

## Topic Area: Leisure & Recreation

<b>What we sought to find out:</b>	<b>Leisure &amp; Recreation</b>
<i>Leisure</i>	What leisure facilities & opportunities are there? Are leisure facilities and spaces well used? Are leisure facilities and spaces fit for purpose? What opportunities are there for sport? Where are they? What are the gaps, un-met demands & future aspirations?
<i>Local Culture &amp; the arts</i>	Are spaces/facilities provided that enable local culture & art events? Are there any elements that need to be introduced, improved or retained? What do local artists do? What are their needs and ambitions?
<i>Tourism and holiday facilities</i>	What facilities are on offer and how well used are they? Is there demand for more facilities? What improvements and enhancements are needed? What are the obvious opportunities

### Strategic Context

One element of **Cornwall Council's Core Strategy**, in compliance with the evolving National Planning Policy, is that *"the Core Strategy should ensure the retention and provision of high quality accessible open spaces and recreational and sports facilities"*.<sup>1</sup>

Cornwall's **Cultural Strategy evidence report 2010**<sup>2</sup> states that the key priorities for our communities should be to:-

*(a) Increase the quality of cultural offer to local population to ensure that people are able to enjoy the benefits which builds links between the cultural sector and new audiences.*

*(b) To encourage participation in sports and other recreational activities; which helps to reduce the risks to the health and wellbeing of our population.*

*The key messages from this survey are:-*

- *Cornwall's environment is the key contributor to its economy*
- *Access to the natural environment and green spaces is beneficial to health & well being*
- *Participation in cultural and sports activities helps to create cohesive communities*
- *Communities in Cornwall have a strong sense of identity*
- *Cornwall ranks highly in activities for teenagers & spaces for young to play ( 2008 survey)*
- *The cultural sector is a key contributor to the economy attracting many visitors.*
- *There are good opportunities for employment in cultural activities but earnings are low*
- *Cornwall's heritage and assets help shape peoples sense of belonging*

### **Local Plan policies related to Wadebridge leisure, recreation & cultural facilities**

Several saved policy items from the 'North Cornwall Local Plan 1999' (NCLP) provide protection to leisure, recreational & cultural facilities and guidance regarding the conditions and constraints for developers.

#### **General NCLP policy conditions related to 'development'**

**(ECN8)** - Change of use and conversion of rural buildings for tourism, sport and recreational uses is permitted but subject to conditions on structural change.

**(SAF 7)** - Access to the countryside and using footpaths, including in the Camel Trail is protected from developments that would adversely affect their route or character.

<sup>1</sup> Core Strategy, Cornwall Council, 2011

<sup>2</sup> Cornwall Cultural Strategy Evidence Report, Sophie Birch, Cornwall Council, Mar 2010

**(SAF7A)**- Provisions for water recreation including mooring and launching facilities for small boats and pleasure craft will be permitted subject to conditions related to integration with existing developments, and any engineering measures necessary to provide protection.

**(SAF9)** - Establishments involved in the arts, entertainment and culture activities are protected against loss from development proposals and change will only be permitted where they can be replaced or the level of easily accessible facilities to the community would not be harmed. Proposals which enhance the provision of art, entertainment & cultural activities will be permitted within or on the edge of development boundaries.

**(DVS4)**- The design and layout of housing schemes includes conditions related to the provision of appropriately located and landscaped open spaces where no other suitable facilities are available in the locality.

**(DVS5)** require developers to provide for a safe, adequate and convenient means off access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

#### Specific NCLP policy related to Wadebridge

**(WAD5)** - Land east of Bridge View and Egloshayle Road is designated for housing with a maximum provision of 50 houses with extensive landscaping throughout the site and open space provision in the northern part of the site.

**(WAD8)** - Development proposals related the waterside industrial site on land adjacent to Trevilling Road will only be permitted where they involve maritime industrial or leisure activities requiring such a location for operational reasons or extension/ improvements required for the continued operation of an existing business.

**(WAD10)** - The land between Eddystone Road and Town Quay is designated for mixed development which includes provisions for a cycle lane, riverside walkway and a design that will respect the traditions of the river frontage.

**(WAD11)**- The land between Bradford Quay and the river Camel is per designated for housing and some commercial development should make provision for a riverside walkway and design that will respect the traditions of the river frontage.

