

## 6 RECREATION

The Government's Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs) state:

**Sport and recreation have a valuable social and economic role. The policy of the Government is to promote the development of sport and recreation in the widest sense: to enable people to participate in sport, whether as players or spectators, and to encourage the provision of a wide range of opportunities for recreation, so that people can choose those best suited to themselves (paragraph 2, PPG17, Sport and Recreation, September 1991).**

**Local Plans provide the appropriate context in which to assess local needs for recreational facilities; identify deficiencies in the provision of public open space; encourage the development of suitable sites and types of site for additional sport and recreation and open space provision; ensure that provision is properly co-ordinated with other forms of development; and protect open space and other land with recreational or amenity value (paragraph 13, PPG17).**

- 6.0.1 Recreation in its various forms is an important component of modern life. It includes formal sport and informal leisure activities, recreation for residents, visitors and potential visitors - tourism recreation - and recreation in the built environment, the countryside and along the coast. Participation has increased over many years as people's leisure time and relative incomes have increased, sporting technology has developed, and people have become more aware of the need for, and the benefits of, exercise. Participation can help improve health and a sense of mental and physical well-being. Consequently, recreation has a valuable social and economic role.
- 6.0.2 Recreation is about enjoyment, but it requires active planning and management to maintain standards and ensure that activities are co-ordinated. In examining future needs for recreation in accordance with the Local Plan Strategy, the objectives are:
1. **To enable a range of recreational activities to be accessible to all persons in the community.**
  2. **To accommodate the demand for recreation in a manner which conserves or enhances the environmental wealth of the Borough.**
  3. **To meet the recreational requirements of the Borough's residents.**
  4. **To meet the recreational requirements of visitors to the Borough.**
  5. **To develop the role of tourism in support of the local economy and the provision of services and facilities, by providing a high standard of recreational opportunities throughout the Borough.**
  6. **To maintain and develop facilities for sport.**
  7. **To maintain and develop opportunities for informal recreation.**
  8. **To promote recreational opportunities in Berwick-upon-Tweed, to maintain the town's role as a sub-regional centre for housing, employment and the provision of services.**
  9. **To encourage the development of recreational facilities in Belford, Seahouses and Wooler, to maintain their roles as secondary centres for housing, employment and the provision of services in the Borough.**

- 10. To promote recreational opportunities in other settlements and throughout the countryside and coast, in accordance with economic interests and the requirements of the wider community.**

## **6.1 Participation**

- 6.1.1 Participation in sport and recreation is dependent on factors such as age, health, ability, interest, expense, accessibility and time. In planning for recreation, the population-age structure is one of the most significant factors.
- 6.1.2 Nationally, the decline in school age population in the 1980's has fed through into a large fall in the 16-24 age group, while the 25-44 and 45-59 age groups are growing. In consequence, health related activities, such as jogging, aerobics and running, and sports such as indoor bowls, dance, badminton, swimming, boating, walking and golf, are likely to gain in popularity during the 1990's, while team and strength-based sports may decline. Pressure on the countryside, arising out of recreational pursuits, is expected to grow. There is also evidence that people in the 25 plus age group - the first generation to experience the wider range of modern sports and exercise facilities in and outside school - are demanding a better range and quality of facilities.
- 6.1.3 Table 2 in the Local Plan (paragraph 2.1.4) shows that in Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough, compared to England and Wales, the percentage of population in all age groups below 45 is lower - England and Wales 62.55%, Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough 55.66% - and, equally, the opposite is true for older age groups. Therefore, other things being equal, participation in sports popular with older age groups will be proportionately greater in the Borough than on average throughout England and Wales.
- 6.1.4 Participation is also greatly influenced by accessibility. In the Borough, where the population is spread over such a wide area, accessibility itself is restricted primarily by distance and access to transport.
- 6.1.5 The Northern Council for Sports and Recreation acknowledges the problems of accessibility and participation in rural areas. Its publication "Sport and Recreation for Rural Communities" (July 1993), identifies some of the key characteristics as: limited awareness and sporting aspirations; limited opportunities, particularly for low income groups, women, young people, people with disabilities, and the elderly; limited resources; and poor public transport.

## **6.2 Standards for Sport and Recreation**

- 6.2.1 Opportunities for formal recreation are usually more limited in rural areas than they are in urban areas, where population size and density make provision more economic through the size and diversity of recreational interest. In Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough, the extremely low density of population - only 0.33 persons per hectare throughout the Local Plan area - compounds this fact.
- 6.2.2 The National Playing Field Association (NPFPA) recommends a minimum standard for outdoor playing space of 2.43 hectares per 1000 population. It is commonly referred to as the '6 acre standard'. This standard should be met by an aggregate of space for youth and adult use and for children's use, depending on the population profile of the locality concerned.
- 6.2.3 The Government does not consider that it would be helpful to prescribe national standards for recreational provision. However, PPG17 does refer to the NPFPA's minimum standards for outdoor playing space as a guideline. These apply specifically to built-up areas and are widely adopted by local authorities throughout the country. In the Borough of Berwick-upon-Tweed, because of the low density of population, it is considered that it is only appropriate to apply the standards to the larger settlements of Berwick-upon-Tweed including Tweedmouth, Spittal and East Ord, Belford, Seahouses including North Sunderland, and Wooler.

- 6.2.4 Facilities for youth and adult use include pitches, greens, courts and miscellaneous items, such as athletic tracks, putting greens and training areas in the ownership of Local Government, whether at County, District or Parish level. Such facilities within the educational sector, which are - as a matter of practice and policy - available for public use, and similar facilities within the voluntary, private, industrial and commercial sectors, which serve the leisure time needs for outdoor recreation of their members or the public, are included. As part of the '6 acre standard', provision of these facilities should be in the range of 1.6 - 1.8 hectares per 1000 population, dependent on the population-age profile.
- 6.2.5 Children's facilities include outdoor equipped playgrounds for children of whatever age, and other play facilities for children which offer specific opportunities for outdoor play, such as adventure playgrounds. As part of the '6 acre standard', provision of these facilities should be in the range of 0.2 - 0.3 hectares per 1000 population. A further 0.4 - 0.5 hectares of casual or informal play space within housing areas is recommended.
- 6.2.6 A further guide to minimum standards for recreational provision is provided by the Sports Council Northern Region, which recommends the following levels of provision:
- for a small individual village with a population catchment area of up to 1,000 persons: a community hall able to accommodate one badminton court and other indoor activities; a football pitch, a cricket square and/or non-turf wicket within a playing field area; a bowling green; and a floodlit multi-purpose, hard surface area of one tennis court size, also suitable for netball, 5-a-side football and other such sports. Within the Borough, the villages of Belford, Norham and Lowick are considered to qualify, as villages with a catchment of 1,000 people, serving the Tweed Valley and a large part of the Intermediate Areas of Landscape Value respectively. Bamburgh and Beadnell are of similar size but their catchments are overridden by those for Seahouses and, to a certain extent, Belford.
  - for a large village serving a group of small villages with a population catchment of up to 3,000 persons: a community hall or dual-use school hall of 2 badminton court size and suitable for other indoor activities; 1 or 2 football pitches; a cricket square and/or non-turf wicket; a floodlit multi-purpose, hard surface area; a bowling green; and, 2, preferably all-weather, tennis courts. Seahouses (including North Sunderland) and Wooler fall in to this category, serving, between them, the southern half of the Borough.
  - for a small town with a population catchment of up to 12,000 persons: a community standard sports hall able to accommodate 2 or more badminton courts and suitable for a wide range of recreational activities; a swimming pool, preferably 25 metres in length; outdoor pitches according to size of catchment and local demand for football, cricket, hockey and rugby - preferably on a single site with shared changing accommodation and social amenities; 3 floodlit multi-purpose hard surface areas and/or an all-weather sports area; a bowling green; 2/3 squash courts; and a 9-hole golf course with pitch-and-putt, particularly in tourist areas. Berwick-upon-Tweed including Tweedmouth, Spittal and East Ord, has a population of 13,467 (Table 1, paragraph 2.1.2. refers), and a catchment population of up to 50,000 people throughout north Northumberland and the eastern Borders of Scotland.

