

Access to the  
countryside for  
recreation and sport

# **Access study**

## **Summary report**

**Countryside**  
COMMISSION



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of the study  
**Access to the countryside  
for recreation and sport**

prepared for the Countryside Commission  
and the Sports Council by

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In a study which has sought to investigate access to the countryside in England and Wales over a three-and-a-half year period, it is inevitable that a wide range of organisations and a large number of individuals have made important contributions.

During the course of the study we have conducted interviews or obtained information from a large number of individuals and organisations. The list is too extensive to detail here but without their willing cooperation and the information they made freely available, the study would have proved impossible. We would like to express our gratitude for their help.

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Brian Duffield (now Vice-Principal of Dunfermline College of Physical Education). Other leading members of the design team were Fred Coalter, Richard Hecock, Howard Newby and Sue Walker.

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# 1. Sponsors' introduction

This is the summary report of a major study into recreation and access in the countryside undertaken over a 3½ year period by the Centre for Leisure Research on behalf of the Countryside Commission and the Sports Council.

In commissioning the study, the sponsors were aware that they were presenting their consultants with a difficult task. Both sponsors have a long and continuing tradition of research into recreation and sporting issues. But previous research has tended to be narrowly focussed, looking for example at the requirements of a particular activity, or to evaluate and inform about a specific problem. In this new study, we wished to adopt a fundamentally different approach. Our aim was to address the totality of recreation and sporting activity in the countryside, and to do so in a way which would identify the underlying processes, motivations and ideologies that are at work while at the same time help to chart the complex and interwoven pattern of relationships that exists between different groups of users of the countryside – between users and land managers and between these two groups and the role of local and central government. It is this basic approach which sets the study apart from all previous research by the sponsors and which has resulted in a uniquely valuable insight into the framework within which recreational and sporting activities take place in the countryside of England and Wales in the late 1980s.

As the report makes clear, the countryside is required to play host to a considerable range of recreational activities. Patterns of land management and practice are equally diverse, as is the way in which local and national agencies carry out statutory and extra-statutory functions. A comprehensive coverage of every issue was not therefore attempted: rather the approach has been a selective one with carefully identified examples being explored as illustrative of different facets of the total picture.

A central and recurring theme of the study is that both the countryside itself and the recreational demands placed on it, far from being static, are subject to continual evolution and change. At no time has that been more evident than at the present. The way that much of the landscape of lowland Britain has changed in recent years in response to a combination of technological advances and economic pressures is already a familiar theme. Those pressures continue. More recently, concern about the level and cost of agricultural surpluses has given rise to a national debate about the possibility of land being taken out of agricultural production. At an individual level, more and more farm managers are exploring ways in which farm income can be diversified, for example by developing tourism or recreation enterprises.

On the sporting and recreation side of the equation, the process of change is equally apparent. The traditional 'trip to the countryside' simply to picnic or sit and admire the view has rarely been more popular. There has been a renaissance in long established activities such as walking and riding, mountaineering and fishing. Fresh impetus has come from the development of various specialisms such as orienteering, long distance walking and riding and pony trekking holidays. Here too, technology has played a part. It has also made possible some entirely new activities, as diverse as sub-aqua diving and hang-gliding. Most recently, the development of a 'go anywhere' mountain bicycle (and the formation of a body to represent participants in the activity) demonstrates that this is a continuing process. Over all of this growing participation is an increasing public awareness and appreciation of the countryside.

The administrative framework and political circumstances are also subject to change, and indeed can change rapidly. Examples of the various approaches to countryside management that have recently been developed are examined in detail in the study. During the final stages of report writing, the Greater London Council and metropolitan county councils ceased to exist and there is continuing uncertainty about the scale of the Government's programme for the 'privatisation' of public authorities' land holdings and what the impact might be on public access to the countryside. The report should be read with these and other future changes of this kind in mind.

This summary report is based on the consultants' full report to the sponsors[1]. Inevitably the approach has been selective. In trying to encapsulate the often complex detail, the summary does not follow the same order as the full report. It indicates the basis of the report's findings but without reference to much of the background material. However, the appendix to the summary (in particular, Figure 6) demonstrates the breadth and detail of the research and fieldwork carried out in the course of the study. Those wishing to explore in more detail the themes and arguments presented in this summary, or who seek corroboration of the research findings, are invited to turn to the full report which is to be published separately by the joint sponsors.[1]

It was not within the consultants' remit to make detailed recommendations for future policy developments of the two sponsors – nor have they done so. The intention was to develop a sound understanding of the underlying framework against which recreation and access opportunities to the countryside are developed, maintained and exercised. The research has provided that understanding and has identified the considerations to be recognised and accommodated in the future policies as they are developed jointly and separately by the Sports Council and the Countryside Commission.

## 2. Aims of the research

The study was undertaken by the Centre for Leisure Research between July 1983 and December 1985 under the joint sponsorship of the Countryside Commission and the Sports Council.

The aims of the research were to:

- assess the nature and scale of the demands for access to the countryside for recreation and sport; how these relate to current access provision; and how both demand and provision have changed or may change in the future
- develop a better understanding of the complex processes by which access is achieved, sustained or modified over time

- develop an understanding of the attitudes taken by individuals, bodies and organisations involved in, or affected by access; how their views have been formed, and how they might change
- develop an understanding of a broad range of current specific access issues.

What distinguishes this research from earlier work is the emphasis on studying the processes and mechanisms by which access is achieved and the emphasis on change which appears in the first three aims. The aims also recognise that there are many access problems and not just one. Therefore the approach is necessarily selective, and certain issues are taken to illustrate general problems. A comprehensive coverage of every issue was not attempted.



*The study investigated major aspects of access in four study tracts – the Snowdon range, part of the North Wales study tract.*

# 3. Key concepts

## Access and accessibility

Over the years, there have been major changes in the definition and components of the 'problem of access' to the countryside; indeed access is never merely a matter of physical availability. It is for this reason that we distinguish between the concepts of 'access' and 'accessibility'. **Access** refers to certain rights of approach to entry – which has been defined as 'legally or conventionally defined rights of entry or use'[2]. **Accessibility**, on the other hand, is a more dynamic notion, referring to whether and how far these rights are recognised and can be exercised in a particular time and place. In this sense, rights of access are necessary, but not sufficient, to guarantee accessibility. Thus accessibility is concerned with the relationship between people and the resources over which they wish to claim rights of access, a relationship which is mediated by various factors, including forms of management, which strongly influence the practical outcome. (In this context, 'resources' implies recreational or 'natural' resources – the latter following North American usages – and includes both land or water, whether managed or not, irrespective of the (semi-) naturalness of the local environment.)

Recreation is but one of several competing claims for rural land. Given that the law rarely has addressed directly the needs of recreational access, varying degrees or security of access are a product of social and political processes in which the economic interests, values and attitudes, recreational needs and political power of various groups, organisations and individuals combine to produce changing patterns of accessibility.

Different groups and individuals possess differing ideologies about what 'the countryside' is for, while their perceptions of what constitutes 'acceptable' recreational and sporting activity in the countryside, and legitimate entry to, or passage across, land and water may conflict. Therefore, accessibility is socially created, socially sustained and socially modified.

What then, is distinctive about the concept of 'accessibility'? Firstly, it draws attention to the **social construction of access** [3]. Access to the countryside is not a simple matter of physical resources or legal institutions. Secondly, it draws attention to the need for an approach which investigates the **transactions** taking place between those who control rural resources and those who seek access to them. Thirdly, accessibility underlines the inherently ideological aspects of the problem – for example, the conflict between **public rights** which may be exercised through law or custom over private land and water, and the notion of **private rights** to be negotiated in the market place and founded on an ideology of private property.

## Access actors

Four groups of 'access actors' have been identified, who, either individually or collectively, are parties to the transactions through which accessibility is created, sustained or modified.

Firstly, there are **recreationists**. The majority of visitors to the countryside are informal day visitors or casual walkers. They belong to no recreation organisation and do not normally have a direct influence in policy-making or resource allocation processes. Their apparent needs are 'represented' either by elected or appointed members of local authorities or public agencies or by officers making decisions on political, professional and technical criteria. 'Sporting activists' are by contrast more likely to belong to local or national organisations, the Ramblers' Association, British Canoe Union, the National Anglers' Council and so on. Such bodies may lobby for rights of access or otherwise seek to protect and promote the interests of their members, attempting to directly influence the allocation of resources. Although 'sporting activists' are a minority of recreationists, their importance and influence is not to be underestimated.

The second group are the **resource controllers** – although primarily private farmers and landowners, this group also encompasses public and private sector institutions (in law, land held by public bodies constitutes private property). Most manage land or water for purposes other than recreation. Resource controllers, like recreationists, are not a homogeneous group, and their attitudes to public access may vary. Nevertheless, their central and continuing concern is not with recreation, but is coloured by a view of private property rights. Much recreational access depends, therefore, not only on compatibility with other land uses but also on the values and attitudes of the various resource controllers.

The third group of access actors are **conservationists**. Once more it is necessary to recognise that the conservation 'movement' or 'lobby' is much less unified or coherent than other labels suggest. Conservationists are generally ambivalent about increasing public access to the countryside. Some groups under some circumstances wish to encourage it; others are more exclusionary.

Finally, there is the role of **the state**. Both locally and nationally, public agencies are involved in allocating financial and natural resources and therefore influence accessibility. The state represents both an actor in its own right and a set of institutions through which various interests (the access actors) seek to gain influence and determine policy.

# 4. Research methods

The study of accessibility issues and access mechanisms was undertaken by reviewing the recent history of access to the countryside in England and Wales, and then investigating four major aspects of access in each of four study tracts (shown in Figure 1). This was complemented by:

- surveys at recreation sites in the tracts,
- social surveys of the population living in and around two of the tracts,
- surveys of farmers and land managers in the four tracts, and
- further interviews with officials representing local and national bodies.

Two specific **mechanisms** have been developed for recreational access to land; the rights of way network

and access agreements. Access to water is governed by proprietary rights (eg sporting rights to fish) or licences (eg permits to sail) and to a limited extent more general navigational rights. The study of these mechanisms forms a central core to the report and serves two purposes – the intrinsic interest in the application and development of the mechanism, and its value in illustrating the processes whereby access to the natural resources of land and water is gained and maintained. The other principal topics, investigated in the tracts and in case studies undertaken in other areas, were the contribution of countryside management initiatives and the representation of interests. (A fuller account of the research methods can be found in the Appendix of this summary and in the full report [1].)