**(WAD13)** - Other areas of local significance are designated as open areas of local significance related to preservation and/or recreational use where policy (ENV2) will apply:-

- (a) The floodplain between Piggy Lane and the River Camel
- (b) Land between Gonvena Hill, Trevilling Road and the A39 bypass
- (c) Jubilee field
- (d) Egloshayle playing fields
- (e) Trenant Valley
- (f) The woodland and floodplain of the Polmorla valley
- (g) Coronation Park and land to the north east of Dunveth Farm
- (h) The Treraven valley and floodplain including the Camel trail
- (i) The floodplain between Egloshayle Church and Clapper

#### **Other Relevant Strategies**

National indicators detailed in the **2008 Active People Survey**<sup>3</sup> confirm that participation in cultural and sports activities in Cornwall, excepting museums, is above national average:-

	Cornwall	National Av'
Adult participation in sport & recreation activities	23.6%	21.9%
Use of public libraries	50.3%	48.5%
Visits to museums	50.3%	53.8%
Engagements in arts	50.1%	45.2%

<sup>3</sup> National Active People Survey, Sport England, 2008

The **2008 Place Survey**<sup>4</sup> confirms that there is a high level of satisfaction in the services for sports and recreation provided for the population:-

Very & fairly satisfied respondents:

Libraries	68%
Parks	66%
Sport & leisure	48%,
Museums & galleries	44%
Theatres/concert halls	36% * (*improving but below national levels)

It is fair to point out that contributors to the most important priorities for Cornwall in the '2008 Place survey' only ranked 'sports & leisure' 13<sup>th</sup> out of the 20 top priorities. Exceptionally, the need for improved activities for teenagers was ranked 3rd.

Wage levels & local cost of living	1	Shopping facilities	8
Affordable decent housing	2	Health services	9
<b>Activities for teenagers</b>	<b>3</b>	Crime levels	10
Better Job prospects	4	Clean streets	11
Public transport improvements	5	Facilities for young children	12
Traffic & congestion	6	<b>Sports &amp; Leisure</b>	<b>13</b>
Road & pavement improvements	7		

Culture and sport are powerful tools for building community cohesion. Activities such as football, music, dance and local history offer natural opportunities for people to come together and participate in community life. This helps to "*break down barriers between diverse groups in a community and can help create a sense of local pride and belonging*"<sup>5</sup>. Evidence from the '2008 Place Survey' indicates that those participating in cultural activities are 20% more likely to know many people in their neighbourhood. Significantly 60% are more likely to believe that many of their neighbours can be trusted. Importantly these figures hold good for those from lower social-economic groups.

Cornwall Council's Health & Wellbeing Strategy<sup>6</sup> confirms that cultural and sporting activities also play an important role in improving health and wellbeing. Physically active people have a 20-30% reduced risk of premature death and up to 50% reduced risk of major chronic disease. Evidence included in Health and Wellbeing Strategy highlights the physical benefits that cultural infrastructure and activities can have on individuals. Medical evidence increasingly suggests that people with access to quality green space are healthier. It is therefore important that our environment is attractive, accessible and encourages physical activity such as walking and cycling which have positive effects<sup>7</sup>.

The '*strategy for sport*'<sup>8</sup> outlined broadly by Sport England is to ensure that those interested in sport have a quality experience that will enable them to fulfil their potential. Government guidance on the '*standards for sport, recreation and open space*'<sup>9</sup> recommends audits to assess local needs and advocates the production of a design guide to ensure that good quality spaces are provided through the planning process. Much depends on the need for particular communities and standards such as 'green flag' for public gardens, blue flag for coastal destinations, water quality and safety considerations need to be taken into account.

<sup>4</sup> Place Survey, Cornwall Council, 2008

<sup>5</sup> Tessa Jowell, Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport, 2004

<sup>6</sup> Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2020, Cornwall Council, Sep 2012

<sup>7</sup> NICE guidance: Promoting Physical Activity in the Workplace, 2008

<sup>8</sup> Strategy for Sport paper, Sport England, 2010

<sup>9</sup> Sport, Recreation & open spaces issue paper, Cornwall Council, 2011

The key messages from the various studies to date include:-

- A clear link between health and physical activity and the need to increase participation rates
- Importance of local audits and standards to maintain existing facilities & identify new space
- Optimising locations to minimise transport and travel to facilities
- Continuing need for children's playing areas
- Improvements in access to countryside, public footpaths and other rights of way
- Improvements in access to the coastal and marine environment for recreation
- Blue sky and green space policy regarding air quality, water and flood management

## Tourism

Tourism has very strong links to the local economy and regeneration as well as sport, recreation and open space, landscape and seascape and the historic environment.

Tourism is of crucial importance to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Cornwall. In 2010 tourism was generating significant revenues (£1 billion) and thousands of jobs (39,130 FTE's)<sup>10</sup>. This activity is supporting communities and helping to maintain and improve county wide assets.

Overnight visitor numbers in 2010 was about 20% lower in overall terms than in 2008 as a result of the recessionary downturn. As the economy recovers growth may well be expected in future years. The Visit Cornwall annual report of 2011 confirms that *"work is underway to identify the products and their associated markets that best meets Cornwall's needs which could offer an opportunity for growth in employment at established tourist locations"*<sup>11</sup>.

Cornwall is recognised as a top UK tourist destination with particular emphasis on its high quality natural, historic and marine environments. The Cornwall visitor surveys comparison<sup>12</sup> & Visit Cornwall survey 2010 confirms that the County performs well in terms of the domestic market and about 88% of visitors are repeat visitors. The overseas visitor market is relatively small at 6% of overnight visitors.

