

Motorised Sports in the Countryside

Overcoming the Challenges



LAND AIR AND WATER

2 October 1990
Stoke Rochford Hall,
Nr Grantham, Lincolnshire

CONFERENCE REPORT

PREFACE

(David Pickup, Director General, Sports Council)

"I am delighted that we have such a distinguished list of speakers and participants in this first national conference of its kind.

"The timing of the Conference is significant in that it coincides with the imminent launch of the new Planning Policy Guidelines for Sport and Recreation as well as the launch of the Sports Council's own National Countryside and Water Policy Consultation paper. Indeed the recommendations that this Conference makes will be absorbed into our consultation process. You, therefore, have an opportunity to directly influence national policy!

"I am particularly pleased to say that this Conference is a joint national venture with the Countryside Commission.

"This theme of partnership extends to planners, governing bodies, landowners and indeed to the individual sportsman and sportswoman. Only through partnership, liaison, compromise, forward planning and goodwill can we hope to achieve significant advances in solving the challenges of motorised sports in the countryside.

"I would urge all participants to bring along with themselves to the Conference a positive attitude and a determination to seek out workable recommendations. People, sport and the environment all interact. Our collective will and our increased sense of responsibility to needs of land users, sports and the environment can overcome the challenges outlined in this Conference."

David Pickup

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

David O'Neil (Sports Council)

BACKGROUND

In the 'Conference Briefing Papers - Introduction' published before the Stoke Rochford Conference it was stated that we were at a crossroads in dealing with the complex issues which motorised sports in the countryside raise. The Countryside Commission and the Sports Council brought the delegates together so that an agreed direction could be identified and recommended to all the partners involved with Motorised Sports in the Countryside (Air, Land and Water).

The pre-conference papers gave much of the background to the discussions that subsequently took place. These included reference to Martin Elson's publications on Motorised Sports on Air, Land and Water - an updated summary of which is due to be published in the near future. The underlying theme of Elson's work was partnership. The Sports Council Director General, David Pickup, re-emphasised this theme in his preface.

The Conference was designed to allow discussions on partnerships to develop and to identify the need to change attitudes. It was also structured to allow specific recommendations to be made, especially within a planning context.

One specific point not covered in the Conference to any depth, but for which several requests were made for further information, was the subject of motorised sports training and excellence. An article on this is therefore included as Appendix B.

DELEGATES

The Conference was advertised to attract:

- Local government planners and elected members.
- Developers, resource managers and consultants.
- Local community organisations, user groups and governing bodies of sport.
- Academics.

The attendance list within the Report shows that these target groups were successfully attracted. Although conservation interests and representatives of local community organisations were invited and did attend, their numbers were low. It was particularly pleasing however to see the overall breadth of representation, and this significantly added to the quality of discussion that took place.

VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS REPORT

The views expressed in this Report and the recommendations made do not necessarily represent the views of the Sports Council or the Countryside Commission, nor do they represent the views of the host organisation the Regional Council for Sport and Recreation - East Midlands. They represent the views of the delegates and have been compiled by the Conference organiser. A degree of "creative interpretation" had to be undertaken in order to synthesise workable recommendations. The Conference Organiser takes full responsibility for this and understands that not every delegate will agree with all the recommendations.

DISPLAYS

The Conference organisers were indebted to the various organisations who mounted displays in the Conference Hall. These undoubtedly added to the quality of information available.

- Rutland Group plc: The Bedfont Lakes Development
- Auto Cycle Union: Access Work Display
- Countryside Commission: Rights of Way Display
- Motorised Sports Land Access and Recreation Association: Access Work
- Kawasaki Motors Ltd: Jet-Skis and Scrambler Bikes
- The Sports Council: Promotional Display

RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Since the Conference took place several relevant publications and reports have been produced. Since many of these are detailed reviews, draft reports or consultations, it was not felt wise to attempt to summarise them in this Report. For completeness sake they are listed in Appendix C. What the list does show is that countryside policies are in a state of considerable flux and evolution. This comprehensive report on motorised sports therefore comes at a most propitious time.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

9.30 - 10.00	Registration and Coffee
10.00 - 10.10	Chairman's introduction NORMAN SARSFIELD , Chairman of the Regional Council for Sport and Recreation - East Midlands
10.10 - 10.40	'Setting the Scene' (Where are we now, Historical aspects, legislation and the environmental context). JOHN VAUGHAN , Under Secretary of State, Department of the Environment.
10.40 - 11.10	'A Sporting Chance' (The role of the Sports Council, the new National Countryside and Water Recreation Policy, recent initiatives. An emphasis on participation. PETER YARRANTON , Chairman of the Sports Council.
11.10 - 11.40	'Out in the Countryside' (The role of the Countryside Commission, planning issues and recent initiatives. An emphasis on planning). ROGER CLARKE , Director of Policy for the Countryside Commission.
11.40 - 12.00	Questions and Discussion
12.00 - 13.00	L U N C H;
13.00 - 13.15	'Airy Heights' (Planning Strategies in a regional and county context including motorised sports). KEITH GARTON , Assistant Chief Planning Officer, Derbyshire County Council and Chairman, Countryside Panel of the Regional Council for Sport and Recreation - East Midlands.
13.15 - 13.30	'Making a Splash' (Water based activities; jet skiing, cruising and water skiing - a broad policy approach. BOB HALL , Business Strategy Manager, British Waterways.
13.30 - 13.40	Briefing for Workshop Sessions
13.40 - 15.00	Workshops
15.00 - 15.30	Tea and Mingle
15.30 - 16.30	Report Back and Recommendations
16.30 - 16.45	Chairman's Summary

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Delegates will attend one workshop only:

WORKSHOP A: 'PREPARING THE ROUTES'

PANEL:	MARTIN ELSON	Professor of Town Planning Oxford Polytechnic
	PETER CRANSTONE	Director, UK Jet Ski Assoc
	JILL SKELTON	Countryside Commission
	BARRY NEVILLE	Sports Council
	ANDREW McNAB	Royal Town Planning Institute
	BRIAN COSGROVE	British Microlight Aircraft Assoc
TOPIC:	Developing Planning Strategies to Meet the Challenges	

WORKSHOP B: 'ON THE STARTING LINE'

PANEL:	GEOFF WILSON	Chairman Land Access & Rights Assoc
	JOHN THOMPSON	Head of Landscape, Conservation & Recreation, Peak Park Joint Planning Board
	ROGER SIDAWAY	Research Policy Consultant & Senior Research Fellow, University of Edinburgh
TOPIC:	Identifying Good Practice, Working with Partners	

WORKSHOP C: 'GOING ROUND THE BEND'

PANEL:	RAY TAYLOR	Assistant Director of Recreation Services, Lincs County Council
	MALCOLM BURGESS	Principal Design Analyst, Landrover Division, Rover Group
	GEOFF HUGHES	Regional Officer, The Sports Council
TOPIC:	Technical Appraisal of Challenges, Vehicle Design, Positive Interpretation of Legislation, Resource Management and Maintenance	

WORKSHOP D: 'LOW GEAR'

PANEL;	DAVID GILES	Chairman, Trail Riders Fellowship
	CHRIS GOFFEY	Presenter, BBC TV 'Top Gear'
TOPIC:	Improving the Image, Communications and Use of Media	

DELEGATE LIST

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
ALEY, John	M.C.C.
ANDREWS, M	Auto Cycle Union
ARROWSMITH, John	Midland Rover Owners Club
BADMAN, Tim	Heritage Coast Forum
BARWICK, Paul	Forestry Commission
BEADLE, John	Essex Landrover Club
BEDFORD, Paul	Sports Council, Greater London & SE Regions
BINGHAM, Jerry	Sports Council Headquarters
BLATCHFORD, David	Nature Conservancy Council
BOLTON, Dr Nicola	Sports Council for Wales
BOYD, Bill	Norfolk Naturalists Trust
BRADBURY, Jennifer	Countryside Commission for Scotland
BRADLEY, John	Crow Wood Motor Sports Development
BULLAR, Alison	Sports Council, South West Region
BURGESS, Malcolm	British Leyland
CALDERBANK, Jonathan	Sports Council, Eastern Region
CANNON, Peter	British Horse Society
CHARLESWORTH, Paul	All Wheel Drive Club
CLARKE, Roger	Countryside Commission
COLE, Tony	Practical Alternatives to Custody Ltd
COLEMAN, D G	Auto Cycle Union
COLLIS, Mike	British Hang Gliding Association
COPELAND, Alistair	Sports Council, Yorkshire & Humberside Region
CRANSTONE, Peter	UK Jet Ski Association
COSGROVE, Brian	British Microlight Aircraft Assoc.

DAVIES, John	Suffolk Coastal DC
DAVIS, I R	RAC
DERBYSHIRE, R J	The National Trust
DRUMMOND, I R	Water Recreation Panel, RCSR - EM
DUFFY, Les	Kawasaki Motors UK Ltd
ELSON, Martin	Oxford Polytechnic
EARLE, Mike	Sports Council Headquarters
ENOCH, Nikki	Sports Council, East Midland Region
FELTON, W J	Sports Council, West Midlands Region
FINCH, Frank	Motor Cycle Industry
FISHER, Glyn	Kawasaki Motors UK Ltd
FYTCH, Ian	Sports Council Headquarters
GALLING, Michael	National Autocross Sports Association
GARTON, Keith	Derbyshire County Council
GILES, David	Trail Riders Fellowship
GOFFEY, Chris	BBC TV 'Top Gear'
GORDON, Duncan	L.A.R.A.
GRAHAM, Andrew	Countryside Recreation Officers, Berkshire CC
GREEN, Don	Amateur Motor Cycle Association
HALL, Bob	British Waterways
HARPER, Chris	Sports Council Headquarters
HATTS, Leigh	The Great Outdoors Magazine
HAY, R N	Forestry Commission
HEAD, C	Surrey County Council
HICKLING, David	British Parachuting Association
HORSLEY, Diane	Sports Council, East Midland Region
HOWE, Janet	Rutland Group
HUGHES, Geoff	Sports Council, Northern Region
HURLEY, Liz	All Wheel Drive Club
HURST, Anthony	Brackwell Forest BC

JOHNSON, John S	Greater Manchester Countryside Unit
JOSLIN, Jos	Countryside Commission
KEMPSTER, Tony	Association of Rover Clubs
KERSEY, D G	Auto Cycle Union
KIND, Alan	L.A.R.A.
LANE, Peter	Langbaugh BC
LARKIN, Joe	Sports Council, North West Region
LENNON, Jim	Countryside Commission
LEWIS, Roger	Arun DC
MACILWAINE, Heather	Countryside Commission
MACK, Terry	Sports Council, East Midland Region
MARTIN, Claire	Lee Valley Regional Park Authority
MASON, Roy	Outdoor Pursuits Division, CCPR
MIDDLETON, John	Freelance Journalist
MILLAR, David	Farming News
MITCHELL, D	Range Rover Register
MORRIS-EYTON, Sue	Sports Council Headquarters
MORTIMER, Dale	Leicestershire CC
McDONALD, Deborah	Sports Council, North West Region
McDONALD, Ian	Rutland Group
McKINNEY, Elaine	Scottish Sports Council
McNAB, Andrew	Royal Town Planning Institute
NEEDHAM, L N	RAC
NEVILLE, Barry	Sports Council, East Midland Region
NEVILLE, Bridget	Nottinghamshire CC
NICKOLDS, Geoff	Severn Trent Water Ltd
O'DELL, Barry	British Water Ski Federation
O'NEIL, David	Sports Council, East Midland Region
ORGILL, Roger	Sports Council Headquarters
PEGG, Kevin	Kawasaki Motors UK Ltd

PERCY, Richard	Sports Council, Southern Region
PHIPPS, Sian	Sports Council Headquarters
ROBSON, R H	Leisure, Mid Sussex DC
ROLT, N M	Powys County Council
SABEY, Donald	Strategy & Investment Panel, RCSR - EM
SARSFIELD, Norman	Regional Council for Sport & Recreation - EM
SHAW, Freda	Executive Committee RCSR - EM
SIDAWAY, Roger	University of Edinburgh
SIMPSON, Christopher	Regional Council for Sport & Recreation, EM
SKELTON, Jill	Countryside Commission
SMITH, Barry	Popular Flying Association
SMITH, Charlotte	Tourism Development, Northants CC
SMITH, Linda	DoE, Information Recreation & Access Branch
SMITH, R O	Isle of Wight County Council
SMITH, R W	Auto Cycle Union
SMITH, Sue	Leisure Department, Lichfield DC
SWEBY, C	Auto Cycle Union, South Midland Centre
SYDENHAM, Angela	Country Landowners Association
TALLON, Richard	Trail Riders Fellowship
TAYLOR, Ray	Lincolnshire County Council Recreation Services
TEMPLETON, John	Youth Hostels Association of England and Wales
THOMAS Andrew	Norcare Ltd
THOMAS, Gwyn	Trail Riders Fellowship
THOMPSON, John	Peak Park Joint Planning Board
TRUSCOTT, Robin	East Hampshire DC
TUNGATT, Malcolm	Sports Council, North West Region
TURNER, Jane	British Horse Society, Nottinghamshire
VAUGHAN, John	Department of the Environment
VINER, Susan	National Farmers' Union
WHEAL, Keith	Oxfordshire CC

WHICHER, Des	Ramblers' Association
WHITELEY, Norman	Yorkshire Rover Owners Club
WILSON, Geoff	Land Access and Recreation Association
WINSOR, P	Environmental Health Dept., Milton Keynes BC
WINSTANLEY, P J	Newark and Sherwood DC
WRIGHT, Graham	Sports Council, Southern Region
YARRANTON, Peter	Sports Council

CONFERENCE SUMMARY

This Conference has clearly identified many of the problems, underlying causes and solutions involved in planning for motorised sports in the countryside. The topic is an extremely complex one. This summary needs to read alongside the specific recommendations (found in Chapters 6 to 10 inclusive).

CAUSES

The underlying causes of the problems are:

- The limited access to resources: Access to the natural resources of the countryside - land, air and water space, upon which motorised sports depend is limited by land ownership, legal restrictions and competition with other uses of the rural environment. The actual air, land and water space, as opposed to the access to this space, is to all intents and purposes unlimited.
- The perceived problems caused by motorised sports: peoples' perceptions of the severity of the problems can often be far in excess of the actual damage or disruption caused. Physical damage is usually limited, sporadic and of less significance than portrayed by the media. Motorised sports people may hold inappropriate perceptions about the exercising of their "rights" and the antagonism of their "opponents". These perceptions are equally true for some of the "opponents".
- An increasing demand for all uses of the countryside: this includes demand by recreation, transport, housing and conservation uses.
- A lack of knowledge: of the law or of the needs of other users of the countryside are often not known or understood; (eg the economic needs of landowners and farmers and of the rights of way legislation). Most countryside users to one extent or another suffer from this lack of knowledge.
- A lack of expertise: this would include a lack of driving, flying or boating skills.
- Financial constraints: such as a lack of finance to pay for improved management, better communication, land purchase or more planning staff.
- Competition for the limited access to countryside resources: this is both a cause of problems and a problem itself. Without this constraint on access and without the growing demands of participants' competition for access would obviously be considerably lessened.