### 6.3 Informal Recreation

- 6.3.1 The main asset for informal recreation in the Borough is undoubtedly the diversity of its natural environment, including the countryside, coast and wildlife. It is an ideal context for a wide range of informal recreational activities, and a significant fact in the area's attraction as a tourist destination.
- 6.3.2 The Cheviot hills which - as part of Northumberland National Park - are largely outside the Local Plan area, are of great importance as a focus for informal recreation, and there are numerous fine walking areas elsewhere in the Borough.
- 6.3.3 Water sports are specifically catered for at Beadnell and the quieter sports such as rowing and sailing in the Tweed estuary at Berwick. Provision is limited elsewhere along the coast

because of its nature conservation importance. The Tweed and Till rivers are valuable for fishing and for quiet water sports such as canoeing and rowing.

- 6.3.4 The wildlife of the area within "a landscape of considerable drama and dynamism" is an important factor in the Borough's popularity as a tourism destination. The Farne Islands host significant breeding colonies of grey seals and many birds including kittiwakes, puffins, shags, guillemot, eider and terns. The coast and inshore waters are identified as Candidate Special Areas for Conservation because of their international importance for bird and marine life and their geology. Lindisfarne is managed as a National Nature Reserve.
- 6.3.5 The built environment of the Borough is outstanding in terms of its quality within a predominantly rural setting. Features include the castles at Bamburgh, Holy Island, Chillingham, Etal, Ford and Norham, and the Town Walls at Berwick which are acknowledged as the best preserved Elizabethan fortifications in Europe. The walls and castles are the legacy of hundreds of years of Border wars. With the battle sites at Flodden, Halidon Hill and Homildon Hill, and many sites with evidence of man's activities during the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages, the area's sense of history gives it a further dimension as a tourist destination.

## **6.4 Tourism**

- 6.4.1 Tourism is a major factor in the local economy and contributes to the maintenance and enhancement of employment opportunities and the provision of services. In the same respect, by adding to local demand for recreation, it enables the provision of additional and improved recreational facilities. It is, therefore, an activity which will be encouraged in a way which maximises the benefits for visitors and residents alike, and minimises its potential impact on social, economic and environmental interests.
- 6.4.2 The Council's Strategy for Sustainable Rural Tourism, introduced in paragraph 2.3.2., is concerned with the integration of tourism interests between host communities and habitats, visitors and tourism businesses. For visitors, the strategy is concerned with the provision of a good value, harmonious and satisfying holiday experience, where visitors and hosts are on equal terms. The Strategy is particularly concerned with marketing, management and delivery of a quality product. Elements relevant to the Local Plan include:
- careful stewardship of the coastal area to maintain its special qualities, including improvements to caravan sites, upgrading of facilities at Seahouses and visitor management at Holy Island; Policies R12, M18 and M19 and Proposals 3 and 4 apply.

- careful promotion of the Tweed Valley and adjacent parts of the Intermediate Areas of Landscape Value, for quiet recreation such as walking and cycling; Proposals 6 and 15 and Policy R14 apply.
- the development of visitor facilities at Wooler to promote the town as the hub of the wider inland rural area; Policy W22 applies.
- the development of outdoor recreation, particularly walking, in the Kylee Hills, with small scale car parking provision and waymarked trails; Proposal 8 applies.
- the encouragement of further rural diversification for tourism in inland areas; Chapters 5 and 8 apply.

6.4.3 Tourism accommodation is characterised by small scale Bed and Breakfast businesses; self-catering in farm cottages; hotels, which are the subject of Policies in Chapter 5; and camping and caravanning. Policies R9, R12 and R17 are concerned with self-catering holiday accommodation including camping. In addition there are major Holiday Parks at Berwick and Haggerston (Policies W14 and W27 refer), and permission has been granted for the upgrading of the Riverside Holiday Park at Wooler; Policy R17 refers.

## 6.5 Provision for Sport and Recreation

6.5.1 The Local Plan Survey of sport and recreation has been largely confined to a study of existing provision. A detailed evaluation, relating existing provision to needs, aspirations and requirements, including those factors highlighted in paragraph 6.1.5, is required to identify deficiencies and establish priorities for improvement. A District Strategy, as advocated by the Sports Council, would be appropriate.

6.5.2 A District Strategy would present the Council with the detailed information necessary to compete effectively for available funding, from the National Lottery, the Sports Foundation and other sources, for the improvement of recreational facilities. It is acknowledged that the Council's success in securing £1.7 million from the National Lottery Fund for the new swimming pool, was achieved as a result of a detailed project appraisal. A District Strategy would provide similar information and establish priorities for other projects, and could be achieved within the Council's existing resources. Therefore, in accordance with the Recreation Objectives, a District Strategy will be prepared, in-house, in partnership with the Sports Council, to inform the process of review of the Local Plan, prior to modifications being made.

### PROPOSAL 2

**To inform the process of review of the Local Plan, the Council, in partnership with the Sports Council and other interested parties, will prepare a District Strategy for Sport and Recreation.**

6.5.3 A District Strategy would also assist with the implementation of Policy R1. Section 6.2 identifies the NPFA's '6 acre standard' as appropriate to the larger settlements in the Borough - Berwick, Belford, Seahouses and Wooler. In these settlements, and elsewhere where developments of more than 20 houses are proposed, the Council considers that provision should be, made by the developer, for recreation in accordance with the '6 acres standard' (paragraphs 6.2.4. - 5. refer). Dependent upon the anticipated population profile of the development once occupied, this will be met by an aggregate of space for youth and adult use and children's use.

### POLICY R1

S8  
S18 **In the settlements of Berwick-upon-Tweed, Seahouses, Belford and Wooler, and in developments of 20 or more dwellings, the Council will seek to attain the National Playing Field Association's '6 acre standard', 2.43 hectares of outdoor recreational space per 1000 of population. Developers will be required to set aside a proportionate part of their application area - in accord with the NPFA Standards, or by agreement, to**

contribute by commuted payments to the provision of suitable facilities on related sites. The recreation space will be provided at appropriate phases of the development, to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority. In considering proposals, regard will be had to;

- i) the characteristics of the recreational demand associated with the development;
- ii) the quantity, type, distribution and accessibility of existing open spaces; and,
- iii) the suitability of the sites characteristics to meet the identified needs, with particular regard to land form and soil type.