The key issues opportunities and development issues facing Cornwall's tourist industry summarised in the *'Tourists Issues Paper 2012'*<sup>13</sup> includes:-

Cornwall as an experience: Cornwall is in a good position to take advantage of the trend to match experience to destination offering unique opportunities (i.e. family holidays, outdoor activities, sports including surfing, indulgence/pampering, nature based and heritage).

Accommodation: The 'Visit Cornwall report 2011' identifies some concern about the lack of high quality serviced accommodation such as hotels and too much un-serviced accommodation such as self catering apartments in some parts of the region. Extension of the overall season March – October will potentially result in a better balance of occupancy levels and use of facilities.

Economy, employment and earnings: The tourism sector employs over 39,000 persons which represents about 22% of Cornwall's total employment<sup>14</sup>. The employment mix is 34% in catering, 32% accommodation, 14% retailing, 13% entertainment, 5% transport & 2% others. Pay levels tend to be low partly as a result of seasonality. The priority challenge will be to find ways to support targeted sustainable development that will produce higher paid and all year employment for local people.

<sup>10</sup> Cornwall Visitor Survey, Visit Cornwall, 2010

<sup>11</sup> Cornwall Visitor Survey, Visit Cornwall, 2011

<sup>12</sup> Cornwall Visitor Survey 1993 - 2009 - Comparisons with previous years surveys, Visit Cornwall

<sup>13</sup> Tourism Issues Paper, Cornwall Council, 2012

<sup>14</sup> Cornwall Economic Forum, 2008

Transport: Consultation in 2010<sup>15</sup> highlighted the need to focus on the development of all strategic routes to the county including: the dualling of the A30, Newquay airport, the rail network, internal public transport routes and car parking facilities which are all factors that will assist continuing growth of tourism.

Sustainability: Research has demonstrated that taking part in sporting and recreational activities has a positive impact on health, educational attainment, community cohesion and economic vitality. Therefore further development of opportunities for sport, recreation and tourism are important aspects of a sustainable development plan for many neighbourhoods in Cornwall.

## Leisure and Recreation at Wadebridge

Wadebridge, with the adjoining parishes of St Breock & Egloshayle, has evolved into a well established and attractive neighbourhood area with a current population of 7,861 (2011 Census). Historically the town developed commercially as a market town with a port, rail and road connections serving a broader community now estimated as approximately 20,000 people that live in the wider Camel Estuary area.

The Town of Wadebridge currently provides leisure, recreation and cultural facilities for a wider population from outlying villages. The GVA *Grimley Cornwall Retail Study*<sup>16</sup> states that Wadebridge provides an important role in serving retail and service needs of the local population and rural hinterland. The study states that 70% of people in the Wadebridge/Padstow area consider Wadebridge to be their local shopping area as do 40% of the population of the Camelford area. Given the wider population is around 20,000 it is estimated the population accessing services from Wadebridge is in the order of 14,000. From this it can be reasonably assumed that a proportion of the population from rural areas rely on Wadebridge for some leisure, recreational and cultural services

If housing growth is focussed on a relatively higher proportion of affordable homes aimed at the younger generations it is reasonable to assume that with overall population growth demand for all forms of leisure facilities will continue and possibly increase over the years ahead.

### Current Leisure and Recreational Facilities

The town is at the centre of an area of outstanding natural beauty, tourism is a major factor that has helped to sustain continuing economic development. As an established commercial and social centre, the town has well developed leisure facilities including open spaces, community buildings and halls, a cinema and library and many well established clubs offering the community many opportunities to participate in sport, leisure and cultural activities.

In response to the question about “*level of satisfaction with leisure facilities*” in the Community Survey 2012, 92.6% of 970 respondents confirmed that they were satisfied with current facilities and only 7.4% stated they were not satisfied:-

<i>Very satisfied</i> 34.5%	<i>Satisfied</i> 58.1%	<i>Not satisfied</i> 7.4%
-----------------------------	------------------------	---------------------------

The neighbourhood area’s community facilities include:-

Open Spaces - Coronation Park, Egloshayle playing fields, Jubilee Park, Talmena Orchard, Treraven Farm, Camel Trail, Ten Acre Wood, Clapper wetlands, Royal Cornwall show ground.

Buildings & Halls – Wadebridge Town Hall, John Betjeman Centre, the station Goods Shed, Library, Cinema, Coffee Corner, Wadebridge School sports & leisure centre & adult education, Egloshayle Pavilion, Children’s Centre, Home Farm Trust, Shuttleworth Memorial Hall, St Johns Ambulance hall, Masonic hall, Hustyns & other church halls.

<sup>15</sup> Local Transport Plan consultation 2010

<sup>16</sup> Cornwall Retail Study, GVA Grimley, 2010

Sporting clubs & activities – football, rugby, cricket, tennis, swimming, keep fit, squash, basket ball, hockey, table tennis, bowls, fishing, boating sailing & canoe, badminton, cycling, walking. Other commercial facilities such as gyms are available.