PROBLEMS

The causes identified above lead to specific problems which include:

- Competition for access or use of the countryside resource: this involves conflict between recreation users as well as conflicts between them and non-recreation users. Vehicular noise was identified as the most significant conflict.
- Illegal and inappropriate use of the resource: this is often a consequence of a greater demand than the limited access can provide. Such use can lead to other problems such as physical and economic damage.
- Physical damage to the countryside: this would include damage to fences, gates, crops, soil, track surfaces, vegetation and (indirectly) to stock.
- Economic damage: this would include the cost of maintenance, repair or replacement of the items mentioned under physical damage. It may also lead to more indirect economic damage such as the loss of value of land or property as a consequence of nuisance.
- Health effects on humans: such as identifiable health effects caused by activities operating in excess of statutory limits. These would include aspects involving personal safety.
- Personal safety: physical danger caused by motorised sports activity
- Disruption of lifestyle: this would cover those perceived problems that are caused by motorised sports operating within statutory limits, and therefore not problems in the legal sense.
- Unhelpful attitudes: often caused by a lack of knowledge, poor communication and a selfishness. Unhelpful attitudes can lead to entrenched positions, non co-operation and an unwillingness to compromise or share the resource.
- Poor management skills: this can lead to the resource not being fully or appropriately used. It can also mean that conflicts continue even when a solution might be available.
- Poor communication: many problems are caused by, or exacerbated by a lack of communication. In some cases an excess of communication, such as media hype, can make problems far worse than they actually are.
- A lack of quality research: unless the problems are fully understood it is not easy to find appropriate solutions.

SOLUTIONS

The solutions to the problems include:

- Overcoming the limited access to the countryside resource by:
 - [a] Increasing the amount of accessible land, air and water; eg by new agreements with farm and forest landowners.
 - [b] Better sharing of the existing access: this would include zoning, better management and improved planning.
- Overcoming problems associated with the vehicles:
 - [a] Better vehicle research and design: to reduce noise emissions.
 - [b] Improved vehicle handling skills
- Overcoming financial constraints:
 - [a] Increased funding
 - [b] Charging for use of the resource
- Overcoming unhelpful attitudes and prejudice:
 - [a] Improved information and education
 - [b] More compromise and co-operation
 - [c] Development of shared values and objectives
- Overcoming the legal obstacles:
 - [a] An improvement and simplification of the rights of way terminology and updating of the definitive maps
 - [b] Allow for a dual system of voluntary restraint on some sites whilst promoting other suitable sites or tracks.

CONCLUSIONS

The most significant advances towards solving the problems will occur if a positive attitude is adopted by all parties concerned. Open mindedness, co-operation and a desire to share and protect our natural resources whilst being mindful of the needs of sports and other users, are all needed. No amount of detailed technical recommendations will help unless attitudes change. People need to start talking with each other and not at each other. Education of all parties concerned with motorised sports in the countryside is a vital prerequisite to this.

The adoption of the planning recommendations is most important. Didactic policies and blanket bans cause antagonism and misunderstanding. The development of integrated land-use strategies coupled with integrated site management, may lead to an atmosphere where such positive planning can succeed and from where a proper partnership by all concerned can germinate.

SECTION 2

RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO SPECIFIC ORGANISATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO SPECIFIC ORGANISATIONS

The recommendations of the Conference have been divided into four chapters. These chapters are not directly analogous to the workshop areas of discussion, as it was felt more appropriate to re-arrange the workshop conclusions into the following format. (For background information the original workshop conclusions are given in Appendix A).

The recommendations are targeted at specific organisations to facilitate their implementation. This section identifies the abbreviations used for the various organisations and lists the recommendations that are relevant to each of them.

Chapter 6	Recommendations on Availability of Resources
Chapter 7	Recommendations on Human Influences
Chapter 8	Recommendations on Planning & Legislation
Chapter 9	Recommendations Ecological & Technical Implications
Chapter 10	Recommendations on Research.

DEFINITION OF SENSITIVITY

The words "sensitive sites" in the text are used in the sense of the following definition. This definition is the one used in the Sports Council's Consultation 'A Countryside for Sport':

"Areas where the current level of use by particular activities exceeds the carrying capacity of an area or site which has exceptional conservation, landscape or other value, and serious damage or major conflicts are occurring. Where a series of different management techniques has been tried, but the conflicts with the conservation of the natural resource or other established interests have been shown to be incapable of resolution at the current levels of use and there is need to provide for and promote the activity elsewhere to reduce the pressure on the area.

"Sites may include those with a low carrying capacity which are suffering from over-use by certain countryside activities. Examples might include quality countryside activity sites where over-use decreases the quality of the site or experience of it; sites where serious conflicts with other sports or countryside uses, particularly agriculture are occurring; special 'wilderness' areas retained for a sense of remoteness; some internationally or nationally important nature conservation sites; and over-used popular visitor sites and routes, particularly footpaths."

The abbreviations given below are used in the main body of recommendations and the numbers refer to those recommendations specific to the given organisation.

- 1 (All) All relevant organisations: 6.6, 10.9
- 2 (BW) British Waterways: 6.15
- 3 (CAA) Civil Aviation Authority: 8.7, 8.15
- 4 (CCPR) Central Council for Physical Recreation: 6.6
- 5 - Commercial Sector: 6.15
- 6 (CLA) Country Landowners Association: 6.14, 7.14, 9.10
- 7 (CoCo) Countryside Commission: 6.6, 6.12., 6.15, 7.13, 7.14, 8.11, 8.14, 8.15, 8.16, 9.10, 10.6, 10.7
- 8 - Countryside Managers: 6.8, 6.13, 8.9, 9.10, 9.13
- 9 (CRRAG) Countryside Recreation Research Advisory Group: 10.6
- 10 - Developers: 6.11
- 11 (DoE) Department of the Environment: 8.8, 8.14
- 12 (DoT) Department of Transport: 8.10, 9.11, 9.12
- 13 (DTI) Department of Trade and Industry: 9.11
- 14 - Environmental Groups: 7.9, 7.15, 8.6
- 15 (ETB) English Tourist Board: 6.15
- 16 - Farmers: 6.7, 7.10
- 17 (FC) Forestry Commission: 6.15
- 18 - Landowners: 6.7, 6.8, 6.10, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10, 7.12, 7.14, 9.10
- 19 (LA's) Local Authorities: 6.7, 6.8, 6.9, 6.11, 6.12, 6.13, 6.14, 6.16, 7.10, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9, 8.10, 8.11, 8.12, 8.13, 8.14, 8.15, 8.16, 8.17, 9.10, 9.13, 10.9, 10.10
- 20 - Local Residents: 6.16, 7.9, 7.10
- 21 (MAFF) Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food: 6.15
- 22 - Manufacturers: 7.13, 9.11, 9.14, 9.15, 10.6
- 23 - Media: 7.11, 7.12, 9.15, 10.10
- 24 (MoD) Ministry of Defence: 6.14
- 25 (NCC) Nature Conservancy Council: 6.15, 8.6, 10.6, 10.7

- 26 (NFU) National Farmers Union: 6.14, 6.15, 7.14, 9.10
- 27 (NGB's) National Governing Bodies of Sport: 6.7, 6.10, 6.13, 6.14, 6.16, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10, 7.11, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 7.16, 7.17, 7.18, 8.7, 8.14, 8.17, 9.10, 9.13, 9.14, 10.6, 10.8
- 28 (NPA's) National Park Authorities: 8.16
- 29 (NRA) National Rivers Authority: 8.11
- 30 - Others (non specific): 6.12, 6.14, 6.16, 7.10, 8.6, 8.10, 8.11, 8.12, 8.13, 9.14, 10.6, 10.7, 10.9, 10.10
- 31 - Parish Councils: 6.9, 6.16, 7.9, 7.10, 7.12, 8.14, 8.16
- 32 - Participants (Individuals - see also User Groups): 6.10, 6.16, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10, 7.13, 7.15, 7.16, 7.17, 8.14, 9.10, 9.12, 9.13, 9.14
- 33 (RA) Ramblers Association: 6.15
- 34 (RCSR's) Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation: 6.9, 6.15, 8.11, 8.14, 8.15, 8.16
- 35 (RDC) Rural Development Commission: 6.15
- 36 (RTPI) Royal Town Planning Institute: 8.6, 8.8, 8.11
- 37 (SC) The Sports Council: 6.6, 6.9, 6.12, 6.13, 6.14, 6.15, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 7.18, 8.11, 8.14, 8.15, 8.16, 10.6, 10.7, 10.8, 10.9, 10.10.
- 38 (SDO'S) Sports Development Officers: 7.10, 7.11
- 39 - User Groups (Sports Organisations - see also Participants): 6.7, 6.10, 6.16, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10, 7.11, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 7.15, 7.16, 7.17, 7.18, 8.7, 8.12, 8.14, 9.10, 9.13, 9.14

SECTION 3

SPEAKERS CONTRIBUTIONS

'SETTING THE SCENE'

John Vaughan, Assistant Secretary, Sport & Recreation Division
Department of the Environment

- 1.1 I must begin by apologising for the absence of the Minister for Sport. Your Chairman's invitation to speak at this Conference was originally accepted by Colin Moynihan. As many of you will know he has now swapped his sporting responsibilities for those of energy. The new Minister, Robert Atkins, is unfortunately unable to attend today because of other commitments but he has asked me to stand in for him.
- 1.2 I know that the Minister is sorry not to be able to be here today. As a former Transport Minister he is particularly interested in motorised sport and is keenly aware of the great enjoyment which many people gain from it. But he is also aware of the competing pressures on the countryside that can result from over useage and is anxious to ensure that a balance is struck between recreation and conservation.
- 1.3 A number of you will have seen the Government's White Paper on the Environment entitled "This Common Inheritance" which was published last week. This document recognises that more and more people are wanting to use the countryside for recreational purposes, be they organised competitive sports or quieter, informal recreational pursuits. Increased participation in a wider range of sports means increased pressure on the finite land and water space available. Conflicts between participants and other users of the countryside and even between different sports, are on the increase. There is of course no easy answer to the problems but the Government believes that through consultation, co-operation and careful planning, conservation and recreation can co-exist.

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE NOTE

- 1.4 Ministers are well aware of the need to provide up to date guidance for planning authorities and the Environment White Paper promises the early publication of a Planning Policy Guidance note on Sport and Recreation. If I may, I would like to talk in some detail about the sort of guidance that I expect to see in the Planning Policy Guidance Note and which should be taken into consideration by planning authorities. The note must recognise that noise from motorised sports and some gun sports can cause concern in some locations. General guidance on planning and noise is given in DoE Circular 10/73 which is under review. It is envisaged that updated advice will be issued in due course. Codes of Practice have been issued giving guidance on appropriate methods of minimising noise and the Secretaries of State can approve them under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. For example, a code on noise from model aircraft was issued in 1982 and the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association is preparing a draft code in consultation

with the Department of the Environment. The Government set up earlier this year, an independent working party to review the control of noise. The working party looked at the need for Codes of Practice and for further guidance on the use of the countryside. Its report will be published very soon.

- 1.5 I would also expect the Planning Policy Guidance Note to emphasise that, where there is a clear demand for noise-generating sports activities, it is important that planning authorities seek to identify sites which will minimise conflicts with other uses. Suitable sites can often be found - for example adjacent to an existing noise generator such as a main road, or in locations screened by banks and trees - which can divert the unauthorised and damaging use of playing fields, footpaths, open land and woodlands. If the governing body of the relevant sport has produced a code of conduct for use when organising events, planning authorities should consult it when seeking to resolve problems with existing sites or considering new ones. In this context I hope that the Note will make reference to the two Sports Council reports on 'Providing for Motorsports' and 'Providing for Motorised Water Sports,' about which I am sure you will hear more later in this seminar.
- 1.6 If I might just stray rather wider than motorised sport for a moment and mention other new leisure activities, such as war games, which can cause disturbance and danger as well as noise problems. The Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988 gives a general grant of planning permission for the use of land for certain recreational activities, for up to 28 days in any calendar year. Longer use requires specific planning permission. The permitted development rights available have been granted by Parliament and are withdrawn only when there is a real threat to the amenities of the area.
- 1.7 Motorised sport does, of course, also include air sports. Participation in air sports has grown substantially, particularly as gliding and microlight aircraft have developed in the last twenty years as alternatives to flying light aircraft for sport. At the same time environmental constraints, and in some cases extensions of controlled/regulated air space have lead to restrictions on air sports. It is therefore important that local planning authorities are aware of the airspace, noise and site constraints on air sports, particularly when they are called on to consider the merits of a proposal to a relocate an air sport. I hope that planning authorities will consult the Civil Aviation Authority and the Sports Council Regional Offices as well as the governing bodies of air sports on any proposals.
- 1.8 The Planning Policy Guidance Note will therefore describe and elaborate on the current planning controls. Some of you may feel that these controls are too restrictive, but Ministers are keen to use the Planning Policy Guidance Note as an opportunity to develop the theme of co-operation and will urge planning authorities to consult with all those organisations with an interest in sport and recreation, including the conservation bodies, British Waterways and the National Rivers Authority, Urban Development Corporations, tourist interests, and the governing bodies of sport. The Regional Councils for Sport and

Recreation provide a valuable forum where many of these interests are gathered. And I would urge local planning authorities to make full use of the Sports Council Regional Offices, which can provide a valuable means of gathering expertise and opinions while plans and proposals are being formulated.

RIGHTS OF WAY

- 1.9 I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise the DoE's interest in, and concern for, the proper maintenance of the rights of way network. As increasing numbers of people enjoy visiting the countryside for leisure and recreation, the value of the network is coming increasingly into focus.
- 1.10 Parliament sets the legislative framework within which rights of way are protected and maintained. It has delegated the duty and responsibility for day-to-day management to authorities responsible for the highway network as a whole. It has also, through the Countryside Commission, established an agency providing advice and guidance on how those general duties can be carried out most effectively. Under its 'Recreation 2000' initiative, the Commission has highlighted the importance of the rights of way network as the primary means of access to the countryside for recreational enjoyment. It has established a firm target; that the rights of way network, all 140,000 miles, should be legally defined, properly maintained, well publicised and available for public use by the end of the century.
- 1.11 As the recent White Paper on the Environment explains, there are problems, including non-restoration after ploughing, impenetrable natural vegetation, rights of way blocked by fences and walls, the absence of signposts or waymarking. These problems may affect only a small proportion of the network but their impact on enjoyment is disproportionate.
- 1.12 We were particularly pleased, therefore, to be able to offer support for Edward Leigh's Private Members' Bill on ploughing and rights of way, which came into effect as the Rights of Way Act 1990 on 13 August. The Act not only clarifies the law, but the consensus between landowners and users which supported it clearly demonstrates that conflicts over issues as intractable as rights of way can be resolved quickly. This is an excellent pointer to the future.
- 1.13 Ministers at the Department believe that rights of way legislation requires only fine tuning, not fundamental change. They, are however, looking to see that they are not overtaken by the pace of technological change and increasingly sophisticated demands for access opportunities. Ministers are prepared to look closely at any suggestions that the legislation might need clarifying in certain areas.

