
SECTION 8 - RECREATION AND LEISURE

INTRODUCTION

- 8.1 The District Council is involved in the management and promotion of a range of recreational and leisure facilities in the District. Other facilities are provided by the County Council, Town and Parish Councils, the Forestry Commission and the private sector.
- 8.2 It is likely that over the period covered by this Plan the demand for recreational facilities will grow, as the lifestyles of people in the District change. There is also likely to be greater participation across the social spectrum, as the awareness of the benefits arising from exercise increases. This combined with increase leisure time, higher standards of living and the growth of a wide range of active and semi-active leisure and recreational pursuits, will place pressure on existing facilities. There will also be a need for newer facilities, as public tastes and levels of satisfaction change and demands arise from residents of new housing developments.

STRUCTURE PLAN POLICIES

- 8.3 The County Structure Plan establishes the strategic context for planning policies relating to recreation and leisure provision.
- 8.4 In particular, that Plan provides for golf courses, country park proposals and other matters to be taken into account in providing for leisure development in the open countryside. In addition, it is suggested that provision should be made for a wide variety of organised sports, informal recreation, water based recreation and the arts. Space and distribution standards should be devised, in order to govern, control and direct provision for all types of recreation and leisure activity.

RECENT TRENDS

- 8.5 A number of factors such as growth in the population, changes in the structure of the population, growth in home and car ownership and changing employment trends have created a significant potential for leisure and recreational activities. The public expectation of the quality and range of facilities needed is changing.

ISSUES

- 8.6 Recreation and leisure has to compete with other activities for the use of land. In the towns, housing and commercial development is seen by developers as giving a greater financial return when land is used in this way. In the countryside, recreational activities place pressures upon the environment and can disrupt other interests. Large areas of land are needed, for example, for golf courses and country parks.
- 8.7 A wide variety of agencies are now involved in implementing the provision of open space and formal sports facilities. There is limited finance available from public authorities, agencies such as the Countryside Commission and the English Sports Council (East Midlands), for both the initial provision of the facility and its ongoing maintenance. This, together with lack of access to facilities provided by private firms or clubs, means that it is now quite common to look to the private sector for assistance in securing the provision of further recreational facilities. This will help to give a better balance in meeting needs and will help to achieve minimum acceptable standards. The question of access to facilities by non-car users must be addressed if the benefits of participation in sport and recreational activity are not to be denied to large sections of the population.
- 8.8 Countryside Recreation is the term used to describe informal use of the countryside. It includes activities such as walking, country drives, non-competitive cycling, horse-riding, visits to country parks, historic parks and gardens and picnicking. Activities organised through clubs, or competitive activities, are primarily the concern of the English Sports Council (East Midlands). By definition the term "countryside" relates to rural areas. There is no comparable term to describe informal urban green space. Countryside Commission surveys show that 70 per cent of the population of the UK visit the countryside at some time, each year. People visit the countryside in their local areas and as tourists. Countryside recreation is now a major tourism activity.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 8.9 The recreation policy objectives of this Plan are to:-
- (i) achieve a minimum standard of 2.43ha of open space provision per 1000 population;
 - (ii) ensure that open space provision is made within new housing developments;
 - (iii) prevent the loss of existing open space and sports facilities;
 - (iv) increase the facilities and spaces needed for present and future recreational and leisure needs;
 - (v) improve access to the countryside and provision for organised sports, public enjoyment and education, without causing environmental damage;
 - (vi) ensure that the rural population has access to a basic level of facilities;
 - (vii) make better use of existing facilities by encouraging dual use and advising and informing the public of the facilities that are available;
 - (viii) maximise the potential of disused mineral working areas, for recreational use;
 - (ix) foster private sector provision through planning gain, achieved as a result of negotiations on planning applications; and
 - (x) ensure that arrangements are made for the ongoing maintenance of recreational and leisure facilities.