Organised leisure Club activities – youth clubs, scouts & guides, skate boarding, police & army cadets, Rotary, Lions, Inner Wheel, Probus, WI, floral art, painting, photography, bridge, gardening, allotment and various associations for the elderly.

Commercial social activities – including numerous restaurants, pubs and bars, live music and events.

The Community Survey 2012 confirmed that 772 (55%) of respondents preferred Wadebridge for socialising. This was followed by Rock (16%), Padstow (14%), Truro (10%) and Bodmin (5%). Notably Newquay, which is popular with the younger generation, was not mentioned! The relatively low responses from the 18-34 age groups may explain this point.

A further question on what attracts respondents to socialise at Wadebridge during the evenings confirmed that the safe environment, cinema, restaurants and organised events were the most important factors.

	Responses	Important %	Not important %
Safe environment	910	91.8%	8.2%
Cinema	924	73.7%	26.3%
Restaurants & cafe	888	68.1%	31.9%
Events	773	56.3%	43.7%
Clubs & societies	761	38.0%	62.0%
Pubs & bars	761	34.7%	65.3%
Live music	785	32.9%	67.1%
Late night buses	734	26.6%	73.4%

While the question was specifically related to the evenings, it is clear that with over 25 restaurants, several public houses, shops and a partly pedestrianised main street (Molesworth Street) the town centre is regarded as a relatively safe and popular place for the community both young and old to socialise throughout the day as well as evenings.

### Issues and Future Aspirations

#### Overview of community aspirations related to 'Leisure & Recreation'

The response to the question regarding the appropriateness of developments related to '*places for assembly and leisure*' in the Community Survey 2012 is summarised as follows:-

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
Egloshayle	114	207	2:1 against
St Breock	76	221	3:1 against
Wadebridge	379	107	3.5:1 for
Overall assessment	356	246	1.5:1 for

As would be expected, this simple analysis confirms that there is no strong desire for 'leisure & recreation' developments in the two rural parishes of outstanding natural beauty adjacent to Wadebridge. In contrast, given that Wadebridge town provides many services for area as a whole, the public view by a significant factor is that leisure developments are appropriate matters to consider in planning the future of Wadebridge town.

A majority of the public (92.6%) who responded to the Community Survey 2012 have stated that they are satisfied with current facilities. The 'overall' assessment regarding further development suggests that the public believe that leisure is an important issue and facilities should be maintained and

improved in response to the projected growth in population planned for the neighbourhood and wider area.

### Wadebridge Town Centre

The town centre is the focus of community commercial and social activity. It is clear from the Community Survey 2012 and investigations by Wadebridge Town Forum over the past few years that the public are concerned about the lack of short term car parking facilities and the failure to fully pedestrianise Molesworth Street to make visits to this area more pleasurable and safe. This problem was identified in the 'Wadebridge Town Plan 2004' and is now being addressed positively by the Town Council, but progress is slow as a result of complexities with retailers and financial constraints. The need to make progress has been confirmed by two public surveys and consultations over the past 10 years. This is an urgent priority to improve convenience, safety and the overall experience for visitors to the town centre.

The following extract of the four most important issues requiring change and improvement in Wadebridge Town summarised from the Community Survey 2012 are:-

	Very Important	Not so Important	Not at all Important
<u>Community responses</u>			
<i>Increase short stay car parking</i>	554	89	44
<i>Pedestrianisation of Molesworth St.</i>	543	101	46
<i>Improve bus services</i>	488	125	28
<i>Improve/increase cycle routes</i>	469	109	71

We are also very aware of the public's dissatisfaction with transport and traffic arrangements in the town including the need to improve the bus services within the town particularly for the elderly who rely on these services to visit the centre for shopping and socialising. There is a strong public desire for the Town Council to develop a viable plan to improve cycle routes through the town. Several comments in the Community Survey 2012 state that the congestion with bicycles and cars particularly in the summer is '*an accident waiting to happen*'.

With regard to leisure activities and many visitors' desire to cycle the Camel Trail there are also urgent needs for the Town Council in partnership with the Camel Trail Partnership, Police and Cornwall Council to determine a safe route through the town connecting the Bodmin and Padstow sections of the trail. Resolving this 'problem' is also an 'opportunity' for the town given Wadebridge's unique location as the most significant entry point for visitors to the Trail. Funding has been made available to investigate and develop a viable proposal and consultants have been appointed. This should be a high priority objective of the Neighbourhood Plan (see additional comments on tourism).

### Additional open spaces for social and recreation use related to building developments

Growth related to higher density 'affordable' houses on the outskirts of the town will potentially lead to logistical problems for the community. The lack of facilities nearby will mean travel to the town centre for shopping, leisure and recreation purposes. As with many growing towns there is a risk of a loss of community cohesion, particularly for the elderly, on such estates. These issues have been raised at public meetings in reaction to the '800 houses growth plan'.

