraries now have movable shelving and furniture which enable the layout to be changed for a few hours to accommodate a wide range of different potential uses.
- 3.3 There is considerable scope for community groups, voluntary sector organisations, the private sector and other parts of the public sector (including other parts of the County Council) to make more use of these assets when the Library and Information Service is not using a building to deliver its services. This would be subject to any applicable planning permissions or lease conditions of each building. This could provide a source of income for the Library and Information Service, helping to reduce financial pressures on the service, or enabling income to be reinvested into delivering new services to meet local needs.

Library meeting rooms

- 3.4 The existing network of library buildings offers a number of meeting, function and office spaces. These facilities are available for public hire by individuals, small businesses, charities, local organisations, service providers, partners and private enterprises.
- 3.5 Meeting rooms are available in four libraries across the county. They are primarily hired on an hourly or session basis (morning, afternoon or full day) although there is the potential to hire the space on a weekly, monthly or other agreed duration period. Meeting rooms can be hired when the library is closed, by prior arrangement. The meeting rooms have a variety of facilities and are located as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Current meeting room provision in library buildings

Library	Meeting Room detail	Facilities
Peacehaven	Meeting Room 1 @ 50m ²	Wifi, toilets, parking, power, DDA compliant, interactive screen
	Meeting Room 2 @ 30m ²	
Newhaven	Meeting Room 1 @ 6m ²	Wifi, toilets, power, DDA compliant, hearing loop
	Meeting Room 2 @ 6 m ²	
	Meeting Rooms 1 and 2 can be joined together	
Eastbourne	The Grove room @ 30m ²	Wifi, toilets, power, DDA compliant, interactive screen, hearing loop
	The Ivy room @ 8m ²	
	The Grove and Ivy rooms can be joined together	
Uckfield	Meeting Room 1 @ 63 m ²	Kitchen facilities, toilets, DDA compliant

- 3.6 During 2016/2017 the meeting rooms across all four venues generated £8,500 of income. The rooms were booked for a wide range of uses including business meetings, health programmes, language courses, training, and individual use.
- 3.7 Despite marketing of the meeting room spaces at these four libraries, they are under-utilised and are not realising their income generation potential. Further consideration should be given to more targeted marketing of the meeting rooms for ad hoc or longer term rentals, or entering into longer-term agreements with potential partners to rent the rooms as workspaces or places from which services to the community could be provided.
- 3.8 Where meeting rooms are not being used, and where they can be adequately supervised by staff, consideration will also be given to opening them up to library customers, for example for use as study spaces or areas where customers can access library wifi using their own devices.

Opportunities to release library space for alternative use

- 3.9 Technical Appendix, National and Local Context, shows that the number of visits to East Sussex libraries and the number of items borrowed by customers has decreased significantly. There is an opportunity, therefore, to consider whether the amount of space within each library building is still

required to deliver the Library and Information Service. This section of the Technical Appendix provides a detailed assessment of opportunities within individual libraries to allocate space for use by partners, delivery of commissioned services, or both.

- 3.10 The release of space within libraries is also an opportunity for the Library and Information Service to review overheads and generate a rental income either as a saving or to be reinvested within the service. Partners could help offset running costs of libraries, reducing property revenue expenditure for themselves as well as the library service. Identifying space within a building that could be used for other purposes could also enable the Library and Information Service to generate income by bidding for external funding to provide new or better services that help the service achieve its strategic outcomes or by being paid to deliver services on behalf of others when they are commissioning services.
- 3.11 A review of space within all of the libraries in East Sussex has identified:
- the available space (description and m²)
 - what kind of potential use the space is best suited for (considering the layout and use of the rest of the building and the facilities available) e.g. office space, training rooms, operational base, delivery of a public facing service like a shop/service point
 - any works that would be required to enable this
 - any planning issues that need to be addressed
- 3.12 This review identified that nine libraries have the potential for space to be freed up for use by partners or to deliver commissioned services on behalf of others, so that income could be generated. These are:
- Battle
 - Bexhill
 - Hailsham
 - Newhaven
 - Peacehaven
 - Rye
 - Seaford
 - Uckfield
 - Wadhurst
- 3.13 As a result of this review, operational bases for parking enforcement staff will be provided in Hastings, Eastbourne and Lewes libraries from the start of the new parking contract from June 2018. The Library and Information Service will deliver the functions of the three separate Parking Shops from these libraries, and members of the public will be able to access Parking Services' online services from the free People's Network computers in the libraries. This joint venture will enable the new parking contract to be delivered at a