RECREATION AND LEISURE POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

General

POLICY RL1

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR RECREATION AND LEISURE FACILITIES PROVIDED THAT:

- (I) THE SITE WOULD BE SUITABLE FOR THE INTENDED USE IN TERMS OF AREA AND LOCATION AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS;**
- (II) THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE AMENITIES OF ADJACENT LAND USERS;**
- (III) THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT; AND**
- (IV) ACCESS, BY PRIVATE AND (WHERE APPROPRIATE) PUBLIC TRANSPORT, AND PARKING CAN BE PROVIDED TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

- 8.10 The District Council is keen to promote recreational projects of a district wide and local significance. Projects with wider implications may, in certain circumstances, be acceptable. It is also important, however, to ensure protection of the high quality landscape and agricultural land in the area. New facilities, therefore, should be located where they will have a minimum impact upon the environment. Where it is feasible, facilities should be grouped to provide economies in their provision and operation, as well as minimising impact upon the environment.
- 8.11 It is important to encourage provision of projects and facilities which meet the identified needs of the area and cater for the variety of age groups, within the total population. The District Council will monitor the level of recreational provision, in order to identify locations and activities which need to be satisfied in the future.

- 8.12 Implementation of this policy will be by the combined efforts of the public authorities and the private sector, either individually or in partnership. The English Sports Council publishes advisory documents. Agencies such as the Countryside Commission also publish advice. All these Agencies will also comment on the suitability of proposals when consulted in relation to individual planning applications.
- 8.13 It is important that new development does not result in the loss of amenity to neighbouring land uses as a result of noise, traffic generation, or visual impact.
- 8.14 Planning permission has been granted for a motor racing/test circuit and related facilities at Deene Quarry. This will host a variety of motorised events, from specialised rallies to Formula 1/Indy Car racing. The site is accessed through the Phoenix Parkway Industrial Estate in Corby and therefore has good links to the A43 and national strategic road system. It will be a major recreational resource for participants and spectators alike.

Public Open Space

POLICY RL2

THE PRINCIPAL SITES ALLOCATED FOR RECREATIONAL USE ARE AS FOLLOWS:-

SITE	HECTARES
LAND SOUTH WEST OF SANDRINGHAM CLOSE RUSHDEN	1.50
LAND SOUTH OF DEACON CLOSE, RUSHDEN	1.80
DITCHFORD LAKES, RUSHDEN	36.40
LAND EAST OF BEDFORD ROAD, RUSHDEN	6.80
LAND SOUTH OF PINE LODGE, IRTHLINGBOROUGH	26.00
LAND WEST OF MIDLAND ROAD, THRAPSTON	3.90
LAND NORTH OF THE FORMER ARC PLANT SITE, THRAPSTON	117.00

- 8.15 This policy is intended to meet present needs and prevent the occurrence of future deficiencies. Some of the sites are owned by the District Council. Others will be provided by the private sector, as a result of new development proposals.

Open Space Standards

POLICY RL3

ARISING FROM NEW DEVELOPMENTS OF MORE THAN 15 DWELLINGS RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE WILL BE PROVIDED BY DEVELOPERS TO SATISFY AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING STANDARD:

- (I) **SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION IN EXCESS OF 1000 - PROVISION WILL BE AT THE RATE OF 2.43 HA PER 1000 POPULATION;**
- (II) **SETTLEMENTS WITH POPULATION LESS THAN 1000 - PROVISION WILL BE CONSIDERED SEPARATELY**

- 8.16 This standard is taken from the recommendation of the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) and is generally known as the NPFA standard. It should be considered as a minimum standard.
- 8.17 The NPFA suggest the following breakdown of the 2.43ha:-
- (i) Youth/Adult use - 1.6 - 1.8ha.
 - (ii) Children's playgrounds - 0.2 - 0.3ha.
 - (iii) Children's casual/informal use - 0.4 - 0.5ha
- It should be noted that this standard relates to playing space only. Amenity areas are excluded.
- 8.18 The concentration of open space within parts of the settlement may mean that not all the open space contribution need be located on a development site. Where appropriate, the District Council will seek to enter into legal agreements to achieve contributions towards the provision of open space to provide a better balance of open space for the settlement as a whole.
- 8.19 Developers will not be expected to make good existing shortfalls, but will be required to met the needs arising from the scale of development proposed.
- 8.20 Where land is to be provided for large housing developments it should normally be of a sufficient size, where possible, to accommodate for example at least a football/rugby pitch with associated access, parking and clubhouse/changing facilities.
- 8.21 The District Council will consider the use of compulsory powers in order to secure provision, if negotiations with developers break down. It is likely that the majority of the open space will be conveyed to Town and Parish Councils. In exceptional circumstances, the District Council may take on responsibility for managing the facilities.
- 8.22 The requirements of this policy will not apply in respect of specialised housing schemes for elderly people. It will be necessary, however, in schemes of this kind to provide sufficient space around the buildings for amenity purposes.