*The coast plays host to a wide range of recreational interests – Dorset study tract.*





Figure 1.5.1. Study tracts

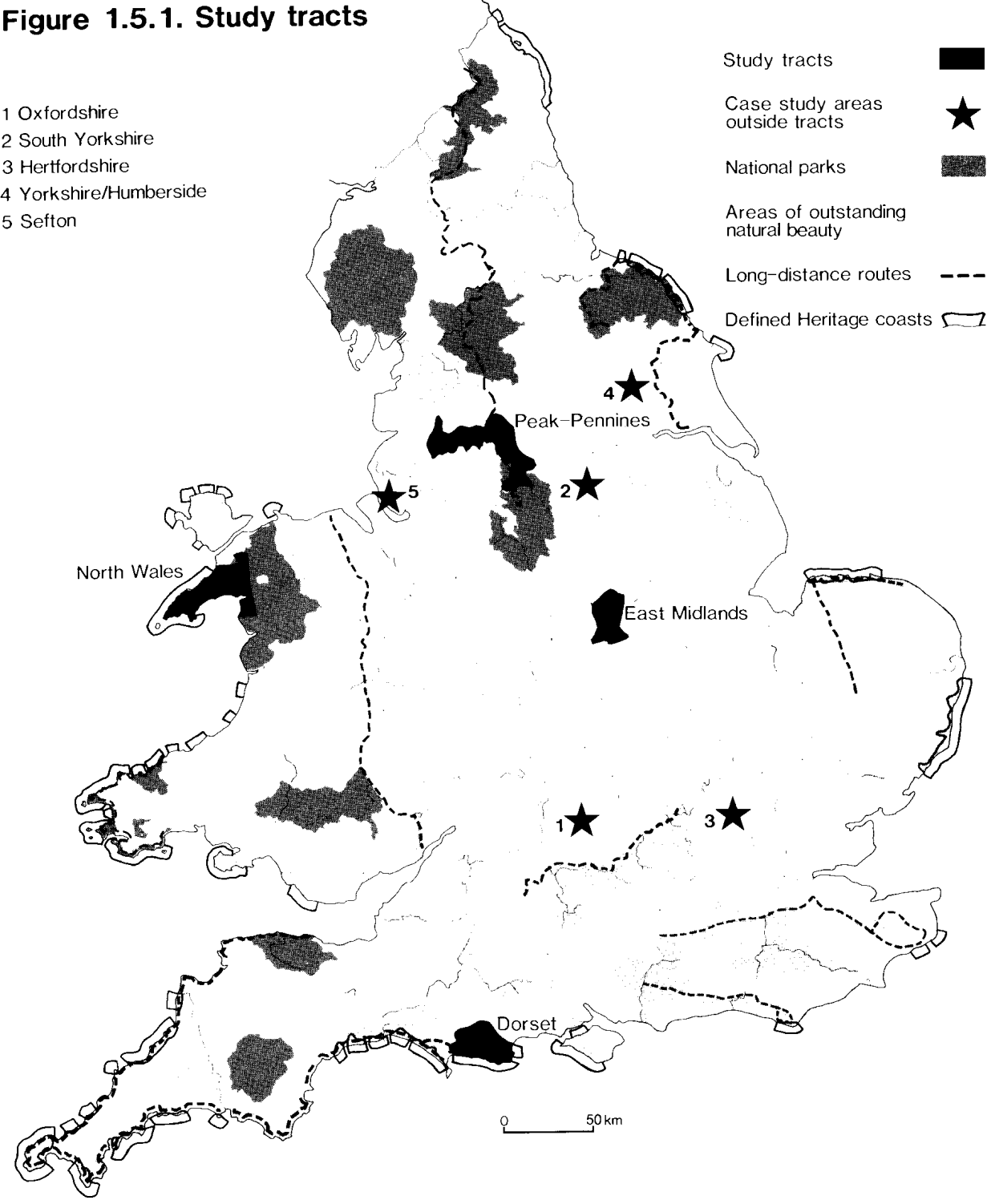


Figure 1. Survey tracts and case study areas

# 5. The changing context of access issues

The history of access to the English and Welsh countryside illustrates the ways in which the 'problem of access' has been redefined within the prevailing ideas of society and the economy. Each historical period has produced its appropriate response to 'managing the problem'. The nineteenth century concern to preserve footpaths and urban commons forged a popular movement, rallying around the cry of '**freedom to roam**', which led to the mass trespasses of the 1930s. The succeeding phase of post-war **social reconstruction** secured greater protection for cherished landscapes and began the formal recording of rights of way. More widespread car-ownership in the 1960s opened up the prospect of **recreation opportunities for all**, but led to fears that the countryside would be swamped by what was termed 'the fourth wave' [4]. The response was the development of specific recreation sites and facilities, with the provision of picnic sites and country parks to cater (and contain) this mass demand. The economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s have reduced public finance and led to an emphasis on low-key developments and 'cost-effective' **management** and marketing of countryside resources.

The conclusions to the fuller historical review, contained in the consultants' full report, are that:

- the most significant and far-reaching legislation measure – the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 – was brought about by a popular movement based on a coalition of recreation and conservation interests during a period of social reform
- while that measure remains broadly intact, it was based on assumptions about recreation behaviour which were transformed by the rising popularity of visiting the countryside among an expanding motoring public
- concern about these recreation 'pressures' has been overshadowed by the impact of agricultural efficiency on the environment, and the recent harsher economic climate which has led to a change in emphasis from public sector provision to countryside management schemes geared to securing public benefits from private land
- more generally, historical analysis shows that both agricultural and recreational demands on the countryside are not static but are constantly evolving. As new and conflicting demands arise, perceptions of the problem also change which in turn condition public debate. Meanwhile the mechanisms which regulate access are slow to adapt and the formulation of public policy has tended to be reactive rather than proactive.

# 6. Changing patterns of participation in countryside recreation

While the 1984 National Survey of Countryside Recreation (NSCR) has confirmed the popularity of visiting the countryside, particularly for informal recreation, it is the changing patterns of participation that are likely to be of increasing significance to accessibility rather than any growth in demand. Indeed until the Countryside Commission can estimate participation on an annual basis, fluctuations in levels of participation cannot be fully understood because of short-run climatic or economic factors.

The significant elements of participation which emerge from the National Surveys of Countryside Recreation carried out in 1977 and 1984, [5, 6] and the home interview survey undertaken as part of this study are:

- the recreational use made of '**unmanaged**' countryside  
(In 1984, 44 per cent of recreation trips were made to farmland, woodland and other inland or coastal areas which were not managed primarily for recreation.)

- the significance of the countryside close to towns  
(In 1977, 41 per cent of recreation trips were made to destinations within one kilometre of an urban settlement [7].)
- the popularity of walking
- the increasing popularity of outdoor pursuits
- the special needs of those groups who rarely visit the countryside if at all.

These last three elements are covered more fully below.

**Walking**, it should be emphasised, was shown to be a major activity in its own right, undertaken by a broad cross-section of the community. Its more specialised form – 'serious' hill-walking or following long distance routes – was a predominantly male and middle class activity, but, on a more everyday level, walking was as likely to be undertaken by the elderly and retired and to be more habitual, tracing a familiar local path.

The Access Study home interview survey has shown that:

- **the majority of those interviewed were frequent walkers**

Almost one-third of respondents walked in the countryside at least once each week and another one-third walked two or more miles once or twice each month. The national statistic is somewhat lower, 51 per cent of respondents walked over two miles at least once in the previous month (6).

- **most countryside walks were short**

Over 70 per cent of walks were of three miles or less; barely one-third covered a longer distance.

- **people who lived in rural areas walked in the countryside more often**

A higher proportion of walks were made by rural dwellers (37 per cent) than one would expect from their proportion in the population (25 per cent). This was true irrespective of their affluence or social status. Population movement from the cities to rural towns and villages in recent years makes this finding of particular significance as 'newcomers' explore their local farmed countryside. Their growing interest in their surroundings may well find local political expression.

- **rural dwellers were more likely to begin their walk from home and to walk for shorter distances**

Most walks (54 per cent) started away from home but then most people lived in towns and had to travel to begin a walk in the countryside.

- **most people (82 per cent) walked on familiar territory**

that is, they visited particular locations regularly to walk. The convenience of time and distance are important. Such territory is usually close to home: for 46 per cent of these walkers, their habitual location was within walking distance of home or within an hour's drive. Less than 14 per cent of these walkers made a day's round trip or longer to get to 'walking country'.

- **relatively few people walked with a dog**

Less than a quarter of those who used a familiar location were accompanied by a dog.

- **although the summer months are the most popular for walking, a large proportion of walkers (nearly 40 per cent) were active throughout the year**

especially those who lived in rural areas.

As most walkers were familiar with the countryside they used, it is not surprising that they reported few access problems. However, the problems encountered by a minority cannot be disregarded. One-fifth of respondents in our surveys reported problems; nationally, this would represent about two million walkers over a 12-month period.

## Trends in outdoor pursuits

The wide range of countryside sports is not as easily surveyed in such detail. Over the decade 1970-1980, membership of the governing bodies of sport increased steadily (20-30 per cent) for long-established activities like angling, motor sports and rambling; and even more dramatically for newly-established sports (eg 200 per cent in the case of water-skiing). The Sports Council pointed to the growth of 'high risk, glamorous sports' such as sub-aqua, sailing, hang-gliding and boardsailing, and in these cases new technology has played its part [8]. The membership figures for that period also showed a

substantial increase in many long established pastimes such as camping, caravanning and horseriding [9]. The most recent statistics from the governing bodies of outdoor pursuits which cover the period 1974-1984 also show a continuing growth in membership in many national clubs and federations [10]. Changes in participation as measured by the General Household Surveys of 1977 and 1983 have to be interpreted with care, as those for individual sports are based on very low sample sizes. Nevertheless, they support the contention that **for certain outdoor sports participation has increased markedly in recent years.**

## Frequency of participation and special needs

The frequency with which different groups of people visit the countryside has implications for recreation policy. (These proportions have been calculated from NSC:R 1984 but appear to have fluctuated in recent years and, given the difficulty of obtaining comparable statistics, should be treated with care.)