RECREATIONAL MOTORISTS AND RIGHTS OF WAY

- 1.14 The recreational motorist is not always popular in the countryside. Landowners, horseriders and ramblers seldom welcome his presence. It is of course illegal to take a motor vehicle along a footpath or bridleway, but the motorist has a right to use a green lane if it is classified as a "byway open to all traffic" (BOAT). Motor vehicles can and do cause damage to green lanes. In wet weather they can make them impassable to other users. The worst culprits are agricultural and forestry vehicles, but recreational vehicle users can cause the same problems on a smaller scale. They also emit noise and fumes. They are often perceived as a hazard to other travellers. Walkers and riders often regard them as hostile and out of place.
- 1.15 On the other hand, recreational vehicle users gain great enjoyment from travelling on rough and relatively unfrequented routes such as green lanes. Their interests should not be ignored. Where they can use their vehicles lawfully and without causing damage or conflict, they should not be prevented from doing so. In some instances though, regulatory action may be necessary to preserve the character of a highway which is especially suitable for walkers, cyclists or horseriders, or to allow the public to enjoy the amenities of the area better. Local highway authorities have powers (under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984) to ban any specified classes of traffic from using a highway. These powers can have effect at particular times, days or periods.
- 1.16 On certain routes in the countryside, if the local authority does not choose to make a ban, the Countryside Commission may request the Secretary of State for Transport to do so. Many of you will be aware that Cecil Parkinson has agreed to a request from the Commission to seek powers to ban recreational motor vehicles from using the (Berkshire-Oxfordshire-Wiltshire) Ridgeway Long Distance Route on Sundays and Bank Holidays. The decision was not taken lightly. The Secretary of State first required the Commission to undertake a survey of the usage of the route. This established that its use by motor cycles and four wheel drive vehicles led to significant conflicts with other users and also contributed to the damage to the surface of the route. The preparation of the necessary traffic orders is now underway.

COMMUNITY FORESTS AND NEW NATIONAL FORESTS

- 1.17 Many of you will be familiar with the Countryside Commission's policy statement 'Forestry in the Countryside' which proposed two initiatives; Community Forests and New National Forests. The Community Forest is a joint venture with the Forestry Commission which aims to create forests on the outskirts of major cities. The Department of the Environment has authorised a lead programme at three sites and is considering whether to extend the programme. The Department is also considering the Countryside Commission's proposal to develop a New National Forest.

- 1.18 Clearly the community forests provide excellent opportunities for sport and recreation in the countryside on land, water and in the air. If properly planned they can be models for multiple use of resources and include provision for intensive countryside activities, such as motorised sports, without detriment to landscape or conservation interests. Again, the emphasis must be on planning, co-operation and consultation between all the interested parties.

WATER SPORTS

- 1.19 Last, but no means least, I must mention another area in which the DoE has an interest: that of access to the waterways. Whilst the best arrangements made to cater for different users of our waterways are often voluntarily agreed amongst those directly interested, navigation control on inland waterways is generally the formal responsibility of the many local navigation authorities. They are best placed to consider whether specific controls are necessary or adequate, having taken account of local conditions, in the interests of the best and safest use of their waterways. They have available to them a range of powers under public and local Acts of Parliament to enable them to regulate users, including powers to make byelaws on navigation and water-based recreation.
- 1.20 Since its formation under the Transport Act of 1962, British Waterways has been responsible for some 2,000 miles of canals and navigable rivers, the country's longest single holding of navigable inland waterways. During its management of these waterways, predominantly for leisure and recreation, the Board has gained considerable experience of ensuring that a large number of people can enjoy different sporting and recreational activities. Some 2 million informal users, 300,000 anglers and 42,000 boaters enjoy the waterways at least once a month.
- 1.21 The 1989 Water Act also imposed a duty on the National Rivers Authority and indeed on the new water companies, to provide for recreation on their land and waters. Additionally, the Authority is under a wider duty to promote the conservation of the natural beauty and amenity of inland and coastal waters and their use for recreational purposes. To this end we hope the NRA will work closely with national and local sporting bodies and related interests, by offering advice and making recommendations on water recreation, which may also lead to the NRA's participation in assisting the resolution of user conflicts.

CONCLUSION

- 1.22 The constant theme running through this speech has been the need to balance the conflicting pressures arising from increased participation in an ever widening range of sports. Ministers are confident that this balance can be achieved and that by careful planning and co-operation outdoor activities can continue to thrive.

'A SPORTING CHANCE'

Peter Yarranton, Chairman of the Sports Council,

- 2.1 I am delighted to be speaking to you all today at this, the first National Conference of its kind. I hope that during today's proceedings we shall try, collectively, to identify ways to overcome the challenges raised by motorised sports in their use of rural land, of air and of water. My speech is entitled 'A Sporting Chance' and I have deliberately chosen to define the word 'chance' in terms of 'opportunity'
- 2.2 I will not be accused of originality if I say that motorised sports have not traditionally enjoyed a very good press. As the Conference brochure points out, "...For the participants and enthusiasts, motor sports are exciting, involving skills, achievement and great fun ... For many planners, landowners, site managers and residents, they may be seen as a noisy, smelly, periodic or near permanent nuisance which can bring more cost than benefit to their lives and environment."
- 2.3 The Sports Council reports, 'Providing for Motorised Sports: Land, Air and Water', produced in 1986 and 1989 respectively by Professor Martin Elson, who incidently is here with us today, addressed this dilemma squarely. These reports demonstrated the problems of image associated with motorised sports. The lack of provision for motorised sport and water-skiing results in part from perceptions, often false perceptions, which many members of the public have of these activities.
- 2.4 At one level motorised sports are an expression of human skill and enterprise just as any other activity, like angling or horseriding, I do not accept that there is some inherent and self evident reason why such sports should be denied a legitimate position in the countryside. Indeed, the positive benefits of motorised sports for both the participant and the rural communities should be promoted more positively.
- 2.5 For example, motorised sports contribute to the development of physical skills and personal fitness. They involve the practice of skill, the measurement of performance, competition and, in many cases the development of responsibility, self-reliance, technique and judgement.
- 2.6 They perform a valuable training function at youth level and constitute social and community activities valued by club members. For example, off-road motor cycle facilities provide the safest environment and make users better and safer riders. The high standards of off-road motor cycle facilities and their accompanying coaching/supervisory personnel can be maintained through schemes such as the NatWest Bank/Auto Cycle Union Training Division, aided by the Sports Council, which offers expert information and advice on every aspect of off-road motor cycle centres. The benefits of this extra safety are by no means enjoyed exclusively by those who live in towns.

- 2.7 Furthermore, the General Household Survey is a government sponsored survey which asks questions on sport every three years. Their latest data suggest that "exciting, adventurous, and fun" activities are needed in order to retain/attract young people to sport. Motorised sports certainly fulfil these criteria. Water skiing, for example, has more than doubled in terms of clubs and members since 1970. Many of those who wish to take up such sports are doubtless themselves country-dwellers.
- 2.8 Sportsmen and women are not indifferent to their environment and it is for this reason that I will today attempt to dispel what I believe is the misrepresentation of the motorised sport community among the so-called 'opinion formers'. I shall of course, draw upon the role and work of the Sports Council in this respect, paying particular attention to our work in developing a policy framework for countryside and water based sport and recreation.
- 2.9 The four main aims set out in the Sports Council's Royal Charter are:
- [a] to increase participation in sport and physical recreation;
 - [b] to increase the quantity and quality of facilities for sport and recreation;
 - [c] to raise standards of performance for all those taking part;
 - [d] to provide information for and about sport and physical recreation activities.
- 2.10 These duties clearly encompass the whole range of 'countryside activities'. Indeed, we are delighted to see that the number of people taking part in recreational activities in the countryside has increased significantly over recent years and continues to rise. Simultaneously the number and range of countryside activities have themselves increased, bringing new opportunities and challenges to all those involved with planning and providing opportunities.
- 2.11 However, the Sports Council is also conscious that the growing demand for countryside activities has added to the increasing pressures on the countryside from a whole variety of sources. These include industry, housing, waste disposal, transport, forestry, agriculture and tourism. Pressures have also arisen, both directly and indirectly, through the designation of sites for the protection or conservation of landscapes or nature. These pressures have tended to exacerbate conflicts between countryside interests and a co-operative effort is required to ensure the best multiple use of the environment.
- 2.12 The particular problems associated with motorised sports include the following:
- [a] Claims for access to the countryside are rarely undisputed by some other land user.
 - [b] There is a fundamental clash of interest between the aspirations of the majority of countryside users for space, peace and quiet and those of motorised sports participants, who value the same visual amenity but from a very different perspective.

- [c] The increase in urban-rural migration and the perceived threats to the countryside have increased the premium placed upon a 'green and pleasant land' and any interests which are regarded as contrary to this are increasingly being seen as unwelcome.
- [d] The increase in participation has lead to added pressure on the limited number of sites available to motorised sports in the countryside.
- [e] Motorised countryside sports are generally poorly represented on decision making and policy making forums concerned with access to the countryside, particularly when compared with the lobbies developed by other countryside interests.
- [f] The governing bodies and clubs of the motorised countryside sports are often expected to police and control access to the countryside which is a difficult task for voluntary organisations. Additionally, many of the problems traditionally associated with motorised sports are created by unaffiliated or unauthorised users, whom it is unreasonable to expect voluntary organisations to control.
- [g] There are a number of different disciplines within air, water and motorised sports activities, some competing for the same space and others for different spaces.

- 2.13 Some of you may be aware that the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, in association with the National Housing and Town Planning Council and the Association of District Councils, has launched a paper pressing for extended planning control over farmland. CPRE wants to bring all agricultural building and alterations under planning control. The paper expresses particular concern over the sound pollution and damage caused by 'noisy sports', such as clay pigeon shooting and motor cycling, and calls for consideration of additional controls on such activities and the reduction to time limits for temporary uses of this kind. We have to be prepared positively to counter such proposals.
- 2.14 Many of these problems crop up in relation to the individual activities which I will now briefly examine. There is a capability of living together.

LAND SPORTS

- 2.15 Turning first to land sports. You will recall that the report prepared by Professor Martin Elson, "Providing for Motorsports - From Image to Reality" (1986), identified a number of major issues:
- [a] Noise The noise generated by land sports is the major objection from other countryside users. It should be pointed out that evidence supplied by Cheshire County Council showed that complaints about noise from other sources, such as domestic and industrial, far exceeded complaints about land sports.

[b] Image

Land sport suffers severely from a problem of image, both for the sport itself and of its participants. I recall that at the Motorised Vehicles in the Countryside Conference at Winchester in October 1989, several speakers stood up and quoted Lord Denning's remark about "young vandals" and asked whether they, as 60-year old company directors or whatever, fitted this image? However, despite such protestations land sports undoubtedly continue to suffer from such preconceptions and action needs to be taken to counteract the orthodoxy prevailing in many quarters, that land sport interests are unprincipled, uncontrolled and immune to outside pressures.

[c] Land Availability

All land sports activities suffer from increasing obstacles by way of access. As well as encountering difficulties in establishing and retaining security of usage of a site, sports are finding it more and more common for county councils and national park authorities to make use of traffic regulation orders to exclude motor vehicles from vehicular rights of way.

[d] The Planning System

Planners are often reluctant to tackle the problem of land sports in the countryside other than with exclusionary policies which seek to shift the problem elsewhere. The Elson Report states "..... it is apparent that consultative procedures have been of little use to motorised sports interests as their prime effect has been to formalise opposition rather than to permit genuine access to decision-making such a stance is increasingly untenable".

The Sports Council believes that sport and recreation activities can be harmonised with other countryside interests. In planning for them local planning authorities should have regard to the needs of the local community and economy and not solely of conservation concerns. Although proper consideration of local and conservation interest is clearly desirable, a complete ban on land sport activities will rarely be necessary or wholly effective.

[e] Informal Activity

Even where formal sites have been developed by local authorities such arrangements can be inherently unattractive to participants who are unaffiliated to any clubs and who derive a certain amount of pleasure from pursuing their sport in unauthorised places.

AIRSPORTS

2.16 Let us now look at airports. Again there are a number of problems.

[a] Restrictions on Airspace

Participation in air sports has grown substantially, particularly as hang gliding, gliding and microlight aircraft have developed in the last twenty years, as alternatives to flying light aircraft

for sport. At the same time, the amount of controlled/regulated air space has increased, particularly in South East England, leading to restrictions on air sports, not least in finding new sites for airfields. We badly need a formal means of consultation over proposed air space modifications between the civil aviation authority and air sports interests.

[b] Air Sports and the Planning System

At present the responsibilities of local planning authorities for airfield planning are very unclear. If the Sports Council and the airports governing bodies are to influence planning documents in a constructive way these responsibilities should be clarified by the Government. At present, planning decisions tend to be at best restrictive and frequently hostile towards air sports development. It is extremely important that local planning authorities are aware of the airspace, noise and site constraints on air sports, particularly when they are called on to consider the merits of a proposal to relocate an air sport. We have been pressing hard for the forthcoming Policy Planning Guidance Note on Sport and Recreation to be produced by the Department of the Environment to address this issue.

[c] Environmental Problems

The most important impacts of air sports in the countryside are noise, loss of privacy of local residents, car parking and erosion of heavily used sites. Local authorities have increasingly sought to control the informal use of sites through byelaws and whilst accepting that this process is likely to continue, we believe that adequate discussion with user groups should take place first and that the byelaws should be the subject of regular reviews.

[d] Sites Loss

In common with other motorised sports in the countryside, air sports, microlighting in particular, often suffer from a lack of security of tenure of their sites. Those which make use of Ministry of Defence facilities have the constant threat of exclusion due to security alerts. Others using less permanent facilities also experience problems.

[e] Conflict Between Air Sports

Given these problems, conflict between air sports in the limited areas which remain to them is almost inevitable, and several examples have emerged of clashes of interest, in particular between gliding and hang gliding.

MOTORISED WATER SPORTS

2.17 Finally, let us look at the main issues relating to motorised water sports.

[a] Access

Again, shortage of sites is becoming critical. Most of the activities require a large area of space which is often at a premium on inland waters and which has to be shared with other non-motorised water sports. The growth in participation is exacerbating the problem, particularly for water skiing.

- [b] Inland Waters
In view of the problems of using coastal and estuarine waters, many clubs are seeking to move their activities inland, but this has incited much opposition from nature conservationists. Generally, both in relation to inland water and many coastal areas clashes have occurred between recreationists and conservationists.
- [c] Problems of Non-Affiliated Participants
Again the policing of non-affiliated participants creates difficulties.
- [d] Noise Levels
The governing bodies of the motorised water sports have introduced voluntary codes of practice to restrict noise levels, with some success. This often remains a bone of contention whenever new sites are being sought.
- [e] New Sports
The rapid increase in the number of people wanting to take part in new activities such as jet skiing, are bringing their own problems. Not only is there a clash with the interests of more established sports, such as water skiing, but the problems of regulation are exacerbated by the nature of the activities. Ways must be found to develop these new sports in harmony with other users and the environment.