Children's Play Areas

POLICY RL4

ARISING FROM HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS OF 15 DWELLINGS OR MORE, CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS WILL NEED TO BE PROVIDED BY DEVELOPERS

- 8.23 The District Council will require developers to provide children's play areas within housing developments of 15 or more dwellings. This provision is part of the 2.43 hectares per 1000 population of recreational open space referred to in Policy RL3.
- 8.24 If it is more appropriate to locate children's play areas to sites where they can also serve existing residential areas, the District or Parish Council will be prepared to negotiate financial contributions. This will enable the Councils to provide more suitable areas.

Recreation and Leisure Provision in Non-residential Schemes

POLICY RL5

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR LEISURE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WHICH FORM PART OF NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS, PROVIDED THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT OR ON THE AMENITIES OF ADJOINING LAND USERS

- 8.25 It is increasingly common for leisure and recreational facilities to be provided in connection with developments where the main purpose is to meet other commercial needs such as retail and business park developments. Such proposals are likely to be permitted provided they do not result in an adverse impact on the environment.

Countryside Recreation

POLICY RL6

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR NEW RECREATIONAL PROVISION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE FOR THE QUIETER, LOW KEY ACTIVITIES, PROVIDED THAT:

- (I) FULL REGARD IS GIVEN TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF AGRICULTURE AND THE NEED TO PROTECT THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND (GRADES 1, 2 AND 3A) FROM DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS IRREVERSIBLE;**
- (II) THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT OR THE AMENITIES OF ADJOINING LAND USERS**

8.26 Most of the new facilities and open space provision will be provided in the villages, rather than the open countryside. Whereas most forms of development associated with the quieter, low key activities in the countryside (such as walking, cycling, fishing, horse-riding, bird watching, non-powered boating) are unlikely to be resisted; some larger scale and more intensive uses can attract high numbers of people and generate excessive traffic movements. Development of this kind needs to be carefully evaluated so that the overriding need to protect and conserve the countryside remains paramount. In some instances, although there may be some social and economic advantages associated with a new proposal, to allow such a development could result in insufficient weight being given to environmental considerations. Unless it can be demonstrated by virtue of an environmental impact assessment or similar exercise, that the intended development is sustainable, planning permission is unlikely to be granted.

Noisy Sports

POLICY RL7

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH MOTORISED LAND, AIR AND WATER BASED SPORTS, WAR GAMES, SHOOTING AND POWERED MODEL PURSUITS PROVIDED THAT:

- (I) FULL REGARD IS GIVEN TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF AGRICULTURE AND THE NEED TO PROTECT THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND (GRADES 1, 2, 3A) FROM DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS IRREVERSIBLE;**
- (II) THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT, OR LOSS OF AMENITY TO ADJOINING LAND USERS;**
- (III) PROPOSALS ARE SITED A SUFFICIENT DISTANCE FROM RESIDENTIAL AREAS TO AVOID NOISE NUISANCE**

8.27 Recreational activities involving noise and disturbance have special locational requirements. Derelict land/landfill sites or areas adjacent to existing noise generating activities are likely to be acceptable locations where they meet the above criteria but subject to the general limitations on development in the vicinity of designated wildlife/woodland sites and the Special Landscape Area (Policies EN2; EN8 and EN11).