6.5.4 However, as noted previously, the provision of recreational space and facilities throughout a large sparsely populated rural area, is problematic. In relation to the above Policy, this is not least because the majority of new housing is provided in developments of fewer than 20 dwellings. Therefore, an alternative means of providing funding relative to new locational demands arising from new development, needs to be identified. This will be investigated within the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation (Proposal 2 refers).

6.5.5 The Swan Centre for Leisure in Tweedmouth, formally Bonarsteads Leisure Centre, which opened in January 1991, has significantly enhanced the level of provision for sports and recreation in the Borough, and the addition of the new £3 million leisure pool, has improved provision further. It includes: a multi-lane indoor bowls rink which can be converted for roller-skating; a large sports hall which caters for badminton, volleyball, basketball, cricket nets practice and other activities; two squash courts; a floodlit multi-use outdoor synthetic sports pitch for six-a-side football, hockey, netball and tennis; a gymnasium and health suite, and full-size outdoor sports pitches.

6.5.6 Seahouses Leisure Centre provides for a limited range of activities including badminton, carpet bowls and tennis. Otherwise dual arrangements with schools are a valuable means of maximising the use of scarce resources - such arrangements exist with Berwick High School and each of the Middle Schools in the Borough - and most Parishes have at least one public hall which can cater for numerous activities including, in many places, sports such as badminton and bowls.

6.5.7 The Council recognises that these facilities form a network of recreational resources across the Borough. Their demise would seriously affect access to leisure pursuits and their improvement can only sustain and enhance the quality of life of residents. The Council will therefore encourage the further development and extension of their recreational role. The Policy, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-4, 6,7 and 10, is:

#### **POLICY R2**

C3  
C16  
C17  
The development of new recreational facilities, the improvement or extension of existing facilities, including Community, Parish and Church Halls and education facilities in dual-use, and other works to enhance public access to leisure facilities, will be permitted providing that:

- i) it will not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring uses, land or the environment;
- ii) it will enhance the overall provision of recreational facilities in the Borough; and,
- iii) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.

The dual-use of facilities provided in the educational sector or elsewhere, for use by sporting organisations and/or the general public, will be encouraged.

6.5.8 There are many traditional outdoor sports facilities, such as cricket, football and rugby pitches, tennis courts, bowling greens and golf courses. With the exception of rugby pitches, these are well dispersed throughout the Borough. These facilities will be protected from encroaching development. Only in exceptional circumstances will development be permitted. The Policy, consistent with Recreation Objectives 1-4 and 6, is:

#### **POLICY R3**

R5  
R21

Development on land used as outdoor playing space, or other development of sports pitches, tennis courts, bowling greens or other specialist sports facilities, will only be permitted when:

- i)(a) it is directly related to the provision of additional recreational or supporting facilities, including changing rooms; or,
- i)(b) it will assist in retaining sport and recreation facilities through the redevelopment of a small part of the site; or,
- ii) the developer is able to demonstrate that equivalent or improved replacement facilities will be provided on a site which is conveniently located for users of the facilities; and,
- iii) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.

6.5.9 Accessibility to swimming pool facilities is widely perceived to be deficient. The public pool at Berwick was previously accommodated in a building which was once the Corn Exchange. Maintenance costs were high, and its unusual shape made it unsuitable for competition swimming, with the opportunities for the incorporation of 'fun' features being limited. As a consequence, the Council has developed a new pool adjacent to The Swan Centre for Leisure, formally Bonarsteads Leisure Centre, for which a grant of £1.7 million was received from the National Lottery Fund. Other swimming pools are located at the holiday parks in Berwick, Haggerston and Wooler, and at Longridge Towers School, but – with the exception of Wooler – they are not normally available for public use.

6.5.10 Access to swimming pools throughout the Borough for all sections of the community will remain a priority of the Council. Access to private facilities will be sought, by negotiation, where the opportunity arises. The Policy, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-6 and 8-10, is:

#### **POLICY R4**

**The development of new swimming pools will be permitted, provided that;**

- i) It will not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring uses, land or the environment; and,
- ii) Public access to new and existing facilities will be pursued wherever practicable.

**The dual use of facilities provided in the educational sector or elsewhere, for use by sporting organisations and/or the general public, will be encouraged.**

## **6.6 Spectator Sports**

6.6.1 As noted in the reference to paragraph 2 of PPG17 highlighted at the beginning of this Chapter, participation in sport as a spectator also has an important social and economic role and is a valuable component of modern life. The Borough is host to Berwick Rugby Club and Berwick Rangers Football Club, both of which have the distinction of being the only English team in their respective National Scottish Leagues, and Berwick Bandits Speedway team which competes in the British League. As elsewhere, many other teams compete in different sports and in a variety of leagues, all of which add to opportunities for spectators in one form or other.

6.6.2 Berwick Rugby Club has club facilities at Scremerston; Berwick Rangers Football Club is based at Shielfield Park in Tweedmouth, which is owned by the Council and also used by the Berwick Speedway Club. The provision of new, and improvement of existing spectator facilities will be encouraged where a demand is identified. The Policy, consistent with the Recreation Objectives, is:

#### **POLICY R5**

M14  
C16 **The development of new, or improvements to existing facilities, for spectators at sportsgrounds, or proposals materially to change or intensify the use of sportsgrounds at which such facilities are provided, will be permitted provided that:**

- i) it will not materially adversely impact on neighbouring land or occupiers;

- ii) there are suitable arrangements for; access, car parking and emergency services; and,
- iii) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan, particularly Policy R6.

## **6.7 Noisy Sports**

6.7.1 Annex 3 to PPG24 (paragraph 22, Planning and Noise, September 1994), gives guidance on the issue of noise from recreational and sporting activities. The frequency of the noise and how disturbing it will be are particularly important considerations, and the enjoyment of the participants should be balanced against the level of nuisance to other people. Higher noise emission levels than would otherwise be acceptable from industrial development, may reasonably be permitted, where it is subject to a limit on the hours of use and the control of noise emissions during unsocial hours. PPG17 adds that, where there is a clear demand for noisy sports activities, it is important to minimise conflicts with other users. Therefore, in accordance with the Recreation Objectives, the Policy is:

### **POLICY R6**

M14  
C16 **The use of land or facilities for noisy sports - including motorised sports and sports incorporating the use of guns - will be permitted provided that:**

- i) it is the best location in terms of the requirements of the sport and the interests of participants and spectators, balanced against the interests of other people who may be affected;
- ii) any adverse affects of the development or use on the amenity of adjoining uses, land or the environment, can be mitigated to the extent that the reasonable interests of other land uses and the wider community are safeguarded; where necessary by:
  - ii(a) a limit on the hours of use, by length and time of operation, to avoid causing undue disturbance; and/or,
  - ii(b) the use of other operational restrictions that may reasonably apply; and,
- iii) suitable access and egress to and from the site can be obtained, for participants and spectators, including provision for emergency access and egress; and,
- iv) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.

## **6.8 Golf**

6.8.1 During the 1980s and early 1990s, golf enjoyed a considerable boom in participation and consequent demand for course space and new courses. This has been evident locally through the formation of a new course in parkland at Belford, although the low level of population and distance from the conurbations has meant that the 'boom' has not been as evident in the Borough as in more populated areas.