The challenge for planners, developers and the Town Council will be to ensure that adequate space is allocated for appropriately located and landscaped open spaces for community use (per local plan DVS4) and safe, adequate means of access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. Clearly the provision of improved bus services will be an important factor as confirmed by respondents to the '*Community Survey 2012*'.

### Sports & Leisure - the importance of the Egloshayle & Jubilee playing fields

The land on the east and west bank of the River Camel along the Egloshayle Road and Guinea Port including the park, children's play areas and sports fields is owned by the Town Council and leased to various organisations. In sport and leisure terms it is recognised as a very significant community asset by those who participate and those with children.

The facilities available for the community include tennis courts, cricket club, Camel rugby club, the bowls club, children's play group and a recently updated play area with new equipment in two segregated areas. The whole area is well managed with tidy garden areas and paths/ walk ways along the raised river Camel banks. Young people socialise here and adults, many with dogs stroll the park daily.

The various clubs offer opportunities to all age groups to participate. All are successfully progressing developments to improve their facilities subject to planning regulations and Town Council approval. The challenge for the Town Council over the medium term is to work in partnership with these organisations and help to facilitate a successful and sustainable future for this area.

### Wadebridge Town Football club and a significant development opportunity

The Football Club is well established and well supported with numerous senior and junior teams at Bodieve Park. For some time the Club, which own their land adjacent to land designated for development, has been considering proposals from various developers related to possible commercial and housing projects.

The latest proposal would involve the Football Club moving to a new site for an appropriate consideration which would allow a developer to construct a new access road and develop a mix of affordable and other houses with further road access for commercial premises and possible longer term linkage to the Trevilling area which is designated for business development.

The 'community' bonus would be a much improved football ground and training facility and the possibility of 'partnership' with Wadebridge School sharing training and other facilities with the football club. This opportunity is currently being progressed by the interested parties with pre-planning briefing between the developers, Wadebridge School, Town Council and County councillors.

### Recreational use of the Camel River at Wadebridge

The North Cornwall Local Plan 1999 recognised the importance both historically and currently of Wadebridge's access to the tidal navigable waters of the Camel River and estuary. Provisions for water recreation including mooring and launching facilities for small boats and pleasure craft are detailed in policy statement (SAF7a) and (WAD8) as detailed earlier in this report.

With this as a background the 'Wadebridge Town Forum' has for several years been in discussion with interested parties including The Padstow Harbour Commissioners, the Duchy of Cornwall, Wadebridge Boat Club, Wadebridge Canoe Club, sea scouts and other interested users of the Camel for recreational purposes with the objective of developing a strategy for improving existing and developing new facilities for the benefit of the community. It has been recognised that other commercial or housing projects may be proposed by developers along the river banks but it is believed that such developments can be harmonised with recreational requirements to optimise the benefits to the community.

Some progress has been made with recent investment in a mooring pontoon at Commissioners Quay but more is required to refurbish and improve slipways and make provision of parking and storage of craft on the Trevilling bank. Papers have been forwarded to Cornwall Council and the Town Council for consideration recommending that provisions should be included in future plans.

### Facilities for 11-18 year olds and the proposed Skate Park

Wadebridge faces the same problems in meeting the 11-18 age group's aspiration for better recreation facilities as detailed in overall observations for Cornwall in the 'Place Survey' 2008.

Much has been achieved by the 'Wadebridge Youth Project' to motivate young people through positive youth projects, but finance is tight and continuing progress depends on charitable donations from the community. The local Scout & Guide group is well supported and organised but funding for additional facilities is limited given the projected increases in population.

Various projects aimed at this age group supported by the Town Council, Police, business and the community include a graffiti wall and modest skate facilities in the Jubilee Park area. In response to continuing requests for a skate park facility the Town Council is currently negotiating legal terms with Cornwall Council for a lease on land on the edge of the town for building a more substantial facility.

Wadebridge School carried out a survey amongst its sixth formers in the autumn of 2013. Amongst the questions was one relating to leisure and what they thought was needed in the Wadebridge area. Less than half of the respondents thought that Wadebridge had all the leisure facilities it need. Over 40% reported not being satisfied with existing provision. The table below shows the response in order of 'popularity. It seems that a skate park may not be the only 'solution'.

<b>Wadebridge 6<sup>th</sup> Form Survey 2013</b>	
<b>Suggested Improvements in the Wadebridge Area</b>	
Big name shops	4
Cheaper facilities	4
Skate park	3
Gym facilities	3
Better sporting facilities	3
Improved facilities	3
Ice rink	3
Spa	2
Bowling	2
Running track	2
Sailing facilities	2
Arcade	1
Garden	1
Hockey pitch	1
Go karting	1
Bigger Leisure Centre	1

### **Meeting Future Needs**

The report '*Facility needs for community sport in Cornwall 2009*' is particularly related to indoor sports halls, swimming pools, synthetic turf pitches (STPs), health & fitness facilities, indoor bowls, indoor tennis and ice rinks.<sup>17</sup>

The evidence considers the quantity, quality and accessibility of current facilities to enable identification and prioritisation of strategic facility needs to support national, regional and local ambitions for sport and physical activity as defined in Cornwall's sustainable community strategy. The physical investigation and audit of facilities on quantity and quality generally confirms that there is a good network of sport and recreation facilities in Cornwall. Encouragingly the report confirms that over 98% of Cornwall's resident population live within 20-25 minutes travel to a sports hall or swimming pool. There is a good

<sup>17</sup> Facility Needs for Community Sport in Cornwall, Cornwall Council in conjunction With Cornwall Sports Partnership Aug 2009

spread of health and fitness provision across the county. Facilities with the greatest potential of becoming more accessible for community use are located on education sites.