lower cost due to the sharing of overheads and other operational costs with the Library and Information Service.

- 3.14 In addition, the Seaford Integrated Locality Team, part of our East Sussex Better Together health partnership, will move into accommodation within Seaford Library. This team will bring together a number of social care and health services for adults, from the County Council and the NHS, within the community. Their services will not be delivered in the library.
- 3.15 As a result of these two proposals and other efficiency programmes which we have identified as part of the development of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, the Library and Information Service will save approximately £171,000 per year through a combination of efficiencies and the rental of library space.
- 3.16 Relocation of library space for other purposes (including the provision of parking services) will, in most cases, be subject to planning restrictions. It is therefore recommended that an application for change of use is submitted for the relevant library when required to enable the property portfolio to respond to changing needs for space across the County.

Further efficiencies

- 3.17 As identified above, the reduced footfall in libraries and the decline in the number of issues means that libraries need less space than previously required. There is no current evidence to suggest that this trend will stop or reverse in future. With rising rents and business rates, the Library and Information Service will need to continue to identify whether library services could be delivered in the same locality in a more cost-effective way.
- 3.18 In addition to considering the release of space within library buildings as an opportunity for the Library and Information Service to share costs or generate a rental income, there may also, in future, be the potential for library services to be delivered from different locations, in order to reduce costs or to deliver a better service in conjunction with other services, or both. This could involve sharing space with a district, town or parish council or a private, voluntary or community sector organisation, to the benefit of both organisations and their users. The consultation on the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy provides a key opportunity for the Library and Information Service to enter into a dialogue with potential partners over possible co-location of library services.
- 3.19 The County Council has considered what opportunities there might be to share library facilities with other organisations as part of the work on this Technical Appendix. This included a 'search' against the buildings requirements of the SPACES partners. SPACES (Strategic Property Asset Collaboration in East Sussex) aims to identify and realise opportunities for co-location and collaboration between community and voluntary sector partners. Partners include East Sussex County Council, the borough and district

councils in the county, the emergency services, representatives from the voluntary and community sector, the NHS and some central government services such as the Department for Work and Pensions. At the time of this review, there were no clear matches, but the consultation on the draft Strategic Commissioning Strategy provides a key opportunity for the Library and Information Service to enter into a dialogue with potential partners over possible co-location of library services.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1 The East Sussex Library and Information Service has a network of 24 public library buildings, which host around 1.48 million visits annually. Many libraries also offer services delivered by, or in partnership with, other organisations. The County Council owns 16 of the 24 libraries, and the remainder are leased from public, private or voluntary and community sector landlords. The Library and Information Service also leases Ropemaker Park in Hailsham, which is the central storage and distribution point for library stock and base for the Mobile Library and some staff. Ropemaker Park is also the County Council's records centre.
- 4.2 The total running cost of our buildings, including Ropemaker Park, is approximately £850,000 per year, excluding staffing costs, refurbishment costs and income. Around £359,000 is spent on business rates, £209,000 on maintenance and £177,000 on rents and service charges. Utility costs make up the remainder of around £105,000 per year.
- 4.3 With 1.48 million visitors annually, wear and tear on library buildings, furniture and fittings is inevitable. Worn and damaged items can quickly pose a risk to the health and safety of customers and staff or become damaged beyond economic repair. In the past decade the County Council has spent approximately £16.5 million on improvements to and major refurbishment of East Sussex library buildings. Once the refurbishment of Hastings library is complete in the spring of 2018, this sum will have risen to £20.4 million.
- 4.4 The current financial climate means that it is unlikely the County Council will be able to afford an investment programme for library buildings on this scale for the foreseeable future. However, we will still need to keep our buildings, furniture and fittings safe and in a good state of repair, so that they are fit to provide the services they need to deliver. It is estimated that for the 24 library buildings the service currently operates from, this would cost around £2.6 million over the next five years, or approximately £523,000 per year.
- 4.5 All of the libraries in East Sussex are closed for periods of time, for example on one or more mornings, afternoons or whole days per week and many have movable shelving and furniture which enable the layout to be changed for a few hours to accommodate a wide range of different potential uses.
- 4.6 There is considerable scope for community groups, voluntary sector organisations, the private sector and other parts of the public sector (including other parts of the County Council) to make more use of these assets when the Library and Information Service is not using a building to deliver its services, subject to any applicable planning permissions or lease conditions of each building. This could provide a source of income to help reduce financial pressures on the service, or enable income to be reinvested into delivering new services to meet local needs.