6.8.2 The popularity of golf is partly due to its versatility; it can be played by young and old, male and female. In addition to Belford, there are 18 hole courses at Magdalene Fields in Berwick, Goswick (Berwick Golf Club), Bamburgh and Seahouses, and 9 hole courses at Wooler and Haggerston. Those at Goswick, Bamburgh and Seahouses, are within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coast, and the course at Magdalene Fields is also within the Heritage Coast. Therefore, particular care is required in their further development. In an area such as the Borough where tourism is integral to the local economy, golf can be an important part of the area's tourism infrastructure.

6.8.3 PPG17 notes that golf courses can open up the countryside for recreation, but they can also have a significant impact. They should be located and designed to ensure harmony with the surrounding countryside and to conserve the natural environment. Each proposal should contain full details of the site and of the impact of the development proposed, including the effect on Public Rights of Way.

6.8.4 The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is concerned about the effects of such development on agricultural land and seeks to ensure that development is reversible, i.e. it can be returned to agricultural land of a similar quality if required. English Heritage is

concerned to retain historic features of the landscape. The Policy, consistent with the Recreation Objectives, is:

#### **POLICY R7**

**The development of new golf courses, or the extension of existing courses, will be permitted provided that:**

- i) a safe layout in respect of participants and adjoining land uses can be achieved;**
- ii) it can be integrated successfully into the landscape, including heritage and nature conservation interests;**
- iii) it would not result in the irreversible loss of Grade 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land, other than to accommodate any related facilities permitted as part of the development; and,**
- iv) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.**

### **6.9 Public Rights of Way**

6.9.1 In common with other parts of England and Wales, the Borough has a vast network of Public Rights of Way. These include public footpaths and bridleways and have the legal status of highways. However, they are now predominantly used for recreational purposes and, in an area where informal recreation is an important attraction for tourism, are an important part of the Borough's recreational infrastructure.

6.9.2 Northumberland County Council, as highways authority, is responsible for surveying, maintenance and improvement works, including the production and continuous review of the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way, although the Borough Council operates an agency agreement on their behalf for works on the ground within the A1(T) bypass at Berwick-upon-Tweed. The Borough Council intends to continue its support of the County Council in undertaking these responsibilities. Proposals for the Coastal Zone, Tweed Valley and Kylee Hills are included in the relevant Landscape Area Sections. Otherwise, the Policy, consistent with Recreation Objectives 1-5 and 6-10, is:

#### **POLICY R8**

**The development or other use of land, which will interfere with a Public Right of Way, will not be permitted, except where an alternative alignment is provided by the developer, which is similarly convenient, or an improvement to the route of the existing Right of Way. The maintenance, improvement and extension of Public Rights of Way will be supported and encouraged.**

W8  
C16  
Proposals  
5, 6, 8.

### **6.10 Tourism Accommodation**

6.10.1 As noted in paragraph 5.11.3, the provision of accommodation for visitors is an important activity in sustaining and promoting the role of tourism in the local economy. Chapter 4 deals with permanent residential accommodation, primarily for residents of the Borough, but includes an allowance for second and holiday homes within the overall allocation for new build housing. Chapter 5 deals with hotel accommodation, the conversion of buildings for self-contained holiday accommodation, and the two main Holiday Parks in the Borough, at Berwick and Haggerston Castle. This Chapter is concerned with touring camping and caravanning, and static caravans, chalets, log-cabins and other purpose-built holiday accommodation.

6.10.2 The main concentrations of touring caravan and camping sites, and other purpose-built holiday accommodation other than Berwick Holiday Centre and Haggerston Castle Holiday Park (Policies W14 and W27 refer), include: Marshall Meadows Farm; Beachcomber House; Waren Caravan Park; Budle Bay Camp Site; Seafield Road and Clifftop Caravan Sites at Seahouses; Beadnell Links; Swinhoe Links; Beadnell House and Beadnell Camp Site at Beadnell; Blue Bell Farm Caravan Site at Belford; River Breamish Caravan and Camping Site near Ingram; Riverside Holiday Park and Highburn House Camping Site at Wooler; Barmoor Castle; Bradford Kaims Caravan Park; Glororum Caravan Park at Glororum Farm; and Ord

House Caravan Park, Seaview Caravan Club Site and Elmbank Caravan Site in Berwick-upon-Tweed.

- 6.10.3 The Council intends to limit the development of further sites in the Coastal Zone and Berwick-upon-Tweed, but is anxious to stimulate additional tourism activity in the inland areas, particularly the Tweed Valley and the Kyloe Hills and Glendale Areas of High Landscape Value. Visitor aspirations for standards of accommodation and services have risen dramatically over recent years, in line with aspirations for living standards generally. In response, holiday park and caravan site owners continue to upgrade the amenity of their sites and of individual accommodation units, in order to compete. The net result is that such sites become less intrusive in the landscape. Such developments are to be welcomed and encouraged and, potentially, make the accommodation of new sites more acceptable in appropriately screened locations. The owners of the Riverside Holiday Park in Wooler have recently received planning permission for the upgrading of their site (Policy R17 refers). Otherwise, the Policy, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 2, 4, 5 and 10, is:

**POLICY R9**

W8  
C16

**The development of new sites, or the extension of existing sites, for touring caravans or camping, or static caravans, chalets, log-cabins or other purpose-built holiday accommodation, will be permitted provided that:**

- i) the site is largely enclosed from the surrounding landscape by dense woodland and/or other landscape features;**
- ii) it will be integrated successfully into the wider landscape, including heritage and nature conservation interests;**
- iii) a high standard of amenity will be provided for visitors to the site, in terms of both the setting of the accommodation and/or pitches, and the external appearance accommodation where accommodation is provided;**
- iv) a management plan, to ensure that site amenity and the visual relationship between the site and its landscape setting will be maintained or enhanced, is agreed;**
- v) it will not result in the irreversible loss of Grade 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land, other than to accommodate any related facilities permitted as part of the development;**
- vi) it will not adversely affect the amenity or services of adjoining communities;**
- vii) the local road network can accommodate the additional traffic generated by the development;**
- viii) in the Coastal Zone, Policy R12 will also apply; for the Riverside Holiday Park in Wooler, Policy R17 will also apply and in Berwick-upon-Tweed, Policy R23 will also apply; and,**
- ix) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.**

**Where an extension to an existing site is proposed, either by area and/or the number of accommodation units, improvements to the amenity and layout of the existing site will be sought as appropriate. Planning conditions will be used to ensure that all accommodation is for holiday use, and not as principal residential accommodation.**

**6.11 The Coastal Zone**

- 6.11.1 Facilities for active and organised sport in the Coastal Zone are provided at Seahouses and Bamburgh; in the latter settlement, the Council has recently invested in the provision of a floodlit, multi-purpose games area, as defined by the Sports Council. There are football pitches at Seahouses Middle School and Bamburgh; a cricket pitch at Bamburgh; golf courses at Bamburgh, Seahouses, Goswick and Magdalene Fields at Berwick; tennis courts at Seahouses and Bamburgh; and a bowling green at Seahouses. The bowling green and tennis courts are attached to Seahouses Leisure Centre which includes a sports hall catering for badminton, carpet bowls and other activities. Beadnell Bay is a popular destination for watersports activities including sailing, sub-aqua diving and water-skiing, and the outer Tweed Estuary at Berwick accommodates sailing and windsurfing.