- **frequent users** visited the countryside at least once a week in the summer months, were likely to be relatively well informed and were probably habitual in sticking to familiar local territory. They were more likely to be from the affluent groups in society: from social classes A, B and C1, in full-time employment, have access to and drive a car and live in or close to the countryside. They probably constituted about one-quarter of the population, but made two-thirds to three-quarters of all trips to the countryside.

- **occasional users** spanned a broad and fluctuating range from those who visited the countryside once, or not at all, in winter to those who went as often as two or three times a month in summer. They came from a broad cross-section of the population, their interests covered a broad range of activities and they probably constituted 60 per cent of the population, making a quarter to one-third of all trips.

- **non-users** (for whatever reason) did not visit the countryside at all during the year of survey. A relatively small proportion of the population (15-20 per cent), they spanned those with no interest in the countryside at all, to those who lacked the means of getting there. Their social backgrounds reflected the difficulty they had in getting out into the countryside due to their lack of income or mobility. They were more likely to come from social classes C2, D and E, be unemployed, retired or housewives, and live in households without a car located five miles or more from the nearest countryside.

The size and latent interests of the second group suggests that they represent a vast marketing opportunity, or a major threat to the countryside depending on one's standpoint. They are not regularly reached by present provision, which suggests that current priorities for public investment (in the broadest sense) should be reviewed. They present a promotional opportunity to recreation providers as most people's horizons are limited. They know and use the countryside close at hand but are unaware of the wider opportunities it offers.

The non-users constitute some five million adults, including low income, disabled and elderly people who would require local service programmes giving assistance with transport, events or modifications to facilities if opportunities are to be provided for them to enjoy the countryside.

# 7. Recreationists' attitudes to access

## The benefits of visiting the countryside

Regular use of the countryside is likely to be limited to those who perceive it as imparting certain benefits. For example, more **walkers** (40 per cent of respondents in the home interview survey) perceived a wider range of benefits of the countryside than either sports participants or non-active users. In particular, they felt that the countryside is a place to exercise and make one's own entertainment, where they could be alone to relax, to forget everyday problems and to enjoy its natural beauty. **Sports participants** (10 per cent of the sample) shared many of the same values. They tended to be younger and more affluent, seeking exercise and a degree of excitement from their pursuit. They travelled further to seek out prized natural resources, such as water areas or climbing crags, and were keen to see these opportunities extended. **Informal recreationists** comprised the largest group, forming half the sample interviewed and although they may have taken a less active interest in the countryside there is no reason to believe their enjoyment was any the less. They tended to be less well informed about where they could go or what they could do, probably lacking the experience or interests gained in childhood by other users, as they were more likely to be city-dwellers. Their preference for more facilities to visit in the countryside suggested that they tended to feel secure within the 'structure' of organised provision.

## Views on improved provision

The majority of respondents in the home-interview survey considered that having more information on what they might do or where they might go in the countryside was particularly important. They also would like more and better kept public footpaths, better public transport,

more safe enclosed spaces with facilities, and more open access to the countryside, lakes and rivers. The rankings of these possible improvements were quite consistent between walkers, sports participants and informal recreationists. Most sports participants would also like to see more open areas for sport.

## Perceived opportunities and problems

Bearing in mind that most visitors interviewed in surveys at the inland recreational sites were regular users and local in origin, it is not surprising that levels of satisfaction are high and perceived problems few. There was a broad measure of sympathy for conservation interests and tolerance of, and even support for, restricted access to protect wildlife. Walkers and sports participants were better informed about the area, more sensitive to management practices and more demanding. However informal recreationists, who formed the majority of all users, were largely uncritical, prized the sites for their peace and unspoilt character, and were probably unaware of the full extent of the opportunities that the surrounding countryside offers.

The inland and coastal water recreation areas studied were more confined and congested. The popularity of coastal areas and low levels of management probably explain why fewer users were satisfied with provision and more were annoyed by other users. Competition for scarce inland waters, such as those in the East Midlands, is more intense. There recreation is more likely to be organised through angling and sailing clubs. Established users, such as anglers, frequently control the access of others, who are often frustrated and dissatisfied by limited opportunities.

# 8. Farmers' and landowners' perceptions and attitudes

## Perceptions of public use of private farmed land

The principal findings of our surveys of occupiers of agricultural holdings in the four study tracts revealed that:

- **farmers ranked the rural way of life highly**

When asked about the advantages of farming in their locality, 33 per cent of farmers gave peace and quiet as a main advantage and the value of the rural way

of life (17 per cent) was as highly rated as proximity to markets. In comparison, the disadvantages of farming in their locality were felt to be the topography (28 per cent), soils (25 per cent), and climate (18 per cent), all of which were rated above trespass (15 per cent). Nevertheless, 45 per cent of respondents cited various problems stemming from public access as a disadvantage of the locality.

- **most farmers considered their access problems resulted from regular local use**

It appears that something of a myth has grown up around the alleged problems caused by the hordes of ignorant townspeople rampaging over farmed land. The greatest number of respondents saw the problems to be caused by locals (18 per cent) or by residents new to the area (16 per cent) who are perhaps not considered to be part of the traditional rural community and whose presence may therefore be resented. While the difficulties arising from public access were perceived to be greater in the summer than in the winter, in just over half of the cases they were spread evenly throughout the year. Indeed, almost a half of the farmers and landowners interviewed experienced at least one such problem a week. For 36 per cent of respondents the problems were either 'very severe' or 'severe', but for 32 per cent they were 'not much bother'. Although walking (16 per cent) and rambling (9 per cent) created some of these problems, those arising from poaching (20 per cent) and motorcycle scrambling (18 per cent) were more often cited.

- **most farmers reported unauthorised use of their land**

71 per cent of respondents reported that the public used their land without permission. However the range of activities which they reported as everyday occurrences would not always find their way into conventional recreation surveys. Nevertheless, in addition to walking, farmers believe that poaching and mushroom or blackberry picking are the most common public uses of farmed land.

- **almost all farmers allowed the public to use their land**

94 per cent allowed some activity to take place, nearly one-third permitting walking or rambling, but shooting, hunting or horseriding were often allowed also.

- **most farmers had rights of way crossing their land**

Only 18 per cent of respondents said that their holding had no rights of way. Of those with rights of way, 71 per cent said they had spent time and money fulfilling their maintenance obligations. Opinions were evenly split over their evaluation of the division of responsibility between the landowner and the council; amongst those who were dissatisfied the most common complaint was that councils do nothing to meet their obligations.

- **many farmers provided for the public**

A large proportion (45 per cent) of the farmers make some recreation provision for visitors, but the definition of recreation was broad and it included educational visits, mainly made by schoolchildren. Income was received from camping and sales of farm produce.

## Attitudes to increased public access

Overall there was surprisingly little variation between tracts in terms of attitudes to access. **The vast majority (87 per cent) of farmers and landowners interviewed in our surveys were strongly opposed to greater public access to farmed land.** There is widespread suspicion over the whole issue of increasing public access. Less than one-third of the sample agreed that farmers had a general responsibility to the rest of society to allow access to the countryside and as far as their **own** land was concerned only 13 per cent would be in favour of more public access, a figure which rose to only 21 per cent if payments were available and to 26 per cent if a ranger and/or repair service was also introduced.

It is significant that the most commonly cited source of the hostility towards increased access was the perceived **ignorance** of visitors (52 per cent of respondents mentioned this) rather than maliciousness (11 per cent).

There were significant contrasts between those who already provided facilities for visitors and those who did not. **Providers** were more likely:

- to agree that there should be more public access in general (9 per cent compared to 4 per cent of non-providers)
- to favour greater access to their own land (16 per cent compared to 11 per cent)
- to be prepared to enter into informal access agreements (41 per cent as opposed to 28 per cent)
- to permit more access if paid to do so (27 per cent compared to 15 per cent)
- to permit more access if a ranger service were established (31 per cent compared to 22 per cent)

They were also:

- less likely to favour a reduction in access (22 per cent compared to 28 per cent)

Although the under-representation of very large 'agri-business' farms in our survey must make our conclusions somewhat tentative, it appears that the owners of larger farms were much more likely to provide facilities – 37 per cent of farms below 50 hectares provide access as compared with 63 per cent of those above 50 hectares.

Younger, more highly-educated farmers, who were more expansionist and 'market-oriented', and who had more capital resources to work the larger holdings, were prepared to make more provision for visitors and accommodate greater demands for public access when it paid. They tolerated public access as a strict economic transaction, which gave the public certain legitimate privileges, but then reserved the right to define the terms of the contract.

Many farmers and landowners (40 per cent) resented the **intrusion into their privacy** that public access threatens and any outside 'interference' in the workings of the farming business. Their values are deeply rooted in the ideology which is popularly referred to as 'an Englishman's home is his castle', ie the sanctity of private property.



# 9. Differences in values and ideology

ACCESS MECHANISMS	IDEOLOGY
<i>de facto</i> access	<b>Non-market</b>
Rights of way	Freedom to roam
Rights of navigation	Public rights over private land and water
Rights of open access	
Access agreements	<b>Market</b>
Management agreements	Public intervention in the market
Public ownership	
Property rights	Private rights of property
Sporting rights	
Permissive access	

Figure 2. Access mechanisms and ideology

The perception of the countryside as a haven of peace and quiet is commonly shared by those people who live and work in the countryside and those who only visit it for recreation. It would be mistaken, however, to regard their common appreciation of, and concern for, the countryside as evidence of a deeper consensus masked by failures of communication. If anything, the opposite is the case. Conflicts are often a product of real ideological differences rooted in different (and sometimes opposing) interests. This does not mean that a reconciliation of such interests is impossible, nor that a mutual accommodation cannot be achieved. But it does mean that such divided interests must be recognised – and not wished away – if progress is to be made.

Fundamentally different values and beliefs concerning private property underlie the legal mechanisms which provide the basis for rights of access. Underlying highway and navigation law is an acknowledgement of the public's right of passage, to pass and re-pass, over private land. Other approaches however involve the purchase of private property rights, stressing both the exclusive nature of rights of private property and the law of contract (see Figure 2). These different approaches are based on deep ideological beliefs about the way in which the countryside should be enjoyed. Many recreationists espouse the ideology of 'freedom to roam' which rejects the idea of exclusive uses of 'natural resources' particularly when their activity involves an element of travelling, eg walkers and canoeists. But there are those recreationists, such as anglers, whose sport has traditionally been associated with proprietorial rights and who share with the resource controllers a belief in rights to exclusive use of the resource.