POSITIVE PLANNING

- 2.18 In such a complicated and apparently insoluble situation what should our policies and priorities for motorised sports in the countryside be? In my view Positive Planning is required. The planning authorities need to develop clear provision policies for sport and recreation. For example, in their draft local plans (1990), Corby District Council and Kettering Borough Council have proposed to identify specific sites for motorised sports. This is surely the right way forward.
- 2.19 I am confident that the forthcoming Department of the Environment's Policy Planning Guidance Note on Sport and Recreation will stress the need for positive planning. Respect for environmental, conservationist, aesthetic and recreational needs is required. "Planning, not banning" should be the prevalent theme from central and local government: and a negotiative rather than an exclusionary stance should be taken towards motorised sports in the countryside. Certainly it is imperative that countryside sport and recreation needs, including motorised sports, are fully taken into account when considering local plans, structure plans and strategies for the countryside, recreation, tourism, leisure, mineral extractions and the coast.
- 2.20 Certainly, groups involved in policy formation on rights of way should also emphasise the need to support governing bodies to control their sports by education, codes of practice and codes of voluntary restraint. After all, conservation in the countryside should not be preservation by exclusion, but access with education. Why shouldn't there be many examples of access agreements for say, a private lake, or a derestricted stretch of British Waterways canal, being drawn up with specific and responsible jet ski clubs?

- 2.21 There are currently no systems for defining or designating sites or areas which are particularly important for countryside sport and recreation. This means that countryside activity sites are in greater danger of being lost to development or other uses, compared to sites or areas which have clear designations or definitions for nature conservation, archaeological, geological or landscape reasons. The Sports Council is currently considering how best to ensure the long-term future of such prime sites, and we look forward to discussing this in more detail with our partners during the Sports Council's forthcoming consultation on policies for sport and recreation.
- 2.22 The Sports Council believes that the plurality of land-user needs can be by sports users, planners and land owners working together on site design and management. For example, we should be seeking to provide for access to and security of sites for motorised sports in new developments such as industrial estates and newly built sports complexes. One fine example is the proposed Bedfont Lakes development, located to the West of London, which not only includes offices and business units, but also offers extensive recreational amenities including a junior motor cycle training track looking out over the waters of Bedfont Lake and 188 landscaped acres of green belt land. We want more of this.

FUTURE POLICY

- 2.23 The Sports Council has been closely involved with sport and recreation in the countryside for over 18 years. If the aims of the Royal Charter are to be fully achieved, and new opportunities for sport in the countryside are to be developed, it is clear that new policies must be devised for the future, for all the reasons I have been outlining.
- 2.24 The timing of this Conference virtually coincides with the planned launch of the Sports Council's own national Countryside and Water Policy Consultation Paper.
- 2.25 During the last eighteen months, officers within the Sports Council have been addressing a number of policy issues with the aim of formulating a formal policy statement on countryside and water-based sport. Our aim is to publish the final policy document in the summer of 1991. More immediately, however, a consultation document will be published early next month. I hope you all feel ready to make a constructive contribution to today's proceedings because the recommendations that this Conference makes will form part of the consultation process.
- 2.26 One of the most important aspects of the consultation will be to seek agreement on how planning for sport and recreation in the countryside can be achieved. The Sports Council believes that people should be encouraged to take part in activities, and that they should be encouraged to use opportunities which have positive effects upon the environment.
- 2.27 If the countryside activities, land, air and water, are to be matched with sites which can best meet the needs of an activity and best cope with its effects, then it will be necessary to devise a system for assessing each type of area and activity occurring upon it.

- 2.28 The Sports Council recognises that there are different types of landscape or environment, which might be used to develop appropriate planning policies.
- 2.29 First, there are areas where use by most countryside activities can be increased whilst simultaneously improving the quality of the environment and remaining in harmony with other interests. Sites might include those in urban areas or man-made 'facilities' such as canals or derelict land.
- 2.30 Secondly, there are areas where the development of the majority of countryside activities would be environmentally sustainable. Sites might include lowland farmland, woodland and forests, rivers and some moorland areas.
- 2.31 There are those areas where it should be possible to maintain or even gradually increase current levels of use by most activities through improved management or well designed new facilities. These are all areas where sport and recreation can be developed.
- 2.32 The Sports Council also recognises however that there are some areas which cannot support current levels of use by particular activities, which in some cases include motorised sports.
- 2.33 We would welcome your views on these ideas amongst others and they may be a useful basis for discussion in at least one of the workshops today.
- 2.34 The problems can be demonstrated with regard to National Parks. Many of the best and most important sites for countryside sports are found in national parks. The Parks are a unique recreational resource, essentially because they are able to provide a quality of environment and recreational experience not found elsewhere.
- 2.35 The Sports Council believes that the Parks should be managed to provide for those activities which depend upon their natural assets. At the same time we question whether they should be actively promoted for those forms of leisure activity which can be equally well accommodated elsewhere. Should sites for motorised sports therefore be planned and provided outside the National Parks areas, to decrease activity within the Parks?
- 2.36 More appropriate sites for motorised sporting activity might be seen to include sites in or near major urban areas such as city based activity centres in docklands, lowland farmland, forests, derelict land (quarries), regional valley parks, and areas of regional and national significance such as the proposed New National Forest in the Midlands.
- 2.37 Although such planning may reduce the use of sensitive areas such as national parks by visitors, the question of local use remains. Where should the local kids be encouraged to use their motor bikes. Areas such as community forests will become very important for achieving a balance of interests in the countryside, and as such, should be planned and managed for all countryside sports from the earliest stages, not just for informal recreation, forestry or conservation.
- 2.38 I would also like to mention the Council's National Demonstration Projects Programme, which aims to increase participation in sport by

exploring new avenues, and provides a fine series of examples of the successful operation of joint management projects. Each project is monitored in detail in order that lessons may be learned and information disseminated to potential new sponsors for schemes aimed at increasing participation in sport. One such project is the motorised sports promotion scheme with Langbaurch Borough Council in the North East of England.

- 2.39 For those of you who are not familiar with the project, the Langbaurch motorised sports project was selected for inclusion in the National Demonstration Programme in June 1988 and work began on the ground in November 1988. One of the fundamental short-term aims of the motorised sports complex is to make motorised sport competition and the chance to drive and ride motor vehicles interesting and available to people who would not normally have the means and the inclination to take part. It also aims to redirect those who may be driving and riding illegally to safe, legal and educational activities.
- 2.40 Although throughout this speech, I have promoted the defence of the sports participant in the countryside, I do recognise that there is, nevertheless, a need to educate people (especially young people) about their responsibilities to the environment, local people and to other land users. Governing bodies, the media and site managers have an important role to play in this effort.
- 2.41 For example, the Motoring Organisations' Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) has produced a Code of Conduct for drivers and riders in the countryside, aimed at helping participants to gain the most from their recreation, but at the same time protecting future access to the countryside. This Code also includes a message from the Royal Society for Nature Conservation about the need to take care when driving through wildlife areas.
- 2.42 We support positive planning and educational policies by providing improved and more appropriate facilities, and if necessary be prepared to relocate motorised sports from 'problem' areas to areas where they can be planned from the onset.
- 2.43 As I said earlier, motorised sports unfortunately have a relatively poor image with local authorities, other land/water space users and rural residents. This is due to a lack of understanding and is based on a misinformed assessment of the degree of intrusion caused. Nevertheless, motorised sports do need to improve their image and control the "rogues". This can be done through schemes such as 4 x 4 vehicle groups assisting conservation volunteers to repair and improve access to green lanes and other areas difficult to access and through the enforcement of voluntary bans by motorised sports groups.
- 2.44 It is not just the participant who has a responsibility to help raise levels of environmental awareness. There is also a need for continued research and development by the manufacturers, encouraged by user groups, to design environmentally sensitive vehicles.
- 2.45 We should not forget that motorised sports have immense potential as spectator sports, for sponsorship, for media interest, for income generation and for private sector investment. We should seek to maximise this 'commercial buoyancy' in every way possible in order to further the development of the various motorised disciplines.

CONCLUSION

- 2.46 I started today's speech on the basic premise that all sport can potentially be accommodated in the countryside and I shall conclude on this note as well. At the same time, the message which we at the Sports Council are constantly re-enforcing is that sport does not operate in isolation. Only through partnerships, liaison, compromise, forward planning and goodwill can we hope to achieve significant advances in solving the challenges of motorised sports in the countryside.
- 2.47 "Conflict between recreation and conservation can be solved by sound management and planning. What does seem likely, however, is that conflicts of interest are likely to increase as environmental concerns and standards of protection are raised while recreation pressures grow. It will be necessary to concentrate on the opportunities that this situation presents".
- 2.48 We have therefore, come full circle in the debate and return to the concept of 'opportunity'. We need to remember that people, sport and the environment all interact. Our collective will and our increased sense of responsibility to the needs of land users, sports and the environment can enable us to identify future opportunities for motorised sports in the countryside, in the air and on the water, and work towards resolving conflicts that exist today.

'OUT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE'

**Roger Clarke, Director of Policy
Countryside Commission**

- 3.1 It is a privilege to be associated with the Sports Council in promoting this Conference and I pay tribute to the work already done by the Sports Council on air, land and water motorised sports.
- 3.2 The Commission's 'Enjoying the Countryside' policy document published in 1987 was the result of a comprehensive review of countryside recreation. It examined the opportunities available for recreation, the means of informing people about them and the management needed to improve recreational opportunities and integrate recreation with other land uses. Five specific points for action were identified:
 - [a] Improving the rights of way network.
 - [b] Better information for people about countryside recreation.
 - [c] More countryside management schemes.
 - [d] A new role for countryside staff.
 - [e] A strategic approach to countryside recreation.
- 3.3 Considerable progress has been made in all these areas. The Commission's target of getting the rights of way system operational by the end of the century has been endorsed by the Government and new resources applied by many local authorities.
- 3.4 Rangers based in country parks have increasingly been given wider countryside management duties. Many local authorities have prepared countryside recreation strategies. The Commission will this winter be publishing for consultation, new draft policies on informing people about countryside opportunities.
- 3.5 The Commission has traditionally emphasised those forms of recreation that are compatible with the quiet enjoyment of the countryside.

THE COMMISSION'S VIEW OF MOTORISED SPORT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

- 3.6 The Commission recognises that the countryside is also an appropriate place for less compatible forms of recreation such as motorised sport, which by its nature is intrusive and noisy and has the capacity to cause environmental damage, to upset local residents and to conflict with other countryside users.
- 3.7 The Commission continues to recognise motorised use of the countryside as a legitimate recreational activity. It comes in many forms using the resources of land, air and water and based in both specific sites and using the countryside as a whole.

- 3.8 Off-road motorised use is of course a minority activity. By far the largest forms of motorised use of the countryside is people going for drives and outings using cars to travel on the road network.
- 3.9 The Commission considers however, that off-road motorised sport in the countryside, like other countryside activities, needs careful management if it is to co-exist with other users.

PRINCIPLES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF MOTORISED SPORT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

- 3.10 As a general rule, the protection of the basic countryside resource must be paramount. The 'Sandford Principle' for national parks devised in the mid 70s said that, where there was an irreconcilable conflict between conservation and recreation, the conservation imperative should take precedence. Today we recognise (the Brundtland Report) the paramount importance of conserving the basic resources of land, air and water. All countryside sports, whether motorised or otherwise, need to take this message to heart and to minimise or mitigate any environmental damage.
- 3.11 An approach based on rights alone, whether they be the rights of walkers, canoeists, four-wheel drive enthusiasts, or grouse moor owners, is inadequate and unhelpful. A clear legal underpinning is important, but one person's rights inevitably conflict with another person's rights. If conflict is to be avoided, rights have to be tempered by mutual respect and solutions found through management devices rather than through megaphone diplomacy.
- 3.12 In relation to off-road motorised sport in the countryside, management solutions are particularly important, as there is always bound to be an underlying tension between motorised use of the countryside and its conservation and quiet enjoyment by other users.
- 3.13 Countryside recreation strategies prepared by county councils represent the first management device advocated by the Commission. Sometimes they are part of more general countryside strategies. Their preparation should involve dialogue with the various user groups, landowning interests and local communities, as well as discussion between the local authority departments involved.
- 3.14 The Commission proposes that district development plans should make specific provision of sites for motorised sport in the countryside, rather than seeking to ignore the problem, to divert it to neighbouring districts, or to ban motorised users altogether. The Commission published its overall view of planning policy for the countryside, 'Planning for a Greener Countryside' in 1989, and two years earlier in 1987 had published 'Planning for Countryside in Metropolitan Areas'. It is fair to say that neither of these publications said much in specific terms about motorised sport. However, on 29 November this year we shall be publishing 'Countryside and Nature Conservation in District Planning', which will contain a little more explicit guidance along the lines I have outlined.
- 3.15 The Commission advocates the establishment of local liaison groups to deal with management issues related to rights of way. These may be a means of tackling other issues connected with the management of countryside recreation, although they are not in themselves likely to be a fruitful means of identifying specific sites for motorised sport.

- 3.16 The Commission does not at this stage view it as necessary to revise the legal framework which enables vehicles to use by-ways and Roads Used as Public Paths (RUPPS). The Commission is keeping the situation under review. For the time being the Commission favours the use of traffic regulation orders (as proposed on the Ridgeway) to deal with local problems.
- 3.17 Some areas are so sensitive that any kind of motorised use may be inappropriate. In general, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Heritage Coasts are not appropriate areas for the development of motorised sports. In particular, the wilder parts of the designated areas have an increasing value for their solitude, and conservation policies in such areas are likely to become stricter in years to come.
- 3.18 Motorised users of the countryside suffer from a poor image in the minds of many other countryside interests. To earn respect in the future they will need to give the maximum emphasis possible to organising participants in their various sports and to negotiating rather than confronting local authorities, land managers and other recreational and community interests.
- 3.19 Many local authorities in recreation areas including National Park Authorities, deploy rangers or countryside management services on the ground, whose task is to improve local conservation opportunities and to help resolve recreational conflicts. Such staff can be an important liaison point for those wishing to develop motorised sport in the countryside.
- 3.20 All recreational users of the countryside, including those taking part in motorised sport, need to contribute to countryside conservation. This may be through lobbying for the conservation cause, through channelling money into conservation effort, or through carrying out practical conservation work themselves.
- 3.21 The Commission is committed to extending recreational opportunities in the countryside. Current initiatives include plans to create Community Forests around major cities and a New National Forest in the Midlands, the site to be announced this Friday. Recreational opportunities for motorised sport may well exist in the new forests. Forests have a better absorption capacity than open areas. It would not be realistic to expect motorised recreation to be a principal objective of the forests.
- 3.22 Motorised off-road sport in the countryside generates a lot of heat. Even more important, as suggested earlier, is motorised on-road traffic in the countryside. Arguably the penetration of motor vehicles (whether on business or recreational trips) in increasing volumes through country roads, does much more damage to the tranquility of the countryside than motorised sports. The Commission will be studying this issue over the next year or two and develop a policy proposal accordingly.