- 6.11.2 Seahouses, including North Sunderland, is the largest settlement in the Coastal Zone and the only village of sufficient size to warrant the application of a target relating to the National

Playing Field Association's '6 acre standard' (paragraph 6.2.3 refers), and the Sports Council's standards for a village with a catchment population of 3000 persons (paragraph 6.2.6 refers).

- 6.11.3 Taking into account the population-age profile of the area and the location of the villages relative to natural recreational features, including beaches and the sea, the overall target for Seahouses and the surrounding area, including Bamburgh and Beadnell Parishes, is 3.4 hectares of recreational space for youth and adult use, and 1.2 hectares for children's use, including 0.4 hectares of equipped play space and 0.8 hectares of casual or informal space. It is considered that, generally, the area falls short of these standards, but the precise situation will be assessed, and the standards refined as appropriate, as part of the preparation of the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation (Proposal 2 refers). In relation to the Sports Council standards, the village requires a new football pitch.
- 6.11.4 The provision of one, or two, new public football pitches in Seahouses, in addition to the pitch used under a dual-use agreement at Seahouses Middle School, has long been identified as a requirement. The Policy, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-7 and 9, is:

#### **POLICY R10**

Proposal  
2

**Within the Coastal Zone in the village of Seahouses, 2.0 hectares of land adjacent to the Leisure Centre is designated for the formation of one, or two, new publicly accessible football pitches, provided that adequate provision is made to ensure that it will not result in the irreversible loss of agricultural land. Otherwise, the overall provision of recreation space throughout the Zone, for youth and adult use and children's use, will be considered within the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation, and a programme of works initiated accordingly to rectify any shortfalls in provision which are identified.**

- 6.11.5 As noted above, Beadnell Bay is a popular location for watersports. Its popularity is in part because of its suitability for such activities, and part because of the unsuitability of much of the neighbouring coast for such activities because of its international importance for nature conservation. However, Beadnell Bay is also important for nature conservation and there are other conflicts between participants in watersports activities and other visitors enjoying the beach, the fishermen who earn a living in the Bay and adjacent inshore waters, and residents of the village - Harbour Road in particular - when the road is congested with parked cars and traffic.
- 6.11.6 A byelaw has operated since 1968 to restrict the speed of vessels in the northern part of the bay to 8 nautical miles per hour. The extension of this restriction southwards is under active consideration, in partnership with the Northumberland Coastal Service, Alnwick District Council, Beadnell Parish Council, Beadnell Fishermen's Association, the Sports Council, National Rivers Authority, English Nature, RSPB and other interested parties. The Borough Council considers that this should be extended to embrace the development of a detailed management plan to reconcile the wider conflicts. Therefore, the Proposal, consistent with Recreation Objectives 1-7 and 10, is:

#### **PROPOSAL 3**

W8  
W10  
W11  
R11  
Proposals  
4 & 5

**The Council, in partnership with the Northumberland Coastal Service, Alnwick District Council, Beadnell Parish Council, Beadnell Fishermen's Association, the Sports Council, National Rivers Authority, English Nature, RSPB and other interested parties, will undertake the preparation of a management plan for Beadnell Bay and adjoining areas, to regulate the use of the bay for fishing, watersports and casual recreational activities, nature conservation interests, vehicular access and parking, and the interests of local residents.**

- 6.11.7 In advance of the completion of a management plan, the continued management of boat launching by, or on behalf of, the Council, will help to minimise conflicts between various users of the bay and assist in maintaining safety. The provision of a secure trailer park will

remove trailers from the beach, thereby improving its amenity and safety. Therefore, the Policy, consistent with Recreation Objectives 2-7 and 10, is:

**POLICY R11**

W8  
Proposals  
3 & 4

**Within the Coastal Zone at Benthall in the village of Beadnell, a secure parking area for boat trailers will be provided on 0.3 hectares of land to the west of the public car park.**

6.11.8 The Coastal Zone provides a variety of opportunities for informal recreation. The Council has welcomed and endorsed the objectives and proposals set out in the Northumberland Coast Management Plan, prepared by Northumberland County Council, the majority of which are designed to encourage appropriate levels of informal recreation. Therefore, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-7 and 10, the Proposal is:

**PROPOSAL 4**

W8  
W10  
W11  
W15

**The Council will continue to work in partnership with Northumberland County Council and others to implement the management priorities set out in the Northumberland Coast Management Plan.**

R12  
M17  
C16  
Proposals  
3, 5, 13 &  
14.

6.11.9 The Public Rights of Way network in the Coastal Zone is supplemented by the series of wide sandy beaches which can be walked where there are no footpaths or bridleways along the coastal edge. However, there are areas - notably between Fenham and Budle - where the coastal road network provides the only footpath. The Council recognises the need to protect areas of nature conservation interest from visitor pressure but considers that full enjoyment of the coast should be extended to walkers. Therefore, the Proposal, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-5, 7 and 10, is:

**PROPOSAL 5**

W8  
R8  
C16  
Proposal  
14

**Within the Coastal Zone, the Council in partnership with Northumberland County Council and others, will promote the provision of additional public footpaths to form a continuous network of rights of way along the coast, which avoid County roads. In negotiating the alignment of new public rights of way, priority will be given to the protection of sites which are sensitive in terms of their nature conservation interest.**

6.11.10 Northumberland County Council, with financial support from the Borough Council, is also investigating the feasibility of a coastal cycle-route between Berwick and North Shields, related to Sustrans' successful bid for Millennium funding for a national cycle network. Wherever practicable, the joint use of routeways for walkers and cyclists will be encouraged (Proposal 14 refers).

6.11.11 Caravan and camping sites have traditionally provided accommodation for substantial numbers of visitors to the coast. Some sites have been successfully absorbed into the landscape; others have not. There is a long-standing strategic policy not to allow the development of new caravan sites within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Council supports this policy and intends to extend its application throughout the Coastal Zone. However, the development of a new site to replace an existing site which would be more satisfactorily integrated into the landscape and reduce the impact on other interests, or the extension of sites to allow the improvement of site amenity and layout may be acceptable. The Policy, in addition to Policy R9 and in accordance with Recreation Objectives 2, 4, 5 and 10, is:

**POLICY R12**

W8  
C16

**Within the Coastal Zone, the development of new, or the enlargement of existing sites, for camping, caravans or purpose-built holiday accommodation will be permitted provided that;**

- i) it accords with policy R9;**
- ii) it does not adversely impact on the coastal landscape;**
- iii) it is adjacent to, and compatible in scale and intensity of use with, a settlement offering local facilities and services;**

- iv) regard is had to any opportunity created to displace a prominent or otherwise unsatisfactory site; and,
- v) regard is had to the availability of public transport.

## 6.12 Tweed Valley Area of High Landscape Value

6.12.1 Recreational provision for organised sport in the Tweed Valley Area of High Landscape Value is limited to school playing fields and a network of village halls, while the River Tweed and its tributaries within the area - the lower stretches of the River Till and Whiteadder Water - provide outstanding game fishing and are also used for informal recreation.