## Accessibility strategies

Many traditional countryside sports are viewed as 'legitimate' and 'natural' countryside activities (eg angling, hunting, riding, shooting). New activities seeking to secure access to scarce resources will inevitably

have some difficulty in establishing the legitimacy of their claims. Often, the issue is not so much the denial of the right of certain groups to access to the countryside in general, as the protection of established benefits and monopolies.

The success of new groups partly depends on the size and nature of their membership, organisational expertise, how much control they can exercise over participants who are not club members to ensure that they behave 'responsibly', and the degree of political pressure they can exert. Because many landowners limit access to members of 'responsible' organisations, a group's ability to secure access may depend upon its organisational coherence and ability to enforce a code of conduct on its membership. Many organised user groups seek to use a variety of methods – management agreements, statements of intent, legal action, political lobbying, purchasing or leasing – to gain access to the rural recreational resources. Given that the actions of such groups often exclude other users, it is necessary to consider distributional equity; how far the activities of certain organisations may contribute to reducing or expanding access to resources for other groups.

It is recognised that some groups seek to use extra-legal approaches to secure access, such as organised trespass. Such direct action has an obvious political intent – to get the issue 'on the agenda' – but it is not typical of the strategy adopted by user groups. If organised trespass is the exception, *de facto* access is often the rule. It should not be assumed that use of land without the owner's express permission necessarily occurs without his or her knowledge. The owner may choose to 'turn a blind eye' or even acknowledge visitors with a wave. But the owner may still be unwilling to 'regularise' the existing *de facto* situation in a formal agreement, for example because of a fear that he may then lose control of the situation or because of fear of attendant legal liabilities attached to the activities on the land.

It is extremely difficult to gauge the extent of *de facto* access. Not only are owners often reluctant to divulge information; users too may be unwilling, either because they enjoy exclusive use which, they fear, would be endangered by publicity or because they are reluctant to 'rock the boat' and risk the imposition of restrictions. Nevertheless, even on an impressionistic basis such access is an extremely important element in the structure of accessibility. In some circumstances, *de facto* access can be regarded as completely satisfactory by users and owners alike. There can be no automatic presumption that recreationists using *de facto* access would wish it to become more formalised and legally secure.

The strategies adopted by various recreational interest groups concerned with access to the countryside are set out in Figure 3. An important distinction has been made between 'interest' and 'principle' groups [11]. **Interest groups** are defined as the appointed representatives for a particular section of the community with a definite interest, and who seek to pursue the common interests of their members (even if the extent of the interests being represented often is somewhat vague). **Principle groups** on the other hand represent no specific sectional interest. Instead they draw people together who share particular values, to defend these values or to promote causes which embody them. However, as has been pointed out, 'the specific goals rhetoric a group is obliged to adopt may be quite distinct from its fundamental purposes. Often, sectional interests are rationalised in terms of principles and apparently principled causes are not always what they seem' [11]. The legitimacy and influence of interest groups will be enhanced if they can present themselves as defenders of socially cherished values – such as the aesthetic appreciation of the natural beauty of the countryside and its 'proper' enjoyment in the 'appropriate' manner.

The typology set out in Figure 3 suggests that three distinct approaches can be pursued. Firstly, some groups

pursue **exclusionary** ends, seeking to impose a restrictive definition of 'legitimate' activities and claims for access. This may be based either on an **aesthetic** view of the countryside, or on a self-interested attempt to maintain a traditional monopoly of use. Secondly, there are those groups who adopt **cooperative** approaches and seek to share a particular resource with recreationists who have gained access already. Their interest in the resource may be **instrumental** providing no more than a setting for their activity. This approach is characteristic of new or expanding sports, who are in competition with groups with longer established rights. Thirdly, there are those who adopt a broader, more **participatory** approach whereby public access is increased for general consumption.

The mechanisms which different groups adopt are also distinct and, as has already been suggested, are underpinned by fundamentally different ideologies:

- (a) 'non-market', ie public rights to use private land or water, which have a basis in legislation or common law
- (b) 'market', ie private rights to land or water, which are either purchased or leased or negotiated on a permissive basis

We recognise that these categories are not necessarily legally precise or fully exhaustive. For example, on strict legal definitions, public rights of use may be regarded as 'market-based', being the result of express or implied dedication. The market can also be used to obtain permissive public rights and not just private ones.

The typology can be regarded as a map of the 'territory' occupied by certain groups. It illustrates how:

- different approaches may be adopted within the same sport (eg some canoeists are committed to establishing public rights of navigation, while others are prepared to negotiate permissive use)

APPROACHES (values)			
ACCESS MECHANISMS	EXCLUSIONARY (Aesthetic)	COOPERATIVE (Aesthetic/instrumental)	PARTICIPATORY (Principle)
NON-MARKET			
<i>de facto</i>	mountaineers	canoeists	Ramblers' Association
legal/statutory	local ramblers	local ramblers Trail Riders' Federation British Horse Society British Canoe Union	Ramblers' Association Byways and Bridleways Trust Open Spaces Society
MARKET			
private rights	anglers (conservationists)		
specific permissions	riding schools British Mountaineering Council	British Canoe Union	

Figure 3. Accessibility strategies

- organisations may have difficulties in claiming to represent all participants in a rapidly growing activity, or where club membership forms only a small proportion of participants (as in the case of canoeing)
- local strategies may not coincide with national policies (eg some local ramblers seek exclusive use by opposing the registration or creation of bridleways, while the

national organisation pursues a more principled, participatory approach)

- the strategy of some conservationists is to acquire proprietary rights and thereby secure exclusive use – a position shared by certain recreational interests (eg frequently by anglers).

## 10. Mechanisms for securing access to the countryside

A series of case studies, chosen after careful scrutiny of accessibility issues identified in the study tracts, covered linear and area-wide access to land and water. In particular, field surveys in selected parishes within the tracts, and an extensive interview programme with representatives of public authorities and landowning and user organisations, illustrated how access mechanisms operate (particularly rights of way and access agreements), and the attitudes and experiences of interested parties to these mechanisms in practice.

### Rights of way administration and management

The highways and countryside legislation provides a well-established legal framework for establishing, recording, modifying and maintaining public rights of way which enable people to pass or repass on defined linear routes across private land. Although the statutory procedures embodied within this legal framework are cumbersome, they serve an important function of maintaining a balance between the often conflicting interests of countryside landowners and those seeking access to private land.

Two principal problems surround rights of way. The first revolves around the difficulties faced by those interests who seek to secure currently unrecorded rights, to gain new dedications or to achieve changes in the present networks, whether to enhance recreational opportunities or for land management benefits. In general, the mechanisms are time-consuming and complex, often inhibiting change and tending to reinforce the status quo. Secondly, and of principal significance to users of rights of way, are the many shortfalls in the extent to which highway authorities undertake their statutory duties in respect of safeguarding and maintaining rights of way. In too many cases, these functions are treated as 'Cinderella' responsibilities being inadequately staffed and financed and given low political and operational priority.

The poor performance of many local authorities has allowed many definitive maps to remain incomplete or out-of-date, rights of way to remain unrecorded, and routes to be 'lost' through neglect or damage by landowners, developers and other parties. National authorities too must take a share of the blame; they have been unwilling to persuade or require local authorities to discharge the statutory duties placed on them. The Department of the Environment appears often to have given equally low priority to discharging its own duties

way and excessive delays, for example in determining objections to the definitive map, have been common. As a result, distrust and a lack of confidence have developed among many user groups, especially where they feel unable to influence action by the local authorities. This situation has been exacerbated by legislative changes which have disrupted the progress being made by many authorities (eg the abandonment of definitive map reviews following the Wildlife and Countryside Act), by ambiguities in the legislation and regulations (eg unclear definitions of 'ploughing' and 'restoration', as recently demonstrated [12]) and, in some areas, by successive waves of local government re-organisation. Thus, disputes have developed and impatience has grown amongst those who see rights of way as essential routes for recreation, or who regard rights of way as part of the rural 'heritage' and requiring protection as such.

Despite the perceived shortfalls in rights of way provision and procedures, the case studies highlighted several instances where the 'goodwill' and cooperation of interested parties, and the allocation of appropriate resources by local authorities, have contributed towards agreements on priorities, the achievement of extended or revised route networks, and the better provision of information on routes. The full report of the study [1] gives examples of rights of way management initiatives including Oxfordshire County Council's Rights of Way Liaison Group, the former South Yorkshire County Council's Adopt-a-Path Scheme and Hertfordshire's Countryside Management Service and Bridleway Project.

The case studies enable several key components of an effective rights of way service to be identified:

- **readily-available and up to date definitive maps and statements** providing accurate records of the routes and status of all rights of way
- **consultative arrangements** enabling landowning and user interest groups to contribute information, advice and expertise to rights of way decision-making and management
- **a responsive management system** enabling rights of way problems to be reported to the managing authority and ensuring speedy remedial action
- **a development-orientated approach** facilitating the development of new routes, or the modification or extension of existing routes to suit recreational or land management requirements

- **information and the promotion of route networks** to encourage the use, enjoyment and respect of rights of way networks.

While rights of way provide the principal means of linear access in the countryside, area-wide access poses other issues. Although there is a clear legal basis for access to certain urban commons and to areas of open country covered by access agreements, rights of access do not exist to most other uncultivated areas. Nevertheless, there is a popular misconception that such rights exist and some support for greater access. Farmers and landowners generally tolerate *de facto* access to their uncultivated lands, except where economic returns might be diminished (eg resulting from disturbance of shooting rights).

## Access and management agreements

As introduced within the provisions of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, access agreements have provided the principal means for the negotiation of area-wide access opportunities. They are intended to apply only to 'open country' (defined in the 1949 Act as mountains, moor, heath, down, cliff or foreshore) and are based on the principle that owners or tenants should receive some financial compensation for entering into agreements which may constrain the use or management of their land, or may cause inconvenience. Although the definition of 'open country' was extended by the Countryside Act 1968 to include woodland and also rivers, canals and adjoining strips of land (apparently to help provide access to water for boating), little use appears to have been made of these extended powers. Similarly the powers held by local authorities to make an access order, where agreement cannot be reached, have been almost wholly neglected.

Whilst the context to the negotiation of access agreements, and their detailed contents, differed in each area investigated during the study, it was evident that essential components of access agreements are –

- **the legal agreement** securing access
- **compensatory payments** to the landowner or tenant
- **bylaws** imposing regulations on the use of the access area
- **a warden service** to encourage compliance with bylaws and assist users and land managers
- **specified access points** and agreed **closure procedures** where required.