'AIRY HEIGHTS'

Keith Garton, Assistant County Planning Officer
Derbyshire County Council and Chairman of The Countryside Panel of
Regional Council for Sport & Recreation - East Midlands

- 4.1 When I was approached by the Conference Organiser to present this contribution my immediate reaction was that it had come 30 years too late. Such a presentation then would have coincided with the peak of my enthusiasm for the subject; an avid reader of 'Motor Sport' and the proud possessor of a Singer 'Le Mans' sports car that had seen better days; a frequent spectator at race meetings and a dedicated disciple for the sport. However, on reflection, the ensuing years and a professional career that has diverted from a conventional planning policy background to one directly concerned with countryside recreation and environmental improvement may help present a more balanced view of the subject. Although as a planner, I contend that the "head in the clouds" connotation of the allotted title for this contribution 'Airy Heights' is somewhat removed from the down to earth reality of the work.
- 4.2 The past 20 years have witnessed a recreational revolution; the wave of leisure demand forecast in the 60's broke up the countryside with a range of new facilities prompted by the Countryside Act 1968. Local authorities, especially county councils, were encouraged, with the offer of central government assistance, to develop and manage this new wave of facilities; ranging from country parks to picnic sites and trails, in an endeavour to stem the leisure tide and ease the pressure on established sites in popular but vulnerable areas of countryside, such as the Peak District National Park.
- 4.3 Majority (family) interests have been relatively well catered for, with 200 country parks and 250 picnic areas developed since the introduction of the Countryside Act in 1968. Not so well accommodated are the requirements of those who prefer their pleasure to be power driven, whether on wheels, in the air or on water.
- 4.4 Television programmes like 'Kickstart' have done much to popularise competitive trials riding, and in Derbyshire our local champion Mick Andrews has championed the case for the provision of recognised sites for trials training and events.
- 4.5 Equipment manufacturers and sales outlets are quick to respond to such stimulus, but the availability of sites where they may legitimately be put through their paces has not followed suit. This has lead, inevitably, through frustration to problems of the unauthorised use of land, very often in conflict with local residents and the law. Local authorities, Derbyshire County Council included, have experienced problems of youngsters riding motorcycles on public open spaces and non-vehicular rights of way. Not only is such use dangerous to other legitimate users, but it creates rapid deterioration of surfaces not intended for wheeled traffic.

- 4.6 It is not surprising therefore that local authority land-use and recreation strategies have belatedly addressed themselves to the problem. Motorised sport undertaken responsibly and in appropriate locations provides pleasure, recreation and considerable employment for many people. Pursued irresponsibly without regard for the safety or well being of others or the environment is totally unacceptable. A major step towards overcoming such problems is for motorised sport to be recognised as a legitimate countryside recreation with criteria established for the identification of potentially acceptable locations for participation by enthusiasts. Equally, the governing bodies of the various motorised sports have a responsibility to direct use to such sites and encourage responsible behaviour amongst participants.
- 4.7 In acknowledging the legitimacy of motorised sport in the countryside it must be recognised that there will always be a proportion of participants with no wish to join a club and that there will be areas where the inevitable noise or mere presence of vehicles, aircraft, powercraft or spectators, is contrary to the conservation of high quality landscape, wildlife or heritage interests and any proposals to promote motorised sport would be vigorously opposed.
- 4.8 Similarly, where there is likely to be conflict with other recreational activity, it is unlikely to be sanctioned. So where you may ask, does that leave the sport? Legitimate, but without any prospect of development.
- 4.9 I do not believe that to be the case; certainly we need to achieve a balance between conservation and recreation, but there is sufficient evidence of the confidence of regional and local authorities to suggest that this can be achieved.
- 4.10 The Regional Council for Sport and Recreation - East Midlands in its Regional Strategy for the 90's 'Taking Shape', recognised as a priority the development by local authorities of corporate plans or strategies for sport and recreation, and placed emphasis on the protection of air and motorised sports venues. In addition, it identified a need for additional water skiing sites, especially in Derbyshire and Leicestershire. Relative to the development of all forms of motorised sport in the countryside it recognised the need to discuss with local planning authorities the choice of site and, as a means of promoting a better understanding of the problems, urged the Sports Council to stage the type of seminar being held here today.
- 4.11 Within the time allocated for this contribution, a comprehensive review of the many local planning strategies to assess the degree of recognition accorded to motorised sport would be impossible, so I will limit my reference mainly to two. These, not surprisingly are the Replacement Structure Plan for Derbyshire, approved in May this year and the First Review of the Peak National Park Plan approved in April 1989.
- 4.12 The Explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Replacement Structure Plan for Derbyshire acknowledges that "certain recreational activities which have special needs or characteristics still experience difficulty in finding suitable sites. This is particularly true of noisy sports, such as off-road motor cycling and model aircraft flying". (Para 7.25).

- 4.13 "Whilst care must be exercised in the location and design of such facilities, opportunity should be taken to direct user groups to sites where such facilities can best be accommodated without causing disturbance to neighbours " (para 7.25 cont)
- 4.14 These statements are supported in the approved Leisure Policies to the effect that "provision will be made for leisure activities which have special locational requirements", and also that "opportunities offered by mineral workings, environmental improvement and land reclamation schemes to develop and expand the range of leisure facilities" would be supported. (LEISURE POLICY 1)
- 4.15 This latter policy was in turn picked up in the more localised and detailed Trent Recreation Plan, which developed the proposal originally propounded in 1969 in the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire's sub-Regional Study for a regional water park, based on the valley and its rivers, canals and water filled gravel pits.
- 4.16 In the context of this paper, the Recreation Plan, identified growth in participation in water skiing but a shortage of facilities, and it accordingly proposed the development of new facilities at former gravel workings at Trent Meadows, Long Eaton.
- 4.17 Participation in the other principal motorised sport, inland waterway cruising, reached a plateau in 1987 but continues to enjoy a steady level of demand. The navigable waterways are heavily used and in order to cater for future demand, especially moorings, further marina development is needed. The release of land adjacent to the Erewash Canal at Sawley, acquired for land reclamation, to allow the development of much needed moorings is an example of local authorities' reaction to legitimate demand. The same waterway also provided an early example of inter-authority endeavour to assist in meeting demands for improved inland waterway cruising facilities when in the early 1970's, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County Councils jointly funded the increased maintenance costs incurred by British Waterways as a result of the restoration and subsequent upgrading of a six mile length of the canal from "remainder" to cruiseway status.
- 4.18 The aspect of motorised sport that is missing from the Derbyshire Strategies and I suspect from most others, concerns provision for motorised air sports. Gliding features in inventories of existing provision and the assessment of projected demand but, to date microlight aircraft flying has remained a relatively low participation sport. No doubt however, subsequent plans or updates of existing ones, will need to address themselves to this 1990's recreation activity. In this they could do worse than base their assessment of the local recreational airborne activity and its demands on terra firma on the Sports Council publication 'Providing for Air Sports' published in August 1989.
- 4.19 I regret that I cannot emulate this and quote successful case studies from Derbyshire, although the authority has been involved in the search for an alternative base for the Flying Club which formerly operated from Burnaston Aerodrome prior to its development by the Toyota car company.

- 4.20 The range of recreational issues, opportunities and indeed conflict identified above exist to an even greater extent in that part of Derbyshire within the Peak District National Park, which, in common with the other National Park Authorities, has two principal duties; to protect and enhance the natural beauty of the Park and to ensure that the public has access to enjoy it. In this context the Peak Park Joint Planning Board is required to produce a National Park Plan setting out management policies for the protection and enhancement of the Park's landscape and providing for the enjoyment of the Park by the public. The Peak District has long been used for all forms of countryside recreation and the First Review of the National Park Plan examined the environmental and locational problems associated with motorised sport.
- 4.21 Whilst acknowledging that informal trail-riding using silenced motor cycles, driven slowly and sensibly on VEHICULAR RIGHTS OF WAY may be reasonable in much of the countryside (para 13.65), it identifies problems arising mainly from irresponsible (cowboy) riders with no respect for the countryside or for those who live, work or use it for quiet enjoyment. The problem has been exacerbated by the rise in popularity of all-terrain vehicles (ATV) and four-wheel drive vehicles for recreational rather than utilitarian use and the desire by their owners, together with their two-wheeled counterparts, to demonstrate their cross-country capabilities, very often on footpaths and bridleways or across moorlands, creating disturbance and damage to the fragile, physical structure of the Pennines. The incidence of this abuse has risen to such proportions that the police in the Kirklees area have resorted to aerial surveillance and apprehension of the perpetrators.
- 4.22 The Peak Park Planning Board also considers that motoring activities such as motorcross and scrambling are not generally consistent with the primary conservation role of the National Park and alternative venues should be sought outside the Park.
- 4.23 The National Park Plan makes reference to the Regional Council for Sport and Recreation - East Midlands Report on off-road motor cycling published in 1985, which identified the need for a hierarchy of sites for motor cycling events and activities. Such sites, it suggests could be established in old quarries without giving rise to objections, and meet local or regional needs, provided there is no special wildlife interest and that the events themselves are not too large or frequent.
- 4.24 This commonsense policy guidance brings us logically to the critical issue of implementation.
- 4.25 The deciding factors, assuming there is a genuine willingness to act, is, as always, resource availability, a suitable and available site and the finances necessary to develop it. The latter, at the present time is to say the least, a problem in Derbyshire, thanks to my authority being Community Charge capped and the Countryside Programme becoming an inevitable casualty.
- 4.26 However, I can indicate certain instances where it has been possible through local authority intervention, to assist in the provision of sites for the more "noisy" recreational activities and perhaps offer some prospect of similar action in the future.

- 4.27 Countryside Recreation Strategies throughout the country share, I suspect, a common main theme similar to that in Derbyshire; to encourage the use of, and improve access to the countryside by all sections of the community for recreation and specifically, to provide country parks, picnic areas and other facilities for recreational trips.
- 4.28 The main thrust of this strategy is obviously directed to satisfying the demand for mainstream countryside recreation. Over the years many new facilities have been provided, encouraged by the Countryside Commission, especially their grant, and whilst the prime purpose of site development has been to cater for the predominant countryside recreation activities, where space permitted and development could be satisfactorily correlated with other activities and the local environment/planning policy, the opportunity is presented to meet other recreational demands.
- 4.29 Water space for water skiing, as a Regional Recreational Strategy confirms is at a premium, and in the planning of the Rother Valley Country Park, a joint endeavour by Rotherham, Sheffield, North East Derbyshire and Derbyshire County Council, the main feature a 1,000 metre lake has been designed and developed as a water sports centre, accommodating not only rowing, board and dinghy sailing, but also water skiing. (Similar to that provided by Nottinghamshire County Council and The Sports Council at Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre).
- 4.30 A site and scheme however, which more closely meets the policy intentions of the Structure Plan and the National Park Plan is Victory Quarry near Buxton, a large disused limestone quarry, acquired by the County Council for land reclamation and waste disposal purposes. Whilst unsuitable for general public use it has proved ideal for the development of a club motor cycle trials circuit. It is remote from housing but accessible and the quarry floor, protected by the walls of the worked-out void, has provided an excellent screened area within which the North Derbyshire Youth Motor Cycle Club has created an exacting circuit for the training and enjoyment of its members.
- 4.31 The Club hold events on thirteen Sundays, mainly from April to October, attracting up to 100 participants. Informal training sessions occur at other times at weekends for youngsters anxious to develop their trials riding skills.
- 4.32 This type of self-help for motorised sports clubs is a way in which the County Council, in the present constrained financial circumstances, can assist and encourage the development of a responsible attitude towards the sport, rather than attempt to invest in expensive development and direct management of purpose-built facilities like the Birmingham Wheels Park. Suitable sites included in the derelict land reclamation programme are examined at the feasibility stage to determine whether land could be made available, following reclamation, for the development of off-road motorised sport or motorised water sport activity. Similarly, when considering the after-use of mineral workings, especially now that there is no longer the same justification to restore to agricultural use, motorised sport provision should be considered.

- 4.33 Unfortunately "Murphy's Law" applies to this work as elsewhere and it is not always possible to match a prospective site to an area of demand like urban fringe areas, where unauthorised motor cycle use poses a major problem. The current Derbyshire Derelict Land Reclamation Programme however, has within the last month commenced its biggest scheme to date at Ireland Colliery on the outskirts of Stavely; which will on completion provide land for a variety of recreational uses, including a motor cycle trials training area, providing a suitable organisation is prepared to take on the responsibility for its development and management.
- 4.34 Similar opportunities will, I am sure, be presented and, although realisation of their full potential for recreation including motorised sport, will need to take their place in the queue for scarce resources, the fact that the special site requirements have been recognised and built into planning policy consideration is, to my mind, a significant step forward.
- 4.35 New opportunities, as yet to be evaluated and tested on public opinion, will, I am sure, present other options - the New National Forest in the Midlands for example, should within its 150 square miles be capable of accommodating a range of motorised sport activity without compromising the forest concept or overall environmental objectives; ie the Government places greater emphasis on "Green" after-uses in the Derelict Land Reclamation Programme.
- 4.36 Attitudes can change and planning prejudice be overcome, especially when presented with reasoned argument and persuasive reassurance. Who for instance would have thought that 1990 would see the RAC - Lombard Rally routed through one of our most revered country parks?

'MAKING A SPLASH'

Bob Hall, Business Strategy Manager, British Waterways

WHAT MAKES WATER DIFFERENT?

- 5.1 Motorised sports on water have some different implications for planners and managers, such as:
- The legal aspects are more complicated, especially where sporting rights (such as angling or wildfowling) have become separated from land ownership, and on rivers, where navigation rights may be unclear.
 - A greater range of sporting activities may be concentrated into a small area of water space, such as angling and unpowered boating, as well as powered water sports.
 - Environmental aspects may be more complicated, with concerns for the impact of water sports on aquatic ecology and water quality.
 - The land/water edge becomes a focus for access and facility provision, making detailed planning and landscaping important.
 - Safety considerations on water makes supervision and management important.
- 5.2 There is no doubt about the continuing popularity of water for recreation. We have seen new water sports, particularly water skiing, board sailing and jet skiing develop over the last few years, and no doubt more new activities will be created. Hence planners and managers must think flexibly in order to accommodate new activities. Moreover, casual use is likely to increase, as more people want to try different activities and move on to other experiences. We can no longer regard casual users as "lepers", or "unclubables" but should actively introduce appropriate management to cater and encourage this market.

BRITISH WATERWAYS

- 5.3 British Waterways (BW) manages 1,750 miles of canals (which it owns on behalf of the nation), and is the navigation authority for about 250 miles of rivers, where its land ownership is usually limited to lock islands. It licenses about 25,000 powered boats, and about 300,000 anglers use its waters at least once a month. It is estimated that about 125 million visits per year are made by informal users, making the inland waterway system a major national leisure resource.

