

Recreation and Tourism



Headlines

- The easing of the Covid-19 lockdown led to an unprecedented demand for access across the whole of the National Park from both new and returning visitors. This in turn put facilities under pressure and resulted in a reactionary approach to the management of visitors traffic.
- Progress has been made on the development of a Recreation Hubs Supplementary Planning Document, with an informal stakeholder consultation being held over the summer.
- The Authority is working with partner organisations to develop a vision for sustainable visitor management
- There was been a decline in the number of permissions granted for recreation, environmental education and interpretation over the life of the Core Strategy, through to 2017. It is unclear if this is indicative of a decline in the number of applications.
- The parish statements raise some concerns about parking provision in settlements and wider traffic / visitor management approaches.



What has worked well

- **Hotels** – the Core Strategy approach has enabled the Authority to work with developers to restrict new hotel development within the National Park. Planning permission has been granted and work commenced on a hotel in Bakewell. Planning permission has also been granted for a hotel through enhancement on the site of the former Rising Sun in Bamford.
- **Static caravans and lodges** – Over the life of the plan, there has only been one successful application for the provision of static caravans, chalets or lodges. In this particular case the development is seen as an enhancement, with static caravans being replaced by lodge style structures.
- **Increase in popularity of the area** – the Peak District was already experiencing an increase in popularity with a growth in the number of visitor days. This has been reflected in the number of staying visits. The importance of the National Park to its visitors has been particularly demonstrated following the easing of the Covid-19 lockdown in May 2020.

What has not worked so well

- **Development for recreation, environmental education and interpretation** – There was been a decline in the number of permissions granted for recreation, environmental education and interpretation over the life of the Core Strategy, through to 2017. It is unclear if this is indicative of a decline in the number of applications.
- **Sustainable access to recreation sites** – Over the life of the Plan, the availability of alternative means of access to many popular recreational sites has declined. This is particularly the case in relation to access by public transport.
- **Visitor management** – This is particularly the case during the easing of the Covid-19 lockdown. This has led to complaints from many of the National Park's resident communities. Complaints have largely related to dangerous or obstructive parking, dangerous or antisocial driving, fly camping, littering and other anti-social behaviours.

What are the big issues for the Plan review?

- **Public transport accessibility to recreation sites** – The majority of recreation sites are easily accessible by car, but less so by public transport. Should future development be restricted to those sites that can be accessed by non-car means? Where sites are currently dependent on car-borne access, should any future development include a commitment to invest in alternative means of transport?
- **Campervans** – There is increasing demand for access by camper vans; anecdotally, a number of car parks are used for overnight stays. Should this use be encouraged / accommodated? Is there scope for official sites where overnight parking of campervans is permitted, provided that there is appropriate space and facilities? If official sites were to be provided, should stricter controls be introduced elsewhere?
- **Gateway sites** – There are a number of gateway sites on the fringes of the National Park that provide easy access from surrounding urban areas. Should these sites be prioritised for recreational development based on their strategic location?



What are the big issues for the Plan review? (Continued)

- **Hotel development** – Our policy approach Policy RT2C restricts new build hotel accommodation outside of Bakewell to enhancement sites. Given the benefit that hotels bring to neighboring towns, do you agree that this is still the best approach?
- **Static caravans, chalets and lodges** – our policies prevent the provision of new static caravans, chalets and lodges, but do give scope for other camping pods and shepherd huts at appropriate locations. Is this still the correct approach?
- **Removal of occupancy conditions for self-catering accommodation** – our policies set out our approach to the relaxation of occupancy conditions of self-catering accommodation, to meet local housing need. Do you think that the policy provides enough flexibility to enable local housing need to be partially met in this way?