8.28 *Development should be designed and implemented so as to preserve any existing public right of way in its present form. Alternatively, provision for its diversion or reinstatement will be required. In conjunction with the County Council, the District Council will consider how best to improve and extend the existing right of way network.* There is a comprehensive system of public rights of way in the District. The County Council as Highway Authority has the prime responsibility for maintaining and publicising this route network (also see paragraph 10.31). In the event of development taking place, the aim is to ensure that the continued use of any rights of way affected is safeguarded. The District Council is likely to support proposals to divert rights of way where this will lead to an enhancement of other routes or to improved public access to the countryside, or enhanced public safety. Safety is very important in relation to public rights of way and the District Council will encourage provision to be made for safe methods of crossing where new highways are to be constructed.

- 8.29 A number of footpath interest groups exist in the area. In association with these interest groups it is intended to produce leaflets to publicise the routes and encourage their use. Where necessary, way marking will also be encouraged as part of this exercise. The Countryside Commissions Parish Path Partnership Scheme aims at involving interest groups in maintaining and promoting public rights of way through a system of grants and advice. The County Council has established the Nene Valley Way as a medium distance footpath. This proposal was supported by the District Council.

POLICY RL8

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR FACILITIES SUCH AS COUNTRY PARKS, POCKET PARKS, PICNIC SITES AND PLAYING FIELDS, PROVIDED THAT THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE LANDSCAPE OR THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

- 8.30 Although facilities of this type are generally to be encouraged, such development can be associated with complimentary buildings to provide for interpretation and ancillary uses. Structures of this kind can be intrusive and therefore care and attention is necessary for their design and siting.
- 8.31 Facilities for informal recreation and for use by motorists can be enhanced by the provision of picnic areas in acceptable locations, where development does not prejudice environmental or highway considerations. (Also see policies AG1 and TR6). Picnic sites are also being provided on a joint grant basis in the Nene Valley following work undertaken as part of the Nene Valley Project.
- 8.32 Small "pockets" of land near to, or within settlements, possibly unused or incapable of beneficial agricultural use, may be suitable for the establishment of small parks with the emphasis on quiet recreation and nature study.
- 8.33 This policy will be implemented in association with Parish Councils, the County Council and the Countryside Commission. A total grant of up to 75% will be offered provided that the remaining 25% is funded by the Parish.
- 8.34 There is an increasing awareness and interest in nature conservation and quiet countryside recreation. In addition to more traditional and active recreational pursuits there is also a need to consider the provision of new park areas and to encourage their use for recreation and study. Policies EN2, EN5 to EN11, EN20 and EN23 are also relevant with regard to the protection of existing environmentally sensitive areas.

POLICY RL9

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR NEW GOLF COURSES PROVIDED THAT:

- (I) THERE IS A PROVEN NEED FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION;**
 - (II) THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT IS ENHANCED BY EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING CARRIED OUT AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT;**
 - (III) THE QUALITIES OF THE DESIGNATED SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA ARE NOT PREJUDICED;**
 - (IV) THE PROPOSAL IS NOT SUPPORTED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL SCHEMES WHICH ARE UNACCEPTABLE IN THE RURAL AREA;**
 - (V) FULL REGARD IS GIVEN TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF AGRICULTURE AND THE NEED TO PROTECT THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND (GRADES 1, 2 AND 3A) FROM DEVELOPMENT;**
 - (VI) THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT OR THE AMENITIES OF ADJOINING LAND USERS**
- 8.35 There is currently extensive pressure and demand for golf courses. This has, in part, been stimulated by the need to set aside agricultural land and foster diversification of the rural economy. In addition, golf is a growing recreational pursuit, with new courses much in demand.

- 8.36 Golf courses need not be intrusive in the open countryside, provided that they are designed and laid out in a way that complements and blends into the existing landscape character of the area. The character and setting of Historic Parks and Gardens would be destroyed if development of a golf course or courses was allowed. Similarly, proposals which affect other historic landscapes are unlikely to be permitted by virtue of the control to be exercised under Policy EN1.
- 8.37 Where golf courses are permitted they should not be associated with other uses such as new build residential and commercial schemes. These uses will not normally be permitted in the countryside and provision of a golf course will not secure permission for development of this kind. The only exception will be where existing buildings are converted for activities associated with the development (Also see policies EN1, EN2, AG1, RL1, and TO1). If proposals for a new golf course affect a statutory public right of way the development should be designed and implemented so as not to prejudice the route in its present form. Alternatively it will be necessary to make new provision for the public right of way, most probably by means of an acceptable diversion.