The most significant catchment gaps mainly in north & west Cornwall include in the lack of provision of Synthetic turf pitches (Helston, Launceston and Wadebridge). Other gaps based on a 30 minute drive include indoor bowls and indoor tennis.

The key issues for future facility development are new and additional capacity in areas of major house development. A proactive approach to replacing/refurbishment of ageing facilities aimed at optimising or adding to capacity in areas where demand is likely to increase. Other initiatives including greater use of schools in partnership with the community and possible rationalisation programmes through a central programming and remote management approach.

Setting local minimum standards based on national ambitions provide a contemporary and informed view of sport and recreation facilities and provides tools to inform and negotiate developer contributions and resist unsuitable planning applications. Locally derived standards based on identification of current and future demand are:-

Type	Minimum Provision standards (per 1,000 population)		
	Quantity	Quality (min required)	Accessibility
4-Badmington	191.98 sqm/1000	Adequate condition	20min drive
25m Swimming pools	6.33 sqm/1000	Adequate condition	20-25min drive
Synthetic turf pitches (STF)	257.01sqm/1000	Good condition	15 min drive
Health & Fitness facilities	11.38 sqm/1000	Good condition	15 min drive
Indoor bowling facilities	3.54 sqm/1000	Good condition	30 min drive

The 2009 Report concludes that *“the closure and rationalisation of facilities will potentially increase the number of residents living outside the catchment areas and make it difficult to achieve specified minimum provision standards. At county level several strategic objectives will need to be implemented:*

- *Creation of a comprehensive network of facilities operated on public, private & not for profit sectors*
- *Developing new facilities near to significant increases in dwellings*
- *Sustaining and improving the quality and accessibility of identified facilities*
- *Minimising the impact in energy costs to users*
- *Increasing levels of use of CC managed facilities by physically inactive people*
- *Adopting common use agreements for sport and recreation facilities on education sites*

It also proposes a series of strategic, management and operation principles:

- *“Develop a ‘sport & recreation facility management framework’ for CC to coordinate*
- *Make greater use of school facilities for ‘community sport’*
- *Optimise benefits of PFI & BSF initiatives for community sport*
- *Produce a playing pitch assessment and mapping access to sports facilities*
- *Amend planning documentation to incorporate minimum provision standards*
- *Developing a ‘leisure card’ system for Cornwall residents*
- *Quality improvement, safe guarding the future and development of additional indoor facilities”*

A recent report on public open space in Wadebridge states that *“open spaces including play areas are valued community assets improving public health, well-being and quality of life, and bringing regeneration benefits to an area. As part of the preparation of the Local Plan and to support the*

*neighbourhood planning process, Cornwall Council must ensure appropriate protection of open space, as well as the creation of new provision where necessary, as part of the development proposals”<sup>18</sup>*

The report summarises the conclusions of an assessment of the existing level of different types of open space in and around Wadebridge and recommends provision standards that will govern the levels and type of provision required of developments in the future. The standards will also help in prioritising investment in the open space assets of the council and its partners, and identify opportunities for revenue savings, capital income and improving management practices. It reminds us that The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) requires planning policies to be “based on robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.” It encourages local authorities to set their own standards locally, based upon a provision and needs assessment that engages the community in the process.

The report identifies a range of types of green space including sports facilities:

- Parks and gardens; Amenity green space; Civic spaces
- Natural and semi-natural green spaces, Green corridors, accessible countryside in urban fringe areas.
- Public access sports facilities (outdoor): available for community games
- Children’s play area – equipped
- Provision for teenagers– equipped facilities
- Allotments, community gardens, and city (urban) farms
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- School pitches and outdoor sports club facilities (No or limited public access)

Schedules of these types showing existing provision of space per person are shown on comparison to the average median for all towns being studied and recommendations for future provisions based on the population of Wadebridge estimated as 7,537 (existing) and growing to 9,607 for (future) provisions.

The following extracted summary chart based on estimated population and estimated growth are still being assessed and various assumptions are being investigated by the Wadebridge Area Neighbourhood Plan team.