6.12.2 None of the settlements are of sufficient size to warrant the application of the National Playing Field Associations '6 acre standard'. However, Norham village can generate a catchment population of up to 1,000 people and, therefore, the Sports Council's standards for such a village can be applied (paragraph 6.2.6 refers). Norham does not have any of these facilities. The Council considers that the provision of a football pitch or cricket pitch is not warranted, but a bowling green and floodlit multi-purpose games area as defined by the Sports Council could be. The Local Plan consultations uncovered a reasonable level of interest for such facilities in the village. Further evaluation of requirements in Norham, and elsewhere in the Tweed Valley, will be carried out as part of the District Strategy (Proposal 2 refers). Meanwhile, the Policy, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-6 and 10, is:

### POLICY R13

Proposal  
2

**Within the Tweed Valley Area of High Landscape Value in the village of Norham, the development of land for use as a bowling green and/or a floodlit multi-purpose games area, will be permitted provided that:**

- i) it will not adversely affect the amenity of adjoining uses, land or the environment;
- ii) satisfactory vehicular access and parking provision can be obtained; and,
- iii) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.

**Otherwise, the overall provision of recreational space throughout the area, for youth and adult use and children's use, will be considered within the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation, and a programme of works initiated accordingly to rectify any shortfalls in provision which are identified.**

6.12.3 As noted above, the River Tweed and its tributaries, which is a proposed Site of Special Scientific Interest, provides outstanding game fishing; indeed, the river is internationally famous for its salmon. As a consequence, fishing is a significant piece in the Borough's tourism 'jig-saw', and provides valuable income to the Collingwood Arms Hotel, Tillmouth Park Hotel and other guest houses, public houses and businesses in the area.

6.12.4 However, the River Tweed is also used for quiet watersports such as rowing and canoeing, and the Council considers that these aspects could be promoted in harmony with other interests, if care is taken in choosing appropriate locations. Therefore, the Policy, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-5, 7 and 10, is:

### POLICY R14

W8  
Proposals  
6 & 15

**Within the Tweed Valley Area of High Landscape Value, development in support of quiet recreational activities associated with the River Tweed, including canoeing and boating, will be permitted provided that:**

- i) it will not adversely affect fishing interests along the River;
- ii) it will not adversely affect the amenity of adjoining uses, land or the environment, including nature conservation interests; and,
- iii) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.

**Development in support of motorised watersports will not be permitted.**

6.12.5 The Council believes that the Public Right of Way network which extends almost the entire length of the river between Berwick-upon-Tweed and Cornhill-on-Tweed is strategically important and is one means by which the coastal footpath network might be linked to the

Cheviot hills. The promotion of this link is a further means by which the attractions of the Tweed Valley can be opened up for residents and tourists alike. Therefore, consistent with Recreation Objectives 1-5, 7 and 10, the Proposal is:

**PROPOSAL 6**

W8  
R8  
C16  
Proposal  
15

**Within the Tweed Valley Area of High Landscape Value, the Council - in partnership with Northumberland County Council and others - will work to maintain, improve and promote the Public Right of Way network as a strategic link between the coastal footpath network and the footpath network of the Cheviot Hills. In negotiating the alignment of new footpaths, priority will be given to the protection of sites, which are sensitive in terms of their nature conservation interest.**

6.12.6 In addition to the Berwick to North Shields coastal cycle-route, Sustrans are also seeking to promote a route between Berwick and Edinburgh, via the lower Tweed Valley. Proposal 15 refers.

6.12.7 Till Valley Tourism Initiative is active within three Parishes which are part within the Tweed Valley Area of High Landscape Value: Carham, Cornhill-on-Tweed and Duddo. The Initiative is a partnership between the Council and a wide range of other agencies, and is seeking to stimulate opportunities for tourism and recreation in the inland areas of the Borough. The Proposal, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-5, and 10, is:

**PROPOSAL 7**

W8

**Within the Tweed Valley Area of High Landscape Value, in the Parishes of Carham, Cornhill-on-Tweed and Duddo, The Council will continue to work in partnership with others to implement proposals within - and arising from - the Till Valley Tourism Initiative.**

**6.13 Kylee Hills and Glendale Area of High Landscape Value**

6.13.1 Belford and Wooler are key settlements for facilities for active and organised sports. Both settlements have football and cricket pitches and sports fields and courts at their respective Middle Schools. At Wooler, the Council and the Sports Council have funded the provision of a floodlit multi-purpose games area at Glendale County Middle School, and there is a bowling green at Scott's Park. Both villages have 9 hole golf courses although Wooler's is somewhat remote from the village, at Doddington Moor on the opposite side of the Till Valley.

6.13.2 Elsewhere, there is a network of Parish, Church and Community Halls which provide recreational facilities. There are cricket pitches at Chatton and Etal. The Borders Gliding Club currently fly from an airfield in the Milfield Plain.

6.13.3 Paragraph 6.2.3 identifies both Belford and Wooler as being of sufficient size to warrant the application of the National Playing Field Association's '6 acre standard'. Taking into account the population-age profile of each village and the surrounding area, the overall target for Belford would be in the region of 1.6 hectares of recreational space for youth and adult use, and 0.6 hectares for children's use, including 0.2 hectares of equipped play space and 0.4 hectares of casual or informal space; and 3.2 hectares for youth and adult use and 1.2 hectares for children's use, including 0.4 hectares of equipped play space and 0.8 hectares of casual or informal space, in Wooler. In terms of available space, it is likely that each village has sufficient land, but the use of that land might need to be reordered, particularly for children's playspace. This will be considered within the preparation of the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation (Proposal 2 refers).

6.13.4 It would also be reasonable to compare recreational provision against the Sports Council's standards set out in paragraph 6.2.6. Belford has a catchment population of over 1,000 persons but somewhat below 3,000. Wooler, reasonably, has a catchment population of 3,000 persons or above. It can be seen that in this respect, both villages compare fairly favourably. However, Wooler football pitch is owned by the Council and has been reserved for an extension of The Martins housing estate. However, it is not now likely to be required

for this purpose and designation of the site for recreational use is appropriate. The Policy, consistent with Recreation Objectives 1-7 and 9, is:

#### **POLICY R15**

Proposal 2 **Within the Kylee Hills and Glendale Area of High Landscape Value in the village of Wooler, 1.5 hectares of land to the south of The Martins, currently used as a football pitch, is reserved for this use. Otherwise, the overall provision of recreational space throughout the area, for youth and adult use and children's use, will be considered within the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation, and a programme of works initiated accordingly to rectify any shortfalls in provision which are identified.**

6.13.5 Other than Belford and Wooler, Chatton, which is located midway between these two villages, is one of the larger villages in the area. A need for an equipped children's play area, and a suitable site, has been identified in negotiations with Chatton Parish Council and Northumberland Estates. Therefore, the Policy, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-3, 7 and 10, is:

#### **POLICY R16**

**Within the Kylee Hills and Glendale Area of High Landscape Value in the village of Chatton, 0.48 hectares of land to the west of Mill Hill Farm and south of the B6348 classified road, is reserved for the provision of an enclosed, informal and equipped, children's play area.**