POLICY RL10

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WATER BASED RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES USING RIVERS AND THE LAKES FORMED BY DISUSED MINERAL WORKINGS PROVIDED THAT:

- (I) THE REINSTATEMENT OF THE LAND TO AN AGRICULTURAL USE IS NEITHER VIABLE NOR REQUIRED BY CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO ANY VALID PLANNING PERMISSION;**
- (II) THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER OF THE NENE AND WELLAND VALLEYS, ASSOCIATED TRIBUTARIES AND FLOOD PLAIN LANDSCAPE FEATURES;**
- (III) THE PROPOSAL WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST OF THE AREA; AND**
- (IV) THERE WILL BE NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE AMENITIES OF NEIGHBOURING LAND USERS**

- 8.38 The District Council is keen to encourage the development of the full range of water based recreational uses and to encourage the retention and development of those already existing. It recognises, however, that certain forms of water based uses are only acceptable in specified locations. For example, power boating and water skiing are not compatible with angling and nature conservation uses. The potential of the Nene Valley is considered in greater detail in the Tourism Section. (Also see paragraphs 9.27-9.28).
- 8.39 Furthermore, it is important to safeguard water quality and prevent schemes which will increase runoff and cause flooding. (Also see policies PU1 to PU5).
- 8.40 The use of disused mineral workings and the advantages that can be gained by permitting recreational development which restores despoiled and derelict land of this kind, is considered in the Minerals Section. (Also see policy MIN1 and paragraph 11.13).

POLICY RL11

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR RECREATIONAL PROPOSALS WHICH MAKE USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, PROVIDED THEIR FORM, BULK AND GENERAL DESIGN IS IN KEEPING WITH THE SURROUNDINGS AND THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

- 8.41 Development schemes for uses of this form should be undertaken so as not to result in any visual intrusion in the landscape; give rise to traffic congestion; have poor access; prejudice sites of environmental importance or involve extensive alteration, rebuilding or extension. Submitted schemes will also need to comply with policy AG4.

- 8.42 ***Sympathetic consideration will be given to requests for financial assistance towards the provision, improvement or renovation of village and community halls and the provision of playing fields by public or charitable organisations.*** The District Council in association with the County Council operates a system of grants to support the provision, improvement and renovation of village and community halls. This is because the importance of the village hall in community life in the rural areas is recognised by the local authorities. Where no playing field exists, it may also be possible to consider financial assistance towards provision.
- 8.43 Grant aid may be extended to the provision of basic facilities connected with the issue of public entertainment licences by the District Council. These govern the use of village halls for certain activities. (Also see policies CF3 and CF4).

Retention of Existing Outdoor Recreational Facilities

POLICY RL12

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EXISTING AREA OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE, SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS, OR PRIVATELY OWNED RECREATIONAL SPACE, FOR ANY PURPOSES OTHER THAN RECREATIONAL OR NON-COMMERCIAL COMMUNITY USE, UNLESS AN EQUIVALENT REPLACEMENT SITE IS PROVIDED AND LAID OUT BEFORE USE OF THE EXISTING SITE CEASES

- 8.44 Existing facilities make a valuable contribution to the recreational needs of the local community. Protection from development will prevent the occurrence of further deficiencies in provision.

POLICY RL13

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT NORMALLY BE GRANTED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WELL USED ALLOTMENTS, UNLESS AN EQUIVALENT REPLACEMENT SITE IS PROVIDED AND LAID OUT, BEFORE USE OF THE EXISTING SITE CEASES

- 8.45 Well used allotments are a valuable recreational resource and as such need to be protected.
- 8.46 The District Council also wishes to prevent the visual deterioration in the appearance of areas used for allotments. New sheds and structures associated with uses of this kind which are poorly designed and give rise to an adverse visual impact, are therefore unlikely to receive planning permission.