### **Provision standards for Wadebridge (m<sup>2</sup> per 1000 population)**

(Extracted from tables prepared by the Community Development Foundation)

<u>Type</u>	<b>Wadebridge Existing (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	All towns Average (m <sup>2</sup> )	<b>Wadebridge Future (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>
Parks and gardens	<b>8250</b>	8650	<b>8770</b>
Natural spaces	<b>12890</b>	16420	<b>13760</b>
Public sports facilities	<b>2350</b>	2890	<b>15600</b>
Children’s play area	<b>650</b>	510	<b>700</b>
Provision for teenagers	<b>40</b>	120	<b>250</b>
Allotments	<b>2470</b>	1160	<b>1940</b>
Cemeteries	<b>1440</b>	2630	<b>1130</b>
School pitches	<b>13410</b>	27820	<b>15600</b>
<b>Total provision per 1000 pop</b>	<b>41490</b>	60220	<b>42120</b>

<sup>18</sup> *Wadebridge Open Space* by Stuart Wallace, Cornwall Council, 2013

## Local Culture and Arts at Wadebridge

Wadebridge, although growing, is still a relatively 'small' town in comparison to other towns and communities across Cornwall. Given the spread of population throughout the county many cultural activities are centred in larger towns such as Truro, Bodmin, Falmouth and Plymouth. This means that there is a need to travel to gain access to a more comprehensive range of cultural activities.

That said, Wadebridge and its adjacent parishes has a strong sense of identity and has well developed organisations reflecting many local cultural interests. The following list gives a flavour of the many interests catered for.

Cultural organisations – Town Museum, Old Cornwall Society, several choirs & choral societies, Town Band, Youth Theatre, Lyn Warrick Dancers, Camel Art Society.

Church activities – Several Christian denominations, including Church of England, Methodist, Catholic, Wadebridge Christian Centre and Society of Friends, have various buildings and centres of activity in the town. Only St Breock church is outside the town council area. In addition there are a few small groups for other faiths, but the present population does not have a significant ethnic, cultural or faith diversity. All of these groups make, in addition to their core worship activities, a variety of social and recreational contributions to the local community. The main Christian churches also collaborate in Churches Together in Wadebridge. Total regular involvement across the faith groups is not easy to measure but is probably in excess of 500.

Festivals & Twinning – The Twinning Association and annual carnival, Wadebridge Folk festivals and other community events such as the annual Regatta, 'big lunch' are on going and well supported by the community.

Chamber of Commerce – Although primarily concentrating on business and commercial development issues the Chamber has recently been making an encouraging contribution to social activities that bring the community closer together. Events such as the annual fireworks display, continental markets and other town centre organised events have been welcomed by the public.

The Community Survey 2012 did not focus on arts and culture issues and opportunities and few local statistics are available. Further research is required, possibly through direct contacts with the organisations involved to elicit their views and aspirations and consider how they can be incorporated in the Neighbourhood Plan.

## Tourism at Wadebridge

### Overview of the Town & Neighbourhood Area

Wadebridge is the natural 'market town' nearest to the mouth of the Camel Estuary. The town is at the centre of a rural area of outstanding natural beauty and some of the finest coastlines in Cornwall. Being so close to internationally famed tourist locations including Padstow, Rock, Polzeath, Port Isaac and Bodmin Moor, the town is well placed to provide a wide range of services both for the surrounding communities and tourists that visit the area.

Over the two decades since the opening of the A39 bypass has made the town more accessible during the tourist season, coupled with the growth in second homes in the catchment area, Wadebridge has developed substantially in its tourist role. Although it does not have high profile attractions it is well used by visitors for supplies, casual shopping and general leisure. This has particularly led to a vibrant and busy central area with Molesworth Street which is all but pedestrianised.

Apart from the normal retail, restaurant and commercial services that attract tourists from spring to autumn, the town is strategically placed half way along the Camel trail 5 miles up stream from Padstow and 6 miles through the Camel Valley down stream from Bodmin. Many of the estimated 500,000 visitors who visit the Trail each year start their journey from Wadebridge taking advantage of car

parking, cycle hire, shopping and public convenience facilities situated close to the entrances to the trail.

### **An opportunity for further growth, but not without problems!**

The popularity of the Trail and the range of services available to tourists is a major opportunity for the town but the continuing growth of tourists wanting to use the town as a base for a walk or cycle ride to Padstow or Bodmin has resulted in severe traffic congestion (cars & bicycles) on all access and through the town roads connecting the Trail.

There are particular problems of safety at key junctions and pressure on facilities such as car parking and the main street (Molesworth Street) which has evolved to a pedestrianised area with as yet no restrictions to traffic.

The 'Community Survey 2012' and studies by the Police & the Camel Trail Partnership highlighted these problems as being the most important issues needing to be resolved regarding transport and traffic arrangements related to the town centre. These issues are detailed in the leisure & recreation section of this report.

### **Need for a Tourist information Centre**

Up until a few years ago, Wadebridge had an impressive Tourist Information Centre in the centre of the town run by a private company which was part subsidised by North Cornwall District Council. This organisation provided a very useful service helping tourist to find appropriate accommodation offering advice regarding on the numerous local attractions, supplying leaflets and as an agency providing a booking service for various holiday related organisations. Unfortunately this business failed financially and the facility was closed.