6.13.6 As noted in paragraph 6.4.2, the Council is seeking to promote outdoor recreational activities, particularly walking, in the Kylee Hills. The Till Valley Tourism Initiative, the area for which includes all but the eastern extent of the Kylee Hills and Glendale Area of High Landscape Value, has developed a series of circular walks from public houses and cafes throughout the area, including Chatton, Ford Common, Milfield, Pallinsburn, Roseden and West Weetwood. The continuing promotion of these and other routes, with small scale car parking and way marked trails as appropriate, and other initiatives arising from the Till Valley Tourism Initiative, will be encouraged. The Proposal, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-5, 7 and 10, is:

#### **PROPOSAL 8**

W8 **Within the Kylee Hills and Glendale Area of High Landscape Value, the Council will continue working in partnership with Northumberland County Council and others, to implement proposals within - and arising from - the Till Valley Tourism Initiative. The development of informal recreation opportunities throughout the area, including circular walks and waymarked trails, with related small scale car parking and interpretation facilities as appropriate, will be encouraged.**

6.13.7 The owners of Riverside Holiday Park in Wooler have been granted planning permission, backed by a planning agreement, for the extension of the park, on the basis that site amenity and facilities will be improved and all caravans will be transferred to the west of the A697 Primary Road. This development is entirely in accord with Policy R9. However, its significance to the tourism infrastructure and wider development opportunities in Wooler, is such that the principles of the development are worth reiterating in the Local Plan, should a further planning application be required. The Policy, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-5, 7 and 9 is:

#### **POLICY R17**

W8 C16 **In the Kylee Hills and Glendale Area of High Landscape Value in the village of Wooler, development to alter or enlarge the Riverside Holiday Park will be permitted provided that:**

- i) it is confined to the area of land identified on the Proposals Map;
- ii) it accords with Policy R9; additionally the authority will seek binding agreements to secure that;
- iii) land identified in the existing planning agreement for the site, adjacent to The Peth, remains undeveloped with the exception of land and premises known as

the Brewery Social Club, all holiday park activities are removed from the eastern side of the A697 Primary Route, and the site remaining is developed for housing and/or industrial or commercial use, in accordance with Policies S18 or W19 respectively, or is restored forthwith to agricultural use; and satisfactory vehicular access to, and egress from, the site, to and from the A697 Primary Route, between the bridge over Wooler Water and the former railway bridge, and traffic flows within the site including a new bridge across Wooler Water, can be achieved.

#### **6.14 The Intermediate Areas of Landscape Value**

- 6.14.1 Facilities for active and organised sport in this area are limited; there is a cricket pitch at Warenford, a football pitch at Lowick, and Berwick Rugby Club is located at Scremerston. In common with the other areas, there is a network of Parish, Church and Community Halls which provide opportunities for recreation.
- 6.14.2 Haggerston Castle Holiday Park has a swimming pool and a wide range of outdoor amenities, some of which are available for public use on a limited basis. In accordance with Policy R4 and Recreation Objectives 1-6 and 10, the Proposal is:

**PROPOSAL 9**

W27 **The Council will encourage the owners of the Haggerston Caravan Holiday Park to allow public access to recreational facilities within the Park.**

- 6.14.3 None of the settlements are of sufficient size to warrant the application of the National Playing Field Association's '6 acre standard'. Residents and visitors usually have to make use of facilities elsewhere to participate in active and organised sport. However, Lowick village can generate a catchment population of up to 1000 people and, therefore, the Sports Council's standards for such villages can be applied (paragraph 6.2.6 refers). Lowick does not have a cricket pitch, bowling green or floodlit, multi-purpose games area. The Borough Council considers that the provision of a cricket pitch is not warranted, but a bowling green and floodlit multi-purpose games area as defined by the Sports Council, could be. The Local Plan consultations have uncovered a reasonable level of interest for such facilities in the village. Further evaluation of requirements in Lowick, and elsewhere in the Intermediate Areas of Landscape Value, will be carried out as part of the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation (Proposal 2 refers). Meanwhile, the Policy in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-6 and 10, is:

**POLICY R18**

**Within the Intermediate Areas of Landscape Value in the village of Lowick, the development of land for use as a bowling green and/or a floodlit multi-purpose games area, will be permitted provided that:**

Proposal 2

- i) it will not adversely affect the amenity of adjoining uses, land or the environment;
- ii) satisfactory vehicular access and parking provision can be obtained; and,
- iii) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.

**Otherwise, the overall provision of recreational space throughout the area, for youth and adult use and children's use, will be considered within the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation, and a programme of works initiated accordingly to rectify any shortfalls in provision which are identified.**

- 6.14.4 The Till Valley Tourism Initiative is active within Lowick, Bowsden and Branxton Parishes and those parts of Carham, Cornhill-on-Tweed, Kilham, Milfield, Ford, Duddo and Doddington Parishes which are within the Intermediate Areas of Landscape Value. The Initiative is a partnership between the Council and a wide range of other agencies, and is seeking to develop opportunities for tourism and recreation in the inland areas of the Borough. The Proposal, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-5, 7 and 10, is:

**PROPOSAL 10**

W8 **Within the Intermediate Areas of Landscape Value, in the Parishes of Bowsden, Branxton, Carham, Cornhill-on-Tweed, Doddington, Duddo, Ford, Kilham, Lowick and Milfield as applicable, the Council will continue to work in partnership with others to implement proposals within - and arising from - the Till Valley Tourism Initiative.**

**6.15 Berwick-upon-Tweed**

- 6.15.1 Berwick-upon-Tweed is the largest population centre in north Northumberland and the eastern borders of Scotland, and provides for the recreational needs of the local population and its rural hinterland. With a population of over 13,000 and a catchment population approaching 50,000, it is appropriate to apply the National Playing Field Associations '6 acre standard' to the town, and consider recreational provision against the Sports Council's standards (paragraph 6.2.6 refers).
- 6.15.2 Unlike the Borough as a whole, the population age-profile of the town is reasonably well balanced compared to the national age profile. Therefore, in applying the '6 acre standard' for recreational land provision, a standard in the middle of the recommended range for each category is appropriate. Throughout the town, this equates to: 22.8 hectares, including 16.2 hectares of sports pitches for youth and adult use; 3.3 hectares of equipped play space for children; and 6.0 hectares of casual play space for children.

## RECREATION

6.15.3 Current provision for youth and adult use totals 17.6 hectares, including 16.2 hectares of sports pitches. In addition, there is a further 21.9 hectares of recreational land at Berwick County High School, Tweedmouth County Middle School and Berwick County Middle School, which is owned by Northumberland County Council as the Local Education Authority, and normally available by arrangement for public use. This includes up to 20.0 hectares of sports pitches.

6.15.4 The above figures demonstrate that without the contribution from the dual-use of Local Education Authority owned recreational land, land available as sports pitches meets the standards. However, there is a considerable deficiency in land for other outdoor sports activities, even with Local Education Authority land included, and a possible need to reorganise the way that available land is used. These issues and the overall provision of children's play space will be examined as part of the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation (Proposal 2 refers).