5.4 All these activities are concentrated into a thin strip, 10 x 15 metres wide. How does BW cope? On canals we are helped by the shallow depth of the channel, which physically limits the speed of most boats to about 4mph. However, conflict between some user groups, particularly boaters and anglers occurs from time to time, and BW use the following methods to improve its management of its customers.

- User forums of local boating clubs, angling associations and other user interests meet regularly.
- Codes of conduct have been published and distributed widely.
- Marketing of the waterways emphasises the enjoyment to be gained from "slowing down".
- BW's permission is required for events on waterways, which can then be planned carefully.
- Research is being carried out into the impact of boating on angling and waterway ecology, thus helping us to manage accordingly.
- BW has bye-laws, which are enforced by BW's patrol staff. Boats are identified by a unique numbering system, enabling their owners to be traced via BW's licensing system.

5.5 On its rivers, BW has experienced water skiing and jet skiing from time to time. Other users have reported some conflict, and a recent survey on the River Severn showed that 38% of boaters have experienced conflict with other users, 18% with "speeding boats" and 6% with jet skiers. BW would consider relaxing its bye-laws, which restrict boat speeds to 6mph, in order to accommodate properly controlled jet skiing and water skiing. However, these activities would ideally be better located on enclosed waters.

THE FUTURE

5.6 In looking ahead to the future demand and supply for water space for motorised water sports, an interesting picture emerges. I am not aware of any plans for new reservoir development, in contrast to the 1970's and the 1980's. The other source of new water space, gravel extraction, is likely to provide less than in the past. A growing demand for landfilled sites, greater planning constraints, and increased use of alternative sources (such as marine dredged aggregates and crushed rock) seem likely. As a result, significant increases in water space in the future are probably unlikely.

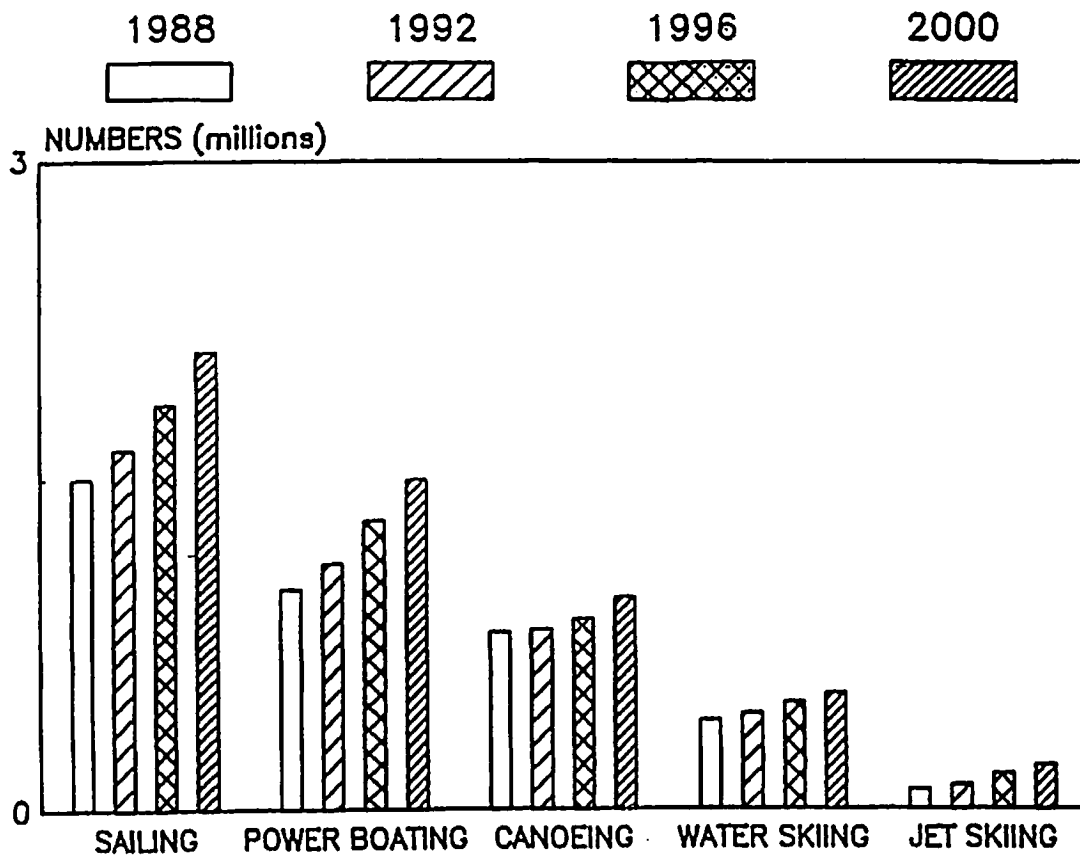
5.7 In contrast, the demand for water sports according to Leisure Consultants, is likely to grow significantly (see graph). This all points to the need to achieve better utilisation of existing water space and in particular to ensure that the best locations for motorised water sports are used for these purposes. At present, existing water space seems grossly under-utilised, and much of this may be due to its leasing to single use clubs.

5.8 Intensification of water activities and the relocation of uses to the best sites would require positive action:

- Planners need to look positively at the provision for water sports and to identify the best locations for motorised sports. This should form part of local plan work, perhaps even disregarding present uses.
- Users should accept that they will have to compromise on their requirements and share with other activities. They may be faced with the alternative of having to pay more for exclusivity.
- Manufacturers should continue to reduce noise levels and consider using speed-governors. They also need to reflect upon the image they project, possibly learning from the current encouragement being given to car manufacturers to emphasise economy and environmental friendliness.
- Sports administrators and managers should provide access for casual users as a matter of course and not rely on clubs. This will have important implications for local authorities and the Sports Council in their grant giving and relationships with governing bodies of sport.

5.9 Finally, more innovation in the management of water space is necessary. Commercial operation could be the key to obtaining better utilisation, as it would provide investment in quality facilities, give professional management and safety cover and encourage access and tuition for casual users. It would also allow management of different activities, either on a time or zone basis, perhaps managing water space on a sports hall basis. It should also allow the proper control and management of motorised sports, probably enabling them to be accommodated more easily. Examples of good commercial operation of water space should be collected, and new ones encouraged, perhaps through joint ventures between commercial operators and local authorities or the Sports Council.

PREDICTED GROWTH IN WATER SPORTS



(R HALL, BRITISH WATERWAYS, OCT 1990)

SECTION 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS ON AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

THE ISSUES

- 6.1 The countryside in its broadest sense (air, land and water) is under increasing pressure from a wide number of uses; some complimentary and some conflicting in their needs. The high population relative to land availability leads to a shortage of the natural resource. New Zealand, Canada and France in comparison, do not have the level and complexity of conflicting countryside demands that makes our Country's problems almost unique and therefore requiring unique solutions.
- 6.2 Due to competing demands, land ownership patterns, current land management practices and often an historical 'sole-use' ethic, there is a significant level of restricted access to the countryside. In many ways this leads to an overuse of the few sites that are available for sport and recreation.
- 6.3 Very much related to the level as well as the type of use is the cost of maintenance of land used, and the cost of provision ("opportunity cost"). The former arises out of repairing damaged surfaces, maintenance of gates, erosion of river banks etc, whilst the latter cost is incurred where the income from sport and recreation may be less than the income from another land use such as cropping or development.
- 6.4 All these factors restricting the resource availability are being compounded by significant increases in both the use and the unsatisfied demand of motorised sports people, (eg water skiers). The increasing importance of 'new sports' such as jet-skiing, are often particularly demanding, but with just as many "rights" as more traditional activities.

THE OUTCOME

- 6.5 The outcome of the resource issue is as follows:
 - [a] There is a conflict between sport and other land uses such as farming, conservation and mineral extraction.
 - [b] There is a conflict between various types of sport and recreation.
 - [c] Many available sites for motorised sports are over-used.
 - [d] There is an illegal or inappropriate use of some areas of land which is in part due to the demand not being met.
 - [e] There is often an entrenchment of protectionist policies on all "sides", leading to a polarisation of views and subsequent lack of understanding and willingness to co-operate, and to find ways of sharing existing resources or open up new ones.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION BY

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| 6.6 | All people involved in the use of the natural resources of the planet should have the conservation of the basic resource as their starting point. The Sports Council, the Countryside Commission, The Central Council for Physical Recreation, amongst others, agree with this principle. Without this conservation there would be no resource to recreate on. | All
SC
CoCo
CCPR |
| | eg As expressed in the Sports Council Consultation Paper 'A Countryside for Sport'. | |
| 6.7 | User Groups and planners should negotiate increased access on to private land not yet used for sport, to reduce pressure on over-used sensitive areas. For this to be successful landowners would need to be approached with an attractive commercial package and effective methods of controlling the amount of use, damage or disturbance. | NGB's
User Groups
Landowners
Farmers
LA's |
| | eg Planning and negotiating use of private forests and farmland. | |
| 6.8 | Much of the countryside resource currently used by sport and recreation is under-used. For example, large bodies of water often have a single use such as angling. Management improvements including zoning and management agreements, should be undertaken to increase use of sites nearer to their carrying capacity. A concentration of several motorised activities on a few sites which have been indentified as appropriate, is often better than their dispersal over many sites. | Countryside
Managers
LA's
Landowners |
| | eg Multi-activity management at the Holme Pierrepont National Water Sports Centre has increased the number of activities and participants without increasing conflict or damaging the environment. | |
| 6.9 | Where areas of 'new' land (such as new gravel pits) are identified and agreed as suitable for motorised sports, then 'dilution' by non-motorised sports or other land uses, should be avoided in order to maximise the use of the site and minimise impacts elsewhere. | RCSRs
SC
LA's
Parish Councils |
| 6.10 | Motorised sports people and their representative organisations should accept in principle that payment be made for use of specially provided sites where a cost of maintenance or a cost of provision is (or would be) incurred by the landowners. This does not mean however, that all sites should be charged for. | Participants
NGB's
User Groups
Landowners |

- eg The Green Sticker Scheme in the USA where permits for off-road vehicular driving control use and pay for a wardening service.
- eg Commercial 'off-road' holiday firms should be asked to pay towards using the resource.
- 6.11 The planning process should allow and encourage appropriate commercial developments to subsidise the provision of new motorised sports facilities as part of integrated site plans. (see also 8.10).
LA's
Developers
- eg The Bedfont Lakes Development near Heathrow, London, (The Rutland Group plc).
- 6.12 The Countryside Commission, The Sports Council and local authorities should increase the financial resources available to relocate motorised sporting activities where they occur on sensitive sites, to more appropriate sites. The resources given would also be paying (indirectly) for countryside improvement of the sensitive sites by removing vehicle pressures from them. These organisations should also recommend that other agencies and local authorities follow a similar policy.
CoCo
SC
LA's
Others
- 6.13 Sites should be properly planned, designed and managed to ensure that the experience of the participants is of a high quality. The Sports Council and the national governing bodies should provide information on good planning, design and management.
Countryside
Managers
SC
NGBs
LA's
- 6.14 The feasibility of provision and use of alternative off-road resources should be investigated. Derelict canals, private coniferous forestry and farmland (surplus to crop need), and redundant military airbases, may be amongst the options. (see also 7.14)
SC: NFU:
CLA: LA's
NGB's: MoD
Others
- 6.15 Major agencies and lobby groups should co-operate to actively promote the concept of multi-purpose land use, which includes motorised sport as a legitimate, though minority, use of the countryside.
CoCo: MAFF
RCSR's: SC: NCC
FC: BW: RDC
NFU: ETB: RA
Comm Sector
Others
- eg The Countryside Commission should promote the Community Forests and New National Forest as multi-purpose forests where motorised sports have a legitimate, albeit minority, place.
- 6.16 The users of planned sites need to be educated to pursue their activities in an environmentally sensitive manner with due regard to the needs of other users. Opportunities at these sites should be found to engender better liaison, understanding and co-operation between all groups involved, and especially local residents.
Participants
User Groups
NGB's
Parish Councils
Local Residents
LA's

RECOMMENDATIONS ON HUMAN INFLUENCES

THE ISSUES

- 7.1 The real (or perceived) effects on people are what causes the majority of problems for motorised sports in the countryside. There are the physical or sensory impacts of the motorised activity on humans such as noise, smell, chemical poisoning, vibration and visual intrusion. Then there are impacts which are less quantifiable such as loss of privacy, conflict with a person's political or emotional view of the world and the image of the sports in relation to other countryside activities. Safety, driving attitude and driving skills factors are other relevant aspects.

THE OUTCOME

- 7.2 There are some real problems which involve illegal activities undertaken by some motorised sports enthusiasts such as speeding on waterways, trail-riding on footpaths, flying too low over restricted areas or making an excessive noise. These problems are subject to existing statutes and also to byelaws.
- 7.3 There are some "real" problems for other users of the countryside. Landowners and farmers may suffer from damage to land, crops and fences. These problems usually occur when rights of way cross their land. Walkers, cyclists and horse riders, on the other hand, may be physically disturbed or have their safety compromised by motorised sports activities.
- 7.4 There are other problems which are perceived as being of concern, but not covered by statute and only occasionally in byelaws. These include a reduction in people's enjoyment of the countryside, quality of life or privacy. The visual, and to a lesser extent the smell impacts of vehicles may be of similar concern to some people. Perceived disturbance to humans is difficult to analyse and make objective statements about. Some countryside leisure users may find a box-shaped Land Rover moving across the landscape as intrusive. Others may gain interest from the sight and be far more 'disturbed' by large numbers of artificially coloured orange cagoules. The National Trust may see windsurfing as a visual intrusion on remote Heritage Coasts, whilst thousands of spectators can enjoy watching off-shore power boat racing, which adds interest to their experience of the countryside.
- 7.5 The countryside is not necessarily the haven of peace and tranquillity so often imagined. Main roads, school playgrounds, over-flying commercial aircraft, passing trains and agricultural vehicles all generate noise and "intrusion" more often, more noisily and for longer periods of time than do motorised sports.