So far, the most extensive access agreements are in the uplands of the Peak District, the West Pennine Moors, the Forest of Bowland, and Snowdonia. Indeed, the Peak District National Park contains 60 per cent of all access agreement lands in England and Wales, covering some 76 square miles [13]. Dedicated walkers can 'wander at will' over the high moors as a result of these arrangements. In contrast, the Snowdonia National Park Authority's approach is more restrictive, being based on considerations that access agreements should be used only to resolve access problems, should be restricted to enclosed farmland, and that extensive access areas may exacerbate management problems.

Overall, our research suggests that access agreements are generally favoured by countryside interest groups, as

a means of enabling and regulating visitor access to open country and providing compensation for any consequential financial losses and inconvenience. However, few local authorities and national park authorities have negotiated agreements. Greater effort may be required therefore to promote the use of agreements as a positive means of securing countryside access, along with a government commitment to ensure continuing financial assistance to those authorities entering into long-term agreements.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 introduced the concept of management agreements which can be made to meet either conservation or recreation objectives, or a combination of both. Unlike access agreements they can apply to any type of land in the countryside and the compensation provisions are also more wide-ranging (or at least have been interpreted to be so) including payment in kind (eg the provision of facilities or a wardening service). The emphasis of the 1981 Act is on voluntary agreements; there is as yet no power of last resort nor any provision to make management orders. Nevertheless, these are significant provisions and their implications for recreation are only now beginning to be realised.

While existing access agreements tend to be restricted to moorlands and hill country (because of the limited definition of 'open country') access or management agreements could provide a means of extending access at popular visitor sites, especially coastal areas and rivers, canals and lakesides. Management agreements could be used also more widely, for example to improve the management of public access to picnic areas or woodlands, or to provide recreational 'corridors' alongside important routes (eg long distance footpaths). Where appropriate, they can be drafted to combine recreation and conservation interests.

## Access to water

The legal framework for gaining access to water is less well-established and less extensive than that for land. Excluding tidal waters, the principal mechanism available is a **right of navigation**, based on the historical use of major rivers and waterways for commercial purposes. This provides rights of linear access similar to rights of way on land. Many rights of navigation are well established; however, difficulties arise where navigation rights are not acknowledged or are disputed, and particularly in respect of rivers and waterways whose commercial use has long since ceased [14]. Further, the increased popularity of canoeing and other watersports, assisted by technological developments, has increased the use by light craft on upper reaches of many rivers and other waters without navigation rights.

Where canoeists seek access to stretches of rivers and waterways subject to riparian property and sporting rights, they may come into conflict with both the holders of the sporting rights (eg angling clubs) and the riparian owners. While some canoeists may claim that navigable rights exist or should be established, and may press that claim by trespassing, others may be prepared to negotiate private rights in the market. Where anglers have purchased private property rights often at considerable expense, they will understandably defend the status quo. There is a clear clash between market and non-market values.

Attempts have been made to mediate between the various interest groups through the production by the Sports Council of a 'Statement of Intent' [15] but with little success. The full study report [1] examines the reasons for this failure through a case study within Yorkshire and Humberside Region. A further review of legal provisions for securing access to navigable and other waters is currently under way [16] and it may be that further intervention by public bodies is required to regulate and manage such access and to promote understanding and responsible conduct by all users, whether water-based or land-based.

While rights of navigation provide one means of ensuring linear access to inland waters, access to lakes, reservoirs and flooded gravel pits more commonly relies on permissive or *de facto* access. While access agreements could be negotiated or access orders made, these have seldom been used and would involve complex procedures in cases where many riparian owners are concerned. Most frequently access relies on a permissive arrangement, often involving a lease, licence or day ticket. Where clubs or organisations are allocated controlling rights, this may be to the disadvantage of casual or unaffiliated users.

Lakes and reservoirs are often owned and controlled by public authorities who generally provide for casual users. However, some water authorities may bar entry, particularly to certain water supply catchments or storage reservoirs to safeguard public hygiene. Unless adjoining land is in private ownership, anglers are likely to operate on the same footing as other licencees. Nevertheless, an informal hierarchy of permissive users appears to be favoured by many public authorities and private landowners, in which angling is almost universally encouraged, and dinghy sailing and boardsailing may be permitted, while the claims of other users (eg water-skiing or other 'noisy' watersports) are perceived as being illegitimate or undesirable. Conservationists often ally themselves with private landowners, water authorities and anglers to exclude other recreational users.

Intervention by public agencies may be required to ensure opportunities are available to casual users, especially those engaging in new or 'noisy' sports. However, recent central government directives to water authorities, to maximise profits and to reduce non-essential land holdings, are likely to result in recreational users losing the use of areas which have been sold to private owners, or in increased levels of charging, or restrictions on access for those least able to compete in the 'market', particularly 'new' sports, and casual users.



Access to 'open' countryside – Kinder Scout, Peak National Park.



# 11. The analysis of accessibility

There is no single access problem but a wide range of issues reflecting the diversity of countryside resources, interests and demands. These problems centre on **accessibility**, the processes of establishing and exercising rights and privileges of access, rather than the legal mechanisms themselves. Nevertheless, the issues can be subjected to a common form of analysis which embraces the underlying values of interest groups and how those interests are represented.

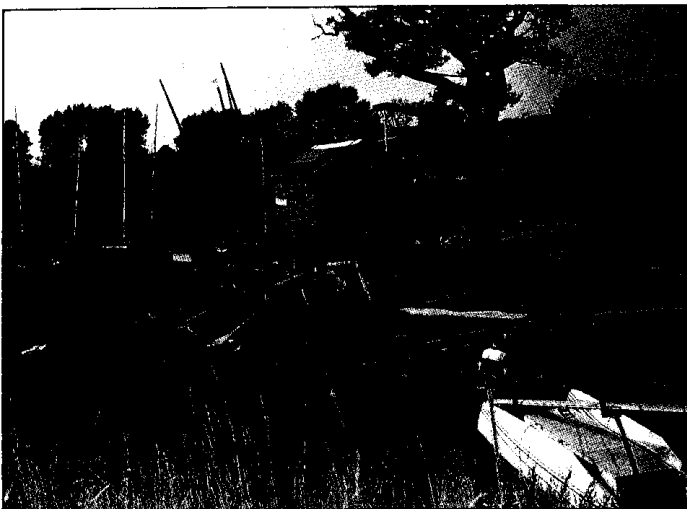
The general conclusions, from the analysis of accessibility are that:

- **gaining entry** to recreational resources is of major concern to newly emerging sports, especially casual users, for whom there may be no forum in which their interests can be represented (eg casual boardsailors and canoeists)
- new demands for access are frequently opposed by the **vested interests** of resource controllers, who defend private property rights or traditional access arrangements. Resource controllers may be landowners and occupiers, or recreationists already holding sporting or property rights (eg anglers). Such opposition may be faced also where well-established users try to revive public rights which have not been recently exercised, such as navigation rights
- frequently, **coalitions of interest** will be formed which reject the legitimacy of new claims:
  - These coalitions may seek to protect proprietorial rights against the establishment of new public rights (eg anglers/riparian owners against canoeists).

– Alternatively, coalitions of interest may be based on a shared ideology of public rights versus private rights (eg ramblers and horseriders against landowners).

– These coalitions are rarely formalised but are fluid and shifting. Allegiances vary in different areas.

- basic **conflicts of values** may underlie these clashes; thus, they may reflect a conflict between market and non-market values, or between aesthetic and instrumental values regarding the 'appropriateness' of certain recreational activities in the countryside (eg ramblers opposing claims by horse and trail riders for the recognition of the unrecorded byway status of certain paths)
- the interests of **informal recreationists may not be readily organisable**, and they may be totally excluded from processes that are essentially political lobbying
- **rights may exist but not be easily exercised** due to lack of information, lack of use, poor maintenance, obstruction, or other practical difficulties (eg many rights of way studied in the tracts). Also, they may be irrelevant to recreational requirements (eg routes used historically to gain access to places of work)
- inevitably **management issues** arise, such as the regulation of recreational uses, and the requirement to manage natural resources sensitively to sustain increased levels of use.



*Water is a scarce recreational resource sought after by competing interests – East Midlands study tract.*

# 12. Response to change

Thus situations are both dynamic and inequitable – dynamic because of the changing demands of recreation and land management; inequitable because certain groups of users are failing to get their interests on to the political agenda or are unable to gain access to land and water resources. Where pressures for change stem from the productive economy of the countryside on the one hand, or new recreational demands on the other, resistance to change will come from established interest groups, whether they seek to safeguard land management, conservation or recreational interests. Where change is resisted and the forces for change persist, local conflicts will occur and these may be magnified in national debates. The alternative is to recognise that processes are dynamic and that there is a need to adapt to and to accommodate change by altering attitudes or adapting the mechanisms for providing access to the countryside (see Figure 4). However, as we have noted, both attitudes and mechanisms may be deeply rooted in sometimes opposing values and ideologies.

The traditional methods by which access issues have been resolved may not deal easily with new demands nor with questions of social equity:

- **market mechanisms** deal with long established sporting rights pertaining to property. To gain entry to the market can require considerable financial resources. To amass the required resources requires collective action and a degree of organisation which does not easily encompass casual or unaffiliated users. Often new groups may have to demonstrate the ability to regulate casual users before they may be allowed to enter the market.
- **public rights of access**, although open to casual users, are defined, and limited by law. New claims within the scope of the statutes are not easily established because of the complexity of the procedures. (The Trail Riders' Fellowship has proved to be an exception to this general rule and has recently pressed claims under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with some success.) The establishment of new rights requires legislation, and as new rights usually impinge on existing ones, questions of compensation arise.

The direct acquisition, in the open market, of rights to or over land (by ownership, lease or licence, for example) is a solution which is relevant only to certain interests. It is unlikely, for example, to meet the needs of those seeking continuous rights of navigation over land in several different ownerships. Moreover, use of

the market requires organisational skills and favours those with the greatest resources. The market is not, therefore, equitable in its outcome. Neither, in practice, are the statutory processes, either because they fail to recognise minority interests or because they are unable to respond quickly to change. Those mechanisms of public intervention which attempt to meet these ends, such as access agreements, are not widely used.