Dual Use of Facilities

- 8.47 ***New or improved dual use arrangements will be encouraged by the District Council in respect of indoor and outdoor facilities.*** The District Council will encourage the Local Education Authority and the private sector, to provide arrangements for the joint use of facilities where opportunities of this kind are seen to exist.

Indoor Facilities

- 8.48 ***The provision of new indoor facilities will be investigated to offset known shortfalls.*** The District Council has recently provided a major leisure pool development at Rushden, which is now fully utilised and meeting a previously unsatisfied need.
- 8.49 There are still further shortfalls in indoor provision that need to be met. In particular, the English Sports Council (East Midlands) has identified a need for three indoor sports halls in the District and suggests extension of the dual use arrangements for the swimming pool at Oundle School.

Entertainment and Cultural Facilities

POLICY RL14

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED FOR THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT OR CULTURAL ENRICHMENT OF THE LOCAL POPULATION, PROVIDED THAT THERE IS NO ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT OR ON THE AMENITIES OF ADJOINING LAND USERS

- 8.50 Entertainment and cultural activities are an important aspect of leisure and recreation. The District Council has appointed an Arts Promotion Officer to assist in improving the range of facilities available. It is anticipated that the majority of new facilities will need to be provided by the private sector.

Recreation Strategy

- 8.51 It is a proposal of this Plan that a Recreation Strategy should be prepared by the District Council. This would supplement and interpret a Countywide Recreation Strategy which the County Council intend to prepare. It will provide a strategic framework for countryside recreation, and could also include more detailed proposals for formal recreation and sport.

- 8.52 The strategy will address the following:

- (i) consideration of whether existing playing field and open space provision meets the NPFA standard overall;
- (ii) whether some neighbourhoods or local areas have deficiencies, whilst others are, in comparison, over-provided;
- (iii) how any problems arising from (i) and (ii) might be addressed;
- (iv) the provision and distribution of existing facilities, including indoor centres;
- (v) establishing local demand and assessing un-met needs;
- (vi) an examination of the potential for extending dual use arrangements;
- (vii) a consideration of future provision, maintenance and management of land and facilities;
- (viii) accessibility of facilities and the particular recreational needs of elderly and disabled people;
- (ix) country parks, pocket parks and other areas with unrestricted access to the public. The development of pleasant links from the urban areas to the countryside would also be examined including provision for off-road cycling, horse-riding, motor-cycling and four-wheel drive vehicles;
- (x) provision of stopping places for car-borne visitors, including lay-bys, picnic areas and car parks at key points of access to the rights-of-way network;
- (xi) the development and role of facilities such as cafés, public houses and visitor attractions;
- (xii) partnership with public transport operators to provide urban/rural links to improve access to the countryside;
- (xiii) initiatives to make the public more aware of the opportunities for countryside recreation, by providing information centres and literature to serve the needs of both residents and visitors to the area;
- (xiv) development of a well-signposted, well-maintained and convenient rights of way network, to give ready access to the countryside from the towns and to link points of interest;
- (xv) development of a range of accommodation facilities, to meet the needs of visitors who may wish to stay overnight, when visiting the countryside in the District; and
- (xvi) specific needs for both mainstream and specialist sports facilities (indoor and outdoor).

- 8.53 In developing a strategy of this kind the District Council would work closely with the County Council, East Midlands Tourist Board, the Countryside Commission, English Nature, English Heritage, the Forestry Commission, the NRA, Town and Parish Councils, voluntary organisations and private companies. In particular, the recommendations contained within the Countryside Commission's recently published document entitled "Visitors to the Countryside" will be considered.
- 8.54 The Recreation Strategy would also take into account and assess the resources that exist in the District, which provide for enjoyment by the public of the countryside and natural environment.
- 8.55 In areas where conflicts could arise, it will be important to make provision to reconcile these by proposing management agreements and producing a management plan as part of the strategy.