- 7.6 Individuals, lobby groups and organisations antagonistic to motorised sports in the countryside can influence the planning process with emotional and subjective arguments. For their part, motorised sports' participants have done little in the past to improve on their poor image, though this is now changing. Some individuals still ride too fast, illegally, dangerously, with poor skills, badly maintained vehicles and in an aggressive and environmentally irresponsible manner.
- 7.7 A general lack of understanding, a lack of communication and a consequent polarisation of views has resulted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION BY

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|------|--|--|
| 7.8 | Motorised sports users, like all other leisure users of the countryside, should accept that in some cases a fair and equitable charge for the use of the resource is necessary. No activity in the countryside is "free" if the cost of disruption, maintenance and repair of damage is taken into account. | Participants
User Groups
NGB's
Landowners |
| 7.9 | All individuals and organisations directly or indirectly involved with motorised sports in the countryside, need to develop a better commitment to co-operation, sharing, consultation, compromise and respect for each other's needs and the needs of the environment. In particular, motorised sports bodies should work much more closely with environmental groups. | NGB's
User Groups
Participants
Environmental Groups
Local Residents
Landowners
Parish Councils |
| 7.10 | Local motorised sports liaison groups or federations need to be set up as a matter of urgency. These groups should include water, air and land sports representatives. Regular meetings should be held with local planners, parish councils, residents groups, environmental groups, landowners and other relevant organisations. Contacts should be developed to encourage mutual understanding, trust and education, as well as become a basis for local negotiation and partnership. | NGB's
User Groups
Participants
Local Residents
Parish Councils
LA's: SDO's
Farmers
Others
Landowners |
| 7.11 | Motorised sports federations should concentrate on the development and promotion of a positive and environmentally responsible image. They would do well to target the local and national media, local politicians, environmental groups and planning officers. Appropriate lobbying, appointment of community liaison officers and access officers (who might also work with non-motorised sports access officers), could all help achieve the desired result. The media themselves have an important and proactive part to play. | NGB's
User Groups
Media
SDO's |

- 7.12 More publicity and emphasis should be given to supporting responsible clubs and other organised groups. Although responsible casual users should be catered for, clubs offer a better chance of controlling irresponsible participants as well as being better able to negotiate new access agreements with land owners.
- 7.13 Local federations, clubs and national umbrella organisations should strive to ensure that casual users act in a responsible manner. Local authorities, the Sports Council, the Countryside Commission and other such agencies should seek to help these organisations to achieve this influence. Manufacturers should assist club training programmes to help to ensure their products are used responsibly.
- 7.14 Clubs should seek to increase access to the countryside by approaching landowners, especially those in the private sector. Formal access agreements between farmers, foresters and other land owners, which involve controlled and responsible use by sportsmen and sportswomen and also provide an income for the owner, are more likely to find a positive response than an extension of activity on to the public rights of way network. (See also 6.14)
- 7.15 Local clubs and joint federations should seek to partner environmental organisations in positive practical conservation tasks such as improving and repairing rights of way and transporting materials for task groups working in difficult locations. Local authorities should encourage local motorised sports bodies to assist them in such work. Conservation groups should seek to bring in sports groups to help them with their work.
- eg Conservation Task Force work with 4 x 4 drivers.
- 7.16 Motorised sports groups should take a responsible part in policy formation exercises such as the Sports Council's 'A Countryside for Sport' Consultation Document.
- 7.17 Motorised sports organisations should accept and (effectively) publicise their voluntary codes of restraint on the use of certain "no-go" areas (eg winter use of a right of way with a soft surface).
- 7.18 Motorised sports organisations need to develop and adopt and promote 'Codes of Good Conduct'.
- eg Stopping on green lanes for horses; proper maintenance of vehicles to reduce emissions and the quiet, responsible and safe driving of jet-skis in busy port areas.

NGB's
User Groups
SC: LA's
Parish Cncls
Landowners
Media

NGB's
User Groups
Participants
Manufacturers
SC
CoCo
LA's

NGB's
User Groups
Landowners
NFU
CLA
SC
CoCo

User Groups
Participants
LA's
Environmental
Groups

NGB's
User Groups
Participants

NGB's
User Groups
Participants

SC
NGB's
User Groups

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PLANNING AND LEGISLATION

THE ISSUES

- 8.1 The "legislation" discussed here is taken to cover Acts of Parliament, DoE Circulars and Statements (such as The Policy Planning Guidance Note on Sport and Recreation), Structure Plans, Local Plans and Byelaws. These all play an important part in formalising the place of motorised sports in the countryside, even if technically they are not all statutory documents. The legislation needs to be simplified and updated, but by and large is not as major a source of problems as it is often made out to be. With co-operation, goodwill, education, liaison, and positive planning the existing legal structure needs only minor modification in order to overcome the problems faced in the countryside.

THE OUTCOME

- 8.2 Much of the law relating to rights of way and access to the countryside is complicated and confused. The law may be used to constrain motorised sporting activity and a Highway Authority may sometimes find that using the legislation is the only effective option left in its management of motorised sports.
- 8.3 By far the most constraining factor on responsible sporting participation is the lack of positive planning. County Council Structure Plans and Local District or Borough Plans mainly contain negative constraining policies. This often results in a lack of provision, encouraging illegal and inappropriate use of the countryside. The "NIMBY" attitude often results in local opposition, and is why strenuous efforts by local motorised sports' liaison groups are necessary in the promotion of the needs of motorised sports, together with a more robust attitude within local authorities to assist motorised sports.
- 8.4 Commercially run motorised sports facilities may be able to attract a good income from participants, spectators and sponsorship. The opportunities for income generation and local employment therefore need to be taken into consideration when dealing with planning applications for such facilities.
- 8.5 The financial pressures that other competing land demands exert, such as landfill, can oust recreation. Such pressures need to be recognised and the sporting interest protected.

RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTION BY
8.6 Local planning authorities (LPA's) should take into account all needs of the local area and not automatically prioritise conservation over sport and recreation when developing planning policy. Conservation should not in all cases automatically come first, but be judged in a balanced manner against competing land interests such as sport, as is the requirement of planning authorities.	RTPI LA's NCC Environmental Groups Others
8.7 LPA's should be aware of and acknowledge the constraints there are on airspace and closely liaise with flying, microlighting, parachuting and gliding clubs when considering new or relocated airfields.	LA's User Groups NGB's CAA
8.8 LPA's should adopt a positive planning approach to providing for motorised sports. Other competing land demands such as transport, housing and landfill will otherwise lead to a marginalisation and possible exclusion of recreation.	RTPI LA's DoE
8.9 Casual use should be planned for to ensure that those individuals who do not wish to belong to clubs may have suitable and legal access to countryside resources.	LA's Countryside Managers
8.10 Planning legislation (such as the use of Section 106's) should be used to ensure the provision of motorised sports alongside some appropriate developments such as industrial estates, major road interchanges, new power stations etc. (See also 6.11).	LA's DoT Others
8.11 Local authorities and other agencies involved in strategic planning should seek where possible to adopt the strategies of the Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation.	RTPI:LA's: NRA:CoCo: SC:Others RCSRs
8.12 The use of Traffic Regulation Orders and other such legal controls should only be used as a last resort. Negotiation with all bodies concerned and a genuine effort to seek an agreed compromise should be the priority.	LA's User Groups Others
8.13 In some cases distinctions should be made between different types of motorised vehicles to allow certain types access to a resource, but barring others. This could alleviate the blanket banning of all activity.	LA's Others
eg Allowing two-wheeled vehicles, but not heavier four-wheeled vehicles on some 'softer' tracks.	

- 8.14 Regional strategies, County Structure Plans and District Local Plans should identify new sites for motorised sports in appropriate locations so that any relocation of the sports away from sensitive sites does not lead to a net deficit in provision. Such positive planning can avoid damage to sensitive sites and can lead to better control of casual and illegal use. In exceptional cases, local authorities and land users should accept that the priority to relocate a motorised sport may displace an existing user from the proposed site. The emphasis should however be on seeking joint use agreements.
- eg Derbyshire County Council Structure Plan and the development of Victory Quarry as a site for motorised sport.
- DoE
LA's
RCSR's
SC
CoCo
Parish
Councils
Participants
NGB's
User Groups
- 8.15 Specially planned and designed sites cannot always replace an existing resource used by motorised sports. For example, specific sites cannot and should not replace the use of the vehicular rights of way network. Enclosed inland bodies of water cannot always replace the value of coastal and estuarine waters. Air sports already suffer from severe restrictions on air space so that further restrictions would be unacceptable.
- LA's
CoCo
SC
CAA
RCSR's
- 8.16 The urban fringe and areas of derelict land should be targeted for new motorised sports provision to encourage activity away from "deep" countryside such as the core areas of National Parks.
- LA's: NPA's
CoCo: SC
RCSR's
Parish Councils
- eg Planning motorised sports into the Mercia (South Staffs) Community Forest to deflect Birmingham based off-road riders away from the Peak District National Park.
- 8.17 Where relevant, any planning for motorised sports facilities should include suitable provision for spectators.
- LA's
NGB's

RECOMMENDATIONS ON ECOLOGICAL AND TECHNICAL IMPLICATIONS

THE ISSUES

- 9.1 The ecological impacts that air, land and water vehicles make involve their noise, smell, chemical emissions, sight, vibration, speed, wave erosion, and ground damage. In many ways the vehicles are seen not to be in harmony with the countryside environment but are an example of an inappropriate man-made intrusion. It must be realised that the level of pollution whether direct or indirect is extremely small in comparison to those other activities identified in 9.4. The major issue is noise.
- 9.2 "Ecological" effects of motorised sports activity only concern those effects on the animal and plant communities and their physical habitat (eg the soil). Humans may also have their health "truly" disturbed by noise, (eg clinical stress) which is discussed here. Those effects that are just "displeasing" are dealt with under the section on 'Human Influences'.
- 9.3 Very often ecological effects are confused with the social or aesthetic effects on humans. Vehicle noise for example may not have a major effect on the ecology of an area, but may be seen as a nuisance to people.
- 9.4 Many forms of human activity "disturb" the natural environment. Motorised sports in the countryside often have a disproportionate amount of attention paid to them relative to their real or actual disturbance and damage. When compared to that of housing developments, industrial pollution, transport schemes, over-flying of civil or military commercial aircraft, road traffic or even noise from playgrounds, motorised sports effects are minimal and only occasionally of local significance.

THE OUTCOME

- 9.5 There are some direct effects on the ecology of an area such as damage to soft tracks, erosion of peat, wave erosion on lake edges, disturbance of ground nesting birds, damage to vegetation and to a small degree, chemical pollution (eg oil in water).
- 9.6 Vehicle noise is perhaps the most contentious issue. Many other users of the countryside feel that the peaceful and quiet enjoyment of the countryside is being disturbed. It is also argued that wildlife is disturbed by noise (eg birds feeding on estuaries). There are statutory controls on the levels of noise which regulatory bodies such as the local authorities and Environmental Health authorities enforce which should cover effects on human health and well being. No statutory noise levels have yet been seen to be necessary for impacts on wild life.

- 9.7 Due to a lack of quality research data on the "real" as opposed to "perceived" effects of noise from motorised sports, many strategic and planning decisions are being made on hunches and on emotive responses. Quality research data together with a balanced analysis is needed allow a scientific assessment of the impact of noise or of other disturbance on wildlife.
- 9.8 There is no evidence that visual or smell impacts negatively affect wildlife or cause humans "real" or "clinical" problems.
- 9.9 The reduction of physical and chemical damage such as wave action on river banks, tyre erosion on soil or oil emissions, needs to be addressed through improving the design, manufacture, marketing and use of the vehicles.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION BY

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 9.10 | The best use needs to be made of those off-road tracks that are agreed as being appropriate for vehicular use. Failure to do so can further limit the resource availability. Local authorities, landowners and managers should co-operate with user groups to ensure that access, maintainance, improvement and repair of these routes is undertaken. It is particularly important that the user groups are seen to be actively involved in improvement and conservation works. | LA's
CLA
NFU
Landowners
Countryside
Managers
CoCo
NGB's
User Groups
Participants |
| 9.11 | Manufacturers should design and market vehicles that are more environmentally friendly in terms of chemical emissions, tyre damage, wave damage, noise emissions, public image, visual impact etc. This may also require further legislation. | Manufacturers
DoT
DTI |
| 9.12 | Drivers of vehicles should ensure the highest standard of maintenance is achieved to reduce noise and emissions. Government departments should consider introducing legally enforceable vehicle emission controls on new vehicles and vehicles undergoing MOT's or equivalent. | Participants
DoT |
| 9.13 | Participants and user groups should accept that in certain areas, such as core areas of National Parks, access should be voluntarily restricted, even though a legal right of way may exist. In some instances it may be necessary to change the legal status of sites in order to ban vehicular access. Voluntary restraints, better management, occasional negotiated bans for limited periods of time are preferable to legal constraints. Diversion of activity away to other provided sites together with a policy of non-promotion of the problem sites are other methods of non-statutory control that should be vigorously pursued. | Participants
User Groups
NGB's
LA's
Countryside
Managers |

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 9.14 | Manufacturers, dealers, club and race officials amongst others should persuade drivers not to modify vehicles in ways that increase noise emissions. Improved maintenance can also assist in the reduction of noise and other emissions. (see also 7.18). | NGB's
User Groups
Participants
Others
Manufacturers |
| 9.15 | Manufacturers and dealers should market and advertise their goods in an environmentally sensible and responsible manner. | Manufacturers
Media |

RECOMMENDATIONS ON RESEARCH

ISSUES

- 10.1 Effective communication is essential as many of the problems could be resolved if quality information and good communication were the norm. Expertise, improved research data, access to information and dissemination of good practice are all necessary. The public image of motorised sports is discussed under the 'Human Influences' chapter.

THE OUTCOME

- 10.2 The availability of quality research on the following issues is limited:
- [a] The effects of noise on the natural environment;
 - [b] Conflicts between the views of sports users, local residents and environmentalists.
 - [c] The existing and potential demands for motorised the sports.
 - [d] Technical data on facility design and safety.
- 10.3 The dissemination of good practice is limited. The publication 'Good Conservation Practice' for Sport and Recreation' by Roger Sideway should help in this area.
- 10.4 A general lack of expertise, staff time and financial resourcing for effective communication reflects the low priority this is given by government agencies, manufacturers, local authorities and sports organisations.
- 10.5 A lack of information on where to go leads to inappropriate use.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION BY

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>10.6 The Sports Council, Nature Conservancy Council, Countryside Commission and other relevant organisations should target significant resources to research the "real" effects of motorised sports activity on the environment and on other users of the countryside. In particular, noise should be the priority research area. The research should be undertaken from a sports point of view to balance other research undertaken from a conservationist point of view. Manufacturers should also prioritise this work.</p> | <p>Manufacturers
SC: NCC: SC:
CoCo
NCC
NGB's
Others
CRAGG</p> |
|---|---|

- | | | |
|-------|---|--------------------------------|
| 10.7 | Good practice should be collated and published. The media, local politicians, planning officers, national governing bodies of sport and others involved in motorised sports in the countryside should be targeted to receive this information. | SC
CoCo
NCC
Others |
| 10.8 | Current desire and demands and future predictions for motorised sport in the countryside should be accurately assessed. | SC
NGB's |
| 10.9 | The expertise of the Sports Council Regional Officers for research advice should be sought where local expertise is limited. | All: LA's
SC's
Others |
| 10.10 | Readily available information on where the sports can legally take place needs to be collated and published. There is also a need to identify and promote some sites as especially suitable for increased use, in order to reduce the pressure on more sensitive sites. | LAs
Media
Others
SC's |

SECTION 5

CHAIRMAN'S CONCLUDING REMARKS

CHAIRMAN'S CONCLUDING REMARKS

Norman Sarsfield, Chairman,
Regional Council for Sport & Recreation East Midlands

We have not got to the crux of all the issues and problems today, but I realise that we have started talking with each other and not at each other. This really is a significant improvement. It is true to say that although we have 120 delegates from a tremendously wide range of interests a few key organisations are not well represented. These include some environmental groups and the representatives of local people, although I was delighted that the National Association of Local and Parish Councils were represented here today.