Certainly some markets respond to new demands, as can be seen by increased commercial sports facility provision, the popularity of activity holidays, and expanding sales of outdoor clothing and equipment. However, while certain sporting rights have been traditionally the subject of market transactions, other forms of recreational access to the countryside have not.

Strategic plans may try to anticipate demands and the development control system can be used to attempt to influence change. However, such controls are essentially negative; they can prevent, but rarely encourage, certain forms of provision. In addition many countryside activities are outside the scope of development controls. The public sector has responded also by making provision for 'non-market' access, but this has been largely limited to providing country parks, which probably accommodate only some ten per cent of informal recreational use (still less of sport). Such provision therefore fails to meet the needs of the majority of visitors who seek access to the wider countryside, (see page 11).

The premise underlying this analysis is that, to be equitable, a full range of interests should be represented in any transactions concerning the allocation of countryside resources for public access. This has rarely been the case.

The nature of recreational demand on the countryside is changing and will continue to change. It is becoming more specialised, as in for instance, the increasing participation in a wider range of sports in the countryside; and is more dispersed with, for example, walking, horse-riding, and cycling activities. New or increasing demands (eg horseriding, off-road vehicles, canoeing, boardsailing, and water-skiing) have found difficulties in gaining entry to land and water resources. The needs of casual users are not necessarily well represented by clubs or associations. Local needs, such as the increasing demand for walking from 'newcomers' to rural areas may not be recognised, whilst those from farther afield may be opposed by local interests who seek to protect the status quo.

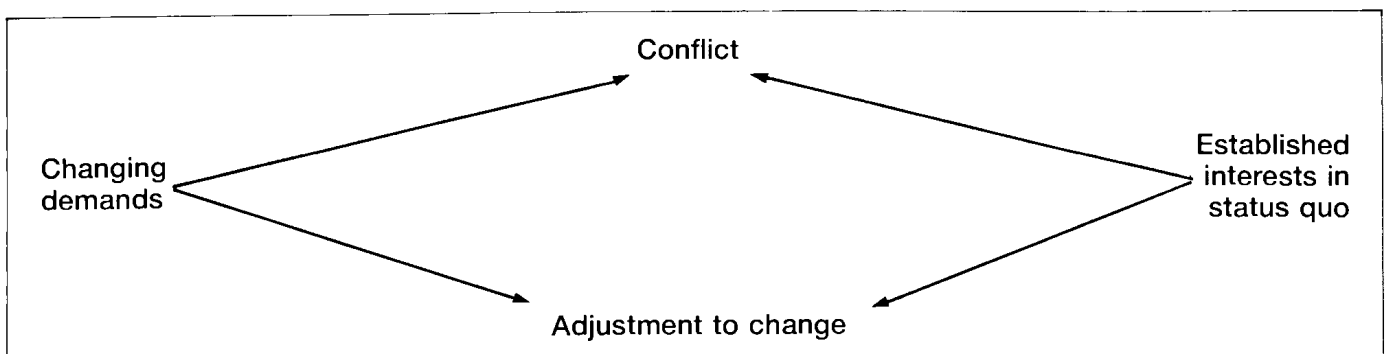


Figure 4. The responses to change

# 13. The contribution of countryside management

Over the last two decades, countryside management initiatives have illustrated how small-scale practical projects can provide positive means of gaining the interest and cooperation of countryside landowners and managers in projects of conservation or recreational benefit. Through direct action (such as wardening services, rights of way improvements and maintenance projects, fencing, tree planting and landscape conservation tasks), land managers have been shown a new willingness by public organisations, and some publicly funded voluntary groups to assist in amenity or recreational improvements.

The three countryside management initiatives reviewed during the access study illustrated different approaches to countryside management:

- **Hertfordshire County Council's Countryside Management Service** uses professionally-staffed teams of skilled local authority employees, working in conjunction with private and voluntary interests, to undertake conservation tasks and rights of way management, and to provide warden and information services
- **Access Rossendale** (established by Rossendale Groundwork Trust) brings together representatives of recreational, conservation, amenity and local community organisations to attempt to reconcile conflicting recreational interests, and to promote access improvements partly by lobbying the relevant public authorities to fulfil their statutory access responsibilities
- **Pennine Taskforce** (established by the Pennine Heritage Trust) uses Community Programme-sponsored employees and volunteers to provide a countryside management and rights of way maintenance service.

An effective **warden service**, which assists and regulates visitor use of the countryside by providing information and advice to visitors, patrolling access land and enforcing bylaws, and assisting with practical tasks of conservation or recreational benefit, can be a key to ensuring responsible visitor use of the countryside and gaining landowners' consent for more extensive access to private lands. From the countryside visitors' and local recreationists' viewpoints, **information and interpretive services** can extend the accessibility of the countryside, enhance the users' enjoyment, and increase understanding and respect for countryside interests and land management practices. However, countryside management has to be sensitive to the needs of both land managers and countryside users.

Locally-based organisations can play important roles in providing advice and assistance to countryside management schemes and access development projects. However, the involvement of such groups must be on the basis that a wide range of interests are represented, and that no one group has a dominant influence thereby adversely affecting wider access interests.

The presence of a countryside management service, or a warden service, in a locality can often assist in diffusing potential access disputes or resolving difficulties arising from access. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that there are limits to what realistically can be achieved. It cannot, for example, hope to resolve deep structured issues where the roots of the problem are outside local influence or control. Moreover the approach must essentially be a voluntary one, albeit backed up by the authority's statutory powers and duties. Where one or other of the parties is unable or unwilling to accept this approach, they may seek recourse to legal (or quasi-legal) remedies.

# 14. The resolution of conflicts through legal process

Large numbers of people have substantial misunderstandings and misconceptions of the law of access. Indeed the sheer complexity or inconsistencies of the law often leads to disputes. A simplification of the legal framework and greater awareness of public rights may reduce significantly the number of disputes. Even so, conflicts are likely to arise between landowners and users, and amongst different users.

Local authorities can attempt to resolve such conflicts, although they may not always be regarded as neutral arbitrators. Nevertheless, more informal forms of local hearing, where consensus is sought, may, in most circumstances, be preferable to the more formal legal procedures for the resolution of rights of way issues involving court actions or public inquiries. Not only do

legal proceedings often involve participants in costly and time-consuming procedures, but they are usually adversarial by nature rather than conciliatory. Additionally, the evidence which the courts can examine is restricted; concepts such as 'the public interest' are not easily defined in law, while assessments such as shortages of recreational routes may not provide admissible evidence.

If the aim is to resolve disputes by seeking compromise and consensus, then local authorities, many of whom already play a positive role, should be encouraged to play a more active part as mediators in access disputes, bearing in mind their statutory responsibilities to record existing rights of way regardless of merit.

# 15. The case for public intervention

Our conclusion from the proceeding analysis is that the case for public intervention rests on four premises. It is in the public interest:

- to ensure that opportunities exist for casual users, for those who would like to visit the countryside but cannot do so, and for new user groups (**social equity**)
- to establish and maintain public rights of access (**legal administration**)
- to promote public enjoyment of rights, regulate public use, and to maintain the countryside resource (**management**)
- to provide financial resources to secure recreational access for the common good (**finance**)

Questions of social equity are properly part of the public domain; their resolution should be within the normal democratic process. Within each local authority a single department (be it planning, technical services or recreation and leisure) should bear the principle responsibility for providing access opportunities for the community. Their detailed objectives should be determined via the statutory processes of planning and development control, using the instruments of structure and local planning which take into account the policies of government departments and the national agencies.

The needs of equity may justify public intervention in the market to acquire private rights over natural resources for public benefit by purchase, lease or legal agreement. They may also justify enacting legislation to secure new public rights, while providing compensation

for the loss of private rights where necessary. Also, it may be considered desirable to provide some form of financial subsidy or service to cater for those sections of the community with special needs to improve their personal mobility, and to facilitate their enjoyment of the countryside.

Where recreation resources are publicly owned or where public rights are exercised over private land, management may be provided or supported at public expense to ensure that behaviour is regulated, that the resource base is maintained, and that people are informed of their access rights, opportunities and responsibilities.

However, the case for public management, or indeed any management, has to be considered critically. Certain interest groups are ideologically opposed to any management which impinges on the spontaneity or 'adventure' of their sport or their independence as voluntary organisations; others are notable for their codes of conduct and self-regulation. Yet others find themselves in a somewhat invidious position; they are expected to act as the responsible governing body of a sport with a large number of unaffiliated casual participants.

The processes for negotiating and recognising public access, and for safeguarding them once they are established, have to be administered by a publicly accountable body. (In practice, voluntary organisations may be grant-aided to assist in this task.)

The exercise of each of these functions should be publicly accountable to ensure equal opportunities and the full representation of interests.

# 16. Local responsibilities

Although a variety of bodies (eg parish councils, Groundwork Trusts, footpath societies) may be involved in access issues, it is only the local authority which combines existing statutory responsibilities with political accountability, albeit limited to the local electorate. Despite the obvious shortcoming in the way in which many authorities discharge those statutory responsibilities, the study has confirmed that constitutionally they are the most appropriate body to exercise responsibilities for access; although, the smaller the authority, the greater may be the concern that local interests might predominate. There is no obvious justification for transferring responsibilities to another existing body or creating a new organisation.

By analysing local authority responsibilities for planning, legal administration or public rights and recreation management, the aim is to clarify rather than necessarily to extend the local authority's role. The range of local authority responsibilities are set out in Figure 5.

It is important to distinguish between the three different modes in which the local authority operates – **regulatory**, **enabling** and **provisory**. The regulatory and enabling roles of the local authority require some restatement and more adequate resourcing. Indeed, their enabling role could be emphasised at the expense of further public provision, unless it is clear that the market is failing to provide for access and recreation.

It appears from the evidence obtained in the survey tracts that the current fragmented pattern of responsibility for public access, as evident in many authorities, both reflects and reinforces a low priority for access provision generally and a lack of funding, especially for rights of way functions undertaken within highways departments. In general, rights of way have tended to command a higher priority where responsibilities are allocated to specific recreation or leisure departments (as in the former metropolitan counties), to some of the national park authorities, or

Function	Role	Task
Planning	enabling	respond to new demands conciliation of interests
Legal administration of public rights	regulatory	establish and protect public rights
Recreation management and development	regulatory enabling enabling provisory  provisory	regulation of public use promotion of enjoyment maintenance of resource provision of open access and recreation facilities provision of services for special needs groups

Figure 5. Local authority responsibilities for access and recreation

to planning departments (as has happened in Hertfordshire). This lends weight to the argument for consolidating access functions within one department to ensure that adequate priority and funding is allocated to each function, or at least for local authorities to identify a 'lead' department with responsibility for coordinating and promoting its access efforts. Also, the allocation of access responsibilities to the recreation, leisure or planning department of a local authority enables bids for financial or labour resources to be assessed against recreation rather than transport priorities.