A small facility offering general advice has been set up in the Town Hall but not with the facilities previously provided. The question of marketing the town, local facilities and events has been considered and debated by the Town Council, Chamber of Commerce and Wadebridge Town Forum.

The growth of internet facilities and interactive web sites is seen to be a very important way of communicating with visitors planning holidays and requiring more detailed information when on holiday. The Town Council has a website and issues a diary of events named 'WOW' (What's on Wadebridge) every month. The Chamber of Commerce have developed a website to assist in marketing the town naturally promoting commercial opportunities.

The feasibility of appointing a 'Town Manager' to manage the marketing of the town has been investigated which some feel is not appropriate for Wadebridge. Funding of such a role in any case is a problem in these times of financial constraint and currently the role cannot be justified.

There is no doubt that the Town Council in partnership with the commercial community needs to develop a strategy to ensure that the town and its community optimises the potential benefits from tourism.

## Summary Conclusions

### Clear facts (from the Evidence):

- We have an obligation to ensure the retention and provision of high quality accessible open spaces, recreational and sports facilities
- Sporting activities are powerful tools for building community cohesion as well as contributing to the local economy.
- Participation in cultural and sports activities in Cornwall is high as is the level of satisfaction in the services for sport and recreation.
- A wide range of leisure and recreation opportunities is good for the health and wellbeing of the population.
- Tourism is important to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing and has a very strong links to sport, recreation, landscape, seascape and the historic environment.

### Main problems/issues (from the Evidence):

- Improving facilities and activities for teenagers' should be high on the agenda.
- How can we best exploit the tourism potential of the area?
- There remains an urgent priority to address this situation to improve convenience, safety and the overall experience for visitors to the town (especially in the holiday season).
- How will the continued growth in the active elderly population affect leisure and recreation requirements in future years?
- Ensuring that the quantity and quality of facilities continues to exceed the minimum standards of provision.

### Trends - What has changed significantly over the past 10 years?

- Wadebridge's population has grown by 6% but there has been a significant swing between age groups with the over sixties growing by 28.7% and 0-59 age groups declining by 2.5%.
- Wadebridge, although growing, is still a relatively 'small' town. This means that there is a need to travel to gain access to a more comprehensive range of cultural activities.
- Wadebridge's tourist season has extended significantly.

### What is most needed?

- A priority plan and financial commitment to sort out infrastructure issues
- involvement of town and parish councils prior to major planning applications to ensure that the best sustainable solutions are considered, which optimise leisure and recreation benefits to the community

### What messages have local people sent?

- Generally satisfied with local leisure, recreation and cultural facilities as they are
- Leisure developments should be focussed on Wadebridge
- There is a desire for further development to improve things particularly in providing easy access

### What are the obvious 'development' opportunities?

- Wadebridge Town Centre is the focus of community and commercial activity and resolving the issues of car parking, bus services, cycle routes and pedestrianisation of the main street is an urgent priority.
- Most of the potential areas suitable for housing growth are on the outer fringes of the town within the boundary of the A39 by pass system. The challenge will be to ensure that adequate open space is allocated for community use, appropriate access facilities (Car, cycle, walking etc.) and the provision of improved local bus services to ensure easy access to the town centre.

- Wadebridge has well established parks and sports establishments on land on the banks of the River Camel. The challenge is to facilitate a successful and sustainable future for this area.
- The Wadebridge Town Football Club moving to a new site which would allow a much improved football ground and training facility and the possibility of sharing training some of these facilities in partnership with Wadebridge School.
- Wadebridge's access to the tidal navigable waters of the Camel River and estuary.
- A mooring pontoon at Commissioners quay and improved slipways and provision for parking and facilities for the storage of craft on the Trevilling bank.
- Land on the edge of the town for building a more substantial skate-park facility.

What is the most interesting finding?

- The lack of detailed knowledge and understanding of local needs and aspirations

***Key Neighbourhood Planning Questions Going Forward:***

- What is the development potential for water-borne recreation?
- How can we enhance and develop the riverside for public access and leisure pursuits?
- What role should the town centre play in increasing the leisure offer?
- How can we provide safe cycle routes through the town?
- What are the leisure and recreation needs of the wider area that could/should be met in Wadebridge?
- What are the leisure needs of the increasingly active and growing number of elderly residents?
- How far are people prepared to travel for arts and culture activities and events?
- How much more tourism do we want and what type would we prefer?

What must we try to find more about?

- What local people want
- What visitors think
- What are the football club's plans?
- Further investigation needed into community sport and open space provisions and projections
- Further research into the cultural needs of the area particularly related to the significant growth of the elderly
- Implications of projected population growth (especially the mix) on facility needs
- What are the arts and cultural needs and aspirations of local people?
- How to future-proof facilities to meet the changing needs and fashions