- 4.7 Library meeting rooms are available for public hire by individuals, small businesses, charities, local organisations, service providers, partners and private enterprises in four libraries across the county. During 2016/2017 the meeting rooms were booked for a wide range of uses including business meetings, health programmes, language courses, training, and individual use.
- 4.8 Despite marketing of the meeting room spaces at these four libraries, they are under-utilised and are not realising their income generation potential. Further consideration could be given to more targeted marketing of the meeting rooms for ad hoc or longer term rentals, or entering into longer-term agreements with potential partners to rent the rooms as workspaces or places from which services to the community could be provided.
- 4.9 With decreasing visits and issues of items, there are also opportunities to release space within libraries for other organisations to use, so that costs can be shared and a rental income generated for the Library and Information Service. There are nine libraries within East Sussex where this potential exists. The opportunities range from small shop-style operations or delivery of front-line services to the public, to spaces for meetings and training, to office space.
- 4.10 As a result of this review, operational bases for parking enforcement staff will be provided in Hastings, Eastbourne and Lewes libraries from June 2018. The Library and Information Service will deliver the functions of the three Parking Shops from these libraries. This joint venture will enable the new parking contract to be delivered at a lower cost due to the sharing of overheads and other operational costs.
- 4.11 In addition, the Seaford Integrated Locality Team, part of our East Sussex Better Together health partnership, will move into accommodation within Seaford Library. This team will bring together a number of social care and health services for adults, from the County Council and the NHS, within the community. Their services will not be delivered in the library.
- 4.12 As a result of these two proposals and other efficiency programmes which we have identified as part of the development of the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, the Library and Information Service will save approximately £171,000 per year through a combination of efficiencies and the rental of library space.
- 4.13 The Library and Information Service will also need to continue to identify whether library services could be delivered in the same locality in a more cost-effective way and consider the potential for library services to share accommodation with other organisations, in order to reduce costs or to deliver a better service in conjunction with other services, or both. The consultation on the draft Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy provides a key opportunity for the Library and Information Service to enter into a dialogue with potential partners over possible co-location of library services.

Annex 1 Freehold/Leasehold status of East Sussex libraries

Library	Ownership
Battle	Freehold
Bexhill	Freehold
Crowborough	Leased
Eastbourne	Freehold
Forest Row	Leased
Hailsham	Freehold
Hampden Park	Freehold
Hastings	Freehold
Heathfield	Freehold
Hollington	Freehold
Langney	Leased
Lewes	Freehold
Mayfield	Licence
Newhaven	Freehold
Ore	Freehold
Peacehaven	Leased
Pevensey Bay	Leased
Polegate	Freehold
Ringmer	Leased
Rye	Leased
Seaford	Freehold
Uckfield	Freehold
Wadhurst	Leased
Willingdon	Freehold