It is important to recognise that, on many access issues, more positive steps have been made locally, and more tangible progress can be recorded than in the somewhat abstract national policy debates. This is particularly true where rights of way have been comprehensively recorded and are well maintained and where a local consultative forum facilitates face-to-face discussions between the various interest groups. Such a liaison group can be especially useful in encouraging positive attitudes to access issues provided that the local authority is prepared to ensure that resources are allocated to ensure practical

results 'on the ground'. The access management initiatives in Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire highlight the value of a consultative forum to advise the appropriate committee of the local authority, with a membership chosen to represent the full range of recreational, sporting, conservation and landowning interests. The Hertfordshire example also shows the value of countryside management schemes which are supported by structure or local plans and where rights of way work is implemented following discussion in a liaison group.

Inevitably, the execution of these responsibilities depends on political will and adequate resources. While recognising that local authorities already have the necessary statutory responsibilities and enabling powers, they are not always prepared to tackle these functions fully, or are hindered in doing so by a lack of expert staff or financial resources. This may be the result of local political decisions, or as is increasingly evident (especially from the rights of way investigations undertaken during this study), as a result of central government's failure to provide adequate financial support for these duties.

## 17. National policy issues

Although the detailed resolution of access issues should take place locally, the way in which devolved statutory responsibilities have been exercised to date suggests that certain safeguards and a policy framework are required at national level.

### Social equity

Hitherto, countryside recreation policy has been more concerned with resource management issues, such as the designation of national areas and the provision and management of country parks, than social policy issues, such as who should benefit from public investment in countryside recreation. The analysis of accessibility – the extent to which people can enjoy the countryside – shifts the focus and raises the question as to whether an indiscriminate 'access for all' policy provides a credible or realisable goal. The findings of this research indicate

a need for a more selective approach aimed at specific target groups. The issue is as much about non-participation (or deprivation) as about low and infrequent participation.

Three levels of participation can be identified from the national surveys. **Regular** countryside visitors are probably the main beneficiaries of present public policies, yet they are probably the most conversant with, and knowledgeable about, countryside resources. Amongst **infrequent** participants, there is clearly scope to 'deepen' the experience of sport and informal recreation participation, in quality and satisfaction, as well as to increase its frequency. Recent trends of increasing sports participation, including activity holidays, and the continuing growth in public interest in natural history, are ways in which this is already happening and which could be further encouraged.



This segment of the population, and the last – the genuine **non-participants** – could be more appropriately the targets of any public policy which seeks to promote participation. There are significant minorities who do not visit the countryside, notably the elderly and disabled, whose special needs centre on their lack of personal mobility. These segments should be more clearly identified, recognising that immobility has more general and more serious social consequences than an inability to get to the countryside. National programmes could be sponsored to stimulate and aid their participation.

The other principal issue of equity, which is a recurrent theme of this report, is that of the non-representation of certain interests, which occurs at many levels. Government could take a lead by recognising the changing needs of society and could respond by including a wider range of interests within the membership of the Sports Council and Countryside Commission and those of Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation. All have been noticeable for the low representation of outdoor pursuits and casual recreation interests amongst their membership. If these bodies are to promote the interests of groups with special needs, they would do well to consult the range of voluntary bodies concerned with the needs of the elderly, the physically and mentally disabled, and those who are socially or economically disadvantaged, with a view to widening their representation.

As well as developing accessibility policies and programmes, there is an important continuing task for both the Countryside Commission and the Sports Council to monitor structure and local plans to ensure that the accessibility issues identified above receive adequate attention.

### **Extension of public rights and public intervention on the market**

At present, a range of mechanisms for public intervention may be operated, which include public purchase, formal and informal agreements. The range of options should be better known to both public bodies and landowners. In particular, national bodies should promote a better understanding of the role of access or management agreements, which can provide a degree of security to the interests of both resource controllers and recreationists and they should be prepared to ensure that adequate financial resources are available to secure their adoption.

Certain conflicts of interests have deep-seated ideological origins and are not easily resolved by local conciliation. The options to be considered by the sponsors, or other authorities and interests, are whether to press for legislation to extend public rights or to encourage public intervention in the market via access agreements. The publication of a 'Green Paper' would allow for public debate about the extension of public rights and the terms of any compensation to be paid to owners of private rights, where this is deemed appropriate, and it may be that this is the eventual solution to some disputes over navigation on rivers in England and Wales. The situation regarding rural commons is certainly unsatisfactory and widely misunderstood, and could be clearly resolved by legislation that regulated public use, as in the case of urban commons, and which ensured proper management.

It is a matter of political judgement whether to press for the extension of public rights, thereby disturbing the status quo which allows much *de facto* local use of farmed land and upland. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that further public rights over uncultivated private land would be just that – the land would remain in private ownership.

It may be possible to make further progress towards securing more general rights of public access by *ad hoc* legislation. However, a logical development of the law would be a consolidating act which recognises 'recreation' as a 'right', to be protected in the courts and weighed alongside more traditional 'rights' and 'interests'. This would provide a sound legal basis for compensatory payments, which would recognise the loss of benefits to landowners that would arise from the creation of new public rights of access.

The issue of compensatory payments to land occupiers for public access on private land or water is likely to arise during the emerging debate on agricultural support. The key points to be considered include:

- There can be no question of compensatory payments being made for existing public rights of access or where rights are disputed.
- There is already some concern amongst recreational and sporting organisations that the ethos of public rights is being eroded by permissive agreements and that market values may be created for all recreational uses to the detriment of existing free access.
- The needs of land occupiers are for income, while any compensatory payments for the creation of new public rights of way would require, in most cases, to be once and for all payments.
- Annual payments to land occupiers could be covered by specific access agreements or other legal agreements to secure access.
- Payments to land occupiers and/or the provision of materials for rights of way maintenance may prove a cost-effective means of ensuring the upkeep of such routes.
- Where sporting rights are rateable, local authorities could make wider use of their powers to give discretionary rate relief to voluntary organisations in return for commitments to the sharing of waters or increased access to land (eg angling clubs might be compensated in this way for the disturbance caused by permitting canoeing access).

Government instructions to regional water authorities and the Forestry Commission to dispose of water catchment and forest lands respectively, run counter to the existing policies of those bodies to increase public recreation and access. The programme of forest sales has concerned recreational interests [17] for, although recent sales have concentrated on small lowland woods, these recreational resources can be of major local significance. Moves to 'privatise' both sets of organisations, rejected for the time being, are likely to decrease significantly public access to reservoirs, water supply catchment lands, and state forests. It is difficult to see how the financial strictures imposed in recent years [18] will be any less under private ownership, and the larger private forestry syndicates and financial institutions are likely to make very limited provision for public access. Ironically, both

the water and forest industries are well placed to make cost-effective recreation provision and both have specialist management skills. The water authorities have an advantage over other bodies in terms of direct capital costs of provision since the majority of their water resources, by definition, have another, primary role [18].

## Management

The functions of management in countryside recreation were earlier identified as the need to:

- promote visitor enjoyment
- inform visitors of recreational opportunities and their rights and responsibilities when using them
- regulate visitor use
- sustain the natural resource base on which activities depend.

The role of national agencies has been to promote the concept of management, to outline an approach, to set standards by training and advice, and to ensure that resources are available. The Countryside Commission has been active in this field and clearly has a continuing role. Certainly national agencies, especially those that manage land, can take a lead in showing sensitivity and an equitable approach to new demands, such as those of noisy sports, which are likely to be opposed by recreationists and others as 'inappropriate' to the countryside.

The provision of information was the major improvement in accessibility which gained most support from respondents to the home interview and recreational site surveys. While the Access Charter recently published by the Countryside Commission clarifies the rights and responsibilities of the public (and its impact should be carefully evaluated), there is still much that can be done directly by national agencies, or indirectly through their financial assistance to local authorities and other providers, to ensure that the public is better informed of access opportunities.

## Legal administration of rights of access

The review in this study of the statutory procedures for establishing and modifying public rights of access concluded that procedures work to the advantage of existing users. The ways in which new interests can be accommodated, the maintenance of resources and responsibilities for rights of way within local authorities require review and modification. (Some indication of the scope and nature of possible procedural changes are given in the full study report [1].) Such a review should be conducted nationally to ensure conformity of administration.

## Overlapping interests

Hitherto, there has been a tendency for a demarcation of interests to be drawn between the Countryside Commission and the Sports Council, and between informal recreation and sports in the countryside. The division appears arbitrary, although it is based partly on the different remits and philosophies of the two agencies.

The Sports Council has a promotional remit, requiring it to expand opportunities and encourage participation in sport and physical recreation. As a result, it has tended to concentrate its efforts towards the development of urban-based participation in sport and the development of built facilities. The Commission is required to keep under review matters relating to the need to secure public access to, and the provision and improvement of facilities for the enjoyment of, the countryside. It has also to contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the countryside and to seek to achieve a balance between the needs of those who live and work in the countryside and the needs of visitors. This has meant that the role of the Commission has tended to be responsive, being concerned with expressed recreational demand rather than latent need [19].

It would seem sensible for both organisations to recognise formally the mutuality of their overlapping interests, and to re-define their specific roles. The sponsorship of this study marks a new phase in cooperation between these agencies and provides an opportunity for the development of joint policies and actions at national and regional levels.

## Financial resources

Any initiative to facilitate better accessibility to the countryside for sport and recreation requires financial backing, whether for better administration to secure public rights, better management of countryside resources, the purchase of private rights, or new legislation. Partly this could come from existing resources put to better effect, but it has to be recognised that in most cases existing financial resources are so limited that there are few opportunities for diversion. A constitutionally correct case has been argued that statutory responsibilities should continue to lie with public authorities that are democratically accountable. But the regulatory and enabling functions of these authorities must be properly funded by the public purse. They, together with those national agencies which have statutory responsibilities for recreation and sport in the countryside, have the task of arguing the case with government for adequate resources.