England is still a green and pleasant land and I believe that there is space enough for motorised sports on land, water and in the air. We are seeing increasing amounts of agricultural land coming out of production and we are seeing the establishment of new areas of forestry such as Community Forests and the New National Forest. In all these areas motorised sports has a place. I also believe much of the motorised sports activity should move on to damaged or sterilised land and help improve these environments including quarries, derelict industrial sites and reclaimed tips.

I believe that the problems of motorised sport in the countryside are considerably exaggerated. I know that Roger Clarke of the Countryside Commission agrees with me on this one. An objective analysis of the real problems together with a sense of proportion are required.

I would like to congratulate the Sports Council on their recent initiatives on countryside and water policies, especially their consultation exercise 'A Countryside for Sport'. The Sports Council's lead in this area is most welcome and very necessary.

It is most important to respect the views and the needs of local people. In some parts of Derbyshire, Keith Garton has told us, local people suffer from an over concentration of visitors and many resources are thus over-used. We cannot expect local authorities, land owners or managers to provide and maintain such resources, nor can we expect them to develop new ones, without some financial assistance from the people who use them.

In the proceedings today it is clear that the impact of the casual user needs to have more emphasis placed on it. They make up the largest number of visitors to the countryside.

The most important factor identified today has been that noise causes most of the problems most of the time. Therefore noise needs to be addressed as the priority.

In the workshop discussions and the plenary session which followed I realised how much ground had been covered in this vast area of work yet still we have only touched the fringe of what has to be achieved. We need to build upon the circle of people in this hall, promote the positive attitudes this Conference has had as its hallmark and so ensure that we can all go on enjoying the countryside.

Today can only be seen as a beginning and we will need to reconvene this Conference in two years' time to assess the progress we have made.

SECTION 6

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CONCLUSIONS REACHED BY WORKSHOPS

This appendix summarises the "conclusions" reached by the four workshops. So much cross-linkage occurred between workshops that it was felt appropriate to rewrite them as "recommendations" in the format seen in the main body of the report (section 4). All the material in this appendix is included in the main recommendations. It is presented here for completeness only.

DEVELOPING PLANNING STRATEGIES TO MEET THE CHALLENGES

The Conclusions reached by Workshop A were:

- 1 That better education of local authorities, other significant organisations and the general public is needed.
- 2 That more quality scientific research is required to ensure that the planning of motorised sports is based on balanced factual arguments.
- 3 That the media needs to be kept better informed to help overcome the use of emotional, ill-informed and biased arguments that sometimes cloud the real issues.
- 4 That a positive planning approach needs to be adopted by officers and members of planning authorities and others involved in the production of national, regional and local strategies.
- 5 That in many instances a site by site approach is recommended, taking into account all the local factors involved. This should require that local liaison groups are formed to bring together landowners, local parishes, sportspeople (often local people) and local planners.
- 6 That a regional planning or strategic approach is required and the machinery of the Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation, together with their strategies, are seen as good "vehicles" to achieve this approach.
- 7 That relocation of certain motorised sporting activities takes place from identified sensitive sites (as defined in the Sports Council's publication 'A Countryside for Sport'). This would need to be on a quid-pro-quo basis with alternative planned sites being made available in appropriate locations. These relocations should be agreed with all the relevant bodies such as the governing bodies of sport. A regional strategy may help overcome "NIMBY" attitudes that may otherwise predominate.
- 8 That the motorised sports bodies (and individual users) should improve the poor image that the sports have with local authorities. The motorised sports organisations should undertake public relations work in a co-ordinated manner, and seek to engender a more positive view amongst all those involved in the planning process.
- 9 That motorised sports users establish a positive and productive dialogue with conservation and environmental bodies. This was agreed by all present as an ideal way forward but requiring compromise and understanding by both parties.
- 10 That all those organisations influencing or involved in national level policy formation (such as the Countryside Commission, the Sports Council, Royal Town Planning Institute, the Department of the Environment and the Nature Conservancy Council) better co-ordinate the creation and promotion of positive planning policies.

- 11 That effective local liaison is established by setting up local federations that mesh into the parish council and local authority committee structures. This would improve the accessibility of and communication with motorised sports users thus paving the way to better co-operation and understanding.

IDENTIFYING GOOD PRACTICE: WORKING WITH PARTNERS**The Conclusions reached by Workshop B were:**

- 1 That the concept and adoption of a "minimum environmental impact philosophy" should be adopted and promoted by all motorised sports participants and their organisations.
- 2 That manufacturers make an increased commitment to promote a minimum impact philosophy and to encourage and deliver appropriate training courses via local clubs.
- 3 That the clarification and simplification of rights of way issues and legislation is needed to allow good practice to progress without confusion in each local case.
- 4 That a detailed study be made of the feasibility of introducing a licensing scheme for the use of countryside resources. The income from the "Green Sticker Scheme" operating in the USA was given as an example of a source of money for maintenance work and resourcing wardens.
- 5 That the formation of local motorised sports federations should be encouraged by the governing bodies. These federations should provide a responsible and effective lobbying service and allow improved local liaison. These federations should be easily accessible to local people and all the relevant individuals or organisations.
- 6 That manufacturers should ensure their products are responsibly used throughout the products' lifespan. This could involve post sale information distribution direct to owners.
- 7 That codes of voluntary restraint should be tried before Traffic Regulation Orders are imposed.
- 8 That all motorised sports bodies should adopt Codes of Good Practice which should be widely disseminated to both members of clubs and to the general public.
- 9 That the policies of Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation are more widely used in identifying and planning site resources and negotiating with relevant bodies. RCSR's would need to review and update their data availability and policies accordingly.

**TECHNICAL APPRAISAL OF CHALLENGES, VEHICLE DESIGN,
POSITIVE INTERPRETATION OF LEGISLATION, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE**

The recommendations made by Workshop 'C' were:

- 1 That vehicle manufacturers should give a higher priority to their work in vehicle design to noise reduction.
- 2 That vehicle users should police themselves, ride quietly and not customise bikes to emit more noise. (Increased noise usually means decreased power and higher fuel consumption.) Manufacturers and motorised sports organisations have an important role to play here.
- 3 That increased and improved local liaison is needed to help solve local management problems. Local motorsports federation access officers could play an important role here.
- 4 That clarification of the legislative nomenclature related to rights of way is needed. The 'Byway Open to All Traffic' classification especially needs clarification and renaming.
- 5 That vehicle users should be made aware of the need to avoid damage to the resource especially where that damage conflicts with the needs of other users such as walkers and local residents or with high value conservation.
- 6 That countryside managers and planners should selectively use voluntary or imposed bans, eg during certain weather conditions, certain days of the week, or certain levels of use, rather than blanket bans.
- 7 That planned permanent purpose-built resources are recognised as providing alternatives to the illegal and unmanaged use of inappropriate sites.
- 8 That the channelling of users into a few identified and promoted linear routes or specific sites may avoid other sensitive areas being damaged or a greater number of people being disturbed on other sites. The routes or sites need to be carefully chosen and responsibly used. Sufficient management and maintenance resources together with excellent local liaison will need to be targeted at such routes to avoid an unacceptable concentration of damage and disturbance to local residents, landowners and farmers.
- 9 That research into vehicular pollution (fumes, noise and other emissions) needs to be undertaken to assess if significant pollution is occurring or whether it is just a perceived problem.
- 10 That management schemes which selectively ban certain vehicle types should be examined. Thus two-wheel vehicles could be allowed on some sites but not four wheeled vehicles.

IMPROVING THE IMAGE, COMMUNICATIONS & USE OF THE MEDIA

The Conclusions Reached by Workshop D were:

- 1 That all organisations with a responsibility for motorised sports need to prioritise their public relations work to counteract their bad image with the public. In particular they should overcome the fears of the local population with facts and promote the good practice in the sport. They should appear concillatory and non-confrontational. They should be seen to support local and national conservation causes. They should promote their sports people as trained responsible and fit athletes.
- 2 That the media should be approached to ensure that the positive aspects of the sports are highlighted. That the promotion of a balanced and fair view by the media would help foster a spirit of co-operation. Good practice in solving many of the problem areas could result.
- 3 That the media has a particularly important role to play in the education of the non-affiliated users, general public and the members of local authorities.
- 4 That local clubs and governing bodies should "bombard" the media with good press stories on positive aspects of their sport and the individuals within it. Local groups and federations should undertake public relations training exercises.
- 5 That local federations should be established and promote themselves to the countryside fraternity as responsible, co-ordinated and concillatory lobbying groups. They should, in particular, develop accessible lines of communication with relevant local individuals (such as head wardens, parish councillors etc).
- 6 That local authority officers should seek to educate themselves regarding the true attitude of responsible motorised sports users and organisations and seek to partner them to combat the illegal, inappropriate nuisance of problem individuals.
- 7 That local authorities should consider the wider implications of planning needs and not just those in their local area. When identifying motorised sports in the countryside policies they should consider looking to the Regional Councils for Sport and Recreation for guidance in this matter.

ATHLETES ON BIKES



Matt Bates

42 years young: Mick Andrews still going strong at the Bolton MCC's Inter-Centre Team Trial last April (TAMX News Photo)

After a gruelling 40 minute and two lap moto, or after particularly difficult trials section, what has given the victor a winning edge? Natural ability? Machine preparation? Course knowledge? Experience?

Undoubtedly, all these factors are vitally important. However, what if all the competitors in an event have these qualities in equal amounts? Then, quite simply, a competitor's level of fitness will be the deciding factor.

To the vast majority of people outside our sport, a "biker" is a "biker". Therefore, competitors in the sport (and the majority of motorcyclists who are law abiding and responsible) are tarnished with an image that is a cross between Marlon Brando and the Hell's Angels, on the one hand, with a touch of "mods versus rockers" thrown in for good measure, on the other. Little is done to promote competitive motorcyclists as the athletes on bikes they undoubtedly are. General fitness has always played a part in motorcycle sport and, riders in all disciplines, are becoming more aware of the need to retain a good level of fitness in order to remain competitive. For its part, the ACU Training Trust is ensuring that all its rider squads are receiving advice on both mental and physical fitness, as well as pure riding technique.

To graphically illustrate the importance of fitness, Newsline spoke to two riders who are at vastly different stages of their sporting career. Like many other competitors, fitness training is as important to them as is their riding ability. One, Mick Andrews, has been at the top of the trials scene for more years than he probably cares to remember, whilst the other, Matt Bates, is poised to make a name for himself in Motocross after several successful seasons in the Youth Division.

Mick Andrews (46 years young) is the ACU's National Trials Assessor, and has been since the Training Division was established in 1986. In addition, he recently became our first International Trials Coach. A status he thoroughly deserves after 31 years in the sport, with many championships at all levels and coaching schools organised around the world, under his belt. Mick told Newsline that "I have always been a fitness fanatic. I have always loved sports, ever since my school days, and have enjoyed keeping my fitness" says Mick.

When he first entered the world of trials, Mick spent many hours practicing on bikes, and this activity kept him fit. However, he spends far less time nowadays on his bikes and, to compensate, he does other activities. These include running — to improve stamina, aerobics

— for agility and suppleness, weight training — not only for general strength, but with particular attention to the muscles used in trials riding, and riding a bicycle — for leg stamina and, simply, because it is so enjoyable.

Mick is still more than capable of achieving excellent results in top trials events and, in order to retain his competitiveness, he spends an average of 2½ hours a day in training. His remaining ambition (sponsorship permitting) so Mick

FROM 'NEWSLINE' THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ACU (WINTER 1990-91)

In December "Sounds like he has some particularly fearsome plans for the squad!" With regard to his diet, Mick does allow himself alcohol — but in moderation! He stresses that although he doesn't follow a diet as such, unlike many of today's top trials riders who do, he does ensure that he only eats "good" food: "junk" food is definitely out.

Mick's overall fitness cannot be doubted and, as he points out, "still competing, still enjoying, still fit, and still successful."

Matt Bates recently attained Regional Motocross Instructor status within the Training Trust, and is poised to establish himself as a top motocross rider after several successful seasons in the Youth Division. During the seven years that Matt has been in the sport he has always kept fit. Prior to his involvement in motocross he used to compete in representative athletics and, in the future, he hopes to enter some triathlons. In short, Matt believes an athletic body is one that is fit enough and strong enough to cope with the requirements of his chosen sport of motocross.

For Matt, diet is even more important than fitness in that the right foods provide essential vitamins and protein for a healthy body. He feels that egg-based pasta is ideal because it provides me with the carbohydrates I need. Although most of us would think that sweets are bad for you, Matt always eats a bar of sweet chocolate to restore lost energy, or he may make do with a banana, as an alternative. During the close season, Matt commences a programme of training that is designed to help him cope with the particular requirements of a strenuous motocross season. Early every morning he goes running, then, after breakfast (usually cereal) he spends two hours in the gym. He does not lift heavy weights because "if my muscles are pumped solid, like a bodybuilder, they are useless; plus heavy muscles will increase my overall bodyweight — an obvious disadvantage on a motocross bike." Therefore, Matt only lifts light weights, with his main gym activity being two hours, non-stop, circuit training (sit-ups, press-ups etc.). This gym-work is designed to build up the stamina that is so important for motocross.

As if this is not enough, Matt then goes swimming, which is perfect exercise for all the muscles of the body. Matt takes care of his riding technique by practising twice a week. Neither Mick or Matt are unique in their dedication to the fitness that is so vital to successful competition, but it is something that seems forgotten when our sport is covered by the media. So, when you are at home, watching TV or down the "local", spare a thought for all the dedicated ACU competitors who, like Matt and Mick, are staying over a hot aerobics session!

RECENT PUBLICATIONS LIST

APPENDIX C

Department of the Environment:	'Draft Planning Policy Guidance Note on Sport & Recreation' (Oct 1990)
The Sports Council:	'A Countryside for Sport - Towards a Policy for Sport & Recreation in the Countryside' (Nov 1990)
Countryside Commission:	'The New National Forest - A Countryside for the 21st Century' (Dec 1990)
Countryside Commission:	CCP317 'Countryside & Nature Conservation Issues in District Local Plans' (1990)
RSPB	'Turning the Tide - A Future for Estuaries' (Sept 1990)
Countryside Commission:	CCP305 'Heritage Coast: Policies & Priorities: 1991' (January 1991)
Countryside Commission:	CCP295 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - a Policy Statement' (1990)

STILL TO BE PUBLISHED

The Sports Council*:	'Good Conservation Practice for Sport & Recreation (R Sidaway) *with Countryside Commission, Nature Conservancy Council & World Wide Fund for Nature
Countryside Commission:	'An Agenda for England's Countryside - A Discussion Paper' (April 1991)
Countryside Commission:	'Heritage Coasts Policies & Priorities' (Jan 1991)
Countryside Commission:	'National Parks Review Panel Report' (March 1991)