### **POLICY R19**

Proposal 2

**In the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed the overall provision of recreational space, for youth and adult use and children's use, will be considered within the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation, and a programme of works initiated accordingly to rectify any shortfalls in provision which are identified.**

6.15.5 It is apparent from the strategy documents of the former Northern Council for Sport and Recreation that there are deficiencies in sports facilities in the area including a swimming pool, floodlit multi games area and an artificial turf pitch

6.15.6 In advance of the District Strategy, the Borough Council considers the provision of a floodlit multi-purpose games area in Berwick-upon-Tweed, as defined by the Sports Council, to the north of the river, to be a priority, and considers land at Berwick County Middle School to be appropriate for this purpose as, located there, it will also provide additional recreational facilities for the school. The Policy, consistent with Recreation Objectives 1-3, 6 and 8 is:

### **POLICY R20**

M10  
M14  
C16

**Within the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, the development of land at Berwick County Middle School, or elsewhere to the north of the river if Berwick County Middle School is not able to accommodate the development, for the provision of a floodlit, multi-purpose games area, will be permitted provided that:**

- i) it will not adversely affect the amenity of adjoining uses, land or the environment;**
- ii) satisfactory vehicular access and parking provision can be obtained; and,**
- iii) it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.**

6.15.7 The Northern Council for Sport and Recreation Strategy has identified the need for a floodlit full-size artificial turf pitch in North Northumberland. The nearest equivalent facility is at Tweedbank near Galashiels in the central Borders. The Council considers that Berwick-upon-Tweed would be the ideal location for such a pitch, being the largest settlement for nearly 50 miles, or 'one hours driving time', in any direction, and that the existing football pitch adjacent to Bonarsteads, to be retained after development of the new swimming pool, would be the ideal site. Therefore, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-6 and 8, the Policy is:

M10  
M14  
C16

**POLICY R21**  
**Within the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed on land adjacent to The Swan Centre for Leisure, formally Bonarsteads Leisure Centre, the development of a floodlit artificial turf pitch of a size capable of accommodating 11-a-side football, and of a standard approved by the Sports Council, will be permitted. The precise location of the pitch, and the arrangement of landscaping and boundary treatments, will be designed to ensure the minimum impact on surrounding land uses other than the Sports Centre and new swimming pool.**

6.15.8 The facilities and environment at the children's play space adjacent to the Promenade at Spittal, have been identified as deficient. The upgrading of this facility would benefit residents and, because of its location, enhance Spittal's somewhat depleted role as part of the Borough's portfolio for tourism. Therefore, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-5 and 7, the Policy is:

W8  
C16

**POLICY R22**  
**Within the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, the existing children's play area adjacent to the Promenade at Spittal will be improved and enhanced as a facility for local children and the children of visitors to Spittal.**

6.15.9 The estuary of the River Tweed accommodates a number of water sports on both an organised and informal basis. It is also enjoyed as an open space and is valuable because of its nature conservation interest and, with the Tweed Dock, as a working port. There is also potential for the development of a limited marina facility. The Borough Council considers that all of these spheres of activity should be safeguarded, a concept embodied within the Tweed Estuary Management Plan (1997). The TEMP was developed in partnership with Northumberland County Council, English Nature, The Environment Agency, Northumbrian Water, The Berwick Harbour Commissioners, and The Tweed Commissioners. It is a non-statutory document, which has been the subject of public consultation. The TEMP's mission is "to protect and enhance the environmental resources whilst recognising the importance of commercial, industrial, economic and recreational resources". The plan details a number of initiatives to promote; sustainable development, English/Scottish co-operation on river management; methods to reduce pollution; monitoring of the estuarine communities, and the importance of the harbour within the community, all within the statutory framework of the local plan. The Proposal, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-8 and Work Objectives 4 and 10, is:

**PROPOSAL 11**

**The Council will continue to work in partnership with others to implement proposals within – and arising from – the Tweed Estuary Management Plan, 1997.**

W33  
W34  
M45

6.15.10 Caravanning and camping provides accommodation for a significant number of visitors to the town. There are existing sites at Ord House Caravan Park, Seaview Caravan Club Site and Elmbank Caravan Site, as well as Berwick Holiday Centre which is located in the Coastal Zone (Policy W14 refers). The Council considers that these sites are sufficient to meet the requirement for this type of accommodation in Berwick, and any further sites would be detrimental to the amenity of adjoining residential areas and the wider interests of the town. Therefore, the Policy, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-5 and 8, is:

W8  
C16

**POLICY R23**  
**Within the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, the development of new sites for touring caravans or camping, or static caravans, chalets, log-cabins and other purpose built holiday accommodation, or the extension of existing sites at Ord House Caravan Park, Seaview Caravan Club Site and Elmbank Caravan Site, to accommodate additional residential units, will not be permitted. Improvements to upgrade the amenity and layout of the existing sites will be permitted provided that it accords with Policies elsewhere in the Plan.**

- 6.15.11 Housing estates in the town are relatively well provided with amenity and public open space. However, these spaces would benefit from an appraisal of their function and pattern of use within the District Strategy for Sport and Recreation (Proposal 2 refers). Therefore, in accordance with Recreation Objectives 1-3 and 6-8, the Proposal is:

**PROPOSAL 12**

Proposal 2

**As part of the preparation of a District Strategy for Sport and Recreation, the Council will investigate patterns of use and the function of amenity and public open space on housing estates in the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and establish estate improvement action plans.**

**6.16 Implementation of the Recreation Chapter**

- 6.16.1 Implementation of the Recreation Chapter will depend upon many public, private and voluntary organisations and individuals. A significant element, as is apparent throughout the Chapter, will be the preparation of a District Strategy for Sport and Recreation by the Borough Council, for which the close co-operation of the Sports Council will be required.
- 6.16.2 Funding from the Sports Council, the Foundation for Sport and the Arts, the National Lottery and elsewhere will be crucial in supplementing limited resources available locally. A number of clubs have already been successful in securing grants from the Foundation for Sport and the Arts, including: Berwick Bowling Club, Berwick Rowing Club, Berwick Rugby Club, Berwick Tennis Club and Magdalene Fields Golf Club. The Tennis Club, as well as the Council, has also secured National Lottery funding. The Council also supports 41 local clubs through 100% discretionary rate relief, amounting to £41,500.00 in 1995/96, in addition to a £1,000.00 annual grant to Berwick Sports Council Association and subsidies to The Swan Centre for Leisure, formally Bonarsteads Leisure Centre.
- 6.16.3 As elsewhere the Development Control process will be the regulatory mechanism for development. In this respect, the Recreation Policies will be continually monitored to ensure that they are relevant, useful and effective, for the Council's Officers and Development Committee, and other users of the Plan, and assessed against the Objectives of the Recreation Chapter and the Local Plan Strategy. Consistency in interpretation and implementation will be a critical aspect, for developers, the wider community, the Council, and Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State in respect of any Appeals which arise. Where development is carried out which requires, but is without, planning permission, or is contrary to any planning permission which has been granted, enforcement action will be taken or retrospective planning approval will be required to rectify the position, in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 6.16.4 Primary Legislation, Statutory Orders, Government Guidance, funding structures and names referred to in the Chapter, are correct at 1<sup>st</sup> July 1995 but may be subject to change. Relevant amendments will be taken into account in considering proposals for development against Policies in the Plan, and in the review of the Plan.