There is little doubt that with adequate funding there could be ample opportunities to augment local authority resources from the voluntary sector and from special employment measures. However, these developments should be directed by permanent local authority employees trained in countryside skills. National agencies are already actively encouraging the use of voluntary labour and the special employment schemes funded by Manpower Services Commission. Much has been achieved, nevertheless. While there is much to be said for political realism, local initiative and opportunism, the limitations of this mode of operation have to be recognised. Neither source of labour necessarily offers high levels of skill or supervision, and both should be seen as augmenting existing resources and not substituting for them. Neither provide a sound basis for long-term planning or management.

# 18. Opportunities for change

Some voluntary bodies have argued that the pre-occupation to conserve the countryside has resulted in recreation being given lower priority in national policies in recent years while accessibility issues have tended to be neglected. The major concern of those keen to promote greater public access will be how to elevate it as a political issue and to ensure that it is incorporated in national political debates. This places a major responsibility on these recreational interests who have on occasion shown that they can act as a coherent lobby, notably during the passage of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in 1981. However, the main responsibility for representing the majority of unorganised and unorganisable informal recreationists and casual users rests with the Countryside Commission and the Sports Council. Three major opportunities are likely to present themselves. A successful political strategy to elevate access and accessibility issues in current political priorities will involve all three.

With the eventual reform of the EEC's **Common Agricultural Policy**, it is essential to ensure that public access is accepted as a valid land use to be incorporated in any strategies for the future of rural land. It is an important social benefit to be sought from changing patterns of farming and forestry, alongside the benefits of wildlife and landscape conservation. The case is sound for increased public access being provided as a *quid pro quo* for some form of compensation from the public purse, whether by direct payments, by relief of taxes or by assistance from countryside management schemes. This

is but one way in which the wildlife and landscape benefits of the countryside will be appreciated by the public.

Leaving aside the resolution of the debate about local authorities' responsibilities and the role of special employment measures, there is little doubt that providing and maintaining access opportunities could create short- and long-term **employment opportunities** that would yield considerable public benefit. The recently announced Farm and Countryside Initiative, launched by MAFF and utilising the Community Programme, provides one basis for this kind of employment [20].

To the home and overseas visitor, information about access opportunities in holiday areas is not easily obtained and probably little understood. Many countries in continental Europe have clearly waymarked routes. Parts of our rights of way network, long distance routes, waterways and water bodies already provide opportunities for **tourism development** which could be considerably expanded and promoted by regional and local tourist organisations.

Whether a strategy emerges, which capitalises on these three opportunities, will depend on **concerted political action** on the part of the various interest groups and on the ability of the leadership of national organisations to persuade their members that combined action is more effective than the pursuit of sectional interest, when faced with highly motivated political lobbies supporting agricultural development and conservation.



Footpath survey and stile repairs – part of the management approach developed by Rossendale Groundwork Trust.

# Appendix

## Research methods

The research design had to include both an investigation of the quantitative aspects of accessibility and also to obtain qualitative information on the perceptions and values of both recreational users of the countryside and those who control access to countryside resources. A sound data base was considered crucial to understand the mechanisms and processes shaping access and accessibility.

For logistical and financial reasons these surveys could not be undertaken throughout the length and breadth of England and Wales. Rather, the intention was to cover a range of situations and explore any access issues in a specific context. Thus, four **Study Tracts** (Figure 1) were selected with the intention of providing a cross-section of countryside situations, in which the nature and scale of recreational and sports activities could be assessed. The tracts were:

**North Wales** – including part of Snowdonia National Park and the Llyn Peninsula

**Peak-Pennines** – the South Pennines between Manchester and Sheffield, with part of the West Pennines and the northern part of the Peak District National Park

**East Midlands** – an area south of Nottingham and north of Leicester

**Dorset** – the coast and hinterland, from the Isle of Purbeck to Dorchester and Blandford Forum.

The criteria for tract selection, and an outline of access issues within each, is contained in Appendix 1 of the full study report [1]. The most notable gap in coverage is the absence of a tract dominated by large-scale, intensive, arable agriculture as predominates in the East and South-East of England, and the analysis of our surveys – particularly the farmers' survey – needs to be interpreted with this in mind. The final choice of study tracts was taken on the sponsors' advice.

The adoption of a tract-based approach enabled specific issues to be placed within a broader context and allowed some comparison to be made of variations within the tracts.

In addition to the surveys undertaken within the tracts, a number of interviews were held with representatives of national organisations concerned with land use and recreation.

The main survey elements comprised:

- **Surveys of public authorities:** A programme of semi-structured interviews with senior officers and elected members of selected public authorities was complemented by scrutiny of public authority policy documents, including recreational strategy reports, structure and local plans, site management plans and local authority reports.
- **Surveys of farmers and other resource controllers:** A survey of occupiers of agricultural holdings was undertaken to explore the variations in farming practice and their attitudes towards recreational access on their property. A total of 257 interviews were conducted, based on a representative sample of farms reflecting the size of land-holdings in each tract.

Interviews were also conducted at both national and local levels to explore the attitudes and practices of public bodies and how their various policies and statutory remits affected the local access problems under investigation.

- **Surveys of conservation and amenity groups:** The interests and activities of such groups were investigated through semi-structured interviews with representatives of local groups (eg local naturalists' trusts) and with other national groups (eg the Council for the Protection of Rural Wales).
- **Surveys of recreational organisations:** Organised sport and recreational groups were investigated through semi-structured interviews with representatives of national and local organisations. These elicited information on the general policies of each organisation and on area-specific issues. In addition, interviews were conducted with groups whose concerns were more with purely local issues, such as local footpath societies. The choice of groups interviewed depended on the principal issues identified in the preliminary tract surveys and on information received from regional officers of the Countryside Commission and the Sports Council and local authorities.
- **Home interview survey:** Little consideration tends to be given to issues such as whether provision meets recreationists' actual needs and aspirations, or whether increasing provision, made on the basis of recreational patterns, is sufficient to cater for those who do not (or cannot) avail themselves of existing opportunities – to turn their latent demand into expressed demand. To overcome this problem, it was decided to conduct a home interview survey of 1,593 respondents living in and around the Peak/Pennine and East Midlands Tracts during September 1984. The sample areas for this survey were chosen to represent a series of contrasting circumstances in or near the tract, rather than to provide a nationally-representative sample in the catchment populations.
- **Recreational site surveys:** More detailed information was gained by a series of observational studies and user interviews conducted at eleven selected recreational sites within the tracts during August 1984. The sample included both casual visitors and those undertaking a range of active pursuits – predominantly walking and fishing. A structured questionnaire was used for approximately 1,500 interviews.
- **Management initiatives:** Examples of 'developing practice' were investigated outside the tracts where these were of sufficient significance to demand attention. Some were chosen to ensure that a rounded account of the issue was obtained; others represented local experiments of particular interest.

Figure 6 sets out the principal topics investigated, the detailed issues that arose and the fieldwork on which the research findings are based. This also demonstrates how the research findings were integrated into the analysis.

Principal topics (referring to relevant chapters of full Study Report)	Accessibility issues and mechanisms for access provision	Investigations	
		Tract surveys and interviews <sup>1</sup>	Case studies
A. Access to cultivated and uncultivated countryside (Chapter 4)	(i) Linear access and rights of way <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safeguarding, administration and management of rights of way by statutory authorities</li> <li>• attitudes, responsibilities and practices of land managers, user groups other interests</li> <li>• effects of changing land use practices on linear routes</li> <li>• other issues of recreational route management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Wales</li> <li>• Peak-Pennines</li> <li>• East Midlands</li> <li>• Dorset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rights of Way Case Studies – all tracts</li> <li>• Oxfordshire Rights of Way Liaison Group</li> <li>• South Yorkshire Adopt-a-path Scheme</li> <li>• Hertfordshire Bridleways Project</li> </ul>
	(ii) 'Open' country access uncultivated countryside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the processes and terms of negotiating access agreements</li> <li>• the implementation and management of access agreements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Wales</li> <li>• Peak-Pennines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snowdonia Access Agreements</li> <li>• Peak Park Access Agreements</li> <li>• West Pennine Moors Access Agreements</li> </ul>
B. Access to water for recreation (Chapters 4, 6)	(i) Access for watersports on reservoirs and gravel pits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the negotiation, allocation and management of access to inland waters</li> <li>• access provisions for casual users</li> <li>• conflicts – between sports; recreation users -v- conservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peak-Pennines</li> <li>• East Midlands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Pennine Moors Plan Inquiry</li> <li>• Recreational Access to Inland Waters – East Midlands</li> </ul>
	(ii) Access to rivers – the inter-relationships of anglers and canoeists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access and property rights</li> <li>• access and organisational control</li> <li>• conflicts between sports</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yorkshire – Humberside Anglers -v- Canoeists Case-Study</li> </ul>
C. Management of the countryside for access (Chapter 5)	(i) Countryside management initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the roles of quasi-public organisations</li> <li>• local authority countryside management initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peak-Pennines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rossendale Groundwork Trust</li> <li>• Pennine Heritage Trust</li> <li>• Hertfordshire Countryside Management Services</li> <li>• Sefton Coast Management Scheme</li> </ul>
	(ii) Countryside management services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• warden services and their roles in access management</li> <li>• information and interpretation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Wales</li> <li>• Peak-Pennines</li> <li>• East Midlands</li> <li>• Dorset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snowdonia National Park Warden Service</li> <li>• Peak Park Ranger Service</li> <li>• Hertfordshire Countryside</li> <li>• Dorset Heritage Coast Project</li> <li>• Kimmeridge Warden Service</li> </ul>
D. User group conflicts and the representation of interests (Chapter 6)	(i) User groups' roles in securing and managing access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aspirations and roles of sports groups in securing access and controlling participants</li> <li>• conflicting ideologies between recreational groups; between recreation groups and conservationists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Wales</li> <li>• Peak-Pennines</li> <li>• East Midlands</li> <li>• Dorset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Pennine Moors Plan Inquiry</li> <li>• Yorkshire – Humberside Anglers -v- Canoeists Case-Study</li> <li>• Attenborough Local Nature Reserve</li> <li>• Sefton Coast Management Scheme</li> </ul>
<sup>1</sup> Surveys and investigations within each tract included – a) Questionnaire surveys – Home interview survey, farmers' survey, site users' surveys b) Semi-structured interviews – with representatives of government departments, national agencies, public authorities, recreationists and sports activists, and farmers and landowners.			

Figure 6. Issues for investigation

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